In winter it’s only natural to want to wrap up warm and not venture outside. But I urge you to do the opposite.

There are many tourist hotspots overseas that put up the “closed” signs and shutter the windows for winter. There’s absolutely no need to do that here, not with what the Bay has to offer.

We’ve just had some lovely celebrations take place for Matariki (Maori New Year), including one at the Soundshell, which finished with a fireworks display.

We also have plenty to look forward to over the next month. Napier City Business Inc has some fun activities and events planned as part of its Winter Playground promotion between 9 and 24 July, with the added bonus of free parking in the CBD on 9 July, retailers across the city will be offering delicious deals as part of Winter Potluck, and that perennial favourite, Winter Deco Weekend, is on between 15 and 17 July.

And don’t be surprised if you see a lot of people carrying instruments in the vicinity of the Napier Municipal Theatre between 13 and 17 July. Those are the dates it will be hosting the National Brass Band Championships.

This will be my last mayoral message for Proudly Napier, for now, in keeping with the rules for elected members leading into the local body elections in October.

I encourage all Napier residents and ratepayers who have not yet registered to vote to do so as soon as possible, and I encourage all of you to take the opportunity to cast a vote and have your say when the time comes.
Meet Natasha Carswell
Community Planning Manager

For Community Planning Manager, Natasha Carswell, the saying “variety is the spice of life” has never been more on point. The energetic leader works with all facets of the community, from youths and seniors to families, facilities and funding. Diversity is what makes her tick.

Throughout Natasha’s career she has always worked closely with the community, so when an opportunity came up to work as the Community Planning Manager at Napier City Council nearly six years ago, she took it and moved her family from Wellington to Napier – her home town – and hasn’t looked back since.

“The sheer diversity of my work means that I get to work with a whole range of interesting, smart people who care about what happens in our community,” Natasha says.

“It’s fantastic to be able to talk to people in the community, hear their ideas and solutions and weave that into our work.”

Dealing with a variety of communities and needs, however, requires patience, understanding and a positive attitude.

“Every community’s needs are different and some of the issues we work with are complex and don’t have quick fix solutions. We have to keep chipping away and progress can be slow. The main thing is to stay positive and work with people and agencies that can help.”

To relax and unwind, Natasha lets off steam by skating and helping out with the junior Bay City Rollers roller derby team, ‘Guns ‘n Roses’.

“I don’t play anymore but I still love skating and get out on the Parade almost every weekend.”

Work is now well underway to transform Napier’s Marine Parade into an exciting public space that will cater for children of all ages as well as parents, grandparents, the art community and sports organisations.

A modern skate park, designed by renowned skate park designer Richard Smith to cater for all levels of roller skaters, skateboarders and other wheeled sports, is currently being constructed on the former Marineland site. A new skate bowl and wooden ramps will be built and the revitalised, existing grandstand will once again become a key attraction - and landmark of - Marine Parade.

Napier City Council Community Development Manager, Antoinette Campbell, says the new park has come about as a result of the Napier Skating Club making a submission to Council requesting room for growth. A number of the club’s ideas have been incorporated into the new design.

“To ensure the area is multi-purpose, a stage can be established on the main skate rink to allow for concerts, community events and other entertainment which can be viewed from the grandstand,” Antoinette says.

“There will be concrete ramps at the southern end of the new development with a timber vert (half pipe) ramp left of the grandstand.

“This skate park is being future proofed – skating may in future become an Olympic sport and according to the experts, a vert ramp would be ideal for training.”

To help bridge the gap between the closure of Sk8 Zone and the opening of the new park, a short-term pop-up skate space is being considered for use by club skaters.

For more information about the Marine Parade Redevelopment see www.napier.govt.nz keyword #prjbigpicture

The entire redevelopment is expected to be completed by December 2016.
Fiona's Sweet Dream

Her son had moved out of home, her beloved dad had passed away and she was spending up to four hours each day stuck in Auckland traffic. It was little wonder that macarons.co.nz business owner Fiona Tomlinson began dreaming of a different life.

“It was towards the end of 2015 when I made the decision to move,” says Fiona. “I had had the business for a couple of years and was juggling that with my photography business. I received a massive order for 20,000 macarons which I was looking to manufacture in Auckland. But I didn’t want to be stuck doing that same old thing where I would be driving all the time in order to run my business. I wanted to make a lifestyle change.”

Fiona began seriously considering taking her business elsewhere – and Napier was the obvious choice. “I approached the Business Hub who were just fantastic,” Fiona tells. “They put me in touch with someone in the food industry and together we began running the numbers. I was able to quickly see the opportunity in manufacturing the product here.”

A call to Napier City Council’s planning team sealed the deal. “Oh my goodness, when I rang the Council to find out about commercial kitchens I left a message and about 15 minutes later my phone rang and I was chatting away to the very person I needed to speak with. He couldn’t have been more helpful. I had dealt with council staff in Auckland for so long and I could never speak to a human being there!”

Having shifted over in March, Fiona now manufactures two ranges here – her Classic range is sold in selected New Worlds and in catering packs, and is about to go into production with Napier’s Country Culinaire. Meanwhile her hand-piped Artisan range, using regional produce such as damson plums and St Andrew’s limes, is made just down the road in a kitchen in Havelock North. “I now have two income streams which gives me the opportunity to have a bit of leveraged income, and the flexibility to work on other projects.”

Eventually, Fiona hopes to expand, employing up to five staff in the region.

“It costs slightly more to courier out of Napier, sure, just because a lot of my clients are in Auckland. But my other costs are so much lower - and my stress levels are definitely a lot lower. Because of the ease of living in Napier, my time is not wasted and I have more hours in the day. Now I enjoy being alive, rather than just existing. The trouble is, it’s so beautiful here that sometimes I just don’t want to work!”

National Recognition

Quality infrastructure and art projects have secured Napier City Council finalist spots in two categories of the 2016 Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) EXCELLENCE Awards.

The awards celebrate the outstanding leadership role local government plays within communities.

The Marine Parade Outfall and Viewing Platform is a finalist for the Chorus EXCELLENCE Best Practice in Infrastructure Management award, hailing its fusion of functionality and aesthetic beauty which have swiftly seen it become the most photographed structure on Marine Parade.

The Sea Walls: Murals for Oceans project is also a finalist, in the Creative New Zealand EXCELLENCE Best Creative Place category, recognised for bringing together talented international street artists to paint large scale murals about the plight of the world’s oceans.

Judges for the awards are former Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast, Chair of EQC Sir Maarten Wevers and The New Zealand Initiative’s Executive Director, Dr Oliver Hartwich.

Category winners will be announced at a gala dinner during the LGNZ Conference, to be held in Dunedin from 24-26 July, 2016.
What’s On

National Brass Band Championships 13 - 17 July

The 136th New Zealand National Brass Band Championships will be hosted in Napier this year and presents a fantastic opportunity for all ages to hear 30 bands. The programme includes;

- Wed 13 July, Mission Estate Winery – Invitation Slow Melody
- Thurs 14 July, Napier Municipal Theatre – Champion of Champions
- Fri 15 July at 1:30pm, Infinity Foundation Parade of Bands – Street March, Hastings Street
- Fri 15 July & Sat 16 July, Napier Municipal Theatre - A & B Grade
- MTG Century Theatre - C & D Grade
- Sun 17 July, Napier Municipal Theatre – Deco Bay Brass Extravaganza

Tickets available at Napier Municipal Theatre or www.ticketek.co.nz

Winter Deco Weekend 15 - 17 July

Ride on the traditional 1938 railcar, revel in the glitzy casino evening, swoon at an afternoon tea dance, sip cocktails in heritage splendour, and come out in your Deco duds to see the vintage cars on display!

View the programme now at www.artdeconapier.com

Reminder for Dog Registrations

Dog registrations are now due. Pay by 31 July to avoid a late payment fee. Save time, do it online - www.napier.govt.nz/pay-it or by Internet Banking