



The Informer

February 2026 Edition

Green Island | Concord | Abbotsford | Fairfield | Waldronville | Westwood | Ocean View | Brighton

GREEN ISLAND JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB PREPARES TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF SEVEN-A-SIDE

This year, the Green Island Junior Football Club's annual Seven-a-Side Tournament reaches a major milestone, celebrating 50 years of this much-loved local event and bringing together generations of players, families, volunteers, and supporters.

First held in 1976, the tournament was founded by Merv Marsh and Jim Martin. Life member Ian Hand has been involved since those early days, at a time when the club was much smaller and far less resourced than it is today. The first tournament attracted around 50 teams. This has now expanded to include 140 to 150 teams, making it a standout fixture on the junior football calendar.

Ian recalls "There wasn't a lot of equipment back then, so we improvised." One initial solution involved heading into the forestry to source timber for goalposts. While practical at the time, one wooden crossbar included a knot that eventually gave way after being hit by a ball, falling onto a player's head. Thankfully, no one was injured, and it's now one of those stories that's part of tournament folklore.

The tournament has changed significantly over the years. In the beginning, the club had to get creative to mark out and set up the field for Sunday matches. Cars were parked around the pitch, their headlights lighting the way after Saturday's games were over. "That's just what you did," Ian says. What was once managed with paper schedules carried by young runners is now handled seamlessly through an app, keeping team draws and game logistics organised.

Basic food tents have been replaced by the Village Green café and the Lions Club caravan. One tradition that is making a comeback is the march-on of all teams, led by a piper around the field at the start of the tournament.

The Seven-a-Side Tournament caters for players aged 6-14, with both competitive and social grades, ensuring it remains inclusive

and fun for players of all abilities. That spirit, Ian says, is what has helped the tournament endure. "The club has a good heart-supportive parents, great local referees, and businesses that want to see the kids and the club succeed."

Around 20 local businesses support the tournament, and many families now have multiple generations involved. Ian himself is one of them, with his son and grandson both connected to the club. Ian was the club's first life member, and his son, David Hand (the previous club president) has since followed in his footsteps.

The club has also seen changes on the field. There's been a noticeable shift from rugby to football as families look for safer sporting options, and the number of girls playing continues to grow. A highlight for Ian was seeing Waitaki Girls win their grades a few years ago.

Current club president James Crawford says the tournament continues to represent the very best of junior sport.

"This is a magnificent event where kids of all ages and abilities get the chance to play fun, competitive football alongside their friends. That enjoyment of the game is what football is all about. We're incredibly grateful to the teams, volunteers, and local businesses who support the tournament year after year."

To mark the 50th anniversary, the club is hosting an afternoon tea at The Village Green on the weekend prior to the tournament. The event will celebrate past and present players, volunteers, referees, committee members, and all those who have contributed to the club over the years. Those wishing to attend are invited to register their interest by emailing: gjfc50th@gmail.com

The club looks forward to welcoming the community to Sunnyvale Sportsground on 17 May 2026 for a special celebration of 50 years of football, friendship, and community spirit.



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BRIGHTON GALA DAY MARKS 30 YEARS OF COMMUNITY FUN

"It's all about a fun day out for the whole community," says Colin Weatherall, head honcho of the volunteer team behind the Brighton Gala Day, which was celebrating its 30th year.

Colin was absolutely delighted with how the day went, with an estimated 12,500 people coming along to enjoy a wide variety of stalls, food, entertainment, and live bands. Despite being such a large event, he says the heart of the day is still about the community coming together and creating a good atmosphere.

That community feel showed on the stage as well, with several new bands playing the gala for the first time. There was also room for a bit of spontaneity, with a group of "local misfits" jumping on at the end to round out the day, adding to the relaxed, inclusive vibe and giving space for genuine community expression.

Colin is quick to point out that an event of this size only works because of the huge effort from volunteers, supporters, stallholders, and the wider community who show up and get involved.

Fellow organiser Scott Weatherall shared that an impressive \$6,000 was raised through donations at the gate on the day, helping ensure the future of the gala for years to come.

While the team faced a few challenges early on, including rain on Saturday making it tricky to mark out sites, everyone mucked in, adapted, and got the job done. Once the weather cleared in the afternoon, the event rolled on smoothly and wrapped up without incident.

In the end, Colin says "It's worth it just to see the smiles on kids' faces as they are heading home."

TALKING CAFÉ RETURNS FOR 2026

2025 saw the start of our Talking Café for seniors, and we enjoyed good company, a cuppa, and some learning as well.

We were joined by some amazing speakers sharing information about topics like scam protection, first aid, foot health, hearing, advanced care planning and fire safety.



Pictured, attendees with Kalem Blackley from Fire & Emergency NZ

One of the regular attendees of Talking Café said she enjoys the social aspect and "being out and about, having a chat, and at the same time hearing about what's available and what's happening."

We look forward to welcoming our friendly Community Constable, Toots at the first Talking Café for the year on Tuesday 17th February 2026.

Watch out in next month's Informer for details of the speakers & topics coming up for the rest of this year.

Talking Café meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at St Mark's Church, Shand Street, Green Island. Please join us - it's completely free to attend.



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Talking Café



Join Toots for a cuppa & a yarn

**Tuesday 17 February
1pm - 3pm**



Venue:
St Mark's Church lounge
Shand Street, Green Island

For further information:

Age Concern Otago
03 479 3054
hp@ageconcernotago.co.nz

Greater Green Island Community Network
021 228 6934
admin@greatergreenisland.nz

ageconcernotago.com

HARRAWAYS INVESTING 11 MILLION IN GREEN ISLAND MILL

Harraways has been part of Green Island for nearly 160 years, and a major \$11 million refurbishment shows the iconic oat miller is committed to staying put. Over the next three years, the upgrades will modernise the factory, boost production, and bring the site up to current health and safety standards - all while preserving the heritage and character locals know so well.

Owned by the Hudson family since 1944, Harraways has carefully considered its future over the years - including whether growth might require a move closer to grain-growing areas. In the end, shareholders backed Dunedin. The decision reflects confidence in the city's business environment, its workforce, and the advantages of the existing site, including proximity to major transport routes, dispatch hubs, and the Port of Dunedin.

The refurbishment includes upgraded grain intake systems, new infrastructure such as boilers and silos, and increased automation - particularly to meet growing demand for convenient oat products like sachets. Importantly, the investment is about supporting growth, not reducing jobs. Harraways currently employs around 50 to 60 staff, and the company says its workforce remains strong.

Being based in a larger city also has real advantages. While about 95 percent of Harraways' oats come from Otago and Southland farms, operating in Dunedin provides access to a wider pool of skilled staff, contractors, and support services. The small proportion of oats sourced elsewhere are organic - simply because local supply cannot meet demand at a viable scale.

Despite the modernisation, Harraways remains true to its heritage. The milling process still uses a traditional kiln, giving the oats that distinctive nutty taste, and reflecting the company's Scottish roots - a fitting connection given Dunedin's sister-city relationship with Edinburgh and the shared porridge tradition that links the two.

Harraways' renewed focus on what it does best - quality breakfast foods - has paid off. The business has seen strong growth in recent years, particularly since Covid, as demand for healthy, affordable, New Zealand-made food increased. That period also reinforced Harraways' commitment to the community, with the company working closely with the Salvation Army to support local foodbanks when it was most needed.

The company has also made it easier for locals to be part of its sustainability journey, with a soft plastics recycling bin located on site at Harraways and open for public use. The initiative has been so well received that one local even dropped a Christmas gift into the office to say thank you. It's a small example of how closely connected Harraways remains to the community it has been part of for generations.



Proud to be part of the Green Island community for almost 160 years - Harraway & Sons CEO Henry Hawkins (left) and marketing and product innovation head Peter Cox.

The company's success has also been recognised nationally. Harraways recently received a Product Lifetime Achievement Award at the New Zealand Food Awards for its rolled oats - a product many Kiwi households have grown up with. Judges described it as an iconic staple that has stood the test of time through quality, consistency, and trust.

For Green Island residents, there will be no change in how Harraways manages emissions or noise. The company has long worked closely with the Dunedin City Council and says that will continue throughout the refurbishment. Locals may notice more Harraways-branded trucks on the road, following a move to a fully truck-based freight system that is proving efficient and reliable.

As Harraways looks ahead to its 160th year, the message is clear: this is a business proud of its past, confident in Dunedin's future, and committed to staying local - supporting growers, workers, and the community that has supported it for generations.



The Informer

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➡️ Newsletters available online at :

www.greatergreenisland.nz/aboutnewsletter/newsletter-archive/

Articles are free for community groups/clubs and events (not for profit) in the Greater Green Island Suburbs.

Please email your articles and stories in Word-less than 250 words.

Images need to be high quality 300DPI.

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GREEN ISLAND MARKET DAY SHINES IN THE SUNSHINE

Green Island was absolutely buzzing at our Christmas Market, held on the first Saturday in December 2025. With the sun shining and the main street alive with activity, locals turned out in force to soak up the colour, catch up with friends, and enjoy a relaxed, festive day.

There was a real feel-good atmosphere as neighbours stopped to chat, families spread out on the grass, and local school groups took to the stage to enthusiastic applause. Kids darted around with freshly painted faces, dogs tagged along happily with their humans, and stallholders were kept busy talking, laughing, and sharing their creations.

Food was a big drawcard, with mouth-watering smells drifting across the market, while stalls brimmed with handmade treasures, from bright crochet pieces to thoughtfully crafted gifts and decorations. It was a great showcase of local creativity and talent.

Adding a bit of extra fun were two brave volunteers wandering the market in inflatable costumes, one a giant bee and the other a unicorn. On such a hot day, that was no small effort, but they brought plenty of laughs and delighted waves from children wherever they went.

Santa was another highlight. Despite nearly overheating in his suit, he gave it his all, spreading Christmas cheer and handing out lollies. Most people would not have known he came to Market Day carrying personal grief, having farewelled his wife at her funeral just the day before. Still, he said being there, seeing the children smile and sharing a bit of joy, lifted his spirits, something that touched many families on the day.

The success of the market was made possible by generous community support. Local community business leaders and community members gave time, money, and resources to make the day a success. It was successful because of everyone's contribution from volunteers, to vendors, to those that performed and had fun!

Behind the scenes, a dedicated group of volunteers worked tirelessly to organise, set up, guide people, and keep everything on track. Their hard work showed in how smoothly the day ran and how welcome everyone felt. Green Island Market Day was more than just another market, It was a celebration of community, creativity, connection, and just being outside enjoying the sunshine.



Harcourts

LOCAL MARKET REVIEW



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Happy New Year and Welcome to 2026

As 2025 came to a close, the Dunedin property market showed steady activity and resilient demand, with buyers and sellers making the most of opportunities before the year ended.

The Greater Green Island area continued to shine as a sought-after suburb, offering affordable, family-friendly homes that moved quickly and attracted strong interest.

While the market was more balanced than in previous years, standout properties — well-presented, modern, or in desirable locations — saw keen competition and excellent results.

Sellers who prepared their homes carefully and priced them realistically were rewarded, and buyers found opportunities to secure homes in this stable market.

The year reminded us that with the right approach, every market can offer exciting possibilities.

I am looking forward to helping more people in 2026 find their perfect home or achieve a successful sale.

GREATER GREEN ISLAND

STATS NOVEMBER

Average Dwelling Price

\$705,125

Number of sales

16

DUNEDIN

STATS NOVEMBER

Median Dwelling Price

\$625,000

Number of sales

225

DUNEDIN TUNNELS TRAIL TAKES SHAPE

Hidden beneath hills and bush, just beyond the edges of our suburbs, lie two remarkable pieces of Dunedin's railway history. Built in the 1870s, the Chain Hills and Lookout Point (Caversham) railway tunnels were once part of the original rail line linking Wingatui and Caversham. When the route became redundant in 1911, the tunnels were closed- and for more than a century, they sat quietly, largely untouched.

Now, those long-forgotten tunnels are being brought back to life. Thanks to the work of the Dunedin Tunnels Trail Trust (DTTT), Dunedin City Council, and a wide range of project partners, these historic structures are becoming part of a new shared trail that will allow people to walk, cycle, scoot, and explore a unique slice of Otago's heritage safely and accessibly.

Just before Christmas, a major milestone was reached with the opening of the first section of the Dunedin Tunnels Trail, including the historic Chain Hills Tunnel. This newly opened 1.5km section runs from Gladstone Road North, following the old railway alignment through regenerating native bush and straight through the illuminated tunnel. Pedestrians and cyclists can now enjoy a return trip through the tunnel, offering a flat, family-friendly walk or ride that feels both adventurous and welcoming.

The work on this stage began in June 2025 and was delivered by the Dunedin Tunnels Trail Trust, with \$1.8 million in funding from Dunedin City Council. Construction included drainage, fencing, seating, plantings, signage, handrails, and full lighting throughout the tunnel- transforming a long-abandoned structure into a safe, accessible space for public use. When complete, the Dunedin Tunnels Trail will follow the original rail corridor, creating a mostly off-road, flat route linking Mosgiel, Fairfield, Abbotsford, Green Island, Burnside, Caversham and Central Dunedin.

The trail is being designed with a wide range of users in mind- commuters, families, recreational walkers and cyclists, visitors, and people using mobility aids. Features include tunnel lighting, fencing along key sections, clear signage, and strong connections to wider cycling and walking networks across Otago and beyond.

As the southern gateway to Dunedin, the trail has the potential to significantly improve safe, low-carbon travel between suburbs, while also strengthening social and recreational connections across our communities.

Rather than following a strict numerical order, stages will be delivered as they're ready, due to factors such as landowner

approvals, track design, easements, and access. Work is now progressing on the Burnside-Caversham section, which includes the currently disused Caversham railway tunnel.

This next stage is expected to get underway within the next 12 to 18 months and will involve trail development through Burnside and the Kaikorai Valley, remedial work at the tunnel entrances, installation of lighting through the tunnel, vegetation clearance and surface preparation, as well as repairs, fresh gravel, and new signage.

Once complete, this section will add another high-quality link to the growing tunnel trail network and move the project closer to its long-term goal: a continuous, scenic route from Dunedin to the Taieri. The Trust has also secured a further \$2 million in government funding to support future stages of the project.

For residents of Green Island, Abbotsford, and Fairfield, the Dunedin Tunnels Trail represents more than just a new path. It offers a safer way to travel without traffic, encourages people to be active outdoors, and provides a hands-on way to enjoy local heritage. The trail also makes it easier to connect with neighbouring communities and gives residents the option to access the city on foot or by bike.

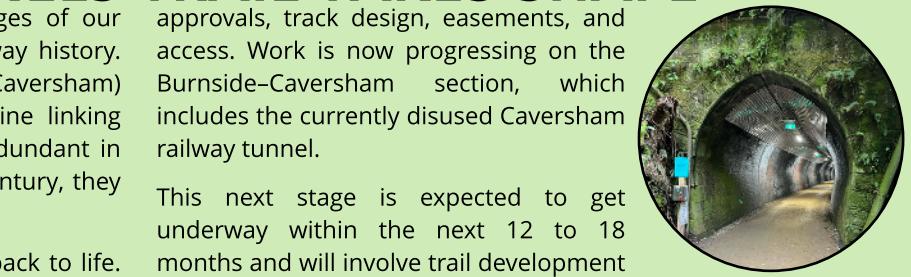
This project brings together history, sustainability, recreation, and community wellbeing- and it's happening right on our doorstep. DTTT Chair Brent Irving has cycled the track most days since opening, and has been pleased to see about 50-100 others enjoying the trail and respecting it by picking up rubbish.

The Trust welcomes community involvement and would love local support for the next stages.

Keep an eye on the facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/DunedinTunnelsTrailTrust/>

To explore maps, updates, and detailed project information, visit the Dunedin Tunnels Trail Trust website: www.dttt.org.nz/project-overview

The reopening of the tunnels marks an exciting new chapter for these historic structures- and a promising future for safe, connected travel across our communities.



These kids think the tunnel is cool!
Pictured from left, Lennox Floane (6), Xavier Floane (8), Jeremiah Floane (4).



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INGRID LEARY - A TRIBUTE TO FORMER MAYOR JULES RADICH

When I think about Jules Radich, I think about someone who genuinely cared about the everyday realities facing people in our city. We didn't always agree on everything- that's politics - but I always respected that Jules showed up, listened, and tried to make things better. This was abundantly apparent in the heartfelt tributes at Jule's funeral, held at First Church packed out by many like me who still couldn't quite believe he was no longer with us.



Former Dunedin Mayor Jules Radich was farewelled at a funeral service held at First Church, where family, friends, civic leaders and community members gathered to pay their respects and honour his life and service to the city.

In Green Island recently, business owners told me that Jules regularly visited. Same story the city over - Jules showed up.

One area where Jule's engagement mattered most was the ongoing climate and flooding issues in South Dunedin. For people who don't live there, it can be easy to talk about climate change like it's something far away. But in South Dunedin it's very real, and it's already affecting homes, schools, businesses and community spaces. Jules understood that early on. He made sure those voices were heard and that the flooding challenges weren't swept under the rug or treated as someone else's problem.

As Mayor, Jules put time into understanding the science as well as the social impact. He sat in community meetings, visited affected streets, and pushed for funding and planning that recognised how complicated the situation really is. He backed work on stormwater upgrades, climate adaptation planning and community engagement so residents could be part of shaping solutions rather than just having decisions made about them.

I also appreciated that Jules didn't pretend there were easy answers. South Dunedin's flooding and climate challenges are tied up with housing, insurance, infrastructure and long-term planning. That takes patience and honesty, and Jules had both. He didn't sensationalise things, and he didn't downplay them either - he tried to get it right.

Outside of council, Jules was approachable and grounded. He cared about local sport, motorbikes, small businesses, and the character of our city. He was always up for a conversation, even with people who disagreed with him. We're a stronger community when we acknowledge people's efforts, especially in tough spaces. Jules made a real contribution to Dunedin, and I'm grateful for it.

LITTLE BLUE PENGUINS NESTING ALONG THE BRIGHTON COAST

There's some exciting wildlife news from our coastline- little blue penguins (kororā) are nesting along the rocky shore between Ocean View and Brighton. These tiny penguins, the smallest penguin species in the world, have chosen our local coast as a place to breed and raise their chicks. It's a positive sign for the health of our coastal environment and a reminder of the role our community plays in protecting it.

To help keep nesting penguins safe, a trap line targeting stoats, weasels, and rats has been installed along the coast. This work has been instigated by the Brighton Trapping Project and is supported by a dedicated team of community volunteers who regularly check and maintain the traps.

The coming months are especially important. In February and March, adult penguins go through their annual moult, shedding all their feathers over two to three weeks. During this time, they cannot swim or feed, making them highly vulnerable to predators and disturbance.

When enjoying this area, please keep dogs on a leash at all times, avoid known nesting and resting areas, give penguins plenty of space, keep noise to a minimum, and never handle or approach them. It's also essential that all traps are left completely undisturbed, as they play a critical role in protecting penguins and other native wildlife.



Claudia Babirat with one of the traps installed by the Brighton Trapping Project.

Having kororā nesting so close to our community is a privilege. Thanks to the work of the Brighton Trapping Project, these penguins have a better chance of safely raising chicks and surviving the moulting period. With care and respect, we can help little blue penguins to remain part of Brighton's coastline for years to come.

Facebook: facebook.com/BrightonTrappingProject

Email: brighton.trapping.project@gmail.com

RESIDENT ROOSTER RIDES HARLEY AT CONCORD INN

If you've noticed people slowing down or stopping outside the Concord Inn lately, there's a good reason. A unique finishing touch has been added to the recent renovations - perched above the front door is a rooster riding a motorbike, complete with flying helmet and goggles - he's become a talking point for locals and visitors alike.

This quirky creation comes from Mosgiel-based metal artist Brad Jackson of Southern Sculpture, who says the biggest challenge wasn't the steel, but capturing the rooster's expression. The cartoonish eyes were surprisingly tricky to translate from a loose concept drawing into a finished steel form, and took careful shaping by hand to get just right.

One detail many people don't immediately realise is that the motorbike is entirely handmade. It's modelled on Concord Inn co-owner Warren Bremner's 1927 Harley-Davidson, right down to the shape and handlebars, adding a personal touch that grounds the playful piece in something real.

Because the sculpture is designed to be seen from the street, Brad had to think about how it would look from multiple angles, as well as the limits of space, size and safety. Creating public art also means factoring in public safety and how the piece is secured - considerations that are worked through right from the beginning.

Dunedin's weather was another important factor. The rooster is mainly constructed from stainless steel and corten steel, materials chosen specifically to stand up to the elements and ensure the sculpture will last for years to come.

Brad is well known for his playful, character-driven work, and says this project was especially enjoyable thanks to the collaboration with Concord Inn owners Jane and Wal. Their ideas helped shape the rooster's personality, while still presenting the challenge of bringing all those elements together in steel.



A Rooster waits to greet you at Concord Inn- sculpture by Brad Jackson.

What Brad enjoys most is seeing how people interact with his work once it's installed. Sculptures like this take an enormous amount of time to create, so watching people stop, smile, and talk about it makes the effort worthwhile.

He hopes the rooster adds something special to both the Concord Inn and the wider neighbourhood. "Hopefully people will call in to take a look in person. I think it's added real character to the new renovations - this is an awesome place with great owners, great food and awesome service."

A naming competition is planned for the rooster, giving the community a chance to put their own stamp on Concord's

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The Greater Green Island Community Network is a registered charity aiming for a strong community which works together to develop its own solutions - a community which is self-reliant, responsive, resilient, and sustainable - a community where neighbourhoods are again full of people we know as our neighbours.