

Eltham Newsletter

Eltham Business & Professional Association

Report, editing & photography: Jiong Sun
For news tips, feedback, advertising, or a digital subscription, contact us at
elthambizassn@gmail.com

Eltham in Bloom: A Town in Full Colour

Eltham was alive with colour, community, and celebration during this year's Garden Festival. Organised and sponsored by the Eltham Business Association, with the theme Eltham in Bloom, the town came to life with vibrant window displays, cheerful blooms, special shop offers, high tea experiences, a buzzing insect trail for families, and much-loved Teddy Bear Picnic. The town felt full of life and locals noticed.

Congratulations to the winners of the **Shop Window Display Competition**: Second Threads Op Shop, Touchpoint and Stylz Hair Salon (photo below). Thanks to our prize sponsors: 4GenArts and Cheesebar.



High Tea and Hospitality

Several local shops hosted High Tea events, inviting people to relax and enjoy the festive week in style. At Decodence, co-owner Candy Hopson, said the vibe was lovely, with people chatting and enjoying the sunshine. she expressed deep appreciation for everyone who came and the energy it brought to town. "Together we made the town look its best. We look forward to bringing a great vibe for the Christmas period."

Teddy Bears Picnic

The Teddy Bears Picnic was a real highlight; families filled the park with picnic blankets, teddies in tow, soaking up the sunshine and the friendly, festive atmosphere.

It came to life thanks to Wendy Barry's cheerful coordination, the support of Eltham Four Square, and the generous help of volunteers, local groups and businesses. As Wendy says, "There's no better sound than that of a child laughing." Families enjoyed train rides, sausage sizzles and ice creams, face painting,



and mini fire engine rides. The Eltham Fire Brigade set up a fun and educational fire safety maze, and Carol Johnstone from St John offered CPR demonstrations, even the teddy bears got a turn! A fantastic hip hop performance by Eltham Primary School added energy and smiles to the afternoon.

Maresh Goswami, owner of Eltham Four Square, not only helped run the day, he generously donated \$355 raised from sausages and ice creams back to the Eltham Fire Station. "Seeing the kids laugh and the community come together like this, that's what it's all about," he said.



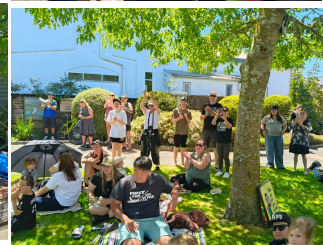


Insect Trail Competition

The Insect Trail Competition kept kids busy throughout the week as they counted colourful bugs, bees, and butterflies hidden in shop windows.

This creative initiative was led by Judith Rodgers, who coordinated the trail from start to finish, from selecting and delivering bugs to shops, gathering prize donations from local businesses, to helping decorate displays. She also made sure all the winning children received their prizes at the library with smiles all around. Judith shared, "Big thanks to all the shop owners who joined in, and to the parents and kids who took part, you made it all worthwhile."

Congratulations to the lucky prize winners: Jessica, Trevor, Tiger, George, Percy, Lola, Lily, and Te Iwingaro(right photo).



Special thanks to prize donors:

Mike's Museum, Touch Point, Eltham Vet Club, Uhlenberg Haulage, Lloyd Gernhoefer Contracting, Decodence, El Smoove and Fried Green Tomatoes, Eltham Four Square, and The Craft Shop at 129 Bridge Street

From window displays to shared cups of tea and smiling faces on the street, Eltham in Bloom was a beautiful reminder that when our town comes together, something truly special blossoms.

Here's to more blooming moments ahead.

Carl Bates MP for Whanganui

Whanganui - South Taranaki - Stratford

  [carlbateswhanganui](#)
44 Victoria Street, Hāwera

 **National**



Authorised by C Bates, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.





A New Gym for Eltham: From Local Kid to Local Dream

If you've been following the Eltham Community Group over the past few months, you'll know there's been one project getting everyone buzzing - a brand-new 24-hour gym right here in town. And behind it all is someone with deep Eltham roots: Simon Oliver, with his daughter Sharon Oliver proudly cheering him on.

Grew up in Eltham, and fun fact: the building he's turning into a gym was actually his first after-school job, back when it used to be a paint shop where his dad worked. That bit of history even inspired the gym's name: "The Pain Shop." A nod to the old paint shop days... and of course, a playful twist on "no pain, no gain."

Why a Gym? Why Now?

Simon has always been into fitness, helping friends, running morning bootcamps, sharing fun monthly challenges online, and even taking part in the Sky Tower Firefighter Stair Challenge nine times, seven of those in full gear!

And honestly, opening a gym is something he's always wanted to do. It's the kind of work he loves and something he knows he's good at. Back when he was doing CrossFit instruction in Stratford, people would often come up to him saying, "The Lion's Den is packed, there's no space, we're waiting for machines... can we join your gym instead?" That stuck with him. He could see the demand, and he knew he had the passion and skills to offer something genuinely useful for people.

He even sat down and did a proper business plan. Generally, gyms aim for about 10% of a town's population as potential members. Eltham has around 2,200 people, but Simon decided to be conservative and work with 7%, which came out to roughly 150 members. Even before opening, the enthusiasm online suggested he might not be far off at all.

But the final push came from all of you. When he posted in the community group asking if a 24-hour gym would work in Eltham, he got over 100 comments, almost all positive. He said he was "nearly in tears" reading the support.

It Hasn't Been Easy...

Like many small-town start-ups, the hardest part wasn't motivation, it was the bank. After weeks of delays, miscommunication, and eventually a "no," it would have been easy to stop.

But Simon said the community's support is what pushed him to keep going. A finance company stepped in, and the building owner encouraged him to get one good year under his belt before trying the bank again.



A Gym That Fits Eltham

The confirmed venue - the old Carac Couplings building, it was chosen for its big open layout and heaps of potential.

Things are moving fast:

- Equipment is ordered
- Security cameras are on the way
- Fob/app entry system sorted
- Flooring being measured
- Insurance lined up
- Logo nearly finalised in Eltham's green-and-black colours

If all goes smoothly, Simon hopes to open by Christmas.

What can people expect inside?

- Dumbbells & hand weights
- Squat racks and lifting platforms
- Treadmills, bikes, ellipticals
- Leg extension/curl machines
- A hack squat (because everyone asks for one!)
- Mirrors (because... gym 😊)

A small kitchen area will be turned to a kids' corner for parents who want to squeeze in a workout

He's also open to hosting sports teams on rainy days and working with local personal trainers for classes once things settle.



Membership Pricing

Simon has now confirmed pricing:

- General 24hr access: \$22/week + \$30 joining fee
- Ages 14–18: \$15/week + \$20 joining fee
- Kids up to 14, and seniors 60+: \$10/week
- Casual pop-in: \$10/day
- First week is included in the joining fee

Affordable, simple, and designed for all ages in the community.

A Gym With Heart

More than anything, Simon wants this to be a welcoming space.

“No judging. Egos stay at the door,” he said. “All shapes, all sizes, all goals... everyone’s welcome.”

For Simon, this gym isn’t about getting rich, any profit goes straight back into more equipment, better gear, and making the space even more useful for locals. It’s genuinely a gym for Eltham.

Eltham’s Got Game: New Basketball Court Now Open!

There’s a brand-new reason to get outside and get active - the 3x3 basketball court at Soldier’s Park in Eltham is now open to the public!



Photo from: South Taranaki District Council

The new facility is part of the Eltham Town Revitalisation Roadmap, and it’s been a top priority since local youth strongly voiced their support for it during community consultations in 2019, and again in recent feedback rounds.

The court was officially opened with a blessing and closing karakia on October 24, led by Kaumātua John Hooker, marking the final stage of the project. While the final acrylic surface will be added in early 2026, temporary court markings mean everyone can start shooting hoops right away.

A huge thank you to the Eltham Lions for clearing the site and to Basketball New Zealand for generously donating the goal hoop.

David Pentz, Community Development Manager for South Taranaki District Council, says: “This court is a fantastic addition to Eltham’s recreational facilities and a great example of youth voices shaping our town’s future.” He also shared that Basketball NZ is planning to take part in Eltham’s Community Event in January, with a 3x3 basketball competition and some special guest players expected to attend!

We can’t wait to see the court buzzing with energy. So grab a ball, head to the park, and enjoy this awesome new space.

Eltham’s 24th Trolley Derby: A Great Day on the Hill

Sunday, 26 October delivered sunshine, a light breeze, and a great day for the 24th Annual Eltham Lions Club Trolley Derby. Organised once again by Glenn Hansen, who has been behind the wheel of this much-loved community event for many years.

“It’s become a real tradition for families on Labour Weekend Sunday,” Glenn shared.

There were 10 trolleys in action on the day, with five of them brand new, something Glenn

called “very cool” to see.



Photo by Mark Bellringer



Senior Constable Dean Roycroft was back with the radar gun, and the Eltham Volunteer Fire Brigade again offered support with radios and first aid, helping make the day run safely and smoothly.

Trophies on the day went to:

- Fastest Speed (Senior): Kieran George - 76 km/h
- Best Family Trolley & Participation: Haze, Harley, and their dad Quentin - top speed of 41 km/h
- Best Looking Machine: Brodie, Emmett, Riley, and Matt Vincent - speeds between 58-61 km/h
- Young Engineer Award: Harry Willis - reached 61 km/h with support from his team, who made tweaks throughout the day
- Great Participation: Harry and Olly Waterson - showed persistence and reached 41 km/h by the end of the day
- Supporters Trophy: Eltham Four Square - fastest trike speed of 66 km/h



Photo by Mark Bellringer

A big thank you goes out to the event's sponsors and supporters, including Uhlenberg Haulage Ltd, Eltham Four Square, Joyce for running the BBQ, Royalz Coffee Float for keeping the crowd caffeinated, and Janine for her amazing Facebook posts that helped promote the event.

Glenn also mentioned that next year will be the 25th anniversary, and the team is already planning to make it extra special, with some impressive trophies ready to be featured.

Thanks again to all the helpers, sponsors, families, and racers who continue to support this fantastic community event, keeping it rolling year after year.

New Battery Recycling Bin Now at Library

Got old batteries lying around the house? You can now recycle them safely and easily, right at your local library!

The council has installed new fire-safe battery collection bins at libraryplus centres in Eltham, Ōpunakē and Pātea, and at its main office in Hāwera.

This initiative is part of a district-wide effort to reduce fire risk and promote safe waste disposal. Batteries thrown into rubbish or recycling bins can cause fires in collection trucks and at waste facilities. These new units, funded by the Waste Minimisation Levy and provided by Phoenix Recycling Group, are specially

designed with advanced fire safety features and are monitored remotely for added security.

Council's Environment and Sustainability Manager Cindy Koen explains. "By recycling them safely, you're helping protect our environment, reduce fire risks, and support safer kerbside waste collection across the district."



Photo from: South Taranaki District Council

What you can recycle:

- Alkaline batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9V)
- Lithium batteries (coin, cylindrical)
- Rechargeables: NiCd, NiMH, and Lithium-ion
- Button/coin cell batteries
- Small device batteries (e.g., in vapes, electric toothbrushes, smoke alarms)

What's not accepted:

- Car batteries (lead-acid)
- Large industrial or oversized batteries
- Damaged, leaking, swollen, or modified lithium batteries

Note: Car batteries and larger items can still be dropped off for free at the Hāwera transfer station.



Upcoming Exhibition at the Village Gallery

The Village Gallery is delighted to present Spring into Summer, a vibrant new exhibition by landscape artist Veronica Tee.

The collection celebrates the joyful transition from spring into summer, a time that fills the artist with inspiration. The sight of flowers blossoming, with their wild and colourful nature, inspires her greatly, Veronica shares, "It is this transition period that fills me with great joy, and it is this emotion that I hope to evoke with my art."

Originally from Malaysia, Veronica studied at the Malaysia Institute of Art and co-founded a mural company before moving to New Zealand, where she now works as an art tutor. She is a member of PANZ (Pastel Artists of New Zealand) and has exhibited widely, earning a Merit Award at the 2019 Purely Pastel National Exhibition, and has exhibited in both local and international shows.



We invite you to experience this radiant celebration of colour, movement, and the beauty of the changing seasons.

Eltham Food Bank Drive: Monday, 1 December at 6pm

The Eltham Lions Club and Eltham Volunteer Fire Brigade are teaming up once again for the annual Eltham Food Bank Drive. Volunteers will be out from 6pm, collecting non-perishable food items from households around town.



How to help:

Simply place your donation (cans, dry goods, pantry staples) in a clearly visible spot by your letterbox before 6pm. Every item helps make a difference.

Let's come together as a community and show our support during this season of giving.

Did you know?

You can also drop off non-perishable food items at McDonald Real Estate Eltham all year round! Open Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm.

Christmas Parades are Coming!

The festive season is just around the corner, and towns across South Taranaki are gearing up for their annual Christmas parades, a joyful celebration of community spirit, creativity, and Christmas cheer!

Parade Dates:

Stratford: Friday 28 November

Pātea: Friday 5 December

Eltham: Friday 12 December 2025

Hāwera: Saturday 13 December 2025

Manaia: Saturday 20 December 2025

Ōpunakē: Wednesday 24 December

Let's light up Eltham's streets together and make this year's parade a dazzling celebration to remember.

