

# Media Release

## Punt stop open for public use

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A new punt stop next to the Margaret Mahy Family Playground has been realigned and is now ready to be used by all water craft on the Ōtākaro/Avon River, says Christchurch Central Development Unit Director Baden Ewart.

The stop is called *Tauranga Waka*. The word Tauranga means safe anchorage or resting place.

"Tauranga Waka gives the public fantastic access to the river and is perfect for kayak and canoe users," Mr Ewart says.

"We have fine-tuned the work initially done to make sure it's an ideal height for everyone to access the water. We have also worked closely with Welcome Aboard, the operators of Punting on the Avon, to guarantee that the stop is accessible for their passengers to disembark from."

Mr Ewart says having access to the river at Tauranga Waka means the community can take a closer look at river-life.

Since the Avon River Precinct work began in early 2013, the river has been cleaned and populations of native longfin eels, trout, fresh water crayfish and bluegill bullies have flourished.

"Well over 100,000 people have visited the Margaret Mahy Playground over the summer, and its location next to the river is an important part of its attraction. Tauranga Waka is another great addition to the playground and the river and I look forward to seeing how families and visitors will interact with these two city assets."

More playground equipment is currently being installed in the Margaret Mahy Playground, including three climbing towers and a spiral slide. This work will be completed during winter.

A family BBQ area is also being added to the playground and will be open in spring.