

# Kumeu Courier

FREE monthly community magazine for Kumeu & surrounding townships

- Safer communities
- Food & beverage
- Home & garden
- Property market report

## Muriwai Slips

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Contact Geoff Dobson on 027 757 8251 or [geoffdobson2017@gmail.com](mailto:geoffdobson2017@gmail.com)

March 2023





## Greetings

Much has been said of the loss of Muriwai volunteer firefighters and deservedly so.

These two men were bravely assisting their community during the terrible storm that was Cyclone Gabrielle when a house and slip hit the Motutara Road property they were checking.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand is among those who have paid tribute to the two firefighters, with FENZ Chief Executive Kerry Gregory saying the "tragic incident has been a heavy blow for the two families, their friends, colleagues in the Muriwai Volunteer Fire Brigade, and the Muriwai community; and it touches all of us, not just in the Fire and Emergency whanau, but emergency services internationally and all New Zealanders".

He adds it was an awful reminder of the risks emergency services face while protecting others.

That's for sure!

I've covered many emergencies and the services involved in this area for about 40 years and admire the dedication and willingness to help others.

It's rare that anyone among the emergency services here is killed in the line of duty - in fact, this is the first real tragedy in that regard I've heard of during my time.

Some have come close, and several have suffered in other ways – and I've known at least one who died of natural causes while getting into action and others who have been badly injured.

People around them suffer too – their families, colleagues (work, play, and their various organisations), so it does impact the wider community.

I just hope it doesn't put people off volunteering for these organisations – and I doubt it will, such is the drive many have to help others.

Many in this area have served their communities well over the years, and they deserve every accolade they get. Some might get recognition, but not always.

The reward for most is doing their job well and helping as much as they can.

I salute them all.

Geoff Dobson, Editor



# What's inside

- 3** People & Places
- 9** Safer Communities
- 10** Community News
- 12** Hospice
- 14** In brief: Updates
- 16** Best of Aged Care
- 18** Best of Aged Care
- 20** Property News
- 22** Mortgage Broker
- 24** G.J. Gardner
- 26** Property Statistics
- 28** Property Market
- 32** Home & Garden
- 34** Laser Plumbing
- 36** Water tank cleaning
- 38** Central's Tips
- 40** Food & Beverage
- 42** Health & Beauty
- 44** Area Columnists
- 46** Kumeu Library

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# People & Places

## Kumeu Area Emergency Response Team

Kumeu is an incredible community that always pitches in to help each other in times of need.

The wide scale flooding in August 2021 highlighted the need for a coordinated community response, which led to the Kumeu Area Emergency Network's formation.

Many passionate locals and organisation representatives came together alongside emergency response (Fire, St John and Police) and Auckland Emergency Management to develop a plan on how to work better together.

The fruit of six months of relationships, discussion and building trust has meant the January flooding and February's Cyclone Gabrielle saw better communication and understanding of how response teams work and the community's role.

"Our plan was still in development, and the coordination team (six locals) had only stepped up in November 2020, but still the response to the latest disasters has shown one key place of local information is important," says co-chair Andie Davies.

The plan includes preparation, response, recovery and mitigation.

"We want to acknowledge that response is done by our hardworking Fire & Emergency team, St John crew and Police," says Andie.



"They work tirelessly for our community. Our primary role is to activate a support hub that the community can come for needs and information. When requested we do this in conjunction with Auckland Emergency Management and we can advise them on the best locations.

"We recognise the widespread damage caused by the cyclone and the needs of not only the Kumeu area, but the wider district, especially the Muriwai community.

"The swift response by Emergency Services, who at great cost responded, the Auckland Council staff who set up the shelter at Waimauku Hall, New Zealand Defence Force and the community who all have come together to support each other in the time of need. This is the true demonstration of working together."

In response to the January flooding, Andie says the team kicked into action with St Chads as a drop-in centre.

"People brought baking and New World Kumeu donated morning tea, which we distributed to the businesses and homes we knew were hard at work cleaning up. This was much appreciated by people desperate to get their shops up and running again.

"Oma Rapati, unbeknownst to us, had also opened their doors for donations, which quickly flooded in, (once again our generous Kumeunity) so by the time they needed to reopen as a day care centre on Tuesday, somewhere needed to be found for all the donations."

The West Coast Rangers Football Club along with the Kumeu Cricket Club generously offered their rooms, which ended up becoming a free supermarket and drop in centre for those hit hard by the floods, Andie explains

"One of our goals is to ensure we only ask for donations that are



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# People & Places

needed. A future goal is to have a storage space with mattress, bedding, towels so we can easily open our own space as needed.

"Our planning document states that we are an adaptive community, which learns from the past. "Going forward, knowing where to find good information and continuing to look out for one another as a community will be key to us thriving in increasing events like these.

"Keep an eye out for a community gathering to reflect and discuss how we can further mitigate these local emergencies."

The Kumeu Area Emergency Team comprises co-chair and Baptist pastor Andie Davies, co-chair and Kumeu Business Association rep Teresa Nobilo-Healy, Rodney Local Board member Guy Wishart, Faithpointe pastor and NorthWest Care Foodbank coordinator Viv Anson, Kumeu Small Land Owners rep Shona Oliver, and Kumeu Baptist Church rep Raewyn Moodie.

Visit [www.facebook.com/kumeuemergencynetwork](http://www.facebook.com/kumeuemergencynetwork) for more information.

## Twilight Bowls and Friday food trucks at Riverhead

Twilight Bowls is a community competition event for new and non-bowlers to have some fun and try lawn bowls on a Wednesday evening at the Riverhead Bowling Club.



With 14 teams of three players playing a fast format "Bowls 3 Five" the hotly contested competition between rotating teams with names such as "Bad Mums" "The Bowling Stones" and "Spag Bowl" is a lot of fun and a very social way to spend a summer's evening.

The Riverhead Bowling Club keeps everyone watered and fed with barbecue sausages and onions while each one-hour game is played.

For eight weeks the teams play each other with nightly prizes of meat packs for the best team and a lucky dip team of the night.

Spot prizes are also given for the First Toucher (bowl to hit a jack) plus some special events over the course of the eight weeks.

So, come on down to the club in the Riverhead War Memorial Park where there is a new awesome playground and check out what's going on - Wednesday nights from 6pm.

Thanks to Courtney and Co, and Bowls New Zealand for their

support with this community event.

Food Truck Fridays are also starting very soon (watch the community Facebook page for details) at the Riverhead Bowling Club.

Three different food trucks come every Friday, so visitors can eat at the park or bring meals into the club, grab a table, play some pool or lawn bowls.

The club has opened up access to the new playground next door, so parents and caregivers can observe their children at the park while they play and while relaxing at the barbecue tables on the deck.

Annual club social membership is only \$10 and runs from September (required for alcohol bar purchases)

Visit the Riverhead Bowling Club through the week, 4.30pm to 6pm, grab a membership and enjoy the facilities.

Contact Steve Gordon on 027 490 6572 to register.

## Kumeu Rugby competition games start April 1

On the back of a hugely successful 2022 season, both on and off the field, Kumeu Rugby is excited for the 2023 season to get underway with competition games starting Saturday April 1.



The Riverhead-based club has been unaffected by flooding and has been leaving its changing rooms open for people with no power, homes, or other places to go to have hot showers, use toilets, charge their phones, and for some other needs.

Meanwhile, junior rugby registrations are now open and the Kumeu Rugby Football and Sports Club Incorporated expects to see record numbers of junior players this year.

With 470 players in 2022 - around 20% of those female - and 35 teams, Kumeu Rugby's junior club is getting huge, says Manager Melissa Taylor, adding "it is great to see the enthusiasm that our youngest members show for the game".

With key coaching appointments made at the end of last year, training for the club's five senior teams is well underway.

The Premier 1 and 2 sides train alongside the Under-21 team on Tuesday/Thursday at 6.30pm, and the Restricted Under-85kg side

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# People & Places

trains on Monday/Wednesday at 6.30pm.

The President's grade team trains on Thursdays at 6.30pm.

"With the support of our many sponsors we have been able to undertake many improvements to our facilities over the season, including refurbishment of our downstairs male, female and disabled access bathrooms, replacement of fire exit stairs, replacement of all clubroom chairs (thanks to Four Winds Foundation), and construction of an underdeck secure storage area' says Melissa.

"These improvements have massively improved our member experience and we look forward to working through our refurbishment schedule throughout this year."

New players are welcome and should contact Mark Hall on 021 527 877 or come along to a training session.

Visit [www.kumeurugby.co.nz/junior-registration](http://www.kumeurugby.co.nz/junior-registration) to register online.

Contact [rugby@kumeurugby.co.nz](mailto:rugby@kumeurugby.co.nz) for sponsorship opportunity enquiries and check out the club's Facebook page for more information.

## Supporting homeowners with natural disaster claims

People whose homes have been damaged by a natural disaster - like Cyclone Gabrielle and recent floods - have access to a new service to assist and support them if their insurance claims get stuck.

The New Zealand Claims Resolution Service (NZCRS) provides expert support to homeowners with insurance claims after natural disasters to avoid disputes, resolve issues and ensure claims are settled as quickly as possible, says Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Dr Duncan Webb.

The NZCRS is a nationwide service modelled on the Greater Christchurch Claims Resolution Service (GCCRS) and Residential Advisory Service (RAS) that helped to achieve resolution with insurance companies.

"Dealing with a damaged home can be extremely stressful for homeowners and it is important that they have access to the support that they need," Duncan says.

"For those impacted by the Auckland flooding, the service has case managers on the ground at community support hubs. For those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle support will be available locally as soon as possible."

Together the GCCRS and RAS have successfully provided information and services to more than 10,000 homeowners.

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Satisfaction surveys show that 90% of respondents say they would recommend GCCRS to others, so what worked well in Christchurch has been expanded to make it a permanent nationwide service for all forms of natural hazards, Duncan explains.

"Early intervention before things go wrong, and independent technical and legal advice are key," he adds.

"The new national service will now make this support available to all homeowners affected by natural disasters.

"Funding for the service is currently provided through MBIE. It will provide homeowners with case management support, access to legal, technical and wellbeing services tailored to individual and whānau needs."

Homeowners who have concerns about their claim or are unsure about the process can contact NZCRS on 0508 624 327, email [contact@nzcrs.govt.nz](mailto:contact@nzcrs.govt.nz) or visit [www.nzcrs.govt.nz](http://www.nzcrs.govt.nz) for more information.

"The first port of call is always to work things through with the insurer in the first instance, but if you get stuck or need support with unresolved claims, contact this new service," says Duncan.

"We know this service was a gamechanger in Christchurch and we are scaling it up across the country."

Those working with RAS will see an increase in the support they can now access.

## Givealittle page for Muriwai firefighters caught in slip

A Givealittle page has been established by the Muriwai Volunteer Fire Brigade for its two firefighters who lost their lives in a Muriwai slip.

All funds will be used in the memory of David Van Zwanenberg and Craig Stevens as directed by their families.

Visit [www.muriwaifire.org/](http://www.muriwaifire.org/) for more information.



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# People & Places

Meanwhile, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) has paid tribute to the pair.

Both were checking a Motutara Road property on February 13 when it was hit by another house and slip during Cyclone Gabrielle.

Craig was taken to hospital in a critical condition on the Monday night and died on Thursday night, February 16 while David's body was recovered on February 15.

FENZ Chief Executive Kerry Gregory said his thoughts and prayers were with Craig's and David's families.

"This tragic incident has been a heavy blow for the two families, their friends, colleagues in Muriwai Volunteer Fire Brigade, and the Muriwai community; and it touches all of us, not just in the Fire and Emergency whānau, but emergency services internationally and all New Zealanders," Kerry said, adding it's an awful reminder of the risks emergency services face while protecting others.

"As we mourn them both, we will think of them with pride."

About 300 people sheltered at the Muriwai Surf Club during the storm's height, while many Muriwai residents also stayed at The Trusts Arena in Henderson which became an emergency evacuation centre.

## More equestrian events at Kumeu Show 100th

Cyclone Gabrielle hasn't really impacted the 100th Kumeu Show on March 11 and 12, other than adding more equestrian entries across both days with the Horse of the Year Show in the Hawke's Bay cancelled due to the cyclone's damage to that region.



The show's big line-up remains, with about 15,000 people expected daily.

Various bands and musicians will be performing over the two days, including The Brendon Ham Band and fiddler Marion Burns.

Centenary highlights include freestyle motocross (FMX) displays on both days, sheep dog trials, championship shearing and an international woodchopping contest.

Many dignitaries are expected at the show, including Kumeu Agricultural and Horticultural Society patron Chris Penk.

Also in the show are Mahons Amusements carnival rides and games, the giant pumpkin contest, a strongman competition, vintage tractor display and parade, performances, traditional games, a NorWest Heritage display of the show's history, plus baking, art and photography in the sheds.

Bird displays will be held by the Auckland Metro Bird Club and the Auckland Poultry and Pigeon Association.

Farm animals such as alpacas and goats are on show, while a Farm Zone petting zoo for children to interact with some farm animals under supervision is planned by the Kumeu Small Landowners Association.

Hundreds of trade displays, many food trucks, a bar, refreshment stands and much more are included.

Various bands and musicians will be performing over the two days.

Tickets available through Eventbrite for \$15 adult (14 and over) with those under 14 free - and free showgrounds parking.

Contact show secretary Lizelle Westman at the showgrounds on 09 412 9322 or email [info@kumeushow.co.nz](mailto:info@kumeushow.co.nz) for show information.

## More pain coming

Cyclone Gabrielle and other recent weather events (including the January flooding) are proving expensive for all.

They have again shown that building in or near flood plains is inadvisable, with many Kumeu-Huapai property owners who had just completed repairs to their properties after the late August 2021 floods again hit.

That's expected to bolster support for Future Kumeu's proposal to base the "town centre" on higher ground near the Huapai District School.

Some reports suggest building up land in existing flood plains to raise buildings above flood levels will just exacerbate flooding lower down.

Groceries are likely to get more expensive with many crops lost, inflation will rise further and insurance costs increase (along with difficulty getting insurance for some parts).

It will cost many millions to repair roads, power, water supply and other crucial infrastructure, so taxes and rates are likely to increase as well.

What's worse is that February's cyclone won't be the last major event to hit New Zealand.

We can expect more, especially with climate change.



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# People & Places

Meanwhile, Auckland Transport urged the public to stay away from heavily affected west coast areas of Auckland after Cyclone Gabrielle, especially as sunny days followed the storm.

The areas included Muriwai, Te Henga Bethells Beach, and parts of the Waitakere Ranges.

"I can't stress enough, these locations are high risk and only residents and emergency services will be given access," said Waitakere Councillor Shane Henderson days after the cyclone.

"The most important thing is for essential supplies and help to get to those who need it."

"Land especially around our Western beach communities continues to be unstable. Soil saturation remains quite high so there is still a risk of further slips, and any more rain may cause further movement. Remain vigilant."

Shane says It's been a heart-breaking time for many of the communities "and the last thing they need is for people coming out to take photos of the devastation".

He says community spirit throughout West Auckland has been "incredible".

Auckland Transport says it was working around the clock to repair damage across the region.

To keep communities updated with progress on sites that will have long-term repair programmes AT has a website, [at.govt.nz/roadrepairs](http://at.govt.nz/roadrepairs), to provide up-to-date information about what phase the repair is for these roads and predicted timeframes for completion.

Murray Burt, who is leading AT's flood recovery programme, says in times like these it is vital to keep communities updated with progress.

"Auckland Transport is now moving into the recovery phase after the floods and cyclone," he explains.

"This will involve working closely with communities who have been hardest hit and keeping them fully informed in the coming weeks and months.

"Local Boards and councillors will be crucial in helping us to stay engaged with communities and to understand the issues people face as we work to restore the road network."

Long-time Waimauku resident Ross Kerr-Taylor recalls a grandfather, Vincent Kerr-Taylor, declaring a moratorium on all building in Domain Crescent, Muriwai, while in a position of authority.

Vincent died in 1921, and various councils after his time removed the moratorium, according to Ross.

"The Kerr-Taylors used to have a summer bach at Muriwai," adds Ross, so they knew something about the area.

He says the Fletchers also stayed at Muriwai in those days.

A daughter came across some of the council archives in Henderson which related to Muriwai, Ross explains.

## Muriwai slips

Muriwai's Domain Crescent residents were ordered to evacuate on February 17 at 12.43 by Auckland Emergency Management due to a heightened landslide risk.

They had to evacuate immediately on foot and meet emergency services at the intersection with Motutara Road, taking only essential items including pets.

Further updates were posted to the Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) social media channels.

Some road closures remained and anyone driving in more remote areas were encouraged to be extra careful and visit the Auckland Transport website for information.

In an update on February 19, the AEM said the Rapid Building Assessment team continued to assess properties affected by the flooding and landslips, with Community Support Hubs in the local areas having information on placards issued.

"If your building has received a red placard you need to obtain authorisation from Auckland Emergency Management before you may enter your property, whether it is within a security cordon or not. You may contact us on 0800 22 22 00 or visit the local information hub to arrange a visit. Managed access may not be permitted if safety concerns do not allow it."



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# People & Places

Civil Defence Centres, Shelters, and Community Support Hubs remained open across the region, with anyone needing support to get to them urged to ring 0800 22 22 00.

Regional parks closed for safety reasons included Waitākere Ranges Regional Park and Muriwai Regional Park.

The update added that due to the severe slips in the Domain Crescent Muriwai area it meant there was no safe access for anyone.

"Until geotechnical experts give clearance that the area can be accessed safely, no one is able to enter their homes," says AEM.

"We have a security-controlled barrier at the corner of the road to ensure safety and security of homes in the locality. (This excludes the few white placarded homes at the very beginning of Domain Crescent.)

Some reports had been received about people allegedly impersonating Auckland Council officers to access some homes at Muriwai.

The Auckland Council advised that its staff have uniforms and photo identification, and it encouraged people to check.

A resident-only road closure restriction applied to Motutara Road.

"Entry is restricted from the Muriwai Road/Oaia Road intersection to the Fire Station. We have established security-controlled barriers between red placard buildings on Motutara Road from Coast Road to house number 177.

"Entry into Muriwai is also restricted at the top of Waitea Road, from Oaia Road. There is no access to this area without prior authorisation from Auckland Emergency Management."

The Waste Management team is working on a solution for sandbag disposal, along with waste removal in Muriwai, AEM explained. People were warned that sandbags in contact with possibly contaminated water needed special care in handling.

Water infrastructure in Muriwai had been impacted by the landslides

with the water treatment plant remaining offline and the water storage reservoir empty.

"A tanker is providing emergency water to customers and is located at Sand Dunz Café."

Muriwai residents were also among those warned to be prepared for power cuts and encouraged to check for any power outages on Vector's website.

## Thinking about moving to retirement living?

Due to recent flooding, storm and cyclone events within Auckland and New Zealand and feedback from prospects and participants we have delayed the Best of Aged care event to 27 April 2023.

We believe this is the best option due to the current state of emergency extending in Auckland and the immediate recovery activity.

Thank you for your understanding and our thoughts go out to those that are rebuilding their lives after these events.

Free from cost, and without commitment to act, we are hosting a fun and information packed event providing answers to the common questions about moving from the family home into a better and easier living environment. The Best of Aged Care Seminar and chat is on Thursday 27th April 2023, 10am to 12.30pm, West Harbour Church, 145 Moire Road, West Harbour, Auckland. The best of aged care seminar will deliver a number of the very best accommodation and health care options available to you today from reputable and proven suppliers that really care about you, and your journey, to retirement living, making your next stage of life, comfortable, easy, simple and enjoyable. For more information call 0800 900 700 or email [editorial@kumeucourier.co.nz](mailto:editorial@kumeucourier.co.nz).



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# Safer Communities



As recent events have shown us, it doesn't take long for weather to turn and we can quite easily find ourselves in a position that can leave us and our families trapped in our home by rising flood waters or in a house that has been made unsafe.

This highlights the importance of being prepared and ready should these or any similar events happen again and to keep in contact with neighbours,

particularly if they are vulnerable and require assistance.

[www.getready.govt.nz](http://www.getready.govt.nz) has some helpful tips that can assist you with ways in which you can prepare your home and proactively think about ways in which you can be ready for an incident, including, securing outside objects, having food/water for several days for both yourselves and pets, and to also be prepared for cooking without power.

Should you need to evacuate your home, it is highly recommended to have a 'go bag' prepared before you need to leave. This should have the basics you need to take with you in a hurry and include a first aid kit, water, snacks, phone charger, torch and any medication required etc. There are many suggestions online as to what necessities these bags should include.

If it is at all possible. Leave a secure note on your door advising that you have evacuated and where you can be

reached in case emergency services are involved.

If you have evacuated your house and are staying with others, be mindful that the layout of the house will be different and it will be beneficial to familiarise yourself with how to evacuate in case of a fire.



Jamie Shaw

Senior Fire Fighter  
Waitakere Fire Brigade  
Phone 09 810 9251



Help prevent drowning

## Look for clues

### In the backyard



- Buckets filled with water
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# Community News

## How did Te Awaroa Helensville Museum fare?

While the effects of the January floods were devastating for many, in good news Te Awaroa Helensville Museum came through them unscathed, despite the buildings being sited on a flood plain on a former rubbish dump beside the Kaipara River.

Vice President Leigh Bosch explained she and other museum volunteers made fixing water issues a priority when working to restore the precious buildings, archives and artefacts after the discovery in 2019 that the collection was endangered by borer and other pests, and the heritage buildings were in urgent need of repair.

"When we started, as well as tell-tale puddles of water there was a pervasive smell of mould but you couldn't see where it was coming from," said Leigh. Thanks to rooves, ceilings, walls, floors, windows, spaces underneath floors and drainage being checked and water-proofed in the restoration, the museum and its collection now have a much better chance when severe weather events like the January storms hit.

As just an example, one taonga in the collection that is safe and dry is a beautiful embroidered velvet cushion made by Janet Drinnan, who brought it with her when she and her husband William immigrated to Aotearoa in 1860. As a hotel, shop and landowner Janet became one of Kaukapakapa's leading lights. Known as "the Mother of Kaukapakapa", she has many descendants in the wider district. The cushion was unearthed recently by textile specialist Jo Dixey, who is working with fellow specialist Katriona Main to



restore and re-catalogue the museum's textiles after they have been through the pest extermination process.

## Kumeu Childcare

At Kumeu Childcare, we value learning and aim to foster the skills children need to reach their full potential and live a healthy and prosperous life. We offer a high-quality natural light, spacious setting and separate large rich outdoor areas for children to play. We encourage children's capacities for thinking, feeling, imagining and inventing through meaningful play. We pride ourselves in offering high levels of care and education to our children and families and in maintaining meaningful relationships with our local community.



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## Local Kumeu company expanding to Aussie

The Dog Safe Workplace is a locally owned company and many of you will have seen articles written on what they do and why. Some of you may have been shouted coffee at another local thriving business 'Juicy' on State Highway 16, where Jo Clough the Director of The Dog Safe Workplace always shouts a coffee for the person behind her.



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# Community News

interaction between dogs and people better" says Jo. "With all the doom and gloom about the economy and small business at the moment we are thrilled to have this opportunity to continue to work with our clients in NZ and also expand"

For those of you who are unaware of what The Dog Safe Workplace does, they provide training to organisations who have workers that are required to enter properties where dogs may be present. Last year New Zealand had over 13,500 dog bites costing millions of dollars.

"It no longer cuts it to just say 'if there is a dog on the property don't enter,'" says Jo. "Education and training are essential for these workers. We dispel myths such as 'a wagging tail means a dog's happy', 'rolling on its back means it wants its tummy rubbed,' we also educate the organisations in canine body language and how to remove themselves without injury. We customise the course to suit each company's individual requirements. As well as keeping the workers safe we are helping companies reduce costs and retain staff by making the work environment a better and safer place".

If anyone would like further information on Dog Safety, you can contact Jo on 0508 DOG SAFE or jo@dogssafeworkplace.com.

## Choosing the correct tyres for your vehicle

Choosing the correct tyres for your vehicle is essential for ensuring your safety, maximizing fuel efficiency, and getting the best performance out of your vehicle. With so many tyre brands, models, and types to choose from, it can be challenging to know where to start. Here are some tips to help you choose the correct tyres for your vehicle.

1. Consider your driving needs: The first step in choosing the correct tyres is to consider your driving needs. Do you primarily drive in urban areas, on highways, or off-road? Do you need tyres for a sporty or high-performance vehicle? The answers to these questions will help determine the type of tyres that are best for your vehicle.

2. Check your vehicle's specifications: Before choosing tyres, check your vehicle's specifications, such as the tyre size, load capacity, and

speed rating. The information can usually be found in the vehicle's owner's manual or on the tyre information placard in the doorjamb.

3. Check the tyre tread depth: The tread depth is an important factor in the performance of your tyres. The deeper the tread, the better the tyre's ability to grip the road and provide traction. You should replace your tyres when the tread depth reaches 1.5 mm.

4. Consider the cost: Tyres can be expensive, so it's important to consider the cost when choosing the correct tyres for your vehicle. While it may be tempting to choose the least expensive option, it's important to remember that the quality of the tyres will affect their performance and lifespan. Investing in high-quality tyres will pay off in the long run.

Choosing the correct tyres for your vehicle is essential for your safety, fuel efficiency, and performance. By considering your driving needs, checking your vehicle's specifications, checking the tyre tread depth, and considering the cost, you can find the tyres that are right for your vehicle. Remember that tyres are an important investment, so take your time and choose wisely.

For advice and help on choosing the correct tyre, or for a free tyre check, visit the team at Bridgestone Kumeu or Westgate. You can find us at 1 Cellar Court, Westgate phone 09 833 8555, or 43 Main Road, Kumeu phone 09 412 9111.

## March at Kumeu Arts

The 'Winners Exhibition' continues until March 11th and features sculpture, painting, drawing and photography by eight prize winners from last year's Kumeu Arts Awards. Then Muriwai based artist Mette Hay takes over the Main Gallery with exciting new work, including an interactive sound experience. Mette says, "My creative practice is centred in a strong belief that when the boundaries between design, art and science, are effaced, the potential for magic occurs". Also, this month Kumeu Arts and Kumeu Library are collaborating for the World of Cultures Festival. The festival



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# Community News

is a celebration of multiculturalism and race relations. There are workshops in 'Expressive Mark-Making' with U.K artist Sally Cole and a Jewellery Workshop with Susie Cropper. During the Easter school holidays, Creative Matters will be running fantastic art classes to keep the Children happy. Visit us behind Kumeu Library or online to discover all this and more. [www.kumeuarts.org](http://www.kumeuarts.org)

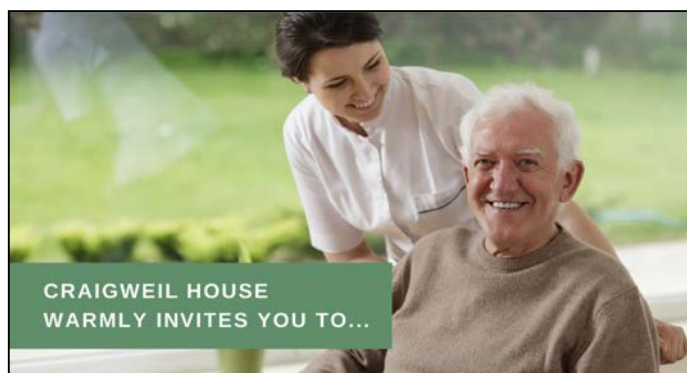
Image for the 'World of Cultures Festival' titled 'Olinda Carnival' by Jago Neal.

## Hospice West Auckland: Living every moment

Many people think that Hospice care means that you have given up hope, when in fact Hospice support enables a person to live every moment in the ways that are important to them. This might be spending time with loved ones, visiting favourite places, or doing those activities that have always brought you joy.

Hospice West Auckland cares for people with life-limiting illness and supports their families and carers. As well as specialist palliative healthcare, we provide a wide range of social care services including counselling, physiotherapy, spiritual support, music and arts therapy, Rongoa Māori, acupuncture and pet therapy. We take a holistic approach to enhancing the quality of life by caring for the physical, practical, emotional and spiritual needs of people and their loved ones.

Our services are provided completely free of charge to residents living in the wider West Auckland area, and our experienced teams work alongside GPs and other healthcare services. "Put aside those preconceptions of what you think Hospice means. You can't appreciate the scale of what they do until you've been through the process - it isn't the end of the line."



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For more information on Hospice West Auckland please visit [www.hwa.org.nz](http://www.hwa.org.nz).

## Cat lovers we need your help

The NZ Cat Foundation has a sanctuary based in Huapai which houses over 150 cats. We offer safe sanctuary for older, disadvantaged and un-homeable rescue cats where they can live out their lives in safety and comfort. We need regular volunteers to help with routine chores so our cats can



enjoy happy, healthy, safe lives. We are looking for volunteers who are mature, have a sense of responsibility, are good team players and dedicated animal lovers. Helping at the sanctuary is a popular way to fulfil community service hours for Duke of Edinburgh, St John's, Scouts, Guides, church, university, animal sciences studies, etc. We are happy to sign off on your hours and provide any needed verification of your service. We rely heavily on volunteers on a daily basis and desperately need more.

Financial and food donations are also urgently needed to cover vet and other costs associated with our sanctuary. The NZ Cat Foundation also supports community Trap-Neuter-Return programmes and helps feed and care for many cats living in the community. Please visit our website for more information on volunteering and how to donate at [www.thenzcatfoundation.org.nz](http://www.thenzcatfoundation.org.nz). You can also email - volunteers: [volunteer@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz](mailto:volunteer@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz) donations: [info@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz](mailto:info@thenzcatfoundation.org.nz).

## Kaukapakapa Village Market

Sunday 19th March 8.30am to 1pm. There is always something fresh to experience with new stall holders joining the market each month - quality stalls with everything from locally hand-made crafts, fresh fruit & vegetables to pre-loved treasures, clothing and collectibles, books, plants, freshly made coffee, ice cream, great food and much more plus live music from Ralphie.



For more information contact Sarah 027 483 1542 or email [sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz](mailto:sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz).

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# THANK YOU

By Chris Penk, MP for the Kaipara ki Mahurangi electorate.

I have one simple message today: thank you.

On behalf of this community I'd like to take this opportunity to express the gratitude that we collectively feel towards our courageous firefighters, NZ Police, St John ambulance service, surf lifesaving clubs, Coastguard and other first responders.



## You are our heroes.

In particular we think of the volunteers and staff of Muriwai Fire Station and affected friends and family following the tragedy in Muriwai, grappling with loss beyond imagination.

In my visits to as many flood-ravaged areas as possible these past few weeks, I've seen many others stepping up as well. I want to thank the many community groups and locals who have worked tirelessly before, during and after the floods to organise help for their fellow Kiwi in need.

In the coming weeks I will have plenty to say about systemic



shortcomings that will have cost many of you dearly. These include planning and maintenance practices, along with budgetary focus on anything but the basics – such as stormwater management – all too often. Lessons have clearly not been learned from the August 2021 flooding, despite warnings delivered by many of us since then.

There will be time enough for all that soon. But today I say again, to everyone who has displayed such incredible community spirit and bravery in these tough times: while we can never fully repay you, please know that you have the admiration, respect and heartfelt thanks of a grateful community.



**Chris Penk**  
MP for Kaipara ki Mahurangi

**Your Local MP**

A | 134 Main Road, Kumeu 0810  
P | 09 412 2496

Funded by the Parliamentary Service. Authorised by Chris Penk, 134 Main Road, Kumeu 0810.



# In Brief

## Flower arranging – Easter theme

Sunday 26th March 0930am - 1130am

After an extremely successful flower arranging workshop last Christmas, we've invited Louise Kirkwood, from Old School Yard Blooms, back to present an Easter themed version. So, if you would like to create your own Easter table settings or flower arrangements to celebrate the festival (and impress your friends and family!) this is a "not to be missed" event.

She will bring her experience from growing, gathering and curating fresh, local, seasonal flowers on the property that housed the old Upper Waiwera School.

Her approach to growing and arranging flowers is to work with passion and in a manner which is sensitive to our ecological environment.

In this very interactive workshop, you will get the opportunity to:

- Learn about tools and materials needed, with a focus on re-sealable supplies
- Select flowers and foliage from the Kaipara nature trail and gardens
- Practise some different ways to create smaller and larger pieces for a tablecape
- Learn how to help your creations last longer

If you have a small dish or other container you would like to utilise to contain your creation please feel free to bring that along.

Louise plans to stroll around the gardens with attendees selecting appropriate plants and flowers and then show how to arrange them



to best effect.

After the workshop you can also spend some more time in the Gardens which has a beautiful sculpture exhibition along a 1.2km pathway as well as our recently created nature trail which is a further 2.4 km for you to explore. This is all set in the idyllic Kaipara countryside and placed so as to blend sympathetically with the surrounding environment. \*

There is also a kid's play area as well as our cute little coffee shop on site plus of course the Plant Centre for you to browse through.

Our knowledgeable and friendly staff will also be on hand to help with any garden related questions. \* Trail not suitable for wheelchairs or walking frames. 1481 Kaipara Coast Highway (SH16), 4km north of Kaukapakapa. Tickets: \$25 per person. To Book: info@kaiparacoast.co.nz or 09 420 5655.

## Nature's Explorers Kindergarten

Recently at Nature's Explorers we have been learning about Waitangi Day. At group-times we have had discussions on the Treaty of Waitangi and discussed our own kindy treaty.

Some of our tamariki suggested to add to our treaty, "Waewae hiko, walking feet." {Inside}, "Inside voice" and "Be kind."

We have provided opportunities for our tamariki to explore several Maori patterns including; Koru - which is the Maori word for 'loop' and represents new life, growth, strength and peace.

Tanika - which is weaving together perspectives, priorities, ideas and stories and lastly kowhaiwhai - which is a tribe's whakapapa. It is inspired by nature and often found on the rafters of meeting houses. Children were invited to choose one of these patterns to make their own special crown.

We also invited our families to bring in vegetables, such as potato, kumara and carrot. Our tamariki with guidance from their kaiako (teacher), helped prepare the vegetables. We then roasted them, and enjoyed a shared kai (food), to celebrate Waitangi Day.

We also read many stories including; 'Maui and the Sun', 'The Fish of Maui', 'My First Words in Maori' and 'The Story of Waitangi Day'. We sang waiata, including; 'Kina, Kina', 'Totira Mai Nga Iwi', 'Tena Koe' and more). These stories and songs exposed our tamariki to literacy



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# In Brief

experiences valued by the cultures represented in our community.

If you are interested in contacting/visiting us at Nature's Explorers Kindergarten please contact Angela on phone 09 412 8800 or email: office.kindergarten@xtra.co.nz.

## Gratitude for the things we have

As I sit here looking outside at the storm, with no power, it made me ponder about all the things we take for granted. When we look outside, we see the trees, we see the leaves and branches swaying away, while at the same time, we can hear the whistle of the wind, such little things, that maybe we don't notice on a day-to-day basis, this is usually because we are too busy, we are playing with our children, we are watching TV, listening to the radio, or talking to friends on the phone or chatting with them online.



But as I am looking and listening to the outside world without out modern-day distractions, it makes me appreciate the little things we do have, that come free and courtesy of Mother Earth. Tonight, it's the wind, the brewing of the storm, then other nights the majestic beauty of the sunset and in the morning the glorious sunrises, such majestic gifts that we are blessed with and yet it doesn't cost us anything to enjoy them.

Sadly, as I am writing this, we learn that the numbers of this who passed away in Turkey and Syria due to the earthquake, are continuing to increase, people are still dying due to sickness, crime, accidents and other natural disasters, and to most it brings us much sadness and compassion, but at the same time, it should help us to appreciate the little things we can do to help others. We saw many wonderful examples recently when we faced severe flooding around Auckland, we saw how people, total strangers came together to help one another, giving the little we have to someone who has even less than us. Some were opening their homes, their kitchen cupboards,

their businesses, their time, their wallets to help one another. Does this not open our hearts up with joy and gratitude to these people? Does it not make us appreciate the things we have no matter how large or small, or how cheap or expensive it may be?

When we see and hear about others sufferings, maybe it should encourage us appreciate our families, our friends, our neighbours, our communities and all the things around us, no matter who small. Let us show gratitude for the things we do have and for those who are out their helping their communities and families during these times.

Let us show gratitude for our health, to be able to laugh, to feel joy, to feel loved, to taste the food we eat, to drink the water from the taps. Let us have gratitude for all the things we have today and remember tomorrow we may lose them.

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## Harakeke flax weaving workshop

Te Awaroa, Helensville Museum - Saturday 18th March, 10am to 1pm. Have you ever wondered how to correctly and respectfully harvest Harakeke? Would you like to learn to create a simple rourou (pārō) food basket? Then this entry level workshop is for you. Come along and learn from Katriona and Leigh about the fundamentals and practical skills of working with NZ flax. All materials provided, open to those 13 years old and over, \$25 per person. Please book with Eventfinda (Helensville Museum), numbers are limited. Funds raised support the Te Awaroa, Helensville Museum.



Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi. With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive.

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# Best of Aged Care

## Making the move in 2023

Moving is regularly up there on lists of the most stressful life events, but it doesn't have to be that way.

If 2023 is the year you will be relocating or downsizing, here are some tips from the experts at Retirement Moving to make your move easy:

1. Don't take everything. Spend time sorting your possessions before you move, and gift, donate or dispose of unwanted items.
2. Take your time. Chip away at sorting and packing one space at a time over a couple of days or weeks.
3. Dig around. Check every cupboard, under the house, in the garden and track down everything that will either need to be moved, sorted or disposed of.
4. Pack sentimental and valuable items yourself. It'll give you peace of mind knowing you packed things of vital importance, and you'll know exactly where to find them.
5. Get the professionals to pack oddly shaped and fragile items and disassemble/reassemble furniture. They will have the right tools for the job.
6. Empty your fridge and freezer and switch them off 24-48 hours before the move. They are large, heavy and bulky items, and having



food in them adds to the weight.

7. Make a priority carton where you can pack a toothbrush, PJs, medicine, keys – anything that you use every day – and keep it somewhere accessible.

8. Unpack immediately. Add a day to your move-in plan and get the boxes emptied, furniture reassembled, and rubbish disposed of.

If you are in a position to do so, engage a moving company you can trust to help with your move. Ask friends and family for recommendations or look at reviews online. Talk to your moving company about the little extras that can help make your move easy – things like helping to declutter, providing boxes and tape, or arranging a post-move clean.

## Radius Taupaki Gables

Radius Taupaki Gables provides residents with hospital-level medical care from the comfort of their own bed, in a family friendly environment. Offering 48 hospital beds and 12 rest home beds, Radius Taupaki Gables provides a range of services, including respite, palliative, and young and disabled care. The care home's core value is to ensure that families feel good about their loved ones being in care. Laurel and her team



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The Retirement Moving team are people you can trust to make your next move a success. From the first free consultation, to the unpacking and placement of your goods, our focus is on you and getting it right first time.

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[www.retirementmoving.co.nz](http://www.retirementmoving.co.nz)



# Best of Aged Care

take a holistic approach, ensuring that residents' medical care is furthered by supporting therapies, social activity and engagement with the community - and even animal visits.

A leader in the aged care sector, Laurel Winwood brings a wealth of knowledge from her extensive background in nursing. She merges medical care and wider care into one, so residents can feel at home while they recover from injury or illness. Laurel explores innovative ways to engage with residents to keep them active, including working with an Auckland University study into reducing falls.

## Summerset at Monterey Park

Experience luxury living in the thriving community of Hobsonville at Summerset at Monterey Park.

**Villas:** These brand-new homes are equipped with all the modern amenities one needs for easy living. Two large double bedrooms, large open-plan living which flows to a deck or outdoor patio, an internal access garage with laundry and tiled bathrooms, plus an extra separate toilet. Easy modern living.

**Clark Coastal Villas -** Our premium homes, set on the water's edge, featuring open-plan living with a seamless flow to a large outdoor deck. Including two large bedrooms with ensuites, plus a third room



perfect for a study, or spare room, a double internal access garage, elevator and huge storage options. Orientated for fantastic sun and views and finished with a modern neutral décor throughout.

Summerset is also excited to announce a brand-new retirement village, Summerset Milldale, located close to Wainui, Silverdale and the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. Once complete, it will offer over 220 independent homes to choose from including villas and apartments. Plus, a wide range of care options, including serviced apartments, a care centre and our industry-leading memory care centre.

For more information on either of these villages, visit [summerset.co.nz](http://summerset.co.nz).

## ClearStone Legal

ClearStone Legal are a full-service law firm who are able to assist with residential conveyancing (sale, purchase and refinancing of property), advise on occupation licences and Retirement Villages Act 2003 and estate planning (Wills and Enduring Powers of Attorney).

**Occupation Licence -** often the first step is deciding on and securing a unit in your village of choice. We will complete a full review and advise you on the terms of the occupation licence (sometimes called an Occupation Right Agreement). Your initial



## Summerset Milldale coming soon.

Summerset is excited to announce a brand-new retirement village, **Summerset Milldale** which begins pre-selling in early 2023.

Once complete, it will offer over 220 independent homes to choose from including villas and apartments. Plus, we will have a wide range of care options, including serviced apartments, a care centre and our industry-leading memory care centre. All safe and secure within a fully gated village community.

Summerset Milldale is located close to Silverdale and the Whangaparaoa Peninsula in one of Auckland's newest and most affordable suburbs. It will offer the perfect retirement lifestyle, close to beaches, cafes and shopping, everything the Hibiscus Coast has to offer.

Only 25 minutes from downtown Auckland, this stunning village will give you easy access to everything a busy retirement life demands.

**Get your free information pack today**  
**0800 SUMMER (786 637)**  
[summerset.co.nz/milldale](http://summerset.co.nz/milldale)



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# Best of Aged Care

agreement might need to be subject to the sale of your home.

Sale of your residential property - once you have a buyer in front of you, your agent will negotiate and put in place a sale and purchase agreement. From this point we will work with you and the purchaser's solicitor to reach unconditional status, and then work towards settlement. We will prepare the documentation to transfer title to the purchaser, and if needed obtain a discharge of mortgage from your bank. We will apply the proceeds of sale to pay the purchase price for the occupation licence for you on settlement date.

Estate planning - one of the requirements of entry to a retirement village is to have up-to-date Enduring Powers of Attorney and Wills in place. We will take your instructions, advise you, guide you and draft the appropriate documentation to complete the requirements.

## Country Club Huapai

You've all seen Country Club Huapai, growing from the ground up over the past years. It is a beautiful part of our neighbourhood. Some of you may have visited our café, popped in to see friends or enjoyed the use of our stunning spaces for your clubs



or groups. What a pleasure to be able to work in such a luxurious setting. As a local of some decades it is a privilege to help people from our community make decisions about what their next home will be. I get to introduce to people the fun lifestyle that goes part and parcel with life at Country Club Huapai. At the upcoming seminar I look forward to telling you more about us. How our village works, what we have on offer and in what ways you can all make this fabulous local resource work for you. I look forward to meeting everyone on Thursday, 27 April. See you there. Chris, Sales Manager, Country Club Huapai.

Chris Brittenden - Sales Manager, phone 021 982 583.

## Appreciation for great design

Today's retirees appreciate great style and design and, after almost three decades in the business of building and operating premium retirement villages, Metlifecare takes a unique approach to creating its bespoke villages and amenities.



Metlifecare ensures its villages fit perfectly into local environments and communities and the process starts by considering potential customers and determining their needs and expectations.



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# Best of Aged Care

"We know our future residents are accustomed to high-end architecture, they appreciate outstanding urban design, and they want to be proud to show their children and grandchildren where they live," says head of development, Matt Wickham.

"We look for outstanding sites with strong links to the local community and desirable lifestyle features and use award-winning architects and landscape designers to bring to life bespoke villages that residents can be proud of."

Those sites can be coastal, urban or rural, and each Metlifecare village is completely unique, with its own individual theme. One of the company's latest developments, Orion Point, currently under way in Hobsonville, has been designed with an urban coastal sanctuary focus. With Stage 1 complete, we welcomed our first residents in February 2023.

Metlifecare has considered the area's rich history, taking great care to honour it, building a premium retirement village with independent villas and apartments, a care centre and stylish modern amenities, all sitting comfortably within a stunning coastal location.

[www.orionpoint.co.nz](http://www.orionpoint.co.nz)

## Register today for "Best of Aged Care 2023"

The Best of Aged Care Seminar and chat is on 10am, 27th April 2023, at West Harbour Church, 145 Moire Road, West Harbour, Auckland.

Free from cost, and without commitment to act, we are hosting a fun and information packed event providing answers to the common questions about moving from the family home into a better and easier living environment that provides some future proofing to changes in health, situation and dependency.

The best of aged care seminar will deliver a number of the very best accommodation and health care options available to you today from reputable and proven suppliers that really care about you, and your journey, to retirement living, making your next stage of life, comfortable, easy, simple and enjoyable.

You can bring a friend or family member with you to this independent seminar and chat with a range of professional support providers to help you.

Morning tea is provided, however as seats are very limited we need you to reserve your seats early to avoid disappointment. Call 0800 900 700 or email [editorial@thewesterly.co.nz](mailto:editorial@thewesterly.co.nz) with your name, contact details and seats you would like reserved. Multiple seats will require names and contact details.

"This is a fun, engaged and interactive chat that will talk openly about aged care living and planning ahead" says Graham McIntyre, publisher of the Westerly Magazine, who, with partners Seniornet, Mike Pero and Clearstone Legal will deliver confidence and clarity to your decision making.

For more information call 0800 900 700 or email [editorial@thewesterly.co.nz](mailto:editorial@thewesterly.co.nz)

## ORION POINT

### Point of perfection

Discover Orion Point, a premium retirement community nestled on the stunning peninsula between Hobsonville and Scott Points. Our range of newly released Stage 1 villas and apartments ensure you will find the perfect home for your retirement.

**Call us to discuss your options**

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[orionpoint.co.nz](http://orionpoint.co.nz)



metlifecare

#### FACILITIES COMING LATE 2023

Village clubhouse and green with bistro-style café and bar

Swimming pool, spa, activities room, hair & beauty salon, resident workshop

Coastal walkway extension

#### COMING EARLY 2023

Coastal pavilion



Luxurious, move-in ready apartments from \$885,000<sup>^</sup> and Stage 1 villas now selling from \$1,520,000<sup>^</sup>.

<sup>^</sup> Price is for an Occupation Right Agreement secured by a first ranking mortgage in favour of the statutory supervisor on behalf of the residents. Price valid for 30 days from time of printing. Stock availability subject to change. Car park not included in apartment price. Product images are artists' impressions and an indication of product only.

Note: Visitors must be feeling well to enter a Metlifecare site. Mask-wearing within a village is optional. For full Metlifecare COVID-19 guidelines, please refer to our website [www.metlifecare.co.nz](http://www.metlifecare.co.nz)

# Property

## Landlord's Insurance

Landlords should have full insurance for their rental property, not only to protect against the important events including earthquake, fire and flood, but also for the additional landlord risks including loss of rent, tenant damage, landlord contents and even meth contamination.



Because policies vary from one insurance provider to another, it is important to check what cover is included as standard in a policy, and what optional cover can also be added for an increased premium.

The RTA Amendments Act 2019 has created the requirement for landlords to be fully transparent regarding their existing insurance and should be a reminder for all landlords to ensure they have suitable cover in place.

Many investors believe they have adequate cover under their current policy only to find at the point of making a claim that's it's not what they expected.

Every landlord insurance policy will likely contain exclusive requirements and it's vital you are aware of what these are e.g., in a damage compensation claim you may be required to show evidence of regular inspections you have conducted.

It's important to ensure you have the right cover against all possible outcomes (including loss of rent, damage, abandonment etc) and often a simple extension to your existing policy may be all that is required.

Real Landlord Insurance NZ - We understand the importance of continuity of rental income and strongly recommend all landlords ensure that they have sufficient landlord protection insurance.

The Rent Shop has an excellent long-term relationship with Real

Landlord Insurance NZ (RLINZ) who specialize in insurance for landlords and their properties. Feel free to visit their website at [www.rlinz.co.nz](http://www.rlinz.co.nz) for more information about the specialist cover they offer or contact your Property Manager for more information

Here is a RLINZ example to demonstrate the benefit of their policies.

Carolyn had the 'perfect tenant' - her tenant had been in her home for 3 years. All inspection reports were glowing, the tenant was very clean, neat and tidy, and each inspection showed full photos to prove this. The grounds were immaculate, and the rent was paid on time. What could possibly go wrong?

The tenant lost his job! The tenant was unable to make regular payments and Carolyn requested that the tenant vacate within 90 days. In the final weeks the tenant lost it. This was his home. The tenant put holes in walls, smashed lights and blinds, and even ripped the alarm system from the wall - cutting all wires.

Real Landlord provided support to Carolyn throughout the claim process and provided settlement of the claim for a total of \$7,284.03 and an excess of \$500 applied.

When you engage with The Rent Shop and our team of property managers you can choose to select one of the Real Landlord Insurance Policies that are only available to accredited property management companies.

RLINZ policies also tend to have lower excess costs when compared to other generic landlord insurance policies.

By engaging The Rent Shop, we have access to the best possible cover for any adverse situation. It's just one of the many benefits involved with having your property professionally managed. If you would like further information feel free to email us at: [mike.james@therentshop.co.nz](mailto:mike.james@therentshop.co.nz).

## Property market report

If you had a crystal ball you'd never believe that the property market in the North West of Auckland would have to sustain the impact of multiple flood events and a cyclone to impact on the housing stock within our area. I witnessed first-hand the effects of the landslides at Muriwai and the wind and flooding effects in many of the areas within our community and my thoughts and hopes are with the land-owners of affected homes and properties. It is a cruel and sometimes soul-destroying position that many find themselves and the physical scars are always followed by mental scars. We certainly see this market as being mixed with certain areas being off-the-table and others being in hot demand. Still an oversupply in some pockets of the market causing price reductions but not all.

Let's look at sales over the last month:

Coatesville	\$1,914,490 to \$3,583,440
Helensville	\$939,000 to \$3,000,000

the  
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**Mike  
James**

Managing Director

☎ 021 413 660

✉ [mike.james@therentshop.co.nz](mailto:mike.james@therentshop.co.nz)

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# Property

Huapai	\$1,090,000 to \$1,258,000
Kumeu	\$2,750,000
Riverhead	\$1,200,000 to \$1,888,000
Swanson	\$1,170,000 to \$1,186,000
Waimauku	1,165,000
Waitakere	\$1,900,000
Whenuapai	\$830,000 to \$1,510,000

Whatever your situation and position, a conversation can always help create clarity and after 17 years of real estate knowledge and application at a top level, I am here to assist you making the very best decision possible. Contact me on 027 632 0421 or email graham.mcintyre@mikepero.com - Mike Pero Real Estate Ltd Licensed REAA (2008).

## What you should know when considering Retirement Village living

By Yolandie Rivas

Moving to a retirement village is a big decision. They can offer many lifestyle benefits such as an increasing a sense of security and community, easy access to leisure facilities such as a pool, gymnasium, and movie theatre and best of all, no more having to spend hours and hours of your time mowing lawns and maintaining your property! However, it's important to understand the future implications and differences from owning your own home.

Buying a unit in a retirement village is different from purchasing a house. When you buy into a retirement village, you are actually purchasing the right to occupy, not outright ownership. There are still monthly fees to pay which vary, depending on the outgoings of the village, the extra services, and the utilities you use. As you don't own the property, you won't receive the benefit of any capital gain and upon deciding to leave the village you could actually lose up to 30% your purchase price. However, for most people moving into retirement living, they do so with the knowledge that they will not be occupying their own property again.

So, you've found the perfect retirement unit? The first step is to complete an application. Upon acceptance, you will be asked to pay a deposit of between \$2,000 and \$10,000 to secure the unit



and undertake a medical assessment, update your will and have Enduring Powers of Attorneys (EPAs) in place. You will also be provided with an Occupation Right Agreement (ORA). As there are a range of providers, these agreements are all slightly different. For your protection, an ORA can only be signed once a Solicitor has explained it fully to you. If, after signing you have second thoughts, you can cancel the agreement in writing within 15 working and receive a full refund of any money paid.

But what if I have a house to sell? Most villages are happy to make the ORA conditional on selling your existing home, so that you can use the proceeds to pay for your unit. Like purchasing a house, the apartment usually comes with various appliances and fittings, but there may be additional costs, for example if you require carparking.

What can I or my family expect once I move out? Under the ORA, the purchase price (or entry payment) is usually split in two parts: A facility contribution of around 30% of the purchase price and an exit payment which is paid when the agreement ends. Usually if you stay longer than five years, the village will deduct the total amount and then the exit payment balance of about 70% will be paid to you or your estate. However, this balance will only be paid once your unit has been sold and the village has received the funds.

So before deciding to make the move to a retirement village, make sure you do your homework. More information, checklists and calculators are available on the Sorted website at [www.sorted.org.nz/guides/retirement/living-in-a-retirement-village](http://www.sorted.org.nz/guides/retirement/living-in-a-retirement-village).

We are happy to guide you through the process, making it easy and stress-free. We can also look after the sale of your existing property, update your will and put EPAs in place for you. For free no-obligation advice, give us a call on 09 973 5102 or make a time to come and see us at either our Kumeu or Te Atatu office.

## Should you use a Mortgage Broker?

When I bought my first home, I was self-employed as a strategic consultant - having recently left a role with one of the big banks in their business banking team. Even with my banking experience, I still engaged a Mortgage Broker to take care of my lending application.

I did so because Brokers had access to far more information than I did, my wife and I were busy in high pressure roles and going to endless open homes, and our



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# Property

application was complicated by my short term self-employment; so why not make the most of their expertise? However, the broker representing us didn't have the skills/experience to understand my income and the process was endlessly frustrating. I ended up terminating our relationship and got my own approval, working directly with the bank.

Many years later - I am now a Broker myself (and I love it) - so when people ask if they should use a broker, I've got an incentive to say "yes". However, my early experience is still fresh in my mind. If you want to use a broker, go for it, most are free. However, it is important to make sure you use the best one for you.

The benefits of using a broker include:

- We can guide you through the whole home buying process; we have networks that include lawyers, building inspectors, realtors and insurance firms and can recommend ones to you based on your circumstances.
- We can save you the hassle of shopping around banks for the best deal; by completing a pre-assessment we can let you know which lenders and products best fit your needs.
- We can make the whole process quicker, easier, and less stressful.
- We can often get better pricing than you can directly.
- We can work with you on your long term goals - and make sure all your lending is structured to help you achieve them.
- Most of us don't charge you any fees for our services for residential lending.

So when shouldn't you use a broker?

- When the broker is acting outside their area of expertise.
- When the broker doesn't have access to the best banks for you. Brokers can only work for banks that have given them an accreditation.
- If you already have a complex lending arrangement with your own bank (that you're happy with) - it can make much more sense to deal with the bank directly.

So what should you ask a broker to see if they are right for you?

- Ask about their background, and what experience they have working with people like you.
- Ask which banks they are accredited with - and more importantly which ones they're not.
- Ask about timelines - and their capacity to prioritise you.

If you'd like to talk to me about your lending and to see if I'm right for you, feel free to give me a call; and as always, if you want to meet for coffee - it's on me.

Scott Wombwell, Managing Director & Financial Advisor, Better Borrowing 020 4009 8944 | [www.betterborrowing.co.nz](http://www.betterborrowing.co.nz)

## Buying a tenanted residential property

Buying a residential property that is currently tenanted is slightly more complicated than buying property from someone who is living there and will move out on settlement day

If you wish to live in the property you will need to ensure that the sale and purchase agreement provides for vacant possession. The words "vacant possession" must be inserted in the tenancies box on the front page of the Agreement for Sale and Purchase. This is particularly important if you are using a KiwiSaver withdrawal or Kainga Ora First Home Grant to assist with your purchase.

Fixed term tenancies cannot be terminated before the end of the fixed term, unless the tenant agrees.

If you want to keep the existing tenants your lawyer will ensure that the appropriate paperwork is completed prior to settling. You should not assume that the rental currently meets all the legal requirements for a rental, such as the Healthy Homes Standards and do your own due diligence to make sure the property meets your legal obligations as a landlord.

By Jennifer Edwards - Smith and Partners, 293 Lincoln Road, Henderson phone 09 836 0939 or email: [partners@smithpartners.co.nz](mailto:partners@smithpartners.co.nz).



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# SHOW YOUR POPPY

Join the movement and show your support by displaying a Poppy on your gate or fence.

**MARCH /  
APRIL 2023**

Hi Neighbour,

Remember the fallen and show your support for the Poppy. Join us to post your proud poppy creation that adorns your fence, gate or letterbox in advance of ANZAC Day and our formal day of remembrance.

The team at Mike Pero Kumeu and Hobsonville will be giving away Mitre10 and Aussie Butcher vouchers. Participating houses will go in the draw to win one of three \$100 Mitre10 Mega vouchers and one of three \$100 Aussie Butcher vouchers, with winners announced 26 April 2023\*.

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO REGISTER  
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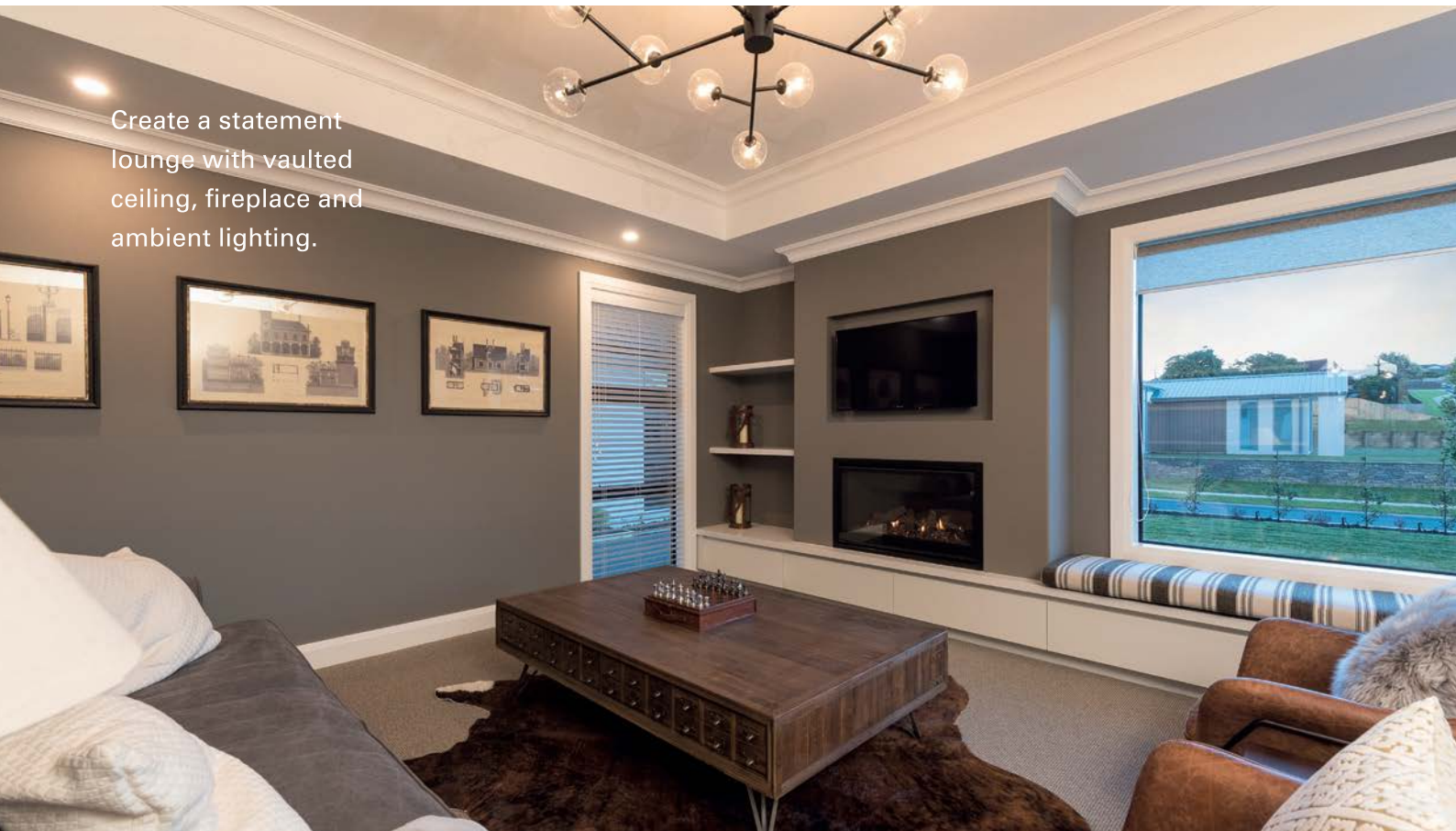




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**G.J. Gardner.** HOMES

# Area Property Stats

Every month Mike Pero Real Estate Kumeu assembles a comprehensive spreadsheet of all the recent sales in the area that reviews the full range of Residential transactions that have occurred.

To receive the full summary simply email the word "full statistics" to [kumeu@mikepero.com](mailto:kumeu@mikepero.com). This service is free from cost.

SUBURB	CV \$	LAND AREA	FLOOR AREA	SALE PRICE \$	SUBURB	CV \$	LAND AREA	FLOOR AREA	SALE PRICE \$
COATESVILLE	1,100,000	1.1HA	362M2	3,583,440	KUMEU	2,450,000	1HA	257M2	2,750,000
	1,875,000	1.18HA	131M2	1,914,490	MASSEY	1,500,000	827M2	210M2	1,175,000
HELENSVILLE	1,175,000	662M2	222M2	1,265,000		440,000	196M2	158M2	855,000
	900,000	1214M2	89M2	939,000		880,000	182M2	92M2	836,000
	1,775,000	5HA	104M2	3,000,000		1,100,000	548M2	132M2	990,000
	880,000	622M2	155M2	950,000		970,000	139M2	127M2	995,000
HOBSONVILLE	1,025,000	112M2	161M2	1,110,000		1,075,000	230M2	175M2	1,068,000
	1,450,000	297M2	216M2	1,450,000		950,000	968M2	146M2	938,000
	900,000	106M2	102M2	840,000		970,000	131M2	138M2	880,000
	1,395,000	543M2	210M2	1,363,000	RIVERHEAD	1,480,000	1214M2	120M2	1,200,000
	1,575,000	334M2	228M2	1,406,666		2,025,000	1039M2	363M2	1,888,000
	1,210,000	453M2	160M2	1,150,000		1,750,000	801M2	266M2	1,400,000
	985,000	351M2	100M2	840,000	SWANSON	1,140,000	337M2	183M2	1,170,000
	980,000	685M2	120M2	865,000		1,175,000	348M2	191M2	1,186,000
	1,285,000	500M2	170M2	1,160,000	WAIMAUKU	1,025,000	1518M2	130M2	1,165,000
	645,000	0M2	61M2	645,000	WAITAKERE	1,325,000	1.73HA	110M2	1,900,000
	975,000	112M2	97M2	860,000	WESTGATE	655,000	131M2	66M2	650,000
HUAPAI	1,350,000	607M2	190M2	1,258,000	WHENUAPAI	935,000	98M2	125M2	830,000
	1,100,000	619M2	180M2	1,090,000		1,750,000	363M2	282M2	1,510,000

DISCLAIMER: These sales figures have been provided by a third party and although all care is taken to ensure the information is accurate some figures could have been mis-interpreted on compilation. Furthermore these figures are recent sales over the past 30 days from all agents in the area.

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Mike Pero Real Estate Kumeu also provide statistical data FREE from cost to purchasers and sellers wanting more information to make an informed decision.

Phone me today for a FREE summary of a property and surrounding sales, at no cost and no questions asked. Graham McIntyre 027 632 0421

\*Available for a limited time. Conditions apply.

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D: 120mm

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**\$669,000**

**2 / 10 Wickstead Place, Massey**  
Asking Price \$669,000

Calling all first home buyers, this is your opportunity to secure a traditional two bedroom home in the heart of Massey. I seldom find a home that offers so much and is so affordable. This home offers exceptional value for money with options for lounges/ study, office and relaxing. A simple two bedroom home with a large open plan lounge-dining offering stunning sunshine. Off street parking and a single garage for treasures, while the lawn area and plantings are low maintenance and park-like. A short stroll to the inner-harbour, convenience shopping, schools and parks.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3477990](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3477990)



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**EXTENDED FAMILY OR BLENDED FAMILY - ROYAL HEIGHTS**

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**3 Bangla Place, Massey**  
Asking Price \$1,249,000

If your expecting to house all of the family plus some, you'll need a big home with multiple living and outdoor spaces, you'll also need some clever parking options and a fully fenced yard for the cutties and the critters. Well you've found just that. A near new, multi-level home that delivers more than you thought possible in its price category. Tucked away, off-street parking for four cars (tandem) and double garage, moving up to an expansive lounge-dining-kitchen with direct access to sunny and expansive entertainment decking and fully fenced yard, peppered with mature trees for shade and ambience. Two bedrooms and bathroom and guest w/c on this level and up-stairs three more generous bedrooms, separate lounge and bathroom. Delivering the perfect environment for a mixed, blended or growing family.

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Asking Price \$835,000

A 1950's three bedroom home in a quiet hamlet, overlooking farmland and yet close to Waitakere Primary School, services and park. Set on 850 square meters, this is a unique home that can host the full joys of family and friends in an environment that extends to alfresco living, outdoor pursuits and garaging tinkerers, all in the confines of this fully fenced property. Lovingly presented to reflect its pedigree and offering a neutral canvas for you to fully express your individuality. Available immediately for you to claim and move on in. Close to transport links, convenience shopping, Waitakere Primary School, and a short drive to Swanson Rail Station, Bethells Beach and Westgate Shopping hub. Motivated Vendor welcomes your interest today - You won't be disappointed.

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5 2 3

**By Negotiation**

**6A Mansion Court, West Harbour**  
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The home has been immaculately presented and delivers an as-new look and feel with natural colour palette and excellent attention to detail. Set on 417sqm of land offering a fenced rear section, established plantings and grand entrance, the home at 248 square meters makes the very most of it's location and premium address. Close to the inner harbour and a stone throw away from Marina View School. Split over two levels, the home offers living downstairs with an additional bedroom that can be used as an office or second lounge, while upstairs is four bedrooms and two bathrooms. Multi-use carpeted garage with loads of space and storage and easy access to garden shed and clothes line.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3610153](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3610153)



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**BUSINESS - TOWN CENTRE ZONE - HUAPAI**

3 1 1

**By Negotiation**

**8 Oraha Road, Huapai**  
By Negotiation

Nestled to the Eastern boundary of the Huapai Business Zoned area is this generous 869sqm parcel of land offering a flat section which shoulders the carparking and the Police Station at Huapai. A stately three bedroom bungalow with open plan kitchen, dining and living room leading onto westerly decking. A large shed and carport offers storage options while the yard is full of mature fruit trees. Fully fenced, flat section with services in the street. A short distance to parks, schools and convenient transport links. Invest today for options tomorrow.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3226379](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3226379)



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**STAND ALONE ON 450SQM, STUNNINGLY GOOD**

3 1 1

**\$849,000**

**17 Chorley Avenue, Massey**  
Asking Price \$849,000

An absolute treat is on offer here on Chorley Avenue, this homely bungalow offering the best of suburban living with private and quiet section, yet close to schools, amenities and transport links. Make the most of this great real estate, priced well and positioned well with Northerly aspect, framed in lawn and peppered by fruit trees. Three bedrooms, one bathroom, separate laundry, with open plan lounge-dining opening out through french doors to north-east decking and patio area. Good parking as you enter section. A master-class in homeliness awaits you. Close to Henderson shops, schools, convenience shopping just up the street with transport links.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3493287](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3493287)



**Graham McIntyre**  
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TRANQUIL, PRIVATE, SINGLE LEVEL IN HOBSONVILLE 3 2 2

By Negotiation

**34 Starlight Cove, Hobsonville**  
By Negotiation

Modern living and presented to an extremely high standard, and it is single level (no stairs). Delivering all the benefits of modern construction within a cul-de-sac environment with established trees and shrubs, the property and the community is beautiful. Offering three bedrooms and an additional room/office/ lounge /media suite, the home certainly provides space for you to maximise how you wish to live. Master with walk-in and en-suite with main bathroom and bedrooms off a central hallway. Unencumbered alfresco access to patio areas that are completely private and quiet, with peppered plantings to delight the eye and share pockets of shade. Set up in entertainers style, the kitchen, dining, living offers an uncluttered flow to outdoor spaces. Internal access double garage.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3543221](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3543221)



**Graham McIntyre**  
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FLAT LAND - BIG SHED - AQUAFER BORE

By Negotiation

**Lot 2 / 337 Ararimu Valley Road, Helensville**  
By Negotiation

Offering a flat and usable 2.3 hectare (approx) land lot offering some significant benefits:

- An unconsented 150sqm (approx) plus high stud barn
- A deep bore with water rights accessing a deep spring aquafer
- A pre-existing house site (house removed) with septic and water tanks
- Power, water and waste infrastructure on site

This is a rare opportunity to buy land that has infrastructure already in place, and although it has no house on site it offers opportunity and improvement value.

[www.mikepero.com/RX3570208](http://www.mikepero.com/RX3570208)



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# Home & Garden

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## Blackout Electric

Pool landscape lighting ideas to help create your very own tropical island in your backyard.

Having a pool in your backyard is a great way to enjoy the summer months. But to make the most of your pool, you need to make sure you have the right lighting. The right lighting can help create a beautiful atmosphere for your pool and make it a place you can enjoy for years to come. When it comes to lighting up your pool area, there are a few different types of lights that you can choose



from. The most common type of pool light is underwater light. These lights are installed directly into the pool and can be used to create a beautiful and relaxing atmosphere. Other types of pool area lights include LED lights, which are energy efficient and can be used to create a variety of different effects. It is also important to consider the type of water and sanitisation system you will be using for your pool, for example, if your pool is a salt water system, it would be best to use stainless steel lighting fixtures to ensure they withstand the salt water and prevent rust from forming on your outdoor lighting.

Benefits of pool area lights lighting up your pool area can offer a variety of benefits. Not only do they create a beautiful atmosphere, but they can also help to increase the safety of your pool. By having lights around your pool, you can make sure that everyone can see where they are going and avoid any potential accidents. Pool lights can also help to keep your pool clean and free of debris, as they can help to illuminate any dirt or debris that may be in the pool. Pool lighting is a great way to create a beautiful atmosphere and make your pool a place you and your family and friends can enjoy for years to come. When choosing lights for your pool, make sure to get in touch with Blackout Electric who can assist you with the type of lights that would work best around your pool, the benefits they offer, and to ensure they are installed properly and safely.

With the right lights, your pool can become your very own tropical island in your backyard.

Contact Blackout Electric for all your electrical service needs. We can be found at [www.blackoutelectric.co.nz](http://www.blackoutelectric.co.nz) or [info@blackoutelectric.co.nz](mailto:info@blackoutelectric.co.nz).

## New Zealand Biosecurity Services

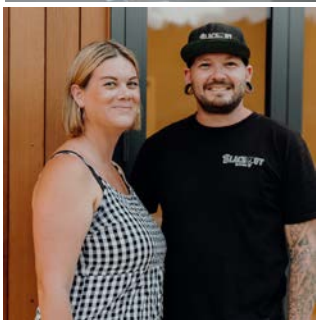
It is time to start thinking about getting those sites ready for winter planting. Areas that are being set aside for native plants should have weeds removed strategically to enhance the chances of plant survival. Often native plants can be overtaken by fast-growing weeds which smother native plants and block them from getting to the sun.

New Zealand Biosecurity Services Ltd are busy during autumn making the final sweeps through winter planting areas which can involve making sure any vines are knocked back, trees are crown lifted to provide shade but allow space to plant under, rank grass is scrub cut or mown, and access to the planting area is made suitable for vehicles.



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# Home & Garden

Knocking the weeds back one last time in autumn while the ground is still dry and before the weeds die back for the winter is critical to ensure less re-growth next spring. Control of weeds can occur by hand or using agrichemicals to suit the conditions. Make sure you contact the team at NZ Biosecurity today for a free quote on 09 447 1998 or [administration@biosecurity.net.nz](mailto:administration@biosecurity.net.nz).

## March kitchen garden

Keep on top of watering if the weather is dry. March is good time to prepare empty spaces for new crops by turning over the soil and adding compost and sheep pellets. Blood and bone can be worked into the top layer before you plant.

Plant lupin, mustard or oats for green manure if you are leaving the garden empty for a season.

Sow seeds - carrots, parsnips, kohlrabi, radish, leeks, spinach, silverbeet, beetroot, broccoli, onions, cabbage, cauliflower and brussels sprouts. Transplant to the garden when they are showing at least two sets of true leaves.

Plant seedlings - cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, beetroot, silver beet, kale, radish.

Salad greens can also still be planted in warmer regions.

Onions can be planted now; they can go in the same place year after year.

Plant peas and snow peas before autumn sets in, the seeds can be

planted straight into the ground.

Early sowing of broad beans in cooler regions, they can be planted straight into the ground. Pinch out the first flowers to encourage more.

Harvest basil and coriander before the weather cools then remove and compost plants.

Finish the harvest on your potatoes, onions and kumara. Store in a cool, dry place.

Harvest pumpkins when the vine dies away and the stems become shrunken and dried up. Leave some of the stem on when you pick. Store in a dry place until needed.

Continue harvesting pip and stone fruit. Rake up and compost all the fallen fruit.

Harvest tamarillos before the frosts arrive.

Continue to harvest feijoas and kiwifruit.

Finish harvesting passionfruit. Then prune back, feed with citrus fertiliser and water this into the soil. Spray with Copper Oxchloride and a Pyrethrum spray to take care of passion vine hoppers, mealy bug and brown spot.

Continue to feed vegetable crops with a general-purpose liquid fertiliser.

Finish tidying strawberry beds, remove old or diseased plants. Cut off runners unless you are using them for next season's plants.

Feed citrus with citrus fertiliser, water well as the fruit starts to develop.

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# Home & Garden

Spray citrus with spraying oil and Copper Oxychloride to protect against scale and verrucosis.

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When it comes to plumbing and drainage, DIY repairs can result in health and safety risks, not to mention potentially expensive mistakes.

If you are experiencing sewerage smells, overflowing drains, no or extremely hot water, ceiling leaks, overflowing guttering or gas smells, then it is definitely a good idea to call a plumbing professional.

Laser Whenuapai is your local plumbing professional that can help with any of these issues and more. Dripping taps, a slow draining sink, blocked toilet, low water pressure, clogged waste disposal or backflow issues. We have a talented team of maintenance plumbers who can easily remedy any plumbing issues, on time and hassle free.

We are also excited to share that we now offer a Supergold card discount. Just let us know you have a Supergold card when you book in your plumbing job, and we will give you 20% off your first hour of plumbing labour.

We do more than just fix your plumbing problems. Maybe you are thinking of building a house? We know building a new home requires a lot of important decision making, which is why we will take the time to discuss your plumbing and drainage requirements with you and help to create your house into a home. We can offer full

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## Introducing Signature Homes Huapai showhome

Searching for new home inspiration? Why not visit Signature Homes latest Huapai showhome to experience the difference?

This dual pavilion home provides 199sqm of effortlessly light, bright, and beautifully sun-soaked living spaces.



Enjoy three thoughtfully placed bedrooms, separate media room, a spacious open-plan kitchen, dining, and living room that flows out onto a stunning louvred pergola and deck area - perfect for entertaining with friends and family.

Designed to reflect a welcoming coastal-inspired abode, the Huapai design perfectly celebrates nature and a connection with the outdoors. Featuring a minimal tonal colour palette of crisp white, paired with stunning wooden accents to further accentuate the modern coastal look.

Experience this stunning showhome for yourself, and the quality you can expect when you choose to build with Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland.

Located at 190 Matua Road, Huapai. Open daily from 12pm-4pm.

Start your new home journey with Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland

Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland is one of the most sought-after and respected builders in Auckland, where no new build project is too big or too small.

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# Home & Garden

## Waimauku Garden Club

The last two events the Waimauku Garden Club organised were close to home and we carpooled from Huapai Domain to visit eight wonderful gardens.

Gardeners are always the most generous of people, but this must be particularly so of the gardeners in NW Auckland. Each garden welcomed us with open arms and kindly gestures such as mowing a special paddock for us to park in, providing us with cool water and beautiful seating areas where we could shelter from the sun, and sharing their experiences and expertise. I was shown how to propagate clivia and begonia, others were gifted with cuttings of plants that they had shown a special interest in and another gardener let us take cuttings from the cuttings he had propagated all around his garden.

One of the gardens we visited had never had a garden club through before, so although I expect they were nervous, they were the most gracious and generous of hosts and their garden was exquisite and spiritual.

It warms your heart going on garden visits and if you are looking to meet a wonderful group of like-minded people and discover magical pockets of gardens please join our club.

Our February visit was canceled due to Cyclone Gabrielle but will now happen in March and will be a bus tour to four South Auckland gardens including Linda Hallinan's gardens.

Please visit our Facebook page or contact any member of our committee below.

Ann 021 035 7406, Diana 027 478 8928, Gail 021 344 070, Maree 027 496 3006, Moira 027 498 9154, Sandi 027 498 9154, Jacqui 021 985 253.

It's a sad time for many of us just now and some of us have lost our gardens, but others have lost so much more. We wish to acknowledge our local volunteers who have given so much to their community, and especially the two firefighters who lost their lives and we send our loving and grateful condolences to their loved ones.

To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.

## Kumeū Community Gardens

Kumeū Community Gardens stands with our local community who has been through so much adversity these past few weeks, months and years. We are a group of local volunteers who meet alternate Saturdays to spend time in nature, nurturing the soil and growing kai for our community and for our health.

We are a varied bunch of people from lots of different backgrounds with wide ranging levels of experience but the key thing that brings us together is the passion of creating a safe space for anyone to come and join in.



## Visit our new Showhome *To experience the difference*



### Our stunning new Huapai Showhome is now open

This dual pavilion home provides 199sqm of effortlessly light, bright, and beautifully sun-soaked living spaces. Designed to reflect a welcoming coastal-inspired abode, the Huapai design perfectly celebrates nature and a connection with the outdoors. Experience this stunning Showhome for yourself, and the quality you can expect when you choose to build with **Signature Homes West & North-West Auckland**.

0800 020 600 | [signature.co.nz](https://signature.co.nz)

**Huapai Showhome:** 190 Matua Road, Huapai. Open Mon - Sun | 12pm - 4pm

**Office:** 80 Main Road, Kumeu. Open Mon - Fri | 9am - 5pm



# Home & Garden

Whether you have a green thumb or as I like to joke, a brown thumb (some wins, some losses), we welcome your involvement. If you need a place to escape to, somewhere to unwind, somewhere to find friendly faces, or just somewhere to be grounded then we gladly welcome you along. We are at 45 Oraha Road and you will find more details on our Facebook page: Kumeū Community Garden.

## Western ITM

At Western ITM we're here to support those locally in need following the recent cyclone and floods.

We have significantly reduced the prices on these essential products and more; Dricon, insulation, plasterboard, 30% off plywood, fence posts & palings, nails.

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\*Special pricing valid to 31/03/2023.

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which too is stain resistant and waterproof. We offer shower glass restoration and apply a durable protective coating afterwards.

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## Has your water tank been cleaned recently?

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## Whenuapai Floral and Garden Circle

Our Treasurer Margaret took over for our President Margaret

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# Home & Garden

who was unable to attend due to illness. Several apologies were tendered and three new members were welcomed. Birthdays were acknowledged, raffles drawn and blooms admired before Lynda Cartwright from Kings Plant Centre spoke to the gathered members.

An experienced plants person, Lynda has worked weekends at Kings for more than twenty years. She mentioned that indoor plants have come back into fashion in a big way. And she has seen more varied plants available than she was aware existed. Heritage food crops were discussed, the history of wild fruit and the importance of bumblebees in our gardens.

We would love for you to join us at the Whenuapai Village Hall, 41 Waimarie Road at 1pm on the second Thursday of the month, February, March, April, May, then September, October, November with outings on the fourth Thursdays to be advised, also luncheons early in June and December, to celebrate the birthday of our Club, and Christmas.

If you would like to know more about our Garden Club, and wish to come along, please phone either Doreen Brown on 09 832 3020 or Judy Garrity on 09 833 5592. Entry fee is just \$4 plus another dollar (optional) for the raffle (good prizes).

Until next time, Happy Gardening from Mary Anne Clark.

## Building a home has never been this easy

At G.J. Gardner Homes Rodney West, we promise to make your new home building experience a pleasure.

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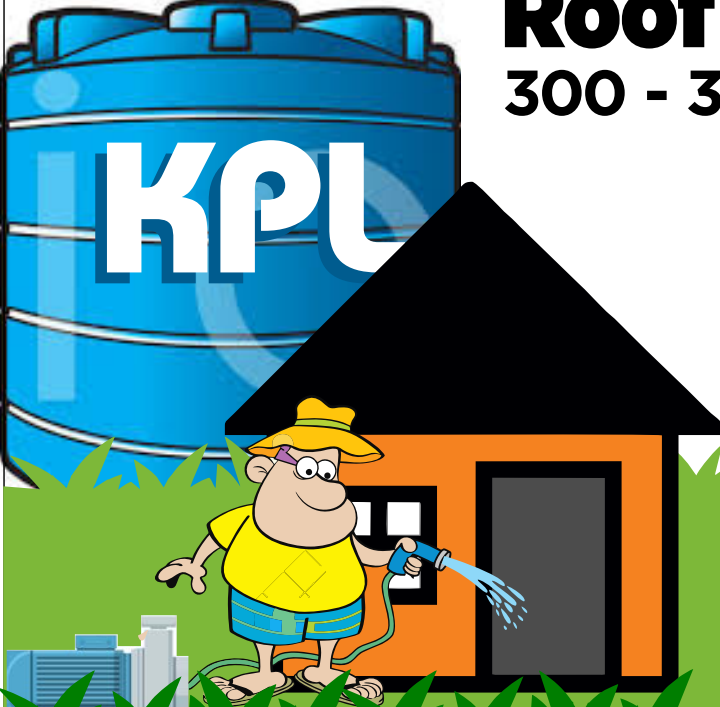
We project manage everything every step of the way and give you written assurances, regarding costs, workmanship, material guarantees, completion dates and other key issues.

Our thoroughness is just one of many reasons why year after year, more people build with G.J. Gardner Homes than any other builder.

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Budgets are tight and advertising is often expensive, but it's nice to know that someone is making it easy and cost effective. For \$100 plus GST you can be exposed to over 20,000 locals for a whole month. That is only \$3.30 a day. For more information email our editor at [editorial@kumeucourier.co.nz](mailto:editorial@kumeucourier.co.nz).




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# Central's Tips

## March 2023



### The fruit and vegetable garden

- **Feed citrus, feijoa and fig trees** as the fruit develops. This is necessary after a very rainy season to add nutrients to the soil and ensure good sized fruit
- Ahead of planting out new vegetable seedlings, **condition the soil** with compost, sheep pellets or fresh Garden Mix
- **Cover late season** blueberries, raspberries and strawberries with bird netting as the birds get braver and hungrier
- **Get adventurous** with cold season vegetables – plant seedlings of broccolini, purple sprouting broccoli, green Romanesco and coloured Asian greens
- **The power of lemon flavourings** – lemon peel, lemon verbena, lemon thyme, and lemongrass – use them together for infusions and syrups
- **Prune plum trees now**, thinning out the middle and removing dead branches. Pruning now reduces risk of disease
- **Rosemary in abundance?** Use the woody stems as kebab sticks for lamb or beef. The smell from the BBQ and the meat flavour will be delicious

### The ornamental garden

- **Plant out autumn-toned** shrubs and flowers to complement developing autumn colours: NZ coprosmas and grasses often fuse well with ornamental trees that have colour, as do dwarf maples and late flowering hydrangeas
- **One last trim and tidy** – trees, shrubs and topiaries should be tidied to harden up before winter. Crisply shaped bushes offer interesting structure when the garden dies down
- **Renovating lawns begins now** – fertilise with Prolawn Lawn Booster after a summer of unseasonably heavy rain. Mow often and resow bare patches
- Some **cutting back** of spent perennials is good housekeeping, but roses and hydrangeas should only be deadheaded as they're traditionally pruned at the end of winter
- This year the soil is warm and moist, making it ideal to **plant all those trees and shrubs** on sale at the garden centre. Add some compost or Garden Mix and a layer of mulch and they will establish easily
- **Early spring flowering bulbs** should be planted out now, including ranunculus, freesias, anemones, and crocuses. Crocuses are suitable for small containers and bowls

## Project for March

### Stabilize your muddy property? Lay Jakmat.

For parking access on muddy areas, Jakmat is the ideal surfacing mat, made in NZ from recycled plastic. Designed to take the weight of the boat, RV or extra car, Jakmat is tough and UV resistant. Once installed, all you see are beautiful decorative pebbles. Now that has to be a great investment!

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# Food & Beverage

## Spearmint Lamington Cake Recipe

This is a modern take on a classic recipe using Spearmint Tea. You could use any of your favourite herbal teas to create the glaze for this recipe - the options are endless.

It is best to use a day-old sponge, so make the sponge the day before or you can place it in the fridge just before applying the glaze to help firm up the sponge. To make a gluten-free version, replace the 2 teaspoons of plain flour with 2 teaspoons of buckwheat flour and ensure the icing sugar is also gluten free.



**Sponge Recipe Ingredients:** This recipe is from the Edmonds Fielder's Cornflour packet.

3 eggs, 1/2 cup caster sugar, 1/2 cup cornflour, 2 teaspoons plain flour, 1 teaspoon baking powder

**Sponge Method:** Preheat the oven to 190C. Select a pair of matching baking pans to use - this recipe fits into 2 x 20cm sandwich pans, however you can select four mini pans and equally distribute the batter between each of the matching pairs of pans. Line your pans with parchment paper. Separate the eggs. Beat the whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add the caster sugar and continue beating until it has dissolved. Slow the mixer and add one egg yolk at a time, ensuring each one is well incorporated before adding the next. Stop the mixer and remove the bowl. Sift the cornflour, plain flour and baking powder into the bowl - do not bang the bowl. Use a metal spoon and fold the dry ingredients into the egg mixture, careful not to overmix it. Spoon the batter into the pans and use your scales to weigh the pans to ensure the mixture is even in each of your pans. Use a spatula to carefully spread and smooth out the mixture and top. Bake for 12 minutes, then check the sponges to see if they spring back when lightly pressed. If not, continue baking for a further 3 minutes, then check again. Once cooked, remove from the oven and leave on a rack in the pan for a few minutes, then take a small and sharp knife and run the knife around the inside of the pans to loosen the sponges, then remove them from the pans and leave on the rack until completely cooled. When cooled, remove the parchment from the base.

**Spearmint Glaze:** 2 cups icing sugar, 2 teaspoons Spearmint tea, 3 tablespoons boiling water, 1 teaspoon vanilla essence, 1 tablespoon butter, approximately 2 cups desiccated coconut

**Glaze Method:** Begin by making the Spearmint tea. Add the tea to an infuser and pour the boiling water over the tea and allow to steep for 2 minutes. Strain and squeeze out all of the liquid. Add the butter and stir until it has melted. Add the vanilla essence. Next sift the icing sugar into the tea mixture and stir well. Holding the sponge in one hand, carefully spoon the glaze over the sponge, turning it as needed and coating the entire top and sides. Then take the sponge and dip it into the desiccated coconut, brushing the coconut up the sides until the whole top and sides are coated. Place on a wire rack and allow to set. Repeat with the remaining sponge cake.

**Spearmint Sponge Cake Assembly - Whipped Cream:** You will need 200ml double cream, 1 teaspoon vanilla essence and 1 tablespoon icing sugar. Whip the cream until it holds nicely. Spoon into a piping bag and pipe onto the bottom cake. Add the top cake and sprinkle a little extra coconut over to give the appearance of an even topping. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

You can purchase Spearmint Tea and other Certified Organic herbal teas, sign up for our quarterly newsletter and see our recipes at: [www.NewZealandHerbalBrew.co.nz](http://www.NewZealandHerbalBrew.co.nz).

## Good from Scratch

Our thoughts go out to all those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle. For those who have lost homes, property and loved ones. This has struck at the heart of our community - we are at a loss for words.



**11th March - Farm Shop day -** Join us on the 11th March for our first farm shop of the year. We love our monthly farm shop days, they provide an opportunity for the cookery school to open its doors to the public. Every time we get to meet lots of lovely new faces, catch up with some old ones and enjoy the company of our locals.

This time we are excited to announce that we will be joined by some wonderful artisanal growers and producers. We are excited at the opportunity to create a local hub, a hive of activity for all things food and culinary, and if successful we are hoping to extend this to every farm shop - who knows we might eventually end up with a Farmers market.

If you or someone you know might be interested in becoming a stall holder with us here at Good from Scratch please get in touch at [info@goodfromscratch.co.nz](mailto:info@goodfromscratch.co.nz)

**12th March - The Muriwai Deli Bread Class -** I am very excited to



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# Food & Beverage

inform you that on the 12th March we will be hosting a Sunday morning bread class with Boyd and Cam from the Muriwai Deli. This will be a 9am - 1pm masterclass in all things bread. From focaccia to rewana to sourdough, master your bread making skills with a fun, hands on class. With only 16 spots - be sure to book in soon. For more information and to grab your tickets head over to [www.goodfromscratch.co.nz](http://www.goodfromscratch.co.nz).

## Don Buck Honey

Don Buck Honey has new season local honey from the summer 2022-23 harvest season. Waitakere Forest Blend 500g pots for \$12 (can be purchased with other potted honeys with the usual mix-and-match discounts). There are also 2.5kg mini-buckets: Rural West Auckland Blend for \$35, and Waitakere Kanuka Honey for \$40. Orders can be collected from my home address in Massey or couriered to you with Post Haste. Order online at [www.DonBuckHoney.co.nz](http://www.DonBuckHoney.co.nz) or email [Donbuckhoney@gmail.com](mailto:Donbuckhoney@gmail.com). Get them while the honey is runny.



## Jesters Pies Westgate at the Kumeu Show

Come down and say hello at the 2023 Kumeu Show. Held Sat - Sun, 10th and 11th of March at the Kumeu showgrounds, you will be able to find us in the food area to the left of the main stage. We'll have all your favourite pies & rolls, including Gluten Free and Vegan options as well as ice cold drinks.



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# Health & Beauty

## What is neuromuscular therapy?

Neuromuscular therapy differs from typical massage therapy techniques such as deep tissue massage or lighter Swedish massage.

Deep tissue massage accesses deeper layers of tissue in addition to the normal muscular tissue. The service is typically offered on day spa menu and is described as a deep-tissue massage as opposed to a lighter Swedish Massage. In a spa setting, deep tissue or Swedish massages are typically full-body procedures with focus on a few troublesome regions, with muscle relaxation being the goal. Additionally, deep tissue massage does not require any additional knowledge or certification beyond the foundational massage therapy curriculum.

Neuromuscular Therapy is a highly specialised type of manual therapy that treats trigger points, muscle adhesions, and fascial (connective tissue) patterns to address pain and dysfunction. These adhesions, trigger points, and fascial patterns can develop because of trauma, a postural pattern, or a series of repetitive movements. During neuromuscular therapy sessions, specific treatment procedures are used to release tight fascia, palpate, and reduce trigger points in tight bands of muscle, and release blocked muscle locations to address these patterns.

Neuromuscular therapies typically focus on the primary and secondary body parts that are contributing to your pain and limiting your range of motion.



The training to become a qualified Neuromuscular Therapist is rigorous as you require a 3-year Bachelor's degree. The training includes becoming familiar with every trigger point, their typical referral zones, and the biomechanical factors that contribute to the development of trigger points (by observing your gait and movements). It also includes hands-on clinical application of all specific treatment protocols for each muscle and region. A true expert in muscles is a Certified Neuromuscular Therapist.

At NorthWest Physio Plus, Nicky is our qualified Neuromuscular Therapist. For more information call 09 412 2945, email [info@nwphysioplus.co.nz](mailto:info@nwphysioplus.co.nz) or see [www.northwestphysioplus.co.nz/massagetherapy.html](http://www.northwestphysioplus.co.nz/massagetherapy.html)

## Seven signs you need an eye exam

1. Blurry Vision - Near or far blurry vision is one of the major signs you need an eye exam. Sudden blurry vision can be a sign of larger health issues and should be seen urgently.

### 7 Clear Signs You Need an Eye Exam



2. Headaches - When the mechanism that helps the lens and cornea to focus on images fails, the small muscles in the eyes are pressurised to work harder, causing eye strain and headaches.

Working in dim or overly bright light, or eye conditions such as astigmatism, myopia (short-sightedness) or Hypermetropia (long-sightedness) may also cause headaches.

3. Eye Pain or Eye Strain - Eye pain or eye strain can be a sign of an eye infection, or a more serious eye condition. Have an eye examination if you are experiencing eye pain or strain.

4. Double Vision - Double vision is also known as diplopia and can occur in one eye (monocular), or both eyes. Sudden diplopia needs urgent attention.

5. Changes in Night Vision - For most adults, the first sign that night vision is fading is increased difficulty when driving at night or seeing subtitles on the TV.

Do you see halos around lights or have eye pain at night? If so, get your eyes tested right away.

6. Dark patches or flashing lights in your vision - This could be a retinal detachment - have retinal scans done promptly to be sure of best treatment outcomes.

7. Squinting - People squint when they face visual difficulties because the act of squinting reduces light scattering and improves vision. So, if you notice that you are squinting more than usual, book your

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# Health & Beauty

eye examination <https://for-eyes-optometrists-nz.au1.cliniko.com/bookings> with Matthew or Molly at For Eyes in the Kumeu Shopping Village phone 09 412 8172.

## Healthy teeth for a longer life - protect and prevent

The great news is people nowadays are living longer, with the average life expectancy extending well into their nineties. Living in 2023 also means that we expect a far better lifestyle than aged people have typically enjoyed in the past, and therefore dentures are no longer the desired option.



What must be emphasised is oral health is closely related to your general health. Your mouth changes as you age. As you get older you need to take extra precautions and make your visits to the dentist more regular just like you do with the doctors.

Regular maintenance visits will prevent and protect your teeth and help you keep your teeth for life. Luckily, dentistry has evolved and here at Kumeu Dental we can now offer durable, long-term sealants giving protection for high risk exposed roots, as well as other options like implants, bridges and crowns where the structure of the tooth has already been compromised.

Call Kumeu Dental on 09 412 9507 and ask how we can help you maintain your beautiful smile for life.

## I am woman, hear me roar!

March is where we celebrate International Women's Day, and I am proud to be a woman.

When I was young, I wanted to be a boy. I believed they were stronger, had it easier and were allowed to do more than girls. It felt like my brother was permitted to do things I wasn't.

It took years to realise it was because he was older than me and when I grew up I was allowed to do many of the things I thought 'only boys could do'.



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But it was too late, I already had a belief that being a girl meant I was weak and could only do certain things. That belief stopped me trying many things up to the age of 40. Today I believe I am strong, resilient, powerful and can do whatever I set my mind to. And in the words of Helen Reddy from her 1972 song I Am Woman:

I am woman, hear me roar, In numbers too big to ignore, And I know too much to go back an' pretend, 'Cause I've heard it all before, And I've been down there on the floor, And no one's ever gonna keep me down again, Yes, I am wise, But it's wisdom born of pain, Yes, I've paid the price, But look how much I've gained, If I have to, I can do anything, I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman.

Lorraine Maguire - Rapid Transformational Therapist - [www.lorrainemaguire.com](http://www.lorrainemaguire.com).

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# Area Columnists

## Kumeu Library

March is always a busy time in the Kumeu area, with the Kumeu Show on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 March - keep an eye out for Kumeu Library there and come and say hello!

Also in March is Census Day (Tuesday 7 March), and everybody who is in New Zealand on the night of 7 March is required to complete a Census form. Census data is important to ensure that communities get the resources and funding they need, and this is especially relevant in times of emergency such as those recently experienced. By doing the census, you create a better idea of what you, your family, and your community need. By knowing these community needs, Auckland Council, government agencies, iwi, community groups and businesses can plan how to respond to them.

Here at Kumeu Library we can make completing the Census easier for you - our public computers have quick links to the online census forms so you can access and complete them easily. If you prefer physical forms, you can request them online at Kumeu Library - please note that Kumeu Library is unable to supply physical forms. Or you can use our free WiFi to complete your forms or request physical forms online using your own device. Online Census forms can be filled in any time before Friday 7 April 2023.

Also coming up at Kumeu Library: Ukulele for Beginners! An introductory workshop will be held at Kumeu Library on Tuesday 21 March from 9.30 to 11.00 am. We have a limited number of ukuleles available for use and spaces are limited - please book by emailing [kumeu.library@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:kumeu.library@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz).

Follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/kumeulibrary](http://www.facebook.com/kumeulibrary)) to keep up with all Kumeu Library's news and events.

## Supporting people through Cyclone Gabrielle

It's been a really tough few weeks for communities across the Kaipara and Whangaparaoa. Cyclone Gabrielle is the most significant weather event New Zealand has seen this century. The severity and the breadth of the damage hasn't been experienced in a generation, and I know the events have taken a huge toll on many New Zealanders.

Over the past weeks I connected and worked with the local Civil Defence and Community organised Emergency centres across the region and was impressed with the way people from all walks of life came together, stepped in and pitched in to help clear properties inundated by the floods. While I was adapting to a life without electricity, without internet and without phone connection my heart

went out to families in Kumeu whose homes were flooded for, in some cases the third time in recent years.

I was impressed with the reaction of Kumeu families who, since the cyclone hit, as whānau, friends and neighbours pulled together to keep each other safe, warm and fed. The resilience and community spirit shown by everyone has been remarkable, but I know there's still a long road ahead for many, especially those who live in Muriwai where the tragedy the cyclone brought was extremely personal.

My thoughts go out to the family, friends and colleagues of the volunteer firefighters who lost their lives in Muriwai during Cyclone Gabrielle. They were protecting their community and the lives of others - leaving their own homes and loved ones to do so.

Our volunteer firefighters play an incredibly vital role in our communities. They provide critical frontline response and support to us through some of our hardest times, as we have seen first-hand during this devastating cyclone.

My aroha goes to all who have been impacted by the cyclone. The loss of life and destruction is heartbreaking. These are extraordinarily hard times, but we will get through them together.

As we recover from the Cyclone and flooding it is obvious that Auckland needs to review its ability to respond to such serious disasters and climate events and recognise the impact of climate change as well as the need to build and maintain our water infrastructure to cope with the demands such changes cause.

As you are aware it is only the third time in our history, the Government has declared a National State of Emergency. This enables us to support the affected regions, provide additional resources as they are needed, and help set the priorities across the country for the response. The Government has provided a \$11.5 million community support package to provide immediate relief for individuals, families and households as well as putting in place funding to help farmers, growers and rural communities mobilise and co-ordinate recovery efforts from the cyclone and will be providing even more support once we know the full extent of the damage caused.

We've also had people trying to get hold of loved ones who are now cut off without reception. While emergency response teams worked as hard as they could to get communications back online, it has been an anxious time for a lot of us but with great community spirit and co-operation we will recover. I'm sure that the Kumeu Show will give us all the chance to celebrate the resilience of the community later this month. I look forward to meeting you there

Marja Lubeck MP - Labour List MP based in Kaipara ki Mahurangi

## Citizens Advice Bureau

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**Marja Lubeck**  
Labour List MP based in Kaipara ki Mahurangi



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**Marja Lubeck**  
Labour List MP based in Kaipara ki Mahurangi

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# Area Columnists

Advice Bureau Helensville.

Clients are still being looked after and cared for whether at its office at 16 Commercial Rd, online or by phone.

A petition is proving there's ample public support for the popular community organisation with more than 4000 people signing so far.

Auckland Council's proposed funding cuts or removal from CABs in Auckland in its budget for 2023/24 could spell the end of its helping hand after serving Tāmaki Makaurau for over 50 years.

"The real question is what will happen if CAB's don't exist?" says manager Rani Timoti.

"Will staff on councils and agencies in central government have or take the time to listen non-judgmentally to stressed out and overwhelmed people? Fill out forms if people don't know how to do so? Patiently go through the details and provide options for their clients?"

Encouraged by the public positive outcry so far for Auckland's 32 CABs, Rani says their "amazing army" of volunteers help anyone with everyday stuff to more complex issues, mainly speak for the vulnerable, disadvantaged or those who have to understand or access information they haven't come across yet.

A vast array of local issues like neighbourhood problems are part of CAB Helensville's service, which would normally be dealt with by council.

"Sometimes people don't know about us because they don't need us. But one day they may and we hope to give them the information and reassurance they need."

That day came for many first-time users with the weather bombs which rocked Auckland.

Volunteers helped them with issues like using CAB phones or the Internet as they had no power, accessing fresh water and wanting to know how to donate. Some clients were referred from council or anxious about approaching council and government agencies for support.

And support is one of CAB's strong points, reflected in its Maori translation of its name as pou and its Maori Manaia as the kaupapa (set of principles) for commitment to Maori.

Meanwhile, the organisation hosts its national awareness week from March 20 to 26 supporting diverse communities and celebrating multiculturalism within the CAB whānau.

The continual theme of helping clients in languages other than English, limited literacy, numeracy and digital literacy issues and a range of communities is the purpose of this week.

\*Auckland CABs help people with information and advice and connect them with the support they need. Last year our dedicated volunteers in Auckland CABs helped more than 160,000 people. There are nearly 1,000 volunteers in Auckland, operating out of 32 CABs from Wellsford to Papakura.

CAB is campaigning to Save Auckland CABs with a petition running

at <https://our.actionstation.org.nz/petitions/save-auckland-cabs> or available to sign in person at CABs or visit our website [www.cab.org.nz](http://www.cab.org.nz) for more information.

## Expect more flooding

Three severe flooding events in 18 months has not been the frequency Northwest river valley residents have been used to.

The weather patterns are changing and they're changing fast.

Many in the valley on lower lying land are familiar with flood waters entering the lower parts of their property on a regular basis, then two to three times a year a larger event that may fill whole paddocks and cross low-lying roads occurs. No big deal.

However, the last three flooding events are part of larger weather system/cyclone changes carrying more energy and water vapour than we might expect to see this far south in the Pacific.

The August 30-31, 2021 event was unusual as it was a narrow river of very humid air driven from the east up the river valley, causing a localised but devastating flood during our COVID lockdown period.

The rainfall in the Waitakere Ranges and the hillsides that flank the river valley carry the water to the Kumeu River, which becomes the Kaipara River at Waimauku.

There are many feeder streams, but as a general rule a rainfall under 100mm and at about 10mm/hr in the hills will not cause flooding of homes in the Waitakere-Waimauku river valley.

Once the rainfall increases to 120-150mm in 12hrs, some flooding of low lying homes will occur.



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# Area Columnists

At about 200mm in 12 hrs, the flooding will rise further up the walls, 20-30cm in some areas and 60-70cm in others depending on their height above the passage of the flood waters.

Even higher rainfall levels will increase the heights further.

Clearly, in the areas carrying the main flow of the fast moving flood waters, the depth can be 1-10m deep and is far too dangerous to go anywhere near unless a viable rescue is considered possible by emergency services.

There is a need to quickly review where we are in terms of the risk to life and property due to flooding in our river valley.

How much of the flooding was due to poorly maintained and clogged water channels? How much was due to the massive increase in impermeable surfaces by housing and commercial properties? How much was due to the rate and volume of rainfall?

Kumeu received about five times its average rainfall this January.

Do we stop any further building consents on the areas at risk of 100 to 250-year flooding events? ( "A common misunderstanding is that a 100-year flood is likely to occur only once in a 100-year period. In fact, there is approximately a 63.4% chance of one or more 100-year floods occurring in any 100-year period" (Wikipedia 100-year flood).

Do we ease up on compliance and help property owners to raise houses that have experienced repeated recent flooding events?

There is no doubt about several things.

The weather patterns are changing and not in our favour.

We need to speed up the delivery of an automated flood alert system for the valley to save the lives of people and animals, protect vehicles, farm and household gear.

We need to assess the different mechanisms to fund the clearing of the waterways and look afresh at the strategies we will need to increase our resilience against changing weather patterns. Ultimately, the ability to have access to insurance for homes and businesses is likely to drive the change as to where houses and businesses can safely be built, but there are many on the river valley who want to stay there and are working on the resilience required

to do so.

By Guy Wishart, Kumeu Community Action (KHRRA) Chairman

## Sayers Says It

By Rodney ward Councillor, Greg Sayers. The tragic loss of two Muriwai Volunteer Firefighters, along with the loss of personal property with many families still displaced from their homes, has both shaken and galvanized the Muriwai community.

Everyone's thoughts remain with the volunteer firefighter's families and with the Muriwai brigade.

In areas such as Waimauku, Helensville, Muriwai, Tuapaki, Kumeu/Huapai, and in many more communities - neighbours, volunteers and local contractors selflessly rallied to do what needed to be done.

These communities really got stuck in and they were amazing.

Now the slow process of recovery, dealing with the insurance processes, getting essential services such as water, electricity, gas, roads and sewage repaired, repairing homes and businesses will be time consuming - and tiring.

During the events some communities and their families felt totally isolated, not just for hours but some for days, without being told what was going on.

Mayor Wayne Brown has ordered an independent review of the council's emergency management preparedness and performance. This follows criticism of himself and the council's slowness to respond adequately on January 27.

One aspect of the floods of particular concern was the dead fish and eels in the Kaipara River near Helensville, along with an overpowering stench on the grasslands once the flood waters retreated.

Any floodwaters will undoubtedly be contaminated and any contact should always be avoided. However, these levels of pollution haven't been seen before.

The Auckland Council is carrying out testing to identify what the contaminants were - ie: could they be from overflowing septic tanks, or a breached chemical stockpile somewhere up river, bacteria, a disturbed holding tank somewhere, the council's own Huapai sewage plant, or from a combination of sources?

Regarding the council's levels of general maintenance - I have written to council Chief Executive Jim Stabback and Mayor Wayne



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# Area Columnists

Brown, firmly pointing out the failures in proactive river weed maintenance, plus the council's failures in local road and drainage maintenance. These basics have to be done, but were neglected, despite repetitive requests from the public.

The Mayor has replied saying he agrees. He has instructed the CEOs of both Auckland Transport and Auckland Council to tell him what they are going to do to get it sorted. The results of this will be reported back to the Kumeu Courier.

If you need any specific assistance please feel free to email greg.sayers@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or call me on 021 285 9900.

## Stay strong

It hasn't been our usual summer you would have to say.

Some of us feel cheated by the excessive rain and winds ruining their holiday plans, while others have had their lives turned upside down and are wondering when things will return to a new normal for them.

Our support emergency systems have been tested beyond their ability to cope in many cases and nothing seemed to happen fast enough as teams from Vector, Auckland Transport (AT), Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Watercare, environment services, Healthy Waters and many others scrambled to fix our battered and broken infrastructure.

Viewing AT's list of roads that needed work, locals commented that their damaged road hadn't even made it on their list.

Vector staff were working furiously to reconnect households whose water supply had stopped and their fridges and freezers were now storage cupboards for warm and thawed food.

Barbecues were cooking whatever food they could and communities were ramping up their emergency networks.

It was amazing to witness and be involved with the highly dedicated group of community recovery teams that organised food supplies, showers for those without power, fresh water, accommodation and in some cases, airlifted food and supplies to the inaccessible parts of South Head.

In many cases the lack of communication as communities struggled to come to terms with what had just happened to them led to an



outpouring of accusations about the effectiveness of their support networks.

Many of these comments were quite fair given the circumstances. It is also fair to say that Auckland Emergency Management (AEM), Vector, AT, etc were not ready for events on this scale. They all have plans and protocols to deal with large scale events, but Cyclone Gabrielle in particular, given its high winds and long extended period of rainfall, was at a level Auckland city had not seen for some time - if ever.

We listened with sadness and disbelief to reports of our brave, courageous firefighters who lost their lives in the service of their community.

We are not a big, disconnected community in the NorthWest. We know each other and many of us knew Dave and Craig. There are no words at times like these to express our gratitude and sorrow for the sacrifice these men have made for the sake of others. Our hearts go out to their families who are grieving with this huge loss.

As the power is reconnected, water pumps start turning, fridges rattle back to life and some of life as normal returns to many, there is still a long tail of destruction left by Cyclone Gabrielle in particular, but also the late January floods.

For some their roads will need to be remade as the slips were very severe and this is not a quick process.

So many homes at Muriwai and other west coast beaches are red stickered which means people are unable to safely live there. The uncertainty over the process of returning to live at their homes will be making many very anxious.

Most of us have never had to deal with an issue like this before, so it comes as a huge shock.

The geotechnical team who assess the stability of the soils the houses are built on will work to get as many of the families back into their houses when it is safe to do so.

Until then, we as a community need to support one another in any way we can, and we have proved already that we are willing and able to do just that.

Kia kaha Northwest. By Guy Wishart, Rodney Local Board, Kumeu Subdivision.

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