



# WAIROA IN FOCUS

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## FROM MAYOR CRAIG LITTLE CYCLONE GABRIELLE THREE YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, February 14, marks three years since the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle.

Many of the memories of that time are still so vivid, and clearly, our town and district still bear the scars from the extreme weather and flooding. As we approach the third-year anniversary, it is timely to remember and acknowledge the heroic actions of so many who came to our people's aid. The Wairoa township is a low-lying delta and has been flooded on many occasions over the decades. Many of us still remember the damage caused by Cyclone Bola, nearly 38 years ago, when part of the main Wairoa Bridge was washed away.

Sadly, despite our history of flooding, until now, we have never had any flood protection. That is why it is so great that the Wairoa flood mitigation project has secured formal support to proceed to construction. The progress of this project is a direct result of the many sacrifices whānau in our community have made by selflessly making their land available to help ensure our town's future security through the building of the spillway and stopbanks.

This project is a huge milestone for Wairoa, and we remain appreciative to the current and former governments for the \$70 million contribution, which recognised that flood mitigation for our town was long overdue.

From a recovery perspective, we are making progress. The new permanent Te Reinga Bridge is on track to open next month, and work is underway on the Waikari and Te Puna Bridges, which were both impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. Council has also made a tremendous effort to repair our roading network and make improvements where possible.

I know there are still homes and buildings that remain impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle flooding, and also the June 2024 flooding. Through its

usual day-to-day activities, Council is still supporting the community to recover from the flood events. While there is no longer a formal Recovery team or office, our staff are still active in the community and helping people to make progress, such as working towards homes having yellow stickers removed. If you need assistance, please call the Council on 06 838 7309 or email [customerservices@wairoadc.govt.nz](mailto:customerservices@wairoadc.govt.nz).

## BUILDING COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

Our Council has been placing a real emphasis on building community resilience to help prepare people for future emergencies.

Around a dozen Community Civil Defence Response wānanga have been held throughout the district, and more are planned. The aim of these get-togethers is to bring communities together to form community resilience plans and to empower communities to be as self-sustaining as possible during Civil Defence emergencies and weather events.

The focus is on strengthening our community's ability to respond to emergencies.

The wānanga are about people coming together, sharing intel, resources and needs of families in the area, and bringing all that local knowledge together and putting it into a plan.

Key objectives from the workshops include building a trusted team of community response personnel who will play key roles during emergencies, building a database of vulnerable kaumātua/elderly and families, identifying key champions to connect with Wairoa's Emergency Operations Centre (Civil Defence operations at Council) and building a database of equipment and materials that can be used during a response.

The wānanga cover natural disaster preparedness, community response models and response roles, teams and functions.

More workshops are being planned. For more information please email Community Engagement Manager Austin King [austin@wairoadc.govt.nz](mailto:austin@wairoadc.govt.nz)

Council staff will also be at the East Coast Farming Expo next Wednesday and Thursday (February 18 and 19), and the team will be happy to have a chat about community resilience.

Together we can prepare, respond and protect our whānau and community.



Wairoa Mayor Craig Little welcomes new First Choice mini supermarket owners Parkash and Reena Lohana and their son Jayesh to town.

## MINI SUPERMARKET FOR NORTH CLYDE

It is great to have mini supermarket, First Choice, based on the North Clyde side of town.

It has been sad to see the Mobil site building on Bridge Street remain empty since it was flooded in Cyclone Gabrielle.

Now, thanks to the dedication of Reena and Parkash Lohana, we have a new business that offers convenience and a new choice.

North Clyde-based businesses have done it hard, and I have nothing but respect for all business owners who have worked hard to continue to provide a service to the North Clyde community. Thank you all for your dedication.



Wairoa Mayor Craig Little

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

### Assurance, Risk & Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday, February 17, 1pm

### Māori Standing Committee

Tuesday, February 24, 1pm

## DOG REGISTRATION PAYMENT PLAN

Setting up a payment plan over the year can help reduce the pinch when it is annual registration time.

To find out more [www.wairoadc.govt.nz/services/animal-education/dog-owners](http://www.wairoadc.govt.nz/services/animal-education/dog-owners)

## WAIROA EVENTS CALENDAR

Are you holding an event?

Add it to the Wairoa Events Calendar! Email your event to [communications@wairoadc.govt.nz](mailto:communications@wairoadc.govt.nz)

Make sure you add the name of your event, the date and time and a small blurb about your event.

You can view the calendar here [www.visitwairoa.co.nz/events](http://www.visitwairoa.co.nz/events)

## AFTER HOURS SERVICE

If there is an outage to a Council service outside of regular business hours please call 06 838 7309 - 24/7.

### Catch up with Mayor Craig Kanohi ki te Kanohi Face to Face

If you have anything you would like to discuss with the Mayor, please call the council offices on 06 838 7309 to arrange a meeting time. The Mayor is available to meet on Wednesdays or by appointment.

## The GAIETY Cinema & Theatre Now Showing February 12 - 19

### Grand Prix of Europe

G | 1hr 38m

Sunday 15th February 2pm

### Send Help

R16 | 1hr 53m

Friday 13th February 5.30pm

### Mārama PREMIERE

R16 | 1hr 53m

Friday 13th February 8pm

### Mercy

M | 1hr 40m

Wednesday 18th February 5.30pm

### Avatar: Fire and Ash

M | 3hr 12m

Saturday 14th February 2pm

### Crime 101 PREMIERE

M | 2hr 15m

Thursday 12th February 5.30pm

Saturday 14th February 5.30pm

### The Spongebob Movie: Search for Squarepants

G | 1hr 36m

Sunday 15th February 11.30am

### GOAT PREMIERE

M | 1hr 40m

Thursday 19th February 5.30pm

**Creative Communities SCHEME**

**Do you have an amazing creative idea?**  
We have funding to help you bring it to life!

## Applications are now open

For more information head to [www.wairoadc.govt.nz/our-district/grants-funding/creative-communities-nz/](http://www.wairoadc.govt.nz/our-district/grants-funding/creative-communities-nz/)



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