



Waitākere Ranges Resilience Planning

A report written by Community Think
for the Waitākere Ranges Local Board, 2023



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Community Think was contracted by the Waitākere Ranges Local Board to talk to communities in the local board area about their resilience planning. In a series of informal conversations, we asked people the following three questions:

- How is resilience planning currently going within your community? Do you have a plan?
- What has worked well? What ideas would you like to share with other communities?
- What would assist you to further build resilience within your community and in the collective communities of the Waitākere Ranges?

How to read this report

★ Star bullet-points indicate recommendations or requests for the Waitākere Ranges Local Board, Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) or Auckland Council.

Yellow highlighted text are recommendations or requests for the Waitākere Ranges Local Board.

Teal highlighted text are recommendations or requests for the Auckland Emergency Management (AEM)

Red highlighted text are recommendations or requests for the Auckland Council

Setting the scene

The Waitākere Ranges area

The Waitākere Ranges Local Board extends from Whatipū and Titirangi in the south, to Waitākere and O'Neill Bay in the north. The 2018 census records that 52,095 people were living in this area, a 9 per cent increase from 2013. Of these, 13 per cent identify as Māori.

Te Kawerau ā Maki and Ngāti Whātua are mana whenua of the Waitākere Ranges, an area which is also the site of a large regional park. Hoani Waititi Marae is a local urban marae. Te Kawerau ā Maki acquired land in 2020 to build a marae and papakāinga at Te Henga/Bethells Beach.

The Auckland Prosperity Index shows that Waitākere Ranges has the highest self-employment rate in Auckland. The area has high levels of home ownership, relatively affordable rentals and low unemployment, although there are significant differences between more and less affluent areas. Healthcare, education and construction services are the main employment sectors.



Who did we talk to?

- Te Henga Bethells Beach Emergency Resilience Group
- Anawhata Resilience Planning Group
- Piha Residents' Association
- Cornwallis Resilience Group
- Karekare Resilience Group
- Henderson Valley Residents' Association
- Ōrātia Community Patrol
- Waiatarua Ratepayers' Committee
- Glen Eden Community House

The Waitākere Ranges Local Board was interested in hearing from other communities in the area, but some were unavailable to talk to us during the timeframe of this project, or chose not to participate.



Defining terms

There are several parts to the work communities are doing (and need to do) in the space of emergency preparedness—specifically resilience work, emergency planning and recovery work.

► Resilience work

Resilience is created by the existing connections that are there before the disaster. It's not the services coming in during the recovery.—Karekare resilience group member

We heard an awareness that emergency response is reliant on the connections and communication flow between groups and individuals in communities. In areas where people don't know one another and trust is low, it is very hard for information to reach people and people become isolated when an emergency occurs.



Resilience work involves the background work of building capacity in a community in a variety of ways:

- More people being aware of the location and services provided by community hubs, sports centres, churches, marae etc. in their area,
- People getting to know their neighbours through local events or campaigns to encourage connection,
- People knowing who the local leaders are, where resources are available and where to go for information
- Existing community groups having greater connection to one another so they can cooperate and collaborate on emergency planning, response and recovery,
- Surveys and information-gathering to find out who is in the community, what their needs are and what resources (physical, professional and personal) they can offer

There are many ways communities do resilience work, including:

- Community events like stream clean-ups, festivals, information evenings, public meetings, family events,
- Involving more people as organisers and volunteers
- Encouraging small social events like street parties
- Setting up and managing community communications channels like Facebook, WhatsApp and electronic and print newsletters
- Creating a process for welcoming new people to the community and providing them with relevant information

► Emergency planning

Emergency planning involves creating clear plans that effectively communicate to everyone in the community what they should do in various types of emergencies. A lot of research must go into the development of the plan, and it involves a commitment from organisations, council, public venues and individual residents to play certain roles and provide services in the case of an emergency.

Each community must survey the specific challenges and risks inherent in their physical, social and economic environment to identify what situations need to be addressed in their plan. They need to consider what services and resources are available (or not) and how they will meet the needs of people and continue the services of local infrastructure (roads, buildings, electricity, telecommunications, food and water supply) affected by the emergency.

► Recovery work

Recovery work is what happens in the aftermath of an emergency. This may involve:

- Re-homing people who have been evacuated and can't return to their homes;
- Counselling and emotional support for people who have suffered in the crisis;
- Ongoing provision of food and other resources;
- Disseminating information from authorities, and so on.

Often those who have been involved in the emergency response become the de facto organisers for the recovery process, which can lead to burnout and an excess of trauma being concentrated in a few individuals. Good preparation for emergencies involves setting up recovery services that do not rely on the same resources (especially personnel) as the emergency response plan.



Themes drawn from the community kōrero

Advisory group and resilience network

Two suggestions arose from our kōrero that were important to all the groups, and can be applied across the whole Waitākere Ranges:

1. The formation of a resilience planning advisory group that is recognised by Auckland Council, AEM and the local board. This group could do the work of devising a template for resilience plans and advise and support all parties on a lot of the recommendations that are included in this report.
2. A less formal network of resilience groups across the area which links to the advisory group through shared members.

Communication lines with emergency services and council

Those communities that are actively involved in resilience and emergency planning, who have written plans and have been through significant events, would like to know in advance how communication will happen with AEM, Auckland Council and 111 responders. Ideally, they would like to have the name and direct contacts for at least one person who is responsible for communicating specifically with them during an emergency—someone who is aware of the particular needs of their community, has read their plan and visited their area to meet with them.

AEM runs a simulation event, where community members can experience what AEM staff do during an event. When this was suggested to communities, there was some reservation. Some have already been through high stress situations, and experienced trauma and prolonged stress. They are looking for a stronger relationship with AEM, where they are reassured that AEM knows who they are, is aware of their plan and

willing to work together. Although some requested a visit to AEM, they would rather a two-way sharing of information and understanding than to be put through a pre-set event that is a one-way communication.

★ Auckland Council—allocate a person or small team to the west coast beaches and organise training for them, including understanding the needs of those communities and reading their plans. This person should be involved during an emergency and have influence within AEM and relevant emergency service organisations.

Resourcing communities to do resilience work

Some of the communities we spoke to are very well connected and have good, ongoing communications channels. All of the communities could see how important this work of building relationships, of knowing one another and sharing information is for emergency preparation, response and recovery. Some of the communities we spoke to requested extra support to begin or continue this resilience work.

Karekare gives a good example of how emergency response planning can only go so far. Relationships formed through ongoing community resilience work become vital when it is necessary to work together under pressure:

Overall it was great to have a plan and roles to roll out a response to the cyclone impacts. This had to be flexible though as it became apparent quite quickly that different areas were differently impacted and had to organise themselves in pragmatic ways to respond to their respective neighbourhood needs. Essential to think outside the box and appreciate we had to be organic in our approach, trust the process and each other.

★ Auckland Council—make funding available to support communities to write, update and distribute their resilience plan.

Four of the nine communities we visited have a written plan, while the others felt they would benefit from support to start that work. They are aware that a substantial input of resource is needed to create plans and update existing plans, and would like to be able to remunerate residents who put in their time. Because plans need to be accessible to everyone in the community without relying on internet and power, communities would like support to print the large numbers of plans needed to distribute to every household.

With the necessity for regular updates, this support would need to be factored in as ongoing or repeating rather than one-off, contestable, project funding that communities need to apply for.



Training for residents

Communities are in an uncertain space when it comes to their plans and their actual response in an emergency event, unsure of how far they should take matters into their own hands, put themselves in dangerous situations, and take on tasks that would normally be done by professional services with professional equipment. At the same time, they have been advised and are aware that, when roads are impassable, those services may take days or weeks to arrive, putting lives in danger by their absence.

We were warned very early on by a Waitākere Local Board representative who came to meet with us that we would have to do as much as we could for ourselves and couldn't necessarily rely on a lot of Council or Auckland Transport help. —Karekare resident

If we accept that residents are likely to take on such tasks, what training can be made available for them to tackle such issues as blocked roads, fallen trees, first aid and clearing of earth/sand/debris?

There is an understandable tension between wanting to have the autonomy to do what is necessary to keep communities safe and functional during or after an event and not wanting to be caught in an assumption that communities will take care of dangerous work that would normally be undertaken by trained professionals.

Groups that have set up as resilience planning collectives—with an intention to inform, guide and support the community to be prepared and well connected—are now asking whether they have unwittingly put themselves in the position of being first responders, emergency services stand-ins, and the organisers of their community's entire emergency response.

★ AEM—Create an inventory of emergency-related tasks completed by Waitākere residents in the past five years and tasks residents would like to be able to do and offer training to keep people safe in those situations, with clarity about what is in and out of scope.

Resilience planning needs to connect neighbouring communities

Some communities share access routes like Huia Rd and Piha Rd, and many share contiguous bush, waterways and coast lines. Storms, bush fires and other events do not obey the boundaries of the map, and so communities would benefit from considering their emergency response work together and setting up lines of communication. Residents in Piha may need to evacuate to Anawhata, storm water in Ōrātia may cause

flooding in Sunnyvale, and the lack of an emergency hub in Cornwallis may see residents using the Huia community hall.

★ Local board to encourage communities to include one another in their communications and planning.

Inter-group hui

All the people who had been part of the kōrero about their community's resilience planning were invited to a hui, with the aim of creating more communication and collaboration. Many groups are aware that other communities have well thought-out plans that they can use as examples for their own, and some communities are already working together with the idea of having a single plan encompassing two or three areas. There is also a network emerging that is joining up the resilience groups of Laingholm, Cornwallis, Huia and Piha, although the only representatives that were involved in this work were those from Cornwallis.

The themes that emerged at this meeting included:

- Enthusiasm for having stronger lines of communication across the West and with various relevant services, like AEM. There was a real interest in forming a reference group or advisory group.
- The tension of wanting some autonomy to take care of matters if a community is cut off, without having the responsibility for doing dangerous work that volunteers/residents are not trained or properly equipped for.
- Groups being unclear about whether they are resilience focused and/or expected to be an emergency (first) response team. A need to be clear on the difference between resilience building, emergency response and recovery work.
- The need for community-building and networking, with an awareness that even the best resilience plan can't predict what will really happen (e.g. planned emergency hubs being damaged or inaccessible), so people need to be able to work together to solve problems day to day and communicate to the rest of the community.



Summaries of our kōrero

Te Henga Bethells Beach

Te Henga Bethells Beach (population c.1300) has had a strong Emergency Resilience Group (ERG) since the area suffered from significant storm damage in 2018. By dividing the area into 12 zones, each with a volunteer ERG rep, it is possible for everyone in the village to be contacted after an event. The zone reps keep in touch through a chain of radio contact. Each zone rep is aware of the private resources available within their zone and endeavours to keep in regular contact with residents and reach out to new arrivals.

The ERG makes good use of Facebook pages and groups to communicate plans and information and backs this up with emails. Te Henga has a strong community spirit, with events like an annual Community Day beach picnic.

Slips leading to road closures have seen the community cut off for periods of time, so there is a focus on self-sufficiency for essentials like power, food and water. Many people own generators and deep freezers, and there is a community pantry.

The Bethells Valley Fire Station is well situated to act as a community hub, with the volunteers there already involved with the ERG. However, Fire Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) shows reluctance to allow the building to be used as an emergency hub or to install better kitchen facilities to make the building fit for this purpose. Conversations are yet to be had with some of the other potential emergency bases like the golf club.

Te Kawarau ā Maki acquired land in 2020 to build a marae and papakāinga at Te Henga beach, saying “The design of our eco-marae will form part of wider aspirations to uplift the mana and mauri of the iwi and the

Waitākere Ranges, and to embracing the Te Henga and west coast community.”¹ It is possible that the marae may serve as an additional emergency hub, well-suited to accommodating and feeding people.

Like some of the other communities we spoke to, they would like to know that AEM is aware of their emergency plan, knows who the key people are to contact, and that they have a single point of contact in an emergency—someone from emergency services who is looking after their area (if not Te Henga specifically, then the west coast beaches together).

The ERG is aware that in emergency events, the unexpected often happens. Changes in technology mean that their plan needs to be updated frequently, and new questions arise. The issue of what is safe, legal and prudent for civilians to do in the wake of an emergency is also front of mind. For instance, could a designated and trained resident have access to the cell tower so they can keep it powered if they are cut off from services in the city? Should residents attempt to clear slips so local services can access people in need?

They would also like to be able to communicate about what their needs are in an emergency. There was some surprise expressed about supplies that were delivered the last time they were cut off, and that these were not what the community was needing or expecting.



1. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihiki/433332/te-kawarau-a-maki-reacquire-ancestral-land-for-marae-at-te-henga>

Recommendations and requests:

★ AEM: Te Henga ERG would like to distribute the AEM rural/lifestyle block emergency plan booklet and would like access to printed copies for the whole community.

★ A suggestion was made that Auckland Council organise a bulk purchase of radio communications be made and distributed to all the Waitākere Ranges communities for emergency use.

★ Local Board to assist identifying funding or support to have taps installed on people's water tanks so that a) they can access their water in a power outage and b) fire service can connect to the tanks to fight fires in the area. Again this could be rolled out to other communities also. For this to happen, it would be necessary to have an agreement between Auckland Council and a tank refill service that people whose tank had been drained in an emergency would be prioritised for refill.

★ Better communication from Auckland Council to the community on the status of the walking tracks—people's mental health is suffering and they would like to know when the work on the tracks is scheduled and when they might reopen.

Anawhata

Anawhata has a Community Response Plan, dated October 2012 and reviewed in May 2013. Over time, the plan has become out of date and many of those involved have moved on, although there is currently a group of residents with an interest and some expertise working to update the plan.

Anawhata is a small community of about 80 people in about 40 dwellings, about two thirds of which are residences and the others holiday homes. The community is quite spread out and largely divided into those near the beach and those in the village half way down the road. Walking routes to Piha are currently closed due to storm damage or kauri dieback, and on the other side only one track is open to Scenic Drive. We are aware that their planning overlaps in some ways with Piha. They would benefit from seeing the plans of other Waitākere communities to inform their new plan and are curious about streamlining the process through use of a template—and whether it would also benefit communications with emergency services if all the plans were laid out the same way.

The chief concerns in this community are around wildfires, so they would like to define escape/evacuation routes and processes. Most areas of Anawhata are without cell phone coverage with many using internet-dependent wifi calling. Internet is limited with satellite and (often poor quality) rural wireless the only broadband options. Some households have generators, and these could be included in a community repository of information (if not publicly available in the emergency plan).

Craw Homestead is named in the Community Response Plan as a community hub, but this will need to be reviewed as to its suitability. Another option might be the rangers' house/office (which might be currently unstaffed and locked).

The community (at least the village) connected and kept in touch during the pandemic, but more recently has not been building connection.

Recommendations and requests:

★ Local board funding for community resilience was requested—e.g. community BBQ for people to connect up.

★ Local board support to identify funding to resource someone to research and write the updated community emergency response plan.

Piha

Piha has a population of slightly over 1,000 in an area 5.24km². Like many of the areas we visited, the population is somewhat split into those living by the beach and those living higher up the hills in the ngahere. Although it is a small community, it is quite spread out, with some people living in relative isolation.

Driven by the ethos of “local solutions to local problems,” Piha has a comprehensive resilience plan, with the Residents and Ratepayers Association taking the lead on resilience work and community building. They have identified seven clusters and are currently looking for community members to act as cluster representatives. Flooding and landslides are the main concerns for Piha residents.

The resilience plan is greatly strengthened by the presence of a volunteer fire brigade and volunteer medical first responders in the local area with a lot of experience as surf lifesavers at what is a busy surfing and swimming location for Tāmaki Makaurau and visitors from far and wide. There is an awareness of the need to call on different community members for resilience and recovery work and not overload the volunteer first responders. Cluster representatives would act as communication hubs and triage for the first responders.

There are two refuge centres, located at the Piha Surf Club and the North Piha Surf Club, where evacuees can be looked after during or after an event. However, a third location is needed for those higher up the hill, who could easily get cut off from the refuge centres and rest of the community by road damage, landslides etc. They have secured funding from Red Cross to put a container with a generator and supplies higher up.

★ Auckland Council to investigate allowing a designated resident to hold a key to the rangers’ building at 60 Anawhata Rd with a plan for its use in an emergency.

They have also approached Red Cross about providing training for the cluster coordinators and resilience volunteers. It is important that people are not asked to do work that is dangerous or that they are not trained for. A further request has gone out to AEM for radios, based on the understanding that there is a stock of radios that could be distributed to Auckland communities at risk.

The work of cluster representatives in the area of psychosocial first aid needs to span at least a month after any disaster—people often carry trauma that doesn’t surface until well after the event and aftermath. It’s also important for the community to get together and have fun. Community activities are a regular feature of the Piha community and there is an emerging team with a plan who are formalising these activities as annual events.

Request and recommendations:

★ Local board to help source funding to implement radio telephones in the event of Telecommunication networks not functioning during a storm.

Cornwallis

Cornwallis is a small community of approximately 55 houses stretched along Cornwallis Rd near Cornwallis Beach and wharf. The resilience group was formed at the beginning of 2023 with support from Auckland Council's Climate Action Grant. They are organising four community events per year, with a focus on building relationships and communications amongst the community, increasing resilience through growing food and producing a community resilience booklet, using the template provided by AEM.

In the January 25th floods, parts of Cornwallis experienced serious issues with flooding, slips and other stormwater damage. The community is concerned about the lack of regular and effective maintenance of the public stormwater system.

Results of a community survey done by the group show that fire is the greatest concern. As a follow-up they invited the Fire Chief from Huia to talk to the community.

Karekare

Karekare community (population c.300) has a strong resilience planning group and emergency response and recovery group. This community is still in recovery after the cyclone and flooding of 2023, with houses red- and yellow-stickered and people living in uncertainty. There is fatigue and burnout after the trauma and energy-expenditure of the emergency response and recovery work.

Karekare has a resilience plan that is held up as exemplary. While the plan was proven successful in the recent events, there are updates and changes needed now post Cyclone Gabrielle. This community has several questions and requests at a more specific or granular level that are based on their recent experience.

They believe that emergency planning needs to be highly adaptable—in Karekare, as in Piha, buildings that were intended to be emergency hubs

People are interested in creating an inventory of resources held privately, but some sensitivity is needed around who has access to that information.

There is no community hall or other communal facility in the Cornwallis area. The resilience group is therefore focused on building a noticeboard so that information can be shared in a civil emergency when other forms of communication are unavailable. With the addition of solar panels, it could act as a charging station during power outages.

As in other communities, the Cornwallis community is very aware that communication and collaboration with the areas nearby—especially Laingholm, Parau and Huia—is important in their resilience planning.

Recommendation:

★ Auckland Council to streamline and support the work on the noticeboard—waive the \$600 application fee for building on public land.

were cut off or made unsafe in the storm conditions, different parts of the community were affected differently, and people had to fill different roles than expected.

A tension for the more remote communities is that centralised emergency services may not be able to respond—they may be overloaded with call-outs, cut off from access routes, or there may be no communication at all (no ability to contact emergency services on 111).

Recommendations and requests:

★ Local board support to identify funding to resource the community with satellite phones and other resources as requested.

★ Local board to build and advocate for a relationship between AEM and West Coast Resilience Groups.

★ Local board to provide resources and support for the formation of a West Auckland disaster response and recovery network that includes support agencies in the west.

★ AEM to provide clarity around how community resilience leaders can establish communication with AEM in a disaster and understanding about the link between 111 calls and AEM.

★ Local board to offer free printing and support for updating and socialisation of Karekare's Resilience plan, as required.

★ Local board to support the development of a community resilience advisory board in West Auckland.

★ Auckland Council to support an additional battery for cellphone tower to assure cell phone coverage at all time

★ Auckland Council to provide extra recovery support to the people who are part of the categorisation process

Henderson Valley

Henderson Valley is a semi-rural community with a population just under 1,500. The area has been impacted by flooding for several years, resulting in the exemplary Henderson Valley Community-Led Emergency Guide, itself based on Karekare's emergency guide.

As well as information from AEM about disaster preparation and advice for before, during and after an emergency, the guide includes key numbers for local businesses, radio stations to tune into, and how to make an away kit. They have identified street coordinators, with the main focus being welfare checking after a significant event. Street coordinators are equipped with a go-bag and a signage board so they can inform their area of current conditions and changes.

Chris Thomas has led this work and is also supporting groups in Waiatarua and Ōrātia to form their emergency guide books.

An emergency hub at Ferndale Lodge was washed away in August 2019 floods, and no clear replacement has been identified. The school has been used for welfare checks twice in 2023 but is not willing to take on the role of emergency hub.

Carey Park and Kiwi Valley, although supportive, have the primary responsibility to take care of visitors at their facilities during an emergency. The matter of an accessible community and emergency hub is a current focus, as emergency equipment that the group has fundraised for and owns is not currently accessible to the public without being supplied by the Residents' Association members.

Like other areas, Henderson Valley can be cut off from vehicle access, power and communication during weather events. People are dependent on the supplies of food and water that they have stored at the time. The resilience planning group is aware that they should expect three to four days before emergency responders could get to the area. Residents used

their own chainsaws to remove fallen trees but were aware of the danger when power lines were involved.

Power and Internet both cut out frequently and mobile coverage is inconsistent. For those below the tree canopy, Starlink is not an option. For this reason they are proposing to set up a walkie-talkie system and

Recommendations and requests:

★ Auckland council to supply generators for mobile charging, making cups of tea etc during crisis events.

★ AEM to help devise a way for the community to indicate when a situation is critical, for example the danger to families living in areas where fire services are unable to use the roads.

★ Auckland Council to support stream clean up—the community plans to take care of this with support from Eco Matters, but logs that block streams require specialist equipment and disposal and can cause future flooding if not taken care of.

★ Local board to support the reinstatement of the community noticeboard that was on the corner of Mountain Rd and Ōpanuku Rd.

Local board to set up an emergency and resilience reference group for ★ West Auckland.

have been working with Auckland Emergency Radio Communication to procure equipment for base stations, using a grant from the local board.

The residents association runs regular community building events, including an annual community day at Carey Park, Easter and Halloween events, and a barn dance at Kiwi Valley.

★ AEM to offer emergency planning training.

★ Clarity about what AEM is responsible for—e.g. who would set up a community location, a needs and offers board—the community isn't comfortable asking volunteers to staff a hub 24/7.

★ Local board broker a better relationship between community resilience groups and AEM.

★ Encourage communities to investigate better options for communication—Starlink is not suitable for all homes and all situations.

★ Continue to keep resilience planning in mind at the local board level.

Ōrātia

Ōrātia is a semi-rural area with a population of 2,180 (2022). A small resilience planning group has been following the lead of the Henderson Valley Community-Led Emergency Guide and working closely with Henderson Valley towards the possibility of having a shared plan that covers the three areas of Ōrātia, Henderson Valley and Waiatarua. Geographically, Ōrātia and Sunnyvale are linked by water flows from Ōrātia into the flood plains of Sunnyvale, so it also makes sense to combine planning with that community.

The local Community Patrol (with 28 volunteers) often ends up being the organising body for emergency response. They would like to improve their communication and collaboration with AEM and formalise the roles of community response leaders.

A group of 70 volunteers mobilised after the 2023 cyclone and flooding and used existing maps of flood-prone areas to deploy helpers to clean up people's homes and streets. The volunteers had no health and safety training or preparation. However, there is a feeling that these maps are little-known and not in use in emergency response planning.

Community resilience and connection is quite well covered, although there is a proliferation of small local groups throughout the western city in general, calling for a need for a centralised organising body. Organisers in Ōrātia are aware of the need for community development towards resilience, rather than a service delivery model. A communal mindset change away from “the council is responsible” and towards “we can organise together if we are well connected” is called for. They want to find ways to keep people engaged between emergency events, with Student Volunteer Army being held up as a good example. The planning needs to be focused on processes, not people (so that plans can still be activated if key people are unavailable and knowledge is made public rather than held by individuals).

Recommendations and requests:

- ★ AEM to offer workshops with guidance for creating a resilience plan.
- ★ AEM to offer training for people who will become volunteer first responders if emergency services aren't available.
- ★ Local board and Auckland Council create a strategic plan of how to allocate resources across the Waitākere area in any emergency deployment.
- ★ Local board support the creation of a single point of contact for Waitākere—based in the community, to work alongside the council resilience role.
- ★ Local board convene a citizens' assembly to define the issue the community believes is at stake here and then create a communal, integrated plan for West Auckland communities.
- ★ Local board and Auckland Council—be clear about what resources can be made available for the community—radios, tool boxes and other resources.

Waiatarua

Waiatarua has a population of a little over 2,000. Like other communities of the Waitākere ranges, the residents were cut off in the 2023 storm events. The local ratepayers committee is interested in doing a resilience plan and is aware that this would be most effective if they work closely with Henderson Valley and Ōrātia: they already have good relationships with the resilience groups there and plan to continue meeting regularly. They plan to print 1,000 guides to distribute, and are interested in joining with Ōrātia in publishing a guide that covers both areas to achieve better community coverage and access printing at scale to reduce costs. Both Ōrātia and Waiatarua coordinators believe they can manage to design a guide that will be effective for both areas.

The Waiatarua hall forms a natural community and emergency hub and a generator has just been purchased to support this function. The community would like to create an emergency supplies store at the hub as well as charging stations and sufficient food and water supplies.

The committee plans social events monthly, focusing on the achievable goal of creating small, regular events like film evenings, quiz nights, pot lucks and market days. Attendance is around 40-60 people. They also have a community newsletter that is distributed to 900 letterboxes.

They support the idea of a West Auckland community-led advisory or reference group being established. Creating a community-led resilience plan requires a lot of energy and resource from the community and people who are prepared to communicate with others in the community. Having wider support and working with neighbouring communities also creates resilience, so that the community is not relying on one or two individuals and left vulnerable if they are away during an emergency, or if they move out of the area.

Recommendations and requests:

★ Local board—“Don’t forget about us”—Piha and Ōrātia get notified when things are happening, but we get told “look up the website”

★ Local board to offer printing of the forthcoming resilience guide



Glen Eden

Glen Eden is yet to form either a resilience planning or an emergency response group. This is a large suburban area with a large, growing and fairly transient population, including apartments, public housing and one of the two town centres of the Waitākere Ranges Local Board area.

Some parts of Glen Eden were affected in the 2023 floods, and with more buildings going into flood-prone areas like old streambeds and more people living in large apartment blocks, there is definite concern for the community's ability to respond in an emergency. A large number of people live day to day without food reserves and services like pātaka kai are much needed and well used.

Food resilience is therefore the greatest concern for the community leaders we spoke to. While there are some facilities that could cater to large numbers, it is unlikely there are adequate food stores to feed those in need in an emergency and its aftermath.

The nearest emergency hub is in Kelston, too far for many to reach and serving too large an area. Glen Eden needs to identify different zones, an emergency/information hub for each, and personnel to be activated in a state of emergency. The hubs need to be visible and well publicised, so that people know where to go for information if power and communication services are down. Some of the hubs may have the necessary facilities to act as a shelter for evacuees, while others may be information hubs, with medical services, generators for power and direct lines of communication to emergency services.

Recommendations and requests:

★ Local board to support resilience work in the community to connect people to existing resources and services, create local networks of connection and support, and bring existing community groups to work more closely together.



★ Local board to actively support the formation of a resilience planning group in Glen Eden, resourcing a community leader to work towards an emergency response plan and resilience plan, drawing on the networks formed in the above work and creating communications to inform the people of Glen Eden.





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