



**7 March  
2023**



# Community newsletter

## **Muriwai Beach cyclone recovery**

Kia ora koutou,

On behalf of the team at Auckland Council and Auckland Emergency Management, I would like to acknowledge the impact of the last three weeks on your community. This has, for so many, been an incredibly difficult, unsettling and emotionally draining time. We have clearly heard your concerns, your frustrations and your need for regular and clear information.

We have made, and continue to make, every effort to support your community and get you the answers you need from us to move to the next stage of your own recovery. Those answers won't always be complete, or exactly what you want or need. We are committed to doing our best for you.

For us, this has been a time like no other. Our teams have been responding to flooding, cyclone damage, building inspections, land instability and clean-up and recovery efforts across the Auckland region. We have included some information on who we are and what we do in this newsletter – we hope this is helpful too.

These newsletters will come to you as we have information to share and will be available on the [aem.org.nz](http://aem.org.nz) website. Today's newsletter is just the beginning – we will be in touch again soon.

**He waka eke noa**

**Mace Ward, Deputy Recovery Manager, Auckland Council**

### Catching up with you again

When we met with the community on 2 March, you were very clear that you wanted to see us out at Muriwai again. We discussed catching up again this week, perhaps with more of a 'drop-in' format and in order to talk about your properties in more detail. We've continued to work on two critical pieces of work – more geotechnical information and a roadmap (plan) that describes the process we need to work through to understand when and under what conditions reoccupation will be possible. These pieces of work are progressing well but are not yet complete.

For that reason, we feel that meeting with residents and property owners this week will not be good use of your time, or give you answers to your questions. **There will be no community meeting or drop-in sessions this week.** Instead:

1. We will send you a comprehensive overview of the geotechnical work that has been carried out so far and an explanation of what will happen next (from a geotech perspective) – **Wednesday 8 March.**
2. We will provide a high-level roadmap of the process for enabling reoccupation – **in the next seven days.**
3. We will update you on plans to enable Managed Temporary Access for property owners/occupants – **in the next fortnight.**

## Your questions answered

We've had a lot of questions about the process of recovery, so we talked to Ian McCormick about three of the most common questions. Much of the work covered in these questions is contributing to the roadmap (plan) that is currently being finalised and will be shared with you soon.

### **When can I go back into my home to get essential items?**

This is the question we've been asked most often and we're working on it urgently. We will allow managed temporary access as soon as it we're confident it is not dangerous to do so.

Managed temporary access is when up to two residents are allowed back in their homes for a short period (no more than 20 minutes) to get the things they need or value the most. To make sure it's not dangerous, we need geotechnical assessments of slip movement to be completed and analysed. Further LiDAR scans took place on Saturday, with more planned for this coming weekend. The results of the scans will help inform our decision making and we'll update you as soon as we can.

Some people have asked if they can get cars out and look for pets. At this stage we don't know when this will be possible, but our teams are working on this and an update will be provided soon.

### **My house isn't damaged but has a red placard. When will this be reassessed and if it's safe, when might we be allowed to go home?**

The short answer is 'when it is no longer dangerous'. We can't put a date on it because we can't reassess houses until it's safe for us to do so, and we can only let people back to live in their homes if it is not dangerous for them. We will only know it's not dangerous by monitoring the area and carrying out geotechnical assessments, and that will take time. How much time depends on factors outside our control, for example if slips keep moving or if we get more bad weather.

In some cases, work may need to be undertaken to stabilise a slip or to remove material before we can let people back, and this work can only begin when it's not dangerous. We understand that not knowing how long you'll have to stay out of your home creates a lot of stress and uncertainty, so we promise to keep updating you with new information as soon as we can.

### **When will Muriwai be open to non-residents? What security will be available for empty homes when it is?**

Resident-only restrictions are still in place. No date has been set for reopening, but we are looking at this now. Local businesses need visitors to return but we're also aware of local security concerns, so we're trying to balance those two needs. Police are continuing high visibility reassurance patrols in flood or cyclone affected areas, particularly where homes have been red or yellow placarded. They've asked residents still in those areas to stay vigilant and to report anything untoward to the Police. There will continue to be 24/7 security-managed barriers restricting access to red-placarded buildings in Motutara Road. and Domain Crescent.

We will let residents know in advance when we plan to reopen Muriwai to visitors, and we will also provide details of any additional security measures that will be put in place.

We are keeping in touch with community leaders in Muriwai and they have been sending us your questions. Please keep asking them, and we'll do our best to answer as soon as we can.

*And we haven't forgotten the "10 Questions" from the community meeting last week, we're working through those and will share the answers later this week.*

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## Have we got your details?

If you've received this newsletter via email, then we're all good – we have your correct contact details.

If it has been passed on to you by someone else or you're reading it via a website or social media channel, we'd like you to share your contact details with us. Please email us at [muriwai@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:muriwai@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz).

There are lots of reasons we might not have your details – you might be a tenant (and we've been dealing directly with the property owner); you might not have provided an email address (just a phone number) to our inspections team; or sometimes, despite our best efforts, handwritten forms lead to mistakes.

## Who is working on your response?

Over the last few weeks, you will have met many people from Auckland Emergency Management or Auckland Council. Here's a quick introduction to some of our teams and subject matter experts.

- **Auckland Emergency Management (AEM)** is part of Auckland Council. Its staff are Auckland Council employees and when there is no emergency response underway (like an activation or an emergency declaration), AEM works with partner agencies and communities on readiness and reduction activities. When disaster strikes, AEM brings together staff from across the council to help with the response. This includes subject matter experts and trained council staff from many different departments.
- **Building inspections teams** are part of Auckland Council's Regulatory Services division. General Manager Building Consents Ian McCormick leads a team of building inspectors who have carried out rapid impact (with FENZ and USAR) and rapid building (secondary) assessments on all properties impacted by flooding or land instability. Ian's team apply the red, yellow and white placards, and work alongside geotechnical experts to establish when properties can be re-entered and reoccupied. The team also assists with building consents and works with the council's compliance team to remove or re-grade placards once repair works and/or further geotechnical surveys have been undertaken.
- **Welfare officers** are joined by representatives from government and support agencies, to provide all types of welfare support. This includes connecting you with services like Work and Income for emergency funding or civil defence payments; facilitating health and wellbeing support from healthcare agencies or psychosocial support experts; working with AEM's logistics team to provide practical help, like food, water and shelter; and making sure you have access to accommodation (MBIE's Temporary Accommodation Service), insurance advice and networks like the Rural Support Trusts. Our welfare team also coordinates the local leads that are working alongside the community to get information in and out, and running community hub services.
- **Geotechnical experts** are in hot demand right now and their advice is critical to access, land stability and the overall timeline in relation to your property. Ross Roberts is our Head of Engineering Resilience. Ross is a geotechnical and natural hazards specialist with a masters degree in engineering geology and more than 20 years' experience. He is former chair of the NZ Geotechnical Society and manages the [landslides.nz](https://landslides.nz) database.

You'll hear more from Ross in tomorrow's newsletter.

### Need help?



Visit: [aem.govt.nz](https://aem.govt.nz)

Email: [aeminfo@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:aeminfo@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) or [rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)



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