

## **Annual Report of the Co-Chairs for the year ended 31 March 2025**

Milford Residents Association is pleased to report to members on another year of local activities. We are very grateful to all our members and friends of the Association for their support and encouragement of our efforts to advocate for improvements to community amenities and to keep local people informed about what's going on in our lovely town centre and neighbourhood.

### ***Activities in 2024/2025***

#### **Milford Storm Recovery Project**

Milford Residents Assn was approached by Auckland Council to take a lead in a local storm recovery project. Fifteen communities that were highly impacted by the Anniversary Weekend flood or Cyclone Gabrielle in early 2023 were identified for community-led projects where communities could come together to identify what a local recovery would look like and how they would like our neighbourhood to be in the future. We have the help and guidance of our Recovery Specialist, Neesha Bremner, and have received the standard project grant of \$40,000 to cover the cost of a facilitation team, project activities and events. Milford has the highest number of homes being bought out (141) of any suburb and we look forward to seeing plans for the blue-green network that will be created as part of the Wairau flood prevention works.

Our first storm recovery event was **The Milford Summer Picnic, 2 February 2025, in Milford Reserve**. About 300 people attended and picnicked under the trees on a very hot day. They were entertained by singer Serene Boulton, cardboard play, face painters, an exhibition of historic photos, Open Day at Milford Cruising Club. Information stalls by Pupuke Birdsong Project, Auckland Emergency Management and the Storm Recovery Project attracted many visitors. We are considering making the picnic an annual event, perhaps in early March rather than February, and drawing in Milford's other community groups. Thanks to Community Activator, Ruth Maloney, for her contributions in planning and providing funding and equipment for our event.

#### **Project events held recently (but since 1 April 2024) are:**

- Tuesday, 29 April, 6.00pm-7.00pm, Community Meeting and Storyboard Workshop, MSCC Hall
- Sunday, 4 May, 10.00am-11.00am, Coffee and Chats in the Park, Nile Reserve
- Around 50 people attended each event

#### **Wairau Flood Prevention and Water Quality Activities and Issues**

- Meeting in Milford Baptist Church, Friday, 6 December 2024, 5.30pm. Hosted by local MPs, Simon Watts and Dan Bidois. Great info given by Nick Vigar of Healthy Waters. Around 180 attended. Relationship built between Castor Bay R&R Assn and Milford Residents Assn and Simon Watts over the year had led to this meeting.
- Milford Residents Assn (Debbie Dunsford, Norma Bott and Frances Hague) addressed the Transport, Resilience Infrastructure Committee of Auckland Council on Thursday, 3 April. Councillors were to vote to advance the business case for the Wairau flood prevention work, including the proposals for A F Thomas Park. We reminded Councillors of the traumatic events experienced by so many Milford residents on 27 January 2023, the scale of the buy-out of Milford homes and the long history of flooding along the Wairau that needed to be addressed. This received a lot of coverage in the press. The Councillors voted unanimously for the business case work to proceed.

- **Wednesday, 21 May 2025, 7.00pm-8.30pm, Healthy Waters meeting on Wairau proposals, Eventfinda Stadium.**

**Wairau Flood Rubbish Clear-ups:** During 2023 and 2024, we initiated or were involved in five clean-ups of flood rubbish. In 2024, a combined effort by Milford Residents Association, Pupuke Birdsong Project and Milford Mariners Society cleared the last of the large piles of flood rubbish from the Estuary. This rubbish (mostly wood) was located in the middle of the estuary making it a long trudge for volunteers to carry out to East Coast Road. The use of the Milford Mariners' barge at high tide made this work much easier for us all. Over two separate sessions during mid to late 2023, a great crew of volunteers (including from Westlake Boys High) dealt to the rubbish with enthusiasm. Thanks to everyone.

**Community events.** We held a lantern making day to celebrate Matariki on Saturday 13 July at the MSCC Hall. There was a modest response but those who attended enjoyed the activity. In retrospect, we felt we had not promoted the event sufficiently and it may not have been the right activity for Milford.

#### **Communications:**

*Website, Newsletters and Facebook.* A total of 23 email newsletters were sent to members during the year ended 31 March 2025. We also post these newsletters to the home page of our website, [www.milford.org.nz](http://www.milford.org.nz). Selected items and events are posted on Milford Locals facebook group. Please join our *Milford Locals Facebook Group* community group if you haven't already.

*Website redesign:* We are moving forward on having our website updated, redesigned and moved to a different platform. Benefitz Ltd have offered us very generous discounted quotes to do the redesign work and host our site. We are currently preparing applications for a grant to help fund the redesign.

#### **Milford Projects in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board Draft Annual Workplan**

Milford Reserve – pathway to link playground to toilets

Beach front road ends at Milford, Craig and Cecil Roads – options to 'tidy' these up.

Milford Marina pathway/boardwalk along Inga Road – once the coastal retaining wall has been renewed.

For 10 years or more, we have asked for these projects to be completed in our submissions on Local Board budgets and plans. It is great to see them appear in the Board's draft workplan and we look forward to seeing projects of high quality eventuate.

#### **Protecting our natural environment, flora and fauna**

Milford Residents Assn has volunteer members work locally in the areas of predator control in our parks and reserves. Recently, two of our most loyal trappers, Vince West and Murray Baker, have retired. If you would like to contribute to our environment by checking a regular trap or bait station line, please contact Norma, [chairs@milford.org.nz](mailto:chairs@milford.org.nz).

#### **Milford to Takapuna Coastal Route –Firth property, 9 Kitchener Road**

Through the generosity of the property owners, public access was re-established in time for this past summer. However, there is no resolution in sight to the problem of the heritage listing making the property effectively unsaleable. Our view is still that it is the coastal walkway (not the building) that has true heritage value and is also a vitally important amenity for today's local community.

#### **Milford Motel – application for a tavern licence**

This application and neighbours' experience of noise from premises was discussed at our 2024 AGM. MRA was one of 32 submitters opposing a tavern licence (but not the existing restaurant licence). We were among submitters who spoke at the first session of the hearing on 14 April (reconvening on 19 May).

### **New Constitution**

Under The Incorporated Societies Act 2022, all incorporated societies are required re-register and submit a Constitution that conforms with the legislation. We have prepared our new draft Constitution and will be asking the AGM to adopt the Constitution.

### **Annual Membership Fees**

Our expenses are rising gradually (meeting room hire, email hosting, website hosting, etc) and we would like to increase our fees for the 2026/2027 financial year (not the current year) to accommodate these increased costs:

Individual from \$10 to \$15 pa, Household from \$20 to \$25 pa.

### **Committee membership**

We have been delighted to have Frances Hague and Lisa Burtenshaw (Treasurer) on our committee during the past year. Life Member Peter Carter is taking a sabbatical from the committee this year. Committee members standing for re-election are Debbie Dunsford, Norma Bott, Heather Masfield, Lisa Burtenshaw, Frances Hague, Alistair Laurie, Helen Pilkington and Michael Barr. Please contact us if you would like to join the committee or have a special interest you would like to be involved in: [chairs@milford.org.nz](mailto:chairs@milford.org.nz)

Our committee meets on the last Tuesday of the month in the lounge of the MSCC Hall at 5pm. Please contact us and come along if you would like to raise any issue with us



**Debbie Dunsford**

Co-chairs

11 May 2025



**Norma Bott**