



Meremere Community Committee Plan 2024-2026

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A message from your Community Committee

Kia ora koutou,

We are proud to present our plan for the Meremere Community Committee for 2024-26.

Our plan identifies our vision and our priorities over the next two years. It also provides an overview of the Community Committee's role and purpose.

This plan is a living document which will be regularly reviewed to ensure that our priorities are still aligned to improving our social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

We are looking forward to listening to, and working with our diverse community, mana whenua, partners, and other organisations to achieve our goals.

Ngaa mihi nui,
The Meremere Community Committee



About Community Committees

Community Committees play an important role in local governance and citizen-led democracy, serving as the primary link between the local community and the Council. We are your representatives at council, and respected connectors into the community.

Our roles are governed by the Local Government Act 2002. Some of the roles specified are:

- The key connector between the community and council.
- Advocate for and represent the interests of our community.
- Consider and report on all matters referred to us by the council, or any other matter of interest to us as a committee.
- Keep track of the services provided by the council in our community.
- Prepare an annual submission to the council for expenditure within our community.
- Engage with organisations and special interest groups within the local community.

Community Committees Plans

Community Committees Plans are developed every three years and outline our key priorities for our elected term. They also indicate how we will work in partnership with locals and mana whenua to achieve the Council's community outcomes.

A key part of the development of our plan is engagement with locals to ensure that our priorities reflect the needs and desires of Meremere.



Our Community Outcomes



Everything we do is aimed at improving the wellbeing of the people that live, work, and explore the Waikato District. Our Community outcomes are developed under the four wellbeing pillars and describe what we want to achieve for the Waikato District into the future.



Cultural

We celebrate who we are.

We celebrate all cultures. We treasure our diverse communities, and acknowledge our cultural rights and obligations. We honour, understand and implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi and acknowledge the relationship with mana whenua of our district.



Economic

We support local prosperity.

We champion sustainable growth in our local economy. We support local enterprise and encourage innovation and socio-economic prosperity for all, while managing regulatory processes to protect and promote our unique district. We acknowledge our rural and Maaori economies as key contributors to our district's prosperity and sustainability.



Environmental

Our environmental health underpins the health of our people.

We want waterways which are healthy and create connections. We protect and enhance our soils, water and native biodiversity and take care of our taiao (natural environment) for the health and wellbeing of our people, our communities and for future generations.



Social

We have well connected communities.

Our communities are connected, safe, accessible and resilient. We put community wellbeing at the heart of our decisions, and we embrace partnerships to get things done to improve people's lives.



Our Vision

Listen to and work with our diverse community, mana whenua, partners and other organisations to protect and enhance the environmental, social, cultural and economic wellbeing of Meremere.

Our vision statements:

- We are committed to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi by engaging well with mana whenua and holding Te Ao Māori values at the core of our decision-making.
- The views, interests, needs and aspirations of residents are effectively represented.
- We have an open and transparent decision-making process that residents can understand and engage in.
- Our focus is to enhance environmental, cultural, social and economic wellbeing.
- To have an strong relationship with our community as a respected arm of Waikato District Council.
- To have a strong relationship with council so that the voice of our community is kept well-informed of things happening in our area.

Our priorities

Cultural Wellbeing

Grow and strengthen our partnerships with mana whenua and our local community to promote, enhance and celebrate our natural environment and significant heritage.

This matters because...

Alongside mana whenua we are kaitiaki of an area with a unique natural environment and significant heritage which make up our unique identity providing a sense of togetherness and belonging. We actively promote and celebrate arts, culture, and heritage by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion in Meremere.

Our commitment

- Hold Te Ao Maori values at the core of our decision-making.
- Celebrate and promote our arts, all cultures, and heritage to encourage strength, togetherness and belonging.
- Work with mana whenua, to understand our local history from a mana whenua perspective.
- Promote, celebrate and educate, in partnership with mana whenua, our cultural heritage and unique natural environment.
- Work, in partnership with mana whenua, to educate our community on the significance of Matariki, Waitangi Day and other culturally significant events.

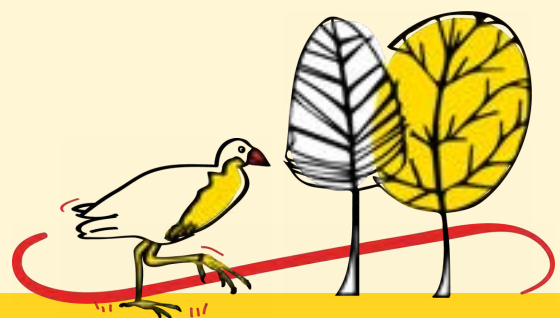
- Promote and celebrate Diwali, Waitangi Day, Matariki, Chinese New Year and other significant cultural events.
- Continue to build and strengthen our relationship with mana whenua to ensure their input and perspective is heard.
- Hold wananga in our local community hall, in partnership with mana whenua, to enhance our community's cultural wellbeing.
- We as a Committee will support discretionary funding on projects aligned to enhancing cultural wellbeing.
- As a Committee we will support community-led development with letters of support for our community's priorities identified through the Blueprints and other community aspirations that our community wants to undertake.

Success looks like...

- Regular hui is being held with mana whenua.
- Arts and culturally significant events are celebrated and actively promoted in Meremere.
- Wananga is held in our community hall.

Environmental Wellbeing

Protect, enhance and educate on our natural environment and biodiversity for present and future generations.



This matters because...

As kaitiaki, alongside mana whenua, we have a duty of care to look after our environment now and for our future generations.

We have a unique environment with the Whangamarino Wetland, which covers 7,000ha in the Waikato. It has major recreational, historical and economic values and has been designated an international Ramsar site in recognition of its status as an area of outstanding biodiversity. As kaitiaki of the natural environment we are here to protect, enhance and educate our communities on the quality of our waterways, including the Waikato Awa and our culturally significant sites such as our local Paa.

Our commitment

- Partner with Council, the Waikato Regional Council, Waikato Tainui, mana whenua and Waka Kotahi to identify the many opportunities for native planting and ecological restoration.
- Hold community days, in partnership with other organisations, to educate and encourage the preservation and enhancement of our natural environment and biodiversity. This includes education on the Whangamarino wetland.
- Encourage the use of ecological initiatives to mitigate natural hazards where appropriate.
- Establish a group of local volunteers passionate about protecting and enhancing our natural environment to assist in the education of our community.

- Encourage and support community-led resilience planning.
- Hold and promote annual clean-up days with the Meremere community in partnership with the Waste minimisation team at Council.
- We as a Community Committee will support discretionary funding on projects aligned to enhancing environmental wellbeing.
- As a Community Committee we will support community-led development with letters of support for our community's priorities identified through the Blueprints and other community aspirations that our community wants to undertake.

Success looks like...

- A meeting with Council, Waikato Regional Council, Waikato Tainui, mana whenua and Waka Kotahi to discuss opportunities for native planting and ecological restoration is held.
- An education day is held with the community to promote the importance of our protecting and preserving our natural environment and biodiversity in partnership with others.
- Committee members have established a group of passionate individuals within the community to support and assist with environmental initiatives within the community.
- Resilience planning for Meremere has been promoted through various channels.



Social Wellbeing

Connecting our diverse community through social activity to provide a sense of safety, togetherness and belonging.

This matters because...

We have a diverse community; therefore, it is important that we know our neighbours by fostering and nurturing social cohesion to ensure our community feel connected, safe and welcome.

Our commitment

- Identify and promote social activities such as Children's day, Christmas community dinners, Matariki celebrations, Waitangi Day, Halloween and Diwali.
- Undertake a stocktake of what activities and social services are available in Meremere and promote these activities through various communication channels.
- Promote and celebrate the volunteer organisations that support Meremere.
- Hold community days, in partnership with mana whenua, that invites our community to kooreo around the local detail of living in Meremere.
- Advocate for walkways to enable connectivity and safe passage through our community.
- Advocate for buses, rail, cycleways, green spaces.
- Advocate for public toilets in our park.
- Co-opt passionate individuals in its community to enhance the social wellbeing for our community.



- We as a Community Committee will support discretionary funding on projects aligned to enhancing social wellbeing.
- As a Community Committee we will support community-led development with letters of support for our community's priorities identified through the Blueprints and other community aspirations that our community wants to undertake.

Success looks like...

- The Committee has actively promoted social activity across its community using multiple communication channels.
- The Committee has conducted a stocktake of all social activity and community services within its community.
- Our community will be aware of the different social activities available to them within Meremere.
- A community day has been held to welcome and educate our new and existing community to Meremere.

Economic Wellbeing

Growth, diverse investment, and tourism are encouraged and supported to create a thriving local economy.

This matters because...

A positive thriving economy is built on a foundation of growth, investment, tourism all of which lead to opportunities for our community. All these areas will enable more business and attract visitors leading to employment opportunities and career pathways for our people.

Our commitment

- Partner with organisations to offer the right support to support our young people into employment.
- Work with our youth and other organisations to ensure that our young people are well positioned for sustainable career pathways.
- Partner with mana whenua on opportunities to educate visitors on our significant heritage and rich history.
- Promote and advocate for cultural and environmental tourism opportunities to attract visitors to our village.
- Advocate and lobby for land to be designated appropriately to enable growth and investment to occur.
- Co-ordinate a meeting between Council and the Community Committee to discuss planning options for future residential and commercial growth.
- We as a Community Committee will support discretionary funding on projects aligned to enhancing economic wellbeing.
- As a Community Committee we will support community-led development with letters of support for our community's priorities identified through the Blueprints and other community aspirations that our community wants to undertake.

Success looks like...

- A meeting has been co-ordinated with the Strategic Planning Team to identify future growth and commercial land opportunities.



- The Community Committee has actively promoted and advocated for growth, investment, and tourism for Meremere.
- Youth to employment sessions have been held in partnership with others.
- Discussions with the schools, mana whenua, and other organisations on sustainable career pathways are underway.

Engagement

We are committed to citizen-led decision-making.

This matters because...

Engagement is vital for fostering a strong sense of community and leads to better wellbeing outcomes for our communities. We are representative of the community that elected us to office therefore it is important that we bring the voice of our people to the decision-making table.

Our commitment

- Build capability in our community around Council processes for example, Long Term Plans, Annual Plans, Policy Reviews and other matters that Council is seeking consultation on.
- Through its partnership with Council the Community Committee will be the main conduit out to its community to increase participation in citizen led decision-making.
- Engage with our community on plans in the Meremere area using a variety of communication channels.
- Facilitate community hui on matters of interest to ensure the voice of the

community, including the voice of mana whenua, is well represented within our decision-making.

- Identify key stakeholders within our community and strengthen our relationships with them.
- Continue to strengthen our relationship with local Marae and hapu groups.
- Co-opt passionate individuals to support the Community Committee when required.

Success looks like...

- Increased numbers of submissions are evidenced on areas that the community feel strongly about.
- Regular communication to the community following Community Committee meetings and on matters directly relating to the Meremere community is made.
- Increased levels of community involvement on matters and issues that relate to them.
- Relationships with key stakeholders are being fostered and nurtured.
- The community is using Council systems for their requests.







Key amenities and services

Council Facilities



1 Library and Council Service Centre



2 Council parks and 1 reserve



1 Community centre

Community and Education



1 Community Gym



1 Community church



1 Primary school, 1 Puna Reo ECE centre

Emergency Services



Emergency services in nearby Pookeno and Te Kauwhata



2 Defibrillators

Recreation and shopping



Meremere offers a range of recreational activities for all ages.



A number of retail outlets, as well as a nearby service centre in Mercer



Community Committee Investment

The Meremere Community Committee has funding available for allocation each year. The purpose of this fund is to assist community groups projects.

If you would like to apply for funding, or for more information, please visit waikatodistrict.govt.nz/community-funding-grants or scan the below QR code.



Your Community Committee



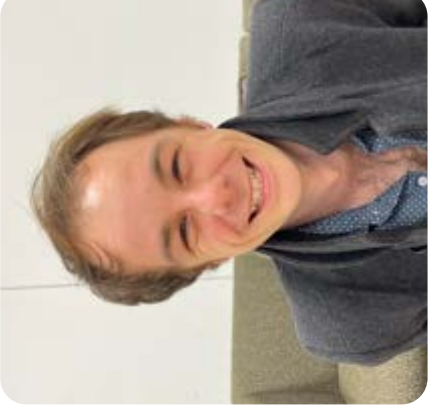
Jim Katu
Chairperson



Ben Brown
Deputy Chairperson



Cecilia Heta



Jacob Calvert



Lauren Wismans



Miles Swann

CREATING
LIVEABLE, THRIVING
+ CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES

Waikato



District Council
Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato