



**26
April
2023**



Community update

Piha cyclone recovery

Welcome to Auckland Council's first community update for Piha. We will be sending out this update regularly when new information related to Piha's recovery is available.

Privacy and spam regulations don't allow us to use your contact details from existing council information for general communications, so if you would like to receive updates, we need you to [sign up via this online form](#).

We hope that the information in the updates will be relevant for most community members, so please also help us spread the word on this update to your neighbours and friends in Piha.

Introducing Simon Fraser – Community Liaison Lead for Piha and Karekare



I'm pleased to be stepping into the role of Community Liaison Lead for the Piha and Karekare communities for the Auckland Council Recovery Coordination Office, for an initial two-month period. My role is to be your community point-of-contact for recovery-related issues and help facilitate the resolution of those issues. This includes working behind the scenes with the Auckland Council whānau (Auckland Transport and Watercare) to ensure a coordinated approach to recovery operations.

My home role at Auckland Council is with the Natural Environment Strategy team and I've recently been assisting Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) with the emergency response. I feel really privileged to be able to be working on the ground in one of Auckland's natural gems!

I really enjoyed meeting a number of you recently, and I look forward to connecting with more of you over the coming weeks. My immediate priorities have been establishing connections, improving communications (hence this update), and facilitating work to review the cordons

around Piha. I'm also working towards creating a longer-term roadmap, so everyone has clarity on what to expect from the recovery programme over the coming weeks and months.

I'm looking to base myself in Piha on a regular basis, and will let you know in these updates when I'll be around – but feel free to come and say hi if you see me out and about. If you want to get in touch, please drop me a line at piha@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

Piha cordon

We are currently reviewing the access cordons around Piha, and we intend to begin engagement with community groups later this week on a proposed date for the Piha Road cordon to be removed.

We recognise there are a range of views across the community regarding the cordons into Piha. Our engagement will include conversations with the community groups to explain the factors being considered as part of the decision-making process (such as roading resilience and public safety, security and the impact on local businesses).

As we have previously committed to you, we will provide advance notice of cordon changes prior to them taking effect. Please be assured this is a priority for the Auckland Council Recovery Office and we will be communicating any changes to you as soon as decisions are made.

Recovery roadmap for Piha

We are currently putting together a longer-term recovery roadmap to give a broad outline of recovery activities over the coming weeks and months. This is being developed in conjunction with Auckland Transport, our Parks and Community Facilities team, Waitākere Ranges Local Board and key community contacts.

We will communicate this roadmap with you in the coming weeks in a future community update.

Case managers assigned

Case managers (Auckland Council compliance officers) have now been assigned to red and yellow placarded property owners in Piha, and they will shortly be in touch. Red placarded properties are being prioritised, with yellow to follow.

Your case manager will check in with you to see where you are up to in your remediation process. They can help advise on any legislative requirements in relation to the Building Act 2004 and Resource Management Act 1991.

If you have a red placarded property and have not been contacted by your case manager by the start of May, please email rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

Cordon vehicle passes

If you require a pass to gain access through the Anawhata Road cordon for personal or business reasons, [you can now apply online](#).

The existing coloured paper passes are still valid – you do not need to apply for another pass if you already have one.

Once you apply, you will be asked to provide supporting documentation. We aim to complete all requests within three business days. It is important to note, access to Piha and Karekare remains extremely restricted and all applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Placarded property process

A [rapid building assessment](#) (RBA) is an initial check to ensure the safety of building occupants and the public. It will identify if the building is safe to remain in.

Once a placard has been issued, you will need to complete a more thorough assessment of your home or building.

If you are insured, your insurer will arrange for the right experts to carry out that full inspection and recommend what repair works are needed.

If you do not have insurance, you will need to engage suitably qualified professionals to do this on your behalf. For example:

- Structural issues for a building need to be assessed by a [Licensed Building Practitioner](#) (LBP) and/or a structural engineer.
- Land issues e.g. where a slip has occurred, may require advice from a [geotechnical engineer](#).

The detailed inspection and recommendations from suitably qualified professionals will determine the repair works that need to be carried out.

Please note that council will not be undertaking further, detailed assessments of the placards – it is between the insurer and property owner, or the property owner and their expert, to progress remediation works.

Once remedial work has been completed, it's then time to make contact with us again.

Please send the documentation you receive from your insurer or building professional to: rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

We'll review your documentation and the placard status, then determine whether or not we need to visit the property again. A visit from council inspectors is not always required – this will vary from property to property.

Once the review has been done, we'll send you an email notification and letter with a change of placard status for your address, where appropriate.

Something to note, some property owners in Muriwai have a different process to the one set out above, you may have read about this. The difference is due to the exclusion zone that is in place and the need for a different approach to geotechnical work within that area.

Placard removal

Placards indicate how a building can be used. They flag whether there is any safety risk in using that property or part of that property.

It is important you do not interfere, damage, or remove the placard once it is installed.

(White placards are the exception, and we are deeming them to expire 21 days from the date of issue. After that date they can be removed by the owner.)

If your placard is missing, please contact rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz, or your case manager.

Placard information on Land Information Memorandums (LIMs)

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, any future LIMs issued for a property will include the placard history.

The most up to date placard status will be displayed. This will show as 'open' until the documentation review has been done and the placard has been changed to 'closed'.

In the case of white placarded properties, after 21 days the LIM should reflect the placard as 'closed'.

If we confirm a placard has been issued in error, for instance where a placard is placed on the incorrect address, it will not be noted on any future LIMs.

Temporary Access process for red placarded properties

Property owners/occupiers/representatives who would like to temporarily access a red placarded property can apply for access if accompanied by a suitably qualified professional. If you would like to temporarily access a red placarded property, you will need to supply the following information:

- Property address
- Email and phone number
- Names of those who will be entering the property including their company name and whether a person is an owner/occupier
- Reasons for entry
- Time and date for entry and exit
- Written confirmation from a suitably qualified professional that a Health and Safety Plan has been prepared and will be followed for entering the property.

The above information should be sent to the case manager assigned to the property or to RBacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

Properties can be accessed by the following persons:

- Suitably qualified professionals such as a licensed building practitioner, geotechnical or structural engineer, or geologist
- Representatives of the property owner such as an insurance loss adjustor or property manager
- Property owner/occupier.

Some properties around the Auckland region have additional restrictions in place due to being located inside a designated exclusion zone (such as in Muriwai). Within designated exclusion zones, all temporary access is managed by Auckland Council. There are no designated exclusion zones in Piha or Karekare.

Rapid Building Assessments update

Updated placard status numbers in Piha as of Monday 24 April:

- Red 1 – 10
- Red 2 – 7
- Yellow 1 – 16
- Yellow 2 – 7
- White – 153

Visit the [Auckland Council website](#) to learn more about what the placard colours mean.

Reporting new land movement or landslides

If you see new land movement, please visit the [Auckland Council website for next steps](#).

Rates relief for uninhabitable homes

Last week we contacted placarded property owners with information about rates relief for ratepayers with uninhabitable homes that need help to pay their rates. Placarded customers were contacted via email (or via text where we don't hold an email address) so if you have not heard from our grants team, we may not have contact details for you. You can email the grants team (erfgrants@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) for application details. Applications close on 28 April 2023.

Welfare update

If you need financial support, contact [Work and Income](#) for information on benefits and payments.

If you have queries about EQC or insurance, please contact your insurance provider directly. Remember, the Ministry of Business, Employment and Innovation (MBIE) continues its Temporary Accommodation Services (TAS). You can [register online](#) or by phoning 0508 754 163.

Business support is available through the [Auckland Business Chamber Back to Work scheme](#).

Support for residential home insurance claims

If you'd like support and advice on your residential home insurance claim, the New Zealand Claims Resolutions Service (NZCRS) can help.

The NZCRS is a free service that provides residential homeowners with advice, case management support where appropriate and access to legal, technical and wellbeing services to help achieve timely, fair and enduring resolution of residential insurance claims resulting from natural disasters.

They are there to help whether you are just confused by what your insurer is telling you or you have specific questions about either your insurance policy or the process that will be followed to settle your claim.

NZCRS has supported homeowners across New Zealand through a number of events including flooding in Nelson, Westport and Edgecumbe, along with earthquake responses in Christchurch and Kaikoura.

You can contact NZCRS on 0508 624 327, email contact@nzcrs.govt.nz or visit nzcrs.govt.nz.

Wellbeing support

If you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed, please consider talking with a 1737 counsellor for support, advice and ideas that can help. Call or text 1737 anytime.

For less critical non-emergency care, please connect with your GP in the first instance, or if you don't have a GP and are unsure where you need to go to seek help, call Healthline [0800 611 116](tel:0800611116).

You can also contact one of the West Auckland organisations below:

- Family Action familyaction.org.nz
- Vision West [Counselling, Wellbeing, Clinical Supervision | West Auckland | Book Online \(visionwest.org.nz\)](http://visionwest.org.nz)
- Care Waitākere [Counselling | CARE Waitakere](http://carewaitakere.org.nz)
- Kindred Family Services [Counselling \(kindredservices.org.nz\)](http://kindredservices.org.nz)
- Mental Health Foundation [Accessing Mental Health Services](http://mentalhealthfoundation.org.nz)

Wellbeing support for business owners

The Government has reinstated its one-on-one wellbeing support for businesses impacted by recent weather events. Ongoing uncertainty has placed significant levels of pressure and stress on business owners and managers, leaving many feeling overwhelmed by the challenges they face before they can resume normal business operations.

To address this, business owners and managers can apply for confidential one-on-one professional mental health support by visiting [Firststeps.nz](http://firststeps.nz) and filling out a simple application.

This will give them free access to support from qualified health and wellbeing providers. First Steps has a list of preferred providers and have partnered with [Clearhead](#), who have over 500 mental health professionals across New Zealand here to support those in need.

The timely support of qualified health and wellbeing providers is essential for addressing the mental health and wellbeing issues businesses may be facing. This support can improve relationships at work, home, and in the community, and enable people to approach their return to work with the right support and the best attitude. By prioritising their wellbeing, businesses can navigate the challenges of life more effectively and unlock their full potential.

Central Government's weekly cyclone updates

Central Government's Cyclone Recovery Unit continues to work closely with regions worst affected by the North Island floods and Cyclone Gabrielle.

You may wish to read the Cyclone Recovery Unit's latest weekly update on the [National Emergency Management Agency \(NEMA\) website](#). It covers the range of social support still available, support available to businesses and the agriculture sector, progress being made on the transport network and how the Government's Cyclone Recovery Unit is working with the Cyclone Recovery Taskforce to support recovery efforts.

Past editions are also available to view on the [NEMA website](#).

Rubbish update

We are aware that some red placarded property owners are still clearing cyclone debris from their property (or will have a future need once they are able to get access to their property). We are working with our Waste team to find an option for disposing of storm debris now the dump site at Piha Domain has been closed.

Waitākere Regional Park

Regional parks in the Piha area are currently closed to visitors. This includes all tracks, toilets and parking areas, including Kitekite Falls, Log Race Road and Taitomo areas.

Visit the [Auckland Council website for updates and further closures](#).

Park rangers have been reviewing all tracks and facilities and are now working to get these repaired and reopened.

Auckland Transport (AT) update

AT is continuing to work in the background to deliver a long-term solution for the damaged roads in Piha.

The geotech reassessment has shown that there is no ongoing requirement for weight restrictions on Piha Road, however the 3500 kg weight limit on Scenic Drive at Elevation Café remains in place. We have asked police to monitor compliance with this weight restriction.

We understand there may be some frustration over the time taken to get roads repaired and open. You may have seen roads damaged by the floods/cyclone in other parts of the country that have already been fixed and are open for use. Those slips were far less significant than those around Karekare and Piha. The slips on the west coast are complex due to the nature of the geological construction around the Karekare and Piha area, and require ongoing geotechnical assessments to help guide the planning and construction process. Unfortunately, the need to conduct multiple geotech assessments adds time to the overall programme, however taking the time now will result in a better outcome and ensure a safe and resilient solution. We are continuing to maintain roads and repair minor damage where we can.

We expect Piha Road reconstruction to begin in approximately 3-4 months, once the design and planning work are complete. Once we start construction, it will take 1-2 months to complete. Until a permanent repair is made, the one-way traffic management system will remain in place. A geotechnical assessment of the road has been completed to ensure that the road continues to be safe for people using it.

As we have said before, there is no quick way to fix the major slips on Rayner Road and Glenesk Road due to the severity of the damage, but we anticipate that construction would start in approximately 6 months. This may be longer than residents hoped for, however we have prioritised the work on Piha Road and we will keep you informed about key dates once we get closer to the start of works.



Need help?



Visit: aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz/flood-event-2023/piha-community-information
Enquire: piha@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or rbacomms@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



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