



Minutes of Newtown Residents Association meeting - 17 November 2025

7.30pm St Thomas's Church Community Lounge, 200 Riddiford St

Present: Merio Marsters (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Rhona Carson (Secretary), Sam Somers (Treasurer), Kassie McLuskie, Andrew Wilson, Penny Sturgess, Michelle Wolland, Hilary Watson, Carol Comber, Stephen Pritchard, Adam Awad, Cr Nureddin Abdurahman, Wendy Blue, Melcome Menzies, David Jenkins, Léonie Walker, Jane Patterson, Graeme Carroll, Laura Zhong, Sam Chandler, Don MacDonald, Jude Douglas, Warrick Taylor, Vania Szymkowiak, MP Julie Anne Genter,

Apologies: Cr Laurie Foon, Jan Gould, Keith Powell, Daphne Pilaar, Alex Hockley, Community Constable Desmond Foo, MP Julie Anne Genter (arrived 7.45pm),

Merio Marsters welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Previous minutes of meeting:

October meeting minutes, including the AGM part 2, be taken as read and approved as a true and accurate meeting.
Moved: Adam Awad, Seconded: Kassie McLuskie. Carried.

Treasurers Report:

Sam summarised the accounts. Applied for an annual Council grant of \$1000, and Stone Soup Community Gardens grant of \$300 has been approved.

Projects:

Carrara Park - WCC announcement to have toilets open 26 June 2026.

A community event to celebrate Carrara Park is open for suggestions and discussion.

WCC Connected & Newtown Safety Plan team: Billy Murray, Joel Berryman and Delly Ranginui

- Riddiford Street bus stop has had a clean up with further upgrades in mind
- CCTV in the Newtown area
- Rhona informed the group of the history and connection to the raised garden by the bus stop - the Residents' Association was granted funds by WCC to organise 4 raised beds to go in the old Caltex station, when it was being used as a community space. This one was built by a Salvation Army crew, but then the site became a parking lot, the completed bed was moved out to its current position and the others cancelled.
- Trespass notices were issued to individuals that hang around St Thomas courtyard with more NZ Police being visible and present within the area
- The safety team has been invited to our February meeting to provide us with updates and changes to safety projects/plans in Newtown.

Guest Speaker: Julie Anne Genter, our MP for Rongotai

- The Electorate office has been assisting people with various functions. Many support services have been made more difficult to engage in.
- Newtown Heart, our association, and Salvation Army have been working with Council to do cleanup operations.
- The latest Mt Victoria tunnel proposal has been expanded today. Julie Anne noted that there is no funding for this project yet.

There was some further discussion about the tunnel proposal. It was noted that this project will directly affect neighbouring suburbs, but Newtown will be affected indirectly. This media release from Waka Kotahi lists 'information' days: <https://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=175749>. Note that details are sparse and there are four weeks to make submissions.

Councillor Updates:

Cr Nureddin Abdurahman thanked the Association and Salvation Army for organising candidate meetings and generally helping what was a very positive campaign.

- Council has started working on campaign issues which don't affect the long-term plan.
- The first meeting this week is on Thursday 20 November. It is largely procedural.

- He listed various Council committees, which are in this article <https://wellington.govt.nz/news-and-events/news-and-information/our-wellington/2025/10/deputy-mayor-announced>
- Nureddin was asked about changes to rates. There are no simple answers, but a subcommittee has been formed to look at saving money.

An acknowledgement from Warwick to Cr Nureddin, congratulating on today's High Court confirmation that Uber drivers are employees. He noted that DiDi was better, but there are structural issues causing problems in this industry.

Other business:

Neighbours of the burned out house at 285 Mansfield Street talked about their concerns. This is being addressed with the Council, but they do not consider the building to be dangerous. It is noted that the relevant Council policy has expired. The house was not well looked after for a number of years before the fire. It is unclear who the owners are. Cr Nureddin is planning to look at this in his role as chair of the City Strategy and Delivery committee.

Ban on Fireworks. Following from last month's meeting, we have written to the Council asking that previous discussions be reviewed. There was some discussion around the issue.

Andrew Wison (Salvation Army) updated the meeting on social issues around the City.

- Some people on the street are moving out of Newtown
- Costs typical of Christmas are being seen. There is a Christmas appeal which people can support by giving gifts, food, etc. This can be dropped off at the district office.
- The de-escalation courses have been popular though the most recent one had to be cancelled because of illness.

An awareness and shared information drawn to new changes for 70+ year olds renewing their driving licences, for example: to be registered and seen by GP, cognitive, eye tests, etc

Merio encouraged attendees to reach out to isolated vulnerable members in our community, so external support can be provided during the holidays period. To everyone in attendance, Safe holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Food blessed by Andrew for our end of year shared kai.

Formal meeting ended at 8:32pm - followed by supper and an enjoyable social time.

Next meeting: 16 February 2026 at 7.30pm