



**Minutes of meeting of Newtown Residents Association
St Thomas' Church community lounge, 200 Riddiford Street
Monday 16th March 2026 at 7.30pm - 9pm**

Present: Merio Marsters (Chair), Rhona Carson (Secretary), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Sam Somers (Treasurer), Cheryl Robilliard, Malcolm Menzies, Laura Zhong, Vania Szymkowiak - WREMO, Don McDonald, Steve Dunn, David Jenkins, Hilary Watson, Keith Powell, Daphne Pilaar, Carol Comber, Wendy Blue, Warwick Taylor, Michelle Wolland, Graeme Carroll, Cr Laurie Foon, GW Cr Yadana Saw, MP Julie Anne Genter,

Apologies: Andrew Wilson, Jane Patterson, Kassie McLuskie, Marion Leighton, Kerry Finnigan, Sam Chandler, Sehai Orgad - WCC City Safety & Wellbeing Manager, Joel Berryman - WCC City Safety Adviser, Millie Lambess - WCC Harm Prevention Team Leader,

Minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes were distributed late and shared with the executive team. Minutes will be available on our NRA website.

- Moved that the minutes be approved - Sam Somers
- 2nd - Hilary Watson

Carried.

Financial

- No major change since last meeting.
- Still working through being approved as a charitable organisation.
- Bank accounts will be sorted soon, now Martin Hanley is available post Newtown Festival.

Correspondence

Invites to our local Councillors and MPs for each meeting

We are also going to invite the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, through their request process

Vania Szymkowiak - WREMO

Vania introduced the evolving role of WREMO, in the Newtown area.

This includes consideration of:

- Current resources central and held by individuals
- Known hazards
- What people are concerned about emergency preparedness
- Community-led model, neighbours uptake is progressing
- Picnic, preparedness gathering over the weekend, cnr Wilson & Daniel Streets was very well attended and supported

There is a WREMO workshop this Saturday, as recorded in the newsletter. This is aimed at those who represent/interested in being part of a collective of others who want to be involved, promote hub open days, community events/workshops and ongoing conversations/preparedness.

- When: Saturday 21 March 2026, 1pm-3pm
- Where: Te Whare Hapori o Ngā Puna Waiora/Newtown Community Centre

Festival Update/Feedback

Rhona said that things had gone very smoothly and asked for feedback.

Don enjoyed the buskers stretch, not too loud.

Sam acknowledged support for his site, went above and beyond. Noted that Sam got good publicity for returning a \$693 overpayment to a customer.

Carol shared a successful day at Newtown Festival for Poneke Public Housing movement, raising awareness and over 700 signatures towards the petition for government to retain social housing and

increase supply and to pressure the government, reasons why state housing is important for our community, affordability and sustainability

There was good support and feedback for another successful event with a range of community stalls. Rhona thanked those participating and contributing, on behalf of the Festival team. The meeting supported the Festival by acclamation.

Acknowledgement of the morning tea, and approval that the food was available to people using the Community Centre green room after the official morning tea.

Yadana was running the South Stage and reported that her stage ran smoothly, the crowd and music was great.

The Protest Exhibition - 1970's protest photos and art from 6th March to 11th April

Hilary Watson shared that the exhibition at 24.7 Gallery, Riddiford Street was well attended during the festival with further promotion at Sub-Culture. The exhibition is extended until 11th April and everyone is welcome.

Marching 4 meals - Shared by the Salvation Army, people are invited to join the walk, or donate to raising funds and awareness for The Salvation Army foodbanks across New Zealand.

Click this link for more details: [Marching 4 Meals](#) gathering Sunday 29 March starting at 1pm, Shorland Park, Island Bay, finishing at Oriental Bay, distance: 10.3km

Laurie Foon - Wellington City Council update

Updated us on relevant local things:

- Laurie acknowledged Laura was at the meeting and has concerns
 - There will be an update on policy for dangerous and insanitary buildings. A good opportunity as a community to address these concerns to council with a submission about insanitary/dangerous building policy
 - The name Kahukura Park is now official. The meeting discussed having a party. Perhaps a Neighbour's Day event?
 - More P180 parking spaces to be permitted as part of the parking plan around Newtown East.
 - A mobility park is to be allocated in Regent Street as consulted.
 - On 17th March the Council was due to discuss matters including the Mayor's 64 Triennium Plan and an extension for City Safety work to continue into Newtown. (see the update at the end of these minutes.)
 - Annual plan to cut funds, climate action was not part of the funding cuts.
 - It was noted that Loafers Lodge has been sold to Prime Property Group
 - There is currently a problem with the FixIt App not sending feedback acknowledgements and time delay to get work done.
- Noted that this appeared to be fixed after this meeting.**
- There is not yet a process for continuity with change to Tiaki Wai (the new water management organisation) on the 1st July.

Julie Anne Genter - Parliament update

- Congratulations and thankfulness for an amazing Newtown Festival. "Wonderful day, we really enjoyed it. I'm so grateful to be part of this community".
- Helping council work on Moa Point. Terms of Reference have been released. The lead person of the review is Raveen Jaduram, concerns have been discussed as a conflict of interest. This page introduces the inquires and has links to Terms of Reference: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/moa-point-crown-review-team-appointed>
- It was noted that businesses around the south coast are severely affected by no people being in the Lyall Bay area. Having discussions about a possible relief fund to businesses that have been affected by the Moa Point matter.
- Coalition of people, to oppose the governments 'move-on orders'. An action on the 29th March 2026
- New social housing developments are going to be built in Newtown. Some from Kainga Ora and other community housing providers like Dwell Housing. Discussions raised about addictions being a contributing factor to social and housing issues.
- The Environment Select Committee is working through submissions on the RMA replacement bill. The current situation with the fuel crisis is a priority focus for the government
- There are various steps being taken to push the Government to take steps to ease transport costs with the current fuel crisis.

- It was suggested for the community, residents association to gather and think about what we can do, to support our community as hardship and crisis will rise. Fits in well with emergency planning discussion, with food security and how we can access these and other resources.

Yadana Saw - Greater Wellington Regional Council update

- Yadana Saw, Sarah Free, Simon Woolf and Tom James are our representatives from the Pōneke Constituency
- Public transport fares are increasing by 3.1% on 15 May
- On 12th of April, on the Snapper network, you will be able to use your debit cards, smartphones and watches to pay for a single adult snapper fare. It does not include concessions until the national ticketing system, NZTA projects on the timeline of delivery to roll out throughout the country.
- Annual/Long term plan has trimmed a 13% rate, on average around 9.7%
- There is also going to be a GW review/investigation of Moa Point, at least 6 months away <https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/news/moa-point-sewage-discharge>
- The way we pay for water is going to be changing over to a new entity, Tiaki Wai, as of the 1st July. There will be more changes to follow and a better understanding of the water charges and payment, separate from district council rates
- The Joint Working Group looking at changing regional council activities is progressing <https://www.gw.govt.nz/your-region/news/greater-wellington-joins-other-councils-mana-whenua-to-reform-local-government/>

Carrara Park Toilet Update

Contact made from council, progressing with an external contractor appointed for construction of toilet block off-site and onsite work is expected to begin in May.

WCC Consultations

Only two WCC consultations were mentioned, however, there are several consultations currently open for public feedback. Sign up to WCC Let's Talk to stay updated. [Home | Let's Talk](#)

- Noise control policy: [Review of noise in the District Plan | Let's Talk](#) closes 10th April
- Community engagement: [Participate Pōneke | Let's Talk](#) closes 12th April

Mansfield St house matters

Invited affected neighbours to share with us. WCC has declared this property as 'unsanitary'. A notice has been served and displayed for the owner. Processes with council when notice expires.

Police have been called twice with trespassers still accessing despite the warning tape, it is not safe and could end up in another fire or worse.

Processes to report to Police 105 or 111 have been frustrating to report these concerns.

Legislation may be a factor, noted that disinterested landlords are a concern for a number of reasons. The community will be subjected to more abandoned properties and processes within council to keep homeowners details updated and accountable if not maintained or left untenanted.

Councillor Geordie Rogers inquiry through a process to increase rates on abandoned properties

On a practical level, the community suggests to board it up to stop individuals accessing or entering the property. Is it illegal?

Salvation Army Development on Owen Street

Ground work has been started on the 185 Owen Street site, (access behind their current community housing). A development of 25 newly built dwellings of 1-3 bedroom units, a few accessibility units and a community facility. A shared concept drawing was in the last Newsletter, copied at the end of these minutes.

Questions raised:

- Parking - Will there be on-street parking or off-street parking for these new 25 units?
- What would the development look like?
- We will ask Andrew Wilson to discuss this development further with NRA members.

Meeting ended at 9.04pm

Next meeting: Monday 20th April at 7.30pm

Update about WCC meeting on 17 March

Some of the Mayor's 64 Triennium Plan and an extension for City Safety work to continue into Newtown were passed.

Meeting recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/live/la0b6QFiojs?si=RvB4wsE2rTeDJFUx&t=290>

Concept drawing - Salvation Army Development on Owen Street



Block A: Apartment, three stories, 9x one bed, 6x two bed

Block B: Townhouses, three stories, 5x one bed, 5x three bed

Block C: Communal Building, two stories