**October 19 Update from WREMO – Vania Szymkowiak**

There is some positive resilience mahi progressing across Newtown.

The activities continue to build on from the community emergency mapping workshop held earlier this year for Neighbours month. This identified practical priorities including water, kai, communications, medical support, accommodation for apartment residents and people without secure housing, and ways of supporting neighbouring communities when impacts are shared.

We are refreshing the **Newtown Community Response Plan**, with residents helping to review and update information about community resources, services, businesses, facilities and neighbourhood networks. Anna at the Newtown Community Centre is seeking some more volunteers to contribute local knowledge, identify community assets, review sections of the plan, and help ensure the information Newtown relies on during an emergency is accurate, relevant and community owned.

We are also continuing to build awareness and connections around the **Newtown Resilience Network (What's app group),** following the vegie market open day at the **Community Emergency Hub** and the **Newtown School whānau-focused preparedness scavenger hunt.** These two-pilot Newtown developed activities have been adopted by communities across the Wellington Region with great success and appreciation due to great engagement and the awareness these activities raised.

Alongside this, the online Community **Flood Zine** will stay open to receive experiences and observations from the April floods. If interested contact Alex at april2026flood@proton.me.

A researcher in the **Natural Hazards and resilience cluster** is compiling photos and video from the flood in April for a community facing resource. if you have some high-resolution photographs or video action sequences that illustrate hazards (and related research methods), community responses, recovery efforts, preparedness activities, or resilience in practice please reach out to me.

**The Community impact stories** captured through the community maps continue to help strengthen preparedness, inform infrastructure decisions, recovery planning and wider conversations about catchments and climate resilience.

**Citizen Science** plays an important part in risk mitigation Adopt a Drain interest keeps growing - I am talking to the Minnesota team next week they piloted this programme many years ago and are keen to share their learnings. I am working with Enviroschools here to see how we can facilitate this in Wellington.

With the great success of the Newtown veggie market Hub open day I tested a Preparedness stall at the **Harbourside market** on October 4 this got good engagement from market visitors. Being in a Tsunami zone and so many apartment dwellers it was a great opportunity to team up with local Residents associations.

**Dwell Housing Trust launched its Tenant Preparedness Programme on 29 September,** turning every tenancy into an opportunity to build resilience. Through a simple Preparedness Passport, tenants learn practical actions that keep them safer at home, from storing water and planning for toilet outages to knowing neighbours, local safe places, and how to safely navigate power cuts. Each housing visit introduces a new preparedness skill, embedding resilience into everyday life and reaching people who may never attend a workshop. Feedback has been magic with tenants inviting others over for a cup of tea to share tips and buddy walks to their earthquake safe spot.

The next opportunity is for the Residents' Association and local networks to help bring more people into this resilience mahi

**Support the refresh of the Newtown Community Response Plan,**

**Help identify and connect community champions** from apartment buildings, streets, businesses, schools, faith communities, sports clubs and community groups to strengthen local networks before an emergency occurs. This aligns with ongoing work to build cross-community resilience networks across Wellington South

**Promote, host and support future neighbourhood activities**, including open days, preparedness events and community response exercises, helping more residents understand how they can stay safe at home and support neighbourhood-led response during emergencies.

**Support local flood resilience and catchment awareness initiatives** by sharing local observations, identifying recurring flood issues and participating in conversations about waterways, catchments and practical risk-reduction actions

**Advocate for and participate in community-led initiatives** that residents have consistently raised, including catchment education, resilience expos, local story mapping, neighbourhood preparedness networks and practical environmental resilience activities.