

16 May 2024

The property owner  
Waihi Beach

**Join us at the Coffee and Kōrero event  
which we are hosting with the  
Waihi Beach Stormwater Liaison Group.**

Waihi Beach Surf Club,  
Sunday 9 June 2024, 10am - 1pm

Kia ora,

### **Waihi Beach Stormwater Update**

The flash flooding on 29 May last year had a devastating impact on many people in Waihi Beach. Significant rainfall was unable to drain away from some areas of the town, causing major damage to properties and forcing residents from their homes.

Waihi Beach is a special place, but that unique environment also brings challenges. It's low lying, with little natural drainage and is close to the coast. These factors make it difficult for stormwater to drain away during heavy rain. Because of this, some areas of Waihi Beach will always have some level of flooding. However, it's a priority for us to do our utmost to improve stormwater drainage as much as we can.

Since the flooding last year, we've been doing lots of mahi on the stormwater systems in Waihi Beach which we'd like to share with you.

#### **What we've been working on**

We've been working closely with the Waihi Beach Stormwater Liaison Group on a list of 75 stormwater projects aimed at improving drainage systems. This group includes community members from Waihi Beach SWAT (Stormwater Action Team), iwi representatives from Te Whānau a Tauwhao (hapu of Ōtawhiwhi Marae), the Waihi Beach Community Board, District Councillors, and Council staff. Together we've been investigating different solutions in the projects list, looking at how effective each is at reducing flooding, as well as other factors like cost and feasibility.

Several initial projects have now been successfully completed, most of which focus on remedial and preventative works. Here's an update on these projects:

- We have installed new grates at key locations on Browns Drive, Jenkinson Street and Beach Road to reduce stormwater blockages (see photos below):



- We have cleared silt from the Maranui Pond and installed a higher barrier to deflect debris from the stormwater drains on Browns Drive. This diverts water away from homes (see photos below):





- We have started the rock erosion protection for Two-Mile Creek (see photos below):



- We have completed works to double the capacity of two pumpstations in Pio shores/ Bowentown (see photo below):



Some of the potential projects still being reviewed include large-scale stormwater solutions involving extensive modelling. We're doing thorough feasibility assessments on these to make sure they will help reduce flood risks without causing new problems elsewhere. This takes time and involves a number of steps including high level design, assessment of risks, costs, timeline to achieve, whether additional land needs to be purchased, and prioritisation. We are moving through these and will keep you updated.

For more information on our stormwater projects, including maps showing project locations, visit our Waihi Beach Stormwater projects page ([westernbay.govt.nz/waihi-beach-stormwater-projects](https://westernbay.govt.nz/waihi-beach-stormwater-projects) or QR code opposite)



### What's next?

- We will continue to work through this list of stormwater projects – keep an eye on our Waihi Beach Stormwater projects page (webpage above).
- The Earth Dam Operation. You may have noticed that the Earth Dam water level is looking a bit low. As well as major upgrades to meet new dam safety regulations, we are going to permanently lower the water level in the dam. This provides a little more storage to reduce flood impacts downstream during storms.
- Council has included \$20.78 million in our draft Long Term Plan 2024–34 for projects to provide relief from flooding within Waihi Beach (more detail at [westernbay.govt.nz/WB-stormwater-2023](https://westernbay.govt.nz/WB-stormwater-2023) or QR code opposite).
- We've been taking a good look at our drain and waterway clearing maintenance to make sure our stormwater systems are in good shape. Before every heavy rain event, we make sure we are on the ground checking things like drains to make sure they aren't blocked. However, this may only keep drains clear until the next big downpour which carries leaves and debris to the catchments.
- We've seen more requests lately about plants growing in our drains, and we appreciate everyone keeping an eye out and letting us know. We'd like to explain how we handle this.



Our main goal when cleaning the drains is to keep the bottom clear for water flow, but we also try to keep plants on the banks intact. These plants help prevent erosion, protect nearby properties, and naturally filter pollutants from the water, improving the health of our waterways.

By managing the plants in this way, we're not just fixing current issues but also helping our environment stay healthy for the future.

- Learn how to tell if your stormwater drainage system is working well or not (visit [westernbay.govt.nz/waihi-beach-stormwater-projects](https://westernbay.govt.nz/waihi-beach-stormwater-projects)) – and please let us know if there is a problem so we can do something about it. Either email, phone, or message us through Antenno. Antenno is an app which not only gives you a way of communicating with the Council, but it allows users to receive messages about your community from councils and other local bodies (see link to download the app, as well as our contact details, at the bottom of the page).

### What can you do?

- Clean out your catchpit (drain). Make sure that lawn clippings and other garden debris are not able to make their way into your catchpit. If catchpits are blocked the stormwater system doesn't drain like it should.
- If your home is in a floodable area, we encourage you to think about raising your home. We'll waive the building and resource consent processing fees, and your application will be exempt from the rules around daylighting for example. Enquire now at [info@westernbay.govt.nz](mailto:info@westernbay.govt.nz)

- If you want to get in touch and speak to someone:
  - Come and have a chat at the Coffee and Kōrero event which we are hosting with the Waihī Beach Stormwater Liaison Group.
    - Waihī Beach Surf Club, Sunday 9 June 2024, 10am – 1pm
  - Get in touch with us, or let us know about something you have seen in the following ways:
    - Phone us 0800 926 732
    - Email us [info@westernbay.govt.nz](mailto:info@westernbay.govt.nz)
    - Download our Antenno App ([westernbay.govt.nz/council/contact-us/antenno](https://westernbay.govt.nz/council/contact-us/antenno) or QR code opposite)



Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'EJ Wentzel', located below the 'Ngā mihi' text.

EJ Wentzel

**Director Water Services**