

ORCA SPLASH SPRING 2026

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Ka tangi it pīpīwharaua, ko te karere a Mahuru
(When the shining cuckoo cries, it is the message of Spring)

As the days get longer and warmer Onemana is slowly waking up to the joys of Spring. We have had some beautiful winter days, but at times it has been as cold as I can remember with hard frosts which is almost unheard of. Some of the natives and non natives are already flowering and we seem to be seeing a resurgence of bee numbers after years of famine. Hopefully it lasts.

Even with the village in hibernation mode there has been quite a lot going on to report.

ORCA have completed their Community Plan and this will be circulated shortly. We are keen to get it to council as soon as we can so they can consider our representations when developing the 2027 Long Term Plan. We will be holding a forum in the new year sometime after the AGM (while the marquee is still up) to brainstorm and get community input / feedback. It's a dynamic document so nothing is cast in stone. That said there isn't really anything revolutionary in it but beauty is always in the eye of the beholder.

2026 Committee:

Rob Andrew (C) 0211771804
Christine Moore (S)
Jennie Kingma (T)
Carol Basham
Bruce Taylor 021438063
Annabelle Couldwell
Neville Cross
Leticia Murray
Earl Irving
Ruhi Pene 0272941452

Morning tea at the Cafe

last Thursday each
month
10am

24 September
29 October
26 November
\$10 pp

Bring something for the
swaps table.

Council have been seeking feedback on their new spatial plan, which is the 50 year visionary plan and a couple of ORCA members participated in an online brainstorming session. It was useful to see and hear ideas from others around the peninsular and assess the diversity of opinion. While I hate to be a cynic, with the various amalgamation proposals working their way around the traps at present I'm not sure any of it will see the light of day and if it does it could well be a different vision as the communities of interest change... We will wait to see what goes.

With winter we get planting season and there has been activity all around the bay and the reserves. Les and the dunes team had a great turn out for their event and up to 1500 new plants were distributed on the foreshore. The focus is still mostly on the north end where the erosion has mostly occurred and also the Dune Care people have provided fertiliser to give the existing spinifex a well needed mineral boost. You may have noticed a gentleman periodically spraying in the dunes to suppress the nasties and this has also had a great effect.

More work has been done at the Onemana entrance and around the stock yards. Succulents have been excised and replaced with OiOi's, flaxes and renga renga lilies. There has been a spring clean around the lakes and reserves and they are looking mint at present. The eels are also back and hungry!

For those that regularly walk up the hill you may have noticed a new small track heading up the hill after the stockyards. This has been put in to try and bypass a mucky bit of the old track which walkers have been avoiding by walking on the road. It's still work in progress but please try it as we are aware that there have been near misses on the road as vehicles do speed down the hill and the road is quite rough and narrow.

And now for the section on all things birdish. Firstly thanks to Helen Bucksey, a 'new' Onemana local who is organising a bird survey. The idea is that at intervals (annually or six monthly) a 5 minute survey of birds is undertaken, at established locations 200 metres apart to get base data to help track how we are going with our bird population and by inference the measure of success or otherwise of our preservation programmes. These programmes include the trapping, planting natives, use of feeders etc etc. DOC and others do it all over the country and it's a universally accepted measurement technique. If you want to join feel free to contact Helen thru the Onemana 5MBC WhatsApp group or an ORCA Committee member.

H5N1 (bird flu) is also in New Zealand, so please be aware of it. Never touch, handle, or move sick or dead wild birds. Keep pets and children away from them. If you spot three or more sick or dead wild birds in a group, report it immediately to the Ministry of Primary Industries Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline at 0800 80 99 66.

The Dottie's are back at it and starting their nesting activities along with the variable oyster catchers. Please take care on the beach especially if you have dogs as their nests are very fragile and exposed and they are easily disturbed. Also a cat has been spotted on the camera wandering on the beach. It may be a feral cat as there are plenty around, but if your moggy does roam please think about keeping him or her home at night.

Predator Free Onemana continues to do a great job keeping rat and stoat numbers down and giving our birds a better chance at breeding and just surviving. The group have asked me to include a plea to people not to interfere with their traps. Baits are being regularly removed from one of the automated traps. If you need baits or rat bait just contact Les on 021 790 459.

Sandra Andrew and others have continued to arrange some great community events in the village. Mid winter Xmas was a great party with a guest trans Santa who entertained the girls and boys. We were also very fortunate to have the world famous magician **Paul Romhany** who gave us an off the cuff performance. I'm still not sure how he pulled that rabbit from my hat and **Sandra Andrew** is still looking for the other half of **Rob** after he was cut in half. Our early morning Matariki welcoming event went well and the morning teas and Friday community evening are all tracking well and keeping **Rahul** in the cafe busy. Mah Jong is still going on Tuesdays & Fridays as are outdoor bowls on the tennis court. If you're keen to participate just turn up and see how it rolls or is it pings and pongs.

SEPTEMBER 2026

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
 	1	2	3	4	5	6
  	7	8	9	10	11	12
 	14	15	16	17	18	19
  	21	22	23	24	25	26
 	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2026

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
  	5	6	7	8	9	10
 	12	13	14	15	16	17
  	19	20	21	22	23	24
 	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1
  	2	3	4	5	6	7
 	9	10	11	12	13	14
  	16	17	18	19	20	21
 	23	24	25	26	27	28
	30					

Some may have noticed that the lines on the basketball half court have started to come off, we think due to excess watering of the concrete at the time they were laid down. Never fear this has been reported and the contractor is coming back to fix it. This won't however happen until after the weather settles so let's hope next time we get a good contact.

At present if you look around you will see there is quite a lot of water seeping onto the footpaths, reserves and roads and may be concerned that there are pipe leaks. Well that may be so, but also we have a large number of natural springs in our valley a number of which come and go when the water table is high or as a random event. If you are concerned, put in a TCDC Request for Service [Request for Service \(Link\)](#) and they are very good at getting back on water related matters.

On a more serious note, this year is forecast to have a supersized El Niño which will have potential effects on our region. The forecast is for hot and windy weather with the wind mostly coming from the west. What this means is much greater fire risk and also the need for conservation of water to avoid rationing. We may also get significant weather events. With regard to fire risk Onemana is very exposed being surrounded by plantation forest so extreme care will be required. The council are onto it and are facilitating planning and our Emergency Group are formulating actions we can take to reduce the risk in Onemana. Our village area is generally pretty good with little dry grass and flammable material but the actions we take with fires, barbecues, fire works etc also put our rohe at risk. So please be sensible and if you see others putting the community at risk let them know it's not on. There will be more communication on this in the future if and when the threat escalates.

I have also been asked to mention water harvesting which involves having your own water storage tank fed from your roof. This means you have a back up water supply and also can wash your car/boat/children without worrying about deposits of scale. Just a thought! It's probably too late for this year but worth consideration.

Ngā mihi o te kōanga
(Welcome to Spring)