

ORCA SPLASH

New Year 2026

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Welcome to the new year and a rather eventful start it has been. ORCA have had their Annual General Meeting, their first regular meeting of the year, we have a new dynamic set of councillors including 'our own' John Freer and hence a lot to report... So here we go.

Welcome to new members and our new committee members Leticia Murray and Earl Irving and farewell to Murray Cruikshank and Kim Mashlan who have left the committee. Kim deserves a special thanks as our dedicated secretary for four years. She's off on an adventure which sounds like great fun and we will be sad to lose her skills and knowledge. Welcome to Christine Moore our new secretary. Christine was already a committee member and has kindly stepped into the breach to replace Kim

2026 Committee:

Rob Andrew (C) 0211771804
Jennie Kingma (T)
Bruce Taylor 021438063
Annabelle Couldwell
Leticia Murray
Ruhi Pene 0272941452

Christine Moore (S)
Carol Basham
Anna Thomson
Neville Cross
Earl Irving



Firstly the flood. I'm sure everyone is aware of what happened and that we were isolated for a number of days. Thanks to the group of people who cleared the drains, waded in and managed to divert most of the water away from the cafe and real estate office by demolishing a fence (now reinstated) and checked up on our less able residents. There was water damage to the shop complex, flooding in a number of basements, one deck separated from its house, Onemana Drive was underwater at times as was Bambury Place but generally we were ok. Hopefully everyone has checked their properties for damage as the rain was intense and the easterly wind drove it in under eaves and into cavities. As a result of this event, we have reviewed our emergency plan and extended its coverage to ensure we take a proactive approach to all events as we can't just rely on others in these circumstances as resources across the region become very stretched. We will be updating our plan and try to formalise some of the preventative measures. That said we all need to be responsible for our own properties and surroundings and ensure drains are kept clear of debris and water flows are not impeded. While I appreciate some of this is council responsibility they are also stretched so please be proactive

A big thank you to the team who cleared all the debris out of the grates on the lake after the event and also the slash which had washed down Tuna Creek and clogged the pipes. Unfortunately the island of silt has returned and council have been made aware of this (the lakes are silt traps). We will also be asking them to look at the adequacy of the general drainage system as once the grates clog up with debris and weed it forms a dam and the water then runs around and over the lake platform and floods whatever is in its way. I doubt there is an easy fix but let's see. Also the boardwalk at the southern end of the beach was substantially undermined by water and the council have blocked off the access as it is dangerous to walk there. Please respect this as it's easy to walk around the fence but by doing this you will damage the dunes which are very fragile and also have a vital protective role.

As for the beach, well it's ok and has started to recover except for where the stream came down

On a more positive note D-day for the basketball half court is only a couple of weeks away. Site and Work Plans have been done, Health and Safety Plan also as well as the Archaeological Protocols recorded. All things going well it will be up and running early March so watch this space. Again a special thanks here to our Chairman Rob Andrew because without his dedication to the cause I'm sure this project would have floundered in the too hard basket.

A thanks to Matariki Forests for the assistance they provided to try and stop the people off-roading on the sides of Whitiporuroa Road. Rocks have been dropped in various places and it seems that it has become a less appealing place for these people to practice their dark arts. There was a flurry of activity over the Xmas period and some of the rocks moved but in majority it's been a success so far.

Unfortunately our chairman who was interviewed on CFM radio about it was subject to considerable unpleasant abuse via Facebook but he tells me he has a thick skin and he's not yet ready to take their advice offered regarding " heading back to the Retirement Home". Maybe some of these fellows should join a 4 wheel drive club and stop damaging others propertyjust saying.

**Community Morning tea
at the Cafe**

**held 10am the last Thursday
each month.**

**26th February
26th March
30th April**

\$10 pp.

Bring something for the swaps table.

Both ORCA and our stall holders were disappointed that market day had to be cancelled, but with the high winds the Health and Safety risk was too high to permit it to continue. It is our big fund raiser so we will have to watch our shillings this year. Although we weren't obliged to give refunds we did offer the stall holders the choice of a 50% refund or a 100% credit on next year's fees or a donation option. It was great to see most stall holders have carried their fees over into this year. A number also donated it to us and a special thanks to them. Most of these traders are Onemana regulars and we always love to see them back.

Stephen Lowe

Sunday fruit & veg

9.30am to 11.30am
off the Cafe carpark
(cash or eftpos)

EVERY SUNDAY
(weather permitting)

FEBRUARY 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

MARCH 2026

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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 	9	10	11	12	13	14
 	16	17	18	19	20	21
 	23	24	25	26	27	28
 	30	31				

APRIL 2026

Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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 	6	7	8	9	10	11
 	13	14	15	16	17	18
 	20	21	22	23	24	25
 	27	28	29	30		

For those of you who are cyclists we have had a number of enquires particularly regarding safety as the Whitiporuroa road is quite narrow and winding and while there isn't a lot of traffic it can get rather scary. We will be approaching the council regarding signage and also to consider if a speed reduction for safety reasons would be appropriate. We have also had a number of people concerned about the fire risk arising from the long grass in the fire- breaks. The cattle when they are there just can't keep up with the growth. We have approached all the parties involved and as you can see had limited success. Can I suggest that all those concerned people also contact the Forestry company (Matariki Forests) and hopefully add weight to our concerns. I appreciate we have just had heavy rain so it's not an issue today but as it dries off it becomes one.

Kathryn and her weed busters team have been busy as the weeds just love this weather. So it's been spraying and pasting to try and suppress the nasties. Please take care if you are out there as we have run into a number of wasps nests in the clay banks and walls and stumbling into them isn't what you want. Please take extra care if you are looking to destroy them and only do it when they are inactive. We have also dealt with a number of native bee nests (similar to the wasps) but only poison these if they are near walking areas. Fun fact there are 28 species of native bees in NZ (Ngaro Huruhuru) and here's a link for those interested

<https://www.fortheloveofbees.co.nz/native-bees>

It does say they rarely sting, but I don't believe it as I speak from bitter experience.

Les and the pest control group have had great success both with the dunes and bush trapping and the back yard trapping. If you wish to join up please contact Les 021 790 459 as he's always looking for back yarders and there is also plenty of rat bait available. With autumn coming up the rats will be looking for new homes indoors and also the possums will be starting to migrate into the village. Christine and the dotterel group can finally move into relaxation mode as all their babies have fledged and literally flown the coop. They have had an extraordinary year in terms of numbers fledged and I'm sure are an exemplar in the wider dottie community.

The 2026 program for ORCA is rather a movable feast, but will likely include an update of our strategic plans as 2027 is Council Long Term Plan year and so we need to have our input ready for that. If you have any thoughts or ideas please let us know so we can add them to the mix. Council are also looking to change the way they interact with their communities and this may alter how we operate once we know how it will work. We also have a new constitution which will mean more compliance as the rules have become more prescriptive for Incorporated Societies and Charities.

To all those members who made donations as well as paying their subscription thank you very much. The money is well spent on enhancing our environment in many ways. ORCA have also made a few donations notably to The Surf Club, The Pools Complex (both of whose facilities we use from time to time), The Coromandel Helicopter Trust and the Whangamata Community Patrol Group. These are all important organisations in this region and like everyone use every dollar wisely.

Social activities have been on hold over the Christmas break with the regular Community Friday nights at the cafe and the coffee morning's continuing through the break. Sandra has a program marked out for the year so keep a watch on Facebook and emails for upcoming events.

Finally, I can say we have a security camera up and I think it's working. It's now located by the Fire Station and is linked to the police station. The new camera will operate day and night and is focused on number plate recognition. I understand there is no face recognition as part of the operation. The installation is part of the Council and Whangamata Community Board programme to ensure greater safety in our rohe.

Ko te whenua te waiu mō ngā uri whakatipu
The land is the nourishment of future generations.