

Māpua and Districts Community Association meeting update – August 2025

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Candidates confirmed for 2025 Election

At 12pm on Friday, nominations officially closed for the 2025 local elections. We received a grand total of 40 nominations!

Check out who is standing for what at <https://www.tasman.govt.nz/candidate-information>.

Now it's time to meet the candidates so you can make an informed decision about who you want to represent you.

Over the next couple of weeks, we will produce videos of candidates answering a couple of simple questions, so you can see and hear their thoughts about the Tasman District. These videos will be posted on our website alongside their written candidate statement.

Meanwhile there are numerous events planned around Tasman organised by community groups and organisations where you can find out more about the people on the ballot paper. We don't run or organise these events, but a comprehensive list will be updated regularly.

Water quality results enable rāhui to be lifted.

Post-flood sample testing of water quality at 22 sites across the top of the south has returned a blanket set of good results, enabling the current rāhui to be lifted from 1pm on Saturday August 2, 2025. This also provides confidence for those looking to enter or use the water once again.

Concerns were initially raised around the effect of floodwaters on the coastal and marine environment in the aftermath of the weather events in late June and mid-July.

A rāhui was implemented from Saturday 28 June, covering the area from Te Parinui o Whiti (the White Bluffs) in the east, west to Kahurangi Point, including Aorere and Tai Tapu.

It covered all coastlines, river mouths, and floodwaters, and asked for people to respectfully refrain from the gathering of seafood and kai in these areas as well as swimming and entering the water.

The consistency of results across the entire Tasman and Golden Bay areas has given sufficient confidence that the water quality is back to pre-flood condition and our coastal waters are now safe for swimming.

However, the quality of the water in the immediate vicinity of the Motueka wastewater treatment plant still presents risk to swimmers, gatherers of kaimoana and a separate rāhui will remain in place for this area.

Rāhui are a voluntary measure and non-enforceable, but are another way of trying to keep people safe, especially when considering the impacts on the environment and potential contaminants in the waterways.

As part of ongoing monitoring measures, water samples have been collected by Nelson City and Tasman District Councils at coastal beaches and river mouth sites over the last two weeks.

Sample results from five locations in Golden Bay, 11 locations across the Tasman Bay coastline and six locations with the NCC-administered side of Tasman Bay showed particularly low levels of Enterococci and E.coli.

The national guidelines for safe limits in New Zealand are 280 enterococci/100ml for our coastal sites and 540 E.coli/100ml for our river sites.

Without exception, all sites returned results well under these limits in multiple tests, with only five sites showing more than 10 parts per 100ml at any stage. The maximum reading was 74 Enterococci / 100ml, recorded at Riwaka Port on July 25.

The effects of heavy rainfall on July 29 only caused a very short-term increase to these concentrations. Our data from the last few decades shows that the water returns to a swimmable quality within 48 hours of a rainfall event.

Tasman storms by the numbers

First there was a storm, then another which compounded problems, and then as we were starting to gain traction, yet another bout of heavy weather threatened – fortunately we dodged a bullet the third time.

Some of the numbers associated with dealing with various aspects of these weather events make sobering reading. The following numbers are by no means a full and final tally of the work that's been carried out by our staff, contractors, and out-of-town workers brought in to help during and following the storms.

At one single point at the height of the event, more than 600 kilometres, or more than one third of our council roading network, was closed, with around 175 people working directly on the road cleanup.

More than 3,300 roading-related jobs were logged due to the storms.

In storms one and two, there were 18 different companies working with us to restore the roading network back to a point where vehicles could use it safely. In the first three weeks of the cleanup, it included an estimated 35,000 hours of work.

In emergencies like these, our Council staff step in as part of Civil Defence Emergency Management, working two 12-hour shifts per day, seven days a week.

For the first two storms, 7,000 local staff hours were spent in these roles, supported by up to another 7,000 from our partner agencies and people brought in from out of town to assist.

Then our waters team also clocked up close to 5,000 hours of work dealing with issues during the first two storms.

But the work is by no means over and will continue for many months. A specialist team is based at our office in Richmond, coordinating the recovery from these events.

Mayoral Relief Fund available

If you (or someone you know) is experiencing financial hardship due to the June/July weather events, you can apply for money from this fund. Financial hardship is different for everyone.

What it may look like but isn't restricted to:

- Difficulty paying for your essential living costs (such as food, medication, accommodation)
- Difficulty paying for additional costs that may not be paid for by your insurer (for example clean up, disposal of goods).

Applications can be made at tasman.govt.nz/mayoral-relief-fund or pick up a form from any of our service centres.

River Z works underway

One of our major roles as a unitary authority is to look after the District's rivers.

We maintain 285 kilometres of Tasman's major rivers, including larger waterways such as the Motueka, Wai-Iti, Waimea, Dove, Aorere and Tākaka Rivers, which collectively form our River X and River Y management areas.

The majority of smaller rivers and tributaries that feed into them have no active management or ongoing maintenance by us and make up the River Z area.

The effects of the recent weather events have been immense and have compromised properties and the landscape of areas across the District, next to rivers and waterways of all sizes.

As we move into the recovery phase of these flood events, we know that a long-term commitment to river work and community collaboration will be needed to repair flood damage and make our rivers more resilient to future floods.

However, we also know that work needs to begin right away.

We will be starting on a post-flood tree and debris cleanup programme on some of our smaller River Z rivers in the areas affected by recent flooding. This includes Pigeon Valley Stream, Eighty Eight Valley Stream, Pretty Bridge Valley Stream, Stanley Brook, and others.

In light of the severity of this event, we acknowledge the importance of doing what we can to help in these River Z areas.

This work will be done in parallel with major river recovery work in the River X and River Y large waterways, following a similar plan of an initial post-flood cleanup and repair of the most vulnerable areas.