

Māpua and Districts Community Association meeting update – November 2025

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New Council ready for business

The votes are in, and there are five new faces around the Council table following the declaration of the final confirmed results of the 2025 Tasman District Council triennial elections.

Newcomers Mark Hume, John Gully, Kerryn Ferneyhough, Dave Woods and Timo Neubauer, as well as previous Councillor Dean McNamara, will join returning Councillors, Jo Ellis, Mike Kininmonth, Brent Maru, Celia Butler, Trindi Walker, Kit Maling and Mark Greening in the Council Chambers.

The Council will continue to be led by returning Mayor Tim King, who polled more than 6,000 votes ahead of his nearest rival, Timo Neubauer, in the mayoral race.

Claire Hutt returns to the Motueka Community Board along with long-serving previous Councillor David Ogilvie and will sit alongside new board members Laura Lusk and John Katene.

In Golden Bay, the Community Board will comprise previous members Grant Knowles and Henry Dixon, with newcomers Clarrisa Bruning and Axel Downard-Wilke joining them.

There was one vacancy for the Te Tai o Aorere Māori Ward, where Paul Morgan was declared elected unopposed as the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies.

In the Māori Ward referendum, 8216 people voted in favour of keeping the Te Tai o Aorere Māori Ward, while 10529 voted to remove it; therefore, the ward will be removed for the 2028 and 2031 local elections.

This election, the voter return was 47.8% compared to 48.9% in 2022 and 51.7% in 2019

Māpua launches Emergency Preparedness Plan

Enabling and supporting individuals and their communities to take ownership of emergency preparedness is the example set by the Māpua Ruby Bay community in launching their Emergency Preparedness Plan.

To celebrate the milestone, an Emergency Preparedness Day has been organised for Saturday 29 November at the Māpua Community Hall between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm.

Civil Defence, Neighbourhood Support, FENZ, St John, and Tasman District Council, plus climate resilience and other community groups, will be attending. The day will feature information, competitions, giveaways and a sausage sizzle.

In the event of an emergency or disaster, it is unlikely that Civil Defence, first responders or council staff will be able to reach everyone affected during the initial 24-48 hours.

This was the catalyst for creating this Plan seven months ago, when the Community Emergency Preparedness Committee sought feedback to assess the resources and risks that existed in Māpua, and how prepared residents felt they were to cope with an emergency.

Māpua and Districts Community Association Chair Paul McIntosh says after receiving more than 80 responses from residents, they now have a go-to process “to increase the resilience of our community to the impacts of hazards and to promote problem solving and self-sufficiency.”

“This ensures that we are prepared to take care of our families and neighbours while helping our community recover more quickly, minimising the economic and social impacts on our residents and businesses.”

If your community is interested in creating a plan of its own, call Civil Defence on 03 543 7290 during business hours or email info@ntem.govt.nz to register.

Final Mayoral Relief Fund and primary sector recovery payments distributed

The Nelson Tasman Mayoral Relief Fund, established through Government support and donations, has made its final recommendations for grants to residents and primary sector businesses affected by severe weather events in mid-2025.

The fund was established in late June and was extended following a subsequent weather event on 11 July.

“While not intended as compensation, it’s hoped these grants will go some way towards helping to alleviate the emotional and financial stress experienced by individuals, families, and businesses,” Mayoral Relief Fund manager Jim Frater says.

The Fund had \$482,297.32 to distribute. It received 264 applications by the 5 September deadline.

To date, the Mayoral Relief Fund panel has approved payments of \$477,465. Seven meetings were

held between 30 July and 24 September 2025 to make recommendations on funding requests.

Applicants sought a total of \$3.6 million.

“A number of applications were unable to be processed due to applicants providing insufficient information or documentation. There are currently no outstanding applications,” Frater says.

“In weighing up the expectation of donations being distributed as soon as possible against holding some funds in reserve, an upcoming debrief will discuss the possibility of retaining a pool of funds for any future need identified.”

A separate panel has also considered applications for the \$340,000 Primary Producers Recovery Fund.

The fund was established to support the recovery of farmers, growers, foresters, and fishers affected by severe weather in mid-2025.

The funding was provided by the Government. This fund was administered by the Tasman District Council in conjunction with the Mayoral Relief Fund.

The fund received 91 applications by the 5 September deadline. Applicants requested \$4,212,017.

“A three-member panel reviewed the applications to ensure they met the fund criteria. Additional information was sought where necessary to enable a thorough assessment of each application,” Frater says.

“The recovery fund was set up to help cover costs including cleaning up silt and debris on production land and around aquaculture farms, clearing key tracks, and removing fallen trees.”

The panel was made up of Tasman deputy mayor Stuart Bryant, Federated Farmers chairperson Wayne Langford, and MPI’s On Farm Support recovery manager Tim Stevenson.

Still on the road to recovery

We continue to follow the long road to our new normal, following the back-to-back weather events that tore through parts of Tasman District in June and July.

Five months after the devastating floods that wrought havoc in parts of our District, the clean-up continues.

Tonnes of rubbish and debris that were left behind by the raging flood waters along the banks of the Motueka Valley have been cleared in a mammoth effort by our contractor Nelmac Kūmānu.

But it hasn’t been an easy task for them. Operational challenges thoroughly tested the team’s planning, logistics, and risk management capabilities.

Crews encountered a range of hazards, including hanging trees, tensioned logs, and concealed debris. The expertise of their arborists and machinery operators has been essential in assessing and safely mitigating these risks, allowing them to do the work efficiently and without incident.

The other big issue we've faced is dealing with large quantities of silt which was washed on land during the floods.

We established a temporary silt transfer station next to the Riwaka football grounds, where an estimated 6-thousand tonnes were stockpiled, then moved on to various locations.

Many people don't realise that, in controlled quantities, most of that silt is quite fertile and usable, and that's why some growers and farmers have allowed it to be spread on their pastures.

The rugby ground car park used for the transfer station has been restored to its former glory in time for the upcoming summer sports season.

Right trees, right place, right time!

Future proofing the Tasman District to cope with nature's fury in the years to come means our flood recovery efforts require more than just repairs to damaged areas and infrastructure.

In recent weeks, our Rivers and Catchment teams have been busy helping our rural communities to replant and make their hillsides and riverbanks more resilient.

More than 2,700 poplar and willow poles were distributed to more than 120 people in flood-affected areas. A further 2,500 native trees were also distributed with the poles, or to sites where natives were deemed more suitable.

To support recipients, two webinars were held, offering guidance on where and how to plant the poles and providing an opportunity for participants to ask questions specific to their situations. Recordings of these webinars have been shared with all recipients and are also available on our YouTube channel at youtube.com/@TasmanDistrictCouncil.

Where larger volumes of natives have been distributed to a single property, Tasman Bay Guardians has been linked in to help organise and facilitate volunteers to get them planted and take the pressure off people already overwhelmed with flood recovery.

This initiative is part of a longer-term programme to enhance biodiversity and support long-term ecological health, and we anticipate ongoing opportunities being made possible in years to come.

We want to say a big thank you to all the groups and organisations that have been working to help restore flood-affected sites. With your efforts, these restored areas now stand as a testament to what's possible when community and nature work hand in hand.

We welcome storm waste funding

A government announcement of up to \$2 million to further support Tasman flood recovery efforts is welcomed, as the clean-up from back-to-back storms in June and July continues.

Environment Minister Penny Simmonds says the grant has been drawn from the recently established emergency waste funding.

Tasman District Council Recovery Manager Richard Kirby says the total bill for all damage and the subsequent clean-up stretches into the many millions, so this additional money for waste disposal is very helpful.

“I’m grateful that the Ministry for the Environment has supported us in providing solutions to the disposal of waste, silt and gravels arising from the flooding.”

Richard says the money will cover around 75 percent of the cost of this aspect of the storm clean-up process.

The Emergency Waste Fund money will help to cover some Tasman District Council costs in a variety of areas, including:

- The initial and ongoing clean-up of debris on the coastline and along our river corridors.
- Removal of silt and debris around critical infrastructure.
- Disposal of flood-damaged household goods.
- Receiving and managing silt from around homes.
- Assisting with silt management from horticultural properties where necessary.
- Receiving and processing fence posts – we’ve already processed and donated 8,000 re-processed vineyard posts for farm fencing.
- Management of rural plastics, debris and hazardous wastes.
- Helping with the management of woody debris on public land and private property.

Richard is also welcoming assistance from the Ministry for the Environment to apply for a waiver of the waste disposal levy to further reduce the financial burden of disposing of silt and other flood-related waste.

Come home safe this summer season

With the start of the summer boating season, our Harbourmaster team in collaboration with Maritime New Zealand and the Safer Boating Forum, is urging all recreational water users to prioritise safety.

Safer Boating Week is next week, highlighting the importance of safe practices for everyone heading out on the water, whether you’re in a waka, kayak, paddle board, sailboat, or powerboat.

For many, it will be their first time back since last summer.

The theme, ‘Come Home Safe’, emphasises the importance of safety. Over the past decade, more than 170 New Zealanders have died in recreational craft incidents.

This year, special attention is being given to paddle craft safety (kayaks, paddle boards, and waka), as they were involved in nearly half of last year’s boating fatalities – five out of 11 deaths.

Paddle craft users face unique challenges: their vessels are more likely to capsize, and incidents often happen close to shore or on inland waterways. The waters around Tasman can turn rough very quickly, so it’s essential to stay prepared.

Remember these simple safety tips before you head out:

- Check the marine weather forecast.

- Take two forms of waterproof communication.
- Always wear a properly fitting life jacket.

For more detailed safety advice, visit saferboating.org.nz. Stay safe out there, we want everyone to come home safe this summer!

Planning for resilience

Nelson Tasman Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) has reviewed its Group Plan with the vision of a resilient Nelson Tasman community.

The Plan, reviewed every five years, identifies the region's hazards and risks and how Civil Defence will effectively manage these across the four key activities of risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.

It's been updated by the Nelson Tasman CDEM Group, a partnership between Nelson City and Tasman District Councils, and its key partner agencies, who are involved in the delivery of emergency management.

The plan takes account of lessons from significant emergencies around New Zealand in recent years, including floods and earthquakes that have affected our own region.

Changes from the previous plan include greater emphasis on planning for recovery and the role of communities towards this, transitional periods and transitional powers available during a transition period, boosting the role of the Lifeline Utilities group, and providing further options to support outlying communities in the event of Civil Defence events.

You can check out the plan at nelsontasmancivildefence.co.nz/plans-and-strategies.

Flood weeds on the move

We've been starting to hear more and more about pesty plant species popping up on properties affected by the severe flood events earlier this year.

Floods are like a magic carpet for weed seeds, spreading them far and wide, and providing a nutrient-rich medium for them to germinate in. While Asiatic knotweed is high on the list of concern, many other common weeds have taken advantage of the situation.

With spring well and truly here, we are starting to see sycamore, blackberry, convolvulus, hawthorn, robinia and old man's beard showing up in new places in Tasman, adding to the burden on affected landowners.

These are some of the most persistent and annoying weed species. Sycamore in particular is toxic to horses, so keep an eye out for seedlings in paddocks where horses are kept.

Our Biosecurity team are always available to identify weeds and provide comprehensive advice on the most effective ways to control them.

Some of these weeds can be very hard to get rid of once they are established, so early intervention is key. We also have dedicated pamphlets with advice for controlling pest trees, shrubs, vines

and grasses. These are available at our service centres and on our website, tasman.govt.nz/pests-and-weeds.

If you need advice, please get in touch with our Biosecurity team at biosecurity@tasman.govt.nz or by calling us on 03 543 8400. We're here to help!

Join the conversation

Over the next few months, we'll be posting questions and statements on our 'let's talk Tasman' page, and we'd love to get your thoughts.

This is an opportunity to informally share your ideas and feedback with us and others in the community. By joining in, you can help build a common understanding of what matters in our community.

Together, we can start some meaningful conversations about what makes our District a great place to live, and how we can all support its future.

Visit us at shape.tasman.govt.nz/lets-talk-tasman.