

# He Whakamahuki mā ngā Kaikaunihera Hou

## Briefing to Incoming Council

**October 2025**



# Contents

## 1 Elections

Amalgamation Referendum	4
Māori Ward Referendum	5

## 2 Future Focus

Finding efficiencies	6
Crown investment	7
Rates affordability	8
Local Water Done Well	9
Government Reform Programme	10
Building reforms	11
District Plan	12
Hutt City Council's Bloomberg Journey	13
Emergency Management at Council	14
City Resilience and Climate Change	15
Council-owned Facilities	16
Our City 2055	17

## 3 Ward profiles

Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward	18
Central Ward	20
Harbour Ward	22
Northern Ward	24
Western Ward	26
Wainuiomata Ward	28

## 4 Additional information

Three year pathway	30
Further reading	31

# Nau mai, haere mai

He mihi nā te Tumu Whakarae |  
Welcome from the Chief Executive



Nau mai, haere mai ki Te  
Kaunihera o Te Awa Kairangi.  
Congratulations on your election  
and thank you for stepping up to  
serve our city.

This briefing highlights the key issues and decisions you will face during this time of major change for local government. Central government reforms in water, local government and planning will affect our work, while we continue to deliver essential services and renew ageing assets. At the same time, rates affordability, infrastructure renewal and climate resilience remain front of mind for our community.

Large projects such as Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (RiverLink) and Tupua Horo Nuku (Eastern Bays Shared Path) show both the scale of investment and the benefits of collaboration with Mana Whenua and our communities.

There are some tough calls to make to balance service expectations with financial realities. Council may decide to pause or stop some work on projects, progress new initiatives, or reprioritise funding.

This briefing sets out the key issues facing the city, milestones throughout the triennium and decisions ahead, along with further reading to support your induction. Additional documents will also be available in your Diligent resource folder.

I look forward to working with you to navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, and to deliver on the aspirations of our communities.

Ngā mihi nui,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Miller', written in a cursive style.

Jo Miller  
**Tumu Whakarae**  
Chief Executive  
Hutt City Council

## Amalgamation Referendum

### Vote in favour



The community has voted to support exploring regional amalgamation.

### Overview

Voters were asked whether Hutt City Council should "explore amalgamation options with Wellington, Upper Hutt and Porirua City Councils, and the Greater Wellington Regional Council, which combine relevant services and functions, while keeping appropriate local services and decision-making local."

+ [Final results as at 17 October 2025](#), votes cast in favour: 17,429, number opposed: 14,283.

+ Result is non-binding but shows support to consider options.

### Further information

Porirua City Council also ran a non-binding poll on whether to explore amalgamation. As of 17 October 2025, final results for Porirua City Council show voters were in favour of working with other councils in the Wellington region to explore the possibility of creating one single council (9,581 votes in favour and 7,399 votes against). Wellington City Council and Upper Hutt City Council did not hold a referendum.

The recent poll result is non-binding. It gives incoming Council an indication of community interest but does not commit Council to any specific course of action. If Council wishes to explore this matter further, the next step would be for elected members to consider asking officers to carry out some initial, high-level exploratory work. This could include identifying possible options, assessing potential benefits and risks, and outlining what further engagement might look like.

Once this information is available, Council could then decide whether to consult the community on a preferred approach. If Council chooses to proceed beyond that stage then a [formal process](#) through the [Local Government Commission](#) (LGC) is required.

#### Any future steps will require:

- Careful analysis of opportunities and impacts,
- Collaboration led by the Mayor with neighbouring Council at governance and executive level,
- Engagement with Mana Whenua,
- Engagement with businesses,
- Engagement with communities.

# Māori Ward Referendum

## Vote to retain



The community has voted to retain a Māori Ward for Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai / Lower Hutt.

### Overview

- + [Final results as at 17 October 2025](#), votes cast in favour: 19,976, number opposed: 11,688.
- + The result confirms the Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward for the 2028 and 2031 elections.
- + Cr Te Awa Puketapu was elected unopposed as the Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward Councillor.
- + The Māori Ward Councillor has a particular responsibility to represent people of Māori descent alongside Mana Whenua and to act in the best interests of the city as a whole.

### Further information

In November 2023, Council voted to establish the Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward to ensure Māori representation in local decision-making. The Ward gives people of Māori descent on the Māori roll the opportunity to elect a Councillor to represent them at the Council table, alongside Mana Whenua.

In 2024, legislative changes required this referendum to confirm whether the Ward would continue. With the community voting in favour, the Ward will remain in place beyond this triennium.

### Timeframes/Decisions

- **2030**  
Decision on whether to retain the Māori Ward considered as part of the next Representation Review, due in 2030

# Finding efficiencies

To achieve more affordable rate increases, significant savings will be needed. A new targeted operating model will help achieve this.

## Overview

- + Council faces significant financial pressures, with limited revenue options and increasing costs.
- + If Council wants to achieve a single digit rates rise then savings in the region of \$30M will be needed over the next three years will be required.
- + The previous Council agreed that work on efficiency should continue.
- + Budget review options are being prepared for the new Council to consider.
- + A service catalogue has been developed to provide a clearer picture of what Council does, how much it costs, who it serves and how it aligns to legislation and strategy.
- + The service catalogue has also helped to inform a new targeted operating model that will assist in achieving further savings over the longer term. Council will consider this in late 2025.
- + Investment in technology will create efficiencies over time, and further investment is needed in some systems, and AI, to create savings.

## Further information

Like many councils, Hutt City Council is implementing changes to the Resource Management Act and water services reform, alongside other shifts in Government priorities that are not always centrally funded. Reforms may ease long-term pressures, but they create unfunded transition costs in the short term.

Record levels of Government investment are improving resilience but also require Council contributions and increase delivery obligations. At the same time, rates remain the main revenue source, already under strain from ageing infrastructure, rising service costs, and inflation. Unpaid rates arrears have grown from 2% of total revenue in 2019 to 5% in 2024.

To address this, savings of around \$30M are needed by 2028 to make rates more affordable.

This includes \$2M per year of stranded overhead costs for functions not transferring to the new water entity Metro Water.

A new targeted operating model is in development which will help achieve the savings needed to reduce forecast rates increases.

The targeted operating model can guide a future structure and business model that enables more efficient service delivery and helps reduce the financial burden on ratepayers over time.

Work is underway to support consideration of a "line-by-line review". This includes developing the service catalogue and reviewing budget processes. Officers will engage with the new Council early in the triennium on how best to progress this efficiently and effectively.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **October/November 2025**  
The initial phase of the targeted operating model will occur over a five-week period, with options being presented to Elected Members as part of initial strategic conversations. Any cost implications will be considered as part of the upcoming Long Term Plan Amendment/Annual Plan process
- **30 March–30 April 2026**  
Draft 2026–27 Annual Plan Consultation period
- **13–15 May 2026**  
Annual Plan submission hearings
- **30 June 2026**  
Council approval of Long-Term Plan amendment and 2026/27 Annual Plan

# Crown investment

Crown investment is enabling the city to deliver major transport and resilience projects, including Cross Valley Connections and Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (Riverlink).

## Overview

- + Crown funding is supporting major transport and resilience projects, including [Cross Valley Connections](#), [Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi \(RiverLink\)](#) and the [Infrastructure Acceleration Fund](#).
- + These investments require Council to commit significant local funding alongside central government contributions.
- + Delivering large-scale projects while meeting new government policy directions continues to place financial pressure on Council.

## Further information

The Cross Valley Link Road, which is a part of the wider Cross Valley Connections programme, has been confirmed as a Road of National Significance. The project will provide a new east-west link across the valley, improving travel times, reducing congestion on key corridors, and strengthening access to the port and hospital. It will also improve resilience by providing an alternative route in the event of disruptions on State Highway 2.

Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi is a once-in-a-generation programme that combines flood protection, transport upgrades, and redevelopment of the city centre. It includes flood defences, improvements to local roads, walking and cycling routes, the State Highway 2 Melling interchange and new Melling Bridge, relocation of the Melling train station and a new pedestrian bridge connecting the station with the CBD. The name, gifted by Mana Whenua, recognises the cultural relationship with the river and the project's focus on environmental restoration.

The Infrastructure Acceleration Fund is helping unlock housing growth in Lower Hutt by funding major water upgrades. New pipelines, pumping stations and storage tanks will support more than 3,500 new homes, including higher-density and affordable options, while also reducing flooding, improving reliability, and future-proofing the city's infrastructure. Council secured \$174.3M in funding, including \$98.9M from Kāinga Ora for the stormwater project, with the remainder funded through development contributions and rates.

Council also receives NZTA subsidies for day-to-day transport activities such as roading renewals, maintenance, and safety works. For most transport maintenance activities, Council funds 49 cents and NZTA funds 51 cents per dollar.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **October-December 2025**  
Cross Valley Link & Connections Project Next Phase Update
- **December 2025**  
Te Wai Takamori Programme - City Link Bridge Procurement Plan
- **February 2026**  
Te Wai Takamori Programme - Streetscape Strategy Phase Approval

# Rates affordability

Rates are the main way Council funds services and infrastructure. Recent increases have been largely driven by the need to fix ageing water and roading networks, along with rising costs, such as inflation and interest.

## Overview

- + The Government has signalled it will introduce rates capping. This would place a limit on the amount by which councils can increase rates revenue each financial year.
- + A Ratepayer Assistance Scheme is being proposed. A final Government decision on whether this will be developed is being sought by the end of 2025.
- + Councils have limited options for raising revenue, and rates are the main source.
- + Council's current Long-Term Plan has approved \$2.8B investment in infrastructure over the 2024-2034 period. Water and transport make up 81% of this investment. The new Council will have the opportunity to review priorities and to consider the significant challenges of rates affordability.

## Further information

Recent rates revenue increases in Lower Hutt have been heavily driven by investment in water services and transport.

From 2026/27, the water services costs will no longer be included in Council rates, as responsibility for water shifts to the new water services entity. Council will continue to incur up to \$2M per year in stranded overhead costs for functions that do not transfer to Metro Water such as corporate support costs. Ratepayers will receive two separate bills – one for water service charges and the other for the remaining rates charges. Both of these bills are projected to increase.

Council will set the strategic priorities for the next eight years through an amended Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 that removes water services costs and an Annual Plan 2026/27. Through this process, there will be an opportunity to review the rates policy and future rates increases.

Council will need to make tough decisions to balance service expectations with the financial reality. The public will have opportunities to provide their views directly to Council.

The proposed Ratepayer Assistance Scheme would create a national shared service for councils to help address affordability concerns by providing flexibility around when to pay certain Council charges. The Government has asked the local government sector to undertake further development of the proposal. If approved by the Government, legislation will need to be changed to bring the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme into effect. If it goes ahead, Council will need to decide in 2026 whether to join the scheme.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **December 2025**  
Council briefed and provides initial direction
- **February 2026**  
Council progresses further decisions on priorities and trade-off choices
- **March 2026**  
Council approves draft amended Long-Term Plan and draft Annual Plan 2026/27
- **April 2026**  
Public consultation
- **May 2026**  
Council considers feedback from the public and progresses decisions
- **June 2026**  
Council adopts amended Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan 2026/27, and sets the rates increases for 2026/27
- **2026**  
Council considers joining the proposed Ratepayer Assistance Scheme

# Local Water Done Well

The Wellington metropolitan councils and Greater Wellington are establishing a jointly owned organisation, with the interim name Metro Water, to deliver all water services from 1 July 2026.

## Overview

- + Metro Water will assume ownership of and responsibility for drinking water, wastewater, and reticulated stormwater services across the Wellington metropolitan area from 1 July 2026.
- + The new entity will have greater borrowing capacity than councils do, allowing smarter investment in water infrastructure over a longer period, reducing pressure on ratepayers.
- + It creates a platform for consistent service delivery and better decision making across the regional network.
- + By early November 2025, the entity will be incorporated with an establishment Board in place to lead the transition.
- + The Water Services Delivery Plan was approved on 6 October 2025.

## Further information

The new multi-council-owned water services entity will own and operate public drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater assets for around 432,000 people across the shareholding councils. Those councils are Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington City Councils and Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The model was co-designed by the five councils in partnership with Mana Whenua: Ngāti Toa Rangitira and Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika. Further details can be found in the agreed [Water Services Delivery Plan](#), which ensures Council meets new [legislative requirements](#).

Council is working to ensure that local assets and systems are transferred smoothly to Metro Water in alignment with the regional transition timetable.

A joint “Partners’ Committee” will be established to oversee Metro Water, made up of representatives from each partner council and Mana Whenua. The foundation documents for Metro Water, including the constitution and partners’ agreement, will be presented to Council for endorsement in December 2025.

Wellington Water Ltd will continue to deliver water services on behalf of Council under the current model until Metro Water takes over on 1 July 2026.

The cost of water services will come out of rates billing and be charged separately. Council will continue to bill customers on behalf of Metro Water until it is set up to bill customers directly.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **Early November 2025**  
Incorporation of Metro Water and appointment of establishment Board
- **By 31 December 2025**  
Council ratifies foundation documents for Metro Water
- **30 June 2026**  
Council approves Long-Term Plan amendment and 2026/27 Annual Plan
- **1 July 2026**  
Day 1 of Metro Water operations, taking over from Wellington Water Ltd

# Government Reform Programme

If passed, the Government's proposed System Improvements Bill reforms would narrow councils' role, add compliance costs, and limit service flexibility.

## Overview

- + The Bill narrows the statutory purpose of local government and reinstates a list of "core services."
- + It introduces stronger cost-effectiveness tests and expands central oversight of council performance through mandatory performance measures and codes of conduct.
- + The Government has introduced the [Local Government \(System Improvements\) Amendment Bill 2025](#), the next stage of wider reforms to the local government sector, signalled by the coalition Government.
- + Other reform programmes underway include changes to resource management legislation, water services reform, and ongoing policy discussions on local government structure. See [page 9](#) for more information on Local Water Done Well.
- + Building regulation reforms are being advanced, with implications for seismic strengthening, building consents, and hazard management. See the following Building Reforms page for more.

## Further information

The Bill reframes the purpose of local government around "good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and regulatory functions" delivered in the most cost-effective way, with an added requirement to support local economic growth.

[Local Government New Zealand \(LGNZ\)](#) and [Taituarā](#) have raised concerns that this narrower scope could reduce councils' flexibility, increase compliance costs, and expose decisions to greater legal challenge.

The Bill would reinstate a statutory list of "core services" such as infrastructure, waste, civil defence and community amenities. Sector submissions note that the list is incomplete and risks constraining councils.

The Bill also expands central powers through new performance measures, standing orders and governance rules, which may increase costs and reduce local discretion.

These changes are occurring alongside wider Government reform programmes, including resource management, water services, local government structure, and building and hazard management.

The Government has also signalled it will introduce rates capping. This would place a limit on the amount by which councils can increase rates revenue each financial year.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **18 November 2025**  
The Governance and Administration Select Committee is due to report back

# Building reforms

The Government's upcoming changes to New Zealand's building regulatory system have wide-ranging implications for Council including new rules and seismic ratings for buildings.

## Overview

Areas of proposed change under the Government's building reforms include:

- + Moving to a risk-based framework for earthquake prone buildings that will emphasise fixing high-risk elements rather than full upgrades, could result in declassification of some local buildings or longer timeframes for remediation. This could include buildings such as Hutt Hospital.
- + Liability settings moving from "joint and several" to proportionate liability so each party pays only their share of fault;
- + "Granny Flats" being exempt from specified consenting requirements;
- + Building Consent Authority reforms leading to consolidation of roles between councils and the introduction of private Building Consent Authorities;
- + Overseas-certified building products being accepted as compliant, starting with US, European and other international standards;
- + Modernisation of occupational licensing, including self-certification.

## Further information

The proposed reforms could reduce liability, workload and revenue for Council. The focus of some Council roles would move from consenting to compliance monitoring, risk-based auditing, and post-market enforcement. New technical expertise may be required and competition for council building professionals would increase.

Much of the detail of the reforms will be developed by Government over the next six months.

Further information can be found on the MBIE website: [News | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment](#)

Further information on Council buildings can be found here: [Seismic information of Council buildings | Hutt City Council](#)

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **1 July 2026**  
Government has indicated legislation will be finalised by this date
- **2026**  
Options around how Council responds to these opportunities and risks will be presented to Council as further details become available from Government

# District Plan

Council has agreed to apply for an exemption so hearings can continue on key parts of the Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan.

## Overview

- + The District Plan is the main document that sets the framework for managing land use and development within our city.
- + The Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Act 2025 introduces a "Plan Stop", pausing councils' unfinished Resource Management Act (RMA) plan-making work unless hearings have already started.
- + This applies to the Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan, but requests for exemptions may be made.

## Further information

Council's [District Plan](#), prepared under the [Resource Management Act 1991](#), provides objectives, policies and rules that manage subdivision, land use and development to support sustainable resource use

Council began a review of its District Plan in 2019. This review resulted in a new Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan, which was notified for submissions in February 2025.

The "[Plan Stop](#)" prevents councils from progressing RMA plan changes likely to be replaced by national reforms. Plans not at hearing stage pause until new legislation in 2026, unless exempted for issues like natural hazards or granted ministerial approval.

On 29 September 2025, Council unanimously agreed to seek a ministerial exemption to progress hearings on eligible parts of the Proposed District Plan. The application will exclude provisions on historical and cultural values, natural environment values, and highly productive land, which will be withdrawn.

The Government is progressing major reforms to the resource management system, with new legislation to replace the RMA expected in early 2026. Although details are not yet known, the reforms are likely to substantially change how Council manages district planning and resource consents.

This may include new requirements to prepare a combined regional plan (to replace the District Plan) alongside the other local authorities in the Wellington region.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **October 2025**  
Council will apply for the exemption
- **15 January 2026**  
Deadline to apply to the Minister for the Environment for an exemption to proceed with some parts of the Proposed District Plan
- **2026**  
If an exemption is granted Council will run hearings in 2026

# Hutt City Council's Bloomberg Journey

Bloomberg Philanthropies has provided Council with significant funding and expertise to help build leadership skills and capability around innovation and human-centred design. Council is now using innovative, community-centred design techniques to reimagine our city centre and transform the way residents respond to natural disasters.

## Overview

- +** In early 2024 Mayor Barry was selected to be part of the Bloomberg Harvard Leadership Initiative, a programme funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies to lift the skills and capability of city leaders around the world.
- +** Following the Mayor's participation in this programme, Council was invited to be part of the Bloomberg Innovation Track, receiving support to build the skills of Council staff around innovation and human-centred design.
- +** In 2024 Council applied for the Bloomberg Global Mayors' Challenge with a project to improve community response during emergencies. We were selected as one of 50 finalists (out of over 630 cities) to compete to win \$1 million USD to deliver our prototype.
- +** In July 2025, Council hosted an Intern from Harvard for 10 weeks who completed a project to help us measure the effectiveness of our engagement processes.

## Further information

### Innovation Track

In late 2024, Council joined a 9-month programme focused on human-centred design and resident-led innovation. At no cost to Council, twelve staff went through the programme, getting access to world-leading expertise in innovation and human-centred design.

The Council team worked with residents on ideas for city centre regeneration. Key insights to feed into future Council work programmes include: connecting activities in the city centre and improve visibility; reflecting the diversity of our communities in the city centre.

Work is also underway to consider how to grow wider innovation capability across the organisation and provide resources and tools for staff to support this.

### Mayors' Challenge

In June 2025, Council was named one of 50 global finalists (the only city in Oceania) in the Bloomberg Mayors' Challenge, the world's largest city innovation competition. We received \$50,000USD to prototype our idea – a GenAI Community Emergency Response Assistant. During an emergency, the Assistant will: give residents personalised, real-time, trusted updates in multiple languages; let residents share live intel back to Council; ensure all communities can act quickly on clear advice.

The project has allowed us to develop strong, unique partnerships with global organisations such as PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Microsoft.

Council is now waiting to hear if it will be one of 25 cities to win \$1 million USD to complete and implement the prototype.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- October 2025**  
Final application due
- 2026 onwards**  
If successful, begin Community Emergency Response Assistant implementation

# Emergency Management at Council

Local authorities are responsible for civil defence and emergency management in their area. Our emergency management office coordinates responses with assistance from the Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office.

## Overview

- + Our city is exposed to a wide range of hazards and climate change is exacerbating the risks.
- + Council staff train regularly and can be deployed in: the purpose-built Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at 25 Laings Rd; designated Emergency Assistance Centres in the community; or in support of other councils across the region and country.
- + During a major event, the EOC may operate 24/7 over 2-3 shift rotations. It becomes the centre for coordinating local response activities across the emergency services, welfare agencies and frontline Council teams.
- + Council has business continuity plans to ensure key activities can be delivered during a disruptive event such as an earthquake.

## Further information

The Mayor plays a vital role during a significant emergency response. Under the [Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002](#) the Mayor can declare a state of local emergency. When this occurs, Emergency Controllers can exercise additional powers to direct and coordinate personnel and resources. All Elected Members provide community leadership during a response by identifying community needs and supporting and reassuring the public. See link to further advice for Elected Members [here](#).

The EOC directs specialist activities such as:

- On the ground reconnaissance of affected areas
- Operation of emergency assistance centres for displaced people
- Undertaking post-earthquake building inspections
- Cordon/evacuation management, and
- Emergency re-supply logistics.

Led by the Local Controller, the EOC is organised into functional areas using the [New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System \(CIMS\)](#).

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **October/November 2025**  
Councillors' briefed as part of induction programme
- **2025-2028**  
Regular updates to relevant Council committee
- **At all times**  
The EOC team is on call throughout the year and come together to coordinate an emergency response when needed

# City Resilience and Climate Change

Lower Hutt's location and changing climate create ongoing risks, making resilience and emission reductions a key focus for planning and investment.

## Overview

- + Lower Hutt's geography and climate risks mean resilience is a priority, particularly for floodplain and coastal communities.
- + Major infrastructure projects underway to improve flood and coastal protection include: [Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi \(RiverLink\)](#) and [Tupua Horo Nuku \(Eastern Bays Shared Path\)](#), while the next stage of the [Eastern Hutt Road slope stabilisation project](#) is in the planning phase.
- + Recent severe weather events highlight the importance of new robust infrastructure, with the May 2025 storm testing coastal defences.
- + Council is also reviewing and strengthening resilience through transport corridors, cycleways, and micromobility projects.
- + Emission reductions are critical to assist in avoiding climate impacts.

## Further information

Lower Hutt, like the rest of Aotearoa New Zealand, faces significant exposure to climate risks from flooding, landslides, sea level rise and storm events. Much of the city sits on a floodplain, and coastal communities are exposed to increasing inundation risk. Council is responding with new comprehensive hazard modelling and mapping, and by tightening planning rules in high-risk areas to prevent further intensification in these areas and embed resilience into long-term planning and investment.

Work is underway across major infrastructure and transport programmes to strengthen resilience and support safe movement and access during disruptive events.

Emissions reductions are important. Council's [Interim Carbon Reduction and Climate Resilience Plan 2021-31](#) and the [Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway](#) provide information on the work to reduce emissions and increase resilience. This includes phasing out fossil fuels across all community facilities, electrifying the vehicle fleet, working with contractors to decarbonise the services they deliver on behalf of Council, and reducing emissions associated with waste by changing systems and incentives.

### Example:

The new Te Ngaengae Pool is significantly larger than the old pool, yet operational emissions are more than 50% lower. It relies on heat pumps instead of traditional gas boilers.

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **End of 2025**  
Report back on business cases/feasibility studies regarding a solar farm at the closed Wainuiomata landfill, and implementation of Renewable Energy Certificates for Council's electricity consumption
- **By 30 June 2026**  
Continue to implement and report on actions outlined in Council's climate change plans including any amendments to the plans
- **First half of 2026**  
A food and green organics collection service has been proposed to reduce emissions. Final decisions need to be made on whether to implement the service, based on confirmed costings
- **First half of 2026**  
Review of Council's carbon targets and actions required to achieve them

# Council-owned Facilities

Significant renewal is needed across Council-owned facilities, with work underway to manage costs and meet community needs as per the assets review.

## Overview

- + Council provides a range of facilities and services such as pools and neighbourhood hubs that support community wellbeing and connection.
- + Many facilities require renewal at the same time as demand for community spaces is increasing.
- + Council has adopted a new approach to asset management focused on better use of existing facilities, improving cost recovery, and, in some cases, transferring assets to the community.
- + Investment is being directed to maintaining essential services and supporting future affordability for ratepayers.
- + Renewal programmes are underway across swimming pools, neighbourhood hubs, and other community spaces and places.

## Further information

Council's eight [neighbourhood hubs](#) provide flexible spaces, library services, Wi-Fi, and learning opportunities. Their role is broadening to include more community-led activity and resilience functions, and they are equipped to operate as Emergency Assistance Centres when needed. Council also operates 12 community halls or spaces that can be booked online, six swimming pools, two museums, and a range of green assets including parks, reserves, sportsgrounds, playgrounds and cemeteries.

Past under-investment means many assets need significant renewal, with some facilities having closed due to their poor condition. The [2024–34 Long-Term Plan](#) included an Assets Review that set a focus on optimising existing facilities, improving cost recovery, and targeted investment in renewals.

Officers are currently involved in conversations with several community groups around divestment opportunities.

Officers are currently considering the impact of proposed Government reforms to seismic standards. More seismic information on Council buildings available [here](#).

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **2025–26**  
Ongoing implementation of the Assets Review recommendations, including cost recovery measures and community transfers
- **2025–26**  
Progressing projects – Petone Neighbourhood Hub (procurement), Petone Wharf (procurement) and Petone Grandstand (community divestment conversations)
- **2025–26**  
Stokes Valley Pool – scoping for significant renewals in 2026/27

# Our City 2055

Tō Tātou Tāone 2055 – Our City 2055 is a 30-year strategy in development that outlines how the city will grow and adapt. It was developed with our communities, Mana Whenua and city leaders.

## Overview

- + Tō Tātou Tāone 2055 – Our City 2055 is a city-wide strategy, not just a Council document.
- + Its development was facilitated by Council but shaped through collaboration with iwi, government, business and community sectors.
- + A City Leadership Group, made up of senior representatives from key organisations, including Mana Whenua, education, business, and social services, guided the process to ensure it reflects priorities from across the city.
- + It provides a framework for responding to major challenges including climate change, housing, transport, equity, economic resilience and infrastructure.
- + Engagement with communities, partners and stakeholders has shaped the values, vision and goals, with adoption planned following consultation.
- + The draft Strategy will come to the new Council for endorsement.

## Further information

Public consultation in September 2025, was undertaken to test whether the draft Strategy is clear, relevant and aligned with community priorities. Feedback was positive with strong support for the intent and values of the Strategy. This will be used to refine the document and guide delivery.

The draft Strategy will come to Council for endorsement early in the new triennium. Once supported it will act as a shared roadmap for the city, guiding long-term planning, investment and collaboration. The City Leadership Group will oversee supporting actions and continue to monitor and review progress.

More information about the draft strategy, consultation process, draft overview and chapters can be found [here](#).

## Timeframes/Decisions

- **December 2025**  
City Leadership Group finalises the Strategy
- **January–March 2026**  
Council and other key stakeholders endorse the Strategy

## 3 Ward profiles

# Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward

The Mana Kairangi ki Tai Māori Ward Councillor has a particular responsibility to represent all people of Māori descent alongside Mana Whenua.

Based on Census 2023, the Māori population of Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai is 21,000 people, with 7,358 voters choosing to be on the Māori roll. The information below gives a snapshot of the Māori population in Lower Hutt.



### Ethnicity:

19.6% of Lower Hutt population identify as Māori.



### Age:

29% of the Māori population is under 15 years old, the highest proportion of children in any Ward.

63% are aged 15–64.

6% are 65 or older, the lowest proportion of older people in the city.



### Home ownership:

16.8% of the Māori population own or partly own their own home.



### Employment:

Of the Māori population aged 15 or over:

53% work full-time,

11.4% work part time,

6.2% are unemployed,

29% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



### Income:

The median household income of the Māori population is \$112,600 per annum, compared to the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



**Mana Kairangi ki  
Tai Māori Ward**

# Central Ward

Based on Census 2023 data, the Central Ward is home to 27,726 people, which makes up 25.8% of the city's population.



## Ethnicity:

Of the Central Ward population:

63.2% identify as European.

14.1% as Māori.

7.8% as Pacific Peoples.

25.1% as Asian.

2.4% as Middle Eastern, Latin American, African.

1.0% as other ethnicity.



## Age:

17.8% of the population is under 15 years old.

65.6% are aged 15–64.

16.5% are 65 or older.



## Home ownership:

63.1% of the population own or partly own their home compared to the city average of 66.8%.



## Employment:

Of the population aged 15 or over:

54.9% work full-time,

12.3% work part time,

2.6% are unemployed,

30.1% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



## Income:

The Central Ward has a median household income of \$112,300 per annum, compared to the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



## Resource consents:

The number of resource consents issued in the last five years is 404, the highest in the city.



## Building consents:

The number of new building consents issued in the last five years is 331. The number of new houses built in the Central Ward in the last five years is 829, the second highest in the city.



**Western  
General  
Ward**

**Northern  
General  
Ward**

**Central  
General  
Ward**

**Harbour  
General  
Ward**

**Wainuiomata  
General  
Ward**

# Harbour Ward

Based on Census 2023 data, the Harbour Ward is home to 15,864 people, which makes up 14.8% of the city's population.



## Ethnicity:

Of the Harbour Ward population:

76.5% identify as European.

14.7% as Māori.

6.4% as Pacific Peoples.

13.3% as Asian.

2.1% as Middle Eastern, Latin American, African.

0.9% as other ethnicity.



## Age:

15.8% of the population is under 15 years old.

66.0% are aged 15–64.

18.2% are 65 or older.



## Home ownership:

The Harbour Ward has a home ownership rate of 65.7%, close to the city average of 66.8%.



## Employment:

Of the population aged 15 or over:

54.7% work full-time,

13.2% work part time,

2.8% are unemployed,

29.3% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



## Income:

The Harbour Ward has a median household income of \$116,800 per annum, slightly above the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



## Resource consents:

The number of resource consents issued in the last five years is 376, the second highest in the city.



## Building consents:

The number of new building consents issued in the last five years is 132. The number of new houses built in the Harbour Ward in the last five years is 289, the second lowest in the city.



**Western  
General  
Ward**

**Northern  
General  
Ward**

**Central  
General  
Ward**

**Harbour  
General  
Ward**

**Wainuiomata  
General  
Ward**

# Northern Ward

Based on Census 2023 data, the Northern Ward is home to 30,573 people, which makes up 28% of the city's population.



## Ethnicity:

Of the Northern Ward population:

54.9% identify as European.

24.6% as Māori.

20.3% as Pacific Peoples.

17.5% as Asian.

2.5% as Middle Eastern, Latin American, American.

1% as other ethnicity.



## Age:

20.2% of the population is under 15 years old.

66.1% are aged 15-64.

13.7% are 65 or older.



## Home ownership:

58.9% of the population owns or partly owns their home compared to the city average of 66.8%.



## Employment:

Of the population aged 15 or over:

52.3% work full-time,

1.1% work part time,

4% are unemployed,

32.5% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



## Income:

The Northern Ward has the lowest median household income \$92,900 per annum, in the city, compared to the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



## Resource consents:

Number of resource consents issued last five years is 278.



## Building consents:

The number of new building consents issued in the last five years is 465. The number of new houses built in the Northern Ward in the last five years is 910, the highest number in the city.



**Western  
General  
Ward**

**Northern  
General  
Ward**

**Central  
General  
Ward**

**Harbour  
General  
Ward**

**Wainuiomata  
General  
Ward**

# Western Ward

Based on Census 2023 data, the Western Ward is home to 13,794 people, which makes up 12.8% of the city's population.



## Ethnicity:

Of the Western Ward population:

74.8% identify as European.

10.0% as Māori.

4.6% as Pacific Peoples.

19.9% as Asian.

1.8% as Middle Eastern, Latin American, African.

1.6% as other ethnicity.



## Age:

19.8% of the population is under 15 years old.

66.2% are aged 15–64.

14.0% are 65 or older.



## Home ownership:

The Western Ward has the highest home ownership rate in the city, with 82.4% of the population owning or partly owning their home compared to the city average of 66.8%.



## Employment:

Of the population aged 15 or over:

60.4% work full-time,

13.3% work part time,

1.8% are unemployed,

24.4% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



## Income:

The Western Ward has the highest median household income in the city at \$143,300 per annum, compared to the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



## Resource consents:

The number of resource consents issued in the last five years is 158, the lowest number in the city.



## Building consents:

The number of new building consents issued in the last five years is 187. The number of new houses built in the Western Ward in the last five years is 134, the lowest number in the city.



**Western  
General  
Ward**

**Northern  
General  
Ward**

**Central  
General  
Ward**

**Harbour  
General  
Ward**

**Wainuiomata  
General  
Ward**

# Wainuiomata Ward

Based on Census 2023 data, the Wainuiomata Ward is home to 19,599 people, which makes up 18.2% of the city's population.



## Ethnicity:

Of the Wainuiomata Ward population:

63.3% identify as European.

30.2% as Māori.

15.9% as Pacific Peoples.

14.5% as Asian.

1.1% as Middle Eastern, Latin American, African.

0.9% as other ethnicity.



## Age:

21.5% of the population is under 15 years old.

67.1% are aged 15–64.

11.3% are 65 or older.



## Home ownership:

The Wainuiomata Ward has the second-highest home ownership rate in the city at 75.1%, compared to the city average of 66.8%.



## Employment:

Of the population aged 15 or over:

58.1% work full-time,

10.8% work part time,

3.5% are unemployed,

27.7% are not in the labour force (e.g. retired).



## Income:

The Wainuiomata Ward has a median household income of \$106,700 per annum, just below the Lower Hutt average of \$110,100 per annum.



## Resource consents:

The number of resource consents issued in the last five years is 236, the second lowest in the city.



## Building consents:

The number of new building consents issued in the last five years is 503. The number of new houses built in the Wainuiomata Ward in the last five years is 656.



**Western  
General  
Ward**

**Northern  
General  
Ward**

**Central  
General  
Ward**

**Harbour  
General  
Ward**

**Wainuiomata  
General  
Ward**

# Three year pathway



**Year  
0**

### Election Year

**October 2025:**

Step into elected member role; Inaugural meeting; Council business begins for the triennium

**November 2025:**

First Council meeting; Appointment of Deputy Mayor; First discussion of Annual Plan; Set up Committees and appoint Chairs; Make appointments to external organisations and joint Committees (e.g. Regional Transport Committees and Regional Civil Defence and Emergency Management Groups)



**Year  
1**

### Council Business & Strategy

**February 2026:**

Council business resumes

**June 2026:**

Annual Plan/ Long-Term Plan amendment approved. Rates set for 1 July; 2027-37 Long-Term Plan engagement with Elected Members typically begins.

**October 2026:**

Sign off Annual Report



**Year  
2**

### Strategy Execution & Monitoring

**February 2027:**

Public engagement or consultation on the Long-Term Plan begins

**April 2027:**

Public hearings on the Long-Term Plan are typically held

**June 2027:**

Long-Term Plan sign off

**October 2027:**

Sign off Annual Report



**Year  
3**

### Pre-election Report

**June 2028:**

Annual Plan approved

**July 2028:**

Pre election report released

**September/  
October 2028:**

Sign off Annual Report

# Further reading

## **Pre-Election Report 2025**

A snapshot of our city designed to help residents and candidates understand the choices ahead.

## **City Centre Framework (formerly Central City Transformation Plan)**

Originally adopted in 2019, the Central City Transformation Plan was the result of three decades of formal planning and community consultation that sought to re-energise our city centre and turn it towards Te Awa Kairangi. In 2025, it was refreshed and updated to become the City Centre Framework.

## **Hutt City Council Performance Reports**

Performance reports show progress, priorities, and financial outcomes for Council.

## **Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy**

This Strategy provides a shared vision and goals that can guide Council, Mana Whenua, and the community on ways of working together to protect and restore indigenous biodiversity.

## **Integrated Transport Strategy**

Outlines our vision, and strategic direction for responding to Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt's growing transport challenges. It lays out an integrated approach to delivering land use planning, transport planning, investment and encouraging behaviour change within the city.

## **Investing in our water services**

On this webpage you will find reporting for how we are tracking on pipe renewals and leak repairs, as well as information on key projects like upgrading the Seaview Wastewater Treatment Plant.

## **Lower Hutt Climate Action Pathway**

Community-led work and report.

## **Mahere ā-Tau Annual Plan 2025–2026**

Outlines our key projects, budgets, and service levels for the year ahead.

## **Mahere Tekau Tau 10 Year Plan 2024–2034**

The Long Term Plan (also known as our 10 Year Plan) sets out our priorities and plans for the city over the next decade.

## **Office of the Auditor General (OAG) integrity framework**

This guide from the Office of the Auditor General outlines what integrity means in the public sector and why it matters, how it contributes to public trust, and aims to support leaders to deliver on their stewardship responsibilities.

## **Proposed Lower Hutt District Plan**

Sets out what can be built, what limitations apply, and what hazards and other considerations need to inform new development in our city.

## **Pūrongo ā-Tau Annual Report 2023–2024**

Reports back on how we did against the Annual Plan for that year. Our next Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2025 will be available later in 2025.

## **Rautaki hanganga | Infrastructure strategy**

Infrastructure supports Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai Lower Hutt to be a liveable city.

## **Rautaki pūtea | Financial strategy**

Our Financial Strategy is part of the 10 Year Plan 2024–2034 and explains how our services and investment will be funded and balanced with revenue and borrowings in a financially sustainable way.

Continued on following page

### **Reserves Investment Strategy**

Outlines plans to improve green spaces as the city grows, with a 10-year project list funded by reserve financial contributions under the Resource Management Act and District Plan. Budgets are estimates and may change with community feedback and design updates.

### **Reviewing Investment in Recreation Sport and Play**

Reviews how much the city is investing in recreation, sport, and play, and assesses whether those investments are delivering value, meeting community needs, and aligning with long-term goals.

### **Sustainable Growth Strategy 2025-2055**

Sets out how we will manage population and urban growth over 30 years, focusing on safe, accessible areas like the central city and valley floor. Guides future investment in water, Council services, government, and private development.

### **Te Herenga Kairangi Māori Strategy**

A rautaki (strategy) consolidating all council work aimed at improving outcomes for Māori.

### **Tō Tātou Tāone 2055 | Our City 2055**

A City Leadership Group that includes Iwi, business, government and community leaders, developed this Strategy on the future of our city, it will be released later in the year.



