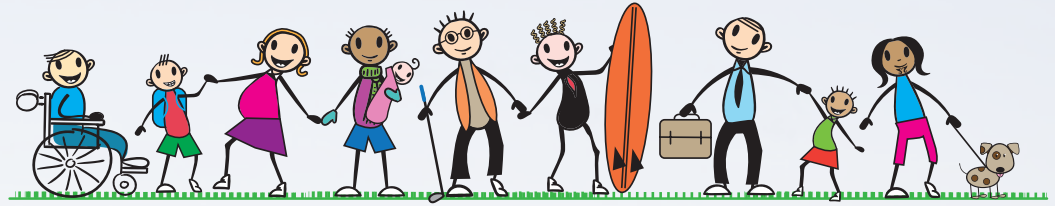


MERCURY BAY SOUTH COMMUNITY PLAN 2020 - 2030

This plan will help Council to understand what is important to the community and allow Council to make informed decisions on the prioritising and funding of services and activities through the review of the Long Term Plan.



A map of the Mercury Bay South ward, highlighted in green. The map shows the coastline of the bay, with a smaller inset map of New Zealand in the background. The text 'MERCURY BAY SOUTH' is written in a bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the green area.

MERCURY BAY WARD

Mercury Bay, situated on the eastern coast of the Coromandel Peninsula was first named Te Whanganui-o-Hei, the great bay of Hei, by Māori. Te Whanganui-o-Hei refers to Hei, a tohunga tārai waka (expert canoe builder) from the great ocean-going double-hulled waka, Te Arawa. The local iwi is called Ngāti Hei.

Captain James Cook, the British explorer and navigator, named the area Mercury Bay whilst circumnavigating New Zealand. In November 1769, the then Lieutenant Cook sailed into the area on the HM Bark Endeavour to observe the transit of Mercury across the sun in order to determine the longitude to establish the exact position of New Zealand on the world map.

The Mercury Bay Ward runs from Pauls Road in the South through to the Whangapoua Hill in the north.

Whitianga is the largest town and provides the main retail and commercial hub in the Mercury Bay Ward.

The Mercury Bay Ward is made up of 17 communities that encompass towns, coastal villages and rural settlements. The proximity to the safe harbour provides easy boat access to nearby beaches, outlying islands and good fishing grounds; making the Mercury Bay Ward a desirable place to live work and play. The usual resident population increases significantly during the peak summer period as visitors come to share this unique environment.

The Mercury Bay South area is located within the Mercury Bay Ward and includes Ferry Landing, Front Beach, Flaxmill Bay, Cooks Beach, Hahei, Hot Water Beach and Whenuakite.

The coastal Mercury Bay South communities are made up of a mix of permanent residents, absentee property owners. It is renowned as a tourist hot spot.

Internationally famous for Cathedral Cove, Te Whanganui-o-Hei Marine Reserve and Hot Water Beach (Te Puia), the Mercury Bay South area attracts over 700,000 national and international visitors to the region each year.

Named after Captain Cook, who observed the transit of Mercury at the eastern end of the beach in 1769, Cooks Beach is experiencing ongoing growth with subdivision development.

Access from Mercury Bay South to Whitianga is either a 30-minute drive by road, or a brief Ferry ride across the Whitianga Harbour. A passenger ferry has been operating between Ferry Landing and Whitianga since 1895 and the route is part of the area's transport network.

Whenuakite, located at the southern end of the Mercury Bay South area, is a small rural community made up of farming, horticulture and lifestyle blocks.

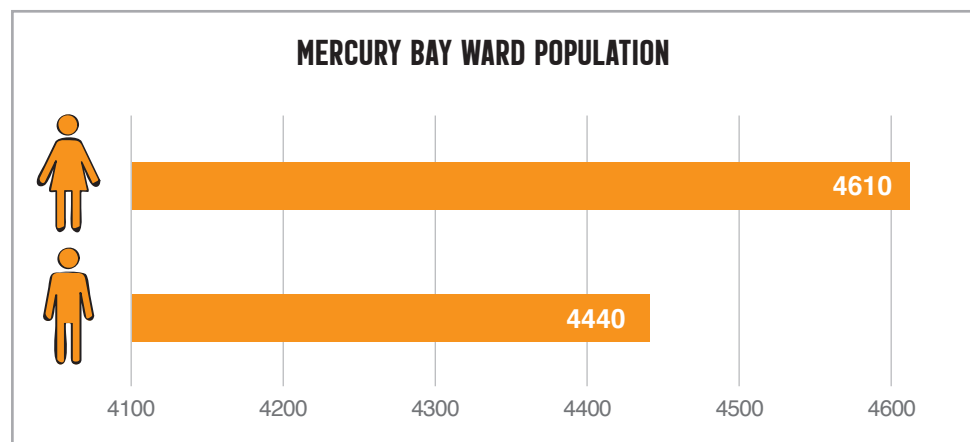


WHAT WE KNOW

POPULATION

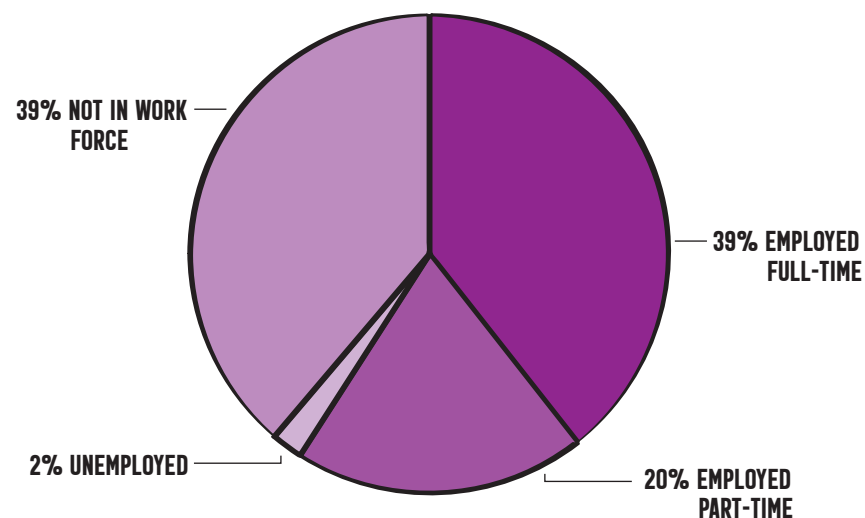
In 2018 the population of the Thames-Coromandel District was **30,800**

And the population of Mercury Bay Ward was **9,050**



EMPLOYMENT

2018 EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS FOR MERCURY BAY WARD



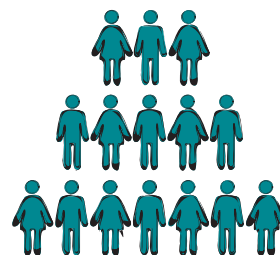
LIVING

3,762

Occupied private dwellings

4,788

Unoccupied private dwellings



ETHNICITY

The population by ethnicity vs the total population – totals differ due to some people being 'double counted' in multiple ethnicities

8,172

New Zealand / European

1,146

Maori

165

Pacific peoples

249

Asian

39

Other

The data above covers the Mercury Bay Ward and is from the Thames-Coromandel District Community Profile and provides demographic analysis for the District and its suburbs based on results from the 2018 census.

LANDSCAPES AND SITES OF INTEREST



COMMUNITY FACILITIES



3 WATERS – WATER SUPPLY, WASTEWATER AND STORMWATER

- Ferry Landing, Front Beach, Flaxmill Bay, Cooks Beach and some areas of Hahei have Council reticulated wastewater (sewerage) systems.
- Council operates a water supply scheme for some areas of Hahei and is investigating extending the water supply and wastewater networks in Hahei.
- Where Council reticulation is not provided, Mercury Bay South communities rely on private water supplies and on-site wastewater disposal systems.
- Stormwater disposal is provided for in varying degrees.



RUBBISH/RECYCLING

- The Mercury Bay South area is serviced with rubbish and recycling collection in most locations.
- Other facilities available to the Mercury Bay south area are refuse transfer stations at Whitianga or Tairua; and a rubbish compactor located at Coroglen.
- A future green waste site is under investigation and will be considered under Council's Long-term Plan process.



ROADS, FOOTPATHS AND STREETLIGHTS

- The Mercury Bay South area has a network of local roading. The roads are maintained to various levels depended on the volume and usage of the road.
- Kerbing channelling and streetlights are provided for in varying degrees through the area.



HALLS/LIBRARIES/ MUSEUMS/SCHOOLS

- Council owns two halls in the Mercury Bay South area, located at Cooks Beach and Hahei, these are managed by local hall committees.
- Council provides a building that houses the voluntary run community libraries in Hahei and Ferry Landing.
- Council provides financial support for the Mercury Bay Museum which holds history of the Mercury Bay Ward.
- Whenuakite has a small rural primary school providing for Years 1 to 8 students.
- Mercury Bay Area School, located in Whitianga, provides education for Years 1 to 13 students.



RESERVES, PLAYGROUNDS AND PUBLIC TOILETS

- The Mercury Bay Multi Sport park provides a destination sporting facility for the use of the whole Mercury Bay District.
- Council owns and maintains playgrounds in Cooks Beach and Hahei.
- Council is supported by volunteer Reserve Management/Beach Care groups who assist with maintenance of local reserves and dunes.
- The Kotare Reserve Memorial Garden Trust, Hahei are creating a Memorial Garden at the Kotare Reserve in Hahei, as a place to contemplate and reflect.
- Mercury Bay South has many reserves which encompass scenic, recreation, esplanade, local purpose, neighbourhood open space and foreshore reserves.
- The Mercury Bay South area has fourteen Council managed toilets.



CEMETERIES

- The Mercury Bay South area is serviced by a cemetery at Ferry Landing. As available space is limited a new district cemetery is being developed at Kaimarama.



HARBOUR FACILITIES

- Council owns, manages and maintains the Ferry Landing wharf.
- Council contracts the Whitianga Ferry to operate a regular passenger ferry service between Ferry Landing and Whitianga wharves. The Ferry route is part of the area's transport network.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

COMMUNITY FACILITIES (CONTINUED)



AIRFIELDS

- The Mercury Bay South area is serviced by the Mercury Bay Aero Club who own and manage a grassed runway south of Whitianga.



MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY

- Mercury Bay South area is serviced by a medical centre in Whitianga, with the nearest hospital at Thames.
- Hahei and Cooks Beach Fire & Emergency Services provide cover for the Mercury Bay South area, with support available from Whitianga and the wider Mercury Bay area.
- Police, St John, Land Search & Rescue and an emergency helicopter all provide emergency cover to this area.
- Hot Water Beach Surf Lifesaving provide emergency cover over the peak period at Hot Water Beach, Hahei and Cathedral Cove.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Along with day to day interaction with the community, a series of focus group meetings and an on-line survey were undertaken to give the Mercury Bay South community the opportunity to tell us what is important to them.

The community was asked to consider *Our people, Our Environment, Our Infrastructure and Our Future*.



ALL THE COMMUNITIES SAID THEY LIKED

- THE BEACHES
- THE FAMILY FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT
- THE SIMPLE, QUIET LIFESTYLE
- THE SAFE, CLEAN AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES
- THE SCENERY
- THE PEOPLE

Whakatauki

Ma te kōrero ka mōhio
Ma te mōhio ka mārama
Ma te mārama ka mātau
Ma te mātau ka ora ā tatou

Through discussion comes awareness
Through awareness comes understanding
Through understanding comes wisdom
Through wisdom comes wellbeing for all



COMMON CONCERNS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITIES

To address concerns raised in the following sections on “Our People”, “Our Environment” and “Our Infrastructure”; Council can support and work with communities to pursue initiatives through Council processes, Regional Council, Central Government agencies and community groups.

OUR PEOPLE

He aha te mea nui o te ao
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

What is the most important thing in the world?
It is the people, it is the people, it is the people

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	WHERE TO FROM HERE	WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?
THE COMMUNITY NEEDS MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING	Advocate to Government agencies for equitable access to affordable housing.	The provision of more affordable housing for the permanent residents.
DEMANDS ON THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES ARE INCREASED DUE TO AN AGING POPULATION.	Advocate to the District Health Board and health support agencies for access to improved health care.	Emphasis on provision of greater social and medical services throughout all sectors of the community.
WE WANT TO RETAIN OUR YOUTH IN THE AREA	Advocate for improved health care, economic development, education and affordable housing will assist in retaining youth in the area. Review Council's 2013 Youth Strategy.	Youth have a sense of belonging and can choose to stay or return to their hometowns. The Youth Strategy is reviewed through engagement with the youth community.
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AREA ARE LIMITED	Implement the economic development strategy to recognise a diversity of business opportunities that will assist the local economy and provide employment opportunities.	Increased economic development growth to allow for a greater range of employment opportunities.
KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL HISTORY AND A SENSE OF PLACE ARE IMPORTANT	Explore how best to acknowledge our history through library and museum services. Explore with Hauraki iwi how best to promote our diverse history. Install Historic signage where appropriate.	The community will have an increased knowledge of the diverse heritage of the area.
GOLD CARD MEMBERS SHOULD HAVE FREE USE OF THE FERRY SERVICE	Advocate to the Ministry of Social Development to include discounted fees for SuperGold card users to cover the Ferry Service charges.	SuperGold card holders will have discounted or free travel on the Ferry Landing-Whitianga Ferry service.
WE WOULD LIKE INCREASED SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS	Advocate to Council for community project support. Communities can apply for annual Community Grant funding, where available to support new and ongoing community projects.	Communities will understand the process to engage with Council on community projects.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	WHERE TO FROM HERE	WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?
INCREASING TOURISM PUTS PRESSURE ON OUR INFRASTRUCTURE AND KEY ATTRACTIONS	<p>Work with Destination Coromandel, commercial tourism providers and other stakeholders to educate visitors to the region.</p> <p>Develop policy and access available funding sources to improve tourism services within the district.</p> <p>Support Department of Conservation and iwi in the ongoing management of visitors to Cathedral Cove Reserve.</p>	<p>Visitors to the area will be respectful of our natural environment and way of life, encompassing the principals of the Tiaki promise – https://tiakinewzealand.com/</p> <p>Provision of an enjoyable visitor experience in a sustainable environment.</p>
FREEDOM CAMPING NEEDS IMPROVED MANAGEMENT	<p>The freedom camping bylaw is reviewed in 2020/2021 which will include a public consultation process.</p> <p>Support options to enable private camping sites.</p>	<p>The Bylaw is reviewed and updated to take into account community views while ensuring, as much as it can, minimal impact on residents, amenity values and the environment.</p>
WATER QUALITY OF OUR RIVERS, STREAMS AND OCEAN NEED TO BE IMPROVED.	<p>Participate in national freshwater policy initiatives and in the review of the Waikato Regional Coastal Plan.</p>	<p>Improvement of water quality across the coastal marine area so kaimoana/seafood can be safely harvested, and people can swim safely.</p>
OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IS IMPORTANT AND ONGOING PEST PLANT AND ANIMAL MANAGEMENT IS NEEDED	<p>Monitor and remove plant and animal pests on Council land and work with Department of Conservation, Waikato Regional Council and community groups on pest management.</p> <p>Communities can advocate to Council to use alternative weed control measures, eg. no herbicides.</p>	<p>Proactive, ongoing management of plant and animal pests that threaten the natural environment, including the protection of kauri.</p>
HOW DO WE PROTECT OUR ICONIC AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES?	<p>Enforce the environmental protection provisions of the District Plan to protect special landscapes and participate in national and regional policy initiatives.</p> <p>Consult as to the best adaptive coastal management pathways via the Shoreline Management project.</p> <p>Implement the actions of the Mercury Bay Coastal Erosion Strategy.</p> <p>Educate where possible and implement and enforce, where appropriate, bylaws to prohibit vehicle access on to beaches.</p>	<p>Ongoing enforcement of the District Plan provisions to protect the iconic and historic landscapes.</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of our coastal areas including making them resilient to natural events.</p> <p>Safe beach use through appropriate education and bylaw processes.</p>

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

OUR ENVIRONMENT (CONTINUED)

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	WHERE TO FROM HERE	WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?
EXISTING RESERVE SPACE NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED	<p>Manage and maintain reserve space in line with the Reserve Management Plans and its operational processes.</p> <p>Consider how best to provide recreational opportunities when reviewing the Reserve Management Plans and Long Term Plan.</p>	Council owned reserves will be maintained and enhanced, where possible, to provide quality recreational space for all sectors of communities.
MERCURY BAY SOUTH COMMUNITIES WANT A RESTRICTION ON COMMERCIAL CONCESSIONS	Consider the impact of beach users vs commercial concessions as part of the Reserve Management Plan review for Mercury Bay South reserves.	The impact of commercial concessions will be considered against the effect on residents, amenity values and the environment of each location.
THE HOT WATER BEACH COMMUNITY WANT TO WALK THEIR DOGS ALONG THE FULL LENGTH OF THE BEACH	<p>Opportunity to participate in any future dog bylaw review.</p> <p>Council to include feedback relating to dog issues in the Bylaws Issues Register, to be considered at the time of a future dog bylaw review.</p>	<p>All users of the beach can use the beach for their preferred recreational purpose, with no negative interactions.</p> <p>Stakeholders will have had the opportunity to participate in any bylaw review.</p>



OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	WHERE TO FROM HERE	WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?
THE ROADING NETWORKS, BOTH LOCAL AND STATE HIGHWAY NEED TO BE IMPROVED	<p>Advocate to New Zealand Transport Agency to adopt best traffic management strategies for the Peninsula including upgrading the State Highway one-lane bridges.</p> <p>Advocate for better public transport.</p> <p>Implement the long-term infrastructure management strategy in relation to roading.</p> <p>Review traffic safety, speed limits and traffic signage in Mercury Bay South.</p>	<p>Regular maintenance and improvement of state highways and local roads to improve safety, access, prevent wear and tear on vehicles and to be less prone to slippage resulting in temporary isolation during weather events.</p> <p>Traffic safety measures will contribute to safer use of local roads throughout the area.</p>
MERCURY BAY SOUTH COMMUNITIES DO NOT SUPPORT A FEE FOR “LOCALS” TO PARK AT THE DOMAIN (MIDDLE) CARPARK AT HOT WATER BEACH	Consider the community view if proposing to implement parking fees.	Mercury Bay South residents would have free access to The Domain (Middle) carpark.
OUR COMMUNITIES NEED SAFE FOOT-PATHS AND CYCLEWAYS	<p>Work with the Mercury Bay Cycle Steering group to implement the Mercury Bay Cycle Strategy actions.</p> <p>Consider a pedestrian network policy in the long-term infrastructure management strategy.</p> <p>Include a mobility policy in the long-term infrastructure management strategy.</p>	People can safely move around their communities.
STORMWATER DRAINAGE TO PROTECT THE COMMUNITY FROM UNNECESSARY FLOODING IS A PRIORITY	<p>Implement the long term infrastructure management strategy in relation to the three waters (water, wastewater, stormwater).</p> <p>Investigate alternate methods of stormwater management.</p>	Flooding from inefficient stormwater drainage reticulation will be mitigated.
OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS TO BE RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF NATURAL DISASTERS?	Work to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters in association with national and regional Emergency Management and Civil Defence agencies.	Community response planning to assist with preparedness for emergency events.
MARINE AND RIVER FLOODING CONTROLS NEED TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES	Consult as to the best adaptive coastal management pathways via the Shoreline Management Project.	Reliable sea defenses and erosion controls are in place to protect our communities from marine and river flooding.
IMPROVED WASTE (RUBBISH AND RECYCLING) MANAGEMENT	<p>Address improved recycling opportunities and waste collection when reviewing the waste management strategy.</p> <p>Investigate options for a green waste facility for Mercury Bay South.</p>	Reduction in waste going to landfill.
FASTER, SECURE INTERNET OPTIONS	Advocate for secure fast internet and investigating private provider options.	Most of the Mercury Bay South area will have access to a fast and reliable internet service.

OUR IWI TOLD US WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE

WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID	WHERE TO FROM HERE	WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?
SUPPORT FOR PAPA KĀINGA (MĀORI HOUSING SETTLEMENT)	Papakāinga is provided for in the District Plan for Māori Land.	Papakāinga developments that support whānau, hapū and iwi to achieve their housing aspirations.
WE WOULD LIKE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE COMMERCIAL CONCESSION ON RESERVES PROCESS	Consider the request for inclusion in the concession process.	Collaboration between all stakeholders to ensure that concessionaires are fully cognisant of the history and the cultural importance of the reserves to local iwi.
WE WOULD LIKE A MĀORI AREA SET ASIDE AT THE KAIMARAMA CEMETERY	Develop an area for interment of Māori who live in the area (not mana whenua) and who do not want to be taken back to their home area.	A Māori section will be included in the layout of the Kaimarama Cemetery.
WE WOULD LIKE TO BUILD A COMMUNITY MARAE IN WHITIANGA	Investigate options to utilise land for a community marae.	A community marae will be established for the use of the community.
IWI SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN CONSULTATION FOR ALL COUNCIL PROJECTS IN THE MERCURY BAY WARD.	Include appropriate iwi consultation in all project development.	All stakeholders including iwi, will have been consulted and know that their views have been heard.
IWI SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN CONSULTATION FOR ALL BYLAW REVIEW IN THE MERCURY BAY WARD	Include appropriate iwi consultation in all bylaw review processes.	All stakeholders including iwi, will have been consulted and know that their views have been heard.
INCREASE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN COUNCIL AND MĀORI	Hold regular hui with Māori communities within the Mercury Bay Ward area.	Māori will know that their views have been heard.
WE WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH COUNCIL TO REALISE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES	Implement the economic development strategy to recognise business opportunities that will assist Māori with their economic objectives	Economic opportunities will be recognised.
WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MĀORI REPRESENTATION ON COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY BOARDS	Consider Māori representation through the representation review.	Māori are represented on Council and its committees.



THE PROJECTS THE COMMUNITIES WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN

Individuals, community groups and organisations throughout our communities have told us these are the projects they believe should be given priority when Council is considering its Long Term Plan.

FERRY LANDING /FLAXMILL BAY /COOKS BEACH

Ferry Landing

Replace existing Ferry Landing toilet block

Front Beach (Maramaratotara)

Install toilet

Shakespeare Cliff Reserve

Seal access road

Flaxmill Bay and Cooks Beach Coastal Erosion Protection

Completion of the Cooks Beach Coastal Erosion protection at Purangi and development of coastal mitigation measures at Flaxmill Bay

Cooks Beach

Upgrade the wastewater plant

Install a toilet at the “Longreach” playground

Future zoning on Purangi Road for a Service Station

Ensure access road from “Longreach” to Purangi Road is formed

Security cameras in CBD and at Purangi Boat Ramp

Install a skate ramp and basketball hoop

Playground development

Redevelopment of Purangi Reserve

Review traffic safety, speed limits and traffic signage

Central Reserve toilet replacement

Purangi Reserve toilet upgrade

Purangi upper harbour walkway

Green waste facility

Investigate options for a green waste facility

Protection of dune systems

Protect dunes as outlined in the Mercury Bay Coastal Erosion Strategy

HAHEI

Wastewater and Water Supply

Proposed investigations into extending the water supply and wastewater networks

Stormwater

Review stormwater disposal options, including piping of Christine Terrace/Pa Road intersection drain

Hahei Beach Front Reserve

Development of reserve areas including toilet renewal and effluent upgrade

Hahei Streets

Review traffic safety, speed limits, traffic signage and campervan parking on all roads in Hahei.

Walkable Village

Explore implementing a walkable village concept throughout the village

Shared safety zone between shops to the beach

Develop walkway/cycleways in Ko Tahuri-ki-te-Rangi Stream (Wigmore Stream) and Pa Road areas

Kotare Reserve

Establish a skate ramp and BMX track as a community led project.

Open drain improvements

Exercise equipment station

Blowhole Walkway

Completion of a track and appropriate signage from Hahei Beach to the Blowhole (in conjunction with DOC)

Protection of dune systems

Protect dunes as outlined in the Mercury Bay Coastal Erosion Strategy

Green waste facility

Investigate options for a green waste facility

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

THE PROJECTS THE COMMUNITIES WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN (CONTINUED)

HOT WATER BEACH

Wastewater Management

Investigate development of a strategic, sustainable plan for the management of wastewater

Domain Road (Middle Carpark)

Toilet upgrade/replacement

Parking and road safety

Implement paid parking at the newly formed car park area

Investigate bus parking options

Investigate availability of additional land for parking

Review traffic safety, speed limits and traffic signage

Tourist Management Strategy

Develop a tourist management strategy

Reserves

Establish a BBQ, shade and playground

Hot Water Beach Surf Lifesaving

Investigate funding streams

Protection of dune systems

Protect dunes as outlined in the Mercury Bay Coastal Erosion Strategy

Green Waste facility

Investigate options for a green waste facility

WHENUAKITE

Dalmeny's Corner

(Dalmeny bridge on Hot Water Beach Road)

Future development including widening and raising the bridge over Whenuakite Stream on Hot Water Beach Road.

Tourist Hub

Investigate options for a tourist hub to manage visitor movements in Mercury Bay South

Green waste facility

Investigate options for a green waste facility



COUNCIL PLANS

Where does this Community Plan “fit” with other Council plans?

The Council has several other plans in place.

The Community feedback in this plan will help form the development of Council Plans.



THE LONG TERM PLAN (LTP)

Outlines the overall direction and expected costs of Council activities over a ten-year period. The LTP is prepared every three years. In the intervening years, Council produces an Annual Plan, which serves as an update on the LTP for that year.

THE DISTRICT PLAN

Promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the Thames-Coromandel District, primarily by managing the effects of land use on the environment. The plan responds to local government issues in terms of community needs and aspirations. If those needs and aspirations change, then plan changes may be needed.

COMMUNITY PLANS

Capture the shared vision of specific communities and outline the key issues and projects facing that community over the next ten years. The plans provide a clear focus for Community Boards and Committees to progress key issues within their areas. Community Plans have been informed by engagement with communities and from individual community plans such as [Hot Water Beach Community Plan](#).

RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Reserve Management Plans contain policies that apply to all reserves that are owned and/or administered by Thames-Coromandel District Council. This allows for a consistent approach to the management of reserves.



WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Upon completion of the final consultation and the plan being finalised, the Mercury Bay Community Board and Council will adopt the Community Plan.

While some key issues and projects in this document will require more resources than are available and may take longer than a few years to realise, we can be assured there is a plan in place.

The Mercury Bay Community Board and communities will continue to work with Council to prioritise issues and projects through planning such as the Long-Term Plan (LTP), Annual Plan and work programmes.

Please contact the Mercury Bay Community Board if you would like any further information customer.services@tcdc.govt.nz.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!