

The Helensville Community News

Issue 196 - March 2026

Kahui Ako Young Authors Short Story Competition

This is a fantastic opportunity for our local Primary, Intermediate, and Secondary students to shine as writers!

The **Kahui Ako o Kaipara** is a *Community of Learning* that includes our local ECE centres and 8 local schools, all working together to support our tamariki across Kaipara. What follows is the story by Indiana Marshall year 6 who won **“First place in the Primary Division”**

The World Beyond the Slide

The park was supposed to be empty. The lights along the pools were off, the faint glow of the moon shimmered faintly showing the closed sign hanging gently, swaying in the cool breeze. Elana peers around for any whisper of life, nothing, but the silence almost seemed to be warning her to turn back.

Elana slips through the gates smirking to herself as her feet patter against the wet pavement. She looks around, folded umbrellas and towering stacks of chairs are slumped in the corner, as if waiting for the light of morning to arrive. Suddenly, she hears the delicate swish of water whispering down the slides, a silent smirk creeps along her face. She creeps up the damp boards, yet every step they still find a way to whisper a creak.

Finally she finds herself at the top of the slides – before she can even catch her breath, she whispers down the cool water of the slide. As she swishes down, a strange feeling grows on her, the slide seems to be getting steeper and steeper. Suddenly, the slide violently ends, she shuts her eyes and screams, but nothing comes out. Soft clouds wrap around her as she falls faster and faster down. Elana glances around, noticing the soft feeling of warmth wrap around her – daylight? It was night-time just before?

Suddenly Elana jolts up.

“Welcome” A soft voice says to her. Elana’s eyes drift toward the figure, a human, but not quite. Tiger stripes traced her skin, and dreamy wings curled gently around her body.

“Welcome to Parakai’s biggest secret...” The tiger-human whispers.

Elana glances around with thoughts swirling up in her head, All her thoughts suddenly disappear as her heart skips a beat, around Elana dozens of animal-human creatures fill the pool. Like the seeds filling up a watermelon. They laugh and splash as the wind bristles softly through their fur. The light of the sun shimmers upon the creatures making their coats shimmer delicately. Suddenly, something moves behind her. She spins around frantically nearly tripping over herself, she almost screamed when a long, fluffy tail almost whacked her in the face.

“WHAT, WHY DO I HAVE CAT-PARTS?!” She screams to the universe as her heart beats louder and louder. The sleek black tail majestically sways behind her. She just stares at it for a long moment.

“...It’s actually kinda cute,” she whispers. Then it wiggled. “NO.

DON’T YOU DARE. I’M NOT CALLING YOU CUTE,” she yells at it like it wasn’t herself.

The tiger’s smile disappears

“The longer you stay here, the more it claims you...” She murmurs silently. “Each new part binds you here, it starts with the tail... then the claws, eyes, ears, and then the wings...”

She whispers with fear in her eyes. “The final part, the fur, and after that, there’s no way out, you’re trapped in this world forever...”

Elana glances up, wide eyed and voice trembling. “W-what?” “Before the fur, is there a-any way... of g-getting out?” Elana trembles.

The tiger’s voice is serious but calm.

“No time... you’re trapped here forever”. The tiger human says as she watches the wings sprout and the ears twitch on Elana.

A drop of water slides down Elana’s cheek.

“Well, there’s only one chance of escaping this world. The tiger leans in closely.

“The storm... It holds this world together. No one can pass it. No one can leave. Except... Maybe you...” The tiger whispers sternly.

“My name is Lunara, by the way.” Lunara says with a soft smile.

Elana gets to her feet, heart racing, and asks, “W-where is the storm?” Lunara’s eyes glint softly as she replies.

“It’s high in the sky, I wish you luck.”

Elana nods, whispering a thank you, before she sets off with her newfound wings. Elana’s wings flap wildly as she dashes towards the storm – the only way home.

Her new ears twitched violently as distant thunder rolled in

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All correspondence should be legible and include writer's name and address.

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Continued from page 1,

around her. Suddenly, a prickling shiver ran down her spine. She brushed her arm against her leg – and froze. Fur, soft and impossibly thick, coated her skin.

“N-NO!” Elana screams, as her tail flicks frantically and ears twitch at the booming thunder and cracking lightning.

Suddenly Elana’s eyes flick towards the storm – dimly glowing against the dark. The storm then rumbles louder as Elana almost falls to the ground in shock.

“You will not pass.” She hears a grumbling voice say. The storm grumbled once again.

“I made p-per-perfect...wooooooorld...heeeere... Why...why would you...NNNNot STAY?–” The storm hummed like a broken record.

“I don’t want to stay in this horrid world, I want to go back home!” Elana screams, batting back tears.

The storm suddenly travels higher into the air booming.

“YOU... W-WILL STAAAY...” Elana watches the cloud of fury and death travel closer and closer to her, willing to do anything to stop her from passing.

Right as the storm travels closer, a crevice opens up, on top of the cloud, a small hole tearing through reality itself. Elana uses all her might, she swoops up dodging the storms’ attacks as she glances towards the tunnel.

“I’m almost there!” Elana pants as her hands, covered in sweat, brush the edges of the tunnel peeking into another world.

Elana clammers in the floating tunnel, glancing back one last time, muttering.

“Well, I got past you didn’t I...” Elana tumbles into the tunnel, but then feels something strange, like reality itself tearing apart. As Elana falls she feels like time and space is pulling itself apart. Her heart was thumping in her chest, she was small and lost in the chaos of existence itself.

Right when she thought it was all over, she found herself at the bottom of the very slide that took her to that world. It was early in the morning and Elana could hear the faint noise of birds chirping in the distance. Elana glanced around, happy to be back in her own world, and she’d never leave it again.



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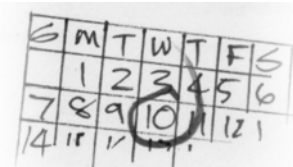
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What's happening this month



Sunday, 8 March, Helensville Art Trail (HAT), our studios will be open on the second Sunday of every month until May 2026. We're excited to welcome you back to explore our creative spaces, meet local artists, and enjoy the diverse art on display. All studios offer free entry, ample parking, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere. There's also a brand-new studio to discover this season – another reason to come along and see what's new on the HAT. Looking forward to seeing you soon!

Saturday, 14 March, 103rd Kumeu Show. Bring the whole family to experience agricultural displays, live entertainment, and endless fun! Enjoy two action-packed days of rides, entertainment, animals, food, competitions, and classic country fun, held at the beautiful Kumeu Showgrounds, just 20 minutes from central Auckland. There's something for everyone at the Show - whether you're seeking thrills, unique experiences, or a relaxing day out in a vibrant community atmosphere. At the 2026 Kumeu Show, there's something for everyone: Experience exciting attractions like: • Amusement rides • Trade & market stalls • Food trucks • Animal petting or enjoy our fantastic live events and competitions, including: • Live music & entertainment • Sheep shearing & wood chopping • Lawn mower racing & tree climbing • Tractor parade • Equestrian events • Livestock competitions • Horticultural displays plus, plenty of activities for all ages, fun for the whole family!

Sunday, 15 March, The Village Market, Helensville Showgrounds, Railway St, Helensville, 8.30am – 1pm. A monthly event that takes place on the third Sunday of every month (except for February) at the Helensville A&P Showgrounds. A lively and friendly market that offers a variety of stalls, live music from Kenny Luond, free face painting or hair plaiting for the kids, and delicious food and coffee. You can find fresh local produce and plants, artisan food and preserves, handmade crafts, gifts, collectibles, pre-loved items and more. If you are looking for a fun and relaxing way to spend your Sunday morning, you might

want to check out this Village Market. No dogs please with the exception of assistance dogs. Gold coin donation for parking – proceeds to the Helensville/Kaukapakapa Scouts and St John youth. For more information contact sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz. **Saturday, 21 March, River Valley Baptist Family Gala Day,** 1 Fordyce Road, Parakai, 10am – 1pm, Come along for some great community time with fun, budget-friendly food and activities. Bouncy Castle, Café/home baking, BBQ, Magic carpet rides, Easter Egg hunt, Second hand goods, & Clothes, Water balloon/darts, balls & hoops, ice cream, cold drinks, face painting & more.

Saturday, 28 March, Helensville Primary School Gala Day, 10am – 2pm, It's going to be BIG, loud, fun and full of community vibes! We've got something for everyone this year...Teacher Dunk (yes, this is your chance!) Climbing Wall, Bouncy Castles & Air Jumper, Photo Booth, Craft Station, A special visit from a Fire Truck — and at approx. 1:45pm the kids will get hosed down! Plus, heaps of delicious food vendors to keep those bellies full while you wander, play, laugh and soak up the fun. Bring your friends, bring your neighbours, bring the grandparents, Gala Day is all about coming together, supporting our school and making epic memories with our kids. See you there... we can't wait!

Thursday, 2 April – End of Term 1

Friday, 3 April – Monday, 6 April, Easter Weekend

Friday, 3 April – 7 April, Kumeu Easter Festival, 12pm – 9pm daily, Kumeu Showgrounds, \$3 Entry, FREE Parking, What to expect: Delicious Food Trucks, Rides & Kids Fun, Retail + Artisan Stalls, Live Entertainment, Easter Egg Hunts, Movies Under the Stars. Big Easter vibes for the whole family, Mark your calendars — your Easter weekend is sorted!,

Sunday, 5 April, Daylight Saving ends.

Tuesday, 7 April, U3A Monthly Meeting, 10am – 12pm Guest speaker **Dr John Bray** Physics research fellow. Topic: The Universe in 60 minutes. Guests are very welcome. U3A <https://www.u3a.nz> is a national and international volunteer led organisation for retired and semi-retired people committed to lifelong learning and who enjoy interesting company. South Kaipara U3A has more than 60 members and is thriving. There is an informative meeting on the first Tuesday of every month 10am-12pm. There are also a number of smaller interest groups. Guests and new members are very welcome. For enquiries contact Bev Silvester-Clark bev.s-c@outlook.com 'phone 0274 316205



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River Valley Baptist Family Gala
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Tu Tangi Ora brings Waka Ama Regatta to Aotea, Shelly Beach



From 2008, when Tu Tangi Ora first began, they have been solid competitors at national and international Waka Ama events. Now, on Saturday 18 April, Helensville based Tu Tangi Ora will host Tu Te Ihi Ki Kaipara, their first regatta. The idea was born when event manager, Robbie Steedman, new to one of New Zealand's fastest growing sports, connected with the aspirations of veteran paddler Tony Cooper. Soon a small crew with all the necessary skills was onboard bringing the idea of a local regatta to life.

On the day, racing begins at 8:30am, with a powhiri at 7:45am and registration at 7:00am. New and experienced paddlers of all ages will come from all over the country to compete in 8km and 20km races. Contestants will be paddling the Kaipara Harbour, the traditional home of Ngati Whatua and the largest harbour in the Southern Hemisphere. The 20km course offers kaihoe something no other Waka Ama event has: a unique perspective of Gibbs Farm Sculpture Park. "The 20k will be challenging if the weather turns. It'll be an awesome thing to witness for those who have never seen it before and even more epic for the ones racing", explains Robbie.

In keeping with the powerful history of waka sailing and voyaging, Frank Kawe and his team will be travelling up from Mount Maunganui to attend the event and to showcase Te Pahore o Rehua, a waka ama that has been adapted for sailing. They will run this awe-inspiring vessel through its paces in the Kaipara Harbour to demonstrate the future of the sport.

Visitors and residents take note that during this event, the Aotea, Shelly Beach carpark will be closed off for parking and access to the boat ramp will be limited with controlled access only. Using the alternative access at Parakai or Mangakura boat ramps is advised. Trailer parking will be available on James McLeod Road.

Driven by Waka Ama values of culture, inclusivity and whanau spirit, this event promises to be an outstanding day for all. The name, Tu Te Ihi, 'bring the vibe', was coined to reflect the positive energy that is frequently the talk of participants at waka ama events. This regatta is sure to deliver with good food, good music, good people and most of all good vibes! For further information, contact tutangiorawakaama@gmail.com.



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Love Takes Many Forms: Reflections on Valentines, Pride, and Community Spirit

by Sequoia Thomson, Year 13 Student, Kaipara College

Only a few months in, and it seems the year is already steamrolling forward, with or without us. While the students are slowly acclimatising to our back-to-school schedule, as predicted, it has still been quite difficult. I know from personal experience that these first few weeks have left me suffering from what I personally like to call summer withdrawal. A self-decided schedule and no work due was quite addictive after all!

On Friday, the 13th of February, the school celebrated Valentine's Day, and our wonderful PSSP (peer sexuality support programme) sold some chocolate hearts at \$1 each during interval and break, alongside the student leadership, who sold some plastic roses, (also \$2 each) as a collaboration with PSSP to inspire connection with our fellow students. I must say, manning the booth and seeing how many students enthusiastically bought and gifted hearts and roses was a very 'sweet' reminder of the love not only couples, but friends share too - in fact, I think we sold more gifts for friends than anything!

This links into one thing I think many single folk need to remember in general - love comes in many forms, whether it's your relationship with a friend, your pet, your parents, or a partner, love is for all of us! As Gandhi said, "where there is love, there is life!". This coming month, remember to appreciate the small things you usually brush by, a handmade lunch, a friend's compliment, or a mothers morning hug.

Another love-related celebration also occurred over February - Pride! A month that historically celebrates the 1969 Stonewall uprising in Manhattan, but also promotes LGBTQ+ acceptance, rights, equality, and diversity. A time of joy and happiness, which is not just for those who are LGBTQ+. Pride month is for everyone who celebrates and supports the community, and the Auckland pride parade which occurred on the 21st of February was a great example of this, with a huge, and very colourful crowd showing up to celebrate.

On a more sports-related note, with the integration of the vertical Tira houses, Tauihu, Taurapa, Takere and Te Ra, we also had our first Tira tabloids Sports day. This is a day full of fun, with groups of students from each Tira house competing against each other in individual games to win points, which are added to the overall tally. We also had our year 9 have a go day on Friday 20th February, in which year nines tried an array of different activities - Tira points were also collected from the winners of these activities too. At the end of the year, the Tira house with the most points (from all the different events) will win! I myself am vouching for Tauihu (my Tira), but I am a little biased...



GirlGuiding is hosting a jamboree in 2027

Joan Furbish is a Leader at the Helensville GirlGuiding Unit, which opened its doors to girls in the northwest of Auckland in February 2025. "GirlGuiding offers programmes for girls and young adults that take them away from technology and into the great outdoors," says Joan.

Not many people know that the global movement of GirlGuiding was founded in the South Island, making it a kiwi born legacy. These days, girls engage in both traditional outdoor activities as well as gaining exposure to more contemporary issues, reflecting what matters most to girls of today. Leadership skills are encouraged and developed, and lifelong friendships are made.

In summer of 2027 GirlGuiding is hosting a jamboree, this is the largest outdoor camping event for girls in the country. "I would encourage girls to sign up to GirlGuiding this year if they would like to attend and ask that volunteers who might want to take part contact me," says Joan.

Local interest in Guiding is strong and the unit in Helensville

is growing at an incredible rate, but so is the waitlist - we need more leaders! The easiest way to bypass the girl waitlist is to volunteer as a leader. Leaders get full training in leadership of girls as well as girl safety, camping and even First Aid courses.

We are looking for someone who wants to share this wonderful journey with us - is that you? Further information can be found on the GirlGuiding website (girlguidingnz.org.nz) or by emailing your local Helensville Guide Club at this address: helensvilleguideclub@gmail.com.



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North West Country Inc media release March 2026

March is Here and the North West is Buzzing!

What a fantastic start to the year it has been. Businesses across the North West are back up and running, the energy in our community is tangible, and the feedback we are hearing is that people are feeling genuinely positive about what 2026 holds. After a tough few years, it is wonderful to see confidence returning to our region and we are here to make sure that momentum keeps building.

As always, we have been busy behind the scenes working on initiatives that will make a real difference for our members. Here is what is happening across the North West this month.

Flooding Toolkit, Momentum is Building!

The response to our Business Flooding Toolkit pilot has been really encouraging. Since we presented the concept to Healthy Waters at Auckland Council last year, we have been busy getting a group of local businesses on board who have experienced flooding firsthand and are ready to be part of finding real solutions.

The Toolkit will give businesses a practical toolbox of flood resilience and resistance options they can put in place when floods are on the way. We are working to have these measures endorsed by Auckland Council (pending negotiations) and insurance brokers, so businesses can implement them with confidence.

If your business is in Kumeu, Huapai or Waimauku, has experienced flooding, and you haven't yet registered your interest, there is still time! This pilot is a real opportunity to get tailored engineering solutions designed specifically for your property, at no cost to you. Get in touch with me directly on manager@northwestcountry.co.nz and let's get you on board.

PerformIQ Launches This Month, Don't Miss Out!

Big news for North West businesses, The Better SMB is launching their PerformIQ platform right here in our region from 20 to 24 March 2026, and we want as many of our members as possible to be part of it.

PerformIQ gives businesses access to real insights and performance metrics through the innovative 35 by 35 Programme, a movement helping businesses grow their performance by up to 35% by 2035. North West Country will be right alongside you, supporting every member on the platform to make the most of what it offers.

Here's where it gets really exciting for our region: once we have at least 50 businesses on board, we will receive aggregated and anonymised data about how our business area is performing as a whole. That means we can benchmark ourselves, identify where businesses need the most support, and tailor what we do to actually make a difference.

More information is coming your way over the next few weeks, so keep an eye on your inbox and our channels. This is one not to miss.

2026 Sponsorship Opportunities, Partner With Us

We are looking for great local businesses to come on board as North West Country sponsors in 2026, and the opportunities are genuinely exciting. Whether you want to back the organisation as a whole or get behind a specific project that aligns with your values, there is a way to make it work for you.

Annual sponsors have their logos featured across all of our communication channels and receive tickets to our events, putting your brand in front of the people who matter most to your business. Project sponsors become our delivery partners on initiatives that are shaping the future of the North West.

Whatever you're looking for brand exposure, community connection, or simply wanting to give back to the region that supports you, let's have a conversation.

Reach out to me on manager@northwestcountry.co.nz and we can find the right fit for your business.

Welcome, Governance Intern!

We are thrilled to announce that North West Country is bringing on board our very first Governance Intern, in partnership with Massey University Business School. This is something our Executive Committee is genuinely proud of creating a pathway for emerging governance professionals while strengthening how we operate as an organisation.

"The intern will support our organisation to best practice and allow us to look at ourselves from a new perspective, making sure we are always innovating," says our Chair, Andrew Howard.

We love that this partnership brings fresh eyes to our not-for-profit and helps us keep raising the bar. Watch this space for more on how this initiative develops throughout the year.

Nga mihi,
Danielle Hancock
General Manager, North West Country Inc
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A Heartwarming February at Craigweil House

February was a meaningful and heartwarming month at **Craigweil House**, as residents and staff came together to celebrate both Waitangi Day and Valentine's Day, each observed on its own special day but united by the same spirit of connection and community.

For Waitangi Day, we took time to acknowledge and reflect on the partnership, history and shared future of Aotearoa New Zealand. The day was marked with learning, discussion and a strong sense of togetherness. Some residents and staff wore black to commemorate the occasion, while others helped prepare the space with decorations, taking pride in creating a welcoming and meaningful setting. Activities included Poi, a New Zealand history quiz, and watching a video about the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, all of which sparked conversation, curiosity and shared memories. Staff also performed Maori Poi and Waiata, which was warmly received and enjoyed by everyone.

Later in the month, Valentine's Day brought a lighter and creative celebration. Residents enjoyed colouring heart themed designs, filling the room with bright colours and cheerful conversation. In the afternoon, we made the most of the remaining summer days with a lovely garden tea, sharing sweet treats and warm drinks outdoors. It was a beautiful way to relax, laugh and appreciate one another's company.

At Craigweil House, moments like these reflect the care, connection and sense of belonging we value every day. If you are considering aged care options for yourself or a loved one, we warmly invite you to drop by, meet our friendly team and see what Craigweil House has to offer. PH 094208277



Sayers says it

By Rodney Councillor Greg Sayers. Ratepayers in Rodney should not be required to fund the operating costs of the City Rail Link.

This is not opposition to the project or to Auckland's growth. It is a question of equity. Should a largely rural district, with no passenger rail services and limited public transport infrastructure, be compelled to fund a multi-billion-dollar inner-city rail tunnel?

The CRL's projected annual operating cost is approximately \$235 million — equivalent to a 7.9 per cent residential rates increase. That comes on top of last year's significant hikes, which in some cases reached 30 to 50 per cent. At a time when households are absorbing higher insurance, food and fuel costs, another large rates increase is not sustainable.

Rodney residents derive little direct benefit. There are no local train stations. Many communities rely on private vehicles because viable public transport options do not exist. Some rural roads remain unsealed, and long-promised township upgrades have been deferred and SH 16 will remain congested.

Rodney ratepayers already pay a targeted rate to maintain basic bus services.

Supporters argue that all of Auckland benefits indirectly through reduced congestion and economic stimulus. But indirect gains cannot reasonably be equated with direct, daily usage. For a commuter stepping onto a central city train platform, the benefit is immediate. For a farmer navigating an unsealed rural road, it is not.

Excluding Rodney from contributing to the CRL's operating costs would not derail the project. Spread across Auckland's urban base, the additional cost per household would be thirteen cents a week. For Rodney, the relief would be substantial.

Rodney should not be penalised for infrastructure it neither uses nor meaningfully benefits from. Excluding Rodney from a 7.9% rate increase is not divisive — it is responsible governance.

Please have your say online at <https://akhaveyoursay.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/> or pop into a library for a submission form before 27 March.



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Yellow legged Hornets: How are we Doing? Is it too Late?

Should we be worried? Is our biosecurity robust enough to handle this predator? Here are my thoughts on the response.

I am part of the biosecurity response team working to eradicate the yellow legged hornet (YLH) from New Zealand. I'm not directly employed by MPI, but with the surveillance company tasked with the response and overseen by Biosecurity New Zealand. This is a new predator in Aotearoa, so while there was a plan in place we did not have direct experience dealing with the YLH. It is important to note that it has altered its lifecycle and behaviour slightly as it is adapting to our environment, so we can't directly transfer overseas experience and knowledge as there will be subtle differences that have ramifications down the line. We are being advised by experts from the UK, who have been battling the YLH for a decade. We have a varied team including well-respected local beekeepers who work in bee related biosecurity for different agencies and people who have made biosecurity their life long career. Irrespective of our CVs, we are all passionate and well aware of the need to succeed. At the time of writing this, they have only been found on the North Shore but we must all be vigilant to ensure that they don't spread further afield.

I am fortunate to be on the hornet treatment team (Hornet Death Squad). Once a nest has been identified we work out a plan, no two nests are exactly the same, to safely terminate it; returning 24 hours later to collect every remnant of the nest and send it to the laboratory for analysis. We wait a day so that any stragglers that return to the nest will get poisoned.

Finding a Nest

MPI traps are checked regularly and reports from members of the public are followed up. When YLH activity has been identified (winnowed out from well-intentioned wasp reports) feeding stations are put out and observed; after a flight path has been observed (or two or three), the YLH are marked with a coloured paint and timed. The feeding station is moved closer until a likely site has been identified. Tracers triangulate flight paths to find the nest, if it is hidden in dense bush or up a high tree, the hornet is then captured and tagged with a tiny electronic transmitter. Once the team are in place, the YLH is released and the receivers triangulate the signals to find the nest. It could be in the ground, in a rotten log or high up a tree, depending on whether it is a primary or secondary nest. The site is then marked on our app and the treatment team swing into action. We do not take chances being stung, even the trackers wear protective suits. When treating a nest we can have dozens of YLH attack, so we wear the thickest hornet suit, leather gloves and boots with cuffs taped up. We wear visors to protect from the venom that can be sprayed into the eyes. We also wear half face respirators to protect from the insecticides used. Secondary nests are usually quite high up a tree which require specialised arborists, who not only wear all the hornet PPE but also their safety gear and climbing harness, hot work indeed.

Should we be worried?

They are terrifying wee beasties and the thought of them becoming established drives me forward every day. They would likely decimate our honey bees and native pollinators, impacting our crops that are essential to our export revenue. More worrying though is the thought that these hornets could sting our children at play in gardens throughout New Zealand. I believe that we will eradicate them, but it won't be quick or easy.

How can you help?

- Put out hornet traps
- Regularly monitor the traps
- Report any YLH sightings to MPI, preferably with a photo



Connection update

CONNECTION, Shop 3,
Helensville Railway Station, next to
The Shoppe and Ginger Crunch café.



Regular events:

Wednesday Raranga/flax weaving - 10.30am - 2.30pm, \$20 for a 2 hour session, Make puti puti (flowers) or kono (basket). Contact Heather 0220366985

Friday Sewing Circle - 10am to 1pm, \$10 for a 2 hour session. Bring your machine and your mending or a project. Chrissy 0274 671843.

Room available for hire: Acoustic music practice, Workshops, Meetings, Interest groups, Celebrations, Exhibitions etc. Heather 0220366985.

Introductory Grief Tending Workshop

With Facilitator Marlies Dorrestein
At Connection, Shop 3, Helensville Railway Station



The Role of Grief Tending -

- Are you experiencing or have you experienced any kind of grief in your life?
- Do you feel or have you felt weighed down or overwhelmed by your grief at times?
- Do you feel or have you felt isolated and alone with your grief?
- Have you ever said to yourself or a friend: "I don't want to go there, because once I start crying I'll never stop"?
- If your answer is "yes" to any or all of these questions, and you feel drawn to learn a way through grief that offers an active, heartfelt and sensitive approach, this workshop may well be for you.

"Grief Tending" supports you to actively develop a whole new relationship with grief over time. You will learn to use time-honoured practices that help you hold your grief with tenderness, and courage; practices that allow you to find inner and outer (re)sources you may not have realised you can draw on, in community.

Tickets available from Humanitix:

(google Humanitix Grief Tending for links to tickets or see Connection Hub facebook page)

- **Date: Thursday 26th March, Time:** Morning 10.00 am - 12.30 pm
- **Date: Thursday 26th March, Time:** Evening 6.30 pm - 9.00 pm
- **Cost:** \$25 - \$45 (Sliding Scale - see ticket information)
- Limited spaces available (maximum 10 participants, minimum of 5 participants)



Marlies Dorrestein's website:
www.thewelcomeconnective.org

Connection facebook page:
Connection Hub



- Look out for YLHs when out in your garden, farm or the bush
- Educate yourself to be able to easily identify them; check out the MPI website
- Politely counter misinformation on social media
- Spread the word amongst friends, family and neighbours
- DO NOT capture hornets or attempt to destroy nests; report them so that we can safely trace them back to their nest
- They are a notifiable pest and it is not permitted for you to move them; it is also dangerous as they have a very painful sting

Together we can eliminate the yellow legged hornet and keep New Zealand safe from this predator. I ask you to work with the response team and follow updates on the MPI website.

Ken Brown

Apiculture Tutor, Land Based Training Ltd
President Auckland Beekeepers Club



Principal Jane Coup

From the Kaipara College Principal's Desk

Kia ora, Kaipara College Community!

It has been an incredibly exciting first month here at Kaipara College, and I wanted to take a moment to share some wonderful news with our community.

Since stepping into my role, I have made relationships my top priority. Taking the time to get to know our students, staff, and the wider community. I have been meeting with as many staff members and students as possible to listen to their hopes and dreams for the school. In those conversations, one message has come through: our staff and students love this community, and they love this school. There is a deep sense of pride in what Kaipara College stands for, and a heartfelt desire to see more of the incredible things happening within our walls celebrated and shared with the wider community. That is something I am absolutely committed to helping make happen.

A perfect example of this spirit in action was our Year 9 Orientation, held during the first few days of the term. Our newest students dove into a variety of indoor and outdoor icebreakers designed to build connections and confidence, and a fantastic time was had by all. This was made even more special by the support of our dedicated student leaders, who did a wonderful job welcoming our juniors into the Kaipara whanau. You can see some great captures of the fun and energy from these days in the photos shared with this piece.

It is timely to reflect on the fantastic NCEA results our students achieved last year. These results are a testament to the hard work of our aakonga and the commitment of our kaiako, and I couldn't be prouder.

2025 NCEA Results

Kaipara College performed above the national average across every level of NCEA — a remarkable achievement:

- **University Entrance** — 55.4% pass rate (*above national average*)
- **NCEA Level 3** — 78.5% pass rate (*above national average*)
- **NCEA Level 2** — 76.9% pass rate (*above national average*)
- **NCEA Level 1** — 75.2% pass rate (*above national average*)
- **Level 1 Literacy and Numeracy** — 85.3% pass rate (*more than 10% above national average*)

Excellence Endorsements — Level 3

A huge congratulations to the following students who achieved Level 3 with an Excellence endorsement: Ruby Anderson, James Griffiths, Maggie Redman, Kaiya Jones, Samara Gostick, Giovanna Meredith, Bella Cornelius, Ben Harvey, Zac Masterton, Lexie Tilson, Maya Duckworth, Zoe Phillips, Alana England, and Tara Phillips. What a stunning achievement — you should all be incredibly proud.

Merit Endorsements — Level 3

Congratulations also go to the following students who achieved Level 3 with a Merit endorsement: Riley Barrett, Matai Harrison, Dylan Smith, Wendy Peng, Riley Cave, Millie Limmer, Olive Bendall, Jackson Doyle, Jessie Evans, Trent Day, Moko Pairama, Asha James, Olivia Kelly, Lily Carter, Eleanor Buckley, Ryan Cong, Theo Bayly, Jacqui Gilberd, Freddy Komornicki, Tinaishe Musekiwa, Lexi Skinner, Lily Glasgow, and Zac Currie. Each of these students has demonstrated outstanding dedication and we celebrate every one of them. These results reflect what is

possible when a community comes together around its young people. I look forward to continuing to connect with you all and to building on this wonderful foundation as we head into an exciting year ahead.

Nga mihi nui,

Jane Coup, *Principal, Kaipara College*



Year 9 girls participating in a tug of war as part of orientation.



Year 9 girls participating in an indoor orientation activity.

Helensville Library and Service Centre update for March

March is a quiet month at Helensville Library, while we recover from the Helensville A&P Show. We are working on our plans for April, including school holiday events.

Visit the library, and / or follow us on Facebook to be among the first to know about them.

Our regular programmes:

Kids Time, for under 6s and their grown-ups: Wednesdays, 10am to 10.30am
Crafternoon for adults: Thursdays, 3pm to 4.30pm
Crafternoon for kids: Thursdays, 3.30pm to 4.30pm

Baby Play, a free play session and chat for under 6s and their grown-ups: Fridays, 10am to 11am

Lego and Duplo Club: Saturdays, 10.30am to 12noon

Book Chat: Thursday 26 March, 10am to 11am.

Bring along a book you've recently read and loved – or disliked – to share with fellow readers.

Report a problem with Auckland Council

While you're out and about, you may see something that needs fixing. The Auckland Council website is your best place to start. aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/report-problem/Pages/report-a-problem.aspx

Alternatively, you can phone Auckland Council 24/7 on 09 301 01 01. Or visit our service centre desk.

Our hours are: Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm, Saturday: 9am to 1pm. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for any updates: facebook.com/HelensvilleLibraryAndServiceCentre

Anne Coppell

Senior Librarian / Poukokiri - Children & Youth / Helensville Library and Service Centre

Chris Penk
MP for Kaipara ki Mahurangi

Here to help
134 Main Road, Huapai • christopherpenk@parliament.govt.nz • 09 412 2496

National
Authorised by Chris Penk, 134 Main Road, Huapai



National **Pen** **CHRIS PENK – MP**

New High School for Huapai

By Chris Penk, MP for Kaipara ki Mahurangi



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It was such a delight to announce last week that Kumeu is getting a new high school!

In the previous edition of the Kumeu Courier I was able to hint that good news in this space was imminent. And last Friday afternoon, at Matua Ngaru School, I was so pleased to be joined by local parents, local school and other community leaders to share some of the detail. Admittedly there are still some details that we don't yet have, including, mostly importantly, confirmation of when the school will be built and students accepted. It would be ideal if the answer to this question proves to be "2028" but I am wary of making timebound promises that may not be fulfilled exactly as planned - given the complexity of construction projects - as I'm conscious that local families will be making plans on the back of this information.

The key point for now, however, is land has been identified and the Ministry of Education is in the process of finalising its purchase. The site is adjacent to Huapai District School.

By way of background, I have been advocating strongly for increased secondary schooling capacity to serve families across Kumeu, Huapai, Riverhead and the wider northwest. With population growth continuing at pace, many parents have rightly expressed concern about long travel times and limited local options for their young ones. Access to quality education close to home is not a luxury — it is an essential part of building strong communities.

That is why I am so pleased that the Government has now confirmed plans for a new high school to serve our growing northwest population. This is a significant milestone and one that reflects the voices of local families, educators and community leaders who have made the case so persuasively.

The new school will help ensure that young people in our area can learn, grow and thrive without needing to travel long distances each day. Of course any moves that reduce congestion on northwest Auckland roads are important for this reason alone.

Having a school closer than either Kaipara College or Massey High School - both of which are excellent schools, I want to emphasise - also supports families in the Kumeu area by strengthening community connections and providing opportunities for students to participate more fully in sports, arts and cultural life close to home.

I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to share their views and experiences with me as we have worked towards this

Continued on page 13



outcome. We've done petitions, news stories, letters, questions and Official Information Act requests together over several years.

To be clear, community advocacy has played an important role in getting us to this point.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Minister of Education (my friend and colleague Erica Stanford), local schools and the community as planning progresses. This investment in education is an investment in the future of our young people — and in the continued success of northwest Auckland. Bring it on!

BIG SAVINGS AT A SMALL CEMETERY

The alarming cost of Ashes Plots at Auckland Cemeteries has not gone unnoticed. Kaukapakapa's small Church Cemetery has pledged to hold it's fees at half the cost of the other larger Cemeteries. This will benefit the families that reside within the South Kaipara region. See the advert above and call the cemetery on 02108 290768 for costs and conditions.



Cut the barriers holding back local development

By Simon Court, ACT MP

Across Auckland’s northwest and the wider Helensville community, families are feeling the pressure of high housing costs, slow infrastructure delivery, and a planning system that too often says “no” before it says “yes.”

We talk a lot about the need to build more homes and deliver infrastructure faster. But if we are serious about that goal, we need to be honest about what is getting in the way.

One of the clearest recent examples of what can be achieved when unnecessary barriers are removed is the Northern Busway extension. The Government made the decision to fast-track this important project so Aucklanders could get the transport links they need without years of delay.

Recent headlines also show how contested the current settings have become. Groups such as the Voice of Taranaki Maunga have publicly expressed concern about proposed RMA reforms. But the real question for policymakers is practical: are our planning rules focused on managing real environmental effects, or are they layering additional process onto projects regardless of scale or impact?

When we streamline the process, projects move. Costs come down. Communities benefit sooner. But for most housing and development projects, the experience is very different.

I regularly hear from homeowners, builders, and small developers who find themselves navigating a complex web of additional reports, consultations, and fees that add little practical value but significantly increase time and cost.

Recently, a North Shore family contacted our office about a modest renovation to their existing 1970s home. The project would not expand the building footprint and would remain within an already developed residential site.

Despite this, they were told they needed to engage with multiple iwi groups as part of the resource consent process. One group sought a paid site meeting and report costing around \$10,000. Then a second group also expressed interest in being consulted.

Whether or not each individual request is technically permissible under current rules is not really the point. The broader issue is that the system increasingly creates uncertainty, duplication, and cost for ordinary New Zealanders trying to improve their own property.

Every additional requirement adds friction. Every layer of process adds delay. And ultimately, those costs flow through to higher house prices, more expensive renovations, and slower infrastructure delivery.

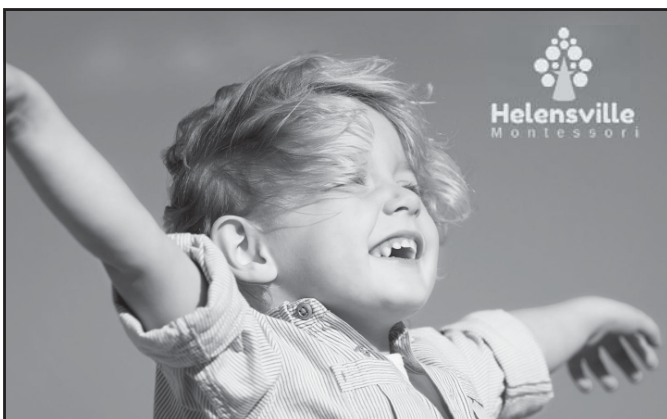
This matters in places like Helensville and across the northwest,

where growth is coming and communities need more housing, better transport, and more local investment. The current system too often applies blanket processes that bear little relationship to the scale or impact of the project involved.

We should be asking a simple question: does this requirement materially improve environmental or planning outcomes, or is it simply adding cost and delay? If we want more homes built and infrastructure delivered on time, we need a resource management system that is predictable, proportionate, and focused on real effects.

Fast-tracked projects like the Northern Busway show what is possible when we cut through unnecessary process. The challenge now is to bring that same discipline to the wider planning system. Because until we do, well-intentioned families, builders, and communities will keep paying the price.

SHELLY BEACH TIDE CHART					
Date	High Water Shelly Beach	Sun Rise	Sun Set		
March '26					
1 Sun	1003	3.8	2229	0705	2000
2 Mon	1054	4.0	2318	0706	1958
3 Tue	1138	4.2	-	0707	1957
4 Wed	0000	4.1	1218	0708	1956
5 Thu	0039	4.1	1254	0709	1954
6 Fri	0114	4.1	1327	0710	1953
7 Sat	0146	4.0	1358	0711	1951
8 Sun	0217	3.9	1429	0712	1950
9 Mon	0249	3.8	1501	0713	1949
10 Tue	0323	3.6	1538	0714	1947
11 Wed	0404	3.5	1623	0715	1946
12 Thu	0456	3.3	1721	0716	1944
13 Fri	0608	3.2	1840	0717	1943
14 Sat	0739	3.2	2013	0718	1941
15 Sun	0851	3.4	2119	0718	1940
16 Mon	0943	3.6	2209	0719	1938
17 Tue	1028	3.9	2253	0720	1937
18 Wed	1109	4.1	2334	0721	1935
19 Thu	1149	4.2	-	0722	1934
20 Fri	0013	4.2	1228	0723	1933
21 Sat	0053	4.3	1309	0724	1931
22 Sun	0133	4.2	1350	0725	1930
23 Mon	0215	4.1	1433	0726	1928
24 Tue	0259	4.0	1520	0726	1927
25 Wed	0349	3.8	1615	0727	1925
26 Thu	0451	3.6	1724	0728	1924
27 Fri	0610	3.5	1848	0729	1922
28 Sat	0732	3.5	2006	0730	1921
29 Sun	0842	3.6	2112	0731	1919
30 Mon	0939	3.8	2206	0732	1918
31 Tue	1028	4.0	2252	0733	1916
April '26					
1 Wed	1110	4.1	2332	0733	1915
2 Thu	1148	4.1	-	0734	1913
3 Fri	0009	4.1	1223	0735	1912
4 Sat	0043	4.1	1255	0736	1910
5 Sun	0115	4.0	1225	0637	1809



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Regular Events

60 Plus, Held the last Thursday of each month, 10am morning tea provided, a great opportunity to meet others in a relaxed friendly atmosphere. Held at Magnify, 118 Commercial Rd, around the back, downstairs. (There is a ramp) Jocelyn Read 0211-726-547.

Al-Anon Family Groups can help. Free lunchtime meeting every Wednesday, 12.30 pm in small office at rear of carpark Magnify, 118 Main Road, www.al-anon.org.nz. Chris K 021-157-1692

Aqua Aerobics – Low impact exercises to improve your health - and wellbeing. Classes: Mon, Wed, Fri, 9am – 10am, held in the outdoor pool at Parakai Springs Hot Pools all year except public holidays. Cost: \$2 per class, \$7 pool entry for non-cardholders. Contact Ruth on 0210-2277-481 for more details.

Car boot, garage sale market. \$15 per stall. 2nd Saturday of the month, 8.30am to 12.30pm. Positioned by the bollards up by the street footpath, 40 Commercial Road, beside WINZ. Enquiries to 021 488 427

Citizens Advice Bureau: Helensville, is open Monday - Friday from 10am to 1pm at 16 Commercial Rd, Helensville. JPs are always available. Come for information and advice.

Diabetes & Arthritis Group - First Monday in the month unless it's a public holiday. Held at the Anglican-Methodist Church, 60 Garfield Road, Helensville, from 10am to 12pm. Morning tea provided. Speaker and fun times. Contact Shirley on 420-6501 or Glennis on 420-2801.

Freemasons at Helensville; Regular meetings at The Duke of Albany Lodge, Kowhai Street, Helensville. For more information call Bob Greenough on 0210-829-2345

Groovy Line Dancing Tuesday 9.30am – War Memorial Hall, Helensville. \$6 – Levvia Aukino-Uruamo. Ph 022-626-7030

Hana's Group Fitness Classes, small group fitness classes. Pilates, Functional Fitness & Boxing for Fitness held indoors at the Helensville Rugby Clubrooms, 5 x per week. Please contact Hana on 0211623362 or email hanalundon@gmail.com

Helensville Floral Art Club, Third Thursday of the month at Helensville Masonic Lodge, 9 Kowhai Street. All welcome. Contact Cushla 0212-588-979 cushanddez80@gmail.com for more information.

Helensville Healing Rooms, now at outside rooms of River Valley Baptist Church, Fordyce Road Parakai, opposite Parakai Primary School, Every 1st and 3rd Saturday, 11a.m-12p.m. We offer prayer for help with what you need healed, All welcome, no appointment, no charge, ph 0276-058-225

Helensville Lions Club, meet 2nd Monday of the each month, in

the Tennis Club building, 124/164 Rautawiri Road, 6.30pm for 7pm start. Just come along to any meeting to see what we are about - you will be made very welcome. Contact Chris 027-646-3324.

Helensville Railway Museum. 2 Railway Street, Helensville. Open every Sunday 10.30am to 3pm. 09 420 8961, helensvillerrailwaystationtrust@gmail.com, www.helensvillerrail.org.nz

Helensville River Valley Country Music Club Held 3rd Sunday of the month at Tennis Club Building, Rautawhiri Park. 1pm start. All Welcome Contact Marion 420-8867.

Helensville St John Youth: Ages 5-18 yrs see youth@stjohn.org.nz for more information. Monday 5.30-7pm during school terms,

Makiri Street, Helensville. Contact: Carla. carla.lang@stjohn.org.nz

Hot Pool Stretching and Exercise Class: Every Tuesday 8-30-9.30am. Suitable for arthritis sufferers or those wanting to warm up these muscles and stay flexible. Lots of fun; pool noodles available and fully instructed. At Parakai Springs Hot Pools. For more information contact Chrissy on 027-258-2010

Kaipara Memorial RSA. - Dining available from 5.30pm Wed, Thurs, Fri and 11am on Sundays. All welcome at the RSA, 49 Commercial Road, Helensville. Any queries, give me a call, Rex Keane, 027 293 2768

Kaukapakapa St John Youth: Ages 5-18 yrs see youth@stjohn.org.nz for more information. Tuesday 5.30-7pm during school terms, 1015 Kaipara Coast Highway, Helensville.

Contact: Caroline 0221-674-823, caroline.thompson@stjohn.org.nz
Kumeu Friendship Club. Friendship New Zealand Inc. is a welcoming social organisation for people living in New Zealand who are retired or semi-retired. Come along and join us on the fourth Thursday of the month at 10am at St. Chad's Church, 7 Matua Rd, Huapai.

Our Village Coffee/Playgroup - Northwest (Find us on Facebook). Social community group for all ages and stages. Everyone welcome along: Parents, caregivers, grandparents, all the whānau, with/without children. Every Thursday 9.30am - 1.00pm St Matthews Church Lounge - 60 Garfield Rd, Helensville. Email: ourvillagenorthwest@gmail.com

SeniorNet Kumeu Inc., Have you ever thought about joining SeniorNet? The Kumeu branch meets in St Chads Church, Huapai, with a Helensville outpost in a private home in Garfield Rd. Entry is free. Why not come along and find out what we have to offer. Contact details: Brian Lacey brian@lacey.nz, 0221-831-811, Nigel Dempster 09-411-9444

South Kaipara Community Patrol, Contact Paul on 021345928. or southkaipara@cpnz.org.nz

Te Awaroa Museum Open Monday - Wednesday 10.30am - 1.30pm 09-420-7881 info@museum.teawaroa.nz www.museum.teawaroa.nz

U3A South Kaipara: 1st Tuesday of the month for general meeting. See What's happening this month column for more information or contact Bev Silvester-Clark. bev.s-c@outlook.com 0274-316-205.

Trade/Professional & Services List

Accountants	ECE Astute Accounting	420-7835	Homekill	Country Meat	021-161-4270/420-3113
Agecare	Craigweil House	420-8277	Ink and Toner	Huapai Copy & Print	09-412-8882
Age Concern Rodney		09-426-0916	JP's	Lindy McDermott	022-049-2871
Beauty Therapy	Beauty Elixir	022-465-0727	Lions Club of Helensville	Chris Clark	027-646-3324
Beauty Therapy	Premier Aesthetics	www.premieraesthetics.co.nz	Market Opportunity	Car Boot/ Garage Sale	021-488-427
Birthing Centre	Commercial Road, Helensville	420-8747	Markets	The Village Market	0274-831-542
Budget Service	Francis	420-7740	Markets	Waitoki Village Market	Gill 420-3301
Business Hub	Northwest Country, Danielle	0204-0027-008	Mechanical Repairs	Helensville Mechanical Services	420-8177
Butcher	River Valley Meats	0212-130-060/0274-833-400	Mechanical Repairs	Parakai Automotive	09-420-7224.
CAB	16 Commercial Road	420-7162	Mower Repairs & Sales	Lifestyle Mowing Machinery	0274-955-948
Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning	Curtis	027-200-5456	MP	Chris Penk	021-0230-6106
Chiropractor	Kaipara Chiropractic Healthcare	420-6224	Paddock Mowing	Tractor mowing with mulcher	0274-669-464
Computer Repairs	Michael - Controlaltrepair	021-251-4138	Pet Spa	Groomville Boutique	021-246-5354
Concreters	Brewis Concrete	021-992-590	Plant Centre	Kaipara Coast Plant Centre	420-5655
Diggers	Helensville Diggers	021-454-793/420-7023	Plumbers	ATL Plumbing Ltd	021-245-9677/420-7868
Dog Grooming	Christine	021-521-303	Plumbers	KPL Ltd	420-9108
Early Learning Centre	Active Explorers	09-222-3277	Pumps	KPL Ltd	420-9108
Early Learning Centre	Gumboots	09-411-9038	Pumps	Mid West Pumps	420-7694
Early Learning Centre	Helensville Montessori	420-7181	Real Estate	Barfoot & Thompson-Kelly Davison	0274-670-175
Electrician	Sean Gray Electrical	0274-784-396	Real Estate	Burmester Realty	420-8360
Filtration	KPL Ltd	420-9108	Real Estate	Prestige - Jana Mills	021-509-990/420-9953
Garden Sheds	Baby Barns	022-075-8283/420-3298	Roofing	KPL Ltd	420-9108
Gift Baskets	Riverside Crafts - Sarah	0800-831-542	Shuttle Service	Helensville Shuttles	0272-777-339
Gifts & Art	FIGG 44 Commercial Rd	021-488-427/ 420-6026	Shower Installation	GSI Ltd	0800-466-5327/420-8777
Gifts & Clothing	Eleventh Hour - 60 Commercial Road		Storage	J S Storage	021-462-930
Glass Services	Nor-West & Kumeu Glass Services	09-420-8210/0800-825100	Typesetting/Photocopying	Huapai Copy & Print	420-9307
Handyman	Dale Browne	0274-397-519	Venue Hire	Kaipara Memorial RSA	420-8888
			Your Local Business Book	yourlocalbusinessbook@gmail.com	



Team **BURMESTER**

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Helping Change Lives - One Opportunity at a Time

At Burmester Realty, real estate is about more than buying and selling property - it's about **people, community and creating real opportunities.**

In 2025 Burmester Realty proudly sponsored a local mum to attend an 8-day Outward Bound course in Anakiwa. The experience helped her rediscover confidence, strength and goals that had quietly been put aside. Inspired by the opportunity, she went on to complete her first half marathon - a powerful reminder of what's possible when someone is given a chance.

But giving back doesn't stop there.



As a proud part of the Helensville community, Burmester Realty is also standing beside a true local hero - **Tony Cooper**, who is currently battling stage four cancer. With no government funding available for the treatment he urgently needs, community support is vital!

Burmester Realty is pledging \$500 from every property sold to support Tony's treatment and care.

Giving Back to Our Community

Whether it's helping someone sell their home, buy their future, or face life's toughest challenges, Burmester Realty stands for more than just property.

LIST & SELL BETWEEN 21st JANUARY & 20th MAY 2026 & YOU COULD PAY HALF COMMISSION

List your property with Burmester Realty and if it sells before 30 May 2026, you'll go into the draw to win 50% OFF your commission*

- ✓ No marketing fees - ever
- ✓ The top-performing agency in the area
- ✓ Extremely competitive commission
- ✓ Award winning service you can trust

Why settle for ordinary when you can work with the #1 agency for 2026 in Helensville, South Head and Kaukapakapa (As Verified by Rate My Agent 24/12/2025)

Contact Burmester Realty today - *Local. Proven. Results-driven*

We stand for **People** | We stand for **Community** | We stand for **Possibility**

*Ts & Cs apply - 50% off your commission (incl. GST) or \$10,000 (incl. GST) which ever is the lesser. Applies to new listings only

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