Resilient Communities Forum Report

A 2025 Snapshot of community resilience in Whaingaroa, Raglan

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Mihi

We acknowledge Karioi Maunga, Whaingaroa Moana and the whenua of the Whaingaroa area that have supported continuous occupation of the area and the abundance that these have provided.

We acknowledge those passed, those present and those yet to come.

We acknowledge the hundreds of years of resilience of mana whenua.

We acknowledge all of the people, organisations and work that has gone into maintaining and strengthening the resilience of this place and its people.

We value the local knowledge and wisdom that resides within Whaingaroa.

Context & Background

Raglan Naturally hosted two community forum events in July and August 2025, with a focus on Resilient Communities. One of Raglan Naturally's roles is to bring the community together to network, plan and build greater cohesion around topics that are current and important. At the 2023 Community Organisations Networking & Planning Event 'Resilience' was identified as a key priority for collaboration.



Graphic summary of key outcomes from the 2023 Community Organisations Networking & Planning Event

The July event was 2 hours in duration and August event, 4 hours. Around 150 attended these two forums, some to both events and many stayed for the whole event duration. These two community forums were co-designed and facilitated by Gabrielle Parson (Raglan Naturally) and local facilitator Finn Mackesy.

The purpose of the Community Resilience Forums was to build collective understanding about community resilience in a way that connected and uplifted us, so that we can strengthen our ability to respond to challenges and take action to grow leadership for our future.

Forum Objectives

- **Build a rich picture** of what makes resilient communities in Whaingaroa
- **Strengthen our connections and contributions** to resilience building in Whaingaroa.
- **Build support and energy for community initiatives**
- **Celebrate** the current resilience of Whaingaroa
- The Raglan community together **identifies the priorities** for resilience building
- A **community resource** that summarises the Resilient Communities Forums, provides a snapshot of resilience in Whaingaroa, and identifies opportunities for action. This resource includes community research data that supports future project development (including potential funding).

Mana whenua

It was important that we started off these forums with the voice and perspective of mana whenua. Angeline Greensill of Tainui o Tainui opened for us and spoke of the long standing resilience of mana whenua here in Whaingaroa, of the close community in the 1960's and 70's and of the importance of the wider community building relationships with mana whenua in all the work we are doing. We were also supported by Lucy Haru and Lisa Thomson in these forums.



Angeline Greensill opening the forum with some reflections on resilience from a mana whenua perspective

Rangatahi / Youth

Youth voice and perspectives are also essential as we build our understanding of community resilience. 'Rangatahi, Youth are our Future' was also a key priority from the 2023 Networking & Planning event.



Rangatahi Films on Community Resilience - 6 short films created by senior students of RAS

We supported 6 senior students from Raglan Area School to each create a short film after interviewing local groups about how we build resilience here in Whaingaroa. Along the way they built skills in interviewing, filming, editing, and teamwork while connecting with the community and exploring what resilience really means. The films were shared through social media to community leading up to the Resilient Communities Forum #2. You can view these on the Raglan Naturally Facebook page or website.

Voices of young adults

To ensure we heard voices of young adults (ages 18-35) we worked with Olivia Dean-Chambers who created a survey around community resilience, tailored for this age group. 17 responses were received, mostly from ages 25-30.
The themes that emerged from this survey align with what came out of the Resilience Forums and is emphasised in voices of these young adults. The key insights from this work are included in the **Youth Survey** section below.

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"Resilient communities make sure all residents can meet their basic needs, even during tough times and emergency situations. They ensure access to the human rights of food, housing, education, medical care, social services, and opportunities to work."

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.

What is Community Resilience?

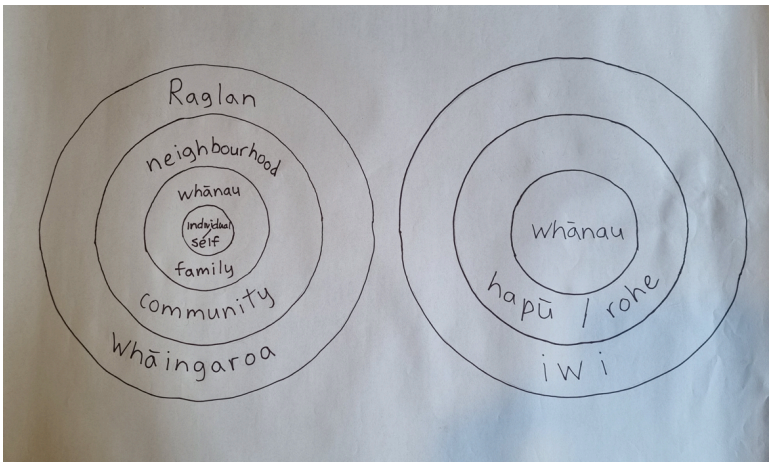
At the start of Forum 1 we asked participants what community resilience meant to them. Here is what they shared:

- Communication - sharing knowledge
- Local resources
- Skills and resource sharing
- Support each other
- Collaboration
- Flexibility and Fluidity
- Responsiveness. Adaptability and Preparedness
- Food resilience
- Abundance for future generations
- Communities within communities
- Understanding diversity and working with it
- Understanding vulnerabilities - including young people
- Inclusion of rangatahi
- Intergenerational processes
- Resources to support vulnerable communities
- Mental wellbeing
- Safety and Security
- Economic Base
- Cooperatives - money
- Transport
- A community plan of what we want to see - next 100 years
- Water reliance - weaknesses
- Resilient infrastructure
- Energy self sufficiency
- Community-led
- Self organised and managed
- Sustainable for the long term - people fatigue
- Sustainability - short and long term
- Strong leadership and strong processes
- Building relationships and community - kotahitanga
- Strong sense of place
- Collective memory - remember how to respond
- Equity
- Hard working - sturdiness
- Ability to recover

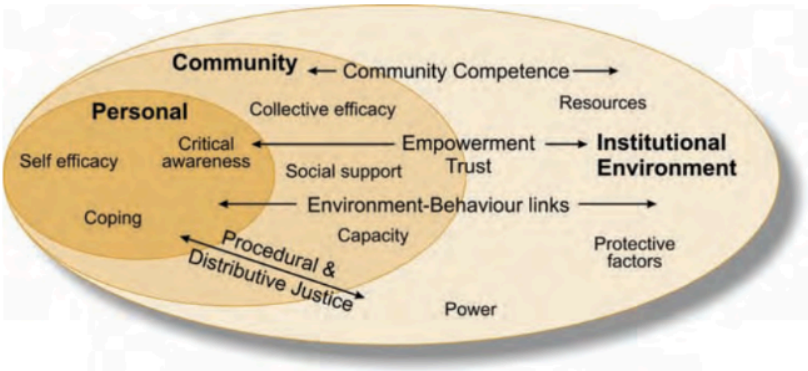
Nested scales of resilience

It can be useful to think about resilience from different perspectives and scales of focus. These reference points or scales are also nested, meaning that some of these perspectives ‘nest’ inside wider boundaries or larger scale perspectives. It is also worth noting that in the context of resilience, these scales and points of reference are culturally relative.

Two examples of scales of resilience worth considering are typical pākehā and Māori understanding of self and place:



This model of community resilience, developed through research in Aotearoa New Zealand, shows selected indicators at each level (personal, community and institutional) and relationships between them (adapted from Paton, 2006).



History of Resilience in Whaingaroa - A Community Exploration

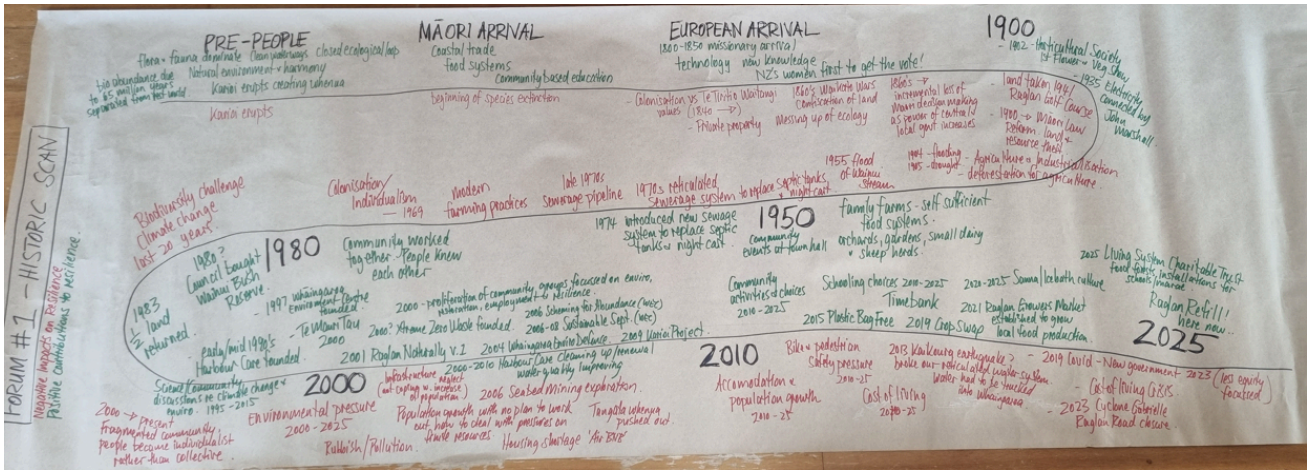
To ground us in the present and give a wider context on resilience we knew it was important to look back, before looking forward. Together we undertook an Historic Scan of the history of resilience in Whaingaroa starting with ‘Pre-People’ and working our way up to the present day. We asked the question: *What insights and inspiration can we take from our past that will help us plan for the future?*
We reflected on the events that impacted (negatively) on and contributed (positively) to resilience, wrote them up on coloured pieces of paper and placed them on the timeline.



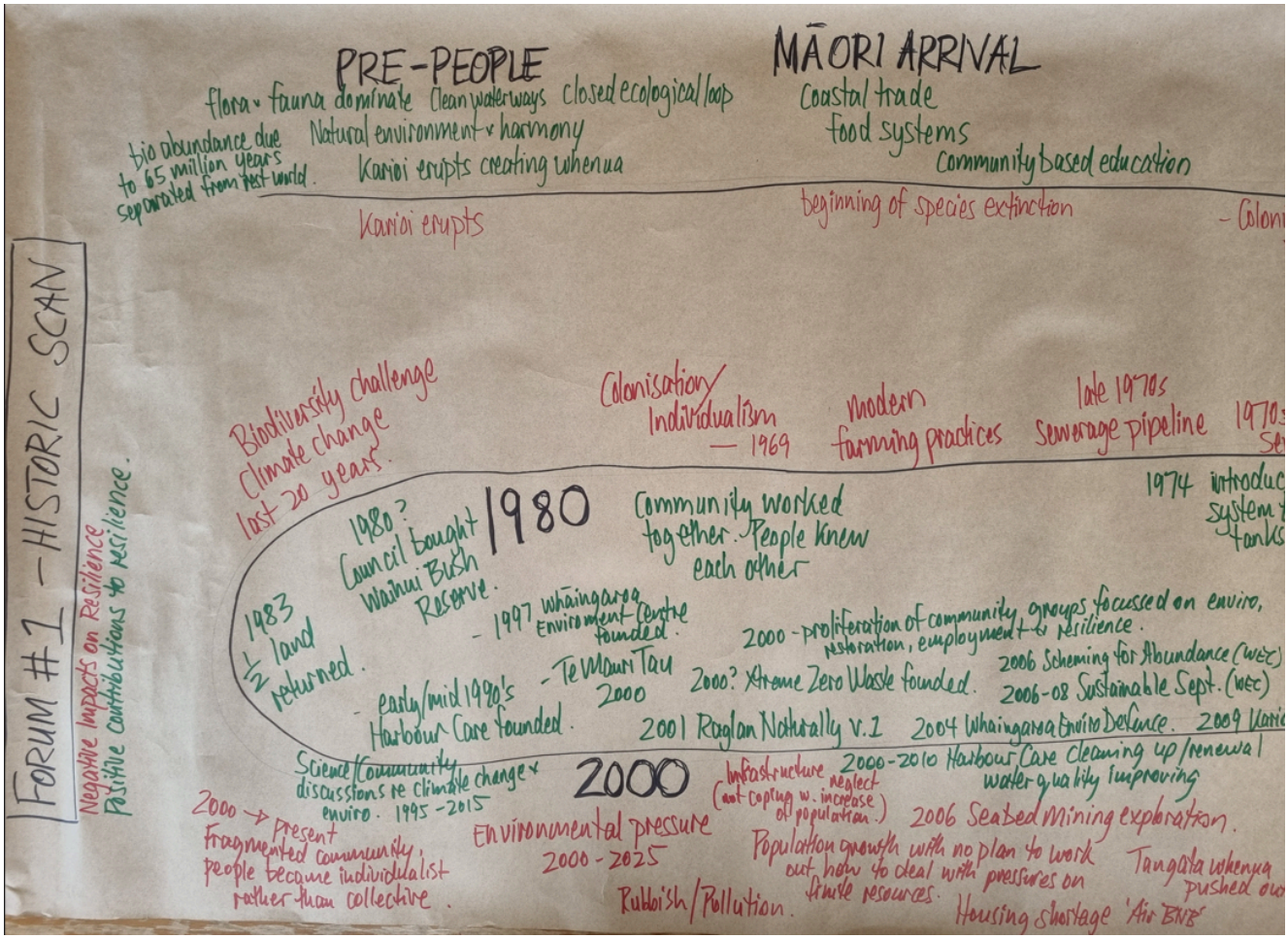
Participants co-creating an historical scan of resilience in Whaingaroa

Some of the insights that surfaced after this activity were:

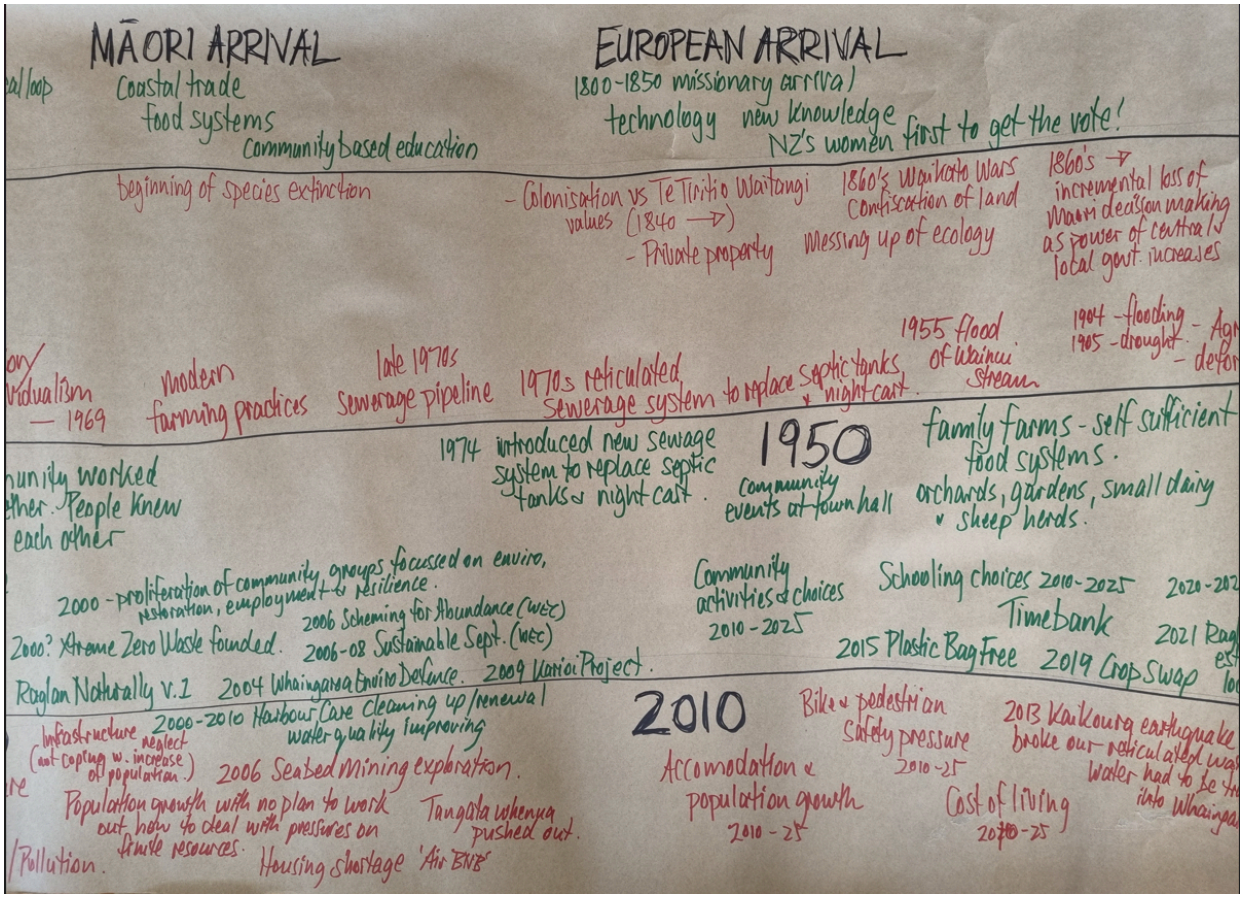
- Positives come from within Raglan (responses to the negative) and many negatives from outside of Raglan
- Difficult journey for mana whenua / tangata whenua since 1860’s and continuing today. How do we support / celebrate a continued restoration of mana whenua systems and processes? Especially at a time when central and district decision making processes / leadership is chained to ecological destruction
- Current positives are restoring / returning things to how they used to be
- Amazing environmental leadership
- Local, grassroots initiatives are powerful! More so than imported ones
- Lots of multigenerational families makes community stronger
- Lots of small initiatives that promote health and wellbeing.



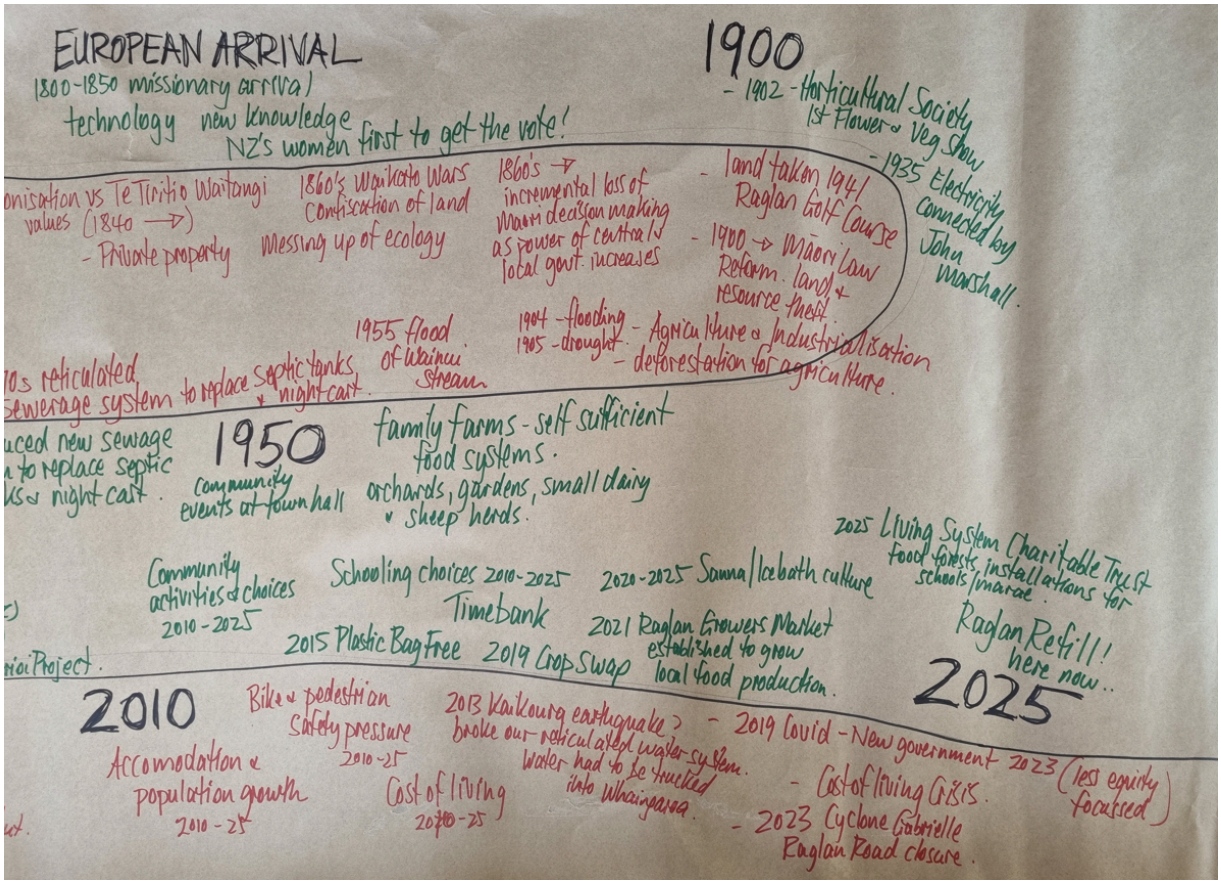
Re-creation of historic scan of resilience in Whaingaroa created at Forum 1



Re-creation of historic scan of resilience in Whaingaroa created at Forum 1 (zoomed in section)



Re-creation of historic scan of resilience in Whaingaroa created at Forum 1 (zoomed in section)



Re-creation of historic scan of resilience in Whaingaroa created at Forum 1 (zoomed in section)

"The ability to self-organise is the strongest form of system resilience. A system that can evolve can survive almost any change, by changing itself."

Dianna Wright & Donella Meadows

SWOT - A Community Assessment

A SWOT analysis is a strategic framework that helps groups and organisations identify their internal Strengths and Weaknesses, along with external Opportunities and Threats, to support better decision-making and strategic planning. We used a SWOT analysis to better understand the current resilience of Whaingaroa, to start to identify opportunities to build resilience, and to help prepare for and strengthen our community against potential external challenges.

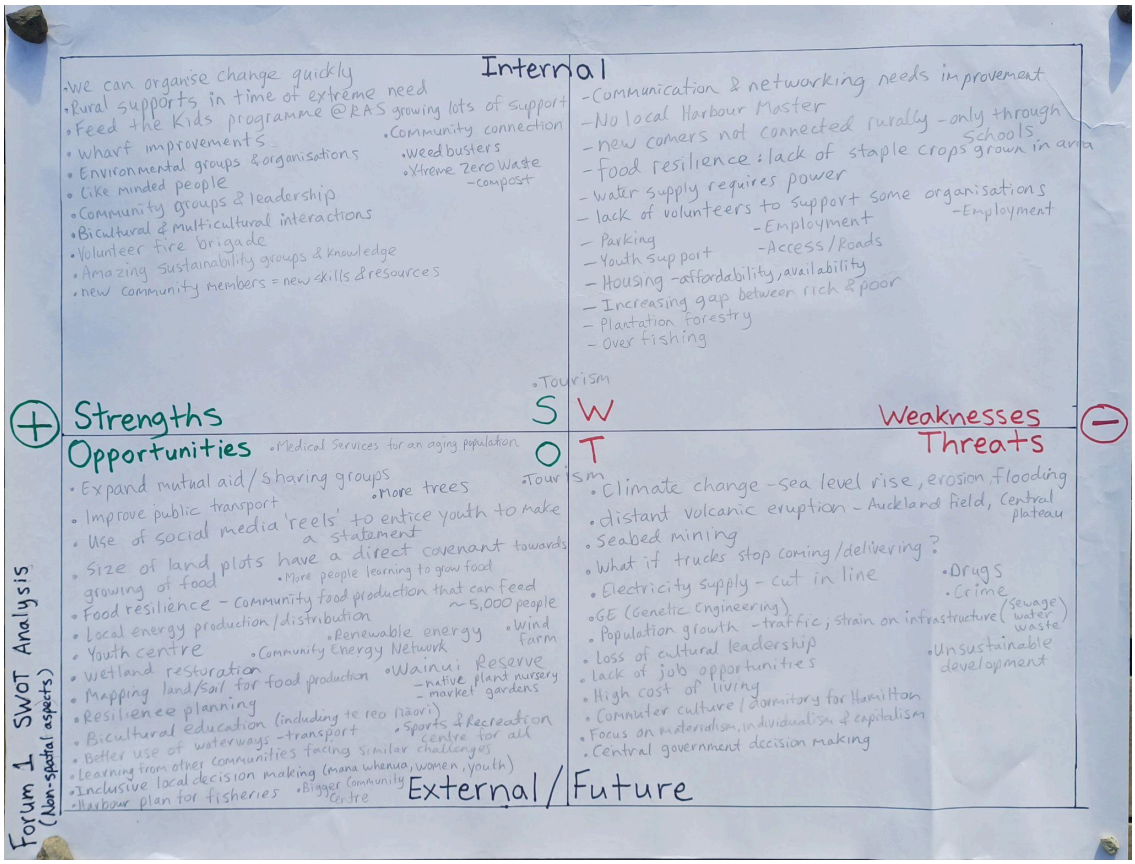
We used two scales of maps to spatially identify current known strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the wider Whaingaroa area including Raglan township, the harbour and the rural settlements of Waitetuna, Te Uku, Te Mata, and Ruapuke as well, as well as a zoomed in map of Raglan township. We also identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could not be mapped spatially.



Consolidated spatial SWOT analysis for the wider Whaingaroa area from Forum 1



Consolidated spatial SWOT analysis for Raglan Township from Forum 1



Consolidated non-spatial SWOT analysis for the wider Whaingaroa area from Forum 1

Some of the insights that surfaced after this activity were:

- Connections and relationships are critical - we should explore ways to make connections stronger.
- Framing is really important as different lenses and ways of looking at the same thing can reveal it to be a strength or weakness, opportunity or threat. For example, depending on the context and perspective, tourism is a strength, weakness, opportunity and threat for the community. And AirBnN was identified as both an opportunity and a threat.
- There is sometimes a tension between short-term and long-term benefits, and benefits for local individuals versus benefits for the wider community.
- It can be useful to broaden our outlook and see Whaingaroa from a wider scale (i.e zoom out).
- Affordable housing also impacts on community services. For example, police officers struggle to find secure rentals.
- Many local, small scale industries, businesses, organisations and initiatives were seen as strengths to local resilience
- There is no accommodation for families in need
- Reforestation is an opportunity to reconnect the area



Community SWOT analysis activity at Forum 1

"Central to civil defence emergency management is community resilience – communities understanding and managing their hazard risks."

NZ's National CDEM Strategy, 2007

Components of Resilience - Group Conversations

At forum 2 we ran a World Cafe style session to promote community dialogue and shared learning, and to explore different components of resilience in a way that deepened and enriched participants' understanding of resilience. This process encouraged thinking about different perspectives and scale, as well as the connections between different components of resilience.

The different components or areas we explored were the natural environment; health & wellbeing; critical infrastructure; climate response; community preparedness & response; kai / food; economics, employment and tourism; housing; and arts & education.

There were 9 themed tables where conversations about different components or areas of resilience were held. Each table conversation was hosted by one community member whose job was to hold space for the conversations about that specific topic. The hosts used the focus questions provided to facilitate topic specific conversation and ensure key discussion points were documented, and encouraged all voices to be heard.

Everyone got to visit 5 different tables and at the end of 5 rotations each table host provided a high level summary of the key discussion points and themes that emerged across the different conversations at their table.



World Cafe style discussions about specific components or topics related to resilience in Whaingaroa



World Cafe style discussions about specific components or topics related to resilience in Whaingaroa



World Cafe style discussions about specific components or topics related to resilience in Whaingaroa

Opportunities & Challenges for Strengthening Resilience

We collated all of the opportunities and challenges (to resilient communities in Whaingaroa) that were shared in the SWOT analysis (in Forum 1) and the group conversations (at Forum 2), and grouped them into the 9 themes.

The information documented about opportunities and challenges as well as the other table discussion points are documented below.

Natural Environment

How can the natural environment help or hinder resilience in Whaingaroa?	● Climate change - but protecting environment can help ● Space constraints for housing ● Natural disaster - physical situation would make it difficult for access / transport / communication ● Nature = resilience ● Support mental health - connect with nature and connect with yourself ● Buffer climate extremes ● Our physical health relies on the health of Papatuanuku
What are the biggest challenges and threats to the health of Whaingaroa's natural environment?	● Harbour health ○ Pollution & run off ○ Over-fishing ● Worldview - illusion of separation from environment - extractive economy ● Lack of awareness engaging with youth ● Summer influx - Air BNB ● Climate change more extreme events ● Big corporations - eg overfishing and seabed mining - $>planet ● Convenience culture ● Urban sprawl - more population = more cars, etc ● Pollution of waterways and the harbour (from shore and directly from the sea) ● Pest plants and animals
What are the opportunities to protect and regenerate Whaingaroa's natural environment?	● Planting more trees / Reforestation ● Planting more natives ● Tree crops ● Ecological corridors / Blue Green Networks ● Riparian planning ● Wetland restoration ● Wainui Reserve ● Environmental tourism ● Increase conservation areas +/or returning land to hapu / iwi

	● Local employment for pest animal control (rather than poison) ● Embrace our amazing climate - grow more kai ● Restoring our dunes/coastal spaces ● Protecting our spring water sources - local ownership and care ● More pest control ● Get rid of single-use items here - eg. takeaway cups ● Engaging Air BNB hosts ● More people to become more aware of need to protect environment. Education + direct, local action = long term impacts. ● Small changes make a big impact if enough people take it up
Who is already working in this space?	Local hapū / iwi; WEC; Karioi Project, Whaingaroa Environmental Defence; Coastcare; Lots of environment groups; Backyard trappers; WDC, WRC, DOC, RCB; Whaingaroa Weedbusters; Horticultural Society; Op Shops; Whāingaroa Repair Cafe; Raglan Refill; Sewing workshops; Crop Swap; RAS and other kura; Community Gardens

Arts & Education

How can the Arts and Education help or hinder resilience in Whaingaroa?	• Having a strong support for the Roopu at RAS • Education and awareness through music - eg. famous singers • Learning opportunities for everyone - mental health, physical health • Job losses through AI - arts increases mental resilience / health
*What are some of the **biggest challenges** to local arts and education?*	• Affordable / appropriate work spaces • Infrastructure behind the industry / individuals • Reduction in available funding • Integration of groups within the community - coming together for art making • Learn book publishing (print on demand) • Access grants for the arts, including NZ Film Commission • Learn skills for surviving collapse

*What are some of the **opportunities** for arts and education to support local resilience?*	• Bi-cultural education (including te reo Māori)
	• Local youth centre
	• Learning from other communities
	• Increase youth engagement/voice
	• More accessible art-based programmes for whole community - tamariki, rangatahi etc
	• Old school gallery space has opportunities not currently utilised
	  ○ More people to get involved
	  ○ Expanding on different creative project / exhibition opportunities - representing wider age group / art forms
	• Lesson plans in school using resilience as a key word
	• Raglan Arts Weekend - more 'open' sessions for community involvement at no or low cost. For children and adults - fund raising to cover cost.
	• Art to Wear - springboard conversations / ideas.
	• Toi Māori wānanga

*Who are some of the **key people, groups and organisations** working in this space?*	Retired community; Raglan Art Project; Private artists conducting workshops; Xtreme Zero Waste (XZW) - sourcing materials (arts and crafts (variety) at least once a week); Evening 'Glow' events - children and adults and Glow projects / made in school / education on visual arts.; Timebank; Whaingaroa Environment Centre (WEC); Community Gardens (presentation and workshops); Old School Arts Centre; Raglan Art to Wear; Film Festival; Horticultural Society; Early childhood, Kindergartens and Schools

Community Preparedness & Response

What is the relationship between community preparedness & response and resilience?	● Somewhere to go ● Elderly / emotional support ● Community centre where to get water and essential services. Sanitary facilities. ● Who? Everyone. Relationship / collaboration ● Connections with people - what do we have already ● Planning - self / family / communities ● Combined events would impact scale ● Some self resilience support ● 3 - 4 days - after 3 days more difficult. Can be significant effects - including income ● Scale of event - affects preparedness ● Prepare with critical resources ● Food preparation / self / sharing
What are the biggest challenges to resilience that community preparedness & response can address?	● Not knowing neighbours - especially with lots of houses empty most of the time ● Local power, food and water - more solar panels
What are the key opportunities for community response in Whaingaroa?	● Strengthening local governance & decision making - ensure mana whenua, women & youth are providing guidance and leadership ● Expand mutual aid / sharing groups ● Networking ● Phone / email 'trees' - if you have transmission facilities / charges / power ● Knowing what is available to be shared ● Communication ● More self resilience ● Infrastructure - not reliant on infrastructure - copper in ground ● Check out other areas of NZ who have responded to preparedness and use their skills ○ Christchurch response after earthquakes ○ Flood affected regions
Who is working in this space?	● Community Response Group

Health & Wellbeing

What is the relationship between health & wellbeing and resilience?	● Whānaungatanga and interconnectedness ● All fractals of the whole ● Holistic - self regulate - mental, emotional, spiritual, physical ● Nature time / rhythm seasons ● Capacity individual / community ● Sense of contributing to community - work / volunteering
What are the biggest challenges to the health & wellbeing of the communities and people of Whaingaroa?	● Lack of time for workers who commute ● Pandemics - future not prepared - past division and disinformation ● Kids spending lots of time on screens ● Medical appointments - demand and supply ● Radiology facility ● Affordable housing ● Accessibility to support services ● Awareness of isolated and vulnerable people and poverty - elderly, young families, rangatahi ● Stress - economic, juggle of demands, life admin ● Individualism ● Crime ● Drugs ● Social media / AI - discernment / big unknown / isolated / dysfunctional / independence - affirming existing belief ● Community connection - sharing and collaboration, challenges and inspiration ● Disinformation ● Rangatahi - their voices - needs, hopes and dreams
What are the opportunities to optimise the health and wellbeing of people and communities in Whaingaroa?	● Supporting aging population ● Sports & Recreation facilities ● Community hub/house ● Marae clinics - fortnightly ● Cater to all sections of the community - eg. Junior football next level not available in Raglan ● Diversity ● Informal spaces for connection / enjoyment ● Healthy soil - healthy plants - healthy people ● Awareness of who lives alone / loneliness / need help daily / visits / emergencies ● Supported living for disabled people / caretakers ● Maybe community house can help hold a register of people living along?
Who is working in this space?	Te Toi Ora ki Whaingaroa; Community House; Private health therapists; Raglan Medical; Raglan Men's Group; Raglan Radio; Raglan Chronicle; Pharmacy; Foodbank; Children's Centres; Schools; Seniors Groups; Knitting Group; Crop Swap; Arts Centre; Churches; Volunteering; Horticultural Society

Economics, Employment & Tourism

What is the relationship between economics & employment and resilience in Whaingaroa?	● Making a living doing what you love ● Currently reliant on finances - services. ● Without an economic base, no jobs - families leave town ● Maslow's triangle ● Need for local employment and options - using local talents ● Movement away or more commuting ● Work opportunities for education and awareness - Eco tourism
What is the relationship between tourism and resilience in Whaingaroa?	● Seasonality ● Housing - Air BNB's ● People locked out of housing availability ● 22,000 visitors - attitude to waste. Educational campaign ● Tourism can support innovation, experimentation and business health to make possibilities available for locals we otherwise wouldn't have. ● Sharing the 'Raglan' story of sustainability with the world. Creating a narrative around it.
What are the biggest challenges to a resilient local economy in Whaingaroa?	● Lack of employment & work opportunities ● Unsustainable development ● Education accessibility (high school students) ● Strain on local infrastructure caused by tourism ● Increasing gap between rich & poor ● Inflation ● Tourists taking jobs - young locals often miss out. ● Welcome pack for visitors and new residents ● Affordable leisure space or business space ● Low wages ● Diversity in opportunities and jobs ● Big business taking money out rather than money staying local. ● Impact on infrastructure - of tourism ● Impact on housing - of tourism (Air BNB's)
What are the opportunities to strengthen local employment and economic development in Whaingaroa?	● Tourist education ● Local markets ● Nature based tourism, but need to look after our environment - must be sustainable ● More people working from home - needed? - already happening ? ● More small manufacturing that creates health employment ● Free living wage / social security ● Rangatahi need to be educated to be prepared to work in this space.

Critical Infrastructure (including energy, waste, water and telecommunications, transport & roading)

What is the relationship between critical infrastructure and resilience in Whaingaroa?	● SH23 ● Sewerage system ● Is there one or is it in the 'too hard basket'. How should it begin??
What are some of the biggest challenges and threats to critical infrastructure?	● Sewage overflow ● Power cuts ● Roading and transport ○ State HWY 23 vulnerable road access ○ Insufficient safe and accessible footpaths & cycleways in and around township ○ Roading and transport doesn't match population growth ○ Insufficient access & transport to and from town centre ○ Wainui Road/ Raglan West bridge ○ Limited parking in town centre ● Affordability ● Extreme weather events ● Floods, slips, erosion ● Coastal inundation to critical infrastructure eg. pump stations ● Critical positions around the moana ● Stormwater urban and rural across our ward ● Unsealed roading network condition ● Insurance
What are the opportunities to strengthen resilience of critical infrastructure in Whaingaroa?	● More footpaths and cycleways ● Bigger community centre ● Local renewable energy production ● Better use of waterways for transport ● Increased community links and connections ● Raglan Airfield ● Grow interconnectedness of groups ie. collaboration for funding versus single cell bids ● Need to find out what people's needs / expectations are ● People are interested in local transport but are not coordinated to bring it together ● More public and affordable transport eg. frequent rides to Hamilton ● Bus service to Rangitahi and improved connections eg. from Lorenzen Bay to catch bus to Hamilton. Raglan orbiter.
Who in the community is working on building	Water ● WDC ● Hapū - wetland restoration and coastal rejuvenation

resilience around critical infrastructure?	Energy ● Raglan Local Energy ● Mark Burmister - home solar kits Waste ● New Wastewater treatment plant creating ‘new water’ from waste ● Wainui Reserve ‘new water’ land based discharge ● Xtreme Zero Waste ● Repair Cafe ● Raglan Refill ● Aroha Stand Telecoms ● Civ Tech upgrade along SH23 Transport ● Ihub is working with WRC and WDC to improve public transport Roading ● Waka Kotahi ● WDC

Housing

How does housing help or hinder resilience in Whaingaroa?	● People can't live well, work well, learn well without a secure, healthy home. ● Providing shelter ● Could help: multi generational living and diversity in the community ● Eco and self sufficient homes don't rely so much on the national grid ● Desperation - opportunities for those who might 'prey' on others ● Help: make rent stable - not the primary focus - rather than providing reliable housing/home for people ● Hinderance: uncertainty about length of time rented housing is available. Worried about being 'sold' out of her home = stress. Takes away the energy to create / save for own resilience.
What are some of our biggest challenges to housing?	● Affordable housing and rentals ● Secure tenancy for renters ● Vacant housing ● Town centre monopoly ● Desperation - in order to secure housing of 'any kind' people 'willing' / forced to accept Very substandard housing. ● Cost of buying a house ● Cost of renting a house ● Empty homes when some can'd find a home - only used for a few weeks of the year ● Psychological damage for those not well housed. ● No sensible retirement houses - size / one level / location ● Landlords ● Treating tenant as your neighbour ● Partnership between landlord and tenant
What are some of the key opportunities to improve the quality, security and affordability of housing in and around Raglan?	● Better rights for tenants ● Rethinking the model ○ Away from speculation / commodification / profiteering ○ Community land trust model. Keep land in community ownership, housing sold or reserved. Half of market price because you are not buying the land. ● Rent to buy schemes ● Quality housing for all ● Solar panels ● Good quality housing needs to be viewed as a right - not left to luck
Who is already working in this space?	● WRAP - Whaingaroa Affordable Housing Project ● Joe Wilson - advocating for Ethical Landlordship ● Community Energy Whaingaroa (CEWH) - Healthy Homes Project

Climate Response

What is the relationship between climate response and resilience?	● Recovery v adaptation / adjusting ● Build on the capacity to adapt and recover from climate change impacts ● Local supplies rather than imports ● Beware of carbon tunnel vision! ● Community response and planning ● Looking after each other ● Growing locally adapted food/seeds ● Need for local energy and therefore 'self' reliance (community scale) ● Hazards - disruption - impacts & need ● Human / nature connection and interconnection ● Tipping points ● Insurance
What are the main known climate risks for Whaingaroa? What is the current climate modelling telling us we need to prepare for over the next 20 years?	● Sea level rise ● Coastal erosion ● Severe weather events ● Flooding ● Rain patterns - water conservation ● Drought - water ● Landslides - affecting roads in / out ● Bridges ● More mozzies and insects year round ● Confusing nature - seasons changing - seasons shift - flowering/fruiting times change - tohu ● Land loss ● Loss of houses ● Visibility of agricultural/farming (and fisheries?) businesses and families ● Heat waves / fires ● Increase of climate refugees - pressure on infrastructure ● Grow local to feed local ● 3 degrees C increase in temperature - mold! Wet warm. ● Food / water security ● Food price increases ● Food / crop diseases / failures and crop changes ● Cultural impacts - manaakitanga, tohu, taonga

What are the opportunities for community climate response in Whaingaroa?	● Strong community science base
	● Reducing consumption
	● Education
	  ○ Facebook, noticeboard, email lists at events like this
	  ○ Discussing the feasibility of response options
	  ○ Timeframes / scale / information / how does it affect me?
	  ■ Me
	  ■ Family
	  ■ Street
	  ■ Community

	○ Maps and trigger / tipping points ■ Tiggers for planning / housing / infrastructure ○ Tools ■ Natural hazards portal ● Planting - coast, wetlands, hills ● How might advancing technology help us with this? ● Raglan Refill ● Radio and communication channels ● Visitors and education ○ Recycling ○ Re-use ○ How it impacts climate ○ New residents ■ Welcome pack for all - the action happening in community also Whaingaroa's Xtreme Zero Waste
What groups or individuals are working on climate responsiveness in Whaingaroa?	WEC - Community garden / kai; Seed saving; Land sharing for growing food (larger scale); Met Ocean and ECoast; Coastcare; Crop Swap; Documentarians

Food / Kai

What is Food / Kai resilience?	● Food is medicine ● Living systems / food landscapes ● Enough food to sustain a population ● Access to that food - sharing and affordability ● Knowledge - eg. foraging, experiences ● Kids - full puku ● How to use food wisely
What are the biggest challenges and threats to food resilience in Whaingaroa?	● Education ● Food trends - advertising ● High-sugar content foods / instant food / fast food ● Treating food as a commodity ● Time available for sourcing / growing ● Seed modification ● Weeds - invasive to our native bush foraging ● Climate change - eg. too hot soon to grow spuds!! ● Relationship with food and where it comes from - all life around us ● Local sources of protein and fat and carbs - as well veg and fruit ● Need healthy soils ● Micro plastics ● And other chemicals ● Less or zero sprays ● Bird Flu threat to chickens and cows
What are the opportunities to strengthen kai resilience in Whaingaroa?	● Harbour fisheries ● Increase local food production to feed local population ○ Food commons - access to land for growing food ○ Increase opportunities to learn to grow food ○ Identify land/soil most suitable for growing food ● Nurture neighbourhood sharing ● Online resources for food sharing - eg fish frames ● Still have a garden space at most properties where people can grow food ● Allotments ● Land shares ● Local appropriate diets ● Opportunities to share more knowledge - lots of experienced locals ● Cooking classes for seasonal food ● Education on growing kai ● Seed savers community of practice. High level professionals - know the science and practice. ● Warm wet weather, good for banana growth. Adapt to changing climate for food resilience ● Fair share - aroha stand - schools - neighbours ● Soil Sisters Whaingaroa ● Integrating food - growing with nature ● Resilient crops - taro, magenta spreen, corn, amaranth, quinoa etc

	● Protein - beans ● Education on indoor gardening for apartment living
Who is already working in this space?	Crop Swap; WEC / Xtreme Zero Waste - Growers market, Community Gardens, Growers Gathering; Raglan Refill; Horticultural Society; Foodbank; Timebank; Feed the Kids; Lots of individuals / families; Garden to Table at Waitetuna School; Private growing practitioners; Aroha Kai; Free Pantry

Youth Survey - Whaingaroa; your voice on change, connection and community resilience.

To ensure we heard voices of young adults we worked with Olivia Dean-Chambers who created a survey around community resilience for ages 18-35. 17 responses were received, mostly from ages 25-30.

This survey ran in parallel to the Community Resilience Forums. These themes align with what came out of the forums and is emphasised here in voices of these young adults.

Summary and key insights from survey:

1. Whaingaroa Feels Special Because of Deep Connections

Many people described Whaingaroa as a place where they feel **seen, valued, and grounded** — not just by the natural beauty, but by the people, the culture, and the shared sense of care.

- A **tight-knit, caring community**
- Deep respect for **te taiao** and **local Māori culture**
- A strong feeling of **belonging and identity** through place and people

"You can go around town and see faces you know. You don't feel anonymous."

But many feel that rapid change is **threatening what makes Whaingaroa meaningful**.

2. Growth Is Happening — But It's Costing Us

While people accept that change is inevitable, there's deep concern about how it's happening — and what we might be losing in the process.

Gentrification and affordability:

- Locals, especially Māori whānau and young people, are being **priced out of their hometown**
- Lack of rentals and rising rates are **pushing families away**
- Too many short-term rentals (Airbnbs) and investment-driven development

"Locals are being driven out by rising prices."
"Some of the highest rates in the Waikato and our infrastructure doesn't reflect that."

Cultural and community loss:

- Important events and local traditions are **disappearing**

- The town's identity is becoming more **commercial and catered to outsiders**

"We used to have Te Ao Mārama, the raft race… now it's all gone." "Even the restaurants are more for visitors than locals now."

3. Mixed Feelings About Change — Hopeful, But Worried

Most people feel **mixed** about what's happening.

They can see the **potential benefits** — more diversity, new energy, business opportunities — but **only if** the changes are guided by **community values**, cultural respect, and environmental care.

"Growth is epic for businesses, but I never want the essence of Whaingaroa to change." "Change is inevitable — but we need to protect what matters."

4. Young Adults Need Real Support — and a Place in the Future

Respondents highlighted that **supporting young people** is essential to Whaingaroa's future resilience. And it needs to be more than just words.

Young adults are asking for:

- **Affordable housing and real job opportunities**
- **Inclusive spaces** where they feel safe, welcome, and represented
- **A wider range of activities** (not just surfing or creative arts)
- **Connection to tikanga Māori, history, and whenua**
- **Adult leadership** — not leaving youth to carry the load alone

"Kids follow what the adults do. Don't expect them to hold it together on their own." "Hold more wānanga, kapa haka, and history — not just yoga and wellbeing workshops."

5. Cultural Integrity Is Central to Our Resilience

Again and again, people shared that resilience in Whaingaroa isn't just about economics or infrastructure — it's about **staying true to our cultural roots and values**, especially **Māori values of community, whenua, and collective care**.

"The town's values should be stemmed on Māori values — it benefits all people."

Survey Summary: How We Build Resilience

To keep Whaingaroa strong, thriving, and grounded through change, young people are calling for:

- **Stronger cultural grounding** — especially in te ao Māori
- **Affordability** — in housing, transport, and everyday life
- **Youth support and inclusion** — across all walks of life
- **Rebuilding community connection** — across generations and groups
- **Guided, intentional growth** — not development for profit's sake

Whaingaroa's resilience is in its **people, place, and shared purpose**. The challenge ahead is to protect what makes this place special — while ensuring **everyone, especially rangatahi, has a future here.**

-

"'Resilience' is a relative term that can look wildly different in different contexts and according to different developmental stages of community life".

Nick Wilding, Carnegie UK Trust

-

"Resilient communities use natural resources in a way that protects biodiversity, so there will be enough food and water for our children and grandchildren as well."

Community Resilience Toolkit 2.0, Bay Localize

Priorities for Resilience Building

Opportunities and challenges that are collated into the themes above were put up on the wall for participants to review and sense check and any missed opportunities and challenges were added to the extensive list.



Finn Mackesy reviewing the resilience building opportunities and challenges identified during the two forum

In total over 180 opportunities and challenges for resilience building were identified.

In order for us all to see where there was energy for action we gave all participants sticky dots to place on the wall. Each participant got 6 dots, 3 red and 3 green.

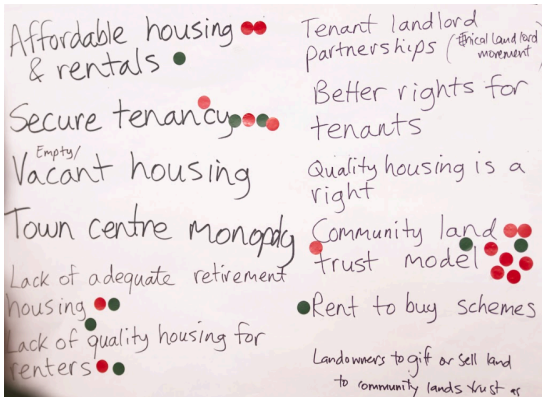
- Red = what stands out as an absolute priority, for the whole of Whaingaroa?
- Green = what do I want to get involved in that will build my (and household's) resilience?

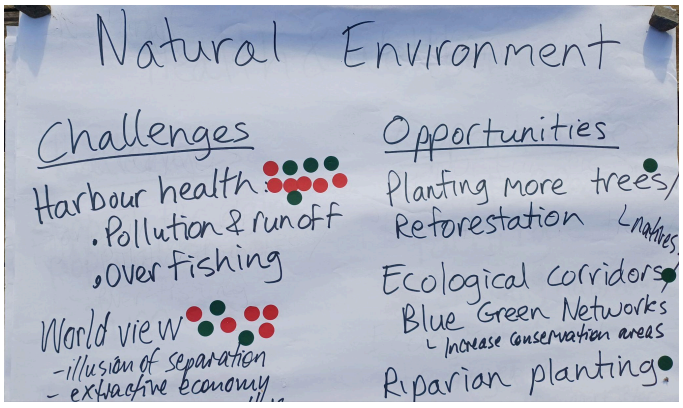


Participants using sticky dots to identify community priorities for resilience building

Summary of Prioritisation

Increased local food production was the highest priority opportunity, with **harbour health** and a **community hub/house** being the next two highest priorities, followed closely by **Community Land Trust**. **Our worldview**, **strengthening local governance** and a **Raglan orbiter bus** were the next highest priorities for the community.





Images of prioritisation activity: Housing and Natural Environment

Highest Priorities for Resilience Building (6 or more dots)

Natural environment

- Harbour Health (x10)
- Worldview - illusion of separation; extractive economy; convenience culture and waste (x8)

Health & Wellbeing

- Community Hub/house (x10)

Critical Infrastructure

- Raglan Orbiter bus (x6)
- More footpaths and cycleways (x7)

Community Preparedness & Response

- Strengthen local governance and decision making (ensuring mana whenua, women, and youth are providing guidance and leadership (x8)

Food / Kai

- Increase local food production (x12)

Housing

- Community Land Trust model (x9)

Other priorities for Resilience Building (3 or more dots)

Natural environment

- Environmental tourism

Health & Wellbeing

- Indigenous science (x4)

Critical Infrastructure

- Increase community links & connections

Climate Response (in general)

Community Preparedness & Response

- Community centre with essential services

Food / Kai

- Education

Economics, Employment and Tourism

- Tourist education (x4)
- Sharing Raglan story of sustainability with the world

Housing

- Affordable housing & rentals (x4)
- Secure tenancy (x5)
- Lack of adequate retirement housing

Arts & Education

- Bi-cultural education (including te reo Māori)
- Local youth centre
- Increase youth engagement / voice

Project Planning for Resilience

For the final session of the forum we started to plan projects that participants were most interested in exploring further. Participants were encouraged to find a project they were interested in. We provided action plan templates for each group, to support the discussions and planning process. The purpose of this activity was to get people thinking creatively and critically, discussing what might be possible, and planning project ideas in more detail. The information below summarises the initial planning for these potential resilience building initiatives.

A. Education of and Engagement with New Residents & Visitors

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Exponential short rapid growth of population. 22,000 visitors per year. New subdivision.
- Risks - gentrification, losing town vibe / values
- Rubbish increase in Summer - peak season

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- 'Buy In' for visitors
- To feel part of the community
- Signs to welcome newcomers and let others know the kaupapa. Signs at Papahua, Ngarunui

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Decide on key messaging and how to deliver
- Funding
- Allies / other groups / overlap with other groups in community
- Learn from Great Barrier Island work

B. Strengthen Local Governance in Decision Making

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Strengthen local governance in decision making

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- That central government leaves local government to decide

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Submissions to central government
- Education - use the Maori Wards as an opportunity
- Local candidates lobbying on this issue
- Engagement and partnership with Iwi

C. Community Services Hub

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Finding physical space to accommodate the varied services of locals - across age, gender, culture.
- Also one town identity whose key role is networking with all the groups based in Raglan / Whaingaroa. Could be a great space for Raglan Naturally to be based at.

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- An extension to what the existing Community House is already doing

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Find out who owns the vacant properties on Wi Neera Street and if any possibility of that land (and building) being co-opted to use as a starting base for such a centre. See Lisa Thomson.

D. Whaingaroa Food Foraging. Local Food Production

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Eating more resilient food sources in Whaingaroa

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- More people eating locally sourced wild foods
- Caring for the community
- Caring for environment - so food sources are healthy and clean

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Locating local food sources, understanding environment, kaupapa and engaging knowledge keepers to share.
- Set up a series of workshops / groups to focus on these food sources holistically

E. Climate / Future / World View - Ministry for the Future

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Climate change resilience - mitigation - adaption

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- Educate and inform regarding what is coming with climate change
- Supporting existing and new initiatives

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Engage with WEC and Raglan Naturally and Hāpu to see where this kaupapa fits into existing community
- Explore possibility of regenerative farming on Wainui Reserve
- Identify needs / interests / gaps
- Identify skills / superpowers

F. Community Land Trust

What is the challenge or opportunity you are trying to address?

- Affordable and secure housing
- Renting and purchasing

What would success look like? What are you trying to achieve?

- Land acquisition to enable building to commence
- Agreement around intergenerational model

Identify some of the critical first steps to making this idea into a real community project.

- Land acquisition (the Trust already exists)
- Information to the community. A plan for development with plenty of opportunity for input. Advertise and educate.
- Meeting with the community
- More involvement with Fiona McNabb

Names and contact details were shared and all the groups indicated that there was interest to develop this project idea together further.

Case Studies - Local Inspiration

At Forum 2, nine inspiring local projects that contribute to resilience in Whaingaroa were showcased. Below is a snapshot of those projects and how they contribute to local resilience.



One of the nine local projects presented at Resilient Communities Forum

Community Response Group

The Raglan Community Response Group formed in November 2024, currently has 10 members who are meeting regularly and training to build skills in community response for the Raglan Area. The group is supported by Waikato District Council's Civil Defence and Community Response team.

We need a coordinated community response group to support community education and preparedness and to respond to events that impact our community with welfare support and information updates.

This work contributes to community resilience as it's growing our skills in coordination of local efforts and supporting individuals and families to build their own resilience and response plans.

If you are interested to be involved in this local group or if you need support your own resilience and preparedness please contact Gareth Bellamy on 027 838 7420 or garethdjbellamy@gmail.com

Te Pokapū Taiao o Whāingaroa
Whāingaroa Environment Centre

Food Resilience Project nurtured by WEC / XZW

Launched in 2022 by the Whaingaroa Environment Centre with support from the Ministry of Social Development, the project is now a grassroots initiative nurturing local food resilience. It brings together local growers, schools, volunteers, and educators to explore what's already happening, identify community needs, and co-create solutions. From the Wi Neera Street Community Garden to the Raglan Growers Market, seed saving networks, shared food growing and permaculture workshops, the project is alive due to shared effort and local involvement.

This work matters because, despite our rich land and strong community ties, many still face barriers to accessing affordable, nutritious food. Reliance on external sources, high costs, and social stigma around asking for help all contribute to food insecurity. *The Food Resilience Project* attempts to meet these challenges by fostering a circular, community-led food system rooted in respect for land, indigenous knowledge, and shared abundance.

By localising food production, valuing providers, and building skills, the project strengthens Whaingaroa's resilience, socially, economically, and ecologically. It shows us what is possible when communities connect and grow together.

To get involved or support the work, contact Tania at tania@Whaingaroa.org.nz.



A community cropping group supported by The Food Resilience Project



Raglan Refill

Raglan Refill opened in March 2025 as a community-driven, not-for-profit social enterprise. We provide affordable bulk wholefoods and cleaning products without single-use packaging. Our shop is located in a building in the Raglan Club car park and is run by an Operations Manager, supported by a strong team of volunteers and community support.

Supermarket packaging creates huge amounts of waste. Many people in our community want to live more sustainably but lack accessible, affordable options. Raglan Refill exists to reduce packaging waste while keeping costs fair and supporting local suppliers where possible. We are also an important connection point for the community.

By keeping resources in circulation and reducing waste, we're building a local circular economy. We also strengthen food resilience by stocking locally produced goods and supporting the Plastic Free Raglan & Reusable Raglan campaign. By growing local supply chains and community participation, we are less reliant on distant supermarkets and plastic-heavy systems. The shop is a hub where people connect, share ideas, and take practical action towards zero waste living.

People can support us by shopping with us (remember to BYO containers), volunteering, applying to become a trustee, donating jars for reuse and spreading the word.

Community Energy Whaingaroa

At CEWh, resilience means whānau live in warm, dry, efficient homes and can access clean, affordable energy.

We believe that generating more of our own power, keeps the savings and the benefits in the community. Our solar installs on local buildings like the Community House and Xtreme Zero Waste are reducing power costs. With storage at Community House that enables the power to stay on in an outage and a retired EV battery for XZW in the future. We're now looking into a larger 2MW community-owned solar farm that could take this to the next level.

Resilience also means being prepared for the unexpected — like power outages or extreme weather events, which are becoming more common.

What are we doing to build resilience?

- **Free Home Energy Assessments & Retrofits**
  Our trained local team helps whānau make their homes warmer and more efficient — with things like curtains, draft stoppers, mould kits, and links to insulation and heat pump subsidies.
- **Growing Local Skills**
  We've trained seven locals in home performance and retrofit skills. They're now qualified to assess homes and support whānau with practical changes that make a real difference.
- **Energy Literacy**
  We help people understand their power bills, choose the best plans, access subsidies and reduce costs. Knowing how energy works is a huge step toward energy freedom.
- **More Local Solar**
  Alongside solar on local organisations (RCH and XZW) we're currently exploring a community-owned solar farm with the purpose of:
    - Supporting more homes in energy hardship through creating healthy homes and energy subsidies
    - Creating more locally owned renewable energy
    - Being self-funded as an organisation rather than relying grants and funding
    - Reducing Raglan's carbon emissions

How can you get involved?

- Come to a **free energy workshop or drop-in clinic**, learn how to save energy and make your home warmer and drier.
- Visit **cewh.org.nz** to check what's on, fill out a referral for a **free home energy check** (if you're on a low income), or book a **Healthy Homes assessment** (if you're a landlord).
- Are you a **business owner**? Host a staff workshop to support your team's wellbeing.
- Are you a **Meridian or Powershop customer**? You might be eligible for extra support, get in touch.
- Follow us on **Facebook** and share tips with your whānau.



Waikato District Council
Te Kaunihera aa Takiwaa o Waikato

Waikato District Council - Starting the adaptation conversation

We are likely to experience an increase in floods, storms, droughts, warmer temperatures and sea level rise, that may impact properties, infrastructure, economy, lives and wellbeing. We, need to start to make decisions now about our future on how to adapt and prepare for climate change impacts.

To adapt to the impacts of climate risks we are beginning the process to work in partnership with at risk communities. We value the knowledge that mana whenua and communities hold about the area they live in and what makes it special. We will be working together to develop plans that will outline adaptation pathways for different climate risks.

Adaptation planning takes a long-term approach to climate risks and from this action plans can be developed. The adaption pathways will build in flexibility and will be reviewed often as new climate information and better data becomes available.

Providing knowledge and supporting the processes to plan and prepare for adaptation in partnership with the community will strengthen community resilience.

For more information or to begin the conversation please contact Amy Taylor, Community and Business Adaptation Advisor, Waikato District Council amy.taylor@waidc.govt.nz



Lorenzen / Greenslade Reserve Group

In 2012 a fish survey of the Waikokowai Stream, which flows to Lorenzen Bay, showing a surprising number of fish species started the local restoration of the reserve with the aims of creating an ecological corridor leading to the harbour. A catchment group made up of local residents has worked in the Lorenzen / Greenslade Reserve to plant, control weeds, trap and monitor the health of the stream.

The greenspace provides wild play spaces for kids, community gathering areas and supports mental health and wellbeing. The conservation and restoration of biodiversity is important and there are plans to create educational opportunities here. Relationships and building community is key to community resilience and this reserve group are setting a positive example of working together as residents, and with Waikato District Council and Raglan Community Board on the design and management of this reserve space which they are passionate about.

The group has worked with a local resident, who is a freshwater ecologist, to create a restoration and development management plan for the reserve, which Council is supporting us with and which will be endorsed by them.

If you are interested to be involved or learn more for your own restoration group contact Gabrielle Parson at gabrielleparsonraglan@gmail.com



Toitū Whaingaroa - Educate, Create, Activate

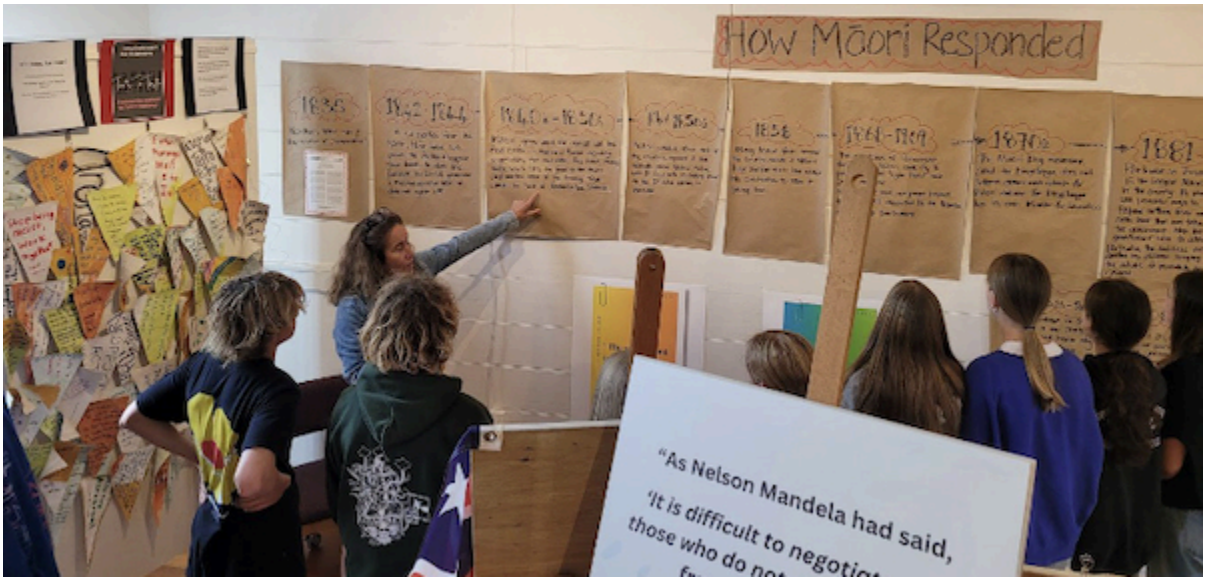
We are members of Toitū Whaingaroa and collectively hold expertise across community-led development, local government, education, and research spaces. We are also collaborators, creative thinkers and dreamers who believe that we can all make a difference in our daily lives if we work together.
Toitū Whaingaroa focuses on growing community capacity to realise the founding partnership relationship which was aspired to in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and creating a space for all through this lens.

Toitu came into being when we were called to take action within our own community after some of us attended the hui-a-motu at Tūrangawaewae in 2024 by heeding the call by Kingi Tūhetia for Kotahitanga

Flax roots action does make a difference in our communities, no matter how big or small and enabling our rangatahi and mokopuna to learn our collective history will strengthen our future.

‘Toitū: Strengthening Community through Connection’ recognises that achieving the flourishing partnership relationship aspired to in Te Tiriti o Waitangi requires learning and sharing: connection to stories of people and place that grew out of and are unique to Whāingaroa. By educating, creating and activating, we seek to ignite not only thinking, but action!

If you would like to learn more or be involved: join our **Toitū te Tiriti Whaingaroa Raglan Facebook group.**



whaingaroa raglan affordable housing project | WRAP

Whaingaroa Raglan Affordability Project (WRAP)

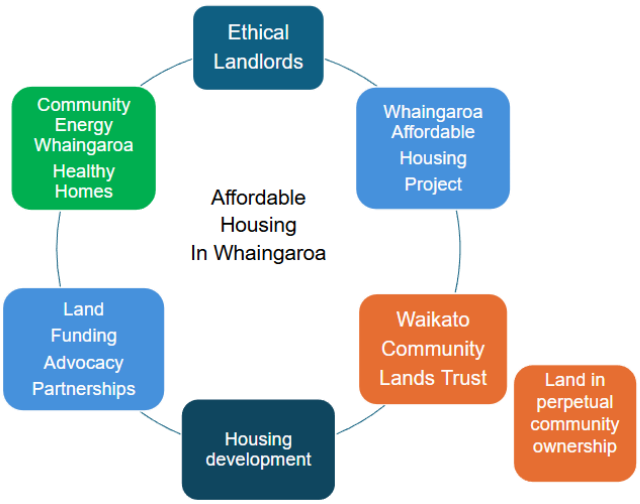
WRAP came into being in 2017 when a small group of concerned community leaders came together to air their concerns about the impacts of ever rising house prices in Raglan.

In some cases families were resorting to living in cars, tents and other poor quality options in order to make ends meet. Business owners were struggling to find accommodation for staff, especially over the summer, the school roll was dropping and it was apparent that there was a trend towards those on lower incomes being forced to leave town to find more affordable housing elsewhere.

Earlier efforts to secure affordable housing had been initiated as far back as 2000 when other committed community members had produced reliable research predicting this trend of rising prices and gentrification impacting on the diversity and economic viability of the town.

The formation in May 2020 of the Waikato Community Lands Trust now provides a mechanism for land purchased or gifted, to be reserved in perpetuity for the community of Raglan to build homes that could be sold using supported financial arrangements to those in need. Land would remain in community ownership with home owners paying a small leasehold to contribute to the ongoing work of WRAPl

At the Resilience Forum Fiona McNabb spoke to these points below and to the recent work of Joe Wilson and his local Ethical Landlords movement. If you would like to find out more or get involved please contact Fiona at fiona@solotec.co.nz or visit **www.wraphousing.org.nz**



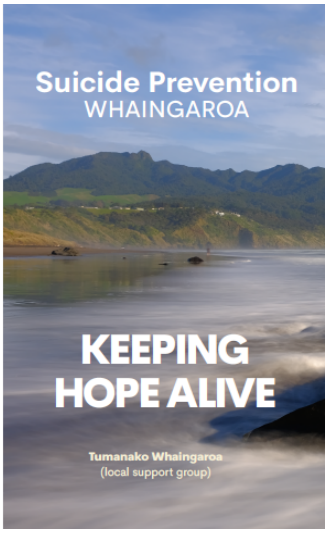
Tumanako Whaingaroa Suicide Awareness

Tumanako Whaingaroa is a local support group of professionals and community members with a heart for mental and social wellness.

In 2018 we formed a group in partnership with Te Whatu Ora and in 2023 & 2024 we supported a local Hikoi for Hauora.

We see great value in forming connections with other regional hauora groups.

Our Purpose: Support the community around mental health and suicide prevention and postvention, in a way that strengthens connections and relationships and builds hope. We work to grow awareness and skills and build our local services.





Insights & Reflections from Resilient Communities

An insight is a realisation or ‘aha’ moment of understanding. Insights often grow from asking ‘why?’ when we observe a pattern or unusual behaviour (norms and exceptions to those norms). Insights provide us with a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of underlying patterns, behaviours or characteristics and often provide clarity, guidance and direction.
Throughout the process and during the collation of this report the authors had several insights that we think are worth sharing:

- The community has interest and motivation to continue to proactively explore opportunities for resilience building
- A lot of existing community initiatives contribute to local resilient communities but are not necessarily framed or perceived as resilience building
- Secretarial, administrative and/or organisational support would increase the community’s capacity and capability to establish and sustain resilience building initiatives
- The community know a lot about what is needed and have identified lots of opportunities and ideas for resilience building
- Many of the locals who attended know a lot about the area and its people and places - they are subject matter experts about Whaingaroa!
- Opportunities and challenges that affect the whole of the Whaingaroa area were identified as hugely important to local resilience. However, some of the absolute priorities that were identified for Whaingaroa, like harbour health, and worldview are so large and complex, that it is often difficult for individuals or small groups to impact on the system in a meaningful way. While these challenges were seen as absolute priorities for the long term wellbeing of Whaingaroa, they lacked sufficient champions to start exploring next step actions to build resilience in these areas.
- Resilience building is an ongoing process and requires multiple actors and agencies to foster and sustain it at a community scale.

“Scaling up nature-based enterprises offers a clear route to building the resilience of rural communities.”

World Resources, 2008: Roots of Resilience. World Resources Institute, Washington DC.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to those who advised us and supported this work. In particular a big thank you to Rick Thorpe, Liz Stanway, Angeline and Alan Greensill and Rachael Goddard for your advice and encouragement early in the planning process. Thanks to those who helped in the kitchen, to the young people who supported the Kids Activities and to Waikato District Council (WDC) for support with printing large rohe maps and help at both events.

Also, thanks to those who helped out during the forums including:

Presenters who showcased local projects:

- Tania Ashman
- Fiona McNabb
- Jasmine Hunter and Kristy Lorson
- Lisa Thomson
- Betty Diprose and Lara Sweetman
- Rachael Goddard and Amy Taylor
- Gareth Bellamy

Table Hosts:

- Caleb Osborne
- Etai Gilad
- Fiona McNabb
- Liz Stanway
- Stacey Hill
- Gareth Bellamy
- Therese Boyle
- Lisa Thomson
- Amy Taylor

"Really well facilitated session, thank you!"

"You guys are providing such a rich learning experience. Using the community's strengths to come together and getting the kids involved."