

Kereru

Community Resilience Plan



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For further information contact enquiries@hbemergency.govt.nz

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Contents

Introduction	4
Purpose	4
Description of the community	4
Map of the Kereru area	5
Hazards and Implications	6
Warning Systems	7
Communication Systems	7
Community-led gathering places	7
Resilience	8
Readiness	8
Resources	8
Response	8
What might people need us to do?	9
How do we coordinate ourselves?	9
How do we get in touch with Civil Defence?	9
When should we stop?	9
What are our local radio stations?	10
Where else can we get information?	10
What about health and safety?	10
What shall we do if the building we are in is unsafe?	10
Recovery	11
Future Plans	11

Introduction

Resilient communities understand the risks they face; have reduced these if possible; are prepared to use local resources and expertise before, during and after an emergency; and are able to adapt and grow following a crisis. This Community Resilience Plan has been developed as a strategy to increase the resilience of the Kereru community which also includes the areas of Thorn Flat and Mangleton.

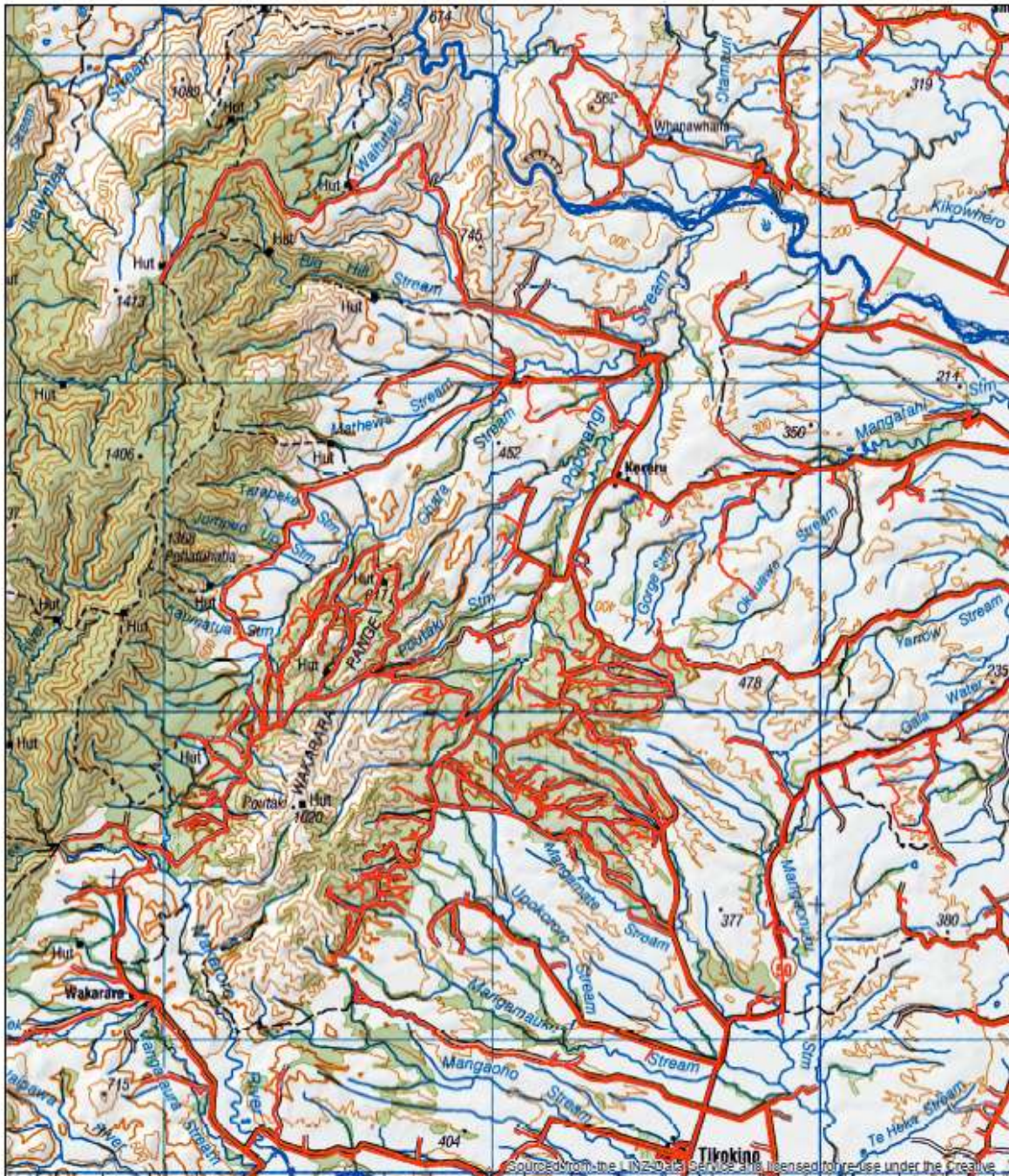
Purpose

This plan describes our community, our hazards and the potential impacts we may face, what resources we may have available to us to respond to an emergency, and what is important to us in recovery from such an event. It aims to make Kereru residents better prepared to manage the hazards of our community and, in the event of an emergency, to take independent action to look after ourselves. There is a high chance, due to its location, our community will be isolated following a major emergency. This particularly applies to those areas across the Poporangi stream, and the Mangleton farmlands. However, we will not be on our own – we will be with our friends, family, co-workers and neighbours. In an emergency the people of our community will want to assist one another. This plan helps to co-ordinate and speed up this process. It is a living document and will be regularly reviewed. We also include projects to help increase the resilience of our community at the end of the plan.

Description of the community

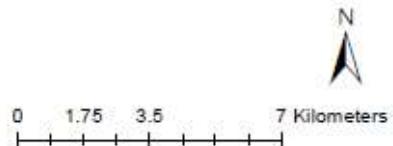
Kereru is a farming district which includes portions of four historical stations, those being Olig, Kereru, Whakarara and Poporangi. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries these stations were broken up into much smaller units. There are some families who have farmed here for generations, others which have won ballots for farms post the two world wars especially WW2. More recently others have moved in from other areas, some to farm and others to enjoy a rural lifestyle. There is a two-room primary school which serves as a focus for the community, a hall (which includes a squash court) where the local preschool centre operates on two days of the week. High school children generally attend a boarding school in Napier or Hastings, but some are transported by parents on a daily basis to either Hastings, Havelock North, or Napier schools. This is of course relevant in times of emergency.

Kereru Hawkes Bay



Legend

- Rivers
- Roads



Map of the Kereru area.

Hazards and Implications

Earthquakes: Hawkes Bay is prone to earthquakes with many fault lines located in the region. A severe earthquake could lead to injury or loss of life and damage to buildings, electricity, water, telecommunications, bridges and roads. Residents who commute in and out of the area may not be able to return home as bridges, gorges and roads could be impassable.

All residents are advised to have household plans in place to manage the collection of children and alternative household meeting places decided upon should access routes be compromised. In the event of an earthquake everyone should drop where they are (under a piece of furniture if less than a few steps away), cover and hold their heads (or hold onto the furniture if sheltering under something). Be prepared for ongoing aftershocks.

If you happen to be in Napier at the time of a long, strong quake you should head for high ground as soon as the shaking stops to avoid being engulfed by a tsunami.

Storm/ Flood: Most areas of Kereru are prone to high winds especially Mangleton. Trees falling, especially over roads, are a frequent hazard. Every storm brings falling debris in the gorges making Kereru Road a particularly vulnerable route to town which most people use. Generally there are no areas prone to severe flooding but heavy rains can cause ponding and surface water in areas where care should be exercised. It is not a good idea to attempt to drive or walk through flood waters even if they are on your farm! Another occasional event over which we have no control is snow fall. This makes care in driving essential and may impact on whether or not children attend school on that day.

Human Pandemic: In the event of widespread illness in the community, residents will be advised to limit movement and stay in their homes. School and Tots'n'Dots preschool centre may be shut. Pandemic events are managed by the District Health Board.

Animal Pandemic: The health of livestock is vitally important to this farming community. In the event of disease such as the current problem with cattle, movement must be limited and monitored. Events affecting farmers are managed by the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Volcanic ash: The region is downwind of the volcanic plateau, giving potential for significant ash fall. The impacts could be: difficulty with breathing, loss of electricity, damage to vehicle engines, damage to roofing, and impact on the agricultural, horticultural and viticulture industries. If outside during ash fall use a mask, handkerchief or damp cloth over mouth and nose and seek shelter. Seal windows and doors and turn off air conditioners. If you use rain water for your water supply, disconnect the tank. Avoid driving. Seek the right advice on the removal of ash.

Chemical substance: Any number of events could lead to a chemical substance incident. Spillage of fuel or agricultural chemicals requires specialist management, usually by the Fire Service.

Landslide: The gorges in particular are prone to landslide or rock fall. In the event of a severe storm or an earthquake, roads may become impassable and alternative routes may need to be used. Kereru, Poporangi, Duff, Big Hill and Mangleton Roads may all be compromised along with any roads off these. Salisbury Road may be passable (but recent events have proved it is also liable to landslide) as may the route through Gwavas forest, but there are bridges on each of these which could be damaged.

Fire: Be aware of fire restrictions. Rural rapid numbers should be clearly displayed and driveways maintained to permit access. Any fire event is managed by Rural Fire which means the local residents who have committed to this service.

Warning Systems

- HB emergency website and Facebook page
- Television and radio media
- Informal warnings from family, friends and social media
- The Red Cross app on your smart phone (free to download)

Communication Systems

If the telephone and internet networks are operating this should be the primary means of communication. In a major event, if using a mobile phone, texting rather than phoning is recommended so as not to overload the cellular network. A local Facebook page has been created as a platform for communicating events and is a great way to share information, offer resources or ask for assistance in an emergency. There is a problem however if electricity is down, if cell towers have fallen, or your cell phone is out of range. There is very poor coverage in parts of this district for cell phones and this is an area which needs addressing.

Establishing communication with Hawke's Bay Civil Defence and Emergency Management (HBCDEM) in the event of an emergency is very important. They will need to know the situation in order to be able to support and assist the community. Listen to the radio or go to www.hbemergency.govt.nz for contact information and advice. UHF radio provides communication for the district if other forms of contact are not available. The UHF radio is located at Kereru School but will be moved in the event of an emergency to the Kereru Hall. Kereru Station has its own radio network covering all its employees and enables Mangleton residents to be monitored and their situation noted. Use of this radio network will be available to the co-ordination team at the hall.

Community-led gathering places

Following an emergency, people are asked to look after their household, check their neighbours, and if able, support the wider community. Farmers have the added responsibility of their stock. It is unlikely that many, if anyone will be able to do more than manage their own needs on the first day. In order to get information, support one another, and to co-ordinate a response to the needs of the community, some designated persons will gather at Kereru Hall if it is safe to inhabit. With the aid of radio, possible cell phone texting, they will clarify what is known and what needs to be known. They will identify what resources there are and what is needed. All of this information will be documented using a whiteboard or flipchart so that people can tell at a glance what the status of the district is and who is accounted for. Ensuring that HBCDEM is contacted via radio is vital so they know what is happening and can give support.

If there is a need to accommodate anyone who is not able to get to their own home, it is envisaged that billets will be offered at the nearest safe location. A community shelter as such will not be set up.

If an event occurs during the daytime when both the school and preschool centre are operating,

the children will be cared for by staff who have a duty of care until all children are safely collected by designated adults (either their parents or someone nominated in writing to the school). Supplies of food, water and other essentials for young children are held on site.

Resilience

Resilience is not just being aware of the risks we face and knowing what resources we have available to us. We must do what we can to reduce the impact of any risk and then be prepared. This is termed readiness.

Readiness

Unlike those living in towns, a rural community must have greater stores of essentials such as food and water in order to survive. Both human and animal needs for food and water must be available. Pets and livestock need to be catered for, the latter possibly moved off site eventually. If anyone needs daily medication then ask the doctor for an extra week's supply to be held in reserve for emergencies (to be changed each time a new prescription is obtained). Alternative cooking and heating methods may be needed so supplies of wood for fires and gas for barbeques need to be monitored. Fuel for vehicles is often stored on farms but it is wise to ensure that cars are never less than half full of fuel. Some ready cash is also needed when ATMs are down and shops cannot accept eftpos.

Resources

Being a farming community there are more resources available than in the towns. Tractors, chain saws, motor bikes and quad bikes, digging equipment of various kinds and the skills of the people who work the land are here. So too are trained nurses, first aiders and, held at the school, a defibrillator which is located in the staff toilet and shower room. Tots'n'Dots have a fully stocked emergency kit as does the school. There are two eco houses in the district which have off-grid electricity. Some farms have generators.

Response

A community led response offers support and assistance to people affected by an emergency.

What might people need us to do?

Information: This is the most common need in any emergency. The plan is to set up an information board at Kereru District Hall. The community Facebook page will also be used if power is available.

Medical assistance: Identify the people in the community with medical expertise and ask them to help.

Physical needs: food, water, shelter. Generally these are our own responsibility but if the affects are long-term then outside help might be required. A list of needs can be radioed to Civil Defence who would then organise help.

Emotional support: someone to talk to, someone to sit with. Neighbours helping each other by being there and checking on each other. It is vital to know who your neighbours are and how to contact them.

Checking on vulnerable people: Checking (and rechecking) on people who are vulnerable (e.g. due to health issues or age) is a good idea.

Working bees: If there has been damage caused by the emergency event, working together to clean up can make everyone cope better.

How do we coordinate ourselves?

Identifying a leader or leaders is a good idea. Then identify:

- what you know
- what you need to know
- what you need to do
- who you need to tell

How do we get in touch with Civil Defence?

It is important that you let HBCDEM know what is happening so they can support you if required;

- (06) 835 9200 Hawkes Bay Regional Council
- (06) 871 5000 Hastings District Council
- (06) 835 7579 Napier City Council
- welfare@hbemergency.govt.nz
- Private message on Facebook – www.facebook.co/hbemergency
- UHF radio – there is a Civil Defence radio located at the school.

When should we stop?

Running a community led response is voluntary and you can stop whenever you want or need to. Having an exit plan is important and should be done early on. Think about how long people can commit (be realistic), think about what circumstances could cause you to want to stop, and let Civil Defence know when you are discontinuing your response so they can support any ongoing needs.

What are our local radio stations?

Newstalk ZB HB 90.3FM or 1278AM
The Hits 89.5FM (Wairoa 99.7FM)
The Breeze 97.5FM
More FM on 88.7FM
Radio New Zealand News or 101.5FM
Radio Live 106.3FM & 1368AM
Radio Kahungunu 765AM & 94.5FM

Where else can we get information?

Friends and neighbours
The hbemergency Facebook page or website (<http://www.hbemergency.govt.nz>)

What about health and safety?

The safety of people should always be considered. Nominating a person to oversee health and safety at the onset of a community-led response should be a priority. All actions undertaken are voluntary and at the discretion and risk of those involved. In the event of the community leading the response to an emergency, as the 'work' is for community purposes and everyone is volunteering, there is no liability for any individual under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

- Buildings and surrounds should be checked for hazards.
- No one should do anything that could put themselves or others at risk.
- Consideration should be given to health and hygiene. Food handling and hand washing are vital. Consider a supply of hand sanitiser in your emergency kit. If there are people unwell, attention needs to be given as to how to limit the spread of illness.

What shall we do if the building we are in is unsafe?

It is critical that the building you are in is safe. Check it for any damage. If it is not safe, evacuate and find a safer place. If you relocate, you may want to leave a message on the door saying the building is unsafe and where you are going to.

Recovery

The things that we value about the community of Kereru are:

- a strong sense of community, friendly people
- having a school and preschool centre located in the community
- having a community hall available for functions and social events
- a squash court at the hall for recreation and sport
- a swimming pool at the school for which locals can buy a key to use in the summer holidays

We therefore commit to continuing the above. A major recovery event will be a party! For those living in isolation as we do, get-togethers are very important for swapping experiences, catching up on friends, monitoring the wellbeing of those in the community. As in times of drought, sharing our thoughts and feelings is a healthy way of recovering. If we have concerns about the mental wellbeing of any of our family or neighbours a good website to check for symptoms to watch out for is www.depression.org.nz.

Post-traumatic stress syndrome must be considered when people have been under stress; children especially need to be monitored for this. Seek help from counsellors or other mental health professionals if you have any concerns.

Future Plans

There needs to be improved cell phone reception, so Spark, which has the monopoly, must be lobbied for improvements.

It would be useful for an acknowledged signal of distress to overflying aircraft to be reinstated for rural communities. Both the Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management and the Civil Aviation Authority are to be asked to reconsider their response to our initial request. Given the experiences of those in Kaikoura who desperately needed help from the many aircraft which flew overhead without landing, it would seem that a simple, nationally recognised signal is essential. Alternative routes in and out of various areas of the district are being identified and will be noted at a later date.

The custom of holding community events at the hall to welcome new residents and just to socialise will be maintained. This is a great way to inform newcomers of district plans such as this.