

# Frequently Asked Questions – Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara

## **KEY MESSAGES:**

- When water is healthy, it's able to sustain the plants, animals and people that depend on it, but our freshwater is under pressure.
- All New Zealanders have a role to play in protecting and restoring freshwater.
- Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara Committee is a group of local people committed to safeguarding the mauri of the water.
- And we're developing a plan on how to improve our freshwater in the region.
- From the mountains to the sea – we need to safeguard and protect the whole catchment for generations to come.
- Talk to your local committee member or stay in touch to learn more.

## **What is a whaitua?**

- Whaitua is a Māori word for space or catchment.
- Whaitua is a geographical area with hills, mountains, valleys and waterways. Rain falls on earth and then flows over the landscape finding its way through the soil or streams feeding the rivers, lakes, wetlands, freshwater aquifers and the sea\harbour.
- Catchments are different from one another in size, shape, features and drainage patterns.



## How far does Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara extend?

- The boundary of this catchment extends to Upper Hutt in the north, Wellington in the south, Wainuiomata in the east and Makara\Ō hāriu in the west.
- Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara includes several smaller catchment areas such as Wainuiomata and Orongorongo, Southern coast (suburbs such as Owhiro, Island and Houghton Bays), Western coast (Makara\Ō hāriu), and Wellington Harbour stream catchments like Kaiwharawhara, Kumutoto and Korokoro.



## What are some of the rivers and streams that flow through these catchments?

- Several rivers and streams flow through the various catchments in Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara. The main rivers in the Hutt Valley are Hutt River (Te Awakairangi), Pakuratahi River, Mangaroa River, Akatawara River and Whakatikei River.



- Wellington Harbour has many streams flowing into it. The main ones are Kaiwharawhara Stream, Ngauranga Stream, Korokoro Stream and Waiwhetu Stream.

- Wainuiomata River and Orongorongo River are the two main waterways over the eastern hills of

the Hutt valley which drain to the south coast

- There are three main streams – Makara Stream, Karori Stream and Owhiro Stream – that flow through the Southern and Western coast catchment.
- There are many other streams within the catchment that flow into the harbour or feed the larger rivers and streams, but they are hidden from view for most of their length as they have been piped underground.

## **Is there a problem with the quality of water in Whaitua te Whanganui a-Tara?**

- The communities of the Whaitua are united with, depend on and have responsibility for the waters of Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara, the health of which is vital to the health and well-being of its people and all the species that live within it.
- Due to rapid population growth over the past 150 years, the water of Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara is under pressure. As the water flows over the landscape it finds its way into streams and down into the soil, eventually feeding the rivers, lakes aquifers and wetlands.
- Issues such as stormwater and sewage discharges, and other land use activities greatly affect the health of water in our catchment.
- Against the backdrop of increasing demand on land for housing and agriculture, we observe our streams and rivers bearing the brunt of the pressure.
- Metal contaminants such as zinc, copper and fine sediment end up in waterways during rainfall through storm water drains. These are harmful for the ecosystem.
- Faecal contamination from livestock, sewage overflows and runoff from landfills are damaging our ecosystem and degrades the quality of water in the catchment and its ability to sustain life.
- When the water is healthy, we all will be healthy. It's all about respecting and caring for our water, our taonga. Water is a gift we need to protect and enhance for future generations. By changing our relationship with water, we can change the health of Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara and all the communities it sustains.



## **What is the role of a Whaitua committee?**

- It is clear that significant change is needed to reduce people's impacts on water and improve the health of Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara. There is an urgent need to start doing things differently.
- The New Zealand Government has set some expectations nationally, and we need to work out what those expectations mean for Whaitua te Whanganui a-Tara. While there are some minimum expectations for the level of improvement set by the Government, the expectations our communities have for Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara are likely to be higher. Greater Wellington needs to develop a plan for ensuring those expectations are met, including how they will be stepped towards over time.
- This is a big change, and it needs to be developed with and owned by the community, as well as being informed by science and data. This is why Greater Wellington has established a committee of community members, mana whenua and councillors to work together on a Whaitua Implementation Programme, supported by a team of experts from our councils.

## Who are the Whaitua committee members?

The 17-member committee has eight community members, four representatives from our iwi and mana whenua partners and one councillor from each of the three councils – Upper Hutt City, Hutt City and Wellington City – and two councillors from Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Community Representatives:



Louise Askin (Co-chair of the Committee)



Peter Matcham



Johnny Osborne



Quentin Duthie



Zoe Ogilvie



Anya Pollock



Gabriel Tupou



Pat van Berkel

Mana whenua partners:



Kara Puketapu-Dentice (Co-chair of the Committee)



Morrie Te Whiti Love (recently retired)



Naomi Solomon



Hikitia Ropata

Council Representatives:



Wayne Guppy (Mayor UHCC)



Tui Lewis (HCC)



Peter Gilbert (WCC)



Roger Blakely (GWRC)



Paul Swain (GWRC)

## **What is the relationship between the councils and this Whaitua committee?**

The Greater Wellington Regional Council had initiated a community-led collaborative process to address a number of land and water management issues and to carry out its obligations under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. The region was divided into five whaitua or catchments: Ruamāhanga, Te Awarua-o-Porirua, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Kāpiti Coast and Wairarapa Coast.

Like the previous two whaitua committees (Ruamāhanga and te Awarua-o-Porirua), the Committee for Whaitua Te Whanganui-a-Tara, set up in November 2018, is independent of the Regional and City Councils. When the Committee finalises its Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP), they will submit it to the Greater Wellington Regional Council for implementation.

The recommendations – for integrated management of land and water resources in the catchment – will influence the District Plans of the City Councils and also become one of five chapters of the National Resources Plan for the Wellington Region.

## **What does partnership mean?**

Greater Wellington Regional Council will develop and run the whaitua process in partnership with its mana whenua partners which in this rohe are Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. Mana whenua partners will determine how the whaitua will be supported in kawa, tikanga and matauranga Māori (process, practice and traditional knowledge). To support this approach Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara has elected co-chairs Louise Askin and Kara Puketapu-Dentice to lead the committee through this process.

## **What is the committee's purpose?**

Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara has adopted a Kawa based foundational framework. This will align a principled start point with a strengths based approach to help them achieve an integrated and holistic outcome for the well-being of water.

### **The committees putake\purpose...**

*"Kei te putake o Whaitua te Whanganui a Tara tona mauri mana motuhake... hei oranga mo te katoa i noho ki konei".*

The mauri of Whaitua te Whanganui a Tara and the communities who live within it is nurtured, strengthened and able to flourish.

### **...And their kawa...**

Ko Te Kawa Ora

Ko te Te Whanganui a Tara Whaitua te mātāpuna o te ora:

*Whaitua te Whanganui a Tara is to be honoured as the source of spiritual and physical sustenance for all life within its waters and lands.*

Ko Te Kawa Wai

E rere kau mai nga wai iti, nga wai roa, nga wai nui, nga wai puna, nga wai tuku kiri mai i nga pae maunga ki Tangaroa: The water flows from the mountains and hills to the sea.

*Whaitua te Whanganui a Tara is a living system of waterways, streams, rivers, springs and groundwater that flows from the hills to the sea.*

Ko Te Kawa Tiaki

Ko tatou enei wai, ko tatou nga tangata tiaki: we are these waters, we are responsible for their care.

*The communities of the Whaitua are united with, depend on and have responsibility for the waters of Whaitua Te Whanganui a Tara, the health of which is vital to the health and well-being of its people and all the species that lives within it.*

Ko Te Kawa Piripiri

Ngā manga iti, ngā manga nui e piripiri kau ana, ka tupu nga awa, ka tupu te taurikura o nga tangata katoa.

*The small and large streams that flow into one another form the numerous rivers which provide nourishment for all.*

Whaitua Te Whanganui a Tara is a singular entity woven from the land, the waters and the communities of life they sustain. It transcends its component threads and cradles all who live within it.

**...are the guiding principles behind the committee's obligation and responsibility to water.**

## **What is a WIP?**

The Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara committee will make recommendations to Greater Wellington Regional Council through a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP). This WIP will contain recommendations, strategies and actions which will inform plan change processes and form a programme of work to achieve the community's objectives for water quality and quantity within the whaitua.

## **What will you do with the feedback and inputs we provide?**

All of the feedback and inputs you provide to the committee will help us develop a Whaitua Implementation Programme (WIP), which will set out the long-term vision for Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara and a range of actions and changes for creating and accelerating improvement towards that vision.

The committee and the community need to understand the concerns around water, and the values and aspirations of mana whenua and wider community. We all need to understand what it means to be a kaitiaki of water. These discussions will inform our vision for Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara and our relationship with its waters. We then need to understand how much change is needed in different catchments to realise our communities' vision.

We need to recognise what is already happening to improve water and understand how much more is needed. We need to work together to agree the nature and pace of changes that will improve water across the whaitua towards our communities' vision.

## **How can I contribute?**

We would love you to help us to shape the action that is needed. We want to hear how water is part of your life and what you imagine in a better future. [Follow this link to have your say](#)

We will look forward to hearing from you and if you have any feedback, invitations or suggestions please email us at [whaitua@gw.govt.nz](mailto:whaitua@gw.govt.nz)

For more details visit: <http://www.gw.govt.nz/whaitua-te-whanganui-a-tara/>