

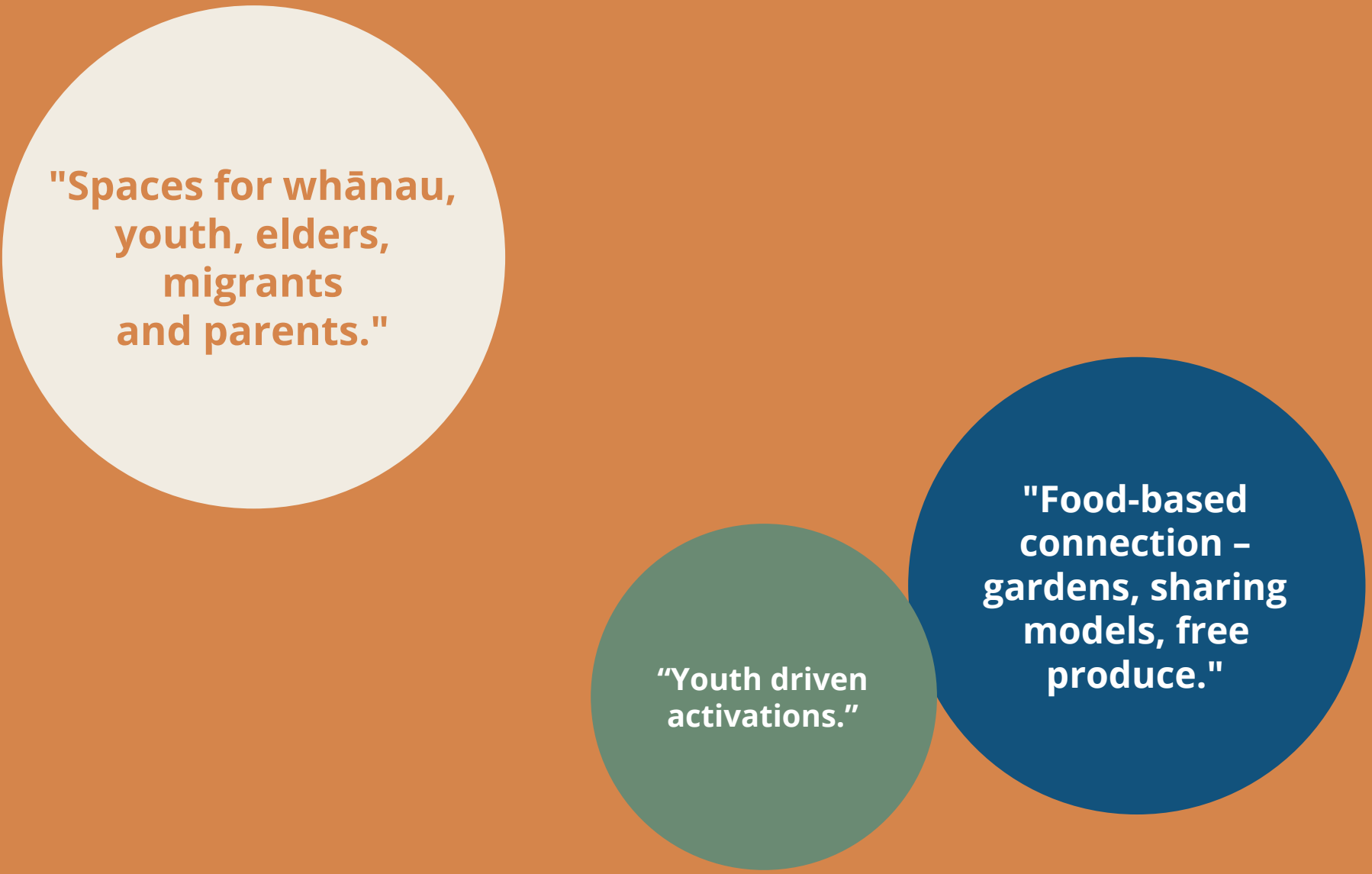


Mau te Rongo

Henderson Community Plan

A community-led vision for recovery, resilience and connection.

Photo: One year after the Floods Anniversary Gathering



**"Spaces for whānau,
youth, elders,
migrants
and parents."**

**"Youth driven
activations."**

**"Food-based
connection –
gardens, sharing
models, free
produce."**

He mihi nui ki Te Kawerau ā Maki

E ngā mana whenua o tēnei rohe, tēnā koutou.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou mō tō koutou manaakitanga, aratakitanga, me te koha o te ingoa Mau te Rongo mō tēnei kaupapa.

E mihi ana ki tō koutou hononga mauroa ki te whenua nei, e tū nei hei pou whakatinana mō tēnei mahi.

E mihi ana hoki ki te hapori whānui o Henderson.

Following the impacts of the 2023 floods and ongoing pressures facing our communities, this kaupapa has been shaped by the strength, care, and connection shown across Henderson.

Whānau, rangatahi, community organisations, partners, and local networks have all contributed their voices, experiences, and what matters most for the future of Henderson.

This plan reflects what has been shared, not from a single moment, but from many conversations, insights, and connections over time.

Mau te Rongo speaks to restoring balance, peace, and wellbeing, reconnecting people, place, and relationships so we can move forward together with strength and purpose.

This work began as a response to recovery, but it has grown into a wider community plan, shaped by local voice and strengthened through partnership and collective action.

We acknowledge everyone who has contributed to this kaupapa and those who continue to walk alongside this mahi.

Mā te mahi tahi, ka mau te rongo.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa



Our approach

This kaupapa is grounded in a community-led approach, built in partnership with Te Kawerau ā Maki and MPHS, and shaped by the voices and priorities of local people (core themes highlighted on Pages 8 & 9).

In 2023, severe weather events deeply impacted Henderson and wider West Auckland. Many whānau are still living with the effects — alongside ongoing housing pressures, cost-of-living challenges, and food insecurity. At the same time, strong community leadership

**Community-led,
grounded in
local voice.**

**Listening, inclusion,
partnership with
Te Kawerau ā Maki.**

**Community holds
the answers.**

emerged, with neighbours helping neighbours, organisations working together, and mana whenua stepping forward.

As part of the regional recovery response, Henderson/Rānui was identified as a priority for community-led planning. Te Kawerau ā Maki invited MPHS Community Trust to partner in developing this plan.

While this work began as a recovery response, it quickly became clear that the aspirations of our community go well beyond immediate recovery. This plan reflects a shared desire for a more connected, inclusive, and resilient Henderson — now and into the future.

Our approach to gathering insights was simple, practical, and grounded in real conversations. This was not a large-scale academic study, but a community-led process to understand what matters most. We heard from individuals and whānau, community organisations, faith groups, schools and kura, rangatahi, and local networks. Insights were gathered through workshops, surveys, conversations, and ongoing engagement — not a single “ask”, but many touchpoints over time.

Why this plan exists

This Henderson Community-Led Recovery Plan has been developed to:

- Respond to the 2023 flood events and wider ongoing pressures affecting people and places in Henderson.
- Create a shared, future-focused recovery pathway that considers social, cultural, economic, natural, and built environments together.
- Reflect the aspirations and lived experiences of Henderson communities gathered through targeted engagement across schools, local networks, faith communities, community groups, and rangatahi at the Youth Studio.
- Strengthen collaboration between mana whenua, community organisations, Council, and other partners so recovery actions and future developments are connected rather than isolated.

From this, coherent and consistent themes emerged. People want connection, safety, access to resources, and a strong sense of belonging. There is also a clear call for better information and support in times of need, stronger collaboration across organisations, and spaces and opportunities that bring people together.

This plan exists to respond to those voices to strengthen community connection, align efforts across organisations, and support a shared, future-focused direction for Henderson. It reflects what we heard, and creates a foundation for action that is connected, inclusive, and community led.

At its heart, this approach is grounded in capturing local voice.

Who contributed

This plan draws on insights from:

- Individuals and whānau directly affected by the 2023 floods
- Te Kawerau ā Maki
- Community organisations, clubs, hubs and services
- Faith communities
- Schools and kura in the Henderson area
- Rangatahi, particularly through the Youth Studio
- Wider residents reached through online and network-based engagement

Their experiences, ideas and priorities have been gathered through workshops, surveys, conversations, and targeted outreach – not a single big “ask”, but multiple touch points woven together.



Insight gathering People Pride Place event

What we heard

What people love about Henderson

- The cultural diversity and vibrancy.
- Community pride and friendliness.
- Green spaces, bush walks along Ōpanuku stream and path, nature pockets, and closeness to the environment.
- Local shops, small businesses, and creative spots.
- Supportive services and people who genuinely care.

People told us:

“Henderson is full of potential — you can feel it when people come together.”

“There’s a spirit here, even after the hard times.”

“We love the diversity — it’s who we are.”

What’s hard right now

Feeling disconnected after the 2023 floods and wider pressures.

- Streets and public spaces not feeling clean, safe, or welcoming.
- Difficulty accessing kai, services, transport, and clear information.
- Housing stress and financial pressure.
- Lack of youth opportunities and support.
- Confusion about recovery, resilience, and what’s happening locally.

People told us:

“Sometimes it feels like things are happening to us, not with us.”

“It’s hard to know where to go or who to ask.”

“Some spaces feel forgotten.”

What’s possible

People shared hope and ideas for the future:

- More connected neighbourhoods with events and shared spaces.
- Clean, safe, welcoming public places.
- Better transport, signage, and access.
- Stronger visibility of Māori stories and history.
- Affordable kai and thriving local businesses.
- Meaningful opportunities for youth.
- Public art and signage reflecting Henderson’s identity.

People told us:

“Imagine if Henderson felt like everyone belonged the moment they arrived.”

“We could be a place that celebrates all cultures proudly.”

“If we work together, this can be a community that bounces back stronger.”

Who we heard from

Engagement reached a wide range of people and groups:

- Rangatahi (Youth Studio, schools, online)
- Māori whānau and community members
- Pacific and diverse ethnic communities
- Families and parents
- Faith communities
- Elders and kaumātua
- Local businesses, shoppers and workers (at Tipping Point + MPHS staff)
- Newcomers to Henderson
- Residents directly affected by the 2023 floods
- Community organisations



Middle School West Auckland at Te Māra

**People want
connection, safety,
pride and belonging.**



Flood recovery Community Hui

Rangatahi voice

What we heard

As part of Mau te Rongo – the Henderson Community Plan, we made a deliberate effort to hear directly from rangatahi.

This matters. Their voices are often underrepresented, yet they are a vital part of our community now and into the future.

Many of the rangatahi who shared their views had been directly impacted by the 2023 floods. Their experiences add depth to what we heard and highlight the importance of getting this right.

We kept the approach simple and grounded focused on real, lived experiences. Rangatahi shared a clear message: they care deeply about their community and want to see practical improvements that support their wellbeing and their futures.

What matters most to Rangatahi

Affordable Everyday Life

The cost of housing, food, transport, and bills is a real pressure. Rangatahi want more opportunities, including access to jobs and support for their whānau.

Places to Go and Belong

Safe, welcoming spaces matter — places to connect, be active, and spend time, supported by good schools, transport, and community facilities.

Safety and Respect

Feeling safe is a priority. Rangatahi want less violence, bullying, and racism, and more kindness and care in their community.

Connection and Whānau

Strong relationships are central. Rangatahi value belonging, culture, and opportunities to connect in positive ways.

Environment and Place

There is pride in where they live. Clean streets, green spaces, and caring for the whenua are important to their wellbeing.

Hope for the Future

Rangatahi want a future where they can grow — with space for creativity, identity, culture, and a sense of hope.

"Going on adventures."

"More gym and sports programs."

"Hanging out with my friends."

"Community
helping one
another."

"No putting rubbish
in nature."

"No more
violence."

What this means

These insights align strongly with the five core themes of Mau te Rongo, reinforcing shared priorities across the community.

Importantly, this work highlights the value of intentionally creating space for rangatahi voice. Their perspectives bring clarity and a future-focused lens that strengthens both the plan and how we respond.

Rangatahi are not asking for anything unrealistic they are asking for a community that works well, feels safe, and supports people to belong and thrive.



Henderson North School rangatahi session

Our mahi

Our approach to analysing the community feedback needed to be simple, practical, and fit within the limited time and resources available for this kaupapa. This was not an academic study, it was a community-led process to quickly understand what matters most to people in Henderson. We used straightforward tools to identify repeated ideas and emerging themes across both rangatahi and general community responses.

“Good information and support in times of need, like the flooding.”

1. Rangatahi (paper-based responses)

Rangatahi shared their thoughts through face-to-face sessions in schools, visits to youth programmes, and creative expression.

Guided by Te Whare Tapa Whā, this approach helped us understand what matters most to rangatahi their wellbeing, connections, and sense of place.

Rangatahi expressed themselves in different ways. Some wrote single words, others drew images, and many shared short phrases. These expressions gave insight into how they feel about their community including feeling

safe, connected, supported, and having fun.

Each response was carefully reviewed, with repeated words, ideas, and visual themes grouped into shared patterns such as belonging, safety, and care for people and the environment.

This approach ensured rangatahi voices were captured in their own way, without over-analysis or filtering, and their insights continue to shape both current and future initiatives.



MPHS Community Trust youth studio

2. General community (online based responses)

Online and digital survey responses were collected. An online survey was shared across community networks, organisations, and MPHS platforms, allowing people to respond directly from their own devices or through iPad assist. All responses were automatically captured online, so no manual data entry was required.

Once in Excel, we used the Filter and Search tools to cluster similar words and phrases. When repeated ideas appeared — for example, frequent mentions of transport, signage, connection, or support — we colour-coded these groupings to help visualise and organise the emerging themes.

This simple but systematic approach allowed us to process a large volume of feedback efficiently while still grounding the findings in the words and ideas expressed by participants.

3. Supportive use of AI for validation

Because of tight timeframes and limited resources, we used AI as a secondary validation tool. No names or identifying details were shared at any point. AI was used only to:

- Double-check the patterns we had already identified manually
- Ensure we hadn't missed repeated ideas across large response sets
- Support consistency across the theme groupings

Human judgement remained central throughout. AI simply helped streamline parts of the process and confirmed that the themes reflected the strongest patterns in the data.

We respectfully acknowledge the name 'Mau Te Rongo' gifted to this work by Te Kawerau ā Maki.

4. How themes were finalised

Across both methods — handwritten rangatahi responses and Excel-based community responses — we looked for ideas that appeared most often and most strongly. These repeated concepts were then grouped into the final themes presented in the plan.

Quotes were selected to illustrate and validate these themes, ensuring the final result stayed true to the voices of Henderson.

Core themes

Over the past several months, more than 2,000 insights have been gathered through workshops, kōrero, surveys, online engagement, school sessions, neighbourhood networks, and rangatahi workshops. These insights reflect a wide cross-section of Henderson and show what matters most to people as they think about recovery, resilience, and their hopes for the future.

Across all engagement activities, five strong themes consistently emerged.

**Connection,
Whiria te Tangata
ki te Whenua,
Access, Care and
Culture.**

1. Connection

People want a stronger sense of connection — more gatherings, shared spaces, friendly neighbourhoods, and chances to come together.

People told us:

“We want spaces and moments that help us feel like a community again.”

“It would be great to have more places where people actually meet one another, not just walk past.”

“We miss feeling connected — it shouldn’t be hard to know your neighbours.”

2. Whiria te Tangata ki te Whenua – weaving people and place

People want local Māori stories, identity, history, and values visible and honoured across Henderson.

People told us:

“More Māori design and stories would help us understand the whakapapa of Henderson.”

“It matters that mana whenua are visible and acknowledged here.”

3. Access

People want Henderson to be easier to move through — safe walking routes, clearer signage, better transport options, and visible information.

People told us:

“Getting around shouldn’t be this hard — we just want it to feel safe and simple.”

“Clear signage and safe paths would make a huge difference.”

“Sometimes you don’t even know where things are — information needs to be easier to find.”



Engagement hui at HubWest



Letterbox from a flood damaged home

4. Care

People highlighted the need for accessible kai, local jobs, youth pathways, training, community services, and support for small businesses.

People talked about compassion, pride, feeling safe, and shared spaces that are clean and cared for.

People told us:

“We need opportunities close to home — work, learning, support, and kai we can actually afford.”

“Our young people need more pathways and local options.”

“Small businesses are important — we should be supporting them.”

“It makes a difference when our places feel looked after — it helps us feel looked after too.”

“Some streets feel neglected; it affects how safe and supported we feel.”

“People here care — we just need systems that show that care back.”

5. Culture

People want Henderson to reflect its cultural richness — through murals, public art, storytelling, signage, and events that honour everyone who calls this place home.

People told us:

“Our cultures make Henderson vibrant — we want to see that everywhere.”

“Art and storytelling help us feel proud of where we live.”

“Celebrating our diversity brings people together.”

Connection

By strengthening local connections, these places and placemaking activities create social capital and cohesion, key neighbourhood assets that support economic prosperity and community resilience.



**"We need spaces
for teens, youth
and rangatahi."**

**"We want
indoor and outdoor
spaces for learning,
recreation and
connection."**

Whiria te Tangata ki te Whenua – weaving people and place

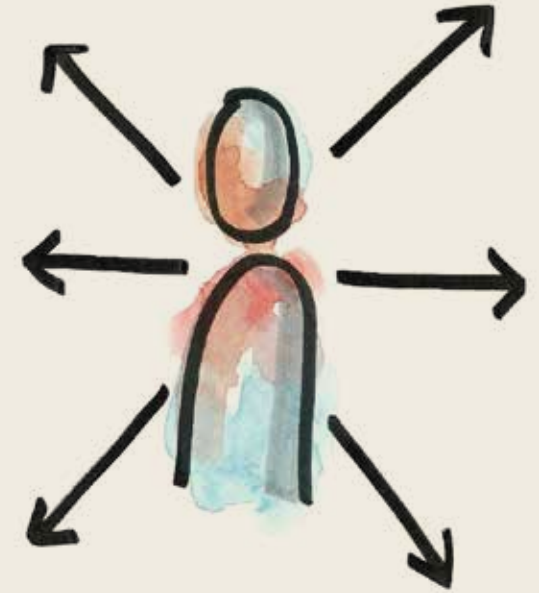
Each strand of Henderson – its people, whenua and whakapapa – becomes stronger when woven together through partnership with mana whenua, shared stories, and Māori identity made visible in our everyday spaces.



"We want the Māori history of this place reflected in the places we live and walk through."

Access

Access in Henderson is about ease, safety, inclusion and flow – making everyday movement simple, reliable, and welcoming so people can get on with their lives without stress.



**"Safer walkways,
bus stops and
night routes."**

**"Easier movement
between the mall,
station, parks
and hubs."**

Care

Care in Henderson is about safety, dignity, wellbeing and responsibility – creating places and systems where people feel protected, supported and valued, and where care for people and care for place go hand in hand.



**"Keep
Henderson
clean."**

**"Spaces that feel
safe, welcoming, and
well-maintained."**

Culture

A place that reflects its people.
When people see themselves in
local art, stories, celebrations,
and creativity, it grows pride
and a sense of belonging.



"Local art,
stories and
creativity on
walls, paths and
structures."

"Lift up the
stories, traditions
and languages
that shape our
community."

The journey

Listen

February to December 2025

Engagement + Hui + Surveys

- 1 Mar 25 People Pride Place
- 28 Mar 25 Neighbours Day
- 19 Jun 25 Henderson Recovery Plan Hui
- 2 Aug 25 Retail Outlets Pop Ups
- 5 Aug 25 Street Pop Ups
- 16 Sep 25 MPHS Youth Studio Rangatahi Engagement
- 17 Sep 25 PHAB NZ Focus Group Youth With Disabilities

18 Sep 25 School Visit and Engagement: Seventh Day Adventist and Bruce McLaren Intermediate, Henderson High School represented through Youth Studio, PHAB NZ.

1 Oct 25 Have Your Say Survey Launched & Flood Letterbox Surveys

10 Oct 25 West Auckland Organisations Feedback First Hui

3 Nov 25 Zoom Organisational Hui

4 Dec 25 Preloved Clothing Event

10 Dec 25 Middle School West Auckland, Rangatahi Engagement

Understand

March 2026

Insights + Themes

16 Mar 26 West Auckland Organisations Second Hui

Share back

April 2026

Community Validation

April 26 Presentation to the Local Board, Te Kawerau ā Maki and Recovery Office



HubWest as a community Civil Defense centre in 2023

From insight to action

What we're hearing and where this could go

This plan reflects what we've heard from our community and that kōrero is already continuing.

As an initial next step, we have shared these core themes with local community groups who contributed to our insights gathering.

Through these conversations, we are starting to hear more about:

- What is already happening across our neighbourhood
- What is working well and could be strengthened
- Where there are gaps or opportunities for new initiatives

This is helping build a clearer picture of how these themes are already coming to life and where there is energy to do more.

Across Henderson, individuals, whānau, community groups, and organisations are already doing important mahi.

This next phase is about recognising that work, supporting it to grow, and creating space for new ideas to emerge.

Looking ahead, there will be funding available to support community-led initiatives aligned to the five core themes — Connection, Whiria te Tangata ki te Whenua, Access, Care, and Culture.

This could support:

- Individuals or whānau with ideas to strengthen their neighbourhood
- Local groups or organisations already delivering community initiatives
- New projects that respond to gaps or emerging needs

**Connected, safe,
inclusive, proud
community.**

Supporting existing and new community-led initiatives

What could this look like?

- Neighbourhood connection activities
- Youth-led initiatives and opportunities
- Cultural storytelling, creative or placemaking projects
- Local food, wellbeing, or support programmes
- Safer, more connected public spaces

This is about building on what already exists, while creating opportunities for new ideas to grow.



Community hui at HubWest

A community-led funding approach

Participatory funding – how decisions will be made

A key part of this next phase is how funding will be used and who decides.

This work will be supported through a participatory funding approach.

Participatory funding is a community-led model that puts decision-making in the hands of local people, those who know their community best.

Rather than decisions being made elsewhere, this approach enables the community to help shape:

- What ideas are put forward
- What priorities matter most
- Which initiatives are supported

Through this process:

- Community members can submit ideas aligned to the core themes
- Ideas will be shared and considered openly
- The community will help prioritise what moves forward

This approach is grounded in trust, transparency, and local knowledge.

This is not the end of the plan — it is the beginning of a community-led phase of action.

Whether you are part of a group, an organisation, or simply someone who cares about Henderson, there is a role to play.

**Together, we move
from insight to action
— supporting ideas that
reflect Henderson, led by
the community, for the
community.**

Stay connected

Email programmes@mphs.org.nz or scan the QR code to find out more.



Ngā mihi – acknowledgements

This plan is built on partnerships — with Te Kawerau ā Maki, MPHS, and our community — all coming together to share knowledge, strengthen resilience, and prepare for whatever the future brings.

Our community

Our biggest partner is you. The Henderson Recovery Plan is a community-led effort, built on the voices, skills, and connections of local people. Every conversation, shared idea, and small act of preparedness helps make our neighbourhood stronger. You joined us at events, shared your knowledge, and have been part of shaping how we prepare for whatever comes next.



Te Kawerau ā Maki

Te Kawerau ā Maki, mana whenua of this area, are key partners in the Henderson Recovery Plan. They bring deep cultural, historical, and environmental knowledge, helping to shape a future where our community is prepared and resilient. Their values of Mana Motuhake, Kaitiakitanga, Whānaungatanga, Auaha and Mātauranga Māori strengthen our shared mahi.



TE KAWERAU Ā MAKI



MPHS Community Trust

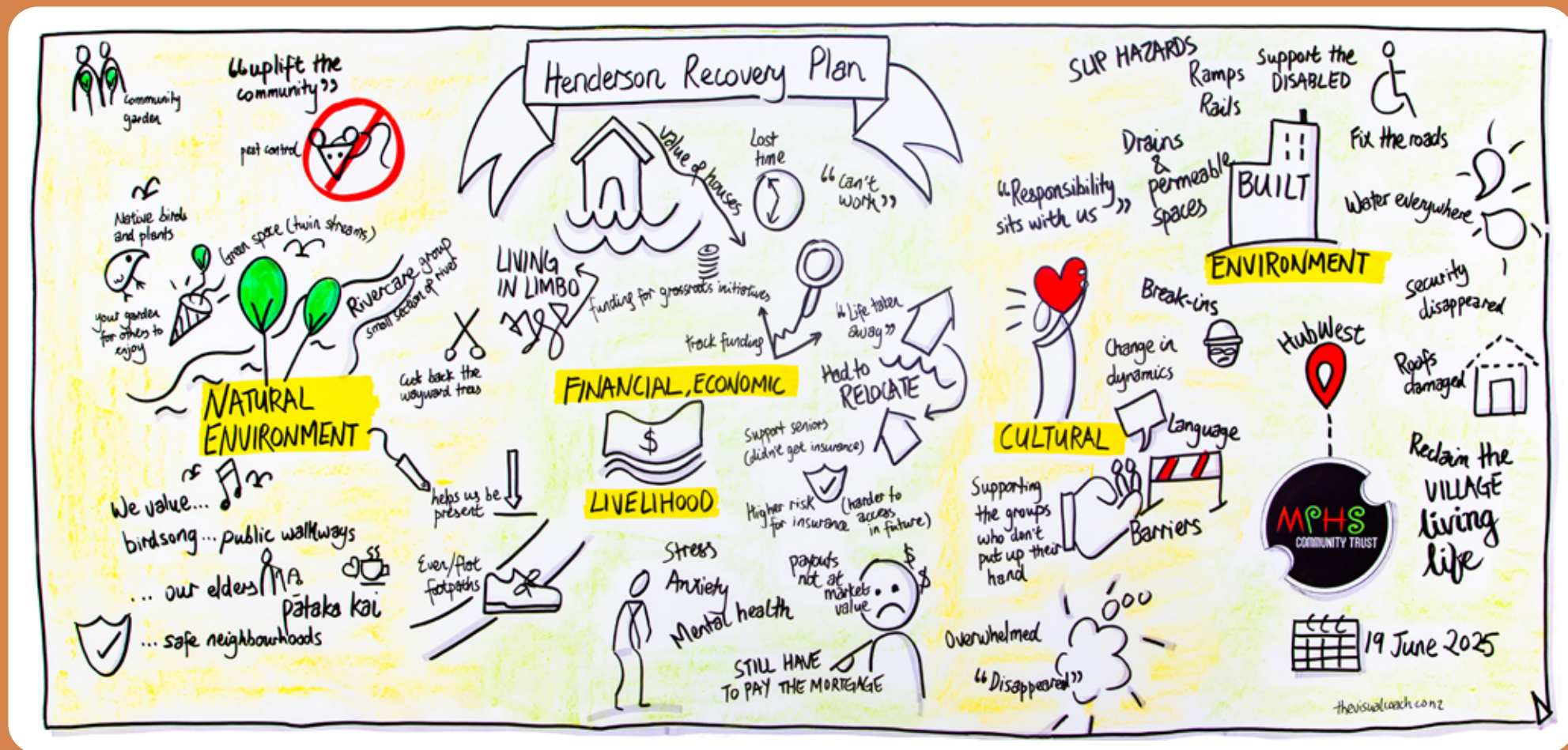
MPHS Community Trust is a community-led organisation working alongside people, whānau and partners to strengthen connection, wellbeing and resilience across Henderson and West Auckland. We bring people together through local projects, programmes, and partnerships, creating opportunities for participation, learning, and support. From youth programmes to environmental initiatives, our work is grounded in community voice and focused on what matters most to local people. Our approach is to walk alongside communities, supporting local leadership, building connection, and helping ideas grow into action, with a focus on people, pride, and place so Henderson continues to be a community where people feel connected and able to contribute to a strong future.

**"Bring Māori
design, stories and
artwork into parks
and walkways."**

**"Make the town
centre feel alive
again."**

**"Whānau-safe
areas near shops,
parks and stations."**

**"Lift up
grassroots voices
and local leaders."**



MPHS Community Trust

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