

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2014

Welcome to all the new members who have joined recently and thanks to our ongoing supporters. We really appreciate your membership and support.

MANUKAU HARBOUR TALKS - BIRDS! MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Following on our first successful talk, we are hosting another on the birds of the Manukau. David Lawrie of the NZ Ornithological Society will speak on: **Common Birds - Extraordinary Journeys.**

When: 7pm Tuesday October 28
Where: Onehunga Community House
83 Selwyn Street
Onehunga

Free to members; a gold coin donation would be appreciated from nonmembers.

Come for an enjoyable evening learning about our remarkable birds and join us for a cuppa and conversation afterwards.



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MHRS RELEASES RECREATION AND TOURISM STUDY

Support for Onehunga Wharf Redevelopment

The NZ Tourism Research Institute of AUT has completed their analysis of the online survey of visitors and residents of the Manukau Harbour. Over 800 surveys were completed. The survey

found that the majority of both visitors and residents strongly support the idea of developing Onehunga Wharf as a hub with facilities for passenger ferries, boat charters and water taxis, improving transport options across the harbour. They support developing the wharf as a place for public/recreational activities such as cafes and restaurants and a fish market.

Not surprising, the majority of visitors are from other parts of Auckland with most time spent in the Waitakere Ranges and the Franklin area. The survey provides us with other valuable baseline data on visitors, for instance how often they visit, how long they stay, what they do in the area and how much they spend. When asked about less attractive aspects of their visit to the area, poor infrastructure and facilities and environmental issues were raised.

A third of the residents completing the survey have lived in the area for over 25 years and both residents and visitors alike appreciate the natural environment and recreational opportunities the area provides. Residents rate pollution and environmental issues and the lack of local infrastructure and facilities as the least appealing features of living in the harbour area.

Both phases of the study have provided MHRS, the Manukau Harbour Forum and local communities with valuable data that will inform future decisions and should improve recreation and visitor activities around the harbour.

MHRS is grateful to the 9 Local Boards of Auckland Council comprising the Manukau Harbour Forum who each funded the study: Unlocking the Recreation and Tourism Potential of the Manukau Harbour.

You can find the results of the survey and the Phase 1 baseline study by clicking here: www.mhrs.org.nz.



MHRS, MBR&R AND TOES END LEGAL APPEAL OF WATERCARE

Following legal advice, MHRS, the Mangere Bridge R&R and the Onehunga Enhancement Society, ended our legal challenge of the proposed Central Interceptor. While we are still opposed to the project, we did not have the financial resources that would have allowed us to continue the appeal to a hearing in the Environment Court. In ending the appeal we negotiated for tighter restrictions on the frequency of use, preventative back up systems and monitoring of any discharges from the Emergency Pressure Relief Valve.

What we learned during the proceedings about the operations of the Mangere Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWTP) and discharges into the Manukau Harbour raised significant questions. For example we are particularly concerned about the frequency with which effluent bypasses secondary treatment at the treatment plant. In evidence given in the Central Interceptor hearings, Watercare stated:

“The approved Mangere WWTP bypass activates during wet weather conditions approximately 6 to 8 times per year on average.”

Yet we found that in a 22 month period the bypass was activated 50 times. In the last four and a half years alone, Watercare-supplied figures show close to 7 million cubic meters of effluent has bypassed secondary treatment before discharge. We are concerned about the adverse environmental effects on the harbour of this effluent and the high levels of BOD it contains.

As a result we have requested Auckland Council begin the five yearly review of the effect of the discharges from the MWTP on the water quality and biota of the harbour as provided in Watercare's discharge consent. We also requested the same of the Watercare Board of Directors but as yet have not received a response. We encourage you to contact your Councilors and impress upon them the importance of beginning this review of the state of our harbour.

Our Councilors appear to care deeply for the Waitemata; we'd like them to demonstrate the same stewardship of the Manukau.

You can read our analysis of Watercare's operations and implications for the harbour at www.mhrs.org.nz

EPR will discharge Raw Sewage across mud flats. This area has water coverage for a limited period each tidal cycle.



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PAGE 12

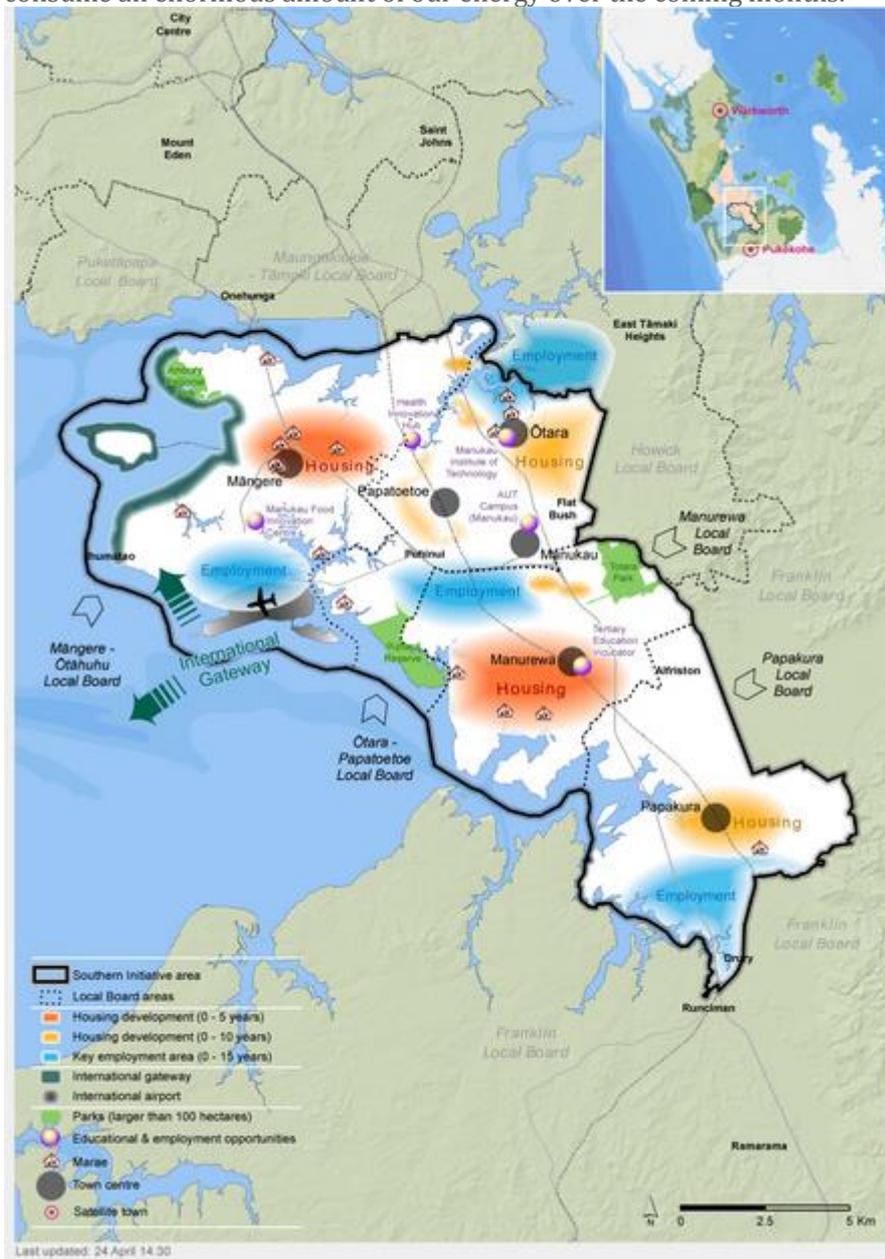
MHRS AWARDED FUNDS FOR MANGROVE REMOVAL

MHRS is grateful to Auckland Council for the award of grant funds which will allow us to continue to remove mangroves from the Mangere Inlet as per our resource consent. Watch for progress in the coming months as you drive around the foreshore in Onehunga and Otahuhu. Kudos to Hayden Mack, our mangrove project manager, for his hard work preparing applications for the funds.



UNITARY PLAN HEARINGS

MHRS is now engaged in the formal hearings of submissions on the Unitary Plan. Our submissions cover an enormous range of topics from opposing POAL's (Ports of Auckland Ltd) proposal to zone the port of Onehunga for light industrial activities not related to the port; opposing Transpower's proposal to continue to add transmission towers to the foreshore and allow transmission towers to penetrate view planes and ridge lines; opposing more restrictive rules on mangrove removal from the harbour; to opposing restrictions that would make it difficult to build more boat ramps and wharves along the harbour foreshore. The hearings process is complex and time consuming and puts volunteer, community organizations at a distinct disadvantage. We anticipate these hearings will consume an enormous amount of our energy over the coming months.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

We love having you as a member. But if you haven't paid a subscription this year, now would be a great time to do so! You can make payment direct from the website – mhrs.org.nz (just use the Join button); make a direct deposit to ASB Bank Account No 12-3110-0100719-00; or send a cheque to MHRS PO Box 13273 Onehunga Auckland 1643.

Membership is so cheap! \$10 for individuals, \$15 for families and \$200 for a corporate membership

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We are working hard on updating our databases so we can send out individual renewal notices but somehow more pressing issues such as Watercare, the Unitary Plan and submissions on stormwater keep us from getting it done. We ask for your forbearance and generosity – please would you renew your membership? We would be most grateful.

Many thanks.

Bronwen Turner

Deputy Chair

The Manukau Harbour Restoration Society Inc