

A message from the mayor

There's been a lot of interest lately as central government elections draw closer. Most days bring another announcement, another debate or another headline. Among it all has been the Government's decision to pause local government reform. I think this is a positive development. It gives communities like Kaipara time to understand the issues, ask questions and consider what any future changes could mean for our district.

What happens next will ultimately depend on the decisions made after this year's election. Whatever direction is taken, my view remains the same. Local government should be simple, affordable and accountable, and work for the people it affects.

The Planning Act and Natural Environment Act have also passed into law, setting the direction for how communities like Kaipara will grow and develop in the future. The new Acts focus on preserving property rights, and will eventually replace the Resource Management Act which has been in force since 1991.

Closer to home, we have been working through our Annual Report and reflecting on what has been achieved over the past year. From maintaining our local roads and strengthening flood protection to supporting community facilities and investing in infrastructure, the work continues across our district every day. These are the services that make a real difference to people's lives.

We are also developing our Long Term Plan 2027–2037. To guide this work, elected members have adopted a new vision for our district: Kaipara – grow and thrive here.

That vision is supported by five community outcomes: a growing economy, affordable living, better roading, vibrant communities and a healthy environment. They will guide our decisions and investment over the next decade, helping us make sensible decisions about where we invest and what we prioritise.

Kaipara has so much to offer, and we want more people to discover that. Our goal is to attract new investment, support local business and welcome new residents who want to be part of our district. We're already seeing signs of that confidence, with recent figures showing Kaipara house prices positively increasing over the past three months, against a national average of minus 1.3%.

We want Kaipara to be a vibrant place where businesses and communities thrive and where people come together for great events, activities and experiences. There's enormous potential for our towns and communities to grow and flourish.



Jonathan Larsen
Mayor of Kaipara District



Get your home and water supply summer ready.

With a hot, dry summer forecast, every drop counts. Whether you're on town supply or tank water, simple actions can help:

- Fix leaks
- Take shorter showers
- Only run full loads in dishwashers and washing machines
- Reuse water where you can
- Water gardens in the early morning or evening

If you rely on tank water, check your levels now and arrange deliveries before supplies run low. We're investing in water infrastructure upgrades across Kaipara to improve water security and resilience for the future.



Your rates at work

The next time you drive down a local road, visit a park, or wait while road crews repair a road, remember your rates help pay for these improvements. Rates make up around 50% of council's funding and help make Kaipara a safer, stronger and more enjoyable place to live, work and raise a family.

To catch up on all the projects, services and initiatives we delivered over the last year, check out the Annual Report 2025/2026, available soon at kaipara.govt.nz/annualreport

By the numbers for the 2025/2026 year

 **52,776** CUSTOMER ENQUIRIES RESPONDED TO

 **863** NEW LIBRARY MEMBERS SIGNED UP

 **256** RESOURCE CONSENTS

 **541** BUILDING CONSENTS

 **85,588** LIBRARY VISITS
 **7% ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR**

 **856** LIMS PROCESSED

 **5,349** DOGS REGISTERED ACROSS KAIPARA

15,533 POTHOLES REPAIRED 

 **58km** UNSEALED ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

 **89.3km** OF SEALED ROADS RESURFACED
5.8km OF SEALED ROADS REHABILITATED

What's been happening in Kaipara

Building roads that last

Looking after our roads is one of our top priorities. It's more than sealing, maintaining and fixing potholes; it's building resilient roads that can withstand future weather events.

Since Cyclone Gabrielle hit in February 2023, more than 70 major slips have been repaired, including damage on six key roads: Pukehuia Road, Whakapirau Road, Houto Road, Huarau Road, Pouto Road and Mangawhai Road.

These repairs were complex and required detailed engineering work before construction could begin.

Mangawhai Road was one of the largest and most challenging slip repair projects ever undertaken in Kaipara. The fix saw the team use anchored H piles with a mesh-faced reinforced wall slope – a hybrid solution that provided significant cost savings over a traditional concrete wall, and one that addressed significant ground movement at the site. The road had to be closed while crews repaired ongoing land movement. Around 3,600 vehicles use this crucial artery every day.

As well as repairing storm damage, our crews carried out work to make important roads more resilient to future storms. In Dargaville, they improved drainage and strengthened

Victoria Street after a blocked culvert was found beneath the road.

To help keep children, families and our school communities safer, we introduced variable speed limits outside every school in Kaipara. Please adhere to these when you drive past one.



Pukehuia Road slip repair

Protecting against floods

Upgrades were made to floodgates at Beach Road and Owairangi to improve drainage and reduce flood risk for nearby homes, farms and roads. Work is also advancing on the K Canal floodgate project, which will help protect the Raupō Drainage District by improving drainage, reducing flood risk and limiting saltwater intrusion, strengthening the area's long-term resilience to flooding.

We raised the flood protection bank around the Dargaville wastewater treatment plant to better protect it from flooding and severe weather.



Ruawai and the Northern Wairoa River

Designing spaces for everyone

Harding Park in Dargaville received international recognition, earning a prestigious Green Flag Award® for its high standards and excellent management.

During the year, the park became the first permanent StoryWalk® in Kaipara, which encourages children and families to enjoy reading while outdoors.

In Pahi, a new nautical-themed playground now gives local and visiting children a safer and more accessible place to play.

We also approved plans for a community-led mountain bike park in Mangawhai, creating more outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.



Pahi playground

Making way for a new community facility

Work to remove the Northern Wairoa War Memorial Hall and Annex buildings began on 1 October. The project will also reinstate the heritage-listed Municipal Building.

The work is expected to take about 18 weeks.

This is the next step in a wider project to plan and build a future community facility for Dargaville. A working group is helping to identify future community needs and secure funding.

We will continue to keep the community updated. Find out more at kaipara.govt.nz/dthp

\$6.3 million investment in Dargaville's water network

Pipes that help deliver drinking water to homes and businesses across Dargaville are getting a major upgrade, with a \$6.3 million-dollar watermain renewal project across the town.

Approximately 4.3 kilometres of watermains are being replaced between the water treatment plant and Logan Street, via Station Road, Edward Street, Day Street, Beach Road and the Kaihu River bridge on State Highway 12. Work is expected to finish in late June 2027 and will be carried out in stages to keep roads open as much as possible.



Watermain renewals on Logan Street, Dargaville

Rates rebate: Could you save up to \$830?

If you own and live in your home, you may be eligible for a government rates rebate of up to \$830.

Most ratepayers with an annual income of \$33,210 or less can qualify. For SuperGold cardholders, the income threshold is \$46,400. You may still be eligible even if your income is above these thresholds. Find out if you qualify:

- kaipara.govt.nz/rates
- visit a council office in Mangawhai or Dargaville
- call 0800 727 059

For SuperGold cardholders

If you're applying in person, please bring your SuperGold card. If applying by mail or email, include a copy of the side showing your name and signature for verification.

Don't miss out. Check your eligibility today and see if you could reduce your rates bill.