

# Onepoto delay causes a stink

By RACHAEL CLARKE

The pond in Onepoto Domain remains toxic despite Auckland Council's plan to control the issue last winter.

Residents and boating enthusiasts who use it regularly spent eight years asking for work to be done to improve the water quality — and they are still waiting.

Located on the western side of Onepoto Domain, the pond is at its worst during summer when the stench

“We noticed the terrible smell and the amount of debris and plastic in the lake”

Laurain Magennis

becomes stronger as the water and sludge heats up.

Carol Bergquist from the Onepoto Lagoon Committee, who says the pond is in a “terrible state”, blames the delay on a design taste dispute.

“There were some design issues — they need to meet sailing demands and water treatment's demands. It's still going to go ahead this winter.”

Two weeks ago she took a dying gull to Bird Rescue and she isn't alone in taking the welfare of Onepoto's birds and wildlife into her hands.

Concerned resident Laurain Magennis counted nine dead ducks two weeks



**Sickly:** The sight and stench of the pond is hard to avoid, say neighbouring residents.

ago while taking her daughter and two grandsons for an evening walk.

“We noticed the terrible smell and the amount of debris and plastic in the lake. On closer inspection we discovered sick and dying ducks. We rescued two which were stuck in the mud.

“Unfortunately one died over night and the second one will be receiving treatment from Bird Rescue.”

She says it's clear no one from council has been out to the lake for sometime.

Bird Rescue's Sylvia Durrant says the council needs to take action.

“It's very very hot weather. There's no rain, no water and the lake gets botulism.

“The city council come and put barley straw in lakes to keep it clean but they didn't do it there [Onepoto] this time. No birds can breathe.

The council has got to do something about it.”

Kaipatiki Local Board chairwoman Kay McIntyre told the *North Shore Times* last year that the pond's desilting project was scheduled to start once the board had gone through the required resource consenting process.

She understood then that the project was held up due to budget constraints.

After meeting with the stormwater engineer responsible for the delivery of the project on March 17, McIntyre says work on the pond will now begin in April.

The contract is being let this week and work is expected to start soon, she says.

“The aim is to get the majority of the physical work completed before the end of April.”

## Disused phone starts fire

A self igniting cellphone is said to be the cause of a house fire in Beach Haven.

Birkenhead Fire Station officer Russell Wilkinson says an investigation following the fire in a two-storied home on Anchor Place on March 11 determined the cause to be an unused smart phone.

He says the owner had thought the phone to be no longer working and had left it in a bedside table upstairs.

The table had caught fire when the phone ignited and soon spread through the bedroom and second storey.

Wilkinson says there was extensive fire damage to the bedroom and extensive smoke damage on the top floor while the ground level had water damage.

He says it serves as a reminder to dispose of unused electronics appropriately.

“It is very rare for this to happen but it's not unheard of,” he says.

No-one was home at the time and the house and contents are fully insured.