

## Ways to improve your well-being

### Ngā kaupapa hei whakare i te oranga tāngata

Everyone is different, which is why we've come up with a range of options that will help you find balance, build strength and boost your well-being:

1. **Discover our stories:** Take your own wairua (spiritual) journey and learn about the stories of our ancestors by following the Tupapa heritage trail.
2. **Take a short walk:** There are short-walking tracks within 20 minutes drive of Gisborne city, with options for using a ViMo all-terrain wheelchair if mobility is an issue.
3. **Get involved as a volunteer:** Connect with nature by volunteering with conservation working bees or helping people with disabilities to access nature.
4. **Fun activities with the whānau:**
  - **Outdoors:** Several local reserves are great for activities with children, or you can take the kids to a conservation working bee, on an overnight tramp or to the Gisborne Botanical Gardens.
  - **Indoors:** DOC's website has some great activities for you and your whānau to try, including in your backyard.

### Feedback

We'll update this guide as we get more ideas for connecting with nature in Tairāwhiti. And we'll be developing other guides to cover other areas in Tairāwhiti.

We welcome feedback on how we can improve the information in this guide. See the contact information at the end of this guide.

#### Before you head out

Before you head outdoors, make sure you're prepared. Read 'Care for Aotearoa' in this guide.

## Discover our stories

### Ngā kaupapa hei hura māhau

#### Taha wairua (spiritual health)

In te ao Māori, wairua (spirituality) is a key part of well-being and good health. Wairua helps us have hope for the future and recognise and celebrate the links we have with others in the world around us.

Spending time in nature, learning about whakapapa and nurturing your relationships with whānau and friends are all key ways to find comfort on your own wairua journey.

Connect with the natural world by going on hikes or walks either alone or with loved ones. Find quiet places to sit and look at the plants, animals and clouds. Learn about the history of the lands you stand on.

If you are not sure of how to get started on your wairua journey, talk to your local marae or kaumātua about places of significance and/or how you can find out more.

#### Tupapa heritage trail

The Tupapa heritage trail can help you make connections with the whakapapa (genealogy) and whenua (land) of Tūranganui-a-Kiwa Gisborne. It describes the places where different iwi (tribes) connect through shared history and ancestry.

Puhi Kai Iti / Cook Landing National Historic Reserve along the trail is a special place to stop and reflect on the journey through 1,000 years of our people's navigational past.

Download the app from the Tupapa website at [www.tupapa.nz/trail.html](http://www.tupapa.nz/trail.html) and discover the stories of our ancestors' experiences of this place.



Puhi Kai Iti / Cook Landing National Historic Reserve. Photo: Jamie Quirk

## Ways to wellness – Tairāwhiti

### He Ara Taiao ki te Ora – Tairāwhiti

A guide to help you improve your well-being by connecting with nature



Department of  
Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

## Take a short walk He hīkoi poto te hāere

### Self-directed / free / no need to book

There are lots of health benefits to walking. It is relatively easy on the muscles and joints and carries a low risk of injury. Regular walking can help to reduce the risk of health conditions like obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers. It also improves your heart rate and circulation, muscle strength, overall health and well-being, self-esteem and stress levels.

Overleaf we've listed five short walks you can explore within 15-20 minutes drive of Gisborne city centre.

A whānau overnight tramp is featured in the 'Fun activities with the whānau' section. This is a tramping track, not a short walk.

### Before you go

- check you are wearing sturdy walking shoes
- dress for the weather conditions
- take a drink bottle
- make sure you're prepared (see 'Care for Aotearoa').

### Accessibility

To make it easier for a wider range of people to get around the parks and reserves in Gisborne, there are a few ViMo all-terrain wheelchairs available for loan.

#### What is ViMo?

ViMo means vitality in motion. It's a multi-function, all-terrain, lightweight collapsible recreational wheelchair. It would benefit people with a disability, elderly people, or those who are experiencing injury and illness, including whānau with limited mobility. ViMo chairs don't move by themselves - you will need someone to push them.

The ViMo chairs can tackle many of the walking tracks and green spaces but they are not suitable for steps.

Where can you get a ViMo wheelchair?

To borrow one of the ViMo wheelchairs, please contact:

- Parafed Tairāwhiti: mobile 020 408 09069 or [www.facebook.com/ParafedGT](https://www.facebook.com/ParafedGT)
- Tairāwhiti Environment Centre: phone 06 867 4708 or [www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre](https://www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre)

The chairs are available for loan free of charge, but do need to be booked in advance.



A wheelchair symbol shows the short walks that are suitable for wheelchairs.

## Connecting with nature around te Tairāwhiti

### Te tūhono ki te ao tūturu i te Tairāwhiti

Connecting with nature can help improve people's health and well-being – body, mind and spirit.

#### Being in nature:

- makes people feel happier and reduces stress
- restores mental balance to give people more energy and focus for the regular activities we all need to do in our lives
- gives us access to vitamin D, which we need to make healthy bones and muscles.

The Tairāwhiti region is one of the best places in the country for deepening your connection with the natural world. It has a range of natural landscapes and recreational options and a rich and interesting natural history to explore. Find your own nature-based ways to wellness, either alone or alongside whānau and friends.

We've put together this guide to help you on your wellness journey. It lists some easy ways you can improve your well-being by connecting with nature and follows the Mental Health Foundation's 'Five Ways to Wellbeing':

- Connect
- Take notice
- Be active
- Give
- Keep learning.

We hope you enjoy your experience in nature.

E manako nui ana ka mīharo pai koe i roto i tēnei whēako.

## Okitu Bush Scenic Reserve

SH35, Wainui Beach, heading up the coast  
20–30 minutes (loop)



Okitu Track is an easy walk through native bush includes a grassy picnic area close to the car park and is a great option for families. The Wainui-Makorori headland is just across the highway and gives access down to the beach for another great walk.

### What you need to know

- The loop track has a gravel surface. It crosses three small footbridges and passes through relatively dense native bush.
- There is an optional walk up to a lookout platform where you can get views of Wainui Beach and the surrounding hills.
- This reserve is great for activities with the family (see 'Fun activities with the whānau').
- As the reserve is right on the edge of SH35, be careful driving in and out of the car park. Traffic will be travelling fast and may appear with little warning – keep clear of the road and supervise children in the car park.
- No toilets at the reserve, but there are toilets 200 metres away on the beachside.
- The track is not wheelchair accessible.
- There is an entry/exit at Sirrah Street, Okitu.

For further information, search for 'Okitu Bush Scenic Reserve walk' on the DOC website: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz).

## Titirangi Maunga (Kaiti Hill)

Via Ranfurly Street / Queens Drive or  
Rakaiaatane / Kaiti Beach Roads  
30 min – 2 hr (loop)



Titirangi Maunga (Kaiti Hill) provides great views of Gisborne city and the bay towards Māhia. There is a network of walking paths through mostly native bush in the Titirangi Reserve, and the area is part of the Tupapa heritage trail. The area is close to the city centre and has a range of entry points and six parking areas.

### What you need to know

- The reserve offers various walking options on well-formed paths and sealed roads with a moderate to steep gradient.
- There are four main lookouts, picnic areas, a playground and a fitness trail in the reserve.
- There is also a World War II gun emplacement.
- Dogs must be kept under control at all times.
- There are no toilets in this reserve.
- The tracks in this area are not wheelchair accessible.
- A water fountain is available on the corner of Queen's Drive heading up Titirangi.



Picnic area on Titirangi. Photo: Sandra Groves

## Gisborne Riverbank and Oneroa Walkway

Riverbank walkway and beachside boardwalk  
(from Gisborne city centre)  
10–60 min, 2.5 km (one way)



This walk follows the banks of the Taruheru and Turanganui rivers and takes in the best view of the city's beaches. There are several starting points along the way from the Taruheru River end of Bright Street, anywhere along Reads Quay or multiple access points along the beachfront from Waikanae to Midway Beach. The walk is part of the Tupapa heritage trail.

### What you need to know

- The walkway is a flat, well-formed, two-lane concrete path and boardwalk catering for walkers and cyclists.
- At 2.5 km one way, it can be walked or cycled in either direction or completed as a circuit.
- Dogs must be kept under control at all times.
- There are toilets at Waikanae Beach or Midway Beach.
- The walkway is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies.



Walkers on Oneroa Walkway. Photo: Sandra Groves



Okitu Bush Scenic Reserve. Photo: DOC



Titirangi walking track. Photo: Sandra Groves



Oneroa Walkway. Photo: Sandra Groves



Grays Bush Scenic Reserve wheelchair access. Photo: Trudi Ngawhare



People gathering at Bioblitz at Waihirere Domain. Photo: DOC



Joe Waikari with Te Karaka School at Waihirere Domain. Photo: Trudi Ngawhare

## Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve

Back Ormond Road  
15 min–1 hour



Gray's Bush is one of Gisborne's most popular short walk destinations. It's a living museum – a small reminder of what the Gisborne plains must have been like in the ancient past. The reserve is a haven for native and introduced birdlife and boasts a canopy of impressive kahikatea and pūriri forest.

### What you need to know

- Two main tracks loop and link within the reserve on easy, flat ground – no hills or steps.
- A 15–20 minute loop track is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies.
- This reserve is great for activities with the family (see 'Fun activities with the whānau').
- Enjoy Gray's Bush but look after its ecology – don't litter or take anything from the reserve.
- The area can be muddy in the winter or after a lot of rain.
- There are no toilets.

### For further information

Search for 'Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve walks' on the DOC website at: [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz).



Upgraded wheelchair track at Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve. Photo: Dave Lynn

## Waihirere Domain

Waihirere Domain Rd, off Back Ormond Road  
(9 km from Gisborne)  
40–50 minutes (return)



Just 3.5 km north of Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve on Back Ormond Road lies Waihirere Domain, a pretty picnic area with play equipment in a large clearing surrounded by mostly native bush. A scenic walk beside a stream through native bush leads to a small waterfall – a great place to take the kids.

- The walk is over uneven ground with exposed tree roots.
- Dogs must be kept under control at all times.
- Wheelchairs are not recommended for this track.

### For further information

For more information on other walks around Gisborne, see:

Department of Conservation at [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

Gisborne District Council at [www.gdc.govt.nz](http://www.gdc.govt.nz)

Gisborne i-SITE Visitor Information Centre at [www.tairawhitigisborne.co.nz](http://www.tairawhitigisborne.co.nz)
















For more information about ways to wellness, contact: Tairāwhiti Environment Centre, 386 Palmerston Road, Gisborne at [www.tairawhitienviro.nz](http://www.tairawhitienviro.nz)

### Track grades

**Easy access short walk**  
Track is well formed, with an even surface. Suitable for people of most ages and fitness levels.

**Short walk**  
Well-formed track with easy walking for up to an hour. There may be steps or slopes. Suitable for most abilities and fitness levels. Walking shoes required.

### Track symbols

-  Wheelchair accessible
-  Short walk
-  Shared use walking/cycling
-  Parking
-  Toilets
-  Picnic shelter
-  Dogs on leash
-  Boardwalk
-  Sightseeing
-  Interpretation panels
-  No dogs
-  No littering
-  Do not remove vegetation
-  Managed by DOC
-  Managed by Gisborne District Council

Waihirere Domain

Waihirere

Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve

Hexton

Matawhero

GISBORNE

Gisborne Riverbank and Oneroa Walkway

Okitu Bush Scenic Reserve

Okitu

Titirangi Maunga (Kaiti Hill) Walking Track

Wainui

Tūranganui-a-Kiwa  
Poverty Bay

Tuamotu  
Island

Sponge  
Bay

Shark  
Bay

Taruheru River

Turanganui River

## Conservation activities

There are many conservation activities you can do in your own garden and with the whānau, such as backyard trapping, attracting birds to your garden, picking up rubbish and more.

DOC has pulled together a collection of these activities on the 'Conservation activities' webpage at [www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-activities](http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation-activities).

## Working bees

Keep an eye on the Tairāwhiti Environment Centre page at [www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre](https://www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre) for an opportunity to take your tamariki to a community working bee, such as a beach rubbish clean-up or planting day.

## Whānau overnight tramp

Fit families looking to connect with nature can try an overnight tramp from the Moanui Road end to Koranga Forks Hut (6 bunks) in the Waioeka Conservation Area.

You can find out more about the Koranga Tawa Loop Track on DOC's website at [www.doc.govt.nz/koranga-tawa-loop](http://www.doc.govt.nz/koranga-tawa-loop).

## Gisborne Botanical Gardens

Visit the Botanical Gardens on the corner of Roebuck and Aberdeen roads next to the Taruheru River. It has a playground, plants and picnic spots.

**For further information on ways you can get involved, contact:**



## Get involved as a volunteer

### Tūhono mai hei tūao

#### Why volunteer?

Conservation projects always welcome new volunteers. Volunteers can engage with nature to help a local community and themselves, including by learning more about native plants and animals, gaining new skills and making new friends. Time spent in nature also reduces stress and improves health and well-being.

#### How to get involved?

To find out more about opportunities to volunteer and to sign up to their volunteer list, contact the Tairāwhiti Environment Centre, phone 06 8674708, visit [www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre](https://www.facebook.com/tairawhitienvironmentcentre) or the Gisborne Volunteer Centre at [info@gisbornevolunteercentre.org.nz](mailto:info@gisbornevolunteercentre.org.nz).

#### Do you want to be a support person to help others get out into nature?

Are you interested in helping others get into nature? Contact the Gisborne Volunteer Centre to find out about volunteer roles helping people with disabilities access nature.

You will need to register for a role through the Volunteer Centre, phone 06 868 4522 or drop into the office in Treble Court, Peel Street, Gisborne to find out more.

A ViMo (all-terrain wheelchair) is also available from the Tairāwhiti Environment Centre or Parafed Tairawhiti.



Louise Ellery (Parafed Gisborne Tairawhiti) with Cory Newman.

## Care for Aotearoa



#### Protect nature

Keep your distance and don't feed wildlife. Follow any rules restricting dogs, fires, drones or vehicles.



#### Be prepared

Stay safe in the outdoors by following the Land Safety Code.

- ▶ Choose the right trip for you.
- ▶ Understand the weather.
- ▶ Pack warm clothes and extra food.
- ▶ Share your plans and take ways to get help.
- ▶ Take care of yourself and each other.



#### Keep NZ clean

Take all rubbish with you and use toilets where provided.



#### Show respect

Respect others, respect culture.



Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai



## Further information

Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai  
Turanganui-a-Kiwa / Gisborne Office  
63 Carnarvon Street  
Gisborne 4010

PHONE: +64 06 869 0460

EMAIL: [gisborne@doc.govt.nz](mailto:gisborne@doc.govt.nz)

[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

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Te Whatu Ora Tairāwhiti, Gisborne District Council, Gisborne Volunteer Centre, Sport Gisborne Tairāwhiti, Tairāwhiti Environment Centre, Parafed Gisborne Tairāwhiti, Strive Rehabilitation Tairāwhiti, Pinnacle Health, Te Waharoa, Gizzy Local, Taiao Huru Huri and First Chapter.

Cover image: A Gisborne home school family in the Whinray Scenic Reserve.  
Photo: Trudi Ngawhare

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## Find your inner nature

The goal of the walk is to notice as many pleasurable things as possible, slowly, one after another. Use all your senses—sight, smell, sound, touch.

- Find five different types of leaves (different colours, shapes, textures and sizes).
- Look for flowers on the native trees. Often native trees have tiny, delicate flowers.
- Find a natural seat (comfy log or boulder) near water, and listen to the music of the water for 5 minutes.
- Lift up a rotten log and see how many different insects are hiding underneath it.
- Listen to a bird singing. Does it repeat the same notes or does it sing a tune? How many of that type of bird can you hear at once? Can you hear different birdsongs?
- Take your shoes off and walk the track barefoot for a while – how different do you feel walking barefoot?
- Take some deep breaths and smell nature. What does it smell like? Sweet, earthy, musky?
- Try to feel which way the wind is blowing, and identify what things move when the wind blows: leaves, grass, flowers, tree branches, etc
- Look for moss. See how many examples of nature's carpet you can find.

Let your senses guide you through the Tairāwhiti Environment Centre Garden, which is enclosed and secure for young and old. The centre is open from 9 am to 3 pm Tuesday to Friday, 386 Palmerston Road, Gisborne.

Take your time and enjoy! The more you look the more you will see.



## Fun activities with the whānau Ngā mahi pārekareka ma te whānau

Use these fun activities to help get the whānau together and active in nature. From exploring nature reserves with the children and taking part in conservation activities and working bees, to going on a whānau overnight tramp and visiting the botanical gardens, we've got you covered.

For easy, practical activities for getting outside with your whānau and taking a moment for nature, visit '50 things to do' at [www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/conservation-activities/50-things-to-do](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/conservation-activities/50-things-to-do)

You can enjoy nature wherever you are. From your window, balcony, backyard or on your local neighbourhood walk. All these activities have been designed to make getting out into nature easy for you and your whānau.

Take the fun outside with this pack of tiny adventures, designed to step the whānau outside to explore and perfect for younger tamariki. Check out the activities at 'Haerenga Mō Waho Outside Adventures' at [www.doc.govt.nz/haerenga-mo-waho](http://www.doc.govt.nz/haerenga-mo-waho).

The backyard, local park, beach or river – any nature close to you will do! Made with our friends at Sparklers and SKIP to help you head outside for a quick, fun whānau adventure and to celebrate te reo Māori.

There are nature activities for families at home too, from experiencing birds in your backyard, getting moving in nature to exploring the night sky. For these ideas, visit [www.doc.govt.nz/familyactivities](http://www.doc.govt.nz/familyactivities).



Bella and Hamish Swann at Gray's Bush Scenic Reserve.  
Photo: Sandra Groves