



## Waitangi National Trust information sheet

Waitangi Treaty Grounds are part of an estate comprising over 500 hectares. The land and buildings of the estate were purchased by then Governor-General Lord Bledisloe in 1932 and put into trust to ensure they are cared for and protected in perpetuity on behalf of the citizens of New Zealand.

Waitangi National Trust was established by Act of Parliament in 1932 to administer the estate and its Deed of Trust sets out its role and objectives. As kaitiaki of the estate, the Board of Waitangi National Trust takes responsibility to:

- Maintain and enhance the Waitangi National Trust estate and its taonga as a place of belonging for all New Zealanders;
- Oversee the sustainable development of the land and assets of the Trust through appropriate maintenance, conservation and management;
- Preserve, protect and present taonga (treasures) in the Trust's care;
- Promote further understanding of Te Tiriti, its significance as the nation's founding document and its continuing relevance to our life as a nation;
- Develop and apply its own tikanga (culture) governing access to and use of the site of the first signing of Te Tiriti, Te Whare Rūnanga (meeting house) and its marae, and Ngātokimatawhaorua, the ceremonial canoe.
- Ensure the Waitangi National Trust estate is used appropriately to commemorate the first signing of Te Tiriti.

Every year on 6 February – Waitangi Day – people of all communities and backgrounds gather at Waitangi to commemorate the first signing of New Zealand's founding document: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, The Treaty of Waitangi, on 6 February 1840. In that year, representatives of the British Crown and over 500 Māori rangatira signed what is often considered to be New Zealand's founding document. The day was first officially commemorated in 1934 and has been a public holiday since 1974.

Ongoing recognition of Te Tiriti as the nation's founding document will continue to keep this commemoration alive, as the Treaty continues to live as part of New Zealand's past, present and future. Waitangi Day is recognised as New Zealand's national day and is the most important annual marker in the country's history.

On 6 February each year the Treaty Grounds closes its buildings for the day and the grounds become the location for the Waitangi Day Festival.

COVID-19 has forced Waitangi National Trust to re-think the commemorations for 2022 due to health and safety considerations for visitors, staff and the local community. The Trust has moved the commemoration to a virtual one, involving TV3, national and local radio, and various digital platforms.

## **Waitangi National Trust Board**

The Waitangi National Trust Board, established by the Waitangi National Trust Board Act (1932), includes descendants of key people involved with the first signing of Te Tiriti at Waitangi in 1840, as well as representatives of all geographical regions of New Zealand. Trustees are appointed for an initial three-year term and can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. Trustees are entirely voluntary and receive no remuneration for their service.

### **The Inaugural Waitangi National Trust Board in 1932 consisted of:**

- Lord and Lady Bledisloe as life members (the donors of the Estate to the Nation)
- Vernon Reed, formerly MP for Bay of Islands
- Prime Minister George Forbes
- Alfred Ransom, Minister in charge of the Scenery Preservation Act
- Sir Apirana Ngata, the Native Minister
- Kenneth Williams, a member of the Williams missionary family
- Riri Maihi Kawiti representing the families of Hone Heke, Maihi Kawiti, Tamati Waka Nene and Pomare
- The Māori King, Te Rata Mahuta
- Sir Robert Heaton Rhodes, representing the people of the South Island
- Sir Francis Dillon Bell, representing the family of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, founder of the New Zealand Company
- Gordon Coates, a former Prime Minister.

The Board continues to be made up of descendants and representatives of people directly associated with this historic site. The incumbent Governor-General has the right to choose to be Patron of the Trust.

### **The Waitangi National Trust Board 2022 consists of:**

- Pita Tipene, a member of the family of Maihi Kawiti (Chair)
- Tania Simpson, a member of the family of Pomare (Deputy Chair)
- Ngā Wai-hono-i-te-pō Paki, a representative of the Māori people living in the North Island south of the City of Auckland

- Dame Claudia Orange, a person prominent in the life of the country as a statesman
- Dennis McBrearty, a representative of the Pākeha residents of the Bay of Islands district
- Hon Kate Wilkinson, a representative of the people, Pākeha and Māori, living in the South Island
- Hon Peeni Henare, a representative of the Māori people living in the North Auckland Peninsula
- Jane Fletcher, a member of the family of the late Archdeacon Henry Williams
- Mita Harris, a member of the family of Tamati Waka Nene
- Wiremu Puriri, a member of the family of Hone Heke
- Hugh Cotterill, a representative of the family of the late James Busby
- Willow-Jean Prime, appointed by the Prime Minister to represent the Government
- Dr Shane Reti, appointed by the Leader of the Opposition, following consultation with the leader of each party that is not in Government or in coalition with the Government
- David Dunsheath, a representative of the family of the late Edward Gibbon Wakefield