



# State of Wellbeing


Tairāwhiti Report  
2025



# Tātau



# Tātau

**Tātau**  **Tātau** and the theme of sharing is central  
to our kaupapa and vision for the region of  
**Te Mana** - Shared Pride, **Te Ihi** - Shared Prosperity  
and **Te Wehi** - Shared Opportunity.



We are pleased to present the inaugural State of Wellbeing Report for Tairāwhiti, informed by the Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Survey (TWS). The TWS is an annual initiative led by Trust Tairāwhiti to measure and track regional wellbeing.

This report represents a collective journey as a region, bringing together insights from rich and comprehensive data spanning three pivotal years (2022–2024). The intent is to deepen our understanding of Tairāwhiti, shape thoughtful policies, investments, and effectively serve our communities' diverse wellbeing needs.

The survey is designed to capture the perspectives and experiences of our local communities, providing a robust evidence base for data-driven decision-making and investment in the region.

Responses are benchmarked against the Trust's wellbeing framework, He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora. The framework guides Trust distributions, investments and operations to ensure they deliver meaningful outcomes for Tairāwhiti.

This report brings together insights from the last three years.

# The Trust's journey of measuring wellbeing

Trust Tairāwhiti is the regional community trust, with a strategic focus on economic development, community initiatives and investments that support the wellbeing of our people and place.

Since the Trust's inception in 1993, it has provided millions in funding for community projects and initiatives. While it was assumed those initiatives positively impacted the community, this was not measured.

In 2018, Trustees set a strategic focus on regional wellbeing and committed to better understanding the impacts of their decision-making. Investing in wellbeing can be challenging, but it's the right thing to do.

The Trust led a significant community engagement programme to understand what wellbeing meant to the people of Tairāwhiti. That engagement informed the development of He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora.

At the centre of the framework is a waharoa, a metaphoric gateway to wellbeing made up of the fundamental principles of equity, sustainability and integrity. Woven into the framework are muka, representing the aspirational wellbeing outcomes as defined by the people of Tairāwhiti. They are interdependent and when woven together, create the enduring vision we have for regional wellbeing.

He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora — 'Our people, whānau and communities can live the lives they value in ways that matter to us.'

## Headline indicators

Through the framework development, headline indicators were determined for each of the wellbeing muka (domains) and the TWS was created to collect local data on how the region is tracking with its wellbeing.



### Hapori Communities

- Overall life satisfaction
- Family wellbeing
- Sense (locus) of control
- Self-rated health
- House is cold in winter



### Ōhanga Economy

- Employment rate\*
- Household income meets everyday needs
- Not paid essential bills on time in last 12 months
- Median hourly earnings (real, deflated 2017 dollars)\*
- GDP: 5 largest industries\*



### Mātauranga Knowledge

- Te Reo Māori proficiency
- Number of information sources used
- School entrants with prior Early Childhood Education (ECE)\*
- Post school qualifications



### Taiao Environment

- Air quality in local area
- State of coastal water and beaches locally
- State of rivers and lakes locally
- State of lands and soils locally
- Biodiversity (amount) locally
- Biodiversity (health) locally



### Tūhono Relationships

- Trust in others
- Felt lonely in last four weeks
- Social support: Able to find someone to stay with
- Sense of belonging to region
- Feel safe walking alone in your neighbourhood at night

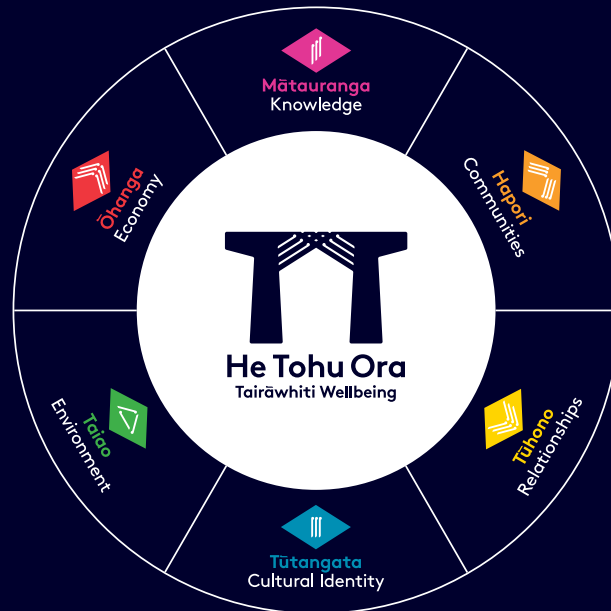


### Tūtangata Cultural Identity

- Ability to speak Te Reo Māori in day-to-day conversation
- Ability to express identity
- Reported discrimination

\* Sources other than TWS, refer Sources on page 23 for details.

# He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Framework



## Waharoa

In partnering with the Trust, we encourage you to step through our waharoa. It is always open to anyone who aspires to benefit the people of Tairāwhiti.



### Ngā Pou

All people, whānau, and communities of Tairāwhiti have unhindered access to support and opportunities that enhance their wellbeing.



### Ngā Pou

We are good ancestors. Children, young people and future generations have a better set of opportunities than the current generation.



### Te Taahu

Tairāwhiti upholds Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Mana Whenua partnerships are maintained with integrity.

## Muka

Our muka represent wellbeing outcomes that are aspirational. They are inter-dependent and when woven together, create a dynamic and enduring vision that we have for regional wellbeing.



The Tairāwhiti economy is diverse, innovative, resilient, and regenerative and provides access to well-paid, quality jobs. Our people have sustainable livelihoods from paid and unpaid work.



Diverse systems of knowledge, information, and Mātauranga Māori are accessible, utilised, valued and evolve.



Communities are healthy, happy, and empowered. The voice of communities is integral to decisions that impact their lives.



The quality of our land, water, air and atmosphere is pristine. Our biodiversity is abundant. We practise kaitiakitanga.



Culture connects the people of Tairāwhiti. We express, celebrate, and value our diversity, heritage and taonga.



Our people, whānau, and communities in Tairāwhiti have respectful, connected and collaborative relationships.



# The Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Survey

The Trust conducted the first TWS in 2022. The TWS is the key way we engage with our communities to understand their life experiences and perspectives. Each year, the survey asks a set of core questions that track wellbeing outcomes over time. These questions are directly linked to He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora and ensure we can measure how people, whānau, and communities are faring across the six muka (domains of wellbeing).

## The survey has a modular design consisting of:

- **Core wellbeing module:** A condensed version of the NZ General Social Survey that measures headline wellbeing indicators.
- **Trust Tairāwhiti module:** Questions that connect directly to our strategic priorities in Te Aka Rautaki ki te Tau 2029.
- **Regional partner module:** This provides a platform for other organisations in Tairāwhiti to ask their own questions, tailored to their priorities. By including these within the same survey, partners get richer, locally grounded insights that help them better understand and serve the needs of our people.

This modular design ensures that the TWS is not just a research exercise, but a living tool that adapts as priorities shift. It helps us, and our partners, gather high-quality local data that often isn't available from national surveys, while also

keeping the survey relevant and connected to the issues our communities face.

By combining consistent core measures with flexible modules, the TWS creates a clear picture of wellbeing in Tairāwhiti today, while also supporting smarter, evidence-based decisions for tomorrow.

## Why do we collect this data?

- To track Tairāwhiti wellbeing in the same way it's measured nationally, while aligning with our local wellbeing framework.
- To monitor local wellbeing outcomes over time.
- To help identify groups or areas with specific wellbeing concerns based on age, gender, ethnicity, geographic location, or need.
- Where applicable, to help assess the impact of local and regional policy interventions on the wellbeing of the people involved.

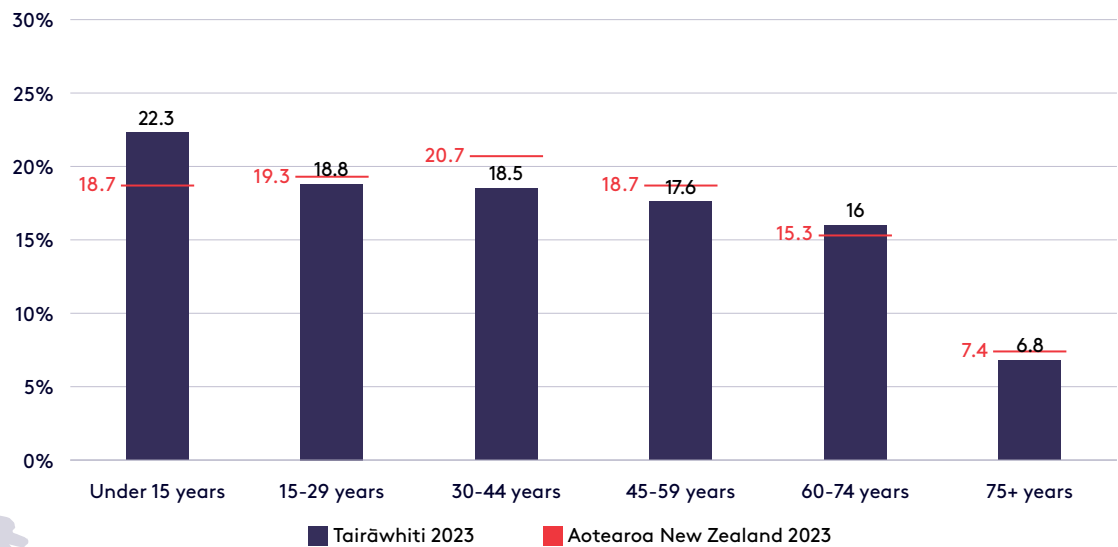
A national pilot survey was also conducted in 2022, which provided national-level contextual data using the same survey instrument as used for the TWS. In 2023 and 2024, a second and third annual TWS were conducted, with a fourth survey to begin in October 2025.

# Setting the scene

Tairāwhiti is located on New Zealand’s East Coast with a population of about 53,300 in 2024.

The region is characterised by a youthful demographic with 40% of residents under the age of 30. Māori make up about 54% of the population.

Population by fifteen-year age group 2023 Census



Between 2022 and 2024, Tairāwhiti encountered significant challenges that tested its resilience post-pandemic. In February 2023, Cyclone Gabrielle hit the region, resulting in widespread flooding and landslides, causing extensive damage to infrastructure, homes and farmland. This disaster required major and ongoing recovery efforts supported by local and national agencies.

## Tairāwhiti

Gisborne

“The coast upon which the sun shines across the water.”



# Key learnings

The Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Survey data shows that the region's strongest areas of wellbeing capital are in our communities, relationships and cultural identity. These muka tend to have a higher proportion of people with good outcomes when compared to national averages and have strengthened over time or stayed firm, despite the challenges post-Covid-19 and Cyclone Gabrielle.

The environment, economy and access to knowledge are the most concerning areas for residents in Tairāwhiti when it comes to their wellbeing. These areas either lag behind the national average or remain relatively low.

Trust Tairāwhiti conducted a multiple disadvantage analysis, examining the influence of each area of wellbeing and how it influenced overall life satisfaction and whānau wellbeing.

While community and relationships had the biggest overall impact, improvements in economic outcomes were important for whānau wellbeing, something that is especially important in a region with one of the youngest populations in the country.

Cultural identity and environmental improvements show an influence on reducing overall hardship, while access to knowledge remains crucial for long-term resilience and capability.

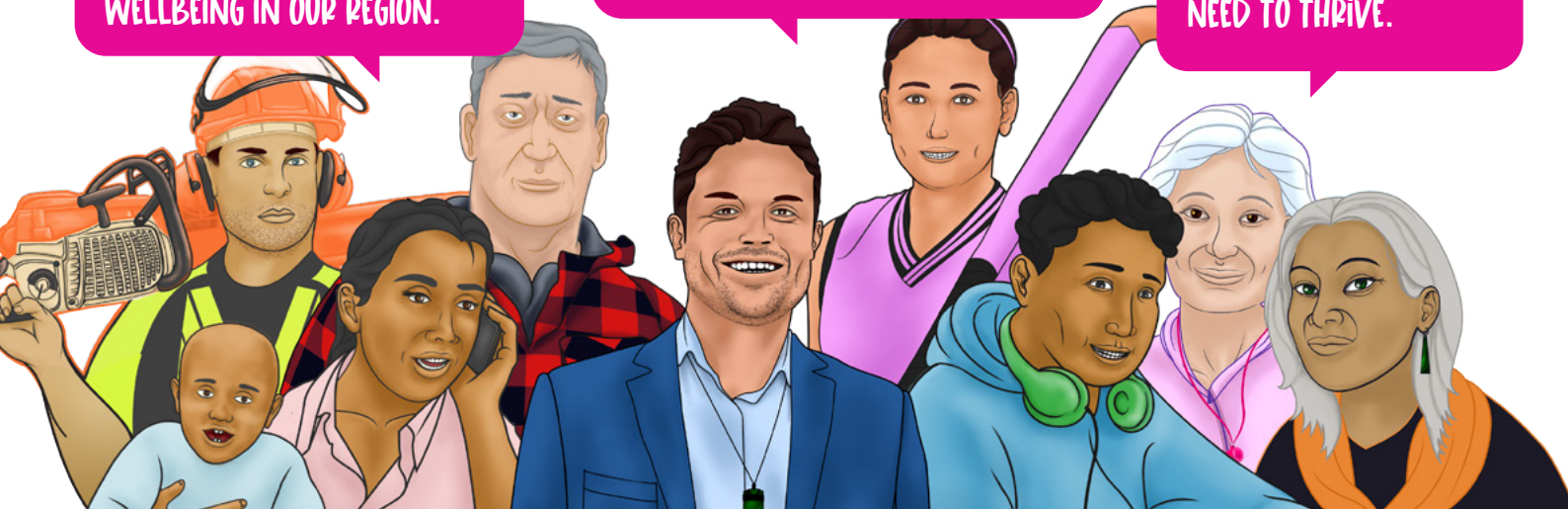
He Rangitapu He Tohu Ora and the TWS provide us with a clear line of sight between what matters most to our people, and the decisions we make as a region. By weaving together consistent measures with community voice, we are building an evidence base that not only tracks progress but also guides investment where it will have the greatest impact.

Over time, this approach strengthens resilience, sharpens our focus on equity and sustainability, and ensures that the wellbeing of whānau and communities remains at the heart of our collective journey. It's through this long-term commitment to listening, measuring, and acting that the true value of the framework and survey is realised, creating enduring benefits for the people of Tairāwhiti, today and for generations to come.

COMMUNITY, CONNECTION,  
AND CULTURE — THESE  
ARE THE CORNERSTONES OF  
WELLBEING IN OUR REGION.

BY GROWING ŌHANGA  
OPPORTUNITIES, WE CAN BOOST  
WHĀNAU WELLBEING — ESPECIALLY  
WITH ONE OF THE YOUNGEST  
POPULATIONS IN AOTEAROA.

STRONG CULTURE AND A  
HEALTHY TAIAO HELP US  
TACKLE HARDSHIP. BUT  
IT'S MĀTAURANGA THAT  
FUELS THE RESILIENCE  
AND SKILLS OUR PEOPLE  
NEED TO THRIVE.

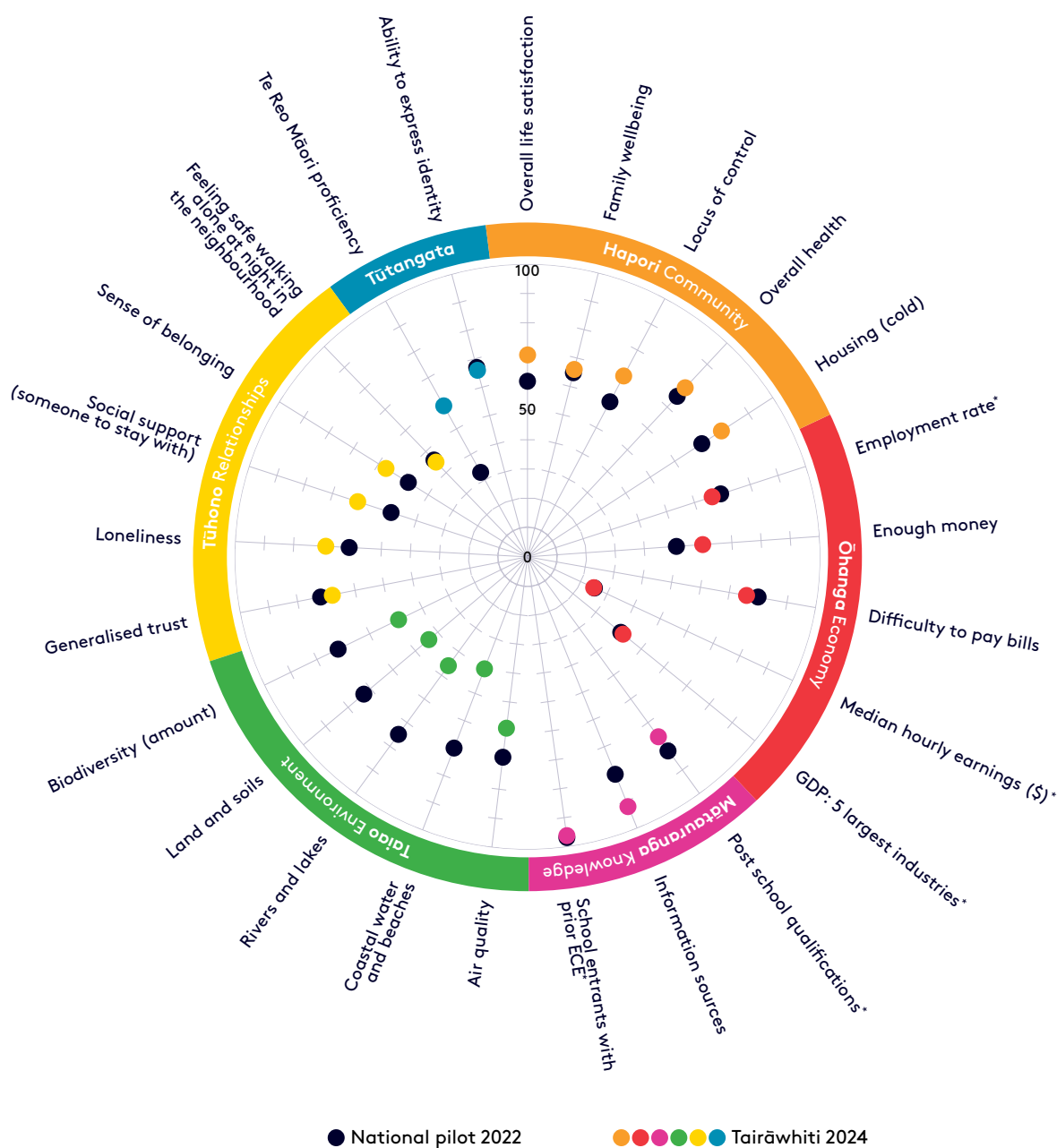




Wellbeing snapshot for Tairāwhiti 2024

Each spoke of the wheel presents the proportion of people reporting good outcomes for one of the 24 wellbeing outcome indicators. The outcomes have been clustered around the wheel relating to each of the six muka.

The further out each spoke reaches, the higher the proportion of people doing more positively for that outcome.



\* Sources other than TWS, refer Sources on page 23 for details.



# Hapori Communities

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

COMMUNITIES ARE HEALTHY,  
HAPPY, AND EMPOWERED.  
THE VOICE OF COMMUNITIES  
IS INTEGRAL TO DECISIONS  
THAT IMPACT THEIR LIVES.



This muka encapsulates self-determination, being able to make decisions and being heard. Happiness doesn't mean that people are or should be happy all the time, but rather an increase in people's experience of positive emotions relative to negative ones and a sense of satisfaction with life as a whole. Health focuses on physical health including length and quality of life.

At a glance

- Tairāwhiti residents report higher life satisfaction and sense of control in their lives when compared to the national average.
- Tairāwhiti residents report improving housing quality but have growing concerns about housing affordability in the future.
- Whānau wellbeing and self-rated health remain steady.

Insights

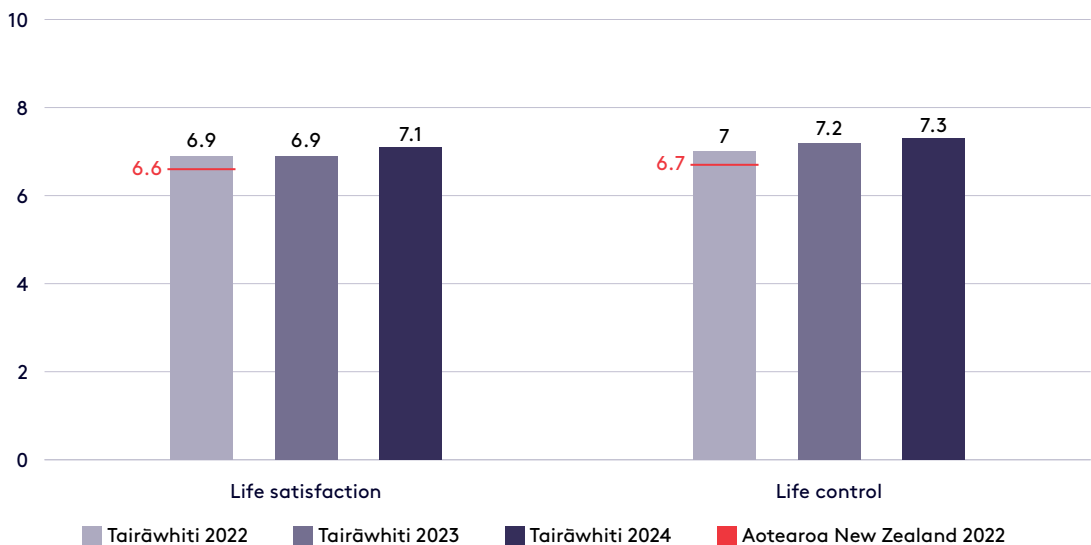
Overall, more Tairāwhiti residents are reporting higher life satisfaction (69%) and a greater sense of control over their lives (70%) in 2024, compared with 2022.

This is reassuring given that in 2022, more Tairāwhiti residents (65%) already reported a higher life satisfaction and greater sense of control over their lives than the national average (60%).

Higher levels of family wellbeing (70%) and self-rated health (79%) were also reported in 2024, although 2022 levels were more consistent with national figures of 65% and 75%.

There has also been a noticeable increase in residents reporting improved housing conditions, with 79% reporting not (or only some of the time) living in a cold house in 2024, compared to 72% in 2023 and 71% in 2022, which was the same as the national average. There are still concerns around housing affordability with only 9% of residents agreeing that housing will be more affordable in the future 2024, compared to 12% agreeing in 2022.

Mean life satisfaction and life control





# Ōhanga Economy

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

THE TAIRĀWHITI ECONOMY  
IS DIVERSE, INNOVATIVE,  
RESILIENT, AND REGENERATIVE  
AND PROVIDES ACCESS TO  
WELL-PAID, QUALITY JOBS.  
OUR PEOPLE HAVE SUSTAINABLE  
LIVELIHOODS FROM PAID AND  
UNPAID WORK.



The economy is critical to wellbeing because of jobs, income and livelihood. This muka refers to broader characteristics of the economy, including resilience, innovation and diversity. It acknowledges that a livelihood can come from paid and unpaid work. Unpaid work could be the ability to grow or hunt food to sustain your livelihood.

At a glance

- Concerns about limited economic diversification, resilience, and job options are seen in a growing negative view of Tairāwhiti as a place to start a business or for young people to live and work.
- Employment, median hourly earnings, and the proportion of people reporting no difficulty paying their bills on time all improved between 2022 and 2024.
- Despite low incomes, more people in Tairāwhiti say they have enough to get by, likely reflecting higher levels of mahinga kai, home production, and whānau or community support.

Insights

The employment rate in Tairāwhiti increased from 61% in 2022 to 65% in 2024, and real median hourly earnings increased from \$28 to \$32 over the same period.

This is likely to contribute to a higher proportion of residents reporting no difficulty paying bills — 76% in 2024, compared to 71% in 2022 and the national average of 80%.

Tairāwhiti residents continue to manage meeting their everyday needs, with 60% reporting they have enough money to make ends meet in 2024 (the same as 2022), compared to the national figure of 51%.

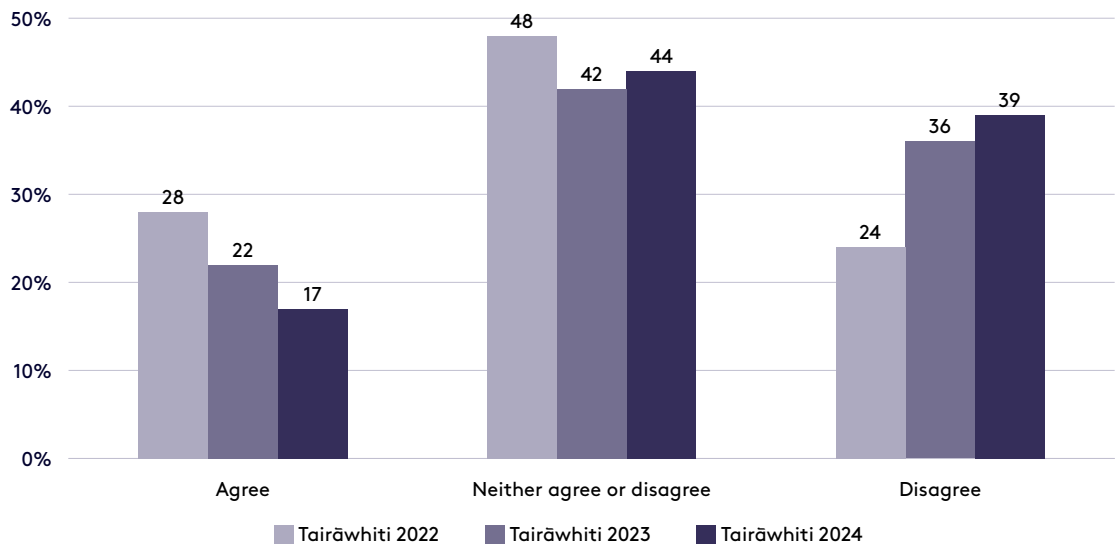
High rates of self-reported income adequacy compared to the national population, alongside

lower real incomes, suggest that people in the Tairāwhiti region may be making greater use of non-market sources of consumption, such as sharing kai, or informal support from community or family networks.

Future resilience and diversification of the economy remain a concern, with only 17% believing that the economy would be more resilient and diverse in the future in 2022 and in 2024. Similarly, in 2022 35% of residents believed Tairāwhiti had diverse employment opportunities, which dropped to 26% in 2024.

When asked about business sentiment and if Tairāwhiti was a good place to run and start a business in 2022, 28% of residents agreed it was, however in 2024, only 17% agreed.

Tairāwhiti is a good place to start or run a business





# Mātauranga Knowledge

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

DIVERSE SYSTEMS  
OF KNOWLEDGE,  
INFORMATION, AND  
MĀTAURANGA MĀORI ARE  
ACCESSIBLE, UTILISED,  
VALUED AND EVOLVE.





This muka is about the ability to access knowledge and make informed decisions. It's fundamental to wellbeing as a driver for health, employment and income. If a person does not have access to information to make informed choices about how to achieve their goals, their choices are limited for the sort of life they want to live.

At a glance

- NCEA Level 2 achievement in Tairāwhiti is below the national average, highlighting education gaps.
- Residents rely more on local media and community networks for information than the national population.
- Early child education is on track and comparable to the national average.

Insights

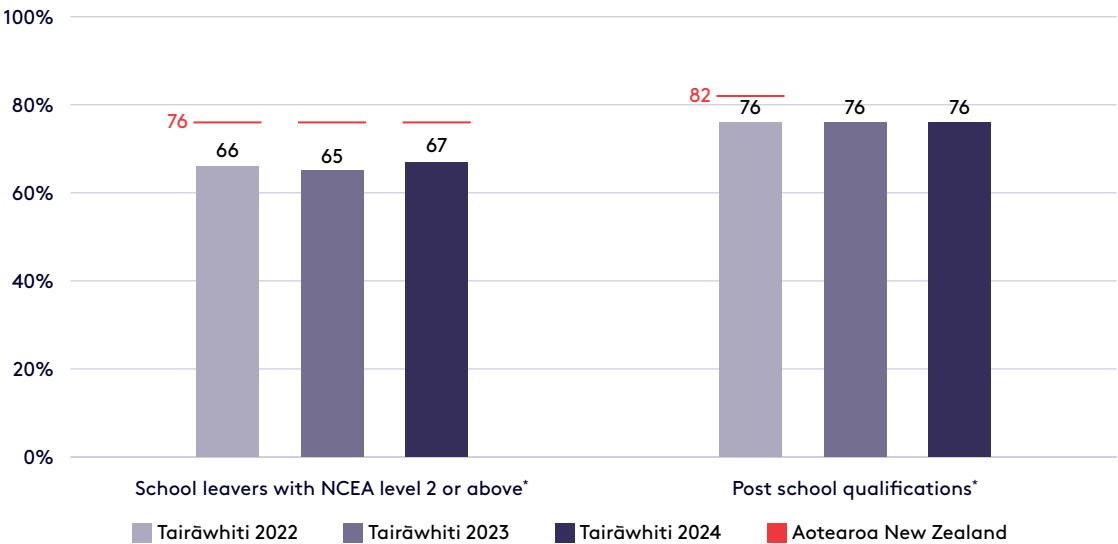
Tairāwhiti has a slight education disadvantage, with only 76% of Tairāwhiti residents having post-school qualifications compared to the national average of 82%.

Current NCEA Level 2 achievement levels for school leavers, reported in 2024, showed 67% of school leavers in Tairāwhiti achieved NCEA Level 2, substantially lower than the national 76% reported.

Almost all (96%) of school entrants have prior early childhood education experience, which is comparable nationally.

The greater diversity of information sources used by Tairāwhiti residents is linked to greater use of local media and community networks as a source of information compared to the national population.

School leavers with NCEA Level 2 or above and post school qualifications



\* Sources other than TWS, refer Sources on page 23 for details.



# Taiao Environment

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

THE QUALITY OF OUR  
LAND, WATER, AIR AND  
ATMOSPHERE IS PRISTINE.  
OUR BIODIVERSITY IS  
ABUNDANT. WE PRACTISE  
KAITIAKITANGA.



This muka is about the impact of the natural world on people's wellbeing. Taiao focuses on the direct effect of environmental quality on the wellbeing of people. It's measured in biodiversity, the quality of land, water and air.

At a glance

- Perceptions of the environment remain below the national average, since Cyclone Gabrielle.
- Only one in four residents believes the environment will improve in the future.
- Impact of climate change concern remains high, with more than half of residents worried about its impact on their lives and whānau.

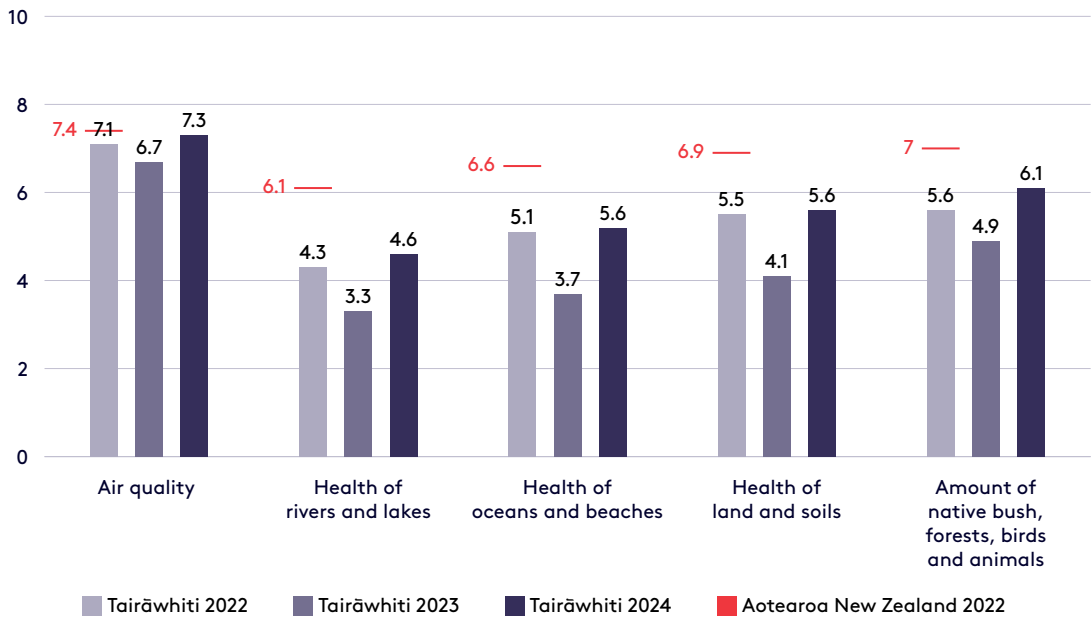
Insights

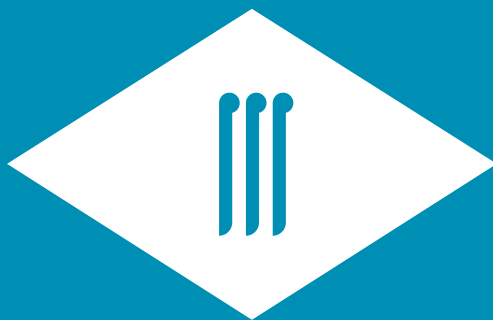
Residents of Tairāwhiti generally perceive challenges for their local environment less favourably than the national results for all Taiao indicators except for air quality. Ratings across the survey's other environmental measures improved in 2024, following significant falls in 2023 (especially for the coastal environment and land quality), reflecting the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle

on the region. They still remain well below the national averages.

In 2024, only 25% of residents believe that in the future, the environment will be in a better state, while 53% of residents are either worried or very worried about the impact of climate change.

Mean perception about our nature environment





# Tūtangata Cultural Identity

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

CULTURE CONNECTS THE  
PEOPLE OF TAIRĀWHITI. WE  
EXPRESS, CELEBRATE, AND  
VALUE OUR DIVERSITY,  
HERITAGE AND TAONGA.



This muka focuses on peoples' sense of self, belonging and cultural connection to Tairāwhiti, and how they relate to others. It values different and shared identities, heritage and taonga.

At a glance

- Most residents feel it's easy to be themselves, reflecting confidence in their own cultural identity.
- Te Reo Māori knowledge is strong in Tairāwhiti, with over half of residents able to kōrero more than a few words, well above national average.
- Most residents view engaging with Māori culture as important.

Insights

Cultural identity is a strength, with 66% of residents saying it's easy to be themselves. The proportion of the population reporting that it's easy or very easy to be themselves in New Zealand improved between 2022 and 2024.

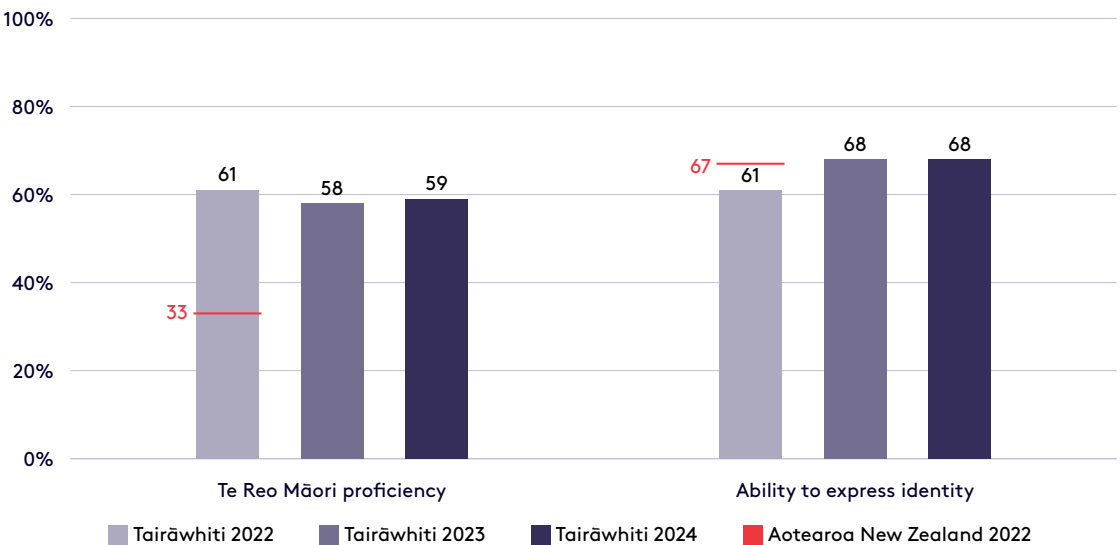
A much higher proportion (59%) of Tairāwhiti residents can speak more than a few words or phrases in Te Reo Māori, compared with the national average of 33%.

In 2024, 71% of residents said that engaging with Māori culture was important. However, only 58% think that more people will be familiar with Māori culture in the future.

The high levels of discrimination reported are a concern. In 2022, 50% of residents reported experiencing some form of discrimination, almost double the national average of 26% in the same year. This number has decreased, with 42% of residents reporting experiencing discrimination in the last 12 months in 2023 and 2024.

People in Tairāwhiti report similar or lower levels of discrimination to the national average in areas or places where they interact with other locals and report higher rates of discrimination in interactions with government services (health, schools) and at work.

Te Reo Māori proficiency and ability to express identity





# Tūhono Relationships

Aspirational wellbeing outcome

OUR PEOPLE, WHĀNAU, AND  
COMMUNITIES IN TAIRĀWHITI  
HAVE RESPECTFUL, CONNECTED  
AND COLLABORATIVE  
RELATIONSHIPS.





As a wellbeing outcome, Tūhono, relationships, focuses on the connections between people, whānau and communities. Social support and connection are identified as one of the 'big six' drivers of wellbeing. Connectedness enables a feeling of belonging and fosters an environment of wellbeing.

Highlights

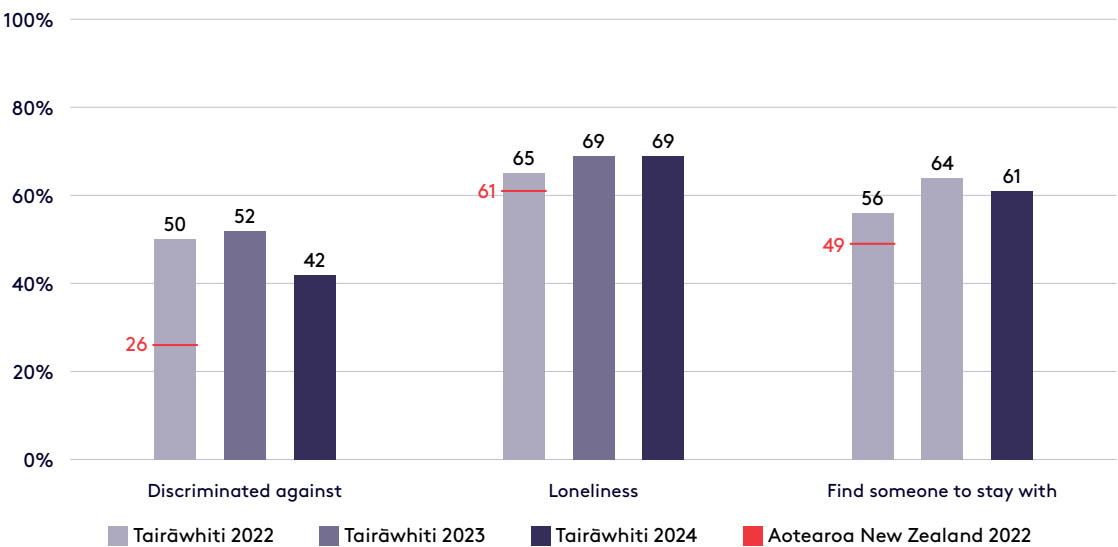
- Social connections are strengthening, with residents reporting less loneliness and stronger networks than nationally.
- People’s sense of belonging remains high in Tairāwhiti when compared to the national average.
- Experience of discrimination remains a concern, particularly in government services and workplaces, even though levels have declined since 2022.

Insights

Social connections were stronger in 2024 compared to 2022, which were still noticeably better than national results. This may reflect the region’s resilient response to significant climate and economic adversity over the past two years. More than two-thirds of Tairāwhiti residents (69%) reported feeling lonely only a little or none of the time (compared to 65% in 2022 and 61% nationally), whereas 61% reported finding it easy to find someone to stay with (compared to 56% in 2022 and 49% nationally).

People’s sense of belonging was fractionally down in 2024, but relatively stable since 2022 and much higher than nationally (57% in 2024 compared with 58% in 2022 and 48% nationally). In comparison, perceptions of neighbourhood safety at night have noticeably improved in line with the national average (45% in 2024 compared to 33% in 2022 and 46% nationally).

Discriminated against, felt lonely and find someone to stay with



## Wellbeing outcome indicators

| Muka                           | Indicator  | Responses included   | National 2022 | Tairāwhiti 2022 | Tairāwhiti 2024 |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Hapori<br>Community            | 1. Overall life satisfaction                                 | 7 to 10  | 60%           | 65%             | 69%             |
|                                | 2. Family wellbeing  | 7 to 10  | 65%           | 65%             | 66%             |
|                                | 3. Sense (locus) of control                                  | 7 to 10  | 60%           | 65%             | 70%             |
|                                | 4. Self-rated health   | good, very good, excellent                                 | 75%           | 74%             | 79%             |
|                                | 5. House is cold in winter                                   | no, yes - sometimes  | 71%           | 71%             | 79%             |
| Ōhanga<br>Economy              | 6. Employment rate*  |  | 69%           | 61%             | 66%             |
|                                | 7. Household income meets everyday needs                     | enough, more than enough                                   | 51%           | 60%             | 60%             |
|                                | 8. Not paid essential bills on time in last 12 months        | not at all   | 80%           | 71%             | 76%             |
|                                | 9. Median hourly earnings (real, deflated 2017 dollars)*     |  | \$25.39       | \$24.40         | \$25.23         |
|                                | 10. GDP: five largest industries*                            | "% regional GDP accounted for by the 5 largest industries" | 41%           | 42%             | 42%             |
| Mātauranga<br>Knowledge        | 11. Post school qualifications*                              | NCEA level 2 or better                                     | 82%           | 76%             | 76%             |
|                                | 12. Number of information sources                            | 5 or more  | 80%           | 99%             | 92%             |
|                                | 13. School entrants with prior ECE*                          | % annual to Dec  | 97%           | 96%             | 96%             |
| Taiao<br>Environment           | 14. Air quality in local area                                | 6 to 10  | 69%           | 64%             | 59%             |
|                                | 15. State of coastal water and beaches locally               | 6 to 10  | 70%           | 47%             | 41%             |
|                                | 16. State of rivers and lakes locally                        | 5 to 10  | 75%           | 49%             | 46%             |
|                                | 17. State of lands and soils locally                         | 6 to 10  | 73%           | 52%             | 44%             |
|                                | 18. Biodiversity (amount) locally                            | 6 to 10  | 72%           | 49%             | 49%             |
| Tūhono<br>Relationships        | 19. Trust in others  | 6 to 10  | 72%           | 68%             | 68%             |
|                                | 20. Felt lonely in last four weeks                           | a little of the time, none of the time                     | 61%           | 65%             | 69%             |
|                                | 21. Social support: Able to find someone to stay with        | easy, very easy  | 49%           | 56%             | 61%             |
|                                | 22. Sense of belonging to region                             | 7 to 10  | 48%           | 58%             | 57%             |
|                                | 23. Feel safe walking alone in your neighbourhood at night   | neither safe nor unsafe, safe, very safe                   | 46%           | 36%             | 45%             |
| Tūtangata<br>Cultural Identity | 24. Ability to speak Te Reo Māori in day-to-day conversation | more than "a few words or phrases"                         | 33%           | 61%             | 59%             |
|                                | 25. Ability to express identity                              | easy, very easy  | 67%           | 61%             | 66%             |

\* Sources other than TWS, refer Sources on page 23 for details.

## Find out more



Scan me with your phone camera to visit the  
Tairāwhiti Data website



[www.tairawhitidata.nz](http://www.tairawhitidata.nz)



Scan me with your phone camera to view the  
Kotata insight: He Tohu Ora Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Report



[www.trusttairawhiti.nz](http://www.trusttairawhiti.nz)

## Sources

### Tairāwhiti Wellbeing Surveys

2022 (N=1026), 2023 (N=833), 2024 (N=1002), National pilot 2022 (N=1077)

[www.tairawhitidata.nz](http://www.tairawhitidata.nz)

### Employment rate

[www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/employment-rate](http://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/employment-rate)

### Median hourly earnings

Earnings from wage and salary jobs by sex, age groups, region, and full-time and part-time status

[explore.data.stats.govt.nz](http://explore.data.stats.govt.nz)

### GDP combined for five largest industries

Regional Gross domestic product (RNA), by region and industry (March year)

[infoshare.stats.govt.nz](http://infoshare.stats.govt.nz)

### Post school qualifications

Birthplace, occupation, highest qualification, age, and gender for the employed census usually resident population count aged 15 years and over, (RC, TALB, Health), 2013, 2018, and 2023 Censuses

[www.stats.govt.nz/tools/aotearoa-data-explorer](http://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/aotearoa-data-explorer)

### School entrants with prior Early Childhood Education (ECE)

[www.educationcounts.govt.nz/data-services/national/ece-participation](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/data-services/national/ece-participation)



**Trust  
Tairāwhiti**  
Regional Wellbeing  
He Tohu Ora

[www.trusttairawhiti.nz](http://www.trusttairawhiti.nz)