

No matter who we are or where we come from, most of us want a future where people and the environment are well cared for.

But some people and groups are trying to divide us, and divert us from these concerns that matter to so many of us. At times, this division has meant our councils are not able to make the best decisions for our long term, ones that put **care for people and our environment first.**

Māori Wards have been a positive solution. By bringing in Māori culture, knowledge and ways of life, councils have become a better reflection of our communities and our shared concerns. Māori Ward councillors have helped harness our collective strength by weaving our communities together, so our councils can make better, long-term decisions that benefit all of us and the places we love.



Why does this matter now?

This October, you might be asked to vote on whether to keep your Māori Ward in the local body election. Even though Māori Wards are already working for many communities, the Coalition Government passed a law last year where over 40 councils must run referendums on whether to keep Māori Wards. No other Wards are being targeted under this law change.

How to vote?

- ◆ If you are enrolled, you will receive your voting papers in the mail. Fill them out and follow the instructions.
- ◆ If you are not enrolled, visit your local council website or contact your Electoral Officer to find out how to cast a special vote.

Now is the time to keep Māori Wards going—because when we decide together as a community, we thrive together.



For more information, visit
www.maoriwards.nz



Decide Together Thrive Together

VOTE to keep Māori Wards

**A guide to the upcoming
referendum on Māori Wards**

What are Māori Wards?

Māori Wards (or constituencies) are seats on local councils that represent Māori who otherwise might not have a voice in local decisions. They are voted on by people enrolled on the Māori electorate roll and are committed to serving the entire community.



Why are Māori Wards important?

Māori Wards work with fellow councillors to care for the people and our environment

When Māori Wards are able to open the door to Māori representation on councils, the people and the land are better off.

This is because many Māori are guided by the principles of manaaki (care, generosity, aroha) for all people, and kaitiakitanga (protection, guardianship) of the natural world around us. Māori representatives can bring a deep connection to the place and people in a local area—sometimes spanning hundreds of years.

Māori Ward councillors have worked together with their fellow councillors to help protect local waterways, native wildlife and precious places in their area. They've also driven policies that benefit everyone, such as improving accessibility to our community facilities.



Māori Wards help weave our communities together

When we come together across backgrounds and genuinely listen to each other, it leads to more connected and cohesive communities—and better decision making as a result.

Māori Ward councillors have helped weave stronger bonds between communities. They are often skilled at bringing people from different backgrounds together, in kotahitanga (unity, togetherness) to solve complex problems. For example; activating community responses to natural disasters and being a 'bridge' for groups who would otherwise not have a say in local councils.

Māori Wards contribute to wise long-term decisions

Responsible leaders are those who are both wise and bold enough to face our current challenges and plan for the long term.

Our councils are facing difficult times. Post-pandemic inflation and corporate profiteering has driven up costs on everything from infrastructure to insurance. But Māori communities are used to navigating tough challenges while maintaining a long term vision.

So when Māori culture, knowledge and ways of life are reflected in discussions and decision making, our councils can make better long-term decisions that benefit us all.