

TE HAU O TE KAENGA

“My name is Māori, we are one” Renata Kawepo

Kaitiakitanga in Action: Te Waiora Taiao

Two years of walking alongside our people, our councils and our awa

By Trish Nuku, Te Waiora Taiao Kaihautū

Over the past two years, Te Waiora Taiao has walked alongside our people, our councils, and our environment through some of the toughest challenges our rohe has faced. When Cyclone Gabrielle struck, we found ourselves not only helping with recovery but also holding fast to the cultural values that guide how we care for our awa, our whenua, and our taonga species.

We have been out on the ground completing 62 site visits with Hastings District Council alone ensuring that every project begins with karakia and that our tikanga is respected. At sites such as Matapiro Bridge, Kererū Gorge, and the Ōhiti Bridges, we have monitored works, protected tuna and kōura, and designed planting plans to restore life to the rivers. Today, karakia is standard practice on all HDC projects, a shift we are proud to have influenced.

Alongside hands-on work, we have produced Cultural Impact Assessments and a Cultural Values Assessment for the Ngaruroro Awa. These are not just technical reports; they embody our vision of the awa as a living ancestor, and they are now shaping how councils and agencies plan for its care and future.

A highlight of this journey has been training more than 20 of our whānau in cultural monitoring. They have learned to combine mātauranga Māori with scientific tools such as SHMAK and eDNA testing. This means our own people are now skilled, confident, and leading the monitoring of our waterways.

We have also reconnected with traditional practices — harvesting raupō at Pekapeka wetlands, building a mokihi raft at Houngarea Marae, and taking it to the river mouth at Haumoana. These activities ground us in whakapapa and strengthen the intergenerational transfer of knowledge.

Looking ahead, we are developing new wetlands with partners such as TToH and HOLCIM. These spaces will clean water, restore kai species, and serve as learning hubs for rangatahi.

With the recent Maraekakaho High Court decision upholding hapū voices in water planning, we feel hopeful that momentum is finally shifting towards stronger recognition of our role as kaitiaki.

The last two years have shown us that recovery is not just about fixing what was broken. It is about restoring balance and leaving a legacy. For us, that legacy is kaitiakitanga in action, so that our mokopuna inherit not only healthy waterways but also the knowledge to care for them.



Te Waiora Taiao Team: Wayne Ropiha, Jaime Ropiha, Trish Nuku, Jenny Mauger, Nekewhenua Wirihana

Trustee Elections – Have Your Say!

It's election time! We're appointing seven (7) new Trustees to the Ngāti Hinemanu, Te Ūpokoiri me ōna Piringa Hapū Authority Trust. This is your chance to shape the Trust's direction and ensure our hapū voice is strong and united.

Seats to be filled include a Rangatahi representative, a Kaumātua representative, 1 representative each for Ōmāhu, Runanga, and Te Āwhina Marae and 2 Hapū representatives (by postal ballot)

Marae will confirm their representatives, while hapū members vote for Hapū seats. The election is independently run by Doug Bradshaw of Shepherd Hensman Limited to ensure fairness.

Any registered uri aged 20 years or older can be nominated to stand, provided they whakapapa to Ngāti Hinemanu, Ngāi Te Ūpokoiri, Ngāti Mahuika, or Honomōkai. Current kaimahi are eligible, though they must step down from their roles if elected. Voting is open to all registered uri aged 18 and over.

Key Dates

- Nominations: Open 25 Sept 2025 and Close 16 Oct 2025
- Voting packs sent: from 24 Oct 2025
- Voting closes: 12.00pm, 15 Nov 2025 – Results announced 29 Nov

Get involved whānau! Make sure you're registered with the Trust and your details are up to date so your voting pack reaches you. Think about standing as a candidate, or nominating someone with the skills, experience and time to serve our hapū. Most importantly, spread the word and encourage your whānau to register and vote — every voice counts!

Need Help? Visit www.piringahapu.com for details, the Trust Deed, FAQs, the registration and nomination forms. Email register@piringahapu.com if you need to know more or drop into our tari at Ōmāhu Marae for a chat with our Interim Trustees.

*He taura whiri kotahi mai anō te kopunga tai no i te pu au.
Speaks to the interconnectedness of the awa, from mountain to sea, and our obligation as kaitiaki of the whole.*

*E kore e ngaro, he takere waka nui.
Emphasising unity, courage, and collective capability steering the hapū forward.*

**SAVE THE DATE: Te Piringa Hapū Authority Trust Hui a Tau
at Ōmāhu Marae on 29 November 2025**

Whai Kāinga, Whai Whānau

Ōmāhu whānau leading the way in healthy homes, strong futures

By Koriana Williams and Sage Mihaka

Kōanga (spring) has arrived, bringing fresh energy to our rohe and a chance to share some important updates. The kaupapa of Whaioranga has grown from urgent housing repairs after Cyclone Gabrielle into a broader vision of healthy kāinga and strong whānau.



Whaioranga Kāinga – Healthy Homes, Healthy Futures

Over the past year, more than 40 flood-damaged homes have been repaired in partnership with contractors, marae trustees, and our patient whānau. These repairs have made homes warmer, drier, and safer, restoring both dignity and wellbeing.

As this mahi begins to wind up, we are proud to rename the housing workstream Whaioranga Kāinga, reflecting our vision of kāinga as thriving places of belonging, growth, and wellbeing. Looking ahead, our focus is shifting from recovery to long-term housing pathways and healthy homes.

For Ōmāhu whānau, healthy homes are more than buildings – they are the foundation of wellbeing. Warm, dry and safe kāinga reduce preventable illness, support tamariki to thrive, and strengthen whānau resilience, ensuring our people can live with dignity and mana on their whenua.

*He oranga kāinga, he pikinga waiora
A thriving home is the foundation of wellbeing.*

Whaioranga Whānau – Growing Together

Our journey forward includes changes within our team. We mihi to Tia and Taranaki, who supported us during the cyclone and recovery and have now moved to their own mahi. Their contribution leaves a strong legacy.

We've also moved into new office space with our Taiao and Kāinga kaimahi, and refreshed our whānau navigation and housing team under a new name: Te Whaioranga Whānau. This reflects our commitment to whānau wellbeing and collective growth. Upcoming plans include gatherings for kaumātua and rangatahi, the roll-out of a new navigation service, and continued collaboration with external providers.

Your Voice, Our Future

Most importantly, we want to hear from you. Your whakaaro and your voice guide our path forward. Please drop in for a kōrero, share your ideas, or simply come and say kia ora.

*Waiho i te toipoto, kaua i te toiroa
Staying close as whānau ensures strength and resilience.*

Financial Assurance & Investments

Over the past few months, Te Piringa Hapū Authority Trust has worked hard to address outstanding matters, tidy finances and contracts, and ensure our kaimahi have the resources they need. We want to reassure whānau that all funds are intact, properly accounted for, and used solely for their intended purposes. A full review by our Chartered Accountants has been completed, and an independent audit is underway, due for completion in November in time for our Annual General Meeting.

The Trustees have also approved the appointment of two new directors to sit alongside Renata Hakiwai on the Limited Partners Board to oversee our investment interests. Once their paperwork is complete, their names will be made public. What we can share now is that both whakapapa to one or more of our four hapū and each have built long and distinguished careers in financial management, investment, and commercial governance. This is an important step in strengthening the foundations of our Trust, protecting our assets, and ensuring our investments serve the long-term wellbeing of our people.

Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu - A metaphor for providing resources and sound management so the hapū (the manu) can flourish.

GENERAL MANAGER'S UPDATE

Kō Daphne Reremoana Luke ahau. He uri tēnei nō te whānau Te Rito, e hono nei ki a tātou katoa i raro i te maru o Te Piringa Hapū. He mihi mahana ki a koutou e kawē tonu ana i te kaupapa, e whai wāhi ana ki te oranga tonutanga o tō tātou hapū.



Raised in Pōneke with regular trips home to Ōmāhu, our enduring whānau ties have always been a source of strength, identity and grounding for me.

My journey home has been shaped by many years working in Māori economic development, business, and governance, carried with a commitment to supporting whānau and hapū wellbeing. Receiving the tonu, the karanga to come home, was a privilege. It has been heartening to reconnect with the ahi kā and our team, many of whom I worked alongside after Cyclone Gabrielle.

The past two years have been challenging for some of our whānau, and frustrations are understandable. Over the last three months, we've focused on addressing outstanding matters, tidying finances and contracts, and ensuring kaimahi have the resources they need to do their work.

Transition and Change: This quarter has also brought significant transition. A leaner structure has been introduced to focus resources where they matter most, meaning some roles have been disestablished or reduced. Trustee terms have ended, and Interim Trustees are in place to provide stability. We mihi to kaimahi who have moved on — their aroha and skills helped shape who we are today. To those who remain, your resilience and commitment carry us forward.

We also acknowledge that times of change can bring uncertainty, and sometimes kōrero shared online may not reflect the full picture. While social media has its place, words expressed behind a screen can sometimes cause hurt or confusion for individuals, their whānau and for the hapū as a whole. As a Trust, we remain committed to open and transparent communication, and we encourage whānau to bring their whakaaro to us directly, kanohi ki te kanohi where possible. He taonga te kupu — words carry power. Let us use them to uplift and strengthen one another, keeping aroha at the heart of our kōrero.

Re-igniting Programmes: Change brings uncertainty but also the chance to reset and strengthen foundations. Already, programmes across our pou are being reignited — strengthening kāinga, health, wellbeing, and the taiao — and we are grateful to whānau who continue to support the mahi.

Elections: Elections are now underway, with nominations open and voting to follow. We look forward to announcing a new Board at our AGM on 29 November at Ōmāhu Marae. This Board will recruit a permanent Kaiwhakahaere Matua and lead the Trust into its next chapter.

Looking Ahead: The coming months will be about embedding this new model, maintaining momentum, and securing sustainable revenue through contracts, partnerships, and fundraising. Above all, it will be about staying close to our whānau – listening, responding, and ensuring our mahi reflects manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, and kaitiakitanga.

Ngā mihi nui to our kaimahi, trustees, and partners who carry this kaupapa. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient community and Te Piringa Trust — honouring the past while preparing for the future.

*E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea.
I will never be lost, for I am a seed sown in Rangiatea.*