

The image shows a beautiful view of Ōhiwa Harbour. In the foreground, there's a sandy beach with several people, including children, playing in the shallow water. The water is a clear, vibrant blue. In the background, there are rolling green hills under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The entire scene is framed by green leaves in the top corners. A traditional Maori geometric pattern is overlaid on the bottom left corner of the image.

# Ōhiwa Harbour

## Recreation Strategy

*Ōhiwa - Together we're keeping it special  
He taonga tuku iho kē, ko tātau rā ngā uri e*





# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Vision</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The current situation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>What people value</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1	The Mauri of the harbour	7
5.2	Historical and cultural significance	7
5.3	Natural beauty and tranquillity	7
5.4	Wildlife and the natural environment	7
5.5	Food basket	7
5.6	Home to many	7
5.7	Safety	7
<b>6</b>	<b>What is recreation?</b>	<b>7</b>
6.1	What the Recreation Strategy covers	8
<b>7</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>8</b>
7.1	Review period	8
<b>8</b>	<b>Action plan</b>	<b>8</b>
8.2	Objective: Opportunities for recreational experiences that meet current and future needs are provided	9
8.3	Objective: Public Access to the harbour and environs is maintained and further opportunities are investigated and developed	10
8.4	Objective: Appropriate facilities are available and well maintained	11
8.5	Objective: Reserves are utilised according to their reserve status	12
8.6	Objective: Information about and for recreation is made available	12
8.7	Objective: Management of reserves and recreation is well coordinated	13
8.8	Objective: People are able to engage in recreation activities safely and without conflict	13



8.9	Objective: Camping and overnight self-contained parking is available, monitored and well sign posted	15
8.10	Objective: Social cultural and environmental impacts of recreation are minimised	15
<b>9</b>	<b>What people do</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Where people go</b>	<b>16</b>
10.1	Ōhope Spit and boat ramp (Port Ōhope Recreation Reserve)	16
10.2	Port Ōhope Wharf Reserve	16
10.3	Otao South Reserve	16
10.4	Tauwhare Pā	17
10.5	Nukuhou Saltmarsh Lookout and Walkway	17
10.6	Ōhiwa boat ramp (Loop Road)	17
10.7	Ōhiwa Spit	17
<b>11</b>	<b>Harbour access and public land</b>	<b>17</b>
11.1	Current access	17
11.2	Reserves	17
<b>12</b>	<b>Facilities available</b>	<b>23</b>
12.1	What we have	23
<b>13</b>	<b>Provision of information/education</b>	<b>32</b>
13.1	What we have	32
<b>14</b>	<b>Recreation research</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Future recreation trends, needs</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>33</b>
16.1	Formalised recreational groups	33
16.2	Commercial interests	33
16.3	Community groups	33
16.4	Events	33





17	Conflicts	33
18	The legal framework	34
	Appendix 1: Bylaws	39
	Appendix 2: Reserve Management Plans	40
	Appendix 3: Recreation research	41
	Appendix 2: Feedback	42



# Ōhiwa Harbour Recreation Strategy

## 1 Introduction

The development of this strategy results from Action 3.1 of the Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy (OHS) to “develop and implement a recreation strategy”. Its implementation will be guided by the seven Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy partners.

Tangata whenua, residents, local visitors, holidaymakers and tourists all have an interest in Ōhiwa Harbour. The harbour and its environs are considered by residents and visitors alike to be a uniquely special place. The physical environment - the scenery, wildlife, tranquillity and relative lack of commercial development are greatly appreciated. People engage in a wide range of water-based activities such as fishing, swimming and boating as well as land-based activities such as sight-seeing, walking and picnicking around the harbour margins. Most of these activities are focused around a small number of sites.

In the Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan (2017), Ōhiwa Harbour is recognised as an area of outstanding natural features and landscape and as having the highest ranking for indigenous biodiversity. This document also notes the significant cultural importance of the harbour to tangata whenua and its recognition historically as Te Kete Kai a Tairongo (the food basket of Tairongo).

## 2 Vision

A pristine harbour environment that provides sustainable recreational opportunities for local communities, iwi and visitors.

## 3 Purpose

The *Ōhiwa Harbour Recreation Strategy* (OHRS) guides management of recreation, current and future, in and around the Ōhiwa Harbour. Key to this purpose is enabling recreation; balancing expectations of local community, iwi and visitors while ensuring the harbour’s values are not compromised.

## 4 The current situation

There are a number of agencies responsible for various aspects of recreation in different parts of the harbour. District councils provide reserves and associated facilities such as toilets and boat ramps. Department of Conservation (DOC) has a number of reserves with various classifications. Private businesses run camping grounds and other services such as kayak hire. Various agencies, groups and businesses develop new recreational opportunities from time to time. Some activities are governed by bylaws and other regulations, for example the Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw. There are occasionally conflicts between different recreation uses or between those providing new initiatives and residents (see section 17). Recreational use of the harbour is likely to increase over time. Research has provided some insights into what people value, what they do and what would improve their experience (see section 14). The OHS partners have a holistic view of recreation and seek to ensure it is managed in a coordinated and collaborative fashion. The current situation regarding recreation is described more fully in sections 9 to 13. Management of all aspects of recreation needs to be in keeping with various pieces of legislation (see section 18).



## 5 What people value

### 5.1 The Mauri of the harbour

Mauri has been described as the spark of life which inhabits all things, and the binding force of the physical and spiritual spheres. It is an important value in Te Ao Māori and often used as a measure of sustainability.

### 5.2 Historical and cultural significance

Ōhiwa Harbour has long been settled by Māori, and on its margins and islands are many waahi tapu and sites of cultural significance, such as ancient pa sites and battle sites. In addition, more recent European settlement has created places that also have historical significance, such as the now-flooded settlement at Ōhiwa.

### 5.3 Natural beauty and tranquillity

The relatively unspoiled character of the natural environment around Ōhiwa Harbour provides relief from urban life, with its beautiful scenery, cleanliness and quiet spaces. The harbour is a haven for people seeking solitude or space to engage socially in a range of activities.

### 5.4 Wildlife and the natural environment

Ōhiwa Harbour is rich in wildlife and home to a multitude of species of shore and sea birds, aquatic life and plants. There are many areas with significant indigenous biodiversity in and around the harbour.

### 5.5 Food basket

Māori often refer to Ōhiwa Harbour as “Te kete kai a Tairongo” (the food basket of Tairongo). For centuries, Ūpokorehe, Whakatōhea, Ngāti Awa and Tūhoe have lived in the area and harvested food from Ōhiwa Harbour and its environs. It is thanks to their kaitiakitanga that the harbour remains a rich food resource today.

### 5.6 Home to many

The harbour environs are shared by members of a number of iwi and hapū groups. In addition, people of many ethnicities live close to the harbour, particularly around Ōhope.

### 5.7 Safety

There is freedom, particularly for families, to participate safely in a range of recreational activities and access to the harbour is easy at many locations.

## 6 What is recreation?

Recreation is usually defined as any activity done for enjoyment or pleasure, undertaken during leisure (not work) time. The word itself “Re-creation” indicates that the activity serves the purpose of refreshing people’s mind, body or spirit. Similarly, for Māori recreation is any activity or experience personal to them as a people, and which reinvigorates or refreshes them as Māori.

Recreation for the purpose of this strategy is defined as:

***Active and passive pursuits undertaken for enjoyment, which improve or reinvigorate personal and social well-being.***

Active recreation includes activities such as boating, swimming, fishing, gathering kaimoana, walking, cycling, kayaking, water skiing, playing. Passive recreation includes activities such as bird-watching, sightseeing, and picnicking.

## 6.1 What the Recreation Strategy covers

The OHRS focuses principally on recreational activities occurring around the margins of the harbour. It deals with activities on land more or less adjacent to the harbour and on the interface between land and water, including access to the water.

Activities involving water craft are regulated by the Bay of Plenty Regional Council under the *Bay of Plenty Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw*.

Rules and regulations concerning fishing methods and catch limits are the responsibility of the Ministry for Primary Industries.

A number of Ōpōtiki District Council and Whakatane District Council bylaws regulate various activities around the harbour such as the lighting of fires, alcohol use, vehicles on beaches, dogs, and overnight camping (see Appendix 1). Reserve management plans cover many other aspects of reserve management (see Appendix 2).

The OHRS aims to support the work of these organisations.

## 7 Implementation

The Ōhiwa Harbour Implementation Forum (OHIF) provides leadership in the implementation of both the Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy and the Recreation Strategy. This Forum is made up of representatives from Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC), Whakatāne District Council (WDC), Ōpōtiki District Council (ODC), Te Upokorehe, Whakatōhea, Ngāti Awa and Waimana Kaaku (Ngāi Tūhoe). These groups are collectively referred to in this document as “the Partners”.

The Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy Coordination Group (OHSCG) is also made up of representatives of the groups listed above with the addition of representatives from other groups and organisations that are involved with the Ōhiwa Harbour. OHSCG carries out the day to day implementation of the strategy actions.

### 7.1 Review period

The *Ōhiwa Harbour Recreation Strategy* will be reviewed about every five years, with the review timed to occur after each five-year review of the OHS.

## 8 Action plan

This action plan will need to keep abreast of changes and developments in recreation as they arise and may be updated accordingly from time to time.

### 8.1.1 Undertake regular needs assessments

Explanation	Every five years, the Partners will undertake surveys of recreation users (as in Hammerton, 2014) that includes both residents and visitors, to gather feedback regarding existing facilities and opportunities and identify changing needs and requirements. Any resulting assessment will incorporate data gathered by other agencies. The development of decision-making metrics for this assessment will be investigated. Consideration will be give to carrying out similar research in the “off” season.
Who?	All Partners.



### 8.1.2 Develop an understanding of the local community

<b>Explanation</b>	Our research so far has focused on the experiences of recreational users during the summer period - rather the various recreational needs of the diverse communities living in an around Ohiwa. We know very little about our communities recreation needs; those who don't utilise the harbour for recreation, and why. We need to understand whether recreational opportunities (facilities, programs, and services) around the Ohiwa Harbour meet the needs of those of our local community.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.1.3 Engage with local community

<b>Explanation</b>	While this strategy has been prepared by the partner agencies and guides their management activities in the future, we must not lose sight of that fact that it is ultimately in place for the benefit of the local community and visitors. The Partners need to engage with those people in a way that ensures their participation in the planning and management process.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.1.4 Monitor recreation trends

<b>Explanation</b>	Recreational activities and the technology that supports them changes over time. It is important for the Partners to keep abreast of such changes and takes account of them. Changing trends in destination choices which may impact on the harbour also need to be understood. Such information could be gathered from the NZ Recreation Association and Tourism NZ.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

## 8.2 Objective: Opportunities for recreational experiences that meet current and future needs are provided

### 8.2.1 Support continued development of Ōhope harbourside trail

<b>Explanation</b>	With the support of WDC, Rotary have proposed and planned a trail from Waterways Drive to the Ohope wharf along esplanade and other reserves. The trail is currently under construction (Jan 2018). Extensions to this trail will be investigated as appropriate (e.g. to Tauwhare Pa, to the boat ramp).
<b>Who?</b>	WDC and BOPRC to provide signage. BOPRC to fund pest control and planting.

### 8.2.2 Continue to support Opotiki to Whakatane cycle trail

<b>Explanation</b>	A cycle trail has been proposed to run from Opotiki to Whakatane. Portions of this trail are in place or planned (2017). Further construction may take place as resource consents are obtained and it will be supported by the partners.
<b>Who?</b>	WDC and ODC with support from BOPRC.

### 8.2.3 Support the upgrade of Ohope Wharf Reserve

<b>Explanation</b>	WDC have planned a comprehensive upgrade of the Ohope Wharf reserve. Construction will begin when resource consents have been obtained.
<b>Who?</b>	WDC.

8.2.4 Facilitate the development of further new recreational opportunities as they arise	
<b>Explanation</b>	It is likely in the future that proposals will arise for the development of further recreational experiences and facilities (such as walkways). It also is likely that in future, recreation trends and needs will change. Where ever appropriate these changing will be supported while ensuring any developments do not significantly impinge on the harbour values. It's worth noting that such developments often have the spin off of increasing engagement with environmental care and restoration. This should also be encouraged.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.
8.2.5 Support the provision of recreational events	
<b>Explanation</b>	The holding of recreational events will be supported. To the extent possible, the Partners will ensure that events are appropriate and impacts and conflicts minimised.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

8.3 **Objective: Public Access to the harbour and environs is maintained and further opportunities are investigated and developed**

8.3.1 Ensure adequate parking is available at access points	
<b>Explanation</b>	As popularity of the harbour grows, so does the need for adequate parking. The need for extra parking will be monitored. Where parking is available, signage may be required to ensure motorists to not obstruct harbour access or other users.
<b>Who?</b>	ODC, WDC.
8.3.2 Ensure access to public reserves is appropriate	
<b>Explanation</b>	Maps and signage are required to let people know which reserves can be accessed, by whom and for what purposes. For example dogs or vehicles may not be allowed in some places. Waahi tapu sites need to be respected.
<b>Who?</b>	ODC, WDC, DOC, BOPRC.
8.3.3 Identify and investigate further opportunities for harbour access	
<b>Explanation</b>	Increasing pressure on existing access points during summer months will be monitored (see 8.1.1), the possibility of providing additional access will be investigated when opportunities arise. Care will be taken to ensure any such access does not have negative cultural, social or environmental impacts.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.
8.3.4 Ensure access is available for those with disabilities	
<b>Explanation</b>	Wherever possible, access to the harbour, tracks and facilities will be provided with appropriate infrastructure to allow access for those with physical disabilities or wheelchairs.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils, DOC.

## 8.4 Objective: Appropriate facilities are available and well maintained

### 8.4.1 Ensure provision of picnic facilities at suitable sites

<b>Explanation</b>	Picnic facilities (seats, tables, BBQ's, waste disposal) are available at some sites. The need for further facilities or adaptations to contemporary practices (eg provision of recycling facilities) will be monitored.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils, DOC.

### 8.4.2 Ensure toilet facilities are appropriately located to meet demand

<b>Explanation</b>	Toilet facilities are located at several sites around the harbour where demand is high. The need for further facilities will be monitored.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils.

### 8.4.3 Ensure facilities are clearly signposted and, where applicable, policies are indicated

<b>Explanation</b>	All facilities should be clearly signposted, including toilets, parking, rubbish disposal, recycling, seating, picnic facilities, overnight self-contained parking, dog exercise areas, boat ramps and wharves. Maps will be provided at key locations. Policies relating to facilities will be indicated where appropriate. In particular where rubbish disposal is not available, council policy (that people should remove all their own rubbish from the area) should be clearly stated.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils, DOC.

### 8.4.4 Ensure tracks are well-maintained and signposted

<b>Explanation</b>	A number of walking and cycle tracks are provided around the harbour. These will be well maintained and signposted.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils, DOC.

### 8.4.5 Monitor the use of facilities to ensure visitor needs are met

<b>Explanation</b>	In order to ensure that visitor needs are met as far as possible, regular monitoring of activities and visitor numbers will be carried out as in 8.1.1. It is recognised that individual agencies also carry out their own monitoring from time to time.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.4.6 Ensure boat ramps are managed appropriately

<b>Explanation</b>	The Ohope Reserve and Loop Rd boat ramps in particular are important and very busy items of infrastructure. Their safety, structure and capacity needs to be monitored.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils.

## 8.5 Objective: Reserves are utilised according to their reserve status

### 8.5.1 Maintain up to date list and map of reserves

<b>Explanation</b>	Information about where the reserves are and what their purpose will be kept up to date and included on maps at key locations or through other media as appropriate. The public will be informed of any restrictions regarding access to reserves.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.5.2 Encourage the use of reserves in alignment with their purpose

<b>Explanation</b>	Many reserves have been set aside under the Reserves Act for a specific purpose, eg scenic, recreation, esplanade or wildlife reserves. Appropriate public use should be encouraged and any uses or proposed uses of these reserves will be in keeping with their purpose.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

## 8.6 Objective: Information about and for recreation is made available

### 8.6.1 Ensure signage is clear, appropriate and up to date

<b>Explanation</b>	Signage, instructional, regulatory and directional, includes both instructions will be kept up to date, sited appropriately and well maintained. A plan for the review, coordination and rationalisation of signage has been prepared by the Partners and this will continue to be implemented and updated where necessary.
<b>Who?</b>	Councils, DOC.

### 8.6.2 Provide historical, cultural and environmental information where appropriate

<b>Explanation</b>	There is a public desire for more information about many aspects of the harbour. A plan is in place to develop an Ohiwa Harbour heritage trail, nga tapuwai o Tairongo. Interpretive information will be provided at points of interest about the natural, cultural and historic heritage of the harbour. Implementation of this plan is in progress (2018) and will continue. Further sites/information added in the future as appropriate. The provision of any interpretation signage needs to be well coordinated.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.6.3 Provide information through a diverse range of media

<b>Explanation</b>	All information should be easily accessible to different users through a variety of media, including provision of on-site signage, printed material, web-based information and mobile phone apps. The partners will work towards ensuring that this occurs in line with visitor needs and current technology.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

## 8.7 Objective: Management of reserves and recreation is well coordinated

### 8.7.1 Ensure the development and maintenance of facilities is well-coordinated

<b>Explanation</b>	All Partners need to have a coordinated approach to both the development of new facilities and the maintenance of existing facilities and to ensure alignment with this strategy.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.7.2 Monitor and support individual agencies recreational planning

<b>Explanation</b>	Many reserves have a management plan. Water based recreation is covered by the Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw. When new plans, bylaws etc. are proposed or reviewed, the Partners will support this work and collaboratively provide input to these plans to ensure a coordinated approach to management in line with this strategy.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.7.3 Support the other agencies

<b>Explanation</b>	It is recognised that some agencies (e.g. MPI with their fisheries function and the harbourmaster) involved in some way with recreation are not Ohiwa Harbour Strategy partners. The Partners will endeavour to liaise with and support those other agencies wherever appropriate.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.7.4 Support the work of other stakeholders

<b>Explanation</b>	The provision of activities and services by private businesses will be supported. To the extent possible, the Partners will ensure that such activities and services are appropriate and impacts and conflicts are minimised.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

## 8.8 Objective: People are able to engage in recreation activities safely and without conflict

### 8.8.1 Support the safety of water-based recreation

<b>Explanation</b>	The Partners will actively support the Harbourmaster to ensure that water based recreation is managed so as to ensure the safety of users in line with the Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw and that signage related to water-based activities is appropriate, well sited and coordinated with other signage. The Partners will also assist the Harbourmaster in any navigation related communications to the public.
<b>Who?</b>	All Partners.

### 8.8.2 Ensure cycleways and walkways are available where possible

**Explanation** Due to the narrow roads around the harbour and increasing numbers of cyclists and walkers, the availability of cycleways and/or walkways is increasingly important for ensuring the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. The Partners will promote the development of further cycleways and walkways as appropriate (for e.g. there is a proposal to develop a cycleway from Harbour Road to Burma Road), while ensuring harbour values are not compromised. Concerns have been raised by the community regarding safety issues on local roads.

**Who?** All partners.

### 8.8.3 Advocate for safety initiatives where appropriate

**Explanation** There are potential conflicts between different uses. As far as water-based activities are concerned, these are largely covered by the Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw but the Partners will liaise with the Harbourmaster on any safety matters that come to their attention. Users have suggested that different water-based activities should be better separated. Parking, crossings and pedestrian and vehicle movements at certain places, especially along Wainui Road are sometimes safety issues and the partners will advocate for improvements seen as desirable.

**Who?** All partners.

### 8.8.4 Ensure conflicts over reserve use or recreational activity are mitigated

**Explanation** From time to time there may be conflict in the community between different groups, for example between those who wish to develop a particular facility and others in the community, or those who wish to pursue a particular activity against the wishes of others. In such situations, the Partners will endeavour to ensure that such developments or activities are in the best interests of the community at large and that the values of the harbour are not compromised. Also, in the past, illegal structures have been erected by residents (jetties and boatramps etc.). The Partners will collaborate with the appropriate agencies to ensure these are removed in the future if necessary.

**Who?** All partners.

### 8.8.5 Events are planned and well managed

**Explanation** Events that are likely to impact residents and other visitors need to be carefully planned and information about dates and impacts communicated to residents well in advance. This will be particularly important for events that involve road closures or may impact regular use of recreational facilities. The Partners will try to ensure event planners work closely with councils to ensure they have appropriate safety plans in place to ensure the safety of all event participants, spectators and other regular recreation users for the duration of the event.

**Who?** All partners and event holder.

8.9 **Objective: Camping and overnight self-contained parking is available, monitored and well sign posted**

8.9.1 **Ensure official camping/overnight parking sites on public reserves are well maintained**

**Explanation** The responsible agencies will ensure camping sites on public reserves are well maintained. Because demand for overnight parking is high at peak times over summer, it is important to ensure that drivers of self-contained vehicles have clear information about where parking sites are located, and where the boundaries are. Maps at these locations will be helpful.

**Who?** Councils.

8.9.2 **Consider development of additional self-contained overnight parking sites at suitable locations**

**Explanation** Demand for overnight parking is high, with existing sites often full during peak times. Motor homes and campervans are becoming increasingly popular. However, development of new sites needs to be carefully planned by the councils. Technically, there are many places where overnight parking is allowed but people seem to choose a limited number of sites for this purpose.

**Who?** Councils.

8.9.3 **Ensure official camping/overnight parking sites on public reserves are regularly monitored**

**Explanation** Regular monitoring of camping/overnight parking sites should be undertaken by councils to ensure rules are adhered to. Various concerns about “freedom camping” have been raised by the local community.

**Who?** Councils.

8.10 **Objective: Social cultural and environmental impacts of recreation are minimised**

8.10.1 **Ensure the impacts of recreation on Ōhiwa Harbour and environs are regularly assessed**

**Explanation** Social, cultural and environmental impacts of recreation need to be monitored regularly to ensure impacts are avoided or minimised and to assess the impact of new facilities. This will form part of the 5 yearly surveys (see 8.1.1) and an outline of what information is necessary and how this will be gathered will need to be developed.

**Who?** All partners.

## 9 What people do

Recreation activities in and around Ōhiwa Harbour include a range of water-based and land-based activities. Research into the types of recreation that were common during the summer months (Hamerton, 2014) found that the most popular water-based activities (in order of popularity) were fishing, swimming, power-boating, kayaking, sailing, paddle-boarding and dinghies. The most popular land-based activities were sight-seeing, walking, picnicking and cycling. Patterns of activities observed varied across different sites.

A survey (Hamerton, 2014) of people at various sites around the harbour found that Ōhiwa Harbour is highly valued for its peace and tranquillity and also for the natural environment, beautiful scenery and wildlife. People surveyed also reported they value the easy access to the water at many points around the harbour, the safety of the harbour for families with children, and the diverse range of activities available (Hamerton, 2014). Many people also expressed an interest in finding out more about the natural and cultural history of the harbour, where to go and what to do.

80% of the survey respondents were European with equal numbers of men and women and from a broad range of age groups. More than half reported that they live in the Bay of Plenty. One third of those surveyed were visiting Ōhiwa Harbour for the first time. Note that the research was conducted during the busy summer period and does not reflect recreation activity during the rest of the year.

## 10 Where people go

Recreation opportunities vary at different points around the harbour. Some activities such as sightseeing and cycling may occur right around the harbour, but most recreation occurs at particular points (“hubs”) at the interface between land and water. These hubs and the kinds of activities that occur there are listed below.

### 10.1 Ōhope Spit and boat ramp (Port Ōhope Recreation Reserve)

The boat ramp near the end of Ōhope Spit is a very popular spot for recreation, particularly for people launching boats. Other activities in this location are walking (to the spit), fishing, sightseeing, picnicking and swimming. A water ski area is located to the west of the boat ramp and the jet ski area is centred here. A well-used self-contained overnight parking site is also located here. Car parking, public toilets, a shelter and picnic tables are provided. The adjacent Ōhope golf course is leased from WDC.

### 10.2 Port Ōhope Wharf Reserve

The Port Ōhope Wharf Reserve on the southern side of the Ōhope Spit is the most frequently visited recreation location around the harbour. Boat mooring is available near the wharf; there is a public boat ramp and the yacht club is based here. Apart from the wharf itself, car parking, public toilets and picnic tables are provided. There is a restaurant here and a store and café nearby. This is a popular spot for fishing, swimming (including diving or ‘bombing’) and sightseeing, as well as picnicking and kayaking.

### 10.3 Otao South Reserve

Otao South Reserve is a narrow grassed reserve in Ōhope mid-way along the southern side of the spit. There is a children’s playground, picnic tables, public toilets and parking at this location. It is a popular place for picnicking, sightseeing, school science trips, kayaking and paddle-boarding. Paddle boards can be hired from the nearby store. The Ōhope harbourside trail extends along esplanade reserves in both directions from here.



#### 10.4 **Tauwhare Pā**

Located close to Ōhope on the road between Ōhope and Ōhiwa, this pā site is of historical interest. It is a popular place for sightseeing and walking. There is ample parking but no other facilities.

#### 10.5 **Nukuhou Saltmarsh Lookout and Walkway**

The Nukuhou Saltmarsh lookout river bank is a popular location for sightseeing, picnicking, walking and bird-watching. A picnic table is provided. A walkway along the Nukuhou riverbank starts here. The saltmarsh provides niche habitat for several native bird species.

#### 10.6 **Ōhiwa boat ramp (Loop Road)**

Numbers of visitors to the eastern side of the harbour are lower overall than those observed on the Ōhope side. However, the Ōhiwa boat ramp is a popular location for fishing, boating and kayaking, especially during the summer months. It is also a popular spot for sightseeing and picnicking, as well as for swimming and cycling. Car parking, public toilets, a shelter and picnic tables are provided.

#### 10.7 **Ōhiwa Spit**

Ōhiwa Spit is a popular location for both water- and land-based activities. There is a motor camp located nearby. Popular activities at this location are kayaking, swimming, picnicking, fishing, birdwatching, sightseeing, walking and cycling. The Onekawa Te Mawhai Regional Park is also located adjacent to the spit with the main entrance nearby. There is easy walking access to the beach and mudflats. Public toilets, car parking and a shelter are provided. The Ōhiwa walkway joins the Ōhiwa boat ramp and Ōhiwa Spit.

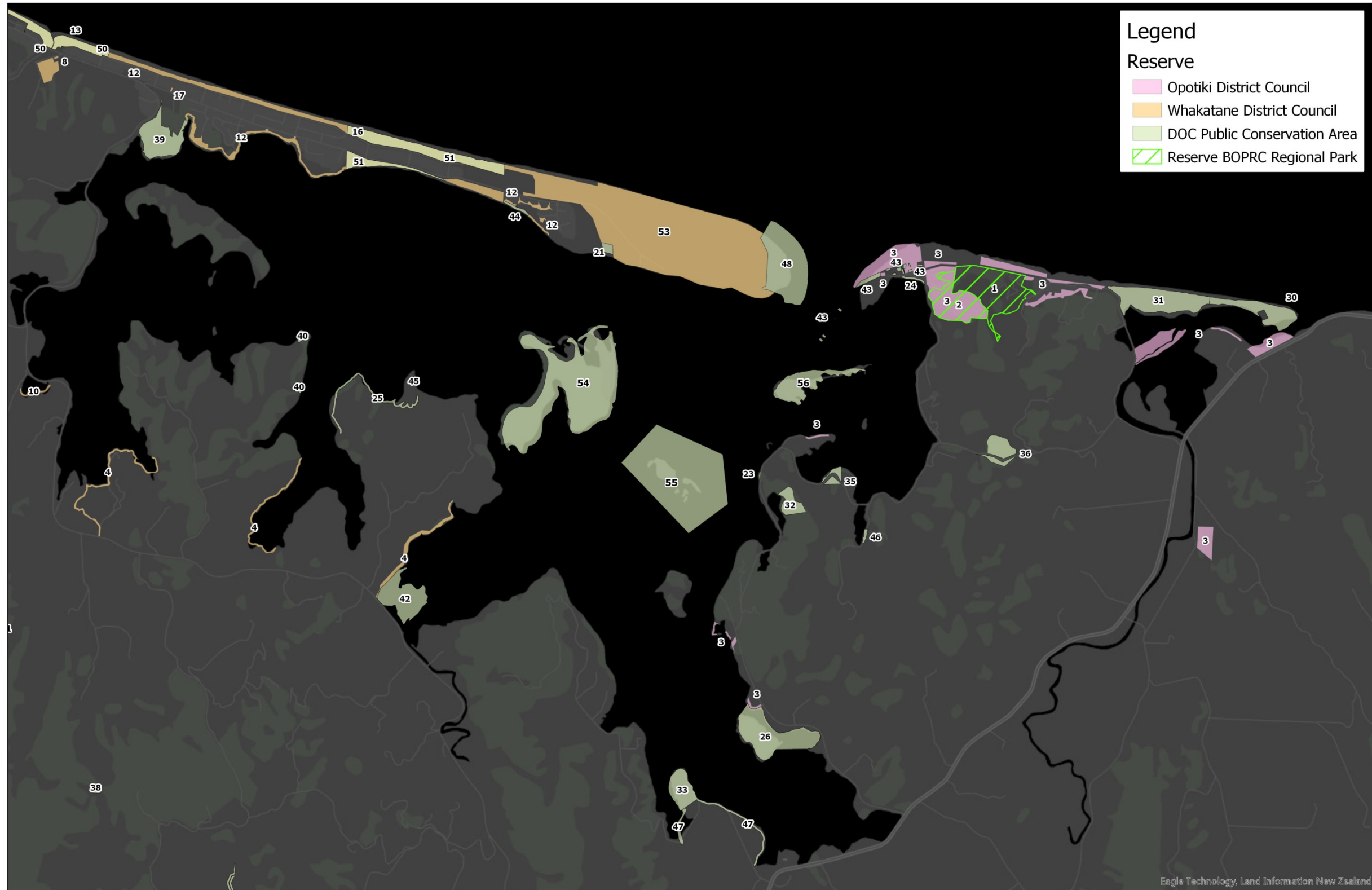
### 11 **Harbour access and public land**

#### 11.1 **Current access**

The harbour is blessed with considerable amounts of public land, in various tenures, on some islands and on the harbour margins. OHSR While there are large stretches of harbour margin with no public access, a previous study carried out by the Partners concluded that currently there is adequate public access.

#### 11.2 **Reserves**

The Whakatāne District Council, the Ōpōtiki District Council, the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and iwi manage reserves around the harbour. These reserves have been set up, mostly under the Reserves Act, for a variety of primary purposes (see Appendix 3) subject to various pieces of legislation. Most have some form of management plan.



**Legend**

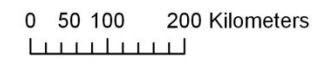
**Reserve**

- Opotiki District Council
- Whakatane District Council
- DOC Public Conservation Area
- Reserve BOPRC Regional Park



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Moturiki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

## Ohiwa Recreation Strategy - Reserves Ohiwa Margins



© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
© Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
© Statistics NZ

**556578**


Sheet 1 of 1  
Date Printed 1.3.18



OBJECT ID	Reserve Name	Reserve Type	Reserve Owner
1	Onekawa Te Mawhai	Regional	BOPRC
2	Onekawa Te Mawhai	Regional	BOPRC
3			Ōpōtiki District Council
4			Whakatāne District Council
5		Harbour(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
6	Kapu Te Rangi Historic Reserve	Reserve(Historic)	Whakatāne District Council
7	Te Parihari Pa Historic Reserve	Reserve(Historic)	Whakatāne District Council
8	Bluett Park	Reserve(LP Civic & Parking)	Whakatāne District Council
9		Reserve(LP Erosion Control)	Whakatāne District Council
10		Reserve(LP Esplanade)	Whakatāne District Council
11		Reserve(Quarry)	Whakatāne District Council
12		Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
13	Maraetotara Reserve	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
14	Motuhora Reserve	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
15	Ohope Hall	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
16	Otao Domain	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
17	West End Reserve	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council
18	Whakaari Reserve	Reserve(Recreation)	Whakatāne District Council

OBJECT ID	Reserve Name	Reserve Type	Reserve Owner
19		Reserve(Scenic)	Whakatāne District Council
20	Kohi Point Scenic Reserve	Reserve(Scenic)	Whakatāne District Council
21	Port Ohope Recreation Reserve	Recreation Reserve - s.17 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
22	Waingarara Stream Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
23	Tokitoki Historic Reserve	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
24	Ohiwa Harbour Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
25	Ohiwa Harbour Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
26	Pataua Island Scientific Reserve	Scientific Reserve - s.21 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
27	Ohope Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
28	Huntress Creek Conservation Area	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
29	Waiotahi Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
30	Waiotahi Spit Historic Reserve	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
31	Waiotahi Spit Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
32	Ohiwa Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
33	Kutarere Recreation Reserve	Recreation Reserve - s.17 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
34	Matekerepu Historic Reserve	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
35	Conservation Area - Waiotahi	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
36	Oscar Reeve Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC

OBJECT ID	Reserve Name	Reserve Type	Reserve Owner
37	Kotare Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
38	Soda Springs Reserve Crown Land	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
39	Tauwhare Pa Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
40	Paparoa Pa Historic Reserve	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
41	Waiotane Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
42	Conservation Area - Nukuhou Saltmarsh	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
43	Conservation Area - Old Town of Ohiwa	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
44	Ohiwa Harbour Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
45	Motuore Point Conservation Area	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	DOC
46	Ohiwa Harbour Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
47	Ohiwa Harbour Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
48	Ohope Spit Wildlife Refuge Reserve	Government Purpose Reserve - s.22 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
49	Nukuhou River Marginal Strip	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	DOC
50	Ohope Recreation Reserve	Recreation Reserve - s.17 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
51	Otao Domain Recreation Reserve	Recreation Reserve - s.17 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
52	Kohi Point Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC
53	Port Ōhope Reserve	Recreation Reserve - s.17 Reserves Act 1977	Whakatāne District Council
54	Uretara Island Scenic Reserve	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	DOC



OBJECT ID	Reserve Name	Reserve Type	Reserve Owner
55	Whangakopikopiko Government Purpose	Government Purpose Reserve - s.22 Reserves Act 1977	DOC
56	Motuotu Island Nature Reserve	Nature Reserve - s.20 Reserves Act 1977	DOC

## 12 Facilities available

Ōpotiki and Whakatāne District councils, and to a lesser extent DOC, BOPRC and care groups, provide and maintain a number of facilities around the harbour that support recreation.

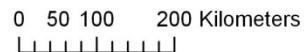
### 12.1 What we have

- Rubbish collection points provided by WDC are available on the western side of the harbour only. ODC has a zero waste policy, so does not provide rubbish bins on the eastern side of the harbour and visitors are expected to take their waste and recycling with them when they leave.
- WDC provides a wharf at Port Ōhope Wharf Reserve, and boat ramps at Port Ōhope Wharf, Ōhope Spit Reserve and Goodwin's Landing. ODC manages the Ōhiwa Loop Road boat ramp on the eastern side of the harbour.
- Signage is provided at boat ramps and wharf, with information about water and navigation safety, tsunami risk and fishing regulations. Signs at the Nukuhou lookout provide information about local wildlife.
- Public toilets are provided by WDC and ODC at five sites.
- Privately owned and operated camp grounds are located at Ōhope Beach, close to Port Ōhope Wharf, and at Ōhiwa. There are also a number of motels in the area (though only on the western side).
- Seating and picnic tables are available at several locations. Some have shade trees and/or shelters.
- Plenty of parking for vehicles and boat trailers is available at all the boat ramps. Parking is also available for vehicles at all the "hubs" listed above.
- Walkways/cycle trails are provided between the Ōhiwa spit and Loop Road boat ramp. Another is currently (2017) under construction from Waterways Drive to the Port Ōhope Wharf.
- Walking dogs is a popular activity. It's worth noting that dogs are banned from some areas, need to be on a lead in others and one reserve, Otai South is a designated dog exercise area.
- Overnight self-contained parking sites. Whakatāne District Council operates an overnight self-contained parking site for self-contained vehicles only at Ōhope Spit. In addition, a few private landowners around the harbour offer overnight parking for self-contained campervans. Freedom camping legislation permits such parking at a number of locations around the harbour.

Ninety-five per cent of research participants (Hamerton 2014) said their recreational needs were well catered for, and gave high satisfaction ratings for a range of facilities. Some however suggested improvements could be made in facilities around the harbour such as rubbish disposal, picnic tables, toilets, shade and camping sites.



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
 New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
 For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
 VERTICAL DATUM:  
 Moturiki  
 PROJECTION:  
 New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)



# Ohiwa Recreation Facilities

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

556578

Sheet 1 of 1  
 Date Printed 22.2.18







- Legend**
- Facility Type
- BBQ
  - Parking
  - Picnic Table
  - Seat
  - Shelter/Waharoa/Whakaruruhou
  - Toilet
  - Boat Ramp
  - Playground
  - Overnight Self Contained Parking
  - Dog Exercise Area
  - Old Wharf
  - Track



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Mauriaki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

0 50 100 200 Kilometers

### Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Tauwhare Pa

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data, CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

556578

Sheet 1 of 8  
 Date Printed 27.2.18

















**Legend**

**Facility**


**Type**

-  BBQ
-  Parking
-  Picnic Table
-  Seat
-  Shelter/Waharoa/Whakaruruhou
-  Toilet
-  Boat Ramp
-  Playground
-  Overnight Self Contained Parking
-  Dog Exercise Area
-  Old Wharf
-  Track



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Motuiki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

## Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Nukuhou Saltmarsh/Walkway 556578

0 50 100 200 Kilometers  


© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

Sheet 3 of 8  
 Date Printed 27.2.18





HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Motuiki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

### Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Ohiwa Boatramp

0 50 100 200 Kilometers

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

556578

Sheet 4 of 8  
 Date Printed 27.2.18





**Legend**

**Facility Type**

- BBQ
- Parking
- Picnic Table
- Seat
- Shelter/Waharoa/Whakaruruhou
- Toilet
- Boat Ramp
- Playground
- Overnight Self Contained Parking
- Dog Exercise Area
- Old Wharf
- Track



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Motuiki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)



### Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Ohiwa Spit

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
© Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
© Statistics NZ

556578

Sheet 5 of 8  
Date Printed 27.2.18





HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geoidless Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Mean Sea Level  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

### Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Ohope Spit and Boatramp 556578

0 50 100 200 Kilometers

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

Sheet 6 of 8  
 Date Printed 27.2.18





**Legend**

**Facility**

**Type**

- BBQ
- Parking
- Picnic Table
- Seat
- Shelter/Waharua/Whakaruruhou
- Toilet
- Boat Ramp
- Playground
- Overnight Self Contained Parking
- Dog Exercise Area
- Old Wharf
- Track



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Motuiki  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

## Ohiwa Recreation Facilities - Otao South Reserve



© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
© Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data, CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
© Statistics NZ

556578

Sheet 7 of 8  
Date Printed 27.2.18





**Legend**

**Facility Type**

- BBQ
- Parking
- Picnic Table
- Seat
- Shelter/Waharoa/Whakaruruhou
- Toilet
- Boat Ramp
- Playground
- Overnight Self Contained Parking
- Dog Exercise Area
- Old Wharf
- Track



HORIZONTAL DATUM:  
New Zealand Geodetic Datum 2000 (NZGD2000)  
For practical purposes, NZGD2000 equates to WGS84  
VERTICAL DATUM:  
Motukahi  
PROJECTION:  
New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (NZTM2000)

### Ohewa Recreation Facilities - Ohewa Wharf Reserve

0 50 100 200 Kilometers

© Bay of Plenty Regional Council, 2014  
 © Sourced from Land Information New Zealand data. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED  
 © Statistics NZ

**556578**

Sheet 8 of 8  
 Date Printed 27.2.18



## 13 Provision of information/education

### 13.1 What we have

Instructional and directional signage is provided at many sites around the harbour. This is in the process of being rationalised and updated (2017). Ngā Tapuwai o Tairongo, the Ōhiwa Harbour Heritage Trail (in design 2017) will provide interpretation of natural and cultural history at a number of points around the harbour. Visitor research (Hamerton, 2014) indicated that most people found the existing signage around the harbour 'useful' and that there 'was about the right amount' of signage. Generally people were satisfied with the information and signage provided. Some people commented that they would like to see more information about the natural environment (specifically birds) and things to do and see.

People get information about Ōhiwa Harbour from a range of sources, often from other people, and also rely on local businesses to provide information. The sources survey respondents gave were, in order of importance: word of mouth, internet, campground/motel offices, locals, local papers, observation, i-sites, booklets and brochures, motorhome guide, signs and noticeboards, councils, radio (Hamerton, 2014).

Some respondents requested various kinds of signage, including clear signs indicating where camping is allowed, information about fish and shellfish harvesting and limits, information about wildlife especially birds, and historical and cultural information about particular sites.

## 14 Recreation research

Research was carried out over summer 2013-2014 (Hamerton, 2014) using interviews, surveys and observation. The full report of this research can be found in Appendix 3.

Feedback was gathered, via workshops and community drop-in sessions, from iwi, members of the community and from particular interest groups when the OHS was refreshed in 2014. The feedback relating to recreation is summarised in Appendix 4.

The findings of both the above have been incorporated into this document.

## 15 Future recreation trends, needs

There are trends nationwide and many of these may be replicated at Ōhiwa.

- As more people live in large urban centres, Ōhiwa Harbour, with its natural character and quiet, peaceful environment is likely to become more popular.
- Domestic and international tourism is booming nationwide and we can expect to see an increase in people visiting the harbour.
- Increasing reliance on web-based sources of information.
- Increasing use of mobile phone apps for information.
- Current figures show that domestic tourists spend about 77% of the tourism spend, and international visitors around 23%.
- Increase in freedom camping numbers nationwide and pressure for additional self-contained overnight parking facilities.
- Public and Commercial ventures may continue to increase – events (water based, sport, food/festival/music events), summer shops/restaurants, mobile trading (coffee, food carts), commercial recreation facilities.
- Some kind of ferry or boat link across the harbour may become necessary as walking and cycling trails are developed.



- During previous research (Hamerton, 2014), respondents noted pressure on some facilities already at busy times, particularly the Ōhope boat ramp and rubbish bins. They also made suggestions about how their recreational experience could be improved.
- Local community members have offered many suggestions for improvements that could be made (Appendix 4).

## 16 Stakeholders

Apart from the OHS Partners and other agencies, there are a number of other stakeholders in recreation in the harbour and others who have an interest in recreation.

### 16.1 Formalised recreational groups

- Port Ōhope Yacht Club.
- EBOP Triathlon and Multisport Club.

### 16.2 Commercial interests

- SUP and bike hire.
- Kayak hire and tours.
- Fishing charters.
- Accommodation providers.
- Shop, cafe and restaurant.

### 16.3 Community groups

- Several environmental care groups.
- Coast care.
- Lions Club Ōhope.
- Ōhope Scouts.
- Port Ōhope Playcentre.

### 16.4 Events

- The above stakeholders may hold events from time to time.
- Sailing regattas.
- EBOP triathlon and multisport triathlons.
- Sunshine and a Plate Vintners event (Ōhope Wharf).
- BirdsAPlenty festival (harbour wide).
- SLSC Junior surf champs use Otao and boat ramp as alternative location.
- Private functions such as birthdays and weddings are occasionally held in various locations.

## 17 Conflicts

The potential exists for conflict in a number of areas:

- Conflicting activities occurring in the same or adjacent locations (e.g. swimming and boating; kayaking and water skiing).

- Recreational activities which can have a negative impact on amenity values or on the environment (e.g. noise from powerboating in quiet spots; contamination of water from boats, rubbish, etc.).
- Different cultures hold values related to recreation which that are quite different from each other.
- Recreational activities carried out in public spaces have potential to impact on private landowners living adjacent to the harbour or public reserves.

## 18 The legal framework

The *Local Government Act 2002* notes that local authorities should take into account the social, economic, and cultural interests of people and communities and maintain and enhance the quality of the environment.

The *Resource Management Act 1991* promotes the sustainable management of natural physical resources, including the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, while maintaining and enhancing public access.


The *Reserves Act 1977* governs the establishment and management of reserves held under the Act. It provides for the preservation and management of areas for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, ensuring, as far as possible, the survival of all indigenous species of flora and fauna and the preservation of access for the public. It also provides for the preservation of representative samples of all classes of natural ecosystems and landscape and promotes the protection of the natural character of the coastal environment and the margins of lakes and rivers. Each classification of reserve should have its own philosophy, purpose, and management principles and management planning should provide for the best use of each reserve. It emphasises retention of open space for outdoor recreation, attempts to maximise freedom of access to reserves for all people rather than just a few, encourages multiple use of reserve land and facilities when feasible and appropriate and facilitates greater involvement of the public in reserves administration and decision-making.

Reserve management plans are in place for a number of reserves classified under the Act. Other reserves are covered by 'omnibus' reserve management plans. They contain comprehensive planning for the current and future management of these reserves.

The *New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (2010)* sets out a number of objectives designed to assist in preserving the natural character of the coastal environment, while ensuring recreation opportunities are available in appropriate places. Policies call for integrated management or control of activities and recognition of potential contributions to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities of activities in the coastal environment.

The *Regional Policy Statement for the Bay of Plenty (2014)* notes the importance of integrated management of the coastal environment, with one goal being that of general enjoyment, amenity and recreation, maintaining and enhancing public access while preserving its natural character. It notes the value of water for recreation and names Ōhiwa Harbour as an area of "pristine outstanding natural character".

The proposed *Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan (2017)* notes several issues related to recreation: the pressure that increasing population and diversifying recreation interests will put on access to coast and harbours; the possibility of inappropriate access routes to the coast degrading sensitive habitats; the linking of recreation experiences to open space qualities making them vulnerable to change; and loss of public access to the coast which could occur due to human activities, land use development or sediment build-up. Objective 22 calls for integrated access to the coastal environment to be maintained and enhanced, and for provision of safe ocean and harbour access for boats, and so that people can enjoy the coast's open spaces and natural heritage qualities.



Other Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki District Council plans and strategies make reference to a number of initiatives around Ōhiwa Harbour. They variously note the need to improve harbour facilities and public access, to maintain recreation areas such as community reserves and cycle ways and to further develop infrastructure such as the Ōhope wharf, Ōhiwa boat ramp and roads.



# Appendices

---







# Appendix 1: Bylaws

A number of bylaws are in place which relate in some way to recreation and are administered by councils.

## **Whakatāne District Council bylaws**

Those of relevance to Ōhiwa Harbour include (but not limited to): public places, dog control, beaches, liquor control, parks and reserves.

Note: self-contained overnight parking is not currently covered by a specific bylaw but a new freedom camping bylaw is likely to be developed under the Freedom Camping Act.

Most of these bylaws are currently under review (early 2018) or are likely to be reviewed in the near future.

## **Ōpōtiki District Council bylaws**

Those relevant to Ōhiwa Harbour include (but not limited to): public places, animal, dog control, beaches.

These bylaws are scheduled for review in 2018/2019.

## **Bay of Plenty Regional Council bylaw**

Bay of Plenty Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw (2017).



## Appendix 2: Reserve Management Plans

Many reserves have a management plan in place.

### **Whakatāne District Council Reserve Management Plans**

Reserve Management Plans include the Ōhope Reserves Management Plan – last revised in 1998. Ōhope Spit was not WDC administered land until 2006 therefore this is currently omitted from the plan. This plan is due for review as resources dictate. Ōhope spit and all other Ōhope reserves in this area will also be covered by this revised plan.

The draft Whakatane District Reserve Management Plan (omnibus) is still under development following stage one of consultation and is due out in late 2018. This plan will cover all other freehold land held for reserve purposes that is not currently in the Ōhope Reserves Management Plan.

### **Ōpōtiki District Council Reserve Management Plans**

Reserves adjoining Ōhiwa Harbour are included in the Coastal Reserves Management Plan (2012).

### **Bay of Plenty Regional Council Park Management Plan**

BOPRC administers the Onekawa Te Mawhai Regional Park in conjunction with ODC. A park management plan (2014) is in place for the BOPRC portion of the park in conjunction with ODC and Upokorehe.

### **Department of Conservation Reserve Management Plans**

DOC do not have management plans in place for specific reserves. Planning for their reserves is carried out at a district and regional level. The exception is Tauwhare Pa which is included in the management plan under Te Tapa-Toru a Toi (Joint Management committee).





## Appendix 3: Recreation research

# Ōhiwa Harbour Recreation Research

Report prepared for Bay of Plenty Regional Council  
MARCH 2014



By Heather R. Hamerton



## Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank the following people for their contributions to this report:

- Research assistants Kerry Boothway, Tanja Rothers and Chloe Marshall for their work on data collection and data input, and for assistance with data analysis.
- Owners/managers of the following businesses who generously gave of their time to participate:
  - Ōhope Beach TOP 10 Holiday Park
  - Ōhiwa Beach Holiday Park
  - Port Ōhope General Store
  - Aquarius Motor Lodge
  - KG Kayaks
  - Cheddar Valley Pottery
- Tim Senior, Land Management Officer (Eastern), Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Photo on front cover courtesy of Tanja Rothers

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	2
Executive Summary .....	5
1 Background.....	6
2 Methodology .....	6
3 Findings .....	6
3.1 Observations.....	6
3.1.1. Port Ōhope Boat Ramp.....	7
3.1.2 Port Ōhope Wharf.....	9
3.1.3 Ōtao South Reserve .....	11
3.1.4 Tauwhare Pā .....	12
3.1.5 Wainui Road.....	12
3.1.6 Nukuhou Lookout and River Walk.....	13
3.1.7 Ruatuna Rd .....	13
3.1.8 Kutarere Wharf .....	13
3.1.9 Ōhiwa Walkway .....	14
3.1.10 Ōhiwa Boat Ramp.....	15
3.1.11 Ōhiwa Spit .....	17
3.1.12 Summary of Observations.....	18
3.2 Surveys.....	19
3.2.1 Demographics.....	19
3.2.2 Place of residence .....	20
3.2.3 Present accommodation .....	20
3.2.4 Visiting Patterns.....	21
3.2.5 Recreational Activities.....	23
3.2.6 Satisfaction with Facilities .....	24
3.2.7 Information and signage .....	25
3.2.8 Suggested improvements .....	28
3.2.9 Aspects of Interest and Value .....	29

3.3	Interviews with business owners .....	31
4	Summary and Discussion .....	33
	Appendix 1 .....	35

## Executive Summary

As part of the monitoring of the Ōhiwa Harbour Recreation Strategy, Bay of Plenty Regional Council on behalf of the Ōhiwa Strategy Co-ordination Group requested information about recreational use of the harbour over the summer holiday period. Between 6 January and 10 February 2014, researchers completed observations of recreational usage patterns at twelve sites around Ōhiwa Harbour and conducted brief interviews with 226 people about their activities and satisfaction levels with facilities, and what was of interest and value to them about the harbour. Six local business owners/managers commented on the feedback and requests for information they receive from visitors and made suggestions for improving facilities.

The observations demonstrated that the numbers of people around the harbour were highest in January and decreased into February. Numbers were also higher during weekends, particularly Auckland Anniversary weekend and the weekend immediately following Waitangi Day. The most popular water-based activities were fishing, swimming, power-boating, kayaking, sailing, paddle-boarding and dinghies. The most popular land-based activities were sight-seeing, walking, picnicking and cycling. Patterns of activities observed varied across the different sites.

The 226 survey participants were 80% European, equal numbers of men and women and from a broad range of age groups. More than half reported that they live in the Bay of Plenty. One third of those surveyed were visiting Ōhiwa Harbour for the first time, and 90% of people planned to visit more than one location around the harbour. Port Ōhope Wharf was the most popular site for people to visit. Ninety-five per cent of participants said their recreational needs were well catered, and gave high satisfaction ratings for a range of facilities. Most people found the signs useful and said there was about the right amount of signage. People get information about Ōhiwa Harbour from a range of sources, often from other people, and also rely on local businesses to provide information. The quiet and tranquillity of the harbour was highly valued, as were the natural environment, beautiful scenery and wildlife. People liked the easy access to the water at many points around the harbour, the safety of the harbour for families with children, and the diverse range of activities available. Business owners reported they get a lot of positive feedback about how wonderful the area is for recreation and receive many requests for information.

People are attracted by the quiet, uncluttered and scenic natural environment, and appreciate the diverse recreational activities available. This is demonstrated also in the broad range of recreational activities which were observed around the harbour. Generally people are satisfied with the facilities and signage. However, they also made suggestions for how their experience could be improved. The information collected will assist regional and district councils in their management of Ōhiwa Harbour and its environs.

# 1 Background

The Ōhiwa Harbour Strategy calls for regular monitoring of recreational use of the harbour "...to assess usage, to identify incompatible activities, including conflict with cultural and ecological values, and to assist demand management (such as the need for facilities)" (10.3.7, p51). This report was requested by the Ōhiwa Strategy Co-ordination Group from Heather Hamerton of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic to satisfy the requirements of this action and to provide information about issues such as the provision of signage.

# 2 Methodology

Three research assistants completed observations of recreational usage patterns at a number of different sites around Ōhiwa Harbour between 6 January and 10 February, 2014. Observation times at each were usually one hour; on some days observations were carried out at the same site in both morning and afternoon.

The research assistants also surveyed 226 people, asking them what activities they were involved in and how often they visit Ōhiwa Harbour sites. Survey participants were asked how satisfied they were with facilities and the signage and information available, and invited to comment on what they valued most about the harbour.

Interviews with 5 business owners around Ōhiwa Harbour were also carried out in mid-February. Business owners were asked about the feedback they received about the harbour and recreational opportunities and what kinds of information people most often request. They were also invited to make suggestions for improving facilities. Campground owners were asked if there is sufficient capacity to cope with demands for camping and whether demand for camping is rising or declining.

# 3 Findings

In this section, findings from observations are reported for each site at which observations were carried out. Survey findings are then presented, followed by a summary of information contributed by business owners.

## 3.1 Observations

Regular one-hour observations were carried out at the following sites:

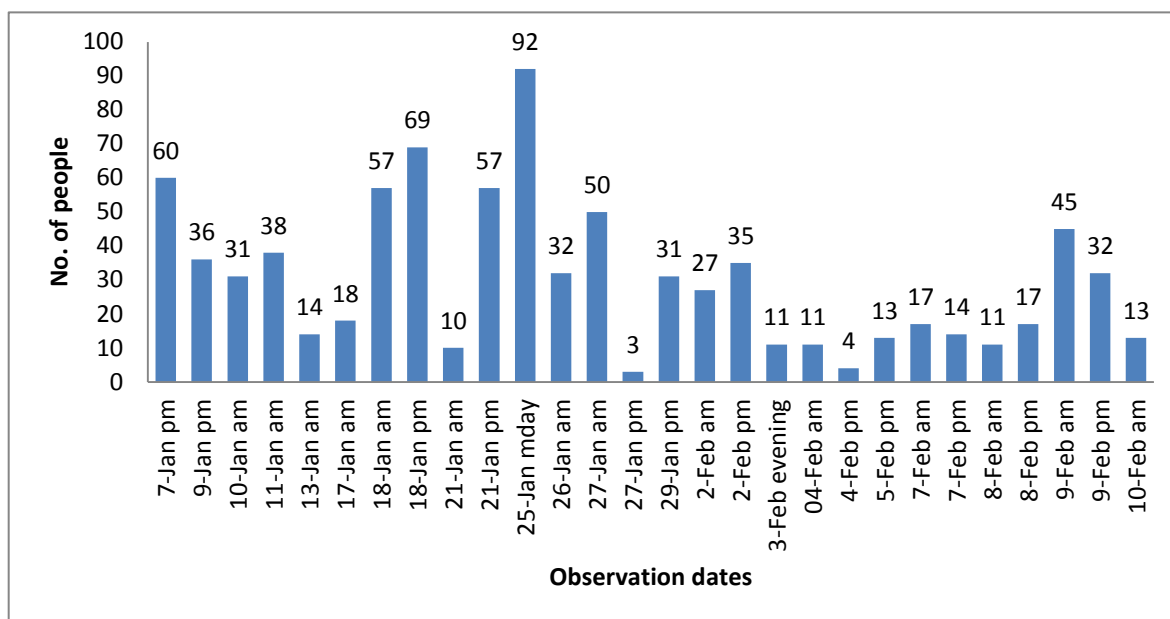
- Port Ōhope Boat Ramp (27 observations over 19 days)
- Port Ōhope Wharf (28 observations over 18 days)
- Ōtao South Reserve, Ōhope (14 observations over 13 days)
- Tauwhare Pā carpark (14 observations)
- Wainui Rd
- Nukuhou Lookout (Burke Rd) (10 observations)

- Nukuhou river walk (3 observations)
- Kutarere Wharf (9 observations)
- Ruatuna Rd (8 observations)
- Ōhiwa Boat Ramp (18 observations over 13 days)
- Ōhiwa walkway (10 observations)
- Ōhiwa Spit (16 observations over 14 days)

### 3.1.1. Port Ōhope Boat Ramp

Observations were carried out on 27 different occasions over 19 days. The chart below summarises the total numbers of people at this location during each observation time. Between 30 and 92 people were observed in January; after anniversary weekend numbers dropped down to between 11 and 30 people during a one-hour period.

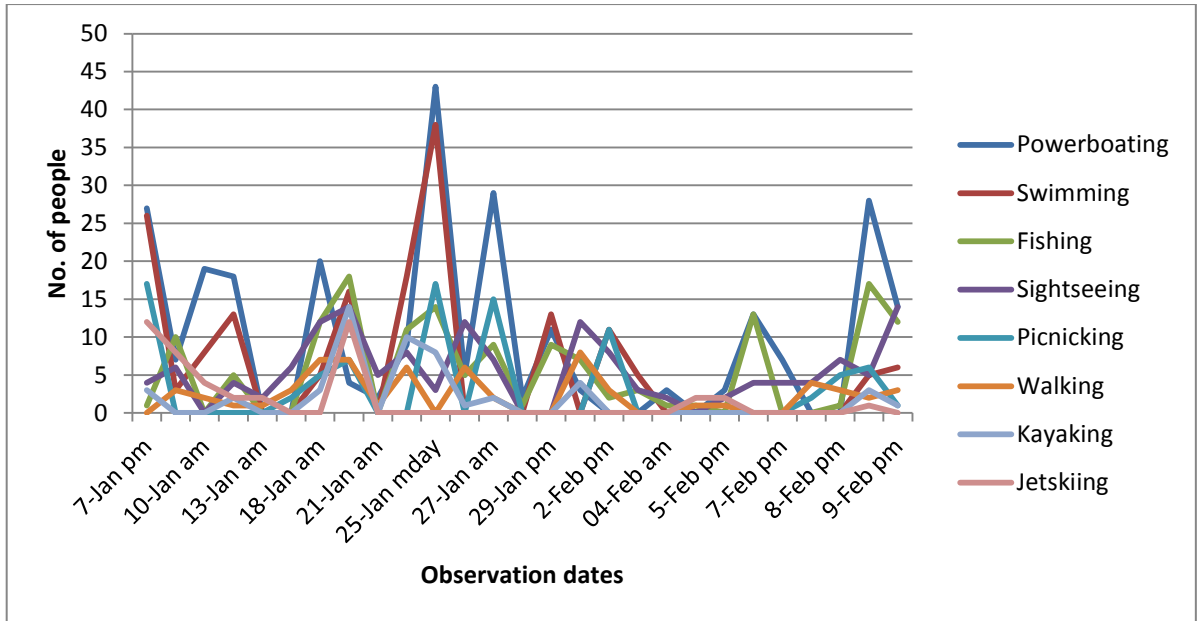
During both January and February, the observation periods when only small numbers of people were observed were days on which sea and/or wind conditions were rough. As an example of how weather affected numbers, rainy conditions on the morning of 21<sup>st</sup> January meant that only 10 people were counted at the boat ramp, whereas on the afternoon of the same day after the rain had cleared 57 people were observed.



**Figure 1: Total numbers of people observed at Port Ōhope Boat Ramp**

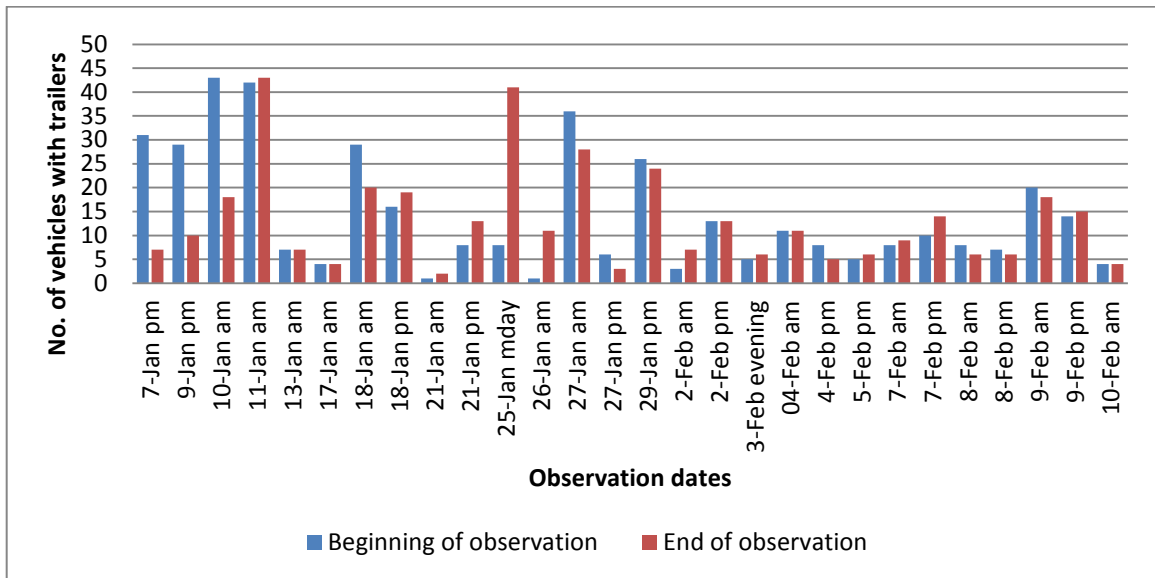
The most popular activity at the Port Ōhope Boat Ramp area was power-boating. Other very popular activities were swimming, fishing and sightseeing. Swimming was popular here because of the safety of the water. Many other water activities were also popular, including water-skiing, jet skiing, kayaking, paddle boarding and biscuiting. The area was popular for picnicking and walking, and people were camping in the area on most days. The figure below shows the recreational use pattern for the eight most popular activities observed at Port Ōhope Boat Ramp.





**Figure 2: Recreational use patterns for the eight most popular activities at Port Ōhope Boat Ramp**

Numbers of vehicles with trailers was recorded at the beginning and end of each observation period. The number of vehicles with trailers parked at Port Ōhope Boat Ramp varied from 1 on a few days to 43. The average number of vehicles with trailers counted at this location was 14, making this the most popular spot for launching boats around the harbour. Higher numbers were recorded on weekends. From the changes in numbers at the beginning and end of some observation periods, it appeared that people are launching and bringing in boats at all times of the tide. The table below shows the numbers of vehicles with trailers parked at this location at the beginning and end of each observation period.

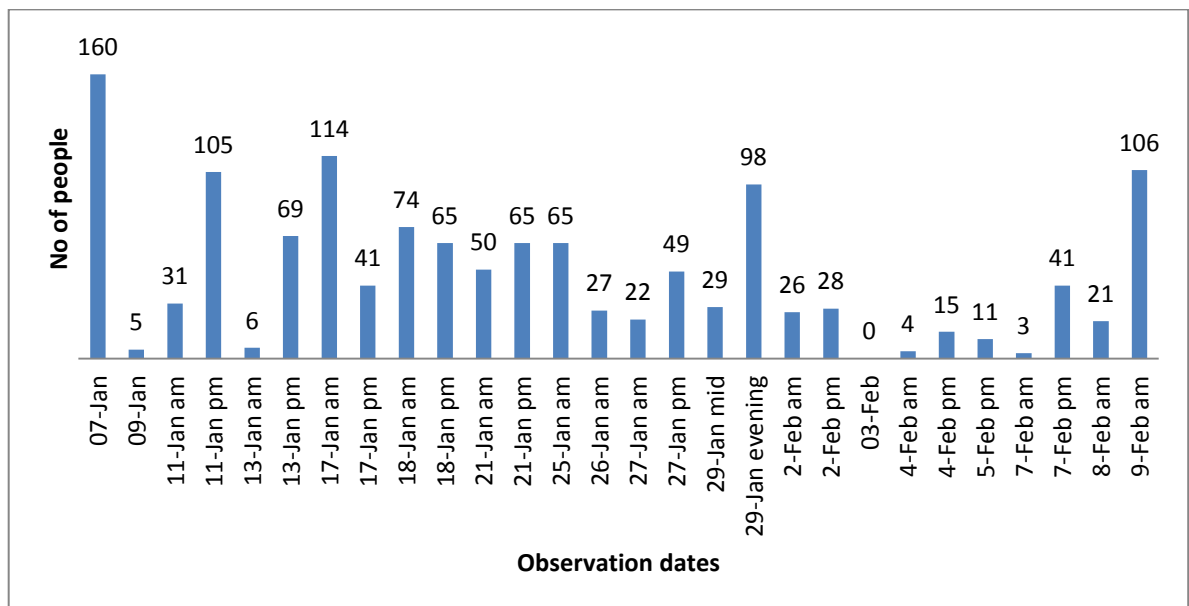


**Figure 3: Numbers of vehicles with trailers at Port Ōhope Boat Ramp**

### 3.1.2 Port Ōhope Wharf

During the observation period, numbers fluctuated from day to day, but started to decrease slightly in February, with the exception of the weekend following Waitangi Day. The average number of people observed during a one-hour period was 48, with numbers ranging from less than 10 on some days up to 160. The total numbers of people observed at each time are recorded below.

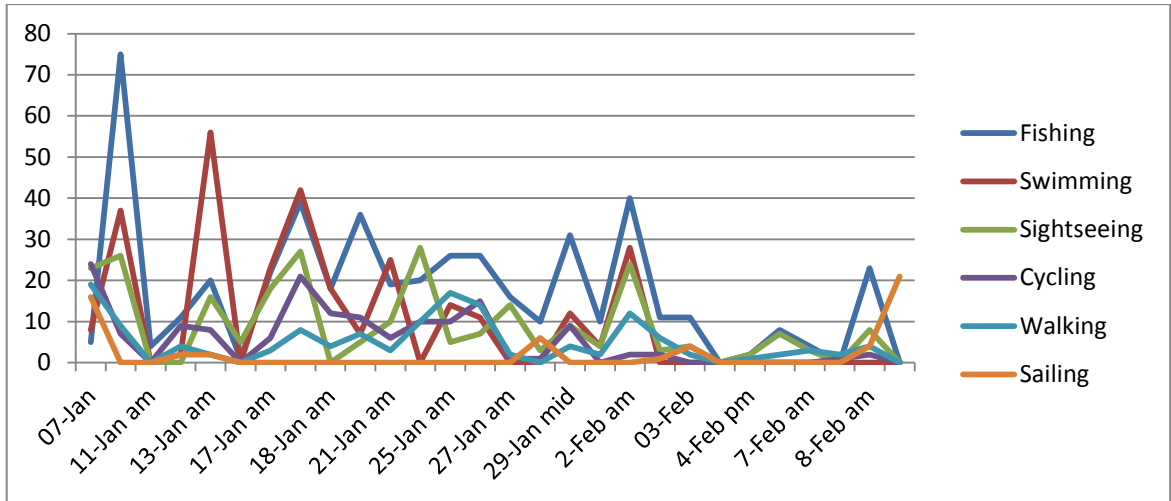
As at the boat ramp, numbers were lower when weather conditions were rainy or overcast and windy, as was the case on 9th January. Fewer people were also counted at the wharf in the early morning observations and when the tide was low.



**Figure 4: Total numbers of people observed at Port Ōhope Wharf**

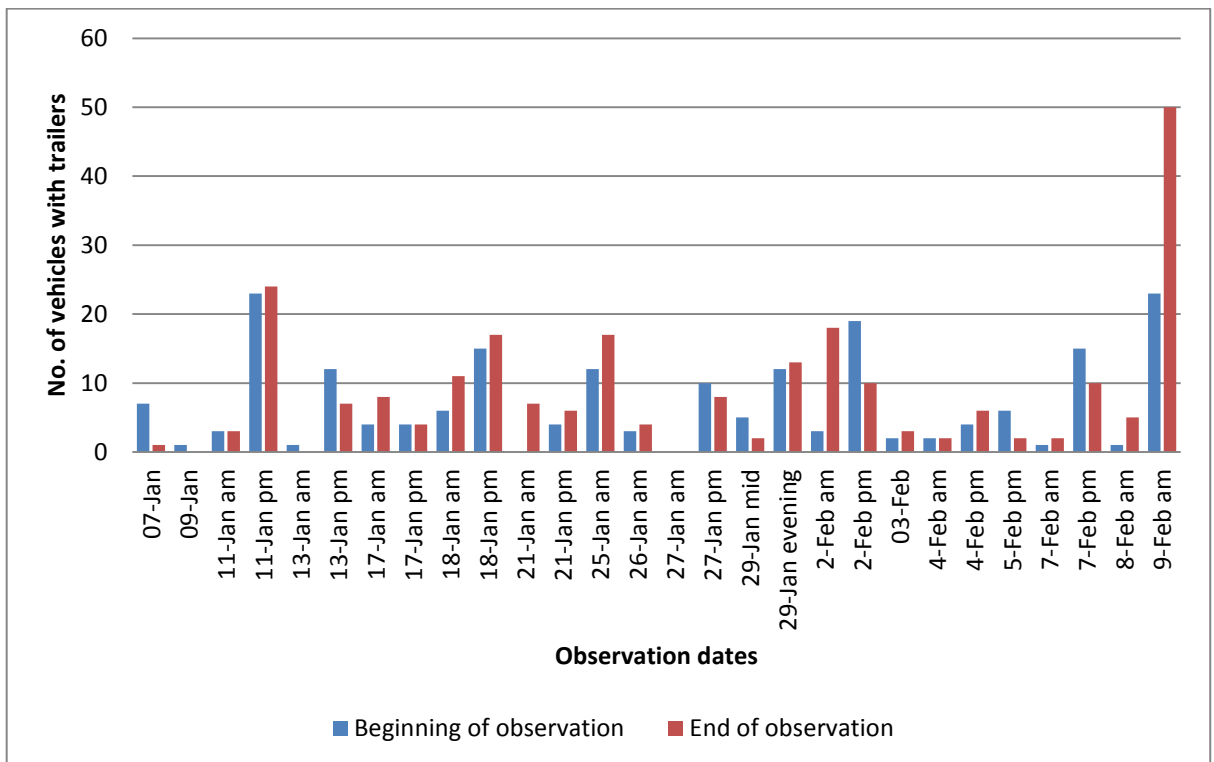
Fishing was by far the most popular activity at this location. Numbers of people fishing from the wharf ranged from 15 - 40 people, with 20 being the average number on days when the tide was favourable. Swimming and sightseeing were very popular activities around the wharf area. People were also engaged in a number of water activities, including sailing, kayaking, power-boating, paddle-boarding and kite-surfing. A kayak hire business is located at Port Ōhope Wharf adjacent to the boat ramp over the busy summer period; from here people paddle kayaks all around the harbour.

Land-based activities consistently observed included walking, cycling and picnicking. At high tides, the wharf was a popular place for swimmers jumping into the water from the wharf. The figure below shows the patterns of recreational activity for the six most popular activities.



**Figure 5: Recreational use patterns for the eight most popular activities at Port Ōhope Wharf**

A boat ramp is situated adjacent to and west of Port Ōhope Wharf. The number of vehicles with trailers parked near the boat ramp varied from 0 on some days to 50 on one Sunday in February. The average number of vehicles with trailers counted at this location was 8. Higher numbers were recorded on weekends. Slightly lower numbers of vehicles with trailers were counted at low tide times, but it was different to discern boat launching patterns. The much higher number of vehicles and trailers on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February was due to activities at the local yacht club at this location. The table below shows the numbers of vehicles with trailers parked at this location at the beginning and end of each observation period.



**Figure 6: Numbers of vehicles with trailers counted Port Ōhope Wharf**

### 3.1.3 Ōtao South Reserve

Observations were carried out on 13 days, and on one day in both morning and afternoon. Numbers ranged from 0 on a rainy day to 43 people on one day on anniversary weekend, with an average number of 18 people during one observation period. The chart below summarises the total numbers of people observed at this location on all observation dates.

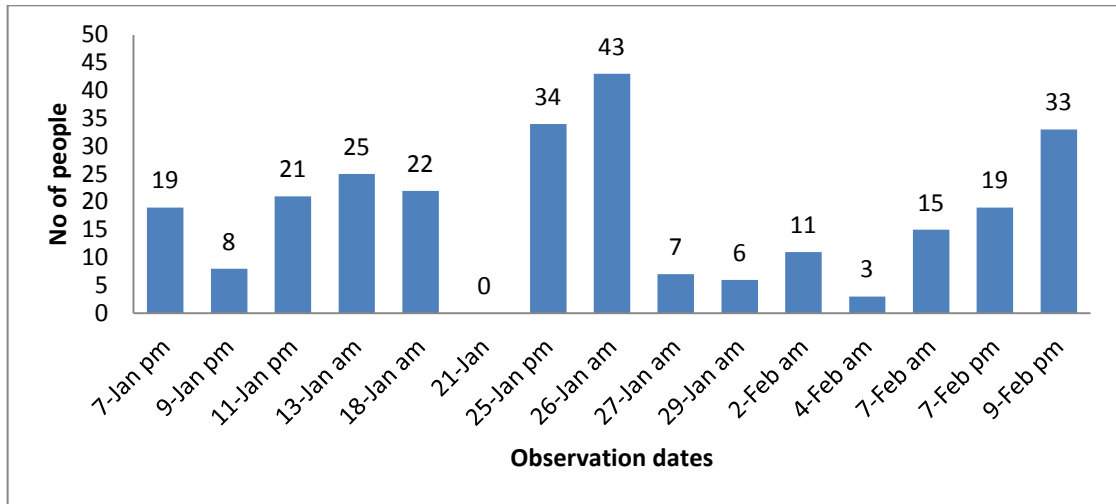


Figure 7: Total numbers of people observed at Ōtao South Reserve

At Ōtao South Reserve, people were observed both on the land and on the water. The most popular activities at this location were kayaking, walking and playing at the playground. Other activities were powerboating, sailing, picnicking, sightseeing and paddle-boarding. A stand-up paddle-boarding hire business operates from the Port Ōhope General Store at this location. The figure below shows recreational activity patterns for the six most popular activities.

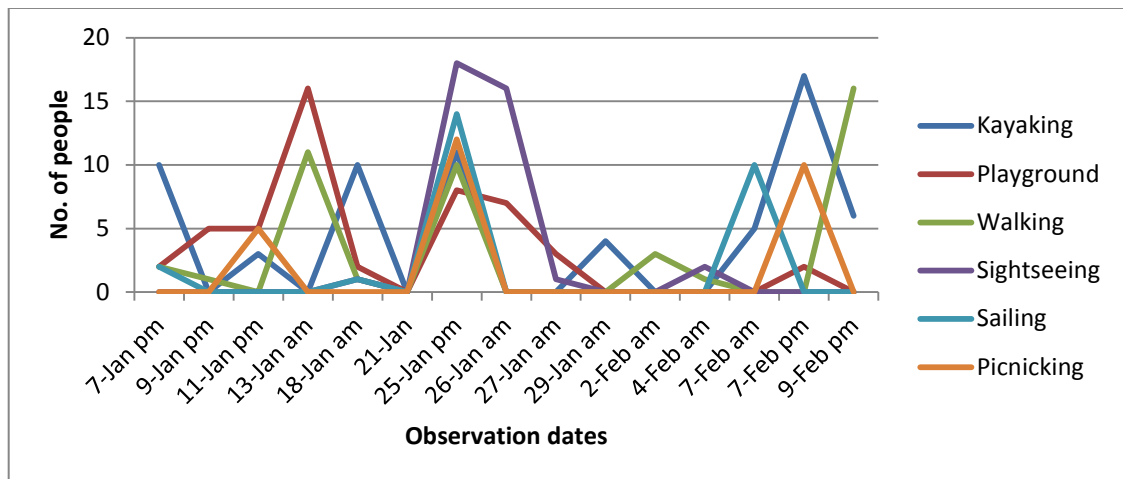


Figure 8: Recreational use patterns for the eight most popular activities at Ōtao South Reserve

### 3.1.4 Tauwhare Pā

One-hour observations were carried out at the carpark at the bottom of the path to Tauwhare Pā on 14 occasions. Small numbers of people (between 1 and 21) were observed walking and sightseeing there. On two days no-one stopped at this location during the observation time. It is not known how many of the people who stopped at the carpark climbed the path to Tauwhare Pā.

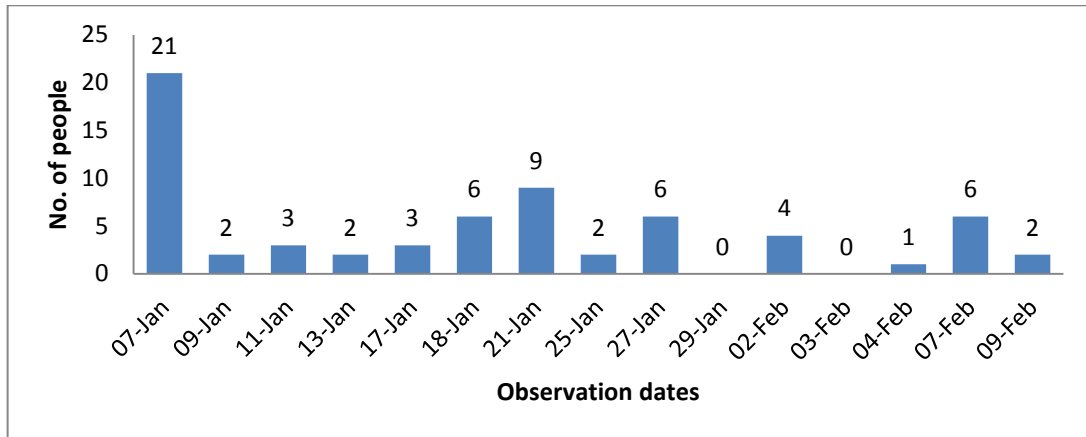


Figure 9: Numbers of people observed at Tauwhare Pā

### 3.1.5 Wainui Road

Although only one observation sheet was completed for Wainui Rd, and this showed no people present, researchers frequently drove through this area. They reported that few people stopped along the road, possibly because there are not many safe places to park. There is one rest area on Wainui Rd not far from the Ōhiwa Oyster Farm but there are no tables at this location, which may be a reason for not many people stopping there. Most of the vehicles that the researchers observed at the rest area were trucks; no one was observed engaged in recreational activities in this area.

### 3.1.6 Nukuhou Lookout and River Walk

Observations were carried out at the lookout for approximately an hour on ten days during January and February and on the river walk on three days. Information from both locations is included here. On all visits, a small number of visitors were at the site, mostly sightseeing and walking. On two days larger numbers of people were visiting: 16 people on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 12 people on 1<sup>st</sup> February. People remained at this location for around 15 – 20 minutes or less. Most people who stopped at the Nukuhou Lookout did not do the river walk. People were observed on the river walk on only one of the three days that observations were carried out.

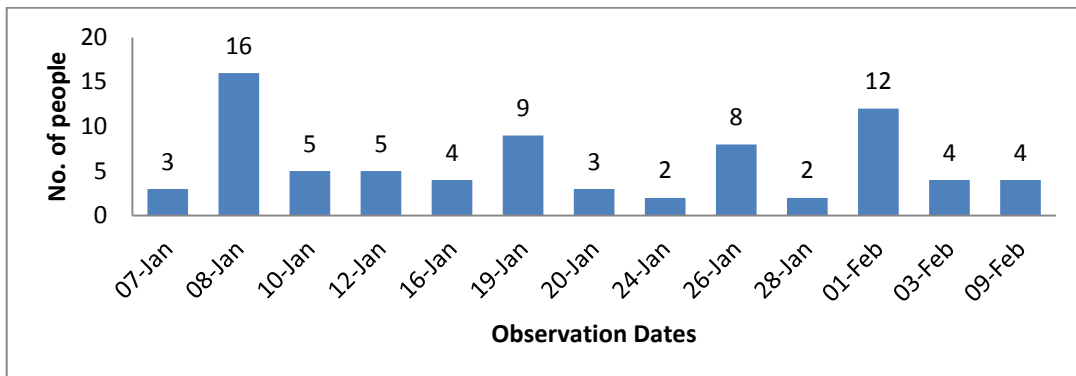


Figure 10: Numbers of people observed at Nukuhou Lookout and River Walk

### 3.1.7 Ruatuna Rd

Brief observations were carried out on Ruatuna Rd on eight occasions. On one day there were six people riding horses, and on another one person gathering oysters. On the other days there were no people or cars.

### 3.1.8 Kutarere Wharf

Brief observations were carried out on nine different days at this location, with researchers remaining there between 15 and 30 minutes. On one visit there were two people there. Otherwise no people were observed, although researchers noted on one visit that new rubbish had been dumped there and there were signs of a vehicle being driven on to the wharf.

Kutarere Wharf is sign-posted from the main road at Kutarere, but it seems that not many tourists see the sign or go down this road. The road itself is quite rough approaching the wharf, and no information is provided on this route about the area, or any scenic attractions or history.

### 3.1.9 Ōhiwa Walkway

Ōhiwa Walkway runs along the harbour’s edge from Ōhiwa round to Ōhiwa Boat Ramp (approximately 5 km long). Observations were carried out on Ōhiwa Walkway on ten days, for up to an hour each time. Small numbers of people (between 2 and 9) were observed on each occasion. The chart below records the total numbers of people counted during each observation period.

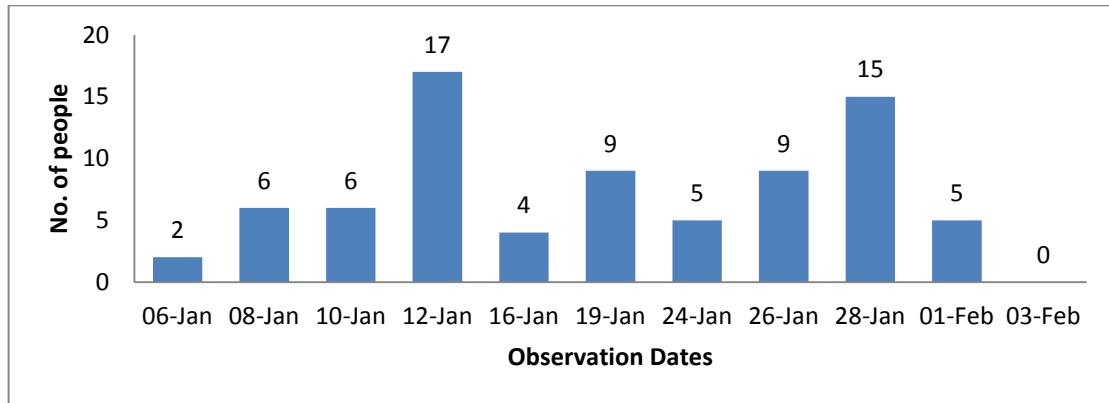


Figure 11: Numbers of people observed on Ōhiwa Walkway

Walking and cycling were the most popular activities on the walkway. People were also seen running and kite surfing on the harbour. On two occasions observations coincided with low-tide; at these times 12 and 17 people respectively were counted collecting shellfish. The figure below shows the pattern of recreational activities across the observation dates.

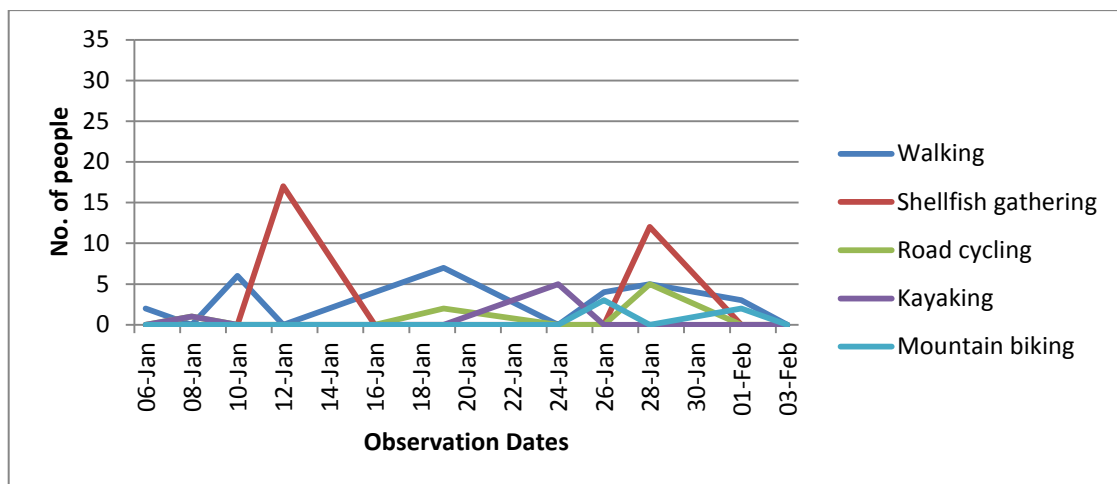


Figure 12: Patterns of recreational activity at Ōhiwa Walkway.

### 3.1.10 Ōhiwa Boat Ramp

Observations were carried out at this site on 13 days between 6<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> February. On eight days, observations were carried out in both the morning and afternoon. Higher numbers of people were observed in early January, with numbers decreasing through the rest of the month. Weekend numbers were only slightly higher than during the week. The highest number of people during one observation period was 45 people on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January. This observation also coincided with low tide, when 14 people were observed collecting shellfish.

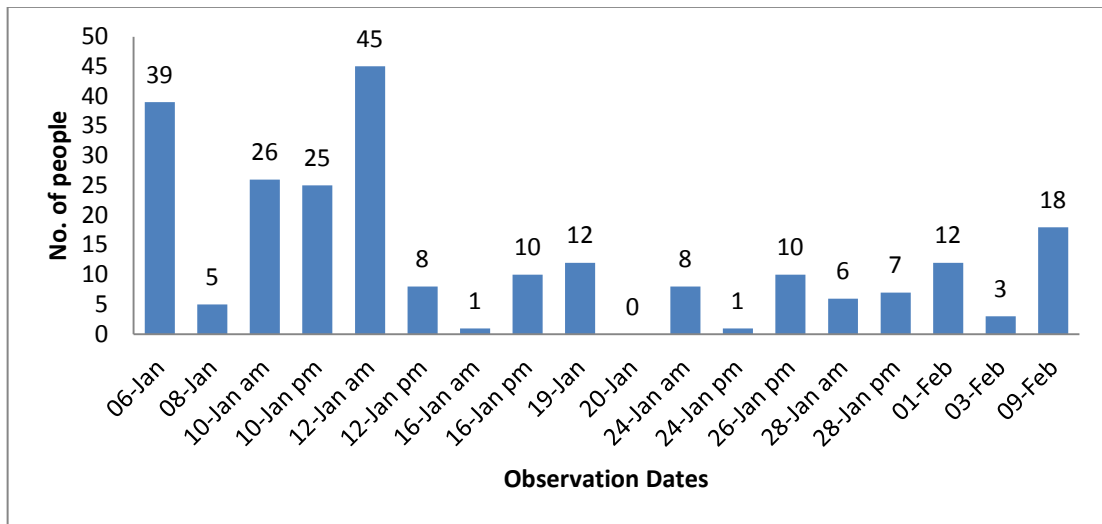


Figure 13: Total numbers of people observed at Ōhiwa Boat Ramp

The most popular activities at Ōhiwa Boat Ramp were powerboating, sightseeing, picnicking and fishing. People were also observed swimming, collecting shellfish when the tide was low, kayaking, walking and biscuiting. Tide did not appear to affect people launching boats and fishing in this area. The figure below shows the patterns of recreational use for the six most popular activities.

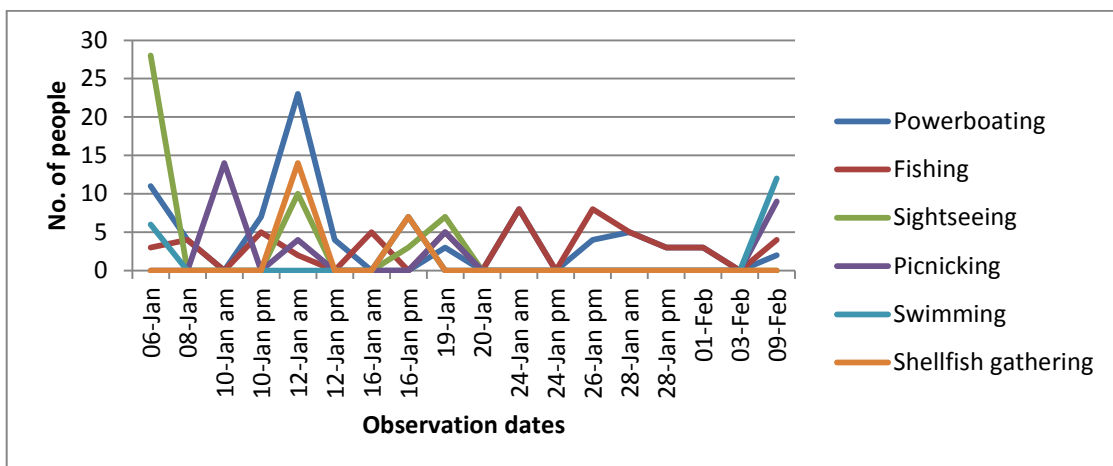


Figure 14: Recreational use patterns for the eight most popular activities at Ōhiwa Boat Ramp



The numbers of vehicles with trailers parked around the Ōhiwa Boat Ramp during observations varied from 0 to 14, with the average number being three. Because observations were carried out for only an hour at a time, it was difficult to discern how patterns of boat launching varied with the tide. However, on one observation which occurred on a January weekend at mid-tide, 5 vehicles were counted at the beginning of the observation and 14 at the end, demonstrating that people were launching boats at mid-tide as the tide was going out. It is not known how many of the boats being launched were boating in the harbour nor how many crossed the bar to the open sea. Numbers fluctuated each day throughout the observation period with slightly higher numbers of vehicles counted in mid-January. However, this boat ramp was still being used regularly in early February. The table below reports the numbers of vehicles with trailers counted at the beginning and end of each observation period.

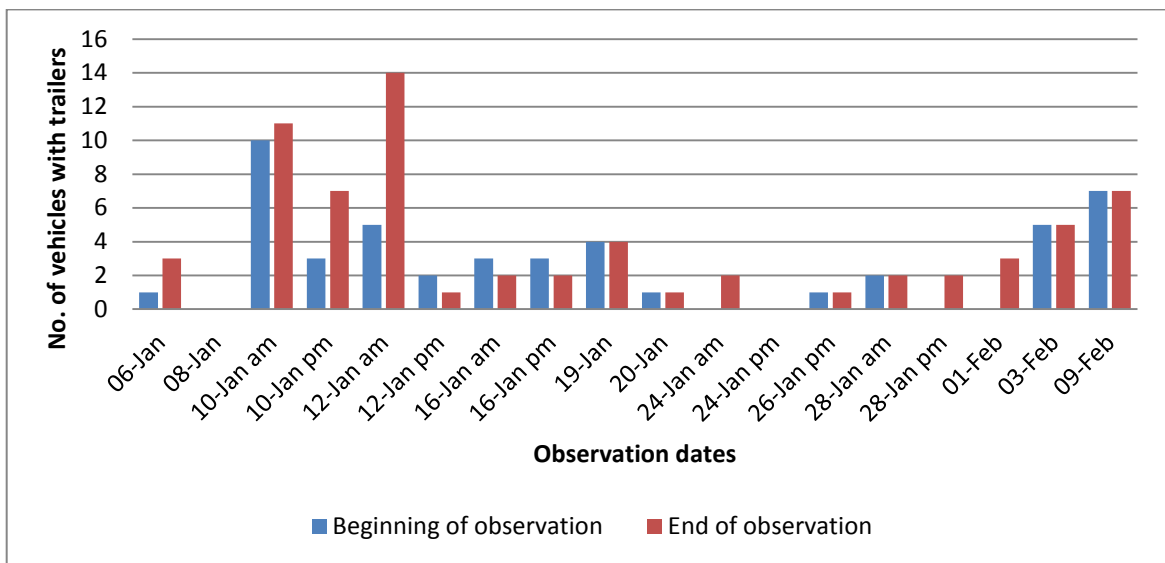


Figure 15: Numbers of vehicles with trailers at Ōhiwa Boat Ramp

### 3.1.11 Ōhiwa Spit

Regular observations were carried along Ōhiwa Spit. As with Ōhiwa Boat Ramp, numbers were highest in early January when between 17 and 37 people were counted (mean = 26). The numbers observed can be seen in the table below.

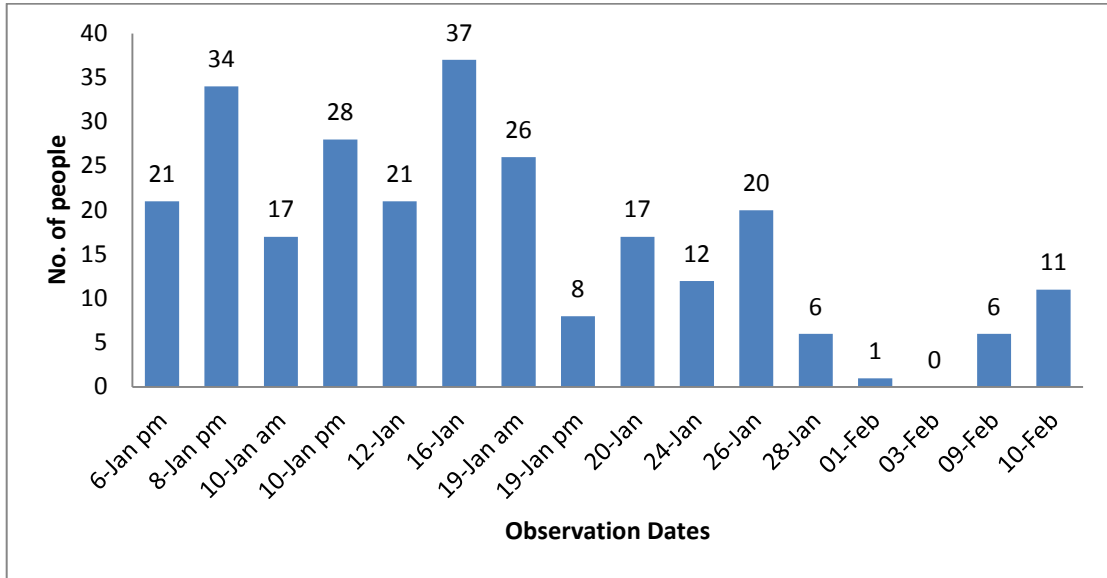


Figure 16: Total numbers of people observed at Ōhiwa Spit

The most popular activities in this location were kayaking, swimming and walking. The area was only suitable for launching kayaks and swimming around high tide as at low tide there are extensive sand- and mud-flats. People were also fishing, power-boating, picnicking, stand-up paddle-boarding, sailing and cycling. The figure below shows the patterns of recreational use for the eight most popular activities.

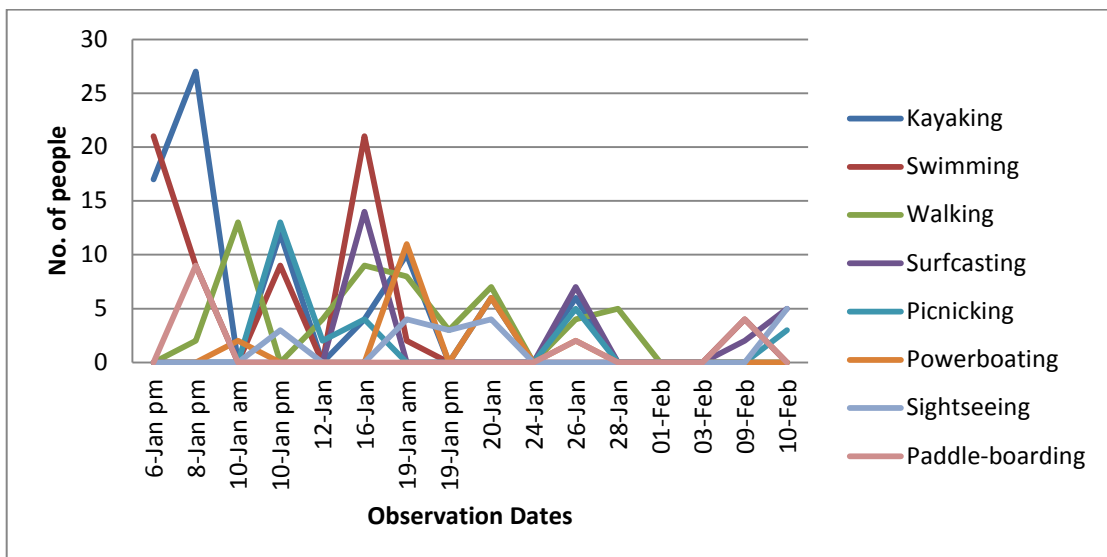


Figure 17: Recreational use patterns at Ōhiwa Spit

### 3.1.12 Summary of Observations

The observations demonstrated that the numbers of people around the harbour were highest in early January and decreased into February. Numbers were also higher during weekends, particularly Auckland Anniversary weekend and the weekend immediately following Waitangi Day.

Water-based activities were popular right around the harbour; the most popular water-based activities were fishing, swimming, power-boating, kayaking, sailing, paddle-boarding and dinghies. Many people were observed fishing in boats as well as from shore and from Port Ōhope Wharf. Swimming was most popular at Port Ōhope Wharf and Port Ōhope Boat Ramp, with smaller numbers observed swimming on the Ōhiwa side of the harbour. Kayak and stand-up paddle-board hire businesses based beside the harbour at Port Ōhope make these two activities popular, and kayaks are also available for hire at Ōhiwa Holiday Park. Paddle-boarding is a fairly new activity, and numbers of paddle-boarders on the harbour could be expected to rise in coming summers. Most water users were carrying out activities such as jet-skiing and water-skiing in the zones marked for these activities.

The most popular land-based activities were sight-seeing, walking, picnicking and cycling. These were popular activities at every location. Sightseeing was the most popular activity on land, and was most common in areas where parking was readily available and where signs indicated sites of interest such as Tauwhare Pā and Nukuhou Lookout. Walking and cycling (both road cycling and mountain biking) were popular activities on both Ōhope and Ōhiwa sides of the harbour. Cycle hire is available at the Port Ōhope General Store. The only playground observed was at Ōtao South Reserve and this was a popular attraction. However, it should be noted that both Ōhope Beach TOP 10 Holiday Park and Ōhiwa Holiday Park have playground facilities available for children staying at these facilities.

Shellfish gathering was mostly observed at several spots on the Ōhiwa side of the Harbour and only when the tide was low. A number of activities were also tide-dependent. Kayak launching at low tide was restricted to certain places such as boat ramps; swimming was similarly restricted at low tide to areas with sufficient depth of water. Bird-watching was observed only at Ōhiwa Spit and Nukuhou Lookout.

## 3.2 Surveys

A total of 226 surveys were carried out at locations around Ōhiwa Harbour. The numbers of surveys completed at each of the sites are reported in the table below.

**Table 1: Numbers of surveys completed at each site**

<b>Location</b>	<b>No of surveys</b>
Port Ōhope Wharf	71
Port Ōhope Boat Ramp	55
Ōhiwa Boat Ramp	24
Ōhiwa Spit	23
Nukuhou Lookout	21
Tauwhare Pā	15
Ōtao South Reserve	11
Ōhiwa Walkway	4
Kutarere Wharf	1
Location not specified	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>

### 3.2.1 Demographics

The vast majority of the survey respondents were European or Pakeha. The table below summarises reported ethnicity.

**Table 2: Reported ethnicity of survey respondents**

<b>Reported Ethnicity</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
New Zealand European / Pakeha	180	79.64%
Maori	16	7.08%
Asian	3	1.33%
Other	19	8.41%

Approximately even numbers of men and women were interviewed, with the gender breakdown illustrated in the table below.

**Table 3: Gender breakdown of participants**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	105	46%
Female	99	44%
Not specified	22	9.7%

There was a wide spread of age groups among the people surveyed. The majority of respondents were aged 40 or older, with smaller numbers of young people completing the survey.

**Table 4: Respondents' reported age groups**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Under 20	3	1.3%
20 - 29	9	4%
30 - 39	32	14%
40 - 49	62	27%
50 - 59	38	17%
60 or over	65	29%
Not specified	17	7.5%

### 3.2.2 Place of residence

Thirty per cent of respondents (n=67) reported living in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and a further 27% (n=62) live elsewhere in the Bay of Plenty. Thirty-five percent of respondents (n=80) reported they live elsewhere in New Zealand, and almost seven per cent were from overseas. Table 5 reports where participants live.

**Table 5: Respondents place of residence.**

<b>Place of residence</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ōhiwa	6	2.7%
Ōhope	26	12%
Whakatane	22	9.7%
Opotiki	6	2.7%
Elsewhere in the Eastern Bay of Plenty	7	3.1%
Wider Bay of Plenty	62	27%
Elsewhere in New Zealand	80	35%
Overseas	15	6.6%

### 3.2.3 Present accommodation

When asked where they were staying, about one third (n=74) reported they were staying at home, just over one third (n=82) were camping (either in a camping ground or freedom camping). Approximately 17% were staying with friends or family or in a bach, while the others were staying in a range of accommodation options.

**Table 6: Respondents' reported accommodation during their visit to Ōhiwa Harbour**

<b>Accommodation during visit</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
At home	74	32.74%
Holiday Park	53	23.45%
Freedom camping	29	12.83%
Staying with friends/family	22	9.73%
Bach	18	7.96%
Motel	10	4.42%
Holiday House	9	3.98%
Bed & Breakfast	2	0.88%
Backpackers	1	0.44%

### 3.2.4 Visiting Patterns

Approximately one third of respondents were visiting the site where they were interviewed for the first time. Another quarter (n=58) had been visiting this site for more than five years. Smaller numbers had been visiting there for less than a year (13%) or between one and five years (16%). Table 7 below reports how long respondents had been visiting the interview site.

**Table 7: Length of time respondents have been visiting this site**

<b>Length of time visiting this site</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
First time today	90	39.82%
Less than 12 months	29	12.83%
1-5 years	37	16.37%
More than 5 years	58	25.66%

Respondents were also asked about the frequency of their visits to the location where they were interviewed. This question was not relevant to those who had never visited before. Forty per cent (n=91) said they visited this location approximately once or twice a year; twenty per cent (n=46) said they visited more frequently. Sixty per cent of respondents (n=136) visited only during the summer months, while 28% reported they visit all year round. Table 8 below records respondents' reported frequency of visiting the location where they were interviewed.

**Table 8: Frequency of visits to this site**

Frequency of visits to this site	No of respondents	Percentage
Never been before	64	28.32%
Once a year	51	22.57%
Twice a year	40	17.70%
Once a month	30	13.27%
Once a week	10	4.42%
Two or more times a week	6	2.65%

Interviewees reported they planned to stay at their location for varying lengths of time. Thirty-four per cent (n=77) planned to spend 1 – 2 hours there, while another thirty-three per cent (n=76) said they would stay longer but less than a day. Twenty-two per cent only planned to stay for less than an hour, while a small number said they would stay longer than a day. Exact numbers and percentages are reported in Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Planned length of current visit**

Planned length of visit	No of respondents	Percentage
More than a day	20	8.85%
More than 1/2 day but less than a day	28	12.39%
2 1/2 to 4 hours	48	21.24%
1-2 hours	77	34.07%
less than an hour	49	21.68%

People were asked about the size of their group. Group size varied from 1 to 29, with an average of 3 people reported in each group.

Participants were asked what other sites around Ōhiwa Harbour they also visited. Many people said they planned to visit other sites. Port Ōhope Wharf was the most popular site, mentioned by 45% of people. Table 11 below contains a summary of the numbers who reported they planned to visit different sites. Small numbers of people also mentioned they planned to visit other sites, including the Oyster Farm, Ōtao South Reserve, Ōhiwa Domain and Tauwhare Pā.

**Table 10: Other sites visited**

Other sites visited	No of respondents	Percentage
Port Ōhope Wharf	102	45%
Ōhiwa Beach	89	39%
Ōhope Boat Ramp	83	36%
Ōhiwa Boat Ramp	58	26%

Eastern Bay of Plenty residents were asked how often they visit other sites around the harbour. Responses from the 58 people who answered this question are summarised in the table below. Most people who lived in the Eastern Bay visit other Ōhiwa Harbour sites once a month or less, with only small numbers visiting other locations more often.

**Table 11: Frequency of visits to other sites around Ōhiwa Harbour**

<b>Frequency of visits to other sites</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Never been before	8	13.79%
Once a year	12	20.69%
Twice a year	11	18.97%
Once a month	19	32.76%
Once a week	5	8.62%
Two or more times a week	3	5.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

People who indicated that they lived elsewhere were asked how often they planned to visit other sites during their stay. Thirty-six percent did not indicate that they planned to visit other sites. The frequency with which respondents said they plan to visit other sites is reported in Table 13 below.

**Table 12: Frequency of visiting other sites during this visit**

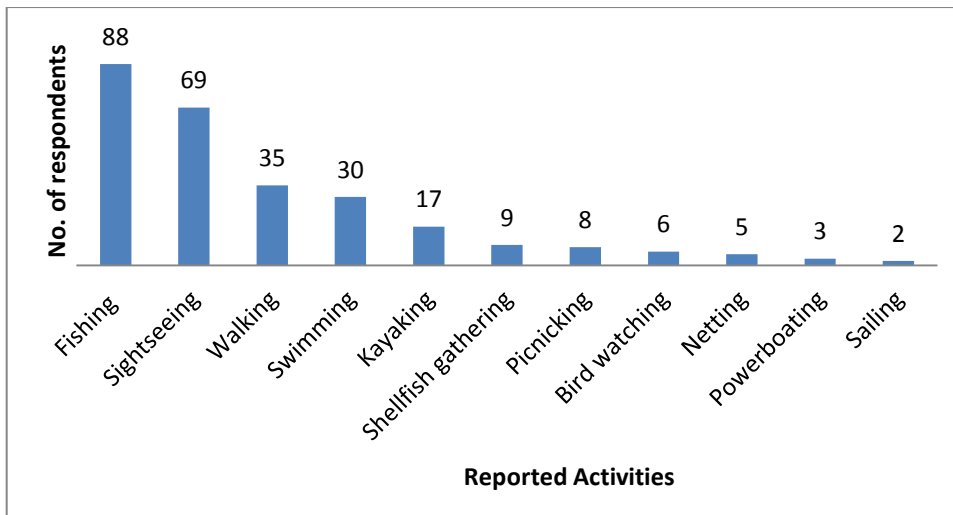
<b>Frequency of visiting other sites</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1 - 3 times	70	44.59%
4 - 6 times	15	9.55%
More than 6 times	15	9.55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63.69%</b>

These findings suggest that many people, even those who live in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, visit Ōhiwa Harbour fairly infrequently. Only a small number are frequent visitors, and while some visit all year round, many only visit during summer. While some respondents planned to visit a range of other locations, more than one third had no plans to visit other locations during their stay.

### **3.2.5 Recreational Activities**

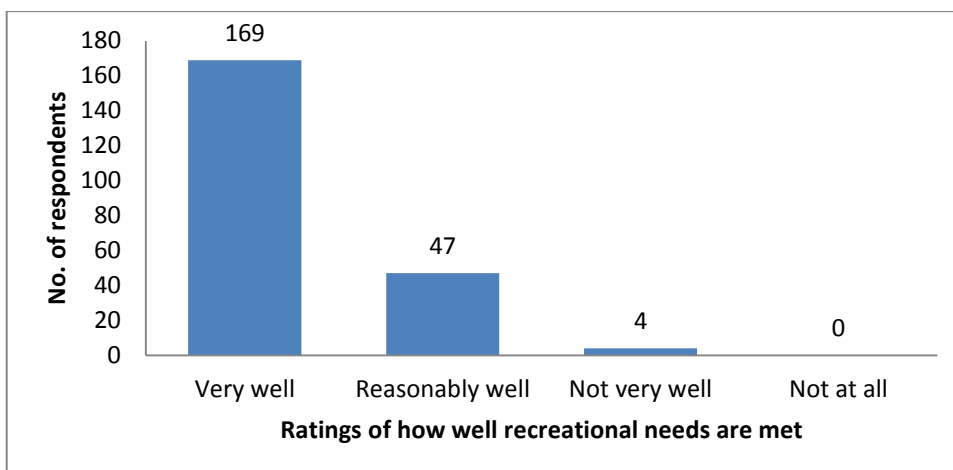
Survey respondents reported recreational activities they were engaged in during their current visit. The main activities reported are summarised in the table below. Fishing (including surfcasting from the shore and fishing from boats) and sightseeing were the most popular activities, followed by walking and swimming. The chart below summarises the most popular recreational activities respondents reported.





**Figure 18: Activities in which survey respondents were engaged in during their current visit**

Participants were asked how well their recreational needs were met. Ninety-five per cent of respondents reported that their recreational needs were catered for either very or reasonably well. Less than 2% said their needs were not very well catered for. The chart below summarises these responses.



**Figure 19: Respondents ratings of how well their recreational needs are met**

When asked about how their recreational needs could be better catered for, only a small number of people made suggestions, which included requests for more shade, seats, tables and toilet facilities at some picnic spots.

### 3.2.6 Satisfaction with Facilities

When asked to rate their satisfaction with facilities at the location where they were interviewed, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was very satisfied and 5 was not at all satisfied, overall people were satisfied with facilities (mean rating = 1.33). All facilities received above average satisfaction ratings as can be seen from Table 13 below. The availability of seats and tables and adequacy of shade were rated lowest.

The table also shows the ratings for sites on the Ōhope side of the harbour separately from ratings on the Ōhiwa side. When satisfaction ratings were broken down in this way, satisfaction ratings for individual items and overall satisfaction did not vary much across particular sites. Noise levels received a slightly lower rating on the Ōhiwa side and overall satisfaction was slightly lower as well. The availability of seats and tables, adequacy of shade, cleanliness and water quality were all rated lower on the Ōhope side.

**Table 13: Mean satisfaction ratings of facilities**

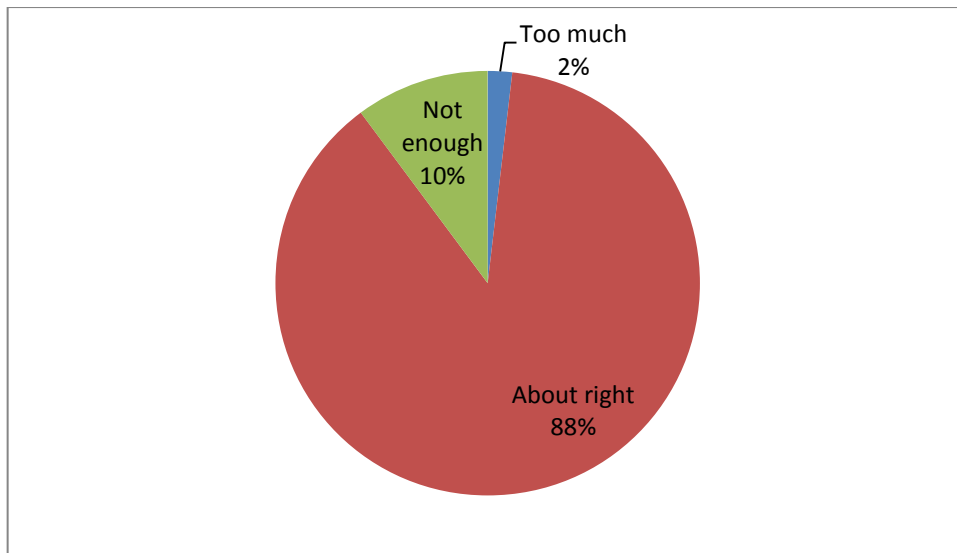
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Ōhope side of harbour</b>	<b>Ōhiwa side of harbour</b>	<b>Overall mean rating</b>
Overall Satisfaction	1.29	1.40	<b>1.33</b>
No of people	1.34	1.30	<b>1.33</b>
Cleanliness	1.42	1.36	<b>1.40</b>
Noise levels	1.39	1.58	<b>1.45</b>
Water quality	1.61	1.50	<b>1.58</b>
Boat ramp	1.72	1.52	<b>1.66</b>
Toilets	1.84	1.46	<b>1.75</b>
Seats/tables	2.18	2.11	<b>2.15</b>
Adequacy of shade	2.36	2.01	<b>2.25</b>

### **3.2.6.1 Feedback about this location**

When asked what they liked most about this location, participants gave a broad range of responses. Many people liked the quiet and peacefulness, and the beauty of scenery and views. They liked the natural environment, with plenty of space, fresh air and easy parking. They also liked how close the harbour was to where they lived or were staying and the easy access to water and a diverse range of activities. Some people specifically mentioned the fishing and shellfish, and a small number liked the walks and birdlife. Several people liked having access to both harbour and sandy beaches. Respondents appreciated how calm the harbour water was and safe for children. They appreciated the facilities that were available, including information about history and birdlife, walkways and freedom camping.

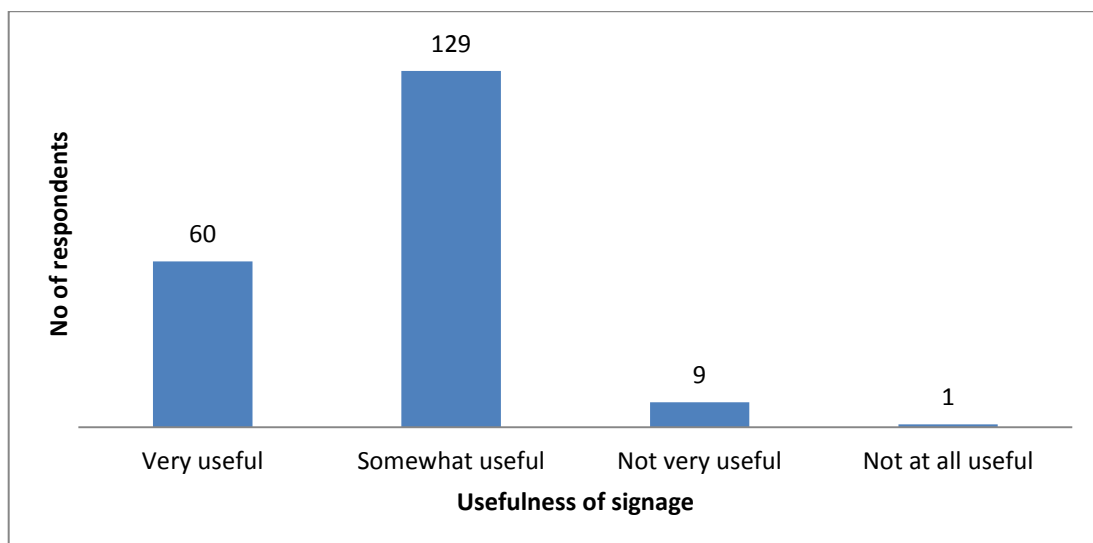
### **3.2.7 Information and signage**

When asked about the amount of signage around the harbour, eighty-eight per cent of respondents said there was about the right amount. Ten per cent said there was not enough signage. Less than two per cent said there was too much signage.



**Figure 20: Respondents' ratings of the amount of signage around Ōhiwa Harbour**

Respondents were also asked to rate the usefulness of the signage. As the chart below demonstrates, most people thought the signs were either very useful or somewhat useful (n=189).



**Figure 21: Respondents' ratings of the usefulness of signage**

A wide variety of suggestions were made about the signage, including information people would like to be included. The table below summarises the suggestions made by more than one person.

**Table 14: Suggestions about signage**

<b>Suggested signage</b>	<b>Number of people</b>
Fish: descriptions, sizes and limits (currently available at some sites only)	16
Overnight (“freedom”) camping: spots and boundaries more clearly indicated	13
History: especially at Tauwhare Pā	10
Birds: nesting places, descriptions/photos	9
Maps: more at various locations with recreation areas marked	6
More educational information about wildlife (other than birds)	6
Rubbish: instructing people to take it away or provide more bins	4
Toilets: more clearly signposted	4
Jumping off Port Ōhope Wharf: re no jumping from front of wharf	4
Shellfish: limits and ban (signage was not accurate)	3
Fire ban areas: Ōhope Beach and Spit	3
Dogs: where they can and can’t go, especially around Ōhope Spit and Beach	3
Walkway signs to include estimated walking times	2
Boat warnings and coastguard signs	2
Crossing the bar (with a map)	2

Several people also commented that the existing signs were faded and needed to be replaced with newer and brighter ones. Many people also commented that they had not read or did not see the signs.

When asked where they would like more signage, a small number of people suggested better signage at the boat ramps and also on Ōhope Spit. Several people also commented about signage on the main road at the turnoff to Port Ōhope Wharf and at the wharf itself.

When asked how they obtained information, people reported that they got information about the area from a range of different sources, which are summarised in the table below. Some respondents also said they knew about the place because they lived here or had lived here, or had been coming here for a long time.

**Table 15: How people get information about Ōhiwa Harbour and activities**

<b>Information Source</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>
Word of mouth (other people including family and friends)	59
Internet (including Google, Trip Advisor, fishing & boating websites)	36
Campground or motel offices	19
Locals	18
Paper (especially Beacon and Bay View)	14
Driving past (and stopped)	13
i-sites (Whakatane and Opotiki were mentioned)	12
Booklets & brochures	10
Motorhome Guide	9
Signs and noticeboards	8
Councils (BOPRC & WDC)	5
Radio	3

### **3.2.8 Suggested improvements**

Survey respondents were each asked to make one suggestion for improving facilities around Ōhiwa Harbour. A great many different suggestions for improvements were made, some of which were general, and some of which related to specific sites.

At the Port Ōhope Wharf, there were suggestions for improving safety at the wharf by having railings and a life buoy available, and for providing more seats and tables and shade. At the Port Ōhope Boat Ramp, people requested more camping sites (although some wanted camping banned there), a jetty, barbeque facilities and better parking as well as rubbish bins. On the Ōhiwa side, people wanted a store/café, public toilets, extension of walkways and better beach access. More shade and tables were also requested at Ōhiwa.

The table below summarises the suggestions that were made.

**Table 16: Suggested improvements**

<b>Suggested improvements</b>	<b>No. of people</b>
Rubbish: More bins/better signage/more frequent emptying of bins	21
More seats and tables	16
Toilets: public toilets on Ōhiwa side; better maintenance/cleaning & signage	14
More shade	13
More camping sites	12
Better pest control/eradication of weeds	7
Drinking water taps	6
Extension of walkways	6
Improvements to boat ramps	4
Sealing road to Ōhope Spit	4
Improvements to parking	4
BBQ facilities	4
Store/cafe on Ōhiwa side	4
Better beach access	3
Wifi access	3
Better policing by fisheries officers	3
Pontoon for childres	3
Rod holders at Ōhiwa boat ramp	3

### 3.2.9 Aspects of Interest and Value

Survey respondents were asked two questions: firstly about what interested them about the harbour, and secondly what they most valued. Although there was considerable overlap in responses to these two questions, they are reported here separately.

When asked what else they were interested in about the harbour, the most popular responses were all related to recreational activities: fishing, swimming, walks and kayaking. People were also interested in the natural environment and bird watching. The table below summarises all the activities mentioned by more than one person.

**Table 17: Respondents' reported interests**

<b>Items people were interested in</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>
Fishing (including shellfish gathering & floundering)	50
Swimming	39
Walks	36
Kayaking	32
Nature	28
Scenery	17
Birds or bird watching	17
Boating, including water skiing and jetskiing	12
History	8
Quietness and tranquillity	6
Activities for kids	4
Sustainability	3
Cycling	3
Sightseeing	3
Glow worms	2
Shops and cafes	2

People were also asked what they valued most about the harbour. The most valued aspect by far was the scenery and beauty of the harbour, which one person described as "...a good taste of coastal New Zealand" and another saw as having "uncluttered, clean looking shorelines and views".

Although there were varied responses, it was clear that people particularly valued aspects of the natural environment and the relatively undeveloped state of the harbour and its environs. One respondent reported that they valued "...its pristine condition, really well preserved, not developed" while another said "...no high rises here like in Mt Maunganui".

The safety of the harbour for families with children was another thing that people valued, with one person saying it was a "great place to bring the grandkids". The range of recreational activities available was valued: "...caters for so many people interested in aquatic activities". Many other respondents simply made brief one word comments, such as "beauty", "scenery" or "peacefulness".

The table below summarises the specific responses that were made.

**Table 18: What people value about Ōhiwa Harbour**

<b>What people value</b>	<b>No of respondents</b>
Beauty, scenery, view	76
Water	24
Safety of the harbour, especially for children	20
Accessibility	19
Availability of kaimoana/seafood	18
Cleanliness	15
Quiet and peaceful/lack of people	21
Natural environment/ecosystem	13
Activities available	7
That there are groups who care for it	5
Birdlife	5
Sheltered	4

### **3.3 Interviews with business owners**

Local business owners reported they get a lot of positive feedback about how wonderful the area is for recreation, particularly for fishing and boating, paddle-boarding and kayaking, also cycling, walking and bird-watching. People really appreciate how safe the harbour is for swimming and boating and are surprised at how beautiful and varied. Many people return to the campgrounds year after year, and many campers bring boats.

Businesses receive requests for information about a wide range of recreational activities including fishing, boat launching, charters and tours, navigating the bar, fishing, shellfish gathering spots, tide times, daily limits and shellfish bans. They are often asked about water activities such as stand-up paddle-boarding, kayaking and surfing, particularly on the Ōhope side of the harbour. Many of the requests are for information about activities for families.

People also request information about walks and walkways, local history, bird-watching and mountain biking, these requests are most common on the Ōhiwa side. One person commented that the number of boats on the harbour and going out to sea has decreased over the years, with more people now running and cycling instead of engaging in water-based activities. He attributed the changes to an “ageing population” and a decrease in the number of fish in the sea.

On the Ōhiwa side of the harbour, business owners reported that they are also asked about activities east of Ōhiwa Harbour.

Business owners, in particular those providing accommodation, really want to be able to answer the queries they get and have multiple ways of ensuring that any information they have is passed on. One campground manager said “We love to pass information



on if we have it” and described that they hand information out to people on their arrival, post information in camp kitchens and give daily information bulletins over their PĀ system as well as making information available in their office.

One business owner commented on the increase in the number of motorhomes in the area who make use of “park-over” facilities around the harbour, adding that a lack of space for motorhomes to park in Whakatane has contributed to this increase.

A number of suggestions for improvements were made by business owners:

- Improved signage on the main road at Port Ōhope Wharf: at present signage implies many businesses/activities are operating there, and people are often disappointed to find nothing open. The suggested change was “only advertise things that are actually happening or available – perhaps people could slot their sign in when they’re there”;
- Better and more readily available information about crossing the bar at Ōhiwa Harbour entrance (requested by several people, one of whom reported that the information available in the Harbourmaster’s brochure has deteriorated, with no map of Ōhiwa Harbour included);
- Make fishing information available to business owners not just at the main boat-launching sites– daily limits and shellfish bans;
- Better signage in BOPRC regional park (Ōhiwa side) to clarify where the park boundaries with private property (campground) begin as people come down from the park and use their facilities;
- Improve signage on the main road to areas of interest (for example as has been done at Nukuhou Lookout);
- Fencing off of part of the area around the Port Ōhope Boat Ramp has created difficulties for paddle-boarders who now have to paddle through the jet ski zone to get back to shore;
- Board walk through the sand dunes at Ōhiwa as many residents are older adults who find walking on soft sand difficult;
- Please complete Ōtao South walkway as soon as possible;
- Advertise recreational activities more widely to people who live locally – as often they are surprised by what is available. More website promotion was suggested as a way of doing this;
- In consultation with tangata whenua provide more information about the history of the harbour, and also include European settlement history;
- Reduce the speed limit on Wainui Rd to 80 kph;

- Provide better access to rubbish disposal and recycling facilities, especially on the “Opotiki side” of the harbour;
- Extend the Ōhiwa walkway/cycle trail.

One person recommended a 2-year ban on fishing and shellfish collecting inside the harbour to let fish stocks replenish. This person gave several examples of over-fishing that they had observed, both from shellfish gathering and netting, and said “we have to stop the take and take and take” attitude. In his view, greater protection was needed to ensure sustainability and so that future generations will be able to have the pleasure of going fishing with their children and grandchildren.

## 4 Summary and Discussion

Analysis of the information collected from observations, surveys and interviews with business owners demonstrates that many people flock to Ōhiwa Harbour during summer, particularly for water-based activities such as boating and fishing, but also for sightseeing, walking and cycling. Ōhiwa Harbour is a popular destination for people from the Bay of Plenty, as well as wider New Zealand. Many people come to the area specifically for the recreational opportunities that the harbour offers, although many people come just to enjoy the sights.

People value highly the beautiful scenery, ecology and wildlife of the area, and particularly like the quiet and tranquil nature of the harbour and its environs, which makes it safe for families with children. They appreciate the diverse range of activities available and for the most part are satisfied with the facilities provided. Several people said they appreciate the work that councils and care groups put into ensuring the harbour and its environs are well-maintained. Nevertheless, suggestions were made for improving signage in some places, such as on walkways, and providing more shade and picnic facilities at various locations. It was also suggested that authorities take greater steps to protect the natural environment and wildlife, especially fish and shellfish.

It is clearly the undeveloped nature of Ōhiwa Harbour that attracts visitors. While some said the area’s attractions could be more widely advertised, they were not keen on increasing the numbers of people visiting. The many comments made about how easy it is to park and to access the water are probably because the harbour remains relatively undisturbed and uncluttered. It is likely that people who prefer shops and cafes mostly choose to go elsewhere.

The information collected will be of interest to all those who have responsibility for providing services and facilities around the harbour, including local business owners. It will also assist regional and district councils in their management of Ōhiwa Harbour and its environs.



# Appendix 1: Observation Locations



LEGEND	
POBR	Port Ohope Boat Ramp
POW	Port Ohope Wharf
OSR	Otao South Reserve
TP	Tauwhare Pa
WR	Wainui Road
NLO	Nukuhou Lookout
NRW	Nukuhou River Walkway
KW	Kutarere Wharf
RR	Ruatuna Road
OBR	Ohiwa Boat Ramp
OWW	Ohiwa Walkway
OS	Ohiwa Spit

# Appendix 4: Feedback

## Compilation of feedback from participants at OHS refresh workshop and community drop in sessions regarding recreation

The following are literal transcriptions of comments written by participants.

Participant comment	No. of comments
Recreation in balance with cultural values.	1
Recreation needs to be balanced with cultural values.	1
Recreation needs to be balanced with protection of harbour environment – management.	3
Putting people in the environment for recreation helps achieve improved environment – develop recreation opportunities to help with this.	1
Recreation encroachment inhibits mahi kai and cultural practice.	1
Recreation needs to be managed in order to sustain cultural practice.	1
Be mindful of culture – boardwalks, tracks, cycleways, camping with cultural practice in mind.	1
Clear values defined re recreation.	1
Make sure recreation isn't 'dumbed down' by other themes, e.g. kaitiakitanga.	1
Ōhiwa Harbour is for everyone.	1
Why is the tourism industry not represented on OHSCG.	2
Involve the tourism industry in looking after the harbour.	1
Have all tourism opportunities been exhausted to enhance the use of our harbour to heighten harbour importance to more of us?	1
Eco-cultural tourism.	1
Business values play a part.	1
Theme: explore, enjoy, experience.	1
Provide enhanced access to view points.	1
Public access becoming too tight.	2
Turn Wainui Road into scenic drive reduce speed to 80 (too many people dying).	1
80 km speed limit for Wainui Road.	2
Look at danger of 70 km area – put in cycleway.	1
Reduce speed on road near pā site carpark and create footpath all the way too.	1
Our culture, Ōhope's culture - revisit freedom camping.	1
More spaces for contained vehicle overnight parking at Ōhiwa boat ramp.	1
As above and other sites.	1
Identify key sites for overnight parking to protect areas where camping is not supported.	1
Pop up freedom camping sites in summer.	1
Pop up camping – managed practically – well thought out.	1
Change in culture at boat ramp freedom campers monopolising this area.	1
Jetty for launching boats.	1
No jetty, avoid structures that compromise natural views.	2

Participant comment	No. of comments
Boat ramp finger jetty to assist launching/retrieving of boats.	1
Boat ramp area extremely dangerous in height of summer.	1
Remove fence near the ski lane to allow public access to harbour edge within ski lane.	1
Boat and jet ski lanes too close to swimming – enlarge swimming zone and push back other zones.	1
Introduce ski lanes to allow jet ski racing.	1
More places set aside for active (non-motorised) recreation on water and land including hills around harbour.	1
Consider whole catchment for activities that provide recreation, horse riding, mountain biking etc.	1
Incorporate land based tourism.	1
Toilets?	1
Provide develop Ōhiwa Harbour trails, walking, kayaking, heritage, ecological.	1
More flying foxes/adventure tourism.	1
Eel encounter.	1
Weka encounter.	1
Plant a tree (as a tourist).	1
Interactive e-tours (like a phone app taking you to best views etc.).	1
Sculptures to get people to stop and look at places of interest/beauty.	1
Include Onekawa Te Mawhai Regional Park under Ōhiwa Strategy.	1
Onekawa is a big contribution to strategy goals.	1
Onekawa pā should be included in overall plan.	1
Investigate, develop integrated management of Onekawa expand from Ōhiwa to Waiotahi Spit	1
Road signage and track development as well as planting at Onekawa.	1
Education about poison signs.	1
How do we connect harbour to ocean?	1
Have a harbour festival each year to celebrate Ōhiwa.	5

