

# Kia mataara! Be alert!

**Māori wards**

South Wairarapa

## Let's Kōrero about a South Wairarapa Māori ward!

The Government has made changes to let local councils decide whether or not to have Māori wards in their city or district. We are required to engage with our Māori communities to understand their perspectives before Council makes a decision.

### Join us

- 💬 Hui about Māori wards
- 🕒 Pāpāwai Marae
- 📍 9.30am, Saturday 30 September

- 💬 Māori Standing Committee Meeting
- 🕒 Martinborough Townhall
- 📍 6.00pm, Tuesday 10 October

### What are wards?

Wards are areas of a city or a district identified for electoral purposes. They work in the same way as seats in a general election. In the South Wairarapa we currently have three wards, Featherston, Martinborough and Greytown.

People can only vote for candidates in their ward, but everyone gets to vote for who they want as Mayor.

Although candidates stand for their ward area, when voted on to Council, councillors swear an oath to work for the district as a whole.

Depending on the number of councillors and wards, there could be multiple votes on the general roll for each ward. For example, at the last election there were three votes in each ward.

### What about Māori wards?

Based on our Māori Electoral Roll, South Wairarapa District Council is eligible to have one Māori ward across the entire South Wairarapa District.

Māori wards sit alongside general wards in a city or a district. They allow voters on the Māori roll to elect a representative to their local Council.

Māori wards work in a similar way to Māori seats in Parliament.

### When would the change happen?

The final decision on Māori Wards is scheduled to be made by Council on 22 November 2023.

If Council decide to have Māori wards this will come into effect for the 2025 & 2028 Local Government Elections.



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DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
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## Council's current engagement with Māori

Māori wards may be an additional way for Council to provide opportunities to increase Māori participation in decision-making.

South Wairarapa District Council currently has a Māori Standing Committee (MSC) that advocates on behalf of and in the best interests of Māori in the district.

A Māori ward would be in addition to this committee with the successful candidate being one of the South Wairarapa District councillors for the three year election period. They will have the same voting rights as the other councillors.

## Who can vote in the Māori wards?

- People enrolled on the Māori electoral roll can **only** vote for candidates standing in their Māori ward.
- People on the general electoral roll can **only** vote for candidates in their ward.
- If South Wairarapa District Council had a Māori ward for the 2025 elections, this would mean **one vote for one Māori ward and one vote for Mayor**.
- People are able to move to the Māori roll during the next Māori Electoral Option in 2024. This is in time for the local elections in 2025.

## Standing for election in a Māori ward

To be eligible to stand for election, a candidate must be:

- A New Zealand citizen (by birth or citizenship ceremony)
- Enrolled as a Parliamentary elector (anywhere in New Zealand); and
- Nominated by two electors whose names appear on the Māori electoral roll within the ward a candidate is standing for. Candidates in Māori wards do not need to be of Māori descent, but they do need to be on the parliamentary electoral roll.

## Have your say

If you would like to be kept updated on Māori wards or have feedback or questions, please email us at: [haveyoursay@swdc.govt.nz](mailto:haveyoursay@swdc.govt.nz)

## South Wairarapa Māori Population

14.2%<sup>\*</sup>  
Māori

2  
Iwi groups

2.3%  
Te reo Māori  
speakers

3  
Marae

Source: Stats NZ

\* 14.2% of the South Wairarapa general population identify as Māori



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