Ngā kaitiaki i te whenua ki Waitangi: Resilience and adaptation of Indigenous people in Aotearoa in the wake of Covid-19

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“Ehara taku toa I te toa takitahi. Engari, he toa takitini.”

Contents

Glossary

ahu whenua trust	common land trust used administer Māori land
Aotearoa	Land of the long white cloud, New Zealand
Hāngi	earth oven
hau kāinga	the local people of the marae
hapū	subtribe
iwi	tribe
kaitiaki	trustee, guardian, steward
kaitiakitanga	guardianship, stewardship, sustainability
kanohi ki te kanohi	face to face relationship, to see, hear and smell each other
kaumātua	an elderly person of status within the family
kaupapa Māori	Māori philosophy
koha	gift
kōrero	discussion, conversation
kuia	female elder
mana	a force in a person, place or object which indicates prestige
manaakitanga	hospitality, kindness, generosity, care for people and land
Māori	Indigenous people of Aotearoa
marae	courtyard in front of a carved meeting house
Pākehā	New Zealanders of European descent
papakāinga	original home, communal Māori land
pūrākau	story, myth, legend
tangata	person, man, human
tāngata whenua	people of the land, local people, Indigenous people
taonga	treasure, highly prized object, something of value
taonga tuku iho	treasures handed down, cultural property
te ao Māori	the Māori world view, Māori society
Te Tai Tokerau	region north of Auckland
Tiriti o Waitangi	Treaty of Waitangi
tikanga	cultural values and practices
tino rangatiratanga	self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy
tīpuna/tūpuna	ancestor
tūrangawaewae	place where one has the right to stand through whakapapa
uri	descendants
wairua	the spirit of a person which exists beyond death
Waitangi	“weeping waters” historical settlement in Northland
whakapapa	genealogy
whakawhanaungatanga	process of establishing relationships
whānau	family, extended family
whenua	land, placenta

Introduction

Purpose

The aim of this report is to discuss how members of Te Tii B3 Trust at Waitangi (the trust), a significant site of cultural tourism in Aotearoa New Zealand, have adapted in the face of Covid-19, and to ascertain their future aspirations for tourism.

Report name

This report is named 'Ngā Kaitiaki i te whenua ki Waitangi', which translates as, 'the Guardian of the land to Waitangi'. We adopted this name to respect the role that the trust (which acts in the interests of Ngāti Rahiri), and other iwi (tribes) in the area, play as guardians of Waitangi. They upheld this role during the Covid-19 lockdowns in Aotearoa New Zealand, and continue to do so. It is in respect to their tino rangatiratanga/sovereignty that they extend over the whenua that we acknowledge them as kaitiaki/guardians.

The following quote encompasses the vision of why tourism might be one of the economic endeavours they pursue:

"You need to have the economic waka to fill the cultural kete."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

Tourism and Covid-19

In April 2020 a worldwide shutdown had commenced, with flights stopping and borders closing due to a global pandemic. Dr Apisalome Movono and Professor Regina Scheyvens, who both have extensive backgrounds in research around sustainable tourism in the Pacific, were concerned about the impacts that Covid-19 would have on global tourism, and the communities who relied on it. Through their Pacific contacts, they had heard of negative impacts for tourism-dependent communities, but also stories of hope, resilience, and adaptation (Steenbergen et al., 2020; Jones, 2020). They thought that a research project to understand how communities were coping with Covid-19 and how this had changed their roles in the tourism sector, and their perceptions of tourism, was necessary.

Indigenous perspectives

The two researchers talked to Dr Jason Mika, an Indigenous entrepreneurship specialist, requesting that he be an advisor on the project. He had heard stories from Māori around Aotearoa who were involved in tourism and who had also been impacted by Covid-19. These people had similar experiences to those in the Pacific but were also drawing on their strong Indigenous connections and learning from the past to survive (McMeeking et

al., 2020). Thus, Dr Mika came on board as the third lead researcher in this project, which was expanded and named accordingly: "The re-development of tourism in Aotearoa and the Pacific post-pandemic: Seeking sustainable, self-determined Indigenous development" (see www.reimaginingsouthpacifictourism.com).

The broader research project covers Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands and Aotearoa. These are countries which depend on tourism for thousands of jobs and between 10 and 70% of their gross domestic product (GDP) (South Pacific Tourism Organisation 2018). It seeks to highlight both how these tourism-reliant countries are responding to the slowdown but also to harness community viewpoints on future aspirations for tourism. The initial findings from this research project in the Pacific context are found in the report: "Development in a World of Disorder: Tourism, Covid-19 and the Adaptivity of South Pacific People" (Scheyvens et al., 2020).

Waitangi case study

Meanwhile, this report focuses on the Waitangi case study which is led by Jason Mika. Two research assistants were commissioned to conduct interviews at Waitangi and do the case analysis: Suzanne Hepi (Ngāti Rahiri), a Master's student in Business Management at Massey University, born and raised into the hospitality industry and Sophie Auckram, a Master's student who is a research assistant for the wider project. They travelled up to Waitangi to conduct the interviews, analysed the data and are the key authors behind this report. As Suzanne has direct whakapapa ties to Te Tii B3 Trust, which is located at Waitangi and involved in tourism, this entity became the focus of the research.

Research questions

This case study report on the addresses the following research questions:

1. How has Covid-19 impacted on Indigenous people involved in tourism in Aotearoa and the South Pacific?
2. How have Indigenous peoples involved in tourism in Aotearoa and the South Pacific responded to the pandemic?
3. How could more sustainable, resilient forms of tourism be developed post-pandemic to support Indigenous wellbeing in Aotearoa and the South Pacific?

Te Tii (Waitangi) B3 Trust

In 1830, the land of Waitangi was sold to the Church Mission Society by the Chiefs who were part of the trust. In 1839, Archdeacon Henry Williams gifted back 81 acres to the hapū of Ngāti Rahiri, as a Reserve for tribal purposes and to keep them near the Mission Church. That hapū comprises uri/descendants from Te Kemara, Marupo, Haratua, Te Tao, Whiorau, Heta Tuhirangi, Hone Heke, Makoare, Te Hepetahi, Mahikai, Peia, Parangi, Te Pua and Hori Pou. The available block narrative (in Māori Land Court records) indicates that the Te Tii Block (81 acres) was partitioned in 1890 and 1918. This included the naming of 251 persons as being the registered owners of the block.

The land around Waitangi has been affected by the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840. This treaty was an agreement between the Crown and iwi that set out rights of sovereignty over land around New Zealand. It was meant to bring peace between the two nations. However, the English and Māori versions were mistranslated, so the two versions have different meanings. The English version gives the Crown ‘absolutely and without reservation all the rights and powers of sovereignty’ over Māori land, while the Māori version guarantees tino rangatiratanga (self-determination/sovereignty) for Māori over their land. These two disputing versions have caused conflict between the Crown and Māori.

The trust is based at 19/36 Te Kemara Avenue in Waitangi, Northland. They are an Ahu Whenua Trust (one which administers and promotes the use of the land in the interest of its owners) constituted under section 215 of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993. The trust is a Māori authority for tax purposes and is governed by a trust deed approved by the Māori Land Court in accordance with the Act. The trust administers 70 freehold blocks located in Waitangi. 85% of the land is zoned commercially with the remainder classed as residential. The trust exists to administer the assets and revenue for the benefit of those descendants of the original 251 tupuna/ancestors as listed in the scheduled owners list: Native Land Court 27 July 1891. In accordance with the Trust Order 2015, "as from the 2016 Annual General Meeting there shall be seven (7) Trustees. Only a Tupuna Whānau Representative who is recorded in the TWR Register as at the Nomination Closing Date may be appointed as a Trustee." The trustees are elected at each Annual General Meeting by the tūpuna whānau representatives in attendance.

The trust’s portfolio comprises:

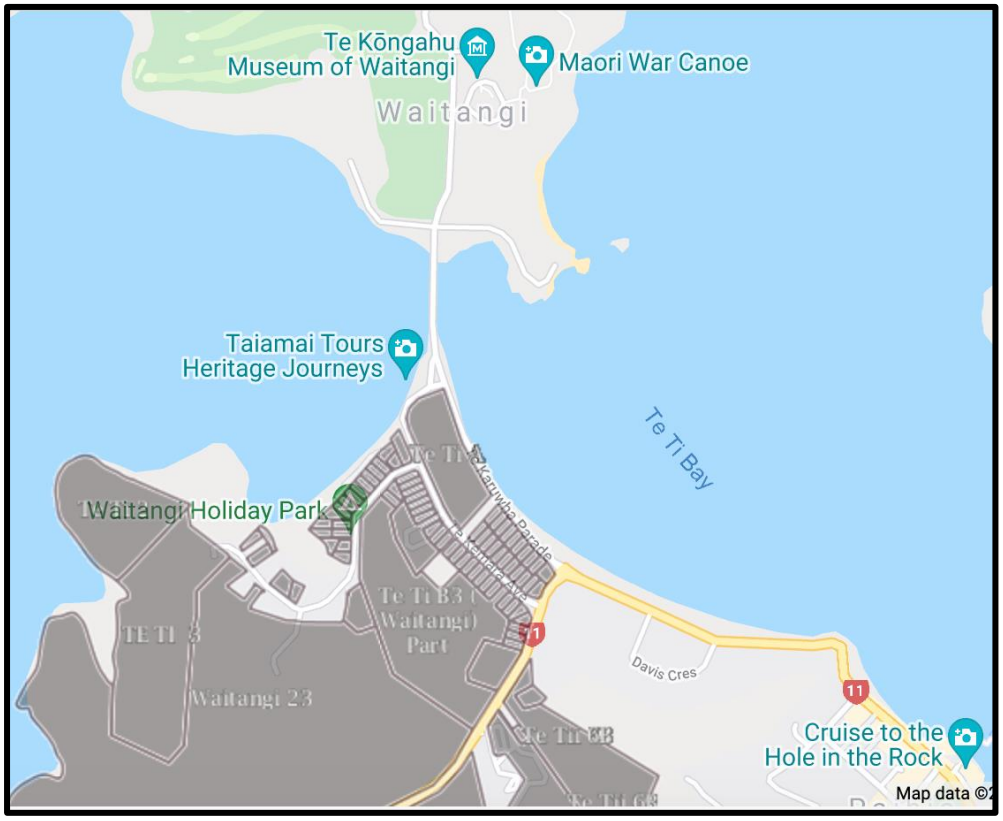
- Countdown Supermarket (lease)
- Residential tenancies and residential leases
- Holiday park
- Lodge
- Motel units
- Holiday homes

The maps below show the location of Waitangi and the trust's lands. Waitangi is located in the North of New Zealand (Map 1) in Te Tai Tokerau. The land that the trust operates on (Map 2) is split into larger and smaller sections, which indicate housing, the campground, the motel and the supermarket.

Map 1: Case Study Location

Source: Google Maps

Map 2: Te Tii (Waitangi) B3 Trust lands



Source: Te Kooti Whenua Māori—Māori Land Court
https://www.Māorilandonline.govt.nz/gis/map/search.htm

Methodology

This section discusses the research framework adopted, the importance of whanaungatanga/relationships between the researchers and researched, our methods, recruitment of interviewees, and ethical considerations.

Māori research frameworks

This research was informed by a Māori research framework. The predominant framework that gives Māori research a distinctive outlook is the incorporation and use of kaupapa Māori. This framework has been used throughout this research with the trust and can be understood as Māori having control over the research process alongside the importance of whakapapa/family and engagement (Smith, 1999). When understanding whakapapa and its relevance to Māori, it is understood that this concept provides Māori with identity and history but also connects Māori with belonging to their land, whenua and ancestors. These aspects provide a pathway of how Māori exercise their values, beliefs, protocols and practices. The role of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) within a Māori environment applies Māori knowledge to an understanding of te ao Māori (Māori world view). Rout et al. (2019) have explained that mātauranga Māori is a resource that helps to understand and concept of balance in the Māori world view and is key to business operations for iwi and hapū. The hapū is the subtribe, while the iwi are the larger tribe which the hapū is part of. It also recognises the responsibility and obligation of iwi to protect their land, ocean and resources, relating this back to upholding Māori tikanga (Māori values and customs).

Respect for Māori cultural practices and values is an important element of research with Māori. These methods have been passed down for generations and make up te ao Māori. In particular, relationship building is a key element of kaupapa Māori research (Wilson, 2008). Māori engagement and making connections are embedded in whakapapa and are based on the Māori values of whakawhanaungatanga (process of establishing relationships), manaakitanga (respect), mana (prestige) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship).

Whanaungatanga/relationships

Suzanne is a descendant of Ngāti Rahiri and approached the trust through her whānau relationships. Dr Api Movono was unable to make the trip to Waitangi so research assistant, Sophie Auckram, who is of European descent, was invited to join the research. Whakawhanaungatanga is a tikanga process to help people meet each other and establish relationships. This tikanga builds connections, but also constructs meaning. It is important that these Māori cultural practices are exercised when engaging with Māori. The whanaungatanga that was experienced during the time in Waitangi cannot be described in words: it was a sentimental value experienced by the researchers and those they were

visiting. Only those who were physically present face-to-face experienced the wairua/spirit of the interactions.

Methods

Most of the data for this research was collected from 25-27th November 2020, when Suzanne and Sophie were present in Waitangi for hui and interviews.

Participant observation

Suzanne stayed at one of the trust's tourism properties, Waitangi Beach Units, during the research period. As a member of Ngāti Rahiri hapū she was able to sit in with the trustees' strategic 5-year planning hui and attend the trust's annual general meeting that was held at the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. This procedure helped Suzanne to gain a broader understanding of the trust and its purpose, and to establish meaningful relationships between Suzanne, the interviewees and the trust.

Interviews: Kanohi ki te kanohi/face to face approach

Prior to going to Waitangi, the project leaders had advised that interviews should ideally take place with people who either had a direct association with tourism in Waitangi, or who had experienced the impacts of a decline in tourist numbers due to Covid-19 (e.g. a reduction in household income). Once on location in Waitangi, participants were recruited via Suzanne's whānau/family and hapū connections. Those recruited had the following roles:

- Chairman of the trust
- Director of the Risk and Audit Committee
- Marketing and Sales Manager of the trust
- Office Manager of the trust
- Administrator of the trust
- Operations Manager of the trust
- A student studying hospitality at the QRC Tai Tokerau
- A member of the community

Post-fieldwork, another interview was conducted via Zoom with a member from the local hapū who was not available when the researchers were in Waitangi.

Interviews were conducted through a kanohi-ki-te-kanohi approach (face-to-face) as this helped to create a safe space, but also acknowledged the importance of manaakitanga. They began with Suzanne and Sophie introducing themselves and a brief summary about their background, followed by a short introduction from the interviewee before asking questions. This helped Suzanne and Sophie to form an understanding of the participant and helped with the process of whakawhanaungatanga between both groups. The use of these

Māori methodological principles applied throughout the interviews helped to set a whānau-orientated atmosphere and helped this research generate a sense of personal belonging for both interviewers and participants.

Interviews ranged in length from 25 minutes to three hours. This is because Suzanne and Sophie spoke to a range of members within the trust. Kaumātua (elders) often spoke for longer as they had a lot of background knowledge that they wanted to share. This related to the process of whakawhanaungatanga, allowing time to establish relationships with the interviewees and for them to share their knowledge at a pace comfortable to them. Due to the relationships that were formed during this research, the researchers were told that they were always welcome to come back and visit the trust.

Review of secondary data

In order to understand the structure of the trust and history of the Waitangi area, secondary data was analysed. This centred around accessing information, including reports, available via the trust's website (www.https://www.tetiiwaitangi.co.nz/). Documents on the trust Order of 2015 and Ngā uri o Maikuku rāua ko Hautakaroa 1891 Trust were particularly helpful in terms of understanding the trust's structure and different elements of its operations.

Ethics

An in-house ethics review process for the overarching research project that this case study sits within, took place in the Development Studies programme in early June 2020. This led to submission of a low risk ethics notification to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. On 16 June 2020 the researchers were informed that the research project had been listed as low risk, with the Ethics Notification Number: 4000022718. The information sheet with these details is provided in Appendix 1.

Findings

Stories from the past

For Māori in Te Taitokerau (Northland), specifically Waitangi, Māori culture is an important aspect of how they see themselves. Māori values and beliefs represent elements of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge), transformed through lived experience as Māori, and captured in pūrākau (stories). Pūrakau influence Māori responses to shocks such as pandemics like Covid-19.

Taonga tuku iho (valued heritage) include cultural narrative passed down from ancestors, often recalling significant events that influence how Māori see the world and experience life. For iwi at Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi is significant because the signing of the Treaty took place on their whenua (land). The Treaty signalled peace between Māori and Pākehā settlers in Aotearoa, but was also inaccurately translated into English which caused conflict for many years. The Treaty led to an uneven power distribution where the Crown assumed sovereignty, power and control over Māori land. This contentious event has had implications for Māori for generations, including intergenerational trauma, as evidenced in the following quote:

> *"In retaliation for [Māori resistance to the Treaty], the British soldiers went up the river to our village and they killed as many people as they could find. They burned the crops, salted the earth and burned the houses. Prior to that we had a flourishing economy because we were doing a lot of trading with the new people that were coming in…That kind of event and the huge losses of life at the time and just the destruction of our way of life really. That economic base that we were building, I don't know if our people have ever really recovered from that generations later."*
>
> *(Community member, Waitangi)*

However, some research participants see the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi to be empowering, and iwi holding Pākehā accountable for their promises:

> *"For me, I think it's something that I also accredit it to my personality, and my DNA basically, is that if you look at it, my ancestors who signed the … Treaty of Waitangi, they all voiced their disappointment, disharmony and not accepting what was being offered by the Europeans."*
>
> *(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)*

Members of the trust felt strongly that they had an obligation to serve their people in a way that is true to Māori values, an obligation that had been passed down by their ancestors:

"This [work] is for my own family, for my dad's side for my father's fathers' side. That's what this is…I've got five generations that were involved with this trust."

(Director of Audit and Risk Committee for Te Tii B3 Trust)

"But in terms of the chairperson of the organisation, and the bigger picture, you're not only the chairperson of TB3, you're also there on behalf of the whānau [and] hapū. There's where, when I go back from the beginning, that has been really valuable, is the knowledge in whakapapa history, stories and all those cultural values that we feel as Māori."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

Why tourism is important to the trust

The foundation of the trust is land. A separate entity was formed that is responsible for managing the land on behalf of its beneficiaries. Overall, operating tourism enterprises is important to the trust in terms of the cultural and historical significance of their land:

'There's a lot of history [being Māori in tourism], especially here in Waitangi…there's an ingrained learning that everybody in Māoridom knows, that this is where it all started in terms of the English with Māori.'

(Director of Audit and Risk Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

'In the tourism industry I think [being Māori] is very important, specifically in Waitangi, just cause that's our origin.'

(Office Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

The hapū wants to bring the significance of the whenua through so that visitors and future generations can remember the importance of it:

"[To create a living pā] we have the businesses, we've got the hill sides, the views; where visitors walk through and get a sense that they're dealing with an authentic city; we had te Tiriti [the Treaty], bringing back those relationships, or reigniting those relationships with our visitors, and telling our Waitangi stories."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Resilience in the face of shocks

A number of participants noted ways in which they had to face up to past challenges, including flooding and disruptions to the governance of the trust, and how this helped them to see they could endure in the face of the pandemic.

The Te Taitokerau area has been susceptible to natural disasters such as flooding and landslides for many years, which will only increase in intensity due to climate change. This has had some tough impacts on members of the community:

"We've had flooding. It's going to continue to happen. Of course, we must be mindful of the environment and global warming."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"A major event we had last year was a flood in July. That was really difficult. Several people had their houses flooded. One … whānau in particular… who do a lot of work at the marae and in the community, have had to live in a little cottage with a friend up the road while their house is being repaired. So, that's been July. I think they've just started doing the actual building. So, it's still going to be two or three months."

(Community member, Waitangi)

However, participants said they had learned from past floods and that influenced some of their decisions:

"I think it was 2016 we had the road slip on Lemon's Hill. That really affected traffic from Paihia to Kawakawa. So everyone had to go all the way around and so we were getting a lot of people, a lot of guests [would] see us and come and stay with us."

(Office Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"We've had some big flooding…we were…going to relocate our offices up there to higher ground."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Trust restructure

Another unexpected circumstance for the trust in the past was the restructure of its governance. This was a shock because they had been operating in a certain way for many years and a lot of beneficiaries weren't necessarily happy with the new changes:

"And, we had enormous conflict within the beneficiaries fighting over this… dealing with that was also a challenge. It was a long period of time working through all those things."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"Hence came 2014, and I was asked to come up here because there were some big issues going on with the iwi with the Te Tii B3 Trust. It wasn't until I got here and then I realised 'this is pretty dysfunctional'."

(Director of Risk and Audit Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

However, the trustees managed to resolve a lot of their issues and feel that everyone is better off for it, as they were able to regain proper management of their land:

"We removed our meetings out of that environment, which we couldn't control...we relocated our meetings with our beneficiaries to safer places.... that was a two-year process.… to strategise how we move away from that thinking, into making this trust for everyone, open and transparent; and not just for the people that live here, because we've got beneficiaries all around the world; and having access to the information that we put out."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"That was the journey, of like I said, providing and establishing integrity, transparency and all those things that really count; not as a business, but as a people."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

Financial shocks

Te Tai Tokerau and the trust have had to deal with financial shocks which have adversely affected the community in the past:

"[In 2004] I was approached, would I take on [the role] as chairman for the block, for the ahu whenua trust, which I did, realising that it was in dire straits. It was in debt… There was a default in paying for rates and all this..."

(Director of Risk and Audit Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"I think we have quite a high rate of unemployment out here anyway. It has been that way for a while. When the freezing works was going full-on in Moerewa which is about half an hour from here, a lot of our whānau were employed there, and they paid well. So, it wasn't too bad then. But, since the freezing works got downgraded, which is maybe 20 years ago, the unemployment rates started rising then."

(Community member, Waitangi)

However, the trust managed to adapt to the situation and learn from past mistakes:

"When I came on board we were at ground zero...we basically owed [a lot of money]. Our businesses weren't operating. The year I was appointed, a beneficiary had placed the trust under statutory management; so the Māori Land Court had taken over and frozen everything. It took a year to sort out, and then they appointed a financial advisor basically to guide and advise the trust in terms of getting back on our feet and so on. It worked...when he felt that we were able to operate and manage ourselves, he exited."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"Like I said, we managed to build it up and get out. We managed to get the debt right down in those three years of operation from 2016-2019. It gave us a good solid foundation for the trust..."

(Director of Risk and Audit Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Stories from the past, natural disasters, the trust restructure and financial shocks were events that influenced the trust's response to Covid-19. The trust had learned strategies for resilient responses.

Responses to the pandemic

Due to Covid-19 and the associated lockdowns, the trust has had to think differently about how they protected their people as well as how they operated their businesses, particularly as the tourism industry has been heavily affected. Their initial reaction was to ensure the safety of their people, then over time they adopted techniques which were diversified their operations and demonstrated resilience.

Protection of and care for people

As Covid-19 hit the shores of Waitangi, so did the restrictions. Hapū members wanted to keep Waitangi coronavirus-free. Thus, when New Zealand went into lockdown on March 26,

2020, the trust immediately responded to protect the community. Figure 1 and the quotes below show the response of the Tai Tokerau border control which stepped in:

> *… when Covid turned up, we were able to be an essential service in terms of the holiday park [providing accommodation], but we chose not to do that, because we did not want to put our community at risk, because we didn't know who was out there, who had Covid. And so, we chose to shut Waitangi down. We put gates and fences and everything up, just to protect our families and the people living here, and our businesses.*
>
> *(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)*

> *"[There was] the coming together of the local hapū, in terms of setting up roadblocks, and taking a more serious approach to it. We blocked off the whole block…We thought protect our papakāinga, particularly our kaumātua, kuia."*
>
> *(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)*

This did not mean that they turned away hapū members who were in need, however:

> *"We have used a couple of our units as sort of interim accommodation [for beneficiaries]."*
>
> *(Director of Risk and Audit Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)*

Figure 1 Tai Tokerau Border Control

Source: Article by Peters (2020)

Changes to the way businesses operated

The trust took measures to enhance their business and keep it resilient during challenging times. One strategy was to one strategy was to recruit community members who were recently unemployed so that even if hospitality businesses had to close, other work could continue:

> *I guess the positive was that we went out looking for opportunities, and snapped up, luckily, essential workers, working on various projects…and we based them out here. So we managed to keep some income coming in.*
>
> *(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)*

Some major upgrades to operational systems were also put into place during lockdown, to ensure the businesses would be in a stronger position and be able to operate efficiently when business resumed:

> *"The first thing that we did [after lockdown] we signed the contract with Secom Company and we updated our PMS [property management system], which is a management system for the hospitality businesses, and it was really big change for us. It gives us a lot of opportunity, and we updated our website as well to improve our direct sales on the website."*
>
> *(Marketing and Sales Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)*
>
> *"We did an upheaval of our computer software. That was good downtime to do that."*
>
> *(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)*
>
> *Before we would never have virtual meetings. We would fly people all over the country to come in for a three or four hour meeting, face-to-face kanohi-ki-te-kanohi; but now we've accepted the technology that we've embraced.*
>
> *(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)*

Diversification

The Māori community has also changed their approach towards tourism. They have diversified into the domestic market as international tourism has been put on hold.

> *"I would say, even though we have put some good measures in place, that we have been lucky. We have had a good response from people. What we have tried to do is try and give a market that is there for the average New Zealander domestic rather than international market shift"*

(Director of Risk and Audit Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Similarly, tourism students studying in the Waitangi area, although somewhat disappointed in the lack of international travel opportunities, have taken the opportunity presented by Covid-19 to enhance their knowledge of the domestic market:

"Because Covid happened and the borders have shut, our internships…were open to the whole world, so we got to choose where we wanted to go, but now that the borders are closed our options are limited so we only have to stay in the country which is pretty cool because we can discover more now about our own country instead of going out."

(Student at QRC Tai Tokerau)

The trust is also thinking differently, considering how they can diversify their market out of tourism in the future, to make them more resilient to shocks:

"We've got papakāinga [community housing] prospects in mind. All of those things can now be explored…the next thing is developing our supermarket"

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

We are looking at diversifying our portfolios, tourism… at the moment we are heavily reliant on our holiday sector. So, looking at how we can [have]… maybe a joint venture with other Māori organisations locally.

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Impacts of Covid-19 on wellbeing

When approaching the concept of wellbeing, we asked participants about five aspects of wellbeing: financial, social, mental, physical and spiritual. What we found was that there were both negative and positive associations with financial, social and mental wellbeing. Physical wellbeing was not really discussed, and responses to spiritual wellbeing relate mainly to the concept of wairua.

Financial wellbeing

Financial wellbeing was positive for the trust's business, though this can be attributed to the nature of the tourism business they were running, and the fact that wage subsidies for employees and support for businesses were available. In addition, the initial countrywide lockdown in New Zealand only lasted for two months, so domestic tourism was able to restart in late May. However, financial wellbeing for some individuals in the community was more negative.

The initial impact of Covid-19 on the community in Waitangi was difficult, with costs increasing while revenue was decreasing. This made it difficult for employers and employees:

"Because when we had to shut down in March, we thought it was really going to put the hammer on us actually. It did for the first couple of months. We had to put some staff off, which wasn't easy."

(Director of Audit and Risk Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"I think people had different impacts, financially…[there was] a bit of homelessness. We had people; well, whānau living out in their cars, and in the marae."

(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

There were also increased levels of unemployment in the community, which put pressure on families trying to pay rent and get food. Those in the tourism sector had a particularly difficult time with finance:

"I know a couple friends who were in the hospitality industry and they haven't re-opened. It was just too costly. Once they shut up that was it and they were out. They stayed out."

(Director of Audit and Risk Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"It took a big toll on [tourism students] because they still had studies as well and then the loss of their job, they had no income."

(Student at QRC Tai Tokerau)

Despite financial difficulties for some in the community, there were also some financial benefits from Covid-19. The domestic tourism market in New Zealand expanded after the lockdown ended, with people eager to travel and unable to leave the country. This meant the businesses that the trust runs were doing very well, with large influxes of tourists.

"This is the busiest winter we've ever had. In terms of Waitangi, we're up about 30 percent, in terms of this time last year. We're beating all last year...and its mainly because we've got a domestic market."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"What Covid has done for us in terms of tourism, is actually put us all back on a level playing field…instead of ten people arriving at the international airport in Auckland and seven turning left and heading Rotorua, Taupō or

Queenstown, and only three coming this way, now almost the whole ten are turning right and coming north."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

What was also positive was that the government wage subsidy helped keep a lot of people afloat and allowed the trust to maintain a full staff. This ensured that most employees were catered for, and some people even improved their spending habits.

"We had to work our way through our staff first. That was our immediate concern; everything shutdown there was no work. We qualified for the wage subsidy. That helped."

(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"…it's made us more efficient around savings."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Mental health

Mental wellbeing saw an overall decline for the majority of participants, although some participants felt there were some positive impacts on their mental wellbeing.

The initial shock of Covid-19 impacted negatively on the community, causing anxiety and problems in the household:

"So, it would be the week of March 23rd, and I think initially all a bit of a shock. The community here; I think had a negative impact. So, we had issues; you could still go to Countdown and buy alcohol. All that carry on. People coped as well as they could."

(Operations Manager for Te Tii B3 Trust)

"When Covid hit us, it created quite a period of anxiousness amongst the trust staff."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

The negative mental impacts have continued as people have had to cope with the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, work demands in terms of being agile and making changes to the business, and the stress associated with potential lockdowns:

"…the negativity is that I'm exhausted. Absolutely, mentally exhausted, because [of] everything that has happened with Covid. Its delayed things in my work life as well as my homelife."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"There's quite a few here still quite tentative about the second wave. I am adamant, if we have a second lockdown it's just going to tip people over, some people, mentally, I mean."

(Director of Audit and Risk Committee at Te Tii B3 Trust)

However, the positive side of mental wellbeing is that people have had a reset, and have been able to reassess. This has led to people viewing their life differently, being more grateful for what they have and finding new ways to prioritise mental wellbeing:

"These are some of the things that Covid has done for us. It's actually reminded us, in no uncertain terms, not to take things for granted."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"Aspirations in terms of our work, I think we're working on a worker wellbeing scheme, making sure everyone's mental and spiritual wellbeing is taken care of. Going into this holiday period that they feel secure in their job, secure in their finances and if we could find that security for them and just knowing that they're looked after. That sort of culture."

(Office Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"In terms of myself; I'm definitely smashed, exhausted, but it's also given me a different outlook on work life balances, and it's changed our structure, our Trust, the governance levels, how we look at things."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Social wellbeing

In terms of social wellbeing, this was also mostly positive, though the community still dealt with some negative implications of Covid-19.

Covid-19 impacted socially on some people's wellbeing in a negative way as they were forced to stay home and in their own bubbles. The stress that came from the pandemic lead to people buying dangerous substances, and flow on negative effects for their families:

"This community is inundated with drugs and alcohol; so, some people choose to buy alcohol as opposed to the wellbeing of their families. They choose not to pay their rents and to buy alcohol and drugs...of course… then you have family violence coming into it as well."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

After lockdown ended, there were some negative social impacts for forms of community socialisation in the community, such as participation in clubs:

"I think it's made people more paranoid, and I go back to the social side of I pretty much run a bowling club in Russell, where we have over a hundred members; and we've noticed the impacts of Covid from that because people don't want to be part of big groups anymore. They are quite happy now, to stay at home and have drinks at home because we've got into that mode where we all did that."

(Administrator Te Tii B3 Trust)

However, overall there were more positive than negative impacts for social wellbeing that came out of lockdown and its aftermath, from the point of view of participants. People came together to look after the community:

"…there was I guess the coming together of the local hapū, in terms of setting up roadblocks, and taking a more serious approach to it. We blocked off the entire block.."

(Operations Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"Because we are [a] trust, everything that we do is for the people and for the community."

(Marketing and Sales Manager of Te Tiriti Motel Waitangi)

There was also a strengthening of familial and community bonds:

"I think it's just made me tighter within my own family unit that probably wasn't there before. I love being home, and before I was never home; just walked in and walked out. Now, I'm trying to stay there and not walk out…you forget the value of family, and I think Covid has returned the value of having the family and support structures around you."

(Administrator at Te Tii B3 Trust)

"We are like a whānau now…we all went through this tough time and we all survived after Covid and now we're just so happy to be together and we have really good relationship."

(Marketing and Sales Manager of Te Tiriti Motel Waitangi)

The social wellbeing of people also improved by connecting people to their roots and where they came from, as people returned home for lockdown:

"[Covid has given us a reminder to] ...come back to zero, to ground zero. Come back to the basics. Come back and remind us of who we are. Remind us of how I connect to you."

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

This was especially significant for some Māori who had not connected strongly with their culture for some time:

"[I returned home because of Covid]… so being Māori, being home, and on our tūrangawaewae and being heavily involved in the marae, heavily involved in the community development work and doing lots of stuff here, that's me. That is my identity."

(Community member Waitangi)

Spiritual wellbeing

When participants spoke of spiritual wellbeing, they did so in the context of Māori identity and culture. The meaning of wairua generally translates to spirit or soul, but in te ao Māori, the definition is much more extensive. For Māori, wairua relates to the spirit of a person or entity which is an intangible feeling, and can be an internal connection to whenua or whānau and is a part of an individual's mental wellbeing. For the people of Waitangi, they spiritually feel a strong connection between themselves and their land, as land is understood to be a link connecting people to their tīpuna and past generations.

'Like I said today, something important for me, and it's always been important in our family, is having a focused spiritual understanding. It's not all about money. It's not all about wealth. It's about your body and people having more spirituality. It's important to us as a people.'

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

The participant who spoke in favourable terms about how Covid-19 led to them moving back to Waitangi, their tūrangawaewae (place of belonging), explained:

"I think when you have that strong attachment to te ao wairua, when you know that there's mauri imbued in everything around you, when you understand that your tūpuna are constantly with you, guiding you, accessible to you if you know how to access them; when you know that te ao wairua impacts on your everyday world in many, many different

ways, that can provide a stability and a foundation for the rest of your life. If you know that, you can connect to that. But a lot of our people have lost that kind of knowledge. So, part of what we want to do, or what we need to do, is reclaim that. Reclaim it in a way that's individual yet collective."

(Community member Waitangi)

Future of tourism

Considering the challenges and lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, the trustees are looking forward to the future with a new outlook on life, utilizing the land and resources they have. Some of the key aspects that they want to focus on include doing a wider range of things within the tourism space:

"Yeah, just diversifying our portfolio. At the moment we are heavily reliant on our holiday sector. So, looking at how we can; and maybe a joint venture with other Māori organisations locally."

(Administrator of Te Tii B3 Trust)

We need to develop a better tourism industry. More culture…or maybe for the schools as well and the camps

(Marketing and Sales Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

For several participants, the opportunity to tell more of their own stories and to weave their culture more into the tourism offering, was important:

"I guess, for me, it was important to try and give a cultural perspective, and a worldly overview. I think, if you don't want to talk about tourism, that's what you need. What's here? What's in the Bay of Islands? It's us telling our stories"

(Chairman of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"I think Māori tourism is very lacking up here in the north…[we can reinvigorate it with] our marae, our groups and working together, setting out trails, Māori tourism trails."

(Administrator of Te Tii B3 Trust)

"Wouldn't it be cool, if you've been to our farm, to walk around the farm and... maybe we can share with them a smoked eel, sausages and mince grown on your farm, vegetables grown on your farm. You might be

able to see people doing carving from the native trees that are on our blocks."

(Chairman at Te Tii B3 Trust)

The trust also wants to enhance Waitangi for its cultural importance and make it the centre of tourism in the area rather than being seen as a site of controversy:

"Trying to make Waitangi a destination rather than Bay of Islands…our aspiration would be to make Waitangi take away that stigma of the protests and Waitangi Day and take away that stigma of the protests and Waitangi day making it somewhere to come and enjoy."

(Office Manager, Te Tii B3 Trust)

It's Waitangi, we have beautiful holiday park in front of the Waitangi River which is great place to stay and we can offer up to a thousand people a day to stay and we have plenty of space and we have other businesses that we're connected with…for example we have special with Waitangi Treaty Ground as well for the museum and everything and it can be a place for the people to explore, especially Waitangi as a Māori community, as a Waitangi Treaty Ground as a Māori culture.

(Marketing and Sales Manager at Te Tii B3 Trust)

Lastly, the community would like to centre 'Māori' back in the Aotearoa tourism sector

"[An idea I had was] that we could educate people coming in more on the planes, so they know more about what New Zealand's like, our culture. We were just talking about the pilots and the air hosts to do their intros in Māori and we even talked about serving hāngi on the plane."

(Student at QRC Tai Tokerau)

These aspirations for the future of the whenua administered by the trust centre Māori tourism, in collaboration with others with a focus on the domestic market.

Conclusion

Covid-19 caused the trustees of Te Tii B3 Trust to look to past events (such as the signing of Te Tiriti, financial shocks, the trust restructure, and natural disasters) and their responses. The trust knew that had adapted to significant challenges in the past, and this, along with their cultural identity, gave trustees confidence to tackle challenges with Covid-19.

Key conclusions:

- The trust and the local community looked after each other during the initial Covid-19 outbreak and were resolute in their response.

- Although the financial shocks were significant, the trust was able to reorientate its business to domestic tourism, which they believe offers a sustainable business model.

- There were negative impacts on mental and social wellbeing with the initial lockdown, and some people were left in dire financial situations. However, participants felt community wellbeing had improved overall as people have taken time off, reconnected with their community and whenua, and they feel “like a whānau now”.

- Enhancing Māori tourism is the key focus for the trust in the future, to highlight the stories of Waitangi. They want to centre Waitangi as a cultural tourist destination within the Bay of Islands but also within Aotearoa. This would involve more authentic experiences for tourists engaging with Māori culture.

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Appendix 1 Information Sheet

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

The re-development of tourism in Aotearoa and the Pacific post-pandemic: Seeking sustainable, self-determined Indigenous development

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

This research asks the following questions:

1. How has Covid19 impacted on Indigenous people involved in tourism in Aotearoa and the Pacific, and how have they responded to the pandemic?
2. How could more sustainable, self-determined forms of tourism be developed post-pandemic to support Indigenous wellbeing in Aotearoa and the Pacific?

The research is being conducted by a team of researchers from Massey University who have significant experience researching tourism among Pacific and Māori communities: Dr Apisalome Movono and Prof. Regina Scheyvens (Development Studies), and Dr Jason Mika (Te Au Rangahau Māori Business and Leadership Centre, School of Management).

Project Description

This project seeks to put Aotearoa and the South Pacific at the forefront of developing future tourism in a way that benefits both people and planet. It will achieve this by exploring how Indigenous people involved in tourism have been impacted by Covid-19, but also how tourism can be re-imagined in more sustainable and equitable ways, specifically by building on Indigenous knowledge. The research focuses on Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands and Aotearoa, countries which depend on tourism for thousands of

jobs and between 10 and 70% of their GDP. The knowledge generated by this study will be used to inform government officials, tourism industry businesses,
Indigenous organisations and other relevant bodies about ways they can best support Indigenous development through tourism in the future.

Invitation

We are inviting you to participate as we would value drawing on your experience and insights to help build our understanding of how Covid-19 has impacted on Indigenous communities involved with the tourism sector, as well as how tourism can be re-imagined to better contribute to Indigenous wellbeing.

You have either been asked to participate in:

- an online survey (this will take 5-10 minutes of your time)
- a key informant interview (30 minutes-1 hour) or,
- a group korero/talanoa (up to 2 hours).

Data Management

The information you provide will be kept confidential and stored safely. All data, including interview recordings and notes, will be stored in the research project's password-protected Dropbox site.

Participant's Rights

We would be delighted if you agreed to participate, but please be assured that you are under no obligation to do so. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about this research please contact the following investigators:

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Committee Approval Statement

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. The Ethics Notification Number is: 4000022718. Consequently it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email humanethics@massey.ac.nz