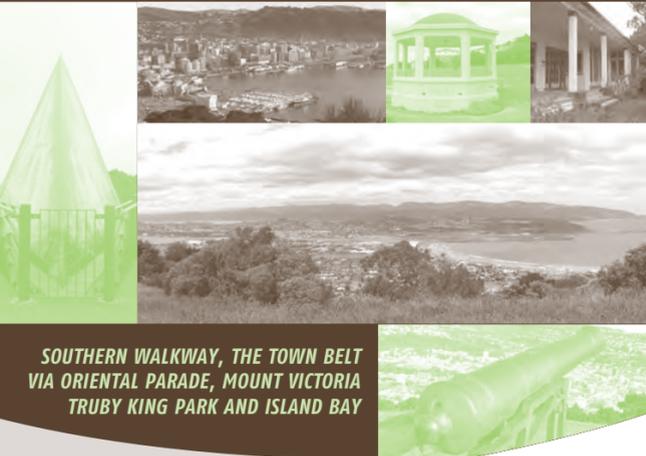


# EXPLORE WELLINGTON

Discover Wellington's Town Belt, reserves and walkways



SOUTHERN WALKWAY, THE TOWN BELT VIA ORIENTAL PARADE, MOUNT VICTORIA TRUBY KING PARK AND ISLAND BAY

**Absolutely Positively Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke



## EXPLORE

The Southern Walkway is an 11km walk along the Town Belt between Oriental Bay and Island Bay. The total walk can be completed in 4–5 hours depending on fitness and interest.

The greatest attraction of this walkway is the variety of scenery, from views of the harbour and central city at Oriental Bay, the shade and tranquillity of the Town Belt forest to the rugged and exposed Southern coastline between Houghton and Island Bays.

Although the walk is steep in places, it is not difficult overall and is suitable for those of average fitness. Various access points from suburban streets allow you to complete the walkway in stages if you choose. From the city, take either the No.14 Kilbirnie (via Roseneath), or the No.24 Evans Bay bus to Oriental Parade (the walkway entrance is sign-posted and begins near the intersection of Oriental Parade and Carlton Gore Road); or take the No.1 bus to Island Bay (the walkway begins in Shorland Park). For bus timetable check out [www.metlink.co.nz](http://www.metlink.co.nz)

All along the route are numerous seats and picnic spots.



There are numerous other walks on Mount Victoria for people of all fitness levels and enthusiasm. These are clearly marked on the map shown here.

## VIEWS ON THE WAY



**A TE PAPA**  
Te Papa is the national museum of New Zealand and was opened on 14 February 1998. After extensive consultation with iwi (Maori tribal groups), and canvassing of political support to secure funding, a new Act of Parliament was passed in 1992 (the Museum of New Zealand Act, Te Papa Tongarewa 1992), which combined the National Museum and the National Art Gallery to form the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Te Papa was a rare and exciting challenge – the opportunity to design from scratch a place unique to New Zealand.



**B BASIN RESERVE**  
In the early 1800s there was little flat ground available for cricket. An earthquake in 1855 lifted up the area that had been set aside as a basin for turning around the supplies loaded from ships in the harbour and transported up canals to the basin. The ground was swampy but the region's cricketers offered to develop it if it was designated for their use.

The Reserve was developed and the first game was played at the ground on 11 January 1868 between Wellington Volunteers and officers and crew of HMS Falcon.

The Reserve was gifted to the city by means of a trust deed in 1884 and is considered a historic area and a protected ground.



**C GIFFORD OBSERVATORY**  
From here you can see the Gifford Observatory. Charles Gifford, who was a teacher at Wellington College, a talented mathematician, photographer, naturalist and a dedicated astronomer built the observatory in 1912. A small group of people have worked towards refurbishing and rebuilding the previously derelict observatory in order to house the magnificent Zeiss refractor telescope.



**D WELLINGTON HOSPITAL**  
The building commenced in 1878 using prison labour. The prisoners were marched each day from the Terrace gaol to Newtown where the bricks were made on site from excavated clay. The hospital opened in 1881 and patients were transferred from the Thorndon Hospital.



Walk through Wellington's beautiful parks and discover picturesque views, stunning flora and fauna and some early history of the area. The Southern Walkway guides you along the Town Belt from Oriental Parade to Island Bay.

### 1 | Start, Oriental Parade

From the Oriental Parade entrance, the walkway zigzags up the hill. Several paths intersect the first section of the walkway however, the Southern Walkway route itself is clearly marked with posts bearing orange directional arrows.

Seats strategically placed on the hillside offers a place to rest and enjoy the scenery. Below is one of the most picturesque harbours in New Zealand. You can also look out over Oriental Parade, which is lined with restored turn of the century houses and modern apartments.

### Mount Victoria and the Harbour

Legend has it that two taniwha (water monster) lived in the harbour, which at that time was an enclosed lake. One was a restless, energetic taniwha named Ngake, who longed to escape its confinements and swim to open sea. It sped about in the North Eastern part of the harbour, using its tail to build up the shallow area and then hurled itself at the rocks encircling the lake, and smashed through to escape to the freedom of Raukawamoana (Cook Strait).

The second taniwha, *Whataitai*, decided to make his escape through another exit. He pushed off with his tail, and in doing so created the Ngauranga Gorge. *Whataitai* then

headed off down the other side of the island of Motu Kairangi (Miramar Peninsula), only to get caught by the receding tide *Ngake* had let in. *Whataitai's* body thus forms the isthmus between the former island of Motu Kairangi and the Western side of the harbour, where the airport is now situated.

It is believed that *Tangi-te-keo* (Mount Victoria) was named after the soul of *Whataitai*, which after leaving the taniwha's body, flew up to the top of this hill in the shape of a bird and proceeded to tangi (weep and mourn).

Crossing *Palliser Road*, the walkway continues up the hill to the left, in the shade of the *Town Belt trees* to an excellent picnic spot in *Charles Plimmer Park*.

### 2 | Charles Plimmer Park

Charles Plimmer died in 1930 and left money in his will to the Wellington City Council to plant trees and shrubs to beautify the bays, beaches, Town Belt and reserves around Wellington. Several major beautification projects have been funded by the Plimmer Trust, including Oriental Bay Beach and Otari Wilton's Bush.

The Town Belt, through which most of this walkway passes, was a concept developed in England in the early 19th century as a means of combating overcrowding and poor living conditions in England's industrial

cities by improving the health and well-being of citizens. The Town Belt was shown on the first plan of Wellington drawn in 1840, labelled as 'land...reserved for the enjoyment of the public and not to be built upon'.

Its purpose was to separate town and country sections to provide space for public recreation.

In 1997, Friends of the Wellington Town Belt was established. Their principle objective is to promote preservation of the Town Belt for future generations.

They also aim to promote knowledge about the Town Belt's unique history and ecology, to encourage people to use and enjoy the Town Belt.

For more information check out [www.townbelt.wellington.net.nz](http://www.townbelt.wellington.net.nz)

### 3 | Mt Victoria Matairangi Summit

The walkway then leads to Alexandra Road. A short diversion back to the left along Alexandra Road leads you to the Mount Victoria summit and lookout. Here at a height of 196 metres, there are sweeping views of the city, harbour and Tinakori Hill, the Hutt Valley and Eastern harbour bays, Matiu/Somes Island and the Miramar Peninsula. Beyond are Baring and Pencarrow Heads and further to the right, Wellington's Southern suburbs

and Mt Mathews, Wellington's highest point to the East.

### Bronze Cannon

The bronze cannon, below the steps that lead to the lookout, was used to fire the noon signal in the years between 1877 and 1900.

### Byrd Memorial

The Byrd Memorial honours the memory of Admiral Richard E Byrd, a polar aviation explorer who mapped large areas of Antarctica and identified closely with New Zealand's polar explorers.

From Alexandra Road the walkway meanders down through the pine trees of Mount Victoria.

The town belt goes over the Mt Victoria tunnel.

Head up to Mt Alfred for fantastic views of Evans Bay, there is a great spot under the Pohutukawa trees to enjoy your lunch.



THE TOWN BELT VIA ORIENTAL PARADE, MOUNT VICTORIA, TRUBY KING PARK AND ISLAND BAY

The walk continues above Kilbirnie to Melrose, a comfortable place to rest before the climb to Mount Albert. From the reservoir, follow the Southern Walkway arrows, which takes you under the pines to Truby King Park bringing you out onto Manchester Street and then to Sutherland Crescent. Truby King Park has great grounds to stop and enjoy the surroundings, check out the rhododendrons in spring.

Walk down the driveway and cross Manchester Street, go 40m uphill then take Sutherland Crescent to Melrose Park.

**4 | Truby King House and Gardens**

Sir Truby King planned, designed and personally supervised the development of the garden, which cost thousands of pounds. It included roading, paths, wind breaks, a tennis court and extensive brick garden walls. Sir Truby King is best known as the founder in 1907 of the Plunket Society, which promoted his beliefs surrounding infant welfare. When Sir Truby King died in 1938 he was given a state funeral and buried in the grounds of his Melrose property.

**5 | Karitane Products Society Building**

In 1922 Sir Truby King purchased a 10 acre block of land on an exposed ridge in Melrose. Here he built his home, the Karitane Hospital and a factory for the Plunket Society to manufacture a range of infant milk and food products. The factory provided products to supplement the diets of growing children.

**Wellington Zoo**

Wellington Zoo was founded in April 1906 when the Bostok and Wombwell Circus presented a young lion to Wellington City. The lion, named "King Dick", after Prime Minister Richard Seddon, who had died that year, was initially housed at Wellington Botanic Garden along with a small collection of animals. In 1907 the City Council developed a part of Newtown Park into New Zealand's first zoo. The Zoo grew rapidly, and by 1912 around 500 animals were housed in cages, aviaries and a huge sea lion pool.

**6 | Wellington Zoo, Hamadryas Baboon**

As you walk past you can see the Hamadryas Baboon enclosure. The Hamadryas was the sacred baboon of the ancient Egyptians, and was often pictured on temples and monoliths as the attendant or representative of Thoth, the God of Letters. Baboons were mummified, entombed and associated with sun worship. The rewarding views from the slope of Mt Albert offer a different perspective. From an altitude of 178 metres you can see Lyall Bay, Wellington International Airport and Palmer Head. On a fine day, the seaward and inland Kaikoura ranges of the South Island can be seen with the snow-clad summit of Mt Tapuaeouenuku about 120km away.

**7 | Mt Albert Hockey Stadium**

This park has been developed as the home base for Wellington hockey with two artificial hockey fields, a pavilion and car parking. The first artificial surface was opened in the early 1980s. The Wellington Chinese Sports and Cultural Centre was built in 1977

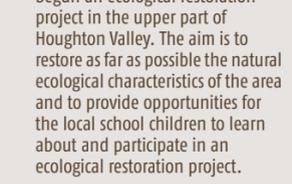


and is used for volleyball, basketball and other indoor sport and cultural activities.

From Melrose Park climb to the ridge line and follow South to Mt Albert before it descends to Sinclair Park. Great views!

**8 | Houghton Valley School – Restoration Project**

In partnership with the Houghton Valley Primary School, the Council has begun an ecological restoration project in the upper part of Houghton Valley. The aim is to restore as far as possible the natural ecological characteristics of the area and to provide opportunities for the local school children to learn about and participate in an ecological restoration project.



**9 | Wind Gardens and Haewai Festive Mead**

Establishment of the gardens and meadery began on Valentine's Day 1999. Festive Mead is made with organic honey and Haewai Meadery's own natural spring water. The garden is in continuous flowering for nine months of the year. Because of the extreme harshness of the climate, plants are blasted frequently by North and salt-laden South winds, so grow differently here than in sheltered areas.

The walk from here takes you along the rugged, exposed coastline from Houghton Bay to Island Bay. Although Houghton Bay is not safe for swimming, Island Bay is a safe and popular beach.

Or for some more great views, follow a new trail (steep in places) from the Houghton Valley Playground, which comes out on Buckley Road, continue south. Turn right into Bann St and turn first left into the first cul de sac and follow the concrete path. Turn right to the end of Orchy Cres and then follow the path leading you to Island Bay via Melbourne Road, Liffey Street and Brighton Street.

**10 | The Keep, 116 The Esplanade**

The keep was built with a precast concrete shell on which a Cornish stonemason built Plimmerton



rocks. The inside has large beams and joists of macrocarpa. The keep is engineered to withstand an earthquake.

**11 | Tapu te Ranga Island**

The "Isle of Hallowed Ways", close to the shore of Island Bay, is the subject of many Māori legends, traditions and stories. One important role it played was as a refuge for the Ngati Ira tribe from the invading Ati-Awa of Taranaki. Later, European inhabitants



cleared the island of its native vegetation and it became known by the less illustrious title of "Goat Island" and then "Rat Island". After 1927, the then Parks and Reserves department of Wellington City Council planted taupata, karaka and ngaio trees in an effort to redress the damage.

**12 | Band Rotunda, Shorland Park**

Opened in February 1930, the eight-sided memorial rotunda at Island Bay was built at the end of the tram and bus line from the city. The memorial, unlike other



cenotaphs, was built as a tribute from the residents to the 106 soldiers who enlisted from the district during the first World War.

**13 | Shorland Park Island Bay**

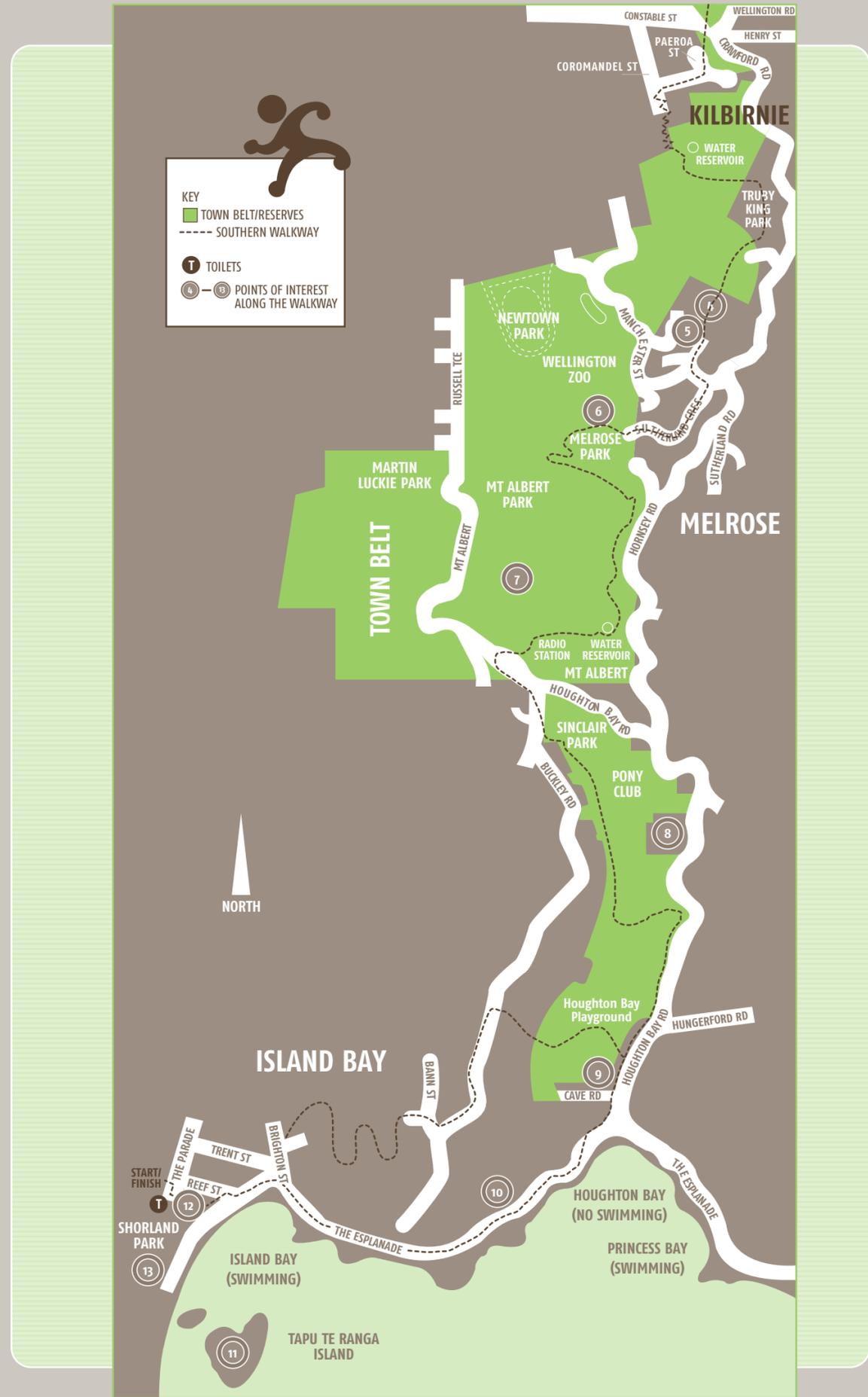
Shorland Park has electric BBQ facilities, bring your swimming togs on a summer day. This park is also the Start/Finish points for the City to Sea Walkway which if you have the energy it will return you to the CBD (5 hour walk).

In the late 19th century Island Bay was outside the city of Wellington. Although the bay was a popular picnic and recreation spot, few people lived there. The number of households was small – only 13 in 1891-2. With the completion of the Wellington railway in 1886, the city



was able to expand. During the 1890s and 1900s Wellington spread out across the hills and along the railway line. It was the electric tramway that opened the area up for subdivision and development.

Shorland Park is the Start/Finish of the Southern Walkway.



**SAFETY AND REGULATIONS**

- Dogs must be kept on a leash
- Mountain Bikers to give way to pedestrians. Unless signposted, tracks are open to mountain bikers
- No Litter
- No Fires
- No Camping

**TOPOGRAPHICAL PROFILE**



**FLORA AND FAUNA**

Between 1924 and 1944 over one million exotic trees were planted on the Town belt; Bishop's Pine (*Pinus muricata*), Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), macrocarpa (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) and various gums (*Eucalyptus spp.*)

Much of the walkway is shaded, richly scented and covered with pine needles.

Secondary native vegetation is thriving in some areas and native birds piwakawaka (fantails), riroriro (grey warblers) and tauhou (waxeyes) populate the walkway.

The long term vegetation plan for the Town Belt involves the removal of some pine trees, especially if they are a hazard and replanting with native plants.

Other Explore Wellington Brochures featuring Wellington Town Belt, parks and reserves, and art and heritage walks in the city are available at stands at the Visitor Information Centre on Wakefield Street, Wellington International Airport and the Wellington Railway Station. Brochures are also available by phoning Wellington City Council 499 4444 or visit our website Wellington.govt.nz

The Mountain Bike brochure is available at the Visitor Information Centre, Wakefield Street.

You can contact a Wellington City Council Park Ranger on 499 4444.

Planting a tree is a wonderful way to commemorate something special or to take an active part in creating a greener future. There are lots of ways you can help restore the city's reserves, bush and coastal areas – and some don't involve getting your hands dirty! Phone 499 4444 for more information.