

VOTER TURNOUT IN THE 2025 FAR NORTH DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL ELECTIONS

May 2026

Voter Turnout in the 2025 Far North District Council Local Elections

Prepared by Election Services on behalf of Far North District Council



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Prepared for: Far North District Council

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Data and interpretation note

This report uses turnout data from the 2025 local elections, alongside geographic and demographic datasets including Stats NZ statistical areas and socioeconomic deprivation measures. Percentages and geographic comparisons are intended to support understanding of broad turnout patterns across the Far North District and should be read alongside the methodology and limitations section.

Disclaimer

While care has been taken in preparing this report, turnout figures, maps and analysis are dependent on the quality and structure of the source data. Small-area results should be interpreted with caution, particularly where voter numbers are low.

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Introduction

The Far North District Council (FNDC) elections were held from 9 September to 11 October 2025, for the mayor, general and Māori ward councillors, and community board members. Additionally, electors in the Far North District Council area were able to vote for councillors to the Northland Regional Council (NRC), as well as two polls – whether to retain or disestablish the FNDC Māori Ward, and whether to retain or disestablish the NRC Māori Constituency.

This report analyses voter turnout, with a focus on identifying patterns across demographic groups and geographic areas and highlighting where participation was strongest and weakest. Demographic information used includes age band, Māori descent status, community board, subdivision, Statistical Areas 1 and 2 (SA1 and SA2) and socioeconomic deprivation index.

Glossary

This report uses the following terms:

Term	Description
Turnout	The proportion of electors (eligible voters) who returned a voting document.
Statistical Area 1 (SA1)	A small Stats NZ geographic area used for detailed local-level statistics. SA1 areas are built from meshblocks and usually contain around 100–200 residents.
Statistical Area 2 (SA2)	A larger Stats NZ geographic area made up of SA1 areas. SA2 areas are designed to broadly reflect local communities, such as suburbs, towns, rural settlements, or surrounding rural areas.
Māori descent	Electoral roll demographic information indicating Māori descent status.
Māori electoral roll	An electoral roll where only those of Māori descent can enrol. Electors on the Māori roll can vote for the mayor, Māori ward councillors and community board members.
General electoral roll	An electoral roll where electors not of Māori descent must enrol, and electors of Māori descent can choose to enrol. Electors on the general roll can vote for the mayor, general ward councillors and community board members.
Deprivation index/NZDep	Area-based measure of socioeconomic deprivation. Higher scores indicate higher deprivation. More detail can be found on page 8.
National turnout mean	Average turnout across all territorial authorities nationally.

Methodology and limitations

The information used in this analysis came from a range of sources:

- Elector and turnout figures for FNDC were provided by Independent Election Services Ltd
- Turnout figures for other territorial authorities were sourced from the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)
- Areas, boundaries and maps were sourced from Stats NZ
- Demographic information, such as age band and Māori descent status, was provided by the Electoral Commission
- Socioeconomic deprivation data was sourced from the University of Otago’s website

Some demographic and small-area analyses are based on Electoral Commission demographic data matched to electoral roll and geographic records. Demographic data does not include all special votes, so totals in those sections may not reconcile exactly to the official turnout totals.

This report analyses voter participation only. It does not attempt to analyse *how* electors voted.

Executive summary and key findings

The 2025 Far North District Council elections recorded a turnout of 50.7%, with 24,561 of 48,456 electors returning their voting document, a substantial increase from 41.5% at the 2022 elections. It was also higher than the 2025 national mean of 39.6% and was the 23rd highest turnout out of 66¹ territorial authorities².

The key findings are below:

Key findings



Turnout increased substantially and outperformed the national mean

FNDC's turnout rose from 41.5% in 2022 to 50.7%, well above the national mean of 39.6%
More detail on page 6



Māori electoral roll turnout increased more than general electoral roll turnout

Turnout for Māori roll electors increased by 15 percentage points, compared to a 6.9 percentage point increase for general roll electors

More detail on page 6



Māori turnout was relatively strong among younger voters

Māori turnout was higher than non-Māori turnout in the youngest age bands

More detail on page 7



Deprivation was associated with lower turnout

More deprived SA1 areas generally had lower turnout than less deprived areas

More detail on page 8



Turnout varied strongly within community boards, subdivisions and townships

Even within local areas, turnout varied strongly

More detail on pages 9-12

¹ There are 67 territorial authorities in New Zealand, but Tauranga City Council did not hold an election in 2025.

² Sourced from <https://www.dia.govt.nz/services-Local-Elections-Index> on 13 May 2026

Overall turnout trend

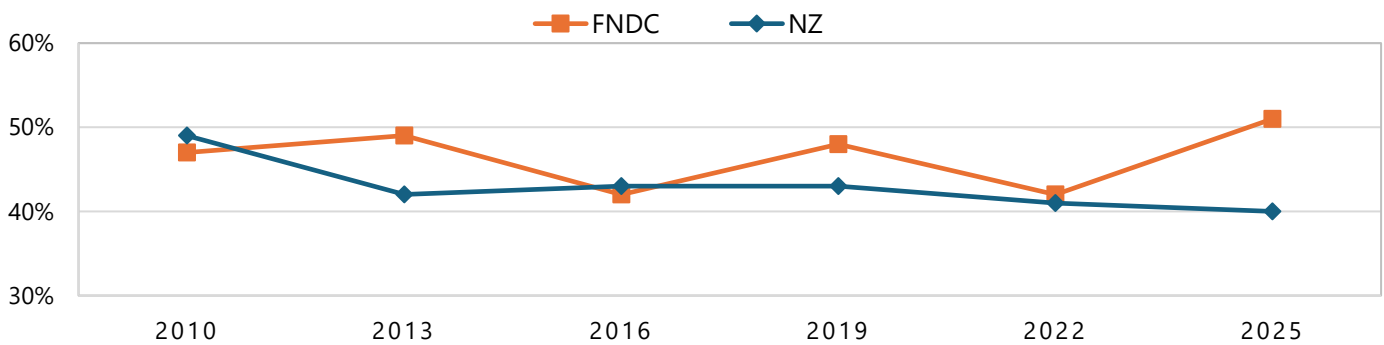
KEY FINDING

Turnout increased substantially and outperformed the national mean

While nationwide voter turnout in the 2025 local elections continued a long-term decline, the Far North District Council recorded a notable increase compared with the 2022 elections. Of the 48,456 electors in the FNDC area, 24,561 returned their voting document, giving an overall turnout of 50.7%. This was substantially up from 41.5% in 2022 and 47.5% in 2019.

This result compares favourably with the national mean for local authority elections. Nationally, the average turnout was 39.6% in 2025, down from 40.9% in 2022 and 42.3% in 2019. In contrast, turnout in the Far North increased by 9.2 percentage points between 2022 and 2025, placing the district well above the national average.

Figure 1: Local election turnout (Far North District relative to the national mean)



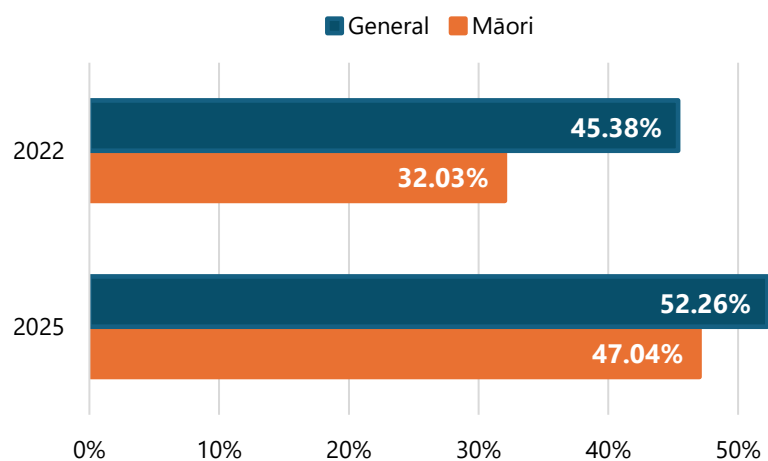
KEY FINDING

Māori electoral roll turnout increased more than general electoral roll turnout

Figure 2 shows that the increase in turnout was more pronounced among electors on the Māori electoral roll (+15 percentage points from 2022) than electors on the general roll (+6.9 percentage points from 2022). This means the gap between general and Māori electoral roll turnout reduced from 13.35 percentage points in 2022 to 5.22 percentage points in 2025.

While it could be speculated that this was due to the Māori ward and constituency polls, such observations are outside the scope of this report.

Figure 2: Turnout broken down by electoral roll type³



³ The Māori electoral roll is not the same as Māori descent status. Māori descent status indicates whether an elector is recorded as being of Māori descent. Electors of Māori descent may choose to enrol on either the Māori electoral roll or the general electoral roll.

Age band

KEY FINDING

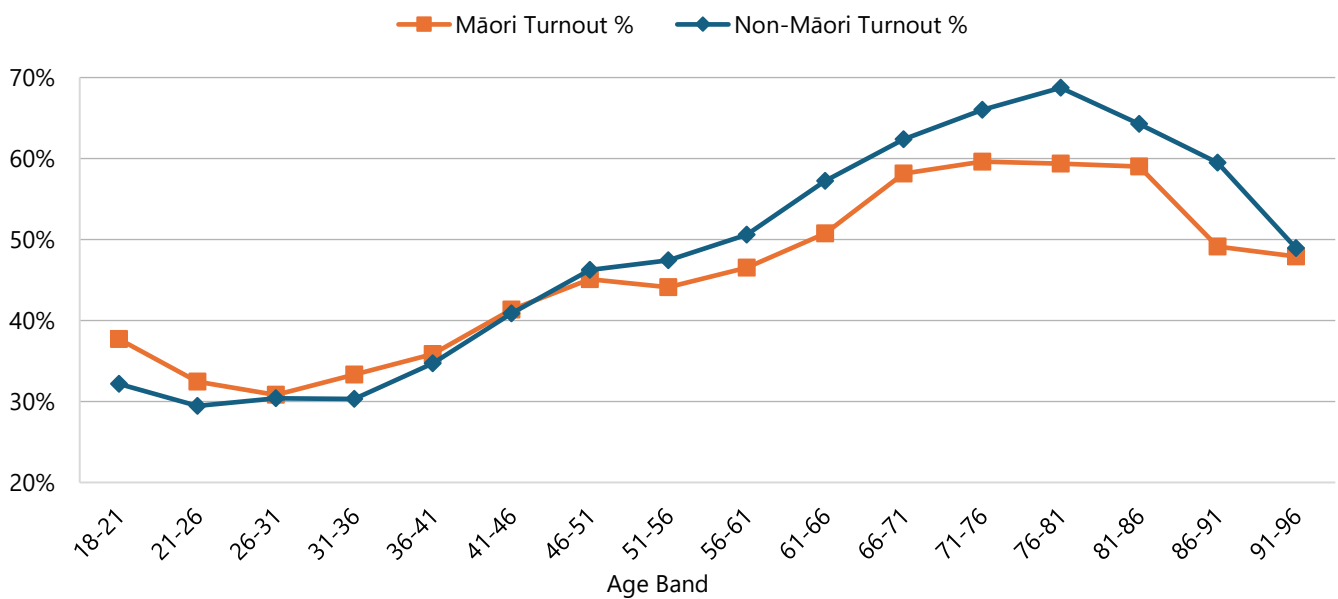
Māori turnout⁴ was relatively strong among younger electors

Turnout showed a relationship with age, generally increasing from younger to older voters. Overall turnout was lower among younger age groups, and rising steadily through middle and older age bands.

Māori and non-Māori turnout followed broadly similar patterns, but there were some differences. Turnout among electors of Māori descent was slightly higher than non-Māori turnout in the youngest age groups, including 38% compared with 32% among electors aged 18–21. The two groups were equal at 41% in the 41–46 age band. From the late 40s onward, however, non-Māori turnout was generally higher, with the gap becoming more noticeable in older age groups.

The largest differences appeared between ages 61 and 86, where non-Māori turnout ranged from 57% to 69%, compared with 51% to 60% for Māori voters. Non-Māori turnout peaked at 69% in the 76–81 age group, while Māori turnout peaked earlier at 60% in the 71–76 age group.

Figure 3: Turnout by age band (5-year bands)



Overall, the data suggests age is a strong predictor of turnout, with participation increasing steadily across most age bands. It also shows that Māori turnout is relatively stronger among younger voters, while non-Māori turnout is generally higher in the older age groups.

These statistics are broadly consistent with patterns seen in enrolment by age on the electoral roll, as well as turnout-by-age analysis published by other New Zealand local authorities⁵.

⁴ Māori turnout is a reference to electors of Māori descent, not electors on the Māori electoral roll

⁵ Sourced from <https://www.knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/2025-auckland-local-election-voter-turnout-who-did-and-did-not-vote/> on 12 May 2026

Socioeconomic deprivation

KEY FINDING

Deprivation was associated with lower turnout

There appears to be a moderate negative relationship between turnout and socioeconomic deprivation across SA1 areas. The deprivation index score is an area-based measure of socioeconomic deprivation, rather than a measure of individual people. In the NZDep index, higher scores indicate higher levels of deprivation, while lower scores indicate lower levels of deprivation.

The chart below shows that SA1 areas with lower turnout generally had higher deprivation index scores, while areas with higher turnout generally had lower scores.

Most SA1 areas were clustered between about 40% and 60% turnout, but there was still considerable variation within that range. This shows that deprivation is not the only factor influencing turnout. Some areas with similar turnout levels had quite different deprivation scores, indicating that other local, demographic or practical factors are also likely to affect voter turnout.

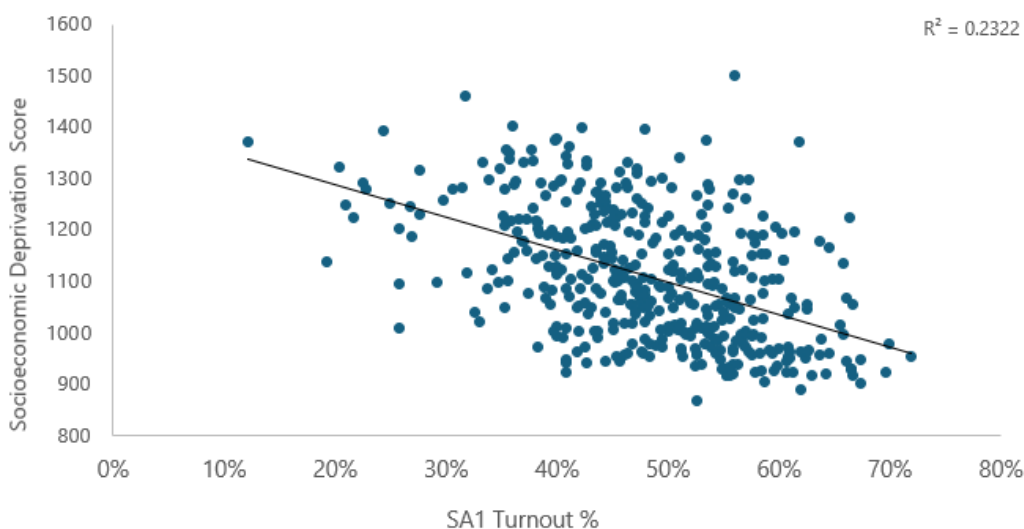
About socioeconomic deprivation

Socioeconomic deprivation is an area-based measure of relative disadvantage, based on census variables: internet access, income, employment, qualifications, home ownership, family support, living space and property conditions.

Higher NZDep scores indicate higher deprivation. The score describes an area, not every individual or household within it.

See www.otago.ac.nz for more information.

Figure 4: Turnout by deprivation index score⁶



The R², or R-squared, shows how closely the data fits the trend line. A value of 1 would mean the trend line explains all of the variation in turnout, while a value of 0 would mean it explains none of it.

In this case, the R² of 0.2322 means that deprivation is associated with about 23% of the variation in SA1 turnout. This indicates a relationship, but not a complete explanation.

⁶ Sourced from <https://www.otago.ac.nz/wellington/research/groups/research-groups-in-the-department-of-public-health/hirp/socioeconomic-deprivation-indexes> on 12 May 2026

Turnout by area – Community Board, Subdivision and SA2

KEY FINDING

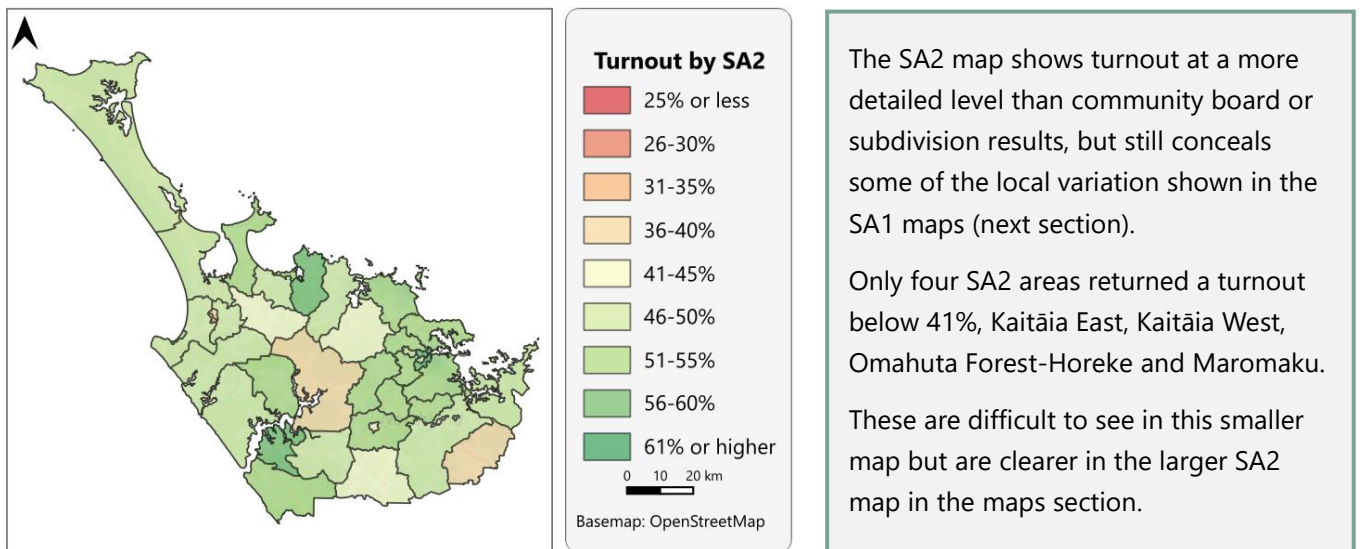
Turnout varied strongly within community boards, subdivisions and townships

This section examines turnout at the community board and subdivision levels. These geographies are too broad to draw meaningful conclusions (all three community boards and all 13 subdivisions recorded similar turnouts between 41% and 60%) and are included in this report mostly to emphasise the importance of considering turnout at a more granular level, as demonstrated in the next section.

Figure 5: Turnout was high across all three community boards and 13 subdivisions



Figure 6: Turnout was high across almost all 47 SA2 areas



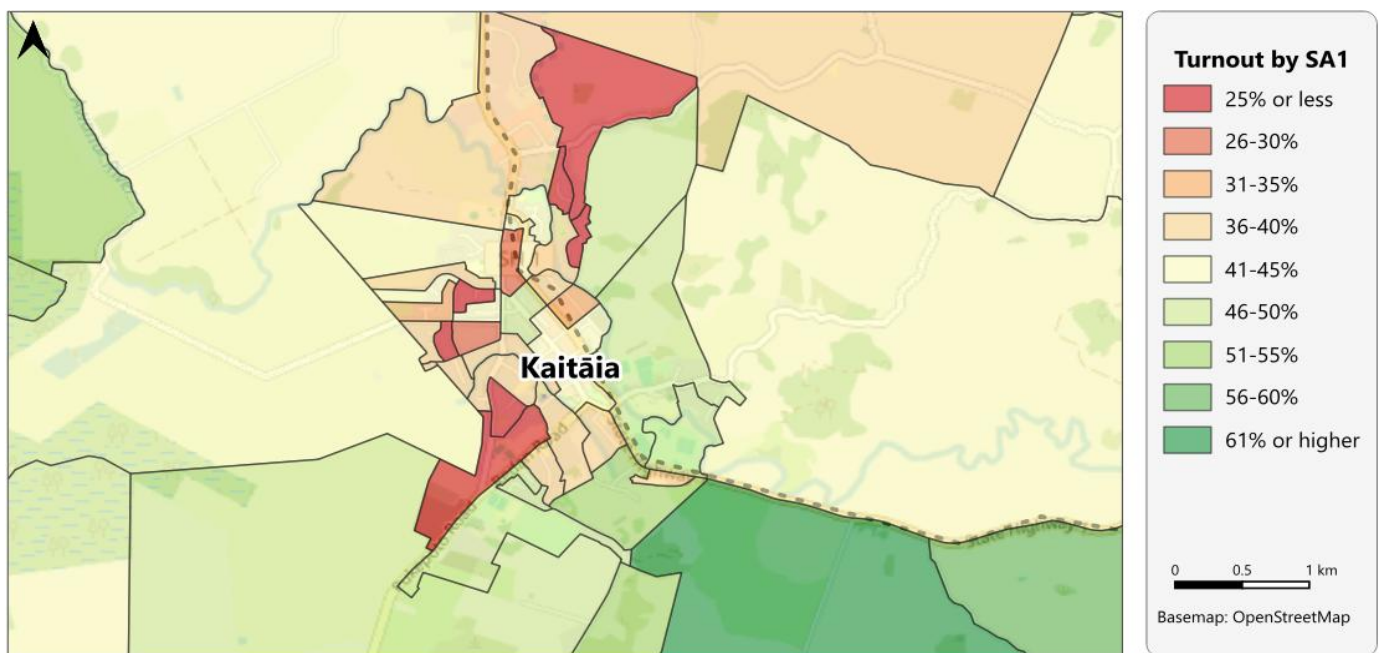
Turnout by area – SA1 and Townships

This section focuses on turnout patterns using SA1 data across the three major townships in the district: Kaitiāia, Kerikeri and Kaikohe. For more detail of other areas, see the maps affixed to this report.

Kaitiāia

The Kaitiāia map shows one of the clearest clusters of low turnout in the district. Several SA1 areas surrounding the township recorded turnout of 25% or lower, with further nearby areas sitting between 26% and 40%.

Figure 7: The lowest turnout SA1 areas (25% or lower) were those surrounding Kaitiāia



Kaitiāia is one of the most socioeconomically deprived parts of the district, which is consistent with the report's wider finding that turnout tended to be lower in more deprived areas. Local context may help explain why several SA1 areas surrounding the township recorded particularly low turnout.

The maps section includes Māori and non-Māori turnout maps for the same area.

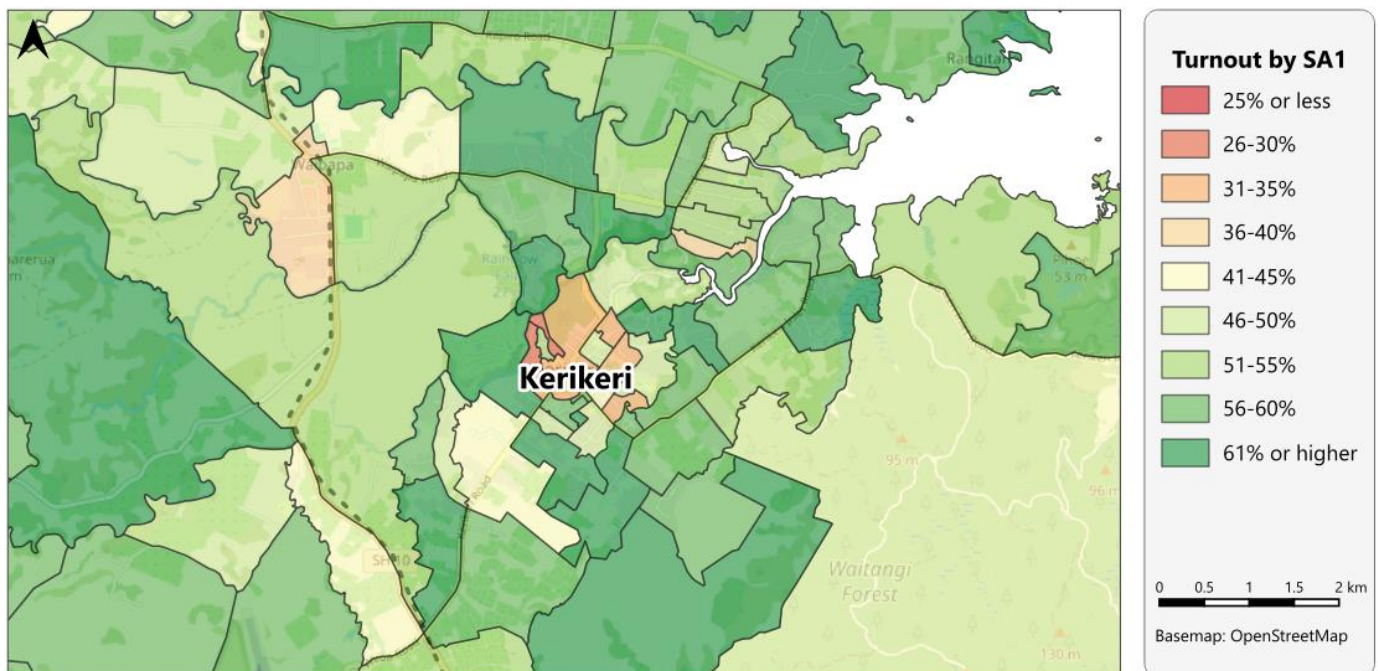


Kerikeri

The Kerikeri map shows a different pattern from Kaitiāia. Many SA1 areas around Kerikeri and Waipapa recorded relatively high turnout, including several areas above 61%. These surrounding areas appear to have contributed strongly to the district’s overall turnout result.

Turnout was not high across the whole area, however. Kerikeri township itself recorded lower turnout than some of the surrounding rural and semi-rural areas, with several central SA1 areas sitting closer to the 31% to 40% range. This shows why smaller-area analysis is useful: broader results at the community board or subdivision level can hide different turnout patterns between neighbouring communities.

Figure 8: The highest turnout areas (61% or higher) were in the SA1 areas surrounding Kerikeri, although the Kerikeri township saw relatively low turnout of between 31 and 40%



The difference between Kerikeri township and its surrounding areas may reflect a mix of factors, including population profile, housing type, deprivation, age structure and voting participation.

Kerikeri and its surrounding areas are generally less deprived and more affluent than many other parts of the district, which may help explain the stronger turnout seen in several surrounding SA1 areas. At the same time, the map shows that turnout within Kerikeri township itself was more mixed.

See the maps section of this report to see maps of the same area, breaking down turnout between Māori and non-Māori.

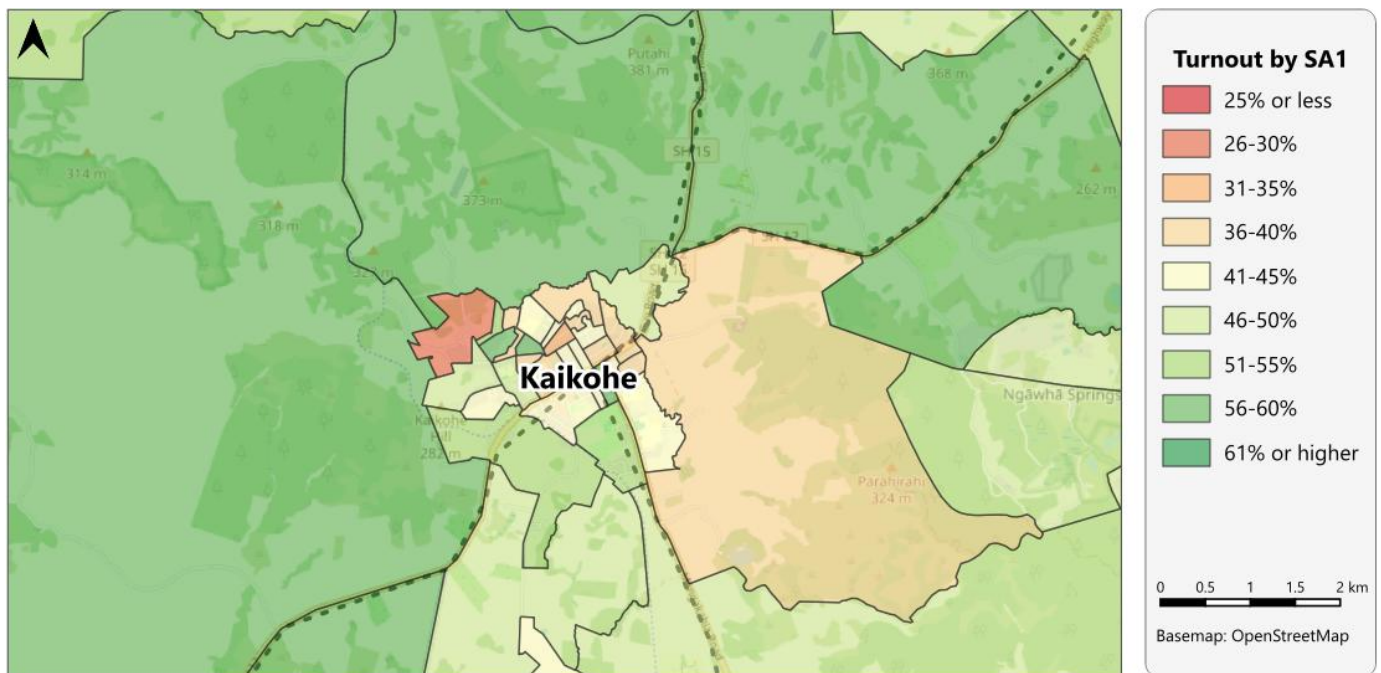


Kaikohe

The Kaikohe map shows a more mixed turnout pattern. Lower-turnout SA1 areas appear within and around the township, while nearby areas recorded moderate or higher turnout. Compared with Kaitāia, where the lowest-turnout areas are more clearly clustered, turnout around Kaikohe is more varied from one SA1 area to the next.

Several central areas recorded turnout in the lower to middle ranges, while some surrounding rural or semi-rural areas recorded higher turnout.

Figure 9: Kaikohe returned mixed turnout results by SA1



As with Kaitāia and Kerikeri, the Kaikohe map shows that higher-level turnout figures, such as community board or subdivision can conceal substantial local variation. Nearby communities can record quite different turnout levels, likely reflecting a combination of demographic, socioeconomic, geographic and practical factors.

Kaikohe appears to sit somewhere between the clearer patterns seen in Kaitāia and Kerikeri. The map shows a mix of lower, moderate and higher turnout areas within a relatively small area, suggesting that no single factor fully explains turnout in the township and its surrounds. As with other parts of the district, local socioeconomic conditions, age profile and community characteristics are all likely to have influenced participation.

The maps section includes Māori and non-Māori turnout maps for the same area.

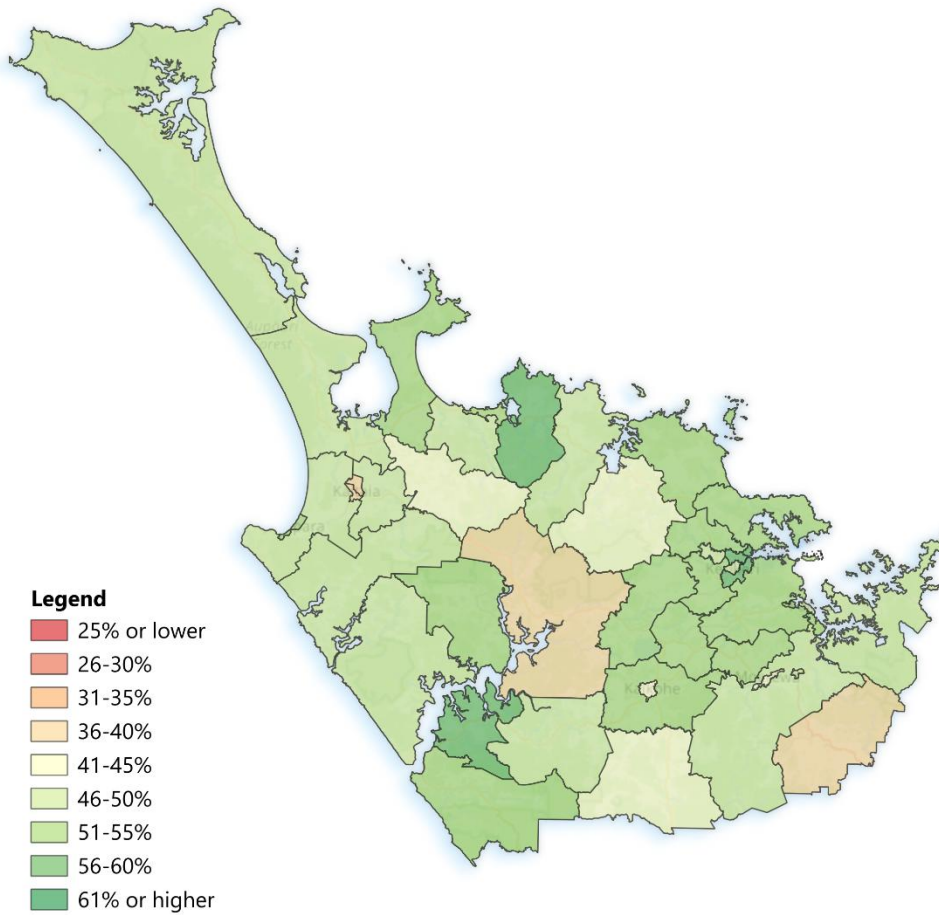


Maps

Total turnout by SA2

Total (Māori and Non-Māori) Turnout by SA2

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

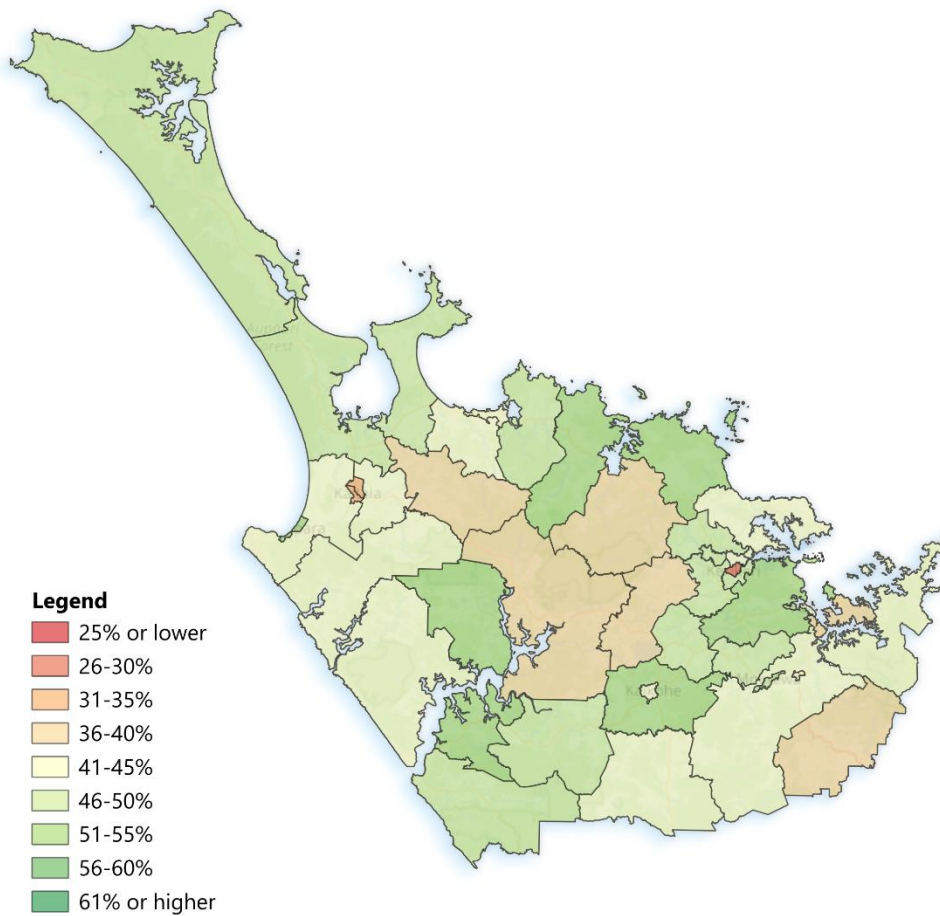
Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

DISCLAIMER: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this map, no responsibility is accepted for any errors or omissions. Users should not rely on this information as a substitute for official data or advice.

Māori turnout by SA2

Māori Turnout by SA2

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

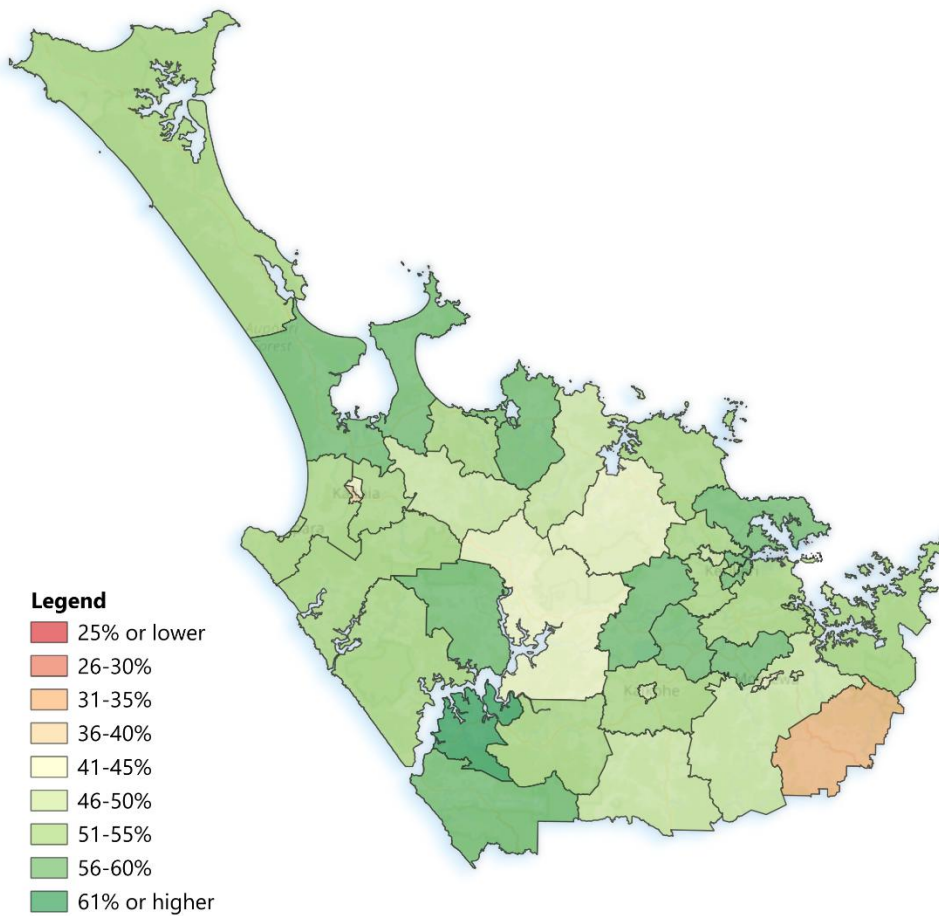
Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

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Non-Māori turnout by SA2

Non-Māori Turnout by SA2

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

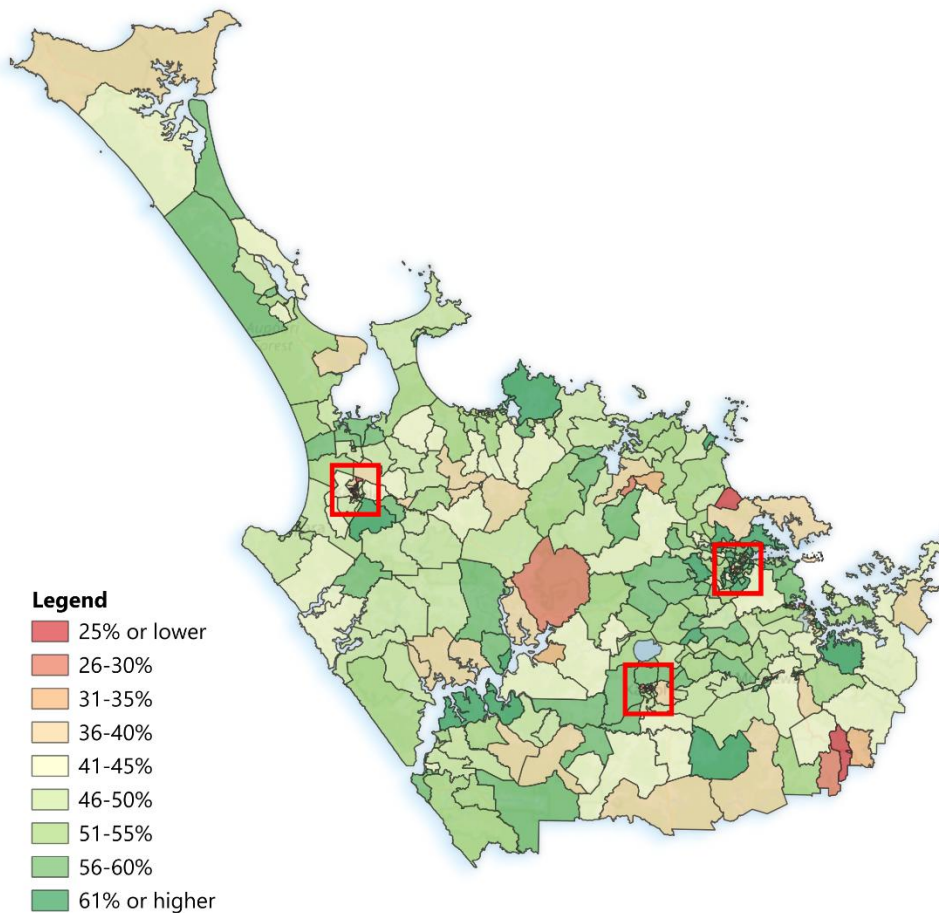
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Total turnout by SA1

Total (Māori and Non-Māori) Turnout by SA1

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections

See following pages for inset maps



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

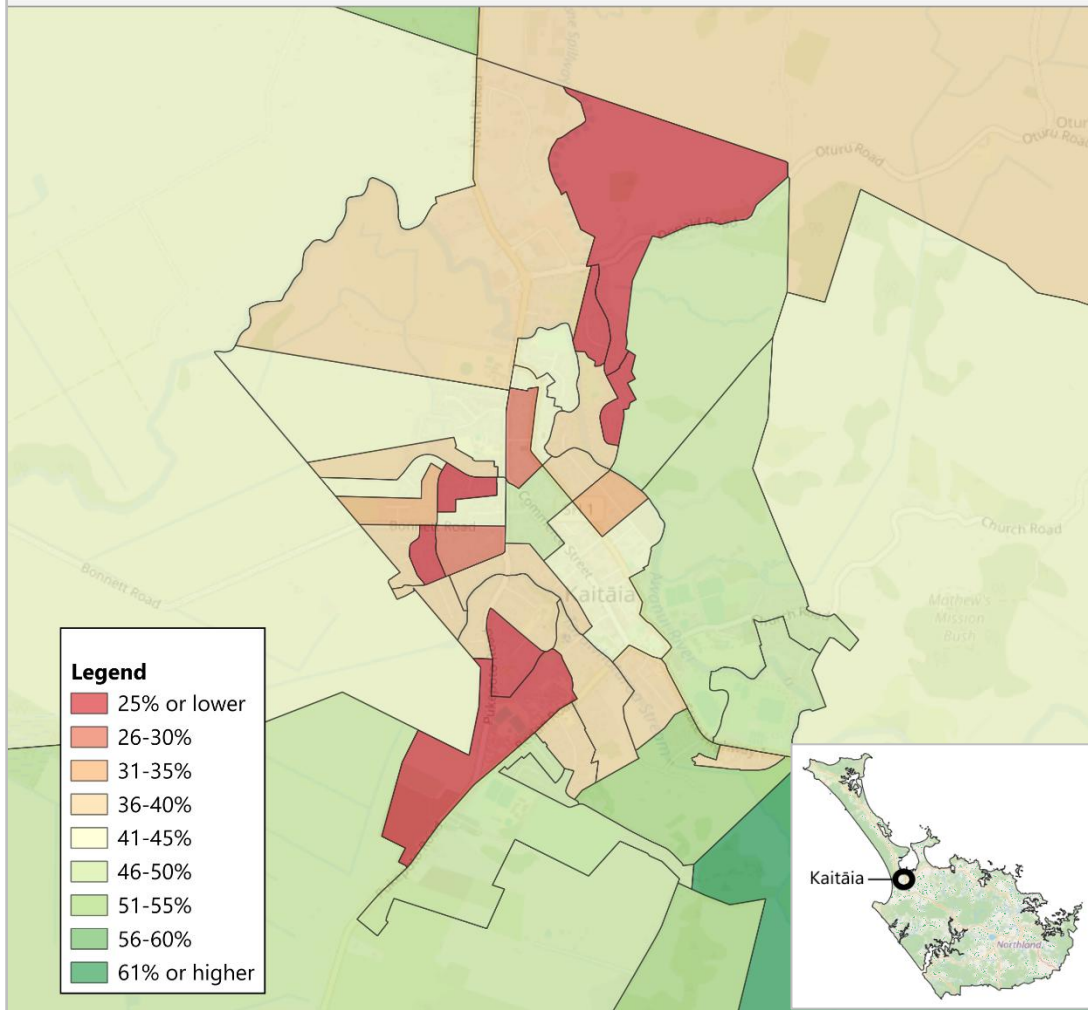
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Total turnout by SA1 – Kaitāia Inset

Total (Māori and Non-Māori) Turnout by SA1 - Kaitāia Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

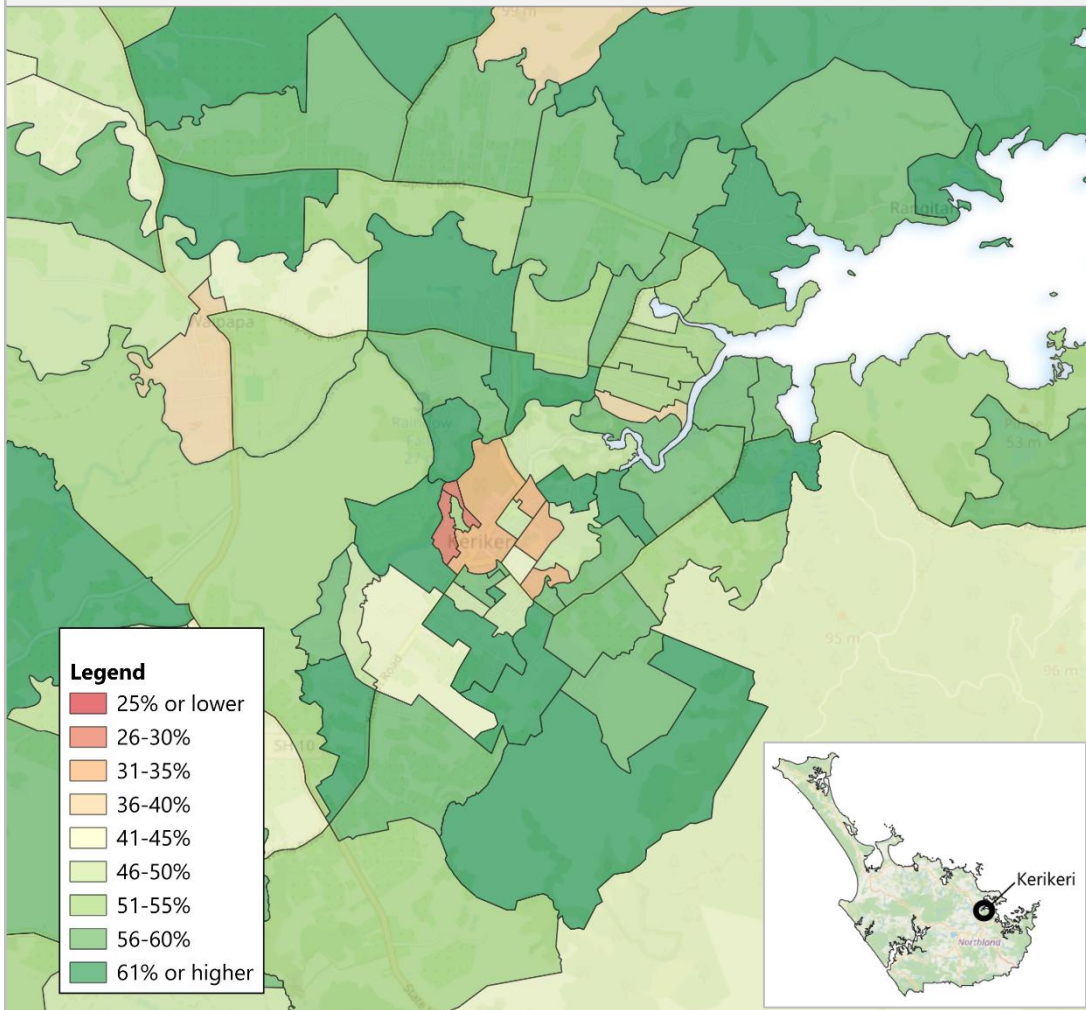
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Total turnout by SA1 – Kerikeri Inset

Total (Māori and Non-Māori) Turnout by SA1 - Kerikeri Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

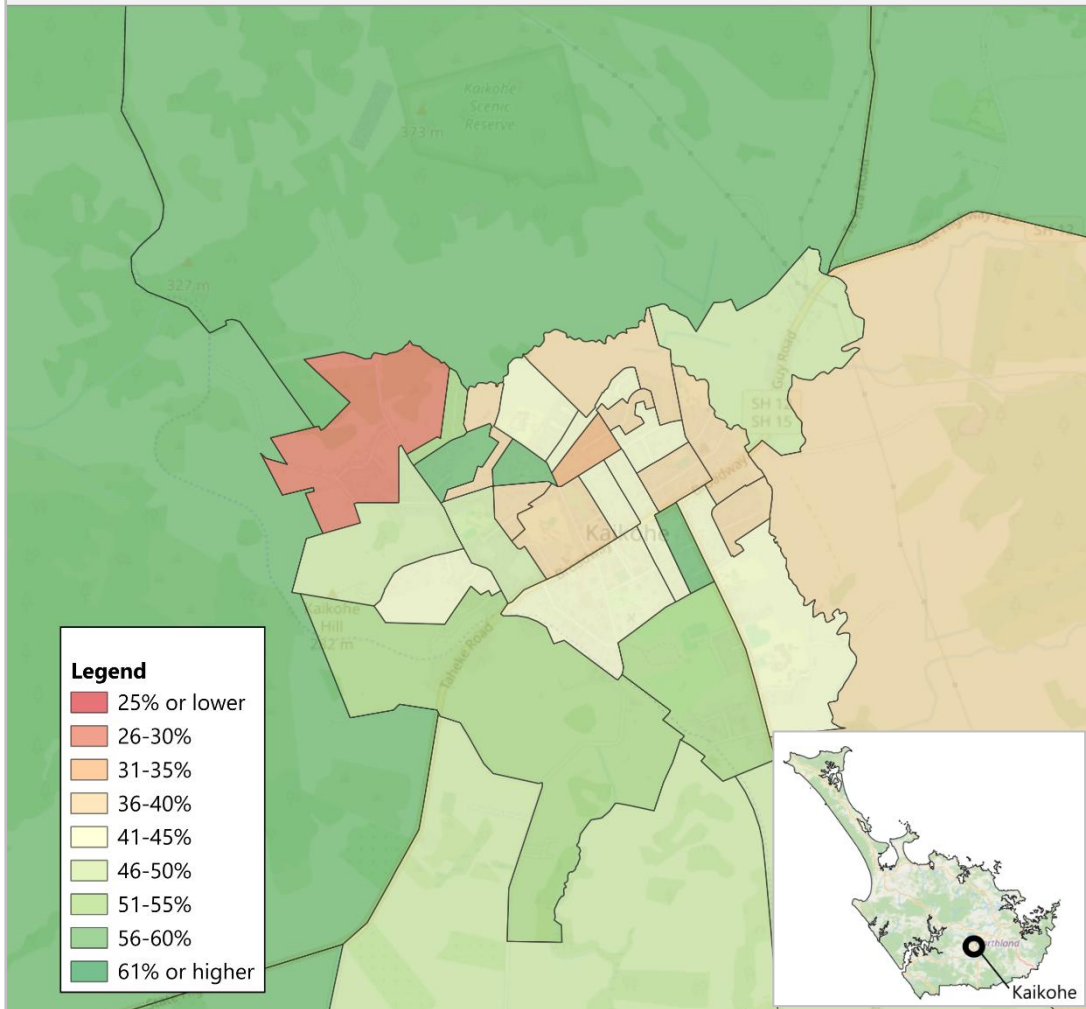
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Total turnout by SA1 – Kaikohe Inset

Total (Māori and Non-Māori) Turnout by SA1 - Kaikohe Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



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Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd
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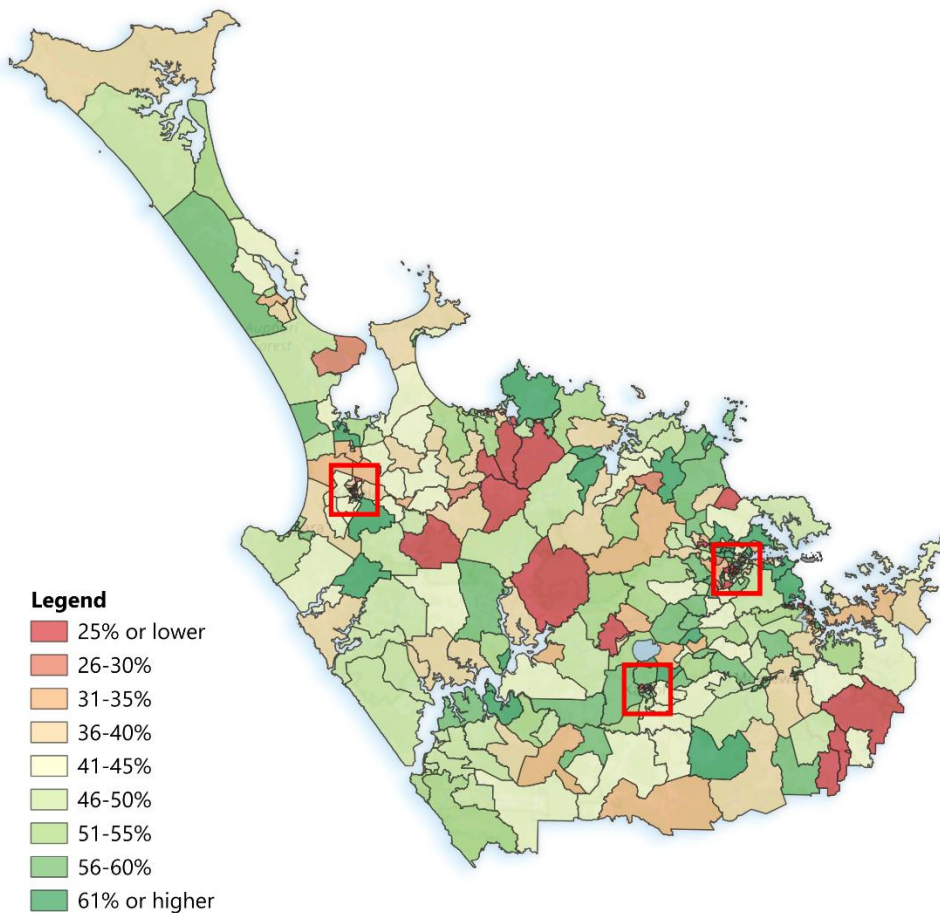


Māori turnout by SA1

Māori Turnout by SA1

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections

See following pages for inset maps



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

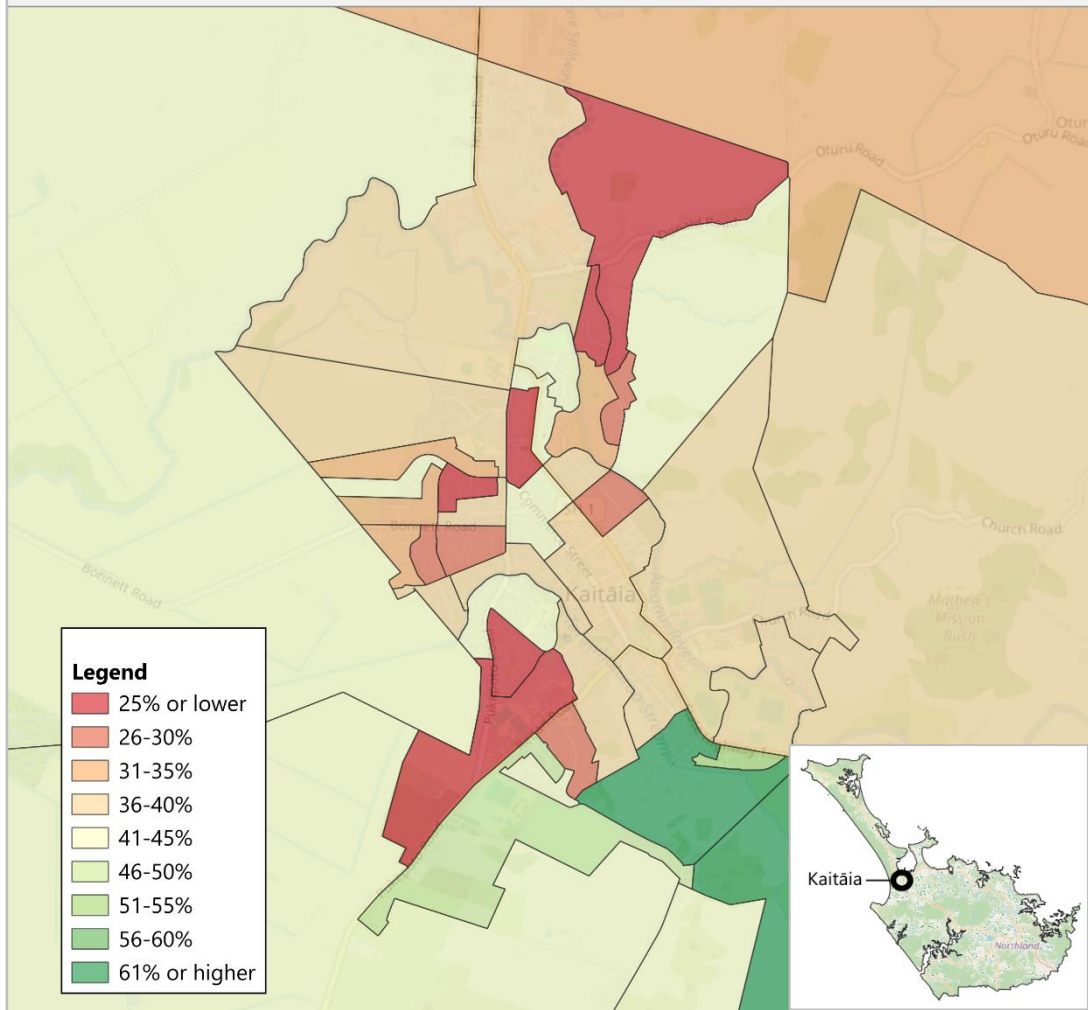
Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

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Māori turnout by SA1 – Kaitiāia Inset

Māori Turnout by SA1 Kaitiāia Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

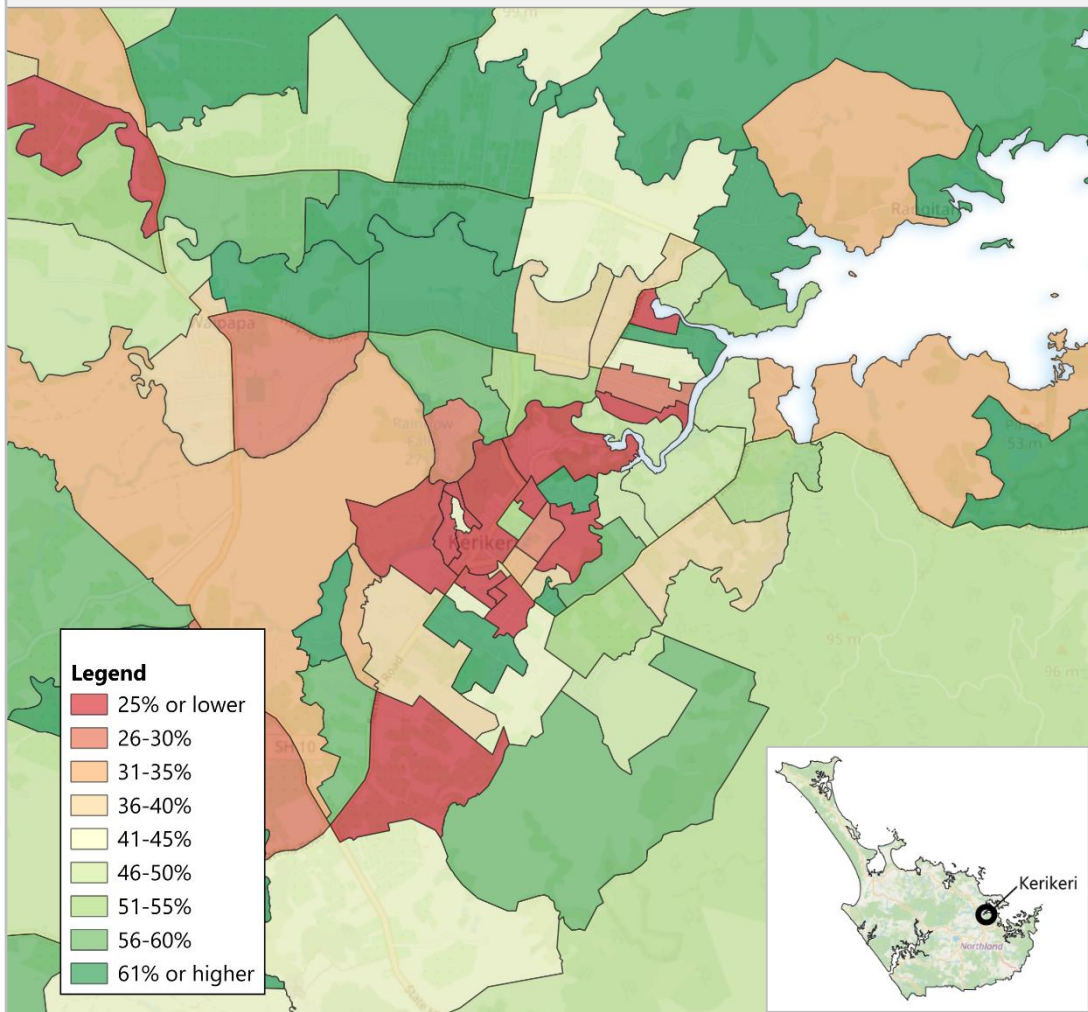
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Māori turnout by SA1 – Kerikeri Inset

Māori Turnout by SA1 Kerikeri Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



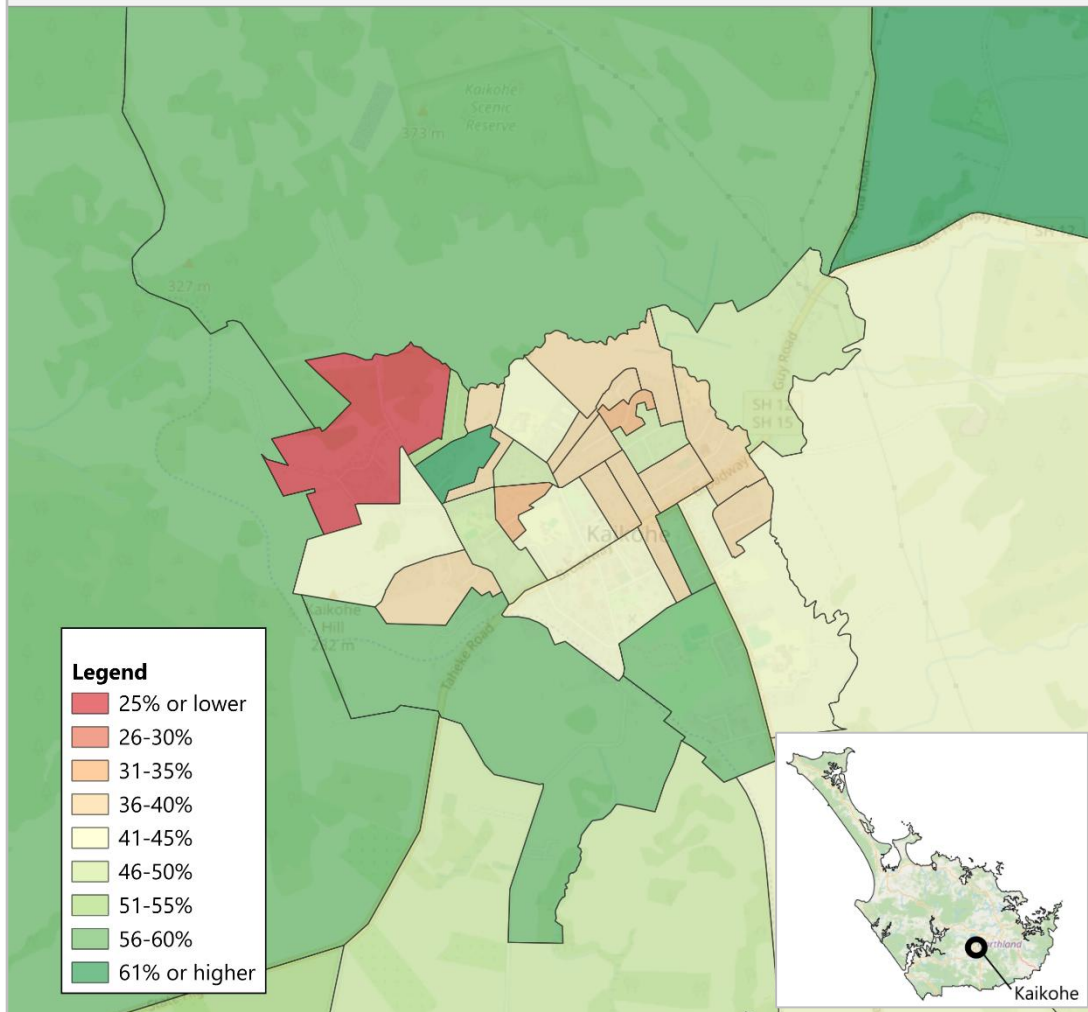
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Māori turnout by SA1 – Kaikohe Inset

Māori Turnout by SA1 Kaikohe Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



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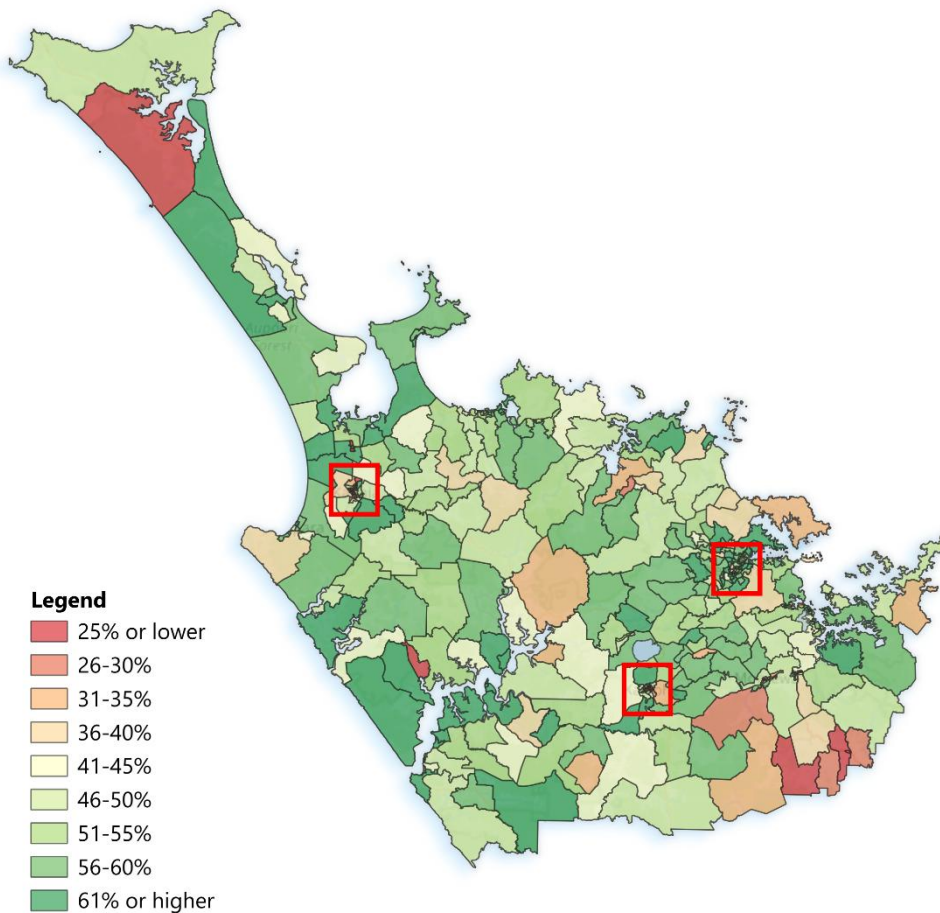


Non-Māori turnout by SA1

Non-Māori Turnout by SA1

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections

See following pages for inset maps



0 10 20 30 km



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

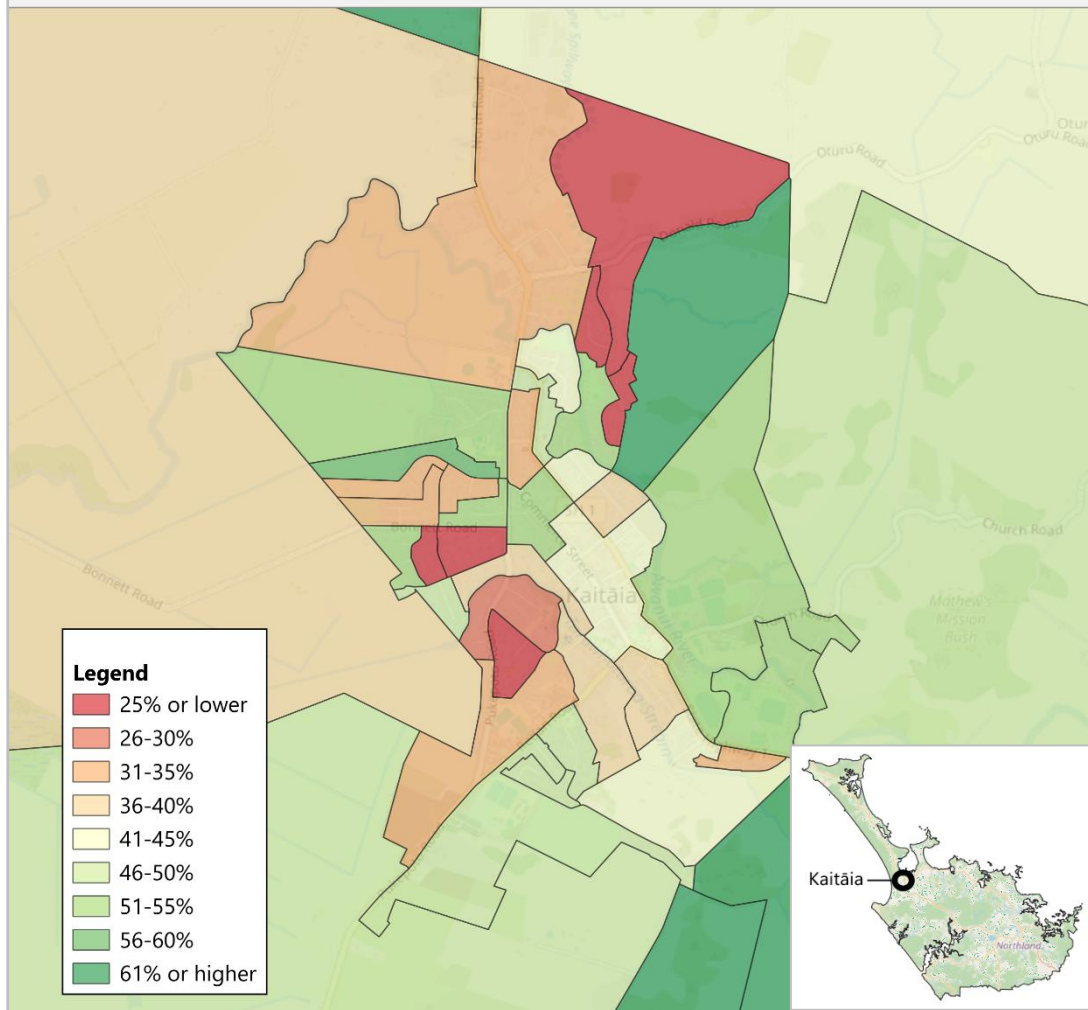
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Non-Māori turnout by SA1 – Kaitiāia Inset

Non-Māori Turnout by SA1

Kaitiāia Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



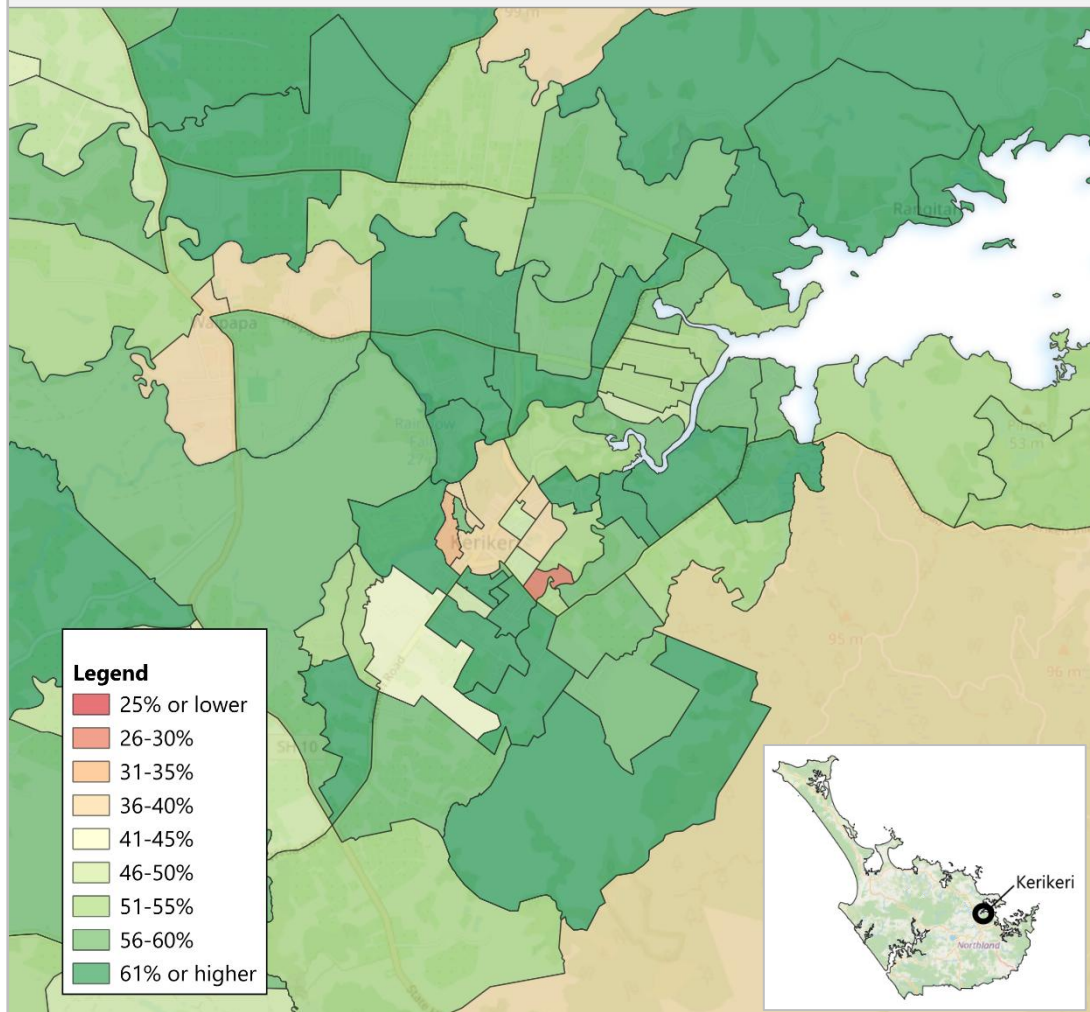
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Non-Māori turnout by SA1 – Kerikeri Inset

Non-Māori Turnout by SA1 Kerikeri Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



Map created: 08/05/2026

Map design: Ben Roser, Independent Election Services Ltd

Source: Independent Election Services Ltd, NZ Electoral Commission

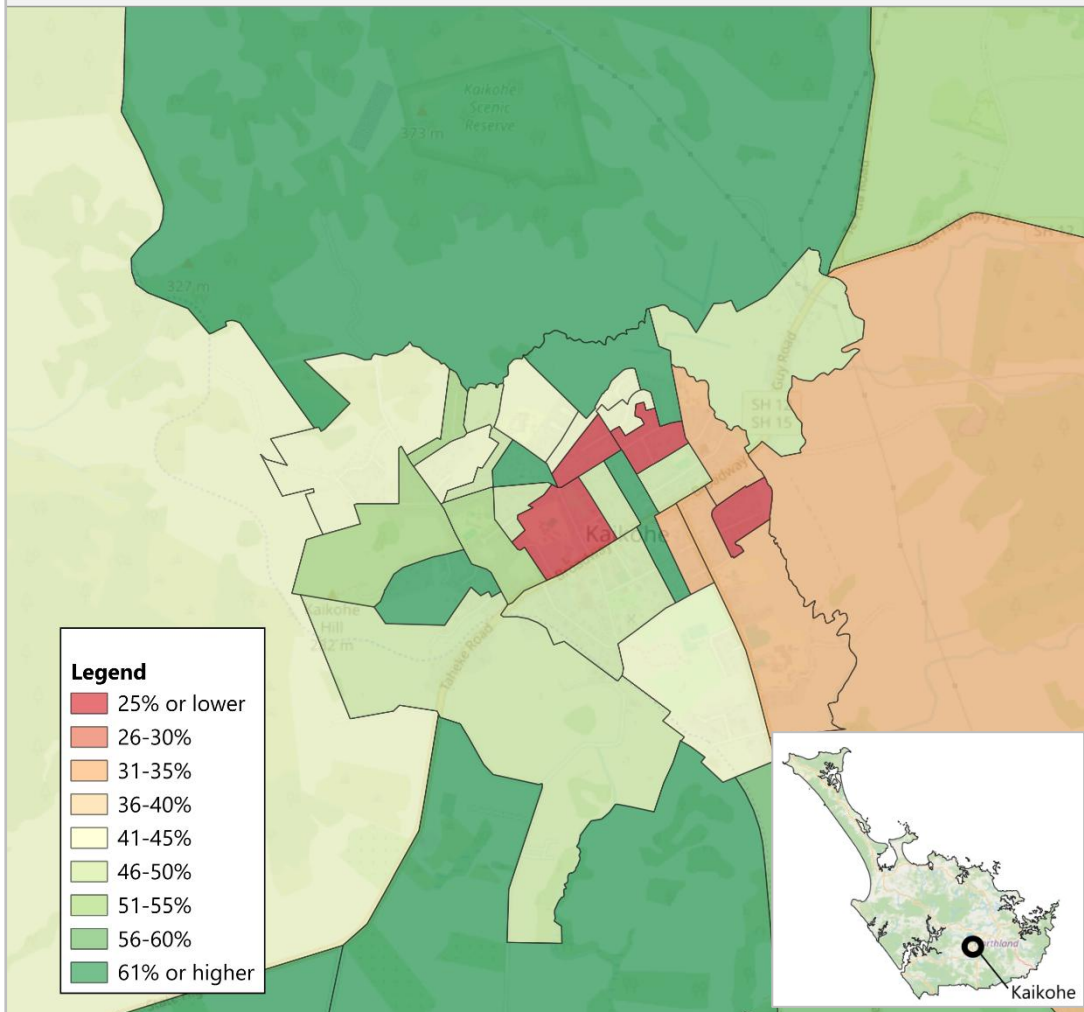
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Non-Māori turnout by SA1 – Kaikohe Inset

Non-Māori Turnout by SA1 Kaikohe Inset

Far North District Council
Local Government Elections



Map created: 08/05/2026

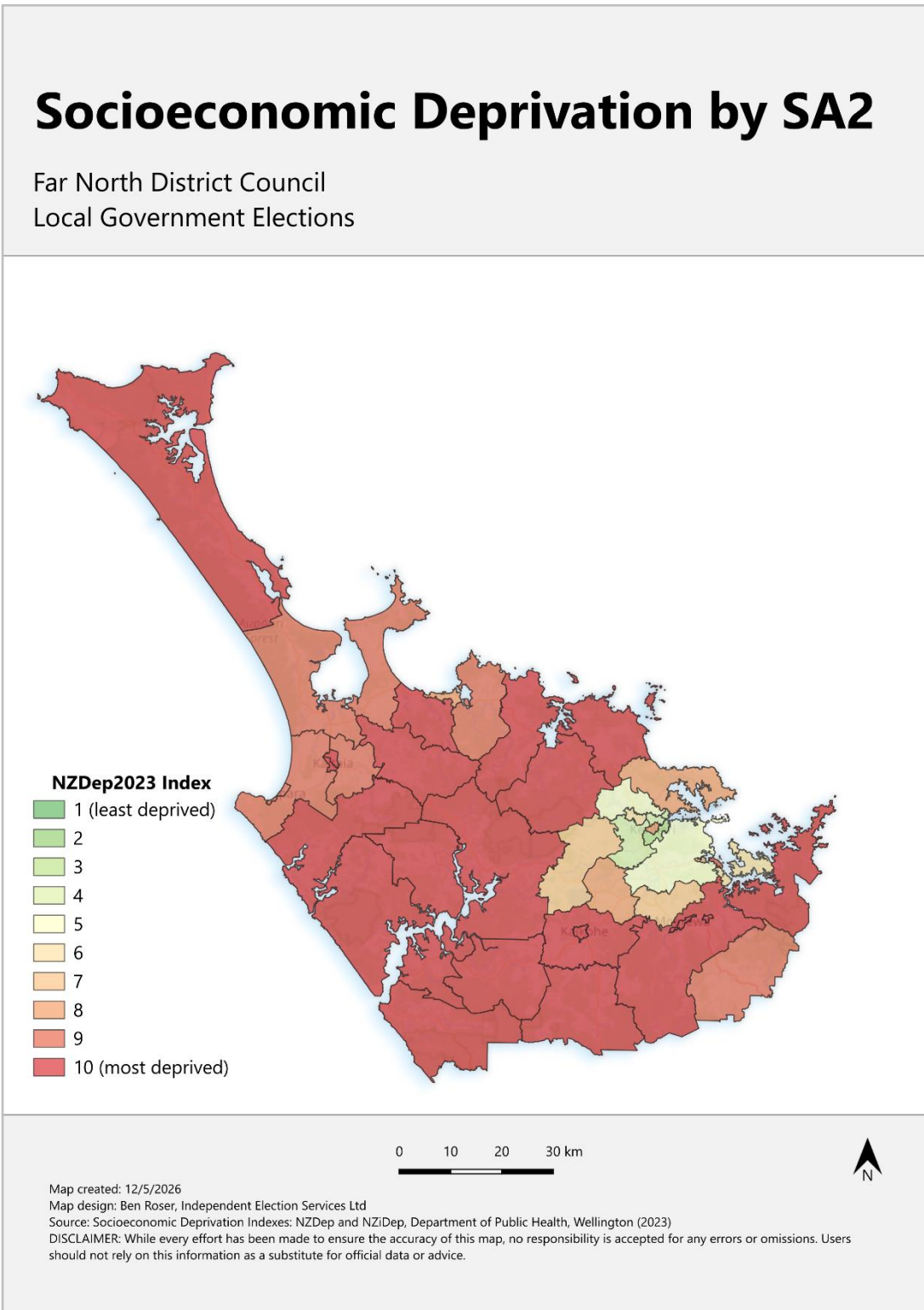
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Socioeconomic deprivation deciles by SA2⁷



⁷ The scatterplot on pages 8 uses NZDep scores, while this map shows NZDep deciles; in both cases, higher values indicate higher deprivation

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