



Home Birth Aotearoa

**Handbook for
Trustees and Employees**

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Timeline: The shape of the year

Regular events

Last Wednesday of each month: Zoom Meeting 8-9pm. Trustees, apprentices and contractors.

Quarterly: Regional Representative Zoom hui. November, February, May, August.

Quarterly: Invoice to Te Whatu Ora (TWO).

Dates to remember

If, as and when, the Homebirth Services contract is secured with TWO, the Administrator should update the Strategic Plan to include Board and TWO discussions of renewal.

Season	Task	People Responsible
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SUMMER Dec Jan Feb	Dec 1 st : Send out minutes from Hui & AGM	Admin
	Dec: Quarterly accounts, report to next trust meeting	Financial Admin
	Dec: Send TWO invoice Payment due Jan 20th	Financial Admin
	Dec: Release seasonal newsletter	Social Media Admin and Admin
	Dec 30 th : Charities Commission return due	Admin
	Jan: Review Handbook	Admin and trustee feedback
	Jan/ Feb: Review half year annual budget and send out a small financial report	Financial Admin and Treasurer

	Feb: Regional Rep Zoom Hui Third Wednesday of the month.	Admin arrange trustee rep and Zoom link
	Start considering options for International Day of the Midwife on May 5th.	Trustees and Social Media Admin

AUTUMN March April May	(or late summer) Plan for Hui/ Conference. Promote hui processes, procedures and guidelines (actual hui dates are at the discretion of each region)	Trustees and Admin
	March: Release seasonal newsletter	Social Media Admin and Admin
	March: Website Maintenance Review	Social Media and Admin
	March: Regional Grants - round 1 of 2	Trustees and Admin and Social Media Admin
	March 8 th : International Women's Day	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	March: Quarterly Accounts, report to next Trust Meeting	Financial Admin
	March: Send TWO invoice Payment due 20 th April	Financial Admin
	April: GST 1 Oct - 31 March return due	Financial Admin

	Schedule contractor reviews	Admin to remind Trustees/ Chair persons
	May 4 th : World Maternal Mental Health Day	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	May 5 th : International Day of the Midwife	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	May 8-12 th : Mother's Day, date varies	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	May: Regional Rep Zoom Hui Third Wednesday of month.	Admin arrange trustee rep and Zoom link

WINTER June July August	June: Send TWO invoice Payment due 20 th July	Financial Admin
	June 6 th : International Home Birth Day	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	June: Release seasonal newsletter	Social Media Admin and Admin
	June: Matariki	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	June 30 th : End of the financial year. Finalise end-of-year accounts with accountant	Financial Admin
	July: Quarterly accounts report to the next trust meeting	Financial Admin

	July 1 st : Start of the financial year — set budget	Financial Admin, Treasurer and Trustees to approve
	July 18th?: Birth Trauma Awareness Week	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	July: (once budget set) Plan for Home Birth Awareness Week initiatives	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	July 21 st : Report to MoH	Admin
	1-7th August : World Breastfeeding Week	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	August: Regional Rep Zoom Hui Third Wednesday of the month.	Admin arrange trustee rep and Zoom link

SPRING September October November	Sep: Regional Grants- round 2 of 2	Trustees and Admin and Social Media Admin
	Sep: Release seasonal newsletter	Social Media Admin and Admin
	Sep: Website Maintenance Review	Social Media Admin and Admin
	Sep: Quarterly accounts, report to next trust meeting	Financial Admin
	Sep: Te Wiki o Te Reo Maori	Trustees and Social Media Admin

	Sep: Send TWO invoice Payment due October	Financial Admin
	9-15th October: Baby Loss Awareness Week	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	15th October: International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Day	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	Hui and AGM — present final accounts, decide where next one to happen	Trustees Financial Admin
	(even years) NZCOM Conference	
	(odd years) HBAT Conference	
	Oct: GST 1 Apr - 30 Sept return due	Financial Admin
	Nov: Charities Return Commission can be filed when the end of year account is received. Due Dec. Best after AGM.	Admin
	Oct: (starting Labour Day) Home Birth Awareness Week	Trustees and Social Media Admin
	November: Regional Rep Zoom Hui Third Wednesday of the month.	Admin arrange trustee rep and Zoom link

Welcome

To new trustees

Tēnā koutou katoa, kia orana, talofa lava, malo lelei, fakaalofa atu, welcome.

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Home Birth Aotearoa Trust Board. We welcome you to this circle of women, to this dynamic, open space. We welcome you as you are, with all the experiences that have shaped you. We welcome you to draw strength and inspiration from our past; we welcome you to breathe new life and vision into our future.

We acknowledge the time and energy you are volunteering for this role and the wisdom and understanding you bring from your birth experiences, whatever those experiences are. We hope that in your time as a trustee you will grow and learn; we look forward to growing and learning alongside you.

We acknowledge the whānau that supports you in your work: your children, your men, your women, your nanas and papas. We acknowledge the wax and wane of your energy and of family cycles; we know that sometimes you will soar into your work as a trustee and that at other times you will need to pull back. We affirm the priority of your family in your life and invite you to bring your family into this community.

The Home Birth Aotearoa Board are the guardians and kaitiaki¹ of the homebirth movement in Aotearoa, but we do not own or govern the movement. Our work together is collaborative and based on consensus. We work with circular models and without hierarchy, and we seek parallel partnerships in all our relationships, new and old. The Board relates to the wider organisation and movement in the inverse of Home Birth Aotearoa's wheel structure: the trustees are around the outside of the wheel and feed into the centre, where the membership and the movement sit.

Your work as a trustee is also part of the wider body of work that creates change in the world. Your work on the Board contributes to national and global movements for the rights of women and children. We hope that the boundaries between this work and the work you do elsewhere — in the community, in activism, in parenting, in academia, in business — will be permeable and fluid, lines where your worlds can meet and nourish each other.

And finally, we hope that the Home Birth Aotearoa community will sustain you in your mahi as a trustee. Around the country and on the Board are many women who carry a depth of experience and herstory. Please use the resources that the organisation has nationally and in the regions; they are there to sustain you and all women of this movement. As a Board, we also commit to meeting each other at a deep personal level, and we hope that you will find camaraderie in this space.

¹ *Kaitiaki* (noun) trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, keeper. (<https://maoridictionary.co.nz/>)

Welcome again, welcome, welcome.

To new employees

Tēnā koutou katoa, kia orana, talofa lava, malo lelei, fakaalofa atu, welcome.

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Home Birth Aotearoa Trust Board. We welcome you to this circle of women, to this dynamic, open space. We welcome you as you are, with all the experiences that have shaped you. We welcome you to draw strength and inspiration from our past; we welcome you to breathe new life and vision into our future.

We acknowledge the experience and knowledge you bring to your work, and we thank you for your willingness to help us to achieve our aims. As a volunteer-led organisation, we are grateful for the support and mahi of our employees, who keep us ticking along, re-energise us and help us to realise new projects and dreams.

We commit to supporting you in your role, to communicating with care and clarity, to being a fair and flexible employer. We acknowledge that you are holding whānau life alongside your work, and we will offer compassion, celebration and commiseration as you need them.

We look forward to seeing what you will bring to Home Birth Aotearoa, to your creativity, competence, intelligence and heart. We hope that you will grow and learn in your role; we look forward to growing and learning alongside you.

Welcome again, welcome, welcome.

Guidelines for using the *Handbook*

The purpose of the *Handbook*

The *Handbook* is designed to inform, support and inspire you in your work as a trustee or employee. It supports two of the Trust's aims:

1. To have a thriving and flourishing network of homebirth groups throughout New Zealand
2. To have a strong and flourishing Trust Board

The *Handbook* is intended to acknowledge the herstory of the Trust, to record the present and to contribute to the ongoing sustainability of the organisation. It aims to honour the women who built the organisation, acknowledge our partners in this movement, make a difference to those who continue this work, and make a difference to homebirth whānau.

Women's lives are cyclic and busy in their childbearing/raising years, and we want to honour the Trust's commitment to making a difference to birthing women in Aotearoa New Zealand. The women who are involved in this organisation are mostly volunteers who contribute willingly, and we want our employees to be able to work efficiently and with all the information they need. We do not want women to feel like they are on an endless wheel of repeating what has been done before because there is no record of that work. In effect, we are creating a record of the organisation's work that may be referenced in many ways.

The *Handbook* will achieve this purpose by:

- pulling all the policies and procedures into one place so that they can be referenced quickly and easily
- making the information and work done in the past available to current and future trustees and to employees
- helping the Trust work sustainably by avoiding the need to replicate existing material.

The *Handbook* is intended as a resource for current and future trustees and for employees, and it is therefore written in language that suits the organisation. The Appendices have lists of key documents (and where to find them) and reference books. This is a living document and will be updated as necessary to reflect changes in our organisation.

The structure of the *Handbook*

Section	Description
Timeline: The shape of the year	A seasonal timeline of key dates, events and tasks.
Welcomes	Welcomes to new trustees and employees.
Guidelines for using the <i>Handbook</i>	The purpose and structure of the <i>Handbook</i> , as well notes on how to use the documents and the review process. (You're in this section right now!)
An introduction to Home Birth Aotearoa	Our karakia and mihi, our aims, mahi and herstory.
Structure: What our organisation looks like	The structures for Home Birth Aotearoa and the Trust, along with an explanation of the trustee role and profiles of our current trustees.
Board procedures: How we govern ourselves	Summaries of our procedures for nominations and elections, notes on trustee removal, and our succession plan.
Regional groups: Our local communities	A description of the regional groups and how they work.
Communication and decision making: How we work together	Notes on teleconferencing, paper and electronic communications, and our consensus decision-making processes.
Trust Deed: The ground we stand on	A summary of our Trust Deed.
Strategic Plan: Our pathway into the future	An overview of our Strategic Plan.
Our contract: Our mandate and funding	An overview of our contract with Te Whatu Ora/ Health New Zealand.
Financial procedures: How we look after our money	Notes on our accounts, funding, budgets, Charities Commission requirements, GST, PAYE and ACC, and wages.
Human resources: The people who support our work	An outline of our current paid positions, the Trust employment process, job descriptions and contracts.

National hui: How we gather together	An overview of our hui procedures, Te Ahuru Mowai and Kei a Wai, Te Tiriti workshops, and a herstory.
Regional pod hui: How we build strong regions	An overview of our procedures for regional pod hui.
Conferences: How we learn together	An overview of our conference procedures and a herstory.
Home Birth Week: How we spread the word	An overview of the purpose and procedures for Home Birth Week.
International Day of the Midwife	An overview of the purpose and procedures for International Day of the Midwife.
External communications: Our public face	An overview of our lobbying, media work, website, magazine, social media presence, and advertising, sponsorship and fundraising.
Resources: Our taonga and tools	A summary and descriptions of our resources.
Formal relationships and alliances: Our connections	A summary of our formal relationships and alliances.
Appendices	
Key documents	A list of key documents.
Job descriptions: Trust roles	Job descriptions for Trust roles.
Job descriptions: Employees	Job descriptions for staff and contractors.
Trustee and staff contacts	Contact lists.
Regional contacts	Contact lists.
Other useful contacts	Contact list.
Style sheet	Notes on preferred styles for Trust documents.
Writing for the Trust	Notes on writing style and how to work with documents.

References	A list of useful and interesting reading resources.
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How to use the *Handbook*

The *Handbook* is primarily a reference tool for trustees. When you first look at the document, you might like to flick through it to get a sense of the scope of your role and the organisation.

However, most of the time you'll probably be looking for specific information, so please use the Contents page to search for the topics you are interested in. We've made the Contents fairly detailed, so you should be able to find the material you need.

The main body of the *Handbook* contains overviews of each topic, with enough detail for you to understand the basics of how something is done and why it is part of Home Birth Aotearoa's work. The Appendices contain fuller reference information and contact lists. If you need more detail about something, please contact the person responsible.

Review process for the *Handbook*

The *Handbook* will be reviewed once a year. The Administrator will be responsible for the review process — all changes should go through them. The recommended process is below.

1. In early January (as holidays allow), the Administrator goes through the *Handbook* and puts together a list of suggested changes. The Administrator sends this list out to all trustees and calls for other changes.
2. Trustees look through the *Handbook* and email any suggested changes (or comments on the Administrator's suggestions) to the Administrator by the first week of February.
3. The Administrator puts in all changes and sends out a draft revised document by the third week of February.
4. Trustees make any further suggestions within one week.
5. The Administrator prepares the final revised document by mid-March.

Note

Suggested changes could also be sent to the Administrator during the year. If the changes are urgent, the Administrator should make the changes. If they are less urgent, the Administrator should simply keep them on file until the formal review process.

An introduction to Home Birth Aotearoa

Karakia

*Hoatu te mana
ki a ratou kua tae mai nei ki tenei whenua,
kua wheturangitia i te korowai o Ranginui,
kua hangaia i tenei tikanga hoki.*

*Give credit and recognition
to those who came to this land,
to those who have departed and are adorned as stars in the heavens,
to those who built this tikanga also.*

Mihimihi: Our place in the world — who we are

Home Birth Aotearoa (HBA) is the national collective of regional homebirth groups throughout Aotearoa / New Zealand.

We are a creative force

*Our mountain is the rise of woman's belly, swelling with life
Our ocean, the tides of labour
Our rivers flow in birth waters, teardrops, blood and milk
Our vessel is the womb
We claim kinship with the midwife, as she exists in all women
Our ties in the cord
bonding us above, below and beside one another
In the making of all Mothers*

We are Home Birth Aotearoa

Home Birth Aotearoa would not exist without the regional homebirth groups. Currently there are about 20 regional groups — ranging from legal entities to informal groups — all of which are actively involved in supporting homebirth in their regions.

The Home Birth Aotearoa Trust is a charitable trust formed in 2007. The Trust has eight elected trustees who invest in their regional homebirth groups as well as in HBA and the Trust. The Trust was formed to create a legally recognised national homebirth organisation that would be collectively accountable and sustainable.

Home Birth Aotearoa holds the National Home Birth Coordination Contract with Te Whatu Ora/ Health NZ, and the Trust applies this contract by initiating opportunities for regional groups to invest in the national movement — with the aim of promoting homebirth in New Zealand more widely.

The Trust works as kaitiaki, or guardian, of HBA; it holds the kaupapa or spirit of the homebirth movement in Aotearoa New Zealand by representing the collective interests of the volunteer-led homebirth support groups and associations in the regions. Regional and national hui are held annually to strengthen bonds, create collective vision, and build momentum and strategy towards that vision.

Our aims: Why we're here

HBA has five aims:

1. To see home recognised and promoted as an option for birth for the majority of New Zealand women
2. To increase the number of women choosing to birth at home
3. To have a strong and flourishing network of active homebirth groups throughout Aotearoa
4. To have input into maternity strategy and policy-making to enable empowering birth experiences and outcomes and healthy, thriving families
5. To implement and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and all its articles within our mahi, to remain committed to genuine partnership with tangata whenua within our mahi, and to undertake robust reflection upon this commitment on a regular basis

Our mahi: What our work is

We support and celebrate homebirth and provide birthing women and whānau with information about homebirth.

The Trust delivers the National Home Birth Coordination Contract for the Te Whatu Ora, promoting and coordinating homebirth activities at a national level. HBA is committed to honouring and upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and tino rangatiratanga for all families and whānau.

National hui are convened annually throughout the country. A regional association hosts a conference biennially (every two years).

A herstory of Home Birth Aotearoa: How we got here

Home Birth Aotearoa does not have a formal written herstory, but our stories are held and passed on in oral form by the women who have built (and are building) our movement.

Three books — *Home Birth Bound: Mending the Broken Weave* by Maggie Banks, along with *Herstory of N.Z. Homebirth Association* and *Save the Midwife* by Joan Donley — tell some of HBA's herstory.

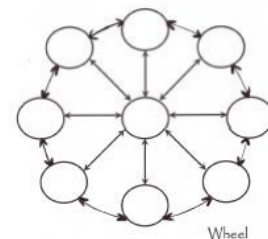
In 2002, a Yahoo mailing group and a website were launched. The Home Birth Aotearoa Trust was established by trust deed in 2007. The website and the online magazine were launched in 2014.

Community Birth Services (CBS) in Palmerston North, held the contract from the Ministry of Health (MOH) to provide national homebirth services back in the day. When CBS called it a day/changed focus, HBA was created as a legal entity to hold that contract, and to receive the national home birth funding. HBA was formed in 2007 with the original trustees/signatories being Jeannette Lazet, Glynette Gainfort and Vivienne Hill. There was \$30,000 in unspent MOH funds held by CBS when they shut down and this was transferred to HBA as per the winding up clause of the CBS organisation. HBA subsequently held that fund in reserve against any shortfall (or lack of ongoing funding from the MOH).

Structure: What our organisation looks like

Home Birth Aotearoa structure

Home Birth Aotearoa has a wheel structure, with the Trust at its core. The regional homebirth groups contribute to each other and the Trust, and vice versa. The Trust exists solely to represent HBA, and it takes its direction from the membership and from the global movement. The Trust remains as a static and secure entity that allows for the ebb and flow of energy in regional groups while retaining a voice and face for homebirth in Aotearoa. Our direction is inspired by the wider community and solidifies into plans and goals at the annual hui.



Trust Board structure

The Trust Board is directed by a Trust Deed that was signed by the inaugural trustees on 26 July 2007.

2012 saw an amendment to the Deed, with the number of trustees extended from six (with a quorum of four) to eight (with a quorum of five). A trustee can also work for the Trust as a contractor, as detailed in the Trust Deed. A copy of the Trust Deed is held by the Administrator.

In 2024 the Trust trialled the inclusion of up to 2 Elders, who are representatives rather than seat holders. An Elder to HBA is considered to be someone who has historically been involved with the Trust and the homebirth movement and who may provide the current trust with wisdom and insight in relation to present issues or topics. An Elder Representative may or may not be considered a Kaumatua. A Kaumatua representative to HBA is specifically tangata whenua. The Trust also included in the eight seats, one seat for a Nga Maia member, to strengthen wāhine

Māori voice in HBA and relationship with Nga Maia. The first Nga Maia seat was ratified at the 2024 AGM. The trial was incredibly positive and the intention is to update the Trust Deed to reflect this structure.

The trustee role

Trustees are responsible for the governance of the Home Birth Aotearoa Trust. They are accountable to the national network of homebirth associations and support groups (Home Birth Aotearoa) to set and achieve the goals of the organisation.

The Trust is accountable for financial transactions (including funding, expenditure and assets), and the services it provides must comply with the TWO contract and the law.

Anyone who is a member of and is endorsed by, a homebirth association or homebirth support group, or, is actively involved in their homebirth community in Aotearoa, can be a trustee. Previous governance or committee experience is helpful but not essential. An annual honorarium is not paid to trustees, but reimbursement for hui travel is. Trustees will need to be able to commit to:

- timely participation in the online agenda of Board business
- participation on the Home Birth Aotearoa trustee Facebook group
- monthly meeting by Zoom
- attendance at the annual hui and AGM
- specific accountability, such as Treasurer, Chairperson, secretary, and/or contributing to initiatives
- thinking at a national level, providing guidance, clarity and direction for long- and short-term goals.
- Supporting regional groups, midwives and student midwives.

Trustees will have:

- a passion for homebirth, accompanied by 5+ hours of investable time per month
- a commitment to supporting and empowering women, their whānau and their communities in their choice to birth at home
- a commitment to Home Birth Aotearoa
- an ability and commitment to expressing their own opinions and perspectives
- an ability and commitment to working constructively with others, sometimes from different backgrounds and points of view
- the support of their families in undertaking a trusteeship
- the support and endorsement of their regional homebirth association or support group.

Current trustee profiles:

<https://homebirth.org.nz/community/about-us/>

Monthly meeting protocol

The Trust meets monthly via teleconference/ Zoom to plan, prepare and make decisions for the activities ahead. The meetings are generally held on the last Wednesday of the month. It is recommended that Trustees add these to their annual schedule in advance.

Meetings are held from 8-9pm to allow for the availability of those trustees who are parenting. It is expected that attendee's login to the meeting at 7:55 to allow for a prompt start and with the intention of running through the agenda items within the hour. At times, the meetings will run overtime.

A link to the meeting, as well as to the meeting folder which contains the agenda and any associated reports, will be emailed to trustees, Elder Representatives and contractors the week before the meeting.

A quorum is required to make decisions and trustees are expected to prioritise attendance of these meetings as a minimum requirement to being on the Trust.

If a trustee is unable to attend it is expected that they would contribute submissions prior to the meeting and offer follow up/ acknowledgement of the minutes once these are available. The administrator will post the minutes to the HBA Trustee Group on Facebook.

If a trustee misses two consecutive meetings with little or no follow up engagement, there will be a transparent discussion amongst the board as to whether the absence is due to fair and reasonable circumstances or whether the trustee needs to consider their availability and commitment to HBA. The task of monitoring and recording attendance will be managed by the Administrator as part of minute taking. The Trust, as a collective, will pay attention to trustee engagement to ensure a robust and committed board is maintained.

Board procedures: How we govern ourselves

Trustee nominations and elections

Trustees are elected first as apprentices and then move into three-year terms. They are intended to have a part year as an apprentice, two active years as a trustee, then

spend their third year focusing on nurturing emergent trustees. There will be a natural flow and variation to the exact timeline.

Apprentice trustee nominations and elections

Apprenticeship to the Board offers people a chance to spend time getting to know how the Board works and whether the trustee role would suit them. HBA can have up to two apprentice trustees on the board at any one time. Anyone may register their interest in serving as an apprentice to the board, though preferably are connected to their local homebirth group. Before the next AGM or if a trustee stands down, apprentices and trustees then decide if they are suitable to move into the trustee role. If an apprentice decides not to step into the trustee position, they can either continue apprenticing (and talk about any support they need for further personal development) or stop volunteering their time as an apprentice. New trustees are ratified at the spring hui.

The process for nomination and election of apprentice trustees

1. HBA makes a call for apprentice nominations. People can self-nominate.
2. A final date for nominations is set by the Administrator. This is determined by the time of year, what else is happening and at the discretion of the Trust.
3. Candidate information is to be compiled and emailed to the regional homebirth group representatives email list. If there are two or fewer nominees, they will be considered duly elected and no voting process will follow.
4. In this email, HBA will outline what attributes the trust requires from an apprentice at that time e.g. a specific region that requires representation, midwife or consumer balance on the board.
5. HBA will allow time for regional groups to respond with their preferred three candidates. One month is suggested.
6. HBA trustees will also review the applications and select their preferred three candidates.
7. At the one-month closing date, the Administrator will then compile the votes to determine the two most successful candidates.
8. The incoming apprentice trustees, the regional groups and the unsuccessful candidates will be notified.
9. The new Board of Trustees will begin business.

Trustee removal

The Board must have no fewer than five and no more than eight trustees. According to the Trust Deed, a person stops being a trustee when they:

- resign in writing

- die
- are declared bankrupt
- are found to be mentally disordered within the meaning of the Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992.

The trustees may decide that it is in the best interests of the Trust to remove a trustee. To do so, they must pass a resolution to that effect by at least two-thirds of the trustees. If such a resolution is passed, the trustee's removal takes place immediately.

Regional groups: Our local communities

Regional groups often grow out of the energy and inspiration of a small group of women. The regional groups are varied, and they wax and wane with time and the energy of their members; your local group might be large, small, active, thriving, close-knit, at a low ebb, focused, diffuse, quiet or solid. Or all of these things together! Any group that says it belongs to HBA does belong.

All regions are invited to attend the national hui and participate in the activities of the organisation. At times, regional groups may approach the Trust for funding or other support for their initiatives. Regional groups are promoted through the website.

<https://homebirth.org.nz/community/>

Starting a group

No local group in your region or town? Have you considered starting your own? Some groups are just a few like-minded mums or midwives who get together now and then, whereas some are more structured and boast large memberships. If you are eager to facilitate a gathering of like-minded people in your area, here are some ways you might begin:

- **Contact us.** We can let you know what, if any, groups have been in your area in the past, who the local homebirth midwives are, and where the nearest groups are as well. We also have resources to help get you started.
- Start a **forum topic** to connect with others in your area.
- Join our Facebook [page](#) and [group](#) to connect with others in your area.
- Start your own local social media group.
- Arrange a coffee morning, picnic or similar and invite friends and acquaintances from local playgroups, playcentre, and so on.
- Join our [Facebook group](#) and [regional email contact list](#) to hear about upcoming hui and other national opportunities for regional groups.

If you choose to formalise your homebirth group, here are some useful links for becoming an association, society or trust:

<http://www.societies.govt.nz/cms>

<https://www.govt.nz/browse/tax-benefits-and-finance/ird-numbers/get-an-ird-number-for-a-business-charity-or-trust/>

Communication and networking

The trust communicates with the regional groups primarily through the [email](#) list. There is also a [regional facebook group](#). It is recommended to be connected with both.

Support for regional groups

Bi-annual grant rounds are offered to regional groups to assist them with self-sustaining ventures such as birth pool hire, or to establish a meeting place. Regional representatives are financially supported to attend the annual national hui with up to \$500 offered to each group. This amount may vary according to budget and inflation.

Regional grant application protocol

Each year, HBA dedicates funds from within its budget to allocate to regional home birth groups. Groups can then use these funds to support their birth pool hire service, secure a meeting venue or whatever needs their region may have at the time.

The allocated amount may vary and will be approved by the Board when the annual budget is reviewed. The Trust's financial year runs from July 1st- June 30th and as such the budget is approved in August.

It is recommended to offer two grant rounds per year, to support the evolving needs of regional groups. September and March are suggested dates, as they avoid the busy times of hui/ conference and summer holidays.

Regional groups will be notified via the email contact list, the regional group Facebook page and advertising across HBA social media platforms. Groups will need to fill in an application form and these will be compiled and reviewed by the trustees. The Trust aims to provide balanced and reasonable support across all regions. (Please refer to the Grants & Loans folder in the DropBox for the application form.)

Communication and decision making: How we work together

Teleconferences

We hold our teleconferences via Zoom. The Administrator develops an agenda, with input from trustees, and sends it out before each meeting. The Administrator takes minutes, posts them to the trustee Facebook page and shares them via email on completion.

Paper

Our address for mail correspondence is (subject to change with Administrator role):

Home Birth Aotearoa, % Cushla Richardson
32 Rosendale Avenue, Spotswood, New Plymouth, 4310

Electronic

The trustees communicate through the trustee Facebook group, the trustee Messenger chat and occasionally by email.

HBA communicates with regional groups through email and our Facebook page and groups.

Consensus decision-making processes

Decisions are made through a consensus-based process whereby each decision is considered in terms of its effect on the Trust and the organisation as a whole, then discussed collaboratively.

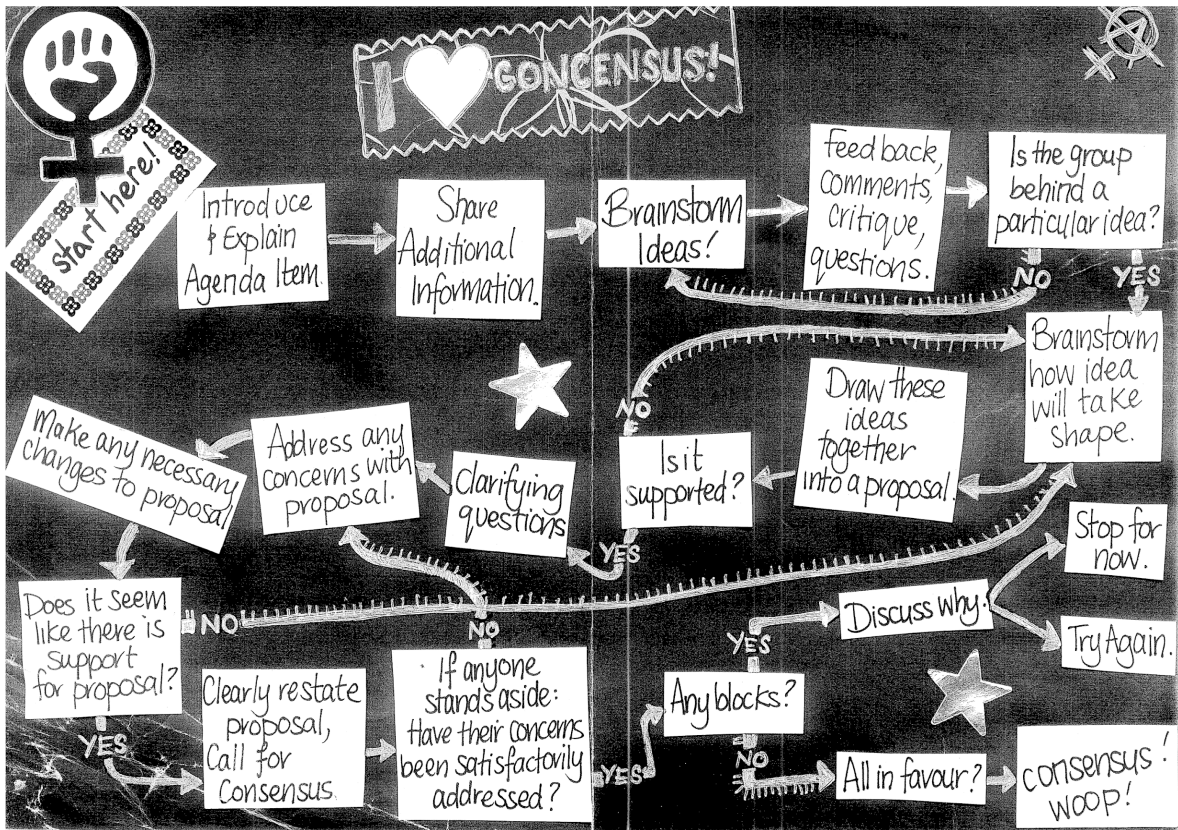
This seems to be the most effective method of decision making for HBA as it takes into consideration the group dynamic, as well as the self-determination of individuals to nurture their own processes when receiving information or ideas.

Once an issue or idea is brought to the Board, each trustee is responsible for using the appropriate space and time to fully explore their thoughts and feelings towards the issue.

The Board supports a culture of openness and trust so that each trustee feels able to communicate their opinion or concerns and to seek resolution or clarity if needed.

The final decision is made once any of these situations occurs:

- A unanimous agreement to a course of action
- No strong objection
- 2/3 majority in agreement



Trust Deed: The ground we stand on

The Trust Deed establishing Trust Home Birth was made on 26 July 2007. On 8 October 2007, the name was changed by deed to Home Birth Aotearoa Trust. The Trust Deed establishes:

- the mātāpono/principles of the Trust
- the whāinga/purpose of the Trust
- the limiting of the Trust's activities to Aotearoa New Zealand
- the ability of the Board to decide the location of the Trust's office
- the rules governing Te Runanga Whakahaere / the Board
- the rules governing nga hui o te runanga / the meetings of the Board
- the taketake/powers of the Trust
- the rules governing ko nga rawa hei painga mo te iwi / the income, benefit, or advantage to applied to the Trust's charitable purposes
- the rehitā/registration of the Trust
- the pūtea/financial arrangements of the Trust
- te tohe taketake / the common seal of the Trust
- the rules governing whakarerekētanga ture/alteration of the Trust Deed
- the rules governing takawaenga/mediation and arbitration
- the rules governing taunaha/trustee liability
- the rules governing te tuku toenga rawa / disposition of surplus assets.

A copy of the Trust Deed is available from admin@homebirth.org.nz.

Strategic Plan: Our pathway into the future

The Trust has a Strategic Plan, which is reviewed and amended annually to reflect the current activities and aims of the Trust and the HBA community. Strategic planning is conducted by the trustees and the wider community through online communication and through national and trustee hui.

A copy of the Strategic Plan is available from admin@homebirth.org.nz.

Te Whatu Ora/ Health New Zealand contract: Our mandate and funding

Ministry contact

Abby Hewitt (ia | she/her)

**Principal Service Development Manager, Maternity
Kahu Taurima | Maternity & Early Years
Starting Well
Planning, Funding and Outcomes**

+64 21 276 7375 | abby.hewitt@tewhatuora.govt.nz
133 Molesworth Street, Wellington 6140

The current contract runs from **1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**. The Administrator invoices quarterly. The Administrator and Board prepare an annual report on the contract, which is filed by the 10th of August each year and for which there is a template provided.

Around **May 2025**, the Board should start talking to TWO about renewing the contract.

The objectives of the service are to:

1. Provide a national contact and online presence to promote home birth, and work in partnership with women, whānau and midwives by raising awareness of home birth; and
2. Provide voice and representation at national maternity fora to ensure home birth consumer voices have the opportunity to provide input into maternity policy and practice; and
3. Provide a contact point for women and regional groups in Aotearoa for home birth matters by providing home birth information, accessing recommendations for home birth midwives, access to birth pools, and support for antenatal education on home birth; and
4. Connect with like-minded and relevant community and government organisations across Aotearoa to share home birth information, and be a reliable contact point on home birth for the media; and
5. Provide support to regional Home Birth Associations and groups, particularly newly forming local home birth groups, by providing establishment support, grants, resources, and networking.

The components of the service are to:

1. Provide access and refer consumers to the New Zealand College of Midwives website which provides information about midwife availability, place of birth options and other information; and
2. Support Home Birth Associations and groups throughout Aotearoa through funding, resourcing, networking, and provide opportunities for them to actively contribute to the national network; and
3. Facilitate communication and networking opportunities amongst regional Home Birth Associations and Home Birth support groups; and
4. Establish a contact point and forum for a national consumer voice on home birth issues on behalf of Home Birth Associations and groups, individuals and whānau; and
5. Update and maintain the Homebirth Aotearoa website to ensure the site is current, user friendly, provides access to home birth and midwife information for individuals and whānau, agency and government stakeholders; and supports the Regional Associations; and
6. Collaborate with the Ministry to design and undertake a project contributing to the Maternity Action Plan workstream Delivering whānau-centred maternity care.

The reporting requirements are:

Provide a report each year by 10 August each year that includes quantitative data (where applicable) and a narrative report on the following:

1. Summary of Home Birth Aotearoa social media presence and engagement [Service Objectives 1 and 3]
2. Summary of engagement with professional organisations, community providers, agencies and professional individuals; including a summary of attendance at forums, hui and professional meetings [Service Objectives 2 and 4]
3. Summary of Home Birth Aotearoa funding supplied to regional Home Birth Associations and groups [Service Objective 5]
4. Summary of any project work undertaken with the Ministry contributing to the Maternity Action Plan [Service Component 6]

The contract and service specifications are available from admin@homebirth.org.nz.

Financial procedures: How we look after our money

Bank accounts

Cheque account: 03 1540 0512 132-000

Debit Card account: 03 0703 006155 000

Savings: 03 1540 0512132 001

Term Deposit: 03 1540 0512132 081

The Trust has a business account with Westpac.

There are four accounts:

- A checking account, which receives income and makes payments
- A second checking account which is connected to a Visa Debit card and used for online payments
- A savings account
- A term deposit (used when interest rates exceed the savings account rates)

At least four people have access to the account, and two people (one of whom should be a trustee) are needed to authorise any payments. The current signatories are:

- the Administrator - Cushla Richardson
- Andrina Palmer
- Alesha Hobbs
- Bobbie-Jane Cooke
- Kristin White

The Administrator handles all the day-to-day banking. All payments/invoices should be forwarded to them.

Funding

Most of the Trust's income is from TWO funding, which is invoiced and paid quarterly. The funding is for the national coordination of home birth services.

Some income comes from koha and donations, the sale of merchandise, and interest.

The Administrator and Treasurer could look at other funding options (such as grants) for projects that fall outside the scope of the contract.

The regional groups are responsible for their own fundraising.

Budgets

The Trust's financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June. The Financial Administrator, in conjunction with the Treasurer and Board, compiles the budget annually. The Board reviews the budget after six months and makes any adjustments at this time. The accounts are not audited, but are prepared annually and presented at the AGM. The accountants are Green Grass Accounting, based in Tākaka.

It is the Administrator's job to record, reconcile and report on financial transactions for the Trust. The Administrator does this in consultation with, and under the direction of, the Treasurer and the Board. The software used to keep track of the finances is Xero. This software makes it possible to track projects and manage the budget.

New Zealand Business Number

The Trust has a registered NZBN. The registration can be found [here](#).

NZBN9429043164844
Entity Status Registered
Business Type Charitable Trust
Registration Date 15 April 2008

Charities Commission requirements

Charitable registration number:	CC38150
User ID:	CC38150
Password:	4XLRg745
Charities Commission website:	www.register.charities.govt.nz
Charities Commission phone:	0508 242 748
Charities Commission email:	info@charities.govt.nz

HBA is registered as a charity with the Charities Commission. Annual returns are due to the Charities Commission on 31 December.

All trustees are registered officers with the Charities Commission.

GST, PAYE and ACC

GST number: 100 561 409

The Administrator files six-monthly GST returns in April and October. Returns are calculated on a payments basis and are filed through Xero.

The Administrator also receives, checks and pays ACC bills, which are based on the type of staff the Trust employs. If staff are contractors, rather than employees, there will be no ACC liability to the Trust.

Wages

HBA has two contractors:

- Administrator (general and financial): up to 6 hours per week
- Social Media Administrator: 4 hours per week

Occasionally others are contracted for short term project work, such as website development or facilitation of strategic planning.

Contractors submit their invoices and task reports to the Administrator at the start of the month. These are paid by the 20th of the month directly into the contractor's bank accounts.

Human resources: The people who support our work

Paid positions

As described in the previous section, HBA has two contractors:

- Administrator: up to 6 hours per week
- Social Media Administrator: 4 hours per week

The Trust employment process

Being a small, charitable and largely volunteer organisation, it has proven best for the Trust to work with contractors, rather than to employ people. Should the trust decide to employ someone there are guidelines below.

1. Plan and develop the role

When planning to employ someone, the Trust should consider the steps that the Employment New Zealand recommends. See:

<https://www.employment.govt.nz/starting-employment/hiring/>

Consider the following steps:

- Planning for the process
- Describing the job
- Developing a job description
- Deciding whether the employee will be full-time, part-time, permanent, casual or fixed-term
- Deciding the hours of work
- Deciding the place of work
- Considering the personal attributes sought in the employee
- Considering the skills and qualifications sought in the employee
- Considering the character of the workplace
- Attracting suitable job applicants

2. Advertise the position

Positions are advertised for three weeks via the email groups, the website and Facebook. The job description is made available to all prospective candidates.

The Administrator is the point of contact and receives applications. The Administrator then passes the applications on to the trustees who have committed

to making up the recruitment team. This team creates a shortlist of around three candidates and emails them within a week.

3. Interview candidates

A teleconference (Zoom) interview is conducted between each candidate and at least two trustees. An interview question list and evaluation form are developed to suit the role. All interviewers make evaluation notes and share these to assist the selection process. The preferred candidate/s are reference-checked by one or more of the recruitment team. The recruitment team makes recommendations regarding the candidates to the Board within two weeks.

4. Select a candidate

The Trust holds a teleconference to consider and discuss the recommendations and comes to a decision. The selected candidate is contacted, and the process of negotiating an employment contract begins.

The prospective candidate is given a contract to consider by the Administrator or one of the recruitment team. Once the contract has been agreed, the employee is invited to start work. Contractors will have position-specific aims and time periods outlined in their contracts.

5. Induct the new contractor

Planning for the induction of a contractor should be considered and planned for during the whole recruitment process.

Ideally, the new contractor will meet with the most relevant Board members and the outgoing contractor to discuss an induction plan.

Where possible, the new contractor has a face-to-face training/induction meeting with the outgoing contractor, who passes on all relevant resources. The new employee is also given a copy of the *Handbook* and a current contact list of all trustees and regional contacts.

6. Review the employee's performance

The Trust is committed to acting in good faith and communicating openly with their contractors at all times. The Trust is an equal opportunity employer and is fully

committed to and invested in personal and professional development for all trustees and contractors.

A performance management meeting is held to develop a performance plan within six weeks of the employee's start date.

The performance plan is reviewed with the employee annually: the aims are discussed, feedback is provided to each party, and the role is solidified. Remuneration may or may not be assessed.

Where dismissal is considered, the trustees follow Employment New Zealand guidelines to evaluate and consider the employee.

Job descriptions

The employment documents for the Trust have been created using templates from the Department of Labour and Inland Revenue. Copies of the job descriptions are in the Appendices.

One-off contracts

Contracts usually relate to projects run by the Trust.

The position is discussed, defined, advertised and selected in a similar way to that of a permanent contractor. Where relevant, companies or other known professionals may be invited to apply as well.

At least two trustees should make up the recruitment team.

The contract is carefully considered and negotiated with the contractor. Other parties are advised of the outcome as soon as possible.

National hui: How we gather together

Purpose of hui

The national hui is an opportunity to share regional issues and reflect on what we are trying to achieve as a national organisation. It is open to trustees, regional group representatives, their families, midwives, student midwives, partnership group representatives- anyone who is interested.

The hui ceremony is known as Te Ahuru Mowai and opens with the Kei a Wai. (See *Te Ahuru Mowai and Kei a Wai: Nurturing the numinous* information later in the *Handbook* for further detail and Herstory.)

The AGM is held at hui, to approve the finance and board reports, review the Strategic Plan, discuss any proposals for the national organisation and hear regional reports. On hui only years (no conference) a Ti Tiriti workshop needs to be included.

Participants leave hui inspired and energised by one another.

“How to hui”/ Reference guide for the host region

Leading up

The hui is created and run by the regional group (you) with the support of HBA. If you do not have a committee member on the HBA board please consider creating a Facebook group where your members and HBA can communicate throughout the planning process. A monthly update is requested so we can keep connected. Administrative tasks can be delegated to the Trust if your group does not have the capacity to resource them internally.

During hui

Trustees will be assigned roles for the day. These roles include:

- liaison/greeting/farewell with you/ host group
- managing HBA resources table
- leading Kei a Wai ceremony
- AGM minute taker
- chairing AGM

Dates and location

Duration

Consider the hosting capacity of your team.

- Stand-alone hui event: Two days, one night is best for costs and attendance/ or 1 full day
- If hosting the hui in a conference year, one day for hui and one day for conference

Date and venue

Annually in spring/ October. Set date and venue ASAP.

Location

- Easily accessible for locals, from airports and other transport hubs
- Marae is ideal but not essential
- Venue capacity
- Heating, space for meeting, sleeping arrangements, parking and eating
- A cosy space for parents to breastfeed

Customs for location

- Consider what rules and requirements are set by marae/location
- Reach out to your local Māori organisation for support eg. Hapū Wānanga, manawhenua, Ngā Maia
- Arrange to Pōwhiri or Mihi Whakatau if you have appropriate guidance, please contact HBA if you need support

Human resourcing

Create a team of interested individuals to help plan and run the conference. Consider having tangata whenua representation to ensure Ti Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld and considered. Source a photographer.

Roles of responsibility to allocate: promotion, food, technology/sound, host/Marae liaison, money, transport, registration/bookings, delegate communication, MC etc.

Budget/ Grants

HBA will cover fair and reasonable costs for accommodation/venue, food, resources, petrol vouchers for volunteer shuttle drivers, cultural workshop, childcare etc up to a total of \$3500.00 for conference and hui year and \$2000.00 for a hui only year.

Attendees buy tickets to conferences, which helps to cover costs. Hui needs to be accessible to everyone, though a reasonable fee can be charged for kai if the budget cannot cover it. Consider contacting your local council for additional grants. Please consult HBA with quotes and to discuss preferences.

Receipts/invoices are essential for everything. Forward, scan or photograph, then email through to HBA for reimbursement. Email to: admin@homebirth.org.nz. Avoid cash/under the table payments, vouchers are more appropriate.

Please refer to the Financial Records Template to manage your budget, available from admin@homebirth.org.nz. Consider applying to Nga Maia for a grant for Māori speakers and Māori student midwife tickets.

Ticketing

Clarify a cut of date for ticket sales so you can confirm numbers. HBA has an account with Eventbrite which has proven to be an effective way to manage ticketing.

Please notify HBA when you open ticket sales so we can promote this within our circles and alert our Regional Representatives about funding options. HBA will cover the cost of trustee tickets, please confirm numbers and reserve.

It is recommended to charge a \$20 ticket/booking fee for attendees, to get some commitment and to clarify numbers for catering. You may need to charge more to cover catering but please remember hui needs to be as accessible, if not free, as possible.

Consider asking for a koha at the ticket check out as well as on the day. All revenue collected from the booking fee and koha can be kept by the host region, or used to offset any overspend.

AGM - Needs to be open to anyone interested at no charge, however they must come only for the scheduled time slot if they don't have a paid ticket.

Agenda Setting

- Consider a theme or put out for agenda items
- Two hours for the opening ceremony, Kei a Wai
- One to two hours for the AGM
- Two hours for Regional Reports (This requires effective management to not run over time, the facilitator can be assigned the role of timekeeper)
- Te Tiriti workshop (On hui only years, see below for more detail)
- Time for breaks and meals
- If time allows, final one to two hours to highlight current issues and focus on positive action to take back to communities and/or guest speakers
- Space for creativity and flow.

Don't pack too much in. The essential activities are: Kei-e-wai. Regional reports. AGM. Te Tiriti engagement.

Registration/Communication

Promotion

The HBA social media Administrator will manage the promotion of the event. You need to provide them with updates and content. They will advertise through emails to our regional groups, Facebook, website and quarterly newsletters.

Consider creating an A4 pdf and jpg poster that can easily be shared for printing and sent to local midwifery schools, hospitals and birth centres.

Create a co-hosted Facebook event with HBA and your regional group. Eventbrite will list the event on their site, if used, and is an easy way to email delegates.

Invite Regional Representatives, local homebirth families, homebirth midwives and sister organisations such as Nga Maia, Hāpū Wananga, the New Zealand College of Midwives (NZCoM), CBS and the national Pasifika Midwifery group. Invite local businesses/crafts people to have trade tables. Invite local reporters to cover the event on the day, a great way to promote your regional group and homebirth!

Information for attendees

- Have clear points of contact for queries - for example travel, accommodation.
- Gather info: food allergies, numbers adults/babes in arms, contact details, sleeping arrangements (if relevant), travel assistance
- Let people know about transport to and from the venue, ground rules/Marae customs
- Offer information on nearby alternative accommodation
- Ask regions and individuals to bring ideas/initiatives for discussion

Travel

Regional Representatives can contact the HBA Administrator in advance to arrange the possibility of reimbursement/subsidy of travel expenses. HBA has a statement relating to this, that can be used within promotion and publications.

Arrange transport to and from the venue/airport transfer.

Food

Assign someone the role of planning and facilitating food. Consider marae catering, or a catering company if your budget allows. Catering is often the greatest expense. You do not have to hire a caterer if you have local, experienced helpers able to manage the food.

Ask attendees to bring baking and regional items with a plan to utilise it. Consider food allergies/preferences but know you cannot please everyone.

Please ensure your kitchen staff/ kitchen manager reserves food for speakers who may be held up and unable to get to the serving table promptly after presenting.

Te Tiriti workshops

The fifth goal in our Trust Deed is *“To implement and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi and all its articles within our mahi, to remain committed to genuine partnership with tangata whenua within our mahi, and to undertake robust reflection upon this commitment on a regular basis.”*

Our organisation holds Te Tiriti o Waitangi workshops as part of our national hui on years when the conference is not also being held. Workshops may be tailored to meet the specific needs of the regional groups and HBA and are usually facilitated by local providers. Workshops contribute to the personal and professional development of individuals with regard to Te Tiriti and ensure HBA and its resources are accessible and relevant to Māori so that home birth is a real option. Workshops may include fundamental Te Tiriti knowledge, specific issues, use of Te Reo Māori language, Te Tiriti partnership or other relationship building, developing Māori resources, learning cultural or practical skills, presentations by Māori childbirth education providers, and so on.

Please be in touch with HBA if you are having difficulty finding someone in your region to run a workshop.

Te Ahuru Mowai and Kei a Wai: Nurturing the numinous²

Te Ahuru Mowai is the name of Home Birth Aotearoa's hui ceremony. The name Te Ahuru Mowai was gifted by Nga Maia to the homebirth conference organised by the Whangarei Home Birth Group and held at Te Puna O Te Matauranga, Whangarei, on 28–29 September 2007.

As Whaea Mina TimuTimu and Crete Cherrington shared, Te Ahuru Mowai refers to the sacred water of life — to the water of the moana (or ocean) and awa (or rivers), the water in which the baby nestles, that we birth in, the water in tears, in all our bodily fluids, the water essential to our life itself, and the water we return to after passing.

Nurturing the numinous (numinous meaning “in the presence of the divine”) was a reflection of Whangarei Home Birth Group's commitment to the spiritual aspect of birth — that homebirth allows the profoundly spiritual nature of birth to blossom and bloom in perfect harmony with the physical nature of birth. The name acknowledges and values equally all aspects of holistic birthing.

In wanting to honour this name, Jane Cunningham was gifted a vision of a water ceremony. The ceremony would honour the blessing of Te Ahuru Mowai and share the miracle of water in *The Hidden Messages in Water* by Masaru Emoto. The research of Dr. Masaru Emoto captures frozen water crystals in photographs that present a glimpse into the mysterious response of water to thoughts, words and pictures.

Dr. Emoto and many others believe that water holds the potential to create peace on earth. By holding the intention of peace towards water — by thinking, speaking and acting with the intention of peace toward water — water can and will bring peace to our bodies and to the world.

One woman cannot change the world, but one woman can deliver the message to change the world. Holistic birthing is the perfect place to begin the ripples of peace for the world.

The ceremony required a vessel to represent woman and birth — we are each the vessel of a miracle when we birth — and this miracle is the essence of the numinous that the Whangarei wise women wished to celebrate.

Jane shares the story of the birth of Te Ahuru Mowai and Kei a Wai

The Whangarei Home Birth group was blessed to have a connection with Hana Easton, a local potter, glass artist and jewellery maker. Hana and her family

² This material was written by Trudy Hart and Jane Cunningham. It has been lightly edited for the purposes of the *Handbook*.

welcomed members of the core group to her studio, where we each made a clay coil, which together made up the beautiful vessel. Through talking and tears, silence and song, the vessel was formed by loving hands with a vision of what the Home Birth hui and homebirth meant to us.

The vessel became symbolic of the birthing woman. From the lush hapu puku, smooth and voluminous, the three stages of labour, the shapes of the ova and the sperm, the whenua, the labia that the water pours from, and the red inside for the view that the pepe takes for the nine or so months of gestation.

The handle of the vessel — touching only in two places where it was needed for strength, but mostly standing apart — represents the midwife, her guardianship and facilitation of holistic birth.

Participants in the conference were asked to bring water from a place that was meaningful to them; after the powhiri, they were asked to tell the story of their water to the group and pour the water into the vessel placed at the base of a post in the wharenuī for the duration of the hui.

Water came from across the country and around the world, from springs, from water tanks, from the Glastonbury chalice, from tears, and virtual water from places important to us and our families.

The wai stayed in the vessel for the duration of the hui, and then in the gentle rain of the last day we walked to a park that had been the childhood playground of one of our beloved group members, Madeleine. This awa had been badly polluted by farming further up the valley, and over time has been lovingly restored to health by the local community and DOC — we thought this was a wonderful parallel of how together we are trying to re-establish the power of homebirth for the betterment of humankind.

After karakia, Crete, Robert, and Louise (the teenage daughter of our beloved group member Eva) emptied the wai back into the awa, symbolising the way our energy would travel back out into the world, charged with all we had learnt and shared during this time together.

As we spoke and cried and told our stories and gifted our wai to the vessel in the wharenuī, Robert, local kaumatua, was “struck by a bolt of lightening”. He told of his insight that when you ask in Maori “who are you?” you ask “kei a wai?” Wai is water. We are all water.

This profound statement has become the name of the ceremony, acknowledging our truth that we are all water: we come from water, go to water, are connected by water, and water is the most powerful of our fundamental elements. Our ceremony honours that truth and the sacredness of the path we walk as vessels of a miracle.

Water was taken from the vessel to create a tincture, so that the energy from the wai of that hui will be part of the wai of each successive hui and will grow in potency

with every ceremony. We will go from strength to strength in our journey as homebirthing women, and the Te Ahuru Mowai vessel is a Home Birth Aotearoa taonga that will travel our country empowering ripples of peace and harmony through homebirth.

A herstory of our national hui

The table below gives a chronological herstory of our national hui. The table has a few gaps due to being not able to locate minutes or reports. Auckland may have numbers for the regional pod hui held there in 2013/2014.

Blue shading = Home Birth Conference

Pink shading = Regional pod hui

No shading = Annual Home Birth Hui

#	Date	Location	Te Tiriti Workshop	No. of Attendees
1	2000	Cambridge		
2	August 2002	Hamilton?		
3	15 February 2003	Manawatu?		
4	10–12 Oct 2003	Palmerston North Home Birth Conference		
5	21–22 Mar 2004	Christchurch	Network Waitangi Otautahi	9
6	19 Sept 2004	Wellington NZCoM Conference		
7	23 April 2005	Tauranga		
8	Sept 2005	Invercargill Home Birth Conference		
9	31 Mar – 1 Apr 2006	Hamilton		14

10	21 Oct 2006	Christchurch NZCoM Conference		
11	30–31 Mar 2007	New Plymouth		21/19
12	28–30 Sept 2007	Whangarei Home Birth Conference ? Marae		App. 40
13	Mar 2008	Hawkes Bay	Moea Armstrong	15
14	Sept 2008	Auckland NZCoM Conference		21
15	21 Mar 2009	Dunedin	Tauiwi Solutions	19
16	9–11 Oct 2009	Christchurch Home Birth Conference Wai Ora Trust		34
17	27–28 Mar 2010	Wellington Te Kuratini Marae	Turanga Kaupapa	18
18	6 Sept 2010	Rotorua NZCoM Conference		36
19	19–20 Mar 2011	Nelson Riverside Community	Te Korowai Trust	18
20	28–30 Oct 2011	Taranaki - Oakura Marae Home Birth Conference		
21	Mar 2012	Bluff Te Rau Aroha Marae	Flax weaving wananga	19
22	Nov 2012	Tauranga + one-day Home Birth Aotearoa conference		36
23	Mar 2013	Regional pod hui Southland		
24	2013	Regional pod hui Auckland		

25	8–10 Nov 2013	Dunedin Arai te Uru Marae	Kelly Tikao	19
26	2–4 May 2014	Regional pod hui Auckland		
27	17–18 May 2014	Regional pod hui Southland Te Takutai o te Titi Marae		
28	8–10 Oct 2014	Hui Auckland Umupuia Marae	Treaty Resource Centre	48
28	15 March 2015	Tapu Te Ranga Marae Wellington		23
29	29-30 Aug 2015	HB Conference Riverside Community Centre, Nelson	Joanne Rama	100 (Conf)
30	29-30 Aug 2015	National Hui Riverside Community Centre, Nelson	Joanne Rama	50 (hui)
31	19 Sept 2015	Regional Pod Hui Tauranga		
32	15 Oct 2016	Raglan Hui	Heather Muriwai	40
33	7 Oct 2017	Auckland Conference		130-140
34	8 Oct 2017	Auckland Hui		52
35	3rd-4th Nov 2018	Wellington Hui, Horouta Marae, Porirua		30
36	2nd -3rd Nov 2019	Christchurch/Otautahi Conference		52 + 8 students

37	2nd-3rd Nov 2019	Christchurch/ Otautahi Hui	Anton Matthews	31
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38	31st Oct 2020	Tauranga Conference Te Whare Tangata Bayhill Function Venue 243 Waitao Rd Tauranga	Rob McGowan /Rongoā Rob - Rongoā that can support women during haoutanga and birth. Arianna Nisa-Waller - Upholding tikanga Māori throughout the haputanga journey during Covid-19	76 tickets sold 9 Trustees/ Apprentices 1 admin staff Guest speakers Approx 100 total
39	1st Nov 2020	Tauranga Hui Bayhill Function Venue 243 Waitao Rd Tauranga		35 tickets 8 Trustees/ Apprentices 1 admin staff
40	29th October 2022	Waikato Conference		152 including trustees and regional reps. 16 regions were represented
41	30th October 2022	Waikato Hui	Rawinia Hohua	99 including trustees and 16 regions represented

42	28th/29th October 2023	Whakatū/ Nelson Hosted by Choice Baby Nelson Motueka Home Birth and Birth Wisdom - Empowered and Home Birth in Golden Bay Te Tau Ihu/ Top of the South	TeAnna Hema -traditional Māori birthing practices	Saturday 86 people Sunday 74 16 regional groups represented
43	2nd/ 3rd November 2024	Auckland Saturday 2nd Strategic Planning day facilitated by Tessa Mackenzie and attended by HBA trustees, elder rep Brenda Hinton and Nga Maia rep Jacquelyn Paki. Held at trustee Airbnb. Sunday 3rd: AGM & regional reports. Held at Ngā Hau Birthing Centre, Mangere and via Zoom.		Saturday 11 Sunday 25 12 regional groups represented
44				

The Annual General Meeting

The AGM is held at the national hui; this is the forum to approve the finance and board reports, review the Strategic Plan and discuss any proposals for the national organisation.

Allow one to two hours for the AGM.

One month's notice of the AGM should be given to the wider homebirthing community through the use of social media and online channels and be included in the hui schedule.

A quorum of five (trustees) is required to be present before the meeting can be held. Decisions are valid only if there is a quorum present. If a quorum is lost during the meeting, the meeting is declared closed.

Roles to assign to trustees:

- Minute taker – Usually the HBA Secretary/ Administrator. The minute taker will note the times the meeting opens and closes, pass around an attendance sheet to collect names, list apologies and record motions and resolutions, taking care to note the names of those presenting and seconding
- Chairperson. The chairperson opens the meeting by welcoming attendees and noting the time. Continues to run through the meeting agenda. Will prepare (with the help of the trust and administrator) and read the HBA board report. During election of officers the chairperson will temporarily “vacate the chair” to be replaced by a neutral person. The Chairperson thanks people for attending the meeting and says “The meeting is now closed”
- Secretary - Usually the HBA Secretary/ Administrator. Provide and run through previous minutes
- Treasurer/ Financial Administrator (prepare and present financial report and budget)

Agenda of Annual General Meeting

Held at: (venue) Date: Time:

1. Welcome from chairperson followed by karakia timatanga and/or waiata.
2. Brief introduction of Trust and trustees.
3. Confirmation of attendees, apologies and quorum.
4. Additions/amendments and approval of the agenda.
5. Amendments and approval to the minutes of the previous AGM. (See attached)

Motion: “to approve the minutes of the previous AGM”

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED?

6. Matters arising from the previous AGM minutes.

7. Board report and Financial report, including annual financial statement from accountant.

Motion: "to approve the annual Financial Report"

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED?

8. Election of officers - Chair / Treasurer / Secretary.

(This part of the meeting needs to be chaired by a neutral person, not a trustee)

Chair:

Motion: "to approve that is the Chairperson"

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED?

Treasurer:

Motion: "to approve that is the Treasurer"

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED?

Secretary:

Motion: "to approve that is the Secretary"

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED?

9. General Business • Annual/Strategic plan • Annual Budget • Matters arising

10. Meeting closed. Karakia whakamutunga.

Regional pod hui: How we build strong regions

The below text is somewhat historical, with the last recorded pod hui taking place in 2015.

A regional pod hui is a hui held by a group of regional groups (a pod) annually in or around autumn. This is an evolving initiative that began in 2013. Each year, one, two or all of the eight pods may have a hui. The Trust will budget funding towards regional pod hui and then allocate those funds according to the level of interest and plans in each pod to support the gathering. The table in the “National hui” section lists dates of regional pod hui.

The concept of regional pod hui is to have an annual gathering of regional groups and families together in their pods to share, unite and support. A regional pod hui can look however you want it to, as long as it is inclusive and collaborative.

The aim of pods and regional pod hui is to link regional groups and facilitate joint endeavours, share information and resources, and provide support. The intention is that regional pod hui will be tailored to and by the community where they take place. By locating the hui within the region, the whole whānau can attend and local issues can be discussed. Hopefully they will also provide a space for regional groups to grow and feel supported at a national level without leaving home.

Regional pod hui is intended to have an aspect of self-creation by the members in each region to suit the individual needs of each region, with financial assistance from HBA to help at a practical level with transport, venue costs and other logistical needs. The inaugural hui will also be an opportunity to name each pod according to what you, the membership, feel best suits your area. **Regional pod hui are very mother and baby friendly. We encourage attendance of all those willing/wanting to participate, in particular whole families.**

Hui are an important part of our homebirth community because they are an opportunity for us to connect with the strength of our homebirth community. They offer space to ask questions, build bonds, make plans, sort out challenges and get inspired. Although we still feel strongly that national hui are important and needed, we also want to accommodate regions creating bonds and hope that regional pod hui and national hui, alternating every six or so months, will really tick all the boxes for strengthening our homebirth communities at a local and national level.

So, how can you participate? Get in touch — whether you are interested in helping to organise or would just like to be kept in the loop, we’d love to hear from you! Please also check out the official Home Birth Aotearoa Facebook [page](#).

Conferences: How we learn together

Purpose of Conference

Conference is one of the avenues in which HBA achieves the goal of promoting and encouraging homebirth in Aotearoa. Some of the ways in which conference does this include:

- Making homebirth visible/accessible in the wider community
- As an opportunity for those that are curious about homebirth to connect and learn from others
- Creating a space where groups/advocates/services can promote themselves, network and support one another
- Providing a forum for policy makers/influencers to meet the consumers
- A time for our sister organisations to bring/share traditional Māori birthing kaupapa
- To include at least one speaker with a Ti Tiriti focus
- Supporting homebirth midwives to network, gather support and recharge

How to run a conference/ Reference guide for the host region

The conference is created and run by the regional group (you) with the support of HBA. If you do not have a committee member on the HBA board please consider creating a Facebook group where your members and HBA can communicate throughout the planning process. A monthly update is requested so we can keep connected.

Dates and planning time

Conference is held bi-annually in spring/October. It is commonly held in conjunction with the annual hui. This would then involve an overnight component. Running a business hour only event is a possibility which then leaves accommodation up to the attendees to manage. Please discuss this with HBA. In the bigger cities suitable venues can be booked out well in advance. Please consider the initial venue and date setting one year prior to the intended conference. This also allows time to secure grants and sponsorship.

Location

- Easily accessible for locals, from airports and other transport hubs
- Marae is ideal but not essential
- Appropriate conference room with tables, projector, chairs, sound etc
- Venue capacity
- Heating, space for meeting, sleeping arrangements, parking and eating

- A cosy space for parents to breastfeed

Customs

- Consider what rules and requirements are set by marae/location
- Reach out to your local Māori organisation for support eg. Hapū Wānanga, manawhenua, Nga Maia
- Arrange to Pōwhiri or Mihi Whakatau if you have appropriate guidance
- Contact the local marae to find the contact details of manawhenua/kaumatua. There is usually someone able to open and close events. A koha must be arranged. Please contact HBAT if you need support.

Human Resourcing

- Create a team of interested individuals to help plan and run the conference
- Consider having tangata whenua representation to ensure Ti Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld and considered
- Source a photographer
- Roles of responsibility to allocate: promotion, food, technology/sound, host/Marae liaison, money, transport, registration/bookings, delegate communication, MC etc. If you are short of helpers, please ask HBA for support.

Budget and Finances

Conference is a fully self-supporting event, with the exception being that HBAT will offer the host region a \$1500.00 grant, which can be used if ticketing revenue is not yet available. Historically this grant has not been enough and additional grants and sponsorship need to be sought to keep ticket prices down.

Documentation is essential. Email through invoices to HBA for reimbursement. Avoid cash/under the table payments, vouchers are more appropriate.

Consider applying to Nga Maia for a grant for Māori speakers and Māori student midwife tickets. Charging a fee for trade tables is another option to create revenue. Your local district council may also have grants available. Consider opening a bank account for the event. Any income made during the conference remains with the regional group.

Agenda

Decide upon a theme/vision for the event. Put out for agenda items within the national home birthing community. Ask for expressions of interest for speakers. Reflect upon what is currently happening/is relevant within the home birth movement.

Ticketing

Clarify a cut-off date for ticket sales so you can confirm numbers. HBA has an account with Eventbrite which has proven to be an effective way to manage ticketing.

Early bird prices have been previously successful as well as varying price levels; Students, Unwaged/Midwives, Waged. If the budget allows, please consider 10x scholarship tickets for Māori and Pasifika.

The ticketing revenue should cover the costs of the event.

Please notify HBA when you open ticket sales so we can promote this within our circles and alert our regional representatives about funding options. HBA will cover the cost of trustee tickets, please confirm numbers and reserve.

Registration and Communication

Promotion

The HBA social media Administrator will manage the promotion of the event. You need to provide them with updates and content. They will advertise through emails to our regional groups, Facebook, website and quarterly newsletters.

Consider creating an A4 pdf and jpg poster that can easily be shared for printing and sent to local midwifery schools, hospitals and birth centres. Create a co-hosted Facebook event with HBA and your regional group.

Eventbrite will list the event on their site and is an easy way to email delegates.

Invite regional representatives, local home birth families, homebirth midwives and sister organisations such as Nga Maia, Hāpū Wananga, the New Zealand College of Midwives, CBS and the national Pasifika Midwifery group. Invite local businesses/crafts people to have trade tables. Invite local reporters to cover the event on the day, a great way to promote your regional group and homebirth!

Information for attendees

- Have clear points of contact for queries - for example travel, accommodation
- Gather info: food allergies, numbers adults/babes in arms, contact details, sleeping arrangements (if relevant), travel assistance
- Let people know about: transport to and from the venue, ground rules/Marae customs
- Offer information on nearby alternative accommodation

Food

Assign someone the role of planning and facilitating food. Consider marae catering, or a catering company if your budget allows. Catering is often the greatest expense. You do not have to hire a catering company if you have local, experienced helpers able to manage the food. Consider food allergies/preferences but know you cannot please everyone. Please ensure your kitchen staff/ kitchen manager reserves food for speakers who may be held up and unable to get to the serving table promptly after presenting.

Conference program/ handout

In previous years, attendees have appreciated a program of speakers, as it is useful for follow ups and reporting. Consider printing a simple page the day before (as last-minute changes occur) and include the time, name of the speaker, their topic and any contact/ website details they are happy to have included.

Trade tables

Consider what people/products would best suit the spirit of the event and target audience. Consider inviting other related organisations, eg La Leche League, Maternity Services Consumers Council etc.

Speaker gifts and attendee goodie bags

You may wish to consider some way of showing appreciation to the speakers. Goodies bags have been offered previously to attendees and though always appreciated are not essential. A Conference t-shirt can be a nice keepsake for attendees and potential source of raising funds at the event.

Tangata whenua speakers

Please be mindful that tangata whenua speakers do not incur any personal cost through speaking at the event. As a non -Māori organisation, we are not owed their knowledge and wisdom and in honouring our trust deed and commitment to Ti Tiriti partnership we must appropriately honour the speaker's time, and journey of cultural reclamation.

Attendance certificate

A number of professional people require this to add to their portfolio or show as evidence of attendance. HBA can manage this process but the host region needs to let people know that this will be available.

Home Birth Week: How we spread the word

Home Birth Week is an internationally celebrated week to highlight the benefits of homebirth and the homebirth movement. It begins on Labour Day each year, which is the fourth Monday in October.

The Trust uses this week to highlight a specific aspect of homebirth to the community and media, while also conducting an event or project to celebrate and attract attention to the cause in New Zealand. Usually, this initiative involves the creation of resources and supports regional groups to celebrate and fundraise.

Resources created for Home Birth Weeks and events held include posters, postcards, political postcards, stickers, bookmarks, movie screenings, gifts such as books, stamps, and monetary contributions for meetings.

In 2012, the Home Birth Week T-shirt competition was launched. The competition has three aims:

- To create a dynamic, novel and well-supported way of producing a variety of public-awareness-raising, partnership-connecting, Home Birth Aotearoa-branded merchandise
- To empower regional groups to promote homebirth by providing a long-term fundraising opportunity
- To create appeal for and support creativity in our community

An online competition is held to create a slogan and design for a homebirth T-shirt. The Trust orders a seed stock of the limited-edition T-shirt based on the winning design and slogan. The T-shirts are made available for regional groups to purchase at cost and to sell as a regional fundraising opportunity. Social networks and the HBA website are used to market the competition. The long-term aim is to build a sense of tradition around the competition, with HBA being recognised as holding this event biannually.

In 2013, the Home Birth Week photography competition was launched. This competition encourages members of the community, as well as professional photographers, to submit photographs in a variety of categories. The Trust is responsible for judging the competition, with one category of People's Choice voted on by the public.

Sponsorship for prizes was provided by H2OH! , with several birthing pools, magazines, T-shirts, wraps, and cash prizes awarded. Home Birth Aotearoa was generously gifted the rights to the majority of the photographs, which has been a boon to the development of our website and magazine.

We intend to run these two competitions biannually (in alternating years).

International Day of the Midwife: How we celebrate our midwives

The International Day of the Midwife is an international day of celebrating and paying attention to midwives and their global contribution. This day is well supported by the NZCoM and the international body, the International Confederation of Midwives. A theme for the day is set each year.

HBA usually runs an initiative or campaign related to the theme, such as new resources. We also write and disseminate a press release.

Regional groups have used a range of initiatives to celebrate International Day of the Midwife: picnics, walks, pamper sessions and movie screenings. Many of the resources listed in the Appendices were developed as International Day of the Midwife initiatives.

External communications: Our public face

Lobbying

HBA has its roots in lobbying - in the 1980s and 90s, homebirth groups were pivotal in the inception of the NZCoM, midwifery autonomy and the de-medicalisation of birth.

Over the years, the roar of HBA's political voice has diminished and is politely raised in submissions and occasional instances of localised concern. There is a growing feeling that the homebirth voice needs to be raised again in support of physiological birth and homebirth.

HBA needs to be mindful of a clause within our current funding contract regarding outright criticism of TWO, which provides all maternity care in Aotearoa New Zealand. While this is not a "gag clause", attention should be paid to ensure no breach of contract occurs. Please refer to the current contract for this information, available from admin@homebirth.org.nz.

Media

We regularly release statements to the media via a comprehensive range of national, local and health-specific publications. This usually occurs at significant times of the year, namely International Day of the Midwife (5 May) and Home Birth Week.

HbA would like to build our media presence and make more responsive comments to particular events related to our cause. We encourage members of our Trust, staff and wider community to contribute to this.

From time to time, we are asked for comments by media organisations. In the past this has included magazine items, newspaper and radio interviews.

Website

Our website is a pivotal way of communicating with the wider community. The website has a lot of informative articles for homebirth families, and providing a website is a major part of our commitments under the TWO contract.

Our website blog is a channel to discuss current issues and also for the Board to communicate with our community. We use the blog to provide information on HBA issues and events. The blog has also been used to provide guest blog posts and report back on events such as regional pod hui. It features a space for promoting other blog posts of interest to our community. Over time, we would like to develop this forum.

The website forum is a space for discussion in our community. The intention of this space is to have an archival resource controlled by HBA for frequently asked questions and planning that is safe and uncensored (in the way Facebook, for example, cannot be). It is also a space that could be used for steering groups.

The birth stories section of the website is a space for our community to post stories and photographs of their births.

Magazine/ Newsletter

The magazine, *Home Birth Matters*, was a quarterly publication with a wide range of articles, opinion pieces and reviews. It was published online. The magazine relied on voluntary contributions and eventually became unsustainable to produce. A best-of, hard copy was printed and is currently available via the website.

A quarterly, digital newsletter is now being produced by the social media Administrator, and is easily shared via our email, social media and website.

Social media

HBA has an Instagram account and a number of Facebook pages and groups to communicate with our community and other perinatal groups and organisations.

See links below:

[HBA Trustee Group](#)

[Home Birth Aotearoa](#)

[Homebirth in Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

[HBA Regional Group Coordination](#)

[Instagram](#)

Advertising, sponsorship and fundraising

HBA has an advertising policy that relates to advertising in our publications. To meet the criteria for a link on the HBA website, a website:

- must promote homebirth
- must be willing to provide a reciprocal link
- should provide information/education rather than businesses promoting their services/products (unless they relate directly to homebirth)
- should be New Zealand-based unless they contain information that is relevant to homebirthers in New Zealand
- should be free and regularly updated.

Copyright and model release for photography and video

When a CLIENT agrees to share photographs or video with HBA they agree that;

1. HBA shall have the exclusive right to make reproductions for, including but not limited to, marketing materials, products, editorial pieces, or for display within or on the HBA website and/or social media. CLIENT releases HBA from all claims and liability in relation to the photographs and any use by HBA which is consistent with this agreement.
2. Should the images contain any baby/ies, child/ren under the age of 18, CLIENT as parent or guardian of the child gives permission for the images to be used and published by HBA, including for the purposes of the reproductions under clause 1.
3. If HBA desires commercial use of the images other than as stated under clause 1, HBA must not do so without first obtaining the written permission of the CLIENT.

Name, date and signature of CLIENT: Name, date and signature of HBA trustee:

Resources: Our taonga and tools

The table below lists HBA resources, their purposes, and where to get hold of them.

Item	Purpose	Availability
Kowhaiwhai design (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To represent HBA ● To decorate HBA publications and other resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Administrator ● On the website (to view)
Logo (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To represent HBA ● To decorate HBA publications and other resources ● To advertise HBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the HBA Dropbox
Rack cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To advertise HBA ● To give as small gifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Administrator ● From the website
Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To decorate HBA spaces ● To advertise HBA ● To give as gifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● None currently available
Postcards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To communicate with midwives ● To advertise HBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Administrator
Stickers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To advertise HBA ● To give as small gifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Administrator ● From the website
Bookmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To advertise HBA ● To give as small gifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the Administrator ● From the website
T-shirts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To celebrate HBA ● To advertise HBA ● To signal membership or support of HBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From regional groups if available ● From the website

Kowhaiwhai design³

The large curve and smaller curve containing the baby represent the pregnant belly. The large curve also represents the nurturing aspect of the mother's mother and so on back through the generations; also, the nurturing of the wider whānau which supports the mother's ability to nurture the baby. The large curve ALSO represents the curve of the earth; Papatuanuku as the mother of us all.

³ The material in this section was written by Karuna Thurlow and lightly edited for the purposes of the *Handbook*.

Top and bottom half of the kowhaiwhai are mirror images representing the father's and mother's lineage (Ranginui skyfather / Papatuanuku earthmother). The vertical line on the right is the hononga or connection between mother and father. The baby is enclosed by the mother's belly and is the culmination of the two lines of heritage.

From the corners, the first circle with a koru inside represents Te Kore, the fertilised egg cell, and the first trimester.

The second circle represents Te Po, growth and development, left/right brain, and the second trimester. The third circle represents burgeoning/neural connections (brain is 15% developed by birth), Whei Ao with the koru from the outer edges representing the first glimmering of light, and the metaphorical embrace baby will arrive into. Overall, the three circles also represent the breast (as a symbol for sustenance in a broad sense), with the largest being the milk ducts and the smallest the nipple, feeding nourishment into the hononga tangata. The single koru touching the outside of the third circle represents love: ancestors to descendants, gods to humans, family to new baby. Also, the touch of divinity that comes with giving birth. The small koru curving in toward each other just above the baby represent the act of conception (physical and the formulation of ideas about the world) and the first bonds the baby will make to others pre- and post-birth. The middle pattern represents the whenua, or placenta, with an outward tendril up taking in knowledge and a genetic inheritance from the parent and an outward tendril down passing on to the baby, connected to the bonding/conception koru as inherited information feeds into baby's forming impressions.



Inside the placenta is represented the sorting of what's available in the mother's body to select the best possible nutrients for baby; also the circulatory rootlike system within it refers to the post-birth burial of the whenua which links (sends down roots) baby to the land s/he is heir to (as far as I'm concerned this is up to the individual; if you're born here but identify strongly as Greek, then the land you're heir to may include Greece).

Overall, the tracery of koru represents the circulatory system with baby as the heart, inflow and outflow of learning.

Logo



Our original logo was conceptualised in the year 2000 by Jeannette Lazet for the Wellington Home Birth Association and was officially drawn from her sketch of an idea by a graphic designer.

In 2002, when the Community Birth Services contract for a National Home Birth Coordination Service was first established, the Wellington Home Birth Association gifted the logo design to what was to become, and now is, Home Birth Aotearoa. From then until mid-2013, the logo was shared by the Wellington Home Birth Association and Home Birth Aotearoa.



Home Birth Aotearoa
It's your choice

In mid-2013, the Trust engaged a designer, Robin Wisser Kidder, to help us create a brand-new logo to represent the organisation. The “protected beginning” circle logo was inspired by the founding thoughts of the kowhaiwhai. The layers of the circle represent many aspects of birth and our community. There are layers of protection of the pepe, the mother, the whānau, the community. There is a vortex illustrating the past to the future. There are waves and surges, ripples of understanding, spirituality and support.

Formal relationships and alliances: Our connections

HBA regularly communicates with a variety of other maternity and mother-related organisations. We hold a membership with the NZCoM. From time to time, we have direct contact in relation to projects and initiatives.

Some of the organisations we hold relationships with are listed below.

- Te Whatu Ora/ Health New Zealand
- The NZCoM
- Nga Maia O Aotearoa
- La Leche League
- Maternity Services Consumer Council (MSCC)

- Women's Health Action
- The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Council
- Midwifery training bodies

Our connections to other organisations are an area we would like to build and develop over time. We are working on developing reciprocal relationships with other maternity organisations (particularly online), and via our new website we have links to other organisation's websites for information relevant to our community. We currently have a trustee (Bobbie-Jane Cooke) on the NZCoM as a homebirth representative.

Domiciliary Midwives Society⁴

The Domiciliary Midwives Society of New Zealand (Incorporated) — or DMS as the Society was known — was established in 1981 to:

- enable practising domiciliary (homebirth) midwife members to communicate efficiently, speak out effectively as one body, and manage their own affairs
- oppose and correct misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the philosophy of homebirth and the policies of domiciliary midwives
- protect the reputation and interests of all domiciliary midwives by seeking to obtain membership from all midwives providing homebirth services.

With the homebirth associations and support groups, the DMS was very active from the 1980s in securing the viability of the homebirth option before 1990.

Maternity Services Consumer Council

The Maternity Services Consumer Council is a consumer organisation that promotes the rights of women throughout the birthing cycle. They believe that birth is a normal life cycle event. They oppose the unnecessary medicalisation of childbirth. The MSCC provides a wide range of information on topics and current issues relating to the maternity services in New Zealand. They distribute resources covering topics relating to maternity care and a woman's options throughout the childbirth cycle.

<https://maternity.org.nz/>

⁴Lightly edited from an archiving statement for DMS. The original is at <http://www.birthspirit.co.nz/Articles/Articles/Domicilliary%20Midwives%20Soc.pdf>.

Nga Maia O Aotearoa⁵

Ngā Maia Māori Midwives ō Aotearoa was formed in 1993 by Māori midwives, midwifery tutors, and their students, to address the inconsistencies in maternity services for Māori in New Zealand.

Registered as a charitable trust in 1994, Ngā Maia became recognised in maternity circles as the 'voice' for Māori. By 2008 its role was endorsed by the Midwifery Council of New Zealand (MCNZ), the New Zealand College of Midwives (NZCOM), and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG).

Ngā Maia is committed to Māori birthing practices that promote the health and well-being of whānau. To whakamana and nurture kahu pōkai/ kaiwhakawhānau in providing holistic, sustainable, quality care steeped in tikanga Māori.

<https://ngamaiaitrust.org/about>

New Zealand College of Midwives⁶

The NZCoM is the professional organisation for midwives, representing almost 90 percent of practising midwives in New Zealand. Membership is voluntary, and the College's midwife membership includes both employed and self-employed midwives.

The College sets professional standards, provides continuing education for registered midwives, and conducts the Midwifery Standards Review process for all practising midwives in New Zealand. It offers professional information, education and advice to women, midwives, DHBs, workforce unions, schools of midwifery and TWO regarding midwifery and maternity issues. It provides the Midwifery First Year of Practice Programme for new graduates under contract to TWO.

In order to maintain its women-centred focus, the College works in partnership with women by encouraging consumer membership and involvement in the development and maintenance of the midwifery profession. It makes places on all of its national and regional decision-making committees for consumer membership and input. Home Birth Aotearoa is currently one of the consumer groups with membership of the College's National Committee.

⁵ Copied from the website for Nga Maia O Aotearoa. See <https://ngamaiaitrust.org/about>

⁶ Compiled from material on the website for NZCoM and lightly edited. See <http://www.midwife.org.nz>.

Homebirthing women were instrumental in the establishment of both the College of Midwives and the Domiciliary Midwifery Review process, now known as Midwifery Standards Review.

<https://www.midwife.org.nz/about-the-college/>

Homebirth representation to NZCoM

There has been homebirth consumer representation on the National Committee of the NZCoM (in some form or other) since the College's foundation. The National Committee is the governance body of the College, responsible for the strategic direction and decision making for the midwifery profession in New Zealand.

Since 2000, the homebirth representation has been from the Home Birth Aotearoa Trust, and before that from a member of a homebirth association nominated at national conference meetings.

As the College has increased its membership and grown into a large organisation, so too have the responsibilities of its governance body, the National Committee. Amendments to the governance structure of the NZCoM were ratified at the 2008 AGM. The Governance Committee that advises National Committee has one consumer representative member (of unspecified background) as well as the President, three midwife National Committee members from different regions of NZCoM, the CEO, and one midwife member elected by the membership. The Home Birth Aotearoa representative contributes to the governance of the College as well as representing the voice of homebirthing women and whānau via the networks and discussions of HBA.

Attendance at the NZCoM Conference every two years is funded by the College and includes attendance at the AGM and other National Committee events if applicable. National Committee meetings occur three times a year (and as often as five times a year in some instances). Meetings take place over three consecutive days (Wednesday – Friday). Travel and accommodation are funded by the College. Childcare at \$50 per meeting is reimbursed without a receipt. Childcare costs in excess of \$50 per meeting are paid at the discretion of the Head Office and require receipts. A yearly honorarium is paid of \$250 (from which withholding tax is deducted).

The HBA Representative's Responsibilities to Home Birth Aotearoa

As well as the responsibilities to the College, there are also responsibilities to HBA. The HBA representative will:

- participate actively in the HBA trustee group
- circulate relevant information to homebirth associations and support groups via the email forum
- gather comments/opinions/feedback on various issues as necessary to take back to the College and National Committee meetings, such as consensus

statements, consultation documents, and issues relating to maternity in general and homebirth specifically

- liaise with the Public Liaison Representative to prepare letters, documents and feedback as required
- liaise with the National Co-ordinator to distribute information relating to the College to homebirth associations and support groups
- be supported and mentored onto National Committee and be able to ask for support at meetings if required
- prepare reports before National Committee meetings representing the issues and events that relate to HBA and NZCoM, with support from both the Public Liaison Representative and the National Co-ordinator as appropriate
- prepare reports following National Committee meetings regarding discussions, decisions and points of relevance to homebirth associations and support groups.

Appendices

Key documents

HBA works with a number of key documents, which are mostly available from the Administrator. The key documents are listed below.

- Trust Deed and amendments
- Strategic Plan and template
- TWO contract and service specifications
- Charities Commission registration certificate
- NZCoM Consumer Representative Role documents
- Election/nomination forms and templates
- Contact lists of regional representatives and trustees
- Passwords

Job descriptions: Trust roles

<p>Job description: Chairperson/ Co-Chairperson — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust</p> <p><i>The Chairperson may be the longest standing trustee, or a trustee specifically elected to be mentored into the role. HBA aims to have Tangata Whenua and Tangata Ti Tiriti representatives share the role. Consideration may also be given to a Consumer/ Midwife balance. Careful succession planning must be considered to ensure this balance.</i></p>	
<p>General responsibilities</p>	<p>The general responsibilities of the Facilitator are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to make sure that the Trust complies with its Trust Deed, working documents, and any other relevant legislation or regulations ● to make sure that the Trust works towards the goals listed in its Trust Deed ● to make sure that the Trust uses its resources exclusively to work towards its goals ● to contribute actively to the Board by giving firm strategic direction to the organisation and facilitating collaboration to define goals, set targets and evaluate how the Board is meeting its targets ● to safeguard the good name and values of Home Birth Aotearoa ● to make sure that Home Birth Aotearoa is administered effectively and efficiently ● to protect and manage the property of Home Birth Aotearoa ● to appoint any employees and monitor their performance. <p>In addition to the above duties, the Facilitator should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Trust reach sound decisions. This may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● scrutinising reports ● leading discussions ● focusing on key issues ● guiding the Board on new initiatives ● other issues in which the Chairperson has special expertise.
<p>Additional duties</p>	<p>Additional duties of the Facilitator may include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● planning the cycle of the Trust meetings ● setting agendas for the Trust meetings ● chairing and facilitating the Trust meetings ● giving direction to committee policy-making ● making sure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented ● representing the Trust at hui, functions and meetings ● acting as a spokesperson, as appropriate ● bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision-making.
Employment-related duties	<p>Where staff are employed, the Chairperson is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● liaising with the employee to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate ● leading performance appraisals for the employee ● sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels ● facilitating change and addressing conflict within the committee and within the organisation, and liaising with the employee (if staff are employed) to achieve this <p>The Co-Chairperson and/ or Secretary acts for the other Co-Chairperson if they are not available.</p>
Position requirements	<p>The ideal candidate will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a commitment to Home Birth Aotearoa ● a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role ● strategic vision ● thoughtful, balanced, independent judgment ● an ability to think creatively ● a willingness to speak their mind ● an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of the Trust ● an ability to work effectively as a member of a team ● a commitment to the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership ● leadership skills ● experience of committee work ● tact and diplomacy ● good communication and interpersonal skills

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences <p>The Chairperson/ Co-Chairperson must understand the work done by HBA</p>
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Job description: Secretary — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust	
Position purpose	The role of the Secretary is to support the Trust by making sure it functions smoothly and that proper procedures are maintained. This role is best suited to the Administrator contractor.
General responsibilities	<p>The general responsibilities of the Secretary are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to prepare agendas with the Chairperson and circulate them and any supporting papers in good time ● to make all the arrangements for meetings (booking the room, arranging for equipment and refreshments, organising facilities for those with special needs, etc) ● to receive agenda items from other Board members ● to check that a quorum is present, take a roll of attendees at meetings (either verbal or written), and keep permanent records of who attended ● to capture comments and check that a quorum has commented ● to take minutes of the proceedings of all meetings, including the date and place of meeting, who was presiding, and business conducted ● to circulate the draft minutes to the Board ● to make sure that minutes reach final copy ● to circulate agendas and minutes of the Annual General Meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings ● to notify members of upcoming meetings ● to sit on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.
Additional duties	<p>The duties of the Secretary are much more comprehensive than simply taking minutes, so the officeholder must be especially talented. Additional duties are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to maintain a file of original agendas and minutes ● to report, file and answer all correspondence

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to maintain the files of the organisation, including clippings and relevant documents ● to produce a directory of Board members and regional representatives ● to maintain contact names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of people with which the organisation regularly works ● to keep copies of activity calendars and special events ● to write thank you and courtesy notes.
Position requirements	<p>The ideal Secretary will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● organisational ability ● knowledge or experience of business and committee procedures ● minute-taking experience ● an ability to think creatively ● a willingness to speak their mind ● an ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Job description: Treasurer — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust	
Position purpose	<p>The role of the Treasurer is to maintain an overview of the organisation's financial affairs, and in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure its financial viability ● ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained ● provide strategic leadership in financial affairs.
General responsibilities	<p>The general responsibilities of the Treasurer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to ensure that the organisation pursues its aims as defined in its governing document ● to ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively to pursue its aims ● to regularly report the financial position to the Trust Board ● to ensure the Trust Board approves all expenditure in accordance with internal procedure and recommended good practice ● to safeguard the good name and values of the organisation ● to ensure the financial stability of the organisation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to prepare, or oversee the preparation of, necessary budgets ● to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds ● to ensure proper payments are made in line with relevant legislature, including employment, health and safety, and taxation legislation ● to oversee the development and review of policy and procedures related to finances ● to hold approval authority for payments.
Additional duties	<p>Additional duties of the Treasurer may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● overseeing, approving and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements ● providing assurance that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs ● assisting with preparation and presentation of financial reports to the trustees ● ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place ● liaising with any paid staff and volunteers about financial matters ● advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans ● ensuring that the Trust has an appropriate investment policy ● ensuring that there is no conflict between any investment held and the aims and objects of the Trust ● monitoring the organisation's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the organisation's policies and legal responsibilities ● ensuring the organisation's compliance with legislation through regular auditing of reports and tax payments ● ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, eg. the Charities Commission and/or the Registrar of Companies ● if external scrutiny of accounts is required, ensuring that the accounts are scrutinised in the manner required (independent examination or audit) and any recommendations are implemented ● keeping the trustees informed about their financial duties and responsibilities ● contributing to the fundraising and funding strategy of the organisation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● making a formal presentation of the accounts at the Annual General Meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way.
Employment-related duties	<p>Where staff are employed, the Treasurer is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● liaising with the employee/s to keep an overview of the organisation's financial affairs and to provide support as appropriate ● contributing to performance appraisals for the employee.
Position requirements	<p>The ideal candidate will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a commitment to HBA ● a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role ● strategic vision ● thoughtful, balanced, independent judgment ● an ability to think creatively ● a willingness to speak their mind ● an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of the Trust ● an ability to work effectively as a member of a team ● a commitment to the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership ● financial qualifications and experience ● some experience of charity finance and fundraising ● the skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences ● preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the committee ● experience of committee work ● tact and diplomacy ● good communication and interpersonal skills.

Job description: Resources — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust

General responsibilities	<p>This role has typically been held by the Administrator contractor. It could, however, be held by a willing Trustee.</p> <p>The general responsibilities of the Resources person are:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to have an overview of the physical information and promotional resources of the organisation (stock records and storage) ● to make sure the resources are up to date and appropriate ● to make sure stocks of resources are sufficient ● to make sure resources are designed, ordered, paid for and used in a timely manner ● to respond to requests for resources ● to liaise with the Administrator about ordering, despatching, etc ● to research and review prices for resources, printing, etc ● to investigate new ideas ● to report to the Trust Board.
Current resources	<p>Current resources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● rack cards ● bookmarks ● stickers ● magazines ● T-shirts
Other resources	<p>Other resources sometimes in stock include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● balloons ● postcards

Job description: Regional Liaison — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust	
General responsibilities	<p>The general responsibilities of the Regional Liaison are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to make sure that the Trust and the regional homebirth groups of Aotearoa (hereafter “regions”) have solid and effective lines of two-way communication ● to take care of the process of regional representation online, in teleconferences, and in face-to-face hui ● to support the ongoing development of the regional pod groups ● to support the establishment and sustainable maintenance of regional pod hui

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to be a point of contact for queries about regional involvement, and to support the process of liaising between the Trust and regions as needed ● to encourage future initiatives that foster the connection and communication between the Trust and regions as needed ● to offer support and resources to regions undertaking a specific campaign or project ● to offer support to regions hosting a hui or conference. <p>In addition to the above duties, the Regional Liaison should make sure that a regional perspective is considered in the Trust’s decision making. The Regional Liaison should also table the potential impact on regions, along with their personal opinion, in the Trust discussions.</p>
Employment-related duties	Where staff are employed, the Regional Liaison should liaise with the employee/s about issues specifically entrusted to the Regional Liaison, as outlined above.
Position requirements	<p>The ideal Regional Liaison will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a trustee position with HBA ● a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort ● the ability to creatively address communication barriers between the Trust and the regions ● a willingness to speak their mind ● an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of the Trust ● the ability to work effectively as a member of a team ● a commitment to the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership ● tact and diplomacy ● good communication and interpersonal skills ● impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences ● knowledge of the type of work undertaken by HBA and regions.

Job descriptions: Employees

Job description: General and Financial Administrator — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust	
Position type	Permanent part-time
Position purpose	<p>This position is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● day-to-day, financial, and project administrative support ● managing web and media communications and relationships ● managing website content and stock levels ● supporting the trustees in their roles and activities ● maintaining a consistent point of contact for the organisation ● carrying out the duties of the position in a collaborative manner with the trustees.
Hours of work and work requirements	<p>The employee will need to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a reliable computer and internet connection ● access to a local post shop for delivering orders ● safe storage space for financial and historical records. <p>The hours of work are up to 6 hours per week, depending on the workflow of the Trust.</p>
Key responsibilities	<p>The key responsibilities of the position are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● payments, filing and administration of finances day to day ● prepare and contribute to financial reporting ● research and collation of information as requested ● investigation and compilation of quotations ● stock keeping and distribution ● filing of financial and organisational resources — in accordance with legislative requirements ● diarise Trust activities and coordinate meetings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● creation of new content, including regular blog posting for website ● systematic review and testing of website content ● be point of contact for, and respond to all contacts through website in a timely manner ● moderation of website forum ● regular and consistent communication/posting to regional group community through social media platform and email ● champion the adoption and use of new web technologies for the organisation and the Home Birth Aotearoa community ● ensure that HBA and regional associations are supported to utilise the website, forum and social media platforms ● listen to, understand and appreciate the needs of the organisation in a dynamic manner and find web-based communication tools and resources to meet organisational aims and needs ● provide point of contact for media enquiries and distribute or respond as appropriate ● actively manage public relations and take initiative to respond, contribute and strategize at a national level to ensure the organisation is a voice in all relevant public conversations. ● acknowledge the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa
Detailed responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare PAYE & GST reports and payments ● Prepare wages, invoice and reimbursement payments ● Administrate online and hard copy banking ● Reconcile accounts monthly ● Regular reporting on finances is provided ● Assist with budget planning ● Complete Charities Commission annual report under direction of Treasurer ● Generate agendas and keep meeting minutes ● Maintain up-to-date contact lists for all members of Trust and regional groups ● Ensure all relevant information is circulated to trustees ● Draft communications, press releases and letters ● Follow and complete the annual Website Maintenance Review

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forum admin and moderation (almost daily, dependent on use) ● Blog posting, monitoring comments on blog ● Content management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regular review of static content – regularly refresh existing content with new information – build upon current content, in keeping with writing style and theme of current content – regularly check on file size and maintain good practice in storage and organisation of articles and information – network with contributors to the site – actively seek additional contributions of writing, photography and images ● Liaise with hosting and support company ● Continued development of skill and expertise on the software/s used ● Monitoring blog comments ● Receiving, editing and posting birth stories ● Receiving and actioning queries to the web email address
Key relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reports to entire Board of Trustees ● Collaborative relationship with magazine Editor ● Supports all trustees ● Point of contact and ‘go-to’ for all regional groups ● Point of contact and working relationship with contributors ● Management of suppliers within project scenarios, ie. designers, printers, and so on ● Working relationship and management with the web-hosting company and accountant. ● Has specific reporting relationship with Treasurer
Performance measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HBA financial administration is complete, up to date and all legislative requirements are met in a timely fashion ● All correspondence is received and responded to in a timely fashion ● Initiative is demonstrated ● Strategic advice is of value and contributes to successfully meeting organisational aims

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Media presence is increased ● Others are more engaged with and inspired by web-based organisational activities ● Efficient and effective relationships are created and maintained with all trustees
Person specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-motivated ● Able to work with a range of people ● Comfortable working solo, but also collaborative approach ● Technologically savvy, comfortable working online ● Excellent time management with the ability to be flexible ● Knowledge of, and interest in homebirth and maternal wellbeing ● Proven excellent communication skills ● Organised and honed administrative skills ● Intermediate computer skills – the role requires use of Zoom, WordPress, Facebook, Instagram, Dropbox and more. ● At least a basic understanding of book-keeping processes ● Ability to establish good work processes on behalf of the organisation
Remuneration	<p>This position is paid at the living wage.</p> <p>We are open to negotiation on the form of employment – contracting or employee.</p>

Job description: Social Media Administrator — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust	
Position type	Permanent part-time
Position purpose	<p>This position is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintaining weekly social media content and communications ● Creating seasonal newsletters ● Support to HBA with specific social media activities as requested ● Carrying out the duties of the position in a collaborative manner with the trustees

Hours of work and work requirements	<p>The contractor will need to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A reliable computer and internet connection <p>The hours of work are up to 6 hours per week, depending on the workflow of the Trust.</p>
Key responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research and collation of information as requested ● Administrative oversight for Homebirth in Aotearoa FB group, Home Birth Aotearoa FB page and Instagram ● Moderation of social media platforms ● Strategic overview of social media ● Regular and consistent communication/posting to community through social media platforms ● Ensure that HBAAT and regional associations are supported to utilise the website, forum and social media platforms ● Listen to, understand and appreciate the needs of the organisation in a dynamic manner and find web-based communication tools and resources to meet organisational aims and needs ● Provide point of contact for messages and queries via social media ● Acknowledge the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa
Detailed responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all relevant information is circulated to trustees ● Page and group admin and moderation ● Social media maintenance ● Posting on Facebook and Instagram ● Ensuring there are time efficient linkages in place for all social media ● Networking with other users and organisations to drive traffic to the website and spread the homebirth message ● To use good judgement in posting and networking ● Content management ● Regular review of static content for accuracy and value ● By request build upon current content, in keeping with writing style and theme of current content ● Network with contributors to the site and where relevant seek additional contributions of writing, photography and images ● Compile quarterly newsletters to distribute to regions groups and other interested parties ● Receiving, editing and posting midwifery profiles, edits and birth stories

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report on this at regular intervals to HBAT via the private Trustee FB group and/or monthly meetings ● Ensure accurate use of te reo Māori grammar and macrons. Seek translation and direction from tangata whenua as required. Koha and remuneration to be approved in advance by HBA ● Incorporate acknowledgement of Te Tiriti and partnership within content and writing style
Key relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reports to the entire board of trustees of HBA ● Collaborative relationship with the General Administrator ● Point of contact and working relationship with contributors ● Management of suppliers within project scenarios i.e. designers, printers, etc
Performance measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic advice is of value and contributes to successfully meeting organisational aims ● Social media content is maintained and linked to the Website where appropriate ● Media and social media reach has growth ● Others are more engaged with and inspired by web based organizational activities ● Efficient and effective relationships are created and maintained with all trustees
Person specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self motivated ● Able to work with a range of people ● Comfortable working solo, but also with a collaborative approach as needed ● Technologically savvy, comfortable working online ● Excellent time management with the ability to be flexible ● Knowledge of, and interest in home birth and maternal wellbeing ● Proven excellent communication skills ● Organised and honed administrative skills ● Intermediate computer skills – the role requires use of Zoom, email, Canva, Dropbox and social media platforms ● Ability to establish good work processes on behalf of the organisation
Remuneration	<p>This position is paid at the living wage.</p> <p>We are open to negotiation on the form of employment – contracting or employee.</p>

<p>Job description: Editor — Home Birth Aotearoa Trust August 2012 (<i>The magazine and Editor position have not been active since approximately 2018</i>)</p>	
Position type	Either permanent part-time OR freelance contract (depending on the position holder's preference)
Position purpose	The Editor's role is to source content for and create a quarterly magazine pertaining to pregnancy, maternity care, and birth, particularly homebirth.
Key responsibilities	<p>The key responsibilities of the Editor are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to liaise with each of the regional homebirth associations or support groups to gather content for each edition of the magazine ● to decide which content is appropriate to the magazine's homebirth ideals ● to proof and/or edit content where appropriate ● to write an editorial for each edition — size depending on the space available ● to lay out and format each edition ● to furnish Home Birth Aotearoa's WebCrafter with a copy for uploading to the website ● to email copies to any partnership individuals/organisations ● to source advertising and provide relevant information for invoicing to the HBA Treasurer ● to find and action additional ways to fund the role (e.g. grant applications).
Performance measures	<p>The performance measures for the role are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the magazine is produced and distributed quarterly prior to deadlines ● advertising is sourced to a satisfactory level, enabling the revenue to provide majority funding for the Editor role.
Key relationships	<p>The Editor reports to Home Birth Aotearoa trustees.</p> <p>Key relationships are to be made with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the Trust Facilitator ● the Trust Treasurer ● HBA's WebCrafter ● representatives from each of the regional homebirth associations / support groups ● external organisations relevant to homebirth interests.

Position requirements	<p>The ideal candidate will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● your own computer with appropriate internet access ● an understanding of homebirth and the function of HBA ● experience with publishing technology such as Scribus (free online), Publisher, or InDesign ● experience in editorial management and planning ● attention to detail and an appreciation for visual design ● sound spelling, grammar and proofreading skills ● methodical and ordered working practices ● a demonstrated ability to work independently or as a member of a team ● a positive “can-do” attitude ● an ability to prepare images for print (crop, resize, etc).
Remuneration	<p>\$20 per hour</p> <p>Up to a maximum of three hours per week</p>

Annual contractor review

The annual review is to be held in autumn by the chair persons, the contractor and a support trustee. This is an opportunity for contractors to discuss their role and request any changes or support needed, and for the trust to feedback to the contractor.

Review between HBA and

Held on:

Next review due:

1. Reevaluate work/tasks/obligations/hours.
2. How satisfied, heard and valued does the contractor feel in their work with HBA?
3. Any issues or concerns from either party
4. Does the contract need to be updated to reflect the above?
5. Review Performance Measures as listed in the Handbook.
6. Review pay.

Trustee and staff contacts

Home Birth Aotearoa Board of Trustees and Staff (February 2025)		
Name	Address/phone/email	Committee role
Bobby Jane Melanie Cooke	0210757183 bobbiejane.homebirth@gmail.com	Trustee, Co-Chairperson, HBA representative to NZCoM
Lala Love Larissa McCarthy	0278838622 mccarthy.lalalove@gmail.com	Trustee, Co-Chairperson & Social Media Administrator
Alesha Rachel Hobbs	40 Central Tākaka Road, RD1, Tākaka 7183 0278104943 homebirth.alesha@gmail.com	Trustee & Treasurer
Kristin Sarah Anne White	183 Harewood Road, Papanui, Christchurch, 8053 kristin.sa.white@gmail.com	Trustee
Andrina Joy Gwendolyn Palmer	1 Ocean View Road, Ravensbourne, Dunedin, 9022 vindalle@gmail.com	Trustee
Dianne Maree De Estena	1 Rata Avenue, Huntly, 3700 birthyourway@slingshot.co.nz	Trustee
Rachel Irene Joyce Webb	3 One Mile Line Road, RD 2, Arahura Valley, Hokitika, 7882 0273144332 rachelhaywebb@gmail.com	Trustee

Regional contacts

Region/ Group	Email	Social Media	Contact Person	Other
NORTH ISLAND				
Active Birth Taranaki	admin@activebirthtaranaki.org.nz	https://www.facebook.com/groups/50913989134	Clarissa Benton	
Auckland	contact@ahbc.space hello@ahbc.space	Auckland HomeBirth Community https://www.facebook.com/AKLHomeBirthCommunity/ AHBC Closed Group (Auckland HomeBirth Community) https://www.facebook.com/groups/AKLHomeBirthCommunity/	Rose Fisher	www.ahbc.space
Coromandel Hauraki Homebirth	summer@voagemidwifery.co.nz	https://www.facebook.com/groups/129918480091895	Summer O'Brien	
Eastern Bay of Plenty/ Whakatane	ebophomebirth@gmail.com	https://www.instagram.com/ebophomebirth/ https://www.facebook.com/ebophomebirth	Isabella Johnson	
HB Hawkes Bay Hub	rachelmariep76@gmail.com alexa.doula.photography@gmail.com	Home Birth Hawke's Bay - Page https://www.facebook.com/Home-Birth-Hawkes-Bay-1757655174509241/ Home Birth Hawke's Bay Hub - Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/658667200811706/?ref=br_rs	Rachel Alexa Pedersen	

Manawatu HBA/Active Birth Manawatu	manawatubirthpoolhire@gmail.com mhbanewsletter@hotmail.com	Manawatu Home Birth Association - Page https://www.facebook.com/MHBAInc/?ref=br_rs Active Birth Manawatu - CLOSED GROUP https://www.facebook.com/groups/1735441460082372/	Saritta Burney	
North Auckland Home Birth	nahomebirth@gmail.com	https://www.facebook.com/groups/6337626729638635	Jade and Kat	
Rotorua HB community	talia.debelak@gmail.com jamiegera@hotmail.com	Rotorua Home Birth Community - https://www.facebook.com/RotoruaHBC/?ref=br_rs Rotorua Home Birth Community - Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/239584373072437/?ref=br_rs	Talia Debelak Jamie Fyfe	
Taupo HB	taupo.homebirth@gmail.com	Taupo Home Birth Community - Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/taupo.homebirth/?ref=br_rs Taupo Home Birth - Page https://www.facebook.com/Taupo-Home-Birth-1576633602645384/?ref=br_rs	Kasey McMaster Stoeten - Birth pool co-ordinator	ON HOLD - Alaina looking to re-establish
Trust HB Tauranga	emilysearle19@hotmail.com	Trust Home Birth Tauranga https://www.facebook.com/Trust-Home-Birth-Tauranga-1675452169394034/ Trust Home Birth - Tauranga https://www.facebook.com/groups/trusthomebirth/?ref=br_rs	Sophie/Sarah/Lala Anne Sharplin - Pool Hire	sharplintaylor@hotmail.com

Waikato HBA	waikatohomebirth@gmail.com	Waikato Home Birth Association https://www.facebook.com/waikatohomebirthassociation/?ref=br_rs Natural Birth Support - Waikato Home Birth Association https://www.facebook.com/groups/1408377745869970/?ref=br_rs	Bobbie-Jane Cooke	
Wellington HBA	whbaweb@gmail.com	Wellington Home Birth Association - Page https://www.facebook.com/HomebirthWellington/ Wellington Home Birth Community- Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/121135894337/	Vivienne Oliver	
Whangarei	emmarthursa@gmail.com	Whangarei Homebirth Support Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/1441939289366255/	Emma Jacobson	
SOUTH ISLAND				
Region/ Group	Email	Social Media	Contact Person	Other
Birth and Baby Southland	southlandhba@gmail.com	Birth and Baby Support Southland BaBss https://www.facebook.com/SouthlandHomebirth/	President Katie Oliver 0226381497	
Birth Wisdom - Empowered and Home Birth in Golden Bay	birthwisdomgb@gmail.com	Birth Wisdom - Empowered and Home Birth in Golden Bay https://www.facebook.com/birthwisdomgoldenbay/	Alesha Hobbs	

Canterbury HBA	hbcpoolhire@gmail.com canterburyhba@gmail.com	Home Birth Canterbury https://www.facebook.com/CanterburyHomebirthAssociation/ Home Birth Canterbury Community https://www.facebook.com/groups/345614608923916/		
HB Support Marlborough	oliviadoonan@me.com	Homebirth Support Marlborough https://www.facebook.com/Homebirth-Support-Marlborough-239913962762694/	Olivia Doonan	
Motueka HB	homebirthmotueka@gmail.com	Motueka Home Birth https://www.facebook.com/groups/motuekahomebirth/	Jennifer Burt	
Nelson/Tasman Homebirth Group Choice Baby-Nelson's Natural Parenting and Home Birth Group	lunabloom.therapies@gmail.com	https://www.facebook.com/NelsonTasmanHomebirth https://www.facebook.com/groups/237138172995711	Marta Willis	
Oamaru Home Birth Support Group	oamaruhbgroup@gmail.com	Oamaru Home Birth Support Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/1551577148624350/	Kayla Gebert	
Positive Birth Dunedin	positivebirth@gmail.com nourah.mohd@gmail.com margaret.g@extra.co.nz	Positive Birth Dunedin https://www.facebook.com/positivebirthdunedin/?ref=br_rs Positive Birth Dunedin - Home Birth Association - CLOSED GROUP https://www.facebook.com/groups/28589683071/	Tamma Andrina Palmer	

Queenstown and Central Lakes Home Birth	gonijoni@hotmail.com	https://www.facebook.com/groups/902543246461543	Joni Medows Pamela Rogers	
South Canterbury Home Birth Support Group	schomebirth@gmail.com borntobirthnz@gmail.com	South Canterbury Home Birth Support Group https://www.facebook.com/groups/426739535283292	Lydia Garner Rebekah	
West Coast Home Birth	westcoasthomebirth@gmail.com	West Coast Home Birth https://www.facebook.com/WestCoastHomeBirth/	Kerry & Ripley	

Regional Pods

Pods (2014)		
Pod	Trustee	Region
1		Whangarei, Auckland, Waikato, Waikato North, Hauraki, Keri Keri
2		Taupo, Hawkes Bay, Gisborne , Rotorua
3		Tauranga , Whakatane, Kati Kati / Waihi
4		Taranaki, Whanganui , Manawatu , Waimarino
5		Wellington , Kapiti , Levin
6		Canterbury , West Coast
7		Nelson , Golden Bay/ Mōhua, Motueka , Blenheim
8		Dunedin, Southland, Central Lakes

Style sheet

Words and phrases

ABC Administrator (capitalised) Annual General Meeting (capitalised) Appendix/Appendices (upper case when referring to this document) Board / Board of Trustees (capitalised) book-keeping (hyphenated) budget (lower case) Contents page (upper case when referring to this document)	DEF Editor (capitalised) end-of-year accounts/report (hyphenated) Elder Representative (capitalised) email (one word, lower case) Facebook (capitalised) Facilitator (capitalised)
GHI Goal One/Two/Three, etc (capitalised) <i>Handbook</i> (capitalised and italicised when referring to this document) Healthline (capitalised) homebirth/homebirthing (one word) Home Birth Aotearoa / Home Birth Aotearoa Trust / the Trust / the Board (in full) homebirth association / group / support group) (lower case unless the name of a specific group) hui (lower case) Introduction (upper case when referring to this document)	JKL Kei a Wai (capitalised)

<p>MNO</p> <p>MoH contract (lower case for “contract”) mum2be (as written) National Home Birth Coordination Contract (capitalised and no hyphen in “Coordination”) New Zealand (non-breaking space) online (one word)</p>	<p>PQRS</p> <p>Pinterest (capitalised) playcentre (one word) pod (lower case) Regional Liaison (capitalised) Resources person (capitalised) Regional Representative (capitalised) Secretary (one word) spring, summer, autumn, winter (lower case) Strategic Plan (capitalised)</p>
<p>TUV</p> <p>Te Ahuru Mowai (capitalised) Te Tiriti o Waitangi (capitalised as shown) TWO contract (lower case for “contract”) Treasurer (capitalised) Trello (capitalised) Trust (capitalised) Trust Deed or Deed (capitalised) trustee (lower case) T-shirt (capitalised and hyphenated) Twitter (capitalised)</p>	<p>WXYZ</p> <p>Web Content Manager (capitalised) Wordpress (capitalised) Yahoo (capitalised) Zoom (capitalised)</p>

Acronyms

DHB	District Health Board
DMS	Domiciliary Midwives Society
DoL	Department of Labour
HBA	Home Birth Aotearoa
the Trust	Home Birth Aotearoa Trust

LMC	Lead Maternity Carer
MoH	Ministry of Health
MSCC	Maternity Services Community Council
NZCoM	New Zealand College of Midwives
NGO Council	Non-Governmental Organisations Council
Te Whatu Ora/ Health New Zealand	TWO

Other style decisions

Abbreviations

Do not use abbreviations (“eg.”, “etc.”, “ie.”) in body text. Abbreviations are okay in tables and figures.

Contractions

Contractions (eg. “don’t”, “it’s”) are quite acceptable in all but the most formal of Home Birth Aotearoa documents.

Dashes

Use an unspaced en-dash (–) between numbers.

Use a spaced em-dash (—) to separate ideas within a sentence.

Use an unspaced slash (/) to separate word alternatives.

Use a spaced slash (/) to separate phrase alternatives.

Dates

As in: 28–29 September 2007

Emphasis

Use bold for emphasis.

Font

The Trust has purchased a font, Archer, for “pretty” documents.

Headings

Sentence case, with no punctuation at the end of the heading.

Put a one-line gap between sections.

Heading styles have been created for this document.

Justification

Left justified, ragged right.

Lists

Unless it is necessary for avoiding ambiguity, do not use an Oxford comma. This means that in a list, there is no comma after the second-last item. For example: “The Administrator, Webcrafter and Editor use timesheets to record the hours they work.”

When giving the steps in a procedure (or similar), use a numbered list.

Elections are held every second year, and the process is outlined below.

1. A call for nominations is made at the beginning of July.
2. Applications are disseminated at the beginning of August.
3. Votes are received at the beginning of September.
4. The results are ratified at the spring hui.

If the list items complete the lead-in sentence, put a colon at the end of the lead-in, start each item with a lower-case letter, and end the final item with a full-stop.

All organisations have a past, present, and future. These documents are intended to acknowledge the herstory of the Trust, to record the present, and to contribute to the ongoing sustainability of the organisation. They aim to:

- honour the women who built the movement
- honour the women who built the organisation
- acknowledge our partners in this movement

- make a difference to those who continue this work
- make a difference to homebirth whanau.

If the list items are complete sentences (with a complete sentence as the lead-in), put a full stop at the end of the lead-in, and punctuate each list item as a complete sentence.

The Maternity Manifesto was created by representatives of several maternity consumer groups to gain public support for more effective, women-centred, and evidence-based options of maternity care and policy, which are presently not available to support the best beginnings for all New Zealand families. The Manifesto seeks support of the following goals.

- **Normal labour and birth:** Labour and birth which starts, progresses, and ends naturally should be the New Zealand definition of “normal birth” and the goal for maternity services quality assessment.
- **Alternatives to hospital birthing:** Promotion and support for healthy women to access birth centres or birth at home will increase “normal birth” rates, benefitting women, whanau, and the community.
- **Mother-baby unity care of all sick newborns:** The New Zealand “rooming-in” standard for healthy babies and sick children should be applied to the care of sick babies.
- **Human milk banks:** New Zealand, like most other countries, should re-establish human milk banks utilising the high level of screening techniques now available.
- **Comprehensive implementation of the WHO Code:** To raise the proportion of infants exclusively breastfed for at least the first six months, New Zealand needs to fully adopt the WHO Code to regulate the marketing of breast milk substitutes.

If the list items are independent items (not complete sentences), start each item with a capital, and do not use any punctuation at the end of list items.

The Trust has a business account with Westpac, which is held at the Karori branch. The account has three accounts:

- A checking account, which receives income and makes payments
- A savings account
- A facility for term deposits, which is not used at the moment as the interest rate is better in the savings account

Numbers

Numbers under ten are written as words; numbers over ten as numerals.

Paragraphing

The body text style is set to put a 12-point space at the end of paragraphs. Do not indent paragraphs.

Quotes

Double quote marks.

Spacing

One space after full stops.

Styles

This document has embedded styles for:

- body text
- body text before bullets
- hyperlinks
- headings at various levels
- table text and table bullets
- numbered lists
- footnotes

Please use these styles rather than trying to duplicate or adapt styles manually.

To change styles, select the style in the style menu and modify it, then apply the modified style throughout.

Tables

Table styles have been set for this document.

Consistency checking

- Check headings — their size, spacing, and how they match any chapter or section summaries.
- Check page numbers in cross-references.
- Check that all pictures are in the right place.

- ☑ Check page breaks: watch for headings, tables and pictures going over page breaks. Check that table rows do not break over a page.
- ☑ Check that the Contents page matches the wording and page numbering of headings in the document. For this document, the Contents page is linked to headings set in the HBAT styles, so it just needs to be updated whenever the document is edited. Note that any headings not in the set styles will not appear in the Contents. The Appendices heading will need to be put back in the Contents manually after updating.

Writing for the Trust⁷

Writing style

When writing for the Trust, aim to keep your writing clear and jargon-free. The *Handbook* uses a set of styles that could be used or adapted for other Trust writing. Please see the style sheet (above) and writing tips (below) for further guidelines.

Writing tips

1. Know what you want to say

Know your purpose, your overall argument, and your main points — and state them clearly at the start.

When you write a document, it's important to be clear about what the purpose of the document is (why you're writing it). Readers feel more comfortable with a document if they know why you want them to read it and what sort of response you expect — is the document a basis for discussion, an education resource, a way of reflecting on an issue, background information for making a decision, a promotional tool, a thank you or acknowledgement of someone's mahi, or a celebration of a big event or achievement? A sentence or two at the start of a document stating this purpose goes a long way to orienting your readers.

Likewise, it's important to be able to sum up what you want to say — both your overall argument or message and the main points of that argument/message. Summarising key messages at the start of a document cues readers to look for those messages through the document and to anticipate the ways you might expand on them. The same principle applies to subsections of the document, and can even be used in paragraphs, where you can start with a topic sentence then provide details or illustrations to back up that topic sentence.

⁷ This material is the intellectual property of Mary McLaughlin (Little Red Pen) and is gifted to Home Birth Aotearoa for use in this document. Please do not duplicate or re-use it without permission.

2. Put in signposts

Use structure and informative headings to guide your readers through your document.

To help readers navigate your document, you need to create a clear and logical structure. A good general rule in informative writing is to present your content in order of importance, with the most important messages appearing first. You could also consider structuring your material chronologically or as the steps in an argument. Different structures will work for different kinds of documents; the structure that works for you will emerge from the material you wish to convey, the needs of your readers, the conventions of the style of document you're creating, and the balances and harmonies that will best support your ideas.

Whatever structure you choose, it is usually helpful to outline the structure at the start of the document, use headings that reflect the content of their sections, and foreground the most important material in each section. Using consistent wording for ideas and sections throughout your document will help readers to keep track of your structure: your structure outline should be mirrored in your headings and in the introductions to each section (if you have them).

It is also worth thinking carefully about heading hierarchies in your document. Level one headings should be used for the main ideas, and secondary and tertiary heading levels for the concepts or material that fits under those main ideas. Most readers will struggle to keep track of more than three heading levels.

Most structures will need introductory material, both at the start of the document and possibly at the start of each section. Introductory material can serve several purposes: to welcome readers and make them comfortable, to provide contextual or background information, to orient readers, and to explain how the document will work and what readers can expect. Taking time and care over introductions can settle your readers and save them much later confusion.

3. Keep your paragraphs under control

Write paragraphs that are coherent (about one key point), cohesive (well-structured), and concise. Use clear topic sentences to tell the reader the key point of each paragraph.

Paragraphs are the building blocks of your writing, units of meaning that fit together to develop an argument, explain a concept, create an image, or build a relationship with your readers. Tight, engaging paragraphs will keep your readers on track by making it easy for them to follow and comprehend your ideas.

A good paragraph will be about one clear point, usually expressed in a topic sentence at or near the start of the paragraph. Sometimes you need an introductory or linking sentence or phrase first to transition from the previous paragraph or set the groundwork for your point. The rest of the paragraph might include an illustration of the main point and an explanation of the illustration. It might also include details that flesh out the main point.

If you are stuck generating content for a document or section, try jotting down the key points you want to make, putting them in a logical order, and developing paragraphs for each point. Checking your paragraphing is also important at the review stage of writing. Make sure your paragraphs are in a sensible order and internally well structured, cohere around one idea, and stick (more or less) to the point. If your paragraphs feel unwieldy, try dividing them or reordering your sentences. If they feel flimsy, think about whether you need to provide more detail, an illustration or a stronger topic sentence.

4. Go for flow

Check the flow of your document and use transitions to link paragraphs.

Once you've got your paragraphs sorted, you need to think about how they fit together. You can think of the end of one paragraph and the start of the next as being like links in a chain — the end of a paragraph should propel you forward to the next paragraph, and the start of a new paragraph will often look back and pick up on the previous paragraph. Effective transitions can be as simple as a word or phrase. You could try repeating the final concept of a paragraph as the starting point for the next, or indicate how the reader should relate the ideas in adjoining paragraphs with a “likewise”, “in contrast”, “furthermore” or “on the other hand”.

You can also create a sense of flow by using clear, direct sentence structures and by varying the length and pacing of sentences. A document with rhythm, energy and pace will sing. Try writing to music — it might just seep through your fingers and onto the page.

5. Explain for your reader

Explain quotes and graphics — don't make the reader do the work for you.

Writers sometimes forget that quotes and graphics don't speak for themselves. A well-written document will always introduce or lead into quotes and graphics. And it will explain for the reader what they're looking at and how it relates to the topic under discussion.

Neglecting to introduce and explain quotes and graphics can leave your readers wondering how the material relates to your argument, trying to make sense of figures that look problematic, or sidetracked by irrelevant ideas. Take the time to integrate quotes into your writing and to explain significant numbers.

6. Love the verb

Watch out for abstract nouns and nominalisations — see if you can find a concrete noun or use a verb instead. Red alert = ‘...tion of’!

When drafting material, many writers tend to use abstract nouns or verbal phrases when a simple verb would be clearer and more direct. This is sometimes called nominalisation. The table below gives some examples.

Nominalisation	Verb
We give an explanation of	We explain
The Introduction presents a summary of the key ideas	The Introduction summarises the key ideas
The Trust’s role is to provide support for women	The Trust’s role is to support women
Our purpose is the acknowledgement of your time and effort	We acknowledge your time and effort

A related tendency is to write long noun strings, such as “homebirth association network”, “Maori specific service requirements”, “health education resource development”. Sometimes these phrases form a useful shorthand, but often they obscure meaning and bog writing down.

You can use a few different tricks to identify and rewrite nominalisations and noun strings.

- Look for any nouns that can also be verbs. Convert them to their verb form and see if the sentence reads better.
- Look for general-purpose verbs attached to abstract nouns or adjectives. See if you can replace these with a simple, strong verb and a more concrete noun.
- Look for strings of adjectives and nouns. Try converting these to a noun-verb structure.
- Look for sentences and phrases beginning with “there/this is/was/are”. Often, you will be able to replace this phrase with a noun-verb structure.

Note that when you use these techniques, you may need to provide a subject for the verb. Who or what is doing the action of the verb?

7. Stay active

Use the active voice, unless passive would be more appropriate.

You may also find yourself overusing the passive voice. The passive can be very useful and appropriate (it's often used when describing scientific experiments to keep the reader's focus on what was done and not who was doing it, and it can be used to avoid naming the person or organisation responsible for an action). But used too often and without thought, it makes writing feel flat and disengaged. So what are passive and active voices?

A main (or independent) clause or sentence must have a **verb** (the thing that is done) and a **subject** (the thing or person that goes in front of the verb).

In an active sentence, the subject is the thing or person that does the verb (the actor). A simple way to explain this is to use Ralph Brown's formula⁸:

Active = Actor(s) + Verb

In the following sentence, "Mary" is the subject, and "wrote" is an active verb.

"Mary wrote her report swiftly, pausing only to check for dangling modifiers."

In a passive sentence, the verb usually takes the form "is [verb]ed" or "was [verb]ed", using the past participle of the verb. The subject is the thing or person that has the action done to it, and the object (the thing or person who does the action) may not be obvious. In the following sentence, "the report" is the subject, and "was written" is a passive verb.

"The report was written at speed, and it showed."

8. Keep relationships clear

Relate clauses grammatically and always put a noun after 'this' and 'that'.

⁸ See

http://www.skillset.co.nz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=516:the-active-voice-defined&catid=21:writing-&Itemid=67

A couple of things really annoy the pedantic reader: dangling participles, dangling modifiers and misrelated clauses. These irritants often turn up in sentences with a subordinate clause or phrase before an independent main clause. In such sentences, the understood subject of both clauses should be the same.

If you start a sentence with a qualifying or introductory clause or phrase, please make sure it connects appropriately with the main clause and that the two clauses have the same understood subject. Ask yourself who is doing the action in the first clause, then check that the same person or thing is doing the action in the second clause.

“Walking into the common room, rain dripped off Sam’s hat.” NO

“Walking into the common room, Sam shook the rain off her hat.” YES

9. Prune, prune, prune

Cut out redundancies and gap-fillers, such as ‘in other words’, ‘in relation to’, and ‘in the context of’.

Humans seem to have a tendency to overwrite things. We hem and haw and take ages to get to the point. We use fancy words and phrases when simpler ones would be clearer and more direct. We repeat ourselves, perhaps using three words that all mean the same thing or overstating a point. As a reader, we tend to find this overwriting irritating. We get bogged down, or we simply lose the point. We fall on uncluttered prose like a thirsty desert traveller finding a cool glass of water.

So, always check your writing for unnecessary clutter. Try the following tricks:

- Cut out redundancies and gap-fillers, such as “in other words”, “in relation to”, and “in the context of”, or use simpler phrasing. But do use small phrases if they will help with transitions or if they signal the purpose of your sentence. As a sidenote, if you find yourself writing “in other words”, consider whether it would have been clearer just to use those words in the first place.
- Consider carefully whether you are using essential technical language or jargon and bureaucratese.
- Check that muddled writing isn’t obscuring your message.
- Make sure you are not repeating ideas or using two or three words that mean the same thing.
- Check that everything in the sentence is serving a purpose.

And take pleasure in pruning out the extraneous and in finding plain language alternatives for jargon and bureaucratic language. The closest analogy I can find for what it feels like to successfully prune a document is that it reminds me of solving quadratic equations. You start with something that looks very complicated and

messy, and you work away at it until it is clear and the answer falls out. That's what you want to do with your writing.

10. Have courage

Remember your readers and trust yourself.

Your greatest enemy as a writer is fear. Fear will freeze your ability to get your ideas down on paper, will lock you into focusing on your anxieties and concerns rather than on what your readers need from you and what you want to give them. Fear will drown your writing in overly ornate phrases, jargon, complicated sentence structures, and obscure, opaque prose.

Fear springs from many sources. You may fear showing ignorance or confusion. You may fear alienating or angering your readers. You may fear being overwhelmed by too much material, too many ideas. You may fear striking empty ground, having nothing to say. None of this fear will do your writing any good.

The flipside of fear is freedom. Freedom in writing comes from your joy and trust in writing. Know that what you have to say is important and that the best writing you can do will be writing where your voice — your way of telling a story — shines through.

Of course, you also need the discipline to edit and revise your work, but let your editing be about making your story as strong and clear and wonderful as possible, rather than following a whole lot of rules.

So, what to do? First, take a big turn from self to others. Think about your readers more than yourself, think about what they need to know, how you want to engage them, educate them, entertain them, inspire them, get them thinking. Think about what they know and what they need to know. Think about how you can lead them through your document, and how you want them to feel at the end. Put your readers first in your writing heart, and with a bit of luck, the fear will fall away.

And then turn back to yourself with trust. Trust your knowledge, your wisdom. Trust your sense of what is needed. Trust your integrity and insight. Trust your ear, your ability to hear when your words are working for you, and when they aren't. Draft and write and revise and revise again until you trust that your writing is shapely, elegant, clear. Until you trust that you've nailed it.

Naming documents

Document names should include a clear document title (preferably without hyphens or underlines) and the date. For example, [Regional contacts 26-03-13.doc].

If a document is being worked on by several people or over a period of time, it is also helpful to put the status of the document and the author's initials in capitals between the document name and the date. For example, [Trust Handbook DRAFT MM 12-02-13].

In some cases, the Trust may use a cloud-based system, such as Dropbox, iCloud, or Google Docs, for working on collective documents. With these systems, documents are stored in the "cloud" and anyone with permission can access and alter the document. With this system, it is still important to have a primary author whose role is to keep an eye on coherence, content, structure, tone, voice, flow, and so on.

Editing and filing documents

It is a good idea to save drafts regularly and create a new version when another substantial body of work is done on the document. For example, the document in the previous paragraph could have several draft versions [DRAFT 1, DRAFT 2, and so on], several review versions [REVIEW JL, REVIEW SK, and so on], a proof copy [PROOF MM], and a final version [FINAL]. It is important that the primary author keeps a firm grip on which version is current and pulls together suggestions from review documents without starting to work on two versions at the same time. It's helpful to have separate folders for old versions and review versions.

This document uses Word styles to keep the formatting of headings, body text, bullets, and so on consistent. You may decide to set styles for other documents also. When a document uses styles, it is important to apply the appropriate styles to all text added to the document. It is also useful to keep an eye on the automatic updating function. If this is on, then making a change to a small selection of text (italicising a paragraph, for example) can lead to all paragraphs in that style being changed. You can correct this by undoing the automatic update in the edit menu, or by unticking the automatic update function for that style.

When you have a final version of a document, the author should send that version to everyone who needs it. The recipients should then make sure they use that version and put older versions in a separate file. Again, using dates on document names can help to avoid problems with version control.

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Donley, Joan. *Save the Midwife*. Auckland: New Women's Press, 1986.

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Our documents

Material for the *Handbook* has been drawn from many sources, but primarily from the wisdom and knowledge of Home Birth Aotearoa trustees and employees.

Sources of information include:

- Verbal stories
- Files and documents from previous trustees and employees
- Hui minutes
- Regional newsletters
- The Yahoo forum
- Reports to the MoH