



2026 Rebus New Zealand AGM - Hibiscus Coast

Whangaparaoa and the Hibiscus Coast: location, a potted history and a brief summary of what's on offer

Rebus Club of Hibiscus Coast is located in the coastal community of Manly on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula which in turn comprises a large part the riding of Hibiscus Coast, a stretch of the [Hauraki Gulf](#) coast located between 30 - 50 kms north of Auckland's CBD.

Prior to its sale to the Crown in 1841 the Hibiscus Coast was home to Ngati Kahu who throughout the 18th century competed with a number of tribes for control over the area and, in particular, Whangaparaoa Bay's rich shark fisheries. In the 1820s these tribes vacated the district to avoid annihilation at the hands of marauding Ngapuhi, the first of New Zealand's maori tribes to obtain and use muskets for the purpose of warfare. When the musket wars came to an end in the mid 1840s Ngati Kahu returned to and lived in the area until the 1870s at which point they began migrating northward.

Some of the earliest pakeha settlement in the area was around the town of Wade (renamed Silverdale in 1911) where kauri logging and kauri gum digging were the primary occupations. As the 19th century progressed orchards were planted, dairy farms established and towards the end of the century a thriving tourism industry developed around the hot pools located 11 kms to the north at Waiwera. From the 1920s onwards rudimentary holiday baches began to appear beside the sandy beaches the Hibiscus Coast is perhaps best known for today.

During WWII an army training base was established at the eastern end of Whangaparaoa Peninsula which has since been used for various purposes, most recently as an early covid managed isolation and quarantine facility. Improved roads and the building of Auckland's harbour bridge in 1959 paved the way for increasing numbers of holiday makers to make their way north to the area's beaches and its two regional parks, Wenderholm and Shakespear established in 1965 and 1967 respectively.

Throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s the construction of holiday baches accelerated and by the 1970s substantial villages had been established at all main beaches. By 1960 the Whangaparaoa Peninsula boasted two golf courses, the Peninsula Golf Club at Red Beach which was relocated inland to Wainui in 2015, and Whangaparaoa Golf Club at Army Bay which is still going strong on its original land. Auckland's transport infrastructure continued to improve and support the city's expansion into increasingly distant areas. Inevitably baches on the Hibiscus Coast were transformed into or replaced by more substantial and permanent homes. Growth again accelerated from the mid 1980s with development of the Gulf Harbour Marina, surrounding residential developments and in 1997 the opening of the now sadly infamous Gulf Harbour Country Club.

Today some 68,000 people live on the Hibiscus Coast making it Auckland's second most populated area and the 10th most populated in New Zealand. Notwithstanding this, the suburbs comprising the Whangaparaoa Peninsula and those of Orewa, Hatfields and Waiwera have retained a distinctly holiday feel about them by virtue of their proximity to great beaches, the outer Hauraki Gulf and its islands and to a multitude of parks and green spaces.

The majority of suburbs making up the Hibiscus Coast are named after the sandy beaches they're located beside. Wenderholm Beach is part of the beautiful Wenderholm National Park and, interestingly, where its thought the first Australian white tail spiders landed. Hatfields Beach is well known for hosting past PM Sir Robert Muldoon's holiday home. Orewa Beach is the longest in the region offering 3 kms of white sand, surf and an impressive range of cafes, bars and boutiques. Red Beach is considered one of the best beginner surf beaches in the country...at least we think so. Stanmore Bay at 2kms is the second longest beach and also where you'll find the area's largest community sports centre complete with heated indoor pool. Manly Beach is a beautiful, long, sheltered white sand beach that's a favourite with Aucklanders in summer, which of course thrills the locals... Tindalls Bay, perhaps more than any of our local beaches, retains to this day a quintessential kiwi summer holiday vibe despite the impressive homes that have been built along the seashore. Army Bay is named after the neighbouring army training facility and is popular with both swimmers and local kayak fishermen. Gulf Harbour boasts the second largest boat marina in Auckland, waterway apartments, cafes and bars. Hobbs Bay is Whangaparaoa's most recent residential development...sections are still available, get in while you can! Matakia Bay and Arkles Bay are charming and sheltered southern facing beaches looking out towards iconic Rangitoto. Walks along Orewa Beach, Stanmore Bay and Manly Beach are superb at dawn and sunset...and excellent at any other time.

For those who have the time and would like to explore further afield, the Hibiscus Coast is surrounded by just so many different and interesting areas and things to do. To our south is of course Auckland offering all the attractions of a large city from shopping to theatre, art galleries to sporting events, parks to beaches, small cafes to haute cuisine and much, much more. Getting to Auckland is an easy and straight forward 36 km drive south on SH1. Otherwise there is a regular bus service from Silverdale into the CBD or alternatively a highly recommended regular ferry service leaves from Gulf Harbour, cruises the length of the inner Hauraki Gulf and delivers passengers at the base of Queen St in the CBD (bus and ferry timetables can be found on Auckland Transport's website).

A very pleasant 45 minute rural drive westward from the Whangaparaoa Peninsula will bring you to Muriwai and the wild west coast of the North Island; do stop off on the cliff road overlooking Maori Bay for a birds eye view of both surfers riding powerful Tasman waves and the Muriwai Gannet Colony. Running parallel to Muriwai is Woodville Forest and 20 kms inland the Riverhead Forest offering numerous walking trails and for the keener amongst us a range of other activities including mountain biking, horse riding and tree climbing... For keen golfers Muriwai has an excellent 18-hole coastal course well worth a play. A little north of Muriwai is the Kaipara, the largest inland harbour in the Southern Hemisphere which is a story unto itself. A drive southward will bring you to West Auckland's wineries located around the small towns of Kumeu, Huapai and Waimauku; a number of guided wine trails are advertised online.

North of the Hibiscus Coast are the historic towns of Puhoi (settled by Bohemians, some of our earliest Czech immigrants) and Walkworth (a trip down the Maharangi River on the restored scow, Jane Gifford is an excellent way to while away a few hours). The village of Matakana offers great cafes and holds an impressive weekly Saturday morning market...but do arrive early, thousands come from miles around and parking's at a premium. Further northward is Omaha, one of if not New Zealand's priciest seaside holiday community. Next stop up the coast is Mangawhai with its great surfing and a well-established golf course for those flatter

days. A short drive will bring you to Leigh and the Goat Island Marine Reserve, New Zealand's first. Thereafter Langs Beach, Waipu Cove, Ruakaka, Whangarei and wonderful Northland which, like the Kaipara, is a chapter unto itself.

We hope this brief summary is a helpful introduction to our neck of the woods. If you need any further suggestions or guidance whatsoever, our local Rebus members will welcome the opportunity to give you a steer. Enjoy!