

# Ngaio Walking Tracks

## map 1



PREPARED BY Ngaio Crofton Downs Residents Association, 3rd edition. April 2013

### Skyline Walkway

Part of this walkway runs north-south along the ridge between Mt Kaukau and Crofton Downs. It is 4 km long and takes two hours at an easy pace. On a clear day there are spectacular views of the Kaikoura ranges, the Marlborough Sounds, Wellington city and harbour and the Tararua and Orongorongo ranges. The walkway is open to walkers and mountain bikers. Local access points to the Skyline Walkway are:

- Through the car park at the end of Chartwell Drive
- Bell's Track, from the end of Awarua St.
- Khandallah Park. Tracks to Mt Kaukau join up with the Skyline Walkway.

### Bell's Track

This re-established route starts at the top of Awarua Street and joins a farm track up to a saddle on the ridge. It originally provided access between farms in Ohariu Valley and Ngaio railway station. From the top there are fantastic views over Wellington and the South Island. A dedicated care group is restoring the vegetation.

### Huntleigh Park Reserve

This lesser known area is a WCC reserve. Adjoining bush is administered by the Girl Guides Association. Access is from behind the Playcentre in Silverstream Road, Crofton Downs and Huntleigh Park Way. Tracks are marked with small coloured posts. Some care is needed in several areas that are quite steep.

### Orleans Makererua Reserve (Pukatea Track)

This small reserve has an interesting 10 min. track running from Makererua Street (off Heke Street) to Orleans Street (off Chelmsford Street). There is a gently sloped grassed area at the Orleans end. The reserve is notable for a number of fine specimens of native trees (pukatea, kahikatea and titoki) that are survivors from the original bush. A local care group looks after the area.

### Northern Walkway

The track in Trelissick Park from Hanover Street to Waikowhai Street is part of the Northern Walkway. From Waikowhai Street a short road walk leads to Cummings Park. From Awarua Street the walkway goes along Khandallah Road and Simla Crescent to Khandallah Park where it ascends to the top of Mt Kaukau.

### Cummings Park

This grassed flat park is behind the Ngaio shops. There is a stream, an old totara, a sculpture, seating, a children's playground and a designated off-the-lead dog exercise area.

### Heke Street Reserve

A pleasant track through this reserve links Crofton Downs and Ngaio. Access is from the end of Collingwood Street and between 45 and 47 Thatcher Crescent. A side track runs to Heke Street emerging next to 41 Heke Street.

### How to get there:



· TranzMetro trains (Johnsonville Line). Local stations are Crofton Downs, Ngaio, Awarua Street, Simla Crescent and Box Hill.

· Several bus routes connect from Wellington to Ngaio. Contact Metlink (ph 0800 801 700) for train and bus timetables, ticket details, and journey planner.

Safety

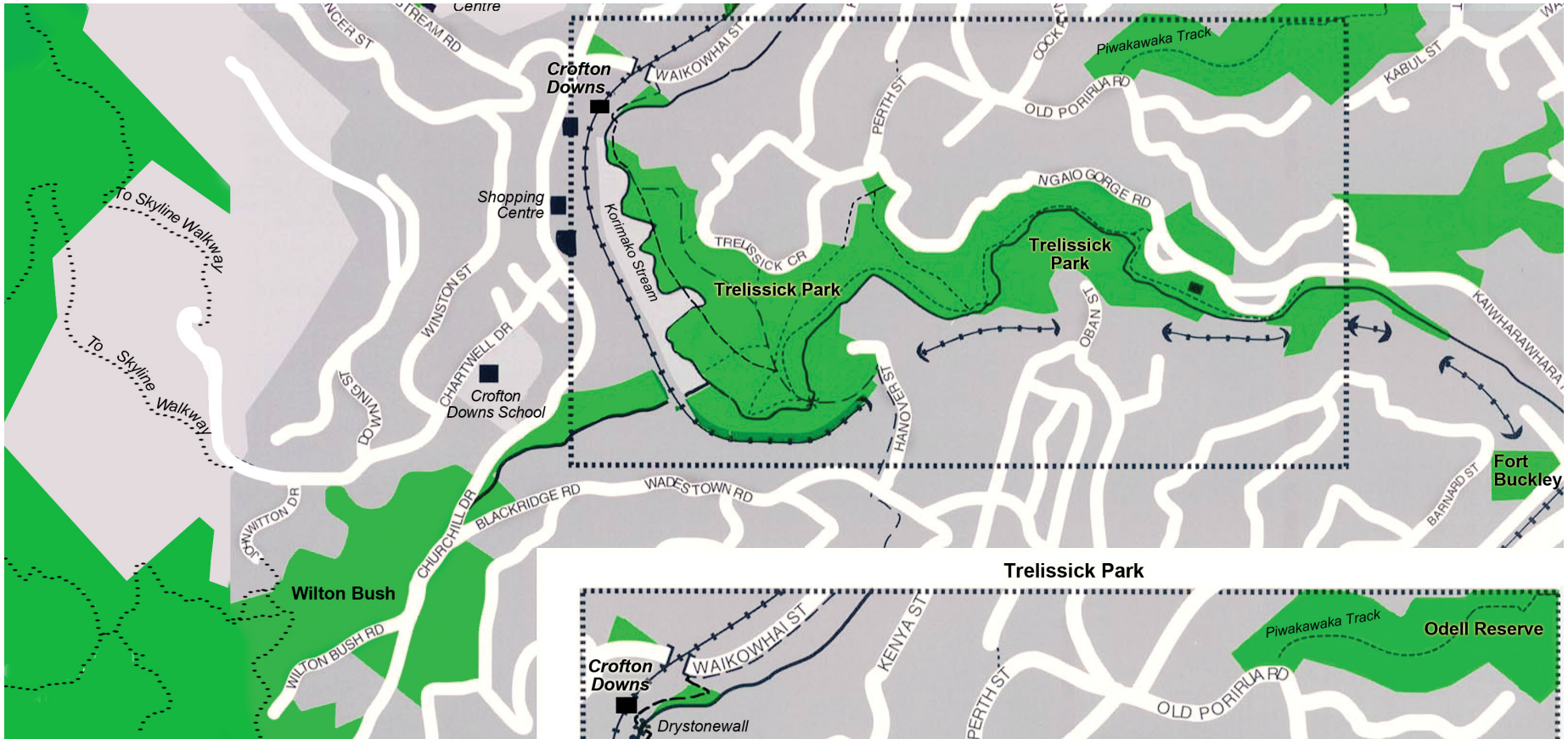


Stout shoes or boots should be worn and a waterproof jacket and warm clothing carried in case of a change in the weather. These precautions are essential if you plan to walk on the exposed skyline ridges.

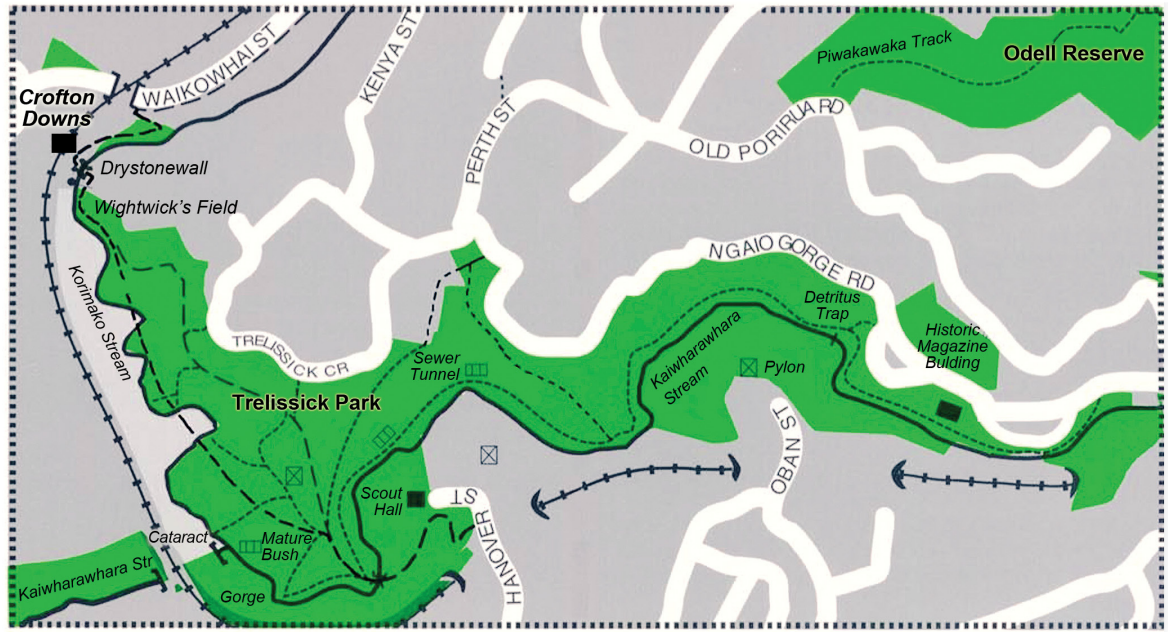
# Ngaio Walking Tracks







Trellissick Park



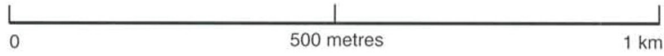
**Dog exercise areas:**

- Silverstream Rd, Crofton Downs
- Cummings Park, Ngaio
- Trellissick Park, Ngaio
- Odell Reserve, Ngaio
- Chelmsford Park, Ngaio

**Public Toilets:**

- Crofton Downs Shopping Centre
- Next to Ngaio Town Hall

- Built-up land
- Open private land
- WCC land and reserves
- Railway
- Nothern Walkway
- Walking tracks
- Streams



map 2

## Trelissick Park

The park covers a large area of rugged landscape extending from the lower Ngaio Gorge to Waikowhai Street with an extensive network of walking tracks. Cared for by a dedicated group of volunteers in co-operation with the Wellington City Council for over 20 years, the park has regenerating bush and a number of heritage trees.

There are five main entrances to Trelissick Park:

- Ngaio Gorge / Kaiwharawhara Road
- Ngaio Gorge Road
- Trelissick Crescent
- Waikowhai Street
- Hanover Street

From the Waikowhai Street entrance (near the railway overbridge between Ngaio and Crofton Downs) the track descends to Wightwick's Field, a flat grassed area with a picnic table and seats. Not far from the Waikowhai Street entrance the track is carved out of solid rock. This is believed to be the remains of a nineteenth century logging track.

A few metres further on, the Silverstream from Crofton Downs emerges from a culvert. Adjacent to this are the remains of a rare old drystone wall constructed when the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Line was built in the 1880s. The track follows the Korimako Stream until it intersects with tracks from Trelissick Crescent and Hanover Street, Wadestown.

Just before the junction with the Wadestown-Trelissick section of the track, a zigzag track provides access to one of the area's finest scenic features. This is the emergence of the stream from a section known as The Gorge from its narrowness and steep sides. At the junction there are several notable trees nearby especially two mature specimens of miro and totara.

From the junction another track runs around the steep hillside to Ngaio Gorge Road. Walking this track requires care due to the steep slope. Downhill from the intersection, the left hand track near the river (now called the Kaiwharawhara Stream) continues to the two lower Ngaio Gorge Road exits.

A major point of interest towards the end of the track is the remains of an historic powder magazine built in 1879-80 and used for storing explosives during the Russian invasion scare of the 1880s. In 2002 the site was damaged when a bank robbery getaway car was set alight.

## Piwakawaka Track (Odell's Reserve)

Access is from alongside 14 Punjab Street or from Old Porirua Road near the entrance to the Harbour Lights subdivision. This track passes through regenerating bush and provides a convenient segment of a circular walk in association with the Bridle Track. The highest point, at the water tanks, provides spectacular views of the city, harbour and Ngaio itself. Great vantage point for Guy Fawkes night.

## The Bridle Track

This was the first northern route that linked the city with the hinterland in 1840 and follows the original Maori track that was widened to accommodate bridled horses. The track is a sealed path connecting Winchester Street (off Fore Street, Kaiwharawhara) to Nicholson Road (Khandallah). It passes through pines and regenerating bush with wonderful harbour views.

## Otari Wilton's Bush

This unique sanctuary in nearby Wilton is devoted to indigenous New Zealand plants. It has a range of tracks through forest, gardens, open spaces and picnic areas. This is one of the finest showcases of native flora in the country. It is a national treasure. Access is from Wilton Road, John Witton Drive or Churchill Drive.

Otari is easy walking distance from Ngaio. Go along Churchill Drive to Blackridge Road. The lower entrance is on the right.

## Suburban Walkways

Ngaio and Crofton Downs have a large number of zigzag walkways and steps between streets. These provide easier access for pedestrians to shops and transport. These are shown on the map as dotted lines linking streets. They complement the track system and provide interesting walks and shortcuts through the suburbs.



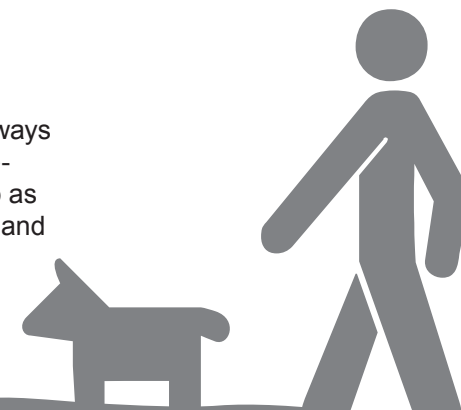
### Exercise Areas

There are five off-the-leash dog exercise areas in Ngaio and Crofton Downs: the whole of Trelissick Park, Chelmsford Park off Lower Chelmsford Street, Cummings Park, Silverstream Road Reserve and Odells Reserve.

# Ngaio Walking Tracks map 2



PREPARED BY Ngaio Crofton Downs  
Residents Association, 3rd edition. April 2013



*“Ngaio, one of Wellington’s northern suburbs, has many accessible bush reserves and walking tracks running from the lower Ngaio Gorge to the Skyline walkway. There are short tracks for family forays or longer extended walks for fitness.”*

# Ngaio Walking Tracks



## Early Maori

*Kaiwharawhara was a Te Atiawa Pa at the mouth of the Kaiwharawhara Stream. There were links to the Ohariu and Makara Pas via various tracks that passed near Otari. There was also a track to the north following the route of the present Bridle Track from Winchester Street to Khandallah. The Kaiwharawhara Pa had gardens in the present Kenya Street - Trelissick Crescent area and bird snaring was done on the slopes of Mt Kaukau. (Kaukau is a corruption of kaka, the native parrot).*



## Geology

Ngaio rocks are raised sedimentary sandstone (grey-wacke) and black mudstone (argillite). Subsidiary earthquake fault lines have allowed streams to erode valleys, such as the Ngaio Gorge, or have left their mark elsewhere on the land. A good example of this the fault line that crosses the upper part of Bells Track to create a shallow valley behind The Crow’s Nest and small notches in the southern spurs between the track and Mt Kaukau.

A flat remnant of the original land surface or peneplain still remains on Mt Kaukau and has given its name to the extensive flat surface that originally existed over much of the Wellington area (the Kaukau-surface or K-surface). More recently (10-20,000 years ago) freeze/thaw action during an Ice Age produced a water-logged mantle of mud and rock fragments that flowed down the hillsides. This debris (and the underlying bedrocks) can be seen in many Ngaio road cuttings.

## Botany

Pre-European vegetation was generally a mixed broadleaf - podocarp forest. There were extensive stands of tawa and kohekohe with some emerging podocarps such as matai, totara and kahikatea in association with a rich assortment of broadleaf trees. Vast quantities of timber and firewood were taken from the area and there were extensive bush workings in Awarua Street providing logs for milling at a site which is now the Ngaio Tennis Club courts.

After the area was logged, the land was progressively cleared for dairy farming. Sheep and cattle are still grazed on the higher slopes where some areas of bush are regenerating under a protective canopy of gorse. In other cut over areas, such as the Ngaio Gorge, the bush is regenerating with tawa, mahoe, titoki, karaka and rewarewa.

## More information

Wellington City Council has maps and brochures on tracks, walkways, parks, reserves and heritage trails.

Te Araroa Trail site  
[www.tracks.org.nz](http://www.tracks.org.nz)  
[www.ngaio.org.nz](http://www.ngaio.org.nz)

Cummings Park Library, Ngaio  
Onslow Historical Society  
86 Khandallah Road  
Open 1- 4pm Sunday