



Hiona St Stephens Cultural Heritage Tourism: Ōpōtiki Rising Hui Report

This report records the 6 August 2026 Ōpōtiki Rising hui held at Hiona St Stephens Anglican Church, summarises attendance and survey findings.

Overview:

- 25 people signed the attendance register
- 17 of them (68%) completed the survey, with all but 2 people completing the paper-copy version.
- 100% of survey respondents responded 'Yes' to supporting Hiona St Stephen's proceeding to the next stage of this initiative.

Responses:

Of the survey respondents (n = 17), the most common Kaupapa people stated they were interested in being involved with was Tour development (53%, n = 8). Other responses included not being able to commit now (n = 5), Church Vestry involvement (n = 3), and Iwi engagement (n = 1). Most respondents (70%, n = 12) were 'definitely' or 'possibly' willing to attend or support hui with Te Whakatohea representatives, with a few (n = 3) stating that would not be able to. Finally, 47% (n=8) respondents provided comments (see below) that largely emphasized the importance of community engagement.

Comments
Community engagement / acceptance
Collaboration
To consult with the Mokomoko whanau
Nope, I like what I see & heard
I think it's a wonderful concept. Funding is the biggest concern - I can see it is going to be self-funded.
Open communication. No hidden agendas.
Whakatohea and whanau approval
Bringing the people of Opotiki on board. Some people are very negative (how do we educate the people)

NEXT STEPS

- All attendees who provided emails will be sent a copy of this report with encouragement to provide further feedback.
- Given the strong feedback to pursue further community engagement, Ivor Jones' role as Community Facilitator for Hiona St Stephens will be supported to lead ongoing hui, with the aim of establishing a governance and legal structure that can implement community-informed Cultural Heritage Tourism for the Ōpōtiki District, centred around the Hiona St Stephens historical site.