

Waimakariri District Council Community and Recreation Committee

Agenda

Tuesday 17 February 2026
1.00pm

Council Chambers
215 High Street
Rangiora

Members:

Cr Brent Cairns (Chairperson)

Cr Wendy Doody

Cr Niki Mealings

Cr Shona Powell

Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond

Mayor Dan Gordon (ex officio)

AGENDA CONTENTS – COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING 17 FEBRUARY 2026		
<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Item Topic</u>	<u>Pages</u>
3.1	Confirmation of Minutes – 16 December 2025	7 -19
3.3	Workshop Notes – 16 December 2025	20 – 21
Reports		
5.1	Welcoming Waimakariri Plan	22 – 93
5.2	Approval to Consult on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029	94 – 153
5.3	Aquatics February Update	154 – 167
5.4	Libraries Update to February 2026	168 – 175
Correspondence		
6.1	Herbicide Update and Usage by Council Contractors in 2024-2025	176 – 185



A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA ON TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY AT 1PM

Recommendations in reports are not to be construed as
Council policy until adopted by the Council

BUSINESS

Page No

1 APOLOGIES

2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Conflicts of interest (if any) to be reported for minuting.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee held on 16 December 2025

RECOMMENDATION

7 – 19

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Confirms** the circulated Minutes of the meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, held on 16 December 2025 as a true and accurate record.

3.2 Matters arising (From Minutes)

3.3 Notes of the Workshop of the Community and Recreation Committee held on 16 December 2025

RECOMMENDATION

20 – 21

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** the circulated Notes of the Workshop of the Community and Recreation Committee, held on 16 December 2025.

4 DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

5 REPORTS

5.1 Welcoming Waimakariri Plan – Tessa Sturley (Community Team Manager) and Aimee Claassens (Community Development Facilitator)

RECOMMENDATION

22 – 93

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260128014558
- (b) **Approves** the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 - 2029 for adoption by the Council at its March 2026 meeting
- (c) **Notes** that broad community engagement informed the development of the initial draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan.
- (d) **Notes** that the attached Stocktake Report summarises that engagement, including detail of participating stakeholders.
- (e) **Notes** that at the September meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, the initial draft plan it was approved be released for community consultation.
- (f) **Notes** that community consultation was undertaken via a Welcoming Waimakariri survey on Council's Let's Talk platform. The period for this consultation was 1 October – 30 November 2025.
- (g) **Notes** that the attached Consultation Summary, summaries the results of the Let's Talk consultation, and feedback from the community and advisory groups listed in 1.4.
- (h) **Notes** that Strategy and Business, Communications and Engagement, and Community Team staff reviewed the feedback in the Consultation Summary to determine appropriate amendments to the draft document, resulting in production of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, 2026 – 2029, presented in this report.
- (i) **Notes** that The Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 document, covers the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2029.

5.2 Approval to Consult on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 – Lexie Mealings (Policy Analyst) and Emily Belton (Youth Development Facilitator)

RECOMMENDATION

94 – 153

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260112003433.
- (b) **Approves** staff to release the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (260129015619) for public consultation for a four-week period, from 18 February to 18 March 2026.
- (c) **Notes** that the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (260129015619) is the direct result of a thorough early engagement process, co-designed with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group. This engagement directly captured the voices of over 1100 local 12-to-24-year-olds.
- (d) **Notes** that following the conclusion of the consultation period on 18 March 2026, staff will process feedback received and integrate suggestions into the Draft Plan between April and May 2026. This will be followed by a report to Council in June 2026 to present the final Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 and recommend adoption.
- (e) **Circulates** this report and attachments to Community Boards for their information.

5.3 **Aquatics February Update – Matthew Greenwood (Aquatics Manager)**

RECOMMENDATION

154 – 167

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260204020262.
- (b) **Notes** total customer attendance of 11,542 customers for the month of January 2026. This is down 7,941 in comparison to January 2025 due to the three-week programmed maintenance closure at Dudley.
- (c) **Notes** several significant maintenance works were achieved during the maintenance closure at Dudley including the replacement of an air fan, tile replacement and floor repairs.
- (d) **Approves** the promotional calendar and its use of time limited promotional discounts to achieve attendance and income budget targets in a competitive market.
- (e) **Circulates** this report to the Community Boards for their information.

5.4 **Libraries Update to February 2026 – Luke Sole (District Libraries Manager)**

RECOMMENDATION

168 – 175

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260204020236
- (b) **Notes** consistent increases in visitation and engagement in library services, including an increase of 500 visits over the holiday period compared to the year previous.
- (c) **Circulates** the report to the Community Boards for their information.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE**

6.1 **Herbicide Update and Usage by Council Contractors in 2024-2025 – Sophie Allen (Water Environment Advisor)**

RECOMMENDATION

176 – 185

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251023201716.

7 **PORTFOLIO UPDATES**

7.1 **Greenspace (Parks, Reserves and Sports Grounds) – Councillor Brent Cairns**

7.2 **Community Facilities (including Aquatic Centres, Multi-use Sports Stadium, Libraries/Service Centres, Town Halls and Museums) – Councillor Bruce McLaren**

7.3 **Community Development and Wellbeing – Councillor Shona Powell**

7.4 **Arts and Culture – Councillor Brent Cairns**

7.5 **Property – Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond**

7.6 **Housing – Councillor Wendy Doody**

8 QUESTIONS

9 URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS

9. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be), it is moved:

That the public is excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

9.1 Confirmation of Minutes 16 December 2025

Item No	Subject	Reason for excluding the public	Grounds for excluding the public.
REPORT			
9.1	Confirmation of Minutes 26 December 2025	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, including commercial and industrial negotiations. LGOIMA Section 7(i)

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 21 April 2026 at 1pm in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

Workshop

- *Waimakariri District Arts Strategy Update – Mel Foster (Community Development Facilitator – Arts Strategy Implementation)*
- *Performing Arts Feasibility Study Memorandum of Understanding – Grant MacLeod (Greenspace Manager) and Jill Borland (Greenspace Strategy and Partnerships Team Leader)*

Briefing

- *Greenspace Update – Key Projects – Grant MacLeod (Greenspace Manager) and Jill Borland (Greenspace Strategy and Partnerships Team Leader)*

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2025, AT 1PM

PRESENT

Councillors W Doody, B McLaren, N Mealings, S Powell and Deputy Mayor Redmond.

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors T Bartle and T Fulton.

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), S Hart (General Manager Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development), R Hawthorne (Property Manager), G MacLeod (Greenspace Manager), T Sturley (Community Team Manager), M Greenwood (Aquatics Manager), L Sole (District Libraries Manager), D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager), G Steele (Property Acquisition and Disposals Manager), I Clark (Project Manager), B Dollery (Biodiversity Team Leader), A Childs (Acquisitions and Disposals Officer), M Kwant (Senior Rangiora Biodiversity), L Mealings (Policy Analyst) and C Fowler-Jenkins (Governance Support Officer).

At the commencement of the meeting, in the absence of the Chairperson, the General Manager Community and Recreation, C Brown, took the Chair and welcomed everyone present.

1 APOLOGIES

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor Powell

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Received** and **sustained** requests for leave of absence from Mayor Gordon and Councillor B Cairns.

CARRIED

2 APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CHAIRPERSON

C Brown called for nominations for an Acting Chairperson for the meeting.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor Doody

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **That** Councillor S Powell be appointed as Acting Chairperson for the meeting in the absence of the Chairperson, Councillor B Cairns.

CARRIED

The General Manager, Community and Recreation, vacated the Chair in favour of the elected Acting Chairperson, Councillor Powell.

3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts declared.

4 **DEPUTATIONS**

Nil.

5 **REPORTS**

5.1 **Property Portfolio Working Group – Review of Activities** – Property Portfolio Working Group and R Hawthorne (Property Unit Manager)

R Hawthorne took the report as read.

Councillor Mealings queried whether the new Terms of Reference permitted staff membership on the Property Portfolio Working Group. C Brown clarified that staff support was currently provided by the General Manager, Community and Recreation; the General Manager, Strategy, Engagement and Economic Development; the Property Manager; and the Community Team Manager, with additional staff assisting them in delivering the required work for the Group.

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that the Property Portfolio Working Group had previously made recommendations directly to the Council and asked whether this had changed, with recommendations now being made first to the Community and Recreation Committee before reaching the Council. C Brown explained that the Working Group would report to the Community and Recreation Committee and/or directly to the Council. In cases where funding had already been allocated, the Community and Recreation Committee had delegated decision-making authority. However, matters such as land purchases would be referred directly to the Council.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor Doody

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251121221602.
- (b) **Approves** the Terms of Reference of the Property Asset Management Working Group (Trim 251121221603).
- (c) **Acknowledges** the work of the previous Property Portfolio Working Group for developing several property and housing-related policies, providing oversight for a significant program of acquisitions and disposals, leadership around the partnering relationships progressed to date, and the development of new housing for Council's Housing for the Elderly service.
- (d) **Notes** the change in the name of the Property Portfolio Working Group to the Property Asset Management Working Group.
- (e) **Notes** the appointments made to membership of the Property Asset Management Working Group, being the Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond, as Chair and the Portfolio Holder for Property. Additional membership includes Councillor Wendy Doody (the Portfolio Holder for Housing), Councillor Niki Mealings (the Portfolio Holder for the District Plan and Sustainability), Councillor Brent Cairns (the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Town Centres), Councillor Bruce McLaren (the Portfolio Holder for Community Facilities), and the Mayor Dan Gordon, Ex-Officio.
- (f) **Notes** the shift in focus of the Property Asset Management Working Group for the new term to be more on significant projects, policy and strategic direction, as opposed to operational and transactional matters.

CARRIED

Councillor Mealings supported the motion, believing the proposed changes to the Working Group, including increased membership, would assist in ensuring it functions effectively.

5.2 **Update to Northern Pegasus Bay Advisory Group Terms of Reference** – L Mealings (Policy Analyst) and M Kwant (Senior Ranger Biodiversity)

L Mealings spoke to the report, noting that approval was being sought for the updated Terms of Reference of the Northern Pegasus Bay Advisory Group. This proposed update was presented at this time to ensure the recommended amendments were considered before the next Advisory Group meeting, scheduled for February 2026, to facilitate a smooth transition for the incoming Chairperson. The Advisory Group had been consulted on the proposed updated Terms of Reference and had received positive feedback.

There were no questions for elected members.

Moved: Deputy Mayor Redmond Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251103208658.
- (b) **Approves** the updated Northern Pegasus Bay Advisory Group Terms of Reference November 2025 (Trim 251103208622).
- (c) **Notes** that the updated Northern Pegasus Bay Advisory Group Terms of Reference (Trim 251103208622) will be formally introduced to the Advisory Group at their next scheduled meeting in February 2026, pending Committee approval.
- (d) **Circulates** this report and its attachment to Community Boards for information.

CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted his involvement in the hearing panel that reviewed the Northern Pegasus Bay Bylaw, commenting that a workable solution had been reached for recreational beach users. He acknowledged this as the second stage of the process and commended the Advisory Group's effective work. He congratulated Councillor Powell on being appointed the next Chairperson of the Advisory Group and expressed confidence that the Group would continue to function successfully.

Councillor McLaren noted that the intention of the extensive representation on the Advisory Group was to allow for organisations and the community to be involved in matters relating to the Bylaw area. However, there was a distinction between membership and participation, and the balance would be to ensure that no single group outweighed decision-makers.

Councillor Powell looked forward to working with the Advisory Group, noting that the Waimakariri District's coastal areas were a special place for her. She recognised the excellent work on the recent Northern Pegasus Bay Bylaw review, which ensured that the coastal areas were accessible to everyone.

5.3 **Arohatia te Awa Working Group Terms of Reference** – B Dollery (Biodiversity Team Leader)

B Dollery spoke to the report, noting the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Arohatia te Awa Working Group were to reflect the changes to membership after the 2025 Local Government elections. In addition, staff titles were used rather than staff names to minimise the need for changes caused by staff turnover. The name of the Revells Road development had also been updated.

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted that, under membership, Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga representative Arapata Ruben was listed by name. He queried whether that should be amended. B Dollery advised that only staff members' names had been removed; the names of elected members and the Rūnanga representative had been retained.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked why the Council's Water Environment Advisor would no longer support the Arohatia te Awa Working Group. B Dollery noted that the Water Environment Advisor would serve as a member of the Working Group.

Deputy Mayor Redmond queried why the Flaxton development was referred to as Revells Road rather than Lineside Road. B Dollery explained that there was a preference to use Revells Road as an interim name until the formal naming process determined the land's future designation.

Responding to a question from Councillor Mealings, B Dollery confirmed that the address of the development was Revells Road.

Councillor Mealings queried whether the Council's Drainage Portfolio Holder should be included as a member of the Working Group. B Dollery noted it would have to be a Council decision.

Councillor Fulton asked which Council Department had oversight of the Working Group. B Dollery explained that the Group operated through an integration of departments. She highlighted the Stormwater Engineer's role in ensuring that riparian areas were designed to provide access to watercourses for maintenance and to prevent blockages.

Moved: Councillor Mealings

Seconded: Councillor McLaren

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251114216960.
- (b) **Approves** the updated Arohatia te Awa Working Group Terms of Reference, November 2025 (Trim 251023202309).
- (c) **Agrees** to the inclusion of the Council's Portfolio Holder for Drainage, Councillor T Fulton, as a member of the Arohatia te Awa Working Group
- (d) **Notes** staff will report back to the Community and Recreation Committee to update on the status of the project and budget in March 2026.
- (e) **Notes** that meeting invites for the 2026 calendar year had been sent to the working group with an expected first meeting to take place in February 2026.
- (f) **Circulates** this report to all the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Mealings supported the motion, noting that the Arohatia te Awa project would be dedicated to enhancing water quality, biodiversity, and recreational access across the Waimakariri District, resulting in many excellent outcomes from both a recreational and ecological perspective.

5.4 **Aquatics December Update** – M Greenwood (Aquatics Manager)

M Greenwood took the report as read.

Councillor Fulton asked if the opening day of the Oxford Community Aquatic Centre had been consistent with previous years. M Greenwood confirmed that it was similar to last year's; the season began on Saturday, 29 November 2025, and would run for 15 weeks.

Councillor Fulton enquired how many gas cylinders were used at the Oxford Community Aquatic Centre. M Greenwood noted that a 2,244kg gas cylinder was used, which had been recycled a couple of times during the first week of the session, after which it was usually one gas cylinder per week.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked about the proposed charges at Christchurch City Council's new Parakiore Recreation and Sport Centre. M Greenwood advised that the adult slide pass would be \$18 and the child slide pass \$13 for full entry. He noted that during Covid some councils chose to freeze fees and charges, whereas the Council implemented small incremental increases. As a result, other councils were now having to catch up, while the Council's charges remain aligned with the national average.

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that the Council's Water Safety Programme outperformed the national average for children aged zero to four, but results were lower for children aged five to six. M Greenwood acknowledged a decline in participation within that age group, noting staff efforts to keep lessons engaging and motivating. He added that staff were working with schools to identify potential causes.

Councillor Doody asked whether staff could encourage children who had left the programme to return. M Greenwood explained that staff were working with schools to support re-engagement. He noted that participation had also declined as more technology course options became available, reducing the number of children continuing through the programme.

Councillor Mealings asked about the possibility of introducing a concession card for the Oxford Community Aquatic Centre. M Greenwood advised that he had researched practices at other facilities and noted that a range of child concession options already existed, providing discounted entry. While not specific to Oxford, these concessions addressed some of the community's needs.

Councillor Powell asked whether any activities were planned over the break. M Greenwood advised that the Dudley Aquatic Facility would undergo maintenance during this period, while the Oxford and Kaiapoi Facilities would remain open. Programmes would be scheduled at those facilities to provide support. He noted that staff had contacted all concession card holders to inform them and that further communication would be issued via the Council's website.

Moved: Councillor Doody

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Redmond

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251125224056.
- (b) **Notes** customer attendance of 23,434 customers for the month of November 2025. This is up 2025 customers (or 8.6%) in comparison to November 2024.
- (c) **Notes** that legislation changes coming into effect in March 2026 will require Concession cards to expire after three years rather than the current one year.
- (d) **Notes** these changes to Concession expiry dates are not expected to have any significant financial impact.

- (e) **Notes** the substantial achievement by children aged 0 to 6 years against national benchmarks through our water safety programming.
- (f) **Circulates** this report to the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Doody supported the motion and thanked staff for the comprehensive report. She noted that the continued high attendance at the Aquatic Facilities was excellent. Councillor Doody urged staff to try to retain five to six-year-old children in the Council's Water Safety Programme.

Deputy Mayor Redmond observed that there was room for improvement in outcomes for children aged four to six. He commented on the Government's concession card initiative, noting that while the Council was required to comply, it was unlikely to have financial repercussions. Deputy Mayor Redmond highlighted the increasing participation numbers as a positive sign and commended Waiswim as an excellent programme. He also supported the motion.

Councillor Powell also supported the motion, highlighting that the Waikuku Beach paddling pool was well used over the summer.

Councillor Mealings commended the report and thanked staff for their work. She noted that attendance increased by 8.6% in 2025, highlighted the benefit of concession cards being valid for three years, and expressed her appreciation for the Waiswim programme's substantial achievements.

5.5 **Libraries Update to December 2025** – L Sole (District Libraries Manager)

L Sole took the report as read.

Responding to Councillor McLaren's question, L Sole noted the libraries were approached by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa (DIAA), who provided funding for the Digi-Coach Programme. It was a 13-week, work-based learning programme that helped job seekers gain practical experience, build digital skills, and contribute to their communities. The Council's libraries had been part of the national pilot programme.

Councillor McLaren expressed concern that the small meeting room in the Rangiora Chamber Gallery, which housed honour roll boards, had been converted into storage due to space constraints. L Sole noted significant pressure on that part of the library, explaining that Justice of the Peace (JP) services operated from the room and were attracting increasing attendance. He added that the adjacent room was not configured for public use, and these issues were being considered in the design brief for the library extension.

Councillor Doody questioned whether there were alternative locations for JP services in Rangiora. L Sole advised that staff had recently met with the JP service to discuss best practice. He noted that in Kaiapoi, services had moved from the meeting room to the main floor, which was their preference. However, when consulted, the Rangiora JPs indicated they would prefer to remain in the meeting room.

Councillor Doody asked if staff had liaised with the artist, Gerald Horton's family, about the removal of the portico mural at Trevor Inch Memorial Library and L Sole confirmed that they had been advised.

Deputy Mayor Redmond asked whether the Community Hub van could support the proposed Pop-up Library service for four hours each Friday. L Sole confirmed that it could, noting the van had been booked for this purpose. He explained that existing bookings would take precedence, though none were currently scheduled, and if required for more pressing community matters, library use would be forfeited.

Moved: Councillor Doody

Seconded: Councillor Mealings

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251204231684.
- (b) **Notes** the trial mobile outreach service, beginning in mid-February 2026. The identified benefits and considerations are detailed below, including budget and health and safety requirements.
- (c) **Notes** the removal of the portico mural at Trevor Inch Memorial Library. This work will coincide with upcoming painting and façade repairs at the Rangiora Borough Council Chambers on Percival Street to reduce costs.
- (d) **Circulates** the report to the Community Boards for their information.

CARRIED

Councillor Doody expressed appreciation for the work of library staff. It was excellent to see the community participating in library programmes, children thriving in their reading, and homeschool children using the area.

Councillor Mealings thanked staff for the report and commended the libraries for their valuable contributions to the community and their focus on sustainability. She congratulated the staff on a successful year.

S Powell thanked staff, remarking that she was continually impressed by the libraries. She noted strong community engagement, highlighting the popularity of the Tinker Zone and the positive rapport built with the Digi-Coach Programme.

5.6 **Community Team Year in Review Report 2024/2025** – T Sturley (Community Team Manager)

T Sturley took the report as read.

Deputy Mayor Redmond noted the report's reference to the four wellbeings and asked, given the Government's Local Government Systems Improvements Amendment Bill did not identify community development as a core activity, what changes were being observed in this area. T Sturley advised that no changes were evident. She confirmed that the Council's community outcomes remained aligned with the four wellbeings and that staff were focused on implementing those outcomes. She emphasised the importance of demonstrating the viability and community value of Council activities.

Councillor Doody asked whether the Tradie Breakfast to Support Mental Health was the same initiative started by Waghorn Builders. T Sturley explained that there were two separate events. Staff supported the Waghorn Builders breakfast held annually in Kaiapoi, and in 2024 organised a Tradie breakfast in Rangiora featuring Lance Burdett, which included a public offering with a particular focus on the sport and recreation sector.

Moved: Deputy Mayor Redmond

Seconded: Councillor Powell

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** report No. 251201227870.
- (b) **Notes** the collaborative, community-led approach adopted by the Community Team as part of business as usual and Civil Defence response.
- (c) **Notes** that, all population and performance measure targets for the Community Development Strategy 2015 -2025 have been met or exceeded.

- (d) **Notes** that, going forward, the Year in Review report will detail results against the recently adopted Whakawhānake Hapori o Waimakariri – Waimakariri Community Development Strategy, 2025 – 2035.

CARRIED

Deputy Mayor Redmond supported the motion, observing that the report effectively highlighted several issues. He expressed concern that removing the four wellbeings would be detrimental, but noted that the Council could still undertake some of those activities. He emphasised that while community facilities were core activities, people should be the real priority. Deputy Mayor Redmond commended the Community Team for their contribution to a healthy society in the Waimakariri District, noting the benefits were evident.

Councillor Powell looked forward to her role as Portfolio Holder for Community Development and Wellbeing. She reflected on her involvement with the Waimakariri Access Group and other groups, observing the positive impact and support provided by the Community Team. She stated that wellbeing made the Waimakariri District a great place to live, with social care providing essential support to residents. Councillor Powell also supported the motion.

Councillor McLaren similarly supported the motion, praising the Community Team's approach of not attempting to deliver specialist services directly, but instead clearly defining its role by enabling experts to provide them.

Councillor Mealings concurred with the previous speakers, noting she was proud of all the work undertaken by the Council's Community Team.

In his right of reply, Deputy Mayor Redmond noted his recent attendance at Citizenship Ceremonies, where a video featuring the Governor General, Dame Cindy Kiro, included the phrase: *"What was the most important thing in the world? It was people, it was people, it was people."* He considered this a strong endorsement of community development.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

Nil.

7 PORTFOLIO UPDATES

7.1 Greenspace (Parks, Reserves and Sports Grounds) – Councillor Brent Cairns

Councillor Cairns provided Greenspace (Parks, Reserves and Sports Grounds) Portfolio updates, as below, prior to the meeting.

Several Greenspace projects reached milestones, and the Greenspace Team submitted the following projects to Community Boards for approval:

- Woodend Sefton Community Board
 - Waikuku Beach Recreation Facilities Master Plan - The Plan was approved by the Board in September 2025, with a request to review further the quality and provision of the current toilet facilities. The Board held a workshop in December 2025 to discuss various options. The Board requested a report comparing whole-of-life costs for complete replacement versus renovation, to be provided in March 2026
 - Woodend Beach Recreation Facilities Master Plan - With the Master Plan approved by the Board, staff were moving into detailed design work in early 2026 alongside engaging a cultural artist for the identified features so these could be integrated with the tender documentation. Staff aimed to release a tender in mid-March 2026, allowing time for a thorough, detailed design given

the site's complexity and the holiday period. Playground proposals had been received, and staff would confirm selections shortly, noting a 12- to 18-week lead time for equipment. While some Board members noted a preference for the existing play space to remain until the new one opens, this would depend on condition assessments. If early removal were required, staff would ensure clear communication to minimise any issues arising from the gap in provision. While construction will be well underway, completion before year-end 2026 was unlikely; staff and the Board were comfortable with this realistic approach.

- Kaiapoi Tuahiwi Community Board
 - Norman Kirk Playground had been installed and was being well used.
 - The Board approved the installation of a StoryWalk at Te Korotuaheka Wetlands/ Honda Forest in Kaiapoi. The StoryWalk would follow a looped path around the reserve for everyone to enjoy. A StoryWalk was installed at Northbrook Wetlands in Rangiora in early 2025 and was a great success. The plan was to install a StoryWalk in each ward in the Waimakariri District. The Kaiapoi StoryWalk would be installed in 2026.
- Rangiora-Ashley Community Board
 - The Board approved the Canterbury Street Reserve play space renewal. This project had community consultation with neighbours and a play centre. The plan would also address ongoing waterlogging issues in the play space, which have become more noticeable to the local community in recent years.
 - The Elm Green Reserve Concept Plan was approved for community engagement. This was a growth project driven by subdivisions in eastern Rangiora. Once engagement was completed, staff would review the concept plan before preparing a report for the Board.
 - The Board also approved staff issuing a project brief for a Sculpture of Howard Kippenberger along Kippenberger Avenue in Rangiora. The purpose of this brief was to invite expressions of interest in concepts that the Waimakariri Public Arts Trust would first review and then shortlist to three concepts for the Community Board to consider.

The Greenspace Team also held workshops with each of the Community Boards in December 2025 to update them on the progress of the 2025/26 General Landscape Budget projects. Board members were requested to submit ideas for landscaping projects, whereafter staff would hold follow-up workshops in March 2026 to review the proposals.

7.2 Community Facilities (including Aquatic Centres, Multi-use Sports Stadium, Libraries/Service Centres, Town Halls and Museums) – Councillor Bruce McLaren

- MainPower Stadium - The stadium was at capacity during peak times. There was some staff outreach to high schools to encourage after-school use.
- Waimakariri Libraries – Almost 400,000 people are visiting the various libraries, a 10% increase on the previous year. It was evident that libraries were more than just books. He was always moved by the happy buzz in the spaces.
- Aquatic Facilities – The 23,500 visitors in November 2025 alone were a phenomenal number. Although there was a user-pay fee, the cost of visiting the pool remained affordable, making it an inexpensive activity for hard-pressed families in the district.
- Oxford Town Hall – The projector at the hall was up for renewal.
- Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) - Supported by the New Zealand Red Cross, several AEDs were being renewed around the Waimakariri District.

7.3 **Community Development and Wellbeing** – Councillor Shona Powell

- Youth Action Plan was being finalised and would be ready for presentation to the Community and Recreation Committee at its February 2026 meeting and subsequent community consultation.
- Public consultation on the Welcoming Communities Plan was complete, and the draft document would be presented to the Community and Recreation Committee for adoption in February 2026.
- Successful funding acquisition to ensure continuity of English Language Classes and other activities for migrant newcomers.
- Successful funding acquisition for Youth-led activities into the New Year, including building on the Dudley Park Activation project.
- Support continued for the Age-friendly Advisory Group and associated activities.
- Project Control Group was being established to guide and monitor implementation of the Accessibility Plan, given that this was a Council Action plan, with deliverables identified by various teams across the Council, as part of its development.
- Working with the Salvation Army and other agencies on a sustainable solution to increasingly complex homeless cases.
- Working individually with several groups on strategic planning and governance, as well as funding
- Working with Arts Trusts on more streamlined governance and increased collaboration. Also, working on cataloguing and gathering relevant information on local Arts Collection Trust works.
- Pressure on food banks continued, alongside strategic support for food security.
- Youth unemployment continued to be a priority, but funding had been acquired for increased capacity.
- Planning a Health Service Forum in 2026, in collaboration with the Health Advisory Group and Social Services Waimakariri. The aim was to address access issues and silos, and to consider how to increase the health competency of the wider Waimakariri.
- The Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW) multicultural dinner saw some newer residents attending. It was an opportunity to capture photos to build the stock of images for community publications.
- The Older Persons Expo was held on 8 October 2025 at the Rangiora RSA, with a good turnout of stalls and attendees
- The newly marked Boccia courts at MainPower Stadium, the first dedicated courts in New Zealand, were launched with an invitational tournament with eight Canterbury players participating. Responses from players, supporters, and Boccia New Zealand were very positive. Sport Canterbury produced a video with interviews and coverage of the day.
- The Waimakariri Access Group was planning to hold their regular awareness training on accessibility for staff and elected members on Thursday, 12 March 2026.
- The Kaiapoi Menz Shed was well underway with their relocation, and the Community Team was working with them
- Many community events had been taking place across the Waimakariri District in the lead up to Christmas, which brought joy and included:
 - Santa Parades and market days.
 - The Wellbeing North Canterbury Trust Christmas Giving Trees, which were hosted by many businesses and organisations to collect new gifts for children and teens, and the successful 'Toot for Tucker'.
 - The Soroptimist International of North Canterbury Christmas Tree Festival, once again hosted in the Rangiora Service Centre.
 - The Mayoral Christmas morning tea.

7.4 **Arts and Culture** – Councillor Brent Cairns

Councillor Cairns provided an Arts and Culture Portfolio update, as below, prior to the meeting.

- Waimakariri Art Collection Trust was in the process of dissolving the Trust, including the following:
 - Building a list of artworks which had been purchased and donated.
 - Locating each artwork, cataloguing, labelling, and having each piece valued before it was handed over to the Council.
 - Several artworks were themed and could form part of exhibitions i.e. Passchendaele.
 - A student was coming on board to do a lot of the work.
 - Looking to create QR codes to provide the history of each artwork.
 - The Council may have to invest in plinths/cases to display some of the works.

7.5 **Property** – Deputy Mayor Philip Redmond

Deputy Mayor Redmond opted not to provide an update at this time.

7.6 **Housing** – Councillor Wendy Doody

Councillor Doody opted not to provide an update at this time.

8 **QUESTIONS**

Nil.

9 **URGENT GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil.

10 **MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Moved: Councillor Powell Seconded: Councillor Mealings

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 of that Act (or sections 6, 7 or 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may be), it was moved:

That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting.

10.1 Mainpower Stadium – Solar panels

Item No	Subject	Reason for excluding the public	Grounds for excluding the public.
REPORT			
10.1	Mainpower Stadium – Solar Panels	Good reason to withhold exists under Section 7	To enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, including commercial and industrial negotiations. LGOIMA Section 7(i)

CARRIED

CLOSED MEETING

The public excluded portion of the meeting occurred from 2:40pm to 3:01pm

OPEN MEETING**10.1 Mainpower Stadium – Solar Panels – I Clark (Project Manager).**

Moved: Councillor McLaren Seconded: Councillor Mealings

THAT the Utilities and Roading Committee

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251127225799.
- (b) **Notes** that the recently tendered contract for design, supply and installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the canopy area of the Mainpower Stadium did not result in a successful tender outcome; all tenders were rejected, and no contract was awarded.
- (c) **Approves** option one for procuring prices for the design, supply and installation of solar panels on the alternative rooftop area at Mainpower Stadium through a second open tender process.
- (d) **Notes** that the front steel canopy on the stadium's northwest corner was initially engineered to accommodate future solar panel installation. However, further investigation has determined that this is not the most practical option due to operational challenges and higher maintenance and capital costs.
- (e) **Notes** that this follows industry feedback received post-tender. Solar specialists recommend the roof as a better alternative, which would likely attract more competitive tenders and design proposals.
- (f) **Notes** that no work will be undertaken until the rooftop supplier confirms that the warranty will remain valid and that installation will not pose any issues.
- (g) **Notes** that the net present value (NPV) will be reassessed following tender to determine if the outcome represents a viable outcome.
- (h) **Notes** that the operational expenses that the Council incur will be offset over time.
- (i) **Notes** that solar panels typically last between 25 and 30 years, and modelling undertaken for this revised scheme shows the Council would start to see a return on the investment after approximately 11 years on a simple payback basis, which is unchanged from the original approved concept.
- (j) **Notes** that this report assists with the Council's environmental aspirations.
- (k) **Resolves** that the recommendations in this report be made publicly available but that the contents remain public excluded as there is good reason to withhold in accordance with Section 7(i) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act; "enable any local authority holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, including commercial and industrial negotiations"

CARRIED

11 **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 1pm in the Council Chamber, Rangiora Service Centre, 215 High Street, Rangiora.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 4:13PM.

CONFIRMED

Chairperson

Date

Workshop

- *Rangiora and Kaiapoi Museum Study Outcomes*

NOTES OF A WORKSHOP OF THE COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 215 HIGH STREET, RANGIORA, ON TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2025 AT 3:17PM

PRESENT

Councillors S Powell (Chairperson), W Doody, B McLaren, Deputy Mayor P Redmond and Mayor D Gordon (Teams).

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors T Bartle and T Fulton.

J Millward (Chief Executive), C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), L Sole (District Libraries Manager), D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager) and C Fowler-Jenkins (Governance Support Officer).

1. **Rangiora and Kaiapoi Museum Study Outcomes** – C Brown (General Manager Community and Recreation), L Sole (District Libraries Manager) and D Roxborough (Strategic and Special Projects Manager)

Questions/Issues:

- This exploratory process had been ongoing for more than a year, and there was growing concern about when a definitive engineering conclusion would be reached. The Museum was becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of progress. An alternative proposal had also been raised: installing a lift through the surface, and there was a strong desire to see this option assessed promptly. Could you please advise on a reasonable timeframe for receiving clear answers?
Regarding the engineering assessment, WSP engineers were currently undertaking this work. An earlier feasibility study indicated that installing a stair lift was technically possible; however, it would require remediation of the existing wall. To obtain detailed costings, staff were required to progress to a second phase involving a full engineering assessment, which is now underway. Staff expect to receive the results of this assessment in February 2026. These findings would determine whether the wall can support a stair lift installation. In addition to this option, alternative solutions, such as a crane lift or a hoist-type lift, would also be investigated as part of the process.
- Regarding the Rangiora Museum building, members of the Museum Committee expressed a preference to remain in the current facility. This position was unexpected, as the Council had previously received submissions requesting relocation. Staff were therefore surprised when the report findings indicated a desire to stay.
Initially, the Committee's view was unanimous with one exception. However, subsequent feedback from consultants confirmed that the Committee was now unanimously in favour of remaining in the existing building. Staff sought clarification from the consultant on whether this position originated with the Committee or was influenced during the process. The consultant advised that the Committee reached this conclusion independently, although staff consider it possible that the consultant's demonstration of how the Committee could be accommodated within the current space may have contributed to shaping that view.
- The Oxford Museum had requested an interim solution similar to the container arrangement used at Rangiora.
Staff were currently considering this request. The Oxford Museum required both short- and long-term solutions, and staff would need to begin reviewing the Museum's Collections Policy, as well as its Acquisitions and Disposals Policy, to determine appropriate next steps.

- *Regarding storage across all museums, the consultant had undertaken preliminary consideration of this issue. At this stage, they have determined that the Rangiora Museum could meet all its requirements within the existing building. However, further investigation was needed into whether separate storage would be required in Rangiora if the Museum relocated to the extended library. In that scenario, off-site storage was likely to become a more significant requirement.*
- *A question was raised as to whether the consultant had assessed the comparative cost of developing a single, purpose-built storage facility rather than continuing with a piecemeal approach for each museum.*
Staff had discussed this matter with the consultant, and it would be included among the options presented to the Council. There were several regional examples where this model had been successfully implemented.
- *It was noted that the Rangiora Museum building was a heritage facility owned by the Council. Clarification was sought as to whether the upgrades previously discussed, intended to bring the building up to an appropriate standard, would be required regardless of the Museum's future location. Staff advised that this issue had not yet been fully explored, but acknowledged that the need for upgrades posed a risk in any scenario.*
- *Concerns were expressed that the information regarding necessary upgrades to the Rangiora building remained vague. The building was transferred to the Council in 2015 because the volunteer group responsible for it lacked the means to continue its upkeep. Since then, the Council had not adequately invested in a comprehensive building upgrade. If the Committee wished to remain in the current location, the Council would need to assess whether the building was fit for purpose and determine the scale of work required to meet appropriate standards.*

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE WORKSHOP CLOSED AT 4:13PM

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

FILE NO and TRIM NO: GOV-01-04 / CMS-09-10-02 / 260128014558

REPORT TO: COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 17 February 2026

AUTHOR(S): Aimee Claassens, Community Development Facilitator
Tessa Sturley, Community Team Manager

SUBJECT: Welcoming Waimakariri Plan

ENDORSED BY:
(for Reports to
Council, Committees
or Boards)


General Manager


Chief Executive

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report seeks Community and Recreation Committee approval of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 as the framework for social cohesion in the Waimakariri District.
- 1.2. It also seeks the recommendation of the Community and Recreation Committee that Council approve the adoption of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029.
- 1.3. The first draft of the Plan was released for public consultation, by the Community and Recreation Committee in September 2025.
- 1.4. This report includes an overview of public and stakeholder group consultation feedback on the first draft of the Plan, summarised in the attached Consultation Summary document. This feedback has been a key consideration in the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029.

Attachments:

- i. Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 (Trim # 251007190087)
- ii. Welcoming Communities Stocktake Report (Trim # 250508081046)
- iii. Summary of public consultation feedback on draft Welcoming Waimakariri plan (Trim # 260128014607)

2. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee

- a) **Receives** Report No. 260128014558
- b) **Approves** the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 - 2029 for adoption by Council at its March 2026 meeting

- c) **Notes** that broad community engagement informed the development of the initial draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan.
- d) **Notes** that the attached Stocktake Report summarises that engagement, including detail of participating stakeholders.
- e) **Notes** that at the September meeting of the Community and Recreation Committee, the initial draft plan it was approved be released for community consultation.
- f) **Notes** that community consultation was undertaken via a Welcoming Waimakariri survey on Council's Let's Talk platform. The period for this consultation was 1 October – 30 November 2025.
- g) **Notes** that the attached Consultation Summary, summaries the results of the Let's Talk consultation, and feedback from the community and advisory groups listed in 1.4, above.
- h) **Notes** that Strategy and Business, Communications and Engagement, and Community Team staff reviewed the feedback in the Consultation Summary to determine appropriate amendments to the draft document, resulting in production of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, 2026 – 2029, presented in this report.
- i) **Notes** that The Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 document, covers the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2029.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Waimakariri is one of the fastest growing districts in New Zealand, with increasing diversity in the local population. This brings economic development opportunities, including increased capability to address skills shortages. If our community is to maximise these opportunities, it is prudent to facilitate strong social cohesion across our communities - applying an intentional approach to strengthening relationships between newcomers and the receiving community.
- 3.2. Newcomers are defined as anyone new to the District. This includes people from overseas, from other parts of New Zealand, international students and returning Kiwis.
- 3.3. Welcoming Communities was developed by Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, in collaboration with Immigration NZ as a mechanism to frame an intentional approach to social cohesion. The programme includes a national benchmarking standard that provides a guide to measuring what "welcoming" is. This incorporates eight pillars that frame the measurement of how inclusive we are as a District. These are:
 - Inclusive Leadership
 - Welcoming Communications
 - Equitable Access
 - Connected and Inclusive Communities
 - Economic Development, Business and Employment
 - Civic Engagement and Participation
 - Welcoming Public spaces
 - Cultural Identity

- 3.4. Involvement in the programme means being part of a national network of 35 Council across Aotearoa, New Zealand, including the Hurunui, Selwyn and Christchurch. This network provides access to a range of supports and examples of successful initiatives applied elsewhere.
- 3.5. The Waimakariri District Council joined the national Welcoming Communities programme in 2023. The Council receives \$50,000 per annum in funding from Immigration New Zealand to support 0.5 FTE facilitator for three years, tasked with developing a Welcoming Communities Plan.
- 3.6. Alongside formative data from a comprehensive range of sources, broad community engagement informed the development of the Welcoming Communities plan. Stakeholder in this engagement included:
 - Key local networks, including Waimakariri Migrant Agency Group, Social Services Waimakariri, Waimakariri Health advisory Group, Waimakariri Access Group, Waimakariri Youth Council,
 - Representatives from targeted sectors, including health, rural support, education and the faith sector
 - Migrants and newcomers with lived experience of being new to the Waimakariri District.

The attached Welcoming Communities Stocktake report details that engagement.

- 3.7. Following the collation of the stocktake report and workshops with an internal Project Control Group and Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group, a first draft of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan was produced. This identified three main themes, each with an associated defined outcome:
 - Collective Responsibility – Kotahitanga: Commitment to fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity is a shared responsibility, with Council and Community Partners leading by example, developing skills and knowledge that enable meaningful change.
 - A welcoming Waimakariri – Manaakitanga: The Waimakariri district is celebrated as a welcoming, a place where it is easy for newcomers to connect, be supported and take part in the community.
 - Being advocates and supporters – Kaihāpai: Community and businesses are actively supported and enabled to lead welcoming and inclusive projects and programmes.
- 3.7. Tables in the plan listed goals under each theme and activities to illustrate each could be achieved, serving as a springboard for the initial implementation plan.
- 3.8. The draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan was refined by Council's Strategy and Business, Communications and Engagement, and Community Team staff, following community consultation, via Council's Let's Talk platform and conversations with stakeholder involved in various community networks. This resulted in the production of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, 2026 – 2029, presented in this report.

4. ISSUES AND OPTIONS

- 4.1. The attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 was produced following broad stakeholder engagement, community consultation and a resulting review of the preliminary draft.
- 4.2. Community Consultation was undertaken via a Welcoming Waimakariri survey on Council's Let's Talk platform. The survey received 55 public responses.
- 4.3. Additional feedback was sought from key local community and advisory groups, including the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group, Waimakariri Access Group, Waimakariri Youth Council, Waimakariri Health Advisory Group, Global Locals of Waimakariri, Migrant Agency Group, Social Services Waimakariri, and the Waimakariri Age-Friendly Waimakariri Advisory Group. Feedback from these groups has been incorporated, alongside the Let's Talk survey responses, into the attached Consultation Summary.
- 4.4. As a brief overview of the Consultation Document, thematic analysis of the results and feedback includes considerations related to:

4.4.1. Content:

The majority of responses confirmed support for the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan as a framework for increased social cohesion across the District over the coming three years. Feedback from the networks was unanimously in favour, while the 55 'Let's Talk' consultation responses showed that 77% of public respondents were in support of the draft document.

Broad themes for feedback related to content highlighted the following suggested modifications to the draft document:

- Increased clarity on motivation for the plan and financial impacts.
- Inclusion of more detail-specific actions and measures in the tables.
- Strengthening the inclusion of the receiving community and New Zealand nationals in the actions.
- Inclusion of more of the research that dictated the goals, in the body of the Plan. E.g. Research that informed a desire for the inclusion of activities that can help migrants navigate New Zealand's unique bicultural context.
- Clarification of mana whenua involvement.

4.4.2. Design elements:

Broad themes for feedback related to design highlighted the following suggested modifications to the draft document:

- Simplifying and condensing the statistics and graphs in the section on local context.
- Including more diverse and local imagery.
- Adhering, where possible, to disability guidelines – to ensure the document is accessible to those who wish to engage with it.

- 4.3. Where appropriate, consideration of feedback from the community consultation has been incorporated into the content and design of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 -2029.

- 4.4. The Plan includes an overview of the evolving cultural demographic of the Waimakariri District. It discusses the challenges and opportunities identified as part of the broad engagement that informed its development and tells the lived experience of newcomers to our district.
- 4.5. The Plan also discusses the relevance of Welcoming Communities to Council's strategic direction, including alignment with Council's Community Outcomes and key Strategic Plans for the Waimakariri District.
- 4.6. The Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026 – 2029 document, covers the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2029. It is framed around three key themes
 - 4.6.1. **Collective Responsibility** – Kotahitanga: Council and community partners lead by example, prioritising the development of skills and knowledge that foster cultural awareness and embedding it as a standard practice across all areas of work.
 - 4.6.2. **A Welcoming Waimakariri** – Manaakitanga: The Waimakariri district is celebrated as a welcoming, a place where it is easy for newcomers to connect, be supported and take part in the community.
 - 4.6.3. **Being advocates and supporters** – Kaihāpai: Council, in collaboration with community partners, supports the community to initiate and take part in welcoming and inclusive activities
- 4.7. Under each Theme, an associated, high level Outcome Statement reflects the result of giving effect to that theme.
- 4.8. Each Theme umbrellas a set of Goals, that give effect to each theme.
- 4.9. A set of Actions, related to each Goal define what we, the community, supported by some of Council's various functions (particularly community development) can do to achieve that goal. These illustrate how the Goal could be achieved, as a guide to the implementation of the Plan.
- 4.10. Success Measures are documented, to ensure that each of the Actions detailed delivers the intended result.
- 4.11. In terms of implementation, the document discusses how activities will be funded, collaboratively, through central government and philanthropic funding streams. It also details the intended process for monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that the intended results are achieved effectively, efficiently and in line with proposed timelines for the Plan.
- 4.12. **OPTIONS**
 - 4.12.1. Option 1: Approve the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan to be adopted by Council.

This is the preferred option, given that the document has been prepared with extensive stakeholder engagement a strong evidence-base, and in alignment with Council's Community Outcomes for the District. Adopting the Plan in this the third year of funding means we are on track to fulfilling our obligation to the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

4.4.1. Option 2: Decline approval for the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, to be adopted by Council.

This is not a preferred option. There is an expectation by the broad range of networks that support this work that, through this strategic approach, Council has acknowledged the issues and opportunities of its residents and commits to its Community Outcomes for a safe, healthy, connected, inclusive and resilient District. Should we fail to meet funder expectations, we would have return funding granted by MBIE for the 2025/26 financial year and the two preceding years. This would equate to \$150,000.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

There are significant implications on community wellbeing as a result of this work:

- The application of an evidence-based, community-led approach ensures the development of sound, relevant initiatives that empower people to plan a part in creating a safe, healthy, connected and resilient District
- This work centres on the creation of connected, inclusive communities, where people have a sense of belonging.
- Broad sector collaboration results in better and locally accessible social, health, education and community service provision.
- People are empowered with skills and opportunities to access employment and engage in the life of their community.
- Community groups and volunteer-involving organisations are adequately skilled and resources to support the needs and deliver quality service to local residents.
- Our community will be able to sustain itself through future natural disasters or crises without strain being put on supply chains.

4.5. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG)

- 5.1.1. The development of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan has been informed by broad community engagement, including an Internal Project Control group and a stakeholder working group. That group, the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG) incorporates broad ethnic representation, including Indian, Filipino, Malaysian, Chinese, Fijian, South African and New Zealand. It also includes representatives from the health, youth, education, and social services sectors, an elected member and Council staff from the Community Team and Strategy and Policy. Note: Some members represent more than one sector.
- 5.1.2. In developing the initial draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan the Group felt it was important to ensure the wording would fit our community and be relevant to newcomers.
- 5.1.3. The preliminary draft document was consulted on via Council's Let's Talk platform and conversations with stakeholders involved in various community networks. This

resulted in the production of the attached Welcoming Waimakariri Plan, 2026 – 2029.

- 5.1.4. The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group provided their own specific feedback on the draft plan. This centred around the design elements being more inclusive of local diversity and accessibility standards.
- 5.1.5. The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group will support work on the actions in the plan going forward.

5.2. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga were communicated with at the commencement of the Welcoming Communities Programme. At that stage they declined formal participation. A follow up request for involvement was made in 2025 through Whitiara the consulting arm of Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

In both the stocktake and consultation on the draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan respondents expressed a desire for more connection with Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga. There is a potential opportunity for the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWG) to establish a relationship with the Rūnanga where priorities align e.g. connecting newcomers with the “getting to know us” workshop through Tuahiwi Education.

5.3. Groups and Organisations

Collectively collaborating with well over 300 community, business, education, government and non-government stakeholders, the Community Team facilitates a community-led approach to its work. Through its various working parties, project coalitions and steering groups, the Community Team has established and maintains an in-depth working knowledge of the Waimakariri District and the physical, socio-economic and environmental factors that affect the quality of life of our residents.

These extensive networks were utilised throughout the stocktake engagement and continued to be utilised in the consultation that informed the edits to the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan. These networks will continue to be invited to be involved in the implementation of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan.

5.4. Wider Community

Broad community engagement is an important part of the work of the Community Team. This ensures a community-led approach that is relevant to all with a stake in creating a safe, healthy, connected and resilient District.

Feedback from the public consultation on the draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan helped to enhance and clarify the plan and was considered, in line with the original research and community input that formed the draft.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the Community and Recreation Committee approving of Council adoption of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026-2029.

The Welcoming Communities programme has granted \$50,000 per financial year, for three years in funding for increased staff capacity for Councils to Develop the Welcoming Communities Plan.

This external funding and associated support via the Welcoming Communities framework has helped us to achieve the necessary increase in staff capacity, without putting additional demand on ratepayers and it is anticipated that, beyond the contract period, delivery of the Plan will continue via the community development function of the Community Team.

6.2. Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts

A US study (Derr, 2017) identified that resilience in the face of climate change is fostered by access to nature, family and friends, and supportive networks. This means that facilitation of initiatives, like Welcoming Communities, that generate positive connections, and wellbeing will be crucial if we are to mitigate the social consequences of climate change.

6.3. Risk Management

Should the draft Plan not be approved for public consultation, there is a risk that timelines for the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) would not be met and that the Plan would not be adopted by Council. This would mean that Council had failed to meet funder expectations and would have return funding granted for the 2025/26 financial year and the two preceding years. This would equate to \$150,000.

6.4. Health and Safety

Health and Safety considerations are included in planning for Community Development portfolio activities.

7. CONTEXT

7.1. Consistency with Policy

This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

7.2. Authorising Legislation

Local Government Act 2002 section 78, community views in relation to decision.

7.3 Consistency with Community Outcomes

The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report. This report relates to the following community outcomes:

a) SOCIAL - A place where everyone can have a sense of belonging:

- Public spaces are diverse, respond to changing demographics and meet local needs for leisure and recreation

- Council commits to promoting health and wellbeing and minimising the risk of social harm to its communities
 - Our community groups are sustainable and able to get the support they need to succeed
 - Our community has access to the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in society and to exercise choice about how to live their lives
 - People are able to enjoy meaningful relationships with others in their families, whanau, communities, iwi and workplaces
 - Our community has equitable access to the essential infrastructure and services required to support community wellbeing.
- b) CULTURAL - where our people are enabled to thrive and give creative expression to their identity and heritage:
- Public spaces express our cultural identities and help to foster an inclusive society.
 - All members of our community are able to engage in arts, culture and heritage events and activities as participants, consumers, creators or providers.
 - Waimakariri's diversity is freely expressed, respected and valued.
- c) ENVIRONMENTAL - that values and restores our environment:
- People are supported to participate in improving the health and sustainability of our environment.
 - Our communities are able to access and enjoy natural areas and public spaces.
- d) ECONOMIC - and is supported by a resilient and innovative economy:
- Enterprises are supported and enabled to succeed
 - There is access to meaningful, rewarding, and safe employment within the district
 - There are sufficient skills and education opportunities available to support the economy.

7.4 Authorising Delegations

The Community and Recreation Committee has delegated authority to develop goals and strategies, for activities the committee is responsible for - noting that Welcoming Communities is not listed in the activities but is recognised as part of the Community Development activity.

Aimee Claassens

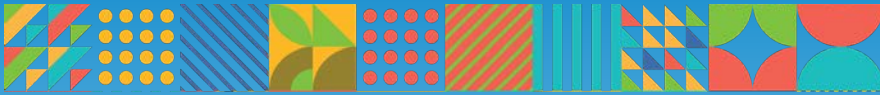
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
FACILITATOR – WELCOMING
COMMUNITIES

Tessa Sturley
COMMUNITY TEAM
MANAGER

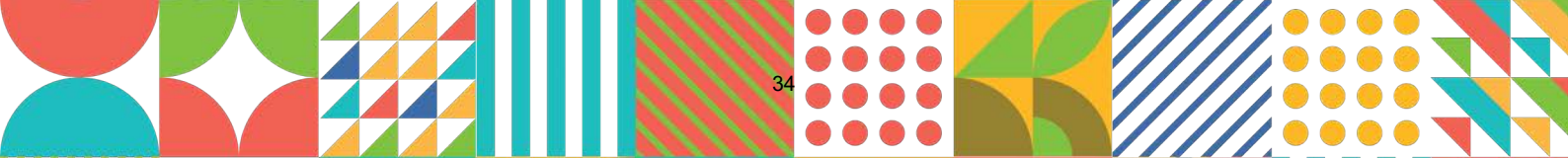


Welcoming Waimakariri 2026–2029

A Welcoming Communities Plan







Contents



Acknowledgements	2
A word from the Mayor	3
Introduction.....	4
Snapshot of plan priorities	5
Strategic alignment	6
Welcoming Communities' core values	6
Waimakariri District Council	6
The Community Development Strategy	7
Local context.....	8
District overview	8
Growth.....	10
Languages and places of birth	11
Ethnicity in the District.....	12
Plan development	13
Research	13
What the community told us	14
Themes.....	14
Drafting the plan	16
The Welcoming Communities Standard	16
The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group	16
Shifting South to the Regions – Rosalie Rapana	17
Priorities and outcomes	18
Collective responsibility – Kotahitanga.....	18
A welcoming Waimakariri – Manaakitanga	18
Being an advocate and supporter – Kaihāpai	19
Moving North of the Bridge – Sam Meni.....	20
The Welcoming Waimakariri Action Plan	21
Theme 1: Collective responsibility – Kotahitanga.....	22
Theme 2: A welcoming Waimakariri – Manaakitanga	24
Theme 3: Being advocates and supporters – Kaihāpai	26
How we fund Welcoming Communities projects	28
From the Philippines to Pegasus – Bob and Rica Bolanos.....	29
Monitoring and evaluation	30

Acknowledgements

The Waimakariri District Council would like to acknowledge the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) for providing the funding to develop the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan. The Council also acknowledges the programme support and supervision provided by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) and the national network of Welcoming Communities facilitators.

The process of the stocktake and plan development benefited from the strong community partner relationships and established networks of the Council's Community Team.

The input from newcomers, various sectors and Council departments is the foundation of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan and we acknowledge the community members for their willingness to share their experiences.

The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group committed their time, providing oversight and ensuring an ongoing community voice in this project. The Council acknowledges the group for their insight, passion and being ambassadors for their respective sectors and communities.



He aha te mea nui o te ao

What is the most important thing in the world?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people

A word from the Mayor

Welcoming Communities is a programme led by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) in partnership with the Ministry of Ethnic Communities and the Human Rights Commission. It provides a framework to work towards healthier, happier and more productive communities by welcoming, supporting and empowering newcomers into the life of the district.

Over the past decade, the Waimakariri District has seen a 30% increase in population, with increasingly diverse ethnic demographics. It is wonderful to see our District grow and evolve, but change is not easy for some. It can take quite a while for migrant newcomers to feel a real sense of belonging, particularly where language difficulties or cultural differences lead to social isolation and disempowerment. Such barriers limit the opportunity for many of our migrant newcomers to be able to share and apply their skills in their local community or the local employment market. These barriers could mean that we don't really see the extent of the rich cultural tapestry within the District.

This intentional approach to creating Welcoming Communities will help bridge the gap between newcomers and long-term residents, celebrate diversity, and support our new migrants to apply their unique skills, talents and experience to creating more vibrant communities across the district.

I endorse this document as a strategic approach to Waimakariri District's local implementation of the Welcoming Communities Programme.



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dan Gordon'.

Dan Gordon
Mayor



Introduction

Our vision is to create a district where newcomers feel genuinely welcomed, valued, and empowered to participate fully in community life. A welcoming community is not just inclusive, it is stronger, more vibrant, and better connected.

The Welcoming Communities programme is a national initiative led by Immigration New Zealand (INZ), in partnership with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities and the Human Rights Commission. The Waimakariri District Council joined this programme in 2023 and secured funding from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to develop a welcoming plan tailored to the District.

The initiative promotes collaboration between newcomers and the receiving community, fostering inclusivity and connection. Successful settlement outcomes not only strengthen social cohesion but also deliver recognised economic benefits, one of the key drivers behind the programme.

Newcomers include individuals arriving from overseas such as recent migrants, former refugees, international students and returning citizens. It also includes anyone relocating from other parts of New Zealand.

As one of New Zealand's fastest-growing districts, Waimakariri is experiencing increasing population diversity. The Welcoming Communities programme provides an opportunity to build on the Council's existing social inclusion efforts.

Social inclusion is a key determinant of health and wellbeing, requiring particular attention in a semi-rural district. The Waimakariri District Council Community Team works in partnership with local groups and agencies to strengthen networks and deliver initiatives that promote social cohesion, including those aimed at newcomer and cultural inclusion. Key projects include the creation of Welcome Bags and resources, neighbourhood

connection events, and the establishment of the Migrants and Newcomers Group (now evolved into the Migrant Agency Group and Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW)).

The Community Team sits within the Community and Recreation Department, alongside Greenspace, Libraries, and Aquatics. These units play a pivotal role in building a connected, inclusive community and provide excellent scope for embedding a welcoming ethos into Council's ongoing work.

Participation in Welcoming Communities ensures cohesion across Council in supporting inclusive practice. It motivates continued support for initiatives (internal and community-led) and, through its structured framework, helps identify gaps and opportunities. The programme also offers access to a national peer support network, which has grown from an initial pilot of nine councils to 35 participating councils across the country.

Developing a local welcoming plan involves taking stock of existing welcoming practice and community aspirations, forming a community advisory group and producing a district-specific plan. The national Welcoming Communities framework provides a benchmark through a set of eight key elements with a total of 30 sub-outcomes that contribute to successful settlement for newcomers.

The following document outlines alignment with strategy, the district's local profile, the research methodology, and the process leading to the plan's outcomes. The overarching themes developed by the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (the community advisory group) and Council staff are presented in tables at the end of this document. Whilst aligned with the Welcoming Communities Standard, each district is encouraged to tailor its approach to reflect its unique characteristics and strategic priorities.



Snapshot of plan priorities

The themes that the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG) and Council staff decided on are purposefully broad in order to ensure the longevity of the plan. Each theme has one key outcome, goals, and proposed actions to achieve those goals.

The WWWG resonated with the use of Māori terms/values as they developed the themes. Values of Kotahitanga, Manaakitanga, and Kaihāpai informed the overarching themes that lead the plan journey.



Collective responsibility

Kotahitanga—oneness or unity and expresses the idea of collective action or responsibility.

Outcome

Commitment to fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity is a shared responsibility, with Council and community partners leading by example, developing skills and knowledge that enable meaningful change.

Goals

- 1.1 There are more opportunities to learn about mana whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi as New Zealand's founding document.
- 1.2 Council leads by example, embedding cultural understanding in its practices and ensuring services meet the needs of all Waimakariri residents.
- 1.3 Council is committed to the Welcoming Communities programme.

A welcoming Waimakariri

Manaakitanga—hospitality, kindness, generosity, support—the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

Outcome

The Waimakariri District is a welcoming place where it is easy for newcomers to connect, be supported and take part in the community.

Goals

- 2.1 The value of all newcomers, including those with diverse heritage, choosing to live and work in Waimakariri is understood and celebrated.
- 2.2 Newcomers are able to easily link with social, health and support services, recreational activities and feel socially connected.
- 2.3 Newcomers find Council communications easy to understand and Council services easy to access.

Being advocates and supporters

Kaihāpai—advocate, champion, promoter, supporter, upholder, backer, campaigner, proponent.

Outcome

Community and businesses are actively supported and enabled to lead welcoming and inclusive projects and programmes.

Goals

- 3.1 Community organisations are enabled to initiate and lead welcoming projects and programmes.
- 3.2 The business sector promotes and encourages local employers to provide welcoming and inclusive workplaces.
- 3.3 A strong youth focus is included in Welcoming Waimakariri activities.

Strategic alignment

Welcoming Communities' core values

1. We recognise Aotearoa New Zealand's history and Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi as the foundation for bringing all cultures together as one nation.
2. Tangata whenua play a vital role as leaders and partners in Welcoming Communities. The programme is guided by two Māori values: Whanaungatanga (building relationships) and Manaakitanga (hospitality and care).
3. Successful settlement happens when newcomers and local communities engage and share their voices.
4. Everyone brings unique skills, knowledge and experiences that help communities flourish. Welcoming Communities respects the cultural and social capital of members of the receiving communities and of newcomers.
5. We encourage locals to understand why newcomers are important and how welcoming initiatives benefit social, cultural and economic wellbeing.
6. Welcoming Communities builds on the ongoing work of councils and communities to promote diversity and inclusion.
7. Understanding our own culture and world view is an important step towards building a cohesive community.
8. Welcoming Communities incorporates the experience and input of newcomers and works with them to help them feel a part of communities in New Zealand and establish a sense of belonging.
9. Welcoming Communities gives locals the chance to experience and celebrate New Zealand's growing cultural diversity.

Waimakariri District Council

The Council has a statutory responsibility under the Local Government Act 2002 to identify strategic priorities and community outcomes that reflect the aspirations and needs of Waimakariri District residents. One of the current strategic priorities is to:

"Enhance community wellbeing, safety, inclusivity and connectedness."

The value of this priority is stated as follows:

"Waimakariri District is a high growth area with an increasingly diverse population. We want to build a wellbeing centred community where all feel safe and welcome; are accepted and connected."

The diagram below shows the Council's strategic framework that informs the delivery of a wide range of Council services, including infrastructure planning, business development, community services, and environmental stewardship. This work is underpinned by robust community engagement, evidence analysis, and alignment with national and regional planning.

The Waimakariri Community Development Strategy is one of the Council's key strategies as shown in figure 1 that supports this priority statement. It is the overarching strategy for the Welcoming Communities Plan.

Figure 1: Waimakariri District Council Strategic Framework



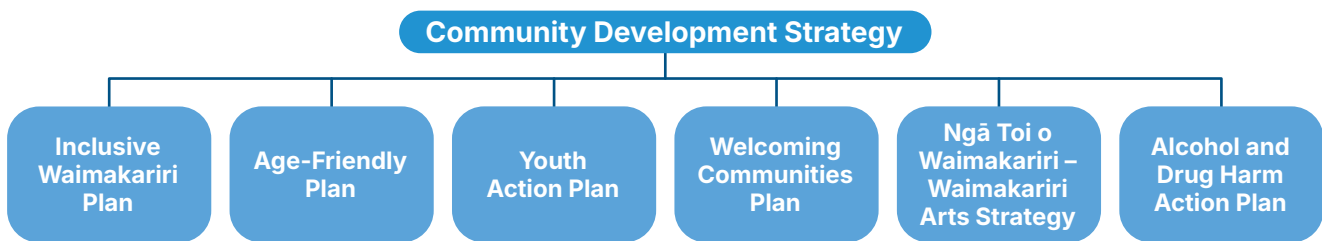
The Community Development Strategy

The objectives of the Community Development Strategy encompass all aspects of the Council's Community Outcomes. These objectives ensure that the Waimakariri is a District where people are:

- Safe and healthy; and able to access the determinants of good health and wellbeing
- Welcome and included, as part of our local communities—geographic and 'of interest'
- Informed and empowered to contribute to local decision making and achieve their aspirations
- Engaged and connected into the district's activities.

To address the broad range of community development activities and initiatives, several plans have been developed giving effect to specific priorities in both the Community Development Strategy and the Long-Term Plan as illustrated in the diagram below.

Figure 2: Community Development Strategy and plans



Welcoming Week was celebrated alongside Council's 'Welcome to the Birds' community event.

Local context

District overview

The Waimakariri District lies to the north of Christchurch on the Canterbury Plains, extending from the Waimakariri River in the south, Pegasus Bay in the east and the Puketeraki Range in

the west. It is bounded to the north by Hurunui District. The District sits within the takiwā (territory) of Ngāi Tūāhuriri, which is one of 18 Ngāi Tahu regional papatipu rūnanga, to represent mana whenua interests.



225,500ha

Land area of the District

\$15.1b

Land value (January 2025)

\$28.7b

Capital value (January 2025)

30,204

Rateable properties (January 2025)

Beach settlements

Waikuku
Woodend
The Pines
Kairaki

Rural villages

Cust
Sefton
Ohoka
Ashley
Mandeville
Tuahiwi
(Hapū of Te Ngāi O Tūāhuriri Rūnanga)

Main towns

Rangiora
Kaipoi
Oxford
Woodend
Pegasus

Figure 3: Extract from Waimakariri District Council Annual Plan 2025–2026

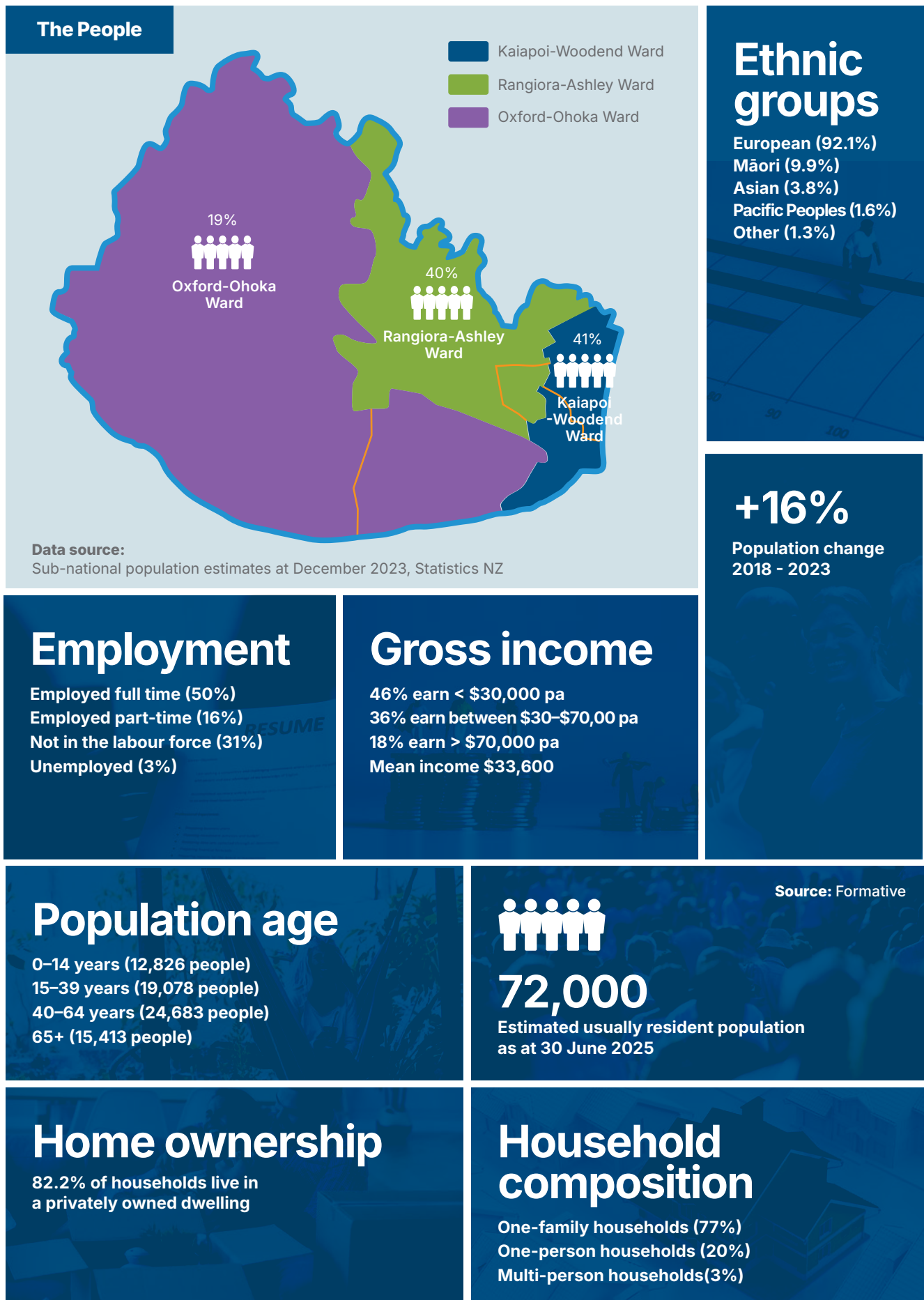


Figure 4: Extract from Waimakariri District Council Annual Plan 2025–2026

Growth

The Waimakariri District has seen an 11% increase in population in the 2023 census, compared to the last census in 2018. The district population is estimated at 72,000 for 2025 with mid-level projections estimating a population of 77,100 by 2033.

The District has a generally ageing population with a median age of 44.7 years, increasing on figures from 2013 (42.9) and 2018 (43.6).

*Stats NZ Census Data, 2023
Community Development Strategy 2025-2035*

New housing developments and proximity to Christchurch, as well as recreation and entertainment opportunities have resulted in an influx of younger couples and families looking to settle here.

Growth in the local hospitality, dairying, construction and retirement/aged care sectors has attracted an increasingly ethnically diverse workforce.

*Youth Strategy Review 2025
Community Development Strategy 2025-2035*



Ravenswood is one of Waimakariri's newest and fastest growing developments

Languages and places of birth

It is useful to have an idea of the statistics as an indication of the makeup of this district, but it is important to note that even though statistically the Waimakariri District may not “look” as diverse as some other parts of New Zealand, there are a range of residents who represent other languages and cultures.

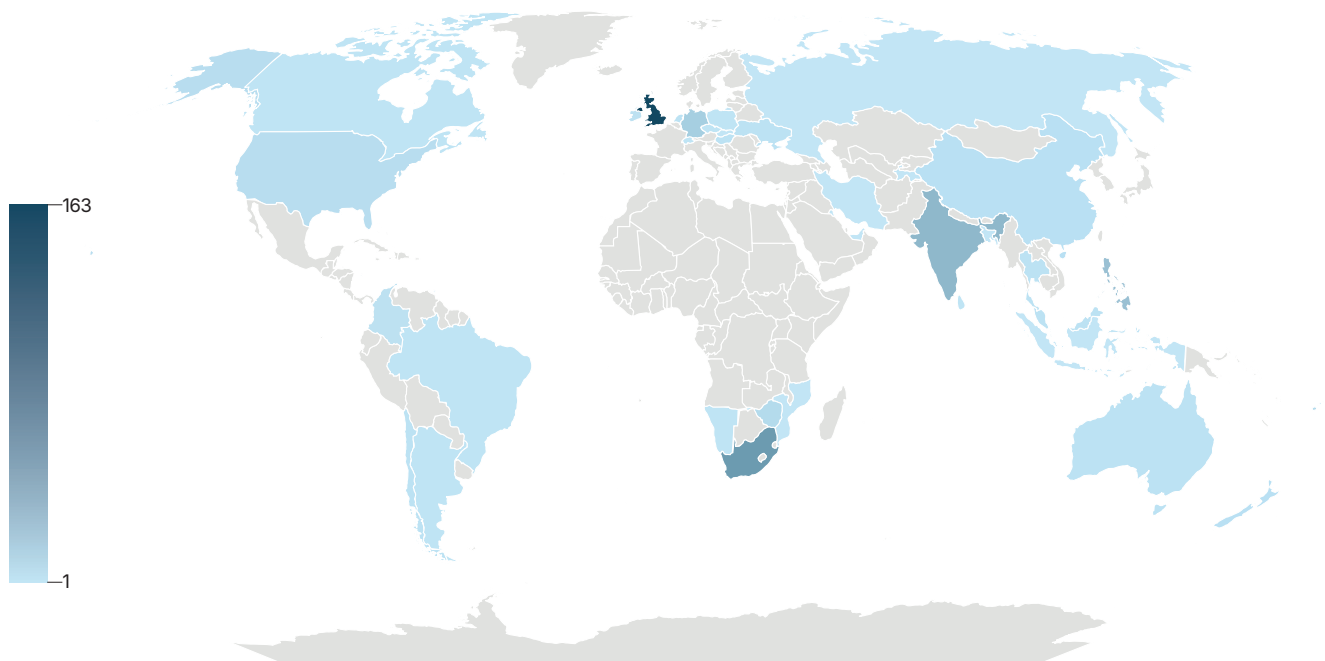
The top five spoken languages in the district (other than English) are Māori (1.8%), Afrikaans (0.9%), French and German (0.8%), Tagalog and New Zealand Sign Language (0.5%) and Spanish (0.4%). Other languages represented in the 2023 census include Hindi, Samoan, Northern Chinese, Punjabi, other forms of Chinese and Tongan.

We know from the range of nationalities at local citizenship ceremonies that there are possibly more languages spoken than indicated in the 2023 Census.

Residents who are part of nationalities and language groups that represent a smaller percentage could be more vulnerable—feel more isolated, less able to access information and less likely to participate in the community. Creating a plan with the most vulnerable in mind sets up the infrastructure for growth and serves the whole District.

Waimakariri has a higher comparative percentage of people born in the United Kingdom and Ireland than the New Zealand average (8.5% vs 5.4%) but is on par for those born in Australia (1.8% vs 1.7%), Europe (1.7% vs 1.8%) and North America (0.7% vs 0.9%). There is a lower percentage of those born in Asia (2.6% vs 11.6%) and the Pacific islands (0.5% vs 3.8%) in comparison with the New Zealand average.

Figure 5: Country of Birth - Waimakariri Citizenship Ceremonies May 2024 to June 2025 reflect a range of nationalities (40), represented by the 475 new citizens.



Ethnicity in the District

Ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to.

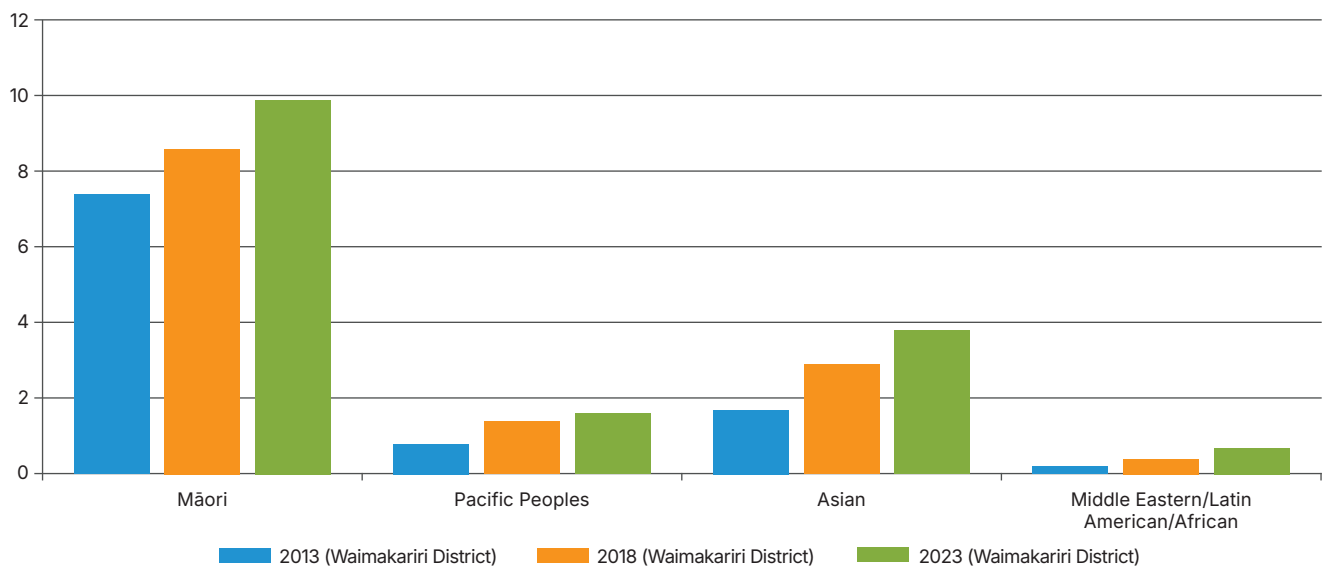
Ethnicity is self-perceived, and people can affiliate with more than one ethnic group.

As a result, the total of all categories may be more than 100 percent.

Table 1: Percentage of population that identify with each ethnic group, Waimakariri District and New Zealand, 2023 Census

2023 Census	Waimakariri District	New Zealand
Māori	9.9	17.8
European	7.4	7.2
Asian	3.9	17.4
Pacific Peoples	1.8	10
Other Ethnicity	1.3	1.1
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	0.7	1.9
New Zealand European	86.2	62.1

Figure 6: Percentage of population that identify with Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian or MEELA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African) ethnic group (level 1), Waimakariri District, 2013–2023 Censuses illustrating steady growth



Plan development

Research

To understand the local context and experiences of newcomers, a stocktake was undertaken. This included an exploratory mixed method design to identify experiences, existing support for newcomers and any opportunities for new initiatives.

Qualitative data collection

Internal engagement with Council units provided understanding of the district across a broad scope. It was also an opportunity to engage with units that may have responsibilities related to the elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard—Greenspace, Service Centres, Libraries, Governance, Communications and Engagement and Strategy and Policy.

External engagement with community partners and individual sectors:

- Waimakariri Access Group
- Waimakariri Health Advisory Group
- Citizens Advice Bureau North Canterbury
- Waimakariri Youth Council
- Migrant Agency Group
- The North Canterbury Sport and Recreation Trust
- Social Services Waimakariri
- Age-Friendly Waimakariri Advisory Group.

In addition, outreach was conducted across individual sectors such as:

- Health
- Farm support
- Education
- Faith-based organisations
- Business sector.

To gather community input, a survey was conducted with 81 responses, and two focus groups were held to gain deeper qualitative insights.

Quantitative data collection

- Review of Council policies and strategies
- Community survey: 81 responses
- Community Development Strategy survey 2024
- Migrant employers and stakeholders survey 2022
- Migrant experiences
- Inclusive Waimakariri Plan-Accessibility Plan 2025-2028 evidence
- Stats NZ Census results

Mana whenua involvement

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tūāhuriri expressed a preference to be kept informed but were unable to participate in the initial design of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan due to resourcing and competing priorities.

Acknowledging the importance of consultation protocols, the Council has lodged a request to provide updates on the plan's progress and to invite future collaboration through Whitiara, the established conduit for Ngāi Tūāhuriri.



What the community told us

The quantitative results provided insight into the region's pull factors, the elements that helped individuals feel supported, and the demographic composition of the district.

Thematic analysis of the survey results, focus groups and sector meetings was plotted against the Welcoming Communities Standard to show gaps, opportunities and existing work that support being welcoming.

Themes:

- 1. Newcomers:** Challenge finding newcomers, waves of ethnic groups and pull factors.

"The main issue I see is the lack of information regarding newcomers in the area. If we had information, we could locate newcomers and invite/encourage them to come to these meetings."

Survey respondent

- 2. Challenges of integration and inclusion:**

Some respondents talked about feeling welcomed initially but having difficulty making deeper connections. They expressed experiences of loneliness. Some mentioned difficulties in understanding and communication, cultural differences or "us and them" mentality, racism and xenophobia. There was a desire for more events to promote connection and celebrate diverse culture and foods.

"People born and raised here tend to have their own group of friends and though happy to chat at functions or sport events, don't offer invitations to their homes for a cuppa/meal or include you in their group gatherings or outings. Therefore, you remain an outsider, which makes it lonely if living on your own."

Survey respondent

- 3. The importance of community-led initiatives and support:** The value of Council and community collaborations, volunteering and community support services.

"We bought here because of better housing choices but appreciate the Waimakariri community more than anything else. From our first transactions with Council staff while buying, through the genuine welcome to the total Pegasus experience, to the volunteering opportunities we have taken advantage of, to my newfound discovery of Silver Fitness offered by the North Canterbury Sport & Recreation Trust, it's hard to fault the welcome we have received."

Survey respondent

- 4. Accessible infrastructure and services:**

Access to public transport and the value of community facilities, such as libraries and sports centres, that provide essential spaces for connection and deliver vital services to residents.

"Oxford connecting to other areas is tough, no regular bus or transport or cycle ways etc. Improving public transport. e.g. from Rangiora to Christchurch Hospital will help both staff working there and patients."

Survey respondent

The natural environment was a main pull factor for newcomers in the public survey but there was a desire expressed for public spaces to be featured more in information about the district. Food gardens, possible use of parks for events and the range of outdoor activities on offer was pointed out as attractive. Having safe spaces in which to engage in recreation was also seen as important.

"Garden, garden, garden—community garden :). Local events get together, movie in the park, family park, food culture, kids game."

Survey respondent

5. Healthcare accessibility: Language, transport, and costs were listed as barriers, as were lack of knowledge about health navigators, systems and translation services. Retaining general practitioners and health professionals was seen as another point about being welcoming in the district.

"It (lack of appointment) may be due to perceived language difficulties the appointments are deferred as being "full" as the practices know the appointment will take longer."

Interview respondent

6. The role of Council: Some respondents noted support services and resources as important. They also mentioned the value of being more pro-active to reach newcomers and break down barriers with those wary of government. Others mentioned the need for further work on exemplifying biculturalism and cultural competency training.

"Welcome Nights" or information evenings where the council sponsors a meeting of newcomers and invites CAB, library, local MPs, INZ representative to talk about topics of interest for people new to the community."

Survey respondent

7. Need for accessible information: There was an encouragement to continue what is currently supported (Welcome Bags, services offered by Waimakariri Libraries, Visit Waimakariri, Next Steps website), and improve accessibility in formats and translations. It was also suggested that Council might help streamline information about the district—events, hobbies and points of connection.

It was suggested that a "How to Kiwi" series or resource might support cultural inclusion.

"Accessible information (is needed) in multiple formats and translatable."

Survey respondent

8. Greater reflection and involvement of mana whenua: There was a general desire expressed for the reflection of mana whenua in the narrative of the district—the special unique local history. It was also felt that it would be useful to offer education about what biculturalism means in New Zealand, for new to New Zealand nationals, as this can cause misunderstanding in a multicultural context.

"When the church celebrated Matariki a person from (overseas) viewed it as "woke" and was resistant. See this as a scope for doing more cultural induction and workshops around te Tiriti and biculturalism."

Interview respondent



Waimakariri Libraries hosts kapa haka performances from school groups during Te Wiki o te Reo Māori - Māori Language Week.

Drafting the plan

The research findings were mapped against the 30 sub-outcomes of the Welcoming Communities Standard to identify potential alignments and inform the stocktake report. This report was reviewed by an internal Project Control Group comprising representatives from various Council departments. The wide range of opportunities and suggestions identified were then consolidated into key themes, which formed the basis for developing a draft concept plan.

The Welcoming Communities Standard

Welcoming Communities provides a framework for plan development that includes guidance on how to plot and measure what "welcoming" is through the Welcoming Communities Standard. The Standard offers councils and communities a benchmark for what a successful welcoming community looks like and guides the activities they undertake through their welcoming plans. The aspects covered in the Standard are those that could be reasonably planned for and delivered at a local level.



The Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group

In May 2025 the Council approved the establishment of the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG) to ensure a community lens in the finalisation of the plan.

Group vision

"To foster a connected and inclusive Waimakariri, where everyone feels welcomed, safe, valued, informed and empowered to participate fully in their communities."

As community representatives, the group's role is to help frame the final draft of the Waimakariri Welcoming Community Plan document and then progress the implementation of the plan.

The group is comprised of members representing a variety of sectors including:

- Newcomers
- Health
- Education
- Business
- Youth
- Cultural groups
- Council staff
- Elected representative

The group worked through the initial draft plan from the stocktake, grouping the proposed opportunities and actions into broader themes.

Shifting South to the Regions

Rosalie Rapana

Rosalie Rapana and her family of five moved down to Waimakariri from Auckland—something she was very nervous about.

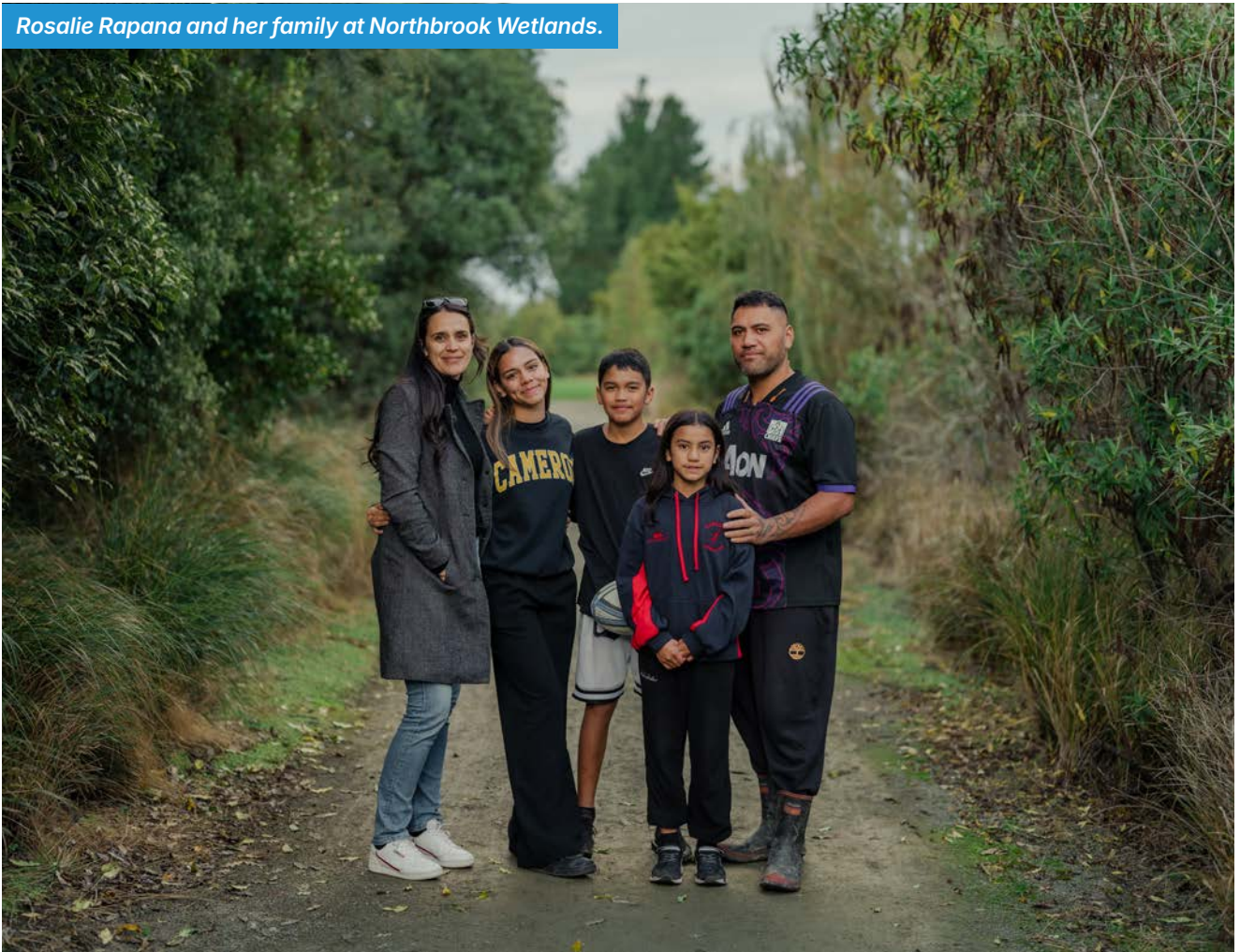
"I was born in Auckland, grew up in Whangārei and then moved back to Auckland when I was 23. My husband and I had established our careers and raised our three kids in Auckland, so this was a huge move for us. But now that we're here, we wouldn't go back."

Rosalie and her husband enjoy the shorter commute to work, and as a big sporting family, have found it easy to get everyone into local sports teams. They've been impressed by the District's schooling options for their kids.

"As much as they've done really well in Auckland, I feel they're getting even more down here than ever before. They learn different things here—they're growing vegetables and learning how to cook them, they go on amazing school camps and they are learning so much more te reo and Māori culture."

"For our family it's been a great move in every sense: schooling, employment, house buying and life goals—everything."

Rosalie Rapana and her family at Northbrook Wetlands.



Priorities and outcomes

1

Collective responsibility - Kotahitanga

Context

By embedding inclusive practices and through its community development function, the Council, in collaboration with established community partners and networks, can inspire the wider community to continue/instigate their own inclusive practices.

Feedback from the stocktake highlighted the importance of leading, promoting and normalising cultural competency, deepening newcomers' understanding of New Zealand's historical bicultural context, particularly within a multicultural society. It also highlighted the value placed on the use of te reo Māori and respectful recognition of shared values contributed to fostering a sense of belonging.

"When I hear people having a go at trying to correctly pronounce te reo Māori like "Rangiora", "Ohoka", it's awesome. Inviting newcomers into the historical stories (Māori and Pakeha stories) of this beautiful area can help newcomers to connect to their new home."

Survey respondent, from elsewhere in New Zealand, 2–5 years in the District.

Outcome - Commitment to fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity is a shared responsibility, with Council and community partners leading by example, developing skills and knowledge that enable meaningful change.

Goals

- 1.1. There are more opportunities to learn about Te Tiriti o Waitangi as New Zealand's founding document.
- 1.2. Council leads by example, embedding cultural understanding in its practices and ensuring services meet the needs of all Waimakariri residents.
- 1.3. Council is committed to the Welcoming Communities programme.

2

A welcoming Waimakariri - Manaakitanga

Context

As Waimakariri grows, so does its cultural diversity and need to foster connection and inclusion. Newcomers generally reported feeling welcomed in the District; however, there is potential to enhance their experience further. Themes from the stocktake highlighted feelings of isolation and a keenness for more community events where there would be opportunities to connect and celebrate culture. Reducing social isolation is a key element of the Community Development Strategy. The Council's Community Team work with community partners to increase social inclusion by sharing community stories, and ensuring newcomers find it easy to settle in the district, through access to information, skills and social connection.

I LOVE THE COOKING CLASSES! It is not easy to find friends in my age group. It is easier if you are a parent with kids, you are automatically in contact with parents/ preschool friends. For elderly there are morning teas/coffees, but nothing in between.

Survey respondent, Germany, 10 years in the District

With national support, and by investing in systems and initiatives that meet the needs of a diverse population, the District can strengthen its social infrastructure and uphold manaakitanga, ensuring everyone feels at home.

Outcome - The Waimakariri District is a welcoming place where it is easy for newcomers to connect, be supported and take part in the community.

Goals

- 2.1. The value of newcomers, including those with diverse heritage choosing to live and work in Waimakariri is understood and celebrated.
- 2.2. Newcomers are able to easily link with social, health and support services, recreational activities and feel socially connected.
- 2.3. Newcomers find Council communications easy to understand and Council services easy to access.

3

Being an advocate and supporter - Kaihāpai

Context

The Council, with its well-networked community development function, is well-positioned to facilitate community-led projects that contribute to more welcoming and inclusive communities across the District.

"If community services can collect temp jobs and pass it on to the newcomers to begin somewhere. Also giving them an orientation on how to get into the community to recover from the shock of migration."

Survey respondent from India in the region 1-2 years

The Waimakariri District is home to industries that hold accredited status for supporting work visas. It has dairy farms that bring in migrant workers. It is also well served with aged care and hospitality businesses whose employment base is largely migrant based. In encouraging and facilitating cultural competency across local workspaces, particularly through its connection to Enterprise North Canterbury (ENC), Council can help local employers increase their productivity, efficiency, staff retention and workplace culture.

Feedback in the stocktake suggested that there was a need to support new-to-New Zealand youth by fostering connection, addressing racism, and providing pastoral care for both domestic-international and international students. Through its Cultural Inclusion, Youth Development and Mayors Taskforce for Jobs, Council has developed relationships across the youth support sector. These will be most valuable in working to address the challenges for local migrant/immigrant and diverse rangatahi.

Outcome - Community and businesses are actively supported and enabled to lead welcoming and inclusive projects and programmes.

Goals

- 3.1. Community organisations are enabled to initiate and lead welcoming projects.
- 3.2. The business sector promotes and encourages local employers to promote more welcoming and inclusive workplaces.
- 3.3. A strong youth focus is included in Welcoming Waimakariri activities.

In 1979, Hillie and Ina moved to New Zealand from Holland, not knowing a word of English. The first few years were a struggle, but eventually they settled into the Kiwi way of life, which they love!

The sisters have been hosting annual Dutch cooking classes as part of the popular Global Locals of Waimakariri Multicultural Cooking class series.



Moving North of the Bridge

Sam Meni

Sam Meni moved to Waimakariri with his wife in 2023 and chose to settle in Ravenswood.

Christchurch born and bred, Sam looked at options outside of the city to build their first home.

"We knew Christchurch was unaffordable for us, so at the time the options were go out to Selwyn or come out to Waimakariri."

He and his wife both have full-time jobs in Waimakariri and are now raising their first-born daughter together. Sam enjoys the short drive to work and being able to get to the beach in less than 10 minutes—a favourite spot for walking his dog.

Sam says moving north across the bridge from Christchurch feels like coming home.

"My Grandmother was born and raised here and since she has passed it's been really rewarding learning more about the place she once called home."

Sam and his dog Trevor enjoy exploring Waimakariri's coastal areas.

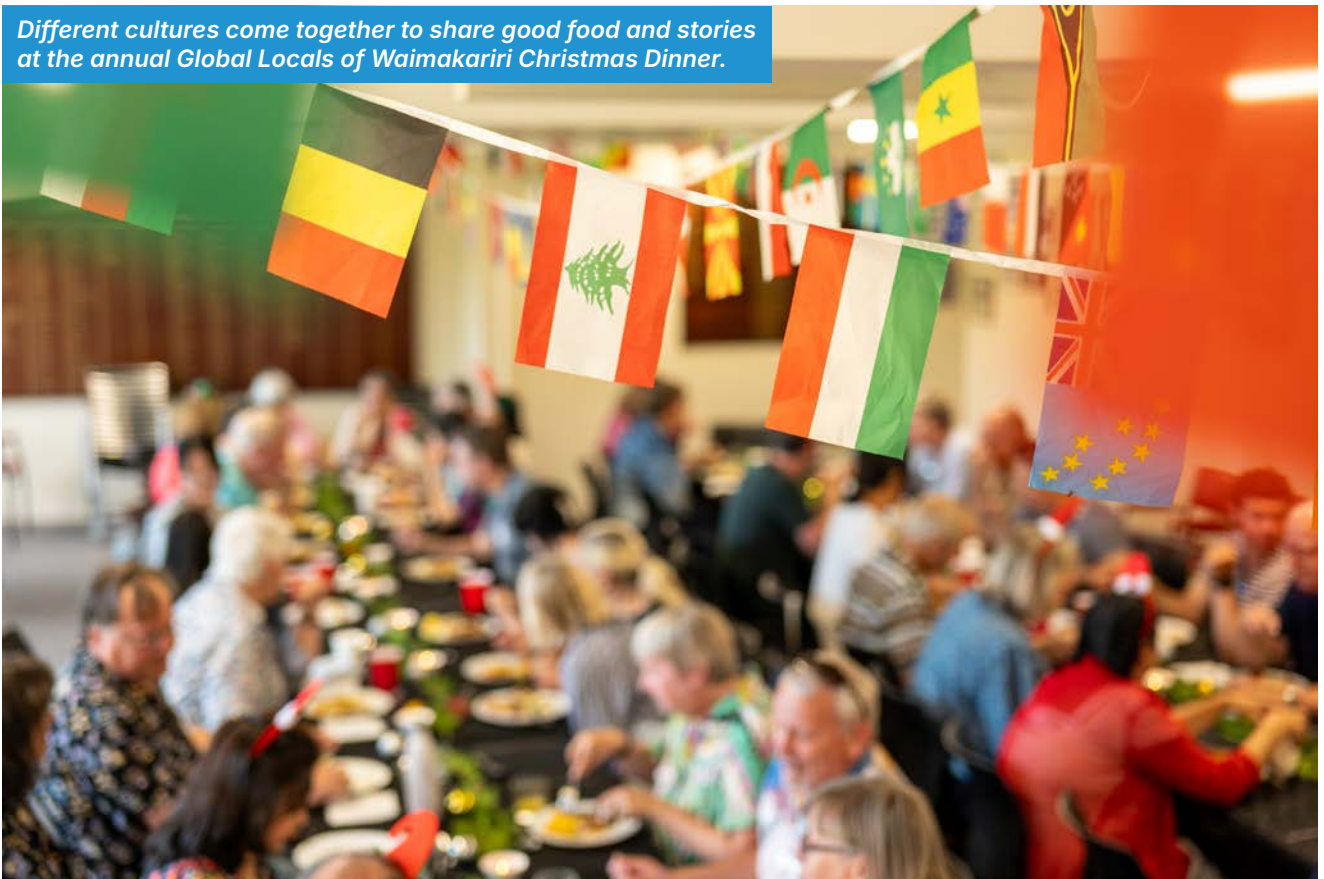


The Welcoming Waimakariri Action Plan

The following tables outline the three themes, the related outcomes, main goals and actions. Each table identifies the lead, potential collaborators, an estimated timeframe and measures of success. Some actions build on existing practice, while others introduce new initiatives. To show alignment with the

Welcoming Communities programme, each action is linked to the relevant Standard element, demonstrating the plan's comprehensive approach to creating a welcoming community.

Different cultures come together to share good food and stories at the annual Global Locals of Waimakariri Christmas Dinner.



Theme 1: Collective responsibility - Kotahitanga

Outcome	Commitment to fostering cultural awareness and inclusivity is a shared responsibility, with Council and community partners leading by example, developing skills and knowledge that enable meaningful change.		
Goal	1.1. There are more opportunities to learn about mana whenua and Te Tiriti o Waitangi as New Zealand's founding document		
Actions	Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard	
1.1.1	Ensure regular communication with Ngāi Tūāhuriri to create opportunities for Welcoming Waimakariri partnership. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Ngāi Tūāhuriri, Whitiara, Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG)	Year 1–3	1. Inclusive Leadership
1.1.2	Encourage opportunities for te reo Māori to become increasingly visible as a cultural taonga (treasure) that enriches New Zealand's national identity by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Libraries Heritage team to further communicate the District's place names and history through a media campaign • Advocating for more opportunities for te reo Māori to be included in public signage • Include common te reo Māori terms in a "How to Kiwi" guide for new to New Zealand newcomers e.g. <i>kia ora, hui, mahi, kapahaka, Karakia, Tamariki, motu.</i> Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Whitiara	Year 1–3	1. Inclusive Leadership 8. Culture and Identity
1.1.3	Promote opportunities to learn about the District's unique history and the continuing story of Waimakariri settlement, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation in public places, e.g. art installations • The Libraries' Māori and New Zealand collections • Further learning e.g. Tuahiwi Education workshops • Local museums and historical societies Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Whitiara, Waimakariri Public Arts Trust	Year 1	1. Inclusive Leadership 7. Welcoming Public Spaces 8. Culture and Identity
Measures of success: Feedback from newcomers on how easy it was to find out more about the District's history and Aotearoa/New Zealand's bicultural heritage.			

Goal			
1.2. Council leads by example, embedding cultural understanding in its practices and ensuring services meet the needs of all Waimakariri residents.			
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
1.2.1	Provide cultural awareness training for Council leaders and staff. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG)	Year 1–2	1. Inclusive Leadership 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities
1.2.2	Provide community focused cultural inclusion facilitation to ensure support continues for the Migrant Agency Group, Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW), and WWWG, and programmes such as English Language Classes, race unity awareness, and the migrant drivers programme. Lead: Waimakariri District Council	Existing	1. Inclusive Leadership
1.2.3	Encourage community groups and the business sector to undertake cultural awareness training. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Enterprise North Canterbury, WWWG	Year 3	3. Equitable Access 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 5. Economic Development, Business and Employment 8. Culture and Identity
1.2.4	Regular review of Council services to ensure they meet diverse cultural needs e.g. burial practices. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: WWWG	Year 2	1. Inclusive Leadership 3. Equitable Access 8. Culture and Identity
Measures of success: Provision of cultural awareness workshops, number of Council staff participating in training, number of community and businesses hosting cultural awareness workshops.			
Goal			
1.3. Council is committed to the Welcoming Communities programme.			
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
1.3.1	Ensure sufficient resourcing for ongoing facilitation and support of the Welcoming Waimakariri initiative. Lead: Waimakariri District Council	Year 1–3	1. Inclusive Leadership
1.3.2	Continue to participate and contribute to the National Welcoming Communities programme, including engaging in regional and national networks. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG)	Year 1–3	1. Inclusive Leadership
Measures of success: Acquiring sufficient project funding through philanthropic sources. Council continues to provide facilitation for Welcoming Waimakariri projects and the Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group. Completing stage one Welcoming Communities accreditation.			

Theme 2: A welcoming Waimakariri - Manaakitanga

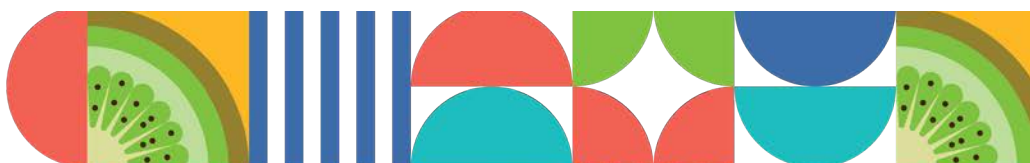
Outcome	The Waimakariri District is a welcoming place where it is easy for newcomers to connect, be supported and take part in the community.		
Goal	2.1. The value of all newcomers, including those with diverse heritage, choosing to live and work in Waimakariri is understood and celebrated.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
2.1.1	Gather and share stories of newcomers and local initiatives that foster connection and inclusivity. Lead: Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG) Collaborate: Waimakariri District Council	Year 1–3	2. Welcoming Communications 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 8. Culture and Identity
2.1.2	Encourage local art groups to feature art/artists in public spaces that celebrate cultural diversity. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Waimakariri Public Arts Trust, WWWG	Year 1	4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 7. Welcoming Public Spaces 8. Culture and Identity
2.1.3	Encourage the provision of opportunities that connect the receiving community and newcomers through shared cultural experiences and significant celebrations and events. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Cultural groups, event/promotions agencies, Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW), WWWG	Year 1–3	4. Connected and Inclusive Communities
2.1.4	Create a Welcoming Toolkit to provide guidance on culturally responsive best practice for receiving community organisations (e.g. sports clubs, businesses). Lead: WWWG Collaborate: Waimakariri District Council	Year 2	1. Inclusive Leadership 2. Welcoming Communications 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities
Measures of success: Number of stories shared and level of engagement across media. Number of exhibitions/collaborations/events showcasing art that celebrates cultural diversity. Number of events and attendance numbers. Development of a Welcoming Toolkit.			

Goal	2.2. Newcomers are able to easily link with social and health support services, recreational activities and feel socially connected.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
2.2.1	<p>Encouraging newcomers to feel part of the community and socially connected through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of volunteering opportunities, newcomer groups, sports and recreational clubs • The creation of opportunities to connect with Council to increase civic participation. <p>Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG), Citizens Advice Bureau North Canterbury (CABNC), Volunteer coordinators, Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW), Libraries, English Language Classes, Rural Support Trust, Dairy Women's Network.</p>	Year 1	<p>2. Welcoming Communications</p> <p>4. Connected and Inclusive Communities</p> <p>6. Civic Engagement and Participation</p>
2.2.2	<p>Work with likely existing points of contact to link newcomers with community information and local services e.g. Welcome Bags.</p> <p>Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: schools, healthcare centres, Tuahiwi Marae, retirement villages, faith groups, Libraries.</p>	Year 1	<p>2. Welcoming Communications</p>
2.2.3	<p>Advisory groups advocate to health and social services providers to consider and adapt services to meet newcomer needs e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking down barriers to healthcare access • Targeted communication. <p>Lead: WWWG Collaborate: Waimakariri Access Group (WAG), Waimakariri Health Advisory Group (WHAG), Social Services Waimakariri (SSW).</p>	Year 1	<p>1. Inclusive Leadership</p> <p>3. Equitable Access</p>
<p>Measures of success: Observed increase of newcomer participation in community organisations and groups, number of Welcome Bags distributed, reported advocacy statements from advisory group meetings.</p>			
Goal	2.3. Newcomers find Council communications easy to understand and Council services easy to access.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
2.3.1	<p>Ensure communications are easy to understand, so that newcomers know what Council does and what services are available to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlining the information on the "Living Here" webpages with links to other useful sites • Include visuals and pictorial signage • Promote accessibility to translation services • Advocate adhering to the Whaikaha Ministry for Disabled Persons guidelines on accessible information. <p>Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: WWWG, WAG</p>	Year 1–2	<p>2. Welcoming Communications</p> <p>3. Equitable Access</p>
2.3.2	<p>Collate a resource pool of locals and Council staff with language fluency and/or cultural knowledge to support public communication, especially in emergencies.</p> <p>Lead: Waimakariri District Council</p>	Year 1	<p>2. Welcoming Communications</p> <p>3. Equitable Access</p> <p>4. Connected and Inclusive Communities</p>
<p>Measures of success: User testing shows that information is easy to find and access. Increase use of pictorial signage. Register of persons with language fluency and/or cultural knowledge produced.</p>			

Theme 3: Being advocates and supporters - Kaihāpai

Outcome	Community and businesses are actively supported and enabled to lead welcoming and inclusive projects and programmes..		
Goal	3.1. Community organisations are enabled to initiate and lead welcoming projects and programmes.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
3.1.1	Support collaborative community led cultural inclusion and connection activities and projects by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging use of community facilities and parks (e.g. help with choosing appropriate spaces, booking process, health and safety planning) • Providing support and guidance to groups leading community initiatives (e.g. event planning workshops, funding applications). Lead: Waimakariri District Council	Year 1–3	1. Inclusive Leadership 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 7. Welcoming Public Spaces
3.1.2	Support new and existing cultural groups and networks that focus on welcoming newcomers. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Welcoming Waimakariri working Group (WWWG), Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW), Migrants Agency Group.	Year 1–3	4. Connected and Inclusive Communities
3.1.3	Encourage use of the Welcoming Toolkit by community groups, clubs and organisations. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: WWWG, regional associations.	Year 3	3. Equitable Access 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities
Measures of success: Number of community cultural activities and projects. Increase in membership of existing cultural groups and newcomer networks. Distribution and uptake of the Welcoming Toolkit			
Goal	3.2. The business sector promotes and encourages local employers to provide welcoming and inclusive workplaces.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
3.2.1	Identify opportunities to collaborate with and support businesses to share welcoming workplace practices and promote inclusivity by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging use of the Welcoming Toolkit by employers • Supporting the sharing of resources for staff who are new to the District. • Supporting cultural training for business owners. Lead: Enterprise North Canterbury Collaborate: Waimakariri District Council, WWWG and business associations.	Year 2	3. Equitable Access 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 5. Economic Development, Business and Employment
3.2.2	Connect entrepreneurs new to the District to local business networks and support. Lead: Enterprise North Canterbury	Year 1–3	5. Economic Development, Business and Employment
Measures of success: Increasing membership to current business networks. Distribution and uptake of the Welcoming Toolkit.			

Goal	3.3. A strong youth focus is included in Welcoming Waimakariri activities.		
Actions		Time frame	Welcoming Communities Standard
3.3.1	Partner with Youth Council and schools to enhance and extend cultural and social support opportunities for all young newcomers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting establishment of youth multicultural/ newcomer groups• Linking with Waiyouth events in the District• Aligning with the pending Youth Action Plan for the District• Connecting international students to local youth focused initiatives. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Youth Council, Waiyouth, Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group (WWWG), Schools.	Year 1–3	3. Equitable Access 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 8. Culture and Identity
3.3.2	Engage and respond to the experience and challenges of dual nationality young people who may be second-generation (or more), living in the Waimakariri District. Lead: WWWG Collaborate: Schools, Waimakariri Youth Council, youth groups.	Year 2	4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 8. Culture and Identity
3.3.3	Respond to opportunities to collaborate with schools to further support their culturally diverse students and whānau. Lead: Waimakariri District Council Collaborate: Schools, WWWG, Waimakariri Youth Council.	Year 1–3	3. Equitable Access 4. Connected and Inclusive Communities 8. Culture and Identity
Measures of success: Engagement level in youth focused events. Increased support for culturally diverse young people including second or more generations. Number of collaborations with schools.			



How we fund Welcoming Communities projects

Welcoming Communities is all about working together. In line with our community-led development approach, funding for each project is decided collaboratively by stakeholder working groups during planning. This ensures activities are well-resourced, sustainable, and reflect best practice.

When planning, we look at what each partner can contribute, whether that's time, skills, spaces, or financial support. We also explore opportunities for philanthropic funding, central government grants, and sponsorship to make projects happen.

Council plays its part too, usually through in-kind support. This includes helping with community development facilitation, providing meeting spaces, promoting activities, and assisting with planning, delivery, and evaluation.

Every activity in this plan has been shaped using this collaborative and resource-conscious approach because together, we make Welcoming Communities thrive.



Waikuku Beach in summer. One of the main pull factors to the Waimakariri District is the natural environment, with opportunity to enjoy various outdoor pursuits.

From the Philippines to Pegasus

Bob and Rica Bolanos

When they decided to migrate, Bob and Rica Bolanos explored options in the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Ultimately, they landed on New Zealand for its unique blend of a small, agriculturally based country with a modern, first-world feel.

The move began with their three children in 2006 when Bob landed a role on a dairy farm in Rotherham, a small town in Hurunui. With a degree in Agribusiness Management and a passion for dairy farming, the transition felt natural.

Over 12 years working across Canterbury farms, Bob built a strong reputation for improving dairy efficiency and farm management, often overcoming

resistance and prejudice from traditional farmers. He later became a vocal advocate for Filipino workers, and at the time he retired from dairy farming in 2017, there were 5,000 Filipinos working on farms across Canterbury.

Bob and Rica now live in Pegasus and are both actively involved in groups and activities that support newcomers settling in Waimakariri.

Bob helped establish the Waimakariri Migrants and Newcomers Group, which aims to support migrants, refugees and newcomers in the District. Bob and Rica also host a Filipino cooking class as part of the annual Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW) Multicultural Cooking class series.

Rica and Bob.



Rica at the GLOW Filipino cooking class.



Bob with participants at the Filipino cooking class, part of the GLOW Multicultural Cooking classes series.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Welcoming Waimakariri Plan is a living document. As community needs priorities change over time, regular reviews will be necessary to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

While the plan provides a high-level framework, its actions can be updated to ensure continued progress toward the intended outcomes.

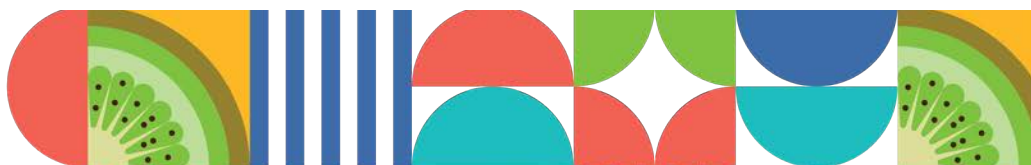
To ensure its success it is important that Council continues to support the Welcoming Communities programme.

Ongoing evaluation of the Waimakariri Welcoming Plan will ensure the sustainability of welcoming initiatives through:

- Ensuring effective evaluation and measuring outcomes is part of all welcoming initiatives.
- Ensuring participant and community partner feedback is collected at Welcoming Waimakariri promotions and events.
- Tailoring a platform for hearing newcomer needs and experiences.
- Reviewing the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan in three years.



Children exploring the playground at Owen Stalker Park, Woodend. There are many reserves and parks in Waimakariri for young families to enjoy.





215 High Street
Private Bag 1005
Rangiora 7440, New Zealand
Phone 0800 965 468
waimakariri.govt.nz

251007190087



Waimakariri Welcoming Communities Stocktake report

| 2025



Contents

Introduction	2
Aim of the stocktake	2
Method and scope.....	2
Qualitative data collection.....	2
Quantitative data collection	3
Results	3
Background and context.....	3
Waimakariri at a glance	4
Growth	4
Stocktake limitations.....	5
Community involvement	5
Quantitative Results	5
Public survey (81 responses)	6
Qualitative Results	10
Aligning the findings with the Welcoming Communities Standard	11
Inclusive Leadership.....	12
Welcoming Communications	15
Equitable Access.....	16
Economic Development, Business and Employment.....	20
Civic Engagement and Participation	22
Welcoming Public Spaces	23
Culture and Identity	24
Next steps in Plan development	25

Waimakariri Welcoming Communities Stocktake

Introduction

The Welcoming Communities programme recognises communities are healthier, happier and more productive when newcomers are welcomed and can participate fully in society and in the local economy. Welcoming Communities actively seeks to mobilise and involve members of the local communities in welcoming activities, along with newcomers.

The Waimakariri District Council (WDC) mission is “to pursue with the community a high quality physical and social environment, safe communities, and a healthy economy.” To support this mission the Council’s Community Team includes a variety of portfolios including those dedicated to social inclusion, older persons, disabilities and migrant inclusion. As the district is growing and there is increasing diversity, Welcoming Communities represented an opportunity to add to the social inclusion work with a strategic framework supported by a national network. The benefits that have been shown in established Welcoming Communities Councils align with the strategic outcomes of the Council and the Community team that aim to facilitate a stronger, safer, vibrant community.

The Waimakariri District Council joined Welcoming Communities in 2023 and receives external funding from Immigration New Zealand for 3 years to develop the plan.

Aim of the stocktake

The objective of the stocktake is to produce a snapshot of initiatives and services that promote welcoming activities in the district. Guiding what “welcoming is” is the Welcoming Communities Standard, comprised of 8 elements (e.g. Welcoming Communications). The stocktake provides a means of benchmarking the Waimakariri District against these elements. The stocktake will inform the development of the Welcoming Communities Plan for the Waimakariri District, the aim of which is to shine a light on existing activities, avoid duplication and identify areas of focus for being welcoming to migrants and newcomers.

Method and scope

An exploratory mixed methods design was used to identify programmes and initiatives that support welcoming newcomers. Newcomers are defined as newcomers from overseas (recent migrants, former refugees, international students and returning citizens) and people relocating from other parts of New Zealand. Support for the development of the survey was given by an informal steering group.

Qualitative data collection

Internal engagement and community outreach

The project was internally introduced within the Council and externally through engagement with key community partners, including:

- Waimakariri Access Group
- Waimakariri Health Advisory Group
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Youth Council

- Migrant Agency Group
- Sports North Canterbury

In addition, outreach was conducted across individual sectors such as:

- Health
- Farm support
- Education
- Faith-based organisations

To gather community input, a survey was conducted with 81 responses, and two focus groups were held to gain deeper qualitative insights.

Quantitative data collection

- Review of Council policies and strategies
- Community survey: 81 responses
- Community Development strategy survey 2024,
- Migrant employers and stakeholders survey 2022
- Migrant experiences
- Inclusive Waimakariri Plan evidence
- Stats NZ Census results

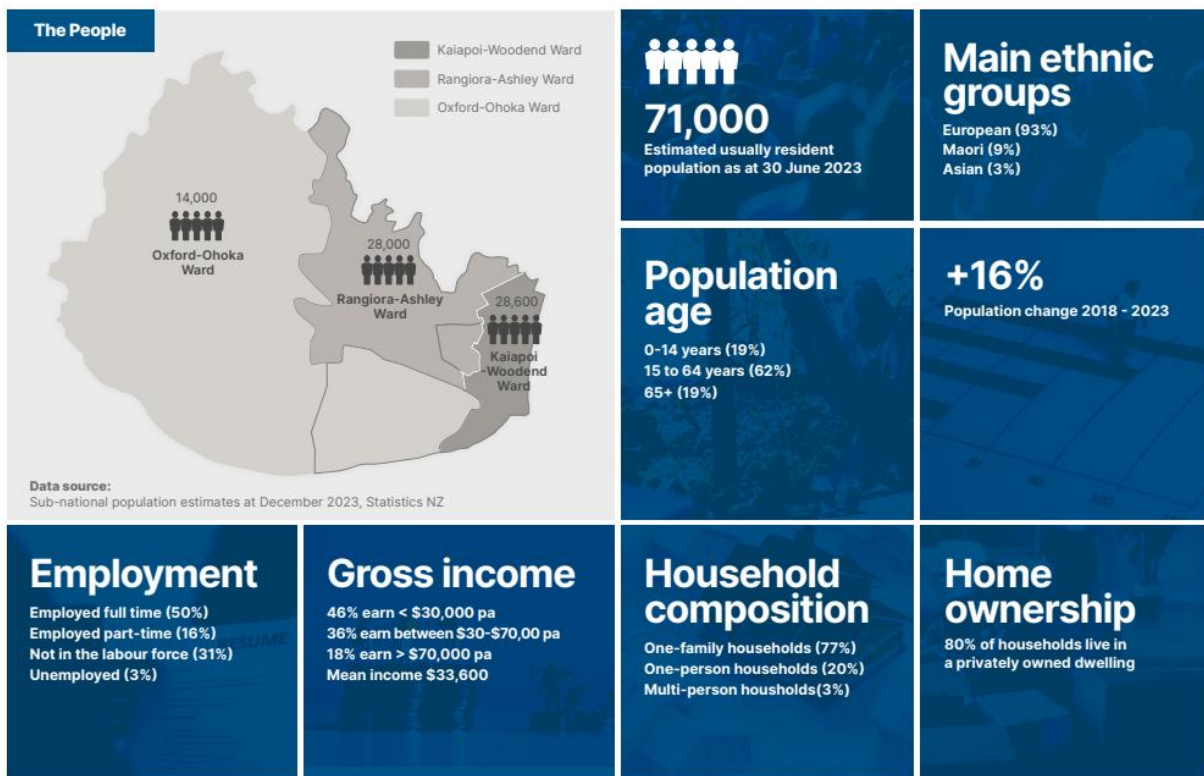
Results

Quantitative results formed a picture of pull factors to the region, what helped individuals feel supported and what the demographic breakdown of the district.

Thematic analysis of the survey results, focus groups and sector meetings was plotted Welcoming Communities Standard to show gaps, opportunities and existing work that support being welcoming.

Background and context

Waimakariri at a glance



The Waimakariri District lies to the north of Christchurch on the Canterbury Plains, extending from the Waimakariri River to the south, Pegasus Bay in the east and the Puketeraki Range in the west. It is bounded to the north by Hurunui District. The District sits within the takiwā (territory) of Ngāi Tūāhuriri, which is one of 18 Ngāi Tahu regional papatipu rūnanga, to represent mana whenua interests.

More than 80% of the population is concentrated in the eastern part of the District in the main urban areas of Rangiora, Kaiapoi, and Woodend/ Pegasus/Ravenswood. Oxford is the largest town in the western part of the District. These larger towns are supplemented by smaller rural villages and four beach settlements.

Growth

The 2023 census indicates that 43.6% of the population lived elsewhere 5 years ago. The District has seen a 11% increase in population in the 2023 census, compared to the last census in 2018. Currently the Waimakariri population is 66, 246 with mid-level projections estimating a population of 77,100 by 2033. The District has a generally ageing population with a median age of 44.7 years, increasing on figures from 2013 (42.9) and 2018 (43.6).

Stas NZ Census Data, 2023

Community Development Strategy 2025-2035

The development of subdivisions and proximity to Christchurch as well as recreation and entertainment opportunities have, however, resulted in an influx of younger couples and families

looking to settle here. Growth in the local hospitality, dairying, construction and retirement/aged care sectors has attracted a significant population of locally based workers who may represent a diversity of ethnicities

Youth Strategy Review 2025

Community Development Strategy 2025-2035

Stocktake limitations

The stocktake is a snapshot of the district. Time and resourcing means that a comprehensive analysis of the district is limited. The plan will be adapted as new information and relationship building occurs.

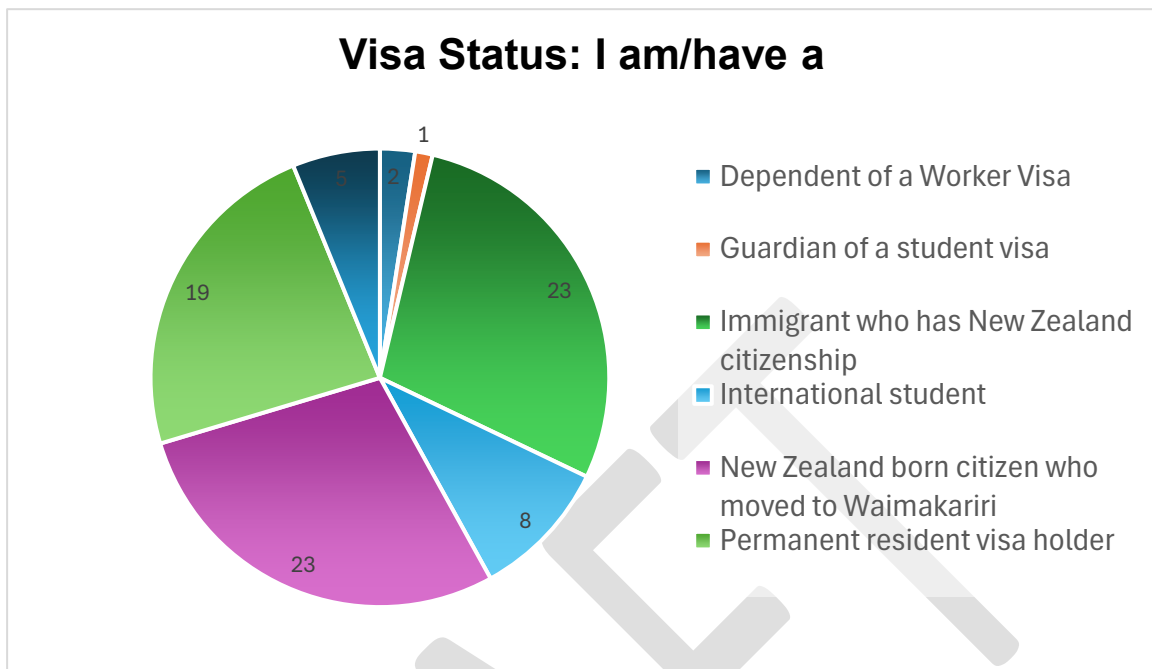
Community involvement

A small steering group of 4 has assisted the part time facilitator in 2024 in developing the survey and keeping on track. A Council Project Control Group will be established to refine the development of the plan in concurrently with an Advisory Group that will support future developments and roll out of initiatives

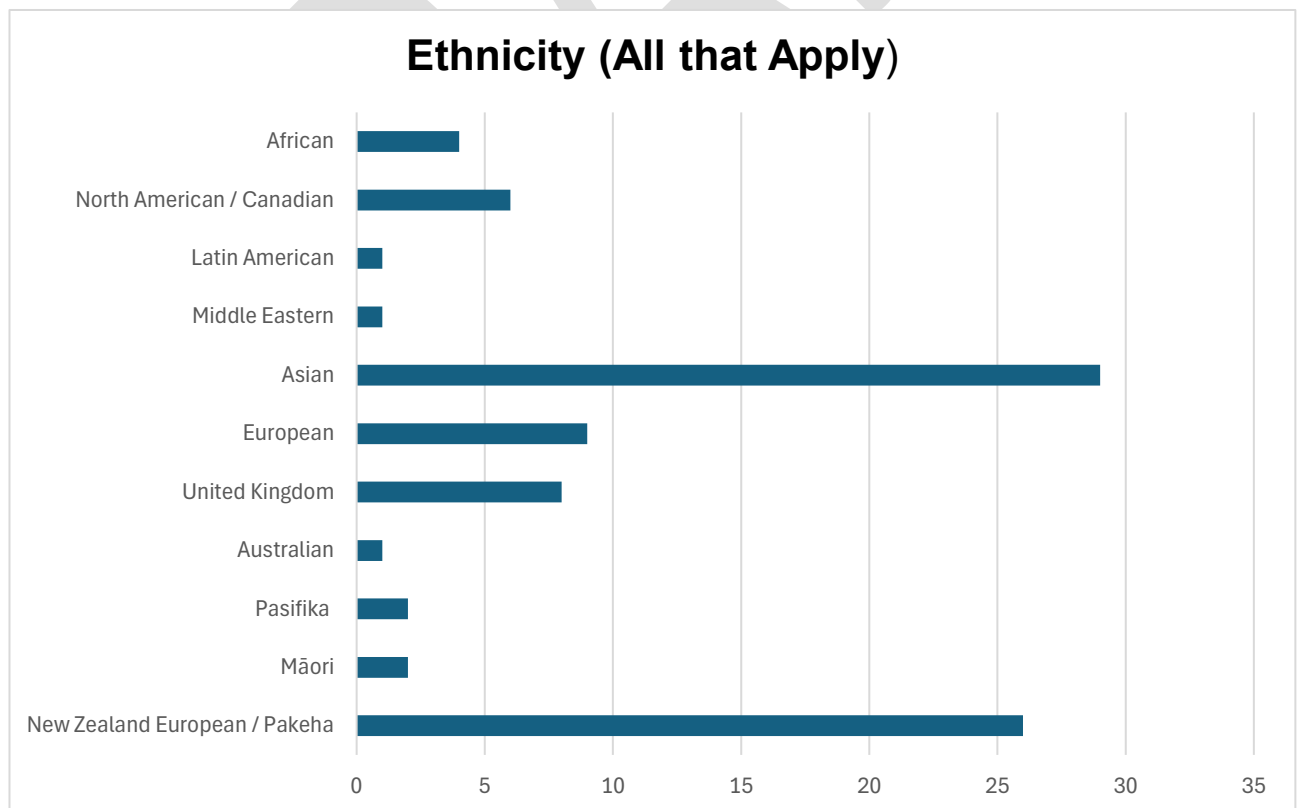
DRAFT

Quantitative Results

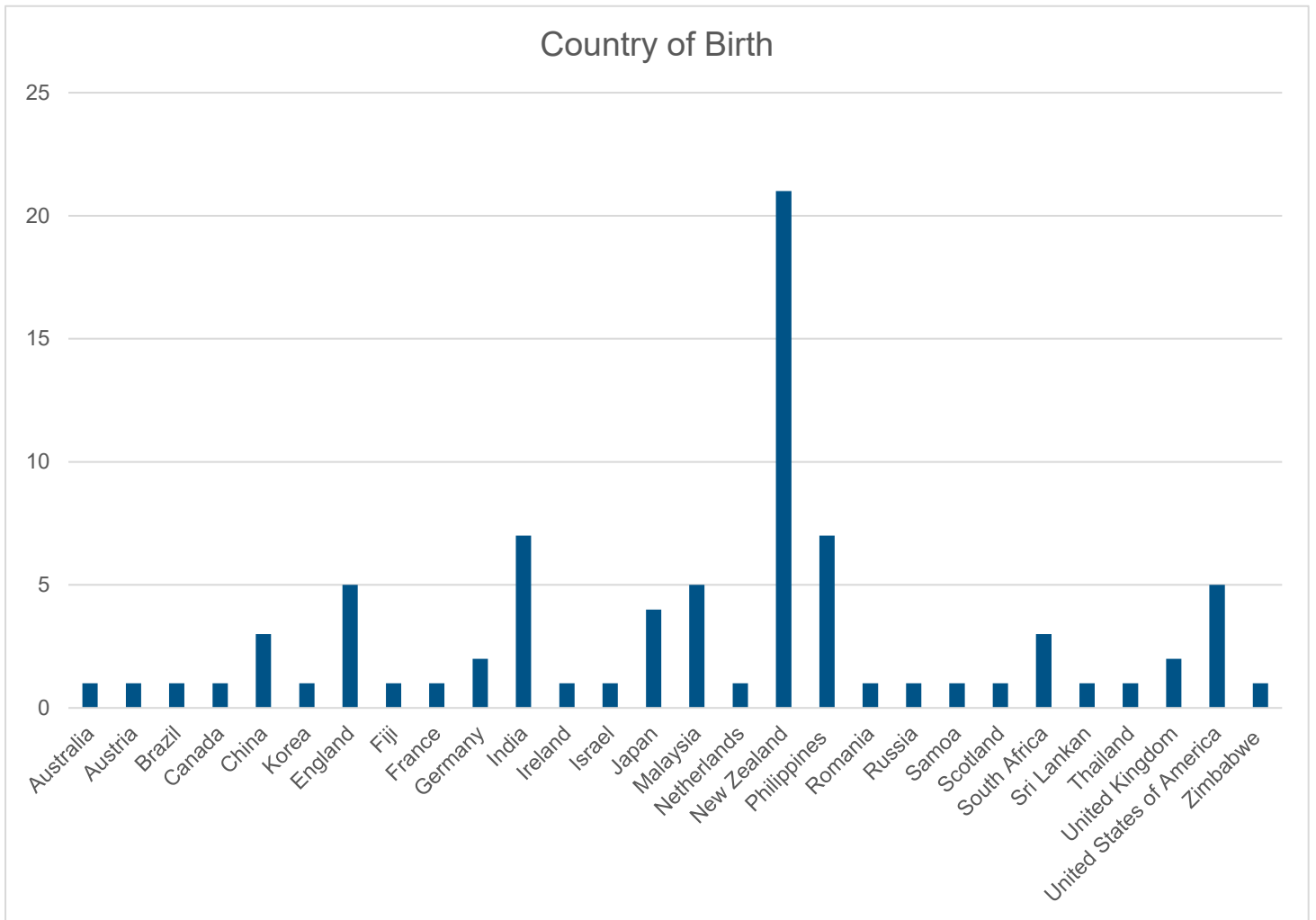
Public survey (81 responses)



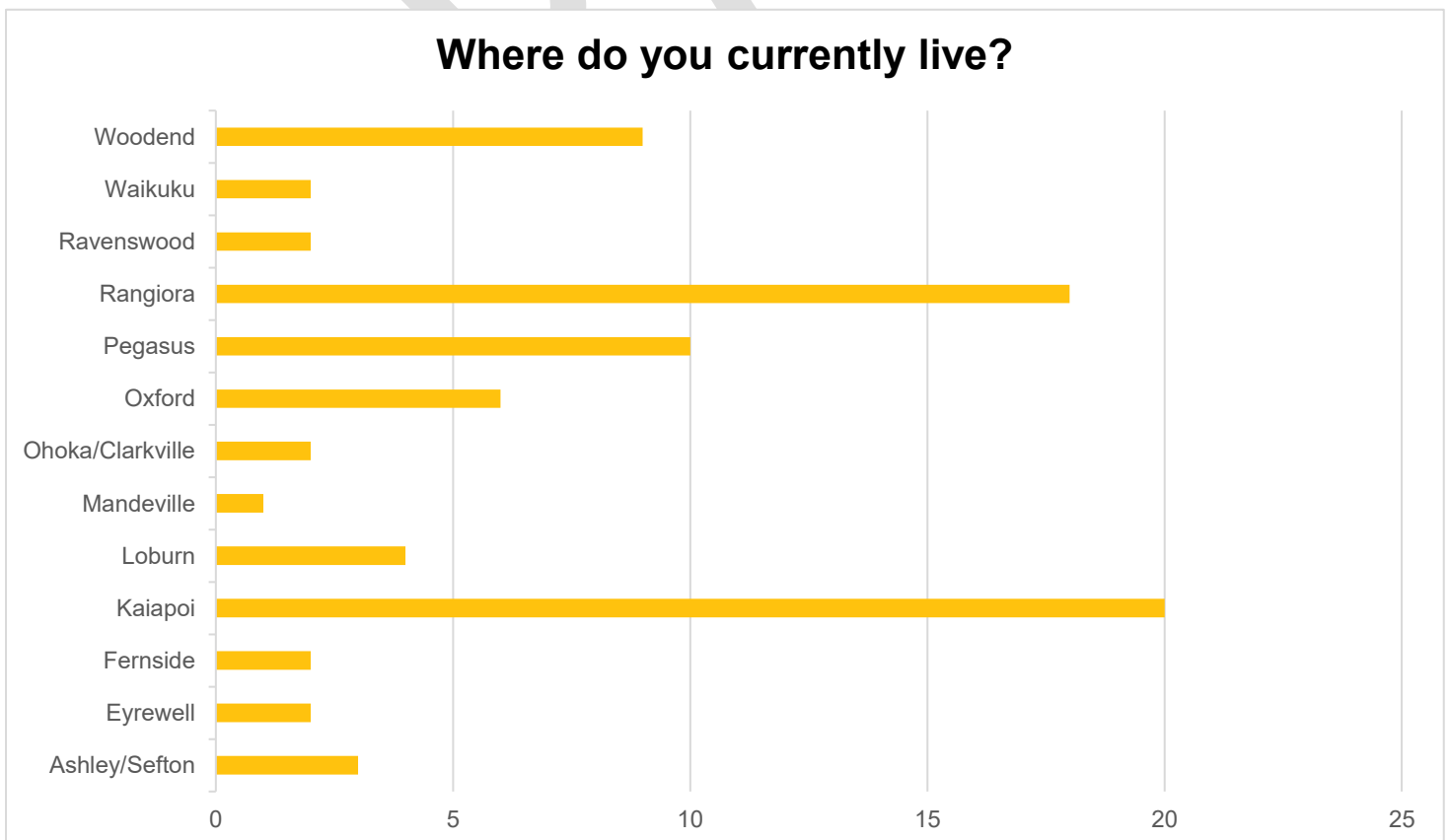
Ethnicity is self-perceived, and people can affiliate with more than one ethnic group.



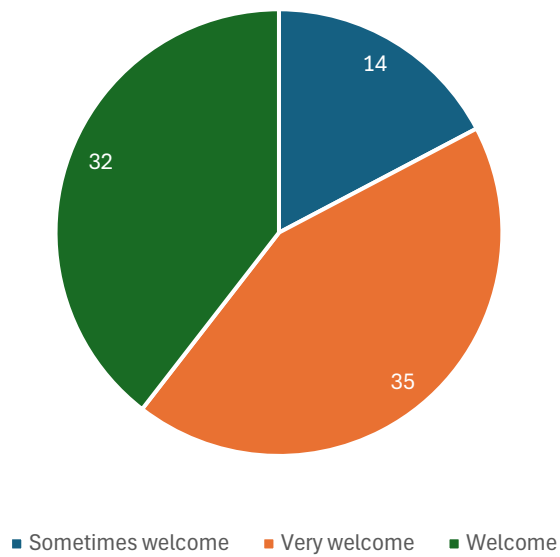
Country of Birth



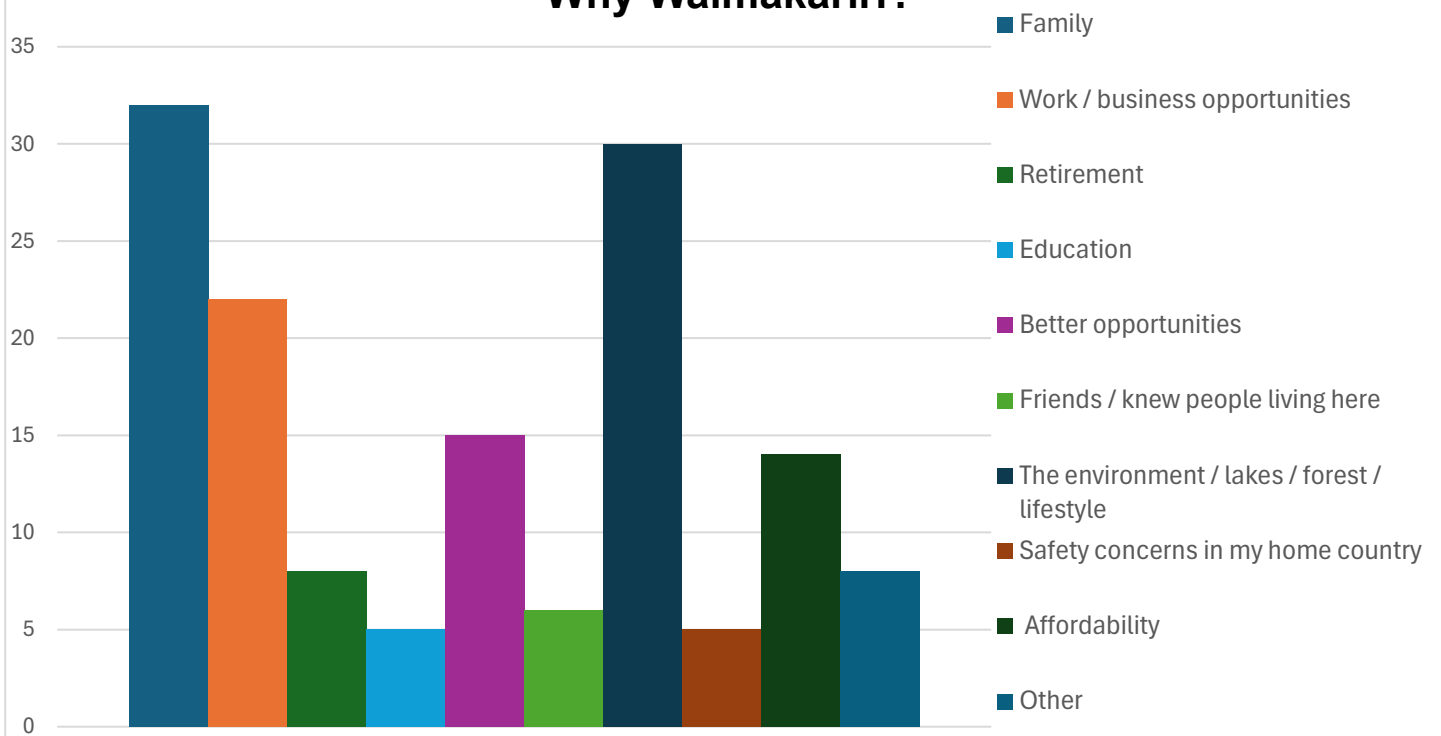
Where do you currently live?



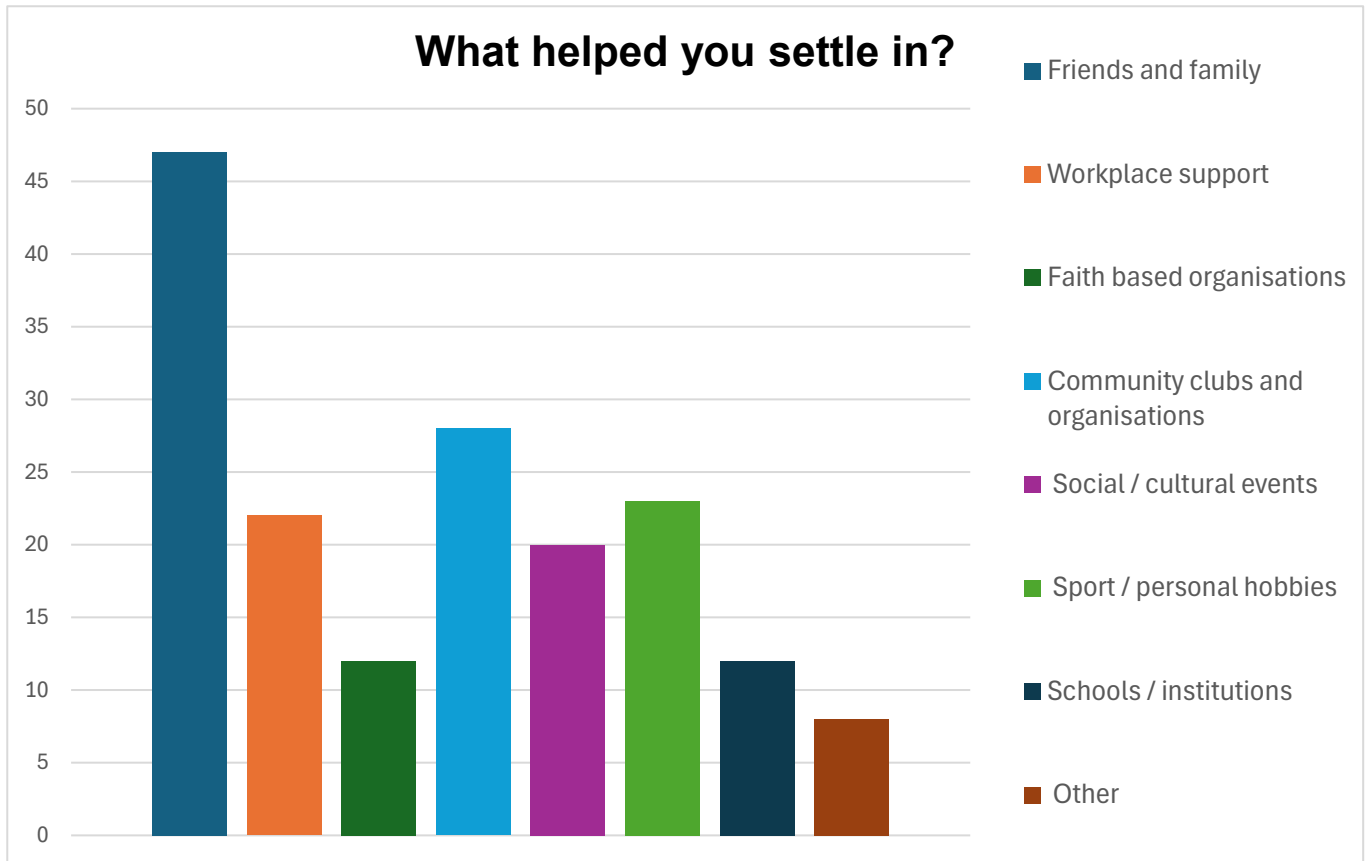
How welcome do you feel?



Why Waimakariri?



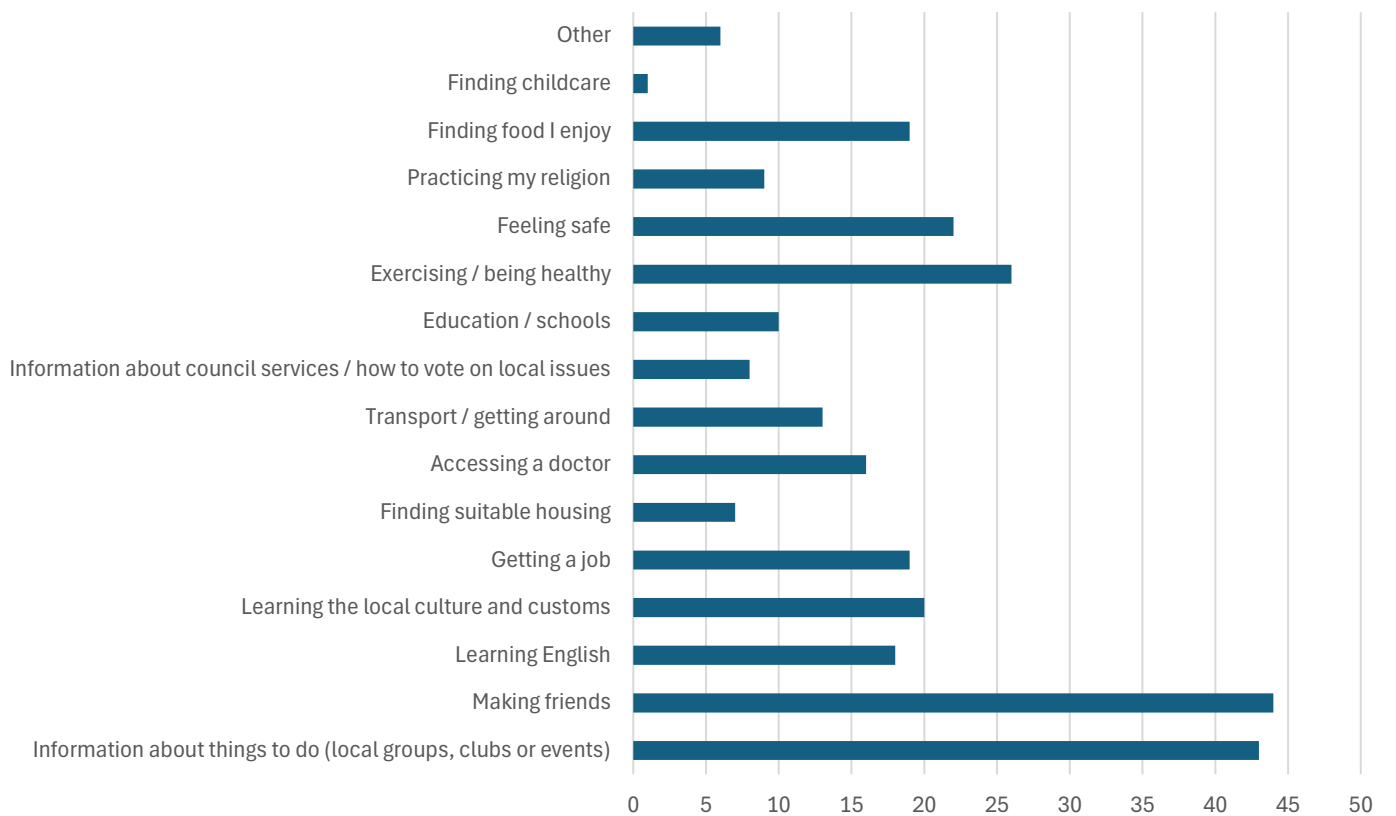
Those who selected other noted size - "Goldilocks" not too big, not too small, joining a partner, the river of Kaiapoi, the peace and quiet and being earthquake refugees from Christchurch



Those who selected “other” mentioned:

- Plunket group really helped to feel connected as well as family.
- GLOW (Global Locals of Waimakariri) a multicultural social group supported by Council
- Exercise classes at the local gym.
- Volunteer work
- Neighbours
- The weather
- Job involved being out in the community

What would be helpful



Qualitative Results

The open-ended questions from the survey (81) have been integrated into the thematic analysis with the 2 focus groups and sector meetings.

Thematic analysis identified 8 overall themes

Newcomers:

Identifying who is new is a challenge. The Council welcome bags were noted but that the system isn't consistent. There are perceived sets of different ethnic groups that "come in waves". There were noted pull factors to Waimakariri – joining family, safety, work opportunities, international student programmes, visa quotas, cheaper housing and proximity to Christchurch as well as being an "earthquake refugee"

Challenges of integration and inclusion:

Despite feeling generally welcomed friendliness didn't translate to deeper friendships. There were noted difficulties in communication between both newcomer and receiving communities – different accents was seen as a barrier particularly in the care or hospitality industry. Cultural differences could cause barriers in the workplace or at social gatherings e.g. raising issues or social norms like "bring a plate". There was a sense of "us and them" by some in the "receiving" community who feel like their needs are not being met by Council. Feelings of isolation were compounded by rural distances, work hours and movements in the farm communities and racism/xenophobia that extended beyond being a recent newcomer – including second generation immigrants.

Community-led initiatives:

It was noted that community groups are very important to this district when sourcing support and connection. Groups mentioned included Oxford Community Trust, Salvation Army, Presbyterian Support, Citizens Advice Bureau, English Language classes, fitness classes and clubs and church groups. The value of volunteer networks in assisting newcomers was noted. This includes the services offered but also the opportunity to participate. Local initiatives were seen as important in promoting inclusion and connection and were connected to Council – Race Unity art poster competition, multicultural cooking classes, and cultural celebrations in the libraries.

Infrastructure and services:

The importance of improved transport options to better connect communities and the importance of community facilities for connection and information sharing. There was a call for more youth spaces.

The natural environment:

The natural environment was one of the main reasons listed in the survey for moving here. It was noted we have a range of environmental attractions from mountains to sea and a dark sky status in Oxford. Community gardens, food forests and parks were noted as potential places to have gatherings around culture or just fun days out.

Healthcare accessibility:

Challenges in accessing healthcare services, including language barriers and limited availability in practices. There is a perceived lack of knowledge of translation services. The health sector in the district is under pressure in general and it was suggested that there may be problem retaining new doctors/health professionals if they/their families don't feel welcomed. Cultural differences in approaches to health or raising concerns was noted as well as different beliefs around health practices.

Council roles:

There was a need raised for Council to be proactive connecting to newcomers and breaking down barriers. Knowing about "civic" and council leadership was a gap. The Council was seen to play an important role supporting community groups, services and resources e.g. Social Services Waimakariri, Global Locals of Waimakariri, the Next Steps Website, providing a office space for CAB. Work on exemplifying bi-culturalism was noted.

Information provision:

A lot of sources of information and resources exist (welcome bags, Chatter, Next steps, Libraries information) but these can be streamlined, and made more accessible – reader formats and translatable.

Aligning the findings with the Welcoming Communities Standard

The resulting notes and opportunities identified from the thematic analysis have been used to benchmark against the Welcoming Communities Standard, made up of 8 elements and 36 sub-outcomes.



Inclusive Leadership

Local government, tangata whenua and other community leaders work together to create, advocate for and continue to foster a welcoming and inclusive community. They lead a shared plan to increase connections between newcomers and existing residents.

Outcomes	Existing	Potential opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>1.1. As the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori – represented by tangata whenua, mana whenua, iwi and hapū and/or other hapori Māori – have a prominent role in Welcoming Plan activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting institution of Whiti Ora – consultants to te rūnanga Ngāi Tūāhuriri. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annual Plan 2023/2024 highlights the Council partnership with Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga, shared decision making through the Mahi tahi Joint Development Committee and consultation. There is an opportunity for the Welcoming Plan is to have guidance and involvement from mana whenua. It should be raised again to present Welcoming Communities to the Rūnanga. The results of the data collection express a desire to showcase the local cultural significance of Ngāi Tūāhuriri. This, alongside the awareness of te Tiriti o Waitangi being a welcoming document (as reiterated through other Welcoming Communities Councils with mana whenua guidance) should be expressed to Rūnanga. Under the guidance of tangata whenua there is an opportunity to share bi-cultural and te Tiriti resources for new to New Zealand families and locals. There is an opportunity to connect newcomers to the “Getting to know us” days at the Marae via Ngāi Tūāhuriri Education. Involvement of mana whenua at the citizenship ceremonies. Due to low resourcing propose developing a video as there is one of the Governor-General on behalf of the Crown, if this is deemed relevant by mana whenua. Working with Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW) to revive the “Cultural day at the Pa”, a multicultural event at Tuahiwi Marae.
<p>1.2. Leaders – both designated and unofficial – reflect the diversity in the local community, as does the council workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ethnic split of the district is 93% New Zealand European, 9% Māori, 3% Asian, %1 Pacific peoples and MEELA. The ethnic split of the Council is not captured. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy: The Council strives to ensure its workforce is reflective of the community which it serves, encouraging diversity to improve quality. Diversity training is included in the licence to recruit training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile the diverse workforce.

<p>1.3. Leaders model the principles of inclusiveness, openness, tolerance, respect and acceptance of all cultures in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Board portfolio that includes International Relationships At Citizenship Ceremonies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speech by the Mayor includes the significance of Ngāi Tūāhuriri. There is appreciation and recognition of new citizen home cultures being a part of making up the community expressed through the ceremony. The Cultural Inclusion Facilitator is present at the ceremonies to share how the Council supports migrants and newcomers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with the Governance team regarding leadership involvement in welcome days at schools when international students are welcomed.
<p>1.4. There are clear roles, responsibilities and ownership within council and in the wider community for the Welcoming Communities programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Welcoming Communities facilitator has been employed for a 3-year period. Welcoming Communities is in the Long-Term Plan (LTP) 2024-2034 as a key project under Community Development. The Welcoming Communities Plan is still in development and ownership in the wider community still being established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting Welcoming Communities actions to Council departments where appropriate e.g. Libraries and Greenspace. With the PCG formalise a Welcoming communities Advisory Group to promote sustainability of the programme after funding is ceased. Plan for sourcing additional external funding to continue the Welcoming Communities programme beyond the funding allotted by Immigration New Zealand for the facilitator (ending 2026).
<p>1.5. Council internal and external policies, services, programmes and activities recognise and address cultural diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The WDC Community Team as a Cultural Inclusion portfolio. The Portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates a Migrant Agency Group that meets quarterly. Partners with The Salvation Army to promote the mentor driver program for migrants. Supports and promotes a multicultural social group Global Locals of Waimakariri (GLOW). Supports and promotes GLOW Multicultural Cooking Classes. Partners with local faith-based group Bahá'í Community to run an annual Race Unity Art competition for local students and schools to participate in. This is in conjunction with Unity Week. Is a central place for connection/networking and establishing cultural groups (e.g. the Chinese Ladies group). Curates mailing lists to keep newcomers and migrants informed. Arranges the funding, advertising and coordination of the Council sponsored English Language Classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the Cultural Inclusion portfolio and increase hours from 20 per week. Include cultural competency training as part of the professional development within Council. Include cultural competency training as part of the capacity building offerings to community groups from the Community Team. Diversity in languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase the range available in front facing council staff. Translation of important information in welcome bags/sites to dominant languages. Celebrating language weeks. Showcase Sister and twin cities: Enshi (China) Zonnebeke (Belgium). Support with school's international student welcoming messaging Work on future initiatives with InCommon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supports cultural group events e.g. Lunar New Year and Chinese Language week. ○ Facilitated collaboration with InCommon to run an Inclusivity Poster Campaign and to support “Shared Kai and Korero” evenings. • The LTP highlights that the district be a place serving changing demographics, fostering inclusivity and expression of diversity. The Strategic priorities in the LTP include inclusivity and connectedness. • Inclusion is a core strategic outcome in the Community Development Strategy • Staff cross team building – world cups, Olympics, learn more about food and culture • Humans of Waimakariri – Shelly Topp 	
<p>1.6. A range of leadership opportunities in the council and the wider community are available to and taken up by newcomers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific function that specifically targets newcomers for this outcome. Leadership is elected members that is a democratic process. 	



Welcoming Communications

People of all cultures and backgrounds feel included, listened to and well informed through a range of ways that take into account their different communication needs.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>2.1. The community is well informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A brochure and messaging for survey page on the council's consultation platform "Let's Talk" was developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Welcoming Communities messaging on the <i>New to District</i> page Profile Welcoming Champions - e.g. Oxford Area School. Profile "local legends" stories of immigrants who are part of the district landscape e.g. Artisan Bakery, The Woodpecker. Commit to supporting/instigating activities for Welcoming Week, developing an awareness campaign in the lead up to the week.
<p>2.2. The council is well informed about newcomers to their region and pro-actively seeks data about newcomers from relevant sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council is aware of newcomers who collect Welcome Bags, but this is minimal. Newcomers are invited to request Welcome Bags from the Community Team/Service Centre, and this has been promoted by the Communications Team on social media. Newcomers may contact the Cultural Inclusion Facilitator directly. The Cultural Inclusion facilitator manages the Migrant Agency Group quarterly meetings who raise issues from their various sectors. Libraries had 873 signups June 2023 to June 2024 and are putting together their own Libraries information pack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making use of naturally welcoming spaces - schools, faith-based organisations, health centres, libraries, to connect newcomers to Council. Look at revitalising and adapting the "Community Connectors" programme that was in place for COVID response. Support Libraries/streamline Welcome Bag information. Create incentives for Newcomers to join "mailing lists". Connect with lions "Welcome to Waimakariri" packs.
<p>2.3. The council's engagement with all residents is two-way, culturally appropriate and fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service requests online and at centres Website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public notices Snap send Solve Public has access to meeting minutes and agendas "Let's Talk" surveys ENews – He Panui The LTP Significance and Engagement Policy reiterates the value of public input that is reflective of community needs and recognises the importance of involving diverse communities in the Council's work. Social media is used to inform the public. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

<p>2.4. Council communication materials and messages are inclusive and reflect the diversity of the local community. Council encourages other agencies, businesses and organisations to follow this model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council brand guidelines call for plain and concise English with less Council jargon. • The district's ethnic split is dominant in New Zealand European (93%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-lingual signage for wayfinding suggested by libraries. • Lay down the infrastructure/foundation for being responsive to increasing diversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Include a plug in on Council site for text to speak options, for those with visual disabilities or dyslexia or have English as a 2nd language ◦ Making information visual, using “international symbols” ◦ Offer other language options for surveys and main information pages/make it easier to use Google translate for official documents (E.g. word vs PDF). • Inform of translation services • Support communication for messages around culturally significant periods. • Work with Enterprise North Canterbury (ENC), School Boards and volunteer groups to provide examples of “Best Practice” for inclusive messaging.
---	---	--



Equitable Access

Opportunities to access services and activities and to participate in the community are available to all, including newcomers.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>3.1. Council partners with local businesses, organisations and sectors to identify and address barriers for newcomers to accessing services and participating in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cultural Inclusion portfolio is a central place for connection/networking and tapping into groups that identify possible barriers for newcomers. • The Migrant Agency Group meets quarterly, facilitated by the Cultural Inclusion Facilitator. • Council supports Social Services Waimakariri (SSW) and the development and dissemination of the Next Steps Website which is a repository of support services and includes a dedicated tab for newcomers. The Next Steps resource is a joint initiative with the Hurunui District Council, which is also a Welcoming Community. • The Council provides an office space for the local Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), a service that was noted several 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile the services provided by Council and Community Team as part of a greater campaign of “did you know” with a newcomer lens. • Highlight the Cultural Inclusion Portfolio through stories. • Continue the Cultural Inclusion role and increase 20 hours per week. • Continue the relationship with SSW supporting with newcomer lens – Next Steps and in meetings. • Continue to support CAB • Council sponsored ENC is in a prime position to connect with newcomers (through businesses and tourism) and identify and address barriers (through their own reporting structures). There is an opportunity to involve ENC with both the Hurunui and Waimakariri Welcoming Communities development and activities through providing messaging and resources that support newcomers.

	<p>times in data collection as being an important source of support for newcomers, information and immigration clinics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Community Team connects with various advisory groups and networks- Accessibility, Age Friendly, Youth Council, Food Secure, Violence Free North Canterbury Network, Wailife Action Group suicide prevention), Waimakariri Health Advisory Group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainpower Stadium and Sport North Canterbury are connected to the council through Facilities Management. The programmes and activities based at the stadium and through their outreach promote inclusion and connection and these can be profiled by the Council. Offer more “casual sports team opportunities. Making use of the various Advisory groups – check ins as part of the agenda items around issues for newcomers.
<p>3.2. Council and other organisations in the community research, design and deliver services that take account of the different circumstances (for example rural/urban) and cultural backgrounds of all service users, including newcomers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council offers free English Language Classes (ESOL) on a Saturday. Through partnership with The Salvation Army a driver mentor programme has been instigated to support migrants to connect with driver mentors and get their licence. This is particularly needed in the rural areas. CAB supports immigration queries and hold immigration clinics. The 3 libraries are fit for purpose for their towns. There is a Community Connections librarian who connects with community and build networks. Service delivery is core Council Business across different departments and there is a process for lodging requests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support and promote ESOL classes. (these classes are now well subscribed and may need to be further developed?). Continue to support and promote the driver mentor programme. Connect in and support CAB immigration clinics. Support farms with material for their own welcome folder for information of district and farm operations. Work on targeted programmes with the Community Connections Librarian that are mutually beneficial for both teams and newcomers.
<p>3.3. All community members are well informed about the services available in the community. Newcomers are made aware of and are using these services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Living in Waimakariri” Council Page includes a tab for “Groups and Networks” that links to resources for migrants and newcomers. This link includes information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for People New to NZ Useful links and Websites Events Workshops Classes Storytelling and exhibitions (Newcomer experiences) Welcoming Communities Hobbies and recreation booklet Volunteer Booklet Waimakariri Youth Council Facebook. Staying socially Connected Document Getting Advice Shows Strength. There is a New to District page that links to visitor sites and Neighbourhood Support. Chatter is a monthly publication that is distributed to members of the public in print and digital format. The content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share a “how to Kiwi” guide/videos from INZ and Ministry of Ethnic Communities (MEC). Streamline information on Council community pages to make it collated and easier to find. Have the “New to District” tab prominent on the main page of the Council website. <i>(Make information available in different dominant languages where possible).</i> Add a “I’m feeling new button to Next Steps Simplify/use visual communication for important Council info. Sharing knowledge of what is available. Have online access to community directories that are easy to find e.g. the volunteer and hobbies directories, make them more accessible and promote them wider Inform of translation services in health settings and council. Share information about health navigators (Waitaha and Pegasus Health) Advertising the library offerings and sharing information on support and skills development offerings.

	<p>is comprised of services and events that promote community connection and support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Waimakariri connected with ENC is an informative site for recreation and tourism. • Next Steps Website newcomer tab. • Community Team and Council Social media pages provided updates and information about events, support, civil defence and general Council information. • Libraries are a main source of information, onsite and digitally. Libraries sends out a newsletter. Across the libraries there are boards for medical, community and Council information. • The Community team helps community groups with Welcome Bags. The bags are decorated by school children in the district, welcoming newcomers. Oxford Service centre combines this information with their own Welcoming Pack. Ray White in Kaiapoi distribute the bags to newcomers. Pegasus Community Centre to Woodend/Pegasus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share more about the services that support migrant employment e.g. farm post, CAB. • More accessibility for migrants struggling to adjust – help lines and making resources known e.g. CAB, Next Steps website, wellbeing booklets Council pages and social media. • Connecting newcomers to different digital community groups e.g. local Filipino Facebook Group. • Highlight the value of volunteering and getting involved with community groups to newcomers (Volunteer Expo, messaging on newcomer page).
--	---	--



Connected and Inclusive Communities

People feel safe in their identity and that they are connected with and belong in the community. There are high levels of trust and understanding between members of the receiving community and newcomers.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>4.1. Coordinated, comprehensive and appropriate initial welcoming support services are available from council, other agencies and community organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community team helps community groups with Welcome Bags. The bags are decorated by school children in the district, welcoming newcomers. Oxford Service centre combines this information with their own Welcoming Pack. Ray White in Kaiapoi distribute the bags to newcomers. Pegasus Community Centre to Woodend/Pegasus. • Next Steps Website • Naturally Welcoming spaces: schools. Libraries, faith-based organisations, work inductions. • Libraries are open over the weekends and act as local ISites and share Council information. • Kaiapoi Promotions planned Welcome to Kaiapoi Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making use of naturally welcoming spaces; faith-based organisations, schools, libraries to connect newcomers to Council newcomer pages and resources like welcome bags. • Make use of rural vets and rural post and farming groups to connect with newcomers. • Finding out about different cultural support groups and connect newcomers into those groups. • Increasing welcome bags distribution, localising welcome material. • Newcomer Seminars in the libraries that include immigration, CAB, elected members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kainga Ora Welcome Days supported by multiple agencies and the Community Team. • Waioara Links Community Cuppa 2nd week of every month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Welcoming Communities messaging for staff inductions, internally and through ENC to businesses and through school boards for schools.
<p>4.2. The receiving community is well equipped and supported to welcome and interact with newcomers.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with groups and schools already reaching out to newcomers to support them and connect them with other schools/businesses/event coordinators to promote initiating activities. • Support more activities that bring people together • Foster Community Partnerships: Strengthen partnerships between community organizations, government agencies, and businesses to address the needs of newcomers, e.g. CAB. • Include elected members at school welcome days. • Contribute to inductions in schools and workplaces with Welcoming Communities messaging.
<p>4.3. Members of the receiving community and newcomers build relationships and are at ease with connecting and learning about and from each other.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Locals of Waimakariri • Driver mentor programme • Race Unity Poster competition • School inductions • Oxford Area School Filipino evenings • Staying Social Connected brochure • Collaboration with InCommon produced posters showing shared connections across diversity. InCommon also ran “Shared Kai and Korero” evenings in Kaiapoi to promote learning about different cultures and cuisines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for youth and children new to the district: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support schools and international student department extend pastoral support to domestic international students. ○ Guidance counsellors reaching out ○ Culture and connection support especially breaking into a friend group at school. encourage formation of new to school clubs or multicultural clubs. ○ Support for parents (2nd gen migrants) and children in connecting with their own culture – cultural days at schools. ○ Promote Mayor’s Task Force for Jobs to new to district families/young people • Continue to support GLOW and Cultural Inclusion initiatives (driver Mentor programme, Race Unity Poster Competition etc.) • Connect with school inductions and offer more involvement to Oxford Area School for the Filipino Evenings.
<p>4.4. Different cultures are celebrated and people are supported to express their cultural beliefs and customs, including language and religious practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chinese Language Week ○ Lunar New Year ○ Diwali ○ World collection ○ E-resources ○ Lote4Kids – other world language book options online ○ Mayo languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the unique history with Ngai Tūhūriri – Māori identity of the district. • Promote the rich cultural presence in cuisine covered in the towns (Visit Waimakariri site included). • Diverse artists help to create art to express themselves e.g. murals. • Using local media to tell local and community migrant stories. • Promote welcoming places (e.g. schools) as place of connection for new families and their cultural events.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holi festival in Rangiora ISCC (Christchurch based organisation) • School cultural days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support cultural exchange events and workshops to foster understanding and appreciation of different cultures e.g. St Joseph's multicultural evening. • Highlight and promote existing events and activities that promote cultural exchange: free ESOL classes, GLOW, Festivals, School events, events in food forests, newcomer group.
--	--	--



Economic Development, Business and Employment

Communities maximise and harness the economic development opportunities that newcomers can offer. Councils work with business associations to promote the contribution that newcomer business owners and skilled migrants make to the region's economy.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
5.1. Newcomers, including international students, are supported to access local employment information, services and networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries are a space where newcomers can access computers, CV templates and on the website is a Jobseekers page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about the services that support migrant employment e.g. farm post, CAB, Rural Support • Farms could be encouraged to share the welcome packs or their own welcome folder for information of district and farm operations
5.2. Newcomers, including international students, are supported with local knowledge and skills to ensure they can operate successfully in the New Zealand work environment, either as a business owner or an employee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAB, Employment Clinic. The clinic is hosted in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). MSD provides an Early Response Work Broker who holds one-on-one sessions with clients supporting to help find employment, advice on interview tips, or to speak about employment seeking goals. • Rural Support Trust offers employee and employer advice and support including connecting rural migrant spouses to online English Language classes. • Dairy Women's Network primary focus is creating events and initiatives for members to learn and grow their connections, knowledge and skills in the farming sector. • Through ENC the Council provides support existing Small to Medium businesses by providing training, coaching, mentoring services and networking opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council supporting migrants to own/start their own business (through ENC) info evenings • Promote Mayor's Task Force for Jobs to new to district families/young people • Promote community partner offerings through Community Team platforms.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For young people the Council has a role for Mayors Task Force for Jobs that supports young people from getting a driver's licence to connecting with potential employers. 	
<p>5.3. The receiving community recognises the value of diversity in the workplace, of newcomers' contribution to the region's growth and of the resulting wider economic benefits.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the rich cultural presence in cuisine covered in the towns (Visit Waimakariri site included).
<p>5.4. Local employers and workforces develop their intercultural competency.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with ENC to develop messaging to encourage workforces to support diversity to ensure cultural competence within organisations. DWN has expressed interest in cultural competency training
<p>5.5. Mutually beneficial connections and initiatives are set up with migrant businesspeople by the local business community and professional networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The North Canterbury MOVE ON UP project is designed to assist employers and recruitment agencies attract talent to work in North Canterbury by positioning North Canterbury as an attractive place to work and live. The project also develops and maintains a strong regional identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support ENC



Civic Engagement and Participation

Newcomers feel welcome to fully participate in the community. Newcomers are active in all forms of civic participation.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
6.1. The council's elected members and staff effectively communicate with newcomers to promote their engagement in local government processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Board members have a variety of portfolios including for example community wellbeing, international relations, business development, social services. They are therefore part of a variety of groups and advisory boards to connect to and promote their engagement to newcomers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support newcomer welcomes at schools, not just Year 9 inductions. Connect elected members – international students, new employees. Host newcomer evenings that include elected members.
6.2. Newcomers are encouraged and enabled to get involved in local government and civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision making that affects our District. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcase public access to Council decision making as part of newcomer messaging. Students, migrants, international students meeting with council members, could be at newcomer evenings. Civics day for schools.
6.3. Newcomers' efforts and achievements in civic participation and community life are acknowledged and celebrated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively looking for knowledge of and involving community leaders and leadership opportunities for migrants.



Welcoming Public Spaces

Newcomers and receiving communities feel welcome in and comfortable using public spaces.

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>7.1. The design and operation of public spaces and facilities are culturally appropriate and reflect the diversity of the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Libraries are places for information, connection and are used as community centres where cultural gatherings and events take place. Annual Plan 2023/2024 and LTP Plan Community Outcomes – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public spaces and facilities are plentiful, accessible and high quality, and reflect cultural identity. Community buildings provide opportunities for local people and visitors to the District to experience and participate in recreation, the arts, cultural activities, service to others and life-long learning. The libraries engage with, and connect people to their community, their cultures, their heritage, their futures and the world in which they live in Public spaces express our cultural identities and help to foster an inclusive society. All members of our community are able to engage in arts, culture and heritage events and activities as participants, consumers, creators or providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to help promote and collaborate with Libraries advising a newcomer lens. Showcase the recreation, arts and cultural activities in the public spaces that promote social inclusion and celebrate diversity.
<p>7.2. Welcoming public spaces provide opportunities to build trust and relationships between newcomers and members of the receiving community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a list of all the parks on the Council website. There is access to public parks/reserves and conservation of it. The food forests can potentially grow different cultural produce, but are also places of connection and events, e.g. Hanami (cherry blossom festival). Community gardens were noted and parks as a place to have gatherings and events. Good Street lunchtime music Libraries: Hold regular events for social connection, e.g. games nights, movie nights, slice and dice, Rainbow connect for young people, crafts and family times and events that celebrate cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to help promote and collaborate with Greenspace to provide a newcomer lens. Highlight the progress of the Youth Council Dudley Park project to create more spaces for youth (moulded seating, play area, BBQs) is in process. Sharing more about public walks and the environment “Sister City” or way to acknowledge other cultural gardens like Halswell Quarry. Bi-lingual signs. More community events to the park to just relax and connect, e.g. tai chi A How to “Park” document, showcase what we have, tell the C&R story. Pictorial signage “international language”

<p>7.3. Public spaces and buildings create a sense of community ownership and inclusion for all, including newcomers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation • Town halls, meeting spaces and indoor court facilities are provided across the district for the community to use. • Providing sports grounds neighbourhood reserves and natural reserves for the community to use. • The regular social connect events through libraries are connected to and involve community groups and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming documentation can be divided into villages/towns – “Living In...”
--	--	---



Culture and Identity

There is a shared sense of pride in being part of a culturally rich and vibrant community. People feel their culture is respected and valued by other members of the community. There are opportunities to learn about each other's cultures

Outcomes	Existing	Opportunities for Welcoming Plan
<p>8.1. Receiving communities and newcomers share and celebrate their cultures with each other, facilitated by the council and others in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLOW and GLOW multicultural cooking classes • Libraries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Matariki showcases and during te Wiki o te Reo activities involved local schools and the council Waiata group ○ Chinese Language Week ○ Lunar New Year ○ Diwali • The Waimakariri Public Arts Trust administers the Council's Art in Public Spaces policy and meet the community outcome of “the community's cultures, arts and heritage are conserved, developed and celebrated.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional language weeks • Diverse artists help to create art to express themselves e.g. murals. • Using local media to tell local and community migrant stories. • Promote the rich cultural presence in cuisine covered in the towns (Visit Waimakariri site included). • More activities that bring people together • Support cultural exchange events and workshops to foster understanding and appreciation of different cultures. • In general, more community/family events were called for.
<p>8.2. Newcomers and the receiving community understand what values they each hold dear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with InCommon produced posters showing shared connections across diversity. InCommon also ran “Shared Kai and Korero” evenings in Kaiapoi to promote learning about different cultures and cuisines. 	

Next steps in Plan development

- Working with PCG to confirm which potential opportunities can be translated into activities and initiatives for the Plan
- Present draft Welcoming Communities Plan for consultation (internally and externally) July and August 2025
- Work with PCG to formalise a Welcoming Communities Advisory Group
- Final consultation with Council in November 2025/February 2026 (election dependent) to sign off Plan
- Public launch of Welcoming Communities Plan TBC 2026.
- Roll out of earmarked activities and initiatives of the Plan.

Consultation Summary on the draft Welcoming Waimakariri Plan

February 2026

Time of consultation: October to November 2025

Number of submissions to Let's Talk survey: 55

Meetings with groups: Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group, Waimakariri Access Group, Waimakariri Youth Council, Waimakariri Health Advisory Group, Global Locals of Waimakariri, Migrant agency Group, Social Services Waimakariri, Waimakariri Age Friendly Advisory Group

Results were tabulated together and analysed using thematic analysis to inform where to focus edits and to confirm that the plan was in line with community needs.

Support for the plan (Let's Talk survey)

The majority of responses confirmed support for the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan as a framework for increased social cohesion across the District over the coming three years. Feedback from the networks was unanimously in favour, while the 55 'Let's Talk' consultation responses showed that 77% of public respondents were in support of the draft document.

What was supported

1. Positive about the plan concept.
2. Confirmation and support of working in the business sector.
3. Confirmation and support of including a youth focus.
4. Recognition that doing work on strengthening cultural cohesion can add to vibrancy, safety and inclusion

Themes that inform edits to the plan

1. Motivation, practicality and delivery detail — “Good themes, but where/when/who?”

Edit: Include the results from the stocktake in the background. Add columns in the action tables to include clear actions to illustrate more of a “plan” and tabulate measures.

Explicit illustrations to be included in the actions:

- Festivals, sport and connection
- Information and welcome bags, “How to Kiwi”
- Editing the wording to be more inclusive of the receiving community
- Strengthen actions to reflect well-being outcomes (aligned with the Community Development Strategy)

2. Funding, rates and reasons for Council role— “What does it cost? Will this increase rates?”

Edits:

- More explicit explanation of the external funding and plans for philanthropic and other agency funding for projects and programmes associated with delivery of the Plan.
- Expand in the Strategic Alignment section the national Welcoming Communities logic that the plan supports economic and business stability.

3. Place identity and localisation — “Make it feel uniquely Waimakariri (history, river, definition of place names, local photos).”

Edit: A plan that “feels Waimakariri”, not generic. Add a short Waimakariri story (river, townships, history) and replace stock images with local, diverse photos.

4. Te ao Māori / mana whenua / te reo/ te Tiriti o Waitangi

This theme showed a level of polarisation. There was support for strengthening mana whenua involvement and bicultural framing in a multi-cultural context but also questions as to the validity of this aspect being included in the plan. It was noted that more consultation should come from mana whenua too.

Edit: Draw back to original research and feedback that informed the plan. Include an explanation of consultation process with mana whenua and ongoing application for partnership.

5. Being more inclusive of the receiving community – remove the “us vs them” dynamics.

Edit: Amend wording in the themes and outcomes to reflect a focus that is inclusive of all newcomers – not just foreign nationals.

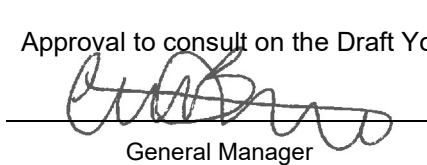
6. Document design to adhere to accessibility standards

Edit: Easy Read and translatable options – plug in for digital format. Being aware of colour and contrast, font size and acronym use.

7. Drawing the (Māori values) used in the theme names through the actions to show a regard for Māori and the receiving community.

The first theme of Collective Responsibility is reflective of this, but it is less explicit in the second and third themes.

This feedback from Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora) was acknowledged for potential future consideration with respect to engagement, as detailed in Point 4, above.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR DECISION****FILE NO and TRIM NO:** 260112003433 / CMS-03-11-01**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 February 2026**AUTHOR(S):**
Lexie Mealings – Policy Analyst
Emily Belton – Youth Development Facilitator**SUBJECT:** Approval to consult on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029**ENDORSED BY:**
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)
General Manager
Chief Executive**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report seeks approval from the Community and Recreation Committee to release the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (the Draft Plan) for public consultation.
- 1.2. The Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 is the direct result of a thorough early engagement process, co-designed with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group, which successfully captured the diverse viewpoints of over 1100 local 12-to-24-year-olds.
- 1.3. The Draft Plan sets out eight distinct themes, all with corresponding goals relating to the feedback received by local youth during the early engagement process.
- 1.4. Each theme within the Draft Plan contains its own set of actions and sub-actions, alongside details on related documents, who will take the lead on delivery, internal and external collaborators, timeframes, and success indicators.
- 1.5. A number of the actions and sub-actions identified in the Draft Plan are already actively delivered by Council. These are denoted by 'ongoing' under the timeframe heading throughout the document. In addition to existing actions, new initiatives have been identified within the Draft Plan, informed by feedback received by local young people themselves.
- 1.6. The Draft Plan has been designed with a 'whole of Council' approach in mind, acknowledging that the needs of youth and the challenges they face as members of the Waimakariri community are related to all aspects of Council service provision.
- 1.7. Meaningful youth development depends on effective collaboration between Council and relevant stakeholders. For this reason, the Draft Plan will also aim to build on and strengthen pre-existing relationships between the Council and external stakeholders. This includes, but is not limited to, community organisations/groups, youth service providers, local schools, and more.
- 1.8. The Draft Plan aims to more effectively support local youth by setting out themes, goals, and actions that are flexible enough to target their changing needs and priorities over the three-year period from 2026-2029.
- 1.9. The Draft Plan receives its overarching strategic direction from the recently refreshed Community Development Strategy 2025-2035, ensuring alignment and consistency. One of the key aspects of Community Development Strategy is to facilitate youth development and opportunity, encouraging youth to view the Waimakariri District as a place that they

want to live in long term. The Draft Youth Action Plan seeks to achieve this through the variety of themes covered, as identified by local young people, and an ongoing commitment to youth development in Waimakariri.

Attachments:

- i. Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 for Consultation February 2026 (260129015619)
- ii. Youth Action Plan Early Engagement Data Analysis Report (250822155814)

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260112003433.
- (b) **Approves** staff to release the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (260129015619) for public consultation for a four-week period, from 18 February to 18 March 2026.
- (c) **Notes** that the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (260129015619) is the direct result of a thorough early engagement process, co-designed with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group. This engagement directly captured the voices of over 1100 local 12-to-24-year-olds.
- (d) **Notes** that following the conclusion of the consultation period on 18 March 2026, staff will process feedback received and integrate suggestions into the Draft Plan between April and May 2026. This will be followed by a report to Council in June 2026 to present the final Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 and recommend adoption.
- (e) **Circulates** this report and attachments to Community Boards for their information.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. The Youth Action Plan project builds on the Council's 2018 Youth Strategy. The first iteration of the Youth Strategy was adopted by Council in 2010. This was refreshed in 2018 after a review.
- 3.2. The significant social and demographic changes our young people have experienced since the 2018 review has led to Council staff reviewing the Strategy earlier than expected.
- 3.3. These social changes include, but are not limited to, the impact of a global pandemic, overrepresentation of Waimakariri youth in local mental health statistics, changing education and employment environments, the continuing emergence of technological advancements, climate change and an aging population focus.
- 3.4. In terms of demographic changes, the Youth Strategy 2018 was modelled on Census data from 2013 which showed that the Waimakariri youth population at that time was 7923 people. Between 2013 and 2018, there was a 14.95% increase in the district's youth population. There was another 4.9% increase between 2018 and 2023 amounting to a total of 9555 youth (14.42% of the district's population) living in the district.
- 3.5. In March 2025, staff received approval from the Community and Recreation Committee to establish a Youth Action Plan Advisory Group. This was the first significant milestone for the project, with the group playing a crucial role in the development of an early engagement process and the Draft Plan itself. The Advisory Group is currently comprised of representatives from the following:
 - Waimakariri Youth Council
 - Waimakariri Access Group
 - Kaiapoi High School
 - Rangiora New Life School

- Comcol North Canterbury
 - Mahi Matatoa Home Educators
 - Sport Canterbury
- 3.6. Alongside the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group, it was decided that a survey, run in conjunction with in-person events and social media engagement would be the most effective way to understand the current needs of local young people. This early engagement occurred between the 18th of May and the 13th of July 2025.
- 3.7. The mixed methods used for this engagement resulted in a large response from local youth, with 1112 having their say across all collection methods. These responses directly informed the development of the Draft Youth Action Plan and are contained within attachment ii (250822155814) of this report for context.
- 3.8. The following section of this report will discuss the development of the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 in more detail.

4. **ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

- 4.1. The early engagement collection methods that formed the basis for the development of the Draft Plan focused on ten different themes. These themes were workshopped with and decided upon alongside the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group.
- 4.2. The feedback received by local young people under each of the ten themes allowed staff to understand which of these are most important to youth, and how they could feed into overarching themes for the draft Youth Action Plan. Following the establishment of these themes, goals were then developed alongside each of the overarching themes in the Draft Plan.

The table below sets out these themes and corresponding goals:

Theme	Goal
Health: inclusive of physical health, mental health, and addiction	Waimakariri youth are enabled to thrive mentally and physically and have access to essential wellbeing services
Recreation: inclusive of sports, physical activities, and hobbies	Waimakariri youth are satisfied with and have increased access to local sports and recreation opportunities
Environment: inclusive of environmental issues, sustainability, and community action	Waimakariri youth are informed on environmental issues impacting the district and feel equipped to make an impact
Employment: inclusive of work readiness, career pathways and volunteering	Waimakariri youth are aware of local career pathways, connected to local employers, and are supported to be work ready
Belonging: inclusive of culture and social inclusion	Waimakariri youth have an increased sense of social and cultural belonging across the district
Spaces and Places: inclusive of access to public places and transport	Waimakariri youth have access to spaces and places in the district that are youth friendly, connected, safe, and inclusive

Engagement: inclusive of Council engagement with local youth and civic awareness	Waimakariri youth are engaged with Council and have increased levels of civic awareness
Sector Support: inclusive of how the Council supports the local youth sector	The Waimakariri youth sector is supported, connected, and trained to effectively address priority issues impacting youth.

- 4.3. The above themes and goals are in line with the strategic direction of the Community Development Strategy 2025-2035.
- 4.4. In addition to the aforementioned themes and goals, the Draft Plan highlights context for each theme, and a summary of what local young people told us about that theme through the Youth Action Plan Early Engagement Survey. This is inclusive of direct quotes to elevate the voices of these young people and how they feel about living in Waimakariri.
- 4.5. Each theme outlined in the Draft Plan has been structured with actions and sub-actions, followed by the citing of relevant documents, recognition of lead internal agents and collaborators, and an indication of which year it is expected that the action will be commenced.
- 4.6. The Draft Plan has been socialised with the Council teams listed as a lead agent or collaborator for each action. Each team was encouraged to provide feedback, suggest edits, or make additions as they saw fit. The current version of the Draft Plan encapsulates this feedback.
- 4.7. The Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 has also been reviewed by the Project Control Group, comprised of:
- Portfolio Holder for Community and Wellbeing
 - General Manager Community and Recreation
 - Community Team Manager
 - Strategy and Business Unit Manager
 - Communications and Engagement Lead
 - Youth Development Facilitator
 - Policy Analyst.
- 4.8. Additionally, staff workshopped the draft actions with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group who provided their thoughts and feedback at their October and November 2025 meetings.
- 4.9. The implementation of the Draft Youth Action Plan is designed to take place over the three years following its adoption by Council. This is envisioned to be between mid-2026 to mid-2029 dependent on the timing of the formal consultation and the level of input received at the conclusion of this process.

4.10. Next Steps

Feb 2026	Feb-Mar 2026	Apr-May 2026	Jun 2026
Request approval from the Community and Recreation Committee to consult on the Draft Plan	Undertake a formal consultation process to get feedback from local youth and the wider community on the Draft Plan	Process feedback received during the consultation period and integrate suggestions into the Draft Plan	Present the final Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 to Council for adoption

4.11. Options

4.11.1. Option 1: Approve the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 to be released to the wider community for public consultation.

This is the preferred option.

This determination is based on the significant level of early engagement undertaken with local youth to inform the Draft Plan, as well as a high level of buy-in from internal and external stakeholders alike.

Additionally, the draft plan is aligned with the Community Development Strategy 2025-2035 and will aid in the delivery of the youth-related aspects of this Strategy.

4.11.2. Option 2: Decline approval for the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 to be released to the wider community for public consultation.

This is not a preferred option.

The Draft Plan directly reflects the voices of more than 1,100 local young people aged 12 to 24 who contributed their time, personal experiences, and aspirations for Waimakariri to the early engagement process. This age group is often difficult to engage; however, this strong level of participation demonstrates that these issues are meaningful to local youth. To support continued engagement from young people in Council processes, it is important that they can clearly see how their input is acknowledged, valued, and translated into action.

There is also considerable buy-in from local education providers, community organisations, and youth service providers, all of whom have been engaged at key stages of the project's development. These stakeholders have a strong interest in the Draft Plan, the actions it proposes, and the impact it may have on youth in Waimakariri.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

There are implications on community wellbeing by the issues and options that are the subject matter of this report.

By giving local young people the opportunity to have their voices heard on the matters which affect them, Council is providing an opportunity for communities to be aware of and accommodate the unique needs of our rangatahi.

The use of a comprehensive and empowering pre-engagement process has helped to ensure the diverse needs of youth have been identified within the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 and has enabled our young people to have a voice in Council processes. This

project has also promoted better connections between youth, their community, and local government.

One of the aims of the Youth Action Plan project is to continue to develop the District in a way that enables youth to thrive. This includes having a sense of belonging and access to the things that matter to them, to encourage youth to view this district as a home they want to remain in long-term.

- 4.12. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapū are likely to be affected by or have an interest in the subject matter of this report and were briefed on the project in the early development stages.

While the hapū did not have the capacity for involvement at the time, opportunities will continue to be provided as the project proceeds. Staff welcome input from mana whenua at any stage of this project, and as they see appropriate.

5.2. Groups and Organisations

There are groups and organisations likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report.

A number of groups and organisations have been identified as key stakeholders to the project, many of which played an active role in promoting the early engagement process. Staff held an event on 10 September 2025 to circulate the results of the early engagement to these stakeholders in order to 'close the loop' on the engagement and explore options for collaboration on the Youth Action Plan.

These groups and organisations will be personally notified of the formal consultation on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 to ensure that the young people they represent are enabled to have their say on this project once again.

5.3. Wider Community

The wider community is likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report.

The formal consultation process will enable members of the wider community to provide their feedback on the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029, alongside local rangatahi and the groups/organisations which represent them.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the decisions sought by this report.

The Youth Action Plan project is being delivered as a collaboration between the Community Team and Strategy and Business Unit.

Staff resource is factored into the annual work programmes of both the Community Team and Strategy and Business Unit as an operational expense.

There is a modest operational budget within the Community Team's Youth Development budget, as approved in the Long-Term Plan, to cover costs associated with the review of the Youth Strategy and the development of a Youth Action Plan.

Many of the actions identified in the Draft Youth Action Plan align with Council's core business and are delivered across multiple units, therefore not requiring additional budget. For example, the facilitation and promotion of environmental activities that encourage youth participation, such as planting initiatives and river clean-up events, are already

incorporated into annual work programmes and are delivered collaboratively by the Greenspace Unit, Community Team, and Solid Waste Team.

The Community Team continues to actively seek external funding to support the implementation of community-related strategies. Several actions outlined in the Draft Youth Action Plan are associated with projects that leverage external funding sources. One example of this is Council's ongoing involvement in the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs Programme, which receives partial funding from the Ministry of Social Development.

6.2. **Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts**

The recommendations in this report do not have sustainability and/or climate change impacts.

6.3 **Risk Management**

There are no risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

6.3 **Health and Safety**

There are no health and safety risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

7. **CONTEXT**

7.1. **Consistency with Policy**

This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

7.2. **Authorising Legislation**

Local Government Act 2002

7.3. **Consistency with Community Outcomes**

The Council's Community Outcomes are relevant to the content of the Draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029. In particular, the following are most applicable to this report and the content it deals with:

7.3.1. **Social:** A place where everyone can have a sense of belonging.

- The social community outcomes are all relevant to this report and the actions that are likely to arise from its approval

7.3.2. **Cultural:** A place where our people are enabled to thrive and give creative expression to their identity and heritage.

- Public spaces express our cultural identities and help to foster an inclusive society
- Members of our community are able to engage in arts, culture and heritage events and activities as participants, consumers, creators or providers
- Waimakariri's diversity is freely expressed, respected and valued

7.3.3. **Environmental:** A place that values and restores our environment.

- People are supported to participate in improving the health and sustainability of our environment
- Land use is sustainable; biodiversity is protected and restored
- Our district is resilient and able to quickly respond to and recover from natural disasters and the effects of climate change
- Our district transitions towards a reduced carbon and waste district
- The natural and built environment in which people live is clean, healthy and safe

- Our communities are able to access and enjoy natural areas and public spaces

7.3.4. **Economic:** A place that is supported by a resilient and innovative economy.

- There is access to meaningful, rewarding and safe employment within the district
- Our district recognises the value of both paid and unpaid work

7.4. **Authorising Delegations**

The Community and Recreation Community has delegated authority on the development of the draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029.

The Council will make the final decision on the adoption of the final Youth Action Plan 2026-2029.

Draft Youth Action Plan 2026—29



A Word From the Mayor

Young people are vital to the future of the Waimakariri District. They bring energy, ideas, challenge, creativity and hope, and they deserve a district that not only welcomes them but actively supports them to build their lives here.

This Youth Action Plan is a significant and proud milestone for our district. It reflects a clear commitment to ensuring Waimakariri is a place where young people aged 12 to 24 feel they belong, are heard, and can see real opportunities for their future. We want our young people to stay, to return, and to choose Waimakariri as the place where they live, work, learn and contribute.

To shape this Plan, we asked young people directly what matters most to them. They told us about employment and training opportunities, social connection, safe and welcoming places and spaces, mental health and wellbeing, transport, sport, and cultural opportunities.

This engagement represents the largest youth consultation ever undertaken by the Council, and the depth, honesty and thoughtfulness of the feedback has been both powerful and instructive.

What makes this work particularly important is that it does not sit on a shelf. The insights gathered through this process will inform programmes, policies and investment decisions across Council for many years to come. The Youth Action Plan will guide real, practical action and shape how we plan for our district's future with young people at the centre.

This work has also drawn strong interest and respect from partner organisations and stakeholders, who recognise the value of listening directly to young people and responding to what they have told us. In that sense, this Plan sets a benchmark – not only for engagement, but for accountability and results.

On behalf of Council, I thank every young person who took the time to share their views, experiences and aspirations. Your voices matter, and this Plan is a direct response to what you have told us. Together, we are working to ensure Waimakariri is a district where young people can belong, grow, and realise their potential.

– Mayor Dan Gordon



Contents

Strategic Framework	1
The Community Development Strategy 2025–2035	3
Youth Action Plan Early Engagement Survey Overview	5
Development of the Youth Action Plan 2026-29	7
Draft Youth Action Plan	10
Health	10
Recreation	16
Environment	22
Employment	30
Belonging	38
Spaces and Places	44
Engagement	50
Sector Support	58
Monitoring and Evaluation	60

Introduction

The (draft) Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026–2029 is the result of a review of Council’s previous Youth Strategy 2018. For the purpose of this work, ‘youth’ is defined as those in the 12-to-24-year-old age range.

Work to review the Youth Strategy commenced in October 2024, earlier than previously indicated. This was done in recognition of the significant level of social and demographic changes experienced by our young people over this time period.

These social changes include, but are not limited to, the impact of a global pandemic, overrepresentation of Waimakariri youth in local mental health statistics, changing education and employment environments, the continuing emergence of technological advancements, climate change, and an aging population focus.

In terms of demographic changes, the Youth Strategy 2018 was modelled on Census data from 2013 which showed that the Waimakariri youth population at that time was 7923 12-to-24-year-olds.

Between 2013 and 2018, there was a 14.95% increase in the District’s youth population. There was another 4.9% increase between 2018 and 2023 amounting to a total of 9555 youth in the District as of 2023 Census data, demonstrating a clear need for this work to be updated.

The Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026–2029 is shaped by this social and demographic context, alongside a significant level of input from local youth themselves. The eight themes outlined in the Action Plan aim to address the issues, challenges, and aspirations highlighted during this process, whilst aligning with relevant strategic frameworks.



Strategic Framework

Waimakariri District Council:

The Council has a statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 2002 to identify strategic priorities and community outcomes that reflect the needs and aspirations of local residents.

Across its eight themes and identified actions, the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 aligns with Council's social, cultural, environmental and economic community outcomes. Additionally, the objectives of the Action Plan are closely associated with Council's strategic priority to, "enhance community wellbeing, safety, inclusivity and connectedness".

This diagram below shows the Council's strategic framework that informs the delivery of a wide range of Council services, including infrastructure planning, business development, community services, and environmental stewardship. This work is underpinned by robust community engagement, evidence analysis, and alignment with national and regional planning.

The Waimakariri Community Development Strategy is one of the Council's key strategies (as shown in figure below).



The Community Development Strategy 2025–2035:

The objectives of the Community Development Strategy encompass all aspects of the Council’s Community Outcomes.

The objectives of the Community Development Strategy encompass all aspects of the Council’s Community Outcomes.

The Strategy’s objectives ensure that Waimakariri is a District where people are:

- Safe, healthy, and able to access the determinants of good health and wellbeing
- Welcome and included, as part of our local communities, both geographic and ‘of interest’
- Informed and empowered to contribute to local decision making and achieve their aspirations
- Engaged and connected into the District’s activities



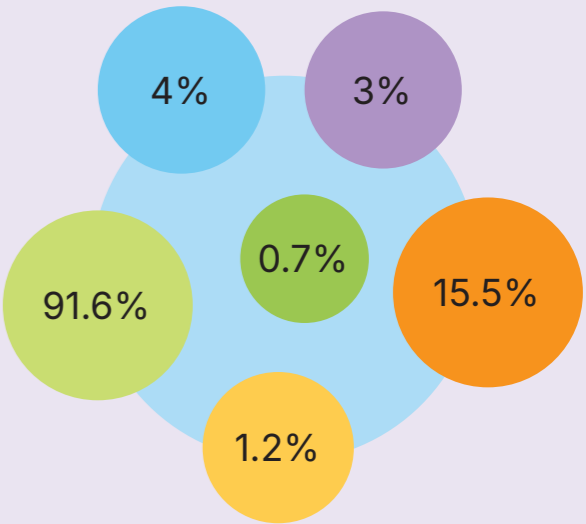
Related Plans

To address the broad range of community development activities and initiatives, several plans have been developed giving effect to specific priorities in both the Community Development Strategy and the Long-Term Plan.

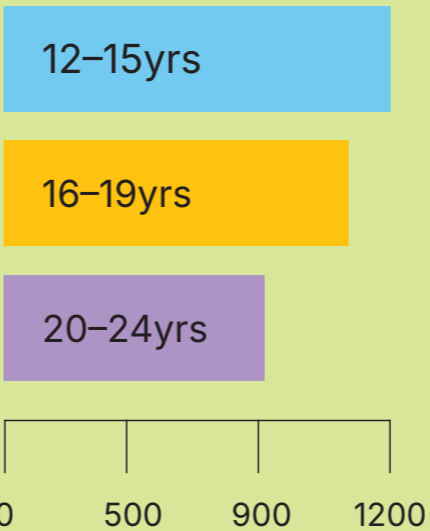
As illustrated in the diagram below, the Youth Action Plan is one of these plans:



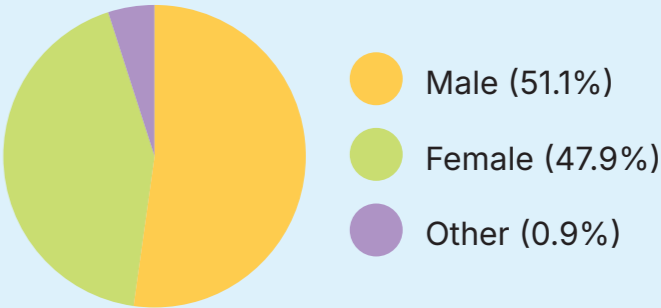
What ethnicity do Waimakariri youth identify as?



Waimakariri youth by age group



What gender do Waimakariri youth identify as?



2013–2018
Waimakariri’s youth population increased by 14.95%

2018–2023
it increased again by 4.9%

As of 2023 an estimated

9555

12-to-24-year-olds live in Waimakariri

Accounting for approx. 14.4% of the District’s population

Youth Action Plan Early Engagement Survey Overview

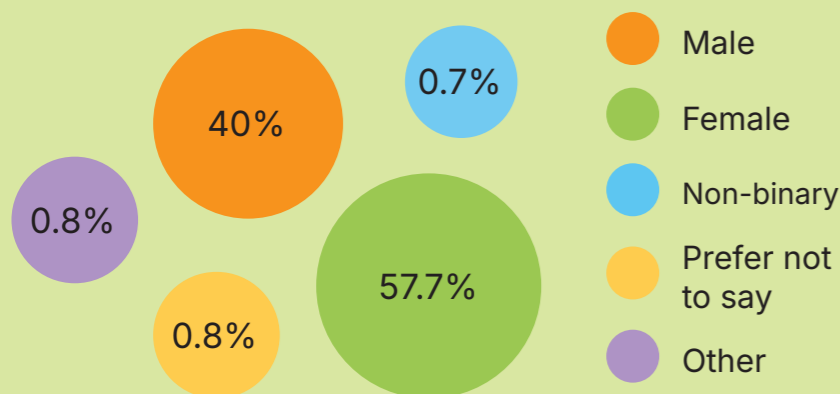
Between 18 May and 13 July 2025, the Waimakariri District Council undertook early engagement with local 12-to-24-year-olds to better understand their changing needs, challenges, and aspirations.

This information formed the basis for the development of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029.

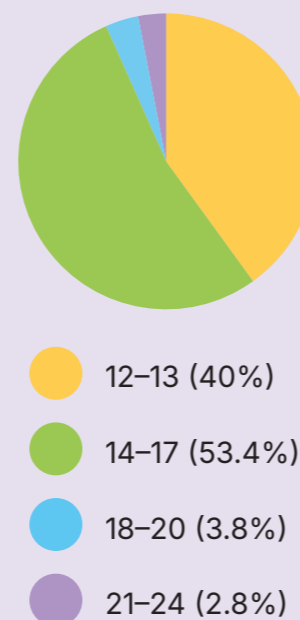
Across all collection methods, Council engaged with 1112 local 12-to-24-year-olds, accounting for 11.6% of the Districts' total youth population.

We heard from 1091 young people through the survey alone. Of these responses...

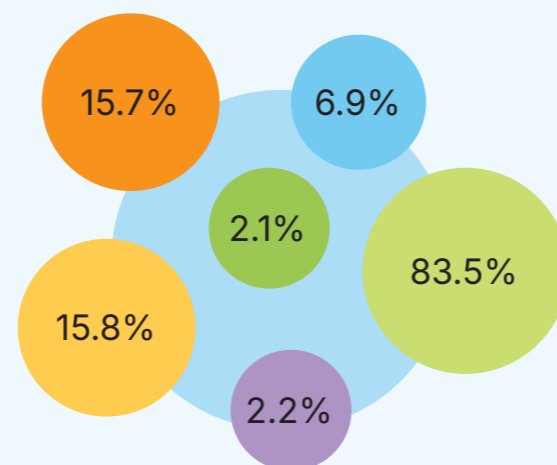
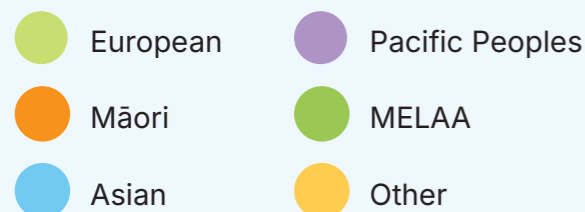
What gender do our respondents identify as?



We heard from a range of different age groups:



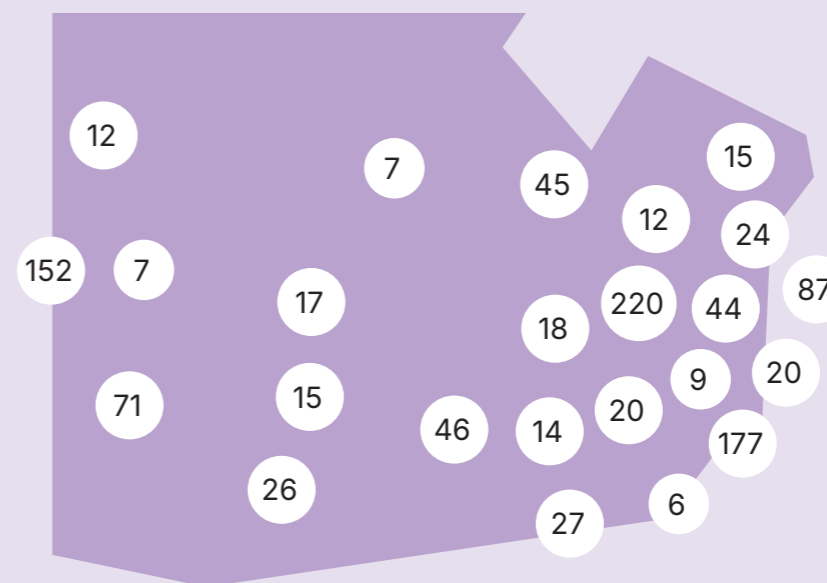
What ethnicity do our respondents identify as?



What were their main messages?

- Waimakariri youth want to engage with Council when it comes to topics of significance to them, and they appreciate the opportunity to make their voices heard
 - Waimakariri youth show interest in a range of different topics and issues, from sports and physical activity to roading and transport, when engaged with in a meaningful way that meets them where they are
 - Waimakariri youth care about the collective social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing of their peers and their communities
 - Waimakariri youth have different experiences based on their location within the District, most notably when it comes to urban verses rural localities
- The commitment made by these young people to respond to the early engagement survey and come along to events is what has shaped the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029.

Who shaped the Youth Action Plan?



This map shows where in the Waimakariri District these young people are from, demonstrating the range of urban and rural youth voices represented through-out this Action Plan.

71	Rural	20	Pegasus Bay	45	Loburn	9	Tuahiwi
220	Rangiora	15	West Eyreton	12	Ashley	152	Oxford
15	Sefton	44	Woodend	87	Pegasus	46	Swannanoa
24	Waikuku	26	Eyrewell	7	Starvation Hill	27	Eyreton
12	Ashley Gorge	14	Mandeville	17	Cust	20	Ohoka
7	Okuku	6	Clarkville	18	Fernside	177	Kaiapoi

Development of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 (to date)

October 2024

The Waimakariri District Council began reviewing its 'Youth Strategy 2018' with the goal of developing a Youth Action Plan in its place. This review was in response to significant social and demographic changes experienced by local young people and was guided by a dedicated Project Control Group.

March 2025

The first major milestone for the project was forming the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group to ensure youth voice and insights from service providers helped shape the plan.

Facilitated by Council staff, the group met regularly throughout the development of the project to provide guidance and feedback.

April 2025

Working alongside the Advisory Group, a co-designed early engagement process was designed with the aim of better understanding the challenges and priorities of local youth, to form the basis for draft actions. This phase was considered critical to the project's success, with the Advisory Group playing an instrumental role in shaping ways to engage meaningfully with local youth.

May-July 2025

Early engagement ran for eight weeks and included an in-depth survey, interactive workshops, and social media outreach. The survey, covering ten key themes, was the primary tool used for gathering youth insights.

To maximise reach, Council partnered with schools and education providers, attended youth events, and worked with young people directly to identify the best locations for QR code posters and social media content.

August-September 2025

The use of mixed engagement methods ensured a large response, with 1112 young people having their say. Feedback highlighted key issues, opportunities, and priorities for local youth. Many also provided detailed written insights, offering a rich understanding of their experiences and perspectives. Council staff then began analysing these responses and shared these learnings during an external stakeholder engagement evening to ensure that decision makers, youth service providers, and the wider community are well aware of these issues and how they can make a difference.

October-December 2025

Analysis of the 1112 responses to the early engagement process for this project directly informed the development of a draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029. The first step was to set out the themes that needed to be included in the document, followed by specific goals and actions. This involved conversations across Council units, as well as with external organisations and youth service providers. The draft was then shared with the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group and Project Control Group for their feedback and workshopping to prepare for consultation.



Draft Youth Action Plan

Theme 1: Health

Goal: Waimakariri youth are enabled to thrive mentally and physically and have access to essential wellbeing services.

What young people told us about health

To better understand how local youth feel about health, we asked them a range of questions relating to mental and physical health, as well as addiction.

The majority of survey respondents told us that mental health is very important to them, with 75.7% going on to note that they think mental health is something Waimakariri youth are actively struggling with. It was also clear that a number of our young people are unsure or do not know how to access local mental health services at 37.8%. Older youth stood out in this category with those in the 18-to-24-year-old group reporting that they face barriers when accessing mental health services, in particular, cost of services and long wait times.

Older youth also had the highest percentage reporting the same barriers for accessing physical health services, highlighting that young people in the 18-to-24-year-old group may require more support in this space. However, it was clear that respondents were more confident that they know how to access physical services in comparison to mental health services.

"I'm worried about the cost and lack of support, and I don't want my family to worry if I'm sick or need care"
— 18-20-year-old, Eyrewell

At 91.2%, the overwhelming majority of survey respondents stated that they feel addiction is an issue that affects young people living in Waimakariri. When asked to elaborate on specific addiction challenges, 89.3% told us that vaping is a significant issue for youth, followed by social media at 77.4%, alcohol at 66.4% and drug use at 64.1%. These responses were a clear indicator that our young people need more support when it comes to addiction.

"Young people dealing with addiction can benefit from community support, education, and accessible services, including peer groups, counselling, and mental health programmes"
— 18-20-year-old, Eyrewell

"Mental health is very serious, and we should make more awareness of it"
— 12-13-year-old, Swannanoa

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
1.1	Promote the availability of mental and physical health services within the District	Conduct mapping of current mental health services available to young people across the District, with a focus of identifying gaps in service provision and future opportunities	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Work collaboratively to ensure that the range of mental and physical health services in the District are publicised in priority youth spaces and online platforms used by youth		
		Ensure that online resources that promote local services, such as the Next Steps webpage, are easily accessible to youth and promoted on Council platforms		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
1.1	Communications and Engagement Team Waimakariri Youth Council Social Services Waimakariri North Canterbury Youth Services Network Waimakariri Health Advisory Group	Ongoing	Youth are more informed on the availability of mental health services in the District Youth who need support are able to find and access the right services Youth and health service providers are well connected and informed about each other's offerings Youth in need are receiving wrap around services to support their mental and physical health	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
1.2	Investigate opportunities to work with key partners in addressing addiction issues facing local youth	Inform key partners about Youth Action Plan survey results on addiction and facilitate initial conversations around next steps	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Engaging the Community for Alcohol Action Plan	Community Team
		Provide support as needed to the projects that result from conversations with these key partners		

	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s
1.2	Community Wellbeing North Canterbury Social Services Waimakariri Local high schools and education providers Alcohol and Drug Harm Steering Group North Canterbury Youth Services Network Waimakariri Youth Council Local Police	Year 1 & 2	Key community partners are more informed, connected, and empowered to address addiction issues facing local youth Key projects to address local youth addiction issues have begun and are well supported

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
1.3	Facilitate opportunities to educate sector providers in relation to youth health and addiction	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
1.3	Social Services Waimakariri North Canterbury Youth Services Network Waimakariri Health Advisory Group	Ongoing	Youth and health service providers are informed about key trends and issues impacting youth in Waimakariri	



Theme 2: Recreation

Goal: Waimakariri youth are satisfied with and have increased access to local sports and recreation opportunities.

What young people told us about recreation

To help inform service provision across the District, we asked local young people to tell us about their thoughts on sports, physical and recreational activities, and their hobbies.

At 91.6%, the vast majority of respondents told us that sports and physical activities are somewhat to very important to them. Team sports were very clearly popular amongst our young people; however, it was noted that interest in team sports seemed to decrease as age increased. In terms of satisfaction with current sports offerings in Waimakariri, the majority of respondents told us they are only somewhat satisfied at present, with rural communities reporting a higher level of dissatisfaction. Once again, cost was seen as the most prevalent barrier to accessing these opportunities.

“Many buses don’t travel to our area as we live more rurally compared to cities like Christchurch and Rangiora, and with more public transport it would be much easier to participate in physical activities”
– 12-13-year-old, Eyreton

Young people told us that they want to see more support for social sport offerings, opportunities to be involved with club and school sports for those not in traditional education settings, and increased access to speciality sports within the District for youth with disabilities.

Young people also told us about their hobbies and the things they do in their spare time. 85.81% of respondents told us they most enjoy hanging out with their friends, reinforcing the idea that our young people value these relationships with their peers.

“It would be better if there were more things for teenagers to do out here, so we don’t have to travel into Christchurch. I have noticed that there are more and more teenagers joining the gym because that is one of the few things we can do to keep us busy. I suggest a youth group or something along those lines”
– 14-17-year-old, Rangiora

Interestingly, 70.9% of 21-24-year-olds told us that they are more likely to partake in activities that have mental health benefits as well. Themes of creativity, expression, and freedom also came through in comments, as well as the need for more local, accessible activities for young people to partake in.

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
2.1	Investigate opportunities to remove barriers for young people to participate in sport and recreation	<div>To better understand participation barriers, facilitate targeted conversations with:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home schooling networks• Youth in rural areas• 18-to-24-year-olds</div> <div>Following conversations with identified groups, provide feedback to sport and recreation providers, and advocate for more inclusive offerings</div>	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Play, Active Recreation and Sports Strategy (currently being developed)	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
2.1	North Canterbury Sport and Recreation Trust Sport Canterbury Mahi Mātātoa Trust Local schools and education providers Local sporting codes Comcol North Canterbury Noaia Charitable Trust R13 Trust Waimakariri Youth Council WaiYouth Waimakariri Access Group	Year 1 & 2	Sport and recreation advisors have increased awareness of barriers impacting youth participation and are motivated and empowered to address these issues where possible	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
2.2	Collaborate with local sport and recreation providers to investigate broader offerings	<p>Connect with staff working on the development of a Play, Active Recreation, and Sports Strategy to better understand the gaps and opportunities for youth sports offerings in the District</p> <p>Support opportunities for local youth to participate in accessible and inclusive sport offerings</p>	<p>Community Development Strategy 2025-35</p> <p>Inclusive Waimakariri Plan 2025-28</p> <p>Play, Active Recreation and Sports Strategy (currently being developed)</p> <p>Community and Recreation Activity Management Plan</p>	<p>Greenspace Unit</p> <p>Community Team</p>
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
2.2	<p>North Canterbury Sport and Recreation Trust</p> <p>Local sports clubs</p> <p>Local cultural groups</p> <p>Waimakariri Access Group</p> <p>Sport Canterbury</p> <p>The Halberg Foundation</p> <p>ParaFed Canterbury</p>	Year 1 & 2	<p>Local sport and recreation providers agree to address gaps identified in sport offerings</p> <p>Local youth have access to a broader range of sport and feel more satisfied in this area</p> <p>Youth with disabilities have opportunities to participate in local sport</p> <p>Levels of service reflect community demand</p>	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
2.3	Facilitate the promotion of sport, recreation, and play opportunities for young people in Waimakariri	Investigate opportunities to attract additional sport, recreation, and play offerings and events in the District	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Play, Active Recreation and Sports Strategy (currently being developed)	Greenspace Unit Community Team
		Work collaboratively to ensure that the range of sport and recreation offerings in the District are publicised in priority youth spaces and online platforms used by youth		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
2.3	Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	Local youth have increased awareness of local sport and recreation opportunities	
	North Canterbury Sport and Recreation Trust		Additional opportunities for youth to be involved in sport, recreation and play become more readily available in the District	
	Local sports clubs			
	Sport Canterbury			
	Waimakariri Youth Council			
	Waimakariri Access Group			



Theme 3: Environment

Goal: Waimakariri youth are informed on environmental issues impacting the District and feel equipped to make an impact.

What young people told us about the environment

We asked local young people to tell us how they feel about their natural environment in Waimakariri, and issues that concern them. The vast majority of survey respondents told us that the natural environment is important to them, with 71.14% telling us that they think it is very important for their local community to be protecting the environment.

It was also clear in survey results that our youth are interested in being involved in activities which help our natural environment into the future.

"I think the natural environment is important as we need to preserve what we have so we can have better futures"
– 14-17-year-old, Kaiapoi

"Maybe promote these cleanups or tree plantings more, because I don't see many ads for cleanups, but would be happy to go if I saw that they were being hosted"
– 12-13-year-old, Eyrewell

Furthermore, at 55%, the majority of respondents told us that environmental issues do worry them, sending the message that our young people are concerned about environmental issues and the impact these may have on the natural environment. In their comments, young people told us that they feel a desire for information to be more readily available and accessible to them.



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
3.1	Facilitate and promote opportunities for youth-led environmental activities	Take a creative communications and planning approach to increase youth participation in environmental activities	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Natural Environment Strategy	Greenspace Unit Community Team Solid Waste Team
		Ensure that information regarding upcoming environmental events and activities are available and accessible to a youth audience		
		Ensure that the Waimakariri Youth Council continues to be supported in their delivery of youth-led planting days, river clean ups, and other environmental activities		
		Enable opportunities for local young people to create their own environmental communications, such as youth-led and directed videos, which provide them with a platform to express their thoughts on environmental topics of their choosing		

	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s
3.1	Communications and Engagement Team Waimakariri Youth Council Ashley Rakahuri River Care Group Environment Canterbury Eco Educate 4WD Club Keep Rangiora Beautiful Rangiora Rotary Rangiora Tramping Club WaiYouth Tūhaitara Coastal Park Trust	Ongoing	Multiple youth-led environmental events and initiatives happen each year The number of youth involved in these events increases





	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
3.2	Investigate new opportunities for sustainable practices in the District	Investigate new opportunities for sustainable practices that youth can be involved in, and sustain current offerings	Waste Management and Minimisation Plan 2018	Solid Waste Team
		Investigate the possibility of an extension of take back schemes in the wider District		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
3.2	Community Team Eco Educate Greenspace Unit	Year 2 & 3	The Council incorporates more sustainability initiatives throughout the District, making it an eco-friendlier place	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
3.3	Facilitate opportunities for youth environmental advocacy at the District, Regional and National level	Ensure that submissions made by Council on environmental matters take into account the feedback received by local young people through the Youth Action Plan survey and other relevant surveys/data	N/A	Community Team Strategy & Business Unit Greenspace Unit
		Support the Waimakariri Youth Council's advocacy work through sharing relevant advocacy opportunities and by peer reviewing submissions		
		Create new opportunities for a diverse range of youth to be involved in environmental strategic development		
		Ensure that information relating to environmental issues, collated by Council, can be shared with young people in a way that is accessible, and easy to understand		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
3.3	Waimakariri Youth Council Communications and Engagement Team Youth Voice Canterbury Local environmental advocacy groups Waimakariri Biodiversity Trust	Ongoing	Local youth voices are represented on a range of environmental issues and projects	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
3.4	Explore new ways to share information and empower youth about environmental issues and projects	N/A	N/A	Communications and Engagement Team Strategy and Business Unit Greenspace Unit
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
3.4	Community Team Waimakariri Youth Council Solid Waste Team Eco Educate	Ongoing	Youth feel more informed about local environmental issues and actions that Council is taking through increased access to information, and regular updates on media platforms	



Theme 4: Employment

Goal: Waimakariri youth are aware of local career pathways, connected to local employers, and are supported to be work ready.

What young people told us about employment (issues that were highlighted)

We asked young people to tell us about their experiences with seeking employment within Waimakariri to better understand the challenges they are facing. It was clear that the most significant barrier is the lack of available jobs locally, with 57% of survey respondents noting this.

"I have applied to 100+ jobs and have only had 2 interviews but got denied both times, it's hard for me"
– 14-17-year-old, Rangiora

"In my area particular jobs are very hard to get because almost every student over 16 is going for the same 5-6 jobs in the town and it makes it incredibly difficult to get the job"
– 14-17-year-old, Eyreton

This was followed by 47.1% stating lack of experience, and 29.7% percent mentioning access to transport as barriers. The inter-related nature of these challenges is significant.

In order to address these issues, young people told us that opportunities such as in-person workshops and one-off opportunities to learn vocational skills, CV writing, and job interview etiquette would be helpful. Some young people also expressed concern that they feel there is bias against young people in the workplace, and that disability stigma impacts their ability to find employment in Waimakariri.



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.1	Facilitate the effective promotion of local volunteering opportunities	Collaborate with the Waimakariri Youth Council to roll out a volunteering opportunities campaign	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Waimakariri Youth Council
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.1	Communications and Engagement Team Community Wellbeing North Canterbury North Canterbury Youth Services Network	Year 1	More youth are aware of and connected to local volunteering opportunities	



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.2	Facilitate a pilot 'Day in the Life' programme offering local youth the opportunity to apply for a one-day work experience in an area of interest within Council	<p>Explore feasibility and confirm interest in a pilot programme across Council units</p> <p>Youth Development Facilitator to work through logistics, draft a schedule for the day, and outline eligibility criteria/selection process to share with Council units and local high schools/education providers</p> <p>Develop required communications collateral and ensure a wide range of local young people are aware of the opportunity</p> <p>Review the success of the pilot programme and determine whether it is suitable to run annually</p>	<p>Community Development Strategy 2025-35</p> <p>Volunteer Policy</p> <p>Recruitment and Selection Policy</p>	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline (year 1,2,3)	Success indicator/s	
4.2	Human Resources Team Participating Council Units Communications and Engagement Team Local high schools Local education providers Health and Safety Team	Year 1 or 2	<p>The pilot programme runs with a high level of Council engagement and youth participation</p> <p>Youth participants have increased awareness of council functions and career pathways</p> <p>Connections between local youth and Council are strengthened</p>	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.3	Facilitate workshops aimed at youth work readiness	Mayors’ Taskforce For Jobs to continue with learner licensing courses and other relevant work readiness workshops for clients	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Support WaiYouth to host work readiness workshops for wider youth population		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.3	Waimakariri Youth Council WaiYouth Comcol North Canterbury Noaia Charitable Trust Enterprise North Canterbury	Ongoing	Waimakariri youth are supported to learn skills that will increase their work readiness and employability	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.4	Maintain opportunities for youth to intern across Council business units	Encourage the proactive sharing of internship opportunities across Council units with local young people	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Human Resources Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.4	Council Units Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	More Waimakariri youth are aware of and able to participate in Council internships	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.5	Maintain participation in the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs programme	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.5	Ministry of Social Development	Ongoing	Eligible Waimakariri youth are supported to find work through the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs programme	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.6	Support the North Canterbury Youth Futures activities to highlight local career pathways	Facilitate and promote the North Canterbury Youth Futures Careers Expo, Business Breakfast, and Career Pathways activities	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.6	North Canterbury Youth Futures Working Group	Ongoing	<p>The North Canterbury Youth Futures activities continue to grow</p> <p>Local youth continue to gain awareness of local career pathways and connect with employers through North Canterbury Youth Futures activities</p>	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
4.7	Investigate alternative transport options to support youth employment opportunities	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
4.7	Local Employers Community service providers North Canterbury Minibus Trust Local High Schools Comcol North Canterbury Noaia Charitable Trust	Year 3	Key partners are identified and committed to providing new transport pathways for young employees	



Theme 5: Belonging

Goal: Waimakariri youth have an increased sense of social and cultural belonging across the District

What young people told us about belonging:

We asked young people questions about how they feel being themselves in their local communities to better understand where there may be higher levels of need. When asked if they feel accepted and included by their peers, 60% of survey respondents said they do, followed by 33.1% noting they only feel this way sometimes, and 6.9% stating they either do not feel this way or that they'd prefer not to say. It was noted that the feeling of acceptance seemed to trend upwards as the age of the young person increased as well.

83% of survey respondents told us that they view their culture as being somewhat to very important to who they are. Following on from this, 55.1% of these respondents told us they feel supported and accepted by their community to be themselves in their cultural identity.

However, 33.1% were unsure of how to respond to this question, and a further 11.9% stated that they do not feel this way. 89% told us that it is somewhat to very important to live in a community that includes people of multiple cultures, with only 11% disagreeing. Young people also expressed that they feel the Waimakariri District could be doing more to celebrate and promote cultural diversity, beyond just ticking a box.

"You could have a Polyfest in Waimakariri or a big open Māori hāngi or community celebration. Maybe a get together even. It doesn't have to be big, you just have to feel noticed"
— 12-13-year-old, Pegasus

"I think there's a bit of a way to go still when it comes to societal attitudes here when it comes to acceptance and inclusivity"
— 18-20-year-old, Rangiora



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
5.1	Ensure that the implementation of the Welcoming Waimakariri Plan also reflects the needs of young people	N/A	Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026-2029 Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
5.1	Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group	Ongoing	The Welcoming Waimakariri Plan implementation represents and includes young people	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
5.2	Facilitate and promote opportunities for cultural inclusion, education, and celebration for local youth	Work with Global Locals of Waimakariri to widen opportunities for youth involvement with the group’s activities	Welcoming Waimakariri Plan 2026-2029 Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Facilitate the Race Unity poster competition		
		Investigate additional offerings of youth-targeted cultural events and activities		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
5.2	Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group Global Locals of Waimakariri Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	Local youth have access to and are attending a range of cultural events and activities Local youth feel more accepted, included, and welcome in Waimakariri	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
5.3	Facilitate and promote youth social events and opportunities across the District to improve inclusion and connection	Support Waimakariri Youth Council and WaiYouth in running multiple youth-led events and activities each year	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Greenspace Unit
		Collaborate with relevant Council teams to facilitate events and opportunities for youth during Youth Week		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
5.3	WaiYouth Waimakariri Youth Council North Canterbury Youth Services Network Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	Waimakariri Youth Council and WaiYouth events are well attended by local youth Youth feel more included and connected across the community after attending these events	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
5.4	Ensure that youth voice is represented when designing meaningful pathways for cultural and social inclusion at Council	Utilise responses to the Youth Action Plan survey in designing these pathways, and promote to relevant Council units for use in their work	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Actively incorporate concepts such as Te Whare Tapā Wha and Hauora when exploring pathways for youth voice and cultural inclusion		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
5.4	Waimakariri Youth Council WaiYouth Youth Voice Canterbury Relevant Council units Welcoming Waimakariri Working Group Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga	Ongoing	Youth are supported to have their voices represented at Council on topics related to cultural and social inclusion	



Theme 6: Spaces and Places

Goal: Waimakariri youth have access to spaces and places in the District that are youth friendly, connected, safe, and inclusive.

What young people told us about spaces and places (issues that were highlighted)

We asked young people how they feel about public spaces in the Waimakariri District to better understand how they interact with our offerings and what we could be doing better. 92.3% of respondents told us that local public spaces are somewhat to very important to them. It was evident that our young people value having places where they are welcome, safe, and can enjoy hanging out with their friends. Some respondents noted that there is a lack of indoor spaces that are youth friendly and cost effective.

Young people stated a preference for public places to be served with places to sit and hang out with friends, accessible bathrooms, and Wi-Fi for safety reasons. On the topic of safety, the majority of respondents told us they feel somewhat safe in public spaces at 62%, followed by 23.9% who feel very safe, and 14.1% who either do not feel safe or were unsure.

There was a clear preference for outdoor spaces expressed by respondents, with parks and beaches in particular being mentioned.

Libraries were noted by some as safe spaces, whilst others touched on the importance of accessible playgrounds and sensory spaces.

"I used to take busses everywhere but now that I have my own car it feels impractical when it takes three times as long to get anywhere"
— 18-20-year-old, Rangiora

We also wanted to understand how our young people get around the District, and how accessible public transportation services are to them. Unsurprisingly, 90.9% of survey respondents use a car as their main method of transportation, followed by walking and bussing.

Only 21.9% of respondents said they feel satisfied with the provision of public transportation services in their communities and was noted by both rural and urban based youth. To encourage them to use public transport, young people told us they would need better travel routes available where they live at 50.7%, followed by better connections between places they want to go at 45.9%. Safety concerns were also expressed alongside comments on systems being hard to navigate, and the need for more effective youth targeted communications.

"One of my favourite places to go to is the Library mainly because it's sort of a safe haven for book geeks and the Waimakariri Libraries have a variety of things to do while your there"
— 12-13-year-old, Eyrewell

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
6.1	Further develop the 'Waimakariri Youth Spaces' concept, which aims to increase young people's connection, agency, and sense of ownership of local spaces and places	Develop a project plan and establish a control group to progress the Waimakariri Youth Spaces concept	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Greenspace Unit
		Create new opportunities for youth-led storytelling around spaces and places in the District		
		Connect with community organisations, businesses and relevant Council Units to collate their facilities and offerings that youth can easily access		
		Investigate opportunities to develop branding for the Waimakariri Youth Spaces concept to be used in the community		
		Investigate areas for young people to create their own spaces and contribute to codesign processes		



	Collaborators	Timeline (Year 1,2,3)	Success indicator/s
6.1	Strategy and Business Unit Communications and Engagement Team Local businesses Community Organisations	Year 2 & 3	The Waimakariri Youth Spaces concept is developed and executed Local youth have increased sense of ownership and connection to local spaces and places

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
6.2	Work alongside youth audit service providers to proactively assess public spaces and places to improve youth friendliness	Encourage Waimakariri youth to train as Youth Audit Team Leaders to build local capacity Based on feedback received through the Youth Action Plan survey, plan to undertake youth audits when reviewing pre-existing public spaces and developing new spaces	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Play Space Strategy 2017	Greenspace Unit Community Team

	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s
6.2	ReVision Initiative Waimakariri Youth Council	Year 2 & 3	Priority local public spaces are assessed through youth audits, and plans to make them more youth-friendly are under development More local youth are trained to be Youth Audit Team Leaders

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
6.3	Hold conversations with regional public transport providers to uplift the needs of Waimakariri youth, influence planning decisions, safety measures, and better publicise transport options	Proactively share transport relevant data from the Youth Action Plan survey, and other relevant surveys, with Environment Canterbury, Greater Christchurch Partnership, and other partners Ensure Council submissions to transport relevant consultations take into account Youth Action Plan survey data Further promote public transport options in the Waimakariri District, ensuring it can be easily understood by a youth audience Hold conversations internally at Council to advocate for more active mode transport options	Community Development Strategy 2025-35 Infrastructure Strategy 2021-51 Integrated Transport Strategy 2035+ Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017-22	Strategy and Business Unit Community Team

	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s
6.3	Communications and Engagement Team Waimakariri Youth Council Environment Canterbury Youth Voice Canterbury Roding Team	Year 2	The transport needs of Waimakariri youth are represented to regional public transport providers and are reflected in their planning

Theme 7: Engagement

Goal: Waimakariri youth are engaged with Council and have increased levels of civic awareness.

What young people told us about engagement:

Although it wasn't directly mentioned in the Youth Action Plan early engagement survey, the importance of engaging with young people in general came up in qualitative comments and workshops. It was clear that local youth value the opportunity to connect with their Council and have a desire to deepen this connection through the Youth Action Plan itself. The need for increased levels of civics awareness was also evident, highlighting the need to work more in this space to ensure our young people can be educated on what Council does, how it impacts them and their whanau, and what they can do to make sure their voice is heard.

The number of young people engaged with through this project and the quality of their responses demonstrated to Council that this work can assist us when engaging with our young people into the future as well, beyond the ways we already seek to achieve this. This section of the Action Plan aims to recognise the connections we currently foster, as well as to broaden our efforts and entrench new ways of thinking about youth engagement.

"Thank you for giving us a voice, we're not the most popular age range so I really appreciate this. 13-year-old me would be so happy"
— 14-17-year-old, Rangiora

"I've had a good experience with the Waimakariri District Council. I've seen how they work hard to support the community, especially with their youth programmes and local initiatives."

It's great to see a council that listens to young people and invests in making the District a safe and positive place for everyone"
— 14-17-year-old, Rural



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.1	Support the Waimakariri Youth Council	<div>Ensure that Youth Council are enabled to communicate the interests and preferences of local young people to the Council in relation to:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content of strategies, policies, plans, and bylaws of the District Council• The processes and mechanisms for engagement with young people in the District• The consideration of regional issues raised by local young people• Consultation with local young people and the community• Any matter that the Youth Council considers to be of particular interest or concern to Waimakariri young people.</div> <div>Waimakariri Youth Council is supported to deliver events and activities addressing key priorities for local youth</div> <div>Further develop Waimakariri Youth Council's online reach with local young people and their communities</div>	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team

	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s
7.1	Waimakariri Youth Council	Ongoing	Waimakariri Youth Council is supported to represent the interests and preferences of local young people to the Council and to deliver activities addressing key youth priorities

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.2	Support the Wai Youth Action Group	WaiYouth Action Group are empowered to plan and execute social and educational events for local youth	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.2	WaiYouth	Ongoing	WaiYouth is able to deliver multiple well-attended events per year for local youth	



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.3	Support Youth Voice Canterbury initiatives	Support Waimakariri Youth Council members to be actively involved in Youth Voice Canterbury projects and events	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Support Youth Voice Canterbury with the delivery of the regional Youth Takeover Survey run annually		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.3	Youth Voice Canterbury	Ongoing	Youth Voice Canterbury initiatives and activities are actively supported by Waimakariri Youth Council Waimakariri youth voices are represented in the regional Youth Takeover Survey each year	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.4	Facilitate and promote the Youth Service Award	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.4	Governance Team	Ongoing	The Youth Service Award is delivered annually to recognise outstanding contributions to the community by local youth	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.5	Build capacity across Council Units to engage effectively with local youth	Create a Council specific checklist for use by staff when running youth-targeted engagements to ensure effective communications and authentic engagement	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
		Provide opportunities, such as 'lunch and learn' sessions, with Council staff to educate and train on how to best engage with youth		
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.5	Communications and Engagement Team	Year 1 & 2	Council Units are better equipped to engage effectively and meaningfully with youth	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent
7.6	Proactively create opportunities for local youth to meaningfully engage with Council	Enable and facilitate opportunities for local youth to take part in deputations to Council and participate in other Council processes relating to issues of importance to them Reassess feasibility and delivery of the Youth Development Grant, to support youth leadership in the District	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Governance Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.6	Local schools and education providers Strategy and Business Unit Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	Youth not currently involved with Waimakariri Youth Council or WaiYouth are actively engaging with Council The Youth Development Grant is delivered	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
7.7	Increase civic education levels for youth across the District	Foster relationships with local education providers to enable broader youth understanding, engagement and participation in Council processes Plan and execute an annual drop-in sessions programme aimed at local schools, education providers and youth organisations, focused on topics such as Long-Term Plans, major consultations, etc Develop youth- focused communication materials, such as videos on social media platforms, around important Council functions and how Council works Facilitate civics education activities annually during Youth Week on topics such as voting, how to make submissions, etc Explore pathways to increase youth voter awareness and turnout through youth-targeted campaigns prior to the next election period	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Governance Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
7.7	Strategy and Business Unit Communications and Engagement Team	Ongoing	Local youth have an increased understanding of Council functions and broader civic awareness	

Theme 8: Sector Support

Goal: The Waimakariri youth sector is supported, connected, and trained to effectively address priority issues impacting youth.

Through facilitation of the North Canterbury Youth Services Network, Council's Youth Development function provides a mechanism whereby local services and supports working with local youth can come together to network, learn and consider collaborative responses to locally identified issues and opportunities.

In recent years this collaborative approach has resulted in:

- The establishment of the Youth Futures North Canterbury programme that facilitates improved pathways for young people to access education and employment
- Provision of quality professional development for volunteers and paid workers in the local youth sector, ensuring best practice in service delivery that address the issues impacting on the mental, physical and cognitive wellbeing of local youth
- Research and preliminary work toward to establishment of a more youth-friendly Waimakariri District
- The development of a regular newsletter, to keep those working in the youth sector up to date with emerging issues, opportunities and information.



	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
8.1	Facilitate the North Canterbury Youth Services Network monthly newsletter and quarterly trainings	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
8.1	Hurunui District Council	Ongoing	The District's youth service sector feels well-trained, supported, and connected	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
8.2	Collect and share data related to Waimakariri Youth with the wider youth services sector	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team Strategy & Business Unit
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
8.2	Youth Voice Canterbury Waimakariri Youth Council	Ongoing	The youth services sector is informed on key issues impacting youth in Waimakariri	

	Action	Sub-actions	Relevant documents	Lead agent/s
8.3	Promote opportunities for local youth sector service providers to access funding	N/A	Community Development Strategy 2025-35	Community Team
	Collaborators	Timeline	Success indicator/s	
	N/A	Ongoing	Local youth sector service providers are aware of opportunities for funding and how to access them	

Monitoring and Evaluation

This version of the Waimakariri Youth Action Plan has a three-year scope, with actions to be undertaken between TBC 2026 and TBC 2029.

A three-year timeframe was decided upon to make sure that this document can be reviewed more regularly. This was done with the aim of ensuring that the ever-changing needs, aspirations, and issues encountered by local youth can be factored into updated actions, addressed as required.

The success of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 is dependent on Council's commitment to delivering on the actions contained in this document.



- This will be achieved by:**
- The establishment of a staff working group, comprised of relevant Council Unit representatives, to ensure that lead agents of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 are enabled to deliver on the actions outlined in this document through collaborative efforts
 - Annual check-ins to assess the progress of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029, in line with timeframes indicated for each action
 - An update on the progress of the Youth Action Plan 2026-2029 included in the annual Community Team 'Year in Review Report'
 - Ensuring that the progress and completion of actions within this document are shared with local young people and the wider community to ensure accountability and transparency in completing this work

Youth Action Plan Early Engagement Data Analysis

Between the 18th of May and the 13th of July 2025, staff from the Waimakariri District Council set out to engage with our local young people to better understand what challenges and issues are most significant to them at present. This engagement was incredibly successful with 1112 12-to-24-year-olds engaging with Council during this time period, accounting for 11.63 percent of the District's youth population.

One of the aims of this engagement was to ensure that we heard from a diverse range of young people from right across the District. The data analysis contained in this document shows that this has been achieved. This was important because these responses will inform the drafting of a Youth Action Plan for the District, which needs to be relevant and fit for purpose for all of our young people.

This engagement was undertaken through the promotion of an online survey run on Council's 'Let's Talk' platform, as well as flexible in-person engagement events, advisory group meetings, workshops, and general conversations.

Main messages

- Waimakariri youth want to engage with their Council when it comes to topics of significance to them, and they appreciate the opportunity to make their voices heard
- Waimakariri youth care about the collective social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing of their peers and their communities
- Waimakariri youth show interest in a range of different topics and issues, from sports and physical activity to roading and transport, when engaged with in a meaningful way that meets them where they are
- Waimakariri youth have different experiences based on their location within the District, most notably when it comes to urban verses rural localities
- Waimakariri youth are particularly concerned with mental health and wellbeing, indicating that these are topics our young people may need more support with

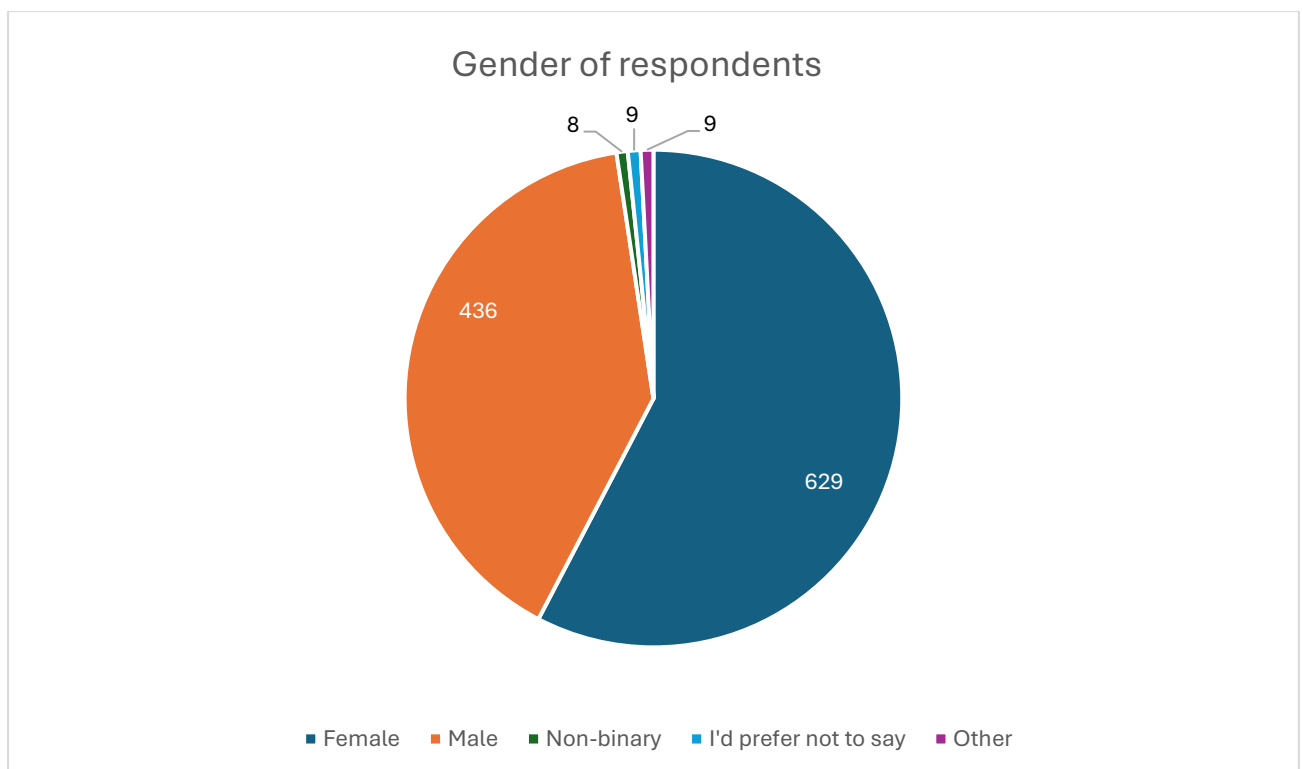
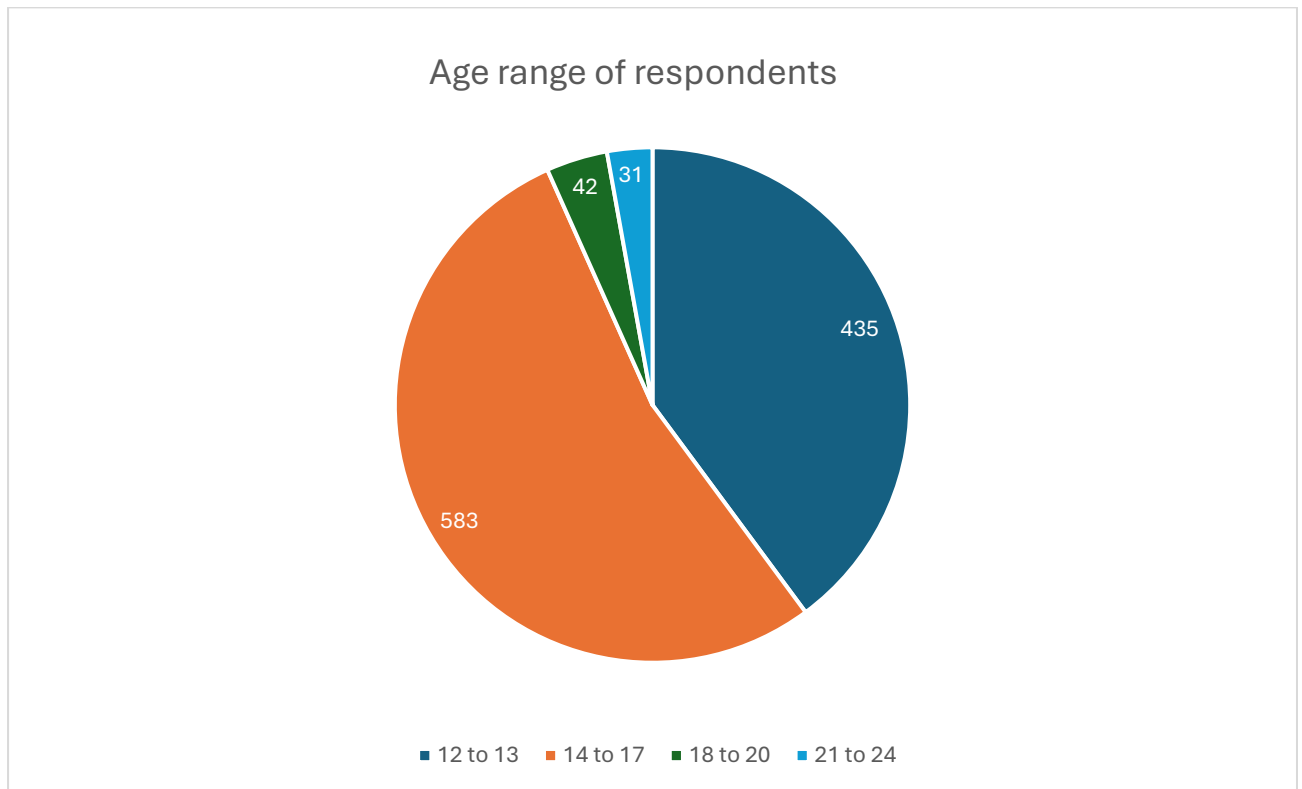
The following document contains the high-level analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected from these young people during this time period, identifying specific issues, challenges and opportunities of relevance to our rangatahi.

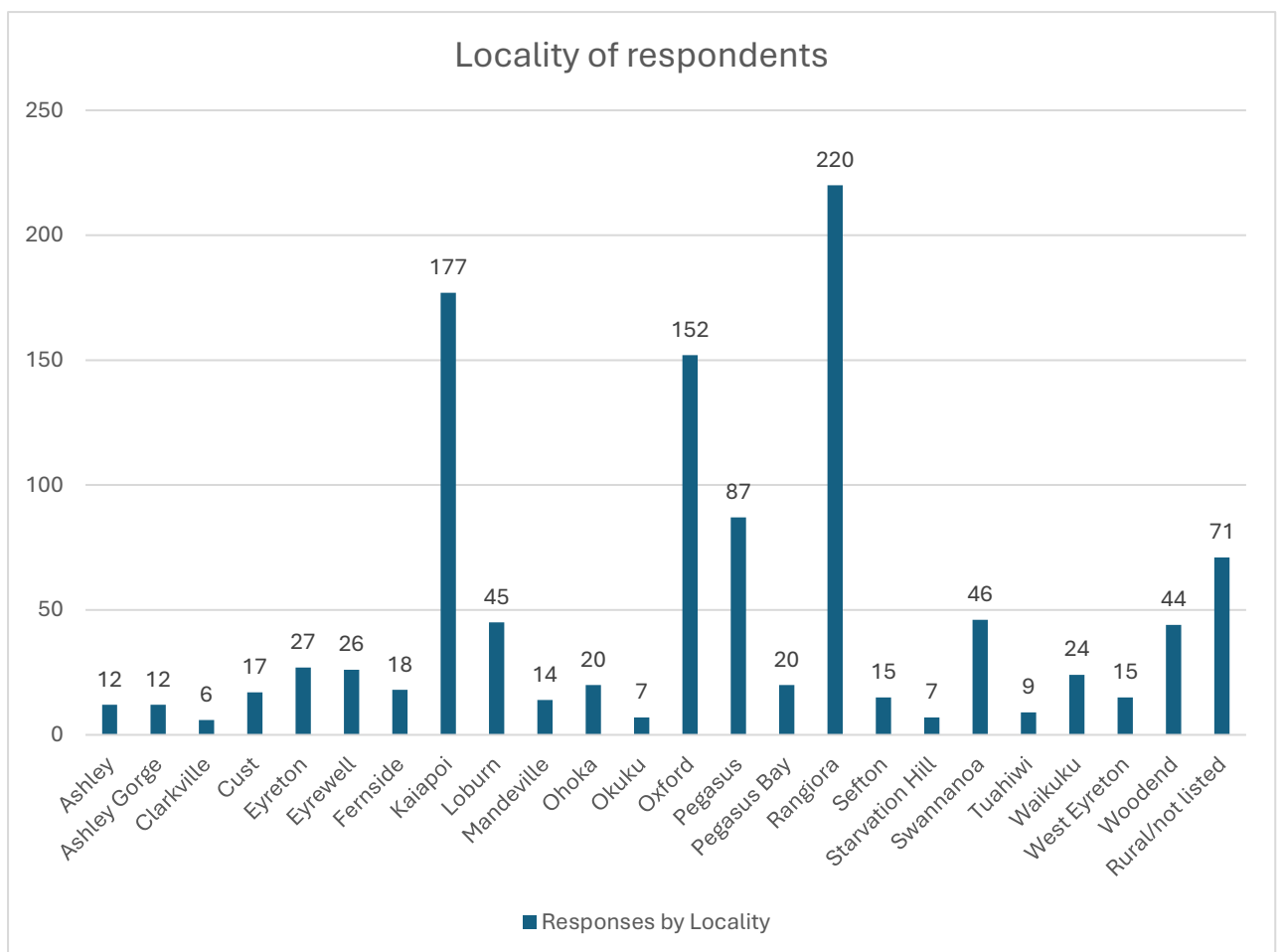
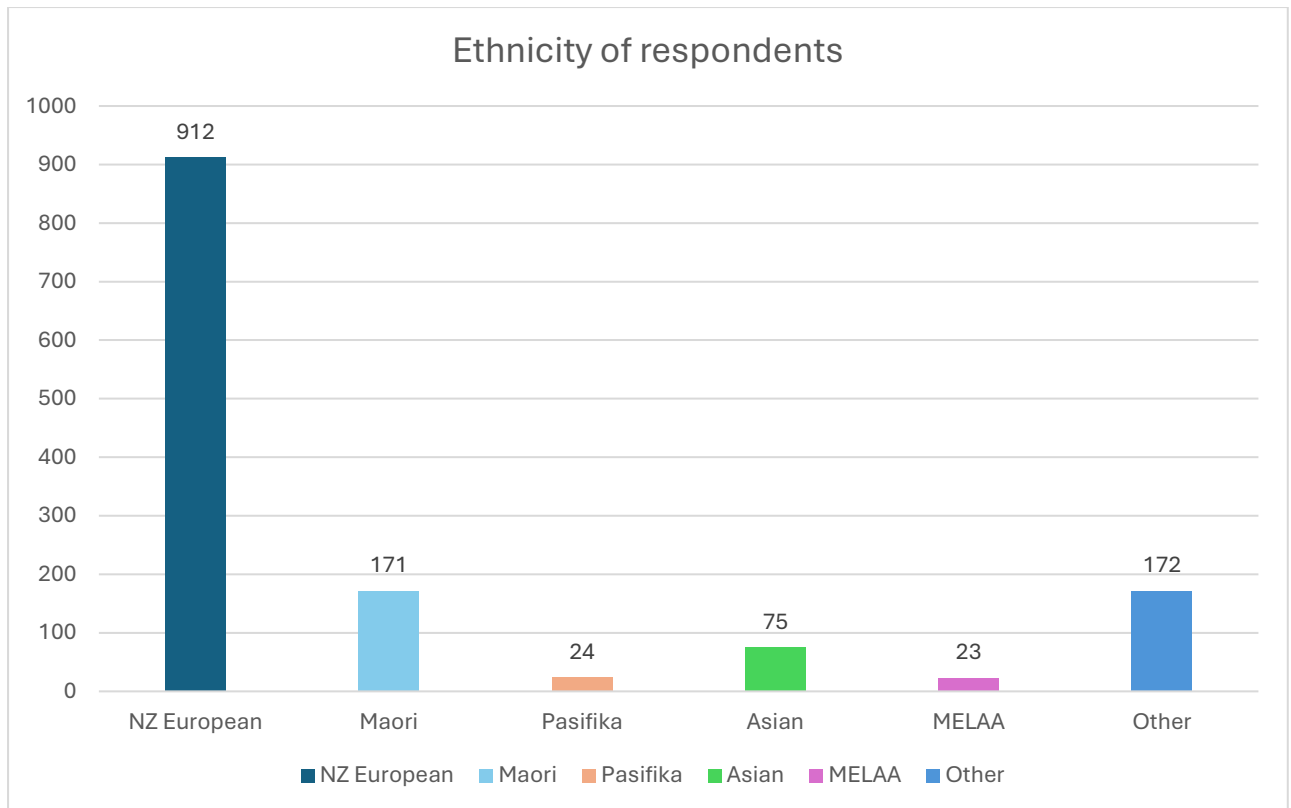
This analysis has been split into ten different themes, in line with the early engagement survey questions. These have been analysed as a collective group, as well as by age group, gender, ethnicity, and locality within the District.

Please note that some groups have a smaller number of respondents in comparison to others. In the interests of conveying equitable messaging that acknowledges a range of different sub-groups within the youth population, data by specific group has been analysed as a percentage of respondents within that group that answered a question in the same way. Where this drilled down data has been mentioned under each theme, for example, a statistic relating to a specific locality, this is because it stood out significantly in comparison to other groups.

This document will begin by sharing the demographic composition of survey respondents and will then go into each theme that these young people engaged with across all collection methods.

Demographic composition of survey respondents





Sport and Physical Activity

Quantitative data analysis:

- Waimakariri youth who engaged with this survey told us that they view sport and physical activity as important to them, with 51.4% describing it as very important, 40.2% describing it as somewhat important, and only 8.4% describing it as not important
- Overall, team sports were seen as the most important sport/physical activity with 63.24% of survey respondents selecting this option, followed by walking and running
- The popularity of team sports decreased as the age of the respondent increased, with those in the older age groups enjoying gym workouts, yoga/Pilates and walking more than the younger groups
- In terms of the level of sport opportunities, the majority of survey respondents noted that they are only somewhat satisfied at present. This would indicate that there may be some work to be done when it comes to providing opportunities for young people to be involved with sports in the Waimakariri District
- Satisfaction with the level of sport opportunities differs between localities. The localities with the highest percentage of respondents reporting they are not satisfied are Okuku (28.57%), Ashley Gorge (25%) and Starvation Hill (14.29%), all of which are rural communities
- The majority of survey respondents don't face any barriers when it comes to participation in sports and physical activity (58.87%), however, there is still a significant percentage of respondents reporting that they do face challenges in this space (45.63%). Please note that respondents were able to select both yes and no for this question.
- Groups that most notably stated they experience barriers to participation in sport and physical activities were 21-to-24-year-olds (67.74%), those who identify as other gender (77.78%) and respondents from Sefton (93.33%)
- Overall, cost came up as the most prevalent barrier to participation in sports and physical activity. This was most notably stated as a barrier for respondents from Okuku (57.14%)

Qualitative data analysis:

- Common barriers that came through with the qualitative responses to the survey were social anxiety, fear of judgement, and injury when accessing sport and physical activities
- Horse riding, swimming, cycling/biking and dance are other physical activities commonly enjoyed by our young people
- When asked what additional sport and physical activities respondents would like to see in Waimakariri for young people, the most common answers were team sports (volleyball, basketball and hockey), youth targeted fitness/gym classes, and skating
- Young people expressed a desire for more opportunities to partake in social sport offerings, rather than competitive
- Other feedback received during in-person workshops told us that young people with disabilities would like to see specialty sports be made more available in Waimakariri, eliminating the need to travel into neighbouring Districts to partake in accessible sports and physical activities
- At another in-person workshop, home-schooled young people noted that they would like to see more support for sports like rugby within the high school age range. Those who are not in school can find it difficult to be involved in team sports as young people in this age group tend to play through their school, meaning clubs often do not have the numbers to create teams at this level

- Notable quotes:
 - “To play certain sports, most young people's parents/schools have to drive to Christchurch to participate”
 - “Waimakariri is a great area, and I am glad about the current opportunities for progressing the area further”
 - “We need more playgrounds for older youth and teenagers”
 - “Making opportunities like these cheaper for more NZ youth to participate in. Without worries or boundaries like cost”
 - “There isn't anything to do in Kaiapoi, there is the occasional fun run or basketball competition, but it is all run through bigger corporations that are in larger cities and districts, meaning kids who want to excel at sports have to go either into town or anywhere far away just to play a sport”
 - “More places to ride quad bikes, as there are no places for this or very few places”
 - “Many buses don't travel to our area as we live more rurally compared to cities like Christchurch and Rangiora, and with more public transport it would be much easier to participate in physical activities”

Hobbies and Recreational Activity

Quantitative data analysis:

- For the most part, our young people told us that they don't need to travel to neighbouring districts to do the hobbies and activities they enjoy (53.5%), except for in certain circumstances (38.2%)
- The majority of survey respondents told us that they enjoy hanging out with their friends in their spare time (85.81%). This response clearly demonstrated that our young people value being with their peers, favouring using their spare time in this way in comparison to specific activities
- In terms of specific activities, notable responses by different groups include 100% of non-binary respondents noting they enjoy partaking in creative arts and 62.5% enjoying reading/writing, as well as 79.17% of Pasifika respondents enjoying sport and physical activities for fun in their spare time
- The most common reasons for these young people partaking in the hobbies and recreational activities they mentioned to us were fun and enjoyment (90%) and socialising with others (71.5%). This shows that that our young people are more likely to seek out activities which provide them with these benefits in comparison to other reasons such as mental/physical health benefits and learning new skills
- 21-to-24-year-olds were far more likely to partake in activities which they feel have mental health benefits with 70.97% of these respondents selecting this option
- Pasifika respondents were far more likely to partake in activities which they feel have physical health benefits with 70.83% of these respondents selecting this option
- In comparison to response rates from other localities, respondents from Starvation Hill were more likely to enjoy partaking in activities where they could learn a new skill (85.71%)

Qualitative data analysis:

- Qualitative responses in this category indicated that a number of our young people enjoy dirt biking and cycling

- In their comments, young people also told us that they enjoy activities which allow them to be creative/expressive, develop freedom and independence, and partake in social opportunities
- A number of young people told us in their comments that they need to travel into Christchurch in order to partake in the hobbies and recreational activities that they enjoy
- Notable quotes:
 - “It would be better if there were more things for teenagers to do out here, so we don’t have to travel into Christchurch. I have noticed that there are more and more teenagers joining the gym because that is one of the few things we can do to keep us busy. I suggest a youth group or something along those lines”
 - “There are no activities to do whatsoever for my age category”
 - “We need a motorbike track/mountain bike track so we don’t need to ride on the road and go to the river to ride all the time, and we will have variety”
 - “Since one of my hobbies is biking, I’m relatively unable to do it often because there’s not enough cycling tracks where I live”

Wellbeing

Quantitative data analysis:

- 60% of young people who engaged with this survey indicated that they feel accepted and included by their peers, followed by 33.1% answering that they sometimes feel this way, and 3.8% noting that they do not feel accepted and included. 3.1% preferred to not say.
- Respondents who identified as non-binary had the highest percentage reporting to not (12.5%) or only sometimes (75%) feel accepted and included by their peers, with zero respondents from this group saying that they feel accepted and included
- The vast majority (90.5%) of survey respondents indicated that they catch up with their friends at school. This makes logical sense when considering that 93% of respondents were between the ages of 12 to 18, making them more likely to be in school
- 66.2% of survey respondents answered that they catch up with their friends online, indicating that a large proportion of our young people use social media platforms to catch up with their friends virtually. This statistic is particularly interesting given that the rise of social media and technological advancements were noted as some of the societal changes contributing to the need for this work to happen now
- The vast majority of respondents (91.2%) stated that they think addiction is an issue that affects young people in the Waimakariri District. In terms of the more detailed data breakdown, 100% of non-binary respondents also answered yes to this question, as well as 100% of respondents from both Clarkville and Starvation Hill
- Overall, it was clear that vaping is the biggest addiction issue facing Waimakariri youth, with 89.3% of survey respondents noting this in their survey responses. This was followed by social media (77.45%), alcohol (66.4%), and drug use (64.1%)
- Vaping was most notably mentioned as an addiction issue by 14-to-17-year-olds (85.59%) and female respondents (83.62%)
- 70.83% of Pasifika respondents noted alcohol as an addiction issue, which was 10% more than the ethnic group with the second highest percentage reporting this as an issue for our youth

- 85.71% of respondents from Starvation Hill and 80% of respondents from Sefton noted drug use as an addiction problem for our youth. These percentages stand out in comparison to other localities on the same issue
- Starvation Hill (100%) and Sefton (86.67%) also stand out in comparison to other localities when looking at respondents reporting smoking as an addiction issue for our youth

Qualitative data analysis:

- Comments were made regarding the success of parental workshops out in the District over the past year, and how it could be useful to do similar events but aimed at young people instead on topics such as addiction, peer pressure, etc
- Through their comments, young people also told us that they like to catch up with their friends through youth groups and volunteer work
- In their comments, as well as during in-person workshops, a number of young people told us that they think explicit media/pornography is also an addiction problem for local youth
- Additionally, self-harm was noted in qualitative responses as an addiction issue
- We asked respondents to tell us what kind of support or resources they think would help young people dealing with addiction issues. 570 legitimate suggestions and comments were made in response to this question. The most common suggestions revolved around family, youth led support groups, access to counselling/therapy and restricted access to addictive materials and substances
- Notable quotes:
 - “Having more well-known resources, support services and pathways for future direction would help youth”
 - “Vaping is a real problem in schools, and it is kind of being overlooked. I have seen it change people lives and seen it affect so many people, for example, people having to drop out of sports because they are no longer able to run without being out of breath”
 - “Getting rid of all the vape/smoke shops, having more no vaping/smoking areas”
 - “Drug use is primarily marijuana and is a less widespread addiction than other ones but tends to be intense in some people. I've come across people who can't sleep without it, smoke multiple times a day and are completely reliant”
 - “Regulation of vape products and online gambling sites. Social media addiction is more so just a symptom of a larger alienation problem among young people”
 - “I think education is the biggest thing. Giving them good examples of not only the risks but also role models, even something like a really good teacher or coach that you feel okay reaching out to can be a big help. Additionally, instead of just telling someone that it's bad for them, tell them why, and don't underestimate the severity, make them know how hard it is to stop and not overestimate their ability to shake the addiction”
 - “Young people dealing with addiction can benefit from community support, education, and accessible services, including peer groups, counselling, and mental health programs”
 - “I believe that technology is one of the greatest problems in this generation. I'm not entirely sure what to do about the matter, but I do hope that the addiction to technology will spur someone to do something about it. It is horrid for mental health”

Mental Health

Quantitative data analysis:

- Mental health was seen as very important for the majority of our young people who engaged with this survey (62.8%), with only 4.8% of respondents answering that it is not important to them
- The 21-to-24-year-old group stood out in this category for their ranking of mental health as being very important, with 90.32% of these respondents selecting this option
- At 75.7%, the majority of survey respondents told us that they think mental health is something our young people struggle with in Waimakariri
- Female respondents had a significantly higher percentage saying that mental health is something our young people struggle with, with 82.51% selecting this option
- 60.1% of respondents told us that they know how to seek out help for mental health struggles, whilst 37.8% answered that they are either unsure or do not. These results suggest that although there is a large portion of young people who are aware of what options are available to them and how to seek them out, we still have a number of youth who may require assistance
- Those from Starvation Hill had a significant percentage of respondents noting that they do not know how to access mental health services in comparison to other localities at 42.86%
- Although the majority of respondents have not needed to access mental health services, there are a number of our young people who have faced a range of barriers which impact their ability to seek help
- Overall, cost of services was noted as the most significant barrier (23.7%), followed by long wait times (20.3%) and lack of awareness (19.2%)
- 58.06% of 21-to-24-year-olds reported cost of services as a barrier, which was significantly higher than other age groups
- 41.67% of respondents from Ashley Gorge reported that long wait times are a barrier for them when accessing mental health services, as well as 50% citing cost as a barrier, both of which were relatively high in comparison to other localities

Qualitative data analysis:

- Qualitative responses that identified barriers when accessing mental health services included lack of trust or discomfort with professionals/strangers, privacy concerns, lack of awareness, accessibility issues stemming from transport options, affordability, location/availability of services, and simply not wanting to seek help at all
- Young people told us that the availability of mental health services within the District needs to be publicised more
- Notable quotes:
 - “The resources are there online but not in person”
 - “I think a suggestion would be like a lgbtq+ hangout event because some people won't have supportive parents and some people who are a part of the lgbtq+ community like me sometimes find it hard to find friends, etc”
 - “I have experienced long wait times (6+ months) before being seen which was challenging. Having to see a GP to get the initial referral also creates somewhat of a barrier financially (not the service, but the original GP appt)”
 - “From talking with people, it seems that there isn't enough privacy when getting help though this could just be a school problem”

- “Mental health is very serious, and we should make more awareness of it”
- “It is often made embarrassing to struggle with mental health, which worsens it”
- “Unfortunately, a lot of mental health support comes through GP’s in the form of a health support person who may not have extensive training in mental health. Personally, I think there needs to be more access to trained mental health professionals who have a wide range of skills and experience”

Natural Environment

- The natural environment was noted as important to the majority of survey respondents, with only 3.7% of respondents telling us it is not important to them
- 100% of respondents who identified as non-binary as well as 100% from Clarkville answered that the natural environment is important to them, which was significantly higher in comparison to other groups
- At 55%, the majority of respondents told us that environmental issues do worry them, sending the message that our young people are concerned about environmental issues and the impact these may have on the natural environment, which they told us is important to them
- The specific groups that were most worried by environmental issues in comparison to others were 21-to-24-year-olds (77.42%), those who identified as non-binary (87.5%), Pasifika respondents (70.83%), and Loburn respondents (73.33%)
- A large majority of our respondents (71.14%) told us that they think it is very important for their community to be protecting our environment, with only 1.8% saying it is not important
- Just under half of respondents indicated that they have previously participated in activities which help our environment in Waimakariri at 49.8%, with 30.6% expressing interest in attending future activities, and 46.4% noting that they may be interested as well

Qualitative data analysis:

- Notable quotes:
 - “I think it is important to live in a natural clean environment”
 - “Information in this case is very important. Yes there is a lot out there but only if you are looking for it and it has caused most people to be unaware of its severity. Also, the fact that we do not see a huge amount of the effects in New Zealand so having more information being taught in schools would help the masses to understand more”
 - “Would be great to see some form of terracycle initiative like they have in Richmond”
 - “Trees help us breathe and other plants are overall very helpful for our life forms, that’s why I think taking care of the environment is very important!”
 - “I think the natural environment is important as we need to preserve what we have so we can have better futures”
 - “Maybe promote these cleanups or tree plantings more, because I don’t see many ads for cleanups, but would be happy to go if I saw that they would be being hosted”
 - “Encourage youth to be more aware of environmental issues”

Physical Health

Quantitative data analysis:

- At 69.92%, the majority of respondents told us that physical health is very important to them, with only 2.1% noting health as not being important
- The specific groups who largely ranked health as very important to them in comparison to other groups were 18-to-20-year-olds (71.43%), female respondents (72.97%), Pasifika respondents (95.83%), and respondents from Clarkville (100%)
- A large majority of respondents told us that they know how access health services in Waimakariri at 78.4%, with 14.6% saying they were unsure, and only 7% saying they do not know
- In comparison to other localities, respondents from Ashley Gorge had a higher percentage reporting to not know how to access health services in Waimakariri at 25%
- When asked if they feel young people in their community with disabilities receive enough support, the answers were split. 51.2% of respondents did not know, 29.9% feel there is enough support provided, and 18.9% believe that these young people are not receiving enough support
- 21-to-24-year-olds had the highest percentage reporting that young people in their community with disabilities do not receive enough support at 22.58%, whilst 14-to-17-year-olds had the highest percentage reporting that they do at 30.97%. The difference between these age groups could infer that as our youth get older, there is a lower perception of community support for our young people with disabilities
- In comparison to other groups, a significantly higher percentage of non-binary respondents reported that they feel young people with disabilities in their community do not receive enough support at 62.5%
- At 73.5%, the majority of respondents told us that they do not face any barriers when accessing health services in Waimakariri, with 26.5% saying there are things that stop them
- As an age group, 18-to-20-year-olds stood out in this category as one of the groups with the highest percentage reporting they face barriers when accessing health services in Waimakariri (54.76%), as well as the age group with the highest percentage reporting long wait times (28.57%), cost of services (42.86%), and lack of support (11.9%) as barriers in particular
- As a locality, Tuahiwi stood out in this category as one of the localities with the highest percentage reporting they face barriers when accessing health services in Waimakariri (44.44%), as well as the locality with the highest percentage reporting long wait times (44.44%), cost of services (33.33%), lack of support (33.33%) and lack of available services (22.22%) as barriers in particular

Qualitative data analysis:

- Notable quotes:
 - “Young people are treated very very poorly. It needs to be easier to access doctors, therapists etc. I think that it is especially hard for young trans people. We do not get enough acceptance from the public and it is hard to access trans healthcare”
 - “I’m worried about the cost and lack of support, and I don’t want my family to worry if I’m sick or need care”
 - “We need more doctors in local communities”

Culture

Quantitative data analysis:

- In comparison to other topics where we asked respondents to tell us how important something was to them, the majority of young people who engaged with this survey ranked culture as being somewhat important to who they are at 51.02%. This of course still sends the message that culture is important to our young people, with 32% stating it is very important, but is a notable difference in comparison to other topics
- In comparison to other localities, respondents from Okuku had a significantly higher percentage reporting that their culture is important to who they are at 71.43%
- The majority (55.1%) of Waimakariri youth who took part in this survey told us they feel supported and accepted by their community to be themselves, but we do have a number of young people who are either unsure how they feel in this regard (33.1%), or do not feel this way (11.9%)
- In terms of age groups, the percentage of young people reporting to feel accepted and supported by their community trends upward as age increases
- For the majority of our survey respondents, living in a community that includes people of multiple cultures ranges as being very (44.83%) to somewhat important (44.2%), with a smaller percentage reporting this as not important to them at 10.97%
- Similar to when respondents were asked to answer how important culture is to them, the percentage of young people reporting that living in a community that includes multiple cultures is important to them also tends to increase with age
- Female respondents stood out when it came to the importance of living in a community that includes multiple cultures as the only group in this category that had the majority ranking this as very important (48.17%)
- When asked if they think the Waimakariri District could celebrate and promote cultural diversity more, the majority of survey respondents told us that they were unsure (45%), followed by those who felt this could be done (43.8%), and a smaller percentage of respondents answering no to this question (11.2%)
- In comparison to other localities, respondents from Eyreton had a higher percentage reporting that the Waimakariri District could celebrate and promote cultural diversity more at 66.67%

Qualitative data analysis:

- Some respondents told us in their comments that they experience racism, a lack of inclusivity, and feel there is limited cultural representation beyond Māori and Pasifika culture
- Home-schooled individuals expressed a desire for more accessible involvement in cultural opportunities, often feeling like outsiders to opportunities that those in traditional education settings are offered
- Notable quotes:
 - “You could have a Polyfest in Waimakariri or a big open Māori hāngi or community celebration. Maybe a get together even. It doesn’t have to be big, you just have to feel noticed”
 - “There should be festival or street markets from different places to show more cultural diversity”
 - “I think there’s a bit of a way to go still when it comes to societal attitudes here when it comes to acceptance and inclusivity”

- “Celebrating and promoting cultural diversity is good, but I don't think it comes from higher up, but from those in the community that accepts them and celebrates them, and at some points even defends them. It comes from the people, and people come to it because they see acceptance from a whole community, not just a governing body. The people are the culture”
- “I feel as if the Council only ‘ticks the box’ on diversity and culture but doesn’t go above that”
- “I find there are plenty of cultural opportunities!”
- “People are extremely racist and homophobic. I, as an Indian female, feel insulted. So do my peers”
- “Diversity is a wonderful thing, but I think it is also important to celebrate the things that make us a community and what unites us”

Employment

Quantitative data analysis:

- When asked if they have tried to find a job in Waimakariri, the majority of survey respondents told us they have not (57.8%), with the remaining 42.2% telling us they have. Given the demographic make-up of our survey respondents, with a high number of 12-to-13-year-olds included in this data, it makes sense that the answers to this question may be skewed more toward no
- Those who have attempted to secure a job within the District reported a range of barriers that they face when searching.
- Lack of available jobs in Waimakariri is the most commonly experienced challenge experienced by the young people who engaged with this survey at 57%, closely followed by lack of experience at 47.1%. The relation between these two barriers is notable, as without sufficient experience, a person may find it more difficult to secure a job when there are not many on offer in an area.
- The third most commonly experienced barrier to employment was lack of transport options at 29.7%, implying that a number of these young people may not have the ability to then seek jobs outside of Waimakariri either
- In comparison to other groups, lack of transport options is most notably seen as a barrier for 14-to-17-year-olds at 30.36%, as well as respondents from Ashley Gorge at 50%
- Service industry jobs were seen as most favourable by survey respondents, with 48.5% telling us that they would like to see this industry be more present in Waimakariri to find work in
- In comparison to other groups, female respondents reported much higher interest in service industry jobs at 47.38%, as well as social and community service roles at 33.7%, whilst male respondents reported much higher interest in manufacturing and technology jobs at 26.38%

Qualitative data analysis:

- At an in-person workshop, some young people expressed interested in one-off opportunities to learn vocational skills early on, as well as events to learn how to write CVs and approach job interviews
- In their comments, some young people expressed that they feel some employers have a bias against youth and that disability stigma impacts their ability to find employment in Waimakariri

- Other comments noted that having online resources available for employment related topics would be helpful for them
- Notable quotes:
 - “I think the main concern for me is teenagers unable to get jobs”
 - “I wish there was more jobs for young people like me”
 - “There is so much competition, it's crazy”
 - “I found for teens at the moment there aren't many jobs available for the level of demand causing students to continuously have bad experiences and feel as if they keep failing”
 - “There's no good ways of getting entry level jobs without knowing someone that owns a business or already works somewhere needing employees”
 - “In my area particular jobs are very hard to get because almost every student over 16 is going for the same 5-6 jobs in the town and it makes it incredibly difficult to get the job”
 - “I have applied to 100+ jobs and have only had 2 interviews but got denied both times, it's hard for me”

Transport

Quantitative data analysis:

- The vast majority of survey respondents use a car as their main mode of transport at 90.9%, followed by walking at 75.4%, and transport by bus at 50.4%
- In comparison to other age groups, 12-to-13-year-olds had a much higher percentage reporting to use cycling as a mode of transport at 51%
- Those who felt satisfied with the provision of public transportation services in their community were in the minority of respondents, at only 21.9%
- The rural localities of West Eyreton (46.67%), Eyreton (44.44%) and Mandeville (42.86%) had the highest percentage of respondents reporting that they are not satisfied with public transportation in their communities
- In terms of public transport use, the majority of respondents told us that they do not use public transport often at 35.4%. This was followed by those telling us that they use public transport daily at 17.6%, and 15.2% of respondents who noted that there is no public transport available to them where they live. These results make sense when considering the rate of satisfaction with public transport expressed by survey respondents.
- In comparison to other groups, Pasifika respondents had the highest percentage reporting that there is no public transport available to them where they live at 37.5%
- The rural localities of Eyrewell (57.69%), Okuku (57.14%) and Ohoka (55%) had the highest percentage of respondents reporting that there is no public transport available to them where they live
- The majority of survey respondents told us that they feel somewhat safe when using public transport or walking/cycling in Waimakariri at 54.7%
- 18-to-20-year-olds had the highest percentage reporting to not feel safe when using public transport or walking/cycling in Waimakariri at 21.43%. This is interesting when considering that this age group also had the highest percentage answering that they do not like using public transport (14.29%) and that they don't use public transport often (45.24%)

- Respondents who don't currently use public transport noted better travel routes where they live to be the most significant change that would encourage them to use public transport at 50.7%. This was followed by better connections between places they want to go at 45.9%.
- Although the introduction of cheaper fares for public transport is often brought up as a way to encourage more people to use public transport, only 38.6% of young people who responded to this question indicated that this would impact their use of this service

Qualitative data analysis:

- In their comments, a number of young people discussed the difficulties had with living rurally and accessing transportation services
- Some young people told us that metro systems can be confusing, and that targeting communications to youth would be helpful when it comes to getting people onto public transport
- Safety was also brought up as a significant concern within comments
- Notable quotes:
 - "Living rurally, I always had to get a parent to drive me to a bus stop approximately 10-15min away to be able to use public transport. This limited my ability to use it if my parent wasn't able. As an adult, I've opted to use my car most of the time because it has been easier for me. I also felt unsafe at times using public transport, which meant I was reluctant to use it at certain times of the day"
 - "I used to take busses everywhere but now that I have my own car it feels impractical when it takes three times as long to get anywhere. I wish I could take a train into Christchurch, we need more modes of public transport in the South Island"
 - "I would use public transport if there was actually any public transport like buses in my area"
 - "Would more rural bus routes be a possibility? Bus routes that go further than the Northern park and ride?"
 - "We want you to fix the potholes on the roads please"
 - "I would be more likely to use public transport if there were better measures to stop harassment and inappropriate behaviour. I have experienced people making comments about my appearance while in uniform, including from intoxicated individuals. I've also had people try to look up my skirt, which made me feel unsafe. There are often people screaming, drinking alcohol, or smoking cigarettes and weed on buses, and it makes the environment uncomfortable and intimidating. Stronger rules, enforcement, and security would make me feel safer using public transport"
 - "I don't know where to find where different busses routes to know which one goes where I want to go"
 - "I take the bus sometimes. And it stresses me out every time because of the bad time tabling and the vibe inside the bus. I don't like how a bus can be late or how when it's early it doesn't wait to be on time. I left my house eight minutes early for the bus just for it to drive past me then I had to wait an hour for the next one"
 - "It would be great to have bus services in rural areas such as Ohoka, Swannanoa, and Mandeville, making it easier for people in those areas to access transportation. I think this is important because it can be very hard to get around to the surrounding regions when I rely on my parents for transportation. This would also help those without cars or other ways of getting around. This could help with schooling, work,

and the well-being of people in our community, as it would allow us to connect with others more frequently”

Public Spaces

Quantitative data analysis:

- The majority of survey respondents told us that public spaces in the Waimakariri District are somewhat important to them at 57.7%, followed by those saying these spaces are very important to them at 34.6%. Only 7.7% of respondents told us that these spaces are not important to them
- In comparison to other groups, 21-to-24-year-olds (58%), Pasifika respondents (45.83%) and respondents from Okuku (71.43%) had the highest percentages noting public spaces in the District as being very important to them
- The young people who engaged with this survey told us that in terms of the spaces and places they enjoy most in Waimakariri, the natural environment is preferred by most. Parks and outdoor spaces were the noted as the most popular by respondents at 77%, followed closely by beaches at 65.5%
- Overall, Waimakariri pools were the third most popular space that these young people enjoy spending time in, with 64.83% of 12-to-13-year-olds in particular selecting this option
- In comparison to other age groups, female respondents had a much higher percentage reporting that they enjoy spending time at beaches (72.66%), whilst non-binary respondents had a much higher percentage reporting to enjoy spending time in libraries at 62.5%
- The majority of respondents told us that having places to hang out is the most important thing for young people in public spaces at 83.1%. This was closely followed by bathrooms at 71.2%, and Wi-Fi at 69.9%
- Despite only being ranked as important in public spaces by 44.9% of respondents, plants and trees were described as important for young people in these spaces by 64.52% of 21-to-24-year-olds
- In comparison to other groups, male respondents had a much higher percentage reporting that sports facilities are important for young people in public spaces at 57.57%
- In comparison to other localities, respondents from Ashley, Fernside and Mandeville had the highest percentages telling us that they think having places to hang out are important for young people in public spaces, all at 100%
- When asked how safe they feel using public spaces in Waimakariri, the majority of respondents told us that they feel somewhat safe at 62%, followed by 23.9% telling us that they feel very safe. Only 7.4% of respondents stated that they feel unsafe in these spaces, and 6.7% said they were not sure

Qualitative data analysis:

- At an in-person workshop, comments were made regarding the lack of disability playgrounds/access for wheelchairs in these spaces. Comments were also made regarding the need for bike trails in Waimakariri to be more accessible for those riding specialty bikes
- In-person comments were also made regarding the importance of tinker zones and sensory parks/playgrounds for young people with disabilities

- Respondents were asked about their favourite places, as well as places they avoid within the District. 278 of these answers indicated positive experiences, 55 noted negative experiences, and 41 answers were mixed in sentiment with regard to local public spaces
- Notable quotes:
 - “We need more places for people to hang out inside as there are not places to go after school if it is cold and you want to hang out with your friends, unless you are willing to spend money at a cafe or restaurant so you can stay in there. Otherwise, there’s nowhere free to stay warm and dry”
 - “I really enjoy the skatepark and the bathrooms nearby are useful, also the sport grounds and mountain bike tracks”
 - “On a few occasions me and my siblings have come across people on drugs or drunk in the park. I don’t always feel safe there, and both of these occurred in the afternoon”
 - “I mean one of my favourite places to go to is the Library mainly because it’s sort of a safe haven for book geeks and the Waimakariri Libraries have a variety of things to do while your there”
 - “Public parks are very appreciated. They are the perfect place for me and my friends to meet and hangout”
 - “I usually avoid the skate park, due to some recent assaults happening there. Especially after the sun goes down, when I like to personally walk”
 - “I adore the outdoors, so any outdoor areas in our community I love spending time at especially the beach, forests, parks, lakes, rivers etc”

General:

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked if there was anything else they would like to say or would like the Council to know.

Here’s what they told us:

- “Asking young people on this topic is a great step, but I think we tend to be a bit lazy and complacent, or more so unobservant and unbothered by the world because we tend to be more isolated from the community compared to other demographics and stay in our own bubbles. This can mean we can be hard to get feedback from because we don’t really notice things, they just are the way they are in our eyes unless they are something we use very frequently”
- “Thanks for giving me this survey and letting me express my own opinion!”
- “Thank you for giving us a voice. We’re not the most popular age range so I really appreciate this. 13-year-old me would be so happy”
- “I just believe everyone in the community needs to be more respectful and kind to the community. Many teenagers are struggling with fitting in, finding common interests and connecting with one another. Not everyone is built for school (Including me!) and struggle to find people like-minded to myself. Therefore, I believe having more interest groups (Run clubs, sports teams etc) will be so beneficial to finding more people like you”
- “One thing that would make a big difference is having more safe places for young people to hang out, especially after school. A youth hub or chill zone with music,

games, or art would be awesome. It would also be cool to have more cultural events where we can share and learn about different backgrounds. That helps us feel more connected. Lastly, better access to mental health support is super important. It should be easy to find, free, and made for young people”

- “I’ve had a good experience with the Waimakariri District Council. I’ve seen how they work hard to support the community, especially with their youth programs and local initiatives. It’s great to see a council that listens to young people and invests in making the district a safe and positive place for everyone”

Summary

The results from the early engagement on the Youth Action Plan project have highlighted a number of issues, opportunities, and topics of significance for youth in Waimakariri.

The young people who took part in this process were incredibly engaged. This survey posed 65 questions across ten different topics, with only demographic questions being compulsory. Despite the length and depth of the survey, the question with the fewest answers still received 1049 responses. This has demonstrated that young people want to engage with local government processes when approached in ways that resonate with them.

In addition to quantitative responses, a large number of participants provided detailed written feedback, offering rich insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of local rangatahi. These insights were further explored through in-person workshops and flexible engagement formats.

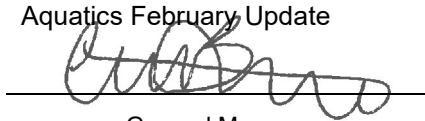
The key drivers and priorities identified through this engagement will directly inform the development of the draft Youth Action Plan. This work will be undertaken by Council staff with the guidance of the Youth Action Plan Advisory Group, who played a significant role in codesigning the early engagement process.

Next steps

This document has provided an analysis of data received through early engagement on the Youth Action Plan project. The data contained in this document will be used to guide the development of a draft Youth Action Plan.

Once the draft is prepared, Council staff will undertake formal consultation with youth and the wider Waimakariri community to ensure the draft is relevant, inclusive, and aligned with the genuine needs and aspirations of local rangatahi.

Following this consultation, Council staff will review any additional feedback and make amendments if required. It is envisioned that the final Youth Action Plan will cover the period 2026-2029.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR DECISION****FILE NO and TRIM NO:** GOV-01-04 / AQU-02-09 / 260204020262**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 February 2026**AUTHOR(S):** Matthew Greenwood, Aquatics Manager**SUBJECT:** Aquatics February Update**ENDORSED BY:**
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)

 General Manager


 Chief Executive
1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Community and Recreation Committee with a summary of the Aquatic Facilities year to date progress, as measured against the unit's most significant Key Performance Indicators.
- 1.2. The report contains a breakdown of customer attendance data to 31 January 2026, and an update on maintenance activities achieved during the recent programmed closure at Dudley.
- 1.3. This report seeks approval to proceed with promotional activities as outlined in the calendar to assist the facilities in growing participation and achieving income budget targets.

Attachments:

- i. Nil

2. RECOMMENDATION**THAT** the Community and Recreation Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260204020262.
- (b) **Notes** total customer attendance of 11,542 customers for the month of January 2026. This is down 7,941 in comparison to January 2025 due to the three-week programmed maintenance closure at Dudley.
- (c) **Notes** several significant maintenance works were achieved during the maintenance closure at Dudley including the replacement of an air fan, tile replacement and floor repairs.
- (d) **Approves** the promotional calendar and its use of time limited promotional discounts to achieve attendance and income budget targets in a competitive market.
- (e) **Circulates** this report to the Community Boards for their information.

3. **BACKGROUND**

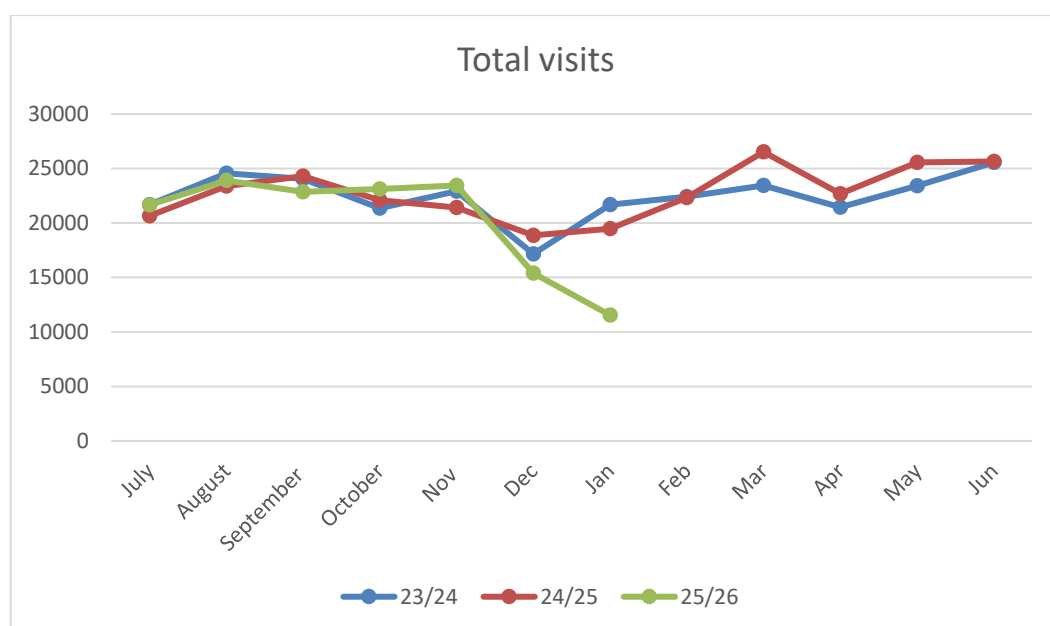
- 3.1. The Waimakariri District Council's Aquatic Facilities team deliver best practice aquatic programmes and enjoyable recreation opportunities for the ongoing wellbeing of our community and visitors. We do so from four sites: two indoor, year-round facilities and two seasonal summer pools, which operate over the summer period.
- 3.2. The Aquatic Facilities team work closely with partner organisations, clubs, trusts and interest groups to support water safety programmes, grow and develop swimming and Aquatic exercise initiatives, and works with the Council to ensure our facilities are inclusive places, accessible to all members of the community.
- 3.3. With the facilities open 15 hours per day, 7 days a week we work hard to plan maintenance activities to minimise disruption to our customers. While a number of activities can be completed during normal operation, programmed maintenance closures are required to ensure the safe and comfortable operation of the facilities. During these closures detailed maintenance is completed on key systems such as circulating pumps, HVAC, and heating systems which would otherwise prevent the facility from operating.
- 3.4. While the Aquatic Facilities operate with the support of Council and rates funding, they do so in a busy and competitive market. It is important that the facilities continue to utilise all tools available to attract and retain customers, growing attendance and ensuring income targets are met.

4. **ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

4.1. **Aquatic customer attendance**

The following tables provide a summary of attendance across the facilities to date as at 31 January 2026.

This period included a three-week closure of Dudley which impacted attendance as shown.

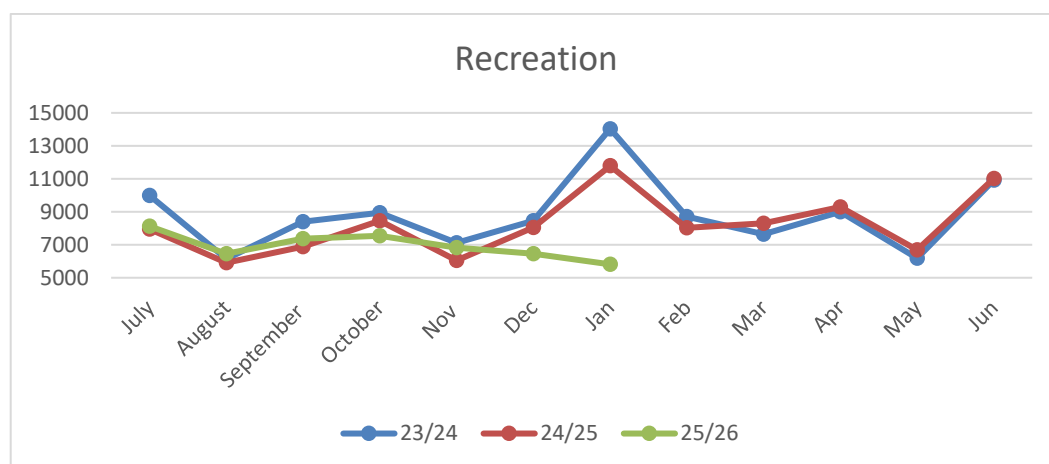


Attendance at the facilities trended down with Dudley pool closed for three weeks in January for scheduled maintenance with just over 11,500 total visits in January.

Dudley managed to record over 4,000 visits in the 10 days it was open, with Kaiapoi seeing over 1600 and Oxford 250 additional visitors when compared with the same time last year. However, overall this was just under 8,000 visits short when compared with the previous year.

The following tables break down the three core activities Recreation (Casual swims, Leisure and Lane swimming) Programmes (Learn to Swim, Schools and Aquarobics) and Prepaid entries (Concession and Memberships) across the 3 facilities.

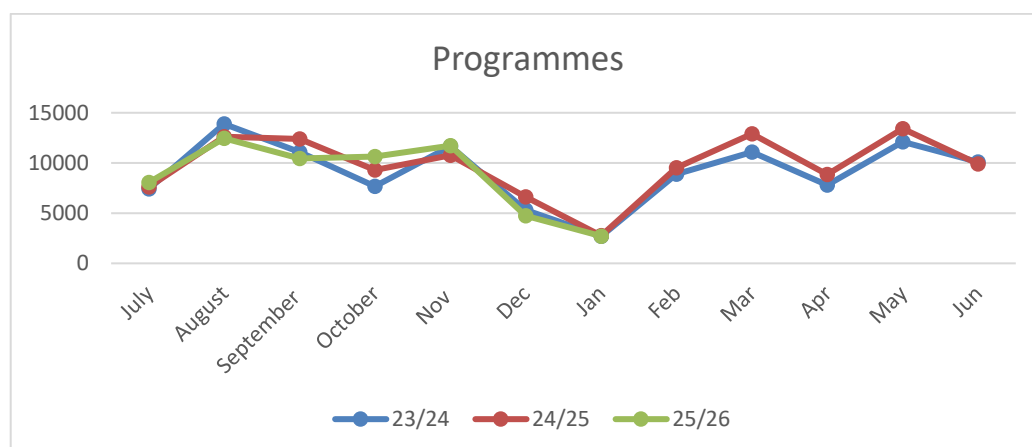
Activity totals and summary



Dudley's closure had a noticeable impact on recreation swimming in January with just over 5,800 recreation swims this year, compared with just over 11,700 last year. Kaiapoi recorded an increase of more than 1500 visits and Oxford increased by 250, although some customers are likely to have used the closure period to explore alternative facilities.

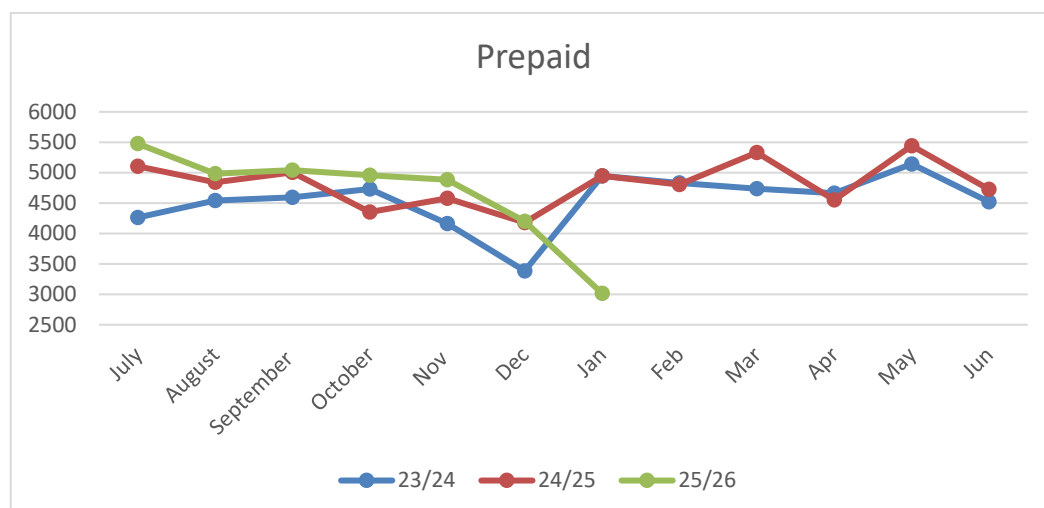
Christchurch City Council opened their flagship recreation facility, Parakiore Recreation and Sport Centre, on 17 December 2025, following a 13-year development period and an investment of approximately \$500 million. The facility incorporates a 50-metre competition pool, dive pool, five hydrosides, a large aquatic leisure zone, and a sensory aqua centre designed to support inclusive participation. Additional features include nine indoor courts, a three-court show court with retractable grandstands, fitness and movement studios, and a training base for High Performance Sport NZ.

As with the opening of any new recreation opportunity, it is likely to have an initial impact on attendance with customers excited to try out the new facility. However, the long-term impact is expected to be minimal due to Parakiore's central location, its primary catchment differs from suburban and district facilities, and regular patronage is unlikely to shift significantly.



Despite the closure, programmes attendance in January was just 40 visits short of the same time last year. This was helped in large part by high demand for holiday lesson programming and a 52% increase in Aquarobics attendance at Kaiapoi with customers traveling from Dudley for their fitness fix.

The schools programme attendance can vary as we work in with the attending schools who are balancing swimming within their curriculum and other school activities. Additionally, the dips in October, Dec/January and April coincide with the school holidays with the main learn to swim programme being term based.



Pre-paid attendance understandably took a hit, down just over 1,900 visits in January due to limited space with Dudley closed. While pool space was available at Kaiapoi and Oxford, both these sites lack dedicated leisure space often requiring staff to balance customer needs, and lane swimmers to share.

At \$4.30 for a child and \$7.60 for an adult, taking the family swimming remains an affordable recreational option for most. Compared to other leisure activities such as going to the movies, swimming offers excellent value for money while promoting physical activity, social interaction, and overall wellbeing. Its accessibility makes it an attractive choice for families seeking cost-effective, family-focused recreation opportunities. As identified in option 4.3 it is important that the facilities continue to market and promote their activities to remain relevant, retain customers and continue to grow attendance.

This appeal is further strengthened by current economic conditions. With ongoing cost-of-living pressures and global financial uncertainty continuing to impact discretionary spending, families are increasingly seeking affordable ways to stay active and connected. Swimming stands out as a practical and budget-friendly option that supports both physical health and social engagement.

4.2. Dudley Maintenance closure

Dudley pool closed recently for its first significant full facility closure since a number of works were completed around Covid restrictions and closures. Although there is never a truly quiet period for a facility as popular as Dudley, the timing of this programme limited risks associated with water table movement and reduced the overall disruption to our customers. The community had a range of alternative options available, including the facilities at Kaiapoi and Oxford as well as beaches, Gorges and other summer outdoor pursuits.

Some of the key projects were the replacement of one of the air circulation fans, tile replacement in the Learners pool and floor repairs throughout the facility. These tasks required the full closure of the facility as replacement of the fan impacted our ability to operate the heating system and the sealants used for curing the floor repairs are particularly strong smelling.

Exhaust Fan

The air handler unit at Dudley contains two fans, one which supplies fresh air into the facility, blowing it through a heating coil and out onto poolside and the other which draws the moist, chloramine rich air off poolside, blowing it through a heat recovery system and exhausting it out to the street. This exhaust fan is also sized larger than the supply to ensure an air imbalance which creates a natural vacuum on poolside, always drawing more air back towards the pool hall to ensure the moisture and heat from poolside doesn't leak into the wider building or outside.

The air handler systems are enclosed in a mezzanine area above the main plant at Dudley and while there is both internal access as well as access through to the roof, it was not necessarily designed to facilitate the swapping out of large equipment. This required us to open a hole through the ceiling above the fan unit so that the previous unit could be removed and the new unit swung into place. Prior to this work we investigated the option of installing a permanent access hatch to better facilitate future works, however as this ceiling is fire rated, this added a degree of complexity. Ultimately, removing and replacing the ceiling and roofing panels proved to be significantly more cost-effective even in the long term, despite the degree of physical work involved.

With the fan removed we were unable to run the heat recovery system which required a full shut down of the heating system and allowed for a number of other works to be completed at the same time, servicing in line strainers, oil compressors, driers and heat exchangers.



Pictured: A crane is used to remove the old fan through a hole in the ceiling of the plant room.



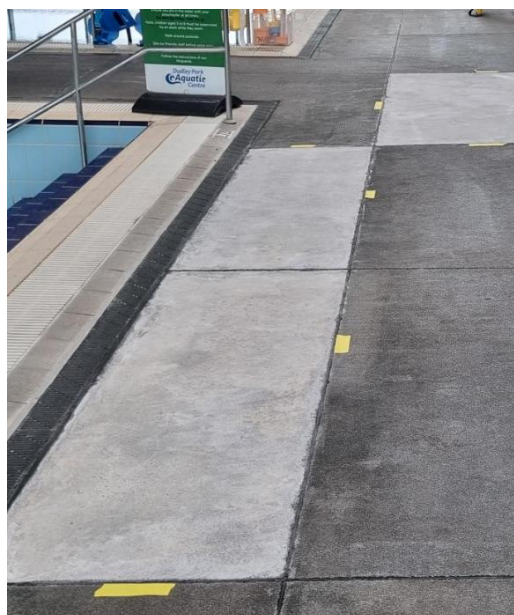
Pictured: The old fan showing signs of wear and tear and the hole in the ceiling it was removed through.

Floor surface repairs

The flooring throughout the facility takes a beating especially in high flow areas like the changing rooms and in front of the Learners pool. The Traxite surface used within our facilities provides a good level of grip while still allowing water to drain away and not trapping too much dirt in the surface.

The surface is first ground back, cleaning off any previous products, then a layer of “sand” is spread out across it to ensure the non slip qualities. This is then followed by a number of layers of epoxy resin to ensure it forms a strong durable surface.

Pictured: Preparation of the surface, with the old traxite removed and the floor surface ground back prior to the application of grit and resin layers.



Learners pool tiles and sealant

Prior to the closure we had a number of tiles lift within the learner's pool. This can happen where water has tracked behind the surface weakening the grout allowing it to pop loose.

While some of these are obvious, due to the weight of the water holding other loose tiles in place it can also be a difficult issue to properly scope. In this case it was only around 30 tiles mostly along the edges of sealant lines as shown by the wide groove in the image below.

Sealant runs along construction joints in the slab of the building which ensures the building has some small degree of flexibility to move without further risking tile and surface damage. When this sealant fails it can lift becoming a target for small hands to pull out. Best practice saw the sealant runs all removed, properly cleaned and then re-laid.



Pictured: Three loose tiles removed, at the intersection of two grout lines, prior to surface cleaning and tile replacement.

Heat exchangers

The heating system operates in a closed loop, to keep the treated pool water separate from the delicate components with the main heating compressor. This avoids corrosion issues similar to the air circulation fan.

Our heating system uses a series of plate heat exchangers to transfer thermal energy between two fluids using a series of thin, corrugated metal plates stacked together. Fluids flow through alternating channels, allowing heat to transfer through the plates while keeping the liquids separated. Over time these heat exchangers can get blocked up and corroded, operating less efficiently.



As noted previously, with the heating system out of action our contractors were able to remove and replace the plates in the five heat exchanger units.

Pictured: new plates prior to being installed.

Wear and tear, touch ups and other tasks

While the majority of the staff opted to take leave, some with contracted hours were reassigned to support the other facilities while a number of team members remained behind to perform odd jobs.

Among the many tasks completed were sanding and varnishing of the poolside bleachers and benches, cleaning, sanding and repainting a number of walls throughout the facility, shampooing all the carpets in reception, offices and dry corridor, removal of the Covid screens and a general spruce up of the reception area, storerooms and utility areas.



Pictured: a staff member performing maintenance on lane ropes used to section out the learn to swim classes, replacing any damaged floats.

Finally, we wish to thank all our customers for adjusting their routines, sharing their lane or waiting patiently for the facility to reopen. Our facilities play an important role supporting the physical, mental and social wellbeing of our community and it has been a pleasure to welcome them back, seeing them enjoying the spaces with friends and whānau.

4.3. **Use of promotional discounts to support competitive business growth**

Recently, questions were raised about the use of discounts to promote sales of concessions and memberships at the aquatic facilities as part of our “New Year New You” promotion, which offered a 15 percent discount to attract new customers and generate regular facility users. The promotion was intended as a tool to help the facilities meet or exceed income targets and does not seek to alter levels of service or existing budgets.

Discounted introductory pricing remains a common and accepted method both with local businesses and within the wider recreation sector for increasing participation, retaining current customers and attracting new ones. A range of public pools and fitness centres currently use short term promotions on memberships and concessions as part of their business practice.

While Council holds a monopoly on public pool provision, this is not reflective of the broader recreation environment within the district. Residents have access to numerous activities that are free or low cost, including walking and running tracks, mountain biking, coastal and conservation parks, cycling routes and general outdoor recreation. There is also a wide range of organised sports such as BMX, rugby, league, athletics, trampolining and archery. In addition, the district competes with commercial fitness providers including City Fitness, Snap Fitness, Flex Fitness, Anytime Fitness and the North Canterbury Sport and Recreation Trust, all of whom routinely use discounts to attract and retain customers.

Although concession and membership swim cards already provide a modest saving over standard entry, the concern that further discounting constitutes “discounting a discount” does not reflect the broader competitive environment. From a customer perspective the decision is not limited to which pool to use, but which activity best suits their discretionary time and budget. Aquatic facilities therefore operate within a wider physical activity and entertainment market and compete for participation in that context.

Time limited promotional discounts are an established tool for increasing new user acquisition and reactivating lapsed customers. They reduce initial participation barriers and provide targeted incentives without altering the permanent price structure. These promotions support revenue stability by encouraging interest and uptake of concession and membership products, which generate predictable income and are associated with higher levels of repeat usage. Customers who join through a promotion may also generate secondary revenue through programmes, merchandise, lessons or family visits.

Promotional pricing also supports Council's Community Wellbeing outcomes by reducing cost barriers for some households, particularly older residents. Short, controlled promotional periods improve accessibility without requiring a permanent change to fees and charges, and contribute positively to water safety, social connection and health outcomes through increased participation in aquatic activity.

For these reasons the controlled use of promotional discounts remains a justifiable and strategically sound practice. It acknowledges the existing pricing structure while enabling the facilities to compete effectively within the broader recreation market and support community outcomes.

It can be difficult to measure the direct impact of promotions because customer behaviour is influenced by multiple variables, outside our control that change at the same time, including weather, seasonal demand, school holidays and competing events and deals. These factors can mask or exaggerate the effect of a promotion, making it challenging to isolate the promotion as the primary driver of sales, attendance or revenue changes.

Promotional activity may also create delayed effects, where customers trial the facility during a promotion but do not convert to regular users until weeks later. This makes short

term reporting unreliable and can require longer observation and in-depth surveys which we aren't equipped to perform. In addition, not all customers identify themselves as having responded to a promotion. These limitations mean that while promotions can support attendance, growth and revenue, attributing specific outcomes to a single promotional initiative is inherently very difficult.

The following table shows our proposed promotional calendar, details of the promotion, who these events are targeting, the incentive offered and any resources required. These promotions have largely been delivered as detailed for the last 10 years at least.

It is important to note that the majority of the planned promotions aim to raise awareness of our services and are unlikely to have any direct financial cost. Through our sales of togs and swim products we are able to attract limited numbers of free products for use as prizes and giveaway. Our standard mark up on togs and merchandise allows us to run discounted sale events and still realise a profit on the sale.

Month	Activity	Tactics, resource and motivation
January	New Year New you promotion, 15% off memberships and concessions	Capture the new year resolution fitness market in a push to grow customer numbers.
	Dudley reopening following maintenance closure	Welcome customers back following maintenance closure
February	"Dogs in togs" End of Oxford season pool party Term two LTS bookings open	Planned to coincide with the end of the summer season, with no cost. Pool is to be closed, drained and cleaned prior to reopening so no impact on filters systems. Dog events are a unique point of difference and very popular.
March		Retention and continued growth of LTS customer base
April	Easter Egg hunt and colouring competition	Engages well with younger market with merchandise prizes donated by suppliers
	Restart your fitness goals 5% off returning memberships and concessions	Limited time event to attract new members, boost retention of current members to maintain regular user numbers
May	Mothers day – "bring mum for a swim and she swims for free"	Limited cost impact as this can incentivise users to visit when the otherwise wouldn't have. Leverages current customers as advocates, increases participation.
June	Kings birthday - merchandise and swimwear sale	Discounts offered decrease margins but still ensure a profit is realised on sale.
	Term three LTS bookings open	Retention and continued growth of LTS customer base.
July	Kidsfest Pool Parties	Planned activity with support for promotion through Kidsfest. Prizes donated by suppliers.
	Matariki - concession and membership promotion 10% off	Limited time event to attract new members, boost retention of current members to maintain regular user numbers.

August	Aquarobics promotion - "bring a friend for free"	Leverages current customers as advocates, increases participation, convert to regular users
September	Fathers day – "bring dad for a swim and he swims for free"	Limited cost impact as this can incentivise users to visit when the otherwise wouldn't have. Leverages current customers as advocates, increases participation.
	Term four LTS bookings open	Retention and continued growth of LTS customer base.
October	Waikuku Beach Paddling pool opens	Promoting a planned activity.
	Get fit for summer 5% off returning memberships and concessions	Limited time event to attract new members, boost retention of current members to maintain regular user numbers.
November	Black Friday merchandise and swimwear sale	Discounts offered decrease margins but still ensure a profit is realised on sale.
	Oxford Pool opens	Promoting a planned activity.
December	Elf on a "pool" shelf	No promotion offered but generates social media interaction and brand awareness.
	Term one LTS bookings open	Retention and continued growth of LTS customer base.

The following options are available

- 4.3.1. Option One – approve the proposed promotion calendar and the use of discounts as a promotional marketing tool. This approach is consistent with the activities and results of previous years with the intention of helping to achieve attendance, maintain levels of service and income budget targets. This is the recommended option.
- 4.3.2. Option Two – remove discounted promotions from the calendar with other activities proceeding as planned. This is likely to see decreased sales of new and returning customers making income targets more difficult to achieve. This approach is not consistent with the wider industry or other comparable business activities. This is not the recommended option.
- 4.3.3. Option Three – increase, decrease or otherwise adjust the proposed marketing activities in the calendar. This may still achieve some impact and budget targets although outcome is dependent on changes proposed. The promotions outlined in the proposed calendar are consistent with previous years activities and income results which is why this is not the recommended option.
- 4.3.4. Option Four – Discontinue use of any promotions or marketing. This is likely to make achieving budgeted income targets especially difficult. This approach is not consistent with the wider industry or other comparable business activities. This is not the recommended option.

It is important to note that any changes to the planned promotions or discounts offered are likely to generate a volume of negative feedback from customers.

In summary, the use of short term promotional discounts remain a legitimate and strategically appropriate tool for increasing participation, supporting revenue stability and improving accessibility for residents. Although individual promotional impacts are difficult

to isolate due to external factors and delayed customer responses, these initiatives operate within a competitive recreation environment and assist the facilities to attract and retain users without altering levels of service or requiring additional budget and assist the Council in achieving its Community Outcomes.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

The successful operation of the Aquatic facilities is fundamentally tied to the wellbeing of our community and customers. Beyond the obvious physical benefits, our facilities promote the mental, and social wellbeing of residents. As a hub for recreation, education, and connection, the pool provides far-reaching benefits that extend well beyond its walls.

Through Leisure, Lane swimming and Aquarobics programmes we encourage regular physical activity across all age groups, contributing to improved health, strength, and mobility. They also serve as a platform for water safety education, equipping children and adults with essential life-saving skills. Programmes such as learn-to-swim classes and survival skills training are instrumental in reducing drowning risks.

The pool fosters social cohesion by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds. We offer a welcoming environment for families, youth, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. Community events, school programmes, and recreational activities hosted at the pool such as the Kane Shield, strengthen local ties and promote a sense of belonging.

By hosting school programmes, holiday lessons, and training courses, the pool supports local education initiatives and employment opportunities, contributing to the local economy and reinforcing the pool's role as a valued community asset.

Ensuring the pool remains accessible is key to its continued impact. Working to ensure we meet community needs, efficient operation and inclusive programming help remove barriers to participation, ensuring that all members of the community can benefit from our facilities.

- 4.4. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapū are not likely to be affected by or have an interest in the subject matter of this report.

5.2. Groups and Organisations

There are a number of groups and organisations who are affected by, or have a vested interest in the ongoing operation of the districts Aquatic Facilities.

Aquatics staff continue to work closely with key community partners and wider industry organisations, including North Canterbury Swim Club, Water Skills for Life, Waimakariri Access Group, Recreation Aotearoa, Swimming NZ and the North Canterbury Sports and Recreation Trust, to name a few.

5.3. Wider Community

Aquatics staff run an internal customer survey every six months as an opportunity to check in with our customers, gain valuable feedback and ensure programmes and services align with community needs. In our most recent survey we achieved an overall customer satisfaction rating of 94%. This is down from our previous result of 97% six months prior yet still ahead of our targeted greater than or equal to 90%.

There are a number of ways for customers to provide us with direct feedback; email, our facebook pages, councils' website enquiry, service requests and our in-house survey QR code. While these are all utilised to a different degree, running a survey "event" is a good opportunity to gather feedback both on what we do well but also where we can do better.

A review of the District Aquatics plan in 2023 reinforced the outcomes of the original document, with growing community demand for Hydrotherapy a key area of opportunity, additional leisure space at Kaiapoi and the integration of the Pavilion into the main facility at Dudley and what this would mean for current changing spaces.

Aquatics staff continue to engage with our community, through platforms such as SwimDesk, the Councils website, Facebook pages and emails to members. Further, we invite feedback through our in-house surveys, customer feedback boxes, staff engagement and social media channels.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1. **Financial Implications**

The following table summarises the Aquatic Facilities operational financial position in the year ended 31 December 2025.

	Actual	Budget		Diff
Revenue	910,909	881,923	➡	28,986
Rates	2,333,284	2,288,640	➡	44,644
	3,244,193	3,170,563	➡	73,630
Operating Expenses	2,053,815	2,109,999	➡	56,184
Maintenance	123,092	202,064	⬆	78,972
Overheads	461,413	470,472	➡	9,060
Internal Interest	143,586	153,744	⬆	10,158
Depreciation	504,674	473,562	⬇	- 31,112
	3,286,579	3,409,841	➡	123,262
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(42,386)	(239,278)	⬆	196,892

Overall income remains up on budget due to growth within the programmes. With the higher demand for lessons we are better positioned to fill out class numbers which has seen a stronger than forecast revenue income result.

Recent policy changes affect fixed-rate charges for Museums, Libraries, Park Reserves, Community Buildings, and Aquatic Centres. To comply, remitted rates are now split out, resulting in an increase to both rates revenue and rates remission expenditure. This approach clearly documents the charge while balancing the overall impact.

The underspend in Operational Expenses is primarily attributed to lower electricity costs, resulting from both improved rates and some reduced consumption compared to forecasted levels. The underspend in the Maintenance budget is due to two factors, with increased spend planned for the January closedown as well as an underspend in insurance costs, which were lower than anticipated and are accounted for within the maintenance budget.

Of the three main income activities, results remain on budget for pre-paid entries, recreation just under budget and learn to swim income higher than forecast due to the recent increased numbers.

Direct staffing costs remained on budget due to the need to continue to meet contractual obligations and safe operating requirements.

Any changes to the proposed approach for marketing activities are likely to see effects on income budget targets.

There are no significant financial implications of the information within this report.

This budget is included in the Annual Plan/Long Term Plan.

6.2. **Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts**

While the recommendations in this report do not have a direct sustainability or climate change impact, the impact our operation has on the community and environment are key drivers for the delivery of services and our planning processes.

While ticket sales account for around 40% of the Aquatics income budget, to ensure the continued sustainability of the business, it is important that the aquatics team are able to utilise the same promotional and marketing tools available to other similar businesses in what is a dynamic and competitive market.

As explored in the District Aquatic Strategy, ensuring the efficiency of our operation is key to managing the sustainability of current and future offerings. This ensures that facilities will be well utilised and continue to be good value for money for future generations.

Aquatic staff continue to investigate more sustainable and climate conscious alternatives with examples including switching to LED lighting, closely monitoring our water quality to reduce the need for additional chemical balancing and switching products to prioritise less impactful chemicals for cleaning and filtration.

To minimise its environmental impact, our pool plant utilises systems to recirculate water and recover heat, which decrease the overall resources required to operate. However, with changes underway within the Three Waters sector, there is an increasing likelihood of water usage charging for Council facilities, including Aquatics. While the details are yet to be finalised, this potential change will have implications for budgets and long-term planning. Staff will continue to monitor developments, engage with the three waters team and refine our water quality and efficiency processes to minimise impact.

6.3 **Risk Management**

Changing attitudes around the risks from communicable diseases and colds continue to impact on both our staffing ability but also on customers attendance for recreation and programmed activities.

The treatment systems and processes around the ongoing monitoring of water quality are designed to minimise risk to customers from water borne illness and communicable disease. Staff will continue to work closely with Te Whatu Ora to address situations as we are made aware of them and take the appropriate steps.

Changes to our marketing approach risks affecting the revenue split between ticket sales and rates revenue. Staff will continue to monitor revenue and expenses closely, identifying new initiatives such as visiting attractions and partnership opportunities, refining the business model to identify efficiencies, retain customers attract new business and meet the community demand for low cost, safe and enjoyable recreation opportunities.

6.4 **Health and Safety**

Customer and staff safety is key to the ongoing success of the facilities with leadership staff working closely with Council's Health and Safety team, Police, Poolsafe, and other key groups to ensure we provide a safe and enjoyable environment for our customers.

Staff take the safety our customers as their highest priority with any unusual behaviour addressed or escalated to the proper authorities

Community spread from colds, viruses and notifiable diseases can impact our availability to safely operate facilities. The Aquatics Standard Operating Procedures and Pool Water Quality Risk Management Plan outline the steps taken around effective treatment of pool water to ensure we provide a safe environment for our customers. Our Aquatics BCP

outlines how we will manage staffing pressures to ensure we continue to operate a safe and secure environment for our customers at all times.

Poolsafe accreditation requires robust practices around reporting, investigation, trending and management of both staff and public accidents. This is on top of the Council's Health and Safety requirements and ensures a comprehensive overview.

7. CONTEXT

7.1. Consistency with Policy

This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

7.2. Authorising Legislation

Poolsafe - Though not currently a legislative requirement, Poolsafe accreditation is recognised as industry best practice, representing a base safe standard for operating a public aquatic facility following a coronial enquiry delivered in October 2006

7.3. Consistency with Community Outcomes

The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

Public spaces are diverse, respond to changing demographics and meet local needs for leisure and recreation.

Council commits to promoting health and wellbeing and minimizing the risk of social harm to its communities.

Our community has access to the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in society and to exercise choice about how to live their lives.

People are able to enjoy meaningful relationships with others in their families, whanau, communities, iwi and workplaces.

Our community has equitable access to the essential infrastructure and services required to support community wellbeing.

Public spaces express our cultural identities and help to foster an inclusive society.

People are supported to participate in improving the health and sustainability of our environment.

Our district transitions towards a reduced carbon and waste district.

There is access to meaningful, rewarding, and safe employment within the district.

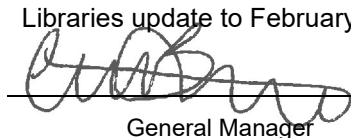
Infrastructure and services are sustainable, resilient, and affordable.

Our district readily adapts to innovation and emerging technologies that support its transition to a circular economy.

There are sufficient skills and education opportunities available to support the economy.

7.4. Authorising Delegations

This committee has delegated authority for the governance of the Aquatic Facilities.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR INFORMATION****FILE NO and TRIM NO:** LIB-04-01/260204020236**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**DATE OF MEETING:** 17 February 2025**AUTHOR(S):** Luke Sole – District Libraries Manager**SUBJECT:** Libraries update to February 2026**ENDORSED BY:**
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)

 General Manager


 Chief Executive
1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides an update on notable services, programmes and experiences offered to our community | hapori by Waimakariri Libraries from December 2025 to February 2026. This includes an update on holiday visitation, events and other offerings, and a description of the upcoming mobile outreach trial.

2. RECOMMENDATION**THAT** the Community and Recreation Committee

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 260204020236
- (b) **Notes** consistent increases in visitation and engagement in library services, including an increase of 500 visits over the holiday period compared to the year previous.
- (c) **Circulates** the report to the Community Boards for their information.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Waimakariri Libraries promote literacy and lifelong learning to support healthier and more resilient communities, support pathways to learning, contribute to economic and social wellbeing, and deliver excellence in public service.
- 3.2. Our District's libraries are vibrant and increasingly busy spaces, with visitation increasing by approximately 10% each year. This equates to almost 400,000 unique in-person visits and 500,00 books issued.
- 3.3. Since the last update report there have been several initiatives which have been undertaken which are described in more detail below.

4. ISSUES AND OPTIONS

4.1. **Waimakariri Libraries welcome record numbers over summer holiday period**

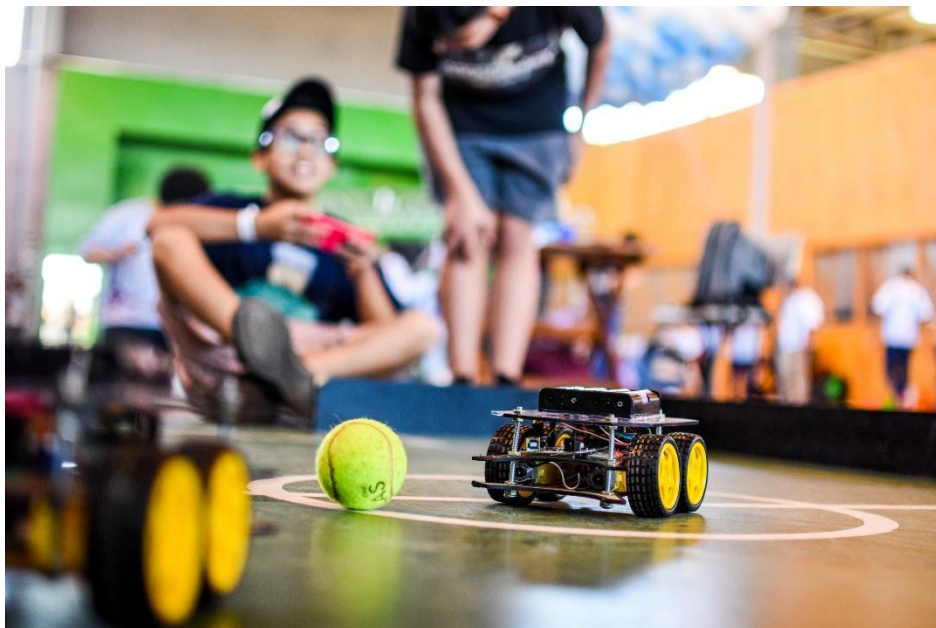
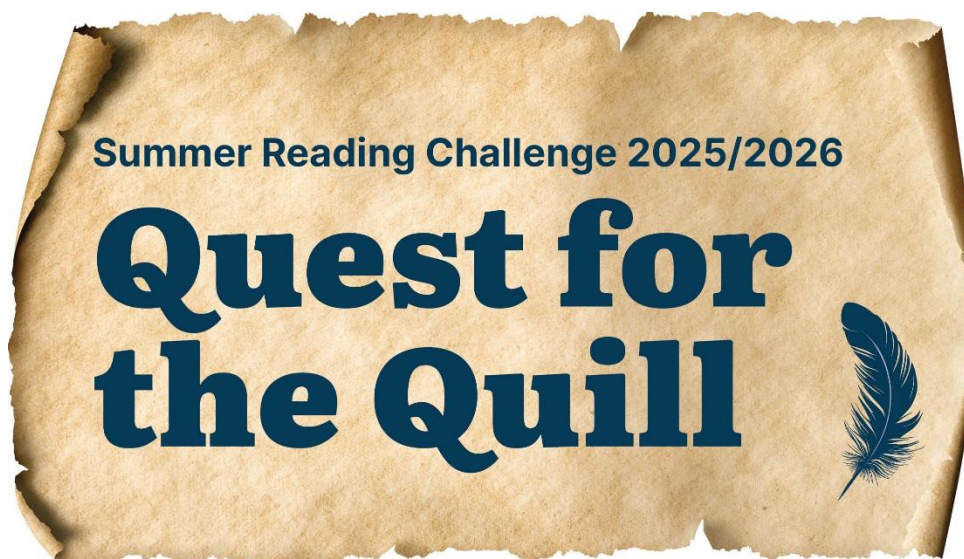


Figure 1: Programmable Battle Bots were offered during school holidays.

- 4.1.1. Visitation remained strong over the summer holiday period, with record numbers of our community visiting libraries to read, socialise, and take part in engaging events and programmes. Our libraries also continued to play an important intergenerational role, with many older residents visiting alongside grandchildren during the holidays.
- 4.1.2. Across the three libraries, total visits increased by over 500 people compared with last year, rising from 39,626 in 2024–2025 to 40,161 in 2025–2026.
- 4.1.3. Rangiora Library recorded the largest increase, welcoming 23,617 unique visitors, an increase of 255 people year on year.
- 4.1.4. Oxford Library also saw strong growth, with 3,100 visitors, up 245 people on the previous year. Kaiapoi Library recorded 13,444 visits over the same period.
- 4.1.5. Children's engagement remained a highlight, with children's book issuing more than 1,200 higher than the previous year, reflecting strong participation in reading and holiday-related activities.
- 4.1.6. A total of 47,111 physical books were issued over the holiday period, which is a slight drop from last year, which is mostly reflected in reduced demand for adult and teen fiction.
- 4.1.7. During the last three weeks of January, Waimakariri hosted Whakarewa Raumati / Level Up Your Summer — a programme designed for rangatahi (teenagers) aged 10 and up. While the activities were created with young people in mind, they were also enjoyed by younger tamariki (children) and whānau (families) too.
- 4.1.8. Across the children and teen sessions, we welcomed over 100 participants. The school holidays continue to be a valuable opportunity to connect with young people, strengthen relationships, and foster a sense of belonging within our community.

- 4.1.9. Overall, summer attendance figures demonstrate the continued importance of libraries as accessible community spaces that support learning, connection, and family-focused activity during the holiday period.

4.2. **Summer Reading Challenge a huge hit for school-aged children**



- 4.2.1. The Waimakariri Libraries Summer Reading Challenge 2025–2026, titled *Quest for the Quill*, was successfully delivered over the summer holiday period, with 276 children participating across the district.
- 4.2.2. The programme was designed to captivate children through a fun storyline, engaging characters, and creative activities. This approach motivated children to read over the summer while also ensuring they had a positive and enjoyable library experience. These early experiences are important in building lasting connections with libraries, encouraging continued engagement from children and their whānau (families) beyond the holiday period.
- 4.2.3. Participants responded enthusiastically, sharing a wide range of creative outputs linked to their reading, including poems, picture books, music playlists, short stories, and photos of crafts and cooking or baking. This strong level of engagement highlights the role libraries play in fostering creativity, imagination, and a love of reading and learning.
- 4.2.4. Library staff played a key role in the programme's success, fully embracing the theme and bringing the story to life by acting out characters and plot elements within library spaces. This enthusiasm helped create a welcoming and lively atmosphere that resonated with children and families.
- 4.2.5. The challenge concluded with a finale celebration on Friday 30 January, where participants' efforts were recognised. Mayor Dan Gordon presented certificates and prizes to the Questers, and his attendance was greatly appreciated as a show of support for children's literacy, creativity, and community learning.
- 4.2.6. *Quest for the Quill* successfully supported summer reading while reinforcing libraries as engaging, creative, and family-friendly spaces that encourage lifelong learning.



Figure 2: Summer Reading Challenge participants, staff and Mayor Dan Gordon at the prize giving event.

4.3. Hāpai Access Card Accreditation – Waimakariri Libraries

- 4.3.1. Waimakariri Libraries is in the final stages of attaining [Hāpai Access Card](#) accreditation for its three library sites: Oxford, Rangiora, and Kaiapoi. This initiative supports the libraries' commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and equitable access to services for all members of the community.
- 4.3.2. The Hāpai Access Card is a nationally recognised programme that identifies and verifies accessibility features within public and community spaces. Accreditation provides clear, reliable information for people with access needs, including those with mobility, sensory, neurodiverse, or hidden disabilities, enabling them to plan visits with confidence. The scheme also supports organisations to assess and improve accessibility in a structured and practical way.
- 4.3.3. Achieving Hāpai accreditation will improve the experience of library users by:
 - 1.1..1. Providing clear and trusted information about accessibility at each site
 - 1.1..2. Supporting greater independence and confidence for people with access needs
 - 1.1..3. Demonstrating Waimakariri Libraries' commitment to inclusive, welcoming spaces
 - 1.1..4. Strengthening connections with disabled people, their whānau, and support networks
- 4.3.4. As highly used community spaces, libraries play a key role in ensuring equitable access to information, learning, and social connection.
- 4.3.5. For staff, the accreditation process builds greater awareness and understanding of accessibility and inclusive service delivery. It provides a consistent framework for identifying barriers, improving environments, and responding confidently to a wide range of access needs.
- 4.3.6. Library team members will take the final accreditation requirements and implementation planning to the Waimakariri Access Group for feedback

before proceeding with final accreditation. This ensures the work is informed by lived experience and local expertise.

- 4.3.7. This initiative represents a significant milestone, as it is the first time Waimakariri District Council has participated in the Hāpai Access Card scheme.

4.4. Waimakariri Libraries to commence mobile outreach trial from mid-February

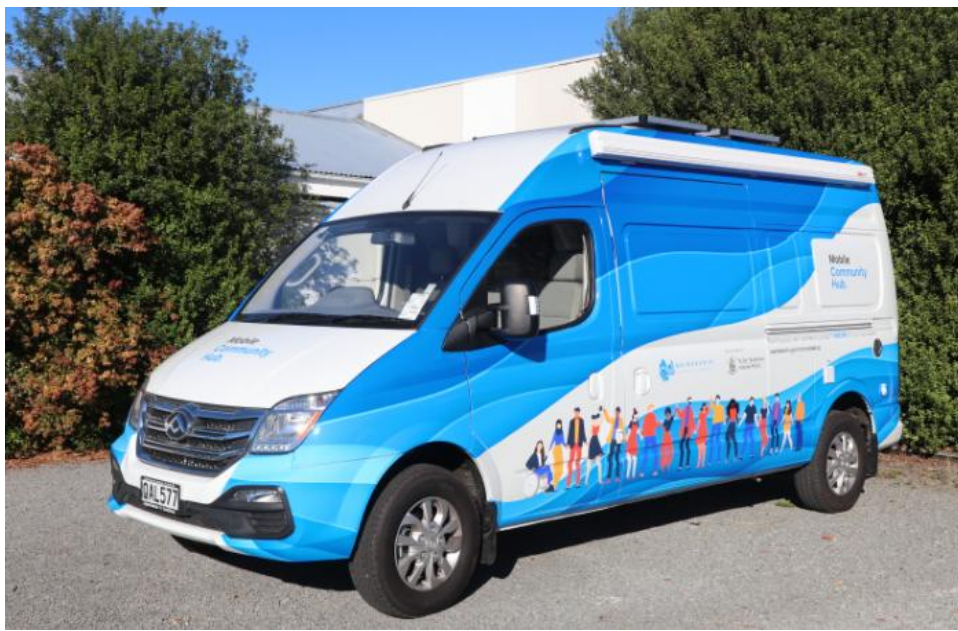


Figure 3: Mobile Community Hub Van

- 4.4.1. Waimakariri residents will soon have easier access to library services thanks to our new Pop-up Library trial launching on February 13, 2026.
- 4.4.2. This initiative aims to bring a curated selection of books, magazines, and other library resources directly to communities that may not have easy access to our physical libraries.
- 4.4.3. Waimakariri Libraries are trialling this service for a period of three months, before a decision is made to continue the offering long term.
- 4.4.4. The Pop-up Library will be run out of the [Mobile Community Hub](#) that was developed so not-for-profit, charitable organisations, or government agencies can provide support, information, and connection to members of the community wherever they are.
- 4.4.5. The Mobile Community Hub was made possible by funding from the Department of Internal Affairs. Visitors to the Pop-up Library will find a range of reading materials and connection with the friendly faces of talented librarians. They'll be available for a chat, assistance with technology queries, and as always can help you find your next great read.
- 4.4.6. The mobile service will pop up at various locations, including community groups, preschools, schools, aged care facilities, and even playgrounds. Community & Culture Team Leader Sam Armitage believes "It's about building connections by taking library services to parts of our community that may not be able to easily reach a library. We offer so much, from books and online resources to community education and entertainment. We're excited about the prospect of bringing these experiences to our outlying communities."

- 4.4.7. Costs associated with the trial will be met by existing budget, including staff time (two staff onboard the vehicle), materials, and the fuel cost of operating the vehicle. Costs will be met through existing library budgets and outreach allocations: GL 10.495.634.2465. Fridays were selected due to having a resource buffer to account for staff sickness or leave.
- 4.4.8. A full timetable of stops will be available soon on the [Waimakariri Libraries](#) website.



Figure 4: Pop Up Library in use in March 2025.

Implications for Community Wellbeing

There are various initiatives that promote positive community wellbeing outcomes in the issues and options that are the subject matter of this report. Notably, the initiatives delivered by the libraries team and/or external partners are developed to promote community wellbeing, foster community connection, and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

- 4.5. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapū are likely to be affected by, or have an interest in, the subject matter of this report. Waimakariri Libraries provide access to important historical resources, promoting cultural preservation and fostering educational opportunities. Our libraries hold collections relating to Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri, including art, photographs, maps, and books, which are vital for preserving and promoting mātauranga māori (Māori knowledge). Our libraries regularly connect with mana whenua through programmes and events, including Matariki and Te Wiki o te Reo Māori, also known as Māori Language Week.

5.2. Groups and Organisations

While there are no specific groups or organisations affected as a result of the recommendations in this report, the Waimakariri Libraries service provides events and programmes for a number of groups and organisations. The events and programmes vary, however, all initiatives provide significant benefit for the groups and individuals involved.

5.3. Wider Community

Waimakariri Libraries has growing visitor numbers, attendance at events and programmes, and borrowing across physical and digital collections.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1. Financial Implications

The below summary report is dated to December 2025.

Library Summary Report December 2025			
	Actual	Budget	
Revenue			
Revenue	61,110	52,110	
Rates	2,887,615	2,832,732	➡
Grants	26,990	61,098	⬇
Development Contributions	18,930	139,896	⬇
	2,994,646	3,085,836	
Operating Expenses			
Operating Expenses	1,650,115	1,608,702	➡
Maintenance	220,515	296,196	⬆
Overheads	584,958	613,344	➡
Internal Interest	5,910	6,636	⬆
Depreciation	565,996	551,388	➡
	3,027,495	3,076,266	➡
Surplus/ (Deficit)	(32,849)	9,570	⬇

Grants above refers to Better Off Funding, which was \$200,000 for the Library Concept Plan Development relating the the extension of Trevor Inch Memorial Library. There is a balance remaining of \$122,000 which is intended to be spent in 25/26.

Revenue is mostly derived from the sale of withdrawn books, the replacement of lost books where this is recovered from members, and consumables relating to printing, 3D printing and craft materials. Libraries operate to a cost recovery model for consumables where possible.

6.2. Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts

The recommendations in this report do have sustainability and/or climate change implications. Libraries promote sustainability by providing wide-ranging collections and resources that are borrowed extensively, including digital resources that carry a reduced carbon footprint. In addition, public libraries are providers of information and play a role in teaching environmental literacy by educating communities to learn about climate issues. The availability of emergent technologies and equipment such as sewing machines in a library setting reduce the need for community members to purchase their own technology and enable the community to repair and repurpose their own items.

6.3. Risk Management

There are no specific risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report. Given the

6.4. Health and Safety

There are no Health and safety risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

7. CONTEXT

7.1. Consistency with Policy

This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

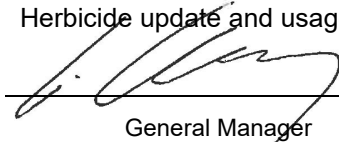
7.2. Authorising Legislation

7.3. Consistency with Community Outcomes

The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

7.4. Authorising Delegations

The Community and Recreation Committee have the delegation to receive this report.

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**REPORT FOR INFORMATION****FILE NO and TRIM NO:** DRA-14 / 251023201716**REPORT TO:** UTILITIES AND ROADING COMMITTEE**DATE OF MEETING:** 25 November 2025 (Utilities and Roading Committee)**AUTHOR(S):** Sophie Allen – Water Environment Advisor**SUBJECT:** Herbicide update and usage by Council and contractors in 2024-25**ENDORSED BY:**
(for Reports to Council,
Committees or Boards)
General Manager
Chief Executive**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report summarises herbicide usage by the Council and its contractors in 2024-25 for public areas and/or areas that are beside waterways and compares to data from 2023-24. This scope includes areas in the work programmes for maintaining rural drainage, stockwater races, green spaces such as parks, stormwater management areas, and the road reserve (including roadside drains).
- 1.2. Council herbicide usage and recommendations for improvements are reported annually to the Utilities and Roading Committee and the Community and Recreation Committee. This report is the second in a standardised annual report format. This annual reporting also reviewed important updates in relevant herbicide research, as well as reassessments and approvals of herbicide and their additives under the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).
- 1.3. Various Waimakariri community members have raised concerns regarding the safety of herbicides to human health and ecosystems, particularly regarding possible effects on aquatic environments.
- 1.4. Herbicide usage is minimised by Council where possible, with other methods such as mechanical cleaning used. Herbicides for Council operations are only used as approved by the EPA and where deemed necessary by Council staff and contractors. Operating procedures are in place to ensure best practice and label instructions for herbicides and their additives are followed.
- 1.5. The EPA decided in July 2024 that there was not sufficient evidence to require a review of the herbicide glyphosate in New Zealand (www.epa.govt.nz). None of the herbicides, as used by Council, are under current reassessment by the EPA. Some herbicides when used in aquatic environments are under reassessment by the EPA, such as triclopyr, haloxyfop and diquat, however the Council does not use these herbicides in aquatic environments.
- 1.6. The EPA has stated they plan to carry out a review of polyoxyethylene amine (POEA) surfactants commonly used with herbicides, due to claims that these surfactants should be restricted, however have not stated a date. Alternative surfactants to POEA have some limited availability in New Zealand, such as found in the glyphosate product Grunt® 600 from Donaghys Ltd. Council staff will monitor and address the review findings from the EPA when published.
- 1.7. This year WDC staff specifically reviewed the use of additives to glyphosate when applied as a spray, for uses such as a penetrant, anti-spray drift and to reduce the rain-fast time, with further work needed before confirming any guidance to the Council and its contractors.

- 1.8. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) section about herbicides has been added onto the WDC website. The Herbicide Spray Management Plan for WDC consent CRC120402 for spraying plants in drains and stockwater races is being reviewed and updated to best practice. A WDC 'No Spray Register' form will soon be publicly advertised on the WDC website as an option for berms.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Utilities and Rooding Committee:

- (a) **Receives** Report No. 251023201716.
- (b) **Notes** that herbicide use is minimised where possible for Council operations and only used where deemed necessary by Council staff and contractors. Other (i.e. mechanical) weed control options are used where they are deemed more appropriate.
- (c) **Notes** the herbicides and their use are as approved by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), however spray additives are usually not required to be approved by the EPA.
- (d) **Notes** the following report contains actions for WDC staff to; monitor the Environmental Protection Authority for relevant reassessments, reviews or approval changes; monitor for updates to relevant peer-reviewed research; provide guidance to contractors on spray additives; extend the scope of the WDC Rooding 'No Spray' register; and require relevant contractors to be Growsafe Registered Chemical Applicators.
- (e) **Notes** that spraying over water by Council and its contractors is very limited, with a preference for mechanical maintenance for rural drains and stockwater races. If spraying near or over water is carried out (with a risk of discharge of contaminants to the waterway), it is following consent CRC120402 and Glyphosate 360 is applied for this. No diquat has been used by the Council in 2024-25, although permitted by CRC120402.
- (f) **Notes** that the budgets in the Long Term Plan 2024-34 have been based on continuing to use herbicides, including glyphosate, for weed control, where deemed necessary by Council staff and contractors.
- (g) **Notes** that the EPA decided not to review the herbicide glyphosate in 2024, as there was insufficient evidence that an update was required from the previous review conducted in 2016. A challenge by the appellant, the Environmental Law Initiative (ELI) to this decision was unsuccessful in the High Court in October 2025.
- (h) **Notes** that there is a planned review by the EPA of polyoxyethylene amine (POEA) surfactants commonly used with herbicides, due to claims that these surfactants should be restricted, however no date for this review has been announced.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Waimakariri District Council has received increasing concerns in recent years from the community regarding herbicides practices and the potential impact of herbicides on waterways within the Waimakariri District. In 2024, multiple residents have raised concerns that herbicide usage could have caused dieback of weedbeds in the Ruataniwha Cam River and Kaiapoi River.
- 3.2. Use of herbicides in public areas and beside waterways are the areas that community members have primarily raised for their concerns, therefore are the scope of this annual reporting. Herbicide usage by WDC in other areas is thought to be minimal and *ad hoc*, making it difficult to track, therefore is out of scope of this annual reporting. This annual reporting provides clarity to community members about WDC herbicide practices as well as provide potential improvement recommendations.
- 3.3. Due to community concerns, WDC has minimised spraying aquatic vegetation such as watercress and monkey musk, preferring to use primarily mechanical methods to manage

excess weed growth in drains with baseflow. Spraying herbicide into dry drain invert and woody weed pest species on adjacent riparian banks has continued as the preferred control option.

- 3.4. WDC has prepared previous reports regarding herbicide usage. A report in 2018 conducted a review of the use of glyphosate by WDC and examined alternative options. A report in 2019 also looked at glyphosate, and recommendations for improvement to practices. A report in 2022 provided an update on spraying practices, herbicide brands and volumes used by WDC and its contractors. The first annual report in a standardised format was published for herbicide usage during 2023-24.

4. ISSUES AND OPTIONS

Annual reporting

- 4.1. Herbicide data that are reported for each financial year include:
 - 4.1.1. Council operations and contracts that include the application of herbicides in public spaces and/or next to waterways;
 - 4.1.2. Brands of herbicide used;
 - 4.1.3. Brands of additives used;
 - 4.1.4. Volumes of herbicide used; and
 - 4.1.5. A short general statement on locations where herbicides are used (riparian margins, dry drains, public parks etc), types of application, and summary of target species for the herbicide.
- 4.2. Data are also collated in a spreadsheet for comparison between years.

EPA and international reviews

- 4.3. All herbicides and additives reported as used by WDC and its contractors in 2024-25 are approved for their use by the EPA. Synthetic pyrethroids, occasionally used by contractors as insecticides in public places, are under active assessment by the EPA as they are on the priority chemical list (noting that insecticides are outside of the scope of this report). Oxadiazon is a weedkiller under reassessment, however is not currently used by Council or its contractors.
- 4.4. Grounds have been established by EPA to reassess substances used as aquatic herbicides, namely:
 - 4.4.1. Endothall dipotassium salt
 - 4.4.2. Diquat dibromide
 - 4.4.3. Metsulfuron-methyl
 - 4.4.4. Haloxyfop-R-methyl
 - 4.4.5. Imazapyr isopropylamine
 - 4.4.6. Triclopyr triethylamine
- 4.5. Triclopyr (such as in Grazon and Tordon Pastureboss) and haloxyfop (in Gallant) are used in various forms for terrestrial use by WDC and its contractors, however the EPA is not reviewing terrestrial use of these herbicides. Diquat is approved for use under consent CRC120402 for weed control in stockwater races and rural drains, however WDC does not currently use Diquat despite this approval.

- 4.6. Glyphosate is a common herbicide used by Council and its contractors. The EPA concluded in their 2016 review that glyphosate-based products are not likely to cause harm if users follow the label instructions with appropriate usage.
- 4.7. The EPA decided in July 2024 that there was not sufficient evidence to require a new review on its use in New Zealand, with the last review of 2016 still standing. This decision was challenged by the Environmental Law Initiative (ELI). However, the High Court ruled in favour of the EPA in the High Court in October 2025.
- 4.8. There is international debate on the human health effects of glyphosate. In 2015, the IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) classified glyphosate and its derivatives in Group 2A, as probable human carcinogens. In 2022, the European Food Safety Authority stated that the available data did not provide sufficient evidence to prove the mutagenic/carcinogenic effects of glyphosate. Therefore, the European Commission decided to renew the approval of glyphosate use for another 10 years.
- 4.9. Before the EPA approves a substance (such as glyphosate), they assess potential impacts on human health and the environment and weigh up its risks and benefits. They use the latest scientific data, including research and decisions made by overseas regulators. If the substance is approved, rules are put in place to reduce risks, such as how to label, package up and dispose of the substance, and there may be restrictions on who can use it. The EPA considers that the existing rules for using glyphosate and glyphosate-containing products are sufficient to manage any potential risks to human health and the environment.
- 4.10. EPA has stated that they plan to undertake a review into a non-ionic surfactant called polyoxyethylene amine (POEA) that is often added to glyphosate products, however no review date has been announced. POEA has hazardous properties and can be toxic to aquatic organisms. There is only a limited range of glyphosate products available in New Zealand without POEA. WDC staff intend to monitor the EPA review of POEA for any changes to approved uses of the surfactant.

Rural drainage

- 4.11. Rural drainage works were carried out under contract CON2019/43. Predominantly rural drainage works are carried out via mechanical methods, such as using an excavator with a root rake bucket. For herbicide usage, the rural drainage contractor adheres to the WDC Drainage Maintenance Management Plan (2020) and a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for spray drift.
- 4.12. Herbicides that were reported to be used for rural drain maintenance in 2024-25 were for grass and woody weed control for 8.4km of dry drains near Oxford and a section of Kaikanui stream margins (along the SH1 motorway) using glyphosate with Pulse penetrant (an organosilicone). Some Tordon Brushkiller for woody weeds and blackberry was used for Mill Road – Oxford and Carleton/Ashley Drain. Total volumes were similar to usage reported in 2023-24:

Agrichemical:	Volume in 2023-24:	Volume in 2024-25:
Agpro Glyphosate 510	18.8 Litres estimated	18.8 Litres estimated
Pulse (penetrant additive to herbicide)	1 Litre estimated	1 Litre estimated
Tordon Brushkiller XT – (active ingredients aminopyralid and picloram)	0.3 Litres estimated	0.3 Litres estimated

--	--	--

- 4.13. In the year 2024-25, the 8.4 km of dry drains sprayed near Oxford were:
- Oxford Road – section west of Barracks Road (1260m)
 - Barracks Road (500m)
 - Powells Road (870m)
 - Mill Road – Oxford. Spraying of gorse and broom along margin (1330m)
 - Bush Road – Crallans Drain (847m)
 - Mounseys Road (360m)
 - Carleton/Ashley Drain. Spraying of gorse and broom along margin (1310m)
 - Bennetts Diversion (1930m)
- 4.14. Any spraying of emergent weeds within a waterway, if carried out, would be according to the consent conditions of CRC120402 and the Herbicide Spray Management Plan however no such spraying was carried out in the period 2024-25.
- 4.15. Section 7.3 of the WDC Drainage Maintenance Management Plan (2020) covers herbicide usage and Council approach for staff discretion to select the most appropriate management option, whilst minimising the usage of herbicide where possible. The DMMP also details best practice if herbicide is used, a summary of the EPA review for glyphosate, and its potential impacts on the environment.

Stockwater races

- 4.16. Stockwater race maintenance is contracted out by WDC. Private landowners also carry out maintenance on sections of the races. A 'No Spray' register option is maintained by the Council stockwater contractor for landowners to request no herbicide spraying is undertaken on stockwater races within or adjacent to their property.
- 4.17. The contractor is a registered chemical applicator with specific training requirements, and occasionally use a subcontractor who is also a registered chemical applicator. They have a Standard Operating Procedure that they follow.
- 4.18. The contractor uses herbicide to control grasses and woody weeds such as gorse and broom. Emergent weeds, such as watercress and monkey musk are usually maintained via mechanical removal. Herbicide spray over the stockwater races for emergent weed control is used only in places where there is lack of access for an excavator (or other access issue) and is carried out following consent CRC120402 conditions and the Herbicide Spray Management Plan.
- 4.19. Total volumes used for stockwater race maintenance in 2024-25 were a slight increase to 2023-24 volumes:

Agrichemical:	Volume in 2023-24:	Volume in 2024-25:
Glyphosate Green 510	160 Litres	180 Litres
Pulse penetrant (an organo-silicone surfactant added to herbicide)	16 Litres estimated	18 Litres estimated

Tordon Brushkiller – (active ingredients aminopyralid and picloram)	A limited amount	A limited amount
---	------------------	------------------

Parks, reserves and stormwater management areas

- 4.20. WDC maintains urban green space maintenance, such as parks and reserves, and also carries out maintenance for stormwater management areas under contract CON2016/51. The herbicides and volumes used for weed management in 2024-25 under this contract were:

Agrichemical:	Volume in 2023-24:	Volume in 2024-25:
Rainbow and Brown Glyphosate 360	407 Litres	410 Litres
Wet and Forget -active ingredient of alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride	15 Litres	10 Litres
Agpro Brushkiller - active ingredients of triclopyr and picloram	46 Litres	2 Litres
Picloram gel (for cut and paste work)	3.220 Kg	1.860 Kg

- 4.21. The contractor has ceased the use of the Agpro spray maximiser (penetrant additive to herbicides used in 2023-24), as it was found to not be required for effectiveness, with no penetrant used in 2024-25.
- 4.22. Without the use of a penetrant in 2024-25, the time for glyphosate to become rain-fast is longer, i.e. several hours, rather than 30 minutes, which the contractor manages with carefully weather watching. The use of a penetrant to reduce the rain-fast time is being considered by the contractor, however some penetrants have potential negative environmental impacts, which needs careful consideration. The contractor is also considering the use of spray-drift reducing nozzles with air induction.
- 4.23. Target species are annual grasses, broadleaf weeds, annual weeds, cleavers, dock, blackberry, gorse, old man's beard, moss and mould. The contractor uses chemicals sparingly, mainly spot spraying by knapsack. Areas near waterways have seen mechanical and digger weed removal along with weed eating during 2024-25 to minimise chemical usage. The contractor does not spray in water or over waterways.
- 4.24. The contractor has SOP documentation for 'Handling and Storage' and 'Weed Spraying'. Their staff that apply chemicals have been through the Grow Safe training course and have certification. The contractor uses digital chemical diaries and have an app which has direct access to safety data sheets and hazard identification forms. The bulk of weed spraying is spot-spraying predominantly around garden beds. Wherever possible the contractor heavily mulches gardens to reduce chemical use.
- 4.25. Although the scope of reporting is limited to herbicide usage, it is of note that the contractor reported the use of 0.8 Litres of Yates Super Shield Rose Spray, which contains an insecticide called Tau fluvalinate, a synthetic pyrethroid. Synthetic pyrethroids are under

reassessment by the EPA currently. The outcome of this reassessment is recommended to be considered by the Council for future insecticide usage.

Ecological restoration work

- 4.26. The Greenspace ranger is a contractor to WDC. Herbicides are applied responsibly by a qualified and experienced professional. Applications are site-specific and carefully timed to effectively manage invasive pest plants. Herbicides also support site preparation and maintenance during early establishment of native plant revegetation projects. The ranger does not apply herbicides or other sprays over waterways.
- 4.27. Methods of application have included knapsack spraying, drilling and filling of tree trunks, and cut and pasting of stumps. Target plants have included annual and perennial grasses, annual and perennial broadleaf species, invasive climbers and vines, and shrubs and trees.
- 4.28. The volumes and products used in 2024-25 by the Greenspace ranger increased from 2023-24 due to project-specific requirements:

Agrichemical:	Volume in 2023-24:	Volume in 2024-25:
Orion Deal 360 and Nufarm Weedmaster G360 - glyphosate as the active ingredient	35 Litres	38.1 Litres
Corteva Grazon - triclopyr as the active ingredient	1 Litre	24.3 Litres
Nufarm Pulse Penetrant – organosilicone additive to herbicides	1 Litre	7.4 Litres
Envirodye blue marking dye	0.7 Litres	3 Litres
Kiwicare Weed Weapon Stump Stop	Not used	2.6 Litres
Nufarm Associate 600 WDG - active ingredient of Metsulfuron-methyl	Not used	250 grams
Corteva Gallant Ultra - active ingredients Haloxyfop-P methyl ester and Haloxyfop	Not used	0.65 Litres
X-tree Basal Wet and Dry	Not used	3.8 Litres
Corteva Uptake Spraying Oil - no active ingredient	Not used	2 Litres
Cut n Paste Glimax Professional Weed Gel - active ingredient glyphosate	Not used	1.5 Kg

Road reserves – including roadside drains

- 4.29. Roothing spray operations carried out under contract CON2019/43 relate to urban kerb and channel spraying, rural spraying around street furniture (signs, poles, edge marker posts, etc), around culvert ends and occasionally road drains. Overgrown vegetation that poses a roading safety risk (blind spots etc) at intersections and/or bridges is also sprayed.
- 4.30. The Waimakariri District Council roading contractor, provided quantities of chemical spraying undertaken in litres used in 2024-25 for roading purposes under CON2019/43. The types and amount of herbicide and additives used were:

Agrichemical:	Volume in 2023-24:	Volume in 2024-25:
Lion 490 DST - glyphosate as the active ingredient	188.75L	209.1 Litres
Tordon PastureBoss-active ingredients triclopyr and aminopyralid	81.52L	63.75 Litres
Li -1000 – a lecithin anti-spray drift and penetrant additive	33.28L	33.94 Litres

- 4.31. Herbicide is only used when deemed necessary by the Roothing Team. Landowners are encouraged to not use herbicide on the banks of roadside drains and swales. An anti-drift additive (Li-1000) is added to council roading chemical sprays to ensure minimal spray drift when applied. Spray is usually applied with the spray nozzle close to the ground to also help reduce drift. This product also works as a penetrant for the herbicide and decreases rain-fast time to 30 minutes. The product is lecithin-based, which is considered safe for humans as a food-additive.
- 4.32. The Waimakariri District Council continually adds to a 'No Spray' register for roadside berms, which members of the public can opt in to have their berm frontages added to. The 'No Spray' register is now advertised on the WDC website as an option for ratepayers, with an online form planned to be added shortly. The register holds private information and therefore it not available to the public.

Specific recommendations for improvement to WDC practices

- 4.33. The following actions are proposed to be undertaken to improve WDC herbicide practices:
- Action 1: Monitor the Environmental Protection Authority for relevant reassessments, reviews or approval changes of herbicides, insecticides (such as the synthetic pyrethroids) and common additives used. Specifically analyse the proposed EPA review of POEA surfactants used with herbicides when published for recommended actions.
 - Action 2: That WDC staff provide guidance to contractors on the suitable use of anti-spray drift, penetrant and rain-fast additives when spraying herbicides regarding spray effectiveness and minimising environmental effects.
 - Action 3: Monitor and review updates to relevant peer-reviewed research on health and environmental effects of herbicides and common additives that WDC uses.
 - Action 4: Extend the scope of the WDC Roothing 'No Spray' register to possibly include other areas that border private property such as Council reserves and stormwater management areas, if appropriate alternative management is agreed by the private

property owner. Potentially incorporate the 'No Spray' register information maintained by the contractor for the stockwater races.

- Action 5: Require that the minimum level of qualification of a contractor to carry out spraying within 30m or less from water or a sensitive habitat, or in/onto water is a Growsafe Registered Chemical Applicator (with an Aquatic strand or equivalent for use within water).

Implications for Community Wellbeing

- 4.34. There are implications on community wellbeing by the issues and options that are the subject matter of this report. Herbicide usage can provide effective and economical control of weed species. However herbicides and their additives should be regularly monitored for updates on potential effects on human health and ecosystems.
- 4.35. The Management Team has reviewed this report and support the recommendations.

5. COMMUNITY VIEWS

5.1. Mana whenua

Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri hapū are likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the subject matter of this report because of potential effects such as weakened mauri of ecosystems, and for the gathering of mahinga kai. A copy of this will be presented at an up-coming monthly WDC- Rūnanga meeting.

5.2. Groups and Organisations

There are groups and organisations likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report, such as rivercare groups.

5.3. Wider Community

The wider community is likely to be affected by, or to have an interest in the subject matter of this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications of the decisions sought by this report. This report is for information only.

Budgets included in the Annual Plan/Long Term Plan are based on the continuation of a limited use of herbicides for weed control.

6.2. Sustainability and Climate Change Impacts

The recommendations in this report do have sustainability and/or climate change impacts. Improvements in the usage of herbicides could have benefits for sustainability, such as for human health and for aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.

6.3 Risk Management

There are no risks arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report.

6.3 Health and Safety

There are potential health and safety opportunities arising from the adoption/implementation of the recommendations in this report, such as a reduced risk to human health from POEA surfactants if these are recommended to be phased out of usage by the EPA.

7. CONTEXT

7.1. Consistency with Policy

This matter is not a matter of significance in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

7.2. Authorising Legislation

7.3. Consistency with Community Outcomes

The Council's community outcomes are relevant to the actions arising from recommendations in this report.

7.4. Authorising Delegations

No delegations apply as this report is for information only.