



# Community Services Bulletin August 2021

## 1. REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATIONS MANAGER (Keith McRobie)

### **General operations**

The operations staff have been busy working on targeted tree maintenance, rose and shrub pruning, protective spraying, and coring turf areas where conditions allow. Winter bedding is now well established and bulbs are just starting to come through. Staff have attended refresher training for Playground Inspections.

### **Projects**

**Pukarau Cemetery:** The work started earlier in the year has continued with the 'friends' of the cemetery. There has been a slight delay with very wet ground conditions limiting access, however a commitment has been made to have entrance gates repaired and cast iron fence cleaned and painted, some more tree pruning and removal and the road metaling of the paper road up to the entrance of the Catholic area. We are now working with the 'friends' to investigate signage and an interpretive map.

**Charlton Park Cemetery/Gore Cemetery/Bannerman Park trees:** We have issued three separate contracts for Arborol work in the cemeteries and Bannerman Park. The three contractors came in with comparable pricing and this exercise will let us gauge the quality and value for money for similar work going forward. The work is all scheduled to be undertaken in the next few months and will allow Parks staff to replant cherries or a similar flowering species at Charlton Park this planting season. We are investigating tree replacement options for Bannerman Park and will be looking to enhance existing collections with more appropriate medium height tree species.

The major work includes the removal of very overgrown conifers around graves in Gore Cemetery and the removal of a line of poplar in Bannerman Park to enable a row of coloured Acers to mature further.

**Replacement play equipment at Pukerau Domain:** The existing play equipment is due to be removed this week. A new suite of play equipment has been ordered and will be installed in the coming month. Once in place the Parks team will install new safety soft fall material and playground edging.

**Streets Alive surplus furniture:** Over the coming months we will utilise 21 units (10x picnic tables, 7x bench seats and 4x platforms) made available from the Streets Alive project. This ties in nicely with one of the key suggestions from the community consultation phase of the Parks, Recreation and Facility strategy document 2019, *"Additional seating in parks and cemeteries as part of future development to better meet the needs of the increasingly ageing populations"*.

As part of the installs we will look at concrete bases so that they are easy to maintain and mow around.

**Dolamore Park:** The two counters which count people/vehicle movements at the park entrance and entrance to Whiskey Creek Track provide live data to Council. The link

to the counters has been loaded to the Gore DC web site. The annual summary of use records the following:

*Table 1 – Counts of vehicles and pedestrians 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021*

Counter	Total	Daily Average	Daily Maximum	Average per hour
Vehicles	15,247	50	249	3
Pedestrians (Whiskey Creek)	577	2	17	0.1

We are working with both Hokonui Rūnanga and West Gore School to provide interpretation around the Koura in the stream. This is an incitive from the School that we are supporting.

**Gore Main Street trees:** We receive feedback regularly about issues relating to the Dawn Redwood trees located in the Main Street. Our acting manager Chris Rutherford is in the process of completing a discussion document on the longer-term options for these trees which we are proposing will be workshopped with the Council in the near future.

#### **Collegial interaction**

- Regional Sports Trust meetings around looking at establishing regular communication and dialogue between the three Southland local authorities and scoping possible recreation funding sources.
- The Parks and Recreation Manager attended a one-day Lower South Island industry workshop at Omarama last week.

## 2. REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS/MARKETING MANAGER *(Sonia Gerken)*

### **Purpose**

This report provides an overview of the communications activities for June and July, as well as Council-led events.

### **Events**

The Council had successfully delivered two of its larger events in recent months thanks to staff working together and stepping up to fill leadership roles.

Freeze Ya Bits Off Busking fulfilled its billing as a cornerstone event in the inaugural Tussock Country music festival. There were record entries in the schools competition on the Thursday, and strong entries for other sections on the Friday and Saturday with 52 people performing.

This year the final was held in the Thomas Green, which proved extremely popular. The bar was packed with friends, family and visitors to town.

The Hokonui Culture Feast also proved a record breaker this year. About 700 people packed into the Gore Town and Country Club stadium to enjoy an array of international food from the 19 stalls and local entertainment.

The venue was at capacity, which provided some challenges. A debrief has identified opportunities for growth although any increase in stall holders or public attendance will require a larger venue. Consideration is being given to alternative locations and the timing of the event.

The Council welcomed a new Events Coordinator at the start of August. Jessica Swan takes over the role after completing a fixed term contract in the events team at Great South.

### **New Zealand Event Association Awards**

The Council has again punched above its weight to be named a finalist in the New Zealand Event Association's Excellence Awards for best local government event 2021. The event as our Enchanted Parks Quest, the Council's first foray into supporting NZ Parks Week.

To put this achievement into perspective, one of the other event finalists has a budget of \$150,000 and one person specifically dedicated to it year round.

## Community Engagement

**Streets Alive:** The community engagement requirements of this project again dominated work flows until the managed retreat of most of the initiatives. At the time of writing, there was still analysis and publication of various survey results. Talking with other councils involved in Innovative Streets projects, the amount of content created and community feedback obtained by GoreDC was incredible, compared to other councils.

**10-Year-Plan:** Feedback on the 2021 – 2031 10-Year-Plan was down on previous years. This may have been reflective of the lack of major issues and/or projects and a bit of consultation fatigue, given the huge responses the Council received to its Streets Alive engagement. It was pleasing to see residents supporting the Council's digital-first approach again, with 128 of the 154 submissions received via the Let's Talk portal.

**Rethinking Waste:** The Council's recent decision to support a Rethinking Waste community focus group, which will inform the Rethinking Waste working party, planning has started on developing collateral and creating a project page on Let's Talk. Our community is passionate about waste disposal and minimisation, so this will be an excellent opportunity to share ideas for the future.

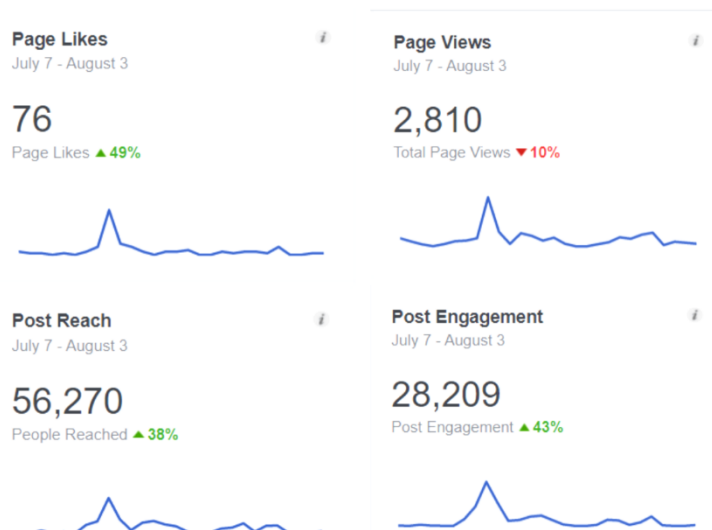
## Digital Engagement

### Facebook

Support for the Council's corporate social media page continues to grow with 7,660 followers. (The number of followers indicates the number of people who may see our page's updates and posts in their news feed.)

There have been no concerning incidents in the last two months.

Insights for the period 7 July to 3 August are:



### YouTube

If one good thing came out of COVID-19 lockdown, it would have to be livestreaming Council meetings. The Council has 140 subscribers to its YouTube channel, which compares very well with some of our larger neighbouring local authorities.

### Let's Talk

The Council has 1,122 people signed up to its Let's Talk Kōrero Mai community engagement site, making it a powerful platform when wanting to connect with customers.

**Antenno**

The Council is recognised as one of the leaders in its use of Antenno and uptake by residents. There are 1860 downloads of the app, which is 30.5% of our rating database.

**New website**

This project is nearing completion, with a go-live date of Monday 23 August. The new website has been a mammoth project, involving all facets of the Council's operations and services.

The new online services is not only going to provide customers with a new way of doing business with us, but it will also see new ways for Council staff to process applications and payments. The aim is to ultimately move away from paper-based forms and processing.

Customers will be able to create a My Gore account, which means any forms they fill in will be automatically populated with their details. It will also be a repository for any historical applications or transactions. Ultimately, customers will be able to track the progress of applications.

For customers we are not digitally connected, there will be a computer available at reception for them to use. Our customer service staff will be available to help anyone.

### 3. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER (*Lorraine Weston-Webb*)

#### **Library relocation**

Judging by comments received from visitors, the new temporary premises are meeting the needs of the library community. All collections are available, along with after-hours returns, Wi-Fi, computers, photocopying, scanning and printing. There is a small room off the side of the library which is used for children's activities. This room can be booked for meetings or used informally by people of all ages. There is signage on Hokonui Drive and a flag stationed at the library entrance indicating the library is open. Asphaltting of the footpath from the street to the main entrance has now been completed ensuring safety for all users.

The library's new location is registered on the Council and Library websites, Facebook and Google Maps. Newcomers to the District are easily finding the library, becoming members and making a visit to the library part of their routine.

The heating is reliable which makes the library welcoming. The most challenging aspect for visitors is that there are only a small number of study spaces. Although impressed by the library's facilities, some visitors have said they find the location slightly out of the way.



*Jacob Street temporary library*

#### **New Zealand Libraries Partnership Programme (NZLPP)**

Several purchases were made with New Zealand Libraries Partnership Programme (NZLPP) funding to support existing and new programmes. This means the libraries have been able to enhance community engagement and inclusion. Technical equipment, games and a super stroller walking frame have all been put to good use.



The NZLPP secondment position is enabling the library to offer more activities, and these are drawing strong participation.

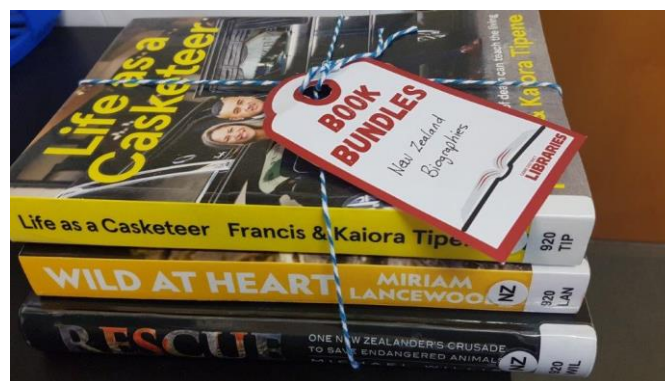
### **Children's holiday and winter activities**

During the July school holidays, both libraries offered a range of activities. All sessions were well-attended and included storytime, craft time, brick time (with Lego bricks) and game time. As a follow on from counting the hidden dragons within the Story Walk illustrations, a group of children brought a live bearded dragon to Story Time.



*A live dragon was a first for the library! Children participating in a holiday activity at Mataura Library*

During the winter months, the libraries offer reading challenges to encourage keen and aspiring readers of all ages. Book bundles are available for those in a hurry or pleased to have an eclectic selection ready to go.



### **Trails**

The Story Walk and Welcome Trails were installed in time for the July school holidays and have proven to be fun for families. Starting at the Gore aviary, the trail leads through the gardens, follows the green reserve along Ardwick Street, through a small 'forest' and ends at the Lyne Street playground. The Story Walk encourages children



to exercise in nature with family and friends whilst reading a sequenced story. The story is 'The lost library' appropriate for those participants who have yet to find the library's new location.

The Welcome Trail on the reverse of the storyboards was prepared by the Newcomers Network Coordinator and contains 40 flags representing the diverse nationalities living within the Gore District. Both trails have associated activities for families to enjoy. One measure of participation for this initiative is the activity/prize packs, to date 115 have been picked up. For more details and comments please see the table at the end of this report.

The intention is for this initiative to become a semi-permanent activity by periodically changing the story. So far the children's book authors, illustrators and publishers have happily provided permission for their books to be used for this fun adventure. The Story Walk concept is new to the South Island and the process has been recorded and shared with other public libraries who are keen to offer something similar.

*The Story Walk being enjoyed by all ages*



### **New website launch**

The library's new website went live on 21 July and is a sub-site of the new Council website (going live in August). The new website is updated, versatile, user-friendly and easier to navigate. It also makes it easier for people to access their library account. This is good news considering more people use the website as an access point for library information and resources. To visit the new website, please click on the following link: <https://www.gorelibraries.govt.nz/>

### 2019-20 statistical report for visitors and borrowing

The COVID-19 lockdown closures and limited services affected visitor numbers as well as the number of physical items borrowed. However, a rise in eBook and eAudiobook issues can be attributed at least in part to the library closures. People who may not have normally read eBooks or listened to eAudiobooks found this a useful way to keep reading while the library was closed.

The Gore Library had a further three week closure (during April - May 2021) when the library was moved into the temporary premises at 11 Jacob Street. During this time, preparatory work commenced on the James Cumming Wing building.

	2019-20	2020-21
Visitor count Gore	82,903	84,849
Visitor count Mātaura	24,000	24,031
<b>Visitor count total</b>	<b>106,903</b>	<b>108,880</b>
Physical items borrowed	97,596	109,148
eBooks borrowed	2,271	2,653
eAudiobooks borrowed	1,496	2,128
<b>Total items borrowed</b>	<b>101,363</b>	<b>113,929</b>

The numbers within the above table indicate an increase in borrowed items and visitors from 2019 - 20 to 2020 - 21. However, these numbers should be balanced against the closed times during the 2020 Covid lockdown.

### Device advice

A tailored technology one-on-one help session was offered by the NZLPP secondment library assistant position. These sessions are for people who require additional help with navigating their devices, communicating and accessing library resources such as the library app, eBook and eAudiobooks, as well as a variety of other uses. People who book a time slot are allocated a dedicated timeslot with a librarian. To date, this service is being used mainly by the 60+ age group.

## DEVICE ADVICE

Book a 30 minute session and learn to

- read or listen on your digital device
- renew and reserve library books on your mobile phone
- basic troubleshooting on your digital device

**FREE**

Gore Library - Monday 10.00-11.00am  
- Wednesday 3.00-4.00pm  
Mātaura Library - Friday 10.00-11.00am  
Phone 2039128 or email [gorelibraries@goredc.govt.nz](mailto:gorelibraries@goredc.govt.nz)

NEVER STOP LEARNING  
GORE DISTRICT LIBRARIES

# StoryWalk statistics and feedback

Day and date	Number of packs given out	Comments
Monday 12 July	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stumbled across it while looking at the birds. Was really cool and the story was really good. Great bonus that it ended at the playground!</li> </ul>
Tuesday 13 July	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was awesome!</li> <li>Mum had to run to keep up!</li> <li>Whanau from Te Anau stumbled across it "Loved it- great idea!"</li> </ul>
Wednesday 14 July	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great fun! Tiring for little legs though!</li> <li>Feedback about being very muddy around one post. <i>(This has now been remedied.)</i></li> <li>Feedback about being a long walk back to the car</li> </ul>
Thursday 15 July	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did it twice just to make sure they found all the dragons</li> <li>Fun but muddy</li> <li>Good to get out and do something</li> <li>Next book could have more words. This one was really easy to read. (11/12 year old)</li> </ul>
Friday 16 July	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loved it! Fabulous. Hope you do another one!</li> <li>StoryWalk is such a great idea!</li> <li>Loved the flags!</li> <li>So cool!</li> <li>I liked finding the dragons on the pages</li> </ul>
Saturday 17 July	3 Total for the week=41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The best bit was finding the dragons!</li> </ul>
Monday 19 July	5	
Tuesday 20 July	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Such a good holiday activity!</li> <li>A lot of fun!</li> <li>2 children from different families joined the library after the walk, mother hadn't been to library in years!</li> </ul>
Wednesday 21 July	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Such good fun, loved that it ended at a playground!</li> <li>Great for all ages</li> <li>Kids spotted the dragons in the pictures and said "it's like our dragon" So they brought their pet bearded dragon, Spike, into the library for us to see! So cool!</li> <li>Great activity for all ages</li> </ul>

Thursday 22 July	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have answers about the flags because we didn't know lots of them? (<i>This has now been remedied with flag and countries posters in the library and activity packs</i>)</li> <li>Fantastic idea, really loved it and the activities between posts like hopping or walking backwards etc</li> <li>Could it be a circular trail and end closer to where you start?</li> </ul>
Friday 23 July	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was wonderful, an absolutely wonderful idea</li> <li>Awesome</li> <li>Very cool</li> </ul>
Saturday 24 July	1 Total for the week= 61 Overall total=102	
Monday 26 July	3	
Tuesday 27 July	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There and back again. Really enjoyed it!</li> </ul>
Wednesday 28 July		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older gentleman stumbled across it and said what a great and appropriate story for us it is ☺</li> <li>Would be great if there were solar lights below the signs so it would be easier to read in dull light</li> </ul>
Thursday 29 July	1	
Friday 30 July	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I liked that it went for 18 pages"</li> </ul>
Saturday 31 July	Total for the week= 13 Overall total=115	
Monday 2 August		
Tuesday 3 August	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What a great idea and we loved the flags!</li> </ul>
	<b>Overall total = 117</b>	

#### 4. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT ARTS & HERITAGE CURATOR (*Jim Geddes*)

##### **Eastern Southland Gallery:**

Exhibitions (Annual Plan Key Performance Indicator (KPI) = 10 per annum)

- Margaret Palmer McKenzie - Paintings (Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre)
- Quilting and Patchwork Collective exhibition (Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre)
- Elizabeth Thomson – Cellular Memory (Eastern Southland Gallery)
- Eastern Southland Embroiderers Guild exhibition (Eastern Southland Gallery)
- Recent Acquisitions (Eastern Southland Gallery)

We expect to exceed our KPI target for 2020/21.

Events (Annual Plan KPI = 10 per annum)

- Concert – Cosmic Jive Trio
- Concert – Aperture – the Life and Art of Ans Westra
- Sue Cooke – Adult Printmaking Workshops (x2)
- Old Hokonui – Book Launch and Distillery Unveiling

Attendances for most events have been well above normal numbers and most of them are at maximum capacity. We expect to exceed our KPI target for 2020/21.

**External loans from Gallery permanent collection:** Christchurch Art Gallery/Dunedin Public Art Gallery (3 x works collected)

**Talks, tours and education programmes** (Annual Plan KPI = 50 per annum): A good number of tour groups visiting our facilities between February and April and a regular programme of talks to community groups and schools continues:

- Riversdale Arts (judging)
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
- Heritage NZ
- Gore High School (x2)
- Otago Access Radio
- Maitaia Licensing Trust
- Hokonui Fashion Design Awards
- Community Trust South
- NZ Lottery Grants Board
- Gore Vintage Car Club
- MP for Southland tour
- Otago Southland Gold Star Association
- ES tourism network
- Creative Communities Scheme
- Southland Regional Heritage Committee.

We expect to meet our KPI target for 2020/21.

**Gallery earthquake strengthening:** The project has been completed – now awaiting signage and vestibule fit-out.

**Maruawai project:** Stage one Moonshine Museum redevelopment. A summary of the project timeline is as follows:

February: Win Hamilton Wing collections were relocated and the interior ground floor stripped. The concrete pad for the distillery wing was poured and structural work commenced.

March: Internal framing and partitioning of the main building was undertaken. Main building re-roofing work and raised exterior parapet complete.

April: Main structural work for the distillery wing undertaken. Installation of new fire and security systems commenced and the building was completely re-wired.

May: Interior of the main building and Win Hamilton Wing was fully re-lined. Distillery equipment was commissioned and transported to a holding facility.

June: Interior paint finishes were applied and the fit-out of the food prep area commenced. Wiring and plumbing of the distillery area also commenced in preparation for equipment installation.

July: Distillery equipment was installed, the HVAC system was commissioned. Floor coverings were installed.

August: Lighting was installed. Fit-out of the food prep area was completed. The exterior site works have been completed. The loading bay gates and fixtures were also installed.

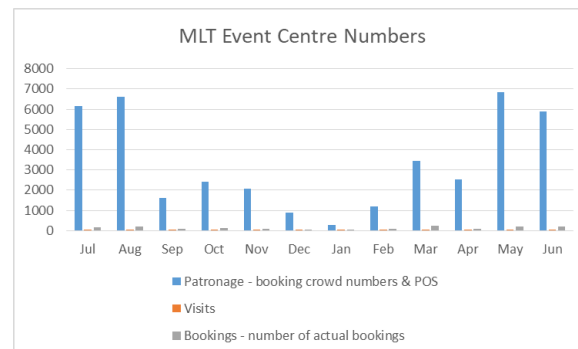
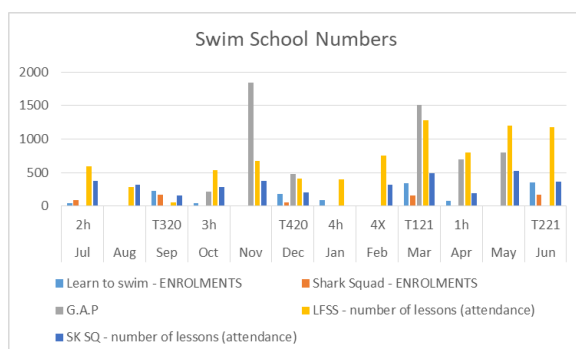
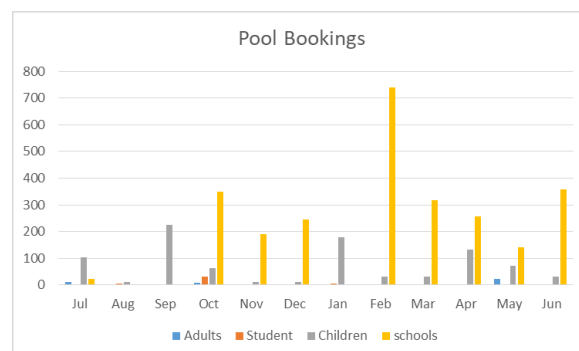
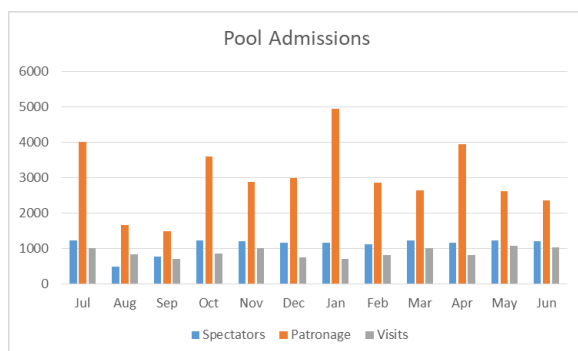
Concurrent to this work, a range of off-site display fabrications are underway and the Trust is developing additional lines of merchandise in preparation for the eventual project launch.

## 5. REPORT FROM AQUATIC SERVICES MANAGER (*Martin Mackereth*)

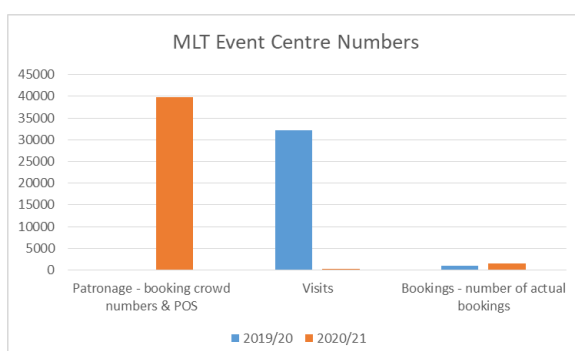
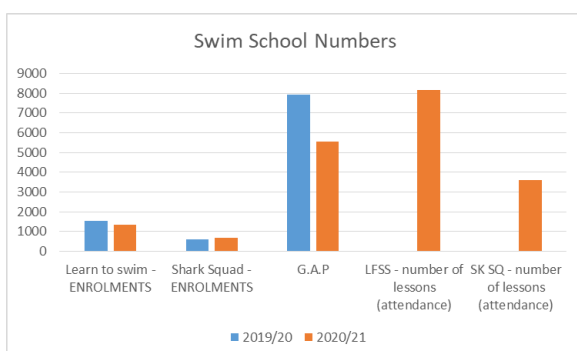
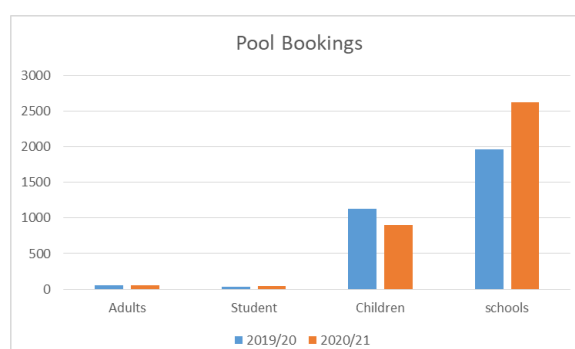
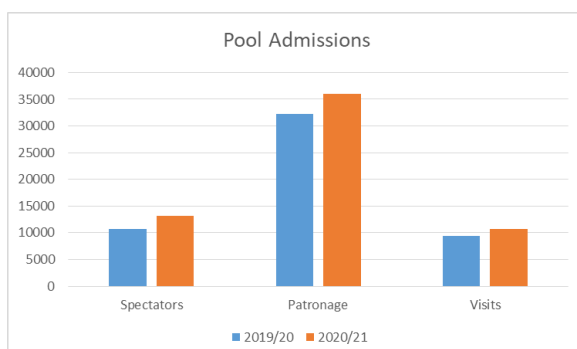
## Admissions to the Gore Multisports Complex

GORE MULTISPORTS COMPLEX													
GORE AQUATIC CENTRE				MLT EVENT CENTRE				ICE SPORTS SOUTHLAND					
Facility user numbers and information 2020/2021													
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Pool days open	31	31	30	30	30	29	29	28	31	29	31	30	359
POOL	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Spectators	1240	500	780	1240	1200	1160	1160	1120	1240	1160	1240	1200	13240
Patronage	4008	1661	1489	3589	2884	2979	4929	2852	2640	3934	2619	2357	35941
Visits	1004	832	708	864	1009	759	717	812	1016	812	1080	1046	10659
Sub-Total	6252	2993	2977	5693	5093	4898	6806	4784	4896	5906	4939	4603	59840
Bookings	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Adults	11	1		7	1	3	2			2	23		50
Student	2	6		30	3		4						45
Children	103	10	224	62	11	11	179	30	30	132	73	32	897
schools	23			350	190	245		739	317	258	140	359	2621
Sub-Total	139	17	224	449	205	259	185	769	347	392	236	391	3613
													0
Pool Total	6391	3010	3201	6142	5298	5157	6991	5553	5243	6298	5175	4994	63453
SWIM SCHOOL & SK SQ	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Term code counted	2h		T320	3h		T420	4h	4X	T121	1h		T221	
Learn to swim - ENROLMENTS	44		222	49		182	84		339	77		357	1354
Shark Squad - ENROLMENTS	89		173	11		50		13	163	14		172	685
G.A.P				214	1845	477			1508	701	801		5546
LFSS - number of lessons (attendance)	592	289	58	537	668	415	396	754	1280	796	1205	1180	8170
SK SQ - number of lessons (attendance)	373	318	163	287	381	203		315	488	189	520	368	3605
Swim School Total	965	607	221	1038	2894	1095	396	1069	3276	1686	2526	1548	17321
Stadium days open	31	31	30	31	30	29	29	28	31	29	31	30	360
STADIUM	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Patronage - booking crowd numbers & POS	6152	6610	1624	2404	2080	883	260	1175	3434	2537	6842	5876	39877
Visits	12	9	4	6	25	7	5	9	10	15	14	11	127
Bookings - number of actual bookings	170	205	93	122	87	41	19	72	226	88	194	215	1532
Stadium Total	6164	6619	1628	2410	2105	890	265	1184	3444	2552	6856	5887	40004
Pool days open Total	359	Swim School needs to be term and holiday numbers only to avoid double ups											
Stadium days open Total	360	( light green area indicates term roughly so only one lot of numbers here)											





## End of year comparison



The number of visits through the Gore Multisport Complex (GMSC) doors from 2019/20 to the 2020/21 years has increased by 25,592.

### **Completed work**

- The new fire system has been installed. This included replacing and updating all fire sensors throughout the Aquatic Centre and MLT Event Centre. There has been a full upgrade and replacement of the smoke beam sensors in the Aquatic Centre, MLT Event Centre main hall and the main panel (brain for the system).
- The roof replacement for the MLT Event Centre is 90% complete and includes the installation of safety harness attachment points. The Aquatic Centre main pool hall repair is 95% complete, leaving the small storerooms to finish. The scaffolding has been removed from the complex, small access towers will remain inside and outside the stadium for the remainder of the project.
- Temporary repairs have been completed on the MLT Event Centre fire doors to keep them operating until we can access new doors due to supplier issues. The team have a daily check on the doors to make sure they are in working order.
- Emergency lighting has been repaired around the complex, with some needing new bulbs and others needing the battery backup system replaced.
- We have four new instructors trained up for Aqua aerobics, allowing the addition of two new classes. An ongoing training plan has also been implemented.

### **Future challenges**

- The Set Point team is waiting to complete the update and improvements on the Building Management System (BMS) upgrade. Progress hinges on Set Point receiving a computer with the correct specifications to install the programme. They are currently working through this issue with the Council's IT staff. The order has been placed but has been delayed in transit.
- There has been continued growth within the swim school resulting in challenges with lane space and accommodating all pool users between 3.00pm and 5.00pm. During this time, only two public lanes are available, and for 30 minutes only one public lane is available.
- The increase in swim school numbers also adds pressure on the swim school team. We are currently recruiting more instructors as the demand for lessons increases.

### **Nice to know**

- We had a group of eight swimmers head to Wellington to compete at the New Zealand Short Course Champs. Three swimmers came home with silver medals, two with bronze medals and all swimmers achieved personal best times in their first New Zealand national meet. Mariano Nani was the head coach for the Southland team and one of our swim instructors and an assistant coach also competed in the event.
- Nine staff at the Gore Multisports Complex are currently completing apprenticeships. Four are completing the senior lifeguard apprenticeship, four are completing the specialised swim and water safety teachers apprenticeship and one is completing the facility operations apprenticeship.

## 6. REPORT FROM THE NEWCOMERS NETWORK COORDINATOR (Mark McCann)

### Ongoing work

- The 'Southland Newcomer Leadership Scholarship' utilising the 'Migrant Participation Fund' previously reported on has been a huge success. The project involves the creation of a contestable fund where newcomers can apply to access funding to enable them to participate in the Southland Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Academy. A number of applicants from Gore District have already graduated or will participate in October of this year.
- We have continued to collaborate with 'Welcoming Communities' representatives from Great South, Invercargill City Council and Southland District Council to form a regional advisory group and to continue work on creating a new Welcome Plan.
- We are uploading relevant events to the NZ Newcomers Network website to inform newcomers of upcoming events/activities/opportunities.
- We have connected newcomers with relevant organisations to support them to find employment, legal advice, establish connections and to ease their sense of isolation.
- We have continued to support and promote the local International Connect Group as well as the Gore Badminton Club.

### Community engagement

We have engaged with the following organisations: Hokonui Rūnanga, Sport Southland, community and faith leaders, Great South, Southland Multicultural Council, Invercargill City Council, The International Connect Group, Southland District Council, REAP, New Zealand Newcomers Network, Community Connections Centre, Welcoming Communities NZ, Community Network Trust and Women's Refuge, Gore High School, St. Peter's College, Blue Mountain College, Menzies College, St. James Theatre, MLT Sports Centre.

### Events

# More food stalls, performances

**VALU.MAKA** E 21.07.21  
@theensign.co.nz

People can expect a greater number of international performances and food stalls at the Hokonui Culture Feast next Friday.

The event will be held at the Gore Town and Country Club from 5.30pm.

Gore Visitor Centre senior consultant Renatta Hardy said the festival continued to grow year after year.

"There are more food stalls this year and more performances."

There would be 15 food stalls filled with a variety of cuisines, she said.

Some of the cultural cuisine and performances which would feature



**Rhythm and music ...** The Puspawarna Gamelan Indonesian percussion ensemble perform at the Hokonui Culture Feast in 2018.

PHOTO: VALU MAKA

Being an inclusive event and seeing all the local people, it will be an enjoyable

- The Hokonui Culture Feast held on 30 July was a huge success with a record number of attendees and stalls.

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The Ensign, August 4, 2021 7



**Hokonui CULTURE FEAST**

## Hundreds soak up blend of cultures

VALU.MAKA  
@theensign.co.nz

Hundreds flocked to the Hokonui Culture Feast held at the Gore Town & Country Club last week.

Gore Visitor Centre senior consultant Renatta Hardy said the evening was a success.

"We had over 700 people come through the doors from the time we opened the doors to the end of the event."

Some of the stalls at the festival featured Filipino, Tongan, Colombian and Scottish food.

"By the time I went around at the end of the night there was no food left," Ms Hardy said.

The feedback from the community was positive.

"People loved being a part of it and we have people wanting to book in food stalls and performances for next year already."

She was looking forwards to the next event.

There were 12 performances on the night, including from the Riversdale Tongan group and Invercargill's Colombian dance group.

St Peter's College and Gore High School's kapa haka groups performed, as well as children from Elsie Street and Oxford Kindergartens.

Ms Hardy acknowledged Active Southland and Camp Columbia co-ordinator Levi Goodall who put on activities for the children.

"They were swamped with kids but we were super grateful that they took the time to create activities for the kids who attended."

She was grateful to the Gore Town & Country Club for the venue.

"They were amazing and their support was essential for this event to happen."

**Powerful** ... Gore High School and St Peter's College pupils perform a haka at the Hokonui Culture Feast last Friday. PHOTO: VALU.MAKA

**in harmony** ... A Tongan group from Riversdale sings traditional kapa haka songs to the crowd at the Hokonui Culture Feast. PHOTO: VALU.MAKA

### Projects and initiatives

- We have worked with the Streets Alive initiative to create a 'Welcome Trail' which involves erecting signs through Gore Gardens bearing flags from each of the countries represented by newcomers to the Gore District. The signs bear the word 'welcome' in the countries native language.

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The Ensign, July 14, 2021 3

## Get on board with StoryWalk trail

VALU.MAKA  
@theensign.co.nz

The Gore District Library and Newcomers' Network will introduce a novel storyboard trail for families.

Library assistant Teresa Blackbeard said the storyboards were up in time for the school holidays.

Eighteen storyboards feature pages from a children's book, she said.

The activity allowed families to follow the trail, looking for the boards, she said.

"Each page will allow children to collect prizes from the library after the StoryWalk."

At the end of the walk was a bookshelf dragon, she said.

"On the last storyboard, people can take a selfie and post it to our Facebook event page and see who else has also enjoyed the StoryWalk adventure."

It was planned for the trail to be temporary, but if it was well-received, it might continue, Mrs Blackbeard said.

As well as the new storyboards, another 20 would show 40 flags from around the world.

**Tales trail** ... Excited to introduce the new StoryWalk at the Gore Public Gardens are Gore District Library assistant Teresa Blackbeard and Newcomers' Network co-ordinator Mark McCann. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Part of the StoryWalk challenge would involve participants determining which flag represented the countries.

Newcomers' Network co-ordinator Mark McCann said the trail would teach walkers about various countries.

Youth councillor JB Acuna said the storyboards were a good opportunity for children to learn more about diversity.

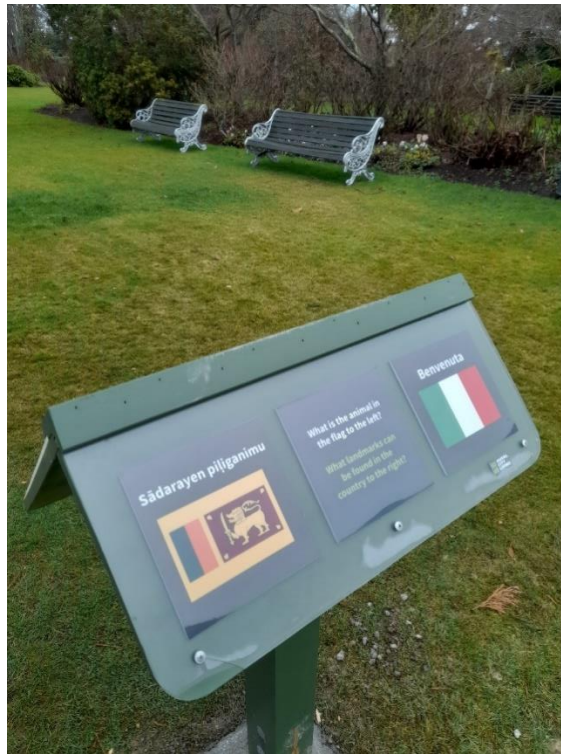
He said he had moved from the Philippines to Gore when he was 9.

"When I first moved here people didn't know much about my culture or language.

"So this is a great idea to expose children to those differences and it is a big step towards opening people's minds further."



The trail celebrates the cultural diversity of the area where over 45 different ethnicities are represented. Fun and challenging questions have been added to make it a learning experience for the whole family or schools.



- We have been working with REAP to provide the following initiatives –
  1. IELTS English lessons for newcomers in support of their residency applications,
  2. driving lessons through 'Drive My Life' for newcomers, and
  3. foreign language lessons for the local community, including Mandarin.
- We are aiming to become part of a new nationwide project in creating a 'Welcome Forest' where newcomers can 'lay down roots', using the kowhai trees presented to them during citizenship ceremonies, in a local park.
- An annual 'Job Search' expo was held in June which provided newcomers with an opportunity to not only look for work but to meet with an immigration advisor, learn about English lesson opportunities and gain settlement support information from the Welcoming Communities coordinator.

### **Other news**

We are working closely with the newcomer community to create a new 3-year Welcome Plan which reflects their own voice.

# VISITOR INSIGHTS REPORT



**Gore**  
**Visitor Centre**



WAIMUMU HOKONUI HILLS  
WENDON VALLEY OTAMITA  
**GORE** WAIKANA  
OTIKERAMA NORTH CANTON  
**FERNDAL** CHARLTON  
ELEMING **MATAURA**  
TARAIA  
WAITANE EAST CHATTON  
GREENVALE ARTHURTON  
WILLOWBANK MAITLAND  
**MANDEVILLE**  
CROYDON MCNAB WHITERIG  
KNAPDALE MERINO DOWNS  
TE TIPUA **WAIKAKA**  
FUTURAU  
KAIWERA CHATTON

Tourism/Gore Visitor Centre Senior Consultant Renatta Hardy

## SUMMARY

'Heart of Southland'

- The first half of 2021 was exciting for the Gore District. Apart from a brief respite, New Zealand's border's have been closed to international travellers, which has changed the travel pattern of our domestic visitors. With more domestic visitors, tourism expenditure in the District is trending back into positive gear.

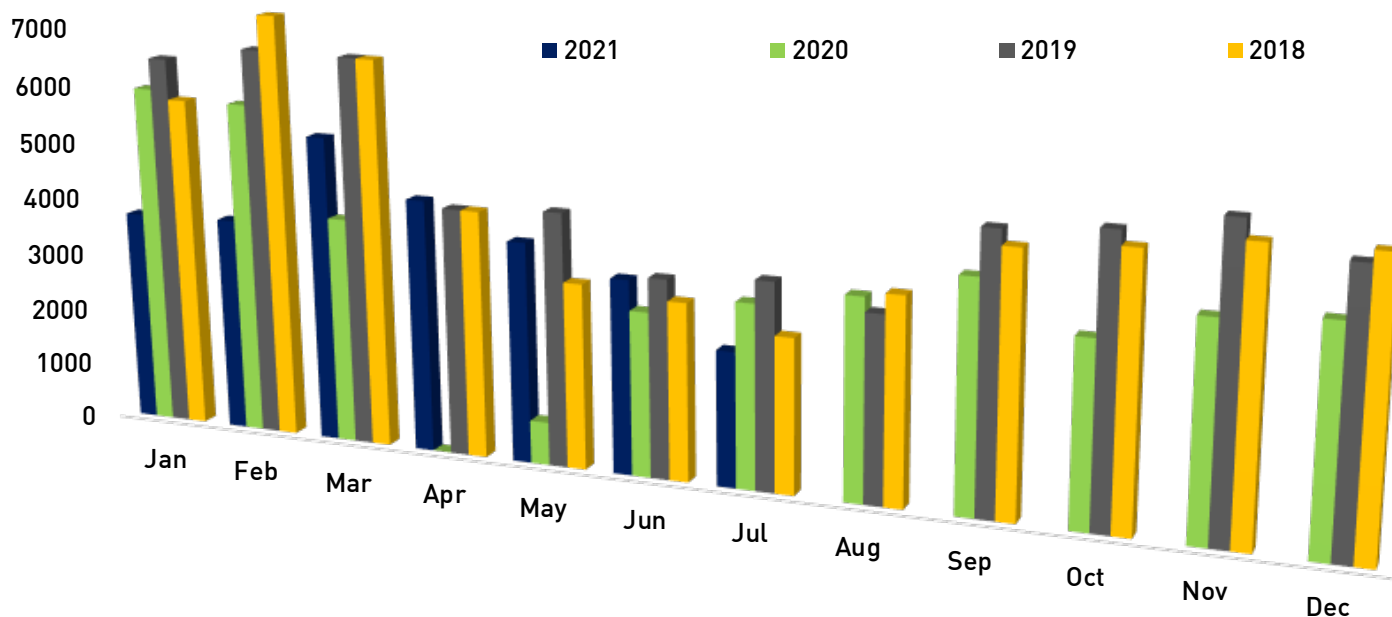
There are several reasons for increased expenditure in the District:

- Kiwis are taking more extended breaks and exploring under the radar spots
  - A series of significant events, such as the Tussock Country Music Festival, conferences in Invercargill having a spin off for the District and the Hokonui Fashion Design Awards.
- Anecdotal reports and observations indicate better community buy-in and engagement with events such as Tussock Country creating vibrancy that visitors to Gore will remember, encouraging return visitations.

## VISITOR CENTRE STATS

- For the period January 2021 to Jul 2021 the total number of visitors was **26,589**, which is up **18.8%** on the same period last year. However, it should be noted the 2020 figures were significantly impacted by the February floods and COVID-19 lockdown.

### Gore Visitor Centre Visitor Numbers (Jan-Dec) month-on-month Comparison



## SALES (Jan - June 2020/2021)

- The centre's gross income for the Jan - June 2021 was **\$44,559.27**, which is down **3%** on the same period last year. Again, comparisons need to be taken in the context of the impact of the floods and COVID-19.

Interestingly, there have been increases in the sale of Hokonui moonshine products.

- Old Hokonui Moonshine Original 375ml **up 77%**,
- Hokonui Moonshine Pickled Onions **up 108%**, and
- Moonshine Whisky Liqueur Chocolates **up 187%**.



# TOURISM ELECTRONIC CARD TRANSACTIONS (TECTs) YE MAY 2021

1 June 2020 – 31 May 2021 (12 months)

- Total visitor spend up ▲ **10.8%** to \$74 million
- Accommodation services spend up ▲ **12.1%** to \$2 million
- Cultural, recreational, and gambling services spend down ▼ **1.1%** to \$1 million
- Food and beverage serving services spend up ▲ **22.4%** to \$10 million
- Retail sales - other spend up ▲ **23.5%** to \$19 million
- Retail sales - alcohol, food, and beverages spend up ▲ **1.7%** to \$25 million
- Retail sales - fuel and other automotive products spend up ▲ **10.6%** to \$13 million
- Other passenger transport spend down ▼ **95%** to \$0.058 million
- Other tourism products spend up ▲ **15.2%** to \$4 million

FRESH INFO



## Measures (ADP) all accommodation types in the Gore District Jun 2021

- Number of active establishments 6
  - Number of stay units 173 up from 172
  - Average stay units per establishment 28.8 up ▲ from 28.7
  - Monthly stay unit capacity 5.2K
  - Available monthly stay unit capacity 2.7K down ▼ from 4.8K.
  - Percentage of stay unit capacity available 52% ▼ from 92.8%
  - Stay unit nights occupied 1.7K up ▲ from 1.3K
  - Capacity utilisation rate 33.2% up ▲ from 24.6%
  - Occupancy rate 63.8% up ▲ from 26.5%
  - Total guest nights 3K up ▲ from 2.2K
  - Domestic guest nights 2.8K up ▲ from 2.1K
  - International guest nights 196 up ▲ from 77
  - Guest arrivals 1.4K up ▲ from 1K
  - Average guests per stay unit night 1.7 days - same
  - Average nights stayed per guest 2.2 day up ▲ from 2.1
- The Gore District's accommodation occupancy rate for **June 2021** was **63.8%**, up **37.3%** on the same period last year. There was also an increase in the average night stay per guest to 2.2 nights.
  - Events was one of the contributing factors. Again comparisons need to be taken in the context of COVID-19 forcing the cancellation of events in 2020.
  - The recent positive recovery trend for the Gore District can also be attributed to our continued working relationship with seven neighbouring RTO's (a 45 SOUTH initiative) and Tourism New Zealand.
  - The visitor centre team continues to work with community groups and event organisers. It has been pleasing to see retailers get behind recent events, such as Tussock Country. This enhanced the visitor experience and the Gore District's overall destination performance.

# VISITOR FEEDBACK/MEDIA ARTICLES

GORE VISITOR CENTRE



4.5 ★★★★★



**Lorraine Wilson**

46 reviews · 2 photos

★★★★★ a month ago

Lovely visitors centre very helpful staff and lovely local gifts to purchase. Interactive games for my toddler grandchild.



**Mel Langman**

Local Guide · 41 reviews · 25 photos

★★★★★ a month ago



**Merv Keegan**

Local Guide · 56 reviews

★★★★★ 2 months ago



**Colin Schwieters**

Local Guide · 1 review

★★★★★ 2 months ago



**Stephanie Brown**

42 reviews · 59 photos

★★★★★ 2 months ago

Very informative isite

## Visitor Log Positive Feedback

Visitors			
Date	Name	Address	Remarks
27-5-21	Coff Swift	Amberley	NZ.
28-5-21	John Sheehan	Palmerton Ritz	
27-5-21	Pauline Enriquez	Hanilton	NZ
28-7	WOLFIE DAVIS	SADLER*	NZ
29-7	Balint Keller	Appleby, Invercargill	NZ
29/5/21	Isla Grant	dunedin	I liked the games!
30/5/21	Matthew Amberton	Huronville North Cant	NZ
30/5/21	George + Rebecca + Hannah	Whangarei / New Plymouth	awesome place
31/5/21	Okeana Ranga + Vincent Ranga	Whangarei	Awesome
1/6/21	Santhiriga K	Auckland	Just back looking around and it was great! Awesome!
5/6/21	Sarah + Piper	Seattle	
05/06/21	Shona Rutherford	New Plymouth	Love it! ☺

Visitors			
Date	Name	Address	Remarks
24th April 2021	Ngapera Rangiaho	2442 Ahester Rd, Wk 3192	Thank you for filling up my basket of knowledge.
24/4/21	Merr Jensen	52 Otago Dr - MURUMBAI	THANK YOU FOR THE PAIN! STUNNING PEOPLE - STUNNING PLACE! Awesome experience. Learned a lot & more.
6/6/21	De La Mare family	Wellington, NZ	GRAT!
17/6/21	TREVOR MARTIN	LUMSDEN. Fly Guy	Looking forward to sampling Te Hē
25/6/21	Trevor + Lynn Shaw	Tuakau, Waikato	Te Hē
1-7-21	Richard Hayden	Oakleigh Motel	Te Hē
8-7-21	Richard Hayden	Oakleigh Motel	Te Hē
15/7/21	Jean Cockburn	Whangarei Northland	Great leading experience
15/7/21	Coat family	Te Atatu St, Auckland	Awesome!! place!!
16-7-21	Jenny/Amey	Brits in Auckland	Lovely place thank
20-7-21	Angie, Christy, Rongyn Kelly	Tge. (Papanui)	Awesome!! ☺

Sources: Total Spend in NZD Figures for Year End May 2021 TECTs (Tourism Electronic Card Transactions) | ADP Stats NZ Accommodation Jun 2021 Vond GoreNZ Shop Jan-Jun 2021 | Gore Visitor Centre FootPrint Counter Jun 2021

The Tourism Electronic Card Transactions (TECTs) data is provided by Marketview, which use a base of Electronic Card Transactions (ECT) spending from the Paymark network (approximately 70% of total ECT spend) to estimate total ECT spend. Despite some limitations, currently, the TECTs are the best available measure for tracking tourism spending in New Zealand amidst the COVID-19 border restrictions.