



Community Services Bulletin

March 2024

1. REPORT FROM COMMUNITY STRATEGY MANAGER

Welcoming Communities

Networking

Community Development Coordinator, Guillaume Willemse has been engaging with stakeholders since joining the Council in September 2023. The aim has been to establish good relationships and discuss future needs engagements for Welcoming Communities.

He has reached out to several different culture communities as part of the Council's plan to connect all the different ethnicities in the district – these include the South African group, Fijian group and Indian group. The Coordinator has been in contact with International Connect and been added to the group's group on Messenger. Mr Willemse has been very active in the community and great relationships have been initiated. Some newcomers have reached out to staff after the Hokonui Culture Festival. Guillaume Willemse has started to build a presence in the community as the Welcoming Communities representative. A meeting has been held with Ethnic Peoples Community Officer, Gee Gasparin in Invercargill. Conversations have been held with Vinay Sood, Director and Licensed Immigration Adviser at Immigration Law Advice NZ Ltd.

The Coordinator has attended several online workshops and meetings with the National Welcoming Communities Network. The administration for the network is managed through the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment.

Welcome Plan

Implementation of the strategy continues with a focus on the high priority recommendations. These include the development of a newsletter, development of welcome pack, strengthen relationships with key stakeholders and immigrant communities.

Newsletter

The Welcoming Communities Newsletter gets distributed monthly to keep the community and newcomers informed of activities and events within the welcoming communities area and wider community.

Welcome Packs

Currently, welcome packs are distributed from key partners. These partners include the key businesses and organisation that newcomers connect with on arriving within our community. The Welcome Pack programme was relaunched in November 2023 with all partners attending a presentation by the Coordinator. These businesses and organisations have been visited by the Mr Willemse.

Events

Several events have been attended since September 2023. Some of the events include Southland Business Chamber, Hokonui Cultural Festival, Diwali Celebrations 2023, and Citizenship ceremonies.

Ready for Living – Te Ara Tiketike

Progress report December

Connections with older peoples continue to increase within the Gore District through the work of Ready for Living. The profile of Ready for Living continues to grow in the community, as well as nationally, with increasing numbers of requests for advice, advocacy and help being received.

Ready for Living is continuing to work to make sure services for older people, that are Southland based, are delivered equitably to the Gore District.

Ready for Living strategy

The major focus of the past year has been to establish the Age-Friendly Strategy for Gore District to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the community now and into the future. This document will guide the work over the coming years.

The Ready for Living Age-Friendly Strategy 2023-2027 was tabled and approved by the Community Wellbeing Committee in September and implementation is now underway.

The strategy focuses on creating a more enabling and inclusive environment that is supportive and accommodating of people of all ages. The strategy has assisted with building our knowledge and understanding of the needs of older people to enable the best things to be in place for the future, to become a truly intergenerational community, where people of all ages and stages interact and cooperate to everyone's benefit.

Background

The Ready for Living Age-Friendly Strategy has been developed with the assistance of McElrea Consulting and the Ready for Living Coordinator and Community Strategy Manager.

The following are guiding principles that underpin the strategy and will assist in making sure that the strategy's implementation is successful. These are:

- Focus on the older person from a wellness perspective,
- Build on what already exists,
- Encourage local community action,
- Working together,
- Being culturally appropriate,
- Nothing about us without us.

There is an increasing emphasis on planning towards age-friendly communities that are designed to value the contribution of older people and ensure their access to all aspects of community life. There are eight areas that communities focus on, and these areas are recognised internationally. These include:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings,
- Transportation and mobility,
- Housing,
- Social participation,
- Respect and social inclusion,
- Civic participation and employment,
- Community support and health services,
- Communication and information.

The benefits of an age-friendly community include:

- Improved social inclusion and reduction in social isolation among older people. This can have significant health benefits. Older people who are socially isolated are at higher risk of depression, cognitive decline and other health issues. Increased social interaction can help improve mental and physical health outcomes.
- Support the independence and autonomy of older people. This enables people to live in their homes and communities longer and helps maintain the dignity and well-being of older people.
- The creation of a more liveable community for all residents regardless of age through access to transportation, well-maintained public spaces and housing that is adaptable to changing needs.
- The recognition of the significant contributions that older people make to society. Creating an environment that values and supports older people, can foster intergenerational relationships, promote knowledge transfer and mentorship as well as celebrate the diverse experiences and perspectives of people of all ages.

Understanding Gore District

The Gore District has the third highest population over 65s when compared to surrounding regions and New Zealand. First is Central Otago followed by Waitaki and then Gore District. The Regional Economic Activity Data shows that 20.2% of Gore population was over 65 as at 2018. This is predicted to increase to 26% of the population over 65 by 2033.

Core challenges for older people

As part of the development of the strategy, five workshops with older people were held where conversations on a range of topics took place. The following are the core challenges for older people within Gore District that were identified during the workshops:

- Healthcare access;
- Social isolations;

- Housing;
- Financial security;
- Transportation;
- Age discrimination;
- Health and wellness;
- Caregiver burden;
- Digital divide;
- Inadequate support systems;
- Elder abuse; and
- Mental health.

The strategy sets out the priorities based on insights from workshops with our older community and agencies. These are:

- Housing - Ngā Whare,
- Employment - Mahi,
- Volunteerism - Tūao,
- Health and well-being - Hauora,
- Communication and information - Kia Whai Mōhiohio te Kaumātua i ngā Kaupapa,
- Recreation - Ngā Mahi A-rēhia,
- Mobility and Accessibility - Ngā Ara me Āheitanga,
- Safety - Haumarutanga.

Each section clearly defines what our older people and service providers said about the subject and what actions and tasks are required to further develop our age-friendly community. These can be found in the strategy between pages 18 -35.

Volunteerism

The strategy identified the needs for some work in the volunteerism space. The goal that the community was keen to achieve was to – promote and support volunteerism among older persons, harnessing their skills, experience, and enthusiasm to contribute to the community, enhance social connections and foster their personal well-being. The detail of this work is on page 23 of the strategy document. Work has commenced into what currently exists, who is working in the space in Southland and how do we achieve the outcomes our older community are looking for. Conversations with Great South, Volunteer South, Welcoming Communities and those implementing the Gore District Workforce plan have commenced. This is an extensive project and will evolve over time.

Loneliness

The strategy identified the needs for some work around loneliness. Loneliness is a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of the social relationships that we have and those that we want.

While loneliness is an emotional experience, isolation is a lack of social contact. Loneliness is a subjective feeling, whereas isolation is an objective state.

Social isolation is about the level and frequency of one's social interactions. It is defined as having few social relationships or infrequent social contact with others.

Feeling lonely is not necessarily the same as being alone. Some people can spend lots of their time on their own and still feel content. Others may be surrounded by people but feel disconnected from them and lonely.

High-quality social connections are essential for our mental and physical health and our well-being – at all ages. Social isolation and loneliness have serious consequences for longevity, health and well-being.

In older age, social isolation and loneliness increase the risks of cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, cognitive decline, dementia, depression, anxiety and suicide. They also shorten lives and reduce the quality of life.

Older adults who are lonely have a higher risk of functional decline and cognitive impairment. Lonely older adults have a 58% higher risk of developing dementia compared to their less lonely peers.

Loneliness is not a mental health problem in itself. However, loneliness and poor mental health are interlinked, each can worsen the other and as such, they are closely interlinked. Meanwhile, social connectedness is associated with better mental health.

How does loneliness affect physical and mental health? Compared to non-lonely people lonely people have/are:

- More anxious about social interactions
- More depression symptoms
- Less social interaction with family, friends and neighbours
- Poorer psychological health
- More negative emotions
- Fewer positive emotions
- Poorer overall quality of life
- More likely to suppress their emotions
- Less likely to be able to change the way they think about a difficult situation

A work programme including key messaging has been developed covering the following aims:

- To educate older people on what social activities are available in the Gore District
- To promote loneliness awareness in the community
- Increase profile of companionship services available in Gore District
- Promote volunteer opportunities to provide companionship to older people.

Suicide Postvention Group

Nationally, suicide deaths across 65+ life stage has continued to grow since 2009 with numbers in the early 50s peaking in 2018 to 80 suicides, with numbers from 2019 through to 2022 in the 70s. The Ready for Living Coordinator continued involvement with the Suicide Postvention group, advocating for resources and education for older people.

Parks drive through

Ready for Living and Parks and Reserves opened Bannerman Park and the Gore Gardens to be viewed from the comfort of residents' cars for the second time in October.

The response was huge with 50 vehicles taking up the opportunity, being with double the number of vehicles from the previous occasion. A parks drive through is planned for 13 March 2023.

A variety of older people got together to participate including friends, husbands and wives, carers, families, and rest homes. Five van loads from Invercargill Rest homes and Age Concern travelled from out of the district to drive through. This initiative has been included in the Council's schedule to occur twice throughout each year.

We received great feedback from everyone that came through, for example:

"Just wanting to pass on my thanks for having Ardwick and Bannerman Parks opened for car access. My father came from Invercargill to let me drive him through and he (and I) really enjoyed the opportunity to see two places where he normally couldn't access. It was a real joy. The parks looked amazing, especially all the work that's gone into Bannerman Park. Please pass on our thanks for all the hard work that has gone into making these spaces so beautiful, and the chance to go through in vehicles."

A Guide to Local Services and Connections for Older People

Following the success of the first 'A Guide to Local Services and Connections for Older People' where 800 booklets were distributed to the community, Ready for Living has updated the booklet.

The new booklet is being distributed and once again receiving great feedback from the older community and their families. This booklet had over 120 changes and editions with many groups and organisations approaching Ready for Living to be part of this community resources.

Ready for Living received \$2,500 from Community Trust South to help towards costs to update and reprinting the guide in 2023 and 2024. Community Trust South was impressed with the Ready for Living project and the coordinator has spoken at its annual meeting, spoke in a video and attended a strategy review meeting.

Scam education

Ready for Living, Neighbourhood Support and Heartland Services/Connected Eastern Southland partnered to host a scams prevention session to educate the community on keeping safe both in their digital and personal spaces. Forty-five people attended and listened to representatives from ANZ Bank, Neighbourhood Support and Police speak. This is the first of a series of initiatives educating on scam/fraud prevention.

Exercise classes

Ready for Living is no longer running an exercise class at Windsor Park. Age Concern has taken over the coordination of this class. Numbers to this class have remained stable. The Ready for Living Coordinator continues to liaise with organisations to ensure that there are a range of exercise options for seniors to participate in. The older community is currently well serviced for exercise options with basic strength and balance exercise and Tai Chi Class at the RSA, home-based falls and fracture prevention services, Nymbi, Fit 4 Function at the NRG Gym and Taurite Tu at the Hokonui Runanga.

Over 80s free parking and swimming

Over 80s free parking continues to be a success with positive feedback from the older community. To date 363 seniors have received the over 80 parking permit, since November 2021.

The Gore Aquatics Centre free swimming for over 80s has had an increase in user. For the year ending 27 February 2023, 420 swimmers took up the opportunity of free swimming or Aquafit sessions. From 1 March to date 586 swimmers have taken up the opportunity.

Mayor's Task Force for Jobs (MTFJ)

Outcomes

The Gore District Council has entered its fourth year in providing the Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) programme within the district.

As of February 2024, MTFJ total placements are 33 in the current financial year. A total of 180 placements have been made over the period in which Gore District has delivered the MTFJ programme.

The expected contractual outcome for the 2023/24 year, is 25 sustainable placements for NEETS (Not in Employment, Education, or Training). A sustainable placement is when a young person has completed three months in employment. It is forecasted MTFJ, Gore will exceed these numbers by 30 June 2024.

Study evenings

Due to the increased numbers with apprenticeships and jobseekers seeking further study externally, the MTFJ has created a programme for the Gore community to gain free weekly tutoring. This provides the opportunity for people to upskill in their chosen fields, as well as receive pastoral care, assistance and further industry knowledge in a

supported environment. The programme will commence on 21 February 2024 and end on 27 November 2024.

MTFJ's Club: Gore and Mataura

The MTFJ Club commenced at the Gore library on the 8 February 2024 and will continue weekly to allow students and jobseekers to drop in for discussions and guidance for job search and career development. The MTFJ's Club will commence on the 26 March 2024 at the Mataura library and will be held monthly.

MTFJ Hui

The Community Strategy Manager and Employability Co-ordinator attended the National Hui for MTFJ in the last week of February. This was an opportunity to meet with other staff around the country working with the MTFJ programme and service providers for the programme.

Updates from business areas within Great South

Overview

We've had a very busy first half of the 2023/24 year. Overall, the business has been progressing some key projects on behalf of the region, including a series of opportunities papers that can be used as discussions progress with the new coalition Government and incoming Ministers.

Great South was proud of the following milestones between July and December last year:

- October 2023 – the Beyond 2025 Southland Long-Term Plan was awarded the Best Practice Award for Integrated Strategy from Economic Development New Zealand
- November 2023 – launch of the Murihiku Southland Destination Strategy in Gore on 15 November 2023 with the attendance of the Mayor, Council members, Council staff, tourism operators and members of the public.
- November 2023 – presentation to the Gore District Council updated from Great South and Beyond 2025 implementation.
- December 2023 – Cycle Tourism Opportunity Assessment launched.
- December 2023 – workshop with the Gore District Council on increased funding requested for 2024/25 and beyond.

Tourism and events

1. Croydon, cruise product development – inclusions in cruise ship itineraries and tours.
2. Inclusion in Tourism Export Council conference famil programme (Croydon, Hokonui Museum, Eastern Southland art Gallery).
3. Continue to work with above partners to keep building trade capability.
4. Education of new TNZ staff on tourism experiences and opportunities in Gore.
5. Focus on the development and promotion of Gore with wider Murihiku option.
6. Development of Southern Way partnership.
7. Gore events posted events calendars.
8. Agritourism accelerator programme

- a. Have supported this national programme to be run in Southland. There has been one attendee from Gore.
 - b. Food tourism - Developed 'Murihiku Eats' brochure showcasing our regional food stories. Hokonui Moonshine was included along with Hokonui Moonshine Museum and The Thomas Green restaurant.
9. Cycling
- a. Cycle tourism opportunities assessment includes consideration of potential trails in and around Gore and the Hokonui Hills.
10. Work in progress:
- a. Get a life - live in southland project
 - b. Ambassador programme – content and workshop deliver options are being drafted

Beyond 2025 Implementation

1. Housing
 - a. Anne Pullar has joined the Beyond 2025 Housing Advisory Group to ensure the Council's perspective on housing is understood and supported with the regional planning that is currently underway.
 - b. We are aware of the consent process currently underway for the Hamilton Street, Kainga Ora housing development and importance with our efforts to increase (and speed up) Government led housing in the Murihiku Southland region.
2. Data repository and dashboards
 - a. There have been meetings with Council staff regarding the development of the regional data repository (Jason Domigan and GIS planning staff).
 - b. The Council will be involved in the review of tenders recently collected through GETS.
 - c. A minimum viable product of a regional data repository is scheduled to be completed by end of June 2024.
3. Great South has been working alongside Council staff and other Councils regarding the recently released Local Government Climate Change Strategy. While we haven't been directly involved up until now, we are now looking to align mitigation/decarbonisation efforts predominantly linked to our implementation of Net Zero Southland 2018 report. Great South provides clear links to the private sector and wider industry to complement the local government approach.

Southland Youth Futures

1. As part of a fun week at Gore High School, SYF worked with all Year 10 students in two groups. For the first group SYF delivered the Work Ready Passport to 51 students on 27/28 November.

For the second group, SYF delivered a number of the Work Ready Passport modules on 1 December. They also did a Speed Networking event on this day.

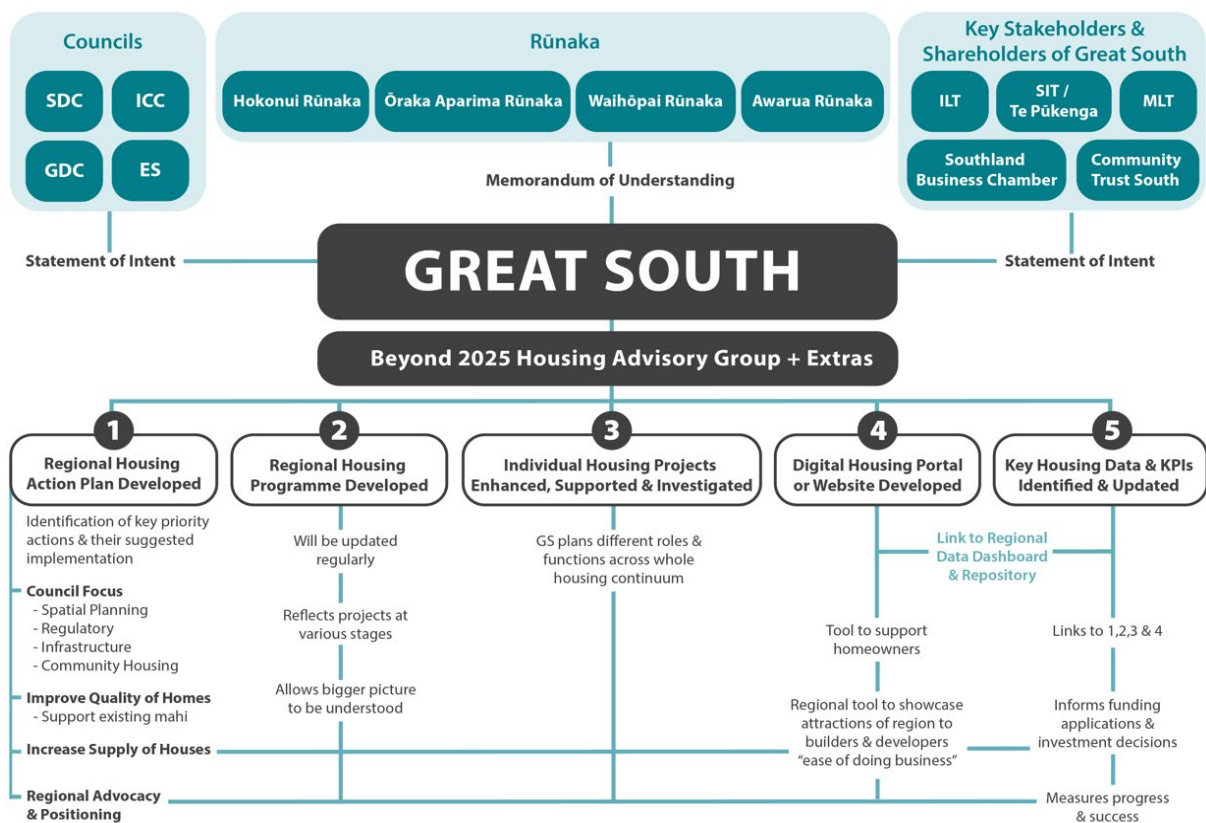
Business support

1. We have engaged with 17 businesses from the Gore District Council area,
 - a. 11 of these businesses have had an in-depth business discovery meeting with one of our business team.
 - b. Six have received funding to a total of \$8,175.
 - c. This represents 14% of all our funding issued for the period for the entire region, indicating a good uptake from businesses within the Gore District Council area.
 - d. Our business team will be visiting Gore on 12 March to undertake eight business site visits alongside the Mayor's Task Force for Jobs Coordinator and Community Development Coordinator from the Gore District.

Housing

Housing is one of the five key enablers from the Beyond 2025 Regional Long-Term Plan alongside energy, workforce, data and regulatory and planning. Following the completion of the regional housing stocktake and evaluation of demand and associated sufficiency, a housing implementation plan has been developed and approved by key stakeholders. Great South has been asked to oversee this plan's implementation and is mandated by its shareholders through its Statement of Intent process. The following will be done by the end of June 2024 with support of MBIE funding (12 month contract from 1 July 2023).

1. **Regional coordination and development of a pathway forward**
 - Great South is developing the regional framework and subsequent approach alongside a multitude of stakeholders, iwi and Councils. This is in line with the new Government and its' priorities so that the region is best placed to be supported how it needs to be. It also aims to support Councils with their individual approaches.
 - Great South is facilitating the Beyond 2025 Southland Advisory Group which is supporting this process (consists of key housing stakeholders, Council and central government staff, mana whenua and a housing developer). Anne Pullar represents the Council on this advisory group.



2. Delivery of four priority actions from the housing implementation plan by the end of June 2024:

- Regional Housing Action Plan
- Regional Supply Programme
- Housing Data (connected to the Regional Data Repository)
- Regional Housing Portal/Website

3. Support for individual housing projects which improve supply and quality of housing:

- This acknowledges that many individual housing projects require support whether it be access to data, business case development etc and this is undertaken by many, including Great South, Councils etc.
- The focus is to continue to support this with a particular focus on ensuring projects are included within the regional housing programme (so can be seen collectively).
- There will be a priority to work with key stakeholders and Government to support funding applications and encouraging investment (connection to regional data repository).

4. Government advocacy

- The other key area of focus has been to support individual councils with their own approaches to housing and iwi as well as through the Regional Asks document to advocate to the new Government for the following:



Hokonui Locality update | Health in your community

Health and wellbeing services are being delivered differently for people in the wider Gore District and those who travel from nearby areas to receive treatment here.

The Hokonui Locality is one of 12 prototypes trialling a new approach to ensure our communities receive the healthcare they need. The aim is to ensure that service providers know what our community and whānau need to ensure people stay well.

The locality concept was expected to be progressed across New Zealand. However, Minister of Health, Dr Shane Reti, recently announced that he does not intend to progress localities further at this stage and has instructed Health New Zealand|Te Whatu Ora to stop work on localities pending further legislation. At the same time, the Minister recognises and understands the value of listening and responding to the needs of community and whānau, and of local decision making in the delivery and coordination of local services.

This decision affects *proposed* localities only, not the *existing* 12 prototypes – of which Hokonui Locality is one. Contractual obligations between Health New Zealand|Te Whatu Ora and the locality prototypes remain, meaning the continuation of work in the prototype localities, ie the delivery of coordinated local services in response to previously identified community priorities.

Hokonui Locality priorities are set by locals for locals and shape delivery of a range of services that work together to improve health and happiness in our region. Our community has articulated the need to focus on five priority areas, each of which are included in the following table, alongside a brief description of progress to date:

PRIORITY	IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
Experiencing Respect and Compassion Manawanui	Development and delivery of a training programme for front of house staff.	This new training programme is focused on the shape of our community and will encourage respect and compassion in a mana-enhancing manner. The programme is due to commence mid-2024.
Connection, Navigation and Ease of Use Whakamāhorahora	New local positions to support whānau and our wider community on their health journey.	These roles will be funded through the Comprehensive Primary Care team announced by the previous Government in mid 2023. They will focus on needs for our community through the three general practices. This includes a recently appointed part-time community dentist.

<p>Oral Health <i>Hauora ā Waha</i></p>	<p>Targeting urgent dental needs where access is difficult physically or financially.</p>	<p>We have purchased vital equipment and are identifying and prioritising urgent dental care in our community. We are also helping those struggling with dental care through a new community fund.</p>
<p>Community Inclusivity <i>Whakakakau</i></p>	<p>Helping our communities feel connected and be more resilient.</p>	<p>A new fund is now available for community-led activities that improve the social, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of the Hokonui community. The application process for this fund will be promoted to the wider community in mid-March.</p>
<p>Information and Communication <i>Herenga Tangata</i></p>	<p>Information campaigns to keep our community informed and up to date.</p>	<p>Regular Ensign articles and updates on social media platforms help keep our community connected to local services.</p>

The health and wellbeing needs of our community and whānau are at the heart of Hokonui Locality decision making. The Hokonui Locality prototype is set to continue in the short term, providing a real opportunity to continue to demonstrate the value of actively listening to, and responding to, the needs of our community.

2. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER (Emma Sherie)

GenConnect



GenConnect was first started at Christchurch Libraries connects generations through sharing knowledge. One of our library staff members and the students from Rosimini boarding house run this programme together. The high school students that deliver the programme answer many questions or doubts about IT including:

- How to set up and use your Smart Phone, tablet, or iPad
- How to set up an email account
- How to set up and use Facebook or Skype accounts so you can get in touch with old friends
- How to share your photos with your friends and family
- How to use technology to make your life easier

The added bonus is that the students get to practice their communication and problem-solving skills. We have also noticed how there are conversations held between the teenagers and the senior citizens which means both parties gain something from this programme.



Facebook goal achieved!

The month of February saw the Gore District Libraries hit over 1000 followers on Facebook. The team have been coming up with some great engaging Facebook content to improve their Facebook reach and get in front of the community. Would you believe that our savvy content is brainstormed whilst we work on our usual duties making sure that we are efficient with our use of time. Our most recent themed posts around "Love you Library Month" were a huge hit. It got people talking and we even had a very special guest.



Programming

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK				
Mon 4 March	Tues 5 March	Weds 6 March	Thurs 7 March	Fri 8 March
Easy as Te Reo Gore 1:30-2:30pm	Storytime Gore 10:30-11:00am	Bricktime Gore 3:30-4:30pm	Reading Revolution Gore 10:00-11:00am	
Gen Connect Gore 3:30-5:00pm		Bricktime Mataura 3:30-4:30pm	Storytime Mataura 10:30-11:00am	
		The Games Gore 6:00-7:30pm	Reading Revolution Gore 1:00-2:00pm	
		JP's Gore 6:30-7:30pm		

CORE DISTRICT
LIBRARIES

Our community programming is looking busy! We have even begun rolling out new activities in Mataura with a Bricktime now available for the children. Feedback from the community has been really positive with comments that it was great to see the library being used in so many different ways.



February Library statistics

Door count

Gore door count	2023	2024
July	5457	6706
August	5392	5983
September	5052	5699
October	5134	5642
November	4826	5174
December	4224	4061
January	0	5171
February	0	4703

Issues – (this does not include renewals)

Gore issues	2022	2023
July	6821	10157
August	6361	9379
September	6055	8880
October	6168	7950
November	6119	7707
December	8331	6714
January	112	8133
February	247	6786

WiFi connections

Gore WiFi usage	2022	2023
July	370	882
August	460	1027
September	369	959
October	397	923
November	374	878
December	305	624
January	85	831
February	135	884

Our computers

Gore computer usage	2022	2023
July	248	471
August	259	477
September	242	483
October	262	503
November	266	470
December	210	410
January	0	501
February	0	411

Signups

New members	2022-2023	2023-2024
July	38	135
August	31	101
September	30	70
October	23	79
November	22	56
December	21	39
January	1	71
February	4	54

Mataura Library

Total door count

Mataura door count	2022	2023
July	791	763
August	874	849
September	720	721
October	792	823
November	724	898
December	653	576
January	818	902
February	848	702

Issues

Mataura issues	2022	2023
July	713	644
August	751	633
September	697	524
October	723	639

November	649	543
December	702	551
January	966	547
February	1507	498

Wi-Fi

Mataura WiFi usage	2022	2023
July	896	1256
August	1176	1298
September	1086	1292
October	1092	1457
November	1135	1436
December	963	1288
January	1062	1321
February	1001	1389

Computer usage

Mataura computer usage	2022	2023
July	91	129
August	114	103
September	106	99
October	118	112
November	95	117
December	70	100
January	116	106
February	140	120

Sign-ups

New members	2022-23	2023-24
July	3	6
August	1	5
September	9	2
October	5	5
November	9	3
December	2	5
January	3	5
February	4	8

Both Library branches

E-items

E-resources issues	2022-2023	2023-2024
July	669	820
August	524	839
September	675	913
October	631	971
November	589	962
December	633	1085
January	731	1017
February	724	1024

Catalogue searches

Catalogue searches	2022-2023	2023-2024
July	486	1926
Aug	497	1950
September	662	2290
October	612	2247
November	579	1901
December	1239	1439
January	423	2265
February	253	1903

3. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT ARTS AND HERITAGE CURATOR (*Jim Geddes*)

Visual arts initiatives

Exhibition programme

Our major Gallery exhibition for February and March was **Rod Eales – *Art of the Flower***. This presentation drew significant public interest, given the accessible theme and the artist's extraordinary approach to this popular subject matter. The artist also gave a very well attended public floor-talk on March 2nd.

Performance and event programme

India Meets Ireland – concert at Eastern Southland Gallery (12 February)

The Gallery's permanent collection has been the subject of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery's major retrospective exhibition of artist **Marilynn Webb**. A total of 31 works were selected from our holdings and will move to the Christchurch Art Gallery at the conclusion of their current showing. Staff were also invited to deliver a public floor talk at the opening event.

February saw staff install two new temporary exhibitions at the Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre – Mandeville:

Lee Petterson – *Instincts and Intuition* (until 14 February)

Julie Duncan & Helen Keith – *It's What We Do* (from 21 February)

Māruawai project

Stage One – Hokonui Moonshine Museum redevelopment

Final display fit-out continues within the museum as key components come to hand. Running concurrent to our display development is a fundraising momentum which has successfully garnered more than **\$140,000** from community agencies and individuals. This has helped replenish our original display budget that was exhausted by Covid related increases in building and material costs. Exterior development of the building is progressing, and external graphics and signage will soon be applied thanks to generous financial support from a local family trust.

Stage Two – Māruawai Centre development

Progress is pleasing with the redevelopment of premises at **7 Norfolk Street**. We now have a fully enclosed building, and we are obviously pleased with the completed interior lining and structural fit-out. All electrical, plumbing and HVAC service installation is also complete. The main toilet block has been successfully lined, painted, and fitted out, and floor-covering is in place. Planning for the fit-out of internal spaces within the eastern wing of the building is continuing and this process has been assisted greatly by the availability of the neighbouring Win Hamilton Wing as archive, and research space. Exterior work is progressing and the space adjacent to the Hokonui Moonshine Museum carpark is being made ready for paving, planting, and outdoor furnishing. Structural provision is now in place for the installation of sculptural gates (ex-Observation Point) by Ralph Hotere.

Precinct programmes

Community engagement and education programmes

We continue to enjoy a good number of tours, special interest groups, school parties and community organisations over the summer months. Given the requirement for local schools to factor mana whenua history and other local content into the new curriculum, there has been considerable engagement with local educators. To this end there has also been a significant call on the outcomes of our 16-year joint venture local research project with Hokonui Runanga. Key information from this source and the on-going research of the Gore District Historical Society have combined to give significant strength to precinct holdings, and will help resource our Stage Two display scenarios, and our many forthcoming education programmes, studio projects and community interactions.

Sample of community talks, tours and engagements (November – January):


Gallery Floor-Talks (x 1), Gore District Historical Society, Art Attic, Akorn Tours, Southern Field Days, On the Fly, PPG Cruises, Moa Tours (x 2), Kirra Tours (x 4), Pounamu Tours,

Meetings and representations

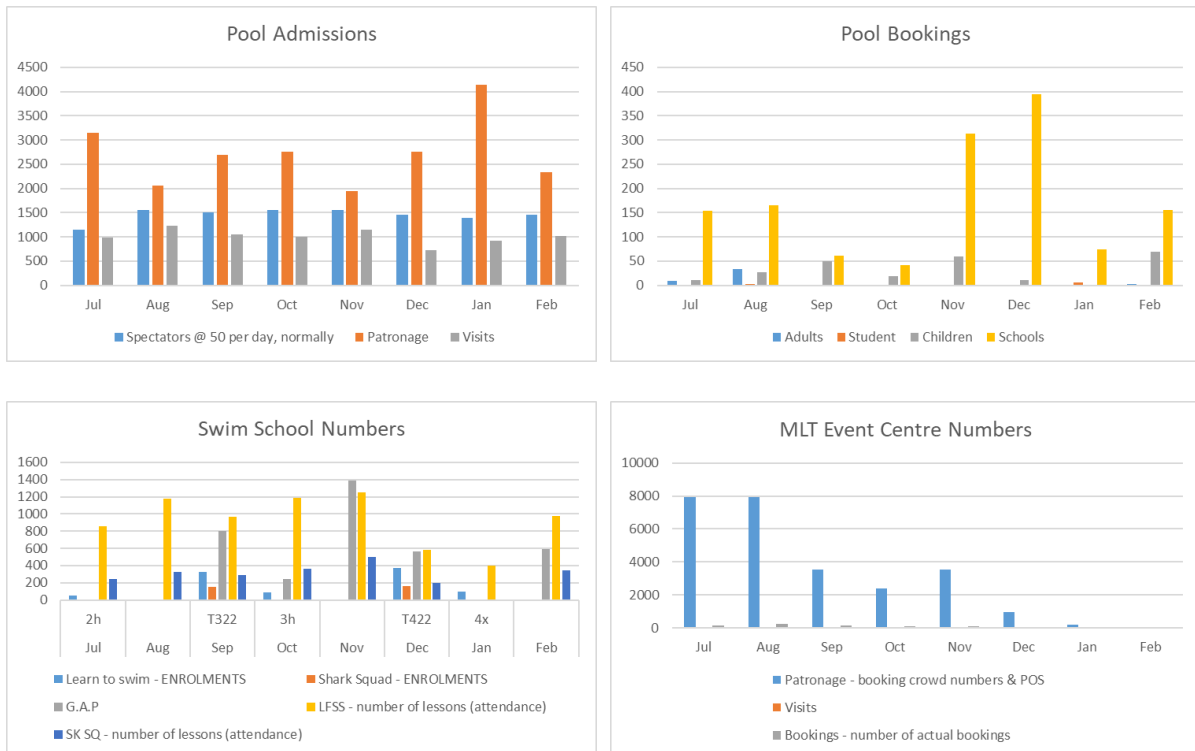
Hokonui Runanga, Southland Regional Heritage Committee, Great South, Southland Museum & Art Gallery.

4. REPORT FROM AQUATIC SERVICES MANAGER (Martin Mackereth)

Admissions to the Gore Multisports complex

 Facility user numbers and information 2023/2024													
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Pool days open	31	31	30	31	30	29	28	29					239
POOL	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Spectators @ 50 per day, normally	1150	1550	1500	1550	1550	1450	1400	1450					11600
Patronage	3156	2053	2693	2755	1940	2762	4132	2333					21824
Visits	986	1230	1049	1006	1149	722	922	1011					8075
Sub-Total													0
Bookings	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Adults	9	33				1		2					45
Student		2					6						8
Children	10	27	50	19	59	10		69					244
Schools	154	165	61	41	314	394	74	155					1358
Sub-Total	173	227	111	60	373	405	80	226	0	0	0	0	1655
Pool Total	173	227	111	60	373	405	80	226	0	0	0	0	1655
SWIM SCHOOL & SK SQ	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Term code counted	2h		T322	3h		T422	4x		T123	1h		T223	
Learn to swim - ENROLMENTS	50		328	91		372	94						935
Shark Squad - ENROLMENTS			149			160							309
G.A.P			804	241	1384	564		591					3584
LFSS - number of lessons (attendance)	856	1178	963	1187	1251	583	398	975					7391
SK SQ - number of lessons (attendance)	248	323	291	359	499	199		345					2264
Swim School Total	1104	1501	2058	1787	3134	1346	398	1911	0	0	0	0	13239
Stadium days open	31	31	30	31	30	29	28	29					239
STADIUM	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Patronage - booking crowd numbers & POS	7951	7906	3560	2384	3522	979	182						26484
Visits	19	13	27	36	30	14	30	36					205
Bookings - number of actual bookings	173	244	136	96	125	46	13						833
Stadium Total	7970	7919	3587	2420	3552	993	212	36	0	0	0	0	26689
Pool days open Total	239	Swim School needs to be term and holiday numbers only to avoid double ups											
Stadium days open Total	239	(light green area indicates term roughly so only one lot of numbers here)											

Monthly usage comparison



Current challenges

Effects of tight disposable income

There are signs that we are starting to see and notice the current economic struggles of our community. As a facility, we are reliant on household disposable income so as this income shrinks, we start to see changes such as payments for lessons delayed or paid off over the term. I expect this trend to continue as we head further into 2024. The normal change we see in this situation is a slight reduction in the lessons space but a slight increase in the one-off attendance or casual visit.

Early plant replacement

Due to the contactor burn out we reported in the last bulletin, we moved the planned upgrade of this power sub-board to this financial year due to the risk. It had been planned for the next financial year as we have seven power sub-boards in total to replace over the next few years due to age and atmospheric issues at the complex.

Future improvements

Accessibility equipment

We have been working with a lot of our patrons in the community that have accessibility and rehabilitation challenges. We have noticed an increase in pool use in and want to support and grow this in the future. So far, the feedback has been extremely pleasing and from these conversations, we have found a few simple pieces of equipment that we have purchased to help with supported movement in the water. They have been received and used extremely well.

The intention is to work to provide more opportunities and find out how we can take that next step to help people in our community that have access and inclusion challenges and provide a space that they feel safe and supported.

Bean bag chill out zone

Three years ago, we created a reading and chill out zone in the reception area. It has been one of the greatest received changes to the facility and where you will often find family and friends hanging out while waiting.

With its popularity, we are looking at renewing the bean bags and getting a few more books so we can see the continued parent reading time and offer a space where people who need some down time can relax and for friends to meet up and chat.

Pickle Ball improvements

We have seen a big growth in our regular pickle ball drop in sessions and the league that has started. This has led us to look at increasing the number of courts we have available and see what else we can do for the continued future growth of the sport in the Gore District.

Future plans are also in the works for getting a regular big tournament based here in Gore and this is at a nation wide level.

Staff planning

Currently our team is in a good position. This means we are at the stage of looking at how we build in strong training and succession planning for the facility as a whole. We have decided to not look at this as just a Gore approach but from an industry and Southland wide approach. This means looking at combined trainings with Splash Palace and other facilities that would like to take part and seeing how we can grow the industry to help us all in the long term.

Facility interaction

Interaction with groups, clubs, and organisations

- Our Stadium operations manager has started on his Health and Safety inductions with all of the winter teams as a lot of the trainings and trails are starting a bit earlier this year.
- The Aquatic services manager is still working with Recreation Aotearoa in the disability space for community users both locally and through out the industry in NZ we are meeting on a two monthly basis at this stage and hope to have a Guideline out by the middle of the year.
- Our Swim School coordinator is working hard with all of the schools to get them in for the council run GAP program.

Good news moments

GAP underway

We are back into the swing of the Gore Aquatic Programme (GAP) with schools, and the students so far that have gone through from the Gore district are loving it. The feedback from the teachers, students and parents poolside has been fantastic and the

progressions and skill development of the week long session has also been great to see.

Smiles, confidence and conquering fears for some have been just a few examples of what these sessions have achieved for students in a water safety and educational space.

We have had a few out of district schools in during this time and from that, teachers have approached and asked how they could also get their school involved.

Combined approach

We have teamed up with Plunket and are offering mums and babies a free session once a month to introduce them to not only the water and pool environment, but also spending valuable time with their little ones while creating a social touch point where they can meet up and create new friendships. So far, we have been averaging 12 participants per session.

Aqua growth

Since the start of the year our numbers for Aqua sessions have grown to a point where we are now averaging 20 people a session for morning classes. Part of this is due to the free over-80s swimming as well as people using these sessions as a catch up time.

5. REPORT FROM THE SENIOR EVENTS COORDINATOR (Jessica Swan)

On the Fly Mataura River Festival

This year's On the Fly festival was held on Sunday 25 February and saw a return to the event's original venue of River Terrace. While the weather was turbulent in the morning, that didn't seem to put too many attendees off and we had a great turnout throughout the day.

Attendees seemed to stay longer at the event than last year, with at least double the number of people having a go at our casting competition at the end. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, we managed to give every person who participated at least a consolation prize which was fantastic.

Post-event, an incentivised feedback survey was put on Facebook, receiving 38 responses.

How would you rate your experience of the event?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0

4.5★
average rating



	VERY POOR	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	FANTASTIC!	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
★	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.53% 4	34.21% 13	55.26% 21	38	4.45

- 94.74% of respondents found out about the event on social media.
- 73.68% said this was their first time attending the event.
- 39.47% voted each the fly fishing demonstrations and children's entertainment as their favourite part of the event.
- Average ratings: fly fishing demonstrations 4.4/5 stars, children's entertainment 4.1/5 stars and the beer garden 4.3/5 stars.
- 81.58% of respondents attended the event with family, 13.16% with friends and 5.26% alone.
- 78.95% said they were from Gore, 13.16% from the wider Southland region, 5.26% from Invercargill and 2.63% were from Clutha.

Parks Week

'Tulloch Takeover!' was held on Saturday 2 March from 11:00am–2:00pm and enjoyed a great turnout of local families. The aim was to have every aspect of the event free for attendees, which was well received on the day. Parents and guardians even stopped staff members to thank them, which was lovely to hear. Overall, the event included:

- o A sausage sizzle

- Face painting
- Pirate dress up with hats and swords
- Basketball
- Chalk art
- Giant bubbles
- Giant outdoor games (Active Southland)
- Archery tag (The Y – Southland)
- Disc golf (The Y – Southland)
- Community Connector with exercise machines (The Y – Southland)
- Fire engine rides (NZ Fire Service)
- Shoot the fire engine hose (NZ Fire Service)

The contributions from Active Southland, The Y – Southland and the local fire service were a massive attraction for children and the archery tag and fire hose were particular highlights.



6. REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER (Keith McRobie)

February has been a reasonably busy month with regular maintenance activity. Grass growth slowed a little but was more vigorous than a normal February meaning we have not really changed our mowing cycle.

Our new gardener/operator is working out well with Pioneer Park and Matai Ridge all looking a lot tidier and cared for. She is now concentrating her efforts on getting around all the district playgrounds, line trimming, spraying and topping up soft-fall when necessary.

Update on ongoing and future projects

Hedge trimming

We have engaged a new contract hedge trimmer and have started work on the backlog of sites, some that haven't been touched for 3-4 years. The most significant of these was upper Ardwick Street between the road and the walkway.

We are wanting to cut along Railway Esplanade which is quite overgrown but are still waiting for an updated Traffic Management Plan to be approved by NZTA for that location. The previous plan was a mobile operation and NZTA has said that is no longer acceptable for that site.

Bannerman Park drainage and improvements

A contractor was engaged to dig out the drainage trench in the Ian Gilchrist paddock. This open drain had not been touched for about 10 years and was quite congested with some of the inlet pipes completely blocked. This drain is the lower end of quite a large catchment from all the neighbouring streets so having a properly functioning drain will improve the situation.

Another drain is to be opened up at the top end of the park that takes stormwater off Beatie Street. Currently stormwater runs across the surface and paths rather than through existing drains.

The new tree tower has been installed in the top end of the park with softfall placed around it. The tower is operational and the area around it will be planted and tidied up in March.

Tulloch Park Stage 2 development

The project team is working on a building consent and drainage options for the site as there is no stormwater option available other than building a sump. Water, wastewater and power are all available close by, new dedicated connections are the best option.

Site meetings have been held to confirm the best location for the new building and the splash pad.

It is expected that after the old swimming pool demolition is completed, we will have more room than required for the splash pad and new buildings. In the extra space, we propose to extend the grass area and add further landscape plantings to enhance the space. It is likely that there will be room for some additional car parks and a connecting footpath as well.

Tree work

Arborist teams from Delta and Cut-Above Trees have been across the district removing large dead trees, completing line clearance work and dealing with some long-standing CRM tree issues.

The arborists from these companies can do close approach work near power lines which is a specialist skill that our own staff are unable to do. We generally provide the crews a list of the outstanding tree jobs and help them with traffic management and other logistical support as needed to get through the work.

Community engagement

We have been actively engaging with various groups, clubs, and organizations, including attending consultations, workshops, and meetings.

We have met with the following groups:

- Active Southland;
- Southland Spaces and Places Guidance Group;
- Southland Biodiversity group; and
- Gore Garden Club.