

Rangitikei Leisure Plan

Active, Passive, Arts & Culture

A plan for the Rangitikei District that shows how leisure can enhance the quality of life and sense of place for residents of the district, and how community organisations can contribute.

Rangitikei Leisure Plan: Active, Passive, Arts & Culture

A Plan for the Rangitikei District that shows the role and scope of leisure in enhancing the quality of life and sense of place for residents of the district and how community organisations can contribute.

August 2005



Rangitikei Leisure Plan: Active, Passive, Arts & Culture. Report

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. Focus

This Plan is focused upon 'leisure activity' – both daily-life and discretionary – active and passive. The plan also addresses arts and cultural activity within the district as an extension of community activity and as a contributing factor to a 'sense of place' that is the Rangitikei.

1.2. Background

This report is the second stage of a two-stage planning process.

- i. Stage one was an issue identification process (completed October 2004).
- ii. Stage two (this report) addresses both the Stage One issues, and issues/opportunities encountered in the Stage Two consultation and research. This report recommends preferred actions to address those issues and opportunities and identifies agencies and groups that might have a role to play in implementing the actions.

The report is divided into three sections:

- Part A: The District Plan Summary (the 'core' of the report - recommended actions that *should* be adopted to have the best chance of achieving the Plan goals for the district)
- Part B: The Local Plan Summary (important township issues that *may* need to be addressed over time)
- Part C: Appendices, methodology and background information (separate document)

The emphasis of this plan is upon a small set of realistic, resourcable and achievable actions that may themselves lead to desired outputs/outcomes or may set in motion processes, research or consultation that lead to final outputs/outcomes.

Consultation indicates the resourcing capacity of a smaller territorial authority such as Rangitikei District Council is limited and that most actions should be confined to those undertaken by the council and their immediate stakeholders such as Sport Wanganui, various health and education agencies, arts collectives and local offices of national organisations such as Department of Conservation.

Where collaboration between district agencies is achievable, realistic and likely to be sustainable, recommended actions have been included. These are actions where collaboration is *essential*, where alignment is *most achievable* and where *duplication of effort can be avoided*. Collaboration is a means to an end – and not an end in itself. Collaboration across many agencies is often very difficult to achieve. While it is possible to consult with many partners, ensuring an agreed collaborative action appears within all partners' business plans is a difficult task.

1.3. Executive Summary

The Rangitikei Leisure Plan (RLP) is part of a national initiative by Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) to improve the planning framework and understanding amongst agencies with a view to increasing physical activity levels across Aotearoa/New Zealand. The development of district physical activity plans is a core component of that national strategy. Rangitikei District Council was amongst the very first to recognise the importance to their community of this type of planning and have invested to ensure fun, active and healthy lifestyles for current and future residents. In addition the Council recognises the important role that arts and culture play in developing a sense of community and have therefore chosen a more 'holistic' approach to leisure provision across the district. Council is very much aware of the role that leisure, across the spectrum, can play in economic development initiatives for which Rangitikei is well placed.

This Stage Two report is based upon a series of key stakeholder and agency meetings, community workshops, location visits and literature searches undertaken between July 2004 – March 2005.

The plan seeks to provide the Rangitikei District Council and community with a clear set of priorities for the enhancement of existing and/or development of new recreation and leisure opportunities across the district.

The key findings of the project included:

- 1) **District 'hub' facilities:** The practicality of delivering district-focussed leisure facilities is difficult. Communities across Rangitikei are geographically isolated and lack the necessary critical mass for the development of large-scale district-wide opportunities. The reality appears to be the need for a *focus upon township based leisure facility* initiatives that service the local community. An over abundance of older and often under-used facilities and open-space will require *rationalisation*.
- 2) **Focus and Levels of service – local access and participation:** Often the focus was upon access to daily-life leisure such as an improvement to footpaths allowing for physical activity (walking for fitness or walking to the supermarket, the library or school) and allowing access to existing (and generally well regarded) leisure pursuits such as genealogy groups and country music. It was generally agreed that council should provide and/or support the provision of leisure 'settings' (facilities and open space) whilst the community should be primarily responsible for the activities occurring at and within those settings.
- 3) **District services/programmes for increasing levels of activity:** Increasing levels of leisure activity in a long-term, sustainable manner appear to have the greatest chance of success by implementing district-wide *programmes/service* initiatives.
- 4) **Barriers:** There was generally a *high satisfaction* with the provision of Council-facilitated leisure opportunities and facilities across the district with a desire to enhance what already exists rather than to seek new developments. *Access and lack of information* appear to be the biggest barriers to participation, while a lack of a clear *policy framework* for both physical activity and the arts was commonly seen as an issue.
- 5) **Avoid duplication – work together:** There was a clear desire to *avoid duplication of services* provided by existing agencies thereby creating another layer of administration. There was a strong focus on improving collaboration between schools and the community with regard to access to services and facilities and in the transition between school and community sport by young people.
- 6) **Unspoilt Rangitikei:** The natural environment was found to have *high importance* and the area's natural features – bush, trails, and rivers – are a major advantage in provision

of both physical activity opportunities and 'wellbeing' promoted by 'the great green outdoors'. The growth of Rangitikei's tourism market will be centred around the outdoor settings and in particular use of the Rangitikei River. A district forum is required to *define and agree the balance* between recreational and commercial use, conservation imperatives and protecting the values that locals place upon the outdoor environment.

- 7) Volunteers:** In common with the rest of New Zealand, clubs continue to provide a vital network of physical activity and arts opportunities. However, many clubs' survival is threatened, or there is *poor succession planning and support for volunteers*. Some of this is attributed to a decline in club membership, particularly in traditional sports, and the need to travel further for competition. It was widely recognised that volunteers are under pressure and are often unable to deliver the quality and quantity of activity experienced by club members in the past.
- 8) Heritage:** The importance of preserving the heritage of the Rangitikei was common across the district – looking after and displaying 'the past' through archives and local museums will become a priority both for heritage itself and for tourism/economic development reasons.

Acknowledgements

In preparing this report significant support was received from Rangitikei District Council and Rangitikei coordinator of Sport Wanganui. The authors wish to thank all of the individuals and organisations that participated in workshops, stakeholder interviews, community meetings and the facility users questionnaire, particularly the volunteers who participated.

Report Disclaimer

In preparing this report it has been necessary to make a number of assumptions on the basis of the information supplied to Global Leisure Group Limited. The recommended actions contained in this report are subject to uncertainty and variation depending on evolving events, but have been conscientiously prepared based on consultation feedback and an understanding of trends in the leisure industry.

The authors did not carry out an audit or verification of the information supplied during the preparation of this report, unless otherwise stated in the report. Whilst due care was taken during enquiries, Global Leisure Group Limited does not take any responsibility for any errors nor mis-statements in the report arising from information supplied to the authors during the preparation of this report.

Author

Gareth Moore-Jones

Director of Global Leisure Group Limited

Contact:

PO Box 3094
Ohope Beach
Bay of Plenty
Phone 07 3070 915
Mobile 021 620 575
Gareth@glgnz.co.nz

Part A: District issues

2. Introduction

The Rangitikei Leisure Plan is part of a *national initiative* by Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) to improve the planning framework and understanding amongst agencies with a view to increasing physical activity levels across Aotearoa/New Zealand. The development of district physical activity plans is a core component of that national strategy. Rangitikei District Council was amongst the very first to recognise the importance to their community of this type of planning and have invested to facilitate or support *fun, active and healthy lifestyles* for residents.

In addition, the Rangitikei District Council wished to encompass arts and cultural pursuits within the Leisure Plan because their association with improved social cohesion and individual wellness is rapidly gaining credence. Arts and Culture are said to promote the intellectual and ‘inner’ uniqueness of individuals and communities – collectively giving expression and a window to the world on the history, diversity, aspirations, and ‘face’ of its creators. “Across the arts and culture spectrum - from the language arts of poetry, fiction and plays, through the object-based arts of painting, photography, sculpture and ceramics, to the performing arts of opera, dance, theatre and music - every medium is marked by vigorous experimentation and the quest for the transforming power of a potent image.”¹

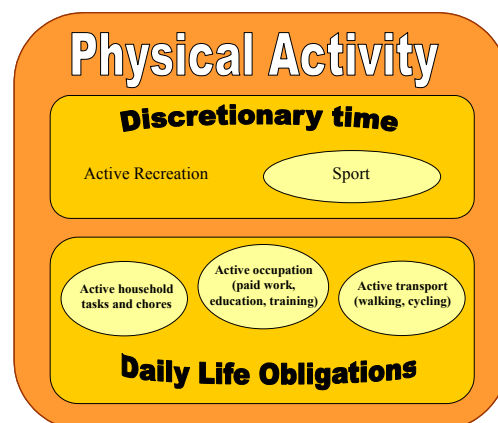
It is recognised that a community without the full spectrum of arts and cultural opportunities is poorer for its absence – Rangitikei District recognise the importance of helping the arts and culture community to achieve the power to ‘transform a potent image’, and by so doing enrich the lives of the community which is touched by the experience. The Rangitikei Leisure Plan therefore encompasses, *where considered important by the community*, the full spectrum of leisure across active and passive recreation, arts and culture.

Many of the leisure and facility provision issues facing the Rangitikei District have been found to be in common with other areas across New Zealand that have a geographically spread population with isolated and ‘fiercely independent’ townships.

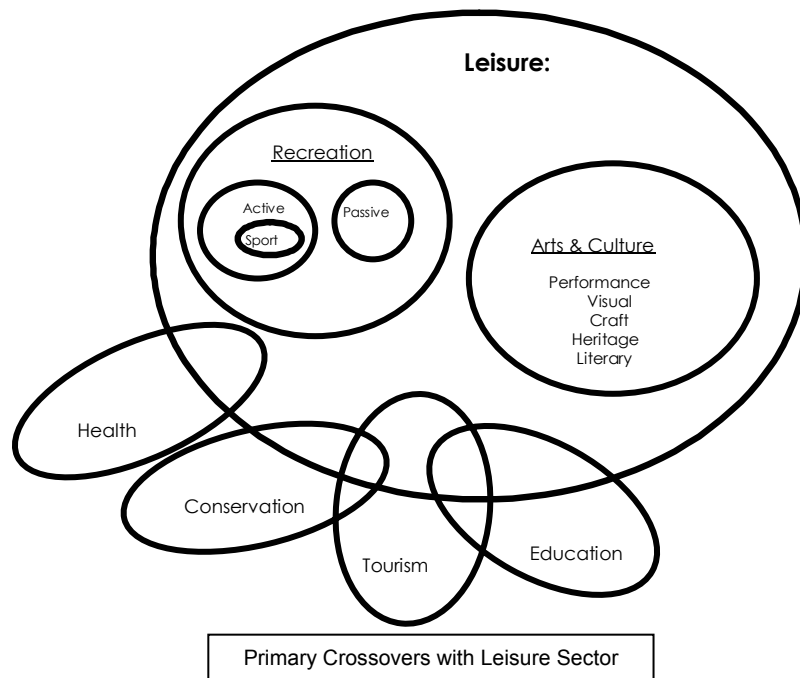
Research indicates that there are a relatively small number of issues and barriers impacting upon uptake of recreation, physical activity and arts across New Zealand and a limited number of appropriate and achievable actions that can be undertaken by smaller territorial authorities – the uniqueness of a plan of this nature lies in the individual community’s response and enthusiasm for addressing the issues and defining locally relevant actions.

This diagram illustrates how the scope of the Plan extends beyond the traditional sport and active recreation undertaken during discretionary time to include incidental physical activity that occurs while undertaking obligatory activities in our daily lives.

Rangitikei District Council and Sport Wanganui support the notion that the fundamental characteristics of leisure for the individual are that it is usually *fun and satisfying*, often a *playful and refreshing contrast* to other parts of their life, and provides *opportunities for social connection*. At the district level, leisure contributes many benefits including *greater connectedness, non-polluting alternative transport and more vibrant communities*.



¹ Peter Simpson “The Artistic Landscape in New Zealand”. (Creative NZ 2000)



The primary crossovers between elements of leisure as described by the plan steering group are represented above. Contained within and connected to leisure (if we were discussing health then health would represent the 'big circle') is recreation (active, passive and structured sport), arts and culture and intersecting at various points are health, education, tourism and conservation. It is important to understand this inter-relationship as a way of seeing that many agencies can have an impact on each-others community outcomes even if their drivers/philosophies are different.

The relationship between regular physical activity and nutrition and the improved health of individuals and communities are many. Similarly the drivers behind the provision of community related health and physical activity initiatives are also many and varied. However, the outcomes have a common feature namely an increase in uptake of physical activity, and an improvement in health. In many settings healthy action and healthy eating go hand in hand and strategies to increase community health should not treat these two elements in isolation from each other.

If a goal of the Rangitikei Leisure Plan is more people, more active, more often - life long leading to *fun, vibrant, creative, connected and healthier communities*, a clear message from the Plan process is the need to focus on a manageable number of initiatives that are well resourced, involve sustainable collaboration and have high levels of commitment from the stakeholders. The district actions in Part A of this plan clearly demonstrate this principle by limiting the action areas to those that are achievable and within the domain of the key action facilitators, namely Rangitikei District Council and Sport Wanganui.

Of particular note during the consultation process was the 'fiercely independent' nature of the towns and communities throughout Rangitikei. There was also a pragmatism when it came to availability of facilities and opportunities and the need to travel if desiring/needing a higher level of service or competition – very few people or groups came with long wish-lists and most recognised that limited resources and a small rating base was the defining factor in what is possible.

3. Community and Plan Outcomes and Goals

This section defines the fit between the desired outcomes and goals of the community, the agencies supporting this plan (Rangitikei District Council and Sport and Recreation NZ (SPARC)), and the goals of this plan.

An outcome is a result that can be measured. It is the ultimate reason for action. Measurement may require the implementation of a variety of research programmes and it may be difficult to prove causal relationships between actions and outcomes. *However, there should be broad agreement about the validity of the outcome (while there may be disagreement about how to achieve it).*

A goal is something that we want to achieve in the future. It is consistent with the outcome but is more specific. In this case, we agree that we desire to have a healthier community for a variety of reasons (personal, social and economic). There are various ways to achieve this (banning smoking in bars is one, eating more fruit and vegetables is another). In this case one of the goals is to increase community health by encouraging increased levels of physical activity whilst another is to help define the nature of the Rangitikei community and its people through fostering arts and heritage.

An objective is a specific measurable result expected within a particular time period, consistent with a goal. It is a clear "milepost" along the chosen path to the goal. Objectives are quantified and indicate time and agency responsibility.

3.1. Community Outcomes

Whilst the Rangitikei District Council did not determine specific community outcomes in its 2004 Interim Long-term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), in the draft it identified a number of areas that are likely to receive priority. Of relevance to this Plan are:

- Community facilities – parks and reserves for both active and passive recreation, halls, swimming pools, public toilets, libraries, archives and information centres
- Community development – economic development, sports promotion, events sponsorship, information centres and urban centres

In addition the council is undertaking planning for the 2006 LTCCP:

Community Outcomes are an integral part of the Council's Long Term Council Community Plan, and the Council is seeking community input as part of its LTCCP for 2006. The Community Outcomes process for 2005/06 has been branded "Rangitikei Rolling/Kōkiri, Rangitikei, Kōkiri".

The words "Rangitikei Rolling" are used to evoke the district's landscape – the rolling hills and powerful river – and a sense of momentum that the district is moving forward as a community. The word "Kōkiri" implies a co-operative action, and stems from a command used to spur the waka onward. These words capture the spirit behind the Community Outcomes process – the district as a whole, being spurred on to move forward together².

"Rangitikei Rolling/Kōkiri, Rangitikei, Kōkiri" seems particularly apt for this Leisure plan and it is hoped that the images evoked by the brand become part of the outcomes of this process.

SPARC's vision is:

All New Zealanders have a right to enjoy participating and reaching their potential in sport and physical recreation, are proud of their own active, healthy lifestyles and are proud of their achievements as a nation in sport.

² Rangitikei District Council – LTCCP description – www.rangitikei.govt.nz. 2005

It's mission is that by 2006 New Zealand be recognised as world leading in our approach to sport and recreation measured by:

- Being the most active nation.
- Having the most effective sport and physical recreation systems.
- Having athletes and teams winning consistently in events that matter to New Zealanders.

The vision of **Creative New Zealand** is:

New Zealand Arts: excellent, distinctive and essential in the lives of all New Zealanders

Creative New Zealand's Regional Development and Communities initiative goal is:

Creative New Zealand is committed to supporting opportunities for all New Zealanders to engage in the arts – wherever they live and whatever their circumstances.

In addition, a range of national, regional and local agencies (ranging from the Ministry of Health to local schools and marae) have a number of compatible visions (appendix ??).

This plan brings together those visions, outcomes and missions for **Leisure services and facilities (active, passive, arts, culture)** in the Rangitikei district by identifying how community agencies, physical recreation and sport organisations and other associated organisations can work together to maximise the benefits of leisure and physical activity for the community.

Drawing together the many strands of community comment a suggested vision for leisure in Rangitikei District is:

The Rangitikei Vision

Rangitikei is a district with vibrant and diverse leisure opportunities based on its natural environment, quality infrastructure, strong traditions and partnerships, and timely innovation.

The Rangitikei District Council will facilitate community provision of balanced and healthy lifestyles by:

- Supporting the communities physical wellbeing by making physical activity opportunities accessible, attractive and affordable,
- Supporting the communities social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing by facilitating the provision of services, programmes and facilities that foster creativity, achievement, excitement and involvement, giving residents a strong sense of belonging and pride in their local community and district,
- Providing and/or supporting an affordable and balanced infrastructure that meets current and future leisure needs.

The overarching **community outcome** is:

Active, creative and healthy communities in the Rangitikei District.

We have assumed that the overarching **community goal** is:

More people, more active, more often, life long, in the Rangitikei District leading to a fun, vibrant, creative, connected and healthier community.

3.2. Plan Outcomes and Goals

This plan is a means of achieving the community outcome and goals. *However, it cannot, and should not, attempt to do everything in relation to leisure provision*, as there is a number of very effective agencies active in the community enacting their own programmes. This plan does not seek to manage all those activities. Rather, it seeks to support **collaboration and efficient provision** of facilities and services within the district. It does not seek to over-ride any existing community programmes, groups or initiatives, but does seek to support those initiatives which are likely to increase physical activity and arts uptake. Its prime focus is on services and facilities provided by district groups, recognising that such provision best takes place in partnership with a wide range of community and government agencies.

3.3. Plan Outcome

Therefore the **outcome for this plan** is:

Effective and efficient provision of physical activity and leisure services and facilities at the district and local level.

3.4. Plan Goal

The **goal for this Plan** is:

Targeted resourcing of physical activity and leisure facilities and services by the district council and other partners, maximising uptake and community support.

4. Rangitikei

Rangitikei is a district blessed with recreation opportunities, particularly those opportunities that utilise the 'great outdoors'. Leisure activity in the Rangitikei is characterised by wide choice, but opportunity is limited by issues of access and travel, adequate levels of service, sustainability of clubs, organisations and the volunteer network, ageing facilities and the absence of a clearly articulated district wide vision for leisure provision.

The history of Rangitikei is typical of rural New Zealand. The pioneering 'we'll do it ourselves' mode of operation is still in evidence today with a high degree of self-help and desired autonomy. This history brings with it many opportunities but also a large number of facilities, developed by individual communities to meet time-specific needs, that are now quite old and in need of 'reconsideration'. It is generally acknowledged that rationalisation will be required to ensure sustainability of opportunities, with township 'activity hubs' becoming essential. This will entail hard decisions being made that will impact upon some communities.

The main centres of Bulls, Marton, Hunterville and Taihape all provide physical activity, recreation or leisure opportunities. Often these occur in outdoor settings that have little or no direct council involvement but rather reflect a recreation-friendly natural environment. All the main centres have strong arts and heritage groups but many of these 'work in the background' and serve a more informal social connection function for older residents.

The geographic spread of the townships whilst managing to serve some of the requirements of residents and immediate rural communities, also means that residents need to travel to access higher-level facilities and opportunities across the leisure spectrum (sports and arts and heritage).

The Rangitikei district is one of the best kept secrets in New Zealand tourism – and opinion (as might be expected) is split between those that say "shhh... don't tell anyone", and others that see economic development opportunities accruing from increased tourism and various population increase initiatives. Both views are legitimate and are at the core of discussions that will take place in Rangitikei over the next 5-10 years.

There are existing asset management plans (AMPs) for Council owned parks and reserves, swimming pools and community halls in the District.

There are no council-adopted individual community plan documents, and currently there are no plans to develop any although Bulls, Marton and Taihape do have fledgling Strategic Planning projects underway. Each township though has a reasonably clear view of where they would like to be – consultation around 'your town in 2015' resulted in a strong emphasis upon easy access to leisure for all age groups. There are no council plans to acquire new parks or reserves over the next 10-20 years unless they are publicly demanded and economically viable and there are clear signs that many existing parks and reserves are under-utilised.

The natural environment (rivers, bush, mountains) is very highly regarded by residents yet, interestingly from community meeting feedback, do not appear to be well used by locals through an absence of information and education.

4.1. Demographic summary

The 2001 Census data suggest that Rangitikei has a declining population, characterised by being older than the national average, less ethnically diverse, with a higher percentage of Maori residents, fewer tertiary-educated residents, lower than average earnings, with less access to information through telephone or emails, living in smaller households. However, Rangitikei District Council (RDC) has identified a strategy aimed at increasing the population by 10% against trends predicted by Statistics New Zealand – therefore, planning for leisure provision into the future will need to be cognisant of the targeted demographic profile of the new residents (not known at time of drafting this report). This plan assumes that the population growth initiatives will be successful and that the demographic 'make-up' will remain constant. The trends for residents to regard Rangitikei as 'home' but to be working and recreating in other districts i.e. Palmerston North and Wanganui is also recognised.

Demographic profiles that may impact upon the Leisure Plan include:

- The 2001 census '[usually resident population](#)' count for Rangitikei District was 15,102, a decrease of - 7.7% since 1996. In comparison, the population for New Zealand as a whole had increased by 3.3% since 1996.
- 12.9% of people in the Rangitikei district were aged 65 and over, compared with all of New Zealand which has 12.1% of people aged 65 and over.
- 25.3% of people in the Rangitikei District were aged 15 and under, compared with all of New Zealand, which has 22.7% of people aged 15 and under.
- 83.7% of people in the Rangitikei district said they belonged to the European ethnic group. For all New Zealand 80.1% said they belong to the European ethnic group.
- 23.7% of people in the Rangitikei district said they belonged to the Māori ethnic group compared with all of New Zealand at 14.7%.
- The population of the Rangitikei district contained a smaller proportion of Pacific peoples (1.3%) and smaller proportion of Asian people (0.8%) compared with the whole of New Zealand (at 6.5% and 6.6% respectively).
- 25.4% of people aged 15 years and over in the Rangitikei district said they had a tertiary qualification, compared with 32.2% for New Zealand as a whole.
- 37.0% of people aged 15 years and over in the Rangitikei district said they had no formal qualifications, compared with 27.6% of people aged 15 years and over in New Zealand.
- The median income of people in the Rangitikei district was \$16,800 compared with \$18,500 for all of New Zealand.
- 58.4% of people aged 15 years and over in the Rangitikei district had an annual income of \$20,000 or less, compared with 52.8% for New Zealand as a whole.
- In 2001 the unemployment rate in the Rangitikei district was 7.1%, compared with 7.5% for all of New Zealand.
- The unemployment rate of Māori in the Rangitikei district was 16.1%, compared with 16.8% for all Māori in New Zealand.
- 71.0% of all households were one-family households in the district. For New Zealand as a whole, one-family households make up 69.1% of all households.
- 264 households or 4.9% in the Rangitikei district had no access to a telephone, compared with 3.7% for all of New Zealand.
- 1,341 people in the Rangitikei district lived in one-person households, which was 24.5% of all households. In New Zealand as a whole, one-person households made up 23.4% of all households.
- Average household size in the Rangitikei district was 2.6 people, compared with 2.7 people for New Zealand as a whole.
- Couples with children (1,689 families) made up 42% of all families. Couples with no children make up 39.7% of all families.
- 17.4% of families in the Rangitikei district were one parent with child(ren) families, compared with 18.9% for New Zealand as a whole.

4.1.1. Population change

Statistics New Zealand³ projects between a +1 and -15 percent growth over the 2001 – 2021 period in households in the Rangitikei District, compared with a medium projection for New Zealand as a whole of 26 percent. Estimates are produced below with Hauraki District, with a similar profile, being included for comparison.

| Territorial Authority | Variant | Estimated/Projected Households at 30 June | | | | | | Change 2001–2021 | |
|-----------------------|---------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------|---------|
| | | 1996 | 2001 | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | Number | Percent |
| Rangitikei District | High | | | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 100 | 1 |
| | Medium | 6,100 | 5,900 | 5,900 | 5,800 | 5,700 | 5,500 | -400 | -7 |
| | Low | | | 5,700 | 5,600 | 5,400 | 5,100 | -900 | -15 |
| Hauraki District | High | | | 6,800 | 7,100 | 7,300 | 7,400 | 700 | 11 |
| | Medium | 6,400 | 6,600 | 6,700 | 6,800 | 6,900 | 6,900 | 200 | 3 |
| | Low | | | 6,600 | 6,600 | 6,600 | 6,400 | -200 | -3 |

³ Subnational Family and Household Projections (2001(base)-2021), August 2004

Population changes for each of the main communities in the district are included in Part B (local) of this report, where leisure issues specific to each community are considered.

5. Active, Passive: Arts and Culture

5.1. Definitions

There are many definitions that could summarise the Rangitikei Leisure Plan – Active, Passive, Arts and Culture. The following is intended to provide the reader with a context within which to interpret the rest of the plan.

5.2. Physical activity and overcoming obstacles to action

SPARC define physical activity as: “movement required on a daily basis to sustain health. Physical activity opportunities include sport, active recreation, physical education, fitness activities, active transport and play.” (SPARC 2003).

Physical activity can include structured sport and also individual activity (such as kayaking the Rangitikei river).

Active Recreation can include those leisure activities that encourage social participation, provide a sense of fun and are physically oriented.

Passive Recreation can include those leisure activities that encourage social participation, provide a sense of fun and are not physically oriented.

Sport can include physical activities that are competitive, organised, involve observation of rules, and may be participated in either individually or as a team. This definition refers primarily to those participating in sport as amateurs, rather than those who derive an income from sports participation.

Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) and the Cancer Society of New Zealand undertook the Obstacles to Action Survey in 2003 based on a survey of over 8,000 New Zealanders aged 16 and over. The objective was to understand attitudes towards and behaviours regarding physical activity and nutrition. Sub-sets of the results are being analysed by regional sports trust area (Wanganui in the case of Rangitikei District). At a demographic level there is no statistical validity to the application of regional results to the districts. A full summary of the process is included in the Appendices (separate document) The study identified a range of obstacles to individuals adopting active lifestyles. Several key elements emerged:

- There was a high level of awareness about the benefits of physical activity, but in many cases a lack of information about physical activity options,
- The key non-environmental barriers related to personal commitment (including a perceived lack of time) and lack of support (friends to recreation with and external encouragement), while poor street lighting, traffic, lack of cycle-lanes and dog-nuisance were the key environmental barriers,
- Respondents were aware of the ‘traditional’ facilities. However, there was a lower awareness of more informal ways of accessing physical activity,
- Health professionals were the most trusted sources of information.

5.3. Arts, heritage and culture

Most definitions of the Arts include literature, film, dance, drama, music and the visual arts. In a diverse district such as Rangitikei, these encompass many cultural forms and levels of participation in their creation and enjoyment. Art can include those activities which allow for the expression of creativity and culture, and which may be expressed through performance, display, and exhibition, by people in both professional and amateur capacities.

Cross-sectoral collaborations and the creative application of new technologies can challenge these broad definitions. It may be useful to consider a wider perspective.

Many arts organisations produce a creative output, usually for an audience or market in a commercial transaction: they are 'creative industries'. The Starkwhite Report commissioned by Auckland City Council in 2002 summarised new thinking about the arts⁴:

| Old Thinking | 21 st Century Thinking |
|---|---|
| <p>The work of artists is only of interest to a relatively small arts audience.</p> <p>The value of the arts is primarily social and cultural, not economic.</p> <p>The arts sector is a cost centre – a subsidised realm for artists and arts organisations to pursue their practices and programmes at the expense of taxpayers and ratepayers.</p> <p>At best, there is a very limited role for government investment in the arts.</p> | <p>Our arts, artists and arts industries are key contributors to the new economy and society.</p> <p>People in the creative sector are very skilled and educated; these skills are highly transferable into other sectors. These people are a specialist enclave of knowledge workers, where creativity and innovation are intrinsic to the sector.</p> <p>The creative sector is fluid and expanding. It consists of increasingly broad applications of creativity including, but also beyond, the traditional arts, and both digital and analogue forms of expression. Creative sector workers are moving increasingly between commercial and non-commercial applications.</p> <p>Employment growth in the creative sector is outstripping that in the general economy. Governments are seeing the social, cultural and economic value of the creative industries and a role in facilitating development.</p> |

In UK Mapping Documents creative industries were defined as originating in 'individual creativity, skill and talent' with 'potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. Advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio were all included. New Zealand mapped its creative sector in 2001. In the year to March 2001, it was worth 3.1% of total GDP, up from 2.4% in 1992 and 2.8% in 1996⁵.

In the Rangitikei context arts and cultural activity was perceived to be wider than '*usually for an audience or market in a commercial transaction.*' In the Rangitikei context arts and cultural activity was variously seen as either a local activity for its own sake (I like painting, it's something to do, I learn about the arts) **or** an extension of the district's economic and tourism development (arts and heritage trails for tourists and promoting the Rangitikei as a place to live for 'artists'). This plan acknowledges the importance of both views. Acknowledged also is the relationship between creating, doing and viewing arts and cultural activity and its potential role in getting more people more active more often.

5.4. Passive leisure

Passive leisure is difficult to define, encompassing as it can a myriad of meanings for a diverse population of many ages, circumstance, locations and access to opportunity. For the purposes of this plan we use the term passive leisure as being the opposite of competitive or fitness seeking activity. These are leisure activities that encourage social participation, promote a sense of fun and are not physically oriented such as playing contract bridge. We can also uplift our souls and sense of well-being by promenading through the rose garden or standing in silent tribute to the Rangitikei river gorge from the top of the Mangaweka hill.

⁴Starkwhite Report. Executive Summary, p9. Auckland City Council 2002. www.aucklandcity.govt.nz

⁵NZ Institute of Economic Research, *Creative Industries in New Zealand: Economic Contribution* (Report to Industry New Zealand, March 2002)

5.5. Active leisure

Active leisure can include both physical activity such as active recreation and sport (depending on how fit or competitive you are) and arts and cultural pursuits -we can work up a sweat trying a dance, heavily involve ourselves in culture and activity through kapa haka

6. How should the Rangitikei District Council and community react?

The council supports or supply's the key public recreation and active leisure opportunities in the district. Schools, clubs, trusts and commercial operations supply most of the remainder. Information services and physical activity programmes are offered by a range of agencies, most with a wider Manawatu/Wanganui/Rangitikei focus (such as Sport Wanganui and the District Health Board) and many with a district or town focus (such as Marton Aquatic and Leisure Trust, Taihape Older and Bolder).

The main opportunities and services offered by the council (collated from the interim 2004-2014 LTCCP) are:

- The provision, management and maintenance of open space for casual recreation, including recreational walkways, parks and reserves, informal and formal play areas, beach and river access, toilets and information,
- The provision and maintenance of many sports fields and some field facilities,
- The management of leases to clubs for the construction of club rooms, pavilions and change facilities on public land,
- The management of roads, crossings, footpaths, street lighting and subdivision consents to maintain activity friendly environments for walking and cycling,
- The facilitation of Trusts delivery of swimming pools,
- The facilitation of community committee provision of indoor facilities and community halls (mainly rural).

Many of these services are provided or supported through partnerships, such as financial support given by the RDC to Marton Aquatic and Leisure Trust and Sport Wanganui. By doing these activities, the Council supports the main physical activity opportunities reported by previous SPARC studies⁶: walking, cycling, running, swimming and sports.

In the arts and culture sector Council supports or supplies the key venues for activity, facilitates the Creative Communities Scheme and is looking forward, through this plan, to enhancing their support by way of an agreed Arts Agenda. The main programmes and initiatives for arts and culture are again provided by a range of community groups but these are usually with a township focus rather than a district focus – such as the Marton Arts and Crafts.

The main opportunities and services offered by the council (collated from the interim 2004-2014 LTCCP) are:

- Provision of a district library service,
- Storage and maintenance of an extensive district archive,
- The facilitation of community committee provision of indoor facilities and hall,
- Facilitation of funding schemes and economic development initiatives (thereby meeting the expectations of residents and supporting desired outcomes of Creative New Zealand⁷).

In providing recreation and leisure facilities the council may adopt one or several different roles for any project. Consideration of these roles becomes important when determining the type and the level of support of district developments. Due to the small scale and geographically isolated communities in the Rangitikei, residents should not expect council or other stakeholders to be 'everything to everybody' – it is simply not possible.

We recommend that council focus primarily on:

- Identifying community priorities and outcomes (through the Community Outcomes process Rangitikei Rolling/Kōkiri, Rangitikei, Kōkiri)
- Effective and targeted facility, open space and transport planning, provision, management and maintenance (or supporting other more appropriate agencies in these roles),

⁶ SPARC has also been monitoring participation trends nationally using three major studies carried out since 1977. www.sparc.org.nz/sparcfacts

⁷ Creative Communities – allowing access to the arts wherever they live and whatever the circumstances – CNZ 2004. www.creativenz.org.nz

- Information services as they relate to public facility use (such as bookings and availability, levels of service and type of opportunity),
- Information services as they relate to providing information on and access to leisure programmes, services and resourcing options,
- Ensuring efficiency of use and provision (this includes developing partnerships in asset provision – for example, between a school and the community as in the Hunterville model, and between council and trusts as in the Sport Wanganui and Marton Aquatic and Leisure Trust models),
- Maintaining effective partnerships with other agencies and communities to ensure key assets are appropriately delivered (monitoring and consultation only e.g. working with DoC Wanganui Conservancy or Horizon Regional Council in a partnership capacity but taking the role of monitoring the external agencies contribution towards identified community outcomes),

Leisure *programmes and services* (active, passive, arts and cultural) are better delivered by partner agencies and individual communities. The Council should act as planner, advocate, supporter and catalyst for those services (Section 5.2), but not as direct providers. A gradual increase in the levels of council support to programme and service providers will be needed over time.

6.1. Councils' roles

What then are those roles that Council can play – or facilitate and enable other agencies to undertake? Councils are required to adopt some roles, and have the option of adopting others where required to achieve community outcomes. *Ensuring council make a decision on what role to perform in what circumstance is a primary recommended action of this leisure plan.* These roles could include:

Statutory body. Territorial authorities operate under the opportunities, obligations and restrictions provided by a range of statutes, including the Local Government Act 2002, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Reserves Act 1977. Under these, and many other Acts, councils are bound to operate in certain ways, such as controlling the leasing and licensing of private or club use of reserves under the Reserves Act and planning for city growth and change through the District Plans prepared under the Resource Management Act. These are compulsory roles.

Provider/Funder and Asset Manager. This is the highest level of support, with councils owning and operating a facility. Funding of the facility will operate in accordance with councils' funding policy (private/public split). Levels of provision can vary from 'land only' to full development, or support of operations and maintenance costs. Where an asset or land is owned by a council, they have a defined set of statutory responsibilities. However, day-to-day management and promotion of use of those assets can be taken up by other agencies.

Planner. Before a council can serve the interests of the community it must identify what those interests are. The councils therefore has a key role to play in carrying out planning that facilitates the efficient development and use of substantial community resources and ensures mechanisms are in place to meet future need. Many of these roles are also statutory responsibilities.

Supporter for agencies, clubs and groups providing leisure opportunities. The councils can do this by providing land and/or leases to a wide range of groups for activities and facilities across a range of active or passive pursuits or assisting clubs find alternative funding. Some facilities are also provided free of charge or at a nominal rental for groups to use.

Some groups providing their own land and facilities receive rates rebates. One-off grants for facility development can be made through the councils' annual planning processes and a council can act as a guarantor for community clubs and organisations raising bank loans. These are optional activities.

Co-ordinator of opportunities. Councils are able to bring together individual groups to plan the joint development of facilities. Networking opportunities can be provided and joint promotions carried out. These are optional activities, although clearly territorial authorities are often the key facilitator.

Catalyst. Councils work closely with community groups to encourage the development of new or improved leisure facilities where gaps in provision are identified.

Advocate for improved recreation and sport (mainly) facilities within the district. The Council may assist stakeholder organisations attract resources by supporting groups and lobbying on their behalf. Submissions are made to national organisations such as SPARC and CNZ as necessary, in an attempt to ensure national policy takes into account needs and circumstances of the Rangitikei district.

6.2. Planning Principles

One of the issues to be addressed through this plan was the identification of a facility planning framework. A 'principles-based' planning approach is proposed for use by the RDC to guide the assessment, consideration and decision-making process for facility developments (retrofits or new or rationalisation). The principles reflect the trends that are impacting on the provision of leisure and sport facilities in New Zealand, and have been adopted by a number of agencies throughout New Zealand with success. As such this will need to be regularly reviewed to maintain relevance in a changing planning environment both regulatory and as a result of population initiatives. *They also represent a 'common sense' approach to facility provision. Within the Rangitikei the principles will generally apply at a township level rather than a district serving level.*

In summary, the principles are:

Principle 1: Co-location and shared facilities replacing dispersed and duplicated provision

Co-location is the positioning of several activities within a centralised location, such as a sport and recreation precinct, whereby a major cluster or 'hub' is formed. This is usually a long-term process, acting as opportunities arise. The activities generally share social areas, toilets, change facilities and parking, but may use their own specialist facilities - such as a pottery kiln, computer suite or BMX track - or may share facilities such as a hall, performance venues, exhibition space, workshop space, sports fields, swimming pool, hard courts or indoor courts. Co-location can also reduce travelling time for families who have more than one member involved in the activity. It provides potential for a 'one stop shop' approach through the creation of activity clusters.

Principle 2: Partnering to maximise community benefits

Partnerships between educational organisations, clubs, commercial operators, councils, churches and other organisations are an increasingly popular facility provision option. The motives driving these partnerships include providing a seamless or 'one stop' service, avoiding inefficient duplication or gaps in provision, addressing the need to be economical (seeking economies of scale), making better use of scarce managerial, volunteer, land or financial resources, or allowing more advanced specialisations to be developed. The following points are important in exploring partnerships:

- Partnership development at the earliest stages depends on the ability of the partners to develop their ideas in an **atmosphere of flexibility**.
- There needs to be **clarity of leadership**, which implies that whoever leads the development of a partnership needs to be recognised and empowered by his or her own organisation, and is trusted by the partners.
- There needs to be a **clarity of understanding** of the framework, culture, values and approach of partner organisations, which in many cases will need to be the subject of explicit discussion.
- There needs to be **clarity of purpose**, which implies a clear statement of the objective of the partnership which can only exist in the context of a clear and informed understanding of the nature and performance characteristics of existing service provision.
- There needs to be **clarity of role**, which implies that an early agreement of the precise contributions of each of the partners and agreement about their inputs and gains is essential to a well-structured partnership. This needs to be set out in some memorandum or "contract".
- There needs to be **clarity of commitment** from all the partners which needs the support of the principal partners and this commitment needs to find expression in their practical support for the partnership in terms of the resource and cost implications of the partnership.
- There needs to be **clarity of management** as soon as the partnership starts to become operational.
- There needs to be **clarity of measurement** so that all of the partners agree at the outset know how they are to measure their success and how they are to incorporate into that measurement the requirements for continuous improvement.

These points taken together enshrine the approach that makes for the successful initiation of partnerships. They form the basis of a sound management "check list" which needs to be considered whenever a new partnership is being contemplated.

Principle 3: Targeted renewal and refurbishment funding

Territorial authorities seek to maximise benefits and minimise costs through the efficient and effective management of assets. To achieve these efficiencies Council must identify the best time and method to refurbish, renew, replace and dispose of assets. A typical question is, should Council refurbish a facility for X dollars and extend its life 10 years, or replace the asset with something that lasts 50 years for X+ dollars? This principle ensures asset managers offer the most cost-effective and long-term solutions. This issue will face the RDC over the next 10-years particularly.

Where RDC does not own a facility, but supports another provider, a condition of refurbishment funding should include a proven record of savings by the owner or users to create a reserve fund for renewal of the facility. There also needs to be proof that the owner has sought to optimise use of the facility through such strategies as:

- Joint ventures
- Consolidation of existing facilities
- Development of a multi-activity arrangements
- Identification and elimination of any alternative facilities.

RDC, and through them, funding bodies, should look to support refurbishment or replacement of leisure and sport facilities with targeted investment where there is *evident need*, and the functional value of the facility can be retained or enhanced.

Principle 4: Rationalisation of supply of facilities

Facilities that are surplus, due to an over supply of similar facilities, or are redundant, due to diminishing demand, could be converted for other uses, relocated, and/or demolished. The supply of facilities includes all those available for community use regardless of ownership. This allows a TA to 'buy back' or facilitate an 'exchange of ownership' of facilities that are owned by organisations but which are uneconomic, and offer more cost effective – and often centralised – facilities.

RDC should take a leading role in identifying appropriate levels of provision, and pinpointing priority facilities in the district. Priority facilities would include those that are currently under-utilised, but are well located, perform the desired functions needed by the community and are in good condition (most likely to be a single facility for active and passive leisure in each of Bulls, Marton, Hunterville and Taihape).

Principle 5: Improved communication and co-ordination

This encourages the provision of a regular and structured communication process to foster co-operation and co-ordination between stakeholders. It is suggested that informal forums coinciding with, at least, the LTCCP planning cycle be held to review progress and discuss topical facility issues could be an option. The purpose of the forums would be to build awareness of facility needs and the potential for co-operative action. These forums to be held in broad sector groupings (such as schools, sport and arts) or a greater number of more focused groupings (such as primary schools, outdoor sports, indoor sports, performing arts, visual arts, culture and heritage). The development of local community plans in each township (seen as a priority action in this plan) will support this process.

Principle 6: Redevelopment of compromise facilities to improve functional performance

Many existing facilities are designed to serve a wide variety of user groups (the ubiquitous memorial halls throughout Rangitikei as an example). The design is therefore a compromise between a wide range of preferences. This attempt to 'be all things to all people' often means that many activities are in fact severely limited. Such facilities often include school facilities (three-quarter courts) and local general-purpose community

halls. Most of these facilities have been developed in the belief that meeting the widest range of need will provide the most affordable solution to the community and achieve high occupancy levels.

These facilities generally provide relatively low user satisfaction due to the major compromises in performance required to meet a wide range of needs. A common characteristic of 'compromise facilities' is the ongoing pressure from users for improvements to meet their specific needs.

7. District goals, objectives and actions

The goals and actions in this section respond to the '**major district**' issues identified in Stage One of this planning process. 'District' issues are those which are common across all townships and communities in the Rangitikei.

Local issues, outcomes, goals and actions are addressed in Section B. A local issue and action refers to a specific town, suburb or individual club/organisation.

Adoption of these **district goals and actions** will support the locality-specific recommendations in this plan. Acknowledging the size and resource limitations of the RDC and key stakeholder groups, the author believes the adoption and addressing of the district actions will be a significant step forward in enhancing opportunities for leisure (active, passive, arts and culture) uptake as the outcomes will influence town specific issues and actions over time.

It is timely to re-state that the Local Government Act 2002 requires territorial authorities (TAs) to identify the social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes desired by their communities, and to identify the outputs each authority will manage to help secure those outcomes. It is clear that the TAs are not responsible – and are not able to – achieve all the outcomes independently. However, they must recognise where a service deficiency exists and consider which agency should fill that gap (which may be the RDC, a neighbouring TA such as Wanganui, Manawatu or Palmerston North, another government agency or, for example, an NGO).

The Leisure Plan Steering Group has undertaken an Action Priority exercise intended to group the following district actions into a 1-5 scale (1 = top priority; 5 = lower priority). The list of actions in priority order can be found in section 7.13

7.1. Arts Agenda

Goal: A pro-active arts and heritage agenda across the district

7.1.1. Key Elements

The community places strong emphasis upon the artistic and cultural heritage of the district. There is room for growth both within the 'amateur' arts and the increasing number of professional artists (mainly visual) that contribute to Rangitikei's sense of place and a vehicle for economic/tourism development. Preservation of heritage sites, buildings, archives and 'memorabilia', coordinated funding and district-wide marketing/promotion is required.

7.1.2. Discussion/Issues/Opportunities

The impact of locally provided arts opportunities upon a community has not been the subject of any recent large body of research. As discussed in the background to this report arts and culture are said to promote the intellectual and 'inner' uniqueness of individuals and communities – collectively giving expression and a window to the world on the history, diversity, aspirations, and 'face' of its creators. An important finding of research undertaken on a national perspective⁸ concerned the extent to which artists and arts professionals valued the potential role and contribution of the *local arts infrastructure*. Respondents uniformly rejected the idea that financial support from central government sources constituted their principal wants or needs. Instead *local* institutions were seen as capable of offering a range of services which were generally valued over and above those offered by national providers. These services were:

- information
- dialogue
- exhibitions
- promotion
- opportunities to create work
- networking
- marketing
- audiences
- sales
- access to equipment
- research/scholarship
- publications
- education

The relative importance of the local infrastructure is determined by the range of these services provided by each institution. Those offering a large range of services are held in highest regard by respondent artists. The important point for RDC to note is the applicability of the above elements to 'community arts and culture' (Bulls Spinners and Weavers, Taihape Drama etc) that currently exists and by local provision of local level arts initiatives the opportunity to attract professional artists as residents. The reality remains (backed only anecdotally

⁸ New Vision. A critical view of New Zealand's visual arts infrastructure.

A Report by McDermott Miller Limited, Wellington. Commissioned by Creative New Zealand and The Chartwell Trust. Published by Creative New Zealand April 1998.

perhaps) that access to the professional performing arts either as participant or audience is more likely to occur by travelling to Palmerston North than by direct provision by the RDC or other arts agencies in the district.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires territorial authorities (TAs) to identify the social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes desired by their communities, and to identify the outputs each authority will manage to help secure those outcomes. It is clear that the TAs are not responsible – and are not able to – achieve all the outcomes independently. However, they must recognise where a service deficiency exists and consider which agency should fill that gap. CNZ has no mandate for capital expenditure on **places** to create and share art, i.e. an accessible infrastructure of galleries, museums, theatres, concert halls, rehearsal spaces and studios. In the case of arts and culture in the Rangitikei there are comparatively few ‘structured and resourced’ agencies available to contribute towards these ‘places’ and therefore RDC will need to be the primary conduit at least for local-level facility and settings provision.

The most common issue to be identified from consultation was a lack of accessible and affordable facilities, lack of knowledge concerning resources and a desire to address promotions and marketing in a coordinated manner. RDC and the arts stakeholders in Rangitikei should consider priority focus upon **People** and **Access** (in common with CNZ’s focus):

- **People.** Skilled amateur and professional arts practitioners reflecting the ethnic and cultural diversity of the district. Identify and utilise the extensive local expertise to develop the arts and culture agenda for the district. Set a strategic priority to support ‘rewarding and sustainable careers for professional artists, developed and maintained through targeted resources and opportunities (at the local level)’.
- **Access** to the arts by exhibitions, performances, events and public programmes through provision of appropriate local facilities/settings. Access is about knowledge and understanding how/where the arts take place, how to access funding and how to get to (physically) the arts. CNZ has a strategic priority for participation – a gateway (waharoa) for New Zealanders to access, engage in and experience the arts – RDC can develop this priority by making access ‘easy and affordable’.

The establishment of a *district* Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory Group is advocated to better understand what residents ‘value about the arts, culture and heritage’, what constitutes arts, culture and heritage and how best to manage and preserve over time these aspects of the community.

The development of Rangitikei as an Arts and Heritage Trail was strongly endorsed - utilising the resources of the Regional Partnership Programme.⁹

A lack of base-line data on local arts, culture and heritage participation, needs and directions will hamper appropriate development and therefore a major recommendation is the collaborative funding of research into these areas. This research will either inform or be informed by the Wanganui-Rangitikei Regional Arts and Heritage database being developed currently but with an as yet unknown completion date.

7.1.3. A pro-active arts and heritage agenda across the district

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Objective (s) | <p>A district arts and heritage agenda/policy framework which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies the roles and responsibilities of RDC in making arts and heritage access easy and affordable ▪ Identifies the roles and responsibilities of community arts and heritage groups ▪ Clearly articulates the division between the above roles ▪ Clearly articulates the importance of arts and heritage to the community both intrinsic (sense of place) and extrinsic (economic development models) ▪ Pre-determines a funding structure for support of arts and heritage |
|----------------------|--|

⁹ Major Regional Tourism Initiative Fund (a joint Government funded venture between Rangitikei, Ruapehu and Wanganui Councils)

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies relevant community organisations for collaboration ▪ Identifies appropriate arts and heritage settings in each major township and seeks agreement from stakeholder organisations for the targeted resourcing of a single purpose-developed facility |
| Lead agency (s) | RDC/Nominated arts representative committee |

| Recommended Actions | Timing / Resources |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. RDC form a Arts, Culture and Heritage Collaborative Committee to develop a District Arts, Heritage and Culture Agenda | Immediate New resource |
| 2. The collaborative committee seek funding on behalf of the district from the Creative Communities Scheme to contract a District Arts, Culture and Heritage Volunteer Coordinator to work (a) identifying township arts, heritage and culture needs, (b) on gaining agreement from community arts groups on appropriate single-venue township infrastructure, (c) gathering base-line data on participation rates, and (d) undertaking research on the viability of combining local arts initiatives with an arts/heritage/culture tourism network and development of a professional arts network as a new resident incentive scheme | 12-24 months New resource |
| 3. The collaborative committee promote the outcomes and mechanisms of the Agenda to affected groups i.e. where the policy has impact upon types of initiatives and funding applications | by 2007 New resource |
| 4. Identify and establish a Rangitikei Arts and Heritage Trail accessible by walkers and cyclists (section 7.13) | by 2007 New resource |

7.2. Policy consistency

Goal: A clear and consistent policy for physical activity across the district

7.2.1. Key Elements

District-wide planning is essential for the effective delivery of active leisure services and facilities and in determining the appropriateness of future initiatives. It is also essential to avoid situations occurring such as traditional facility development without determining actual and latent demand, ability to contribute to operational expenditure or the 'fad' element of specific activities. This policy must clearly determine the roles of RDC in physical activity provision (facility provider and/or programme provider etc). Streamlining council systems/procedures that maybe acting as barriers to access or information.

7.2.2. Discussion/Issues/Opportunities

In the delivery of leisure initiatives there are many potential partners who, at a local, regional and national level, offer a variety of services. Local clubs provide and manage some of their own facilities. Sport Wanganui co-ordinate and deliver promotion, coaching, training, co-ordination, advisory and event management services. The community committees such as the Hunterville Collective Committee managing halls, Trusts such as MALT deliver aquatic opportunities. Various health agencies, such as Te Wai Puna offer educational programmes and targeted preventative health services, many with a physical activity component. Church groups provide facilities and social connection points for walking groups, visual arts activities and drama. RDC is but one of a number of agencies supporting leisure activity, and their role needs to be clear.

The role of the council in leisure provision should/ may be limited to:

- Managing to agreed levels of service all assets owned by the council, as defined by the relevant activity management plans,
- Maintaining an overview of the affordability of facility provision (by council and other key providers where facility responsibility may revert to council) using the long-term asset management skills within the council,
- Co-ordinating relevant maintenance services at a district level for facilities, fields and open spaces to reduce costs to all providers of physical activity services (and identifying where cost-recovery is required),
- Managing leases to recreation and sports clubs and other community groups (such as playcentres) to enable them to deliver appropriate services without compromising existing opportunities,
- Co-ordinating at the district level the allocation and booking of facilities and sports fields where these are not managed by a club, or a site-specific facility manager,
- Providing information services to the public and other agencies about facility availability (both council and non-council owned), options for their use and booking services,
- Supporting partner agencies in the development and delivery of facilities and services which will help achieve desired community outcomes. This will not necessarily be through financial support but by administrative assistance, advocacy and the provision of information and contacts as determined by adoption of preferred council roles within the policy (section 6.2)

Development of greater awareness across Rangitikei of inclusiveness issues is a priority. The preferred strategy is promotion of effective policies and strategies through education and professional development of elected representatives, management, planners, coaches/instructors and administrators. Access to leisure opportunities can be enhanced for all of the population if design of organisational systems (such as sport events and leagues, facility design and active transport) provide access for people with disabilities.

7.2.3. A clear policy framework for recreation delivery across the district

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Objective (s) | <p>A district recreation/physical activity policy framework which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies the roles and responsibilities of RDC ▪ Identifies likely future activity and facility initiatives with district impacts ▪ Addresses and resolves cross-boundary opportunity provision with Wanganui and Palmerston North and any Development Contribution Policy that is required ▪ Pre-determines a funding structure for local and district initiatives and their relationship to ward funding issues ▪ Identifies relevant community organisations for collaboration and works with communities to get them to agree township priorities ▪ Seeks agreement on the responsibilities of partner agencies/groups in funding on-going capital expenditure for new or retrofitted facilities ▪ Practices Inclusiveness and access through a No Exceptions policy |
| Lead agency (s) | SW/RDC |

| Recommended Actions | Timing / Resources |
|---|---------------------------|
| 5. Sport Wanganui coordinate development of a district physical activity and leisure consultative committee to progress a district policy on behalf of RDC and community | Immediate New resource |
| 6. RDC facilitate the development of Community Leisure Consultative Committees for Bulls, Marton, Hunterville and Taihape with focus on leisure planning and priority setting | By 2007 New resource |
| 7. RDC promote the outcomes and mechanisms of the policy to affected groups i.e. where the policy has impact upon types of initiatives and funding applications | By 2008 New resource |
| 8. RDC adopt the Facility Planning Principles (section 6.1) and identify and apply the Council Role (section 6.2) for each future initiative as part of any policy framework | Immediate Nil resource |

7.3. Minimum 'Levels of Service' for leisure provision

Goal: Levels of service which target overcoming barriers to participation are provided across the district and in each town

7.3.1. Key Elements

Service provision should be targeted at providing levels of service which overcome barriers to participation and support the main local leisure pursuits of residents.

Service provision that specifically addresses the recreational needs and access issues of youth across the district.

7.3.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

Council should adopt a minimum level of service for provision of facilities for each of Bulls, Marton, Hunterville and Taihape and pursue their delivery through a community plan in each township and the relevant activity management plan. This should include:

- A single venue (agreed by the town consultative committees) for physical recreation, arts and cultural activities by 2016
- A BMX or similar significant off-road cycling area (applicable also to Ratana)
- At least two high quality multi-age free play areas with equipment suited to toddlers and up to at least 14 years of age. One may be located at a school, and one should have public toilets nearby. Facilities should be designed to suit the specific area and each offer a point of difference, but include play equipment for young children, and at least a basketball half court (applicable also to Scotts Ferry, Mangaweka and Ratana)
- One moderate-sized skatepark as part of a youth action zone in a central and high visibility area, with the option for a small skatepark in an alternative residential area.
- At least one defined walking, cycling and fitness circuit for a range of fitness levels; named, sign-posted and well maintained (applicable also to Ratana)
- A walking and cycling map showing safe and pleasant routes between all major destinations within each area (i.e. those surrounding Marton or those surrounding Ohingaiti). Each map will clearly state points of public access and the responsibilities of the public if walking over private land.
- A school-based (or readily accessible) swimming pool for swim education¹⁰. Over the long-term this will offer life-long physical activity benefits and should be considered a priority above the delivery of swimming pools as general recreation facilities or for competition (note, this is a minimum level of service and more advanced options may be delivered where there is demand and funding over the long-term such as the current discussions on development of Marton pool with MALT and Taihape pool with the co-location of the new Taihape School next door).
- Sports-field provision appropriate to the size and proven demand of each township based on an annual codes forum to assess actual level of need rather than 'block-booking' of various spaces.

Council's activity management plans for recreation should illustrate the costs implications of these minimum levels of service and indicate timeframes depending on affordability.

Collaboration between schools and the community for use of facilities generated much comment – in all cases it was perceived that the capacity at the schools could not cope with an increase in community use and in some situations there was a 'sense' of space capture by single groups or sports. Determining appropriate models for school and community collaboration, aligning programming with current demand and assessing as a whole of

¹⁰ From Water Safety New Zealand: "That all young New Zealanders learn to swim as a normal course of growing up, while still held true by many, is no longer the case. Many barriers to having a nation of swimmers have become apparent. These barriers include factors such as schools no longer having or being able to afford to operate their own pools, families being unable to afford swimming lessons, and the changing cultural composition of New Zealand communities. These and other factors have contributed to learning to swim slipping off the priority radar and unless something is done to arrest this slide the situation will continue to deteriorate."

community approach to the facility service, mix and location is crucial. Hunterville was often quoted as an appropriate model to follow.

The specific leisure needs of youth (12-18) are difficult to define given the extensive physical and emotional changes that occur over this period and therefore the myriad of possible alternative needs. Many leisure plans advocate the provision of youth centres in all locations but they often do so without regard to the community's ability to resource and sustain such infrastructure for what can be a dynamic and changing culture and fad-prone adolescent period. Certainly consideration should be given to facilitation of programmes and services relevant to youth in a venue appropriate to the larger communities in Bulls, Marton and Taihape (particularly so for Taihape which is by far the most isolated main town) but only within the community leisure hub concept rather than a separate location. This plan suggests that the provision of the minimum levels of service above, aligned with better promotion of available opportunities and a youth representative on the Leisure Plan Legacy Group will start to address levels of leisure uptake (also see section 7.9).

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| Objective(s) | <p>Appropriate and equitable levels of service are provided across the district so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residents can access structured recreation opportunities at entry and local competition levels within their local community ▪ Residents can access unstructured recreation opportunities within their local community ▪ Residents will have access to all relevant information in a style and manner cognisant of any future Rangitikei branding |
| Lead agency(s) | RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|--|------------------------------|
| 9. RDC adopt 'agreed minimum level of service' policy as part of both the arts agenda and physical activity policy within respective Activity Management Plans | By 2007 Existing resource |
| 10. Workshop with relevant agencies (TAs, Sport Wanganui, Health, BOTs, Principal Assns, community trusts) to identify and agree on scope of community/school partnerships. | By 2006 New resource |
| 11. Investigate 'best practice' partnership models and contracts for community/school collaboration. | Immediate New resource |
| 12. Utilising the established Community Leisure Consultative Committees establish long-term facility requirements, capital and operating funding and sustainability strategies . | 5-10 years New resource |

7.4. Sustaining volunteers and vibrant sport and recreation club structures

Goal: Strong and sustainable clubs contributing to community cohesion and identity

7.4.1. Key elements

The support of sustainable club structures, recruitment and retention of volunteers.

7.4.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

Many clubs suffer from static or reducing membership and an ageing volunteer base. A clubs 'snap-shot' questionnaire in Stage One of this plan noted that 76% of clubs had either the same or reduced club members over the last five years, 36% said they were only 'OK' with volunteers and 32% responded that they were 'struggling' with volunteer support. Whilst a facility-sharing scenario can bring benefits through economies of scale it is the potential for the joint administration of clubs that can bring the most significant benefits and reduce the burden of 'many tasks on the same few people'.

Garry Henshall, a leading Australian recreation and sport expert, when asked to comment on the Australian experience noted:

" We have found from previous investigations that buildings don't necessarily solve problems of management, business planning and membership growth. They just put a group of overworked volunteers together in one building rather than three. Whilst a joint building may be good for economies of scale – that only works when buildings were actually the problem. The development of a multi-sport facility incorporating a multi-management approach tends to generally service one sector's needs very well –e.g. schools having exclusive use for it's students, or often provides a segregated range of groups in the one facility, booking access at different times. This is not (my..) idea of a good management structure.

Trends in Australia also show a reduction of volunteers in sport administration. We have found that specific skill support or the establishment of a sports secretariat service – rather than a facility – to be closer to the answer."

In January 2000 the Hillary Commission published a discussion paper titled 'Sport and Active Leisure: The Future Marketing Environment'. It identified nine trends that are likely to affect leisure lifestyles. When considering the recommendations in a document like this, these trends are worthy of serious consideration (see Appendix document).

The most significant issue is whether communities choose to fight against macro trends – to regain what was once considered special – or to react to trends to mitigate the negative and capitalise on the positive. In many leisure planning exercises, the first reaction is normally to fight against trends. What we knew to be good in the past (like volunteerism) is being lost and we want it back! However, when we are looking at where to place resources, inevitably we end up working with the likely future in mind and plan accordingly.

The Hillary Commission's report opined that:

We are fooling ourselves if we hang on recklessly to our parents' notions of community service and joint effort. This is not how other developed societies are now behaving and we have to accept that the decline in our society is probably an irreversible reality.

In collaboration with Sport Wanganui and disseminated with guidance from each Community Leisure Consultative Committee, and any proposed Arts, Culture and Heritage Volunteer Coordinator, volunteer recruitment and retention education programmes should be mandatory for all organisations seeking council assistance. Similarly, future council funding policies should ensure that all avenues including rationalisation and merging of organisations is considered by the group as a part of any funding application.

Supporting 'clubs/groups' *means supporting volunteerism*, which is very important in towns and smaller communities in the district. Means of offering support include:

- Providing information about funding sources for activities and assisting with applications (at least once, to share the necessary skills),
- Introducing appropriate and stream-lined administrative systems (including ensuring incorporated societies maintain their legal obligations),
- Creating alliances between similarly-focused individuals and organisations,
- Providing new ideas and directions to clubs who lack strategic direction,
- Mediating the resolution of seemingly intractable problems,
- Ensuring realistic expectations are maintained.
- Recognising and acknowledging the value of volunteer input (affirmations and a pat on the back).

Human resource and social issues impacting upon the overall delivery of club sport in Rangitikei are similar to those found in other provincial and rural studies. As identified by the analysis of community feedback they included:

- The advent of 7-day trading;
- Lack of employment and tertiary education opportunities for youth in the townships and the need to travel (or board) in Wanganui or Palmerston North;
- Changing farming environment and the reduction in the number of families working on the local farms;
- A perceived decline in the number of young residents ready to take on administration roles leading to "too many committees of one";
- Increasing difficulty in retaining members as well as attracting new members;
- Reduced time (and expertise) available for coaching and administration of sport;
- Decreasing parental support;
- Lack of 'local' role models;
- Lack of a coordinated strategic direction for club sport coaches, managers and administrators;
- Lack of communication between primary and secondary schools and the community sports clubs, leading to an absence of clear pathways from child-teen-post school sport delivery;
- Lack of communication between clubs leading to an absence of linkages and the inefficient use of scarce resources such as volunteers;
- An absence of opportunities for experienced administrators to pass on knowledge and mentor 'new blood';

Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs) are an established entity within the sports and recreation sector in New Zealand and in common with most RSTs Sport Wanganui was well-considered in the district and its input valued. The work undertaken by the Rangitikei District Coordinator on behalf of the Rangitikei District met with overwhelming support and appreciation. However the agency does not have the capacity to offer a dedicated, personalised and permanent volunteer support service within each community. It is considered unlikely that such a service delivered over the long-term would be affordable or necessary.

In some instances community established Trusts undertake complementary roles with the RST within single townships. Whilst this option is worthy of consideration RDC will need to establish the long-term costs of supporting up to eight community trusts (for physical activity alone) each with their own administration and promotions as against supporting a single agency with a district focus.

It is recommended that funding be sought for a series of short-term (three to six month) postings of a dedicated individual to the main communities to assist with leisure (active, passive, arts and culture) project and programme

development and volunteer support/education (an 'animateur'¹¹). A short-term approach to the posting would reduce the risk of dependency or displacement of volunteer effort. This could be one contracted position moving from one community to the next within a three to five-year period. Another option is for a higher level of support with several short-term contract positions working concurrently in several communities. Such input may be required on a rolling basis, perhaps once every three to five years in each community to revitalise volunteer input and their community organisations (should the first round prove effective).

Such a project would be a joint initiative between RDC and Sport Wanganui who have a district-wide mandate, be managed jointly by the RST and the TA with regular input from any Community Leisure Consultative Committees developed. This is a separate position to the Sport Wanganui, Rangitikei district co-ordinator who would continue to provide ongoing service across the entire district and liaise closely and support the contracted position.

Global Leisure Group is aware that other communities across New Zealand are looking to develop similar volunteer support positions within their communities. It is anticipated that development of a *network* of experienced professionals in these roles will not only help the individual communities but will strongly assist SPARC is achieving it's vision:

To be recognised by 2006 as world leading in our approach, measured by:

'Having the most effective Sport and Recreation systems...'¹²

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|-----------------------|---|
| Objective(s) | Maintain vibrant leisure organisation structures by encouraging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment and retention of volunteers ▪ Sustainability of clubs through improved management, promotion and succession planning ▪ Rationalisation and merging of clubs/activities where appropriate ▪ Adaptation of activity to meet changing demand |
| Lead agency(s) | SW/RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|---|------------------------------|
| 13. Seek funding through SPARC's Active Communities scheme for an 'animateur'. The animateur/volunteer coordinator to work (a) identifying district needs, (b) on gaining agreement from community sports groups on appropriate single-venue township infrastructure, (c) gathering base-line data on participation rates, and (d) undertaking research on the impact of interventions upon outcomes. | Immediate New resource |
| 14. Sport forum for district sports organisations (RSOs, District Assns, local clubs, and community trusts) to identify common factors between clubs/groups that are struggling/achieving and establish 'best practice model' for district implementation. | 12-24 months New resource |
| 15. Community volunteer support forum – identify volunteer specific issues, identify required volunteer skill-sets, set up community based club volunteer network. Possible linkage with Government 2005 budget resourcing for recreation and sport volunteers. | 12-24 months New resource |
| 16. TAs support amalgamation of 'struggling' clubs and facilities where appropriate in return for support/resourcing (TAs decline funding/support where clubs do not consider amalgamation of | Ongoing Existing resource |

¹¹ A French term which denotes a person in the field of education, social work or community development who works to stimulate people to awareness of their own needs as a group, so that they define the nature of the needs, determine the means to satisfy them and act to do so.

¹² Our Vision, Our Direction – SPARC 2002. www.sparc.org.nz/about-us/overview

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| administration and/or facility where appropriate) | |
| 17. Sport Wanganui to encourage and support district and town specific sports organisations to undertake a risk analysis regarding the sustainability of their organisation and its activities and introduce the Sportsville concept as a development option (township leisure hubs see section 7.5). | Ongoing New resources |

7.5. Affordable and appropriate scale of facility provision district-wide and within each community

Goal: An affordable and appropriate facility network

7.5.1. Key elements

The identification of affordable and appropriate scale of facility provision within each community, and consideration for how different scales of resource provision and leisure activity promotion can assist toward achieving equity of access to facilities and services across the district.

7.5.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

All the main communities in Rangitikei have desires for centralised sport and recreation facilities mostly inclusive of an indoor venue, associated sports and recreation groupings and in the case of Marton and Taihape a redeveloped aquatic centre. There is also a demand for centralised arts display venues with associated functions over time. Whilst the communities may desire such facilities the development of these facilities will incur significant capital, operations and maintenance costs. While each community has access to a variety of capital funding options, the long-term costs of operating any facilities requires *very careful and prudent consideration*.

There is a common expectation amongst those consulted for the level of service offered by each of these facilities, including sports fields, to cater for local and entry level participation standard and access. Of those consulted regarding Marton and local environment there was a perceived advantage to being close to both Palmerston North and Wanganui (access to leisure infrastructure yet not paying for them through local rates) and often undertaking leisure on the way to or from working in those towns. No research data was available to indicate the number of Rangitikei residents who work out of the district (or vice versa).

Each community (through town leisure plans) should consider development of a leisure hub specifically designed to meet the majority of leisure needs in the town thereby creating economies of scale and a greater chance of funding investment than a larger number of smaller and isolated initiatives.

In common with many provincial and rural councils across the country RDC has not traditionally and we do not consider that they should now be involved in the delivery of local community *programmes or activities* which are more effectively delivered by clubs, schools, Sport Wanganui, community run Trusts and social agencies. RDC should however have a role in facilitating the provision of physical activity and passive leisure *settings* in which and at which activities occur, including mediation where necessary between community groups and schools.

The availability of affordable and accessible facilities for leisure activity (physical, passive and artistic) could be enhanced through effective partnerships between schools and community groups. Determining appropriate models for school and community collaboration, aligning programming with current demand and assessing as a whole of community approach to the facility service, mix and location is crucial.

Each community needs to address the most appropriate and equitable model for school and community use of local facilities.

This plan was unable to determine the leisure attitudes and therefore facility requirements of rural (mainly farming) residents – what they like to do, where they do it etc. Anecdotally though it appears that many rural residents travel to the main townships for sport and physical activity options and in the absence of significant new funding or a dramatic population increase enabling new facility development in rural locations it is considered that any leisure hub development within the main towns will serve the rural population as well.

Opportunities for spontaneous leisure (going for a walk or jog, a ramble in the reserve, skateboard through town, a family cricket match or throwing hoops in cul-de-sac 3-on-3) should not be overlooked. When considering facilities and scales of provision it is important to remember that unstructured, spontaneous activity is highly important (although very hard to quantify).

7.5.3. *Appropriate scales of facility provision*

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|---------------------|--|
| Objective(s) | <p>A network of local facilities (built and open-space) are provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are appropriate to the size of each community and their capacity to service such facilities ▪ Add, where possible, to 'what is already there' before development of new facilities ▪ That provide a central hub for the majority of leisure activity ▪ Take into consideration actual and latent demand for such facilities ▪ Provide for local level competition and access and local 'standard' arts activity ▪ Take into consideration the proximity of similar facilities in neighbouring towns and districts/cities ▪ Are integrated within a transport network that encourages physically active transport options (walking and cycling) within each town enhancing opportunities for 'spontaneous' recreation. |
| Lead agency | RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 18. Identify with Community Leisure Consultative Committees an appropriate location for hub facilities, level of need and priorities for provision (facility and service mix) | 12-24 months New resource |
| 19. Identify (with local schools) the best 'intra-town' walking and cycling routes based on the location of the hub facility and work with relevant agencies to enhance these | 2008 New resource |
| 20. Work with SPARC to research 'good practice' models for school and community partnerships | Immediate New resource |
| 21. Work internally with other RDC departments on recognition of spontaneous recreation opportunities in all planning | Ongoing New resource |
| 22. Undertake full-day Councillors Workshop to identify facility specific issues and determine community mandate (in absence of community outcomes in yet to be completed 2006 LTCCP). | Immediate Existing resource |

7.6. The Great Outdoors

Goal: Ensure residents are able and motivated to access quality outdoor settings in the district, while maximising tourism benefits from domestic and international visitors.

7.6.1. Key Elements

Providing information, education and access. Managing competing recreational interests. Sustainability and preservation.

7.6.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

The Rangitikei district has significant outdoor attractions – rivers, beaches, valleys, hills and bush – all accessible and generally well maintained. There are no data available on the number of regular ‘users’ of these outdoor opportunities but feedback suggests ample capacity to cope with greater use (whilst this may be debated by river users, discussions tended to be around the style of use and competing demand rather than numbers of users). Similarly there are no data readily available to gauge visitor impact on the rivers, beaches and mountains.

The pressures on managers of large-scale public open space are growing. The Rangitikei district is no exception. A range of issues are directing the need for effective long-term planning, including:

- *Tourism* growth,
- Increasing *expectations* for levels of service (residents and visitors),
- *Biodiversity* imperatives,
- New *statutory requirements*, including, especially, the Local Government Act 2002 with its requirements to effectively address social, cultural, economic and environmental issues¹³ in all management activities,
- High expectations (and statutory requirements) for *cross-cultural* consultation and partnerships,
- A strong sense of *ownership of local resources by locals*, and high expectations for easy accessibility by a much wider audience (creating the potential for recreation displacement),
- The need for sound long-term *financial planning* (statutory and common sense),
- *Commercial interests* in domestic and international tourism venues (with impacts often indistinguishable from general recreational use),
- Expectations regarding the continuance of past recreation pursuits by long-term residents and visitors (and concerns regarding displacement),
- A lack of agreement over the core values of open space and the best means for conserving these, while affording wonderful recreation opportunities.

There is high anticipation that the Rangitikei will have an increasing resident population (moving into the area because of the outdoor environment and therefore with high expectations), and a rapidly increasing domestic tourism market driven by both the core values of the environment (quiet, unspoilt, dramatic) and the ability to consume (or expend) large amounts of adrenalin and energy. It is considered crucial to both these initiatives, and good management practice, to ensure appropriate quantity and quality of infrastructure is available ‘before they all come’. Suitable, widely agreed and understood policies on recreational use, conservation and tourism are urgently needed.

¹³ In this Great Outdoors context, these four values are considered to be the ‘vogue’ due to their prominence in the Local Govt Act. Environmental values include landscape and ‘natural heritage’ or biodiversity. Cultural values are assumed to include heritage assets. Social values are assumed to include recreation.

7.6.3. Recreational walking and access to information

The most common issue for access to bush and other walkways was a lack of information and signage - at point of decision-making, information about safety or difficulty and increasingly about ownership of the land and visitor responsibility.

The process of developing this plan also highlighted a number of other consistent themes, being:

- An absence of a consistent *promotion strategy* for recreational walkways
- An absence of a common *signage policy*. Classification, duration, and interpretation information is minimal.
- A desire for more *bilingual signage* to reflect community diversity and heritage significance of recreational walkways.
- An adhoc approach to community/council *partnerships* in the design, implementation and maintenance of recreational walkways leading to an unstructured and often unwieldy delivery of these routes.

A coordinated mapping exercise is required to identify all recreational routes managed by district agencies (RDC, Horizons, DoC), the access points, linkages and ownership.

Changes in the demographics of recreation walkway users (tourists and those with minimal time) will mean walkway providers developing more short duration (2 to 3 hours) opportunities at or near main roads.

7.6.4. Rangitikei River

The Rangitikei is a large river with its headwaters in the Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges. The River is characterised by steep valley sides and a spectacular series of river terrace formations in its middle reaches, created by the river cutting through the land mass.

A National Water Conservation Order protects parts of the upper and middle Rangitikei River and tributaries. The Order makes a distinction between the upper and middle part of the catchment¹⁴. The Order preserves the outstanding wild and scenic characteristics and the outstanding recreational fisheries and wildlife habitat features of the upper river. It also requires that waters in the upper catchment must be preserved in their natural state.

The Order protects the outstanding scenic characteristics recreational and fisheries features, of the middle river. As part of this protection the Order requires that at least 95% of the natural flow is retained in the rivers. The Order also requires that no damming takes place in the water in the Upper River or the Middle River.

The Lower Rangitikei River, Defined as downstream of Mangarere Bridge, is excluded from the National Water Conservation Order. This section has scenic, recreational, cultural and fisheries values. However, these values were not regarded sufficient to warrant protection by the National Water Conservation Order.¹⁵

The Rangitikei River is a nationally important trout fishery. National and international anglers consider the upper Rangitikei River to be one of the best rainbow trout fisheries in New Zealand.

¹⁴ The Order defines the Upper Catchment as including the Rangitikei River itself from its source (approximate map reference info map 260 U19:723-313) to its confluence with the Makahikatoa Stream (approximate map reference info map 260 U21:725-888) and all rivers and streams contributing water to the Rangitikei River upstream of that confluence. The Order defines that Middle Catchment as including the Rangitikei River itself from its confluence with the Makahikatoa Stream to the Mangarere Bridge and the Whakaurekou River plus all its tributaries and the Kawahatau River plus the following tributaries, the Pouranaki River and the Mangakokeke Stream.

¹⁵ Horizons Regional Council – Management Plan for Beds of Rivers and Lakes – March 2001

The River provides important opportunities for canoeing, white water rafting and jet boating. Tourism operators have established bungy jump facilities on the Mokai and Omatane bridges across the river.

The biggest issue for recreational and leisure use of the river surrounds the competing demands from the various users themselves – generally speaking, the trout fishers have an issue with the kayakers, the kayakers have an issue with jet-boats – trampers and hikers have an issue with helicopter-borne tourists spoiling the peace and tranquillity of their experience. There have been calls for an extension of the National Water Conservation Order (or a similar tool to protect the river) to include the majority of the waterway. This may have merits, as could a number of other initiatives but currently there is a lack of accurate and dispassionate data on:

- User numbers,
- Types of use,
- Core values and beliefs held about the river,
- Visitor impacts,
- Acceptable limits of change,
- Environmental and social impacts of various uses on the environment and alternative user groups.

Consultation suggests the need for a single representative grouping of all the recreational users of the river plus specialist agencies such as DoC, Horizons¹⁶ and RDC – referred to in this plan as the Rangitikei River Users Group. The Rangitikei River Users Group should undertake (using external resources if required) a Visitor Impact Assessment Study and a Recreational Displacement Study upon which to make informed decisions on the future recreational use of the river.

Poor access roads, a lack of signage (directional and interpretative) and rubbish build-up are pressing concerns also and these can be addressed by the relevant agency without reference to the users group.

7.6.5. Walkways and rivers

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| Objective(s) | Sustainable and equitable recreational use of walkways and rivers through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An understanding of current and future recreational demand ▪ Identification of the values and beliefs held by recreational users and non-users ▪ Readily accessible information, signage and interpretation ▪ A policy agreed by the majority of stakeholders that allows for diverse use of the river but with the welfare of the river being the first priority |
| Lead agency(s) | RDC/Horizons/DoC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|--|---------------------------|
| 23. Development of district wide signage and interpretation policy with specific focus on enhancing recreational use of the 'Great Outdoors' | By 2007 New resource |
| 24. Establishment of a single representative Rangitikei River Users Group | Immediate New resource |
| 25. Development of a Visitor Impact Assessment Study and a Recreational Displacement Study | June 2006 New resource |

¹⁶ Horizons Regional Council's "One Plan" strategy does not appear to mention their role in recreational management as it impacts upon biodiversity issues.

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| 26. Review roading access and rubbish removal policies | Immediate Existing resource |
| 27. Initiate a key-agency workshop to develop a common mapping tool for district walkways and leisure access. | Ongoing Existing resource |

7.7. Leisure and Healthy Communities

Goal: A healthy Rangitikei community through collaboration with health, physical activity and nutrition agencies.

7.7.1. Key elements

Community relationships with Good Health Wanganui, Primary Health Organisations and Iwi Health Providers in cooperative delivery of physical activity programmes. Increasing awareness of arts and creative leisure as a mechanism for improved mental health.

Ensuring that physical activity and nutrition, with other health interventions, are used holistically and in concert rather than at the exclusion of either.

7.7.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

The benefits of physical activity generally are now widely accepted by both government and non-governmental agencies. These benefits include: health and well being, personal development, social cohesion, economic development, reducing health care and justice costs, reducing antisocial and self-destructive behaviour and enhancing quality of life. The potential advantages in all sorts of areas from increasing physical activity are evident. Many of these benefits can accrue from exposure to open-spaces, aesthetically appealing environments and opportunities to relax and to recreate.

The relationship between regular physical activity and nutrition and the improved health of individuals and communities are many. Similarly the drivers behind the provision of community related health and physical activity initiatives are also many and varied. However, the outcomes have a common feature namely an increase in uptake of physical activity, and an improvement in health. In many settings healthy action and healthy eating go hand in hand and strategies to increase community health should not treat these two elements in isolation from each other.

Collaboration is seen as logical because of the high level of crossover in physical activity outcomes between stakeholders in health, transport, sport, and education and the roles that these sectors can play in identifying and delivering the initiatives. An example is the Ministry of Health's Healthy Eating – Healthy Action (HEHA) strategic framework (2003) and the HEHA implementation plan (2004-2010)¹⁷. The HEHA strategy has an emphasis on collaboration in the implementation Strategy. The HEHA strategy has a raft of actions that when implemented could support the Leisure Plan's outcome of 'More people, more active, more often, life-long in the Rangitikei District leading to a fun, vibrant, artistic, connected and healthier community'.

The agency most able to impact upon health through physical activity in collaboration with RDC is Good Health Wanganui (GHW). Whilst there are many other high quality providers, most of these have single-demographic or issue focus. The district-wide scope of GHW, their mandate through the Healthy Eating Healthy Action Strategy and the likelihood of sustainability (they're a good bet to be around for quite a while) means that collaborative action should bring wide benefits (bigger bang for all partners bucks). In the interests of efficiency and RDC's limited capacity to collaborate with every agency they'd like to, it is best for RDC to have a primary relationship with GHW and to utilise their extensive networks that way.

GHW advocate strongly to ensure that the currently disadvantaged can access the programmes and services they need to enhance their lives – promoting access and information and removing infrastructural barriers to physical activity, parks and gardens, arts venues and importantly also libraries are areas that RDC and GHW can achieve together.

¹⁷ Healthy Eating Healthy Action – A Strategic Framework – MoH 2003. HEHA Implementation Plans 2004-2010 – MoH 2004.

GHW have expressed a desire to be involved in collaborative delivery of healthier communities through this plan. Sport Wanganui work with both RDC and GHW and can act as an appropriate link between the agencies. Given the workloads and resourcing capacity of both RDC and GHW this collaboration is most likely to be limited to an understanding of each agencies position and ensuring that a representative from GHW sits upon the plan legacy group and the management team that the community animateur/volunteer coordinator (section 9.4) reports to.

| | |
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| Objective(s) | Target over time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each agency ▪ Cooperative delivery of physical activity and nutrition programmes ▪ Cooperative provision of settings ▪ Common goals and outcome statements across agencies with reference to physical activity/recreation/nutrition ▪ Common approach to research into links between physical activity, nutrition, arts and health outcomes |
| Lead agency | GHW/SW/RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|---|------------------------------|
| 28. RDC to formalise links with GHW through a Memorandum of Understanding or similar instrument | Immediate Nil resource |
| 29. Cooperate in the development of promotional material for community use describing the roles of all relevant agencies and how the agencies will work together to increase community health (tying this to Community Outcome Statements in the LTCCP process) | by June 2006 New resource |
| 30. Identify key research needs over medium to long-term and plan to conduct research | Medium New resource |
| 31. Invite GHW to be a member of the Leisure Plan Legacy Group | Immediate Nil resource |

7.8. Active Transport – connectivity for daily-life and discretionary activity

Goal: Safe active transport options in all communities in Rangitikei

7.8.1. Key elements

Coordinated planning to develop a connected and effective network of cycle and walking routes within townships that deliver high levels of visible and safe physical activity opportunities for both daily-life and discretionary travel.

Development of a District Walking and Cycling strategy.

7.8.2. Commentary/Issues/Opportunities

Active transport provides the most readily accessible form of physical activity for residents – active transport incorporates both discretionary and daily-life opportunities by making the active choice the easy choice.

Given the geographically spread nature of Rangitikei District it is unrealistic to develop 'inter-town' active transport options for daily-life functions such as walking to work from Mangaweka to Marton or cycling to the library between Taihape and Bulls. The development of an integrated 'intra-town' cycle and walking network is therefore an appropriate priority target for Rangitikei. The network will link the major daily-life needs of residents (school, library, supermarket, social services etc) and the location of any future leisure hubs (sections 7.3 and 7.5).

The need for 'more, better quality and accessible' walking opportunities (both footpaths and destination walkways) was a common feature particularly given an ageing population. 'Getting to' leisure activities is often a physical activity in itself and residents of Marton and Taihape voiced concerns over the standard of footpaths not only for walking as an activity in itself or mode of transport to leisure activity settings but also for mobility scooter users.

RDC is planning an initiative to increase the resident population of the district. It is essential that as development happens, the townships and new subdivisions retain high levels of amenity for walking and cycling (and mobility scooters). Any loss of these opportunities will probably have the greatest impacts on the role of physical activity in people's daily lives in Rangitikei.

The location of the State Highway through Bulls and Taihape means Council will need to carefully consider how to integrate transport planning and traffic initiatives with future recreation planning on the needs for the resident pedestrian before the 'drive-by viewer' (as an example feedback from Bulls residents demonstrated a clear wariness of the main road and feelings of very genuine concern for elderly trying to cross the road, whilst Taihape residents suggest that active transport and safe communities cannot be achieved until an overbridge is built for the new combined school).

Future development of a 'district ramble' route for physically active users and those accessing the Rangitikei Arts and Heritage Trail (section 7.1) may be possible utilising the Major Regional Partnership (a government funded initiative between the Rangitikei, Ruapehu and Wanganui councils).

Investigation of a collaborative approach with Horizons Regional Council to district active transport options should be explored.

Opportunities for spontaneous leisure (going for a walk or jog, a ramble in the reserve, skateboard through town, a family cricket match or throwing hoops in cul-de-sac 3-on-3) should not be overlooked. When considering non-motorised access to recreation it is important to remember that unstructured, spontaneous activity is highly important and for many, (specifically the senior population) getting 'to' leisure is an activity in itself.

7.8.3. Integrated town and district cycle and walking networks

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Objective(s) | A connected and effective network of local and district cycle and walking routes. |
| Lead agency | RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|--|----------------------------|
| 32. Schools in Rangitikei undertake a walking and cycling audit of their towns using the audit tools from SPARC's 'Activity Friendly Environments' document ¹⁸ and collate findings back to RDC | by 2006 Nil resource |
| 33. Sport Wanganui to facilitate township active transport forums to identify priority routes and establish action plans | 2006/7 New resource |
| 34. Complete a study on the potential of using rail corridors for off road cycling and walking as a basis for a district active transport strategy | Ongoing New resource |
| 35. Work with Community Arts and Culture Coordinator (section 7.1.3) on a feasibility study to establish a District Arts, Culture and Heritage Trail | Medium New resource |

¹⁸ www.sparc.org.nz/whatwedo. 'Activity Friendly Environments - Making the active choice the easy choice, SPARC 2004.

7.9. Leisure and Rangitikei's youth

Goal: Active, creative and informed district youth

7.9.1. Key elements

Leisure access for 12-18 year olds. The impact of travel. Development of youth appropriate destinations within a wider leisure hub context.

7.9.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

The specific leisure needs of youth (12-18) are difficult to define given the extensive physical and emotional changes that occur over this period and therefore the myriad of possible alternative needs. Many leisure plans advocate the provision of youth centres in all locations but they often do so without regard to community's such as Rangitikei's ability to resource and sustain such infrastructure for what can be a dynamic and changing culture and fad-prone adolescent period. Certainly consideration should be given to facilitation of programmes and services relevant to youth in a venue appropriate to the larger communities in Bulls, Marton and Taihape (particularly so for Taihape which is by far the most isolated main town) but only within the community leisure hub concept rather than a separate location.

Consultation with secondary school students in Marton suggested that there was not 'a lack of things to do' if you were prepared to 'get motivated', 'it's not a lack of places – it's a lack of get up and go'. This seems particularly true for the Rangitikei district and the outdoors opportunities available but these are vehicle (or caregiver) dependant opportunities. The integration of active transport initiatives 'intra-town' and the provision of a web-accessible opportunities database, will alleviate some of these issues but not all.

The fundamental issue for youth leisure was 'a place of our own', 'somewhere we can have'. The location does not need to provide activities as the primary motivation would appear to be social connection, but having activities at the destination is certainly an advantage.

"...young people need public spaces (destinations) for the same reasons as other people, but particularly as places to establish and maintain relationships with each-other, and as affordable places to spend time outside of school and home. The extension of schooling and the demise of employment opportunities has made peer interaction a central feature of young peoples lives"¹⁹

As with other groups consulted with in Rangitikei access to information and knowledge regarding opportunities is often a major barrier to participation for youth – if you don't know where to look, or how to look or what to seek you are unlikely to take the next step. Development of promotional material in a format accessible by youth i.e. at schools, sports clubs and on a youth developed web-site is a cost effective and efficient means of delivering knowledge.

For those young people without access to outdoor opportunities – or without 'get up and go' (whatever the reason) students agreed that the 'hub' was the local school in the absence of other alternatives. Improved collaboration between schools and the community both in use of facilities, development of better facilities and creating a stronger link between community leisure groups and school students was important.

There was broad respondent agreement that understanding where young people like to go and why they like to go there was a more focussed way of understanding planning needs than asking 'what do you want'. The development of a Youth Destination Plan both Rangitikei wide and within each town, aligned with research into the importance of youth settings in rural communities and social interaction is recommended. Investment in re-locatable activities (portable skatepark, transportable staging etc) and moving this between the townships in

¹⁹ Queensland University of Technology – Youth Publication. Unknown author 2000.

collaboration with the community animateur provides a changing leisure environment without the necessary investment of permanent infrastructure.

Where permanent infrastructure is considered as part of the suggested Minimum Levels of Service (7.3.2), ensure a youth representative is engaged to undertake consultation on 'style and design'.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Objective(s) | <p>Ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of appropriate youth settings in accessible locations ▪ Co-ordinated promotions and marketing systems across the towns and district ▪ Access to information is appropriate to youth age group ▪ Integration between 'youth hubs' and 'community hubs' to enhance social connectedness and efficiency of capital expenditure. |
| Lead agency | RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 36. Develop a youth focussed leisure committee within council (most appropriately part of a more generic Youth Council) | 2006 Existing resource |
| 37. Develop a Rangitikei Youth web-site as an off-shoot of the RDC site | 2007 New resource |
| 38. Identify through township youth forums popular destinations and elements | 2006 New resource |
| 39. Develop a proposal to SPARC for research into youth destinations in rural settings and the development of re-locatable recreation assets. | Immediate Existing resource |
| 40. Invite a nominated young person onto the Leisure Plan Legacy Group | Ongoing Nil resource |
| 41. Give priority to youth initiatives when developing Minimum Levels of Service in each township (7.3.2) | Ongoing New resource |

7.10. Engagement with Maori for physical activity, arts and culture opportunities

Goal: A healthy and informed, leisure educated Maori population

7.10.1. Key elements

Ensuring access to information. Understanding of Maori specific issues and addressing barriers to participation.

7.10.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

Maori make up 23% of Rangitikei's usually resident population²⁰. Unfortunately Maori represent a disproportional percentage of new cases of Type II diabetes and are over representation in community obesity levels.

However, there is little if any data on the levels of Maori participation in active and passive recreation or arts and cultural pursuits within Rangitikei. There are no data on numbers of Maori playing organised club sport, utilising the river and bush, participating in Rock and Roll classes or learning how to paint. There are no current data to suggest that access to leisure for Maori is the result of barriers different to that of the rest of the population although national figures and local anecdotal information suggests socio-economic barriers can and do prevent access to information (if not the activity itself).

Rangitikei District Council have combined Iwi representation to the council through Te Roopu Ahi Kaa. Discussions on this draft Rangitikei Leisure Plan have been had with Te Roopu Ahi Kaa at a formal meeting at the council offices and further information has been forwarded to the group and clarification sought. Consultation will be undertaken using the draft document as a base and the identification of any Maori specific issues not covered within the 'general' scope of this plan will be incorporated at that time.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Objective(s) | Ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current and accurate knowledge of Maori specific needs in relation to leisure activity access ▪ Leisure opportunities are representative of Maori activity ▪ Te Roopu Ahi Kaa representation on the Leisure Plan Legacy Group |
| Lead agency | Te Roopu Ahi Kaa |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 42. Consult with Te Roopu Ahi Kaa with the draft Leisure Plan | Immediate Existing resource |
| 43. Task Te Roopu Ahi Kaa with consultation within specific communities of interest and collation of feedback | Immediate Existing resource |
| 44. Invite Te Roopu Ahi Kaa representation on Leisure Plan Legacy Group | by end 2005 New resource |
| 45. Seek funding through Investing in Communities and Creative Communities Fund for necessary social research or recommended actions | 2006 New resource |
| 46. Further develop the leisure facility Access database created as part of this leisure planning process for iwi specific and marae based opportunities. | 2006/07 New resource |

²⁰ Statistics New Zealand 2001 Census. Usually Resident Population Tables. www.stats.govt.nz

7.11. Promotion, marketing and information sharing

Goal: An informed, up-to-date and leisure educated community

7.11.1. Key elements

Collation, promotion and information sharing services for all leisure options.

7.11.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

Lack of access to information and knowledge regarding opportunities is very often a major barrier to participation – if you don't know where to look, or how to look or what to seek you are unlikely to take the next step. Development of promotional material (in a format accessible by the majority of residents) is a cost effective and efficient means of delivering knowledge about sports clubs, arts and heritage groups, walkways, age-specific activities, providers and support agencies. However, maintaining such information (databases, currency and relevance of information) is often an onerous and resource-hungry task.

Consultation strongly suggests that the rewards would be well worth the effort and many respondents identified the information centres as an appropriate agency to undertake the task. In the absence of an Information Centre service the town libraries might perform the function. RDC describe the libraries as "...(providing) a window to local, national and international information and creativity. In addition they provide a neutral, safe, community environment".

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Objective(s) | Ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current and accurate database of opportunities and providers ▪ Co-ordinated promotions and marketing systems across the towns and district ▪ Access to information is appropriate to target group |
| Lead agency | RDC |

| Recommended Action | Timing / Resourcing |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 47. Collate in common format a database of all activities and organisations across the district | Immediate Existing resource |
| 48. Promote/publish/house the database in a format accessible to community | Medium New resource |
| 49. Task one organisation with ensuring currency of database | Medium New resource |
| 50. Investigate appropriate media in which to target specific groups | Medium Existing resource |
| 51. Further develop the leisure facility Access database created as part of this leisure planning process. | Medium New resource |

7.12. Plan sustainability

Goal: A sustainable approach to leisure activity access across the district.

7.12.1. Key elements

Keeping this plan alive and effective through continuing evaluation, monitoring, review and collaboration via a committed Legacy Group.

7.12.2. Discussion/issues/opportunities

‘Oh – no...not another door stop!

As discussed in the introduction to Part A – many of the leisure and facility provision issues facing the Rangitikei District have been found to be in common with other areas across New Zealand that have a geographically spread population with isolated and ‘fiercely independent’ townships.

The reality is that there are a relatively small number of issues and barriers impacting upon uptake of recreation, physical activity and arts across New Zealand and a limited number of appropriate and achievable actions that can be undertaken by smaller territorial authorities – the uniqueness of a plan of this nature lies in the individual community’s response and enthusiasm for addressing the issues and actions.

The uniqueness and success of the plan also lies in ensuring that the recommended actions are *prioritised in accordance with community feedback* and consultation on the draft and that the agencies tasked with the actions are comfortable with and able to undertake them. The development of a Rangitikei Leisure Plan Legacy Group will manage this role. The development of a monitoring tool as part of recreation planning processes around New Zealand (see Appendices document) allows the legacy group to localise the tool when actions have been prioritised and agreed and progress toward the desired goals can be monitored.

It is recommended that the Legacy Group give priority to the implementation of the District issues and actions above before addressing local township issues and actions.

7.12.3. Sustainability

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Goal(s) | This Plan continues to have effect and is reviewed and improved over time. |
| Lead agency | RDC/SW |

| Action | Timing / Resources |
|--|--|
| 52. RDC identify and coordinate the development and endorse a Rangitikei Leisure Plan Legacy Group to advance the actions recommended in this plan. | Immediate Existing resources |
| 53. The Legacy Group invite representatives from other lead agencies and key partners to pledge their commitment to the Plan and to co-ordinate the implementation of leisure strategies – particularly communications – across the district | Immediate Existing resources |
| 54. In response to Plan feedback, prioritise the recommended actions, gain formal agreement by stakeholders and further develop the monitoring and evaluation tool | Determined by community feedback Existing resources |

7.13. District Action Priority Setting

The Leisure Plan Steering Group have undertaken an Action Priority Setting exercise. This prioritisation is necessary for resources to be allocated and the actions with the greatest chance of maximum impact can be advocated sooner rather than later.

Those with a '1' in the score box are considered to be necessary for the Leisure Plan to be implemented and upon which all the following actions will depend – they are therefore the 'first' actions to be undertaken (must do and within 12-18 months).

The remaining actions are **2 – 6**, with **2 being high priority** (must do and within 18-36 months, resource dependant) and **6 being low priority** (may do some time in future if resources are available). Having a relatively large number of lower priority actions recognises the resource capacity of the plan stakeholders rather than suggesting the actions are not very important.

| Recommended Actions | Score 1 – 6 (1= First; 6= low) |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| RDC form an Arts, Culture and Heritage Collaborative Committee to develop a District Arts, Heritage and Culture Agenda | 1 |
| Sport Wanganui coordinate development of a district physical activity and leisure consultative committee to progress a district policy on behalf of RDC and community | 1 |
| RDC adopt the Facility Planning Principles (section 6.1) and identify and apply the Council Role (section 6.2) for each future initiative as part of any policy framework | 1 |
| RDC adopt 'agreed minimum level of service' policy as part of both the arts agenda and physical activity policy within respective Activity Management Plans | 1 |
| Establishment of a single representative Rangitikei River Users Group | 1 |
| RDC identify and coordinate the development and endorse a Rangitikei Leisure Plan Legacy Group to advance the actions recommended in this plan. | 1 |
| RDC to formalise links with GHW through a Memorandum of Understanding or similar instrument | 1 |
| Invite GHW to be a member of the Leisure Plan Legacy Group | 1 |
| Sport Wanganui to facilitate township active transport forums to identify priority routes and establish action plans | 1 |
| Develop a youth focussed leisure committee within council (most appropriately part of a more generic Youth Council) | 1 |
| Invite a nominated young person onto the Leisure Plan Legacy Group | 1 |
| Consult with Te Roopu Ahi Kaa with the draft Leisure Plan and invite Te Roopu Ahi Kaa onto Legacy Group | 1 |
| Development of a Visitor Impact Assessment Study and a Recreational Displacement Study | 1 |
| Work internally with other RDC departments on recognition of spontaneous recreation opportunities in all planning | 1 |

| | |
|--|---|
| The collaborative committee seek funding on behalf of the district from the Creative Communities Scheme to contract a District Arts, Culture and Heritage Volunteer Coordinator to work (a) identifying township arts, heritage and culture needs, (b) on gaining agreement from community arts groups on appropriate single-venue township infrastructure, (c) gathering base-line data on participation rates, and (d) undertaking research on the viability of combining local arts initiatives with an arts/heritage/culture tourism network and development of a professional arts network as a new resident incentive scheme | 2 |
| Seek funding through SPARC's Active Communities scheme for an 'animateur'. The animateur/volunteer coordinator to work (a) identifying district needs, (b) on gaining agreement from community sports groups on appropriate single-venue township infrastructure, (c) gathering base-line data on participation rates, and (d) undertaking research on the impact of interventions upon outcomes. | 2 |
| Identify with Community Leisure Consultative Committees an appropriate location for hub facilities, level of need and priorities for provision (facility and service mix) | 2 |
| Work with Community Arts and Culture Coordinator (section 7.1.3) on a feasibility study to establish a District Arts, Culture and Heritage Trail | 2 |
| Collate in common format a database of all activities and organisations across the district | |
| The Legacy Group invite representatives from other lead agencies and key partners to pledge their commitment to the Plan and to co-ordinate the implementation of leisure strategies – particularly communications – across the district | 2 |
| In response to Plan feedback, prioritise the recommended actions, gain formal agreement by stakeholders and further develop the monitoring and evaluation tool | 2 |
| The collaborative committee promote the outcomes and mechanisms of the Agenda to affected groups i.e. where the policy has impact upon types of initiatives and funding applications | 3 |
| Identify and establish a Rangitikei Arts and Heritage Trail accessible by walkers and cyclists (section 7.13) | 3 |
| Promote/publish/house the database in a format accessible to community and task one organisation with ensuring currency of database | |
| RDC facilitate the development of Community Leisure Consultative Committees for Bulls, Marton, Hunterville and Taihape with focus on leisure planning and priority setting | 3 |
| RDC promote the outcomes and mechanisms of the policy to affected groups i.e. where the policy has impact upon types of initiatives and funding applications | 3 |
| Investigate 'best practice' partnership models and contracts for community/school collaboration. | 3 |
| Utilising the established Community Leisure Consultative Committees establish long-term facility requirements, capital and operating funding and sustainability strategies . | 3 |
| TAs support amalgamation of 'struggling' clubs and facilities where appropriate in return for support/resourcing (TAs decline funding/support where clubs do not consider amalgamation of administration and/or facility where appropriate) | 3 |
| Sport Wanganui to encourage and support district and town specific sports organisations to undertake a risk analysis regarding the sustainability of their organisation and its activities and introduce the Sportville concept as a development option (township leisure hubs see section 7.5). | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Undertake full-day Councillors Workshop to identify facility specific issues and determine community mandate (in absence of community outcomes in yet to be completed 2006 LTCCP). | 3 |
| Development of district wide signage and interpretation policy with specific focus on enhancing recreational use of the 'Great Outdoors' | 3 |
| Cooperate in the development of promotional material for community use describing the roles of all relevant agencies and how the agencies will work together to increase community health (tying this to Community Outcome Statements in the LTCCP process) | 3 |
| Task Te Roopu Ahi Kaa with consultation within specific communities of interest and collation of feedback | 3 |
| Workshop with relevant agencies (TAs, Sport Wanganui, Health, BOTs, Principal Assns, community trusts) to identify and agree on scope of community/school partnerships. | 4 |
| Community volunteer support forum – identify volunteer specific issues, identify required volunteer skill-sets, set up community based club volunteer network. Possible linkage with Government 2005 budget resourcing for recreation and sport volunteers. | 4 |
| Schools in Rangitikei undertake a walking and cycling audit of their towns using the audit tools from SPARC's 'Activity Friendly Environments' document ²¹ and collate findings back to RDC. Identify (with local schools) the best 'intra-town' walking and cycling routes based on the location of the hub facility and work with relevant agencies to enhance these | 4 |
| Initiate a key-agency workshop to develop a common mapping tool for district walkways and leisure access. | 4 |
| Complete a study on the potential of using rail corridors for off road cycling and walking as a basis for a district active transport strategy | 4 |
| Develop a Rangitikei Youth web-site as an off-shoot of the RDC site | 4 |
| Further develop the leisure facility Access database created as part of this leisure planning process for iwi specific and marae based opportunities. | 5 |
| Investigate appropriate media in which to target specific groups | |
| Sport forum for district sports organisations (RSOs, District Assns, local clubs, and community trusts) to identify common factors between clubs/groups that are struggling/achieving and establish 'best practice model' for district implementation. | 5 |
| Work with SPARC to research 'good practice' models for school and community partnerships | 5 |
| Review roading access and rubbish removal policies | 5 |
| Identify key research needs over medium to long-term and plan to conduct research | 6 |
| Identify through township youth forums popular destinations and elements | 6 |
| Develop a proposal to SPARC for research into youth destinations in rural settings and the development of re-locatable recreation assets. | 6 |
| Give priority to youth initiatives when developing Minimum Levels of Service in each township (7.3.2) | 6 |

²¹ www.sparc.org.nz/whatwedo. 'Activity Friendly Environments - Making the active choice the easy choice, SPARC 2004.

| | |
|--|--|
| Further develop the leisure facility Access database created as part of this leisure planning process. | |
|--|--|

Part B: Local issues

8. Introduction

The goals and actions in this section respond to the 'local' issues identified in Stage One of this planning process and the community consultation undertaken in Stage Two. Whereas a **district** issue and recommended action (Part A) will bring benefit to the entire Rangitikei if adopted, a **local** issue and recommended action refers to a specific town or suburb.

The Stage One issues identification process aimed to identify the 'major' elements impacting upon the uptake of physical activity (SPARC's and RDC's primary focus) and the wider field of leisure including passive recreation and arts and culture (RDC's secondary focus). Not every issue or request for each town, club or individual can be incorporated into the plan but if the local and major issues and recommended actions that follow are adopted then there is a greater chance of 'making a difference'. The adoption of a community leisure volunteer coordinator will ensure that the 'bits and bobs' (a padlock for the rugby club, more storage for the drama group) will be accomplished over time.

It is anticipated that many of the issues and opportunities raised during the local township leisure planning consultative and research phases will have been addressed in Part A, given that the barriers impacting upon leisure uptake are common across the district and are not therefore repeated from Part A.

The primary recommendation of the plan is that Council adopt the District Actions (Part A) as priority before the local actions.

The following is based on the assumption that Rangitikei District Council's population increase initiatives are successful but that the population demographics remain constant.

The issue is listed, a discussion is presented introducing the key elements of the consultation feedback and research, a recommended action is noted where appropriate and a lead agency is suggested. The locations reflect the consultation process and feedback and the major activity and facility hubs. They are split into Bulls, Marton, Hunterville, Ratana, Taihape and Other Rural. It is not surprising to note the commonality between issues facing the townships in the Rangitikei District and although they are in common it is also important to note the impact of those issues may be different in each town hence some of the common local issues are addressed separately for each location.

8.1. Bulls

The census 2001 usually resident population count for Bulls was 1,755, a change of -6.1 percent since 1996. In comparison Rangitikei District's population has changed by -7.7percent. 23.9 percent of people in Bulls were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 13.8 percent of people in Bulls were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

Bulls township is the southern gateway to the Rangitikei District and is at the intersection of State Highways One and Three. Bulls has a long and well-founded reputation as an arts, crafts and antiques hub and is ideally located as the 'meet and greet' centre for connecting travellers – locals refer to Bulls as the 'Window to the Rangitikei', as would like to see Bulls developed as 'the new Tirau'.

The towns' location close to rivers and streams also puts Bulls at the centre of fishing activity and other water based opportunities. Bulls maintains a large but declining number of leisure clubs with a lack of critical mass to ensure sustainability – perhaps reflecting the decrease in population and the opportunities available to residents nearby.

The Domain is the defacto leisure hub and is well supported.

Bulls' location, near to Palmerston North, adds an interesting dimension to leisure provision in the town – how to provide leisure opportunities to engage the travelling public and residents whilst acknowledging that most residents travel regularly to Palmerston North for their work and leisure pursuits, both sporting and artistic.

The large traffic volume creates opportunities for economic gain but poses very real barriers to older adults walking and daily-life physical activity opportunities.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Bulls issues to consider include:

8.1.1. Bulls Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p>Provision of leisure opportunities for youth</p> | <p>There are opportunities for youth (12-18) leisure in Bulls but the majority of these involve access to 'outdoors' activities and mainly unstructured (river etc). However, accessing these opportunities is often dependent upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transport ▪ Money ▪ Knowledge ▪ Community acceptance (age related and culturally related) ▪ Motivation ▪ Conflicting use <p>Bulls' location relatively near to Palmerston North means that if youth do have access to motorised transport and wish to access leisure opportunities then many of them go to Palmerston North. Although no data was available it is thought that the majority of secondary aged youth attend school and play their sports within the Palmerston North/Manawatu catchment.</p> <p>Questions were raised during consultation about provision of either youth specific opportunities within Bulls or making access to Palmerston North easier and more cost effective. The total usually resident population under the age of 15 years in Bulls was approx 240 plus rural youth from surrounding districts (many of whom also go to school in Palmerston North). At this time it is suggested that Council adoption of the minimum levels of service (section 7.3.2) for leisure facilities, in addition to increased promotion of available opportunities and consideration of youth specific interests in the Bull's Leisure Hub will be sufficient to address youth leisure issues in the town.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council adopt the Agreed Minimum Levels Of Service (7.3.2) with emphasis upon Youth Action Zones in Bulls. 2. Collation of all youth opportunities available in walking or cycling distance in Bulls and post on Youth Web-site (7.9) | <p>Immediate</p> <p>2006</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>Community Board</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Development of a central arts and culture facility and a coordinated approach to arts and culture provision</p> | <p>Bulls is traditionally known as an arts and crafts and antiques town and given it's central location at the meeting point of two State Highways it is ideally located to build economic development through this sector (the new Tirau?). It is important though to remember that the goal of this planning process is first and foremost about increasing levels of access to leisure activity by residents.</p> <p>Consultation suggests the development of a central arts and culture venue. Given the relatively small size of the local population any centre would need to service both the needs of residents and tourists for sustainability. Sustainability is also more likely if all arts and culture groups within Bulls recognise a single vision and the need to be located centrally so that the venue would house performing and visual arts and culture with an integrated administration base.</p> <p>Bulls is in the process of a Strategic Planning exercise looking at the improvement of Bulls from a beautification and accessibility view – any central facility would need to be incorporated into these bigger picture plans.</p> <p>For the benefit of all of Rangitikei it was considered important for towns to have a 'point of difference' and Bulls' difference could be centred upon improving the arts and culture brand. It is proposed also to develop a Rangitikei Arts, Culture and Heritage Trail for both motorised and active transport options (section 7.8) – Bulls would be the logical information centre for such a Trail. This should also include a proposed cycle route from Bulls to Koitiata Beach.</p> <p>Integration of a central venue will need to be considered within the wider leisure hub context depending upon availability of land. It is recommended that the development of such a centre in Bulls is progressed over the next 5-10 years.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Council develop and adopt an Arts, Culture and Heritage Agenda (7.1) 4. Bulls is tagged as the Arts and Heritage Gateway to the Rangitikei and funds are sought through the Regional Partnership programme for development of a complementary brand 5. An integrated Arts, Heritage and Culture venue is developed over time | <p>2006</p> <p>2007/8</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC/CNZ/Tourism Rangitikei</p> <p>RDC/Bulls Community Board</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Resourcing of the proposed Bulls River Walkway and Councils role within such a development.</p> | <p>The development of Activity Friendly Environments (AFE) as a way of increasing the uptake and level of physical activity is now well documented²². AFEs are designed to make the 'active choice the easy choice' for residents by identifying the infrastructural and social barriers to participation and addressing them through intervention strategies.</p> <p>Key issues in Bulls preventing AFEs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of integrated walkways and cycleways ▪ High traffic volumes on SH with few crossings ▪ Emphasis on motor traffic over pedestrian needs ▪ Dispersed parks and gardens with little connection to 'daily-life' activity routines i.e. linking home with school, work, library, supermarket, and recreation settings <p>Through this planning process Council has demonstrated a commitment to improving access to leisure opportunities for residents and as such can be assumed to have a role in appropriate initiatives that contribute to that goal. One of these is the development of the River Walkway that can serve as an ideal 'vehicle' for encouraging activity, linking Bulls with an iconic setting and contributing to the economic development of Bulls by providing a well located and visible activity for tourists. The proposed route linking the river, Bulls Domain and up through Criterion St also provides an extra fitness trail dimension (section 7.3.2) and cultural history interpretation opportunity (section 7.1).</p> <p>Resourcing of the Bulls River Trail is being considered by a local group presently. Whilst Council may be able to contribute over time, it's most likely role (section 6.1) will be that of facilitator and advocate to external funding agencies and acting as the catalyst for agencies such as Horizons to see the biodiversity</p> | <p>6. Development of accessible, safe and well promoted walkways/buggy ways that link residential areas to essential services (library, bank, supermarket, schools, Plunket – section 7.8.3)</p> <p>7. Council adopt as a basis for future decision making the Council Roles Policy (6.1) and act as facilitator and advocate for Rangitikei River Trail</p> <p>8. All Bulls schools are encouraged to undertake a walking and cycling audit (www.sparc.org.nz/whatwedo/afe) to direct future council planning</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>2006</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>Principals Assn/Sport Wanganui</p> |

²² Activity Friendly Environments – SPARC 2004. www.sparc.org.nz/whatwedo

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
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| | <p>education role that such a trail could play.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Bulls River trail is a priority initiative for getting more people more active more often and linking the physical activity, passive activity, arts and culture elements of the leisure plan.</p> | | | |
| <p>Community expectations for levels of service delivery for physical activity options (sport) and non-sport activity (walkways, creative activity)</p> | <p>Levels of Service (LOS) for active recreation relate to the standard of provision by council of various services including activity , built infrastructure and open-space (7.3.2). LOS for physical activity uptake may relate to the frequency and cost of a holiday programme, maintenance and management of the Domain or Santoft Park or length of grass on a sportsfield or quality of cricket-block.</p> <p>Within an arts and culture context LOS may relate to the facilitation/provision of a single arts venue in Bulls and resourcing necessary marketing to aid tourism activity.</p> <p>Levels of Service also need to be seen within the wider contexts of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Travel times ▪ Profile of community and ability to resource within the town over time. <p>Although consultation on this point was limited within Bulls there appears to be agreement that Council provided LOS which promote local level competition and access are preferred rather than higher competitive or professional activity level.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council adopt the Minimum Levels of Service for leisure (section 7.3.2) as they apply to Bulls. Consideration should <i>also</i> be given to developing fitness circuits and multi-age playgrounds (youth action zones for the older youth) at Duddings Lake and Santoft Domain.</p> | <p>9. RDC's Asset Management Plans and other relevant council policy commit to a LOS that allows entry-level and local competition level physical activity within Bulls</p> <p>10. RDC to investigate opportunities to assist clubs/groups requiring to travel with access to funding or other support</p> <p>11. Establish a BMX or large-scale off-road cycling track within safe cycling distance of the township possibly with any new Domain fitness trail or associated with the College</p> <p>12. Pursue the development of and ongoing improvement of existing skatepark facilities.</p> <p>13. Review play equipment provision and develop an additional play area within the urban area of the township and Duddings Lake.</p> <p>14. Develop, name, sign and publicise a set of walking and cycling circuits within</p> | <p>Medium as reviewed</p> <p>Within 2 years</p> <p>within 3 years</p> <p>Within 5 years</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC/Sport Wanganui</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>Community Board</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>Community Board</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|--|---|--|------------------|--|
| | | the town. | | |
| <p>The impact of Ohakea’s potential growth on leisure demands and the ability of Bulls township to meet demand.</p> | <p>The Rangitikei leisure Plan has been developed during a period of uncertainty over the future size of the Ohakea Air-Base community. That Ohakea will ‘be there’ and will be expanded is certain – it is the scope of any development that is not clear. This section assumes a mid-ground scenario being a growth at the base that brings 2000 extra people to the base. Where they will choose to live and how they will spend their leisure time has not been confirmed. It is understood from Council and community sources that houses in the Bulls, Marton and Palmerston North area have been purchased with a view to future development.</p> <p>Of leisure significance to the wider Bulls community, Ohakea currently has a gymnasium, swimming pool, squash courts and sports-fields (used primarily for rugby league and cricket) The gym, pool and squash courts are predominantly for base personnel.</p> <p>Similarly Flock House is currently being negotiated for sale. There is a 25m swimming pool, sportsfield and a gymnasium that may well be developed for community use.</p> | <p>15. RDC senior management assume a proactive role in negotiations with NZDF and Flock House for community access to facilities and gaining clear understanding of NZDF intentions upon existing Bulls recreation infrastructure</p> | <p>Immediate</p> | <p>RDC Community Services and Governance Manager</p> |

8.2. Marton

The census 2001 usually resident population count for Marton was 4,752, a change of -11.0 percent since 1996. 24.4 percent of people in Marton were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 17.9 percent of people in Marton were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

Marton – known as the ‘Hub of the Rangitikei’ – is home to the main office of the Rangitikei District Council. It is situated almost mid-way between State Highway’s One and Three and is increasingly becoming targeted by lifestyle seeker and professionals looking to enjoy a refined rural environment that is an easy drive to larger centres of economy and jobs such as Wanganui and Palmerston North.

It is this closeness to larger urban centres that provides residents from Marton and it’s surrounding area with its biggest advantages in leisure provision. Like residents of Bulls, Martonians do not seem to regard driving to Wanganui or Palmerston North as onerous in pursuit of sport, recreation or arts activities.

Marton is active in planning for the future with Vision 2010 and Project Marton.

Martonians are generally pleased with the number of leisure opportunities available in the town, however, many organisations (active, sports and arts) are reported to be small and ‘fragmented’ with no central meeting venue. There is a lack of critical mass for some activities, which has been partly attributed to the closeness to larger urban centres.

The Marton Pool site has created the opportunity to develop a centralised leisure complex over time.

There is little evidence of facility collaboration between Marton community and the education centres that contribute to the local economy such as Nga Tawa, Huntley and Rangitikei College but physical activity and arts options delivered within these schools are strongly supported.

With a larger percentage of older residents in Marton it is essential to provide a range of leisure options to suit ability and to provide quality, accessible arts and culture facilities in a central facility. Feedback suggests it is equally about ‘getting to your activity’ as it is about the activity itself and this will entail consideration of footpath quality, lighting and green-ribbon pathways.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Marton issues to consider include:

8.2.1. Marton Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>The viability, facility and use mix of any future sport and recreation complex aligned with Marton Pool.</p> <p>Collaboration between community users and local schools, and accessibility for community activities.</p> | <p>Consultation shows a preference for the development of a single 'community facility' in Marton for physical activity opportunities. A single 'hub' is seen as a pragmatic solution for a town of Marton's size.</p> <p>The Marton Aquatic Centre (Swimshed) and Gym (Workshed) is an obvious location for the physical activity hub with an existing and growing user base, availability of land, access to and by local schools and within walking or mobility scooter distance for town residents. There is a clear desire to have the pool open for a longer season which will necessitate full coverage, better heating and obviously greater costs (heating and staff). There is also an opportunity within any development to incorporate a collaborative initiative with health agencies for the provision of warmer, therapeutic water for rehabilitation and to attract the larger seniors population and lunch-time workers as regular users.</p> <p>The pool is currently maintained by RDC and is operated by the Marton Leisure and Aquatic Trust (MALT) through a grant by RDC. The development of the gym with the pool is a stand-alone operation (not funded by RDC) and would be the necessary model for resourcing of any expansion aligned with locally targeted rates increases (the geographically isolated nature of towns in Rangitikei preclude any district serving aquatic centres and therefore the majority value to and rating of the hub would accrue to Marton). This aspect would require substantial community agreement first. It is considered more likely to gain community agreement if the development is linked to a central administration base for the majority of clubs in Marton, provides or has easy access to an indoor facility for display space and becomes part of the minimum levels of service for each town as discussed in section 7.3.2</p> <p>Schools are seen as the hub of a community – the youth of the community congregate there and the schools often (but not always) have the major facilities for active recreation in the town and with utilisation of classrooms and halls they can serve as the arts and cultural centre. Rangitikei College and Nga Tawa Diocesan School have</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marton schools to host a meeting of community groups to identify actual and latent demand for school and community use of school physical activity services and facilities and revisit facility programming in light of demand 2. Assess required demand against current provision (who to, when, rationale) 3. Identify any expansion of Rangitikei College facilities (or alternatives) to meet community demand 4. Council has a role to play in the development of such an expansion by facilitating a feasibility study into community participation, facility and service mix, capital and operational expenditure, sources of funding and the likelihood of sustainability 5. Sport Wanganui collaborate with RDC on appropriate resourcing/funding models 6. Facilitate meeting between Sport Wanganui and MALT (and other Rangitikei trusts with similar aims) to establish roles, responsibilities, performance expectations and complementary visions | <p>Immediate</p> <p>2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>2007</p> <p>Immediate</p> | <p>RDC/Principal s cluster</p> <p>above</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>SW</p> <p>RDC</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| | <p>playing fields, an extensive gymnasium (at Nga Tawa) and a hall that is used for a range of school and community activities and also provides education space for community education (at Rangitikei College). Rangitikei College also hosts a sports academy whilst Nga Tawa has a 25m outdoor swimming pool used almost exclusively by school students.</p> <p>Any expansion of the Marton Aquatic Centre would need a commitment from all local schools to contribute to the development in whatever way is appropriate and an agreement that they would book the water space for their learn to swim and aquatic activities.</p> <p>Council has a role to play in the development of such an expansion by facilitating a feasibility study into community participation, facility and service mix, capital and operational expenditure, sources of funding and the likelihood of sustainability.</p> | | | |
| <p>Strengthening the arts and heritage community by collaboration and coordination of resources and facilities</p> | <p>Arts, culture and heritage activity within Marton and districts is reported to be as strong as anywhere in the Rangitikei with the added advantage of access to opportunities at both Wanganui and Palmerston North. This proximity, aligned with a generally older arts activity population and low capacity to self-resource suggests that ‘commercial/professional’ arts, cultural and heritage activities should continue to be provided by those larger urban centres.</p> <p>In the case of the smaller cottage industry of arts and crafts, Marton has potential to become a regional hub and weekend retreat with an increasing number of B&B’s appearing in the area. Council’s role in this activity is addressed within Part A – District Issues but it is worth mentioning again that the Regional partnership Initiative could resource the development of an Arts, Culture and Heritage Trail for both motorised and non-motorised transport and RDC can facilitate the marketing and promotions. Any economic development initiatives can only add value to the local availability of resources, expertise and facilities.</p> <p>The Marton Arts and Crafts Centre is perceived across the Rangitikei district as an example of how community</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. RDC endorse the concept of an Arts and Heritage Trail and negotiate funding from the Regional Partnership Initiative 8. RDC endorse the concept of a Rangitikei Arts and Heritage Coordinator and act as advocate to CNZ for resourcing 9. RDC develop and adopt a District Arts, Heritage and Culture Agenda 10. RDC facilitate a Marton Arts Group workshop to identify the feasibility of shared administration and facilities | <p>2006</p> <p>2006/7</p> <p>2006/7</p> <p>Immediate</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
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| | <p>arts can work together at one facility. The centre offers classes across a range of visual arts and attracts residents and visitors alike. The success of the centre suggests that any Marton leisure hub may in fact have two locations, one for 'active leisure' and the centre for arts and culture.</p> <p>Marton Historic Village, Kendrick Cottage and the Old Granary (now the Red Tomatoes Cafe) are further examples of Marton's artistic and heritage importance – yet there appears to be a lack of a coordinated approach to facility development and resourcing across the range of arts and heritage.</p> <p>Consultation found some frustration at a lack of information from RDC on funding sources and eligibility criteria. It is recommended that RDC facilitate a Marton Arts, Culture and Heritage Workshop to address issues of resourcing, volunteers, joint-facility provision, access to information and future involvement in the proposed Rangitikei Arts, Culture and Heritage Coordinator position .</p> | | | |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p>The impact of growth, changing home ownership patterns and age profile in the community on demand</p> | <p>Marton experienced a population decline of -11.0% from the 1996 to 2001 Census. RDC has a stated aim to increase the resident population of the Rangitikei by +10.0% by 2021. It is not known at this time whether that is intended to target an average 10% growth across the district or, as an example, 11% in Marton and 1% in Hunterville. The target demographic for population growth is also unknown. It is a widely accepted maxim that there is little point increasing the number of people unless they are 'the right people' that can add value through new industries or an expression of how the town wishes to be seen i.e. an artistic and intelligentsia enclave for professional artists and Palmerston North academics??).</p> <p>Given Marton's location between Palmerston North and Wanganui, easy access to Wellington and quieter (non highway) setting, locals suggest that it will become the town that starts the population increase. Recent evidence²³ does suggest an increase in population since 2001²⁴.</p> <p>This becomes an opportunity to promote the concept of Activity Friendly Environments (the active choice is the easy choice) and to enhance the uptake of local physical activity. RDC do not currently have policies regarding provision of open-space or neighbourhood reserves/playgrounds within new sub-divisions. Any increase at the 65+ age group will highlight the need to provide physical activity opportunities incorporating daily-life activity (going to the shops, library, Arts centre, social services, RDC council etc), linked walkways and wheelchair/mobility scooter accessible environments and the provision of 'warmer and more comfortable' settings i.e. carpeted Marton Memorial Hall and a swimming pool that incorporates warmer water (doubling as therapeutic water) and longer opening hours (as addressed above).</p> <p>Marton library was regarded by those consulted as a community focal point and the Historical Society would like also to be able to store their archives there. As Genealogy and Historic Societies are usually regarded as an older persons activity it is recommended that they become part of the team managing the Rangitikei Archives.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. RDC develop and adopt policy requiring the provision of open-space, neighbourhood reserves/playgrounds within all new sub-divisions. 12. Council to facilitate Horizons and GHW to investigate the collaborative development of linked walkways/cycleways between existing and new sub-divisions/communities and adopt the philosophy of Activity Friendly Environments for Marton. 13. Schools to undertake Cycling and Walking Audits (www.sparc.org.nz/whatwedo/afe) with emphasis on developing linked routes between all major activity points to direct future council planning 14. Council to review footpaths and roads for accessibility for wheelchairs and mobility scooters 15. Historic Society and Genealogy Society to be invited to help maintain the Rangitikei Archives | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2006</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>As required</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>RDC/SW</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>RDC Roding</p> <p>As required</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <p>Community expectations for service delivery for physical activity options (sport) and non-sport activity.</p> <p>Note this is a district-wide issue but is presented under local issues as it is a priority for each town.</p> | <p>Levels of Service (LOS) for active recreation relate to the standard of provision by council of various services including activity , built infrastructure and open-space. LOS for physical activity uptake may relate to the frequency and cost of a holiday programme, maintenance and management of the Memorial Hall, Marton Park or length of grass on a sportsfield or quality of cricket-block.</p> <p>Within an arts and culture context LOS may relate to the facilitation/provision of a single arts venue in Marton at the arts centre and resourcing necessary marketing to aid tourism activity.</p> <p>Levels of Service also need to be seen within the wider contexts of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Travel times ▪ Profile of community and ability to resource within the town over time. <p>Consultation demonstrated a preference for Council provided LOS which promote local level competition and access rather than a higher competitive or professional activity level.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council adopt the Minimum Levels of Service for leisure (section 7.3.2) as they apply to Marton. Consideration should <i>also</i> be given to developing fitness circuits and multi-age playgrounds (youth action zones for the older youth) at Marton Park and an appropriate location between Swimshed and Rangitikei College.</p> <p>Encouraging forms on non-sport activity can be achieved by providing for children and families unstructured and inter-generational opportunities such as walks and open-spaces for kite flying. Spontaneous recreation is very important and RDC should assume the role of direct provider of the settings for spontaneous recreation within the town.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. RDC’s Asset Management Plans and other relevant council policy commit to a LOS that allows entry-level and local competition level physical activity within Marton 17. Establish a BMX or large-scale off-road cycling track within safe cycling distance of the township in linkage with the Swimshed 18. Continue to pursue the development of and ongoing improvement of skatepark facilities. 19. Review play equipment provision and develop an additional play area within the urban area of the township. 20. Develop, name, sign and publicise a set of walking and cycling circuits within the town. 21. Complete a walkability assessment for the township and include asset enhancements as required in relevant activity management plan | <p>Within 5 years</p> | <p>RDC/Sport Wanganui</p> |

8.3. Hunterville

The census 2001 usually resident population count for Hunterville was 507, a change of 11.9 percent since 1996. In comparison Rangitikei District's population changed by -7.7 percent. 27.2 percent of people in Hunterville were under the age of 15 years, compared with 23.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 17.2 percent of people in Hunterville were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

Hunterville is the acknowledged hinterland-farming hub for the lower Rangitikei. Famed for being the Hunterway dog capital of the world Hunterville possesses and demonstrates a sense of independence and 'do it ourselves' attitude (a-la the multi-turf at the Hunterville Primary School).

One of the only towns in the Rangitikei to record an increase in population in the 1996-2001 census period (but still having a limited population for any sustainable leisure development), Hunterville appears, anecdotally, to also be popular as a weekend destination for absentee home-owners from Wanganui and Palmerston North. It is understood that much of the weekday leisure activity for these people is done in either Wanganui or Palmerston North but a strong motivator behind their property ownership may well be Hunterville's access points to the bush, hills, river and fishing for weekends and holidays.

Hunterville continues to have a strong community spirit and those clubs and organisations that continue to operate appear to do so in a collaborative manner, such as the tennis, netball and hockey complex. Parental involvement appears to be high at sports events and there is an active youth club.

Hunterville, with a 2001 resident population of 507 has a comparatively large number of halls and facilities - at last count 13.

The library has become the default community hub particularly so for retirees.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Hunterville issues to consider include:

8.3.1. Hunterville Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Reducing player and volunteer numbers for leisure activities.</p> <p>Necessary rationalisation of facilities.</p> | <p>Enhancing and increasing levels of leisure activity is most often achieved by identifying and addressing a community's barriers to participation. In Hunterville these are inextricably linked to the small population and the number of residents that live in Hunterville just on the weekends.</p> <p>The issue of decreasing volunteer numbers was addressed in Part A (section 7.4) yet because of the relatively small number of possible players and volunteers it can have a <i>terminal</i> impact upon leisure activity in Hunterville. The reality is that the best one can hope for in the absence of a large and sudden population increase is maintenance of existing numbers and a rationalisation of the tasks they need to do (less time administrating and therefore more time participating).</p> <p>In the Hunterville context (and also Ratana, Scotts Ferry, Koitiata and smaller communities) this really means accepting an inevitable – there won't be the numbers so how do we relieve the burden on the few there are?</p> <p>Hunterville should look to relieve the pressure on a dwindling number of volunteers and should rationalise the number of facilities that the community is attempting to support.</p> <p>Through a community focus group identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the one or two most appropriate facilities to cater for active recreation and arts/culture demand ▪ establish those as the core community venues for leisure ▪ establish a profile of the community and its ability to resource development over time ▪ establish a community leisure group (possibly a Trust) to manage a central administration base. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RDC endorse the principles of the work undertaken the Hunterville community in developing the combined community turf and assess the model's appropriateness for development across Rangitikei 2. Facilitate Community Focus Group to agree on rationalisation of local facilities 3. Investigate a central administration hub for all Hunterville leisure | <p>Within 2 years</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Within 5 years</p> | <p>RDC/SW</p> <p>Community committee</p> |
| <p>Community expectations for service delivery for physical activity options (sport) and non-sport activity.</p> <p>Note this is a district-wide issue but is</p> | <p>Levels of Service (LOS) for active recreation relate to the standard of provision by council of various services including activity , built infrastructure and open-space. LOS for physical activity uptake may relate to the frequency and cost of a holiday programme, maintenance and level of grant resourcing for Hunterville Pool, redevelopment and maintenance of the Town hall or Paraekeretu Domain.</p> <p>Within an arts and culture context LOS may relate to the facilitation/provision of a single arts venue in Hunterville and resourcing</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Council adopt Agreed Minimum Levels of Service for Hunterville 5. Develop a secondary Youth Play area by main road for local and travelling public use 6. Establish local Older & Bolder group (or similar) | <p>Immediate</p> <p>Within 5 years</p> <p>Within 2</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>??</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|--------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <p>presented under local issues as it is a priority for each town.</p> | <p>necessary marketing to aid tourism activity.</p> <p>Levels of Service also need to be seen within the wider contexts of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Travel times ▪ Profile of community and ability to resource within the town over time. <p>Consultation demonstrated a preference for Council provided LOS which promote local level competition and access rather than a higher competitive or professional activity level.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council adopt the Minimum Levels of Service for leisure (section 7.3.2). Consideration should <i>also</i> be given to developing fitness circuits and multi-age playgrounds (youth action zones for the older youth and travelling public) at Queens Park.</p> | | <p>years</p> | |

8.4. Taihape

The census 2001 usually resident population count for Taihape was 1,803, a change of -9.9 percent since 1996. 25.3 percent of people in Taihape were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 13.8 percent of people in Taihape were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

Taihape – nationally and internationally known as the Gumboot Town – is regarded as the Northern Gateway to the Central Plateau and Mount Ruapehu for Rangitikei residents and the major entrance to ‘Unspoilt Untouched’ Rangitikei for south-bound tourists. Like all towns in the district Taihape has an extensive pioneering past of which it is enormously proud. Given it’s relative isolation from Rangitikei District Councils primary hub in Marton and the physical barrier in the north that is the Desert Road, Taihape residents have maintained much of the pioneering psyche and express strong sentiments towards autonomy (they remain fiercely independent).

Taihape is benefiting from an increasing tourism traffic and is effectively transforming the town from a ‘pit-stop’ into a short-term destination. It will be important for Taihape to fully understand any potential impact on the social fabric of the community through efforts at economic sustainability with the necessary work hours likely to further reduce the pool of parent volunteers and sports/arts administrators.

Taihape has an active older-adult leisure network with vibrant arts activities inclusive of the nationally known Taihape Drama group and the ‘older and bolder’ programme which is an excellent example of collaboration between agencies toward healthy outcomes.

Taihape has a strong rugby club, golf course and junior netball and basketball set-up and a variety of other strong codes (possibly the strongest supported sporting town in the Rangitikei).

Taihape has an accessible defacto leisure precinct close to town with a very strong rugby fraternity, a nationally recognised equestrian venue and the districts largest swimming club.

The development of the new combined Taihape School presents an excellent opportunity to ensure school and community enhancement of facilities and programmes. For the purposes of this plan it is assumed that the combined school will be at the primary School site with linkages to the Taihape Pool.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Taihape issues to consider include:

8.4.1. Taihape Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <p>The viability and appropriate use of community halls as both community hub and physical activity settings.</p> | <p>Taihape has a number of halls in which to place leisure activity – The grand old Taihape Town hall being foremost amongst them. Council manages and maintains the hall on behalf of the community but the community has the ultimate say in what activities are undertaken. Currently the hall is too small for larger scale physical activity such as basketball (although courts are provided) and is considered too big for non-active (or less active pursuits) such as stretch and flex, Sit and B Fit, yoga. As a setting for performing arts it is suitable yet not ideal and as a venue for visual arts displays it was considered ‘too open and cold’. It is recommended that the Community Board consider the most appropriate form of activity for the hall (under the broad headings Sport, Fitness, health or arts) and use that as the basis for any redevelopment or programming initiatives. With the opportunity for a gymnasium at the new combined school, the Town Hall is most appropriate for non-sport activity.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of rural residents access structured sport and physical activity services at Taihape but utilise the <i>community</i> halls as an important social hub, most of which are run by local hall committees. Unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the halls are no longer required by the communities, they should continue to be supported.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Hall Committees to consider what services and programmes could be provided at the halls to enhance the uptake of physical activity and arts i.e. Upright and Active, kindy-gym, visual and performing arts 2. RDC to work with Community Hall Committees to ensure Hall Management Plans reflect community needs and sustainability strategies are appropriate 3. Community Board agree upon the most appropriate future leisure function for the Town Hall and develop accordingly | <p>2006</p> <p>2006/7</p> <p>2007/8</p> | <p>Hall Committee</p> <p>Hall committee</p> <p>Community Bd</p> |
| <p>Barriers to participation and physical activity options through required travel time and cost.</p> | <p>Distances travelled for sports competitions for Taihape participants can be substantial (the road in winter from Taihape to Marton can be ‘tricky’).</p> <p>Rural depopulation (-9/9% 1996-2001) means that most competitions require extensive catchment areas to generate the required level of competition or require travel for ‘higher-standard’ to main urban centres both within Rangitikei but also to Palmerston North and Turangi/Taupo. It was reported as an example that it cost Taihape College \$15,000 in extra travel for one season of winter sport.</p> <p>Increasing travel costs and time is in many ways a fact of life for towns such as Taihape. What needs to be accomplished however is to encourage the Regional Sports Organisations (RSOs) to penalise visiting teams that default return games in Taihape using travel as an excuse.</p> <p>In addition, the Rural Travel Fund administered through SPARC would appear to be ‘made for Taihape’ yet there is confusion around eligibility and scope. SPARC has been pro-active in reviewing its Rural Travel Fund policies and Sport Wanganui should be tasked with advocating with RDC for extra assistance for Taihape sport. Priority should be given to</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Sport Wanganui to collate examples where travel has impacted upon participation and where ‘home’ games have been defaulted by the opposition. Identify strategies with appropriate RSOs to minimise this situation 5. RDC collaborate with Sport Wanganui and an RSO’s forum on advocating an increase in the Rural travel Fund 6. Adopt Agreed Minimum Levels Of Service and implement all elements in Taihape 7. Research successful models for | <p>Immediate</p> <p>Within 2 years</p> <p>Within 5 years</p> | <p>SW</p> <p>SW</p> <p>RDC</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| | <p>assisting coaches and parents/caregivers as consultation suggests the biggest barrier to participation against other towns teams is not the participants but the ability to get there.</p> <p>Although the primary impact of travel is the costs to schools for regular competitions, there are significant issues for those who do not have access to motorised transport or who cannot afford to use 'the car' to transport themselves or their children to practices, competitions, the beach, the forest or the rivers.</p> <p>Opportunities for spontaneous recreation become increasingly more important where the elements above are apparent such as in Taihape. Provision of parks and reserves and planning for 'cul-de-sac' recreation are priorities.</p> | <p>cul-de-sac recreation (3 on 3 etc) for their applicability to Taihape</p> | | |
| <p>The viability, facility and use mix of any future sport and recreation complex, including any wider district role</p> <p>Collaboration between community users and local schools, and accessibility for community activities</p> | <p>Consultation shows a preference for the development of a single 'community facility' in Taihape that incorporates the new combined school, the aquatic complex, the equestrian centre and sportsfield.</p> <p>Although Taihape had a decreasing population between 1996-2001, a combination of RDC growth initiatives, an increase in tourism traffic, long-term local roading infrastructure works and an appreciating real estate value have all lead to an anticipated population increase over the next 5-10 years. This is associated with the maturing of an outdoor adventure tourism market and a steady realisation that Taihape is an excellent place to have a winter holiday home. When taken together with Taihape's unique circumstance being more isolated from major urban areas than other Rangitikei townships, the development of a town leisure hub is considered a priority.</p> <p>The relationship between the new combined Taihape School, the aquatic centre and the current sports grounds make this an ideal setting for the leisure hub and land is available for the development of an indoor centre. This centre may not be the home of all sports activity within Taihape but does provide an opportunity for shared administration and the merging of activities for many groups i.e. indoor sports, Tai-chi, yoga, and seminars.</p> <p>Similarly the potential increase in use of the Taihape pool by students appears likely to outstrip the pool's capacity to cope and will further reduce public access to the pool (see next section). Collaboration between RDC, the school, Ministry of Education and the Community Board is required urgently.</p> <p>Future resource commitment to recreation and sport activities and</p> | <p>8. Facilitate a workshop of all potential community users of new school gym to ensure appropriate scope</p> <p>9. Accurately determine levels of combined school use of Taihape Pool and assess capacity of pool to cater for increased use</p> <p>10. Complete feasibility study into development of an indoor centre in association with the school, pool and sports-ground users</p> | <p>Immediate</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>2007/8</p> | <p>BOT</p> <p>RDC/BOT/Pool Committee</p> <p>Community Board</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
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| | <p>facilities will need to be considered in a priority context i.e. should the community fund-raise for the development of school-based facilities that are more readily accessible to the wider community or should fund-raising be focussed upon development of a community facility at the showgrounds that also caters for increased school demand?</p> <p>There should be immediate discussions with the school to ensure that the proposed gymnasium is appropriate for community use as well as school use and that the gym works in collaboration with any other indoor venue so that the facility and service mix is complementary.</p> | | | |
| <p>The future of aquatic opportunities in Taihape</p> | <p>RDC provide a grant for the management of the Taihape pool. The pool is open on a seasonal basis. During high use times (December – February) the pool struggles to cope with demand from public use and school aged users (learn to swim and holiday traffic). The future of many rural school pools around Taihape is uncertain due to increased power costs and levels of compliance with water quality standards. This, when compounded by increasing life guarding requirements, may lead some schools to close their school pool and demand increased time and activity scope at the Taihape pool.</p> <p>Whilst the provision of an upgraded pool or the development of a new pool needs to be considered within the context of community profile, ability to resource capital and operational expenditure, the location of the new combined school next door will put extra pressure on the ability of the pool to cope (as above). This either means increasing the hours and seasons of the pool, increasing the size and volume or accepting the status quo with a reviewed programming schedule.</p> <p>The provision of warmer water was discussed – 14% of the local population is aged 65+ yet pool records show only 2% use the pool. The provision of warmer water for longer hours could lead to an increased use of the pool by seniors, and the addition of separate adult/child change facilities may also lead to an increase in lunch-time workers usage.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Facilitate a workshop of all potential community users of Taihape Pool to assess current and latent demand 12. Accurately determine levels of combined school use of Taihape Pool and assess capacity of pool to cater for increased use 13. Complete feasibility study into extension of pool to meet proven demand | <p>Immediate</p> <p>Consequent upon decisions re new school</p> | <p>Pool Committee /BOT/RDC</p> |
| <p>Provision of leisure opportunities for youth</p> | <p>There are opportunities for youth (12-18) leisure in Taihape but the majority of these involve access to ‘outdoors’ activities and mainly unstructured (river etc) in common with the other townships in Rangitikei. However, accessing these opportunities is often dependent upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transport ▪ Money | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Council adopt the Agreed Minimum Levels Of Service (7.3.2) with emphasis upon Youth Action Zones in Taihape. 15. Collation of all youth opportunities available in walking or cycling distance in | | |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|--|--|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge ▪ Community acceptance (age related and culturally related) ▪ Motivation ▪ Conflicting use <p>Taihape is isolated and even if youth have motorised transport there would still be significant barriers to accessing other leisure activity and for this reason development of youth specific initiatives is a priority for Taihape. At this time it is suggested that Council adoption of the minimum levels of service (section 7.3.2) for leisure facilities, in addition to increased promotion of available opportunities and consideration of youth specific interests in the Taihape Leisure Hub will be begin to address youth leisure issues in the town. The opportunity to encourage greater daily-life active transport options exists with the establishment of the combined school and the potential leisure hub/aquatic initiative being major 'hooks' to encourage youth participation. Respondents referred to a town 'split' between two sides of a state highway and any efforts to get more youth being active will need the development of an over-bridge at some stage.</p> | <p>Taihape and post on Youth Web-site (7.9)</p> <p>16. Facilitate a youth recreation workshop for both physical activity (non-structured sport) and arts</p> <p>17. Investigate options for creating links between western and eastern Taihape via an over-bridge</p> | | |
| <p>Arts, heritage and culture and a centralised venue</p> | <p>The visual and performing arts are 'alive and kicking' in Taihape although admittedly from participants with a significantly older population. One of the biggest issues participants faced is how to get younger people interested and involved. One school of thought raised was that all activities are generational and attempts at trying to get younger people involved detracts resources and enjoyment from those currently participating. Another school of thought says that each activity is important and all efforts need to be made to encourage 'the next group'. A Leisure Plan cannot answer this question which is probably the domain of social science research – yet the plan can suggest identifying and building upon existing successful models.</p> <p>Taihape Older & Bolder is an enormously successful initiative aimed at getting those over 65 years involved in new activity – for social and health enhancement. What was primarily a physical activity tool has now developed to introducing participants to a wider range of leisure activities including visual and performing arts ,heritage trails and cultural preservation. Organisers assert that socialising is the main reason why they are getting new participants rather than any particular activity itself. Increased levels of support for Older & Bolder enabling them to widen their scope to fully include both physical activity and arts and heritage activity is recommended. RDC could act as facilitator and funder of this</p> | <p>18. Council work with Creative NZ to identify models for attracting new arts participants</p> <p>19. Collaborate with the Older & Bolder team to model the programme to include all aspects of leisure and to initiate older & Bolder as a district programme</p> <p>20. Facilitate an arts and heritage workshop to identify all activities and the desirability/feasibility of a shared administration base under guidance from the proposed Arts, Heritage and Culture Coordinator</p> | <p>Within 12 months</p> | <p>RDC/CNZ</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|-------|---|---|--------|-------------|
| | <p>action and if successful the model may be appropriate to other Rangitikei communities.</p> <p>Arts and culture activity is spread widely through a number of facilities in Taihape. While each facility has some maintenance and storage issues these will need to be addressed by landlords (for commercial property) or RDC, these can occur within the regular asset management schedules. There were no loud and vocal calls for a single arts venue in Taihape at this time although the concept of a Taihape leisure hub over the next ten years (7.3.2) is still supported. Issues of volunteer support have been addressed in Part A.</p> <p>In common with other rural towns across Rangitikei there is a local museum. The museum (as do the others) suffer from a lack of patronage and resource – it is believed by those consulted that RDC need to have a policy on the importance of heritage to the district and direct resources to the development of each museum and consequently develop those into a district network that links with the Arts, Heritage and Culture Trail (Part A section 7.1) and offers wet-weather alternatives to adventure seeker tourists and the large North-South-North drive-thru traffic.</p> <p>Taihape is looking for a new brand and the concept of “gateway to adventure” is appropriate with the town’s entry point from the North. Implicit in this brand is an accent on heritage and what this has to offer to all of Marton from Taihape, central and south to Marton and Bulls. Marketing of the adventure opportunities need to be carefully blended with those of ‘quiet and unspoilt’ and as a centre of arts and culture and to this end RDC should consider ongoing investment in the local heritage museums across Rangitikei as a primary source of economic development.</p> | <p>21. Determine through the Rangitikei Arts Agenda the role of local museum in both preservation of local heritage and positioning within the wider economic development initiatives. Fund local museum over time.</p> | | |

8.5. Ratana community

The census 2001 usually resident population count for Ratana Community was 426, a change of -3.4 percent since 1996. In comparison Rangitikei District's population has changed by -7.7 percent. 32.4 percent of people in Ratana community were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 7.0 percent of people in Ratana community were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand

Ratana community is spiritual home of the Ratana Church which has extensive outreach throughout New Zealand. Ratana is the Rangitikei's western most township and as such has a close relationship with the Wanganui region and the western coast beaches and fishing areas.

Ratana has under 100 homes and has a large percentage of residents under 15-years and smaller than average number over 65-years.

Whilst many leisure activities continue to be strongly supported such as the brass-band, church choir and cultural activity like Kapa-haka, the lack of a suitable indoor facility hampers the development of existing and potential physical and arts activity. The problem is compounded by inadequate space on which to put any future indoor facility and a lack of local capacity to fund and operate a facility of any meaningful size.

Much of the leisure undertaken by Ratana residents is done in the towns to which they travel for work.

There are older adult programmes run in conjunction with Sport and Recreation Wanganui.

There is a noticeable absence of appropriate youth activities even though there is a large youth population (percentage-wise) compounded by the reliance on transport and volunteers to travel to sports games away from the community.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Ratana issues to consider include:

8.5.1. Ratana community Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|--|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| <p>Provision of leisure opportunities for youth</p> | <p>Unlike the other townships in Rangitikei there are no leisure activities in close enough proximity to Ratana for access by foot or cycle.</p> <p>Ratana is isolated and even if youth have motorised transport or access to transport through other means there would still be significant barriers to accessing leisure activity in Marton or Wanganui and for this reason development of youth specific initiatives is a priority. The same issue applies to Ratana's closest neighbour Turakina.</p> <p>At this time it is suggested that Council adopt the minimum levels of service (section 7.3.2) for leisure facilities to the following extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A single venue (agreed by the town consultative committees) for physical recreation, arts and cultural activities by 2016 (dependant upon Ratana population projections) ▪ A BMX or similar significant off-road cycling area aligned with one skatepark ▪ At least two high quality multi-age free play areas with equipment suited to toddlers and up to at least 14 years of age. One may be located at the school, and one should have public toilets nearby. Facilities should be designed to suit the specific area and each offer a point of difference, but include play equipment for young children, and at least a basketball half court ▪ At least one defined walking, cycling and fitness circuit around the community perimeter and within the domain area, for a range of fitness levels; named, sign-posted and well | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RDC to adopt the Agreed Minimum Levels of Service 2. Develop minimum facilities as priority 3. Work with GHW to enable better access for Ratana youth to GHW programmes either at Ratana or within close proximity i.e. Marton or Turakina | <p>Immediate</p> <p>within 2 years</p> <p>12 months</p> | <p>RDC</p> <p>GHW</p> |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|-------|--|--------------------|--------|-------------|
| | <p>maintained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sports-field provision for multi-use <p>In addition RDC should work specifically with GHW to ensure their Maori Health initiatives that involve aspects of physical activity are promoted to Ratana – council may wish to contribute funds to this initiative.</p> | | | |

8.6. Other - Rural

The 2001 census [usually resident population count](#) for **Mangaweka** was 180, a change of -12.9 percent since 1996. In comparison Rangitikei District's population changed by -7.7 percent. 26.7 percent of people in Mangaweka were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 11.7 percent of people in Mangaweka were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

The census 2001 [usually resident population count](#) for **Moawhango** was 684, a change of -6.2 percent since 1996. 28.1 percent of people in Moawhango were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 5.7 percent of people in Moawhango were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

The census 2001 [usually resident population count](#) for **Pohonui-Porewa** was 2,157, a change of -9.1 percent since 1996. 26.6 percent of people in Pohonui-Porewa were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 7.5 percent of people in Pohonui-Porewa were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

The census 2001 [usually resident population count](#) of **Lake Alice** was 2,691, a change of -3.9 percent since 1996. 25.1 percent of people in Lake Alice area were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent in Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 9.1 percent of people in Lake Alice area were aged 65 and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei District and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand.

The census 2001 [usually resident population count](#) for **Koitiata** was 114, a change of 2.8 percent since 1996. 13.2 percent of people in Koitiata were under the age of 15 years, compared with 25.3 percent of Rangitikei District and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand. 21.1 percent of people in Koitiata were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.9 percent of Rangitikei and 12.1 percent for all New Zealand.

Due to the nature of the consultation including time and resources, meetings were not held in each of the rural areas of Rangitikei District as defined by Mangaweka, Moawhango, Pohonui-Porewa, Lake Alice, Scott's Ferry, Turakina and Koitiata. Some rural representatives did attend other meetings. Leisure infrastructure and services to the rural areas is limited and the majority of discretionary-time leisure (sport, physical activity, arts and entertainment) options happen in the larger rural townships or indeed Wanganui or Palmerston North.

Feedback does suggest, however, an autonomous and self-reliant attitude to leisure provision, borne by historical necessity and common across all of Rangitikei. The development of community halls as the base for rural community leisure activity has meant many halls are now 'tiring' but continue to be well used. As a base for social hubs and as potential settings for leisure activity the community halls are very important and should be supported by council where community demand can be demonstrated. In the absence of significant new funding or a dramatic population increase enabling new facility development in rural locations it is considered that any leisure hub development within the main towns will serve the rural population as well.

Whilst Koitiata experienced an increase in population to the last census period and has an obvious imbalance between those under 15 years (under represented) and those 65+ (over represented), the total population is still too small to make any trends statements that would impact upon future leisure planning.

Note – Turakina is not represented individually in Statistics NZ Census data.

Issues across the district are highlighted in Section 7.0. Other Rural issues to consider include:

8.6.1. Other rural Issues and Recommended Actions Tables

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|-----------------|---|---|----------------|-------------|
| Koitiata | <p>Koitiata residents are passionate about their beach as a setting for community leisure both active and passive. There is strong concern about the standard of signage and access to the beach which, if rectified, would lead to more use.</p> <p>There is a lack of an integrated play area – under 10’s and over 10’s and development of a youth action zone (Minimum Levels of Service 7.3.2) would encourage activity by locals and holiday-makers.</p> <p>The Koitiata Community Hall is currently well utilised but will be in need of redevelopment. The community strongly endorses continued use of the hall. Any redevelopment should incorporate a warmer winter option to allow for more passive recreation such as the increasing interest in Sit and be fit and the potential for an extension of Older & Bolder for the seniors population.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As part of Council review of both signage and access (Part A section 7.6) review access issues at Koitiata Beach 2. Develop two play areas for under and over 10’s 3. Maintain Koitiata Hall | Within 3 years | RDC |
| Turakina | <p>The Turakina Highland games are a popular annual event and there are discussions around extending its scope. As the games become more popular as a visitor attraction it is hoped that RDC can act as facilitator for funding through the major Partners Initiative.</p> <p>The Turakina Domain is well regarded but under-utilised – it is not clear if this is due to lack of interest or lack of promotion.</p> <p>The Onepuhi River access is needs development as its current state prevents any increase in activity – water activity is a popular form of leisure in the area.</p> <p>The Kawhatau Outdoor education Centre is not used to capacity but is an excellent example of how multi-generational activity can be incorporated with outdoors and biodiversity education.</p> <p>There are ongoing issues with access to DoC managed land and farm property (addressed in part A section 7.6). There is a clear need for a district-wide framework to encourage access but to protect land-owners rights and safety.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. As part of Council review of Leisure policy undertake an economic impact assessment of rural events | Within 2 years | RDC |

| Issue | Consultation/Research summary | Recommended action | Timing | Lead agency |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|
| <p>Ohingaiti/Mangaweka</p> | <p>The limited leisure infrastructure at Ohingaiti requires most residents to travel to other centres to access opportunities. There is a significant community spirit in the area and a strong emphasis on outdoor pursuits and the economic development opportunities that may result.</p> <p>Mangaweka is typical of how many a small town can find a niche through recreation (mainly active) and change the nature of the town toward a positive economic outlook. There is large potential for walks and mountain bike tracks within the Mangaweka area that would complement other 'adrenalin' activities. The potential for mountain bike trails particularly is positive although land access issues and signage Part A section 7.6) will need to be addressed.</p> <p>In common with other rural towns across Rangitikei there is a local museum. The museum (as do the others) suffer from a lack of patronage and resource – it is believed by those responding that RDC need to have a policy on the importance of heritage to the district and direct resources to the development of each museum and consequently develop those into a district network that links with the Arts, Heritage and Culture Trail (Part A section 7.1 and 7.8) and offers wet-weather alternatives to adventure seeker tourists and the large North-South-North drive-thru' traffic.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. As part of Councils Great Outdoors Workshop (7.6.2) discuss potential impacts of Mountain Biking as a recreation activity 6. Review signage and access policy and promote responsibilities of users when accessing private land 7. Determine through the Rangitikei Arts Agenda the role of local museum in both preservation of local heritage and positioning within the wider economic development initiatives. Fund local museum over time. | <p>within 12 months</p> | <p>RDC</p> |