Social Strategy

Toward 2028
This Social Strategy renews the Hauraki District Council’s strategic focus for enhancing social well-being, community development and social service advocacy. It provides direction as we move forward from our legacy social policies and strategies towards the following vision:

**Hauraki – Working together for connected, safe, creative and valued communities.**

Four strategic pillars containing our goals and actions have been set, and we, the elected Council, alongside our communities will now strive to do our part in addressing them. These pillars are:

- **Connected Communities**
- **Safe and Healthy Communities**
- **Active and Accessible Communities**
- **Creative and Proud Communities.**

Identified in these pillars are our intentions for a way forward in which we feel we can best support our communities, assisting them to thrive through empowerment and through support.

From the Hauraki District Council’s perspective, we are proud to be living a legacy of proactive social policy. Over the years, we have dedicated our time, advocacy and a significant amount of budget to supporting social well-being and we are consciously committing to continuing this. We want to be clear, however, that whilst we accept that there is a place for the Council to fund certain social initiatives, we have consciously moved away from being a go-to for funding.

The Hauraki District Council Social Strategy focuses on the activities and services of the Council that we do best, delivering more strategically on our social infrastructure and advocating for the continued support and provision of our District’s social services. Those projects that we can support, that we are inspired by from within our community will still be nurtured and celebrated, but this may not necessarily be through funding.

We want our communities to feel connected, safe and healthy. We want to ensure social well-being is accessible for all and we want to keep increasing our sense of pride and belonging within our Hauraki community. With these key pillars in mind, we will strive alongside others, to work towards our vision of connected, safe, creative and valued communities for all within Hauraki. We challenge you – our communities, to do the same.

John Tregidga, JP, MNZM
Hauraki District Mayor
Social well-being - what is it?

Social well-being covers those aspects of life that society collectively agrees are important for a person’s happiness, quality of life and welfare through physical and mental well-being.

This definition helps us to focus on the fact that well-being is all-encompassing. It is not just a person’s standard of living but also a person’s social connectedness, health, freedom from fear and many other factors.

Generally, the elements of satisfaction that a person needs in order to achieve social well-being include:

**Education** - which improves people’s abilities to meet their basic needs, widens the range of career options open to them, and allows them more control over the direction their lives take.

**Culture and identity** – can be defined as the shared knowledge, values, and practices of specific groups. People’s identity may relate to their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual beliefs, or physical, artistic, and cultural activities.

**Labour market** - employment provides people with income to meet their basic needs, to contribute to their material comfort, and gives them options for how to live their lives (this is something that our Economic Development Strategy looks at further).

**Leisure and Arts** - leisure time is a crucial part of a balanced lifestyle. Participating in arts and cultural activities can add meaning to life, and create a sense of identity and connectedness for people and communities.

**Health** - good health is critical to well-being. Without good health, people are less able to enjoy lives fully – their options are limited, and they are less likely to be happy.

**Standard of living** - the physical circumstances in which people live, the goods and services they can buy, and the economic resources they can access.

**Safety and security** - safety is freedom from physical or emotional harm. Security is freedom from the threat or fear of harm or danger.

**Trust and participation in government** - people feel they have civil and political rights.

**Social connectedness** - the relationships people have with others can benefit individuals and society. Social connections include relationships with family, friends, neighbours, as well as connections people make through paid work, sport and other leisure activities, or through voluntary work or community service.

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1 *Ministry of Social Development*
How does local government contribute to social well-being?

The Council is at the heart of growing a vibrant and sustainable community. By its very nature, everything that the Hauraki District Council does contributes in some way towards social well-being. It is one of the key reasons why local government exists.

The Council contributes to social well-being in two major ways. The first is by promoting safe and healthy communities through the majority of its core operational activities such as the provision of water, wastewater, solid waste, land transport and drainage infrastructure. It also provides amenities such as parks and reserves, libraries and swimming pools, community and sports facilities, which assist in increasing people’s quality of life, happiness, recreational needs, mental well-being, and health. This second grouping is discretionary but has come to be expected of local government as a standard service provision.

Policy development is also a key component attributing to social well-being, for example our liquor, gambling and dog policies all contribute to safe and healthy communities.

This strategy does not focus on the core operational activities of the Council as these activities are given direction from legislation and the Council’s financial and infrastructure strategies contained within its Long Term Plan.

It does focus on the discretionary social policies that the Council has been involved in for many years with the support of its community. This includes policies on our youth, our older people, advocacy for a violence and abuse-free Hauraki and support of the arts, culture and heritage aspect of our District.

Our continued celebration and recognition of our people, our grants allocations and our advocacy for the social service, health, education and volunteer sectors are also areas that we are proud to have been and continue to be involved in.
Hauraki District and our People

Situated in the Waikato Region, the Hauraki District is afforded a prime location between the three major cities of Auckland, Tauranga and Hamilton. Its three largest communities are those of Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi, with several other smaller communities surrounding them.

The Hauraki District has a strong agricultural base, it also has significant gold and silver mines in Waihi, and, District-wide it has a growing focus on retirement care and tourist related activities. Our diverse community groups have a strong community spirit and often celebrate our District and its volunteers’ efforts as being exceptional amongst peers.

The estimated population of the Hauraki District is currently 19,550 (2017). This is a 9.8% increase in population since the census of 2013. This growth exceeds previous projections and provides the Council with evidence that rural communities are indeed sustainable.

Whilst the 2013 census is now a little out of date, it provides us with the most accurate snapshot of our District and its communities. As of 2013 our population was made up of a majority of NZ/European and Māori ethnicities, with around 85.2% identifying as NZ/European and 21% Māori. Like the rest of New Zealand, we have an ageing population, with the median age of 45.5 (New Zealand median is 38).

2 Statistics New Zealand National Population Estimates June 2017
3 The Māori ethnic population is the count for people of the Māori ethnic group. It includes those people who states Māori as being either their sole ethnic group or one of several ethnic groups.

Some of the major advantages of living and working in the Hauraki District are:

• We have small close-knit communities with a great deal of pride.
• We have a good number of schools available and in many cases are within walking distance.
• We have top performing primary and secondary schooling.
• We retain a number of social service agencies in town.
• We have good proximity to hospital and specialist care.
• We have areas of outstanding natural beauty at our doorstep and a variety of recreational activities available at no cost.
• Our Mayor and Councillors are engaged and easy to contact.
• Our Council is supportive of social needs and economic development.
• We are central to a number of major cities providing excellent connectivity.
• We welcome tourists and visitors to our communities and offer excellent recreational facilities and natural environments.
• We value and celebrate our heritage.
• We embrace the arts and have a thriving art community.
• Our cultural diversity is embraced and welcomed.
• We are innovative and embracing of modern technology.
• The Council is progressive.
2017 Summary

In preparing this strategy, we have taken stock of the current and future social opportunities and challenges for the Hauraki District.

The challenges identified include an increasing population that is ageing, has a higher ethnic diversity and a low socio-economic rating. We are seeing some core health indicators gradually moving in the wrong direction, suggesting that some in our communities are increasingly leading less healthy lifestyles. We have identified that there are some issues with affordability and higher numbers on the waiting lists for our pensioner housing. Frustratingly, in the background to all this, we continue to hear from our Police and social service networks that we are still seeing domestic abuse and addiction in our own back yard.

A low voter turnout during local body elections (below 50%) and in some cases engagement during consultation has also been identified as a challenge for the Council.

As with any identified challenges, we are also fortunate to be experiencing opportunities. A period of economic growth has provided for an increasing population, a vibrant, positive feel, and whilst the dairy industry had been struggling off the back of low milk solid prices and extreme weather events, there have been some positive signs that the tide is turning. Industries and businesses are thriving and the residential property market is buoyant.

Our communities continue to be recognised for their strength and positivity at a national level, and the Council applauds all the efforts made by our non-government organisations and volunteer networks in the community to improve social well-being outcomes.

We want you to know we recognise this work, and are looking to support you as you provide these invaluable services to our communities.

Population Growth

After a period of low growth, the District is now experiencing higher than projected population growth. There are opportunities and challenges that this will bring for Hauraki looking to the future. In 2017, we are seeing a change in the housing market and some financial stresses for some members of the community. Housing affordability is decreasing as high demand drives housing prices up, and the rental market is very competitive, with the number of rental houses available significantly reducing over the past year.

As the Council and others work through the challenges associated with rapid population growth, there should also be some positive changes such as an increase in the diversity of our people and increased labour markets to fill shortages.

The District population is projected to rise 7.4% over the ten-year period between 2018 and 2028. Beyond this, a slightly slower yet sustained period of growth will continue out until 2048 of 0.3% per annum.

The ever-increasing need to balance growth with environmental constraints and the need to plan for climate change will provide challenges for the Council and its communities. In particular, the growing national emphasis on improving water quality, the amount of water available for use and the pricing of water will inevitably lead to changes in land use controls.

Table: District and Ward Population Projections
Source: Rational 2017

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Ageing Population
By 2018 it is estimated that 24% of the population of the Hauraki District will be aged 65+ years; this is projected to increase to 30% by 2028 and 38% by 2048. A combination of factors are driving this, including better health care, longer life expectancies, and declining birth rates.
An aging population brings both opportunities and challenges. Mobility appropriate services, social housing and recreational activities are all areas in which the Council will need to plan for regarding this demographic. From a social perspective, there is great value in utilising the knowledge that age brings, and this will be something the Council will also look to embrace as we plan into the future.

Disability and accessibility
“Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They maybe physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments. Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.”

In the 2013 Disability Survey, 24% of the New Zealand population identified as disabled: approximately 1.1 million people. This means that one in four people live with a disability of at least one impairment type and was an increase of 20% over the 2001 survey. The increase has been partly explained by New Zealand’s aging population. Being that a physical impairment is reportedly the most common type of disability this is something that the Council has to keep in mind when planning its infrastructure and services.

4 The New Zealand Disability Strategy (2001)
5 Disability Survey 2013; Statistics New Zealand
Our Youth

Our young people have an immeasurable amount of talent and energy in which to contribute to the quality of life in the Hauraki District. This energy and talent is highly valued by both the Council and the community.

The Ministry of Youth Development identifies youth as being children and young adults aged 12 – 24. If we look wider than that and include all people under 24, they will make up 29% of our District in 2018, and are projected to remain around that percentage or declining slightly when we look to our future.

While any District without higher education options will always lose a large group of its youth, we are keen to encourage our youth going on to further their education to come back, and value those youth that remain living in our District.

The Council has not always been as proactive as it would like in tapping into this talent source and this is something we wish to address through this strategy. Not only do we wish to continue to support and advocate for services that support our vulnerable youth, but we want to expand our engagement with all youth in our District in order to empower them to help us make decisions about our combined future.

Social Deprivation

The Hauraki District currently rates significantly high in the NZ Social Deprivation Index and this is something that the Council takes seriously. The index of deprivation scale ranges from 1 to 10. A value of 10 indicates that an area is in the most socio-economically deprived 10% of areas in New Zealand and a value of 1 represents the least deprived 10%. Dimensions of deprivation include access to communication, income, employment, qualifications, home ownership, living space and access to a car.

The Hauraki District’s deprivation scores range from 6 – 10 and these scores increased from 2006-2013. This shows that there is an increase in the social deprivation of the District meaning an increasing number who do not have the same level of income, and qualification, or access to goods and services as other places in less deprived areas. Whilst the Council is unable to assist with many factors associated with deprivation, it will consider this as a significant challenge when looking at the social well-being of the District.

Diverse communities

The Council’s current ethnic mix (based on census 2013 figures) is predominantly NZ/European and Māori with a smaller percentage of pacific Island and ‘other’ nationalities. We will not have a more recent picture of our District’s ethnicities until the 2018 Census results are available, but we can project that our ethnic diversity will continue to increase. This diversity will be due in part to the government migration policies promoting opportunities outside of the main cities, and the pull of the labour market as businesses continue to see growth within Hauraki. As a District, we want to retain a welcoming attitude to all of our new community members and embrace the opportunities that ethnic diversity will bring.

NZ CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES:
Hauraki welcomes new citizens

(left) Joanna Derham from the UK is congratulated by her St Joseph’s Waihi students and (right) Mitsuhiro (Mikey) Shimazaki from Japan and his partner Jacqui MacDonald a scottish emigrant receive the kowhai seedling to symbolise their new roots as Kiwi citizens.

6 NZDep2013 Index of Deprivation; Department of Public Health, University of Otago
Voter turnout and democratic engagement
As is the same nationwide, the Council is experiencing consistently low voter turnouts during electoral cycles, hovering in the 40% range. You have to look back to 1998 before you start seeing more than 60%. Voter turnout is a significant factor for Council as it is important that the community has trust in and participates with political matters at a local level. During its planning, the Council wants to explore ways in which it can empower its community to use their votes; education and communication are key factors here.

Voter turnout 1998 - 2016

Vulnerable communities
The term social vulnerability refers to the inability of people, organisations and societies to withstand adverse impacts from multiple stressors to which they are exposed. There are many stressors that can create or exacerbate vulnerability; abuse, social exclusion and natural hazards are examples.

The Council is acutely aware of some of the stressors that exist in its community from interaction with our social service agencies, police and health professionals. Many of these centre around abuse, addiction, social isolation, mental health and poverty. Whilst mitigating these is not a core role of the Council there are many ways in which we can advocate for or promote other agencies in their work towards supporting these communities.

Key stressors that the Council can in some way influence include risk management of natural hazards, responding to climatic events and working towards resilient communities. Climate change will be a key stressor for our future communities, this is something that the Council is increasingly focusing on as more information and evidence becomes available.

Walking and cycling
The Council has highlighted walking and cycling in this strategy as an opportunity and a focus for strategic direction. If the Council provides accessible enabling infrastructure this can assist in encouraging people to choose active modes of transport (e.g. walking and cycling) instead of vehicles, which has obvious benefits for the environment and people’s health. Furthermore, if the Council’s infrastructure is accessible it is also more likely that people with mobility and other impairments will remain in the District’s communities, and lastly if the Council’s infrastructure adopts Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards, then safety can also be enhanced for the community.

The Council is involved in two distinct areas of walking and cycling:
• walking and cycling as part of the Roads and Footpaths activity of the Council e.g. the provision of footpaths, lighting, kerb and channel, street and road signs, and
• the development and maintenance of the Hauraki Rail Trail for walking and cycling.

Social Infrastructure
The Council considers social infrastructure (such as libraries, parks and reserves and cycle tracks) as one of the key areas that can be enhanced to provide social well-being for its communities. Through this strategy an invigorated focus will look to determining ways in which our social infrastructure can promote a vibrant District where people want to live, work and play.
Our Vision
Hauraki: Working together for connected, safe, creative and valued communities
Achieving our Vision

After reviewing the District’s key challenges and undertaking a stocktake of its current social policies and strategies the Council has focused on four priority areas in which it can best influence social well-being in our community. The Hauraki District Council has a long history of providing a range of functions and duties that contribute to social well-being outside of its core business, and this is something we wish to continue.

The four pillars shown on the following page are:

- Connected Communities
- Safe and Healthy Communities
- Active and Accessible Communities
- Creative and Proud Communities

The goals beneath these pillars align where appropriate with a number of the current priorities for the social sector as set out by the Ministry of Development, and the applicable aspirations within the recently adopted Waikato Plan and Sports Waikato Strategy.

The Council recognises that progress towards this strategic vision cannot be made on our own so we will prioritise the work we can progress and then work hard to attract partners, or advocate for others where actions are outside of our expertise.

7 The Waikato Plan (2017) is a plan to set the region’s course for the next thirty years. Sport Waikato’s Moving Waikato 2025 is a unified strategy for sport, recreation, parks and physical activity for the Waikato Region.
Council’s role in achieving our goals

Council can play a number of roles in achieving our goals, which are summarised as follows.

**Provider**
The Council can provide a new service project or campaign.

**Funder**
The Council can provide partial funding to another organisation or group towards providing a service, project or campaign.

**Advocator**
The Council advocates to other agencies and central government to try and achieve outcomes.

**Regulator**
The Council enforces government legislation or makes its own bylaws.

**Promoter/Facilitator**
The Council undertakes promotional activity such as education programmes, or brings together organisations to work towards social outcomes. It can also support and empower community led groups to achieve their own goals.

The Council will aim to ensure the implementation of this social strategy by funding a staff resource who will oversee the actions being prioritised and implemented. We will also provide some limited discretionary funding to assist other organisations in working towards key priorities of the strategy where Council does not have the expertise or resources to do so.

There is no defined period set for attaining our goals and vision, as we realise that social well-being is an evolving state and highly susceptible to external influences beyond our control. The Council will, however, remain dedicated to progressing its own goals and commits to resourcing them moving forward.
Our goals

- Our communities are respected, engaged, valued and connected.
- Our community groups and voluntary sector is effective, supported, empowered and sustainable.
- Our most vulnerable people are cared for through initiatives to build social support, cohesion and inclusion.

Our goals

- Hauraki residents feel safe and healthy in their homes and in their communities.
- We are resilient to the challenges of our demographically changing future.
- All people in Hauraki have access to the health and social services they need.

Our goals

- Community infrastructure is safe and accessible for all.
- Council’s sport and recreation facilities are fit for purpose and affordable.
- Our walking and cycling networks are integrated and accessible for our communities and visitors.

Our goals

- Our heritage and built environment encourages pride and a sense of belonging.
- Hauraki District celebrates its successes, identity and cultural diversity.
- All cultures and ethnicities feel welcome and included in the Hauraki District and that the particular cultural significance of the tāngata whenua within this District is recognised.
- The Arts are supported and valued.
Connected Communities

Connected communities refers to our vision to see our people feeling valued and connected, whether they are young or old, have a disability, are of an ethnic minority, are on low incomes or high earners. In order to do this, the Council needs to continue to respect all points of view and proactively engage with all parts of our community in an appropriate manner.

As the outcome of the Treaty of Waitangi settlements bring partnership and co-governance arrangements for the Council, we will also look to strengthening partnerships at a social level. By reinforcing our relationships with local social service agencies addressing the specific needs of Māori, we will be able to understand their needs better and support them in a manner that suits.

We have an incredible resource of talented youth in Hauraki and we want to continue to proactively involve this future-focused group in our decision-making. On the other side, we recognise that we continue to have disengaged and vulnerable youth, and will continue to advocate for the promotion of projects to support this group.

We value the wisdom that age brings and believe this can brings many opportunities for connecting generations.

Our vulnerable communities continue to provide us with a reminder that we do not all have the means to address our most basic of needs. The Council wants to continue to support and advocate for agencies who deliver life-changing support to these sectors of our community.

Through the development of this strategy we have discussed the significant role of our voluntary groups within the District. We feel that we are in a good position to be able to assist them through facilitation and support of upskilling, and this will be a focus for Council over the coming years. We also want to be open to community-led initiatives and empower them as they present themselves to Council.

Our goals within this pillar are:

• Our communities are respected, engaged, valued and connected.
• Our community groups and voluntary sector is effective, supported, empowered and sustainable.
• Our most vulnerable people are cared for through initiatives to build social support, cohesion and inclusion.

Our plan to achieve our goals:

• The Council will liaise with all groups of its community in a proactive, appropriate and respectful manner.
• The Council will provide opportunities for youth engagement and participation in decision-making processes, community projects and events.
• The Council will investigate options to collaborate with schools to deliver democratic education to youth.
• Council will collaborate with tāngata whenua, and key agencies to promote and support social service provision in the District.
• The Council will investigate initiatives that connect and value older people e.g. an intergenerational knowledge-sharing scheme.
• The Council will continue to ensure that communities have good access to information, resources and places to meet.
• The Council will advocate for agencies developing strategies to assist with youth classified as ‘Not in Education Employment or Training’ (NEET).
• Through its Digital Enablement Plan, the Council will work towards providing people with access to community and social services online e.g. the establishment (with others) of a Digital Hub.
• The Council will investigate options for upskilling our volunteer base, and empowering our leaders.
• During our District Plan review the Council will be mindful of the Districts affordable housing needs.
Case Study

Secondary School Employment Partnership Programme (SSEP)

In 2016 staff from the Hauraki District Council were involved in the Secondary School Employer Partnerships (SSEP) pilot programme, working with Year 9 English students from Hauraki Plains College.

The SSEP programme is run by Smart Waikato and is supported by Waikato Means Business, WEL Energy Trust and Waikato Federated Farmers Charitable Trust. The goal of the programme is to improve student retention, achievement and education-to-employment pathways, beginning with younger secondary school students and progressing to senior students. The Council agreed to be an employer partner of SSEP for a three-year period.

The year-long programme involved an initial ‘meet and greet’ event where Council staff gave a short presentation about the Council to all Year 9 students, then answered questions in a ‘job fair’ type situation. Two groups of six students were then tasked with researching the Council and this involved the students interviewing the Council staff. Those same students then took part in a field trip, organised by Council staff, to the Kerepehi Water Treatment Plant and the Council building in Paeroa. The students’ presentations were presented to the employer partners at the end of the programme.
All aspects of health (physical, mental and spiritual) are core aspects of social well-being, as is the need to feel safe and be safe. This pillar is about the Council’s focus on investigating new opportunities and promoting existing projects to contribute towards both of these key aspects.

The Council has long been an advocate for a violence-free Hauraki and will continue to promote the message to our community regarding abuse, that “IT’S NOT OK EVER!”, whether it be emotional or physical.

We will also take a hard line on the aspects of society like drugs, alcohol and gambling which can cause health and addiction issues, using our regulatory power to make use of the limited influence we can have on these. This pillar confirms the Council’s support of other agencies who promote healthy lifestyle messages.

Another way Council can support safe communities’ is through environmental design, and this is something we are keen to employ further as we train more of our staff up in the standards associated with crime prevention through environmental design. Alongside this, we will continue to support the funding of a road safety co-ordinator and other projects enhancing the safety of our communities within Hauraki.

We recognise our older population in this pillar, and we want to ensure our communities can age in place positively. This means continuing to support health and social services, and advocate for their presence in smaller rural towns. It also means continuing to be involved in social housing particularly for our elderly in need.

**Our goals for this pillar are:**
- Hauraki residents feel safe and healthy in their homes and in their communities.
- We are resilient to the challenges of our demographically changing future.
- All people in Hauraki have access to the health and social services they need.

**Our plan to achieve our goals:**
- Alongside central government, Council will continue to support initiatives for warm and healthy homes.
- The Council will continue to take a hard line on its gambling and alcohol policies.
- The Council will promote and support addiction services and the vision to create a Violence and Abuse Free Hauraki.
- The Council will collaborate with tāngata whenua, and key agencies to promote and support health service provision throughout the District.
- The Council will use Crime Preventions Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards where appropriate to assist with the reduction of crime.
- The Council will continue to support the provision of pensioner housing within the District.
- The Council will support the development of retirement villages so our communities can age in place.
- The Council will work with other agencies and advocate to central government to retain and attract key health and social service providers.
- The Council will support policy and organisations promoting healthy lifestyles.
- The Council will continue to support a Road Safety Co-ordinator.
- The Council will continue to fulfil its role as a Civil Defence Emergency Management provider.
- The Council will continue to promote safe communities through its animal and noise control services.
Case Study

It’s Not OK Campaign - Waihi

In 2010 the “It’s Not Ok in Waihi” project was the first in the country to secure the backing of two high profile national campaigns to drive home a local message. The Waihi work had the backing of the National Family Violence It’s Not OK campaign and ALACs’ Ease up on the Drink campaign.

The awareness raising campaign saw billboards put up on the roads leading into Waihi reminding people to “Ease up on the Drink”, shoppers getting the message through slideshows of local faces and messages running at local supermarkets and liquor stores and information leaflets distributed throughout the town.

Alongside the two national campaigns, the Hauraki District Council collaborated with Population Health, Waikato District Health Board, NZ Police and the Hauraki Family Violence Intervention Network to lead the Waihi project. It was a great example of how national messages can be targeted at a local level providing much more ownership and impact.

The project was applauded nationwide, and the local champions aspect of the campaign is now replicated in many other townships, including Paeroa with billboards of local people repeating the message that “IT’S NOT OK” ever!

The campaign has shown sustainability with new campaigns reinvigorating the message in both Waihi and Paeroa. Hauraki Family Violence Intervention Network (HFVIN) Coordinator Lauren Cowgill says “This campaign has really been taken to heart by locals who are incredibly supportive of its kaupapa. Local agencies report more people are asking for and accepting support before things reach ‘crisis’ level. This is great news as one of our key messages is that it is ok to ask for help.”

Above is an example of a campaign picture from the 2017 It’s Not OK in Waihi Campaign

2010 Labour leader Phil Goff and MP Jacinda Ardern discuss the It’s Not Ok campaign with local police, Councillors and family violence advocates
Active & Accessible Communities

Participation in sport, recreation, leisure and physical activity has an important impact on our well-being. Whether it is the activation of the mind or body, it supports a sense of belonging, provides an opportunity for communities to work together, and gives those involved and those in the community a sense of pride and achievement.

The Council's strategic intention to work towards active and accessible communities, therefore, is about ensuring that where possible the whole of our community can enjoy the space and facilities that we have without limitations. We want to be forward thinking in our approach to accessibility and design and will work on our own infrastructure with regard to this.

We also want to encourage active leisure and focus on walking and cycling alongside the national drivers to promote these as recreational pursuits. We want to ensure our connections are safe across our walking and cycling network and ensure accessibility for all our residents.

Our goals for this pillar are:
- Community facilities and infrastructure are safe and accessible for all.
- The Council’s sport and recreation facilities are fit for purpose and affordable.
- Our walking and cycling networks are integrated and accessible for our communities and visitors.

Our plan to achieve our goals:
- The Council will continue to provide recreational facilities that are user-friendly and appropriate to community needs e.g. libraries, sports facilities, parks and reserves.
- The Council will continue to support the objectives in the Moving Waikato 2025 unified strategy for sport, recreation and physical activity for the Waikato region.
- New urban design is accessible, attractive, safe, and future-focused.
- Prioritise the actions that arose from the accessibility audits in Hauraki towns to ensure more members of the community can better use the network.
- The Council will continue to support a sport co-ordinator through Sport Waikato.
- The Council will advocate for and support our sporting community groups at a Regional Level e.g. the Waikato Regional Sports Facility Plan.
- The Council will encourage development of a roading network that is safe for walking and cycling by introducing engineering techniques e.g. widening footpaths.
- The Council will continue to develop public spaces in our towns that encourage walking and cycling and improve our streetscapes.
- The Council will continue to integrate the Hauraki Rail Trail with our roading network.

Hugh Hayward Domain in Ngatea is the sporting and recreational hub of the Hauraki Plains. Used for rugby, football, athletics, cricket, netball, league, touch and hockey. The Hockey fields are the only Astroturf playing surface in the greater Coromandel and Thames Valley area.
Case Study

New skateboard park for Paeroa

Council was approached by residents of the Norwood Road area complaining about the skateboard facility on Brenan Field. The facility had been a community project driven by a local businessman keen to establish a space for what was a growing sport activity. Council provided the land and made a contribution to the concrete pad with the rest of the assets being donated and built by local tradespeople. Over the years the facility became run down and was regularly graffitied.

Council considered the development of a skate park in the Railway Reserve area. Skateboarders were invited to attend various meetings on the subject resulting in a concept plan being presented to Council and ultimately the construction of a skate park on the Railway Reserve. In the same year the Plains Ward also approved the construction of a skate park on Hugh Hayward Domain Ngatea.

Both projects involved engagement with youths in the skating fraternity; the designs were provided by professionals in skating. A renowned graffiti artist was also commissioned to do a mural on the wall of the facility.

The new facility has been well used with a number of other complementary assets being built in the same area e.g. barbeque shelter, lighting, children’s playground etc. The recreational benefits from this site are varied and there is now a good community space that can be used by families and skateboarders alike.
We want our communities to value their local areas, to feel connected and involved and generally have a great sense of pride and belonging. As a local Council, we believe we can help to achieve these by continuing to respect our heritage, celebrate our successes and be welcoming to all. We will also continue to provide safe and clean environments acknowledging that in order to feel proud of our District it must represent us well.

We also want our communities to be empowered and enabled to express and celebrate their diverse cultural heritages, and we recognise the particular cultural significance of Māori as tāngata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand.

As a Council we have long been supportive of the arts. We will continue to support the development and maintenance of arts in the District in order to maximise the benefits to our well-being and the well-being of those who visit us.

Diverse cultural heritage: Limestone sculptures in the Gilmour Lake reserve captures Waihi’s unique heritage.

Our goals
- Our heritage and built environment encourages pride and a sense of belonging.
- Hauraki District celebrates its successes, identity and cultural diversity.
- All cultures and ethnicities feel welcome and included in the Hauraki District and that the particular cultural significance of the tāngata whenua within this District is recognised.
- The Arts are supported and valued.

Our plan to achieve this...
- The Council’s urban design features will continue to be innovative and interesting instilling a sense of pride and belonging.
- The Council will continue to support the district concept of Keep New Zealand Beautiful.
- Our Districts unique characteristics will be reflected and maintained in long-term planning decisions.
- The Council will consider projects that will enhance our identity, honour our people and celebrate our unique features e.g. built heritage and natural landscapes.
- The Council will continue to provide community events e.g. Anzac Parades
- The Council will work with groups and organisations (where appropriate) for the promotion and enhancement of local arts, culture and events.
- The Council will administer appropriate funds to provide opportunities for our communities e.g. Creative New Zealand ‘Creative Community Scheme’.
- The Council will continue to use language line so that we can communicate with our growing diverse community.
- The Council will support cultural diversity through inclusive cultural celebrations.
- The Council will continue to support the sister cities cultural exchange.
- The Council will continue to support museums and cultural centres as appropriate.
- The Council will acknowledge achievements through Award Ceremonies and recognition.
- Opportunities are created and ongoing support provided for the development of youth within the District.
Case Study

Citizen and Young Achievers Awards

The Council has always been aware that there are exceptional individuals within communities that contribute a considerable amount of their personal time and effort towards achieving the ambitions and objectives for the community they live in. The Council wanted to publicly acknowledge these outstanding individuals on behalf of the community that they live in and established an Awards event. Initially (2004) the annual Citizens Award was recognised through a celebratory event in the Council Chambers but in 2006 realisation of achievement by the youth was recognised and the two activities were combined into one gala event. This evening has become a significant event for the community with nominations received from all aspects of society. To date over 130 citizens and 130 young people have been publicly congratulated for their contribution to our community.
Some of our achievements over the last five years

Elephant in the Paddock
Ngatea and beyond
In 2015 Council convened a comprehensive group of farming community and industry support stakeholders to gather input around concerns raised regarding the wellness of Hauraki farmers.

The identified areas of concern included rural and social isolation of farmers and the farming community, stigma to getting help for mental health issues, lack of information on how to access help by local businesses that regularly connect with farmers, and finally financial and environmental pressures.

A working party then set out to address some of these concerns with the following achievements to date:

- ‘Good yarn’ workshops were run to help people identify stress and know how and where to seek help.
- A series of ‘Elephant in the Paddock’ articles published in the local newspapers.
- A localised brochure has been produced and printed providing a quick reference for where to go for help and how to talk about depression and well-being down on the farm.
- 6 Key interviews with local farmers providing us with real-life accounts of how the pressures of farming can and have been dealt with.
- A suicide prevention workshop was held.

International Day of the Older Persons (IDOP)
Council annually celebrates IDOP by providing a morning of entertainment in each of the three main towns for our senior residents.

Whilst a celebration and recognition of our seniors, this opportunity also provides Council with a chance to hear from people in our community who maybe do not participate in usual methods of engagement.

In past years the Council has run this event both on its own and in collaboration with other social agencies in the District. It is something that Council values and we feel it helps us to connect with our community.

Connect Waihi
Instigated from a social initiative lead by the Hauraki District Council, Waihi Connect is a phone line providing a one-stop shop for all thing senior-related. It was the brainchild of a working party who met to discuss issues facing our senior residents in Waihi. The key issue identified was social isolation. The phone number, which is, contracted by the Waihi Community Resource Centre, links isolated residents with a knowledgeable person who can connect them with the service they need, or connects them with a local voluntary bus if required.

Keep Hauraki Beautiful
Hauraki District Council has partnered with Keep New Zealand Beautiful to form Keep Waihi Beautiful, Keep Paeroa Beautiful and Keep the Plains Beautiful, all under the umbrella of the Council-led initiative Keep Hauraki Beautiful. In Waihi, this community-led group holds monthly public rubbish clean-ups, runs education programmes in schools which focus on changing littering habits, and partners with other volunteer organisations working on keeping Waihi clean, tidy and attractive.

Keep Hauraki Beautiful is working on anti-graffiti projects which will clean-up sheds, walls and other current targets in the District, replacing affected walls with attractive murals. It is also developing annual tree-planting projects with other local organisations in Hauraki, in recognition of New Zealand’s national Arbor Day.
Action Plan and monitoring

In order to implement this strategy an action plan will be drafted and updated on an annual basis. This action plan will focus on key deliverables over a three-year period and be overseen by a working party of the Hauraki District Council.

It is noted that resourcing for community initiatives is minimal and due to this the key areas that Council will focus on are promotion and advocacy of organisations progressing actions that contribute to the vision and goals adopted. The Council wants to continue to focus on what we do best whilst empowering communities to help themselves as much as possible.

The Council will monitor progress towards its vision by reporting back on its action plan and evaluating the impacts of projects and actions progressed, on the sections of the community they are aimed at.

We look forward to working with the Hauraki community and the organisations working within it and for it.
For further information about social well-being and community initiatives or development please contact the Community Engagement Manager.

Council offices are open from 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

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