

Te Rautaki Rangatahi o Wairarapa

Wairarapa Youth Strategy

Rangatahi in the Wairarapa have opportunities to grow, develop and reach their full potential.



**SOUTH WAIRARAPA
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Kia Reretahi Tātau



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Taratahi
CARTERTON
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Ngā Hua o Roto

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He karere nā ngā Koromatua

Message from the Mayors

Kia ora tātou

Welcome to this updated Wairarapa Rangatahi Strategy, one which outlines those areas most important to rangatahi (youth) across our diverse and vibrant region.

Throughout the development of this strategy, we proactively targeted and engaged rangatahi from all areas and backgrounds, capturing the thoughts and aspirations of the broadest possible cross-section of our region's young people. Through this engagement process they raised their hands and raised their voices, and we listened.

As Mayors, it is our role to ensure the viewpoints of all who call Wairarapa home are considered when making decisions on their behalf. We, and our elected colleagues, represent our communities in their entirety - a vital sector of which is made up of rangatahi, those aged 12 to 24.

Te Rautaki Rangatahi o Wairarapa - Wairarapa Youth Strategy outlines how the region's three councils should consider the provision of services, facilities, and activities for our young people. It is a lens that we can use when delivering for or working with rangatahi in the region – one that can be applied across all the work we do.

Our rangatahi are focused on the future and want to ensure that today's decisions do not adversely impact their tomorrow. Connection, pride, support, and purpose are themes you will see repeated throughout this strategy. We know that our young people want a sense of belonging. They want to know their communities are supportive of and can provide for their aspirations and goals. They want to feel that they can contribute on the big issues such as our environment and facilities; that their voices and opinions matter; that they can be their authentic selves and bring their experiences and input to the table - knowing they will be welcomed, respected, and acted upon.

When developing a strategy such as Te Rautaki Rangatahi o Wairarapa it can be tempting to think that the job is done when the strategy is published. This is not the case. Our publication of this strategy signals our commitment to the first of many waypoints as leaders and as Councils; every decision we make from this point forward demands we check and recheck our commitment to this strategy, its objectives, and our Wairarapa rangatahi.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Caffell".

Gary Caffell

Mayor of Masterton



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron Mark".

Ron Mark

Mayor of Carterton



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mr Connelly".

Martin Connelly

Mayor of South Wairarapa

Kupu Whakataki

Introduction

Our Region

The Wairarapa region spans 830km², bordered by the Remutaka and Tararua ranges to the north and west and the Pacific Ocean to the east. At our southern point is Te Karu o te Ika a Maui, the eye of Maui's fish, more commonly known as Wairarapa Moana (Lake Wairarapa) and its mouth, Te Waha o te Ika a Maui (Palliser Bay). The region is made up of urban, rural, and coastal communities, and is home to 49,900 people.

Three district councils fall within the Wairarapa region: Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa (the Wairarapa District Councils). The Wairarapa District Councils support communities across Masterton, Carterton, Greytown, Featherston and Martinborough townships, and smaller rural and coastal communities. Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC)¹ also plays a role in our region. The Wairarapa District Councils and GWRC work together on matters relating to areas such as climate change and flood protection.

¹GWRC has responsibility across biosecurity, emergency management, flood protection, environment, land management, parks and forests, transport, harbours, pollution control and water supply in the Wairarapa region.





Rangatahi in the Wairarapa Region



Rangatahi (youth) are defined as those between 12 and 24 years old. Approximately 14% (7,090) of the Wairarapa population are rangatahi.

Source: Statistics New Zealand estimated resident population 2016-2021



The Wairarapa is becoming increasingly diverse and a wide range of cultures and ethnicities are represented in our communities.

Source: Census 2018



Our rangatahi move regularly across the region to access education, sports, recreation, and arts and cultural activities.



We know household income and increased costs of living can have an impact on rangatahi, parts of our region have lower incomes than national averages.

Source: Infometrics 2022

[Mean per capita income for Carterton (\$38,735) and Masterton (\$36,014) is lower than the New Zealand average (\$44,179)]

4255
15% OF THE
MASTERTON
POPULATION

1441
14% OF THE
CARTERTON
POPULATION

1394
12% OF THE
SOUTH WAIRARAPA
POPULATION

ARE RANGATAHI
AGED BETWEEN **12** AND **24** YEARS

Source: Statistics New Zealand Estimated Resident Population 2016-2021



The Wairarapa has a range of education providers including a tertiary institute (UCOL), and opportunities for rangatahi to re-engage in education when they have been excluded from mainstream schooling.



Rangatahi are supported to successfully transition into training or employment through gateway programmes in schools and by Mayors Taskforce for Jobs programmes in the region.



The Wairarapa region has a lower percentage of youth achieving NCEA levels 1, 2 and 3 than the national average .

Source: Vodafone OHI Navigator, 2021.



Rangatahi can access a variety of sport and recreation opportunities across the region including (but not limited to) athletics, netball, rugby, dance, soccer, gymnastics, equestrian, hockey, and water sports.



There are arts and cultural activities that rangatahi can participate in across the Wairarapa. An example of this is engagement in competitions such as Smokefree Rock-quests and in local and national kapa haka festivals.



Parts of our region have lower than national averages for 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET).

Source: Infometrics 2022



We know that many Wairarapa rangatahi move out of the region at around 20 years old. They move for a range of reasons, including higher education and employment opportunities.

Source: Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy 2018, p.76 and 2022 p.17

Mā te aha i te Rautaki Rangatahi

Why have a Rangatahi strategy?

Having a Rangatahi Strategy in place assists councils to promote the wellbeing of rangatahi within our communities. Many councils across New Zealand do have Youth Strategies in place to set out their commitment and priorities for this demographic within their district. The purpose of our strategy is to recognise the needs of our rangatahi and encourage youth development through the provision of services, facilities, and activities delivered by the Wairarapa District Councils. While this strategy focuses on all rangatahi, it acknowledges that one size does not fit all.

There is no legislative directive to have one specifically, however the purpose of Local Government (as defined in the Local Government Act 2002) is to enable democratic local decision making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities (the four wellbeings), in the present and for the future.

Having a joint strategy enables the Wairarapa District Councils to take a co-ordinated approach in the work we do to support rangatahi in the Wairarapa. It sets out a common framework across the region so we can collaborate on making the Wairarapa a great place for rangatahi to grow and thrive. We look forward to collaborating and partnering with mana whenua, community groups, agencies and wider community to deliver on the intent of this strategy.



Te āhua o tā mātou waihanga i te Rautaki

How we developed the Strategy

The Wairarapa Rangatahi Development Strategy (2016) was due for review in 2020. The 2016 Strategy was a joint effort of the Masterton and Carterton District Councils. The South Wairarapa District Council came on board as part of this review process to develop a combined Wairarapa Rangatahi (Youth) Strategy. It is the first time all three Wairarapa district councils have come together to develop a common vision for the rangatahi (youth) in the Wairarapa region.

To help inform our approach we explored a range of existing youth strategies. We also looked at resources and information from the Ministry for Youth Development, the Ara Taiohi Mana Taiohi principles, and TiraRangatahi, a rangatahi rōpū (group) who work in partnership with Eastern and Central Community Trust.

It was important to the Wairarapa District Councils that we took a rangatahi centred approach to the review of the Strategy. Upon the advice from those working directly with rangatahi, we took an approach where we engaged kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face to face) to workshop and discuss key areas of importance to rangatahi.

We reached rangatahi from a range of different communities such as:



Disabled/whaikaha, Pasifika, Māori, LGBTQIA+ rural and urban.

We reached rangatahi across the district and held workshops with groups in Masterton, Riversdale, Carterton, Gladstone, Greytown, Pirinoa and Kahutara.



We reached over 1300 rangatahi through



19 schools



6 community groups



Over 3000 suggestions/feedback were provided.

We split our engagement into two phases, reflecting the intent of the 2016 Strategy and the Mana Taiohi principles. The aims and outcomes of each phase were as follows:

- **Phase 1 Rangatahi voices are heard:** Collating data and information from a broad range of rangatahi from across the region that will influence the key areas of focus in the revised strategy. All schools in the region (Year 8 and above) were offered the opportunity to have their students be involved in a variety of ways.
- **Phase 2 Rangatahi voices are reflected:** Refining the data and information into revised goals and actions in collaboration with rangatahi to ensure that the strategy reflects the priorities and needs of rangatahi across the region. On 7 December 2022 we hosted a full day workshop with 19 rangatahi from across the region.

This engagement enabled us to design rangatahi centred priorities for council to support through the Strategy.





Mana Taiohi – Youth Development Principles

This Strategy is underpinned by Mana Taiohi², the principle-based framework for Aotearoa that can inform the way people, organisations and systems work with young people. The framework was informed by the voice of rangatahi and others and aligns with the aspirations outlined in this Strategy for rangatahi in the Wairarapa region.

This Strategy seeks to recognise and enhance the four elements of young people's mana as identified in Mana Taiohi:

- **Mauri Taiohi:** the life spark, values, beliefs, skills and talents of rangatahi.
- **Whakapapa Taiohi:** the genealogy, connection to place of rangatahi.
- **Hononga Taiohi:** the relationships and connections; whānau, peers, community of rangatahi.
- **Te Ao Taiohi:** The big picture which impacts rangatahi including social and economic contexts.

Mana Taiohi also provides how we can enhance young people's mana and oranga (wellbeing) in four different ways:

- **Whanaungatanga:** Supporting quality high-trust relationships
- **Manaakitanga:** Nurturing the values of generosity, feeling accepted and included, and mutual respect
- **Whai Wāhitanga:** Supporting participation of rangatahi, voice and decision-making
- **Mātauranga:** Ensuring we are informed by good information

These elements complement and are reflected within our vision, priorities and what we seek to achieve. These principles are interconnected and holistic.

Mana determines the right of a young person to have control over their lives and the decisions that affect them. Enhancing the mana of rangatahi means recognising what is right with them, as well as the reality of their world. Rangatahi are supported to have a voice, work to their strengths and step into leadership.

²Ara Taiohi. (2019). Mana Taiohi <https://arataiohi.org.nz/mana-taiohi/>

Te Rautaki Rangatahi o Wairarapa - The Wairarapa Youth Strategy

Our Vision: Rangatahi in the Wairarapa have opportunities to grow, develop and reach their full potential.

The purpose of the Strategy is to highlight what is important to rangatahi and support their development through the provision of services, facilities, and activities delivered by the Wairarapa District Councils. It is a lens that Councils can use when delivering to or working with rangatahi in the region that can be applied across all the work we do.

The Strategy aims to deliver the purpose set out in our vision: Rangatahi in the Wairarapa have opportunities to grow, develop and reach their full potential. By identifying clear priorities, it outlines ways the three Wairarapa District Councils can begin to achieve this vision.

The environment in which rangatahi grow and develop helps shape their identity as adults. Investing in rangatahi will benefit both the region's rangatahi directly and the community as they interact with them. It is in everyone's best interests to support rangatahi and provide the opportunities they need for a fulfilling life.

We want all Wairarapa rangatahi to:

- have access to recreational, educational, cultural, and social opportunities.
- have equitable opportunities to participate and be heard (across council matters),
- be connected within their communities,
- be proud of who they are, and
- be supported to grow and reach their full potential.

This Strategy sets out the priorities that rangatahi in the Wairarapa region have identified and what council can do to respond to and support their core needs and aspirations. While this strategy focuses on all rangatahi, it acknowledges that one size does not fit all.

Ngā Whakaarotau o te Rautaki

Strategy Priorities

The following sections set out the seven core priorities for rangatahi in Wairarapa. These were developed in collaboration with rangatahi from across the region in 2022. Rangatahi have identified the following priorities:



What our rangatahi said...

"Providing safe places to just be ourselves and show others our cultural selves and personal selves."

"More cultural events"

"More Wairarapa stories/legends"

"Accept individuality"

"Knowing your identity/background"

"Queer youth support and celebration
"Carterton Pride""

"More Polynesian communities come together"

"Organising and running events that help us celebrate who we are such as parades."

"Māori integration of language. Makes us more open to different cultures and traditions and how we can respect each other"

"I want to know about me and the people around me."

Kia whakanuia tō mātou tuakiritanga

We want to celebrate who we are

Our rangatahi want to celebrate their diversity. Through our engagement with rangatahi they identified a range of ways to celebrate their cultural identity and heritage, in particular Māoritanga (Māori culture). This could be through events or in spaces in our region. Rangatahi also noted the importance of LGBTQIA+ rangatahi being able to express and be their true selves in their communities.

What is important to rangatahi?

- We have pride in who we are in Wairarapa.
- Our culture and identity (including gender and sexuality) are visible in our region.
- There is space for us to celebrate who we are.
- Te Ao Māori³ is an important part of our country and who we are.
- We want to understand Te Ao Māori and how we can learn more.

What is Council's Role?

Councils provide a range of opportunities for rangatahi to express themselves and for communities to celebrate their diversity. Councils encourage inclusivity. Councils recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi and customary rights of mana whenua.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Placemaking⁴ will actively consider the vision and priorities of the Strategy and seek the views and needs of rangatahi when enhancing or creating community spaces.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the cultures, backgrounds, and diversity of Wairarapa rangatahi through our events, programmes, and services.
- Work with mana whenua and rangatahi Māori to support opportunities to celebrate and promote Māori culture in our communities.
- Support community events and activities that enable rangatahi to take active leadership.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

³Our understanding of Te Ao Māori is 'the Māori world' encompassing te reo Māori (language), ahurea Māori (Māori culture) and tikanga Māori (Māori customs and practices).

⁴Councils can influence cultural, environmental, social, and economic wellbeing outcomes through place-making. Place-making is widely understood as "the process of strengthening the connection between people and the places they share," in order to maximise shared value and strengthen community identity (Dyet 2021).

What our rangatahi said...

"Letting us help organise and run events. Giving us the opportunity to lead."

"Sports!"

"Specific sports facilities that need to be enhanced (and maintained)."

"A gym where youth are welcome"

"Wheelchair swing"

"More activities so you don't have to drive hours cost \$"

"Access to good facilities"

"More opportunities for women in sports (have it more talked about)"

"Māori games"

"Increase promotion and accessibility for everyone in our community."

"Upgraded pools"

"More activities targeting all youth - more involving!!"

"More public sports fields basketball, soccer etc"

Kia mauri oho mātou

We want to be active

Our rangatahi want to participate in a range of pursuits. The most common response through our engagements, when talking about what was important to them, was sports and recreation opportunities. Rangatahi would like to see different opportunities to be active in our communities and want these to be accessible. They also noted online sports and gaming spaces where they can come together and participate in these pursuits.

What is important to rangatahi?

- We have facilities and spaces that we can be active in across the region. Facilities and spaces are fit for purpose and looked after.
- There are opportunities to participate in sports, recreation and events across the Wairarapa region.
- We can access a range of activities regardless of our abilities.

What is Council's Role?

Councils provide a range of opportunities, facilities and spaces for sport, recreation, arts and culture, which are easy for rangatahi to take up. Councils consider the needs of disabled/whaikaha rangatahi when making decisions about spaces and facilities.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Consider the vision and priorities of the Strategy and seek the views and needs of rangatahi when upgrading or developing cultural, sport and recreation facilities or spaces.
- Engage with disabled/whaikaha rangatahi and their whānau to understand their needs when it comes to accessible recreation.
- Work in partnership with rangatahi, community groups and stakeholders to support the sporting and cultural endeavours of rangatahi in our communities.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

The following is an example of what we want to do more of with our rangatahi...

Enabling rangatahi to be active in our community

Molly's Slide – Carterton

In 2021, Molly O'Dwyer made a submission on the Carterton District Council's (CDC) Long-Term Plan requesting that the slide at the Carterton Swimming Pools be upgraded. She and other rangatahi did not feel it was safe to use.

Molly collected signatures from the community to support her cause, gathering a total of 91 signatures. Council responded by allocating \$10,000 through the Long-Term Plan process as seed funding for the project.

Molly spread her idea far and wide and ran a community campaign to get others on board and to seek further funding to make the slide project a success. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor were supportive of the project and participated in Molly's fundraising events to raise the final funding.

Molly worked in collaboration with community groups such as Ka Pai Carterton, Trust House, and the wider community, to realise her goal. These groups provided Molly with the final funding towards the project, with their contribution totalling over \$52,000.

Molly's slide project also sparked further upgrades to the Pools with Adrian Jackman, Rangatahi 2 Rangatira (R2R) and local school students painting a new mural in the space.

CDC led the construction of the slide which was officially opened in November 2022.

We want our rangatahi to feel they can raise issues with their council regarding the facilities that we provide, and that they can also be part of the solution. We look forward to supporting more rangatahi like Molly who want to be active and to have good community facilities.



Photo credit: Debbie Hunt Photography



Photo credit: Debbie Hunt Photography



Photo credit: Jet Productions

What our rangatahi said...

"Safe environments"

"Feeling safe walking home after school."

"Transportation frequency helps us get home on time, without feeling unsafe from standing at a deserted road."

"Street lights working"

"Having safe places where we can connect with others and be ourselves."

"Less violence"

"More vape free zones"

"Places that are inclusive"

"Safe roads/streets"

"Safe places to hangout"

"A place to feel safe"

"Having freedom to express myself"

"Safe from bullying"



Kia rongo mātou i te haumarutanga

We need to feel safe

Through our engagements, rangatahi noted the importance of having safe communities and spaces for them. Rangatahi expressed a desire to have their interests and opinions validated and their identity respected. They also considered freedom of expression important. There was consistent feedback around reducing the availability of vaping and harmful substances in their communities.

What is important to rangatahi?

- There is no violence or bullying in our community.
- We are safe from the impacts and peer pressure of drugs, smoking and vaping.
- There are safe, inclusive, and accepting spaces across our region where we can be ourselves.
- We can work together to support one another to make our community safe.
- We can get home safely no matter where we live.

What is Council's Role?

Councils create safe communities and welcoming places for rangatahi and their families and whānau, which foster a sense of belonging.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Consider vision and priorities of the Strategy and the views and needs of rangatahi when developing policies that relate to harmful substances in our community.
- Partner with key stakeholders and community groups, target places of concern identified by rangatahi, and work with rangatahi to strengthen safety and inclusion (e.g. lighting, features, artwork, clearing rubbish).
- Advocate to central government for policy and funding initiatives that support an improved standard of living for Wairarapa rangatahi.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

What our rangatahi said...

"Providing more events like festivals and concerts for youth"

"Family events - more ages rather than aimed more at young children"

"Young people running events (instead of old people)"

"Community activities that involve everyone"

"More youth groups to make friends"

"Transport - public transport is limited which can be difficult for those without a car."

"Let Rangatahi organise an activity"

"Free wifi"

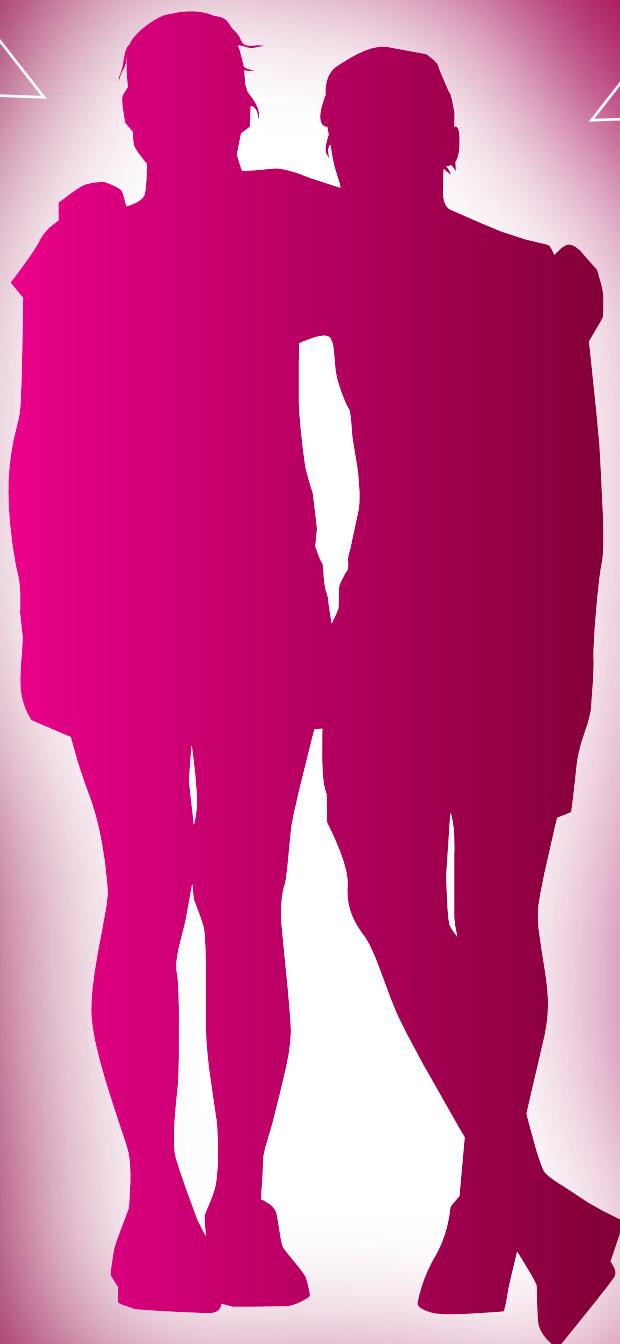
"Places to spend time together"

"Quality Time with your family"

"Make public transport free"

"Promoting activities in a way everyone can see"

"Be more involved with the community"



Kia whakakotahi mātou

We need to connect

Rangatahi identified that their relationships with their whānau and friends were one of the most important things to them. They also noted the challenges when they were trying to connect across the region when it came to transport and access to WiFi. Rangatahi noted that they need opportunities to come together as a community or as rangatahi.

What is important to rangatahi?

- Connecting with one another is easy in our region, and we can do this online or in person.
- We can find the information we need, in the ways we need it.
- We can come together through events and other opportunities with our community.
- There are a range of transport options across our region.

What is Council's Role?

Councils provide information that rangatahi need, in ways they can best access and understand it.

Councils provide opportunities for our community and rangatahi to come together. Councils advocate for efficient, affordable, reliable, and safe transport so that rangatahi can get to the places, and use the services and facilities, they wish to.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Consider the vision and priorities of the Strategy and seek the views and needs of rangatahi when developing community events and initiatives. Explore ways to enable rangatahi to take active leadership roles in the delivery of events.
- Work in partnership with rangatahi to advocate for improvements and changes that are needed to our transport options.
- Improve access to up-to-date rangatahi-friendly information on the opportunities and services available to them.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

The following is an example of what we want to do more of with our rangatahi...

Supporting rangatahi to connect

Just Shift it – LeadHERship Programme – Masterton

In 2021 Masterton District Council part-funded the Shift Foundation to support rangatahi initiatives in the community. Shift ran a range of initiatives with rangatahi, including the LeadHERship programme.

The focus of LeadHERship was to build leadership capability and confidence of young women aged 12-24. Shift co-ordinators worked with rangatahi over 10 weeks to progress them through the five stages of the programme which included:

1. Starting with whanaungatanga, building connections, relationships - why are we here?
2. Shift yourself or lead yourself - you gotta start with number one!
3. Shift others or leading others.
4. Shift your body - explore leadership in the context of physical activity, whatever that means to your group.
5. Shift into action - how do you go about planning an opportunity for others to participate in?

As part of the programme the rangatahi involved were empowered to lead a community initiative for young women. One of Lakeview School LeadHERship groups noted that there weren't many inter-school competitions or inter-school opportunities other than athletics, cross country, and the competitive afterschool or weekend competitions.

In response to this gap, they co-designed a 'Just Shift It – Winter Edition' day, where they invited young women in year 7/8 from schools across the Wairarapa region to form teams of 10 to try out different activities and build confidence in a safe space with their friends. The rangatahi wrote to the following groups, and they agreed to run their part of the day: OnBoard Skate, Wairarapa Boxing Academy, Wairarapa Hockey, Wairarapa College Senior A Netball team, and Solway College's Senior A Football team.

Shift co-ordinators supported rangatahi to remove barriers to participation in the programme, such as transportation and costs. The rangatahi were able to get 11 teams from across the region to enter, with approximately 110 young women participating in the activities, with an extra 10 senior young women running the activities.

Following the 'Just Shift It' day, the local Boxing Academy reported that three young women went on to sign up and join the academy. The young women who organised the day ran a short survey of the students who attended. There was only positive feedback, and the students were eager for the day to be run again.

We want more rangatahi to feel empowered to come up with ideas for them to connect and for the Wairarapa District Councils to be ready to respond to their aspirations. We look forward to supporting more rangatahi directly or through programmes like LeadHERship who want to lead their own community activities.



What our rangatahi said...

"Better public transport
will lower gas emissions.
More people using it"

"People showing others
what changes to make in their
life to be more sustainable
and eco-conscious"

"No waste"

"Annual rubbish
pick up day"

"Supporting our plans
and ideas we have to
reduce plastic pollution"

"Stop climate change"

"An outdoor garden/
tree park to help
climate change"

"Cleaner rivers"

"Recycling"

"Parks"

"Bus to organise
cleaning up parks"

"Taiao"

"Our rivers"



Kia tiakina tō tātou taiao

We need to protect our environment

Rangatahi noted that their connection to the environment was important to them. They want to make sure their parks, rivers and green spaces are healthy. Reducing waste was a key concern for rangatahi.

What is important to rangatahi?

- We can lead our own initiatives to help combat climate change and support the health of our environment and waterways.
- We work together to reduce our waste.
- We look after our parks and green spaces and enjoy living in clean and beautiful neighbourhoods.

What is Council's Role?

Councils support waste reduction and are committed to reducing and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Councils support initiatives for rangatahi to be involved in to improve our environment.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Consider the vision and priorities of the Strategy when developing future iterations of both mitigation and adaptation plans for climate change. Seek the views and needs of rangatahi when developing plans to include intergenerational equity considerations.
- Work in partnership with key stakeholders to support rangatahi to lead environmental initiatives or climate science in their communities.
- Support waste education for rangatahi.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

The following is an example of what we want to do more of with our rangatahi...

Intergenerational equity, in a climate change context, refers to the idea that current generations must tailor how they interact with Earth's natural resources to accommodate future generations. Even though young people and future generations are the primary beneficiaries of climate action, they are often under-involved in climate planning processes. Intergenerational equity is enshrined in the preamble of the global climate change agreement (Paris, 2015).

Empowering our rangatahi to protect their environment

Donald's Creek Restoration Project – South Wairarapa

The Donald's Creek restoration project is led by students from St Teresa's School in Featherston. It is a multi-year project aimed at improving habitat, returning native fish species, and encouraging community connection to a neglected and forgotten waterway. Through the project, students have been empowered to lead their own solutions and connect with an important part of their district.

With support from Enviroschools and Mountains to Sea, students developed a proposed restoration plan for the Donald's Creek area. Students presented the plan to the Featherston Community Board. The Plan advocated for improvements to the habitat, help to return native fish species and encourage community connection to Donald's Creek, and the water that flows into Wairarapa Moana.

In 2016 the group was granted guardianship of the South Wairarapa District Council-owned section of Donald's Creek to progress the project. Students visit the stream several times each year to do freshwater restoration, monitor stream health and undertake freshwater science activities. The project has received ongoing support from South Wairarapa District Council in the form of general oversight of the project, maintenance of the site, help with planting, liaising with elected members and funding.

In 2019 students hosted a community freshwater celebration event, where the community was able to visit and learn about the stream and the creatures that live there, and its connection to Wairarapa Moana. Featherston rangatahi have ongoing connections to the site and are supported by experts to progress their restoration plan.

We want our rangatahi to have a strong connection to Wairarapa, and to feel that they can be kaitiaki (guardians) of these spaces and lead their restoration and preservation for future generations. We look forward to supporting more rangatahi like the students of Featherston who want to advocate for these special ecosystems and spaces for our communities.



Student restoration plan for Donald's Creek

What our rangatahi said...

"Assisting Youth Councils with their activities to get more recognition"

"Everyone's opinion matters regardless of age etc"

"Better at informing youth of what the council is and what they are doing"

"Youth are the future so I believe it is important we influence and participate in the production of our future and community"

"Make council info/ meetings more accessible to youth"

"Seeing actions and ideas happening"

"Communication about everything. I don't know or hear anything about opportunities e.g. youth council"

"Being able to organise things"

"Having rights"

"Listening to what we are saying"

"Feeling involved in adult conversations"

"Having a voice in Council activities"

"A youth website so we can be heard"



He reo tō mātou, ka whakamahia

We have a voice and can use it

Rangatahi noted that they want to participate across a range of community activities and plans, but often don't know how to be involved or feel that their voice is not valued. They expressed the view that Councils need to make sure everyone's opinion matters regardless of age and culture. Councils need to listen, take rangatahi seriously and take on board their ideas.

What is important to rangatahi?

- We can have our say and know that our voices are heard. We hear what opportunities are out there for us.
- Youth representation is important and equally reflected across the Wairarapa.
- We are empowered to lead.

What is Council's Role?

Councils create opportunities for rangatahi to actively engage in decision-making on policies, plans, projects, and initiatives that affect them, and give them a leadership role. Councils empower rangatahi to champion solutions for their communities.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Resource and support representation of rangatahi in their communities through Youth Councils or other representation formats that work best for the rangatahi in their district.
- Ensure all rangatahi engagement follows best national and international practice, including indigenous models and research. These approaches are reflected in the councils' communications and engagement plans for consultation on policies, plans and strategies.
- Provide broader opportunities for a wider range of rangatahi to get involved with decision-making and influencing change through forums, events and other forms of engagement.
- Support and encourage rangatahi to lead on initiatives and opportunities that directly impact them and their whānau, where practicable.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.

What our rangatahi said...

"Somewhere easy to go to ask questions (health)"

"People not needing to pay to see counsellors because they need to talk to someone about their basic needs"

"More money for families that don't have anything"

"More facilities to support mental health"

"Safe/accepting places where they feel comfortable to talk about things troubling them"

"Not having to struggle to get basic needs met"

"Shops where we can actually afford stuff"

"Food"

"More job opportunities for youth"

"Being supported"

"Shelters for homeless people"

"Getting the chance to live and learn"

"A loving and caring Hapori"

"Somewhere to live"



Ka tautokohia mātou, ā, ka tautokohia e mātou

We need to be supported, and support one another

Wellbeing and health outcomes (both mental and physical) were an overwhelming response received during our engagements. Rangatahi expressed a desire to have their interests and opinions validated, and their identity respected. They would like to see better access to mental health essentials in our communities. Some noted that their basic needs were not being met and noted the importance of access to food and housing. They also commented on the impact the cost of living is having on them and their whānau.

What is important to rangatahi?

- We know where to go for help and support in our community.
- We are treated fairly regardless of culture, gender or sexuality.
- We can access a range of services locally to support our wellbeing.
- Cost is not a barrier for us to have our basic needs met.

What is Council's Role?

Councils work with rangatahi and partners to create healthy environments and help inform rangatahi about services and support that are available to them in our community.

How can Councils achieve this?

- Work with rangatahi to advocate for better health and wellbeing outcomes in our communities where possible.
- Improve communication with the health and social sectors to ensure relevant and timely information is shared.
- Strengthen the councils' knowledge of national policies and research, including Mana Taiohi, to contribute to our local knowledge of rangatahi and share knowledge with organisations that support rangatahi.
- Collaborate with agencies and community groups who provide access to education, training and employment pathways where possible.

Further details on initiatives and opportunities that support the Priority outcomes, and these objectives, are outlined in the Implementation Plan.



**Te āhua o tā ngā Kaunihera o Wairarapa
whakakotahi kia tutukitia ai tā mātou aronga
me ōna whakaarotau**

How the Wairarapa District Councils will deliver on our vision and priorities together

This is an important strategy for the Wairarapa District Councils. It must enable, support and be consistent with our respective councils' strategic frameworks so rangatahi have opportunities to grow, develop and reach their full potential in the Wairarapa.

This Strategy provides the Wairarapa District Councils with a greater understanding of how our rangatahi want to be involved in council activities, and what we need to do to embed these commitments and opportunities. We recognise each district has unique needs and challenges, and there are varying levels of capacity across each council to respond to aspects of this Strategy. It is important that each district has autonomy over what they deliver, but we aim to come together and collaborate, share resources and information to improve outcomes for rangatahi.

The Wairarapa District Councils are committed to working together where possible to deliver on this strategy. Across the seven priority areas Councils will share information and decision making with each other about:

- funding support for rangatahi
- facility developments/infrastructure
- training and development opportunities for staff and rangatahi
- partnerships and networks that support rangatahi development.

We also want to work in collaboration with our community. Achieving the intended outcomes of this strategy will rely on having strong relationships and partnerships with the health, education, cultural, sport, and social sectors in our region. The Wairarapa District Councils are committed to actively participating in community networks that support rangatahi development across these sectors.

Implementation and Monitoring

This Strategy will be reviewed by the Wairarapa District Councils every five years following its adoption, or earlier if determined by the Wairarapa District Councils, or in response to legislative or policy changes.

Strategy implementation will be the collective responsibility of all areas of the councils, and be used as a core document when working with rangatahi or groups that support or deliver services to rangatahi. The implementation plans support the delivery of the priorities and objectives of this strategy and will set out:

- Areas of ongoing work that Councils already undertake and deliver to rangatahi.
- New projects or initiatives to be developed and implemented. Some of these projects may need further consultation or consideration by council. Where required these will be included within Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan planning cycles.
- Areas where the Councils will look to partner with others to deliver on the priorities and objectives of the Strategy for rangatahi.

Each council will be responsible for their own implementation plans which will be published alongside the Strategy document. Implementation plans will be developed in advance of each Annual Plan, and longer-term projects identified as part of our Long-Term Planning process.

Activities in the plans are shown under their respective priority areas. Lead teams and partners are identified. Given some regional projects may be identified, implementation plans of the three Wairarapa District Councils will be published concurrently.

The Implementation Plan will be subject to annual monitoring. The annual monitoring will allow us to regularly update the Implementation Plan with additional new or planned activities. The following methods will be used as a basis to evaluate and monitor the Strategy:

- Number of initiatives delivered (delivery against implementation plans).
- Rangatahi or community surveys.
- Data sets from areas such as Nuku Ora, Te Whatu Ora – Health NZ, NZ Police, and Statistics New Zealand (Census).
- Targeted feedback from rangatahi, Youth Councils, or groups that work closely with rangatahi.

It is important to note that rangatahi engagement is an ongoing and significant part of the delivery and implementation of this strategy. This is a living strategy, and we will continue to grow our understanding and connections with all parts of our rangatahi community to make sure we continue to connect with the outcomes of this strategy this includes Māori, Pasifika, rural and LGBTQIA+ rangatahi.

In particular, while we made best endeavours to reach out to 18–24-year-olds through our engagement opportunities (online and in person) the levels of engagement were lower than our 12–18-year-old bracket. We are committed in our implementation plans to continue to reach this age bracket and identify where focus is needed for the Wairarapa District Councils.





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**SOUTH WAIRARAPA
DISTRICT COUNCIL**
Kia Reretahi Tātau



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Taratahi
CARTERTON
DISTRICT COUNCIL