

Our Places



Strategy

A REGIONAL APPROACH TO SPACES AND PLACES PLANNING IN
WAITAHA AND TE TAI POUTINI 2026

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GREATER CHRISTCHURCH PARTNERSHIP MEMBER ORGANISATIONS:



BOUGHT TO YOU BY:



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1. Foreword

Our Places – A Regional Approach to Spaces and Places Planning in Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini 2026 is the refreshed Canterbury Spaces and Places Plan. It marks an important step forward in how partners work together to plan for, provide and advocate for quality spaces and places across the region.

This plan reflects a shared, evidence-based approach to planning for play, active recreation and sport across Canterbury. It comes at a time when councils, funders and the sport and recreation sector are under increasing financial pressure, making collaboration, smart decision-making, and getting the most from what we have, more important than ever.

It recognises that people's needs are changing. It looks beyond traditional sport to include play and active recreation. The plan also reflects a stronger focus on working in mana enhancing ways with mana whenua, supporting environmental outcomes and ensuring spaces and places are welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

Our vision at Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ) is simple: Every Body Active. We're building a healthier, more connected Aotearoa by supporting communities to be active in ways that work for them. This includes locally led approaches to spaces and places that deliver quality experiences in play, active recreation and sport.

We work alongside Regional Sports Trusts, national sports and active recreation organisations and local government to support the planning, funding and delivery of spaces and places that are affordable, well used and sustainable.

We know many New Zealanders want to be active and physical activity is bouncing back post pandemic, but participation and experiences are not equal for all communities and age groups. While not all the drivers of how and whether people are active are within our control, the quality of the opportunities and experiences people have in their local spaces and places is something we can influence together.

This plan helps partners build a shared understanding of community needs and agree on what good looks like. It provides a clear, high-level framework to support decision making, encourages collaboration and helps councils and funders respond to system pressures and priorities.

Sport NZ acknowledges and thanks the councils and Sport Canterbury for their leadership. We look forward to continuing to support the implementation of this plan.

Julie Morrison

General Manager Strategy, Policy and Investment

Sport NZ

March 2026

2. Introduction

2.1. Background

Sport Canterbury, Sport New Zealand and 12 councils have been working collaboratively to develop regional, sub-regional and local spaces and places (facilities) strategies and plans, across the Sport Canterbury area, since 2016. This is the first time that a plan encompassing all parts of the Sport Canterbury Region has been developed. This Plan builds on the foundations and learning from the previous spaces and places reports, and provides a regional planning approach to support play, active recreation and sport facility planning across the whole of Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini (the Sport Canterbury rohe).

2.2. Purpose

The purpose of Our Places – A Regional Approach to Spaces and Places Planning in Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini (Our Places 2026) is to transform the earlier sport facility-focused documents into a broader, regional play, active recreation and sport spaces and places plan. It provides a range of insights and refreshed recommendations to help guide the future approach to regional, collaborative planning for spaces and places.

Our Places 2026 (this Plan) celebrates the successes that have been achieved through prior spaces and places planning, particularly through collaborative approaches and investment. It also identifies key priorities which should be progressed to help improve the community outcomes obtained from future spaces and places investments across Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini.

2.3. Scope

While Our Places 2026 considers play, active recreation and sport spaces and places, it is not a physical activity strategy. It focusses on the spaces and places (facilities) which enable play, active recreation and sport to occur. As a high-level, regional plan, it cannot account for all play, active recreation and sport spaces and places. Rather, it is focussed on the more significant facilities in the network that serve a sub-regional, regional, national or international role as defined in Section 2.7.

2.4. Strategic Fit

This Plan provides high-level strategic guidance, to help inform councils, funders, and community organisations across the Sport Canterbury rohe, in their decision making regarding spaces and places planning and provision. It aims to help ensure stakeholders and decision-makers are more informed as to the priority needs across the whole Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini region, recognising that resources are limited and prioritisation of future investment is required.

The Plan does not replace the need for more geographically focused planning or the analysis of individual assets and development plans. It is intended that this regional approach be used to support and inform more detailed sub-regional and local planning, including strategies, plans, policies, needs and feasibility assessments and asset management plans.

Figure 2-1: Strategic Fit



2.5. Definitions

In this Plan, the following definitions are used:

Active Recreation is non-competitive physical activity for the purpose of wellbeing and enjoyment. It includes activities that:

- occur in built, landscaped and natural environments (including outdoor recreation, fitness/exercise, community recreation, aquatics)
- are undertaken by individuals and by groups
- occur with and without the involvement of a 'provider' group or organisation (i.e. can be undertaken independently).

Sport is usually defined as physical activity that is competitive, organised and involves the observation of rules. It may be participated in either individually or as a team.

The reality is that often there is no real differentiation between Active Recreation and Sport, particularly from the view of community participants. To recognise this, we note that: **Active Recreation and Sport** are activities that you do for fun, challenge and fitness that involve movement. Active Recreation and Sport includes a wide range of activities such as walking, fishing, stand-up paddle boarding and a huge range of individual and team sports. Participation can occur in a range of settings from informal to organised competitions and individual to group and club environments.

Play is an innate human activity. It is a fun, accessible, challenging, social and repeatable activity that is spontaneous and can happen anywhere. Play has no pre-determined outcome, is intrinsically motivated, personally directed and freely chosen.

Play Spaces are those areas with elements or features designed to encourage play. They can be highly structured with built equipment or less formal spaces designed for nature play or creative play. When people have time and permission to play, any space can be a play space.

Strategy Partners are Sport Canterbury, Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa (Sport NZ), and territorial authorities across the Sport Canterbury area as identified in Table 2-1.

Stakeholders are a diverse range of organisations that have an interest and a role to play in the planning, provision and use of spaces and places across the region. This includes play, active recreation and sport organisations (at local club, regional and national levels), education and health sector organisations, mana whenua, tangata whenua and kaupapa Māori organisations.

Territorial Authorities (TAs) is the term used within this Plan to collectively refer to all the city or district councils included in this Plan. Table 2.1 outlines each of the territorial authorities included in this Plan. Note: a territorial authority is formerly defined under the Local Government Act in New Zealand, which outlines their role and powers.

Regional Sports Organisation (RSO) is an organisation that governs and operates a specific sport within a geographic boundary. They also often act as the conduit between national sports organisations and local clubs and delivery organisations. Different sports have different RSO structures across the Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini region. Examples include Canterbury Rugby League, Mainland Netball and Athletics Canterbury.

National Sports Organisation (NSO) refers to a peak body that has been recognised by Sport NZ as being responsible for the governance of the identified sport across Aotearoa New Zealand. Examples include Tennis NZ, NZ Football and Snow Sports NZ.

2.6. Key Terminology

Due to the broad geographical area covered by this Plan, it is necessary to clarify some key terms regarding how different geographic areas are referred to throughout the Plan:

Table 2-1 Key Terminology

Sport Canterbury Region Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini region Sport Canterbury Rohe	Sub-region(s)	District(s) Territorial authorities
Description		
The whole of Sport Canterbury's territory	Specific geographic areas that are often considered as a whole grouping	Each local territorial authority area
Areas included/covered		
Canterbury Waitaha (including North, CSW cluster, mid and south), West Coast Te Tai Poutini (including Buller), and Chatham Islands	North Canterbury ¹	Hurunui District
	Christchurch, Selwyn, Waimakariri (CSW) Cluster	Christchurch City
		Selwyn District
		Waimakariri District
	Mid Canterbury	Ashburton District
South Canterbury	Mackenzie District	
	Timaru District	

¹ Often Waimakariri is considered to be 'North Canterbury' but for the purposes of this Plan it is grouped with the other more urban areas of Christchurch City and Selwyn District.

Sport Canterbury Region Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini region Sport Canterbury Rohe	Sub-region(s)	District(s) Territorial authorities
		Waimate District
	West Coast	Buller District ²
		Grey District
		Westland District
	Chatham Islands	

² Buller is within the area serviced by Sport Tasman but is referenced within this Plan as it is part of the West Coast area and some sport and recreation organisations operate on a coast-wide basis.

2.7. Spaces and Places Categories

To help inform regional spaces and places planning, it is useful to have a way to categorise and consider the role of specific spaces and places and how they support communities to engage in play, active recreation, and sport. While all categories of facilities are important in their own way, the focus of this Plan is primarily on spaces and places that serve a sub-regional or regional purpose.

2.7.1. Facility Categories

Figure 2-2 Facility Categories



All categories of facility have an important role to play within the network of facilities across the Sport Canterbury region. A single facility often meets a variety of community needs across the spectrum, from local participation to international competition. Each facility is classified based on its highest capability, rather than by its regular primary function. In most instances, an International Standard venue can cater to many other types of uses.

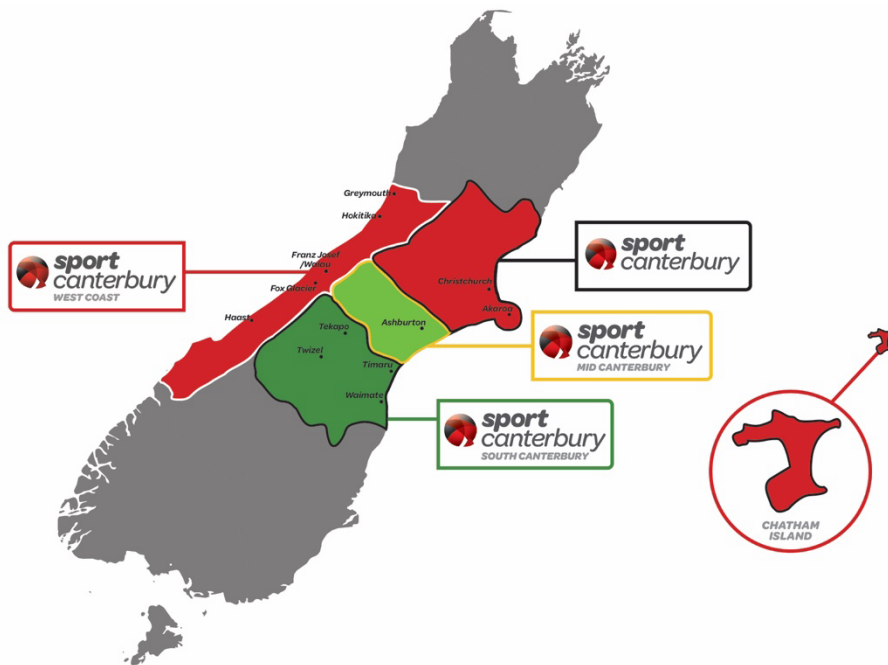
2.7.2. Facility Category Definitions

	Local	Sub-regional	Regional	National	International
Definition	A facility that provides community participation opportunities for a local neighbourhood, town or city catchment. Local facilities often facilitate people's introduction to sport and recreation within their local community.	A destination facility with the ability to provide participation opportunities for training, competition or other unique participation experiences. Often supporting a whole territorial authority (TA) district and drawing people from across adjacent areas.	A facility with the ability to host regional competitions (including South Island wide), serve as a regional high-performance training hub for one or more sports codes or provide community participation opportunities for a high number of people across TA boundaries. Regional spaces and places are often the primary centre of co-located, multi-sport and active recreation facilities within a regional catchment.	A facility with the ability to draw participants from across New Zealand (NZ), host national competitions and events (including pro and semi pro franchise competitions involving teams from outside NZ) or to serve as a national high-performance training hub for one or more sports codes.	A facility with the ability to host international competitions and events (i.e. between nations) or draw participants from outside NZ.
Examples	Hampstead All Sports Club, Ashburton Kia Toa Bowling Club, Timaru Man Made Hill Mountain Bike Park, Twizel Arthur Fong Park, Greymouth MainPower Amberley Pool	Margaret Mahy Playground, Christchurch DWC Westland Sports Hub, Hokitika McLeans Island Forest Park, Christchurch Caroline Bay Aquatic Centre, Timaru EA Networks Centre (aquatic), Ashburton Waimate Events Centre	Aorangi Stadium, Timaru Wilding Park Tennis Centre, Christchurch Selwyn Sports Centre Christchurch Netball Centre Foster Park, Rolleston Ashburton Domain Mt Hutt Mountain Bike Park, Ashburton District Westland Recreation Centre, Greymouth	Ngā Puna Wai (Rugby League), Christchurch Lake Ruataniwha (rowing) MainPower Stadium, Rangiora EA Networks Centre (indoor courts), Ashburton Upper Kakapotahi (Whitewater kayak), West Coast	one.nz stadium (Te Kaha/Multi-Use Arena), Christchurch Parakiore, Christchurch Trust Aoraki Tennis Centre, Timaru Ngā Puna Wai (Hockey, Athletics), Christchurch Mount Hutt (ski field) Paparoa Track Great Walk, West Coast Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail, Mackenzie

3.Strategic Context

3.1. The Region

Figure 3-1 Sport Canterbury Region



The region is very broad and diverse, with significant variations in the geography, climate and population across the region. The oceans, beaches, rivers, lakes, foothills, mountains and bush provide many spaces for active recreation and sport opportunities. The natural environment is supplemented by a significant variety of built play, active recreation and sport spaces and places (facilities) which are provided in both rural and urban contexts.

Approximately 80% of the current regional population lives in the Christchurch, Selwyn, Waimakariri council areas (CSW Cluster). Mid and South Canterbury have a further 5% and 9% of the current population, respectively, mostly in Ashburton and Timaru. The remainder of the population is spread across a series of smaller towns such as Greymouth, Hokitika, Waimate and Amberley and small rural towns and settlements such as Twizel, Waitangi (Chatham Islands), Ross, Fox Glacier, Hinds, Arthurs Pass and many, many more. Those living in the more sparsely populated, rural parts of the Sport Canterbury region typically have greater travel requirements in order to access built spaces and places to support their play, active recreation and sport participation.

Planning on a regional basis for such a diverse area and communities is challenging but still important and possible, with collaborative intent and willingness.

3.2. Demographic Summary

This section provides the key demographic trends at a regional level for the whole Sport Canterbury rohe. With the exception of the ethnicity analysis, the analysis period is 25 years from 2023 to 2048.

Please note: the demographic trends presented here apply to the whole Sport Canterbury region. There are sub-regional demographic nuances that will require further, specific analysis at a local level, when organisations are considering potential future spaces and places investment(s). For further demographic detail, please refer to the separate reference document.

	25 Year Demographic Forecast	Impact on Sport and Active Recreation
	<p>The population of the Sport Canterbury Region is expected to increase by 30% (205,080 people) to reach approximately 897,270.</p> <p>97% of the expected population increase (198,590 people), is projected to be in the Waimakariri, Selwyn and Christchurch city areas (CSW Cluster).</p>	<p>An increase in the total number of people will require facilities and infrastructure to adapt and/or increase to meet the sport and active recreation requirements of the larger population base.</p>
	<p>The distribution of the population across the Sport Canterbury region is expected to remain much the same. The proportion residing in the CSW cluster area is expected to increase to 84% from 80% currently.</p>	<p>Future spaces and places developments and upgrades need to consider where the future population will be and what level of mobility people have to travel around the region to participate.</p>
	<p>It is projected that the population of the Sport Canterbury region will be evenly spread across all age groups, with between 13% and 20% in each 15-year age band.</p>	<p>Spaces and places developments need to consider the sport and active recreation requirements of the whole population.</p>
	<p>The population of the Sport Canterbury region is ageing. The population of the 75-plus age group is expected to increase by 118% or 62,230 people.</p>	<p>More demand for indoor recreation and social spaces by this cohort. More demand for warm water facilities. A requirement for facilities that are warm, accessible and with good acoustics.</p>
	<p>The Sport Canterbury region is projected to become more ethnically diverse.³</p> <p>Notably, the population identifying as Asian is expected to increase to nearly one quarter of the population (24%) while the population of those identifying as Māori is expected to increase by 4% to 14%.</p>	<p>The participation preferences of various ethnic groups can vary. An example is the higher proportion of people who identify as coming from Asian descent participating in badminton, or those identifying as Māori seeking opportunities to engage in traditional Māori games such as ki o rahi and what impact this may have on the supply of spaces and places for these sports and activities.</p>

3.3. The Value of Play, Active Recreation, and Sport

Play, active recreation, and sport have long been valued as key parts of the New Zealand lifestyle. It is well known and accepted that participation has a range of benefits for individuals and communities, including contributing to physical and mental health and wellbeing, social connection, national and local pride, and the national and local economy.

³ Ethnicity projections are to 2043. Also, individuals can identify as more than one ethnicity so totals may add to more than 100%.

How New Zealanders participate in physical activity has changed over time. Increasingly, people are choosing to participate through active recreation and play; engaging through traditional sport, whilst still important, is not the main way people are physically active. In part, this is due to increasingly busy lives, changing work habits and the broad diversity of play, active recreation and sport opportunities which are on offer.

The spaces and places that support play, active recreation, and sport across the Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini region are considered to be integral to the overall wellbeing of communities.

3.4. Key Trends in Play, Active Recreation, and Sport

Several trends are challenging the structure, leadership and delivery of play, active recreation, and sport in New Zealand. These trends impact the spaces and places network that is needed to support community participation and wellbeing into the future. Some relevant trends include:

- Increasing awareness of the value and importance of play.
- Decreasing physical activity, particularly influenced by the electronic revolution.
- Ageing built facilities, many of which are no longer fit for purpose and may not be financially viable to upgrade and/or maintain.
- The development of multi-use hubs that function as broad community facilities, providing for a range of uses rather than just one sport.
- Increasing popularity of, and demand for, dog-friendly recreation spaces such as off-leash dog parks.
- Increasing diversity in the range of sport and recreation available.
- Increasing participation in individual sport and recreation activities, including a move to more casual participation
- A general reduction in the popularity of many traditional team sports in proportion to the population, although there are some outliers such as basketball which has experienced recent growth.
- Continued importance of team sports for young people, particularly in the school setting.
- New technologies that benefit and encourage participation, such as e-bikes, smart watches, and online tools.
- Increasing expectations of participants, including the move of some outdoor sports to indoor environments (such as netball), desire for access to artificial turfs and surfaces, and year-round participation options.
- Low-cost, no cost casual play and active recreation opportunities such as open spaces with facilities to encourage whānau use such as disc golf, multi-use courts, walking/bike spaces and multi-use areas.

For every \$1 spent on play, active recreation, and sport there is a social return of \$2.12 to New Zealand. Meaning for every dollar invested the return is more than doubled.






- The Social Return on Investment (SROI) of Recreational Physical Activity in Aotearoa New Zealand, Sport NZ (2022)

3.5. Participation Trends

Sport NZ undertakes independent research to understand the proportion of people participating in recreation and sport activities throughout New Zealand. The data provided in the Sport NZ Insights Tool⁴ gives a picture of participation across the Sport Canterbury rohe.

This section provides high-level participation trends only, it does not include detailed consideration on a code by code basis. The Sport NZ Insights tool shows the following activity behaviour (interests and preferences)⁵ for the Sport Canterbury region. It is important to note that this information is an indication only and care should be taken with the proportions of participation that it presents.

Figure 3-2 Sport Canterbury Region – Top 5 Activity Behaviours

				
45 % Walking for sport or leisure	26% Jogging/ running	19% Individual workout	15.4% Swimming/ diving	14.8% Cycling/Bike riding

Note: If 'inactive' was an activity it would be ranked 3rd, at 21%.

This information shows that the majority of participation across Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini is likely to be through recreation and informal or casual participation opportunities in the outdoors (including footpaths) or via spaces and places and classes that cater to more individualised sport and active recreation opportunities such as gym/exercise classes and pools.

However, sport is still a popular and important participation option. This is significant from a spaces and places planning perspective as the majority of sports participation has a high reliance on parks which include sports fields and turfs, a range of built facilities (such as indoor and outdoor courts, aquatic facilities, sports clubrooms and amenity facilities) often these types of spaces and places are directly provided by local councils, or by clubs with some level of council support such as low cost land leases.

3.5.1. Sport Canterbury Region - Top 5 'organised sport' activity behaviours

When the Sport NZ Insights activity behaviour data is considered from a facility-based, 'organised' sport⁶ perspective the top 5 facility-based sports in the region (all demographics), based on modelled data⁷ are:

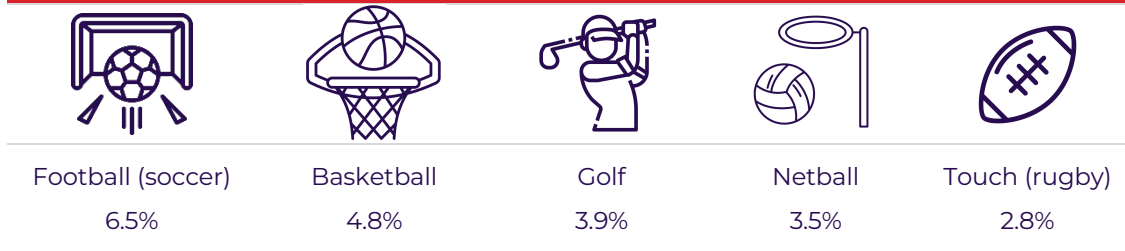
⁴ This Tool sources data from Statistics NZ, Active NZ Survey (Sport NZ) School Sport New Zealand sports participation data, Ministry of Education, Health and Nielsen Research. See <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/insights-tool/>

⁵ Activity behaviours is modelled participation using combined data from the 2022 and 2023 Active NZ Survey (last 7 Days participation rates) and Statistics NZ Census 2018.

⁶ Some activities such as cycling /mountain biking, swimming, and dance were within the data but are not included in the top 5 summary as they are expected to largely reflect recreational participation.

⁷ Activity behaviours is modelled participation using combined data from the 2022 and 2023 Active NZ Survey (last 7 Days participation rates) and Stats NZ Census 2018.

Top 5 'organised' sport activity behaviours (all demographics)

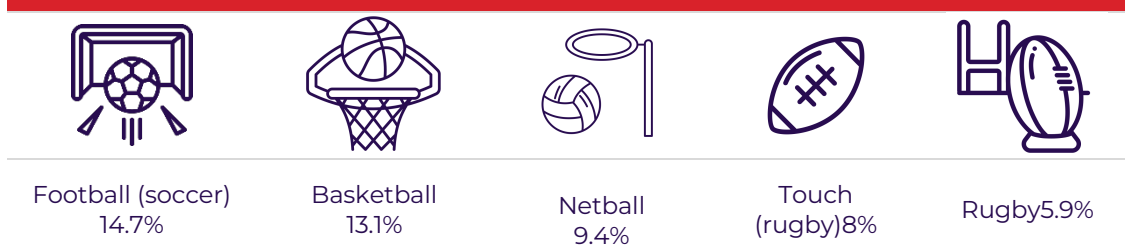


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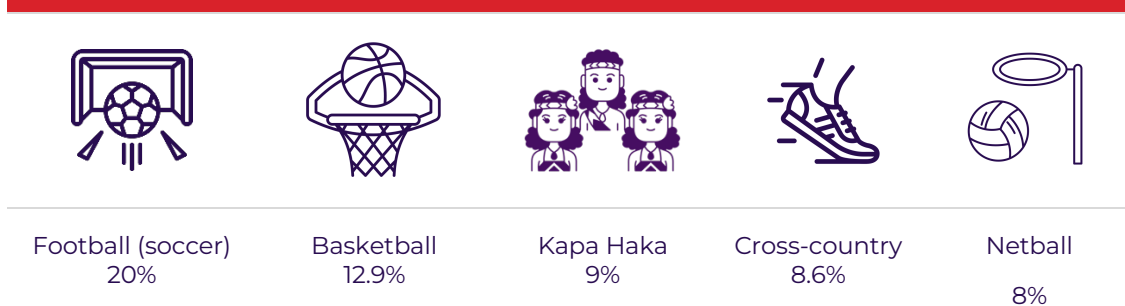
top sports for young people are different to those of the whole population, and there are also differences between primary and secondary school age sports participation.

Sport NZ Insights data shows the top 5 facility-based, 'organised' sports⁸ for students in the Sport Canterbury region are:

Secondary Students - Top 5 'organised' sport activity behaviours



Primary Students - Top 5 'organised' sport activity behaviours



3.5.2. Sport Canterbury Sport Report Card 2024

Sport Canterbury has been tracking sport membership (participation) trends for 17 years. This provides an important source of longitudinal data for Christchurch-based Regional Sports Organisations (RSOs)⁹.

Key points contained in the 2024 report include:

- Many sports in 2023/2024 reported participation growth from 2022/2023, with 18 out of 25 sports showing overall participation numbers have increased.

⁸ Again, a range of more recreational participation activities such as trampolining, surfing, individual workouts were excluded from this top 5 summary on the basis that they largely reflect recreational participation.




⁹ The method of gathering data was changed for the 2024 year, and some of the 31 invited sports did not report so there is some variability in the quality of the 2024 data.

- Since 2007, there has been an overall increase in membership across all sports¹⁰ (combined) from approximately 80,000 (2007) to 120,000 (2024).
- Membership trend data shows growth for some sports along with stability or decline for others. This is captured in Table 3-1 below.
- Gender balance remains steady at 40% of members being female and 60% being male. This balance has been reasonably stable since 2019.
- Juniors continue to make up the largest proportion of membership at 37%, followed by seniors at 34%¹¹. Youth are the third largest category at 25%.

Significant membership increases and declines have a direct impact on spaces and places utilisation.

The longitudinal data means it is possible to provide an overall assessment, on a sport by sport basis, of membership growth, stability or decline¹². Table 3-1 below provides the assessment for each sport that provided data in 2024, compared to membership in 2014¹³.

Table 3-1 Sport Membership Trends 2014 - 2024

Growth Trend 	Relative Stability 	Downward Trend 
Basketball	Badminton	Baseball
Canoe Racing	Hockey	Bowls
Football	Netball	Cricket
Golf	Rowing	Gymnastics
ParaFed	Rugby Union	Table Tennis
Rugby League	Softball	Tennis
Swimming	Squash	
Volleyball	Ultimate Frisbee	
	Waterpolo	

¹⁰ Not all sports were involved in providing data from 2007, some have come into the monitoring in later years.

¹¹ Generally, Junior is those under 13 years and Senior is 19 years and over although there can be some variation on age categories on a sport by sport basis.

¹² This assessment was provided by Sport Canterbury in their report card report. It is important to note that some codes included this table did not have or provide data for the full 10 years (such as baseball, table tennis, ultimate frisbee, paraFed and squash). Some sports are newer or emerging sports with relatively low overall membership and therefore the trend assessment is indicative only.

¹³ Note: all sports reflect slightly different participation regions and methodologies in how they capture membership. Some sports have been reporting data since 2007, others came in later so the assessment in the table is based on a 10 year data set. Therefore, this data provides indicative trends for each sport. It should not be used to compare 1 sport with another.

Source: Sport Canterbury Report Card.

Overall, the report card data indicates some areas where pressure on spaces and places may be expected due to increasing membership of some sports such as sports fields (rugby league and football), indoor courts (basketball, volleyball, parafed). Some aquatic spaces may also experience pressure due to increases in casual community use as well as aquatic-based membership sports. However, it is noted that Parakiore opening will provide significant increases in the supply of both courts and aquatic space in Christchurch. Membership growth may also be placing pressure on some golf courses.

For more participation information from the report card see the separate reference document.

4. Celebrating Success

4.1. Success Stories from Earlier Spaces and Places Planning

Previous spaces and places strategies and plans at a sub-regional level identified a number of planning and development projects that have been successfully implemented.

This section provides a brief overview of some examples of successful projects from prior strategies. The separate reference document provides more detail on these examples, including the challenges being addressed, key milestones, highlights and potential learnings for other spaces and places planning and development projects.

4.2. Development Projects

Transforming Fraser Park into a Thriving Multi-sport Hub

Overview

The Fraser Park Redevelopment Project in Timaru, South Canterbury reimagined a traditional rugby venue into a vibrant, inclusive, and multi-purpose community facility. What began as a response to deteriorating infrastructure and limited usability from a rugby perspective, has become a flagship example of a multi-purpose community venue.

Led By

The Fraser Park Trust, working in partnership with South Canterbury Rugby Union with support from other code partners.

Highlights and Success

- Expanded Use: Hosting diverse events from sport to community gatherings
 - Inclusive Design: Facilities now cater to all genders and abilities
- Future Potential: Positioned to attract even more events in 2026 and beyond



Reimagined Indoor Court Facility Network

Overview

Following the Christchurch earthquake sequence there was a significant reduction in the available indoor court space due to permanent closures and/or long-term repair projects that were required to existing facilities.

The earthquakes also contributed to more rapid population growth outside of Christchurch city, particularly in the Selwyn District.

Several major indoor court and multisport facility development projects were undertaken:

- Selwyn Sports Centre – opened 2021
- MainPower Stadium Rangiora – opened 2021
- Christchurch Netball Centre – opened 2023
- Parakiore Recreation and Sport Centre (opened December 2025).

Led By

Selwyn District Council, Waimakariri District Council, Christchurch City Council, and Christchurch Netball Centre.

Highlights and Success

The most valuable part of these developments for the Canterbury community is the access and connection they create. These facilities aren't just sports halls; they're community hubs that bring people together for activity, competition, learning, and social interaction.



4.3. Strategic Planning Projects

Aligned Strategic Planning In Westland

Overview

The development of the West Coast Spaces and Places Strategy (2020) highlighted the need to assess, in more detail the sports field network, including how events were catered to in Hokitika.

Subsequently, a detailed local Hokitika Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan was developed to set priorities for investment, maintenance and facility development in Hokitika over a 10-year period. It confirmed the importance of:

- Public land at Cass Square and the Westland Racecourse as key sport and recreation assets
- The need for the creation of site masterplans for both locations.

Led By

Initial West Coast strategy led by Sport Canterbury on behalf of stakeholders in the region.

Westland / Hokitika specific planning led by Westland District Council

Highlights and Success

The development of the local strategy enabled:

- Informed local decision-making, with Westland District Council using it to support council activity-management planning and project planning.
 - Identification and execution of multiple community projects
- Consideration of investment in key local assets such as Cass Square, the Westland Racecourse and play spaces/playgrounds.



Supporting Chatham Island Future Sport and Recreation Needs

Overview

Chatham Islands Sport and Recreation Facilities Plan (2024) explored the current and future sport and recreation facility (spaces and places) needs of the Chatham Islands and reflected these in a practical, implementable plan which aligned with the Chatham Island Council strategic vision of creating “a thriving Chatham Islands where together we can achieve a better future for our people and our islands”.

Led By

- Sport Canterbury, working in partnership with Chatham Islands Council
- Supported by Sport New Zealand and the people of the Chatham Islands.

Highlights and Success

- The recommendations are achievable, necessary, and enhance existing resources.
- Plan is being used by funders and decision-makers to inform future investment and work programmes
- Already successful in receiving funding for further planning and implementation
- The Plan went far beyond the original expectation evolving from a pool solution focus to identifying opportunities to improve facilities, governance and council, community relationships.



5. Advantages of the Region

Identifying the competitive advantages in a region can help to shape where spaces and places investment may be able to build on and leverage these advantages (directly or indirectly). As the Sport Canterbury rohe is made up of many varied sub-regions, the degree to which each competitive advantage applies may differ. The summary of the competitive advantages outlined below are those which are relatively consistent across the region, with any key sub-regional differences noted.

5.1. Strategic Advantages

Major Event Facilities - There are a number of major facilities which are at International or National level. This is particularly relevant in the CSW Cluster with assets such as Hagley Oval, one.nz stadium (Te Kaha), MainPower Stadium and Parakiore, along with South Canterbury (Trust Aoraki Tennis centre and Lake Ruataniwha). Mid-Canterbury has Mount Hutt (snow sports) and relatively easy access to event facilities in the CSW Cluster. Sub-regions like North Canterbury and the West Coast do not have these kinds of major event facilities, but residents do travel to attend events at the facilities provided in other parts of the region.

Natural Environment – the region is supported by an abundance of natural features (mountains, lakes, rivers) which provide for a range of outdoor sport and recreation activities. There is significant tourism linked to iconic recreation assets such as cycle trails (e.g. West Coast Wilderness Trail, Alps 2 Ocean), alpine areas including ski fields, and recreation opportunities in destination townships such as Tekapo.



Range of quality spaces and places - across the region that provide a diverse range of play, active recreation and sport experiences. Many communities have access to relatively new, high-quality and multi-use assets such as aquatic centres, indoor court venues and sports hub parks. There has been significant investment by many councils and other providers to create these high-quality assets across the region. In Christchurch, the earthquake rebuild programme has seen the development of many significant, high-quality sport and recreation assets such as one.nz stadium (Te Kaha), Parakiore, Ngā Puna Wai and several local aquatic centres such as Te Pou Toetoe Linwood Pool and Matatiki Hornby Centre.

Sharing of key regional and sub-regional facilities – many communities enjoy relatively easy access to sport and recreation facilities in adjacent areas. This provides the opportunity for people to access facilities of a standard and scale that may not be provided in their community such as Waimate residents accessing facilities at Aorangi Park, Fraser Park and Caroline Bay Aquatic Centre in Timaru and Hokitika residents accessing the Westland Recreation Centre in Greymouth. It also enables participation opportunities and sports competitions to be played across a RSO region, for example Canterbury Hockey scheduling competition games at hockey turfs in Selwyn (Foster Park), Waimakariri (Mainpower Hockey Turf) and Christchurch (Nunweek Park, Ngā Puna Wai), along with a range of satellite turfs. This ensures participants in smaller centres do not always have to travel to participate.

6. Regional Challenges

There is a variety of challenges and issues impacting play, active recreation, and sport spaces and places across the Sport Canterbury rohe. There are variations in the challenges experienced in different sub-regions and by different sport, active recreation and play organisations. The key challenges identified in Table 6-1 are those that were consistently identified throughout the whole region by a range of stakeholders.

Table 6-1 Consistent Regional Challenges

Key Challenges	Related Considerations
<p> Limited ability to fund asset maintenance</p> <p>Many community sport and recreation facility owners indicate they undertake limited maintenance or defer maintenance due to a lack of funding.</p> <p>With an aging network of assets, the need to undertake relatively major maintenance on key assets is increasing.</p> <p>In a very competitive funding environment, it is becoming harder for organisations to secure funds for maintenance.</p> <p>Organisations are operating in an environment with increasing building compliance costs for items such as building warrant of fitness and maintenance of fire safety systems and building services.</p>	<p>There has been a reduction in revenue across the sport and recreation sector (2018-2022), with the biggest decreases seen in funds from membership, participation, sponsorship and commercial activities.¹⁴</p> <p>Class 4 Gaming is a significant operational funder for many community sport and recreation organisations, including major repairs and maintenance. There are current strategic issues which present risks to the future of this funding source.</p> <p>Duplication and underutilisation of some play, active recreation and sport assets is exacerbating this issue, contributing to a further decline in facility quality and access issues for some communities.</p>
<p> Limited funding for new facilities/upgrades</p> <p>There is significant pressure on key funding sources which means there is not enough funding available to support major facility upgrades or desired new facilities.</p> <p>Councils are facing significant budget pressures, with most across the region applying significant rate rises through long-term plans (LTPs). Meeting infrastructure challenges, including for water and transport assets, may mean little, if any, council funding is available for spaces and places investment.</p>	<p>Inflation and construction cost increases are exacerbating the funding gap. Construction costs are estimated to have increased 41% in New Zealand since 2019¹⁵.</p> <p>Community groups are finding it harder to secure grant funding as application processes become more complex and competitive.</p> <p>With potential rates capping legislation under consideration, the ability of councils to support play, active recreation and sport projects to the levels they have in the past will likely be further constrained.</p>

¹⁴ Sport NZ Funding for Play, Active Recreation and Sport Sector Report (2023)

¹⁵ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-tackling-high-construction-costs>

Key Challenges	Related Considerations
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Community funders are oversubscribed with requests for funds at the same time as they themselves are facing constrained budgets.

Central Government investment in spaces and places is reducing, and the future funding levels from Lottery Grants are uncertain.

Without the same levels of central and local government and community funding sources, the achievability and sustainability of many spaces and places projects is questionable.

There are also significant disparities in the levels of financial capacity across councils in the region.

This can place pressure on larger, urban councils to provide regional assets, but also impacts access for residents in more rural areas.



Poor condition / quality of facilities

With an ageing network, some spaces and places are becoming outdated and no longer meet minimum standards. A lack of ongoing maintenance and investment is also negatively impacting the quality of some spaces and places.

Some playing surfaces are in poor condition and cannot sustain the desired levels of use, or are constrained by a lack of lighting or poor-quality lighting. Some community users indicate that school facilities are not value for money as upkeep can be poor and equipment is often faulty.

Public expectations of the basic, acceptable standard of spaces and places are also increasing.

Where natural sports fields and outdoor courts were the norm in the past, increasingly communities are seeking artificial surfaces and covered or indoor courts for even junior or social level competitions.

This results in increasing costs of provision, particularly for councils that often provide these assets, along with some RSOs which develop and own facilities.



Access to appropriate amenities

In most instances, this is a quality consideration, with many toilet and change room facilities originally developed (and often not upgraded since the mid 20th century). These facilities can be off-putting to many users. For example, a lack of separate shower cubicles is especially off-putting for women and girls.

There are also spaces and places which completely lack basic infrastructure such as public toilets. This issue is most prevalent for active recreation assets such as walkways and cycleways but is also a challenge for some sports parks.

Many sport and recreation parks also do not have other amenities such as adequate lighting, storage, seating, shelter and car parking. This can undermine the experience of spectators and whānau, including those who are spectators as well as the active participants.

Key Challenges

Related Considerations



Availability of Volunteers

Many sport and recreation groups are finding it harder and harder to secure volunteers. The lack of volunteers is impacting community organisations' ability to manage and operate facilities, including proactively planning for maintenance, upgrades or new facilities.

Increasingly, community groups are needing significant support from councils and Sport Canterbury to help them effectively plan and deliver spaces and places projects.

The lack of volunteers is also impacting the operational capacity of organisations to provide participation opportunities on a day to day basis.

The complexity of the legislative and regulatory environment in which community sport and recreation groups operate is also impacting volunteers.



Affordability of Membership Fees

Community providers have indicated that keeping participation/membership fees at an affordable level is difficult, particularly with cost of living impacting many participants and whānau.

Some community organisations reported significant increases in facility hire fees, including a doubling of prices in some situations recently.

Where fees are becoming unaffordable it can lead to a reduction in membership and participation which has flow on impacts (see below).

An increase in self-directed, low-cost recreation in public spaces has been seen in some areas as costs of club membership or facility use become a barrier for some.

It is important that the cost of accessing facilities and programmes remains affordable. User fees need to consider the balance between ideally covering the costs of delivery without pricing out participants.



Membership Retention

Is a concern for many sport and recreation organisations. Declining membership levels have a direct impact on the utilisation of facilities and the ability of organisations to afford operational costs associated with spaces and places.

Aspects impacting declining participation vary across the region, with factors including demographic change (aging), challenges of teen and young adult retention, costs of living/family affordability versus participation costs.

The use of casual and modified formats is helping some sports retain adult members.

For those sport and recreation organisations with significant assets (clubrooms, turfs, grandstands), any decline in membership can have a significant impact on financial viability and their ability to maintain assets into the future.

Although this does also provide an environment where partnerships are seen as more desirable.

Increasingly, organisations should consider partnerships with others to help maximise use of assets, but some find the idea of sharing challenging and need support with this.

Other challenges include:

Uneven population growth – future population growth is expected to vary significantly across the region, with pockets of very high growth, such as in Selwyn district, while other areas like the West Coast are expected to remain fairly static or may decline. This contributes to significantly different pressures across the region, with some communities facing a shortfall of access to spaces and places, while other areas may struggle to maximise the utilisation (and therefore financial sustainability) of existing assets into the future.

Ageing population – an ageing population indicates that participation choices and needs are changing. Sport and recreation facilities need to be flexible to adapt to the needs of an ageing population, such as desire for hydrotherapy or warm water aquatic space, and more recreational and social spaces and activities, rather than a competitive focus of sport and recreation.

Climate Change - The impacts of a changing climate present issues for future play, sport and recreation spaces and places planning. Factors like heavy rain (limited drainage) and drought impacting sports field surface quality and playability are becoming more common. There is also increasing risk of damage to clubrooms and other facilities in areas susceptible to flooding or coastal inundation. This could lead to some assets becoming unusable. Climate change effects such as increasing heat as well as more intense rainfall and wind can impact the safety and comfort of participants, increasing the need for shade and covered spaces to support participation.

Rising insurance costs – associated with climate change impacts is the increasing costs of insurance. Some sport and recreation organisations are becoming under-insured as they cannot afford the operational cost impact of the premiums to fully cover their assets, while at the same time those assets may be becoming increasingly at risk of significant damage.

Geographic distribution of facilities – with a large geographic area, and many small, rural towns a key challenge is to provide convenient, locally accessible facilities within an appropriate travel distance for communities. The boundaries of council areas also don't necessarily align with where people might choose to participate. This indicates improved cross-boundary planning could create efficiencies in the spaces and places network.

On a sub-regional basis there were some variances in the top 5 challenges identified by stakeholders who attended workshops. A summary of the sub-regional variances is provided in the separate reference document.

Selection of Comments About Challenges from Survey Respondents:

“Able to meet maintenance requirements but unsure about future upgrades.”

“Facilities leased are not fit for purpose with little storage room, minimal toilets etc.”

“Competitions are at capacity... new people can't find teams.”

“Outdoor courts in desperate need of resurfacing.”

“\$50/hour for affiliated bookings is very expensive.”

“Outdoor courts will not be safe to use in 10 years without investment.”

“Minimal seating... had to purchase 300 chairs ourselves.” (for an event at a council facility)

“Cost increased from \$200/day to over \$600/day – became unviable.”

“Require significant increase in lit field availability during winter...”

“Old, dark & unhygienic toilet block... track damaged by misuse.”

“Clubrooms need work – roof repaint, toilets but no budget.”

“We already have significant deficit in facility access....”

“Most court space booked out by basketball/netball.”

“To upgrade we require funding grants which we do not always obtain”

“Don't generate enough income to maintain this as the maintenance cost is high.”

7. Stakeholder Insights

A range of engagement techniques were used through this project to gather input from key stakeholders to inform the direction of this Plan. The key engagement phases undertaken included:





- Online survey of sport and recreation stakeholders, including schools
- 5 stakeholder workshops to test emerging themes and priorities¹⁶
- 2 meetings with Māori organisations¹⁷

7.1. Themes from Survey Responses

99 organisations responded to the stakeholder survey. Nearly half (43 or 47%) of respondents were regional or national sports organisations. Just over a third (35% or 32 respondents) were community sports organisations. All 5 sub-regional focus areas had representation in the survey responses.

Respondents were asked to provide an overview of how their organisation's membership or participation had trended in the last 3 years, as well as their prediction for the next 3 years.

7.1.1. Participation Trend and Predictions









	Participation Trend and Prediction	Number (%) of respondents
	Increase in the last three years	50 (61%)
	Stayed the same in the last three years	21 (26%)
	Predicted an increase in next 3 years	49 (60%)
	Predicted to stay about the same in next 3 years	24 (30%)












¹⁶ These were held in Mid-Canterbury, South Canterbury, Waimakariri, Christchurch and the West Coast.

¹⁷ 1 with Ngati Waewae in Te Tai Poutini and 1 with kaupapa Māori organisations in Christchurch.

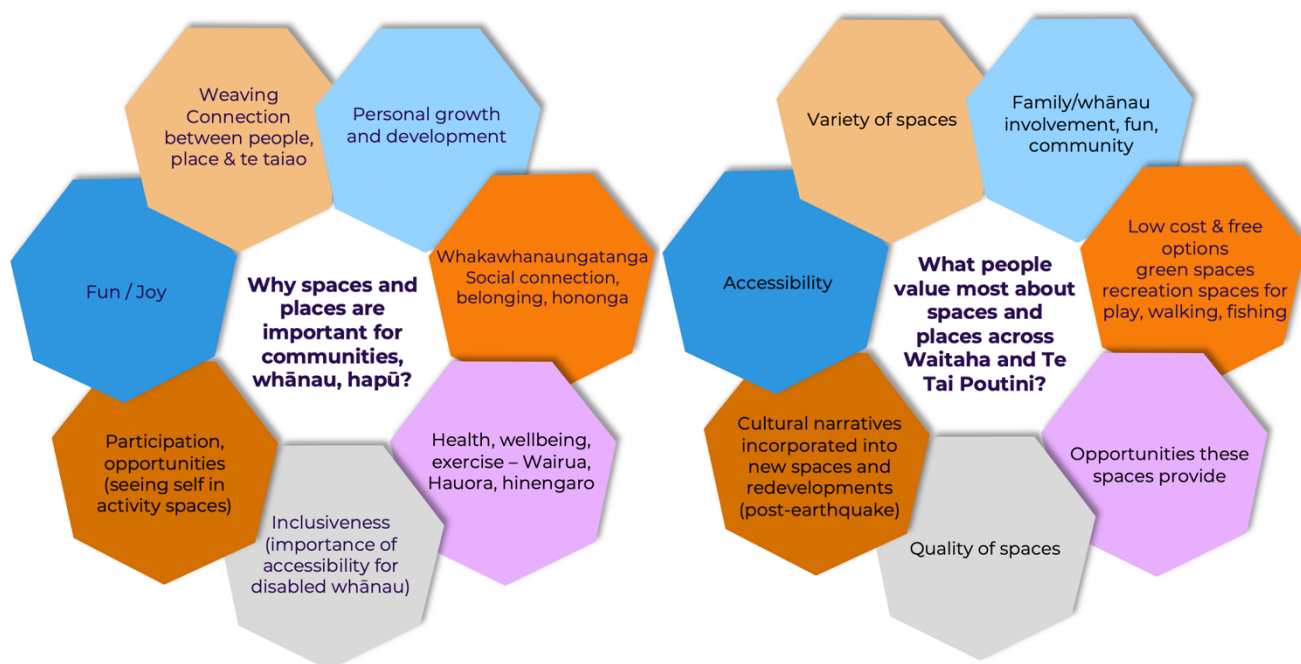
7.1.2. Facility Use, Satisfaction and Future Needs

The survey also asked a series of questions about facility use, satisfaction and future needs. The key responses are summarised below.

Facility Use	
	There was a reasonably even split between respondents who used one main facility and those who used multiple facilities.
Respondent Relationship to Facility	
1/3	Own and manage their facility,
1/4	Regular users or hirers
1/4	Lease or rent their facility.
	Split ownership-management arrangements were less common.
Facility Age	
	30% of facilities (11 of 37) were over 50 years old. Over half of the facilities were over 25 years old.
Sharing of Facilities	
	Half of the respondents who share their facility share with one other organisation, while others shared with multiple organisations.
	The most frequent sharing with another organisation was weekly, followed by seasonally.
Facility Satisfaction	
	Respondents were most satisfied with the suitability of the location and the overall condition of facilities.
	Respondents were least satisfied with the capacity to meet current needs and the provision of amenities
Do Facilities Meet Needs?	
	Respondents felt facilities met needs in the areas of access and activity/playing spaces.

	The areas that meet needs less well are changing, and social facilities.
Use of Facilities outside of Sub-Regional Area	
	25 of 34 respondents (nearly 3/4) indicated they used facilities outside their area for regional events.
	Approximately half of the respondents use facilities outside their area for Annual/one-off events and/or for national competitions.
Long-term Financial Situation	
62%	33 of 54 respondents say they have the long-term financial ability to operate/maintain/upgrade their facility.
Facility Development, Maintenance, Upgrades	
	29 of 60 respondents (49%) have plans to upgrade/renew/dispose or develop new facilities.
	42% (29 respondents) said their facility would meet their needs in 10 years' time. 20 respondents (29%) said their facility would not meet their needs, and 20 were unsure.
Sustainability	
	The majority of respondents (45 of 68) said their organisation did not have an environmental sustainability plan.
	The majority of respondents (49 or 79%) said they do not provide any educational programs, materials or initiatives to promote sustainability awareness among players, coaches, and spectators.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	
	38 of 64 respondents (59%) offer some form of DEI programme
	Aspects that were rated as very poor or poor are LGBTQ policies or signage, gender neutral bathrooms/changing rooms and accessible spectator viewing and social areas.
Big Picture Thinking	
	Skilled teachers, coaches and volunteers, a welcoming environment and affordability of facilities and spaces are seen as the main things that support the provision of active recreation and sport opportunities.
	Similarly, the availability of volunteers and keeping membership fees affordable are the two things that are considered the biggest hindrances to the provision of active recreation and sport opportunities.

7.2. Themes from Stakeholder Workshops



Prominent Issues and Challenges across all workshops combined were:

Common Issues and Challenges

1st Financial – ability to fund asset maintenance

2nd Availability of volunteers

3rd = Funding for new facilities/upgrades to existing

3rd = Affordability of membership fees

4th Poor condition / quality facilities

5th = Access to appropriate amenities

5th = Membership retention

Pressure on Council funding was also recognised as important.

7.3. Themes From Kaupapa Māori Organisations

Prominent Issues and Challenges for Kaupapa Māori Organisations

Common Issues and Challenges	
1 st	Affordability of membership fees
2 nd	Access to appropriate amenities
3 rd	Travel distance / time
4 th =	Poor condition / quality facilities
4 th =	Financial – adequate funding for programme delivery
5 th	Availability of bookings

Other challenges raised included accessibility (for disabled participants, cost and geographic accessibility); Māori aren't reflected in public spaces/lack of culturally appropriate spaces which enable cultural practices and activities; The focus on 'sport' versus benefit of any movement such as gardening.

Overall themes from Māori stakeholders highlighted the importance of:

- **Cultural connection** – understanding of place, importance of acknowledging, sharing history of place and creating connections
- **Inclusivity and accessibility** – opportunities for all regardless of background or ability
- **Community and whānau involvement** – community-led initiatives, including early, genuine engagement with Māori in projects.
- **Intergenerational, whānau friendly** spaces and places that support whole whānau to be active together
- **Connection to place and environment** – importance of te taiao-based activities, respect and learning from and in the natural environment
- **Physical activity as part of a bigger picture** – movement is integrated with wellbeing, culture, social connection – not the sole focus (health by stealth)
- **Design and infrastructure** – accessible, multi-use, well-maintained spaces that support diverse opportunities, community-led design processes
- **Intentionality** – spaces with purpose, aligned to cultural and social needs
- **Partnerships** – with a wide range of groups including Māori.

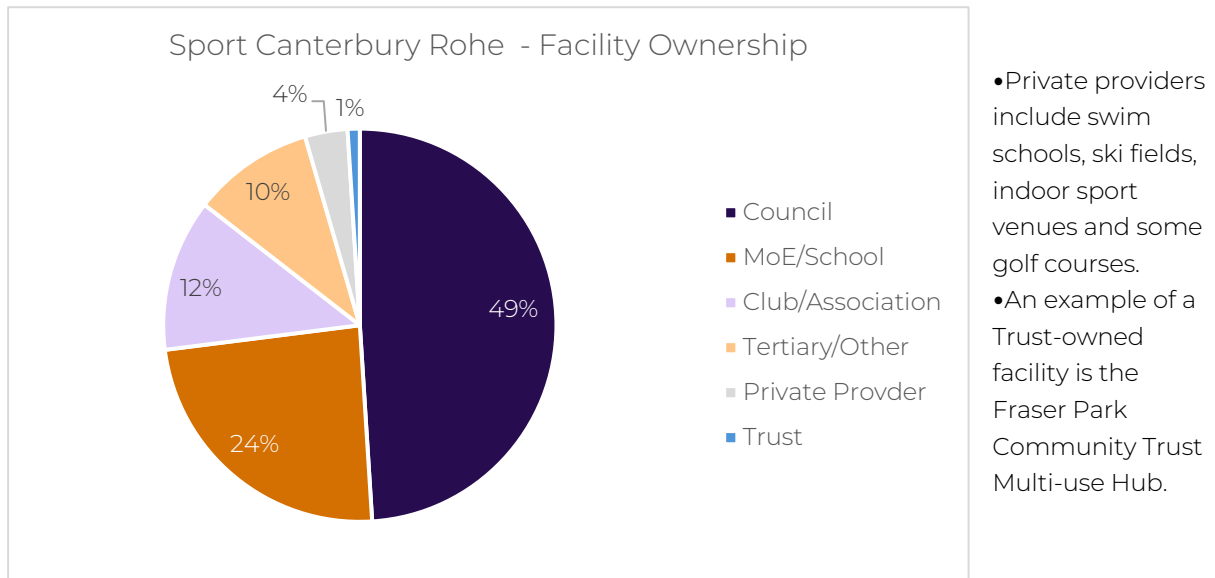
It was positive to hear kaupapa Māori organisations talk about the value they place on the cultural narrative that has been incorporated into recent development projects such as Ngā Puna Wai and Parakiore. Such use of cultural narratives are seen to provide an increased sense of connection to key sport and recreation facilities for Māori.

8. Snapshot of Spaces and Places




8.1. Regional Provision

The data in the Sport NZ Facility Planning Tool (FPT) for the Sport Canterbury area was reviewed and updated during the development of this plan. Currently, the FPT inventory includes 879 known play¹⁸, active recreation and sport sites across Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini with approximately 1,345 facilities provided across these sites¹⁹. Facility ownership of the various spaces and places for play, active recreation and sport are shown in Figure 8.1. Councils are the main providers of sites and facilities (49%) followed by the Ministry of Education /Schools (24%). This reinforces the important role councils and education have in the spaces and places network.

Figure 8-1 - Facility Ownership







The most common site and facility types in the FPT for the Sport Canterbury rohe are:

Facility Type	Number of Sites in FPT
 Sports Fields	285
 Outdoor Courts	204
 Aquatic facilities/swimming pools	201

¹⁸ It is important to note that only a few playgrounds are captured in the inventory, the majority are not. It is known there is significant provision of these types of assets across the region.

¹⁹ All numbers in this section are indicative only as the Sport NZ Facility Planning Tool is known to have some data gaps. It is also a live system, regularly being updated so figures change. However, it is the most comprehensive facility information that is available.

	Facility Type	Number of Sites in FPT
	Indoor courts	149
	Bowling Clubs	62
	Golf Courses	59
	Squash clubs	28

- Most of the sports field and outdoor court sites provide multiple fields or courts, either with multi-use line markings or for a single code, such as tennis or netball.
- The majority of the swimming pools are owned by the Ministry of Education / schools (131), while councils are the most significant providers of aquatic centres and public pools (55), along with 13 owned by private providers (typically swim schools).
- A significant number of the indoor court locations provide multiple courts. Each sub-region (excluding the Chatham Islands and West Coast) has at least one indoor court venue providing 3 or more courts.
- There are numerous other sites and facilities recorded in the FPT for the region, for example, athletics tracks, bike parks and cycleways, equestrian sites, shooting ranges, velodromes and clubrooms for a wide diversity of sports.

A snapshot of provision on a sub-regional basis is provided in the separate reference document.

8.2. Observations on the Regional Network by Facility Type

8.2.1. Aquatics (pool-based)

The new Sport NZ national benchmarks for aquatics have been considered at a regional level, with relevant considerations summarised below. Consideration of sub-regional aquatic provision in comparison to the national benchmark and indicators is provided in the separate reference document.

The benchmark for provision is a minimum of 27m² of aquatic space per 1,000 population. This is supported by demand indicators for each of 3 types of facility use:

- Fitness, health, lane sports, deep water sports – 16%
- Aquatic competence – 17%
- Leisure, play, relaxation, hydrotherapy, school, recreational access – 67%

When the national benchmarks and guidance are considered at a regional level across the Sport Canterbury rohe:

- Overall, there is generally an adequate supply of total aquatic space across the region.
- However, there is an overall shortfall in some sub-regions related to year-round available pool space (indoor).
- There is an imbalance in the regional network in terms of the types of water space provided.

- Generally, there is an undersupply of learn to swim and leisure water and an oversupply of fitness water (lane pools).

In planning future aquatic facility upgrades or new developments it is critical that careful consideration is given to the types of water space provided to meet learn to swim and leisure demands, including the needs of an aging demographic for warmer water access.

8.2.2. Natural Water-based Sport Venues

Many natural water-sports venues across the Sport Canterbury rohe are experiencing site capacity constraints as well as significant water quality issues.

There are positive examples of lakes and rivers providing multi-use access as well as storage and car parking for water-based sports, such as Naval Point, Kaiapoi River and Lake Hood to name a few. However, many of these are experiencing capacity issues at peak times.

Several venues that cater to a wide range of water sports, including rowing, sailing, yachting, canoe/kayak and canoe polo have had temporary closures due to water quality concerns in recent years. One comment that sums this issue up best:

"Avon River is disgusting water quality... Kaiapoi not much better" – survey respondent

Water quality-related closures may begin to make some of these activities and clubs unviable. Interest in participation and membership will decline if regular participation opportunities cannot be offered due to water quality closures. The clubs based at Lake Hood were very concerned about this, as were several other water-based sports in other sub-regions.

With water-based activities being popular among both recreational, casual users as well as sport participants, the demand on water-based venues is expected to continue to grow. Efforts to enhance assets as well as the water quality at key facilities should be encouraged.

8.2.3. Indoor Courts

Many community stakeholders feel there is a potential shortfall of court space (indoor, outdoor/covered) to meet community needs across the region.

Sport New Zealand's National Indoor Active Recreation and Sport Facilities Strategy establishes a national benchmark figure of 1 court per 7,800 population. This is presented as an FTE (full-time equivalent court) benchmark and considers facility availability during peak times (evenings and weekends).

When the national benchmarks and guidance are considered at a regional level across the Sport Canterbury rohe:

- Overall, there is considered to be a surplus of indoor court provision²⁰ across the region (on a pure population basis) when all court supply is considered (including school courts and sport specific indoor court facilities²¹).

²⁰ The new courts at Parakiore are included in this assessment.

²¹ such as for tennis and badminton.

- Despite a general oversupply of indoor court space, the region has some access challenges, particularly in terms of local accessibility and travel distances, especially for areas with a significant rural population.

Consideration of the benchmark at a sub-regional level is provided in the separate reference document.

In planning the future indoor court network key considerations include:

- Is additional indoor court space simply desired, or is it actually required? What evidence demonstrates need?
- Developing partnerships with schools to increase community access to existing or planned school facilities, especially for rural communities where travel to access indoor courts may be challenging.
- Changing the sport delivery models and programming approach of existing indoor court facilities to open up availability to a wider range of groups and to meet growth needs to certain sports. For example, consider reducing training expectations, providing shorter seasons or shorter game times to maximise the available court space and time.
- Maximising alternative, lower cost provision types such as re-surfacing, lighting and multi-marking existing outdoor courts. This could also include consideration of covering outdoor courts such as has been done at the DWC Westland Sports Hub and Eastern Community Sport and Recreation (New Brighton) to improve usability to poor weather. These are low cost alternatives to a new build scenario. This may also require a change in sport delivery models.

It is also important to understand that Sport New Zealand's National Indoor Active Recreation and Sport Facilities Strategy clearly identifies that there are sufficient regional level and above competition facilities for the supply of events, essentially meaning no additional regional or above event facilities are required across the country. Any communities that are planning significant investment in multi-court facilities for event purposes should do so with significant caution.

8.2.4. Multi-Use Turfs and Artificial Surfaces

There is increasing demand from some sports and communities to have access to artificial surfaces to support their sport delivery to allow for factors such as:

- Increasing use levels and associated maintenance impacts on natural surfaces
- Playable in all-weathers
- More effective training spaces
- To ensure athletes are prepared to compete on these surfaces when at tournaments and events.

Some councils, such as Christchurch City, have a clear plan for future provision, others are considering these on a more reactive basis. When considering these increasing levels of service, the high cost of provision, and environmental sustainability considerations of these types of surfaces need to be carefully weighed up alongside the potential multiuse benefits. The type and level of artificial surfaces should also be carefully considered to ensure that it is appropriate for the level of competition, amount of use and the population base. A high level of provision, such as an international standard surface is not always required or justified.

8.2.5. Multi-use spaces

A clear priority identified by stakeholders, research and good practice, is to increase collaboration opportunities including through prioritising investment in multi-use hubs that cater to multiple sports and recreation organisations, along with other community groups and uses, rather than single

focus facilities. However, it is also noted that some fit-for-purpose, sport-specific facilities may be required, but need must be proved through appropriate needs assessments and feasibility processes.

Another factor that is apparent is a need to maintain the integrity and multi-purpose functionality of open spaces to ensure maximum future flexibility. There is an emerging trend of converting open space areas, such as fields or green space to single-purpose uses such as pump tracks, including in school settings. While there is demand and need for some purpose built facilities, converting space that currently enables a variety of uses to single purpose functions can reduce future flexibility and should be carefully considered.

8.2.6. Play spaces

There are many significant, destination play spaces across the region which provide high-quality and variety-rich play experiences. There is no clear need for more major destination play sites in the region, but there are some potential gaps in locally accessible play space provision. While territorial authorities are typically the main providers of play spaces, schools also provide many important local play assets.

When any new sport and recreation sites and facilities are developed, opportunities to incorporate flexible, casual play opportunities should be considered wherever possible.

8.2.7. Specialised Facilities

Cycling / velodrome

There have been some proponents of developing an indoor velodrome in Canterbury. While the velodrome in Southland remains, it is not considered that a further velodrome is needed in the South Island. In this context, the retention and ongoing suitability of the outdoor velodrome at Denton Park remains important for this sport. It is noted, that if future demand warrants it, development of an indoor training track may be appropriate to consider further but it is not identified as a current priority for investment. Note: recommendation 35 in Section 16 (South Canterbury) regarding cycling in that area.

Hockey

The new Hockey in New Zealand National Spaces and Places Strategy should be used to inform future planning and investment in hockey surfaces across the region. It indicates that each hockey association across the whole Sport Canterbury region is adequately supplied with turfs based on players, teams and the current levels of participation. Against key metrics, each hockey association is generally identified with a 'green' rating, meaning there is no obvious areas of concern.

The Hockey NZ dashboard for the Canterbury Hockey Association does indicate some pressure may be experienced in terms of the current playing age population per FTE²² and based on projected population growth and total players per FTE in 2033. For the Canterbury Association area, the key improvements that are identified in the dashboard, to be considered in future planning are:

- Investigation of primary school relationships to increase supply
- Establishment of a sustainability plan
- Significant financial input needed for turf renewal in the next 1-6 years.

The Canterbury Hockey Association is also investigating options for providing an enhanced player experience through the provision of appropriate social space.

²² Full Turf Equivalent – available 43 hours per week.

Where action is considered to be required regarding hockey, this is noted in the specific sub-regional sections of this Plan.

Stadia

With uncertainty over the future of Apollo Projects Stadium, some sporting codes have identified a desire for an additional mid-sized event venue to support delivery of spectator games. This desire includes matches which may not have the spectator levels to justify use of one.nz stadium (Te Kaha), such as Farah Palmer Cup (rugby), National Women's Premiership (rugby league) as well as some where existing smaller venues may be inadequate such as English Park for higher profile spectator football matches. Demonstrated evidence of need for such a mid-sized venue would be required before it is identified as a spaces and places network priority.

Smaller-scale spectator games can currently be delivered at a range of venues across the Sport Canterbury rohe including Ngā Puna Wai (rugby league and rugby), English Park (football), Rugby Park (Christchurch), Fraser Park (Timaru), Rugby Park (Greymouth) and Rangiora Showgrounds. It is also noted that smaller venues such as Pleasant Point Rugby Club and Methven Rugby Club have successfully hosted Heartland Rugby matches at their local domain grounds in the recent past. It is acknowledged that all of these venues generally require some form of temporary event overlay to support spectator games.

9. Future Opportunities

When the themes from stakeholder engagement sessions were combined with secondary data review and partner kōrero, common feedback themes have been identified. These have been shaped into four key theme areas with specific opportunities to help address these themes outlined in Table 9.1.

Table 9-1 - Key Themes

Key Themes	Opportunities
Look to greater collaboration and partnership delivery models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish more facility sharing arrangements, such as between clubs and codes or across local authority boundaries • Actively seek ways to reduce duplication • Look to shared service models that reduce pressure on volunteers • Enable partnerships with and between schools (capex and operational), tertiary, iwi and councils.
Optimise the quality and provision of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase provision and investment in multi-use hubs • Target lighting improvements to fields, turfs and outdoor courts to support changed delivery models • Harness technology to improve assets (such as text/app controlled lighting) and enhanced booking systems • Improve provision and quality of amenities, including toilets, changing, shelter/shade and spectator facilities such as seating. • Maintain and upgrade existing facilities to maximise use (increase appeal, useability) • Invest in smarter maintenance methods to ensure existing facilities can sustain higher levels of use
Improve the accessibility and availability of spaces and places to provide opportunities for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure spaces and places are welcoming and inclusive • Provide culturally appropriate spaces and places that Māori can see themselves in and feel connected to • Ensure accessibility of venues, including play spaces, making them suitable for all ages and abilities and taking into account the needs of both participants and spectators.
Reframe offerings that meet user needs in new and different ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible participation formats (less time intensive) • Change delivery models to address peak time loads (such as shift competition to mid-week versus weekend for some activities) • Actively seek ways to keep hire fees reasonable so cost is less of a barrier to participation • Better or more local facilities to support sport training and casual/social participation (hub and spoke models) along with locally accessible recreation assets such as open space, skate, play space.

Some of the ways Strategy Partners can help stakeholders activate the above opportunities include:

1. Continuing to build relationships in support of spaces and places partnerships across the play, active recreation and sport sector and with other community sectors. This will help encourage further regional collaboration, maximise existing spaces and places and support communities to better leverage assets via advocacy for community access partnerships. There may be opportunities for partnerships with schools, other community facility providers, mana whenua and tangata whenua.
2. Assisting stakeholder organisations to identify opportunities for facility partnerships with schools to increase community access to existing school facilities. Again, this will help maximise the use of existing assets, and in particular may provide an opportunity to better cater to new and emerging sports that need facility access options.

10.Regional Planning Approach

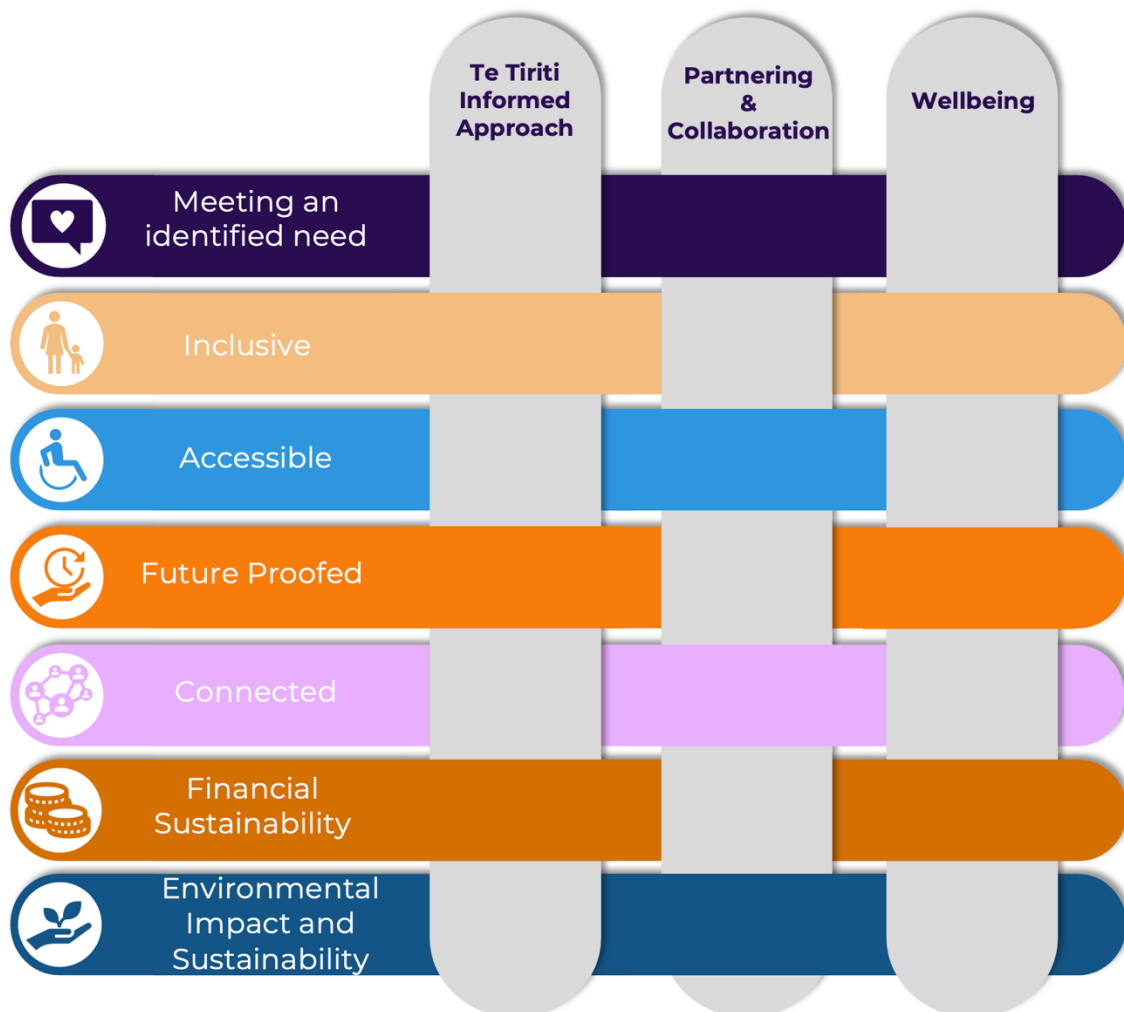
10.1.Vision

A well-planned, collaborative, regional approach to the network of play, active recreation and sport spaces and places which support vibrant, healthy and active communities across Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini.

10.2.Planning Principles

When considering major maintenance, upgrades, new development or decommissioning of spaces and places, it is critical that a robust approach is taken to planning. The following principles will be used to guide spaces and places planning and investment across the Sport Canterbury region.

Figure 10-1 Our Places Planning Principles



Te Tiriti o Waitangi-Informed Approach

The mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is recognised when providing strategic guidance and planning, developing, and operating facilities and active environments. We seek to grow authentic relationships with Māori and consider the cultural narrative of the area when planning current and future spaces and places.

Meeting an Identified Need

An evidence-based approach to identifying need ensures fit-for-purpose solutions. A clear evidence base should be established before any decision is made regarding changes to (or investment in) the network of facilities. This will include considering where existing assets (either sport and recreation or other) can be enhanced to better meet needs before building new.

Financial Sustainability

Taking a long-term, comprehensive view of financial sustainability through the planning process is important to achieving viable facilities and active environments over the lifetime of the asset. To ensure sustainability, existing and future facility use needs to be optimised through effective promotion and programming.

Connected

Networks of connected and complementary facilities and active environments create physical activity opportunities and connected communities (rural and urban). These inter-connections encourage greater physical activity, neighbourhood and local participation, social connection, cohesion, and a growing sense of place.

Partnering and Collaboration

Partnerships and collaboration across stakeholders (including schools) within the region lead to well-used facilities and active environments that maximise the return (social and financial) on investment and avoid duplication. Where possible, existing assets will be maximised, and a regional or sub-regional lens will be applied to planning and investment in facilities. Often, people do not consider territorial boundaries when they participate.

Future Proofed

Facilities and active environments that are future-proofed can easily adapt to changing circumstances and emerging trends over time. It is inevitable that the activities people want to do will change over time, and spaces and places need to be able to respond to the changing needs of the community.

Inclusive

Valuing diverse groups by developing safe, welcoming, and collaborative environments where everyone can participate and thrive. This is not just about the physical spaces provided but also the operational culture and programmes on offer to communities.

Accessible

Accessibility is the usability of a space for all people regardless of ability or affordability. Truly accessible environments are created that enable the entire community to access and use facilities or spaces with dignity. Everyone benefits from fully accessible facilities.

Environmental Impact and Sustainability

Facilities and active environments are developed and operated in a more environmentally sustainable way over their lifetime. It is critically important to consider climate change and other factors when planning, designing, upgrading and operating spaces and places to minimise the impact on our environment. In many instances, maximising existing assets can support positive environmental outcomes.

Well-being

The connection of people and place is integral to providing meaningful opportunities to enhance people's holistic well-being²³. It is important to take a co-design approach where communities and hapori²⁴ are involved in the planning, design, and operations of facilities and active environments so that their needs are met. This will help ensure spaces and places are well-used and well-loved, supporting community activity and holistic well-being into the future.

10.3. Collaborative Approach

Strategy Partners in Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini have been working collaboratively in spaces and places planning for many years. Several successful and well-utilised sport and recreation spaces and places have been enhanced or developed through this collaborative approach²⁵.

With increasing pressure on resources within the sport and recreation sector, it is apparent that collaboration will continue to be important to help reduce potential duplication and ensure the best community outcomes are obtained from investments in spaces and places operations, maintenance, upgrades and new developments.

In future, there is an opportunity to take a more structured approach to future collaborative planning across the region, particularly where community organisations are proposing new developments or upgrades and are seeking support from councils and community funders. The vision, planning principles and recommendations of Our Places 2026 could help inform future consideration of new solutions or initiatives which are put forward to respond to spaces and places challenges and opportunities across the region.

It is acknowledged that each organisation involved in spaces and places proposals or opportunities, such as proponent groups, councils and funding organisations, will always have complete autonomy over their own decision-making processes. However, the following diagram provides an example of a potential collaborative planning journey that could be applied in future, either at a regional or sub-regional level, including Strategy Partners and relevant stakeholders.

²³ By this we mean wellbeing as outlined in Sir Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model of holistic wellbeing which describes health and wellbeing as a meeting house with 4 aspects in balance – Taha Tinana (physical wellbeing), Taha Hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), Taha Whānau (family and social wellbeing) and Taha Wairua (spiritual wellbeing).

²⁴ Kinship group, family, society, community.

²⁵ As demonstrated in the case studies in Section 4.

Figure 10-2 Potential Collaborative Planning Journey

Journey Map – Potential Collaborative Planning



*For facility solutions, this will be guided by the National Spaces and Places Framework seven-stage development life cycle.

Further information to support a potential collaborative planning approach is provided in Section 7 of the separate reference document, including an example of criteria that could be used to help assess alignment of potential spaces and places proposals against the principles of Our Places 2026.

11. Regional Recommendations

11.1. Context

A high-level, regional plan such as this is not intended to provide detailed recommendations for local-level spaces and places. Therefore, recommendations in this Plan are focussed on actions which enhance regional planning and delivery of spaces and places that have a sub-regional, regional, or national/international role²⁶. The spaces and places network across the region should not be considered in isolation. However, local planning is required to provide detailed direction on local-level spaces and places. This should occur within the context of the regional principles and guidance provided by this Plan.

The overall funding environment is constrained, making the importance of obtaining maximum value out of existing assets critical to effective provision. Therefore, despite funding pressures, it is imperative that continued maintenance and investment is made by asset owners into existing play, active recreation, and sport assets. This Plan does not provide recommendations to “continue to maintain assets” as this is considered to be business as usual (BAU). However, it is also acknowledged that in the current funding environment, budgets to support BAU may be under significantly increased pressure²⁷. This in itself underlines the critical importance of strategically assessing the need for any new or enhanced facilities, as if existing assets are difficult to maintain, investment in additional facilities may exacerbate operational maintenance budget challenges in the future.

The identification and prioritisation of projects in this section is based on a high-level strategic view, in line with the principles of this Plan. This prioritisation does not replace the need for specific analysis of the identified priorities through appropriate scale needs assessment, feasibility and business case planning (where required, dependent on the type and scale of the project or proposed initiative).

It is important to note that each decision-making organisation (such as proponent group(s), councils and funding organisations) still has complete autonomy over its own local decision-making processes.

²⁶ As defined in Section 2.7.

²⁷ In December 2025 the government announced they would be pursuing “a rates cap to help councils keep rates increase under control” – Local Government Minister Simon Watts.

11.2. Regional Collaboration and Planning Priorities

The recommendations in this section are about setting the foundation for future success in the spaces and places network. Strategy Partners will seek to support each other with progressing these recommendations through a collaborative planning approach in key areas. Sport Canterbury and Sport NZ play an important strategic advocacy and facilitation role.

11.2.1. Short Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
1. That each Strategy Partner in Our Places receives the Plan as a document to inform and enhance its own spaces and places planning.	It is desirable that each organisation supports a regional strategic approach. Our Places 2026, where appropriate, can support and enhance participation outcomes, especially where cross-boundary collaboration opportunities may exist.	Lead: Strategy Partners Support: Sport Canterbury, Sport NZ
2. Work with mana whenua and tangata whenua to explore ways to involve them in planning regional and sub-regional spaces and places.	Currently, mana whenua and tangata whenua have limited involvement and influence in spaces and places planning. There may be opportunities for Māori representatives (who have been selected by Māori) to be included in Spaces and Places Steering Groups or future project-specific working groups.	Lead: Sport Canterbury Support: Strategy Partners
3. Investigate options and opportunities to develop regional and/or sub-regional funding mechanisms to better support alignment of spaces and places investment.	Pressure on available funding sources is increasing, and the current heavy reliance on council investment may not be sustainable in the future.	Lead: Sport Canterbury Support: Strategy Partners
4. Support kaupapa Māori providers to undertake a process to identify space and place requirements to better support Taonga Tākaro and traditional Māori sports across Waitaha and Te Tai Poutini.	Due to the high-level nature of this Plan, a detailed awareness of the space and places needs of kaupapa Māori providers has not been obtained. Working together with kaupapa Māori organisations will enable the identification of priority needs and opportunities from their perspectives. The intention will be to share information and use this process to identify collaboration opportunities and improve access and	Lead: Sport Canterbury Support: TAs, Asset Owners

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
	provision for more traditional Māori sports opportunities within existing spaces and places, or within proposed redevelopments and new assets.	

11.2.2. Short-Medium Term Recommendations - Code Dependent (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>5. Work with RSOs to develop a prioritised programme of aligned code facility network planning at a regional or sub-regional level (depending on code readiness, issues and need).</p>	<p>These plans should assess existing spaces and places provision, need and collaboration opportunities with schools and other codes.</p> <p>This will ensure that code-specific planning occurs across council boundaries and with other potentially aligned codes.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement indicates the initial priorities for this programme could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football and futsal • Water sports including waka ama, rowing, kayak/canoe and sailing disciplines • Squash (within the Midlands region) • Bowls (outdoor and indoor) and other aligned sports such as croquet and pétanque. • Racquet Sports²⁸ – investigate a strategic approach considering the growth areas of South Christchurch and the Selwyn District. • Hockey – a review of the Canterbury Hockey Facilities Plan 2021. 	<p>Lead: Sport Canterbury</p> <p>Support: RSOs, TAs</p>

²⁸ Including tennis, pickleball, squash and potentially others.

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
	Each investigation should explore existing facility provision and potential sharing opportunities, including with new and emerging sport and recreation disciplines.	

11.2.3. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>6. Facilitate collaboration opportunities to better enable Strategy Partners to work together to consider cross-boundary partnership opportunities in future.</p>	<p>It is important to address the cross-boundary funding dilemma, as current sport and recreation activities frequently occur across TA boundaries and often one council bears a higher proportion of the burden for facility development and operational costs, despite them being well used by residents from neighbouring council areas.</p>	<p>Lead: Sport Canterbury Support: Strategy Partners</p>
<p>7. Work with Stakeholders and Strategy Partners to help enable more cross-organisation collaboration and resource sharing.</p>	<p>Stakeholders and Strategy Partners have identified partnerships and collaboration as a key way to make the most out of limited resources. This includes in spaces and places as well as operational collaborations to maximise sustainability (through diversified income streams). However, community organisations have also indicated they need leadership and support with working together to create collaborative solutions and efficiencies.</p>	<p>Lead: Sport Canterbury Support: Stakeholders and Strategy Partners</p>

11.3. Regional Spaces and Places Investment Priorities

Depending on the availability of funding, the recommended spaces and places investment priorities for the Sport Canterbury region over the 10-year strategic planning period are outlined in this section. Several of these proposed investment priorities are still subject to further detailed planning work (such as design or business case investigations), but should be supported to proceed through the appropriate next stages of project planning.

11.3.1. Short Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>8. Investigate and implement opportunities to improve existing floodlight quality, operating systems and/or provide additional floodlit sports fields, turfs and courts to increase the usability of existing spaces beyond the current peak use periods.</p>	<p>In many instances, a relatively small investment in lighting for sports fields, turfs and courts can significantly increase the capacity that existing facilities provide to the network for both training and competition.</p> <p>Some existing light systems are outdated, making them energy inefficient and with limited functionality for effective use, such as token operation systems and slow reset. Consideration of a better user interface for light operating systems (such as apps or text control systems) may be required.</p> <p>The provision of effective lighting can help facilitate sports to change delivery models, which enhance choices for participants. This helps to spread demand peaks and could also help facilitate increased facility access for new and emerging codes who struggle to get access to existing assets. Installation of energy-efficient lighting systems can also help reduce some operational costs, although improved maintenance standards of playing surfaces may be needed to support increased use.</p>	<p>Lead: Asset Owners and TAs</p> <p>Support: Funders and Sports Organisations</p>

11.3.2. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>9. When planning future upgrades or development of new sport and recreation facilities, consider opportunities for how these spaces can better support and enable play experiences.</p>	<p>There is an adequate supply of 'destination playgrounds' across the region. Improving the local accessibility and variety of play opportunities, and maximising playful experiences alongside existing or new sport and recreation assets for diverse outcomes should be the focus.</p>	<p>Lead: All TAs, Play Advocacy organisations</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury and Funders</p>
<p>10. Explore opportunities to further enhance Ngā Puna Wai as a key regional sport and recreation asset.</p>	<p>Ngā Puna Wai provides a significant, regional multi-sport hub which provides for regular community sport, tournaments and events to a national and international standard.</p>	<p>Lead: CCC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury and Stakeholders</p>
<p>11. Maximise the usability of existing play, active recreation and sport spaces by improving the provision and quality of support amenities, including toilets, changerooms, parking, shelter and seating.</p>	<p>Many recreation and sport destinations have old, outdated or no public amenities, which is a barrier to usability. There may be potential for councils to partner with sports and recreation organisations that own assets to invest in improving existing amenities to make them safer, more welcoming and appropriate for wider public use. Some outdated amenities may not be able to be improved and may need to be rationalised.</p>	<p>Lead: Asset Owners and TAs</p> <p>Support: Funders</p>
<p>12. Identify ways to increase energy efficiency within existing indoor facilities to help improve their overall sustainability.</p>	<p>Some indoor facilities, including aquatic centres, are high energy use and would benefit from enhancements to improve sustainability. Programmed changes to improve energy efficiency of lighting, pumps and heating systems should be planned by asset owners.</p>	<p>Lead: Asset owners, and TAs</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, Sports Organisations and Funders</p>

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>13. Where multi-use artificial turfs are planned to supplement and enhance the natural sports field network, consider investing in these at existing sports clubs which have high-quality support infrastructure, such as refurbished toilets/changerooms and/or existing floodlights.</p>	<p>While some councils' policies may prioritise these types of assets at new sport and recreation sites, there may be circumstances where considering existing sites is appropriate as a way to help maximise the return from past investment.</p> <p>If investing in existing sites, to help ensure wider public use of such assets, may require agreements with existing clubs that detail minimum access requirements for other groups and associated reporting in return for council investment or other support.</p>	<p>Lead: TAs and RSOs</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, Sports Organisations and Funders</p>

12. Chatham Islands Sub-region

The recommendations for the Chatham Islands have been directly extracted from the Chatham Islands Spaces and Places Plan 2024²⁹. Support of the RST and key funders will be important to enable the lead agencies to effectively implement these recommendations.

Recommendation	Lead	Timeframe ³⁰
1. Determine the most appropriate site to develop an enclosed/covered court and investigate what construction materials and methods would be suitable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Whatever site is determined as most appropriate, the court surface will require multi-use markings and modern, efficient court lighting to maximise available hours of use and cater to as many sports as possible. b. If Norman Kirk Memorial Reserve (NKMR) is determined as the best location, then improve the existing court surface and multisport markings as an immediate priority. c. If NKMR is not suitable, then Te One School should be considered as the site for a combined school-community hub. 	Chatham Islands Council	Short (investigate) Short (implement)
2. Consider oversight models which will give the Chatham Islands Council greater awareness of, and insights into, the asset management and operations of the community pool. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If the pool continues to leak, then consider installation of a pool liner. 	Chatham Islands Council; Pool Committee; School	Short
3. Optimise existing buildings available on the island as a temporary solution to the required relocation of the Community Gym.	Chatham Islands Council	Short
4. Improve opportunities to link existing walkways and cycleways with new additional walk and cycle infrastructure. This may be through the creation of short connector links and/or towards the creation of an island loop pathway.	Chatham Islands Council and private landowners	Long

²⁹ Therefore the table is formatted differently to others in this strategy.

³⁰ Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years Long 7+ years

13. CSW Cluster Recommendations

13.1.1. Short Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>14. Continue to progress plans for the development of the future Selwyn District Park (Rolleston landholding).</p>	<p>The land provides a significant opportunity for the current and future community of the Selwyn District and other visitors. The future District Park will be able to accommodate a wide range of sport, recreation and community activities, some of which may not typically be available in urban environments.</p>	<p>Lead: SDC Support: Sport Canterbury, Sport NZ, Stakeholders and Funders</p>
<p>15. Network planning is required for the community indoor space network in the Selwyn District.</p>	<p>It is expected that the development of the site will occur in stages.</p> <p>As one of New Zealand’s fastest growing districts, it is important to develop a strategic view of the indoor space needs of communities across the district. This plan should seek to maximise collaboration and multiuse opportunities by considering a broad range of asset types, including libraries, community meeting space as well as sport and recreation venues suitable for indoor space needs.</p>	<p>Lead: SDC Support: Stakeholders</p>
<p>16. Seek the support of key partners to start progressing the key recommendations from the Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri Netball Court Provision Report June 2025.</p>	<p>The report identifies the need to retain a combination of provision types for netball courts, i.e. outdoor courts for low-cost, mass participation opportunities (especially primary and secondary school competitions), potential for covered, multi-marked outdoor courts to supplement indoor court provision at key sites such as in Waimakariri.</p>	<p>Lead: Mainland Netball Support: Sport Canterbury and TAs</p>

13.1.2. Medium Term Recommendations (4-6 years)

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
17. Continue to progress plans to develop the Affinity Gymnastics sub-regional gymnastics hub in Selwyn District.	The need for a facility in Rolleston was identified in the Greater Christchurch Gymsports Facility Plan 2020 as a priority need. This has subsequently been confirmed by an independent feasibility study.	Lead: Affinity Gymnastics Support: SDC, Sport Canterbury and Funders
18. Continue to progress the planning and development of the Whakaraupō Sport and Recreation Hub.	A recent feasibility study has confirmed the need for this space. The appropriate next steps will be confirmed after the business plan (currently underway) is completed.	Lead: Whakaraupō Recreation Inc Support: Naval Point Club, CCC, Sport Canterbury, Funders
19. Aquatic network planning is required in the Selwyn and Waimakariri areas. Planning should consider cross-boundary provision in Christchurch and North Canterbury.	Both Selwyn and Waimakariri have been identified as having an undersupply of year-round pool space. It is also important to consider local access in these areas, along with the balance of aquatic water space types, particularly learn to swim and leisure water access.	Lead: SDC, WDC Support: Sport Canterbury, Aquatic users

13.1.3. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsible
20. Continue the staged implementation of the CCC Sports Field Network Plan 2024.	Sports fields are an integral component of the city's open space and contribute to 'greening' the urban environment. They enable a wide range of sport and recreation opportunities that are central to enhancing community health and wellbeing.	Lead: CCC Support: Sport Canterbury, Stakeholders

14. Mid-Canterbury Sub-region

14.1.1. Short Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
21. Continue to progress the development of the Ashburton Domain bike skills park.	Detailed concept plans have been developed for the enhancement of the existing bike skills facility at Ashburton Domain. This project is now at funding stage, and implementation will support the increasing popularity of cycling experiences for young people.	<p>Lead: Safer Mid-Canterbury, ADC</p> <p>Support: Funders including Rotary Clubs</p>
22. Work to ensure the planned A&P Showgrounds upgrade project will provide positive outcomes for multiple sports and other community uses.	It is important to ensure that this upgrade project provides multi-sport outcomes. Single code outcomes should be considered a lower priority than multi-use hubs.	<p>Lead: Ashburton A&P Association</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury; ADC, Stakeholders</p>

14.1.2. Medium Term Recommendations (4-6 years)

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
23. Undertake a needs and partnership assessment into the potential of providing some multi-use, covered courts at the Braided Rivers Community Trust Ashburton Tennis Centre, which could also provide for other racquet sports.	The provision of some covered outdoor courts would enhance the player and spectator experience. It is critical to consider how such an asset could support potential partners such as pickleball and Ashburton College. There may also be an opportunity to consider future squash provision as part of any redevelopment at this site. Single code outcomes are considered a lower priority unless significant demand exists and no partnership options are possible.	<p>Lead: Braided Rivers Community Trust, Ashburton Trust Tennis Centre</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, ADC, potential partners, funders</p>
24. Consider opportunities to improve access to learn to swim space.	Overall, the district has adequate access to aquatic water space, however, there is significant current pressure regarding learn to swim	<p>Lead: ADC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury</p>

Recommendation	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
	access due to an imbalance in the types of aquatic space provided across the district.	

14.1.3. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
25. Continue to advocate with Environment Canterbury for action to address water quality concerns at Lake Hood.	Lake Hood provides an important venue for water-based sport and recreation. Continued water quality issues are resulting in frequent closures of the water body. These negatively impact the ability of providers to offer reliable, quality and safe experiences to participants. Environment Canterbury is the relevant legislative organisation, and limited progress can be made by others.	Lead: ADC Support: Sport Canterbury, Environment Canterbury, Water sports, Lincoln University
26. Continue the programme of developing local park based, no cost / low cost recreational opportunities to support community participation.	Recent district initiatives have been highly successful and well utilised i.e. bike parks, trails, mini golf, disc golf, ½ courts. Continue to consider provision of such recreational spaces and opportunities within local communities.	Lead: ADC Support: Sport Canterbury
27. As budget and capacity allow, continue ongoing implementation and reviews of strategic plans which support play, active recreation and sport, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EA Networks Masterplan • Ashburton Domain Development Plan. • Open Spaces Strategy • Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy • Reserve Management Plans 	These key documents provide clear plans and priorities for investment to support ongoing community participation outcomes. It is noted that implementation is subject to available resourcing.	Lead: ADC Support: Sport Canterbury

15. North Canterbury Sub-region

15.1.1. Ongoing Recommendation

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
28. Continue efforts to enhance relationships with organisations in North Canterbury by increasing the regularity of interactions with key stakeholders in this area.	Increasing the regularity and quality of interactions will help improve outcomes for play, active recreation and sport in North Canterbury.	<p>Lead: Sport Canterbury, HDC</p> <p>Support: RSO's</p>

16. South Canterbury Sub-Region

16.1.1. Short Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
29. Continue to explore opportunities for ongoing investment in the network of connected cycle trails / shared pathways across the sub-region, including Waimate.	<p>This will help maximise the return on earlier cycle trail investments and will provide recreational benefits to local residents as well as supporting sub-regional tourism.</p> <p>Initial priorities should include completing the connection of existing planned cycle trails such as Cave to Fairlee, Kimbell to Dog Kennel Corner and The Waimate Trail - Te Ara Waimatemate.</p>	<p>Lead: Cycle trail groups; TAs</p> <p>Support: Funders; Sport Canterbury</p>
30. Develop a sub-regional aquatic network plan that considers both local and sub-regional access to aquatic spaces.	<p>National aquatic benchmarks indicate that there is some undersupply in this sub-region, particularly in terms of year-round aquatic facility access. There may also be an imbalance in the type of aquatic spaces provided, such as learn to swim and warm-water aquatic space. Further investigation is required to consider the appropriate future network, including local access opportunities, potential partnerships</p>	<p>Lead: TDC, WDC, MDC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury</p>

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>31. Ensure that sustainability considerations and the potential for partnerships and multi-purpose surfaces are considered when planning the future renewal of the old hockey turf at Aorangi Park.</p>	<p>and the needs of different demographics, such as rural communities and the ageing population.</p> <p>One turf has recently been upgraded. It is understood that the other turf surface will be due for renewal during the next 3 years. The Hockey in NZ National Spaces and Places Strategy 2025 emphasises the importance of not over-specifying hockey surfaces and considering environmental sustainability when planning future surfaces, including considering multiuse surfaces and partnership approaches in order to open and grow the game.</p>	<p>Lead: South Canterbury Hockey Turf Trust and Hockey South Canterbury</p> <p>Support: TDC, Sport Canterbury</p>
<p>32. Continue to progress the staged implementation of the Aorangi Park Masterplan. An important early step will be to undertake more detailed operational planning for the Indoor Court Facility at the park.</p>	<p>Ensuring the expanded indoor court facility is maximised will require focus on detailed operational planning, including consideration of the need for additional programmes and partnerships with community delivery organisations to help ensure the new indoor courts are maximised.</p>	<p>Lead: TDC, RSOs</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury</p>
<p>33. Develop a Masterplan for Sir Basil Arthur Park which considers current park tenants as well as possible future options for cycling.</p>	<p>Sir Basil Arthur Park is one of the key sport parks serving Timaru and the South Canterbury sub-region. It has the potential to be enhanced and could be a possible solution for relocation of some codes from the Caledonian Grounds, which are at risk of coastal erosion, including Cycling South Canterbury, whose current outdoor velodrome at the site is also degrading.</p>	<p>Lead: TDC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, RSOs</p>
<p>34. Continue to progress the proposed Tekapo Sports Trust project to develop a multipurpose sport and recreation facility on Aorangi Crescent Reserve.</p>	<p>The proposed development is a long-term initiative which is intended to enable the relocation of Tekapo Squash Club from its current site. The inclusion of other activity space, such as fitness will help ensure a diverse range of users.</p> <p>The proposed development on Aorangi Crescent Reserve will help create a multi-use community sport and recreation hub at that</p>	<p>Lead: Tekapo Sports Trust, MDC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, funders</p>

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
	location, maximising existing infrastructure with shared use of the driveway car parking area with the Lake Tekapo Community Hall.	

16.1.2. Medium Term Recommendation (4-6 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
35. Monitor use levels of the sport and recreation spaces provided in Twizel and proactively plan for ongoing community use, including accommodating potential increases in demand due to predicted population growth.	<p>Most sport and recreation assets in Twizel have some level of shared use between the community and Twizel Area School.</p> <p>With population growth occurring, it is recommended that MDC, the Ministry of Education and the school board plan for the long-term sustainability of sport and recreation assets, including through monitoring use levels, and where required, clarifying access arrangements, roles and responsibilities between the different partners where there is dual school and community use.</p>	<p>Lead: MDC, Twizel Area School</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, Ministry of Education</p>

16.1.3. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
36. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Aorangi Golf Facilities Plan 2022.	The 2022 plan makes it clear that golf is over-supplied in the South Canterbury sub-region and that changes to the future network are needed. The Plan includes general/ongoing recommendations as well as short, medium and long-term actions to explore opportunities to modify the existing network and create more diverse golf experiences through partnerships and consolidation.	<p>Lead: Aorangi Golf, Golf NZ</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury, Golf Clubs</p>

17. West Coast Sub-Region

17.1.1. Short-Term Recommendations (1-3 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>37. Review and update the West Coast Walking and Cycling Strategy (2009) to bring it up to date with changing circumstances. This plan should consider both shared walking and cycling trails and MTB specific trails.</p>	<p>The current Strategy does not reflect the significant developments in this sector since 2009. The walkway and cycleway network is a significant drawcard for tourism and an important contributor to the local economy. A prioritised future-focussed plan is now required.</p>	<p>Lead: Sport Canterbury West Coast</p> <p>Support: West Coast Regional Council (WCRC) - Transport Committee Development West Coast, BDC, GDC, WDC, MTB clubs</p>
<p>38. Investigate and plan for the provision of additional artificial surfaces to improve wet weather participation (where demand warrants it). The initial priority is to assess the needs and options for a ¼ to ½ field sized surface that enables junior sports participation and training (for all ages) in Hokitika</p>	<p>When considering this type of investment, ensure that environmental sustainability is a key consideration.</p> <p>Also, ensure that the surface type selected in Hokitika is compatible for supporting multiple codes such as hockey and football. This should be considered in partnership with the DWC Westland Sports Hub Committee.</p> <p>Due to frequency of wet-weather on the West Coast, there may be a need to consider provision of artificial surfaces to support other codes in future. However, this is not considered a current high priority (unless identified in another specific recommendation).</p>	<p>Lead: WDC, DWC Westland, Sports Hub Committee</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast, GDC, Sports Associations</p>
<p>39. Prioritise fundraising for the renewal of the Westurf Recreation Trust turf, which is expected to be required in 2027/28.</p>	<p>As part of planning for turf renewal, sustainability considerations and alternative surface types need to be considered to ensure the most cost-effective and sustainable solution.</p>	<p>Lead: Westurf Recreation Trust</p>

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
	Additional amenity facilities at this site are not considered to be a priority in the short-medium term.	Support: GDC, Sport Canterbury West Coast, Funders
40. Continue to support the community volunteers at the Cobden Sports Complex at Jellyman Park as they work with councils regarding the impacts of coastal erosion at the site.	Jellyman Park provides an important community sport and recreation asset, but it is negatively impacted by coastal erosion. Council work on seawall enhancements/relocation will impact the available sport and recreation playing spaces at the site. It may even be that alternative future locations are needed for the existing uses. The volunteer committee will need assistance as they work through these processes with councils.	Lead: Sport Canterbury West Coast Support: WCRC, GDC
41. Investigate the spatial provision within the Westland Recreation Centre and identify options for re-prioritising existing space(s) to better support sport and recreation needs.	<p>This facility is the main indoor court venue for the Grey and Westland Districts, supporting a diverse range of sport and recreation needs, including fitness.</p> <p>Some space within the venue is currently used for non-sport and recreation purposes. At the same time, there are capacity constraints on some of the services offered, such as fitness.</p> <p>Developing a more detailed understanding of spatial needs is required in order to inform the potential best future utilisation of space within the venue.</p>	Lead: GDC Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast, User Groups
42. Engage with users to develop a prioritised list and budget for minor enhancements at the Westland Recreation Centre.	<p>This facility could benefit from some minor enhancements to improve functionality, such as consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Block out blinds on the large windows to reduce glare issues for sports Regular replacement of equipment, such as nets, poles/hoops to keep them up to standard. 	Lead: GDC Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast, User Groups

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>43. Investigate the suitability of Wadeson Island Reserve for increased long-term use as a sport and recreation site.</p>	<p>This greenspace currently has some sport and recreation uses, including providing a whitebait sanctuary and fields for rugby league use. It has the potential to support greater utilisation. However, it also has some challenges with ground conditions, which need to be further assessed.</p> <p>Investigation of the opportunities at this site is important to consider as part of the overall network of provision alongside the planning work for Hokitika Racecourse Recreation Reserve and Cass Square.</p>	<p>Lead: WDC, DOC</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast, WCRC, Sports Users, Community</p>

17.1.2. Short-Medium Term Recommendations - Site Dependent (Short 1-3 years Medium 4-6 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>44. Investigate opportunities to enhance collaboration and create new or improve existing sporting hubs at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. John Sturgeon Park, Greymouth (short) b. Anzac Park, Greymouth (medium) c. Hokitika Racecourse. (short) <p>Also see recommendation 40 regarding DWC Westland Sports Hub.</p>	<p>All these sites have existing assets and the potential to provide enhanced multi-use outcomes through further partnership and collaboration. As part of these investigations, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Options to provide a home for football (especially at junior level) b) Alternative surface types such as multi-use, all-weather surfaces (where appropriate). <p>Investment in single-code outcomes should be a lower priority than multi-use hubs</p>	<p>Lead: GDC, WDC, Sports Associations</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast, Westland High School / MOE,</p>

17.1.3. Medium Term Recommendations (4-6 years)

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>45. Prioritise the staged implementation of the Concept Plan for Cass Square Park, Hokitika to provide a multipurpose public recreation space.</p>	<p>This site is important to mana whenua, and they should be actively involved in the detailed planning stages.</p> <p>Development of this site will maximise a key destination and improve its functionality to support the needs of a diverse range of users. The proposed enhancements will support improved play, recreation, sport and community outcomes.</p>	<p>Lead: WDC</p> <p>Support: Funders, Community Sport and Organisations, mana whenua</p>
<p>46. Investigate the potential need for additional provision of artificial cricket wickets across the sub-region.</p>	<p>It is understood there has been a growth in cricket, in part due to increases in the Indian population in the sub-region. It is important that the indicated cricket growth is carefully assessed before investment and that options are considered which minimise any impact on other sport's use of the site(s) selected.</p>	<p>Lead: GDC, WDC, West Coast Cricket Association</p> <p>Support: Sport Canterbury West Coast</p>

17.1.4. Ongoing Recommendations

Recommendation:	Explanation/Rationale	Responsibility
<p>47. Monitor the ongoing access to traditionally important beach, lake and river access areas.</p>	<p>Beach, lake and river access areas are important recreational assets. There are some demand pressures on key access assets (such as boat ramp/ launching sites) as well as climate change impacts. There are also cultural considerations regarding use of some specific sites, which need to be considered in planning.</p> <p>Future investment may need to be prioritised into maintaining a few key sites to a higher standard to support increased use levels, and also in terms of climate impact protection.</p>	<p>Lead: GDC, WDC, Iwi</p> <p>Support: WCRC, DOC</p>

