



Community
Services Bulletin
May 2022

1. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER (Lorraine Weston-Webb)

Community presentation

Now that the country is 'living with COVID' to some extent, we are tentatively restarting community outreach events. The library's fixed term library assistant with responsibility for Community Engagement/Digital Inclusion/Reading for Wellbeing gave an evening presentation to Gore Hokonui Lions on 13 April. It was evident that people in the audience were unaware of the extent of library services, and there was a lot of interest in the new things being offered by the library, particularly digital services.

StoryWalk®

Story Soup by Abie Longstaff is the current feature on the StoryWalk® trail. It includes a search-and-find sheet as well as comprehension and prediction questions. A story soup recipe offers a chance to win a prize by posting a photo of the child's own story soup ingredients on Gore Libraries Facebook page. This story ties in with the Active Southland scavenger hunt on behalf of whom the library has an entry box. This activity can be a great learning opportunity for children, an inspiration to write their own story, or simply a fun way to read and walk together with family or friends.



School holidays

In the April school holidays children were able to collect a *Take & Make* pack with an *Animals* theme. Introduced in 2021 these bags have been very popular with families, particularly with many in isolation due to COVID.



COVID-19

After 12 weeks at the red setting (24 January-13 April) and high COVID case numbers, all of New Zealand moved to the orange setting on 14 April.

In this period Gore daily community active cases ranged up to 440, and daily new cases ranged up to 85. Many people became close contacts and so had to self-isolate at home.

The library service continues to be affected as we do our best to keep everyone safe and the libraries open. Staff remain working in teams, so if one team is affected by COVID the other team can keep the library open. Staff work from home on the alternate shift.

Gore Library opening hours remained reduced with three-hour morning and afternoon openings. People who find the hours don't suit them are encouraged to make use of the Call and Collect (or deliver) service and the library's online books and resources. Matarua Library and Service Centre has retained normal opening hours, except for two afternoons when staff were unavailable, and the Centre closed.

As at other Council facilities, library visitors are expected to wear a face mask, and practice social distancing and good hygiene. With a mild autumn, the libraries have been well ventilated with open windows and doors.

Staff and customers are looking forward to working fully on-site in a single team and returning to normal opening hours.

2. REPORT FROM COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT COORDINATOR (Mark McCann)

- **Welcome Plan** – we are happy to announce the release of the new Gore District Welcome Plan 2022-2026. This document can be found at: <https://www.goredc.govt.nz/our-community/welcoming-newcomers-and-migrants>



The Gore District Welcome Plan aims to create a realistic and achievable path forward to assist all newcomers to become part of the Gore community. The plan sets out ways the Gore community can embrace and be proactive in inviting those new to the District, as well as actions for the newcomers to integrate into their new home.

We believe communities are healthier, more vibrant, happier and more productive when those new to the area are welcomed. A strong, vibrant community is one that enables all members of the community to participate in its economic, civic and social life.

- **Welcoming Communities working group members** – a number of people have put their hands up to be a part of the Gore District Welcoming Communities Plan working group.

The purpose of the group is to assist with and provide input and advise on the implementation of the Gore District Welcome Plan.

The group will aim to make the Gore district an increasingly welcoming community where newcomers feel accepted, connected, a sense of belonging, and of value by

providing strategic direction in relation to the Gore District Welcome Plan and activities.

They include people from the local community as well as newcomers to the area from both overseas and other parts of New Zealand.

- **Welcome Pack** – one of the recommendations made in the Welcome Plan is to create a Welcome Pack for newcomers to the district. The working group will work in collaboration with the local community in planning and creating this resource which will include, but not be limited to, information about the area and settlement support information.

3. REPORT FROM THE EVENTS COORDINATOR (Jessica Swan)

Purpose

This report provides an overview of event activities for March and April.

Freeze Ya Bits Off Busking

Unfortunately, with the cancellation of the Tussock Country Music Festival, Freeze Ya Bits Off Busking was also cancelled for this year. We did investigate the possibility of a schools only day after we cancelled. However, the notice was too tight for schools to proceed.

The organisation of new merchandise for the event is going well, with the process now in the final design stages. Once international visitors can return for the festival, these should act as great mementos for them to take from their visit.

Hokonui Culture Feast

The Hokonui Culture Feast has been postponed to the alternative date of Thursday 6 October due to the ongoing uncertainty around COVID restrictions. Almost all registered stallholders have indicated they wish to remain involved in the new date.

Gore District Community Awards

The Gore District Community Awards are set for Friday 4 November, starting at 6:15pm at the Gore Town and Country Club.

Nominations are now open online for the community awards, with physical forms able to be requested from the front desk at the Council's main office. Two new awards have been added – the Te Ao Māori Award and the Business Excellence Award. Sponsors for these awards have been approached and are steadily being locked in. We have also changed the Emerging Performing Artist Award to allow a person of any age to enter and merged the Community Coach of the Year Award with the Services to Sport Award.

Following a successful joint venture on staging and lighting hire with a local performance group in 2020, we are in discussion to hopefully work with them again this year and continue the relationship. We are also working on having the same local caterer as in 2020, following positive feedback about the meal. Tickets will go on sale closer to the event, as we still need to lock in some sponsors to work out the ticket price.

Santa Parade and Christmas Carnival

The Santa Parade will be held on Sunday 11 December. The Christmas Carnival will immediately follow the parade. Crispin Design is creating new collateral for the event (posters, social media tiles) as our new graphics from last year are now too closely wrapped up with the advent calendar event.

On the Fly Mataura River Festival

Next year's On the Fly Mataura River Festival is tentatively set for Sunday 19 March, subject to some of the larger local event organisers confirming their dates around this time. Celebrity chef Brett, who was to appear at this year's On the Fly, is pencilled in for 2023 and our fly fishing experts have been notified. The weather on the day the event was to have been held was spectacular, so hopefully, keeping it on the same weekend next year will ensure perfect weather again.

4. REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM (Sonia Gerken & Kaitlyn Wright)

Projects

Since March, we have launched two public consultations/projects on our Let's Talk platform, capitalising off our strong online presence on social media for engagement. These are:

- Gore District Plan Review
- Rethinking Waste

The Rethinking Waste consultation included partnering with Dr Niki Bould, a sustainability and waste expert who was available to answer questions from the community. Let's Talk has 1154 registered subscribers. All our consultations have online submission forms supported by hard copy that can be downloaded or picked up at the usual Council facilities.

Ongoing projects are:

- Elizabeth Street pipeline renewal
- Matai Ridge

Digital Statistics

Website

Statistics for the Council's website over April/May were:

- Users: 6,815. Of that, 53% used their mobile phone to access the site, 44% used their desktop, and 3% used a tablet.
- Page views: 31,698
- Top three pages: Property search, Gore Aquatic Centre and Cemetery records search
- MyGore accounts: 291

Antenno

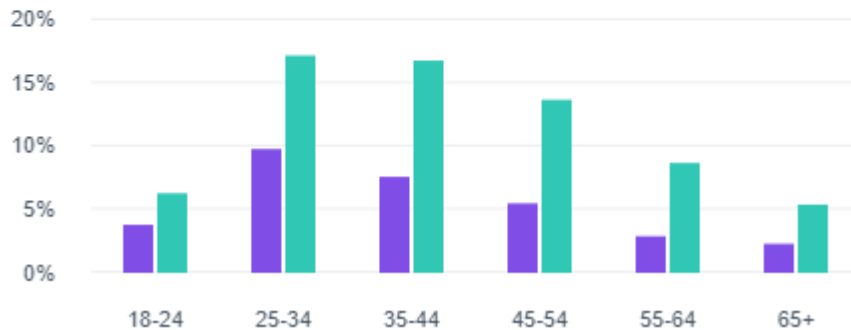
Subscribers: **2240, an increase of 108 since the last period.** This is 36.8% of our rating database, meaning GoreDC retains its place as the leading Council in New Zealand for downloads of Antenno per rating units.

Facebook

GoreDC currently has **7,905** followers. A breakdown of the demographics of these followers as attached:

Age and gender

Men 31.80%
Women 68.20%



GoreDC continues to have a good reach across social media. Below is the figure for the period April/March.

Facebook Page Reach ⓘ

24,521 ↑ 54.7%










Instagram Reach ⓘ

80 ↑ 100%



Instagram

In April, GoreDC joined another social media channel, Instagram, under @goredistrictcouncil. We currently have **71** followers. While still a low follower count, the engagement, including Instagram Reach above, seems to still be notable:

	Strong Communities Murihiku (SCM) wants ...	Boost post	2 May 2022 at 16:42	22 People reached
	We are pleased to announce Council faciliti...	Boost post	29 April 2022 at 13:00	27 People reached
	Did you see this Roll of Honour Memorial P...	Boost post	27 April 2022 at 15:18	34 People reached
	Following recent rainfall, we are now able t...	Boost post	26 April 2022 at 12:07	26 People reached
	They shall grow not old, as we that are left ...	Boost post	25 April 2022 at 09:55	31 People reached
	ANZAC DAY LONG WEEKEND HOURS We w...	Boost post	22 April 2022 at 09:00	21 People reached
	Overnight we've had 15 mm of rainfall! 🙏 ...	Boost post	21 April 2022 at 15:07	24 People reached

Google

Since April, our Google accounts have been combined, allowing the team to oversee the accounts together. This was previously split by GoreNZ and GoreDC. Combining these profiles allows us to ensure all information relating to our facilities is up to date, and accurate across the board, and track Google analytics, reviews, and trends for all accounts.

Google is looking to transition to a new version of Google Analytics 4, so we are keeping an eye on information relating to these changes and how we can best prepare.

Local Government Elections

The triennial local government elections will be held this year. Election day is Saturday 8 October.

We have teamed up with our southern colleagues at Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council and Environment Southland for Vote Murihiku 2022, a campaign to encourage people to stand for election and vote.

The campaign started with three Facebook live sessions “Can I Stand?”, hosted by Steve Broad and featuring past and present councillors from throughout the country.

The Facebook live sessions received good engagement.

- March 31 – post reach 2,264, engagement 256
- April 7 – post reach 1,683, engagement 170
- April 28 – post reach 834, engagement 102

The sessions can be viewed on the Vote Murihiku 2022 Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/votemurihiku22>



5. **REPORT OF THE DISTRICT ARTS & HERITAGE CURATOR – March to May 2022:**
(Jim Geddes)

Eastern Southland Gallery:

Exhibitions (Annual Plan KPI = 10 per annum)

Arts and Heritage Department staff worked on three exhibitions for the March to May period:

- **New Year, New Beginnings** – paintings by **Joanne Borgman** (from 11 February to 30 April) – (Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre)
- **New Landscape** - works by **Robin Bardas, Miranda Joseph and Sue Pearce** (from 12 February to 27 March) – (Eastern Southland Gallery)
- **Black & Gold** – works from the permanent collection (2 April to 15 May) – (Eastern Southland Gallery)

The Mandeville presentation featured a talented local artist, while the Gallery exhibitions incorporated recent Master of Fine Arts graduates and gifts to the district collection from a variety of sources. The Gallery's 2022 exhibition and performance schedule has had to be 're-jigged' to accommodate Covid related restrictions, but the outcome is looking promising with a wide range of exciting offerings now confirmed for the rest of 2022. A significant emphasis will continue to be placed added value education and community programmes.

With the welcome support of **Creative New Zealand** we have been able to engage local artist and designer Jacqui Byars and popular community art worker Janet de Wagt to develop a range of studio activities and artist-in-residence projects. Many will dove-tail into the on-going research partnership between the Eastern Southland Gallery and Hokonui Runanga. This partnership has successfully helped gather important information pertaining to the Matakura Valley that will provide a critical foundation for many of our new of art projects.



We expect to meet or exceed our KPI target for 2021/22

Precinct events:

Events (Annual Plan KPI = 10 per annum)

- **Alpaca Social Club** - concert (20 March)
- **Chris Priestley & the Unsung Heroes** - concert (22 March)

Attendances for such events have been restricted in line with Alert Level directives, so they have been at maximum (albeit limited) capacity.

We expect to exceed our KPI target for 2021/22.

Talks, tours and education programmes (Annual Plan KPI = 50 per annum)

In line with Covid related restrictions and protocols, a limited number of tour and special interest groups have been visiting our facilities between March and May. Our regular programme of talks to community groups and schools is being carefully managed and we are only catering to small groups where appropriate social distancing can be managed. Unfortunately, over 20 tour parties have had to cancel or postpone their planned visits to our facilities. However, those groups we have been able to safely accommodate have included:

Gore Focus Group, St Andrews 140th Anniversary Tour, Gore District Historical Society, Farmlands Tour, Timaru U3A and Platinum Tours.

Meetings and representations

Tussock Country Festival, Radio Hokonui, Gore High School, Creative Communities Scheme, Southland Regional Heritage Committee and He Waka Tuia.

Owing to Covid related restrictions we may only just meet our KPI target for 2021/22.

Maruawai Project

Stage One – Hokonui Moonshine Museum Redevelopment: (LTP target)

With the functioning components of the Hokonui project now in place (Visitor Centre and Distillery Wing) and the front doors open to the visiting public, staff members are concentrating on completing the museum's social history displays and associated fit-out. With significant post-Covid cost escalations across almost the entire floorplan fundraising (plus the securing of grants and donations) will be a major team focus for the remainder of the year. Product availability has been another challenge with delays of up to six months for some key items of plant and equipment.

Stage Two – Maruawai Centre Development (LTP target)

The project design team under the direction of Signal Management have been working with staff members to refine many aspects of detailed design for the new Maruawai Centre and it looks likely that all the necessary documentation and Quantity surveyor costings will be in hand by the first week in May. Project designers have been careful to utilize all suitable aspects of the building's existing structure and maximise the opportunities offered by the current open plan format. Given the existing premises at 7 Norfolk Street comprise *'two buildings joined together'* we are formulating environmental and display options to suit major spaces with varying internal cladding and ceiling heights.

We are very grateful for the generous \$919,000 contribution from Provincial Growth Fund and the equally generous grant of \$250,000 from Community Trust South that have jointly provided a stable foundation for further project funding initiatives. Concurrent fund-raising and display development will obviously be the primary focus of the Arts and Heritage team going forward.

6. REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATIONS MANAGER (*Keith McRobie*)

General operations

The Autumn leaf fall has been late this year with unseasonably warm conditions and some deciduous trees still showing green leaves. We have only been picking up leaves over the last 2-3 weeks. The leaf pick up has been combined with catcher mowing in the main parks because we are still getting grass growth. It is likely that the leaf pick-up operation will extend much later into the winter than usual.

The Winter bedding display has had a good establishment period due to the warm weather and we are already seeing some flower display.

Replacement and new tree planting have taken place at Pukerau road reserve, and Mataura Cemetery frontage. We are using a new tree tying system that uses black pre-stained tree stakes that looks tidier than the previous system used.

Projects

Bannerman Park

New fruit trees have been planted in Bannerman Park in the community orchard area. The community orchard initiative came from the Gore Garden Club and is an appropriate use of the upper park space.

The Puketi ex-situ species Rhododendron plantings took place in early May in a sheltered site adjacent to Mitre Street. The ex-situ plants are provided free to us and it is expected we will receive 40-50 plants a year for a number of years to help with the preservation of these species. The ex-situ plants complement the existing species plantings undertaken by Gordon Bailey and Dennis Hughes from Blue Mountain Nurseries back in the late 1990s.

A large mixed poplar and cedar shelterbelt has been removed from the area below Mitre Street and adjacent to the deer park. Access to the area was provided through a property that is due to be developed so we made use of the window provided to complete the works. Many of the trees in the shelterbelt were in various stages of decay and potentially a risk to park users. A stump grinding contractor will grind all the stumps and then the area tidied up and replanted with more appropriate specimen grade trees.

Pukerau Cemetery: Council staff have continued helping the Pukerau Cemetery Support Trust with some planting and mulching. The kiosk panels have been given the final sign-off and have been a significant body of work for the Trust. The list of upgrade works now only has a few minor items remaining and should all be completed for the November Commemorative Celebrations.

Minor tree contracts: We have had Delta Tree Services back in April and May completing removal works at the top of Bannerman Park (1x Macrocarpa), Hamilton Park (2x Macrocarpa), Kerwood Place (1x Willow) and Willis/George Street Corner (12x mixed trees).

The state of the trees on the Willis and George St, corner were a revelation in that two of the trees had significant decay in the trunks and could have come down at any stage. The corner has been cleared of weeds and debris and will be planted up with Camellias, Rhododendrons and Azaleas in the next few months.

Playground upgrades: The Covid 19 outbreak has significantly delayed our flying fox contractor. It is hoped that he will be onsite sometime in late May/ early June to carry out flying fox upgrade works.

Work is currently underway topping up soft fall on a number of playgrounds where the existing material no longer meets the NZ Standard depth requirement. We are still waiting to get contractors on site for the electrical cabling works for the BBQs and concrete works for the Sword Street basketball half courts.

The Parks Manager continues to work with Active Southland, West Gore School and the West Gore community on the Neighbourhood Play project. The intent is to upgrade Hamilton Street and Oxford Street playgrounds, with some tree plantings, equipment upgrades, furniture installs and some linking tracks to existing walkways.

Dolamore Park: Parks staff have been working with the Hokonui MTB Club and DOC with new wayfaring signage and track marker design. These are now being manufactured and will then be installed. The cost for this work is being covered by DOC.

Staff have undertaken tree canopy lifting around the lower camp area, and removed some trees adjacent to the main entrance to help with vehicular traffic sight lines entering and leaving the park. New and replacement rhododendron and dogwood plantings have been carried out at the entrance.

Gore Main Street trees: The main street tree replacement has gone mostly to plan and are now waiting tree cages and base surface works before we plant the trees. The work was more complicated than originally envisioned because there is a watermain running down the inner edge of each tree pit. The watermain has been replaced in sections under each tree pit and better protected with root guard.

Community and school plantings

Last week was a busy week with community and school plantings. Mataura School planted 1200 daffodil bulbs on the SH1 road shoulder.

St Mary's and Longford Intermediate School, assisted by the Gore Rotary Club and parks staff, planted approximately 500 native plants and tri-guard plant protectors in the lower Hamilton Park area adjacent to the landfill. Gore River Valley Lions planted a further 120 native plants in the weekend. In total, 3,000 plants have been planted with the Gore and Districts Amenities Trust paying for approximately 60% of the plant stock. They have funds available to assist with further plantings in the area in the next 2-3 years.

There is one more planting project to be completed at the end of May with Mataura School planting 250 native plants in the lower Tuturau Reserve adjacent to the carpark.

Community interaction

Interaction with groups, clubs, and organisations over the past months

- Active Southland, consultation, and MS Teams meeting attended.
- Sport NZ, East Gore Neighbourhood Play systems working group, consultation and meetings attended.
- A & P Joint Management Committee meeting attended, replacement caretaker employed and transitioned into role.
- Southland Equestrian Park Trust, consultations and meeting attended.
- Southland Rhododendron Group, consultation.
- Gore Garden Club, consultation and meetings attended.
- Pukerau Cemetery Support Group – consultation.
- Various sports club interaction.
- Discussions and liaison with various sub-contractors and suppliers.