



Community Services Bulletin

September 2023

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

Aotearoa maps

The Gore Library has three new Aotearoa maps permanently displayed in Te Puna o Tūtemākohu, the first-floor research room.

- The first set provide Tangata Whenua place names for Te Ika-a-Māui - North Island, and Te Waipounamu - South Island. These maps are in the alcove adjacent to the Mahinga Kai artworks interpretation panel, which explains the meaning behind the back-lit panels displayed above the internal stairs.
- These are complemented by Ngā Iwi o Aoteroa, New Zealand Māori tribal map and traditional geographic names. This map is framed on canvas, located on the wall behind the alcove.



Māori artworks celebration

On 13 September, the Gore Library held a celebration event for the newly completed Māori artworks. Hokonui Rūnanga Kaitohutohu Tikanga Māori/Cultural Advisor Matu Coleman-Clarke gave a blessing for the artworks. This was followed by kōrero from the Council's Chief Executive, Stephen Parry, me as Library Manager, Kaiārihi Taiao/Environmental Lead Riki Parata and Tuatahi Creatives Chief Executive, Jordan Tuhura.

The first two talks gave the background to the building project and working together with Hokonui Rūnanga; then Riki and Jordan elaborated on the meaning of the artworks and how they link people and place – in times past, present and future. The symbolism was described as the library being sustenance for the mind and spirit, just as Mahinga Kai is sustenance for the body and spirit, and the Mataura River running through the land and people.

Invited guests included Hokonui Rūnanga, the people who worked on and supported the artworks installation, Gore District Council elected members and staff. Most of all, it was a time to thank all involved and view the artworks together, with understanding of their meanings.

September-October school holidays

The programme of activities is again popular, being in action at time of writing. Activities include a new children's book 'The teacup pirates' launched at Gore Library with Tapanui author Vicky Purple reading her story. A new activity is Nighttime Story Time to be held on Wednesday 4 October. Other children's favourites Story Time, Brick Time and Craft Time are being held at both libraries. The Eastern Southland Embroiderers' Guild are offering a stitch craft class on 4 October.



Talks and tours

- Gore Library hosted a visit from Riversdale Book Club, 15 August.
- Gore library staff hosted a tour/talk for a group of LIANZA Murihiku librarians, with people representing a variety of libraries from Dunedin, Central Otago, and Southland, 16 September.
- Two librarians gave a presentation about the benefits of the library on the brain for a Brain Health seminar celebrating the International Day of Older Persons at Gore RSA. More than 80 people attended and the library was one presentation of many. Being full of positivity the talk was well received, 2 October.
- Reading Revolution sessions have become so popular that we now plan to hold two sessions each fortnight. These sessions offer opportunity for people to discuss a reading given on the day, selected, and read to the group by a Reading Revolution-trained librarian and volunteer.
- The Gore Spinners and Weavers and the Eastern Southland Embroiderers' Guild have met in the public seating areas of Gore Library on weekend days to work on their crafts and invite interest from the public.

Water bottle filler and drinking fountain

By offering a refill station the library is helping save disposable water bottles. To date '1,144 plastic bottles saved' according to the counter.



Library Manager update

Being my final bulletin report to the Council, I'd like to thank the current Council, and all previous elected members during my 11-year term as Library Manager. As a firm believer in the good that a library delivers to a community, I'm grateful for the support of the Council in working through the particularly difficult years from 2019-2023, while the library was operating from temporary premises, to moving into the lovely spacious new building. Having heard and seen how people are using the new library, I feel privileged to have been part of the team that helped during every stage of the process toward this outstanding result.

It is my pleasure to welcome Emma Sherie to the Library Manager role from 16 October. Emma comes from the West Coast where she was the Buller District Librarian 2018-2022. She takes on this role at a pivotal time when services to residents and visitors can be further developed.

2. REPORT FROM THE EVENTS COORDINATOR (Jessica Swan)

Hokonui Culture Feast

Friday 13 October will see the Hokonui Culture Feast return to Gore. Planning for this event is now in the final detail stages, with over 20 food vendors lined up to participate.

In September, the events team was granted funding from Creative Communities to go towards the event and received financial sponsorship from local business Ajax Building Contractors Ltd. This support means we can keep the event free for attendees and vendors, and pay professional groups to travel to Gore and perform on stage.

The Facebook event is currently at 500 respondents (4 October), which is slightly higher than in 2022. Hopefully, this means we'll have an excellent turnout on the day and fill the venue for our vendors.



Christmas Carnival and Santa Parade

We spent September redesigning the Santa Parade registration form to make it as simple and user friendly as possible, while providing us with more need-to-know information that we lacked last year.

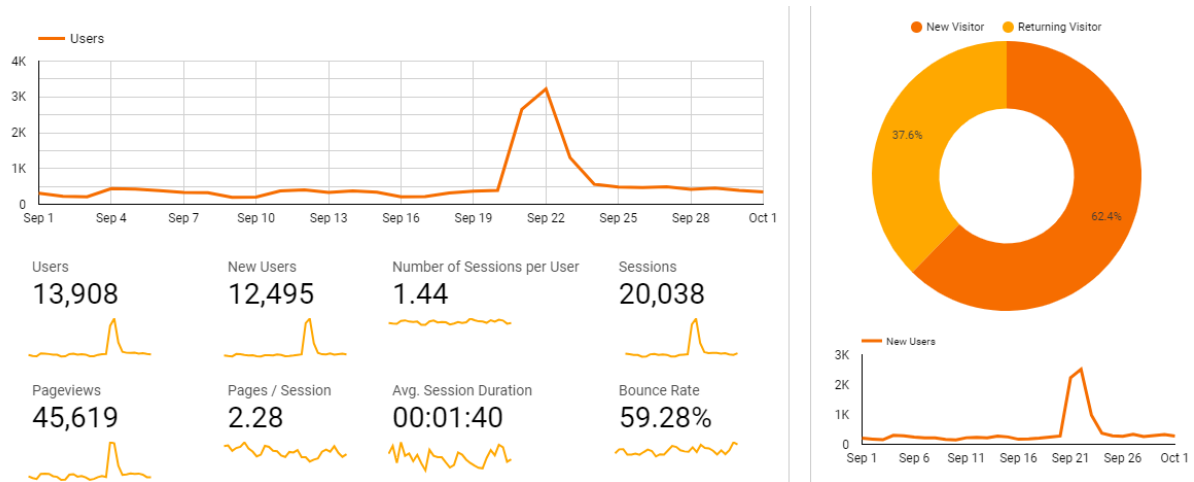


In particular, we wanted to rework the health and safety aspect for our parade participants after complaints about our process in 2022. We now have a more in-depth, easier-to-digest health and safety page on our registration form that we believe should prove more practical for our participants. The new form went live at the end of the month and has already resulted in seven early registrations for the parade.

Our Events Assistant successfully secured significant sponsorship from Active Southland and Mercury for the Christmas Carnival, which will cover the cost of children's attractions, making them free for the public. Under this agreement, we have engaged Anglem Amusements to bring larger rides for children to Gore. As a result, we will have exciting new, carnival-themed rides for our attendees. Funding from Creative Communities has also been granted, meaning we can contract top-quality performers for the stage show.

3. REPORT FROM THE DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Digital Statistics – Corporate Website



The significant spike in traffic reflected Gore’s flooding state of emergency mid-September, where we had 5,399 website users over two days.

It’s great to see people using our website as a source of truth and authority in an emergency. A total of 62.4% of the traffic were new users to the website, which means we’ve increased our website’s overall reach and awareness for Council-related information in the future.

The top three most popular pages for September:

1. Road closure alert
2. Alerts
3. Property search

What our audience used to access our website:

- 56.7% mobile
- 41.7% desktop
- 1.6% tablet

MyGore accounts: 845

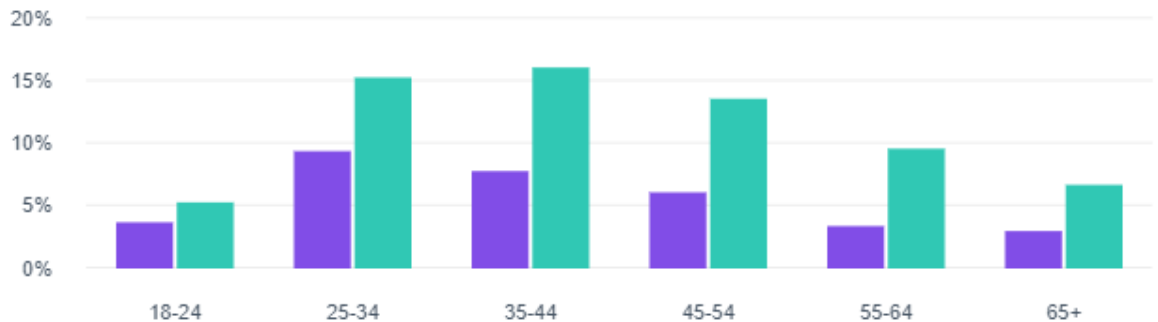
Antenno subscribers – **2,705**, which is 40% of our rating database.

Facebook



GoreDC currently has **10,210** followers. A breakdown of the demographics of these followers as attached:

Age and gender

■ Men 33.40%
■ Women 66.60%



The top three organic social posts from GoreDC in September all relate to our flooding response.

	<p>*SANDBAG UPDATE* This is a call to our community! We need reinforcements to help with filling sandbags. Our team can not keep up with the huge number of requests we are getting for sandbags in Gore and Mataura. If anyone is willing and able to help us out, please head to our yard on Miro Street. The yard is also now open for those to come...</p> <p>Thurs, 21 Sep</p>	Post reach 38,163	Engagement 9,381
	<p>5:00PM UPDATE FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER - DISTRICT ROAD CLOSURE LIST Local roads closed are: • MacGibbon Road • River Road • River Street • River Terrace • Ontario Street • Bury Street • Woolwich Street • Maitland Street, from the stop bank to the river • Otamita Road • Otama Flat Road • Lower McBain Road • Half of Waiarikiki Road, from Frazer...</p> <p>Fri, 22 Sep</p>	Post reach 34,553	Engagement 10,950
	<p>UPDATE 8:48pm: Due to heavy surface flooding, SH1 from Bridge St in Mataura to Salford St in Gore is now closed. URGENT ROAD CLOSURE NOTICE: We've had to temporarily close State Highway One, from Broughton Street to Charlton Lane, to run a hose across SH1. The hose is pumping flood water from Clyde Street to a waterway next to...</p> <p>Thurs, 21 Sep</p>	Post reach 23,664	Engagement 5,107

In addition to the above flooding response content, during this event the GoreDC Facebook page saw:

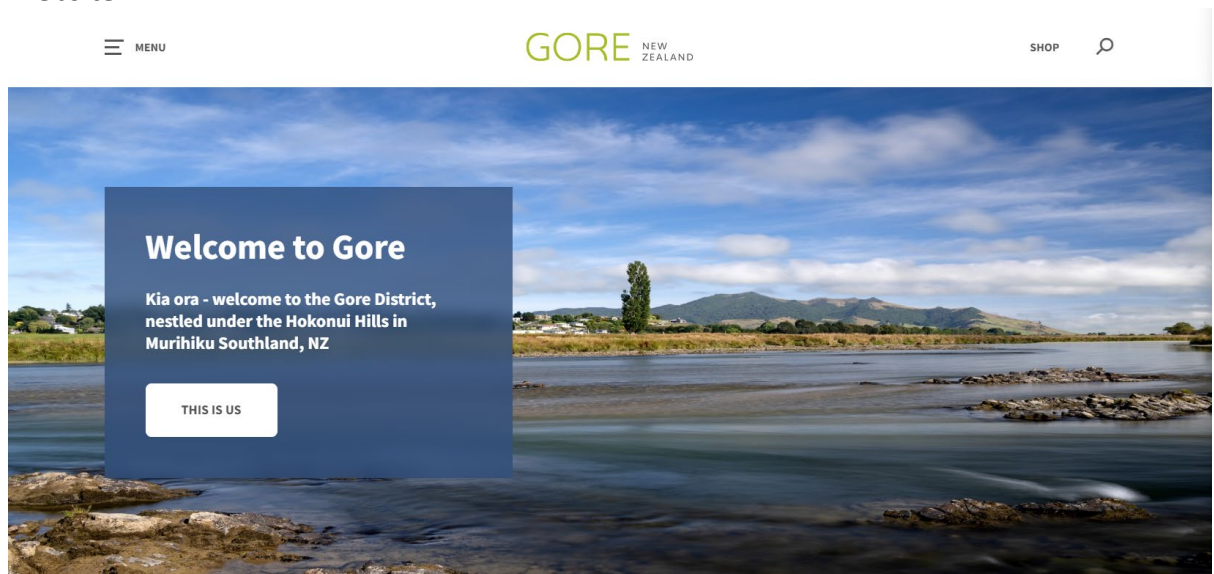
- A total of 625 new followers in four days (an increase of 6.5% total followers. A 10% increase of total followers *per annum* is typically used as a successful benchmark)
- Post reach of 72,280 people over four days (123.3% more than usual)

Instagram - @goredistrictcouncil has 413 followers.

We've been able to grow this following using the ability to post content cross social under Meta's Business Suite which helps with economising time when monitoring multiple platforms.

YouTube - @GoreDC has 523 subscribers.

Digital statistics – tourism Website



The top three most popular pages in September on www.gorenz.com were:

1. Events calendar
2. Hamilton Park
3. Events

It is great to see our community using our tourism website to find exciting local events and recreational activities to do in our patch as opposed to going elsewhere.

Facebook - GoreNZ currently has **4,346** followers.

Here is some of our top performing content from September:

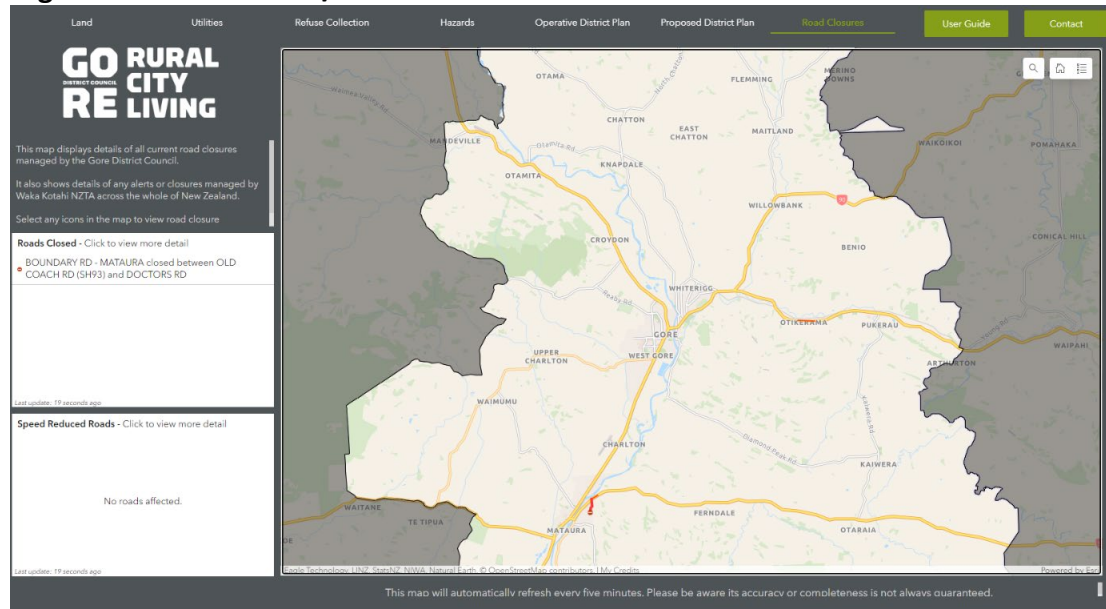
	#FridayFlashback aaaall the way to 1958! The bottom left corner shows the Seddon Memorial Hospital many will remember. The hospital served the residents of Gore and surrounding areas from 1909 to 1999. Fri, 15 Sep	Post reach 44,893	Engagement 4,362
	This morning's view of the mighty Mataura Falls 🌄🐦💙 Thanks Scott for sending this pic in! Tues, 5 Sep	Post reach 28,007	Engagement 2,066
	Hot off the press... Southland Monopoly is BACK! 🎲🎰 Want to go in the draw to win a FREE game? Comment below and correctly tell us who the exclusive Gore stockist is 🤔 A handy hint.. Chynna is standing right outside! The winner will be drawn at 12 noon next Wednesday (4 October) – so guess away and keep your eyes peeled. A limited number of the... Fri, 29 Sep	Post reach 2,427	Engagement 822
	It's that time of year again... 🎣 fishing season opens this Sunday (1 October). If you're a beginner – or even a seasoned pro – check out our website for some fishing inspiration 🌟 www.gorenz.com/experience/fly-fishing Amazing pic, Tony! 📸 Shepherd Photos // www.shepherdphotos.co.nz Wed, 27 Sep	Post reach 2,082	Engagement 217
	📍 Dolamore Park - one of Gore's most idyllic spots to walk, camp, and explore. Visit GoreNZ.com to learn more about the beautiful parks and reserves in our District 🌟 www.gorenz.com/experience Wed, 20 Sep	Post reach 2,049	Engagement 238

Previously, content was quite localised and 'on-the-ground' and catered more to followers living here now. We are putting more focus on content *all* followers can enjoy, whether they live here now, 20 years ago, have family here, or only just briefly visited or perhaps never visited at all.

A clear example of this is the above #FridayFlashback post – which generated 140 comments of locals or people who whakapapa to Gore’s experiences with the old Seddon Memorial Hospital, significantly increasing the post’s reach.

Instagram - GoreNZ currently has **1,402** followers.

Digital communications/GIS collaboration



In collaboration with the senior GIS Officer, we have a new addition to the website and our overall online mapping system.

Our new road closure map visually highlights closed roads in our District. The purpose of the map is to supplement information going out to the community in an emergency event or civil defence response.

Coincidentally, its official launch was during our flooding response mid-September, where it was visited 7,325 times.

Having the mapping system sit on our new ARC GIS platform means it pulls through information from other agencies, such as Waka Kotahi NZTA for state highways. This provides extra value to our community.

4. REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER (*Keith McRobie*)

The weather pattern has continued to be wet throughout the start of the growing season. This has had an impact on our ability to access some sites however we have been able to complete the bulk of our maintenance tasks.

Following is an update on some of the ongoing and future projects:

Gore Gardens

The gardens team have been working at tidying up and renovating a number of borders and plant collections. The conifer border has had a huge renovation with some of the older overgrown material removed and the more significant and rare items given space to grow to full potential. Further on from the conifer collection the peony border has had some dead material removed and new magnolias planted in the middle and back garden area.

The team are now focusing on completing works on the camellia border and upper Fairfield frontage before the Rhododendron Festival and Christmas Carnival.

Playgrounds and structures

We are working on completing playground installs at Hamilton Park (main playground and dog park) and Bannerman Park, The Bannerman Park units are based around nature play and include a tree house unit and an in-ground still unit.

The half courts at Sword Street and Oxford Street playgrounds will have full colour court markings installed on them in mid-November. The Christchurch-based contractor has a number of jobs in Southland, and we are taking advantage of them being here and not having to pay huge set-up costs.

Turf work has been completed around the half courts and Hamilton Street picnic area. New playground equipment will be installed at Ingram Place in Mataura (updated galvanized/powder coated swing and seesaw units), Dolamore Park (Supernova spinner) and Eccles Street (single bucket spinner)

Bannerman Park

Work is continuing on new tracks and planted areas in an effort to improve overall park access. We have been fortunate with the excavation contractor we are using to be able to shift and transplant some quite large rhododendrons. Some of these were in odd places or were too bunched up for their ultimate growth size. The new placement takes better account of the ultimate size and shape of the shrubs.

New seating is being installed next to the tracks using benches left over from the Streets Alive project. Two new picnic tables are being installed at the Martin Street entrance as that has been a popular spot for visitors. One of the picnic tables has been donated by the Gore Rotary Club.

Cemeteries

At all our cemeteries we have been focusing on beautification works including planting some of the grass topped plots with colourful and hardy perennials. At Pukerau Cemetery, this work has been carried out in conjunction with the cemetery support group. It is also paying for a significant portion of the work from its own finances.

The drainage work we have carried out at Charlton Park finally seems to be working with large tracts of previously wet areas now dry and able to be maintained.

Tulloch Park Stage 2 development

The proposed Tulloch Park development funding applications are progressing positively. We have had confirmation of funding for the new basketball court surface painting. The outcome of the Lotteries Community Facilities application won't be known until early December, and we still have one other application to complete this month.

The roading team has organised for one of its contractors to apply a 40mm seal coat over the whole court surface. Basketball nets and backboards have been ordered and we should have the court finished and ready for use by the end of November.

It is expected that we will have updated specifications and pricing for the new toilets and change facility in early November and should be able to order the modular unit soon after.

Community engagement

We have been actively engaging with various groups, clubs, and organizations, including attending consultations, workshops, and meetings. We have met with the East Gore NPS group, A&P Joint Management Group, Active Southland and Biodiversity Southland.

5. REPORT FROM GORE VISITOR CENTRE

Visitors

It was evident “tourism season” is coming as September got progressively busier at the Gore Visitor Centre, although sales were marginally higher in August.

Tourism NZ is predicting a return to pre-Covid times for visitor numbers with more people coming from the non-traditional markets. The visitor centre is still seeing predominantly Australians, many who have combined a skiing holiday with a bit of travel in the nearby regions. The first organised coach tour arrived on Monday 9 October.

Bus Services

There were 19 Intercity bookings for September. This is up from 15 in August and not unusual for a month including school holidays. In July, Intercity changed the direct single bus service from Invercargill to Christchurch to two separate buses, one going from Invercargill to Dunedin then after 55 minutes the next bus departs Dunedin to Christchurch. This has caused some concern for more senior customers.

The visitor centre continues to be asked about travel options from Gore to Queenstown and Gore to Invercargill. Staff are currently collecting data to provide to community strategy staff to assess needs.


Moonshine museum

Most of the Hokonui Moonshine Museum refurbishment is finished. While it’s not officially open, visitor centre staff are informing guests they are welcome to view the museum for a donation. Staff are waiting to hear from the Hokonui Moonshine Museum Charitable Trust about official opening dates and pricing. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and it has been refreshing for staff to be able to welcome visitors after two years of informing them the museum has been under reconstruction.

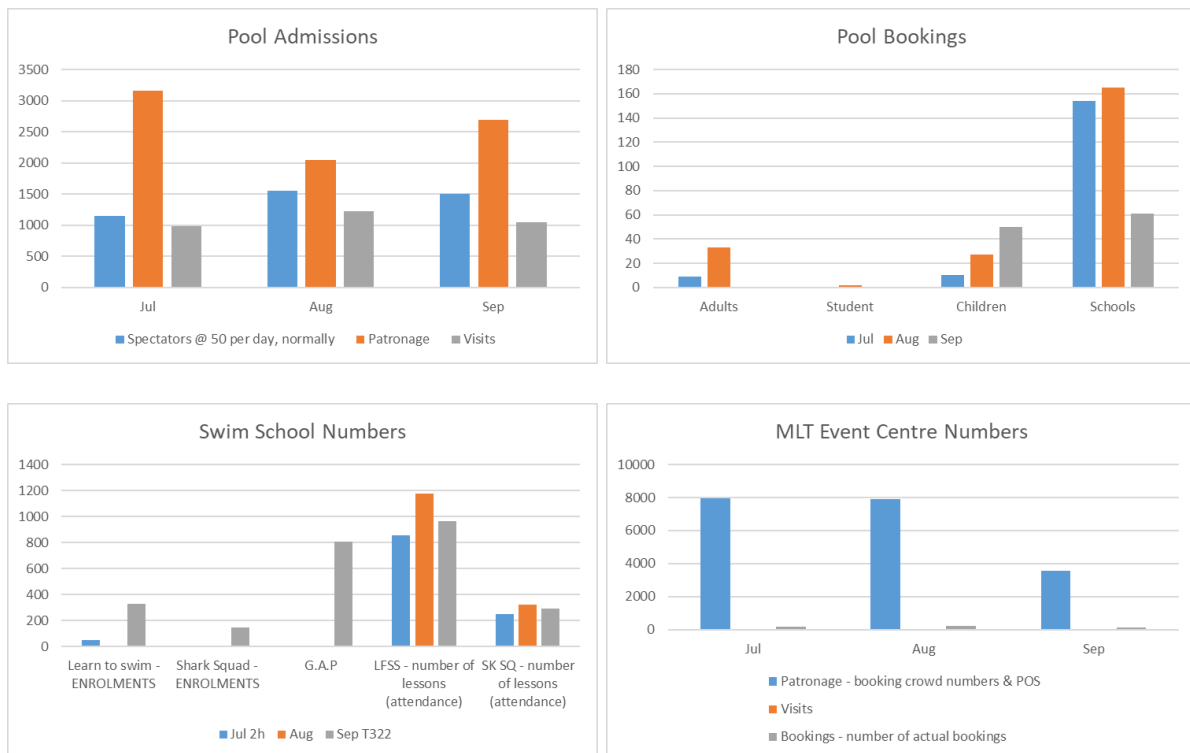
Gore Visitor Centre	August 2023	September 2023
Number of sales	116	134
Items sold	297	285
Revenue (incl gst)	\$7131.55	\$6905.15
Revenue change %	Up 56% on same period 2022	Up 14% on same period 2022

6. REPORT FROM AQUATIC SERVICES MANAGER (Martin Mackereth)

Admissions to the Gore Multisports complex

 Facility user numbers and information 2023/2024													
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Pool days open	31	31	30										92
POOL	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Spectators @ 50 per day, normally	1150	1550	1500										4200
Patronage	3156	2053	2693										7902
Visits	986	1230	1049										3265
Sub-Total													0
Bookings	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Adults	9	33											42
Student		2											2
Children	10	27	50										87
Schools	154	165	61										380
Sub-Total	173	227	111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	511
Pool Total	173	227	111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	511
SWIM SCHOOL & SK SQ	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Term code counted	2h		T322	3h		T422	4x		T123	1h		T223	
Learn to swim - ENROLMENTS	50		328										378
Shark Squad - ENROLMENTS			149										149
G.A.P			804										804
LFSS - number of lessons (attendance)	856	1178	963										2997
SK SQ - number of lessons (attendance)	248	323	291										862
Swim School Total	1104	1501	2058	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4663
Stadium days open													0
STADIUM	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Patronage - booking crowd numbers & POS	7951	7906	3560										19417
Visits	19	13	27										59
Bookings - number of actual bookings	173	244	136										553
Stadium Total	7970	7919	3587	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19476
Pool days open Total	92	Swim School needs to be term and holiday numbers only to avoid double ups											
Stadium days open Total	0	(light green area indicates term roughly so only one lot of numbers here)											

Monthly usage comparison



Current challenges

Staffing challenges

We are in a much better place staffing wise, however the challenge that we still have, along with a lot of other businesses, is trying to get staff to who want to work weekends. This means as much as we can extend the evening hours back to 7.00pm, we still have restricted space on the weekends at the Aquatic Centre.

Recently we have advertised for weekend only staff and so far have a few applicants that we intend to interview. This could solve the challenge with weekend staffing.

Operational issues

We still have a few staff who have been affected by illness and this has put pressure on the team. We have been lucky to have team members step up to make sure this does not affect the public's use of the facility.

We are also in the process of training three new staff. The challenge is that it takes up to two months to get them qualified as a Lifeguard to be able to be on pool side independently.

Effects of tight disposable income

With people still in the grips of what they are calling the cost of living crisis, we know this affects us in several ways. Often, we see a drop in learn to swim classes and an increase in the general swimming admissions. At this stage, we are not seeing it however I believe it is something that we need to highlight and keep in mind as we move forward.

Future improvements

Walkie talkies for the complex

As with many pools around the country, we struggle with finding a walkie talkie that is suitable for the conditions. We have found a new brand that we are trialling that seems to have better clarity as well as a better clip system and weight. So far, it is proving to be a much better fit for purpose product.

Meeting room tables and chair options

Currently we still have the original tables and chairs in the meeting room space. We are looking at options to improve what we have and to enable more options for the space. There are more groups utilising this space.

Facility interaction

Interaction with groups, clubs, and organisations

- Working with cricket to see how we can all make better use of the court space has led to Southland Cricket investing in a second batting net. We hope that this partnership will get stronger over the years and hopefully we can look at more improvements and options for the use of the facility in the future.
- The Aquatic Services Manager is now part of a group that has been set up by Recreation Aotearoa around the disability space in aquatic facilities and the future of where the industry is heading. This involves a monthly video meeting to share knowledge and come up with a plan. It is currently attended by ten Managers from around New Zealand.
- We are still working with Hokonui Swim Club to see how we can fund and get new starting blocks and turn boards through part sponsorships. The aim is to make this happen in the 2024/25 financial year.

7. COMMUNITY STRATEGY REPORT (Anne Pullar)

Closing the Gaps

The Council has signed a contract for a further two years with Local Government New Zealand to deliver the Mayoral Task Force for Jobs (MTFJ) programme within the Gore District. For the year ended 30 June 2024, 25 outcomes are required. This requires the placing of 25 NEETS into employment during the year. For the year ended 30 June 2023, 35 young people were supported and placed into employment.

Sharlene Taylor-Giles has resigned from the position of Employability Coordinator. Joanne Stephens will take up the position at the end of October.

The Inzone bus visited Gore in late September. This was an opportunity for young people who are entering the workforce to consider various career opportunities. The bus was visited by school leavers, those looking for a change in job or career as well as agency staff working in the employment space.

A DOTS Communication course is being held in Gore on 26 October as part of the MTFJ's programme. This is a free course and a valuable opportunity for both employers and employees. The course will help to build an understanding of different communication styles and further develop skills and understanding on the best way to communicate with other people. The course is free and registrations are essential as numbers are limited.

The Closing the Gaps newsletter continues to provide regular updates to the business community and the distribution is quietly growing. A newsletter is distributed monthly.

Great South will present the Murihiku Southland Destination Strategy in Gore on 15 November 2023 at 4.00pm at the Croydon Hotel. This is an opportunity to hear about the vision for the future of Southland's tourism sector.

Sister City

Recently a workshop was held with the Sister City working group to discuss the future activities within the Sister City relationship. This was a positive meeting with the group compiling information on the past activities and, preparing information on Tamworth to build its understanding of the Tamworth District. Recently a radio interview was held with a representative from the Tamworth Regional Council and a member of the Tussock Country Music Festival live on air. Currently the charter between the two Councils – Tamworth Regional Council and the Gore District Council is being reviewed and will be presented to the Council before the end of the year.

Welcoming Communities

Recently Guillaume Willemse joined the Council in the role of Community Development Coordinator. As part of Guillaume's role he will manage the welcoming communities programme and the implementation of the Welcome Plan and the Workforce Plan.

A newsletter has been developed for the Welcoming Communities community. The first newsletter has been distributed.

A review of the welcome packs project is currently being undertaken in liaison with the Welcoming Communities Working Group.

Ready for Living Age-friendly Strategy

The Ready for Living Age-friendly Strategy 2023 -2027 has been approved by Gore District Council. The process included hosting five workshops with older people and agencies to discuss, then they were asked back to review the draft plan. The focus of these workshops was on what would make Gore District a better place to live as we age. The strategy was developed from the information gained at the workshops.

The following are guiding principles that underpin the strategy and will assist in making sure that the strategy's implementation is successful. These are:

- Focus on the older person from a wellness perspective,
- Build on what already exists,
- Encourage local community action,
- Working together,
- Being culturally appropriate,
- Nothing about us without us.

The action plan focuses on eight areas:

- Housing
- Employment
- Volunteerism
- Health and Well-being
- Communication and Information
- Recreation
- Mobility and Accessibility
- Safety

Ready for Living will be working to complete these actions over the next 4 years.

International Day of Older Persons

Ready for Living alongside Age Concern co-hosted a Brain Health Seminar to celebrate International Day of the Older Person. The seminar included speakers from various organisations on topics including heart health, mental health, Alzheimers, benefits of staying active and being scam savvy. Eighty-two older people attended the event with 97% reporting the seminar was useful or very useful.

Living Well in Later Years

The updated version of 'Living Well in Later Years - A Guide to Local Services and Connections for Older People' was launched 2 October to celebrate International day of the Older Person. The information in the booklet aims to support older people in their daily lives. Sections include medical services, support for living at home, social opportunities and community organisations.

Community Trust South has generously provided some funding to complete this booklet update. There has been great feedback from organisations and the community about the first version and Ready for Living has received praise for identifying a gap and taking the initiative to fill it.

The publication is available online and at several locations in the District including the Gore Library, Mataura Service Centre, Gore Visitors Centre and Connected Eastern Southland.

Reserves Management Plan submission

Ready for Living submitted suggestions to the Reserves Management plan review process. These were all from the actions in the Age-Friendly Strategy.

Ready for Living suggested the review of the Reserves Management plan take into consideration the increasing older population and make changes to meet their needs now and into the future.

Challenges regarding accessibility and mobility for older people can vary depending on factors such as location, infrastructure, and personal abilities. Common challenges include physical barriers, transportation limitations, age related health conditions, social and community barriers, financial constraints, digital accessibility, and lack of information and awareness. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach.

Some actions suggested included:

- Ensure paths and walkways are clear and safe.
- Assess seating options / increase and improve seating.
- Higher quality and more toilet facilities (Kids Hub park, Hamilton Park).
- Assess potential areas around Gore District parks and reserves that could be purposed as gathering places for retirees eg create chess tables, pétanque areas etc.
- Establish a community garden.