

**OUR  
DISTRICT  
OUR FUTURE**

**WAIMATE DISTRICT  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**ACTION PLANS**  
FEBRUARY 2019





# Action Plan at a Glance

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## 1.1 Develop ICT infrastructure

**Information and communications technology (ICT) is critical to the economic growth of the district by supporting businesses, visitors and residents.**

Businesses and residents need to embrace technology as it has the potential to improve productivity, create employment, encourage innovation and creativity, gain access to and share knowledge, and connect with the rest of the country and globally.

Currently there is a lack of sufficient broadband infrastructure and cellphone coverage within the district, particularly in rural areas. The Government's commitment to invest in the Ultra-Fast Broadband initiative, the Rural Broadband Initiative, and the Mobile Black Spot Fund will go a long way to addressing these issues, however, the roll-out of ultra-fast broadband is not expected to be completed until the end of 2022.

The focus of this action is to develop a 5-year connectivity plan that identifies critical infrastructure needs, encourages private sector investment, supports the deployment of digital infrastructure, supports the visitor sector, improves accessibility and affordability, identifies educational opportunities and improves digital skills, and supports local ICT organisations.

### Action: Develop ICT infrastructure

**Potential partners:** Waimate District Digital Trust, Waimate Community Wireless Trust, Government agencies, Council, education providers, Waimate TV, local businesses, iwi, Waimate Community Radio, telecommunication companies/providers, Heartland Services, training providers, community groups

### Key deliverables:

- Develop a 5-year connectivity plan
- Facilitate initiatives to provide free WiFi in key locations
- Identify cellphone blackspots in the district and advocate for their coverage
- Encourage recycling of used hardware for use by community groups
- Ensure fast internet access at Library

**Timeframe:** Years 1-5

### Key outcomes:

- Connectivity plan developed
- Infrastructure in place to deliver ultra-fast broadband
- Majority of businesses and residents have access to and are using affordable ultra-fast broadband
- Visitors able to access free WiFi in key locations
- New business opportunities identified
- Increased employment
- Education and training opportunities identified

**Potential funding sources:** Government agencies, telecommunication companies/providers, education providers, Waimate District Digital Trust, Waimate Community Wireless Trust, Waimate TV, local businesses, Waimate Community Radio





## 1.2 Develop Cycle and Walk Trails

**Outdoor activities such as cycling and walking are gaining popularity with locals and visitors, and is expected to continue into the future.**

The Waimate District is making a name for itself as a destination for cycling and walking through its individual and shared trails, where our beautiful landscapes and scenery can be experienced.

The focus of this action is to establish, extend, connect (trails and significant locations) and maintain urban and rural trails throughout the district to provide a world-class trail network for all physical abilities. Key to this is the development of a long-term strategy which identifies trail types, locations, infrastructure requirements, priorities, implementation plan and maintenance requirements. Feasibility studies would be required for all new trails to determine their viability.

A number of new trails have been identified: Wainono Lagoon walkway and carpark, Wainono Lagoon to the lakes (Hydro Highway Trail), Fairlie to Waimate, South Canterbury loop (through Waimate, Timaru, Mackenzie and Waitaki Districts), Pareora to Glenavy; Waihao River walkway, Sky Trail (MTB); Waihao Box to Waihao Downs, Hakataramea Valley and Pass, Waimate to Knottingley Park, and Old Coach Road and Meyers Pass loop.

### Action: Develop cycle and walk trails

**Potential partners:** Local cycling and walking groups, Council, AA, iwi, NZ Cycle Trail, landowners, adjoining councils, Government agencies, SCDHB, Sport Canterbury, local businesses

### Key deliverables:

- Establish a trust to represent and develop cycling and walking interests and opportunities in the district
- Develop a long-term strategy
- Undertake feasibility studies for all new trails
- Undertake site investigations, surveys and produce detailed designs
- Obtain access agreements/easements
- Obtain resource and building consents
- Develop signage and interpretation boards
- Include on Waimate app
- Identify marketing opportunities

**Timeframe:** Years 1-10

### Key outcomes:

- Trails completed
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- New business opportunities identified
- Positive public feedback received

**Potential funding sources:** Government agencies, Council, local cycling and walking groups, iwi, NZ Cycle Trail, landowners, adjoining councils, philanthropists, external funding trusts and organisations, corporate organisations, local businesses





### 1.3 Investigate the development of an industrial/business park

**The Waimate District is a very affordable place to conduct business, and being centrally located between the South Island's two largest business hubs makes it an ideal location.**

The establishment of an industrial/business park would have many benefits such as attracting new investment, creating employment, increasing population, clustering of businesses and stimulating collaboration.

Through its district plan Council needs to ensure that adequate industrial, commercial and business land is provided for existing businesses to expand and for new investment to take place. The goal would be to attract companies engaged in the following sectors: rural, firewood, logistics, digital, light industry, freight and small start-ups. Incentives for locating new or existing businesses to the park could also be considered.

The focus of this action is to prepare a feasibility study to determine the viability of establishing an industrial/business park in the district. The study will identify and assess the availability of land, review district plan zones and rules, assess the level of capital investment required, produce financial projections, identify new and existing infrastructure, consider environmental effects, include a market analysis, and consider the use of innovative technologies.

**Action:** Investigate the development of an industrial/business park

**Potential partners:** Developers and investors, contractors, Council, Government agencies, local businesses, real estate agents, architects

**Key deliverables:**

- Consultant contracted to produce a feasibility study to determine the viability of establishing an industrial/business park
- Presentation of a comprehensive feasibility study

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Consultant contracted
- Feasibility study produced
- Decision on whether to proceed with the establishment of an industrial/business park

**Potential funding sources:** Council, Government agencies





## 1.4 Enhance existing and develop new infrastructure

**Infrastructure is vital to the local economy and the wellbeing of the district's residents and visitors.**

The accessibility and quality of infrastructure and community facilities also plays an important role in where people decide to locate their families and businesses, and encourages participation in sports, recreation, arts, culture and community activities.

The focus of this action is to enhance existing and develop new infrastructure in the following areas: roading, parks and reserves; tourism; community facilities.

To ensure sustainable management of all assets they will need to be incorporated into Council's long term and annual planning processes. This will ensure they are prioritised appropriately, reflect the communities' feedback and funded accordingly. Access to external funding should be explored as a means of funding these projects.

**Action: Enhance existing and encourage new infrastructure**

**Potential partners:** Council, Government agencies; ECan, iwi, property developers and investors, NZ Motor Caravan Association, hospitality providers; local interest and community groups

**Key deliverables:**

- Roothing (Years 2-5): Upgrade SH1 intersection at McNamara and Timaru Roads; Install kerb and channelling at Glenavy
- Parks and Reserves: (Years 1-5): Create flagship playground; Enhance existing camping grounds; Create allotment scheme and community greenhouse; Identify alternate uses for reserves; Develop reserve management plans; Create edible gardens
- Tourism (Years 2-5): Increase quantity, quality and attractiveness of public toilets; Improve signage of dump stations; Increase quantity and cleanliness of public seats/tables; Install rubbish and recycling bins throughout the district
- Community Facilities (Years 3-10): Install covered/heated lap pool; Install ice skating/hockey/curling rink; Investigate night sky opportunities; Encourage multi use of facilities

**Key outcomes:**

- Safer roads and appropriate signage installed
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Enhanced visitor and resident experience
- Increased usage of parks, reserves and community facilities

**Potential funding sources:** Government agencies, Council, SCDHB, property developers, corporate organisations, iwi, ECan, local businesses and individuals





## 1.5 Develop a visitor accommodation strategy

**Tourism in the Waimate District is growing, and the availability and affordability of quality accommodation is essential to creating positive visitor experiences.**

The district has a range of accommodation offerings from budget (camp sites) to premium (luxury lodges), however, there is a limited supply of accommodation to make the district a viable alternative to securing larger meetings, incentives, conventions, events and sports (MICES). During major events visitors seek accommodation outside of the district resulting in a loss of visitor income to not only accommodation providers but also to food and beverage providers, attractions and local businesses. There are opportunities to invest in tourism infrastructure and to attract this investment a marketing campaign should be developed.

The focus of this action is to develop a strategy that supports and encourages private investment in the visitor accommodation sector. Any investment needs to be sustainable and to ensure that accommodation providers maintain high occupancy rates our accommodation options and availability (particularly around major events) needs to be continually promoted.

**Action:** Develop a visitor accommodation strategy

**Potential partners:** Developers and investors, Council, Government agencies, tourism operators, local businesses

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop a visitor accommodation strategy
- Identify potential development sites
- Develop marketing campaigns to attract new investors
- Continually promote the district's accommodation options and availability
- Ensure Council's district plan and regulatory processes are supportive of investment in visitor accommodation

**Timeframe:** Years 1-2

**Key outcomes:**

- Visitor accommodation strategy developed
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- New business opportunities identified
- Increased employment
- Education and training opportunities identified

**Potential funding sources:** Developers and investors, Council, Government agencies, tourism operators, local businesses, external funding trusts and organisations



## 1.6 Develop a residential housing strategy

**The Waimate District is experiencing a period of growth and to accommodate this demand the shortage of residential housing needs to be addressed.**

To encourage people to move to the district a range and availability of accommodation options is required. There are people working in the district that are finding it difficult to secure housing and as a result are living in adjoining districts and travelling to their place of employment.

The focus of this action is to develop a strategy that increases the supply of and access to quality, warm, healthy, energy efficient and affordable housing. The strategy will consider land availability, new constructions, existing housing stock, rental properties, community housing, retirement living, infrastructure, regulatory processes and barriers, sustainability and innovative options, investment and educational opportunities.

**Action:** Develop a residential housing strategy

**Potential partners:** Property developers and investors, Council, Government agencies, iwi, real estate agents, SCDHB, polytechnics, retirement living organisations, contractors, local employers

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop a residential housing strategy
- Ensure Council's district plan and regulatory processes are supportive of growth
- Facilitate access to energy efficient advice for new and existing housing
- Collaborate with local employers on their employee requirements

**Timeframe:** Years 1-2

**Key outcomes:**

- Housing strategy developed
- Residents have access to quality, warm, healthy, energy efficient and affordable housing
- Increased population
- Larger rating base
- New business opportunities identified
- Increased employment
- Education and training opportunities identified

**Potential funding sources:** Property developers and investors, Council, Government agencies, iwi, SCDHB, polytechnics, retirement living organisations, local employers, external funding trusts and organisations



# WAIMATE

## a district to explore

## 2.1 Roll out the Waimate District brand

**Previously the district lacked brand recognition. To address this a new brand was developed in late 2017 by Council to promote the district 'Waimate – a district to explore'. The message is clear yet simple, and is complemented by the use of vibrant colours.**

The importance of developing a strong and successful brand cannot be underestimated – it creates pride, builds loyalty, enhances identity and boosts the local economy.

Council has limited resources available to promote the district and it is essential they are used effectively and efficiently. The focus of this action is to continuously promote the district as a destination to live, work and play, use the community to act as 'champions' to create positive visitor experiences and change perceptions, develop a campaign for locals to 'explore your backyard', and ensure all collateral is reviewed and aligns with the new brand. Keeping up with new technology will help ensure success.

Visitors will be driven to the district's official visitor information website, social media platforms and the Information Centre where additional information can be accessed, thereby encouraging visitors to stay longer.

**Action:** Roll out the Waimate District brand

**Potential partners:** Council, tourism operators, event organisers, local community groups and businesses

**Key deliverables:**

- Create brand guidelines and encourage use by businesses and community organisations
- Review and refresh all existing collateral to align with the new brand
- Identify potential ambassadors and build ambassador profiles
- Produce new promotional videos
- Promote souvenirs and Waimate products
- Hold regular networking events for tourism operators
- Produce monthly tourism advertising feature in Waimate Trader
- Develop an 'Explore your backyard' campaign for locals
- Install information touch screens in strategic locations
- Promote the Motor Home Friendly District status
- Promote the Hydro Highway

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Increased awareness of the district
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased visitors to website, social media and Information Centre
- Continuous and consistent branding
- Increased advertising, videos, images

**Potential funding sources:** Council, event organisers, tourism operators, local businesses, community groups



## 2.2 Develop a Waimate District app

**Technology is changing at an exponential rate and has changed the way visitors plan and experience their holidays. The use of apps has grown significantly with a large number of people now accessing information on their smartphones or tablets.**

Visitor information is an important part of the visitor's experience. The focus of this action is to develop a free app which can be accessed without the need for a WiFi connection. Visitors will be able to make online bookings, and source information about local attractions and activities, places to stay and eat, maps and brochures, self guided tours, and local businesses at any time and any place.

The app will be another tool to promote the district and attract new visitors, and will work in tandem with the 'Explore Waimate District' website and social media platforms. The app will also allow for visitors to provide feedback and provide them with assistance if required. For the app to be successful, it needs to be attractive and easy to navigate.

**Action:** Develop a Waimate District app

**Potential partners:** Council, tourism operators, local businesses, community groups

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop business case
- Advertise tender and appoint developer
- Develop concept
- Create style guide
- Develop app functionality and prototype
- Undertake beta testing
- Deploy and publish on app store
- Develop communications/marketing plan

**Timeframe:** Year 2

**Key outcomes:**

- An offline app that can be accessed 24/7
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased availability of information in digital format
- 'Explore Waimate District' brand reinforced

**Potential funding sources:** Local businesses, telecommunication companies, Microsoft, external funding trusts and organisations





## 2.3 Enhance the Whitehorse monument and surrounds

**Waimate District's rich agricultural history is celebrated by the iconic Clydesdale Whitehorse, which is sited on the hill overlooking Waimate.**

The Whitehorse was built in 1968 from 1,220 concrete slabs and is accessible by road, on foot or mountain bike. It is a popular lookout for locals and visitors alike, who can take in the spectacular views east to the Pacific Ocean.

The focus of this action is to enhance the Whitehorse and surrounding area as a visitor attraction and adventure playground. This would be undertaken in two stages. Stage 1 would include improvements to signage and road access, enhancements to the Whitehorse itself, landscaping and the identification of other opportunities (e.g. night sky viewing, additional walking/bike tracks, horse riding). Stage 2 would be to undertake a feasibility study for the establishment of a cafe, gondola, zip line, luge and zorbing.

**Action: Enhance the Whitehorse monument and surrounds**

**Potential partners:** Council, Trackways, Waimate Mountain Bike Riders, Friends of Kelcey's Bush, Rotary, adjoining landowners

**Key deliverables:**

- Improved directional and information signs
- Access road widened and sealed, trees trimmed
- Enhance Whitehorse (painting, solar lighting)
- Install telescopes on hill and in Waimate town, security cameras, webcams
- General landscaping (sheltered picnic tables, improved access to monument)
- Investigate additional opportunities (night sky viewing, horse riding, extra walking/biking tracks)
- Feasibility study for the establishment of a cafe, gondola, zip line, luge and zorbing

**Timeframe:**

- Stage 1, Years 1-2: Signage, road access, landscaping, enhancements, investigate additional opportunities
- Stage 2, Years 3-4: Undertake feasibility study for cafe and adventure activities

**Key outcomes:**

- Increased visitor numbers
- Increased activities available
- New business opportunities identified
- Increased educational opportunities - history, astronomy, conservation

**Potential funding sources:** Council, Government agencies, external funding trusts and organisations, philanthropists, corporate organisations, service clubs, local businesses





## 2.4 Market the district as a golf destination

**The Waimate District has two stunning golf courses set within natural landscapes at Waimate and Maungati.**

Golf tourism is a growing sector with thousands of domestic and international visitors travelling each year to play. Golfers are very passionate about the sport and tend to be high value visitors.

The district's golf courses are easily accessible and affordable, and their central proximity to world-class courses in Christchurch and Queenstown should be capitalised on. It is also worth noting that creating a FootGolf course would be beneficial as FootGolf is the fastest growing new sport in the world.

This action is to market the district as a golf destination to domestic and international visitors by developing multi-day golfing itineraries, golf tournaments and competitions, a driving range, mini golf course and FootGolf course, to bring golfers and their supporters into the district. Opportunities exist for the golf clubs to generate additional revenue, and increase visitor spending on accommodation, food and beverage, transportation and attractions. To be successful and ensure financial sustainability, the golf clubs and local businesses will need to work together, and a marketing campaign developed.

**Action:** Market the district as a golf destination

**Potential partners:** Golf clubs, Council, accommodation providers, food and beverage outlets, tourism operators, AA Tourism, Sport Canterbury, NZMCA

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop multi-day golfing packages, in conjunction with local businesses
- Develop golf tournaments and competitions
- Develop mini golf course and driving range
- Establish golf club hire
- Create FootGolf course
- Increase marketing to attract players and their supporters into the district

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Increased numbers in golfing activities
- Increased revenue for golf clubs
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased visitor spend throughout the district

**Potential funding sources:** Golf clubs, business sponsorship, Sport Canterbury, service clubs





## 2.5 Attract meetings, incentives, conventions, events and sports

**One of the district's strengths is the ability to organise vibrant events which attract large visitor numbers. The district has an impressive calendar of events with more than 45 held annually, many of which rely on volunteers.**

With the recent construction of two new venues that can accommodate meetings, incentives, conventions, events and sports (MICES) and special occasions (weddings, birthdays, anniversaries), along with existing venues, the district has the potential to be a destination venue given its central location between the South Island's two major cities, Christchurch and Dunedin.

The focus of this action is to attract MICES to the district and increase visitor and overnight visitation numbers. To achieve this, active promotion of the district, venues, attractions and activities is required. Organisers of MICES will be encouraged to promote their event (free of charge) on the 'Explore Waimate District' website event calendar as the central location for advertising events online. This will avoid a clash of dates and allow visitors to plan in advance.

**Action:** Attract meetings, incentives, conventions, events and sports

**Potential partners:** Council, MICES organisers, local businesses, community groups

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop attractive marketing material and packages
- Actively promote the Waimate District as a destination for MICES
- Develop event calendar on 'Explore Waimate District' website
- Create a 'Celebrate Waimate' initiative
- Identify and establish new events, particularly those that can be held in the off-season

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Increased awareness of district and facilities
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased promotion of events
- Increased volunteer numbers

**Potential funding sources:** Council, local businesses, out of district sponsorship



## 2.6 Promote the wallaby experience

The Waimate District is colloquially known as 'Wallaby Country' or the 'Wallaby Capital of New Zealand', and is home to a large population of wild wallabies.

Whether they're adored or considered a pest, the wallabies are a 'point of difference' for the district. There is no other place in New Zealand where you can hand feed and hold a wallaby, or hunt them, and in recent times enjoy a wallaby pie, thought to be a world first.

From a tourism perspective, the wallabies are a major drawcard for visitors to the district, particularly for international travellers. The EnkleDooVery Korna wallaby park is unique and one of the district's most well-known attractions. Wallaby hunting is also a very popular sport and provides a way of reducing the number of wild wallabies, which in turn reduces the economic and environmental impact on farmers.

The focus of this action is to identify a number of opportunities, from marketing, to research and development, and the creation of high value products. There is potential to increase the district's visitor numbers by enhancing and promoting the unique wallaby experience.

**Action:** Promote the wallaby experience

**Potential partners:** Wallaby park, Council, Government agencies, ECan, iwi, hunting groups/guides/retailers, farmers, taxidermists, forestry industry

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop a marketing campaign that targets international visitors
- Investigate development of high value products (meat, leather, clothing)
- Develop a marketing plan to promote and sell wallaby products and souvenirs
- Identify recreational opportunities (hunting tours, viewing in wild)
- Develop wallaby themed activities and attractions (sculpture, murals, children's slide)
- Investigate research and development opportunities

**Timeframe:** Years 1 to 3

**Key outcomes:**

- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- New business opportunities identified
- Increased employment opportunities
- Wallaby products produced

**Potential funding sources:** Government agencies, ECan, hunting-related organisations, local businesses, universities/science institutes





## 2.7 Establish an arts and heritage steering group

**The Waimate District has a number of arts and heritage groups, most of which are run by volunteers. Without these incredibly dedicated people the groups would not survive.**

Increased pressure is being placed on the volunteers, many of which have other commitments, and on the resources and funding available.

This action is to establish a voluntary community steering group that could act as an advisory, consultative and coordinating body on behalf of the district's arts and heritage groups. This could include the coordination of administrative functions, identification, development and promotion of initiatives, and the identification of funding sources and assistance with completing funding applications. Creation of a paid administrator could be considered. To ensure success and a sustainable future a collaborative approach is required. It is imperative that the groups maintain their independence and uniqueness.

**Action:** Establish an arts and heritage steering group

**Potential partners:** Local artists and art groups, local heritage groups and attractions, Council, iwi, community groups, local businesses

**Key deliverables:**

- Appoint a facilitator
- Develop terms of reference
- Establish a steering group
- Identify priority areas and funding sources

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Priority areas identified and implemented
- Increased collaboration amongst groups
- Groups and projects are sustainable

**Potential funding sources:**

- Department of Internal Affairs Community Led Development Programme
- Provincial Growth Fund



## 2.8 Redevelop the heritage trail

**History and places of significance play an important role within the Waimate District. They give locals a sense of place and belonging, and are a connection to the past. They also create a unique and special character for the district that is attractive to visitors.**

Domestic and international visitors are increasingly interested in rediscovering 'the past' and the district's 'stories'. There are many places, buildings and features of significance throughout the district that are currently captured in a number of heritage trails, e.g. Strawberry Heritage Trail, Waimate Historic Walk, Waimate Old Cemetery self-guided walk.

The focus of this action is to consolidate the district's heritage into one trail. Self-guided tours are popular with visitors who want to experience the local history at their own pace. Others may prefer packaged/guided tours. An opportunity also exists for visitors to experience our heritage accommodation.

Consistent directional signage, information boards and publications are required. Having information available online will allow visitors to undertake research on the heritage features either upon arrival to the district or before they embark on their journey.

### Action: Redevelop the heritage trail

**Potential partners:** Proposed arts/heritage steering group, local heritage groups and attractions, Government agencies, Council, iwi, Tourism Radio NZ, local businesses

### Key deliverables:

- Review and consolidate existing trails into one brochure and map
- Install plaque/information boards at each heritage site
- Install consistent directional signage
- Develop online and audio content

**Timeframe:** Year 1

### Key outcomes:

- Heritage trail developed
- Potential new business opportunities identified
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased awareness of the district's heritage

### Potential funding sources:

Government agencies, Council's Heritage and Community Grants, iwi, external funding trusts and organisations, philanthropists, corporate organisations, service clubs, local businesses





## 2.9 Develop arts and culture initiatives

**Arts and culture are a source of national pride in New Zealand, and are an important way for people to engage in and celebrate the diverse traditions within their communities.**

There are many types of art forms, e.g. performing, visual, digital, craft/object, Maori/Pacific, literary; and it's fair to say that the Waimate District has its share of talented artists.

Arts and culture promotes innovation, creativity, local pride, and stimulates the economy. The focus of this action is to develop a number of initiatives that support our arts and cultural community, including the development of an art trail, sculpture park and art installations, and a number of festivals and other arts/culture related events. It is also important to continue to value and support existing events. To be successful a coordinated and collaborative marketing approach is required. The availability of information online will enable greater engagement in these events.

### Action: Develop arts and culture initiatives

**Potential partners:** Proposed arts/heritage steering group, local artists, local arts and culture groups, Council, Government agencies, Creative NZ, iwi, schools, community groups and local businesses, private art collectors, Tourism Radio NZ

### Key deliverables:

- Review Council's bylaws/planning documents to ensure support of arts/culture initiatives
- Develop an art trail and interactive street art
- Develop sculpture park in Waimate and sculpture installations throughout the district
- Establish an arts festival
- Develop an art competition
- Establish 'selfie frames' in key photo locations
- Establish displays for empty buildings
- Develop a regular food market
- Develop a busking festival
- Develop an opportunity to wear Edwardian period costumes

**Timeframe:** Years 1 to 3

### Key outcomes:

- Art trail developed
- New arts/culture events established
- Increased visitor numbers and visitor nights
- Increased number of locals participating in arts/culture or attending events
- Potential new business opportunities identified

**Potential funding sources:** Government agencies, Council's Heritage and Community Grants, iwi, external funding trusts and organisations, philanthropists, corporate organisations, service clubs, local businesses, community sponsorship



### 3.1 Develop a signage plan

**Signage is an important and powerful tool for communities to create a positive impression, provide directions and key information, improve public safety and reinforce a brand.**

Currently, there is a lack of consistency across the district's signs in terms of brand, design and size. A number of signs are in varying condition and states of readability due to ageing, lack of maintenance and vandalism. Content on all signs needs to be reviewed and refreshed to ensure it is still current.

The focus of this action is to develop a plan that provides guidance on the planning, design, installation and maintenance of signage throughout the district. The plan will ensure consistency in brand, design, symbols used, messages conveyed, materials used, landscaping, and suitable locations. Visitors are also increasingly using smartphones and tablets to obtain information so QR codes (or similar) and website links should be incorporated. Signs may be grouped into the following types: District gateway signs, town entrance signs, directional signs, community facility signs, information kiosks, event signs, walkway/cycleway information/marker signs, interpretive signs, and street banners.

**Action:** Develop a signage plan

**Potential partners:** Council, NZTA, property and sign owners, service clubs, community groups, local businesses, Kurow Island Group

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop a signage plan for the district
- Review and refresh signage content
- Prioritise and install signage

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Signage plan developed
- New signs installed and consistent with signage plan
- Increased visitor numbers
- Visitor experiences are enhanced

**Potential funding sources:** Council, NZTA, local businesses and attractions





### 3.2 Develop a landscaping plan

**To ensure the Waimate District is a place where people want to live and visit, we need to make our public spaces attractive and inviting.**

Currently there is no landscaping consistency throughout the district and, in fact, many areas require improvement.

The focus of this action is to develop a district-wide landscaping plan that provides guidelines for the development of parks, reserves, open spaces, road corridors, community facilities, areas of significance, and residential and industrial developments. The guidelines will apply to plants, district gateways, town signage, paving, hanging baskets and planters, irrigation, and outdoor furniture such as seating, rubbish bins, cycle racks and bollards. A landscaping plan will also identify projects and priorities, create continuity throughout the district and ensure that all landscaping is sustainable and easily maintained. Preference will be given to the use of local natural materials such as rock, wood, etc.

The support and involvement of the community, in partnership with Council, should be encouraged wherever possible to create a sense of belonging and community pride. Consideration should be given to the development of a beautification awards programme for residents and business owners.

**Action:** Develop a landscaping plan

**Potential partners:** Council, Government agencies, ECan, KiwiRail, NetCon, service clubs, community groups and individuals

**Key deliverables:**

- Develop a landscape plan for the district
- Identify projects and priority areas
- Produce design concepts for main street master plans and key projects
- Create a maintenance schedule

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Landscape plan produced
- Key projects identified and high priority areas developed
- Maintenance is undertaken as per schedule

**Potential funding sources:** Council, Government agencies, ECan, KiwiRail, business sponsorship



## 4.1 Attract new businesses

**Attracting new businesses will generate significant economic benefit to the district. Not only will it increase employment it will also increase the diversity and prosperity of the local economy.**

Key to this will be investigating and supporting all new business opportunities as they are identified, and ensuring that appropriately zoned and serviced land is available to accommodate new and expanding businesses.

The focus of this action is to promote the lifestyle, central location and the advantages of working, investing and living in the Waimate District to potential business owners and investors. This could be achieved by developing an investment/promotional prospectus and video, investigating a range of incentives for new businesses, and creating a marketing campaign. A 'Welcome Pack' could also be developed for any new business opening in the district, as well as ensuring they are promoted locally.

### Action: Attract new businesses

**Potential partners:** Council, real estate agents, local businesses and land owners, Government agencies

### Key deliverables:

- Develop a promotional prospectus and video
- Develop a marketing campaign
- Ensure adequate industrial, commercial and business land is available
- Investigate all new business opportunities as they are identified
- Facilitate site visits for prospective business owners and investors
- Develop and distribute a 'Welcome Pack' for new businesses
- Showcase new businesses on Explore Waimate website and social media

**Timeframe:** Year 1

### Key outcomes:

- New businesses established
- Increased population

**Potential funding sources:** Council, Government agencies, local businesses





## 4.2 Support and assist existing businesses

**Local businesses are the backbone of the district’s economy. Not only do they create income and employment, they also market the district, sponsor events and train staff.**

Providing support and assistance to existing businesses is an important way of building a sustainable economy.

The focus of this action is to support and assist the growth of local businesses, promote collaboration, and encourage the uptake of new technology. To achieve this, engagement with the business community is required to help determine business needs and concerns.

Given the proximity to Timaru and Oamaru there is strong competition for the retail dollar so developing a ‘buy local’ campaign will help keep the retail spend local but will require businesses to be competitive.

It is also important to acknowledge business excellence which can be supported via the South Canterbury Business Awards.

**Action:** Support and assist existing businesses

**Potential partners:** Council, business organisations, training providers, private developers and investors, local businesses

**Key deliverables:**

- Council to establish and maintain a database of all businesses, promote all businesses on Explore Waimate District business directory, develop a programme of regular engagement with local businesses, review Council’s procurement policy to support local businesses, have a simple consenting and compliance system, and demonstrate a business friendly and can-do attitude
- Hold regular business networking events
- Work with training providers to facilitate business workshops and seminars
- Develop a ‘buy local’ campaign
- Promote locally made products

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- All businesses promoted on Explore Waimate District business directory
- Increased business revenue
- Greater business collaboration

**Potential funding sources:** Council, business organisations, training providers, local businesses, Government agencies



### 4.3 Attract new residents

**The Waimate District has a great lifestyle, vibrant community and natural environment that appeals to a diverse range of people. This is what makes the Waimate District special.**

There are many reasons why people locate to the district: Affordable housing, strong community spirit, safe environment to raise families, world-class sport and recreation, history, stunning natural environment and central location. The list goes on!

The focus of this action is to attract new residents to make our quintessential rural district their new home. To do this we need to continually promote the district as a great place to live, work and play. This includes displaying pride in our district, promoting the good choice of schools and hundreds of sporting, cultural and hobby groups, ensuring our towns are appealing and boasting about our ability to throw a good party.

**Action: Attract new residents**

**Potential partners:** Council, Community Link, Government agencies, local businesses, clubs and sports groups, real estate agencies, iwi, community volunteer groups

**Key deliverables:**

- Promote the district as a 'lifestyle location'
- Develop a relocation service for potential new residents and employees
- Promote the district at major local events
- Promote and distribute the 'New Residents' information packs

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Relocation service implemented
- Increased population
- Improved perception of the district, schools, businesses and services

**Potential funding sources:** Council, community groups, local businesses





## 5.1 Develop, attract and retain skilled workers

**As with other rural districts, Waimate is not immune to the loss of younger people seeking education and employment opportunities outside the district. By improving local access to educational and employment opportunities these losses will reduce.**

The lack of skilled labour and training opportunities has been identified as an ongoing challenge. Having a skilled workforce is critical to economic growth as it will encourage innovation and productivity within existing businesses, and attract new businesses to the district.

The focus of this action is to develop, attract and retain a workforce that has the skills and expertise to meet the demands of local businesses.

This could be achieved by raising awareness in schools of career and training options, working with businesses to identify skill gaps and facilitating appropriate training, developing work experience and apprenticeship programmes, developing a campaign to attract skilled migrant workers, and promoting job vacancies and education/training opportunities.

**Action: Develop, attract and retain skilled workers**

**Potential partners:** Council, Community Link, education and training providers, iwi, local businesses

**Key deliverables:**

- Engage with businesses to identify skill gaps and training requirements
- Promote the list of scholarships available
- Develop a work experience programme for students and local businesses
- Develop an apprenticeship programme for local businesses
- Develop a mentoring programme
- Develop a forum for promoting local jobs, education and training opportunities
- Develop a business training programme
- Create a campaign to attract migrant workers
- Investigate providing migrant English classes
- Support career expos held in the region and run expos in Waimate
- Investigate providing driving courses in district

**Timeframe:** Year 1

**Key outcomes:**

- Decreased number of younger people leaving the district seeking education and employment opportunities
- Increased number of people participating in educational and training opportunities

**Potential funding sources:** Council, Government agencies, Community Link, education and training providers, iwi, local businesses