



Community Board Plan
2021 - 2024

FIORDLAND

OUR *Future*

As chairperson of the Fiordland Community Board I am pleased to present our Fiordland Community Futures Plan.

We believe we have heard our community's voices and that this has resulted in a plan that is and will be community led. There has been extensive consultation through surveys, social media and workshops and this has enabled us to formulate a set of key priorities to guide how we grow and develop the Fiordland area in the coming years.

The plan recognises the thoughts of many segments of our community, including youth, business and the rural sector, as well as recommendations from others who have taken an "outside in" look at our region. This collaboration has allowed us to embrace a holistic approach to planning for the future; an approach that ensures we consider all aspects of wellbeing in how we manage future growth. Consideration of social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing will help us deliver on the key outcomes and priorities in a sustainable, unified and thoughtful manner.

We are excited to be partnering with Great South in terms of delivering a Destination Management plan which will work in with the overall community plan. This will allow the board to work with Great South to address all aspects of growing our visitor economy, not only in terms of marketing and promotion, but also the broader aspects of infrastructure development, product development, sustainability and governance.

In doing so, this provides better access to a wide range of stakeholders, including central government, potential investors and funders. This is important so that we don't burden the local ratepayers with all the future costs of growing and developing Fiordland.

Community is key; together we can prepare for growth, while also preserving the uniqueness of this place we call home. Sustainable development means we will look at creating value for everyone. This will involve some new ways of working.

The community board cannot complete everything alone. However, together with the community, key stakeholders and partners we can bring this plan to fruition. It will involve working with Council, central government, the Department of Conservation, iwi, Environment Southland, Fish & Game, Great South/Visit Fiordland and potential funders, as well as you, our community, to name a few.

We will influence and improve what we can; we will ensure we still have a voice on matters that concern us, but that are out of our control. We welcome your input and contribution as plans progress and we look forward to working with you across the next few years, to sharing in our prosperity while we retain our sense of belonging in this place we call home.

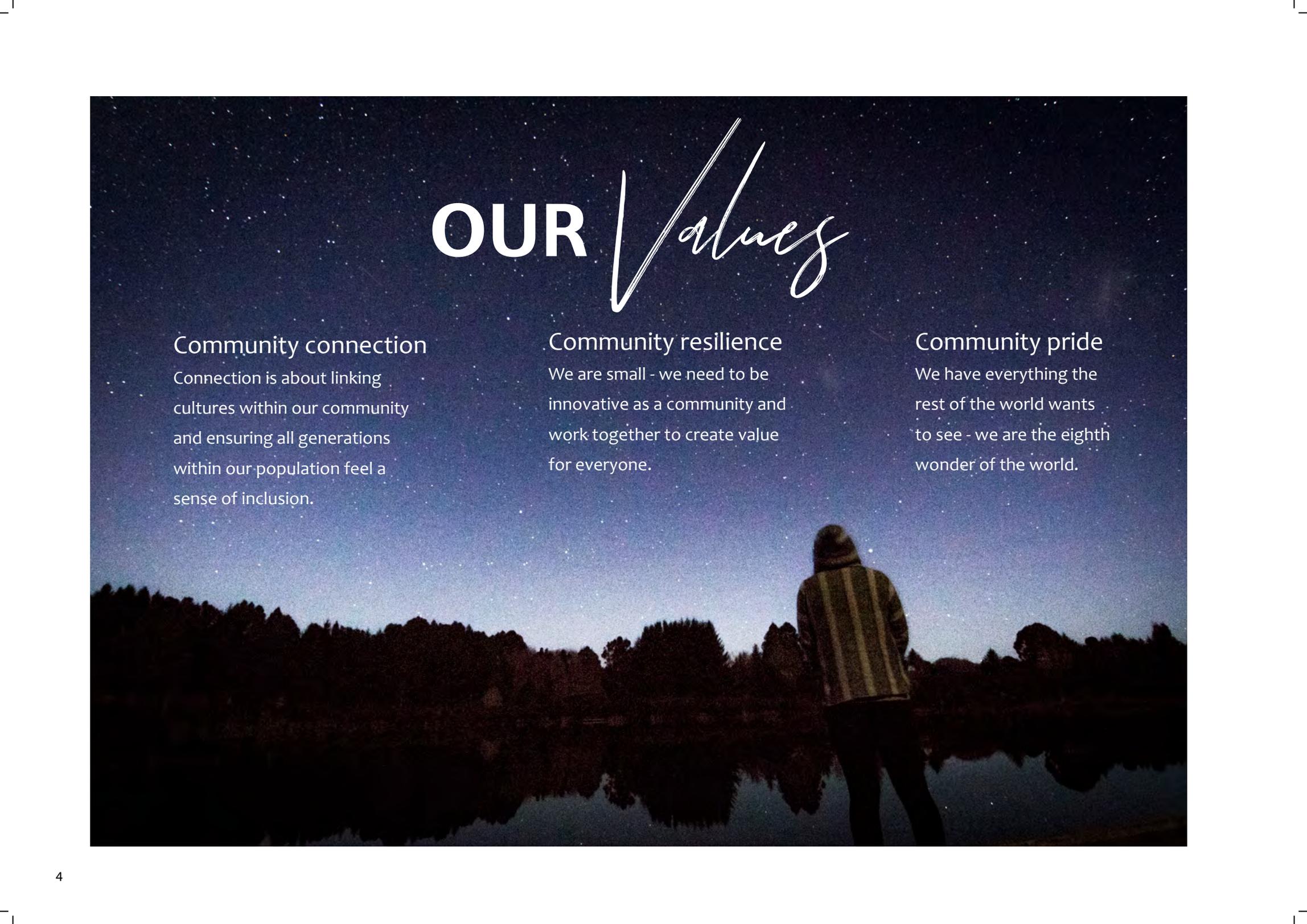
Sarah





OUR *Vision*

Fiordland is a thriving and connected community of people that welcomes visitors, embraces sustainability and takes care of its natural environment.

A person wearing a striped jacket is seen from behind, looking up at a starry night sky. The sky is filled with stars and a faint Milky Way. Below the person, a dark forest is visible, and the scene is reflected in a body of water in the foreground.

OUR *Values*

Community connection

Connection is about linking cultures within our community and ensuring all generations within our population feel a sense of inclusion.

Community resilience

We are small - we need to be innovative as a community and work together to create value for everyone.

Community pride

We have everything the rest of the world wants to see - we are the eighth wonder of the world.



Farming is a lifeline for many communities. Living off the land, working the land and valuing the land is a farmer's passion.

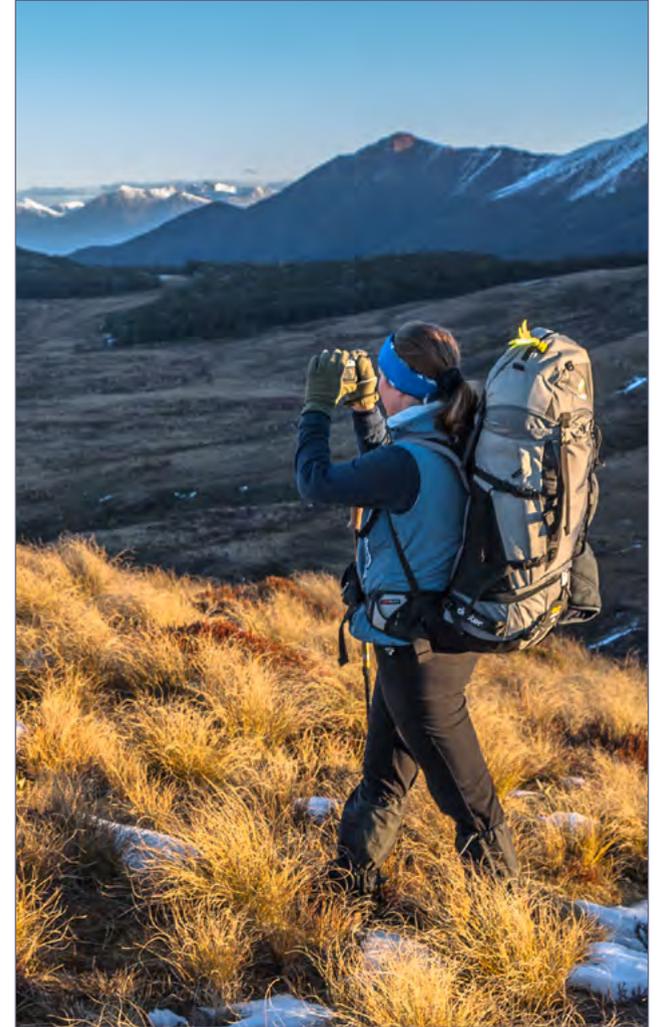
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OUR *Outcomes*

The following four outcomes provide the board with a future focus from which it can then develop key projects and actions.

- 1 A community that attracts business, investment, people, and visitors
- 2 A community that sustainably protects and enhances its natural environment in a regenerative manner
- 3 A community that enriches its lifestyle through cohesive, well thought out planning for growth
- 4 A community that is committed to wellbeing through being connected, functional, safe and healthy, with access to excellent services



Can we say we are proud of what are we passing on
to our children of tomorrow?



OUR *Community*

In our original feedback, the community saw its multi-faceted economy as a strength and many were encouraged by the potential for growth.

However, the “Covid years” have now given us a different perspective.

The flooding in February 2020 followed by the Covid-19 lockdowns, red alert levels, delays in opening the borders and challenges in finding staff have all demonstrated our vulnerability.

While we now see greater hope in there being a brighter future for Fiordland, it is even more important for us to work on diversification of employment opportunities into other new areas, attracting a workforce to ease the current pressure being experienced through a range of businesses (including agriculture and the trades), reducing the winter seasonal downturn in employment by developing more winter tourism product to allow for year-round employment, and using our current circumstances to rebuild a more robust future.

It is vital to our economy that we support and enable growth in areas that will provide permanent, full-time employment.

We still believe that addressing our housing situation is vital to having housing stock available to rent once our visitor numbers and staffing levels increase again.

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Encourage the provision of a range of services that will attract and retain youth, families, the elderly, different cultures and business enterprise.	Community-led initiatives.	Lobby the relevant people and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiordland Community House • SDHB Southern District Health Board • Ministry of Social Development • Aged Care service providers



Ensuring all generations within our population
feel a sense of inclusion.



We want to be sure there is somewhere for everyone and provide for our elders so they stay connected with family and friends while continuing to live in their home town.

Ebel

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Addressing the housing situation in Fiordland is seen as vital to having housing stock available to rent once our visitor numbers and staffing levels increase again.	Businesses could consider co-investing in worker accommodation options.	Commission a housing feasibility survey on how the Luxmore Subdivision could best ease housing pressures in Te Anau. Work with Great South and SHAF to identify new and alternative housing models that may be used in the idea, and identify potential investors who may be willing to partner in providing housing solutions. Work with MSD to collate appropriate data to identify those that would fit Housing NZ criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland District Council • Great South • Southern Housing Action Forum • Ministry of Social Development • WSP Opus

OUR *Housing*

Prior to Covid-19, availability of rental accommodation, affordable housing and social/emergency housing were all challenges for the Fiordland area.

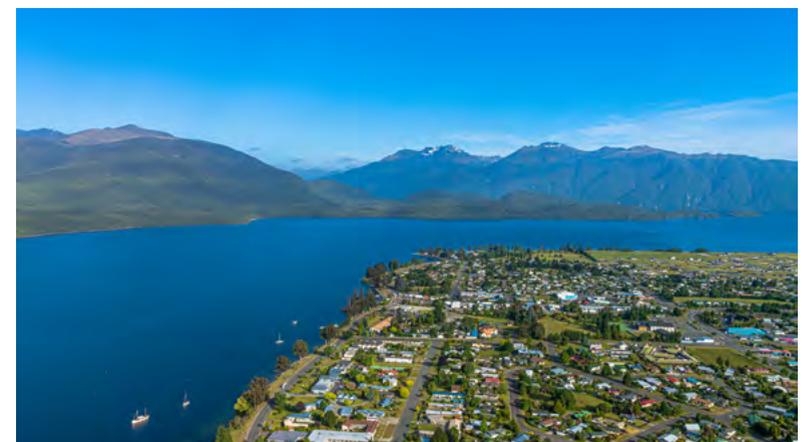
Steady growth since the end of the global financial crisis, along with legislative changes in the Residential Tenancy Act and proliferation of Airbnb accommodation, has placed significant pressure on housing supply for permanent residents, and limited the supply of short-term accommodation for seasonal workers.

While some of these issues have receded, house prices have gone up and rental property is still in short supply. The board recognises that it still needs to actively and proactively do something about the situation rather than waiting for the next crisis point to hit.

Sale of the Luxmore subdivision land is imminent, and from there we will need to see how best to alleviate housing issues for the future.

We are still working to identify new and alternative housing models that may be used in the area, and to identify potential investors who would be willing to partner in providing housing solutions.

We are also working with MSD to collate appropriate data to identify those who would fit Housing NZ criteria.





OUR *Plans*

Destination Management

In conjunction with the Milford Opportunities Project and the Southland Murihiku Destination Management Plan, the community board continues to advocate for a shift in perspective around the type of visitors that we want to attract to share our beautiful corner of the world.

We still believe that a model which attracts quality visitors who will share our love of Fiordland, that slows them down, encourages them to stay longer, and spend more would bring about a greater synergy and understanding between locals and visitors alike. In doing so, we would all be protecting and valuing our greatest asset - our natural environment.

In the original consultation work, there was a broad range of comments around opportunities for our area. Great South has already done some great work on rebranding Fiordland, product development, marketing and promotion alongside the principles of good governance and sustainable practices.

The board is working on investing in the infrastructure needed to support and enable post-Covid growth in visitor numbers by working with Council and central government to get projects completed eg, the Pearl Harbour redevelopment, upgrading of public toilets and replacement of boat ramps.

One foundation of effective Destination Management is place identity. A place's core identity is at the centre of all the experiences and stories it generates. By understanding the different types of value that a place offers, you can then clearly define its intrinsic character in its entirety. It is the essential authenticity test for all our marketing - messaging must match the DNA. Our initial work on this shows that we have some good foundations in place.

It is the essential authenticity test for all our marketing - messaging must match the DNA. Our initial work on this shows that we have some good foundations in place.

The Destination Management plan for Fiordland already incorporates product development of the following:

- Fiordland Heritage Centre
- Dark Sky Sanctuary Status
- Boutique/eco accommodation (with staff accommodation)
- Activity-based touring routes/itineraries (in conjunction with other RTOs)
- Enhancing multi-purpose trails
- Events/conferences (eg, food festivals, creative art expo)

Work on the Dark Sky application for Fiordland has already been commenced by Great South and the requirements for becoming a Dark Sky Reserve have been initially assessed.

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Development of a Destination Management plan for Fiordland.		Destination Management plan will include product development to allow for year-round employment including events/conferences, Dark Skies, Fiordland Heritage Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great South

OUR *Events*

Events and conferences offer another opportunity for growth through the shoulder and winter seasons which will also boost the economy.

Regional Events Strategy funding has already seen the allocation of funds to develop both existing and new events in the area.

Events such as Godzone, the Men's Muster, the Te Anau Long Lunch and Fiordland Trails Trust Hydro Half Marathon are all examples of events that have been given funding support, bringing in more visitors from outside the area. We therefore need to be able to ensure that capability and capacity for hosting events is addressed.

During the past two years, we have seen a large increase in visitors travelling with their bikes. Enhancing the multi-purpose trails in the area not only supports community wellbeing, it also helps bring much-needed revenue to our area.

Ultimately, we see that visitors who share our values will be willing to stay longer, spend more and be involved in initiatives that benefit the entire community.



We pride ourselves on a family focused community, locals helping locals. Community events and activities that everyone can be involved in and enjoy.

Mary



OUR

Area

Between 75,000 and 15,000 years ago much of the area's high-sided valleys, waterfalls and fiords were gouged by glaciers

1700s
The Ngāti Māmoē people lived in Preservation Inlet, having fled from tribal warfare in Otago. But in the later 1700s the settlement was obliterated by Ngāi Tahu.

1773
James Cook and his crew spent six and a half weeks in Dusky Sound.

1800s
Dusky Sound was active with sealers and whalers until about the 1840s when the seals were hunted almost to extinction.

1904
Most of Fiordland (nearly 1 million hectares) was made a scenic reserve.

1880
Donald Sutherland discovered **Sutherland Falls**. At 580 m they are not only New Zealand's tallest falls, but one of the highest in the world.

1893
Te Anau was **first surveyed**, shortly after the Milford Track opened.

1910
Moose were released in Fiordland

1914
Milford Sound had become one of the country's top resorts, despite the fact that most visitors had to walk in (some came by sea).

1948
The **Te Ana-au caves** were re-discovered in 1948 by Lawson Burrows, who found the upper entry after three years of searching following clues in old Māori legends.

1925
Lake **Monowai** was raised 2m to provide more water flow for a power station, which today supplies about 5% of Southland's electricity.

1948

The **Takahē** were rediscovered in Fiordland's remote **Murchison Mountains**.



1963

Manapōuri **hydroelectric power** station construction begins to supply electricity to the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter near Bluff.

1952

Fiordland scenic reserve becomes

the Fiordland National Park



1985

The Burwood Takahē Breeding Centre is created.

1988

The **first Kepler Challenge** was held with **149** competitors.



1990

The **Fiordland Lobster Company** is established making Southland the country's biggest lobster region.



1986

Fiordland National Park becomes part of the

Te Wāhīpounamu
world heritage area.

1971

The Deep Cove Outdoor Education Trust is a non-profit organisation established in 1971 to help promote and educate tourists and school aged children on the importance of conservation and environmentally friendly practices in the remote Fiordland National Park.

2004

The Māraroa becomes the first river in New Zealand found to be infected with the alga **didymo**.

2003

A **magnitude 7.2 earthquake** hit Fiordland near Secretary Island off the Fiordland coast causing significant landslides in parts of the region.

1960s

The **Hollyford River and valley** become part of the Fiordland National Park.



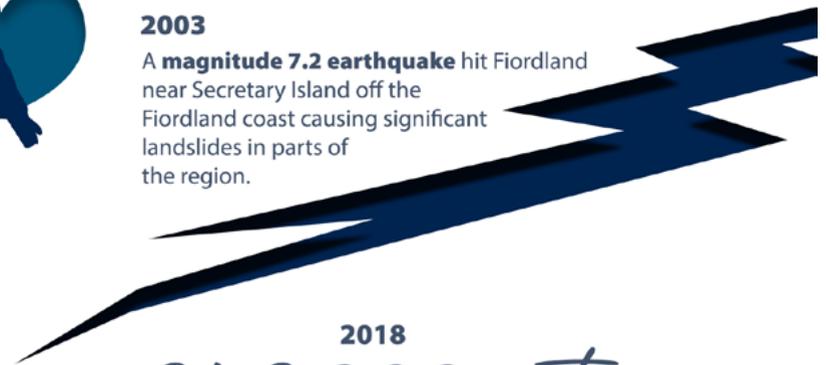
1973

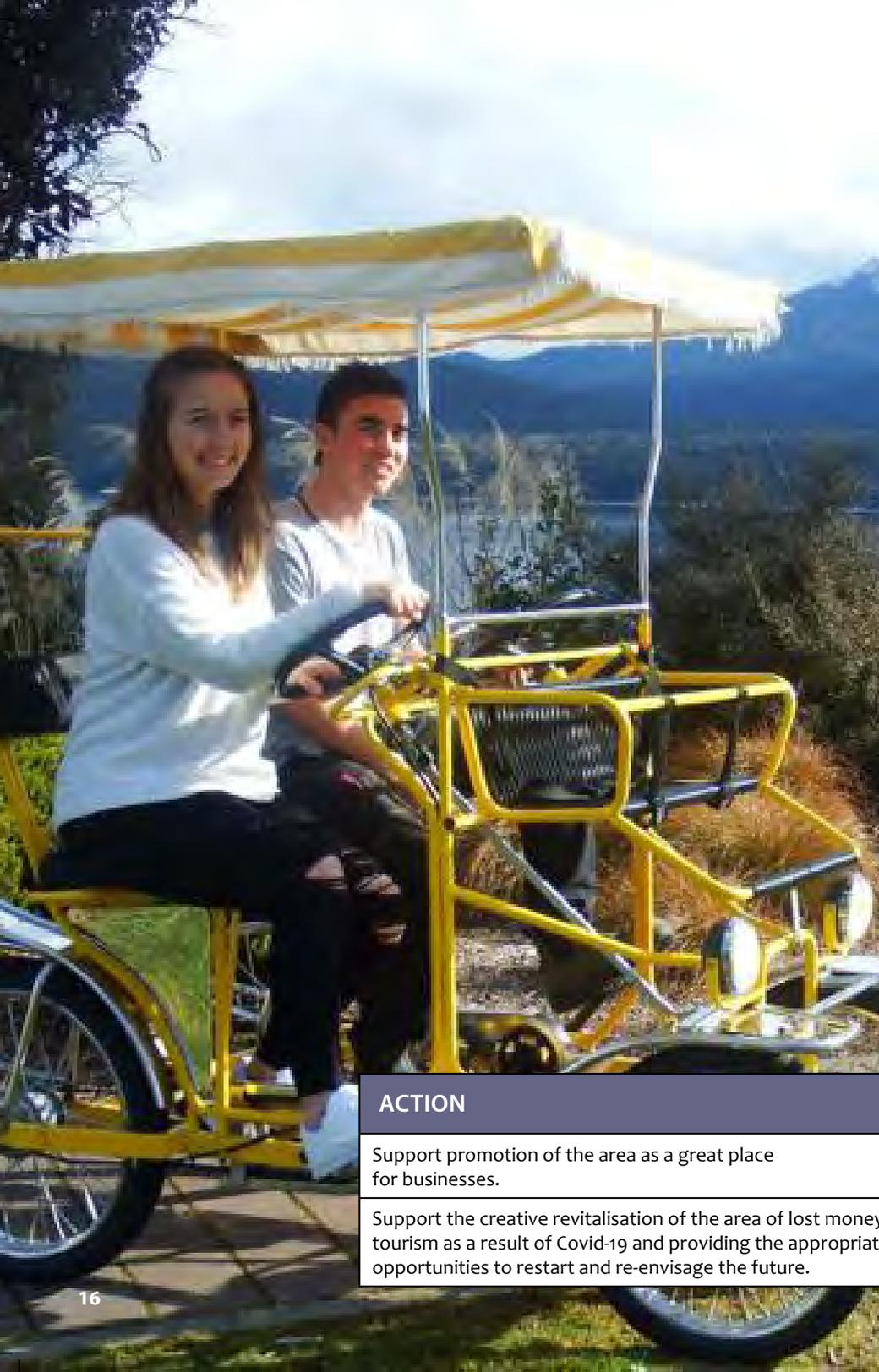
The Guardians of Lake are created to oversee the management of the Manapouri, Monowai, and Te Anau lake levels.

2018

946,000 visitors

went to Milford Sound Piopiotahi





OUR *Network*

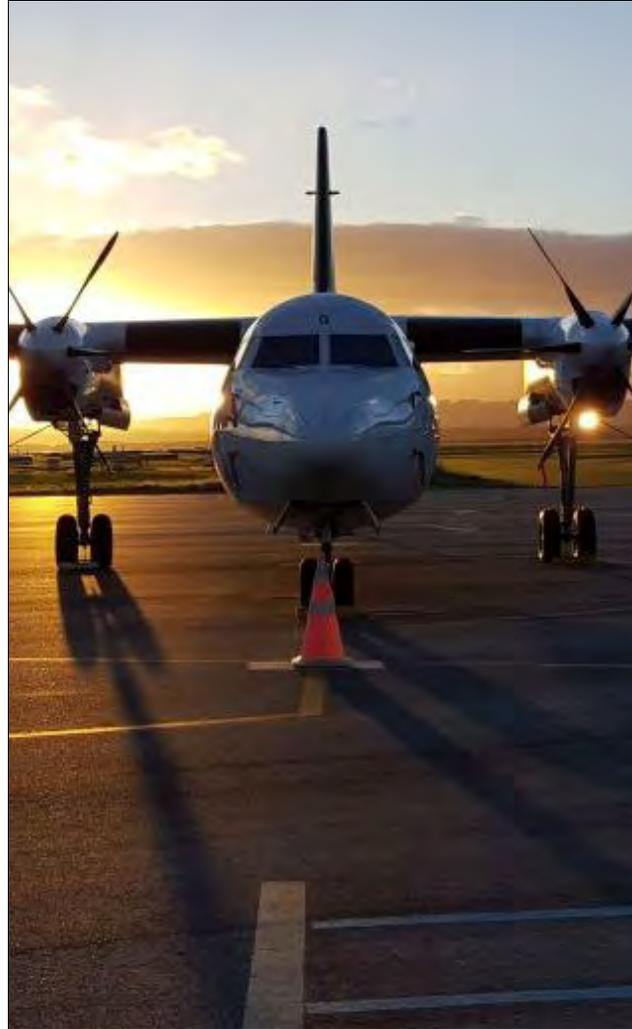
Connectivity

Attracting 365-day-a-year business requires excellent connectivity in terms of transportation, communication/internet options and delivery of other key services.

The Rural Connectivity Group and Chorus have both been working to improve connectivity, particularly along the Milford Road.

An ongoing review of communication provision is needed to ensure the region can proactively attract a range of businesses that require high-speed internet services to operate in the area.

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Support promotion of the area as a great place for businesses.	Community-led initiatives.	Encourage diversification of employment opportunities into new areas.	
Support the creative revitalisation of the area of lost money from tourism as a result of Covid-19 and providing the appropriate opportunities to restart and re-envision the future.	Community-led initiatives.	Lobby relevant people and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great South • Central government



Te Anau Airport Manapouri development

The board will continue to review upcoming requirements and financial costs for ongoing operation of the airport in conjunction with Southland District Council, given the airport is also a district asset.



OUR *Environment*

A community that sustainably protects and enhances its natural environment

Fiordlanders value their natural environment with its fresh air, beautiful lakes and clear skies, and see it as a key drawcard for choosing to live in the area.

They have a sense of pride in sharing the beautiful landscapes, flora and fauna.

The community stated that they want to see our “clean and green” image preserved and enhanced so that it becomes part of their everyday lives.



Become more environmentally sustainable

Work with Southland District Council to develop a recycling initiative plan for the Fiordland area that will also extend beyond its boundaries into other parts of the district. Support and enable the development of community composting schemes and the community garden.

Educate and support the community on how to become more environmentally friendly, from businesses through to individuals.



Incorporate the National Park within our townships

Align with Southland District Council's Open Spaces Policy to plan, prioritise and implement projects which will enhance natural elements, develop our outdoor recreational assets while also ensuring they can be easily accessed.

This includes native planting, beautification and setting up the community garden.



A communication chain is our strength as a community to help refocus and build a sustainable future that we can all be proud of.

Diane

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Develop recycling and sustainability initiatives.	Community-led initiatives.	Support a community composting scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WasteNet • Southland District Council
Encourage projects that connect with and enhance the natural assets of the area.	Community-led initiatives.	<p>Prioritise and implement projects which will enhance natural elements, develop our natural assets while also ensuring they can be easily accessed.</p> <p>Work with DOC on developing recommendations for the new Fiordland National Park Management Plan.</p> <p>Partner with local groups and DOC on opening up more multi-purpose trails to develop connectivity within and between townships and settlements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOC • Meridian • Environment Southland • Guardians of the Lakes

OUR *Masterplan*

Develop a cohesive urban plan for Te Anau in the form of a masterplan.

Aspects of the plan will review:

- Zoning - including zoning for commercial/business opportunity, density
- Infrastructure provision - including replacement of ageing assets
- Roading layouts and traffic management
- Connectivity between tracks, roads and trails
- Cycling provision on roads
- Spaces for al fresco dining
- Playground solutions
- Street appeal including artwork
- Toilets and dump stations
- Recycle bins/water fill points

Work has already commenced on some of these services, with the replacement of some significant pieces of water-related infrastructure. Accessing Tourism Infrastructure Funds is enabling other pieces for work to be done.

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Plan to manage future growth so that lifestyles and the uniqueness of the area can be maintained for locals and visitors.	Community-led initiatives.	Review campervan parking and access to Fiordland townships. Lead a discussion on what is an appropriate range of accommodation for the area (including conversations about Airbnb).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses • Developers • Fiordland Housing Trust



This plan will provide a conceptual layout to guide
future growth and development



OUR *Opportunities*

Maintain and enhance “front country” opportunities

Work with the community to support business cases to support desired changes to the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

Work with DOC on developing recommendations for the new plan.

Partner with local groups and DOC on opening up more multi-purpose trails to develop connectivity within and between townships and settlements.

Review campervan parking and access to Fiordland townships.



A community that enriches its lifestyle through well thought out planning for growth

Residents of Fiordland value their sense of community and the lifestyle that Fiordland offers.

They are, however, concerned about the ad hoc nature of development.

They would like to see a thoughtful and sustainable plan put in place to manage future growth so that lifestyles and the uniqueness of the area can be maintained alongside additional population and visitors.

ACTION	COMMUNITY IDEAS	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS
Encourage the provision of a range of services that will attract and retain youth, families, the elderly, different cultures and business enterprise and support the community.	Community-led initiatives.	Lobby the relevant people and organisations. Liaise with EMS to deliver civil defence preparedness workshops and ensure the community is prepared for an emergency situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Management Southland • MSD • Fiordland Community House • Sport Southland • Healthy Families • Local education providers
Encourage projects that connect with and enhance the natural assets of the area.	Community-led initiatives.	Prepare and implement a plan for cycling and pedestrian safety through Fiordland townships. Partner with local groups and DOC on opening up more multi-purpose trails to develop connectivity within and between townships and settlements.	



OUR *Partners*

Milford Opportunities group

We recognise the need to collaborate and engage with the Milford Opportunities group to ensure that developing our own community masterplan fits into the strategic concepts announced by the Milford Opportunities Project, while also moving forwards with a plan.

Engagement in this process is critical to ensure a broader Fiordland voice is applied to the overall solution for Milford Sound, and that we achieve positive economic impacts on and for the Fiordland/Southland economy.



OUR *People*

Residents value that they live in a helpful, supportive and safe community with access to services and amenities such as schools, the health centre, library and a range of clubs and societies. Living in a safe environment means children can cycle to school, the elderly feel safe in their homes and there is minimal crime, however roads beyond the various town boundaries present a number of safety challenges.

Covid-19 has also had a detrimental impact on community wellbeing, and with the community board now supporting the work of the Te Hau Toka Southern Wellbeing Group, we are now able to advocate for obtaining funding available to support better wellbeing outcomes for our community.

We are aware that community feelings of isolation create challenges. Lack of local maternity service within the area, poor preparedness for a civil defence emergency and traffic issues on the State Highways in and out of the area were all originally identified as creating cause for concern.

Connection is also about linking cultures within our community and ensuring all generations within our population feel a sense of inclusion.

We are here for the people now and the future generations. Simplicity and functionality is key to help Fiordland grow into something to admire.

Ben

OUR *Mouth*



We are delighted that our youth have had a voice in this plan.
They are also our stakeholders.

We acknowledge many leave for tertiary opportunities, and that their exposure to other worlds and people helps them define who they are.

We appreciate that having a sense of leaving may encourage them to return and we also know that many of those who choose to return feel a strong connection with the community they grew up in. Providing the best childhood experiences is directly correlated to a desire to return at a certain point in time.

The youth survey identified a real concern over mental health and wellbeing and believed greater access to help and support was required. This has been recognised in the need to lobby for provision of a range of services, including those that are wellbeing related, and to provide choice around how to access these services within a small community.

Encouragingly, our youth also said that they feel safe and connected in the community and value the natural

environment. As with others in the area, they believe that having more reasons to visit Fiordland would provide them with winter working opportunities, as well as summer jobs.

They would also like to see a broader range of opportunities for youth. Additional extra-curricular indoor activities, beyond the existing sporting options, and short courses were among the things they thought would benefit them.

Finally, they indicated that we could do much better in terms of diversity and inclusion and learning to be accepting of differences, whether they be in relation to gender, culture or other aspects of multi-culturalism.

By embracing the four wellbeings, specifically social wellbeing, we certainly aim to ensure we involve everyone in the discussions, and will proactively approach those who are not “in the room” at these community events.



Many of our young people feel a strong connection with
the community they grew up in...

OUR *Safety*

Preparedness for a civil defence emergency

Liaise with Emergency Management Southland to deliver civil defence preparedness workshops.

Identify and develop proactive measures that can be taken to get Fiordland “open for business” again after a civil defence emergency. This will link to the Destination Management plan and product development.

Work with the Hazard Management Group to ensure businesses and residential homes are prepared for an emergency situation.



Enhance safety on State Highways within the Fiordland area

Prepare and implement a plan for cycling and pedestrian safety through Fiordland townships in partnership with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and other stakeholders.

Liaise with NZTA and other stakeholders regarding improving safety on the Milford Road, including possible signage, stopping areas, and additional parking provision in Te Anau for longer term full-day parking.

Advocate for provision of services in the Fiordland community

Continue to lobby for the provision of a range of services that will enhance community wellbeing, attract and retain youth, families, the elderly, different cultures and business enterprise.



OUR *Economy*

Responses to the business survey completed pre-Covid were diverse.

However, at that time, common themes around success included that being on a tourist route is a key contributor, as was having a loyal and supportive community, location of the business itself, proximity to Queenstown and lack of competition. Tourism has historically had a high impact on business success, and also the economic growth of the area.

The negative impacts of the February 2020 flooding, Covid-19 and Great Walk track closures were highly detrimental. Some businesses did not survive, and some had to reinvent themselves in the domestic market. However, the board understands that while tourism may sometimes appear to be the mainstay of our economy, everything is connected.

The trades have faced challenges being able to obtain supplies and parts, experiencing long delays in obtaining materials due to supply chain issues. They have also struggled to fill job vacancies.

In addition, the stresses being placed on the rural sector with the introduction of more legislation and compliance costs, increased operating costs and labour shortages have also taken their toll.

The loss of international tourism took millions of dollars out of our local economy. Today's challenges around supply chains, delayed border opening, compliance costs and more continue to take their toll.

It is therefore vital that the board works with its stakeholders and strategic partners to think creatively about supporting the revitalisation of tourism revenue for the area, alongside other business growth activities.

Providing the appropriate infrastructure, facilities and opportunities to restart and re-envisage our future are key. Furthermore, we also need to support how we can attract new residents with the right skills and qualifications to our area to fill the vacancies that have remained open for many months.

Work has changed; particularly with remote working becoming a more accepted practice. Growth will happen if people are visiting the region and businesses have access to a workforce that can service the demand. Innovative thinking is needed to bring visitors to the area during the shoulder and winter seasons. Providing a reason to visit and effectively marketing and promoting this would positively boost the economy as more residents could be provided with permanent year-round employment, as would marketing Fiordland as a great place to live to a broader business base.

Provision of appropriate accommodation is one key to ensuring this happens and lack of it will inevitably be a hand-brake to growth.

Concerns were voiced by local business owners pre-Covid as Airbnb remains unlegislated; now is the ideal time to have the conversations necessary to reset an effective platform for the future.





Conclusion

The Fiordland Community Board acknowledges the enormous resilience that the community has shown in the past two years. These have been challenging times and they will continue until we reach a point of Covid confidence in our community.

As we plan our restart and envision our future, we recognise that growth has to work for the community at large as well as for individuals and impacted businesses.

This is why we have to approach the implementation of this plan in a thoughtful and considered way.

Love of a place unleashes the personal and political will needed to make profound change.

It is incumbent on us to protect Fiordland for future generations and we can do this together by loving this place and encouraging visitors to do the same; we will not, however, allow our place to be loved to death.



Looking forward with vision will pull everyone through as a community. Listening, new ideas and working together is a journey we can share with our children for their children.

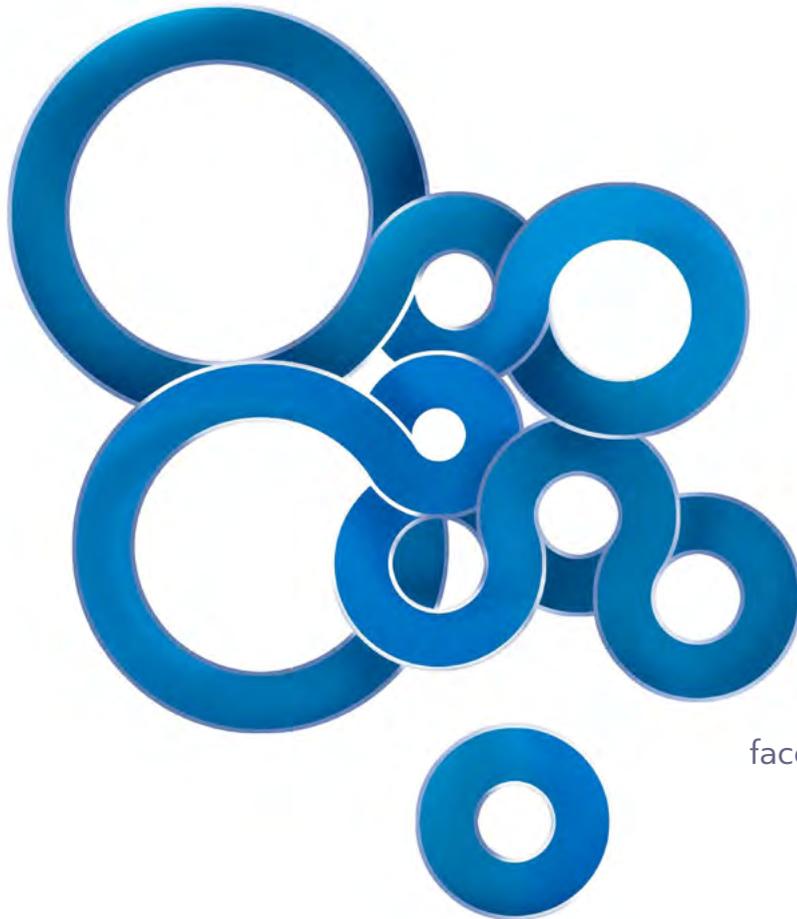
Ryan

OUR *Journey*

This is not just our journey, this is your journey too...

We invite feedback along this path to make Fiordland a better place for everyone to live, stay and play and we look forward to working towards achieving the vision and outcomes in the coming months and years.

... the future of every community lies in capturing the passion, energy and imagination of its own people.



Communities
hold Southland
together

facebook.com/fjordlandcommunityboard