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# THE FIRST EDITION

Southland District Council's magazine





# Review to ensure fair, effective representation

**S**outhland District Council is undertaking a representation review, which may result in changes to the way our Council is elected and structured in the future.

Local elections are held every three years so you can decide who will represent you at the Council table and on the community boards. To make sure that residents have fair and effective representation, all councils must review their representation arrangements at least every six years.

We last undertook a representation review in 2018 in preparation for the 2019 elections. The key focus of that review was developing a community governance and representation arrangement framework to work more effectively for the people of Southland district.

The 2018 review led to substantial changes to the arrangements and part of the purpose of this review is to assess and check in on how those changes are working.

One of the changes made in the 2018 review was reshaping the community board boundaries to allow for district-wide representation for all residents.

The last representation review completed in 2018 incorporated the work of a Community Governance Project that began in 2015. The arrangements prior to the last representation review were similar to what they were in 1989, when Southland District Council was formed in a local government amalgamation.

Despite there being 175 elected representatives – in 12 community boards and 16 community development area subcommittees (CDAs) – one third of the population of the district lived in an area with no local decision-making body. The key focus of that project was developing a community governance and representation framework to work more effectively for the people of Southland.

## Systems being reviewed are:

- the number of wards (electoral areas within Southland)
- ward boundaries
- the number of councillors that represent your ward
- the community boards, including the number, boundaries and subdivisions of the community boards, and the number of members for each board.

At present, Council is made up of the mayor, who is elected by all voters in the Southland district (also referred to as “at large”), and 12 councillors, who are elected by voters within each of the five existing wards: Mararoa Waimea (3), Waiau Aparima (3), Oreti (3), Waihopai Toetoe (2), Stewart Island Rakiura (1)



**Cover art:**  
Kyra and her pet Izzie.  
Limehills School pet day.  
PHOTO: Briar Kilsby

**Magazine design**  
Gloria Eno

**Produced by**  
Southland District Council  
communications team

### There are currently nine community boards:

- Fiordland
- Northern  
(divided into three subdivisions)
- Ardlussa
- Tuatapere Te Waewae
- Wallace Takitumu
- Ōraka Aparima
- Oreti  
(divided into three subdivisions)
- Waihopai Toetoe
- Stewart Island Rakiura.

Subdivisions were created for the Northern and Oreti community boards to create fair representation for their smaller townships and localities, which are spread over a wide geographical area.

Based on the district's latest population estimate of 32,990, under a Local Government Act calculation each ward councillor must represent 2,749 residents plus or minus 10% (2,474-3,024).

The exception is Stewart Island Rakiura, which in 2023 had an estimated population of 450, well below the threshold required to have its own councillor. However, since 2013 Rakiura Stewart Island has been regarded as an exception by the Local Government Commission, which agreed with SDC that it was an island community of interest and required its own ward to ensure effective representation.

Two important decisions for the next elections have already been made.

After conducting a public poll, Council decided in August this year to retain the first-past-the-post (FPP) voting system.

Community views were sought through Council's Make it Stick Southland website from 19 June to 7 July 2023. Also, the nine community boards were invited to provide feedback on their preferred system.

A total of 224 valid responses were received from individuals on Make it Stick, with 80% of those responses being in favour of FPP. Four community boards gave feedback on the voting systems and those four boards all preferred FPP.

After consulting with local iwi, it was decided that there would be no Māori wards established for the next election in 2025.

The Local Electoral Act provides councils with the ability to create Māori wards, which are seen as a way to increase Māori participation in decision-making. However, Ngā Rūnanga, a collective representing the four papatipu rūnanga of Southland Murihiku, did not support the establishment of a Māori ward in Southland district at this time.

Mayor Rob Scott said he believed the decision by Ngā Rūnanga reflected its strong relationship already in place with Council. "They are happy with the status quo."



### WHAT NEXT?

- **February-April 2024:** Development of initial proposal
- **May 2024:** Council considers and approves initial proposal
- **June/July 2024:** Public consultation period
- **August 2024:** Submissions heard
- **August 2024:** Council decision on final proposal
- **September 2024:** One-month appeal period for objections
- **December 2024:** Appeals and objections sent to Local Government Commission for consideration
- **10 April 2025:** Deadline for final determination from the Local Government Commission
- **October 2025:** Local elections held under new representation arrangements



# SDC adopts Annual Report 2022/2023

Southland District Council has adopted its Annual Report for 2022/2023.

The 2022/2023 Annual Report details performance of the organisation against the key performance targets that were specified in the Long Term Plan 2021-2031.

At \$105.5 million, total revenue for 2022/2023 was \$16 million higher than budgeted as a result of \$14.5 million of assets transferred to Council from developers, additional government grants for projects in Manapouri and Te Anau, and increased forestry income as a result of additional harvesting.

Total expenditure was \$114.3 million, \$21.2 million over budget, primarily due to higher depreciation costs resulting from the revaluation

of roading and three water assets, additional forestry harvesting costs and an updated landfill provision.

Finance costs were less than expected as Council has not begun its investment and borrowing strategy, which will be started in 2023/2024.

The Annual Report includes information about projects, their completion status and actual cost versus budget. The projects include those programmed in the 2022/2023 Annual Plan plus any projects carried forward from previous years or any new projects. This project information excludes the roading programme.

Of the 2023 projects, overall, 81 (40%) were completed, 7 (3%) were deleted, 18 (9%) were not started, and 97 (48%) were in progress.

Of the 58 service performance targets, 45 (78%) were achieved and 13 (22%) were not achieved.

In general, throughout the report there are a variety of reasons why the performance targets were not achieved and these reasons are outlined in more detail in the performance tables within the various activity sections of the annual report.

Deloitte completed the audit and provided an unmodified opinion.

The Annual Report and accompanying Summary Report can be viewed on SDC's website here:

[southlanddc.govt.nz/council/annual-and-long-term-plans/annual-report/](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/council/annual-and-long-term-plans/annual-report/)

2022/2023  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL



**A** year ago I was writing this First Edition column for the first time as your new mayor, and now I find myself struggling to remember what life was like when I wasn't a mayor.

Having done lots of the things that mayors normally do, from cutting ribbons to declaring a state of emergency, the real rewards have come from working with our people as we navigate through the complex world that we operate in.

I remember when I had my first child – I had all these expectations of what it was going to be like, and how easy it would be – and then I had my first child. In theory there is no difference between theory and practice, but in practice there is!

As I write this, we are still waiting for the negotiations to conclude so that a new government can be formed. There will be a lot of new MPs and a new PM running through the same feelings that I had 12 months ago. They will have a mixture of excitement, stress and the weight of the role which, if done right, can make a real difference.



I still regularly get asked “how are you finding the role?” and I always answer honestly – 90% of the time I love it, and it sure has its challenges!

The theme of our last Long Term Plan (2021-2031) was “It’s time, Southland”, focused mainly on our ageing bridge renewals and continuing to invest heavily in our roading network. At the time our asset base was worth \$1.6 billion, inflation was at 1.4%, and the OCR was raised to a mere 0.75%.

A couple of years later, our asset base is worth \$2.2 billion, inflation is sitting at 5.6% and the OCR is at 5.5%. What does this all mean for us? For many years Council was running without any external debt. This meant that we didn’t have to worry about any unforeseen fluctuations in the interest rates. With external debt now at \$21.8 million, a 5% increase in interest rates translates to \$1.09 million per annum!

Not only were we running without external debt for many years, we were also not accounting for depreciation. This is something that we started accounting for in 2015/2016, and we have been incrementally increasing it over the years.

So how does depreciation work?

Let’s take the example of a bridge that costs us \$1 million to build today, with an estimated lifespan of 100 years. If we don’t account for depreciation, in 100 years we will need to fully fund the replacement cost of the bridge at, say, \$10 million.

By depreciating the bridge, we take the replacement cost divided by its lifespan and essentially put aside some money each year to cover this cost. This means that when it comes to replacement time the money is there to fund the new bridge. This in a round-about way ensures that the current users of the bridge are paying for their usage of it. As the value (or replacement cost) of the bridge increases, to remain relevant the depreciation also increases.

The increase in inflation has had a noticeable impact on our asset valuations. Not only have the costs of building the assets gone up over the past three

years, the cost of depreciating them has too. Coupling this with the increased interest rates it starts to paint a pretty bleak picture when it comes to funding all of this – the cumulative impact really hurts.

It is very tempting right now – and I know that councils up and down the country are having conversations around depreciation – to ask: should we depreciate the full amount? Should we depreciate at all? Or should we reduce our depreciation so that our rates increase is reduced?

It is a real conundrum because while we may be saving a few dollars today, we are not setting up our future generations very well when it comes to replacing the assets.

The opposite of depreciation is appreciation, and every day I get a solid appreciation for what a truly awesome place Southland is – not just the place but the people!

There have been a few gatherings lately where we have been able to celebrate the awesome work that our people do. Seeing the growing recognition of our trades graduates for the important work they do, and the calibre of those graduating, was inspiring at the recent Tradequal awards night.

Then we have our great role models like Steve Turton and Guy Johnstone – two Winton firefighters who walked from Bluff to Queenstown in full firefighting kit to raise money for mental health – and Shelley McDougall, who completed her journey from Cape Reinga to Bluff back in March.

As I walked through Winton with Guy and Steve, what I witnessed was truly special. The town came out in full support, with a guard of honour the length of the town for them. People young and old were looking up to these guys, and I could see the next generation of Southlanders modelling themselves on these truly inspirational people.

As another year passes we head into our summer season where we get to truly appreciate our natural environment and spend quality time with our friends and family.



# Marie Casey

Marie Casey, the wife of Southland district's first mayor John Casey, passed away on 20 August 2023. She was 89 years old.

Mr Casey had died in June 2011, just days short of the 55th anniversary of his marriage in 1956 to Nightcaps schoolteacher Marie Philomena Marnane, daughter of Opio farmer John Marnane.

After their marriage, John and Marie farmed at Otara, fully involved in community life there during the years their sons Tony, Philip, Stephen and Chris were growing up. Mrs Casey worked as a teacher's assistant at Fortrose School in the 1970s. The couple retired to Invercargill in the mid-1990s.

In an obituary in *The Southland Times*, the late Pat Veltkamp Smith wrote that Mr Casey was an active justice of the peace for 35 years, witnessing his last document only days before his death.

He was involved with local body politics from his selection as the Toi Tois ward member of Southland County Council in 1977.

Mr Casey said he stood for public office to protest the state of roads in his own area and further afield and ended up travelling thousands of kilometres over them. He succeeded Sir Erskine Bowmar as chairman of the county and was elected Southland district mayor in 1989 after four territorial authorities – Southland county, Wallace county and Stewart Island County Council, and Winton Borough Council – amalgamated into one.

Pat Veltkamp Smith wrote that Mr Casey's calm, diplomatic approach was valued in the endless negotiations during and after the local government amalgamation.

Marie Casey did, in fact, get to sit in the top seat at Southland County Council. In his book *King of Counties II*, historian Vince Boyle wrote that on 12 October 1989 Mrs Casey chaired the final meeting recorded in the county minutes book when she presided over the inaugural (and only) annual meeting of the Southland County



Council Wives. This unique and light-hearted event resolved that Mrs County Manager and Mrs County Engineer should receive remuneration and that spouses should be paid full travel and accommodation costs for attending local government conferences. The minutes appendix noted that these were not bona fide resolutions of Southland County Council.

Mr Casey and Mayoress Marie enjoyed their term of office, hosting receptions for governors-general Dame Cath Tizard and Sir Paul Reeves, the Royal New Zealand Navy and the New Zealand Army.

The couple were good listeners, and valued and trusted friends. Mrs Veltkamp Smith wrote that at Mr Casey's funeral people spoke of his finely tuned sense of natural justice, his integrity and the commitment he brought to causes and relationships.

John and Marie Casey are remembered by current Southland district councillor Paul Duffy QSM for their personal warmth, relatability and genuine interest in people and their welfare.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE CAMERON McINTOSH

**I**t's useful, occasionally, to step back from the challenges of day-to-day life and reflect on how lucky we are to be Southlanders.

Being immersed in the vast, natural beauty of our surroundings on a daily basis, it's quite easy for us to take them for granted. Even when we know that we have easy access to some of New Zealand's greatest coastline, snow-capped mountains, lakes and national parks, all within reach, it's still possible to fail to see the wood for the trees.

Let's never forget what we have here, even when we as Southlanders are under a good deal of pressure at the moment.

Our agricultural sector is doing it hard. Lamb schedules have taken a hit recently, down almost \$2 from two seasons ago. There's slightly better news for dairy farmers, where Fonterra's forecast farmgate milk price for 2023/2024 is up 50 cents.

But still, the volatility of prices in our primary industry, and the uncertainty that flows through from that, is unsettling. If the farmers are hurting, our economy feels it too.

We're lucky. We live in a spectacular part of the world. But we're not removed from global events.

The shockwaves of Covid still reverberate, and northern hemisphere war has affected supply routes and materials. The costs of construction and materials are going up.

The rise of AI technology has generated fears around the potential implications for us as a workforce-based society, and social media has continued to be an unfiltered noticeboard of misinformation and anger from the disaffected.

We have workforce shortages across the province and not enough places for them to live when they come.

But even with all of that – and let's not forget these issues are global, not ours alone – we still have much to be thankful for.

Spurred on by North Islanders searching for sunshine, tourism came back last summer. When it's humming tourism is the Southland region's fourth highest earner, pumping hundreds of millions of dollars into our economy. Great South predicts numbers to return to pre-Covid levels by the end of this year for Southland and by 2025-2026 for Fiordland.

That old stereotype of Southland being the land of the endless winter must surely be all but extinguished by now.

We have two national parks – Fiordland and Stewart Island Rakiura. While Milford Sound Piopiotahi is yet to bounce back to pre-pandemic numbers, Te Anau and Stewart Island are both buzzing, with a shortage of worker accommodation the main issue.

Great food is a wonderful part of our story. Traditionally we've punched above our weight thanks to the fame of our exquisite Bluff oysters, delicious local lamb, blue cod, king salmon and other fine produce. There is a growing awareness of the diversity of our food offering across the region thanks to co-ordinated activism from the Murihiku Kai Collective, as well as artful championing by Great South's Murihiku Eats guide and the locally published Wee magazine.

Our share of the active tourism dollar is good and growing, thanks to the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail, and having four of the nation's 10 Great Walks in our district – with a fifth, the Hump Ridge Track, likely to be added within a year.

It's very pleasing that numbers of both cyclists and pedestrians are showing consistent year-on-year growth on the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail. In the 2022/2023 season 7,000 cyclists and 8,000 pedestrians used the trail, bringing life to small local businesses along the way.

Serious cyclists who take on the 1,500km Sounds to Sounds bikepacking challenge will pass over the Nevis Road, which connects Central Otago and Northern Southland, in one of the most rustic sections of the trail from Queen Charlotte Sound to Milford Sound. Our awe-inspiring high-country rides are made for those with an adventurous spirit.

For those who come south and want to have a really good look around, our district is connected by 5,000km of roads, the second largest network in the country. Our wayfinding experiences will soon be enhanced by the addition of the Matariki loop, where travellers can follow the path of the Matariki star cluster, marvel at the giant artworks and read interpretation panels with their stories in Māori mythology, while visiting our towns along the way.

The secret's out.

The New Zealand Herald's editor-at-large, Shayne Currie, recently went on his own length-of-the-country road trip looking for positives to write about. He found a disproportionate number at our end.



What he encountered was the best city in New Zealand (Invercargill), the best weather (right up there with traditional hotspots Nelson and Tauranga), the best pies (Fat Bastard) and the best tourist attraction (Bill Richardson Transport World).

Let's benignly overlook the fact that he didn't get out of the big smoke of Invercargill and have a decent poke around the district. Let's focus on the tangible benefits this kind of national publicity can bring the south, when "the south" is viewed as a regional package. Which is as it should be.

There were no marketing pressures at play here. This was the entirely subjective view of one Aucklander in a position of some influence. And he liked what he saw.

There's much to be positive about as Southlanders head into a well-deserved Christmas-New Year break and enjoy some of our magnificent holiday spots this summer.

I'm quite optimistic.

We should remember that we live in a pretty cool place in the world and we are populated by fantastic, hard-working people.

We care. The place is special. We even have our own accent. We play a unique part in New Zealand's social fabric and part of our charm is that we don't often make a big song and dance about it, when we have every right to.

**This is Southland. This is who we are.**

**Merry Christmas to you, and a happy New Year.**



**S**temming back to the 1940s, groups of dedicated individuals have been committed to protecting the 6.9ha forest fragment Kōwhai Reach.

Near Kauana, just 10 minutes north of Winton, the area is highly significant as it supports a Tenant Forest ecosystem of riparian lowland ribbonwood, of which there is now less than 1% remaining of this forest type.

The kōwhai trees themselves date back over 400 years.

In the 1940s, Alex Stewart and Alex Shand, supported by two farmers upstream, refused catchment board entry onto their properties as the board was planning to straighten the Winton Stream running through their land and Kōwhai Reach.

Continuing the protective stance, since 1987 four farmers whose properties surrounded the reach have worked hard to get the area placed under a QEII covenant in order to prevent any harm, and to preserve the natural heritage of the site.

However, in recent years it was discovered there had been very little regeneration occurring because the land the reach is on had become too narrow, leaving the trees nowhere to move.


So a group of individuals, including QEII representatives, Limehills School, catchment groups, Hokonui Runanga, immediate landowners, Southland District Council staff and councillor Margie Ruddenklau, are going to great lengths to help regenerate the area.

**“We’ve formed a working group, and we’re trying to find how we’re going to protect this going forward for the next generation,”**

Margie says.

# INCREIBLE





As it stands, there are plans to work in with the farmers in the area to move fencing back to allow more space for the kōwhai to thrive.

**“This is a marathon, not a sprint. We replant, look after it, wait a year and a bit then move more fencing for some more space.”**

In November 2023, the group carried out more planting in the area.

“We just completed three days of planting,” Margie says. “It’s a really beautiful space. It’s pretty special.”

The reach is a stunning location, with thousands of kōwhai flowering

annually in September. A picnic area for families, which features information signs created by the Limehills students, was opened in 2007 by former Southland District Council Mayor Frana Cardno. There are plans to move and revitalise the area where the reach could be seen as a key destination point in the future.

Students and staff of Limehills School have strong connections to the reach. Instrumental to the over 25-year relationship is Gay Munro, who held potting days with the children of Limehills School, which would then be planted the following year at the reach.

The children spend time planting kōwhai saplings grown from seeds sourced in the area. Not only does this work provide regenerative growth to the reach, lessons are also being learnt around cultural and environmental enhancement for pupils.

When students arrive as a new entrant to the school, they plant a kōwhai seed. Upon leaving Limehills School, that same kōwhai tree is gifted to the student.

“There’s been so much community input into Kōwhai Reach it’s just incredible,” Margie says. “The passion people have for it around the area will ensure the next generations are aware of the importance of looking after this incredible reserve.”

**If you’re interested in getting involved with the group, contact Margie Ruddenklau on 027 266 7421.**

# KŌWHAI REACH



# Ratepayers to have say on funding of airport

Southland District Council will ask ratepayers about a proposal to fund Te Anau Airport Manapouri's operational shortfall from general rates during consultation on the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan.

Te Anau Airport Manapouri is considered a strategic asset by Southland District Council.

The operations of the airport are funded by a combination of lease and rental income, fees from landings, ground handling and parking landing fees, with the shortfall being funded by Fiordland ratepayers. The shortfall has ranged from \$217,000 a year to just under \$320,000 over the past five years.

At a meeting on 22 November Council considered a series of options to boost the airport and ease the burden on Fiordland ratepayers that were suggested by an airport working group set up to review the airport's operations.

The recommendations included a district-wide rate being put in place to fund a portion of the airport's operating costs until it is able to become self-funding.

Another recommendation was putting in place an interim solution to allow the airport to establish a more commercial operation while a medium to long-term plan is developed and a more permanent solution of setting up a Council-controlled trading organisation (CCTO) is investigated.

It supported Great South doing the work, within 12 months.

The Fiordland Community Board backed the working group's recommendations.

The working group's brief was to deliver an overview of the challenges currently facing the airport and recommendations to Council for the future direction of the airport.

Significant engagement with the local community was undertaken by the working group, including seeking feedback from local airport users, the business community, Council staff and contractors, and the public.

At the November meeting Council discussed the working group's recommendation to consult ratepayers on whether they would be prepared to fund 30%, 50% or 100% of the airport's operational shortfall from general rates.

Based on current budgets, at 100% the district uniform annual general charge (UAGC) component of the general rate would rise by \$9.22 and the general capital value rate would increase by 80 cents for every \$100,000 of a property's capital value. Meanwhile, Fiordland ratepayers' targeted airport rate would drop to zero.

The 50% and 100% options would require consulting on a change to SDC's Revenue and Financing Policy.

Following rigorous debate, councillors



decided that the public should have a say on any level of airport funding from the general rate, and voted to include the option of not paying for the shortfall at all. This will be one of the consultation issues during next year's LTP process.

In the meantime, Council approved unbudgeted expenditure of up to \$171,060 (plus GST) for Great South to put in place a strategic business plan and investigate the opportunities identified through the review. This work will be funded from the Te Anau Luxmore Subdivision Reserve. The Luxmore reserve is made up of the net sale proceeds from the sale of Luxmore subdivision land by the Fiordland Community Board.

Council also approved paying off the existing airport loan of \$631,797 from the Luxmore subdivision reserve.







# SDC gets update on possible coastal effects of climate change

The possible effects of climate change on Southland district's coastal communities will soon be better understood as a result of a study commissioned by Southland District Council.

Chief executive Cameron McIntosh said that as part of its ongoing commitment to understanding the effects of climate change, Council commissioned Great South to prepare a report on spatial modelling of sea level rise.

Summary information was presented to a Council workshop by Great South general manager strategic projects Steve Canny about the modelling used in its report, titled Sea Level Rise and Extreme Sea Level Exposure. The full report had not been released at the time of writing.

The sample maps in the summary presentation outline best and worst-case scenarios in the year 2090 for six specific locations to the south coast of the Southland district territorial authority and Stewart Island Rakiura: Colac Bay, Curio Bay, Fortrose, Riverton, Oban, and Waikawa.

A best-case scenario for 2090 considers sea level rise, vertical land movement and mean high water spring (spring tides).

The worst-case scenario adds to this extreme sea level resulting from a one-in-100-year storm event creating storm surge and wind waves.

The final report was to project further scenarios for years 2130 and 2300, and would be peer reviewed before completion.

Great South general manager strategic projects Steve Canny said the area of climate change-induced sea level rise was a dynamic and changing area of science.

The methodology was based on interim guidance on the use of new sea-level rise projections provided by the Ministry for the Environment in 2022, and drew on other sources of information including the latest LiDAR data and the New Zealand SeaRise programme.

"It is expected that the guidance from the Ministry for the Environment will be updated as climate science knowledge is further refined, and an agreed rate of climate change is confirmed," Mr Canny said. "Accordingly, the modelling shown may change as updated climate science information becomes available."

Mr McIntosh said "our communities are already experiencing the effects of sea

level rise and changing weather patterns. Council has commissioned this work to provide a basis for better decision-making into the future.

"Council has a responsibility to identify natural hazards, including those that will result from the effects of climate change in the future, and do our best to draw on this information in short, medium and long-term decision-making.

"It is an expectation from the Auditor-General that the potential effects of climate change are reflected in long-term planning."

The full report and peer review will be made public.

Mr Canny's presentation to the Council workshop on 1 November can be viewed on the SDC Communications YouTube channel, while the PowerPoint is on SDC's website:

[southlanddc.govt.nz/environment/climate-change/coastal-hazards](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/environment/climate-change/coastal-hazards)

If you have any questions, Council has set up an email address: [coastalhazards@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:coastalhazards@southlanddc.govt.nz)



Excitement levels were high at the annual Limehills pet day on Monday 30 October.

There were pets of all varieties, including a lamb called Speckles, who was very suited to the name. It was a jam-packed day planned by the year 8s of the school who organised games such as soak the teacher, needle in the haystack, sack races, delicious food stalls, a young farmers competition and the main event of the day, judging of best pets.

Some of the winners of the day were Annabelle and her calf Ginger who won first place in the calf category, Kyra and her lamb Izzie, who took out the lamb category, and Shahn with her winning goat, Tank.

The Limehills pet day is a well-oiled machine that has been running for a “long time”.

“I actually went to the school and we were doing pet days then,” says teacher, ex-pupil and former board of trustees chair Peter Hammond.

“Pet days are a real hub. It’s a community thing. It’s like a fair and its moulded into this wonderful day – it’s really the highlight of the year. You’ll walk around and you’ll see grandparents and even just people from the community – they’re invited, come and judge. It’s just a massive amazing day.”

Pet day was first started as a community-run event, then the school looked into having the senior students run and organise it and even went to lengths to form a committee.

Ex-principal Malcolm Walker explains the progression of pet day over the years. “The first year the kids just could not believe how much fun they’d had and what they had learned, from making rosettes to negotiating deals with people, and then the committee formed and to get to be a chairman of the pet day committee was sort of the key to the school, a big job. Since then, they have done a remarkable job.”

The pet day was a prologue to a very important week for the school, which celebrated its 150th jubilee on 3-5 November. The school is an integral part of the Limehills community, which has acted as a community hub for the past 150 years. Even parents of former pupils keep in contact with school staff.

“We ran into some ex-parents of the school and they were reminiscing about everything that had gone on when they were here,” says teacher Hunter Murray. “Man, it was cool. It’s a wee precursor to what the jubilee is going to be.”

Peter points out that as the school changes throughout the years, one thing that is clear is the community spirit that sticks around.

“You will always have it (the connection/community spirit), because of the people in the community. Community is the heart of the school. Personnel will come and go but that community spirit is always there.”

One hundred and fifty years is an amazing feat for a close-knit rural school with plenty of heart.



Annabelle and Ginger



Shahn and Tank



Year 2's Hudson and Te Arai





# COMMUNITY SPIRIT STILL STRONG AS LIMEHILLS SCHOOL CELEBRATES



Soak the Teacher2



Sam and Fletcher



Speckles  
Lamb





# JOIN THE SDC

# youth COUNCIL

Recruitment is now under way for the 2024 Southland District Youth Council.

We're on the hunt for inspiring, motivated young people (aged 16-24) to act as advocates and ensure youth voices get heard by the Council.

Are you ready to represent your peers and your community? Have you got lots of ideas? Well, the Southland District Council Youth Council might just be for you!

As a youth councillor, you will influence change by sharing your voice, building leadership skills and connecting with other youth from communities throughout Southland in an inclusive space where your ideas will have a positive impact on our district's future.

Learn more and download an application form at [southlanddc.govt.nz/youthcouncil](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/youthcouncil)

**Youth councillor Jack Ruddenklau shares his thoughts about the importance of the role.**

Reflecting on my tenure with the Southland District Youth Council evokes a profound sense of gratitude and nostalgia, akin to the Māori proverb "Whāia te mātauranga hei ora ngā mā koutou" – Seek after wisdom for the sake of your wellbeing. I have endeavoured to delve deeper into my journey, articulating my emotions and the valuable lessons learned along the way.





### Why did you get involved with Youth Council?

My decision to join the Southland District Youth Council was not made lightly; it was fuelled by a deep-seated passion for community engagement and a burning desire to ensure that the voices of young people were not just heard but amplified and integrated into the decision-making fabric of our society. Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini – My success is not mine alone, but it is the strength of many. Southland has been a platform for my growth, and I felt a strong responsibility to give back to contribute to the shaping of policies and initiatives that directly affect us as young individuals. I saw the Youth Council as an opportunity—an opportunity to learn, to lead, and to lay down a pathway for youth participation in governance and community development.

### Why is it important for youth to have a voice?

“He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata” – What is the most important thing in the world? It is the people, it is the people, it is the people. Empowering youth voices is crucial for the vitality and progress of our society. As the younger generation, we bring a unique set of perspectives, ideas, and energies. These are essential for fostering innovation, driving social change, and building a resilient and inclusive future. Our involvement ensures that policies and strategies are comprehensive, catering to the diverse needs of all age groups. Furthermore, when young people are actively engaged and feel that their opinions matter, it cultivates a sense of responsibility, belonging, and civic duty, laying the groundwork for a more engaged, informed, and conscientious Southland.

### What would your message be to anyone thinking of getting involved?

To those on the cusp of deciding whether to join the Youth Council, I would say: Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui – Be strong, be brave, be steadfast. Embrace this opportunity with open arms and a committed heart. The journey will be challenging yet incredibly rewarding, filled with moments of triumph, learning, and unparalleled personal growth. You will be part of a collective force driving positive change, ensuring that the youth voice is not just a whisper in the background but a powerful one that shapes the future of our community. Your involvement will be a testament to the belief that when young people are given a platform, they can and will create waves of positive impact. As my tenure with the Youth Council nears its end, Haere taka mua, taka muri; kaua e whai – Go in front, not behind. Don't follow! I am consumed in a sea of emotions, grateful for the journey and the incredible people I've met. It's time for the next generation of passionate, determined young leaders to step forward, to carry the torch, and to continue the invaluable work of ensuring that young voices echo onto the table at the Council and the halls of decision-making, shaping a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

### How has Youth Council led to your involvement in other organisations as you progress your career?

The Youth Council served as a foundational platform for me, equipping me with crucial skills in leadership, advocacy, and community engagement. Whiria te tangata – Weave the people together. The lessons learned and the experiences gained have been instrumental in shaping my approach to inclusive decision-making and strategic planning, directly influencing my roles in organisations such as Te Whatu Ora Southern, acting as the Community Representative on the Clinical Transformation Group for the New Dunedin Hospital (Project Whakatuputupu) or on the investment committee for The Momentum Programme — this also goes right into my professional career in business consulting, as an analyst and into my life as a student. The Youth Council has built on my confidence to navigate complex organisational landscapes, the ability to understand and amplify diverse voices, and the commitment to transformative change – all these attributes have been learned during my time with the Youth Council. The Youth Council provides a solid foundation that helps to propel you forward in your career and personal growth journey.

### What do you enjoy most about your involvement?

Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata; ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tīna! – Seek out distant horizons while cherishing those achievements at hand. My involvement with the Youth Council has been a journey—a journey of growth, learning, and fulfilment. The part I love the most is the sense of community and the shared commitment to making a difference. Advocating for youth perspectives in local policies, representing Southland on the international stage at a United Nations Flagship Conference or being nominated by the Mayor to attend impactful forums every moment was a step towards positive change. These experiences have not just been about leading or advocating; they've been about connecting, understanding, and building bridges between the youth and the wider community.

# SHORT STUFF

## Careers website

Southland District Council has developed a new careers website where prospective employees can apply for our jobs. This includes an updated application, offer and onboarding process for candidates through Pulse. You can check out the website here: [vacancies.southlanddc.govt.nz/](https://vacancies.southlanddc.govt.nz/)



## Book bus

The book bus is set to be retired after 10 years and more than 350,000km of sterling service to our communities.

The new vehicle approved by Council will feature high-speed Starlink internet and a full suite of services to customers, including rates payments, dog registrations, applications, requests for service, printing/copying as well as existing book borrowing services. The new vehicle will also be available for Emergency Management support and service when required.

We're not sure when the new vehicle will be ready for use, and the routes and schedules will be subject to change when we start with the new service. The January 8 to 2 February timetable is on the SDC website for now and ongoing timetables may be reviewed as we lock the new schedule in. Thanks for your patience.

[southlanddc.govt.nz/services/libraries/book-bus/](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/services/libraries/book-bus/)

## Ulva Island wharf

Discussions are continuing with the Department of Conservation around a new wharf and track extension on Ulva Island.

The present wharf in Post Office Cove is at the end of its functional life, and Council has been forced to put restrictions in place for its use this season.

A new wharf has been proposed for the adjacent Bathing Bay, which would require a connecting track to be constructed to connect it to the existing track network.

Council was to consider a report on whether or not the wharf will be replaced in late November, before publication of this magazine. Regardless of the outcome of that decision, the Ulva Island wharf will be closed and no longer available for use at the end of this coming tourist season.





## Te Anau kiosk revamped

Visitors to Te Anau will now be greeted by a revamped information kiosk at the entrance to the township.

The wooden kiosk, on state highway 94, was initially erected in 2003. Council acquired the land it sits on from Buchanan's Farm under the Public Works Act in 2002 for \$1. An agreement was entered into with the landowner that it would only ever be used for the purpose of an information kiosk.

The long-standing fixture now boasts a modern vibe featuring a range of information about the Fiordland area, the local Great Walks, and the settlements of Te Anau, Manapouri and Milford Sound.

The creative design was completed in-house by Southland District Council graphic designer Gloria Cumming and utilises locally sourced imagery.

Fiordland Community Board chair Diane Holmes was thrilled to see the kiosk modernised, providing a positive



welcome for visitors to Te Anau.

"The information kiosk had got a bit tired and out of date. It's great to see it revitalised giving practical, up-to-date guidance and information, alongside stories of our culture and heritage to our many visitors. It looks great too, with lots of Fiordland themed photos and graphics," she said.

# Working towards renewable energy

A registration of interest to create a business case for renewable energy on Stewart Island Rakiura has gone out on GETS (the government electronic trading system) [www.gets.govt.nz](http://www.gets.govt.nz)

Islanders have been looking at alternatives and a green source of electricity for more than 12 years, so the government's announcement of an initiative for establishing a renewable electricity system on New Zealand domestic islands in May was welcomed.

A steering group has been appointed, chaired by Stewart Island Rakiura Community Board chair Aaron Conner. Its purpose is to develop a business case which will set out recommendations for renewable energy on the island, and then present the case firstly to the community board, residents, iwi partners

and Southland District Council for ratification, and then to government officials and ministers.

"The aim is to get indications of interest before Christmas and then to work on appointing the contractor either through a limited or full tender process. The business case is due within 12 months," Mr Conner said.

Stewart Island Rakiura residents currently receive their electricity through diesel-powered generators. The cost of diesel has increased markedly in the past two years, which has meant a large increase in charges to users and the Stewart Island Electricity Supply Authority's reserves decreasing. The cost of electricity for the islanders is becoming unaffordable because of this. The generators also emit nearly 1 million kilograms of carbon annually.



# Fundraising mission for new museum

By Briar Kilsby

Back in 2017, the beloved Wyndham and surrounding Districts Historical Museum was closed due to being labelled a potential earthquake risk. Since then, a volunteer committee of five have been working hard behind the scenes to protect the archives and fundraise for a new site and museum.

Collections of the museum include information from the wider Wyndham, Edendale and surrounding districts family genealogy, farming, dairy factories, horse racing and various historical items, as well as fascinating histories from local clubs and societies.

## What has happened to the current items?

Currently, the committee has transferred the majority of the items into temperature-controlled boxes where they are ensured to be airtight to prevent any damage to the community's precious artifacts, with less fragile items being stored on the old site.

The very committed crew at Project Ark came to the museum and spent 18 months photographing and digitising the 4,200 items into the online cataloguing system.

## Milk barrow 1907-1940

This milk barrow belonged to Scottish-born Charlie McKelvie who supplied the Oware dairy factory during the early 20th century. The barrow was used to cart milk cans from dairy sheds to Charlie's vehicle then on to the factory.



## What's the next step for the museum?

This has been a mammoth job for the small group of volunteers who have been busy raising funds for the Wyndham and Districts Historical Society and its future development.

"We have had some fundraisers in the past, including the Journey through Fashion back in June 2023, raffles, quiz nights and Spell-it-Rite competitions in the Ensign and Express newspapers," says society chair Paul Duffy.

"We're always looking for volunteers and we welcome anyone to help us out."

There are plans to build the new museum on land secured by the society in Edendale on the corner of George Street and Ferry Road as the museum covers the wider Wyndham, Edendale and surrounding districts.

The society's subcommittee plan more fundraising in the future. It's a long road ahead before the stories of the community's past continue to be told.

## Colonial oven 1850-1860

A common feature in a mid-19th century home was this steel oven. Featuring a heavy cast iron plate on top, the oven wasn't too heavy so it could still be transported if needed.



## Gas Mask 1916-1918

This mask belonged to Joseph Irwin of Wyndham. He fought in WWI and was the youngest of his three brothers to do so. The small box respirator was used during the war and offered more protection against strong gases. Respirators like this one saved many during the war this one in particular might've saved Joseph.

**NGĀ TAONGA  
O MURIHIKU**  
HISTORICAL TREASURES IN  
SOUTHLAND'S MUSEUMS

For more information, head to the Wyndham and District Historical Museum's website: [ehive.com/collections/3102/wyndham-and-district-historical-museum](http://ehive.com/collections/3102/wyndham-and-district-historical-museum)



# Iconic tour important platform for Road Safety Southland

Nothing reinforces the importance of road safety like attempting to navigate your way around a fast-paced peloton of lycra-clad cyclists during the SBS Tour of Southland.

The annual event is the perfect platform for Road Safety Southland to connect the community with vital messages to share the road.

The Share the Road team has been a regular feature of the event for over 15 years, with cyclists the calibre of Tour de France contender Jack Bauer and the legendary Gordan McCauley donning the iconic strip.

Road Safety Southland road user safety advisor Maureen Deuchrass said the team had boasted some “truly incredible” riders over the years.

“And we’ve achieved that while always staying loyal to our goal of at least half the team hailing from right here in Southland,” she said.

“Our cyclists are really focused on being positive role models and we are seeing the impact of that. So many of the Southland cyclists we have now achieving in the elite ranks will tell you their own sporting journey and love of cycling was ignited by watching that mighty Tour of Southland peloton soar past when they were kids.”

Each year throughout the district, school children line the roadside to enthusiastically cheer on the cyclists – supported by Maureen and her trusty mascot sidekick GloBro.

“The schools just add so much colour and energy and it’s a fantastic interaction to encourage those key road safety messages, teaching kids to be as safe as possible as a vulnerable road user,” she said.

“If we can teach our young kids to be



Road Safety Southland road safety advisor Maureen Deuchrass relaxes with the 2023 Share the Road riders after stage two of the SBS Tour of Southland at Lumsden. From left, Jacob Turner, Blake Tait-Jones, Luke Macpherson, Maureen Deuchrass, Marcus Cauley (seated), Morgan Borrie, and Matt Zenovich

aware, scan for hazards and respect all road users, they are actually learning some really important tools they need as a driver when they get older as well.”

The Share the Road initiative emerged from tragic circumstances following a fatal accident in Tweed Street when a young girl was cycling to school.

“I remember it vividly because I was a teacher at Tweedsmuir Intermediate at the time. It was a horrific day,” Maureen recalled.

“It was her father who came up with the idea for an educational programme called Share the Road and I have no doubt countless lives have been saved as a result so we need to keep spreading these key messages.”

This year’s campaign was supported by Good Tech Guys, McCauley Ford, Vital Signs, Toasted, South Port and UDC.

“It’s local Southland companies working in partnership to make it all happen.”

For the record, this year’s Tour honours went to Auckland-based Dan Gardner, who became the first Englishman since 1957 to win the iconic event.

New Zealand endurance rider Nick Kergozou (Transport Engineering Southland - Deep South) won the final

sprint in Gala St for his first ever stage win on his home tour, with Gardner winning overall by 15sec from Joe Cooper (Central Benchmarkers-Willbike) and 45sec from Boris Clark (Quality Foods Southland).

In the team stakes, Quality Food Services Southland was first overall, followed by Transport Engineering Southland-Deep South (+1.22) and Oxford Edge (+2.41) respectively.

Kergozou dominated the Sprint category with 55 points, followed by Kane Richards (Couplands – Booth Logistics) on 36 points and Ollie Jones (PowerNet) with 33 points.

In a closely-contested King of the Mountains battle, Max Campbell (C Brown Builders – Olphert Contracting) reigned supreme with 30 points, followed by Richards on 27 points and Eliot Crowther (Quality Food Services Southland) with 24 points.

The leading under-23 rider was Zakk Paterson (C Brown Builders – Olphert Contracting) who finished 7th overall in the general classification, with Glenn Haden (Couplands – Booth Logistics) the top over-35 rider and 8th overall.

# Building on land subject to natural hazards

When you apply for consent for a new building, or a major alteration to an existing building, consider how the building could be affected by natural hazards, or how the work could accelerate or worsen a natural hazard.

The Building Act requires us to decline a building consent for work or major alterations to a building if:

- the land is subject to one or more natural hazards
- the work will accelerate or worsen the adverse effects of the natural hazard on that land or other property.

This would not apply if we are satisfied that adequate provisions have been made to protect land, building and other property or restore any damage to that land or other property.

If we are satisfied that provisions have been made to protect the building and not the land and the building consent is

approved, a condition would be added to the building consent which requires a notice to be registered on the property title to ensure future owners of the land know about the potential hazard. For this reason, property owners are keen to ensure that their developers and designers demonstrate how protection of the land as well as the building has been achieved.

## What is a natural hazard?

The Building Act defines a natural hazard as land subjected to:

- erosion (including coastal erosion, bank erosion and sheet erosion)
- falling debris (including soil, rock, snow and ice)
- subsidence
- inundation (including flooding, overland flow, storm surge, tidal effects and ponding)
- slippage.

Hazards such as tsunamis or earthquakes are not regarded as natural hazards under the Building Act. Occasionally natural hazards may not be identified in Project Information Memoranda (PIMs) associated with your building consents, and there may be a need for the Building Control Authority – in this case Southland District Council – to determine whether or not natural hazard provisions apply.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has recently put out some guidelines on natural hazards and the application of the legislation in regards to these. You can read their guidance on the government's Building Performance website:

**[building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/all-news-and-updates/guidance-for-the-natural-hazard-provisions-of-the-building-act-released/](https://building.govt.nz/about-building-performance/all-news-and-updates/guidance-for-the-natural-hazard-provisions-of-the-building-act-released/)**

# Rental options for home owners

Lack of worker accommodation is one of the major challenges for businesses trying to recruit staff in Southland district.

Research done by Great South while preparing the Beyond 2025 regional long term plan showed that 52% of large businesses interviewed said lack of suitable housing was compromising recruitment efforts.

There are some key pressure points in the district, including Te Anau, Manapouri, Riverton Aparima, and Stewart Island Rakiura, where holiday homeowners could help to provide a partial solution to this problem and all parties would benefit.

If you are the owner of a holiday home, you might consider renting out the property for part of the year and still have it available for your own holiday.

Considering either a short fixed-term tenancy (90 days or less) or a longer-term rental could be beneficial in this situation.

Alternatively, you could lease the property under the Property Law Act 2007 to an employer who is wanting to use the property as rental accommodation for their employees. The agreement could have a fixed end date, allowing you to regain the premises at the desired time.

There are some rules around renting your property for any length of time, however, and we would encourage homeowners to check out their obligations before entering into a tenancy agreement, particularly around the Residential Tenancy Act and healthy homes standards.

A useful link for more information is: **[www.tenancy.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/](https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/)**

Before entering any of these arrangements, we recommend seeking legal advice to ensure it is appropriate for your circumstances. We also recommend speaking with your insurance company.



# Counting the high cost of vandalism

Vandalism of district facilities is an ongoing concern for Southland District Council, costing tens of thousands of dollars to repair and causing a risk to public safety.

The main areas targeted are community facilities and roading.

Strategic manager transport Hartley Hare says “vandalism is a serious concern, since it can lead to or contribute to road incidents such as crashes resulting in serious injury and even death”. Community facilities contract manager Jacqui Lighthart says vandalism of toilets and reserves is an “ongoing nuisance” for contractors and staff and an unnecessary cost to ratepayers.

In the first 10 months of 2023 SDC spent \$125,380 repairing or replacing damaged or missing road signs.

In many cases it’s impossible to tell whether the damage was deliberate or accidental, so not all of this total can be directly attributed to vandalism, although 192 cases of broken signposts up till October seems a suspiciously high number.

Missing signs are a good indicator of theft, though, because if they’re not where they’re supposed to be they’ve most likely been stolen. Nearly \$38,000 alone had been spent replacing missing signs up till October. Another \$22,499.70 had been coded by Council’s roading contractors as “sign vandalism”.

Hartley said road signs provided valuable information to drivers and other road users.

“They represent rules that are in place to keep you safe, and help to communicate messages to drivers and pedestrians that can maintain order and reduce crashes.

“In addition to the human cost of missing or damaged signs it results in increased costs to ratepayers to replace, repair, or maintain the vandalised signs along with interrupting and

detracting from planned works programmes.”

Jacqui says in the 2021 financial year Council spent \$12,433 repairing vandalism to community facilities. There was a lull for a couple of years during Covid lockdowns where damage repairs hovered around the \$3,000-\$4,000 mark, but Jacqui says the incidence of vandalism was ramping up again.

“The main thing we get is doors ripped off toilets, for instance at Clifden, Athol, and Garston. You get dispensers and bowls ripped out or destroyed.

“One way to try to reduce this kind of deliberate damage is to replace broken toilets with stainless steel units. They are a bit more expensive but they’re much sturdier. You can’t break stainless steel like you can porcelain.”

The community facilities team also put mesh over windows to make it harder to break windows, but graffiti remains a problem.

The worst case during the year was the arson of Cosy Nook toilet, Jacqui said. The cost of replacing it was around \$26,000, which was covered by insurance.

The Lumsden toilets had also been out of use for about a month at the time of writing because of the “huge amount of damage that went on there. They ripped out electricals”.

Jacqui says in parks and reserves the usual forms of vandalism are shooting or destroying signs, or vehicles being used to rip up grounds.

“We’re constantly having to send our contractors in to fill in the gouges they leave, which again is a major cost and a horrendous waste of their time. It also throws mowing schedules out because they can’t mow the grounds when they’ve been ripped up and while they’re being repaired.

“It all adds up to a cost in ratepayers’ money to repair the damage.”

## LET US KNOW

If you have any issue you would like to report to Council, or would like to make a general inquiry or provide feedback, you can lodge a request for service (RFS) with Council.

These requests will be actioned during business hours.

### You can either:

- Do it online:  
[southlanddc.govt.nz/services/do-it-online/requests-and-feedback/](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/services/do-it-online/requests-and-feedback/)
- Phone us on 0800 732 732
- Email us on  
[contacts@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:contacts@southlanddc.govt.nz)
- Download the Antenna app from your favourite app store to report issues and receive important messages about your area



# Southlanders urged to think about water usage

Southlanders are encouraged to manage their water usage now to reduce the chance of restrictions this summer.

Southland District Council strategic water and waste manager Grant Isaacs says that with the predictions of another warm summer it is timely to reinforce the need to manage water usage in the south.

“Restrictions are always a last resort and everyone has a part to play in ensuring we don’t need to introduce them,” Grant says.

He points to the near thing in Riverton last new year’s eve, when hot temperatures and an influx of holidaymakers put severe strain on the seaside town’s water reserves

and residents were asked to make an urgent effort to conserve water.

He encourages Southland residents to think about how they use water, particularly treated water.

“If we conserve water now and make it a habit, then Council will be better able to manage the peak demands in summer.”

## Some easy water conservation tools to manage water usage.

Install a water-saving shower head

Turn off the tap while brushing teeth



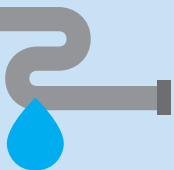
Use water-saving toilets

Don’t use unattended sprinklers



Take shorter showers

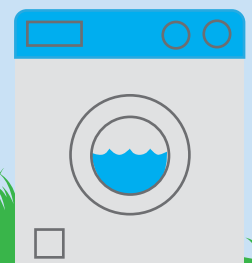
Fix household water leaks



Report any leaks

Restrict handheld watering to cooler parts of the day such as early morning or later in the evening

Use less water when cleaning



Some plumbing fittings have the potential to allow minute traces of metals to accumulate in water standing in the fittings for several hours.

Although the health risk is small, the Ministry of Health recommends you flush a mugful of water from your drinking-water tap each morning before use to remove any metals which may have dissolved from the plumbing fittings.

We are recommending this simple precaution for all households, including those on public and private water supplies.





# CHRISTMAS HOURS

## INVERCARGILL AND AREA OFFICES:

The following Southland District Council offices and libraries close at midday on Friday 22 December 2023 and re-open on the following dates:

OFFICE	OPENING DATES AND TIMES
Invercargill	Monday 8 January 2024 9am
Lumsden	Monday 8 January 2024 10am
Otautau	Monday 8 January 2024 9am
Riverton/Aparima	Monday 8 January 2024 9am
Stewart Island/Rakiura	Monday 8 January 2024 9am
Te Anau library	Wednesday 3 January 2024 9am
Winton	Monday 8 January 2024 9am
Wyndham	Closes on 21 December 2023 5pm Re-opens Tuesday 9 January 2024 2pm

## STEWART ISLAND/RAKIURA RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE

DATES	HOURS OF OPERATION
Friday 22 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Saturday 23 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Sunday 24 December 2023	Closed
Monday 25 December 2023	Closed
Tuesday 26 December 2023	Closed (Collection day)
Wednesday 27 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Thursday 28 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Friday 29 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Saturday 30 December 2023	OPEN 9.30am to 1pm
Sunday 31 December 2023	Closed
Monday 1 January 2024	Closed
Tuesday 2 January 2024	Closed (Collection day)
Wednesday 3 January 2024	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Thursday 4 January 2024	OPEN 9.30am to 4pm
Friday 5 January 2024	OPEN 9.30am to 4.30pm (normal hours)

## WHEELIE BIN DATES - CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR 2023/2024

Christmas Day – no collection – Tuesday to Saturday collection

New Year's Day – no collection – Tuesday to Saturday collection

Please put your bins out one day later from Monday 25 December 2023 through to Saturday 6 January 2024.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to increased demand in some areas, the time during the day of the collection may vary, so please ensure that your wheelie bin is out by 7am on your collection day.

## TRANSFER STATIONS / REFUSE SITES

All SDC transfer stations will be closed Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 December 2023 and Monday 1 and Tuesday 2 January 2024.

All other days will be normal operating hours.

A list of transfer/refuse station addresses, information about what you can dispose of at each one and where to buy tokens can be found on the WasteNet website: [wastenet.org.nz](http://wastenet.org.nz)

Transfer stations have Eftpos facilities on site.

## WALLACETOWN GREENWASTE SITE No Eftpos facilities on-site – tokens only.

Sunday 24 December 2023	OPEN
Sunday 31 December 2023	OPEN

Contact Southland District Council on 0800 732 732 for any issues at the recycling stations in the district during the holiday season.

# Leashes on beaches!

With summer coming up, Riverton's beautiful beaches are going to be teeming with people. We want everyone to be able to enjoy the beaches and be safe from incidents with uncontrolled dogs.

This is just a reminder that dogs must be on a leash while on the beach unless they are in a designated area where dogs are allowed off leash. There are signs indicating where these areas are along the walkways to the beach.

There are lots of places in Southland to enjoy with your dog. You can find maps on Southland District Council's website, here:

[southlanddc.govt.nz/home-and-property/animals/dogs/walk-your-dog/](http://southlanddc.govt.nz/home-and-property/animals/dogs/walk-your-dog/)

Please keep dogs under control at all times. Dogs love to enjoy time off leash but make sure you are in a designated dog exercise area and they are still under control at all times.

Dogs are not allowed in playgrounds and cemeteries anywhere in the district.



## MICROCHIPPING TIMETABLE

AREA	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
<b>Invercargill Office (car park)</b>	Wednesday, 1st 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Wednesday, 5th 11.30 – 12 noon	Wednesday 1st 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Otautau Office (at rear)</b>	None	Tuesday, 7th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Tuesday, 7th 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Lumsden Railway (at rear)</b>	None	Wednesday 8th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Wednesday 8th 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Riverton Office</b>	None	Thursday 9th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Thursday 9th 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Winton (Wemyss street)</b>	Tuesday, 7th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Tuesday, 4th 11.30 – 12 noon	Tuesday 14th 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Te Anau Office (at rear)</b>	None	Thursday, 16th 11.30 – 12 noon	None	Thursday 16th 11.30 – 12 noon
<b>Wyndham Office (at rear)</b>	Tuesday 14th 2.00 – 2.30 pm	None	Tuesday 13th 2.00 – 2.30 pm	Tuesday 14th 2.00 – 2.30 pm

All dogs eligible to be registered with Southland District Council can be microchipped for free.  
All dogs must be registered by three months of age.



# Council develops plan for closed landfills in Southland



A risk assessment report into identified closed landfills will enable Southland District Council to formulate a plan for their ongoing protection.

In Council's 2021-2031 long term plan \$500,000 was allocated to investigation of all landfills and to action any recommendations. This was split \$150,000 in 2021/2022 and \$350,000 in 2023/2024.

Strategic manager water and waste Mike Bourke said a review of all closed landfill sites was done by e3 Scientific in 2022.

“This investigation has provided Council with a comprehensive review of all sites and the information allows us to put the right steps in place to manage these into the future.”

Of the 62 landfills previously identified, eight were subsequently found to be private with another four not considered to have landfill material deposited.

56 separate Selected Land Use Register (SLUS) sites, including some landfills split into multiple SLUS records, were investigated. A number of sites were considered low risk and capable of being managed through a simplified site management plan, including five sites which no longer required on-going, proactive site management.

A total of 17 sites were considered to present a possible risk due to leachate impacting surface water or groundwater

quality, or due to potential exposure to erosion/flooding. For these sites, it was recommended detailed site management plans be prepared to act as a guide for additional investigation and assessment.

After reviewing the e3 Scientific investigation, SDC staff created a risk register based on likelihood of failure, consequences of failure and ability to mitigate risk and 17 sites were identified as requiring further works.

Closed landfill management plans were created for the 17 sites, containing considerably more detail than the original report. The two main recommendations were surface water/groundwater sampling for leachate contaminants and assessment of at-risk sites by a coastal engineer for stability and protection options.

The first round of water sampling on some sites has been undertaken with results being processed currently. Other sites are due for their first round of sampling in coming weeks when weather permits.

The Colac Bay landfill was included with further water sampling recommended to confirm presence and concentrations of leachate indicators upstream and downstream of the site. The first round of sampling is scheduled for the coming weeks. Erosion of the coastline will continue to be monitored, however the distance from the coast to landfill compared to other sites around the district does not make this site an immediate risk requiring reactive works.

“The Colac Bay site has been assessed three times in the past and has been listed as low risk, although beach erosion is still occurring but a long way off yet. It is considered that the site may be

vulnerable in the long term, but current risk is low,” Mr Bourke said.

e2 Environmental were engaged to undertake coastal engineering assessment of sites at Otautau, Bayswater, Wreys Bush, Thornbury and Riverton Rocks. The subsequent erosion protection for landfills report gave protect in place vs removal considerations, the works likely required, high level costs and approximate timelines for this to occur.

Based on e2 Environmental recommendations, protection/removal works at Otautau, Bayswater, Wreys Bush, Thornbury and Riverton Rocks have been added into the 2024 -2034 long term plan with an estimated cost of \$12 million. These works are planned to be completed within the next 15- 20 years.

The Bluecliffs Beach Road dump site, near Tuatapere, was not included in the report as Council was not aware of its existence until recently.

Historically, waste disposal in Southland was decentralised and most townships had one or more local tip sites that fitted their community needs. These landfills by today's standards were poorly designed, managed and located in marginal areas, typically empty gravel pits or the like.

When the Resource Management Act 1991 came into effect, resource consents became required to control environmental impacts of these activities. As a result, these localised sites were closed rather than gain consent.

Southland District Council is responsible for any works required going forward due to being the successor of the local authority that operated or allowed the landfill, or the current landowner of the site.

# Award for Beyond 2025 Southland plan

The plan for the future economy, environment, and people of Murihiku Southland was recognised at the 2023 Economic Development New Zealand Best Practice Awards.

The Beyond 2025 Southland Regional Long Term Plan, facilitated by Great South, was awarded Best Practice for Integrated Strategy at the awards ceremony in October.

The plan was recognised by economic development leaders as demonstrating long-term benefits, an innovative and robust approach, and providing inspiration for other regions across New Zealand.

Beyond 2025 Southland project lead Bobbi Brown said that while she was delighted to accept the award on behalf of the project team, the real honour was planning for the region's future.

"To me, when it comes to long-term planning, there isn't a greater honour than being able to plan for and support the future of the place you proudly



From left: Beyond 2025 Southland project lead Bobbi Brown, Great South chief executive Chami Abeysinghe, and Great South general manager strategic projects Stephen Canny.

call home. This award is testament to the commitment, hard mahi, expertise, and passion of the project team, and to the support and enthusiasm received from the Murihiku Southland community, mana whenua, local councils, and government agencies."

The Beyond 2025 Southland Plan is evidence-based and built around clear aspirations for Murihiku Southland's people, environment, and economy. The award highlighted that the development process involved a high degree of partnership and community engagement with surveys, roadshow events and other opportunities to provide feedback.

As the Regional Development Agency for Murihiku Southland, and with its focus on economic diversification, Great South was contracted by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to

lead the long-term planning work for the region as part of Southland's Just Transition.

Great South chief executive Chami Abeysinghe, who was also there to accept the award at the gala dinner, said it was wonderful to see the plan recognised at a national level. It was the culmination of an 18-month process and a lot of hard work, she said.

"For Murihiku Southland, this plan provides a foundation from which we can embrace opportunities and ensure the most appropriate use of resources to look after our people and place. I am delighted that this work facilitated by Great South has been highlighted and for the inspiration it may provide to other regions in their approach to planning for the future."

With additional funding received, Great South is now focused on facilitating the implementation stage of the Beyond 2025 Southland Plan.



Taking stock of carbon emissions is becoming increasingly important and it's now easier for Murihiku Southland businesses to do that and help the region meet net zero goals.

Great South runs two regular programmes to address carbon emissions, a Decarbonisation Workshop Series for business and the more in-depth Murihiku Southland Sustainable Tourism Programme, specifically for tourism businesses and organisations.

So far 108 people representing 74 Murihiku Southland businesses have taken part in the programmes.

In addition, a new partnership between Great South and carbon emissions certification provider Ekos means that businesses that want to take the next step and achieve carbon certification can now access a significantly reduced rate.

Great South general manager strategic projects Stephen Canny said the total cost for certification would depend on the size of the business's emissions but

this partnership would go a long way towards overcoming a price barrier, particularly for small businesses.

"Going through the carbon certification process provides an opportunity to take a close look at the main causes of emissions within a business and to make changes to minimise them."

Going that step further and getting independent validation could support product and business branding, Mr Canny said.

"It's something customers, prospective staff, investors, funders and insurers are increasingly looking for and we encourage any business that takes part in either of our programmes to go through the certification process and to celebrate their efforts through branding and marketing."

For the region and New Zealand as a whole to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, this was something every business would need to action, Mr Canny said.

The partnership with Ekos came about as part of Great South going through its own carbon certification process, which it achieved in September.

Great South released the Net Zero Southland Report in 2021 and initiated the Government Waihōpai Invercargill Decarbonisation Contestable Fund in partnership with EECA, which has helped 11 businesses to convert boiler and heating systems to renewable energy. Work is under way for this programme to be extended beyond Invercargill.

- Registrations of interest are now being taken for the next Decarbonisation Workshop Series, with one in March and one in May 2024. Please email [paula@greatsouth.nz](mailto:paula@greatsouth.nz).
- Expressions of interest are also being taken for the next Murihiku Sustainable Tourism Programme, which will be held on Stewart Island Rakiura\* in April 2024. Please email [amie@greatsouth.nz](mailto:amie@greatsouth.nz).

\*Subject to sufficient registrations.

# Reducing emissions easier for Murihiku Southland businesses



Participants in the Murihiku Sustainable Tourism Programme held in Te Anau earlier this year.

# New guide showcases our food offerings

Visitors to Murihiku Southland, and locals too, will be able to get a taste of the region more easily by way of a new food guide.

Murihiku Eats, a food guide to Southland, includes 24 food and beverage establishments from across the region that celebrate the Southland food story, a map to locate them and information about some of our signature food stories, including titi muttonbird, Hokonui Moonshine, Fiordland venison and the iconic Bluff oyster.

Great South destination development manager Amie Young said visitors often wanted to try foods and learn about the culinary delights of a particular area and this guide would help make sure they could do that in Southland.

"People often come to Southland knowing about cheese rolls, but there are so many other foods to savour, and we want to make sure visitors get the opportunity to experience as many as possible."

The businesses included in the guide were those that best showcased local produce and food stories, Ms Young said.

Great South has been working on various initiatives to develop Southland as a food tourism destination, such as supporting the development of Savour the South and other events that celebrate our local food offerings, as well as working closely with Eat New Zealand.

An event to encourage the hospitality sector to utilise local ingredients and share our unique food stories, Our kai, our people, our place, was held earlier this year.

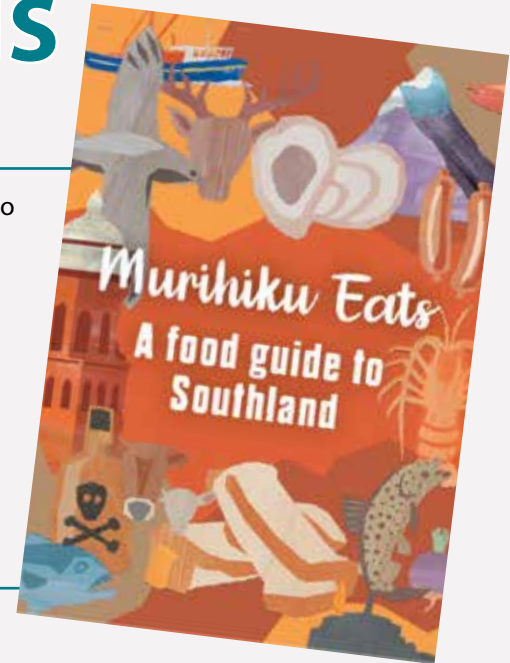
The opportunity to attract visitors to Southland based on the strength of its unique food was identified as part of the Southland Murihiku Destination Strategy developed in 2019 and this was further explored within the Southland Murihiku Food Tourism Strategy, released in 2021.

Murihiku Southland was one of the first regions in New Zealand to undertake such a comprehensive analysis of its potential to become a food tourism destination.

"There's still plenty of opportunity for development and we hope this guide will encourage other eateries to champion local food stories and highlight them with their customers," Ms Young said.

- The guides can be picked up at the establishments listed in the guide, as well at visitor centres across the region.

For those wanting to have Murihiku Eats guides available at their business, they can be ordered at [greatsouth.nz/brochure-orders](https://greatsouth.nz/brochure-orders), while an online version of the guide can be found at [southlandnz.com](https://southlandnz.com).




## Events in Southland

*Your Back Yard Events Calendar*

Discover upcoming events happening in your community!

Check out the online calendar here:  
[southlandnz.com/events-southland](https://southlandnz.com/events-southland)

BACKING EVENTS IN THE SOUTH  
 GREAT SOUTH  
 Southland Regional Development Agency



# Waikaia Forest Trail's stage one completed

Stage one of the Waikaia Forest Trails project, the pump track and trail hub base, was officially opened by Southland District Council Mayor Rob Scott on 1 October, in front of a crowd of around 250 people.

Levi Goodall, one of New Zealand's top freestyle mountainbike riders, rated the pump track "one of the top three in the country" after he showcased his skills to a crowd of all ages and abilities who brought their bikes. Mayor Rob said, "this is community-led initiative and development at its best".

Trust chairperson Hilary Kelso praised the community for their help with the project, acknowledging the huge support of fundraisers and the countless volunteer hours of landscaping.

The hub base where all mountainbike trails in the forest will start, includes a large shade sail picnic area with seating and is fully landscaped with native plants, many of which were donated and planted by volunteers. Stage one has cost around \$150,000, with savings made possible by many discounted and donated hours by local businesses and a huge amount of volunteer hours.

The pump park offers an opportunity for bikers to develop skills that will help to prepare them for the forest tracks when they are completed.

Waikaia Trails Trust is delighted to have completed this stage of its vision of approximately 25km of mountainbike trails in the nearby Southland District Council-owned Waikaia Forest.

The pump park was completed by Graded Earth Ltd of Christchurch, and owner Matthew Coultas and staff member Lewis Taka have recently spent a week in Waikaia scoping out the next stage of the project, which will include a connector track from the trail hub to McKee Park and a grade two loop track in the forest. Construction of this stage will take place at the beginning of February.

One of the trust's primary focuses for the project is that all the mountainbike trails are suitable for the adaptive rider community. To enable the trust to fulfill



Waikaia Trails Trust members, from left (front) Jann Robertson (administrator), Daniel Butler, Hilary Kelso (chair) and Colleen Morton; (back) Sam Ruddenklau, James Anderson, Mayor Rob Scott and Dylan Ditchfield.



the vision to make it a fully accessible facility, it will develop a facility that will provide outdoor recreational activities for the 29% in Southlanders (stats in 2013) who identify with a disability. The tracks will be specifically designed and built to meet the individual needs of all groups that are affected by a disability.

Graded Earth Ltd has experience and knowledge of the specifications needed to provide a network that can be ridden confidently by those with a disability as well as able-bodied riders. The trust is particularly excited about this element of the planning, development and provision of a facility that will truly be accessible to all.

The trails will also be available for primary and secondary schools throughout Southland to use in their PE programmes, wellbeing programmes,



general fitness, team building and more. The trails will have no barriers to race, age, cultural backgrounds and other communities. If a person can ride a bike, they are welcome to use the mountainbike rails.

All levels of abilities will be catered for, from beginners to advanced riders, as well as the adaptive riding community. The mountainbike trails will be free to ride, and Waikaia Trails Trust intends in the future to provide, via funding or donations, bikes for those who don't have them.

Waikaia Trails Trust is incredibly excited to be moving towards the next stages of the Waikaia Forest Trails Project now that the hub base has been completed to such a high standard and fully celebrated and embraced by the wider community.

# \$4.8M in Better Off funding

A large number of community projects were approved by the Department of Internal Affairs following Southland District Council's application for Better Off funding.

The \$4.8 million worth of projects are from a total of \$2 billion in three waters reform funding being allocated nationally by the government to councils to support investment in community wellbeing. Crown Infrastructure Partners Ltd is monitoring the work.

The Southland district projects are in various stages of completion, or are due to be started soon. All funding amounts are plus GST (if applicable). The projects are:



<b>SPATIAL PLANNING PROJECTS INITIATIVE:</b>	<b>\$1 million</b> to develop a GIS-based spatial plan
<b>TE ANAU/MANAPOURI:</b>	<b>\$360,000</b> for open spaces improvements, consisting of: purchase and installation of playpod and seating at Village Green; purchase and installation of adult exercising equipment at Fraser's Beach walking/exercise track; installation of seating and shade space at Te Anau playground; Te Anau playground development (Manapouri scoped, Te Anau waiting on completed basin development plan)
<b>RIVERTON APARIMA:</b>	<b>\$345,000</b> for Taramea Bay development, stage one of Riverton and Colac Bay development
<b>TOILET UPGRADES:</b>	<b>\$337,500</b> to upgrade the following toilets: Princess Street, Riverton; Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau; Tokanui; Tuatapere Main Road; Wallacetown.
<b>TUATAPERE:</b>	<b>\$310,000</b> to create tourism precinct at Tuatapere Railway Station.
<b>STEWART ISLAND RAKIURA:</b>	<b>\$300,000</b> for Butterfields Beach walking track initiative, installing walkways and carrying out beautification.
<b>COMMUNITY BOARDS:</b>	<b>\$300,000</b> to support the nine community boards with potential Better Off tranche 2 applications.
<b>OTAUTAU:</b>	<b>\$275,000</b> towards new camping ground (scoping done, now in delivery)
<b>WALLACETOWN:</b>	<b>\$257,000</b> for development of pump track and development of area near community centre.
<b>ORETI:</b>	<b>\$230,000</b> to upgrade community halls at Dipton, Ryal Bush and Winton
<b>WAIKAIA TRAILS TRUST:</b>	<b>\$200,000</b> towards development of pump track and trail hub, and mountain bike trails (\$105,000 paid for pump track, stage 2 starting soon)
<b>MURIHIKU RŪNANGA:</b>	<b>\$150,000</b> to support the four papatipu rūnanga with potential Better Off tranche 2 applications, and foster relationship building
<b>WYNDHAM:</b>	<b>\$150,000</b> to Lions Club for a memorial in Baird-Hewat Doctors Square <b>\$50,000</b> for camping ground feasibility study (first draft received) <b>\$40,000</b> for Mokoreta-Redan Centennial Hall
<b>LUMSDEN:</b>	<b>\$100,000</b> for playground and skate park upgrade (equipment ordered, installation early 2024) <b>\$50,000</b> for museum development
<b>WAIHOPAI TOETOE:</b>	<b>\$100,000</b> to build footpaths in Waihopai Toetoe district
<b>GARSTON:</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> for barbecue and reserve improvements (spatial plan under way)
<b>MOSSBURN:</b>	<b>\$38,000</b> for tennis court resurface (happening before Christmas)
<b>ATHOL:</b>	<b>\$31,000</b> for tennis courts (happening before Christmas)
<b>RIVERSDALE TENNIS CLUB:</b>	<b>\$30,000</b> towards resurfacing tennis courts (two of four courts done, further fundraising required)
<b>TOKANUI:</b>	<b>\$30,000</b> for skate park
<b>BALFOUR:</b>	<b>\$20,000</b> for Lions Club, concrete pad for basketball half-court (completed) <b>\$12,000</b> for Festival of Lights (installed)
<b>WAIKAIA</b>	<b>\$11,500</b> towards sculpture trail
<b>OHAI-NIGHTCAPS:</b>	<b>\$11,500</b> for old railway line walking track (under way)
<b>NIGHTCAPS:</b>	<b>\$11,500</b> McGregor Park master plan (under way)



Southland District Council has a range of scholarships and grants available for residents of Southland District.

Full details, criteria and application forms are available on our website:

[southlanddc.govt.nz](https://southlanddc.govt.nz) > My Council > Funding & Grants

For more information on any of these funds and scholarships, call Kathryn Cowie on 0800 732 732.

# SDC GRANT FUNDING

## Community Partnership Fund

Administered by each of the nine community boards and available to support projects in their respective areas. Closing dates and application forms can be found online at [southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf](https://southlanddc.govt.nz/cpf).

## Creative Communities

Available for arts and cultural projects and initiatives which stimulate and strengthen local arts activity and participation.

Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

## Sport NZ – Rural Travel Fund

Available to assist with transport expenses associated with participating in regular local competitions. Ages 5-19.

Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

## District Initiatives Fund

Available for projects of a larger scale which benefit the whole region, or at least two community board areas. Applications close on 31 March and 30 September.

## SDC Scholarships/ Bursaries

### Centennial Bursary

Two scholarships valued at \$2,000 each, awarded annually. Applications close 20 December.

### SDC Eric Hawkes Memorial Outward Bound Scholarship

Two scholarships in this category: one for 18 to 26 years and one for 27 years and over. Applications close 20 December.

### Valmai Robertson Arts Scholarship

Contestable fund of up to \$2,500 annually. Applications close 20 December.

## Other opportunities

### Northern Southland Development Fund

Available for the development of initiatives which benefit the residents of the Northern Southland Development Fund area (represented by the Southland District Council Five Rivers ward and the Dipton Community Levy area). Applications close 31 March.

### Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy Fund

Available to support activities and facilities for the benefit of visitors to Stewart Island; and activities and facilities that mitigate the adverse effects of visitors on the environment. Applications close 31 March each year.

### Ohai Railway Fund

Available for residents of the former Ohai Railway Board area, for the development of community facilities, programmes and other activities, tertiary education and employment training. Applications close 31 March and 30 September.

### John Beange Fund

Available to support recognised community groups or organisations and individuals within the Wyndham area, or for projects for the benefit of residents within the Wyndham area. Eligible purposes include assistance occasioned by age, illness, congenital defect, accident or other misfortune, as well as the advancement of education and learning. Applications for 2021 close on 31 March.

## Contact us



All offices: **0800 732 732**

District libraries: **0800 732 542**

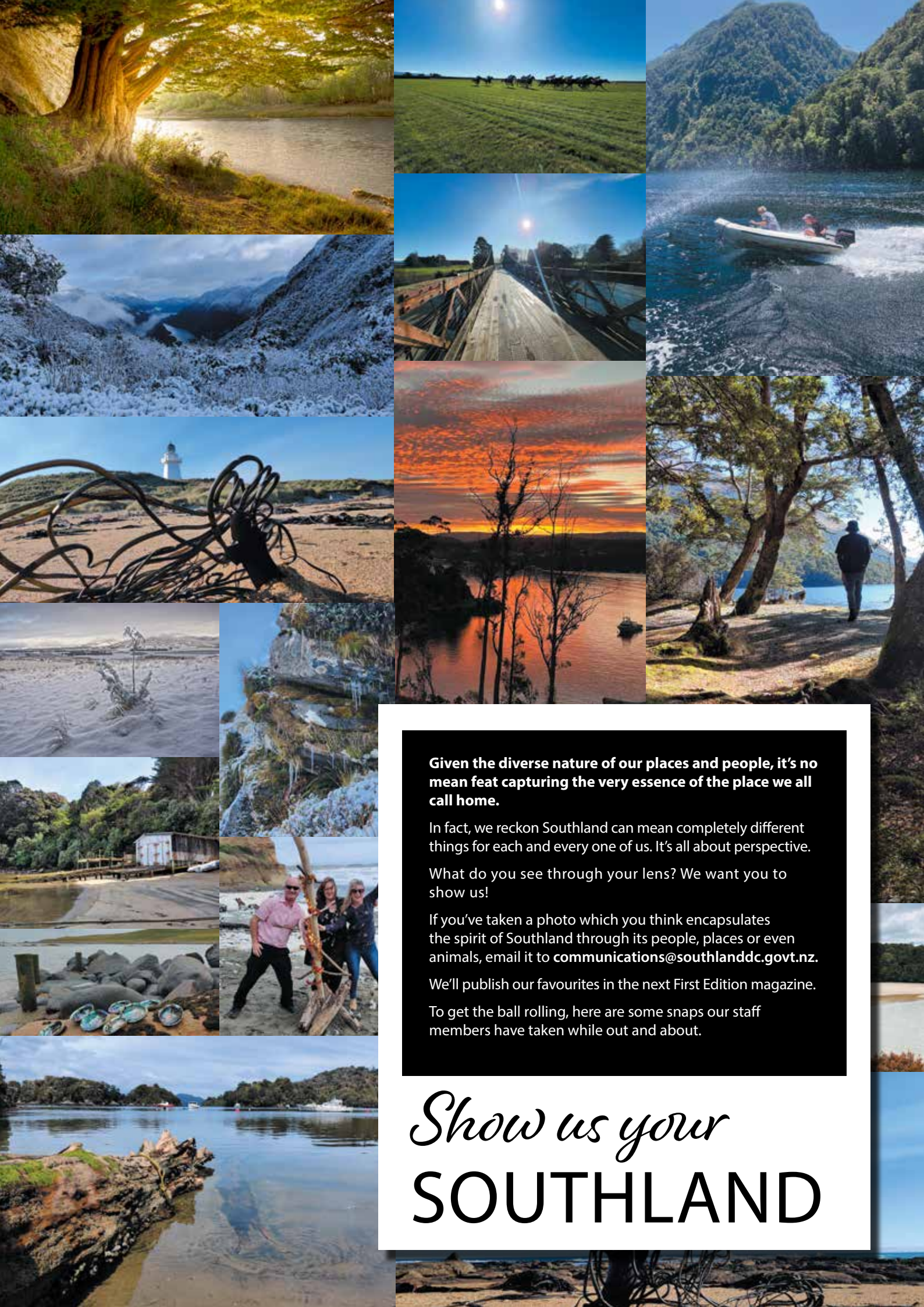


**[funding@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:funding@southlanddc.govt.nz)**



**[southlanddc.govt.nz](https://southlanddc.govt.nz)**





**Given the diverse nature of our places and people, it's no mean feat capturing the very essence of the place we all call home.**

In fact, we reckon Southland can mean completely different things for each and every one of us. It's all about perspective.

What do you see through your lens? We want you to show us!

If you've taken a photo which you think encapsulates the spirit of Southland through its people, places or even animals, email it to [communications@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:communications@southlanddc.govt.nz).

We'll publish our favourites in the next First Edition magazine.

To get the ball rolling, here are some snaps our staff members have taken while out and about.

*Show us your*  
**SOUTHLAND**