



Community board plan

NORTHERN

2021-2024



Northern Southland folk have earned a reputation for rolling up their sleeves and getting the job done.

So, naturally, we're treating this Northern Community Board plan as a 'to do' list.

Within these pages you will find goals to achieve and a clear direction to follow as we strive to lead Northern forward.

Community-led development is at the heart of it all and that's where you come in. We're excited to work alongside residents to achieve the actions set out.

There's untapped potential in spades right here on our doorstep. Lumsden is our hub and has evolved into a great location as a tourist stopover, while Athol, Garston and Mossburn remain popular spots for those travelling between Queenstown and Fiordland.

Our focus is to link our communities together because, let's face it, a united approach is vital to achieving the outcomes we are endeavouring to achieve.

It's time to expand our horizons and proactively take our Northern home into the future.

Greg Tither

Chairperson
Northern Community Board

Our Vision

The Northern area of Southland will be a healthy, caring, connected, vibrant, welcoming, diverse and progressive community



OUR AREA

Northern Community Board

We started talking to our Northern Southland community about what they wanted for the future of their area.

They told us what they loved about the place, what they saw as weaknesses and challenges of living in the area and what opportunities they saw for Northern Southland for the future.



Northern communities include:

Athol, Castlerock, Five Rivers, Garston, Josephville, Lintley, Lowther, Lumsden, Mossburn, Nokomai, Parawa.

1700's

The Ngāti Māmoē and Ngāi Tahu tribes fought on the nearby Five Rivers plain

1861



European settlers took up land in the district and the first building, **the Elbow Hotel**, was built in 1875

1876

Garston land was surveyed into farms, many of which were settled by former goldminers. Nowadays, farming remains the predominant occupation of the valley.

1862

One of Southland's largest sheep stations, Nokomai's fame grew when gold was discovered by **James Lamb**



1878

Railway lines reached Lumsden from Invercargill and Gore in 1880, and Elbow became a rail junction.

1885

The settlement name of Elbow is changed to

LUMSDEN

1935

A fire destroyed the Lumsden railway station and tea rooms



1991

Stone walling was erected in Athol to highlight a technique used by goldminers and farmers in earlier days



1972

The **first deer farm** in Southland was established near Mossburn.



The **first ski rope** in the South Island was installed at the Garston Ski Field

1948



2014

The **Around the Mountains cycle trail** was officially opened

2009

The announcement of government funding for

QUICK START TRAILS

by then Prime Minister Sir John Key was the catalyst for making the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail a reality.



2007

Meridian Energy's White Hill **29 turbine wind farm** was the first wind farm to be built in the South Island.



NORTHERN

population is 1884

Male	54%
Female	46%
Under 15	22%
15-29 years	18%
30-64 years	46%
65 and over	13%

WORK AND LABOUR FORCE STATUS

Employed Full-time	58%
Employed Part-time	17%
Unemployed	2%
Not in the Labour Force	23%

ETHNIC MAKEUP

European	80%
Maori	8%
Pacific peoples	1%
Asian	8%
Other	3%

HOME OWNERSHIP

Own or partly own	50%
Do not own and do not hold in family trust	50%

A photograph of three people standing next to a red Farmall tractor in a field with mountains in the background. The tractor is red with 'FARMALL' written on the side. A man in a dark jacket stands to the left, a woman in a light blue shirt and green shorts stands next to the tractor, and a man in a patterned shirt and dark shorts stands to the right. The tractor is pulling a implement with four large, rusty, circular discs. The background shows a vast field and rolling hills under a cloudy sky.

Our people **value**

Our strong rural farming sector

Our caring, trusting and friendly community

Our excellent recreational facilities

By the community for the community

This plan is a reflection of our community working together to build a better now and a future we can all be proud of.

Three main outcomes emerged when discussing the Northern area.

1 A progressive and flourishing economy creating opportunities for growth and employment.



2 A safe and healthy community with access to quality facilities and services.



3 A connected, involved and thriving community.





How will we create more opportunities for
growth and employment?

OUTCOME 1

A progressive and flourishing economy creating opportunities for growth and employment.

The community value their strong agricultural base and the many businesses within the area that support and service both the farming industry and the community. They have signalled the importance for the industry to continue to develop by adopting innovative, progressive practices to create further opportunities for growth and employment for the area.

The community have also highlighted the importance of diversifying and supporting the economy through seizing on tourism opportunities, attracting entrepreneurs to the area, ensuring the Northern area has enough housing to support development and further supporting local businesses.



Encourage business innovation.

The Northern community highlighted the need for businesses, particularly agricultural, to adopt new practices which will lead to further employment opportunities within the area.

Destination management

The Northern community value their central location to Queenstown, Invercargill and Fiordland and see opportunity to encourage passing visitors to stop and experience the Northern area. To do this, the community have signalled that they need to develop attractions, provide good accommodation options, ensure their infrastructure (eg, EV stations) can support the visitor industry and promote and market the area in a responsible and sustainable manner.



Housing

The Northern community indicated that there are few to no rentals available in the area and there is also a lack of choice for housing. To attract people and businesses to move to the area, this challenge needs to be addressed.



OUTCOME 1

ACTION PLANS

Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Encourage businesses to adopt new, innovative practices that will create further employment opportunities within the area.		Improve communications between Council and the business community which could include the facilitation of workshops with the business community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local businesses• Southland District Council• Around the Mountains Cycle Trail• Central government agencies	Short-term
		Access central government funds and programmes that can support development of infrastructure, tourism, employment, business and training.		Ongoing
		Continue to develop and advocate for district-wide infrastructure that supports business and tourism growth.		Ongoing



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
<p>Develop and implement a Northern Destination Management Plan with a focus on cycling that includes product development, promotion and marketing of the area and infrastructure and funding requirements.</p> <p>The plan to encourage people to visit and stay in Northern Southland.</p>	<p>Contribute to the development of the plan.</p>	<p>Facilitate the development of a Destination Management Plan in collaboration with Great South and the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great South • Southland District Council • Around the Mountains Cycle Trail • Local businesses and organisations • MBIE 	<p>Short to medium term</p>



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Facilitate the opportunity to create an attraction campaign aimed at sharing stories of success within new industries in Southland and promote the Northern area to entrepreneurs as a place to set up business.	Set up a working group to develop the attraction campaign.	Work with the community in setting up a working group and connect them with key stakeholders. Provide financial assistance if possible through grant funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great South • Southland District Council • Community groups and organisations • Local businesses 	Short to medium term

Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Work with Council to identify and encourage use of innovative housing models that may be of use to our area.	Attend a meeting with stakeholders to gain information about issues in the NCB area and identification of possible solutions.	Community board to support through resource and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council Southland Housing Action Forum Local businesses 	Short-term



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Encourage locals to 'shop local'.	Work with local businesses and Council to develop a plan.	Support this plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council Community groups and organisations Local businesses 	Short-term

Outcome 2

A healthy & safe community with access to quality facilities & services



Residents in the Northern community are proud of living in a place where people feel welcome and have a sense of belonging.

Research proves that individuals who feel a sense of security, belonging and trust in their community have better health than those who feel isolated or marginalised.

While the community agree that they have good facilities and services (especially in regards to emergency services), they highlighted that there is an urgent need to focus on supporting the ageing population, ensuring quality maternity services are available, improving access to medical services and promoting road safety.



How can we ensure we are a
safe and healthy community?

Medical services that support the ongoing health and wellbeing of the community

The Lumsden Maternity Home was downgraded by the Southern DHB in August 2018 and now only provides a space for antenatal and post-natal care for mothers. It is also only set up for emergency births. Since the downgrading, this has been a very political issue within the community, and local and central government. Mothers have been forced to give birth on the sides of roads as well as at the downgraded centre, where none of the right equipment has been available. At the time of the consultation, the community stressed that they would like to see the Lumsden Maternity Home reopen and offer quality services to mothers and babies.



Outcome 2

ACTION PLANS



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Support the provision of appropriate medical services to support the ongoing health and wellbeing of the community.	Provide feedback, advice and support on this issue and potentially form a working group to drive this going forward.	Support the community in terms of advocacy to Te Whatu Ora Southern and central government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local women • Southland District Council • Doctors, Nurses, Midwives • Northern Southland Medical Trust • Te Whatu Ora Southern • St John • FENZ 	Short-term



Supporting our ageing population

Residents have stressed a need to support their ever-increasing ageing population through the provision of quality aged-care facilities and services within the community.

Limited medical services and facilities (including opening hours and no helipad) were also issues within the community.

Currently the elderly have to leave the community to find appropriate aged-care support, which can result in a rapid deterioration in their health and wellbeing.



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Understanding the support services and housing options currently available for our elderly population and investigate opportunities for improvement.	Provide feedback, advice and support on this issue and potentially form a working group to drive this going forward.	Provide support to the working group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland District Council • Aged-care providers • MBIE • Ministry of Health • Te Whatu Ora Southern 	Short-term



Driver safety

Residents have expressed concern over driver safety within the Northern area for both visitors to the area and those from the area who need to get safely home from functions, as well as the quality of roading.

Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Support safe driving behaviour for both tourist and local drivers in the Northern Southland area.	Support programmes such as the governments 'Safer Journey's Visiting Drivers' and Drive my Life etc.	Provide communications support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland District Council • Local groups and organisations • Local businesses • Road Safety Southland • Southern REAP (Drive My Life) • Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency 	Ongoing

Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Support safe driving behaviour for both tourist and local drivers in the Northern Southland area.	<p>Notify Police straight away if erratic driving behaviour is observed within the Northern area.</p> <p>Determine the feasibility of the provision of a local shuttle service for people who are attending social events within the community.</p> <p>Notify Southland District Council when there are roading issues so that they can be fixed in a timely manner.</p>	Ensure Southland District Council and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency are aware of roading issues within the Northern area and ensure community are aware of roading developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland District Council • Local groups and organisations • Local businesses • Road Safety Southland • Southern REAP (Drive My Life) • Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency 	Ongoing



Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Improve local emergency facilities and medical services.	Determine the feasibility of the development of a new helipad within the Northern community.	Funding support and advocacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland District Council • Otago Rescue Helicopters • Local emergency service providers 	Ongoing

Outcome 3

A connected, involved and thriving community



The Northern community value their strong community spirit, their aptitude to work hard and play hard, the friendliness within their communities and their welcoming attitude towards new active community members. As such they would like to ensure their continued strong community spirit by encouraging people (particularly new residents) to get involved in the community.

Residents would also like to provide a cohesive environment for recreational activities to occur, to encourage further connectedness.



How will we encourage a connected,
involved and thriving community?

Outcome 3 ACTION PLANS

Community involvement

Residents have expressed a desire for more community members to become involved in the community in terms of volunteering for particular community groups and volunteer organisations, volunteering their time for events and participating in community activities.

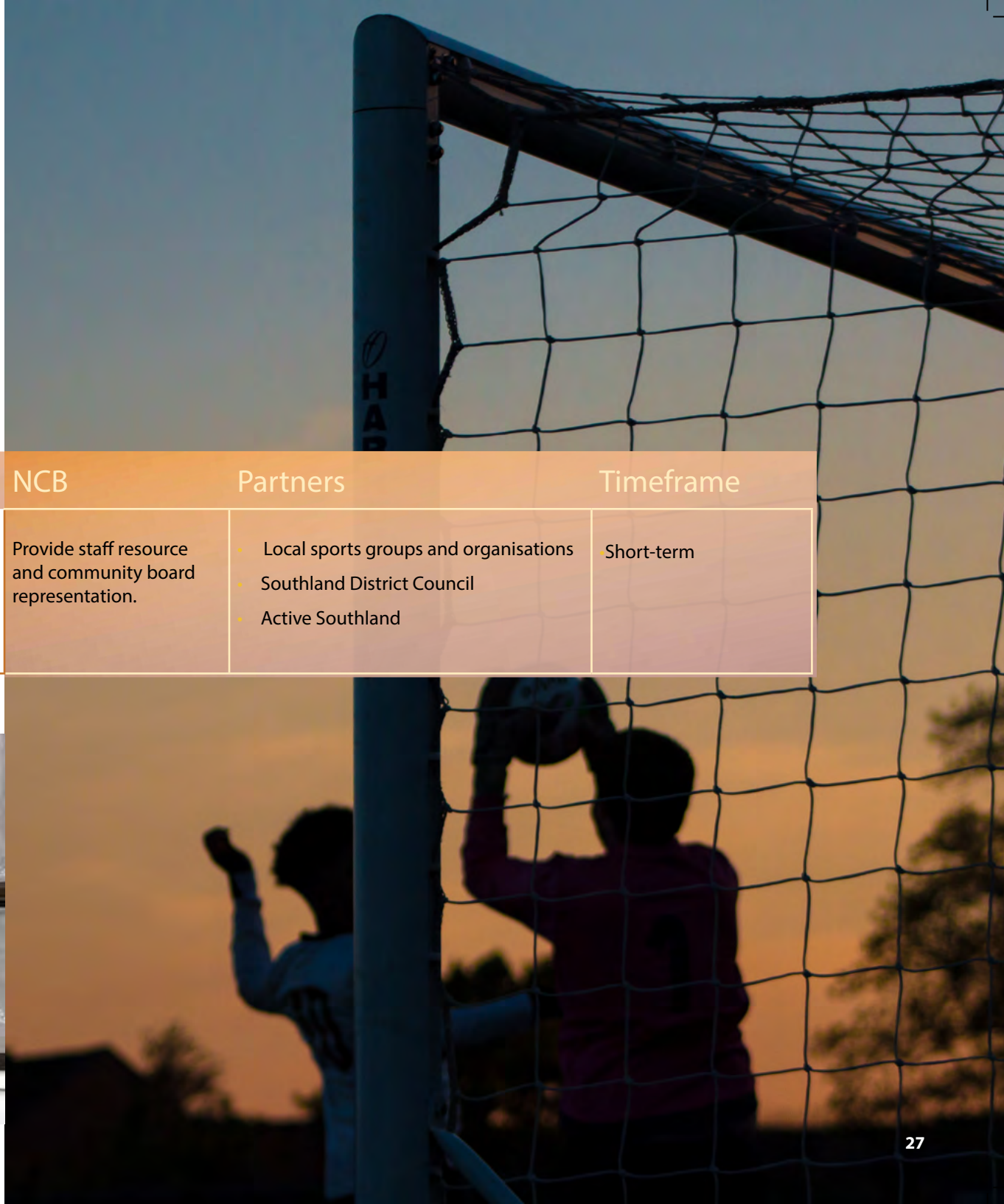


Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Encourage more community involvement in event organising, community groups and volunteer organisations, especially from newer members of the community.	Hold a family-friendly event to connect the community and ask for ideas from newer residents on how they can become more involved in the community.	Provide communications support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local groups and organisations Local businesses 	Short-term

Cohesion of our recreational activities and facilities

Currently there is no cohesion between sporting groups and organisations and the recreational facilities within the area. A more unified structure towards sports and recreation will ensure further connectedness within our wider Northern community area.

Objectives	Community	NCB	Partners	Timeframe
Encourage further cohesion between our recreational and sporting groups and our current facilities.	Community to provide feedback about ways of creating connections between local sporting groups and organisations and facilities in the area.	Provide staff resource and community board representation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local sports groups and organisationsSouthland District CouncilActive Southland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Short-term



DISTRICT BUSINESS OVERVIEW

As our boards wanted to ensure local businesses were represented in this plan, a district-wide survey was conducted to capture a snapshot of their views.

The main advantage identified for businesses in the south was being on the main tourist route. Other benefits included a supportive community and loyal customers, centrality of location, close proximity to Queenstown and less competition.

Challenges faced were seasonality, labour shortages, unreliability of the internet and phone coverage, power cuts, council red tape and issues with the delivery of goods.

Respondents stated that they foresee business growth in the next five years as being 67% – based on 0% being none at all and 100% significant growth.

Comments included:

- We will only be able to expand when we find more staff to employ
- There is expected increase in the building industries and maintenance work
- We are actively investing and growing our business and we work with the USA and Australian markets which are still strong performers
- Council's bridge closures are challenging for us
- Increase of raw materials available
- Over the last five years we have expanded to cover more areas
- We only have a small site so there is limited potential for further growth
- My business is hospitality and tourism based, hospitality is directly affected by rural economy, any decline in farmer income would have a direct impact on their disposable income, therefore it is impossible to predict future trends
- Tourism has had a steady increase over the years

Southland district a better place to operate a business - attracted the following comments:

- Better services - more reliable internet etc
- Yes, rental properties would be great, the lack of accommodation here can be and is a real problem especially for staff
- Establishing a business operators organisation
- Easing of red tape and costs of compliance
- Tidy up our main streets where businesses are located
- Getting people to support and shop local
- Maybe a community business Facebook page where we can share and support each other. I would like to know the other business owners in my community and share ideas
- We will need to invest in new housing and visitor accommodation
- Vastly improved internet required
- More public toilets and tourist information regarding this



Economic stability
plays an important role
in the future of our
community.

Approximately 38%
of respondents had
connected with their
community board.

Comments included:

- Local board members have been positive, and several have visited/maintained contact. Very encouraging
- Just thought of it now
- The community board members aren't business focused, it's not their area of expertise
- Yes, through the local business association
- Never thought of it
- I have discussed it with many members of the community, this will have filtered through to the community board I'm sure. I have never been invited or asked my opinion directly from our community board
- Not sure of the process how to connect with them



YOUTH ARE OUR FUTURE AND THEIR OPINION COUNTS.

Led by the Southland District Council youth councillors, a **district-wide survey** was conducted to gauge the views of young people to be included in this community board plan.

In collating the responses, a genuine sense of community featured highest among things Southland youth liked most about living in the district.

The people, small town vibe, feeling safe and the surrounding environment and landscape rated highly.

Successfully enhancing communities with a youth focus would include more activities, opportunities, events, shops and facilities as a place to hang out. Three major issues identified as having an impact were the mental health and wellbeing of young people, diversity and inclusion, and climate change.

85% of survey respondents believed mental health was a significant issue, with 65% believing there was not sufficient access to help and support.

Comments included:

- There's still a lot of stigma around mental health
- Young males and the farming community are at risk
- People don't feel safe to talk
- No-one wants to talk to the school guidance counsellor
- Good support in school but once kids have left school there's nothing
- Invercargill is too far to travel for services
- It's a problem everywhere
- Some individuals have mental health issues but the majority don't
- I don't know how to access support but I probably should



95%

feel accepted in their community.

68%

feel safe to express their identity.

57%

do not think there are enough opportunities in Southland to express their identity.

Comments included:

- There's a fear of judgement
- Southland is very judgemental and aren't good at accepting differences
- There is LGBTQ phobia
- If you aren't involved with rugby or sports, you aren't included in the community
- Everyone in the community is included
- There's more openness to multiculturalism
- A lot of racism here
- Some people get beaten for being gay and expressing it
- We need more festivals and events to celebrate people



In our evolving world, youth are acutely aware of climate change and the role they have to play.

Youth rated the level their community was responding to climate change at 42%, with 0% being not at all and 100% responding extremely well. Reasons included that a lot of people in Southland don't believe in climate change, it's easy to turn a blind eye, the older generation are often stubborn and it's not a priority for Southland's communities as there are bigger issues right now.

Identified among the best ways to respond to climate change were more recycling, reducing plastic, improving farm practices and changing the way we think.

Comments included:

- We need more effective rubbish disposal in rural areas
- We need to promote locally sourced foods
- It needs to be a priority, not just something in the news
- Initiatives like boomerang bags are quite cool
- The issue isn't advertised locally
- People are finally speaking up about it
- Most people have more important stuff to worry about
- Climate change doesn't exist
- People see environmentally friendly alternatives as inconvenient
- There's no public pressure from Council



COMMUNITIES

hold Southland together

facebook.com/northerncommunityboard

