



Community board plan
2021 - 2024

STEWART ISLAND RAKIURA

OUR VISION



Stewart Island Rakiura is a connected community that manages growth and has a sustainable future...

A photograph of two birds perched on the dark, silhouetted branches of a tree. The background is a warm, golden-orange sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The leaves of the tree are also silhouetted, with some showing a reddish-brown hue. The overall mood is serene and natural.

Kaitiakitanga guardianship

The island has a special and unique natural environment. The community is fiercely passionate about the influence nature has on all facets of island life and protecting this environment for future generations.



THE ISLAND WAY OF LIFE

We live in a special place, surrounded by the sea and large areas of National Park, which provides an array of opportunities.

In setting the goals of our Long Term Plan the board considered the current and long-term effects of Covid-19, with the resulting lack of overseas tourists and backpackers, the growth of tourism to cater for New Zealanders and the opportunities offered by Dark Sky Sanctuary status, along with future growth of fish farming industries.

While individually unique, each of these aspects will greatly affect the island community and projects we undertake.

The Stewart Island Rakiura Community Board has responsibility and governance for both the Stewart Island Electrical Supply Authority and jetties on the island.

These will continue to take much of our time and care will need to be taken to ensure the long-term financial viability of these important island assets.

The board has the precarious juggling act of maintaining or developing services while keeping rate rises at acceptable levels.

To help with this effort, we are committed to a collaborative approach, engaging with our community on the projects that are designed to develop our local areas.

Our community as a whole plays a vital role in all our planning, and we appreciate the dedication of the many volunteers whose efforts make such a positive contribution to the island way of life.

By working together we will achieve our goals and further develop the island.

Jon

Late
1200s

Polynesians had reached
Stewart Island/Rakiura
but did not settle permanently.

Māori
settled around
the coast and on some
neighbouring
islands.

1770
Captain James Cook sights the
island but his map records it as
being connected to the mainland

1800
The **sealing trade**
begins off the shores
of the island

1816
The name Stewart's Island
appears for the first time,
on a map drawn by Captain
William Stewart

1860
Timber milling increases, with
three sawmills operating in 1864
on the north side of Paterson Inlet.

1841
The island is established as
New Leinster, one of the three
Provinces of New Zealand,
until 1853

1820
The **whaling trade** begins off the
shores of the island as seal
numbers reduce

1880
Sheep farming begins

1892
Ulva Island is listed as a scenic reserve

1894
Tourism numbers grow
to **hundreds of visitors**
over summer

Kakapo are
discovered in
the Tin Range

1960
The **original museum** is
built, and extended in 1987

1951
Amphibian Airways begins a regular
air service to Stewart Island from Invercargill

1915
New Zealand Post isn't amused with the
'letter leaves' and sends a **terse circular**
PROHIBITING the use of leaves in the mail

1900
Locals and tourists start writing
letters on leaves and posting
them all around the world

1977
1983
The **first sea-cage salmon farm** is
established in Stewart Island's Big Glory Bay

1998
The island's name officially becomes
Stewart Island/Rakiura

2002
85%
of the island
becomes
**Rakiura
National Park**

2009
**Kakapo population confirmed at
over 100** – more than double the
number of kakapo alive 10 years
previously

2019
Stewart Island/Rakiura is declared an
International Dark Sky Sanctuary

2013
One-third of the
Stewart Island/Rakiura
workforce is employed in the
agriculture, forestry and fishing sector

2010
Southern tokoeka, or Stewart
Island/Rakiura kiwi, are thriving,
with an estimated population
of 15,000

Stewart Island/Rakiura information



Population 408

Female	195
Male	216
Under 15	13%
65 and over	22%
Median age	49.3

Ethnic makeup

European	93.4%
Maori	19.9%
Pacific peoples	1.5%

Language spoken

English	98.5%
Te reo Maori	1.5%
French and German	2.2%

Work on Stewart Island

Employed full time	58%
Unemployed	0.8%
Part time	15.1%
Not in labour force	25.2%



Rent

Median rent \$180
increase of 5.88% since 2013

A biplane is parked on a sandy beach at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the wet sand. The biplane's shadow is cast long and dark on the beach. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and scenic.

Our people **value**

Community spirit

- Like a big caring family
- We really do know our neighbours
- Great place to grow up
- Community values

Our beautiful and unique environment

- Wildlife, flora and fauna
- Ulva Island
- Beautiful beaches
- The peacefulness
- Not being overrun by tourists

The resilience of the community

- Ability to adapt to a changing economic base
- We look out for each other
- Self-sufficient and strong

ISLAND LIFE



Stewart Island Rakiura GLOWING SKIES

Pristine beaches, wetlands, birdlife and native forest, Stewart Island/Rakiura is one of the best places to see native New Zealand wildlife in the wild.

A unique lifestyle, a resilient community - life as it was, naturally. The perfect environment for stargazing and seeing the Southern Lights.

It is the only place in New Zealand where you can readily see brown kiwi in their natural habitat.





By the community for the community

Through various engagement and consultation activities, the Stewart Island Rakiura community told us what they loved about Stewart Island Rakiura and what they saw as weaknesses and challenges and what opportunities they saw for Stewart island/ Rakiura going forward.

Workshops were also held with the Stewart Island Rakiura Community Board.

Five main themes emerged from the consultation:

2

A community that has fit-for-purpose, sustainable infrastructure

1

A cohesive and connected community, recognising many of our ratepayers don't reside on the island full-time

3

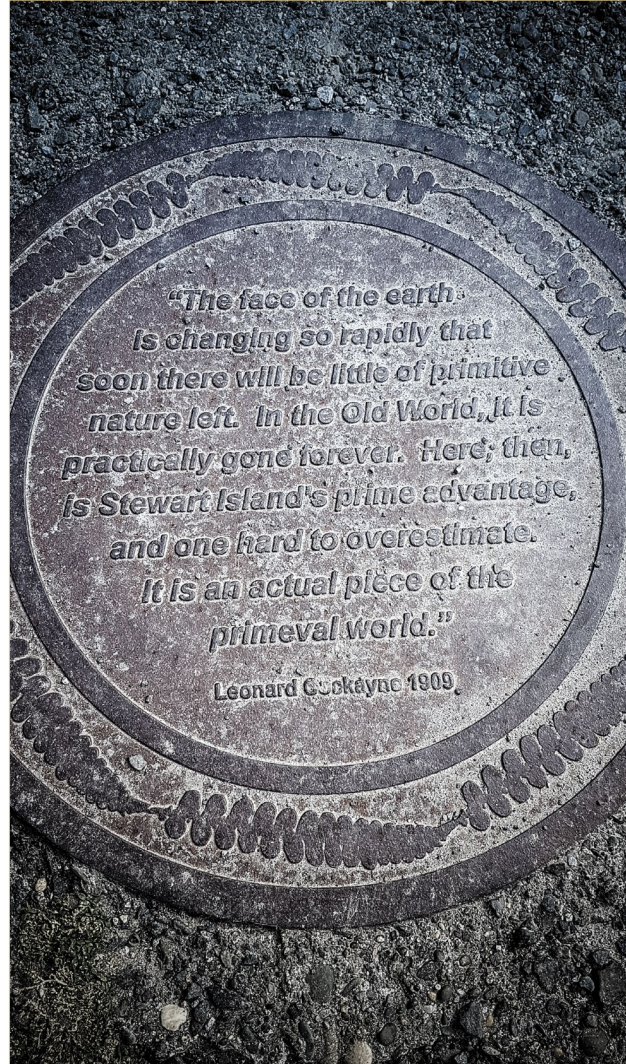
A community that plans for its future – recognising its unique challenges and opportunities

4

Kaitiakitanga-guardianship and protection of Stewart Island's pristine natural environment

5

A community with a strong voice that holds agencies and organisations accountable for doing what they say they will



How can we develop good working relationships and
strengthen our 'voice'?

CONNECTED

COMMUNITY IDEAS



A cohesive and connected community, we recognise many of our ratepayers don't reside on the island full-time.

Roughly half of all ratepayers don't live permanently on the island, making communication and engagement around community priorities a challenge.





Those who live on or have ties to Stewart Island Rakiura all have something in common...

they love the special place that it is.

CONNECTED

COMMUNITY IDEAS



Better connection and communication from the community board and Council

The community see an opportunity for better communication and engagement with residents on and off the island.

The wider Stewart Island community is interested in regular updates about key issues, work planned and priorities for Stewart Island Rakiura from the community board and Council.



BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

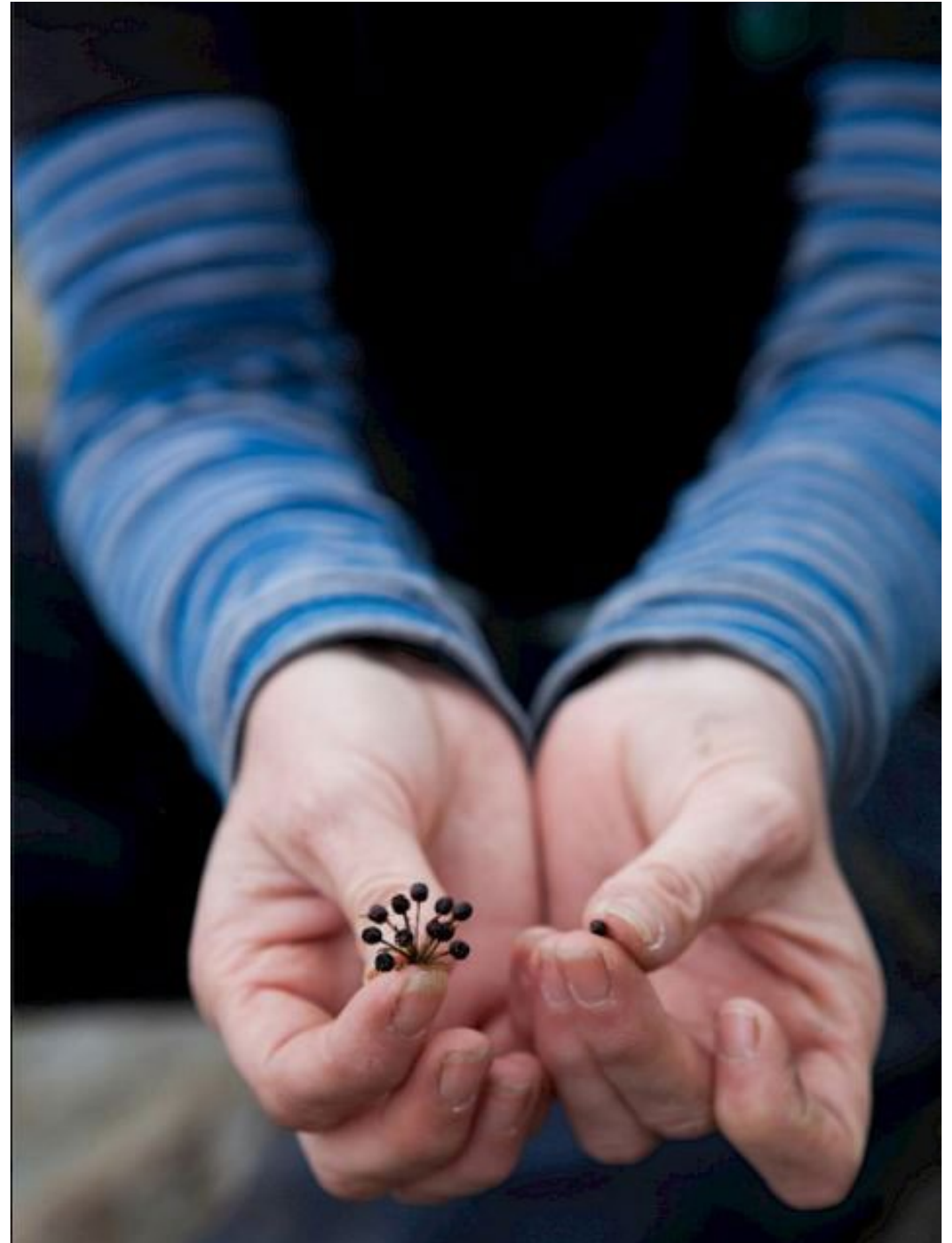
Community activities and events – some that include tourists

Planned community events and planned activities will bring people together – both those who live on the island permanently and those who don't.

Bringing people together will continue to build on the sense of community and the love of Stewart Island Rakiura by all who live or visit here.

Islanders are keen to also explore ways to engage tourists, especially in environmental projects on the island.

TOGETHER





VALUE

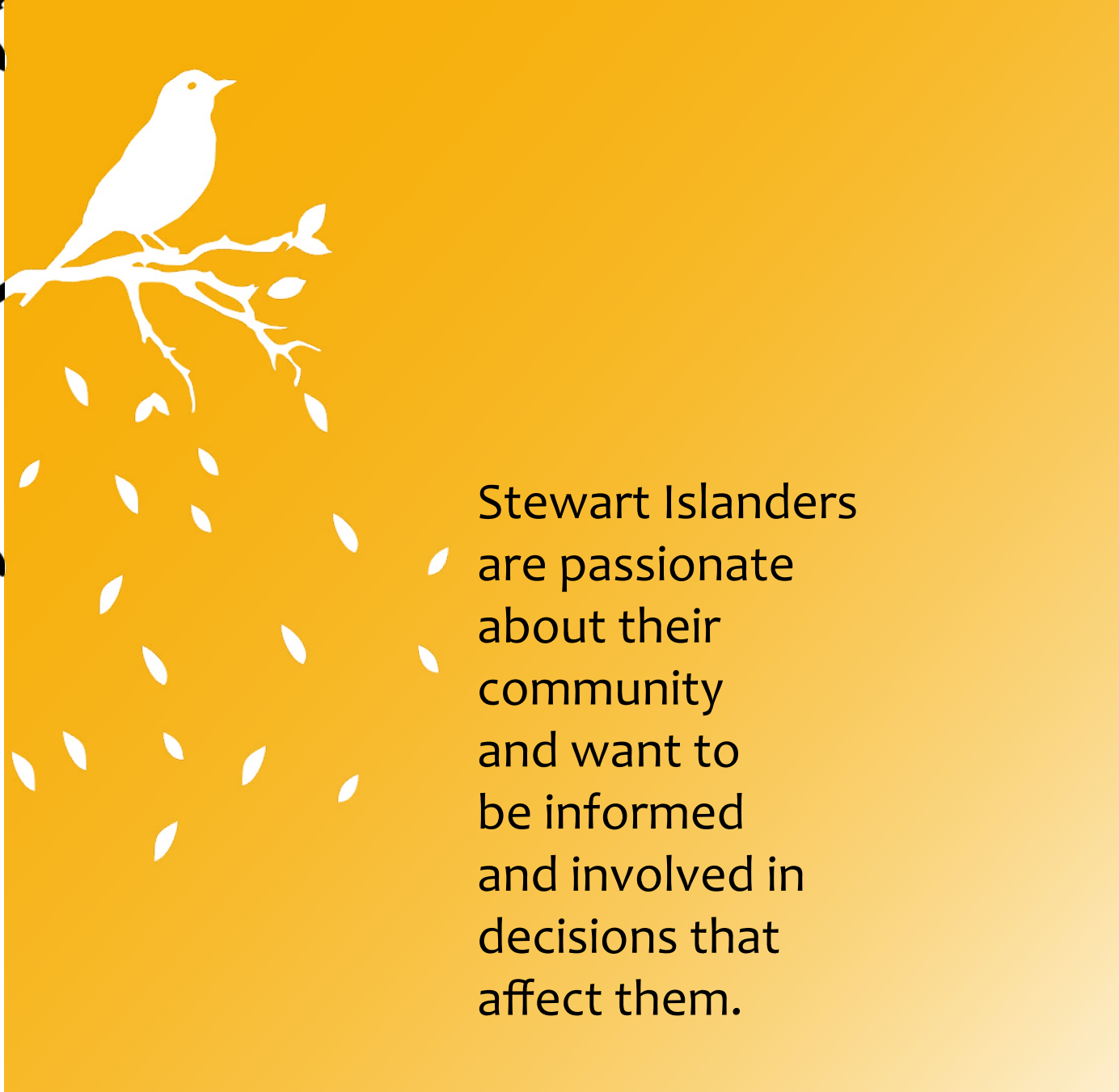
Engagement with our young people

There is a desire by the community to engage more with young people and get them more involved in projects on the island.

This will give them confidence to participate and develop their interest in their community.



OBJECTIVE	COMMUNITY IDEAS FOR ACTION	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS	TIMELINE MEASURES
Better connection and communication from the community board and Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regular Council/community board column in Stewart Island News from the Stewart Island Rakiura councillor and community board chairQuarterly update on key issues, work planned and priorities to be included with the power billBetter relationship with Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work with SDC community partnership leader to progress regular communication with Stewart Island/ Rakiura residents and ratepayersStewart Island board chair and Stewart Island/Rakiura councillor to work closely together to ensure there is a joined up approach to island issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stewart Island/Rakiura councillorCommunity board chairSouthland District Council<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community partnership leaderCommunications team	Short term
Community activities and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support community events that focus on building and strengthening community cohesionSupport the development of a community events calendar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide financial support through the Community Partnership Fund for community events that bring people together and develop a community event calendar that is regularly updated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All Stewart Island/Rakiura community groups/organisationsIndividualsSouthland District Council community partnership leaderSeek expressions of interest from within the community to develop a community event calendarSouthland District Council community partnership leaderOur community	Short term
Engagement with our young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guidance, training and support for leadership development especially for young peopleIdentify ways to engage young people in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advocate for the Leadership Academy to be available on Stewart Island/ Rakiura bi-annually at low/no costWork with Future Rakiura to develop ideas to engage with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Future RakiuraSouthland District CouncilSouthland Chamber of CommerceSouthland District Council community development team	Short term



ACTION PLAN

A community that has a strong voice and holds agencies and organisations accountable for doing what they say they will.

This is a proud and passionate community that is resilient and capable.

Sometimes they feel like their voices are not heard or others speak on their behalf without including them. They see an opportunity to have constructive, productive relationships with agencies and organisations to progress Stewart Island priorities.

Stewart Islanders
are passionate
about their
community
and want to
be informed
and involved in
decisions that
affect them.

More collaboration and opportunities to develop trusted and beneficial relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders off the island.



OBJECTIVE	COMMUNITY IDEAS FOR ACTION	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS	TIMELINE MEASURES
<p>Seek to collaborate more with people on and off the island.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community would like their community board to strengthen its relationship with Council and central government so issues are understood, discussed and debated. They'd also like to be kept up to date with key issues being discussed, how decisions are made and progress on decisions. The community is keen to see more collaboration and opportunities to develop trusted and beneficial relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders off the island. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key agencies that the community board could have collaborative relationships with that would benefit the island. Community board chair and Stewart Island Rakiura councillor to work together closely on Stewart Island priorities. Regular communication in SIN and included with the power bill. Annual report back to the community on relationships made and work in partnership with agencies off the island. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stewart Island/Rakiura councillor SDC – community partnership leader MBIE Future Rakiura Great South Stewart Island/Raikiura Community Board chair Stewart Island Promotions (SIPA) Rakiura Maori Land Trust (RMLT) Department of Conservation (DOC) Predator Free Rakiura Our community 	<p>Medium-long term</p>

LOCAL

COMMUNITY IDEAS



Wharves fit for purpose, safe and well maintained

The community knows the wharves are critical to those who live on and visit Stewart Island Rakiura.

They are to them what bridges and roads are to people who live on the mainland.

It's essential there is a long-term plan for the wharves' maintenance and replacement to effectively manage Stewart Island Rakiura's sustainability.



ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

Our Pest Free Island

As a community keeping our island free of as many predators as possible is integral to the survival of plant, bird and animal species, some of which, only exist in this part of the world.

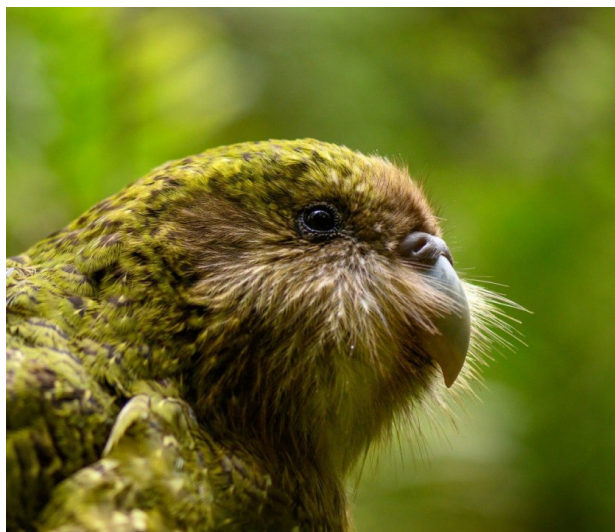
We recognise and thank the many people on and around Rakiura who are currently doing their bit to control predators and keep their properties, homes, vehicles and vessels rat-free.

We respect the values of all the environmental groups who are working together to sustain this natural haven for our future generations.

Renewable, sustainable, affordable energy source that fits with our environmental principles

The community rates electricity as the number one barrier to living on Stewart Island Rakiura.

Islanders would like to see alternative power sources continue to be explored.





HOUSING

Enough affordable housing on the island

The Stewart Island Rakiura community indicated there are little to no rentals available on the island for workers, both long term and seasonal.

They also acknowledge short-term rentals provide visitor accommodation that brings business to the island. The community would like a comprehensive plan that recognises these challenges and finds sustainable solutions.

OBJECTIVE	COMMUNITY IDEAS FOR ACTION	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS	TIMELINE MEASURES
Wharves that are fit for purpose, safe and well maintained	<p>A long-term plan for wharf ownership, management, maintenance and replacement</p> <p>Urgently make Ulva Island/Golden Bay wharves safe and fit for purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with key stakeholders to develop a long-term wharf management plan Advocate for a sustainable funding model for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of wharves on Stewart Island Work with key stakeholders to develop an urgent plan of action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council Environment Southland Ulva Island Trust Hunter family DOC Our community 	Short-medium term
Renewable sustainable affordable energy source that fits with our environmental principles	Islanders would like to see alternative electricity sources continue to be explored and pursued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to pursue alternative electricity sources Annual review of progress and report back to community on action/next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council SIESA MBIE Our community 	Long term
Enough affordable housing on the island	<p>The community would like a comprehensive plan that recognises the housing/accommodation challenges on Stewart Island Rakiura</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of subdividable land on Stewart Island is an issue – a review of the Fiordland/Rakiura zone should be considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for a report that summarises factual information about Stewart Island Rakiura's unique housing/accommodation situation Be aware of the work of the Southland Housing Action Forum and look for opportunities to ensure that Stewart Island Rakiura's unique situation is considered Advocate for a review of the Fiordland/Rakiura zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council Southland Housing Action Forum DOC Habitat for Humanity Stewart Island Seniors Cottage Trust Our community 	Long term
Well-maintained and effective stormwater system for the island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community needs to report any issues with their stormwater to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with relevant Council departments to ensure that the stormwater system is being maintained and it is fit for purpose for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council 	Short-medium term
Strategy for footpaths on the Island	Ensuring that walking around the island is safe	Advocate and work with relevant Council departments for an overall strategy with regards to footpaths on the island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southland District Council Our community 	Medium term

KAITIAKITANGA

GUARDIANSHIP



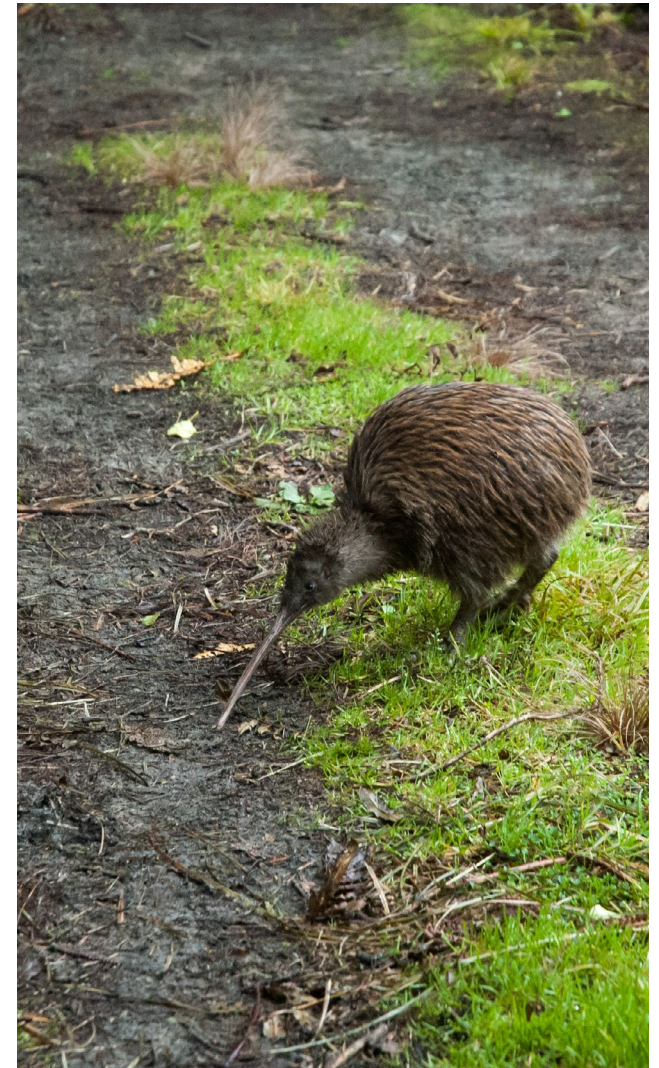
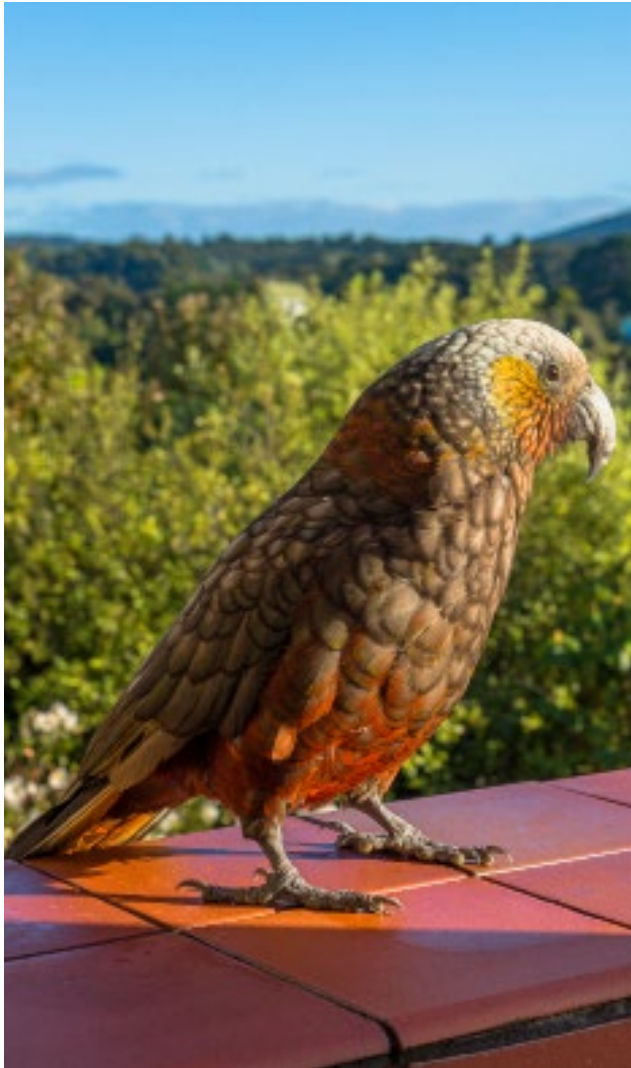
Guardianship and protection of the island's pristine natural environment

Stewart Island Rakiura has a special and unique natural environment.

The community is fiercely passionate about the influence nature has on all facets of island life and protecting this environment for future generations.

The community would like to see any development be in harmony with the environment and for there to be responsible management of the island's resources.





How can we protect our special
and unique natural environment?

KAITIAKITANGA

COMMUNITY IDEAS



Stewart Island Rakiura leading the way in ecotourism, conservation and sustainability

Stewart Islanders would like to have a managed approach to the island's future development, protecting those things that make Stewart Island Rakiura special.

They believe there is an opportunity for Stewart Island Rakiura to lead the world in ecotourism, conservation and sustainability.





OBJECTIVE	COMMUNITY IDEAS FOR ACTION	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS	TIMELINE MEASURES
Stewart Island leading the way in ecotourism, conservation and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stewart Islanders would like to have a managed approach to the island's future development, especially protecting the island's unique environment.The community would like Stewart Island Rakiura to lead the world in ecotourism, conservation and sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support conservation and sustainability initiatives on the island through the Community Partnerships Fund.Support and encourage further understanding of and the development of best practice eco-tourism on Stewart Island Rakiura.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SIPAPredator Free RakiuraSIRCETRMLTRakiura Marine GuardiansMamakau PointOther environmental groups on the islandLocal tourism operatorsLocal business ownersSouthland District CouncilGreat SouthDOCOur community	Medium- long term

FUTURE PLANNING



Islanders want Stewart Island Rakiura to have managed growth and a sustainable future.

They want to actively plan for future opportunities and realities.

This community has, in the past, successfully worked together to develop future-focused plans and they want to continue to work proactively in partnership with central, regional and local government and other agencies/ organisations to plan for the future they want.



FUTURE-FOCUSED PLANNING

Support and encourage community-led future planning, promoting a collective vision and voice on the island.

Advocate for Stewart Island Rakiura priorities with key stakeholders.



How can we secure Stewart Island Rakiura's future so that growth is managed, and the island has a sustainable future?



DEVELOPMENT

International Dark Sky Sanctuary

Support the International Dark Sky Sanctuary(IDSS) by ensuring that any future legislation/bylaws are in line with IDSS requirements which will assist in delivering an exceptional visitor experience.

OBJECTIVE	COMMUNITY IDEAS FOR ACTION	COMMUNITY BOARD ACTIONS	PARTNERS	TIMELINE MEASURES
<p>Future-focused thinking, discussions, planning and action</p>	<p>Seek to understand the challenges that face Stewart Island Rakiura (economic, social, cultural and environmental) and support collaborative conversations that seek to find solutions.</p> <p>Support and encourage community-led future-focused planning that will capture a collective vision and voice on the island.</p> <p>Advocate for Stewart Island Rakiura priorities with key stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with and support Future Rakiura to lead future-focused planning on Stewart Island/ Rakiura. • Actively work with Future Rakiura to develop a plan to engage the community in wide-ranging discussions about future challenges and solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Rakiura • Groups/Organisations on and off the Island • SIPA • Ngai Tahu • Iwi • SDC • Chamber of Commerce • MBIE • DIA • MPI • RMLT • RMG • Local business owners • Great South • Environment Southland • Police • MOH • MSD 	<p>Medium- long term</p>
<p>Support the development of a Dark Sky Sanctuary Strategic Plan</p>	<p>That the island has a holistic plan to maximise opportunities of being awarded the International Dark Sky Sanctuary status.</p>	<p>Support the development of a wide-ranging plan for the Dark Sky Sanctuary that considers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visitor experience • expected numbers and requirements • extension of the season and what that means 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great South • SIPA • Future Rakiura • Tourism operators on the island 	<p>Short-medium term</p>

ISLAND

CHALLENGES



What are the weaknesses and challenges of Stewart Island Rakiura?

Our people would like to have more control over the future of Stewart Island Rakiura, encourage young people to become more involved in the community and have living standards that are attainable for all.







RESOURCES

Effective stormwater systems and safe footpaths

The community wants to work with Council to ensure the stormwater system is being maintained and fit for purpose for the future. They have also recognised a need for a footpath strategy to ensure that walking around the island is safe.



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 were 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 percent – based on 0 percent being none at all and 100 percent 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 5 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 focussed, 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 percent of survey respondents believed mental health was a significant issue, with 65 percent 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 percent, 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 were 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/[stewartislandrakiuracommunityboard](https://www.facebook.com/stewartislandrakiuracommunityboard)

