

Manawātū District Council

SIX MONTH PARTNERSHIP REPORT

1st January - 30th June 2026



SPORTMANAWATU.ORG.NZ


SPORT
MANAWATŪ

Sport Manawatū Regional Sports Awards 2026

The communities of the Sport Manawatū region came together on Thursday June 11 to celebrate the achievements of athletes, officials, teams, clubs and volunteers at the 2026 Sport Manawatū Regional Sports Awards.

Held at the Palmy Conference & Function Centre, the awards celebrated service, dedication, leadership, resilience, community impact and excellence at every level, from grassroots through to the high-performance stage.

A highlight of the evening was the powerful welcome from the Kapahaka students from MANUKURA which set the tone for the event.

These sports awards recognised more than results alone. They acknowledged the countless hours worked behind the scenes, the support required to achieve at a high level, and the passion and pride that sport brings to the region. The theme for the night was “where grassroots meets greatness”, and that is exactly what the night was all about.

The evening was made possible through the support of sponsors, including Manawatū District Council and Central Energy Trust, alongside a range of other local partners. With just under 300 people in attendance, the event brought together athletes, coaches, and officials to celebrate their achievements at regional, national, and international levels.

It also provided an opportunity to recognise the vital contribution of volunteers and sport partners, who play a key role in ensuring sport remains accessible within our community.

Legends of Sport were honoured and recognised for the lasting impact they have made across the region. Those inducted on the night as Legends of Sport were Jacob Oram, Ian Gray, Alan Adamson and Steve Stannard.



Sport Manawatū Regional Sports Awards 2026

Among the evening's top honours, Kaipo Olsen-Baker was named Female Sportsperson of the Year, Te Pae Oranga o Ruahine o Taranua Māori Sportsperson of the Year, and also awarded the Central Energy Trust Supreme Sportsperson of the Year.

Dane Cleaver was named Harcourts Team Manawatū Male Sportsperson of the Year, Reuben Rose the Ricoh Male Junior Sportsperson of the Year and the Snap Fitness Female Junior Sportsperson of the Year was won by Maia Davis.

Other key award winners included:

- Central Energy Trust Administrator of the Year - Vanessa Hodge (Athletics)
- Sport Manawatū Grassroots Volunteer of the Year - Craig Turner (Hockey)
- Rotary Manawatū Community Impact of the Year – ACROSS Social Services (Basketball)
- Manawatū District Council Official of the Year - David Tomlinson (Hockey)
- Manawatū & TRC Toyota Coach of the Year Award - Kristina Sue (Rugby Union)
- Manawatū Standard Team of the Year – MANUKURA Girls Rugby
- Robèrt Embroideries Club of the Year – Manawatū Skating Club
- Trophy Specialists & Engraving Sports Partner of the Year – Subway & Paul Boness
- St Dominic's School for the Deaf Charitable Trust Disabled Sportsperson of the Year (Intellectual) – Ryan Smith (Special Olympics Athletics)
- St Dominic's School for the Deaf Charitable Trust Disabled Sportsperson of the Year (Physical) - Guy Harrison (Golf / Triathlon / Swimming)
- Recognition of Resilience – Josh Hartwell (Golf)

Post-event feedback from both attendees and sponsors was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the success of the evening and reinforcing the importance of reinstating this event within the regional calendar.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS OUTCOMES WITH SPORT MANAWATŪ AND MANAWATŪ DISTRICT COUNCIL

This report builds on the first six-month report delivered earlier in the year. Below are the agreed outcomes.



The Manawatū District develops a strong foundation for community wellbeing through play, active recreation, and sport. Active recreation and community sport events create social opportunities and contribute to Hauora.



People have the skills to safely and confidently ride a bike on our roads, shared paths, and cycleways.



Sport and Recreation facilities (Spaces & Places) across the district meet community requirements. Sports and community sport events create social and participation opportunities as well as economic benefits.



THE MANAWATŪ DISTRICT DEVELOPS A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING THROUGH PLAY, ACTIVE RECREATION, AND SPORT

Have a Go Day 2026

On 22 February 2026, Sport Manawātū, in collaboration with Feilding District Promotions and Manfeild, delivered the second annual Have a Go Day. The event welcomed 1,122 attendees, connecting local clubs with the community in a fun, inclusive environment.

The event was free to attend, with kai and water provided to support participants throughout the day. Growth was evident in its second year, with an increase in both attendance and participating clubs. Have a Go Day provided the community with the chance to try a wide range of sports and activities in one place, helping reduce barriers such as cost and access while encouraging tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau to get involved.

The event also gave clubs the opportunity to promote their sport, connect with new participants, and build awareness at no cost.

A total of 21 clubs and organisations attended, mostly from Feilding and surrounding areas, with strong interest from further afield. Feedback from both attendees and clubs will help shape the future growth of the event and ensure it continues to meet community needs.



Braxton would never normally feel confident enough to try gymnastics, but it was here and everyone was doing it, so he did – now he wants to take some classes, we didn't know they did tumbling."

— **Parent**

"We had a great day and have already had some enquiries from the day, so it was well worth our time."

— **Sarah Taylor** Kung Fu Academy



Play Along the Way

On Thursday 5 February, Sport Manawātū delivered Play Along the Way, a community activation designed to bring the Makino Pathway to life and encourage whānau to get active through play, movement, and exploration.

The initiative highlighted key community assets, including Feilding Lions Mini Putt, the Skatepark, and the Makino Pathway, while creating an accessible and engaging experience for people of all ages. By linking these spaces through a playful, family-friendly approach, the event supported both active recreation and community connection.

Delivered in partnership with a range of local organisations, the event provided a free afternoon of activities. More than 65 people participated in complimentary mini putt, over 200 sausages were provided, and it is estimated that more than 250 people attended across the afternoon. A thank you to the councillors and Manawātū District Council staff who came along and supported the event, including cooking sausages on the day – it was great to have you all involved.

Contributing partners included Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngāti Kauwhata, Manawātū District Council, Manawātū Community Hub Libraries, Makino Aquatic Centre, Manawātū Skateboard Association, Feilding Blue Light, Next Level Athletes – Rangatahi, Feilding Lions Mini Putt, and the Feilding Volunteer Fire Brigade.

The Makino Slip ‘n Slide was a key highlight, with warm weather contributing to high levels of participation and enjoyment. Feedback from attendees reflected strong engagement, with one local participant sharing, “It was super fun and I loved the slip and slide. I wish this happened every week.”

Play Along the Way demonstrated the value of partnerships and place-based activations in supporting community wellbeing through play, active recreation, and sport.



“It was super fun and I loved the slip and slide. I wish this happened every week.”

250+

Participants



Pathways Programme (Saint Dominic's)

Over the past 12 months, Sport Manawātū has worked alongside staff and whaiora at Saint Dominic's to increase activity levels and build staff confidence to lead sessions independently.

The shift in engagement has been significant. When the programme began, we were often unable to get residents to come out of their units. Now, participation is consistent, relationships are strong, and residents are confidently engaging both in sessions and with us out in the community.

Activities have been shaped by participant interests, with football and cycle sessions proving particularly popular. This passion for cycling led to Saint Dominic's successfully securing funding through the Sport Manawātū NZCT Active Communities Fund, resulting in bikes, scooters, and helmets now being available for ongoing use.

Residents are now regularly attending our Green Prescription (GRx) programme at Evolve Fitness, committing to weekly Thursday sessions and making progress in their health and wellbeing journeys. Their continued participation highlights the lasting confidence, connections, and positive habits developed through the programme.

In June, Sport Manawātū returned with the bike trailer to check in on how residents were tracking since our last engagement. It was encouraging to see the enthusiasm that remained, with several participants keen to get back on the bikes. Supported by the Cycle Team, participants rode on the cycle track for the first time, completing a 7km loop. Staff noted that this is an activity they intend to continue regularly.

The final session saw staff independently delivering activities with high engagement, demonstrating their confidence and capability to continue this work moving forward. Overall, the programme has created a meaningful shift in participation, connection, and wellbeing, and is now well-positioned to be sustained by staff into the future.



REPLAY NZ

The REPLAY project has delivered significant impact across the Manawātū District by removing barriers to participation in sport and active recreation. The distribution of equipment has directly enabled tamariki and rangatahi to attend trials, take part in training and games, and remain engaged in physical activity, while also supporting more informal and whānau-led opportunities to be active.

REPLAY was also named as one of Sport New Zealand’s finalists in their Environmental Sustainability Award category for their 2026 New Zealand Sport & Recreation Awards.

Sport Manawātū has played a critical role in enabling this impact, acting as a key connector between schools, community organisations and the REPLAY network. Through strong local relationships, Sport Manawātū has helped identify and verify need, coordinate the distribution of gear, and ensure it reaches those facing the greatest barriers in a way that is trusted and maintains dignity. This locally led approach has ensured the programme is both responsive and effective, strengthening community connection across the Manawātū District.



Empowerment and Potential: “Ashlyn joined our EP Fitness & Wellbeing Hub in March after moving to Feilding with her father. She quickly stood out as a polite, energetic young person who takes pride in her environment.

When Ashlyn started our Box-Fit programme, I noticed she didn’t always have appropriate footwear and was borrowing sneakers just to participate. After reaching out for support, Megan and Sport Manawātū were able to help. The reaction when Ashlyn received her new sneakers was pure joy. It was more than just footwear, it meant she was seen, valued, and able to fully participate.

Ashlyn continues to thrive in the programme and now supports others, including her father who has since joined.”



We’re incredibly grateful to Sport Manawātū for their ongoing support of our rangatahi. This is what strong community connection looks like.”



Feilding Blue Light Mana Gym and Mentorship Programme

Sport Manawātū approved **\$10,000** of Tū Manawa funding to support Feilding Blue Light's Mana Gym and Mentorship Programme.

The programme provides regular physical activity and mentoring opportunities for rangatahi aged **12–18** years across the Manawātū, combining gym sessions, outdoor recreation activities and positive mentoring relationships. The programme supports young people facing significant barriers, including disengagement from education, social isolation and involvement with the youth justice system.

Prior to funding approval, Sport Manawātū Community Lead Megan Hennessy worked alongside Police, Feilding Blue Light and key stakeholders to explore opportunities to sustain and grow the programme following the positive outcomes already being achieved. Led by youth mentor Ned Houkamau, the programme is currently supporting some of the highest-risk rangatahi in the district through consistent mentoring, physical activity and life skills development.

Early outcomes have been encouraging, with one 16-year-old participant successfully transitioning into employment at the local meat works and maintaining regular attendance at work.

Feedback from community partners has highlighted both the significant impact of the programme and the ongoing demand for this type of intervention. The approved funding will help ensure more rangatahi can access positive pathways through physical activity, mentoring and meaningful community connections.

\$10,000

Tū Manawa funding



Feilding Farmers Market Collaboration Holiday Play Session

On 23 January Sport Manawātū delivered a play session alongside the Feilding Farmers Market and Feilding District Promotions.

Delivered during the school holidays, the session supported community play and engaged a number of young tamariki and whānau. Feedback from participants included:

- Sessions helped participants feel more motivated to be active.
- Participants loved the free event and would like to see more opportunities like this during the school holidays.
- Common barriers to being active included weather, cost, and motivation, highlighting the importance of creating fun, accessible opportunities that encourage tamariki to get involved.



Halcombe Community Play Bin – Gear Support & Community Impact

Sport Manawātū supported the Halcombe community through the redistribution of donated sports equipment to their community play bin, using gear sourced via REPLAY NZ and collected from the REPLAY donation station at the Manawātū Community Hub Library.

The bin was stocked with a mix of items including balls, racquets and small play equipment, helping remove cost and access barriers and making it easy for tamariki, rangatahi and whānau to get active at their local courts.

Community feedback shared through social media highlighted strong and regular use of the equipment, with the Halcombe community showing a clear sense of ownership. Local users acknowledged the support from Sport Manawātū and REPLAY NZ, as well as community members who have added extra gear to keep the bin well stocked and accessible for everyone.



“Thank you once again for the balls and equipment you gave us. They are well used and keep our kids active. We are really pleased and appreciate it.”

*Ka nui te mihi,
Lucinda
HCT*

Blue Light Street Party Support

Sport Manawātū continued to support the Feilding Blue Light Street Parties, attending the McCorkindale Street Party on 12 February and the Monmouth Street Party on 5 March.

These fun, community-based settings created opportunities for play, connection, kōrero, and gathering insights into what tamariki are currently participating in, as well as the barriers they identify to participation.

Insights gathered showed that most sport opportunities are being successfully delivered through schools, with basketball identified as an activity tamariki would like to do more of. Sport Manawātū has shared this feedback with Basketball Manawātū who are exploring opportunities to deliver a holiday event in the Feilding District.

Common barriers to participation included weather, time pressures, and tamariki spending more time on devices, highlighting the importance of creating fun, accessible opportunities that encourage tamariki to get involved.



Pop-up and Plays

On Monday 5th January and Thursday 22nd January, Sport Manawātū delivered two school holiday pop-up play sessions using the MCHL Play Trailer on the green space, alongside additional activities including volleyball, soccer, and long jump. Using this green space also highlighted the neighbouring active basketball space and the community library. Approximately 150 tamariki engaged across the two pop-up play sessions.

Tamariki and whānau came to check out the activities and games on offer, and it was great to see people of all ages getting involved in a diverse range of activities suited to varied physical capabilities. The gazebo provided much-needed shade in an area with limited shelter, although the heat appeared to be a barrier on the day. The 22nd January session was moved inside the library due to the weather, creating an opportunity to deliver indoor games and show whānau how easy it can be to stay active at home and indoors with minimal equipment and effort.

Delivering the activation alongside the market and during the school holidays supported strong community engagement, capturing those already in the area. A lively environment, including music and games, created an inclusive space that appealed to all ages.

150+

Tamariki
Engaged



“I have never tried volleyball before, and I think I am better than Dad.”

“It was fun playing with other kids in town.”

“It is cool having adults play with me.”

Insights highlighted the joy of play in a community setting.



Family Fun Day – 22 March

Sport Manawatū supported Family Fun Day, a free community event organised by Manawatū Community Hub Libraries and Manawatū District Council, that created opportunities for whānau to connect with local clubs, organisations, and community play activities.

Sport Manawatū activated the community play trailer and provided sports gear and equipment for tamariki and rangatahi to use throughout the day. The event also provided an opportunity to promote upcoming Sport Manawatū activities, connect with local clubs and organisations, and strengthen awareness of available funding support and Sport Manawatū’s presence in the community.

Insights gathered on the day will help inform the design and delivery of future community events.



Mt Biggs Tough Kids Challenge

On Friday 27 March, Sport Manawatū partnered with Mt Biggs School to deliver the Tough Kids Challenge at the Mt Biggs School grounds. Now in its sixth successful year, the event aims to get tamariki active through a fun, supportive, and community-based challenge.

The day included running across countryside, completing challenges and obstacles, and promoting physical activity in a social, community setting. More than 850 children participated from several surrounding schools, helping strengthen connections across rural schools and communities.

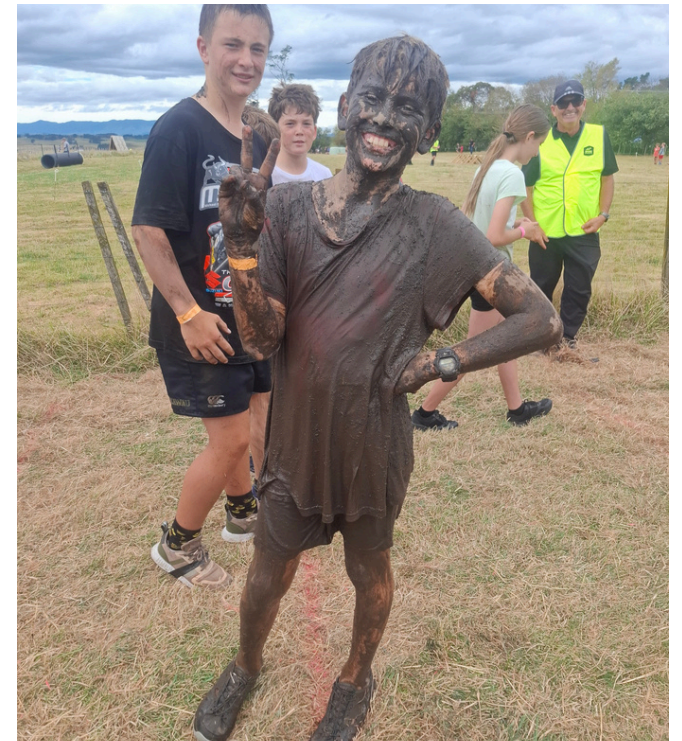
The event also supported leadership development, with Feilding High School Sport Leadership volunteers involved on the day. This helped create opportunities for smaller village communities to take part in active recreation in a non-competitive, supportive, and community-focused environment

Feedback from the day included:

“

“We look forward to Tough Kids all year. It is our favourite day of the year — way more fun than cross country. We love the music in the truck too, and dancing with the other schools.”

— **London, aged 10**



International Day of Play Sensory Play Session at MCHL 11 June

To celebrate International Day of Play, Sport Manawātū partnered with Manawātū Community Hub Libraries to deliver a sensory play session for tamariki and whānau. The session focused on providing an inclusive, low-barrier play opportunity that supports exploration, creativity, and sensory development. This play session created an opportunity to share information with parents and whānau about the value of recreational play and simple ways to support play at home and in the community.



Tamariki Toa

On Friday 13 March, Sport Manawātū supported Lytton Street School to deliver Tamariki Toa, a tough kids challenge held at Timona Park in Feilding. The event brought together more than 800 tamariki from six schools across the Sport Manawātū district, including Ashhurst School, Bunnythorpe School, North Street School, Lytton Street School, Manchester Street School, and Feilding Intermediate.

Sport Manawātū provided staff and equipment to support set-up and assist with activity delivery on the day. The event created opportunities for tamariki to be active in a non-competitive environment that encouraged physical activity, participation, resilience, challenge, and community spirit.

Throughout the day, tamariki supported one another to complete challenges, with many trying activities for the first time. As an annual event, Tamariki Toa is something many tamariki look forward to and aim to improve on year after year.

Teacher and participant feedback highlighted the value of the event.



Many of these children are more likely to complete this with their peers in a fun, non-competitive environment that feels more like a game than a race. For the kids who want the speed challenge, it is there, but for others it is about the challenge of participating in something physical and completing it."

— **Manchester Street School**

"I love how at the end we can go on the water slide as many times as we want. Even though you are so tired and puffed, you just keep going because it is so fun."

— **Alliyah Ofee, Year 7, Feilding Intermediate**



Regional Play Hui – 12 March

In March, Sport Manawātū hosted a Regional Play Hui at MCHL for council staff from across the region, creating the space to connect, share insights, and strengthen alignment around play provision. The hui focused on current priorities, challenges, and opportunities within council-led play spaces and initiatives, with presentations from each TA around play equity, nature-based play, and developing inclusive play spaces.

Participants valued the opportunity to exchange practical approaches and build relationships, with momentum generated for ongoing collaboration between councils.

Feedback from attendees was positive, with an NPS* score of 83.3 and an average satisfaction rating of 9 out of 10. 100% of the participants reported the hui increased their connection and relationships with other councils in our region.



“I think it was great connecting with some of the new staff within SM and also from the other councils. I find you get a lot out of these opportunities, and it really helps build relationships so we can all work together to provide play and fun for everyone.”

“Worth doing. Good collaborating and support opportunity.”

“Well facilitated thank you! Lots of important insights from across park teams from the TAs.”

**83.3
NPS
Score**

**9 out of 10
Satisfaction
Rating**

100% of the participants reported the hui increased their connection and relationships with other councils in our region.

**NPS = Net Promotor Score.*

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a tool that measures customer satisfaction. It asks one question on a scale from 0 to 10: "How likely are you to recommend us?" Scores group people into Promoters (9-10), Passives (7-8), and Detractors (0-6). Subtracting the detractor percentage from the promoter percentage gives the final score.



OUTCOME 1

THE MANAWATŪ DISTRICT DEVELOPS A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY WELLBEING THROUGH PLAY, ACTIVE RECREATION, AND SPORT

Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa Funding Manawatū District

Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa provides funding for programmes or projects delivering play, active recreation, and sport experiences for Tamariki and Rangatahi. It is particularly focused on groups where barriers cause them to be less active.

The purpose of the Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa Fund is to provide quality experiences that are accessible, create a lifelong love of being active and meet the needs of tamariki and Rangatahi.

The Fund helps to cover programme or service delivery costs including:

- Programme or project delivery e.g., venue or equipment hire, transport.
- Equipment as part of the programme or service.
- Officials, where these are required for the delivery.
- Programme delivery

Organisation	Amount
Next Level Athletes Charitable Trust	\$9,920
Bhutanese Society of New Zealand Inc (Manawatu)	\$8,400
AUMĀIA SPORTS CLUB	\$4,379
Parafed Manawatu	\$12,618
IHC	\$17,940
Sense Rugby (NZ) Trust	\$15,300
Rongo Mauri Trust	\$8,333
Manawatu Badminton Association	\$43,570
Feilding Bluelight	\$10,000
Total for 6 months	\$130,460
Total amount for 12 months	\$152,989

This table includes organisations and their projects that received Tū Manawa Funding between January 1 and June 30, 2026.



PEOPLE HAVE THE SKILLS TO SAFELY AND CONFIDENTLY RIDE A BIKE ON OUR ROADS, SHARED PATHS, AND CYCLEWAYS

Bike Ready Programme – Manawatū District Schools

Sport Manawatū delivered the Bike Ready programme across six Manawatū District schools, supported by New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and Manawatū District Council. Participating schools included Sanson, Waituna West, Kiwitea, St Joseph's, Colyton, and Manawatū Home School, with **209 students** from Years 4 – 8 taking part.



The programme focused on increasing cycling confidence, safety knowledge, and participation, particularly within rural schools new to Bike Ready. Students completed bike and helmet safety checks, basic road safety education, and practical riding skills through both Grade 1 school-based and Grade 2 road-based sessions. A bike trailer carrying up to 16 bikes also ensured all students could participate regardless of access to equipment.

The programme delivered strong outcomes. Of the 11 students identified as non-riders at the beginning of the programme, five successfully learned to ride and completed the Grade 1 syllabus. New pre and post-programme surveys also showed increased rider confidence, with a 16.5% increase in students identifying as “Very Confident”.



“I have already recommended you guys to another local school. The program was a real success for my class. The children were very proud of themselves.”

St Josephs School

Kiwitea School welcomed Constable Allan McLean from Feilding Community Police. He reinforced key bike and helmet safety messages and shared practical advice for riding safely on rural roads.

Sanson School Principal Grayson shared: *“Since the session we now see nearly 70% of our students bringing their bikes to school and using them at break times... these students are now always on their bikes, riding correctly, and showing off their new skills to their friends. It is awesome!!”*

Kiwitea School:

“This programme was incredibly well run. It was delivered in an interactive way that included child friendly references. It catered well for all levels of confidence and ability. The facilitators were warm, friendly and well organised. The confidence developed in these sessions was incredible. One of my students who was very apprehensive now eagerly brings her bike to school and proudly shows off her new confidence and skills.”

209 
student participants

On Ya Bike – School Holiday Bike to the Market Challenge

On Friday 17 April, Sport Manawātū delivered the “Bike to the Market Challenge” alongside the Farmers' Market, encouraging active transport across the Manawātū region. More than 30 participants cycled to the event, while over 50 people engaged with bike safety activities and conversations throughout the day.

The activation promoted safe and confident cycling through practical bike safety checks, including helmet fitting and tyre inspections, alongside education on riding safely on roads and interactive activities that helped build rider confidence. The Sport Manawātū bike trailer was also showcased as a resource available to local schools.

Holding the activation alongside the Farmers' Market during the school holidays supported strong community participation by engaging people already visiting the area. A vibrant atmosphere, featuring music and games, created an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of all ages.

The event also provided valuable insights into local cycling behaviours and perceptions. Feedback showed that while many participants regularly ride on footpaths and within their neighbourhoods, confidence riding on roads remains low. Safety concerns continue to be a significant barrier to increasing cycling participation, highlighting the ongoing need for education, skills development, and opportunities to build rider confidence.



SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES (SPACES AND PLACES) ACROSS THE DISTRICT MEET COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS. SPORTS AND COMMUNITY SPORT EVENTS CREATE SOCIAL AND PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES AS WELL AS ECONOMIC BENEFITS

He Rā Ki Tua Spaces and Places

Over the past six months, Manawātū District Council and Sport Manawātū have continued to actively participate in the implementation of He Rā Ki Tua, the Horizons Regional Spaces and Places Plan. Progress has focused on embedding the Plan's principles with Officers into local planning and project development, strengthening regional collaboration through the Steering Group meetings, advancing priorities such as indoor facility capacity investigations with Manfield, and increased utilisation of existing community assets. Regional implementation has also progressed through the development of a dedicated website, and ongoing support for councils and community groups to apply a consistent, evidence-based approach to sport and recreation facility planning across the region.

Makino Aquatic Centre Feasibility Study

Sport Manawātū has worked alongside Manawātū District Council officers and Sport New Zealand to support exploration of future development opportunities for the Makino Aquatic Centre. Through the He Rā Ki Tua Spaces and Places programme, Sport Manawātū has helped connect the project to regional facility planning, provided access to Sport New Zealand guidance and resources, and a contribution of **\$15,000** to investigate how the facility can meet future community needs. This was for the engagement of consultants to carry out the feasibility study.



15k

Contribution



makino
aquatic centre

Lytton Street Jubilee – 28 March

Sport Manawatū supported Lytton Street School’s 125th Jubilee Gala Day by bringing along the MCHL Play Trailer. As a Healthy Active Learning school, Lytton Street School continues to value opportunities that support tamariki to be active, engaged, and connected through play. The event was a celebration of the school’s 125-year history, bringing together school memories and a wide range of family-friendly activities.

The day saw a strong turnout from the community. The Play Trailer was a popular activity and stayed consistently busy, with tamariki exploring and engaging with the equipment throughout the day.

Tangimoana Rippa Rugby Tournament – 15 May

Sport Manawatū supported the Te Kawanu Cluster Rippa Rugby Tournament at Tangimoana School, with over 100 tamariki from eight schools participating.

Sport Manawatū coordinated officials through Manawatū Rugby, provided first aid, timekeeping and scoring support, and helped ensure a well-run day of fun, healthy competition.

For smaller rural schools, events like this provide valuable opportunities to participate in winter sport, connect with other schools, and build community through sport.

Falls Prevention Workshop – 23 April | *In collaboration with Hato Hone St John*

On 23 April, Sport Manawatū, in collaboration with Hato Hone St John, delivered a Falls Prevention Workshop for the community. More than 40 people attended and participated in the event.

The workshop was co-designed in response to community need, with Hato Hone St John identifying an increase in fall-related emergency calls among older adults. This highlighted the need for a prevention-focused approach that addressed potential pre-fall risk factors and supported people to stay safe and confident at home.

Sport Manawatū provided staff to deliver a strength and balance-focused class, alongside information about the Green Prescription programme. The session included practical ways to stay strong, steady, and safe at home, with the aim of reducing the risk of falls.



Pauline from Hato Hone St John shared that feedback from the day was positive, with 36 of the 40 participants who provided feedback responding positively to the workshop content. Suggested improvements related mainly to room layout, event timing, and personal preferences around food. Overall, it was a highly successful event, with participants reporting that they felt more confident when they left.

Participant feedback included:

“

“Great information. I will continue with the chair yoga. I didn’t know anything about the alarms before this.”

“This informed me how important strength and balance are to my safety as I age, and what preventative care can look like.”

“I’m not alone in my fears. It was nice to know this. Information gives me confidence.”

“I learnt the importance of not putting myself in unsafe situations.”

Community Hauora Health Day 4 June

Sport Manawatū joined several other health organisations at a health promotion day hosted by Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngāti Kauwhata.

Sport Manawatū promoted the Green Prescription programme, a programme that supports people to increase their physical activity with guidance from trained advisors.

On the day, Sport Manawatū received 10 referrals to follow up for the programme and engaged with more than 30 community members about health, wellbeing, and the support available. The event brought together a range of community health organisations, creating valuable opportunities for networking, connection, and shared learning among local health advocates.



Workplace Challenge May

Sport Manawatū delivered the annual Workplace Challenge in May, with participation increasing from 217 participants in 2025 to 252 in 2026. The Challenge included participants from across the Manawatū region, with Manawatū District Council, Feilding Health Care, Manawatū Community Hub Libraries, and Feilding & District Promotion taking part.

Feedback was highly positive, with 98% of participants recommending the challenge and 84% reporting increased physical activity. The challenge also had a strong impact within workplaces, with 90% of participants reporting improved team connection, increased movement throughout the day, and more conversations around health and wellbeing.



Dash and Splash 24 May

Sport Manawatū supported Dash and Splash in collaboration with Makino Pool. Sport Manawatū provided promotion, staff, and equipment for the day.

This community event combined running and swimming in a supportive, inclusive environment suitable for tamariki of all fitness levels and abilities. The NZCT Manawatū Active Communities Fund enabled the event to be delivered free of charge, including pool entry, helping reduce barriers for whānau to attend.

Feedback from both participants and parents was positive. Tamariki shared that they had fun, enjoyed the mix of swimming and running, and would like the opportunity to take part again. Parents also commented positively on the atmosphere and format of the event and appreciated having a community-based opportunity for children to challenge themselves in a supportive environment.

Future improvements include moving the event to a summer date and scheduling it on a Saturday to improve attendance and reduce clashes with winter sport. There is also an opportunity to expand the event into a larger community pool party following completion of the races, utilising the outdoor 50m pool, Makino inflatables, and council assets.

Te Wiki Tūao ā-Motu – National Volunteer Week 14 – 20 June

Throughout May, Sport Manawatū – Feilding and surrounds ran a campaign calling for nominations of volunteers in the sport and active recreation space. Selected volunteers were acknowledged during Te Wiki Tūao ā-Motu – National Volunteer Week.

The calibre of nominations was outstanding, with eight individuals selected by a panel to be featured daily across Sport Manawatū’s social media platforms during the week. Many of the selected nominees were recognised as pillars within their communities, highlighting the important role volunteers play across local sport and active recreation.

The campaign supported the capacity of clubs by raising awareness of the value of volunteering and generating positive recognition for those who give their time to community sport and active recreation. The selected nominees included two youth volunteers, helping raise the profile of young people who are contributing to the future of coaching and community sport.

Facebook analytics showed strong engagement with the campaign. Net engagement, including reactions, clicks, comments, and shares, increased by 7,903% compared with the previous 14 days. Across the week, **2,641** people actively engaged with the individual posts shared, while the first individual profile post received more than **10,000** views. This response demonstrated the strong community support for celebrating volunteers and the positive impact of recognising those who contribute to active community spaces.

Sport Manawatū also engaged with Feilding First to acknowledge the clubs and nominees, helping publicly enhance the mana of volunteering within the community. Nominees shared that they were grateful for the campaign, which celebrated existing volunteers while also encouraging others to get involved.

 2641 people actively engaged

10,000+
National Volunteer Profile Post



Manawatū Inter Secondary School Athletics (MISSA) – 18 March

The annual MISSA event was held at the Manawatū Community Athletics Track. Palmerston North Boys’ High School led the delivery of the event, with support from Athletics New Zealand and Mark Harris from MATS Timing, who managed the results and online scoring throughout the day.

This year, we incorporated our Positive Vibes Only campaign, ensuring it was highly visible across the event. Bright pink “Positive Vibes” hi-vis vests were worn by staff at each event station, who also engaged with students to promote the campaign. This helped increase visibility and awareness, encouraging students to carry these positive behaviors back into their school environments, not just within sport.

Participation had a 5% increase from 2024 with a total of 525 students competing across a range of events.

School sports coordinators rated the event an average of 10/10, while student satisfaction remained high at approximately 89%, highlighting the overall success of the event.



Manawatū Inter Secondary School Cross Country – 19 May

The Manawatū Secondary School Cross Country event was held at Timona Park, where 225 students participated across various race distances. This represented a 32% increase in participation when compared to 2025.

The event was hosted by Ngā Tawa Diocesan School with support from Sport Manawatū and the Feilding Moa Harrier Club, who made a significant contribution through course setup and delivery of the event on the day.

It was great to see representation from 15 secondary schools across the region, with students taking part in a positive and active environment. Schools from across the district were well represented, with Feilding High School achieving top three placings across seven team events.

Event feedback showed 91% of students loved the event, with a school sport coordinator satisfaction rating of 9.4 out of 10.



Parks Week – 2nd to 9th March

Sport Manawatū supported Australasian Parks Week 2026 through a targeted social media campaign showcasing village parks across the Manawatū region. Each day featured a different park, providing information on accessibility, suitability for different ages and activity levels, and highlighting opportunities for physical activity in rural settings.

A “Pic of the Park” competition was also run to encourage community members to actively visit and explore local parks throughout the week.

Engagement grew steadily across the campaign, with Mt Lees Reserve emerging as the most popular post. The post reached 9,259 views, generated 590 engagements, and reached a high proportion of non-followers (93.3%), indicating strong community reach beyond Sport Manawatū’s existing audience.

Community response highlighted a strong connection to local parks, with comments reflecting regular use and enjoyment of spaces such as Kowhai Park and Mt Lees Reserve. Feedback reinforced the value of open spaces, play opportunities, and natural environments for whānau, with many noting the variety of activities available and the appeal of exploring these spaces across seasons.

Overall, the campaign successfully increased awareness of village parks, encouraged community exploration, and demonstrated the ongoing importance of accessible green spaces in supporting active recreation and wellbeing.



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Pedestrian Crossing Advocacy

Sport Manawātū has been supporting community advocacy for a pedestrian crossing from the local library towards the red bridge, following ongoing feedback around safety and accessibility in this high-use space. Support letters from Manchester Street School Principal Jared Fretwell and Senior Constable Sarah Cree have been provided to strengthen the case.

Michael Taylor, Community Assets Manager has progressed this to the Roding Team, with initial discussions being positive. The next step is to undertake surveys to better understand pedestrian use of the area and help inform future decisions. Community feedback continues to be positive, and Sport Manawātū looks forward to supporting this space as the project moves forward.



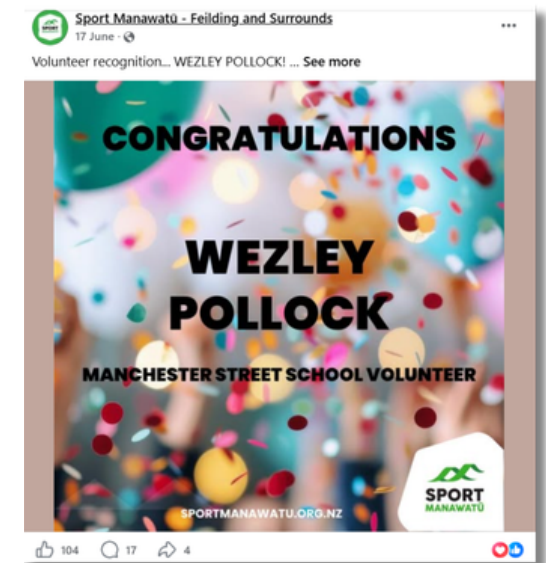
Social Media Update: July 2025 – June 2026

The Sport Manawātū – Feilding and Surrounds Facebook page continues to be a valuable communication channel for connecting with the Manawātū District community, promoting local opportunities, and celebrating community activity.

From 1 July 2025 to 23 June 2026, the page received more than 233,000 views and generated over 13,000 engagements, including reactions, clicks, comments, shares, and saves.

The strongest engagement occurred during Te Wiki Tūao ā-Motu – National Volunteer Week, where the campaign celebrating local sport and active recreation volunteers generated a significant increase in community interaction. This highlighted the value of sharing local stories and recognising the people who contribute to active communities.

The page continues to show strong growth and engagement, supporting Sport Manawātū to promote local initiatives, strengthen community connection, and share opportunities that encourage tamariki, rangatahi, whānau, clubs, and community groups to get involved.



NZCT Manawatū Active Communities Fund

The NZCT Manawatū Active Communities Fund of **\$100,000 administered by Sport Manawatū** was fully subscribed by the end of March 2026 with 69 individual applications (up to \$500 per application) and 29 applications received from schools, clubs, and community organisations (up to \$5,000 per application).

In a challenging economic climate, the fund has played a significant role in reducing financial barriers for more than 1,500 people, helping them to become or remain physically active.

The impact has been wide-ranging across the region. As an example, schools have been able to provide swimming lessons with qualified instructors, as well as purchase sporting equipment that supports both school use and wider community connection in rural areas. Sports clubs have also benefited, with funding enabling teams to purchase new uniform items and essential safety gear without passing those costs on to whānau.

The reach and value of this fund has been substantial, and we would like to acknowledge and thank NZCT for entrusting Sport Manawatū to administer this important fund for the Manawatū region.



69 
individual applications

 **\$500**
per application

29 schools, clubs,
community
organisations

 **\$5K**
per application

APPENDIX

Source: Disruptor Scan June 2026, Sport New Zealand.

Sport NZ's quarterly scan highlights potential disruptors to sport and recreation over the next two to five years. It serves as a tool for discussions on their implications and whether adjustments to current approaches are needed. The following disruptors have been identified as potentially relevant to MDC. This information is from the June Disrupter Scan

Governance and regulation

Central restructuring and post-review reforms are accelerating consolidation, asset rationalisation and role clarification, tightening scrutiny on stewardship and community value, and forcing play, active recreation and sport providers to renegotiate access, collaborate more and adapt delivery models as control of local facilities shifts.

Socio-economic inequality

Persistent low incomes, housing stress and the high cost of disability exclusion are entrenching participation divides, making equity-focused investment, targeted subsidies and inclusive design central to sustaining play, active recreation and sport for disadvantaged groups.

Disposable income

Rising winter energy and food costs, alongside higher debt servicing, are eroding household spending power, pushing families to cut club fees, equipment and travel, and increasing demand for local, low-cost, equipment-light opportunities to be active.

Health and medical

Advances in biomarkers and early-detection tools are reinforcing prevention and healthy-ageing narratives, strengthening the case for sustained, life-course participation strategies and partnerships between sport, health and community providers to keep older adults active longer.

Space and place dynamics

World Environment Day campaigns and urban-design narratives about regenerative, 15-minute, climate-resilient neighbourhoods are reinforcing a shift toward greener, multi-benefit local spaces where play, active recreation and sport are woven into everyday streets, parks and blue-green networks.

Active Transport

Global and Australian evidence on mode-shift programmes, alongside local congestion and emissions debates, is strengthening the case for integrated active-transport investment, positioning play, active recreation and sport as key partners in creating safe, low-carbon movement networks.

Athlete and participant wellbeing

High-profile sideline-abuse incidents and growing concern about enhancement drugs underscore a harder edge to participation culture, accelerating moves toward stricter codes of conduct, stronger wellbeing systems and more youth-centred environments that prioritise safety, enjoyment and long-term engagement.

Workforce (including volunteers)

Persistent cost-of-living pressure, migration and rising expectations of collaboration and capability are stretching already-thin paid and volunteer workforces, pushing organisations to rethink roles, offer better support and explore new models that share back-office functions and reduce admin load.

Changing leisure patterns

Persistent high screen time, rapid growth in gambling-adjacent prediction markets and tightening online-safety regulation are intensifying competition with traditional activity while also opening space for digitally mediated, safer and more ethical play, active recreation and sport.

Wellbeing

Escalating concern over youth distress, deepfake abuse and harmful online content is hardening the wellbeing agenda and pushing sport and recreation organisations to treat belonging, psychological safety and digital safeguarding as core participation duties, not optional extras.

Changing nature of work

Economic headwinds and contested narratives about AI-driven job loss are amplifying insecurity, time-poverty and care burdens, especially for women, making it harder to sustain paid and volunteer roles in clubs and shifting demand toward flexible, low-commitment participation offers.

Incorporated Societies Act 2022

Re Registration process: April 5th 2026

Continuing the work carried out in 2025, at the start of 2026 Sport Manawātū identified contact details and connected with all of the Manawātū based Incorporated Societies associated with sport and active recreation who were yet to re-register under the 2022 Incorporated Societies Act. The purpose of the connection was to ensure organisations had an understanding of the need to re-register and the potential implications for their organisation and office holders of not re-registering prior to the cutoff date of 5 April 2026.

Support was provided by Sport Manawātū to those organisations who requested it. This ranged from phone calls, email support, providing connections to information available through National Sports Organisations and in some cases, sitting with key contacts to help them work through the process in person.

Over the January – April period, there was only one organisation that was unable to be contacted despite numerous attempts and one organisation that voluntarily dissolved. All of the other organisations were successfully re-registered

School Sport NZ Census Results

Results from the School Sport NZ Census show continued growth in the secondary school sport sector, with participation increasing by 9.6% over the past three years. This equates to 332 more students participating in secondary school sport compared with 2022.

The Census shows that traditional sports such as rugby, volleyball, basketball and netball continue to attract high numbers of participants. It also highlights growth across a range of emerging and alternative sports, creating more opportunities for rangatahi to engage in sport and physical activity.

These findings reflect the strong and evolving secondary school sport sector across Manawātū schools, with both traditional and emerging sports providing a growing range of opportunities for rangatahi to participate, connect, develop skills and be active.

Online Casino Gambling Bill Submissions

The Online Casino Gambling Act has been amended to include a community funding return, with 4% of gambling duty ringfenced for distribution to community groups through the Lottery Grants Board. While this addresses initial concerns and introduces a new funding stream, there remains uncertainty about how it will impact existing gaming funding, which currently provides significant support to community sport. A Government review after two years will assess these impacts.

For Sport Manawātū and MDC, while the introduction of a community return from online gambling is a positive step, it still signals a potential overall reduction in funding available to community sport. The new funding stream is unlikely to fully replace existing pokie-based funding if participation shifts online. This means the long-term outlook remains uncertain, reinforcing the importance of continued local investment to help sustain participation and accessibility across the district.

Teresa's Green Prescription Success Story:

When Teresa Browne joined the Green Prescription programme in Term 2, 2026, she was determined to improve her health. At 56 years old, she had been referred to the programme by her GP after concerns about her high HbA1c levels. Although Teresa was exercising every three to four days, she describes her overall health at the time as "obese, unfit, and depressed."

Since joining Green Prescription, Teresa has transformed both her physical health and confidence. What started as a commitment to improve her wellbeing has grown into a daily exercise routine. She now exercises every day and has found a real passion for gym-based workouts. "I enjoy going to the gym," says Teresa. "I enjoy feeling the burn during a workout and even the next day. It proves to me that I've done something positive for myself."



The results have been remarkable. Teresa has lost 13 kilograms, her anxiety has reduced significantly, and she has much more energy. One of her proudest achievements has been lowering her HbA1c levels to the point where she is no longer considered pre-diabetic.

Beyond the physical changes, Teresa has also experienced important personal growth throughout her journey.



“ —

"I've learned that I'm the boss of me," she says. "I've learned to stand up for myself and the importance of warming up before exercise."

Teresa credits the support she received through Green Prescription as a key factor in her success. She particularly valued the encouragement, practical information, and variety of exercises provided through the programme.

"The support, information, and exercises have been amazing. The programme has absolutely met my needs."

The programme has helped her feel more comfortable leaving the house, being around other people, and making positive lifestyle choices. She also learned a great deal about nutrition, including how to make healthier food choices and what to look for when buying food, which has helped her feel more confident managing her wellbeing.

Looking ahead, Teresa is determined to continue building on her success. Her goals are to join a gym and a swimming pool and to keep challenging herself to achieve even more.

When asked if she would recommend Green Prescription to others, her answer was immediate: "Hell yes!"

Teresa's journey is a powerful example of how small, consistent changes, combined with the right support, can lead to life-changing results. Through commitment, determination, and the guidance of Green Prescription, she has improved her health, regained her confidence, and created a brighter future for herself.



GRx Adult

Total referrals Jan – June 2026: 158

Total referrals July 2025– June 2026: 304

Impact MDC GRx Adult

100% of participants reported being more active since engaging with the programme

100% of participants feel more confident about doing Physical Activity since engaging with the programme

60% of participants have developed better nutritional habits since engaging with the programme

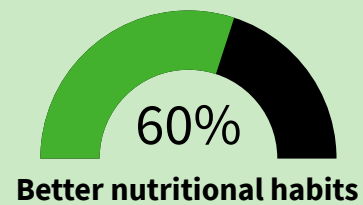
100% of participants have noticed positive health changes since engaging with the programme

100% of participants feel that they have been prescribed activities that are relevant and appropriate to their needs/wellness goals



"It has helped me understand how I can make positive changes for my health. It's a great programme. All the presenters that came along were very interesting and I learnt a lot."

"I have learnt to trust myself and that I'm in charge of me!"

**GRx Active Families/ Active Teens**

Total referrals Jan – June 2026: 12

Total referrals July 2025 – June 2026: 21





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