



Te Ora Tinana Project

November 2021

Sport Otago has completed a needs assessment to identify the physical activity needs and aspirations of priority groups in the Waitaki District. The groups include Māori, Pasifika, and disabled communities.

Sport Otago has worked collaboratively with Kaupapa Māori (Haydon Richards) and Pasifika (Jane Taafaki) researchers in developing this research to capture the needs and aspirations of those communities and insights from local experts. This information will be used to inform the development or re-development of new or existing initiatives to meet the needs and aspirations of those groups and to increase their access around the decision-making table. We want to ensure that everyone can enjoy the physical, mental, social, and cultural benefits of physical activity.

Project Process

Māori: A wānanga was held for Māori whānau interested in the Te Ora Tinana Project at the Waitaki Boys Social Centre. A brief introduction about the project was delivered before whānau engaged in kōrero and provided feedback on the sport and recreational survey. Afterwards, whānau enjoyed a kai with the facilitators before departing. Follow-up kōrero was held with several participants following the wānanga.

Pasifika: Over the course of 6 weeks, a series of one-on-one interviews and small group interviews were held with a variety of Pasifika community members. Using a talanoa (talk-story) style, participants were asked about their feelings relating to their health, wellness, and sport and recreational options as residents of Oamaru and the Waitaki district.

People with disabilities: Key informants from three organisations (IDEA Services, CCS Disability Action, and Special Olympics) were approached about their participation in the project and interviews. All were delighted to be a part, and bring their voices to the table for the Waitaki. Due to Covid, group sessions were unable to take place, however face to face individual interviews were carried out. 21 interviews in total – from managers, support workers, as well as people with a disability. This was to make certain that a range of perspectives within this sector would be represented on the play, active recreation, and sports needs of people with disabilities. Participants and organisations were provided with an information sheet about the research and given an opportunity to provide written consent.

Project Participation

Māori: The primary participants were Māori whānau with school aged children. There were a total of 28 participants present, aged from 5 to 63 years old. The majority of participants were aged under 18 years.

Pasifika: A total of 44 Pasifika community members participated in the talanoa. This included a variety of ages from 16 to 61. The majority of the respondents were

female (55%). Guidance was also sought from Pasifika community and church leadership.

People with disabilities: A total of 21 individuals from a range of ages and abilities were involved in the interviews. The youngest being 13 years old, ranging to 37 years old, with intellectual and/or physical impairments, both female and male, as well as those involved with these people, manager, caretaker, and school support teacher.

Those who benefited are the local intermediate school and various organisations directly involved with people with disabilities – CCS Disability Action, IDEA Services, Magdalen House, Youth Centre, and Special Olympics, all in North Otago. The extra organisations that originally were not targeted such as the Youth Centre and Magdalen House added value to the research as it ensured all parties in the Waitaki District for people with disabilities had their voice heard.

Project Achievement

Māori: Whānau provided personal insights into their desires, aspirations, and experiences of various sport and recreational activities/facilities in the Waitaki region. Through the course of the kōrero whānau identified several desires, aspirations, and barriers to their participation and usage of sport and recreational activities.

Pasifika: In speaking with members of the Pasifika community, insight was gained into the challenges as well as the successes that people in the Waitaki District have experienced relating to the pursuit of health and wellness. Further, a deeper understanding of the broad nature of needs across the community was gained, depending on socio-economic status, family size, residency within the district, english-speaking ability, work schedules, religious/family/cultural commitments, and motivation.

People with disabilities: For those within the disability community a strong connection was made with Sport Waitaki. This link has allowed and given hope to those within the community around their needs and aspirations. They are often a sector that is overlooked regarding play, active recreation, and sport related needs and

aspirations. It is often the small things that make a large difference, as has been found through gaining further understanding and insights into how people with disabilities feel, struggle, and carry out their lives in the Waitaki.

Other Community Benefits or Outcomes

Māori: There were several comments from whānau that they were happy to be included in the project as they often felt disengaged from community discussions. Hence, they were hopeful that this project would provide an avenue for their views and aspirations. There was also strong interest in understanding what financial support was available for whānau who struggled financially, and that such support would enable whānau to engage with more activities and opportunities for health and wellbeing.

Pasifika: Participants were pleased to share their experiences and insights to the project. They are hopeful that the project will result in increased accessibility to programs, places, and funding that will ameliorate some of the barriers that they regularly encounter. For many participants, being asked what they thought was a big step towards recognizing their place in the Waitaki community. Many were surprised that anyone in a position of authority or in a position to make policy change should be interested in their needs or opinions.

People with disabilities: This project will benefit the wider community by providing an evidence base on which to build a coordinated response to addressing priority community needs, leading to increased physical activity and better health outcomes for those groups. In particular, the Waitaki District Council for their future planning for roading, facilities, and resources. Specifically around the 'new' sporting recreation centre that is their main focus, this research adds valuable insights into the challenges, barriers, and support required for people with disabilities, to use for their benefit. For instance – larger benches and family room space for those that are older but still require assistance to change.

Sector Narratives

Māori:

The majority of whānau participants were from North Oamaru, with the remaining participants from South Hill. Participants consisted primarily of rangatahi aged under 18 years who attended the wānanga with their parents. There was a primary interest around rangatahi health and wellbeing through recreation and sports. This was to be expected as the rangatahi indicated they were active in sport and recreational activities, whereas pāhake tended to be less active.

Whānau indicated a generally positive perspective of the various recreational and sport activities across the Waitaki community. The most negatively viewed activities were Multi-age Playgrounds, Sports Facilities, and Community Gathering Spaces. Whānau felt that these community facilities needed better maintenance and up-keep, a perspective that was indicated throughout whānau feedback.

Whānau felt strongly that there were sufficient sporting and play opportunities across the Waitaki region. This is not entirely unexpected given the majority of participants were rangatahi who were actively engaged in sporting programmes. Recreational and cultural activities were highlighted as opportunities for increased participation, with whānau indicating that most Māori activities were through school kapa haka. This isn't entirely unexpected as capacity within Māori communities tends to be limited, with a lot of extra-curricular activities run by individuals who are passionate about a specific kaupapa.

Whānau largely thought that better up-keep of parks, reserves, and playgrounds was required, with several whānau commenting that they felt these areas were messy. Accessibility was also cited by nearly a quarter of participants as requiring attention. The overall view of facilities within the Waitaki region was mixed, while the majority of whānau noted the convenience positively.

Whānau engaged in sport, recreation, and cultural activities across a variety of locations. Public parks, the Aquatic Centre, school, home, and beaches, lakes, and rivers were locations frequently visited. Conservation areas and Church were the locations whānau engaged the least. This was due to accessibility with the most frequently visited locations being more readily accessible than Conservation areas.

Overall, whānau did not have a strong affiliation with Churches, hence the low participation with Church based activities.

Whānau identified several barriers that prevented their participation in activities outside the home, with time constraints and costs being the most prominent. Lack of motivation and equipment costs were also identified as significant barriers. The financially orientated barriers were cited by various whānau as being a major constraint, leading to a discussion around financial assistance and grants that whānau could access.

Rating the importance of a variety of facilities and places, whānau strongly indicated that rugby fields and arts and cultural spaces were the most important. This reflects the nature of whānau as cultural spaces were valued taonga for Māori while rugby fields were cited by the rangatahi as being important gathering places for practice, fun, and social gatherings. The least important facilities and places were indoor walking tracks and ice hockey/skate rink. The rationale for the lower rating was that whānau didn't engage with these facilities and therefore did not view them as favourably as other facilities and places.

Whānau identified a variety of activities and facilities that they would like to pursue if they were available in the Waitaki region. The most prominent activities identified by whānau were kaupapa Māori activities such as waka ama, kī-o-rahi, and mau rākau. This is not unexpected as such activities have increased in popularity over recent years. Whānau also identified a number of aquatic activities such as water polo, a hydro-slide, and bigger pools.

Discussing which sport, play, or recreational areas required the most improvement, "recreational, leisure, and sports programmes and activities are developed specifically for and made accessible to people with disabilities where required" was the most commonly identified need. The rationale behind this perspective was a desire for inclusivity within the community, a viewpoint consistent with the Māori value of manaakitanga (inclusiveness). Other areas that were commonly identified included increased safety on roads, especially near schools. This was an expected result as all participants were connected to schools as either parents or students. More non-competitive sport and recreation options and an improved aquatic centre

were also commonly identified areas. This perspective correlates with previous questions as whānau identified activities such as mau rākau, kī-o-rahi, and waka ama as activities they would like to participate in; additionally a desire for more aquatic activities was also identified. Increased availability and affordability of group exercise options was also an identified need and is consistent with previous answers where whānau identified costs as a barrier to participation. Safe playground options for children aged under five years of age, accessibility of information, and the number, quality, and location of playgrounds were the least identified areas that required improvement. The playground results correlate with the demographic of whānau participants as the majority were rangatahi and therefore not engaged in playground and information related activities, whereas the pakeke present did identify these areas as needing improvement.

When presented with the opportunity to identify activities that they would participate in to be healthy and happy if cost was not an issue, whānau identified a number of existing opportunities such as touch rugby, netball, cycling, rugby, and basketball, in addition to more exotic options such as waka ama and mau rākau. Again, this correlates with previous answers where whānau identified cost as a barrier to participation. These answers indicate that cost is a real barrier that is actively preventing whānau from participating in existing opportunities that promote health, happiness, and wellbeing.

The most common theme identified throughout the survey and kōrero was that cost was a recurring barrier that prevented whānau from participating in more sport, play, and recreational activities. Whānau were unaware of any financial assistance or grants they could apply for, despite there being several funds available.

Another common theme was the desire for more kaupapa Māori activities such as waka ama, mau rākau, and kī-o-rahi, which whānau identified as an avenue for connecting with and strengthening culture and identity. Unfortunately, these activities are not available in the community.

As mentioned throughout this report, costs of activities and equipment is a recurring and significant barrier for many whānau. From the information provided through the survey and kōrero it is clear the financial constraints are actively preventing whānau

from participating in sport, play, and recreational activities that would support their health, happiness, and wellbeing. Whānau were completely unaware that there are opportunities for financial assistance to support their participation in sport, play, and recreational activities, for example the Te Kīwai Fund through Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu. When whānau were informed about this fund and other avenues, they expressed an interest to learn more, however, there was also a sense of apprehension stemming from previous negative experiences seeking financial assistance. There was a sense of whakamā (shame) that has resulted from feelings of being stigmatized and judged during these previous experiences that have created an additional barrier. Whānau indicated that they would consider accessing financial assistance if it was available in a way that felt culturally safe and appropriate.

Overall, whānau had a positive perspective of sport, play, and recreational activities within the Waitaki region. There was active participation in a wide variety of activities, particularly amongst the rangatahi, who were actively involved with sports in particular. Whānau were open to new opportunities and experiences, particularly kaupapa Māori activities. Unfortunately, financial constraints were consistently identified as a barrier that is negatively impacting whānau and their level of participation. The lack of opportunities for whānau to engage in kaupapa Māori activities such as waka ama, mau rākau, and kī-o-rahi was cited by many participants. Furthermore, whānau saw these types of activities as an avenue for connecting with their Māoritanga (culture) and felt disappointed that they were unable to engage in these activities. Capacity and capability constraints are a common theme within Māori communities, and unfortunately it appears that the expertise and knowledge to facilitate these types of activities is absent from the Waitaki region.

Pasifika:

The Tagata Pasifika population, with its younger and increasingly New Zealand-born profile, is projected to increase to 12% of New Zealand's population by 2051 (Statistics NZ, 2018). Given the historic under-counting that has been shown to exist

in Tagata Pasifika peoples (Edwards, 1996), this is perhaps a conservative estimate. The general Tagata Pasifika population is expected to top 650,000 in the next two decades (Statistics NZ, 2018).

Census data showed the population of Pasifika in Waitaki as 858 (3.8%), compared with 468 (2.2%) in 2010. With more than 200 families moving to Oamaru in recent decades, Pasifika now make up 20 percent of Oamaru's 13,000 people, compared to Auckland's 15 percent (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/426793/oamaru-s-pacific-community-weighing-election-opportunities>). The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a more careful accounting of Pasifika in Waitaki and estimates now exceed 2,000 (Oamaru Pacific Island Community Group, 2021).

Te Ora Tinana Project participation was sought from Pasifika who live in Oamaru and the Waitaki Valley. The majority of respondents live in the North Oamaru area, which was to be expected as that is where the vast majority of Pasifika live in Oamaru. This is related to the lower cost of living in the North End, walking distance to all secondary schools and middle school, and closer proximity to employment at Lean Meats and Alliance Pukeuri. Few Pasifika live in the South Hill area, however their responses remained consistent with Pasifika in the North End of Oamaru. Our ability to conduct larger talanoa with the Pacific community was hampered by Covid-19 restrictions and the fact that Talanoa Ako did not continue for Terms 3 and 4 of 2021 due to funding constraints. Nevertheless, participation was widely sought and interviews continued in smaller groups and one-on-one. A total of 44 individuals were interviewed for the project.

Recreation: It was noted that Pasifika do not, in general, make full use of recreational options in the Waitaki District. This can be seen from their limited use of the Friendly Bay playground, Oamaru Gardens and playground, and walking and bike tracks. The reasons behind this can be cultural, socio-economic, racial, or otherwise. It was generally perceived that those are “palagi” spaces. While no respondent mentioned an overt exclusion, it was inferred that they at times do not feel comfortable in those places. This is not to say that no Pasifika family uses the harbour playground or visits the Gardens. However, you are not likely to see many Pasifika there unless they live very nearby.

There is limited use of the Aquatic Centre, for those families whose children can in fact swim. Adults do not use the Aquatic Centre for exercise or recreation for both cultural (wearing of swimsuits for women) and practical reasons (they cannot swim). While the cost to use the Centre is not exorbitant, it remains a barrier to frequent usage of that space. In addition, its location in town is a barrier to those with limited transportation options. Respondents also noted that they have at times felt “shame” if the lifeguard has scolded them for being too loud or boisterous. Despite coming from islands where ocean swimming is the norm, few Pasifika choose to swim in the ocean here and will only if at a family picnic or some similar event. Pasifika children noted that they love “jumping off the wharf” in the summer and/or playing on the beach at Friendly Bay or Kakanui beach, however, those experiences are limited. A number of respondents noted that they enjoy river swimming a lot; making use of the Kakanui river near the Totara Estate or travelling inland to Maheno to more secluded swimming spots. Adults were more likely to swim in the river than ocean or pool because it is more private and they would be amongst their own families/community. Fishing remains a highlight for Pasifika, the most popular being the mouth of the Waitaki river during kahawai and flounder seasons, octopus hunting in Dunedin, crab netting in Moeraki, and, less often, diving for paua/kina or salmon fishing up the valley or at the Ohau/Tekapo canals. The majority of respondents who discussed fishing noted that they do not often buy fishing licenses to catch New Zealand game fish due to the cost. While eating salmon is desirable, families are more likely to purchase it through the Mt. Cook factory outlet in Timaru than catch it themselves. Boating options were primarily not included in participant responses and those who had either experienced or benefitted from fish caught from a boat had so because of a friend or work colleague who took them fishing. No respondent knew of a Pasifika person in Oamaru who owned a boat.

Because of the cost associated with purchasing a bicycle, most Pasifika children do not own one, or will share one bike amongst multiple children. They are more likely to own scooters and are still expected to share. While this may be changing for some families, most older Pasifika children outgrow bike riding and prefer walking to school. Parents noted that the streets surrounding schools are often unsafe, especially Taward St (between Raglan and Redcastle), and on Arundel, Raglan, and Harlech Streets. One parent noted that every morning and afternoon, there are six

schools (Casa Nova Kindergarten, St. Kevins, Waitaki Boys, Oamaru Intermediate, Pembroke, and Waitaki Girls) that have children walking, biking, scootering to/from school. There are no speed warning signs or speed bumps to slow motorists. During the year, and especially during touch rugby season, dozens of children are crossing Taward Street to Centennial Park, and the lack of speed barriers makes this very dangerous as motorists often speed race down this road. Parents are inclined to stop their child participating in touch or will drive them to school to avoid dangerous speeding on these roads in particular.

Use of the Waitaki Recreation Centre is mixed. Younger respondents are very familiar with the Centre as it is the place that basketball, some netball, and volleyball takes place. Community usage of the Recreation Centre for Friday night volleyball was highlighted as a popular activity. This was especially true for the Tuvaluan community and Inspired Faith Church that utilize that space to foster community relationships, provide youth with a Friday night activity, as well as for exercise. Volleyball is a sport that Pasifika have enjoyed from the islands to Oamaru and is another way in which community spirit and competition is enjoyed. The lack of an outdoor space to play volleyball or access to nets/balls was noted as a barrier to most respondents. While volleyball is still an up and coming sport in Oamaru, Pasifika are seen at the forefront, especially at Waitaki Girls and Boys high schools. For Pasifika girls, this is a popular option for those who do not play netball. The lack of public outdoor courts was repeatedly cited as a drawback, especially in North Oamaru. Being able to play basketball/volleyball/netball after school, evenings, and on weekends was mentioned as a real barrier to fitness and recreation for Pasifika. Use of green spaces for rugby was noted to be excellent in the North End as space at Centennial Park is frequently used. Concerns over the loss of a popular rugby game spot to the planned recreational centre were raised, however those concerns were less important than the benefits to be gained. Rugby and touch are extremely popular sports for Pasifika youth and men, and is becoming increasingly popular with girls as well. For families with gifted players, access to larger opportunities outside of Oamaru can be limited because of cost. This is true for almost all Pasifika elite athletes in Waitaki. Participating in tournaments can average between \$100-\$400 per student per tournament. If the family has multiple children in sports, this can be a prohibitive amount. Funding assistance is available but it is limited. Applications from

Oamaru to Sporting Chance are included with children from all of Otago, and so the odds of funding are low. This is true for equipment as well.

In interviewing Pasifika, especially older community members, the condition of footpaths and poor lighting was cited as an important reason behind why they did not walk around their neighborhoods. One respondent noted that there is one street in her neighborhood in the North End that has only two working lights, and is thus dangerous for her to walk in. Uneven footpaths were also cited as a barrier due to fear of tripping and falling. When pressed, respondents also noted that they were “tired” and thus unmotivated to walk on a regular basis, especially if there was no one to motivate or walk with them. Older respondents, many of those barely 60, consider themselves to be “old” and thus unable to exercise. This included walking or attending an exercise class. When asked, older women responded that they would prefer walking on a treadmill or an indoor walking track. For most Pasifika women, feeling “faka maa” or “shame” was a primary reason why they did not exercise publicly or at the gym. They mentioned that most recreational/exercise places lacked a Pasifika “vibe” and thus were uncomfortable/unwelcoming. Some shame derived from larger body size was mentioned. When asked if they would use a space/class specifically for them and run by a Pasifika person, they were unanimously positive.

There are growing negative trends in terms of health disparities that continue to grow (Ministry of Health 2013; Statistics NZ 2013). Social and economic factors such as health literacy, prescription costs, large family size, and diet continue to be key determinants of Tagata Pasifika health behaviours (NZ Health Survey, 2019). This is no different for Pasifika in Waitaki, however a broader community health evaluation was beyond the scope of this project. Nevertheless, it became apparent over the course of the Te Ora Tinana Project that access, affordability, and motivation remain the core issues related to health seeking behaviours for Pasifika.

Body image for Pasifika in New Zealand is a complex issue. Even New Zealand born Pasifika continue to prize a “thicker” body for women as desirable for themselves and their partners. Gaining weight from childbirth is an expectation, however losing that weight is not. Thinness is often associated with illness or “fia palagi” attitudes. While this is not universal, Pasifika women are expected to be on the heavier side

and are considered more attractive. This appreciation of a larger body is often a motivator behind the reason why many Pasifika, male and female, do not exercise. This is also why most Pasifika women often choose not to go to public gyms because they feel judged by non-Pasifika for their size and/or exercising around men. Acknowledging the role that culture plays in body size and image is important. However, many participants also acknowledged that their health is not as they would like it to be but they lacked motivation and could not do anything about it on their own. A number of respondents mentioned admiring the programmes organised by the Tongan Society in Timaru, including the Biggest Loser and various other group exercise initiatives, and wondered whether the same could be replicated in Oamaru.

Access to non-church associated large spaces for both familial and community gatherings, Pasifika exercise programmes, or cultural events was a noted barrier. This was also noted as a barrier in regards to the pursuit of cultural activities like traditional dancing. Respondents noted that Auckland and Christchurch Pasifika have more cultural outlets because they have more neutral, public spaces to practice in. Having a “Celebrate Pasifika” event was mentioned as a possibility, however locating and/or funding it is problematic. One respondent emotionally mentioned that she, as a Pasifika in Oamaru, often feels “invisible” despite the fact that they make up 20% of the Waitaki population. While racism certainly continues to exist in Oamaru, the respondent felt that the lack of opportunities for Pasifika to practice and share their cultures and language (outside of the Language Week and Polyfest) could lead to young people losing that part of their identity.

In summary, the majority of Pasifika in Waitaki greatly appreciate Oamaru and the peaceful nature of life here, and were positive on almost all fronts. They acknowledge that recreational spaces and places exist but they do not take advantage of them as much as they should, whether because of work scheduling, cost, or ability. Most viewed participation in sport as extremely important to them or their children but also cited the rising cost of that participation as problematic. Parents of elite athletes found travel, access to coaching, and distance as their biggest drawbacks of living in Waitaki. Many were hopeful that the planned recreational centre in the North End would attract greater opportunities for less travel, and would bring more scouts and training camps to Oamaru.

Culturally responsive initiatives coupled with Pasifika leadership in the arena of culture, sport, recreation, and wellness would have positive results across the district. Having “Pasifika-friendly” spaces available for all manner of activities is a complex issue. However, having community-centred programmes that specifically target Pasifika, especially women, was considered important. Participants living in Oamaru North noted that there are no quality playgrounds like those at the Oamaru Gardens or Friendly Bay. Having their children be able to walk to larger, multi-age, safe playgrounds was cited as being important coupled with access to public outdoor multisport courts that would allow for evening and weekend recreation. Improved lighting on side streets and repairs of unsafe footpaths was also noted as a community need.

Access to information remains a barrier to wellness and recreation in Waitaki. While opportunities, activities, and events may exist, they are most often not reaching Pasifika communities. The exception to this is organised sport and school-associated sport. Information is often passed from Council level to the community via community organisations like the Oamaru Pacific Island Community Group, individual island group associations, and churches. Partnerships with these organisations should be sought to increase the uptake of any and all recreational and wellness programmes in Waitaki. As community-oriented people, Pasifika will respond well to programmes that are led by/endorsed by their own community leadership. Project participants responded very positively to the idea of gym-type facilities in their church halls and other community spaces that their youth, men, and women could access at different times.

People with disabilities:

The majority of the participants lived in Oamaru North, which was expected as it is close to schools of all ages as well as the IHC and Magdalen housing. Being at this end of town however does mean that people have to travel into Central Oamaru to visit the gardens, go shopping, have a haircut, as well as participate in many other sport, recreation, and play activities. This raised barriers for the initial question of our interview of transport. Many can not drive themselves, therefore other forms of

transport are required; walking, biking, taxis, or organisation vans. Transport is a huge barrier for people with disabilities. This barrier highlights the incompatible footpaths and crossings through the Oamaru township. Education around where to cross is required for those that are independent, and for those that are not completely it is confidence damaging.

The Waitaki Aquatic Centre is used a lot by the disability sector for Special Olympics training as well as hydrotherapy. The water allows them to fully be themselves as the water acts as a support to make it low weight bearing. There is a cost to enter the premises, however interviewees acknowledged that it is the cheapest indoor public facility to enter in the South Island; the expenses add up once transport is included. Sometimes their support worker is able to take them, however, it needs to be one on one and booked in advance to ensure that staff onsite is in ratio. There are new hoists that were put in the Aquatic Centre two years ago – these were appreciated and complimented as having made an improvement for the sector in allowing for people with any type of disability who cannot enter the pool themselves to gain access successfully. The Aquatic Centre was rated very highly with six participants scoring it a 5/5 for importance.

Playgrounds also scored highly on the importance scale. This was due to a few being able to participate themselves, but the majority enjoying watching others. A manager's comment of having a wheelchair access swing has remained boldly in my mind, "those that watch smile so widely yet imagine their faces if they could experience it themselves." Swinging is an excellent source of vestibular input used in sensory integration therapy for children with sensory processing disorders. It can help to develop gross motor skills including balance and coordination, as well as fine motor skills such as gripping. But not just for children, balance and coordination, as well as having fun, is important for anyone of any age.

The Oamaru Gardens and green spaces were described as having "pretty flowers everywhere," however the paths are difficult for many people with a disability. The gardens have narrow and rooty pathways that disrupt the path and cause hazard. This makes those that struggle or are unconfident walking shy away from going near. Whereas in the green spaces throughout Oamaru, and closer to where the majority live in Oamaru North, they are only grass paths which limits a range of accessibility.

Furthermore in regards to paths throughout Oamaru, particularly the North End, there was a common theme that they are difficult - on odd angles, huge ledges/curbs, even near disability car parking. Also the large gaps between footpaths and roads are very high and steep. Many participants understood that the gaps were for drainage, however wheelchairs, bicycles, as well as other modes like pushchairs, struggle to go over. This needs assessment really illustrates that the infrastructure of Oamaru is not up to standard for daily activities for everyone.

There are a range of crossover needs for people with disability; it is also referred to as the accessible journey. For instance, a recommendation for the Waitaki from the research is a concrete, flat, covered shelter in a green space so people with a disability are able to share the simplicity of a picnic/BBQ. It however is a whānau approach for under fives, those in a wheel or pushchair, grandparents, and parents.

Within the disability sector there are those that are independent, but there are also those that require full-time care. From managers, support workers, and individuals themselves, everyone was eager about being able to participate in play, recreation, and sport. Attitude is a huge part of moving and being involved, so this showed a great indication of where this sector is heading in the near future. There was a selection of participants (four) that are friends who use biking as their main mode of transport daily, to work, to hang out, and to get to various recreational activities, e.g. boccia and ten pin bowling. They have taught each other to be confident riding on the footpaths and being aware of other vehicles and people. This shows that with support and encouragement people in the disability sector are able to become more independent. Waitaki is becoming a well known area for recreational cycling with the Alps to Ocean being a large attraction. This is a great resource that could be used more to its full advantage.

Regarding how satisfied participants were with their current community and facilities, over half circled 'unsure' for both indoor and outdoor facilities – this shows that people with disabilities don't know what they don't know, and couldn't make a judgement on this. This is a positive as it allows the Waitaki itself to really take a stand and show everyone that what we have is of great benefit and up to a satisfactory standard for everyone to use.

This research allowed the community to have evidence about people with disabilities' needs and aspirations. It has allowed us to create opportunities around 'their choice'. This is powerful for the disability sector where so often the simple actions of life are more difficult, and regularly overlooked around our local facilities, events, and resources for their accessibility and inclusion. Getting knowledge is better than assumptions, as you do not understand completely unless living in the situation. This research raises awareness and challenges everyone to ensure all are included.

People's disability doesn't define them, instead it is the social structures within Waitaki that are the problem and causing disablement; not themselves. This leads to the social vs medical model of disabilities. The medical model aims to remedy disability through a medical cure or by trying to make the person appear less disabled or more "normal", whereas the social model portrays that the remedy is a change in the interaction between the individual and society. When society changes, the issues of a person with a disability disappear. What we think impacts how tamariki feel... "I don't go up to people and go, 'Hi I am different'. I honestly think that I am equal to everybody else but you know .. some people think I am different, but I see myself as an equal person to everybody else" – Holly, 14.

When they are younger they are more likely to participate in sport, recreation, and play, as there are easier opportunities through their schooling to engage more compared to as they get older. As everyone gets older, societal pressures and demands surround individuals and certain ways of living this either aids or hinders people in their activities. Like this research, it confirms and raises awareness of everyone including those in the disability sector around education and inclusion.

There were a range of positives that the participants mentioned, such as continuing to have the walking events organised by Multisport Club. These are an awesome way to meet others and cater for all. Also the Colour Dash where people with disabilities can aid in whatever way they can, from walking/running themselves to being a paint thrower at a station, or even on the registration or stop prize stand as a helper. Many are involved and more want to be due to hearing from others. There were also a large selection that appreciate and go to the beach locally, in particular Friendly Bay and All Day Bay in Kakanui. From the manager's perspective the idea

of going to the beach is always delightful, however health and safety is quite hard when part of an organisation.

Barriers to participation: People with disabilities have more barriers to increasing their participation than non-disabled people. This was illustrated throughout the interviews with health and safety, independence, and abilities all being in the forefront before the additional hurdles. Finances were a reoccurring barrier as a lot are on a type of benefit once they hit 18 and therefore, once their expenses have been removed for the week, there is not a lot to spend on other things. Moreover, transport was a large barrier. Getting to and from the various facilities, activities, and events safely is a huge barrier that prevents people with a disability from stepping foot out the door. Past experiences of falling immediately puts anxiety in at least five of the participants' minds with the suggestion of attempting to walk on a path.

Knowledge/communication as a barrier for the small district of Waitaki shouldn't be an issue, however knowing what is on, when, and where is key to being a part of the community itself. Over half of the participants were unsure of what is out there for them let alone what they could participate in. This is an issue that is a priority for this sector as they are not taking advantage of their surroundings. Furthermore on knowledge and communication, when you participate with others, understanding what others are saying is important, e.g. for rules or actions. This can often be a large barrier for people with disabilities. Adapting can take place, however this is sometimes linked with others holding them back with comments like, "oh no, they can't do that" beforehand. Education of inclusion is a must for everyone within the Waitaki District.

Multiple participants mentioned their motivation was often low, and they sometimes felt like going and sometimes didn't; changing their minds often. This was due to various medication and drive from within as well as the people they are surrounded by. Therefore, having an activity to attend outside of their comfort living makes them feel responsible and go.

A barrier that every tamariki below 18 years old mentioned was their parents saying 'no'. When they are younger they are dependent on their parents/caregivers and despite the tamariki wanting to, the older adults must agree. This is a barrier that

unfortunately, out of others involved, guidelines and communicating with the schools around aiding with support for the tamariki is the only step.

When getting the information there were challenges in order to get accurate information. At the beginning my interviewees responded with only answers that they had previously been a part of rather than what their future could look like. I then proceeded with a range of images that I was able to show everyone and used both verbal responses as well as facial expressions to gauge an understanding. This allowed me to fully understand what play, recreation, and sport people with a disability were interested in. This ranged from rock climbing and shot put to Zumba and Aquafit; a taste of culture and variety.

Project Summary Recommendations

Māori:

- Promoting financial assistance opportunities available to encourage more whānau to participate in activities, as financial barriers were a common theme.
- Provide culturally appropriate support for whānau who are seeking financial assistance but feel whakamā about doing so.
- Creating an opportunity for kaupapa Māori sport and recreational activities such as waka ama, kī-o-rahi, mau rākau. Whānau had a strong desire for more Māori orientated health and wellbeing opportunities, noting that there were limited opportunities in the Waitaki region.
- Increased maintenance and up-keep of parks, reserves, playgrounds, sports fields, and open spaces.

Pasifika:

- Additional financial support for families who; (a) have children who participate in sport, especially those who have special talent, and (b) those wishing to engage in exercise at a gym or take exercise classes.

- Additional health and wellness programmes that are constructed from a Pasifika point of view or specifically for Pasifika. Participants noted that exercise programmes/places do not appeal to them because they lack a cultural “vibe”, either from the instructor, music selections, location of the programme, etc.
- Creation of at least two more high quality playgrounds in the North Oamaru area, including bike tracks for younger children and multisport (basketball/volleyball/netball) courts with night lighting options. These would also have picnic areas so families can gather there for BBQ’s, and hold community sport competitions (especially volleyball).

People with a disability:

- A database which has everything that is going on in the Waitaki so that those within the disability sector are able to plan ahead of time and ensure that they can be included in these events. Education around ensuring that events and activities need to be inclusive and that this needs to be at the forefront of organisers minds. A large barrier for people with disabilities, as well as those that are working in the sector, is that they feel disconnected from the rest and that they are unaware of what is going on in the Waitaki.
- A common theme among all responses is their love for music and dancing - Zumba for many people has been a great form of recreational movement and exercise, therefore the concept of a form of slow-down Zumba with repetitive movement to allow the participants to fully understand and grasp the moves before moving to the next one, while also enjoying the bright colours involved.
- Creation of a flat, concreted, covered picnic area that is easily accessible for all abilities to allow for the people with disabilities to enjoy the simplicity of a picnic/ BBQ in the sunshine with friends and family. This asset would also be beneficial for others within the community such as elderly and families.
- When interviewing for this research a common hurdle that I experienced was that participants would only go by what they have done in the past rather than what they could do in the future. I then added pictures of various activities to see if they would be interested in the images and trying various sports and recreational activities as a lot of them didn’t know what certain things were – this was a hit and this led to the idea of ‘Have a Go Days’ - let themselves explore and experience a

range of activities that they potentially haven't tried before. There will be no sign ups, however if they are interested we can aid them to a club or organised activity where required.

Despite their anticipated differences, there were a number of commonalities that emerged over the course of this project. Some were related to barriers that people were commonly facing and others were aspirational.

- Finance: All three priority groups noted that a lack of adequate funding presented a barrier to their participation in all aspects of sport and recreation. This included sports fees, equipment, participation in tournaments and elite sports, purchasing mobility scooters, etc.
- Transport: Having access to reliable transportation to and from sport and recreation areas remains a barrier. Disability transport is expensive, taxis are costly.
- Safety: Increased safety on the roads, especially around schools, was a commonly stated issue. Road crossings, road safety basics, speeding vehicles, lack of speed bumps, signage, control, etc, were all mentioned as poor.
- Whānau felt strongly that sport, play, and recreational areas required better accessibility for people with disabilities. They also felt that there should be more opportunities developed specifically for people with disabilities.
- Larger play areas in the Aquatic Centre.
- Creation of a flat, concreted, covered picnic area that is easily accessible for all abilities.
- Creation of at least one high quality playground in the North End of Oamaru that includes a wheelchair swing and multi-age play areas.
- Recognition of the changing nature of the population in the Waitaki District and to build their needs into future planning.

This report will be publicly available via the Sport Otago Website for those who wish to know the details of the project and its findings.

We have seen a development of a network of interested parties and a work programme to address the needs and aspirations of Māori, Pasifika, and people who are disabled in Waitaki within six months of the hui occurring. This is demonstrated in our summary recommendations and will be the focus for our Sport Waitaki Coordinator (Philippa Sutton) to carry out using various funding sources.

Invitations to the report to the community hui were widely distributed throughout the Waitaki district to those who have an interest in play, sport, and active recreation (e.g., funders, schools, sports organisations, providers of recreational opportunities).