

Community & Services Committee

16 September 2025

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [5]

Title | Taitara: Chair's Report

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

The purpose of this report is to provide the Community & Services Committee with an update on projects of interest and includes a summary of projects that have been implemented over this triennium.

This is the final of the reports for the triennium. This final report captures the efforts of staff who have been delivering on a wide range of projects and includes updates and summaries on strategic items that continue to be progressed.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohu

That the Community & Services Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report.

Prepared by:



Name: Craig Ferguson

Title: Chair, Community & Services Committee
27 August 2025

Context | Horopaki

Sport and Recreation

Queenstown

516 Ladies Mile Community Facilities

1. The Te Putahi Ladies Mile Masterplan was approved by Council in 2024 and confirmed that the 516 site is the preferred site for community facilities, including a sports fields, community centre and others. In September 2024, Council approved the Long Term Plan 24-34 and brought forward funding for the 516 Ladies Mile project, however, in December 2024 the Fast Track planning process conditions have indicated difficulties with gaining access to the site, infrastructure and traffic until such time that NZTA completes a range of transportation works, i.e. Howards Drive intersection. Further analysis is required around the timing for the implementation of community facilities on this site.

Queenstown Events Centre Indoor Courts and Fitness Centre Project

2. On 17 April 2025, the Council agreed to proceed with the concept/preliminary design phase to provide 4 new indoor courts and a fitness centre at the Queenstown Events Centre. Project management services and a Concept Design team have been procured with a project working group kickoff in early September 2025. Development of an overall programme for the design/construction is being developed by the newly appointed project managers and design team and once confirmed will form the basis of regular milestone updates to Council and the wider community.

Te Atamira

3. Te Atamira Arts & Cultural Hub was opened on the 22 May 2022 and has provided a home for a wide range of local arts and cultural groups and activities. This was a partnership between Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and the Te Atamira Board, with QLDC committing to a 10-year lease of a commercial building and Te Atamira fitting out and managing the centre. Te Atamira has been recognized nationally and internationally for its contribution to the arts sector and continues to be a significant local arts provider for the District.

Wānaka & Upper Clutha

Ballantyne Road Site Establishment Works

4. The first phase of remediation works have been completed on site to clear the rubbish and other waste material. Retesting of contaminated areas has been completed and the quantity and cost of remediation is at acceptable limits.

5. Earthworks have begun to start cutting and filling in the Western part of the site (the old ponds area) with good progress being made. A time lapse camera has been installed to capture the site development over time: [Timelapse Video](#).
6. In 2022, an engagement process was held to gauge the communities' views around the uses on the site and a draft Masterplan concept which components informed funding allocated in Council's Long Term plan. The Council committed to bringing forward funding for the site establishment works as part of an agreement with Willowridge Development Limited. In conjunction with the Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board and key sporting stakeholders, a programme has been scoped to develop a pathway forward to re-engage the public regarding future uses of the Ballantyne Road site. It is expected the 'development planning' will commence in November 2025.

Paetara Aspiring Central

7. Opened on 1 October 2023, Paetara Aspiring Central was an opportunity the Council took to lease an old Mitre 10 building in Plantation Road and convert it into a 2x indoor court facility, youth centre and gymnastics centre. This facility has complemented the existing Wānaka Recreation Centre and helps cater for the growth in activities throughout the Upper Clutha area.

Luggate Memorial Centre & Playground redevelopment

8. The Luggate Memorial Hall was decommissioned in 2017 because of seismic concerns, and a commitment was made to redevelop the hall. The Centre was reopened in 5 December 2022 and is the first Community Centre in New Zealand to achieve Passive Haus certification. In addition, the existing playground impacted by the Centre works received a full upgrade to compliment the new Centre and growing community.

Key minor projects/activities – Queenstown/Wānaka

9. The Community & Services team have also:
 - Supported Wānaka Cricket Club to build cricket nets and an artificial cricket turf to assist training for the community. Also assisted Queenstown Cricket club to renew their artificial turf and nets due to wear and tear and overuse.
 - Funded the Hāwea Domain Board to relocate a portable building to the Hāwea Domain for use as a community centre and meeting space.
 - Built a basketball court space at the Hāwea Community Centre for the community and provided football goals and line markings for Peter Fraser Park to encourage casual use.
 - Development of a play structure/pod at Wānaka Recreation Centre to encourage play and socialization in partnership with MINT and other community groups.

- Wānaka-Upper Clutha Sports Facilities Working group has been formed, in conjunction with the Wanaka Community board representatives and Sport Central, to look at sports flood lighting and sports field development.
- Renewed the six outdoor courts at the Queenstown Events Centre with a Rebound Ace HSA surface for netball/tennis.
- Developed the QLDC Community Facility Strategy 2022 which provides a future direction for the development of community facilities across the District.
- Hosted and facilitated numerous sporting and cultural events for the District, i.e. Black Caps International One Day Cricket, Bay Dreams, Mardi Gras, Buddhist retreats.
- Reconfigured Frankton Golf course (keeping 9 holes) due to NZTA acquiring land and developing an intersection at the BP roundabout.

Libraries

Highlights at QLDC Libraries for the three-year term beginning October 2022:

10. A fine-free policy for children and seniors was introduced on 1 July 2022, which led to an 87% increase in children's memberships during the 2023/24 period. This initiative was extended to all borrowers on 1 July 2024, aligning with libraries fine-free movement nationally; removing financial barriers, boosting library use, and reducing staff workload.
11. As part of the continued library's strategic commitment to equitable access, hold fees were removed for adult members in January 2025 – previously waived for junior, senior and teacher membership categories – following the fine-free policy adoption. This change led to a 15% increase in item checkouts and strengthened community engagement with library services.
12. QLDC Libraries launched *1000 Books Before School* in November 2022 to support early literacy, with 636 preschoolers currently participating. In February 2025, we became the first in New Zealand to introduce *1000 Books At School*, designed by our Children's Librarian, engaging 174 students to date and extending literacy development into the classroom. Funding was made available to support these programmes through Te Hau Toka and local businesses.
13. With the rapid expansion of digital services since 2023, QLDC Libraries have responded to the growing community need for digital literacy and device confidence through a range of initiatives:
 - Digital classes across the eight library branches (including the Dora Digital Inclusion

Bus), covering eResources, basic computer skills, social media, smartphone use, and digital filing

- Community workshops and guest sessions with groups like Prime Timers, Pembroke Ladies, SeniorNet in the Upper Clutha and Wakatipu Senior Citizen Association, Age Concern and Arvida Country Club in the Whakatipu.
- Expanded Digital Inclusion programmes, such as;
 - i. Skinny Jump – affordable internet for seniors, migrants, and families.
 - ii. Ciena Programme – free 220GB internet for families with school-aged children (in partnership with DIAA & Spark).
 - iii. Partnership with ASB – scam awareness workshops, online banking safety, and general financial literacy across the three main libraries.
 - iv. Chromebooks – externally funded and implemented in five library branches to improve digital access. 36 Chromebooks total, with thanks to Otago Community Trust and Te Hau Toka.

14. Since the 2022/23 financial year, loanable digital resource stock has increased from 23,000 to 64,000 items. Lending of eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines has increased from a total 93,087 items to 144,385 items borrowed in the 2024/25 year. In the same period, physical item lending of a total 116,000 items held across eight library branches has increased from 441,077 to 470,710.

Parks

Draft Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Reserve Restoration Management Plan 2025

15. The draft restoration plan to harvest invasive wilding trees and replant the Reserve with diverse mixed species forest was considered for approval by Council at the 4 September 2025 Council meeting. Further information can be found here: [Draft Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Forestry Management Plan 2025 | Let's Talk Queenstown Lakes District Council](#)

Development Plans – Arrowtown Riverside Reserves and Widgeon Park

16. Draft development plans for the Arrowtown Riverside Reserves and Widgeon Park were shared with the community for feedback on 11 August 2025 (Widgeon Park) and 18 August 2025 (Arrowtown Riverside Reserves). Community drop-in sessions were held on 26 August 2025 (Arrowtown Riverside Reserves) and 28 August 2025 (Widgeon Park). Note: Engagement on the Widgeon Park draft is planned to close on the 14 September 2025, and engagement on the Arrowtown Riverside Reserves draft plan will close on 21 September 2025.

Tiki Trail Pedestrian Bridge

17. A pedestrian bridge that will reconnect the Queenstown cemetery to the base of the Tiki Trail commenced works in August 2025. The bridge enables a safer separation between hikers and mountain bikers. Works are scheduled to be complete in late September 2025.

Ecological Report for Mount Iron

18. Proposals are being sought from suitably qualified and experienced ecological consultants to prepare an ecological report for the Mount Iron Reserve. The report will support ongoing reserve management and implementation of the Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan that was adopted by QLDC in April 2025. The ecological report will identify and assess ecological values and potential areas for restoration and enhancement within the Reserve.

Eely Point Tree Succession Plan

19. A draft Tree Succession Plan for Eely Point was developed to protect an iconic local Reserve to ensure it remains a resilient, ecologically diverse environment for future generations to enjoy. The plan takes a long-term approach to managing the removal of aging wilding conifers. This plan was consulted on with the community, closing 22 June 2025. Note: The final plan will be considered for adoption by the Wanaka Upper Clutha Community Board at its 25 September 2025 meeting.

McPhee Park Playground

20. The long-anticipated opening of the McPhee Park Playground occurred on 1 August 2025, which marked a collaboration with the Hawea Community Association, QLDC and trust funding to create a new interactive play space that meets the needs of a growing community within Hawea flat.

Goat and Rabbit Control

21. The Parks Team have undertaken numerous goat and rabbit control operations. Goat control is focused on Reserves in the Whakatipu and is undertaken by professional contractors. Rabbit control is being undertaken across the district with night shooting, ferret and dog works, and rabbit proof fencing in suitable locations.
22. The winter baiting operations finished on the 3 September 2025. Further information on the goat and rabbit control operations can be found here: [QLDC - Pest Control](#).

Community Partnerships

Community Investments

23. Post-funding reporting for the Waste Minimisation Community Fund has been completed, and preparation began for the latest Get Active Community Grant round (applications close 24 August 2025).
24. Exploration continues for new approaches to the monitoring and evaluation of community

funding impacts, and for evolving the approach to strategic community partnership funding models.

Welcoming Communities

25. The Newcomer's Guide has been released, with growing interest in this local settlement resource. Printed copies have been distributed to schools, libraries, businesses and local community organisations.
26. A Social English programme is now being offered in QLDC Libraries in Wānaka, Frankton and Queenstown.
27. The First Splash Swim with Confidence programme for migrant women is underway with a waiting list of women eager to register to learn how to swim in the next round.
28. Community Link is set up to deliver four settlement sessions this year in Wānaka, whilst Lakes Multicultural Collective will be delivering in Queenstown.
29. Welcoming Week New Zealand - Te Wiki o Manaaki Aotearoa, runs from 5 –14 September 2025; this includes a vast array of local activities to showcase and celebrate how communities are working to be more welcoming places for all, including migrants.

Community Wellbeing

30. Collaboration continues with Volunteer South and the Lakes Multicultural Collective on the annual Find Your Perfect Volunteer Match event, aimed at recruiting new volunteers across the district.
31. The Community Partnerships Team is working with the QLDC Rooding Team to support improved accessibility outcomes in the next phase of Wānaka CBD rooding minor improvements.
32. The Whakatipu Senior Gig Guide, a monthly calendar of activities, events and resources for senior citizens, is now being produced and published by the QLDC Community Partnerships Team (formerly produced by Te Hau Toka Southern Lakes Wellbeing Group).

Community Associations (CAs)

33. The 2025/2026 Annual Community Grant application form opens for CAs to apply for their annual (non-contestable) \$5,000 grant to support community-led projects. Refinements have been made to streamline the process.
34. The CA Relationship Manager has supported QLDC teams to connect with CAs, improving community project delivery and quick wins, including:

- reserve fence and goal post in Fernhill.
- McPhee Playground opening in Hāwea flat.
- roading minor improvements in Glenorchy.
- Tāhuna Glenorchy Dark Sky projects.

Responsible Camping

35. Community consultation on a draft freedom camping bylaw was completed on 8 August 2025, with public submissions then being considered by a hearing panel of Councillors, to inform any changes to the draft bylaw ahead of it being adopted.
36. The new freedom camping bylaw is expected to go before Full Council for adoption on Thursday 9 October 2025, with the aim that the bylaw is in place before summer 2025-2026.
37. Planning for the summer education programme is underway with Summer Ambassadors expected to start in November 2025 before the summer peak.