TAKIWĀ POUTINI

People | Place | Wellbeing

WHĀNAU AND COMMUNITY VOICE

30 April 2023

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Whānau and Community voice has identified the following as their top priorities:

- Timely access to consistent GP / primary care
- Reduction of transport and cost of care as barriers to access
- Whānau centred approach to health care and wellbeing service provision
- Civil defence and preparedness for natural disaster / emergencies – communities cognisant and concerned about planning for these events and the impacts of climate change
- More outdoor fun and recreation activities; cycle lanes, health and fitness programmes
- More community safe spaces for connection / communities to meet and hold events (for Māori – these spaces provide opportunities to connect with culture)

BACKGROUND

The themes identified in this report represent whānau and community voice gathered in Takiwā Poutini engagement activity throughout Te Tai o Poutini from February until 13th April 2023. Engagement has continued past this point with focus groups and surveys, and this will be collated and added to the collective voice. Whānau and community voice is an iterative process and will guide our mahi on this journey.

Themes are interwoven; themes and categories link to each other e.g. transport is a theme category, however it also noted that within health transport is an issue. Wellbeing intersects all elements leading to quality of life. Health and wellbeing are linked, and it is the first element that people tend to think of when they consider their wellbeing.

Approach

In order to protect the privacy of our respondents, individual data of respondents against each response was not included. We collected demographic data, from those that chose to provide it (non-mandatory) so are unable to identify specific themes for specific population cohorts. However, we are able to say that the voice of Māori has been heard as we held a focus group for local Iwi and whānau groups. In checking our themes, we filtered by those focus groups to ensure any additional key priorities for Māori were collected and checked to identify any outliers. If there was a high priority for Māori not captured in highest ranking themes, it is listed separately in our themes.

This report is a status of all responses received from public engagement sessions and online survey responses up to and including 13th April 2023.   There are still forums to be held, that will add to this voice with the following community cohorts:

- Whaikaha (Disabled people)
- Rainbow community
- People experiencing Cancer
- Rangatahi

Assumptions

We believe that housing is a higher priority than what this data is suggesting as, although it was mentioned by respondents, it gets diluted amongst the other priorities. We have included Housing as a long-term priority area that will involve all partners. Transport was also included in the priority group as it impacts on all elements of wellbeing and is linked to access to health.

Food security was not heard as a strong focus from the groups we have engaged with to date. However, with the rising inflation rate, the recent cyclone events in the North Island where the nation's food gardens were impacted, we believe this element will become a higher priority. How it has been reflected in voices we have collected, at this stage, has communities thinking more about community gardens, learning how to grow and harvest food and then how to prepare that food for their families.

Next steps

To ensure we address the issues of inequity that Māori experience are Māori voice is prioritised, the following reports / frameworks will be woven into our whānau and community voice:

- State of Ngai Tahu Nation 2021
- Poutini Waiora Model of Care and Implementation
- Ka Pou Whenua Project
- Pae Ora O Te Tai O Poutini
- Tu Hono Kia Tu Maia – Becoming Stronger together
- Whatua Report
- Tuhono Kia Tu Maia
- Te Putahitanga
- Rongohia Te Reo

During the last couple of years there have been several key feedback and engagement activities held throughout Te Tai o Poutini specifically focussed on wellbeing. The findings from those activities will be checked against our findings and reflected in overall feedback. These include, but are not limited to:

- Growing up Well on the West Coast programme
- Mana Ake
- Housing Survey conducted with >50 years (WC Housing Forum)
- Buller District Council Wellbeing Survey
- WCDHB Family Survey focused on Child Health Services
- Food Security on the West Coast
- Long Term Plan Consultation Documents – Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils

Definitions used for coding

- **Access**: Services / products exist but are difficult to access - either in a timely manner, or at all.
- **Accountability** - community holding service providers accountable for their decisions.
- **Affordability** - costs are too high, unaffordable / out of reach for the community.
- **Consistency** - services are inconsistent; uniformity is required.
- **Food Security** is an internationally recognised term and exists 'when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."
- **Opportunities** - For this category; no opportunities (no resource, no services, no access) currently exist, or are not well known. This category is about creating opportunities.
- **Pathway** - the way "in" to services / support is difficult and hard to navigate.
- **Policy / legislation** - organisational policies / govt policy / access criteria make it difficult for community to access.
- **Resources** - Currently some resources exist, but more are needed.
- **Support / Services** - Either support or services are required to assist the community with an issue.
- **Structure** - the way the service / support is structured does not meet the needs of the community.
- **Te ao Māori** - covers cultural, Te Reo, Kapa haka, wānanga.

ENGAGEMENT

We asked

Thinking about what **your ideal experience of wellbeing** looks like, please give us your thoughts and ideas as you consider the following questions:

- What do you need to improve your wellbeing?
- What is needed to improve the wellbeing of your family / whānau?
- What is needed to improve the wellbeing of your community?

We also asked respondents if they'd like to share their ideas and thoughts on what is working and should continue?   What is not working and needs to change? Are there any other ideas you'd like to share?

Quick Stats – Mid February – 13 April 2023

- 27 engagement sessions took place with more than 230 people
- Engagement methodologies: public sessions, focus groups or via online survey on the Takiwā Poutini website.
- Respondent Demographics match population profile; 16% Māori, Pacific 1%. 77% NZ European/Pakeha and other 6%

WELLBEING PRIORITIES
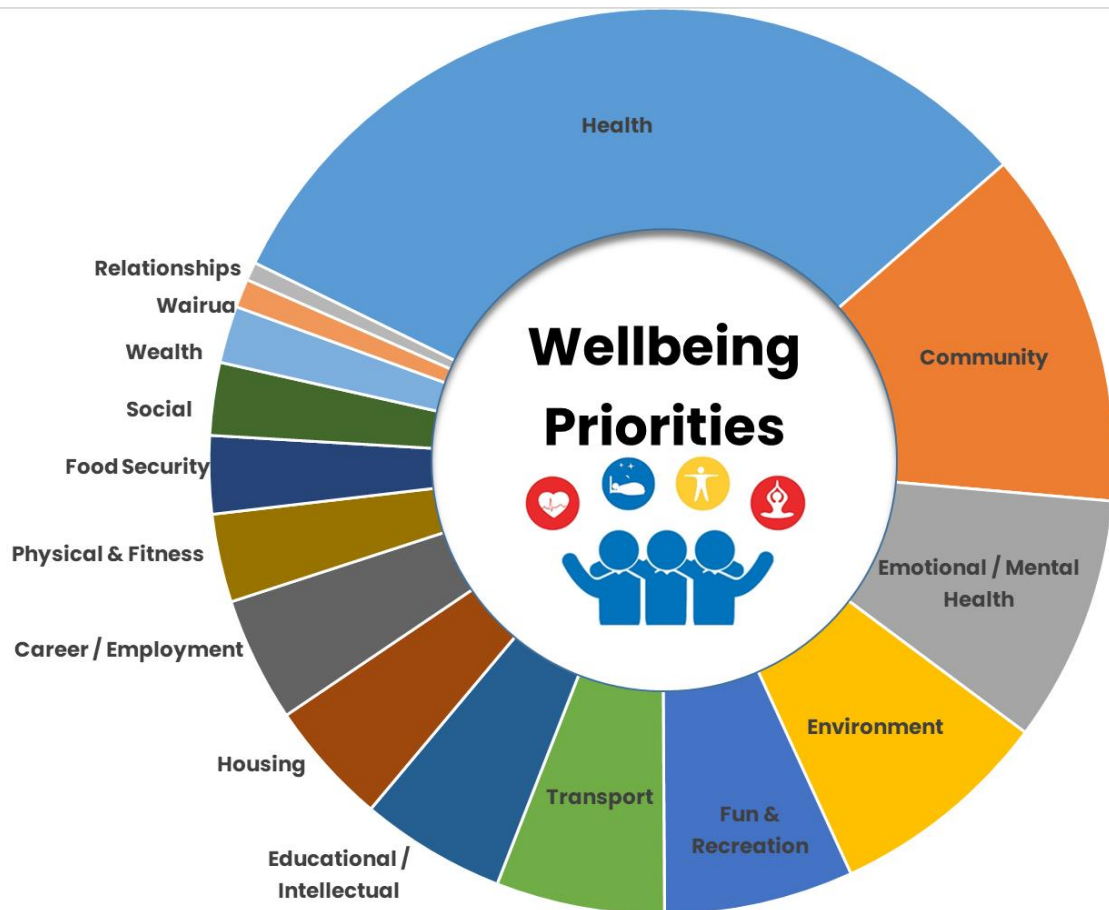
Health is intrinsically linked to individual, family / whānau and community wellbeing and rated as the most important aspect of wellbeing for our communities. Health is impacted by wellbeing and wellbeing impacted by health.

During engagement sessions, respondents showed a stronger sense of community in their ability to identify more options that would impact on the wellbeing of their community, than themselves; they put their communities and whānau first. This acocunts for the higher emphasis placed on community.

However, when the "community" focus is removed from responses, the other key priorities; emotional/mental health, environment, fun and recreation, transport and housing remain as the key components of wellbeing.

Health Priorities
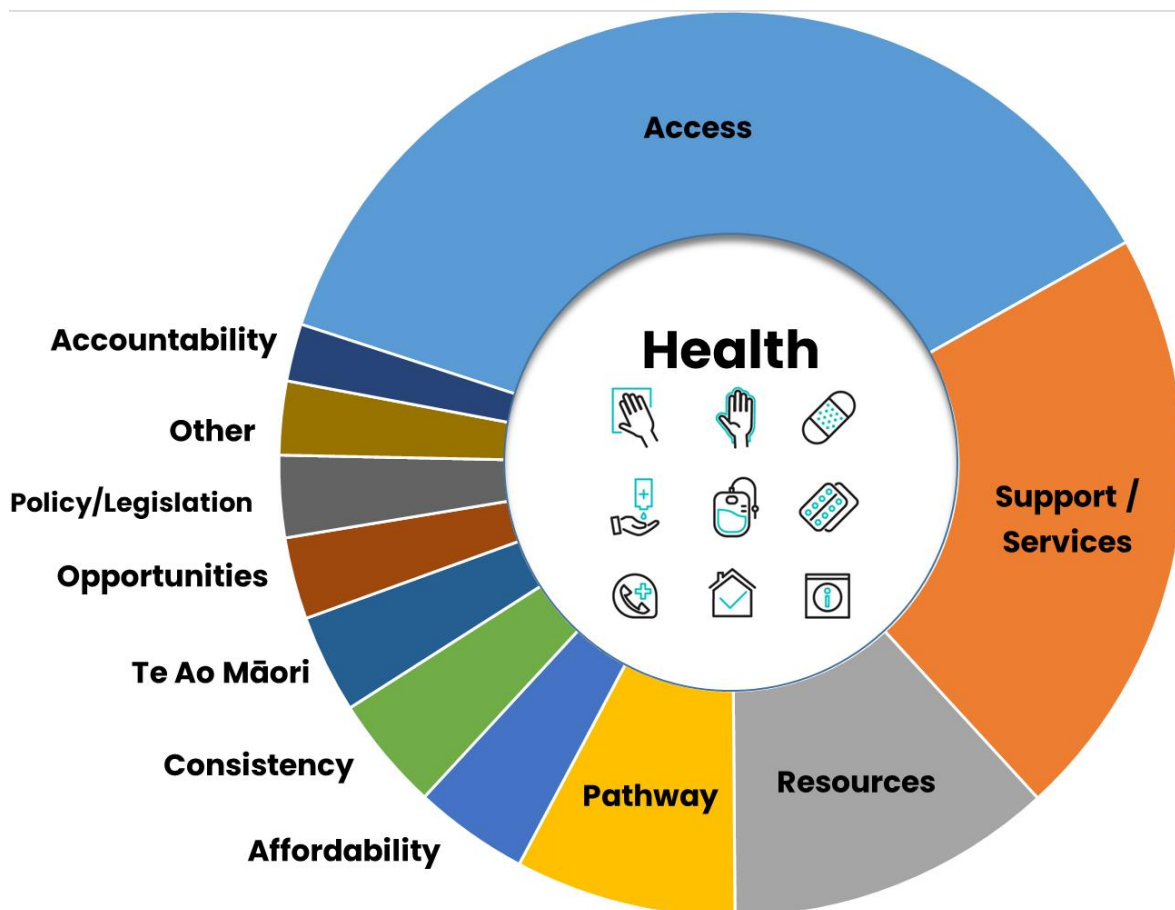
HEALTH SUBCATEGORIES

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- Long wait times to see a GP coupled with inconsistency of GP workforce
- Cost and transportation are a barrier to accessing healthcare – dental, general practice.
- Consultation time slots are not long enough
- Difficult to access specialist and some diagnostics due to availability. This requires travel or long wait times e.g. access to child health services, dental care.
- Whānau centred approach to health required that supports the whole whānau, particularly if travel is required to access health care
- Community based NGOs appreciated for the mahi they do in their communities – fund these
- An ageing population requires thought now to how they are supported in future
- Workforce: More Health navigators / Kaiāwhina workforce to connect people to the services they need, more investment in Māori staff across all sectors
- Workforce to be reflective of Te Ao Māori
- Lack of joined up, integrated pathways into health and wellbeing – more connectedness needed (Collaboration)
- Services to be delivered in communities to reduce barriers to access

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON HEALTH

"Opportunity in the restructure of Te Whatu ora to bring specialist service teams to the rural areas, rather than expecting rural people to always travel for that care"

"Having social workers connect and follow whānau when one of their whānau is transferred out of region for care so all services / supports are in place for the individual and their whānau"

"30 min appointments for all; so there is time to get to the bottom of the issue"

"Access to good medical services is needed to support our ageing and rural community; at least 1x a week supported by a RNS. Lack of GP cover impacts on our ability to get prescriptions filled"

"Important that I have a relationship with my health professional, so they know me and what my needs are, without having to explain to every new locum"

"Easier and quicker access to medical advice/help. At the moment when we try and book, the wait times have been three weeks. Also, there's no consideration of having to drive for 45 minutes each way - we can't just "pop in" on the off chance of an appointment..."

Community Priorities

COMMUNITY SUBCATEGORIES

There is a strong sense of community spirit, connectedness and people in the rural areas are very community minded.

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- Civil defence and preparedness for natural disaster / emergencies – communities cognisant and concerned about planning for these events
- More outdoor fun and recreation activities; cycle lanes, health and fitness programmes
- More community safe spaces for connection / communities to meet and hold events (for Māori – these spaces provide opportunities to connect with culture)
- Appreciative of the NGOs in the rural communities and belief they should be government funded to ensure their ongoing survival
- More activities for tamariki and rangatahi; youth groups, safe spaces to play
- Communities wanting to grow their communities and "keep" their seasonal workers
- Support health professionals recruited to rural areas to stay there by way of supportive retention packages; accommodation, flexible work / life balance, welcomed into the community
- Concern around dwindling number of volunteers for organisations that support their communities e.g. St Johns, FENZ

- Support for the ageing population – fitness, transport to and from appointments.
- Requesting more community educational opportunities – community gardens with workshops teaching how to grow your own food and how to harvest and cook seasonal fruits and vegetables

MĀORI WHĀNAU PRIORITIES

- More funding for community and health related services for Māori
- Community spaces that are safe and allow access to cultural opportunities
- Support for rangatahi – youth groups, activities

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY

"People come to work in rural areas for the "season" and then have to leave at the end of the season as they can't afford to stay. Perhaps MSD could provide some support for "out of season" to enable these people to stay in their small communities = boosts local services"

"Health and fitness programmes that provide wellbeing to the community - in a way that keeps them in good health as they age. Needs to be a self-sustaining model"

"We need to raise awareness of Civil Defence and appropriate planning for communities. Education for communities. People need to have security if a major emergency strikes - how prepared are people really? Would there be equity in help / assistance provision if an emergency arose?"

"Would be a better town with more people - people coming to the area attract services. However, they won't come if the level of current support is not up to par"

Emotional / Mental Health
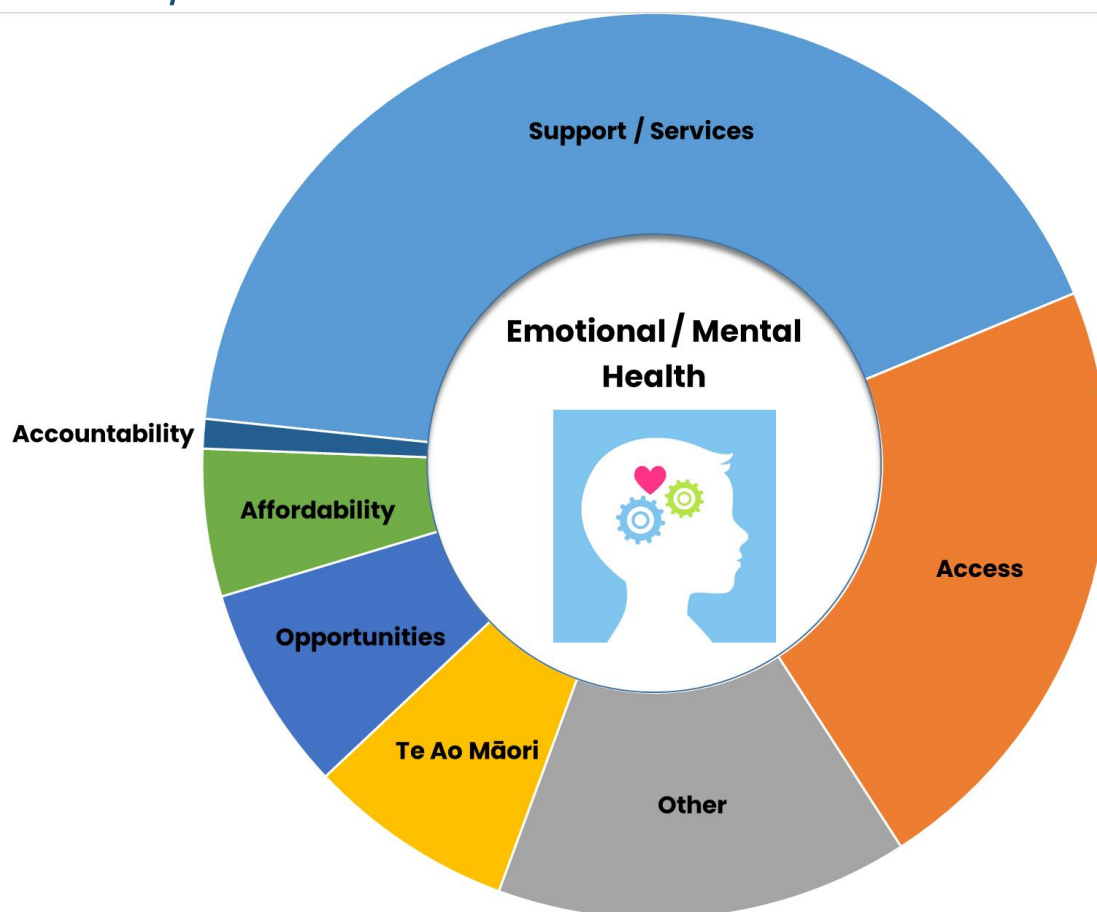
EMOTIONAL / MENTAL HEALTH SUBCATEGORIES

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- That a Whānau ora approach is applied to health and wellbeing; the person with health needs is part of a wider whānau who all need time and support including family community mental health support
- Better Mental health access; knowing who to go to, where to go and when and not having to wait (with specific services for men, trauma, rangatahi and neuro diverse whānau
- More emotional/mental health support for mums who are struggling with a range of different factors; post-birth, being rural, socially isolated, lack of ECE options and those prioritising their whānau and community at the expense of their own wellbeing
- More Counselling services for children under 12 years
- More alcohol and drug treatment options with faster access and support for whānau and their tamariki whilst their caregivers are being looked after when treated for alcohol and drug issues
- More support for those whose wellbeing and mental health is impacted due to waiting for surgery / specialist services
- Lack in consistency of care with GPs exacerbates the stress, time, repeating stories and medication changes
- Mental health and emotional support regarding floods in Westport
- Cultural and spiritual support spaces at Te Nikau to be more accessible

MĀORI WHĀNAU PRIORITIES

- We need to provide access to culture for te ao Māori
- More Māori mental health workers and services, including availability to services (such as alcohol and addictions, psych assessments)
- Making more time for whānau
- More funding into community and health services
- Whānau room at Te Nikau to be better signposted and promoted
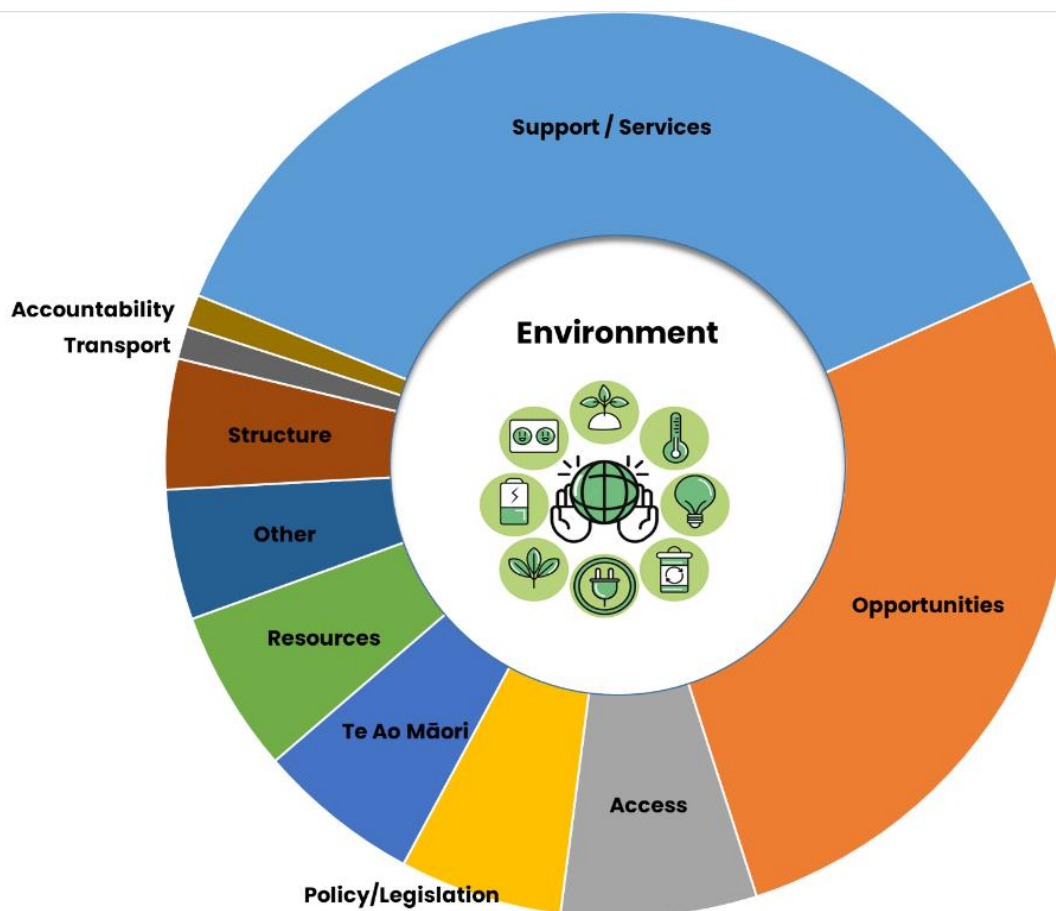
RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON EMOTIONAL/MENTAL HEALTH

"Unable to access to mental health care in an appropriate timeframe - includes alcohol and other drugs and addictions"

"The person seeking health is part of a whānau who all need support"

"I need to be empowered to be in charge of my own health"

"We need more family community mental health support"

Environment

ENVIRONMENT SUBCATEGORIES

The respondents we're heard from thus far were primarily concerned about the impacts of mining on the environment and the effects of climate change on the environment; flooding with the associated concern on where / how they seek support for those events.

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- The impact of mining on roading e.g. the larger number of extra trucks on roads laden with heavy minerals, impact on the environment and the stress this causes.
- Wellbeing, ecological responsibility and the inter-generational responsibility at the core of decision making. Community and environment to be put ahead of profits.
- Environmental support for communities impacted by recent flooding events.
- Community seeking more tracks and walks away from high traffic points creating community spaces that are safe and welcoming for all age groups.
- Walking and access to the environment seen as a way of improving wellbeing for many.
- Promotion of the value of the environment and tourism more on the West Coast.

MĀORI WHĀNAU PRIORITIES

- Access to culture for Te Ao Māori

Fun & Recreation

FUN AND RECREATION SUBCATEGORIES

Most respondents wanted to see more opportunities for fun and recreation within their communities.

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- Most of the fun and recreation activities suggested involved the outdoors; addition of cycle lanes, walking tracks that are maintained and accessible for different fitness ranges
- Family friendly activities for all ages
- Community spaces with activities where the community could connect, across all age groups with respondents noting loneliness as an issue for the elderly
- Safe spaces that provide activities for tamariki and rangatahi to gather and connect, particularly for those that don't play sport
- Community social activities

Transport
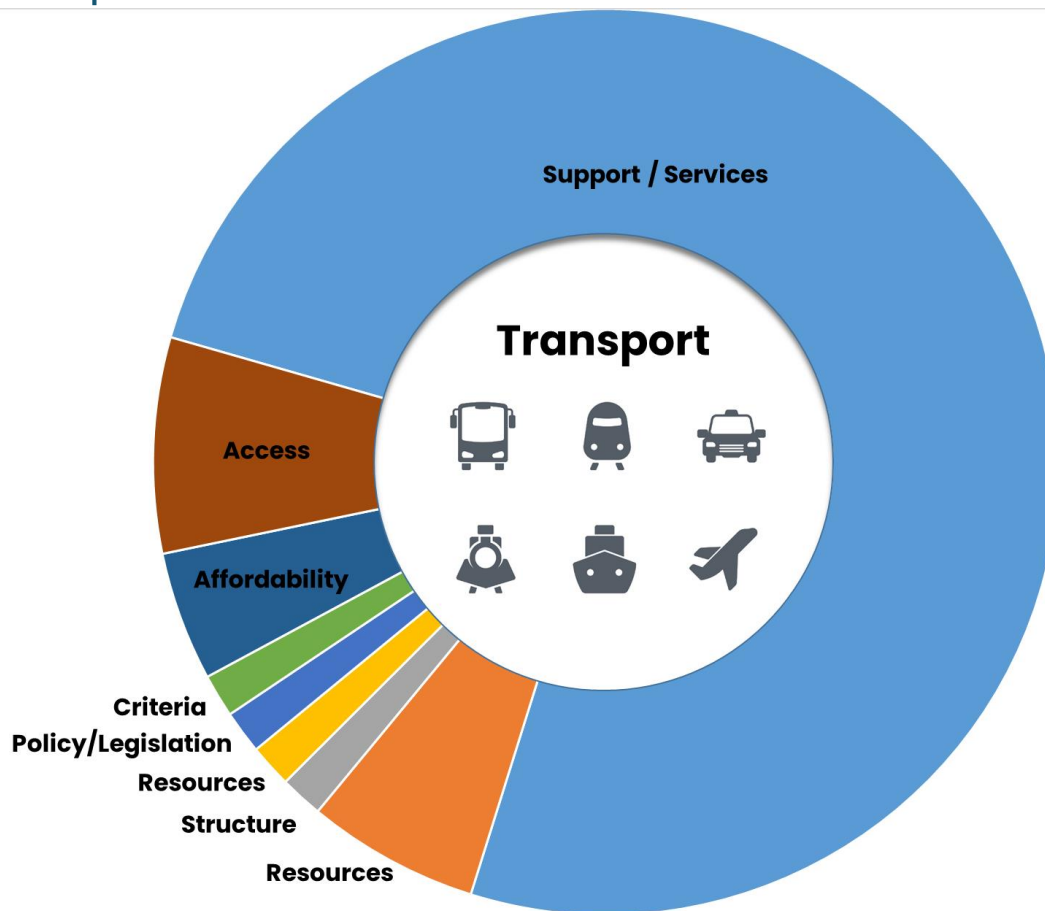
TRANSPORT SUBCATEGORIES

There are few public transport options available for the West Coast communities and none in the rural areas. Most communities noted the benefits of having access to local community vans / other forms of transport for regular travel to the major towns for appointments / shopping and social connectivity.

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- Support for transport related costs and options for those needing to travel for their health care –support for travel is seen as a barrier to accessing care
- Affordable public transport – for accessing services, shopping, health appointments and other purposes
- An ageing population means that as people age transport options become more limited; they may be reliant on whānau / friends when they can no longer drive to access the services / activities they need.

Housing
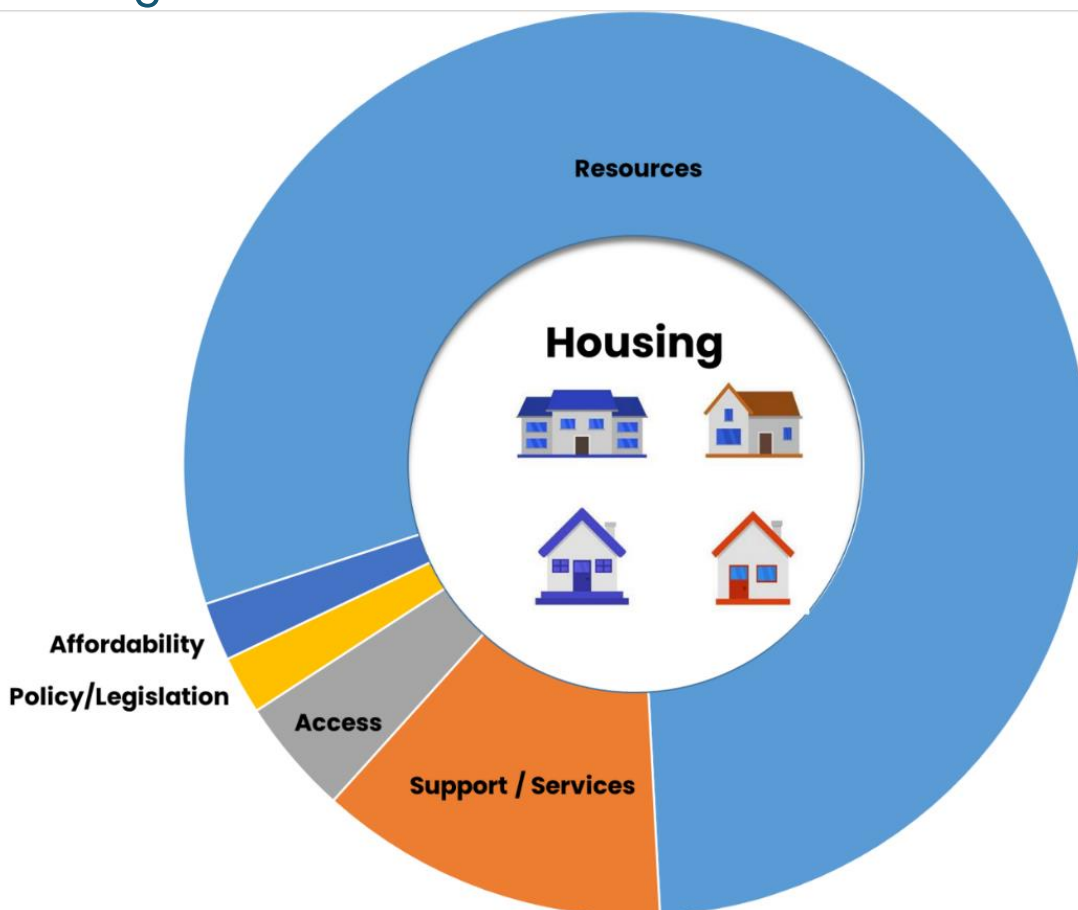
HOUSING SUBCATEGORIES

There is insufficient housing stock on the West Coast. Floods in the Buller region impacted on housing stocks there. There was general agreement from respondents that more people have moved into our communities over the past 12 months, and this has impacted on demand for housing outstripping supply.
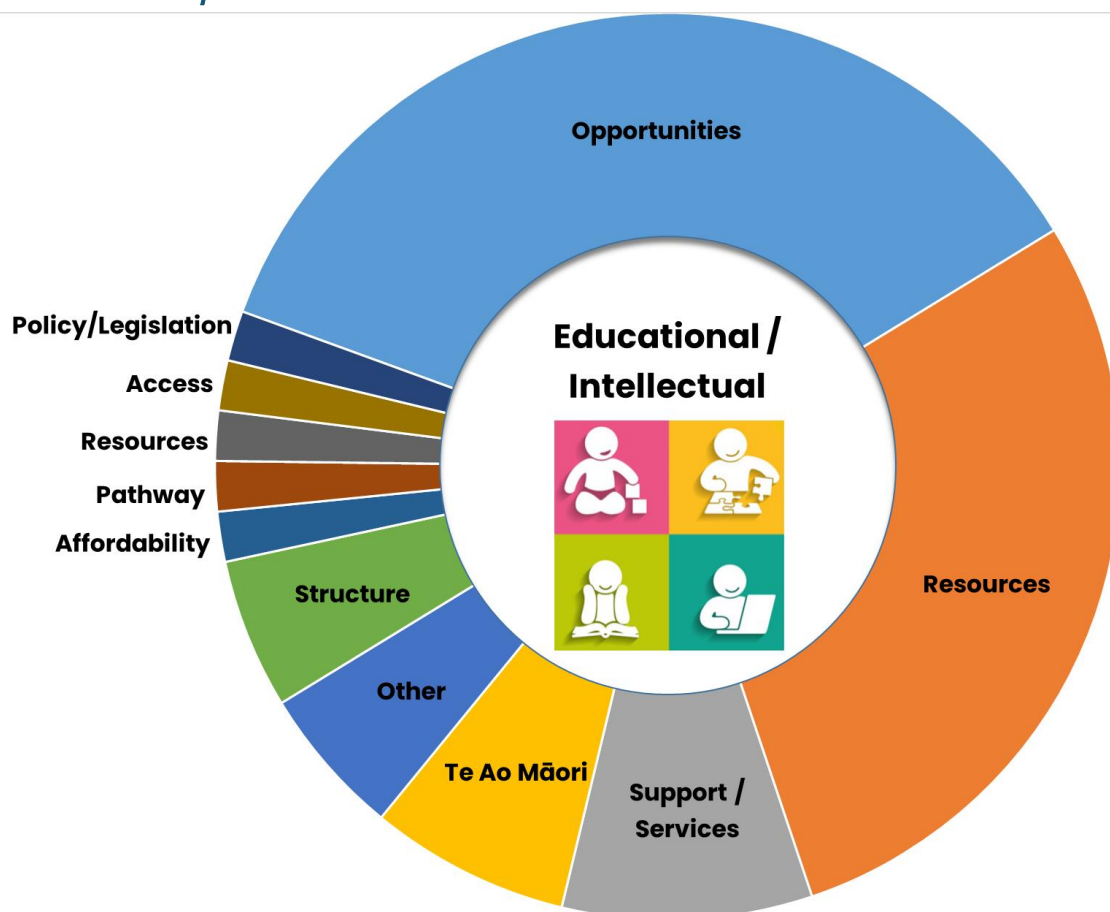
Ranked in order of respondents' priority
- More Affordable, healthy homes required for the communities
- More home rental options required
- Lack of enough housing options for the elderly and those ageing
- Emergency housing options insufficient

MĀORI WHĀNAU PRIORITIES
- Iwi kaumatua to promote kaumatua flats / housing seen as a community issue
- Whānau kaumatua flats / housing designed so that the bedroom is larger than normal (made larger and divided off) so when they reach end of life, they can remain in their home (space for medical equipment, supports and whānau able to gather around them).

Education / Intellectual

EDUCATION / INTELLECTUAL SUBCATEGORIES

Ranked in order of respondents' priority

- Provide education to the community to raise their health literacy, so they understand the roles within general practice, so they can utilise the right health professional that best meets their needs; doesn't always need to be a GP, e.g. could be a health coach
- coupled with building a knowledge of where services are located and how to access
- Kaiāwhina workforce to utilised across the sectors; e.g. Kaiāwhina helping in education
- Early Childhood Centres and childcare hubs needed for the rural areas
- Education for the community to care for their wellbeing; first aid training, classes for growing food, harvesting, cooking, affordable accessible swimming lessons for tamariki
- Support education and networks for Dads; good role models for boys

MĀORI WHĀNAU PRIORITIES

- More Pukenga Tika / Atawhai out in the community and throughout services
- Te Reo taught all the way through high school

Food Security

CONTEXT TO WEST COAST FOOD AVAILABILITY

Limited supermarkets in main areas results in communities restricted to one or two general stores or supermarkets for all their food requirements. Supermarkets rely on food supplies being transported through the Southern Alps, which can be impacted by weather and other natural events (such as earthquakes, slips and floods).

The limited stocks and quantity restrictions in Supermarkets greatly impacts on our more rural communities as they cannot stock up on essentials, especially if travel to town isn't very often. Increased tourism numbers this summer may have further impacted on local food availability.

For those unable to access homegrown fresh fruit and vegetables, the supermarkets are the only places to purchase these. More kai sovereignty and sustainability is needed.

FOOD SECURITY SUBCATEGORIES

- Communities need to be educated on how to grow their own food to provide some food security
- More opportunities for people to learn how to cook seasonal food
- Access to affordable, quality fresh fruit and vegetables

- More community gardens (Māra kai) coupled with education on how to harvest and cook seasonal produce (this a particular priority for Māori)
- Increased choice and variety
- Dietary requirements are very hard to provide for, due to limited availability and increasing costs
- Food prices are contributing to what people are putting into their bodies with the cheap and unhealthy options. This has a flow on effect to things like diabetes, obesity, respiratory diseases etc.
- Fruit breaks at schools require children to bring fruit to school; however, it is becoming unaffordable for whānau to provide these options for their tamariki
- School lunches provided to all schools would make a difference

FURTHER COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

ENVIRONMENT

"Community spaces to connect; safe, welcoming. These are needed for all age groups - elderly are lonely. Kids need safe spaces"

"Everyone in Westport is in limbo on how to recover from the floods. What is the Plan? How do people get supported to help themselves more?"

"Parks and green spaces (not necessarily walking tracks) - recreation areas for all ages. Improved walking and cycling facilities"

RECREATION

"Family friendly activities and spaces - also for the aged population"

"Assistance to develop a cohesive community by bringing in outside independent social activities organiser"

"Gentle activities for the ageing populations to keep them fit = "sit and fit" classes. These need to be in the local communities, time friendly - ? Mid-afternoon, ? Late morning - canvas community they will tell you"

TRANSPORT

"Getting people to health appointments is hard - often no public transport, and many don't qualify for support"

"There is no public transport; makes it difficult for those that find themselves unable to drive anymore. They have to rely on others to get them to where they need to be. Community van would be great"

"There needs to be flexibility in the access to services to reflect the needs of the whānau e.g. transport, whānau facility - look at all needs that wrap around"

HOUSING

"Affordable, stable housing that is not just in town, but in the country for a sense of place = contributes to my wellbeing"

"Not enough rental options available. Housing an issue overall. Lots of people are living in sub-standard housing, they may own themselves, but can't afford to do up, so this contributes to their health status"

"There is a dire lack of emergency accommodation in Hokitika; we've had a massive influx to the region from other parts of NZ and there is nowhere for them to go"

EDUCATION / INTELLECTUAL

"Health and fitness programmes that provide wellbeing to the community - in a way that keeps them in good health as they age. Needs to be a self-sustaining model"

"We need to raise awareness of Civil Defence and appropriate planning for communities. Education for communities. People need to have security if a major emergency strikes - how prepared are people really? Would there be equity in help / assistance provision if an emergency arose?"

"Wider access to education; not just for jobs"

FOOD SECURITY

"There are shortages of certain food groups, and we have limited access to a wide range"

"Access to fruit and vegetables that are affordable and good quality"

"Community gardens are needed here"

"Food is incredibly expensive and hard to get; especially good quality seasonal food. Teach people to grow, harvest and then cook what they grow"