



FAB FEATHY

ĀTAAHUA PAE TŪ MŌKAI

*Empowering Featherston Together:
A community-led development approach*

History of Fab Feathy

Fab Feathy formed from a hui held in September 2016, where the Featherston Community Network discussed the possibility of joining a Department of Internal Affairs' program, designed to support communities in achieving shared aspirations. This program promised up to five years of intensive support for community-led development initiatives if Featherston was selected. The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, leading to the formation of an inaugural working group made up of Kara Pennington, Siv Fjaerestad, Sarah Taylor-Waitere, Mark Shepherd, Alan Maxwell, Phil Dittmer, and Liz Mellish.

The project was aptly named "Fab Feathy," an abbreviation of "Fabulous Featherston," symbolising the focus on positivity and building upon the town's existing strengths.

A number of people in the town felt that Featherston often got 'the short straw' compared to neighbouring towns – and that things were often done to them, rather than with them. Fab Feathy would be about the community being in the driver's seat – shaping and making the change for itself.

The first task for the Fab Feathy Working Group was to engage with the Featherston community, in order to identify shared aspirations and document the community's ideas for actions that could be taken. By using a number of different tools – and promoting these through different channels – the project group gathered input from a wide range and diversity of local people.

These engagement activities were publicised through Featherston's community newspaper The Phoenix, posts on Facebook and other websites, a mailbox flyer drop, a flyer hand-out to commuters, and posters around the town.

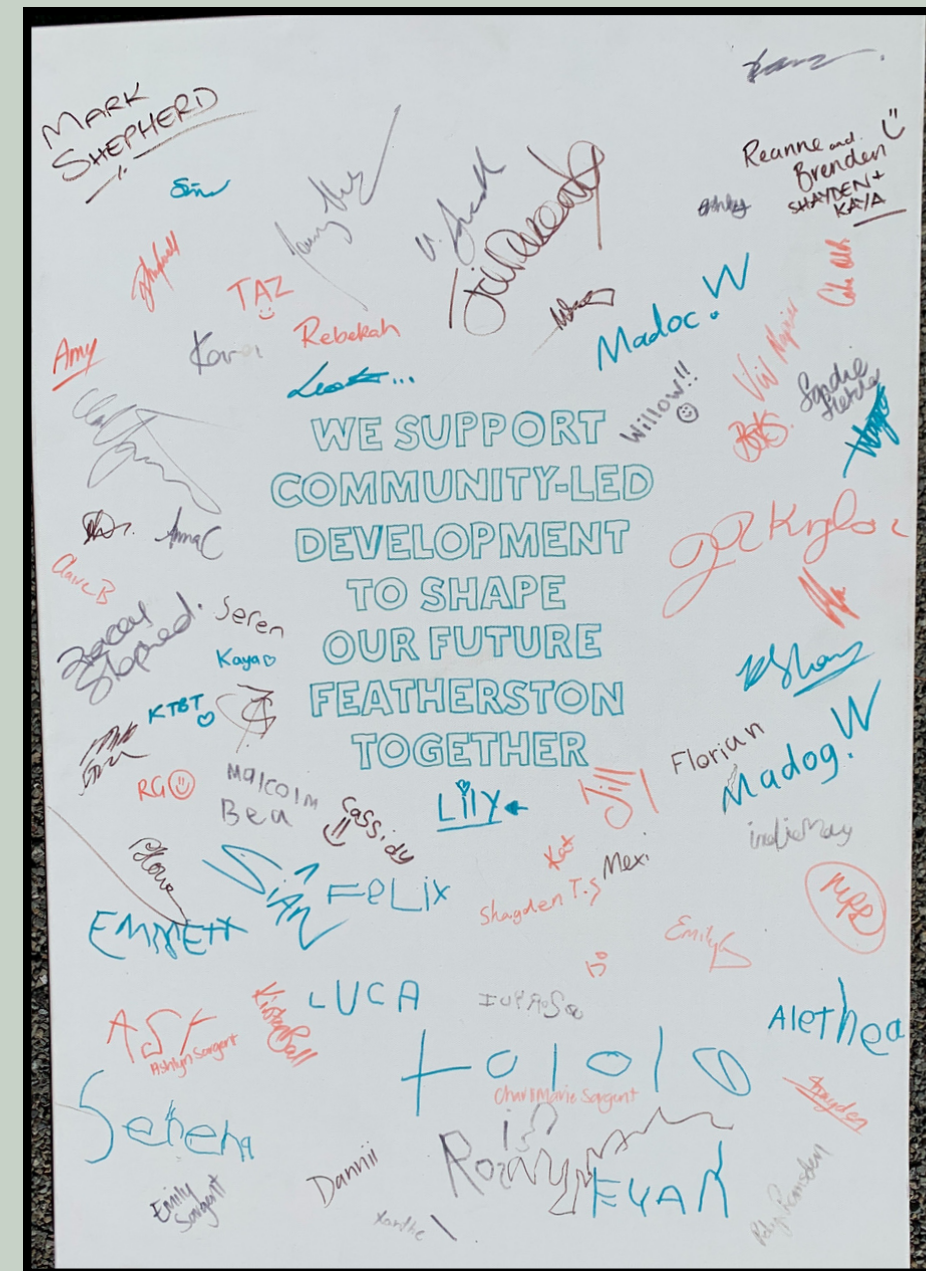
The Fab Feathy Working Group was supported and mentored by Megan Courtney, a consultant with the community-led development consultancy [Inspiring Communities](#). After the engagement, the material that had been gathered from the community was collated. Funding was obtained for a small contract for this work (while all the other work was carried out voluntarily).

Fab Feathy then hosted a community afternoon tea where the themes and ideas from the engagement were presented and discussed. The next task was to create a community plan. Much of this work was done by Kara Pennington. You can read more about the community plan below.

Fab Feathy and the Department of Internal Affairs signed a partnership agreement in February 2018. REAP Wairarapa became the Fab Feathy fundholders and provided a huge amount of support throughout the partnership.



The signing of the partnership Feb 2018



The community declaration

Community Plan

A community plan brings together the community's vision and goals, forming a basis for working together on projects to achieve those. Featherston's community plan also provided the basis for gaining support from the Department of Internal Affairs.

During Fab Feathy's engagement with the community, the working group learnt that people in Featherston believe it is a great place to live; has a wonderful community filled with diverse, interesting, talented, caring and community-minded people; and is bursting with potential.

The following vision and aspirations emerged from the conversations and were published in the Our Future Featherston plan.

Vision

As a community, we want to fully realise the potential we can see Featherston is bursting with while retaining and enhancing what makes our town and community distinctive and great.

Aspirations

- 'Community' is nurtured in Featherston, we have fun together, we are connected, resilient and self-sustaining
- Featherston is a destination town known for: its artisans, being a vibrant hub of creativity, being connected to beautiful natural surroundings
- Featherston values and takes care to conserve, protect, restore and revitalise our natural environment
- Featherston has the infrastructure needed to support creators, innovators, and businesses to invest in setting up here
- Featherston has the amenities, services, and infrastructure to be a great 'liveable' town from cradle to grave

Themes from our 2017 Our Future Featherston Report

In 2017 the Fab Feathy Community-Led Development Project asked the Featherston community, why do you choose to live here, what do you love about Featherston and what do you want for future Featherston?

This table provides a thematic summary of the response from the Featherston Community – a summary of the 205 completed surveys and 444 suggestions provided through suggestion boxes, noticeboards and at community events.

Main Street

- We want the public face of town to tidied up and better reflect the vibrancy of our town. We want a 'public face' we can be proud of.
- We want unique artisanal businesses and a range of affordable shops.
- We want a more unified main street from one end to the other. We want it to be safe for pedestrians. We want people to want to stop and spend money in town.
- We want the squircle to be bustling with people and activities (markets, performance)

Young People/ Rangatahi

We want to make sure that our young people:

- are proud to come from Featherston
- have opportunities in town to discover, develop, and use/share their skills and talents
- have options for 'things to do' for fun, recreation, hobbies, and interests
- can earn their first income and gain work experience in town
- have opportunities to hang out with/interact with other generations in town
- understand the contribution they can make to our community and are recognised
- know that we value and support them and we have their backs
- are confident and resilient and they know where to get help if they need it

Natural surroundings, inc Wairarapa Moana

- We want to protect, restore, and enhance our surrounding outstanding natural environment.

Employment, income and business development

We want the infrastructure needed to attract and support creators, innovators and businesses to invest in setting up here.

Cycle and Walking Trails

- We want to revitalise/improve what we have now and develop new safe and accessible walking and cycle trails for locals and for visitors to use, catering for a wide range of abilities.
- The potential to develop tourism and improving connections between the town and nearby environmental assets where key threads in this theme.

Swimming Pool complex improvements

- We want to make better use of what we already have – and we have some “think big” ideas for developing an all year round facility.

Liveable amenities, services & infrastructure

- We want Council to engage better with the community.
- We want the amenities, services and infrastructure that ensure a great standard of living right across our diverse community.

More public art

- We want more public art projects. Public art makes for an interesting environment for locals and may bring more visitors to town. It is perhaps a means of revitalising some of the tired and shabby public face of the town.
- We also want to support and encourage our local artists and attract more artists to live here.

Destination Featherston

- We want people to stop and enjoy their stay.
- We want to be the destination not just the gateway. We want to develop the potential we can see in town and make the most of our unique character, attributes and surroundings.
- We want to both complement and distinguish our town from what is on offer in the rest of the region.

Community

- We want to get together to have fun and enjoy each other's company. We want a programme of free events/activities for locals aimed at building & celebrating community (not tourism focused).
- We want our community to be connected and cohesive, we want collaboration and sharing. We want to celebrate and utilise the talents and skills we have in town.

Food and Gardening

- We want to grow, exchange, share food locally. We don't want our abundant produce to go to waste when someone else in town could use it.
- We want to attract initiatives that will provide locals with affordable fruit and veges.
- We want to stay in town to eat out.

Children and Childcare

- We want our children to be safe and to have access to good quality affordable age appropriate child care operating in hours that suit working/studying parents/caregivers.
- We want a range of kid-friendly activities for fun, sport, art, culture and recreation.
- We want our kids to have world-class education that supports them to build confidence and resilience.

Better housing and healthcare for elderly

- We want appropriate housing, facilities and services to allow our elderly people to stay in town; to avoid the stress, upset and upheaval of having to leave town if residential care is necessary.

History and Heritage

- We want to see our heritage buildings revitalised, used, and preserved.
- We see potential for tourism based around our unique heritage.

Waste NOT Want NOT

- We want to reduce waste and our impact on the environment by sharing and exchanging, recycling, repurposing, reusing, upcycling materials and resources. "Think big" aspiration to be the Upcycling/Recycling/Recovery Centre of the Wairarapa.

Themes from our 2022 Community Survey

The world has changed a great deal since 2017. The Fab Feathy Steering Group were wanting to check in with the community ahead of the end of the five-year partnership. It was decided to run another survey to see if perceptions have changed about what makes Featherston a fantastic place to live.

In May 2022, fifty-one members of the Featherston community completed the survey. The survey aimed to give Fab Feathy a sense of what was working well in the community, and what should come next.

Analysis of the responses identified twelve key themes. The first set of themes captured what is great about living in Featherston. It seems that the people, the groups, and the community set Featherston apart. To top it off, it is close enough to Wellington to reap the benefits of urban living, but far enough away to stay connected with nature. It is also small enough to maintain a small-town feel.

The results and analysis of this survey can be [seen here](#).

What we love...

THEMES 1-3

UNIQUE
CHARACTER

PROXIMITY TO
NATURAL AND
URBAN
ENVIRONMENT

SMALL-
TOWN
FEEL

Themes from our 2022 Community Survey

The second set of themes captures what is working well in Featherston. Community groups, community-led facilities, and community activities are a real strength. This is no surprise given how frequently community members spoke of Featherston's helpful and supportive community. Local news and events also appear well communicated, and there is a sense that retail and hospitality is a boon for the town.

What's working well...
THEMES 4-8

COMMUNITY
RESOURCES

HELP AND
SUPPORT

COMMUNITY
ACTIVITIES

COMMUNI-
CATION

BOUTIQUE
RETAIL AND
HOSPITALITY

The final set of themes captures what would make Featherston an even better place to live. Infrastructure, amenities, and services top the list, with people wanting to see improvements in the likes of water, electricity, footpaths, green spaces, and public transport. These desires were closely followed by hopes that both the look and function of the main street could be improved. There were many ideas about how this could be done, but the general sense was that the main strip needs to be tidied up, and that spaces need to be better utilised. In addition to these two major themes, respondents also wanted better collaboration with the council and the other South Wairarapa towns, and to see even more activities run in Featherston.

What we face...
THEMES 9-12

INFRASTRUCTURE
SERVICES AND
AMENITIES

MAIN
STREET

ACTIVITIES

COOPERATION
IN THE SOUTH
WAIRARAPA

To achieve our goals as a community, Fab Feathy committed to taking a community-led development approach. Inspiring Communities has created the following guiding principles for effective CLD in action. This is something we have kept at top of mind throughout our 6 years - we work alongside and with our community.

**WORK WITH DIVERSE
PEOPLE AND SECTORS**

**GROW COLLABORATIVE
LOCAL LEADERSHIP**

*PRINCIPLES OF
TE WHAKAWHANAKE Ā-HAPORI
COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT*

**GROW FROM SHARED
LOCAL VISIONS**

**BUILD FROM
STRENGTHS**

**LEARN BY
DOING**

Featherston community projects
supported or enacted by Fab Feathy
2017 - 2023

Community Potluck

The facilitators organised a pot luck dinner in July 2018. The main objective was to give the community the opportunity to meet them and hear about what they would be doing. The dinner was intentionally informal, giving people time to mix and mingle and get to know their neighbours.

A visual activity showed a range of project ideas from the community plan and people were invited to 'vote' for the three projects that were the highest priority for them, by putting on stickers. They were also encouraged to sign up to get involved.

Over 180 people attended the pot luck dinner. Volunteers – including Alan Maxwell's youth group, the Lionesses, members of the Fab Feathy Steering Group and individuals – helped set up the room, distribute food, run the kitchen, and clean up afterwards. The youth group also provided entertainment.



Potluck at ANZAC Hall 2018

Day of the Dead 2018



Organiser Silvia with the Day of the Dead decorations

Fab Feathy helped with some micro-funding and providing community contacts when a Featherston local of Mexican heritage shared her Mexican culture with a Featherston Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) festival in 2018.

This incredible community-driven festival included cooking workshops, poetry workshops, movie screenings and crafts.

Fab Feathy provided funding, connections and support to help the organisers make this festival a success.

"Without Fab Feathy, we wouldn't have been able to link up with the local cafes, bars, and Kiwi Hall that hosted all of the workshops and cultural exchange events that we created as part of this week-long festival."

Youth Programming - Booktown 2019



Fab Feathy was able to provide funding through the CLDP fund of more than \$8,000 for Featherston Booktown to bring a youth-focussed programme to the Festival in 2019. 42 workshops targeted at children and young people were funded through this application, including Poetry for Young People, Bookbinding workshops, Writing for Science, Skateboarding and Real Life in Literature and many others.

Featherston Booktown is an annual event, and the funding provided by Fab Feathy during this year allowed for the positive impact of this amazing festival to create even further ripples, especially impacting our local youth.

Covid response projects (food security, firewood, Kia Atawhai community support)

The Featherston Foodbank relocated and was seeing increased demand due to the pressures of lockdowns. Fab Feathy was able to support the foodbank at this time of high-stress (and for many years to come) by purchasing shipping containers and refrigeration units to allow the foodbank to store more kai.

The wave of COVID brought together concerned parties, and a community food resilience plan was implemented. An MOU was signed between major trusts/groups (Featherston's Own Charitable Trust, Wairarapa Whānau Trust, Pae Tū Mōkai o Taurira, Fab Feathy) to pool resources and streamline logistics.

Kia Atawhai: A community member came to us for help in forming a group. We facilitated meetings, liaised with the community, tapped into networks, and kept on top of ever-changing rules. We did some of the mahi ourselves, as during this time of high-stress, we had the time available to put into this mahi. We also helped with connecting the dots with other groups working in this space.

IS YOUR WHARE SELF-ISOLATING?

Kia Atawhai Featherston is a volunteer group, created to connect those self-isolating in the Featherston area and in need of support with community members who can help. On our Facebook page we share information from authorities that is relevant to our beautiful town.


If you are in need of assistance, please reach out via email or via Facebook. All communications will be treated in confidence and with respect.


.....

If you would like to join our volunteer group, we would love to hear from you! We also encourage you to reach out to your neighbours and see if they need any support.

Please note, this group does not provide health advice or replace the official Covid Welfare Helpline, which you can contact on 0800 512 337

**kia
atawhai
featherston**

 @kiaatawhaifeathy

 featherstonccr@gmail.com



Dogs n Togs 2020

The dog park group is a very passionate community group who wanted to inspire good ownership behaviour, as well as creating a fundraising event for the park.

The group had great ideas and needed some support and networks to turn these dreams into reality.

Fab Feathy facilitator Jack played a key role in encouraging the fun and mad idea of Dog n Togs the whole way.

Fab Feathy provided funding to cover some food and event costs.

A big part of our support came into play, as in March 2020 Covid rules really ramped up. We supported the team with understand the required processes which were constantly evolving.

The dog park team has gone on to run these awesome events annually, it's a great event for connection, fun and fundraising.



**FEATHERSTON
SWIMMING POOL
21 MARCH 2020**


**SMALL DOGS
(UP TO 10KG)
2PM-4PM**

**BIGGER DOGS
(10 KG+)
4PM-6PM**

Email: dogparkg@gmail.com OR

The pool is draining
but before that
happens we will have a
swim day for dogs!
Bring your dog - or
bring yourself this will
be a fun day for all.

**Co-hosted by:
Fab Feathy
Featherston Dog Park
Swim Club
Sports Hub
Eezapet**

see facebook for more info
[@featherstondogparkgroup](https://www.facebook.com/featherstondogparkgroup) 

Windy Wheels 2020 - 2022

A group of passionate locals have been working on community bike tracks, based on the Bikes In Schools model. This is on land gifted to the project by Featherston School – Te Kura o PaeTūMokai.

This project fit in perfectly with the community led development principles, and so was a great project for Fab Feathy to support. We were able to source significant funding for this project via the DIA CLD fund, which has paid for the installation of two bike tracks and a container to store and work on bikes for the community. The group have also sourced funding elsewhere to keep this project sustainable.

The initial riding track was opened in March 2021, with the school reporting that the tamariki use the track regularly on the breaks.

The group have worked with the tamariki, visiting local bike tracks and working out what they think will work well for the Windy Wheels track. The tamariki presented their findings and ideas to the working group at the end of 2021.

The skills track was opened on 19th September 2022, with a series of ‘pedal for your parakuihi’ events, with all community members welcome to test out their skills.

The working group for the Windy Wheels bike track is made up of local volunteers, who are passionate about our local tamariki having access to bikes and skills. A group of students from the kura helped the group to research other bike tracks in the area, and designed their own bike track.

The group have partnered with another local group, Ā Mua resource centre, to run bike repair workshops and drop in events. These regular events upskill our community in bike maintenance, and also fix up bikes that were heading for landfill – gifting them to our community.

The local Menzshed have also worked on this project, helping with the building of the obstacles for the skills track.

All members of the community have been welcomed onto the bike tracks, including the two other schools and local early childhood centres.

Two high-quality bike tracks have been created for our community, as well as a container workshop/storage area. The space is welcoming and friendly, with planting and benches available for those who need a rest after so much biking!

Working bees and opening events have provided opportunities for the community to reconnect and spend time with each other now that covid restrictions are a thing of the past.

“Hana & Jack facilitated funding and delivery of a community bike track project I am involved in. They provided community contacts, sound administrative support and plenty of boots on the ground when needed.”

Windy Wheels - continued

Access to the bike library has meant all of our community are able to access bikes and increase their skills, and the regular workshops the group are holding means that bike repair skills are being passed around our whole town. This group have overcome so many challenges over the period of this project, with many covid-related cancellations, shortage of supplies and contractors. What they have created is a fantastic amenity for our community, and with the cost of living increasing pressures on family transportation, more bikes in our community is hugely beneficial.



Building the skills track in the rain



The opening of the first track in 2021



The grand opening of the skills track September 2022

Wairarapa Moana Trail 2018 - 2022

A few years ago, some locals formed Wairarapa Moana Trail Trust to learn more about an oft-requested need: greater connection between the Featherston people and the whenua – particularly in terms of getting down to Wairarapa Moana (and back again in one piece).

After successful fundraising rounds, research, and reaching out through events such as Featherston Expos; Whakarongo ki teTaiao; Mysteries of the Moana; Featherston Christmas Parade; Paetūmokai Featherston School bike track launch etc., WMTT were awarded funding through the CLDP fund to contract an engineering feasibility study from ROAM that investigates the feasibility of a route between Featherston and Wairarapa Moana Lake Domain; plus, a cost-benefit analysis.

Following much outreach and on-site consultation, a 7.24km best-option route was determined. Construction is calculated at \$1.2 million to meet a grade 2 spec. Annual maintenance is estimated to be \$12,000 per year.

Wairarapa Moana is a taonga, and a place of local cultural, ecological, and historical significance. Many locals and visitors wish to connect with Wairarapa Moana more, and to preserve the environment for inanga, kākahi, and other rare species.

The Benefit:Cost ratio for the trail is between 4.1 & 4.9 (Regional & National level, respectively). This is very strong, and estimates net economic benefits of \$4.1 to \$5 million (at a Regional & National Level) every year.

Only a handful of these users are commuters; instead, hundreds of local single-day users meet thousands of out-of-region and international users to enjoy the Wairarapa valleys, lakes, and mountains. This represents a significant catchment for a local, boutique tourism and hospitality sector to service cyclists and walkers visiting Featherston for the heritage or the hermitage.

It's not just about infrastructure; it's about preserving a precious environment and stimulating a burgeoning tourism industry, paving the way for a sustainable future.

We look forward to hearing what the future holds for this group.



The proposed route

Wai Wheels Car Show

The Wai Wheels team have done incredible work putting on an annual car show to bring like-minded people together, fundraise for local causes, bring in visitors and have fun in our community.

The team have done all the mahi themselves, from fundraising, organising and promoting, gathering stallholders and exhibitors and running the day smoothly and efficiently. Fab Feathy have provided moral support and connections and some marketing support.

"Absolute support in assisting us and promoting our 1st Wai-Wheels Car Show namely - Wheels & Deals Swap Meet & Car Show going back as far as pre-covid. The support of the Fab Feathy Team enabled the whole Community to appreciate and enjoy an event that was a Fundraiser, free to the public and had the potential to grow and become an annual event associated with Featherston that would bring in visitors and in turn benefit the whole Community. We are now coming up to our 2nd annual Show - Fab Feathy are still there with us."



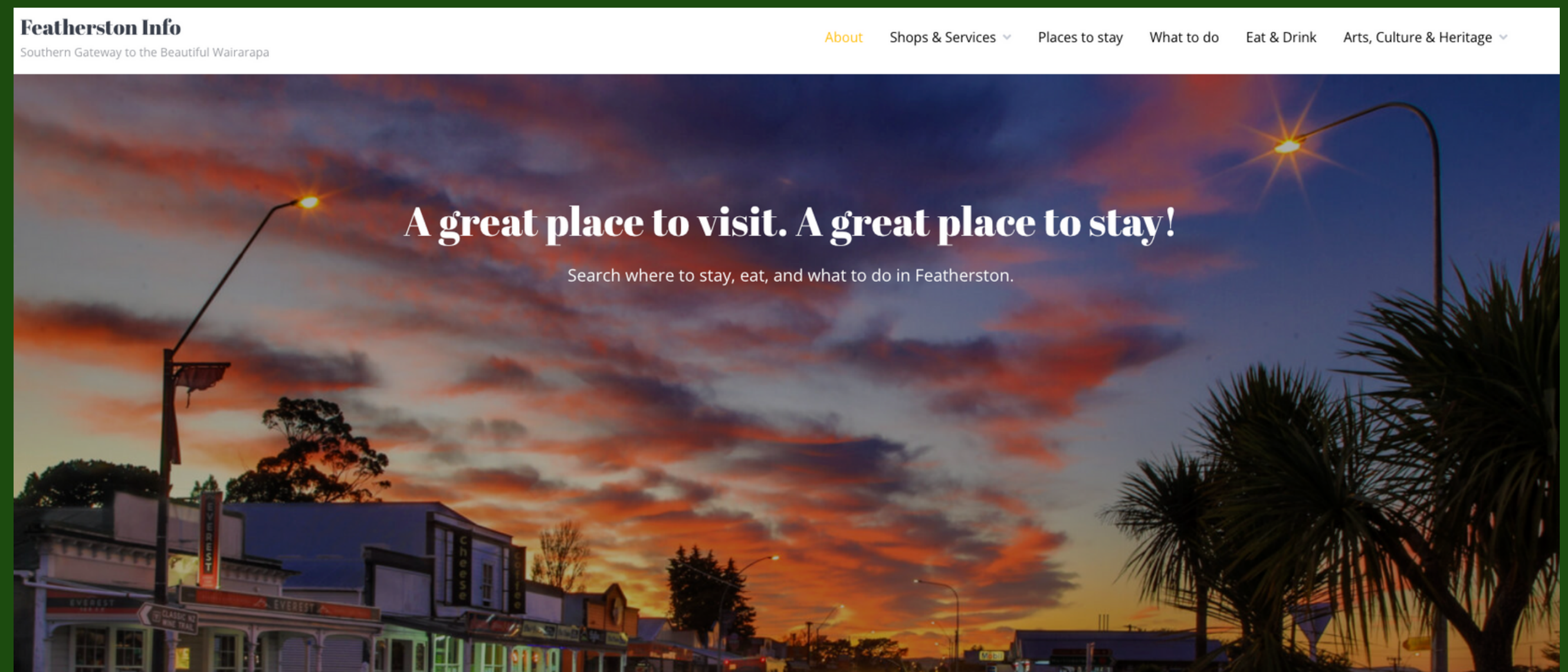
Featherston.info

A need for a local website was widely acknowledged so in 2019 Fab Feathy stepped in to help create this resource for the community.

Fab Feathy created a short-term part-time job for local rangatahi. Sourced local rangatahi; pastoral care, office use and mentorship at FCC with FF staff; funded for wages. Consolidate the various stakeholders and interest groups to get a short-term contract going for a local rangatahi. Give a one-stop, consistent and comprehensive team leadership role, from sourcing to advising and project delivery.

By 2023, Featherston had seen some big changes and the online world had grown further, so as part of Fab Feathy's 'wrap up' the CLD fund provided the development costs of a Featherston website upgrade. Fab Feathy and Featherston Community Centre worked together with a local website developer on the upgrade, which launched early 2024.

The new website is also home to the Fab Feathy archive. Keeping our reports, findings and a summary of our work safe and easily accessible.



Featherston First Fridays

Featherston First Fridays is a series of summer festivals held on the first Friday of the month over summer. It is made up of live music, art activities and lots of community spirit.

A repeated sentiment in the 2017 community plan was a desire for Fab Feathy to support the continuation of the Featherston First Friday Festivals.

Fab Feathy was a big supporter of this event up until the organisers stepped away due to COVID and other commitments. In February 2018 the First Friday Festival was also the spot where the partnership with the DIA was signed!



After a three year break, in 2022 a new group of organisers wanted to take up the mantle, including Fab Feathy kaiwhakarato Hana Makin. There was a definite need for some fun community events to bring the community back together after a difficult few years of lockdowns and alert levels. Fab Feathy supported the new iteration of First Fridays by providing significant funding of \$4,000. This allowed the organisers to koha the musicians, photographers and other talented locals who lent their skills to this fantastic series of events. Hana's skills in marketing were put to good use, and the networks and relationships held by Fab Feathy proved invaluable in ensuring the community were able to attend this event.



Featherston Community Garden 2022-2023

In August of 2022, Kaiwhakarato Hana was approached by a member of the St Andrews Church Parish Council to discuss the idea of a community garden being created on a patch of land owned by the church. Hana reached out to the community to see if there was any interest (there was!). We reached out early on to other community gardens that are already established in the Wairarapa. This was a great opportunity to learn about what works and what can go wrong in community gardens before getting stuck in.

The group has since met regularly, and first turned the soil in March 2023 with some daffodil planting. There has been a number of working bees in the space, marketed by Fab Feathy and supported by lots of community members and groups. Fab Feathy has been able to provide practical advice, administration and marketing support, and \$4,000 worth of funding for equipment to help get this project established.



Matariki Working Bee July 2023

Bucks Road Campsite

The Bucks Road Kaitiaki are a passionate group of locals who care for a much loved beauty spot and swimming hole.

They have been advocating for better toilet facilities and maintenance for many years now.

With Fab Feathy's support they have created a petition with over 600 signatures to show stakeholders such as DOC and GWRC just how much this place means to those who live here. The team has also organised working bees for native plantings and regularly clean up the rubbish that is dumped there.

Bucks Road Campsite Upgrades



618

Signatures

1,000

Next goal

 Support now



Bucks Road Campsite Upgrades

Buck's Road
Sunday 3rd November, 10-12pm



We will be spreading mulch chips around the community planting at Buck's Road

Sunday 3rd November
10-12pm

Bring a shovel and wheelbarrow if you have one

BBQ lunch to follow

FAB FEATHY



Featherston, Aotearoa New Zealand



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Dittmer Earthmoving LTD

Donalds Creek Science Table

Fab Feathy were able to support St Teresa's school with some funding to build a shelter for their new science table and water monitoring station at a Council-owned section of Donald's Creek waterway in Featherston.

The students at St Teresa's School have been working at this site since 2016, monitoring the health of the important tributary of Wairarapa Moana, as well as planting along the banks to encourage greater biodiversity in the area. As this section is owned by SWDC, it is open to the public as well as other school groups, including the kindergarten, early childhood centres and visitors.

The science station is available for public use. Its purpose is to educate about stream quality; what people might find living in the waterway, as well as provide a space to gather information and work.

The science table was opened in early 2023, and it was a pleasure to attend the opening event and see the students use the table and discuss the many things they found living in the creek.



OnBoard Skate School



On Board skate school were looking to run some of their programmes in the Featherston region. They reached out to Fab Feathy and the Aroha for Featherston Skatepark team to see where they could contribute.

Fab Feathy has played the role of connector in this space, working with SWDC to allow use of the stadium for indoor skateboarding lessons, as well as funding some fully subsidised school holiday programmes.

On Board got involved with running skateboarding lessons at Featherston School and ran some very well attended scooter competitions at First Fridays.



Feed and Fund

Feed and Fund is a community micro-funding event, inspired by a similar event run by our friends at Ka Pai Carterton.

The concept is all about celebrating the aroha mahi being done in our community. \$10 entry gets people their supper and a vote. We source local community groups doing amazing things for Featherston to come and spend four minutes pitching their idea/project to the room, and the audience votes for their favourite. The winner takes home all the entry fee money to help make their project a reality.

Across the two events held we have had nine groups pitch their projects and two winners.

Feed and Fund Round One: October 2022

- Athletics Featherston Ltd - winners! The team took home a grand total of \$451.10
- Bucks Road kaitiaki
- Divine River
- Cross Creek Railway Society Inc
- Ā Mua Community Resource Centre

"Thanks to the event, our club walked away with close to \$500 to help fund a throwing cage for our discus throwers. The event also helped to promote our club and gave us the opportunity to deliver our plight to the right people who can effect change. Hana Makin has also been proactive in helping the club with sponsorship opportunities, giving me awareness of how/when to secure sponsorship."

Feed and Fund Round Two: in partnership with the Featherston Community Centre May 2023

- Youth Hub- Wairarapa Whānau Trust – the winners! This team took home \$438.20 to help create a hub for our rangatahi.
- Featherston Community Garden
- Wairarapa Moana Trail
- Featherston Beautification Group



The winners of Feed and Fund #2 with Shane from the FF Steering Group

Cuppa on the Couch March 2019

Fab Feathy organised a community get-together as part of Neighbours' Week. A vintage-style afternoon tea was held on a vacant lot in the main street, where we set up floral couches, lamps, pot plants – and even a crocheted rug. People dropped in to have tea and bikkies or coffee and lamingtons – and have a chat with people from their community and the Fab Feathy facilitators.



LGBTQIA+ Community Awareness Kōrero 2022

Featherston Community Centre and Fab Feathy joined forces to present an LGBTQIA+ community awareness kōrero in September 2022. This evening was open to all members of our community, to hear from two incredible guest speakers. The intention was to raise awareness of our rainbow communities, increase confidence around the use of inclusive language and provide a greater understanding of the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole.

Throughout the evening, there was conversations and shared stories from the speakers and from the audience, as well as kai and refreshments.

We had a full house, with more than 30 people attending on the night! The feedback was very positive and we look forward to continuing to supporting our rainbow community to continue with their events going forward.



Community Comms 101 - 2022

In October 2022 we held a workshop for community groups to give them some ideas and resources around creating effective comms for their organisations. This workshop drew on the marketing skills of Hana (Fab Feathy facilitator) and Marina (Fab Feathy Steering Group member). As well as sharings tips and tricks, this evening was also effective in connecting community groups together and allowing them time to network.



Governance Course 2022

Again Fab Feathy teamed up with the Featherston Community Centre and REAP Wairarapa to put on this series of events. Throughout our conversations with the community, it was clear that those who were already in governance roles wanted upskilling, and those who wanted to be in governance roles wanted to gain more knowledge before committing to a role. The opportunity arose to receive funding to put on a series of sessions all around governance, the course was held over five sessions and run by local governance expert Peter McNeur.



Strategic Grants Workshop

In November 2023 Fab Feathy hosted a workshop run by Strategic Grants. The purpose of this workshop was to further build capability in the community ahead of Fab Feathy's closure in early 2024.

We were often hearing from groups about the need for more understanding about who can apply for funds and how they become 'grant-ready'. More than 20 community members representing 30 community groups attended the session.



Te Ao Māori Projects

Waitangi Day Hīkoi ki Pae Tū Mōkai 2020

Fab Feathy heard many calls for greater knowledge about and alignment with bilingual, bicultural and Treaty of Waitangi principles. To help catalyse this transformation, Fab Feathy imagined a narrated hīkoi around the Featherston ward that took in the local wahitapu (sites of significance) as recounted by Ngāti Kahungunu historian Rāwiri Smith. The date of the event – Waitangi Day – also allowed Rāwiri to expound on a theme of peace.

By first educating whānau and community about these places and pūrakau (stories), the aim was to inspire those on the journey to incorporate more tereomaori and more teomaori principles into everyday life, using the places around us that we see every day. As a stretch goal, Sophronia and Jack hoped that through inspiring participants, they could one day generate their own art, research and ‘remixes’ to cascade through interpersonal networks, reshaping the culture of the community.

Working closely with REAP Wairarapa’s Makuini Kerehi, Sophronia created a framework whereby the hīkoi would accord with governmental and REAP adult learning requirements, enabling whānau to access this event at a discounted rate. Kerehi’s connection with Te Wananga O Aotearoa and collaboration mahi on this project was invaluable; so too was her connection to Tranzit, who provided the bus for the trip.

Sophronia was also instrumental in connecting with newly-formed local mana whenua group Paetūmokai Otairā (PTMoT). Their Te Whare Whakapapa Raranga at the former Featherston Golf Course was both the meeting point and eating point where the hīkoi departed and returned. Through the promotions of Fab Feathy and PTMoT, this location is quickly becoming a complementary and alternative community centre for Featherston.

With logistics in good hands, Fab Feathy’s challenge was to ensure there were enough participants. They needn’t have worried about attendance; a waiting list had to be adopted due to popular demand. An open invitation to the Featherston community and personal invites saw an incredibly diverse group of seniors, children, artists, scientists, musicians, film-makers, migrants and more together on the journey.

Filmmaker Paascalino Schaller accompanied the hīkoi and has produced a short film to capture the kōrero in perpetuity. There are plans to make Hīkoi ki Paetūmokai an annual event, and for the attendees to share what they learned with friends and whānau. This success marked a fruitful collaboration between Fab Feathy, REAP Wairarapa, Te Wananga O Aotearoa, and the people of Featherston.

Te Ao Māori Projects

★ Matariki ki Paetūmokai
★ Featherston Matariki Festival

12 – 19 July 2020

WHAT?	Hautapu ki Matariki (Matariki Dawn Ceremony) & Breakfast
WHEN?	SUNDAY 12 July, 5:00 - 8:00 am
WHERE?	Venue 1: Te Roto o Wairarapa (Lake Wairarāpa) at 5am Venue 2: Breakfast at the ex-Golf Course (Te Whare) at 6:30am
WHO?	Paora Ammunson & Nick Sault
NOTE:	RSVP required for catering purposes
\$\$\$	Kōha
WHAT?	CRAFTS: Draw Matariki + Decorate FCC Windows
WHEN?	TUESDAY 14 July, 10:30 – 12:30
WHERE?	Featherston Community Centre, 14 Wakefield Street
\$\$\$	FREE
WHAT?	GROW: Compost Workshop (adults) / Bean Sprouting (kids)
WHEN?	WEDNESDAY 15 July, 10:30 - 12:30 pm
WHERE?	Fareham House, 80 Underhill Road
NOTE	Capped at ~12 people max per workshop
NOTE	If raining, this event will be postponed to a later date
\$\$\$	Kōha
WHAT?	LEARN: Stargazing with Dark Skies
WHEN?	WEDNESDAY 15 July, 6:00 - 8:00 pm (THURSDAY raincheck)
WHERE?	Fareham House, 80 Underhill Road
\$\$\$	FREE

WHAT?	MAKE: Manu Aute/Kite Making
WHEN?	THURSDAY 16 July, 10:00 - 1 pm
WHERE?	Featherston School Hall
\$\$\$	FREE
WHAT?	SHOP: Late Night Shopping in Featherston
WHEN?	FRIDAY 17 July into the night
WHERE?	Around and about Featherston's shops
WHAT?	GROW: Planting Natives with Jim Flack (DOC)
WHEN?	SATURDAY 18 July, 10:00 - 1:00 pm
WHERE?	Buck's Road campsite
\$\$\$	FREE
WHAT?	Kite-flying PARTY: Music + Food + Matariki
WHEN?	SUNDAY 19 July, 12:00 - 2:00 pm
WHERE?	Venue: Te Whare Whakapapa Raranga (ex-Golf Course)
\$\$\$	Kōha
NOTE:	RSVP required for catering purposes

RSVP & any questions, email: Sophronia.S@fabfeathy.nz; phone: 021 382 062

Matariki 2020-2022

The Featherston community found it difficult during COVID lockdowns. Matariki in the winter of 2020 seemed like the perfect opportunity to create new community connections and memories. This 2020 programme helped inspire the future Featherston Matariki Festivals which have been run by the community.

FF Matariki during COVID inspired true CLD Matariki in 2022 with many groups working together to achieve smorgasbord of super-local events

FF provided a continued, 3-year long development journey from a more executive/event management role, to then vacate that space and let the community groups step in to flourish. Continued succession of support and linking up people and groups over the years was very successful.

Bicultural and Bilingual kaupapa

The mahi for this series of projects has been over a long journey, with many lessons learnt.

A community forum in Oct 2019 "Ka Mua, Ka Muri: Looking Back & Moving Forward" showed an aspiration to investigate enhancing the bicultural and bilingual profiles of Paetūmōkai Featherston.

Following this, Fab Feathy kaiwhakarato and mana whenua Sophronia Smith met with local whānau to develop a plan for an ambitious Bicultural Kaupapa. This was composed of four main pillars, or 'pou':

1. Registration of the tereo Māori name with LINZ;
2. Drafting a Featherston bicultural strategy and action plan;
3. Carving a pou to share local stories;
4. Capturing stories onto a documentary.

A number of factors have impacted the ability of Fab Feathy to effectively facilitate this project. Between the beginning of this project in 2019 and today, there has been a complete turnover of staff and steering group members for Fab Feathy. There have been misunderstandings between interested parties around consultation and design and in some cases, solutions have not been able to be found. The majority of this work also took place during the Covid emergency, which had huge impacts on timeframes and people's ability to complete work. Fab Feathy entered into this project with the best of intentions and hopes this section of the report goes some way to sharing learnings from this with other CLDPs.

Below is a summary of where the four pou of this kaupapa are at close of project, July 2023:

LINZ Registration

While scoping out the details and prospective timeframes for this project, it was determined early on that it would be unlikely to complete the entire registration process during the term of the CLD partnership due to timelines within LINZ. A local NgātiPākehā bicultural champion within the local TeAtaarangi night class has been working on this with the support of Fab Feathy. Unfortunately ill-health has prevented her from further mahi in this space.

Bicultural and Bilingual kaupapa

Language Champions

Businesses e.g., Kia Ora dairy

Community Groups e.g., Fab Feathy, Pae Tū Mōkai o Taurira

Education/ Health/ Social Services e.g. REAP Wairarapa Te Reo courses (inc. Te Ataarangi)

Marae/Spaces e.g., Pāpāwai, Kohunui, Hau Ariki

Puna/ECE or Schools e.g., Te Kura o Pae Tū Mōkai

Bilingual Research and Strategy

TeAtaahia Hurihanganui (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Ngāti Rangitāne, Ngāti Hāmua) is a local leader in teao Māori, tereo Māori, and education circles; a trustee at Rangitāne; and the owner operator of ReoRua Ltd.

Fab Feathy contracted Reo Rua back in 2020 to undertake this research project on behalf of the PaeTūMōkai community. The scope of this research included the current use of TeReo Māori here in Pae Tū Mōkai, to understand who is championing the language and how te reo can be supported to flourish further.

This resource was created in consultation with schools, families, businesses, community groups, and wider (South) Wairarapa marae and whānau.

Bicultural and Bilingual kaupapa

Pou

The community engaged in discussions regarding the design of a Pou at various events held in 2020 and 2021. The Pou design consultation elicited approximately 100 different ideas and themes from community members. These ideas were carefully collated which resulted in key themes that were then intertwined with local stories. The carving of the Pou commenced, with community members, including school children, engaging in the learning process alongside the talented carvers - Wayne, Francis, and Trevor. Frank and Wayne are natural educators who use a te ao Māori lens to integrate kawa and tikanga into every aspect of cooperation. They have worked alongside a Ngāti Pākehā apprentice, Trevor, to provide a bicultural space for everyone.

Regrettably, despite the best of intentions, the Pou has not been universally embraced by all members of the community. Despite the efforts of many dedicated individuals, a mutually agreeable solution has not been found. Consequently, it has been decided that the Pou will not be erected in Featherston. We extend our gratitude to all community members who actively participated in the Pou project, as well as to the carvers and individuals who generously shared their knowledge and expertise. While the outcome may not have met everyone's expectations, we remain committed to fostering inclusivity, cultural celebration, and meaningful community engagement in our ongoing CLD initiatives.

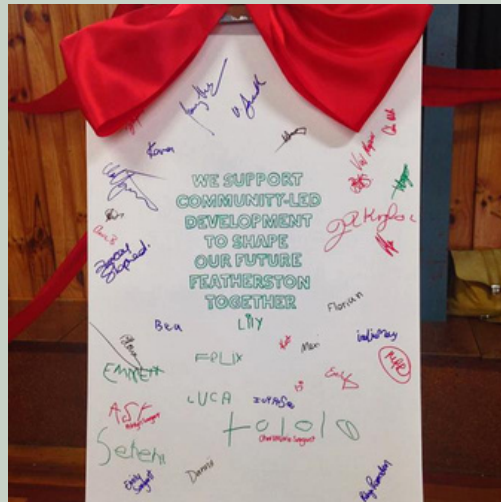
Video Documentary

A local videographer was sourced to shoot and edit a documentary of the pou carving. Because completion of the Pou is a predecessor for completing the narrative of the documentary, the doco is incomplete.

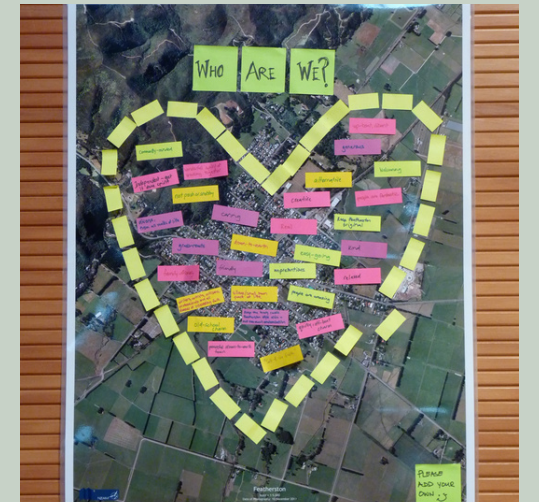
Conclusion of bicultural project:

Community-led development is a continual learning process, and this project has provided valuable insights for us and the wider community-led development (CLD) community. We have taken away numerous lessons that will inform future endeavours. This project has underscored the importance of open dialogue, consensus building, and the need for ongoing community engagement throughout the development process.

Despite the extremely difficult operating conditions of an international public health emergency, turnover at Fab Feathy, and other unforeseen issues, many impactful and long-lasting lessons have been secured during this work. Whilst the bicultural project has not reached its intended milestones, we have appreciated the DIAs support during this challenging project.



Summary



Summary - the challenges we faced

2020 - 2022 was dominated by Covid and the associated challenges it brought with it. Fab Feathy was kept busy helping out where required with food resilience, helping groups navigate alert levels and event planning/restrictions. A number of events planned were postponed or cancelled due to a change in alert levels, and business as usual was on hiatus for nearly three years. A number of projects were stalled due to difficulty in accessing supplies (the concrete shortage for example particularly affected the community-led projects of the Windy Wheels Bike Tracks and Aroha for Featherston Skatepark).

Amid the unforeseen challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Fab Feathy adapted and played a pivotal role in bolstering community resilience. However it did hinder what we were able to achieve within the time of the five-year partnership.

Throughout the six years of Fab Feathy, we had five different staff members. All brought their individual strengths and relationships to the role, however any change in staff has meant that the flow of work was interrupted and new relationships and trust had to be built within the community. This is also true with the change in DIA advisors over the years.

Our Steering Group have been a fantastic asset to our mahi. Given the voluntary nature of the steering group, we've had many new iterations over the years and this has meant time spent onboard and training in CLD, and less time being able to focus on achieving our goals.

The Bicultural Project was our biggest challenge, exacerbated by a change in staff and loss of relationships. Whilst our biggest challenge, it was also our biggest learning opportunity and really showcased why CLD work needs so much focus on the community being in the driving seat.

Summary - our highlights

Since 2016, Fab Feathy has worked alongside the ambitious local community, to build confidence, resilience, and togetherness. The highlights of our journey include:

- The Windy Wheels tracks. The bike tracks, brought to life by local volunteers, not only provide children and adults with the opportunity to embrace cycling but also became a hub for skill development and sustainable practices. These tracks remain an asset for the entire community for years to come!
- The revival of Featherston First Fridays, which highlighted Featherston's community spirit. Fab Feathy's support, alongside other incredible community partners, breathed new life into the festivals, providing the community a welcome space for connection and fun after Covid.
- A new community garden, initiated by St Andrews Church Parish Council, is a beautiful space for connection, both to the land and to the people. Fab Feathy's support helped nurture this project, providing resources and guidance to transform a vacant patch of earth into a vibrant community space.
- Our Feed and Fund events, in collaboration with the Community Centre, became a favourite, spotlighting local groups' incredible mahi. These events weren't just about the putea but the chance for recognition of our local groups, who spend countless hours making Featherston a better place.
- The Waitangi Day Hiko celebrated the importance of our natural environment. This event succeeded in connecting generations and cultures, ensuring that the stories of Featherston's people live on.
- The many courses we invested in have built the capability of community groups, ensuring they are better equipped to lead and serve the people of Featherston. We hope these skills will prove useful for many years to come!



Acknowledgements

Fab Feathy Steering Group, past and present
Fab Feathy Staff - Alexa, Anne, Jack, Sophronia, Hana

REAP Wairarapa

The Department of Internal Affairs

Featherston Community Centre

Wairarapa Community Networks

Inspiring Communities

The wider CLDP community- particularly Ka Pai Carterton

And of course:

The whole Pae Tū Mokai Featherston Community for being such a joy to work alongside!

