



NAPIER CITY COUNCIL

NAPIER AQUATICS STRATEGY

**CITY OF
NAPIER**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aquatic facilities are unique community assets that provide significant health, fitness and social benefits to the Napier and wider Hawke's Bay community. The purpose of the Aquatic Strategy is to set the direction for the provision of aquatic space that will meet Napier City's needs for the next 30 years.

The Aquatic Strategy specifically establishes a vision for Napier City's aquatic facilities and natural environment aquatic opportunities and where Council would like to be in 2044. Supporting the vision are underlying principles that provide a platform for the vision. Council will view the provision of aquatic space through the goals and associated implementation actions in order to achieve the vision for the future.

In developing this strategy Council carefully considered unique factors impacting the rate of population growth currently and predicted into the future and how best to achieve the community's needs and aspirations.

PART 1 STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

Many people choose to live in Napier for its high sunshine hours, coastal location and warm climate. Aquatic activity is therefore an integral part of Napier and has been for some time. The first public swimming pools the 'Hot Sea Baths' were built on Marine Parade in 1909 and a children's paddling pool (the first of its kind in New Zealand) added in 1918. These pools (although they have been disestablished) set the scene for aquatic leisure in Napier.

Aquatic facilities are unique community assets that provide significant health, fitness and social benefits to the Napier and wider Hawke's Bay community. Napier City Council currently provide and/or operate two aquatic facilities within Napier that cater for both local and tourist needs (Napier Aquatic Centre and Ocean Spa). These facilities need to be kept relevant and maintained to a high standard in order to meet the demand of the community. There are also a number of school pools and private facilities as well as features of the natural environment that make up the wider aquatic network in Napier.

This strategy will help to guide Napier City Council in managing their aquatics network with a focus on the provision and use of aquatic facilities within the City and the wider Hawke's Bay region.

WHY WE NEED A STRATEGY

Communities evolve, aquatic sporting interests and requirements change, and facilities age and wear out. In order to efficiently acquire, develop and maintain Napier City's aquatic facilities in a manner that meets both current and future community needs there is a need for a 'planned whole of network' approach.

The Regional Insight Report 2011 identified swimming as the top sport Hawke's Bay residents participate in. Public aquatic facilities provide for many different users and needs. These include more traditional: recreational swimming, learn to swim and swimming club to the more diverse: swim gym, water aerobics, water polo, underwater hockey, canoe polo, diving, and surf lifesaving for example. How these uses are managed efficiently across any existing and proposed facilities is key to how successful they are.

In addition to these needs, the strategy is strongly influenced by national, regional and local legislation particularly through the provisions of the Local Government Act (LGA) which prescribes Council's provide good quality local infrastructure and public services to achieve community wellbeing. Council meets its purpose under the LGA through the implementation of their Long Term and Annual Plans. These plans contain community outcomes and this strategy will be used to inform Napier's community outcomes in relation to aquatics for the next 30 years.

Provision of adequate facilities is required to maximise year round use, to enhance community benefit for the region, and to improve delivery of water safety initiatives. Currently in Napier, Napier Aquatic Centre, Ocean Spa complex and Greendale Pool are the main providers of aquatic space. These centres are supported by a number of swimming pools located in the wider Hawke's Bay as well as the natural environment.

Napier faces a number of challenges in relation to the provision of aquatics. The slow population growth of Napier and wider Hawke's Bay results in the population growth reaching its peak in 2021 in both Napier and Hawke's Bay. Therefore significant investment in aquatic facilities needs to focus on changing, rather than increased, demand for facilities. Changes to demand for aquatic space will likely result from the closure of school pools, the increasing ageing population and changing trends in aquatic sport (including growth in casual and informal sport and recreation).

Aquatic facilities are expensive assets to construct and operate. The cost of access to Council run aquatic facilities does not represent the true cost of providing the service. Given the large proportion of rates attributed to aquatic assets it is important these assets are operated in a financially sustainable manner.

Consideration of existing provision in Napier and wider Hawke's Bay including natural environment aquatic opportunities is required by the strategy. Does the current state of aquatic facilities and opportunities in Napier, enable Napier to achieve the vision and principles of this strategy? The goals and implementation plan contained in this strategy will guide changes to the existing aquatic environment to ensure Napier City Council achieves its vision.



COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE PROVISION OF AQUATIC FACILITIES

A fundamental task in the development of this strategy was to examine Napier City Council's role in the provision of aquatic facilities.

Napier City Council's Local Governance Statement contains the following mission statement:

*'To provide the Facilities and Services and the Environment, Leadership, Encouragement and Economic Opportunity to make Napier the best provincial city in New Zealand in which to live, work, raise a family and enjoy a safe and satisfying life.'*¹

Aquatic facilities are unique community assets which have benefits for a large spectrum of the community. The age range of users of aquatic facilities is very diverse, ranging from 6 months to 80+ years.

The provision of aquatic facilities falls within the role of Council as described in the Local Government Act 2002 below, and supported by the mission statement above.

The purpose of local government is:

- a. to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
- b. to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality² local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses.

Stakeholders consulted on this strategy were asked what they see to be the Council's role in the provision of aquatic facilities. The feedback indicates that there is a firm desire for Council to continue to provide community aquatic facilities for a broad range of uses. This is because aquatic facilities provide the community with a healthy, low impact and socially interactive recreation activity.

It is not the role of Council to provide everything for everyone. Investment in aquatic facilities undertaken by Council should be for the purpose of achieving the greatest good for the

¹ Napier City Council (2014) Local Governance Statement

² Good-quality, in relation to local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions, means infrastructure, services, and performance that are:

(a) Efficient; and

(b) Effective; and

(c) Appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances

greatest number of people. This may result in public aquatic facilities not catering for some user groups. However Council can provide support for elite and/or unique aquatic sports through a number of other initiatives including scholarships, sponsorship and promotion.

Definitions

Aquatic Facility

An aquatic facility means any facility which includes a pool(s). Pool means any water retaining structure, wholly or partially of artificial construction and generally having a circulation and filtration system, designed for recreational, training or therapeutic swimming³.

Public Aquatic Facility

A public aquatic facility means any pool other than domestic pools. This category includes commercial, school, institutional, club, hospitality industry, community and local authority pools. This definition does not differentiate between local authority, community, trust, school or private facility ownership⁴.

Natural Environment Aquatic Opportunities

All non-pool related swimming/aquatic sport/recreation provision both formal and informal such as the ocean, rivers, lakes and estuaries. A local example of this would be the recreational use of Pandora Pond.

Water Play/Leisure

Informal use of water space by members of the public for play.

Recreation

Use of water space by members of the public for health and fitness and/or rehabilitation purposes such as lap swimming, aqua jogging in an informal manner.

Water Sport

Formal use of water space by organised groups for teaching and/or training purposes. This includes learn to swim, swim club, canoe polo, and masters swimming as examples.

³ As sourced from: <http://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/Files/AquaticFacilityGuidelines2010.pdf>

⁴ As sourced from: <http://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/Files/AquaticFacilityGuidelines2010.pdf>



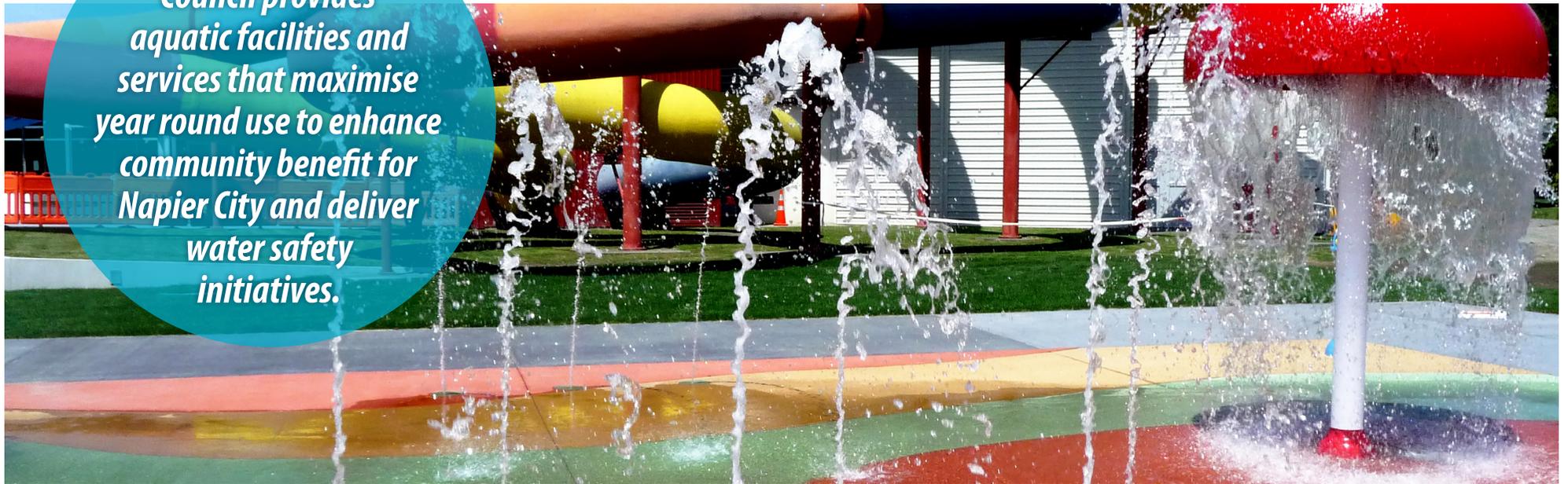
VISION

Aquatic facilities in Napier will continue to contribute toward developing and supporting physically active and healthy communities. Water safety education is promoted through the development of confidence and skills gained from both recreational play and learn to swim programmes.

The essence of this vision is for Council to provide aquatic facilities to the community because of the significant health and social benefits that come from recreating in water. The focus however is on meeting the needs of the diverse range of users and encouraging lifelong use. The vision of the strategy also pursues the promotion of water safety and confidence to ensure all of our communities are safe and can take advantage of all water facilities including the beach and river opportunities offered in Hawke's Bay.



Napier City Council provides aquatic facilities and services that maximise year round use to enhance community benefit for Napier City and deliver water safety initiatives.



PRINCIPLES

The following Principles underpin the Napier Aquatics Strategy. The Napier aquatics network will provide for:

1. Healthy Communities

Participation in both informal and formal aquatic activities has benefits to the physical and mental health of the individual and hence to the well-being of the community as a whole.

Aquatic facilities promote healthy social interaction and act as a centre for community activities.

2. Participation - Well Used Facilities

High levels of participation in aquatic activity are encouraged to ensure the benefits are enjoyed by as many people as possible. This includes consideration of the diverse preferences and needs for aquatic facilities in Napier and wider Hawke's Bay region.

3. Safe Opportunities

The current and future aquatic network (including natural environment opportunities) provide a safe environment to participate in aquatic activities. All pools will be certified 'Pool Safe' and meet New Zealand Water Quality Standards.

4. Sustainable and Efficient Facilities

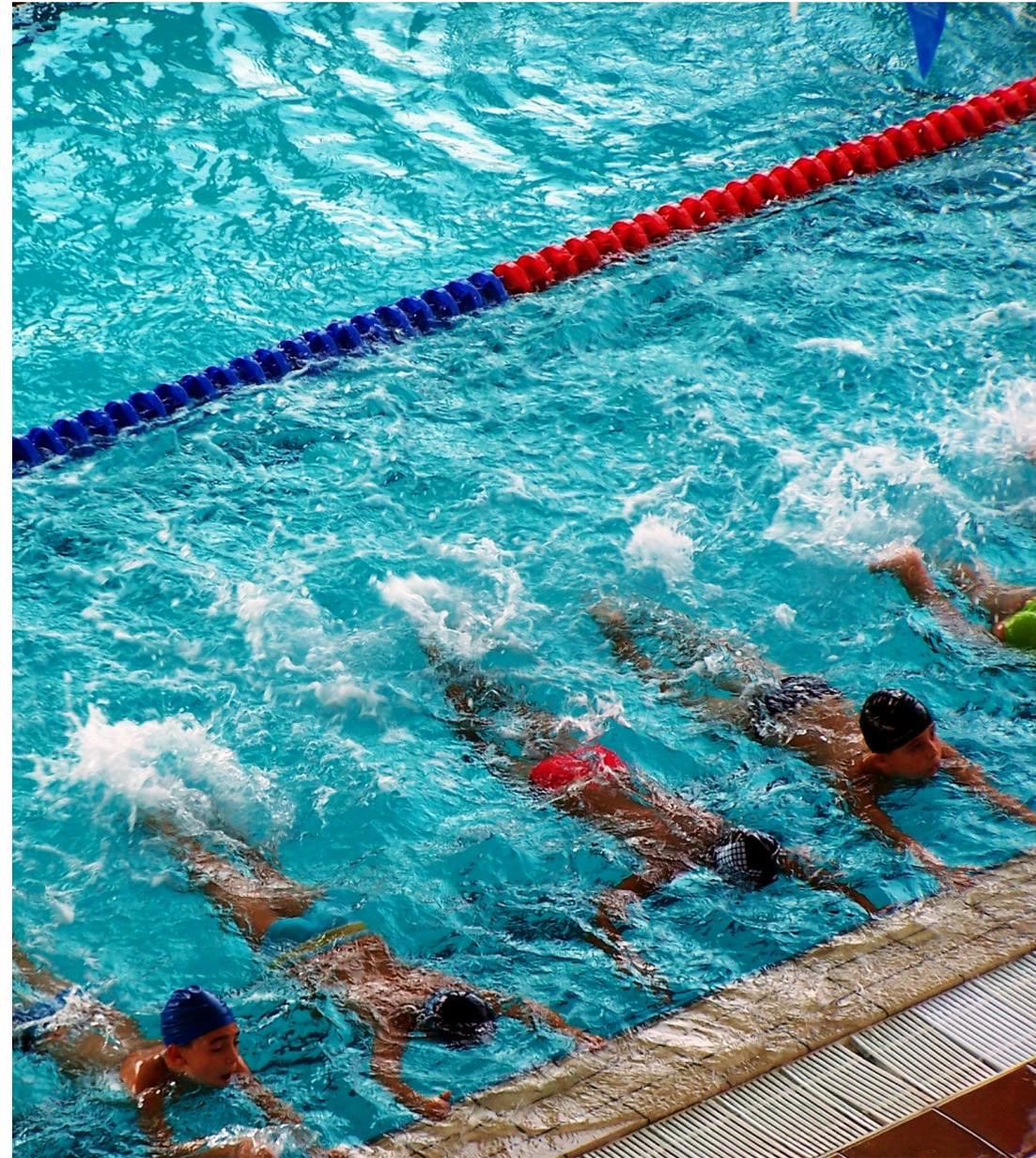
The community's aquatic network will be operated in an environmentally and financially sustainable manner. Priority will be given to maximising the use of existing facilities factoring in the wider regional aquatic network.

5. Well Maintained and Fit For Purpose

The aquatic network will include well maintained and fit-for-purpose swimming pools relevant to the community's need. Pools need to be adaptable to keep up with changing trends in aquatic sport and recreation needs.

6. A Partnership Approach

Napier City Council will take a partnership approach where possible for the provision and management of aquatic facilities and initiatives.



GOALS

This strategy encourages and supports long term planning and engagement with the community to determine the focus and priorities for the provision for aquatic sport and recreation in Napier.

The goals to be delivered through this aquatic strategy are:

1. Inspire the Napier community to be safe in the water, engage in regular physical activity and develop strong community connections.
2. Maximise opportunities for the Napier community to participate in aquatic recreation and sport.
3. The current and future aquatic network (including natural environments) provides a safe environment to participate in aquatic activities.
4. Aquatic facilities and services are financially sustainable. This includes consideration of cross boundary opportunities.
5. Partnerships are entered into to maximise delivery of aquatic facilities and initiatives.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The vision, goals, and principles for the Strategy tell us where we want to be with the management and use of our aquatics network. The following section outlines proposed actions to be undertaken to achieve this over the next ten years.

The costs associated with each of the proposed actions are indicative only and may need to be revised as more detailed information becomes available. Indicative costings are needed to ensure that some level of budgeting can be included in the Long Term Plan.

Many of the proposed actions involve the development of options to improve the aquatics network. This process of developing options will provide more detailed information on the implementation costs associated with different options. When more information on the cost and benefits have been assessed decisions can then be made on whether to pursue the implementation of options.



GOAL ONE

INSPIRE THE NAPIER COMMUNITY TO BE SAFE IN THE WATER, ENGAGE IN REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND DEVELOP STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
1.1 Engage with Water Safety NZ, ACC, Hawke's Bay DHB and Sport Hawke's Bay to deliver water safety initiatives	To ensure all members of the Napier community have basic survival skills in the water	Driver/Facilitator (for Napier Aquatic Centre) Advocate across the wider community	Water Safety NZ ACC Hawke's Bay DHB Sport Hawke's Bay	Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	Ongoing
1.2 Undertake an engagement exercise with the wider Napier Community to encourage participation in aquatic activities across all potential users	To gain an understanding of who is and who is not using aquatic facilities, why, and what can be done to improve delivery of the existing services	Consultation		Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	2015
1.3 Engage with Sport Hawke's Bay and HBDHB to promote health related benefits of aquatic use.	To promote awareness of the health benefits associated with using aquatic facilities	Co-ordination and Promotion	Sport Hawke's Bay Hawke's Bay DHB	Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	2015-2016 then ongoing
1.4 Promote the Napier Aquatic Centre as a vibrant community hub through actively managing and promoting the centre through all facets possible.	To encourage healthy social interaction in an accessible, safe and inviting space that contributes to the City Council's vision 'to provide the facilities... to make Napier the best provincial city in New Zealand in which to live, work, raise a family and enjoy a safe and satisfying life.'	Provider	Napier Aquatic Centre	Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	Ongoing
1.5 Investigate the integration of Napier Aquatic Centre into Onekawa Reserve through the development of a master plan for the whole site to maximise the community use of the site	To provide for a more holistic approach to the Onekawa Reserve site and maximise community benefit of the site.	Planning		\$30,000	2016



 GOAL **TWO**
MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NAPIER COMMUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN AQUATIC RECREATION AND SPORT.

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
2.1 Work with Sport Hawke's Bay, Hawke's Bay DHB, user groups and schools to promote all of the aquatic facilities and activities available to Napier residents	To promote awareness of water based recreational opportunities, water safety and sport	Co-ordination and Promotion	Sport Hawke's Bay Hawke's Bay DHB User groups Schools	Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	2015-2016 then ongoing
2.2 Undertake landscaping/amenity works at Pandora Pond and Perfume Point	To promote more attractive natural environment aquatic opportunities	Provision	Hawke's Bay Regional Council	Work to be undertaken within existing budgets	2015
2.3 Investigate opportunities to develop Pandora Pond into a water sports park	To enhance the existing water sport uses at Pandora Pond and maximise the use of the space	Co-ordination and provision	Hawke's Bay Regional Council User groups	\$20,000	2015
2.4 Investigate the feasibility of a replacement pool facility in the Taradale community in the long term including an assessment of options for Taradale including upgrade of Greendale Pool, a new pool etc (this work should include a condition assessment of Greendale Pool)	To ensure the users of the Greendale pool are able to continue to operate in the long term and to provide increased informal aquatic space	Provision	Greendale Swimming Club	\$40,000	2015
2.5 Investigate and provide direction to Napier Aquatic Centre management particularly with regards to setting lane hireage policy to ensure a balance between water sport, recreation and water play	To ensure that the wider community have reasonable access to pool space	Planning and Programming		Within existing budgets	Investigation to begin 2015. Implementation of new hireage policies 2016
2.6 Identify and address barriers to school access to the Aquatic Centre for learn to swim, water safety and general school use	To provide opportunity for schools who have no or inadequate pool space to utilise Napier Aquatic Centre for learn to swim/water safety lessons	Co-ordination	Sport Hawke's Bay	Within existing budgets	Investigation to begin 2015. Implementation of programmes 2015/2016

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
2.7 Undertake an updated disability access audit at Napier Aquatic Centre	To determine current levels of compliance for physical access and endeavour to exceed the basic legal requirements	Auditor		Within existing budgets	2015
2.8 Provide additional cycle and walking linkages to existing aquatic facilities including the natural environment	To increase the accessibility of existing aquatic facilities	Provider		Within existing budgets	On-going (tie in with upgrades to existing walking and cycleways networks)





GOAL THREE

THE CURRENT AND FUTURE AQUATIC OPPORTUNITIES (INCLUDING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT) PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
3.1 Continue to ensure that Napier Aquatic Centre and Ocean Spa maintain their Pool Safe ⁵ Status	To manage the risk of accident and provide safe aquatic facilities for the community	Compliance	Napier Aquatic Centre Ocean Spa	Within existing budgets	Ongoing
3.2 Continue to ensure all pools in Napier comply with the current water quality systems and standards	To ensure aquatics provision is safe for the community	Compliance	Napier Aquatic Centre Ocean Spa	Within existing budgets	Ongoing
3.3 Contribute to the contact recreation water quality standards through appropriate management and monitoring of landuse activities and advocating for improved water quality outcomes	To ensure safe water quality for contact recreation at our beaches and rivers	Management and Advocate		Within existing budgets	Ongoing

⁵ Pool Safe is a New Zealand Recreation Association and Water Safety New Zealand programme incorporating a range of initiatives aimed at reducing the number of water related injuries in and around New Zealand pools (as sourced from: <http://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/standards---benchmarking/poolsafe/>)

GOAL FOUR

AQUATIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ARE FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE. THIS INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF CROSS BOUNDARY OPPORTUNITIES.

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
4.1 Develop a long term business plan for Napier Aquatic Centre with a focus on adaptability, future proofing and an investigation into all potential income streams (in order to reduce the gap between spending on the asset and revenue earned)	To maximise the revenue earning potential of Napier Aquatic Centre and ensure the centre remains current and operationally sustainable	Planning and Investigation	\$20,000	2016
4.2 Maintain an open dialogue with other aquatic providers within the wider Hawke's Bay region	To avoid duplication of services and initiatives and promote services across boundaries	Initiator	Within existing budgets	Ongoing
4.3 Ensure any new facilities/assets are constructed in a manner that minimises ongoing maintenance costs. This may include energy saving initiatives and co-location of services	To ensure future investment is undertaken in a sustainable manner	Planning/Asset owner	Not applicable	Ongoing



GOAL FIVE
PARTNERSHIPS ARE ENTERED INTO TO MAXIMISE DELIVERY OF AQUATIC FACILITIES AND INITIATIVES

WHAT WILL WE DO?	WHY WILL WE DO IT?	COUNCIL ROLE	POTENTIAL PARTNERS	WHAT WILL IT COST?	WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?
5.1 Partner with community groups to improve access to existing aquatic facilities	To provide support for community groups accessing aquatic facilities	Partner	Community groups	Within existing budgets	2015
5.2 Partner with the Regional Council and/or the Port to provide pontoons and other water play facilities at Hardings Road and/or Pandora Pond	To encourage aquatic activities in the natural environment in a planned and collaborative manner	Initiator/ Partner	Hawke's Bay Regional Council Port of Napier	\$40,000	2015/2016
5.3 Investigate opportunities for co-ordination with Hastings District Council to deliver aquatic facilities	To maximise the delivery of and opportunities for aquatics across wider Hawke's Bay.	Initiator/ Partner	Hastings District Council	Within existing budgets	2016/2017
5.4 Investigate in partnership with neighbouring territorial authorities the feasibility of a 'regional' pool facility in Hawke's Bay	To ensure Hawke's Bay Councils explore opportunities to provide for regional level sport	Partner	Hastings District Council Central Hawke's Bay District Council	TBA	2020
5.5 Partner with Hastings District Council and Hawke's Bay Canoe Polo to investigate the feasibility of the construction of a regional outdoor canoe polo facility building on the investigations undertaken to date by Hawke's Bay Canoe Polo	To maximise opportunities for Canoe Polo and other outdoor aquatic recreation.	Partner	Hastings District Council Hawke's Bay Canoe Polo	\$20,000 (Initial investigation/ feasibility only)	2015



MONITORING AND REVIEW

Progress made in achieving the strategy's goals and working towards the vision will be measured against the following targets. These measures will be assessed on a three yearly basis – linking into the ten year plan process (LTP). This assessment will also indicate when a full review of the strategy is required. A full review of the strategy is intended to be undertaken every 5 years following adoption – or when the need arises.

GOAL	MEASURE	WHAT WILL THIS MEASURE TELL US?	METHODS
1. Inspire the Napier community to be safe in the water, engage in regular physical activity and develop strong community connections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of community awareness of aquatic space and activities Number of water based activities taking place within aquatic facilities and natural environment aquatic opportunities Community satisfaction and wellbeing 	Find out whether the aquatics network is accessible to as many people as practicable. Are all members of the community able to access aquatic facilities and/or safely pursue aquatic activities in the natural environment?	Annual residents' survey Napier Aquatic Centre's visitor database, user survey, and monitoring of booking schedule. Community feedback through submissions on the annual plan, other consultation exercises, and informal feedback.
2. Maximise opportunities for the Napier community to participate in aquatic recreation and sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visits to the Napier Aquatic Centre (NAC) by age, gender and ethnicity where possible Frequency of visits to NAC (i.e. repeat visits) Participation rates for each activity taking place at the pool Customer satisfaction Number of users of other pool space (such as Greendale Pool and Ocean Spa) and natural water spaces (such as Pandora Pond) on an twice yearly basis 	<p>This information gathered will inform on how often members of the community are making use of water space in the community, and for what use.</p> <p>It will also tell us if Council are providing an appropriate well-maintained level of service across the aquatics network.</p>	<p>Napier Aquatic Centre's visitor database, user survey, and monitoring of booking schedule.</p> <p>Greendale and Ocean Spa's user information.</p> <p>Annual Residents' Survey.</p> <p>Community feedback through submissions on the annual plan, other consultation exercises, and informal feedback .</p>
3. The current and future aquatic network (including natural environment) provides a safe environment to participate in aquatic activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of accidents occurring across the wider aquatics network (including natural environment) Pool Safe accreditation achieved at Napier Aquatic Centre and Ocean Spa Number of closures of waterbodies as a result of poor water quality 	How safe the aquatics environment is.	<p>Napier Aquatics Centre accident/incident statistics.</p> <p>Ocean Spa's accident statistics.</p> <p>Surf Lifesaving NZ's incident statistics.</p> <p>Water Safety NZ's drowning statistics.</p> <p>Hawke's Bay Regional Council's water quality monitoring.</p> <p>Community feedback through submissions on the annual plan, other consultation exercises, and informal feedback.</p>

GOAL	MEASURE	WHAT WILL THIS MEASURE TELL US?	METHODS
<p>4. Aquatic facilities and services are financially sustainable. This includes consideration of cross boundary opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net operating cost of a visit to Napier Aquatic Centre, and any new public facility • Percentage of funding coming from general rates • Rate payer funding per head of population • Resource use data – energy use, water use, water and generation • Asset management plans are kept up to date 	<p>How efficiently is Napier Aquatic Centre and any new pool operating – is there a reduction in the rate payer funding contribution?</p>	<p>Annual Reports Napier Aquatic Centres statement of intent Napier Aquatic Centre Resource use data (power, water etc.) Community feedback through submissions on the annual plan, other consultation exercises, and informal feedback</p>
<p>5. Partnerships are entered into to maximise delivery of aquatic facilities and initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of delivery • Percentage of ratepayer/council funding on aquatics projects • Shared knowledge • Delivery of new projects and/or initiatives 	<p>Whether the partnerships entered into maximise the delivery of aquatic space across the wider Hawke's Bay</p>	<p>Annual Residents' Survey Community feedback through submissions on the annual plan, other consultation exercises, and informal feedback</p>

PART 2

NAPIER CONTEXT

STRATEGIC FIT

Although the strategy is not a legislative document, it is strongly influenced by national legislation (and subsequently regional and local legalisation) particularly through the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).

The key purpose of the LGA is to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality⁶ local infrastructure, local public services and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses. The LGA specifically provides for 'libraries, museums, reserves, **recreational facilities**, and other community infrastructure' as core services. These services are required to be 'efficient, effective and appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances'.

The Long Term Plan is Council's method for outlining its activities, community outcomes and long term focus. It outlines among other things its integrated decision making and co-ordination of resources. The 2012-2022 Long Term Plan contains the desired community outcomes for the next 10 years.

The Annual Plan is Council's fiscal path for the relevant year. It details variations to the Long Term Plan. The 2014/2015 Annual Plan, considers 'housekeeping needs', addresses infrastructure maintenance and improvements and looks at the bigger picture developments aimed at progressing the city and making Napier a better place for all.

Onekawa Park, which includes the Napier Aquatic Centre, is managed under the Reserves Act 1977. Reserve Management Plans are required for all parks held under the Reserves Act 1977. The Napier City Council Management Plans for Recreation Reserves contains the Reserve Management Plan for Onekawa Park.

The Resource Management Act 1991 applies to environmental management including discharges to natural water bodies and landuse activities.

Focussed strategies have been developed that aid in implementing the Community Outcomes for the district. At the strategic planning level there are a number of Napier City strategies and policies that closely align with the Aquatic Strategy and have been considered during its development:

- The Napier City Cycling Strategy
- Youth Policy

⁶ Means 'infrastructure, services and performances that are:

(a) Efficient; and

(b) Effective; and

(c) Appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances

- Revenue and Financing Policy
- Napier City Council Safer Napier Policy
- Policy on Partnerships between the Council and the Private Sector.
- Management Plans for Recreation Reserves

Also considered as part of the formulation of this strategy are a suite of strategic documents published by other key agencies (Ngati Kahungunu, Hawke’s Bay Regional Council, Swimming New Zealand, Sport New Zealand and Hawke’s Bay District Health Board and Hastings District Council);

The implications of the various strategic, tactical and operational documents relevant to aquatic provision is discussed further in the Policy and Plan Reference Document that has been developed as part of this strategy. The National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports has been specifically discussed in relation to the implications for Hawke’s Bay on the right.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF AQUATIC FACILITIES

LEGISLATION
 Local Government Act 2002
 Reserves Act 1977
 Resource Management Act 1991

EXTERNAL STRATEGIC RESOURCES
 Te Ara Toiora o Ngati Kahungunu
 Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy
 Swimming New Zealand Whole of Sport Plan 2014-2020
 National Aquatic Facilities Strategy
 Regional Sport and Active Recreation Strategic Direction
 Hastings District Aquatic Facilities Strategy

LTP COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

STRATEGIC RESOURCES
 i.e. Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy
 Napier City Cycling Strategy
 Youth Policy
 Safer Napier Policy

TACTICAL RESOURCES
 i.e. Revenue and Financing Policy
 Policy on Partnerships with the Public Sector
 Reserve Management Plans

THE NATIONAL FACILITIES STRATEGY FOR AQUATIC CENTRES

The National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports⁷ is a key reference document recently produced for Sport New Zealand that sets a long term direction for the provision of aquatic facilities around New Zealand.

The current network of aquatic facilities in New Zealand reflects the national focus of developing social infrastructure in the 1960's and 1970's. The current network further reflects the historic territorial structure (a large number of smaller territorial authorities) which has resulted in a high number of smaller 'local' pool facilities.

When assessing the community's pool network it is important to recognise the contribution school pools make to the network. They are often critical for 'learn to swim programmes' and in providing facilities in areas that are isolated from publically-provided facilities.

The following table⁸ shows the provision of water space in Hawke's Bay and neighbouring regions. It identifies the areas of pool provision (square metres) for both the council and school networks.

TOTAL PROVISION OF POOLS BY REGION						
Region	Population	Council Pools (m ²)	School Pools (m ²)	Combined (m ²)	People p/ m ² of the combined provision	% of School Pools versus Council
Hawkes Bay	155,300	2,746	7,740	10,486	15	74%
Gisborne	46,900	1,000	3,120	4,120	11	76%
Bay of Plenty	276,600	6,001	7,840	13,841	20	57%
Manawatu-Whanganui	233,500	9,528	12,640	22,168	11	57%

* Table sourced from National Aquatic Facilities Strategy

7 As sourced from: Aurecon, 2013 National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports, New Zealand: Sport NZ

8 Table sourced from: Aurecon, 2013 National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports, New Zealand: Sport NZ

The current requirements for competitive aquatic sports are significantly different to the needs of the community user. Competitive sports have specific requirements for facilities which include water depth and specialist associated equipment which can increase the challenges on pool operations, especially for large events. The following table⁹ shows the key requirements to host regional and national competitions for various aquatic sporting organisations.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EVENTS - KEY REQUIREMENTS							
SPORT	LEVEL	INDOOR	POOL LENGTH (m)	POOL WIDTH (m ²)	POOL DEPTH (m)	SPECTATOR SEATING	SUPPORT FACILITIES
Swimming NZ	Regional Competitions	No	25	16	1.35	100+	Timing Equipment
	National Competitions	Yes	50	25	1.35	500+	Timing Equipment
Diving NZ	Regional Competitions	No	20	20	4	50+	Dive Tower
	National Competitions	Yes	20	20	4.5	200+	Dive Tower
NZ Water Polo	Regional Competitions	No	25	21	1.8	200+	
	National Competitions	Yes	33	21	2	200+	
Surf lifesaving	Regional Competitions	No	25	20	1.8	50+	
	National Competitions	No	25	20	1.8	200+	
NZ Canoe Polo Association	Regional Competitions	No	25	15	1	50+	
	National Competitions	No	50	25	1	100+	

9 Table sourced from: Aurecon, 2013 National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports, New Zealand: Sport NZ

SPORT	LEVEL	INDOOR	POOL LENGTH (m)	POOL WIDTH (m ²)	POOL DEPTH (m)	SPECTATOR SEATING	SUPPORT FACILITIES
Under-water Hockey	Regional Competitions	No	25	15	2	50+	Tiled Floor ¹⁰
	National Competitions	No	25	12	2	200+	Tiled Floor
Synchro-nised Swimming	Regional Competitions	No	15	10	1.8	50+	
	National Competitions	Yes	20	12	2	200+	

**Table sourced from National Aquatic Facilities Strategy*

Training requirements are less specific and more flexibility is possible, with the key requirements being access to water space. The National Facilities Strategy has not recognised any aquatic facilities in Hawke’s Bay that can cater for national and international competitions in swimming, diving, water polo, canoe polo, lifesaving, underwater hockey and synchronised swimming. The closest pools with this capability are Lido Aquatic Centre in Palmerston North and Bay Wave in Tauranga. The strategy recognises the Frimley Aquatic Centre and Flaxmere Waterworld (both in Hastings) have the capability to host regional level swimming and surf lifesaving competition¹¹.

Current Demand for Aquatic Facilities

The National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports identifies two major categories of aquatic facility demand:

Competitive Demand: Sport and Competition based activity including training and competitive events

Community Demand: Recreational activity which includes swimming, school activity programmes, learn to swim and a range of facility based activities such as hydro-slides and wave pools.

¹⁰ No tiles on the walls around the floor up to 500 mm off the floor

¹¹ We note that whilst Napier Aquatic Centre is not recognised by the strategy as capable of hosting regional events, the centre currently hosts the ANZ East Coast Swimming Championships.

The following table derived from the Sport NZ/GEMBA study of participation further outlines (on a national level) the motivation of participants in aquatic activity.

MOTIVATION	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS
Youth/Learn to swim	36%
Relaxation	25%
Fitness	23%
Social	13%
Competition	3%
Total	100%

The combination of learn to swim, relaxation and social equates to 74% of the motivation for participation in aquatic activity. The remaining major component is fitness which represents 23% of the motivation. On the assumption that half of those motivated by fitness do so as part of training for competitive sports, the competition demand for facilities is 10-20%, with 80-90% of demand for facilities being for community-based non-competitive recreation.



Meeting Future Needs

Based on an analysis of current and future demand, a shortfall of three 25m (length) x 16m (width) pools been identified in Hawke's Bay (based on the National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports) to meet current needs. However the strategy recognises that the issues surrounding aquatic provision are not just in relation to the provision of facilities but also how aquatic facilities are planned, funded and operated. The following key issues were derived from the National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports:

The Cost of Providing and Accessing Facilities

It is recognised that aquatic facilities are expensive to operate and that the cost of access does not represent the true cost of providing the service (as subsidies are provided by the asset owners). The LeisureCheck¹² database identified that the average admission charges equate to around 44% of the true cost of the visit.

There are also a number of conflicts that occur in terms of the use and access to aquatic space particularly for sporting events. The challenge for the provider is the management of the demand for aquatic space between 3pm and 7pm (and in the morning prior to work hours) which cater for pre- and post- school and work participants. This leaves a large portion of the day during which the facilities are not fully utilised.

Changing Demographic Profile in New Zealand

For most regions in New Zealand (Hawke's Bay included) the demographic profile is ageing which will likely result in a need for different functionality in facilities and different programmes over time.

The increase in the size of the older demographics will provide an opportunity for aquatic facilities to increase utilisation in non-peak times by specifically targeting this demographic.

The school pool network plays a critical role in the provision of aquatic facilities. This makes this network particularly vulnerable to policy decisions made by the Ministry of Education. This has already been reflected in the closure of a number of school pools in Hawke's Bay including the pool at Napier Intermediate School.

Developing Facilities and Decision Making

The critical challenge in decision making is to understand the role the facilities play in the network. There is also a need for decision makers to look beyond territorial authority boundaries when looking at demand and supply of aquatic facilities.

The role of charitable organisations, such as Trusts, is critical to the development of many aquatic facilities. Improved decision making coupled with a clear understanding of the role of the facility in the network, should enable third party funding organisations to further support aquatic facilities.

¹² LeisureCheck was developed for the Industry as a benchmarking tool to collect management and planning information.





WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Napier City Council provides two public swimming amenities, the Napier Aquatic Centre and the Ocean Spa complex. In addition the Greendale Pool, located at Taradale Primary School provides for some community use. There are also a number of school pools some of which provide for informal recreational use during school holidays and on weekends. With the exception of the Greendale Pool all of the school pools are outdoor facilities. Two private swim schools also provide learn to swim in Napier. These are Bev Mitchell Swim School and Swim Solutions. It is also noted that there are a number of swimming pools associated with Rest Homes, hotels and private residences.

Given the warm climate in Napier, the natural environment plays a large role in the provision of aquatic space in Napier. Pandora Pond, Ahuriri and Westshore Beach, Perfume Point Foreshore, the Clive River and the fountains on Marine Parade to name a few all provide for aquatic recreation.

The Napier aquatic network is complemented by the Hastings District facilities which include Clive Memorial Swimming Baths, Havelock North Village Pool, Splash Planet Theme Park, Flaxmere Water World and Frimley Pool. Hastings District Council has recently decided to manage their aquatic network in-house (previously it was managed by trusts) and is currently working through embedding a number of changes across their network. Similar to Napier, the wider Hastings aquatic network is supported by a number of private and school pools.

The Napier/Hastings aquatic network has been mapped as part of this strategy.

Table One below provides an overview of pool provision within the wider Hawke's Bay/ Gisborne area.

WIDER PUBLIC AQUATIC NETWORK - SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

FACILITY	INDOOR POOLS			OUTDOOR POOLS			
	10 - 15m	25m	Other amenities (spas, hydroslides)	10 - 15m	20 - 25m	Less than 10m and/ or Splash pads	Other amenities (spas, hydroslides)
NAPIER							
Napier Aquatic Centre	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓		✓	
Ocean Spa				✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Greendale Pool		✓					
HASTINGS							
Clive Pool	✓	✓					
Splash Planet Theme Park			✓✓		✓	✓	✓✓✓✓
Flaxmere Waterworld	✓	✓					
Frimley Aquatic Centre				✓	✓	✓	
Village Pool Havelock North				✓✓✓	✓	✓	
CENTRAL HAWKE'S BAY DISTRICT							
A W Parsons Indoor Pool, (Waipukurau)	✓	✓					
Waipawa Pool					✓		
WAIROA DISTRICT							
Wairoa Community Centre		✓					
GISBORNE DISTRICT							
Gisborne Olympic Pool				✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓

Note: 1✓ = 1 Pool

NAPIER AQUATIC CENTRE

Napier Aquatic Centre (NAC) is the main community pool in Napier. The centre is located within the wider Onekawa Reserve.

NAC contains two 25 metre lap pools, a learners' pool, toddlers' area, two spa pools and two hydrosides. The learners' pool and associated plant is located in a separate building at NAC and is the only dedicated learners' pool in Napier City. The learners' pool at NAC is the only pool of suitable size and depth to be used as a teaching pool for most primary age children, this is restricting use of the children's pool at NAC for play purposes, particularly during peak demand periods. The remaining integrated suite of pools have been designed to provide play for toddlers, children and family groups. The 25 metre lane pools contained in the complex are not compliant with the requirements for national aquatic sports competition events because they are too shallow and are too narrow to accommodate sufficient lanes of the appropriate width.

The shallow depth of the pools within the NAC also limit the provision of aquatic sports such as aqua jogging, water polo and diving. The NAC run their own aqua fitness class, is the home of the Napier Aquahawk's Swim Club, and offer lane hireage to a number of other user groups including Westshore Surf Lifesaving Club and Underwater Hockey. The centre also contains a large outdoor area that contains bbq's, picnic tables and an outdoor 'splash pad'. This area is open for public use during the summer.

OCEAN SPA

The Ocean Spa Complex opened 1st February 2003 on the site of the original Hot Sea Baths built in the early 1900's along Napier's Marine Parade.

Napier City Council own the complex, and have a management agreement in place with a commercial partner, H2O Management who subcontract the facility to Ocean Springs Management. This agreement has been in place since its opening and is in place for a 20 year period.

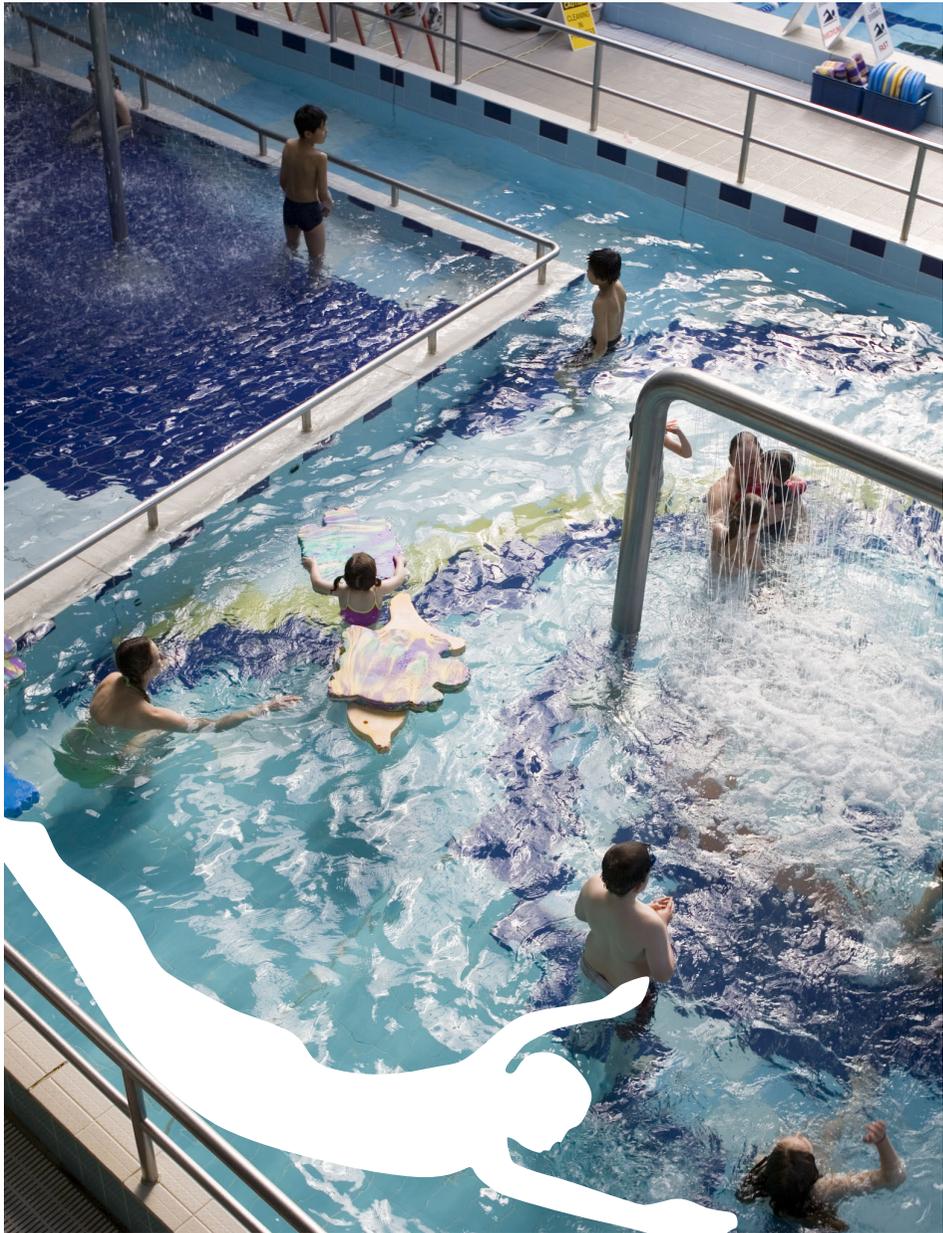
The complex provides, outdoor, heated pools including a 25 metre lap pool, two leisure pools, indoor and outdoor spas and a toddlers' pool. Also included in the complex are a steam room, sauna, sun bed, massage facility and the Ocean Club Gym. The complex is marketed as a tourist destination for those visiting Napier and the wider Hawke's Bay. However it does provide alternative recreational pool use for the community.



GREENDALE POOL

Greendale Pool is a 25 metre (length) by 9 metre (width) indoor heated pool located at Taradale Primary School. The pool is home to Greendale Swim Club, a not for profit organisation who run club training, learn to swim (including adult learn to swim) and various keep fit programmes (including senior Fitness and Triathlon) from the pool. The Greendale Swimming Club play a large role in the provision of alternative to Council-provided pool space in Napier.

The pool was constructed post WWII and has been upgraded three times since that time. While the pool is located on Ministry of Education land, Greendale Swimming Club fund and maintain the facility themselves through a mixture of user pays, grants and fundraising. The club employ twelve staff (all learn to swim instructors and coaches). The running of the facility and maintenance is undertaken by volunteers. Eight schools utilise the learn to swim programme including Taradale Primary School who also use the pool for Canoe Polo and Taradale High School (for water safety training). Other user groups include: Canoe Polo, Underwater Hockey and various church groups.



THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

As mentioned above the natural environment plays a large role in the provision of aquatic space in Napier and wider Hawke's Bay.

A number of natural water bodies are utilised by the community for both informal and formal water use. These include Pandora Pond, Perfume Point (Spriggs Park) and Westshore Beach to name a few.

Pandora Pond

Pandora Pond is the informal name given to the lower section of the Ahuriri Estuary. Pandora Pond is a locally important area for recreational use (Bioresearches, 2004)¹³.

Popular with swimmers and windsurfers, it is also a launching point for kayaks and waka ama. There are minimal facilities at Pandora Pond however the area does contain an ablation block, kayak and stand up paddle board hire and storage of waka ama equipment. Buoys at the pond are well utilised by informal swimmers and a number triathlon clubs (including IronMaori). A number of tri events have also been held at Pandora Pond.

Aquatic activities undertaken in Pandora Pond are managed by the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Harbour Master in accordance with Hawke's Bay Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaws.

Spriggs Park and Perfume Point

Spriggs Park and Perfume Point are the stretch of waterfront previously known as the Town Spit. The area is utilised by the Napier Sailing Club and a number of informal aquatic uses including swimmers who use the existing buoys as training markers.

The foreshore reserve contains a boardwalk playground and ablutions. Council has future plans to develop the reserve area outside the 'Hot Chick' takeaway further to include formal picnic areas.

Westshore Beach

Westshore Beach is located on Napier's Northern Coast. Westshore is the preferred swimming beach in Napier (compared with Marine Parade). Recreational activities popular at Westshore Beach include swimming, picnicking, sunbathing and surfing.

Westshore Beach is home to Westshore Surf Life Saving Club a voluntary, community service organisation, formed in 1959 to provide protection to the beach going public on the Beach. The Club also use the beach for training for surf sports such as surf boats, ski paddling and board paddling.



¹³ As sourced from: Bioresearches (2004) Ahuriri Estuary Environmental Evaluation, Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Hawke's bay





FINDINGS FROM CONSULTATION

Consultation with key stakeholders has been pivotal in the development of this strategy. Engagement with stakeholders in relation to the development of this strategy took place in July and August 2014 and the results of this consultation have been documented.

In addition a Project Advisory Group was established to guide and inform the strategy. This group met twice during the development of the strategy.

It is noted that consultation was only undertaken with identified stakeholders. It is recommended that a wider community engagement exercise is undertaken by Napier City Council in order to gain an understanding of the perspectives of informal aquatic facility users, users of natural aquatic environments and those who do not participate in aquatic sport and recreation.

Key findings from the consultation are summarised below:

- All stakeholders identified a strong lead role for Napier City Council in the provision and promotion of aquatic sport and recreation including affordable learn-to-swim opportunities.
- The ageing of school pool assets and the lack of investment into these is leading to ongoing closure of many of our school pools. This will increasingly impact on the demand of public pool facilities.
- Stakeholders noted a dissatisfaction with general public access to Napier Aquatic Centre particularly in the evenings and Saturday mornings.
- There is a common perception by aquatics user groups that Hawke's Bay is underprovided in terms of swim space.
- There is an important role for Napier City Council in facilitating safe access, good water quality and appropriate waterside facilities at Pandora, Ahuriri and Westshore.
- It is important to take a strategic approach to the future provision of pools.
- There is a desire for a 50 metre regional pool to be built in Hawke's Bay (no specified location).
- No decision has been made about the long term future of Gisborne Pool.
- Napier's public pools (Napier Aquatic Centre and Ocean Spa) are operating in isolation of each other. There is limited ability for this to change in the immediate future because of the long term management agreement in place between NCC and management of Ocean Spa.
- The long term future of Greendale Pool is uncertain. Existing community use of this pool would be lost should this pool close.

KEY CHALLENGES

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

The population of Napier City has grown at a slow rate over the past 30 or so years, from just below 52,000 in 1981¹⁴ to 57,240 as recorded in the 2013 census. The population is projected to continue to grow slowly until around 2021 where it will peak at 58,520 persons then begin to decline slightly. The projected population in Napier in 2031 is 0.5% more than in 2011.

The population of the Hawke's Bay region¹⁵ has also grown slowly over the past three decades, from 104,844 to 151,179. The majority of the Region's growth has occurred in Hastings, secondly Napier and thirdly Central Hawke's Bay. Wairoa has experienced population decline over this period.

Any significant investment in aquatic facilities in the region therefore needs to focus on changing rather than increased demand for facilities as significant population growth is unlikely to be experienced.

The population of Napier and wider Hawke's Bay is ageing. The static or declining population mentioned above is relevant to all age groups up to 64 years of age. The 65+ age group is anticipated to grow (by almost 56%) between 2011 and 2031. The ageing population is accelerated by net migration loss of across the 20-39 year age groups. These projections also show a rapid decline in the region's natural increase, the trend is driven by a cross over to more elderly than children around 2016 in Napier compared with 2021 in Hawke's Bay and 2026 nationally.

The ageing population signifies a likely increased demand for water therapy, physical fitness, injury rehabilitation and opportunities to socialise and interact at aquatic facilities.

Napier City has a large Māori population. It ranks 16th out of 67 Districts in size (Statistics NZ). Between 2006 and 2013 Napier's Maori population increased by 6.3%. Napier's total Maori population equates to 19%, higher than the national Māori population of 14.9%. The higher Maori population is reflected in current popular aquatic sports. Hawke's Bay is home to the IronMāori triathlon movement - a group that seeks to promote triathlon to the Māori community. Waka ama is also very popular in Hawke's Bay with a large proportion of training undertaken at Pandora Pond. Current demand for aquatic space for this demographic tends to lean toward the natural environment and are reliant on the availability of good water quality and a quality natural space.

¹⁴ As sourced from: Jackson, N (2011) *Napier City – Socio – Demographic Profile 1986-2011*, Waikato; University of Waikato and National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis

¹⁵ As sourced from: *Region in this context includes the populations of Napier and Hastings, Central Hawke's Bay and Wairoa District*

A larger proportion of Māori (36.1%) are aged under 15 years in Napier, compared with the national figure being 33.8% aged under 15 years.

The youthfulness of the Māori population is significant in comparison to the rest of Napier. While the focus of demographic change will be on the wider ageing population, it is important to take into account the needs of younger populations. Particularly as this is the current dominant user group of aquatic facilities.

The Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy identifies that socio-economic indicators for Napier-Hastings show income levels below the national average with corresponding high deprivation areas¹⁶. Subsidised aquatic facilities have the opportunity to provide a relatively low cost recreation option for residents in these areas.

CHANGING DEMAND FOR AQUATIC FACILITIES

Over the past decade the demand for aquatic facilities has changed and will continue to change for a number of reasons.

The closure of a number of school swimming pools will place a greater need on learn to swim facilities at public swimming pools. This may result in increased demand for existing learn to swim programmes but also the need to investigate delivery of additional learn to swim services (for example, can these be delivered in the natural environment?).

As discussed, the increasingly ageing population will result in the need for different functionality and programmes at swimming pools. This demographic has a higher demand for low impact sport and recreation. However this demand needs to be met with warmer pools, indoor facilities, accessibility changes (including ramped access into pools) and higher quality changing rooms¹⁷.

Changing trends in aquatic sports also result in changing use and demand for pool space. The growth of Canoe Polo in Hawke's Bay is an example of the development of a non-traditional use of aquatic facilities. Hawke's Bay has one of the highest levels of participation in Canoe Polo in New Zealand. Canoe Polo requires use of the entire pool for games which is an opportunity cost that needs to be balanced with traditional aquatic uses such as learn to swim and lane swimming. An alternative to this would be the provision of additional canoe pool space (that reflects the dimensions required to host national level competitions).

¹⁶ *Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy* as sourced from: <http://www.hpuds.co.nz/HPUDS-18march2011.pdf>

¹⁷ As sourced from: *Aurecon, 2013 National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports, New Zealand: Sport NZ*

This facility could be provided outdoors which would open up other aquatic opportunities in the area such as kayak skills training, surf lifesaving, triathlon etc.

Currently there is no provision of deeper water space in Hawke's Bay for sports such as water polo, aqua jogging, synchronised swimming and diving. This has limited the development of these sports in the region. Emphasis should be placed on meeting a wider range of aquatic participation opportunities through the provision of different depth pool spaces within one venue. Moveable or variable pool floors can also be utilised to achieve different pool depths to suit various uses.

Growth in casual and informal sport may cause a gradual decline in club membership and volunteer members making the traditional club model less viable. Similarly, new sports and digital entertainment may lead to declining participation in traditional sports¹⁸. This is where the provision of casual recreation space and the promotion of aquatic space is important to address these trends.

SUSTAINABILITY

Aquatic facilities are expensive assets to construct and operate. The cost of access to council run facilities does not represent the true cost of the providing the service. A survey run by LeisureCheck showed the average charge for pool admission across New Zealand is \$4.70 per visit¹⁹. However the operating cost of the average aquatic facility is around \$10.70 per visit (so users pay approximately 44% of the cost). This does not include overheads, depreciation or return on capital investments. If this was taken into account, the cost of each individual's visit would be approximately \$14 per visit²⁰. Territorial authorities offer subsidies for aquatic facilities on the basis that there are wider community gains from the provision of these facilities. Given the emphasis on wider community benefits of aquatics it is assumed that the subsidy for these facilities relates to recreational as opposed to competitive uses.

Given the large proportion of rates funding attributed to aquatic assets it is important these assets are operated in a financially sustainable manner. The impact on rate payers should be minimised through effective management and maintenance of the asset.

Maximising the use of existing facilities is one approach to operating in a financially sustainable manner. This can be undertaken through effective programming, however this

does need to be balanced with causal public use.

Understanding true maintenance, replacement and upgrade costs associated with aquatic facilities are also important factors in order to operate in a sustainable manner. Once these costs are understood, the Council can look to invest in a way to minimise maintenance costs (an example of this could be retrofitting energy saving options).

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is a multi-dimensional concept. It includes physical access, visible access, and affordability.

The physical location of pools can act as a barrier to use. Current best practise suggests that successful recreation facilities are those that can be accessed easily, both through vehicle use and by more active modes of transport such as cycling and walking. Aquatic facilities are generally more successful if they are located within close proximity to concentrated populations of people.

Aquatic activities are of high value to people with disabilities, those undertaking rehabilitation programmes to overcome injury and people suffering asthma and arthritis to name a few. The physical layout of aquatic facilities can act as a barrier to these user groups. Physical accessibility to new or redeveloped aquatic facilities need to comply with the required standards for people with disabilities.

Aquatic facilities should be visible to the public. Potential users should be able to recognise the aquatic facilities available to them. This includes ensuring the community know both the physical location of swimming pools, and how to access pools to experience the full range of uses i.e. casual lane swimming, water play, aqua jogging, and organised training and aquatic sports. It may also include management of current perceptions of pool space which may discourage use (i.e. perceived that priority is given to one user group over another). Promotion of aquatic facilities through good signage and wayfinding, as well as promotion on websites and printed material, are key to ensuring swimming pools are visibly accessible.

Price is often a barrier to access to aquatic facilities, both for casual lane swimming and learn to swim services. Aquatic facilities are expensive to operate and often there is a significant difference between the cost of the provision of aquatic facilities and the revenue facilities achieve. However, even with significant subsidy aquatic facilities are not affordable for all. The reduction of school led learn to swim programmes will place greater emphasis on those programmes offered by councils and private providers.

¹⁸ Sport NZ (2012) Strategic Plan 2012-2015

¹⁹ Note: standard adult pool admission at Napier Aquatic Centre is \$4.60 per visit

²⁰ As sourced from: Aurecon, 2013 National Facilities Strategy for Aquatic Sports, New Zealand: Sport NZ

IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PROVISION

Feedback received during consultation identified concern that the NAC was not meeting the demands of the community and various specific user groups. Many of the comments received showed dissatisfaction with the allocation of pool space particularly with regard to the lack of public space available during weekday afternoons and Saturday mornings. The challenge for Council is to provide access for as many of the different user groups and general public use in an efficient, fair and affordable manner.

A better balance needs to be achieved between programmed spaces and non-programmed recreation and water play at NAC. By allowing space for non-programmed use during peak periods the NAC will increase the accessibility of the pool for general public. This will also encourage more of a community feel as people can use casual lanes in between programmed use (i.e. younger siblings can enjoy water play, while an older sibling is at swim club). Napier City Council can direct NAC to maintain a ratio of public to programmed space through the development of a strategy and/or a policy for the pool.

The integration of the NAC into the wider Onekawa Reserve would help to cement NAC's role as a community recreation and leisure facility. A master plan for Onekawa would consolidate future aspirations for the reserve and identify opportunities for improved pedestrian/cycle access, car parking, and signage, landscape planting and seating/bbq areas.

Greendale Pool is heavily reliant on volunteers and funding grants to ensure its operation. The continued maintenance and operation of Greendale Pool (in terms of cost and volunteer time) is a risk to the current aquatic provision. If this pool cannot continue to operate for any reason (i.e. the operational costs exceed the funding available or volunteers leave) it will place more pressure on NAC for lane space and/or discourage aquatic activities by current users.

There are a number of options that can be explored to support the Greendale Swimming Club to continue to operate sustainably. These options include the allocation of funding to Greendale Swimming Club to continue their operation (e.g. assistance with the replacement of filtration systems, roofing and improved lighting for example), the development of a partnership between Council and Greendale Swimming Club for the operation and maintenance of the pool), or the development of a new community pool in Taradale.

It is acknowledged that whilst Ocean Spa is owned by Napier City, it is seen as a standalone facility and not considered as part of the 'public pool' network in Napier. The ability for Council to influence this facility is limited due to its tourism focus and long term contract. However Ocean Spa does provide alternate aquatic recreation space for Napier residents although

the higher prices at Ocean Spa are a barrier to wider community use of this facility as an alternative to Napier Aquatic Centre. When the current contract with Ocean Spa expires, Council should take the opportunity to review the management of the pool and whether there is opportunity to bring Ocean Spa into the 'public pool network'.

Hawke's Bay currently has a wide range of facilities that are well rated by the community, with a number of prized, high-class sport and recreation facilities. Users of aquatic facilities will travel across the City and beyond to use facilities. The role Hastings' aquatic centres play in aquatic provision for Napier residents needs to be acknowledged within this Strategy. Public aquatic facilities across Hawke's Bay are currently managed separately by each respective council however there is a need to ensure that facilities are provided in a co-ordinated manner. This may bring greater efficiency to operational costs and also avoid some duplication of services. Consistent entry fees and charges across aquatic facilities would also reduce the need for pricing of services to be competitive across facilities. The development of Napier/Hastings 'blueprint' for facility development, management and maintenance would ensure aquatics provision is affordable, viable, and meets regional, community and grassroots needs²¹.

Mixed feedback was received through consultation regarding the need for a regional (50 metre) pool facility. In addition to this the National Facilities Strategy identified that by 2031 Hawke's Bay will have a shortage of the equivalent pool space of three 25 metre swimming pools. However it should be noted the strategy also indicates a decrease in the estimated swims per region for Hawke's Bay (contrary to the need for additional space). This is supported by an analysis of current demand for swimming pools undertaken as part of the Napier Aquatic strategy. The National Facilities Strategy has also identified a gap in the provision for deep water aquatic sports in Hawke's Bay. Research undertaken as part of this Strategy has not identified the need for a regional facility. The development of a regional pool facility would require significant investment and a partnership approach to its delivery would be required. Investigation into the viability of investment into a regional facility should include further consultation with Sport New Zealand, national sport bodies, consideration of the wider amenities required to host regional, national and international competitions (including airport size, accommodation for example) and consideration of all potential funding and governance models.

As discussed in previous section, the natural environment plays a large role in the provision of aquatic opportunities in Napier and the wider Hawke's Bay. Whilst there is greater flexibility

²¹ Sourced from the Regional Sport and Active Recreation Strategic Direction



for users of outdoor space to use the space in a manner that meets needs (e.g. through the placement of buoys, tents on the shore line) there are a number of initiatives that could be pursued to more effectively utilise natural waterways. Pandora Pond, Spriggs Park/Perfume Point and Westshore Beach have been identified as the key natural water bodies that provide natural environment aquatic opportunities in Napier. Improvements to these spaces through the provision of seating, ablutions, landscaping and greater gear storage areas for aquatic sports have been identified through consultation as improvements that would attract greater use by various sports codes such as Waka Ama and the triathlon club.

There is also opportunity for Council to work with other partners such as iwi and the Regional Council to establish pontoons and other in-water structures in Pandora Pond and/or the water front at Spriggs Park/Perfume Point to increase the informal recreational uses at these locations. In-water play structures not only have benefit for the community but provide exciting opportunities for tourists to enjoy Napier's natural environment. Emphasis on events held at natural aquatic environments can have benefits for the wider community and tourism as well as the sporting body. Pandora Pond could be further developed into a formal water sports facility for a number of water sports such as canoe polo. Further development of Pandora Pond could include the creation of sloped access into the water, water flow control works, provision of greater car parking, spectator seating (preferably shaded) and high quality ablutions (including changing space). Concept development plans for Pandora Pond should be undertaken in consultation with key user groups.

It is understood that Council have been investigating a number of water play facilities for Marine Parade. Options that have been considered have been an artificial surfing lake and a Lagoon Beach. While this sort of development would attract community users, the main benefit would be tourists. The strategy has not identified a need from the Napier community for any further development of water play on Marine Parade other than the interactive zero-depth water play area already planned.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Long term environmental changes can affect demand for aquatic facilities.

Temperatures in Hawke's Bay are likely to be around 0.9° warmer by 2040 as a result of climate change²². It is likely the region will experience more droughts. The warmer temperatures may result in increased demand for aquatic facilities particularly those located outdoors.

Natural water bodies such as the ocean, rivers and Pandora Pond play a significant role in the provision of water space in Napier and wider Hawke's Bay. However these natural water bodies are vulnerable to pollutants which affects their ability to be used for contact recreation. The closure of these water bodies for water quality reasons can result in increased pressure on aquatic facilities.

WATER SAFETY

New Zealand has one of the highest drowning rates in the developed world. Changes in the school curriculum mean that learning to swim is no longer an automatic part of growing up in New Zealand and many families aren't able to pay for private swimming lessons²³.

The Hawke's Bay Region had the fourth highest drowning rate per capita in 2013 with 6 drowning fatalities occurring over the 12 month period²⁴. The highest number of drownings occur at beaches with rivers coming in a close second. Hawke's Bay has a high number of natural environments suitable for aquatic activities and the drowning risk at these areas is high.

Surf Lifesaving NZ provides a volunteer lifeguard service at a number of beaches in Hawke's Bay. However a similar service is not provided at the number of rivers utilised by members of the community. Council in partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council can use various initiatives to minimise the risk of drowning at these sites. These initiatives can include signage, provision (or deliberate non-provision) of other amenities at these site (i.e. not locating toilet blocks/car parks beside dangerous rivers), supporting/promotion of wider water safety campaigns and subsidised learn to swim programmes.

The natural environment can also provide places for unsafe water play. An example of this is the children who currently jump off the wharf in Ahuriri. Council can also use the provision of amenities to minimise the risk associated with these activities. Council could work with other partners such as iwi and the Regional Council to establish pontoons and other structures in Pandora Pond to provide an alternative safe area for this type of activity.

²² As Sourced from Ministry for the Environment (2012) Climate Change Projections for the Gisborne and Hawke's Bay Region accessed

²³ As sourced from: <http://www.sealordswimforlife.org.nz/swim-skills/>

²⁴ As sourced from: Water Safety NZ (2013) Provisional Drowning Report from <http://www.watersafety.org.nz/assets/PDFs/Drowning/Provisional-Drowning-Report-2013-v2.pdf>





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