

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



**THRIVING
SOUTHLAND**

*Tōnui ana te whenua. Tōnui ana te takata.
A thriving, prosperous land. A thriving, prosperous people.*

Combined message from the Chair/Project Lead

Thriving Southland's first full year of operation has come at a time when the pressures for change globally have intensified in the face of climate change and environmental challenge. These pressures reach across society and sit with all of us to find our way through.

The challenges we face are at a global, national, and regional level. Many of the solutions and their implementation, delivering sustainable change, will come from the ground up. This is the place where we all take ownership, finding, innovating, and implementing solutions that work for our communities and future generations.

It is not by accident that Thriving Southland's focus is firmly on ground up change driven by our farmers and rural communities. Catchment Groups are a positive response to the challenges of change as independent community groups, innovating and finding solutions that make a real difference and are relevant to them. Thriving Southland's role is to support this community-led approach and our success is reflected in the success of the Catchment Groups. We take a holistic approach to support, providing information and connecting with research across the board from water quality to farm systems, to people and community.



CATCHMENT GROUPS

Our first year has been spent identifying the areas our Catchment Groups have requested support and information for, and delivering both in a way that is effective on the ground. It has been encouraging to see the number of farmers and community members engaging with the Catchment Groups, with 1,043 attending events in Thriving Southland's first year. This continues to grow.

Feedback to date has been positive and is reflected in the number of groups continuing to emerge, as well as seeing existing groups grow and continue to develop projects. We are currently sitting at 27 groups across the region with more waiting in the wings. Southland is in a unique position nationally as one of the few regions to be totally covered by our groups on a geographical spread.

Thriving Southland is also aware of the burden on individuals within catchment groups which rely on the good will of their members who are already, in many cases, running businesses or heavily involved in other areas of their communities.

With 27 groups there is already a large number of community members who have stepped up into the leadership space. Our focus is on supporting existing and growing leadership capability within our groups. This is an area that is always on the radar as we continue to survey and deliver the support requested.

Our first year has had a strong focus on increasing engagement as one of the key areas requested by catchment groups, using both a strongly targeted communications strategy and support for community-driven events. We have a focus on continuing to assist growth.

APARIMA COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT GROUP

We have seen the continued growth of the Aparima Community Environment Group (ACE), a collaboration of the six farmer-led Aparima Catchment Groups.

ACE aims to deliver an aligned response across the catchment with a growing understanding of the part they all play in the outcomes and the strong connection to Jacobs Creek Estuary.

The second ACE project was launched this year with a focus on sediment control, good farm practices, exploring future solutions, stream walks and water testing. All areas are relevant to Aparima Catchment, as well as other areas across Southland.

There is increasing engagement with the Future Farm Expo in June an example of this continuing development. There is strong cross sectoral representation looking at current challenges, as well as a focus on the future. Other river catchments are taking interest and we are seeing increased collaboration.



ON THE GROUND SUPPORT

Thriving Southland has a full complement of catchment coordinators covering Aparima, Mataura, Waiau and Ōreti river catchments. Coordinators support Catchment Groups in a number of ways, from helping to develop the group's structure and facilitation, to event planning, project development and delivery. Working with iwi, sector groups and Environment Southland (Southland Regional Council) has helped to see good, well-balanced information and resources provided.

As groups seek out information and specialists, coordinators play a key role in forming the connections and researching the information required. Thriving Southland also provides assistance in project management and event management where required.

Of the total funding for year one 72 percent (\$1,412,151) went to on the ground support through projects, catchment management, science and communications.

INFORMATION DELIVERY

Catchment groups have asked for information that relates to their communities and local catchments and the ability to find and share relevant material.

As a response the Thriving Southland website was developed to provide information, including about events. The website also contains a Knowledge Hub that includes the top resources requested from non-Government organisations, levy groups and primary industry support organisations.

Water quality has been a key area of interest for the groups. Thriving Southland delivered a Water Quality Literature review bringing together the available science into one readily understood document.

FUNDING

In a year that has seen many challenges for the primary sector in the policy space we acknowledge Thriving Southland's funder, the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the support for our catchment groups and their ability to deliver positive results.

It has been a big first year for Thriving Southland but none of it would have been achieved without the support of our catchment groups, their communities and outside organisations.

We also acknowledge the commitment and support of the Thriving Southland Board and the team of coordinators and project team members who have all worked very hard on the ground and behind the scenes to help make Thriving Southland a success.



Thriving Southland is a fantastic example of Catchment Groups working together across Southland

(KPMG AGRIBUSINESS AGENT 2021 REPORT P.75).

Internal Setup



Jeff Grant
Independent Chair



Kate Scott
Vice Chair



Richard Kyte
Project Lead

Board of Directors

Bernadine Balle-Guilleux (Independent)

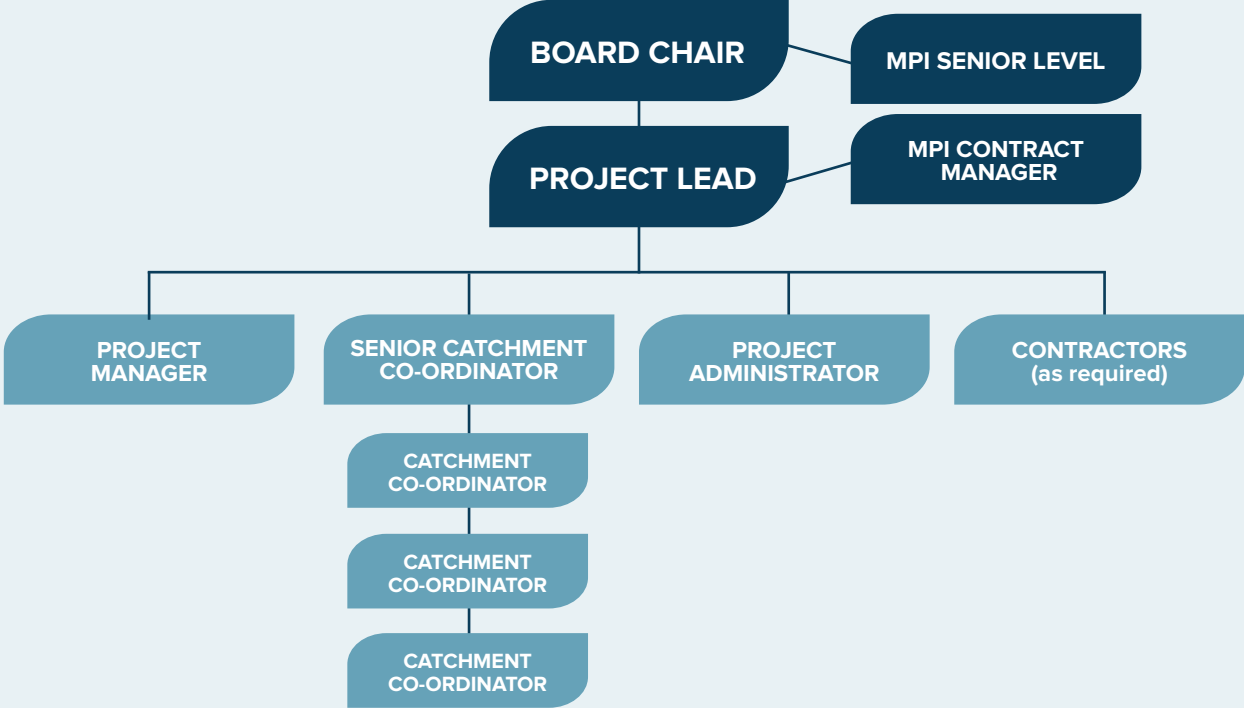
Neil Gardyne
Paul Marshall

Ewen Mathieson
Jonathan Pemberton

Lynden Prebble
John White

Operational Structure

(with linkage to Governance and Funder)



Thriving Southland's purpose is to *INSPIRE COMMUNITY ACTION*

Thriving Southland is underpinned by its values.

At Thriving Southland we do...



Brilliant

Brilliant is facing our challenges head on, being prepared to work hard for success, and always celebrating our achievements.



Collaborative

Our best collaboration comes from being honest, acting with integrity, and being prepared to learn from others. Through collaboration we will deliver results.



Community

Community is at the centre of everything we do. Our success comes from connecting others, and empowering communities to thrive for the future of our children.



Inspiration

We will inspire greatness through our passion. Our passion for Southland and its communities is at the heart of who we are.



Solutions

We encourage innovation, foster opportunity and seek outcomes through on the ground action.

“I feel Thriving Southland has hit the ground running. Being proactive has helped the newer Catchment Groups of Southland to become more involved and helped with their understanding.”

(ANNUAL SURVEY RESPONDENT)

Catchment Projects

Total number of projects approved for Year 1 -

39

Total funding approved for projects for Year 1 -

\$1,160,853

Breakdown of categories of projects approved

ACE major project
(\$421,100)

3 x Category 1 projects
(from \$5k to \$10k)

8 x major projects
(over \$10k)

27 x Category 2 projects
(under \$5k)



Projects have ranged from smaller endeavours, where the objectives were to support engagement and operational enablement, to events with high-calibre speakers and larger programmes looking at the science of catchment land use capability.

One of the larger undertakings is the ACE project, a three-year focus on lifting farmer and community awareness and engagement through stream walks, water testing, sediment traps, good farming practices and exploring future farming solutions.

Catchment groups are interested in understanding their land in order to support environmental change and improvements. We see this playing out in the projects many catchment groups are undertaking to look at the science of the natural features in their catchments that will help them understand how to improve water quality.



The Gore-Waimumu and Waihopai Catchment Groups' project bringing the New Zealand Marine Studies Centre (University of Otago) Aquavan (travelling aquarium) programme to Southland not only engaged and educated Southland school children on coastal health, but also brought together rural and urban communities through a range of events.

Quotes from Aquavan

Programme is amazing, great experiences for our students 

(TEACHER FEEDBACK)

Excellent at engaging students 

(TEACHER FEEDBACK)

Another example of Catchment Group work is the Hedgehope Makarewa group's research project, in conjunction with Southern Dairy Hub, into alternative crop establishment methods for better wintering outcomes. This project looks to gain practical on-farm information about different aspects of winter grazing in Southland conditions.

*These would not have been possible without MPI funding
Thriving Southland*

(COMMENT FROM CATCHMENT GROUP MEMBER INVOLVED IN A PROJECT FUNDED BY TS)



The Mid Oreti Catchment Group brought women together across various catchments with the Women's Enviro series with the aim being to inspire and empower them to get involved in making positive change from the ground up. Two events were held where the speakers included Philippa Cameron, author of *A High Country Life*; Kristy McGregor, editor of *Shepherdess Magazine*; Kaapua Smith, head of sustainability, Contact Energy; and Dan Steele from Blue Duck Station. They shared stories of their own environmental journeys and their drive to make change. A third event is now planned.

*I felt very inspired and have since taken charge of our
environment planning here on farm*

(COMMENT FROM EVENT ATTENDEE)

*Loved the speakers passion!
What is a vision if there is no purpose?*

(COMMENT FROM EVENT ATTENDEE)

Science

Central to Thriving Southland's purpose is understanding the science and information that Southland's Catchment Groups and farmers seek to help them make informed decisions. As a result, during year one Thriving Southland commissioned the following:



Independent Evaluation

Pragmatica was commissioned to carry out an independent evaluation to assess the extent to which the Thriving Southland Change and Innovation Project is on track in achieving planned outcomes and to identify areas for improvement.

Summary of findings

Overall, the evaluators rated the *Change and Innovation Project* design and implementation **very good**, based on it rolling out effectively amongst the 27 catchment groups in the Southland region. The Project reflects a community development approach grounded in local strengths and resources. The committed and passionate Project team who supported the Project development and effective communications strategy are strengths of the implementation.



Farmers at Greater Dipton Catchment Group Field Day event "Know your issues". Photo Thriving Southland Newsletter.

Early outcomes of the *Change and Innovation Project* are rated as **good**, by the evaluators. The Project shows good performance overall with an increasing number of cross-sector event and activities taking place amongst catchment groups. There is evidence that a strong foundation is in place, and throughout the remaining half of 2021 and 2022 there will be increasing outcomes as catchment group projects get traction.

Rating of the overall design, implementation and early outcomes of the <i>Change and Innovation Project</i>						
	Poor	Not yet emerging	Demonstrably emerging	Good	Very good	Excellent
Rating for the <i>Change and Innovation Project</i> design and implementation overall					●	
The Project concept and design supports the initiation of partner and community activities					●	
The Project supports partners and stakeholders to engage in group activities and learning that increases their knowledge, skills, and aspirations					●	
The Project supports engaging with mana whenua and helps stakeholders develop a better understanding of iwi values related to catchment group areas			●			
Overall rating for <i>Change and Innovation Project</i> early impacts and outcomes				●		
Increasing cross-sector events and activities, amongst catchment groups and initiation of catchment projects supports effective relationships to develop with partners, and for early learning to occur.				●		

Catchment Management – Tools & Support

Thriving Southland is all about enabling and supporting, listening and creating action. Through our Catchment Management Workstream 2020-2021 we have acted on themes identified by catchment groups across Southland.

Passionate, informed speakers have addressed our catchment groups, including Melissa Clark Reynolds who spoke about the future of food and agriculture, and Dr Robyn Dynes from AgResearch.

Some catchment groups also secured project funding to bring specialist speakers to their area. These included Craig Simpson from Landcare Trust who introduced groups to macroinvertebrate community index (MCI) testing, and Roger Dalrymple, a passionate Catchment Group leader from the Rangatiki.

We have given Catchment Group members numerous upskilling opportunities, such as positions in the Southland Leadership Academy at Edendale and Lumsden, and held communication and facilitation workshops helping to build better resilience, new skills and tools. Catchment group members have learnt about propagation, planting and maintenance of native plants in a dedicated series of workshops.

At the request of farmers, a winter grazing plan was developed and has been widely used by many stakeholders across Southland farms.

Thriving Southland is now developing a water quality monitoring framework so catchment groups can create a database of real-time water quality information they have collected.

A catchment management workstream has been developed so shared catchment group ideas can be put into action.



“I think Catchment Groups are really great and am proud to see farmers so engaged with changing and adapting, and feeding back to other groups like regulatory agencies and conservation groups. A problem shared is a problem halved and seeing farmers put their heads together to talk things out and collaborate with each other and other groups that also want to see water quality and ecosystem health improve is fantastic”

(COMMENT FROM CATCHMENT GROUP MEMBER INVOLVED IN A PROJECT FUNDED BY TS)

Thriving Southland Communications Activity

Thriving Southland now boasts a well-established brand and website, a popular monthly newsletter, targeted radio advertisements, regular radio and podcast interviews, strong organic and paid social media presence, cost-effective print and online advertising campaigns, and has achieved an array of positive coverage in the media. We have averaged more than one story in key media each month with significant local pick up and on-share for each story.

A communications survey conducted in April 2021 via telephone and online mechanisms identified that one in five people in Southland had heard of Thriving Southland. This is a pleasing result considering the minimal time in market (less than six months).

A new Thriving Southland promotional video was commissioned in May 2021 and is now available on the website and our YouTube channel. The video raises awareness of the organisation and the breadth of Catchment Group activities within Southland.

A significant amount has been achieved in a few short months, and we are excited about building on this momentum for year two.

Key Communications and Marketing Activities

1 September 2020 - 31 June 2021

NEWSLETTER

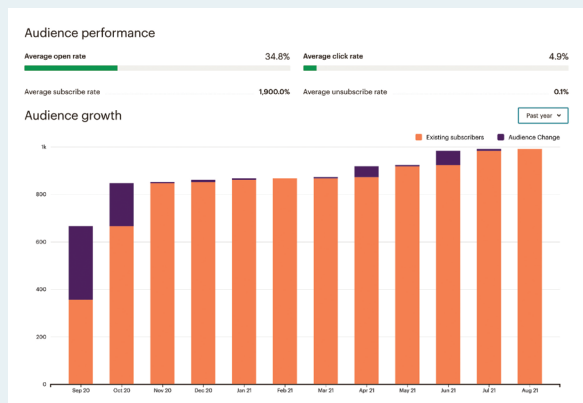
Over **900** people receive our newsletter every month and it continues to exceed expectations as a highly engaged tool, achieving well over the industry norm for open rates.

30-63%

Thriving Southland
average post engagement

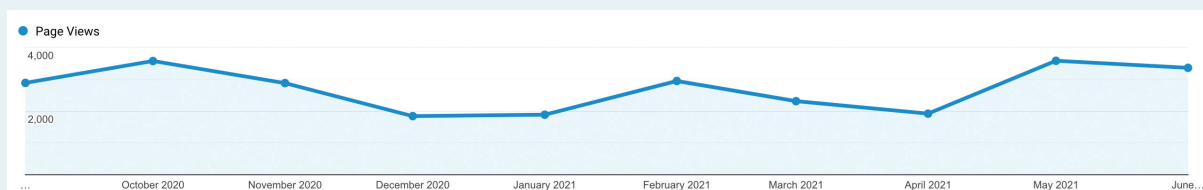
25-30%

New Zealand
average post engagement



WEBSITE

Website visits are directly related to what is being promoted through the newsletter and our advertising channels. Website visits started at **580** per month and now exceed **1000** visits each month.



Peaks in views align with timing of targeted campaigns on Stuff, Facebook, Southland app and other digital platforms including LED screen advertising at Invercargill airport.

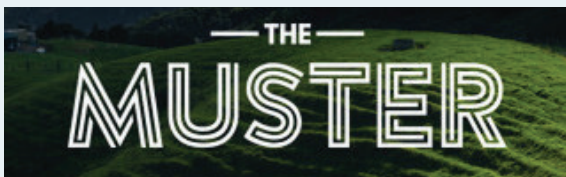
TOTAL PAGE VIEWS Please note: Monthly reporting only shows *unique* page views

MARKETING

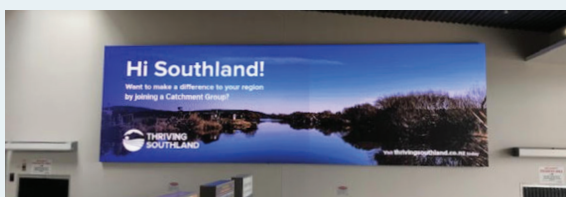
Targeted campaigns on Stuff (Southland Times), the Southland app, Farmers Weekly, Google, Magic, More FM and more.



Full-page ad in **41.5k** copies of 'Summer in the South' magazine, home delivered throughout Southland and Invercargill.



Fortnightly interviews on Hokonui's **The Muster** - Southland's number one local farming show, and monthly episodes on Angus Kebbell's established podcast on [interest.co.nz](https://www.interest.co.nz)



Large screen advertising at **Invercargill airport**

FACEBOOK

Facebook campaigns have been particularly successful, resulting in more than **1,725 link clicks** and **240,246 impressions**, regularly achieving click through rates (CTR) of more than **3%**; industry norm is **0.89%**.

Average CTR for Thriving Southland campaigns stands at **2.28%**

6.5-13%

Thriving Southland average post engagement

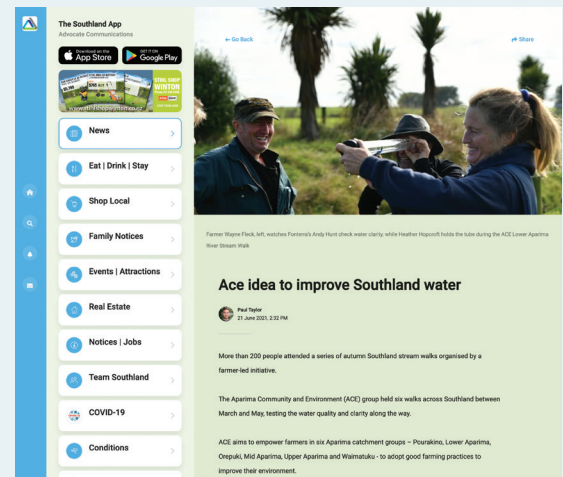
4.16%

New Zealand average post engagement

MEDIA

Media is reliant on newsworthy stories, and our media strategy has focused on using projects and on-farm/catchment activities to show progress on the ground.

Averaging at least **two stories a month** in key Southland media outlets including **Stuff** and **ODT**.



Statement of Service Performance

Thriving Southland supports and enables the community to create and lead innovations that build community wellbeing, environmental improvements and education and research across rural – and in many cases urban - communities. It all helps build the movement towards change in agriculture and farming.

We do this by supporting Catchment Groups with funding for their projects, their meetings and events that bring people together.

Thriving Southland also invests in useful and targeted data-led science, modelling and case studies for increased learning and knowledge across Southland’s agricultural sector.

We use a range of different communication channels, including a strong focus on collaboration, to ensure information, tools, advice and learnings are shared between rural and urban communities.

<p>Projects</p> <p>Projects have ranged from small projects, where the objectives were to support engagement and operational enablement, through to events with high-calibre speakers and larger projects looking at the science of catchment land use capability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 39 projects approved
<p>Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Enabling and supporting catchment group meetings and events which bring people together with a common goal and to inform and connect people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 121 catchment meetings and events » Total attendance of 1,644
<p>Education and Learning</p> <p>Providing science reports, information, tools and workshops to Catchment Groups that enables informed decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Information hub providing farmer advice » Southland water quality science report » Science report that covers each catchment » Wintering plan tool » Catchment Group Leader Forums x 2 » Workshops x 8
<p>Communication</p> <p>Different channels set up to effectively communicate with catchment members, communities and stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Facebook engagement 6% (NZ avg 4.16%) » Monthly newsletter 900 subscribe with open rate of 35% (industry avg 25%) » Website click through rate >3% (industry avg 0.89%)

“Thriving Southland’s Change and Innovation Project is making a worthwhile and valuable contribution to catchment groups, partners, and stakeholders even at this early stage.”

(PRAGMATICA INDEPENDENT EVALUATION REPORT JUNE 2021)

Financials

Full Financial Statements

The full audited Performance Report for the year ending 30 June 2021 for Thriving Southland have been summarised for this Annual Report.

The Performance Report has been prepared in accordance with Tier 3 PBE Accounting Standards:PBE SFR-A (NFP) Public Benefit Entity Simple Reporting - Accrual (Not-for-Profit) on the basis that it does not have public accountability and has total expenses of equal to or less than \$2,000,000 in the previous financial year.

The full Performance Report has been independently audited by BDO Invercargill.

This summarised financial report has not been audited and may not contain sufficient information for a full understanding of the financial position of Thriving Southland, but copies of the full Performance Report and the auditors report can be obtained from the Thriving Southland Office or from the Charities Services website following the AGM.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	2021	2020
Income		
Ministry for Primary Industries Grant	2,305,747	372,595
Interest	140	-
Total Income	2,305,887	372,595
Expenses		
Catchment Projects	827,093	-
Catchment Management	374,508	27,771
Applied Science	186,487	3,525
Communications	159,416	9,199
Stakeholder Engagement	31,321	1,125
Governance	124,981	105,612
Staff and Management	284,716	110,480
Planning and Project Management	123,538	85,443
Administration	194,987	29,440
Total Expenses	2,307,047	372,595
Net Deficit	-1,161	-
FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current Assets	970,221	376,118
Current Liabilities	971,382	376,118
Net Assets	-1,161	-





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