

# Sport Waikato Annual Report 2023

Mahia te mahi hei  
painga mo te iwi

*We strive every day to 'do the work  
for the betterment of the people'*

*-Te Puea Herangi*



**SPORT  
WAIKATO**

*Hei painga mo te iwi*

# Let's Move Waikato - January 2023



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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*Phil Taylor*  
*Board of Trustees Chair*

On behalf of the Sport Waikato Board and staff in our 37th year, we present the 2023 Annual Report. Sport Waikato's focus and drive continues to be aligned to Moving Waikato - the region's strategy for play, active recreation and sport, and by default Sport Waikato's strategic plan as well.

Our elevator pitch at Sport Waikato is that we are targeted in approach: 0 to 18 years with an additional lens up to 24 years for women. We place resource and energy towards positive outcomes through play, active recreation and sport for Maaori, disabled people, women and girls and those living in high deprivation areas of the rohe (region) - those groups with inequitable access to physical education and therefore those who tend to miss out on quality and accessible movement experiences.

Sport Waikato is very fortunate to have been gifted two beautiful tongikura by Waikato Tainui that encapsulate the way we work, the way we behave and the way we care.

**Why do we exist?** *“Mahia te mahi, hei painga moo te iwi – do the work for the betterment of the people” (Te Puea Herangi).* Sport Waikato exists to increase the physical activity levels of people in the Waikato region. We do this by providing high-value strategic and influential regional leadership in play, active recreation and sport to improve physical activity outcomes and access for the people of the Waikato, all with the aim of increasing wellbeing outcomes for our communities.

**How do we work?** *“Kotahi te koohao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro maa te miro pango me te miro whero - there is but one*



*Matthew Cooper*  
*Chief Executive*



**On the horizon, always, is our BHAG of 75% of Waikato adults and youth meeting the national physical activity guidelines by 2030. This is our stretch goal that we constantly remind ourselves of, with participant satisfaction in play, active recreation and sport being a key component of us achieving this goal.**

*eye of the needle through which the white, black and red threads must pass” (Kiingi Pootatau).* This looks like and portrays this Regional Sports Trust being very clear about its role, its ‘why’ and its goal - and importantly, working in partnership both internally and externally to achieve positive outcomes for our communities. We influence strategically and we work collaboratively with those who make decisions about play, active recreation and sport. We don’t deliver! But instead we work with the deliverers in our region to support them to understand the barriers and preferences of our communities and make good decisions about investment and delivery.

2023 has seen Sport Waikato continue to work into important spaces such as education, communities alongside our region’s Territorial Local Authorities, sport and recreation. We continue to develop and maintain robust stakeholder relationships that enable staff to influence decision-making, leadership and delivery in ways that support increased physical activity and importantly, increased satisfaction among participants.

That’s the big shift; everything we do links to ensuring that participants’ experiences are quality and enjoyable in ways that keep them coming back. On the horizon, always, is our BHAG of 75% of Waikato adults and youth meeting the national physical activity guidelines by 2030. This is our stretch goal that we constantly remind ourselves of, with participant satisfaction in play, active recreation and sport being a key component of us achieving this goal. This annual report

provides solid evidence that we are on the right track – focusing on the right things and working in the right ways.

In terms of our full year financial result for 2022-2023, we are reporting a total operating surplus of \$456k for the year. Included within this is \$267k income from interest and dividends earned from investments. Since 2018, Sport Waikato has been fortunate to have a healthy balance sheet as a result of sale of Brian Perry Sports House, the proceeds of which have been placed in a portfolio of diversified investments while we worked through how we intend to use these funds.

We are pleased to communicate that over the last year the Sport Waikato Board of Trustees and Leadership Team have worked together to formalise a new Cash Reserves Strategy to ensure that our reserves work for the strategic objectives of the organisation and for the benefit of the Waikato region that we serve. Our new strategy for this funding has three objectives:

1. Supplement the external funding we receive with interest and dividends earnings in order to support the annual operating budget. This is particularly important to us in a post-Covid world where many of our external funders are facing financial constraints and at the same time, Sport Waikato’s costs continue to rise.

The role of our own income generations via our investments will play a significant role in allowing us to continue to do the work we do in a more austere economic environment.

- Following on from the previous objective, Sport Waikato invests a portion of our cash reserves in a shorter term and easily accessed investment fund for Business Continuity purposes, should we either experience a sudden reduction in income or an unforeseen increase in expenses of significance.
- Finally, proceeds from our long-term investments are to be used for targeting community projects that sit outside of the annual operating plan and budget. Our Board of Trustees, guided by the operating leadership team, had oversight of how these funds may be applied and the intent is that they are invested in projects of scale that accelerate our strategic objectives.

One other key point to our new strategy is that any operating surpluses from a completed financial year are to be carried forward into the new financial year as income. This ensures that any surpluses are continued to be used for the objectives of Sport Waikato as defined by our deed of trust.

## GOVERNANCE

Another positive year of consolidation for the Sport Waikato Board and the organisation. Consolidation, meaning three years on from significant transformation and a new way of working, navigating Covid19 and its challenges, the Board and staff had 'clearer space' to focus and act on Moving Waikato outcomes without significant distraction. The results have been pleasing and captured throughout this annual report.

In line with our ongoing bi-cultural learning and development approach undertaken by Matthew and the team, the Board genuinely undertook its own commitment and invested time to develop, understand and improve its knowledge on Te Aao Maaori and Tikaanga principles and practices. In March this year, the Board attended a full day workshop on Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This important ongoing foundation learning is aimed to enable Sport Waikato to be very clear in formalising and equally articulating our commitment to the founding document – Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

We are also very conscious of the significant increase in the region's population through migration, which will only continue to rise. This places a real importance for Sport Waikato to

be nimble and flexible in our targeted way to appropriately put energy and focus to a multi-cultural approach to our mahi in the coming years.

It is with great sadness that I also make note that our much-loved Kaumatua of 14 years, Pokaia Nepia passed away in April this year. Pokaia's outstanding legacy on Waikato Tainui, Turangawaewae, his beloved sport of rugby league, Sport Waikato and the many other communities and organisations will be cemented in our lives forever. One of Waikato Tainui's finest rangatira that we were so proud to call our Kaumatua.

It was really pleasing to welcome the Sport NZ Board to the Waikato for two days in August. This was one of their two 'out in the region' visits of the year where they held their August Board Meeting on day one and on day two we had the opportunity to present Sport Waikato's change, why we changed, the process that led to change and the impact from our new approach with some 'live' visits to organisations we work with.

In the last 12 months and as part of our constitution, we welcomed Waipa District Council Mayor, Susan O'Regan onto the Sport Waikato Board as the Waikato region's Mayoral collective's representative.

Finally, it is with an element of sadness and equally immense gratitude that at this year's AGM, we bid farewell to two outstanding trustees in Dr Chris Milne and John Latimer. They have both dedicated 10 years excellent service in what has been a decade of significant change for the organisation.

This time has required strong governance, leadership, clarity and also curiosity from Trustees to test and future proof our change before we acted. Both Chris and John were always professional, passionate and committed to ensure decisions were always made in the best interests of Sport Waikato and the many communities of the Waikato we serve.

**Phil Taylor – Sport Waikato Chair**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Finally, and most importantly, to all our funding partners and key stakeholders who believe in our mahi, a special thank you to you all for your unwavering support and longstanding partnership.

As always, special mention to Sport NZ where your support, influence and partnering not only to Sport Waikato but within the Waikato sport, recreation and play 'ecosystem' is nothing short of outstanding. We also acknowledge the region's Iwi, Te Whatu Ora Health NZ, long-time partner Trust Waikato, our ten Territorial Local Authority partners, the Waikato Regional Council, the Waikato Regional Sport and Recreation Organisations, Waikato Secondary School Sports Association, Waikato Primary Association and our partner schools.

To Grassroots Trust, Lion Foundation and NZCT, your collective long-time support enables and consolidates our approach to ensure we stay true to the aims of Moving Waikato but most importantly, it enables us to get things done.

Along with Trust Waikato, your significant support across the Waikato sport and recreation ecosystem is critical in the current environment where the sport and recreation infrastructure 'need' is now well evidenced and documented in the Waikato region, however the 'deficit' in achieving continues to grow.

To our tenants at Brian Perry Sports House; the benefits are really apparent of the shared location model but importantly your company only adds to a positive environment.

In line with our transformational change of the new Sport Waikato brand, the final missing piece in the 'jigsaw' was the long overdue opportunity to refit our home – Brian Perry Sports House at Te Pukenga | Wintec Rotokauri Campus. This was finally achieved at the start of the year and we, along with our tenants, are delighted and inspired by our new workspace

The new environment has been created for us, but it has also been designed to be a 'hub' for sport and recreation in the Waikato region where the opportunity and invitation is there for like-minded external organisations, wanting to be strategic, plan or reflect for a half day or day to join us and utilise our space.

Finally, to our Sport Waikato staff, thank you again for another committed year, evidenced by your professionalism, passion, fun and results. You are and always will be the heart of Sport Waikato - carrying on the legacy of many fantastic people before us since we opened the doors on 20th March 1986.

We close as we always do by again drawing off and being inspired to attack tomorrow with one of our gifted Waikato Tainui tongikura that beautifully captures our reason for existence.

*"Mahia te mahi, hei painga mo te iwi – do the work for the betterment of the people."  
(Te Puea Herangi).*



*Phil Taylor  
Board of Trustees Chair*



*Matthew Cooper  
Chief Executive*



# Statement of Service Performance

**“Mahia te mahi, hei painga mo te iwi – do the work for the betterment of the people” (Te Paea Herangi).** In 2020 Sport Waikato underwent a transformational change to breathe new life into this gifted Tongikura from Waikato Tainui. We exist to increase both the levels and enjoyment of physical activity for people in the Waikato region and to create a lifelong love of being active in all its forms. We do this by providing high-value strategic and influential regional leadership in play, active recreation and sport to improve physical activity outcomes and access for the people of the Waikato region, and by doing so increasing wellbeing outcomes for our communities.

**“Kotahi te koohao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro maa te miro whero me te miro pango - There is but one eye of the needle through which the white, black and red threads must pass” (Kingi Potatau).** Our second gifted Tongikura talks to our role as a strategic influencer and guide which sees us working in the strength of partnership, both internally and externally, to achieve positive outcomes for our communities. As a data-driven and evidenced-led organisation, we use the information we have access to working collaboratively with those that either make decisions about or deliver play, active recreation and sport opportunities. We do this by helping them to understand the barriers and preferences of our communities and this ensures that well informed decision making, and good investment of time, effort and money takes place.

Our partnered, regional strategy for Play, Active Recreation and Sport, *Moving Waikato*, for which Sport Waikato is the lead partner, guides our work. *Moving Waikato* was first developed in 2015 and has been broken into different stages or horizons of which we are currently in the middle of horizon two.

The focus under *Moving Waikato* for the last three years has been the provision of quality experiences for play, active recreation and sport opportunities with an emphasis on the 5–18 year old age group, Maaori, young women and girls, high deprivation areas and those that are less active.

Motivating us to achieve the desired outcomes from *Moving Waikato* is our big, hairy, audacious goal (our BHAG) of having 75% of Waikato adults and youth meeting the national physical activity guidelines by 2030. Sport Waikato has and continues to develop a set of measures and markers for our strategic objectives and progress on some of the key indicators for our current focus areas - tamariki and rangatahi - are detailed below. Over the last three years, Sport Waikato has built up a significant bank of data, insights and evidence that is highly valued by the stakeholders and partners with which we work most closely.

## The quality of experience for physical activity for young people

While our ultimate strategic objective is to see 75% of the region regularly participating in quality physical activity and building a lifelong love of these experiences, it is the ‘quality’ aspect which is Sport Waikato’s current focus. Understanding what a positive experience means for our tamariki and rangatahi is key to us being able to support those that deliver play, active recreation and sport opportunities.

As a quality experience is a predetermining factor in participation in physical activity, we use key metrics from our ‘Voice of Rangatahi’ survey, for which we partner with Sport NZ and our own ‘Voice of Tamariki’ survey. The results of each are detailed below.

## Tamariki (5-11 years) results for 2023

**Key indicator question - “I like doing Physical Education with my class”**

| Voice of Tamariki survey                 | Total Responses | Schools Involved | Positive Response Rate |
|--|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Baseline measure from 2022 calendar year | 1828            | 24               | 62%                    |
| January 2023 – August 2023 Responses     | 1040            | 13               | 63%                    |

The Voice of Tamariki survey is only in its second year and is a partnership between Sport Waikato and primary and intermediate schools that we are directly working with. Thirteen schools participated in the inaugural survey in 2022 and it is expected that these same schools will also participate in 2023 by the time the school year concludes.

In addition to this we have introduced new schools to the survey in 2023 and expect to have over 20 schools in total participating by the end of the 2023 year. This is a positive reflection of the value that the region's primary and intermediate schools place on the work that Sport Waikato engages in with them.

In terms of the results of the survey for 2023 and bearing in mind that not all survey responses have yet been received, what we can see is that the primary and intermediate schools Sport Waikato is currently working with have maintained positive engagement with physical activity at the same level, year on year. Two thirds of tamariki are reporting that they are enjoying physical education with their classmates.

To put some context into what a great achievement this is, it is important to remember that these results have been recorded while the region, like the rest of the nation, was still in the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic during both survey periods. The halo effect of the peak of the pandemic from 2020 and 2021 into the following two years and the impact that has had on students' willingness to engage in in-person education as a whole, let alone physical education, cannot be underestimated.

Additionally, the pressure that primary and intermediate principals and teachers have experienced during this time, including managing their own health while Covid-19 continued to infect and reinfect their staff, really casts these results in the positive light they deserve. It is a testament to the genuine partnership between Sport Waikato and our regional educational stakeholders' willingness to try a different approach to incorporating physical activity into the curriculum at a time of crisis and it has served our tamariki well.

## Rangatahi (12-17 years) results for 2022

**Key indicator question - "How satisfied are you with your overall experience of physical activity at school?"**

| Voice of Rangatahi survey                | Total Responses | Schools Involved | Positive Response Rate |
|--|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Baseline measure from 2021 calendar year | 1070            | 9                | 27%                    |
| 2022 calendar year results               | 4937            | 20               | 22%                    |

The Voice of Rangatahi survey is a Sport NZ initiative which they conduct across all regions within New Zealand in partnership with Regional Sports Trusts such as Sport Waikato. Over the last two years, Sport Waikato has made a concerted effort to engage both schools and students to participate so that we can accurately assess the satisfaction levels of rangatahi with the experience of physical activity in a school setting.

Like the Voice of Tamariki, an immediate indicator of success for Sport Waikato from this survey is the increased uptake in survey participants. We have more than doubled the number of schools participating in the survey and the number of respondents has increased by over 450%. This latter point goes some way to explaining the drop in satisfaction ratings for rangatahi as the larger sample size in 2022, both in respondents and schools participating,

is giving us a more accurate representation. In addition, like tamariki, secondary schools have been significantly impacted by Covid-19 and the fallout in 2022 has been a lack of school attendance, a slow return to school sport, and mounting educational pressures as schools and students struggle to play catch up from two years of rolling lockdowns.

Rangatahi are a hard-to-reach target group as they transition from childhood into adulthood and their physical activity needs change dramatically. How secondary schools cater to these needs is the challenge that has been laid down by the satisfaction results we are seeing amongst rangatahi. The long-entrenched secondary school sport system is a challenge to influence and in the face of these results, Sport Waikato has had to step back and start from the beginning with schools and the Waikato

Secondary School Sport Association (WSSSA) to ensure that they are listening to what their students are telling them they would like in the delivery of sport and in so doing, that they are actually delivering this.

Sport Waikato is thankful to the WSSSA and the secondary schools we have engaged with for their partnership and the progress we have made together in understanding the barriers that exist and for their willingness to work with us to bring about change.

## Concluding Statement

The information contained within this Statement of Service Performance gives a vital snapshot of two specific target groups for Sport Waikato. Greater context and a deeper look at the many initiatives Sport Waikato has underway to understand and overcome the barriers to physical activity as part of its revitalised strategy is contained within the rest of the annual report and this statement needs to be read in conjunction with it.



# OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS

Sport Waikato is committed to achieving the outcomes of Moving Waikato, a partnered strategy for play, active recreation and sport, published in November 2016, and reviewed following the completion of horizon one in 2019. Moving Waikato has the vision of 'everyone active' and a goal of 75% of the region (adults and young people) active enough to positively impact their wellbeing by 2030. Moving Waikato is guided by three strategic pillars:

- **Our People:** more physically active tamariki, rangatahi and whaanau
- **Building Communities:** helping communities to help themselves
- **Regional Leadership:** leading and delivering change

Partners to Moving Waikato include: local, regional and central Government; sport and recreation providers, education providers (tertiary, secondary, primary and intermediate and early childhood), health providers, philanthropic partners, Trust and gaming funders.

The second horizon of Moving Waikato involves a regional focus on increasing physical

activity levels among the following targeted communities:

- **Pre-school children (tamariki mokopuna) 0-4 years**
- **Children (tamariki) 5-11 years**
- **Young people (rangatahi) 12-17 years**

With particular focus on: Maaori, deprived communities, women and girls, disabled people, and low participation groups or those who tend to miss out (e.g., ethnic minority groups). The strategy prioritises key settings and focus areas including education settings, play and active recreation settings, community sport settings, coaching, and facilities, spaces and places planning.

Importantly, Moving Waikato sees Sport Waikato staff united in their work through a shared vision and goal that translates to a 'one team' approach to working that is premised on collaboration within and across teams in the organisation. It is through this approach that system-change is enabled.



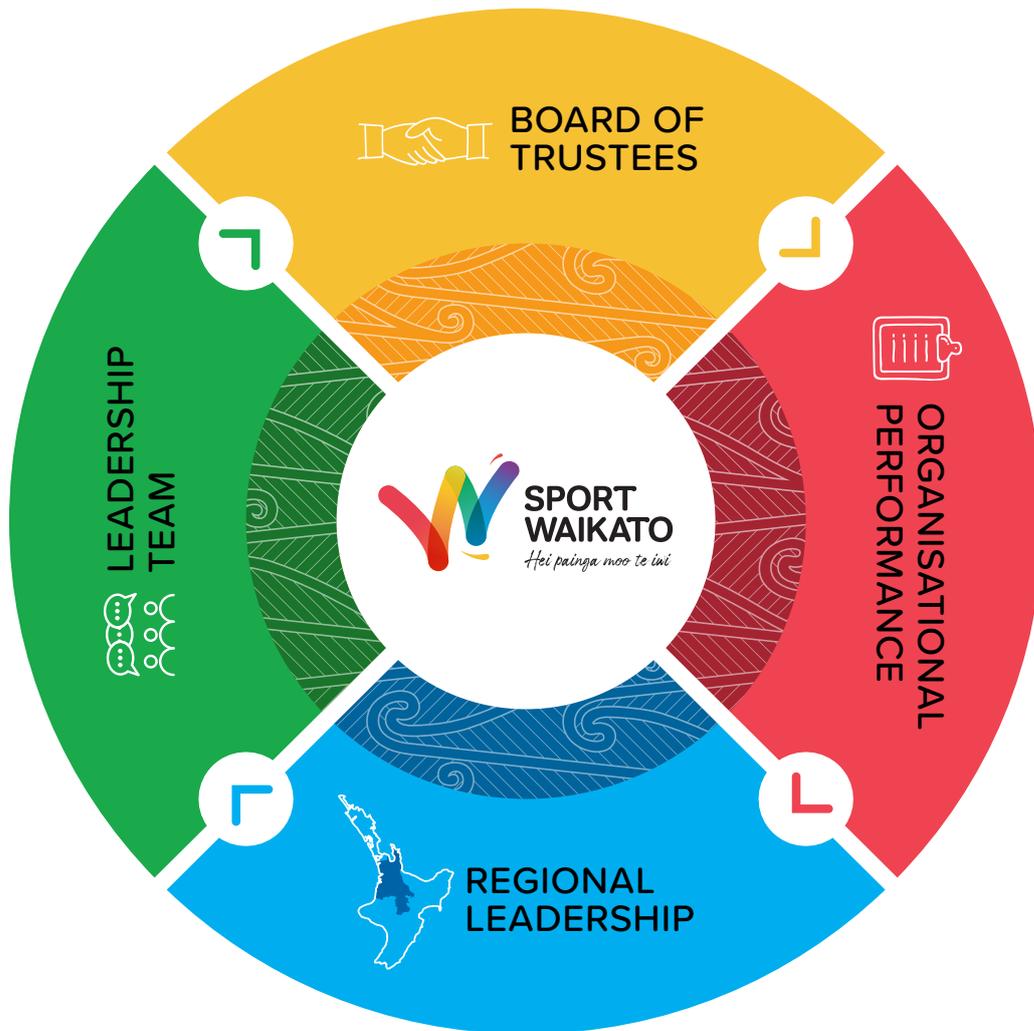
Moving Waikato is an evidence based strategy for physical activity through play, active recreation and sport for the Waikato region, and gives focus and clarity towards 2025.

It seeks to build on the positive momentum of existing partnerships and to increase the provision of opportunities for both participation and quality experiences for the people of the region.

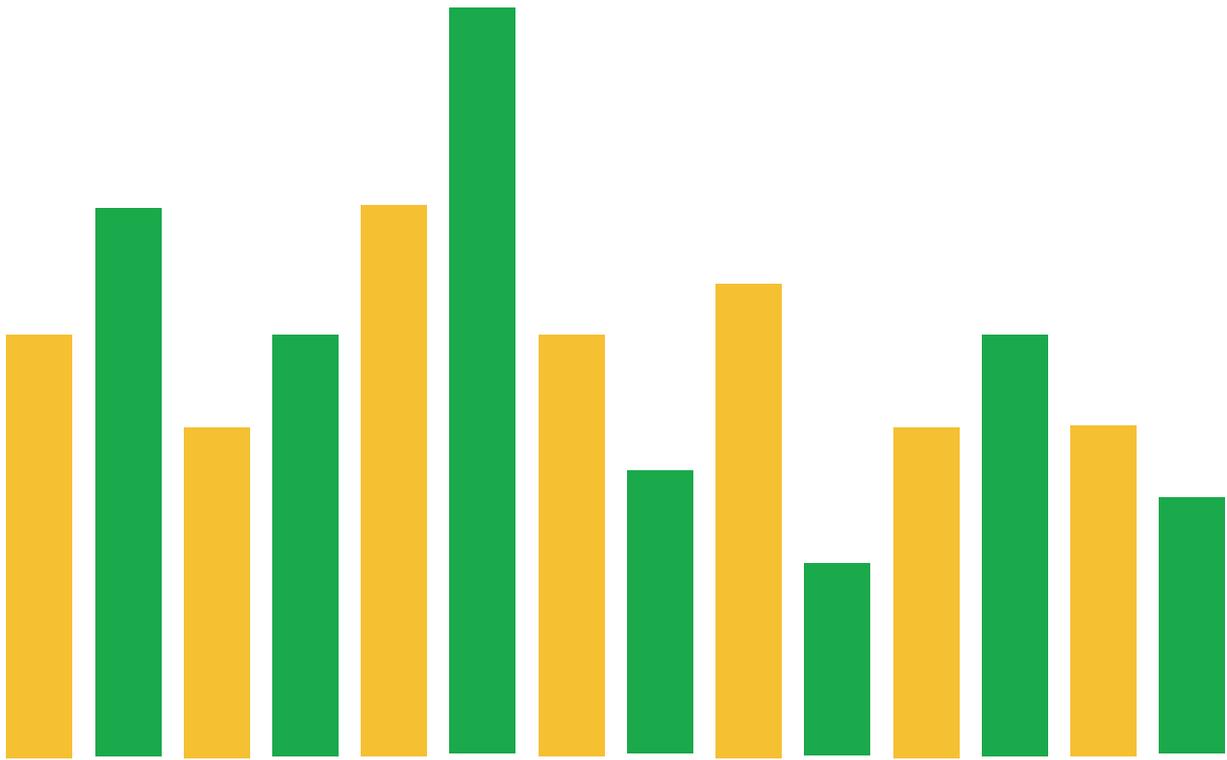


# Sport Waikato

## ONE TEAM



[VIEW OUR PEOPLE](#)



## INSIGHTS & EVALUATION

The data, insights and analysis generated by our Insights and Evaluation Team has continued to go from strength to strength and added extreme value to both our staff and importantly, our external stakeholders.

Over the last five years, Sport Waikato has positioned itself as a data and evidence-led organisation and has made a deliberate investment in building our capability in this space across the entire organisation. As we have already detailed in the Statement of Service Performance, we have seen a significant interest and uptake of our service offering amongst our partners in the education sector which has allowed us to better inform and guide decision-making for how physical activity happens for our tamariki and rangatahi in school settings.

We have played a critical role in providing surveying expertise and the subsequent interpretation of the results to the majority of our Local Authority Councils as part of their local and Long-Term Planning processes, and specifically

for the play, active recreation and sports plans that form part of the recommendations of the Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan and our partnership with Councils across the region.

2023 has also seen us partnering with other key organisations such as the University of Waikato, assisting them with their 'Voice of Waahine' survey as they seek to understand the current experience of physical activity for students identifying as female. Likewise, we have been glad to assist a number of regional sports organisations such as Waikato Badminton, Swimming Waikato and WaiBOP Football with their understanding of the quality of experience for their participants.

While 2023 has seen Sport Waikato continue to work with our key partners under the regional strategy for play, active recreation and sport, *Moving Waikato*, we have also been gearing ourselves to be able to measure the impact of plans and initiatives that are being implemented across the region.

# HEALTHY ACTIVE LEARNING (HAL)

*Healthy Active Learning* is a partnered, national initiative developed and endorsed by Sport NZ, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health that seeks to elevate the levels of physical activity among tamariki in schools by growing teacher capability, confidence and commitment to deliver regular and quality Health and Physical Education (HPE) lessons for students, while increasing connections between schools and communities to ensure tamariki are engaged in regular opportunities to be active through play, active recreation and sport.

It is an initiative based on a broad methodology of assessment, action planning and implementation that sees schools and kaiako (teachers) empowered to deliver regular and quality HPE and physical activity through play.

The initiative has been delivered in the Waikato since 2021 by Sport Waikato, in partnership with Te Whatu Ora – Health NZ (Waikato), Sport NZ and schools across the region. Its introduction coincided with the disestablishment of the long running Project Energize programme – an initiative based solely on implementation that saw a local workforce enter primary schools to deliver physical activity and nutrition sessions to tamariki.

Despite only being delivered for a short time (since 2020), HAL Waikato is already having important impact on the physical activity levels, and overall health and wellbeing of tamariki in the region.

School and kaiako engagement is high and targeted interventions are ensuring that those schools and tamariki who need the most support are receiving it.

Equally, our work alongside ECE is helping to ensure the foundations of movement are built early and in ways that enhance physical literacy in our U5 tamariki so that they may experience success once they enter the primary school system.

Perhaps the most important marker of the impact of HAL Waikato is the change in both quality and quantity of physical activity delivery happening in schools across the region.

As is evidenced throughout this report, a number of schools have made positive strides with the support of Sport Waikato and are now facilitating increased levels of physical activity among their tamariki.

**71 schools** have had **moderate to high** levels of engagement with Sport Waikato have made positive changes to physical activity delivery in a school setting.

Of these changes:

**72%** have been in both quantity and quality  
**73%** have been an increase in quantity (e.g., number of days, length of session)  
**91%** have been an increase in quality (e.g., HPE is now planned and delivered in a meaningful way)

*\* Importantly, change has also been observed in schools with low engagement*

The Sport Waikato team are proud of the progress being made through HAL Waikato and we are buoyed by the level of engagement of our partner schools. We very much look forward to continuing to support school senior leadership and kaiako to understand their role in the delivery of HPE and to find ways to incorporate this regularly and meaningfully into their daily teaching practice.

**12 Kaahui Ako** engaged in HAL

**114 HAL Champions** developed in primary and intermediate settings

Over **22,000** tamariki impacted

**40%** of tamariki impacted are **Maaori**

Our approach of working alongside and through Kaahui Ako is unique to the Waikato and one that is proving instrumental when it comes to influencing system-level change in schools – that is a belief in the need to deliver HPE differently and in more tamariki-centred ways, right from the top.

3 months



Increased knowledge on brain development through movement



Increased level of activities involving **Crossing the Midline** - promoting balance and coordination



Increased time spent in active play by tamariki

low engagement

# Motutaiko Early Childcare Centre

Best Start Motutaiko Early Child Care Centre, Taupo, has been a prominent childcare provider for several years, catering to 51 tamariki with 20% being of Maaori or Pacifica descent. After attending a workshop run in conjunction with Rural Education Activities Programme (REAP) and Sport Waikato, the centre manager realised their knowledge in the holistic development of tamariki was limited, particularly when thinking about movement activities involving crossing the midline.

Kaiako attended a workshop on crossing the midline and its impact on brain development, which served as a catalyst for change, enlightening the teachers about the neurodevelopmental benefits of midline activities and how a combination of movement patterns support lifelong learning skills such as building core strength, reading, and writing. Empowered with this knowledge, they undertook a redesign of their learning environment.

“*The learning you shared has made such an impact on my teaching practice.*”  
- Sharon Kennedy, kaiako

The kaiako introduced a variety of age-appropriate midline activities tailored for under twos, over twos, and three to five-year-olds. These activities included games, exercises, and creative tasks designed to engage both hemispheres of the brain, fostering improved cognitive functions, balance, and coordination. The centre took a bold step by eliminating gadgets such as highchairs. This decision encouraged tamariki to explore their surroundings freely, enhancing their gross motor skills and balance. The absence of these constraints provided ample opportunities for natural movement, supporting the development of strong, healthy bodies.

Sport Waikato shared advice and research on creating a ‘movement-friendly environment’ and the kaiako used this knowledge to implement movement seamlessly into the daily routine, making learning through movement an engaging experience for tamariki.

By implementing activities such as ‘drawing’ in the air the ‘infinity shape’ when using poi, ribbons, or adding it into the outdoor environment as part of an obstacle course; doing

weekly yoga sessions; and group games such as marching and passing balls in a circle keeping both hands on the ball, kaiako have noticed tamariki are using both their dominant and helper hand functions and their balance and co-ordination is enhanced.

The new activities contributed to extending their abilities including gross motor skills, landing and statics, balance, co-ordination, self-assurance and social interactions. Parents have noticed and commented on the positive changes in their tamariki and appreciated the centre’s efforts. This confidence extended into the home environments and whaanau were commenting on “*how [their child] of 18 months of age was using the ribbon activities at home and has been very settled since doing these activities*”. The enhanced communication between the centre and parents fostered a collaborative approach to support the tamariki’s development at home and in the centre.

“*I have observed a marked improvement in balance and co-ordination which I now know is supported by crossing of their midline, spatial awareness and their vestibular system!*” - kaiako

By introducing activities that involve crossing the midline, tamariki are preparing for complex physical activities as well as supporting their overall motor development. The active, movement-oriented environment led to positive behavioural changes. Kaiako have commented how tamariki are now exhibiting reduced restlessness, creating a more harmonious atmosphere within the centre.

The journey of Best Start Motutaiko exemplifies the power of knowledge and a dedicated effort in early childhood education to make a difference. By recognising the importance of movement, especially activities involving crossing the midline, and implementing targeted changes in their teaching methods and environment, tamariki are building the foundation for life long gross motor skills and behaviour.



# Netherton School

Netherton School is a full primary school found in rural Hauraki District. It has an Equity Index rating of 462 and a roll of 156, including 28 Tamariki Maaori. The school's vision of 'Growing and Empowering our Future' is underpinned by the 'Netherton Learner' values of Resilience, Excellence, Self-Awareness, Persistence, Empathy, Courage and Thinking (RESPECT).

The current strategic aims for the school are student agency, grow teacher efficacy and capability, wellbeing and connections and partnerships. As part of the student agency aim, the school has been on a journey to 'build the capacity of students to own and be responsible for their own learning'. The school has been actively exploring ways to ensure that students have 'more choice, responsibility and ownership of their learning that is future-focused and driven by them.'

One of the ways that the school progressed this notion was allowing students to pursue their passion projects. So, when a group of students expressed interest in event organizing, their teacher saw this as an opportunity to conduct an inquiry project to learn how to create an event that would cater to student needs.

To aid in their research, the teacher and students read a position paper on primary school cross country events published by Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ). The students then created a survey to collect data on their peers' thoughts regarding traditional cross country and what changes they would like to see.

According to the school's Principal, "a big part of this mahi was looking at the challenges the children faced when competing or not competing in cross country. It was always described as 'the most hated part of our PE curriculum' so it was important we unpacked the 'why' of this and student voice was going to be the driving factor."

The survey results were surprising to some. A number of students expressed that start line and spectator pressure had a negative impact on them. It was also revealed that a large number of students did not find value in competition; instead, they enjoyed participating in cross country because they liked running. They expressed a need for having a competitive and non-competitive option. This led to the students designing a fun-run based on the feedback they received from their peers.

Alongside the school's own efforts to (re)engage students in physical activity, Sport Waikato

also supported teachers to embed quality HPE teaching practices in ways that focus on student wellbeing and quality movement experiences. Our partnership has led the school to regularly seek student voice through student surveys, student focus groups, sport leader input, and the Sport Waikato Voice of Tamariki Survey. Students have also started having input into the Physical Education Programme:

“ They have opportunities to give feedback on the activity and how it can be adapted or at times a different activity to achieve the same goal. - Teacher ”

Seeking input from young participants removes guesswork and allows for informed, insight-driven decisions. The feedback sought covered a range of topics, from students' enjoyment to uniform preferences and importantly, a focus on competitive versus non-competitive events, which has yielded important change for the school and students. The overall goal was to strike a balance between participation and competition to ensure students got the most from their sporting and PE experiences and so it was decided that students below Year 7 and 8 would participate in mixed fun teams to allow younger participants to have pressure-free experiences focused on enjoyment and development:

“ We want to strike a balance between offering competitive opportunities for children while ensuring events remain enjoyable for everyone. - Teacher ”

The changes implemented over the past two years have cultivated a culture of 'giving things a go.' Students now eagerly anticipate events and are more willing to try new activities, regardless of their perceived abilities.

12+ months  
high engagement

## SNAPSHOT

- ↑ increased participation levels
- ↑ increased quality and quantity of HPE
- ↑ increased participation levels of tamariki in school sport and physical activity events

Notable examples include the increased interest in competitive cross country, which saw a 43% rise in participation from 53 runners in 2021 to 76 in 2023. Girls' tackle rugby witnessed an 83% increase from 12 participants before the pandemic to 22 in 2023.

The Rippa rugby tournament also experienced a 39% surge in participation compared to pre-pandemic numbers. The school has also been working to provide increased quality and quantity in their PE programmes over the past year.

The senior school has daily fitness, three PE sessions a week and provides sport opportunities once a week. The junior school do daily fitness and include play-based learning in their curriculum design.

As a result of the school's changes to delivery in play, PE and sport, satisfaction levels are up among the tamariki, with more indicating they are satisfied with their experiences:

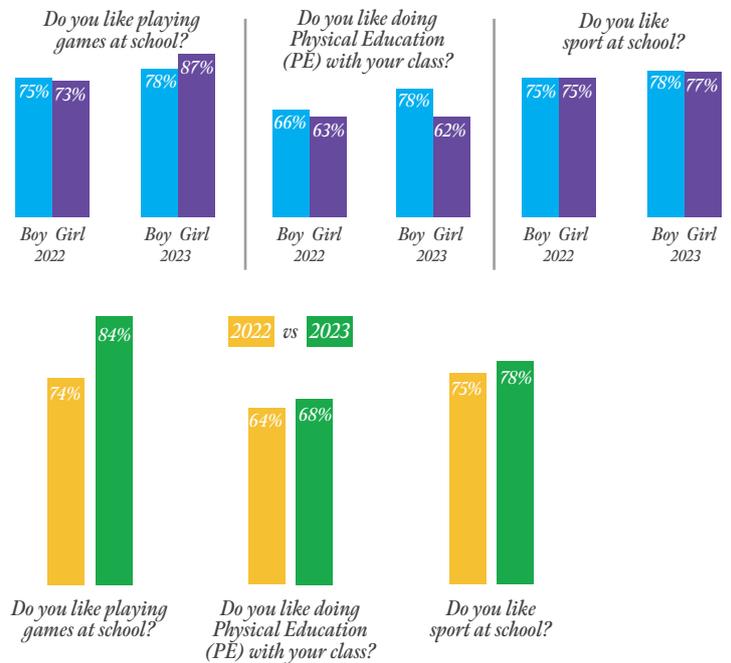
“ Nearly every child is eager to participate in whatever we offer. We've gone from struggling to form one team to taking three teams to events. - Principal ”



## SATISFACTION BY GENDER

Tamariki were asked if they liked different types of physical activity at school. They were given the option of selecting yes, no or sometimes.

The satisfaction of each type of physical activity was determined by those who answered 'yes'.



The work conducted by Netherton School clearly indicates that young people want to engage in physical activities, but they want them to be meaningful and aligned with their preferences.

Without consulting the participants, themselves about their values and desires, we leave the creation of these experiences to chance.

Netherton School's success in their Health and PE programs and school sports events through the use of student voice and co-design processes is very commendable.

# SPORT DEVELOPMENT

The Sport Waikato Sport Development Team has continued to focus on growing the quality of sporting experiences delivered across the Waikato, with a particular lens on increasing the participation and enjoyment of rangatahi in the region. We have had a strong focus on the collection of participant voice in a number of key areas (secondary school participants and staff, coaches, officials and parents) to identify needs and opportunities, and to measure the impact of targeted projects. The *Good Sports* model, that advocates for climates of development over performance, and the *Balance is Better* principles form the foundation of all our work in coach support and development, secondary schools and sector capability.

## COACH SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT

The Regional Coaching team leads the development of the region's coach workforce in both school and community sport settings, with the aim of improving the experiences of youth in sport.

In 2023, we revised the coaching roles and have established two Regional Coaching Advisors that work into the North and the South. Through 2022's Voice of Coach (VoC), we identified that the area of greatest need was to focus on coaches in their first two years in order to retain them for longer, and therefore build a network of coaches in our region to address shortages in volunteer coaches that preclude quality participation. Consequently, work is now focused into clubs and secondary schools in targeted communities with an emphasis on two key approaches:

Ensuring clubs and schools have clear strategies

for connecting with and supporting new coaches to enhance their experience. The VoC also indicated that mentors and coach leaders have a huge influence on their development, so working with clubs and leaders to identify who these people are, or could be, is an important step in making those connections with new coaches, and to drive the strategy.

The second approach requires facilitating a shift in coaching practices among coaches in the Waikato region to increase play-based and player-centred coaching that ensures climates of development are privileged over climates of performance.

Our coaching team has initially focused on understanding the current connection and support received by coaches by conducting surveys in clubs and schools. Early analysis (203 respondents) suggests that limited uptake and completion of surveys indicates a lack of connection, and those that have completed the survey express being "somewhat connected and supported to club/community and other coaches". Our 2023 data continues to support 2022 findings that coaches in our region want and need more connection and support.

Currently, we are working with three community sports hubs (Hauraki, Putaruru and Ohinemuri), four multisport clubs (Te Awamutu Sports, Eastern Suburbs, Hamilton Marist, Northern United), ten primary schools (Saints Primary cluster) and five secondary schools (Sacred Heart Girls College, St John's College, St Paul's Collegiate, Rototuna High School, Hauraki Plains College). Presented are two examples of how this approach has shown early signs of impact with organisations we are working alongside:

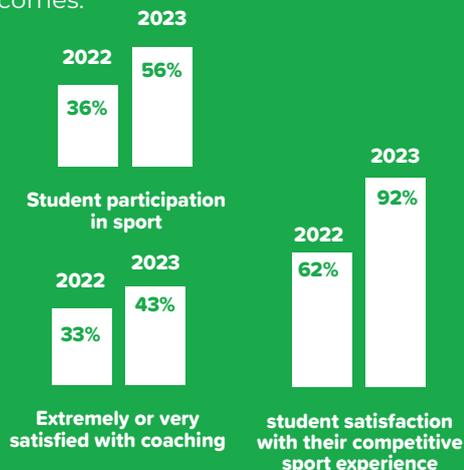


## Rototuna High School - Coach Support and Development Systems

A strengths and needs analysis led to the development of a strategic sports plan including a commitment to providing more support to coaches (additional staff member to sports department, online connection/workshops with coaches, and identified coach leads). As a result, Rototuna High School observed the following outcomes:

- 42%** increase in in-coach and volunteer retention (from 2022-2023)
- 84%** of current coaches report a plan to return to coach in 2024  
(the 16% not returning are due to external factors such as students leaving or moving)
- 96%** of those surveyed said they felt supported by the school sport department  
(this is up from just over 50% in 2022)

**Next steps** A continued commitment to supporting coaches and volunteers and identification of people who will lead in this space.



## Hamilton City Netball – Building Communities of Coaches and Volunteers

Worked alongside Sport Waikato to develop a Strategic Plan to achieve “Poioia te Manawa – nurturing the heart of netball” and providing a lifelong community connection to sport through netball. Through implementation of the strategic plan, they have seen:

- An increase in numbers of umpires with a surplus of umpires at premier and premier reserve levels
- Reduction in the total number of on court issues and spectator complaints
- An increase in umpire coaches, and umpire coach developers
- Growth in number of teams at all levels from 525 to 548 teams (back to pre-covid numbers and growing). The largest growth is in open grade and intermediate ages with over 10% growth in both
- All umpires having access to a coach

**Next steps** The Centre are in the process of developing a plan to target coaching leaders in secondary schools and clubs.



## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Our work into secondary schools has continued to be insights-led through the Voice of Rangatahi (VoR), the School Sport NZ Annual Census, and various other student voice collection methods.

VoR is providing some valuable longitudinal data for schools to understand the motivations, barriers and challenges for students when it comes to engagement in physical activity, active recreation and sport. In 2023, 16 schools conducted the survey (or a modified version of it) with their students, including seven new schools (when compared to 2022).

We now have over 50% of Waikato schools having collected student voice to assist with the development of their sport plans and strategies to ensure they are offering opportunities that are accessible and enjoyable for rangatahi.

The response rate is also up with an average of 54% of students per school completing the survey to give a broad and valuable data set.

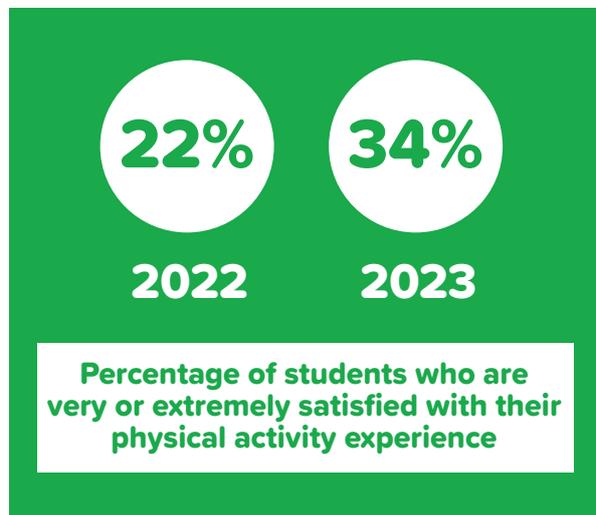
The Secondary team, through our two Youth Engagement Advisors, continue to use the insights from VOR (as well as other sources, such as the NZ Secondary School Sport Census) with two main focuses:

- Promoting co-design with students to develop programmes and initiatives that will engage those students who are less active. Based on identified barriers that include being too busy or too tired, this could include more intra-school and localised inter-school sport opportunities, modified sports, and shorter competitions. We have supported localised sport in the North cluster with Volleyball and Ki-o-Rahi events held locally amongst

these five schools, and also Volleyball and badminton tournaments held in the King Country.

- Strategy and sport plans that ensure resource and time is spent in areas that will have biggest impact. In 2023, six schools have completed and/or presented their sport plans to their school Boards. In two of these schools, extra staff hours and resource was put in place as a result of sport plan and strategy development. A further 13 schools are being supported in the development of their sports plans. Our team also supported the Thames Valley Secondary School Sport Association to renew their constitution and is working alongside them on the development of a new sport strategy for their region.

From VoR conducted in 2023, the percentage of students who are very or extremely satisfied with their physical activity experience has increased from 22% in 2022 to 34%.



## SECTOR CAPABILITY

Much of the work in the sport sector this year has been focused on consolidating the Waikato Sport Collective which was formalised through an MOU. We have 15 Waikato sporting organisations alongside the Waikato Secondary School Sport Association (WSSSA) and Parafed Waikato, who have committed to a vision of creating “A connected network that leads participant-centred change and develops a life-long love of sport.” The key goals of the Collective are working collaboratively to:

- Enhance how adults can positively affect youth sporting experiences

- Grow and retain participation in sport, including players, staff, coaches, volunteers and officials
- Utilise cross-sport opportunities to increase capability and sustainability in the sport sector

They are currently committed to the design and implementation of a region-wide sideline behaviour campaign by Winter 2024 along the lines of the “Positive Vibes Only” pilot by Hamilton City Netball Centre.

In addition, they have identified opportunities to collaborate on *Good Sports, Balance is Better* and games-based approaches to education through coach development.

## A SPOTLIGHT on Positive Vibes Only



The Positive Vibes Only campaign was developed as a joint initiative between Sport Waikato and Hamilton City Netball Centre for the Upper North Island Secondary School Tournament (UNISS) held in August 2023.

With a rise in negative sideline behaviour aimed at players, umpires and volunteers, Hamilton City Netball Centre enlisted the support of Sport Waikato to develop a campaign that would aim to improve sideline behaviour at the annual UNISS tournament.

Through discussions, we realised that often parents, coaches, managers and supporters aren't necessarily aware that their behaviour is 'negative', therefore a 'be positive' message wouldn't hit home unless we told people how we wanted them to behave and made them aware of the issues from the voices of the players themselves. Hamilton City Netball Centre wanted to focus on the positive for the tournament: **The Positive Vibes Only campaign was born.**

### Pre-tournament social media messaging



## TARGETED PARTICIPATION

Sport Waikato recognises the unique challenges experienced by diverse communities to access and participate in physical activity opportunities that meet their needs. Therefore, targeting the participation of these groups to grow the quality and quantity of equitable opportunities to be active is important to Sport Waikato, and is also a key component of Moving Waikato.

Over the past 12 months we have worked to enhance understandings of accessibility and reinforce a focus on principles of inclusion across the Waikato sport, active recreation and play sector. We created the Accessibility and Inclusion (Disability) Network, bringing together 12 representatives from ten different disability services, agencies and activity providers to grow cross-sector connections and knowledge and resource sharing. After two hui there have been at least four connections or partnerships formed (such as multisport days) to ensure more disabled young people have a variety of opportunities to be active.

**12** representatives attending hui  
**10** organisations represented  
**4** partnered opportunities facilitated



Internally, we completed an all-staff workshop with *InsideOut* to better understand how to include and cater to the needs of rainbow communities through physical activity. We plan to conduct further internal training in 2024 to broaden the scope of our knowledge, bring our partners on the journey, and ensure that everyone has opportunities to be active that are welcoming and inclusive.

We continue to support the addition of accessibility and inclusion plans into council planning. We have provided data to both South Waikato District Council and the accessibility advisory group at Matamata-Piako District Council to inform the renewal and design of community spaces and places, such as

playgrounds, and have worked alongside Councils to embed accessibility and inclusion focuses in their local play, active recreation and sport plans.

We have taken inspiration from Merri-bek City Council's (Australia) 'Allocation and Use of Sporting Grounds and Facilities' policy to encourage sport organisations and clubs to evaluate which teams/grades/levels use or are prioritised for key playing surfaces or fields (e.g., sand carpet; number 1 fields).

Participants are telling us that "social teams often play on low quality pitches"; they'd like "equal distribution of good quality playing fields", and that they "[want] girls' games [to be] played on the best pitches as often as boys games".<sup>[1]</sup> Conversations with Hamilton City Council and WaiBOP Football Federation have uncovered an opportunity to pilot a staged approach to the use and allocation of city-wide sporting fields, as a potential FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 legacy project. Hamilton City Council are developing a handbook of processes and procedures for codes and clubs, which we have contributed to, to encourage the consideration of allocation and use alongside the participant experience. The handbook will be presented to winter codes, alongside a targeted workshop, ahead of the 2024 winter season.

We continue to support women and girls to be active in community, school and online spaces, through the delivery of Sport Waikato's targeted initiative, This is ME<sup>®</sup>. This is ME<sup>®</sup> aims to encourage, support and celebrate women and girls being active in whatever way they choose, and to break down participation barriers to increase access and enjoyment.

In the community space, we continue to support providers to think differently about their offerings and consider non-traditional approaches to sport and physical activity. We have facilitated community-led walking, golf, squash, diving and self-defence activations, with 150+ women and girls. For example, a successful daytime have-a-go session at Te Kowhai Golf Club saw 12 women try golf for the first time:

**"It was just fun to try something new and meet new people"**

**"I knew nothing about golf and was hesitant to join, but the team made it so fun"**

**100%** of participants said they were satisfied with the opportunity and would recommend it to others.

[1] Data taken from Waikato Bay of Plenty Football Federation's legacy and gender equity survey 2023 (860 respondents).

Te Kowhai Golf Club have now implemented a social series, with plans to run evening sessions to cater to those with daytime commitments.

In response to the 'Voice of Waahine' surveying, led by Sport Waikato in partnership with the University of Waikato in 2022, that highlighted a need for increased attention to quality physical activity provision for young women, a Waahine Programme Coordinator role was created, and we have worked closely with that staff member to offer guidance and connections.

Following implementation of this role, the University has created the *Waikato Waahine Movement* initiative, through which they offer more active recreation focused opportunities such as 'Learn to Lift' (a gym-based fitness initiative) and 'Waahine Hikes' (outdoor track and trail walks for women). 79% of participants identified that they were likely or very likely to attend another WWM activation, and 79% also noted that they would recommend opportunities to a friend.

Following administration of their Voice of Tamariki (VoT) survey, which highlighted a desire among young females to participate in girls-only

physical activity, we worked in partnership with St Columba's School in Hamilton, to help them shift to a model that prioritised separate physical education classes for girls and boys.

Parents were concerned by this decision, so we supported a Mother and Daughter's breakfast to allow the girls to share their experiences and to bring parents along on the journey of change.

**"I love playing with my friends, it makes me feel happy and strong" – Year 2 student.**

**"She feels like she has more fun when the boys aren't in PE, this surprised me but makes me happy the school supports her" – Year 3 mother.**

**83%** of respondents were extremely satisfied with the workshop and content.  
**100%** would recommend the workshop to others.

Girls' participation in physical activity will now be included in the school sports plan, showing the school's ongoing commitment to meeting student needs.



## REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SPACES AND PLACES PLANNING

Sport Waikato staff continue to work closely alongside our region's the Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs) to support decision-making about and investment into play, active recreation and sport in our Waikato communities. This is supported through a partnership approach and collaborating on key local and regional strategies that support community physical activity outcomes.

### LOCAL PLANS

Over the past 12 months, all of our ten Territorial Local Authorities have progressed with the review of existing or creation of new local Play, Active Recreation and Sport Plans (PARS). These plans are designed to provide guidance to Council during their long-term planning (LTP processes). The plans are evidence-based and make recommendations for priority projects to enhance opportunities for physical activity through play, active recreation and sport, including where collaboration is paramount to achieve community wellbeing outcomes. Although a difficult time for Councils in the wake of local government reform and the strained fiscal environment, the plans are currently being workshopped with steering groups, made up of Sport Waikato and Council members, to then be presented to Elected Members for adoption.

### WAIKATO REGIONAL ACTIVE SPACES PLAN

First published in 2014, the Waikato Regional Active Spaces Plan (WRASP) focuses on the ongoing provision of a network of facilities, spaces and places for play, active recreation and sport that are affordable and accessible to meet the changing needs of participation for people and communities in the Waikato region. The

WRASP continues to provide sound and expert guidance to facilities, spaces and places planning in the region.

In the 2022-23-year engagement among Councils with the WRASP has been high, with several Councils relying heavily on support from Sport Waikato to advance key recommendations of the WRASP along with advancement of planning towards the development of the 4th edition of the plan.

Two planning forums with Council technical managers were held, with all Councils sending representatives, along with three in-person workshops with regional funders, venue managers and regional sporting organisations to help plan regional priorities.



Regional and national relationships with the Ministry of Education continue to be formed through facility development priority projects (Gallagher Recreation Centre, Matamata Community Recreational Hub and Hamilton Indoor Courts), while Sport Waikato has led the (ongoing) advocacy for a much needed Regional Rate to advance regional investment into infrastructure of need via presentations at the CE and Mayoral Forums and at a Waikato Regional Council long term planning workshop. Key feedback from Council Partners assessing the impact of the Plan and Sport Waikato's support included the following:

*“Aided with conversations with clubs and organisations who have aspirational plans on our park network”*

*“Provided guidance and a chance to collaborate on projects with neighbouring councils”*

*“The plan has assisted with providing confidence to make major capital investment decisions and to use the plan to assist with fundraising”*

*“Plan has helped guide the direction in our internal strategic documents (Play strategy)”*

**“Sport Waikato’s support for our district has been outstanding. The Indoor Stadium project would not have progressed had it not been for Sport Waikato’s support in all aspects, including fundraising”**

All facility development initiatives prioritised in the 2021 edition of WRASP in years 1-3 are currently underway:

## 2021 Facility Developments

| Facility Developments   | Years  | Focus on built facility developments, redevelopments, feasibility studies   | Key Partners  | Progress   |
|---|--------|---|---|--|
| <b>Indoor Court Provision   4-5 Court Facility</b><br><br><b>HAMILTON</b> | 1-3yrs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploration of future site options, optimal community access and secure key community partner/s. Decision on preferred option made</li> <li>Feasibility and business case for future indoor court provision undertaken that considers a wide range of users</li> </ul> | Hamilton City Council, Neighbouring Territorial Local Authorities, Key Sports Codes, Community and Education Partners and Iwi | Exploration of future site options completed as part of Hamilton Indoor Court and Aquatic Provision Report – August 2023 |
|   | 3-5yrs | Construct new indoor recreation centre  |   | Not yet underway (Years – 3-5)   |
| <b>Indoor Court Provision   2 Court Facility</b><br><br><b>WAITOMO</b>    | 1-3yrs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project into final design and build phase. Continue to support decisions regarding ownership and governance</li> </ul>   | Waitomo District Council, Te Kuiti High School, MoE and Iwi   | Completed - Gallagher Recreation Centre Opened in February 2023  |



| Facility Developments         | Years  | Focus on built facility developments, redevelopments, feasibility studies   | Key Partners   | Progress   |
|-------------------------------|--------|---|--|--|
| Future Sports Field Provision | 1-3yrs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align specific future sports field provision to the key 2020 Sports Field Study recommendations of individual councils</li> <li>Increase capacity of fields through provision of targeted flood lighting, reallocation of users, improved turf management or multi-use artificial turf (cost benefit required for each)</li> </ol>   | <p>Collaboration of all Territorial Local Authorities</p> <p>Relevant Sporting Codes, MOE, Iwi</p> | <p>Ongoing. Hamilton City Council progressed partnership funding approach to sport field lighting across 20 fields and 5 parks which began rollout in 2023 in line with FIFA world cup.</p> <p>Sub-Regional Artificial Turf Study completed in July 2023 across Hamilton, Waikato District and Waipa. Learnings to be applied at regional level in 4th edition of WRASP</p> <p>Sport Field Masterplanning occurred across the following districts/towns in collaboration with Sport Waikato</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pokeno</li> <li>- Cambridge</li> <li>- Otorohanga</li> <li>- Te Kuiti</li> <li>- Morrinsville</li> <li>- Hamilton</li> <li>- Taupo</li> </ul> |
|                               | 1-5yrs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand supply of fields in targeted growth areas of Hamilton, North Waikato and Waipa Districts. Support required land acquisition and identify partnership opportunities. Establish Community/School Use Agreements and ensure additional supply compliments and maintains a regional network approach</li> <li>Explore and/or facilitate investigation into future collaborative field provision for the wider Waikato region</li> </ol> |  | <p>Ongoing. Evidence of expanded supply through land purchase agreement in Hamilton, Waikato District and Waipa across key growth cells</p>  |

| Facility Developments                                | Years  | Focus on built facility developments, redevelopments, feasibility studies  | Key Partners  | Progress   |
|--|--------|--|---|--|
| <b>Community Aquatic Facility</b><br><b>HAMILTON</b> | 1-3yrs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional indoor capacity required in Hamilton City. Options paper to be undertaken within 1-3yrs. Decision on preferred option made that includes space for play, active recreation and sport use</li> </ul>  | Hamilton City Council   | Exploration of future site options completed as part of Hamilton Indoor Court and Aquatic Provision Report – August 2023.  |
| <b>Waikato Cycle Network</b>                         | 1-3yrs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Hamilton to Cambridge section of Te Awa cycleway</li> </ul>  | Collaboration of all Territorial Local Authority, Waikato Regional Council, MOE, NZTA, Iwi, Sport Waikato | Complete (65km trail fully opened to public in March 2023)   |
|  | 1-5yrs | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for growth in cycling infrastructure, promotion, access and benefits through the Regional Land Transport Plan</li> <li>Support the development of a connected, boundary-less regional cycling network. Investigate opportunities where gaps are identified in any Districts</li> </ol> |   | <p>Continue to work with councils on their spatial and town concept planning projects (Waipa, Waikato DC, Otorohanga, Waitomo, South Waikato) along with providing feedback on connectivity and reserve management plan strategies across the region. Through these avenues Sport Waikato continue to advocate for the need for increased investment into a connected, boundary-less regional cycling network.</p> <p>Supported Thames Coromandel and Hauraki trail collective and Otorohanga District Development Board with sub-regional trail planning.</p> |

| Facility Developments  | Years   | Focus on built facility developments, redevelopments, feasibility studies   | Key Partners   | Progress   |
|--|---------|---|--|--|
| <b>Gymsport   Optimisation / Regional Hub</b>                    | 1-3 yrs | 6. Options explored for optimisation of community clubs and a Regional Gymsport Hub using the Regional Gymsport Plan to guide decisions | Hamilton City, Matamata-Piako, Waipa and Waikato District Councils and Gymnastics NZ | Working with Gymnastics NZ and two Hamilton City clubs around optimisations of and future development opportunities including development at Eastlink Hub current regional home for tennis and badminton and inline hockey.  |
|  | 3-5yrs  | · New or repurposed facility/s built/developed. Consider combining into a hub with the 4-5 court facility                               |  | Not yet progressed   |
| <b>Sub Regional Aquatic Facility</b><br><b>THAMES COROMANDEL</b> | 3-5yrs  | · Complete a business case to determine appropriate Sub Regional need. Waikato Regional Aquatics Plan (2017) to inform decision making  | Thames Coromandel District Council and Neighbouring Territorial Local Authorities    | Consultant engaged to complete Needs Assessment, Feasibility and Business Case centred around future sport precinct development and Thames Pool replacement. Needs Analysis completed in December 2022, with Feasibility Report due in December 2023. Hauraki Council are represented on the project steering group looking at the sub-regional landscape around aquatics. |

Work continues, through partnership with Sport New Zealand, Waikato Regional Council, and the region's Territorial Local Authorities, on the regional Natural Bodies of Water Plan designed to provide a network plan of natural bodies of water (lakes, rivers, oceans) accessible for a range of user groups including on-water activities (rowing, kayaking, sailing, waka ama, dragon boating) that includes information about water quality and site management. The plan is anticipated to be finalised in Q1 2024 and will provide Councils with key information and recommendations for future planning.

## PLAY

Sport Waikato advocates for play opportunities for tamariki in a range of settings - including communities and education - and defines play as much broader than the use of formal play infrastructure (e.g., playgrounds).

Play is freely chosen activities with no predetermined outcome. Play is spontaneous, fun, accessible, challenging, social, repeatable and occurring anywhere at any time. Play for tamariki is personally directed with limited or no adult involvement but can also be undertaken together by whaanau.

Play can occur anywhere, including facilities, spaces and places for sport and active recreation (e.g., parks, gullies, waterways and open spaces for tree climbing or kicking a ball), as well as 'playing on the way' and neighbourhood play in streets and on footpaths.

to discuss play, the opportunities to change mindsets and to think about play through a different lens.

We have also focussed on activating play opportunities across district communities. In partnership with Hamilton City Council, there has been an activation of a Play Trailer specifically to support the Ulster Street (emergency housing) community.

As a tool, this play project aims to bring Ulster Street families and children together for positive productive and playful activities, while also building positive relationships with the community group activating the resource.

This play trailer will enable a mobile storage solution with high durability and functionality without requiring the motels or local community groups to provide a space for play equipment. Rather than providing a high-cost space that caters to the need of only one demographic (e.g.



Over the past 12 months, Sport Waikato staff have continued to work with Councils to ensure play is considered as part of local planning and as a result, we have seen a number of Councils consider playable environments in their Town Concept planning.

Sport Waikato has engaged with Councils to support the development of Play Champions among Council staff to help them become internal advocates for influencing positive impacts for Play.

There have been specific play workshops within Hamilton City Council, Waipa District Council and Waikato District Council, bringing together people from across various business units

(basketball court), the trailer can hold items that support a range of needs and desires.



## TU MANAWA ACTIVE AOTEAROA FUND

A total of \$1,869,441 was distributed by Sport Waikato for the 2022-23 financial year to a range of successful Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa Fund applicants across the region, who have committed to work alongside us to make our region more active.

We prioritise applications that take innovative approaches to engage our priority groups in quality play, active recreation and sport experiences that create a life-long love of being active.

The Tū Manawa fund is used in the Waikato as a vehicle for the success of our goal, which is to get 75% of the Waikato region active by 2030. This fund removes barriers for our geographically isolated communities, an important thing for a region that is so wide-spread and diverse.

Above all, it enables the creation of opportunities for some of our most vulnerable participants and those who tend to miss out to get more tamariki and rangatahi being active in ways that meet their needs.

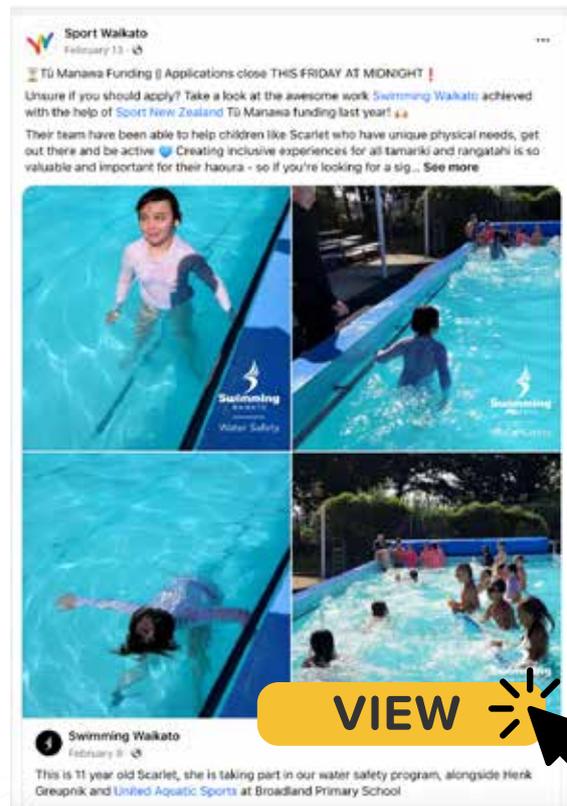
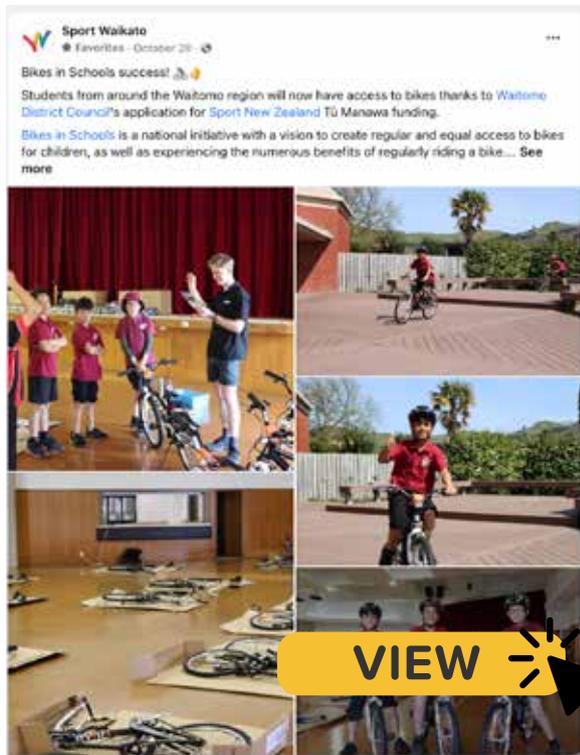
Sport Waikato received 294 applications in the 2022/2023 year, from which 157 were approved.

Applications categorised as 'Active Recreation' projects made up 54% (84 total) of approved applications.

It is clear there has been a rise in the need for Active Recreation opportunities in the Waikato; in the 2021-2022 financial year there were only 47 successful applications in this space. 57 applications (36%) were focused on supporting 'sport', with a total of \$813,162 distributed to encourage participation in a wide range of codes. \$204,821 of the fund was approved across sixteen organisations who prioritised 'play' in their initiatives, making up 10% of the total that was distributed.

In the last year, Sport Waikato has seen the Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa Fund support collaborative projects between RSOs and schools, and projects that were formed through co-design, with organisations using 'Voice of the Participant' (VoP) to reinforce where the gaps are in the Waikato for our participants to be physically active.

We are committed to continue to use this fund to fill those gaps, meet the needs of our community, and encourage those who are less active to give something new a try.



# WAIKATO SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION AWARDS

January 2023 saw the fourth edition of the Waikato Sport & Active Recreation Awards held again at Claudelands Event Centre in Hamilton.

With the awards focused around celebrating innovation, collaboration and achievement, there were over 100 nominations with 21 finalists selected by a judging panel. Finalists and their key supporters were invited to attend Let's Move Waikato, a networking event attended by Sport Waikato's key stakeholders from around the region.

This was the first time that we have had both finalists and stakeholders in the same room - in 2022 the event was reduced to under 100 people with a change in alert levels due to Covid-19.

With MC Jenny-May Clarkson at the helm, it was an incredible night of celebration and connection. Guest Speakers, Black Fern champions Ruahei Demant and Kennedy Simon were a favourite with the crowd, and their humble and authentic interview lead by Jenny-May was a fantastic moment between winner announcements.

The awards evening is a highlight for finalists who come from around the region - often these people have never had an opportunity to be recognised for the work that they do to keep our communities active.

From inclusive opportunities that help participants overcome barriers to participation, to new concept sports run in schools to grow participation outside of traditional sports, to initiatives being taken out to the local communities to alleviate barriers like travel, the ways our nominees have been able to grow participation and create a great experience is outstanding.

This year's nominations for 2023 have again reached a new high - with over 120 nominations received. All finalists have now been announced and the planning is underway for the 2023 Waikato Sport & Active Recreation Awards evening being held in February 2024 where winners will be announced.

February's event will feature MC and local legend Honey Hireme-Smiler with guest speaker still to be announced.



“

**We are seeing some absolutely incredible initiatives being delivered around the region in local communities that really change the way we get active. The people behind the scenes, the initiatives developed, the spaces and places we get active and the way in which they are delivered are creating fun experiences which will keep people coming back - building a lifelong love of being active. And that's what it's all about.**

”

**VIEW NOMINATIONS**



## 2022 WINNERS



Sport Waikato CE Matthew Cooper



Get Waikato Swimming & Life Jacket Hub  
(Sport & Active Recreation Partnership)



Wahine Toa Secondary School Program  
(Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion)



Super Smash Hubs (ND Cricket)  
(Outstanding Active Space Initiative)



Axilia Tricking & Parafed - Joint Winners  
(Commitment to Youth Engagement)



Sandy Schaare  
(Community Coach)



Andrew Langman  
(Community Unsung Hero)



Whitianga Skate School  
(Community Connection)

# REGIONAL PROJECTS

## WAIKATO REGIONAL WATER SAFETY STRATEGY



Over the past year, Sport Waikato has been working alongside a group of key regional and national organisation representatives in the formation of the Waikato Regional Water Safety Strategy. National drowning statistics consistently see the Waikato in the top three regions for preventable drownings, a regional challenge important for us to overcome given the affinity our people and communities have with both active recreation and natural bodies of water.

The group, comprised of leaders from Water Safety NZ, two Local Authorities (delegated by the Waikato Territorial Authority CE Forum), the Waikato Regional Council, Swimming Waikato, Waikato Tainui, Ministry of Education and Sport Waikato, has focused on developing a regional strategy and action plan with interventions into the key areas of 'education', 'community' and 'regional advocacy'. The group believes that by working together as an inter-agency collective, we can influence more widespread efforts to grow water safety awareness and reduce drowning rates in the region. The strategy launched on Dec 1st and is the first of its kind, nationally.

### HORIZON ONE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND FOCUSES



## GROWING CONNECTIONS through play, active recreation, sport and curriculum

This year, Sport Waikato hosted a sector conference called 'Growing Connections Through Play, Active Recreation, Sport and Curriculum'. The event was designed to bring education, sport, recreation and health together to look at new ways of leading change in physical activity delivery for tamariki and rangatahi in the Waikato. With 270 registrants, the day featured two keynote speakers and 12 breakout sessions with topics spanning leadership, coaching, education in the outdoors, talent identification, play, youth advocacy and technology.

Feedback from the day has been overwhelmingly positive, with attendees enjoying the opportunity to engage, collaborate and network in an interagency and cross-sectorial capacity.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE REVENUE AND EXPENSES

For the year ended 30 June 2023

|  | NOTES | 2023<br>\$000    | 2022<br>\$000    |
|--|-------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Revenue from non-exchange transactions</b>                          |       |                  |                  |
| Sport NZ grants  |       | 1,786,858        | 1,930,386        |
| Other Government grants  |       | 1,319,500        | 1,300,000        |
| Lion Foundation grant  |       | 120,000          | 115,000          |
| Other grants   | 5     | 968,564          | 704,049          |
| Trust Waikato donations  |       | 750,000          | 750,000          |
| Events and activities  |       | 92,239           | 46,868           |
|  |       | <b>5,037,161</b> | <b>4,846,303</b> |
| <b>Revenue from exchange transactions</b>                              |       |                  |                  |
| Events and activities  |       | -                | 1,710            |
| Dividends  |       | 85,626           | 80,261           |
| Interest   |       | 181,445          | 69,716           |
| Unrealised gain/(loss) on investments                                  |       | 270,835          | (512,000)        |
| Realised gain/(loss) on investments                                    |       | (13,519)         | (17,268)         |
| Other operating revenue  |       | 95,240           | 93,439           |
|  |       | <b>619,626</b>   | <b>(284,141)</b> |
| <b>Total revenue from exchange transactions</b>                        |       | <b>619,626</b>   | <b>(284,141)</b> |
| <b>Total revenue</b>   |       | <b>5,656,788</b> | <b>4,562,162</b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>  |       |                  |                  |
| Employee related costs   |       | 3,177,024        | 3,024,736        |
| Events and activities  |       | 709,913          | 278,897          |
| Depreciation   | 11    | 58,885           | 66,667           |
| Loss on Sale of Fixed Assets   |       | 22,867           | -                |
| Amortisation   | 12    | 2,981            | 7,296            |
| Audit Fees   |       | 22,169           | 22,060           |
| Other operating expenses   | 6     | 935,464          | 876,784          |
|  |       | <b>4,929,303</b> | <b>4,276,440</b> |
| <b>Total expenses</b>  |       | <b>4,929,303</b> | <b>4,276,440</b> |
| <b>Total surplus/(deficit) for the year from continuing operations</b> |       | <b>727,485</b>   | <b>285,722</b>   |
| <b>Total comprehensive revenue and expenses for the year</b>           |       | <b>727,485</b>   | <b>285,722</b>   |

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2023

|  | NOTES | 2023<br>\$000    | 2022<br>\$000    |
|--|-------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Current Assets</b>                          |       |                  |                  |
| Cash and cash equivalents                      | 8     | 1,328,560        | 1,649,168        |
| GST  |       | 23,186           | 91,598           |
| Investments                                    | 9     | 2,662,936        | 2,611,602        |
| Prepayments                                    |       | 31,609           | 30,353           |
| Receivables from exchange transactions         | 10    | 91,075           | 15,088           |
| Receivables from non-exchange transactions     | 10    | 410,740          | 409,076          |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>                    |       | <b>4,548,106</b> | <b>4,806,885</b> |
| <b>Non-current Assets</b>                      |       |                  |                  |
| Intangible assets                              | 12    | 994              | 3,974            |
| Investments                                    | 9     | 4,856,369        | 4,549,366        |
| Property plant and equipment                   | 11    | 387,140          | 162,314          |
| <b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>                |       | <b>5,244,503</b> | <b>4,715,654</b> |
| <b>Total assets</b>                            |       | <b>9,792,609</b> | <b>9,522,539</b> |
| <b>Current liabilities</b>                     |       |                  |                  |
| Trade and other creditors                      | 13    | 136,899          | 191,972          |
| Employee entitlements                          |       | 267,959          | 255,747          |
| Income in advance                              |       | 551,503          | 966,058          |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b>               |       | <b>956,362</b>   | <b>1,413,777</b> |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>                       |       | <b>956,362</b>   | <b>1,413,777</b> |
| <b>Net assets</b>                              |       | <b>8,836,247</b> | <b>8,108,762</b> |
| <b>Equity</b>                                  |       |                  |                  |
| Trust Fund                                     |       | 1,500,000        | 1,500,000        |
| Accumulated comprehensive revenue and expenses |       | 7,336,247        | 6,608,762        |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                            |       | <b>8,836,247</b> | <b>8,108,762</b> |

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements (full financial statements available on our website). Signed for and on behalf of the Board of Trustees who authorised these financial statements for issue on 6th December 2023:

  
Matthew Cooper  
Chief Executive

  
Phil Taylor  
Board of Trustees Chair



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