



**Waikato  
wellbeing  
project**

Hinonga  
toiora o  
Waikato

Research . Knowledge . Storytelling

# BUSINESS PLAN

2024-25



# Our whakatauki

Mā te whakaatu, ka mōhio  
Mā te mōhio, ka mārama  
Mā te mārama, ka mātau  
Mā te mātau, ka ora

By discussion, comes knowledge  
By knowledge, comes understanding  
By understanding, comes wisdom  
By wisdom, comes wellbeing



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# Introduction and Background

This business plan sets out the priorities for the Waikato Wellbeing Project (WWP) for the next 12 months (May 2024-April 2025). The plan reflects work by the WWP project team and Kaitiaki Advisory Board, conversations with funders, Manu Taki and project stakeholders in 2023 and early 2024.

The business plan builds on our core strategic direction (the “what”) and sets out how the project will continue to respond to this and apply its resources to create value (the “how”). Each initiative will be planned and implemented according to the agreed schedule, with regular updates to the Kaitiaki Advisory Board, our co-funders and key stakeholders.

## The plan:

- Introduces the Waikato Wellbeing Project and our Theory of Change.
- Provides a brief environmental scan of the current context for wellbeing in the Waikato.
- **Strategic priorities** - actions which will create value for our stakeholders and partners.
- **Organisational effectiveness priorities** - actions to ensure that the WWP is able to function effectively and efficiently.
- **Measurement** - a framework for measuring and reporting on our progress, based on our Theory of Change.



## Mō te WWP

### What is the WWP?

The Waikato Wellbeing Project (WWP) is a research, knowledge and storytelling project focused on environmental and social equity in the Waikato.

#### Our Vision:

Our mokopuna are thriving.

#### Our Mission:

To hear our people and transcend their lives through positive impact.

## Mō a mātou mahi

### What do we do?

Our work illuminates the deeper stories of our regional wellbeing challenges, to awhi the real-life initiatives, people and projects imagining, creating and leading positive alternatives to the status quo. The WWP is a suite of integrated focus areas and projects across the region, with the common theme of listening deeply and facilitating impact, through:

- **Research** on the region's pressing social and environmental wellbeing challenges, their upstream causes and innovative ways ahead.

- **Wellbeing knowledge** which brings together existing and new data and information at a range of scales and locations.
- **Storytelling** - shining a light to support the invisible labour which leads to tangible grassroots change in our communities.
- **Advocacy and communications** - sharing the knowledge and insights we have gained and to encourage positive change.

At present, our priority focus areas are on youth | rangatahi, food | kai and understanding of holistic wellbeing at a range of scales across the Waikato. In addition, within our resources, we use our toolkit to support change leaders and Manu Taki across the motu on a range of wellbeing initiatives, including housing, health, waste minimisation, economic development, climate action, river and biodiversity restoration.

The impacts we are aiming to achieve are:

- **Better informed** policy, funding and services in the Waikato.
- **Whānau voice** being heard - communities empowered and supported to make decisions about their future.
- **More effective support and resources** for communities and those working in the social, environmental and community sectors.
- **Collective wellbeing leadership** across all sectors of our communities.



## Mō te āhua o a mātou mahi How do we work?

For us, it's all about listening to whānau voice and amplifying insights for impact. We are researchers and enablers - using innovative tools to facilitate dialogue, data and insight generation and storytelling that all help to enact positive change.

We bring diverse groups together to create connections and synergies, highlight what resources are already available to support groups or organisations undertaking the work, facilitate conversations across organisational areas.

We uncover the wisdom and knowledge that is already present in our whānau and communities, augmented with the additional insights we contribute. We work alongside community, philanthropic funding and for purpose organisations so they can create positive wellbeing impacts.

## Mō a mātou hoa mahi Who do we work with?

We go where there is mana, mandate and tika. We seek out those with energy for change and an invitation for us to join the kōrero. We listen to understand the challenge or the opportunity, and partner to work

alongside and support local leaders. We work with wellbeing leaders, groups and organisations to connect, access relevant data, develop vision and support leaders to work more collectively.

## Mō mātou Who we are?

The WWP team is contractors, volunteer community allies and an advisory board of kaitiaki who work collectively to disrupt and influence the status quo. Our Manu Taki is a multi-talented choir of more than 30 wellbeing practitioners and champions whose work across the community exemplifies the purpose of the WWP.

Our diversity is our strength. Each of us brings a different and complementary skill set and world view ensuring that different perspectives are contributed to our wellbeing challenges. The magic is the synergy we create - unique insights from multiple difference perspectives, looking beyond the obvious and listening for voices, data and stories otherwise unheard or ignored.

## Mō te pūtea tautoko How are we funded?

The Waikato Wellbeing Project was initiated by the WEL Energy Trust and the Waikato Regional Council (WRC) in 2019. WEL and the WRC remain our most significant supporters today.

We also have co-funders for our projects. Trust Waikato is the major funder of our wellbeing knowledge initiative Te Ara Poutama. Our Rangatahi Opportunity was co-funded by the Ministry of Education and the Glenis and John Gallagher Foundation. Ebbett Toyota have been a key member of our funding family since 2021 through vehicle sponsorship.



# Theory of Change

A Theory of Change describes the strategies, actions, conditions and resources that facilitate change and achieve outcomes. It explains how particular activities or actions will lead to particular outcomes. In a simple sense, it is an “if: then” explanation of what we do and how it works.

Our Theory of Change builds on the vision, mission, purpose and goals of the WWP, and helps to identify what action we will take to contribute to these. It helps to clarify what value we will add, how we will work as well as framing our stakeholders’ expectation of our impact.

Our Theory of Change also provides the framework for how we measure our progress and value. Our measurement framework is set out in the implementation section of this plan.

## Our Mission:

To hear our people and transcend their lives through positive impact

Here’s how we do it...

If, based on these values and principles

- Kaitiakitanga
- Kotahitanga
- Manaakitanga
- Equity
- Inclusiveness
- Sustainability
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We use these tools and resources

- Poutoko | Research
- Te Ara Poutama | Knowledge
- He Pakipūmeka | Storytelling
- Waha | Advocacy

To undertake these activities

- **Research** on the pressing wellbeing challenges for the region, their upstream causes and innovative ways ahead.
- **Wellbeing knowledge** which brings together existing and new information and knowledge at a range of scales and locations.
- **Storytelling** - through Lots of Little Fires, shining a light to support the invisible labour which leads to tangible grassroots change in our communities.
- **Advocacy and communications** - sharing the knowledge and insights we have gained and to encourage positive change.

Which will achieve these outputs

- **Deeper insight and awareness** of upstream causes and breakthrough opportunities for our wellbeing challenges.
- **Accessible and relevant wellbeing knowledge** which communities and decision-makers can use to achieve change.
- **Raised awareness** of the hidden realities and leaders embedded in our marginalised communities and environments.
- **Greater collaboration** about wellbeing in the Waikato and what/who makes a difference.

And facilitate these outcomes

- **Better informed** policy, funding and services in the Waikato.
- **Waikato peoples are empowered and supported** to make informed choices for their present and future wellbeing.
- **More effective support and resources** for communities and those working in the social, environmental and community sectors.
- **Collective wellbeing leadership** across all sectors of our communities.

...Contributing positively towards

## Our Vision:

Our mokopuna are thriving



**Waikato wellbeing project** | Hinonga toiora o Waikato  
Research . Knowledge . Storytelling



# Environmental Scan

It's now five years since the Waikato Wellbeing Project was developed. Since then, there have been some significant contextual changes, both in terms of the state of wellbeing in the region and the institutional and policy context (at all scales).

**Some observations:**

- According to the Waikato Progress Indicators, since 2006 the most notable positive wellbeing trends over this period are in areas of building activity, road safety, air quality, incomes, educational attainment, regional GDP growth, voter turnout, recycling, soil quality, perceptions of safety and life expectancy.
- The largest negative wellbeing trends over this period include poorer perceptions of community engagement, less use of public transport, more waste to landfill, higher water use, lower frequency of physical activity, lower perceptions of cultural respect, and more residential expansion onto highly productive land.
- While real GDP per capita has generally increased over the past decade, overall community wellbeing as measured using the WPI indicators and as also shown in Te Ara Poutama, increased at a slower pace and has slightly declined in recent years.

[Research](#) commissioned by the WEL Energy Trust in 2023 based on engagement with Waikato community and funding organisations, noted the following strengths/positives and challenges:

## Strengths:

- Waikato communities genuinely care for others within the community.
- The community is also seen as relatively generous, often demonstrated by the gift of time, money, or goods from community members to local charities
- The association with te ao Māori. The area's history provides a strong connection within the community both to the physical space and through a shared understanding of belonging.

## Challenges:

- **Housing:** This is a complex area and is a pinch point for many providers; there are several layers to the issue:
  - **Financial stress:** Some parts of the community are forced to prioritise housing needs over spending on food, special occasions, car repairs, etc.
  - **Overcrowding:** Some participants report increases in overcrowding with multiple whānau members moving in together, placing added pressure on whānau relationships, especially if the house size is insufficient.
  - **Emergency and transitional housing:** Nearly all participants mention the increasing number of people in emergency and transitional housing, particularly in Kirikiriroa Hamilton City's Ulster Street.



- **Growing food insecurity:** Participants note they have seen an increase in the number and frequency of food requests from the community. When people reach out for food, they are generally also experiencing other hardships.
- **Anti-social behavior:** With the financial pressures many households face, providers report increased episodes of antisocial behaviour, e.g., substance abuse, domestic violence, physical abuse, and decreased mental health. There is a perception of increased crime with specific mentions of ram raids and car theft.
- **Disconnection from the community:** Some participants mention there is still an acute impact of COVID-19 in their community, particularly amongst older community members, with many continuing to harbour concerns about leaving the house and engaging with others in large public spaces.

Across the region, some other policy and institutional factors which may be relevant to wellbeing in the Waikato for 2024-25 include:

- The change in government will see current legislative work on the Resource Management Act 1991 and water reform stopped and replaced. Implementing any substantive changes arising from the [future of local government](#) is not likely to be a high priority, however funding for local government, especially infrastructure (CAPEX, OPEX), will continue to be a major challenge, putting pressure on council balance sheets and rates.

- Te Pukenga will be [disestablished](#), and independent polytechnics (re)created. Work will be undertaken to clarify the business case for a third medical school at the University of Waikato.
- The relationship between Māori and the Crown, and the role of the Treaty of Waitangi | Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles in contemporary New Zealand will undergo a period of uncertainty and change, with the scale and direction of that currently uncertain. The role of co-governance will be a key point of discussion.
- The number of councils in the Waikato is likely to remain largely the same, although collaboration on shared services (for example CoLAB) and cross-boundary strategies/action plans will continue as councils seek to manage the dynamics of growth and seek greater efficiencies. A regional scale spatial strategy, led by WRC may emerge. Work will also be undertaken on a possible regional/city deal with government.
- Funding for wellbeing initiatives will become tighter as funders (central and local government, philanthropic organisations) are themselves under greater funding pressure and calls to fund front line services, especially in the social wellbeing space, increase.



# 2024-25 Priority Areas

## A. Strategic Priorities

These priorities have been organised by our strategic framework and reflect current and proposed commitments. We have identified the critical few initiatives we are able to undertake in 2024-25 within current budget, however co-funding will be sought to support and where relevant enhance our current scope of work.

This will mean we focus on fewer project areas (especially in Poutoko | Major Projects) and aim to have great impact in these areas. In all cases, the WWP:

- Will not duplicate and will partner with others to fill agreed gaps and/or opportunities.
- Will not compete for funding in a way which takes resources away from front-line delivery.
- Will work within our mandate.



### **Tuatahi: Poutoko Major Projects**

- a) The major project areas for 2024-25 is the Waikato Kai Challenge (SDG 1,2) with support for follow up opportunities in the areas of youth employability and homelessness. The key deliverables for the next 12 months will be:
- Food system indicators prepared report by Te Ngira (University of Waikato).
  - Baseline foodshed analysis report (with Waikato Regional Council).
  - Baseline food system description report.



### **Tuarua: Te Ara Poutama Waikato Wellbeing Knowledge Initiative**

- b) The anticipated major project area for 2024-25 is to support Huber Social and our partners in the Hauraki rohe to complete the Hauraki Wellbeing assessment.
- c) We will also explore opportunities to increase wellbeing knowledge and understanding in the futureproof area (Waipā, Hamilton, Waikato and Matamata-Piako districts) and South/Southern Waikato.
- d) We will also continue to update our wellbeing knowledge databases and will explore with WRC and others, opportunities to update the regional wellbeing targets and goals as part of a regional Spatial Strategy.

- e) We have partnered with YWCA, Trust Waikato and WEL Energy Trust to better understand gender equality Waikato (SDG 5).
- f) We will ensure that the updated WHI housing stocktake update is widely shared.
- g) To ensure that Te Ara Poutama fully meets its strategic goals, we will to search for a suitably qualified person to lead this initiative in 2024-25.



### **Tuatoru: Pakipūmeka Lots of Little Fires**

- h) The anticipated major project areas for 2024 are:
- To release the final two stories captured in 2023.
  - To capture and release a summary/ reflections video of Season 1, highlighting the insights and positive wellbeing impacts of Lots of Little Fires.
  - To commence a new round of stories for 2024- with the aim to undertake at least another 10 by December.
- i) We will search for co-funding opportunities that will allow us to continue and grow the initiative, while remaining true to its unique kaupapa and high level of editorial oversight and production quality.



### **Tuawhā: Waha Advocacy**

- j) We will continue to advocate for the vision, mission and goals of the WWP through a targeted advocacy and communications programme, ensuring that whānau voice is heard.
- k) We will continue to take opportunities to advocate for the WWP's outcomes through statutory and non-statutory advocacy.



### **Tuarima: Waikato**

- l) We will focus on the opportunity to contribute towards the development of a regional spatial strategy which integrates and align with the WWPs wellbeing outcomes, goals and targets.
- m) We will also support any effort to develop a city/regional deal with central government, to the extent that it advances overall wellbeing.

## **B. Organisational Effectiveness Priorities**

The WWP is currently a project with a finite resource. We were established in 2020 with funding for five years from the WEL Energy Trust. The operational phase of the project commenced in January 2021, so we are currently in year 4 of 5.

Our project has been managed to ensure that we remain within the funding parameters provided and we have sought additional funding from other partners. Trust Waikato has provided significant funding support for our regional knowledge initiative Te Ara Poutama.

Based on the programme of work set out in this business plan, and assuming that our partners remain committed to the funding that was agreed in 2020, our funding will allow us to continue until about March 2026. Between now and then, we will work to chart the future course for the project, in particular:

- a) Continue to grow our co-funding especially in relation to the Kai Challenge, Lots of Little Fires to complement funding from WEL Energy Trust.
- b) In partnership with Waikato Regional Council and WEL Energy Trust, undertake a review of the progress being made by the Waikato Wellbeing Project.
- c) Subject to results of the review, undertake discussions with WEL Energy Trust, Waikato Regional Council and other wellbeing funders and investors in the region about funding beyond 2025.
- d) Subject to any decisions arising from the review, call for and select a new Kaitiaki Advisory Board as per the Terms of Reference by September 2024, and update Terms of Reference to include a member rotation process.
- e) Recruit a project lead for Te Ara Poutama.
























































# Implementation

Our measurement and performance framework for 2024-25 is illustrated in the table below.

Our programme of action makes a positive contribution towards our vision and the region's ten wellbeing targets and goals. Led by the WWP and our partners, these were developed and agreed in 2020, based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are shown by the coloured boxes on the right-hand side of the table. The arrows illustrate how the WWP makes a contribution towards these, along with many other people, iwi and agencies in the Waikato and Aotearoa New Zealand. The achievement of these is not the responsibility of any one person or entity, and can only be achieved through collective effort by everybody. To learn more about these targets and goals, please go to: [www.waikatowellbeingproject.co.nz/detailed-targets](http://www.waikatowellbeingproject.co.nz/detailed-targets).

Progress against these actions and metrics will be reported to the Kaitiaki Advisory Board every second month, and to the Waikato Regional Council and WEL Energy Trust every 6 months. A summary report of overall progress for 2024 will be completed by 31 March 2025.

This Business Plan will be kept continually updated through the year. Any substantial changes will be discussed with the Kaitiaki Advisory Board, Waikato Regional Council and WEL Energy Trust.

Resources	2024/25 Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
<b>Poutoko Research</b>	<b>Waikato Kai Challenge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food system indicators report from Te Ngira completed and released by <b>15 June 2024</b></li> <li>Baseline foodshed analysis report by <b>1 September 2024</b></li> <li>Baseline food system description report by <b>1 December 2024</b></li> <li>At least <b>33% co-funding</b> for Kai project confirmed by <b>1 July 2024</b></li> <li>Agreement with funders, manu taki, Kaitiaki, stakeholders and partners on priority research area(s) for 2025/26 by <b>1 September 2024</b></li> </ul>	<b>Insight &amp; Awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kai data webinar (with Te Ngira) and updates to website page by <b>30 June 2024</b></li> <li>A further 2 project progress webinars by <b>1 February 2025</b></li> <li>A final report and public seminar/webinar on the Kai Challenge which summarises the results and findings and recommendations of the Kai Challenge by <b>1 March 2025</b></li> <li>Kai Project related news articles and webinars hosted on the website to receive over <b>300 views per quarter</b></li> <li>Maintain average engagement rate on social media of <b>9% (target of 12%)</b></li> </ul>	<b>Better informed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post project evidence and feedback from Waikato kai organisations and stakeholders that the kai challenge has positively impacted:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy</li> <li>Funding and</li> <li>Services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	          
<b>Te Ara Poutama Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing stock take completed by <b>15 May 2024</b></li> <li>Circularising organics report completed by <b>1 June 2024</b></li> <li>YWCA wellbeing for woman report completed by <b>1 December 2024</b></li> <li>Quarterly district dashboards updated and published quarterly on Te Ara Poutama website</li> <li>Hauraki Wellbeing assessment final report completed by <b>1 March 2025</b></li> <li>At least 5 Te Ara Poutama Oversight Group hui by <b>1 June 2025</b></li> <li>At least <b>66% co-funding</b> for project confirmed by <b>1 May 2024</b></li> <li>Agreement with Te Ara Poutama Advisory Group, funders, Manu Taki, stakeholders and partners on priority knowledge areas for 2024/25 by <b>1 September 2024</b></li> </ul>	<b>Accessible and relevant knowledge</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SDG 1/2, 5, 11 and 12 regional dashboards updated and communicated by <b>1 September 2024</b></li> <li>Housing stocktake report communicated including at least 1 webinar and updated to website by <b>1 July 2024</b></li> <li>Hauraki wellbeing assessment initial findings communicated and shared with all Hauraki wellbeing agencies and stakeholders by <b>1 April 2025</b></li> <li>At least 4 wellbeing knowledge webinars held by <b>1 December 2024</b></li> <li>Progress reports to Trust Waikato as per accountability agreement</li> <li>Te Ara Poutama website page to receive over 600 views per quarter</li> <li>Maintain average engagement rate on social media of <b>9% (target of 12%)</b></li> </ul>	<b>Waikato people are empowered</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from Waikato wellbeing organisations and leaders that Te Ara Poutama has empowered them to make informed choices and decisions especially in relation to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing in the Hauraki rohe</li> <li>Housing</li> <li>Waste reduction and organics</li> <li>Woman's wellbeing</li> <li>District wellbeing knowledge</li> </ul> </li> <li>Revised regional community outcomes/wellbeing statements and framework by <b>1 November 2024</b></li> </ul>	          
<b>He Pakipūmeka Lots of Little Fires</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Season 1 summary by <b>15 May 2024</b></li> <li>Stories 9 and 10 completed and published by <b>1 June 2024</b></li> <li>At least <b>33% co-funding</b> for programme confirmed for season 2 by <b>1 July 2024</b></li> <li>Agreement with LOLF Advisory Group, funders, Manu Taki, stakeholders and partners Season 2, stories planned and confirmed by <b>1 June 2024</b></li> <li>Season 2- at least 10 stories by <b>1 March 2025</b></li> </ul>	<b>Raised awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An average of 15,000 YouTube views per story released</li> <li>At least 10 articles in legacy media (print and digital) which amplify LOLF stories by <b>March 2025</b></li> <li>Lots of Little Fires Website content to receive over <b>500 views per quarter</b></li> <li>Maintain average engagement rate on social media of <b>9% (target of 12%)</b></li> </ul>	<b>More effective support and resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary video which highlights impacts of Season 1 by <b>1 June 2024</b></li> <li>At least 5 evidenced examples of changes and impacts facilitated through Lots of Little Fires seasons 1 and 2 by <b>1 March 2025</b></li> </ul>	          
<b>Waha Advocacy and Comms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>WWP newsletter</b> - 5 yearly</li> <li>Submissions lodged - <b>at least 10 yearly, including at least 3 joint submissions</b> at local, national or international scale which align with our priority areas</li> </ul>	<b>Greater collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 10 joint initiatives between the WWP and other for purpose organisations by <b>1 March 2025</b></li> <li>Contribution to the 2024 SDG Alliance Peoples Report</li> <li>Submissions published on WWP Website to receive 100 views per quarter</li> <li>Maintain average engagement rate on social media of <b>9% (target of 12%)</b></li> </ul>	<b>Collective wellbeing leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence and feedback from Manu Taki, community, for purpose and political leaders in the region and New Zealand that the WWP has positively contributed to greater collective wellbeing leadership</li> </ul>	          
<b>Organisational Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accountability reports and presentations to WEL Energy Trust and WRC <b>May and September 2024</b></li> <li>Annual presentations to Waikato Mayoral Forum and WRC</li> <li>At least 5 Kaitiaki Advisory Board hui May 2024-April 2025</li> <li>At least 2 Manu Taki hui annually</li> <li>Terms of Reference for WWP review agreed by WWP, WEL Trust and WRC by <b>1 June 2024</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual expenditures per program initiatives to date</li> <li>WWP Business Plan published on WWP website by <b>15 May 2024</b></li> <li>WWP managed and delivered within Business Plan budget</li> <li>Overall project co-funding (cash and in-kind) of at least \$1.75m by <b>September 2024</b></li> <li>Review completed by <b>1 September 2024</b></li> <li>Maintain Newsletter Open Rate of <b>40%+ (Target 50%+)</b></li> <li>Maintain Newsletter CTR Rate of <b>7%+ (Target 8%+)</b></li> <li>Maintain Website traffic of <b>2,000+ visitors per quarter</b></li> <li>Maintain average engagement rate on social media of <b>9% (target of 12%)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget projections WWP over the next two years</li> <li>Forward funding profile 2026 onwards</li> <li>Agreement and commitment to future function, form, governance and funding of WWP by <b>1 October 2024</b></li> </ul>	          



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