
Recreation Manifesto 2016/2017

Championing high quality
recreation for the benefit
of New Zealand

NZRA NEW ZEALAND
recreation
ASSOCIATION



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The New Zealand Recreation Association believes recreation is vital to New Zealand society. It is a major contributor to the physical and mental health of individuals, and to the resilience of our communities. A thriving recreation industry can also help our nation prosper socially and economically.

Our role is to champion recreation by raising awareness of the many benefits it provides to individuals and to the nation, and to advocate for ongoing investment in recreation opportunities for New Zealanders.

Recreation is not just about enjoyment. It is about being healthy, engaged and stimulated, having fun, and interacting with others, whether through outdoor recreation, community recreation, or aquatic and facility-based recreation.

We work at an agency, industry and professional level to build capability, develop partnerships, and equip individuals and organisations with the skills they need to deliver high quality recreation experiences that engage participants.

Our vision is that in 2020 New Zealand has a strong recreation industry that meets the needs of current and future participants, so that through recreation, New Zealanders are active, healthy, and connected.

Membership

The New Zealand Recreation Association's membership is made up of recreation policy makers, territorial local authorities, voluntary organisations, regional sports trusts and Department of Conservation employees.

Other members include commercial leisure providers, recreation planners, facility managers, programme and event managers, community arts leaders, outdoor recreation businesses, and others involved in the delivery of recreation in New Zealand.

Working together for recreation



So much of the work we do to promote recreation is collaborative. We rely on our partnerships with local government, outdoor organisations, and other agencies. Our successes depend in great part on our outreach.

Recently, we surveyed NZRA members and other stakeholders within our industry to obtain a clearer sense of how we are tracking. We wanted to know whether we are still focusing on the right priorities, and where our future efforts should lie.

The feedback we received reflects our own commitment to keep building partnerships, and to be more visible. We'll continue to advocate for small and big organisations, build on our research to anticipate future trends, and provide support to industry members where it's needed.

The two surveys we carried out also confirmed that we must keep working towards a culture where government understands that investment in the industry is about much more than providing leisure opportunities. It's about strengthening our communities.

As our cities get bigger and busier, we need to make sure the people living within them continue to have access to quality parks and open spaces. We need to help under-served local communities by providing more quality opportunities for them to get out, live healthy lives and interact with others. We need to instill a love and respect for recreation in schools, so that future generations will thrive. We need to understand technology and use it to our advantage.

We have our work cut out for us, but we're invigorated by the energy and commitment of our stakeholders. Together, we can go a long way.

Last year, we developed the Recreation Manifesto to outline the priorities for the recreation industry. This revised and updated version reflects the current environment, and stakeholder feedback. We will continue to sound out the industry to ensure we are on track and focusing on what matters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Leslie'.

Ngā mihi nui,
Andrew Leslie - Chief Executive

Priority

1

Greater recognition of the economic and social value of recreation

Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. This, in turn, makes communities stronger.

A society in which people are active and healthy is also more economically sound. Inactivity can be expensive. The total cost of physical inactivity to New Zealand was \$1.3 billion for 2010¹. Physical inactivity is associated with loss of productivity, health costs, as well as associated costs such as pain and suffering.

Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole.



Inactivity is expensive

The cost of physical inactivity was \$402 million for the Auckland region, \$106 million for the Waikato region, and \$141 million for the Wellington region.²



Fighting the bulge

Research indicates that walking and cycling for transport helps lower the risk of being overweight and obese, and of developing type 2 diabetes.³

1. Waikato Regional Council, Auckland Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council. The costs of physical inactivity: toward a regional full-cost accounting perspective. www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Costs-of-Physical-Inactivity

2. Ibid

3. New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities, University of Otago. Benchmarking cycling and walking in six New Zealand cities, Pilot study 2015. <http://sustainablecities.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Benchmarking-cycling-and-walking-in-six-NZ-cities.pdf>

Priority

2

Grow local and central government investment in recreation

As many as 2.5 million New Zealand adults take part in some form of physical activity each week⁴ and most of our international visitors spend at least some time walking and tramping.⁵ Government has a critical part to play in ensuring people continue to enjoy quality recreation opportunities. These need to be available to everyone, regardless of age, fitness level or socio-economic background.

Planners need to adopt a long-term approach that takes into account factors such as urbanisation, an ageing population and the rise of tourism, to ensure recreation can continue to thrive amid change. By investing in recreation, government is helping to instill a lasting culture where active living matters.

What government does makes a real difference. The ACTIVE study⁶ found that in areas of activity decline, government and community-led interventions helped reverse the trend. When the infrastructure is in place (such as dedicated cycling lanes), people are more likely to be active.



Gen y on wheels

A 2014 study found that Generation Y New Zealanders (aged 15 to 35) wanted to increase their travel by cycling more than by any other mode.⁷



Outdoor tourism

From June 2012 to July 2013, nine out of ten (88%) of international visitors on holiday/vacation in New Zealand reported they had spent time walking or trekking during their visit.⁸

4. Sport NZ, Active New Zealand Survey 2013/2014, sourced from www.sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/attachments/managing-sport/research/Sport-and-Active-Recreation-in-the-lives-of-New-Zealand-Adults.pdf
5. MBIE, International Visitor Survey (2013). www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/sectors-industries/tourism/tourism-research-data/ivs
6. New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities, The ACTIVE (Activating Communities to Improve Vitality

- and Equality) study, part of the Resilient Urban Futures research programme. sustainablecities.org.nz/resilient-urban-futures/active-study-cycling-and-walking
7. NZ Transport Agency, Public Transport and the Next Generation, 2014. www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/research/reports/569/docs/569.pdf
8. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, International Visitor Survey (2013).

Priority

3

A well-informed recreation workforce with the skills to support and deliver quality, sustainable and safe experiences

A flourishing recreation industry relies on a committed and qualified workforce. According to Skills Active's 2016 report on the recreation and sport industry, the sector employs close to 78,000 people assisted by nearly a million volunteers.⁹

Recreation workers operate in an industry that has high standards and expectations – from participants, operators and regulators. Such levels cannot be met without the full engagement of a workforce that is adequately trained, and rewarded.

Recreation workers need to be well trained in safety, sustainability and education. They need the skills and qualifications best suited to engage with schools on the delivery of education outside the classroom experiences, and to respond and adapt to safety and sustainability standards across the recreation industry as a whole.

As other industries compete for good employees, it is also vital to provide recreation workers with professional development and career opportunities that encourage them to stay in the industry.



Recreation pays

In 2014, recreation and sport contributed about \$4.95 billion to NZ's economy, or 2.3% of NZ's GDP.¹⁰



Business model

The recreation and sport industry is complex and diverse with more than 25,000 operators. On average, operators employed 3.2 people in 2014.¹¹

9. Skills Active, Workforce Scan 2016. www.skillsactive.org.nz/assets/Industry/SARI_Workforce_Scan_2016_WEB.pdf

10. Ibid

11. Ibid

Sector priorities

Outdoor recreation

Increased central and local government understanding of the value of outdoor recreation and the opportunities and challenges created by immigration, tourism, urbanisation and New Zealand's changing demographics.

Outdoor recreation is part of the Kiwi way of life. Opportunities to enjoy our great outdoors allows people to lead healthy lifestyles, connect with nature and gain confidence in themselves. NZRA will continue to champion outcomes that benefit outdoor recreation by supporting members and advocating on the sector's behalf.

Priorities include:

- Improved recognition and provision for recreational activities in Department of Conservation planning documents.
- Increased regard for recreational access in decisions made by Land Information New Zealand during Tenure Review, and during Overseas Investment Office assessments of land purchases by overseas investors.
- Greater awareness of the value of Education Outside the Classroom and better access to public conservation land for education groups, in line with the Department of Conservation's Healthy Nature Healthy People programme.

- Provide a voice for the sector during the review of the Adventure Activities Regulations.
- Greater recognition of the recreational access as a matter of national interest in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management.
- Ensure outdoor access and environmental protections continue to be reflected in the Resource Management Act.

Community recreation

Greater recognition of the role of community recreation in developing, empowering and engaging communities

Community recreation brings people together by enabling each community to identify its recreation issues, interests and needs, and to be proactive in developing active solutions that enhance the wellbeing of the individual and the group. NZRA will continue to advocate for local investment in recreation that supports the provision of quality community recreation spaces.

Priorities include:

- Greater awareness of the links between community recreation and healthy people and communities.
- Clearer career pathways for community recreation workers.

Parks and open spaces

Widespread recognition of the contribution parks and open spaces make to the health and wellbeing of communities and the environment.

As New Zealand's population grows, the quality and accessibility of our parks and open spaces is having a direct impact on quality of life. They provide people with the chance to be active, connect with others and to lead healthier, more balanced lives.

NZRA will continue to support those who work in parks around the country and to advocate for government investment in our green spaces. Areas requiring attention include under-serviced communities, and communication and promotion of research into the beneficial links between recreation and social, physical and mental health.

Priorities include:

- Nationwide promotion of Healthy Nature Healthy People, alongside the Department of Conservation.
- Greater recognition of the benefits of partnerships for recreation development and delivery, and more awareness of partnership models.
- A review of the Reserves Act 1977 to ensure it supports recreation provision in a changing world.

- More awareness of the benefits of innovation and sustainability in recreation.
- Sustained funding for cycleways, Great Rides and associated infrastructure.

Aquatics and recreation facilities

More investment to replace ageing infrastructure, prioritisation of flexible wmulti-partner, multi-use facilities.

NZRA will continue to champion quality facilities in the aquatics sector, and also work with Water Safety NZ and regional bodies to advocate the importance of learning to swim and having strong water survival skills.

Priorities include:

- Greater recognition for lifeguards.
- High quality and safe swimming environments for participants.
- Increased funding to ensure New Zealanders have easy access to learn to swim and water skills programmes at schools or in communities.
- A review of the Pool Water Quality Standard (NZS 5826:2010) to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.



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