



RECAP

www.recap.org.nz

Society for the Resilience and Engagement of the Community of Ashhurst & Pohangina, Inc.

Three-Year Strategic Plan

1 Sept 2015 to 31 August 2018

Approved by RECAP governance, 1 July 2015

Vision Statement

The people of Ashhurst and the Pohangina Valley, in their full diversity, are engaged in activities that strengthen community, deepen sustainability, and enhance resilience. Activities are chosen because they care for people, for the living environment, and for the local ecology. Participation contributes to well-being in the local community and extends educational opportunities for children, youth, and adults from throughout the surrounding region.

Mission Statement

To realise this vision, RECAP will do the following.

1. Develop practical projects, such as our community garden, community orchard, and similar projects, with associated practical learning programmes.
2. Engage in conservation activities and associated education.
3. Offer a range of courses, workshops, and public lectures that provide participation opportunities while developing practical skills to increase sustainability and resilience in the home and community.
4. Support public health initiatives within the limits of our capacity, for example through education on home-grown nutrition.
5. Respond actively to opportunities to cooperate with a wide variety of local organisations, especially schools and organisations serving children and youth. Also be responsive to regional groups with closely aligned purposes, to councils, and to iwi and hapū.
6. Provide tools, such as web-based tools, that increase local connectivity, and share these tools with other community organisations. Provide digital literacy training where required for their full use.
7. Maintain and develop our web services as our key asset for communications, client management, and community connectivity.
8. Purchase and maintain any other tools required for our activities.
9. Create volunteer and participation opportunities suitable to people with diverse skills, interests, and availabilities.
10. Develop organisational sustainability and resilience through strong governance, a sound financial plan, a robust programme of volunteering, and due diligence in health and safety management.
11. Ensure services are accessible to those with limited incomes.
12. Strategically manage organisational growth. Sustain our community-based adult education programme at current levels. With respect to new projects and programmes, give priority to inter-organisational cooperative activities, with a particular emphasis on outreach to children and youth through schools and clubs. Develop new planned projects that promise to increase volunteer participation, extend associated education, and enhance community well-being.

Operational context: **Reasons RECAP is planning for managed growth and for long-term continuity in our services**

RECAP has an established history of steady growth.

RECAP was founded and incorporated in 2010, and registered as a charity in 2014. Over the past five years, we have grown steadily across the following measures.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Number of volunteers engaged	9	20	20	40	50
Number of service hours * At the end of 2013, we began employing a paid casual coordinator. Our 2013-2014 volunteer hours represent a decrease in administrative volunteering combined with a substantial increase in project and governance volunteering.	not recorded	425 volunteer	775 volunteer	700 volunteer* + 222 pd. admin.	730 volunteer + 311 pd. admin.
Number of participants served <i>directly</i> , most notably not including library-led visits of ECE and school children to our garden; also not including a number of hidden and indirect participants.	not recorded	not recorded	200	250	430
Number and variety of participant opportunities available , from short-term to long-term, hands-on to cerebral, in-door and out-door, serving people, planting and building, leadership and planning or well-defined and time-bound tasks, independent or social, and more.					
Number of active, cooperative organisational relationships established with other community groups, with councils, with iwi and hapū, and with schools and ECE groups.					
Number of community members offering to volunteer in governance , with a full and stable board since 2013 and, also in 2013, the establishment of an active planning team advisory to the board. This team provides additional opportunities for community involvement in organisational leadership.					

Continued strategic growth is warranted by demonstrable community need and interest.

1. With increasing regularity, some of our events are standing-room only.
2. Our workshops are frequently fully booked well in advance of their delivery.
3. Our participant workshop evaluations are consistently positive, and these include requests for us to offer more activities.
4. We are receiving increasingly frequent requests to develop projects and offer activities in cooperation with other community organisations.
5. Our local council has approached us with requests that we offer particular services.
6. Our regional council has asked us to participate in a high profile collaborative project.
7. Our service to community has been recognised by Palmerston North City Council's nomination of us for a 2015 Trustpower Community Award. In previous years we have been recognised by nominations by others in the the community.

(organisational context continued on next page)

RECAP needs to combine strategies to better meet the existing demand.

1. We can sustain our services over an extended period of time, so that each year new participants can be involved. This strategy is particularly suitable for our recurring adult education workshops.
2. We can work cooperatively with other organisations to extend our services, especially when cooperation increases our outreach to children and youth.
3. We can grow gradually and sustainability to engage new volunteers and interact with a larger and more diverse segment of our rural village and valley population. This will increase our capacity to work with other organisations as described above, and also our capacity to establish new practical teaching projects and commit to their maintenance.
4. We can add stability to the organisation by placing our coordinator on a part-time (rather than a casual "as funds are available") contract, with a particular view to increasing the consistency of our volunteer management and our capacity to act on opportunities for inter-organisational cooperation.

The community will benefit from consistency in our service delivery and project maintenance.

1. Aspects of our adult community education programme, most notably our permaculture design course, are run with assurances that the full suite of workshops required for a certificate will be offered over a two-year period.
2. Some of our ongoing services require us to make even longer-term assurances to the community. Those organisations who have decided to make use of our mailing lists, for example, are anticipating that an up-front learning curve will be rewarded with a tool that is useful over many years.
3. Similarly, our weekly drop-in sessions at the Ashhurst Community Library Garden, which were established in March 2015, indicate that people have already come to expect us to be present and to offer regular opportunities for social interaction, learning, and produce sharing.
4. Our practical projects, even once fully established, require constant maintenance to keep their community value. We have MOUs with PNCC, for example, that assume RECAP volunteers will maintain community teaching orchards and gardens on a long-term basis. Similarly, conservation activities require persistence to establish plantings and to maintain ground on weedy pest control.

The geographic isolation of our rural village and valley community makes local activities more critical, especially for the young and the old.

RECAP service is centred in the villages and rural valley of Ashhurst, Pohangina, and the Pohangina Valley. Limited public transport in these areas constrains those who do not drive. This creates an enhanced need for community engagement, volunteer opportunities, and social interaction.

Our geographic separation also increases the likelihood of being isolated in civil defence situations. Some features of our local geography (e.g. the Manawatu Gorge) enhance this possibility. Local connectivity is especially important in areas such as ours which may need to become more self-reliant.

The changing, wider social context is creating an increasing need for organisations such as RECAP.

While many of the skills required to develop sustainable and resilient communities were known to past generations, recent advances that have increased our quality of life in some ways have also disrupted:

- our sense of belonging in local, place-based communities,
- our connection to place and to particular environments, and
- aspects of inter-generational knowledge transmission.

RECAP works actively to build local community within our rural village and valley area, and to develop a culture of sustainability within that community. By doing so, we lay the foundation for continued community self-reliance, skill-sharing, and neighbour-to-neighbour mutual support. Through our activities, our local area will increase its resilience for facing the challenges of day-to-day life and for responding well to hard times such as economic downturn, resource scarcity, or natural disaster.

Strategic Plan by Year

1 & 2 ¹ . Practical Projects & Associated Practical Learning Programmes		
<p>Community Garden² at the Ashhurst Library</p> <p>Key outcomes:</p> <p>-- Project plan advanced through next three phases.</p> <p>-- Community participation increased through new and reliable opportunities.</p> <p>-- Garden is regularly used as an educational site for RECAP-led activities and ECE and school visits hosted by the Library.</p> <p>-- Increased produce is shared on an ongoing basis and especially through our weekly sharing table, and an increased number of community members are making good use of available free food.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Sustain our regular weekly volunteer presence in the library to continue our programme of drop-in garden skills education. Target service at families after school and at those who are seeking a social space, such as the elderly or socially isolated.</p> <p>Share garden produce with anyone, and promote its availability through a weekly sharing table. Encourage people to bring food from home gardens to further develop a culture of giving and receiving, and to make fresh food available to those who can use it, such as those on limited incomes.</p> <p>Use garden as a basis for educational outreach to other groups, such as the Ashhurst School Garden Group.</p> <p>Through volunteers, maintain gardens, including existing vegetable beds, herb spirals, fruit trees, berry bushes, and any new plantings.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>Work with Brownies to design and plant their garden plot and teach them as they go. Support them with monthly education sessions.</p> <p>Begin planting herb garden once wheelchair ramp is finished.</p> <p>Plant and begin training espalier pear and apples.</p> <p>Begin work on permanent seating to improve garden as a community space.</p>
	2016-2017	<p>Complete seating, including outdoor games and reading areas, with associated plantings.</p> <p>Continue working with Brownies and build new relationships with other children's groups.</p>
	2017-2018	<p>Complete plantings and garden bed design to ensure year-round fruit, vegetable, and herb produce. Demonstrate a range of techniques as per our garden plan.</p> <p>Install water harvesting and seed-raising areas.</p> <p>Continue working with Brownies and build new relationships with other children's groups. Investigate possibilities to help children build connections between gardening and food preparation, perhaps in cooperation with other organisations.</p>

(mission objectives 1 & 2 continued on next page)

1 Numbers found in the shaded headings correspond to the numbered list of objectives in RECAP's mission statement, which is found on the first page of this strategic plan.

2 Please note that, while a typical model for community gardens is for people to work individually in their own allotment and harvest their own food, our community garden's primary purpose is education and working together. Our nine-person team of core garden volunteers are motivated by their desire to share learning with children's groups and with drop-in community participants, and additionally by a desire to enhance the village and valley's social interaction and to share food with the whole community. Our other practical learning projects, such as our community orchard, follow this same education- and interaction-oriented model with service-oriented volunteers.

1 & 2. Practical Projects & Associated Practical Learning Programmes (continued)

<p>Community Orchard</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- Community orchard maintained and used regularly as a teaching space.</p> <p>-- Orchard extensions developed in small reserves by co-planning with reserve neighbours and educating them to maintain the trees.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Offer an annual pruning workshop at the primary orchard site, the Olsson Orchard (which currently has thirty fruit and nut trees, plus berries and coppicing trees).</p> <p>Offer an annual composting workshop at the Olsson Orchard.</p> <p>Call a public working bee at least twice each year to maintain the Olsson Orchard as a community project.</p> <p>Maintain the orchard and surrounding pathways with ongoing volunteering.</p>
<p>Conservation</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- Area conservation is enhanced through existing small projects, through community partnerships, and through the initiation of one more RECAP-led or co-led project by 2018.</p> <p>-- Education, especially for children and youth, is increasingly integrated into RECAP's conservation activities.</p>	<p>2015-2016</p>	<p>Plant a small number of fruit and nut trees at the King Reserve as a satellite orchard site. As agreed, teach neighbours the skills they need to be ongoing volunteer caretakers.</p>
	<p>2016-2018</p>	<p>Plant a small number of fruit and nut trees at the Whitten Reserve and teach neighbours the skills they need to be ongoing volunteer caretakers. Investigate similar possible opportunities elsewhere in Ashhurst and Pohangina, for example at the Pohangina County Fayre and at Awahou School.</p>
<p>Conservation</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- Area conservation is enhanced through existing small projects, through community partnerships, and through the initiation of one more RECAP-led or co-led project by 2018.</p> <p>-- Education, especially for children and youth, is increasingly integrated into RECAP's conservation activities.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Continue to improve the health of the McCrae's Bush stream through annual weed clearing (a RECAP-organised, shared activity with the Ashhurst Cubs and Scouts).</p> <p>Support establishment of previously planted eco-sourced northern rata through weeding and maintenance.</p> <p>Recruit volunteers to support flax planting for Te Kāuru Eastern Manawatū Hapū Collective's Parahaki Island Project.</p>
	<p>2015-2016</p>	<p>Meet with regional council to plan conservation activities at McCrae's Bush or alternative conservation involvement in Manawatu Gorge Project.</p>
	<p>2016-2017</p>	<p>Participate in the Landcare Trust citizen science project and begin ecological monitoring at McCrae's Bush or another local conservation site, by relying on volunteers or, preferably, by teaching a school group how to monitor and supporting them.</p>
	<p>2017-2018</p>	<p>Continue ecological monitoring.</p> <p>Begin an associated wetlands project or a feasible alternative.</p>

3 & 4. Courses, Workshops, and Public Lectures		
<p>Sustainability Workshop Series</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- At least ten workshops are offered annually, providing opportunities to participate and learn new skills and knowledge.</p> <p>-- Additional outreach activities make education available to a more diverse audience including children and youth.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Annually, offer half of the day-long course modules required for a permaculture design certificate, as part of a community-based sustainability education programme primarily aimed at adults.</p> <p>Quarterly, teach at least one two- to four-hour public workshop on a topic related to food sustainability, energy efficiency, health and nutrition, sustainable building, community-based economic solutions, or similar, as part of a community-based sustainability education programme primarily aimed at adults.</p> <p>Work with other organisations to offer additional sustainability workshops as opportunities arise.</p> <p>Run additional workshops or educational tours, perhaps targeted at schools or other specific audiences. This is the anticipated growth area in our formal education. See the next table row, first item, for an example of this.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>Re-design herb spiral workshop for children and offer it as part of our educational outreach to the Ashhurst School Garden Club.</p> <p>Review our workshop hand-outs that are offered online for free download. Make changes as helpful to better enable the use of these resources by individuals or other educators.</p>
<p>Public Lectures and Demonstrations</p> <p><i>Key outcome:</i></p> <p>Quarterly free lectures make sustainability education widely accessible.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Offer at least one free-to-the-public lecture quarterly on topics related to food sustainability, energy efficiency, health and nutrition, sustainable building, community-based economic solutions, or similar, as part of a community-based sustainability education programme primarily aimed at adults. A teaching video may be substituted for a lecture once annually, when combined with a community-building social.</p>

5. Inter-organisational cooperation		
<p>Inter-organisational cooperation</p> <p>Key outcomes:</p> <p>-- Our constitutional purposes are realised more fully by working with organisations with closely aligned goals.</p> <p>-- A more diverse audience is served because we work cooperatively with organisations that can make use of our services.</p> <p>-- Outreach is expanded to targeted audiences especially including youth and children.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Sustain relationships and shared activities with Te Kāuru Eastern Manawatū Hapū Collective, Ashhurst Cubs and Scouts, Manawatu Community Fruit Harvesting, Transition Feilding, Environment Network Manawatu and PiNZ (Permaculture in New Zealand).</p> <p>Accept invitations to provide educational presentations to local and regional groups whenever practical.</p> <p>Build new cooperative relationships and local collaborative activities where organisational capacity allows.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>Develop a teaching relationship with Ashhurst Brownies by helping them co-design, plant, and maintain a garden plot.</p> <p>Support Ashhurst School's establishment of a school garden with plants, volunteer assistance, advice, and presentations to children.</p> <p>Help set the direction for the Environment Network Manawatu's developing "Community Resilience Cluster," which is a network of regional organisations closely aligned with our own purposes.</p>
	2016-2018	<p>Sustain educational relationships with the Ashhurst Brownies and Ashhurst School.</p> <p>Participate in regional public outreach and coordinated service planning as part of the Environment Network Manawatu's Resilience Cluster.</p>
<p>Councils</p> <p>Key outcomes:</p> <p>-- Organisation demonstrates responsiveness to councils in their role as community representatives.</p> <p>-- Effective working relationships are sustained and developed with councils in their role as key landowners and stakeholders in many of our projects and programmes.</p> <p>-- Key relationship with the Ashhurst Community Library is nurtured.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Keep open communication and shared planning as appropriate to maintain and develop garden, orchard, and conservation projects on council-owned land.</p> <p>Continue working in partnership with the Ashhurst Community Library to offer and promote community services and educational opportunities associated with the garden and other RECAP activities.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>Work with Palmerston North City Council to agree on actions that support shared outcomes throughout the 2016-2019 PNCC funding cycle.</p> <p>As requested by Horizons Regional Council, join the Manawatu Gorge Project working group as a community stakeholder.</p>
	2016-2018	<p>Deliver on PNCC contract.</p> <p>Contribute to the Manawatu Gorge Project.</p>

(mission objective 5 continued on next page)

5. Inter-organisational cooperation (continued)		
<p>Iwi and Hapū</p> <p>Key outcomes:</p> <p>-- <i>Te Tiriti o Waitangi</i> is honoured in activities.</p> <p>-- The indigenous culture of place is recognised as one of several foundations for developing communities that are sustainable and resilient.</p> <p>-- Planning is responsive to the unique perspectives and aspirations of Māori in our community.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Through our participation in the Manawatu Gorge Project and the Environment Network Manawatu, continue to deepen existing relationships with iwi and hapū, plus accept opportunities to build new relationships.</p> <p>Continue to recruit volunteers for Te Kāuru Eastern Manawātū Hapū Collective's Parahaki Island Project, as they have requested of us, with the aim of increasing the number of volunteers providing substantial ongoing planting support.</p> <p>Continue to consult with Craig Kawana, the iwi representative to whom PNCC has referred us, whenever we implement new projects and programmes, and also when it is appropriate to seek advice on developing projects and programmes.</p>
6. Local Connectivity		
<p>Community Directory</p> <p>Key outcomes:</p> <p>-- An up-to-date directory helps village and valley residents find ways to participate in community.</p> <p>-- Sharing directory information, as agreed, supports police and other civil defence personnel.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Use new sources, such as newsletters and community notices, to increase representation of groups within the online directory.</p> <p>Actively confirm all information included in the directory at least once every other year. Investigate whether a business might volunteer to support this activity.</p> <p>Work with groups who wish to maintain their own listings, and provide digital literacy training as required.</p> <p>Promote availability of directory through Ashhurst Community Library, through volunteers at the drop-in garden days, through local web resource Ashhurst Dot Org, and similar.</p>
<p>Community Mailing Lists</p> <p>Key outcome:</p> <p>-- Local groups and networks communicate more easily through email, aiding their recruitment efforts and/or reducing their administrative burdens.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Provide training and other digital literacy support for other community organisations who are using or interested in using our mailing list services.</p> <p>Offer mailing lists free of ongoing charge, and with only a minor at-cost set-up charge (\$25).</p> <p>Waive set-up charge for self-organising informal groups that are aligned to RECAP's educational purposes. Support these groups in making effective use of the mailing lists.</p> <p>Grow number of lists used by various community organisations by at least 10% annually.</p>
	2015-2016	Waive set-up charge for two well-connected organisations that can help our community learn this service is available. Provide any necessary associated digital literacy training.
<p>Other</p> <p>Key outcome:</p> <p>-- People learn they can participate in RECAP activities.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Make the public aware of RECAP activities and participation opportunities through routine use of print newsletter the <i>Village Voice</i>, the Environment Network Manawatu e-newsletter, the RECAP Neighbourly page, and the RECAP mailer.</p> <p>Promote activities through newspapers, community radio announcements, Eventfinder, partner organisations' Facebook pages, and local posters as appropriate.</p>

7 & 8. Minor assets		
Web-based resources Key outcome: Web-based resources are kept up-to-date to preserve initial investment and functionality.	Ongoing	Ensure budget includes annual hosting and maintenance fees for domain names, web site, contact management system, and community mailing lists.
	2015-2016	Finish scheduled upgrades according to developer contract.
	2016-2018	Budget for routine upgrades to keep functionality adapted to organisational requirements.
Garden tools including safety equipment Key outcome: -- Appropriate tools are on hand to enable community education, project maintenance, and health and safety.	Ongoing	Support the volunteer responsible for oversight and maintenance of existing tools. Use the right tools for each job. Ensure that key project volunteers are aware of how tools are used, the safety requirements for each, and where responsibilities lie for health and safety. Regularly, and at least twice annually, review tool needs with on-the-ground volunteers. Budget for new purchases required for new projects, increasing participant numbers, and any replacement and/or maintenance of lost or damaged tools.

9, 10, & 11. Volunteering and Organisational Sustainability, Resilience, and Growth		
Volunteering Key outcome: -- Volunteer participation increases consistently.	Ongoing	Increase volunteer numbers by 10% annually. Increase volunteer hours by 10% annually. Offer a variety of volunteer commitments suitable to a range of abilities, interests, and availabilities.
	Staff Key outcomes: -- Services are provided consistently and reliably by a part-time coordinator. -- Staff hours increased as necessary to maintain responsiveness to new opportunities, especially opportunities for inter-organisational cooperation and educational outreach to youth and children.	Ongoing
	2015-2016	Change coordinator contract from casual to part-time hours to increase consistency of services. Review job description and establish performance objectives.
	2016-2018	Support increased activity levels and volunteer numbers by increasing staff hours by 20% over two years. Review performance and performance objectives.

(mission objectives 9, 10, & 11 continued on next page)

9, 10, & 11. Volunteering and Organisational Sustainability, Resilience, and Growth (continued)		
<p>Governance</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- Board and planning team sustained and renewed.</p> <p>-- Team's diverse skills always include chairing, supervising staff, and financial oversight and planning.</p> <p>-- Board ensures that health and safety is given priority.</p> <p>-- Board sets strategic direction in ways that are responsive to community aspirations and within the context of what can be delivered reliably.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Maintain a board of five to seven persons with a diverse range of skills including chairing meetings, employee supervision, finance, and fundraising.</p> <p>Look for opportunities to diversify the board (or, where relevant, to maintain the board's existing diversity) in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, and residence (Ashhurst v. Pohangina), especially to reflect diversity existing in the community RECAP serves.</p> <p>To remain responsive to community interest and talents, welcome interested persons to participate in a planning team that advises the board. Planning team also serves as a potential pool of candidates for board renewal.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>In third calendar quarter 2016, facilitate an open vision and planning day and associated process to consult with the local community on the desired direction for the further development of RECAP and other groups and community projects.</p> <p>Work with PNCC to review health and safety plans for activities on council-owned land.</p>
	2016-2017	<p>Integrate board response to the community consultation within the strategic plan.</p>
	2017-2018	<p>Review the full strategic plan. Hold a board retreat if necessary for full reflection and planning.</p>
<p>Finance</p> <p><i>Key outcomes:</i></p> <p>-- Funding sources are diversified.</p> <p>-- Stability maintained through a period of gradual, managed growth.</p> <p>-- Committed funding allows multi-year service commitments and planning.</p> <p>-- Funding set at levels that ensure education is accessible to all income levels.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Continue to reduce project costs by requesting in-kind support from local businesses, including those with whom we have existing relationships (Ashhurst Engineering and Construction, Edible Garden, The Herb Farm, and Stanford Street Seedlings).</p> <p>Spread support requests over multiple funders to enhance organisational resilience. Include approaches to potential new funders.</p> <p>Continue to diversify income by accepting koha and requesting participation contributions to activities when appropriate.</p>
	2015-2016	<p>Request three-year funding from Lotteries Community Grants Scheme to better serve multi-year project and activity commitments.</p> <p>Request three-year funding from Palmerston North City Council to better serve multi-year project and activity commitments.</p>
	2016-2018	<p>Review and renew financial strategy.</p>
12. Managed Growth		
<p>RECAP's final mission objective indicates where we will and will not increase our level of service. This objective is integrated throughout our year-by-year plan. Our intention is to manage further growth strategically, with the aim of choosing growth areas that will most substantially increase our responsiveness to community needs and aspirations, enable us to realise our vision, and fulfil our constitutional purposes. We can do this best by sustaining current levels of service for adult education, while increasing our capacity to respond to community requests for inter-organisational cooperation. Such requests are arising with increasing frequency, especially from organisations serving children and youth.</p>		