

Living and Working in Clutha

Our vision is that Clutha District is a great place to live, work, and play. Our Living & Working in Clutha Strategy outlines our priorities as we look to work towards this vision on behalf of the Clutha District.

The Clutha District Council sees promoting growth as a priority and believes there are opportunities out there to promote the district's potential as an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. Overall, our district is in good shape, poised to make the most of our circumstances and opportunities. The Clutha District is growing, and our overall outlook is positive despite the unprecedented challenges that have come our way in recent times. We're very much open for business in terms of visiting and investing here, and there are great opportunities to live and work in Clutha. Council is intending to use what it has available to fully support our residents and ratepayers now, and into the future.

This Living and Working Strategy has been prepared by the Council to guide decision-making and our overall progress towards three key outcomes:

- Clutha has vibrant rural towns and communities.
- Clutha is connected, collaborative and resilient.
- Clutha has a healthy and sustainable environment.

These outcomes are tailored to achieve our goal to promote the economic, environmental, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities. We have identified seven

priority work areas where Council has an important role to play. These relate to housing, business and work-place development, the environment, climate change, infrastructure, healthy safe communities, and culture and heritage. We have outlined the strategic elements associated with each of these priority areas.

The Living and Working Strategy has been created to describe, at the highest level, where we want the district to head, and how Council intends to work towards these objectives. Where there is existing strategic direction, this is also referenced below (for example, the Clutha District Infrastructure Strategy). Council also produces comprehensive plans to guide the implementation of these strategies (for example, Activity Management Plans are prepared every three years).

Although this strategy is intended to guide us over the next ten years, we will review it every three years as part of the Long Term Plan process. This will allow it to be updated to reflect the changing conditions and challenges we will undoubtedly face.



Graph: Clutha District Strategic Framework

PRIORITY AREA: INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Council prepares infrastructure and financial strategies every three years, to outline our approach to infrastructure, and how we will pay for it. It includes information about how we are going to manage infrastructure, the main challenges we face, and based on current information, how we propose to address those challenges.

We are focused on maintaining our key infrastructure for residents and future generations, and enabling investment where benefits are clear. We will also look to facilitate growth where there is potential for this, to help achieve our goal of growing the population and the rating base. Council is focused on maintaining the affordability of its infrastructure.

Clutha District Draft Infrastructure Strategy 2024/54

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Council maintains an extensive network of infrastructure in the Clutha District, particularly roading and water supply (a substantial portion of which exists to support our crucial primary sector). Urban water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure supports our townships. Much of our infrastructure was constructed in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., rural water schemes and many of our sewerage schemes), and many of these assets may need to be replaced or upgraded within the time frame of this strategy.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<p>Council's intent is to continue building on our existing asset base, whilst managing and maintaining key infrastructure for residents and future generations. In some instances, we will increase levels of service to meet compulsory requirements, such as increasing standards for wastewater discharges and drinking water. Importantly, Council will also look at facilitating growth where there is potential for this to help achieve our goal of growing the population and the rating base.</p>
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>The 2024/54 Infrastructure Strategy identifies a set of principles, intended to achieve our overall infrastructure objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transition through reforms for the 2027 Long Term Plan. 2. Plan for and be adaptive to growth and enable private infrastructure investment where beneficial to the community. 3. Continue to focus on maintaining the infrastructure we have already invested in, and prioritise investment in infrastructure that balances cost, risk, and service levels. 4. Keep rates affordability at the forefront of our actions and decisions. 5. Use our solid financial position and existing infrastructure as a platform to enable growth.
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>Improve the quality of information we have about our assets, so that we have an accurate estimate of their remaining lifespan. This relates to core infrastructure, as well as community assets such as halls and pools.</p> <p>We will measure compliance against appropriate standards (e.g., drinking water, roading).</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>Infrastructure Strategy, Financial Strategy, Activity Management Plans, Clutha Destination Strategy</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<p>Our key investment priorities for new and existing infrastructure include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating growth – we will plan for and be adaptive to growth and enable private infrastructure investment where it will benefit our community's wellbeing. • Improving levels of service – we will prioritise investment in infrastructure that balances cost, risk and service levels. • Taking care of what we have got – we aim to have the funds needed to replace assets at the end of their economic life.

PRIORITY AREA: MORE QUALITY HOUSING

Council’s Strategic Direction for Housing was adopted in July 2020. It outlines why housing is of vital importance to the Clutha District. Quality, affordable housing underpins other Council priority areas such as business and workforce development, healthy safe communities, and climate change adaptation.

Quality housing is a key aspect of liveability in the Clutha District. Having the security of a home that is safe, warm, dry and affordable is a key foundation to the wellbeing of people. This in turn means that they can contribute to wider community outcomes helping the district to achieve its potential, socially and economically.

Strategic Direction for Housing in the Clutha District, July 2020

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>There are more than 7,000 occupied dwellings in the Clutha District. Of these, approximately 70% are owner occupied/held in a family trust, while 22% are rented. Nearly 20% of dwellings were identified in the 2018 Census as being ‘sometimes damp’. There have been, on average, 64 new dwelling consents issued by Council each year over the last ten years. Council provides 98 community housing units, spread across eight towns.</p> <p>Demand for housing (including rental, owner occupied and social housing) remains strong across the district. Migration patterns, an ageing population, and the increasing trend of one and two-person households also have implications for the types of housing that are and will be needed in the district.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<p>The Vision of Council’s Strategic Direction document is for “Good quality affordable housing that meets the needs of all Clutha District residents”. Its strategic outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-functioning, dynamic housing system with housing stakeholders working in coordination and/or partnership to grow our choice and availability of housing. • Homes are of good quality and resilient, where they are warm, dry and energy efficient. • Homes meet the needs of Clutha District residents. The needs of all segments of the population need to be understood, so that appropriate responses can be implemented. • A housing system that supports sustainable, resilient and connected communities.
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>Council has a key role to play in helping to achieve the outcomes for Housing. In particular, we will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide a community housing service and look to improve this service where possible. • Ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support existing and additional housing. • Support or enable private and public housing initiatives. • Support housing-related projects identified as priorities in Our Place community plans. <p>It is important to note that a collective approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders will be required to address current housing issues in the Clutha District (including availability and quality).</p>
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>Improve the quality of information we have about our assets, so that we have an accurate estimate of their remaining lifespan. This relates to core infrastructure, as well as community assets such as halls and pools.</p> <p>We will measure compliance against appropriate standards (e.g., drinking water, roading).</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>District Plan, Infrastructure Strategy 2024-54 and associated Activity Management Plans.</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<p>Council District Plan related obligations are met, including rezoning with a focus on facilitating infill and new housing developments.</p> <p>Provide warm and safe community housing.</p>

PRIORITY AREA: FILLING OUR JOBS

Actions that help to enhance economic growth are critical to the ongoing sustainability and liveability of the Clutha District. Key focus areas are to retain existing businesses, grow our workforce, and attract additional investment.

Future growth and sustainability for our district means putting economic and community development at the forefront of our actions and decisions.

2021/31 Long Term Plan

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>The Clutha District has a low unemployment rate compared to the New Zealand average, and primary production (food, fibre and forestry) accounts for nearly half of all economic activity in the district. Employers have historically found it difficult to attract permanent staff, despite the number and range of jobs available. As a result, our international workforce is important for some industries, and staff commuting to work in Clutha from outside the district is common. Clutha District Council has made some strategic investments to help stimulate additional economic activity – for example, enabling residential development and subdivisions.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to attract and sustain a vibrant and diverse workforce with the skills to meet the changing needs of the district. • We want to have a diverse range of business and work opportunities available (e.g., agriculture, tourism, digital technology), that suit people’s capability and capacity to work (i.e., their cultural background, ethnicity, age, skills, and life experience). • We want to have a strong diversified economy in the Clutha District. • We would like to see collaboration between employers and employees, including better transition between seasonal jobs. • A district that focuses on quality and value over quantity and balances environmental considerations with economic gain. • We sustain, retain and grow our existing businesses. • A business and workplace environment that provides compelling reasons to live and work in the Clutha District.
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>Council will support businesses and employers through a ‘business-friendly’ regulatory process. We will also form strong partnerships and collaborate with industry, Otago Regional Economic Development (ORED), Economic Development Agencies (EDA’s) such as Clutha Development, and central government. A key role of Council is to provide supporting infrastructure which enables businesses to flourish.</p> <p>Specific programs related to this priority area include Clutha Jobs, Job Seeker Support through Jobbortunities, and Destination Marketing.</p>
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>GDP growth, GDP per capita, employment and labour productivity trends, business size growth, business confidence surveys, number of businesses exporting, visitor nights.</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>Clutha Destination Strategy, 2024/34 Long Term Plan, Economic Development Strategy 2015</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<p>Council funds and contracts out programmes to support business and workforce development, in line with the Living and Working in Clutha Strategy and other Council strategies.</p>

PRIORITY AREA: IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

The physical environment influences nearly every aspect of life in the Clutha District. Many residents relate strongly to our rural environment, with its outdoor lifestyle and focus on agricultural production. Our farming heritage is an important part of our identity, and for many people, life is shaped around action and interaction with the environment. Reducing our environmental footprint underpins community wellbeing and is a priority towards making Clutha a great place to live, work, and play.

With amazing scenery, brilliant and growing cycle trails, stunning beaches and opportunities for whitebaiting, fishing and surfing, the physical environment readily supports well-being through physical activity and moments of wonder and reflection.

Clutha District Community Needs and Strengths Assessment, August 2023

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Although environmental stewardship is recognised as being vital to our wellbeing, this does not always come across strongly in our regulations and strategic direction. Council plays a key role through its:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory functions (e.g. District Plan, Bylaws, Building Control), • Strategic direction (e.g. Our Place Plans), • Service delivery (e.g. waste management and minimisation, wastewater treatment, management of pest species), and • Internal activities (e.g. environmental impact of operating vehicles and Council-owned assets). <p>Examples of Council’s ongoing work to reduce the impact of human behaviour on our natural environment include bylaws for freedom camping (2021) and vehicles on beaches (2022), and improvements to our wastewater treatment facilities.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<p>We want to help create a district that plans for and cares about the future and works to enhance its natural and built environment. Through this Strategy, Clutha District Council has signaled its commitment to environmental sustainability, enhancement, and protection, and it will continue to take a leadership role to ensure that this commitment is met.</p>
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>Council’s core activities include effective planning of infrastructure and efficient delivery of services, and these will be managed in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of our environment. Focus areas include waste management, waste reduction, water conservation, enhancing and protecting habitats of local significance, and discharges to waterways. Council will also work closely with other stakeholders to improve environmental stewardship of the Clutha District. Mana whenua, DOC, ORC, and community organisations will have their own activities they wish to progress, and where possible, Council will look to support these. Council will look to establish a partnership agreement with kā rūnaka ki Ōtāgo and Murihiku, and to give effect to the concept of Te Mana o te Wai which places the health and wellbeing of water bodies at the centre of water management practices. Other relevant Council-led initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District Plan review of related documents – e.g., identifying and protecting indigenous biodiversity and landscapes of significance. • Support for the EnviroSchools program and community groups involved in biodiversity activities – e.g., planting programs (urban & rural). • Supporting infrastructure for electric vehicles and active transport. • Improved procurement processes, reducing the environmental impact of Council’s fleet and other assets (esp. reducing greenhouse gas emissions).
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>Monitoring discharges from Council’s wastewater treatment plants, the number and extent of significant indigenous biodiversity which are protected by the District Plan, and the energy efficiency of Council assets and infrastructure.</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>Infrastructure Strategy, Three Waters and Solid Waste Activity Management Plans, Waste Management & Minimisation Plan, Clutha Destination Strategy, Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council District Plan obligations are met including the protection of indigenous biodiversity and landscapes of significance. • Council works proactively with iwi and community groups. • Council provides kerbside solid waste and recycling collection services in accordance with its waste minimisation plan.

PRIORITY AREA: ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The objective of Council’s Climate Change Leadership and Response Plan is to characterise the risks (particularly for Council infrastructure and functions) that are associated with climate change projections in the Clutha district, and identify how those risks will be managed. This work is critical to the delivery of all Council’s priority work areas, and to community wellbeing.

Adaptation to climate change is an absolutely necessary and ongoing process for decisions relating to infrastructure and urban development.

LGNZ, 2018

The impacts of climate change will have significant implications for the functions of local government in New Zealand.

Lawrence et.al, 2018.

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Adaption: The Climate Change Leadership and Response Plan was adopted in 2019. The first stage was completed in June 2020, with a report describing the impacts of climate change for the Clutha District. A second report, quantifying the risks to Council infrastructure and community assets was completed in June 2021. Council has developed a draft Climate Change Strategy, and this will be finalised using feedback provided through 2024/34 Long Term Plan consultation.</p> <p>Mitigation: Council has participated in a regional level assessment, but more investigations are required to better understand current emissions, and potential methods to reduce them.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common understanding amongst Council staff, Councillors, and the community on the likely impacts and risks associated with climate change. • The ability to plan for changing land use opportunities and limitations, for both rural and residential activities. • Improved ability to manage risk, and to communicate with stakeholders about priorities. • A reduction in Council’s use of fossil fuels, and information to assist/encourage the community to do the same.
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>Once completed, the Climate Change Strategy will provide a solid platform (including a common understanding of likely risks) upon which future strategic decisions will be based. Ongoing work will be required across all Council activity areas, to incorporate new information on impacts and risk into work programs and decision-making. Examples include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing changing risks and potential loss of service levels (e.g., the loss of a coastal road). 2. Managing community expectations about levels of service. 3. Dealing with uncertainty. 4. Finding the best way for Council to work with communities to manage change.
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>Monitoring is likely to be qualitative, including observations of actions by Council and the wider community to reduce risk, or to take advantage of changing environmental conditions (e.g. changes in farming practices).</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>District Plan. The Climate Change Strategy and other reports completed as part of the Climate Change Leadership and Response Plan.</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council ensures District Plan obligations are met with a focus on reducing existing risk and avoiding new risk. • Council implements a communication plan to disseminate new information, and to guide community engagement.

PRIORITY AREA: IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITIES HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

Ensuring our communities are healthy and safe is a priority area for Council. Many of the activities and services provided by Council help to achieve this objective, and this priority area is closely linked to the other six priority areas, particularly quality affordable housing and investment in infrastructure.

The Clutha community is a strong one – it is a resilient community with a can-do attitude.

Clutha District Community Needs and Strengths Assessment, August 2023

<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Clutha communities are known as caring and supportive, with a practical no nonsense approach to addressing any issues. We have built up some excellent community facilities over many decades, with more in the planning stages. New facilities include the Te Pou ō Mata-Au Clutha District War Memorial & Community Centre, the Lawrence Destination Playground, and the Clutha Gold Trail. Our communities are great places to live, work and play. However, our small population, together with increasing costs means that maintaining existing, and creating additional facilities can be a challenge. Volunteers are increasingly stretched, and our population is aging. The district also faces a range of social challenges, including drugs and alcohol, the high cost of living, loss of key services and low digital connectivity in some areas.</p> <p>Relevant activities include community facilities such as pools, social housing, halls, and recreational areas (either directly owned by Council or supported through grants). Council provides regulatory oversight in areas such as dog control, food standards, building standards, gambling, and noise control. Roads and other key infrastructure also help to keep our communities safe and connected.</p>
<p>Where we want to be</p>	<p>We want the Clutha District to be a place that supports and uses the talents and advantages of the whole community to achieve success and ensure wellbeing. We want to have a reputation as a safe place in which to live, work, play and visit. We believe that connectivity and access to health services should be a focus.</p>
<p>How we intend to get there</p>	<p>Council will continue to engage with local communities, to determine the best way to deliver community facilities, services and infrastructure. We will do this through the 'Our Place' program, as well as other more regular consultation processes. Key questions include 'What are the priorities for each community?', 'How should they be funded?', and 'What is the desired level of service?'</p> <p>We will look to achieve compliance with relevant legislation, bylaws, and policies through the provision of information, education, and enforcement. We also consider the best way to deliver these community ambitions, whether it be through core Council services, joint projects with the community, or supporting community-led initiatives.</p>
<p>How we will monitor progress</p>	<p>Compliance against relevant standards (e.g. drinking water, food premises, healthy homes standard). Policy and bylaw provisions are reviewed and are up to date. Progress on priority projects identified in Our Place community plans.</p>
<p>Key documents</p>	<p>Activity Management Plans, District Plan, Dog Control Policy & Bylaw, Our Place Community Plans, Reserve Management Plans, Smokefree Policy, Community Funding Policy.</p>
<p>Long Term Plan levels of service</p>	<p>Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, or support accessible and well-maintained facilities to increase levels of participation in active and passive recreation. • Fund, and work in partnership with external organisations to increase levels of participation in sport and recreation. • Work with Emergency Management Otago to build resilience and disaster preparedness for emergency situations. • Enforce bylaws and legislation to ensure dog owners and residents are aware of safety, protection, and etiquette around dogs. • Ensure that food premises comply with relevant legislation.

PRIORITY AREA: SUPPORTING CULTURE & HERITAGE

The preservation and celebration of cultural and heritage values is an important factor in terms of creating a great place to live, work and play. Local government can play an important role in ensuring that our communities are able to retain, interpret and express their own culture and heritage.

...heritage includes natural features and landscapes, indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna... historic buildings, structures, precincts and streetscapes...the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga, and sites of archaeological significance.

Clutha District Plan

Where we are now	Council supports a range of initiatives across the district, including community-led museums through annual operating grants, its own library network, providing community grants for various projects, and administering the Creative Communities Scheme. At the local level, community-led groups undertake valuable work to protect and ensure access to our culture and heritage.
Where we want to be	Our cultural and heritage values are visible, accessible, and celebrated widely. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social wellbeing of the Clutha District is enhanced and supported by a vibrant, diverse community. • There is an economic benefit to the Clutha District through the alignment of business development, tourism, cultural and heritage resources. • Clutha is a district that understands and celebrates its past, and promotes its unique sense of place today, and in the future.
How we intend to get there	We will work proactively with owners of heritage buildings and sites to preserve the District's heritage. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support heritage and cultural resources and events - for example through websites, our library network, and increased use of Te Pou ō Mata-Au Clutha District War Memorial & Community Centre. • Encourage collaboration between agencies- for example, shared marketing or coordinating exhibitions and events • Council investment which encourages property owners to revitalise and re-purpose heritage buildings, through rates relief, street improvements and heritage grants. • Support the heritage-related projects in the Our Place Lawrence-Tuapeka and Our Place Clutha Valley community plans. • Continue to make our heritage and cultural resources more accessible. • Incorporate local history and culture into renewal work on community facilities. • Continue to develop and promote the Clutha Heritage digital repository, to tell the stories of our past and present. • Continue to work with stakeholders such as kā rūnaka ki Ōtāgo and Murihiku and the Historic Places Trust to better understand and protect heritage values.
How we will monitor progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of consents issued relating to renovation of historical buildings, and earthquake strengthening. • Amount of funding allocated to cultural and heritage groups through community grants. • Library visitor numbers, the use of physical and digital library collections, and the amount of material available through the digital repository.
Key documents	District Plan, Long Term Plan, Annual Plan, Our Place Community Plans.
Long Term Plan levels of service	Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a library service network. • Support programmes which enable access to information, lifelong learning, cultural expression, and celebration of heritage. • Where possible and appropriate, support the protection of heritage values. • Provide cemeteries throughout the district which meet community needs (including our growing cultural diversity). • Review and update the heritage components of the District Plan.