



The Future of Arts

There is a proud and diverse arts community in Central Hawke's Bay who is presenting and participating in a wide array of arts activity. From our nationally significant Waipawa Music and Dramatic group to our full time working visual artists, from artists working in schools to people participating in recreational art such as ceramics or textiles.

There are touring performances in our venues such as Dave Dobbyn at the Central Hawke's Bay Municipal Theatre and Reb Fountain playing recently at the Ongaonga Hall, and a new readers and writers festival. Ngā Ara Tipuna puts authentic cultural stories of Tamatea hapū on the landscape and showcases traditional and contemporary Māori artforms. There is a huge range of opportunities for people to engage in the arts, as makers, creators, presenters, participants, and audience members.

Identified in Project Thrive and the [Central Hawke's Bay Integrated Spatial Plan 2050](#) the development of an Arts and Culture Strategy was an initiative to support this sector of our community. In early 2021 Council secured external funding from Creative New Zealand to develop a Arts and Culture Strategy, amongst the range of other strategic work it is completing for its Places and Open Spaces Assets.

We have created this discussion document to start the conversation about the vital role the arts play in the social, cultural, and economic life of our district. This conversation will take many forms over the next few months, and we hope that together we can all create a shared vision for the arts that will guide our investment as a community.

Background

Arts and culture play an essential role in our communities. We know they bring people together, create a sense of place and belonging, and contribute to community wellbeing.

Central Hawke's Bay District Council is committed to developing an Arts Strategy and action plan as a key pillar of the Council's overarching Community Wellbeing Strategy. We want to strengthen relationships with our arts community and together explore how our community can benefit from the social, cultural and economic gains that the arts can provide. We know our creative sector has faced major disruption due to COVID -19 and believe the district's first Arts Strategy can help us to understand the issues and opportunities for our community.

Council currently supports arts and culture in the district in several ways. From provision of venues and facilities including a theatre and a museum/art gallery, contestable funding through our Vibrancy Fund and administration of Creative New Zealand's Creative Communities Fund. We want to confirm what Council's role needs to be to strategically allocate resources to the arts to have the greatest impact.

We know there is a proud and diverse arts community in Central Hawke's Bay who are presenting and participating in a wide array of arts activity. From our nationally significant Waipawa Music and Dramatic group to our full time working visual artists, from artists working in education to people participating in recreational artforms, from touring arts performances in our venues to opportunities to take part in our new readers and writers festival, there is a huge range of opportunities for people to engage in the arts.

As a country, we're more positive than ever about the vital role the arts play in our lives. The arts are making a powerful contribution to New Zealanders' wellbeing and are helping us get through COVID-19. More people are also appreciating the role that the arts play in connecting whānau and communities, but we know that access could be improved. The arts are helping more of us explore and build our own sense of identity too, as well as growing our connections with other New Zealanders. While we're feeling better than ever about the arts, New Zealanders' engagement with the arts has taken a hit due to COVID-19. Despite attendance at the arts events declining somewhat, participation has held steady. How we want to experience the arts is changing¹ it is a good time to look at what we need to be focussed on to continue to support arts in our communities.

A strategic framework for the arts was developed by Hastings District Council in 2019 with the intention to grow this in the future to be appropriate for the region. Toi-Tū Hawke's Bay² have received funding from Creative New Zealand to regionalise this framework to guide development of current and future arts, culture, and creative strategy and projects within Hawke's Bay. Through collaboration, projects and partnerships it aims to align collective effort across sectors and disciplines towards a common vision and community outcomes. The three focus areas of this framework are *identity*, *creativity* and *sustainability*. We will be using this framework to help inform this strategy for Central Hawke's Bay, as well as considering how Central Hawke's Bay contributes to the implementation of Toi-Tū across the region.

Creative New Zealand has funded the development of this strategy through their Local Government Arts Fund which has been initiated as part of their COVID-19 response to develop the resilience of the arts and culture sector.

Defining the arts

For the purpose of this strategy, we are using Creative New Zealand's definitions of the arts as a starting point. As part of the conversation we expect to define further what the arts means for Central Hawke's Bay.

Creative New Zealand's definition includes community and professional: *performing arts* (such as dance, theatre, music); *visual arts* (ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, printmaking, photography, film, video, design and crafts); *literature* (fiction, non-fiction, essays, poetry); *inter-arts* (such as new-media and digital work); and *pan art-form festivals*. It also includes *Ngā toi Māori* (Māori arts) which include, but are not limited to, Māori heritage arts practice such as: taonga puoro, tārai waka, kaupapa waka, whakairo, rāranga, tāniko, kākahu, tukutuku, kōwhaiwhai, tā moko, kapa haka, mōteatea, waiata ā-ringa, waiata tawhito, poi, waiata haka, pao, mau rākau, whaikōrero, karanga, whakapapa recitation, te reo me onā tikanga, whakairo, kōrero paki, pakiwaitara, karetao, whare tapere and whakaraka. It also includes the work of Māori artists across all forms of contemporary arts practice.

Within community arts Creative New Zealand recognises three core strands of activity and these are:

Community Cultural Development

- Collaboration of arts practitioners with communities to achieve artistic and social outcomes
- Processes of collective creativity
- Community-based issues focused_ on through the arts (for example in relation to the environment or to issues of social equity).

Maintenance and Transmission of Cultural Traditions

- Māori and Pasifika Heritage Artforms, including Ngā toi Māori.
- Defined groups of interest (such as migrant communities) maintaining and preserving their distinctive artistic and cultural traditions from one generation to the next.

Leisure and Recreation Activities

- Community-based arts groups devoted to the recreational pursuit of diverse artforms.

What does success look like?

With the help of others, we've done some early thinking and think that success for the future of Arts and Culture is to:

- The arts enable us to take pride in ourselves, where we have come from, what we have and who we are and celebrate diversity within our community.
- Increasing understanding and an awareness of the value that arts makes to our community will support the arts sector to grow.
- Enrich our towns and villages with art that reflects the uniqueness of our places and people.
- Strengthening and building stronger links within the arts sector locally, regionally, nationally, internationally, and with other sectors such as education and health will benefit our community.
- Resources (facilities, funding mechanisms and programming) must be fit for purpose, accessible, inclusive and supportive for arts opportunities and projects.
- More investment into developing our creative people, projects, and places will support a robust, sustainable sector.
- Central Hawke's Bay will uplift and celebrate Nga Toi Māori in our district.

How the arts contribute to our Project Thrive outcomes

Connected Citizens	The arts connect people to each other within the community, in the creative sector, and with other sectors such as health, education and the environment. The arts contribute to social inclusion.
Proud District	The arts contribute to a sense of identity and sense of place.
Strong Communities	The arts make a positive contribution to supporting strong, thriving communities. Participation in the arts increases personal wellbeing, improves educational and health outcomes and contributes to the economy.

Arts and Culture in Central Hawke's Bay now

This is the first Arts strategy to be developed for Central Hawke's Bay. As such there is no comprehensive database or analysis of what is currently happening. We will work with the community to map out current arts activity in Central Hawke's Bay.

We do know that there is a rich and diverse arts community in Central Hawke's Bay who are presenting and participating in a wide array of arts activity.

Here is a very brief (and incomplete) snapshot of what we know:

- Waipawa Musical and Dramatic (M & D) Club is a nationally renowned recreational theatre company, which has been entertaining the district since 1896. New Zealand's most well-known living playwright, Sir Roger Hall, is a fan and an advocate after attending one of his own pantomimes and seeing the joy and magic they had created. In 2020 he adapted his script of Cinderella specifically for the Central Hawke's Bay community. The Waipawa M & D are based at and perform in the Central Hawke's Bay Municipal Theatre.
- The Central Hawke's Bay Museum in Waipawa houses Central Hawke's Bay's only public art gallery, with a regular rotation of exhibitions. Its 2019 exhibition Ngā Taonga o Tamatea – Hokinga Mai, was a finalist in the NZ Museum Awards.
- Between the Lines is Central Hawke's Bay's own literary festival, now in its third year. The festival takes place in homesteads, private houses, cafes and public facilities throughout the district. It has caught the eye of literary critic and writer Steve Braunias who said "Central Hawkes Bay doesn't exist in the national imagination... It's not especially rustic. It's not what you would call lush...But actually it staged a very, very distinctive literary festival."
- The Ngā Ara Tipuna cultural storytelling project worked with rangatahi and tamariki to build and paint traditional palisading, which now stand proud on Pukekaihou Pā site/ Hunter Park, reflecting traditional Toi Māori techniques.
- The Hawke's Bay Arts Trail is a network of dealer galleries and artist studios which has traditionally been focused on Napier and Hastings. More recently the studios and galleries of Central Hawke's Bay have been included and promoted in this network.
- The Small Hall Sessions is a new initiative by Hastings promoter Jamie McPhail. Jamie brings top class New Zealand musicians to small Hawke's Bay community halls, to provide locals with an intimate concert in their own backyard, or visitors with an opportunity to travel to the likes of Ongaonga and Argyll to experience their favourite act.
- For 27 years the Paul Hunter Centre in Waipukurau, has provided weekly art classes for people with mental health conditions, physical or intellectual disabilities, and linking them with other community services and recreational opportunities.
- The Arts and Crafts Corner in Ōtāne has just celebrated 50 years of service to the community through painting, patchwork, pottery, planting and papercraft.
- Centralines is on their own journey of discovering art in the everyday. They have commissioned local Māori artists to help create designs for their new offices. Centralines has also given permission for their electricity cabinets to be painted around the district. Artists have been commissioned with funding from Creative Communities to brighten up the streetscape through this scheme.
- Film director David White grew up in Central Hawke's Bay and his 2020 feature film This Town was set in and shot in Central Hawke's Bay. The world premier was held at the Civic Theatre in Waipukurau.
- Events like the Spring Fling, Nelly Jull concert series, Christmas Parade, Matariki and the Hawke's Bay Arts Festival feature local talent and bring visiting artists to our stages, streets, halls, and parks.

Some of these examples of current arts activity are only known to us because Council is involved in some way, either through the provision of funding or our facilities. But we believe that this is just scratching the surface of what is out there. We want to know what else is happening in our district and understand what the needs are in the community to build a strong and resilient arts sector that contributes to the wellbeing of our communities.

The opportunities we have identified so far include:

- Gaining a better understanding of the arts activity happening in the district and how we can support this, for example, through marketing and publicity.
- Supporting more public art (street art, murals, sculpture etc) to enhance our urban spaces and places.

- Developing a more strategic approach to our existing arts and events funding mechanisms to achieve the greatest impact for our community.
- Supporting arts activity that engages young people.
- Increasing access to the arts for people who experience barriers to participation as artists, performers, audience members and museum/gallery visitors.
- Recognising the role of the arts in contributing to our identity and sense of place.
- Exploring our facilities in terms of providing fit for purpose spaces for people to showcase their talent, express themselves and participate in the arts.
- Celebrate and support Ngā Toi Māori in Central Hawke's Bay.
- New people are moving to Central Hawke's Bay – how do we engage and harness their knowledge and energy to increase our range our arts experiences, and connect them to opportunities to participate in arts and culture?

The challenges we have identified so far include:

- A lack of sustainable funding opportunities, and the capability and capacity to apply for funds and sponsorship.
- Not knowing what is happening in Central Hawke's Bay in the arts, and how people can get involved. Opportunities are not always promoted.
- A lack of a district and regional approach – creates duplication and silos.
- Advocacy - little awareness or understanding of the benefits of the arts in our community.
- Building sustainable career paths in the arts.
- Resilience in the arts sector to manage the effects of COVID-19.

Let us know your ideas?

We're still in the early phases of this work, however we are keen to hear your ideas to support arts in Tamatea - Central Hawke's Bay. You can do this by completing our online survey at www.chbdc.govt.nz/thriving-places-and-spaces or emailing us on thrivingplacesandspaces@chbdc.govt.nz