



**Picton  
Dawn  
Chorus**



**2026 ANNUAL REPORT**

*Image courtesy of skyworks uas*

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# CHAIR'S REPORT



It is my pleasure to present this Chair's Report on behalf of the Board of Picton Dawn Chorus for the past year.

This year has been one of significant transition, reflection and forward planning for our organisation. While the wider funding environment for community and environmental organisations continues to be challenging, I believe Picton Dawn Chorus has emerged from the year with greater clarity, stronger governance foundations and renewed momentum for the future.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary commitment of our volunteers, staff, supporters, partners and fellow Board members. The ongoing success of Picton Dawn Chorus and Kaipūpū Sanctuary is built on the generosity, energy and passion of our community. Whether through trapping, planting, weeding, guiding, administration, fundraising, advocacy, or simply helping spread our story, every contribution plays an important role.

Over the past year, the Board has undertaken a substantial amount of governance and strategic work. A key focus has been strengthening the organisation's long-term sustainability and ensuring we are well positioned to continue delivering meaningful biodiversity outcomes for the Picton and Marlborough Sounds region.

One of the most significant pieces of work this year was engaging with The Fundraising Agency to develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy and implementation framework for the organisation. This work has provided valuable insight into the opportunities ahead for Picton Dawn Chorus, particularly around major donor development, partnerships, regular giving and strengthening our overall fundraising systems and messaging. The Board has spent considerable time reviewing how we communicate our impact, clarify our vision and priorities and better align the identities of Picton Dawn Chorus and Kaipūpū Sanctuary into a more cohesive public presence.

As part of this process, the Board established a formal Fundraising Committee to help guide this next stage of growth and implementation. We have also commenced work on upgrading our website and strengthening our communication tools to better support community engagement, fundraising, storytelling and volunteer participation.

The Board also undertook significant governance review work this year, including progressing updates to the organisation's Constitution in line with the new Incorporated Societies legislation and reviewing a number of governance and operational policies. This included the development and adoption of updated Health & Safety systems and an AI Use Policy to ensure the organisation remains fit for purpose in an evolving operating environment.

Operationally, the year included a number of important projects and challenges. Work continued across our trapping and biodiversity programmes, track and infrastructure maintenance and community outreach initiatives.

Essential repair work to the Kaipūpū jetty and fencing infrastructure was progressed, alongside planning for long-term asset management and resilience. We also continued exploring new partnership opportunities with local tourism operators, accommodation providers, businesses, iwi and community organisations to broaden awareness and support for our work.

The Board has also continued discussions around the future sustainability and positioning of Kaipūpū Sanctuary, including how we maximise both conservation and community outcomes while maintaining the unique values of the sanctuary itself. These conversations will continue into the coming year as we work toward a clear long-term pathway for the organisation.

Financial sustainability has remained a major focus throughout the year. While funding pressures across the sector remain very real, we were fortunate to receive support from a number of trusts, grant funders, businesses, donors and supporters who continue to believe in the value of our work. On behalf of the Board, I would like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed financially or in-kind over the past year. Your support directly enables predator control, restoration planting, infrastructure maintenance, volunteer coordination, education and biodiversity protection across our region.

I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of our staff team. Under increasingly complex operating conditions, the team has continued to deliver high-quality work while adapting to new funding, compliance, and operational requirements. Their commitment to the organisation and community is greatly appreciated.

This year also marked changes within the Board itself. We thank Bryn Evans, our outgoing chair, for his guidance and support over the past 5 years, and his continued involvement within the community and support to the board and team. We farewelled Ed Pitts following his relocation to Christchurch and thank him for his contribution to Picton Dawn Chorus over many years. We also acknowledge Claire Welch, whose leadership and support across governance, strategy, and policy development has been invaluable throughout the year.

Looking ahead, I believe Picton Dawn Chorus is entering an important next chapter. The organisation is increasingly recognised not only for its environmental outcomes, but also for the role it plays in community connection, education, volunteerism and regional identity. The work ahead will require continued collaboration, careful prioritisation and sustainable growth, but the foundations being put in place now position the organisation strongly for the future.

We extend our sincere thanks to our key supporters - Rātā Foundation, Port Marlborough, Marlborough District Council, Department of Conservation, NZ Lottery Grants Board, Pub Charity, Marlborough Lines, TNC New Zealand Trust, Tiraki Ltd, Pelorus Trust, Bluebridge, New Zealand King Salmon, Core Advice and The Marlborough.

We are equally grateful for the many smaller donations from our members and friends; your collective generosity makes our work possible.

Finally, thank you again to everyone who contributes to Picton Dawn Chorus in any way. Conservation at this scale is only possible because of collective effort. The commitment of this community continues to inspire optimism for the future of biodiversity restoration in Picton and the Marlborough Sounds.

Ngā mihi nui,  
Colin Stobie  
Chair



## Picton Dawn Chorus Board Members



*From left to right: Roy Grose, Dianne John, Colin Stobie (Chair), Claire Welch, Emily Bradbury, Ross McGerty, and Chris Shaw.*



## Picton Dawn Chorus Staff Members

Our staff members, under the capable leadership of our General Manager Pip Macfarlane are absolutely invaluable to our Society in enabling us to achieve our goals.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our employees, whose professionalism and expertise have been key to the success of our Society. Your hard work, creativity, and tireless efforts have ensured the smooth functioning of our organisation and the implementation of our conservation initiatives. We are fortunate to have such a talented team.



*From left to right: Pip Macfarlane (General Manager), Lee Crosswell (Field Coordinator), Anna Polson (Community Outreach Coordinator) and Alison Williams (Shop Coordinator).*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Behind every successful community organisation is a passionate team of people, and Picton Dawn Chorus is no exception. Our continued growth and achievements are driven by the extraordinary dedication of our volunteers, members, and supporters.

### OUR SOCIETY METRICS

Members of the Society

**262**

Active volunteers

**175**

Volunteer hours

**13,003 p.a, (250 p.w.)**



*Health and safety briefing before planting begins*

We were also fortunate to receive valuable hands-on support from local organisations and businesses. We extend our sincere thanks to volunteers from Outward Bound, Marlborough Lines, Marlborough Boys' College, and Port Marlborough for their hard work on Kaipūpū Sanctuary.

Generous community support has also come through donated premises, with Port Marlborough continuing to provide our office and shop space at 14 Auckland Street, and Phil Reese allowing us ongoing use of "The Pebble" shed for essential trapping supply storage.

This year saw 17 new trappers inducted, strengthening our volunteer network and helping ensure the future success of our conservation efforts.

## EDUCATION

While our Education Programme slowed somewhat over the past year, largely due to school travel constraints to Kaipūpū Sanctuary and changes within school curricula, our commitment to engaging young people in conservation remains strong. In response, we are adapting our approach by taking more of our programmes directly into schools, making it easier for students to connect with our work in their own learning environment.

During 2025, we continued to provide meaningful educational opportunities through a range of initiatives. Two school groups from Blenheim participated in the Kaipūpū Experience programme, alongside two separate Kaipūpū visits with Waikawa Bay School. Waikawa Bay School students also joined our Ngahere group for a dedicated tree planting day, strengthening their hands-on connection to restoration work.

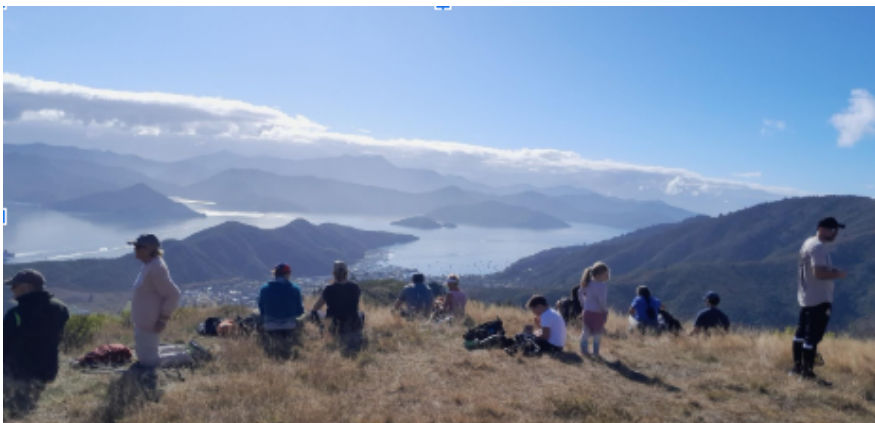
We also supported the next generation of conservation leaders by training students at Waikawa Bay School in trapping techniques, enabling them to independently monitor and maintain their school trapline. In addition, we provided advice to Queen Charlotte College on planting and trapping as they developed a new school trapline area. These evolving education efforts continue to build awareness, skills, and enthusiasm for conservation among local young people.



*Waikawa Bay School students join Ngahere for a hands-on planting day.*

## GONDOLA HILL WALK - OCTOBER 2025

The Gondola Hill Fundraising Walk was successfully held on Sunday, 11 October 2025, after its original May date was postponed due to adverse weather conditions. Despite wild winds and spring weather, around 120 enthusiastic walkers took on the climb to this spectacular lookout, making the event a resounding success.



*The reward for getting to the top – the view from Gondola Hill.*

The day raised approximately \$2,000 in support of our conservation work and proved to be a fantastic community occasion, combining fundraising with fitness, fun and appreciation of the stunning local landscape. Given its strong turnout and positive response, we hope the Gondola Hill Fundraising Walk will become a valued annual event on the Picton Dawn Chorus calendar.

## PROJECT TRAP - TRAPPING FOR RESTORATION AND PROTECTION

Project TRAP has continued to play a vital role in expanding predator control efforts across our project area through ongoing fundraising, community promotion and trap sales. Thanks to the dedication of the team and strong community support, we now have 250 AT220 traps operating throughout the project area, significantly strengthening our conservation impact.

This year, two successful fundraising events helped boost trap numbers further: a Housie Night at Oxley's Hotel and a community Garage Sale. Together, these events raised enough funds to purchase approximately 15 additional traps for deployment.

Public awareness of Project TRAP also grew considerably through promotional articles featured across multiple publications. Coverage by Stuff and the Marlborough Weekly, in particular, highlighted the effectiveness of the AT220 traps, increasing community understanding of their value and resulting in strong donor interest and increased trap sales. Through these combined efforts, Project TRAP continues to build both momentum and community engagement in predator control.



*Field Coordinator Lee checking an AT220 trap.*

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Quarterly newsletters are distributed to 934 people on our database and continue to be an important way for Picton Dawn Chorus to share updates, achievements, challenges and stories with a highly engaged audience. These newsletters consistently achieve strong open rates and provide a valuable connection between our work and our wider supporter base.

In addition, the 92 members across our two trapping groups receive fortnightly updates, ensuring they are kept well informed about trapline activity and any operational information relevant to their work. The Ngahere group also receives a weekly update, including roster links and details of upcoming working bees, helping maintain strong coordination and engagement across the team.

Membership remains a key pillar of our organisation, with 179 members renewing for the 2025–26 year. These membership contributions provide a reliable and ongoing source of income, supporting the day-to-day operations and sustainability of Picton Dawn Chorus.

## BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Our longstanding business partners have continued their valued support, with Bluebridge, NZ King Salmon and Core Advice all renewing their partnerships for a further three years. Their ongoing commitment provides important stability and strengthens our ability to deliver meaningful conservation outcomes.

We are also pleased to confirm the renewal of our partnership with Marlborough Lines, who have supported us for the past three years and have now committed to a further three-year term. In addition, Port Marlborough continues to play a vital role through the provision of our premises at 14 Auckland Street, enabling us to operate the Picton Dawn Chorus Centre as a community hub.

We farewelled Mud House Wines as a business partner this year and extend our sincere thanks for their support during their time with us. We also warmly welcome a new partner, The Marlborough, whose involvement brings fresh energy and adds to our growing network of community and business allies.

We are extremely grateful to all of our business partners for their continued investment in and commitment to the work of Picton Dawn Chorus.

## PUBLICITY AND OTHER EVENTS

Volunteer functions and events are an important part of the Picton Dawn Chorus kaupapa, providing opportunities for volunteers to connect, socialise and for the organisation to express its gratitude for their ongoing commitment and hard work.

This year we hosted a belated Christmas celebration in January, a dedicated thank-you event for our guides and cruise ship volunteers at the end of the summer season and a movie and speaker evening. All events were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed, reinforcing the strong sense of community within our volunteer network.

We also continued to share updates and stories more widely through local publications such as Marlborough Weekly, and our monthly "Picton Happenings" articles, covering a range of topics and helping keep our community informed and engaged with our work.

Kaipūpū Sanctuary has also welcomed visits from overseas journalists and artists this year, both of whom came to experience the Marlborough Sounds and gather material for upcoming articles and publications. These visits will help share the story of Kaipūpū more widely, lifting the profile of both the Sanctuary and the wider Marlborough region on an international stage.



*Movie night and Talk with Neil Mulholland held in September at the Picton Little Theatre.*

# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

## DAWN CHORUS TRAPPING ENTERPRISE

DCTE is the social enterprise arm of Picton Dawn Chorus. DCTE manufactures and repairs and recycles trap boxes and trapping mechanisms, for sale and supply to Picton Dawn Chorus and other trapping organisations.

### Volunteer Base:

The work done by DCTE is all on a voluntary basis. We have about 18 volunteers currently with a wide range of skill sets, who donate their time as regularly as they can. Working bees are social meetings with some very enjoyable discussions had at morning tea.

### Donated Venue:

After enjoying the use of donated premises "The Rock" at 6 Sussex St for four years we had to relocate when these premises were sold. We are fortunate indeed that Gary and Karen Knofflock, have donated the free use of a double garage premises in West Terrace, Picton. We are aware that at some stage Gary and Karen will change this arrangement, but we are fortunate to be able to enjoy and benefit from this generosity.

DCTE shares space at the Studio workshop, with Lee Crosswell, our Field Coordinator, storing his UBCO bike, tools and field equipment.

### Activity:

In the 2025 / 26 year after relocating to the new workshop premises, The Studio in West Terrace, our team of volunteers have had 19 working bees to establish the new workshop, prepare materials and then assemble Trap boxes.

We have constructed and sold 250 x DoC 200 trap boxes, 130 x short trap boxes, 50 x DoC 150 Run Thru trap boxes, 50 x weka length trap boxes, as well as refurbishing 70 old short box traps and DoC 150 trap boxes for resale or gifting to other trapping groups. As well we have repaired PDC trap boxes as necessary.

DCTE trap boxes were sold, and in some cases gifted to trapping groups in Nelson, Golden Bay, Westport and Okari, Otatara near Invercargill, Christchurch, Cromwell, Forest and Bird at Pelorus Bridge, and Arapaoa Kiwi on Arapaoa Island.

### Health and Safety Systems:

In the past financial year DCTE fully reviewed its policy and procedures around Health and Safety systems. This included fire safety and first aid measures as well as Use of Equipment Protocols, and Risk Analysis Procedures.

### Local (Marlborough) Companies Providing Ongoing and Generous Support.

DCTE are fortunate to have the ongoing support of several entities and companies in Marlborough who donate our site, and materials and fastenings used in trap construction. Gary and Karen Knofflock ITM Picton and Rapaura Timber.



*Working bee in action*

## KAIPŪPŪ GUIDED WALKS

The 2025–26 season presented new challenges for our guided walks programme at Kaipūpū Sanctuary. A significant reduction in cruise ship visits to Picton, down by around half compared with previous seasons, combined with Marlborough Tour Company no longer offering the Kaipūpū walk as part of its programme, had a substantial impact on visitor numbers. This resulted in fewer cruise ship passengers visiting the Sanctuary, with both attendance and income notably reduced from last year and current indications suggest this trend may continue into the coming season.

Despite these challenges, Kaipūpū remains part of several valued land-based tour programmes, including Road Scholar tours and LION Tours, an overland visitor group from Taiwan. These partnerships are expected to continue next year and we will actively explore additional land-based tourism opportunities to help expand our reach, if cruise ship participation remains limited.

With lower visitor demand, volunteer guide numbers were also reduced this season, though our experienced guides can be readily reactivated through first aid certificate renewals and refresher training as demand increases. Importantly, visitor experiences at Kaipūpū continue to be exceptionally positive. Guests consistently highlight their enjoyment of the native forest, peaceful surroundings and the rich history of the Sanctuary.

This year, we guided 186 visitors through Kaipūpū Sanctuary, compared with 563 the previous year, generating \$5,465 in revenue before expenses, down from approximately \$17,000 last season. While visitor numbers were lower, the quality of the experience remains a key strength as we adapt to changing tourism patterns.



*Visitors enjoying the spectacular view from the Kaipūpū Lookout.*

## PICTON DAWN CHORUS CENTRE

The Picton Dawn Chorus Centre shop continues to be an important and practical part of our overall operations, providing both community connection and a steady contribution toward core running costs.

During the year, our long-term partner in the premises, Envirohub Marlborough, moved out. While we valued the shared space and collaboration, their departure created an opportunity for us to expand the variety and range of products available in the shop. This has allowed us to better showcase our work, offer more locally relevant items and improve the overall visitor experience.

A key feature of our retail activity over summer continues to be the cruise ship markets. When weather allows, Ali and the team are regularly out at the markets, which remain a strong and reliable income stream. On days when conditions are not suitable for outdoor trading, the team ensures the shop remains open instead, maintaining continuity of income and visitor engagement.

Income generated through the shop plays a real role in supporting our operational needs, including essential costs such as our database and accounting systems. For this reason, we greatly value the support of the public and visitors who choose to purchase from us.

The shop is open Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 3.00pm and is coordinated by Ali with the ongoing support of our dedicated volunteer team, whose time and energy make this work possible.



*Pop in and see us at 14 Auckland Street — we'd love to welcome you into the Picton Dawn Chorus Centre shop and share what we've been working on.*

# FIELD OPERATIONS

## NGAHERE ACTIVITIES

**2025 was a successful year for Ngahere.**

The main planting area is a strip of land running from the bottom of Sussex Street to the lower end of Leicester Street, bordered by regrowth trees above and the Waitohi to Waikawa track below. The site was previously an untidy mix of long coarse grass, weed species, and scattered rubbish. Council contractors prepared the ground with brush cutting prior to planting, which made a significant difference compared to previous years.

A strong turnout of community volunteers completed most of the planting in June, with additional support from Waikawa School pupils who assisted with the Miyawaki-style planting block at the Leicester Street end in July. In total, 530 trees funded by Trees That Count were planted. The early growth has been very encouraging, with visible establishment within the first year.

A further significant planting project was completed later in 2025.

This site is the grassed area just north-east of Lincoln Street, bordered by Hampden Street properties to the south-east, the Waipuna Stream to the south-west, and the fenced MDC detention pond to the north-east. Underground council services limit planting to flaxes and ground-cover shrubs, with no trees permitted. The project was funded by MDC, which also supplied 800 plants along with guards and weed mats. These plantings are also establishing well.



*Photos of a Community planting day and Waikawa Bay School planting day in action*

Myawaki block growth from planting on 17 July 2025 through till 3 April 2026.  
( Approx. 34 weeks)



May 2025 - Site cleared for planting



17<sup>th</sup> July site planted



5<sup>th</sup> December 2025



3<sup>rd</sup> April 2026

## Preparation for 2026 Planting

Looking ahead, a five-year planting plan was developed in January outlining four priority areas within Victoria Domain. The plan has been approved by MDC.

While Trees That Count has not provided funding for 2026, MDC has offered to fund up to 1,000 plants. Subject to final agreement, many of these will be planted along the grassed areas beside the winding road leading from the playground at the lower end of Sussex Street up toward Ridge Road. The remaining plants will be established on the grassed land above the community playing fields, which has capacity for approximately 1,500 plants. Planting is expected to continue across this area into next year.

Community and primary school planting days will again be organised, likely in June and July. Schools have indicated strong interest in participating, which is very positive.

## Maintenance

Maintenance of young plantings has remained consistent throughout the year. With weed growth now slowing, planting areas are generally looking tidy and well established.

Between-tree weeds are being managed through backpack spraying and brush cutting, largely carried out by two dedicated volunteers. A Friday morning weeding group focuses on weeds close to young plants and within guards, while a Sunday morning group tackles more aggressive weed species, particularly vines encroaching on planting margins. This work is essential in protecting plantings and allowing the surrounding native regrowth to re-emerge.

Although weekly volunteer turnout is sometimes light, sessions are limited to one hour and remain highly effective. They are followed by a social break with tea, coffee and a snack.

New volunteers are always warmly welcomed.



*Area 2 planting completed October/November last year*

## **NURSERY**

The Nursery has continued operations over the past year, with a small dedicated group of volunteers attending a session once a fortnight. Plants from the nursery are supplied for sale at the Picton Dawn Chorus Centre and provide additional native species for the Sanctuary. In addition, plants have been provided to the Ngahere Planting Group as replacement plants where required in other planting sites within the Picton area.



*Volunteers working in the nursery*

## **WEED CONTROL ON KAIPŪPŪ**

Weed control is carried out at Kaipūpū by the weed control crew, plus there have been occasional Working Bees. Marlborough Lines and Outward Bound have weeded newly planted flax sites over the reported period.

The weeding volunteer group has been able to keep on top of the three troublesome vines, Old Mans Beard, Banana Passionfruit and Climbing Dock within the sanctuary. Seedlings of these do still occur, but are usually found and removed before growing to maturity.

Some other less invasive weed species are also removed when found, such as the odd Pine tree and Sycamore seedlings.

## **KORORĀ/ LITTLE BLUE PENGUIN**

Wildlife Management International Ltd (WMIL) continues to monitor Kororā at Kaipūpū in addition to Port jetty areas. They provide regular reports to our organisation and have passed on any other useful information from their monitoring cameras, such as any pest species identified within the sanctuary.

Last year they closely monitored a nesting pair on the main walking track around the sanctuary until the chick and adults both left the nest.

## **BIRD SURVEYS**

Volunteers and staff conducted five minute bird counts again in 2025, with data collected from regular sites across the Sanctuary, Wedge, Snout and Urban areas. Sites were monitored three times during October.

Bird count monitoring will continue in the year ahead as we collect long term data to assess population changes.

## VESPEX CONTROL OPERATION

During March of 2026, a Vespex Operation was carried out targeting wasps within the Sanctuary and established Beech forest areas of Wedge Point. There were a total of 120 bait stations set up within Wedge Point Scenic Reserve land and 47 stations used across Kaipūpū Sanctuary. The baiting period included some of the warmest autumn weather and allowed for good bait uptake. This was particularly noticeable on north facing dry areas, where high numbers of wasps could be seen collecting Vespex shortly after the bait was laid.

Adjacent wasp control was carried out by the Ngakuta trapping group in their areas during the same period.

Bait supplies and equipment was supplied by The Department of Conservation as part of the wasp wipeout program. This allowed for additional work to be undertaken.



Figure 1: Vespex Bait Station Locations Established March 2026

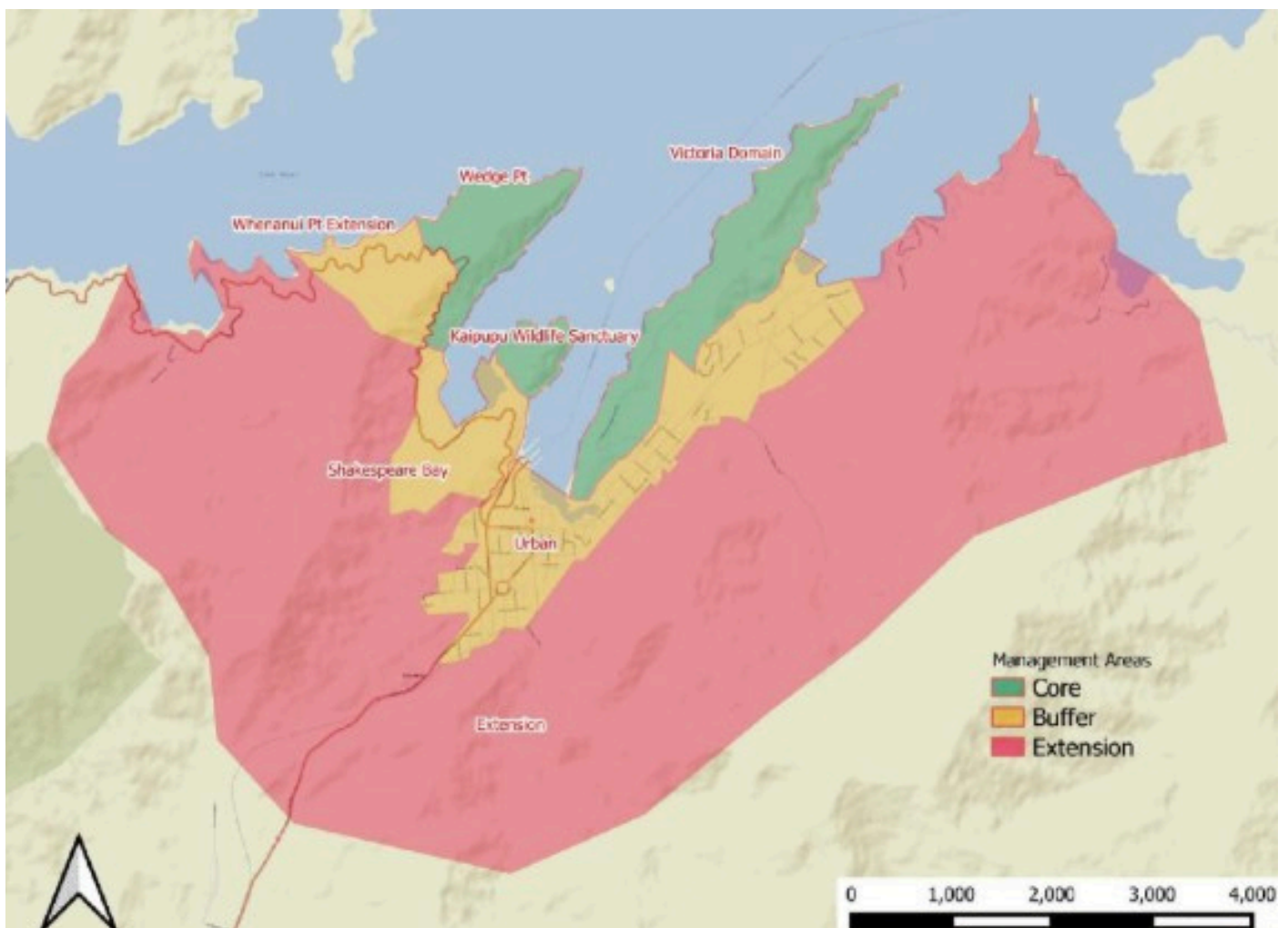
# TRAPPING AND MONITORING REPORT - YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026

## INTRODUCTION

The Kaipūpū/Picton Dawn Chorus areas are referred to as The Sanctuary and Halo areas. The Sanctuary provides a highly protected wildlife sanctuary surrounded by a predator proof fence, with successful predator control. The Halo, an intensively trapped strata surrounding the sanctuary, providing increased scale and habitat diversity over a wider area.

The Operational Plan adopted in 2020, identified seven separate management areas within the total 4,815ha operational area. Various levels of predator control, methodologies and priority levels have been assigned to achieve the desired control outcomes within each of these blocks, ultimately to improve local birdlife and the abundance of other native species.

The Halo area includes the Picton and Waikawa urban areas and the wider bush areas outside of this. Specific control blocks and their control priorities from the operational plan are shown in Figure 2: below.



**Figure 2: Picton Dawn Chorus Management Areas as identified within the Operational Plan**

In past years, much of the trapping effort was carried out across Kaipūpū Point, followed by Victoria Domain, the easily accessible sections of Shakespeare Bay, The Wedge, including the Link Pathway and Queen Charlotte Drive. More difficult to access coastal habitat was also trapped with Goodnature A24s at this time.

In subsequent years more off trail lines were installed, including coverage of Wedge Point by 2021. The Marlborough Sounds Restoration Trust established control on the northern side of the outer Wedge, while contractors set up much of the south eastern side. Since then the remainder of the areas within the plan have been set out by staff of our organisation.

TrapNZ shows 3,910 trap sites currently established throughout the Kaipūpū/Picton Dawn Chorus management areas.

## SANCTUARY

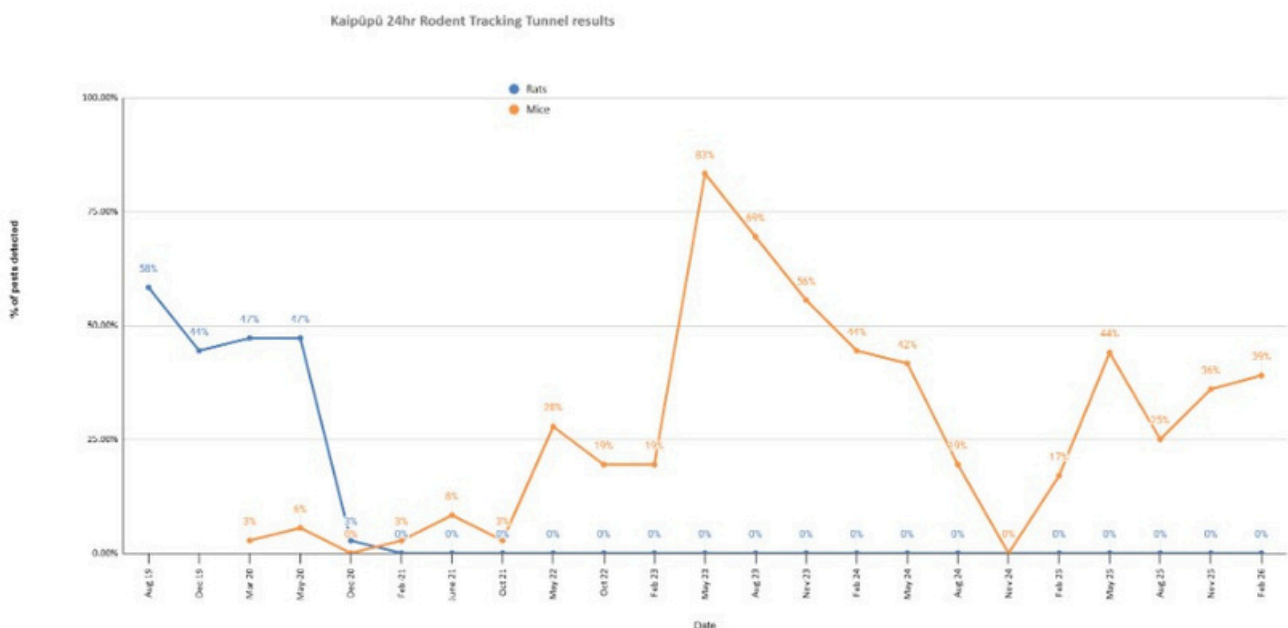
For the reported period Kaipūpū volunteers have continued to service the intensive trapping network within Kaipūpū Sanctuary. Regular trapping continued over the past year. These efforts have maintained a 0% rat tracking within the tracking tunnels during the four monitors carried out during the year.

Mice are still being captured in relatively high numbers, as shown in Table 1 below. While mice tracking fluctuated from 44%-25% in the tracking tunnel monitoring throughout the year as shown Figure 3 below.

Despite the low monitoring results, predators other than mice are captured within the sanctuary, particularly around the predator fence ends. AT220's have been installed adjacent to these fence ends to aid in the capture of any pests that do get into the sanctuary by swimming around these fence ends. In early 2026 A24 traps were set in an adjacent boat yard. The field operations group has also decided to shift AT220 traps to any sites where rat captures are showing up inside of the sanctuary in an effort to keep numbers low.

**Table 1: Sanctuary Catches April 1st 2025 - March 31st 2026.**

Rat	Mouse	Possum	Stoat	Weasel	Ferret	Hedgehog	Unspecified	TOTAL
10	899	1	1	0	0	0	12	923



**Figure 3: Tracking Tunnel Monitoring Results for the Sanctuary**

Volunteers have continued being very active in all areas of planning and maintenance within the sanctuary, with biodiversity planning, monitoring, mowing, weed eating, weed control, scrub cutting all around the site, along the tracks and around the sheds. Other activities, such as spraying, cleaning toilets and signage are ongoing.

Over the past year the sanctuary has benefited from some excellent larger visiting volunteer groups from the likes of Cloudy Bay Winery staff, Marlborough Boy's College Leo's Group, Marlborough Lines staff and a number of groups from Outward Bound. These groups have really jumped in and tackled some of the larger tasks where numbers of keen workers really help to get larger tasks done.

The new track on the northern side of the sanctuary has been established thanks to a kind donation from a long term Sanctuary volunteer and will be opened, once signage is in place, offering a pleasant walk through to a small bay, north east of the main jetty site.

## URBAN TRAPPING AREAS

After an early engagement with large numbers of locals to encourage trapping within the urban boundaries of the Picton township, a number still trap, although gathering data from all local urban trappers can be difficult.

Despite difficulties keeping engagement up, some locals are very active in their trapping.

Table 2 below shows the reported catch data from TrapNZ, captured by urban trappers between April 1st 2025 and March 31st 2026.

**Table 2: Urban catches April 1st 2025 - March 31st 2026.**

Rat	Mouse	Possum	Stoat	Weasel	Ferret	Hedgehog	Unspecified	TOTAL
201	136	148	0	0	0	8	3	496

## HALO

Picton Dawn Chorus volunteers have again contributed a large number of hours checking traps across a number of volunteer lines, enabling a high number of effective trap nights. Work by volunteers over the past year towards the Halo trapping efforts extends across a number of additional activities. These include operational planning discussions, trap design/building, trap trials, auditing processes, fixing traps, bait trials, trapping data recording /analysis, bait/equipment preparation and fundraising.

Last winter an ex-possum trapper again undertook additional possum control for the organisation by leg-hold trapping in Essons Valley behind Picton. His efforts removed an additional 500 possums and kept the lower Essons possum devices well baited through late winter/early spring.

PDC has recorded the following catches on the TrapNZ database, outside of the sanctuary/urban areas, between April 1st 2025 and March 31st 2026.

**Table 3: Bush Trapping Area Catches, April 1st 2025 - March 31st 2026.**

Rat	Mouse	Possum	Stoat	Weasel	Ferret	Hedgehog	Unspecified	TOTAL
3910	591	1083	11	8	2	27	16	5648

Rat catches show seasonal variations with lower catches characteristic of summer (when natural food supplies are abundant) and higher catches in autumn and winter (when natural food is less abundant and our non-toxic trap lure is more appealing). It should be noted that Picton Dawn Chorus has a number of A24 devices that do not have counters or chirps attached, early on it was decided that for the price of these, the funds were more usefully spent on additional traps. This means a number of rat captures and potentially mustelids are not reported in Table 3 above. Another common area of under reporting occurs where wild pigs take possums from traps with no remains left in the trap.

Monitoring of the Halo has continued with six monitoring lines for possums and rats on the Victoria Domain and five lines on the Wedge. For rat monitoring inked cards are placed (for 24 hours) in tracking tunnels set out through our trapping areas. The “Rat Tracking %” shown is the percentage of cards that show rat footprints. Rat tracking tunnel monitoring was again carried out in November 2025 and repeated in April 2026. These results are summarised against recent annual monitoring results in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Tracking Tunnel Monitoring Results for Victoria Domain and the Wedge.**

**\*Note: PDC operational Plan suggests an output target of maintaining a rat tracking index of less than 20% for Victoria Domain and less than 25% for The Wedge strata.**

Victoria Domain	Rat Tracking %	The Wedge	Rat Tracking %
November 2021	23%	November 2021	8%
April 2022	43%	April 2022	16%
November 2022	27%	November 2022	20%
April 2023	23%	April 2023	48%
November 2023	20%	November 2023	8%
April 2024	30%	April 2024	28%
November 2024	30%	November 2024	0%
April 2025	50%	April 2025	32%
November 2025	36.7%	November 2025	28%
April 2026	40%	April 2026	36%

Possum Monitoring is conducted to standard practice with wax tags in the field for a seven night survey.

**Table 5: Wax Tag Index Monitoring Results for Victoria Domain and The Wedge, June 2022 - June 2025.**

**\*Note: PDC Operational Plan suggests an output target of maintaining a wax tag index of less than 15% for Victoria Domain and less than 22% for The Wedge strata. The plan also suggests that if the Victoria Domain target is achieved then monitoring should take place every two years.**

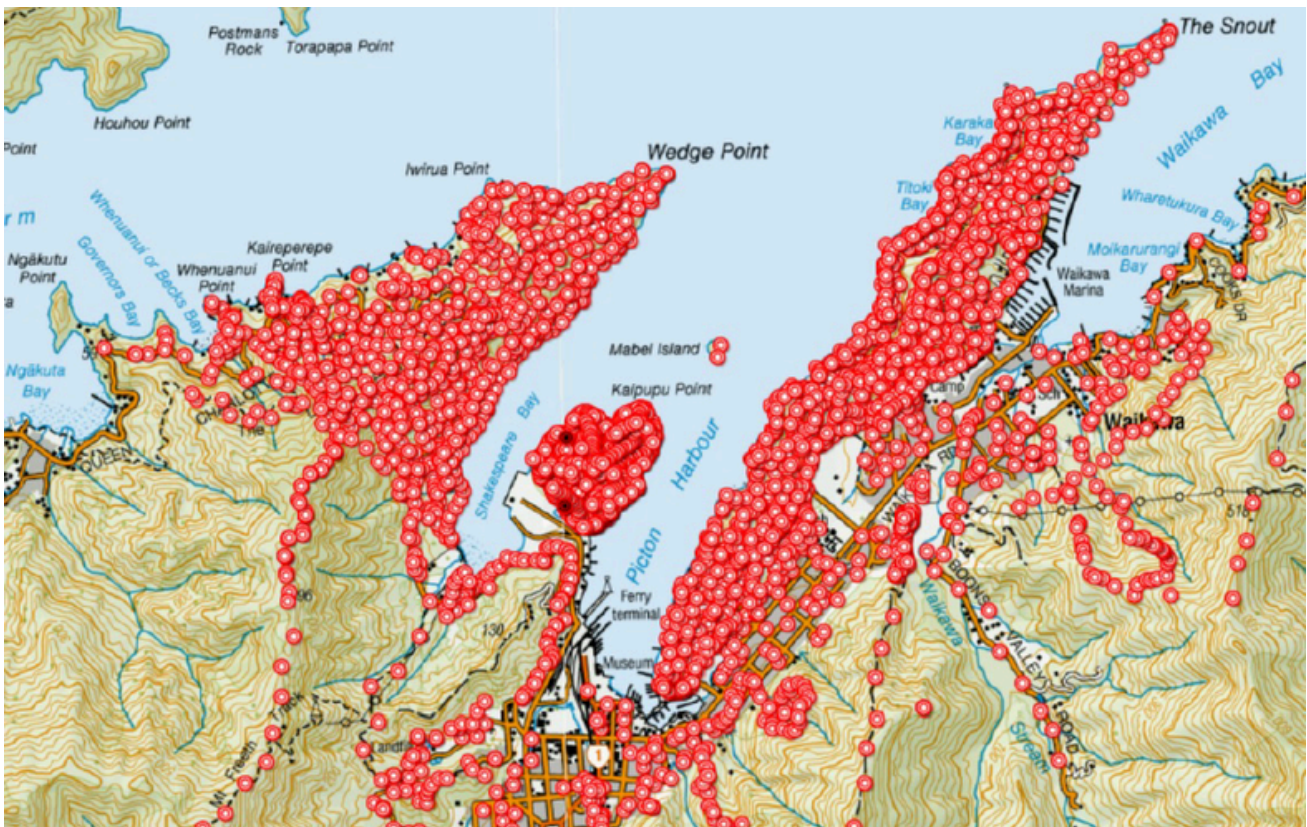
Victoria Domain	Possum WTI %	The Wedge	Possum WTI %
June 2022	10%	June 2022	10%
June 2024	0%	June 2023	6%
		June 2024	0%
		June 2025	6%

Monitoring suggests that output targets for rat control are periodically achieved on the Wedge, however Victoria Domain in general and the autumn tracking tunnel index for the Wedge is often fluctuating above target levels. It is hoped that lower levels can be achieved with more autotraps added to the existing trapping network.

Wax tag monitoring for possum assessment suggests possums are being maintained well below targeted levels in the priority peninsula sites. Where possum catches do occur, they are particularly noticeable along uncontrolled boundaries and where possums have moved into the network. Small pockets of possums with trap shyness are also likely, so follow up leg hold trapping has been a useful method in addition to the permanent traps set out in the field.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

The Wedge Mainland Island habitat is targeted for further AT220 trap placement, strengthening pest control across the two peninsulas on either side of the fenced sanctuary. We will also implement more targeted control using AT220 traps on established remote traplines and continue future-proofing the work undertaken to date, which reduces demands on staff and volunteers.



*Image shows the current trapping network across priority peninsula sites on either side of the fenced Sanctuary on Kaipūpū Point.*



# FINANCIAL REPORTS

## Statement of Financial Performance

For the year ended 31 March 2026

	Year ended 31 March 2026	Year ended 31 March 2025
<b>Income</b>	\$	\$
Grants & Sponsorships Received	193,623	225,734
Membership, Donations & Interest Income	61,101	115,155
Shop Sales	19,156	15,865
Guided Tours Income	6,002	17,301
<b>DCTE Surplus (Deficit)</b>		
Sales - Traps	20,043	53,320
Purchases - Trap Materials	(9,698)	(14,180)
Overhead Expenses	(1,709)	(1,777)
<b>Total DCTE Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>8,636</b>	<b>37,363</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>288,518</b>	<b>411,418</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	\$	\$
Wages, Salaries & Employment Costs	231,643	290,432
Product Purchases & Operating Costs	91,524	85,308
Office Overheads	21,721	19,116
<b>Total Operating Costs &amp; Overheads</b>	<b>344,888</b>	<b>394,856</b>
<b>Net Surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>(56,370)</b>	<b>16,562</b>

## Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2026

	Year ended 31 March 2026	Year ended 31 March 2025
<b>Assets</b>	\$	\$
Bank	356,187	414,407
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>356,187</b>	<b>414,407</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Accounts Receivable	7,053	6,232
Inventory	4,748	5,558
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>11,801</b>	<b>11,790</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Fixed Assets	75,095	70,089
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>75,095</b>	<b>70,089</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>443,083</b>	<b>496,286</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	\$	\$
GST	934	(1,321)
Holiday Pay Owing to Staff	8,929	8,647
Other current liabilities	630	-
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>10,493</b>	<b>7,326</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>10,493</b>	<b>7,326</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>432,590</b>	<b>488,960</b>
<b>Equity</b>	\$	\$
Current Year Earnings	(56,370)	16,562
Retained Earnings	488,960	472,398
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>432,590</b>	<b>488,960</b>



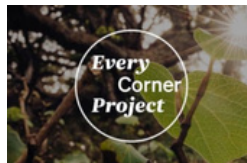
# GRATITUDE PAGE

The success of Picton Dawn Chorus as a community conservation group would not be possible without the generosity of our funders, donors and corporate partnerships. We would like to express our deep gratitude and thanks to the many individuals, organisations, charitable trusts and businesses throughout Marlborough, who choose to contribute to Picton Dawn Chorus.

## FOUNDATION PARTNERS



## TRUST AND FOUNDATIONS



## CORPORATE DONATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

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THANK YOU FOR READING