

Media Release

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Picton's Smart & Connected community group gets underway

Picton's newly established "Smart & Connected" community steering group has set out four areas of work which group members believe will bring the swiftest benefit to the town.

Following the first meeting of the Steering Group in late January, the 14 members have already begun to form working groups to focus on the highest priorities and make sure Picton has input in development going forward.

Chairman Barry Maister says the steering group members represent diverse skills and experience rather than any particular group or organisation; they're all people happy to work together to help the town progress.

"We've got ideas for about 20 different projects but we've narrowed that down to a more immediately achievable handful and, as progress is made, we'll pick up the others," he says.

The first four priorities include a new Library-Community Hub, the development of public spaces around the town, freedom camping and the beautification of Picton.

Each of these projects has been allocated to a steering group member to lead, and reach out to get feedback and views from affected sectors of the community. Another team is focusing on communications, by both digital and traditional means, to ensure Picton people are kept up to date on the Smart & Connected activities and can have input, via a website, digital media, posters, suggestion box and public meetings.

Mr Maister says the 'Enhance the Picton Environment' project will establish a group to deal, not only with litter, but also with new plantings and landscaping. The Public Space Development group would focus on the trial to connect London Quay more closely with the foreshore, the upper High Street improvements and an access path from the town to the Link Pathway.

The Smart & Connected steering group has a database of more than 100 people who attended an earlier public meeting and they will all be contacted by email and invited to support one or more of these projects. A localised social media platform called 'Neighbourly' will enable Picton residents to contribute ideas and feedback directly.

Mr Maister says it's still early days but the group is keen to ensure it sets up a structure and some processes so that the Picton community can work alongside the Council.

"This is really just a starting point. The Council has said the 'smart and connected' concept should be community-driven so we're trying to co-ordinate all the talent and energy in the Picton community so we have some clarity and some momentum to make that happen."

Mr Maister said the minutes of the steering group's meetings will be publicly available, there will be a half-yearly public meeting and regular communication with the Picton community about all the activities.

"The whole thinking behind this is that it's a vehicle for the community to have a voice and influence, and a channel for people who want to get things done for Picton."

ends



Above: Picton's connection with the foreshore - one of the early priorities

Further photographs available on request.