

# Themes from the 2017 'Our Future Featherston' Survey and Fab Feathy suggestion boxes



# Fifteen themes from community feedback

In 2017 the Fab Feathy Community-Led Development Project asked the Featherston community, why do you choose to live here, what do you love about Featherston and what do you want for future Featherston?

This document provides a thematic summary the response from the Featherston Community – a summary of the 205 completed surveys and 444 suggestions provided through suggestion boxes, noticeboards and at community events.

<b>Main street</b>	<p>We want the public face of town to tidied up and better reflect the vibrancy of our town. We want a ‘public face’ we can be proud of.</p> <p>We want unique artisanal businesses and a range of affordable shops.</p> <p>We want a more unified main street from one end to the other. We want it to be safe for pedestrians. We want people to want to stop and spend money in town.</p> <p>We want the squircle to be bustling with people and activities (markets, performance)</p>
<b>Young People</b>	<p>We want to make sure that our young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are proud to come from Featherston</li><li>• have opportunities in town to discover, develop, and use/share their skills and talents</li><li>• have options for ‘things to do’ for fun, recreation, hobbies, and interests</li><li>• can earn their first income and gain work experience in town</li><li>• have opportunities to hang out with/interact with other generations in town</li><li>• understand the contribution they can make to our community and have their contributions recognised when they make them</li><li>• know that we value and support them and we have their backs</li><li>• are confident and resilient and they know where to get help if they need it</li></ul>
<b>Employment, income and business development</b>	<p>We want the infrastructure needed to attract and support creators, innovators and businesses to invest in setting up here.</p>
<b>Cycle and walking trails</b>	<p>We want to revitalise/improve what we have now and develop new safe and accessible walking and cycle trails for locals and for visitors to use, catering for a wide range of abilities.</p> <p>The potential to develop tourism and improving connections between the town and nearby environmental assets where key threads in this theme.</p>
<b>Swimming pool complex improvements</b>	<p>We want to make better use of what we already have – and we have some “think big” ideas for developing an all year round facility.</p>
<b>Liveable amenities, services and infrastructure</b>	<p>We want Council to engage better with the community.</p> <p>We want the amenities, services and infrastructure that ensure a great standard of living right across our diverse community.</p>
<b>Natural surroundings, including Wairarapa Moana</b>	<p>We want to protect, restore, and enhance our surrounding outstanding natural environment.</p>

**More public art**

We want more public art projects. Public art makes for an interesting environment for locals and may bring more visitors to town. It is perhaps a means of revitalising some of the tired and shabby public face of the town.

We also want to support and encourage our local artists and attract more artists to live here.

**Destination Featherston**

We want people to stop and enjoy their stay.

We want to be the destination not just the gateway. We want to develop the potential we can see in town and make the most of our unique character, attributes and surroundings.

We want to both complement and distinguish our town from what is on offer in the rest of the region.

**Better housing and healthcare for elderly**

We want appropriate housing, facilities and services to allow our elderly people to stay in town; to avoid the stress, upset and upheaval of having to leave town if residential care is necessary.

**Community**

We want to get together to have fun and enjoy each other's company. We want a programme of free events/activities for locals aimed at building & celebrating community (not tourism focused).

We want our community to be connected and cohesive, we want collaboration and sharing. We want to celebrate and utilise the talents and skills we have in town.

**History and heritage**

We want to see our heritage buildings revitalised, used, and preserved. We see potential for tourism based around our unique heritage.

**Waste not want not**

We want to reduce waste and our impact on the environment by sharing and exchanging, recycling, repurposing, reusing, upcycling materials and resources. "Think big" aspiration to be the Upcycling/Recycling/Recovery Centre of the Wairarapa.

**Food and gardening**

We want to grow, exchange, share food locally. We don't want our abundant produce to go to waste when someone else in town could use it.

We want to attract initiatives that will provide locals with affordable fruit and veges.

We want to stay in town to eat out.

**Children and childcare**

We want our children to be safe and to have access to good quality affordable age appropriate child care operating in hours that suit working/studying parents/caregivers.

We want a range of kid-friendly activities for fun, sport, art, culture and recreation.

We want our kids to have world-class education that supports them to build confidence and resilience.

# One vision, five community aspirations

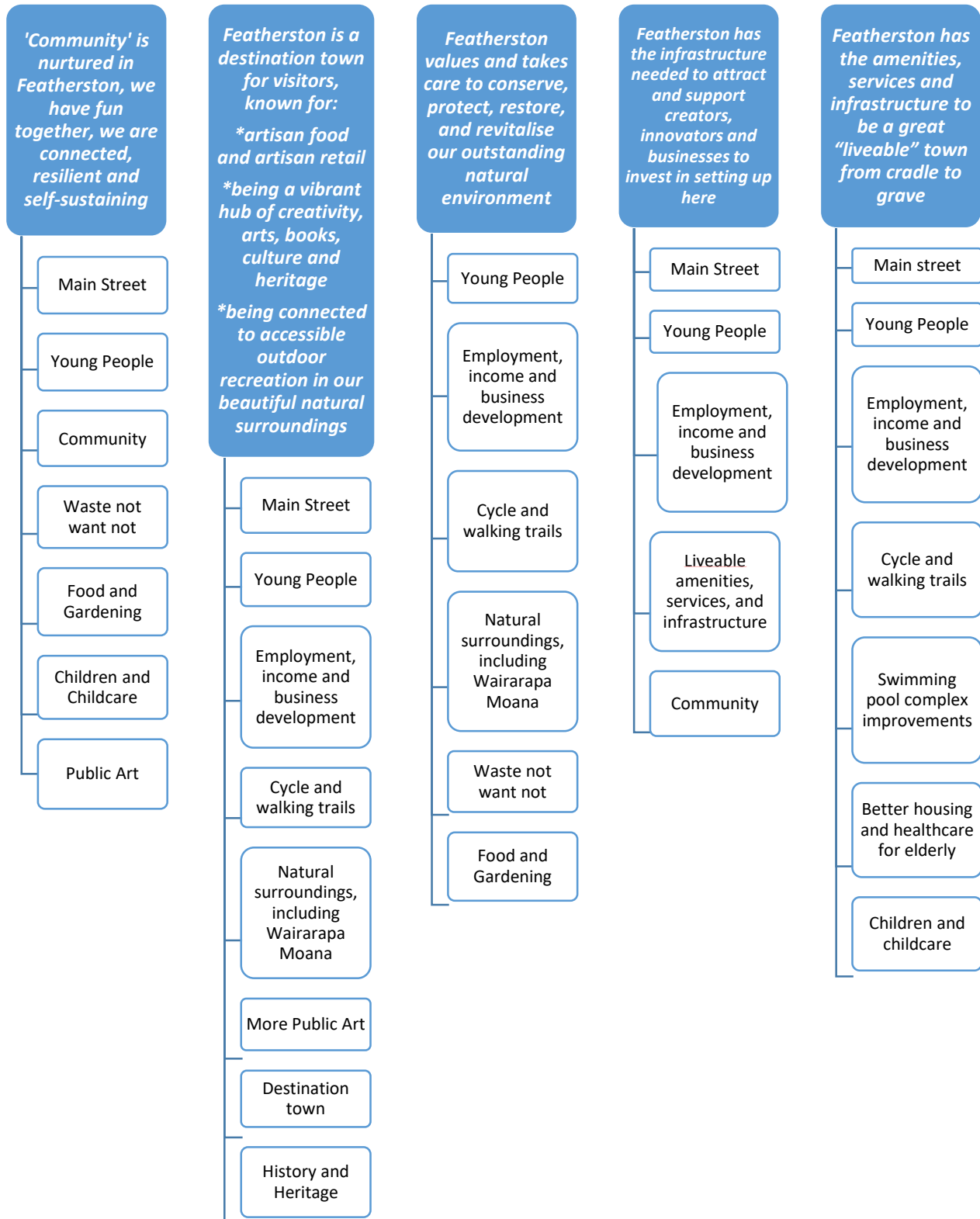
People overwhelmingly commented that Featherston is: a great place to live; has a great community filled with many diverse, interesting, talented, caring and community-minded people; and is bursting with potential.

## Our Community Vision

As a community, we want to fully realise the potential we can see Featherston is bursting with *while* retaining and enhancing what makes our town and community distinctive and great.

## Our Community Aspirations

Five community aspirations were developed from the fifteen theme areas. The following demonstrates which theme area links with each aspiration.



The community provided many, many, many ideas about how to achieve what we want our town. Some of these ideas have been sorted by theme area below.

## Theme one: Main street

***We want the public face of town to tidied up and better reflect the vibrancy of our town. We want a 'public face' we can be proud of.***

***We want unique artisanal businesses and a range of affordable shops.***

***We want a more unified main street from one end to the other.***

***We want it to be safe for pedestrians.***

***We want people to want to stop and spend money in town.***

***We want the squircle to be bustling with people and activities (markets, performance, community gatherings).***

Some ideas:

- no derelict or run-down buildings on the main street – new partnerships to get things upgraded, make building owners/Council more accountable
- ideally renovate the derelict buildings (retain their character); otherwise, have a community paint bombing session to 'decorate' them OR cover the exterior with ply and then paint a mural showing what the building could/should look like
- shelter over public seats in town square/squircle; finish the seats off and planter boxes in the squircle
- slow traffic, speed camera, add traffic island and pedestrian crossings and pedestrian malls (e.g. on Fox Street by war memorial)
- better landscaping of street frontage
- upgrade/clean footpaths. Replace with brick
- more unified appearance - custom made open flags same theme and colours
- more community input and better town planning into the main street appeal and looks
- no Strip Mall – keep Featherston quirky and unique
- take away existing access to SH53 that would allow more parks near Royal and traffic to park/drive past local businesses
- more covered/sheltered areas for markets, outdoor concerts
- retail development ideas based on VUW School of Design concepts

# Theme two: Young people – it takes a village

## ***We want to make sure that our young people:***

- ***are proud to come from Featherston***
- ***have opportunities in town to discover, develop, and use/share their skills and talents***
- ***have options for 'things to do' for fun, recreation, hobbies, and interests***
- ***can earn their first income and gain work experience in town***
- ***have opportunities to hang out with/interact with other generations in town***
- ***understand the contribution they can make to our community and have their contributions recognised when they make them***
- ***know that we value and support them and we have their backs***
- ***are confident and resilient and they know where to get help if they need it***

## Some ideas:

- Support/extend Boundary Road Youth Group (the work Alan Maxwell is leading) to: develop and be sustainable; provide a space for YP to access tools/support they need to keep up with their school work, develop skills and confidence, and plan pathways to their futures
- Support YP to identify and access part-time work. For example, afterschool activities/jobs for children to earn cash – stacking firewood, gardens, lawns, pet feeding
- Strong sports clubs to make sure YP can play for local teams
- Rainy day hang out space
- Video game arcade and/or bowling alley or equivalent space where both young and old can hang out
- Better communication about how to support and get involved in supporting YP in town
- Ask YP to get involved in local projects
- Age appropriate school holiday programmes
- Music workshop for youth and adults
- Computer coding workshop
- Adventure playground for teens and adults
- More jobs/training/work experience for young people -connecting with colleges/tertiary
- Youth friendly activities – teenagers teaching younger children to skateboard or scooter
- Basketball hoops/court
- Bigger skate park; bigger bowl at the skate park



# Theme three: Employment, income & business development

***Lots of ideas about how the development we want in other 'theme' areas could support job creation and generate income for locals, e.g.:***

- bigger better all year round pool = potential jobs
- upcycling centre = create jobs for locals
- destination town, tourism leads to more opportunities for locals to earn income
- new purpose built building for Council and govt services – bring money from council workers into town

***Business development, some ideas:***

- position town as an incubator of emerging high tech start ups
- create new shared co-working space in empty buildings in the main street (including hot desks, kitchen, meeting facilities etc.) Option for commuter workers to work locally a few days a week
- community-led ultrafast broadband project – we're way down government's priority list. But what could we do if the Council, vineyards, local business, private investors, community got together to create a local plan/fibre network.
- offer fast free broadband within commercial zone
- commercial development around the station (coffee... dog day care)
- Council subsidy to get the shops up & running (start-up fund)
- encouraging/providing incentives for business/retail development
- buy local campaign
- income for locals through supporting our local artisans to set up and sustain businesses here
- opening hours that suit commuters
- speed-dating type event to better connect businesses, community groups and others in town.
- Get a regular market going (some stalls) in the new town squircle area.
- attract investment in more vineyards and vegetable fields for work
- website for Featherston
- promote promote promote Featherston ♡

# Theme four: cycle and walking trails

***We want to revitalise/improve what we have now and develop new safe and accessible walking and cycle trails for locals and for visitors to use, catering for a wide range of abilities.***

***The potential to develop tourism and improving connections between the town and nearby environmental assets where key threads in this theme.***

Some ideas:

- Amenities to support cycle and outdoor recreation options for locals and visitors –
  - promote what we have
  - secure storage for cycles while riders are in town
  - 'groovy' bike racks
  - visitor showers
  - good signage from train station and to connect town with trails
  - spruced up public toilets
  - hire sport equipment
- Historic markers/sculptures/signs of Māori history in and around Featherston
- More recreational walking tracks in the Hills but close enough to town so we do not need to drive to start them
- Connect tracks and greens spaces to the info centre/squircle
- Develop town street walks: Historic Street; Public Art; based on Books or Heritage
- Walking track to Peace Garden on Messines Way – as designed by Maria Rogers
- Extend One Tree Hill track into adjacent area which is apparently DOC owned.
- Walkway/cycleway to Lake Reserve.
- Dog walking areas. Public tracks around the lake. Dog facilities on trails.
- Renovate Otairua Reserve and redevelop pathway connecting Otairua Reserve with Featherston
- Safer paths for horses down to the Lake
- Developing the proposed mountain bike trail in the Rimutaka hills from 2009/2010
- Bridge at Barr Brown Bush Reserve to have better access to reserve. Boarbush gulley access to Tararua
- More little book exchanges throughout Featherston on a trail/map to be made
- Book related and/or history related walks through Featherston. One idea is a kids walk based on the book "Olwen Twelve Pockets" by Fiona McKay (with her permission of course!) Each station could reveal the contents of a pocket and lead to the next pocket ... and end at a bookshop!



# Theme five: Swimming pool complex improvements

***The pool complex is a community 'bumping space'; it is a community asset used for play, recreation, exercise.***

***We want to make better use of what we already have – and we have some “think big” ideas for developing an all year round facility.***

***Developing the pool/waterpark was a strong theme in the feedback from our kids and young people.***

Ideas to make better use of or improvements to the current 'summer season' complex:

- Water slide at pool
- Shade sails
- Toys, play features, blow-up-activities
- BBQ/picnic area including seating – late nights, take a picnic and chill
- Late nights – take a picnic, chill
- Pool cover for toddler pool and have it filled up at least 90% the summer pool time
- Support the Swimming Club's Community Relay event
- Extend the pool hours so more of the community can use it during the week (e.g. commuter/worker friendly hours opening until 7 p.m.)
- Dedicated lane/s to improve safety for people wanting to exercise
- Extend the 'season' – open sooner for longer season
- Make the main pool deeper

Some ideas & comments about developing an all year round modern facility:

- Covered, heated, bigger
- Develop an indoor/outdoor waterpark with slides
- Multi-purpose facility with a gym
- Wave-pool
- Splash pad with musical features and buttons
- Retain the charm of our current outdoor pool
- Avoid steamy, loud echoey indoor environment
- Potential to bring employment with the construction - make employing locals a condition of the construction contract - and with the ongoing operations of the new year round facility.

# Theme six: 'Liveable' amenities, services, and infrastructure

***We want Council to engage better with the community.***

***We want the amenities, services and infrastructure that ensure a great standard of living right across our diverse community.***

*'Liveable' is a living conditions / quality of life concept where a range of factors are taken into consideration to rate the 'liveability'. Factors like: cost of living; health care; quality of education; safety/crime; arts, culture, recreation, entertainment options; public transport; access to goods and services; equitable mobility; environment; town design and infrastructure; social inclusion; connectivity; commerce.*

Some ideas:

- cinema
- new street lighting like Greytown
- accessible footpaths w/ramps for wheelchairs & guide strips for blind
- improved public transport – more trains
- make the library bigger
- more support from Council for community development
- improved working relationship with Council
- security cameras and more bike racks at the Train Station
- rain gardens to deal with storm water issues
- free Wi-Fi in main street
- more dining options e.g. wine bars, choice of restaurants other than takeaways
- live music venue; bar with live music, family friendly
- better animal control
- upgrade dog park with ramps, tunnels, jumps and shelter
- modern indoor sports and community gym complex
- linked up sports clubs
- better promotion and utilisation of existing local halls, groups and recreation facilities.
- open hours (library, swimming pool, local gyms) in evenings so commuters can access
- much more visible and responsible police presence
- safe housing for abused partner
- community housing, income-related rents
- respite care
- access to Featherston Community Centre from the Main Street.
- more social service agencies in town, using Community Centre
- Community Network meeting better promoted
- community sports/exercise events; more exercise options & classes; 24 hour gym

# Theme seven: Natural surroundings, including Wairarapa Moana

***We want to protect, restore, and enhance our surrounding outstanding natural environment.***

Some ideas:

- great to see young people getting involved – continue/expand the community work with DOC, GW etc to run youth conservation, biodiversity training programme around Wairarapa Moana restoration
- teaching/learning of conservation and landscape development skills while restoring Wairarapa Moana
- develop career paths for people involved in wetland restoration work
- conservation focused programme around Wairarapa Moana
- campaign to stop chemicals going into the lake (ban Round Up) and the shooting of geese
- clean up the lake water
- implement concepts developed by the Vic Uni landscape architect students
- better use of the Lake. It is unique to the Wairarapa and Featherston is the nearest town. Long term major tree planting and making northern access road along lake; better clearing and replanting
- create conservation jobs – possum trapping
- develop the Wairarapa Moana Reserve
- put the Ruamahunga back in the lake
- increase connections between the town and nearby environmental assets
- upgrade sewage, love for our Wairarapa Moana
- native plants along open storm water streams
- slow down boy racers going down to the Lake
- walking, cycling, horse riding trails around the lake and connecting the lake with town
- look into solar and/or wind power generation that suits our environment

# Theme eight: More public art

***We want more public art projects. Public art makes for an interesting environment for locals and may bring more visitors to town. It is perhaps a means of revitalising some of the tired and shabby public face of the town.***

***We also want to support and encourage our local artists and attract more artists to live here.***

Some ideas:

- to be the kinetic art sculpture capital of New Zealand
- to be the wind sculpture capital of New Zealand
- graffiti art murals on buildings
- be a destination on an Art Trail, perhaps starting from Featherston
- more Public Art projects: sculptures; wind sculptures; murals on buildings
- Art gallery – permanent and pop-ups in the empty shops and buildings, this would encourage local talent
- support the Wairarapa Art Sale at Featherston's Community Centre
- historic markers/sculptures/signs of Māori history in and around Featherston
- groovy bikes racks
- performance spaces
- A place where artists can live and work and don't have to be rich or famous
- new artist studios – co working space and studios in one of the old buildings in town centre. Could offer cheap rent, space to sell artists goods. Could act as a small scale art 'start-up' space

# Theme nine: Destination Featherston

***We want people to stop and enjoy their stay.***

***We want to be the destination not just the gateway.  
We want to develop the potential we can see in town  
and make the most of our unique character,  
attributes and surroundings.***

***We want to both complement and distinguish our  
town from what is on offer in the rest of the region.***

Some ideas:

- better synergy connection with neighbouring towns; complement/distinguish from what is on offer in the rest of the region
- destination park and/or pool that brings families – have a picnic and BBQ area (coin operated or free)
- Booktown
- support the Christmas market and parade
- more restaurants
- main street development; better parking
- support the retailers, they are the public face
- embrace freedom camping and make Otairua Reserve a site for this!
- promote our artisans, more public art
- concerted campaign to upgrade the town toilets; how come Mboro & Beigetown got new toilets & we get the dunger (no pun intended!)
- Dorset Square to have toilets, showers (coin operated) for cyclists to camp
- better market with more stalls
- music festival at the race course
- steam punk festival
- increase connections between the town and nearby environmental assets
- trains to Cross Creek (Steam) or Western Lake & Café both ends/souvenir shop
- better signage from railway station to Featherston
- build tourism profile, better promotion of and positive publicity about Featherston (website)
- other activities that encourage people to stop e.g. mini golf
- better public transport – especially train services (frequency/timeliness)
- expand the visitor's information centre; longer opening hours, an I-site – we are the gateway to the Wairarapa
- strengthen Sister City relationship with Messines in Belgium; build a model village of Messines in the middle of the mini fell railway

# Theme ten: Better housing and healthcare for elderly

***We want appropriate housing, facilities and services to allow our elderly people to stay in town; to avoid the stress, upset and upheaval of having to leave town if residential care is necessary.***

Some ideas:

- turn Fareham House into rest home
- age concern agency presence
- programmes for older adults
- clean warm affordable housing for old persons
- old folks home
- more pensioner flats
- A rest home for residents
- equitable accessible mobility town planning, footpaths etc.
- allow gold card users all day on Wairarapa public transport
- reinstate Meals on Wheels (tick, done!)



# Theme eleven: 'Community' is nurtured

***We want to get together to have fun and enjoy each other's company.***

***We want a programme of free events/activities for locals aimed at building & celebrating community (not tourism focused).***

***We want our community to be connected and cohesive, we want collaboration and sharing.***

***We want to celebrate and utilise the talents and skills we have in town.***

Some ideas:

- more First Friday Parties
- community movie nights at ANZAC Hall
- more Community Potlucks
- more family based community events where we can get together to meet others and our children can interact.
- thoughtful integration of new residents with old school Feathy
- celebrate Community – community awards
- commuter-friendly community events, activities and groups
- residents' Christmas lights festival - everyone lights up their tree and looks at other houses that are decorated with lights. Light up the tree on one tree hill
- fully connected, all communication channels to cover everyone
- community survey like this one where we are invited to share our ideas/vision
- join up all the different groups that do the same thing – have one overarching committee so that all the groups are pulling in same the direction
- joint funding applications
- create inventory of community skills – retired people have skills they can pass on to others.
- workshops where people share their skills for free
- neighbours helping each other
- strengthen links between neighbours so we see more people chatting in the streets
- support group for people with disabilities
- promote our awesomeness - positive media stories
- database of services, groups
- supportive inclusive integrated community
- supportive of elderly, less social isolation
- social services hub
- more groups using the community-owned Community Centre on Wakefield Street
- violence free town: a place where domestic violence is not tolerated

# Theme twelve: History and heritage

***We want to see our heritage buildings revitalised, used, and preserved.***

***We see potential for tourism based around our unique heritage.***

Some ideas:

- Celebrate and develop better knowledge of Māori history of the area
- Have both Featherston's official names (Pae Tū mōkai) recognised by the NZ Geographic Board
- Restore heritage buildings on main street
- Development of a permanent project that showcases the role of the military/prison camp and the town during two wars
- Better promotion/more visibility re: the town's history – the train, the army, the camp
  - Develop display and photo boards to bring it into public life
- Profile Anzac Hall – it's a treasure
- More entertainment to get more use of ANZAC Hall
- Digital recording of our oral, photographic and written history
- Develop an historical aspect to Featherston Cemetery

# Theme thirteen: Waste not want not

***We want to grow, exchange, share food locally. We don't want our abundant produce to go to waste when someone else in town could use it.***

***We want to attract initiatives that will provide locals with affordable fruit and veges.***

***We want to stay in town to eat out.***

Some ideas:

- to be foodie heaven – attract lots of artisan food businesses
- more choice for eating out, including vegetarian and vegan options
- food supplies at reasonable prices
- vegetable co-op like in the Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti (\$10 for bag of seasonal veges)
- community orchard
- grow the food bank to include food-share, swap-a-crop concept
- community fridge and pantry to share surplus food
- use berms to grow community fruit trees and crops like potatoes
- community gardens are a great idea – better promotion and upkeep of the ones we have now
- community garden koha shed soup kitchen
- swap a crop market
- food collective that helps coordinate the distribution of surplus food – particularly fruit and vegetables
- bee friendly town
- gardening club to exchange ideas and plants
- a recognition of the joy that lots of Featherstonians take in their gardens – small or large. Shows spirit and a degree of contentment, don't you think?

# Theme fourteen: Food and gardening

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# Theme fifteen: Children and childcare

***We want our children to be safe and to have access to good quality affordable age appropriate child care operating in hours that suit working/studying parents/caregivers.***

***We want a range of kid-friendly activities for fun, sport, art, culture and recreation.***

***We want our kids to have world-class education that supports them to build confidence and resilience.***

Some ideas:

- childcare, after school and before school; care for pre-schoolers and school-age children
- school Holiday programmes. Minecraft; traditional Māori crafts and games
- things to do on a rainy day
- improve toddlers pool
- expand the Library with more books & activities for children, and more space for events
- Book related and/or history related walks through Featherston. One idea is a kids walk based on the book "Olwen Twelve Pockets" by Fiona McKay (with her permission of course!) Each station could reveal the contents of a pocket and lead to the next pocket ... and end at a bookshop!
- fence around the playground
- new playground equipment: baby bucket swing, new wooden fort with easier to use large slide, rocking toys with springs etc.
- baby skate park at the playground
- a bigger playground with trampolines, with duck pond
- a playhouse at the town square & toy box and a toy hospital