



OUTDOORS IN ŌTEPOTI

RECREATION TRACKS PLAN 2022 | MAHERE ARA HĪKOI Ā-RĒHIA 2022

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OUR VISION

**OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR
ADVENTURES FOR EVERYONE**

**HE MAHI MĀTĀTOA KI
TE TAIAO MĀ TE KATOA**

ADVENTURES AWAIT. ON AND OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

INTRODUCTION KUPU WHAKATAKI

From the rugged country hills of Silver Peaks, to climbing through subalpine shrublands at Rock and Pillar, or to thrill-seeking on Signal Hill – Dunedin’s recreational tracks have it all.

Experiencing our city’s tracks connect us to our landscape and immerse us in nature. Our tracks each hold a story that lets us in on Ōtepoti’s unique culture and history, and they provide another lens to the city’s marvels for our locals, and our visitors.

That makes our city’s tracks important to us because they keep our communities connected, and they provide social, cultural, educational and recreational benefits. They foster wellbeing for the people of Dunedin, and they contribute to our tourism industry and local economy.

We have a diverse and active community, where research shows our residents use Dunedin’s tracks primarily for exercise across a range of uses from walking, to biking, to endurance tramping. As part of developing this Plan, the Dunedin City Council reviewed its tracks using a wide variety of sources – from awareness and promotion, to standards, to usage and appeal. This review showed that while we have a varied network of tracks providing a range of opportunities, we have work to do.

So, we are responding. In this Recreation Tracks Plan, we are focused on providing outstanding outdoor adventures for everyone – where collaboration across community organisations, volunteers and rūnaka will be strengthened, where rich storytelling to provide cultural, historical and educational information will be enhanced, where our tracks will be better promoted, and where connectivity across our network of tracks will be developed. This Plan will work to ensure our tracks appeal to a wide range of users, of varying abilities, supported by activities to make sure our tracks are safe, maintained, and meet national standards.

This Plan replaces the Track Policy and Strategy, which was released in 1998, and centred on the management, maintenance, and information needs of existing tracks. Now we are looking beyond solely maintenance and management activities, to the broader wellbeing, social and economic outcomes our tracks provide for our city.

We want our tracks to be amongst those recognised as the world’s best. Tracks where everyone has an opportunity to experience the rich and rugged landscape hidden amongst the hills and coastline of our city. Where no matter their ability, everyone can access the benefits of Dunedin’s recreational opportunities. Where locals and visitors are enriched by the stories they learn along the way, and the connections they make. Where the longevity of our tracks are protected through strong maintenance and management, and in collaboration with our community of partners.

Here is our plan for Dunedin’s Recreational Tracks. Together let’s make it happen.



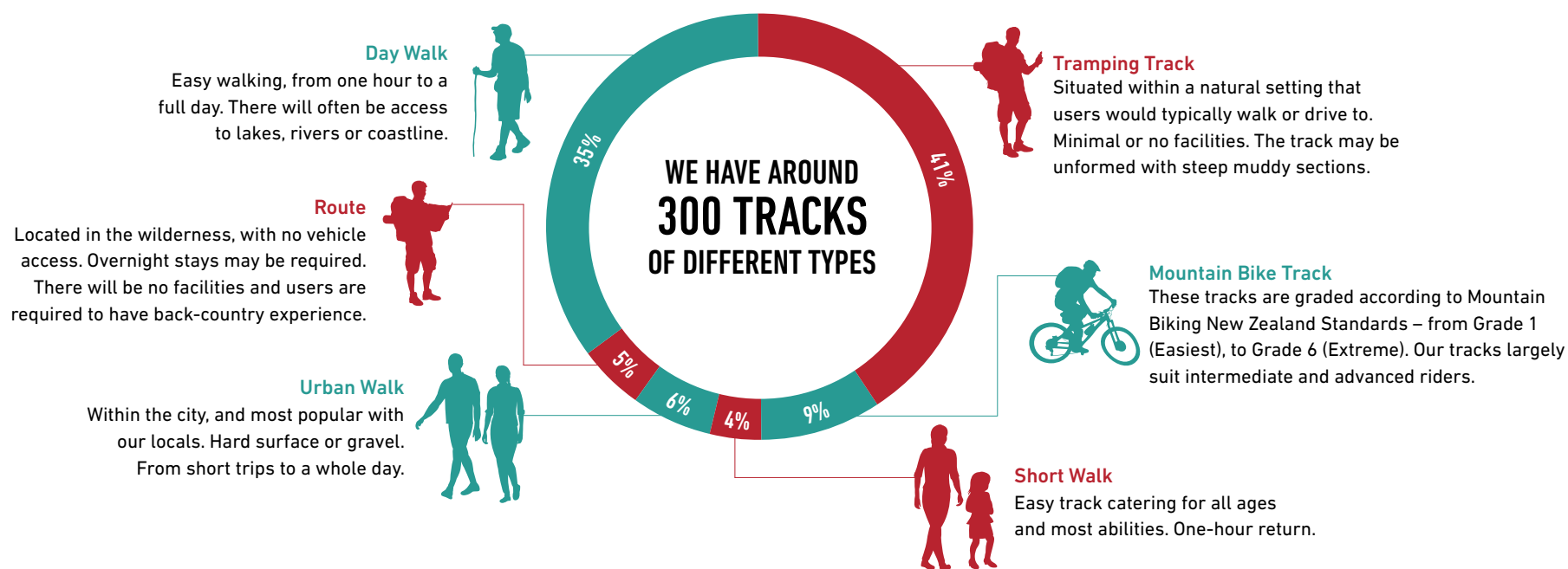
ON OUR DOORSTEP

OUR RECREATION TRACKS PLAN AT A GLANCE

TRACKING OPPORTUNITIES

Dunedin's network is made up of a range of unique tracks, providing opportunities for both multi-use and single-use recreational activities. Many of our tracks are close to the urban environment, and a number of our tracks enable users to experience Dunedin's outstanding natural and coastal environments.

Our tracks network is also maintained and managed with the help of our community. The Department of Conservation and the Green Hut Track Group, together with Mountain Biking Otago and a range of volunteers and private owners, help the DCC to manage and maintain the network.

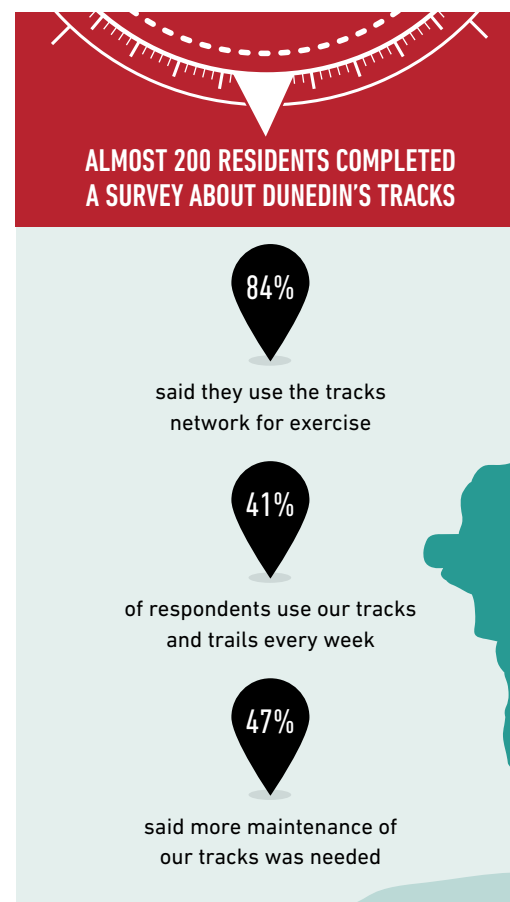


TRACK RECORD

Engagement with key stakeholders, together with community feedback about our tracks, has been integral to developing this Plan.

We held a number of stakeholder workshops, and spoke with a range of community representative organisations and clubs. This included the Department of Conservation, various volunteer organisations, representatives from walking clubs, trail running clubs, orienteering groups, mountain biking clubs, horse riding clubs, and groups from the disability sector. We also sought feedback from local rūnaka and supported our engagement with a people's panel survey to capture the views of our residents specifically in relation to Dunedin's tracks.

In addition, the feedback from our community has been reviewed alongside analysis from Dunedin's Resident Opinion Surveys, census statistics, and by researching relevant data from Sport New Zealand.



ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Listening to feedback from our stakeholders and the broader community, together with understanding the range of tracks our network provides has been integral to developing our Plan. This insight, complemented by reviewing our tracks against local and national standards, has helped us to develop clear goals for delivering this Plan.



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Our tracks will be improved, maintained and managed in collaboration with our community partners.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

Our tracks will be accessible, varied, and distinctive experiences, whatever the age, fitness, or capability.



A CONNECTED TRACKS NETWORK

Links across our tracks network will be provided to better connect our communities for recreation.



ENRICHED EXPERIENCES

Our city will be recognised as a tracks destination and our network will provide opportunities for cultural and historical story-telling.

OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR EVERYONE

OUR PLAN ON A PAGE **TE MAHERE KI TE WHĀRAKI**

YOU SAID... SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY TO STAY INVOLVED

SO WE WILL...
Improve, maintain and manage our tracks in collaboration with our community partners.

BY:

- Collaborating with rūnaka, Government agencies, volunteers, sport agencies and other stakeholders to support track use and community involvement.
- Working with our partners to ensure track surfaces and features are built, maintained and managed to a high standard.
- Initiating a forum for user feedback so we can build an understanding of community needs, track preferences, conditions and changes in use.
- Developing an integrated Council approach to track management, including carrying out regular reviews and audits against track standards to inform future decisions.

DELIVERING: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS



YOU SAID... OFFER A VARIETY OF OPTIONS

SO WE WILL...
Ensure our tracks offer accessible, varied, and distinctive experiences, whatever the age, fitness, or capability.

BY:

- Delivering a variety of tracks and experiences that meet the demands of different skills and user interests.
- Providing opportunities for more family-friendly tracks.
- Working alongside our interested communities to understand future needs and usage trends.
- Developing a framework to influence the range of options available, including where tracks are located and how they are constructed.
- Educating our wider community to ensure safe use of tracks across the spectrum of users and capability levels.

DELIVERING: OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE



YOU SAID... MAKE IT EASY BY LINKING TRACKS

SO WE WILL...
Provide links across our tracks network to better connect our communities for recreation.

BY:

- Identifying opportunities to link and connect a range of experiences, activities and attractions.
- Improving the overall tracks network based on the needs, interests, experience, and demand of residents.
- Identifying cycling and walking track connections that come from planning processes.
- Looking for opportunities to support and connect more tracks that will enable whole families to participate.

DELIVERING: A CONNECTED TRACKS NETWORK



YOU SAID... MAKE IT MEMORABLE

SO WE WILL...
Promote our tracks and provide opportunities to tell our cultural and historical stories through track information and signage.

BY:

- Working closely with Kāi Tahu to ensure mana whenua values are embedded and protected in our signage, story-telling and promotion activities.
- Enabling cultural, heritage and historical storytelling as part of the development and management of the tracks network.
- Actively marketing our tracks network and helping promote volunteer and community events that appeal to residents and visitors.
- Improving tracks signage to enhance the user experience with safety, environmental and distance/duration information.

DELIVERING: ENRICHED EXPERIENCES



A man with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and an orange backpack, is smiling and looking towards the camera. He is standing in a forest with green trees and a dirt path in the background. The image is used as a background for a graphic with text overlays.

ADVENTURES IN THE MAKING

OUR RECREATION TRACKS PLAN IN DETAIL



SIGNAL HILL. IMAGE CREDIT: DUNEDINNZ

GOAL 1: **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Our tracks will be improved,
maintained and managed
in collaboration with
our community partners.



We know our city's tracks are special to our local community users, and their involvement and contribution has meant our tracks have been maintained, protected and expanded as needed over time. While our track network is public, community and volunteer groups maintain and help manage almost half of the network.

Using Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles, we will work to better understand the needs of rūnaka, our Government agency partners, volunteers, contractors, and the community because we know a shared understanding is essential. We want to ensure all track projects, including ongoing maintenance and management efforts, actively support the partnership needed to deliver this Plan.

"Volunteers can only do so much." (Stakeholder)

"...An opportunity for community service people, local youth, local volunteer organisations to become involved." (Resident)

WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOLD US

There are opportunities to develop new relationships with partners, private owners, clubs and Trusts to help develop and manage our tracks network.

There should be more support for volunteer groups who help maintain our network.

We have an impressive landscape, but some areas of the network require more maintenance than what is currently being undertaken.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH TOLD US

We have around 300 tracks across our network (including four parks built to NZ Mountain Biking Standards).

Almost half of the network is managed and maintained by the DCC (with support from the Department of Conservation, volunteer organisations, Mountain Biking Otago and private owners).

A small proportion of the network does not meet national track standards. Tracks that did not meet the standards failed in the following categories - incline, track surface and information.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

We will create partnerships with relevant sports agencies, tramping, walking, trail and biking organisations to support track use and community involvement.

We will collaborate with the Department of Conservation, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Otago Regional Council and other local and national organisations to ensure track surfaces and features are built, maintained and managed to a high standard.

We will work closely with rūnaka to ensure mana whenua values are understood and protected.

We will create a forum for user feedback so we can build understanding about track preferences, conditions and changes in use.

We will develop an integrated Council approach to track management and maintenance partnerships, where National Track Standards will be used to align roles and responsibilities, and we will ensure regular auditing occurs.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

There are MOU's in place with agencies and trusts, with clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

There is a process in place for track development and management, including how tracks are improved, maintained, and managed.

An increasing number of tracks meet track standards.

An increasing percentage of tracks are in good or very good condition.



GOAL 2: **OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE**

Our tracks will be accessible,
varied, and distinctive
experiences, whatever the
age, fitness, or capability.

ON TRACK!



For us, we have a shared belief in the value of recreational opportunities as a contributor to our city's overall wellbeing and prosperity. We know the importance of physical activity for our local people, and we are committed to supporting healthy lifestyles through access to varied, shared and distinctive experiences.

National physical activity trends indicate that participation in unstructured recreational activity is increasing. In Dunedin, more than half of our adult residents are physically active for at least thirty minutes a day – where walking, jogging/running, cycling, mountain biking and tramping are in the top twenty sports most participated in.

"We need to break down barriers for people who are wanting to start out." (Stakeholder)

"It's important to improve access for all age groups and for people with disabilities." (Resident)

WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOLD US

Offering distinct experiences for different users is important and should be upheld.

It is important to provide tracks for all abilities.

More family-friendly tracks would be valued.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH TOLD US

Dunedin residents have a strong interest in outdoor recreation.

Walking for leisure remains the most popular activity, closely followed by jogging, then cycling/ mountain biking and tramping (Dunedin has around 30 tramping clubs).

Of those Dunedin adults who self-identified as disabled, there was a high percentage who went walking for recreation, with a smaller number who went tramping.

Shorter walks (under 3 hours) are popular with our community and visitors.

The interest in cycling tracks is expected to increase. This activity is popular with younger and older-aged families. We currently have four parks that have been built to NZ Mountain Biking Standards.

There are over 20 running trails mapped on the New Zealand Trail Running Club for Dunedin.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

We will deliver a variety of tracks and experiences that meet the demands of different skills and interests.

We will develop a framework to influence the range of options, including the location and construction of our tracks to ensure enhanced diversity across our network – for walkers, runners, bikers and horse riders.

We will look to provide opportunities for more family-friendly tracks.

We will work with users, landowners and other stakeholders to understand, and meet, future needs.

We will educate for safe and responsible use of tracks, across the spectrum of capabilities and user types.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

An increasing percentage of users are satisfied with our tracks network.

There is a growing number of people using a range of our tracks.

An increasing number of people are satisfied with the range of options our track network offers.

There is a process in place for track development and management to ensure a variety of experiences is enabled.



FLAGSTAFF. IMAGE CREDIT: DUNEDINNZ

GOAL 3:

A CONNECTED TRACKS NETWORK

Links across our tracks network will be provided to better connect our communities for recreation.



Ōtepoti Dunedin is well served with the number and length of tracks available. There is an opportunity to create more links between tracks so the network can connect communities for recreation and provide safe, inexpensive off-road cycling for commuters.

Physical and mental health is important to our community's well-being. Recreational tracks provide a valuable opportunity for exercise, challenge, recreation and adventure. We will seek more opportunities to create family-friendly walking and cycling corridors between communities, reserves and our other premier destinations for recreation and commuting.

To ensure our network remains affordable and sustainable, we need to carefully consider the expansion, extent and variety of new track links and existing track improvements. We also need to consider the long-term environmental impact of expanding the tracks network.

"We need to create a walkable city – everyone should have access to a track network without having to drive." (Stakeholder)

"Another great thing would be if tracks/trails are more connected so they can be linked into a big adventure." (Resident)

WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOLD US

There are gaps in the network. This means that parts of our network are under-utilised.

More off-road family friendly connections are required for walking and cycling, to help get our city's children off the roads.

People want connections – and they would like areas of natural/cultural significance to become integrated with cycle tracks and public networks.

There are routes within the network that include narrow roads and users are forced to walk along the road with no path and high-speed traffic passing by.

Public access to coastal areas are limited by land ownership, and some tracks are under-utilised due to poor access.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH TOLD US

We provide a number of different walking tracks across our city, yet there are limited linkages across the network.

We do not know which tracks are used the most.

Around 50% of the mountain bike track network is designed for advanced cyclists, with little connection to easier-graded tracks.

Most of Dunedin's biking tracks are considered to be multi-use, but few are suitable for families to ride (easy graded).

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

We will work with stakeholders to link tracks to provide opportunities to connect a range of experiences, activities, and attractions.

We will make improvements to the network by seeking feedback on the needs, experience, and the demand of residents.

We will seek cycling and walking track connections that come from planning processes e.g. subdivisions, acquisitions.

We will seek opportunities to support more family-friendly tracks that connect walking and biking.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

There is increased connectivity across existing tracks.

An increasing percentage of users are satisfied with the links between our tracks.

Results from our surveys indicate improvements to track access.

Results from the Quality of Life Survey indicate positive improvements to the wellbeing of family/whānau.



GOAL 4:

ENRICHED EXPERIENCES

**Our city will be recognised
as a tracks destination and
our network will provide
opportunities for cultural
and historical story-telling.**



We know that better promoting our tracks to locals and tourists is a key enabler of introducing more people to our tracks, and supporting our residents to stay fit and well.

Part of delivering a city that is recognised as a tracks destination lies in the strength of our open spaces and their strong connection to Kāi Tahu – from the mountains to the sea. Many of our tracks have rich heritage, and we have an opportunity to enrich the experience of our users by connecting them to our first settlers through storytelling on our popular track destinations. Signs and information can build a sense of place for our existing community, new residents and visitors. Interpretation and storytelling enable all users to immerse themselves in, and learn about places, flora and fauna, and people.

We will also improve the user experience through providing high-quality signage to ensure safety considerations, environmental impacts, and distances, durations and directional maps are provided.

“Dunedin is stunning and we really undervalue it.”
(Stakeholder)

“More signs would be good, mid-way through a walk.”
(Stakeholder)

WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOLD US

Signage should include references to relevant cultural and historical information.

Signage should include the use of Te Reo Māori.

The offline and online information, including publicity, is either poorly marketed, or non-existent.

There is scope to encourage greater community awareness and involvement.

Track-based events, such as mountain bike competitions and adventure races, are gaining in popularity and can attract significant visitors.

Signage should include approximate distance and duration, maps, information about biodiversity, risks and safety.

WHAT OUR RESEARCH TOLD US

We have very few tracks that provide storytelling despite our rich cultural and historical heritage.

Awareness of the type and range of tracks we offer is low.

Dunedin is not well-known as a tracks destination.

Research supports outdoor tourism opportunities that enable tourists to explore nature, wildlife, food, culture and history as a way of enriching their experiences of an area.

WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT

We will work closely with rūnaka to ensure cultural storytelling, and mana whenua values are part of the development and management of the network.

We will provide historical information for tracks that have unique stories to enrich the experience of our users.

We will actively market our tracks network, improve online information and produce event-based promotional materials.

We will help promote volunteer and community events that appeal to residents and visitors.

We will improve signage to inform of safety considerations, identify environmental impacts, and outline distance and duration information with directional maps to enable positive user experiences.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

There is an increasing number of signs in Te Reo Māori / interpretation signs.

There is an increasing number of educational aspects to our signage, to provide a rich cultural and historical background for users.

There is increasing awareness of our tracks network, and we are recognised as a tracks destination by tourists.

There is visible promotion of track-based events, including promotion of volunteer and community-run events.

There is an increasing number of signs that identify safety considerations, environmental impacts, and distance/duration information with maps.

A photograph of three young people hiking through a sun-dappled forest. In the foreground, a young man with brown hair, wearing a green jacket and a large blue backpack, is looking towards a young woman. The woman has long blonde hair, wears a grey beanie, a plaid shirt over a white t-shirt, and is laughing with her mouth open. In the background, another young man is smiling. The scene is bright and cheerful, with sunlight filtering through the green trees.

ON TRACK TO DELIVER

PAVING THE WAY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

MAKING TRAC-TION

As we implement this Plan, we will work with our community partners and broader stakeholders to maintain, improve and evolve our network to meet the changing needs of our track users.

For projects where we create new tracks and links across the network



WE WILL...

Work with our stakeholders to include their ideas in changes.

Keep our community and stakeholders informed, listen to and provide feedback on how their thoughts have influenced our decision.

For projects where we change the levels of maintenance or increase/decrease the number of track assets like bridges and seating



WE WILL...

Keep our community and stakeholders informed, listen to and acknowledge their feedback.

Provide feedback on how the thoughts from our community and stakeholders have influenced our decision.

For projects where we temporarily close tracks for long periods of time to address health and safety concerns



WE WILL...

Keep our community and stakeholders informed about the track status.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to provide feedback to the team on any of Dunedin's Recreational Tracks, please email us at parksconsulting@dcc.govt.nz

TRACKING PROGRESS

We know it's important to do what we say we're going to do. We will continue to monitor our progress, and work with our community to ensure ongoing improvements are made.



**THIS IS HOW WE
WILL KNOW THE DCC
HAS DELIVERED ON
ITS RECREATION
TRACKS PLAN:**

Dunedin City Council will have strong relationships with rūnaka, our volunteers, partners and stakeholders.

Dunedin will have a range of high-quality tracks to compelling destinations.

There will be a variety of track options that are accessible and encourage broad community use.

Our network will feature a mix of urban walks, short walks and day walks that meet expected standards.

Dunedin will have improved track connections in high-use and high-profile areas.

There will be a variety of family-focused tracks.

Dunedin will be recognised as a tracks destination, and there will be improved on and off-site track information.



DUNEDIN | kaunihera
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