



UPPER CLUTHA Tracks Trust.

Annual Report 2023

11 October 2023

Chairman – David Howard

Treasurer – John Wellington

Secretary – Diana Manson

Trustees – Allan Gillespie, Tom Rowley, Brian Weedon, Quentin Smith, Grant Fyfe, Geoff Wilson, Lucy Fullerton

Representatives – Anita Middlemiss (DOC), Diana Manson (QLDC)

The UCTT provides access to spaces for people to recreate and engage with nature. We serve those who choose to walk and/or bike as commuters or for recreation. We build tracks and trails that your community wants, and welcome visitors to share them to experience our way of life.

The Upper Clutha has a fast growing population; the preservation and expansion of a well planned trail network is essential if we are to enjoy the level amenity that we currently experience, or enhance that.

The UCTT acknowledges the benefits that trail access creates to individuals, our community, local economics and environmental outcomes. Our work has real purpose and meaningful outcomes.

We acknowledge the intent of our tourism bodies to focus on regenerative tourism. We acknowledge the importance of environmental and climate protection and the many organisations and individuals working towards those goals.

As we move into 2024 we are refreshing our strategic plan, to continue the past success and continue to be a relevant and influential organisation supporting our community. Our revised vision and purpose:

Vision

*A vibrant **track network** where **everyone** has easy access to the outdoors and engaging with **nature** as part of **everyday life**...
(Upper Clutha Tracks - get **away**, and **play**)*

Purpose

For Upper Clutha Community - UCTT will create a network of tracks serves the needs of our residents, visitors, businesses and natural environment. UCTT will:

Protect and develop public access for tracks.

Partner with the wider community to understand and celebrate the benefits of tracks.

Build our planned track network and opportunities for network improvements.

Sustain the track network through financial and non-financial support, and enhance our natural environment, with our community partners.

Summary of Trust Activities for 2022

The Upper Clutha Track Network Strategy 2021-2027 identified four key strategies, for this report we will continue to report against these focus areas.

1. Connect communities
2. Enable recreation
3. Manage, develop and maintain tracks
4. Plan collaboratively

Connect communities

- Continued advocacy for the development of a commuter link between Luggate and Wanaka. Negotiating easements, collaborating with NZTA. This project is currently with NZTA awaiting their business case and we have presented it as a shovel ready project for immediate implementation.
- Progress on the Hawea River true right bank track - connecting Hawea and Albertown. We have completed a track design and ecological assessment, and now progressing through the DOC approval process.
- Planned upgrade of Hawea River Track (true left) to maintain the commuter standard the track was initially intended for and funded for.
- Continued support to the Cardrona resident groups to progress the Cardrona Valley Track connecting Wanaka and Albert Town to Cardrona Village. Completion of an ecological assessment required for the DOC application process for the lower section of the route.
- Progress on the Glendhu Bay Track, connecting Bike Glendhu and Glendhu Bay campground to Wanaka. Aiming at achieving a grade three track to improve accessibility to a wider range of users. We have continued involvement in resource consent hearings to enhance public access.

- Urban connections that enhance our urban network: Working with Simon Telfer as an engaged partner with Active Transport Wanaka to ensure the links between the commuter and recreation track network.

Enable recreation

- The UCTT identified recreation tracks as highly important in realising the benefits that tracks enable. We have developed a draft Ten Year Trail Development Plan that identifies 200km of recreation trails that will sustain and enhance what it means to live in the Upper Clutha. The UCTT are working on these trails through our trail pipeline and development process. Large trail projects take time, and the first step is gaining land access. We acknowledge and thank the landowners that we are engaging with and look forward to their ongoing support.
- Facilitated the completion of Gunn Road children's skills area with DOC.
- Secured easements for lower portions of the Cardrona Valley track across private land, LINZ and NZTA.
- Awarded the tender to build the Charteris track, Makarora.
- Completed the upgrade of the Gladstone Track (Hawea) to an all weather surface along with QLDC.
- Created a new Adaptive/ Adventure Mobility track specification to increase adaptive and off road stroller access.
- Identified backcountry opportunities through the Epic Tracks.
- In the process of influencing the spatial plan by detailing the desired future track network.

Manage, develop and maintain tracks

- UCTT maintains responsibility for Devon Link and Motatapu tracks. Motatapu Track cleared of willows in partnership with the Wanaka Tramping Club
- Improved access to the Newcastle Track off Kane Rd and completed the extension from the Red Bridge.
- Upgrade of our website has begun to raise awareness and credibility within the community. And serve as a functional tool to ongoing development and maintenance of tracks.
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Plan collaboratively

- Engagement with Lake Wanaka Tourism and Love Wanaka on the synergies of tracks and tourism.
- Collaboration with Cardrona Valley residents, developers and businesses for a trail connection from Wanaka to Arrowtown.
- Submission on QLDC annual plan and Landscape Schedule.
- Present at the Festival of Sport to elicit engagement and feedback from the community.
- Present at Biketober to elicit engagement and feedback from the community.
- Collaboration with Central Otago Queenstown Trail Network Trust on the Great Ride trail from Cromwell to Wanaka and the entrance to Wanaka.

Building the Trusts' Capability

The bureaucratic barriers to building tracks have significantly increased over the recent years. As the track network grows and the expectations of trail users increases, so do the demands on volunteers to advocate, build, manage and maintain out tracks. It is important to realise that our track network is largely volunteer lead and community funded. Tracks are a gift from our community to residents and visitors.

The Trust is excited about the host of projects that have been identified through our strategic planning process.

Trust Funding

The UCTT receives an annual grant from the QLDC of \$50,000. As the Trustees are all volunteers, with careful management the Trust is able to use most of these funds for seed funding for other projects as well as setting aside some reserves for future track maintenance.

The Trust would also like to thank the Red Bridge Trust for its donation of \$50,000 as part of the winding up process for the Trust.

The Trust is also extremely grateful to our principle funders, Central Lakes Trust and Otago Community Trust, both of whom have supported us from the very beginning and remain our cornerstone partners.

We would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their valuable contributions over the past year, without which our projects would not have succeeded:

Otago Community Trust	\$30,000
Central Lakes trust	\$33,750
QLDC grant of towards Peninsula Bay track	\$21,000
M & S Jones Family Trust	\$10,000
Coleen & Stuart Landsborough	\$5,000
Hawea Community Association	\$5,000
J I & M D Barlow	\$500
Amy Allen	\$250
Maureen Kernick	\$200
Darren Clay	\$100
Lynne Clay	\$100
E A Bennet	\$50
Jasmin Taylor	\$50
Various (Give a Little Campaign)	\$1,863

Summary

I would like to unreservedly thank all the Trustees for their hard work and commitment in 2022/23 year. I would like to thank Diana Mason from QLDC and Anita Middlemiss from the Department of Conservation for their ongoing support. The success of the Trust and building tracks for the community is only possible through ongoing collaboration with our partners.

David Howard

Upper Clutha Tracks Trust - Chair

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