

SOUTH COAST ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY

Heritage Orchard Parks



Bountiful Backyards



Longwood Loop



Heritage Harvest Festival

PROFILE 2025 – 2026

www.sces.org.nz



Environmental
Inspiration &
Action!

THE SOUTH COAST ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY

The South Coast Environment Society (SCES) was formed as a non-profit legal entity in 1996 to operate the newly-established Riverton Environment Centre.

The Centre was to provide a base for and to support three existing Riverton environmental groups and to promote environmental awareness.

Since then the Society has provided constant, reliable management for the Centre, making it the oldest continuously running Environment Centre in New Zealand.

Our vision is a connected and flourishing Southland where there are leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support people and communities to adopt resilient lifestyles and care for and about their environment.

Over the years SCES has done much to support the community's social, cultural, environmental and economic aspirations, including running educational festivals, developing and supporting community orchards, gardens and composting and establishing a local food trading loop.

TREATY STATEMENT

We recognise the role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundational document for Aotearoa New Zealand and we recognise that the principles in Te Tiriti must guide and inform our practice, both individually and collectively.

We are committed to growing our knowledge of Te Ao Māori and our understanding of what it means to authentically work in partnership with Māori in communities. At the heart of what we do is the belief that Papatūānuku urgently needs kaitiakitanga.

GOOD FOOD ROAD MAP



We were part of the creation of the Feeding Murihiku Good Food Road Map. We fully endorse it and believe that **access to good food is a community right and a shared responsibility.**

We are actively working to give effect to the five pou of the road map.



Graphic Designer Bridgette, "Koukou Creations", 2023



WE VALUE THE SUPPORT OF



OUR PEOPLE

We have developed a strong organisational structure that has withstood the test of time; we have a committee of seven which meets monthly.

Our management subcommittees cover finance, funding and human resources – they meet regularly, reporting back to the main Committee.



We have a small team of professional, qualified, skilled and knowledgeable **administrators and educators** working part-time and together working a total of 80 paid hours a week, including a Centre and Projects Manager who coordinates projects and the Environment Centre on a daily basis (including staff/volunteers) and also reports to the Committee members monthly.

Our **volunteer** contributions come from a wide range of sources, including individuals, businesses, and other community groups from within and outside our Riverton and Southland communities.

We have an established group of volunteers who staff the Environment Centre public area for a few hours each week or month. Reliable volunteer involvement in the Centre means it is open to the public for over 40 hours a week.

Our regular volunteers range in age from 8 to 70+. 52% of our volunteers are female, 40% are over the age of 65, 24% have a disability and 16% are under the age of 25.

Each of our valued people have specific roles and projects they focus on depending on their areas of interest and expertise.



OUR ACTIVITIES

Longwood Loop 'online farmers market' operates every week, with the aim to re-energize rural communities by enabling small and emerging producers of food and goods to connect with their surrounding communities

Environment Centre, packed with information, displays and products to support people with sustainable living. The Centre is open Monday - Sunday, largely staffed by volunteers.

Community

Compost

supports people to tackle waste and climate change, providing subsidised compost bins and workshops, responding to community interest and demand.

Community Heritage Orchard Parks

provide opportunities for the community to come together to celebrate their cultural heritage, learn about & share the care and harvest of their local fruit trees.

Seed Savers

supports the growing of heritage and 'tried and true' vegetable seed varieties, building a resilient, future-proofed food supply.

Educational Festivals are annual highlights - The Heritage Harvest Festival and our Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend bring the community together and provide opportunities to learn about many aspects of self-reliance and community resilience.

Workshops on gardening and cooking

across Southland for other groups, including schools, Community Gardens, the Murihiku Kai Collective and Southland Home Educators, among others!

Aparima College School & Community Garden

provides kai to the community and creates a vibrant learning space for Aparima College akonga.

Volunteers are at the heart of our organisation. They are empowered to be actively involved in all our activities.

Through these activities, we support our communities to celebrate their **cultural heritage**, develop **resilience and self-reliance**, to build **wellbeing** and **community connections**, and to realise their **economic potential**.



COLLABORATION

SCES highly values the opportunity to regularly collaborate with local and national groups.

We are a founding member of **Environment Hubs Aotearoa**, a network of 22 hubs across the motu. EHA's mission is to bring communities together and create lasting, positive change for our environment and future generations.



We are also a founding member of the **Murihiku Kai Collective**, a group of community members who are passionate about building a Good Food system in Murihiku Southland through leadership, collaboration, support and action. We contributed to the development of the **Murihiku Good Food Road Map**.



We have strong connections with our **local schools**, offering support for their teaching and learning programmes, particularly in relation to edible gardens, fruit trees and composting.



We have signed up to **Para Kore**, which educates and advocates from a Māori worldview for zero carbon, zero waste whānau, hapū, iwi and hapori Māori.

We have a symbiotic relationship with the **Riverton Community Food Co-op**, which shares our building; this enables us to open our Environment Centre seven days per week and helps us to reduce our overheads.

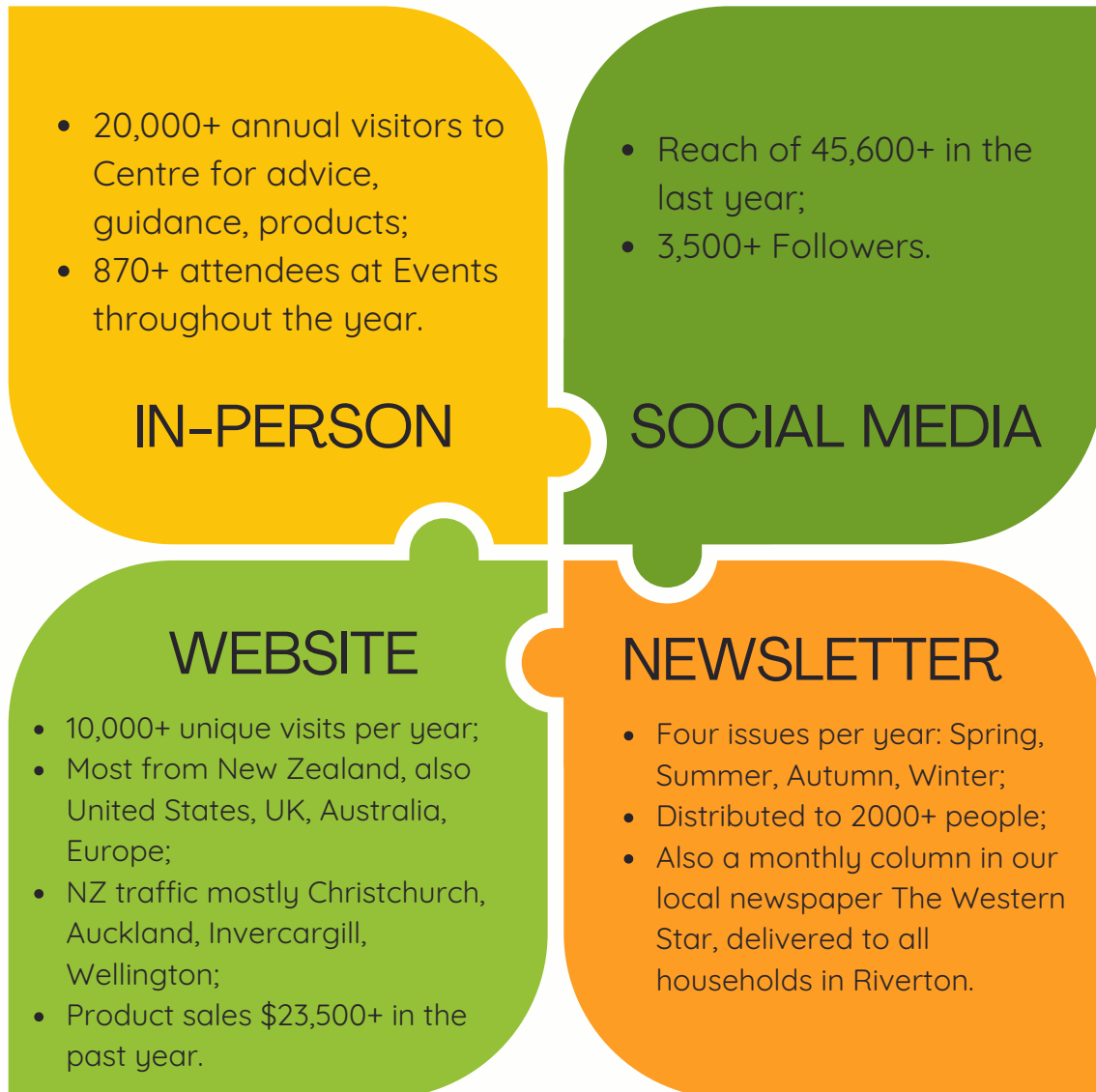


We have memoranda of understandings with **Aparima College** for our support of their school maara kai, and the **New Zealand Tree Crops Association** and we work alongside, supporting and supported by, many other local and national groups. We are also proud employers of a local volunteer firefighter.



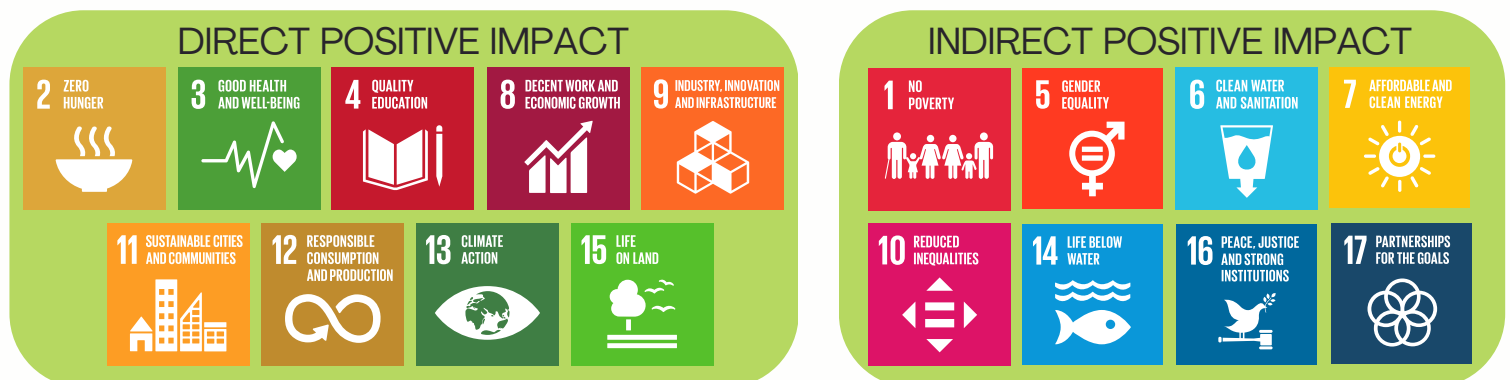
COMMUNICATION, REACH

Our organisation's reach is far and wide; we are known locally, nationally and even across the globe! Our busy Environment Centre has many visitors, especially during the summer months, when we have hundreds come through the door each week. We spend a lot of time offering advice and guidance on gardening, food security and general sustainable living.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

We support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in our projects and planning. Many of our activities link across several of the Goals and all are either directly or indirectly positive, as can be seen below.



WHAT DOES OUR COMMUNITY SAY?

STEVE BROAD,
MURIHIKU KAI
COLLECTIVE

(SCES') work reinforces the culturally significant role of kai in supporting sustainable long-term wellbeing, connection, and community capability. Their commitment to these outcomes benefits not only Western Southland but the wider Murihiku region.

What a treasure we have here in the people with knowledge, willing to share. Thank you all.

ELLEN F,
BOUNTIFUL BACKYARDS
ATTENDEE

JANICE LEE,
KOHA KAI

In my view, investing in and supporting SCES will be a value proposition for the Hapori o Murihiku.

Was such a good weekend enjoyed by our family. Thanks so much, look forward to future events!

REBECCA H,
HARVEST FESTIVAL
ATTENDEE

SUZIE BEST,
SOUTHLAND HISTORIAN

Important work that's helping to preserve aspects of the area's diverse heritage.

Local food security is an imperative element of building resilience and well-being across Southland and the education provided by (SCES) is already a key player in this arena...

DR. ANNA PALLISER,
SOUTHERN
INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGY

LAUREN RICHARDSON,
HEALTHY FAMILIES
INVERCARGILL

(SCES is) a stellar example of an organisation working with the community and for the community.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

It's a great time to upskill to become more prepared to be increasingly self-reliant.

We want to take our extensive education programme throughout the lower South Island; we have a team of very experienced tutors willing to travel and tailor a series of workshops and talks for your township or neighbourhood, at a time that suits you. Please let us know what knowledge and skills would benefit you or your community!

We have seven series of one-hour workshops (50 workshops!) to choose from. You can mix and match to suit your needs; they can be run any time of day or even over a weekend. Check out our website for more info. Let us know which of the workshops you are keen on: www.sces.org.nz

Future Food

Move away from highly processed foods to making your own sour dough bread, ferments, sprouts and microgreens etc. It is easier than you think!



Native Biodiversity

From propagating your own plants to restoring an ecosystem.



Earthcrafts

You will enjoy working with natural materials like wool, beeswax flax, or wood to make your own useful items or gifts.



Shopping wisely

Ethical choices, healthy choices, reading labels, considering travel miles.



Living Lightly

Save money while being eco-friendly. From simple hand-made gifts to making your own cleaners and skin care products.



Bountiful Backyards

From beginning a vege garden to keeping hens or bees.



Appropriate Technology

Making your own solar dehydrator, rocket stove, cob oven and other low-tech, off-grid projects.

