



Wairarapa
Catchment
Collective

ACTION PLAN GUIDE

for Catchment
Community Groups



Greater
Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao



This guide supports catchment community groups to turn shared ideas into coordinated action.

It provides a simple, practical approach to setting a clear direction, prioritising effort, and working together to achieve lasting outcomes for land, water, and communities.

Catchment Community Groups

A Catchment Community Group is a community-led collective of farmers and landowners working together within a defined geographical area - typically centred around a river or lake catchment, or another locally meaningful (social) boundary - to achieve a shared long-term vision. They focus on multiple, place-based outcomes, caring for land, water, and communities through collaborative action.

Across Wairarapa, these groups are already taking practical action to improve water quality, restore native habitats, manage erosion and pests, and build more resilient communities. By working together, communities can share knowledge, pool resources, and focus effort where it will make the greatest impact.

Wairarapa Catchment Collective

The Wairarapa Catchment Collective is a partnership with catchment groups, **MPI On Farm Support**, **Greater Wellington**, and **Mountains to Sea Wellington**.

The Collective partnership aims to streamline access to essential services, advice, research, and funding for Catchment Community Groups.

The Collective supports Catchment Community Groups' activities, grow their capabilities, and support them on the journey towards community resilience.

This is achieved through the Collective's services; catchment action planning, a community network, advice and expertise, story-telling and communications, research and monitoring, connecting with schools, funding, and administration.

Learn more about the Wairarapa Catchment Collective and support available to Catchment Community Groups on our website:



wairarapacc.nz

Catchment Action Plans

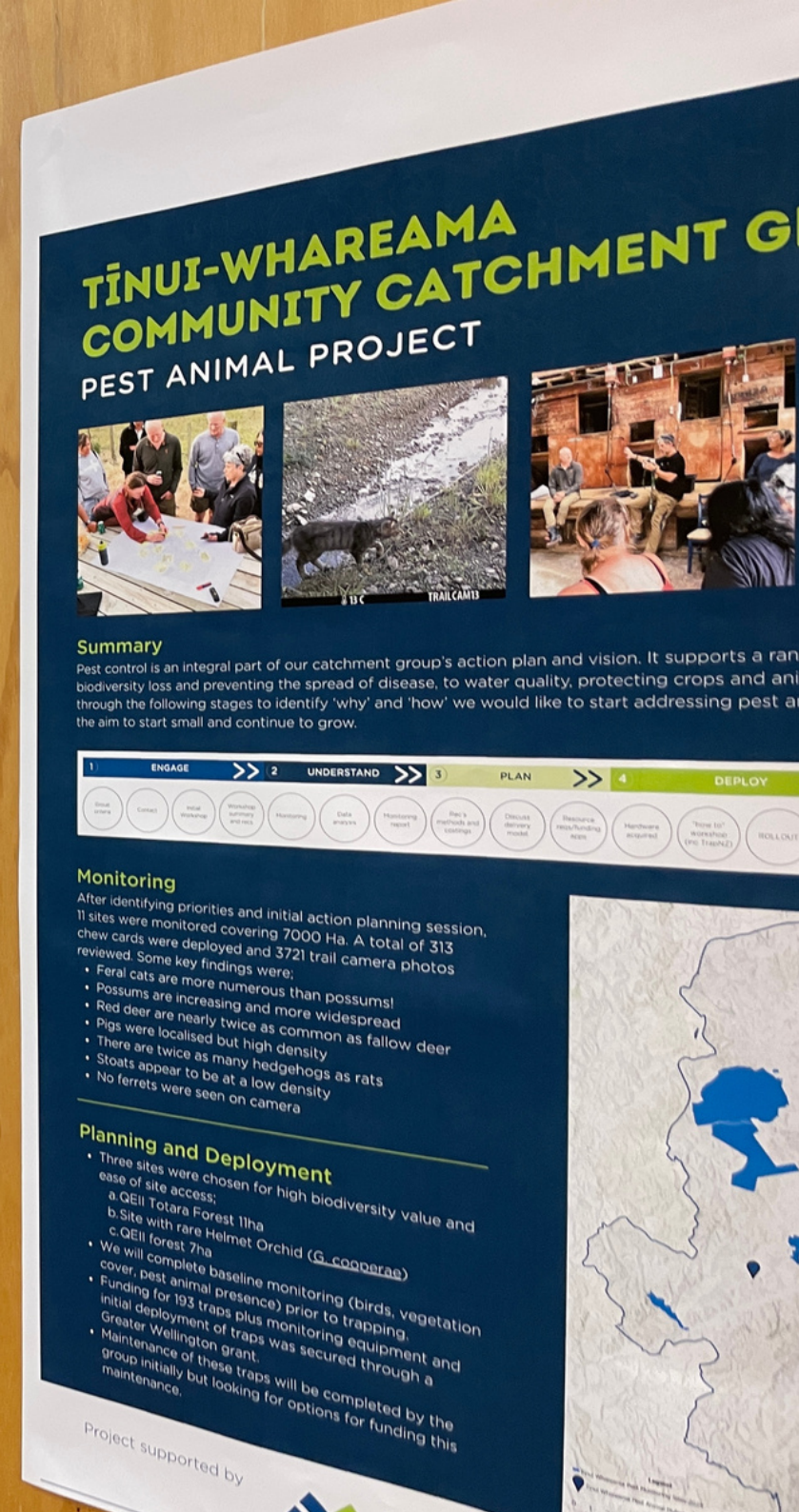
Catchment action plans help groups move from ideas to action. They provide a clear way to agree on what matters most, set a shared direction, prioritise effort, and track progress over time.

By linking actions to outcomes, groups can see the difference they are making. These plans are flexible and evolve as knowledge grows and conditions change.

Collaborative Process

Catchment action planning is a supported, collaborative process. Most groups work through it with a facilitator, often across a series of workshops tailored to their catchment.

By the end, groups will have a practical plan that sets out what will be done, where, why, and by who. Every group is different - some are informal, others more structured, and support is available throughout.



Wairarapa Catchment Community Group

ACTION PLAN - EXAMPLE



Vision

Healthy, thriving and resilient environment and community.

Outcomes

Outcome	Objectives (1-3 years)	Objectives (3-10 years)
Healthy waterways	Get clear understanding of current state water quality - include getting water quality stream data and interpretation.	Create a baseline for water quality and have a plan that ensures the group has 5 years of data.

Actions

Outcome	Action	Sub-action	Lead	Who else?	Timeframe	Status
Healthy waterways	Water monitoring	Design water monitoring programme	Mountains to Sea Wellington	Group project team	2025	Complete
		Complete monitoring	Mountains to Sea Wellington	Group project team	2026	In progress
		Collate and analyse data	Greater Wellington	Group project team	2026	

The Action Plan Cycle

The action planning process follows a simple cycle that supports learning and continuous improvement.

These steps are outlined in the diagram. Each step builds on the one before it, creating a clear pathway from **shared purpose** → **action** → **outcomes** → **learning**.

The workshop flow in the following sections brings together the steps in the Catchment Community Action Plan Cycle.

It is designed to ensure that each workshop builds on the last and that the group moves from shared purpose and understanding, through planning and prioritisation, to action, monitoring, and ongoing learning.

A catchment action plan can be developed in four facilitated sessions, however depending on complexity of the group, challenges, and outcomes this can be more or less.



Workshop 1

Introduction to catchment action planning

This workshop covers the first part of the cycle: **Why are we coming together?** and **What's already happening?**

It helps the group build a shared understanding of the purpose of catchment action planning, why collective action matters, who should be involved, and what existing work, relationships, and knowledge are already present in the catchment.

This is also the point where the group identifies and agrees the catchment boundary.

- Shared understanding of the Catchment Community Action Plan Cycle and commitment to the overall process.
- Clear understanding of why the group is coming together and what it hopes to achieve by working collectively.
- Recognition of existing work, projects, knowledge, and relationships already active in the catchment.
- Agreed catchment boundary to guide planning and future action.



Workshop 2

Vision setting

This workshop focuses on **What is our vision for the future?** The group develops a shared long-term direction for the catchment, agrees what success could look like in the short, medium, and long term, and starts shaping the structure of the catchment plan.

It also introduces the question of how progress will be monitored, where monitoring should occur, and what information the group needs in order to tell the story of change over time.

- Shared understanding of and commitment to developing a catchment plan, including what this means for the group.
- Agreed basic structure for the catchment plan, with sections potentially allocated to different people.
- Draft vision statement, outcomes and objectives describing the desired short, medium, and long-term future for the catchment.
- Shared understanding of what, how, and where the group needs to monitor to measure success.

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What is our
vision for
the future?



Workshop 3

Stocktake

This workshop is centred on **Understanding the catchment context**. The group brings together available information, local knowledge, science, and community perspectives to build a fuller picture of the catchment and its people.

This includes identifying what information already exists, where the gaps are, and what the evidence suggests about key risks, issues, strengths, and opportunities.

It also starts to bridge into **Setting SMART outcomes and goals** and **Prioritising and planning actions** by linking emerging actions to the risks and opportunities identified.

- Increased knowledge of the catchment and the people connected to it.
- Shared understanding of what information is available and where important gaps remain.
- Clearer picture of catchment risks, issues, strengths, and opportunities.
- Initial links made between identified risks and opportunities and possible actions.



Workshop 4

Developing a catchment plan

This workshop brings together the later planning steps in the cycle: **Setting SMART outcomes and goals**, **Prioritising and planning actions**, and preparing for **Taking action** and **Tracking progress and sharing our story**.

Using the knowledge developed through the earlier workshops, the group agrees the actions that matter most, sets realistic goals, prioritises effort, confirms how success will be monitored, and develops the catchment action plan.

- Shared understanding of which actions should be taken in response to the catchment's risks and opportunities.
- SMART goals agreed and actions prioritised.
- Agreed approach for monitoring progress and telling the story of change and success.
- Draft or completed catchment action plan developed.



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How will we tell the story and monitor our success?

7

What actions are we going to take?

6

Prioritise actions & understand implementation methods

5

Set SMART goals and understand how far we can get

Wainuioru Community River Care Group

Wainuioru Community River Care Group was established in 2017 and has been committed to catchment action planning since its inception. Part of the group's success can be attributed to its strong outcomes focus and its commitment to regularly reviewing and refining its catchment action plan to ensure it stays on track.

In the early stages, the group was primarily focused on building connections, developing shared understanding, and gathering information about the catchment. Over time, it has moved through repeated cycles of building knowledge, taking action, reflecting on progress, and then identifying where further information is needed before taking the next steps.

This adaptive approach has helped the group maintain momentum, align action with community values, and respond to emerging opportunities and challenges. It has also led to a range of successful projects, while sustaining long-term commitment to more complex ventures such as crack willow removal and native planting.

Although the group's outcomes are grounded in the aspirations of the Wainuioru community, they have been shaped and strengthened through the support of partners and technical experts. As a result, the group's work has remained practical, community-led, and strongly linked to the long-term outcomes it wants to achieve.

See more details about the group: www.wairarapacc.nz/wainuioru

