



HOOPS IN PARKS HASTINGS

HOOPS IN PARKS, HASTINGS

PILOT INITIATIVE, CASE STUDY

Working alongside local communities to achieve positive outcomes through play, active recreation and sport

Creating more spaces and more places for everybody to be active



Hoops in Parks, Hastings

Hoops in Parks is a pilot initiative that brings together multiple partners in a common goal to create great spaces in local parks where more local people can enjoy being active together.

It was devised by Hastings District Council and Basketball NZ in collaboration with Basketball Hawkes Bay and Sport Hawkes Bay and financially supported by First Light Foundation.

Participation numbers for Basketball have been on the increase, and a lack of suitable community facilities is one of the toughest barriers in terms of accommodating demand throughout the country.

The Pilot aims to address the lack of suitable facilities by creating quality long term opportunities for local communities to participate and play basketball across several outdoor locations.

Building the Partnership

Shared visions drive
change

The first conversations took place in mid-2020 to discuss the concept and ensure the partners were clearly aligned with their strategic directions.

- **Basketball New Zealand** vision - “a hoop in the heart of every neighbourhood”.

BBNZ were looking to expand on their existing program - “**Hoops in Schools**”- which supports the growth of basketball by placing more basketball hoops on school grounds.

They wanted to find a way to take their vision to the next level and look at other ways to provide more hoops outside the school setting.

- **Basketball Hawke’s Bay’s** vision - “Basketball everywhere”

Basketball Hawke’s Bay is committed to concentrating their efforts in places where Basketball can play a positive role in achieving greater community wellbeing.

- **Hastings District Council** – community wellbeing objectives.

HDC had previously invested in their hoops infrastructure and were looking to invest more.

They regard the provision of hoops in parks as a sustainable way for tamariki and rangatahi to be active and have fun with whanau and friends within their local community.

- **Sport Hawke’s Bay** – Kia kaha, Kia ora | Be active, Be well

A key focus is on less active communities where there are barriers to engaging in physical activity

- **First Light Foundation** – local funds staying local

First Light Foundation prioritises funds going back into local communities and are supportive of initiatives that raise the well-being of locals in a sustainable way.

Getting Started

Community Plans guide the decision making

Thanks to the vision and co-operation of Council, the partners engaged in a collaborative approach for the first Hoops in Parks pilot in NZ to make basketball more accessible to the wider community.

Community plans for both Flaxmere and Flaxmere West identified that new sport facilities and equipment were needed in these areas, and that Basketball was an activity of choice.

- Kimi Ora Community School in Flaxmere had been a recipient of two new hoops in June 2020 as part of the Hoops in Schools Project.
- The school facilities are proving to get more kids active – they also foster positive community spirit.

Community consultation was conducted in a visible way.

“It’s really important that we understand where the community think the courts should go”

Public Spaces Manager,
Hastings District Council,
Rachel Stuart.

The community were part of the process and contributed to the outcome

Council pitched the concept to the community for their input and ideas.

Flaxmere residents were asked which parks they would most like new courts to be built as well as what other facilities they would like to see at the courts.

Flaxmere Night Markets – provided the perfect place to connect and engage. It was an environment where the community felt at ease to provide input about the prospect of high-quality basketball facilities in their local parks.

The community responded with plenty of ideas generating excitement amongst the locals about the proposed upgrade of some courts and the installation of others. Almost 200 submissions were received from local residents.

The Council design team came up with a **logo** making the project easily identifiable and raised the visibility of the project in all social media platforms and communications campaigns, further consultations and updates.

Location is everything.

“Once the new courts are completed most of Flaxmere will be just a 10-minute walk from a quality community basketball court; quicker if you are on a bike.”

Hastings District councillor,
Henare O’Keefe

Locations were prioritised where the addition of the new court would be a family-friendly extension of an existing playground.

Facilities on Parks have traditionally been spread out, however, it’s now clear that facilities located adjacent to each other make it much easier for families to all play together in the same place at the same time. Adults are more likely to accompany their children to play in the park when the Park offers something for children of different ages to play in the same area.

Careful consideration was given to locations where Parents would be more likely to give permission for their children to go out and play when the park is close by – no more than a ten-minute walk away.

Children feel safer when they play close to home and where they are playing in the same place as their siblings.

The bigger picture

Thriving community spirit

There are now a total of three Hoops in Parks developments planned for Flaxmere - depending on funding, the aim is to install these courts over the next two years.

First-off the block was a three-quarter sized court at Ron Giorgi III Reserve.

The opening at Ron Giorgi III was a community celebration.

The opening was done in true community spirit. The partners combined to provide a quality community experience with a BBQ, music, activities for the younger kids, Tall Blacks, Tall Ferns, Hawks players, and Councillors participating with residents in knockout competitions, signing basketballs and 3x3 games.

Opening day was focussed on unstructured play where the following day saw an organised basketball tournament taking place amongst local schools. To watch the opening [click here](#).



Everybody Active

Since the opening day, the daily numbers visiting the park and the playground have more than doubled.

Basketball Hawke's Bay hopes the sport will be recognised by the local community as the sport which is strongest in their immediate neighbourhood. Building strong local recognition generates support for participants to pathway from local urban communities to the highest level of their choice if they want to, but more importantly to develop a love of being physically active.

Replicating success

It's hoped that success of the pilot will assist Basketball NZ to communicate with other regions and demonstrate that investing in quality hoops in parks makes a big difference to getting people active in ways that are important to them

Important factors to success

“The collaboration piece was extremely important in the success of this project. All parties were able to contribute specialised skills that have helped to make the project come together”

General Manager, Basketball HB, Nick Hogan

Utilise the strengths of the collective partners

The partner mix allowed for diverse strengths, perspectives and skills to support the initiative. Strengths came from:

- Local passion and great community connections
- Council representatives with extensive local knowledge
- Previous learnings from similar initiatives
- A flexible working relationship
- A willingness to be adaptable
- Everyone was committed to a regular schedule of short catch ups
- Everyone wanted to make this work

Community buy-in was fundamental to the development and implementation phases.

Project partners went the extra mile to keep the community in the loop. At times it was necessary to alter decisions, and it was always important to go back to the community to check in again and ensure there were no surprises with decisions that were made on their behalf.

The co-operative nature of the partnership was key.

It was agreed no formal MOU was required. The project made such great sense that all parties were fully energised to keep things rolling. The frequent, but brief, communication schedule worked just as well as any MOU. It was a working relationship that everyone felt comfortable with.



Free Play helps make the day

“This is what our park has needed for ages, something for everyone to have fun with”

Local resident

“There are big payoffs for letting kids be kids. We’re learning that some kids aren’t getting enough free play time. This was an opportunity for us to understand how our communities like to play together”

Public spaces policy planner,
Hastings DC, Kirsty
Oosterkamp

Opening day was enhanced with Playful activities that suited anyone and everyone

Hastings District Council were hoping for a good turnout on opening day. Realising all ages would be curious to come on down and celebrate the new Park facilities Sport Hawke’s Bay agreed on a plan to fill up the green space beside the new court with items of Play. Alongside the new basketball court, and adjacent to the playground, a variety of loose parts equipment was made available for families to engage in Free Play.

Children moved freely from one activity to the next, interacting in imaginative activities with anyone and everyone from the neighbourhood.

When the basketball court was full, they either played on the swings or picked up a piece of equipment and played with the person next to them.

Free play items added to the quality play experience on offer

The free play space added immensely to the enjoyment of the day, and over 300 people stayed for the full afternoon just to enjoy being outdoors connecting with each other and having something to do.

Sport Hawke’s Bay are working closely with local Councils to look at ways to expand the play opportunity on offer so that everyone can join in on the fun.



What were the outcomes?

“We wanted to look at other ways to provide more hoops – this is the first Hoops in Parks pilot that we’ve done. The pilot will help us show other regions that these quality facilities in parks do make a big difference”

Basketball NZ Manager of Development and Technology, Daniel Darwick

“Having access to quality hoops and places to play allows our communities to be involved at an informal level which encourages active health and wellbeing. Hoops in Parks helps to bring Basketball HB’s vision of “Basketball in the heart of every community” to life.

General Manager, Basketball HB, Nick Hogan

Improved community access to physical activity opportunities

Basketball HB are well known for their administration and delivery of organised basketball opportunities for the community. However, Basketball HB wanted this initiative to have a clear focus on the unstructured basketball opportunities available for communities.

The main objective isn’t for young people to sign up for an organised basketball league, but rather maximise the opportunity basketball present to support physical activity opportunities led by young people in a way that suits them.

Improved knowledge to support the contribution of the initiative with other communities.

This pilot project was proposed to initially concentrate on Flaxmere, Hastings. The learnings developed from this pilot will help support more park projects to be developed with other Hastings communities, including Hastings rural communities.

This initiative has led to discussions with other councils on how the blueprint could support other communities across New Zealand to develop fit-for-purpose quality hoops to support physical activity, and how Hoops in Parks may be scaled to other regions and communities.



Next Steps

Accessibility considerations for Ron Giorgi III

Sport Hawke’s Bay and Hastings District Council will be addressing accessibility considerations for the park to ensure wheelchair users can enjoy the park facilities. Hastings District Council are committed to addressing these upgrades in their plans for the 2022 financial year.

The second Hastings Hoops in Parks location planned for October 2021

Planning is well underway for the installation of a full court at Flaxmere Park. The project team is fully engaged in bringing this project to fruition and depending on funding, it is hoped to have this facility opened prior to the end of 2021.

Hoops in Parks to expand into Napier

Talks are now underway with Napier City Council for the first Hoops in Parks project to get underway before December 2021.
