



## *RAPID RANGITIKEI*

Rangitikei's digital enablement plan  
to support a connected community



# Our vision:

Everyone in our community can access  
fast, reliable internet and mobile  
technology





# Our objectives:

- Our district is a great place to do business on the internet
- Our people use the internet to learn, play and stay in touch locally and globally
- Our businesses operate at maximum productivity through their effective use of the internet



# Our strategies:

- Ensure all residents can access fast and reliable broadband and mobile services
- Provide excellent internet capabilities to existing and new businesses
- Educate and inspire our communities to use new technologies





# Our Projects & Key Actions:

## Project leadership

Project 1: Monitor, review and improve the plan

Project 2: Collaborative engagement for delivery of fast broadband

## Business Growth

Project 3: Developing gradual urban roll-out

Project 4: Free wifi in the CBD areas

Project 5: Improve business presence online

Project 6: Be Happy - Taihape

## Community Enablement

Project 7: Public education and information

Project 8: Iwi/Māori vISP





# Project 1: Monitor, review and improve the Plan

	When?	How much?
Steering Group established	July 2015	Nil (volunteers)
Communications (local newspapers, newsletters, news bulletins etc.)	Ongoing	Nil (volunteers)
Monitoring using #Get Digital	Ongoing	Included in #Get Digital annual fee
Local surveys	Ongoing	Nil (volunteers)





## Project 2: Collaborative engagement

	When?	How much?
Council Infrastructure Services: e.g. align road opening programmes	Ongoing	As per ROI
External providers: bring them into the <i>Rapid Rangitikei</i> plan	Ongoing	Nil (volunteers)
Connecting Mountains to Sea: a cross regional digital leaders forum	Ongoing	Internal resource





## Project 3: Developing Gradual Urban Roll-out

	When?	How much?
Goal 1: Fibre-connected cabinets in Marton, Taihape and Bulls	July 2018	As per ROI (will require extensive investment from UFB2)
Goal 2: Fibre to CBD (Marton and Taihape) Fibre to Bulls	July 2016 July 2017	As per ROI As per ROI
Goal 3: Fibre to all residences	July 2020(?)	As per ROI





## Project 4: Free wifi in urban areas

	When?	How much?
Research - provision	Sept 2015	Nil (volunteers)
Research - funding	Nov 2015	Nil (volunteers)
Stage 1 – CBDs	April 2016	Internal resource
Stage 2 – Schools as hubs for community access	June 2016	\$500 (estimate annually)





## Project 5: Improved business presence online

	When?	How much?
#Get Digital via <a href="http://www.aboutus.co.nz">www.aboutus.co.nz</a>	Nov 2015	\$5,500 annually
Online learning community	As above	Included in #Get Digital annual fee
Local workshops and events	As above	Included in #Get Digital annual fee
Digital Enablement Dashboard to track progress	As above	Included in #Get Digital annual fee





## Project 6: Be Happy - Taihape

	When?	How much?
Prepare promotional brief: Taihape is a great place to live and do e-business	Jan 2016	Nil - (volunteers)
Design and produce materials to meet promotional brief	Jan - Mar 2016	\$10,000 (one-off)
Develop and implement a marketing campaign	April 2016 onwards	\$3,000 (annually)





## Project 7: Public Education and Information

	When?	How much?
Develop regular information column in local newspaper	Oct 2015	Nil (volunteers)
Survey local residents and businesses to assess training and education needs	Ongoing	Nil (volunteers)
Develop and promote training sessions @ the Hub(s)	Ongoing	\$6,000 (per annum)
Develop and promote online training via #Get Digital	Ongoing	Included in #Get Digital annual fee





## Project 8: Iwi/Whanau/Hapu virtual internet service provider

	When?	How much?
Get adequate and secure FTTP to appropriate premises	Dec 2015	As per ROI
Secure/maintain interim retail service providers	Dec 2015	Nil (volunteers)
Research and deliver wireless to marae and other communities	To be confirmed	As per ROI
Set up virtual internet service provider	To be confirmed	Nil (volunteers)





## Council additional costs 2015 - 2018

	Cost in year 1	Three year cost
Monitor, review and improve the plan	\$ 0	\$ 0
Collaborative engagement for delivery of fast broadband	As per ROI	As per ROI
Developing Gradual Urban Roll-out	As per ROI	As per ROI
Free WiFi in the CBD areas	\$500	\$1,500
Be Happy - Taihape	\$13,000	\$19,000
Improve business presence online	\$5,500	\$16,500
Public education and information	\$6,000	\$18,000
Iwi/Whanau/Hapu vISP	As per ROI	As per ROI
Total	\$25,000 + as per ROI	\$55,000 + as per ROI





## INTRODUCTION

The Government is providing local authorities with the opportunity to attract investment in digital infrastructure in their communities under the Ultra-Fast Broadband 2, Rural Broadband 2 and Mobile Black Spot Fund programmes. Rangitikei District Council aims to identify ways to achieve economic and social benefits from these programmes and to coordinate plans to maximise the use of digital infrastructure within the district. This digital enablement plan (DEP) will support Council to achieve these outcomes and also keep the Government informed of anticipated and ongoing developments in the District.

This DEP provides details of our vision, targets and plans to maximise the Internet to increase business profitability, bring economic advantages and engage the community in digital technology.

It focuses on three areas:

- Leadership – managing the plan and associated projects
- Business Growth – projects that help businesses grow by improving their use of technology or online services
- Community Enablement – projects that use technology to help the community, or that help the community use technology

Section 1, below, provides detail of our process to develop the DEP and section 2 provides detail on the projects that have emerged as our priorities.



## SECTION 1: PREPARATION AND ENGAGEMENT

### IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

A survey was prepared and circulated through local networks and available online. As responses were received, the respondents were invited to join the e-network and to participate in a Steering Group to develop the DEP. An analysis of the broadband survey as at 16 September 2015 is attached as Appendix1.

In addition, a group of Council officers from regional territorial authorities had met in early to develop a regional approach to the Registration of Interest - Support and this group remained in touch throughout the period of preparing the DEP.

### ESTABLISHING A STEERING GROUP

Inaugural meetings of local people interested in being part of the Steering Group were held in early August – one in Taihape and one in Marton. The groups that emerged have been added to as further interest has been generated.

The key role of the Steering Group is to monitor, review and continuously improve the projects that comprise the DEP. These form the leadership element of the DEP.

In addition, the Steering Group aimed to:

- Ensure everyone works together towards the common project objectives
- Fairly weigh all requests, acting impartially to do the most good with the resources available
- Be the ultimate decision maker with regards to projects and their direction, priorities and deadlines
- Set clear expectations with regards to project communication, both internally and to stakeholders
- Ensure members have diverse representative interests
- Communicate clearly to the community about the meetings, what is being discussed, final decisions and the likely impact of those decisions.



PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING A COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Community group or stakeholder	How this group has been engaged
Survey respondents	Respondents have been thanked for their input and invited to join an e-network and the Steering Group. As at 16 September, the e-network currently has 34 members and 17 of these have taken part in one or more Steering Group meetings.
Community groups (elderly groups, youth groups, clubs and societies) and not-for-profit organisations	A member of the Steering Group has been contacting community groups to identify their connectivity requirements and to stimulate interest in developing better use of the internet.
Iwi/whanau/hapu	Representatives have been regularly attending Steering group meetings from Te Rūnanga o Ngati Apa and from Ratana Paa.
Educators (schools, preschools, tutors, tertiary institutions)	Direct contact
IT representatives (IT leaders, technology experts)	Via the survey, a number of IT leaders have been recruited to the Steering Group, including the Marton and Surrounds ICT Hub and Council's IT team.
Local businesses (large, small, across industries).	Via the survey, and the local Economy Theme Group, a number of local businesses have been recruited to the Steering Group, including local farmers, small businesses (particularly those which do online business). A member of the Steering Group has been contacting local businesses to identify their connectivity requirements and to stimulate interest in developing better use of the internet. Connections have been maintained with Rangitikei.com, the local tourism agency.
Students (Schools, Tertiary institutions or studying at home)	One student at a local high school has been involved in the Steering group. This remains an area for further development as identified in the DEP Actions.



*Rapid Rangitikei: Rangitikei's digital enablement plan to support a connected community*

Community group or stakeholder	How this group has been engaged
Library services	The Council's Community Services Team Leader is aware of the DEP. It aligns well with the Strategy Plan for Library services to develop as community learning hubs.
Infrastructure Providers	The Steering Group has made contact with Inspire Net and Netspeed. Both these providers have begun to address needs raised in the survey responses directly. In addition, Inspire Net and WEL Networks are aware of the Council's DEP and actively working with the Steering Group to develop broadband infrastructure.
Council and its Committees	The Council has seen an early draft of the DEP in late August and the final draft at the Policy/Planning Committee on 10 September 2015
Neighbouring territorial authorities	A group of Council staff in the central north island have developed the "Connecting Mountains to the Sea" cross-regional collaborative group which has maintained e-contact throughout the development of DEPs and has held two meetings to date (at the beginning of the ROI process and towards the deadline for submission of DEPs).



## SECTION 2: OUR PRIORITY PROJECTS

### PROJECT 1 MONITOR, REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

Establish and maintain a Digital Steering Group to oversee the ongoing development and implementation of the DEP, particularly to

- Regularly review the DEP and adjust projects to reflect changes in community needs and technology ongoing
- Develop a set of indicators to monitor progress using, in the first instance #Get Digital from [www.aboutus.co.nz](http://www.aboutus.co.nz) dashboard
- Request feedback: Speaking directly with community groups and local business, ask for feedback on the suggested projects in the DEP and invite further suggestions via online surveys and offline interviews
- Continue to speak directly with community groups and local business, ask for feedback on the progress of projects as they progress, continue to invite further suggestions via online surveys and offline interviews

Rationale: International research shows that when a community is “fibred up”, evidence of economic growth can be measured after two years. This is due to:

- an increase in the number of small online businesses
- growth of existing small businesses
- SMEs that are considering relocating - stay
- growth in the hospitality and tourism sector who can offer fast speed internet



## PROJECT 2: COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Council infrastructure services to:

- Develop a culture to lay duct whenever roads are dug up. It must be a condition of contract to our roading contractor(s) that whenever a road is to be resealed that a conduit of suitable specification is laid as part of the overall job. This is to be inspected and considered as a non-optional part of the overall job.
- Make the forward-works programme available on the website so that it is easily accessible to the Digital Steering Group and any interested companies

External providers to be encouraged to talk with the Steering Group about needs in the community and to work with Council to meet these needs as resources and other commitments allow. Identify local experts who can assist with technical conversations with infrastructure providers,

### **Connecting Mountains to Sea:**

- Create a cross regional digital leaders forum
- Hold regular cross regional meetings to share knowledge and ideas on digital leadership and to create economies of scale, where appropriate.

The Steering Group's efforts around collaborative engagement will be focussed ultimately on delivering Project 3: Developing Gradual Urban Roll-out to our District's communities.



## PROJECT 3: DEVELOPING GRADUAL URBAN ROLL-OUT

### **Goal 1: To have fibre-connected cabinets in Marton, Taihape and Bulls**

This goal is a prerequisite for a connected District. As outlined above, the Steering Group will work collaboratively with Council infrastructure services, with external providers and cross-regionally with neighbouring territorial authorities.

#### Benefits:

- The District main towns will be like other towns and cities in that it will have a crucial component of minimum basic infrastructure required to be connected in our modern society.
- Once done, it will be possible for any section in the urban area to use fibre-based broadband, once cabling from cabinet to that section has been installed.

#### Costs

- To install fibre and supporting electronics will cost around \$80,000 per cabinet
- The opportunity to obtain funding from central government for this basic infrastructure is essential – public funding through Council ratepayers is unaffordable in the short- to medium-term. The delay would put us behind most of the rest of NZ in terms of UFB connectivity. This will affect present businesses and future business opportunities for the District.

### **Goal 2: To have fibre to all sections in the CBD block (Marton and Taihape initially, Bulls as part of redevelopment of Criterion Hotel site and a multi-purpose community/civic centre in 2017)**

#### Benefits:

- If the CBD areas have fibre, this will enhance the retail experience due to prompt EFTPOS.
- Businesses that rely on internet for back-end databases, multimedia, remote connections etc. will experience a much more efficient and effective connection.
- That the CBD has a fibre connection to all businesses (that want it) is eminently marketable.



Costs:

- Connection costs will require that businesses in the CBD areas support the service, for example, if property owners agree to allow the fibre cable to be located above their verandahs, this will result in significant savings.

**Goal 3: To have fibre to all residences, building on Goal 1 above**

Benefits:

- The District main towns will be like other towns and cities in that it will have a crucial component of minimum basic infrastructure required to be connected to each residence in our modern society.
- Once done, it will be possible for any section in Marton urban area to utilise fibre-based broadband, once cabling from cabinet to that section has been installed.

Costs

- As above (Goal 1), initial cost to install fibre and supporting electronics to the green cabinets may be prohibitive.
- If central government does not subsidise this most basic of community utility infrastructure, then it may be unaffordable via rates and this would be a significant impediment to marketing the District as a great place to live and work.



#### PROJECT 4: FREE WIFI ACROSS URBAN AREAS

Investigate the feasibility and costs of the providing free Wi-Fi to the CBDs of Bulls, Marton, Hunterville, Mangaweka and Taihape using a mix of existing and new infrastructure including Council owned facilities such as the Library and the CCTV cameras and identifying viable locations for further installations (such as schools).

- Create a map showing the potential coverage areas
- Create a business proposal for funding - shared cost between Council and local businesses, possibly involving funding via sponsorship

Stage 1 - CBD: using the existing fibre infrastructure at Council-owned facilities (Council buildings, library, CCTV etc.) and local businesses, install repeaters to achieve Wi-Fi coverage around the CBDs. Publicise service locally, targeting e.g. 2016 Harvest Fair or Gumboot Day for maximum coverage

Stage 2 - schools: using the existing school fibre infrastructure install repeaters to extend Wi-Fi coverage into residential areas (taking into account restrictions around school Wi-Fi coverage as identified in the research, see <http://www.education.govt.nz/school/running-a-school/technology-in-schools/your-broadband-connection/sharing-your-schools-wireless-connection/>)

## PROJECT 5: IMPROVED BUSINESS PRESENCE ONLINE

Sign up for the #Get Digital Small Business Action Plan for Councils. The #Get Digital programme will provide:

- Provide free Web Presence for every business in our District (see [www.aboutus.co.nz](http://www.aboutus.co.nz))
- Provide online learning on setting up and running social media channels
- Provide online learning on key cloud apps
- Provide a Council-facing dashboard for benchmarking and tracking digital engagement amongst our small business communities
- Produce and distribute video stories from local business owners which tell their authentic online engagement stories
- Provide a series of "Get Online for Peanuts" workshops
- Facilitate a regional "Small Day Out" event aimed at providing practical digital advice and education to small business communities
- Support the establishment of a local "Digital Natives" programme which connects small business owners with young digital experts.



## PROJECT 6: BE HAPPY – TAIHAPE

Develop Taihape as a hub for online businesses, taking advantage of the cheap housing (Auckland Housing Crisis, What Crisis?), great schools, good amenities and AMAZING lifestyle and the improved broadband connectivity that will come with the additional investment in infrastructure. Activities include:

- A targeted campaign on social media to encourage people running digital and online businesses (software developers, web designers, bloggers etc.) to move to Taihape (and if successful to extend District-wide). The brief will highlight Taihape as a great place to live and do e-business (affordable housing, excellent schools, amazing lifestyle - Tongariro crossing, skiing, hunting, white-water rafting, horse treks, local walking tracks)
- Promotional materials will be designed and produced to meet this brief. This may be externally produced or it may be done via a project at e.g. the local schools.
- Develop and promote the Taihape online presence including
  - Commercial properties and residential properties available
  - Job vacancies
  - Information on schools, local clubs and organisations, events and activities
  - Case studies of businesses/families who have shifted

## PROJECT 7: PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Benefits of greater connectivity to rural communities include:

- Access to remote health services
- Access to online education and training
- Connection to other communities and families globally
- Disaster recovery and emergency support
- Environmental monitoring

Establish and maintain regular communications programme to inform the community on progress (regular column in the local newspapers, Council newsletters, community newsletters and social media)

Research: talk to people to find out what they need, and identify the resources that are already available - such as the ICT Hub. Investigate whether it would be viable to record training sessions using Google Hangouts so they are always available online, or perhaps copied to DVD for offline distribution.

**Beginner workshops through Libraries via the Marton and Surrounds ICT Hub:** investigate whether a series of workshops would be useful, in addition to the existing drop-in-Thursdays, to help people get started on the basics: email, attachments, documents. These would need promoting through various channels such as the local newspaper and community groups and could be recorded as detailed above

**Intermediate workshops through Libraries via the Marton and Surrounds ICT Hub:** once improved internet is available, a further set of workshops would be developed: online banking, Skype, streaming TV, and accessing council and government services. These would be recorded and promoted as above

**Advanced workshops through Libraries via the Marton and Surrounds ICT Hub:** this series is for the more advanced users: IRD, online accounting, screen-sharing, video conferencing, website and social media etc. These would be recorded and promoted as above

Delivered in conjunction with **#Get Digital** programme as outlined above under project 5.



## PROJECT 8: IWI/WHANAU/HAPU VIRTUAL INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

**Define:** identify key benefits for economic growth, and cultural and community regeneration through improved connectivity for marae in southern Rangitikei (and potentially further afield) including:

- Networking marae ...so they have direct communication and sharing
- Developing a online content platform, maintaining data sovereignty of local content while providing self-directed learning from digitised archives leading to economic, cultural and community regeneration by accessing the Māori language and culture through ICT
- ICT Hubs: eCommunication, eLearning, ePlatform and eCommerce

**Research:** investigate the legal issues being an ISP. The vISP project provides an opportunity to leverage with a connections company to provide quality internet access at affordable rates to rural/remote communities, delivering services to people who are currently excluded. There is a strong strategy for a sustainable business case as well as providing financial benefits back to those communities, while stimulating Māori participation across the ICT sector.

**Implement and promote:** once the RBI Fibre is able to be accessed by the marae, wireless networks providing broadband services to all household in Ratana can be looked at and transmitters attached to homes. Promotional events can demonstrate to marae communities showing how they can be serviced and what network best suits their individual communities especially those deep in the valleys.

### Ratana Paa

- Priority is RBI Fibre backhaul to marae (Chorus)
- Wireless network off marae to all surrounding community homes
- Fibre to Homes in new sub-division

### Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Apa

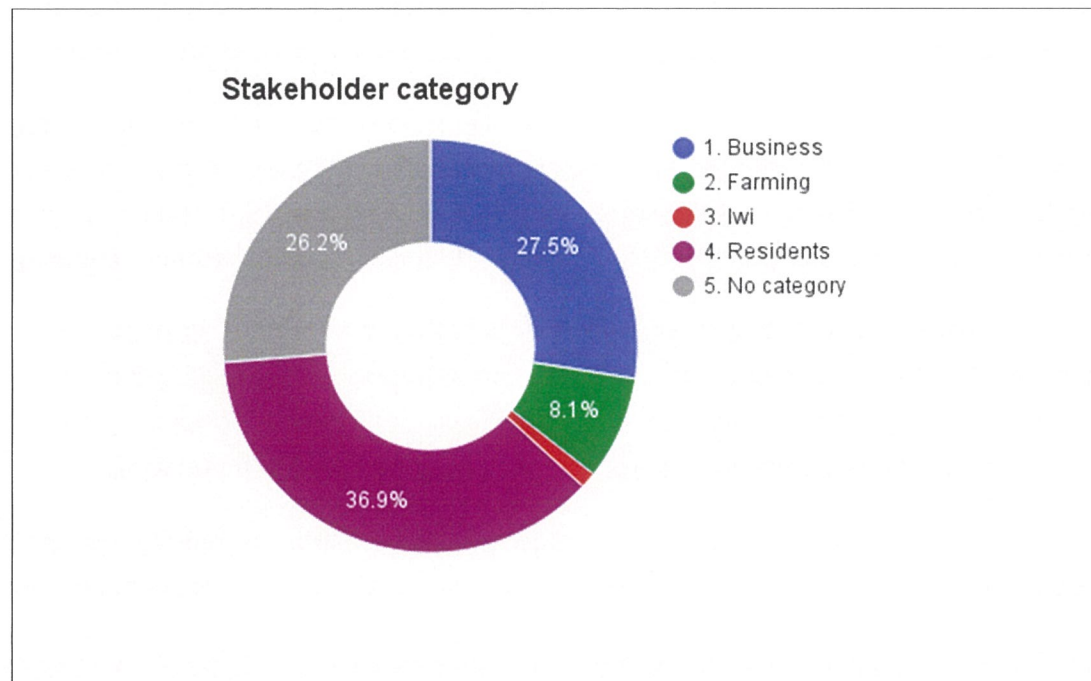
- FTTP to the Rūnanga offices in Bulls
  - Wireless links to Ngāti Apa marae
- As above, investigate and implement feasibility of Ngati Apa establishing a vISP

## APPENDIX 1: UFB/RBI/MBS SURVEY ANALYSIS

### UFB SURVEY RESPONSE ANALYSIS

This is broken down into two graphs. The first one shows the percentage breakdown of respondents into our main four stakeholder types: Business, Farmers, Iwi, and Residents. This shows a good response from business and residents; a large proportion whose category was not clear; and far smaller groups of farmers and Iwi.

This skewed representation may be related to the fact that the survey was mostly conducted online, and many people in rural areas do not even have good enough internet access to test their internet speeds and fill in the survey.



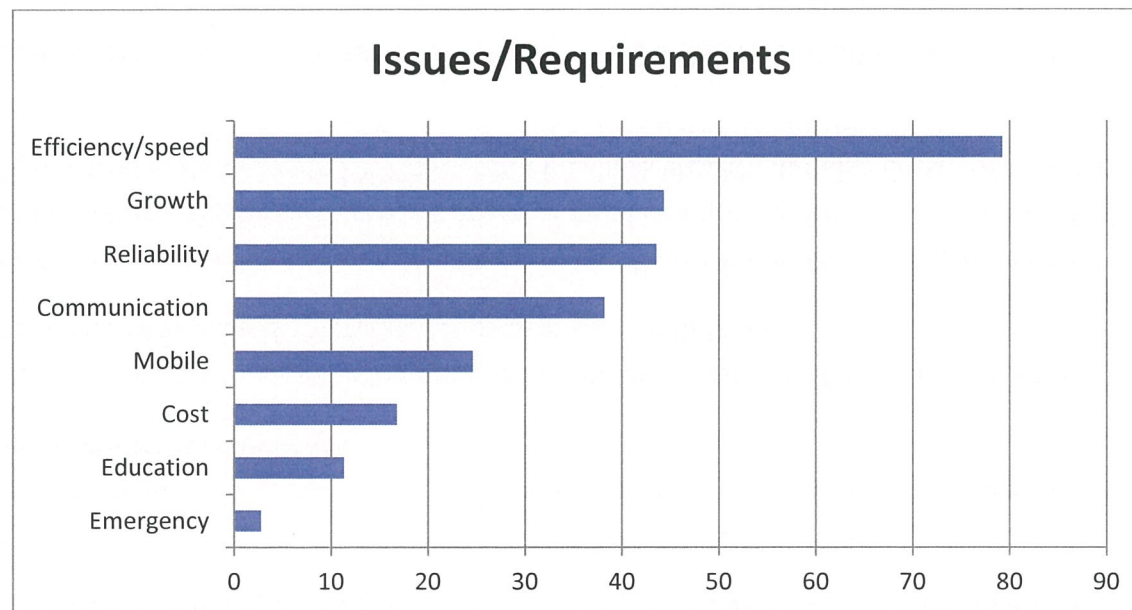
The larger proportion of residential respondents is indicative of a clear desire for UFB from the general population, rather than solely from business users. Responses such as: "I don't work from home at all which I would more", and "without broadband, I can no longer run my business" suggest a crossover between residential and business users - people who want to work or run businesses from home.



There is also a general crossover between all four groups, when considering examples such as farming businesses being run from the family home, or iwi running businesses and providing education.

Comments such as “we are actually connected to SATALITE [sic] broadband because we have no reception” indicates a population who are highly motivated to connect to and pay for decent internet services, which is surely an attractive proposition for the providers who will bid for these projects.

The second graph shows the issues and/or requirements mentioned.



Clearly **slow speeds** is the issue affecting most respondents. “All our marketing now plus reservation system is all internet based. We have staff who are on the internet all day and are increasingly frustrated with the drop of speed we have experienced over the last year or so.

“This is a productivity issue with a great deal of time spent waiting for pages to load...” This shows that, as more people access broadband, which drops speeds for everyone, our business are not just stalling but are going backwards.

Residents are affected similarly: “[it] takes 10 minutes for Metservice weather to load while ads pop up!”

**Growth, Reliability and Communication** are the next pain points for respondents. “We employ 30 people and would absolutely become more efficient and be able to grow more if we had Broadband capacity” demonstrates clearly that businesses not able to grow at the rates they would desire.

A local accountant firm says that the majority of farmers “cannot get broadband or the connections is extremely slow. This seriously hinders their business capabilities and sometimes compliance.”

Another local business states: “we are local/national adult education providers based in Marton but we wouldn't contemplate any large scale online provision of services because of the unreliability/inadequacy of local broadband.”

Residents, some of whom can't even access the internet, feel like they are “living in the past”, and the point was made that “faster broadband speed entices more people to move into the district with the peace of mind of knowing they can connect to the internet while enjoying the speeds of the cities.” This demonstrates that growth isn't just about business growth, but also encompasses migration into the area from larger towns and cities.

Patchy or non-existent **mobile coverage** was mentioned by a number of respondents, and others were dependent on their (very expensive) mobile broadband as the only way they could access the outside world: “options are expensive satellite wireless internet, or mobile data through our cell phone providers. Also expensive. Children are limited to internet time for school work as plans on wireless satellite give few gigs.”

Also mentioned was the lack of communication options in the recent **emergency flood event** that affected the district: “the recent outage during the flooding was highly frustrating when trying to get information about travel, especially as it coincided with cell phone outage. This is a safety issue. We could not find any local radio stations to tell us anything.”