

Sport and Recreation

HIGHLIGHTS

Labour will:

- Continue to invest in community sport and recreation to encourage widespread participation and to help our local clubs thrive
- Commit to supporting volunteers in the sport and recreation sector by providing resources to assist them in their roles and giving them opportunities to up skill
- Bring back a focus on physical activity as part of our Health policy
- Continue to support specialised training for our top athletes, and increase the focus on pre-elite athlete identification so that our pool of high performance athletes can grow.

Introduction

Sport and recreation is an ingrained part of the Kiwi psyche. At the grassroots level, participation in sport and recreation helps create community cohesion and social integration. At the top level of sport, New Zealanders achieving on the world sporting stage lifts our national pride.

Labour is committed to ensuring all New Zealanders, including those with disabilities and ethnic backgrounds, have opportunities to participate and excel in their chosen sport and recreation activities.

Labour is committed to fostering a competent, connected sport and recreation sector and a healthy, active nation.

Grassroots sport through education and volunteering

Investing in grassroots sport will pay dividends through the health, social and economic benefits of participation through investment in our elite sportspeople of the future.

We lose too many young people from organised sport when they move from primary to secondary school or when they leave school. We should retain as many of those young people in sport for as long as possible. Sport participation at the school-age level fosters values, skills and teamwork that are beneficial in many other areas of learning and development.

Labour will:

- Continue to invest in community sport and recreation to encourage widespread participation and to help our local clubs thrive
- Encourage more collaboration between sports clubs and school sport to help bridge the transitions between primary, secondary and tertiary education

- Set up an investigation into school sport participation, including the feasibility of reintroducing mid-week early finishing nationwide to facilitate mid-week sport.

Grassroots sport in New Zealand would not be possible without the dedication of sports volunteers and Regional Sports Trusts. We need to ensure that volunteering in sport is an attractive and worthwhile proposition and that regional sports trusts can maintain relationships with local and national sports organisations, local councils, schools, clubs, health agencies, and local businesses.

Labour will:

- Continue to support the work of Regional Sports Trusts, including the sharing of best practice and assistance with training
- Investing in developing the skills of sports volunteers – skills which are also applicable in other areas of their lives.

Improving health and wellbeing

Physical activity is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. Labour believes that the Government can and should play a leadership role in encouraging people to be physically active, because of the benefits that brings at an individual level and the health dollars it will save at a national level.

Labour will

- Bring back a focus on physical activity as part of our Health policy
- Ensure New Zealanders can be active in everyday life by working with local government and the community to build active living into everyday life, in transport, in walkway, cycle way and cycling lane provision, and in the provision of facilities for encouragement of physical activity.

High performance sport

New Zealand consistently punches above its weight on the international sporting stage. We will continue to support the development of world-class athletes and coaches, and remove overly bureaucratic and unnecessary sport funding arrangements.

Labour will:

- Continue to support specialised training for our top athletes, and will also increase the focus on pre-elite athlete identification so that our pool of high performance athletes can grow across a wide range of sports
- Ensure that high performance sport is given an appropriate focus within Sport New Zealand's overall governance responsibilities and that sports funding decisions are made by the Sport New Zealand board
- Work with national bodies and sporting organisations to promote and support female athletes and administrators to take up pivotal governance and leadership roles.

Outdoor recreation

The opportunities for outdoor recreation in New Zealand are huge. We will work with the sector to foster participation, improve coordination, strategic direction and to enhance leadership.

We will also ensure accessibility and affordability of outdoor recreation activities are accessible and affordable, because the vast majority of outdoor recreation activity takes place outside of any formal organisation. We will protect the network of huts and tracks across public conservation land - significant assets which support outdoor recreation and tourism.

Labour will:

- Work closely with territorial authorities to ensure that outdoor recreation opportunities are available to all New Zealanders and visitors to New Zealand at a low cost but first-rate quality
- Promote outdoor recreational opportunities and continue to upgrade the outdoors infrastructure of huts, tracks, camping grounds and other visitor facilities, including those in the back country
- Promote the development of new outdoor recreational opportunities, for example, walking and cycling trails on former railways land.

