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Planning more trails

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Riding over the Edgar suspension bridge, over the Arrow River gorge. Photo supplied.



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The Queenstown Trails Trust is suggesting new commuter trails, hosting a major international event such as the Enduro World Cup, the enhancement of existing trails and a focus on overnight trail options.

Speaking ahead of the launch of the trust's 10-year strategy document, trust chief executive Mandy Kennedy said the major focus over the next decade was on "connectivity".

The proposed trails revealed in the launch last night include an Arthurs Point-Queenstown commuter track, a new link connecting Arrowtown to Queenstown, a track from Arthurs Point to Tucker Beach, a possible new bridge across the Kawarau River, linking Chard Farm and Lake Hayes Estate and a Walter Peak-Kinloch trail later.

Mrs Kennedy said the trust also wanted to get more residents using the trails and build on its national and international reputation.

One important factor was the development of a sustainable funding strategy.

The strategy says: "Funding for trail development is generally easier to attract than funding for ongoing maintenance. As the trails network expands, the available funds for

maintaining a world-class network also need to increase."

The trust is also identifying which parts of the trails do not meet standards.

In the case of challenging routes, this might mean building or taking an alternative track or changing the existing one.

First up on the trust's "to-do" list is planning and seeking funding to complete the Jacks Point trail and the Cone Peak Station trail, both described as vital links for commuters.

Other aims within the first three years include advocating for cycle lanes, looking at infrastructure - including bike racks on boats or buses - providing air pumps for bikes or E-Bike charging stations and an assessment of what economic benefits the trails brought to the area. Mrs Kennedy said it would be difficult but she was hopeful the trust could deliver.

"We wanted it to be deliberately challenging and that is what we believe we have put forward," she said.

- Louise Scott

Queenstown Lakes

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