

Our Environment

Christchurch City Council's Environmental Newsletter

USER-FRIENDLY SHUTTLE BUSES A WINNER



Bright, stylish and environmentally friendly, Christchurch's shuttle buses are giving the City's public transport image a lift.

The distinctive yellow buses are a big hit with the thousands of workers, shoppers and tourists who travel on them.

Running from early morning to late at night, the three electric buses pull into their own colour co-ordinated stops near Victoria Square, the Casino, Town Hall, shops along Colombo St and Hoyts 8.

"I think the shuttle service is absolutely great," said satisfied passenger and consultant lawyer Colin McLachlan. "Firstly, it's going to the right places and I can avoid traipsing through the desert of Cathedral Square. The route is skilfully chosen. Secondly, I love the buses themselves because they are so quiet and look very special. Finally, they're free."

Mr McLachlan said the shuttle provided a genuine commuter service, which he really appreciated. Everyone he had

spoken to about the shuttle was just as enthusiastic. "I think it's a winner."

The on-going popularity of the yellow buses reflects their success. More than 3,000 passengers travel around the City Centre on Fridays, the busiest day of the week. Even on the quietest day, Sunday, up to 1,500 people take advantage of the service launched on 12 December.

Operated by Christchurch Transport Ltd for the Christchurch City Council, the new hybrid electric buses run on an electric battery that is periodically "topped up" by a diesel generator. This leading edge technology gives the shuttles a quieter and smoother ride, and reduces emissions.

The buses, designed by Christchurch's David Thornley, were manufactured in Ashburton by Designline. Initial technical problems experienced before Christmas have been resolved.

Any remaining problems appear to be related to the service's popularity. Demand at peak hours is so high that some would-be passengers have been

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left standing at stops. Groups queuing outside shops and clogging footpaths are also annoying some retailers. Mr Edwin Edmonds, manager of Stuart Dawsons, says the shuttle provides an excellent service but the siting of some stops should be reviewed.

Senior Transport Planner Stuart Woods says these problems of success are being investigated, as well as other issues to improve the service. "Some research has already occurred and more will continue to find out who uses the shuttle for what purposes, between where and when, as well as impacts of the new service."

Passengers have commented to drivers they are now shopping in different areas of the City because of the shuttle.

Businesses such as Big Fresh, Smiths City and the Casino report that the shuttle is bringing in many new customers.

In a recent survey, 42 per cent of passengers were shoppers and one third were tourists. The wide range of people using the buses also include inner city residents travelling to the movies and other activities, and children travelling to the heart of Christchurch.

The main objective of the shuttle service is to encourage easier movement for shoppers and visitors. It is hoped the buses will also promote the use of public transport.

Jennie Hamilton

SMART DECISIONS ON WASTE BOOST SAVINGS FOR RETAILERS

More inner City retailers are getting wise about waste.

Ten retailers have been involved in the City Council's "Green Retail" pilot project, which started in May last year. Moves to reduce waste in local businesses have been so successful the Council is now inviting other retailers to join the next programme starting in April.

"Green Retail has been really positive in terms of raising awareness of waste as a business management issue," says

Karyn Durham, Waste Minimisation Facilitator at the Council's Waste Management Unit. Those taking part had also found it very useful for networking and were working with local suppliers on issues such as packaging.

The programme, which includes four workshops and on-site advice, is offered free. In return retailers are asked to attend and participate in workshops and to demonstrate a commitment to the project by allocating sufficient time and resources to implement waste minimisation on site.

Using resources more efficiently and sending less waste to the landfill are important issues for Ballantynes, Timberland, Coyotes, Ab Fab Bookshop, Learning Curve, McEwing's Mountain Sports, Bivouac Outdoor, Kiwi Outdoors, Wild Places and The Body Shop.

With the help of the City Council's Waste Management Unit, these retailers have been sorting and measuring their waste and looking for any opportunity to reduce, reuse or recycle it. Not only that, they have also been finding out how their businesses can be more energy efficient by saving electricity.

"It's definitely been worthwhile," says Simon Pease, Manager of McEwing's Mountain Sports. "The information and expertise provided by the Green Retail programme has helped us make a considerable reduction in waste by making us look at the whole process of the company."



Simon Pease, Manager of McEwing's Mountain Sports, sorts out thermal bodywear packaging to return to the supplier for recycling.

Successes so far include:

- Ab Fab Bookshop reduced waste to the landfill by three tonnes per year by recycling paper waste.
- Ballantynes reduced waste and waste disposal costs through reuse of some packaging and by recycling paper waste. Potential savings are at least \$2,000 a year.
- Bivouac reduced waste by more than half, saving \$200 a year in disposal costs.
- McEwing's

Mountain Sports installed energy efficient lighting which will save \$5,000 per year in energy costs, with the added bonus of more efficient lighting.

Bivouac benefited from lighting changes made two years ago. Manager Sally White is now focusing on minimising waste from packaging. She admits it's sometimes an uphill battle but Bivouac is committed to reducing waste. "Our environmental policy recognises and has a preference for eco-friendly suppliers," she said.

Customers can help retailers save resources by only taking a bag when they really need it and by supporting businesses which minimise waste. Suppliers can also make a difference by reducing or reusing packaging, or by taking packaging back for recycling.

Benefits for businesses participating in "Green Retail" include

- financial savings from reduced waste disposal costs and more efficient resource use
- demonstration of a commitment to the environment which will appeal to green consumers
- the opportunity to work with other Green Retailers.

Retailers who want to be involved in Green Retail can contact Karyn at the Council's Waste Management Unit, telephone (03) 372 2426.

KIWI KIDS REVEL IN NATURE'S PLAYGROUND

Searching for cockles in the Estuary, camping in Arthur's Pass or planting native seedlings in Travis Wetland – nature and fun make a magical mix for members of the Kiwi Kids Conservation Club.

Formed 10 years ago, the club is the junior section of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

Keen young members of the North Canterbury group attend outings with their families. Activities planned for March include a trip to Quail Island, a weekend of sea life, planting, history and swimming at Okains Bay, and "discovering a secret of the swamp".

Joel McChesney, 12, is about to graduate to the Teengreens after five enjoyable years in the KCC. "You get to go on

trips and camps and see things with people that know a lot about them," he said. Camps at Craigieburn and Arthur's Pass were highlights for both Joel and his 10-year-old brother Sam.

Local co-ordinator and Canterbury Regional Councillor Valerie Campbell says North Canterbury, with over 400 subscribers, has one of the largest KCC

memberships in New Zealand.

"We aim to provide our members with opportunities to experience the beauty of Canterbury's natural assets, to have fun exploring this world, and to share with them our concern for its preservation for the future," she says.

For a \$12 individual subscription members receive regular copies of the

KCC magazine, local newsletters about activities, a membership certificate with the Kiwi conservation code and a member's sticker, plus of course the chance to join in club activities. Family subscriptions and those for schools, classes and groups cost \$20.

For more information about KCC write to Valerie, 393 Port Hills Rd, or telephone (03) 332 7456.



Joel (left) and Sam McChesney birdwatching on a KCC trip to the Estuary with members of the Ornithological Society.

GREENAGER ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

The Greenager Award is presented five times each year to young people up to the age of 18 who have made a personal contribution towards the protection or enhancement of our natural environment.

The award can be presented to an individual, environment committee, class or school throughout the Canterbury Region. Since 1994, it has been jointly sponsored by the Bodyshop, the Canterbury Regional Council and the Christchurch Press – Newspaper In Education Department. Nominations can be posted to Tanya Jenkins, Greenager Award Co-ordinator, PO Box 12056 in Christchurch, Phone/fax (03) 332 0099.

1998 recipients were:

March – Waikuku School

Project "Seaweed Studies". Over one term the entire school focused activities on the marine environment. Activities included a beach litter clean up and survey, guest speakers, estuary fieldtrips, visit to Christchurch Aquarium and a sea creature dress parade.

May – Wainoni School

Project "Vegetable Garden". Pupils are encouraged and

taught how to grow vegetables. Hands-on planting and harvesting activities as well as nutrition studies are undertaken. All pupils planted flower bulbs as a school ground enhancement project.

July – Roanna Stewart (Rangi Ruru Girls School)

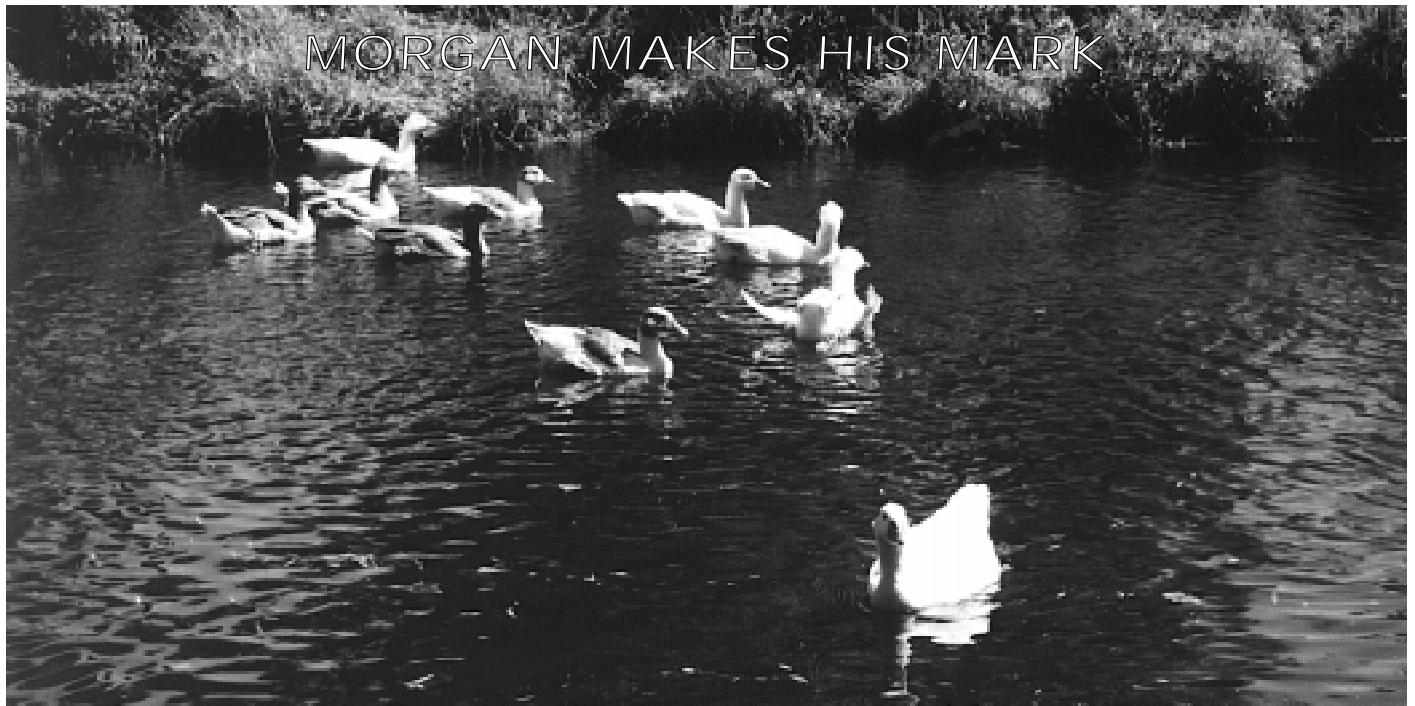
Environment Committee Co-ordinator involved in encouraging the school to become involved in recycling projects, litter collection activities and raising funds to assist Kiwi Conservation schemes.

September – Sacred Heart School

Establishing a native tree nursery, gardening and school ground maintenance projects, paper recycling and comprehensive environmental studies.

November – Clare Grater (Hagley Community College)

Project "Clean Up the World". Clare organised students and teachers to clear parts of Hagley Park of litter as part of a hands on litter awareness experience. The project involved gaining sponsorship plus media coverage to involve wider public participation.



First there was Morgan – alias Mortimer, Snowflake and Shirley.

The large white goose, who arrived one day on the banks of the Heathcote, showed no signs of an identity crisis. Looking regal and fastidiously groomed, he soon became an important presence in the landscape.

Seasons passed. Each summer he adopted a family of ducklings and watched them vigilantly till they could fly to safety. All seemed to survive under his guardianship.

Morgan showed no inclination to take off. Then last spring two brown geese flew in and joined him. There was general satisfaction in the community - Morgan had company. And

didn't they make a striking trio.

Soon two nests appeared, then seven yellow fluffy goslings. Again Morgan took up guard duty as scores of passers by stopped to check their progress and empty bags of bread on the grass.

The goslings flourished. Now 10 geese cruise majestically along the tidal waters of the Heathcote – some taupe coloured, some white and some an attractive mix. More often than not Morgan is at the helm.

It has been a special summer. As for next spring, that's another chapter.

Jennie Hamilton

UNDERSTANDING THE RMA

Are you still grappling with the subtleties of the Resource Management Act 1991? The good news is that the Christchurch Community Law Centre has produced five booklets dealing with different aspects of resource management in New Zealand.

The bad news (for those still trying to comprehend the legislation) is that the RMA looks set to be amended this year.

Proposed changes include removing social and economic considerations from the definition of "environment".

According to Minister for the Environment Simon Upton, commissioners will make more resource management decisions, currently dealt with mainly by territorial council committees. The Minister has also signalled changes to the timing and format of hearings to increase public involvement.

These and other planned changes are outlined in the booklet *Proposals for Amendment to the Resource Management Act* available from the Ministry for the Environment.

To understand the current situation though, try reading the educational booklets produced by the Christchurch

Community Law Centre's Resource Management Service:

Booklet One The *Resource Management Act 1991*: Plans and Policy Statements

Booklet Two The *Resource Management Act 1991*: The Resource Consent Process

Booklet Three Land Use Legislation and the *Resource Management Act 1991*

Booklet Four Conservation Legislation and the *Resource Management Act 1991*

Booklet Five The *Resource Management Act 1991* and other Natural Resource Legislation

The booklets explain complex legislation in a manner that people with no specialist knowledge of the law can understand. The question and answer format, sketches and cartoons, and clear language make the booklets user friendly.

The booklets are available in sets of five only. They can be purchased for \$10 per set direct from Sandra Preston at the Law Centre, PO Box 2912, Christchurch, telephone (03) 366 6870, fax (03) 366 6631.

WARDENS HELP CARE FOR OUR CITY PARKS AND RIVERS

At least twice daily John and Jenny Hoskin check the Edmonds Factory Gardens in Ferry Road to make sure the tranquil, picturesque reserve hasn't been scarred by vandals and graffiti louts.

They are honorary wardens, part of a 209-strong army of dedicated volunteers who help Council rangers and trade waste officers preserve and protect our parks, rivers and foreshore.

Acting as the eyes and ears of the Council, their main job is educate and observe, passing on information about those who flout laws and by-laws. However some wardens, including John and Jenny Hoskin, adopt a more hands-on approach. For example they routinely paint over or rub out graffiti as soon as it appears in their patch to reduce the number of further attacks.

"Okay, the constant battle against graffiti is a bit frustrating, but we're not going to let them win," says Jenny.

The couple have a leading role in the Friends of Edmonds Factory Gardens – John is President – and both have been wardens for several years. Other wardens in the area also keep an eye on the gardens and public spaces generally.

With the help of supportive neighbours, an effective watch system operates. In the past wardens have contacted police to pass on registration plate numbers of vehicles belonging to visitors causing a nuisance or stealing roses. Two \$50 "donations" have been received by the Friends.

As the size of sections shrinks, many people from the surrounding community enjoy visiting the spacious reserve in the former grounds of the demolished Edmonds baking powder factory. A tourist bus stops at the gardens, and many wedding photos are taken there. "We want to keep the place looking well kept and clean so people want to come here," said Jenny. "Everyone has a responsibility to preserve things for those coming after us."

Warden Barry Saunders has become a familiar sight at Washington Skatepark every Saturday and Sunday. His priority is to make sure the park is safe for the younger skateboarders who flock there. "It's like a family park during

the weekends – it's quietened down a lot now," says Barry a former karate instructor who is trained in first aid.

Nearby in Opawa, another warden sets out early each morning armed with a rubbish bag to walk the banks of the Heathcote River between Beckford Road and the Opawa footbridge downstream.

A warden for about 10 years, his main objective is to check that the river and its banks are clean. That means picking up rubbish and painting out graffiti. He has also helped Council staff fish out a double mattress and a sackful of stolen pharmacy drugs from the Heathcote.

He is modest about his role: "If you're going for a walk you might as well be doing something."

Ali Taylor-Hayhurst of the Council's Parks Unit says increased recreational use of walkways and parks puts pressure on the natural environment. Reporting of deliberate vandalism and damage is very important to protect our public spaces. "Wardens also have a major role in education of the public about fragile areas where plants are regenerating or wildlife is nesting or has feeding grounds," she says.

Park rangers or trade waste officers are available round the clock for reports and inquiries regarding offences or problems needing further investigation,

surveillance or back up.

The City's honorary wardens, who carry a warrant of appointment issued by the City Council, include 149 members of the public, 36 Community Board members and 24 Councillors.

Councillors and Community Board members are appointed automatically upon election to office. Other wardens volunteer or are nominated by residents' groups, Council officers or other wardens.

If you are interested in becoming an honorary warden please contact Ali Taylor-Hayhurst at the Parks Unit, or telephone her on 371 1633.

Jennie Hamilton



Jenny and John Hoskin remove graffiti from a seat in the Edmonds Factory Gardens.

NATIVE TREES PLEASE! REVIVES PAST

Creating a living museum of plant life and associated ecosystems, which once flourished on Christchurch floodplains, is the aim of Native Trees Please! a Turning Point 2000 project.

Organisers intend establishing a unique native tree grove in each Community Board area, using one dominant species with appropriate companion planting.

Project convenor Neiel Drain said various sites, all on Council reserves, were being studied to determine physical boundaries and to co-ordinate planting with other planned development. Appropriate tree species for each site have been ordered. The total number of trees required city wide is approximately 12,000.

Key information has been drawn from the City Council's Agenda 21 project undertaken by Lucas Associates. In this study the land surfaces of Christchurch were mapped for their approximate age, soil development and drainage. By examining surviving remnants and historic accounts, the natural mature vegetation/ecosystem for each area was reconstructed as a guide for restoration. Plant lists, including trees, shrubs, scramblers and ground covers, were then compiled for each of the ten original indigenous ecosystems.

A key factor in the success of this project is securing the full support of the Council's Community Boards and also the interest and support of the wider community, including local schools. All Boards have been kept informed of progress and most have pledged funding support for the project. School representatives were also involved in the early planning and further contact will be made with schools to enlist their involvement nearer the time of planting.

Native Trees Please! aims to provide valuable educational resources for schools as well as developing Christchurch's landscape heritage for present and future generations.



NURSERY OPEN DAY



Motukarara Nursery will hold its annual Open Day on 18 April. This year's theme will be "Planting for Survival".

Nursery Manager Jorge Santos says it is important to plant natives, not only for the plants' survival but also for the survival of ecosystems and wildlife. "By choosing the appropriate species for the area, plantings have a greater chance of survival, which is what we try to encourage here," he says. "The Open Day is an opportunity to gain an understanding of the whole process of choosing plants and using the right techniques."

Guest speaker Isobel Gabites will speak about native gardens, and Coast Care and Travis Wetland representatives have been invited to give talks and demonstrations throughout the day.

As well as selling a large selection of plants, there will be information booths set up by several organisations including Forest and Bird, Canterbury Regional Council, Christchurch City Council Water Services, the Christchurch Environment Centre, Agenda 21, Addington Bush Society, and the Historic Places Trust. Refreshments will be available. See you all there!

GLENMORE HOUSE - A COLONIAL SURVIVOR

Glenmore House was notified for demolition in 1996. Public protest and a willing developer led to the dwelling's retention within a new subdivision. However it has been the foresight, determination and dedication of current owner Lolly Fairweather which has ensured that this interesting example of our colonial heritage will pass safely through to the next millennium.

A large two storey residence with wide verandahs on two façades, elegant French doors and a low sweeping roof line, *Glenmore* has now been restored and transformed internally to reflect features of its colonial past.

The restoration revealed that most of the flooring and door frames are solid kauri. As a result kauri, recycled from the former Cave Rock Hotel in Sumner and Ashburton Freezing Works, was carefully selected for use in the new wing. This has created a common denominator which has allowed the new wing to comfortably integrate with earlier parts of the house.

The new wing abuts the original first floor through the addition of another stairway to the original stairway. This has created a degree of grandeur to the original staircase, which still continues to rise in a single sweep from the ground floor but now turns at right angles on the first landing to create two staircases.

Other interior features include a drawing room with an elegant, white marble fire surround, spacious living and dining rooms with high studs and detailed ceilings and a fully restored 'colonial kitchen'.

The property was originally purchased in 1851 by the

Canterbury Association's legal adviser Henry Selfe,¹ who built a single storey residence on the site. It was not until after 1865, when the property was purchased by J B Acland, that the two storey dwelling which comprises *Glenmore* was built.² J A Hendry notes that this dwelling "...either replaced part of an existing house, or was an addition to one, for the attics of the single storey structure [were] lined with newspapers dating 1857."³

In 1863 Selfe sold the property to Major Henry Scott of the 12th Lancers. It was he who named the property *Glenmore*. Scott, who is remembered as the founder of the Canterbury Volunteers, sold *Glenmore* to J B Acland in 1865. Though Acland, whose interests lay in South Canterbury, built the substantial dwelling that set the current, albeit eclectic, architectural form of *Glenmore*, it is probable that he only used the property as his town residence.

By the turn of the century the dwelling was in use as the manager's residence for the Glenmore Brick and Tile Company and remained so until 1942. The brickworks were then taken over by Aldersons of Dunedin, later a subsidiary of McSkimming Industries. The house was sold to R T Thompson and remained, until 1996, within this family.

The large, eight-bedroomed house now functions as a homestay. Aided by this new use, the Fairweathers' careful restoration and sympathetic redevelopment of the 2584m² site it now occupies, has ensured that *Glenmore* will continue to remain a significant Port Hills landmark.

Jenny May



¹ G Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch*, p.113.

² Ogilvie states that the first house was built for Selfe by John Cordy for £100. (Ogilvie, op.cit., p.113.)

³ A J Mair and J A Hendry *The Homes of the Pioneers*, 1968, no18.

WORLD WATER DAY

World Water Day is on Monday 22 March.

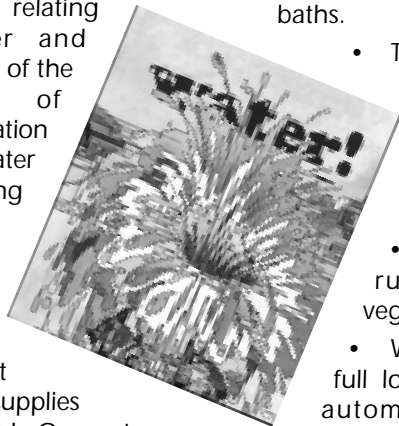
Initiated by a United Nations General Assembly resolution, the first World Water Day was observed on 22 March 1993.

Aims of this annual event include addressing problems relating to drinking water and increasing awareness of the importance of conservation, preservation and protection of water resources and drinking water supply.

How you can conserve water

Christchurch has one of the highest quality natural water supplies of any city in the world. Our water is purified naturally in underground aquifers. It is not chemically purified.

In Christchurch about 25 per cent of water supplied by the City is used outside the home, much of it in our gardens and parks. The remaining 75 per cent is used inside dwellings where large appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines account for significant amounts of water used. About one fifth of total household water consumption is used for toilet flushing.



Worsening drought conditions this summer have highlighted the need for us to conserve our water.

Some of the ways you can use less water are:

- Check pipes and taps for leaks.
- Take short showers rather than big baths.
- Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth.
- Use smaller flushes in toilets (you can buy flush savers from the City Council).
- Don't let the tap run while peeling vegetables.
- Wait until you have a full load before using your automatic dishwasher or washing machine.
- Water your garden in the evening or early morning to reduce evaporation.
- Water your garden by hand and only when necessary.
- Cover exposed soil around plants with a mulch.
- Use "non thirsty" plants such as the rowan tree, silk tree, rockrose, lavender and rosemary.

Jennie Hamilton

DESIGN GUIDE FOR LARGE BUILDINGS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

New rest homes and nursing homes are springing up in residential areas around the City. These homes and other communal living arrangements, such as hostels, often require large buildings which can be difficult to accommodate among traditional suburban houses.

A draft design guide has therefore been prepared to assist owners, designers and developers when proposing a larger than average building in a residential neighbourhood.

The first part of the guide identifies elements that make up the character of Christchurch suburbs such as the standard section size, one and two storey buildings, and a predominance of greenery. New buildings need to be designed to respect this character.

Part Two works through aspects to be considered when designing a new large building. The size, shape and height of the building, the position on the section, the retention of trees and shrubbery and the impact of the proposed building on adjoining properties are all important considerations. Careful attention to these aspects can help ensure that a large building respects both the street scene and neighbours.

Copies of the draft *Large Buildings in Lower Density Living Zones Design Guide* are available from the Environmental Policy and Planning Unit.

Janet Reeves

A GREEN LIST

'When the well runs dry, we know the worth of water'. So says Ben Franklin and it is an opinion we might wisely take notice of. Knowledge is an important component of 'knowing the worth' of anything and you can find out more about water at your library. Here is some of the material available.

On the track of water's secret by Hans Kronberger (553.7 KRO)

The Greenpeace book of water by Klaus Lanz (553.7 LAN)

Ocean by Miranda Macquitty (578.77 MCQ)

Rivers by Terry Jennings (551.48 JEN)

Seachange : a message of the oceans by Sylvia Earle (333.916 EAR)

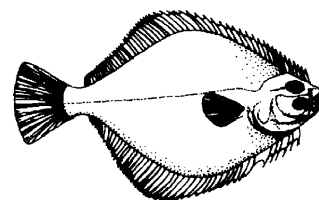
The Times Atlas and Encyclopedia of the sea (551.46 TIM) Reference only

Water and architecture by Charles Moore (714 MOO)

The water wizard : the extraordinary power of natural water by Viktor Schauberger (553.7 SCH)

Waterway enhancement : an introduction to enhancing the streams, creeks and channelised waterways of Christchurch (333.914 WAT) free video

Waters of New Zealand (551.48 WAT)



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