



# Our Environment

Christchurch City Council's Environmental Newsletter

## STRATEGIC THRUST TO REVIVE THE CITY'S HEART

A river promenade along the Avon, more tree-lined streets and distinctive communities are among ideas suggested to revive the Central City.

The ideas are included in a City Council document aimed at stimulating discussion leading to the development of a Central City strategy.

This follows a major push by Mayor Garry Moore and the Christchurch City Council to revitalise the heart of our City. A Central City Mayoral Forum has been meeting regularly to generate ideas and, along with a proposed Central City Board, will spearhead the campaign. Both need a clear direction for the future of the Central City.

Initial feedback from the *City Scene* in August suggests many people would like to see a more interesting Central City area with more people living and playing there. They want more activities including cultural events, a greater range of shopping and commercial opportunities, more attractive and accessible streets, and a safer place to be at night.

The latest residents' survey commissioned by the City Council revealed that 61 per cent of people feel unsafe after dark in the Central City. Noise complaints have increased 170 per cent since 1991 and the volume of traffic continues to increase steadily. Infill development has prompted concerns about lack of privacy, building heights and loss of trees and gardens.

At the same time residents who made non-work trips into the Central City increased by 72 per cent between 1991 and 1999. Sixty five per cent of people who visited the heart of Christchurch were satisfied or very satisfied with what the area offered, according to this year's survey of residents. One of the largest commercial areas in New Zealand, the Central City provides opportunities for improving use of existing commercial areas and greater centralisation.

Project manager Dr Mark Bachels says the Central City strategy is intended to link Council activities and private

to P2 ➡

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**CHRISTCHURCH**

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development opportunities, provide incentives and reduce barriers to revitalisation. Most importantly, it will establish direction, leadership and vision for priority projects over the next 25 years.

But first the Council needs Christchurch people to say what they would like to see in the Central City. One idea is for more activities, improvements and attractions along the Avon River. The document points out that the concept of an extended river promenade has been successfully introduced in a number of Cities to provide distinct attractions and sites along the river to visit, socialise, eat and generally spend time.

The discussion document also identifies 10 neighbourhoods or precincts in the Central City: Victoria, St Mary's, Avon, Worcestor, Merchant, Latimer, Oxford, South, High and East. It aims to stimulate thinking about how we can create more recognisable communities and diversity within the Central City by developing specific themes or projects.

Most of the City's recent success stories such as Worcester Boulevard and the Arts Centre, Victoria Square and The "Strip" have been in the Central City west of Colombo Street. The discussion document asks whether areas east of Colombo Street should be given higher priority for revitalisation.

Pleasant streets are critical for a healthy Central City. Comprising about 40 per cent of our public space, streets provide tremendous scope for improvements, says Dr Bachel's.



Suggestions so far include more public art, wider footpaths, better street lighting, more trees and improved crossing points. The document seeks feedback on how pedestrian linkages could be improved within the Central City. More specifically, it also wants to know whether people support

significantly more tree planting on some Central City streets. It also seeks ideas on transport and parking improvements.

It points out that the Central City has the highest concentration of commercial, civic and public heritage buildings in Christchurch. These buildings contribute to the City's unique character and give it a special sense of "place". The discussion document asks what relevance our built heritage has as the City grows and changes to meet current and future needs? If we want to retain our heritage buildings how can we make the best use of them and what incentives might be pursued for reusing them in the next 30 years?

It also asks private developers and land owners what barriers currently exist to project development in our Central City and what incentives or opportunities should be explored to enhance private development?

The Mayor and Central City Forum plan to discuss ideas with members of the community at

meetings and workshops over the next few months and analyse written submissions.

You can send in your ideas to Mark Bachel's, Project Manager, Central City Revitalisation, at the City Council Offices.

**Jennie Hamilton**

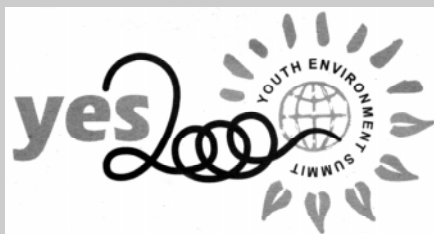
## YOUTH ENVIRONMENT SUMMIT WITH AN INTERNATIONAL FLAVOUR

Local 16-18 year olds will be joined by students from as far away as Japan, Nepal and Bangladesh at the Youth Environment Summit at Lincoln University from 19-24 November.

The young people taking part in the millennium initiative will learn about and share ideas on environmental issues facing societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

They will attend lectures on topics including *What have we done to the biosphere?* and *Priorities for action*. The young environmentalists will also go on a field trip to Rakaia Gorge and Mt Somers station, take part in practical sessions such as rescuing marine mammals, and have fun at various social activities.

YES 2000 is an international version of the university's successful EnviroSchool held every two years since 1990.



The summit's main objectives include:

- Developing an understanding of sustainability as the key to a healthy global environment;
- Adopting a positive outlook, emphasising that environmental problems can be solved with a united approach to resource use and environmental protection;
- To promote international co-operation and partnership in science, ethics and action for a healthy global environment.

The seminar costs \$375, with some sponsorship help available through Rotary Clubs. For details about the summit contact the YES 2000 Administrator

Ph (03) 325 2811

E-mail: [yes@lincoln.ac.nz](mailto:yes@lincoln.ac.nz)

# LINWOOD SCHOOL'S GOT THE RIGHT IDEA

What's the big idea? Make that ideas, judging by the great response to the City Council's campaign to encourage school pupils to think of ways to help our community.

Linwood Intermediate School pupils were among City students who discussed what they could do. They decided that Linwood Cemetery was in need of a clean-up. Not only did they persuade the Hagley/Ferryroad Community Board to put remedial maintenance for the cemetery on the Council's agenda but they decided to take matters into their own hands.

Robert Prescott and Mathew Willoughby wrote to *Our Environment* to explain how they are making the cemetery a more pleasant place.

*About once a month, seven students from Linwood Intermediate School go down to the Linwood Cemetery. We clean off the graffiti, plant flowers, weed the plots and spread the shingle to make the cemetery a better-looking place.*

*All over the cemetery there are broken and smashed head stones*



*scattered over the area, weeds, bushes and even trees covering every inch of the plots.*

*Graffiti in several places including the paths, leaning head-stones that could hurt passer-by, cracked footpaths, rubbish blowing around the place, broken glass shattered throughout the plots are all problems.*

*Our aim for the future is to clean up the cemetery and make it look a nicer place for the people who walk through it, pass by or come to visit for special reasons.*

*If your school has had a Big Idea, write and tell us about it.*



*Pupils from Linwood Intermediate School - making a difference in the community*

## GRAVEYARD PROMPTS TALES OF THE PAST

William "Cabbage" Wilson is just one of the colourful characters of early Christchurch buried in Linwood Cemetery. He died in 1897, aged 78.

Arriving before the First Four Ships, Wilson established various nurseries, was first Mayor of Christchurch in 1868 and founded the New Brighton Tramway Company. The names Wilsons Road and Nursery Road, once Wilson's Nursery Road, are a lasting reminder of the man once considered "the richest man in Christchurch". He also had a dark side and his wife Elizabeth successfully applied to the courts for protection.

Wilson's nickname "Cabbage" was derived from the appearance of his hats, according to librarian and genealogist Richard Greenaway, who guides tours through Linwood and other cemeteries during Heritage Week. The name was used to differentiate him from people such

as Rev James "Parson" Wilson and Sir John Cracroft "Nabob" Wilson.

City benefactor Thomas John Edmonds is also buried in the cemetery. Famous for his baking powder factory in Ferry Road and "Sure-to-Rise" logo, he donated several City landmarks, including the Edmonds Band Rotunda, to the citizens of Christchurch. Other interred notables include explorer Arthur Dudley Dobson, pioneer horsewoman Bella Button, John Etherden Coker, colourful founder of Coker's Hotel, and Effie Cardale, an early social worker.

The City and cemetery were once linked by a tramline and even a tramway hearse, which was shunned by locals and never used.

Richard Greenaway's next tour of Linwood Cemetery will be at noon, Saturday 14 October, during Carter Group Heritage Week.

# BEXLEY WETLANDS RESTORATION PROJECT

Bexley Wetlands, with its freshwater springs, salt marsh, mudflats, birds and fish, is slowly being transformed – back to its original state. Development of the largely unused grazing paddocks situated between Bexley Road and the Avon River began in April last year, when the Bexley Wetlands Trust was formed.

One of the Trust's aims is to foster community and school input and increase public awareness of this area through involvement and education. Regular community planting days are organised by the Trust and Christchurch City Council. Plants are supplied by the Council, or donated by Trees for Canterbury, in conjunction with The Warehouse chain.

A draft development plan being produced by the City Council's Parks Unit will be released for public comment later this month. One of the biggest concerns is how to deal with the old scrap metal recovery yard. This ceased to operate in the 1970s but contaminants still remain.

Although Bexley Wetland is reverting to its natural state, it still has a long way to go and needs every bit of help and support it can get. If you would like to contribute to the establishment of this valuable wildlife habitat, you can get involved in community planting days or offer financial support. To find out about working parties and other events, and be kept informed of progress at the wetland, contact Mia Colberts, of the Bexley Wetland Trust



*Conservation Week was celebrated in late July with a planting near the new Wairoa St car park. Approximately 50 people arrived with shovels in hand, and planted 1000 trees.*



# COMMUNITY GARDENS REDUCE LANDFILL WASTE

Composted kitchen scraps used in the City's community gardens is reducing the volume of organic waste dumped in the Burwood Landfill and helping to build a sense of community.

Last year's trial, involving four gardens, was so successful that the Christchurch City Council has earmarked \$50,000 for the Community Garden Project.

It has also told those involved in the project that they can use a large plot of land beside the Linwood Service Centre for more gardens. The land was formerly part of the Council's Linwood Nursery.

Sue Wilkinson, the Practical Resource Co-ordinator at the nearby Linwood Resource Centre, is delighted with the extra land for community gardens. "It will give all the groups involved a chance to work closely together," she says.

Their centre was involved in the trial. "It worked really well. About 20 people brought their scraps in weekly and later took away the compost."

At present the centre is receiving about 12 to 13 buckets of scraps a week to compost for its community garden. People working in the gardens have first pick of the vegetables.

Sue says the aim of the garden is to help people become more self sufficient within themselves, foster community spirit and pass on knowledge and information to each other.

The four gardens involved in the pilot project - in Linwood



*Sue Wilkinson and others in the Linwood Resource Centre Team*

Avenue, Pages Road, Strickland Street and Surrey Street - were originally set up by community groups wanting to grow vegetables for the local community. The Council's Waste Unit began working with them to help reduce the amount of organic waste sent to the landfill.

Kitchen and garden waste currently makes up almost half the waste currently collected in black Council rubbish bags and 65 per cent of waste in wheelie bins and 44 gallon drums.

Solid Waste Engineer Eric Park says disposal of organic

waste in landfills causes problems because it breaks down and creates leachate and gas. "This stuff needs to be composted to get the benefits," he says. "Diverting the waste through these projects is just one of the ways we can all make a real difference to help the environment."

During the trial, an average of 3-5kg per week of kitchen waste was collected from each of the 45 households involved and composted in the four gardens over three months.

The University of Canterbury's recycling section is planning to start a community garden on campus. Each of the Council's six Community Boards is being asked to foster at least one community garden in its area. It is hoped that these initiatives will encourage similar gardens to spring up all round the City.

## TI KOUKA WHENUA - A SYMBOL OF OUR CITY AND A NEW WEB SITE

[www.ccc.govt.nz/Library/TiKoukaWhenua/](http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Library/TiKoukaWhenua/)

A new web site is helping internet users discover the Maori cultural heritage of Christchurch and Canterbury.

Ti Kouka Whenua provides information and photographs relating to 50 significant local sites. The information can be accessed through an interactive map or through an alphabetical list. It is an educational tool that fills a gap in local Maori history resources. Only basic computer knowledge is required to explore the site, which will continue to expand.

Significance of the name of the web site *Ti kouka* (cabbage trees) were prized by the Maori of Te Wai Pounamu. Important as navigational markers, the trees produced strong fibre favoured for fishing. Their kouru or new shoots were an important source of protein in an area where



kumara was difficult, if not impossible, to grow.

*Whenua* (land) is a highly valued resource for Maori; it represents the heart of Maori culture, steeped in stories that record the histories of the Mana Whenua of Aotearoa. The growth pattern of the ti kouka mirrors the concept of whakapapa and the connectedness of tribal and local history. Our ancestors are closer to us than we may think. The land around us is imbued with their histories. While we cannot go back, we can learn from those who were here before us. Our present is formed out of our past. In turn, our future is born of our present.

Whaia te Matauranga - seek the knowledge.

**Haneta Pierce**

Maori Resources and Services Librarian,  
Christchurch City Libraries

# CAR PARKING STRATEGY



The City Council has received more than 200 submissions from the public as it forges ahead with plans to develop a City-wide car parking strategy.

Nearly half of the submitters were concerned about parking in the Central City. Some were worried about a shortfall of short term parking in this area, while others focused on parking in inner city residential areas. Another key issue raised was parking for sports grounds, such as Hagley Park, schools and residential areas.

Possible solutions to City parking problems suggested by submitters ranged from simply providing more parking to meet the demand to discouraging vehicle use and promoting alternative modes of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport. Other solutions included park and ride schemes, banning vehicles from the Central City, providing bus priority lanes and maximum parking requirements for developments. Many

submissions asked for changes to the structure of parking charges.

Submitters recognised that parking policies were clearly linked with other transport issues including public transport use and traffic congestion.

The Council is setting up small advisory groups to help it investigate the issues and work towards preparing a draft strategy. The final strategy will provide a framework of policies, providing the Council with a consistent approach to parking. Covering the whole of the City, it will address issues relating to both on street and off street parking.

The final strategy will sit alongside other Council transport strategies - the Cycle Strategy, Public Transport Strategy, Road Safety Strategy and Pedestrian Strategy - to form part of an overall Transport Strategy for the City.

**Anna McKaskell**

## MORE THAN 100 EVENTS DURING HERITAGE WEEK

Whether it's climbing old towers, digging up history, relaxing walks or a lively debate, Carter Group Heritage Week will give Christchurch people a chance to explore their heritage from all angles. The 100 plus events, between 13 and 20 October, will also pave the way for Canterbury's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in December.

Taking the Past into the Future is the theme of Heritage Week, which will include a one-day seminar, open days, lectures, walks, bus tours, exhibitions and musical entertainment. It will also feature traditional craft demonstrations and provide opportunities to visit some of the City's historic homes.

The Christchurch Heritage Trust City Landmark Children's Competition is another Heritage Week event. Winners will be announced in the Stone Chamber of the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings on Tuesday 17 October at 1.30pm.

One of the week's highlights will be the debate: *Gothic and Godley or Concrete and Crusaders? That the Canterbury Association's vision for Christchurch has failed.* A merciless probe into the very fabric of our society will be spearheaded by columnist Joe Bennett, Mayor Garry Moore and Councillor Paddy Austin. Defending our fair City will be the Dean of Christchurch, the Very Reverend John Bluck, the Vice Chancellor of Canterbury University Daryl Le Grew and entertainer Janice Gray. Chairman and law lecturer David Round will maintain order.

In the one-day seminar at Ferrymead Historic Park, speakers from key organisations including the Government, the NZ Historic Places Trust, Christchurch City Council, University of Canterbury, Canterbury Museum and Robert McDougall Art Gallery, discuss how they are adapting to the needs of the new millennium while remaining committed to protecting and showcasing our heritage. The evolution of the City's public transport system will also be explored just

weeks before the opening of the new bus exchange.

The week's programme will be delivered to homes with the Christchurch Star on 27 September. It will also be available from the Arts Centre, City Council libraries and service centres or see [www.ccc.govt.nz/heritage/week/](http://www.ccc.govt.nz/heritage/week/). Ph 332-3254 or 025 331 085 for details.



## HEREFORD STREET OFFICES RISE PHEONIX-LIKE FROM THE ASHES

Like the proverbial phoenix, the handsome little late Edwardian building at 167 Hereford Street has literally risen from the ashes and now, completely (and lovingly) restored, it is assured of a permanent place in the architectural heritage of this City.

On 31 December 1996, the building, known as Americano's at the time, was badly damaged by fire. Boarded up and left to the elements over the next three years, the future of the building looked grim. New co-owner Mike Pero states: "Like many other pedestrians in the area I wondered what was to become of the site ... so what if it was 'slightly tarnished' by flame marks ....surely it wasn't ready to be bulldozed. It had stood there for almost 100 years! I for one could not stand aside and watch this happen." Mike said he saw a real challenge and an opportunity to buy some prime heritage real estate in the inner City.

167 Hereford Street was built around 1910. The building appears to have functioned as a later office addition to the 1880's building to the rear. Site history reveals that Wood Mowing and Reaping Machine Company and the Mercantile Finance Company had operated from this site in the 1880s. By 1911 The Royal Exchange Assurance Company and the New Zealand Plate Glass Insurance Company were based here. It is probably at about this date that the Hereford Street building was erected. The building was later occupied by the law firm J A Flesher. The principal of the firm, James Arthur Flesher was Mayor of Christchurch between

1923-25. The firm continued as a family firm with James' son Hubert and in turn Hubert's son Roger.

When erected the building, of brick construction with limestone detailing, would have made a handsome neighbour to W B Armson's Renaissance-style National Bank Building also constructed in brick with limestone detailing. The latter building, despite public opposition, was sadly demolished in 1982.

Mike Pero and Gavin Cook purchased 167 Hereford Street in the December of 1999, complete he says, "...with embers and ashes" and in January 2000 began the task of conservation and restoration. From the beginning Mike, who admits to being a little naive as to the finer points of heritage

profiles.

Conscious of combining the needs of modern office requirements and retaining the heritage aesthetic, Mike has reconfigured some of the interior space. This has been successfully achieved with an interesting blend of 'old' and 'new'. Careful interior planning has enabled a dual use of the building to encompass both Mike's business and a cafe at ground floor level.

Aware of conservation issues, Mike has carefully documented the restoration process with a photographic and video record. He has also established a web site documenting the project - [www.mikepero.co.nz/restoration](http://www.mikepero.co.nz/restoration).

The project, as Mike states, "provided a stream of challenges - it was more costly and time consuming than I could have imagined." He is, however, quick to add: "What we have achieved has made it all worthwhile - the personal satisfaction is overwhelming."

Sitting with Mike in his elegant office and boardroom, furnished with carefully selected period pieces and prints, as he described the

restoration process, was a heritage planner's delight; one can't help being affected by the pride and enthusiasm he exudes in not only saving this building but in being part of the revitalisation of inner City heritage.

**Jenny May**  
Senior Heritage Planner



building conservation, sought the advice of the Council's heritage planners and immediately found himself on a steep learning curve. While the exterior façade was essentially only scorched, much of the interior had been extensively damaged. Where possible all original material such as the original timber flooring has been restored. Materials fire damaged beyond reuse have been recreated to the original

# ACTION ON AIRPORT NOISE AND LAND USE

The City Council is moving to tighten up controls on residential development near the airport. Variation 52 introduces new wording in the Proposed Plan, which will bolster existing policies aimed at protecting the airport from urban housing development.

The variation has two parts:

- Strengthening an existing policy to discourage residential subdivision inside the 50 Ldn dBA noise contour.
- Adding a new policy to ensure that the airport controls the amount of

noise generated from its activities. Impetus for the variation came from the Environment Court following a declaration that some amendments made to the plan as a result of submissions were beyond the scope of those submissions.

Senior Planner Ivan Thomson admits that the controls are more onerous than those suggested in the New Zealand Standards. However, he says that these standards are not binding and Councils are free to impose tougher controls if they can be justified.

"The world is littered with airports that have either had to be shut down, moved or have restricted operations because of weak action by local planning authorities. It would be a tragedy for the City and Canterbury Region if this happened to Christchurch International Airport."

Mr Thomson says this variation focuses on urban encroachment. Other policies and rules already in place aim to limit rural dwellings around the airport.

The variation was publicly notified on 2 August 2000 and hearings are likely to be set down towards the beginning of December.



## NEW PUBLICATION FOR SCHOOLS

Water bodies including rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, aquifers and wetlands are the subject of a new environmental resource for schools, *Your Environment Canterbury*.

The publication, to be published twice yearly by Environment Canterbury, aims to focus on one aspect of the environment at a time so it can be used for a topical study. The first issue describes the various types of water bodies and why we should value them for future generations

Education co-ordinator Anna Norris is also willing to send out additional information to schools or visit classes to speak about issues raised in each publication. She can be contacted at

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P.O. Box 345, Christchurch  
Phone: (03) 365 3828  
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e-mail: [anna.norris@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:anna.norris@ecan.govt.nz)  
<http://www.ecan.govt.nz>

## A GREEN LIST

It's easy to get overwhelmed with the enormity of issues like global warming, the population explosion and shortage of resources and despair of finding solutions. Faced with such large and complex problems how can we plan for a sustainable future? In this issue we have drawn together a list of books that explore some of the options.

**Gods last offer: negotiating for a sustainable future** by Ayres (Ed) (333.72 AYR)

**The ecology of commerce: a declaration of sustainability** by Paul Hawken (658.408 HAW)

**Greening environmental policy: the politics of a sustainable future** (363.7GRE)

**Financing change: the financial community, eco-efficiency and sustainable development** by Stephen Schmidheiny (332.1068 SCH)

**The natural wealth of nations: harnessing the market for the environment** by David Roodman (333.7 ROO)

**Sustainable agriculture** by John Morgan (631.58 MAS)

**Sustainable energy: options for New Zealand** by Dai Redshaw (333.79 RED)

**Sustainable forest management** by I S Ferguson (333.75 FER)

**When two worlds collide: society and ecology** by Klaus Bosselmann (333.7 BOSS)



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