



Report **05.293**
Date 17 June 2005
File Env/15/3/9

Committee **Environment**
Author **John Holmes Section Leader, Policy Advice**

Project Kaiwharawhara

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee about various environmental enhancement initiatives taking place in the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment.

2. Background

During the past 5 years, a number of work programmes have been operating in the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment, in Wellington. These include support for two Take Care projects, community water quality testing, the development of an information kit for the catchment, landscaping and stream habitat improvements at the lower end of the stream and at its estuary, and surveys of the water quality and ecological values of the stream. Some signage has been erected explaining certain parts of this work, and how it fits together as a more holistic approach to managing an urban catchment.

Greater Wellington has provided funding and officer support for much of this work, but there has also been significant support from the Parks and Gardens Department of Wellington City Council. The collaboration between the two Councils has been complemented by several community groups also coming together to work in a more integrated way throughout the catchment.

Greater Wellington and WCC have convened a series of quarterly meetings of all the groups involved with environmental care in the catchment. The groups principally include the Trelissick Park and Ngaio Gorge Working Group (representing several residents' associations and interest groups), the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary Trust, the Ngaio Progressive Association, and the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

There are smaller groups too that work in the area, including the Bell's Track Working Group, the Silverstream Road Group and Project Podocarp. Other related initiatives are a recent "Weedbusters" project in Ngaio, and seven volunteer water quality testing teams that regularly supply monitoring information to GW (much of which is now on the GW website).

During 2004-2005, Khandallah School undertook the Take Action for Water self-guided programme, testing the health of Tyers Stream in Khandallah Park. The teacher has noted that when the class goes to the park for a picnic, students are now reluctant to play in the stream for fear of damaging stream life! Khandallah School received a bronze Enviroschool award in December 2004.

Otari school pupils, who were involved in the pilot programme for Take Action, rejoined the programme this year as a guided school. For the first time, students were testing the health of Kaiwharawhara stream at Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, and comparing their findings with the same stream as it ran through Otari Wilton's bush. As part of their action plan, students grow native seedlings in their shade house and will plant these alongside members of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust.

Additional tree planting by students on sites in the Otari-Wilton's Bush Care Group project area has taken place on Arbor Day in 2002 and 2003

3. Project Kaiwharawhara

While operating independently in their own right, all of these groups and members of the community water quality testing teams are collectively part of what has been dubbed "Project Kaiwharawhara".

In the coming months, a programme of awareness-raising under this banner will take place. This programme will include further signage throughout the catchment that explains individual projects and their wider context within Kaiwharawhara catchment. There may also be regular reports and stories in various publications, such as WCC's "Branch Out" and the Dominion Post.

Another dimension will be to increase awareness of the work within both WCC and GW, so that there is a closer alignment of work programmes and environmental outcomes.

Local businesses may also be targeted so that the effects of their activities are managed in ways that help protect or enhance water quality and habitat within the catchment.

Over the next three years, all schools in the Kaiwharawhara catchment will have had contact with Greater Wellington's environmental education programme, Take Action for Water.

4. Comment

Greater Wellington's involvement and support for Project Kaiwharawhara is currently based on a mix of Care Group funding and a 3-year financial commitment through the Regional Policy Statement Implementation budget. In 2006-7, this latter funding may be transferred to another catchment in order to enhance water quality and increase public involvement in environmental care. Care Group support for the Otari-Wilton's Bush Care Group project is also finishing this financial year, although it is expected that there will be applications for at least one new project in the 2005-6 financial year.

In terms of on-the-ground achievements in the Kaiwharawhara catchment, there are already several tangible successes resulting from the input over the last few years.

Some councillors will be aware of the Otari-Wilton's Bush Care Group's huge planting programme alongside the Kaiwharawhara Stream between Ian Galloway Park and Otari-Wilton's Bush. Over 20,000 plants have transformed the area, with up to 50 volunteers attending at weekends for planting and weeding sessions. All plants have been locally sourced and much of the success of the project has been because of the guidance and enthusiasm of Jonathon Kennett and Bronwen Wall, the Project Co-ordinators. Jonathon and Bronwen are paid for their part time input via WCC's Environmental Grants programme, and are able to be on site for both the regular weekend planting work and the one-off planting days for schools, businesses and the Global Volunteer Network volunteers.

Elsewhere, there has been GW input (via the Take Care programme) to the Ngaio Progressive Association for the production and distribution of a leaflet advising local residents about what native species should be planted alongside the streams that pass either near or through their properties in Ngaio. Five hundred copies of the leaflet were distributed.

At the estuary of the Kaiwharawhara Stream, landscaping works have taken place, and an interpretative sign erected so that passengers on the inter-island ferry can read about what is being done, both at the estuary site and throughout the Kaiwharawhara catchment. A little further upstream, significant landscaping is currently being carried out alongside School Road, with costs being shared by WCC and GW, and some of the planting being carried out by staff from local businesses.

To assist councillors appreciate some of these achievements, a short presentation will be made at the Committee meeting.

5. Communication

No separate communication is required.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *receives the report; and*
2. *notes the contents.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

John Holmes

Section Leader, Policy Advice

John Sheriff

Acting Divisional Manager,
Environment

Tim Porteous

Acting Manager, Resource
Policy