

## Chairperson's Annual Report 2018

Tena koutou katoa

2017-2018 has been yet another busy and productive year, with so many different things occupying our time.

Volunteer efforts totaled approximately 3976 volunteer hours (that we know of). In the 2017 planting season 5010 native plants went into the ground, bringing us to an overall total of 77,282 since 2004. Planting, weed control, mulching, rubbish removal etc. was undertaken by members of the local community; as well as a wide range of community organisations, educational institutions and businesses including:

- Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre
- Collectively Kids Early Childhood Centre
- St Judes Scouts
- Auckland A Rocha & Haven Christian Community
- Cradock Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Powell Street Sustainable Neighbourhood
- Conservation Volunteers
- Bank of New Zealand 'Closed for Good' Team
- NZ Language Centre
- Auckland International College
- Diocesan Girls
- Open Polytechnic
- Scripture Union Youth
- ATEED
- V.Pro
- Mt Albert Grammar
- Beca
- Gladstone Primary School
- Mt Roskill Primary School
- St Lukes Brownies
- Unitec Assisted Learning students
- And more

We continued to hold regular, monthly community working bees. However, we didn't feel the need for an annual clean up this summer, as, over the years, we have moved most of the large and historical rubbish. Instead, we have done clean ups with individual groups. Weekly weeding sessions over the summer / autumn months by a small group of dedicated volunteers, saw us remove massive amounts of bindweed – a problem weed that is not on the Auckland Council's list for contractors to deal with.

Our monitoring and pest control programme continues – thanks to the dedication and commitment of our volunteers. Trapping catches are being maintained at a low number, with rat numbers well down – as is shown through our monitoring. However, controlling mice continues to be a challenge – not just for us, but also in general. We have also joined the Pest Free Inner West network, whose aim is to rid the inner western

part of the Auckland Isthmus of pests.

Lizard monitoring in the Lizard Management Area (as part of the Waterview Connection) was completed in 2017. And, we are investigating the options for continuing with this. Also, weta numbers continue to look healthy.

Our water quality monitoring teams - the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre 'garden group', Eileen Witt at the St Judes Scouts site, Jagjeeta Kaur, at the Unitec Bridge, and, Rachel Shearer, at the Cradock Street Bridge site, continue with their quarterly monitoring. However, Eileen stepped down, recently, from doing the water monitoring – a special thanks to her for her commitment and dedication these past 7 years. Two more St Judes Scouts' parent volunteers – Clare Brown and Suzie Thorp, have replaced her. And, Karen Mann moved on from Buchanan mid-2017. But no one else has taken over her specific role. So, we are looking for someone to do the monitoring on the Wairaka Stream site. A special thanks to Karen, too, who has been working in collaboration with us since around 2005.

The efforts of the teams from Conservation Volunteers (CV), with their regular visits have, yet again, been a great help in keeping up with the work - planting, plant propagation and weed control.

We continue to grow around 1200-1500 native plants, for planting along the creek. This gives us flexibility to accommodate one-off groups that approach us, often at short notice, wanting to do some planting.

We continued to attend the regular Waterview Connection Community Liaison Group meetings up until the end of the project. And we continued to have input into the Shared Path works – through to their completion.

We continue to attend the Community Advisory Group meetings for the Te Auaunga Awa: Underwood & Walmsley Reserves stormwater upgrade project – which is well underway. And, there is a constant stream of new developments happening in the catchment that require us to keep a watchful eye on things like silt control, weed control and encroachments onto reserve land. The next major one will, of course, be the development of the Wairaka Precinct (Unitec)

We have also become part of a network of organisation that is working hard to improve the water quality across the western isthmus. And, were thrilled to see the Council's proposed water quality improvement targeted rate got the 'tick' during the recent budget renewal / long term plan process.

Much time and energy has gone into the co-ordination of activities, networking and liaison with other stakeholders and interested parties e.g. Auckland Council, Local Boards and contractors; and into responding to enquiries and expressions of interest from numerous educational, community organisations and individuals – including students – undertaking assignments and research projects.

Once again, funding from Foundation North, the Lion Foundation and The Trusts Community Fund has been crucial for ensuring the sustainability of the project. And, thanks to David Bowden, for all of his great work as our fundraiser.

Auckland Council, the Albert Eden, Whau and Puketapapa Local Boards continue to support the project, with things such as site preparation, weed control and plants.

And, we have been working closely with the Local Boards on a unified approach to the protection and restoration of the creek.

So, all in all, 2017-2018 has been another exciting and busy year on the creek.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to the following, but not exclusive list of people and organisations for their wonderful support, efforts and encouragement:

- John Maskell, John Stevenson, Per Nielsen, Bruce Henry and Hayley Paul, Frazer Dale & Kirsty McFarlane (from the Auckland Zoo) – for their regular contribution to the monitoring and pest control.
- Karen Mann and her team, from the Buchanan Rehabilitation Centre.
- St Judes Scouts Venturers and the Roskill Rovers for their contribution to the reduction of pests, and the St Judes Scouts for continuing to restore a section of the creek adjacent to their 'den'.
- A Rocha and the Haven community who continue to contribute to the restoration of the creek around the Cradock Street Bridge / Harbutt Reserve area.
- Our two Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups – Powell Street and Cradock Street, who are doing a wonderful job of restoring the creek and surrounding areas, in their local neighbourhoods.
- Te Ngahere for their work on site preparation and weed control, and for undertaking another planting. However, while they no longer carry out weed control under the Auckland Council's Ecological Restoration Contract, they continue to do work on the creek, which is funded by the Local Boards.
- Treescape Environmental, who took over the AC Ecological Restoration Contract, from Te Ngahere, mid-last year.
- Unitec – for the use of the nursery and propagation facilities, and meeting room.
- Our 'weedbusters' team – Jean Barton, Keith Ayton, David Smith, for the great work they do on removing some of our nastier weeds – especially moth plant in our area – and beyond.
- Frances & Dave Morgans – for putting our events posters up along the creek.
- David Stejskal, Auckland Council, for managing the ERC contract, and organising the removal of dead trees, extra weed control, mulch etc.
- Sarah Peters and Huw Hill-Male, Auckland Council Parks Volunteer and Biodiversity Co-ordinators.
- Brent Druskovich, our 'resident archaeologist'.
- Our regular volunteers – particularly Margaret McConnell and Arthur Heighton, and the wider community for their support, enthusiasm and efforts to assist in growing our vision for Oakley Creek.

And, I would like to say a special thank you to all of our Committee Members – Adrienne Stanton, John Stevenson, Sinead Spedding and Sarah Woodfield, for the great work they have done – and continue to do.

And, as you will know, the restoration of Oakley Creek will continue to be a 'work in progress' for many years to come, with lots more to be done, including encouraging more community support and involvement, and advocating for the creek. So, we hope you will continue to be involved and support the project in the coming year.

Many thanks.

Wendy John  
Chairperson