

2020 Progress Report

Honouring a Stormwater Superhero



Kevin Brown, Christchurch West Melton
Water Zone Committee Chair

After being a member of the committee for the past four years, I feel privileged to have been voted in by my fellow committee members as committee Chair in July.

I would like to thank Arapata Reuben for his contribution and passion in the role of Chair over the last six years. His wealth of knowledge on water matters has inspired the committee to work towards fair and equitable solutions in water management.

We were the second committee to co-opt a youth representative and are lucky enough to have Oscar Bloom – his passion and drive for positive outcomes for freshwater in our zone is inspiring.

I'd like to acknowledge the passing of Evan Smith, who is well known in the community for advocating for 602 ha of red zone land along the Ōtākaro/Avon River to be restored for locals and visitors.

Evan was crowned a Stormwater Superhero this year, a modest way for the committee to acknowledge his massive contribution to freshwater in Christchurch.

Evan's relentless rallying for our environment will be missed, but the values he has instilled in the people he worked with will continue to ensure his work continues with the same passion he had.

Ngā mihi, Kevin

Key achievements 2020

- Supported Evan Smith of the Avon/Ōtākaro Network in hosting an online Mother of All Clean Ups competition – raising awareness of stormwater issues in Christchurch.
- A zone committee working group for the Cashmere Stream and Port Hills catchments carried out an education campaign to raise awareness of sediment and erosion issues in the Cashmere Stream and the Heathcote/Ōpāwaho River. Posters were placed around the Cashmere and Mount Pleasant areas encouraging people who see sediment to report it.
- The committee recommended around \$40,000 of IMS biodiversity funding to Albert Stream in St. Martins, a tributary of the Ōpāwaho/Heathcote River.
- Attended the Ōpāwaho Heathcote River Network's annual World Rivers Day event, this year combined with World Fish Migration Day – hosting a stall to encourage people to become a Stormwater Superhero.
- Workshopped with staff to support development of the Ōpāwaho Heathcote draft Stormwater Management Plan and engagement approaches for 2021.
- The second zone committee to co-opt a youth member. Oscar Bloom officially joined the committee as a youth representative after attending meetings since September 2019.
- Acknowledgment of Ōtūkaikino River having the best water quality in urban Christchurch. The committee were invited to partner in a proposal from Water and Wildlife Habitat Trust for a new community project to develop a collaborative partnership with landowners and agencies in the catchment.

Annabelle Hasselman (Deputy Chair) and Evan Smith with Smith's Stormwater Superhero award. Smith, who has since passed, received this award in July to acknowledge his massive contribution to community education, raising awareness, and facilitating community action for freshwater in Christchurch.



Delivering the community's vision for freshwater

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) puts finding solutions for freshwater management in the hands of the community, with support from councils, Ngāi Tahu, and others. The strategy sets out freshwater goals and targets to deliver the community's vision for freshwater.

"To gain the greatest cultural, economic, environmental, recreational and social benefits from our water resources within a sustainable framework both now and for future generations."

Each of the ten community-led water zone committees work collaboratively to develop freshwater recommendations to ensure council plans give effect to these goals and targets.

Within each target area there are several specific time-bound targets to be achieved and these are monitored and reported on to ensure progress is being made.

The target areas are shown below – read some of the stories about what is being done in the zone to achieve deliver on these on the next page.

CWMS Targets

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|  Ecosystem health and biodiversity |  Kaitiakitanga |  Recreational and amenity opportunities |  Irrigated land area |  Regional and national economies |
|  Natural character of braided rivers |  Drinking water |  Water use efficiency |  Energy security and efficiency |  Environmental limits |

Extraordinary year provides a chance to pause and reflect

2020 has been an extraordinary year in more ways than one.

This time last year we had not heard of Covid-19 or the exceptional lengths governments from around the world would take to slow its spread. Keeping any group working productively together in such circumstances can be a challenge but each committee has embraced new technology to communicate, adapted their work programmes and continued their commitment to improve water management in their zone. The committee's year in review report highlights their achievements in what has been a challenging year.

2020 has provided an opportunity to pause and reflect on the achievements of the last ten years of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy and in particular the progress that had been made to put a Resource Management Act planning framework in place (Land and Water Regional Plan). A plan, however, is only as good as the actions that follow. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum asked councils to work in partnership with Rūnanga and committees to refocus their work more on facilitating action on the ground with their local communities. This review of the zone committees has taken longer than expected, because

of Covid disruptions, but we expect to have a new Terms of Reference completed by the end of the year. Councils have also taken the opportunity to clarify their three year priorities, and where they would like support from committees, in a Letter of Shared Priorities.

The next few years is going to continue to be challenging for many local communities as they grapple with the implementation of the new National Policy Statement for Freshwater and National Environmental Standards. Furthermore, the government has announced its intention to repeal the Resource Management Act and Ngai Tahu has sought a declaration in the High Court seeking Rangitiratanga over freshwater in its rohe. These changes will be unsettling and uncomfortable for many local communities.

The new Terms of Reference and Letter of Shared Priorities will give committees a clear focus for future action and an ability to support their local communities to navigate this next wave of change designed to further improve the mauri and health of our freshwater and the way it is managed.

\$10,000 of IMS funding as recommended by the committee three years ago, has helped Christoph Schacherer and his community plant more than 2,000 natives on his hill block in Huntsbury Gully.





Cashmere Stream plantings a-plenty

Around 2,500 natives have been planted in the headwaters of Cashmere Stream thanks to the Cashmere Stream Care Group (CSCG), local landowners, community members, and councils.

Since 2016, more than \$60,000 of Immediate Steps (IMS) biodiversity funding has been allocated to the project, as recommended by the committee. The funding went towards plants, plant guards and fencing, and maintenance of the plants for three years following completion.

Christchurch City Council has contributed significantly with labour and resources for consenting, project management, earthworks, erosion and sediment control, and the major component of landscaping design and civil engineering.

Improving surface water quality and safeguarding surface water flows remains a priority for the committee, with this project contributing to improved water quality throughout the catchment.



Cashmere Stream Care Group's four-year restoration planting project is estimated to be valued at more than \$650,000.



Well established planting at the Albert Stream site provides sediment filtering and shade for the stream



Albert Stream gets royal treatment

Almost \$40,000 of Immediate Steps (IMS) biodiversity funding has helped some hard-working locals protect water quality and biodiversity values along Albert Stream, in St Martins.

The project aligns with the committee's priority to reduce sediment runoff in the Port Hills and enhance instream biodiversity values. Ongoing protection and enhancement work throughout these upper catchment areas are important to the committee, with sediment filtering and stream shading, providing better habitat for aquatic life throughout the waterway.

Community collaboration was key for this project, with volunteers from local community groups and other organisations working in the area.



World rivers day event

The committee supported two main events this year, both with significant support from other community groups and organisations working in the freshwater space.

The first was during COVID-19 Alert Level 4 lockdown, where Evan Smith, of the Avon/Ōtākaro Network held their Mother of All Clean Ups competition, this year online. With more than 200 entries, the event was a huge success in promoting and sharing stormwater management issues and solutions in the community.

The committee supported by Environment Canterbury staff, attended Ōpāwaho Heathcote River Network's (OHRN) World Rivers Day event, combined with World Fish Migration Day. The committee hosted a stand, sharing messages and enhancing public knowledge of stormwater network issues, and encouraging people to play their part by stopping contaminants and sediment from entering waterways. They are looking forward to attending again next year.



Christchurch City Council staff and local volunteers helped plant 170 natives at the annual World Rivers Day event.



Photo: Holly Cholmondeley

South Brighton Estuary. The expansive wetlands that once covered large areas of the Christchurch West Melton water zone have always been an important place to live and gather food for Ngāi Tahu.

Zone description

The Christchurch West Melton Water Zone shares boundaries with Banks Peninsula, Selwyn Waihora and Waimakariri zones. It includes a large part of the Christchurch City Council's territorial area including all of urban Christchurch and parts of the Port Hills, while the western part of the zone is within Selwyn District.

The waterways in the zone have been significantly modified since European settlement of Christchurch in the 1800's. The extensive network of swamps, marshes, and wetlands have been drained and built upon as Christchurch City expanded, and streams and rivers have been modified. These changes have profoundly altered the nature of the ecosystems and species in the zone, with a particular impact upon wāhi tāonga and mahinga kai.

The Christchurch West Melton groundwater system has had a long history of abstraction for public water supply, industry, and agriculture. It needs no treatment and provides almost all of the area's drinking water, valued by both the people and industries of Christchurch.

Zone committee membership 2020

Rūnanga representatives

Arapata Reuben –
Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga

Les Wanhalla –
Te Taumutu Rūnanga

Kakati Te Kakakura Royal –
Te Hapū o Ngāi Wheke

Community members

Kevin Brown (Chair)

Annabelle Hasselman
(Deputy Chair)

Abbie Wilson

Helen Caley

Gareth Oddy

Carly Sluys

Oscar Bloom
(youth representative)

Council representatives

Sophie McInnes
(Selwyn District Council)

James Daniels (CCC)

Phil Clearwater
(Environment Canterbury)

Key Zone contacts

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