

Marketing & Design Manager's report

For period ending Friday 7 September 2007

1. Manager's comments

The winter months are becoming busier by the year, with the increasing popularity of planting days and buggy walks, the growing community interest and involvement in parks, plus the annual reporting cycle.

It is very encouraging to see progress across the various work streams. Ongoing dialogue in the community is helping to identify opportunities for improvement. We were pleased to see very good turnouts for the recent Friends Annual General Meetings and the launch of the East Harbour Management Plan.

I am pleased to report that the number and quality of nominations received for the Greater Wellington Environmental Awards was very good, especially for the first year of those awards. The eventual winners will be very deserving.

2. Regional Parks Report

This year, for the first time, we will be publishing a report of work carried out in relation to the regional parks network during the July 2006 – June 2007 financial year. Comprising the information presented in the Performance Indicator reports, and presentations to the last Committee meeting, it will be an opportunity to showcase our progress and improve region-wide understanding and support of the parks network.

The report is due to be completed in late October. Recipients will include territorial authorities, the Regional EDA, government (e.g. SPARC, district health boards), and non-Government agencies with which we share some common objectives.

3. Signs

3.1 Queen Elizabeth Park (QEP)

The seven Marines signs were printed during the period. Our construction team will be installing them at the site on Whareroa Road shortly.

Staff are to meet with writer Les Molloy and geologist Tony Edwards to determine options for a small series of geological panels for the park.

3.2 Battle Hill

We have received images and captions from our writer Chris MacLean and are due to finalise some details of the text in conjunction with Ngati Toa. Once completed, a brief will be developed for our graphic designer.

4. Brochures

Brochure stands have been set up at Upper Hutt, Porirua and Paraparaumu Libraries and have been very positively received by staff and the public. We continue to work with Metlink on the timetable/ brochure restocking tender.

We will shortly be reprinting Battle Hill and the Hutt River Trail brochures, the latter in conjunction with Flood Protection.

5. Events

5.1 Planting days

During the period 25 people from Accor Hotels planted 900 trees near the Hutt River at Kaitoke Regional Park's Te Marua entrance. We were assisted by Environment Education's Kate McKenzie, both in securing the group and at the planting itself. The favour was returned with staff helping out at the Environment Division planting at Hulls Creek at the end of August.

Also on 14 August people from the Bank of New Zealand spent a morning putting in 500 plants at QEP.

Honda dealers, their staff and customers attended two plantings during August – the first beside QEP's Whareroa Stream and the second at Oku Reserve in Island Bay. While there were only two Honda representatives at QEP, they provided able assistance to just over 20 members of the community.

However, the tables were turned at Oku Reserve, with around 40 Honda people helping 20 members of the community plant on this steep and rocky headland overlooking Island and Owhiro Bays. They provided a real boost and a much appreciated sausage sizzle at the conclusion of the morning.

A second Honda planting is planned for Mauriceville on 13 September. Funded by the Honda Treefund, this will fill in the initial planting done last year. Here too the planting has given a real boost to the local community, as well as creating a "pocket" of native bush at the centre of the village.

5.2 Regional Outdoors Programme

Staff are formalising the Regional Outdoors Programme, meeting with the park rangers and volunteer groups to co-ordinate dates and events plus researching ideas for new events. This includes exploring opportunities with our iwi liaison officer and local iwi, as well as the Pacific community via the Whitireia Polytechnic Pacific Island liaison officer. Planning includes reconnoitring the walks with the rangers to check timing and suitability for the programme, the level of fitness required and to develop risk assessments.

5.3 Buggy Walks

The September Buggy Walk was planned for Poets Park, heading south to Trentham Memorial Park and Barton's Bush.

Planning is under way for the October Buggy Walk, the "feature" on the calendar which partners would like to see as an iconic Wellington event. It will be held at the Botanic Gardens on Thursday, 4 October, and will offer a choice of at least two walks appropriate to various levels of fitness.

Building on the success of the series over the last year, Sport Wellington Region applied to the Lion Foundation and were granted \$10,000 towards the event. GW Parks still plans to be involved over the summer months but this boost should encourage the cities to get involved during the winter and promote more of their leisure and recreation opportunities to families.

6. Networking

Staff attended the Nature Coast networking evening, along with QEP Ranger Nikki LaMonica. The evening was based around the first draft of a new DVD promoting the Kapiti Coast. QEP featured in the DVD, as well as Stables in the Park. The evening also provided opportunities to meet accommodation and activities providers on the Kapiti Coast, who in turn often promote the regional parks to their customers.

6.1 At the Heart physical activity plan

In order to apply to SPARC for implementation funding, each of the stakeholders is to supply details of their planned funding to various aspects of the project. We have supplied this information relating to Parks in terms of community events and our ranger services, and relating to Active Transport and implementation of the Urban Design Protocol. Altogether this amounts to around \$1.8m over the next financial year.

7. Community Liaison

7.1 Launch of East Harbour Management Plan

On 11 August, 25 members of the public attended the East Harbour Management Plan launch at Days Bay along with Councillors Laidlaw, Greig and Glensor and GW staff. There were very positive comments from those present about the plan and a desire to hold similar events in the future.

Shortly we plan to set up a meeting with those in the Eastbourne community who have expressed an interest in tackling weeds at some of the main park entrances. While the review of relationships with Friends groups is ongoing, this is a shorter term opportunity that we would like to follow up.

7.2 Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park

The Friends of QEP recently held their AGM, which was well attended. Four new members have been elected onto the Committee – Mandy Robinson from Stables on the Park, Julie Perkins, Robin Fordham and Leo Watson. Presentations from Doctors Ian Flux and Philippa Crisp were well received. Planning continues for the Barn Dance in the late afternoon/early evening of 29 September. Councillor Shields, as Deputy Chair of the Landcare Committee, has been invited to plant a tree at the park on the day to mark the occasion.

7.3 Friends of Belmont Regional Park

The AGM of the Friends of Belmont Regional Park was also held in August, with guest speaker Dave Bamford of Tourism Resource Consultants. This created a lively discussion amongst attendees.

8. Awards programmes

8.1 Conservation Awards

We nominated Jean Luke for all her work on QEP conservation projects over the past 20 years and Raumati South School for their contribution over the past 8 years. Jean received the Outstanding Contribution Award, while the school received a Merit Award for all their efforts and for making conservation fun for the children. The Minister of Conservation, Chris Carter, presented these awards at Parliament during Conservation Week.

8.2 Environment Awards

The closing date for GW's awards has been extended for two weeks to ensure all those who wanted to take part could do so. We have received at least four nominations (and in several cases more) for each category, a very good result for the first year of the awards.

From this point judges will be shortlisting the applicants, conducting site visits and determining winners. The awards presentation is planned for 7 November.

9. Landscape projects

9.1 Whareroa Farm

The mapping process for the development concept plan continues, with most components identified. We will be meeting with the Guardians to identify possible public access points and routes to be mapped onto the plan.

Staff attended the Guardians' meeting with AgResearch regarding a farm plan for the property that was commissioned by the Guardians. We understand from this that farming on the land to the extent the farm plan suggests will require a substantial cash injection in

the first year, with ongoing costs thereafter. This may not be the best use of the site, as it will compromise restoration projects and remain costly over time with negligible returns.

With that in mind, the development concept plan will be based on the assumption that around 75 percent of the block will be retired from grazing. It would use the Integrated Catchment Management or “Source to Sea” approach. In practice this would mean that the stream catchments and existing remnants would form the basis for restoration planting, while recreational trails and areas would link entrances and provide a variety of experiences suitable for a range of people.

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