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## **Parks Network Plan review update**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide an update on the Parks Network Plan review and discuss possible new directions.

### **2. Background**

The current Parks Management Plan was adopted in 2011 and encompasses eight places:

- Akatarawa Forest
- Battle Hill Farm Forest Park
- Belmont Regional Park
- East Harbour Regional Park (Baring Head, Northern Forest, Parangarahu Lakes)
- Kaitoke Regional Park
- Pakuratahi Forest
- Queen Elizabeth Park
- Wainuiomata Recreation Area

The Plan is now being reviewed. After a two month initial public consultation period in May-June seeking feedback on issues and opportunities for parks, a summary report was presented to the Environment Committee in August 2018 (2018.307).

Key community **aspirations** included:

- Improving park ecosystem health, freshwater quality, biodiversity, wetlands
- Expectations of Greater Wellington leading best practice in land management, water way protection and restoration activities
- Improving ecological habitat links within parks and outside parks

- Reconsidering farming activities in parks and more restoration, particularly in sensitive natural areas
- Improved access to and within parks such as the closed areas of Queen Elizabeth Park and the farmed areas of Belmont
- Improving facilities for activities such as horse riding, dog walking, biking, nature play and camping
- More visible Māori presence in parks e.g. art, storytelling, Te Reo Māori

### 3. Exploring community issues and opportunities

#### 3.1 Officer workshops

Eight officer workshops were facilitated during October and explored how best to respond to the topics raised by mana whenua and the community during the engagement period:

1. Regional parks – identifying core values and attributes to craft a new vision
2. What does demonstrating best practice in land management mean in regional parks? Where do parks fit within the continuum of best practice?
3. How can we improve access to and within regional parks?
4. What are our future trail and accessibility facility opportunities?
5. Leading regional parks into the future. The economy of regional parks. What can we do more / less of?
6. Within and beyond parks, how do we enhance biodiversity?
7. What future role does stock grazing have in regional parks?
8. Parks Department workshop: visions for each park, what attributes make them special places?

The discussions involved subject matter experts from across Greater Wellington, including from the Parks, Biodiversity, Land Management, Environmental Science, Environmental Policy, Te Hunga Whiriwhiri, and Strategy, Communications and Engagement and Flood Protection teams. Future opportunities were explored and common ground was found in a shared passion for protection and enhancement of parks.

A number of **key themes** were identified for consideration in the new plan:

- a) Responding to **climate change**
- b) **Environmental restoration.** Progressive land use change with long term goals to retire farmed areas of parks (except Battle Hill which has farming as part of its purpose) for restoration (wetlands, streams and ecological connections) or recreation.

- c) Improving **public access** to and within parks. This may include trail improvements, better recreation information, minimising closures and accessible by design facilities
- d) **Working collaboratively** with mana whenua partners and community to achieve greater benefits
- e) Setting **new directions**

These themes are explored below. Note that a bullet point workshop summary is provided in **Attachment 1**.

## 4. **Climate change and parks**

Greater Wellington's Climate Change Strategy identifies that climate change is the biggest environmental challenge we face, with increased risks to settlements, infrastructure and ecosystems from rising seas, storms, flooding or drought. It identifies that the worst impacts can be avoided in the long term if carbon dioxide emissions are significantly reduced as soon as possible. In managing our regional parks, we need to consider both the effects of climate change on the parks and the opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from parks and offsetting.

Climate change impacts for parks include stronger and more frequent storms, higher rainfall levels and intensity, longer periods of drought and potentially more frequent and severe impacts on the natural environment and park infrastructure. Carbon emissions come from drain wetlands and agricultural activities in parks.

Regional parks, as natural buffers and carbon stores, have a role in helping to minimise the effects of climate change. Natural environments and plantation forests contribute to capturing and storing carbon.

The Climate Change Strategy primary objectives are very relevant to regional parks:

**Objective 1:** Greater Wellington will act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across all its areas of influence, including its own operations, helping to create the conditions for a smart, innovative, low-carbon regional economy

**Objective 2:** Risks from climate change-related impacts are managed and resilience is increased through consistent adaptation planning and actions based on best scientific information

**Objective 3:** Community awareness of climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions increases and organisations and individuals know what they can do to improve the long term resilience and sustainability of the region.

### 4.1 **Carbon emissions**

Our parks have highly altered landscapes and activities which may be contributing to carbon emissions. For example, drained peat wetlands can become a carbon source rather than a carbon sink. Healthy wetlands in general are very efficient as carbon sinks but damaged peatlands release about 6% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year.

Wetlands have the capacity to store 550 tonnes<sup>1</sup> of carbon per hectare, but if drained they also have the potential to release 550 tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere over time. Queen Elizabeth Park has approximately 85 hectares of drained wetland.

Carbon emissions produced by farm stock and farming operations in parks are difficult to calculate because there are many variables. The New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre identifies that agriculture produces greenhouse gas emissions in ways such as:

- Direct emissions by livestock
- Emissions from the production of livestock feed
- Energy use in fertiliser manufacture
- Farm operations such refrigeration, shearing, machinery and transport.

Carbon emissions from Greater Wellington's regional park farming licence operations are not currently calculated.

#### 4.2 **Minimising effects and building climate change resilience in parks**

Parks primarily contribute to ecosystem resilience when they are in a natural, less modified, state. To reduce carbon emissions and support ecosystem health and resilience, suggestions made as part of the workshops were:

- Concentrating on planting and restoring natural landscapes; wetlands, dunes, hill country to increase overall resilience and excluding stock from them
- Promoting mātauranga (wisdom) Māori knowledge as part of the solutions concept
- Shifting towards the 'natural solution' concept of: protecting, connecting, restoring and leading by example in park management practice
- Allowing coastal dunes space to retreat and minimising coastal infrastructure
- Maintaining investment in weed and pest control
- Promoting parks as part of the solution to the climate change. For example, using storytelling to increase awareness about fragile ecosystems, sand dunes, wetlands and headwaters of catchments
- In the eastern Wellington region parks, increase drought resilience, such as planting drought and heat tolerant plants.

#### 4.3 **Carbon credits from forestry**

Plantation forests in Battle Hill Farm Park, Pakuratahi and Akatarawa forests have harvesting agreements in place until 2075. Plantation forests minimise the

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<sup>1</sup> (Liu, Y, Ni, H, Zeng, Z & Chai, C 2013, *Effect of disturbance on carbon cycling in wetland ecosystem*, *Advanced Materials Research*, pp. 3186-3186-3191.)

effects of climate change as carbon stores for many years, releasing carbon and impacting water quality when harvested.

Council can earn emissions units for forests established after 1989 through the Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) or Permanent Forest Sinks Initiative (PFSI) as they grow to full maturity. The Council presently has 440 Ha of land in the PFSI, and these have earned Council 67,000 emissions units (by sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere) over the past 10 years. These emissions units can be kept as an investment, sold or used for voluntary offsetting e.g. to achieve carbon neutral status. Emissions units from NZ-based native re-forestation/PFSI command a premium price.

Ownership of cutting rights along with some carbon benefits for the majority of GWRC's plantation estate have been transferred to Resource Management Service FGI NZ Ltd (RMS) under registered forestry rights. Two forestry rights were granted in 2014 over approximately 5,600 hectares of commercial plantation forest. The forestry rights are each for an initial term of 60 years, with options to seek renewal for a further term of 30 years. Obligations and benefits arising from the Emission Trading Scheme for this forest land rest with RMS while they retain ownership, although liabilities could be transferred to GWRC when the land is handed back.

At a workshop on *Carbon trading and offsetting – options for Council* on 17 October 2018 Councillors expressed a desire for officers to explore increasing council's supply of emissions units by planting forests on Greater Wellington owned land. This work has been initiated and links closely to the review of the Parks Network Plan.

## **5. Environmental restoration**

### **5.1 Farming in regional parks**

Most areas of park currently grazed are former farms which have since become regional parks. Farming activity has been continued as a land management tool and for the benefit of grazing licence revenue, weed control and fire risk reduction. Farming history differs by park, for example, Queen Elizabeth Park has been a recreation reserve for many years, but has also been farmed by Landcorp and others since WWII. Baring Head has more recently become a park and the sheep grazing activity is identified as being useful for maintaining archaeological sites and minimising fire risk.

Impacts of farming have been reduced with fencing and planting, guided by Sustainable Land Use plans.

However, over time, community values about land uses in parks have changed and become more polarised. Feedback received during the public consultation period indicates that, while many people enjoy looking at farm animals, there are significant concerns about farming impacts on park land, and that protection of the natural environment, land restoration activities and public access in parks is a now a priority for many people.

Some park stakeholders have argued that current farming practices are contrary to the primary purpose of Queen Elizabeth Park under the Reserves Act as recreation reserve. The Reserves Act identifies protection of the natural

environment as being central to the purposes of recreation and scenic reserves. The Act does not specify what farming practices are acceptable. The purpose of recreation reserves is:

#### Section 17 Recreation reserves

- (1) It is hereby declared that the appropriate provisions of this Act shall have effect, in relation to reserves classified as recreation reserves, for the purpose **of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.**

Much of Greater Wellington's regional park land is classified as recreation or scenic reserve under the Reserves Act. The Act identifies that any part of any recreation reserve which is not periodically required for the purposes of its classification, may be grazed, farmed or used for gardening activities under lease or licence. The 'Farming in regional parks' document developed for the initial public consultation outlines further details of the statutory context for farming.

#### 5.1.1 Minimising farming impacts

Since 2012 farming activities in parks have been guided by Sustainable Land Use Plans which provide guidance about land capability and ways of minimising impacts. Many kilometres of stream have been fenced to exclude stock and particularly sensitive land retired from farming. However mana whenua, park stakeholders and some community members have advocated that these plans have not been fully implemented and the measures outlined in them are insufficient to counteract the impacts of farming, particularly the loss of public access and ongoing former wetland impacts such as carbon emissions.

Some of the impacts of farming can be minimised, however the longer grazing continues, the longer the opportunity to build resilience into park ecosystems and deliver broader environmental and community health benefits from these areas of parks is postponed.

Concerns about grazing impacts have also been identified by mana whenua. For example:

#### **Queen Elizabeth Park related mana whenua feedback**

"Everything is Connected" is the theme for the review of the PNP and fits well within Te Ātiawa values. In particular, the concept of mauri recognises the interconnection between the various elements of our world noting that the health of one element is connected to the health of another element. An example of this is the disconnection between mana whenua and the environment at the Park. Not only has this led to a degradation of the environment through various practices that would not be endorsed by Te Ātiawa but has also resulted in the emotional and spiritual suffering of Te Ātiawa people.

As an overarching priority, Te Ātiawa would like to see all the land use within the Park returned to uses that support natural ecosystems of the Park. Te Ātiawa considers that farming of recreation reserve land does not support the natural ecosystems of the Park:

- Farming has significant adverse effects for soil and water quality
- It is inappropriate to utilise recreation reserve land for farming that commercially benefits a very small portion of the community but generates adverse effects for the entire community.

Healthy mauri is required for the growth and health of all living things. With respect to the environment, a healthy mauri is reflected where water runs clean, fish and bird life are abundant, and habitat is appropriate to its environment. With respect to people, healthy mauri

is supported by access to the environment and the ability to undertake practices such as kaitiakitanga that support human health and wellbeing.

When mana whenua values, environmental impacts and opportunity costs such as loss of benefit from recreation use are considered, it is clear that there is a cost to farming in regional parks.

Despite significant capital and operating funds being invested into improving farming infrastructure and practice and reducing impacts, defending farming in recreation reserves has proven to be an ongoing public relations challenge for Greater Wellington.

### 5.1.2 Officer workshop cost/ benefits feedback of all types of grazing

Benefits and impacts relating to farming in regional parks identified in the officer workshops are set out below:

Benefits	Impacts/Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pastoral management</li> <li>➤ Income</li> <li>➤ Maintains the open space values (and farming heritage landscapes)</li> <li>➤ Fire hazard reduction</li> <li>➤ Weed management</li> <li>➤ Some park visitors like to see the animals/ farm experience</li> <li>➤ Can help maintain archaeological features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direct costs e.g. fences, water supply</li> <li>➤ Indirect costs e.g. ranger time</li> <li>➤ Loss of potential habitat for native animals and natural vegetation</li> <li>➤ Lost opportunities for recreation and public access, including health and wellbeing benefits</li> <li>➤ Area no longer perceived as park</li> <li>➤ Vegetation loss and drainage contributes to flood issues</li> <li>➤ Community views</li> <li>➤ Land capability - many areas of the regional parks are not suitable for farming<sup>2</sup></li> <li>➤ Over the years a lot of resource has been used to modify the land to make it work</li> <li>➤ Climate change impacts/carbon emissions</li> </ul>

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<sup>2</sup> Note that sustainable land use plans have identified areas unsuitable for grazing, and many of these areas have been retired since 2012.

## 5.2 Restoration opportunities

There is potential for approximately 2000 hectares of park to be progressively returned to more natural states; forest, native grass and shrub land, wetlands, mown grassy areas or other landscape types.

There are options for different types of restoration such as passive or active restoration. A staged, project approach guided by master plans and restoration plans could be considered.

Resources to fund restoration work, replace farming licence revenue and increase staff time would need to be found to support broad scale restoration. Suggestions from the workshops included:

- **Social and community raised capital:** there is widespread community support for habitat restoration activities and wetland restoration. Community raised capital via crowdfunding can be highly successful on a project basis.
- Central government has set a goal to plant **1 Billion Trees** over the next 10 years. Regional park land could benefit from this initiative with broad-scale restoration plantings.
- The **Million Metres Streams Project** is seeking to accelerate the riparian restoration activity and already funding work at Baring Head along the Wainuiomata River.
- **Revenue** from market rental rates for farm houses in parks (six) and a wider range of recreation related **leases and licences** e.g. events, cafes, food trucks, camping opportunities and fees.
- **Sponsorship and grant funds** are widely available from private enterprise, non-government agencies, philanthropy, government grants and other sources. Also club assistance such as Rotary.
- **Mitigation** from roading and housing projects near parks, for example State Highway 58 works and housing developments near parks.

Other agencies have addressed equally complex land management issues related to farming activities and achieved huge success. The following example of transformation was led by consultant Geoff Canham (also assisting Greater Wellington with this planning process).

### **Kopurererua Valley**

Tauranga's 364 Ha park development project, the Kopurererua Valley, is now an outstanding restored natural environment in an urban setting developed in partnership with tangata whenua.

The hapu of Ngai Tamarawaho led a vision in 1999 that less than 20 years later has culminated in a range of achievements. Previously the valley was degraded, weedy, had limited public access, disaffected neighbours and a place of criminal activities. It was intensively farmed but had flooding problems.

The new park is a solution to all of these issues, and one of the most dramatic inner-city turnaround achieved in New Zealand. A sustainable land management approach with natural flood management via new wetlands and restored swamps saw it transformed.

The project is now known as an exemplar of tangata whenua-community-council partnership of iwi leading the visioning process and business leaders partnering to implement, supported by council. The revitalised park has:

- 12 km of shared trails
- An eye-catching entranceway to the city with large stands of Kahikatea trees and entrance sculptures
- Extensive native plantings to enhance views
- Wetlands and aquatic life
- Passive and active recreational areas including trails, picnic facilities, nature and play areas.

The restoration project has served as a ‘model for export’ and has been profiled at international conferences<sup>3</sup>.

<https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/exploring/parks-and-reserves/parks/kopurererua-valley-reserve>

## **6. Improving public access to and within parks**

### **6.1 Prioritising public access, promoting regional parks**

The health benefits of parks are clear. Connecting with nature has been shown to have a positive effect on mental and spiritual health and wellbeing. To maximise the public health and wellbeing benefits of regional parks, the barriers to access should be minimised, and a broad range of recreation and public participation opportunities enabled.

A range of short, medium and long term practical solutions could be identified to help overcome access barriers and increase park visitation. Suggestions from the workshops included:

- Public transport connections/ route diversions to parks, bus shuttles in summer holidays, bus routes to include park entry points, working with tourism operators to bring people to parks
- Working with others to improve trail connections to parks
- Prioritising public access and removing as many permanently and temporarily ‘closed’ areas of parks as possible. Allowing vehicle access deeper into parks
- Improving signage to parks to encourage visits, and within the parks to give visitors confidence to use trails and explore. Improving website information

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<sup>3</sup> Note that there were significant costs associated with this project.

- In hilly parks e.g. Belmont and East Harbour, upgrading and re-routing trails to achieve more gentle gradients and provide access for more people
- Adopting a ‘universal access’ approach to facility design to ensure that all new facilities are accessible for as many people as possible.

## **7. Working collaboratively**

At the recent World Urban Parks Congress in Melbourne, the key driver to successful outcomes was overwhelmingly identified as community involvement. “Park management paradigms have changed... successful parks are about management and change through collaboration, which must be early and meaningful with the community” (key note speaker, October 2018).

Greater Wellington is already working in a collaborative way with mana whenua, the community and stakeholders in parks and the benefits of this approach are apparent; community groups are helping to manage recreation activities, resourcing and undertaking restoration work. In some parks there is a desire from the community to have a greater level of engagement and collaboration. This provides Greater Wellington with the opportunity to modify our approach, for example, by establishing community reference/collaboration groups.

### **7.1 Mana whenua partners**

The review of the Parks Network Plan is being informed by each iwi or hapu with an interest in regional parks as they wish to engage with us. For some, this is written feedback about aspirations for parks, and others have provided verbal feedback. Outside this planning process Ngāti Toa and Port Nicholson Block Trust are developing regional ‘iwi environmental management plans’ which will inform directions for particular parks. The existing co-management plan for Parangarahu Lakes developed in 2014 remains current.

From feedback, common mana whenua interests and issues for the new plan include:

- Kaitiakitanga responsibilities, nurturing mother nature in regional parks
- Supporting mauri (in this context ecosystems life force) through aquatic and terrestrial restoration activities in parks
- Te Reo Māori park names for parks which don’t currently have Te Reo Māori names (Battle Hill, Belmont, East Harbour Northern Forest and Queen Elizabeth Park)
- Restoring and enhancing freshwater quality to support mahinga kai (food gathering) and rongoā (medicine)
- Mahi Tahi approach to working together collaboratively in park management
- Responding to climate change to support ecosystem resilience

## **7.2 Community involvement**

Officer feedback through the workshops indicated that more and deeper community involvement in management should be encouraged. Supporting and enabling community members and volunteers to do more will realise greater benefits for people and parks. In the August report to the Environment Committee, the establishment of community reference/ advisory or collaboration groups was suggested as a model for engaging park stakeholders and community members to work together. This model is common elsewhere in New Zealand and overseas.

The time is good now for a new focus on community collaboration because there is a growing, skilled volunteer base wanting meaningful work (baby boomers retiring and healthy). Many companies have a social conscience and want to assist with recreation facilities and conservation work. Use of social media makes promotion of volunteering and project funding opportunities easy. Climate change impacts have created a high level of awareness of the need to support healthy local environments.

## **8. Setting future directions**

Key themes from community feedback have been explored, and some challenges and opportunities are apparent. Greater Wellington has not recently undertaken 'state of the park' type reporting, and we will need to increase our level of science knowledge of parks in the future. From our environmental science work, we know generally where ecosystem health is strong and where the opportunities exist to make improvements to deliver more ecosystem service benefits.

The draft Parks Management Plan should support work towards more resilient and healthy park-wide ecosystem outcomes. It will be developed in the context of joined-up planning considering:

- Regional Policy Statement, proposed Regional Biodiversity Framework, Greater Wellington's Biodiversity Strategy (2016), Climate Change Strategy, Volunteer Strategy and other relevant plans and strategies
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management implemented through the proposed Natural Resources Plan and the Waitua programme
- Community and Council feedback.

It is intended that the plan will have an overarching vision and goals, and identify reporting mechanisms so we can track progress along the way. The current Parks Network Plan has a 10 year management horizon, which is appropriate for achieving short and some medium term goals, however achieving long term ecosystem restoration outcomes take much longer, so new restoration activities which may take 30-50 years to achieve are proposed. Identifying long term goals with an ecosystem health approach will inform short term decision making for activities such as grazing and other activity licences.

## 8.1 Look and feel of new Parks Network Plan

At this stage it is envisioned that the new draft Parks Management Plan will:

- Remain a composite plan for eight regional parks and forests
- Support mana whenua values
- Contain strategic direction with a new overarching vision and long term goals supporting:
  - Ecosystem health, resilience and restoration (supporting climate change response)
  - Collaborative work with mana whenua and community
  - Recreational enjoyment of parks
- Contain individual visions for each park and park specific sections are maintained with new visions and goals for each. The park specific sections will progressively be updated (via Parks Network Plan amendments) to include spatial masterplans to illustrate desired future states for parks
- Maintain and update ‘rules for use and development’ section
- Contain updated guidance for leases and licences to provide better guidance for applicants with a focus on assessment and response to possible impacts
- Include or link to property maps to better identify land parcels within parks
- Place emphasis on measurable objectives and outcomes which can be monitored and reported on via mechanism such as ‘state of the parks’ reporting inclusive of environmental and social attributes and outcomes for the environment, recreation and community.

The Parks, Forests and Reserves Bylaws (2016) remain current and no change is proposed at present.

## 8.2 Where to from here?

The Parks Network Plan review process and timeline is set out in **Attachment 2**. A draft plan will be developed and presented to the Environment Committee for approval for public consultation early in 2019. The Reserves Act requires a consultation period of at least two months, and an opportunity for submitters to attend formal hearings to present their submissions.

## 9. Consideration of Climate Change

Climate change and the role of parks in minimising effects and opportunities to build ecosystem resilience have been considered extensively in this report and throughout the process. The public consultation material presented as part of the Parks Network Plan review also explored park management issues related to climate change in detail. Climate change effects for park assets and resilience of facilities and services and minimisation and mitigation measures were detailed as well as climate change projections for each Whaitua, as well as Greater Wellington’s interests in the Emissions Trading Scheme and the

Permanent Forest Sink Initiative. Community climate change concerns were reported in the August parks planning report to the committee. The discussion document and supporting documents 'External Influences on Parks' and 'Farming in regional parks' remain available as reference documents on Greater Wellington's website.

Opportunities for emission reduction and consideration of adaptation responses will continue to be a key consideration as we progress the review of the Parks Network Plan.

## 10. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

The formal notification process for the new draft Parks Network Plan is outlined in the Reserves Act (s41(6)). This applies only to the new draft Plan which will begin to be developed after this meeting.

## 11. Engagement

A communications and engagement plan for the next formal stage of public engagement will be developed prior to the next consultation period in 2019.

## 12. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the contents of the report.*
3. *Notes that a draft new management plan will be presented to the Environment Committee for feedback in 2019.*

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## **SUMMARY OF OFFICER WORKSHOP TOPIC DISCUSSIONS, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Project objective: Creating a vision and a plan that is aspirational and practical, reflects community feedback and leads positive change for the environment and people.

### **Environment, landscapes, heritage features**

- Adopting a catchment-wide ecosystem approach
- Leading by example
- High quality freshwater required
- Restoring natural landscapes and fostering biodiversity with long term goals
- Building resilience in ecosystems in response to climate change
- Kaitiakitanga; protecting natural heritage values
- Minimising impacts - avoid first, then minimise, mitigate as last resort
- The impacts of farming are very high when carbon costs, loss of public access, landscape amenity, diminished mana whenua mauri, and opportunity cost of land not in the process of restoration are considered.
- Many other land use options and tools available instead of grazing stock. A shift from farming to other sustainable and environmentally friendly uses for some parks.
- Other uses better realise the inherent benefits of parks; environmental and human health and wellbeing
- Resources will follow new goals for restoration from a range of sources
- Farming is part of the purpose for only one park, Battle Hill. Opportunities to promote a 'best practice' farming model and education activities there.
- Climate change impacts and response with an ecosystem services approach

### **Mana whenua, mahi tahi/ partnerships approach, Kaitiakitanga**

- Supporting mana whenua partners' aspirations, activities
- Visual identity in parks
- Kaitiaki responsibilities enabled
- Sharing knowledge and skills

### **Community, volunteers, economy**

- Community involvement is the key to successful outcomes
- Working collaboratively with community/ enabling community support
- Enhancing recreation facilities and opportunities to support visits and memorable park experiences
- Revealing stories to foster nature appreciation and cultural connections
- Meaningful volunteering opportunities
- Community collaboration in park management decisions
- Battle Hill – farming focus - further farm education activities, demonstration of sustainable farming practice, connections with farming training etc.

### **Recreation, public access, memorable experiences**

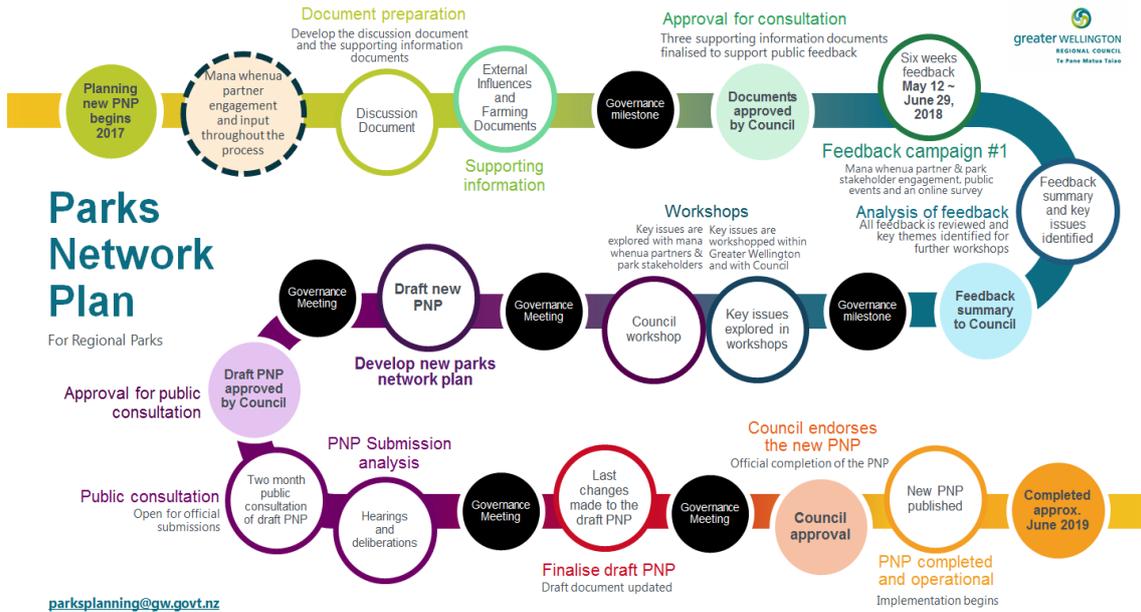
- A renewed focus on recreation and public access as primary; full access and freedom to roam. Grazing accommodating recreation (instead of the other way

around). Progressive removal of fences as restoration activities progress (particularly QEP and Belmont)

- Recreation facility improvements with a focus on trails and improving accessibility, removing / reducing barriers.
- Trail connections based on feedback and the Regional Trails Framework
- Improving horse riding facilities such as access arrangements, float parking areas, horse tie up rails and mounting blocks.
- Camping – more locations, facility improvements such as BBQs, shelters and picnic tables
- Access improvements across parks. New entrance facilities at northern end of Queen Elizabeth Park
- Development of nature play opportunities and more story telling/ heritage interpretation
- Creative focus enabled. Community ideas sought community lead initiatives temporary or permanent.

### ***The way we work***

- Long term masterplan or spatial ‘blueprints’ developed for parks and integrated into PNP as amendments (noting that Kaitoke already has an operational masterplan)
- ‘State of the parks’ reporting – baseline, then reporting progress on plan goals
- Expanding what works well / ‘appreciative inquiry’ approach e.g. partnerships such Akatarawa (ARAC), Baring Head (Friends), Parangarahu Lakes (Iwi)
- Working more collaboratively across Greater Wellington to utilise wealth of knowledge, skills
- New long term goals for habitat restoration e.g. 50 years



# Parks Network Plan Review Update

Environment Committee 6 December, 2018

