

JUNE/JULY 2008

# Our Region

NEWS FROM THE GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL

**Plans for airport to Ngauranga link**  
**More water for more people**  
**Carbon-friendly commuting**

**Gearing up for  
a great winter**



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this magazine



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Water technician Bruce Bates testing water clarity at Greater Wellington's Te Marua storage lakes

Cover photo: Flood Protection riverhand John Tinetti clearing branches from Hulls Creek in Silverstream



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# Carbon-friendly commuting

Bike sheds are full to the brim at Greta Point's National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research (NIWA), thanks in part to an effective workplace travel plan.

Greater Wellington is working on travel plans with 12 major organisations in the region

NIWA scientist Sarah Bury says the desire for such a plan came from staff, senior management and the board wanting to reduce their carbon footprint. "Most people who work for NIWA have a strong personal commitment to sustainability. People here also seem to be generally aware of the importance of health and fitness. And this is an awkward location for people to take public transport to and from, so that's another incentive to ride to work."

Greater Wellington is working on travel plans with 12 major organisations in the region. Sustainable Transport Planner Ping Sim says a travel plan gives people choices while still meeting their needs.

"A plan puts things in place, such as access to taxis or company cars in emergencies, so people can make sustainable choices and have peace of mind at the same time."

[www.gw.govt.nz/travelplans](http://www.gw.govt.nz/travelplans)



NIWA's Sarah Bury is a regular cycle commuter

# Plan for Wellington's transport pulse

A 20 to 30-year plan for the vital transport network between Ngauranga Gorge and Wellington Airport, including Wellington Hospital, is now on public exhibition for your comment.

The draft Ngauranga to Airport plan has a strong emphasis on public transport, including:

- Initiatives to create a fast and efficient public transport network in the city
- New and vastly improved walking and cycle routes



The southern end of State Highway 1 is important in so many ways

- Road changes (including graded traffic separations at the Basin Reserve and roundabouts at Cobham Drive) to enhance traffic flows for both public transport and private vehicles

Fran Wilde, Chair of the Regional Land Transport Committee, is urging people to have their say on the draft plan.

"The southern end of State Highway 1 is important in so many ways. It's the gateway to the capital and CBD. It provides access to our port, airport and regional hospital. Also, residential growth from Johnsonville to Kilbirnie is projected to take off over the next few years. All this means that the transport network needs to be as smooth and seamless as possible – whether you're driving, taking public transport, walking or cycling.

"Within the proposed programme there is some low-hanging fruit for us to pluck to help get transport moving relatively early, but there are also longer-term, big-ticket items that need understanding and careful consideration by the community."

The draft plan is available on Greater Wellington's website [www.gw.govt.nz/N2A](http://www.gw.govt.nz/N2A), our Wellington and Masterton offices, and all main libraries. Submissions close on Wednesday 23 July 2008.

## Our Region is produced sustainably

**Print – Lithoservices**  
Ink is vegetable oil based, from 100% renewable resource, compliant with EuPIA's environmental policy, ISO 9001:2000 and 14001:2004.

Paper from "well managed forest", produced in Forest Stewardship Council-certified mill, ISO14001, elemental chlorine and acid free.

Correction: In Our Region's March issue we incorrectly stated that Lithoservices had achieved Enviro-Mark Level 1 Bronze status and were working towards silver. Lithoservices is not a member of the Enviro-Mark programme.

**Design – Moxie**  
Sustainable Business Awards finalist, Get Sustainable Challenge participant and working towards carbon neutrality.

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## What does Greater Wellington do?

### Water supply to reservoirs

Delivers high-quality treated water to the main reservoirs in each city.

### Environmental management

Ensures the region's natural resources are used appropriately.

### Regional parks and forests

Maintains a network of regional parks and forests for recreational use.

### Metlink buses and trains

Coordinates and funds the region's Metlink public transport network.

### Transport planning

Develops long-term plans for the region's transport network.

### Emergency management

Coordinates civil defence emergency management for the region.

### Flood protection

Helps communities protect themselves from the effects of flooding.

### Pest control

Works with landowners to target pest plants and animals, and eradicate bovine TB.

### Harbour safety

Looks after navigational safety in Wellington and Porirua harbours, and the region's coastline.

### Land management

Works with landowners to prevent or reduce soil erosion.

### Regional economic development

Promotes the Wellington Regional Strategy – a sustainable economic-growth strategy.

Welcome to *Our Region* – the Greater Wellington Regional Council's quarterly magazine. There's news and information on the work we are doing for a better region, and how you can participate to make our region truly sustainable. Your feedback is appreciated. Please contact Greater Wellington on 0800 496 734 or [info@gw.govt.nz](mailto:info@gw.govt.nz)

[www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)



Being confronted by angry goats, putrid and unusual smells, and chicken waste in streams is all in a day's work for Greater Wellington's resource advisers



# A keen eye for the environment

It's a crisp morning with just a light southerly blowing. Resource adviser Jeremy Rusbatch is visiting the Dowse-to-Petone roadworks site in the Hutt Valley. He's investigating how measures to control sediment runoff and erosion have fared since a storm bucketed the city with up to 100mm of rain two nights earlier.

Jeremy is one of a team of 18 Greater Wellington resource advisers, based in Wellington and Masterton. They're often at the forefront of environmental protection, ensuring that businesses meet the conditions placed on their activities whether for taking water from a stream, operating a landfill, or undertaking earthworks for a major subdivision or roading project.

Greater Wellington's resource advisers are often at the forefront of environmental protection

Jeremy's three-and-a-half years since joining Greater Wellington have been challenging – coming to terms with the Resource Management Act (the legal framework that ensures New Zealand's natural resources are sustainably managed), and with technical engineering and earthworks issues.

There's the need to deal with ever-increasing activity in the region, while site visits can also spring surprises. On one occasion on an odour-sniffing exercise at a landfill, Jeremy was confronted by a herd of angry goats!

Attention to detail is essential, says Jeremy. "There are so many issues to consider. On an earthworks site such as Dowse-to-Petone we're looking at whether clean water is being kept away from the site, and that there are measures in place for restricting soil erosion, and containing and treating dirty water.

"We also need to foresee any issues that might arise in the next stages of a project. That means explaining to people what we are trying to protect and why the conditions on their activities are so important."

That's something Jeremy finds hugely satisfying. "It's great seeing people understand their impact on the environment, doing things better and teaching others.

"If you can get across to them that muddy water in drains will ultimately affect freshwater fish in streams and the beaches we swim at, you're on the way to getting people to take ownership of their activities."

Having good intentions doesn't always translate into compliance. Almost 75% of the 2,000 businesses and individuals who hold consents with Greater Wellington do comply, but the other quarter only partly comply or don't comply at all. Non-compliance leads to a range of problems, including sediment getting into stormwater and streams, effluent from dairy farms entering streams, and odours and contaminants polluting the air.



Above: Resource Adviser Jeremy Rusbatch on site at the Dowse-to-Petone roadworks. Centre: Back at the office, poring over plans for a proposed subdivision with fellow resource adviser Tyro Baker-Underhill. Left: Jeremy assesses earthworks near the Petone-Dowse flyover

Jeremy says education is a major part of getting change on the ground. Greater Wellington's Muddy Waters and Small Streams programme helps contractors manage the adverse effects of sediment discharges from earthworks and stream works. The Pollution Control team also educates businesses about pollution prevention through the Take Charge programme.

"Of course there are situations where we must get tough. We educate as much as we can, but if we are not getting change on the ground we will take enforcement action."

In serious cases, non-compliance can result in prosecution – convictions in the past year include Exide Technologies Ltd for breaching limits on lead released into the air, and the Capital Egg

It's great seeing people understand their impact on the environment, doing things better and teaching others

## ABOUT RESOURCE CONSENTS

Greater Wellington's resource advisers process resource consent applications for people wishing to use or develop the natural resources of air, water, coast and land in our region. There are four types of resource consent:

### ✓ LAND USE CONSENTS

For activities involving constructing or altering bores, using or disturbing a river bed or lake bed, or soil disturbances.

### ✓ DISCHARGE PERMITS

For activities involving discharging a contaminant into water, discharging a contaminant onto or into land or into air.

### ✓ WATER PERMITS

For activities involving taking, damming or diverting water.

### ✓ COASTAL PERMITS

For activities in the coastal marine area.

City and district councils deal with consents for other activities, such as subdivision consents and building permits.

Some activities are classified as permitted. Permitted activities are allowed without resource consent as long as the activity complies with the conditions specified in Greater Wellington's regional plan rule for that activity.

Once resource consents are issued, we monitor the use of these activities to make sure consent conditions are being complied with.

Of course there are situations where we must get tough. We educate as much as we can, but if we are not getting change on the ground we will take enforcement action

Company for illegal discharges of chicken waste into a stream.

Thankfully the vast majority of people do want to do the right thing, says Jeremy, and there are benefits for those who go the extra mile.

Greater Wellington offers the Nikau Compliance Award for consent holders who go above and beyond the conditions of their consent in managing environmental effects. "That means they have to identify potential issues and have measures in place to deal with them before they arise." 🌱



# More water for more people

Next year you'll have a role in deciding how to best provide water for a growing population

Greater Wellington currently delivers water to the Lower Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington city councils for supply to 379,000 people.

We already have a low-risk water supply system, but as the population grows the risk increases.

We're proposing short-term measures to provide more water – and reduce the risk of shortages – while investigating longer-term options. The short-term options are:

- Taking more water from the Kaitoke Weir
- A new reservoir in central Wellington
- Increasing the Te Marua water storage lakes' capacity
- Developing the Upper Hutt aquifer

Together, the first three options could supply a population of 395,000 in the four cities, which is projected for 2012. The Upper Hutt aquifer would provide for growth beyond 2012.

Current population projections mean we'll need a major new source or new water efficiency measures by 2022. We must identify a source soon, as development could take eight to 10 years.

We've investigated three dam sites and our

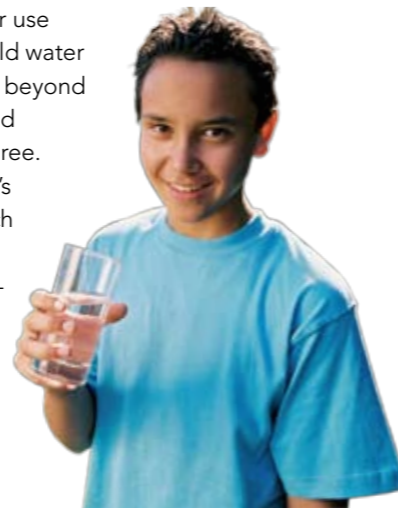
preferred site is the Akatarawa Forest. The site's on the western side of the Wellington fault (so the pipes to Porirua and Wellington have reduced earthquake vulnerability) and we can increase storage capacity at a low cost.

## We'll need a major new source or new water efficiency measures by 2022

Increased water use efficiency (eg, wider use of water-efficient appliances and household water metering) could delay the need for a dam beyond 2022, but the Hutt, Porirua, Upper Hutt and Wellington city councils would need to agree. We're also talking to them and the region's other councils about a combined approach to managing the region's water.

We'll consult with local councils on short-term options this year and with the public in 2009 on long-term options as part of our Long-Term Council Community Plan.

[www.gw.govt.nz/water](http://www.gw.govt.nz/water)



## Wow GW with your work



Nga Uruora – Kapiti Project: winners of the 2007 Rata Community Partnership Award

### THE CATEGORIES ARE:

#### Meridian School Sustainable Project Award

For schools working with Greater Wellington on programmes such as Take Action, Trees for Survival, or projects in our regional parks or with community groups.

#### Meridian School Environmental Leadership Award

Recognising a person's leadership on a school-wide environmental project.

#### Rata Community Partnership Award

For community groups working with us (we partner with many community groups through the Take Care programme, projects in our regional parks, sustainable transport initiatives, land management programmes and flood protection).

#### Nikau Award for Compliance Excellence

For resource consent holders who develop innovative solutions to reduce their environmental impact.

[www.gw.govt.nz/EnvironmentalAwards](http://www.gw.govt.nz/EnvironmentalAwards)

Are you doing great work to protect and enhance our region's environment? We are currently calling for nominations for the annual Greater Wellington Environmental Awards

The awards recognise the stellar work that individuals, community groups, schools and resource consent holders are doing with Greater Wellington to make our region even greater. So if that sounds like you or your organisation, make sure you send in a nomination by 22 August.

## Join a planting day

Greater Wellington organises and supports tree-planting days in regional parks from June to September. If your corporate group would like to organise a planting day, phone 04 803 0382 or email [catherine.hunt@gw.govt.nz](mailto:catherine.hunt@gw.govt.nz). If you would like to join a community planting day see our website.

[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

## Get Sustainable Challenge

Improve your business' sustainability by joining this year's Get Sustainable Challenge, run by the Sustainable Business Network (SBN). Businesses are assessed on waste, transport and energy use, and receive advice and support to improve their environmental performance. They can also enter the Get Sustainable Challenge Awards and receive one year's free SBN membership. Greater Wellington is the Challenge's principal sponsor for the lower North Island.

[www.getsustainable.org.nz](http://www.getsustainable.org.nz)

## Celebrate Life Totara Grove

Since Kaitoke Regional Park's Celebrate Life Totara Grove opened in 2004, more than 200 totara have been planted to mark life's special occasions, such as births, important birthdays or when a family member has died. To order a totara, phone 04 802 0327 or email [eloise.page@gw.govt.nz](mailto:eloise.page@gw.govt.nz). The \$30 cost includes a totara sapling, certificate and tree maintenance.

## Chrystalls Lagoon Walkway

Otaki has a new walkway along the Otaki River to Chrystalls Lagoon, starting at SH 1. The walkway was made possible due to the completion of the Chrystalls Bend extended stopbank, a \$2.11 million project to protect the Otaki township from floods. The new walkway is an addition to the highway to sea walkway, which opened last year.

## New Flood Protection Advisory Service

Do you need advice on the flood risk affecting your property? Flooding is a frequent hazard in the region and can affect the Hutt Valley, Kapiti Coast and central Wairarapa floodplains. Greater Wellington has flood hazard information for many of the region's rivers and can advise you on the best place to build and avoid flooding. Call 06 378 2484 for advice on flood risk in the Wairarapa or 04 802 0328 for the rest of the Wellington region.

## Akura Conservation Centre open

Greater Wellington's Akura Conservation Centre is open now, with a range of native and exotic trees for shelter, erosion control, timber or old-fashioned beautification. Expert staff can provide advice on tree selection and planting. The centre is located on Akura Road, 1.5km from Masterton, and open Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings, from June until the end of September.

[akura@gw.govt.nz](mailto:akura@gw.govt.nz), 06 370 5614



## Snappier way to bus

The days of queuing for tickets and ferreting around in your wallet for the right change are almost over. Passengers on GO Wellington buses, in Wellington city, will soon be able to use a prepaid Snapper smartcard to "tag" on and off buses and have the appropriate fare automatically deducted. Snapper smartcard users will receive a 20% discount on cash fares. Snapper smartcards should be available for use on Valley Flyer buses in the Hutt Valley by the end of the year.

## Train times txt 2 u

Finding out Metlink train times will soon be as easy as sending a text message. txtTRAIN, to be introduced soon, will enable you to simply text the first four letters of your origin and destination station to TRN (876) and receive details of the next three scheduled trains. txtTRAIN will work for journeys between stations on different lines and you can find departure times up to 23 hours ahead. See the Metlink website.

## Where's my bus?

Work has begun on a real-time information (RTI) system for trains and buses. Instead of having to read a printed timetable, RTI will enable you to see – via your mobile phone, computer, and displays at major bus stops and railway stations – when your next train or bus is actually due. Specifications are being developed before tenders for the design of the system go out at the end of this year. RTI will be rolled out from the end of next year.



Greater Wellington's public transport network  
0800 801 700 [www.metlink.org.nz](http://www.metlink.org.nz)



## Sustainability tips

What can you do to help us make Wellington a greater place to live? Here are five examples to help you use less energy more efficiently in the home.

### 1. Switch it off at the wall

By turning off their appliances, flatmates Laura, Rachel and Alyssa saved \$100 per year off their power bill and reduced wear and tear on their appliances (based on 6% annual saving on a bill of \$1,660).

### 2. Say goodbye to the old beer fridge

David saved \$215 per year by turning off the "beer" fridge in the garage (based on average fridge size).

### 3. Change to eco bulbs

By changing the four most-used light bulbs in his house to compact fluorescent eco bulbs, Max saved \$67 in electricity per year.

### 4. Use the clothesline, not dryer

By hanging her clothes on the line rather than using her dryer, Jane saves around \$130 per year and also saves on the wear and tear from tumble drying.

### 5. Install a low-flow shower head

The Patel family of four saved \$430 per year by replacing their old shower head with a low-flow shower head (based on four 10-minute showers per day and reducing flow rate by four litres per minute).

More sustainability tips

[www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz](http://www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz)

## Calendar of events

6 JUNE – 3 JULY

### Greentown

Supporting sustainability in Greytown  
[www.gw.govt.nz/greentown](http://www.gw.govt.nz/greentown)

21 JUNE

### Waikanae Estuary planting day

Waikanae Estuary Care Group  
Contact Jeff 04 905 1396

29 JUNE

### Queen Elizabeth Park planting day

[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

3 JULY

### Lion Foundation Buggy Walk

Hutt River Trail, 10.30am  
[www.buggywalk.co.nz](http://www.buggywalk.co.nz)

5 JULY

### Honda Tree planting day

Waikanae Estuary  
Contact Kerryn Penny (Greater Wellington)  
04 801 1029, [kerryn.penny@gw.govt.nz](mailto:kerryn.penny@gw.govt.nz)

19 JULY

### Waikanae Estuary planting day

Waikanae Estuary Care Group  
Contact Jeff 04 905 1396

29 JULY

### Queen Elizabeth Park planting day

[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)



23 AUGUST

### Butterfly Creek Night-Time Madness

Adventure running/walking event  
East Harbour Regional Park  
[www.paardekooper.co.nz](http://www.paardekooper.co.nz)

31 AUGUST

### Queen Elizabeth Park planting day

[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

## Talking transport

Valuable discussion on public transport matters was generated in a series of public forums around the region, run by Greater Wellington, in March and April.

Fronted by Greater Wellington's Transport and Access Committee Chair Peter Glensor, there were seven forums, which attracted around 200 people in total. The meetings outlined Greater Wellington's current public transport programme and looked at the benefits and costs of future options.

"These meetings represent a different style of communication for Greater Wellington," Cr Glensor says. "Usually we come face-to-face with the public when seeking feedback on a formal proposal. This time our sole intention was to have a conversation. And from our point of view we gained useful insights into the preferences and future options that different parts of our region may have."

Cr Glensor says he is encouraged by the response to the meetings. "We will be back to talk some more with our communities as our public transport commitments unfold."

