

Environmental Reference Group

Annual Report for the period January 2019 – December 2019

Purpose

The Environmental Reference Group's (ERG) purpose is to:

- Advise Council on the best ways to improve Wellingtonian's quality of life environmentally, socially, culturally and economically by protecting and enhancing the local environment.
- Bring knowledge and insight into Council around the environment, including water, energy, waste, biodiversity, urban design and transport management, in the context of Council's roles and priorities.

Portfolios

During 2019 the ERG had a small membership for most of the year but benefited from a diverse mix of well qualified and experienced members across a wide range of disciplines. The principal areas of interest to the ERG are split into portfolios with portfolio leads for most of 2019 as displayed in the table below:

Portfolio Group	ERG Lead
Transport	Paula Warren
Climate Change	Chris Watson
Waste	Martin Payne
Water	Chris Paulin
Resilience	Lynn Cadenhead
Urban Design Agency/Urban Growth	Mark Higham
Mana whenua iwi & Treaty Relations	Mark Fenwick
Biodiversity/Open Space	Mike Britton
Heritage	Lynn Cadenhead

Policies and Strategies

During the period of this report, the ERG consulted with various WCC officers on a number of plans and strategies, including:

- The Whaitua process
- First to Zero project
- Waste Bylaw Review
- Waste Minimisation Plan
- Smoke Free Action Plan
- Electric Vehicle Charges Scheme
- Endeavour project - Rivers as Vectors of Plastic Pollution
- Independent review of advisory groups in June 2019
- Waste Bylaw Review and Waste Minimisation Plan Update

Feedback

During the period, the ERG provided feedback on:

- The WCC Parking Policy review

- Backyard Tāonga project
- Stream Restoration and Whaitua Whanganui-a-Tara for Councillor Gilbert

Submissions

During the period, the ERG provided submissions to Council on:

- Te-Atakura First to Zero, Low Carbon Capital
- Outer Green Belt Management Plan Review
- Planning for Growth

The main themes that the ERG has focused on through their submissions have been:

- Encouraging Council's efforts to increase integration across units, to overcome the negative effects of "silos".
- Highlight to the council the importance of developing good performance indicators and targets that will encourage work towards priority outcomes and help mainstream programmes such as 'Pest Free Wellington'.
- Emphasising the need to invest in cultural change, not just infrastructure change, to address some of the long-term issues facing the city, including climate change, population growth and resilience.
- Highlighting climate change adaptation as we predict it will be a critical part of building a resilient city. That adaptation should address a range of issues, including but not limited to sea level rise, changes in rainfall patterns and more frequency and strength of extreme weather events. It is important that any adaptation improves biodiversity and environmental outcomes and community resilience.
- ERG emphasised that water sensitive urban design is critical to Wellington's future. While the Council has a good policy, it should be moved in a timely manner to implementation and it should be ensured that work is integrated with regional water planning and the three waters policy.
- While acknowledging that Wellington has made great progress in tackling biodiversity issues and building community involvement through initiatives such as Predator Free Wellington, ERG believes that it is vital to ensure that support for work with biodiversity priorities in other areas and initiatives also continues to grow.

Assessment on Process

More and more Councillors and Council officers have adapted to the ERG's preferred strategy of early engagement and targeted advice. Positive and constructive submissions have been made on key plans and policies. For example, the Outer Green Belt Management Plan Review that was supported by ERG.

Working closely with Council officers can only enhance this process in the future and the ERG members are keen to be involved with workshops and meetings outside of the monthly meetings. Some support for this time should be considered as should the level of remuneration for members that has not increased overtime.

We are hopeful that the long overdue reference groups review will be completed soon.

We would like to thank Councillor Gilberd for his feedback, information and encouragement until October 2019 and David Chick and Moana Mackey for their continuing support.

We are delighted with our councillor representatives Councillors Tamatha Paul and Councillor Laurie Foon and with Councillor Teri O'Neill's frequent attendance. We welcome all councillors to our meetings.

Challenges

A major challenge that faced the ERG in 2019 was the small group size. The ERG has been lucky to attract high calibre members covering many disciplines, but these people are in demand in the workforce and increasingly they struggle to find time for ERG or their circumstances change with new roles and challenges. ERG was not able to recruit members in a timely fashion so the group size remained small. Recruitment has now occurred and the ERG was up to strength in December 2019 with high calibre members from a range of backgrounds and ages.

A second major challenge was the number of different Democracy Advisors that assisted the group over the year. They included;

- Hedi Mueller, Democracy Advisor
- Kay Houlahan, Democracy Advisor
- Esther Hoskin, Democracy Advisor
- Manjori Sanyal, Democracy Advisor
- Crispian Franklin, Democracy Team Leader (filling in)

This constant change created many problems including continuity in the work programme and lack of document filing. We would be delighted if Hedi stayed.

Issues to Consider

The ERG would like to recommend the following:

- ERG would like to remind Council officers that we encourage them to provide background reading prior to presenting at meetings and to provide specific questions they would like advice on. Presentations should be brief with plenty of discussion time.
- The ERG is keen for more involvement with Councillors outside of meetings and submission processes but also continued and increased involvement within meetings and workshops.
- The ERG feels that Council could better utilise the extensive network the ERG members have within the environmental space.
- The ERG believes it would be an immense help to create feedback loops after discussion and submissions. For example, the involvement of Councillor Gilberd, David Chick and Moana Mackey in the ERG meetings has made the ERG's efforts feel valued and heard.
- The ERG would like to review representation from iwi, and other groups that could contribute on environmental matters, for example currently there is no representation from

Iwi on ERG possibly due to a funding loop. This should be redressed by an amendment to the ERG terms of reference.

Wellington City Council Environmental Group

Profile of members from January 2019 to December 2019

Mark Fenwick (Chair until October 2019)

For the last ten years Mark has been employed by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research Ltd (NIWA) as a marine ecology technician. He has a varied role, working on the environmental impacts of fishing on marine habitats and fisheries stock assessments for hoki, oreo, orange roughy, blue cod and crayfish. He also works on environmental impact studies for major developments, including roading and sea floor mining.

Mark is a beneficiary member of the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, the Wellington Tenth Trust and the Palmerston North Maori Reserves Trust and he affiliates to Te Atiawa and Taranaki Iwi and is a descendant of Te Whiti O Rongomai. His marae is Te Tatau o te Po in Petone and he currently sits on Te Atiawa ki Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui Potiki Trust (the marae fisheries trust).

He has an MSc from Victoria University, Wellington where he studied the genetic relationships of the New Zealand freshwater mussels (Kakahi) in conjunction with DOC, Iwi and Te Papa. While studying he worked in various roles at the National Museum, Te Papa Tongarewa in the Natural Environment department, the highlight of which was his involvement with the defrost and preservation of the colossal squid where he had a high-profile role as the lead technician.

Outside of work, Mark is a keen fisherman and diver and a part-time dive instructor, helping other people discover our fantastic coast and underwater world. He spends time tramping in the Tararua Ranges, chasing trout, and just generally enjoying the great outdoors. Mark is passionate about our natural environment and believes that tangata whenua have a key role to play in ensuring that our environment is used in cautious, sustainable ways.

Chris Watson

Chris is an architect and author.

He has promoted low/zero carbon cities and countries, to local authorities, public forums, select committees and the environment court. His main interests are zero carbon buildings, cities and travel.

His architectural practice includes world-leading work evaluating quality of buildings and building programs, to feed forward lessons learned. He has been commissioned to undertake numerous projects in Australia and Europe as well as NZ.

His books on building quality and climate safe travel were published in Oxford and Cambridge, UK.

Chris Paulin

Chris Paulin is a marine biologist with 37 years' experience as a marine biology curator at the National Museum of New Zealand (Te Papa Tongarewa), where his research ranged from the taxonomy of New Zealand fishes to traditional Māori fish-hooks and customary fishing techniques.

Chris has published in over 60 scientific papers, including descriptions of 17 species new to science, as well as eight books on NZ fishes and marine life, and fishing in New Zealand. Now self-employed (fishhook Publications & Photography), Chris specialises in macro-photography and has produced two books on the intertidal biota of the Wellington South Coast, and Taranaki regions, and in 2016 published “Te Matau a Maui: fish-hooks, fishing and fisheries in New Zealand”.

Mike Britton

Mike has a background in protected area management with a special interest in national parks and nature protection. He is a former General Manager of Forest & Bird and also Assistant Director of Fish & Game New Zealand. More recently, Mike has become involved in fundraising, primarily for nature protection. Over the last three years he has helped raise money with BirdLife International for island restoration, predator control and the development of sustainable livelihoods in the Pacific. Mike is a member of the Tongaririo Taupo Conservation and the Taupo-nui-a-Tia Management Boards.

Lynn Cadenhead

Lynn Cadenhead is a registered landscape architect with a zoology honours degree and an environmental science background. She recently relocated to Wellington from Nelson where she was an active member in Heritage Nelson and the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Nelson branch, chairing both groups and writing submissions.

Lynn has been involved in a wide range of environmental and community projects, both as a professional landscape architect and as a volunteer. These have included landscape assessments, revegetation reports and projects, reserve and playground designs, and involvement in roading and transport issues.

Martin Payne (Chair from October)

Martin, a professional qualified engineer, runs a design and consultancy company focussed on sustainable water and energy management systems. His particular interest in Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles recognises the impacts of stormwater, transport, waste management and land development on aquatic environments. He has currently completed several papers towards a Master's in Public Health (Environmental Health) with a focus on residential rainwater harvesting.

As a long time environmental advocate, urban water researcher and resident in Wellington City, Martin firmly believes that the natural environment makes an essential contribution to the prosperity and liveability of Wellington City and that protecting this taonga can be achieved by an engaged community. As co-ordinator of Friends of Owhiro Stream, he has been involved in the physical restoration of this urban stream, as well as acting as a strong advocate for the protection of these sensitive environments at local and regional government levels.

Paula Warren (until Nov 2019)

Paula is an ecologist who works as a policy advisor for the Department of Conservation. Her work over the last 26 years has covered a wide range of legislative and systems reforms, including development of the Resource Management Act, foreshore and seabed legislation, development of an outcomes approach for conservation management, and prioritising and reform of protected areas legislation.

Paula was New Zealand's lead technical delegate for the Convention on Biological Diversity for 6 years, including being a member of the technical bureau for the Convention, and being the NZ Clearing House Mechanism and Global Taxonomy Initiative focal point. She has

done voluntary and paid work in Latin America focused on biodiversity and biosecurity systems reforms, and is Secretary of the Friends of Galapagos NZ.

Paula is involved with a number of restoration projects in the region, including chairing the Growing Places Trust that has been set up to implement place-making initiatives in transport corridors. She is also a walking and public transport users' advocate. She is a former member of the Wellington Regional Transport Committee.

Andrew Wilks

Andrew Wilks leads the Sustainability Office at Victoria University. He has experience in planning and delivering environmental initiatives including climate change action, energy efficiency, travel demand management, water conservation and waste minimisation. He has a strong network with sustainability practitioners in business, academia, the student body and has good relationships with council officers. He is also a board member of Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability. He has lived in Wellington for 20 years and has 2 children who he chases around the recreational facilities of the northern suburbs.

Mark Ashby (until September 2019)

Mark is a professional RMA planner with experience in consulting to private interests, as well as local, regional and central government. He has worked on planning projects throughout NZ, and in Australia and Brunei, and manages the Wellington office of a national planning and environmental consultancy. His skills include project team management, impact assessment, peer reviews, policy analysis and development, site/scheme options assessments, district and regional planning, general research work and preparation and presentation of expert evidence. He has a history of working closely with environmental and engineering experts. As a professional planner, an important part of Mark's role is to act as an expert witness at council hearings or the Environment Court which requires a focus on professional opinions, rather than direct advocacy. Mark is certified as an RMA hearings commissioner.

Amy Brasch (until March 2019)

Amy has a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Management and a Master's degree in Ecological Restoration. She has worked for the Department of Conservation for over 5 years, both as an Operations Ranger (Community) and a Systems Design Advisor. During her time as a Ranger, she worked closely with the Community Restoration Groups around the greater Wellington Region. Her role involved organizing various upskilling workshops and information sharing opportunities for the public. As a Systems Design Advisor, Amy looks for ways to improve the Department's efficiencies around the way in which it operates. Amy's interest is around ecological restoration, urban sustainability, citizen science and application of innovative methods in conservation practice.

Mark Higham (until October 2019)

Mark is a Registered Architect with twenty-seven years' experience in architecture practice here and overseas, joining Callum McKenzie in 1999 to form McKenzie Higham Architects.

Mark is interested in sustainable and energy efficient design and is a member of the New Zealand Green Building Council. He is registered as a Homestar Practitioner with this organisation.

Nicole McCrossin (until September 2019)

Nicole McCrossin is a senior advisor in Māori Crown relations for Te Arawhiti. She has skills in relationship management, communication, and analysis and advice.

New ERG Members from December 2019

Steven Almond

Steven's background is in industrial design, previously working in the UK before moving to New Zealand in 2012. Steven has increasingly focussed his work on sustainable design and sustainability issues, recently completing a Master's degree in design at Victoria University of Wellington, researching design for a 'Circular Economy'. For the last year Steven has worked at Garage Project as their Sustainability Ambassador, during which time Garage Project became a zero-carbon brewery.

George Hobson

George is a passionate 16-year-old advocate for the environment. He has been involved in many on-the-ground conservation projects over the last four years, from reptile monitoring on Mana Island, to Black Petrel research on Great Barrier Island.

He is a Coordinator of Forest & Bird Youth, where he works to empower young people across Aotearoa New Zealand to make environmental change. He was also one of the first ZEALANDIA Youth Ambassadors, where he worked with young people from all over Wellington.

George is fascinated by politics and environmental policy, and is passionate about ensuring that youth voices are not overlooked in these areas.

Eleanor West

Eleanor has a background in Environmental Science and Geography, with a focus on urban issues. She currently works for the New Zealand Green Building Council on the technical team. In her free time, Eleanor volunteers for Generation Zero where she works predominately on local transport and urban design issues.

Sally Faisandier

Sally Faisandier has worked as a research and evaluation advisor for central government agencies for the past twenty years (ten as a Principal Advisor), which included Health, Education, Social Development, Justice, Māori Development and Land Information. She has a passion for supporting the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change; and joined the ERG as a generalist, providing expertise in understanding and interpreting research reports over a wide range of topics, to inform policy within a political context.

Isla Day

Isla is studying Physical Geography and Biomedical Science at Victoria University. She was a founding member of School Strike 4 Climate in New Zealand, a national youth led movement that mobilised 170,000 people in its most recent September 27th strike. Both her interest in science and love of the outdoors (through mountain biking) have influenced her passion for protecting the natural environment and in the future she has ambitions in scientific research and policy advice.

Arron Cox

Arron works in environmental policy focusing on how we protect and enhance water in our urban areas. He has a background in the three waters (drinking water, wastewater and stormwater) and has worked as both an engineer and resource consents planner. Outside of water he is passionate about how Wellington can undertake a just transition to become zero

carbon by 2050 or earlier. He is particularly focused on how this can be achieved through the way the city grows and the way its residents get around. He is keen to ensure youth continue to become more engaged in Council's decisions and that their concerns are reflected in Council policy.

Michelle Rush

Michelle Rush is a facilitator, trainer and consultant specialising in collaborative processes and effective stakeholder engagement. She has a background in natural resource management with particular expertise in sustainable land and water policy and sustainable agriculture. She has more than 25 years' experience as a professional facilitator working with businesses, science, industry and government organisations, councils and community groups. Michelle is an authorised trainer for the Technology of Participation (ToP™) Facilitative Leadership Program through the Institute of Cultural Affairs (Australia). Michelle is a Certified ToP™ Facilitator.

Through their company Participatory Techniques Ltd, Michelle and colleague Dr Helen Ritchie, design and deliver specialised training for catchment facilitators, environmental educators and practitioners working with conservation groups equipping them with skills to work effectively with their communities in an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Michelle has a Masters in Applied Science (Agriculture and Rural Development), a BSc in Geography, and a national certificate in Journalism. She is currently Chair of Onslow College Board of Trustees.

Clare Stringer

Clare's career has been focused on biodiversity conservation and invasive species management. She has worked in policy development as well as project implementation in New Zealand and around the world. Clare works at Biosecurity New Zealand.