

Natural Environment

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Natural Environment

What we do

Our natural environment work includes:

- looking after the city's 33 square kilometres of Town Belt, park and reserve land, as well as the city's beaches and coastline, and botanical gardens — this includes maintaining a network of walkways to keep park and reserve areas accessible, controlling pests and weeds, removing hazardous trees, and enhancing open space areas with native or exotic plants
- funding the Zoo and the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, and working to develop other world-class nature-based visitor attractions
- providing grants for environmental initiatives
- working with volunteers and other organisations to protect native plants and bird-life and enhance the city's environment.

Key challenges

Wellington's record at preserving and protecting the environment is good. We're unique in being able to enjoy extensive Town Belt and coastal areas near the heart of the city.

However, we also face challenges, including a need to more effectively protect the region's biodiversity and ecosystems, including streams and waterways, and a need to remove potentially dangerous trees from open space land.

CASE STUDY: restoring the city's streams

Project Kaiwharawhara is helping to restore native plant and fish life in the Kaiwharawhara Stream.

In the past few years, thanks to the efforts of hundreds of volunteers from the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, sections of the Kaiwharawhara Stream have been transformed from weed-infested thicket to native bush. Since 2001, they have given up weekends to raise and plant seedlings alongside a 1.5km stretch of the stream between Otari Wilton's Bush and Ian Galloway Park. Their hard work has paid off. Around 20,000 native plants have been established and a dense forest achieved on half of the 21 sites in the valley.

Their work was recognised when they won the habitat restoration category at the 2005 Wellington Conservation Awards, announced as part of Conservation Week in August 2005.

Separate volunteer groups are caring for different parts of the stream.

The Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust is one of several contributing to restoration of native ecosystems on the stream, which runs from the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary through Wellington's western suburbs to the Harbour.

The Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group is also an award-winner, picking up the heritage and environment category of the 2005 Wellington Regional Airport Community Awards, which recognise the efforts of volunteers in the region.

The work of volunteer groups is co-ordinated by the Council and Greater Wellington under Project Kaiwharawhara, which aims to protect and enhance the stream's natural landscape, ecosystems, homes and recreation areas, and make the stream a focus for local communities.

We're celebrating their work, and making our own contributions.

During 2005/06, we put up signs – on Ngaio Gorge Road, Trelissick Park and in Otari-Wilton's Bush – to publicise the work being done by volunteers and to spread the word that the stream's entire 19 square kilometre catchment is important.

We also worked with the Greater Wellington Regional Council and project Kaiwharawhara volunteers to build two 'fish passes' on the stream, allowing native fish to return to the headwaters for spawning. Previously, culverts had blocked their way upstream.

The stream is home to several species of native fish, including the giant kokupu, short-jawed kokupu and longfin eel – all listed by the Department of Conservation as threatened.

In coming years, we're planning to step up our efforts to protect the city's waterways. Lessons learned from Project Kaiwharawhara will be applied to protection of other streams, with the Porirua and Owhiro Streams given top priority.

We'll also continue our efforts, in partnership with Greater Wellington, to educate residents about the environmental impact of stormwater runoff.

Key facts

Number of square metres of open space land for every person in the city: 189.

Percentage of Wellington residents who visited Wellington's botanic gardens during 2005: 79.

WHAT IT COST		Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual
Net Expenditure/(Revenue) by activity \$000		2006	2006	2006	2005
5.1.1	Habitat Development	1,424	1,555	131	763
5.1.2	Wellington Zoo Biodiversity	-	-	-	-
5.1.3	Native Plant Diversity	-	-	-	-
5.2.1	Weed and Pest Management	754	721	(33)	463
5.2.2	Environmental Values	35	50	15	50
5.2.3	Planting (Ecological/Amenity)	531	591	60	548
5.3.1	Local Parks and Open Spaces	6,103	5,880	(223)	4,891
5.3.2	Vegetation Safety	765	797	32	983
5.3.3	Botanic Gardens	3,219	3,190	(29)	2,834
5.3.4	Beaches and Coast	805	727	(78)	619
5.3.5	Town Belts	1,130	1,119	(11)	1,062
5.3.6	Land Management	-	-	-	-
5.3.7	Walkways	264	352	88	197
Operating Expenditure		15,030	14,982	(48)	12,410

		Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual
Capital expenditure \$000		2006	2006	2006	2005
5.1.1	Habitat Development	440	440	-	499
5.1.2	Wellington Zoo Biodiversity	-	-	-	-
5.1.3	Native Plant Diversity	-	-	-	-
5.2.1	Weed and Pest Management	-	-	-	-
5.2.2	Environmental Values	-	-	-	-
5.2.3	Planting (Ecological/Amenity)	-	-	-	-
5.3.1	Local Parks and Open Spaces	3,576	3,599	23	2,856
5.3.2	Vegetation Safety	-	-	-	-
5.3.3	Botanic Gardens	936	966	30	633
5.3.4	Beaches and Coast	455	459	4	688
5.3.5	Town Belts	852	937	85	625
5.3.6	Land Management	-	-	-	-
5.3.7	Walkways	318	337	19	297
Capital expenditure		6,577	6,738	161	5,598

OUTCOME 5.1 BIODIVERSITY

Our aim is for Wellington's environment to host and protect a representative range of native plants and animals in their natural habitats.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOME	OUTCOME INDICATORS	2005	2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations of all bird species (with the exception of grey warblers and kingfishers) have increased in select reserve areas across the city. 	Bird species counts in select reserves across the city (bird-counts):		
	Silver eye	3.09	3.72
	Fantail	0.80	0.86
	Grey warbler	0.79	0.75
	Tui	1.24	1.57
	Kereru	0.09	0.16
	Kingfisher	0.05	0.03
	Bellbird	0.02	0.12
<i>Source - WCC Parks and Gardens and Pacific Eco-logic Ltd.</i>			

5.1.1 Activity: Habitat development

We are committed to developing high-quality habitats that allow wildlife to thrive, as well as providing attractions for visitors and promoting education. As part of this commitment we support the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary Trust and the Wellington Marine Education Trust.

The Sanctuary is an urban island that provides a haven for birds and plants, keeping them safe from possums and other pests and predators. We own the land the Sanctuary is built on, and we provide funding and other assistance. We're also providing an \$8 million interest-free loan towards expansion of the visitor centre and enhancement of the visitor experience.

We also support the Wellington Marine Education Trust, who plan to develop a major new aquarium and research facility on the south coast. We've provided grants funding of \$360,000 to the Trust and have offered a \$7 million interest-free loan towards the facility's construction.

Both of the interest-free loans are conditional on the trusts securing funds from other sources. During the year both trusts applied for and missed out on funding from the Government's Significant Community Based Projects Fund. Both trusts believe their projects fit with the criteria and are working to secure funding in the next round.

Highlights

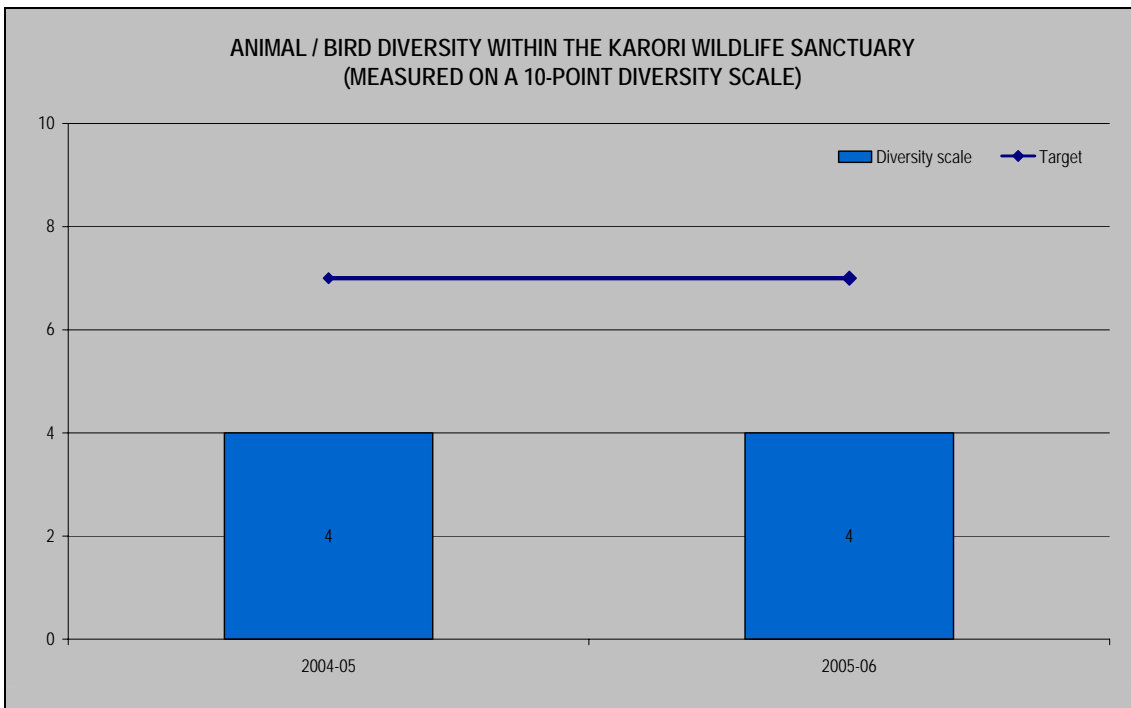
- 70 tuatara were transferred from Stephens Island to the Sanctuary. This was the first transfer of tuatara onto the mainland for over 200 years.
- 30 Maud Island frogs were released into the Sanctuary. This was the first release on mainland New Zealand.
- The Sanctuary received resource consent for a new visitor centre, which will further establish the Sanctuary's position as a premier tourism and conservation facility.

- The Sanctuary won an international eco-tourism award from Skal – an international association for tourism and travel professionals.
- The Marine Conservation Centre Trust lodged a new resource consent application to construct a centre at Te Raekaihau Point, after commissioners hearing the Trust's original resource consent application were unable to reach a decision. The new consent application was publicly notified and received over 5,000 submissions and will be considered by commissioners in August 2006.

How we performed

This measure monitors the long-term programme to increase the extent of animal/bird diversity within the Sanctuary. Changes to diversity at the Sanctuary are expected to occur over the long term. Therefore, monitoring this information on a yearly basis is unsuitable.

During 2005/06, we reviewed our performance measurement for the Sanctuary. New measures that reflect annual progress towards our long-term goals will be used in future planning and reporting documents.



Source – Karori Wildlife Sanctuary

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	1,426	1,569	143	763
Revenue	2	14	(12)	-
Net expenditure	1,424	1,555	131	763
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	440	440	-	499

5.1.2 Activity: Wellington Zoo biodiversity

Wellington Zoo protects plant and animal biodiversity by holding and breeding endangered species, both native and exotic. For more information on the work of Wellington Zoo Trust see section 7.1.8.

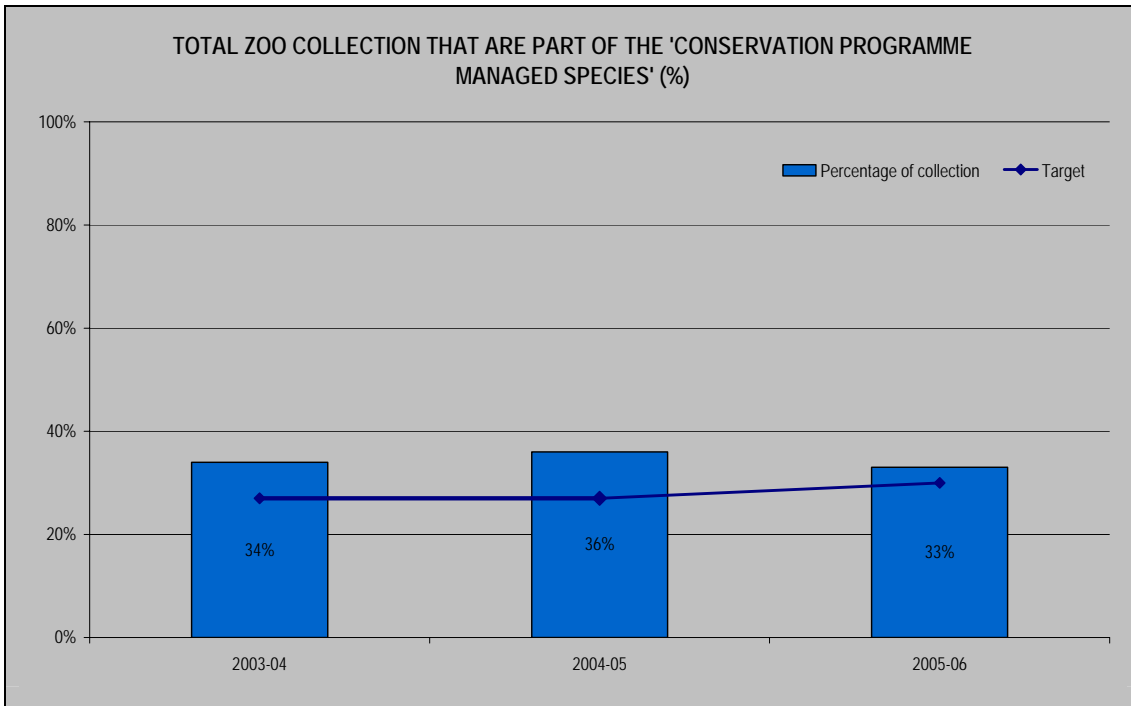
What Wellington Zoo did

- The Zoo embarked on a community-based research and education project called the Kereru Discovery Project. The aim of the project is to make Wellington a better place for kereru – the native wood pigeon. School children, gardeners and city residents will all be called on to plant kereru-friendly plants and report sightings of kereru. The project will in turn add to the preservation of some native plants. The kereru is the only seed disperser with a bill big enough to wrap around and swallow large berries, such as karaka, tawa and taraire. A greater presence of kereru will aid the continual survival of these plant species. Partners in the project include Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, Te Papa Tongarewa, Pukaha/Mount Bruce and Victoria University of Wellington.
- Two Campbell Island teal eggs were transferred from the Zoo to Pukaha/Mount Bruce, where they were hatched and raised for release on a safe island.
- The Zoo's resident skink population increased with the introduction of four Otago skinks. These reptiles are one of the country's rarest reptiles and numbers in the wild are quickly declining.
- The Zoo received permission to breed the three kaka pairs that are resident at the Zoo. It's intended their offspring will be released into Karori Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Zoo staff participated in many conservation projects. For example, the resident vet participated in an ongoing Department of Conservation study on Hooker's sea lion in the Auckland Islands and zoo-keeping staff conducted a kaka observation project at Karori Wildlife Sanctuary.

How we performed

In 2005/06, 33 percent of the Zoo's species were named on an internationally-recognised endangered species list. This result falls below last year's achievement, but meets our Annual Plan target.

The Zoo continues to work closely with Australasian regional zoos to manage populations of a range of native and exotic species.



Source – Wellington Zoo

What it cost

The budget for this activity is provided under 7.1.8 Wellington Zoo trust.

5.1.3 Activity: Native plant diversity facilitation

We work with a wide variety of organisations and groups to facilitate the planting of native flora in the city. Our nursery in Berhampore grows native plants, which we supply free to community groups and residents for planting on road reserves and other areas in the city.

As this work is carried out in conjunction with other Council activities, it has no dedicated budget and no performance measures.

OUTCOME 5.2 ECOSYSTEMS

Our aim is for Wellington's marine and land-based ecosystems to be valued and, where appropriate, protected and restored.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOME	OUTCOME INDICATORS	2001	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every 5-10 years, we survey the open space land we own or manage to determine what types of ecosystems are most common. In the last survey in 2001, just over half (53 percent) was in native scrub or shrubland, 21 percent was gorse/barberry shrubland, 12 percent was native forest, 7 percent was grassland and 7 percent was in other types of ecosystems. We will reassess our reserve areas in 2006/07. 	Vegetation types in reserve areas	Grasslands 7% Native scrub / shrubland 53% Gorse / barberry shrubland 21% Native forest 12% Other 7%	
	<i>Source - WCC Parks and Gardens (Note: this information was last assessed in 2001. This is a long-term measure which will be reassessed in 2006/07)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer groups continue to make a significant contribution to help protect and restore the city's marine and land-based ecosystems. 		2004/05	2005/06
	Number of hours worked by recognised volunteer groups with respect to conservation	7,242	7,381
<i>Source - WCC Parks and Gardens</i>			

5.2.1 Activity: Weed and pest management

We operate programmes to control weeds and animal pests on more than 3,469 hectares of open space land that we own and operate. We carry out this work with the aim of protecting the city's natural ecosystems and providing habitats for native plants and animals.

What we did

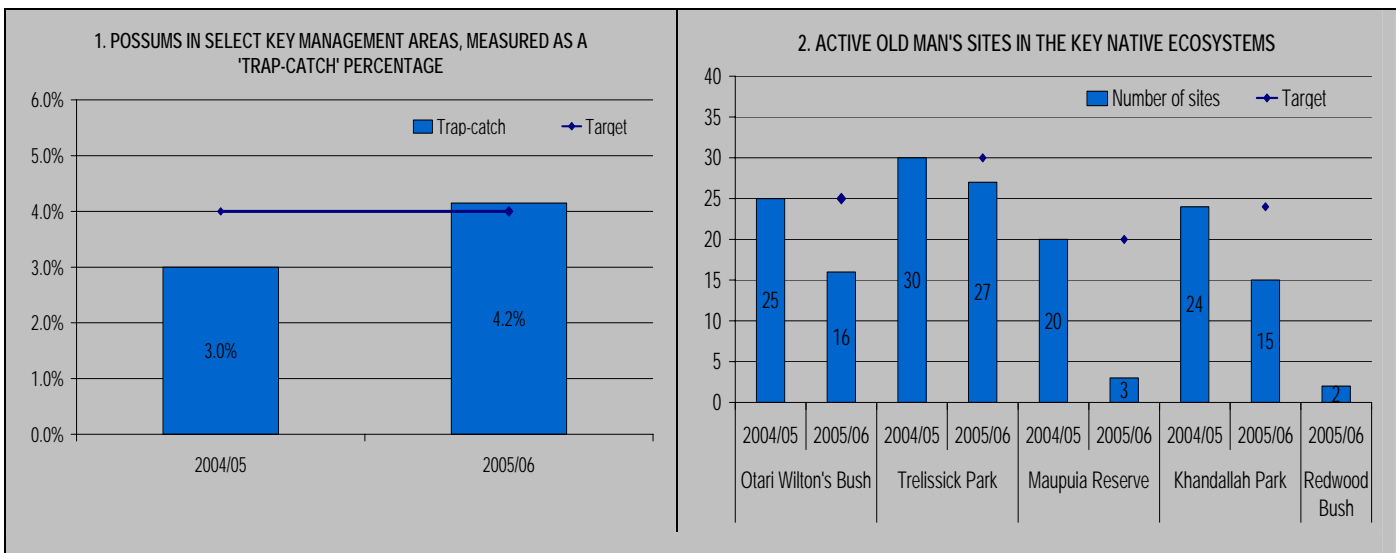
- We started weed control in important natural areas on the south coast and developed a programme to manage the spread of Darwin's barberry, a major weed on the Outer Green Belt.
- We carried out a successful programme to reduce garden waste dumping and engage the community in cleaning up sites in reserve areas.
- We extended our possum control programme to Horokiwi and Grenada North reserve areas adjacent to Belmont Regional Park. High numbers were monitored prior to control. Possum control is now carried out in all reserve areas in the city except Te Kopahou on the south coast.
- We completed our goat control programme in Te Kopahou, the Outer Green Belt and Ngauranga. We are working with Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation to develop plans for removal of goats from the Wellington Peninsula over the next five years.
- We carried out programmes to control old man's beard, cathedral bells, banana passionfruit, wild ginger and climbing asparagus in more than 2,800 reserve and road reserve sites (see also 8.1.2 Roads open spaces).

How we performed

We assess weed and pest management in the city by monitoring the number of possums caught in key management areas and the number of active old man's beard sites in areas defined as 'key native ecosystems'.

It has been a successful year for the eradication of old man's beard sites from key native ecosystems across the city. All Annual Plan targets for old man's beard were surpassed for each of the key native ecosystems in the city.

We have seen a minor increase in the number of possums caught in our management areas. This result fails to meet our Annual Plan target.



Source – Parks and Gardens, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
Operational projects				
Expenditure	763	728	(35)	473
Revenue	9	7	2	10
Net expenditure	754	721	(33)	463
Capital projects				
Cost	-	-	-	-

5.2.2 Activity: Environmental values facilitation

We provide grants for projects that benefit the city's natural environment. Projects can relate to biodiversity, waste minimisation, water conservation, public education or a range of other issues.

What we did

Eight projects were funded this year through environmental grants. The largest grant was given to the Sustainability Trust to set a sustainable business awards scheme for the café and bar sector (\$14,500). The EnviroSchools Foundation was funded to facilitate two Wellington schools to join the EnviroSchools programme and the Common Ground Community Gardens was given money to launch a composting and community education scheme on gardening.

Other groups funded included the Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park Supporters Group, the Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust (in partnership with the Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group) and Houghton Bay Valley School.

How we performed

During the year we distributed grants from the Environment Grants pool in line with our eligibility criteria. We managed to only distribute a proportion of the fund.

WCC Environmental Grants	
Total number of grant applicants	10
Number of applicants receiving grants	8
Total budget available to applicants	\$50,000
Total budget distributed to applicants	\$35,427

Source – Community Services, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	35	50	15	50
Revenue	-	-	-	-
Net expenditure	35	50	15	50
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	-	-	-	-

5.2.3 Activity: Planting (ecological/amenity)

We plant native species on the city's open space land. This work makes these open spaces safer and more pleasant, reduces weed levels and improves biodiversity. Our long-term vision is to substantially increase the number and proportion of native plants on our open space land. We're aiming over 20 years to plant 29 hectares in native plants.

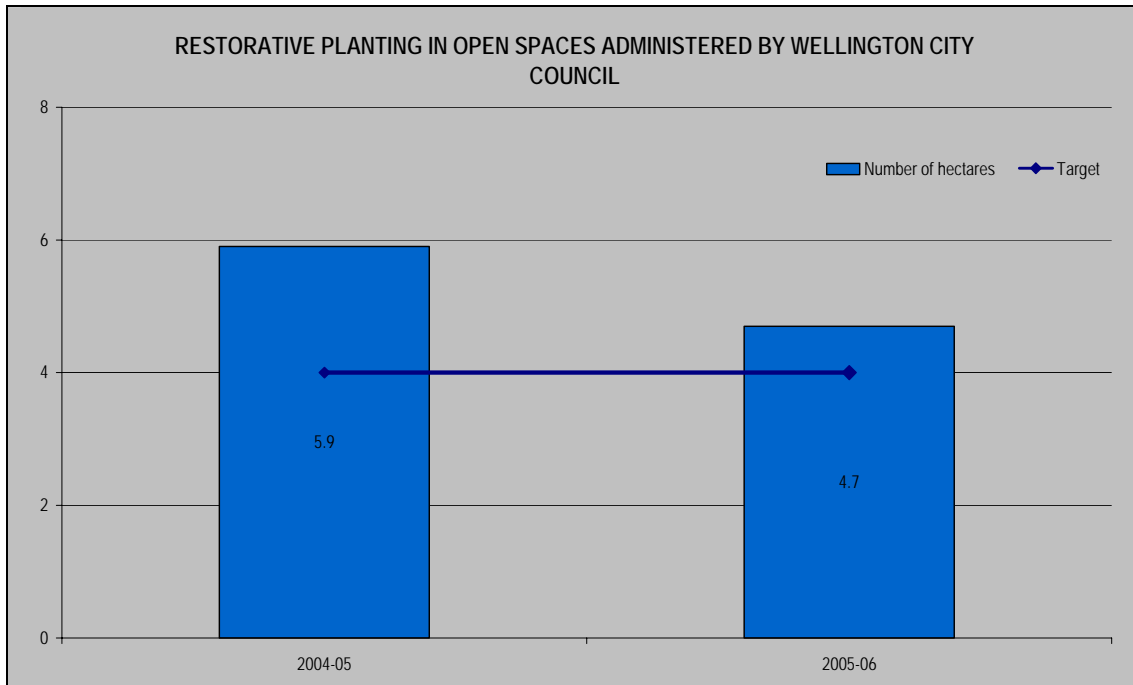
Our priorities include planting sites where hazardous trees have been removed, planting steep mowing sites, bulking up existing vegetation sites, and planting new sites on the south coast. Our botanical gardens also provide for specialist plantings – see section 5.3.3.

What we did

- We provided 17,000 eco-sourced native plants for over 38 community and school planting projects in city reserve areas.
- We planted more than 50,000 eco-sourced native plants on 40 sites throughout the city. Major planting was undertaken at Karori Park, Tinakori Hill, Lyall Bay and Trelissick Park.
- Project Podocarp, a five-year programme to plant northern rata on Tinakori Hill, started with a community planting programme of 2,000 plants.
- Project Kaiwharawhara continued with the installation of information signs and installation of fish ladders to enable native fish to get upstream from Trelissick Park.

How we performed

We have continued to exceed our Annual Plan targets, with 4.7 hectares of restorative planting in open spaces administered by Wellington City Council.



Source – Parks and Gardens, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	536	597	61	567
Revenue	5	6	(1)	19
Net expenditure	531	591	60	548
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	0	0	0	0

OUTCOME 5.3 OPEN SPACES

Our aim is for all people to have access to Wellington's open space, including the coastline, harbour, parks, Town Belt and Outer Green Belt. We also want the city's open spaces to provide a wide range of recreational opportunities that do not compromise environmental values.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOME	OUTCOME INDICATORS	2004/05	2005/06	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to maintain 271.5 kilometres of tracks for walking, running, biking and other recreational activities. More Wellington residents think that the city's open spaces are clean and litter free. There has been a minor increase in the proportion of people who make regular use of the city's open spaces. 	Number of kilometres of maintained tracks within Wellington (km).	271.5	271.5	
	<i>Source - WCC Parks and Gardens</i>			
			2005	2006
	Residents who think that the city's open spaces are clean and free of litter (%).	73%	83%	
	Residents who are regularly using the city's open spaces (including parks, the coastline, harbour, Town Belt and Outer Green Belt) (%):			
	most days.	12%	13%	
	once or twice a week.	28%	32%	
once a month.	19%	21%		
<i>Source - WCC Resident Satisfaction Survey</i>				

5.3.1 Activity: Local parks and open spaces

This activity includes the management and maintenance of the city's parks along with other open spaces, horticultural plantings and street trees. This work aims to give Wellingtonians access to a high amenity, safe open space environment that provides a range of recreational opportunities. This activity also includes planning for the future of the city's parks and open spaces.

What we did and how we performed

- We prepared concept plans for the upgrade of the Owhiro Bay entrance. This included preparation of the design brief and public consultation.
- We prepared a 10-year programme for upgrading community parks. This included defining and identifying 'community parks', assessing their functions and prioritising upgrade developments.
- We considered options for improving access to open space land by extending the network of tracks. This includes four funding scenarios that will be considered as part of the 2007/08 budget round.
- We consulted on a 'discussion document' as part of the Otari Wilton's Bush Management Plan review.
- We continued with our programme to upgrade park furniture installing new bins, seats and signage across the parks network.
- We called for suggestions from the public on how to spend the Plimmer Bequest. The Plimmer Bequest has been held in trust for Wellington residents since 1980. The bequest is to be spent enhancing the city's bays, beaches and reserves. Ninety-eight ideas were received, which were then reduced to a shortlist of nine. We agreed to use Plimmer Bequest funding to beautify and upgrade Scorching Bay and Central Park over the coming years.

- We finalised plans for the upgrade of Cog Park – the 1.2 hectare area next to Hataitai Beach. The concept design, which seeks to make better use of the area and make it a nicer place to visit, was approved in February 2006 after consultation with affected and interested parties.

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	6,461	6,498	37	5,298
Revenue	358	618	(260)	407
Net expenditure	6,103	5,880	(223)	4,891
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	3,576	3,599	23	2,856

As a number of revenue-generating assets were transferred out of this activity after the budget was set, this activity is receiving a smaller share of lease income. This is offset by a favourable variance in revenue in the Town Belts activity (5.3.5).

5.3.2 Activity: Vegetation safety

We aim to ensure the land we manage is as safe as possible. Some trees on Town Belt and reserve land are in danger of falling – either because they're old or as a result of storms. This creates risks to public safety and also affects residents' ability to use areas of open space. We have a programme to remove and replace all high-risk and medium-risk trees over a 12-year period.

What we did

We completed major pine tree removal at the Chest Hospital on Mt Victoria and at Berhampore Golf course. The final stage of pine tree removal at Tinakori Hill was completed and a further 5,000 northern rata were planted. We also removed potentially hazardous pines from the Wellington Botanic Garden playground and from the entrance to Bolton Street Memorial Park.

How we performed

TOTAL AREA OF MEDIUM AND HIGH RISK HAZARDOUS TREES THAT ARE REMOVED

During the year we removed approximately 8 hectares of medium and high risk hazardous trees throughout the city. This result exceeded our Annual Plan target of 7 hectares.

Source – Parks and Gardens, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	966	808	(158)	1,210
Revenue	201	11	190	227
Net expenditure	765	797	32	983
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	-	-	-	-

5.3.3 Activity: Botanic gardens

We maintain four botanic gardens: Wellington Botanic Garden, Otari-Wilton's Bush, Bolton Street Memorial Park and Truby King Park (in Melrose). The gardens showcase a wide variety of plant life and provide places for walking and relaxing. They are used for concerts, weddings, seminars, and other events. The Wellington Botanic Garden receives more than a million visits a year.

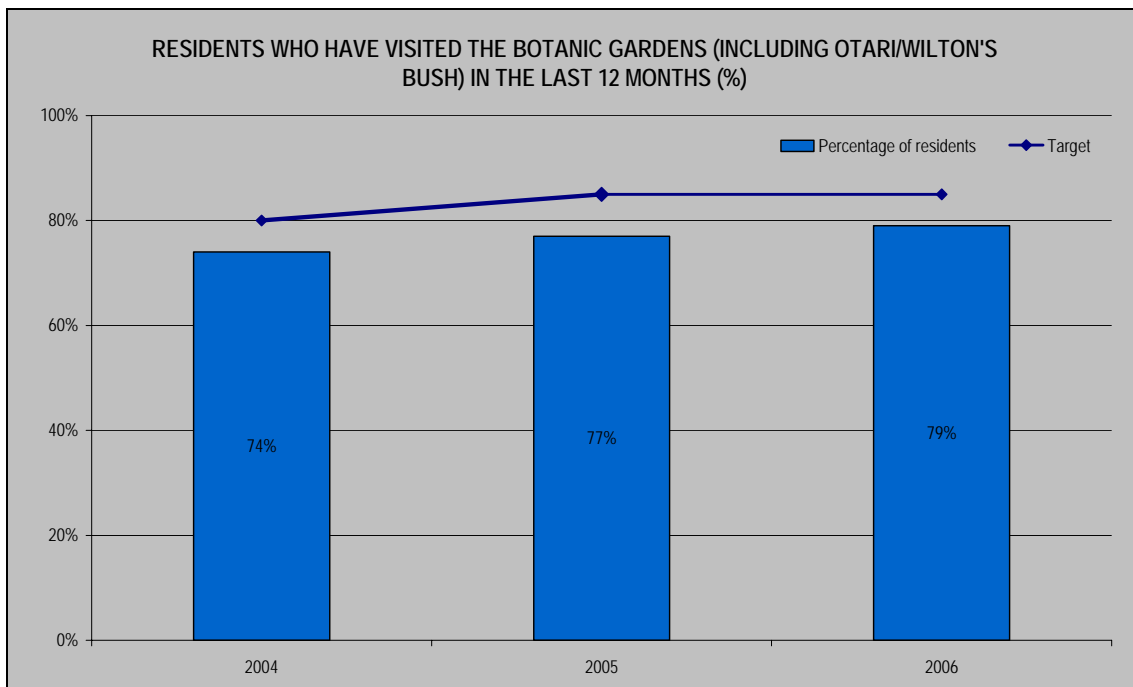
The gardens have educational and conservation functions, providing sanctuary for threatened plant species and the opportunity to nurture new species. Otari-Wilton's Bush is internationally-renowned for its conservation efforts.

What we did

- At Wellington Botanic Garden, we completed work to renew the Herb/Rose Garden zigzag and surrounds. We completed a new paved link between the Founders and Centennial Entrances on Glenmore Street. And we completed conservation plans for the Joy Fountain, Summer House and the Overseers Cottage.
- We upgraded the Otari Circular Walk from the collections area to the Troup Picnic Lawn.
- We completed the landscape design for the replanting of the house and Mausoleum at Truby King Park.
- The gardens hosted many events. Highlights included the popular Spring Festival, the Otari Open Day, and the Botanic Gardens Tulip Weekend that attracted more 10,000 visitors on the Sunday alone. The Wellington Botanic Garden Soundshell was also host to the very successful Summer City Concert series with an estimated 3,000+ concert goers most nights.
- We developed maintenance guidelines for the management of the vegetation and restoration of the headstones and graves in the Bolton Street Memorial Park.

How we performed

The botanic gardens continue to attract residents and visitors alike. Although we did not achieve our Annual Plan target (85 percent), we continue to see steadily increasing visitor numbers.



Source – Resident Satisfaction Survey, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	3,652	3,504	(148)	3,248
Revenue	433	314	119	414
Net expenditure	3,219	3,190	(29)	2,834
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	936	966	30	633

5.3.4 Activity: Beaches and coast

We look after many of the city's beaches and dunes, covering the south coast, eastern bays, Miramar Peninsula, Evans Bay, Makara Beach and the fantastic Oriental Bay and Freyberg beaches. This includes erosion control work, cleaning and dealing with spills.

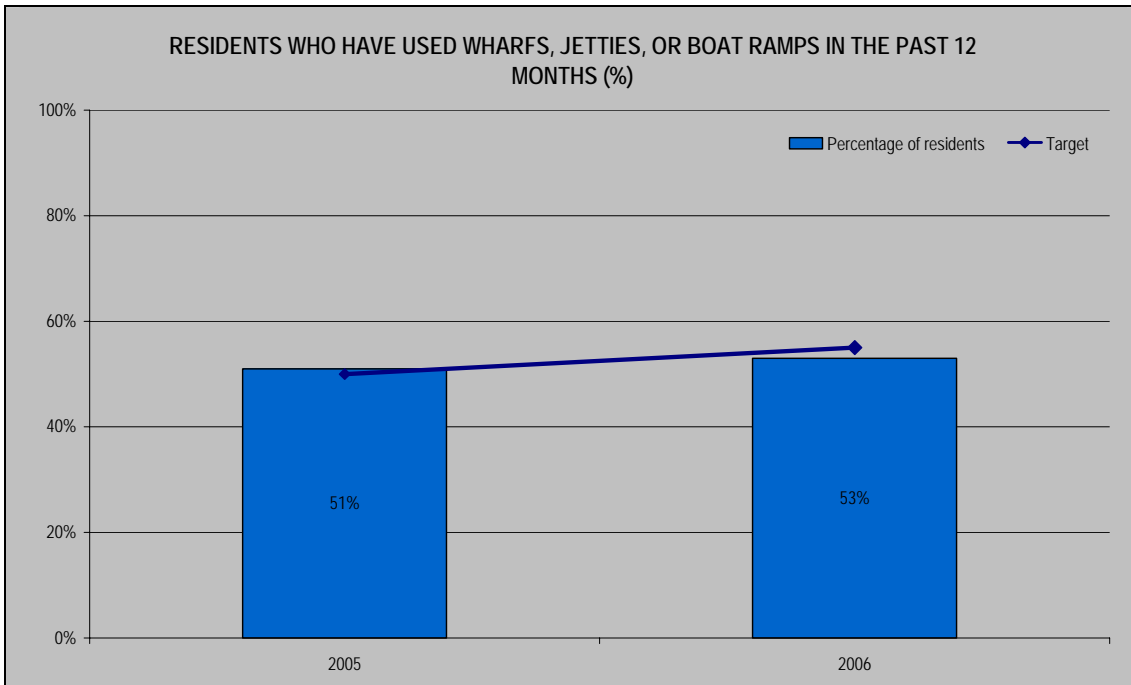
We also have a responsibility for the upkeep of many of the city's wharves, breakwaters, jetties and public boat ramps, as well as the Carter Fountain in Oriental Bay.

What we did

- We continued with the implementation of the South Coast Management Plan. The key project was the rehabilitation of land between Houghton Bay and Te Raekaihau Point that included walkways, vehicle barriers and revegetation.
- We supported the Island Bay dune restoration group with plants, materials and weed control.
- We upgraded coastal carpark surfaces to address potholes and water runoff.
- We monitored and relocated sand at Oriental Bay beach under the compliance terms of the resource consent.
- We continued our programme to address erosion at Cobham Drive.
- We completed the construction of the finger jetties and environmental boat washdown facility at Evans Bay Yacht Club.

How we performed

We monitor usage of wharves, jetties and boat ramps in the city to ensure optimal numbers of people are enjoying our beach and coastal facilities. During the year we saw a small increase in the number of people who have accessed such facilities. Our Annual Plan target (55 percent) was not achieved.



Source – Resident Satisfaction Survey, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	865	769	(96)	658
Revenue	60	42	18	39
Net expenditure	805	727	(78)	619
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	455	459	4	688

5.3.5 Activity: Town belts

Wellington's Town Belt, Outer Green Belt and reserves offer fantastic recreation venues for the public, but they need a lot of care. We manage these areas to ensure that they are maintained to a high standard. This includes custodial duties, operational planning and implementation, educational programmes and upgrade projects.

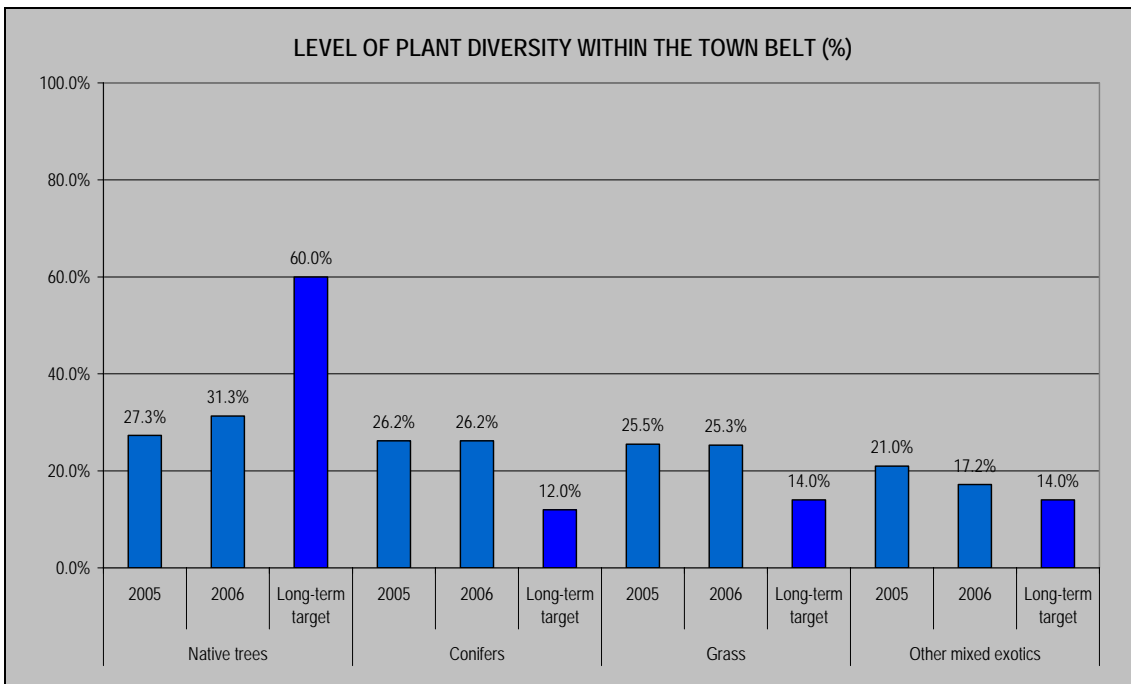
What we did

- We redeveloped the Majoribanks and Oriental Bay entrances to the Wellington Town Belt.
- We continued the fencing of the Outer Green Belt with the installation of over two kilometres of fence on the ridge above Chartwell running through to Otari-Wilton's Bush.
- We upgraded the Mark Avenue entrance to Seton Nossitor Park.
- We carried out a major planning exercise to review reserve designations of land covered by the South Coast and Outer Green Belt Management Plans. This will ensure all land areas are designated with the reserve classification appropriate to their long-term use.

How we performed

We aim to increase the proportion of Town Belt land planted in native trees, while correspondingly reducing other types of vegetation. We have set long-term targets for the desired proportions of native trees and other plants.

During 2005/06, we planted 2.15 hectares of native trees in the Town Belt. Although progress is being made toward our long-term targets, this result did not meet our Annual Plan target (4 hectares).



Source – Parks and Gardens, Wellington City Council

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	1,884	1,168	(716)	1,286
Revenue	754	49	705	224
Net expenditure	1,130	1,119	(11)	1,062
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	852	937	85	625

As a number of revenue-generating assets were transferred into this activity after the budget was set this activity is receiving a larger share of lease income. This is offset by an unfavourable variance in revenue in the Local Parks and Open Spaces activity 5.3.1. Offsetting the additional revenue in this activity is an unfavourable variance in interest expense. This is also due to the transfer of assets into this activity after the budget was set. This is offset by a favourable expenditure variance in the Sports Field activity 7.1.2.

5.3.6 Activity: Land management

We negotiate with landowners and the community over the future of open space land – sometimes these negotiations will result in land purchases, land swaps or boundary adjustments to secure sites with open space values. This activity can also involve education to help landowners understand open space values, and engaging the community in projects relating to open space land.

As this work is carried out in conjunction with other Council activities, it has no budget and no performance measures.

5.3.7 Activity: Walkways

We encourage public use of Town Belt and reserve areas, and recognise that tracks are important for people's access to and enjoyment of the city's bush and open spaces. We currently maintain approximately 160 kilometres of walking tracks, and another 100 kilometres of mountain bike and dual use tracks, throughout the city.

Our maintenance work includes controlling plants, drainage and repairing storm damage and vandalism. We're often assisted by volunteer and community groups in this work.

While Wellington's terrain offers a wealth of mountain biking opportunities for moderate to experienced riders we will in the coming year explore options to improve rides for children and new entrants to the sport.

What we did and how we performed

- We completed the final section of the 12-kilometre Skyline Walkway through Otari farms in conjunction with Meridian Energy. This now enables mountain bikers and walkers to travel off-road from Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park to Ohariu Valley north of Johnsonville.

- We worked with Makara Peak supporters to upgrade several tracks in the park, develop new map-boards and redevelop the skills area in Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park.
- We constructed four new bridges along the Te Mahanga Stream in Trelissick Park to complete an easy route through the park's valley.
- We upgraded a walking track from Huntingdon St and Glamorgan St to Tinakori Hill, including an entrance upgrade and new signs.
- We completed construction of a walkway from Happy Valley Road to Domanski Crescent.
- The Wellington section of the national Te Araroa Walkway was finalised and identified with signage. The route starts at the Cable Car lookout and goes via Kaukau into Ohariu Valley and out through Spicer Forest to Porirua.

What it cost

Cost of activity \$000	Actual 2006	Budget 2006	Variance 2006	Actual 2005
<i>Operational projects</i>				
Expenditure	267	357	90	203
Revenue	3	5	(2)	6
Net expenditure	264	352	88	197
<i>Capital projects</i>				
Cost	318	337	19	297

OUTCOME 5.4 LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Our aim is for features of Wellington's landscape and natural environment with special importance to be recognised and, where appropriate, protected.

PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OUTCOME	OUTCOME INDICATORS	2005	2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in the amount of open space land that is maintained or owned by Wellington City Council. • An increased majority of Wellington residents think that the natural environment of Wellington is well maintained. 	Open space land owned or maintained by Wellington City Council (hectares).	3,214	3,469
	<i>Source - WCC Parks and Gardens</i>		
	Residents who think that the natural environment of Wellington (including the beaches and coast) is well maintained (%).	88%	92%
<i>Source - WCC Resident Satisfaction Survey</i>			