



Arborea



Spring 2020

Newsletter of **The Tree Council**
Tiakina Rākau • est 1986

Tree Week 2020

Tree Week took place from 3 to 11 October 2020 and unfortunately due to Covid19 our AGM event had to be cancelled, but our guided walk of Smiths Bush in Northcote did take place as planned as part of the Auckland Heritage Festival. We were very fortunate to have Steve Cook and Penny Clifflin to lead us in our exploration of this magnificent remnant puriri forest. They shared a huge amount of fascinating information on the history, ecology and management of this very special place. Thanks to both of them for a most enjoyable visit for our 45 attendees.

Memberships are due now

If you cannot attend our AGM please can you renew your membership asap by paying your annual fee of \$20 per person (\$15 for concessions) into our ANZ bank account The Tree Council 11-5462-0230022-11 using your name as a reference. We are sorry but we are no longer able to accept cheques. Our membership secretary will send you a receipt. Your membership is extremely important to enable us to operate and we thank you all for your continuing support for our work.



Photo: Smiths Bush credit: Milestepper.com

Message from Sean Freeman

Well what a year 2020 has turned out to be on so many different levels, I think that now more than ever I feel very grateful to be living in Aotearoa. The lockdowns that we have had here and their associated costs have meant a reprioritising of resources. When it comes to defining what is an essential service, we should remember just how essential the benefits and services provided by trees (especially older, bigger, urban trees) are to our long-term wellbeing.

As I'm sure you all know this year is an election year. We encourage all our members and supporters to ensure you

understand the policies of each candidate regarding tree protection and use your vote to improve the future for trees across the country.

We will be holding our AGM online via Zoom this year and we hope you will be able to join us. Please see details on how to register for this event on page 2

I want to formally welcome Viv Allen and Mark Lockhart to The Tree Council Board. We are extremely happy to have their energy, passion and enthusiasm on our team.

Sean Freeman

This Newsletter is published by **The Tree Council** PO Box 60-203, Titirangi,
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For more information about what we do please go to www.thetreecouncil.org.nz





News in brief

The Tree Council AGM

Our AGM will take place online via Zoom on Monday 19 October at 7pm.

Unfortunately due to the Covid19 restrictions we had to cancel our planned film and talk evening at Lopdell House Theatre. Thanks to Robin Kewell, Sandra Coney, Nick Waipara and Jolie Hutchings for their offers to bring this evening to you. Hopefully we can do it next year instead.

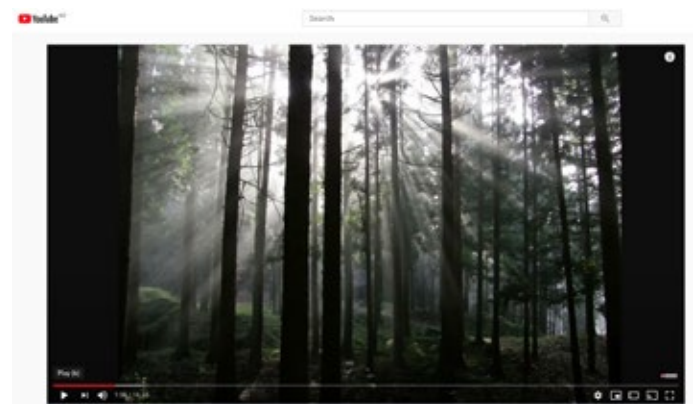
Our AGM will now be held online via Zoom on Monday 19 October at 7pm. Please register your interest in attending this online event by completing the short form at: <https://tinyurl.com/yywn3usj>. A link for the Zoom meeting

will be sent to you nearer the time. You need to download Zoom onto your computer, phone or other device in advance. Visit www.zoom.us for details.

Everyone attending the AGM must be a paid-up financial member. If you have not yet paid your membership please do so by depositing \$20 per person/organisation (\$15 concessions) before you complete this registration to our ANZ account: The Tree Council 11-5462-0230022-11 using your name as a reference. Donations to support our work are gratefully received. We look forward to seeing you there. Thank you from The Tree Council Board.

Forest Bathing

Here is a link to an informative video dealing with some very good research carried out almost 15 years ago in Japan. The research looks at the link between forest bathing (walking in the forest) and the levels of several compounds in our blood directly linked to the performance of our immune system. The video is very easy to follow and the person providing the voice over does a really good job explaining the research and its significance. We thought you would enjoy watching it. Obviously our Auckland urban forest should be capable of providing very similar services to us if properly planned, maintained and protected.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgDjVEpEOdQ>

Saving the Sturges Road Oak

In November 2019 The Tree Council received notification of a consent application to remove a scheduled oak tree at 139 Sturges Rd in Henderson. The notification notice was widely shared on social media because the applicant had included in their reasons for wishing to remove the tree that the acorns were a danger to their children.

This tree had been planted prior to 1940 (as it is shown on archive aerial photos) on rural land and was protected as part of the conditions of the subdivision and development of the land as part of Henderson Heights in the 1990s. There are a number of other oaks of similar size in the locality and together these trees provide a reference back to the colonial history of the area as productive market gardens and vineyards.

We wrote a submission opposing the removal and the hearing was held on 4 December 2019, attended by Board Members David Smith and Mels Barton on behalf of The Tree Council. Auckland Council opposed the removal and a submission was also heard from a local resident opposing the removal of the tree.

The applicant's case centred on their opinion that the tree caused damage to their driveway and house and



that its acorns and leaf fall were a nuisance. However, they failed to present any evidence, expert witnesses or professional reports of any kind to support their case.

The application was declined. However, during the hearing we heard that in the previous few days the tree had been attacked and major limbs severely damaged. We were shocked to think that someone who had applied through the appropriate process for permission to remove the tree would take the law into their own hands only days before the hearing. It is extremely sad to think that although the tree was saved it has been badly damaged. We hope it will survive.

Mels Barton

New Pest found in Auckland

In March 2019 a row of mature Pin Oaks were removed from a playing field adjacent to Terry Street in Blockhouse Bay, west Auckland due to infection with a beetle called Granulate ambrosia (*Xylosandrus crassiusculus* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae). The removal was managed by the Ministry for Primary Industries (now called Biosecurity NZ) as this beetle is an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act. Five other incursions have been found and dealt with in Auckland in the last year. The beetle is regarded as a serious pest overseas. It is known to damage a wide range of broadleaf trees, including horticultural species such as avocado, and can spread fungal diseases. This is the first time the beetle has been found in New Zealand. While it is unclear how the beetle arrived in New Zealand, the evidence to date suggests it may have been in the country for at least two years.

Biosecurity New Zealand is asking the public to report any sign of the wood-boring Granulate ambrosia beetle.



Here are some photos that may help you to identify the beetle. If you see anything suspicious please report it to Biosecurity NZ by calling the NZ Exotic Disease and Pest Hotline on 0800 809966 or visit biosecurity.govt.nz

Mels Barton

Scheduled Pohutukawa, 2 School Road Kingsland

Back in November of 2018 The Tree Council was advised of an application to remove a scheduled Pohutukawa located at 2 School Road, Kingsland. The application was made by the owners of the property citing their concerns regarding the safety of the tree as well as perceived serious conflicts between branches of the tree and the electrical service line to the dwelling.

We wrote a submission opposing the application and pointing out that the applicant had provided no evidence to support their concerns regarding risk of significant harm to persons or property from the tree. In addition, we noted that any conflicts between tree branches and service supply lines could be permanently resolved simply by relocating the service line to the next power pole thereby changing the alignment of the line to the dwelling avoiding the tree entirely. I presented our submission at the hearing held on 8 July 2019 a member of the local community also opposing the application, spoke to their submission at the hearing. Although the applicant had not engaged an arborist to provide a professional opinion Auckland Council's Heritage Arborist had expressed an opinion generally supportive of the application.

At the end of the hearing the independent commissioners determined that there was not enough evidence provided in the application to enable them to reach a decision so they adjourned the hearing, requesting that the applicant provide an Arborist's report to include a detailed tree risk assessment as well as addressing other matters that were absent in the applicant's original evidence.

Somewhat oddly the applicant did not provide the information requested, rather Auckland Council's Heritage

Arborist provided an additional memo still supporting the application based on a follow up ground inspection of the tree. As a submitter The Tree Council was able to respond to the additional information provided by the applicant. We simply pointed out that this new information was just as flawed as that included in the original application.

In September 2019 after considering all of the evidence before them (or more accurately the absence of any evidence supporting the application) including the arguments surrounding the stability of the tree and potential conflicts with the service lines, the independent commissioners refused the application.

Sean Freeman



Photo: Pohutukawa at 2 School Road. Credit: Sean Freeman

New Board Member Viv Allen

More than thirty years ago and a few months before my father died of cancer, I went out on his farm to look for him and was horrified to find him balanced on a steep slope planting trees. Worried about the danger, I called out, What do you think you are doing? His reply was, "I may not be able to see these trees mature but others will get to enjoy them after I've gone". I am thankful to have had such a father and to have inherited his love of trees.

I am newly retired after having had a varied work life as a farmer, advertising executive, English Language teacher and for the last 20 years in the IT industry selling and implementing software. In my spare time I've managed to indulge in my love of tramping and was lucky to have walked the Heaphy Track with my daughter this last January before lockdown.

After living for more than 20 years in Titirangi on one and a half acres of beautiful native bush, we recently downsized and moved into a small townhouse in Freemans Bay. We chose Freemans Bay for the proximity to the city and because it has some lovely tree lined streets. It didn't take me long to discover that there is a different culture here than in Titirangi regarding trees. Three recent events have made me aware that there is an urgent need to help protect the remaining trees in Auckland both on private and public land.

Firstly, last year I was walking home when I noticed arborists scaling a huge Norfolk pine on the corner of Wellington and Hepburn Streets and was told that they were cutting it down. I immediately called the Council to be told it was on private land and that nothing could be done. This was an iconic healthy tree, one of the tallest trees in central Auckland – felled in minutes. It took me weeks before I could walk past the gravesite of this tree without crying.

Secondly, six months ago a townhouse in my area was bought by a couple who immediately requested to fell a huge oak tree that shaded their house. Why did they buy the house if they didn't like the tree? Luckily the tree is growing on a shared common and, for the short term, the others don't want to cut it down. However, if the ownership of some of the other houses changes then this tree will be in danger again.

The third event is closer to me and ongoing. We share a common (small park) with 29 other owners and we have a few beautiful old trees planted over 40 years ago that give the park real character and was the main reason that we bought our house. Recently at our AGM for the common, one resident requested to cut down a gorgeous, healthy deciduous Ash tree saying, 'I love trees but I want to cut down this large tree that I'm scared of'. The last arborist's report of this tree did not show any danger and, previous to the meeting, I had assumed no-one would agree with



Photo: Viv Allen. Credit: Allen family

her but many did, saying things like, "Yes, then I'd have a better view of the Skytower," and "Yes, cut it down as we can just plant another". I stood up to defend the tree and I'm still fighting for it – weeks after the meeting. By the way, this owner is an absentee owner which makes it even harder for me to understand.

The reason I want to help the Tree Council is that trees are incredibly important on so many levels. I find it bewildering when talking with neighbours in the central city when they start with "I love trees BUT I think they should cut this one down because; it drops too many leaves, drops seeds on my car, drops too much debris." My answer to these people is; Do you have a pet that you clean up after continually? At least our trees are working hard to contribute to our environment. I have a lot to learn but hope that I can contribute to the Tree Council to help prevent further loss of trees in our beautiful city of Auckland.

Viv Allen

Ōwairaka/Tūpuna Maunga Authority Operations Plan

It is likely that until late last year most Auckland residents would not have known who or what the Tūpuna Maunga o Tāmaki Makaurau Authority (TMA) are, or what their role is in the management of the Tūpuna Maunga (ancestral mountains/volcanic cones) which dominate the natural landscape of our region.



Image: Artist Impression – Ōwairaka-Mt Albert Future Vegetation – Credit Tūpuna Maunga Authority.

To many Aucklanders (ourselves included) these unique landscapes are highly valued recreational spaces, but to the Iwi the Tūpuna Maunga are taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down the generations). The Maunga are wahi tapu: a place sacred to Māori in the traditional, spiritual, religious, ritual, or mythological sense.

As part of the Treaty of Waitangi settlement The Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau Collective Redress Act 2014 (the Redress Act) came into effect on 29 August 2014 vesting the Crown-owned land in 14 Tūpuna Maunga (ancestral mountains/volcanic cones) in 13 iwi/hapū groups with interests in Auckland (Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau).

The Redress Act also established the Tūpuna Maunga o Tāmaki Makaurau Authority – TMA (a co-governance body with equal membership from Auckland Council and Ngā Mana Whenua) to administer the Tūpuna Maunga. The return of the Tūpuna Maunga and the establishment of the TMA were a focal point and essential outcome of the Treaty of Waitangi negotiations between the Crown and the 13 iwi/hapū of Auckland.

In 2016 the TMA developed an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) outlining the strategic direction for the management of the 14 Tūpuna Maunga, establishing the basis and framework as to how the Tūpuna Maunga will be

valued, protected, restored, enhanced and managed in the future. The public were able to make submissions on the IMP through a planning hearing in 2016, however, as we know only too well the public generally only take interest in plans when the actions have a direct impact on them personally.

Ever since the Tūpuna Maunga Authority (TMA) plans for the ongoing management of the fourteen Tūpuna Maunga became the focus of national media attention The Tree Council has been clear and consistent in our support for the TMA based on the primacy of their legal and moral authority to determine how the Maunga are to be managed and developed, aided by Auckland Council in the implementation of these plans. To date the most vocal opposition to the TMA plans has been centred around Ōwairaka (Mt Albert) where a small number of protesters have physically prevented the tree removal operations which are part of the IMP. The TMA has also been taken to the High Court by two residents in a judicial review relating to the consultation process and planning hearing back in 2016, High Court judge Cheryl Gwyn has reserved her decision on the case.

Each financial year, the TMA and Council must agree an annual operational plan to provide a framework in which the Council will carry out its functions for the routine

management of the Tūpuna Maunga and administered lands for that financial year, under the direction of the TMA. The Tree Council made a submission on the Draft Tūpuna Maunga Operational Plan 2020/21 which highlighted our support for the plans to restore native woodland on the slopes of the fourteen Maunga. We consider that the long-term outcomes of restoring the native ecology across all of the Maunga will be hugely positive, in fact transformative for the whole of Auckland.

The management of the urban forest in a modern city demands a rational and logical approach to the way in which you weigh up decisions about what you're going to do, and the underlying justification for those decisions. It is our view that the TMA has followed a rational and logical approach providing justification for the decisions made regarding both tree removals and the replanting on the Maunga. The narrative woven throughout the IMP gives tangible visibility to Mana Whenua values and world views as well as reflecting the connections and public access our diverse communities have with these special places. We further acknowledge and support the express intention of the Operational Plan 2020/21 to restore and enable the role and responsibility of Mana Whenua as kaitiaki over the Tūpuna Maunga alongside recognition of European and other histories and interactions with the Maunga.

Our submission also suggested that in order to minimise the level of misinformation around planned works specific details should be provided of the implementation of planned removals of inappropriate exotic and pest tree species, alongside information on the number and species to be planted as part of the revegetation works.

It should be noted that the TMA provided much of this information on large project signage placed at the main entrance to Ōwairaka back in early November 2019 and for the Ōhūiarangi/Pigeon Mountain works. Additional details regarding the tree species selected for revegetation were provided through media releases and responses to emails. It is disappointing (but sadly not surprising) that despite these efforts to provide such clear details some of those opposing the IMP for the Tūpuna Maunga continue to misrepresent the planned works.

The projects outlined in the Operational Plan 2020/21 are designed not just to deliver outcomes for the 13 iwi/hapū of the Tāmaki Collective but for all the people of Auckland. It is our view that on completion the programs and projects will enhance the mana and mauri of the Tūpuna Maunga and deliver transformed open spaces containing restored indigenous native ecosystems across the eight local board areas.

Sean Freeman

RMA Update

The Resource Management Act will undergo a two stage reform process.

The first tranche reform dealt only with urgent errors and anomalies and to enact it the Resource Management Amendment Bill has now been passed through all stages of the House and received Royal Assent to become an Act.

The second tranche reform will be more substantial and we were assured by the Labour Party that it will include proposals to reinstate general protection of urban trees, but we have yet to receive a policy statement from them as requested on this topic prior to the general election. As we go to print only the Green Party have committed to replacing general tree protection for urban trees.

The Tree Council and many of you made submissions on the RM Amendment Bill and a number of you attended the special hearing in Auckland to give an oral submission calling for this Bill to include provisions to protect urban trees. We thank you all for your work and support.

Unfortunately our appeal has fallen on deaf ears and despite the issue of tree protection attracting more submissions than any other issue covered by the Bill the select committee recommended to the House not to include provisions to protect trees. This was hugely disappointing and we believe a missed opportunity that

would have saved thousands of mature urban trees on private land.

The second tranche RMA reforms are already in preparation. New Directions for Resource Management in New Zealand is the most significant, broad ranging and inclusive review to take place within the system since the Resource Management Act (RMA) came into force in 1991. This review is now complete and was conducted by the independent Resource Management Review Panel chaired by retired Court of Appeal Judge, Hon Tony Randerson, QC. The review process was an opportunity to design a new system for resource management in New Zealand that delivers better outcomes for our environment, society, economy, and culture. The Panel has come up with a large number of recommendations that will reorient the system to focus on delivery of specified outcomes, targets and limits in the natural and built environments. You can read the report from the Panel here: <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/rmreview>

The next step in the reform process will be consultation to develop government policy and the form of future legislation, but obviously this work will not begin until after the general election on 17 October – and then only if Labour are re-elected to government. We will let you know when consultation begins.

Mels Barton



Photo: Mature trees in Warkworth centre. Credit: Eric Thompson

Why we need urban trees

Urban trees provide a wide range of benefits and services to cities, mainly ignored by residents and undervalued by local government. With winter having finally arrived along with some heavy rain it seems opportune to discuss one of their most important services:

Stormwater management

Rain falling on our cities is captured by the municipal stormwater system which drains directly into streams, rivers and the ocean without treatment. The majority of toxic pollution captured by the stormwater system occurs during the initial "first foul flush" as the pollutants from brake linings, oil etc on roads is washed off. Numerous studies from around the world have demonstrated that tree cover intercepts rainfall and prevents from 18-60% of it from reaching the stormwater system in an individual storm^{1,2,3}. Overall the urban forest can reduce annual stormwater runoff by 2-7%¹ and for every 5% of tree cover area added to a community, run-off is reduced by approximately 2%⁴.

Of course interception of precipitation is influenced by multiple factors including seasonal variation in precipitation and vegetative cover, size and frequency of precipitation events, and temperature and humidity plus tree species, leaf area index of the tree, the density of twigs and branches, and size and age of the tree.

It was shown that during a storm event of 250 – 500mm of rainfall a mature tree can store up to 400 litres of water until all the available surface area reaches saturation point¹. It was also demonstrated that interception was greatest for small storms and least for large storms. Because small storms are responsible for most pollutant wash off and overall loadings, urban forests are likely to produce greater benefits for water quality protection during smaller rainfall events³.

Some cities have calculated the value of savings for stormwater treatment provided by their urban forest. Street trees in Minneapolis save US\$9.1 million in stormwater treatment annually⁵. New York City's trees intercept 890 million gallons (3.37 billion litres) of

stormwater per year, worth more than \$35 million⁶.

Obviously there comes a point during a storm event when the surfaces in the canopy of the tree are totally saturated then water will run off the tree onto the ground. At this point the fissures created by tree roots increases the percolation of surface water into the upper soil horizons (of course provided the tree is growing in what could be described as soil rather than road base!). This is why trees are more effective at intercepting stormwater during small storms than big ones. The bottom line for city dwellers is simple. All the stormwater flows from our impermeable cover (the built infrastructure) ends up in the ocean along with all the heavy metals and other pollutants. So less stormwater runoff means less negative impacts on our delicate ocean ecosystem.

Mels Barton

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Photo: View of the scheduled Norfolk Island Pine at 30 Beach Road Castor Bay from Milford Beach. Credit: Mels Barton

Scheduled Norfolk Island Pine 30a Beach Road, Castor Bay

An application to remove a scheduled Norfolk Island Pine located at 30a Beach Road, Castor Bay was publicly notified in December 2019. The applicant was the property owner citing concerns about the structural integrity of the tree, falling branches, pine cones and foliage increasing maintenance burden and conflicts between the tree and inground services. These concerns were heightened following a lightning strike back in 2015.

The application included an Arborists assessment and report in the form of a memo supporting removal of the tree, concluding; 'that the concerns of the property owner were justified...difficulties with the tree have reached the point where the measures required to safely manage the tree greatly exceed what I would consider reasonable or practicable tree maintenance by a residential landowner. The situation is further complicated by the uncertainties surrounding the effects of the November 2015 lightning strike and the history of excavations in the tree's rootzone (particularly the Council wastewater infrastructure immediately at the base of the trunk)

We wrote a submission opposing the destruction of the scheduled tree arguing that although we accepted the observations made by the applicant's Arborist we did not agree with his interpretations of those observations or the conclusions that he drew.

The tree had been struck by lightning – When a tree is struck by lightning there are (of course) a range of possible outcomes. To us the visible evidence in this tree pointed to a slow and gradual recovery from that catastrophic event, not the spiral of decline perceived by the applicant's Arborist.

There were inground services in close proximity to the base of this tree, but absolutely no evidence was provided by the applicant or their Arborist to support claims that there was an existing serious conflict between the tree and these services.

All trees shed branches over time and we considered that the loss of eight branches from an 80-90 year old tree in the last 10+ yrs did not represent indicators of terminal

decline. We did not consider the arguments provided by the applicant's Arborist sufficient to justify destruction of a scheduled tree.

New Zealand's lockdown response to the global pandemic meant that the hearing for this application which was held on 11 May 2020 had to happen remotely. Thanks to the hard work by council staff all those wishing to speak at the hearing were able to and I felt in many ways the remote hearing was more convenient than having us all tramp into the city then back home.

Disappointingly on 2 June 2020 the independent commissioners granted the application. In their opinion there were sufficient uncertainties surrounding the impact of the lightning strike on the tree and the future outcomes relating to structural integrity to justify removal of the tree. It is always frustrating to lose another scheduled tree when we felt that the applicant did not present strong compelling evidence to support their claims.

One of the learnings we take away from this decision concerns the mitigation included as a condition of the consent. As has been the case for many submissions in the past few years we included a request that mitigation planting should be greater than 1:1 and where additional trees cannot fit into the property that off-site plantings should occur. Based on the arguments made by council planners in this hearing there does not seem to be any point in our continuing with this approach. Off-site plantings requiring the applicant to obtain permissions from other landowners (even on council land) will not be supported as a condition of the consent.

In this hearing the commissioners imposed a mitigation condition requiring the applicant to donate \$500 to a tree planting group to be used for the planting of native trees. Clearly in our view \$500 grossly undervalues the scheduled tree and the benefits and services that it has provided to the community of Castor Beach for the last 80-90 years. For future hearings we are going to have to present a compelling rationale for calculating the true value of our scheduled trees.

Sean Freeman

Huia Water Treatment Plant Replacement Project Update

The seemingly never ending saga that is Watercare’s proposal to replace the Huia Water Treatment Plant in Titirangi has taken some major leaps forward in the last six months. The consent applications were finally publicly notified in June 2019 after more than two years of pre-application consultation with stakeholders including The Tree Council via the Community Liaison Group. The Tree Council made a submission along with around 500 others and the hearing was held over an unprecedented 12 days during March 2020, just before the Covid lockdown.

The Tree Council collaborated with other groups to share the cost of expert witnesses including Forest & Bird, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society and Titirangi Residents & Ratepayers Association. The Titirangi Protection Group also used some of the same witnesses. Our expert witness testimony from ecologist Shona Myers, biosecurity expert Jack Craw and kauri dieback expert Dr Nick Waipara was impressive, far reaching and totally changed the direction of the hearing. Up until that point the questioning of submitters and witnesses had really been focused on the scale and value of losses that would result from locating the water treatment plant on the Manuka Rd site, and whether the compensation for those losses was adequate. It felt like a done deal. However, our experts, supported by expert witnesses from Auckland Council and Department of Conservation

were adamant that Watercare’s proposals were unable to prevent the spread of kauri dieback from the site, if it was present. This would be a breach of the Biosecurity Act and would risk the health of kauri downstream of the site, including taonga trees that are thought to be the largest in the Auckland Region. This evidence stopped the commissioners in their tracks and the entire rest of the day and subsequent day was spent exploring this evidence and examining whether this meant placing the treatment plant in this location was even possible. Since Watercare had not undertaken any kauri dieback monitoring of the site to determine whether the disease is present or not the hearing was adjourned and Watercare were directed to undertake expert caucusing with our expert witnesses, plus those from Auckland Council and DOC, to design and commission a monitoring programme to establish whether the disease is present or not. Due to Covid19 the caucusing had to take place online and the soil sampling has recently been undertaken by BioSense. Once the results are received the experts will meet to caucus again and make recommendations to the commissioners. We await the results with baited breath and are extremely grateful to the professionalism and tenacity of our expert witnesses who have done such an incredible job on this case for us and all the other interested parties.

Mels Barton



Kauri Dieback update

The National Kauri Dieback Management Programme continues to be a total shambles.



Infected kauri. Photo by Dr Ian Horner.

MPI made a business case to the Government wanting significant funding for a plan to let them continue to manage the programme, without producing the National Pest Management Plan on which they have spent over two years consulting with the public. The Tree Council and the Waitākere Ranges Protection Society wrote to the Cabinet to ask that this “business as usual” plan by MPI was not funded. We pointed out that MPI have failed to deliver the NPMP or a Management Agency as promised and that the current management model had failed in all outcomes over the previous decade. There is no point in pouring good money after bad into the same failed model.

Then Covid19 arrived. Whether it was our letter or the Covid crisis that provided the final nail in the coffin we will never know, but MPI did not receive funding for their plan and their kauri dieback team has been slashed to only two staff. This sounds bad, but in fact Northland Regional Council wants to step up to take on the management of the Kauri Dieback Programme nationally, which is really good news. They have made a bid to the Government to fund them to do the work to implement all the outcomes of the draft NPMP and create 100 jobs in the community, which we have supported with a letter to the Minister, although no funding has yet been forthcoming. We just hope that the economic impact of Covid will not limit other councils’ ability to invest in the operational funding required for them to manage kauri dieback in their regions.

We also hope that the Department of Conservation will use the significant funding made available in the Jobs for Nature fund in the recent budget to support work across the country to better manage this disease. There is so much work to be done on surveillance and monitoring, pig control, upgrading track infrastructure, public education and engagement, support for landowners, fencing off kauri areas from stock. Not to mention of course the continued research work into effective treatments.

The lack of a National Pest Management Plan continues to be a problem however because there is no standard approach to managing the disease, no legislative support for identifying healthy kauri areas that need to be protected, no direct funding for landowners and so much more.

We are extremely disappointed that the Labour/Green/ New Zealand First government has not made any progress in the management of this disease in the last three years other than providing funding for research via the Biological Heritage Science Challenge. The Greens have just released a policy that promises \$50m investment over two years and transfer of management of the programme to DOC, but there has been nothing from any of the other parties as we go to print. If you care about kauri you should ask your local candidates in the upcoming election what they plan to do to protect this taonga and when there will be a National Pest Management Plan for kauri dieback.

Mels Barton
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Kauri Rescue Update

The Kauri Rescue project was funded by Auckland Council in 2019/20 to work with landowners in the Auckland Region on treating and monitoring their kauri trees infected by *Phytophthora agathidicida* (kauri dieback disease). For the previous two years the project was funded by the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge.

Unfortunately due to Covid19 Auckland Council suspended all contract negotiations in March 2020 and this left Kauri Rescue with no funding whatsoever from 1 March. Consultation on the Council's Emergency Budget has now closed with a record 34,000 submissions from the public and the final budget is due to be released by the end of July.

It has been desperately frustrating that over the last six months we have been unable to support our citizen science landowners, take on new landowners and analyse the data we have worked so hard to collect over the last three years, thanks to our committed volunteer Ambassador team.

We spent this down time working with a team from the University of Auckland funded by the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge Ngā Rākau Taketake – Saving Our Iconic Trees programme's Mobilising for Action project to produce an interactive website that tells the story of kauri and of the Kauri Rescue project. The website has just been launched and is an incredible resource that will be very useful for educators and anyone interested in kauri. You can view the website here: <https://kaurirescue.nectar.auckland.ac.nz/>

The Kauri Rescue team applied to the Department of Conservation's Community Fund, which unfortunately was unsuccessful. But we have just received confirmation from the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge Ngā Rākau Taketake – Saving Our Iconic Trees programme that they will provide us with some funding for

monitoring of trees that have already been treated and for public engagement and citizen science work for the next

two to three years. This funding will not cover new landowners, nor the treatment of additional trees, so we will be relying on other funders to come on board to enable us to do that work.

The Kauri Rescue team are deeply grateful to the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge Ngā Rākau Taketake – Saving Our Iconic Trees programme for throwing us a funding lifeline.

We are keeping everything crossed that Auckland Council continues to support this vital project providing support and hope to landowners with kauri dieback on their properties, who will otherwise see their infected trees die, so that we can get back into business again before spring arrives.

Mels Barton



You can check out the Kauri Rescue story map website here:
<https://kaurirescue.nectar.auckland.ac.nz/>



**Rescuing Kauri
One Tree At A Time**

Credit: Kauri Rescue

Hidden Gem

At the very tip of Rosebank Peninsula, there's a small native forest. You've probably passed it without noticing – it's next to a go-kart racetrack just before the Whau bridge on the NW motorway heading out of town.

The racetrack and forest, both owned by Auckland Council, are called Rosebank Domain, and motor sports have dominated this headland into the Whau estuary since the 1930s, before which people used to venture out here from the city for quiet picnics. Prior to that there was a Māori village on the site, which had a clear view of the Matariki star constellation across the water.

In 2012, the native forest on the NW side was 'discovered' by an inquisitive ecology enthusiast who noted that despite heavy infestation by weeds, especially moth plant and climbing asparagus, there was basically an established native ecosystem operating here, – a community of native trees, shrubs and grasses that had not yet been completely destroyed by the weeds. It was different from much of this coastal strip that was dominated by wattle and woolly nightshade.

A small group of volunteers started to remove the moth plant which was making big holes in the canopy and darkening the forest floor, but there were so many weeds still that it was an almost impossible job. Luckily, in 2016, contractors came in to do weed clearance and planting as part of the mitigation for the SH16 widening works, which made a huge difference but that contract stopped in 2018 and the forest began to be re-infested with weeds, so again it became a labour of love for a few volunteers, and now it's actually looking pretty good.

Unfortunately, there's a bit of an issue with access, which is the main point of this story. Early this year, a volunteer was trespassed by the leaseholder of the racetrack while working in the forest.

The lease was granted to the Power Sports Association in 1977, a time when coastal native ecosystems were perhaps not considered anything very special. It covers the entire Domain, both racetrack and forest, and includes a clause requiring the leaseholder to keep it free of weeds, which has been completely ignored in the forest areas that more or less surround the racetrack. It might seem absurd that the racetrack lease includes a native forest, but that is the case, which explains the tyres and other auto debris that adorn the forest floor in places.

The whole of Rosebank Domain is officially classified as Open Space – Sport and Active Recreation Zone. Other places of this type are generally available for informal



Rosebank Domain. The forested area, particularly that on the northwest side, needs to be legally separated from the racetrack area so that its ecological values can be protected and enhanced by Council working in partnership with community volunteers.

recreation activities such as walking, jogging and informal games when not used for sport and active recreation. Activities and facilities with this designation that are located on the coast are normally limited to those that have a functional or operational requirement for a coastal location, which motor racing clearly doesn't. Finally, this zone requires activities and development in locations adjoining the coast to meet all of the following: "maintain the visual amenity of the coastal environment and water bodies; avoid areas scheduled for their outstanding natural landscape, outstanding or high natural character or historic heritage values; and recognise Mana Whenua values." The current lease has certainly failed to maintain the natural character and ecology and needs to be reviewed.

The good news is that the lease has expired and is being rolled over year on year until the Council can decide what to do with it. Preparation of a new one is currently in progress and will be publicly notified soon because there is considerable interest. This is a golden opportunity for the racetrack area to be legally separated from the forest so that this rare ecosystem can be returned to Council's management, protected and no longer the responsibility of people whose main interest is racing motor vehicles. Ultimately it could be given Esplanade Reserve status in recognition of its real ecological and cultural value.

If you would like to be personally notified when submissions can be made, please contact Donna.Cooper@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and ask to be added to the register of interested parties for the new Rosebank Domain lease.

Canal Road Avondale – An Opportunity Missed

Canal Road, Avondale has been a significant casualty of the National government's decision to remove blanket tree protection rules from the Resource Management Act in 2012.



Photo: Canal Road trees by David Lockhart

Canal Road, Avondale has been a significant casualty of the National government's decision to remove blanket tree protection rules from the Resource Management Act in 2012. It is a loss on many levels and has highlighted Auckland Councils' inability to "think outside the square" or seem to care about the accelerating loss of Auckland's urban forest. This has been compounded by the Whau Local Board not supporting the potential purchasing of the site when The Tree Council showed them the site three years ago. Whau Local Board Chair Tracy Mullholland and Council officers failed to support the preservation of the site even after a senior landscape planner recommended the Council purchase the land as a ready-made pocket park, only to be overruled by the Senior Policy Advisor.

A flawed argument cited the Avondale Jockey Club as providing future green space to meet Avondale's needs, along with the presence of the existing Council Canal Road Reserve down the road. A potential land swap with the reserve down the road which could be more easily developed was rejected. Apart from the fact that the

Council don't own the Jockey Club and that the reserve down the road has few trees and is a grim little patch of grass, Auckland Council missed the point.

The Canal Rd site was botanically, ecologically, historically and socially significant and this has been supported by the Auckland Botanical Society, The Tree Council and Forest and Bird. Why it was never zoned as a Significant Ecological Area in the Unitary Plan is a question that cannot be answered. An on-line petition asking Council to buy the land and save the trees collected 8,500 signatures and approximately 100 people turned out in protest at the lack of action in December 2019. Since the chainsaws arrived the site has become a focus for protest by local residents and arborists distraught at the carnage being caused to these beautiful trees. The unprofessional way in which the removals were being done led to the site being temporarily closed by WorkSafe and has highlighted how the removal of general tree protection from the Resource Management Act has devalued the arboriculture industry and enabled cowboys without qualifications to

operate with impunity, endangering life and property as well as doing a terrible job of destroying our urban forest. Ironically the Whau Local Board funded a “Wildlink” pamphlet which identified the Canal Road site as a part of a handful of historically important local sites with points of natural interest in Avondale - of which one had already been lost (the scheduled pecan trees) due to a Council “error” in 2017.

Apart from one scheduled Pohutukawa tree (Council rejected scheduling any other trees), all 46 mature native trees on the Canal Rd site are threatened with removal. At the time of printing only 23 trees remain, occupied by protestors in a standoff over 80 days old that shows no sign of ending. The trees are almost 100 years old and include rare black maire, titoki, totara, rimu, puriri, Pohutukawa, karaka, mangeao, hinau and kawaka. A total of 1500 years of growth.

The loss of trees in Auckland is scary, with Council citing 40% loss of tree cover in some suburbs (Grey Lynn) and 12,000 trees removed in a 2018 study. Council seemed to have acknowledged this by introducing the Urban Ngahere (Forest) Strategy which focuses on preserving and improving our urban forest (including on private land). However there doesn't appear to be any funding or motivation for staff to implement it. The nine principles of the strategy are:

- Right tree in the right place.
- Preference for native species.

- Ensure urban forest diversity.
- Protect mature, healthy trees.
- Create ecological corridors and connections.
- Access for all residents.
- Manage urban forest on public and private land.
- Deploy regulatory and non-regulatory tools.
- Manage the whole lifecycle of urban trees.

The loss of the Canal Rd site, which was identified by Forest and Bird as a “stepping stone” for birds travelling between the Hauraki Gulf and Waitakere Ranges, is huge for both the local community and all those who mourn the loss of Auckland's trees.

The Tree Council considers that the very least Auckland Council could do is ensure that the implementation of its Urban Ngahere Strategy is achieved by making its objectives part of the key performance indicators for its senior executive team, so that these filter down through all departments and staff. If retaining existing trees becomes a performance driver for Council staff perhaps opportunities to save sites like Canal Road will be a priority in future, instead of an inconvenience to be ignored.

If you know of sites on private land in your neighbourhood with significant stands of native and/or exotic trees, The Tree Council would like to work with you and the landowner to protect them. Please contact us with details and photographs on info@thetreecouncil.org.nz

Mark Lockhart

Plan Change 29

I am certain that many of you remember the publicity surrounding the destruction of three scheduled Pecan trees on Avondale Road in Avondale back in 2017.

This tragic incident was in large part caused by inaccuracies in the details pertaining to these particular trees in the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) – the errors were in both the text of Schedule 10 describing the trees and in the online mapping indicating the location of the trees. Following significant public pressure from The Tree Council and community groups and individuals, flurries of emails to elected officials



Photo: Avondale Pecan trees after “erroneous” removal. Credit: Mels Barton

and council officers, press releases and community presentations Auckland Council finally moved to audit the schedule and initiate a plan change – Plan Change 29 – to correct the identified discrepancies and errors.

Plan Change 29 was publicly notified on 15 August 2019, public submissions closed on 12 September 2019 and we are currently half way through the two-year time frame that Auckland Council has to deliver its decision on the provisions and matters raised in the submissions (including its reasons for accepting or rejecting submissions). Just like other planning processes any person who has made a submission has the right to appeal the decision on the proposed plan change to the Environment Court.

At this stage the proposed amended Schedule 10 with all the text changes highlighted can be viewed here <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-by-laws/our-plans-strategies/unitary-plan/auckland-unitary-plan-modifications/proposed-plan-changes/docspc29/pc29-proposed-plan-change.pdf> Along with corrections to text errors it is proposed to re-organise the Schedule alphabetically by locality and street address. The current ordering of the schedule by the tree's identification number has proved to be an obstacle to public access.

The proposed amendments to the online mapping tool can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6tabmv3>

As with the existing planning maps you can type in an address in the top left-hand address bar and you will then be taken to that address which shows the proposed changes to the mapped overlay.

Although we were very disappointed that council specifically excluded the addition of new trees to the schedule from the proposed Plan Change 29, based on recent information provided to the Planning & Environment and Climate Change committee from council officers it does appear that council is examining the process steps, costs and expertise required to support the plan change process necessary to enable the addition to trees into Schedule 10 of the Auckland Unitary Plan. This is encouraging, however it is by no means a guarantee that any meaningful action will be taken quickly. We will certainly be closely reading the agendas for subsequent committee meetings to ensure we are able to argue the case for adding new trees to Schedule 10.

In the meantime if you have special trees that you believe would qualify for scheduling in your neighbourhood you should consider nominating them now. Nomination requires the agreement of the landowner, so this is the first thing you need to get confirmed in writing. There is a form on the Council website for you to complete here: <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/building-and-consents/working-on-around-trees/Documents/guidance-for-nominating-notable-trees.pdf>

With respect to Plan Change 29 we certainly accept that this administrative correction of the schedule and the mapping is long overdue. Given how problematic it has been not to have accurately mapped locations of our scheduled trees it is very concerning to note just how many of the symbols representing scheduled trees remain unchanged. In other words, despite the time and money spent on the audit many of our scheduled trees are still being shown by mapping symbols that bear no relation to the actual location of the trees on the ground, they merely indicate that there is a scheduled tree or trees somewhere on the property.

I asked Auckland Council to explain why so many of the symbols used in the online mapping provided no improvement in terms of accurately locating the trees, here is their reply:

'As part of PC 29 the mapped overlay has been amended as far as possible using background information, historic data (such as those from legacy plan maps and contained in 'site pack' information held on the Council's database), aerial photography, the knowledge of heritage arborists and a number of site visits. In many cases, however, the exact locations of trees or groups of trees remains unverified given the large number of listings and the unfeasibility of visiting every property as part of PC 29. Given that many of the notable trees or groups of trees were part of older legacy heritage listings means that we may not have much information associated with some of them and are unable to accurately plot the location of the tree or groups of trees on the property without a full survey which would involve re-evaluation of trees which is outside the scope of this plan change. In these cases, a single central symbol will remain and will continue to alert users to the presence of a notable tree or group of trees on the particular property. As mentioned above this issue will be addressed as part of a future plan change process at a later date.'

So, after all the time and resources spent on the process to date what have we got? Based on the response from council – having mapping that is fit for purpose is not going to happen anytime soon. In this Covid emergency budget reality the 'later date' is going to be a lot later than any of us would want.

I can confidently predict that we will see many more debacles like the loss of the Avondale Pecans repeated. Our elected councillors will wring their hands, express concern, commit to having officers carry out a thorough review to tell them what they already know...inaccurate mapping leads to irreversible mistakes and the loss of more of our most precious living assets.

Sean Freeman

COVID-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Bill Submission

The Tree Council made a submission to the New Zealand Government Environment Select Committee on this Bill, requesting the exclusion of the Northern Pathway and the Unitec development from the list of projects in Schedule 2 of the Bill, to enable them to be subject to a public notification process.



Photo: Some of the trees surrounding Unitec Building 48. Credit: Penny Clifflin

Smiths Bush is a rare example of original remnant podocarp forest in the Auckland Region. One third of it was lost when the northern motorway sliced through it in 1959. This fragmentation has made the eastern portion ecologically useless because it is 100% compromised by edge effects. The current proposal includes an alignment option that will further encroach into the western portion of Smiths Bush, which still has intact ecosystem in the interior but which is surrounded on all sides by development and the edge effects are significant. Further encroachment will damage the interior habitat. This project needs to be publicly notified so that submissions can be made to support an alternative route for the pathway that does not threaten or encroach on Smiths Bush.

The Unitec campus has many significant and important trees. A number of them are scheduled and some are extremely rare. Not all the rare or significant trees are scheduled. The Tree Council has run numerous guided tree walks around the campus in recent years. The proposal for the development is large and will impact on the trees. It needs to be publicly notified so that submissions can be made to request retention and protection of the trees and that the development incorporates them rather than destroys them. We have a number of tree experts who are very familiar with the trees at Unitec and will be able to provide specialist advice.

Penny Clifflin spoke to the submission on behalf of The Tree Council, focussing on the Unitec site due to her research knowledge of the trees. She showed images to illustrate the character of the heritage tree collection (120 years old) with emphasis on the botanically rare, unusual and notable trees, along with the ecosystem services provided by the trees. The newer plantings around the Wairaka spring, and the nearby wetlands (designed by Isthmus group) provide stormwater retention, erosion control, and habitat for birds and insects. The ring roads and carparks for new polytechnic teaching blocks were planted in the late 1980s. There are also special collections such as memorial trees planted for staff and students who have passed away, and a collection of monocotyledonous plants in DNA spiral planted by the Hort and Landscape staff.

Having viewed earlier drafts of the development plan the board had felt reasonably comfortable that the green heart of the campus was being retained and the stream protected and further daylighted. The board asked Penny to check over the latest draft from a 'tree' perspective. She was horrified to find that the plan showed four large apartment blocks were shown right over Building 48 and and its trees!

Building 48 was constructed in 1896 and for some of its history housed the Maori Mental Health wards.

Surrounding it are a magnificent collection of trees planted around the time the building was completed, making the trees about 120 years old!

There are both rare trees like the Japanese tan oak – *Castinopsis cuspidata*, uncommon species such as *Erythrina crista-gallii* the cockspur coral tree, and also some unique specimens of more common trees such as the largest jacaranda in Auckland which spreads a carpet of purple on the lawn in the summer. There are also 120 year old camellias, holly and bay trees, and huge specimens of puriri, rimu and pohutukawa.

The Fast Track Bill has since been passed, and all the projects remain on the schedule, but the submission was

picked up by the government department responsible for the Unitec development and The Tree Council Board members Penny Clifflin and David Smith have met twice Hannah McGregor, a planner from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Together we are reviewing the trees on campus in sections. An arborist will be commissioned to prepare a revised protected tree list, and Hannah seems very open to having us contribute to that documentation process. This should ensure that the most important trees can be listed and protected as part of the amendment to the Unitary Plan required to allow the development to go ahead.

Penny Clifflin

LiDAR Report on Auckland’s Tree Cover

After waiting for four years Auckland Council finally released their report analysing the remote sensing LiDAR data collected between 2013 and 2017. It has been a very frustrating time for us repeatedly asking for this information whilst watching more and more trees being removed from our urban forest.

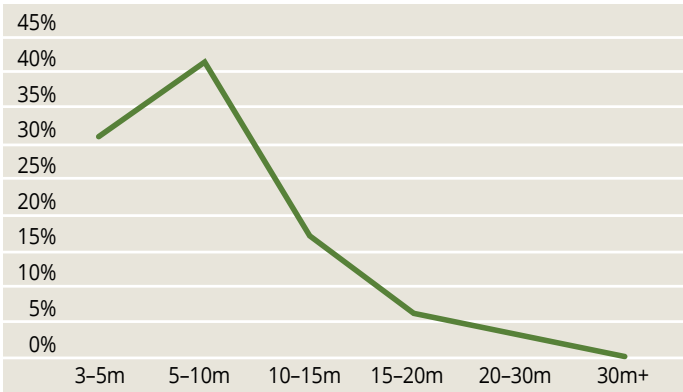
The Tree Council has been expressing our concerns for the rate of tree loss across Auckland ever since the disastrous changes to the Resource Management Act (RMA) that removed general tree protection in 2012. Based on regular reports from our members and supporters of the extent of tree loss being observed in almost every suburb, we estimated that up to one third of our urban forest could already have gone.

The main conclusion from the basic analysis in this report describes a net gain of 0.1% in canopy coverage across the combined Local Board areas. On the face of it even tiny gains like this should be seen as a positive, however in our opinion this very general overview obscures what are serious and concerning changes to the structure of our urban forest.

Some key points that can be drawn from the report are;

- The proportion of small trees making up the canopy has increased 11% since 2013.
- The majority (61%) of urban canopy coverage (within the Metropolitan Urban Limit) is on private land.
- Due to the disproportionate increase in the removal of larger trees across the city the structure of our urban forest is changing:
 - 75% of the urban forest canopy is now less than 10m high
 - only 17% of the canopy is higher than 10m
 - only 6% is higher than 20m
 - Trees higher than 30m make up no more than 1% of the canopy in any of the Local Board areas studied.

Unfortunately, as is recognised by the authors of the report, the analysis carried out is not detailed enough to be able to show whether greater losses are occurring on private or public land. However, the fact that the largest



Height distribution of tree canopy surface area (2016/18) across Auckland's 16 urban local boards.

areas of canopy loss are occurring in Local Board areas which are experiencing large scale, intensive development is in our view more than a coincidence.

The LiDAR report identifies that the 0.1% net gain in canopy translates to a net increase of 60 hectares, but just what have we gained back in that 60 hectares and have the losses been balanced out by the gains?

We know that larger trees provide far more benefits and services to the community and the environment than smaller trees – Auckland Council’s own Urban Ngahere Strategy clearly states: “When it comes to trees, size does matter...Benefits are disproportionately greater for larger trees. We also know that as our city continues to intensify with denser urban infill developments the competition for space both above and below ground also intensifies. There is less and less space for the growth of healthy big trees, and there appears to be no allowance for the space required to grow replacement big trees.”

The Tree Council fully supports tree planting programmes taking place across our region, whether they

are high profile initiatives from our Mayor or community driven revegetation schemes. Whilst we would agree that these programmes are having a positive effect, there are significant limits and constraints when it comes to trying to replace trees lost on private land through tree planting on public land. It is unrealistic to believe that there are enough potential new tree planting sites in parks and along road reserves to deliver the Council's stated objective of achieving 30% canopy cover in every Local Board.

This mismatch between what we are losing and what is being planted to replace it is being felt acutely by those residents who live in the areas of tree loss. This negative experience is compounded and amplified in the Local Board areas in South Auckland where the starting level of canopy coverage is already so low. It is therefore not surprising at all that we receive continual reports of significant tree loss, where residents feel that they are losing their bit of urban forest at an accelerating rate.

In this election year it is imperative that the decision makers in parliament as well as our council chambers do not interpret this report as a positive endorsement for business as usual when it comes to the management of

urban trees. We urgently need general tree protection to be reinstated into the RMA, or whatever replaces it. Every day's delay means the loss of more mature trees in Auckland and every city in New Zealand. Auckland Council needs to actively encourage all landowners and developers to consider the considerable and significant benefits of retaining mature trees, not least to the value of their property, before removing them.

It is up to all of us to ensure that Auckland's future generations get the chance to experience living in a city with these beautiful natural assets as part of a healthy, thriving urban ngahere. The current public consultation on all 21 Local Board three yearly Local board Plans is an ideal opportunity to pressure your own Local Board to take steps to protect and enhance the tree cover where you live. We provided members and supporters with a template of suggested submission points for the Local Board plans and we will continue to urge the Government to prioritise the protection of urban trees on private land. Contacting you local MP now and asking when they plan to put tree protection back into the RMA would be a great way to focus their minds on this issue before the general election.

Sean Freeman

The Tree Council casework report

Our hardworking Board members have a heavy workload of cases that each of them takes on to try and save the trees that have resource consent applications for removal across the city. We are very aware that these cases are the tip of the iceberg of removals as they only relate to publicly notified consent applications for protected trees (either scheduled, on public land or in a Significant Ecological Area) and do not include all the trees on private land that have no protection and can be removed without consent. However we feel it is vitally important for The Tree Council to advocate to save these special trees given the overall situation and lack of protection. If you would like to help us with this work we would love to hear from you. Get in touch on info@thetreecouncil.org.nz. Here is a brief update on the cases we have worked on so far during 2020:

Canal Road, Avondale TTC has encouraged Council to engage with the landowner to save the remaining trees on the site. We have liaised directly with the Whau Local Board on several occasions in the last three years plus recently presented at the Environment and Climate Change Committee. Protesters currently occupy the trees.

Margan Reserve, New Lynn Land exchange proposal between developer and Local Board was declined. TTC made submissions and supported community run petition. Reserve remains intact.

Paturoa Rd, Titirangi Kauri Tree no longer has any protection but is still standing.

Sunshine Boulevard, Sunnyvale TTC continue to follow up enforcement of consent conditions for development.

Watercare Huia Water Treatment Plant Replacement TTC attended hearing and tabled expert witnesses in collaboration with other groups that totally changed the direction of the hearing on the basis of the evidence regarding kauri dieback. Specialist sampling of the site is currently happening and we await the results and report back to the hearing commissioners.

Kauri Dieback numerous media opportunities and advocacy to remove MPI from management of Kauri Dieback Management Programme appears to have finally succeeded. Continue to advocate for effective enforcement of the Waitākere rāhui by Auckland Council.

Western Springs Pines Appeal was resolved via mediation in Environment Court and consent to remove the trees has been issued. TTC did not participate in the appeal. Waitemata Local Board yet to decide whether to provide a budget to enable implementation of the consent.

73 Argyle St, Herne Bay scheduled tree was illegally removed. TTC lobbied Council for enforcement action, but this was not taken.

40 Mountain Rd, Epsom scheduled pohutukawa with severe damage was supported for removal on safety grounds by Auckland Council. TTC did not oppose the removal but submitted for mitigation planting offsite which was not accepted.

Gittos Reserve, Blockhouse Bay Decision to remove trees on safety grounds was implemented. TTC advocated for mitigation planting which has been done, but some

of the trees died due to the summer drought and are currently being replaced.

Saunders Reserve, Avondale TTC opposed proposal by Whau Local Board to remove reserve status from part of reserve, made submission and wrote to Department of Conservation. Local Board decided to go ahead but no approach was made to DOC to implement the decision. In September 2020 Auckland Council legal staff advised the Whau Local Board to rescind their previous decision based on analysis of the legal issues raised in the letter from The Tree Council. The decision was rescinded and the reserve status retained. The Local Board have been advised to classify the reserve.

Waikumete Cemetery following consultation with stakeholders including TTC there will not be any development of the cemetery in the Significant Ecological Areas. Auckland Council is looking to develop a new facility for NW Auckland in future years.

Rankin/Margan Ave corner, New Lynn several scheduled trees were illegally removed and others damaged. TTC lobbied Council for enforcement action, but this was not taken.

Americas Cup Development TTC made submission that a pohutukawa should be transplanted and this was accepted.

McEldowney Rd Macrocarpa, Titirangi Mels and Sean have been watering the tree regularly during the drought and its canopy appears to have improved as a result. Recently Mels had to prevent a Treescape team clearing power lines from removing some of the protected progeny of the scheduled tree.

Brick Bay Drive, Sandspit consent application for accessway through SEA, TTC provided evidence at hearing focusing on risk of introducing kauri dieback to healthy area and consent was declined. However a new application for a slightly different location for a new accessway was granted non-notified.

City Rail Link TTC was approached by CRL regarding the removal (already consented) of 16 scheduled trees on Mayoral Drive seeking our support. We refused to support the work and advised that we considered the consultation done on the proposals to be inadequate.

139 Sturges Rd, Henderson TTC made submission and attended hearing to oppose removal of scheduled tree. The consent application to remove was declined. However the tree had been illegally damaged prior to the hearing.

Hebron Rd, Waiake TTC ensured that enforcement action regarding damage to a scheduled tree during development works was followed up.

In addition to these formal cases we also provide daily information, advice and support to members of the public who report issues with trees to us from all over the city and those working to protect trees in other regions. We also frequently provide interviews and comment to the media on issues to do with trees plus we are occasionally asked to write articles for publication. This year Mels was asked to contribute a chapter for a book called *Tree Sense* which will be published later this year. We will report more on that in our next newsletter.

Tūpuna Maunga Authority Integrated Management Plan TTC made submission as part of public consultation.
30 Beach Rd, Castor Bay TTC made submission and attended hearing via Zoom to oppose removal of the tree. Unfortunately the consent to remove was granted.

Christchurch Cathedral TCC made submission regarding the draft Order in Council to facilitate the reinstatement of Christchurch Cathedral to require a greater level of protection for the heritage trees and a request for public notification of the detailed restoration process. We were partly successful in that greater protection has been provided for the trees, but the process will not be open to public submissions.

Indigenous Biodiversity National Policy Statement TTC made submission during public consultation. Final version has recently been released.

NZTA Northern Pathway proposal to locate this alongside the west side of Northern Motorway within Smiths Bush was opposed by TTC and we encouraged members to make submissions. Decision has unfortunately been made to locate on the west side but the path will be a boardwalk suspended on screws 4m above the ground which will have less impact on the vegetation.

Covid19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Bill TTC made submissions regarding NZTA Northern Pathway and UNITEC development. This has led to direct consultation with the Ministry for Housing regarding trees for protection on the UNITEC site.

Resource Management Amendment Bill TTC made submissions and attended select committee hearing and we encouraged members to make submissions. Unfortunately we were not successful in getting tree protection included in the bill.

Official Information Act request re LiDAR data TTC submitted an OIA request in June to Council requesting the release of the data analysis comparing 2013 and 2016 remote sensing data of the urban forest canopy. The OIA request was refused on the grounds that Council planned to publicly release the data, which they did in July. TTC Chair Sean Freeman was interviewed on Radio NZ re the report.

Official Information Act request re Enforcement data TTC submitted an OIA request in June to Council requesting the release of information regarding breaches of tree protection rules and subsequent enforcement. Council refused to release the enforcement data and TTC is appealing this refusal to the Ombudsman.

Mels Barton

The Back Page

Our people

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Secretary: Mels Barton – 021 213 7779

Board Members:

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David Smith – 021 214 9195

Viv Allen – 021 550180

Mark Lockhart – 027 290 2811

Community Tree Advisors:

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David Smith – 021 214 9195

North Shore Roland O'Driscoll – 09 410 5456

Waitakere Sean Freeman – 021 0837 1202
Mels Barton – 021 213 7779
Anna Fomison – 021 163 7492

Rodney Hueline Massey – 09 425 9246
Stephen Rose – 09 412 5668

Why we love trees...

Prayer of the Tree

One of our Board members found this lovely tree prayer taken from a park notice in Seville, Spain:

To the Wayfarer –

*Ye who pass by and would raise your hand at me
Harken 'ere you harm me!*

I am home to the creatures of the sky

And shelter to all creatures great and small.

*I am the heat of your hearth on the cold winter nights,
The friendly shade screening you from the summer sun.*

My fruits are refreshing draughts

Quenching your thirst as you journey on.

I am the beam that holds your house,

The board of your table,

The bed on which you lie,

And the timber that builds your boat.

I am the handle of your hoe,

The door of your homestead,

The wood of your cradle,

And the shell of your coffin.

I am the bread of kindness and the flower of beauty.

Ye who pass by listen to my prayer,

Harm me not.

Virtual Tree Tour

In our online travels we stumbled across this lovely virtual tour of veteran trees on Hampstead Heath in London and we thought you would enjoy it as much as we did:

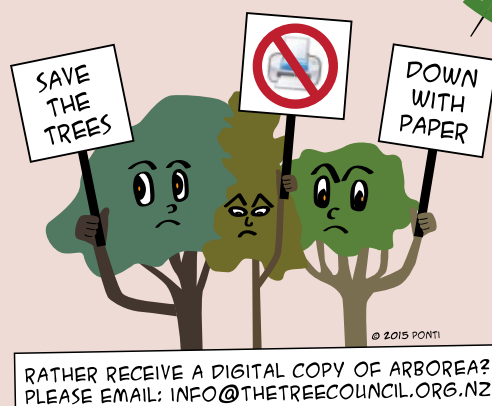
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=90cf2175c2a84407beb8c1a0910f6caf>



Send in your 'Why you love trees'

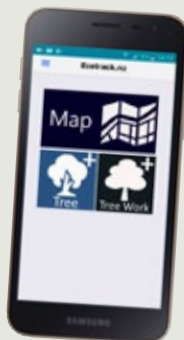
We are asking you to send in photos, drawings, paintings, poems, quotes, cartoons to show why you love trees!

Send to our designer, Vic – vic.segedin@gmail.com



Have you got our tree app yet?

The Ecotrack Cloud App has been designed by Steven MacLeod and enables the public to record trees and tree loss. Download the App to your smartphone now.



Visit our facebook page!



You'll find lots of news, good advice and discussions and everyone is welcome to share stories and photos about trees.
www.facebook.com/TheTreeCouncil