

MT COOK! MOBILISED

Mt Cook Mobilised

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MCM • PO Box 9724 • Wellington 6141

Inhabit
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Welcome to Mt Cook Mobilised, your resident community group. Thank you to Inhabit of Adelaide Road for their ongoing sponsorship. We invite your input (via the email above) on any Mt Cook issue - and to let us know of new ones.

We urge all occupants to care for your plot on the planet as if you own it – and look out for your neighbours.

Watch out for trucks on Rolleston St and Hopper St from the three major construction projects underway. *Peter Cooke*



HERITAGE VS GROWTH

There are old buildings, and there are old buildings with stories. The latter we call heritage, and Mt Cook has lots of heritage. Recently the council said it wanted many more people to live in Mt Cook and to make way for this it would remove protection on our heritage buildings and allow 4- and 6-storey apartment blocks. It has already rezoned Adelaide Road allowing much taller buildings, which we support. WCC proposes to do the same in the Thompson and Nairn Street area: we strongly opposed this in our submission.

Like staying dry, we have only one opportunity to retain heritage. We said this is a “long-established urban environment” which “creates and accommodates a sense of community and diversity that sits at the heart of what makes Wellington a great place to live”. We said more people can be incorporated in Mt Cook without removing protection on heritage, without “wreck[ing] 150 years of history”. Council used population forecasts that were too high and we said normal development will house a moderate rise.

“This volume of additional housing does not warrant removal of character protection from half the suburb. The extra accommodation that is actually required, over and above what will be built anyway, could be achieved by a concerted drive to renovate and alter existing properties to create more dwelling units in a manner sympathetic to the existing character. Exploring incentives and other means to achieve this approach would be preferable to the removal of the

existing character protection. Densification of the lower Adelaide Road transport corridor (between the Basin Reserve and John Street) would also meet all or much of the anticipated future demand expected in Mt Cook.”

The council’s hand is forced by a policy directive from central government which thinks that inner-city high-rise infill will solve a housing crisis. We said “This ignores the reality that owners and developers won’t build dwellings that are not economic, ie that don’t achieve sale prices or rentals that cover the increasing costs of land and building (ever stronger building codes), insurance (higher earthquake premiums), rates (future infrastructure costs), legal and corporate ownership costs, and so on. The extra buildings that are really required can be achieved with some ingenuity and effective incentives, without removing the

existing character protection.

“Another major problem was the loss of sunshine and quality of life by tall blocks shading existing houses. It would be ironic if a misguided push for more affordable but inappropriate tower blocks caused the existing housing stock to become less healthy.”

The Covid-19 pandemic also shows a different future. More people are going to work from home and fewer will need to commute. Offices and supporting business like cafes will move further out.

Other issues such as transport, water infrastructure, business development, open-space planning, climate-change policies and regional development planning may call for differing futures. But there is no reason there cannot be a future for our buildings with stories rather than buildings with storeys.

THE TRACK TO PAPAWAI RESERVE

A new bush walking track has been built between the top of Hargreaves Street and the existing track from the end of Papawai Terrace. It replaces the former route between the top and bottom playing fields, in the Prince of Wales Park, now closed during reservoir construction. To ease some access restrictions we had discussions with the local WCC Ranger, and the job was discussed at the Community Reference Group. A local resident said it was a track route many years ago. Then residents, council officers and a track builder did a walk-through, noting sections of the old track, and agreed a track could be built and be ‘buggy friendly’ (no steps).

The track builders did a great job and were very helpful and accommodating. The track has become popular with families, dog walkers and runners. Tight bends make it

unsuitable for bikers.

Some ‘rescue’ plants from the reservoir site were relocated to the track and most are doing well. In September a group of Keas and Cubs did a great job clearing tradescantia and other weeds from the track surrounds. The new track also provides better working access to the wider restoration area.

MCM thanks WCC, the reservoir project and the Kennett Brothers for the track.



HOWARD STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN

The reinstatement of the Howard Street garden presented the community with the chance to take a more active role in the care of this mini-park. Despite the brutalist nature of the new concrete planters, the garden is strongly supported. Given the opportunity to take a more active role in the plant selection and garden care, a group of locals have come together to plant citrus trees – lemon, lime and grapefruit. Once these are established it is hoped that the fruit will become a shared resource.

Ground cover and under-planting is proving a bit more difficult – poor soil and dry weather means that some plants have curled up their leaves and withered away. Hardier standards such as lavender and borage are being tried. We are particularly interested in plants that flower to attract bees.

We are keen to acquire a hose (approx 30 metres long) to make watering easier and are investigating selling pea straw to raise the necessary funds. Seeking a bulk supplier for this.

If you are interested in joining us to assist in caring for this garden please get in touch via Mt Cook Mobilised. The Howard Street Community Garden is grateful for the support of WCC with this project.



MT COOK CONNECT

Mt Cook Connect is a Mt Cook Mobilised initiative which started to take shape during the April lockdown. The inspiration was from the Mt Vic Hub which shares an online guide to the venues, groups and activities in Mt Victoria. In Mt Cook we have 20+ venues which are under the radar for most of us. Mt Cook Connect will also help people find neighbourhood groups in their street or apartment block, find information about community gardening, and the highlights of preparing for a disaster. <https://mtcookconnect.nz/>

Websites are useful but the main focus is on connecting people. Mt Cook has a host of schools from preschools to adult education. One of our missions is to find small ways that local people can be involved. And we are planning an orientation activity at Massey

A GOOD PLACE TO BE

MCM is delighted that, from its recent Wellington Central candidates' forum, four of the nine candidates present are now MPs: James Shaw, Nicola Willis, Brooke van Velden and Dr Ayesha Verrall. Ayesha deputised for incumbent Grant Robertson (his flight from Auckland was delayed), who is now our Deputy PM. That makes five, including three ministers.

Tēnā koutou/grateful thanks to Mt Cook School for lending MCM your school hall for these meetings.

in 2021. If you would like to be involved or have any questions, please contact Carol on info@mtcookconnect.nz, or message Mt Cook Connect on Facebook.

It would be really useful if you can please fill in the Mt Cook Connect Community Survey to help give us a wide spectrum of community opinion. Type <https://bit.ly/31jf5Dn> into your browser to get started. The survey takes 5–10 minutes and two lucky people will be drawn in December to win a \$50 Countdown voucher.

We would like to thank the Wellington City Council for funding, for their help and inspiration, and for running a great team of community coordinators in the Windy City!

Ring and Complain!

If you have issues with the big construction going on, contact:-
— **Kainga Ora housing Hopper/ Arlington/ Rolleston St**
Renee Regal 021 998 724
renee.regal@kaingaora.govt.nz
— **Water reservoir, Rolleston/ Hargreaves St/ Salisbury Tce**
Russell Obee HEB 027 394 4913
russell.obee@heb.co.nz

FUTURE LIVING SKILLS

In the age of pandemics, climate change and global fear, it has become quite easy to give in to the dismal reality that is 2020. We are living in a world that is dependent on the unsustainable, and we are currently seeing a mass shift towards acts of preservation in order not to compromise the future of ourselves or our planet.

Future Living Skills is a trust which focuses on sustainability and sustainable living. In September, Future Living Skills facilitated a workshop. We sat, shared, ate and gave feedback to one another, and over the afternoon we were all inspired to learn more about 'consumer modules'. These modules are workshops which give you all the desired knowledge that you would need to build a more sustainable lifestyle - whether economically-based, environmentally-based or community-based. The modules come in a variety of topics: from growing your own food, to becoming more energy efficient. Future Living Skills present practical affordable solutions and are presented in a fun and welcoming environment. These modules are designed to be worked through in a group so you will have proper support and assistance.

This year has taught us we must be prepared for anything and cannot rely on the finite anymore - here is an opportunity to use this platform as support in your journey towards a more sustainable future.

Find out more on the Future Living Skills website <https://sustainableliving.org.nz/>. Wellington City Council has signed up to the service.

MONEY FOR VALUE

MCM thanks Wellington City Council for its \$1000 community group grant.



Left to right: Celebrating the new Howard St garden. Kristelle with Josephine Lala, Tim, Frank with Ivo, Carol, Sarah, Susan and Katherine.

PHOTO: SUSAN ROGERS



NEW MURAL FOR MT COOK

Commissioned by Massey's College of Creative Arts, Xoë Hall's latest vibrant work is on the utility building at the entrance to Wellington High and Massey. It is eye-poppingly gorgeous. Mt Cook loves murals. Xoë (Kāi Tahu) uses her art for story-telling, to inspire others to learn the ancient stories. It is under the theme 'Ka Mua, Ka Muri' which means learn from the past. From the gym wall, wrapping around to the northern wall, these deities are featured:

Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother), Hiwa-i-te-rangi (the star from the Matariki constellation that we send our wishes to), Hine-tītama (atua of the flashing dawn) who is also Hine-nui-te-pō (atua of death and night) clutching Māui in lizard form, Mahuika (deity of fire) and Māui in Kāhi form.

Below *The school-facing wall is dedicated to the students who come and go through the space.*

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHURCH ST PAUL'S

In 2017 Grace and Jim Pietsch, from St Paul's church on King St approached Kaibosh food rescue service and began a food distribution from St Paul's. This provides for people in the community who are struggling on low income, and it is supported by a small team of volunteers.

If you or someone you know is struggling on a low income and would benefit by having an extra source of food on a weekly basis, please contact St Paul's. St Paul's also supports Kaibosh by putting on a *Make a Meal in May* event as a fundraiser. Activities at St Paul's are always open to everyone in the community.

St Paul's offers its venue to community groups. The church is regularly used by several fellowships for worship. It is a well-known musical venue, with a grand piano, pipe organ and excellent acoustics. It is used for concerts, recitals, recordings and jazz events. The hall is a comfortable and flexible space for meetings and community gatherings.

You can contact St Paul's:
12 King St, Mt Cook,
021 02299380
wellingtonnz.lutheran@gmail.com

GARAGE OR GATEWAY?

An old garage (built in 1927) sits at the top of Rolleston St. Nearby residents pay to lease the land. It sits on the road reserve and town belt land, and at first Wellington Water said it was not in the way of the Mt Cook reservoir work. Then council chose to apply its policy of resolving encroachments whenever they come to light. Encroachments on town belt are not permitted and a road abutting the town belt is considered a public gateway. In place of the garage, council proposes three public car parks (not resident parking) for sports field users, for when the reservoir work finishes.

The leaseholders say the garage is a valuable facility used by the community. It is not for a car (they pay for two Resi-

dent's Parking Permits) and they want it to stay. "Students with limited room in their flats have put sporting equipment and musical instruments there. A donated emergency kit is stored for access by neighbours. Emergency water and food supplies are also included. As part of the ShareWaste initiative, people in the neighbourhood (67 at last count) who live in flats with no garden deliver their vegetable scraps to buckets beside the garage; they are composted or fed to chickens. Also in the garage are rat traps to be borrowed, and a 'tool library' of gardening or other tools. The garage has never been tagged with graffiti, often a sign that something is valued by the community."



OUR LOCAL WARD COUNCILLORS



IONA PANNETT
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@wcc.govt.nz



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MCM's Spring Fling on 15 November really turned on the magic!

MT COOK!
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community

MARY HUTCHINSON



Hon Grant Robertson

MP for Wellington Central
Your representative in Parliament

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Authorised by Grant Robertson, 220 Willis Street, Wellington

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