



Welcome to the April May edition of SOC for 2008. In this edition we have an interview with local politician Sally Buck, an update on the Transition Communities group's, recent successful bus trip around various organisation facing the challenges of peak oil and climate change in a range of ways. There is also the normal mix of information about sustainability issues ranging from the

personal to the global. Articles are again categorised as noted below so you can find the issues that most interest you. To get a better sense of what you like/dislike/want more/less of in this newsletter I will also be randomly selecting 10 of you from our membership list and will be ringing round to ask about this in the next couple of weeks. If you'd like to avoid the possibility of phone harassment by someone you haven't met I would be very happy to hear your opinions on this directly. Please send me your thoughts on this to ianandmarlys@actrix.co.nz. Also if you have any burning desire to write articles or make other contributions yourselves I would also be very happy to hear from you.

Ian Burn Newsletter Editor

Personal (and domestic)

Local (neighbourhood level)

Town and Around (city and region wide)

National

Global

Consumption

Waste Production

Biodiversity

All of the above and/or anything else to do with sustainability

NB: the **A** category has replaced the **S** category in the last edition, to avoid the implication that Sustainability is separate from the other categories, when it actually sits over all of the other categories, and much more besides.

A Sally Buck, Christchurch City Councillor

SOC committee member Rhys Taylor (RT) recently caught up with Sally Buck (SB), a Christchurch City Councillor in the Fendalton Waimairi ward, and was able to ask her about some of the key sustainability issues facing Christchurch.

RT. *Christchurch keeps spreading across the Plains. How much of an impact do you think an 'intensification of city development' will achieve greater sustainability, through the now-adopted Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS), and if the UDS will not have a fast enough impact, what else do you think the city should be doing to further sustainability?*

SB: As it stands I believe that intensification is not promoted and planned for enough in the UDS, and thus it will fail to have an impact on greater sustainability especially in the short term. However, there are city plan changes to do with L3 and L4 (land usage zonings) being worked on now which will help. I think that the percentage of greenfield development is too large. The City and



surrounding districts should go back and look at the percentage of greenfield development that is being allowed for in the UDS in the short and medium term and weigh this up against intensification and other issues such as fuel costs. Also as long as it is easy to secure greenfield sites then there is not an incentive for a straight rebuild to renew old stock and create better, warmer and more efficient housing. I also think that the UDS has not really looked at versatile soils properly and the impact of allowing good growing land such as Marshlands to be kept as productive land. So not only will people have to travel further but all the food will have to also. We should also look at smaller, local ways of dealing with certain issues, such as sewerage, so we are not so reliant of centralised systems. We also need to be making the building process and all new buildings more sustainable so that waste is reduced, water can be recycled and demand for power is reduced. Design of buildings is also an issue which impacts on sustainability. If we allow ugly sausage buildings to proliferate then these are likely to turn into unsustainable slums in the future.

RT. In responding to SOC's pre-election questionnaire to candidates, you indicated that reducing carbon emissions through energy efficiency was important to you, along with developing a transport system that encourages public transport walking and cycling. The city continues to spend heavily on road building and maintenance, but is it doing enough to promote alternative modes to car-driving?

SB: I think there could be a lot more incentives for alternative modes to private car use. I would like to see companies and businesses incentivise their staff to use public transport or cycle and the

secondary/tertiary education providers to provide similar incentives for their students and staff. The City Council is just one player here and it is good to finally see the bus priority measures being put in place for some of the congested routes. Hopefully these will make bus travel more convenient and attractive. However one has to always remember that the buses, cycles and people car pooling use the roading network that we spend money on developing and maintaining and CCC does put in safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists when it builds and maintains roads.

RT. Sustainability is about society, culture and economy as well as environment. What have been your strongest interests in those areas, in recent years?

SB I have probably always had more interest in the environmental side of sustainability as I believe that if we don't look after the environment then everything else will be affected. For example: what is the point of an economic boom and earning lots of overseas dollars if we have to spend it on buying bottled water or medical treatment for illnesses from pollution.

RT. Water supply and its quality has concerned you, and you have not supported the controversial Central Plains Water project. Bring us up-to-date on this. What do SOC members need to know, and where could they find additional information?

SB The RMA hearing phase in front of the commissioners - at this stage one way to keep updated is by attending the hearing. Some contributors to the Canterbury Issues online forum are posting on this subject. Personally I don't have any objection to the storage of water or irrigation, but Central Plains irrigation project is a run of river

scheme which is to be built on land which is currently owned and being farmed by about 300 farmers to provide water for about 400

other shareholder farmers whose land values will double and who are likely to sell up to dairy farm corporations (the only ones who will be able to afford to be involved in this scheme). These shareholders will be the only ones that will have access to this water - it is not a community scheme. It will create a monoculture across the plains - this is already happening and the shelter trees are disappearing. I don't believe that the light Canterbury soils are conducive to dairying especially as the water supply for everyone living on the plains and in the city, comes from under these light soils. In other places in the world where this has happened there has been pollution of underground water supplies but it takes about 20 years to become apparent. If this happens CCC will become the environmental underwriter.

RT. *It takes more than securing Ellerslie garden show to keep Christchurch as 'the Garden City'. What more would you like to see the Council do in the area of parks, native biodiversity and city-based food production?*

SB. I would like to see a lot more native plants planted in our parks and on council land as these grow well, don't need too much maintenance and bring back the native fauna, especially birds, to the city. I would also like to see CCC develop a 'green berm' policy so that instead the obligatory grass ..., people could opt to plant out their berms. In terms of City based food production - the future of food production is scary. There will be nothing grown anywhere near Christchurch and a lot of it will be imported. The growing land around Christchurch will all be houses ... even if there was a will by the council, to retain areas like Marshlands for growing local

food, and they wanted to retain land for growing, it is likely that the owners would be allowed to subdivide in the end under the RMA supported by the UDS

In terms of SOC's role with Council in promoting sustainability, Sally noted the existence of the Councils' sustainability policy and its sustainability working group on which SOC has a representative (we will be doing articles on this policy and the working group in upcoming issues). She also encouraged SOC members to keep putting sustainability issues before Council, and noted the current consultation on the annual plan as a good opportunity to do this.

A Target Sustainability

This free City Council programme for Christchurch businesses was launched on 21 February. Target Sustainability provides free support to help local businesses become sustainable through reducing waste and becoming energy and water efficient. The type of support provided depends on the business, and ranges from self help guides to up to 20 hours free tailored consultancy services. See www.TargetSustainability.co.nz for more information.

B GE Crops and Pesticide

Friends of the Earth have released a significant global report on genetic engineering showing that GE crops have led to a massive increase in pesticide use and have failed to increase yields or tackle world hunger and poverty.

http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/real_food/news/2008/february/who_benefits.html

A Ecokiwi

The Ecokiwi scheme, seeks to help New Zealanders think about how they can make changes to help the environment,

whilst bringing them other benefits too. They have a number of community networkers who focus on talking and listening to people, rather than just 'telling', so as to be able to meet people's differing needs.

Networkers are provided with training, information and support by the Wellington based Sustainability Trust and a number of other organisations, to help them respond effectively to a wide range of needs.

Ecokiwi is also collecting information about what people are doing, so that we can help build up a picture of how New Zealand is becoming more sustainable.

If you are interested in the scheme or in becoming one of the Ecokiwi community networkers, please contact lloyd@sustaintrust.org.nz.

AB SOC Transition Communities Bus Trip

One Saturday in March, a large group of SOC supporters enjoyed a bus tour around some inspiring Christchurch projects.

The first stop was Te Whare Roimata on the edge of the central city, where we had a very warm welcome. It offers various cultural and community-help programmes.

For over a decade they have run a very successful gold coin cafe and much of the food for the cafe is grown organically in their own large gardens in Linwood.



Strickland St Garden

We all wanted to stay longer, especially when a group sang a beautiful song in Maori, with guitar accompaniment.

Next stop was Strickland Street Community Garden: another inspiring project. It is an oasis of peace, charm and organic productivity in the inner-city. A lot of food is grown here and the volunteer gardeners make all their own compost from vegetable waste brought to them by supportive neighbours. The community garden provides a place for local residents to work together and learn how to grow their own food – an endangered art. We were served a scrumptious morning tea made from home-grown fruit and vegies.

We tore ourselves away, for our next stop: at Addington Bush. This is an amazing example of what neighbours can do when they work together. In the centre of a block of houses a native bush sanctuary has been created by many of the houses in the block opening up the ends of their gardens to create a communal area. The native trees and shrubs, which have been planted by the Addington Bush Society, have grown so enthusiastically it is hard to believe you are still in the inner-city.

Bird song fills the air, making it an idyllic place to sit and relax or else to wander one of the many pathways.

It is especially great for the resident children to be

able to play in the freedom and peace of this natural garden. The experiences of the Addington Bush Society led to the formation of a national network of

groups dedicated to the restoration of native ecosystems – the NZ Ecological Restoration Network.



Treehouse, Addington Bush

Finally we drove to Lyttelton to find out about Project Lyttelton (PL). Margaret Jefferies and Wendy Everingham kindly gave us several hours of their time to tell us of PL's many projects. These include the hugely successful farmers market, summer and winter street parties, walking maps and the Lyttelton community garden. An exciting new project is the 2 acre organic garden at Opawa. This will be run by people participating in a vegie box scheme and some generous donations have been received to help get this project started. Margaret and Wendy are keen to highlight the relationship between the land, food produced and consumers. They hope that this and other PL schemes can be replicated elsewhere in Christchurch, so that communities all over the city can be more self-

sustaining.

As Project Lyttelton was our last stop we reluctantly boarded the bus to go home. There were many animated conversations on the bus, all day. It was a relief to meet other people who actually believe in the truth of issues like peak oil, global resource shortages (especially water), as well as global warming. It was great to meet other people who are excited about sustainability and who can see all the positives that can come out of these scary global issues. A successful future will need strong communities and this can only be a good thing for us all. Many thanks SOC for organising a really inspiring day out.

Kate and Stewart Henry

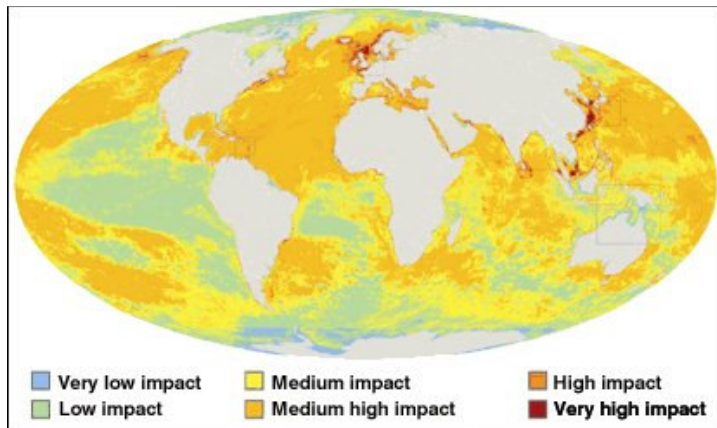
W Ocean Sewage Outfall Project

In February the City Council laid the first of seven 360m long polythene pipelines, that are to be sunk in Pegasus Bay. Over March the remaining six pipes have since been towed to the outfall site and sunk into the dredged trench. The pipes are now being joined together by a team of underground divers and will then be connected to the recently completed concrete tunneled pipeline.

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/LTCCP/CommunityOutcomes/Monitoring/Environment/>

AB Map shows toll on world's oceans

Only about 4% of the world's oceans remain undamaged by human activity, according to the first detailed global map of human impacts on the seas.

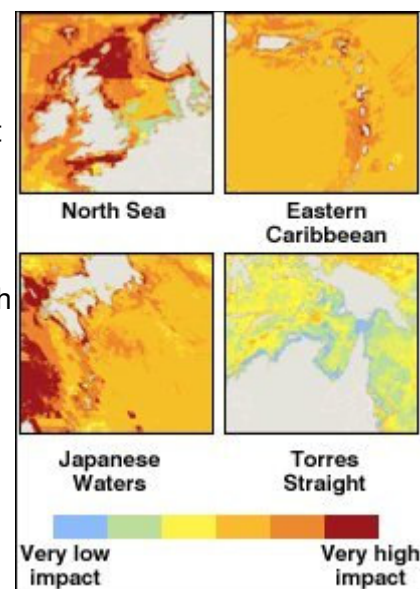


A study in *Science* journal says climate change, fishing, pollution and other human factors have exacted a heavy toll on almost half of the marine waters. Lead scientist, Dr Benjamin Halpern, of the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in Santa Barbara, US, said humans were having a major impact on the oceans and the

marine ecosystems within them. "In the past, many studies have shown the impact of individual activities," he said. "But here for the first time we have produced a global map of all of these different activities layered on top of each other so that we can get this big picture of the overall impact that humans are having rather than just single impacts." Co-author Dr Mark Spalding said that the map was the first attempt to describe and quantify the combined threats facing the world's oceans from human factors, ranging from commercial shipping to over-fishing. "There's an element of wake-up call when you get maps like this," he said. "Human threats are all pervasive across the world's oceans. "The map is an impetus for action, I think that it is a real signal to roll up our sleeves and start

managing our coast and oceans." The international team of 20 scientists in the US, Canada and UK built a complex model to handle large amounts of information on 17 different human threats. The oceans into 1km-square sections and examined all individual threats and how they are influencing the marine environment. They then calculated "human impact scores" for each location, presenting this as a global map of the toll people have exacted on the seas. "I think the big surprise from all of this was seeing what the complete coverage of human impacts was," said Dr Spalding, senior marine scientist for international conservation group The Nature Conservancy. "There's nowhere really that escaped. It's quite a shocking map to see." He said the two biggest drivers in destroying marine habitats were climate change and over-fishing.

"Out on the high seas, climate change and fishing were far and away the strongest influences," he explained. "The least impacted



The map reveals the most and least heavily impacted areas

areas are the polar regions but they are not untouched."

Source <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7241428.stm>
<http://www.globaleducationfund.org.nz/>



Jocelyn taking a sustainable route to the meeting ??

A Sustainability and Christchurch Community House
 SOC member and environmental educator Jocelyn Papprell spoke recently at the AGM of Christchurch Community House on The Earth Charter and Transition Communities. About twenty people were present, representing many of the 43 organisations that operate out of Community House. They asked a number of follow up questions in preparation for discussing how Community House may support the intent of the Earth Charter. Jocelyn saw this as a positive response and felt that there was a genuine interest in sustainability and what people can do at a local level whilst also supporting global endeavours. She will be following with interest what action they decide to follow through on after their next committee meeting.

For more information on Christchurch Community House see

<http://canterbury.cyberplace.org.nz/community/chcom>

[house.html](#)

AC Benefits of Transit Oriented Development Higher than expected

The numbers are in, and they show that transit-oriented development (TOD) really does get people out of their cars. Transit-oriented developments are mixed-use residential or commercial areas designed to maximise access to public transport, and often incorporates features to encourage its use. A TOD neighbourhood typically has a centre with a railway station, tram stop, or bus exchange, surrounded by relatively high-density development with progressively lower-density development spreading outwards from the centre. A new study of 17 different transit-oriented developments in four metropolitan areas showed that they generated only about half as many car trips as the standard planning reference guide predicts.

It's research with potential for major impact on the way communities view transit-oriented development (TOD). The findings could drive changes to local building codes, lead to lower development impact fees, and make the numbers work better for communities and home buyers as well.

Denver is Exhibit A for this trend. In 2004 voters in eight counties of metro Denver approved a ballot measure calling for the construction of 119 miles of light rail on six different lines, with 70 stations, 40 of them in Denver itself. It's clear from talking with officials in Denver that the light rail isn't just about solving a transportation problem. Julius Zsako, communications director for Denver Community Planning and Development, pointed to a passage in his city's strategic plan for TOD: The whole

project “provide[s] an unparalleled level of transit access for a region of this size and, as such, could fundamentally reshape growth patterns in the region.”



The Englewood Light Rail Station, along the RTD's Southwest Corridor Light Rail, has anchored local development since it opened in 2000. Credit: Courtesy RTD

The report also notes that the voters were sold on the project for two reasons:

- The need for transportation alternatives if the Denver region is to remain competitive
- The desire to cluster growth around transit stations to stimulate development “of the type of neighborhoods Denver Metro residents desire.”

The 17 TOD projects the researchers looked were in Washington, D.C.; Portland, Ore.; San Francisco; and Philadelphia/Newark. All were within easy walk of high-quality transit with a mix of modes -- heavy rail, commuter rail and light rail.

Using the time-honored methodology of pneumatic tubes laid across driveways, the researchers determined that the TODs were generating, on average, 44 percent fewer auto trips than conventional wisdom assumes: 3.754 versus 6.715 daily trips per unit. The numbers were more dramatic during rush hours -- 49 percent lower rates during the morning and 48 percent during the afternoon.

Arrington sees these numbers as evidence that “the reality lines up with the theory” -- that transit-oriented development really does generate less auto traffic and so can be more compact without causing congestion. He also sees the numbers as showing how local codes may be mandating unnecessary infrastructure. If they require planning for 1,000 auto trips when research shows that residents are likely to make only 500, “we’re overbuilding our road systems for traffic that will never be there,” as he put it.

The key implications of the study's findings, according to Arrington:

- Local governments and communities may be more accepting of the higher densities of TOD if they are confident that such development will generate less auto traffic.
- Local governments may be able to reduce the impact fees they require of developers by up to 50 percent. In California, these fees can run up to \$17,000 per unit -- just to mitigate transportation impact.
- Lower impact fees for developers and less onerous parking requirements should translate into more affordable housing.
- Transit agencies stand to gain ridership when it becomes possible to build dwellings without parking spaces.
- Using less land for parking means more compact, more environmentally sustainable development.

Arrington cited U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that each on-site parking space in an infill project can reduce the number of new housing units by 25 percent or more.

Arrington noted a need to "ride out the uncertainty in the real estate market" for the time being. But he also suggested that this is a time for advocates of TOD to continue to work for changes in local building codes. It's a time to "get ready for the next cycle."

http://www.tndtownpaper.com/Volume10/tod_by_numbers.htm

A UNEP Unveils the Climate Neutral Network to catalyze a transition to a low carbon world.

Four countries (Costa Rica, Iceland, New Zealand and Norway), four cities and five corporations are the first to join the Climate Neutral Network (CN Net), launched today by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in cooperation with the UN's Environment Management Group, as one inspiring solution to the challenge of rising greenhouse gases. The Network, a web-based project, is seeking to federate the small but growing wave of nations, local authorities and companies who are pledging to significantly reduce emissions en route to zero emission economies, communities and businesses. See <http://www.climateneutral.unep.org/>

Source : Climate Snippets

CW Green Green Limousine

The most environmentally friendly airport pickup service yet! Steven Muir from Cycling Church has now produced a large suitcase-carrying trailer which can be towed behind a tandem bike with several folding bikes in the trailer.

When visitors to Christchurch have arrived, they can ride to their accommodation on the back of the tandem or on the unfolded folding bikes. Up to three large suitcases (or four smaller backpacks/suitcases) can be easily placed in the plastic bins.

One local person can thereby pick up three or four visitors depending on the amount of luggage. It is the ideal way to demonstrate a real commitment to reducing one's carbon footprint and generate some very good PR, exercise and fun in the process. Contact Steve on 365-8238 for more information.

B The world organics ladder

According to the World of Organic Agriculture Statistics and Emerging Trends 2008, 0.4% of New Zealand's agricultural land is organic. This places us 62nd on a list of 86 countries, roughly level pegging with Azerbaijan and China. Liechtenstein 'wins' the competition dedicating 29.1% of its agricultural land to organics. European countries fill out all the top ten rankings with the exception of tenth place which goes to East Timor on 6.9%. The UK manages to dedicate 3.8% of its agricultural land to organics, or about nine times more than New Zealand, Australia 2.8% and even the United States, home of Monsanto, tips us on 0.5%.

The report summary states that:

"In New Zealand, a key issue is lack of production to meet growing demand, for both export and the domestic markets."

and

"The global organic food industry has been experiencing acute supply shortages since 2005. Exceptionally high growth rates have led supply to tighten in almost every sector of the organic food industry."

Source: TreeHugger

A New Zealanders Views on Climate Change

Most New Zealanders seem to think we should come down hard on countries who aren't as committed to climate change action as we are. A new nationwide poll released in March shows New Zealanders support imposing a carbon tax on imports from countries



Tui Billboard, Riccarton Rd

which don't impose carbon charges on their own emitters. The survey also shows people support giving this country's large greenhouse gas emitters special emission credits until 2020, or until their competitors overseas also pay a price on carbon.

A ShapeNZ poll of 3377 people, showed New Zealanders strongly supporting taking action on climate change, wanting the country to be a global leader on the issue, and believing that proposed emissions trading scheme will result in businesses

cutting their emissions. Support for the emissions trading scheme policy had firmed up from 46 per cent in November 2007 to 57 per cent.

Kiwis back an idea, being advanced in the European Union and the United States, to put a tax on imports from countries which do not impose a carbon tax on their own emitters. Fifty five per cent of New Zealanders say this country should impose the green tax at the border (21 per cent say no, 23 per cent don't know.)

New Zealanders are also growing more concerned about climate change: 82 per cent say it is a problem to be dealt with urgently (41 per cent) and now (41 per cent). Only 6 per cent say it is a problem for later, and 6 per cent say it is not a problem. 3 per cent don't know. The number who think it is a problem for now or urgent is up from 73 per cent in November last year to 82 per cent now, while those who say it's not a problem or problem for later have dropped from 25 per cent in November to 15 per cent now.

Source: ShapeNZ

A New Zealand's sustainability record on Travel and Tourism mixed.

In the recently released World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Report New Zealand came last out of 130 countries on the plight of endangered species and 95th on our failure to rein in greenhouse gas emissions. This was in contrast to the high ranking of 7 for the sustainability of the Tourism and Trade sector itself, reflecting the shift to sustainability in last year's tourism strategy. These results appeared in the same week as the Tourism Industry Association calling for exemption from the cost of taking any action on climate change.

Sources: World Economic Forum and Tourism Industry Association

W New kerbside collection service likely to help city meet waste reduction targets

The Christchurch City Council is introducing a new three-bin domestic kerbside collection service that will reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. From early 2009 the Council will provide:

- a 240 litre wheelie bin for the fortnightly collection of an expanded range of recyclables
- an 80 litre wheelie bin for the weekly collection of organic material, and
- a 140 litre wheelie bin for the fortnightly collection of rubbish.

It is estimated the enhanced kerbside collection service will divert 35,000 tonnes of organic material and 7,000 tonnes of recyclables from the Kate Valley Landfill each year. This will reduce the amount of household waste sent to landfill by one third. At the moment the majority of what is put out in black rubbish bags is either recyclable or compostable

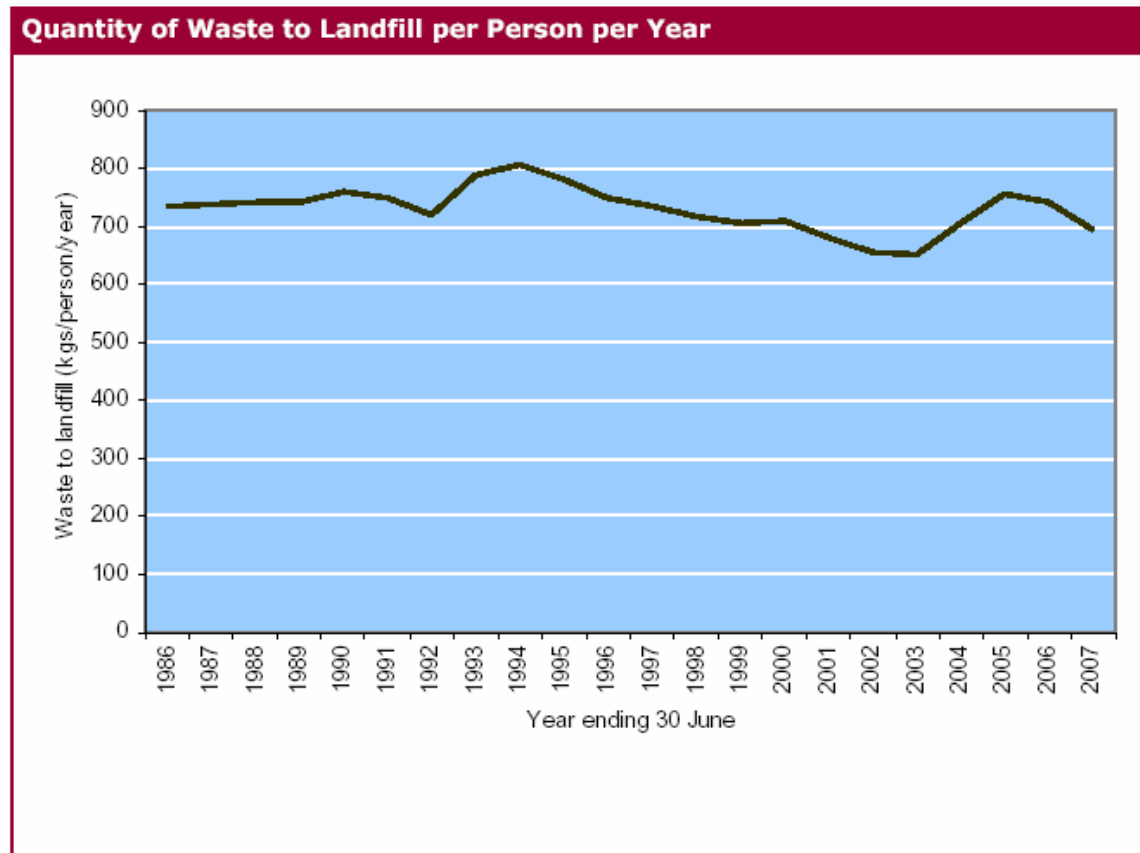
- Christchurch sends 73,000 tonnes of organic waste to landfill each year, resulting in the production of greenhouse gases and leachates. It makes sense to use this material to produce compost instead.
- Many kerbside recycling crates are full to overflowing. Increasing capacity allows all clean plastic containers can be collected and recycled (not just plastics marked '1' and '2'), and means more paper and cardboard can be collected (quantities of which have been growing at the greatest rate).

For more info

<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Waste/RubbishCollection/NewKerbsideCollectionServiceFAQ.asp>

This will hopefully assist Christchurch in meeting its Waste to Landfill Target of 320 kilograms per person per year by 2020 set in 2005 as it is estimated that residential

waste contributes approximately half the total waste to landfill. Current progress in this regard as shown following, is failing to meet the targets set.



Source: Christchurch City Council Water and Waste

The amount of solid waste going to landfill, and the breakdown of its component parts, provides an indicator of our reliance upon the least desirable waste disposal method. If not managed effectively, landfills can have a harmful effect on the natural environment and its ecosystems. Factors such as economic growth, a booming construction industry, consumer packaging and higher levels of disposable income all impact on the amount of solid waste that may end up in landfills. The volume of waste going to landfills is also influenced by local and central government waste management policies.

BA High Food prices spark vegetable growing revival in Northwest Christchurch

Statistics NZ has released figures showing that food increased 5.4% for the 2007 year; with 2.6% of this growth being due to the rising cost of vegetables and in particular, apples, kumara and potatoes. Higher demand for vegetable plant and seed sales has also been noted in northwest Christchurch with Mc Cully's Garden centre and Terra Viva centre in Bryndwr representatives citing the greater cost of store bought vegetables as one of the causes. Also noted as factors in this increased interest in vegetables were: a growing desire for people to know where their food came from; the convenience of being able to get food from your own garden; and the intrinsic satisfaction involved in growing vegetables.

Source: Northwest News 30/1/8

CW Christchurch Traffic and pollution

This year Christchurch has an average of 24kms of congested traffic each day. If this continues at the same rate there will be an average 78kms of congestion in 15 years time

Motor Vehicles are responsible for 43% of Carbon dioxide Emission increase over the last 10 years, with a projected 43% increase in the next 10 years.

Source: CCC Bus Priority Pamphlet

WB Canterbury dairy farmers failing to keep to rules

In October last year, Environment Canterbury released a report on its monitoring of resource consent compliance that found that 17.7 per cent of Canterbury dairy farms required re-inspection visits after incidents of significant or major non-compliance. It also found that 28 per cent of farms had problems with effluent discharge, of which 12 per cent were considered significant to major.

Source: ECAN

CW NZ 'running late' on carbon targets - 38 years late, .

The chief executive of the New Zealand Institute, David Skilling, in a report entitled "Actions speak louder than words" http://www.nzinstitute.org/Images/uploads/Actions_speak_louder_than_words_-_Full_report.pdf, says the measures the Government has announced over the past few months, including an emissions trading scheme, a 90 per cent renewable electricity generation target and tighter fuel efficiency standards, are steps in the right direction and will reduce emissions. "Overall, however, we estimate that the various policies will only serve to reduce domestic emissions in 2050 to about their 1990 level." New Zealand's Kyoto target is to reduce emissions to that level by 2012, but they are now about 25 per cent above it, or 13 per cent if allowance is made for the offsetting effects of new forests.

Source: NZ Herald

UPCOMING EVENTS

AB Documentary opening Thurs 17 April @ Hollywood in Sumner, "*The Real Dirt on Farmer John*". The story of a farmer in southern Illinois who lost family land through economic collapse, then emerged again with support from community subscribers, to develop a thriving farm that produces food for people in the surrounding area and shares vision and skills through on-site education. Audience Award winner @ Sundance Film Festival, Grand Jury Award winner @ San Francisco International Film Festival.

AB *Free Community Garden Plot?* Wai Ora Trust is looking at restructuring its gardens and looking to offer garden plots to community groups, whanau and any other interested parties. Contact ricky@waioratruck.org.nz for more information

A Submissions to *Environment Canterbury's draft annual plan* for 2008/09 are now being received. Anyone interested in the way the environment is being managed by the regional council, and the cost of this to ratepayers can put in a submission by April 29. As well as environmental management of natural resources, regional councils are also responsible for governance functions relating to public transport, regional land transport and the co-ordination of region-wide civil defence emergency management.
<http://www.ecan.govt.nz/home>

A *Renewable Energy that does not depend on wind or rainfall* Earthwise on Radio PlainsFM 96.9, Mon 28 and Wednesday 30 April, 10pm. Chris Bathurst, Mechanical engineer and David Beach, physicist on undersea turbines for the Cook Strait

A *The UN declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples* – WEA in association with Network Waitangi Otautahi Thursday 1 May, 7.30 pm, Koha for expenses. When the United Nations recently adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the voting was 143 in favour and four against. This country was one of the four who voted against. This evening's discussion will begin with an overview provided by Sacha McMeeking, General Manager Strategy and Influence with Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu (TRoNT). Sacha co-ordinated TRoNT's engagement with the United Nations over the Foreshore and Seabed Act and has been involved in international processes related to indigenous rights. 59 Gloucester Street, for more information contact 366 0285 cwea@xtra.co.nz

Two sessions on topics related to *Sustainability and Christianity* presented by Associate Professor of Geography Simon Kingham and SOC member Steven Muir.

A *How green is God?* Friday May 9th 12-1pm. University of Canterbury Commerce Room 119. This session will examine a variety of issues relating to Christianity and environmental sustainability. In particular it will look at the question of whether Christianity is inherently anthropocentric, or whether that's an aberration from historical and biblical Christianity. Date:

CW "What would Jesus drive?" Friday May 16th 12-1pm. University of Canterbury Commerce Room 220. This session will look at how we travel as New Zealanders and ask what would Jesus do? What are the ethical, spiritual, social and practical issues relating to how we get around?

A *WEA is running an issues of the day series* starting Wednesdays 14 May, 1.30 – 2.30 pm, \$25 for 8 lectures some of which have a sustainability focus

A 14 May *Environmental Justice* – Helen Tulett

B 21 May *The problems and risks associated with the genetic modification of crop plants* – Dr Elvira Domice

A *Nuclear Power for New Zealand: Saviour? Nightmare? Nonsense?*, Dr Susan Krumdieck Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Canterbury Engineers for Social Responsibility, Canterbury Branch, Public Lecture, Thursday 22 May, Engineering School Lecture Theatre E1, 5:30 for 6.00 - 7.00 talk, followed by networking.

W *Students from the Untouched World Foundation funded camp 'Tiromoana: Youth leadership for a waste free world'* will present their impressions of the experience, and their ideas for promoting a waste free future, to a public forum on Friday 24th May at Our City - Otautahi, 159 Oxford Terrace at 10.30am. For more information contact Jocelyn Papprell jyc@caverock.net.nz

A The WEA is hosting a series of sessions on *Peak oil and other global issues*. Starts 29 May, 1 – 3 pm, 5 Thursdays, free 'Peak oil' describes the proposal that there is a finite amount of oil and that sooner or later global oil production will peak. Exactly when this might happen is subject to debate, but it could be within the next few years. This series will discuss some of the issues around peak oil and what might happen to western society when oil supplies start to dwindle. Will the effects be catastrophic, or will viable alternatives be found? Each week a documentary film will be screened, followed by discussion. 59 Gloucester Street, for more information contact 366 0285 cwea@xtra.co.nz

A *World Environment Day* this year is hosted by New Zealand with various activities taking place during the course of the week from Monday 2 June through to the actual day on Thursday 5 June, including an international children's painting competition. The Theme is 'kick the carbon habit'. Funding is available to support events see <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/withyou/wed/index.html> or contact Karen Muldowney WED@mfe.govt.nz or call 0800 WED 2008

A Christchurch Energy Action is running a *Fuel Poverty Workshop* at the Canterbury Netball Centre, 455 Hagley Avenue, Christchurch 4 June 2008. This will be focused on:

- raising awareness about Fuel Poverty (FP) and its impact on people's lives
- exploring the meaning and relevance of FP to New Zealand and to commence defining FP for New Zealand.
- identifying what is needed to eliminate Fuel Poverty

To register contact Bede Martin (03) 363 9854 <http://www.cea.co.nz/> or if you can't attend but would like to receive a copy of the proceedings you can subscribe to CEAs occasional e-letter the "Warm Home Standard." by emailing whs@cea.co.nz with the subject line: "subscribe me to The Warm Homes Standard" and including in the email: your first name and surname; the name of the organisation you work for; and your job title.

A A series of sessions on *Sustainable communities* starts 5 June, 6 – 8 pm, 3 Thursdays, donation, at WEA 59 Gloucester St, 5 June Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch (SOC) on 'Transition Communities'; 12 June Susan Krumdieck on 'Dealing with changes'; 19 June DVD and discussion. 366 0285 cwea@xtra.co.nz

A The Lincoln Envirotown Trust is having an *Energy Blitz (Future Proof Energy Expo)* on Saturday June 7th in Lincoln as part of the World Environment Day (5th June) celebrations. There will be information, displays, great discount offers, fun for kids and speakers throughout the day on how to save energy, reduce your use of energy, generate your own energy, sustainable housing etc. 10.00am to 4.00pm Lincoln Community Centre Hall in Gerald Street. For further information contact: Sue Jarvis 329 5858, email Sue.Jarvis@xtra.co.nz or see www.lincolnenvirotown.org.nz

BA WEA is running an issues of the day see previous page for details.

11 Jun *Not letting rivers dry up* - Liz Griffiths, Forest & Bird Cttee

25 Jun *An overview of the resource consent process & with reference to the Central Plains Water Scheme application* – Donald Fraser

AC Short course: *over-the-horizon sustainable product design*. Dr Ron McDowall and A. Idil Gaziulusoy, University of Auckland, Friday, 18 July 2008, 9 am - 5 pm, MWH Offices, 7 Deans Ave, Christchurch

Fee: \$295 including GST for members (NZSSES, IPENZ, RSNZ, NZIA)

\$375 including GST for non-members

Further information: <http://www.nzsses.auckland.ac.nz/docs/2008-04-14-Over-the-horizon-Sustainable-Product-Design-Overview.pdf>

Register by emailing vicky@nzsses.org.nz

B *Measuring NZ's Water Levels*: The Ministry of the Environment is seeking peoples views on a discussion paper outlining a draft National Environmental Standard (NES) on Ecological Flows and Water Levels. The standard has been developed in response to a major challenge in water management identified by regional councils and others. Its aim is to promote the sustainable management of fresh water by:

- setting provisional limits on the alteration to flows and/or water levels for rivers, wetlands, and groundwater systems that do not already have limits imposed through regional plans
- providing a way to select the right system for evaluating ecological flows and water levels in rivers, lakes, wetlands, and groundwater systems. Public workshops on the proposals are being held around the country at dates still to be announced. Submissions close on 31 July 2008.

The discussion document is available at

"<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/laws/standards/ecological-flows-water-levels/index.html>"

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/laws/standards/ecological-flows-water-levels/index.html>. Hard

copies of the discussion paper and related scientific documents are available from

WaterProgramme@mfe.govt.nz

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Completed

- **AB** Transition Communities Bus trip
- **A** Presence at Living Here Sustainable Partnerships forum
- **A** Purchase and Distribution of Earth Charters. See <http://www.sustainablechristchurch.org.nz/resources/earthcharter> for example, contact kmpeet@gmail.com if you'd like a copy \$3
- **A** Adoption of SOC Plan for 2008-09
- **AC** Co-sponsorship of complementary currencies event 10 April

In Process

- **A** Consideration of relationship between sustainable and Treaty based development
- **AC** Development of Transition Communities Energy Decline Plans
- **W** Waste minimisation project
- **A** Ongoing discussion with Healthy Christchurch re focus of recent conference.
- **A** Writing to successful Councillors reminding them of the commitments they made in answering our pre-election online survey.
- **A** Participating in ECAN Proposed Change Number 1 processes
- **A** Holding Transition communities workshop at WEA, 5 June (see above)
- **AB** Preparation of DVD of Transition Communities Bus tour