

MARCH/APRIL 2008

# Our Region

NEWS FROM THE GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL



## Exciting future for public transport

Reducing the region's emissions

Sustainability tips

Take action for water



Please recycle this magazine

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## Greater Wellington – what we do

### Greater Wellington looks after the region's:

#### Emergency management

Coordinates the region's Civil Defence Emergency Management Group to minimise the potential effects of emergencies, such as floods and earthquakes.

#### Environmental sustainability

Helps people and businesses to use the region's resources appropriately by promoting environmental sustainability.

#### Flood protection

Helps communities protect themselves from the effects of flooding.

#### Harbour safety

Looks after the navigational safety of all vessels in Wellington and Porirua harbours, and around the regional coastline.

#### Land management

Works with landowners to prevent or reduce soil erosion by improving the way land is used.

#### Metlink buses and trains

Coordinates the Metlink public transport network for the region, and funds bus, train and harbour ferry services.

#### Pest control

Works with landowners to target pest plants and animals, and eradicate bovine Tb.

#### Pollution control

Maintains a 24-hour incident-response service, and conducts environmental assessments of industrial and commercial sites.

#### Regional economic development

Keeper of the Wellington Regional Strategy – a sustainable economic-growth strategy developed by the region's nine local authorities.

#### Regional parks and forests

Maintains a network of regional parks and forests that are enjoyed by thousands of people every year.

#### Water supply to reservoirs

Delivers high-quality treated water to the main reservoirs in each city. The four city councils supply homes and businesses from the reservoirs.

### Contact your regional councillor

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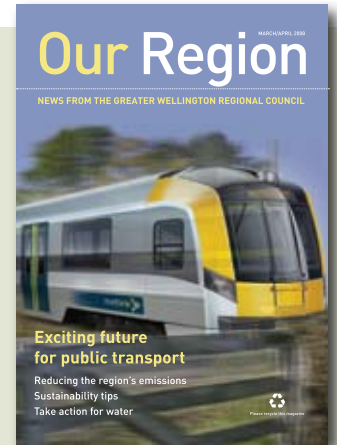
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greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL



### Our Region is produced sustainably

#### Print – Lithoservices

Enviro-Mark NZ Level 1 Bronze (working towards Silver).

Ink is vegetable oil based, from 100% renewable resource, compliant with EuPIA's environmental policy, ISO 9001:2000 and 14001:2004.

Paper from "well managed forest", produced in Forest Stewardship Council-certified mill, ISO14001, and elemental chlorine and acid free.

#### Design – Moxie

Sustainable Business Awards finalist, Get Sustainable Challenge participant and working towards carbon neutrality.

### PLEASE DO YOUR BIT AND RECYCLE THIS MAGAZINE

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[www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)

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Welcome to *Our Region* – the Greater Wellington Regional Council's new, improved version of its quarterly magazine (formerly known as *Elements*). There's news and information on the work we are doing for a better region, and how you can participate to make our region truly sustainable. Your feedback is appreciated. Please contact Greater Wellington's Communications department on 0800 496 734 or email [info@gw.govt.nz](mailto:info@gw.govt.nz)

## Real learning for real life

Helping young people learn about and take responsibility for their environment is essential for a sustainable region. Greater Wellington has a programme to make sure that happens...

Take Action for Water is a free, fun and hands-on programme to help young people learn about, and take responsibility for, their environment – with help from teachers and the community.

Greater Wellington recently held teacher training days to give teachers the skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver the Take Action for Water and Air programmes to students. The training includes giving teachers hands-on experience with the stream testing equipment used to measure water quality and stream health.

South Featherston School Principal Tracey Smith says the

school has been keen for some time to get involved with Take Action and further down the track she sees great opportunities for the local community to take part in whatever projects the school chooses to undertake.

Teacher Susan Allan says the programme will give students an opportunity for real-life learning experiences and to take actions "that can have some positive impacts on the community".

Another teacher at the school, Dave Meehan, says the training is invaluable. "It means we are totally prepared for the unit by the time we have to run it. We don't have to research everything ourselves. People say that you can do anything as a teacher but it's always good to have the practical experience to share with the students."

[www.gw.govt.nz/takeaction](http://www.gw.govt.nz/takeaction)  
04 801 1029



## Thousands flock to summer activities

It's been a stunning summer and many of the region's residents have been making the most of it by taking part in Greater Wellington's Regional Outdoors Programme.

"We've had a fantastic response to the programme this summer," says Greater Wellington's Amanda Cox. "People of all ages and fitness levels have joined in the fun in activities ranging from buggy walks and bush walks, through to fly fishing and four-wheel drive sunset tours."

There have been high turnouts at most events and enthusiastic attendances at children's events. "Kids just love Kev the Wandering Kiwi," says Amanda. "We always get great crowds – at the Wainuiomata event around 270 children and their caregivers came to join in the fun. The Lion Foundation buggy walks are also really popular with lots of newcomers turning up over the summer as well as the veteran buggy walkers."

Events like the Battle Hill Heli-Tramp (where participants are choppered from Battle Hill, up Transmission Gully and on to the range above) continue to book out within days of being advertised. And even though we're heading into autumn, people can still enjoy Greater Wellington's parks and forests. The Regional Outdoors Programme will continue until the end of March, buggy walks will continue throughout the year (you can find out more at [www.buggywalk.co.nz](http://www.buggywalk.co.nz)) and community planting days will take place mid-year. [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events), [bookings@gw.govt.nz](mailto:bookings@gw.govt.nz)  
04 381 7735

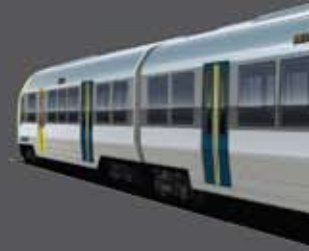


## Going, going, gone!

Two rusting former Wellington trawlers, Szap8 and James Cook, were scuttled in deep water in Cook Strait in December last year. Greater Wellington's Harbours Department disposed of the hulks that had been abandoned by their previous owners. The trawlers had twice slipped their moorings and posed a danger to legal navigation. Prior to scuttling, Greater Wellington removed materials, rubbish and engine oils from the hulks that posed a threat to the marine environment, then waited for the right weather before towing the trawlers out into Cook Strait – the seas en route and in the dumping ground had to be calm.

Check out a video of the sinking at [www.gw.govt.nz/harbours](http://www.gw.govt.nz/harbours)

# OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMITMENT



The future is exciting for Metlink (Greater Wellington's public transport network) but it depends on a commitment to the long-term vision and a willingness to pay, writes Peter Glensor



IT'S THE YEAR 2020.

Ella lives in Titahi Bay and works in Newtown. Before leaving home each day she checks her smart phone for when the next bus is due at her stop, a few minutes walk away. She takes the bus to Porirua Railway Station where a screen tells her exactly when the next train is due. Trains on the Waikanae Line run every 10 minutes during peak hour. At Wellington Railway Station another screen tells her when the next bus to Newtown departs. Ella has a smartcard that she uses on all buses, trains and light rail.

Back to 2008. Our challenge is to put the building blocks firmly in place to make all of this possible.

Our purchase of new electric trains, to be introduced from 2010, along with NZ Bus's purchase of new trolley buses this year (both enabled by Greater Wellington and government funding), are important improvements.

An extensive programme of railway upgrades is under way. However, we've got a lot of work to do with real-time information and integrated ticketing. Both projects are expensive but will help us create a more reliable and user-friendly public transport network.

We have strengthened our commitment to real-time information, with a decision to enter the tendering phase for developing and installing such a system. Up-to-the-minute information (via mobile phones, computers and visual display screens) about when the next bus or train is due gives people a greater sense of certainty and confidence.

The list of what we could do is almost endless, but funding realities mean that difficult decisions have to be made soon about projects that could be 10 to 15 years away.

Rising oil prices are also a significant factor in terms of how we fund our projects and services. While high oil prices could encourage many commuters to switch to our trains and buses, which is great from a sustainability perspective, there are serious rating implications. Already this year, we're looking at an

extra \$1.1 million just to run our diesel buses and keep pace with oil price increases and inflation – without a single increase in service.

Up-to-the-minute information will give people greater confidence

Greater Wellington's Passenger Transport Plan sets out a path for delivering public transport for the next three years, and in some cases up to 10 years. However, it's vital we continue talking with our community about commitment to the longer-term priorities for public transport, and choices about rates and fares.

It's exciting to envisage a cutting-edge public transport network by 2020 but to make it happen we must have commitment to priorities and a willingness to pay.

You can find out more about Greater Wellington's vision for our Metlink public transport network, our priorities and how we can make it happen, at a series of community forums being held later this month.

Peter Glensor is Deputy Chair of Greater Wellington, and Chair of the Transport and Access Committee



An extensive programme of railway upgrades is under way

We've come a long way with the Metlink public transport network over the past few years and seen many changes for the better. Here's a list of what you're currently getting from the Metlink network and what's coming up.

**WE CURRENTLY PROVIDE**

- > 110,000 public transport trips per month
- > 106 bus routes, 7 railway lines and 1 ferry route
- > 804 bus shelters
- > 58 train stations
- > 4000-plus Park & Ride carparks at 58 locations

**OVER THE PAST YEAR WE'VE INTRODUCED**

- > 3 new trains for the Wairarapa Line
- > Improvements to 8 train stations on the Wairarapa Line
- > Better bus services in the Wairarapa, including new wheelchair-accessible buses
- > The first of the 60 new trolley buses for Wellington services
- > The new txtBUS service

**WE'RE COMMITTED TO BRINGING YOU**

- > 70 new electric commuter trains from 2010
- > The remaining new trolley buses to arrive throughout 2008 and early 2009
- > Real-time information for bus and train passengers

- > Double tracking and electrification of the main trunk line from MacKays Crossing to Waikanae
- > Network-wide rail station upgrades for the new electric trains

**WE PAY FOR CURRENT SERVICES AND OUR COMMITMENTS WITH**

- > Greater Wellington rates
- > Central government funding
- > Public transport fares

**TALKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT WITH YOU**

Greater Wellington will continue working with local councils, central government and ratepayers to improve the Metlink public transport network. We'll be talking to you in our upcoming public transport community forums, and you'll have the chance to have your say on public transport priorities and spending for the next financial year in the April/May consultation on Greater Wellington's *Proposed 2008/09 Annual Plan*.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMMUNITY FORUMS**

Public transport community forums will be held from mid to late March in Wairarapa, Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt, Kapiti, Porirua and Wellington.

For dates and venues see [www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz) or phone 04 384 5708



## Working with you on climate change

Transport is the largest non-agriculture contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in our region, generating over a million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from petrol and diesel in 2007, with the majority from private cars.

### Greater Wellington will focus on reducing the region's emissions

Increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions from transport,

industry and heating are responsible for our changing climate and we must act now to avoid the worst consequences of climate change, such as more frequent droughts and floods.

As part of our long-term goal for a sustainable region, Greater Wellington is committed to addressing climate change through the Communities for Climate Protection Programme – New Zealand (CCP-NZ). This programme helps local authorities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their own operations and communities by assessing the quantity of emissions, setting targets for reducing emissions, establishing a local

action plan, implementing it and measuring the benefits.

We'll be focusing on reducing the region's emissions but we're also working within our organisation to reduce emissions. Our inventory shows that water supply (through the electricity used to pump water) is the largest contributor, making up over 70% of Greater Wellington's greenhouse gas emissions.

We are also working to trim emissions from our vehicle fleet, through reducing the number of staff car journeys to work (especially single occupancy and peak time), and increasing the number of walking, cycling and public transport journeys.

**See what action you can take:**  
[www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz](http://www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz)

## Kereru comeback

More kereru, an increase in rare mistletoe... these are all benefits of Greater Wellington's pest control programme.

"We're seeing a comeback of rare native birds and seedlings in our parks and forests – this indicates that the programme is working well," says Greater Wellington's Philippa Crisp. In Kaitoke Regional Park, kereru counts have increased from 29 birds in 2003 to 84 in 2007. Rare native mistletoe and raukawa have also increased.

Greater Wellington does aerial 1080 poison drops to eradicate pest animals such as possums in large blocks of land, hand-lays poisons closer to residential

areas, and controls goats and pest plants. We also work with community groups like Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) on pest control projects. MIRO has been crucial in reducing possum numbers in East Harbour Regional Park by servicing traps in the park's 1,700 hectare forest.

MIRO chair Gail Abel says: "We've removed 1,700 possums in the past three and a half years, allowing native bush to flourish and native birds to return. Our work makes a difference – I've spotted bellbirds, riflemen, whiteheads and kakariki in the park. These were rare or absent a few years ago." **If you wish to get involved in helping with pest control on vegetation projects see [www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)**

## Growing the region

Grow Wellington – the newly established agency responsible for implementing the economic goals of the Wellington Regional Strategy – is moving full-steam ahead.

The strategy for economic growth was developed by Greater Wellington, the region's nine local authorities, central government, and the business, education, research and voluntary sectors. Its key economic goal is to double the region's exports by 2026.

Grow Wellington has been working on initiatives including Angel HQ, which matches experienced investors with start-up and early-stage businesses that have high-growth potential but limited access to capital.

Chief Executive Nigel Kirkpatrick says: "We want Grow Wellington to be the go-to place for the region's businesses. We'll partner with business, infrastructure

and other support organisations so businesses get what they need to be successful and internationally competitive."

Grow Wellington will focus on developing internationally recognised centres of excellence, supporting key industries (such as film), growing businesses, improving broadband supply, working with the region's gateways (e.g. Wellington International Airport) to maximise benefits for the region's businesses, and exploring becoming a carbon neutral region.

[www.growwellington.co.nz](http://www.growwellington.co.nz)



**Grow Wellington**

Working for business success



Photo: Department of Conservation

## Environmental monitoring boosted

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Greater Wellington has extended its network of monitoring stations and the environmental monitoring data available on our website.

We've added new rainfall monitoring stations at Makara, Paekakariki, Longbush, Kiriwhakapapa (near Masterton) and Pencarrow Lakes, new stream-flow monitoring stations on Parkvale Stream, Mangatarere River, Papawai Stream and Tilsons Creek, and new soil moisture and temperature monitoring in eastern Wairarapa.

Upgraded automatic water level recorders have also been installed in the Ruamahanga floodways. Daily rainfall totals, soil moisture, groundwater levels and bathing water quality are just some of the information available on our website.

[www.gw.govt.nz/monitoring](http://www.gw.govt.nz/monitoring)

## Free event for conservation volunteers

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Individuals and community groups with an interest in caring for their local environment are invited to register for a day of free seminars and workshops at this year's Restoration Day, which will focus on a 'Back to Basics' approach to restoration.

The event is jointly organised by Greater Wellington and the Department of Conservation, and will be held at Victoria University's Kelburn campus on Saturday 3 May.

[www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)

or contact Matt Barnett, Department of Conservation, 04 470 8433, [mbarnett@doc.govt.nz](mailto:mbarnett@doc.govt.nz)

## We want your opinion

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Look out for a summary of Greater Wellington's Proposed Annual Plan 2008/09 in your mailbox in early April. It covers the projects and rates needed to deliver key services throughout the region, such as flood protection and public transport. We'll be asking for your feedback on the proposals from 3 April to 5 May 2008.

## Feet first

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More than 50 schools in the Wellington region are taking part in the Feet First Walking Wednesdays programme, where children are encouraged to walk part of, or the whole way, to school at least one day a week.

Greater Wellington's Susan Hutchinson-Daniel hopes that walking to school becomes a daily experience for many children. "It's a fun way to increase fitness, learn road sense and get to know your neighbourhood. It's also a great way to spend chat time with your kids and is environmentally friendly."

[www.landtransport.govt.nz/travel/school/walking-wednesdays](http://www.landtransport.govt.nz/travel/school/walking-wednesdays)



## Calling on young people for youth forum

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Greater Wellington is looking for three secondary school students to represent the Wellington region at the Sir Peter Blake Youth Environment Forum in Wellington from 27 April to 1 May 2008.

Delegates will spend a week participating in community projects, sharing their views on environmental issues and learning first hand about environmental management. Nominations are welcome from students in years 11, 12 and 13.

Download an application form from Greater Wellington's website [www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz) and submit it with a covering letter by 20 March to: **Kerryn Penny, Environment division**  
**Greater Wellington Regional Council**  
**PO Box 11646, Wellington 6142**



Youth Environment Forum participants at Trelissick Park, Ngaio, 2007

Photo: Ministry for the Environment



## Calendar of events

### 15 MARCH

Landforms of the Park  
Queen Elizabeth Park, 10am-12noon  
[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 16 MARCH

Maara Roa Guided Walk  
Belmont Regional Park, 9.30am-12noon  
Phone Sylvia 04 237 4760  
[www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 29 MARCH

Creek to Peak  
Belmont Regional Park, 10am-1pm  
[bookings@gw.govt.nz](mailto:bookings@gw.govt.nz)  
04 381 7735, [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 30 MARCH

Farm to Coast  
Queen Elizabeth Park, 8am-5pm  
\$10, [bookings@gw.govt.nz](mailto:bookings@gw.govt.nz)  
04 381 7735, [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 3 MAY

Crazyman  
Hutt City multisport event  
[www.crazyman.co.nz](http://www.crazyman.co.nz)

### 11 MAY

Wainuiomata Catchment Walking Tour  
[joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz](mailto:joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz)  
04 526 4133, [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 25 MAY

Wainuiomata Catchment Walking Tour  
[joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz](mailto:joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz)  
04 526 4133, [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)

### 4 JUNE

Queen Elizabeth Park planting day  
10.30am-12.30pm  
RSVP 04 802 0327  
[eloise.page@gw.govt.nz](mailto:eloise.page@gw.govt.nz)

### 5 JUNE

World Environment Day  
[www.mfe.govt.nz/withyou/wed](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/withyou/wed)  
Arbor Day  
(See 4 and 6 June planting days)

### 6 JUNE

Battle Hill planting day  
Battle Hill Farm Forest Park  
10.30am-12.30pm, RSVP 04 802 0327  
[eloise.page@gw.govt.nz](mailto:eloise.page@gw.govt.nz)

### 15 JUNE

Wainuiomata Catchment Walking Tour  
[joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz](mailto:joanne.clifford-marsh@gw.govt.nz)  
04 526 4133, [www.gw.govt.nz/events](http://www.gw.govt.nz/events)



## Sustainability tips

Our new sustainability column provides advice on how you can help make our region a greater place to live in, now and for the future. Sustainability means energy and resource use that meets the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. Here are some transport tips to save money and time, improve your health... and get from A to B.

### 1. Walk or cycle short journeys

Stan flats close to town. He sold his car for \$2,000, saving another \$1,000 on licences, WOFs, insurance, depreciation, repairs and maintenance. He spends the \$1,000 saving on a bike for commuting to work and the other \$2,000 on camping gear and car rental for every long weekend from Wellington Anniversary weekend until Christmas.

### 2. Take public transport

Jack's half-hour train ride to work from Manor Park to Wellington means he'll have 229 extra reading/relaxing/listening-to-music hours this year (based on 229 days worked).

### 3. Use a walking school bus

Aroha walks her kids to school on Wednesdays to teach them road sense. The half-hour walk with three roads to cross means she'll have shown them how to safely cross the road 123 times and gained 20 hours of extra exercise and time with her kids by Christmas.

### 4. Carpool with friends or colleagues

Kelly's carpool to work with two friends from Porirua to Lower Hutt will save her \$1,380 this year. The carpoolers pay \$15 each, saving Kelly \$30 per week. (Based on 20 cents/km operating costs for a two-litre vehicle, 22km one way trip and 229 days worked).

Sustainability tips

[www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz](http://www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz)

Regional travel plan programme

[www.gw.govt.nz/travelplans](http://www.gw.govt.nz/travelplans)

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and Telecom networks

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- Call Metlink on 0800 801 700
- Go to [www.metlink.org.nz](http://www.metlink.org.nz)
- Check out txtBUS at Metlink timetable stands.

Get smart. Get Metlink.

metlink

Greater Wellington's public transport network  
0800 801 700 [www.metlink.org.nz](http://www.metlink.org.nz)