

**Waikura/  
Linwood-Central-Heathcote Community Board  
MINUTES ATTACHMENTS**

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**Date:** Wednesday 31 March 2021  
**Time:** 4.30pm  
**Venue:** The Board Room, 180 Smith Street,  
Linwood

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Kia ora koutou

I have been talking with people and planning this visit for some time so its great to be here talking with you today.

I want to begin by thanking you most sincerely for the compassion you showed to myself and to the birds of the Woodham Park aviary, and for the concrete support you gave me - and the birds - last year. The aviaries have been refurbished. The mice infestation has been eliminated. There is improved infrastructure.

We were so excited thinking that the birds were going to have a healthy and happy future. Recently it has become clear this is not the case. Serious welfare issues have arisen again and I will be pursuing this with urgency. However, that is for another day, another context, another conversation perhaps.

Today I would like to talk with you about a proposed project centred on the park. Having Victoria here is a big clue that this is to do with the heritage of Woodham Park which opened in 1942 and has been a much loved and utilised community asset ever since. This includes the fact that the aviary is now only one of two in the CCC area. It is itself nearly 80 years old and deserving of heritage status.

However, it is not heritage as a stand alone that is of interest. I have been interested in this place ever since discovering Woodham Park and its positive impact on my and my family's well- being post -quake and during other periods of stress and ill -health .

I am also very interested in what makes 'community' and what community strengthening actually means in a place- based sense in places that do not easily lend themselves to definition as a community.

Lyttleton e.g. has the tunnel and geographic boundaries defining it; other areas in ChCh have other defining things that over time have led to their sense of place. I live in an area in East ChCh that does not have geographic boundaries or other features making the neighbourhood or community clearly definable.

Woodham Park has however indicated to me the effect a special feature within a place can have.

I believe there is real potential for this place to connect people and strengthen the community around it in ways that relate to all the four well-beings.

I have a project proposal which I have been developing in consultation with Victoria, Jessica Halliday (from Te Putahi) and others and which I'd like to briefly outline today but invite you to meet me at Woodham Park to consider further.

We want to collect stories from people who associate with the park now and/or have done so in the past. Woodham Park is and has been well used. It is beautiful and the birds and the other assets in the park draw people in for a variety of purposes.

We want to tell the stories of community associated with the park. Find the hidden stories and hidden heritage. We want to combine this social history with the environmental history

of the park. The birds; the plantings (it is full of mature beautiful old trees); the insects - it is a wintering place for monarch butterflies. We want to put interpretation panels up so people are aware of both the heritage and the current and past flora and fauna.

Our aims include generating more local community pride in the asset they have. However, this park and aviary are an asset to the whole of ChCh. Indeed while I meet lots of locals in the park I also meet lots of people who are visiting from either other parts of ChCh or from outside our city. The park has destination value to a range of people in and of itself and potential for more.

We need to view the park as combined with the other things in the local area - the river, the Dallington landing (soon to be built); the Richmond Community gardens zone; the Urban Forest project along from that. All these things easily accessible from the Avon Otakaro cycleway; the river corridor. The commercial centre that the park backs on to with cafes etc. So, as well as the environmental, social and cultural well beings already referenced in what I've said think of the economic wellbeing. If we have people drawn in to this place by the birds, the park, the culture and heritage; the whole beauty and amenity value of the park; then the local economy - the shops and cafes in particular will benefit as well.

So what am I asking of you? I am inviting those of you who think this is of interest to meet myself, Victoria, Jess and others perhaps, at the park, to talk about this in the context it belongs. I'd like you to get a real sense of the richness of the park and its surrounds and contextualise the full extent of what we are proposing. I would then hope to get your endorsement to add to our confidence going forward.

Just to finish. On Monday afternoon while visiting the park to check on a sick bird I saw this mum and toddler. She was teaching him Te Reo in front of the aviaries. Recording him talking about 'nga manu'. Super sweet.

There is a lot of potential for this park; unique because of its aviaries and other features, and special in so many ways.



