

ŌTARA WATERWAYS AND LAKE TRUST



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2023



*Te mauri o te rangi
Te mauri o te whenua
Te mauri ora o Tara*

When the lake, waterways and wildlife flourish, the people flourish



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

The year 2022-23 has been a busy and productive one for the Trust, with significant stream restoration achievements, remarkable community engagement activities, especially amidst the challenges presented by COVID-19 in previous years, and the formation of new partnerships while strengthening existing ones with our local community allies.

Having held the position of Chair of the Trust since 2016, I have decided to step down to make way for fresh perspectives and vigour. Since the founding of the Trust, it has grown from strength to strength. Initially, we had only a project coordinator responsible for managing our stream restoration and community engagement efforts in the Otara Creek Reserve. Now, the Trust has expanded to employ four individuals on its Stream Team, leading stream restoration at 20 sites across the catchment area covering approximately 47 hectares. Additionally, we have two part-time Community Coordinators overseeing our community engagement endeavours in Otara and Flatbush, a dedicated Stream Team Manager and Project Manager responsible for the overall management of the Trust's day-to-day operations and a Kaitiākawaenga to strengthen our relationships with mana whenua.

I am very pleased that Tipi Arthur has accepted the role as new Chairman of the Trust, and I am confident that the work of the Trust will grow under his leadership.

I wish to thank all the trustees for volunteering their time, and for their effort and contributions towards the work of the Trust. I also want to acknowledge the valuable contributions of the trust's management and operations staff, who work tirelessly to ensure the smooth functioning of day-to-day operations.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all our major funders for supporting our work, for without their support, our achievements would not have been possible. Although much remains to be accomplished, I am pleased to continue supporting the Trust as a Trustee and to be part of the transformational work the Trust is accomplishing in our urban waterways and local communities.

RICHARD MYHRE

CHAIRMAN 2022-23

KEY OUTCOMES 2022-23

43,989

Native trees, grasses and shrubs planted

20

stream restoration sites actively managed with ongoing weed control and maintenance, covering approximately 47 hectares

740

people hosted at community and volunteer events - including 485 volunteers and 255 people attending events

40

community and volunteer events organised

790

volunteer hours facilitated

18,687

kg of landfill, wood, metal, green and e-waste collected from Neat Streets and green bin days, plus 50 bags of rubbish from clean up events





STREAM RESTORATION

43,989 Native trees, grasses and shrubs planted

20 Stream restoration sites actively managed covering approximately 47 hectares

In 2022-23 the Trust continued its stream restoration efforts across 20 sites in the Flat Bush and Ōtara areas - including seven 1 Billion Trees sites (funded by Ministry Primary Industries), seven sites in Ōtara and five in Flat Bush (funded by the Otara Papatoetoe and Howick Local Boards), and the Te Irirangi Reserve offsite compensation project.

This work includes improving and restoring the stream reaches through weed control, planting, pest control and ongoing maintenance to increase biodiversity values and water quality, as well as improving amenity values for people to be reconnected to these areas.

One Billion Trees

2022-23 was the third year for the Trust's major three year One Billion Trees project, which will help restore seven stream reaches by planting 101,700 native trees, grasses and shrubs across approximately 24 ha.

In 2022-23 Trust planted 35,846 plants at all of the 1BT sites, accompanied with extensive maintenance and control of weeds. The final planting of 23,700 plants will be completed by September 2023, with the 1 Billion Tree sites continuing to be actively managed by the Trust with ongoing support from the Howick Local Board and Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board in 2023-24.

Local Board funded stream restoration

Our local communities want and deserve local streams that are clean, free flowing and without rubbish and other contaminants, so that they can again feel pride and connection to these spaces and can enjoy and use these areas for all cultural and recreational needs.

The ongoing support from the Ōtara-Papatoetoe and Howick Local Boards in 2022-23 has allowed ongoing and long-term stream restoration efforts to be continued at 12 stream reaches across the catchment. The following case studies showcase the stream restoration outcomes which are being realised from this long-term support.

Ōtara Creek Reserve Case Study

Urban streams with great potential

ŌTARA CREEK RESERVE

The Ōtara Waterways and Lake Trust has been undertaking active stream restoration efforts in the Ōtara Creek Reserve since 2016 with the support of the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board.

In this time the Trust has planted over 12,000 native shrubs and grasses in the reserve to extend the width of the riparian margin, to stabilise stream banks, to create shade for the stream and increase the habitat for native birds and insects - all of which in turn and over time have a significant positive impact on the pride and connection that the people of Ōtara have to the Ōtara Creek Reserve - allowing for cultural, social and recreational uses to be resumed and for this space to once again be enjoyed.

The Trust has organised and delivered many volunteer events in the Reserve to support the ongoing care of the area - including clean up events and tree planting by local schools, businesses and families.

The results of the Trust's work and engagement with the community are easily identified with impressive growth of the native plants and reduced rubbish in the Reserve. The work however is ongoing with the planted areas needing ongoing weed control and the planting of canopy trees in the Reserve as the second stage of the long-term Ōtara Creek Reserve stream restoration plan.



Photo Point 1: May 2016



Photo Point 1: July 2021



Photo point 2: June 2018



Photo Point 2: July 2021

Geranium Ave Case Study

Urban streams with great potential

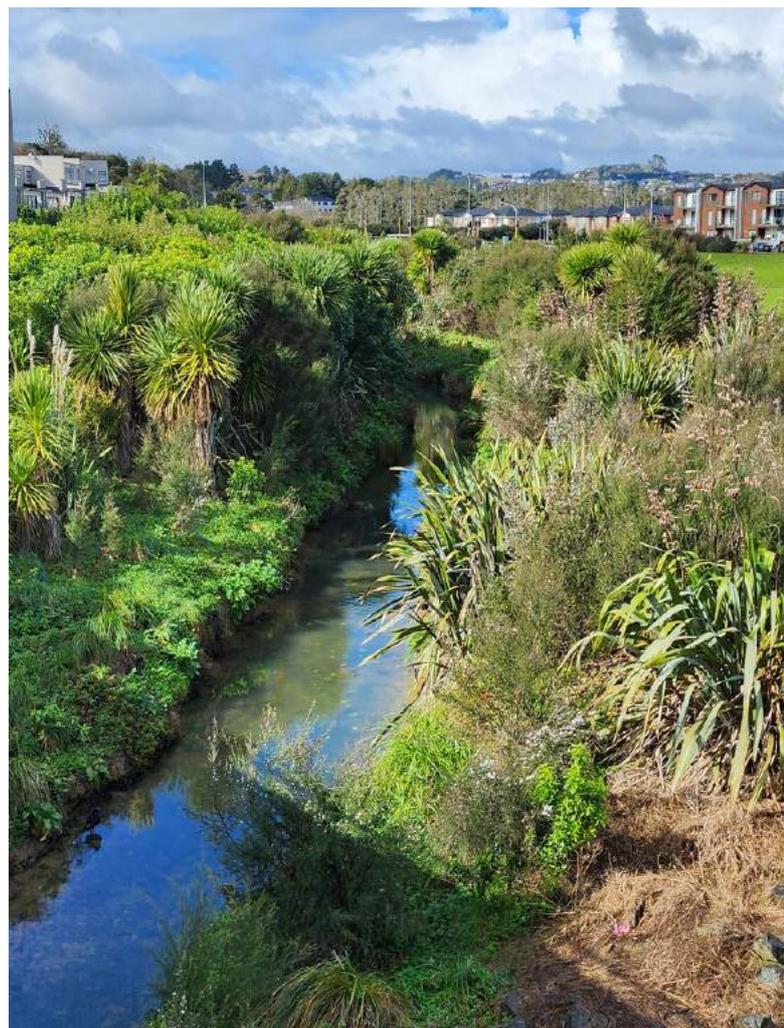
GERANIUM AVE STREAM RESTORATION

In 2019-20 the Howick Local Board provided an initial \$15,000 for the Otara Waterways and Lake Trust to undertake a community planting/stream restoration project in the stream reach between Geranium Ave, Ormiston Rd and Murphy Rd

Since the commencement of the project in 2019-20, the Trust has planted 5,118 native shrubs and grasses in the reserve, alongside extensive removal and control of weeds including abundant woolly nightshade, willow, pampas, privet and gorse.

The Trust has organised and delivered many volunteer events in the Reserve to support the ongoing care of the area - including tree planting by local schools, businesses and families, guided walks, weed release and citizen science projects by local students.

The results of the stream restoration efforts are clearly evident from the the photo points below, with this stream reach now have proper planting to stabilise stream banks, to provide shade for the water and habitat for birds and insects.



2023 FLOOD EVENTS

Stream restoration sites were affected by the 2023 January flood events and cyclone in February, with some areas experiencing bank scour and erosion, bank slips, fallen trees and debris in the water, and removal of vegetative bank cover where weeds (eg tradescantia) were mainly prevalent.

Our assessment of our stream restoration sites following the flood events indicated that bank collapse occurred in two main settings – where deep rooted vegetation is absent and where flow obstructions have deflected flood energy on to specific areas of stream bank.

The flood events highlighted how important the Trust’s work to restore the natural systems in these stream environments is so critically important.

By removing shallow rooted weed species, and replacing them with correct native species which can adapt to and handle high velocity flood waters, and by removing debris in our local streams which create obstructions and cause flooding, the Trust’s work is helping to make our local streams and communities more flood resilient.

With funding from the Hynds Foundation, the Trust will be undertaking a focussed flood debris removal project from September 2023 at critical sites within the Ōtara ward.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Trust sees the engagement of the local community as equally important as the restoration of the ecological process of the stream restoration sites.

After the upheavals in 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022-23 saw a major renewal in the Trust's community engagement activities.

The Trust's approach to community engagement focuses on providing opportunities for local communities to either volunteer their time to help with stream restoration tasks, or to organise events to allow people to participate in a range of activities such as guided walks.

2022-23 COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

740 people hosted at community and volunteer events in Ōtara and Flatbush - including 485 volunteers and 255 people attending events

40 community and volunteer events organised

790 volunteer hours facilitated



Haddington Drive volunteer tree planting

Over two separate days in June, 67 volunteers from the local community assisted the Trust to plant 1,105 grasses and shrubs at the Haddington Drive stream restoration site in Flat Bush as part of the Trust's long-term efforts to restore the stream.



Helping to clear the weeds

With the extremely wet weather in 2022-23 leading to rampant weed growth, enlisting the help of volunteers to help the Trust's Stream Team has been critical to ensure that newly planted natives are not out competed by exotic weeds.

With supervision from the Stream Team, volunteers "hand-release" the weeds using special knives. Whilst not as time efficient as spray-release, hand releasing weeds is necessary when weather conditions are too wet or windy for spraying.

CLEANING UP

Responding to and proactively dealing with illegal dumping and litter in our stream restoration sites is an ongoing issue for the Trust. With our popular Neat Streets programme coming to end in 2023, the Trust thought it timely to look back on the success of this programme.

Neat Streets - a look back

Neat Streets started in the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board in 2017/18 to assist the community to reduce their inorganic rubbish and to minimise the risk of items being illegally dumped into local creeks or parks.

The Howick Local Board adopted the Neat Streets programme in 2019-20.

Since the first Neat Streets event in Antrim Crescent, Ōtara in 2017, the Trust has delivered 32 events under the Neat Streets banner including the traditional large-scale Neat Streets events, mini-Neat Streets (1-2 skips), weed bin and clean up events. In total, since the inception of the Neat Streets initiative, the following outcomes have been achieved:

NEAT STREETS 2017-23

32	events
1,658	homes participated
177,274kg	landfill waste collected
19,478kg	wood waste collected
35,057kg	metal waste collected
4,070kg	green waste collected
18,124kg	e-waste collected
316kg	polystyrene collected
2,096kg	cardboard recycled
267	items repaired

NEAT STREETS 2022-23

In 2022-23 the Trust continued with a much smaller delivery of the Neat Streets programme. Five Neat Streets events and six creek clean up events were organised with the following outcomes:

- 18,687kg - landfill, wood, metal, green and e-waste collected
- 50 bags rubbish collected from clean up events



Hannah Road Neat Streets

A full-scale Neat Streets event was held on Saturday 13 May 2023 for the Hannah / Kudu Rd community in Ōtara, with 53 homes participating.

The event was a fantastic community event, with free haircuts being provided by Kainga Ora (a first for Neat Streets!), backyard trapping information stand and free community BBQ. The event also was a great example of the collaboration between the Trust and Kainga Ora to work together to serve the community of Ōtara.



PEST FREE PROJECTS

PEST FREE SOUTH AUCKLAND

The aim of Pest Free South Auckland is to support efforts towards pest plant and pest animal eradication within the four local board areas of Manurewa, Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, and Papakura.

This includes direct efforts such as pest plant control, pest animal trapping and bait station management, as well as education and training.

The Ōtara Waterways and Lake Trust is the umbrella organisation for the Pest Free South Auckland Coordinator and the annual moth plant pod competition which is delivered across the four local boards.

As part of the PFSA project, The Trust also received funding in 2022-23 from the Ōtara Papatoetoe Local Board to encourage residents to participate in backyard trapping and to manage pest animal bait lines in local reserves.

PEST FREE HOWICK

In 2022-23, the Trust continued its support of the Pest Free Howick Ward project by continuing to be the host employer for the three Pest Free Howick Conservation Assistants.

This is a great relationship for both the Trust and Pest Free Howick, with a shared kaupapa of restoring and protecting te taiao in the Howick Local Board area through the removal of pest plants and animals and engagement of the local community.



THANK YOU

TO OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2022-23

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua



Funding from the 1 Billion Trees programme, for the three year Flat Bush Green Fingers stream restoration project.



Funding provided for stream restoration projects, community engagement, communications, Neat Streets and creek clean up events

Funding provided for the Pest Free South Auckland initiative



Funding provided for stream restoration projects, community engagement, communications, Neat Streets and creek clean up events

Funding for the Pest Free Howick Conservation Assistants



Funding provided through the Community Coordination Fund for the Ōtara Community Coordinator.



Funding provided for operational costs for the Trust.



Funding provided for the Pest Free South Auckland initiative



Funding provided for the Pest Free South Auckland initiative

The Trust would also like to thank various staff and teams of Auckland Council for ongoing assistance with projects, members of the Ōtara Papatoetoe and Howick Local Boards for their ongoing support plus all the volunteers that have assisted at planting days, Neat Streets events and other community events and all the community organisations that support the work that we do

The Trust would like to make a special mention to Accelerating Aotearoa for its tremendous support of the Trust and in providing a home base for the Trust's operations.

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