



Kia ora ano, and welcome to our third newsletter for 2015!

The people who have written articles this time are all doers, that is true, and they know that, whatever they do, it will be more successful on so many levels if they organise it with others and if they pass on their organising and other skills to others too. As it turns out gardening is a very popular way to build community and fashion local solutions. The articles in this newsletter offer a taste of what is going in Panmure, Northcote and Point Chevalier in conjunction with Housing New Zealand Corporation, schools, early childhood centres, a library, local landscaping and gardening organisations, the North Shore Men's Shed, Auckland Council, a bowling club, a Transition Town Group, a church and many many locals!

This year IC has been busy working directly with all sorts of communities but we haven't forgotten about running public events too! While our Provocative Breakfast with Be. Accessible has been sadly postponed, we are excited to announce that we will be doing one with Beacon Pathway in November and another one with Age Concern in the New Year. More on those soon.

The other thing that we are currently developing are some training sessions about different aspects of community-led development. We'll send out information on those soon too. Meantime, if you are in the west you might like to join the Leading in Communities programme. Scroll down for more info on that or contact Jaclyn directly: jaclyn@communitywaitakere.org.nz / phone 838 7904.

If you would like to share what locally-led change you and your community are up to, please let me know by email and we'll happily run an article or advertise your event:

Denise.Bijoux@inspiringcommunities.org.nz.

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* All the stories we feature are written by those involved and there are links included for you to find out more directly from them



Panmure East Residents Association P.E.R.A.

Nerissa Henry helps grow community.

P.E.R.A. was created by a bunch of Housing New Zealand local residents that undertook the first Tamaki Transformation Programme in 2008/2009 along with residential homeowners. We all had the same aspirations for our families, neighbours and community and that was to connect more, look after each other and bring the safety and health of all our residents to the forefront.

P.E.R.A.'s mission is to support residents to build a strong, healthy and vibrant community. We want a healthy and strong community that is proactive and responsive to families and neighbours. We also connect and support our neighbours to be inclusive and advocate for each other.

To get these connections going we hold events and workshops and welcome everyone to come in and join our community garden. We have held Christmas, New Year's, Easter and other events like tea parties, lunches and even Neighbour's Day. We have established good relationships with groups, organisations, ECE's and schools within our Local Board area and educate our community as much as we can on topics such as growing your food, waste reduction and leading healthy lifestyles.

Our main focus is promoting the community garden and getting more people in to join this amazing community initiative. We have open days on Fridays and Sundays from 9:30-11:30am (weather permitting) where we all help out with the garden jobs such weeding, planting, harvesting and really just to get to know each other and make connections.

If you'd like to have a workshop on anything relating to gardens and waste reduction we can help ☺.

To find out more about P.E.R.A. friend us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100008373607248>. Or please feel free to contact Nerissa Henry on 021 073 6995 or email us directly to pera1072@hotmail.co.nz.



Northcote Library's Edible Garden

Steve McLuckie reveals the web of connections that make it thrive

Filling the minds and puku of local children has been the catalyst for the development of an edible garden in the courtyard of Northcote Library on the North Shore. The library's regulars reflect the diverse community in Northcote, with large numbers of Chinese, Korean, Maori and Pasifika families. It's a rich and vibrant community but also one that faces a few challenges. During the school holidays staff regularly see children spending whole days at the library. Many of these kids don't come with a lunchbox and by mid-late morning start showing signs of being hungry. Behaviour can deteriorate as a result. Staff pondered on whether there was a positive, affirming, local response that tapped into some of the strengths of the community and the idea for the edible garden was born.

A passionate team consisting of library manager, Trina Roycroft, Homer Xu from Gardens4Health, Linda Tisch of the Whole Health Hinemoa Garden, local landscape gardener Amanda Yates, Stephen McLuckie from Auckland Council, Ron Kilham from Rotary Northcote Glenfield and Cate Thorn from the local Anglican Parish came together to develop the project. Exploratory meetings developed a vision for the garden as a shared community resource, being tended to and looked after by local people for the benefit of the community. An application to the Evers-Swindell Trust, a locally administered trust fund, was successful and enabled the library garden to progress.

The Mens Shed North Shore team became involved and have constructed and assembled the raised beds and the garden shed. The Sunset Gold Gardeners group, a knowledgeable group of local Chinese elders who garden collectively across the North Shore are excited about the opportunity to be involved in the project as well as share their skills and experience with the next generation of local gardeners. A number of other local people including patients from a nearby diabetes clinic are keen to become involved and grow and tend some healthy kai.

Assistance has been also been secured from Auckland Council through the provision of compost for the garden from the recent Northcote organic food waste trial. Parks and Property staff and local board members have also contributed advice, connections and copious amounts of encouragement. The wonderful facilitators from the Composting Collective have also offered their services with composting workshops to be held at the library in the near future. All in all and it has blossomed into a wonderful collaborative effort between a wide range of stakeholders - local businesses,

community groups, churches, the local community coordinators, council and elected representatives.

Library Manager Trina says this of the project; “I am very passionate about this project and really do feel it will be worthwhile and beneficial for the whole community. It will help on a number of levels, creating and nurturing strong relationships and building a sense of pride. I can’t wait to see the children attending learning about growing their own food, being fed by produce they have grown themselves and taking that inspiration home with them”.

The next stage of the project will be a number of upcoming working bees. For more information or if you’d like to get involved with the Northcote Library Edible Garden contact Library Manager, Trina Roycroft at trina.roycroft@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



Dignan Street Community Hub in the heart of Pt Chevalier, Auckland

Ellen Schindler and Sandra Eriksen show how much can happen in a year.

Imagine an unused quarter acre in one of Auckland’s popular suburbs, Pt Chevalier - and the developers can’t build houses on it. The gift Hallyburton Johnstone gave to the community nearly a century ago, a few acres of land in a perpetual trust for recreation – which includes the Bowling, Croquet and Tennis Clubs - now includes community gardening.

A year ago the Pt Chevalier Bowling Club decided to offer a retired halfgreen, which had been unused for 20 years, to the locals for use as a community garden. The offer was posted by club manager Jenny Jones on the social website Neighbourly - and the rest is history in the making.

Transition Town Pt Chevalier’s Community Garden group, which had a well established garden at the Old Homestead site on Pt Chevalier Road, checked the new site out and decided it was ideal for a new community garden. Importantly, soil tests sponsored by the Bowling Club came back as suitable because of the Bowling Club’s largely organic approach to its greens.

The group’s first big task was to rid the field of excess weed and kikuyu growth. Putting down cardboard (collected from local businesses) and wheelbarrowing 15 truckloads of council mulch to the site was no mean feat. This was to establish raised gardening areas, as the field is often dry in summer but a wetland in winter. Though the garden is tucked away on trust land, the public walkway between the bowling club and tennis club gives lots of exposure and the group has more than doubled in size since taking on the new project. Now a flock of free-range neighbourhood kids

join in whenever they hear voices over the fence - and how they love getting dirty and mucking in, swinging hammers and spreading mulch. They've also helped build a pizza oven base, with hidden signatures of all the helpers engraved forever.

The Dignan Street garden offers a blank canvas with great potential for so much more community involvement. The group's already made good progress on multiple fronts in the 10 months since we first visited the site. As well as the communal garden spaces, there's work on a herb spiral, a picnic area with a large (recycled) pergola, play areas for toddlers and older children, a pizza oven, an orchard (with half the trees already planted on little Huegelbeds), and a six-compartment composting bin area made from repurposed pallets. Also planned is a welcoming space for creative artistic and learning events, and much more.

As a group we have many different skills: organisational, mucking-in, networking, and a magnificent resourcefulness in recognising "rubbish" as potential and the talent to transform it into wonderful parts of the garden hub. There's so much more to do, but with a generous grant from our local Albert-Eden Board, we have resources to make it happen the way we want it.

The Pt Chev Bowling Club proves to be the partner that any group would wish for, sharing valuable resources with us such as good gardening tools, storage space and other facilities, and offering outstanding encouragement and support. Our group of gardeners are also social members of the club, so we can use the large club hall for meetings and other community events, free of charge and with a no-fuss, can-do attitude from the club's manager and trustee. We meet for a potluck dinner every three months to plan the next phase of actions and priorities, which is lots of fun as we're very social animals!

One of the big advantages Pt Chevalier can offer is its peninsular beach flair, with a great swimming beach around the corner. In summer, after a good working bee, our sweaty gardeners head to the beach for a cleansing swim and a picnic – all part of a great community life!

If you want to get involved in the Dignan St Community Garden, email alisonmayburt@gmail.com or check out for updates on our fb site <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Old-Homestead-Pt-Chevalier-Auckland/426939944082421?fref=ts> It is named after our first garden supported by the Pt Chevalier Co-operating Parish and their lovely supportive minister Sandra Warner.

For more information about our general Transition Town activities:

<http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/pointchevalier>.

OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS COMING UP SOON!

What is Auckland Council's 'empowered communities approach'?

A couple of meetings have been held already in Auckland Central and on the North Shore but there are more to come. If you are interested in better understanding this new way of working in Council and have some questions come along to:

- Waitakere Community Resource Centre, 8 Ratanui Street, Henderson, Monday October 5th 4:30-6:30pm (arrive early for tea, coffee and biscuits from 4pm)

Leading in Communities:

Invitation to take part in LEADING IN COMMUNITIES – flax roots leadership development

Are you or do you know someone...

- Already involved in making positive change in your community and local environment?
- Noticing different ways that people lead in communities but don't feel confident as a leader yourself?
- Keen to learn and try out skills and tools in a group environment?
- Part of a neighbourhood and local initiatives in the Waitakere Ranges?

If you're thinking YES – or even MAYBE – then we would love to hear from you. *Leading in Communities* is a (free!) programme delivered by Community Waitakere with support from the Waitakere Ranges Local Board and input from guest presenters. You will take part in a series of interrelated, interactive workshops for nine weeks. *Leading in Communities* starts October 13th and you will need to commit to Tuesday sessions, 5:30-8:30pm.

Feedback from past participants:

"Inspiring - it is very relevant to what is going on in my world. Exciting! I can't wait to start using some of the information, tools and tips. Thank you."

"Courageous conversations and working with conflict situations will be really useful tools for me to use."

"I particularly found it useful to recognise the many ways we can lead. This gives me more confidence to continue on and to be part of the change in environmental and community health."

Community Waitakere believes that leadership doesn't occur within a small group of 'special' individuals but sits within all neighbourhoods so please don't be shy – **this opportunity is for you even if you don't describe yourself as a leader!**

If you want to find out more please get in touch with Jaclyn Bonnici at Community Waitakere (jaclyn@communitywaitakere.org.nz / phone 838 7904). Spaces are very limited and we are looking for a diverse range of people. **Please share this information widely with your friends, whanau and community networks.**