



## Minutes of the Newtown Residents Association Meeting - 19 August 2024

**Present:** Rhona Carson (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Penny Sturgess, Joyce Gibson, Graeme Carroll, Kerry Finnigan, Kevin Lethbridge, Tom Law, Michelle Wolland, Jane Patterson, Steve Dunn, Hilary Watson, Alex Hockley, Stephen Pritchard, Sam Somers, DM Laurie Foon, Cr Nureddin Abdurahman, Guest- Jesse Gale (MacAlister Park Restoration Group)

**Apologies:** Carol Comber, Eileen Brown, Jan Gould, Dave Jenkins, Martin Hanley

Rhona Carson welcomed everyone, particularly our Council representatives, and introduced Jesse Gale to talk about MacAlister Park restoration.

### MacAlister Park Restoration Group

Jesse attended to introduce this mahi to the group and ask if the Residents' Association could be an 'umbrella organisation' for funding applications for the group. They have applied to WCC for funding for new tools, but as the group isn't a legal entity they need an 'umbrella' for this. Geoff Simmons, the group convenor who made the initial approach, was unable to attend.

Although the planting project is within the MacAlister Park boundary it is a long way from the playing fields on Adelaide Rd. From Finnimore Terrace there is a ridge on the Town Belt where the pine trees have fallen, leading into Prince Of Wales Park. Geoff Simmons, and friend Ed Hearnshaw (now deceased), started 'Charlie's Angels' around ten years ago to restore the Prince of Wales Park.

There are about 20 adult members, with other whānau, who go out about once a month to return gorse and unusable land to native bush. The plants are provided by the Council. The exact days of activity vary; they are usually a weekend day.

Rhona outlined the process to set up an 'umbrella' agreement, and indicated that an informal question got general agreement from the NRA Executive. There was general approval from the meeting, and congratulations to the group for the initiative.

If anyone is interested in getting involved Geoff Simmons is the contact - [geoffsimmonz@gmail.com](mailto:geoffsimmonz@gmail.com). Map reference - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/QoKEPj6grgYVfYs68>

### Berhampore and Newtown West Parking

Rhona had asked for feedback about the Parking Plan, and had received written and verbal reports from some people unable to be at the meeting. These were positive, with the people concerned finding it much easier to park outside their homes. One respondent suggested increasing the area available for Residents' parking to 50-60% from 40-50%, while being pleasantly surprised at the effectiveness of the current arrangement.

Those at the meeting were generally in agreement. One person noted that there had been a few more cars over the past few weeks, as though some drivers who had initially avoided the area were gradually coming back, but there was still enough space.

Many meeting attendees were from Newtown East, where the parking changes won't start till next year. Some anecdotal evidence suggests people who used to park in Newtown West are now parking on the East. There might also be more people parking on Alexander Road and Kilbirnie.

Some are unhappy about the need to pay for a parking permit, and wonder why Newtown and Berhampore are the first suburbs with this requirement.

Cr Nureddin explained some of the background to the parking changes, particularly why Newtown was the first suburb to get these changes. Rhona reinforced this – that there have been years of complaints about the pressure on parking for residents without off street options, and we had asked for a parking policy and plan. The system of time restricted parking with exemption for residents was being used in Colombo St and seemed to work well so several years ago we asked if it could be extended.

A question was raised about whether the rules applied on public holidays. DM Laurie will check this out. There are no CBD parking restrictions on public holidays.

<https://wellington.govt.nz/parking-roads-and-transport/parking/city-street-parking/parking-hours-fees#:~:text=the%20parking%20requirements.,Parking%20on%20public%20holidays,-It%27s%20free>

The Newtown parking restrictions generally apply Monday to Friday, including public holidays.

<https://www.transportprojects.org.nz/assets/Berhampore-to-Newtown/Parking-plan-docs/TR157-23-Newtown-and-Berhampore-Traffic-Resolution-Final.pdf>

### **Newtown Community Consortium Meeting at Black Coffee, July 26th**

This meeting was organised by Duncan McLean and Paige Simoneau from the Newtown Business Group. The purpose of the meeting was to gather ideas, voice concerns and create partnerships within the community for support and safety. There was a very good attendance with nearly 50 people present, including representatives from various agencies –social services, WCC, Police and others – and many local residents.

DM Laurie Foon and Penny Sturgess both went to the meeting and reported their impressions of it. Penny commented that there was a lot of positive feeling for Newtown, but also many concerns about safety and security.

- It was noted that one business decided to close partly because of unsavoury interactions with the public.
- Sometimes people were going into a cafe and harassing customers.
- The City Council is going to be more active in suggesting alternatives for those begging on the street.
- Some areas were identified that needed more cleaning work.
- Things have improved with fewer homeless people over the past few months and the Police, Council and community have been doing mahi that is probably helping with this. A number of people have been housed. A meeting attendee commented that there appear to be a lot of homeless people around the railway station, so maybe some people have moved away from Newtown.

DM Laurie added that Downtown Community Ministries (DCM) are out on the streets, and she has been very impressed with their work. It is better to donate to DCM than to beggars.

The Fixit App is very useful to log any of these events.

There is likely to be a Community Cleanup event on 15 September.

### **Interest in Emmett and Green Streets having Historic Heritage designations**

DM Laurie and Cr Nureddin have been talking with local people about progressing this mahi.

## **Wellington Heritage Festival**

Alex Hockley (Wellington Heritage Festival CEO) reported that the brochure of events would be released soon. About 150 events are being held throughout the region. Twelve are in Newtown, and six of these have been initiated by the Newtown Residents' Association. The Festival is running from 26 October to 17 November.

## **Newtown Mini-Events**

Newtown Festival has arranged with WCC for Wilson Street and Newtown Avenue to be able to be closed a few times a year for live events. These will be well publicised ahead of time. An advance notice – the Latino Community are organising a Day of the Dead Festival to be held on Saturday 2 November outside Viva Mexico, in the Wilson St carpark.

## **Newtown Festival 2025**

Well over 200 people have already booked stalls (about 400 are expected), and expressions of interest for performers are coming in.

## **Cancer Society Relay for Life**

The Society are interested in having this at Newtown Park in March next year; still to be decided.

## **Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards**

Congratulations to Newtown Tool Library who got runner-up for the environment awards. [See here for the list of winners.](#)

## **Te Aro Zero Waste**

The Sustainability Trust and Wellington City Council have created a partnership to offer more services. Instead of making the trip to the WCC Landfill Tip Shop you can now go to the Sustainability Trust premises at 2 Forresters Lane to drop off items for recycling or reuse, purchase secondhand items, and more. See <https://sustaintrust.org.nz/tearozero Waste>. Open hours Wednesday - Saturday 10am – 4pm.

## **Affordability for Sports in Wellington**

Cr Nurreddin informed us that a report has been prepared on this subject and will be reviewed by Council soon.

## **Gillies McIndoe Research Institute – 7 Hospital Road**

Graeme Carroll drew our attention to an important recent activity at GMRI. Dr Swee Tan, the lead researcher on the Glioblastoma Phase II clinical trial is recruiting patients recently diagnosed with glioblastoma as participants. The trial will investigate a safe combination of repurposed drugs that is hypothesised to regulate cancer stem cells. If you wish to know more about the Phase II trial, see <https://www.facebook.com/GMRINZ/> - a post from July 22 - or email [info@gmri.org.nz](mailto:info@gmri.org.nz) for more information.

## **177 Owen Street (previously known as Workingman's Bowling Club) redevelopment**

The bowling club club rooms have been demolished and work is progressing on creating the new Park, including extensive sound checking to determine the optimal stage placement.

## **Newtown Residents Association Membership**

Rhona reminded people that the new financial year started on July 1<sup>st</sup> and membership renewals are now due. [The Membership Form is here](#). There are also paper membership forms available at meetings.

**Meeting ended at 9:01**