

Sustainable Ōtautahi Christchurch

Chairperson's Annual Report 2018-2019



This year saw a renaissance in work by SOC that has generated interest and activity both from members and friends of the organisation.

Jump Start

We began in 2018 with the commissioning of a “Jump Start” report to review past and present views of SOC and the potential pathways we could take as we regenerated the organisation from a period of hibernation post -quake. This report, done by Michelle Whitaker an independent contractor trading as Spring Unlimited, will inform future work and is a great resource for us. Our thanks to Michelle for her hard work and the amount of thought she put into this project. Our thanks to Marney Ainsworth and David Guthrey who provided the funds for it.

Speaking for the Planet

An initiative suggested and then led by Jocelyn Pappriell with assistance from Michelle Whitaker whom SOC contracted to help deliver this project. The inaugural Speaking 4 the Planet event went really well on Friday 7th June. This was a joint project between SOC & the Christchurch branch of NZ Association for Environmental Education with wonderful support from a range of sponsors without whom we could not have brought this competition to Christchurch. We have learnt a great deal from this first go at running such a competition and aim to offer it again in 2020 on or near World Environment day (June 5th). Information about this year's S4P can be found on SOC's website <https://sustainablechristchurch.org.nz/speaking-4-the-planet-art/>. Particular mention must be made to the main funders of the programme in 2019 the Sustainable Initiatives Fund (SIFT). This fund has been discontinued and another source of funds will need to be found next year but the success of this year's event should enable this.

Other education initiatives

A meeting of early childhood educators was held June 8th to scope what is happening with regard to sustainable education programmes in the sector and to discuss links with ECE, community and the potential role SOC might play encouraging and supporting such work. A proposal to join in with the ECE ‘Gathering’ - a local ECE sector conference - by showcasing SOC and Clever Green work, to begin relationship building will be written by Anthea Madill and presented in time for us to attend the September 2019 gathering if this is approved by the conference organisers.

Climate

A focus of work this year has been engaging with climate campaigning. Our letters in support of calls for Environment Canterbury and Christchurch City Council to declare a climate and ecological emergency were well received and added to the chorus of voices in our city demanding this. Now we are engaged in consultation processes, in particular with CCC over climate policy and practical and effective programmes to

back up these declarations. June 27th we are leading the 'Restoring a Kind Climate' gathering to inform council work in this area and to further bring our community together in solidarity around this ongoing work.

Water

In August 2018 the Canterbury Water Management Strategy was under review. Two people involved in SOC were asked to be on task groups. In order to facilitate feedback through them by our community into the process a SOC open executive meeting was held with the topic of water, rivers and other water bodies in Canterbury and the effectiveness or otherwise of the CWMS. Input given was able to be presented in the review process. However, water issues including the perilous state of our waterways and fresh- water biodiversity remains a paramount concern not just to SOC members and allies but to the people of Ōtautahi /Christchurch in general. We will continue to work on these issues through 2019-20.

Working with other organisations.

This has been an important aspect of this year's work. As well as the project with NZAEE we have partnered with meetings with the Fabian Society and with One Voice Te Reo Kotahi. We are engaged in a developing relationship with Te Whare Roimata. We have supported the Sharing Cities initiative led by Sophia White. The Chairperson is progressing a proposal in partnership with the Fabian Society and others to establish a 'SHIFT' library in the city containing high quality books relating to topics relevant to the work of SOC. The letters in SHIFT stand for Sustainable, Holistic, Inspiring, Facts, Transition. This library follows the work of Juliet Adams who established the LIFT library (Living Economies, Inspiration, Facts, Transition) in Lyttleton and has supported us doing this in the central city. She did not want us to use the name LIFT but was delighted with SHIFT!

Helping with building a collaborative network working on issues of strong sustainability and regenerative practice is an important part of our kaupapa.

Youth engagement.

We have all been inspired by Students Strike for Climate and the impact of their efforts. Anthea Madill (executive member) and myself were likewise inspired by another community of young people who organised a conference "Enviropast" in April 2019 for which Anthea was a workshop leader and to which I was invited to attend. Young people of secondary school and university age were brought together to look in depth at the issues around plastic pollution. A remarkable achievement and we will continue to have an ongoing relationship with a number of the young people involved.

We also will follow up with the schools involved with S4P. The chance to develop relationships with the schools and their students was part of the motivation for SOC being involved with running this competition.

Submissions

As well as urging the declaration of a climate crisis by our local government agencies SOC submitted on CCC "Our Space" Draft. Dr John Peet prepared our submission and spoke to it during the consultation. Our thanks for his - effective! - work.

Communications

4 email newsletters have been sent out to 255 members/supporters.

The website was reestablished and is being maintained to disseminate information on strong sustainability issues and related events. Our thanks to Rosemary Neave and to Dave Evans for this work.

The SOC Facebook page is currently liked by 852 and followed by 898. Since February Michelle Whitaker has very competently and effectively edited the FB page and this has been extremely useful to support her work on S4P.

www.facebook.com/sustainablechristchurch

Colleen Philip

June 20th, 2019.