

# Sustainable Ōtautahi Christchurch | Chairperson's Annual Report

June 2022 to June 2023

SŌC's goal is the promotion of strong sustainability in Ōtautahi Christchurch and the surrounding area. Our focus is particularly on the climate and ecological crises, as well as social and economic wellbeing and sustainability, which we believe are vital to solving the climate crisis. Below, we briefly describe some of SŌC's core activities over the last year.

We are continuing to play our part in maintaining and strengthening the relationships and interconnections in the ecosystem of organisations/groups who are working alongside us.

## **Speaking for the Planet: *Climate and education***

For the fifth year in a row, SŌC partnered with the NZ Association for Environmental Education to host Speaking for the Planet, a speech, art, spoken word, music video, and impromptu drama competition for young people. Last year's competition took place on Friday, July 1st at Tūranga and this year's will be held on August 11th. For more information on any of the S4P events of the past five years including the upcoming 2023 competition, please visit the [S4P page on the SOC website](#). NZAEE and SOC are very grateful for the ongoing support of our sponsors and supporters and very proud of the calibre of entries from the young people of our region. Jocelyn Papprell has led this project superbly and we thank her for her enthusiasm and hard work. This year we gratefully appreciate the support Claudia Jardine has provided to S4P as well as all volunteer judges and students who work hard on their submissions.

## **Youth vote, democracy, and living wage**

SŌC collaborated with several other organisations, including Living Wage Aotearoa, Generation Zero, Anglican Advocacy, and the Tertiary Education Union to engage with young people and youth organisations on education about the democratic process and their opportunities within it in advance of the 2022 local elections. This culminated in a Mayoral Forum focused on the Make it 16 campaign and advocating for a living wage for all Christchurch City Council and affiliate staff. The forum was attended by all the main Christchurch mayoral candidates and several of the city council candidates. The coalition was able to secure verbal, public support for changing the minimum voting age to 16 and to increasing the Christchurch holdings to living wage.

## **Open government**

SOC hosted Andrew Ecclestone who is Senior Associate for Governance and Policy Studies at Victoria University, Wellington on 28th March. Andrew spoke to the topic "Open Government: What does this mean and why is it important?" He outlined the background to the National Action Plan and the international context as well as the link between open government work

and addressing the climate crisis. The meeting was run in partnership with Canterbury WEA and the Christchurch Envirohub.

### **Climate action**

SOC, 350 Otautahi, and the WEA co-hosted an event with Niki Harré. Niki discussed how to frame climate change and sustainability topics to empower people and communities and inspire action for a more sustainable future.

### **Sustainable business**

SŌC held an expo of local, sustainable businesses in conjunction with a public meeting in which the main speaker (Sue Coutts, Zero Waste Network) and a panel discussed local and national issues related to the development and success of sustainable business. We are grateful to everyone who attended the sustainable business expo, and look forward to additional business partners. We are strongly committed to supporting local businesses that are striving toward a strongly sustainable future for themselves and therefore for our community, country and world. We'd be happy to support another event if someone is looking to organize.

### **Alternative economics**

Three meetings of the economics discussion group were held. One of these involved a visit to the LIFT library in Lyttelton for attendees to learn about and access the economics section which includes material not widely available elsewhere in Christchurch.

### **Transition engineering**

Please note that Susan Krumdiek's book on transition engineering is now free to [download here](#).

### **Marine**

Marine work in 2022 has been pursued mostly within our membership of **ECO (Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa/NZ)**. ECO have been involved in a wide range of marine policy work and campaigns work through the past year and SOC are proud to be a member and support of this work at a national and international level. For more on all that ECO has been engaged with through this past year see the [ECO website](#).

### **Water**

We are seeking an executive member who can lead on water sensitivity issues. If you have a particular interest in this please consider joining the executive and liaising with CWP on our behalf and continuing the advocacy work started in 2020—2021.

## **Memberships, sister organizations, and our place in the greater network of Christchurch sustainability**

- SOC has maintained our membership of **Hui E!**
- Joyce and Nathaniel have kept abreast of the organising group of **One Voice te Reo Kotahi.**
- The SOC and envirohub executives also had a discussion regarding where each organization can best serve, which we felt strengthened the work both organizations are able to do.

### **Submissions**

We will aim to increase our responsiveness to submissions in the 2023–2024 year by sending out calls for submission support, and will trial writing these up as groups (either in person or via zoom depending on how quickly a response is needed).

### **Communications**

#### **Newsletters**

Total of 4 newsletters sent to 380 members/supporters

#### **[Website](#)**

Maintained to disseminate information on strong sustainability issues and related events; and act as a portal for people trying to communicate with people in our region re this for research and other purposes.

#### **[Facebook page](#)**

Maintained for the same purpose and is currently liked by 1300 and followed by 1503.

### **2022–2023 SOC executive**

**Chairperson:** Dr Joyce Yager

**Treasurer:** Dave Evans

**Secretary:** Colleen Phillip

David Guthrey

Nathaniel Herz-Edigner

Ben Jassin

Fiona van de Petegem

Sophia White

**Patron:** Dr John Peet

### **A note on the chairperson transition from 2022–2023**

In the last year SOC has transitioned from having Colleen Phillip, a highly engaged chairperson, to Joyce Yager, who has significantly less time available for SOC. We have navigated this transition by probing where SOC can be most useful to the wider Christchurch sustainability

community and community at large. This is an ongoing conversation and we are continuing to seek the best ways to make SOC more sustainable for the members involved. We welcome additional support from SOC members. We are grateful to all the SOC members and SOC executive and our wider network for their patience and support during this transition!

**Looking ahead:**

As we continue to probe where SOC can be most useful to the community, the executive feels our primary duty is to help build relationships and liaise with community organizations and policy makers in the region, and to support and co-sponsor events with sister organizations. In addition, we always welcome specific events or projects that we can help co-host and facilitate if individuals or organizations need support. This year, we anticipate co-sponsoring a biodiversity-focused event intended for the greater Christchurch community and a follow up open democracy event, likely related to the upcoming elections.

We hope to actively engage the wider SOC network more actively over the coming year and welcome your engagement.