

## Chair's Report to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting

### Context

This year marks our 23<sup>rd</sup> as a Trust of volunteers serving the people of Palmerston North and their natural and built environments. As a Trust we recognise ecological sustainability as a core element of Palmerston North's ongoing well-being of residents, as reflected in our vision that Palmerston North becomes more environmentally sustainable and vibrant.

This year we have made excellent progress in better defining the relationship with Environment Network Manawatu, ending a phase in which we could have joined or otherwise changed the synergy in the sector. The Memorandum of Understanding we hold with ENM is a key step forward, and clarifies our independent role and the need to rebuild the Trust's capacity to ensure we are in a place to deliver strongly on our terms of reference.

While we have made several grants this year, and have been involved in local processes, our primary work has been behind the scenes via the Project Development Lead role delivered by Nikki Pindur in developing the groundwork for the sustainable schools initiative and some prospects for biodiversity enhancement.

It is essential in the coming year to 30 June that in addition to driving these prospects through to the delivery phase, that we also continue to build the Trust capacity in terms of member's capacity and will to act. In doing so, we must keep a focus on what can be achieved through projects, and what is better achieved through high quality advocacy.

### The PNCET Team

We have continued to enjoy the support of a team of seven Trust members through the year. Trust members are Margaret Hunt, Brendan Lucas, Dr. Ee Kheng Ang, Dr. Gillian Skyrme, Paul Horton, and Brent Barrett. In the coming year there is scope to recruit two or three new members to extend our capacity and networks.

### **PNCET Assets**

The Trust's members and networks are its greatest asset, and the source of its most notable achievements. It is our mutual accountability and use of those human resources that will deliver the greatest real value to the community. Financially, the Trust is in a modest position, with financial assets in excess of \$100,000.

The PNCC grant, interest earned on investments, and third party grants allow us to continue our competitive grant application programme for entities seeking resources to initiate and maintain environmental sustainability projects in the City.

We acknowledge the PNCC for their foresight in making an ongoing grant to the PNCET for our independent grant making to community groups; noting that community led initiatives often provide a good return on investment.

There continues to be scope to recalibrate PNCC grant activities across the community sectors in order to better align with stated PNCC vision and strategy, and the wider Regional Development Strategy co-developed by Manawatu District Council, Palmerston North City Council, Destination Manawatu, and Vision Manawatu.

### **Looking Ahead**

The major opportunities for improved environmental sustainability remain around freshwater, sustainable transport, carbon footprint, and city planning & urban design. These areas create the opportunity for the Trust to continue to develop and increase our impact in the City for sustainability outcomes.

My focus as chair remains with the development of a capable team and achievement of environmental sustainability outcomes in the City. I greatly appreciate the support I've received in my fifth year as elected Chair, and thank each Trust member and the Trust Administrator for their support and voluntary contributions to the Trust's work over the year. My aim is to ensure the Trust is well positioned for a succession of Chair in 2015.



Brent Barrett, Chair  
Palmerston North City Environmental Trust  
Palmerston North, Aotearoa / New Zealand  
25 Nov 2014