

Biodiversity Advisory Group

AGENDA

Notice of Meeting:

A meeting of the Biodiversity Advisory Group will be held on:

Date: Tuesday 2 February 2020
Time: 1.00pm
Venue: Council Chamber, 137 Havelock Street
Ashburton

Membership

Ashburton District Council:	Cr Lynette Lovett (Chair) Mayor Neil Brown (ex officio) Cr Diane Rawlinson Bert Hofmans (Open Spaces Planner)
DOC:	Ian Fraser and Brad Edwards
Environment Canterbury:	Donna Field (also Whitcombe Landcare Group rep) Janine Holland
Federated Farmers:	Mike Salvesen
Fish & Game:	Jayde Couper and Mark Webb
Fonterra:	Marcelo Wibmer
Foothills Landcare Group:	Gen de Spa
Forest & Bird, ACCT:	Val Clemens and Edith Smith
Forest & Bird Society:	Mary Ralston (also Awa Rata reserve rep)
Kānuka Trust:	No person specified
Mt Somers Walkway Society & Lake Heron Conservation Society:	Barry Austin
Synlait:	Michael Edmondson
QEII Trust:	Alice Shanks
Water Zone Committee:	Bill Thomas

Biodiversity Advisory Group

Timetable	
Time	Item
1.00pm	Meeting commences
1.10pm approx.	Richie Owen (Mt Hutt Sales & Marketing Coordinator)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Extraordinary Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Previous Minutes & Actions**
 - Confirmation of minutes 8/12/20
- 5 Reports and Presentations**
 - 5.1 Mt Hutt Ski Area – Richie Owen
- 6 General Updates**
 - Lake Clearwater
- 7 Agency Updates**
 - DOC
 - Forest and Bird
 - Ashburton District Council

Biodiversity Advisory Group

8 December 2020



Biodiversity Advisory Group (Unconfirmed)

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group held on Tuesday 8 December 2020, commencing at 1.00pm at the Council Chamber, 137 Havelock Street, Ashburton.

Present: Councillors Lynette Lovett (Chair), Bert Hofmans (ADC); Steve Fabish (GM Community Services); Val Clemens (Forest & Bird and ACCT), Jane Riach (Kānuka Trust), Edith Smith (Forest & Bird and ACCT), Jayde Couper (Fish & Game); Gen de Spa ((Foothills Landcare Group); Mike Salvesen (Federated Farmers); and Barry Austin (Mt Somers Walkway Soc. & Lake Heron Conservation Soc.); Dave Moore (Water Zone Committee).

In attendance: Carol McAtamney (Governance Support - minutes); Peter Garde and Mac McElwain (Methven Lions Club), Michael Edmondson and Nick Vernon (Synlait)

1 Apologies

Cr Diane Rawlinson, Ian Fraser, Mary Ralston, Donna Field, Marcelo Wibmer, Bill Thomas and Mike Salvesen (lateness, 1.14pm)

Clemens/ Smith Carried

2 Extraordinary Business

District Planning Process – Ian Hyde (ADC District Planning Manager)

The current District Plan was adopted in August 2014 and a review was due to be undertaken in 2023/24.

The Government commissioned Tony Randerson to undertake an assessment and appraisal of the current Resource Management Act and its recommendations are currently being reviewed by the Government. It is expected that the Government will be aggressive in implementing new legislation which will have a greater acknowledgement for biodiversity and environmental awareness. The impact means that the timeline for the anticipated review of the ADC district plan, previously expected to start in 2023/24, is uncertain at this point.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil

4 Confirmation of Minutes – 6/10/20

That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting held on 6 October 2020 be taken as read and confirmed.

Smith/Riach Carried

5 Reports and Presentations

5.1 Native Tree Planting (Methven Lions) – Peter Garde and Mack McElwain presented:

- Currently undertaking a project to create a walking/cycling loop around the Methven township with a surface that people from all walks of life regardless of age and ability can use at any time.
- Have received approximately 1,000 grasses from Ecan to plant at Mt Harding Creek to help improve fish life and the health of the creek.
- RDR have assisted with gates, bollards and cattle-stops etc along the RDR.
- Methven Community Board had contributed with funding towards building structures.
- Are currently in need of materials, native grasses and shrubs and working bees and asked for suggestions from the group as to who they could approach for assistance.
- Synlait representatives advised that as part of their ‘Environmental Initiatives’ programme they will have approximately 80,000 plants available for planting in 2021 and would be willing to undertake discussions with Methven Lions.
- Forest and Bird offered to provide assistance/guidance as to what species would be best suited to planting in the area.

5.3 Synlait Environmental Initiatives – Michael Edmondson and Nick Vernon presented:

Four key components:

Lead with Pride

- Launched 2013.
- Based on standards covering broad range farming practices and maintains a focus on care of the Environment, Animals, Food safety and the people who work on and manage farms.

Whakapuāwai

- Launched 2019.
- Synlait’s commitment to restoring and regenerating native ecosystems, waterways and wetlands, flora and fauna – benefiting Mahinga Kai values.
- 80,000 trees to be planted on farms next year, this number is likely to increase over time.
- Synlait offered all staff one day a year to plant trees on farms.
- 15 ha of grazing land behind the Dunsandel factory will be planted in native trees and shrubs in a development to include walking tracks and wetlands.

Soil Health Partnership

- Partnered with AgResearch to assess soil health across Synlait’s pastoral dairy farms, to understand how it can be improved over time.
- Aim is to confirm the link between soil health and farm profitability.

Greenhouse Gas Management (GHG)

- Since 2017 Synlait has been reporting GHG emissions for each farm (through Overseer) and educating farm suppliers on farm specific sources of GHG’s

6 General Matters

Insurance Reserves – Bert Hofmans (ADC Open Spaces Planner)

- A report was commissioned from Mike Harding – Ecologist to survey roadsides to identify sites that insurance reserves could be located.

- Five sites were recommended – Ashton Beach - site 1684, Moorehouse Road (west of Mayfield) – site 404, Harris Reserve – site 294, Plantation Road – site 363 and Ferrimans Road – site 281.
- Sites are deteriorating or disappearing due to irrigation, accidental spraying, fencing, stock movement etc.
- Roadside vegetation is more vulnerable than when it is a fenced area. It was suggested that areas that are semi-controlled would be more suitable.
- A request is to be made that an area in the Domain be made available for the establishment of an Insurance Reserve – Bert to follow up.

ADC Biodiversity Officer Role

- A submission is to be prepared by the Advisory Group to the LTP supporting the appointment of a Biodiversity Officer including suggestions of specifics that the role should entail.
- It was also recommended that each of the Advisory Group members prepare individual submissions from their organisation.

7 Agency Updates

Kānuka Trust

- Kānuka Balancing Biodiversity, Beneficial Bugs Field Day
 - 29 Attendees
 - Fascinating insights from:
 - Crop & Food - which natives attract which beneficials
 - FAR – monitoring the effect of beneficials and adapting farming practice as a result.
 - Stephen Brailsford - practical planting advice for success, right plant right place, ground preparation, plant protectors and maintenance. Farmers - using native plantings as farm assets.
- Participated in the Ashton Beach planting day.
- Have employed an educator who will work with schools in 2021.

Ashburton District Council

Lake Camp

- Another round of weed control undertaken at Lake Camp by contractor 20 November.
- Planting areas mulched and fenced 20 November 2020.
- Another round of pest control undertaken 15 October 2020– 3 possums, 8 hares and 27 rabbits.
- Pest trees removed from reserve area located between bach areas at Lake Clearwater.

Ashton Beach

- Weed control work undertaken 26 November on biodiversity site by contractors.
- Consultant has been engaged to prepare Lizard Management Plan and Wildlife Permit application.

Wakanui Beach Restoration project

- Volunteer weeding ½ day on 8 Dec 2020.
- Weed spraying to occur before Xmas.
- Another round of weeding undertaken 8 Dec with members of the group.

Barry Austin, Lake Heron Conservation

- Replacing single traps with double traps.

- Had enlarged the hole on the bigger traps to enable the capture of cats which was very successful. Due to change in policy large hole entry traps can no longer be used on DOC land. Traps are being returned to standard size.
- Wasp control on private land around Staveley area has commenced.

Gen de Spa, Foothills Landcare Group

- Two species of native mistletoe have been discovered in the Staveley forest.
- Wasp control has commenced.
- Local and Christchurch school children have been undertaking weed control in the forest.
- A request has been received for trapping to be undertaken on the Methven bicycle route.

Val Clemens, ACCT

- Craspedia - Landcare are continuing to undertake DNA testing on plants at Wakanui to see if they have been pollinated.
- Tests are also being carried out using frozen pollen transported to Wakanui from Lincoln.

Mike Salvesen, Federated Farmers

- Members of the Ecan Biosecurity group recently undertook a field trip to the Herbarium located in Lincoln.

Jayde Couper, Fish & Game

- Electric fishing has been undertaken on Lake Hood.
- Juvenile brown trout were found above a culvert with a number of natives species found below the culvert

Dave Moore – Zone Committee

- Committee members, John Waugh and Karl Russell, tendered their resignations effective 24 November 2020.
- Currently working with Ecan, ADC and Runanga to establish an action plan/priorities for the next two years.
- A workshop was held regarding the next steps for the Ashburton River and tributaries including Carters Creek, Ashburton Lakes, Wakanui lagoon and the possibility of getting water returning to Wakanui Creek.

Edith Smith, Forest and Bird

- Participated in the annual bird survey for the Ashburton River.
- Recently walked along the Ashburton Rived (Valetta bridge to the river mouth). Very disappointed in the state of the river – the amount of slime and large stones was disturbing, walking through lupin, viewed over 5,000 black-backed gulls over a long stretch of the river.
- Black fronted terns nesting just before Walkhams Road.

Dryland Biodiversity - Field Trip

A field trip to see the significant progress being made in regard to dryland biodiversity is to be scheduled, areas to visit to include:

- Plantation Road
- Harris Reserve
- Swamp Road
- Ferrimans Road

- Ocean Farm
- Carrs Farm
- Ashton Beach
- Carters Creek

The Chair requested written reports for agency updates to be sent in advance of agendas going out.

8 Next Meeting

Tuesday 2 February 2021 at 1.00pm

2021 Dates:

Tuesday 6 April

Tuesday 8 June

Tuesday 3 August

Tuesday 2 November

9 Terms of Reference

A copy of the updated terms of reference were circulated with the agenda.

The meeting concluded at 2.50pm

7. Agency Updates

Department of Conservation

- ADC have been invited to join The Rangitata Restoration Working Group and Ian Hyde will represent ADC at the next meeting. A significant release of funding from the Kaimahi for Nature (Jobs for Nature) programme to support this work is expected shortly.
- Outcome monitoring for wrybills and black-fronted terns in the Rangitata, Rakaia and South Branch of the Hakatere River is complete, but not yet analysed or written up.
- Rangitata and Rakaia trapping programmes have yielded 50 cats, 151 mustelids, 650 hedgehogs since traps opened in July in the Rangitata. 18 cats, 39 mustelids, 143 hedgehogs in Rakaia. Catch rates are a slightly down on last season.
- From next year, the (expanded) predator control trial in the upper Rakaia will be undertaken by LINZ rather than DOC.
- This financial year DOC will be undertaking additional weed control work in the South Branch of the Hakatere River – pushing down toward Blowing Point Bridge. We will also be doing possum and weed work in the Stour catchment. All this work, and additional trapping effort in the Upper Rangitata project, is funded through the LINZ's portion of the Government's Jobs for Nature programme.
- Vehicle incursion continues to be a significant and increasing problem in the Ashburton Basin (O Tu Wharekai). DOC's work to try and manage the issue hasn't progressed as quickly as we'd like, but we are still working on it.
- Weed control and rabbit/hare control to protect threatened wetland plants in the ephemeral (kettlehole) wetlands in O Tu Wharekai is ongoing.
- Wildling pine control (spot spraying from helicopter) is being undertaken over a large area of O Tu Wharekai this summer as part of the national wildling programme (see map below).

Forest and Bird

- **Seminar: Best practice for planting projects:** I recently had a discussion with a farmer about planning and executing planting projects on farms. It is very difficult for them to get good information and I'd like to resurrect my suggestion of ADBAG holding a seminar to inform farmers and the public about planning, site preparation, eco-sourcing, where to get plants, when to plant, funding, feedback to funders, weed control.
- **Forest and Bird:** Black-billed Gull update, Russell lupins in Hakatere Conservation Park, Craspedia update.

Lake Heron Conservation Society

- Trapping on Sunday 10th January proved to be quite successful with 32 target animals being caught.
- The trap replacement programme has come to a halt, with DOC not able to supply any replacements at this point.

Mt Somers Walkway Society

- The gorse and broom programme has started with two working bees being held around the back of the mountain, totalling over 100 man hours.
- This work consisted of redoing large areas covered last year to pick up any misses, and new strikes.
- Helicopter spraying on Saddle Hill has been held over till late spring when the conditions will be better for a good kill and the funds are available.
- Jig Road has been sprayed for gores and broom and the edges with roundup.
- The wasps are just starting to show, so the ` baiting programme will start late January early Feb. The numbers don't seem bad at the moment.
- ECAN has contacted us regarding a very invasive weed that has been found along the Foothills, bright red flower, worse than Old Mans Beard.
- Walkways Society keen to start a trapping line along the track. DOC has approved but no traps available at this stage , we don't have any funds available to purchase traps.

Ashburton District Council

Ashton Beach

- Lizard Management Plan prepared and submitted with Wildlife Permit to DOC 29 Dec 2020.

Wakanui Beach

- Area re-sprayed.
- Volunteer weeding day held 8 Dec 2020. Low turnout (2 people).

Lake Camp

- Most recently planted areas were fenced for rabbits and stock Dec 2020.
- All planted areas topped up with mulch.
- Some weed species trees e.g. rowans and douglas fir, were removed from the reserve area between the huts at Lake Clearwater as part of wider tidy up this area.

Biodiversity Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the advisory group is to:

- Coordinate the implementation of the Ashburton District Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Maintain partnerships between local and regional organisations with an interest in the management of indigenous biodiversity.
- Provide a forum for discussion and community-wide promotion of biodiversity.

Membership

Representatives on the working group were invited based on their organisation's participation in developing the Canterbury Regional Biodiversity Strategy, and/or their ability to contribute to the implementation of the Ashburton District Biodiversity Action Plan.

Membership of the Advisory Group is:

Mayor, Neil Brown (ex officio)	ADC
Cr Lynette Lovett (Chair)	ADC
Cr Diane Rawlinson	ADC
Bill Thomas	Ashburton Water Zone Committee
Gen de Spa	Foothills Landcare Group
Alice Shanks	QE II
Mary Ralston/Edith Smith/Val Clemens	Forest and Bird
Edith Smith/Val Clemens	Ashburton Community Conservation Trust (ACCT)
Mike Salvesen	Federated Farmers
Mark Webb/Jayde Couper	Fish and Game
Donna Field	Whitcombe Landcare Group
Donna Field/Janine Holland	ECan
Ian Fraser/Brad Edwards	DOC
Michael Edmundson	Synlait
Marcelo Wibmer	Fonterra
<i>[No person specified]</i>	Kānuka Trust
Barry Austin	Mt Somers Walkway Society & Lake Heron Conservation Society
Mary Ralston	Awa Awa Rata Reserve
Vacant	Open Spaces Manager, ADC
Bert Hofmans	Open Spaces Planner, ADC

Speaking rights will be granted to one member of each of the advisory group member organisations at each meeting.

Membership of the group may be amended to include representatives from other organisations. This will be at the discretion of the Ashburton District Council.

To form a quorum, the attendance of representatives from at least 6 of the advisory group member organisations, in addition to at least two ADC local representatives, is required.

Representatives from other organisations may be invited to attend advisory group meetings as the need arises.

Meeting Frequency

Meet five times a year.

Delegations

The representatives on the working group are expected to:

- Meet to coordinate the implementation of the Ashburton District Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Form project groups where appropriate to work towards specific actions in the Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Share information, both on organisational initiatives and collaborative initiatives, to support better decisions and knowledge of biodiversity.
- Communicate and consult with one another in a flexible and open way.
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate.
- Represent their organisations' policies.
- Respect other organisations' governance and policy approaches and priorities in the district / region, and seek a consensus approach to work with these.

Reporting

The Ashburton District Biodiversity Advisory Group will report to Council.

Costs & Expenses

It is acknowledged that being a member of the advisory group will involve a commitment of members' time and energy, and will involve travel to Ashburton District Council to attend meetings. These costs will be met by the organisation(s) or group(s) that members represent. Costs of meetings and associated catering will be met by Ashburton District Council.

Meetings will generally be held in the Council meeting rooms, and may be held in other venues throughout the district as appropriate.

Adopted

9 April 2020 (*Amended 8/12/20*)