



July 1999

Welcome to the first edition of *The Styx River Newsletter* published by the Water Services Unit.



Dignatories arrive by helicopter

The aim of this publication is to keep those who have an interest in the Styx River, its tributaries, and environs better informed, with respect to the area's history; the current situation; and to encourage involvement in whatever plans are to be developed for its future.

Aside from this aim it is hoped that this newsletter will be used by members or groups within the community as a networking tool.

It is anticipated that individuals or groups may, from time to time, wish to provide information of particular relevance. Such input is encouraged and welcome.

A Styx River Newsletter will be distributed two or three times a year - more often should this be desired.

If you have any suggestions regarding improvements, or subjects you would like to see in future editions, please contact The Water Services Unit of The Christchurch City Council. Contact details are listed on the back page.

Happy reading!

First steps

Styx River Happening

"Irony of it all", blazed headlines in The Christchurch Press of 17 March.

"Water Services Unit family fun day postponed due to excess of water!"

Staff of the Water Services Unit however were not to be deterred. Experienced as they are in coping on occasions with both too little, and too much water, they were positive that The Styx River Happening would be held. This "Happening" was to be the first step in the process of consultation between the community and the unit in developing a long term vision and plan for the sustainable management of the River, its tributaries and environment. Although postponed by one week, staff determination to proceed with the Happening was a recognition of the importance they place on this process.

One week later a sunny Spencer Park was witness to several thousand people enjoying a day of fun and information sharing. Many gained a new perspective of the area as they viewed it for the first time from helicopter, army truck or Clydesdale drawn wagon.

If the purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the Styx River and its values, the vote was unanimous - the "Happening" fulfilled its goal.



Displays by various organisations



Childrens drama

People relax and enjoy the warm sunshine at the Styx River Happening



Second Steps

Styx River Workshop

Families arriving at the newly opened Styx Mill Reserve on Sunday, April 11 were curious about the large stripped marquee which, like a mushroom, had appeared overnight. Inside members of the community, staff of the Water Services Unit and others with a concern for the Styx River, swapped ideas and identified issues that they felt would impact on future development of the area. With the River gently flowing only metres from the canvas flap it was an appropriate setting for the continuation of the community consultation process.

Issues identified included:

- * River control (including flooding & maintenance)
- * Conservation
- * Recreational interests
- * Development interests
- * Public access
- * Property owners interests
- * History of the area

Currently a full report of this workshop is being prepared and will be available shortly.

Please contact the Water Services Unit if you would like a copy. Contact details on back page.



Styx River Workshop

Retracing our Steps

The City Plan - The Process to date

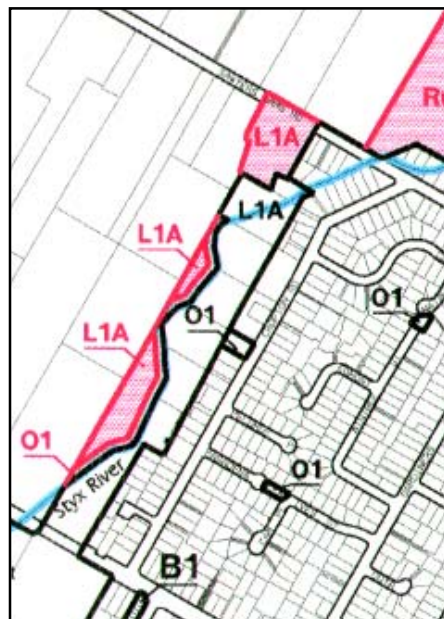
This lengthy statutory process began with a series of documents being released for public comment. These provided the basis for the proposed City Plan.

The Plan, prepared by the Christchurch City Council in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991, consists of 3 volumes plus planning maps and was released to the public in 1995.

The public was then invited to make submissions on the proposed City Plan, and these submissions were circulated for further public comment.

Following this process, a series of hearings was held, with the resulting Council decisions being released on May 8 and 29, 1999.

Any submitter who did not agree with the Council's decision then had fifteen days in which to lodge an appeal with the Environment Court.



Harewood

Decisions affecting the Styx River

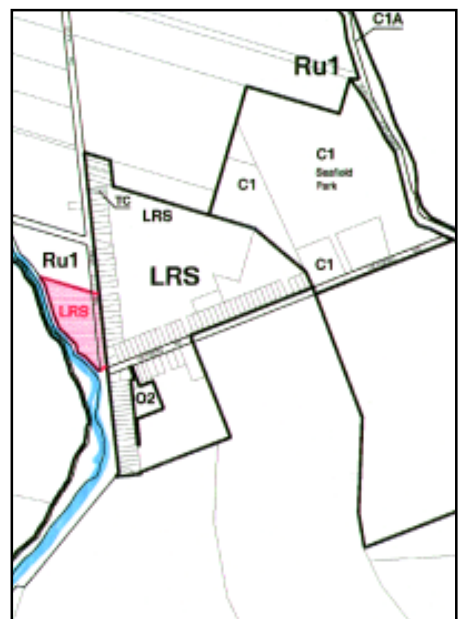
A number of decisions were made that relate to the Styx River and its catchment areas.

Decisions regarding rezoning rural land to residential are highlighted in red on the accompanying maps of Brooklands, Spencerville, Belfast and Harewood.

If you require more information regarding decisions made by Council please contact either the Civic Offices or your local Council Service Centre.

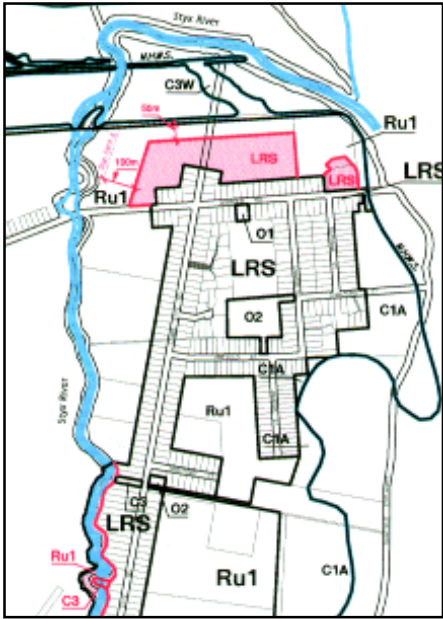
The Styx River Community Consultation Process

While it is important to understand that the City Plan process is a statutory requirement that Christchurch City Council has followed for a number of years, the consultation process currently being undertaken between the community and the Water Services Unit is a non-statutory pro-active initiative. This process provides opportunity for the community and the Water Services



Spencerville





Brooklands

■ Rural Land rezoned to Residential as part of the City Plan process

Unit to work together in partnership in order to:

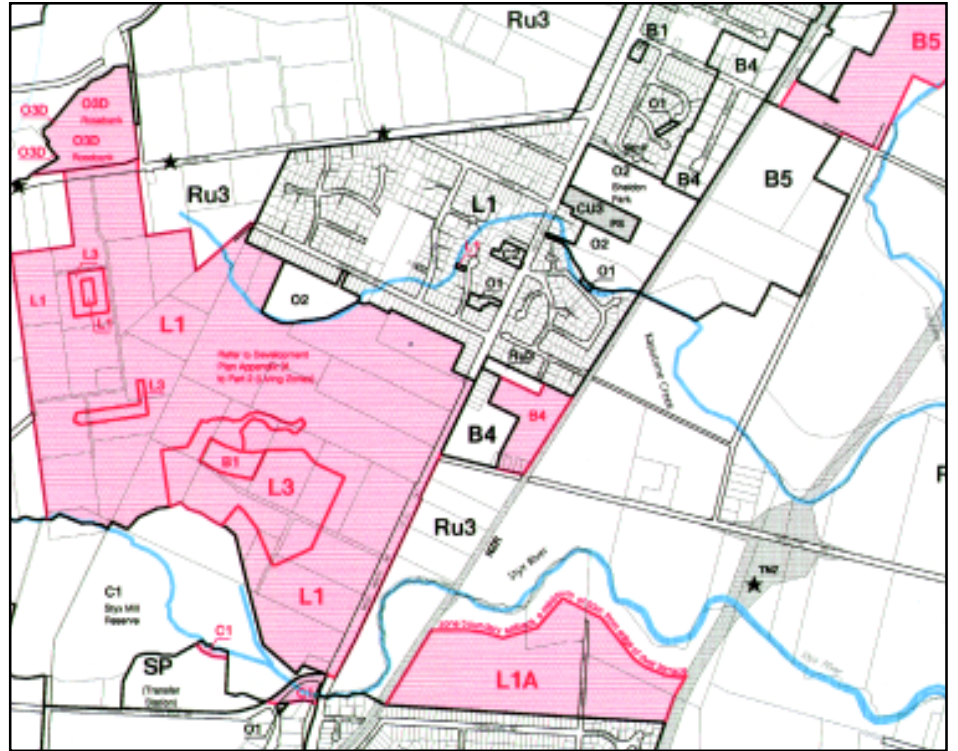
- * have an influence on the way the City Plan's objectives and policies are to be implemented in the area
- * develop understanding of the values that the community consider are important in the management of the waterways and wetlands unique to this area
- * help by providing information that will influence future planning decisions

Continuing Steps

Response to Community Requests:

"Friends of the Styx River" and the History of the Styx

A considerable number of people have indicated they would be interested in being part of one or both of these initiatives. A meeting will be held on 10 August at which both groups can be formed and discussion begin as to their respective objectives and tasks.



Belfast

Focus Group Discussions

A series of meetings with special interest groups is already underway. If you, or your group, would like to be part of this process please contact

Marivee McMath,
tel 332 3142,
fax 332 3128,
e-mail marivee@lynx.co.nz.

Styx River

A meeting will be held in the Papanui Service Centre, Cnr Langdons Rd & Restell Street on Tuesday the 10th of August 1999

Programme commencing at 7.15pm

7.15pm Friends of the Styx River

Formation of a "Friends of the Styx River" interest group

8.30pm History of the Styx

Formation of a community group to contribute information and research information about the Styx River and adjacent area

9.45pm Supper (provided)

10.00pm Conclusion

If you have any queries regarding this meeting please contact Tracy Young.

Tel (03) 371 1319

Styx River Meeting



Styx River Bus Trip

This trip will take place on Sunday 15 August 1999 1pm to 4pm. Those who have already indicated they would like to be part of this trip will soon be sent full information.

If you are only just learning of this trip and would like to be part of it, please contact Stephanie Humphries, on:

tel 342 9513,
fax 342 9513 or
e-mail stephaniek@clear.net.nz

Boat Trip along Styx River

Postpone until the warmer weather. Anticipate will be held October/November 1999.



Descendant's of Janet Stewart at last years community planting day

Competition - Name a Street

Imagine the thrill of walking down the street you were responsible for naming.

Have you often wondered who gets choose the street names? Now that choice can be yours.

A property developer, in discussion with the Water Services Unit, has agreed to offer individuals an opportunity to be part of the process of naming the streets and suburbs to be developed in the Belfast area. In total nearly 70 names will be required.

Should you wish to nominate a name for a street or suburb please:

- * write your suggestion on a single sheet of paper
- * include your reasons for your choice of that particular name
- * on the same sheet include your name, address and phone number

You may enter as many times as you like but each entry must be on a separate sheet of paper, with all of the above detail included on each individual sheet.

Please forward your entry to:
"Street Naming Competition,
The Water Services Unit,
Christchurch City Council,
P O Box 237, Christchurch"

Entries close 30 August 1999

The TOP prize - Seeing your choice of name actually in use!

Community Planting Day

Janet Stewart Reserve

Come and enjoy a fun afternoon of planting, displays, events and refreshments.

When: Sunday 29 August

Time: 1.00 pm to 3.30 pm

Where: Corner of Marshland Road and Lower Styx Road

Postponement: Listen to NewsTalk ZB Sunday morning.

Bring your spades, gumboots and friends.

All Welcome!

Grateful thanks to Woodward-Clyde, Engineering and Environmental Consultants, Christchurch for their sponsorship of the printing and distribution of this newsletter.



If you have any suggestions, comments or enquires regarding subjects mentioned in this newsletter please contact:

Tracy Young,
Water Services Unit,
Christchurch City Council,
tel 371 1319,
or fax 371 1384

Question Corner

What birdlife is living in and around the Styx River?

Answer: A wide variety of bird species is found along the length of the Styx River and in surrounding riparian (river bank) localities. It is not surprising that the highest bird numbers are associated with tidal habitats about the river mouth, and in the ponding areas further upsteam including the Zonta Restoration site above the Styx Floodgates, the Lower Styx Ponding areas, the Janet Stewart Reserve and the Styx Mill Basin.

Several families of wetland birds are represented. These include the herons; commonly the white faced heron, but occasionally a white heron, cattle egret or bittern can be seen.

Four species of cormorants or shags have been observed. The pied, little black, black, and cormorants can all be found below the floodgates. Only black and little cormorants however, are found on the freshwater stretches. Waterfowl include the introduced mallard, along with the native grey duck, shoveler, scaup, grey teal and paradise shelducks. Waders are represented by the spur winged plover and pied stilt, while black-backed, black billed and red-billed make up the gull family. Most observers will readily identify the kingfisher, harrier, welcome swallow and pukeko. Occasionally lucky watchers will be rewarded by a glimpse of a rarely seen little swamp bird called the marsh crane.

