



## AGM Managers Report 8<sup>th</sup> October 2008

This has been a year of immense change and as a consequence of this the Gardens are moving positively into the Future. The strategic planning that has taken place over the past year is bearing fruit and the changes made have re-energised the gardens.

The move away from employing Gardening staff has enabled us to look to other more sustainable options for generating income.

It was encouraging that the trustees held a Working Bee this year. We had a productive time working together when we gave the Earth Building a spring clean but more than that it was good to get together in a relaxed way and to work as a team.

The building is a more pleasant space to use now especially with the new furniture and accessories. Groups that have used it for meetings have been pleasantly surprised.

We co-opted a new Trustee through the year. Diarmuid Brazendale has settled in New Zealand straight from London on his own "The Good Life" patch in the country. He offers a fresh perspective to our Trust meetings.

Paul Ma'a as the primary allotment holder is holding his own. It has been a steep learning curve for him but he is staying on top of things with assistance from Cara Cottle and the Corrections Service.

The Corrections Service under the guidance of Phil Rawiri has kept the grounds from turning into a wilderness. Without this assistance it would have been impossible to maintain the property efficiently.

The Long building is now a reality and has been used by the students of the GB Workcentre for their Stone Carving module. It will be a very useful structure with a myriad of uses and I'm sure the Stone Symposium carvers will appreciate the respite from the sun (and possibly rain) this summer.

We have the backing of the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board for a collaborative project involving ourselves, the Workcentre and the Community Workers to provide the Garden to Plate initiative. This will enable participants to learn how to prepare, sow and harvest their garden and follows up with a cooking component.

The GB Workcentre has employed Cara Cottle to tutor this course.

We have a new agreement in place with TDC that was initiated by Councillor Stuart Borlase. This project enabled a large tunnel house to be erected on the Gardens land which will be used to prepare and house the beautiful hanging baskets that enhance Commercial Street over summer. The Trust will have the use of the tunnel house when it is not required for the baskets (between 21<sup>st</sup> December and 30<sup>th</sup> September.)

It is very encouraging that Local Authorities such as the Local Council and District Health Board are actively investing in the Future of the Community Gardens.

We are awaiting the outcome of a Community Facility Fund grant to erect a kitchen facility at the Gardens. Should we be successful will we have greater scope for the courses we are able to offer the Community. I have tentative plans for these in place.

The ZeroWaste courses have been run again this year in a much smaller capacity. We have offered 5 courses this year which has equated to one a month. The feedback we have received has been very positive with participants enjoying the course but once again the attendance numbers have not been great.

It has been heartening to be involved with the Gardens this past year through all the positive changes and wonderful feedback from the community.

Felicity Hargreaves  
2<sup>nd</sup> October '08