

the Society's executive committee have recently been favoured with an extensive guided tour of the development by Todd Property personnel. This began with an introductory overview and discussion session over the excellent landscape model in the Company's display area at the top of the Beach Road Extension, followed by an on foot and four wheel drive tour of the areas currently under development. The scale of Stages II and III earthworks within the Vaughan Stream Catchment which are barely visible from the Park and beach are truly massive. These encompass the village centre site below the College on the north side of the Awaruku Ridge and further housing sites on this slope and the Vaughan's Road southern face.

A tributary of the Vaughan Stream is being rerouted and the wetland redeveloped in a similar manner to the Awaruku but with a series of three ponds rather than one.

Ashley Avenue in front of the College is being substantially widened to link with the Beach Road Extension.

The tour was very helpful in providing a comprehensive overview of the whole development and answer to our many questions and uncertainties.

Due to the current drought, the ground water run-off to the Awaruku and Vaughan Streams is extremely low with both flowing at very low levels. We are however very conscious of the possibility of a heavy rain event when the cycle finally breaks resulting in massive sediment-laden run-off to the streams and the sea, especially from the present huge area of exposed bare ground. We have voiced our concerns to Todds and will continue to closely monitor the situation.

*Bernard Stanley* Deputy Convenor

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# Long Bay - Okura Great Park Society

**NEWSLETTER \* MARCH 2013**

## **Annual general meeting**

7.00pm Wednesday 27 March 2013  
East Coast Bays Community Centre  
2 Glen Road, Browns Bay

### **General meeting topics:**

**Crimson Walkway**

**Guest speaker:**

**Nicola de Wit of Environmental Defence Society  
'Proposed changes to RMA'**

*Dear friends of the Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society.*  
It is time to elect our new committee. As I have mentioned previously, we have a small committee and we would welcome new members on to it.

I remind Society members of our original aim and catch-cry: a thousand acre Great Park. While that may not be feasible with the loss of green space to the new development so close to the Long Bay Regional Park boundary, we are still looking to extend public space at the northern end by developing the Okura Walkway from Piripiri Point on the southern coast of the Okura Estuary to link to the Okura township. The long-term goal is to link to the Haigh's Access walkway to Stillwater, and ultimately, to link with the newly developed Orewa walkways. But it will be first steps first, and the Society at this point is primarily concerned with the Long Bay- Okura area. We are still at very early stages of the project with the Hibiscus-Bays local board planning a feasibility study.

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

As you may be aware, the Ministry of the Environment is proposing some far-reaching changes to the Resource Management Act. This is the Act under which it was possible for the Society to appeal to Environment Court to contest the Long Bay Structure Plan and, while we do appreciate that working under the Act lead to a long drawn-out process and some processes may be safely curtailed as suggested in the proposed amendments, we are alarmed at the proposed reduction in opportunity for public input and the significant reduction in the role of the Environment Court.

Some of the proposed changes include:

- A reduction in the number of local government planning documents to a single plan for every 'district, and doing away with the need for separate district and regional plans.
- Greater central government guidance on the content of plans. The government could direct plan changes to reflect national as well as local changes.
- Submissions to notified resource consent applications to be restricted to issues requiring notification.
- Restriction of certain types of Environment Court appeals to specifically points of law and to require rehearing rather than starting afresh on the issues.

Because of the far-reaching impact these changes may have, we have arranged for Nicola de Wit of the Environmental Defence Society to be a guest speaker at our AGM. We also plan to make a submission to the Ministry of Environment in regards to these changes.

## A GOOD KEEN NEIGHBOUR

You may recall that in June 2011, members and friends of our Society undertook the planting of several hundred trees in the boggy ground at the most sou-western corner of the Park, by the road. You may not be surprised with our long hot dry summer causing draught conditions, many of these trees have been struggling, and some may even have given up altogether. Driving past one hot afternoon, I was intrigued to see someone in the patch, diligently watering many of the struggling trees with water from a couple of watering cans. On investigation, I learned that 'Graham from across the road' (not a member of the Society) had been filling his watering cans most mornings and/

or evenings and, with the assistance of his golden retriever, giving those trees a little, hopefully lifesaving, drink. Often it is little unnoticed gestures that have a lot of impact and we thank Graham for his thoughtful act of kindness.

Thanking you all for your continued and valued support over the past year and hoping as many of you as can, can join us for the AGM.

Kind regards

*Chris Bettany*

Convenor

## LONG BAY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Earthworks continue within Stage I of the development along the top of the Awaruku Ridge, along the eastern boundary adjacent to the College and in the south-west corner to provide the next tranche of building sites. The first Stage I houses are expected to be built later this year by group builders. The extensive plantings along the street berms of the central developed area appear to be faring well through the current drought but the re-grassed slopes have largely 'burned off'. The wetland continues to flourish with an impressive board walk nearing completion.

Meanwhile, earthworks are proceeding over the hill in the Vaughan Stream catchment in preparation for Stages II and III of the development. Members of

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