

8. STYX LIVING LABORATORY TRUST MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Officer responsible Parks and Waterways Manager	Author Christine Heremaia, Styx Project Area Leader, DDI 941-8270
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The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the attached Memorandum of Understanding between the Styx Living Laboratory Trust and the Christchurch City Council to be executed by the Council.

BACKGROUND

In October 2000, the Christchurch City Council adopted a Natural Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Strategy for the future management of Christchurch's surface water environment. The city was divided into 14 project areas based on landuse, sense of community and soil water interaction. This strategy resulted in a long term vision being developed for the Styx catchment, areas 3 and 4 of this strategy.

The overall vision consists of the following:

- Vision one* To achieve a '**viable springfed river ecosystem**' to complement the other representative protected ecosystems of Christchurch such as the Port Hills, Travis Wetlands and the Coastline
- Vision two* To create a '**source to sea experience**' through the development of an urban national reserve.
- Vision three* To develop a **Living Laboratory** that focuses on both research and learning.
- Vision four* To establish '**the Styx as a place to be**' through maintaining and enhancing the special character and identity of the area.
- Vision five* To foster '**partnerships**' through raising the quality of relationships as we move through together.

A series of key actions were also identified for each vision to ensure their successful implementation. The Styx vision was adopted by the Council in July 2001.

VISION THREE - THE STYX LIVING LABORATORY

This vision is based on the early work of Dr Leonard Cockayne (1885–1934), an internationally renown botanist who owned the property, '*Dilcoosha*' in Highsted Road near Styx Mill Conservation Reserve. Thelma Strongman, a garden historian, described his garden at Dilcoosha with its more than 2,000 different plants species as a 'Living Laboratory'. Dr Cockayne's approach to research and learning has been extended to the total Styx catchment with the focus not only on plants but the total Styx River ecosystem.

The underlying philosophy associated with the Styx Living Laboratory will assist in the successful implementation of the overall Styx Vision. It recognises that the implementation of the vision will be a long evolving process as more is learnt and understood about the catchment's natural and human components and the interactions between them. Monitoring, research, experimentation and learning involving government and non government organisations, experts, learning institutions and the community will characterise this process. As a better understanding of what 'sustainability' actually means in practical terms, it will enable these new understandings to be incorporated into future management decisions for the benefit of community and natural environment.

STYX LIVING LABORATORY TRUST

A charitable trust, known as the 'Styx Living Laboratory Trust', involving major stakeholders and the community has been established to oversee the development of the Styx Living Laboratory. This will ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to research and learning, avoid duplication of activities, maximise the use of resources and create a sense of ownership, particularly by the community and other organisations.

The objectives of the Trust as outlined in Section 4.1 of the Styx Living Laboratory Trust Deed are as follows:

- (i) Obtaining a holistic understanding of the dynamics of the Styx River including its ecology, drainage, landscape, culture, heritage and recreation;
- (ii) Raising awareness of the Styx River Catchment and its environs;
- (iii) Promoting the use of the Styx River Catchment as a collective resource for environmental and social research, and to co-ordinate that research;
- (iv) Using the knowledge and understanding acquired by the Trustees to assist the bodies who have legal responsibility in the future management of the Styx River Catchment;
- (v) Maximising opportunities for community involvement in research and learning;
- (vi) Providing a learning medium for other similar ecosystems;
- (vii) Working with other organisations or people to achieve the above objectives and using memoranda of understanding where appropriate;
- (viii) Assisting other people and other organisations to achieve the remaining Visions in "Vision 2000-2040 The Styx" as outlined section 1 of this report.
- (ix) Recognising the view and expectations of Tangata Whenua, to respect and implement the dual heritage of the partners of Te Tiriti O Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) in attaining the above objectives; and
- (x) Doing all such other things as in the opinion of the Trustees may be incidental or conducive to the attainment of the purposes or activities of the Trust.

STRUCTURE OF THE TRUST

Trustees of the Styx Living Laboratory Trust

The Trust Deed requires that there must be a minimum of six, and not more than 12 Trustees of the Styx Living Laboratory Trust at any given time. Trustees each agree to accept this voluntary position and are appointed for life. Their role is to set strategy and direction for the Trust.

Founding Trustees are:

Clayton Cosgrove MP	Member of Parliament
Lesley Keast	Deputy Mayor Christchurch City Council
Dr Colin Knight	Company Director/Eco Educationalist
John Knox	Director of Eco Tourism
Alistair Malcolm	Horticulturalist and Cool Store Operator
Dr Terry Ryan	Genealogist Whakapapa for Te Runnga-o-Ngai Tahu
Diana Shand	Councillor Environment Canterbury
Sally Thompson	Teacher

Board of Management

The Board of Management of the Trust includes representatives from Environment Canterbury, Christchurch City Council, Tangata Whenua, research, community and education institutions. Other major organisations that are involved include Landcare Research, NIWA and local tertiary organisations. Members are elected for a three year term and must include representatives from signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding and the community. The maximum number of representatives on the Board of Management at any given time may equal 15, with a minimum of ten members, plus the Chairperson and Secretary who are appointed by the members.

The role of the Board of Management is to manage the operations of the Styx Living Laboratory Trust on behalf of the Trustees. They also have the power to delegate areas of management to practical working parties, sub committees and individuals.

Board of Management members also accept their role as being voluntary although reimbursement of approved expenses may be made to them.

Under the Trust Deed, the Board of Management are to provide the Trustees of the Styx Living Laboratory Trust with a written report of their activities at six monthly intervals.

A diagram outlining the structure of the trust is shown in Appendix 1.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Purpose

The development of partnerships has been seen as critical to the success of the Styx Living Laboratory. To assist in this process, a Memorandum of Understanding has been developed by the staff of the partner organisations represented on the Styx Living Laboratory Trust. It provides a statement of good intent by the organizations who have become partners in this project and lays the foundation for future interactions between various parties relating to research, resource management, learning and education. It is based on mutual understanding and respect and seeks to formalise and develop meaningful working relationships between all signatory parties. The Memorandum of Understanding anticipates that there will be specific agreements entered into between parties working together on individual projects.

Appendix 2 contains a copy of the unsigned Memorandum.

Environment Canterbury

The Memorandum of Understanding between Environment Canterbury and the Styx Living Laboratory Trust was discussed at their Council meeting on the 30 October 2003. Environment Canterbury resolved:

“That Environment Canterbury endorses the draft Styx Living Laboratory Memorandum of Understanding, and is represented by the Chairman at the joint signing of the document.”

Please refer to Appendix 3 for a copy of the report.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Christchurch City Council and the Styx Living Laboratory Trust

Although the Christchurch City Council is the initiator of the Styx Vision, the successful long term implementation of the vision will only occur through the establishment of quality partnerships. The Styx Living Laboratory Trust provides a formal structure for the development of partnerships involving major stakeholders and the local community. The Memorandum of Understanding will also clarify the relationship between the Trust and the Christchurch City Council.

Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding

It is intended that the Memorandum of Understanding will be signed at a joint signing involving the leaders of the major partners. It is recommended that the Mayor represent the Christchurch City Council.

CONCLUSION

The Styx project, initiated through the Christchurch City Council's Natural Waterways and Wetlands Asset Management Strategy, has had considerable support from the community and other organizations. The development of ongoing quality partnerships between the various organizations and the community is seen as crucial to the overall successful implementation of the Styx Vision. The Styx Living Laboratory Trust provides the framework of working together in the development of the Styx catchment as a Living Laboratory and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Trust and the various organizations provides a formalization of the goodwill intent between the various partners.

As the initial driver of the Styx Vision, it is vital that the Christchurch City Council supports the Styx Living Laboratory Trust and is a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding.

Recommendation: That the Council represented by the Mayor execute the Memorandum of Understanding between the Styx Living Laboratory Trust and the Christchurch City Council.