

# THE LINCOLN ENVIRO TOWN TRUST

## TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

SUE JARVIS\*



The Lincoln Envirotown Trust (LET) has come a long way since it started from a conversation between Ian Spellerberg and Sue Jarvis! A sub-committee of the

Lincoln Community Committee first met in June 2005, becoming a Charitable Trust in April 2006, with a grand launch in June 2006. We started with a township survey to find out what the issues were, what people wanted to know more about and how they liked to learn. The main issue was the rapid expansion of Lincoln. We provided a number of workshops and seminars on the topics they suggested. This was followed by many discussion groups, and feedback opportunities, culminating in a four hour marathon effort by about 45 people to come up with the Lincoln Community Sustainability Action Plan. The action plan was divided into achievable "chunks". These are shown visually as apples on a large wooden apple tree.



Various groups of locals took responsibility for different sections of the plan. Progress has been made on all areas of the plan. The first action was to reduce the use of plastic shopping bags by distributing free reusable bags to every household in Lincoln with a message about reducing waste. For more LET actions see the breakout box below.

The great progress made would not have happened without the support of the Lincoln community including Lincoln University, Landcare Research as well the Selwyn District Council, the Minister for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund and many other funders.

*The main objectives of the Trust are:*

- To promote the long term environmental sustainability of Lincoln Township with the understanding that this is also the basis for social, cultural and economic sustainability in the future.
- To educate about and raise awareness of environmental sustainability issues and to provide information about how to achieve environmental sustainability.
- To provide appropriate opportunities for personal and community decision making to ensure that the environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability of the Lincoln Township is promoted.
- To act as a model for other communities wanting to progress towards environmental sustainability.

The impact of LET has been influential on changing the attitudes of individuals and businesses towards the idea of environmental sustainability in a rapidly expanding township.

An area that has provided exceptional results has been the establishment of a very successful Community Garden. The garden has been well supported by the community and its success has been expanded upon recently by the introduction of an already oversubscribed cookery course that demonstrates recipes using the vegetables grown in the garden.



*Lincoln Community Gardens*

Local businesses have been invited to apply for "Responsible Business" awards to encourage environmentally sustainable business practices – three categories were established, bronze, silver and gold. Such has been the success of the awards that this year's award will include the new category of platinum, as some businesses have improved their work practices so much that gold is not a high enough award for them! The Responsible Business Awards are now being extended to Prebbleton.



*Award ceremony 2008*

Some businesses and groups based on the Lincoln University campus took part and gained awards: ASB bank, Lincoln University Students Association, Lincoln University Recreation Centre, Lincoln University Early Childhood Centre



*Sian and Stuart  
from the Lincoln  
Township  
Library with  
their award*

### **Lincoln BioBlitz – 3-4 April**

BioBlitz was a 24-hour around-the-clock event where teams of biologists from Lincoln University and Landcare Research, with the help of the public, found as many different species as possible, living in Lincoln's Liffey Domain. It was fun *and* educational.



### **Native Restoration – Mahoe reserve:**



*Installation of a new information sign for the Mahoe reserve*

Lincoln University provides an office for the Lincoln Envirotown Trust in the Department of Environmental Management.

For more information about the activities and events go to:

<http://www.lincolnenvirotown.org.nz>

**You can also contact us if you would like to receive our monthly email newsletter**

\*Dr Sue Jarvis, who holds a PhD in Plant Science, is a teacher at Lincoln High School and is a trustee and the chairperson of Lincoln Envirotown. Sue was the inaugural holder of the Sir Peter Blake Environmental Educators Award and was awarded the QSM in 2007.

LET Action: Lincoln Envirotown has provided information about the realistic achievability of sustainability via a wide range of methods:-

- School holiday programmes for 3-12 year olds
- Enviro kids club
- Story writing competitions on "sustainability" topics
- 3 books produced for the story competitions featuring the best stories
- Biodiversity talk and native garden tour
- Composting workshop
- Sustainable households courses
- Zero Waste street challenges (3 so far)
- A website which provides information and resources:  
<http://www.lincolnenvirotown.org.nz>
- A sustainability centre (at the moment in a caravan parked in Lincoln)
- Research into other sustainable communities, biodiversity in Lincoln etc
- Wide consultation
- Community garden in the Lincoln Township, where people and groups have their own beds, with communal beds and with a focus on education so that people can grow food at home, and on strengthened community.
- Organic community growing project, where people have their own "allotments"
- Producing a Lincoln calendar promoting local businesses and sustainability tips
- Embarking on a feasibility study for distributed energy production in Lincoln
- A booklet on which native species are suitable to plant in Lincoln
- "No Junk Mail" mail box stickers
- Delivered free reusable bags to all households in Lincoln to promote waste reduction
- Working with local developers to promote sustainable practices
- Encouraging links between various groups to communicate their ideas, such as Council, community members, developers, local CRI's, University, local educational establishments, local businesses
- Organising native planting for example at the Mahoe Reserve, Springs Road/Gerald street corner to improve the entrance to Lincoln
- A monthly newsletter that goes out to about 700 people
- Two "energy homes" bus tours, which toured local homes and demonstrated ways of saving or producing energy.
- Organising community "clean ups" of the local Liffey reserve
- Organising water quality testing of the Liffey stream for community groups, kids club and local school groups (with the help of Lincoln University Water Watch)
- Working with other communities to help them set up their own sustainability groups (Prebbleton, Springston and Rolleston so far, with interest from Leeston).
- The provision of speakers on sustainability to groups