



President's Report March 2022

Lawrence Collingbourne

It has been privilege to have been your President during 2021. One of my responsibilities is to report on ORCA's operations to you. This past year has been eventful and challenging and we look forward to better opportunities to keep ORCA relevant to you, our members and to our community in 2022.

A big thank you!

First of all I want to acknowledge that without the ORCA Committee we cannot serve our members nor strengthen our community in Broadmeadows, Khandallah and Kaiwharawhara. So I begin as last time, by thanking all the members of the ORCA Committee. It has been a pleasure to work with such a strong team.

- Martin Jenkins (Vice President)
- Shirley Morrison (Secretary)
- Lance Pratley (Treasurer)
- Rayward Chung
- Lachman Prasad
- Annie Van Herck
- Barbara McKenzie
- Ross Murdoch
- Ian Duncan (co-opted November 2021)

I also want to thank those organisations who have generously sponsored ORCA and its events in the last year, both through direct grants and donations and also help in kind, free product or discounted services: Wellington City Council, Khandallah Trading Company, New World Khandallah, Mitre 10 Crofton Downs, Paul & Helen Anderson, The Independent Herald, Dominos Pizza Khandallah, Whittakers Chocolates, Ying Min Chu and The Cancer Society.

Covid-19 in all its variants

Last year I noted that prior to 2020, few foresaw the impact of the global pandemic. With hindsight we could say the same about 2021 as well! This time last year we had just had a great Khandallah Park Picnic on a summer's day and the outlook looked rosy. However, by the time our AGM arrived in April we were social distancing again and muttering about who opened the borders.

Just when we thought we might have everything under control, Delta sneaked passed our MIQ filters with serious impact for Auckland. Then the unstoppable Omicron variant arrived – thank goodness we now have some inbuilt protection to mitigate its impact. Government policy changed three times and finally it is now back on us to manage the endemic. Needless to say this pretty much cleared out the ORCA programme we planned for the year. I know not everyone agrees, not least the occupiers who built a village around parliament last month, but the ORCA community responded by becoming the first to achieve the goal of a 95% vaccination rate among those eligible to receive it. Well done!

As we handle the peak of Omicron, I suggest that we can all make a vital contribution by staying in touch with community neighbours and ensuring they have the support they need.

The Draft District Plan



It felt a bit like déjà vu, but two public meetings and a drop in were held in November to discuss Wellington City Council's draft District Plan. These meetings provided further information to help our residents understand this plan's greater impact, to empower us to make a response, and give us a say about what our district becomes over the next 30 years. We want to build a brighter future. We summarised the community's views in an ORCA written submission.

It's not over yet, oral submissions continue and there is no feedback about the impact of the Medium Density Residential Standards published by Government in December. Around July this year the District Plan will be notified, which thanks to a change in legislation makes it operative even as it goes into final consultation under the RMA.

The Ten Year Plan

It has been a bumper year for Council planning. In addition to the District Plan that employs over 200 staff, our Council mobilised itself to create a plan for all its activity over the next ten years. This featured a rates rise of 48% over the first five years without including huge unquantified costs for infrastructure and social housing renewal.

Pressed for time we sent round a position paper to members for comment before making a submission in May.

Community emergency preparedness

As a Committee, we want to build on past work ORCA has done to promote family emergency preparedness to strengthen community emergency preparedness. To this end we went to visit the community emergency hub in June. Together with Pooja Kulkarni of WREMO we built a plan to hold a community hub rehearsal and hold a planning day to improve it. The goal is to ensure that we have a local community capability to support each other in the time it takes WREMO and other emergency services to get to us during a major disaster, such as a large earthquake.

Regrettably neither events have been practical during the Covid pandemic.

Let's Keep Wellington Stuck

As if a new District Plan and a Ten Year Plan were not enough during a pandemic, Wellington City Council have also extensively consulted on Let's get Wellington Moving, mostly outside our area. ORCA has not responded to the controversy about the Golden Mile nor Cobham Drive, but the Thorndon Quay Hutt Road (affectionally called TQHR) directly impacts our routes to the City Centre, southern and eastern suburbs, and is our nearest city shopping district.

We made a submission on TQHR supporting improved bus services and safety along the route, and we requested a footpath on Onslow Road in a response to the Bike Plan.



Road Safety Expo



Finally we come to the event that very nearly happened, our Road safety Expo. The speakers and venue were all locked and loaded and in August we distributed notices about it, but then Delta hit, and we and our speakers felt its impact would be lost.

Our plan was to inform our members and community about important road safety considerations that are often overlooked, but are really important in our community, including speed management around schools, drowsy driving, cyclist safety and asking you which local intersections need improvement.

We can resurrect this whenever we get to a new normal that is not dominated by Covid, but we will need your help.

Future Programme

Regrettably, one of the fall-outs of the pandemic and the controversial Council planning has been too much challenge. Several members have left the ORCA Committee this year and we will acknowledge them at our Annual Meeting. Several opponents of medium density housing rose to oppose the Spatial Plan but were unable to continue to help with the District Plan.

We need more members to come and join the ORCA Committee. Otherwise it feels like we are being too ambitious and in 2022 we have to cut our cloth to fit our capabilities. So we envisage simplifying the events we will organise and reducing the number of our focus areas we will respond to as well as the amount of Council business we can inform you about, getting back to some activities that will connect us together.

A quick reminder of our focus areas:

- Housing, Infrastructure & Planning
- Environment & Parks
- Resilience & Emergency Preparedness
- Transport & Road Safety

Please come and tell us your priorities at our Annual Meeting and let's have a drink and some refreshments as we look forward to a brighter future.

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