

# Wesley Environmental/Climate Plan

August 2022

Wesley Community Action, Wellington

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## WHY ?

Wesley's mission states that:

*We believe in the power of the **community** and we are motivated by **compassion**. Our work tackles injustice as we seek transformative **change**.*

Our mission highlights the interconnections essential to sustain healthy systems. Trauma or stress in one part of the eco-system impacts negatively on other parts. Transformative change requires an appreciation of this and the connecting and mobilising people (communities and whānau) to create something better. We are learning that the process of creating opportunities for people to take practical solution-focused action is restorative for themselves and future generations. By taking action to enable nature to heal we also support good health in our social systems.

Transformative change is desperately needed to respond to climate change, and we believe that solutions led by the community will form a vital and effective part in creating the change.

There are many reasons why Wesley can take an active role in this area. Some key ones are:

- **Climate change is a justice issue.** It will affect us all, but like many such events it will more severely affect those who have the least. It is the whānau that we work with who will most feel the negative effects of climate change. Our work with whānau and communities to be more resilient will be crucial in terms of withstanding the shocks that climate change will bring
- **Being a Kaupapa Te Tiriti organisation,** Māori have been identified as among the most vulnerable groups to climate-change in New Zealand and it is acknowledged internationally that Indigenous knowledge will be critical to shaping actions. Te Tiriti provides a framework to give effect to this approach.
- As a **Pacific Nation, we in Aotearoa have a particular responsibility** to consider the impact of climate change on our Pacific neighbours. Pacific islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change with the most substantial impacts of climate change including **losses of coastal infrastructure and land, more intense cyclones and droughts, failure of subsistence crops and coastal fisheries, and the potential spread of disease.** These are life threatening issues for those living in these islands. For our Pacific brothers and sisters here in Aotearoa, there is huge stress of having to watch their homelands and families respond to these serious threats.
- **The reality of not taking action:** climate scientists are now warning us about the tipping points in the climate system, and that we need to act fast, now, to try to avoid further damage. The world is already seeing unprecedented fires, storms, and floods - all of which are consistent with dramatic climate change.
- **Walking the Talk:** By taking action, we not only play our part in minimizing our impact, but we are 'showing by doing' that others can also be part of the solution too. We have opportunities and obligations to communicate - to our partners and funders that change is possible, necessary and can strengthen our social wellbeing.

## HOW ?

Wesley has a role to play in minimizing our environmental impact, as well as leading/fostering positive environmental action in the communities and in the Government systems we interact with. In early 2022, the Wesley team included a new goal into our three year action plan. This goal states that we will:

*“Grow awareness of our environmental impact and implement new measures that reduce our carbon footprint.”*

Wesley has established Team Taiao – a group of kaimahi who represent each team or site, and who are passionate about progressing this mahi. Based on a paper initiated by our Community Innovation Lead in 2020, Team Taiao (with the help from Place Consultancy) have identified nine focus areas for Wesley, some key priorities to work on in the coming year, and some actions associated with these focus areas. This document pulls together these focus areas and describes practical actions we will take to progress our goal in our three-year action plan.

### AREAS OF FOCUS

We have identified the following (intersecting) focus areas, spanning both our internal operations, and our more ‘outward’ facing activity where we have opportunities to inject environmental/climate action into our community innovation work:

- **Climate Change:** measuring and reducing our carbon emissions; climate change risk assessment (Identifying climate risks specific to communities Wesley works with); and strengthening disaster preparedness and community resilience
- **Waste:** reviewing waste streams/processes and take action to reduce waste
- **Travel/transport:** consider our travel-related impact on the environment and options for minimizing this
- **Electricity/energy:** consider our energy-related impact on the environment and options for minimizing this
- **Purchasing and procurement:** understanding the impact of our purchasing (goods and services) and becoming more intentional about choosing low carbon options.
- **Kai sovereignty:** strengthening community resilience and engaging communities in proactive solutions
- **Biodiversity and wāhi ataahua:** developing partnerships and empowering local communities to protect and connect with te Taiao
- **Leadership and Influence:** exercising leadership by taking/creating opportunities to speak out about climate change, advocate for climate justice, and build climate action into our community innovation work.
- **Professional Development:** supporting staff to upskill on environmental issues and climate action.

## ACTION PLAN

	Goal	Specific Actions	Responsibility: who?	Priority/ Timeframe	Resources required
<b>Climate Change</b>	Measure and reduce our carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set up initial consultations with Ekos and Toitū</li> <li>○ Contract one agency to work with on carbon emission measurement</li> <li>○ Consult finance team to establish 2021/22 baseline of GHG emissions</li> <li>○ Decide WCA goals re possible certification, level we want to aspire to (eg Carbon Zero, Carbon Positive)</li> <li>○ Set up system for ongoing annual emissions reporting and complete reporting process</li> </ul>	Kirsten to Coordinate and liaise with Team Taiao and Leadership Team	Begin in May 2022	EKOS fee \$7,000 for year one  Staff time
	Climate Change Risk Assessment for WCA and communities in which we work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify potential disaster scenarios made more likely by climate change.</li> <li>○ Review and practice emergency procedures.</li> <li>○ Work with local communities on climate change mitigation.</li> </ul>	Leadership Team and Board to consider?		

<b>Waste</b>	Review waste streams (all sites) and significantly reduce land-fill waste.	Work with Para Kore, will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o wananga with staff at Connect Session including waste audit</li> <li>o Site visits to discuss waste reduction actions at each site</li> <li>o Support on going waste measurement and reduction</li> </ul>	Kena and Kirsten as WCA lead people. Team Taiao members to be site/team contacts	Begin in August 2022	staff time at each site  new bins?
<b>Travel</b>	WCA will reduce use of petrol, both for during work time and staff travel to work & home.	Develop proposal for this workstream including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Review of current fuel use across WCA</li> <li>o Gather information about travel to and from work of staff</li> <li>o Work on strategies to encourage active transport and minimise private vehicle use (for in work and commuter travel?)</li> <li>o Policy on vehicle purchases</li> </ul>	WCA Lead Person or Contractor - TBC	Medium priority to begin in 2022	Staff time  Low carbon options likely to involve increased capital costs
<b>Electricity efficiency</b>	Identify ways to increase energy efficiency and reduce costs	Gather baseline data on electricity use and track this annually (see above re carbon footprint)  Silvia to provide a resource; for each team to do a small task each month.	See above re Carbon Footprint  Team Taiao to take the power use task to teams each month, and report back.	Medium priority. begin in 2022	Staff Time  Hope to save costs.
<b>Purchasing</b>	Review purchasing and develop guidelines that take	Stocktake of items currently purchased - starting with consumables (e.g. cleaning products, kai, stationary etc) and assessment of their environmental sustainability	Kirsten to coordinate with input from Team Taiao	Begin work in June 2022	Staff Time  Potential cost implication depending

	environmental sustainability factors into account.	<p>Team Taiao to consult with teams and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Purchasing guidelines that promote environmental sustainability</li> <li>○ Where needed, identify alternative products that are more environmentally responsible</li> <li>○ Recommendations re purchasing guidelines for the Leadership Team</li> </ul> <p>In time, consider guidelines for more substantial purchases (such as vehicles, furniture, IT equipment) and wider procurement (e.g. cleaning services, catering trades people).</p>			on decisions around changing purchasing
<b>Kai Sovereignty</b>	Building community resilience through food production	See workplan for Te Hiko Kai Sovereignty initiative	Te Hiko	Ongoing	Staff time – currently have funding for this mahi
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Support community projects that enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify and promote connections between community development and biodiversity work – highlighting benefits to the environment, local communities, and links with climate action</li> <li>○ Grow biodiversity focused programmes e.g. predator control, planting, and native bush regeneration</li> <li>○ Encourage creative projects such as bee-friendly gardens.</li> </ul>	Team Taiao and Te Hiko	Ongoing	Staff time

<b>Leadership and Influence</b>	Taking and creating opportunities to speak out about climate change, advocate for climate justice and action.	Build environmental and climate focused issues/action into our community work - including things like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitate local communities to have their voice on justice and climate crisis, e.g. public transport, climate action.</li> <li>- Promote environmental responsibility within the social services sector.</li> <li>- Becoming a signatory to the NZ Climate Leaders Coalition (organisations who have committed to measure and reduce their carbon footprint).</li> <li>- Support the Citizens assembly on climate change in Porirua</li> </ul>	Across WCA/Leadership team	Ongoing	Staff time
<b>Professional development</b>	Kaimahi are encouraged and supported to grow skills and depth of understanding around environmental sustainability and climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Team Taiao given responsibility and support.</li> <li>o Look for training opportunities, e.g. disaster social work, mental health effects of climate crisis.</li> <li>o Keep finding points of connection and engagement so that this is embedded into the Wesley Way.</li> </ul>	Leadership team		Potentially staff training costs.  Some training provided in Place Consultancy contract

Kirsten – lead

Taiao team with support from Silvia Purdie, Place Consultancy