

Wellington Zoo Trust Annual Report 2007-08

Chair Report

This year we have much to celebrate as our dream of being the best little zoo in the world takes shape with achievements in conservation, visitor experiences, our facilities and capability.

Wellington Zoo's foundation is our commitment to conservation. Our conservation activities this year were wide ranging – from the successful raising of over 50 tuatara for release to the wild in the Marlborough Sounds, to setting up a breeding programme for grand and Otago skink and establishing a possum research programme. The strengthened conservation messages in all our animal talks and encounters reflect our commitment to bringing sustainability to the heart of our visitor experiences. Day to day, we're taking action to reduce our use of water and energy, and minimise our waste. All of these activities bring to life our newly launched Zoo Conservation Strategy, which will be a driving force for the Zoo's future.

Zoos are also fundamentally about people – and this year we celebrated a record with over 182,500 visitors enjoying the Wellington Zoo experience. There has been a great reaction to new facilities and activities, and we now have over 2000 loyal supporters in our Zoo Crew membership programme.

Alongside caring for our visitors, our hard working Zoo team has kept up a cracking pace with the development of new facilities. The opening of the Wild Theatre marked a huge step forward in our capacity to engage with visitors. Our African Savannah and research camp, opened in November 2007, offers the young (and not so young) special opportunities to be wildlife explorers right here in Wellington, including being up close with our largest inhabitants, the giraffes. And more fun has been had on a stationary pre-loved "wildlife safari jeep" than anyone could have imagined.

Not all developments are large scale. The revamp of the Twilight is a response to visitor feedback and our need to provide the best possible conditions for our kiwi, tuatara and other nocturnal inhabitants. Visitors are telling us that they love the new "bush hut" and kiwi experience created in-house through the talents of our construction and visitor teams.

Our position as an industry leading zoo is reflected in the day to day care of our animals and evidenced in breeding success with chimpanzee and red panda, both endangered species in their home environments. The movement of animals between zoos is part of sustaining healthy populations. We successfully introduced Seun the giraffe from Orana Park and farewelled three red panda girls, who now form the basis of a breeding population at Knoxville Zoo in the United States. Movement within the Zoo can also be challenging and trustees recognise the enormous effort which went

into the successful move of three fully grown giraffes to their new home via fork lifted crate.

Rising costs and our desire to do more for people and for conservation means that our financial situation is always challenging. In the last year, we raised from our own activities, including visitor revenue, over 46% of the \$4.6m it took to run the Zoo on a day to day basis (up from 35% in 2003). We finished the year in a positive financial position with a retained earnings closing balance of nearly \$70,000.

We are fortunate to have the committed support of Wellington City Council as our principal funder, and additional support from other donors for our capital projects. Many trusts, foundations and businesses support us and we are grateful for the more than \$500,000 in charitable donations received last year. Our colleagues at Wellington City Council provide professional support for many of our activities. We are grateful to them all.

Within all organisations, it is the people who make the difference. All credit goes to the Zoo's highly capable staff, ably led by Karen Fifield, our Chief Executive. Their dedication and professionalism make it possible for a small team to achieve great things. Our volunteers make an increasing and valuable contribution to our work. I also acknowledge the considerable input of my trustee colleagues who bring their professional skills, wisdom and energy to the board's work and we welcome Ross Martin as our newest trustee. We are delighted to have Cameron Harland as our latest ambassador and bid fond farewell to His Excellency, John Dauth, Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand. He has now taken up his post in London.

As a charity we cannot flourish without the generous contributions of our supporters. And with your help, we can make an enormous difference for conservation, our visitors, and our community. Over the coming year, expect to see even more about what you can do to help make Wellington Zoo the 'absolutely, positively best little zoo in the world.'

Denise Church, Chair, Wellington Zoo Trust

Wellington's Zoo – Chief Executive report

We have had a very busy year creating the new Wellington Zoo. It has been a year of success, tinged with sadness, as we continue on our journey to become 'absolutely, positively the best little zoo in the world'.

This year we focussed on key business outcomes and critical success factors based on our six strategic elements – visitor experience, financial sustainability, staff development, community support, conservation outcomes and industry leadership. Of our 29 targets set against these elements 24 were met or exceeded .

One of the most important success factors is the Zoo Capital Plan which will see Wellington Zoo transformed over the next decade. One year into our ten year plan, the capital projects have already significantly changed the face of the Zoo and our visitors, donors, partners and the community are as excited as we are about the improvements being made.

The most ambitious of these projects, *The Nest* – our animal hospital, is now under construction. A hub for care, recovery and rehabilitation for both our Zoo animals and injured native wildlife, *The Nest* will provide the Wellington region with a state of the art animal hospital. *The Nest* will also be the focus for a new community based fundraising campaign – uncharted waters for Wellington Zoo.

Wellingtonians love their Zoo. We have achieved record breaking visitation figures this year and nearly half of all those who live in Wellington visited the Zoo. We have also excelled this year with our fundraising results, conservation focus and visitor experience.

We aim high to achieve the standards required of a modern zoo and a zoo that our city can be proud of – we have never backed away from the challenge - and will continue to implement ways to ensure best practice in terms of animal, staff and visitor outcomes.

We welcomed two special additions this year – red panda cub Sir Ed, and chimpanzee Beni; and we also grieved the loss of Ricky our 20 year old male giraffe in November – he was a well known and much loved member of the Zoo's family and we miss him. Our new young male giraffe, Seun, has filled the gap and we are all enjoying watching him grow up (and up).

I am extremely proud of our staff and what they have achieved this year. It has been a year of change and our staff continues to put in an enormous effort. I am constantly hearing feedback from visitors that interacting with our Zoo people is a highlight of coming to the Zoo and that the passion and enjoyment they have for their work is evident.

We hope that next year will be just as successful and that we continue to develop our people, grow our supporter base, embrace our community and create the best little zoo in the world - together.

Karen Fifield, Chief Executive, Wellington Zoo Trust

Strategic Direction

In the fifth year of the Wellington Zoo Trust we continue on our journey to create the best little zoo in the world. As a small zoo with a big dream, we put our best efforts into six areas crucial to developing Wellington Zoo into a 21st century zoo. We aim to:

- create outstanding, intimate and unique visitor experiences – bringing visitors up close with our animals, improving visitor amenities, and caring for our animals and their environments within the Zoo;
- be at the forefront of the Zoo industry; supporting national and international breeding and conservation programmes and providing knowledge, expertise and leadership on wildlife care, animal management, conservation and learning;
- increase our financial sustainability by increasing revenue gained through visitor spend and commercial opportunities and by income derived through fundraising;
- attract and retain valued and motivated staff by harnessing their passion and skills;
- lead and participate in conservation and research programmes; both in the field (*in situ*) and at the Zoo (*ex situ*) as well as integrating conservation with animal management and visitor programmes;
- generate lasting community support by raising the profile of the Zoo and making the Zoo relevant to all Wellingtonians.

Conservation Action

Conservation is at the heart of all we do at the Zoo. From supporting conservation projects in the field, to raising and releasing rare tuatara to developing cohesive conservation messages for all of our visitors, conservation has been a major focus for all areas of the Zoo this year. The development and implementation of our Conservation Strategy and the formation of the conservation steering group will continue to keep conservation top of mind for both Zoo staff and visitors.

Conservation Strategy

Wellington Zoo confirmed its commitment to conservation with the publication this year of the *Wellington Zoo Conservation Strategy 2008-2010*. This strategy underpins everything the Zoo will do for the next three years and highlights our aim to bring the conservation work we do at the Zoo, and the conservation projects we support, to the forefront. The strategy outlines our approach to: conservation projects both in the field and at the Zoo, community projects, environmental sustainability at the Zoo, rehabilitation and conservation research and advocacy messages for our visitors.

The formation of a cross discipline conservation steering group ensures that conservation is a priority in all areas of the Zoo, and that the objectives within the Conservation Strategy are implemented Zoo wide.

Integrating conservation

People can be overwhelmed when faced with the task of saving the planet and conserving endangered species. In recognition of this, we have adopted three targeted conservation action messages that are easily achievable for our visitors. These messages were chosen after significant research and input from both Zoo staff and external conservation professionals.

The messages were chosen to relate to the animals we care for at the Zoo, and what Wellingtonians could realistically do to help the plight of these animals in the wild. Our conservation messages are:

- Purchase sustainable timber certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and/or New Zealand pine
- Bring cats inside at night and keep dogs on a lead
- Reduce, reuse, recycle

These messages have been integrated into all aspects of the Zoo including our daily talks, exhibit design, collateral and education programmes. Preliminary results show that our visitors are absorbing these messages, with 41% of visitors able to recall a message after attending a talk - the message most retained (60% of visitors) was to purchase sustainable wood (FSC) instead of unsustainable hardwood.

Conservation in the community

Wellington Bush Builders is a broad-based community project, with school children as the gateway to the community. The aim of this project is to increase awareness in urban children (and their parents) about their local environment and to monitor the wildlife that lives close to the city centre. The *Wellington Bush Builders* project was piloted in five local schools this year with over 800 children participating.

Bush Builders is a hands-on environmental education programme. Students predict what flora and fauna they will find around their schools and then compare their true findings with their hypothesis. By conducting hands-on surveys and acquiring first-hand knowledge of the biodiversity around their school, we found that in the long term, students increased their awareness of local nature. These results support theory that behaviour and attitude change is more likely to be associated with interactive learning rather than static knowledge retention.

Operational funding for year one of the *Wellington Bush Builders* programme was supported by a grant from the Wellington Region Foundation.

Recovery

Brothers Island tuatara

For just over six years, Wellington Zoo was the guardian of 53 Brothers Island tuatara – the rarest species of New Zealand's living dinosaur. Incubated and hatched at Victoria University of Wellington, the tuatara came to us in 2001 and were raised and cared for, off display, at the Zoo. In October 2007 the tuatara were released onto Long Island in the Marlborough Sounds, in conjunction with Victoria University, the Department of Conservation and Te Ati Awa, in hopes of establishing an insurance population for this rare reptile.

Grand and Otago Skinks

In partnership with the Department of Conservation, Wellington Zoo is housing and caring for six Otago skinks and six grand skinks for at least the next five years. It is hoped that these skinks will breed to create a larger insurance population to conserve them for years to come. Our partnership with DoC allows Zoo staff to gain valuable field experience by monitoring wild skinks in their natural North Otago habitat.

Grand and Otago skinks are two of New Zealand's rarest reptiles, estimated to remain in just 8% of their natural habitat and under increasing threat from predators. With no further protection in the wild, these species are predicted to become extinct within the next 10 years. The Department of Conservation has been working on grand and Otago skink recovery in Central Otago for several years. The decision was made in early 2007 to create an insurance population of both species in captivity, to ensure survival of genetic diversity of the skinks into the next decade.

Conservation Research

Kereru Discovery Project

Research and monitoring of kereru in Wellington continued in partnership with School of Biological Sciences, Victoria University, funded by a New Zealand Lottery Environment and Heritage grant. In 2007, nine birds were caught up in Otari-Wilton's Bush and were attached with radio-transmitters. Birds were monitored and observed for their plant preference, and the impact on their home range due to the abundance of food sources. They were monitored until their feathers were shed (including the transmitters). Five nests were also monitored with two of these nests producing fledglings. Interestingly, field work proved more challenging in 2008; several of the kereru shed their transmitters earlier than expected but by increasing the number of kereru studied, research could continue. While the Lottery Grant formally ended in December 2007, the research partnership with Victoria University will continue.

Controlling Possums

Research that aims to find effective contraception methods for possums will be conducted at Wellington Zoo under an agreement between the Zoo and Victoria University of Wellington's School of Biological Sciences.

The Zoo has agreed to house the possums that will be used for research to find effective non-lethal contraceptive methods for possums, and to reduce the reliance on 1080 poison as a method of pest control.

Possums are regarded as New Zealand's number one vertebrate pest in both ecological and economical terms, and approximately \$110 million is spent annually on the control of possums and bovine tuberculosis – primarily using poisons.

Applied conservation research is a key component of our Conservation Strategy that seeks to utilise Zoo resources and foster partnerships that will benefit conservation.

Although the facility will not be open to visitors, the research outcomes will enhance the Zoo's wildlife conservation programmes enjoyed by the more than 182,000 visitors that visit the Zoo annually.

Otago sea lions

The Zoo's veterinary team assisted the Department of Conservation in the anaesthesia and health examination of several female New Zealand sea lions on the Otago peninsula in May. The animals were fitted with satellite tags and time depth recorders and while they were anaesthetised we took the opportunity to take blood and milk samples.

Disease screening

Wellington Zoo veterinarian staff were invited to be involved in a Landcare Research project looking for blood borne parasites in mammals and birds that may be

transmitted via vectors such as the mosquito and tick (blood-sucking insects). Landcare Research is studying a large range of species, but we were tasked with investigating fur seals on the Kaikoura Coast. Our staff helped with the catching and sampling of 62 New Zealand fur seal around Kaikoura.

Our animals

The Zoo, and our collection, is constantly evolving and growing. It has been a busy year at Wellington Zoo. We've had animals move into new homes (and some move back out again), animals that have had their homes renovated and some animals that have left the Zoo for good.

African Savannah

The biggest move this year involved shifting three giraffes from their old home into the new *African Savannah*. Months of training and preparation came to fruition in November when Tisa, Ricky and Zahara were transported up the hill into their new exhibit. All went according to plan, and Zoo staff did a fantastic job in preparing the animals (and themselves) for the big move.

Unfortunately not long after moving into the African Savannah, old age caught up with Ricky, our male giraffe. His death meant the planning and implementation of another big move, bringing 18 month old male giraffe Seun to Wellington from Orana Wildlife Park in Christchurch. To arrive at the Zoo Seun survived an overnight voyage on a container ship and a drive through Wellington city's rush hour traffic (including dealing with some low lying trolley wires). He arrived safe and sound and has now settled in well with our two females. We hope to breed him with our youngest female, Zahara, in the future.

The ostriches and zebras also moved into the *African Savannah*, the ostriches were walked up, while the zebras were anaesthetised for a hoof trim and then transported up on the back of the Zoo van. The zebra did not take to well to their new living arrangements and tried to assert their dominance over the giraffe, so to promote group harmony, they were relocated back to their existing home for the meantime.

Six guinea fowl from a private breeder and three blackbuck from Hamilton Zoo joined the giraffe and ostrich in the *African Savannah*, all were successfully introduced and are living together in harmony.

Native Species

53 Brothers Island tuatara that had lived, and been cared for, for six years at Wellington Zoo were released onto Long Island in Cook Strait, making room for the next lot of precious native reptiles to be cared for at the Zoo – three breeding pairs each of Otago and grand skinks.

This year has seen Wellington Zoo's reintroduction to the national kiwi breeding programme. A female kiwi came to us from Otorohanga Kiwi House and has been paired with one of our males, off display in our conservation aviaries, to hopefully establish a breeding pair. Wellington Zoo has had great success breeding kiwi in the past.

Te Ao Māhina - The Twilight, the Zoo's nocturnal house underwent extensive renovations this year. The kiwi area was refurbished to improve living conditions for kiwi, as well as viewing conditions for Zoo visitors. Improvements made include re-profiling of the soil, a new manuka fence containment system, new path surfacing to reduce noise and a switch from blue to red lighting – as kiwi cannot see in the red spectrum. Tahi the one legged kiwi also now has a permanent home in the *Twilight* as do three juvenile tuatara in a specially built enclosure. Over 50% of the materials used in the refurbishment of the *Twilight* were recycled.

Other native species to arrive at, or leave, the Zoo include:

- A kereru and three little owls, these are advocacy birds and will be used in conservation presentations in the *Wild Theatre*
- Three kaka bred at the Zoo were sent to Maungatautari Mainland Island Sanctuary as part of their repopulation programme
- A male kea from Nelson's Natureland to hopefully establish a breeding pair with our female kea.

Breeding and growing

To tell diverse and interesting conservation stories and to play our part in local and international breeding programmes, we need to manage a healthy collection of both New Zealand and exotic species.

The past year has seen additions to two of our most popular families at the Zoo with a male chimpanzee, Beni, and red panda, Sir Ed, born. Beni was born to Sally, in October and brings the number of chimps in our troop to 13. Sir Ed was the result of the successful introduction last year of our two new red pandas, Amy and Isha.

Along with our babies, we welcomed other exciting new additions to our collection including Seun, the juvenile male giraffe who came to us from Orana Wildlife Park and two emperor tamarins from Melbourne Zoo – the only representatives of this fascinating species in New Zealand. Jin, Auckland Zoo's famous escapee otter also came to live at Wellington Zoo with her partner, Jala.

We sent three of our female red pandas to Knoxville Zoo in Tennessee as part of the international breeding programme for these endangered animals; one of these pandas has already successfully bred producing a red panda cub of her own.

Several of our other animals were sent to other zoos and wildlife parks to participate in both regional and international breeding programmes including meerkats to Auckland; they have also recently given birth to meerkat pups and a female porcupine to Orana Park in Christchurch, she has also been successfully introduced to a male partner producing porcupine babies. Aide, the golden lion tamarin went to Auckland Zoo for companionship with their remaining golden lion tamarin. Twenty-

five tarantulas imported by Wellington Zoo last year were sent to various organisations including: Auckland Zoo, Canterbury Museum and Auckland Museum.

Animal hospital

Wellington Zoo's veterinary team saw 1,025 cases of ill or injured animals, or problems that needed research in the laboratory. The vet team expanded this year with the addition of the postgraduate resident vets from Massey University. Four resident students have already enjoyed hands-on wildlife care at Wellington Zoo.

Some of the cases treated this year include:

- Female chimpanzee Sally had us worried during her pregnancy as she showed symptoms of gestational diabetes. With the help of her keepers we managed to get a finger prick test from her, which showed elevated blood sugar levels. Luckily she recovered well after the successful delivery of her male baby 'Beni' in October.
- Several kaka and cockatoos were successfully treated for heavy metal intoxication. They ingested small bits of metal by chewing the fences in their enclosures. Luckily all birds were diagnosed before the intoxication showed up clinically and all were 100% cured. These enclosures are no longer used to house parrots.
- Chima the chimpanzee has responded well to a trial inhalation treatment for a respiratory allergy. After months of dry coughing she is now much improved on the inhaler and actually waits for the keepers to give her a spray up the nose each morning.
- Sean the sun bear underwent a special teeth cleaning and mouth check as he was suffering discomfort from ulcers in his mouth. Having bad teeth is common in bears, as it is in dogs, and the bears' teeth need to be checked every now and then to make sure they stay in good condition.

Connecting with our visitors

Visitors

More than ever, visitors to Wellington Zoo are voting with their feet. Over 182,000 visitors supported their Zoo, our highest recorded visitation ever. We are delighted that our visitor numbers continue to grow with 4,000 more visitors than last year coming to the Zoo. Over 82,000 of our visitors are children and young people and fifty six percent of our visitors come from Wellington city. Eight percent of Zoo visitors in the last year were international tourists.

Zoo Crew

The Trust now has over 2,000 Wellington Zoo Crew members, up from just over 1,000 at the same time last year. Zoo Crew membership allows members to visit the Zoo as much as they like for one year and attend special events four times per year. Zoo Crew members accounted for 8% of visits to the Zoo last year.

We appreciate the continued support of our Zoo Crew members - amongst our strongest advocates - who continue to make an investment in Wellington Zoo's development. The introduction this year of exclusive Zoo Crew events has been a great addition to the Zoo's social calendar, and a fantastic way of thanking our most loyal supporters.

Encounters

At Wellington Zoo we pride ourselves on the opportunities our visitors have to get up close to our animals. Some visitors do this through a Close Encounter, while others may chance upon a blue tongue skink or cockatoo out with a Zoo guide when they are exploring the Zoo. Giving our visitors the chance to see, feel, smell and learn about the animals they share the planet with is a powerful way of connecting our visitors with our wildlife.

Around 800 Zoo visitors have experienced a Close Encounter with the red pandas, giraffes, cheetahs or big cats in the last year. This is less than last year, mainly due to staff changes and the unavailability of giraffes leading up to their big move. We are currently undertaking a review of all of our Close Encounters to ensure the experience is as good as it can be for all participants, Zoo staff and animals. In accordance with the Zoo's Conservation Strategy, we will also be dedicating a proportion of money raised from each Close Encounter to the Wellington Zoo Conservation Fund.

Interacting with visitors

Successful visitor experience ensures that visitors have a meaningful, emotional and intellectual experience that is delivered in an engaging, fun, relevant and informal way. This year we developed a visitor experience strategy to link our visitors with nature through stories, experiences and interaction with staff and animals.

The easiest way to connect our visitors with the conservation and advocacy work we do at Wellington Zoo is for Zoo visitors to interact with our staff. In recognition of the importance of the interaction between staff and visitors we developed a training programme to enhance keeper and guide talks, and general communication with visitors.

One of the main aims of this programme was to integrate our key conservation messages in a fun and effective way, to empower our visitors to take action at home. Recent research revealed that 42% of respondents believed the Zoo's top priority was educating visitors about animal conservation and 36% said its main goal was providing a fun family day out.

Wild Theatre

Offering intimate and unique experiences to our visitors has continued to be a major focus at the Zoo this year. The new *Wild Theatre* has become a visitor hub and every day during the summer holidays, and weekends during the rest of summer, there was something happening in the *Wild Theatre*. Whether it was face painting, playing games, exploring special zoo touch tables or getting up close to animals, everyone who came to the *Wild Theatre* during summer had a great experience. We have also hosted Christmas parties, business functions, book launches, school groups and Zoo visitors looking for a sheltered place to eat their lunch in the *Wild Theatre*.

During the refurbishment of the *Twilight*, we moved our popular Tahī the kiwi talk into the *Wild Theatre*. This proved a fantastic space for our visitors to learn about our special one-legged kiwi and what they can do to help kiwi in the wild, as we could accommodate a larger audience. In April, Tahī moved into his permanent home in the *Twilight*, but his daily appearances continue in the *Wild Theatre* drawing big crowds to learn about kiwi conservation.

Over summer, visitors were also greeted around the Zoo by our guides with contact animals. Blue tongue skinks, tortoises, cockatoos, and other animals made appearances in the *Wild Theatre* or other locations in the Zoo. These sessions allow Zoo visitors to see and touch some of our smaller reptiles and birds up close, and hopefully this interaction will lead them to be inspired to take conservation action.

Feedback

We want to know how we're doing so we regularly check with both Zoo visitors and Wellington residents to see how they rate their Zoo. Half of all Wellington residents (49%) visited the Zoo in the past year and 86% of these visitors rated their visit as good or very good (with

very good being the highest rating). Households with a youngest child aged 5 to 13 rate their experience at the zoo more positively than average, with 95% rating it good or very good. Feedback from our Zoo visitors tells the same story, with nearly nine out of ten visitors rating their visit as good or very good.

Special events

Wellington was the host city for World Environment Day this year, and Wellington Zoo joined in the celebrations. Zoo visitors could plant trees around the Zoo, learn all about the global amphibian crisis and the challenge of trying to conserve our native flora and fauna against introduced pest species. 10% of all Zoo admission fees on World Environment Day were donated to ARAZPA 'a Year of The Frog fund.

Children's Day at the Zoo was again popular with the children of Wellington. The addition of the *Wild Theatre* allowed for a range of activities for children of all ages to enjoy. Activities this year included a bouncy castle, face painting, special interactive musical sessions, giveaways and animal appearances.

Telling stories

We know that our Zoo visitors learn more about our animals and the natural world by doing as well as seeing, so our recently opened exhibits have emphasised visitor experience alongside animal welfare. The *African Savannah* was designed to bring Zoo visitors closer to the animals and to offer areas of contextual play for our young (and young at heart visitors). The new giraffe house allows visitors to observe training and see the animals from the ground to eye level, an experience that allows visitors to absorb exactly how large giraffes are and see the zoo 'turned inside out'.

Next to the *African Savannah* is the Research Camp, an area for visitors to explore, play and pretend they are researchers in Africa. A previous researcher has had their Landrover 'stuck' in the mud - this has proved to be popular with kids of all ages pretending to drive the Landrover. Back at the camp, the supply crates can be opened to reveal unique, touchable items. Visitors can also sit around the potjie and braai and observe the savannah animals over the dry river bed. At the centre of the area is a large bronze rhino. This rhino was acquired with funds from Wellington City's Public Arts Panel from Wellington's renowned sculptor, Colin Webster Watson. Colin purchased this rhino in the 1970s in San Francisco with the intent to bring her (affectionately called Winnie) home for the children of Wellington to enjoy. Winnie is more than 120 years old and was created in Paris using a rhino at Paris Zoo as a model.

The refurbishment of the *Twilight* has continued this research theme, encouraging visitors to enter our 'bush hut' and learn about how scientists and Wellington Zoo are helping to save our national icons, the kiwi and tuatara – and what they can do to help. The conservation action we would like our visitors to take home after exploring

the exhibit is that of responsible pet ownership - to keep their dogs on a lead and to bring their cats in at night.

Living classroom

This year saw almost 15,000 students visit the Zoo with most of these participating in the Ministry of Education's Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom (LEOTC) programme.

There was a 23% increase in the number of classes that came to the Zoo but the total number of students visiting was slightly less than last year. We have also had a significant increase in the number of school groups (almost double the number of classes) coming to use the Zoo as a living classroom, who have not enrolled in a formal learning session. Nearly half of all schools from Wellington city visited the Zoo this year.

Our ever popular Zoo sleepover programme saw a 37% increase in schools spending the night at the Zoo this year. Children love the experience of touring the Zoo at night, and in the morning, and learning about our animals and the way Zoo works in a fun, informal manner.

In February 2008, new Ministry of Education curriculum was implemented in schools. Wellington Zoo launched the Journeys of Discovery learning programme to support the new curriculum. Our aim is for all learning sessions to have an element of their session out in the Zoo and for students to have a unique animal experience - meeting animals up close, making enrichment or going behind the scenes. The introduction of this new programme has been well received by teachers with 75% of teachers saying their children have a greater appreciation of the natural world as a result of the visit.

Holiday programme

Nearly 800 children enjoyed the Zoo's school holiday programme this year, run during the three term breaks. The holiday programme continues to be popular with most days of the programme booking out well in advance. Children are able to choose from a variety of themed days including zoo keeper for day, making their own zoo movie and helping with animal enrichment.

Protecting our environment

Wellington Zoo's commitment to operating sustainably was increased this year with the formation of the Environmental Management Group. We asked all Zoo staff members for at least one innovative idea on how we could 'green the zoo,' with several of these having already been implemented.

These include:

- The removal of individual rubbish bins from offices throughout the Zoo
- Installing timers for the charging of our Zoo carts
- Ensuring the paper we use is FSC certified
- A battery recycling programme
- Ensuring computer monitors are switched off at night by having our security officers double check all PCs
- Installation of a worm farm.

In addition to our staff innovations, several other steps were made to make the Zoo more environmentally responsible this year. Our old fleet cars were replaced with a hybrid, two compact fuel efficient cars and a work vehicle which is twice as fuel efficient as its predecessor. And, to offset the purchase of these cars, we've planted over 750 trees in the Zoo this year.

We have increased the number of rain water reservoirs in the Zoo to 13, with a plan to install a further three next year – this water is used for cleaning, refilling animal ponds and in cisterns and basins in visitor toilets. Due to the installation of the reservoirs and a concerted effort we have continued to reduce our water use and have used 3.5 million litres less water than we did last year. In 2007-08 year we used nearly 24 million litres less than we did in 2004-05.

Our in-house composter, purchased with a grant from the Shell New Zealand Sustainability Fund, was installed and our first batches of compost have been produced and used throughout the Zoo. This composter allows us to compost all organic waste onsite at the Zoo, including bones and animal waste that were previously sent to landfill.

We became members of the Central Region Sustainable Business Network this year, and staff have attended numerous workshops and functions held by the SBN including a waste workshop.

Growing the Zoo

Wellington Zoo is constantly evolving, and with the ten year Zoo Capital Programme (ZCP) redevelopment plan underway, the Zoo continues to grow and evolve at a rapid rate.

Wild Theatre

The new heart of Wellington Zoo and the first project of the ZCP, the *Wild Theatre* was opened in September 2007 by Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast, and Pub Charity Chairman Maurice Hayes. The *Wild Theatre* won a New Zealand award in the Community and Cultural category of the New Zealand Institute of Architects Resene Architecture Awards 2008.

The *Wild Theatre* has proven a valuable addition to the Zoo, providing indoor shelter for our visitors as well as a versatile space for functions, parties and our daily Tahiti kiwi talk.

The Nest, Wellington Zoo's Animal Hospital

The next major project of the ZCP is *The Nest*, Wellington Zoo's new animal hospital. In order to start construction on *The Nest*, we needed to first ensure we had enough power to run a new building and other new exhibits. The power project is currently underway to install a new 11,000 volt electricity supply into the Zoo. As part of the power project we had to move two large, well established trees from the site – a puriri tree (a favourite of wild tui) was moved a short distance, while a large ficus was loaded onto the back of a truck and moved up to the new giraffe house, both seem to have adapted well to their new homes. These trees were fertilised with compost from the Zoo's in house composter.

Construction on *The Nest* itself is due to start in August. To accommodate our veterinarian resident students from Massey University, and Zoo staff looking after a night time sleepover, we have constructed a two bedroom timber cabin next to the Zoo's Archibald Centre.

Meet the Locals

The next major project of the ZCP after *The Nest*, will be *Meet the Locals* (our New Zealand precinct). A concept for this large area of the Zoo has been created by Studio Hanson Roberts, internationally renowned Zoo exhibit designers. As this project covers such a large part of the Zoo, construction will be phased and the first phase will be to relocate most of our bird species to 'Conservation Corner' – the area previously occupied by our giraffes. As a precursor to this project and to benefit future planning, a review of the vegetation and access routes throughout the Zoo has been undertaken. This has resulted in the production of a Global Landscaping Strategy which will inform all future projects.

African Savannah

The *African Savannah* mixed species experience was opened this year by Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast. The new giraffe house, the cornerstone of this exhibit, allows visitors access inside the stable building and contains a unique 'giraffe crush' designed by the Zoo which incorporates the ability to weigh the animals as well as perform any necessary veterinary procedures.

This building also allowed us to add much needed additional toilet facilities to this part of the Zoo. The exhibit was built with materials from sustainable sources where possible. FSC certified timber was used and cladding materials were chosen to allow maximum light through and to retain heat through efficient insulation. A rainwater recovery system was installed to use for cleaning.

Chimp House and Park

The old chimpanzee indoor house was renovated and repainted with an Australian theme to house the Zoo's cockatoos this year. Out in the chimp park, all of the existing trees and ropes that the chimps climb over were replaced with telephone poles and lots of new climbing frames for them to enjoy. Both of these projects were done in house by the Zoo's property team.

Community connections

Wellington Zoo and Go Wellington continued their partnership and again ran the 'Catch the bus to the Zoo and get in for half price' promotion. This promotion took place throughout May and just over 13% of all adult Zoo visitors in May caught the bus. Encouraging Zoo visitors to catch the bus helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reinforces our conservation messages.

Our third annual neighbours' barbecue held in conjunction with Wellington City Council's City Housing unit was extremely successful. A fine summer evening saw over 650 of our closest neighbours come and explore the Zoo, and learn all about what we do. This barbecue is an important way for the Zoo to connect with our local community, especially those who live next to us but who may not normally visit the Zoo.

'\$2 Winter Wednesdays' in August at Wellington Zoo were particularly popular this year. Over 3,000 people visited the Zoo on the last Wednesday of the month – our busiest day of the year. Our discounted entry rates provide community groups and families, who may not normally be able to afford a Zoo visit, an opportunity to spend the day at Wellington Zoo.

Wellington Zoo, alongside *The Dominion Post*, made an appearance in this year's Wellington city and Hutt city Santa Parades. *The Dominion Post* sponsored the animal themed float, and volunteers from both organisations ensured a lively Zoo presence in the parade.

Community integration

A number of our Zoo volunteers work with us through different community integration programmes. One of our volunteers came to us through Emerge, who provide a range of supported employment services for people with disabilities seeking employment in Wellington.

For the past three years we have hosted students from St Bernard's College in Lower Hutt through the Gateway (run through the Tertiary Education Commission) programme. Gateway is a programme designed to ease the transition from school to work, by providing students with the opportunity to combine school study with workplace learning and experience. One of the Gateway students from this year has enjoyed his time with the visitor experience team at the Zoo so much, he has now committed to volunteering in his own time.

We also have a volunteer who has been at the Zoo for over two years who has come to us through Timata Hou. He helps out with groundskeeping and general maintenance tasks around the Zoo. Timata Hou was set up in 1997 to provide intensive rehabilitative support to people who have complex behaviour as well as an

intellectual disability, to integrate them into the community and increase their independence. Timata Hou is the only service provided by IHC that has a rehabilitation focus.

Publicity and media

Wellington Zoo has enjoyed a high profile in local and national media this year. Many stories were about the comings and goings of animals in the Zoo – the births of Beni the chimp and Sir Ed the red panda, the arrival of Seun the giraffe and Jin and Jala the otters. The death of Ricky the giraffe, the departure of Aide the golden lion tamarin and the three red panda females were all also covered. The tuatara release was also well represented in the media. The strangest story of the year concerned tarantulas that had allegedly escaped in Wanganui en route to Auckland Zoo – a mystifying hoax.

The Dominion Post featured a 'zoo animal of the day' in its summer magazine and our monthly Monkey Business slot on the Classic Hits breakfast show – featuring an interview with a zoo keeper - has proved popular. This year Wellington Zoo has also collaborated with Weta Productions Ltd. on a new children's television show to be set in a city zoo.

Supporters & Partners

Thanking our donors

Wellington Zoo Trust would not be able to survive without the organisations who partner with us and the individuals who support us. As a charitable trust, our life blood is the support and enthusiasm of committed Wellingtonians, granting agencies, companies and visitors.

This year we installed a special 'recognition tree' in the Zoo to acknowledge significant supporters and donors. This is a stylised Kowhai tree made from coreten steel which recognises our donors by incorporating their name and logo upon the 'leaves' or tui bird figures.

Wellington City Council

Wellington City Council is the Zoo's principal funder and continues to be our most important partner. This year, we opened the *Wild Theatre*, the first project of the Zoo Capital Programme (ZCP). Wellington City Council provided three-quarters of the funding for this project, and the Zoo Trust raised the remaining one-quarter.

Zoo Capital Programme

At the end of June 2008, Wellington Zoo Trust has raised \$2.13m towards this capital campaign, so we still need to raise at least \$2.87m for the planned programme.

Many organisations contributed to the fundraising success of the *Wild Theatre*, including Pub Charity, Trust House Charitable Trust, Trusts Charitable Foundation, Perry Foundation, Scottwood Trust, Rotary Club of Wellington and the Caversham Foundation.

This year, fundraising also began for *The Nest*, our Animal Hospital. We have secured funds with the help of The New Zealand Lotteries Grants Board, New Zealand Community Trust, Pub Charity, Estate of Alfred Charles Colcutt, The Community Trust of Wellington, Brian Whiteacre Trust, Southern Cross Hospitals, Koala Trust and Rotary Club of Wellington. In the coming year, we will be seeking the support of Zoo visitors and Wellingtonians as part of a community fundraising campaign for *The Nest*.

Commercial partners

This year, Wellington Zoo welcomed new caterers to the Zoo, Spotless Services (NZ) Limited. Spotless will run all catering services at the Zoo, as well as making a substantial capital investment in our facilities. In the coming year, we look forward to working with

Spotless to maximise our return on these services while offering excellent service to our visitors and customers.

Operational Donors

We would like to thank our valued donors who continue to offer contributions to support the Zoo, both through cash and in-kind donations.

- Pacific Radiology has committed to a further three years of invaluable support to the Zoo through provision of x-rays, CT scans, ultrasounds, MRIs and any other diagnostic services the veterinary staff of the Zoo may require for our animals. Their support provides us with state-of-the-art equipment, and top notch diagnosticians that we wouldn't be able to afford otherwise. Pacific Radiology positively contributes to the health of all the animals at Wellington Zoo.
- Arataki Honey have also committed their support to the Zoo for a further three years by donating both cash and honey to help our sun bears. Through this partnership this year, both Wellington Zoo Trust and Arataki Honey have made donations to conservation project *Free the Bears*, which works to help bears in South East Asia.
- Saatchi & Saatchi continues to wow us with their creative ideas for the Zoo. This year we ran campaigns based around our new arrivals at the Zoo – our baby chimp and red panda, emperor tamarins and our new giraffe– and the opening of our new African Savannah exhibit. In the coming year, Saatchi & Saatchi will support us by providing creative ideas for our fundraising campaign for *The Nest*.
- The Dominion Post provides the Zoo with a donation and free advertising space, in return for the Zoo buying papers at a discounted rate to give to our customers. Zoo visitors love receiving a free paper when they visit the Zoo, and this partnership has proven so successful, both partners have agreed to continue for a further three years.
- Classic Hits remains proud sponsor of the red pandas at Wellington Zoo. Along with advertising contra and publicity opportunities, each year they bring four lots of lucky children up to the Zoo to have Close Encounters with the pandas. Classic Hits is also a major sponsor of Children's Day at the Zoo.
- A new, five-year partnership with Tip Top ice cream was agreed to this year.
- Go Wellington continues to support the Zoo by providing a Zoo branded bus.

- We'd also like to acknowledge the valuable support of the following companies who made contributions in kind: Southern Cross Hospitals for hospital equipment; Outward Bound New Zealand for helping us to send two staff members on their outdoor adventure courses; New Zealand Post for Community Post Envelopes; and The Print Room who continued to print the quarterly Zoo newsletter for free.
- Many individuals also made wonderful cash and in kind donations to the Zoo this year.

07/08 Funding source

Funding Source	Amount	Purpose
Estate of Miss Margery Walton Colcutt	\$2,000	Hospital
New Zealand Lottery Grants Board	\$10,422	Kereru Research
Ministry of Education	\$75,555	Learning Experience Outside The Classroom
New Zealand Lottery Grants Board	\$400,000	Hospital
Rotary Club of Wellington	\$5,367	Wild Theatre equipment
Brian Whiteacre Trust	\$502	Hospital
Pub Charity	\$300,000	Hospital
Koala Trust	\$7,246	Hospital
Private Donor	\$20,000	Hospital and Interpretation equipment
Caversham Foundation	\$5,274	Wild Theatre equipment
Community Trust of Wellington	\$100,000	Hospital
Wellington Region Foundation	\$28,000	Bush Builders project
Ministry for the Environment	\$5,776	World Environment Day Event

Zoo People

Karen Fifield, the Zoo's Chief Executive, has been elected to serve for two years as a board member of our regional Zoo association, ARAZPA. Karen has also ensured the Zoo maintains a high profile by presenting to local community groups and business networks.

The staff structure was reviewed during the year to align staff positions with the Zoo's six strategic elements. This created several new management roles throughout the Zoo including Manager Husbandry Development, Senior Keeper and Collections Development Coordinator in the Life Sciences team. The Commercial Development team was established with the manager overseeing two important branches of the Zoos' work – Fundraising and Marketing and Communication. This year we also established the position of Manager of Conservation and Veterinary Science.

There are always changes to the staff at the Zoo and during the last year we've had several people join the team who bring their knowledge and experience to Wellington Zoo from working with wildlife overseas. They included Leisje Meates, a herpetologist from the USA, Amy Souster an experienced animal handler from England and Hollie Jackson, a keeper, also from England. We've had Gemma Stewart start as full time volunteer coordinator; Arti Govind join as marketing and fundraising assistant and Toby Wilkes come on board as print and production assistant.

Brendon Veale, the Zoo's Manager Fundraising, was working at Bristol Zoo, England before coming to Wellington in November 2007. He has been raising funds for the Zoo, increasing awareness of the Zoo as a charitable trust and forming valuable partnerships and networks.

Volunteers

Wellington Zoo would not survive without the help of those who selflessly donate their time. Our 50 volunteers worked around 5,835 hours last year – equivalent to almost three full time employees. Whether it is through making our events more special, making enrichment or helping out life sciences staff, the contribution made by our volunteers is impossible to overstate.

This year saw the appointment of the Zoo's first full time volunteer coordinator. An emphasis for the new coordinator was to integrate the volunteer programme across all areas of the Zoo. Traditionally, volunteers worked predominantly with the Life Science section of the Zoo. Now there are volunteers

working throughout the Zoo including with the marketing, learning, guiding and property teams.

The Zoo has also welcomed several full time volunteers from overseas through Live NZ. These students stay with us full time for one or two months and get a real feel for working in a New Zealand zoo.

Students

Wellington Zoo this year entered into a partnership with Massey University to create a new postgraduate degree for veterinarians in wildlife medicine. Four veterinary residents started working at the Zoo on a roster basis in March and enjoy the challenges of zoo and wildlife medicine for a month at a time. The three year Masters degree is run jointly by Massey and the Zoo and incorporates avian medicine, exotic species pathology and zoo medicine both on the Massey campus in Palmerston North and at Wellington Zoo.

Wellington Zoo also serves as a living classroom for Unitec students studying towards a certificate in Captive Animal Management. These students do practical experience at Wellington Zoo getting hands on in all sections of the Zoo, so they get the chance to work across all species groups and learn the realities of life as a zoo keeper.

Our Ambassadors

Wellington Zoo Trust is proud to welcome Saatchi & Saatchi Wellington's General Manager, Cameron Harland, to the Ambassador programme this year. We are also very grateful for the continued support of Tana and Rochelle Umaga and family, His Excellency John Dauth, LVO, the Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, and Jane Diplock, AO, Chairman of the Securities Commission. These committed Ambassadors continue to be our voice in the community, supporting our fundraising efforts and lifting the profile of the Zoo. We thank them for their wonderful support.

New Trustee, Ross Martin

On 1st July 2007, Ross Martin was appointed by Wellington City Council to the Trust. Ross has quickly become a valued member of the trust board.

Financial sustainability & success

Wellington Zoo is operated as a charitable trust, governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by Wellington City Council, which provides the principal funding for the operation of the Zoo each year. The Zoo is located on Town Belt land and its capital assets are owned by the Council.

Wellington Zoo became a trust in 2003, and has since grown into a capable not-for-profit organisation, in the business of sustainable fundraising. Through our marketing and fundraising strategies, we work hard to maximise revenue through visitation, functions and events, our membership programme Zoo Crew, Close Encounters, retail and more traditional fundraising.

In 2007/08, the Zoo's operating costs were \$4.7 million in total. The Zoo faces a high level of fixed costs – whether visitors come or not, we must feed and care for our animals, and maintain our facilities. Zoo based activities currently generate just over 44% of our operating revenue (a 20% increase from the time the Trust was established in 2003). Wellington City Council's grant covers the remaining 56%.

The Wellington Zoo Trust is committed to increasing its fundraising, and reducing its dependence on the Council for operational activities of the Zoo. In 2007/08 we earned almost \$1.3 million from admissions to the Zoo and a further \$312,000 from sales of our commercial products such as Close Encounters and functions in the Zoo. This was a 9% increase over our 2006/07 visitor and related revenue. Our retail shop earned us \$252,000 (an increase of 6% on the previous year). In addition to \$440,389 raised for capital projects, operational sponsorships and grants accounted for \$63,198 in the year under review.

Over the past few years, we have received anecdotal feedback that the Zoo is still not recognised as a charitable trust. We know that one of the keys to achieving our goal to be more financial sustainable is that we be seen in the community as a not-for-profit organisation, worthy of financial support.

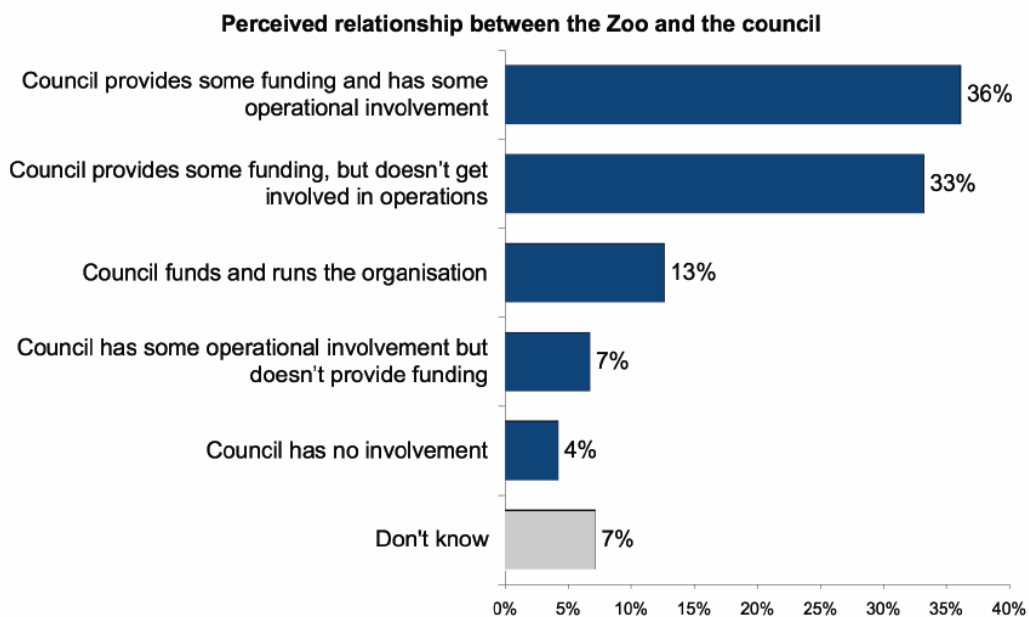
The Zoo Trust is about to launch a community fundraising campaign that highlights the fact that the Zoo is a trust and needs support from its community. The campaign aims to raise community awareness about how the Zoo raises money and also to encourage people to donate money to the Zoo. The success of the fundraising

initiative will depend on the community’s perceptions of the Zoo, and their beliefs about the Zoo’s current sources of funding. In May this year, we commissioned research to evaluate this business problem.

Research findings

- Only 31% of participants thought Wellington Zoo was a charitable trust
- Zoo visitors were significantly more likely to be aware the Zoo is a charitable trust (38%) than non-visitors (21%)
- Almost three quarters of respondents (71%) thought the Zoo received money from Wellington City Council and 21% thought central government provided funding.
- Most people also thought the Zoo received funding from other sources as well, such as donations (62%) and sponsorships (50%).
- There is some degree of confusion about the relationship between the Council and the Zoo. Most people think the Council has some involvement, either operational or financial or both.

Figure 2.2: Perceptions of the relationship between the Zoo and Wellington City Council



These findings were similar to those from the Wellington City Council Residents Satisfaction Survey that asked a new question this year to ascertain the proportion of Wellington residents who are aware Wellington Zoo operates as a charitable trust. Just less than one quarter of residents (23%) are aware of this, just over three quarters (77%) are not.

We believe this research gives a clear message – we still have some way to go in spreading the message that Wellington Zoo Trust is a

charity, worthy of donations from our community. This will be a focus for us in the coming year.

Financial Statements

Trustees

Denise Church, QSO

Chairperson - Denise brings experience from 25 years in public sector management, both local and central government. From 1996 until 2001 Denise was Chief Executive at the Ministry for the Environment.

Phillip Meyer, AfInstD, FAIM, FNZIM

Deputy Chair – Phillip Meyer is an experienced company director and investment banker. He is a director/trustee of a number of other organisations including being the Crown Monitor of Whanganui District Health Board.

Celia Wade-Brown, City Councillor

Council Representative – Celia was elected to Wellington City Council in 1994 and this success was repeated in 1995, 2001, 2004 and 2007 and she is currently the Environment Portfolio Leader. She set up the local pedestrian advocacy group, Living Streets Aotearoa which was incorporated in 2002.

Lee Parkinson

Lee Parkinson started his career with ten years in the British Army. From there he made the natural shift into marketing and marketing communications. He established TOUCH/CAST early in 2004. Lee has been recognised with media, DM and creative awards, within New Zealand and internationally.

Frances Russell JP

Proud Wellingtonian, Community Trust of Wellington Executive Director and Trustee of several organisations including the NZ Affordable Art Trust, The Tana Umaga Foundation,

Ross Martin

Ross Martin, previously CEO of Stagecoach New Zealand, now spends much of his time at his vineyard, Zepelin, in the Hawke's Bay. Ross also serves on the boards of the recently formed KiwiRail, Wellington Free Ambulance and Fullers Ferries.