

Glenside Progressive Assn. Inc.

PRESIDENTS REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1 APRIL 2024 – 30 MARCH 2025

HELD 22 JULY 2025

My report is for the 1 April 2024 - 30 March 2025 reporting year, to align with our annual Performance and Financial report.

1. Building and strengthening community

The Assn. provides leadership and guidance for our community in the preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of Glenside. We are the umbrella group for the Halfway House Heritage Gardeners.

Our Assn. and our community projects and activities are our way of bringing neighbours together so that we know each other better. Knowing our neighbours contributes to building community resilience and community response in emergency situations and reducing crime and disorder in neighbourhoods.

1.1 Community events

ANZAC Day 2024



Challenge 2000, who tenant the Halfway House, produced an excellent WWI outdoor drama at the Halfway House on ANZAC Day. Along with attendees were local MP Greg O'Connor, City Cnr. Tony Randle, and newspaper reporter Frank Neill.

Afternoon tea 2024



Sabah Ahmad retired after 17 years as a community patroller. Sabah (and one other Glenside resident) were the first people to sign up to volunteer for the North Wellington Community Patrol when it was established in 2007. The Assn. hosted an afternoon tea at Halfway House for him on 29 August, and invited managers and business owners from City Council, Twigland and Thyme Café and local residents.

Wedding 2024



The Assn. liaised with City Council to support the Bicknell wedding held in the gardens of the Halfway House in December.

Traditional Christmas Carols 2024



Christmas carols were held in the garden at Halfway House using the wedding marquee, thanks to the Bicknell family. The Assn. arranged for David Dell, Minister, and founder of the Musical Heritage NZ Trust to lead the singing. Two choirs were present, the Take Note Singers and The Wellington Regional Māori Choir "Hiere o Te Kokako". Approximately 80 attended.

1.2 Halfway House



The Assn. uses the Halfway House as a central meeting point for community and for events and meetings. The Heritage Gardeners use it weekly for working bees.

- Last year the WCC lease team approached Assn. about taking over management of the public rooms from the tenants. The Assn. responded in support of this, with conditions, however we are yet to hear what Council propose.
- The wooden power poles down the Halfway House driveway were replaced by concrete ones in September 2024. The Assn. unsuccessfully applied for a grant to have the wiring undergrounded.
- The Assn. was successful in obtaining a grant from the Johnsonville Licensing Trust to have a wooden fence erected along the Halfway House driveway. Twigland paid

for half the fence. Johnsonville Lions, and locals Paul Davidson, Lorna Webb, Claire Bibby, John Parfitt helped plant 400 tussock grasses and C2000 mulched them.

- For the house, the Assn. bought a pair of antique vases and a chiffonier and sold a chest of drawers.

2. Recognising Glenside - Making Glenside Visible

Glenside Sign opposite Monterey

Twigland Gardeners World provided free plants for the flowerbed of the sign.

Suburb boundary adjustment

A meeting was held between Cnr. Randle, Cnr. McNulty and WCC officials over adjusting the boundary of Stebbings Road so that all of the road was in Glenside. The officials did not support it and instead discussed removing the Reedy block from Glenside to make it Churton Park. No boundary changes took place.

3. Retain and enhance Glenside character – Ecology and landscape

3.1 Glenside Reserve



Pictured L to R: Wellington Botanical Society; Lily with lizards; Entomological Society in Reserve.

Studies of natural life in the reserve

- Volunteers have been busy in the reserve studying the natural life. The Entomological Society undertook a night study of the moths and insects along the loop tracks in November 2024. They identified 91 different species which were uploaded to i-Naturalist. The Wellington Botanical Society studied the plants in the reserve and identified 177, providing a list for future restoration approaches.

Plague skink lizard

- Wildlands were contracted by WCC to hunt down any plague skinks following a sighting of this invasive pest on Rowells Road. None were found. Some Northern grass skinks were found in the Reserve, which are native to New Zealand.

Horse grazing lease land

- The Assn. submitted to the Regulatory Committee in support of WCC proposal to end the horse grazing lease in the reserve and make the land more accessible to the public. The lessee must vacate by May 2026.

Bird and bee bank

- The bank behind the Red Shed at Halfway House, which has been planted for birds and bees is growing well and is now being maintained with some infill planting.

Driveway alongside Halfway House

- Planting the hillside above the Halfway House driveway is an ongoing project led by Claire Bibby. The WCC Botanical Garden team helped with infill planting in May 2024. This year WCC paid Downers to remove patches of blackberry and cherry.

Loop Tracks

- Helen and Keith Bond arranged for the installation of a park bench in memory of Helen’s parents, Theo and Margaret Schuch.
- Residents Paul Davidson, Aman Hunt, Robert Gentejohann, Zena Kavas, Barry Blackett and Claire Bibby received training for cherry removal and stump dosing in the loop tracks. Several stump dosing sessions were held. The park ranger supplied safety kit and tools for the volunteers.

Westchester Drive

- The revegetation programme to replace blackberry and honey suckle and periwinkle on the reserve beside the Glenside sign near the motorway continues. This project was started in 2023 by Claire Bibby and is being undertaken with the support of WCC.

3.2 Predator Free

Table 1 records the Predator free catches in Glenside. The community continue to provide backyard trapping tallies to Assn. member Barry Blackett on a quarterly basis. He provides a service maintaining and sharing traps around households. John Parfitt traps the Glenside Reserve loop tracks.

Table 1. Glenside Predator Free tallies 01 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

Pest	Community	Glenside Reserve
Possums	47	3
Rats	287	65
Stoats / Weasels	0	3
Hedgehogs	8	0
Mice	120	91
Feral Cats	1	0
Rabbits	27	1
Tota	489	163

Rabbits continue to be an issue at the Halfway House and in the community, however until the horse grazing ends in May 2026, Greater Wellington will not be able to get rid of the rabbits in Glenside Reserve, which is where the main population is.

3.3 Greater Wellington Water Pollution Hotline



Examples of pollution in the streams flowing through Glenside 2024-2025

The Assn. is keeping a record of water contamination incidents raised by the community and is discussing Greater Wellington response at our meetings. In August 2024, as a result of a resident inquiring what action had been taken after they complained about the stream turning black, Greater Wellington advised that they had issued a \$750 infringement notice to McMud in Grenada, for water contamination in Porirua stream.

Table 3. Dates of stream water contamination known to have been reported by Glenside and Willowbank residents to Greater Wellington 01 April 2024-31 March 2025

May 2024	July 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	March 2025	April 2025
21 May 24 May	16 July	25 Jan 26 Jan	5 Feb	21 March 22 March 23 March 28 March 31 March	3 April

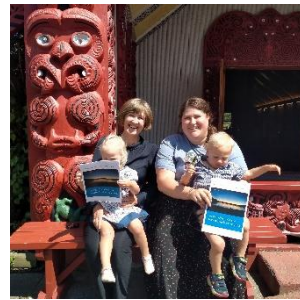
As a result of the March 2025 complaints Callum Hawthorne, Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Officer, Greater Wellington began compiling a draft site-specific protocol to assist investigations. This protocol outlines the internal processes GWRC uses and is intended to support Council and community shared efforts in identifying the source of contamination. A final copy is yet to be distributed.

3.4 Water Quality

The Assn. supports and encourages residents to get involved in Water Quality Monitoring (WQM). Residents and Assn. members Claire Bibby, Shelby Lockwood, Sabah Ahmad and Helen Bond assisted WQM with Mountains to the Sea. This is being done four times a year in three local streams, Stebbings Stream, Glenside Reserve and Drake Reserve up by Wingfield Place.

For City Nature Challenge 2024, a fish identification took place at night in the stream below Twiglands and around the bridge. Overnight fish trap and release was done in Stebbings Stream. Fish identified in the streams include long and short fin eel, common bullies.

Claire Bibby and Georgia Freeman attended the signing of the Porirua Harbour Water Accord between the Councils and Ngāti Toa at Takapuwhia Marae.



Pictured L to R: Abbey, Sabah and Shelby in Glenside Reserve; Stebbings Stream; Claire and Georgia.

4. Retain and enhance Glenside’s character - Heritage

Heritage garden



Pictured L to R: Raewyn Empson, Paul Bicknell, Lorna Webb in the Halfway House garden.

The Heritage Gardeners are in their eighth year of planting the garden around the Halfway House. The highlights for the 2024-2025 year are as follows:

- The gardeners received a letter from King Charles’ office with his thanks for the invitation to visit the gardens. The letter has been kept on file should he visit New Zealand in future.
- Heritage Festival - held 26th of October to 17th of November 2024. Paul Bicknell, Claire Bibby, Pam Brown, Pat Lakeman and Lorna Webb volunteered at the garden Walks & Talks during Heritage Week.
- Seven Walk & Talk garden visits were hosted during the year including Onslow Historic Society, two Heritage Festival events, Tawa Botany Group: U3A, Waterloo Probus Club, Hutt Valley Probus, and St John Anglican Women.
- Five presentations about the garden and its historical connections were made. These included Brooklyn Friday Seniors Group, Wellington Historical & Early Settlers Assn., Waikanae Garden Club and Cashmere Rest home.
- A directional sign at the carpark, pointing to the garden was installed by John Parfitt, Claire Bibby and Frank the WCC park ranger.
- In June 2024, Heritage Gardener volunteer Paul Bicknell featured on the Wellington City Council Facebook page celebrating Te Wiki Tūao ā-Motu – National Volunteer Week.

- A “Moon Garden” shaped like a crescent-moon was created with the encouragement of Shelby Lockwood. Scented native plants were supplied by Tim Park, Otari-Wilton Bush.
- David Sole, WCC Botanical Gardens manager advised a plan to provide more shelter and to ‘tie’ areas of the garden together. This is being implemented.



Pictured L to R: The Heritage Gardeners; David Sole; Dennis Hamblin in the orchard, Halfway House.

We acknowledged the passing of Dennis Hamblin, one of the first supporters for the restoration of the Halfway House and garden.

5. Communications

Newsletters

The Assn. develops and distributes a regular email newsletter and a hardcopy in the letterbox. Hardcopy distribution has increased to include Glenside households in Pine Hill Rise and Farnworth Terrace. Eleven e-newsletters and seven letterbox drop newsletters were distributed to residents.

Glenside Website

The Assn. is very grateful for Rex Johnson’s commitment to our website, which he does at no charge from his home in Cromwell.

Facebook

The Glenside – The Halfway Facebook page has 475 followers, up from 413 last year.

Journals and Newspapers

There were a total 24 articles written about Glenside in newspapers and in a national journal. Some of the featured articles are as follows:

- A six-page article about The Halfway House Heritage Garden featured in the June 2024 issue of the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture journal. The cover photo of the journal was a photograph of the Halfway House and of red flowering kaka.
- An article *Windy Expedition to the Halfway House* was published in the Hutt Valley Horticultural Society Spring Newsletter
- The Halfway House Garden Walks & Talks were published on the Heritage NZ website for the annual Heritage Festival.

6. Community Safety – Traffic, Crime and Disorder

Glenside roundabout – The roundabout was upgraded for safety by WCC. The Assn. coordinated community feedback for the WCC on their proposals. Traffic counts undertaken for the safety project show that in a five-day average 4.500 to 6.300 vehicles move through the intersection from Middleton Road daily in both directions and 7.700 to 10,000 move through the intersection from Westchester Drive daily in both directions.

Crime and disorder – There are on-going issues of tissues, horse oats, dog faeces and torn paper being thrown along Halfway House driveway and in the garden. Each incident is photographed and reported to WCC. Twiglands was burgled twice in May 2024.

7. Other matters

Submissions

The Assn. made several submissions during the year. These included the following:

- Long Term Plan and Annual Plan - we sought funding for landscape plan and strategy for Glenside Reserve – not successful. However, the WCC Urban Ecologist secured funding to undertake studies for future management of the waterways.
- District Plan – Barry Blackett, on behalf of the Assn. made several submissions on the proposed District Plan, continuing to push for protection of ridgelines and hilltops and the proposed Special Natural areas on the western side of Middleton Road, however Council has removed the ridgeline protection and supports the ‘cut hills and fill gullies’ approach of the Callender development instead.
- Regulatory committee – we supported officials’ decision to end the grazing lease on Glenside Reserve – successful.

Farewell to the Middleton Road Dairy and to Twigland Gardeners World



Rakesh and Jyoti Gandhi closed the Churton Park Dairy on Middleton Road, with the last day of trading on Thursday, 21st November 2024. The dairy was first opened in 1966. Rakesh bought the lease in 1988 then he and his wife Jyoti, bought the property in 1994. The property was sold and is now the Animal Medical Centre, relocated from Johnsonville.

In 2025 John Little of Twigland announced the business would be closing and the land sold. The garden centre closed for public trading on Friday 4th April 2025, the subdivision of the Glenside land for a garden centre and café, having been approved in 1995. The Assn. organised a farewell for the staff at Café Thyme, supported by community donations and John Little.

8. Going Forward

I would like to pass on my appreciation and thanks to the following people:

- Barry Blackett, John Parfitt, Aaron and Georgia Freeman and Steve Watts who regularly attend and contribute to committee meetings. Our Association was re-registered under the new Incorporated Societies legislation.
- Avril Hillind and Kaye Francis from Laurenson Accountants for reporting on our finances and Santiago Bernhardt and Heidi from the community for approving payments.
- Gillian Cross from The Collective for sponsoring the newsletter.
- Rex Johnson for managing the website.
- The Heritage Gardeners - Claire Bibby, Paul and Heather Bicknell, Pam Brown, Pat Lakeman, Claire McDonald, Nico Ritmeester, Lorna Webb, Russell Brodie and former gardeners Keira Bosch and Raewyn Empson.
- Barry Blackett, Shelby Lockwood, Sabah Ahmad, John Parfitt, Helen and Keith Bond, Aman Hunt and Paul Davidson and Robert Gentejohann for on-going environmental support in the community. A special acknowledgement for Barry's environmental work along Stebbings Road and Glenside Road.
- John Parfitt for his Predator Free work, and for supporting the Association with this handyman skills (pictured right, with the chairs he sanded and stained).
- Northern Ward Councillors Tony Randle, John Apanowicz and Ben McNulty for representing us at Council, attending meetings and providing guidance.
- Our Park Rangers Denise Clements and Frank Williams.



In the coming year the Assn. will continue to focus on securing a ground bird restoration strategy and landscape plan for Glenside Reserve.

Thank you to those in the Glenside community who provide donations and support the work of the Assn. in a variety of ways.

Your ongoing support for our suburb is valued and appreciated.

Claire Bibby
President
22 July 2025