



VILLAGE NEWS

VOLUME 28 ISSUE 2

GRENADA VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2022

GRENADA VILLAGE PLAY AREA

The Wellington City Council has advised that the play area in Mandeville Crescent is due to be upgraded and have provided a draft concept design detailing what they consider would be appropriate. This upgrade will also include new safety matting and refurbished paths.

The concept design can be viewed at: <https://www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/grenada-village-play-area-renewal>.

The opportunity for giving your thoughts, ideas or suggestions on the renewal is available and welcomed, but closes at 5pm on 18 September 2022. The site for your feedback is: playgrounds@wcc.govt.nz.

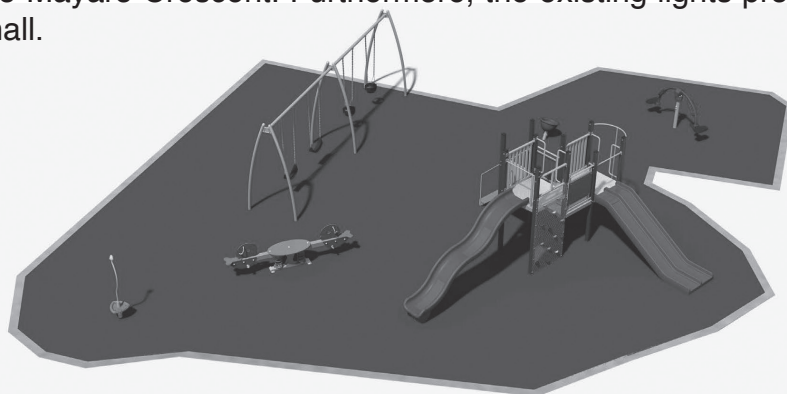
Our park is regarded as a neighbourhood play area meaning that it is designed to service a local neighbourhood as a handy place for a quick play. The last renewal took place in 2006.

While the Grenada Village Community Association will be lodging a submission to the Council detailing what we believe to be in the best interests of the community, it is important that as many people as possible provide their thoughts as well, to ensure that the Council are fully aware of what this community wants and needs. This upgrade will be expected to last 15-20 years.

A play area should be entertaining and have exciting facilities that are imaginative, challenging and stimulating for children of all ages. A play area also assists in providing a sense of community.

At this stage, we do have some reservations regarding the Council's proposed design in that it appears to be channelled only towards very young children being the under 5 year olds, whereas we believe a neighbourhood play area should also include a section to cater for the 5 to 12 year olds (as our current 'Spida' climbing frame does). We accept that there is limited ground space available but any replacement equipment should cover this broader dual concept. What is being proposed is rather sparse. We also believe that the provision of furniture is absolutely necessary and that at least one picnic table and two or three bench seats are required to replace the current 40 year old (and badly weathered) ones.

During an earlier discussion with the Council, they stated that the existing lighting of the play area would be removed as it was no longer council policy to have this. We pointed out that without the two lights centred in the middle of the site, the area is extremely dark and for security and public safety, it is paramount that they remain. Also, people regularly walk through this area at night to get to the walkway up to Mayaro Crescent. Furthermore, the existing lights provide additional security for the community hall.



BUS SERVICE

Back in July 2018, the controversial new bus service network was introduced into Wellington city and suburbs by GWRC/Metlink. It was stated as being a bold strategic vision to revolutionise the city’s transport structure. The new network promised to be simpler, more practical, more reliable and more user-friendly. There would be less congestion and fewer delays. It would carry more people to more places, every day of the week.

During the first year of operating, the service was plagued with problems relating to reliability involving late running buses, cancelled buses, long waits, incorrect information, Metlink app failures, ghost buses and many other such complaints. For many commuters, the new service was extremely unreliable (until reliability is right, nothing is right), and it became a great inconvenience to many. On top of this, there was a substantial shortage of drivers which eventually led to a reduction in the number of scheduled services across the city

The public totally lost confidence in the system and demanded that strong action be taken to rectify the situation. The terms ‘bustastrophe’, ‘busaggeddon’ and busdisaster became a frequently used portrayal of the difficulties being experienced.

Sadly, four years after the new network begun and despite a six month formal review and several redesigns there is still very little improvement, particularly in the reliability of the service. The dependability of your bus actually arriving and not being cancelled is very much hit and miss. This is continually blamed on ongoing driver shortage, high rates of Covid, and seasonal sickness.

One of the issues is the current inability to recruit drivers from overseas. GWRC have asked the Government for a relaxation of the immigration settings to allow bus drivers to qualify as skilled migrants to help fill the shortage but as yet, no decision has been announced.

Taking all this into account, something must change. The mechanics of operating a bus service are complex however there are a number of factors that could be, or should be, sorted out. The operators need to start thinking outside the square. It must be remembered that the buses are owned by independent bus operators who contract to GWRC to provide public transport services.

During May 2022, there were 3412 bus cancellations, July 4963 cancellations and from 1 to 19 August, there were already 4429 cancellations across all operators in Wellington.



Of particular concern is the multiple cancellations of consecutive services to one destination, especially during the peak periods. This has now become a very regular occurrence and it has been confirmed by Metlink that it actually should not occur. Just two of the very many examples we are aware of:

21 July 2022 – Based ex C/ Place - 129 Minutes between Buses (5.07pm to 7.16pm)

Courtenay Place	Railway Station	Grenada Village	
5.07	5.25	6.04	
5.21	5.39	6.19	Cancelled
5.58	6.14	6.50	Cancelled
6.28	6.44	7.17	Cancelled
7.16	7.30	8.01	

11 August 2022 - Morning Peak - 90 Minutes between Buses (6.53am to 8.23am)

Grenada Village	Railway Station	Courtenay Place	
6.53am	7.30am	7.45am	
7.13am	7.54am	8.05am	Cancelled
7.33am	8.14am	8.26am	Cancelled
7.53am	8.33am	8.45am	Cancelled
8.23am	9.05am	9.23am	

HALL HIRE

The Community Hall is available for hire for various social activities.

Charges levied by the Association are \$12.00 per hour for financial members and \$20.00 per hour to non financial members.

No adult private parties are allowed due to the close proximity of houses, unless agreed under specific arrangements..

For more information contact
Dawn Patterson

Telephone 478 4221

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021/2022

Bruce Patterson (Chairman)	478 4221
Elena Ivanova (Treasurer)	021 841 986
Paul Emley (Secretary)	478 7044
Dawn Patterson	478 4221
William Nobelen	478 1091
Steven Archer	478 6352
Athula Wanasinghe	027 428 4852
Daya Vithanage	021 030 7853

This can be very distressing for commuters as they are just abandoned without any way of getting either to work or appointments in the morning, or home to family in the evening. Every day there are cancellations - on peak, off peak, evenings and weekends.

On one occasion on a Friday evening, all buses to Grenada Village after one that departed Courtenay Place at 8.13pm were cancelled for the rest of the night. This would have left a lot of people completely stranded after socialising in the city on a Friday evening. This raises issues of public safety especially those of young persons and the elderly.

As the service to and from Grenada Village also includes a large section of Paparangi via Mark Avenue and Beazley Avenue (and streets there-off) and also a large section of Newlands via Stewart Drive (and streets there-off), there is a substantial catchment area involved.

Another issue for commuters is the unreliability of the Metlink App with its regular failings. When it is operating as it was designed to, it is brilliant, but generally it does not provide consistent correct information and therefore becomes untrustworthy. Then there are the 'ghost' buses which are the ones that just fail to turn up even though they are not showing anywhere as being cancelled.

Many commuters will no longer tolerate such uncertainty and have decided to now permanently commute by private vehicles. Unless some radical changes are promptly instituted to overcome this situation, the public's trust and confidence will not return and the number of people refusing to use public transport will continue to increase.

We recently had a meeting with the senior management of GWRC/Metlink and detailed our concerns. Our presentation was accepted and recognised, particularly in respect of the reliability issues. Hopefully some action will be taken.

We have always worked very hard on ensuring that Grenada Village has an acceptable bus service to and from the city. We appreciate that a lot of residents do not use the buses on a regular basis, but conversely there are a great many who are daily commuters and the service to them is paramount to their work responsibilities and their wellbeing.

GRENADA VILLAGE RADIO STATION

We have our own radio station in Grenada Village, operated by local resident Edwin Hermann. The station is called Mix FM and broadcasts 24 hours a day from Edwin's home in Mark Avenue. Mix FM plays a range of pop/rock music from the 80's through to today's latest hits.

Until recently it was broadcasting on 87.9MHz (FM) across Grenada Village, Paparangi, Churton Park as well as parts of Johnsonville, Newlands, Woodridge and Glenside.

Unfortunately, earlier this year the transmitter ceased working so the station is currently broadcasting online only while funds are being raised to replace the transmitter. You can tune in any time at <https://mixfm.nz>

NZ POST WELLINGTON SUPER DEPOT

The construction of the new NZ Post Wellington Super Depot on Carmel Terrace off Grenada Drive (just up from the motorway interchange) is nearing completion with the opening date currently scheduled for October. This new automated hub that is built to a Four Green Star standard, will process parcels faster and more efficiently, and is capable of processing 9,000 parcels per hour at peak.



The depot will operate Monday-Friday from 6am – 9pm. It is expected that there will be up to 80 full time staff working within the building over three shifts throughout the day and a maximum of 43 staff on any one shift. Courier and delivery drivers will also be present.

It is expected that approximately 50 truck movements and 50 courier vans will arrive and depart from the site each day. Staff vehicles arriving and departing will be additional to this. There will be no sales direct to the public of any goods or services from the site.

The site has been landscaped with low-level planting, shrubs and specimen trees to soften the development. The entire area is fenced off for security purposes and the building will not be open to the general public. Some lighting is proposed to illuminate the building for identification and security.

NEW TREASURER

Sadly our current Treasurer is planning to move from Grenada Village and the Association is now seeking a new Treasurer. A basic knowledge of accountancy and financial systems is required. If you are able to join our committee and fill this important position, please contact Bruce Patterson, Tel: 478 4221 or Mob: 0275 234 221.

BITS & PIECES

A few years ago there was a substantial promotion by the Council for households to purchase a 200L emergency water tank to enable greater resilience in emergency situations. It is recommended that the water should be refreshed every six months and the tank cleaned at least once every 12 months.

The tennis nets in the courts at Mandeville Crescent are to be taken down and sent for repair. They have been damaged in the recent storms and we need them in good condition for the summer period.

Great to see that the Wellington City Council have again been planting new trees on the berms in a number of streets. Some of the tracks and walkways in Seton Nossiter Park have taken a beating in the recent very wet weather but the Council are aware of the situation and will be on to it as soon as they can. They have a tremendous amount of work to do all over Wellington

A reminder that the Grenada Village Community Association has a Facebook page. This provides another avenue for us to have direct and instant contact with the community when it is required. We hope to build this page into a good community interaction group that would be interesting and informative. The page is named '**Grenada Village Community Association**' and we would appreciate you 'Liking' it. The current 'Grenada Village Community' group is not affiliated to the Association, and is privately run.

WELLINGTON CITY LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS

Voting for the Wellington City Local Body Elections closes on Saturday 8 October 2022.

Voting documents are to be posted out from Friday 16 September onwards.

Voting is done by post and completed voting forms are

to be returned in the freepost envelope via any New Zealand Post box. It is recommended that the return envelopes are posted before Tuesday 4 October. Voting for the Wellington City Council elections is done via the Single Transferable Voting (STV) method to elect its Mayor, Councillors and Community Board members.

Please take time to find out something about the candidates standing for the Northern General Ward (three vacancies) and the Greater Wellington Regional Council and check out their background, aims, aspirations and proposals when their candidate statements are published. Good representation around the decision-making table is of utmost importance. The decisions the Council make could have a substantial impact on many aspects of your life and your community. Decisions should be made rationally with an open mind, alternatives researched, and with an understanding of the consequences. There are a number of key priorities the Wellington City Council need to make during the next triennium for our city and suburbs and voting in this election is vital for the future of Grenada Village, the Northern Ward, and Wellington City. Last triennium (2019) only 39.88 percent of eligible voters cast a vote in Wellington city.

Elections for District Health Board members are no longer held due to the Ministry of Health reforms of 2021.

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