



# Ashburton Community Conservation Trust (Inc)

April 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

Edith Smith

Submission in support of the establishment of a Biodiversity Officer/ Ecologist Position

The Ashburton Community Conservation Trust appreciates the opportunity to submit in support for the biodiversity officer ecologist at the Ashburton Council.

We endorse the Additional Budget paper in support of a biodiversity officer which outlined the purpose, strategic case and acknowledgement of the need for change regarding biodiversity matters which was presented to the Councilors last year.

Over the years the Trust has acquired knowledge about the Ashburton plains dryland species and the need to protect and enhance remnant species. Most of our communication and information gathering is from Canterbury ecologists along with other expertise from outside of the Ashburton district.

It has been disappointing to observe ongoing loss of native vegetation notably dryland ecosystems in the district and particularly on the plains. This includes the destruction of the significant roadside stand of Kanuka on Lovett's road. Clearance has continued despite Ashburton district rules requiring a resource consent to remove any native vegetation.

The appointment of a biodiversity officer/ecologist would provide inhouse support for council staff to uphold the rules relating to vegetation removal. The role would include advising councilors as well as liaising with the wider community about the significance of native ecosystems and the requirements of the soon to be released National Biodiversity Strategy.

We look forward to ongoing liaison with the council Open Spaces and Planning teams.

The Trust would like to be heard in support of the submission.

Yours sincerely  
Edith Smith  
Chairman ACCT

