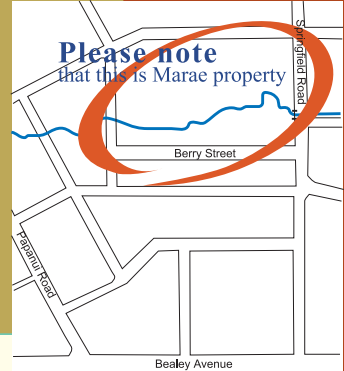


# Living Landscapes

## Lower Frees Creek

Rehua Marae

79 Springfield Road St Albans Christchurch



*Blessing/Karakia at the start of the project*

### Partnerships

The work was achieved in partnership with the following teams:

Christchurch City Council: Jeff Weston, Howard Simpson, Rachel Barker, Ken Couling, and City Care team including Brian Keown, Hunter Morton and Sue Jacobs

Rehua Marae trustees led by Monty Daniels, Terry Ryan and whanau

Private property owners at Rehua Lane, Berry Street and Springfield Road

Permission for access must be gained from the marae administration office, located off 79 Springfield Road.

Do not drive onto Marae property.

Whakatauki - Aroha Ki te tangata  
Proverb - Goodwill to all people  
Avon River catchment

### Background

Many years ago, Frees Creek had important cultural significance to local Maori as a water collection area. Large springs were located close to the current site of Rehua Marae. However, more than 100 years of drainage works seriously threatened the existence of the creek.

In 1996, the Council and Marae took the opportunity to realign and naturalise the creek through Marae grounds. Both the Council and Marae team are proud of the results: from a drain that was formerly deep, straight, and timber-lined, Lower Frees Creek has been restored to a natural, meandering waterway with habitat that is attractive to birdlife.



*Before restoration 1997*

*After restoration 2001*





## Project Details

Project started	1996
Years planted	1997-1998
Area/ size	250 lineal metres overall
Contributions	Development costs met by Christchurch City Council. Marae Trustees made land available for the restoration, and purchased an adjoining property in Springfield Road so that realignment of the entire reach to Springfield Road could be completed.
Plants	Over 1300 ecosourced plants used. A variety of wetland and swamp forest species were selected (including kahikatea, matai, pokaka, hinau and totara) to provide habitat, large trees for the future, and species such as flax and toe-toe for cultural use.
Maintenance	Monthly maintenance by City Care (banks and channel) and Marae (plant watering and grass mowing).
Stream flows	Because flows are minimal in summer, and the upper reaches of the creek bed can dry up, low flows have been enhanced. This was achieved when an existing capped artesian bore was unearthed on site and used to simulate spring water (relayed upstream in a PVC pipe) to maintain summer low flow.
Construction	Three bridges were built: two wide footbridges lead visitors onto the Marae, while a third bridge is located adjacent to the Wharenuui (meeting house). All have traditional red paint finish.  Weathered telegraph poles have been used as bollards. Design detail is simple and bold. Future adornment with teko teko (traditional carvings) is planned by the Marae.



Living Landscapes



## Results

Ecology	improved habitat and naturalised creek banks, restored natural heritage and biodiversity
Heritage	springs recognised, heritage of site acknowledged
Culture	raw plant material available for traditional cultural use
Landscape	enhanced landscape setting for day to day, formal, cultural and educational Marae activities - as well as improved public visibility of creek (public viewpoint at Springfield Road)
Recreation	opportunities to enjoy naturalised creek
Drainage	enhanced drainage capacity from regraded banks and wider stream corridor

