

# Blue and Green Resilience in Abberley Park



Mixed methods and co-designed approach to foster community participation and youth leadership for environmental stewardship in St Albans, Christchurch.

**Community Partners:** St Albans Residents Association, Emma Twaddell, Liam Speechley, Shamani Gill and The Friends of Abberley.  
**Research Team:** Josiah Millar, Róisín Blundell-Dorey, Sylvia Docherty and Tim Pitcaithly. Supervisor Dr Rita Dionisio.

## Research Aim

Support St Albans Residents Association (SARA) to raise the profile and social significance of the St Albans Creek and its role in blue/green resilience with a focus on youth stewardship.



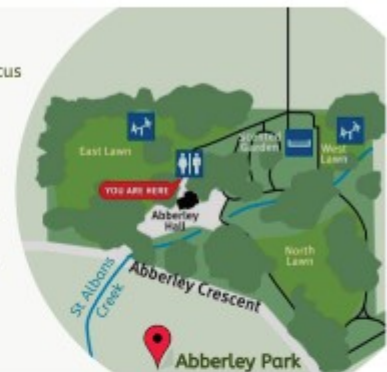
## Research Questions

1. What is the level of the community awareness, particularly in the youth sector, of the St Albans Creek within Abberley Park?
2. Do the community perceptions of the water quality of the creek reflect the actual health of the creek?
3. What are the challenges of gaining youth participation in sustainability initiatives?



## Community Partners:

St Albans Residents Association (SARA)



## Research Methods

Co-designed



Online Surveys



Structured Interviews



Stream Health Assessment



Partner steered literature review

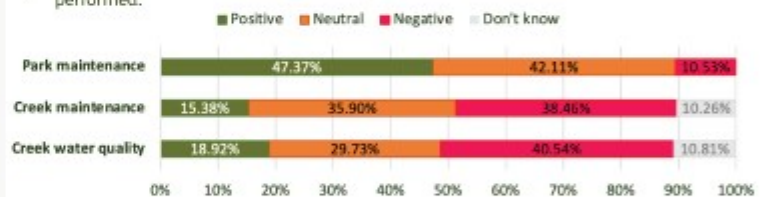


## Results

### Community Feedback

Participants valued the park's flora, fauna, inclusivity and peaceful location.

The public's opinion and recognition of the creek was lower than that of the park. The online survey revealed the quality of the creek and its water has room for improvement, which was validated by the health assessment of the creek that was performed.



### Health Assessment

The assessment revealed that between the three sampled sites, the water quality ranged from moderate to severe levels of pollution.

This can be accredited to the same reasons identified by the public, mud, rubbish, and poor habitat.

## Conclusion

- Green infrastructure is strong and well represented in the park. Species of trees and plants are likely to transfer from exotic to native varieties over time.
- Blue infrastructure is not as well defined or supported in the park. Physically the creek is well recognised, however, raising the profile of the name is a priority. More research is required to identify the source of the creek and impact within the Christchurch waterways. The health assessment of the creek highlights the poor water quality requiring attention.
- The mixed methods and interdisciplinary approach taken has the potential to support future projects in the wider context of blue and green resilience.

## Acknowledgements:

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Jon Harding and Linda Morris - School of Biology, University of Canterbury

## Recommendations

- Community partners share this research with the community and key stakeholders
- Future projects to promote the creek's contribution within the Christchurch waterways network.
- Joint community planting day with St Albans School to improve the riparian planting along St Albans Creek.
- Future research into the best species for riparian planting.
- Engagement with the St Albans school using place-based education approaches.
- Signage to raise awareness of the creek's name and its connection to larger waterways.

