

Barrier Free Newsletter - November 2008

Welcome to the November Newsletter for the Barrier Free NZ Trust. The end of the year is looming and I'm sure everyone is busily trying to pull things together before the silly season! We have a range of topics to discuss in this issue, and we encourage you to keep the Trust up to date with what is happening out there.

This month we will cover:

- Executive Director Position for the Barrier Free NZ Trust
- 2009 Training Pathways Calendar released
- Barrier Free NZ Trust AGM Report
- Occupational Therapists and Access
- Building Sustainable Urban Communities - a reminder

Executive Director Position for the Barrier Free NZ Trust

The mission of the Barrier Free NZ Trust is to encourage, promote, and facilitate the creation of environment that are accessible and usable by everyone in the community, including people with disabilities. This encapsulates the concept of Universal Access for all people. We do this through training, education, and advocacy. We provide technical advice and oversee the use of the International Symbol of Access.

On an annual basis the BFT organises nationwide seminars, which are aimed at a wide range of employment groups, including territorial authorities, building consent staff, architects, designers, planners, landscape architects, building construction and property managers, disability organisations such as CCS Disability Action, IHC, DPA, Royal NZ Foundation of the Blind; and government departments.

The Executive Director role has been created to develop and expand the Barrier Free NZ Trust.

In a largely autonomous role you will be responsible for managing the operations of the organisation, including staffing, funding, advocacy and education. You will become the public face of Barrier Free NZ Trust and will report to and be supported by the Trust Board. This is a unique opportunity to lead and grow this dynamic and exciting organisation!

What we need from you:

- Enthusiasm and commitment to achieve and deliver on the Trust's objectives
- Demonstrated empathy/understanding for people with disabilities
- Business development skills
- Strong communication, literacy, and organisational skills
- Experience with communicating at senior management level
- Knowledge and experience in the building/legal/disability sector/s
- Good IT skills
- People management skills
- Problem solving and decision making skills
- Strategic planning skills

- Relevant tertiary qualification

Please email your CV and a covering letter to office@barrierfreenz.org.nz by the 27th November 2008 if you are interested in this position.

2009 Training Pathways Calendar

The dates for the Training Pathways programme for next year have been released. There will be eight 2-day Barrier Free Seminars held nationwide and three Module 5: Becoming a Barrier Free Advisor Courses.

Upcoming 2-day Barrier Free Seminars for 2009

Auckland 3-4 March 2009
Wellington 31 March – 1 April 2009
Christchurch 5-6 May 2009
Hamilton 16-17 June 2009
Taupo 11-12 August 2009
Auckland 15-16 September 2009
Wellington 14-15 October 2009
Christchurch 17-18 November 2009

Module 5 - Becoming a Barrier Free Advisor

Auckland 29 April 2009
Wellington 20 August 2009
Location TBC 26 November 2009

Places fill in quickly, so make sure you and your staff don't miss out on accessibility training - Register now!

<http://www.barrierfreenz.org.nz/index.php/training-and-education/registration>

Barrier Free NZ Trust AGM Report

The Barrier Free NZ Trust held its Fifteenth Annual General Meeting on 18th September 2008 at Parliament.

In his Chairs Report, Jim Bowler stated that 'the Barrier Free NZ Trust has had a very successful year encouraging, promoting and facilitating awareness on the Accessible Journey. The launch of the new education programme Training Pathways at the beginning of 2008 has proved very successful, and reinforces our core business of providing high quality education and training.'

'The role and profile of the Trust is steadily growing through networking, regular newsletters and presenting at various conferences. This is reflected by people actively seeking our involvement at various forums, working groups, and conferences. This is indeed an exciting development and a demonstration of the strong future that the Trust has to look forward to.'

Please [click here](#) for the full AGM Report.

Occupational Therapists and Access

This year has seen an increased interest from Occupational Therapists' (OTs) to learn

more about the accessible journey.

OTs help people to identify the occupations that are difficult for them. This could be due to problems with physical abilities, for example, strength or co-ordination, or mental abilities, for example, memory or organisation skills. Part of their work is to evaluate homes and work places, and give adaptation recommendations for the built environment. They may also assess student learning environments and suggest changes to make schools and other education facilities more accessible.

Our Education Project Manager Jula Goebel presented with Fiona Mains (Lecturer, School of Occupational Therapy, Otago Polytechnic) at the NZ Association of Occupational Therapists (NZAOT) conference in September. The workshop, Inclusive Design – Making it Happen, covered Universal Design principles, Collaborative Practice, Design and Sustainability, and the Accessible Journey. The focus was to encourage OTs to think of these principles in their daily practice, to broaden their thinking to public facilities rather than individual adaptations, and to show more interest in the accessible journey.

There was an excellent turnout of OT at this workshop, and we look forward to training more OT on Barrier Free Training.

Sustainable Urban Communities

Just a quick reminder that the Department of Internal Affairs is seeking feedback on the [Building Sustainable Urban Communities](#) discussion document by 28 November 2008.

This document sets out ideas for new ways to deal with the increasing challenges and opportunities of urban development, to ensure our towns and cities thrive, prosper, and continue to provide a high quality of life. They want to hear what the public thinks about the ideas, tools, and approach described in the document.

The Second Schedule of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) originally included a provision to provide for “the community or any group within the community (including minorities, children, and disabled people)” in the local government policy statements and plans. This was repealed in the Resource Management Amendment Act 2005, and no legislation has been introduced since then to provide for access for people with disabilities in the built urban environment.

The Trust put forward a submission to the Ministry for the Environment on [National Guidance on Urban Design – Scope of Proposed National Policy Statement](#). [Click here](#) for a copy. The proposed NPS considered that national guidance under the RMA 1991 could help to improve the quality of urban design in NZ, and would complement existing voluntary, non-statutory initiatives like the NZ Urban Design Protocol.

It is important that the processes of councils are influenced at the highest level through their objectives and policies, as these are an integral component of their statutory documents. With the development of an NPS on Urban Design, all activities of a territorial authority will be required to conform.

The Barrier Free NZ Trust encourages people in the access community to put forward submissions to encourage [Universal Design](#) in NZ.