

Annual Report 2022 – 2023

Tēnā koutou members

On behalf of the Trust Democracy Committee, I am pleased to present our 2022 – 2023 Annual Report.

For a small society that is only 3 years old, Trust Democracy (TD) supported an impressive amount of activity across a broad scope during 2022-23. This was enabled by understanding ‘democracy’ and ‘democratic’ as not just electoral representative democracy but as a political system that empowers inclusion, forms collective agendas and wills, and has capacities to make collective decisions. This broader understanding of democracy is what distinguished Trust Democracy from most commentaries about NZ’s democracy.

Topic areas	Worked with	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberative governance • Open Government • Local government review • Charities reform • Parliamentary Standing Orders • Electoral System Review • Voting age • Democratic research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures • Make it 16: Lower the Voting Age • Te Reo o nga Tāngata: The People Speak • NZ Council for Civil Liberties • Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa NZ • Transparency International NZ • Network Waitangi Otautahi • CAB NZ • The Kettering Foundation, USA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 webinars • 5 submissions • 7 letter/email campaigns

Working more with, and through, members

I am pleased to report that a number of members have been much more involved in organising TD events and preparing TD submissions. Members have also been involved in activities organised by other organisations, including at the Kettering Foundation, USA. The committee will build on this in the coming year.

Becoming better known

I am also pleased to report that TD is becoming better known as evidenced by:

- Being invited by Koi Tū: the Centre for Informed Futures to work with other organisations on a joint submission on the Aotearoa New Zealand Public Media Bill
- Being invited to present to a meeting of Mt Eden Quaker Society about making democracy work better.

Focus for 2023-24

Inter-related priorities for 2023-24 will include:

- To develop a strategic plan to help focus our efforts for impact and develop the organisation to support this.
- To increase the number and diversity of our members
- To continue to support the Porirua Talanoa-Wānanga deliberative experiment in Te Tiriti- and community-led governance
- TD will continue to encourage and support local authorities to develop more deliberative and participatory forms of governance through, for example, joint educational webinars with Local Government New Zealand
- To raise awareness amongst journalists and commentators about new forms of democratic engagement that will be needed to address the complex issues we face.
- Maintain the relationship with the Kettering Foundation, USA, and help organise a New Zealand based deliberative democracy event in Auckland during October 2023.

Disclosures

No conflicts of interest were disclosed by Trust Democracy committee members during 2022-23.

Vote of thanks

I would like to acknowledge and thank Andrew Ecclestone, John Pennington and Maureen Gillon for their sterling work as members of the Trust Democracy committee over 2022-23. The committee was very pleased to welcome a new member, Finlay Harvey, in March 2023.

I would also like to thank members for their ongoing support. The society would not have achieved as much as it has without members helping with the events, suggesting projects, writing articles, and providing advice and financial support.

Ngā mihi, nā



Simon Wright
Chair

Appendix: Summary of our work in 2022-23

Events

Trust Democracy organised 7 and held 3 events during 2022-23. Video and other resources were published for the 3 completed events. Four events that were organised in 2022-23 will be held in 2023-24.

Topic	Featuring	Date / Notes
Deliberative engagement for long-term planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MosaicLab 	6 June 2023 In collaboration with LGNZ and for its members
Experiences of Victorian local government leaders with deliberative engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 Victorian local government leaders 	3 May 2023 In collaboration with LGNZ and for its members
Strengthening Democracy through Open Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanjay Pradhan (Open Government Partnership) • Rt Hon Helen Clark (Open Government Partnership) • Helmut Modlik (Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira) • Andrew Ecclestone (NZ Council for Civil Liberties & Trust Democracy) • Suzanne Snively (NZ Expert Advisory Panel for OGP) 	13 April 2023 In collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VUW School of Government • NZ Council for Civil Liberties • Transparency International NZ • Open Government Partnership.
Learnings from NZ's first Citizens Assembly: the Watercare case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amanda Singleton and Jenny Wigley, Watercare • Tatjana Buklijas and Anne Bardsley, Kōi Tū: the Centre for Informed Futures, University of Auckland • Tame Te Rangi, Mana Whenua Kaitiaki Forum 	5 April In collaboration with LGNZ and for its members
Why you should support the campaign to lower the voting age	From the Make It 16 campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anika Green • Caitlin Taylor • Sanat Singh 	1 December 2022
Charities are worth it!	Sue Barker	22 June 2022

A vision for democratic governance in Porirua	Helmut Modlik	12 April 2022
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Publications

Over the course of 2022-23, Trust Democracy submitted 5 submissions, sent emails to all local body representatives about deliberative public engagement, wrote letters expressing our concern about the proposed Charities Act reforms to the responsible Minister and then to all MPs, and was a signatory to 3 letters to the Minister for the Public Service regarding the Open Government Partnership along with other civil society organisations. These are list below and all available on the Publications page of the Trust Democracy website.

Two of the submissions were prepared in collaboration with Trust Democracy members who accepted invitations to help. Trust Democracy took part in a collaborative process to help prepare a submission on the Aotearoa New Zealand Public Media Bill submission after receiving an invitation from the organisers, Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures at the University of Auckland.

Description	Date
Submission to the Justice Committee regarding the Declaration of inconsistency: Voting age in the Electoral Act 1993 and the Local Government Act 2001	15 March 2023
Submission on the draft National Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership issued by the Public Service Commission	12 December 2022
Email to all elected local government politicians alerting them to the Review into the Future of Local Government recommendation for the use of deliberative public engagement, to Trust Democracy's webpage of deliberative process resources, and to our collaboration with Local Government New Zealand to produce 3 webinars for local government in early 2023 on deliberative public engagement.	26 November 2022
Submission on the discussion document issued by the Independent Electoral Review Panel prepared with Trust Democracy members	21 November 2022
Joint letter with 5 other civil society organisations to the Minister responsible for the Open Government Partnership before the GOV cabinet committee meeting on 17 November regarding its consideration of the cabinet paper about finalising the draft National Action Plan	15 November 2022
Joint letter with 6 other civil society organisations to the Minister responsible for the Open Government Partnership regarding the co-creation of NZ's fourth National Action Plan after their 5 October meeting with him	7 October 2022
Joint letter with 6 other civil society organisations to the Minister responsible for the Open Government Partnership regarding the co-creation of NZ's fourth National Action Plan before their 5 October meeting with him	30 September 2022

Letter to all Members of Parliament expressing our deep concern about the direction of the Government’s charities reform agenda	20 September 2022
Submission to the Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee on the Aotearoa New Zealand Public Media Bill by a group convened by Koi Tū: The Centre for Informed Futures that included Trust Democracy	September 2022
Submission to the Standing Orders Committee on the Review of Parliament’s Standing Orders prepared with Trust Democracy members	16 September 2022
Letter to the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector expressing our deep concern about the direction of the Government’s charities reform agenda	13 July 2022

Members published a number of items on the Trust Democracy website:

- [Deliberative engagement: What, what and How for Local Government](#), 1 November 2022
- [Explore: An eclectic selection of references to podcasts, books, papers and websites about democracy and ways of fostering inclusion](#), 26 October 2022
- Andrew Ecclestone, [We’ve been busy](#), 1 November 2022
- Keitha Booth, [Independent review endorses Taiwan’s open government initiatives](#), 12 October 2022

In addition to this, Simon Wright was interviewed by the [Beyond Consultation Podcast](#) on [Why democracy? What democracy?](#) (13 July 2022), presented [Beyond Electoral Representative Democracy](#) to the Mt Eden Quakers (28 November 2022), and presented on ‘collaborative policy development’ in an undergraduate and a postgraduate class at Victoria University of Wellington.

Collaborating with other civil society organisations

Open Government Partnership (OGP)	The OGP is an international initiative that aims to enhance democracy by improving participation, transparency and accountability. A number of Trust Democracy members have been actively involved in the process of developing New Zealand’s 4th National Action Plan with a range of other civil society organisations. ¹ This included meeting with Chris Hipkins, the responsible Minister at the time, and writing several joint letter to him (see the list of submissions and letters above).
CAB – Citizens Advise Bureau	Trust Democracy supported the CAB Petition and campaign to address Digital Exclusion in NZ.
Te Reo o nga Tāngata: The People Speak	Trust Democracy has continued to provide support to Te Reo o nga Tāngata: The People Speak as it works with Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira and other Porirua community organisations to progress the Porirua

¹ NZ Council for Civil Liberties, Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa NZ, Transparency International NZ, Network Waitangi Otautahi, CAB NZ.

	Talanoa-Wānanga deliberative community governance experiment that was talked about at Trust Democracy's 2022 AGM by Helmut Modlik .
Kettering Foundation, USA	TD members and supporters attended a deliberative democracy workshop at the Kettering Foundation, USA, as well as monthly online seminars. A member working on an international working group researching elections and electoral practices.