

Viewpoint

Trail will be an asset

CANTABRIANS will soon be able to enjoy a riverside trail running along the banks of the Avon River through the residential red zone.

The 12km transitional Avon Trail will open in stages from spring and will allow Cantabrians and city visitors to walk, run or cycle from Barbadoes St in the central city to Pages Rd in New Brighton.

The whole trail will be completed and open by early next year.

Construction of the first section of Avon Trail will start this month from Retreat Rd/Avonside Dr through to the Gayhurst Rd Bridge.

The trail will be prepared at the same time as the upgrade of the temporary stop banks. By smoothing the top of the stop banks and adding a fine gravel surface, the trail will be suitable for a wide range of uses.

The Avon-Otakoro Network is leading the project, and community volunteers will help prepare some sections of the trail. Regenerate Christchurch has been helping co-ordinate the work, and funding has been provided by the Ministry of Social Development to the Avon-Otakoro Network.



Gerry Brownlee



Now that the former red zone has mostly been cleared and grassed, we can see the potential of the river corridor.

The Avon Trail is an opportunity for the public to explore this area, and I encourage everyone to do so.

It is an exciting asset for Christ-

church, and an innovative way to get Cantabrians moving from the city to the sea.

The trail is great news for our city, and will help to promote the regeneration of New Brighton. It will allow everyone easy access to the lower Avon and surrounding red zone.

The transitional trail will remain in use for at least two years, as the larger regeneration operation unfolds around it. Further opportunities for a permanent connection from the city to the sea will be explored later.

This is an important area of regeneration, and will impact Christchurch's future. It is the first step in creating a people-friendly, green space in our city.

•Gerry Brownlee is Minister supporting Greater Christchurch Regeneration

•Megan Woods, p23