

# Roe brings Run to Heal to the Hutt

BY SIMON EDWARDS

WHEN ALLISON Roe went looking for a Wellington venue for her first local *Run to Heal* charity run/walk she was soon drawn to the Hutt Valley.

Typical of the enthusiastic response of the 1981 New York and Boston marathon winner says she's had from the region, Greater Wellington Regional Council parks community projects advisor Ross Jackson "dropped everything and spent half a day driving me around to show me all the parks in Wellington," Allison says.

"It can be hard to find the right venue and there was no big parks suitable in central Wellington, but then he showed me Trentham Memorial Park and I was thrilled. It's a huge green space with beautiful mature trees and will allow us to operate the run in a really pretty and safe environment.

"It's a brilliant spot - the jewel in the crown."

And so the scene is set for the first Wellington *Run to Heal* on Sunday, 2 April next year.

Over the last three years the health campaigner's *Run to Heal* events have been a big hit in Auckland and Christchurch, with more than 20,000 people taking the starter's gun in the 5k/10k run/walks. In the process, more than \$150,000 has been raised for health charities. It all used to go to the Breast Cancer Foundation but last July the Allison Roe Trust was set

up, and money raised was shared out amongst women's health and environmental causes - the breast cancer cause still, but also other groups ranging from endometriosis support to asthma, etc.

While some of the charities are national, Allison says the bulk of any money raised by the Wellington event will go to local groups.

With the event also spreading into Hamilton in 2006, she's effectively doubling the size of the campaign and is aiming for 5,000 participants in each city.

Allison, who now runs her own sports events company, began *Run to Heal* to help spread the message about her strong passion for health and wellbeing.

Allison believes focusing on preventative health - issues like good nutrition, regular enjoyable exercise, vitamin supplementation and reducing exposure to environmental toxins - is the economic answer to a sustainable health system for NZ.

The fun runs have a strong focus on women - around 90% of participants are female, she says. But plenty of children, husbands and boyfriends come to support or take part as well. "Hey, it's a great



► **RUNNING PARTNERS:** Run to Heal organiser and NZ sport icon Allison Roe (second from left) still travels everywhere with her running shoes, so when she visited Wellington last week it was the perfect opportunity for a jog with representatives of some of the organisations backing next year's event at Trentham (from left): Ross Jackson of the regional council, Catherine Hunt of Sport Wellington, Halberg Trust sports opportunities advisor Margurite Christophers and Craig Kirkwood of Athletics NZ.

place to meet a girl," she quips.

Sport Wellington is backing the fun run and Athletics New Zealand is also endorsing the 2006 events. "It's nice to think that the national body thinks we're doing a good job," Allison says.

The doctor's daughter and mother of two has found herself drawn into the political arena this election. She's an outspoken critic

of the contentious Australian-based Trans Tasman Therapeutic Goods Agency (TTTGA) being pushed by Labour to come into effect next July, believing it will severely limit consumer access to vitamin and mineral supplements in this country and destroy sectors of the NZ natural health industry.

"The TTTGA will see natural supplements regulated as

pharmaceutical drugs - part of an international movement to restrict consumer access to dietary supplements."

■ See [www.run2heal.co.nz](http://www.run2heal.co.nz)

**THE Hutt News**

13 September, 2005