

Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association

Presidents Report to the Annual General Meeting 2019

Introduction

This is my first report as President and I well remember the outgoing President at the March 2018 AGM noting that the incoming Committee and President had a heavy workload in front of them. Ross was, of course, right.

So I want to thank Ross for agreeing to stay on the committee – his experience and steady advice has been most useful. Ross has continued to represent the Association at the Sounds Advisory Group and will report on that later. I would like to thank Tom Wright, who agreed to become Vice President, for his support and willingness to work into that role. Stefan our Treasurer and primo Internet communications person has done his usual sterling job.

Then there is the rest of the Committee – a big vote of thanks. We all work hard for the Association but it can difficult to accept how long it can take for that hard work to achieve results. However, given that all the existing Committee has agreed to serve another term there must be a fair amount of belief among the Committee members in that together we can and are making a difference.

Some highlights

A number of matters will be covered in later reports so what follows are some brief comments.

Meetings: The Committee met four times by teleconference call and once by a face-to-face meeting at Waitaria Hall. We circulated five Chairman Chatlines plus a couple of follow up notes to members.

Roading Matters: The frustration of all members at the state of Kenepuru Road and associated arterial roads was clearly expressed at the last AGM. At our first committee meeting the Committee agreed we needed to rethink what we had done in the past and grab the opportunities presented by the package of budgeted road work Councillor Trevor Hook presented to the last AGM. Of much interest was the introduction of a modern version of the local roadman of yore – the Sounds Cyclic Road Crew – focusing on the small jobs to prevent them becoming big jobs.

We decided to bring the road committee into the full committee as clearly things had got to a stage where rectifying matters was going to take considerable time, effort and full committee focus and thus support was required.

We decided that Alistair Cameron and I would convene regular meetings with the Council and Marlborough Roads to keep an eye on progress and learn the intricacies of the legal and operational aspects of the system. It is fair to say we had some wins

but still a lot to be done. Alistair will make some comments about our MR/MDC meetings later.

In due course we became aware that the primary Road Maintenance contract was up for renewal some time in 2019. This is an opportunity. We have put together a plan to work with the Port Underwood Association to try and retain and enhance the Sounds Cyclic Road crew. We also want to get the full support and active involvement of Sounds Councillors on this matter. More on that later.

Marlborough Environment Plan: In 2016 the then Committee realised the importance of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to influence planning policy at the regional level and made a number of submissions on the notified MEP. Hearings on submissions to the MEP commenced in late 2017. We made our last two submissions - Occupational charges and Rules for Forestry in the Sounds in December 2018. In total we presented 11 times to the Hearing Panel, which wraps up at the end this month.

As some of you may be aware, one of our local Sounds Councillors, Trevor Hook, was appointed chairman of the MEP Hearing Panel. This is a serious and important role and having sat through many sittings of the Hearing Panel, I am pleased to report that he has discharged that role very well.

Infrastructure Projects: I am absolutely delighted to report that our four-year-long battle to have a public toilet facility installed at the busy Torea Bay wharf has finally succeeded. Further gloss was the upgrade of the rather decrepit public toilet at the Te Mahia jetty.

At the last AGM, we agreed to investigate an upgrade of the Te Mahia jetty to a floating jetty for health and safety reasons. Whilst matters moved along rapidly at first, we seem to have hit a few bureaucratic snags of late. Tom Wright will say a little more on this later.

Networking: In order to advance our stance on local issues, we have met with two Ministers of the current Government – Minister Nash (Fishing) and Minister Sage (Conservation). We have attempted to maintain and enhance our links with Council staff; thus for example, some of the Marine Subcommittee recently had a very cordial meet and greet with the new Council Coastal Scientist.

Marine Subcommittee: A missing element of the MEP is the chapter on aquaculture. This was pulled by the Council from the notified MEP on the grounds more consultation was needed. Trevor Offen has been our representative on the Council-convened Aquaculture Working Group and will say a few words on that later. Hanneke Kroon has done some excellent research work on aquaculture issues and, among other things, collates and formats the likes of water temperature data in relation to salmon mortality levels. Detail on other marine matters to follow later.

Ad Hoc Requests for Assistance: The Association is achieving a useful reputation for being effective and accordingly we are increasingly approached to assist on local issues. Thus, for instance, we put our weight behind the campaign to retain the Waitaria school bus route after the Ministry of Education rather abruptly withdrew

funding. We asked a former President, Pat Williams, to represent the Association at a focus group convened by the Ports of Marlborough following concern over their decision to change the charging regime for local users of berthing facilities. A more reasonable regime was negotiated.

We were asked by the Department of Conservation to comment on their proposal to rebrand the Queen Charlotte Track as a New Zealand Great Walk. Thanks to Ron Rolston's behind-the-scenes discussions we were able to put up a nuanced response to the Department which was well received.

As noted, I and the rest of the Committee are willing to serve again, and if elected look forward to advancing the various work streams we have underway.

Andrew Caddie
President

April 2019