

SOUNDS ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

The Sounds Advisory Group met on three occasions during the last year. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the meeting at Port Underwood in March, and meetings out of Blenheim are always very worthwhile.

May, September 2019, and February 2020, were held in MDC Committee room in Blenheim. I have forwarded meeting notes from these to KCSRA, and they are available on our website. The reports from DoC and Fisheries NZ are always welcome and worth reading.

The September meeting initiated review into the role of SAG with members asked to give their thoughts re the future. What is the future? Has SAG been overtaken by other MDC initiatives and methods of communication? I note that the Smart + Connected initiatives from MDC meet monthly and are well supported by council. In particular the Aquaculture groups are very effective, and hope the Forestry/Wood Products will also benefit the district.

SAG tried to initiate a `Sustainable land transfer fund` seeking funding from central Government's Provincial Growth Fund. This was intended to facilitate better management and protection of the Marlborough Sounds from excessive sediment loads entering the coastal marine area from a range of land uses, including plantation forestry. After a year we are now informed both MDC and central government declined to support this.

Freedom camping is one issue that always comes up for discussion. Not an easy answer anywhere, and fortunately only a few problems in the Kenepuru.

Ross Withell