

Since the last AGM we began a project to erect five interpretation panels on the causeways. Funding was secured with the Otago Community Trust and Bendigo Valley Trust for most of this work. The five panels have been placed at the entrances, one on the Maori easement and one near the bridge.

The other project undertaken during the year was to resurface all the causeways with limechip. Initial intentions had been to do the Scotia St causeway only but with the PD men carrying out the labour we decided to do all the causeways. It was fortunate that work didn't start until early August because a major flood event in July saw parts of the causeways under water for a couple of days resulting in some very muddy and slippery areas. The Waikouaiti Coast Community Board contributed \$650 towards this work.

The culverts have been somewhat problematic at times this year, after the flood the covers needed to be replaced, but the Stewart St one was removed on at least three occasions, thus leading to a rapidly emptying lagoon. The culvert cover was finally replaced using security screws, however a more permanent solution needs to be found, and discussions with the Regional Council are ongoing. We have discussed the possibility of managing each area of the lagoon to suit different bird species and the possibility of a weir to replace the Stewart St culvert.

We had two Ki uta Ki Tai days during the year, one in May (500 plants planted on the Inverary Reserve) and the other in September. This day, which involving University student volunteers helping with the planting and maintenance, also encourages a few locals to join us enabling excellent progress with our long-term planting plans.

Six more traps have been purchased for our trapping programme. Reports indicate good catches of ferrets and rats particularly.

The website continues to attract increasing numbers of visitors and overall in 2017 we had 3,768 first time visitors. Overall hits totalled 76,842. We will be setting up a Facebook page as well.

Our tea towel fundraising effort is very successful, with grateful thanks to Emily for displaying them in her place of business.

Over the summer the lagoon water quality appeared to be less problematic than in other years, with less smell and algal blooms, particularly as temperatures have been high. We have also had several sightings of fish and increased shag numbers reported to members, which may perhaps, indicate some slight improvement in the water quality.

Finally, I would like to extend thanks to those of the committee, and others, who volunteer to work to improve the environs of the lagoon. In particular I would like to thank John Ollerenshaw for his continued mowing of the Inverary Reserve over many years, and to Les Pullar our auditor. My thanks also to the many visitors and locals who are encouraging and appreciative of the work carried out to maintain and improve the lagoon environment.

Shirley McKewen
Chairperson.