

Chair and DCC Report 2025/26

I won't pretend this has been an easy year. The challenges, both operational and interpersonal, have been real with moments that were genuinely dispiriting, and it would not be honest to say they didn't take a toll. When you give your time to a community you care about and are met with hostility rather than goodwill, it weighs heavily.

As I noted at last year's AGM, I intend to step down as Chair at the upcoming General Meeting, and in large part due to the rhetoric experienced from some members, after nearly seven years I've also decided to step away from the DCC role.

Committee:

Many will be aware that early in the year, significant disharmony arose in committee due to a lack of clarity around certain roles and a reluctance by one member to focus solely on their own responsibilities. To address this, I put together a DCC Charter setting a clear standard for how *that* team operates, which now forms part of our governance pack and hopefully offers a useful reference and model for other roles going forward.

Following that period, Bryce joining as Treasurer proved to be one of the highpoints of the year and, even though the outcomes have been disappointing, his financial rigour, clear communication skills and steady presence have been invaluable.

My genuine thanks also go to Dan and Kirk for everything they contributed prior to them refocusing on their respective business interests, and to Hannah, Monique, and Chester for stepping up when needed.

The Role of the Chair and Committee:

I feel it appropriate to make clear that the role of Chairperson is primarily titular and only that of a facilitator at meetings. It is not the sole decision-maker and certainly should not be an appropriate target for personal grievances. I would stress that every significant decision during my tenure was made collectively by a *committee majority*, ensuring no one held the right of veto. That's not a disclaimer; it's how we operate.

The committee's job is to manage shared obligations, uphold governing documents, and look after our infrastructure, and central to all three is a clear understanding of our covenants. These are not administrative formalities. They are legal obligations tied to the original Resource Consent that formed a significant part of the developer's financial contribution to the Council, and they underpin key components of our Constitution and Rules, and as such, they must be applied consistently and fairly. Dismantling them is simply not a viable path. Beyond the legal complexity and considerable financial cost of either compensating the Council or purchasing circa 1 hectare of Benefiting Land over which to transfer the restrictive covenant, doing so could seriously risk exposing the Association to litigation from members who purchased their properties on the firm understanding of where responsibilities lie.

I don't believe that is a risk any committee should reasonably countenance.

Another matter in need of informed understanding is that whilst the committee must act where rules and covenants are engaged, it does not exist to referee disputes between neighbours and cannot replace direct conversation and goodwill. When these arise, responsibility lies with those involved. *It should also be noted that committee members volunteer their time and deserve to be treated with respect.*

Financial Position:

I'll be straightforward. Our finances need attention, and as a member of past leadership teams I accept my share of responsibility for that. Bryce will walk you through the details about where we find ourselves at the AGM and I recommend you engage with that conversation seriously.

Operational Progress:

When our groundskeeper Emma resigned, with Bryce's help we moved to a professional maintenance firm and kept things running without a hitch. There is more work to do, but I'm confident your Gardens and Grounds Member will have that under control.

The Pōhutukawa pruning, which wasn't universally popular, has been vindicated with the trees that were heavily pruned now thriving. Unmanaged growth is a documented risk to footpaths, roads and buried services, and this is why control of their canopy and roots is included in our Bylaws.

The Bella Vista entrance sign is another small but visible win and my thanks to Kirk and Bryce for helping to make that happen. The design was commissioned by member vote, and it is now weathering well. We have solar backlighting in place but perhaps a slightly brighter version is needed!

Looking Ahead:

I cannot finish without sending a warm welcome to Clint Arnold, the latest member to join the DCC. His willingness to step forward is proof that you don't need years of history here to make a real contribution. Clint will need help though, especially since there is a minimum of two members required on that subcommittee.

Where the Association goes from here is a question that deserves your serious consideration.

Broadly, I see three possible paths available:

1. Approach the Council to adopt the roading, footpaths, common and possibly bush areas, and pass responsibility for Amenity Yards to owners. This would likely result in compensatory costs, infrastructure risk (particularly to Internet services), diminished subdivision appearance and appeal, and significantly higher rates.
2. Engage a Body Corporate to manage the subdivision, which would still require a community representative body but with attendant loss of control over fees and service delivery.
3. Continue under a new team as a Residents' Association.

The first two options each carry significant trade-offs, and the choice ultimately belongs to the membership collectively. However, if you've been thinking about getting involved, there has never been a better time to do so.

Finally:

I wish the upcoming committee the very best and, to the many members who have shown me kindness and support over these past years: THANK YOU.

Alan, Retiring Chair and DCC