



**Cast a Vote  
for the Cape Coast...  
See what candidates say**

**NEWSLETTER**

**SEPT-OCT 2019**

# Backed into a corner

## Coastal protection concerns



By Keith Newman, WOW Inc chairperson

**Coastal communities around the country are eagerly waiting to see how Hawke's Bay progresses its leading-edge coastal hazards strategy and the upcoming hurdles of financing the proposed work and identifying 'trigger' points for action.**

After four years of joint council discussions and community consultation, the Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy 2120 (HB Coastal Strategy) remains on the table until everyone agrees on an annual 'contributory fund' to ease the burden on future generations.

The 'all of coast' approach to coastal hazards can't move into the next phase of identifying 'triggers' where specific protection work should begin until there's unanimous agreement on who's going to pay.

There's likely to be further delays with the imminent local body elections meaning new councillors will have to agree to the plan, including the funding proposal, before the HB Coastal Strategy can kick back into gear in 2020.

The launching of the Strategy Document Feb 2019, was a great source of pride for the participating councils, and was applauded widely for its 'adaptive pathways' approach, community engagement, foresight and fairness.

While local government has been urged to complete this kind of work as part of climate change and sea-level rise obligations, Central Government has so far failed to deliver a regulatory environment conducive to those goals.

In fact the tone of its coastal policies, which inform council coastal engineers and consenting departments, is skewed against the work Government has encouraged councils to engage in, creating complexity, cost and confusion.

**See Government needs to step up p.7**

## Ten Years of Treading water

**Walking on Water (WOW) Inc** is a charitable incorporated society  
WOW is a member and supporter of the Cape Coast Community Group (CCCCG)

**Mission statement:** "To find and implement solutions for serious erosion at Haumoana, Te Awanga and Clifton, unite the Cape Coast community and beautify, protect and promote the coastline as an asset for the wider Hawke's Bay region."

At its AGM in July, Walking on Water (WOW Inc) celebrated 10 years of lobbying to Save the Cape Coast.

**2019-20 WOW Committee:** Keith Newman, (chairman), Tez Eaton (secretary); Jo Campbell (treasurer); Jack Hughes and Peter Larsen (technical team); Tom Evers-Swindell (Cape Coast Community Group formerly TAPA), Neville Bawden (Clifton Marine Club), David Grieve, Julia Hughes (marketing), Adrian Cowie, Martin Bates, Shirlene Whaitiri, Kevin Goodall; Jane Fitzgerald; Ana Brooks. Hastings District Council reps: Rod Heaps, Ann Redstone (WOW founder and past chairperson).

WOW Inc wishes to thank all past committee members for their wonderful contribution helping to keep the story of the decades long battle for the protection of Cape Coast alive.

To comment, contribute or keep up with the news join **Save the Cape Coast** on **Facebook** or go to our web page [www.capecoast.co.nz](http://www.capecoast.co.nz)

To get on our mailing list, make donations, offer your services or ideas or seek comment:  
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# Creative collaboration needed

**WOW Inc has been on the coastal protection case for a decade and is encouraged at what the joint councils have achieved and the alleged willingness to treat the Cape Coast, and Cape View Corner in particular, as a priority.**

The Cape Coast is desperate for some reassurance, as Cape View Corner and the so-called Haumoana 21 (H21) get hit hard around twice a year with extreme swells or king tides, and need urgent attention.

It's not a good look to see the decades old problem so evident to tourists, visitors and locals, at the entrance to the Cape Coast where you first get a look at the ocean.

The limestone cycle track connecting up our communities is bringing ever larger numbers of people to the area to ride or take a leisurely walk, often heading to award winning wineries and eateries.

As well as being an attractive destination, the villages themselves are growing with new sub-divisions at Parkhill, East Rd and in Te Awanga likely to add several hundred more people and their vehicles to a local population that has remained relatively static for many years.

The revetment wall at Clifton and the revitalised Hygge café and restaurant have helped restore a sense of moving ahead as has Hastings council's landscaping and planting along the



**Once there were two little green houses at the corner. NIWA**

coast.

With new sculptures about to be installed along the Landmarks Award winning Te Matau a Maui Art & Heritage Trail there's a sense the area is reclaiming its identity and its rich history.

The 'do nothing' option we are told is no longer an option and 'managed retreat' can be proven to be more costly than many of the protection options.

## Cost and complexity

Despite being told protection will be complex and costly, WOW continues to lobby for urgency for Cape View Corner and a response plan if and when other areas along the coast face similar challenges.

The Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy 2120 outlines a robust staged process of "adaptive pathways" to deal with potential threats to 16 sections of coastline based on projected sea-level rise over the next 100-years.

The HB Coastal Hazards Strategy, the first of its type in the country, has been developed with high level input from the country's top coastal engineers and consultants, academics, government advisors and representatives from each community likely to be impacted.

The current stalling point is the "contributory fund", to help offset inevitable future costs, for what committee chairman Peter Beavan says will be a major area of expenditure for local and potentially central Government in the next decades.

The proposal is that from 2021 Napier and Hastings will levy an additional \$15 annually from ratepayers to protect land from sea-level rise and the impacts of climate change. Hawke's Bay Regional Council will add \$15 per ratepayer to protect 'public good' infrastructure.

Further funds would be collected from individuals or specific groups and property owners through a targeted rate for 'private good' protection work when that is required.

It's hoped other agencies including utility companies will contribute.

Beavan says a lot of time has been spent getting the right legal advice that complies with current legislation. Public consultation on the funding issue is expected to begin in July 2020.

## Beach scraping

For the area from the Tukituki River mouth south to Clifton, significant progress has been made with HBRC allowing 'beach scraping'.

This will apply only when large shingle deposits on the beach can be pushed forward to strengthen the crest to prevent overtopping or to repair the crest after an event.

This is a relief for those concerned about protecting Cape Coast lagoons, wetlands, Haumoana Domain, Clifton free camping reserve, Te Awanga reserve, Clifton camp and other at risk areas.

It is clear that Cape View Corner will need a more robust approach than trucking in shingle; the last deposit made went north as soon as the high seas came at the end of July.

In the big picture, a groyne field; possibly starting near Cape View corner and ending with any mitigation necessary at the existing Tukituki River mouth groyne, is consistent with the HB Coastal Hazards Strategy.

And it's generally agreed there's room within those parameters to advance protection of Cape View Corner much sooner than the 3-4 plus years it might take to begin the wider work.

Design options for an initial groyne-style option, potentially with a rock revetment base to protect the eroded crest, are currently being considered by the HB Coastal Hazards Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

## Itchy trigger finger

The question remains, what will 'trigger' the action needed to protect Hastings Council infrastructure at Cape View corner, where the road, water mains and cycle track are at risk?

If the road is undermined it could prevent access to Te Awanga and Clifton and the commercial centre across the road. If the power pole at the corner topples, Unison will have to quickly deal with a mass outage to the coastal villages. If the water mains, currently being reviewed as part of the new water supply for the Cape Coast, are undermined other serious questions arise.

"So, what should happen? As this is public land WOW Inc

believes Hastings should take a lead in this matter. Delaying even another two years could cost multiple millions of dollars (2010 estimate \$3.5 million for the road only) to re-route this important access road.

An early design plan for the larger field of groynes and indicative cost is due in October.

WOW has seen some of the preliminary modelling work and remains concerned that HBRC designers continue to factor in consenting conditions that require tens of thousands of cubic metres of shingle to backfill the proposed groynes.

This is a pivotal issue facing any coastal region and should have been tackled at the highest levels to ensure such proposals could be actioned, before the Coastal Hazards Strategy was undertaken.

### Anticipating obstacles

As a community representative on the Coastal Hazards committee I, and others familiar with the legislation, raised this issue in the first meetings but were told it would be dealt with once we'd worked through the Strategy.

A requirement to truck in gravel from a distant source to dump behind each groyne, has already scuttled two previous WOW Inc and joint council plans to establish a groynefield.

Those plans, which were costly to develop in themselves were made unaffordable, as the shingle alone blew the cost out of the water. And then was always the sense, sometimes made quite obvious, that council officials opposed any such plans.

The flow of shingle is as unpredictable as the changing shape of the river mouth and the logistics of importing shingle to compensate before the groynes naturally fill, and the carbon miles accrued in transport, potentially from Central Hawke's Bay, create a strange desktop modelling, box-ticking, logic.

The idea that you need to compensate for the shingle held back by groynes, essentially preventing East Clive or Napier getting their share from the Maraetotara and the crumbling cliffs of Cape Kidnappers, by bringing material in from another source would be laughable if certain parties weren't so serious

"Waiting until uncertainties are reduced before making decisions, or holding back on making decisions under uncertain conditions, is usually not viable or acceptable to those who are most exposed to the risk (nor for future generations)," Coastal Hazards and Climate Change Guidance for Local Government, Ministry for the Environment 2017, p69.

about it.

Engineers and asset managers insist they're only trying to abide by the Government's Coastal Policy Document by creating these hurdles, despite evidence there's room for flexibility and 'adaptive management' where hard engineering is concerned.

One option is to be prepared to mitigate where necessary but let natural shingle flow fill the groynes as they are constructed and the ever-changing Tukituki river mouth manage the rest.

The Tukituki groyne filled within 10-days without any need for importing shingle. That groyne has protected about 500 metres of beach to the south since 1999.

### H21 as front line

Protecting property owners south of Cape View Corner is in a different category. Further damage to some of these properties and their existing protection could impact the corner and neighbouring properties to the



north.

WOW Inc is brokering a meeting between property owners, council officers and the TAG team, to try and find a way forward.

What's needed is a common understanding of what can and can't be done. A 'collective consent', to meet the needs of those properties that do not currently have protection, may be possible.

Solutions could include some or all of the following: Concrete blocks (and/or cubipods, akmons, X-blocks etc), long timber pylons driven or screwed into the seabed ... the ability to fix broken walls and existing protection.

A small groyne or similar protection at Cape View Corner could have a positive impact on the H21 and be part of an integrated plan that homeowners may like to contribute to.

Private homeowners may be eligible for some public good funding but mostly will have to fund their own protection efforts.

### Moral jeopardy

One concern is what Peter Beavan calls "moral jeopardy". If property owners in the vicinity get wind of plans to protect the coast they may be "emboldened to sub-divide which makes the problem of retreat harder and more expensive".

In local cases councils seem powerless to intervene. He cites two local authorities who acted to prevent subdivisions in places where the risk was regarded as too great, only to find an Environment Court appeal allow them to proceed.

Beavan would like to see central Government decide "on a line X-metres above the high tide line "nd have a clear ruling to prevent further development".

The challenge for WOW Inc is how to support homeowners in this group while continuing to lobby for protection of the wider Cape Coast and the specifics of Cape View Corner as a public good that all ratepayers should contribute to.

As regards all-of-coast solutions, Peter Beaven believes the "contributory fund", agreed in principal by the joint councils, is the fairest way to spread the cost equitably across the entire Hawke's Bay community which would ultimately benefit from the protection.



Continued p.8

# Cast a vote for the Cape Coast Council candidates comment

To help our membership, and mailing list of interested parties and residents get a better idea of how to vote, WOW Inc asked mayoral candidates, those standing for the Heretaunga Ward and representing this area for the Hawke's Bay Regional Council to share their views on coastal protection and what should be done along the Cape Coast.

- ☞ Do you support the Tangoio to Clifton Coastal Hazards Strategy agreed to last year and will you continue to do so through the action stages?
- ☞ Should Hastings, Napier and Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) ratify the "contributory fund" proposal to charge ratepayers an additional \$15 a year from 2021 for essential coastal protection and related works?
- ☞ Or should each council just pay for individual protection projects as they come up?
- ☞ What should Hastings District Council do to protect the public land at Cape View Corner where infrastructure including the road and water mains are at risk?
- ☞ If you were to support protecting Cape View Corner what options would you prefer, a groyne, a revetment wall, shingle fill and maintenance or a mixture of both and why?
- ☞ Who should pay and why?
- ☞ Should HBRC and HDC work with homeowners on the Haumoana 21 (H21) to allow them to repair existing protection or create protection without incurring prohibitive compliance costs and consenting conditions?
- ☞ Would a coordinated approach that takes into account both Cape View Corner and the H21 be preferable?
- ☞ If you were elected, what ideas would you propose and what would you be prepared to commit to in relation to protecting the Cape Coast?

## Hastings mayoral candidates

### Sandra Hazlehurst

Current Hastings mayor Sandra Hazlehurst says the Cape Coast is the jewel in the district's crown and council needs to "carefully manage and invest in the protection for its future".

What's needed is a regional policy to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and "deliver and implement the Coastal Hazards Strategy as set out in the Coastal Hazards Implementation Plan".

She's very proud of this "leading-edge strategy" which will help council make informed decisions on future investment to manage and protect the environmental, social and economic well-being of coastal communities today and in the future.

Mayor Hazlehurst supports asking the community to invest in the contributory fund for coastal protection options.

"I will also be meeting with the Government to look at funding options for short, medium and long term solutions whether they be re-nourishment, managed retreat or hard infrastructure."

While currently in the process of working through a regional funding process, she suggests there needs to be a combination of a contributory fund and paying for individual protection projects as they come up

"Should a 'trigger' be raised, the contributory fund may not meet the investment required to undertake a suitable solution. We need a multi-pronged funding approach."

Ms Hazlehurst wants to make informed decisions based on the future of the Cape View Corner and how to respond. "We are certainly aware of the need to protect our infrastructure and the

entrance to our beautiful Cape Coast at the Cape View Corner."

She says Hastings council officers will work with the HB Coastal Hazards Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to look at the short, medium and long term solutions for this area.

Once there is a recommended solution, "we would also consult with the community as we did previously for the Clifton revetment wall".

She says funding of any option "would require contributions from both local and central government and also affected parties to provide a suitable outcome. Any solution will provide benefits to all parties."

She concedes there has been considerable change to the Cape Coast area in recent years through "the severity of storm events causing sea level rise".

She defers to current legislation when asked whether compliance and consenting costs and conditions can't be eased to make protection simpler and more affordable.

"Under the RMA, resource consents and often a building consent is required for any improvements or repairs. The legislation sets the costs for these consents."

She says both councils need to continue working together to deliver the Coastal Strategy and a co-ordinated approach to resolving the issues relating to public land and the H21 would be preferable "to achieve the most successful outcome for everyone".

At present, she says, "the 21 homes are providing protection to community roads and infrastructure". ☞

### Damon Harvey

Damon Harvey grew up camping at Clifton Motor Camp and surfs regularly at Te Awanga and Haumoana. "I love the Cape Coast and I think it's as significant as other natural landscapes such as Te Mata Peak"

The growing population along the Cape Coast is another reason the council needs to work closely with the community "to ensure this unique environment is both looked after and enhanced".

He wants to see the Coastal Hazards Strategy move through to



implementation stage and believes the contributory fund should be included in next year's Long Term Plan (LTP) with the question put to ratepayers.

"My view is that our community should support it; it will come down to how the fund is administered and how decisions are made on what is done with the money."

Councillor Harvey says Hastings Council needs to ensure the infrastructure at Cape View corner is safe and will continue to supply residents on the coast. "Council needs to look at the options and work out what will be the most cost effective as well as the most secure way to protect the area."

In terms of how protection plays out, he would be guided by the experts. "However, the revetment wall at Clifton looks like it is working well. I think those that receive more benefits should contribute more, but that there is also wider ratepayer funding support."



He says a co-ordinated approach to protect the corner and H21 and councils working with homeowners to find the best solution is worth considering.

"I look at this area as a hub for tourism and locals alike. A small reserve where people can sit and enjoy the coast would be great."

### **Heretaunga Ward candidates**

Voters will choose two candidates from five contenders

#### **Ann Redstone**

Ann Redstone is standing for her second term on council and as a Coastal Hazards Joint Committee member for the past three years says the process has been "thorough, fair and robust".

She believes a contributory fund is the best way to save all ratepayers and beneficiaries of any protection a great deal of money.

"If we don't have to borrow funds we don't pay interest on loans. Our children and grandchildren shouldn't be penalised by our short-sightedness."

Councillor Redstone says having each council pay for individual protection needs, is "a more expensive longwinded way to deal with the issue."



She says Hastings Council is considering options for Cape View Corner and coastal engineers and the Coastal Hazards Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will make the call as to what options are preferable.

That decision should be based on affordability and who gets the benefit, whether that's NZTA roads, central Government assets, local government infrastructure and reserves, power companies, private companies, other utilities or private homes.

Councillor Redstone says both councils should work with homeowners of the Haumoana 21 to

allow them to repair existing protection or create protection without prohibitive compliance and consenting costs and conditions.

A co-ordinated approach to both the corner and H21 would be preferable as "one may benefit the other".

Ms Redstone has been involved in efforts to protect the Cape Coast for a decade. She was founder and first chairperson of WOW Inc and if re-elected "will continue to advocate to protect people's homes and our assets along the coast".

#### **Alwyn Corban**

Alwyn Corban supports the Coastal Hazard Strategy and commends the work done by the joint committee to date.

"I recognise there is an urgent and unresolved situation at Cape View corner and H21, and that decisions need to be made."

If elected to council, he would expect a briefing that included recommendations from the Coastal Hazards Strategy Joint Committee and Hastings District Council staff "so I could make an informed decision on a practical way forward".



#### **Oliver Taylor**

Oliver Taylor, says comprehensive coastal management is important for both communities and businesses and should be carried out "before significant environmental occurrences, to minimise overall costs and damages".

Taylor supports proposed Coastal Strategy action based on the comprehensive 100-year adaptive pathways framework and a "sustainable development model" that relates to "coastal erosion and sea level rise rates over time".

He favours "a minor targeted rate" to allow these initiatives to be carried out" suggesting however, that uncertainty around funding "could lead to delayed implementation, something that would negatively impact communities".

Taylor suggests Hastings Council implement protection that works sustainably and financially but "also respects input from the local community".

He believes groynes would be "simple to construct, use minimal resources and are the least invasive to the environment".

Protecting communities should be in the best interest of councils considering the significant recreational and tourism value of the Cape Coast .

Protecting the corner should be a "shared responsibility" between HBRC and HDC which should work together. Relaxing the barriers for homeowners of H21 to protect their properties should be an "immediate action".

He remains open to expert opinions on the way forward but says both areas should be considered together. Using case studies from areas that use groynes, sea walls, rock walls and other strategies can help coastal communities choose the right approach.

"A groyne would have positive impacts for



# Cast a vote for the Cape Coast: Candidates comment

houses further along the coast” but, as part of the 100-year plan, “protections should change with changing needs”.

He says continued consultation with communities, business and iwi; based on the Coastal Strategy’s adaptive pathways for the 16 sections of coastlines, “will allow me to decide if I would continue to support affirming and implementing these suggestions to protect our coastline for future generations”.



## Jason Whitiri

From Jason Whitiri’s brief understanding of the Coastal Hazards Strategy it has his support but from a ratepayer’s point of view he’d rather pay an additional annual fee than fund individual protection projects as they occur.

He believes protecting council infrastructure at the corner is



“the duty of HDC” and believes groynes, which have been successful overseas, may be the best option.

The cost of protection should be shared between the central and local govt and the local residents.

Whaitiri suggests it’s in everyone’s best interests that HBRC, HDC and homeowners

“collectively work together” and that owners be allowed to conduct repairs to their existing protection without incurring excessive cost and consenting conditions.

A co-ordinated approach between the work at Cape View Corner and the H21 would be preferable.

Ultimately, he’d like to see all parties come together “with tangata whenua and local iwi” as part of finding solutions for the Cape Coast.



**Keith Newman**, WOW Inc current chairperson is also standing for the Heretaunga Ward. His views, which reflect those of the committee, are included in the editorial content.



## Hawke’s Bay Regional Council Ngaruroro constituency

Two candidates for one seat

### Jerf van Beek

Jerf van Beek believes it’s important for all three councils to continue jointly funding the HB Coastal Hazards Strategy as it was developed through a community-based consultation “which is the best way to get community buy-in”.

A vibrant coastal community is important for the wellbeing of a region. “We all benefit so all we all need to contribute,” he says.

The “joint funding model will drive better outcomes” than each council paying for protection projects as they come up which, he says, is “a far less satisfactory” option.

A short-term plan is needed to protect Cape View Corner until the longer term strategy is implemented, and as “it is a public good it should be publicly funded”.

Mr van Beek says groynes, found all over Europe, “often create additional places for recreation, swimming, fishing etc” and “a well-placed groyne or several with additional protection is possibly the cheapest and the best option in the short term”.

Whether that includes a revetment wall and shingle fill would be up to design engineers to determine. “I would support the option that is cost effective and buys us enough time and creates the additional benefits I have mentioned.”

He believes HBRC and HDC should work with the owners of H21 to help cost, model and provide consenting advice.

However, “the primary benefit is for the private land owner so they will need to bear most of the cost reflected in the value of recent house sales there”.

There are clearly two issues, one protecting public assets and the other private property. “I am sure if the public asset is going to be protected then I would guess the private assets will find their own solution in tandem.”

Mr van Beek is hopeful that if elected he would become part of the Coastal Hazards Joint Committee “to carry on the good work of (former chair) Peter Beaven”.



### Guy Wellwood

Guy Wellwood’s grandparents lived on the Cape Coast in the 1920’s, he had his first holiday at Te Awanga in 1964, and he’s well aware of the natural and historic importance of the area and its value to tourism.

“It is an international icon, as important to Hawkes Bay as its climate or its fertile soil. The Coast is extremely important to me and I want it protected “Whatever it takes”.

Wellwood supports the HB Coastal Strat- Continued p.8  
egy and hopes to become a member of the committee when it reconvenes under a new chairman.

# Cast a vote for the Cape Coast

"I am aware of the huge amount of technical, political and consultative work that has gone in to getting this far. I would support the Committee's action plan when it came up as an item of Regional Council business."

He's a supporter of the contributory fund with "a large contribution from HBRC" but opposed to a dedicated rate increase for HBRC ratepayers". He says they've already been subject to a large increase in 2018-2019 and "much of the extra rates collected has yet to be spent".

Mr Wellwood says, "it is wonderful the way the sea suddenly appears at the end of East Rd" and agrees there are "very obvious risks and threats" to Cape View Corner but HDC should follow the Coastal Strategy action plan.

He urges locals to "initially just trust what has been proposed and recommended (as) HDC is responsible for infrastructure in

that vicinity".

He agrees HBRC and HDC should work with H21 homeowners, allowing them to repair existing protection or create protection without incurring prohibitive compliance costs.

"Councils have to be more positive and helpful than they have been in the past. The entire television watching world have seen these properties being pounded by big seas and a few collective schemes should be tried although ultimately defeat may have to be admitted and the houses dismantled or relocated." 🌀



**Mural: Sallie Dunford and Casey Mcleay commissioned by the community and sponsored through Keep Hastings Beautiful used by WOW Inc with permission**



## Government needs to step up

**Central Government pressure on local authorities to protect coastal areas under threat from erosion and sea-level rise could be viewed as hypocritical when its own legislation actively discourages the most practical solutions.**

The consenting requirements and cost of compliance to conform to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (2010), remain the biggest hurdles to progressing the Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy.

The Strategy is a collaborative effort between Napier, Hastings and Hawke's Bay Regional councils, community representatives and the best coastal engineering, consulting and climate change minds in the country.

Despite distilling all the possibilities into a workable plan using the latest computer modelling and consensus processes, those tasked with designing and consenting that plan are bound by the Coastal Policy Document, part of the Resource Management Act, administered by the Department of Conservation.

The Strategy Technical Action Group (TAG) is currently in negotiation to try and determine if there is sufficient flexibility, discretion or 'adaptive management' capability in the Coastal Policy Statement to progress their work.

It's unknown whether the Government is willing to invest in helping Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs) with the coastal solutions they've been asked to come up with.

Peter Beavan, the retiring chair of the Coastal Hazards Joint Committee, says it makes little sense to have coastal settlements keen to protect their investments then finding the biggest barrier is potentially the consenting regime.

He says central Government needs to get involved, because these obstacles are going to be a big issue everywhere.

"Either they need to give a blanket direction to retreat or they need to get enabling regulation in place that allows local bodies to do what their local communities want them to do."

Beavan says the government has been spinning its wheels for several years in a kind of "paralysis by analysis" and should at least agree to contribute where local protection works benefit Government assets

"Central Government does not pay rates, so they have always been free riders on the back of local communities. It's not good enough anymore, in my opinion."

Without some direction and policy relief, even the best attempts at coastal protection may be undermined by consenting conditions that are so onerous and costly no-one can afford them.

Without urgent, high-level creative rethinking, Hawke's Bay's widely applauded attempt to show leadership in coastal protection could become victim to the very obstacles it was asked to overcome.



## Regulations obstruct progress

### Continued from p.3.

One obstacle is that some councillors are still asking why rural ratepayers should pay for coastal protection? Wow suggests the question be turned around; why do coastal ratepayers have to pay for river stop banks?

Or indeed why should people have to share the cost of libraries or art galleries if they do not frequent them? Do rural folk ever come to the beach?

If they did they would know we are rural-coastal, with vineyards, orchards and grazing land galore.

We coastal folk certainly love going for a drive in the country and are aware we all have a unique contribution to make to the economic wellbeing and character of the wider region.

### Caught in a bind

Issues will continue to play out around what constitutes 'public good' and how prepared Hawke's Bay is to mitigate the climate change issues every region is now being asked to examine.

The reality check might be to reflect on Ministry for the Environment Guidelines that state "local government will need to identify communities that are vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise and address the implications."

In March, respected barrister, Jack Hodder QC prepared a paper for Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) warning councils it "may only be a matter of time" before they face claims for damages for failing to adapt their communities to climate change or allowing people to build in the path of storms, floods and rising seas.

More recently NIWA urged councils to stop allowing develop-

ment in coastal areas and to focus on protecting the assets and homes that are already there.

So, how can our councils; who broke with previous entrenched animosities to work together and involve communities in producing the Coastal Hazards Strategy, prove to other local authorities that their grand plan isn't all smoke and mirrors?

And will the Government step up, create the flexibility in its regulations, and financially support this plan that is supposed to be a template for the country?

At Cape View Corner where erosion continues to edge closer to undermining infrastructure there's an urgency to start something well before those issues are resolved.

Locals may have to begin their own high profile fundraising event as an incentive to protect and showcase Cape View corner and the Cape Coast as the asset (with assets protected) it should be viewed as.

The choice is to be pro-active now or this rapidly developing disaster zone may cost significantly more to clean up than to protect. For the Cape Coast the answers can't come soon enough.

– **Keith Newman**, WOW Inc chairman.

**Disclosure:** Keith Newman, the current chairman of WOW Inc, is also a candidate for the Heretaunga Ward this election and his views and those of WOW are contained within this lead article. Ann Redstone, seeking a second term for the same ward is the founder and current HDC council representative on WOW Inc as is Rod Heaps who is stepping down this term.

## CLIFTON: FROM DEATH SENTENCE TO RESPECTFUL TRANSFORMATION

