

Who is the Akaroa Harbour Issues Working Party?

The group is made up of enthusiastic, dedicated locals who are quietly caring for the environmental health and future of Akaroa Harbour. Banks Peninsula District Council established the group in January 1999 and by the following summer some members became volunteers in the inaugural recreational water quality sampling.



Aims and Vision of the group

“To promote a sustainable and improved harbour for present and future users.”



Purpose of the group

“To provide a forum for the community to consider and decide on the uses and environment of the harbour.”

Environment Canterbury now facilitates the group meetings and Christchurch City Council and Department of Conservation attend every meeting, all providing useful updates on their environmental activities in the Akaroa area. The meetings are an opportunity for the locals to bring up any issues, questions and suggestions. We then all work together to deal with issues and try to find the best solution to problems. It is very much a two way street with locals often providing agencies with updates and local knowledge.

Contact details

Do you want to receive minutes from the group’s meetings or even join the group?

Please contact Jenny Bond at Environment Canterbury on ph 03 365 3828 or email jenny.bond@ecan.govt.nz



Akaroa Harbour Issues Working Party

March 2007



The value of the Akaroa Harbour Issues Working Party

- Getting together to know people and learning about the issues.
- As we address new issues other people attend.
- Each person brings new thoughts, ideas and information on Akaroa Harbour.
- Learning on the job.
- Working with scientists and experts and ensuring that the information is in a language we can understand.
- Collecting baseline information to better understand what is happening in the harbour and around the coastline.
- The commitment of all the group members with a special mention for the recreational swimming water samplers.
- A positive working relationship is being developed between the community and Environment Canterbury. This has led to opportunities for an increasing number of issues to be addressed.
- The mix of people with different views assists us in giving us all an appreciation of the different values people have for the Akaroa Harbour area.

The Akaroa Harbour Issues working party group has considered a range of issues

- Involvement with several catchments in the Akaroa Harbour to compile a guideline for Catchment Assessment. This project assists landowners to understand some of the impacts landuse is having on the quality of stream water.
- Water quality sampling has been undertaken in a number of streams including Takamatua, Pawsons Valley stream and the Wainui stream. In the Wainui stream we have been working with ESR to determine the contaminants and their sources.
- Members of the group have assisted in some of the Undaria 'clean ups'. Eradication of this seaweed is no longer possible.
- The Taiāpure to be established in the Akaroa Harbour has been approved by the Ministry of Fisheries and a committee appointed. Some of our group are involved with this committee. The Taiāpure committee will be able to recommend regulations for the management and conservation of, aquatic plant and animal life. Commercial fishing may continue in a Taiāpure.
- In the Akaroa township representatives from the community and both councils assess the need for stream margins and flood protection work. Following letters, the majority of landowners agree to carry out the work that is required.
- A recent project has been about becoming familiar with the renewal of the resource consents for the Akaroa wastewater treatment plant. As part of the process CCC will investigate an Integrated Water Management approach – a holistic approach to waste water, potable water and storm water.
- Recreation and the Harbour Bylaws are addressed almost annually. The group has become familiar with the bylaws and has a greater understanding of the role of the Harbour master. The community has been calling for greater control within the harbour and users understanding and respecting the rules.
- Several scientists have provided information and reported back to the group. For example the aim of one study was to get an idea of the biology and the sediments in the mudflats and another study to understand the nutrient status of the harbour. Baseline information is now available about the harbours's Intertidal Flats and the nutrient status.
- Large scale residential developments have been occurring around Akaroa Harbour and following periods of heavy rain there has been sediment runoff. Group members have been monitoring the situation and look forward to an outcome that will resolve the loss of soil into the harbour.
- The group continues to be concerned at the rising number Black swans and Canada geese. The problem of Canada Geese at that the recreation ground in Akaroa has since been resolved by sowing with grass unsuitable for the birds.
- Working with Community & Public Health, the Department of Conservation and Environment Canterbury to ensure there is information sharing which avoids duplication.
- The group has been working with Community & Public Health to come up with effective signage when there are shellfish gathering bans.
- The group regularly receives updates about the Tikao Bay land based sewage system that continues to cause some concerns. A solution appears difficult and highlights the problems created by the geology of Banks Peninsula soils.

