

# REPORT

**TO:** Chair & Members, Communications Subcommittee  
**FROM:** Communication Officer, Mark Raffills  
**DATE:** 5 August 2008  
**SUBJECT:** **Communication Officer's Report - August 2008**

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## **1 General**

Ecofest has been our main focus in recent weeks along with a revamp of the urban links maps and brochures, the annual plan final document, Sundial Square branding, Waimea Water augmentation project and the Significant Natural Areas project.

Regular publications Newline The Mag, Mudcakes & Roses, JAM, Boredom Busters Eco Buzz and the weekly updates, as well as keeping customer services supplied with display posters have all ensured it's been a busy time over June and July 2008.

We have been working with Corporate Services Manager on a process to cut down Council staff proofing time on major documents such as annual report and annual plan.

We have also been noticing an increase in self-generated "design" which will be addressed once the new strategy is in place.

## **2 Tasman Collection**

A suggested marketing plan to move existing stock will be presented at the meeting.

The two books that we produced last year but didn't market will be presented to prospective sponsors to see if they are willing to assist with printing costs so they can be included in the above-mentioned marketing plan.

## **3 Communications Conference**

Council sponsored Barb Dunn from Dry Crust and Robyn Scherer from the Engineering Department to this event. I also attended at my own expense. Below is my main impression from the conference.

The major concern expressed at the conference from the attending communication managers, officers, assistant and advisers, was the relationship communications people had with their council staff, councillors,

ratepayers and local media. It appeared that most of these were characterised with an apparent lack of working together.

In Tasman just the reverse is the case. We provide a positive working model of how local government communications can work to bring together all parties in a co-operative and successful, goal-achieving partnership.

From a communications point of view I believe we have excellent working relationships with Council staff, from the CEO through to department managers and staff. The same can be said for our relationship with elected representatives – Mayor and Councillors. Our relationship with ratepayers is illustrated by the NRB survey figures (2001 and 2005) showing generally that ratepayers trust and use our communication devices and our relationship with all local media is one of co-operation and helpfulness, illustrated by the use of our media releases and the communication we have with media personnel.

A major contributing factor to these positive working relationships is the fact that our communications is governed by the Communications Subcommittee which is comprised of both staff, Councillors and media personnel.

I believe we have an ideal model on which local government communications should be based and we can be justifiably proud of our relationships, processes and results.

#### **4 Communication Strategy**

Sitting underneath this strategy is the Council Policy and the Staff Guide. These will be presented at the next meeting.

Mark Raffills  
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Tasman District Council