

## Editorial from the Acting Editor-in-Chief

As we pass the mid-year point and look forward to longer, warmer days many people of Canterbury continue to struggle for fairly basic services and facilities, including safe and secure houses. Though we near the second year anniversary of the first earthquake, several articles in this issue of LPR vividly demonstrate that 'recovery' is a long, slow business, and although there are some encouraging signs, the region continues to grapple with serious problems around housing, retail, education and leisure. The papers document the on-going challenges facing residents and planners, parents and policy-makers: Craig Davison's article outlines intriguing legislative and land-use issues around the proposed Highfield subdivision to accommodate the new 'homeless'; Justine Toner's piece provides an overview of the impacts the quakes have had on local drinking culture; and Ruth Sarson's case study of a 'resilient' primary school balanced theory and practice, rhetoric and reality.

These articles contribute to a wider discussion about risk management in New Zealand, what constitutes risk, who assesses risk, and how. In 2011, the Minister for the Environment established a Technical Advisory Group charged with giving "[g]reater attention to managing issues of natural hazards noting the RMA issues arising from the recent Canterbury earthquakes"<sup>1</sup>. As a consequence, natural hazards will be recognised in s.6 of the RMA. As Saunders and Beban point out in their assessment of the implications of the TAG report "There will be a need for planners and potentially decision makers around the country to be up-skilled on what risk is...what is 'significant', and how risk can be managed"<sup>2</sup>. We anticipate LPR being well-placed to contribute to overall awareness in this field.

In a different vein, Holly Gardiner's overview of Porter's Ski Field development proposal, Tim Gale's speculative piece on the future of Canada Geese, Lauren Shaw's investigation of the Undie 500, and Adrienne Lomax's précis of the National Wetlands Symposium all illustrate persistent tensions between economic, cultural, social and environmental values. The proposed amendments to the Local Government Act - including the removal of reference to the four well-beings and a clear focus on fiscal responsibility - raise interesting questions about the tools planners and policy-makers have to address or reconcile tensions like these. The amendments are clearly controversial and, some may argue, fly in the face of international lessons learned about investment in public goods, public engagement and wealth creation in post-industrial economies/societies. Should the proposed changes go ahead, will we see more efficient, more focussed local government, or will they just be learner and meaner? What are the implications of the amendment for issues like those outlined in this issue in terms of conflict resolution, quality of life and amenities that will attract and retain a skilled, clever, and innovative workforce?

Whichever way it goes, I look forward to hearing more about these issues in the next issue of Lincoln Planning Review.

*Dr. Suzanne Vallance, Acting Editor-in-Chief*

<sup>1</sup> TAG, 2012. *REPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT'S RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991 PRINCIPLES TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP*. New Zealand Government, Wellington. pp 15.

<sup>2</sup> Saunders, W.S.A., Beban, J.S., 2012. *Putting R(isk) in the RMA: Technical Advisory Group recommendations on the Resource Management Act 1991 and implications for natural hazards planning*, GNS Science, Wellington

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