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## New Look Regulatory Department

Council is always looking to improve and refine practice to provide a more efficient and effective service for its community. Late this year the Regulatory Department repositioned some of its key players in order to better achieve this goal. The Department now has two key managers, Gina Ferguson as Consents and Compliance Group Manager and Hans Versteegh as Environmental Science and Policy Group Manager.

Gina will have oversight of the Monitoring and Compliance, Building and Resource Consents teams and a newly established Advocacy and Practice Integration team. Her background in Compliance and Regulatory services provides her with an excellent resource of relationships and knowledge to fulfil this role.

Hans has played an invaluable role in developing and maintaining Council's position as a national leader in delivery and fulfilment of Council duties. His new position will enable him to promote and support Council even more so as a national leader. Hans will focus his energy on the digital resource consent platform and maintain oversight of the Policy, Science and Harbours teams.

The Regulatory Department will continue to work as a collective whole, with the assistance of the newly constituted Advocacy and Practice Integration team, whose focus is on improving the quality and consistency of practice, and exploring opportunities for training and integration across Council's regulatory functions.

Our Department wishes you all a very Merry Christmas. We have enjoyed our year working with and for you and look forward to heralding in the New Year with a reinvigorated and enthusiastic new department structure.

## Moving Smoothly Through the Resource Consent Process

### When do I need a resource consent?

Resource consents are approvals to do something that is not automatically permitted in Council's Resource Management Plans or by the Resource Management Act 1991. For example, if your project is going to affect your neighbour's light or privacy, or the wider environment, you will need to apply for a resource consent so that Council can consider all of the effects of your proposal on other people and the environment.

Resource consents are different from a building consent in that a building consent is only for building related activities.

### Who pays for my resource consent?

Like all other councils around the country, Marlborough District Council has a user-pays policy for processing resource consent applications. This means that the applicant, who will benefit from the resource consent, pays the full cost of processing the application, rather than having that cost fall to all general ratepayers.

### How much will my application for resource consent cost?

The cost of an application varies. A straight forward application, which does not require wider consultation with other affected people, will be unlikely to exceed the standard lodgement fee of \$980. The fee covers staff hours for handling the case, plus the actual cost of any disbursements, such as postage, stationary and photocopying, and site visit.



In contrast, an application which affects other people, who may then object to the proposal, or ask that conditions be set around it, may end up at a formal hearing, which can cost thousands of dollars, especially if advice or evidence is required from other professionals.

### How can I reduce the cost of processing my resource consent?

Engaging the services of a resource management practitioner to prepare and submit an application is often the most cost effective option. You can also come into Council and discuss your application with a Duty Planner or attend a pre-application meeting with a Planner. Both of these services will require an appointment with the relevant staff member. There is no charge for the first 30 minutes of your meeting. Whether the application is simple or complex, providing full and accurate information is essential as Council is required to return deficient applications, which results in more time and more costs. Ensure that your application covers all required consents when it is lodged and that you have consulted with all affected parties. It is best if you are able to submit all the required written approvals with your application.

If your application needs to be notified, it is best for you to try and resolve any issues raised by the submitters. This may help you avoid a formal hearing on your application

The fee schedule, including the hourly rate, is available on the Council website, [www.marlborough.govt.nz](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz). The fee schedule is reviewed annually and automatically adjusted for annual inflation, as required by the Marlborough District Council Charging Policy and the Resource Management Act 1991.

## An Update of the Resource Consent Build

### Resource Consenting System

Many of the systems used within Council for managing the complexity of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) are now outdated. These legacy systems were implemented several years ago and are constrained by having been developed incrementally from 'paper based systems' built around discrete processing elements, with the simple filing of documents and reports as a system end state.

To meet the growing needs and expectations of both the Government and the public, Council needs to operate in the 'smartest' way possible.

Council has committed to rebuild its resource consent and environmental monitoring systems over the next three financial years. This began in early 2017/18.



### Solution

The focus is to re-engineer RMA workflow processes from the ground up using digital workflows that reflect the principals of the Act, leveraging the latest in technology, including cloud based development and deployment to construct an integrated system that is both in and outward facing to improve customer trust in data, systems, process and services, maximises information flows in digital and presents information that is accessible, transparent and intuitive for all users.

Due to the complexity and size of the programme, the implementation of this program was broken down into stages;

**Stage 1** - Online Application (live from 23 March 2018) - This initial release focused on a minimum viable product concept. This will be built upon over the coming months with an additional 20 application types, including variations, with NES plantation forestry planned for future inclusion. To date 234 users have discovered and use this service.

**Stage 2** - Migration of Data and Online Processing (proposed release February 2019) - This includes migrating all 45,000 applications, processing records and decisions, associated data and documents from the Council record into the framework, and includes building all necessary workflow to enable the processing of an application from end to end within the system.

**Stage 3** - Environmental Monitoring (proposed delivery from October 2019) - This is a future stage of the integrated ecosystem that is currently being designed. This stage will enable the end to end monitoring of all consents and permits within the system using the digital framework developed in the first two stages of work.

For those that have yet to discover the production service here is the link:

<https://resourceconsents.marlborough.govt.nz>.

Over the coming months (December/January) Council will be testing the new system from end to end before making the new service available. The link above will not change.

As either agent, engineer or surveyor, Council will be in touch with more details closer to the intended date for the system to go live.



## An Update on the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan

The hearing of submissions on the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan commenced in November 2017.

The hearings were organised on a topic basis, rather than on each chapter in the Plan. To date 17 hearings have been held on 18 topics.

There are currently only five topics still to be heard: nuisance effects, air quality, forestry, coastal occupancy charges, and water allocation and use.

## New Duty Planner Service

There is now a Duty Planner service in Picton. The service is available fortnightly on Tuesdays from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm at the Picton Library.

Customers do not need to make appointments, but are advised to ring Customer Services on 03 520 7400 to check which Tuesday the Duty Planner is in Picton.

For more information, contact:  
[dutyplanner@marlborough.govt.nz](mailto:dutyplanner@marlborough.govt.nz)



## Council Christmas Break

Council offices will be closed from 21 December at 5.00 pm and will reopen on 3 January 2019 at 8.00 am.

The statutory timeframes under the Resource Management Act 1991 will suspend from 20 December 2018 until 10 January 2019.



## Staff Profiles



### Peter Johnson

Peter is originally from rural Rangitikei, though he has spent a lot of his life in other parts of New Zealand and overseas.

Peter completed an Honours Degree in Environmental Management at Lincoln University. After four years overseas, Peter returned to New Zealand in 2007 and joined the Marlborough District Council.

Peter is now a Senior Coastal Planner.



### Ian Sutherland

Ian moved to Blenheim in 1981 and worked in the Land Information New Zealand office on a range of matters.

Ian joined the Marlborough District Council 17 years ago as a Resource Management Officer.

Ian is now a Senior Subdivision Planner.



### Glen Parker

Glen is a Blenheim local who studied Geology at the University of Canterbury.

Back in September of 2000, Glen joined the Marlborough District Council and is now Council's Senior Water Permit Planner.

## Next Issue out 1 March 2019