

27 November 2018

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern

**Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) request for information on climate change issues in South Dunedin**

I refer to your request dated 30 October 2018 requesting information on climate change issues in South Dunedin. You have specifically requested three documents:

- **'Communities and Climate Change'** report. Our understanding is that this report has been produced by the University of Otago's Centre for Sustainability. The report can be accessed from the University's website at <https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/handle/10523/8062>. If you have any further questions about this report, its lead author is the Centre for Sustainability's Director, Research Associate Professor Janet Stephenson.
- The DCC's **'South Dunedin Future Strategy'** is an approach rather than a document. The DCC's current climate change adaptation approach is multi-pronged:
  - There is a focus on immediate interventions that will help mitigate (but not eliminate) flooding issues, particularly in the low-lying coastal area of South Dunedin where problems are exacerbated by high groundwater levels. In recent years, the DCC has made improvements to its existing infrastructure and the maintenance of them, to ensure they work as well as possible. The DCC has also supported development of South Dunedin's own locally-driven Community Response Plan and helped the community to build up their own resilience before flooding and other events happen.
  - In the medium to long term, rising sea and ground water will still increase the flooding and ponding risks. The nature of the work and uncertainty about the extent of climate change and sea level rise will mean the work is ongoing over several decades and will take a city-wide response. The DCC has conceived the 'South Dunedin Future' programme to respond to these issues. It aims to develop and deliver a programme that effectively responds to the climate-driven challenges facing South Dunedin in the context of wider Dunedin and the wider region. The community, central government and stakeholders are being engaged in understanding what is happening, building resilience, identifying opportunities and options, and deciding how to adapt to further changes in South Dunedin's environment.
- The **'South Dunedin Update'** leaflet drop to homes this past winter. Please see a copy of this attached.

I hope this information is of assistance.

Yours faithfully



Rebecca Murray  
**Governance Support Officer**



# South Dunedin

## AN UPDATE FROM THE DCC

We're getting in touch with you because it's winter and we want to let you know about what we've done since the 2015 floods to improve South Dunedin's resilience to heavy rain.

We know the community is organised and prepared, and we, the DCC, are too. We've invested in infrastructure improvements and we've got plans to invest much more.

Climate change means more intense rainfall, more often, in many parts of Dunedin, New Zealand and the world. Adapting old stormwater systems to this future is a global challenge and one that we're working on locally.

### What has been done since 2015?

- we have installed a new, larger \$300,000 filter screen at the Portobello Rd stormwater pumping station, for faster cleaning and pumping
- we have improved inspection, cleaning and maintenance of the 1,500 mud tanks (the stormwater grates in the gutter) in South Dunedin and others across the city
- we have fitted new backflow prevention valves to help stop wastewater getting inside homes at risk
- we are replacing old wastewater pipes in the Kaikorai Valley area to lessen wastewater flooding in South Dunedin
- we have begun planning major projects so that wastewater from the Kaikorai Valley area – currently piped through South Dunedin to the Tahuna treatment plant – will instead be piped to Green Island for treatment. This will lessen wastewater flooding in South Dunedin.
- we have employed staff to strengthen our links with the South Dunedin community and what's important
- we have introduced higher minimum floor levels for new homes across low-lying parts of the city so the buildings are less likely to flood
- we have improved emergency procedures, with more sandbags, door-knocking and emergency information centres during heavy rain events, and
- we have supported development of South Dunedin's own locally driven Community Response Plan.

### What else will be done?

- we will spend around \$7 million on a new pipe so wastewater from the Kaikorai Valley area – currently piped through South Dunedin to the Tahuna treatment plant – will instead be piped to Green Island for treatment.
- we will invest \$44 million starting in 2020 to upgrade the Green Island wastewater treatment plant to deal with more wastewater, more efficiently, well into the future. Planning for this work is already underway.
- we will investigate short-term alternative wastewater diversions where possible
- we will spend \$35 million on flood reduction within South Dunedin over the next 10 years, working closely with the community, on things like new higher flow mud tanks, pump stations or new ways of diverting and managing water.

Given the scale of the work, these improvements will take time to design, plan and construct. We will engage with you and frequently share information as this work gets underway.

## What will all this mean?

There will still be times when more rain falls than underground systems can cope with.

In the medium to long term, rising sea and ground water will increase flooding and ponding risks.

We are committed to working with the community, the government and other experts to look at all the ways we can safely adapt to climate change.

We, with our contractors, are working hard to make sure our roads, pipes, mud tanks, screens and treatment plants are working as well as possible.

We do our best to keep water off your property and, while everyone needs to be prepared for possible flooding, here are some things you can do to protect yourself and your living areas.

## What can I do?

### Before it rains:

- check roof spoutings and gutters for blockages and clear them if you can
- store valuables, emergency clothing and food above the floor. Use watertight containers to store important items.
- if you have insurance, check it's up to date
- find out about how sandbags work (see [www.dunedin.govt.nz/sandbags](http://www.dunedin.govt.nz/sandbags))
- have a household emergency plan (see [www.otagocdem.govt.nz](http://www.otagocdem.govt.nz))

### When you hear a weather warning:

- check mud tanks near your house are clear of leaves and other debris
- check on neighbours, especially any vulnerable residents.
- if you have a basement, lift items off the floor (especially important papers, sprays and chemicals)
- make plans to stay with friends or family on higher ground just in case

### If it floods:

- call emergency services on 111 if you feel your safety or property is in danger
- keep up to date with what is happening and for advice about what to do through the DCC website, DCC social media, the radio or other media
- follow any instructions from Civil Defence and emergency services.

If at any time you notice mud tanks not draining please call the DCC on 03 477 4000.

For further information, contact the DCC on 03 477 4000 or see [www.dunedin.govt.nz](http://www.dunedin.govt.nz).

## Find out more

The DCC is holding a **public drop-in information session** for the South Dunedin community from 2pm–7pm, Wednesday, 4 July 2018 at The Blind Foundation's Rooms, 458 Hillside Rd.

This is your opportunity to talk to DCC staff first-hand and find out what the DCC has done since the June 2015 floods to improve South Dunedin's resilience to heavy rain, and what future work is planned. All welcome.

### Public Drop-in Information Session

**2pm–7pm | Wednesday, 4 July 2018**

The Blind Foundation's Rooms, 458 Hillside Rd