The formation of a West Coast Construction Alliance is moving ahead with industry now thinking there may be more opportunities for companies to work together. Nelia Heersink from DWC says while it was initially thought the Alliance could target opportunities from the Christchurch rebuild there were also other projects which the construction industry was looking for.

“The feeling that collectively acting in the interests of the West Coast, rather than seeking individual commissions, will result in a wider common benefit. The Plains Irrigation Scheme and its resultant spin-offs and other areas outside Canterbury that are not serviced because of the demand on services by the rebuild may offer more opportunities to a West Coast Alliance,” she says.

A guest speaker from Venture Taranaki outlined Taranaki’s experience in forming Oil and Gas, and Engineering industries. Dr Chang says, “He talked about how it was helpful to show a collective regional face at trade and other events and that by mutual support the industry was able to keep work local,” says Mrs Heersink.

Grandon Conroy from Hokitika company Design Windows says the first step is for West Coast businesses to get together so they know what each other can offer.

There is a lot of local capability going unrecognised as businesses generally haven’t needed to advertise. We are still working on how a collective will work but we see it as a good opportunity for local businesses to see how others operate and potentially we could pitch for work together,” he says.

Mr Conroy says he could see situations where businesses could help each other and this was something the Taranaki Alliance seemed to have done.

The group decided DWC should now obtain Taranaki’s code of ethics and adapt them to the West Coast situation so they can be discussed at the next Alliance meeting.

DWC is providing initial secretariat functions and co-ordinating meetings until the Alliance becomes fully functional. If you would like to attend the next Alliance meeting please contact Nelia Heersink at nelia@dwc.org.nz or 03 768 1076.

Chairman’s Comment

DWC held its Annual Public Meeting in Hokitika this year on 27 August. The meeting was well attended. To those people who took the time to share the evening with staff and Trustees, thank you once again for taking an interest in our meeting. Trustees announced a strong end of year result for DWC. Your Trust is committed to delivering triple bottom line results: Financial, Social, and Environmental.

Financial – DWC ended the year with a $5.4m net surplus and Total Assets of $122m.

Social – $50.1m committed and distributed to the West Coast community since 2001.

Environmental - whilst a few of you might think this is an odd one out, looking after the environment on the West Coast is important to DWC. This Trust is unashamedly pro-environment and tourism, dairy farming and mining all have an interdependent relationship with the health of the West Coast environment. For this reason we have to make sure that the environment is looked after and that these industries are managed in a sustainable and responsible way, as the people of the West Coast have been doing for the last 150 years.

Recently I attended Grey District Council’s opening of the Southern Breakwater Viewing Platform. This project is one of the many wonderful community projects being funded by DWC’s Extraordinary Distribution Fund (EDF).uppet down and the Coast in partnership with the three district councils. The design and the building of the Viewing Platform is an innovative way to enhance the stunning vista of the Tasman Ocean.

Finally, like many of you, I was saddened to receive news of the resignation of our CEO, Dr John Chang. John joined DWC back in 2009. The role of CEO is going to be a difficult one to fill because of the skills John has brought to DWC. He has given the Trust excellent direction and will be leaving DWC in a good financial position. Personally, I have enjoyed working with him and believe we worked very well as a team as our skills were very complementary.