

## 2022 – 2023 Chairpersons Report

Hoani Langsbury

When I was reviewing my past reports. I reflected on my report for the 2020-2021 year noting the most impressive achievement to date for the OPBG was 20k not in funding, which would have been a highlight only a few years before that, but the removal of 20,000 possum from the Otago Peninsula. At the recent volunteer fire brigade quiz night, the "Almost 29 Team" was named in recognition of the almost 29,000 possums eradicated to date on the Otago Peninsula.

The entire OPBG team is aware of our goal of possum eradication being moved to September 2024, with confidence of achieving this milestone.

We estimate through modelling that are likely several hundred possums in sector 4. The rolling front working west to east across the peninsula proved to be successful, with fantastic engagement from residents of the built community between Vauxhall and Portobello. The possum free peninsula signage is also a hit with the Otago Peninsula community.

In the last year some of our tools have changed, with the use of dogs, helicopters, and drones. The utilisation of these to prove proof of absence has been valuable in demonstrating to Predator Free 2050 Limited representatives that visited during the year, the effectiveness of these in getting those last possums and not getting them, when proving absence.

Another elusive milestone that has challenged us was the recent achievement of access agreements with all land owners across the Otago Peninsula.

The Hub at Portobello has been working well for us and look forward to the DCC completing their upgrade work in the current year. This includes the provision of toilet facilities and recladding and painting of the exterior where necessary.

We have had some changes at the management level of the OPBG with the funding for Trust Manager not being renewed under the extension funding that was used to keep the project going. We wish Montie well with his future endeavours. We also had changes in the role of Operations Manager, with Micaela moving on to undertake study, providing the opportunity for the internal advancement of Paula into the role. This has the Operation Manager again as the only direct report to the Trust.

The OPBG is looking forward to the challenges that the next year brings in achieving eradication of the possum and the opportunity to consider next species projects.

In closing this report, I wish to acknowledge the dedication of the Trustees and hard work of the employees that has enabled me to report on another successful year.

Signed:  Date: 16/10/2023