

## Counter Objection to Cllr. MacDonald's proposal et al, to create a new Queenstown electorate including Cromwell and Alexandra.

### Reasons

Cromwell and Alexandra are key towns in the Central Otago District; a vast area with no identifiable geographical, climatic, economic or cultural ties which bind it to the South Canterbury towns of Geraldine, Timaru or Oamaru with which it is presently partnered in the Waitaki electorate.

It is important to recognize that Central Otago is already a discrete political entity; the Central Otago District Council (CODC) is headquartered in Alexandra and encompassed by its wards in Roxburgh (South), Cromwell (North) and Ranfurly (East). Together, these centres and the smaller villages concealed in its valleys, comprise a discrete and coherent community of interests which due to history, proximity and tourism, are shared with close northern neighbour, the Queenstown/ Lakes District (QLDC). Note too, Wanaka's continuing reliance on medical services provided by Central Otago's Dunstan Hospital at Clyde.

While there is a case to be made for strengthening Queenstown's political representation, to do so in the manner advocated by Cllr. MacDonald and others viz., by distributing Central Otago's population between the Upper Clutha and Waitaki electorates, is unlikely to achieve that goal. There is little community of interest between Queenstown and the rural southern towns of Upper Clutha and the present difficulties associated with providing adequate and fair parliamentary representation are likely to be exacerbated in both electorates.

### Solution

It seems that a solution which might satisfactorily build on the already strong community of interest shared by QLDC and CODC would be better achieved by combining the populations of the two districts. The populations of both Districts have increased substantially since Census 2018 and as at September 2019 the combined total is estimated to be approx. 67,460\* i.e, within prescribed limits.

The new electorate might well be named "**Central Otago / Lakes**" or as proposed elsewhere, "**Inland Otago**". It is submitted that this new entity will restore and further enhance a community of interest which despite electoral boundary anomalies, has persisted since 1863.

Graye Shattky

14 January 2000

Alexandra

- Figures provided by the CODC