

# What we are learning

about community-led development  
in Aotearoa New Zealand  
December 2010



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## Foreword

In Aotearoa New Zealand, and internationally, we are seeing a resurgence of interest and focus on local communities. The concept of ‘mass localism’ (widespread locally-led action) is being internationally recognised as having huge potential to truly transform communities, street by street and community by community.

Right here in Aotearoa New Zealand there are many diverse and exciting examples – from flourishing local farmers/community markets throughout the country, to more than 50 local Transition Town initiatives<sup>1</sup> aimed at building community resilience and enabling local responses to climate change and peak oil. There are also growing local coalitions addressing family violence and promoting whanau and children, strengthening iwi-led organisations building on the internationally acclaimed Whale Watch eco-tourism business in Kaikoura.

Inspiring Communities was established to foster community-led development ways of working in New Zealand, and with a core purpose of collective community learning.

Since mid-2008, the Inspiring Communities Exchange Team has been actively thinking, talking and learning both here in New Zealand and internationally about community-led development and transformative change. All with the view to contributing to the development of New Zealand practice-based evidence.

We want to learn about community-led development. We want to know about what works, what gets in the way and what else might grow and strengthen place-based communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. And we want to support the learning of others involved in community-led development by sharing what we are noticing, learning and observing. Our hope and intention is that this will foster positive progress for communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

We know this is important because we are frequently asked:

- What’s the stuff that really matters?
- What do we need to keep our eye on?
- How can we tell if change is happening and how can we evaluate it effectively?

We certainly don’t claim to have all the answers, but there is an extensive and growing network of current experience to draw from. We have developed a framework of core principles and beliefs about the potential of community-led development and how it works. And we continue to actively work with others to build the knowledge, understanding and evidence.

It’s important to note here that the stories and examples in this document, even some of the learning being captured, do not belong to Inspiring Communities. They are inspired by and belong to the communities and people we meet through forums, and the growing network of communities that are inspiring other communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. We acknowledge and thank everyone for the opportunity to learn and work together, and for being willing to share part of your inspiring journey with others.

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<sup>1</sup> Transition Towns is an international grass-roots movement of local communities. For more on Transition Towns in New Zealand see <http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/node/1667>.

## About this document

This report is the first of what we hope will be an annual reflection from Inspiring Communities on community-led development in Aotearoa New Zealand. In future years (resources allowing!) we hope to explore, analyse and communicate our observations on a range of community-led development focused themes, lessons, challenges and opportunities.

For 2010, we have focused our attention on key emerging themes for community-led development practitioners. In this document we offer what we have noticed so far – our observations and some examples and ideas that have impacted us, through our work and that of others. We have grouped our reflections into learning themes and highlighted key areas we think are worth focusing more attention on.

## Who this document is for

We understand our intended audience to be very broad and from a wide range of backgrounds and agencies. We see a diverse range of creative, determined and passionate people working in, for, or alongside local communities of place. Reading this report too we envisage a range of people and agencies who are interested in and wanting to understand more about community-led development approaches, what lies behind them, and what this way of working can offer and enable.

## Document format

There are three key sections in this document:

**Section 1:** gives an introduction to Inspiring Communities, what we mean by community-led development and a focus on learning.

**Section 2:** contains our learning ‘nuggets’ gathered to date, a mix of practical and hopefully enlightening learnings, grouped under four emerging themes. To help link lessons, observations and practice, we have also included quotes, stories and commentary from communities themselves.

**Section 3:** focuses on some of the ‘big ideas’ that drive both Inspiring Communities and our thinking about community-led development. As ever, linking theory and practice is an ongoing ‘work in progress’ – not just for Inspiring Communities and the eight community-led initiatives we are learning with<sup>2</sup>, but also for many other communities actively seeking to positively influence their local future.

We hope this, our first report will assist and challenge those involved in community-led development initiatives throughout New Zealand to:

- reflect on their understanding of community-led development and new emerging thinking
- see new potential for adding community-led development approaches into their work
- be inspired, hopeful and more determined than ever to influence and shape the future ahead.

We'd be glad to have your feedback on this publication, and to hear what you're seeing and noticing about community-led development too. You can email the Inspiring Communities Team at: [exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz](mailto:exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz)

*Megan Courtney, Mary-Jane Rivers, Leigh Strange, Denise Bijoux,  
Jenny Blagdon, Barbara MacLennan and Alfred Ngaro*

<sup>2</sup> For more on the Inspiring Communities Core Learning Cluster of Community Led Development initiatives, see pages 51-54.

## Executive summary

### Summing up

*What we are Learning* is a first step by Inspiring Communities to document and share our accumulated thinking and learning about the community-led development experience in Aotearoa New Zealand. *What we are Learning* is informed by practical experience – the patterns and learning emerging from community initiatives throughout the country – combined with ‘ways of thinking’ or frameworks for assisting communities to become stronger and more resilient.

***“We want to create a way of working as a whole community, agencies and us together, that creates hope and optimism.”***

*Georgie Thompson  
Ruapotaka Marae, Tamaki*

While this document includes an introduction to Inspiring Communities – our background and our approach, it is not about us. Rather it is about what we are discovering and learning from communities we connect with and some of the big picture thinking driving our understanding and approach to community-led development. Our aim is to share some key themes, examples and thinking so those interested and active in community-led development can continue learning together.

*What we are Learning* includes practical tools, lessons and tips, as well as often inspirational examples of local place based initiatives at the forefront of change. This reflects a growing general movement of locally-led action underway in Aotearoa, including:

- Community Economic Development (<http://www.ced.org.nz/>)
- Community Gardens (<http://good.net.nz/magazine/community-gardens>)
- Time Banking (<http://www.lyttelton.net.nz/timebank>)
- Transition Towns (<http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/>)
- Sustainable Business Network (<http://www.sustainable.org.nz/>)

### A framework for Community-Led Development

Inspiring Communities has identified seven principles and key elements within community-led development:

1. ‘Place’ is the focus.
2. Local voice, vision and leadership are valued and empowered.
3. Working together across sectors and boundaries is essential to tackle complex community issues.
4. A strengths and asset based planning and development approach is powerfully motivating – build and leverage off what communities do well.
5. Growing collaborative community leadership is important so that leading comes from every corner of the community and creates communities filled with connected leaders.
6. Being intentional, adaptable and demonstrating progress are core ingredients of effective community-led working.
7. Whole systems change – working on big and small picture changes to effect long lasting, rather than piecemeal change.



### What have we been learning about Community-Led Development?

Our observations and learnings for 2010 are grouped into four central themes:

#### ***Working together in place***

- The importance of having a strong, uniting community vision that frames local action plans. This enables development of effective processes for measuring, reflecting on, and learning about how change happens. It is also a touchstone in difficult times.

- Resisting the urge to jump straight into projects or solutions without first having spent time clarifying the bigger questions confronting communities and getting a feel for the real drivers behind key local issues and concerns.
- Being intentional – knowing where you want to get to and utilising flexible pathways and action plans to get there. Respond to opportunities, and purposefully learn from what works and what doesn't as you progress.
- For many, 'seeing is believing' and visible projects build interest in the community change journey ahead. Assist momentum towards a community vision by starting with a few projects that are practical, high impact, participatory and visibly demonstrate change and success.
- Working in community-led development ways is challenging for all and requires everyone to accept the challenge of adopting new ways of working. Encouraging creative and enabling roles by all – funders, local and central government, business, iwi, community groups, residents – sets the scene for diverse partners to 'work together,' and co-invest effort and resources to achieve locally determined goals and visions.
- Persevering when the going gets tough – because it will. Learning, both internationally and here in Aotearoa suggests an establishment phase of two to three years and 10 years for really transformative change.

### ***Community building***

- Supporting communities to identify, celebrate and leverage off their existing strengths and assets. This can help un-leash new resources and inspire confidence, participation and hope that a different future is possible.
- Local community events are a great way to bring people together and keep them connected. Neighbourhoods and communities that meet, talk and work together have a stronger sense of identity, pride, optimism and place. Events can also be a key capacity building tool if local people are intentionally part of event planning, decision making and 'doing' on the day.

### ***Leading in and leaderful communities***

Actively growing and strengthening community leadership is increasingly being recognised as important for local community futures. There is a conscious call to:

- Encourage a more 'leaderful' community approach by looking for leaders and leadership in a whole range of new places in communities.
- Proactively involve more local residents in leadership and decision making roles about their community and strengthen connections between and across leaders in communities. People nurture what they care about, and through civic engagement will strengthen their communities.
- Foster integrity and authenticity in leaders, valuing 'character' as much as achievements. Leaders who are highly valued actively build bridges within and across communities, empower and inspire participation, make room for multiple voices at decision making tables, and honour others.

### ***Creating and sustaining momentum***

- Effective transition planning for changes in local leadership is essential. Helpful strategies include buddying and shadowing, documenting personal insights on the 'hows and whys' of the community's change journey to date, personally handing over key relationships and leaving a forward plan of key 'next' steps to take.
- Making time and having processes for noticing and reflection valued and proactively built into work programmes and planning so that a local culture of 'community learning' can be empowered and supported. Useful tools to assist learning and help demonstrate change and success are target setting, community stories and discussion groups, indicators, and pictures.

**Inspiring Communities welcomes your feedback on *What we are Learning 2010*.**

**We are keen to know more about what you have been learning and noticing too.**

**Contact us on [exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz](mailto:exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz)**

## 1 About Inspiring Communities and community-led development

The overall aim of Inspiring Communities<sup>3</sup> is to **grow the recognition, understanding and practice of community-led development** in New Zealand.

We are noticing excitement about, and increasing attention on, communities of place both here and internationally.

This is seen through growing interest in the community-led development way of doing things – that is, putting local communities at the forefront of their own futures.

### 1.1 What we mean by community-led development (CLD)

- CLD is about **place** – local communities.
- CLD is about people from **all sectors** (residents, business, funders, iwi, local government, government, schools etc) working together within local communities to release energy and ideas, create opportunities, harness local resources, solve problems and achieve local visions.
- CLD is a strengths based **planning and development** approach. It involves looking at **whole systems** as opposed to individual issues. It is also about a way of thinking, organising and capacity building to enable locally-led action and leadership of change. It is not a service delivery model, project or programme (although a CLD approach may connect with many activities and service providers delivering within communities).
- CLD **includes** economic, cultural, social and environmental factors, with the driver being **local vision** and priorities.

Community-led development is about fostering communities to thrive and be strong and resilient. There is an **intentional** focus on communities of ‘place’. Rather than being seen, and seeing themselves, as clients or recipients of services, local residents are at the heart, key catalysts for their own and their community’s development. Having ‘place’ as the focus allows different sectors (business, local and central government, iwi<sup>4</sup>, Pacific organisations, funders and voluntary organisations etc), interests and services to work together to solve problems and create opportunities and a shared way forward.

*We believe  
community-led  
development  
helps build strong,  
resilient local  
communities.*

Building from strengths and assets, supporting local catalytic leaders, increasing connections and participation across sectors, learning and adapting, noticing, measuring, celebrating tangible results and changes, and focusing on whole systems change rather than one-off events, are key elements of community-led development.

<sup>3</sup> For more about Inspiring Communities see Appendix 1 on page 49.

<sup>4</sup> The modern relationship between iwi and community-led development is an emerging one. The traditional connection of iwi to ‘place’ is a special one – existing over generations and through whakapapa (family and tribal connections) to both land and marae. It is not confined to where individuals may be currently residing today. For some in Maoridom however, there is a growing need for the traditional view of ‘place’ to be broadened beyond whakapapa. With many Maori now living in urban areas and away from family land and marae, they feel it important for multiple turangawaewae (places to stand where people feel especially empowered and connected) to be valued and recognised, so that those living away from their tribal land are encouraged and supported to have a strong sense of belonging and identity with both whakapapa and where they currently live today.



## 1.2 Why, what and how we practise learning and focus on outcomes

Learning and outcomes are one of the four core activities of Inspiring Communities and a key driver behind our establishment.

While we are actively supporting and fostering the growing community-led development movement in New Zealand, our intention is also to learn about community-led development. We want to learn and share:

- how community-led development works and how communities can become and remain resilient
- what helps communities flourish
- what evidence we can gather about how change is happening in communities
- how we can illustrate and measure change; and
- how community-led initiatives throughout New Zealand can connect and learn from each other.

This learning focus is important for the following reasons:

- community-led development is a relatively 'new' way of thinking about communities for New Zealand – although key elements of CLD have been part of Kiwi communities forever!
- there is a need for more documented New Zealand-based experience of community-led development; more understanding is needed
- we want to actively capture what is being discovered around New Zealand to share the learning for the benefit of all ie. developing a strong local practice culture
- within New Zealand communities we want to foster a culture that intentionally focuses on 'learning and outcomes', which means supporting and enabling communities to have the tools and capacity themselves to successfully dream, plan and do AND to really understand when, how and why change happens.

Like community-led development, Inspiring Communities too is in a developmental phase. As an organisation, we aim to foster a learning culture in everything we do and consider. This means being:

- prepared to challenge our own ways of working
- willing to take risks and purposefully experiment – with the knowledge that we won't always get things right
- ready to embrace other perspectives, knowing they can help; and
- flexible and adaptable when success is delayed, or new approaches are needed.

Our thinking has been strongly informed by the knowledge, learning and experience of others. Read more about the theory and framing that lies behind our thinking and learning approach in Section Three of this document – page 37. Links to many other helpful theories and techniques are noted in Appendix 3 – page 55 – and also on our website <http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/learning-centre/learning-links>.

### 1.3 Inspiring Communities: our framework for community-led development

Rather than a programme or service, community-led development is a planning and development approach; a way of working that's underpinned by a number of key principles as noted below:

Inspiring Communities framework for community-led development	
Principles	What this means...
<b>'Place' the focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Priorities being determined and 'visioned' by those who live, work, care, connect and invest in local community of place – the principle of 'ahi kaa'.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>■ Interconnection of people and local environments recognised, along with commitments to planning holistically for current and future communities.</li> <li>■ Understanding that the make up, history and context of each community is special and unique. While you can't transplant whole models you can transfer ideas, principles, key elements, tools and resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Local voice and leadership valued and empowered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Community experience and knowledge is integral to local solutions.</li> <li>■ Local residents and organisations being encouraged and supported to participate and actively lead.</li> <li>■ Genuine local ownership of community visions, plans and actions.</li> </ul>
<b>Working together across boundaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encouraging connections between diverse people, organisations and sectors to develop creative solutions and harness additional resources.</li> <li>■ Practising new ways of working – creating and co-creating together, building respectful relationships and reciprocity.</li> </ul>
<b>Strength and asset based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identifying existing local physical, cultural, environmental and 'people' assets and strengths and leveraging off what each community does well.</li> <li>■ Not dwelling on, or being overshadowed by deficits or problem fixing approaches – asking instead 'what is the vision for our community' and 'how can we work together to make it happen.'</li> <li>■ Inspiring hope and optimism for a different future – not being constrained by what is, or has been.</li> </ul>
<b>Growing collaborative community leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Acknowledging everyone has a contribution to make.</li> <li>■ Actively seeking and growing new leadership within communities.</li> <li>■ Supporting energetic, catalytic individual leaders and organisations who can work skilfully with others to make things happen.</li> </ul>
<b>Being intentional, adaptable and demonstrating progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being clear on future visions and goals while being flexible in adapting plans, priorities and projects to respond to changes that occur.</li> <li>■ Adopting robust planning processes and practices to ensure monitoring, analysis, reflection, learning about and measuring progress towards desired outcomes.</li> <li>■ Proactively sharing experiences, learning, results and resources across communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Whole systems change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Going beyond 'one-offs' to longer term, sustainable change.</li> <li>■ Influencing policy and legislation, commercial systems, organisational practice, personal, cultural and institutional relationships for lasting impact within communities.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> Ahi kaa is a fundamental traditional Māori cultural concept meaning "site of burning fires". In contemporary times, ahi kaa is used to refer to people who uphold a particular purpose within the community. That is, they are the "keepers of the home fires" be that at home, on the marae (traditional settlements) or within a particular organisation or movement.

## 2 What we are learning

This section focuses attention on key emerging themes for community-led development practitioners. We have grouped our reflections into four key learning themes:

- Working together in place
- Community building
- Leading in and leaderful communities
- Creating and sustaining momentum

### 2.1 Working together in place

#### At a glance

##### *What we are learning about working together in place*

Making long term, really transformational change within communities requires multiple stakeholders working together with local communities to build shared visions, grow capacity and capability, inspire new energy and develop new structures, cultures and processes to sustain the long term change journey ahead.

It's a big task and not everything will happen at once. Often this means starting with the willing and encouraging others to join you as visions become clear, change starts to happen, and the potential for this new way of working gets noticed.

##### *Key lessons:*

- Be really clear on the question that lies behind the issue before embarking on solutions.
- Persevere: expect the work to be long and hard.
- Collaboration is required at many levels.
- Actively seek contributions from residents and local organisations.
- Build capacity by connecting up like minds.
- There are new roles for local and central government to support and enable CLD.
- Funders can be partners too.
- Tough times can tempt people back into old ways.
- Brokers, ideas and expertise from outside can help.

#### Sir Stephen Tindall is interested in a big question

*How can we see the country thrive?*

*The reason for asking comes from his primary identity as a family man – and a man with a heart for community, as well as being a leading businessman and philanthropist.*

*Sir Stephen comments that “...The guiding philosophy of The Tindall Foundation is to give a hand up to New Zealanders in need.*

*Then the question is, ‘how’? I believe community-led development offers a great opportunity for business, philanthropy and government agencies to support local residents in making their own communities even better places to live.”*

*He sees as heroes the communities creating initiatives like the revitalisation of Moerewa and the Victory School and Village development in Nelson – named as the 2010 NZ Community of the Year\*.*

*From presentation to Southern NZ  
Community-Led Development Forum  
– May 2010*

\* For more on Victory Village – NZ Community of the Year 2010 see <http://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/3293168/An-awesome-Victory>

### 2.1.1 *Be really clear about the question that lies behind the issue before embarking on solutions*

Einstein is quoted as having said that if he had one hour to save the world he would spend fifty-five minutes defining the problem and only five minutes finding the solution!<sup>6</sup>

So many times we have realised that we were not clear enough about the questions lying behind an issue before jumping into solution mode. The value of spending quality time to be clear about the question we are asking and why we are asking it can never be underestimated. It avoids going down the track of establishing projects with specific targets and activities that unwittingly veer away from addressing the core issue.

This means digging deeper to find the 'quest' behind the question – what is it that really lies at the heart of the issue or opportunity that's being focused on? 'Wicked questions', for which there is no answer, can also be important to ask because the process of discussing them is "expansive, elucidating and shifting<sup>8</sup>." Importantly here, the process of deeper questioning and clarification enables communities to more clearly identify the goals or outcomes being sought, along with appropriate measures or indicators of change that they might expect to see along their community-led development journey. This in turn gives impetus at an early stage to focusing on the kinds of baseline and progress information that will be required to support, document and communicate the journey of transformation ahead.

- In Hamilton, Ontario, Canada the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (<http://www.hamiltonpoverty.ca/>) spent two years on clarifying their key question and goal.
- In Porirua, Good Cents<sup>9</sup> has spent 18 months clarifying their key question and goals around debt reduction. This was done through a process of many conversations with many different people and groups in the community, exploring all facets of the debt issue.

#### Redefining the question in Porirua

*Instead of asking "why don't people budget properly?" or "how can we stop the practices of 'loan sharks'?" At the Innovation Forum, people from all sectors of the community – bankers, people in debt, funders, local government, and community organisations – discussed the questions:*

***What would it be like if there wasn't a high level of crippling debt in our community?***

***What is it that we can create together for our future that we can't create alone?***

*Together they then developed a set of creative responses, goals and action plans... owned and agreed by all.*

*Beyond Cycles of Debt Innovation Forum  
Porirua - April 2010*



<sup>6</sup> See <http://litemind.com/problem-definition/>

<sup>7</sup> Wicked questions are those to which there are no obvious or easy answers. They are used to expose the assumptions which shape our actions and choices and invite discussion eg. how do you eradicate poverty?

<sup>8</sup> Mark Cabaj April 2009

<sup>9</sup> See page 52 for more information on the Good Cents Porirua initiative led by Wesley Community Action.

### 2.1.2 Persevere: expect the work to be long and hard

Working collaboratively and across traditional boundaries is about far more than just co-ordination or 'joined up working'. As Mark Cabaj from Tamarack puts it, "it's brutally hard work" for everyone involved. It requires developing:

- trust
- a common language
- common understandings of co-creation and co-design<sup>10</sup>; and,
- with these understandings, doing things together over time.

Trust sits at the heart of true collaboration and partnership, trust that we are all acting for the common good. Trust takes time to develop. We have found it can be accelerated when people:

- do what they say they are going to do
- look for the best in each other; and
- actively learn together from experiences.

*"While we may go faster alone, we go further together."*

*(Old African Proverb)*



*The finished Community Centre (above) with fully equipped gym, commercial kitchen, even a sauna and more. The planning team agreed that for any facility the community wanted included; if they could raise the funds, they could have it.*



*Kiwi ingenuity (above): Materials for the community centre arriving by fishing boat.*

### Building a community centre for Stewart Island

*"Alistair Eade started us off by saying 'I've never seen a building built out of money, but I have seen one built with materials.' Then our multimillion dollar dream became possible.*

*The project was about getting people to input their dreams and asking them to help make things happen. It wasn't about people opening their cheque books but getting creative about ways people could contribute. In our eight year journey from vision to completion, locals, crib owners, supporters and businesses on both sides of the Foveaux (Strait) did their bit to help.*

*Volunteers made 2200 lunches for the builders, someone offered a quarter of their paua quota if others came and collected the shellfish, others provided timber that could be milled, and there was free transport of materials and volunteers to our makeshift community mill based in a warehouse in Invercargill.*

*Others gave their time to help make pallets, from timber offcuts, which we on sold for \$49,000! In the end we raised \$1200 per Stewart Island resident and one community volunteer put in 1700 hours on the building site."*

*Margaret Hopkins  
Stewart Island Community Centre  
Development Trust  
From presentation to the Core Learning  
Cluster Annual Learning Forum,  
Rakiura/Stewart Island - April 2010*

<sup>10</sup> Co-creation and co-design refer here to the process of working together – creating and designing a shared way forward, with both sides taking time to come to grips with what 'working together' means and developing appropriate structures, mechanisms, decision making and governance processes etc to enable partnering intents to be realised in practice.



### 2.1.3 Collaboration is required at many levels

Initiating, supporting and sustaining place based community-led development requires strategic collaboration at many levels. Three key areas to grow and nurture include:

- Outside- in/inside-out: reaching out to individuals and organisations who may be based outside the locality but who have a stake in it. For example, externally based service providers, local government, philanthropic funders, tertiary education providers and previous residents may be able to co-invest or collaborate to help achieve local community outcomes.
- Institutions within community: connecting and inspiring collaboration between existing local community organisations, marae, schools, clubs, churches and businesses etc.
- Street/neighbourhood level: communities are made up of multiple and diverse streets and neighbourhoods. Local visions for community change must engage and inspire ownership and action from families and people in streets too!



Community based environmental learning and restoration in Hannahs Bay.

### Community transformation through environmental restoration

*“For a decade, local residents in Hannahs Bay (Rotorua) have worked to reclaim and improve a community reserve which had been neglected and environmentally abused.*

*A significant wetland has been restored; indigenous vegetation is starting to flourish, there are community garden plots, art, memorials, and play areas. Openness to any offers of involvement or contribution has been a key, and through this welcoming approach, local, national and international interests are now linked to this place.*

*For example, many schools have spent time improving the reserve, international conferences have planted trees to counter ‘air miles’, local people have worked off community service hours, and PD gangs have not only worked on their set hours, but returned to finish projects, or bring their whanau and families to garden.”*

*Denise La Grouw  
Hannahs Bay Community Restoration Trust  
Presentation to BOP Community-Led  
Development Forum - April 2010*



### 2.1.4 Actively seek contributions from residents and local organisations

It's about give and take. Joining up in place means valuing, acknowledging and actively encouraging contributions from as many people and organisations as possible. The principle of reciprocity (give and take) shifts the paradigm from local people being recipients of what others are able to offer them, to being contributors with something to give, as well as receive. This builds a more generous community that is based on acknowledging multiple strengths and valuing all contributions – no matter how big or small.



*A local initiative: Stephanie Barnes with one of the baby 'essentials' packs she and fellow Taita mum Maz create for local newborns. They contain a locally hand-made item, information for parents, and an invitation to come to Great Start House for a free family photo.*

### 2.1.5 Build capacity by connecting up like minds

Being an innovator and wanting to change the world often means being stuck on the 'edge' – which can be a lonely place. Connecting 'like minds' within and across communities, provides people with a sense they are not on their own. It validates their new ways of thinking and acting that others may not yet have fully grasped. Informal peer support networks can be crucial in supporting local leadership and growing a 'critical mass' of practitioners and people passionate about community-led change and action.

Though not always possible, physically visiting and meeting with other communities who are on similar journeys also really helps. Being there offers the chance to 'feel' and sense some of the intangible connections, values and context that may not be evident from web pages or reports.

### Time banking – making everyone's contributions count

*"We had a goal of developing a skills exchange across our whole community and so after looking around, we've now set up a time bank for the Eastern Bay.*

*With time banking, **the value is time not skill sets**. One hour of car washing is valued the same as one hour of typing or one hour of gardening. It takes the charity out of it and means everyone in a community has something to offer others! In Whakatane, we've now got 160 time bank members and there's over 500 hours being traded within our community each month. This is practically adding a whole new layer of support into our community. And we have plans to grow much, much bigger."*

*Claire Pye and Ruth Gerzon  
Pou Whakaaro, Whakatane - April 2010*

### Encouraging generosity and giving back

*"One of the core principles of Great Start Taita is actively giving people the opportunity to be part of what happens. We really want to help local people understand that they have things to offer and contributions to make.*

*It happens in many different ways. For example, some of the Mums who have been part of programmes and activities at the Great Start House are now making up 'new baby' packs for other local families – putting together wee hampers of used, yet well cared for baby clothes and essentials."*

*Karen Clifford  
Great Start, Taita - July 2010*

### 2.1.6 New roles for local and central government to support and enable CLD

To date 'place' has not yet been a major government policy driver in New Zealand<sup>11</sup>. In the UK especially, local authorities are recognised as being strategic leaders in 'place shaping'<sup>12</sup> and 'place making'. This contrasts with New Zealand where current government policy is encouraging a refocusing of the local government role on 'core services.'

However, both local and central government, have key roles to play in supporting and nurturing community-led development – as funders, supporters, policy makers, service and information providers, enablers and investors in local communities. And there are many examples of local government and government agencies proactively seeking to incorporate community-led development approaches into their work.

For example: Porirua City Council's Village Planning Programme, Waitakere City Council supporting Massey Matters, McLaren Park Henderson South Community Initiative and Project Twin Streams<sup>13</sup> and Ministry of Social Development's S.K.I.P programme and Community Action Fund<sup>14</sup>.



Taita children were given the opportunity to visit Hutt City Council to share their ideas for creating a new local park, now under development, in Taita.

#### A ten year investment in Massey

*"Key to the establishment, implementation and success of Massey Matters has been the leadership of Waitakere City Council. Most participants agree that, without being too prescriptive... Council has undertaken a strong guidance and brokering role at a variety of levels.*

*Council has made an overt and significant commitment of resources to Massey over a ten year period. This has been seen as a definite display of commitment and faith in the Massey community."*

Massey Matters  
Telling our Story of Community Led  
Action and Change - May 2009

#### Families are part of communities

*"The relationship between strong and well functioning families and communities of place is very strong. I think it's hard to imagine a healthy strong community without healthy strong families and vice versa. The relationship is a mutual one and highly interactive. It will be increasingly important for public policy that focuses on 'making families better' to also take account of this key relationship – families' context within communities."*

Paul Curry  
Chief Executive,  
Families Commission  
- July 2010

<sup>11</sup> In the UK, USA and Australia for example, place focused policy has seen billions of dollars invested in specific communities (typically 'deprived' communities) to help catalyse the regeneration and enhancement of social and economic wellbeing outcomes. Typically, government investment is framed as 'partnerships' with local authorities and communities, with new collaborative mechanisms established to determine visions, strategies, priorities and approaches at the local level.

<sup>12</sup> 'Place shaping' refers to the creative use of (local authorities') powers and influence to promote the wellbeing of a community and its citizens (from the Lyons UK Inquiry into Local Government 2007). 'Place making' refers to participatory urban planning processes which help turn 'spaces into places' through proactively working to build a stronger sense of belonging, identity and 'sense' of place.

<sup>13</sup> For more on Porirua see <http://www.pcc.govt.nz/Community/Community-Projects/Village-Planning-Programme>

For more on Waitakere see Massey Matters <http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/OurPar/masseycommunity.asp> and McLaren Park Henderson South Initiative <http://www.mphs.org.nz/>

<sup>14</sup> For more on Strategies for Kids, Information for parents (S.K.I.P) see <http://www.skip.org.nz/> and for more on the Community Action Fund see <http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/working-with-us/programmes-services/preventing-family-violence/community-action-fund.html>



Rather than planning **for** communities, there are now new opportunities to work **with** communities – to co-create local future visions, and work with local places to build and leverage positive change based on each community's existing strengths. This means government working with a 'light touch' rather than a heavy hand<sup>15</sup>, for example:

- developing longer term and innovative funding streams to support community journeys
- proactively investing in community capacity building, leadership development as well as in services, infrastructure and facilities, and
- working with and enabling communities to develop their own local plans, and linking local outcomes to local/central government plans and priorities.



*A funding relationship becomes a partnership at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Bay Trust and Opotiki District Council.*

### *A new kind of relationship – Opotiki*

*"Now, the Bay Trust and Opotiki District Council have agreed on a more strategic partnership approach and have developed a five year Memorandum of Understanding. This approach widens the scope from a funder-grant recipient relationship, to a partnering approach which includes:*

- *regular information sharing and meeting,*
- *advocacy about the potential community development benefits of the Opotiki harbour development,*
- *sharing advice, relationships and opportunities and;*
- *making an annual plan together each year."*

*Terri Eggleton  
Community Development Adviser  
Bay Trust - May 2010*

### *Rethinking our role and approach....*

*"Community-led development takes time, commitment and trust, and the funder has to be prepared to take a leadership role – but quietly.*

*It's a challenge: a funder has to be prepared to let go some control to even out the power imbalance between granter and grantee."*

*John Prendergast  
CEO, Community Trust of Southland  
- May 2010*

<sup>15</sup> Heavy hand here referring to working in 'top down' ways that focus on programmes with rigid frameworks – for example specifying how Council resources within a community will be spent and/or specifying pre-determined outputs (rather than negotiating) that community organisations must meet in order to receive funding support.

### 2.1.7 Funders can be partners too

Seeing funders merely as providers of money is an opportunity missed. There are many other key roles funders can also play in supporting communities of place. Understanding that funders can also be potential partners, advisers, information providers, connectors and supporters opens up potential for a much broader relationship and a greater shared understanding of both the destination and the journey ahead.

Many funders are also beginning to see their role as advocates for the causes of the communities and organisations they support and assist.

A leading report<sup>16</sup> about what's next for philanthropy in the USA acknowledges the scale and social complexity of the challenges communities now face and urges funders to:

- **“Act Bigger** and look to join with other actors, both in philanthropy and across sectors, to activate sufficient resources to make sustainable progress on issues of shared concern.
- **Adapt Better** and get smarter faster, incorporating the best available data and knowledge about what is working and regularly adjusting what they do to add value amidst the dynamic circumstances everyone is facing.”

#### Inspiring Communities: top tips for funders wanting to support community-led development

- Be brave: be part of co-creating/initiating community-led approaches
- Promote and enable collaboration that supports ‘place’
- Walk alongside communities and help them frame and work through complex issues
- Test intentions and be part of robust discussions
- Share information, ideas, and work together with communities on evaluation, learning and capacity building
- Be open to funding ‘organic’ models and emerging processes
- Look to fund ‘places’ – not just projects and/or organisations
- Be prepared to fund umbrella organisations – eg. organisations that are prepared to ‘fund hold on behalf of’ collaborations and collaborative projects within specific place based communities.

*“I think our role as funders is as much about listening and learning as it is about giving away money. One of the things I keep hearing is that for a child to thrive, it is very helpful to have at least one constant and caring parent or caregiver – and for that caregiver to be constant and caring it is very helpful to be part of a community where social and economic needs are generally met.*

*This makes community-led development a compelling proposition to fund, because when a whole community makes positive changes then lots of children and families will benefit.*

*The difficulty is that on paper it can all look a bit airy-fairy – I think it is very helpful to visit in person and try to get a feel for what is really happening on the ground.”*

*Kate Frykberg  
Chief Executive, Todd Foundation  
- July 2010*

<sup>16</sup> Next Practices for Philanthropy's Next Decade – Monitor Institute July 2010 <http://www.monitorinstitute.com/whatsnext/>

### 2.1.8 Tough times can tempt people back into old ways

When there is conflict, when things like collaboration and co-design are hard, or when things go wrong, people often go back to default settings or old ways of working. At these times, we really need to be willing and able to explore other ways of dealing with the 'hard stuff'.

In these times it can help to:

- Utilise practical tools and exercises that strengthen our power of observation, help people to listen before responding, and really practise seeing things from others' perspectives.
- Be prepared for these phases by having documented shared visions, values, outcomes, measurable targets and ways of working together. These help remind partners about their shared outcomes, agreed processes for dealing with 'messy' situations, and commitments they made to supporting each other through rocky times.
- Utilise information and perspectives gathered from a variety of sources to reflect on the issues at hand and potential next steps.



As part of their Village Planning development, Cannons Creek, Porirua had murals created by NZ artist Michel Tuffery and a group of young Porirua artists.

#### **A helpful reflective tool (adapted from Jan Fook)**

A simple 'reflective practice' approach can help see things from another's perspective:

1. First tell a story as you understand it.
2. Then 'unpack' it by exploring, for example:
  - What have you chosen to emphasise or exclude?
  - What does your language tell you about how you see the story?
3. Then 'reconstruct' the story. You might explore:
  - How does the story unfold if I take on the role (and perspective) of a different character?
  - How does my approach compare with my intentions?
  - What is my capacity to respond now?

### *Shared visions essential in village planning*

*"From our experience in the Village Planning Process we've learned the importance of creating a shared future vision that is bigger than any individual project. The shared vision acts as a touchstone and can be useful when difficulties arise."*

*Moir Lawler  
General Manager Strategy and Planning, Porirua City Council  
- May 2010*

### *Strengthening communication in Opotiki*

*"One of the cross-sectoral groups working in support of the Opotiki Harbour Development has recently experienced some tension when different parties felt uninformed by others. The immediate response was for two of the parties to feel a bit aggrieved, and left out, and to revert to their respective 'places' and share the bad experience.*

*Standing back, it appears that this happened after there had been a 'gap' of months in everyone meeting together.*

**What we learned** *was the need for some routine meetings among key players, in between cross-sectoral meetings so that all players are fully familiar with respective news and developments, in 'real-time.'"*

*Barbara MacLennan  
Opotiki Strategic Broker - May 2010*

### 2.1.9 Brokers, ideas and expertise from outside can help

External expertise is very useful to inform and inspire – but not lead – local work. At times, real gains in community-led development can be made through tapping into the skills, experience and advice of neutral respected ‘outsiders.’ Help sought can be ‘one-off’ or on an ‘as-needs basis’. In other cases, help may be of a deeper and/or ongoing nature, with the neutral ‘outsider’ joining an advisory or governance group or taking on specific brokering tasks as requested. Many community-led development initiatives are benefitting from taking advantage of ‘critical friends’<sup>17</sup> and proactively seeking out and learning from what other communities both in New Zealand and internationally are doing.

What we are learning is that solving complex problems requires a combination of both local community knowledge **AND** outside expertise.

Not being intimately involved in the local community means that sometimes outsiders are often more able to notice the patterns, the shifts, the roles people play, and areas of potential conflict and confusion. Without allegiances or specific barrows to push, neutral outsiders can sometimes usefully name or challenge things in a way that a person who lives in the community, or someone who is deeply involved in particular local action, often can’t.



*The value of respected ‘outsiders’ can be huge. Then Opotiki District Council Chief Executive Vaughan Payne, thanks Anna Kominik (Wellington based, internationally known communications consultant) after a session with Opotiki leaders on working with the media. (April 2010)*

### Looking out to learn from others

*“When I was first framing up the scope of Massey Matters in 2006 I was still thinking with the standard mindset of a three year project. Then I did some internet searching to see what lessons had been learnt from place based projects elsewhere. Research from Canada showed that making change takes much longer than people think and they recommended projects be set up with a 4-10 year planning horizon.*

*So I quickly changed my scoping report and recommended to Council that Massey Matters be established with a ten year time frame and for Council to commit to a long term relationship with Massey. If I hadn’t read that Canadian report I would have unwittingly set Massey Matters up with hugely unrealistic expectations of what it could achieve. I have since learnt that the establishment phase of a community-led initiative is really a three year journey in itself.”*

*Megan Courtney  
Initial Massey Matters Project Leader  
- June 2010*

### Critical thinking for the Bay

*“Opotiki is striving towards a sustainable economy, so one of the ‘critical friends’ we brought in was a skilled economist. She quickly identified that Whakatohea’s aquaculture initiative was significant not just for Opotiki, but for the whole Bay of Plenty region and for New Zealand. It was this input, early in 2008, which catapulted us into helping bring the wider region around the table.”*

*Barbara MacLennan  
Strategic Broker, Opotiki  
- July 2010*

<sup>17</sup> A critical friend can be defined as “a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work.”  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical\\_friend](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_friend)

## 2.2 Community building

### At a glance:

#### *What we are learning about community building:*

Community building is about empowering potential, possibility and local action. It's about encouraging notions of 'I can' and 'we can' – locals taking action to strengthen and support their community and the future they seek.

For residents in communities to truly lead their own development; to be equal partners at both decision making tables and when the action happens, the process of bringing people together and how this is done is incredibly important. In most communities, there's usually some work to be done to connect local people together, give voice to local possibilities, to draw out capacity, and to build capability so everyone can participate and act.

#### *Key lessons:*

- Identify and build from local strengths and assets.
- Proactively involve as many people as you can.
- Value and involve residents as community experts to actively build capacity.
- Local events are a key connecting mechanism.
- Understand and grow local 'community' capital.

### 2.2.1 Identify and build from local strengths and assets

Each community has untapped assets. To find these it helps to get people thinking about what they are good at, what they really want to do and then valuing, promoting and strengthening this eg. growing tomatoes, looking after kids, coaching, organising. Building from platforms of local strengths means doing more of what works and adding onto existing successes within the community.

Think about the existing assets within the community. Who and what might be better utilised or tapped into to help leverage new resources? What are the connections between people, skills and resources that need to be made or opportunities for doing things differently? For example; church halls, winning sports teams, historical landmarks, neighbourhood shops and local streams/environment – what are the local assets that could be new 'lift-off' or connecting points for each community?

### A community garden in Massey East

*"Our street had been doing a few things together like street parties. The idea of a garden came about because Makora Park right next to us was nothing more than an empty grassy field. We talked about it with other neighbours. We quickly saw there was a keen interest to learn gardening skills and work together to make sure entire families could contribute and have access to fresh produce they actually grew.*

*The garden is entirely managed by local Cedar Heights residents. We have monthly 'dig in' days and a weekly watering roster. To communicate with our neighbours we have just begun the 'Cedar Leader', a wee newsletter to keep everyone updated and informed on what's coming up in the garden and also for wider street news."*

*Rebecca Gover  
Cedar Heights Residents Group  
- April 2010*



*Cedar Heights residents work together in the shared community garden that grew out of connections made through neighbourhood events.*



### 2.2.2 Proactively involve as many people as you can

Creating opportunities for collaboration in place often means asking questions – “who else would it be important to have here eg. arts groups, environmental groups, local businesses, someone from every street?” Widening the net needs to be seen not as a threat to power, rather as a key to potential success.

The potential in communities won't be fully recognised unless a lot more people and sectors are involved in the thinking and planning. Being part of co-creating and designing something allows people to see themselves in the new vision and plans that emerge, and then they become more empowered to act.

It is also important to pay attention to power dynamics and check for voices that may not be being heard. In groups and communities it is very easy for divisions to occur, and for some to shrink back, while others drive on. To avoid this, or negate it it's important to:

- make sure everyone who wants to or needs to participate is able to
- pay close attention to the power dynamics and how they play out locally
- bring all those who are part of potential solutions together as part of the conversation – and do what you can to keep them talking and working together; and
- ensure those with the least voice or experience of being 'in' are consciously involved and included.



At Te Raa Mokopuna 2010 in Massey, Auckland, the whole community was involved on all levels: Library staff provided a story time, local Hip Hop crews and other talent entertained, and the community was invited to take part in forming a vision for their neighbourhood.

*“Bones talked about the process of ‘the feeler, the shaker, the insider’ and the analogy of the box. He talked about the insider who knows best about what’s inside the box but is not often asked for his opinion – so he’s not the determiner of change.*

*Too often the power lies instead with the feelers and shakers on the outside.*

*Bones advocated for enabling the ‘insiders’ of our communities to take the lead, with the support of the shakers and feelers, people who are on the outside of our communities but willing to help and support.”*

*Thoughts from Bones, Changemaker  
Mongrel Mob Notorious Chapter at Auckland Leaderful  
Communities Workshop - Aug 2009*

### A definition of community building

*“The Aspen Institute defines community building as an emphasis on participatory processes that develop leadership, enhance ‘social capital’ and personal networks, and strengthen a community’s capacity for improvement. So that means social capital is an ‘end’ as well as a ‘means.’”*

*Mark Cabaj  
Tamarack Institute of Community Engagement  
- July 2010*

### Talking to people in their own homes

*“For us to forward plan our Iwi health and social strategy, we need to know our people’s thinking - to hear from those who don’t often get asked, or surveyed. It needed to be kanoahi ki te kanoahi (face to face), and in people’s own homes. We knew we had to recruit and train surveyors who are part of us and really know our people. They needed to be trusted by people whose voices have not been heard before, or who have often been ignored. And now, we need to involve those people in helping develop our strategies.”*

*Louisa Erickson  
Iwi/Community Development Project Manager,  
Whakatohea Maori Trust Board - July 2010*

### 2.2.3 Value and involve residents as community experts to actively build capacity

Community-led development is all about drawing on community wisdom, knowledge and enthusiasm, encouraging collaboration and letting local people take leadership. It can be easy to say this but harder to actually make it happen.

We are constantly hearing questions such as “who is the community?” and “which people?” Sometimes the term ‘community’ is used when referring to working with community groups and voluntary organisations based in the community. But this is only one aspect of community; the true heart of the community is its **residents**, who bring their own local knowledge and expertise.

Being an ‘actor’ in your community means being directly involved in what happens. It’s much more than being consulted or informed, and is almost the opposite of having things done for you or being a recipient of someone else’s worthy endeavours.

When it’s about ‘my family’ or ‘my street’ or ‘my park’ or ‘my school’ – people really do care and will be more likely to connect with community-led action.

Working at this neighbourhood level however takes a lot of time and resources and can be really challenging. For example: it’s difficult communicating with a community of place (they don’t have a group email address), and there is no one person (like a manager) who can make decisions on the community’s behalf. Similarly, asking, encouraging, and inspiring local people to get involved, and be active locally, is often easier said than done.

In many cases, residents often have little (if any) experience of taking responsibility in their own communities, as usually decisions have been made for them, or without them. This paradigm can take some time to change and often requires multiple actions and activities that intentionally bring people together over time. Processes that seed and intentionally encourage local leadership and build and inspire trust and confidence are key to success.



Local Tongan community and members of Heilala Tongan Playgroup, Great Start team members and Hutt City Council were among those who gathered to plan the Taita Community Garden Opening Day. Along with the discussions, healthy kai was shared and children made garden art and planted seedlings.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

Margaret Mead,  
Cultural Anthropologist

### Great Start’s inclusive approach

*“Any person connected into Great Start is always welcomed and offered support but it is never seen as a one way relationship.*

***Everyone is given a chance to identify what and how they might contribute into their community.***

*This was how two local men got involved in helping out as volunteers with the maintenance that needed doing around the Great Start House.*

*They had been unemployed for some years and had time on their hands, so were happy to do what they could to help. They enjoyed being able to contribute and felt they were doing something of value. They also noticed that they were asked their opinion on all sorts of matters, not just the house and gardens but on events and ways to connect with people. And their ideas were listened to – really listened to.”*

Draft Great Start Taita Case Study  
- April 2010

### 2.2.4 Local events are a key connecting mechanism

Having fun together, playing and celebrating are proving to be critical aspects of community building and empowering local residents. Art, music, song, dance – all of these creative acts have the power to transform and connect communities.

Events with a positive local focus – family days, parades, street barbeques and top town events – offer great opportunities to begin building relationships and enable communities to get to know each other. They also offer a new place where different kinds of conversations between locals can begin.

**Conversations nurture relationships and unleash talk about potential; they are the start of something, and everything.**

When community building processes are intentionally built into event management processes, community capacity and genuine local ownership result. The point is not about providing events ‘for’ or ‘to’ but helping do events ‘with’ local residents. This means an event planning approach that actively seeks to:

- involve a wide number and range of people
- share power and decision making
- purposely build new skills within the team
- actively follow up with debriefings; and
- plan together on next steps.



Opotiki 'No Sweat Whanau Day' 2009.

*“The intention of ‘It’s about us – together’ is not only to celebrate Race Relations Week but to bring together our neighbourhood and celebrate our wonderful assets and strengths.*



*This year we had a five hour concert jam packed with local young talent; no one in the 2500 strong audience wanted to go home when it had finished! The event was a real community effort with over 420 volunteers which included community service providers, volunteers and performers. Having now got a real sense of this great local event, we hope that many of them will return as part of next year’s organising team.”*

*Zena Wrigley, Roskill South Oasis  
Early Years Hub - March 2010*

### Event action in Opotiki

*“A group of community people and agencies in Opotiki agreed to hold a ‘No Sweat Whanau Day’ to encourage playing and spending time together as families. The day was beautiful, and went well, and gave the organising group a chance to do something practical together. Some weeks later, a gathering was called to celebrate the success and to learn together by reflecting on what we did. This meeting generated ideas about different and better ways to do things.*

*One of the big ideas was to ‘add value’ to events that others were already planning – by coming around them and awhi-ing (supporting) what was already happening in Opotiki.”*

*From Opotiki ‘No Sweat Whanau Day’  
Debrief Meeting Notes - July 2009*



*Enjoying the entertainment at the Molloy Green Neighbourhood Day 2010.*



### 2.2.5 Understand and grow local 'community' capitals

While much attention is paid to improving physical community infrastructure such as facilities, parks and schools, the importance of also strengthening social capital<sup>18</sup> within place is frequently overlooked and undervalued.

These often 'unseen factors' – such as sense of pride, identity and belonging, connectedness, acceptance of difference and diversity, people knowing their neighbours, the existence of helping networks and organisations and active volunteer contributions are all intrinsic parts of healthy, strong, happy, resilient and well functioning communities. Naming, valuing and measuring these within place based community building can help make them more visible for communities themselves, funders and other community partners.

There is a developing field focusing on 'community capital'<sup>19</sup>. This refers to the variety of capitals and assets that lie within community – such as financial/economic, environmental, social, and cultural assets.

While the tools and strategies for building community capital and capacity are slowly becoming clearer, it needs to be remembered that this is a complex area with many divergent factors at play – for example: people are working longer hours and have less time to participate in community life, and increasing use of the internet and other technologies to communicate and connect means new 'online communities' are taking a more prominent role in people's lives.



Massey residents place pictures on a story board to describe the kind of street and neighbourhood they would like to live in, while enjoying a community-focused day out at Te Raa Mokopuna 2010.

#### Strengthening connections in Waitara

*"We've focused on building connections at a whole number of levels. There's now a quarterly social services network to enable service providers to identify needs and talk together on local social issues. We've begun building connections at street level too, with the Massey Matters Street BBQ guide giving us ideas to get started.*

*Alongside Neighbourhood Support and the new community constable, we organised a street BBQ in a part of town that was having a few issues. We had a safety themed colouring competition – which local kids brought back to get a prize. They also did chalk drawings of the local Senior Sergeant as he lay down on the footpath – then he took the kids for rides in his police car. The meat works donated sausages for the BBQ and another local woman brought her coffee caravan for free – which was a definite draw-card in bringing the adults out!"*

Melissa Willis

Community Development Advisor

Waitara Community Development Project - July 2010

*Getting the community together at Waitara's first street BBQ: Shown here are a school social worker, Neighbourhood Support coordinator, a Child Advocate, the Community Constable, Community Development Adviser Melissa Willis, and a local business person.*

<sup>18</sup> There are many definitions of social capital – two we like are "social capital is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people" (Dekker and Uslaner 2001; Uslaner 2001) and "social capital can be defined simply as the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them" (Fukuyama 1997).

<sup>19</sup> Flora and Flora – see <http://www.soc.iastate.edu/staff/cflora/ncrcrd/capitals.html>

## 2.3 Leading in and leaderful communities

### At a glance

#### *What we're learning about 'leaderful communities'<sup>20</sup>:*

Leadership is often about the power and talents of an individual or individuals. Rather than power and authority concentrated in the hands of a few, we understand how communities can be truly strengthened when leadership comes from all corners of the community – we see this as 'leaderful communities'.

This means seeing leadership as a process of empowerment where leadership, contribution and action are intentionally grown and/or transferred to others. Actively drawing out skills based contribution, and engagement changes the paradigm for everyone. It means looking for leaders and leadership in a whole range of new places and actively supporting them to grow confidence in their own ability to both lead and work with others. It's also about acknowledging and celebrating proactive contributions; and valuing and growing opportunities for *many* to contribute within their local community.

#### *Key lessons:*

- Create opportunities for new leaders at decision making tables and support them to be there.
- Look more broadly at community leadership: value and celebrate local leaders.
- Create and hold leadership spaces for others.
- Servant leadership actively empowers others.
- Proactively develop local community leadership strategies.
- Communities are looking for integrity and authenticity in their leaders.

*"Cross sectoral collaboration is the only way New Zealand communities will achieve the stepped changes we need. These community-led approaches are the way of the future for NZ."*

*Anyone can be a leader in community-led development. And we need to actively nurture leadership qualities and potential right across our communities."*

*Stephen Town  
Chief Executive,  
Tauranga City Council  
- June 2010*

<sup>20</sup> 'Leaderful communities' emanates from Dr. Joseph A. Raelin, a US professor and management consultant who coined the term in his 2003 book: *Creating Leaderful Organisations: How to Bring Out Leadership in Everyone* (Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 2003). Key concepts are covered in 'The Leaderful Community' article at [http://www.winstonbrill.com/brill001/html/article\\_index/articles/551-600/article579\\_body.html](http://www.winstonbrill.com/brill001/html/article_index/articles/551-600/article579_body.html) and you can find more of Dr. Raelin's resources at <http://www.leaderful.org/>

### 2.3.1 Create opportunities for new leaders at decision making tables and support them to be there

There is a difference between community engagement and community decision making. While many people might participate in community life, decision making about their community is often still in the hands of a few. Without being exposed to a different way, communities don't realise that it's possible to move beyond being engaged in dialogue and discussion processes to actually sitting at decision making tables. Consciously building opportunities for shared decision making in community planning processes and through everyday community activities is a valuable approach, along with having experienced people available to mentor and guide new and emerging local leaders at decision making tables.



Tamaki locals get together to get healthy through a locally led wellbeing programme. Photo courtesy of Ora'anga Kopapa Matutu.

### 2.3.2 Look more broadly at community leadership; value and celebrate local leaders

Those in traditional positions of power and authority such as politicians, influential business people, school principals etc, may not always be the people who actually make change happen in their communities. Listening closely to find out where and who the active community leaders are at the 'grassroots' level is key.

Community garden leaders, public health nurses, church ministers, community house coordinators, kuia, rugby coaches, youth leaders, the corner dairy owner – the grassroots local leaders in each community will be different. Moving forward, it

*"It was important to identify the window of opportunity that the Tamaki Transformation Programme presented for us as a community.*

*Community building is all about bringing people together. In the early days of forming the TIES (Tamaki Inclusive Engagement Strategy) team, it was important to ensure we met people face to face and we talked to people rather than email them.*

*We developed some new language and called the people in the community CSEs – **Community Sector Experts**. As facilitators we had to constantly broker the space, acknowledging that everyone had different needs.*

*Community building doesn't stop at bringing people together, we have to also know how to hold people together.*

*Each individual had to feel acknowledged and not feel they had to fight to be heard. Once they knew this, they were ready to embrace the sense of the whole. This way no one got left behind."*

*Alfred Ngaro and  
Moka Fuemana Ngaro, Tamaki  
- February 2010*

### Walking the talk in Taita

*In 2009, a survey\* exploring community views about Great Start, noted that Great Start had established a hallmark of attracting and quickly building meaningful relationships and connections with an increasingly diverse range of people. It was also seen as having a reputation for:*

- *showing **leadership** and getting things done*
- ***role modelling its principles** and values (eg. valuing children, listening and responding to the community)*
- *supporting and encouraging **relationship building** and connections amongst other people, groups, agencies and the Taita community.*

*\*Great Start Taita /  
Pomare Community Views Research Report - July 2009*

helps to focus energy and attention on connecting grass roots leaders with those in more formal positions of power so:

- leadership is not seen as the province of only a 'professional' few
- local grassroots leaders can both share their perspectives and learn from others
- relationships, networks and resources of those with 'power' can be tapped into and connected locally; and
- stepping stones into other community leadership roles can be identified and supported.

Acknowledging and actively celebrating all forms of leadership within communities is also increasingly important. For example hosting community awards processes to publicly recognise and celebrate local 'heroes' now take place in many communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.



*RaiseUp Massey Crew receive a Massey Marvels award from sportswoman Beatrice Faumuina for their work in providing safe monthly dance parties for Massey youth (2009).*



*Mayor John Forbes and Sir Ron Carter – after the Opotiki Community Contribution Awards 2009, where Sir Ron was a guest speaker from the Sir Peter Blake Trust.*

### **2.3.3 Create and hold spaces for others to contribute, and then lead**

Stewarding potential means knowing it is not up to us as individuals to make everything happen. Even as leaders with visions, growing and empowering others to act is important. A leader's role can become not 'to do', but to delegate or to instead support others to connect with an idea, opportunity or need, and make it happen for themselves. It is an enabling role. And intentionality is important – intentionally holding the space, naming it and inviting others to step into it are key to growing new local leadership and ownership of change.

It might be as simple as asking "Who can help stack the chairs?" "Who else can take notes today?" It's all about supporting people to become 'intuitive' about offering to help, which in turn can help foster a culture of 'shared contribution' and confidence in stepping up to take on other leadership roles within their community.

### **Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership.....**

1. *A person of character*
2. *Puts people first*
3. *Skilled communicator*
4. *Compassionate collaborator*
5. *Has foresight*
6. *Is a systems thinker*
7. *Leads with moral authority*

*James Sipe and Don Frick 2009*

### **What servant leadership means to me**

*"It's not about you as an individual, it's about what you're part of and what you're trying to create – it's about doing with, not doing for or to."*

*Pat Snedden  
Chair of Tamaki Transformation  
Programme  
& Housing New Zealand  
Corporation at Auckland CLD  
Network Forum  
August 2009*

### **2.3.4 Servant leadership actively empowers others**

Servant leadership builds from the principle of 'serving' and being in service of communities rather than dictating to them<sup>21</sup>.

It's not just about how you are as a leader but how you support and empower others to stand in front. This means looking to create

<sup>21</sup> The modern servant leadership movement was launched by Robert K. Greenleaf in the 1970s. In order to be a servant leader, one needs the following qualities: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, growth and building community. Acquiring these qualities tend to give a person authority versus power; for more see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servant\\_leadership](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servant_leadership)



opportunities for multiple voices and views to be heard, actively sharing power and proactively finding ways for others within each community to meaningfully participate at decision making tables. It's also about enabling others to have honour, and be honoured.



Tamaki's Kaiarahi Community Facilitators.

### 2.3.5 Proactively develop local community leadership strategies

Rather than starting to seek replacements when people leave, having strategies that enable emerging new leaders to intentionally learn from wise hands, hearts and minds should be a core part of every community's leadership plan.

Working with an **'each one teach one'** philosophy and consciously sharing the leadership load means growing new leaders in an ongoing way. Often we keep on leading and doing through habit. Instead we could ask "Are there other people who could be doing what I am doing?" Or, "could I work with someone else to do this task?"

Often too, we expect people in communities to step up just because we've asked them to. But sometimes it takes more than that. Having processes of shadowing, buddying and working alongside others, help make the next leadership step much easier to take.

Growing community leadership doesn't always mean developing a special training course (although these can be helpful!) What does matter is proactively thinking about opportunities that already exist that could be built on eg. local school Boards of Trustees, coaching sports teams, youth mentoring programmes, encouraging residents to participate in 'how to' workshops that cover topics such as facilitation, event management and promotion, strategic planning, sponsorship, composting, parenting, and media training etc. Activities or dialogue within communities that intentionally involve conscious discussions about understandings of leadership, capacity building, collaboration and succession planning are also helpful – although you might not always use those specific terms!

*"The Kaiarahi \* – Community Facilitator training we've been running in Tamaki has been incredibly successful – we've now got 18 people trained."*

*It's about giving local people more skills to go and have more in depth conversations in their networks and communities about what is happening and how they can be part of the change.*

*We estimate that kaiarahi have hosted 1000 new conversations about the Tamaki Transformation Programme within the Tamaki community.*

*This process is also enabling our community facilitators in Tamaki to be more confident in speaking about, and advocating for, local perspectives and needs in our community."*

*Jenny Chilcott,  
Community Engagement  
Manager,  
Tamaki Transformation  
Programme*

*(\*Kaiarahi = to guide)*



*Mataura school children were invited to sing at a planning workshop held in 2009 with international community development facilitator Bliss Browne, from Imagine Chicago (see Appendix 3). Bliss encouraged the children to be involved in the whole workshop saying "It takes a child to inspire a village".*

### 2.3.6 Communities are looking for integrity and authenticity in their leaders

In discussions about community across Aotearoa New Zealand, many people have spoken honestly and openly about the importance of integrity and ‘authentic’ community leadership.

For many that means leadership cannot be ‘taken’ by individuals, it must be affirmed by those they are working alongside or seeking to serve. Many people saw authentic community leaders having mana that comes not from birthright<sup>22</sup>, but from trust, respect and experience, with leadership paths built not just from success, but hardships too. Authentic leaders are recognised as those who can make mistakes, learn from them and move on – with the knowledge and support about how things should be different ‘next time.’

Integrity in leadership is about character and how you do things, as much it is about achievements. Being authentic is about being humble, being willing to listen and to take on board multiple views and perspectives. Authentic leadership is also about more than bold vision, foresight and courage, it is also about the ability to inspire and mobilise others. This means having the skills and ability to value the collective, and build both alliances and bridges to actively engage others to make things happen.



Stewart Islander Kari Beaven with visitors to the predator-free sanctuary of Ulva Island (a short boat ride from Stewart Island). This coastal inlet environment has had a big impact on residents, and vice versa, since the area was first settled in the 1860s. Kari discusses the link between social, environmental and economic wellbeing and notes the important role that community leadership has played in turning a holistic eco tourism vision for the Island into a reality.



Weka (pictured above) as well as Robins move about freely at the feet of visitors to Ulva Island, unafraid of humans in their predator-free sanctuary.

#### The Rakiura Way

*“Eight years ago on Rakiura/ Stewart Island a few people came to recognise that the Island was losing something special – its wildlife. It had happened gradually, and no one person or organisation was responsible for doing something about it. Then a few people took the lead quietly. They started putting out possum and rat traps, leading by example, and talking and listening to people about what mattered.*

*The project has now tapped into a shared sense that Islanders have something special to protect, regardless of their views on other matters. The outcomes have been more than an increase in bird life, or even better, roses in newly possum-free gardens – neighbours are talking, bragging rat-catching counts and weka sightings in their own backyards. New community members are getting to know people by asking permission to follow radio-tagged birds into backyards.*

*The key outcome is now easily recognisable: the sense of pride through working together toward a common goal.”*

*Abridged from presentation to  
Southern New Zealand Community-  
Led Development Forum  
- May 2010*

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted however that there are many important cultural contexts around leadership. In many cultures, including Te Ao Maori, leadership is and continues to be transferred through birthright or whakapapa. In some families, particular children are raised with a set of expectations around leadership and community responsibility that is widely recognised and accepted by all around them.

## 2.4 Creating and sustaining momentum

### At a glance:

#### *What we are learning about creating and sustaining momentum:*

While the long term outcomes communities seek may be clear and seem simple, the best pathways to achieve them are often not quite so apparent. Frequent and ongoing changes in communities means community-led development journeys will be filled with ‘ups and downs’ and ‘twists and turns’ – especially when key leaders leave, if funding stops, if the balance of power or energy changes within an initiative or if there are major changes to the external environment – like earthquakes, changes of government policy and direction, or global financial crises.

Losing momentum can mean communities starting over, or taking five steps back before going forward again. There are proactive tactics that can be used to help maintain momentum and forward movement, including reflecting on and documenting the changes being noticed, and analysing and using these to help plan next steps towards intended outcomes.

#### *Key lessons:*

- Get some visible action happening quickly.
- Have clear intent and work organically and adaptively.
- Incorporate key planning steps for success.
- Use stories to support reflection, learning and documenting progress.
- Learn from what doesn’t work.
- Build in time for action-reflection.
- Seek comprehensive systems change too.
- Plan for transitions of key people.
- Personal and professional practice is intertwined.

### Visible action helped Massey get started

*“Alongside successful strategic alliances and partnering, the focus on action is seen as a critical aspect of Massey Matters. Action is the project lynchpin and has drawn both the community groups and residents into Massey Matters events and activities have also revealed and stimulated a groundswell of local leadership and support as well as provoking constructive organisational alliances both within and beyond the Council.”*

*From Massey Matters  
– Telling our Story of Community Led  
Action and Change  
- May 2009*

*Mataura’s market days, two years on: A local singer performs for free, a church runs a café, and locals sell, buy and connect at between 15 and 25 stalls.*



### 2.4.1 Get some visible action happening quickly

In today’s world people tend to have short attention spans, so starting by creating some short term and pretty immediate and ‘doable’ actions and milestones is helpful. Seeing is believing for people who didn’t know that change was actually possible in their community. For others, being part of community-led action (as either a participant or recipient) can be very empowering and help catalyse the next round of local talking, planning and doing. Having people say, “what shall we do next?” or “how can we do it better next time?” are important measures of effective meaningful engagement, and forward momentum.

### 2.4.2 Have clear intent and work organically and adaptively

While traditionally we have been taught to have the answer before acting, instead we are learning it is important to have the right question and intent, and let the answers unfold over time.

However, while the solutions or pathways for action might not be obvious upfront – having clarity on the outcome or aim you seek to achieve matters. Having ‘intent’ means knowing where you want to get to – your visions, objectives and goals. Working organically means you’re prepared to experiment a little, explore and respond to a range of potential solutions that emerge from ongoing conversations and opportunities and work in a less structured, more responsive way.

Increasingly, those working with complex issues and uncertainty are having to adapt and utilise new ways of working, including:

- being clear about and continually promoting shared visions, outcomes and goals (the intent)



*Barnardos began in Taita with a plan to offer social services, but decided to ask questions first to find out what residents wanted. This genuine enquiring intent has been key to Great Start's success – seen through high community involvement and the respect of other service providers.*

### Mataura market thrives

*“The market started two years ago with six tables. The most recent market required all 16 tables in the hall plus more. Quite apart from a venue for selling goods, people are enjoying the market as a place to meet.”*

*Meg Appleby,  
Mataura Market Organising Team  
- May 2010*

### Don't assume what communities want – ASK them

*“In mid 2007 the leadership team of Barnardos NZ, a national children's NGO, was considering what to do with an old building located in the heart of Taita.*

*A relatively radical suggestion was mooted – rather than making a decision around the Barnardos senior management table, could Taita's residents first be asked what they would like to see Barnardos do with the house?*

*Thus begun a number of months of door knocking, asking people about what they wanted for themselves and their community and what, if anything, Barnardos might do to help.*

*Continued in the next box*

### 1200 conversations, one clear conclusion: No more services please!

*What Taita's residents said, in many different ways, was that what they did want were opportunities to get to know their neighbours, to start to feel more connected into their community and to have a sense of belonging and pride in the place they lived.*

*Their interest was not in whether Barnardos could or should develop a new early childhood education service but in identifying who else lived in their community, what was going on for them and how they might start to look out for and help each other.*

*For Barnardos, this feedback was completely unexpected. And it provoked a serious question: ‘What does this mean for an organisation whose core business was to provide services?’ Answering this question was the start of a whole new journey into community-led development.”*

*From Draft Taita Case Study,  
Letting Residents Lead the Way  
- May 2010*



- understanding that often the best ways to achieving local goals and solutions will often emerge<sup>23</sup> as people begin talking and working together – which means having flexible rather than rigid parameters when embarking on designing individual projects
- not expecting to always have power and control over what happens, how or why
- being open and able to respond to new ideas and opportunities
- monitoring performance against intended outcomes – relying on a diverse range of information sources such as practice wisdom<sup>24</sup>, statistical data, experiences and perceptions of participants/community members, service level measures, and evaluation findings
- being prepared to adapt to ever-changing conditions
- trusting the process and those you're working with; and
- expecting the 'unexpected' to happen, and not being surprised or alarmed when it does.

Sometimes making progress can take longer than expected and at other times, things can really charge ahead. Like the process of community-led development, the pace of change is equally difficult to predict with any great certainty.



*When Great Start was nominated for a Hutt City Council Community Award in 2009, they called on local children to share their stories at the awards night. Among them were Danielle and Kaisa, pictured with Minister for Social Development Hon Paula Bennett.*

## Demonstrating progress in Taita 2007-2010

*Great Start Taita embarked on its mission to make Taita a better place for children and families at the end of 2007. Huge progress has been made with an active **network of 73 member organisations and evidence of:***

- **A vibrant, connected community life seen through:** a timebank, regular community market, a community garden, a vibrant community hub.
- **A thriving network for young families including:** a scheme to welcome every new baby born in Taita; strong connections with all three primary schools; an innovative children's programme (My Story) that fosters children as leaders; a wrap-around antenatal service; and a breastfeeding support service accessed by 100 women in 2009.
- **Positive arts, education and business options for locals** which has led to several people moving to set up small businesses and the launch, in May 2010, of a micro-lending scheme, *Spark your Dream*.
- **Attention and respect from local and national leaders**, eg. a partnership relationship with Hutt City Council, support and increasingly active involvement from local businesses, frequent visits from government departments and Ministers, and winning the Supreme award at Hutt City Council's Community Awards.

*Abridged From Draft Taita Case Study,  
Letting Residents Lead the Way  
- May 2010*

<sup>23</sup> Emerge or emergent here means that the best course of action is 'discovered' as dialogue and collaboration processes take place, rather than actions being known or prescribed in advance and rolled out in a linear way.

<sup>24</sup> Practice wisdom acknowledges the experience, and intuition of skilled people working in key positions within communities – colloquially referred to as 'gut feeling'.

### 2.4.3 Incorporate key planning steps for success

Good planning is a key part of successful community-led development. Working organically does not mean you don't plan! Emerging good practice from Canada indicates a number of core elements that are key in establishing and developing successful comprehensive collaborative initiatives<sup>25</sup>. These include:

1. *Begin by building an inspiring vision and develop a coherent strategy to sit alongside:*
  - with clear long term goals and a well understood picture of what success will look like
  - identifying a set of potential programmes and activities, along with the various inter-sectoral collaborations that will be needed to support and develop action on the ground<sup>26</sup>
  - having both strategies and projects built upon local knowledge, existing strengths, capacities and resources.
2. *Build on available solid evidence and good planning:*
  - Undertake and/or bring together a range of potential information sources such as local asset mapping, local history and development context, demographic profiles, community views and perspectives, needs assessments, service and facility information and other relevant local research. Proactively involving local residents in information gathering processes is essential to longer term buy in and success.
  - Ensure that programme and planning approaches are evidence-based but also provide room to incorporate 'learning by doing' approaches.
  - Be prepared to help build capacity within local communities to enable local people to be part of 'good' planning. Proactive involvement of local community leaders, residents and organisations early within planning stages (rather than just at implementation stage) helps build long term community capacity to forward plan and drive change on the ground.



*Faces painted at a street barbeque in Waitara.*

3. *Maintain flexibility and incorporate adaptive learning approaches into the implementation phase:*
  - break up 'big picture' strategy and implementation plans into manageable and realistic chunks so the scale and nature of proposed changes and actions aren't so overwhelming and can more easily be measured/reflected on
  - dovetail new activities into good things/ community strengths/positive collaborations already happening, and only starting from scratch where you really have to
  - work on multiple actions and interventions to see what works and in what combination
  - set aside time, resources and energy into developing appropriate learning and evaluation plans so that results and new thinking and approaches can be built back into services, projects and the overall community master plan in 'real time'.



*Some of the participants at community celebrations for Pasifika month 2009, held in the GI community library. (Photo courtesy of Ka Mau Te Wero Trust, Glen Innes).*

<sup>25</sup> This section leans heavily on the advice from a review of comprehensive collaborative community initiatives in Canada ie. the full range of initiatives that take a comprehensive approach to change within communities to improve the wellbeing of their residents. See: <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/research/comprehensive-community-initiatives-lessons-learned-potential-and-opportunities-moving-forward/>

<sup>26</sup> Collaborations also need to be supported with clear Terms of Reference which provide clear guidance on expected roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. Principles and processes for working together – including reflection, review, relationship and conflict management are also important to include.

#### 2.4.4 Use stories to support reflection, learning and documenting progress

While number based performance measures and targets have been traditional tools for communicating progress and change, stories and storytelling are now being seen as compelling and complementary approaches. It's not an either or – used together, stories, images, performance targets and milestones can present a very powerful and memorable picture of community learning, progress and change. For funders especially, the impact of stories is considerably strengthened when 'numbers' or quantified outputs and achievements are included alongside.

Stories can also powerfully describe some of the tangible and more intangible changes happening in communities as a result of community-led action. Complex issues facing communities<sup>27</sup> means experimenting with a range of projects, activities and services to see what combination of solutions work best. Stories are a great way to help reflect on and make sense of what happened during implementation phases, to demonstrate progress, and to assist in working out what next steps to take.

Telling inspiring stories about what others have done, or that celebrate local successes or point to what 'could be' for each community, can also help generate genuine excitement and new creative thinking about different local futures and potential next steps.



*The Good Cents forum Beyond Cycles of Debt explored keys to change through sharing stories. Participants also created a mural representing the stories of the past, present and future of Porirua.*

#### A picture of progress from Massey



*"In this picture, her son Marcus (9) is grumpy – he didn't want to go to Mum's graduation. He wanted to stay and work with other neighbourhood kids to clean up their street.*

*Over the last 18 months, this street has seen some fantastic community building happening and Sailau has been a big part of it. That day, everyone on the street stopped and clapped the Tiatias when they got in their car and drove to Sailau's graduation as an early childhood teacher.*

*But in 2008 it wasn't like that. Neighbours didn't know each other and were often too scared to go out. It's a different place now. Sailau's story gives us some clues about what makes a difference...*

- *Residents, community groups, local and central government, researchers all in there together.*
- *Someone not just asked BUT involved this street in defining and changing their own future.*
- *This is a place of assets, energy, and talent - people can see the change and have pride in what they've created. They talk about "what shall we do next."*
- *Poorly attended public meetings were replaced by door knocking, conversations and street bbqs.*
- *Place definitely matters, it's made collaboration possible here in a way that means everyone has a stake. Whether you come from a Pacific, youth, health, crime or education perspective – neighbourhood is what brings everyone together."*

*Abridged from Megan Courtney, Presentation to Passing Go Conference  
- November 2009*

<sup>27</sup> For more on complex issues see page 45.

#### 2.4.5 Learn from what doesn't work

As noted above, working in the complex space means not always knowing what will work, especially when doing things for the first time. Sometimes also, the 'firsts' don't always work out as anticipated.

When something doesn't work as planned, the easy thing can be to give up and/or bury it quickly. However these experiences can be very valuable learning opportunities, and knowing what doesn't work and why is often more valuable than knowing what does. The difficulty however continues to be how we document and safely share what didn't work and why – in ways that inform multiple audiences (eg. residents, partners, funders), without unduly 'damaging' or labeling with failure, those who have bravely shared their experience and learnings.

In addition, through reflecting on and analysing what didn't work, new critical information can also be uncovered for next steps planning – and then moving on. Sometimes this may result in keeping hope and the idea alive, and repeating the process – with new knowledge of what didn't work. Conversely, it could mean pausing and delaying the next attempt until a later time – or changing tack and abandoning the idea or project altogether.

#### 2.4.6 Build in time for action-reflection

Action-reflection is a key principle of community-led development but one that can take some dedicated time management and organisational/personal commitment to truly 'practice'. When things get busy, there is often a temptation to focus on doing more doing, without building time into processes and practice that actively encourages feedback, learning and review.

Seeing thinking and reflecting as **actions** can help, as can including reflection time/processes into work programmes and team meetings. In this way, acting into a new way of thinking AND thinking into a new way of acting can be fostered – as both are true.

*Sometimes standing still is the most effective course of action*

*"At Great Start in Taita, standing still is seen as very important. The team has discovered that when they have the opportunity to do this and listen within themselves they see other ways of doing things, working and being together.*

*This also allows them to work with different perspectives, to be part of co-creating new possibilities with the community.*

*Having a skilled evaluator working with the team from very early on helped encourage and assist the Great Start team to build critical reflective practice into their work – both as a team and individually. The Evaluator's presence also sent a message of validating 'thinking as doing, and doing as thinking.'"*

*Draft Great Start Taita Case Study,  
Letting Residents Lead the Way  
- May 2010*



### 2.4.7 Seek comprehensive systems change too



History has shown that it is not possible to create social transformation by working on just one part of the system. More significant change happens when there is simultaneous intervention in many parts of the system (eg. making changes for families, the environment, educational outcomes,

healthy environments, and the local economy together as part of an overarching place based community-led development initiative).

This means everyone working together to take a 'comprehensive' approach to local development rather than being fixated on any one particular sector in isolation. Undertaking initiatives that impact on multiple wellbeing outcomes and proactively reaching out to other sectors can help. This means seeing a local priority like family violence prevention in terms of potential multidimensional responses, and potential involvement of a very broad range of organisations and approaches.

For example, engaging with sports clubs and animal welfare groups, holding street or neighbourhood clean-ups, strengthening the local economy, encouraging more activities for young people, developing local playgroups, having local 'buddies' for new migrant families, developing community service hubs and strengthening neighbourliness could all be potential family violence prevention responses.



Getting 'the whole system in the room' (such as this cross-section of the Porirua community at the Beyond Cycles of Debt forum) can bring diverse thinking together and be a starting point for new solutions to emerge. In this one day workshop (preceded by a year of conversations) five positive action plans were initiated.



*Experience is showing that going where the energy and agreement is can help clarify what activities might lead off first.*

### Revitalising Mātaura

*"A huge range of actions and initiatives are now underway in Mātaura to help revitalise the town. They range from new preschool music activities, to developing a new local business development plan, a thriving community garden, monthly community markets, main street clean-ups and gala days. Planning is also underway for a new iconic 'Swede' festival in July 2010, with local Mātaura sporting heroes invited to attend."*

*Abridged from presentation to  
Southern New Zealand Community-  
Led Development Forum  
- May 2010*

### Solutions beyond a single programme

*"Our work in relation to innovative practice also supports the need for whole systems thinking and recognition that 'another programme' is unlikely to be the solution to very much. Rather it is the 'how' of implementation, the quality of relationships, the opportunity for reflection and for adjusting existing programmes that is more likely to make a difference."*

*Charlie Moore,  
Community Engagement Manager,  
Families Commission  
July 2010*

#### 2.4.8 Plan for transitions of key people

As key people<sup>28</sup> shift roles in communities, or move out altogether, it is essential to think carefully about the transition plan required. Often the vast talents, complex web of relationships, and multiple roles that key people play in communities is not seen or well understood. The critical ‘how’ they do what they do also often goes undocumented or verbally shared.

As discussed in previous sections, being able to shadow or ‘buddy’ replacements for a time is incredibly helpful, as can:

- physically ‘handing over’ key relationships in a face to face way
- noting down key steps in the community’s journey to date and key factors that influenced ‘how’ things happened and why at that time
- documenting thoughts on local ‘politics’ and underlying dynamics that influence ‘how things get done’ in this community – it may be just one person’s perspective, but for new people coming in, it can offer some helpful clues and insights in the early days
- documenting what’s coming up, relative priorities for action and things that are ‘must do’s’ and why.

For those coming into new roles, it’s really important to take time and really learn about what’s gone on, going on and why. Taking the time to build relationships and actively question and learn from those around you is also invaluable. Remember, no two communities are the same, so what worked in previous roles, might not work in new ones. Listen, learn, seek and take advice – and don’t be in a hurry to have all the answers.

#### 2.4.9 Personal and professional practice is intertwined

Community-led development and local change rely on thoughtful, passionate and practical people making things happen at a whole range of levels. Working successfully in this space means seeing yourself as part of the system in which you are working, not separate from it.

As practitioners or facilitators of community-led development, this means needing to reflect on ourselves, not just on our work. We need to be prepared to observe, challenge and adapt our own professional and personal practice because they are one and the same.

The Inspiring Communities team would like to continue shared conversations and thinking about the kinds of skill sets, practices and conditions that truly enable people working in the community-led development space to flourish – for as they do, so will the communities they work in and alongside.

*“There is increasing recognition of the need for more people with skill sets that enable them to ‘deeply’ listen and notice all that is happening around them.*

*Learning to pay attention to what is happening, what isn’t happening, where the energy is and where it isn’t...*

*...what is happening in ‘the middle space’ as people and ideas come together, and what is unfolding through collaborative dialogue is a lot to keep an eye on.*

*Seeing and listening in ways that are impartial, non-judgemental, and not laden with our own views and interpretations can be challenging.*

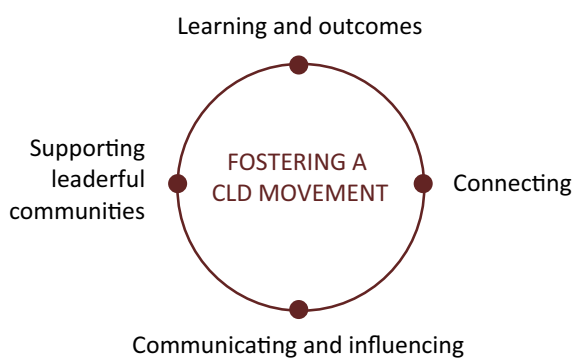
*It takes discipline, practice and patience, and also usually needs encouragement and a lot of support from others.”*

*Jenny Blagdon,  
Social Innovator and member  
of the Inspiring Communities  
Exchange Team*

<sup>28</sup> Such as passionate community leaders, experienced project co-ordinators or people in key governance roles etc.

This section focuses on some of the ‘big ideas’ that drive Inspiring Communities, our understanding of community-led development and our approach to learning. As ever, linking theory and practice is an ongoing ‘work in progress’ – not just for us and the Core Learning Cluster of eight community-led development initiatives we are intentionally learning with, but also for many other communities actively working to positively influence their local futures.

#### Inspiring Communities’ four interconnected areas of activity



As noted above **learning**, with a focus on outcomes, is **one of Inspiring Communities** four core activities. It was a key driver behind the establishment of Inspiring Communities. While actively supporting and fostering a community-led development movement that is seeing strong growth in New Zealand, equally, our intention is to **learn** about community-led development – what works, what gets in the way and what else might enhance current approaches to building strong and resilient local communities.

To this end we also see Inspiring Communities as a developmental organisation. We endeavour to foster a learning culture in everything we do. We are also learning about what it takes to develop an innovative movement for community change. Inspiring Communities is thus a member, as well as the facilitator of the Core Learning Cluster. Collectively we support the reflective learning of each of the local community initiatives involved, while also aiming to harness the benefits of this learning to inform the wider community-led development movement nationally.

#### 3.1 WHY we want to learn

We see learning as an integral requirement for growing the recognition, understanding, practice and evidence building of community-led development in New Zealand.

##### *Recognition*

Community-led development is an old, yet ‘new’ way of thinking for many of the people and agencies working with, for and in communities in New Zealand today. It is often a new way of thinking **within communities, recognising that they can be the authors** of their own destiny.

##### *Understanding*

We want and need to increase the documented New Zealand-based experience of community-led development and, while interest is growing, more understanding is needed in terms of:

- what community-led development means (as opposed to other existing approaches to community development, and service or programme delivery models)
- what the benefits are
- what tangible results are emerging; and
- what practice based evidence is developing to support this way of working.

##### *Practice*

We are attempting to both discover knowledge that is not yet fully understood (ie. how local communities thrive and what holds them back), feed-in learning from other related international and national developments, and test ideas that are in various stages of development. We are seeing community-led development in practice in many communities around New Zealand and seek to actively **watch, support, learn, research and communicate what is being discovered**.

And as we learn, our objective is to share our learnings widely, so more New Zealand communities can avoid re-inventing the wheel and can benefit from the experience of other community initiatives.

### 3.2 WHAT we want to learn

We want to learn about ‘how community-led development works’ and how communities can become and remain resilient. Specifically this means understanding more around:

- What conditions offer the most fertile ground for community-led development to flourish and be long lasting?
- What actions, beliefs and ways of operating most effectively create these conditions? How can we best foster capacity in these areas? How can we follow the application of lessons learned in one community into another community, and in doing so, test their wisdom and relevance over time and contexts?
- What evidence can we gather in terms of demonstrable changes that are happening in communities as conditions shift? What are the most practical tools and techniques to assist communities to measure, analyse and communicate the changes they see?
- Which ways work best to share what is being learned and what assists the transfer of key knowledge and ‘how to’ skills across communities and agencies?
- Persevere when success is delayed, to hold onto hope and to try again in a new way. “There’s always another way” and “When one door shuts another door opens” are two guiding beliefs evidenced in many courageous communities around the country.
- Acknowledge when things are not working as we had hoped or expected, and believe strongly that it really is ok to not get things right all the time – working within the context of ‘safe-fail’ rather than ‘fail-safe.’
- Be flexible, having the ability to respond and adapt to conditions. Keeping an eye out for unexpected developments and potential and seeing barriers as ‘pole vault training.’
- Use reflective practice in order to recognise moments of learning; noticing the small changes, and thinking about the effects on a situation, person, group, or ourselves.
- Develop approaches that bring together intentional focus, assessment and measurement with active learning.
- Be aware of all four quadrants of change (see next section) and recognise and support learning and change as it occurs in the personal, relational, structural and cultural areas.
- Continue to proactively seek new knowledge and learning from right around the globe and apply it to our understanding and practice here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### 3.3 Our learning culture

We are endeavouring to infuse a strong learning culture throughout everything we do. With a true learning culture we can:

- Develop visions, goals and targets to give us clarity on general direction, but be willing to risk and behave experimentally to see which pathways work best to get there – operating from a place of inquiry, retaining curiosity and a passion for ‘non-knowing’ and being prepared to step frequently into the unfamiliar, the uncertain and the unproven.
- Continuously challenge our own thinking, framing and methods around how and why we do what we do.



### 3.4 Our assumptions about learning and transformational change

Learning and change are inextricably linked. For lasting change to occur in communities, learning and analysis are necessary to understand what's happened before, and to inform new decisions and choices that inevitably arise as a result of change.

Four assumptions underpin Inspiring Communities' approach to learning and change:

1. For communities to become stronger and more resilient, particularly where large challenges are present, **transformation is required** in both the thinking and the actions within the community over a long term period.<sup>29</sup> While one-off or smaller incremental or circumstantial changes may build on and layer together over time to create the conditions for substantial change within communities, it is important to note that in isolation these one-off changes do not create stronger, more resilient communities in and of themselves.
2. For lasting transformation to happen within communities there are four key dimensions of change to consider; **personal, relational, structural and cultural**. Over time, these inter-related dimensions must all be influenced as

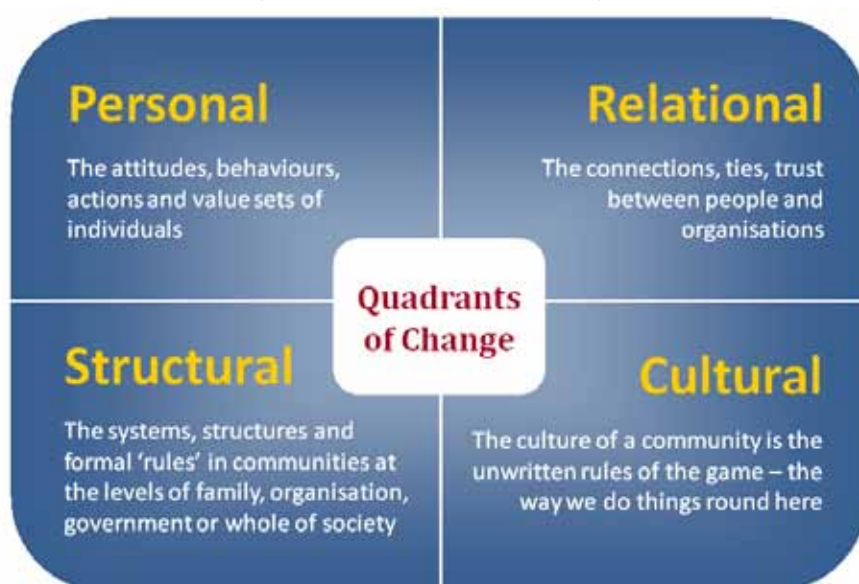
part of any successful and enduring community change process.

3. Personal and societal transformation develops from conscious daily practice, **humility**, and a **willingness to go on learning** and acquiring new skills. Developing the skills for meaningful community engagement, co-creativity and collaboration **is not easy**. We accept that what we know is only one perspective. We attempt to remain open to learning from others' perspectives.
4. **Learning is for sharing**. We want to learn in a way that supports inclusiveness and connectedness within communities. Having learning and knowledge as 'public or community goods' means everyone benefits. This approach also means everyone is provided with the opportunity to develop new ways of thinking, acting and behaving to support community change processes.

*"Creating projects and taking action are relatively easy, really listening to each other and appreciating each other's differences is not".*

*Rose Diamond "Living Your Passion: How love in action is seeding a whole new world" 2008*

**Transformation within communities requires influencing four dimensions of change**



Adapted from: J.P. Lederach, Neufeld, and Hal Culbertson. (2007). *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit*. The Joan B Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.

<sup>29</sup> New research emerging from NZ 2010 Community of the Year – Victory in Nelson – points to more than a decade of sustained community effort as part of their community transformation process.

### 3.5 Theories and practices supporting our learning approach

What follows is a short summary of some of the big picture thinking and ideas that lie behind current community-led development experience internationally. Holding and actively linking theory, framing and practice is important. It helps us understand how and why things should be approached in certain ways – or why things may have happened in the way they did.

#### 3.5.1 Evaluative thinking

Evaluation is traditionally used to determine whether an objective has been achieved or to improve a model. Our interest in evaluation is from a developmental perspective – we aim to provide both our Inspiring Communities team, and those we work alongside, with information and insights to help further develop something that is still in progress.

Grantmakers for Effective Organisations (GEO)<sup>30</sup> brings a helpful approach. They see evaluation as a core learning practice and define it as “systematic information gathering and research that informs learning and drives improvement (rather than proving). **Looking through the prism of learning offers a different view of evaluation. Rather than an accountability exercise, it becomes a powerful tool for improvement.** It enhances the capacity of all ... to understand and solve problems (together) more effectively.”

Inspiring Communities has drawn heavily on the work of Mark Cabaj along with Michael Quinn Patton, Frances Westley and Brenda Zimmerman in beginning to develop our thinking and practice in this area.<sup>31</sup>

There is a creative tension between evaluative thinking (an analytical way of thinking that brings data to bear on decisions) and intuitive noticing (a form of observation that uses all of our information, interpretation and knowledge to understand what is emerging through action at any point in time). We know both are important.

Building our capacity in both of these ways (and holding the tension that results from their mutual application), rather than applying an evaluative process per se, enables us to work with the emergent, experimental nature of social innovation<sup>32</sup>. It supports us to very quickly notice what isn't working and change course when necessary. It also puts community development practitioners, researchers, and other community members on an equal footing; everyone is encouraged to develop their ability to pay attention to what is happening and respond to it. This process also encourages diverse contributions – drawing together both statistical data and community change stories to reflect a ‘fuller’ picture of local change and progress against shared goals and objectives.

*“Developmental evaluation is a complete approach to evaluation which is appropriate to situations of shifting context, innovation and complexity. Differing from formative evaluation that is focused on refining existing models, programmes or strategies, and summative evaluation that is focused on judging the worth of those models, programmes and strategies, developmental evaluation is intended to help people and organisations create and continually adapt interventions. Unlike traditional situations where the emphasis is on ‘think, plan, implement and monitor’, the process of thinking, planning, implementing and evaluation is continuous and simultaneous.”*

*Approaches to Measuring More Vibrant Communities – Tamarack, 2010 page 4*  
[http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/Measuring\\_More\\_Vibrant\\_Communities.pdf](http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/Measuring_More_Vibrant_Communities.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Evaluation in Philanthropy, 2009 Grant makers for Effective Organisations.

<sup>31</sup> Inspiring Communities and Core Learning Cluster members have, and continue to draw on a range of approaches to inform learning and evaluation such as: business continuous improvement approaches, attribution analysis, most significant change, and results-based accountability.

<sup>32</sup> **Social innovation** is the design and implementation of better ways of meeting social needs, both in terms of ‘how’ things are done and the outcomes that are achieved.

## What is developmental evaluation?

Developmental evaluation emerged in response to the need to support real-time learning in complex and emergent situations. Traditional forms of evaluation work well in situations where the progression from problem to solution can be laid out in a relatively clear sequence of steps (Gamble, 2008). However, initiatives with multiple stakeholders, high levels of innovation, fast paced decision-making, and areas of uncertainty require more flexible approaches (Patton, 2008). This is where developmental evaluation comes in. Developmental evaluation differs from traditional forms of evaluation in several key ways:

- The primary focus is on adaptive learning rather than accountability to an external authority<sup>33</sup>.
- The purpose is to provide real-time feedback and generate learnings to inform development.
- The evaluator is embedded in the initiative as a member of the team.
- The developmental evaluation role extends well beyond data collection and analysis; the evaluator actively intervenes to shape the course of development, helping to inform decision-making and facilitate learning.
- The evaluation is designed to capture system dynamics and to surface innovative strategies and ideas.
- The approach is flexible, with new measures and monitoring mechanisms evolving as understanding of the situation deepens and the initiative's goals emerge (adapted from Westley, Zimmerman & Patton, 2006).

*Taken from Dozois, Langlois and Blanchet-Cohen  
"Practitioners Guide to Developmental Evaluation" June 2010 page 14*

<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/resources/publication/de-201-a-practitioner-s-guide-to-developmental-evaluation>

It is useful to remember that in the world of business where entrepreneurship is valued and encouraged, 80% of all new business developments will fail. This knowledge encourages us to be open in terms of what is not working and continue to adapt and modify until we discover what does. It also makes for far more open learning conversations where people learn to talk about what isn't working, just as much as they talk about what is.

Ultimately, the aim is to learn to notice what is occurring, as it occurs, to understand as best we can at the time why it might be happening, to adapt what we are doing as a result and then notice again what happens. This leads to a constant and evolving process of acting, reacting, planning, adapting and learning. Incorporating developmental evaluation approaches into everything we do also adds rigour to our work and provides real-time thinking and evidence to demonstrate progress and change.

- To learn more about the Foundations and Principles of Developmental Evaluation see:  
<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/resources/publication/a-developmental-evaluation-primer>
- To learn more about implementing a developmental approach see:  
<http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/en/resources/publication/de-201-a-practitioner-s-guide-to-developmental-evaluation>
- To hear Michael Quinn Patton discussing developmental evaluation see:  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/InspiringCommunities>

### *A new way of thinking*

*"During the fun time we have spent learning, I was very taken with the concept of developmental evaluation. This process implied the setting of learning measures as well as performance measures, having learning structured into our work, with an understanding that changes of direction that are informed by learning are completely okay."*

*Inspiring Communities  
Core Learning Cluster Participant - June 2010*

<sup>33</sup> Accountability is still a key part of developmental evaluation; however, accountability priorities shift from supporting oversight to supporting learning and impact.

### 3.5.2 'Theory of Change' framework

The term 'Theory of Change' became popular during the 1990s to capture change in the context of complex initiatives. 'Theories of Change' offer a useful discipline in developing community outcomes underpinned by linked goals and actions that sit usefully alongside assumptions and beliefs about how and why we anticipate change will happen. Also included in the framework are success indicators to help us pay attention to what and how we might notice and measure what happens on the ground.

In understanding how community-led development approaches enable transformation and change within communities of place, we have been supported in our work by the Generative Change Community ([www.gc-community.net](http://www.gc-community.net)), a global community of practice focused on strengthening the world's capacity to address complex challenges collectively through multi stakeholder engagement and participation processes. We have also turned to other users of 'Theory of Change' thinking such as the Vibrant Communities poverty reduction initiatives in Canada, Grantmakers for Effective Organisations, and the work of the Annie E Casey Foundation.

As noted on page 39 there are four inter-related dimensions of change we need to consider in any transformation process – personal, relational, structural and cultural. As a framework, it ensures we consider all four dimensions of change in our community initiatives, and makes conscious the various levels of activity required to make long term transformational change.

The following table on pages 43-44 is an example of the framework used in practice – an excerpt from the Inspiring Communities Exchange Theory of Change. It is most definitely a 'work in progress.'

Community initiatives participating in the Inspiring Communities Core Learning Cluster are in the process of considering and developing their own theory of change frameworks to better understand what they are setting out to achieve, and how effective their efforts have been. It is still early days but initial feedback suggests the Theory of Change approach offers a very useful discipline and practical way of thinking and learning about how change happens.

*"It feels powerful now that Opotiki's vision for local transformation has been recognised by others. Local leaders have also been encouraged to see their aspirations and potential within a wider regional (and national context). Having other Local Authority Chief Executives in the Bay get involved to support Opotiki within that frame has made a real difference. The focus is still local but the reality is that nothing is in isolation! In terms of the Theory of Change, what we've been able to do is apply the thinking and really start working on the relational and structural quadrants ... and begin to create a new culture ... for the way we do things around here."*

Barbara MacLennan  
Strategic Broker  
May 2010

*"The term 'theory of change' is often referred to by other terms, such as pathway of change, engine of change, blueprint, and theory of action. Regardless of the label, a theory of change offers a picture of important destinations and guides you on what to look for on the journey to ensure you are on the right pathway. As Alice observed in Wonderland – 'If you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there.' In other words, without a theory of change, a community is vulnerable to wandering aimlessly. Communities and their partners have too much at stake to be aimless, amorphous or random in their actions."*

*Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning  
prepared for the Annie E Casey Foundation, 2004*

<http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid={33431955-1255-47F4-A60B-0F5F3AABA907}>

## Theory of Change table: Inspiring Communities draft 2.12.09

*Overall goal: to catalyse, connect and embed community-led development locally, regionally and nationally*

### How? (some examples)

Create an exchange that actively supports community-led development focused on local communities of place. The Exchange will:

- Contribute to a base of learning, more in-depth understanding, analysis and evidence building that 'grows' opportunities for intentional community-led development locally, regionally, and nationally, and connects with international learning and development.
- Contribute to the development of, and create access to, people, skill sets, connections, support and specialist knowledge.
- Do nothing on our own but seek partners who can add value. In working with them, extend the reach and depth of the movement.
- Actively 'propagate' information and knowledge, to create a foundation for a durable movement that can flourish independent of the current IC staff team.
- Actively notice and pay attention to challenges and opportunities around how change impacts, and occurs.

### Theories of (or ideas for) Change: (some examples)

- Through access to sharing, learning, and analysis – including measurement and illustration – change can be accelerated and amplified.
- Community change activists (from whichever sector) are often isolated either within their community or within their organisation.
- Change, across multiple layers is important.
- Maintaining a place for acknowledging and sharing positive developments assists the transformation process.
- With the right mix of people, their skills and passion, and a clear vision – to see New Zealand as a network of strong, interdependent communities who connect, collaborate and thrive to become authors of their own destiny – we can make a difference.
- Timing matters, and there is a readiness in New Zealand.

Focus	Personal	Relational	Structural	Cultural (the way we do things)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Constant encouragement.</li> <li>■ Identifying and supporting individual learning needs and personal learning development.</li> <li>■ Sustainable treatment of the whole person – self care.</li> <li>■ Creating confidence in individuals and what they have to offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building connections, opening doors – national to local, across sectors, with other relevant idea leaders and initiatives.</li> <li>■ Building an understanding of the space/ place in between sectors/services and finding points of leverage.</li> <li>■ Building in partnering ways of operating – further together, never alone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Persevering.</li> <li>■ Creating round tables of multiple sectors.</li> <li>■ Finding the common ground and speaking to the shared 'greater good.'</li> <li>■ Noticing and connecting with the people inside the structures.</li> <li>■ Clarifying the potential and 'growing' the roles within structures to support CLD.</li> <li>■ Bringing to bear the resources, skills knowledge and evidence held within systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building habits of constant connection, learning and reflection, adapting, evidence building and questioning – creating new ways.</li> <li>■ Igniting groups and individuals to believe they have something to give and supporting their potential.</li> <li>■ Creating a truly integrated, and holistic way of operating.</li> </ul>



Theories	<p><b>Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sustainability of people reduces burn out and reinvention (starting over). – akin to S Covey’s <i>Sharpen the Saw</i> ie. “preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have – you. Involving a balanced programme for self-renewal in the four areas of life: physical, social/emotional, mental, and spiritual”.</li> <li>■ Individual learning and development is key to effective leadership and innovation, including dealing with uncertainty, ‘not knowing’, ambiguity, opportunity and challenge.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relational</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Through partnering and connections we build in multiple perspectives and interpersonal relationships that both create and influence systems change.</li> <li>■ Finding ways to leverage differences creates a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts.</li> <li>■ Actively seeking partners can extend and strengthen the reach of the movement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Structural</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Understanding, communicating with, and contributing to redesigning structures and systems is at the core of achieving the breakthroughs needed for ongoing support of CLD.</li> <li>■ This ‘perspective’ is underdeveloped in terms of both knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cultural (the way we do things)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ By remaining in silos, operating or thinking in a fragmented way and being unable to bring our ‘whole self’ (see Stephen Covey’s definition in ‘personal’ column) to the work we lose the broader perspective, limiting what we can achieve.</li> <li>■ Everyone matters; everyone has a role.</li> </ul>
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ We will be seeing leaders who are able to let go and create space for others.</li> <li>■ We’ll be noticing and acknowledging our quiet influencers and allowing them to contribute and influence.</li> <li>■ Our innovators and strategists will be seen, appreciated and supported to develop.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ We’ll be seeing growth in the many layers of relationships.</li> <li>■ There will be a tangible and truly shared understanding of how each person/organisation can contribute to community-led development ie. we will have developed many meaningful partnerships.</li> <li>■ We’ll have tools, protocols and skills to allow productive and meaningful dialogue and collaboration, including ‘robust conversations’.</li> <li>■ We will be consciously making use of our connections and relationships to support community-led development.</li> <li>■ The experiences and opportunities presented in a vast variety of round table conversations will have created tangible changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ When people are sitting around the table they will have the authority to be the decision makers.</li> <li>■ People will come to the table as ‘people first’ and the structures and systems will support them to do this.</li> <li>■ Round tables will comprise true diversity relevant to the issues so that solutions can be created.</li> <li>■ Knowledge of systems change will be evident in the way people are working, the policies that are being developed, and the way in which they are being approached.</li> <li>■ We will have developed effective relationships with all the key place based government agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ We will be seeing a culture of never leading on our own – instead always connecting and growing people’s gifts.</li> <li>■ ‘Round tables’ will be a primary way of operating.</li> <li>■ Our next learning forum will bring an even wider diversity of people together and the IC staff team will have helped develop this.</li> <li>■ We will have, and be constantly using, tools of reflection, learning, analysis and evidence building.</li> </ul>

Adapted from: J.P. Lederach, Neufeld, and Hal Culbertson. (2007). *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit*. The Joan B Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.

### 3.5.3 Complexity theory



#### About complex issues...

- are difficult to frame
- have multiple root causes
- involve multiple stakeholders
- are hard to eliminate
- require long term commitments
- strategies and solutions are emergent
- require unique responses

Many communities today are seeking change around complex challenges and issues (like poverty and climate change), which are not able to be addressed quickly by 'simple' solutions. We understand that solutions are bound up within a complex web of interdependent systems and networks which are all governed by their own rules.

There's a lot to unravel and understand in order to effect change. There are also limits to what traditional strategic planning tools can offer us. Action planning and problem solving are generally 'non-linear' in the complex space, with 'cause – action – effect' difficult to predict with any great certainty. Different people and organisations often have different views as to what will work, with no guarantee that any one approach will have definite success.

There is an enormous amount written in the area of complexity theory – our favourite is the very simple model applied to social innovation offered in *Getting to Maybe* – that of comparing baking a cake (simple problem: cause and effect well known and same results can be expected with certainty), with flying to the moon (complicated problem: relationship between cause and effect can be found with further analysis and technical expertise) and raising a child (complex: no fixed

relationship between cause and effect, everything unpredictable, many factors at play such as culture, trust, networks, behaviours).

David Snowden's Cynefin<sup>34</sup> framework (<http://www.cognitive-edge.com/video-cynefin.php>) extends this thinking by adding **chaotic** to the simple-complicated-complex framework – acknowledging that in some cases there is absolutely **no link** between cause and effect.

Snowden's framework is considered a 'sense making' model. In the quadrant diagram below, simple problems can be solved by applying '**best**' practices using a sense-categorise-respond (S-C-R) approach. For complicated problems, where expert knowledge is required to assess and assist, a sense-analyse-respond (S-A-R) approach is appropriate to discover patterns and then apply '**good**' practice.

With complex issues, potential patterns can generally only be discerned with the help of hindsight. In this space, stories become a key tool to understand what is happening/has happened and how. In this quadrant, a probe-sense-respond (P-S-R) approach is recommended to sense '**emerging**' practice.



Source: [http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/agile/Agile\\_Orientate.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/agile/Agile_Orientate.html)

<sup>34</sup> Cynefin, pronounced kuh-nev-in, is a Welsh word that signifies the multiple factors in our environment and our experience that influence us in ways we can never understand.

With there being no known systems based solutions to issues in the chaotic quadrant, a different approach is required. In this space, Snowden and others advocate a ‘just act, just do anything’ approach and by acting-sensing and responding (A-S-R) to what happens, it is hoped that something will work and that ‘**novel**’ practice can be discovered, pushing the issue back into one of the complex/complicated/simple domains so that further action can be continued.

What this all means is that when working with complex issues, such as climate change, homelessness, family violence, and social cohesion, we need to work more organically, develop shared visions with multiple partners, be prepared to innovate and change ‘business as usual’, work collaboratively and be prepared to act, react and adapt in ongoing ways.

To hear Mark Cabaj from Tamarack explain why poverty is a complex issue and what this means for collaborative community-led development approaches in the poverty reduction space see [http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s61\\_VC\\_2009f.html](http://tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s61_VC_2009f.html)

#### *Complex issues mean working differently*

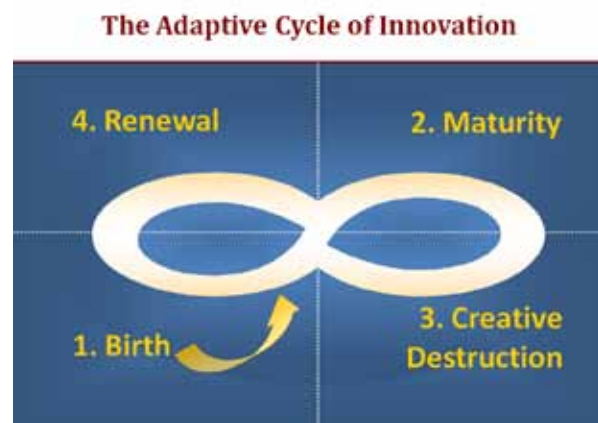
“In trying to justify everything, you still cannot tame the complexity with rational approaches. Rational approaches, which include adopting more business-like behaviour—better management, focused prioritisation, and evaluation tools—may result in a clear business plan and better run programmes, but the complexity of dealing with ‘wicked’ human and social problems undermines any forecast you can come up with.”

*Joan Roberts,  
Governance for Collaboratives; page 105*

#### **3.5.4 The Adaptive Cycle of Innovation – understanding the journey of change**

Our communities are constantly changing. People, policies, programmes, politics, economies, and the weather are all part of the constant flux around us. Resilience or the ability to adapt to change is an essential ingredient that needs to be understood and built into community change journeys.

We have a lot to observe and learn from eco-systems in nature. There are phases of birth, life and death in the natural world that can be usefully paralleled with evolution, development and collaboration processes at project, organisational and community levels.



At the start of the **birthing phase** of the innovation cycle<sup>35</sup>, we have to invest heavily in our ideas to transform them into change and action on the ground – getting our seedlings to grow. In a forest however, not every seedling makes it to the top of the canopy. So it is with the many ideas we seed in our communities. Not everything will or should take off. In fact there is a fine balance between the number of ideas and the resources and implementation capacity at hand. In kicking too much off with too few resources, initiatives fail to get traction and nothing succeeds as a result (**poverty trap**).

<sup>35</sup> This is also referred to as the Eco Cycle or Panarchy Cycle.

When things are working really well and everything's stable, it feels like you can stand back and reap the rewards of all your hard work – you're probably in the **maturity** phase. But when your resources, energy and ideas are all at capacity, the walls still can come crashing down. By doing things the way they have always been done (**rigidity trap**) and not continually innovating or responding to what may have been changing around you – again, a 'crash and burn' can occur.

In nature though, a forest fire isn't seen as a disaster but as '**creative destruction**' – an integral part of **renewal**, enabling new seedlings – or new ideas, growth and resources to emerge, and the cycle to begin again.

As alluded to above, within the innovation cycle there are many traps to be wary of – with 'traps' here referring to choices about what to continue with and what to let go. Three additional traps to watch out for:

- **Charisma trap:** without necessarily meaning to, charismatic leaders or drivers of initiatives can also pose major problems to growth and renewal cycles. When things become dependent upon one person and they leave, the necessary infrastructure for 'carrying on' may not be there.
- **Chronic disaster trap:** after the 'creative destruction' there can be so much change, messiness and complications, that those left to muddle through the mess can feel helpless, isolated and simply unable to cope. When this happens, taking time to re-group, not panicking and pairing things down to 'bite size' manageable chunks is usually the best approach.
- **Innovation trap:** rather than adding on to or adapting processes/initiatives already in existence, there can be a tendency to start something new, a process which can stretch/exhaust resources and capacity, put strain on existing relationships and miss the ability to leverage off existing successful community efforts and initiatives.

Evidence suggests that what matters is strategically observing and understanding where each initiative/collaboration is on the innovation cycle (knowing that different community initiatives will be at different points of the cycle at the same time) and carefully managing transitions between phases – with the aim being to minimise disruption between each stage as much as possible. In this way, we can see change as part of a natural and continuous cycle of growth and decay – not something to be feared, avoided or ignored.

For more information on the model and thinking behind it see <http://www.resalliance.org> and read *Getting to Maybe* pages 65-72.

### 3.6 Our strategies for learning

Inspiring Communities is linked to community at a range of local, regional and national levels, with learning a key part of our focus at all times.

#### 3.6.1 With the Core Learning Cluster

The eight initiatives<sup>36</sup> we are currently working with range in their focus, scale, geography and phase of establishment. All are committed to working in community-led ways and being part of a small shared 'community of practice.'

We are in contact with each initiative regularly, and come together annually at a national learning forum to share learning, support each other in finding solutions to local challenges, and inspire each other. As noted earlier, Inspiring Communities is also a member of this learning cluster, as we are applying the collective learning to our overall understanding of community-led development, how it works best and what this means for Inspiring Communities as an organisation and a movement.

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<sup>36</sup> In Massey, Tamaki, Opotiki, Waitara, Porirua, Taita, Mātaura and Rakiura/Stewart Island – for more detail see Appendix 2 on page 51.

Our work with the Core Learning Cluster communities includes:

- **Annual learning forum** – bringing key individuals from the eight initiatives together to:
  - build on the learning that is occurring within their communities
  - share, probe, develop and deepen their theory of change
  - start noticing, testing and building evidence for effective community-led development
  - grow a shared community of practice and learning.
- **Critical friends** – some initiatives have been trialling working with an experienced mentor who can probe and provoke, while also offering support, encouragement and connections.
- **Learning stories and case studies** – providing support and resources to help capture and share each community's stories so as to notice, reflect, understand, amplify and disseminate learning. It is intended that learning stories will contribute to building case studies within each of the Core Learning Cluster initiatives, with key themes contributing to the collective learning across the Core Learning Cluster and beyond.
- **Reflective learning calls** – a monthly phone based check-in that provides a reflection space to help identify what progress is being made, what's changing, what seems to be working and what they are learning. The calls offer an opportunity to identify and discuss ideas and options within a community-led framework, and are focused on reflection and learning.
- **Regional forums** – offering an opportunity to connect with wider regional conversations, connections, thinking and practice around community-led development.

### 3.7 Deepening the learning

- **Research** – Inspiring Communities is partnering to develop research projects that help to grow the knowledge and build the tools of community-led development. We now have specific funding from the Lotteries Community Research Fund that will partially support some of our learning and researching goals.
- **Learning publications** – we aim to periodically publish reflective articles and reports that explore some community-led stories and learning in more depth, and attempt to draw out the patterns, connections and key learnings.
- **Growing evaluative thinking** – connecting with evaluators and other social innovators, both in NZ and overseas, to develop evaluative thinking.

### 3.8 Sharing the learning

- **Regional learning networks** – working with others to explore regional interest in community-led development through regional forums, skill development and more focused learning opportunities. (Wellington, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki and Southland have regional networks at various stages of development).
- **E -Newsletter** – we publish a monthly newsletter that highlights community-led development news, events and issues, offering information, examples in practice and links to resources.
- **Website** – our website (<http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz>) aims to provide information about community-led development and to stimulate thinking, explore what is being learnt, and the impact of what is happening.
- **Tools** – promoting and sharing easily accessible, simple, grounded and 'quick turn around' tools and frameworks.
- **Presenting** – at workshops, conferences and in learning institutions – sharing what we are doing, what we are learning about community-led development and extending an invitation to others to become involved.

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<sup>38</sup> See section 3.5.2: The Theory of Change framework offers useful discipline in developing community outcomes, linking goals and actions, with an articulation of assumptions and beliefs about how and why we anticipate change will happen. It also encourages clear definition of indicators of success and how we will pay attention to things that happen on the ground.



Inspiring Communities has been established with an **overall purpose of growing the recognition, understanding and practice of community-led development in New Zealand**, through catalysing, connecting and embedding community-led development locally, regionally and nationally.

Inspiring Communities is a non-profit organisation. We have a small governance group and a larger informal network of interested leaders from varied sectors that also strategically advise and support Inspiring Communities and its development.

At the nucleus of the Inspiring Communities national network is the Inspiring Communities staff team. The team is a 'virtual' one of six individuals (based in Wellington, Auckland, and the Bay of Plenty), or around three full time equivalents, with many decades of community development, social entrepreneurial and community change experience in Aotearoa and internationally.

To date, the work of Inspiring Communities has been primarily funded by The Tindall Foundation, with support from the Todd Foundation, the JR McKenzie Trust, Community Trust of Southland, Bay Trust, ASB Community Trust, Call Plus, Auckland City Council, Manukau City Council, North Shore City Council, and Waitakere City Council, and through consultancy contracts.

### Introducing our team



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**Barbara MacLennan**

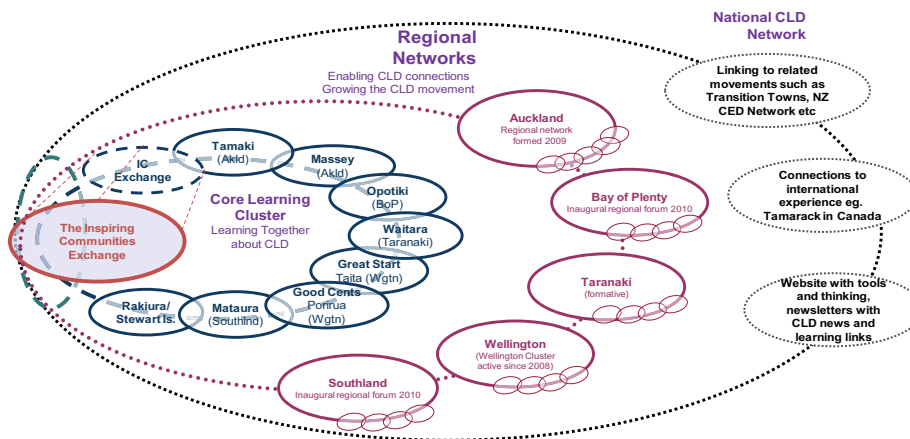
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## Inspiring Communities: a multi-layered network of CLD connections, learning and support



### What we do

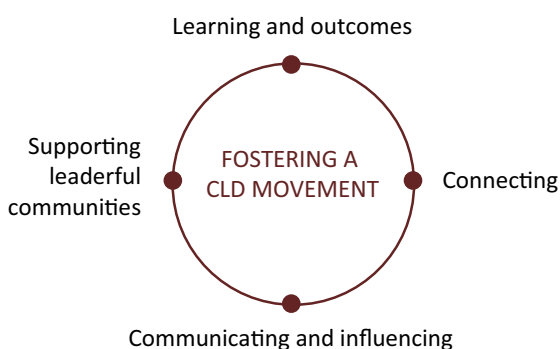
As stated above, our overall purpose is to grow the recognition, understanding and practice of community-led development in New Zealand. By succeeding in this we expect to see:

- Communities as authors of their own destiny
- Neighbourhoods and communities being strong, resilient and independent yet connected with each other.

To enable this to happen, the Inspiring Communities team is working towards the following outcomes:

- Communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand supported to be actively linked and learning from each other
- A durable movement being fostered, reflecting a focus on communities of place.

### Inspiring Communities: our four core activities



### Fresh perspective on complex situation

*"In essence, the involvement of Inspiring Communities in Opotiki has brought a 'fresh set of eyes' to help local and regional leaders work more effectively together on sustainable solutions...."*

*Major learnings have included:*

- not to deal with issues one by one or expect sustainable progress from simple tick box solutions
- recognising the need for cross-sector integration and relationship development, so that there can be comprehensive issue and 'possibility' analysis as a basis to planning....
- understanding the cultural history of Opotiki and why the alienation and sense of despair is so deeply experienced. This understanding has opened up a deeper synthesis, and thought about what might really help bring hope and progress. Not to pay attention to such history would be to deny complexity."

Vaughan Payne  
former CEO Opotiki District Council  
March 2010

**Rakiura/Stewart Island**

Contact: Brent and Kari Beaven

Phone: 03 2191533

Email: solutionz@callsouth.net.nz

**Supported by:** Community Trust of Southland (CTOS)

**Focus:** Investigating the potential for a CLD approach with community. The aim is to protect and sustain the already positive elements of a strong community. The approach under development is to bring the Island's population together to form a shared vision for the Island's future, and create links between many positive projects already existing.

**Background:** The Island's residents, due to living on a relatively remote island, have a strong sense of community and self reliance. This has led to a strong history of local involvement: there are currently over 40 trusts, committees, and informal care groups operating on the Island, from environmental trusts to committees required to run the school and health services. It is a small community with big ideas – in 1999 it opened an impressive \$1.5m Community Centre (an eight year community-driven and locally funded project, with support from CTOS), it has launched its own community-run early childhood education centre and kept the primary school running despite a period of dramatically falling roll numbers. The planned approach going forward is about maintaining a strong community focus and shared vision for the Island amid increasing tourism, evolving external requirements and local needs – all of which influence the dynamics of the population base of around 400. Locally voiced driving factors are volunteers worried about 'burning out' from over-commitment, and new community members regularly not knowing how or where to begin their own contribution.

**Great Start Taita (Lower Hutt, Wellington)**

Contact: Karen Clifford

Phone: 04 567 5437

Email: karen.clifford@barnardos.org.nz

**Supported by:** Barnardos, Ministry of Social Development (Family & Community Services) and The Todd Foundation

**Focus:** Great Start was set up with deliberately simple (though not easy) aims: connecting people to people, doing things differently, and supporting parents.

**Background:** In 2008 a Barnardos-supported team knocked on 1200 doors in Taita asking what residents wanted for their community (to help determine which services Barnardos should offer in a property it owned there). They found no more services were wanted; people just wanted a stronger community.

Barnardos listened, and supported the creation of a unique initiative that is a hub for community and family activities (from a food garden to parent groups) and for 'working groups' of service providers, community groups, schools and pre-schools, the local council, and residents who are working together to take action on issues and opportunities identified by the community. A highlight is a partnership between local children and Hutt City Council (and others) to create a new playground.

### Good Cents Porirua (Wellington)

Contact: Matt Crawshaw, Good Cents Coordinator  
Phone: 04 2377 923  
Email: [goodcents@wesleyca.org.nz](mailto:goodcents@wesleyca.org.nz)

**Supported by:** The Todd Foundation

**Focus:** Strategic focus – working with whole community to fully understand the issue of cycles of unsustainable debt and seek solutions together. Practical focus – in response to needs of local families, running group-based personal development and money sense courses since 2007.

Good Cents hosted the Beyond Cycles of Debt Community Innovation Forum in early 2010. This brought around 50 people from all corners of the Porirua community (business, lenders, church ministers, Council, budget course graduates) together for a workshop asking: “What would Porirua look like without unsustainable debt?” And “What can we the community do?” In closing the event, a group of committed people accepted roles in taking the work and findings from the forum forward.

**Background:** Wesley Community Action began working with and talking to the community in 2007 when it realised (through high usage of its food bank) that a disproportionate number of families were struggling with unsustainable levels of debt, despite strong economic times.

### Waitara Community Development Project (Taranaki)

Contact: Melissa Willis  
Phone 06 759 7726  
Email: [Melissa.Willis@tuiora.co.nz](mailto:Melissa.Willis@tuiora.co.nz)

**Supported by:** Department of Internal Affairs Community Development Scheme

**Focus:** Developing a plan for both the town’s future and community revitalisation. Three years’ Department of Internal Affairs Community Development Scheme funding is now resourcing a project leader to work alongside a community

steering group to maximise local assets and get people working together. Key platforms within the Waitara plan are: improving community connectedness; identifying and promoting community values; ensuring community is well placed to work together in future; working towards achieving less crime and well supported youth in Waitara. A Waitara Business and Promotions Association has also been formed, and has commissioned an economic development strategy to grow Waitara. The results of the economic development strategy will be aligned and coordinated with the Community Development project.

**Background:** In 2008 the Waitara community profile did not make great reading. The deprivation index was 10, it had decile one or two schools, cyclic unemployment (three generations), on top of that several local factories had closed down, and there were two major crimes in the last 10 years, leaving negative impressions about the community. Change was needed and so the Waitara Community Development Project was born. Following a series of community meetings a steering committee was formed of members who live in the community, and Project Coordinator Melissa Willis contracted. The project sees Waitara not just for its challenges, which are real, but as having significant assets. The most important asset is the people of Waitara and they are actively involved in this opportunity to work together to change Waitara’s future.

### Opotiki (Bay of Plenty)

Contact: Barbara MacLennan, Inspiring Communities BoP Strategic Broker  
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**Supported by:** JR McKenzie Trust, Bay Trust, Tindall Foundation

**Focus:** In Opotiki – economic revitalisation leading social development and cultural restoration. Includes a significant aquaculture initiative, led by iwi and local government, involving pond based and off shore marine farming and harbour

redevelopment, and focussed around Opotiki township (4000 people); and joint venture kiwifruit development with iwi further east along the coast.

In Bay of Plenty – encouraging links among people actively involved or interested in community-led development.

There are significant benefits to be gained when all sectors of a community – iwi, Council, business people, community organisations, government agencies – work together to identify their common wish to build a strong and prosperous community, get behind a common plan, and then draw others in to support them. In the longer term, the marine farm is potentially significant not just for Opotiki, but for the region, and nation as well.

**Background:** For decades, Opotiki has featured as one of New Zealand’s most deprived populations. The reason Inspiring Communities is now involved in Opotiki goes back to the early days when Inspiring Communities was forming in 2006-7. Barbara MacLennan had met Vaughan Payne who was working as Chief Executive of Opotiki District Council. Through Vaughan, Barbara learned how both Council and local iwi Te Whakatohea were determined to help turn their community around, through locally led economic development. Together, Whakatohea along with the wider local community, and Opotiki District Council envisage a prosperous future for their community – the place and the people – based upon the traditional relationship with the sea and the land. For nearly a decade there has been concerted work to create the potential for sustainable local economic and social development centered on aquaculture and Vaughan invited Barbara to become ‘a champion for Opotiki’. Over time, the Inspiring Communities network evolved, and is actively working with local leaders and projects in Opotiki.

#### **Tamaki (Auckland)**

Contact: Tess Liew

Phone: 09 521 8436

Email: kmtw@xtra.co.nz

the commitment of Inspiring Communities to The Tamaki Inclusive Engagement Strategy (T.I.E.S.).

T.I.E.S. has also received generous support from Tamaki Transformation Programme, ASB Community Trust and another philanthropic organisation that prefers to remain anonymous.

**Focus:** T.I.E.S. promotes the active participation of Tamaki communities in any decisions affecting their future. Its purpose is to create ties that strengthen, across Tamaki communities and with others who want to make a positive difference here. Grounded in a principle-based approach, T.I.E.S. offers a framework and practical tools to help guide respectful engagement with Tamaki communities. T.I.E.S. promotes collaborative reflection on action, and in action, on the basis that many eyes can see more than one set, and a room full of ears will hear more than one pair. In their book, the TIES Team seek to record and contribute their own knowledge and experience of living and/or working in this area. The T.I.E.S. Team strives to speak as a collective voice; respecting individual interests and connections, and knowing that their communities will keep them in check.

**Background:** In 2008, a group of Tamaki community contributors set out on a journey together that led to the creation of T.I.E.S. Members of the T.I.E.S. Team have lived and/or worked in the Tamaki area for some time and have strong connections with and knowledge of this place. Members came together to explore better ways of doing things across Tamaki communities, and with government, and interested others. The Team has contributed actively to the establishment of the government-led Tamaki Transformation Programme, and has sought to create space for the contributions of other community members. The Team has forged a parallel process to develop community-led proposals for respectful and effective engagement with Tamaki communities, leading to the publication of their book entitled: *Creating T.I.E.S. that Strengthen*.

**Supported by:** The Tindall Foundation is a key backer of Inspiring Communities and has supported



### **Massey Matters (Waitakere, Auckland)**

Contact: Linda Shaw

Phone: 09 8320431

Email: linda.shaw@waitakere.govt.nz

**Supported by:** Waitakere City Council

**Focus:** Building Massey into a better place to live, work, play, grow and learn. Established with ten years' funding by Waitakere City Council, Massey Matters acts as an umbrella for community organisations, local and central government and residents of Massey to work and talk together. Their role is to coordinate, network, advocate, build collaboration and support initiatives and services that work to develop Massey. Key projects include a quarterly community newspaper, community events, networks for family violence prevention, youth and social services, community forums, initiation of new community collaboration projects, such as community based environmental restoration, and local jobs and training opportunities. Massey Matters also catalyses and supports grassroots projects via the \$25,000 Massey Matters Community Projects Fund.

**Background:** Massey Matters began in 2006 as a ten year project to improve quality of life in Massey. Massey Matters grew out of a 2003 report by the Centre for Social Health and Outcomes Research and Evaluation on the experiences of caregivers in Massey. At this time, the proposed redevelopment of Westgate and the expansion of the metropolitan urban limits in the Northern Strategic Growth Area were acknowledged as critical to the long term success of the Massey area. These projects and documents, along with learnings from other local community action and development projects, and internal work within Waitakere City Council, helped to begin a process which recognised the need to develop an integrated, long term programme of investment in the existing Massey urban area. In short, the collaborative strengthening and growing of a sense of local community in existing Massey, was designed to happen in tandem with rebuilding and enhancing of infrastructure for both existing and expected new populations moving into the wider area.

### **Mataura (Southland)**

Contact: Laurel Turnbull

Phone: 03 2033417

Email: bl.turnbull@xtra.co.nz

**Supported by:** Community Trust of Southland

**Focus:** Mataura Taskforce is driving a variety of projects to revitalise the township and community. The vision is to make "Mataura a more liveable place where people can be the best they can be."

The Taskforce is working on multiple initiatives that build on the strengths of Mataura. For example, the school and residents are involved in riverbank restoration, a vibrant community garden venture, a monthly market, annual galas and community events, retaining an early childhood service that 'fits' Mataura, breathing new life into cultural, youth and exercise groups and revitalising local business – with the Project Mataura group undertaking a survey of local business, and developing a strategic plan for future activity.

**Background:** In recent years a number of agencies and locals had been concerned about poor social health and education outcomes for residents in Mataura. There had been many meetings to discuss ways to improve the education, health and social outcomes for the people of Mataura.

In 2007 the Hokonui Horizons Steering Group decided a Community Needs Assessment for the District would be useful and this was undertaken by Makuini McKercher of Public Health South in 2008. Published in April, community meetings held in response to the report immediately determined actions to be taken, and the working groups were established under the banner of Mataura Taskforce.

## Publications

### “‘Bowling Alone’ America’s declining social capital”

Robert Putnam 1996

### “Community: Structure of belonging”

Peter Block 2008

### “Getting to maybe: How the world is changed”

Brenda Zimmerman, Michael Quinn Patton and Frances Westley 2007

### “Living your passion: How love in action is seeding a whole new world”

Rose Diamond 2008

### “The Abundant Community”

Peter Block and John McNight 2010

## Thinking, Theories and Tools

**Abundant Community** – ideas and tools to support neighbourhood development

<http://www.abundantcommunity.com/>

**Appreciative Inquiry** – a process of systematic discovery of what gives ‘life’ to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms

<http://www.appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>

**Asset Based Community Development** – a community development approach based on the principles of: appreciating and mobilising individual and community talents, skills and assets alongside community driven development

<http://www.abcdinstitute.org>

**Building Social Capital** – building trust based networks in neighbourhoods as the key to healthy communities – Robert Putnam

<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/putnam.htm>

**Most Significant Change Process** – a form of participatory monitoring and evaluations using stories

<http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf>

**Open Space Technology** – a way to enable all kinds of people to create inspired meetings and events with extraordinary results

<http://www.openspaceworld.org/>

**Positive Deviance** – a development approach that seeks to identify and optimise existing resources and solutions within the community to solve community problems

<http://www.positivedeviance.org>

**Positive Psychology** – Positive Psychology is the scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

Martin Seligman <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu>

**Possibility Thinking** – how to think beyond our limitations and allow others to do the same

Benjamin Zander <http://www.benjaminzander.com>

**Strengths Based Solutions Focused Movement** – a social work practice movement that emphasises people’s self determination and strengths.

Strengths based practice is client led, with a focus on future outcomes and strengths that the people bring to a problem or crisis

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strength\\_based\\_practice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strength_based_practice)

**The Art of Hosting** – a participatory leadership approach based on convening conversations to seek new solutions for the common good

<http://www.artofhosting.org/home/>

**The U Theory** - using the social technology of presenting to facilitate profound innovation and change processes <http://www.theoryu.com>

**The World Cafe** – a conversational process aimed at awakening and engaging collective intelligence through conversations that focus on questions that matter <http://www.theworldcafe.com>

**Learning communities – groups focused on community development, social innovation and place making:**

**Annie E Casey Foundation** – a philanthropic foundation that fosters public policies, community-service reforms, and community supports to more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families <http://www.aecf.org/>

**Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change** – focuses on the problems of distressed communities and seeks solutions to individual, family, and neighborhood poverty (<http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/community-change>)

**Australian Social Innovation Exchange** – a non-profit company formed to find better ways of tackling social problems and responding to growing community needs or opportunities <http://www.asix.org.au>

**Imagine Chicago** – a social movement cultivating civic engagement in cross cultural and cross generational initiatives in Chicago USA over the last 10 years <http://www.imaginechicago.org/what.html>.

**Social Innovation Conversations** – an online forum offering social change ideas through audio lectures, speaker series, and conference recordings. Download free podcasts on social entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability, philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, responsible investing, etc <http://www.sic.conversationsnetwork.org>.

**Sustainable Communities Network** – linking citizens to resources and to one another to create healthy, vital and sustainable communities <http://www.sustainable.org>.

**Tamarack** – an institute for community engagement in Canada <http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca> and Vibrant Communities – a community-driven effort to reduce poverty in Canada by creating partnerships that bring together – people, organisations, businesses and governments. Focuses on allowing communities to learn from and help each other.

**The Generative Change Community** (<http://www.gc-community.net>) is a global community of practice focused on strengthening the world's capacity to address complex challenges collectively through multi stakeholder engagement and participation processes.

**The Joseph Rowntree Foundation** – an independent development and social research charity, supporting a wide programme of research and development projects <http://www.jrf.org.uk>

**The Village Well** – place makers, working with communities, businesses and government to create meaningful places that reflect the needs of the people that inhabit them <http://www.villagewell.org>.

Other links to tools and resources to support learning and developmental work, and sites of interest for community-led development, can be found among the Learning Links on our website: <http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/learning-centre/learning-links>

If you come across additional learning links that you think others would benefit from, please let us know.

## Glossary of Terms

Term or phrase	What it means...
<b>Action-reflection</b>	A way of working that means you act or take action and then stop to think what happened as a result. Did what you thought would happen actually happen – and if not why? What worked or didn't work? Then you apply those learnings to what you do next.
<b>Adaptive learning</b>	Using learning to adapt action plans in an ongoing way so that each phase makes active use of 'learned' knowledge about what has or hasn't worked before.
<b>Attribution Analysis</b>	A process of analysing and describing why a project or community initiative's performance differed from what was anticipated.
<b>Authentic</b>	Genuine, worthy of acceptance, reflects values, beliefs and accepted 'truths.'
<b>Big picture strategy</b>	The macro or large long term vision and plan for change and how it might happen.
<b>Broker</b>	Brokers, or strategic brokers, are those who bring people, organisations, ideas and resources together – building and catalysing relationships as they go.
<b>Buddying</b>	Walking alongside and assisting, advising another – often a two way process in that both people are learning from each other.
<b>Capacity building</b>	The process of developing and strengthening the skills, abilities, structures, policies, processes, practices and resources (including time and genuine engagement) that individuals, organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, thrive and achieve their goals.
<b>Catalytic leader</b>	Someone who inspires and motivates others and 'gets people going' – someone who through their passion, skills and enthusiasm leads others into action towards articulated goals.
<b>Coalitions</b>	Groups of people who work together to achieve a common cause or goal.
<b>Co-creation/Co-design</b>	An inclusive, collaborative, and participatory process that recognises all parties need each other and in turn, multiple stakeholders work together to create something – which could be a vision, process, project or product that's jointly owned.
<b>Collaboration</b>	A process of two or more parties working together with shared decision making, and agreed principles for how they will work with each other to achieve their shared vision and goals.
<b>Common good</b>	Describes an outcome or 'good' that is shared and beneficial for all (or most) members of a given community.
<b>Commercial systems</b>	The processes, practices, policies and structures that govern business, trading and economic systems in our society.
<b>Community of place</b>	A geographic community of people who share a common location together because of where they reside, work, visit or otherwise spend a continuous portion of their time.

<b>Term or phrase</b>	<b>What it means...</b>
<b>Community capital</b>	The range of social, cultural, environmental and financial/economic assets and strengths that exist within a community.
<b>Community hub</b>	A base or space within a local community where local residents can get information, advice, meet other locals, and access a range of services, activities and support.
<b>Complex issues</b>	Are those issues to which there is no easy or guaranteed solution. Complex issues are difficult to frame, have multiple root causes and are hard to eliminate. Addressing them requires involvement of multiple stakeholders investing time and resources to explore and test a range of potential solutions that best fit each community's unique context and circumstance.
<b>Contestable funding</b>	A competitive funding process through which applications are openly sought and decisions made by funders based on likely impact or expected performance against a set of predetermined criteria and/or objectives and outcomes.
<b>Critical friend</b>	A trusted person with a different perspective who takes time to fully understand the work and who asks provocative questions, provides helpful insights and gently critiques what's going on, while offering advice on ways to reach defined outcomes and advocating for the success of that work.
<b>Core Learning Cluster (CLC)</b>	The eight community-led development initiatives that are learning together with Inspiring Communities as a 'community of practice' about what community-led development really takes.
<b>Cross-sectoral leadership</b>	Leaders from a number of different sectors intentionally working together to achieve shared goals.
<b>Elucidating</b>	Making something clear by explaining or highlighting.
<b>Emergent solutions</b>	Rather than being prescribed or known in advance, the most effective courses of action are discovered and developed as people talk and work together.
<b>Empowerment</b>	Is the giving of confidence, skills and power to communities to shape, influence, participate and be actively involved in determining and achieving visions and goals.
<b>Deficit approach</b>	Focusing on problems, deprivation, gaps, or areas of perceived underperformance and developing actions to address these.
<b>Developmental evaluation</b>	A process of thinking, planning, implementing and evaluating that is continuous and simultaneous, so that actions and interventions can be adapted in an ongoing basis – thus ensuring a higher chance of success.
<b>Developmental organisation</b>	An organisation in an early and experimental phase of establishment – actively learning as it goes about what it will take to achieve its vision and goals.
<b>Developmental phase</b>	Early establishment stage where a number of approaches are tried out to see what actions and approaches work best and why.
<b>Framing</b>	The structure, including assumptions that underpin the way in which something is named, described or put into a particular context.
<b>Incremental changes</b>	Small scale changes that often build upon or are related to other smaller changes that have come before – and those which are yet to come.



<b>Term or phrase</b>	<b>What it means...</b>
<b>Inspiring Communities</b>	A community organisation created to grow the recognition, understanding and practice of community-led development in New Zealand.
<b>Institutional relationships</b>	Relationships and ways of working between diverse groups, organisations and agencies within communities and across society more broadly.
<b>Intentionality</b>	Purposeful aims that sits behind action or directions.
<b>Interconnection</b>	Intertwining of multiple connections – each as part of the other.
<b>Joining up</b>	Process of coming together, finding alignments, common ground, sharing resources and coordinating efforts to achieve shared goals.
<b>Leveraging</b>	Gaining advantage by utilising, linking to or building off existing relationships, knowledge, resources, arrangements or organisations.
<b>Kaiarahi</b>	A community facilitator or guide.
<b>Kuia/kaumatua</b>	A female/male Maori elder.
<b>Organic</b>	Working in ways that are flexible, adaptable and directly related to context, with next steps and actions arising from conversations, collaboration and input and investments from others.
<b>Outcomes</b>	The impacts and effects aimed for at the end of a programme, project or action.
<b>Outputs</b>	The end products that result from performing a specific service, project or activity.
<b>Mana</b>	Mana is authority, control, influence, prestige, honour or power. In tikanga Maori, there are three kinds of mana – that which you are born with, that which others bestow on you and group mana eg. that of a marae or iwi/tribe.
<b>Mass Localism</b>	Growing movement of widespread, high quality local responses and locally led action that is collectively effective on a larger scale.
<b>Moral authority</b>	Moral authority refers to someone who acts ethically with integrity, compassion, and knowledge of what's right and wrong.
<b>Most significant change</b>	Is a participatory monitoring and evaluation approach that utilises storytelling to highlight key changes in communities. Stories are seen as a key way to focus on who did what, when and why – and the reasons why the event was important. It is participatory because many project stakeholders are involved both in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data/stories that are collected to highlight key local drivers of change.
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	A geographically localised community within a larger city, town, suburb or rural area.
<b>Neutral outsider</b>	Someone who lives or works outside a given community who is seen as impartial.
<b>Paradigm</b>	A philosophical or theoretical framework that includes a set of assumptions, theories, concepts, values and practices.
<b>Peer support</b>	Colleagues or other people who meet as equals to provide knowledge, experience, and emotional, social or practical help to each other.

Term or phrase	What it means...
<b>Personal practice</b>	The ways in which we undertake our work in communities – including our own ethics, values, beliefs, understandings, processes and motivations.
<b>Philanthropy</b>	The effort or inclination to increase the wellbeing of humankind by charitable aid, acts or donations.
<b>Place making</b>	Urban planning processes that involve residents, local businesses and other community stakeholders and aim to create and sustain community through incorporating a strong sense of identity, belonging and place into the ‘built’ urban form. This highlights local assets, histories and helps rejuvenation eg. sculptures, place names, local branding and signage, community created art works, local history/landscape and stories reflected in buildings, street furniture etc.
<b>Place shaping</b>	Creative use of abilities, powers and influence to promote the wellbeing of a community and its citizens.
<b>Practice wisdom</b>	The practice based experience and intuition of skilled people working in key positions within communities.
<b>Practitioner</b>	Someone who is ‘doing the doing’ – in this case a community development worker.
<b>Professionalised help</b>	Support or help that is now paid for and performed by others, with performance generally governed by service standards, criteria and policies. Previously, this help may have come from family, neighbours or other community volunteers.
<b>Reflective practice</b>	The process of improving professional skills by monitoring your own actions while they are being carried out, or soon after. These reflections are then later evaluated by talking or writing about them and asking other professionals for their assessments of you.
<b>Resilience</b>	The ability to positively adapt to changes that occur.
<b>Results based accountability</b>	A management tool that assists those working collaboratively to articulate expected results (also known as goals) and to regularly collect and report on data to indicate whether or not anticipated results have been achieved. A cohesive results-based accountability system includes the following components: a strategic planning process, goals and indicators, benchmarks or targets, and mechanisms for regular public reporting.
<b>Robust planning</b>	Plans that are comprehensive, well thought through from multiple perspectives, regularly reviewed and updated and easily able to adapt to changes, opportunities and challenges.
<b>Safe fail</b>	Expecting and accepting that not everything we do will work out as planned and to value and reapply the learning that can come from finding out what doesn’t work.
<b>Social capital</b>	The formal and informal social networks, support, community values and helping structures that exist within a community.
<b>Sector</b>	A grouping of ‘related’ aspects, activities, or organisations.

Term or phrase	What it means...
<b>Seed</b>	To provide initial ideas or resources that over time, and with the right support and conditions, will grow into something bigger.
<b>Shadowing</b>	Fostering learning and leadership by quietly walking alongside others.
<b>Social cohesion</b>	The bonds or 'glue' that bring people together in society particularly in the context of diversity and change.
<b>Social innovation</b>	New strategies, concepts, ideas and organisations that meet social needs of all kinds and that extend and strengthen civil society.
<b>Strengths based</b>	An approach that assesses the inherent strengths of a situation or place and then develops actions that builds on these strengths.
<b>Systems approach</b>	Systems thinking is the process of understanding how things influence one another – for example in nature, ecosystems involve various elements such as air, water, movement, plants, and animals working together to survive or perish. In organisations, systems consist of people, structures, and processes that work together to make an organisation healthy or unhealthy. Systems thinking is an approach to problem solving. Problems are approached as part of an overall system, which minimises the risk of reacting to specific parts, outcomes or events, and potentially contributing to further development of unintended consequences.
<b>Te Ao Maori</b>	The Maori world view: customs, beliefs, traditions, language, values and culture.
<b>Theory of change framework</b>	A process that documents desired community outcomes and articulates the goals and actions that will be taken to achieve them. Also included in the framework are underlying assumptions and beliefs about how change is anticipated to happen. Indicators of success are identified, along with how change in community can be noticed and measured.
<b>Umbrella organisation</b>	A legally constituted organisation which both supports and undertakes specific tasks or functions on behalf of another organisation or group of organisations.
<b>Whanau</b>	Family – with broader understandings of family today including blood relations as well as friends and community members who act like family and undertake family roles.
<b>Wicked questions</b>	Those questions to which there are no obvious or easy answers eg. poverty, climate change.

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