



Kumara Vine



**He piko
he kaainga**
Community Waikato

September 2023

CE Update by Holly Snape

When we were thinking about a theme for this Kumara Vine, we reflected on the strengths of our very diverse community and social service sector. We have been talking a lot recently about how to make the most of the opportunities available to the sector, through leveraging our relationships, our resources and our experiences.

Collectively we possess the power to generate impact across our communities in ways we could never achieve on our own. In this edition of the Kumara Vine, we will be exploring Asset Based Community Development. We will be co-hosting a cross-sector hui later in the year which will where the themes explored in the article may be tangibly applied.

The Community Waikato AGM will be on 18 September. This is an opportunity for us to acknowledge our successes and challenges over the last 12 months. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback to our stakeholders, all of you, how we are working on what we are hoping to achieve. I am hopeful that many of you will be able to make it.

Finally, I wanted to address the fact that it is an election year. Wherever you sit on the political spectrum, our lives are inevitably impacted by the outcome of elections. We have asked some political candidates to respond to questions about the community and social service sector. They offer us unique insights into the way respective governments might work with our sector should they be elected. These are challenging times for many people and each political party has a position on how best to meet the challenges ahead. Don't forget to vote.



An invitation to the Community Waikato AGM

**Monday 18 September, 4pm,
Community Waikato, 33 Victoria St, Hamilton**

Community Waikato will be running our AGM at 4pm. We would love to take the opportunity to share with everyone what we have been engaging in over the last year, over some food and drinks. We hope to see you there!

RSVP by 14 Sept to
jason@communitywaikato.org.nz

Community Waikato Tindall Annual Fund

Funding round open until 15 September 2023

Community Waikato are Regional Donation Managers for the Tindall Foundation. The Tindall Foundation giving is focused in three areas-Family/Whaanau, Community and Environment. Community Waikato's funding area as a Regional Donation Manager is Family/ Whaanau. The overall goal for Whaanau/Family Tamariki/children, rangatahi/young people and their whaanau/families are resilient, secure and thriving.

Visit www.communitywaikato.org.nz to find out more

Cross-Sector Hui!

8 November 2023, K'aute Pasifika fale, Mill Street, Hamilton

Community Waikato, Go Eco and Creative Waikato are collaborating on a cross-sector hui for community groups and individuals from the for-purpose sector. This will be a great opportunity to network and problem-solve, with inputs and insights from across various sectors in our non-profit environment. Coming together makes us strong as we look ahead to our challenges and opportunities. Bringing together environmental stewardship, social engagement, and creative expression enables an exciting opportunity to enrich our collaboration and grow deeper connections that could enhance the collective strength and potential of our region.

Put this in your diaries now and keep your eyes open in the coming months for more details!

Ask the candidates

Voting in the New Zealand General Election starts on Monday 2 October, with election day on Saturday 14 October 2023.

Community Waikato asked local candidates to give us their party perspectives on some topical issues impacting the Waikato community and social service sector.

What are the 2 biggest issues you think are facing the community and social service sector in the Waikato region?

TOP.

The fundamental issue is a lack of trust from the government and the bureaucracy for communities, leading to a lack of funding at the community level. The deck chairs keep getting shuffled, but the funding isn't landing where communities need it. Community and social sector organisations know what's needed (e.g. in social housing, policing, mental health, and wrap-around services). These organisations should be trusted and empowered to cater to their community's needs.

Labour

The cost of living is front of mind for most of us, and rising costs impacts the lives of our communities and therefore the community sector. Funding is an ongoing issue. Funding remains an issue, funding for the sector is constantly squeezed and many funders are unwilling to fund areas that they see should be funded by Government (e.g. disability, health, education). This puts further pressure on the system in gaining adequate funding to provide services particularly to those that do not receive government funding, ones that come to mind are non-clinical support to those navigating health issues such as endometriosis, stroke or epilepsy.

Secondly, environmental events have placed additional pressures on non-profit entities providing support to people. This includes things like community transport (to hospitals and other treatment appointments etc) that have been compromised by diversions on the roads.

Lastly, strategic influence over the grassroots issues and ensuring we address the root cause of issues is important and not always addressed. For example, community-based entities work very closely with members of our community and can see strategic solutions to issues we often can only offer a band aid solution to – eg, food – foodbanks are a bottom of the cliff response to an issue that could be better addressed by enhancing food sovereignty – If we were to fund the infrastructure for food production, like through iwi or marae, we could resolve a lot of food poverty impacting Maori.

act/

Cost of living and crime.

Waikato people face increasing prices, brought about by excessive Government spending fuelled by debt and low productivity. Inflation is caused by too much money chasing too few products – by borrowing and spending, while New Zealand productivity remains low by OECD standards, has resulted in a cost-of-living crisis. This is impacting people in marginalised or socio-economically disadvantaged communities disproportionately. See <https://www.act.org.nz/new-zealands-cost-of-living-crisis>

Crime is rampant. So far in 2023 in the Waikato alone, there have been 1725 acts intended to cause injury, 141 sexual assaults, 308 robberies, and almost 16,000 burglaries and thefts. Crime affects people in disadvantaged or poorer communities disproportionately. <https://www.act.org.nz/law-and-order>

Green

Poverty and the increasing pressure on individuals, whānau, and communities of the cost of living. People deserve the right to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives without the fear of not being able to pay for power or put food on the table.

There are 1.4 million people in Aotearoa who rent and meanwhile we have some of the most expensive housing in the OECD. Access to affordable and healthy housing should not be left to chance, and must be accessible to all people living in New Zealand.

National

The biggest issue facing all New Zealanders is the cost of living, affecting people working as well as those on the benefit.

The second biggest issue would be access to affordable housing – under Labour rents have increased on average by \$175 a week.

What do you think is an effective political response to these issues?

TOP.

A fence is needed at the top of the cliff rather than the ambulance at the bottom. TOP will invest in youth to ensure they are equipped with the skills needed to be resilient, thriving citizens and ensure every Kiwi has the opportunity for a secure, affordable home by raising incomes, stabilising rents & house prices and increasing housing supply. The Opportunities Party values collaboration and a Government that can deliver services effectively. We would work with either side to deliver funding to community organisations in social housing (CHIPS), mental health (rather than via DHBs) and community policing (with community kiosks). Our tax switch policy gives more to PAYE earners (first \$15,000 tax-free) and places the burden on land bankers (this will also incentivise the productive use of land). We need a fairer tax system that doesn't rely on wage earners and moves the tax burden to non-productive assets, like property. When the tax system is fairer, people have more money in their pockets, and funding is available to invest in the fence at the top of the cliff.

Labour

Labour govt has recognised the need to work better with the community sector. The single year contracting that came in under the national government is being redressed by the reintroduction of multi-year funding. In 2022 Labour Government launched the Social Sector Commissioning Action Plan 2022-2028, marking a significant shift in the way social services deliver support for people, whānau and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. This shift provides a pathway for how we can fundamentally change the way government works with social services, so they can be supported to better help their communities.

Budget 2023 has continued the Labour Government's work towards a social sector that better serves our people and communities by improving how government commissions and works with social services.

- We are creating social services that are responsive, whānau-centred and community-led and reflects their needs and aspirations, ensuring people, whānau and communities right across the country can expect to have their welfare needs at the heart of our social services.
- Removing unnecessary red-tape, through continuing to modernising our welfare system so that social sector organisations can support New Zealanders to live with dignity and deliver support where necessary.
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi and Māori-Crown partnerships must be at the heart of effective commissioning. Our approach will support iwi, hapū, and whānau to create their own solutions, equitable access, positive experiences and outcomes for Māori who work in the sector, and applying tikanga in a way that informs how support is provided.

act/

A focus on dealing with the root causes. Government spending must be reduced. You cannot spend your way out of a cost-of-living crisis.

If New Zealand productivity is not increased, then social issues will result with increasing poverty and an ever-shrinking capacity to deal with it. There needs to be a much more intelligent response to crime. Repeat youth offenders are not being treated appropriately, and only ACT has a plan to deal to repeat youth offenders, by creating proper secure youth justice facilities where they can receive the help to turn their lives around.

Green

The Green Party's Income Guarantee is the right and compassionate thing to do to lift everyone out of poverty and set all families up to thrive from the start, while reprogramming our tax system in a way that means we can collect the resources we need from those most able to pay. The Green Party will guarantee a decent income for all. It works by making sure everyone - whether they are in or out of work - has an income of at least \$385 per week. A family top up of \$215 every week for the first child, and \$135 a week for every other child, with an extra \$140 a week for every child under three years. We will introduce a new tax-free threshold, so no one has to pay tax on the first \$10,000 of their income. This will allow you to keep more of your income. Simple changes to the tax rules will unlock the resources all of us need to thrive, this includes a new top rate of income tax of 45% on income over \$180,000, so the top earners contribute more, while those earning under \$125,000 will pay less, and a new corporate tax rate of 33%, returning corporate tax to what it was before National came into government in 2008. You can find our full policy for Ending Poverty Together here: https://www.greens.org.nz/ending_poverty_together

The Green Party will show the political leadership necessary to cap rents, so more of your income can go towards other essentials; introduce a Rental Warrant of Fitness so your home is always warm and dry; ensure there are more public homes for the people who need them; and to build thousands more affordable houses in the places people want to live, so if you do want to buy that first home, it is a realistic option. You can find our full Pledge to Renters policy here: https://www.greens.org.nz/our_pledge_to_renters

National

To reduce the cost of living for all New Zealanders, National will rebuild the economy. To achieve this we will address the drivers of inflation by restoring discipline to government spending, delivering meaningful tax relief by adjusting income tax brackets, stop adding unnecessary costs to businesses, and restore the Reserve Bank's single mandate of putting the lid back on inflation.

To fix New Zealand's housing crisis we need to build more houses - to do this National will unlock land for housing inside and around cities and build infrastructure. National will also restore interest deductibility for rental properties, take the Brightline test back to two years and allow people under the age of 30 to access their Kiwisaver to help pay for the bond on rental property.

The increases in the cost of living has put extra pressure on social service providers, but downturns in investment returns for local funders has impacted funds available to social service providers. What role do you see for Government in bridging gaps to ensure localised community services are retained?

TOP.

When service providers experience a shortfall in funding that impacts their ability to deliver services, the Government should provide funding. As the productivity of our economy improves (through investment in business and innovation rather than land banking), the Government will be able to invest more in community and social services. TOP will bring a fresh voice to Parliament to make these changes we've all been wanting for decades.

Labour

Govt partnering with community organisations to enable them to meet community needs - needs to be a partnership model rather than a low-trust single year funding. Needs to be relationship driven rather than output driven.

Govt partnering with the community sector to better hear and understand localised issues and co-design solutions that involve govt, community sector, Maaori, business etc.

act/

ACT is committed to localised delivery of social services and wants to devolve what are currently centralised social provision much more to local communities and iwi. ACT believes local communities know the people in those communities best, and understand the different nuances of those communities. Local or devolved delivery creates more incentive for more people to engage in the solutions, as there is a direct impact for them.

Green

Uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi throughout the approach of the public service, including by finding Māori organisations, iwi, hapū and marae to run community and environmental initiatives that meet the needs and aspirations of Māori.

Provide secure, flexible and full funding arrangements for the community sector, recognising the value of the work, and ensuring independence within a supportive legislative framework.

Provide local authorities with new revenue tools such as targeted environmental taxes, congestion charges, resource rentals, and tourism infrastructure levies, to better enable funding of local programmes without relying solely on rates.

Work with local government to improve resilience of telecommunications and transport networks for flooding, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

You can find our policy for Community and the Economy here: https://www.greens.org.nz/community_and_the_economy_policy and our full party policies here: https://www.greens.org.nz/policy_complete_party

National

National knows that Government doesn't always know best, and sometimes community providers for things like housing, looking for work, or addiction services get better outcomes than Government agencies. A National led-government would work with these organisations so that they can continue their great work that they do in their communities.

The Government can also reduce the rules and regulations that add burden to those community services and cut wasteful spending on projects that are costly and not getting any outcomes to improve New Zealanders lives.

Thank you to all the candidates who participated and shared their party views.

Supporting communities to thrive – Asset based community development

"When people discover what they have, they find power. When people join together in new connections and relationships, they build power. When people become more productive together, they exercise their power to address problems and realise dreams."

-Mike Green, *When People Care Enough to Act*

Traditionally, agencies focused on supporting communities to thrive have tended to concentrate on meeting a community's needs and identifying gaps in services or problems within that community. This focus on what is wrong with a community and what needs to be fixed contributes to a sense of helplessness within the community and a dependence on outside help to fix the problem. It can be difficult for members of a community to imagine better outcomes when gaps, deficits and problems are consistently in the limelight.

Asset based Community Development (ABCD) is a powerful approach focused on discovering and mobilising the resources that are already present in a community. ABCD is a positive strategy that encourages people to recognise that their community is a glass half full of assets, not a glass half empty with needs. Everyone in a community – individuals, groups, organisations, and businesses – has skills, talents, and experiences that they can use to make their community a better place to live. Every community also has natural resources – space and physical resources – that can also be used for collective good.

The starting point is what is present in the community and not what is problematic or missing.

For example: Imagine a neighbourhood park. There are two different ways to describe that park, and each will lead in a different direction.

Description 1: Needs/deficit focus

The park is a magnet for vandalism. The toilets and skate bowl are constantly covered in graffiti. Local young people gather at the park on a Friday night and leave rubbish everywhere when they leave.

Description 2: Asset based

The park is an important meeting place for local young people. They value the space available there to meet friends. Every afternoon and on the weekends, families with young

children, people walking their dogs and young people come to the park to picnic, play touch, ride bikes, skate and meet other people. The park is a central community asset for a range of groups and individuals.

The asset-based approach does not turn a blind eye to community problems. Instead, it identifies them and then finds and uses resources to deal with those problems by building on the strengths and opportunities that exist. In other words, using what they have to get what they want. Community assets are resources that become valuable when they are brought together and made productive.

"When a growing circle of people work together in community partnership, they have the power to address important problems and to achieve the goals they want. Strong communities know that they need everyone to give their gifts if the community is to thrive. It is true there is no one we don't need"

-Mike Green, *When People Care Enough to Act*

In his book *'When People Care Enough to Act'*, Mike Green identifies **three qualities** that are present in effective community development efforts. They are **asset-based**, focused on discovering what can be productive in a community. What do we already have that will allow us to do something worthwhile? They are **internally focused**, recognising that the best starting point is what can be found inside a community - the people who live in a community are the key contributors to community development that works. And, they are **relationship driven**, communities only get strong through connections among people that enable people to give their gifts. Relationship building is the fundamental action of community building.

What can we do as individuals and organisations working to support communities to thrive?

There are more resources in our communities than any one person can know. We can start by identifying, connecting, and creating opportunities to organise them to work together for the benefit of the community.

Assets can be found in the building blocks of community:

- **Individuals** – with gifts, talents, and skills to contribute. Every person has much to offer if invited and given the opportunity
- **Local voluntary groups** – where people act together out of care for a shared purpose
- **Organisations** – of business, government, and for-purpose organisations. Every organisation has the capacity to support local individuals and their associations
- **The physical world** – both natural and constructed: landscape and waterways, buildings, parks, streets, and the transport infrastructure
- **The cultural world** – life is full of creativity, culture, heritage, and history. Creative talent and opportunities for everyone to express themselves in ways that reflect their values and identities, improve understanding, and promote their voices
- **The local economy** – economic exchange circulates money, goods, and services through a community as people buy, sell, hire or invest
- **Whaanau, Hapuu and Iwi** – it is also important to consider the strengths, assets, connections, and resources held and shared by whaanau/hapuu/iwi and Maori organisations within communities. These sit in multiple dimensions across a community asset map, will be diverse and may incorporate elements such as whenua (land), awa (waterways), tikanga and kawa (cultural beliefs, values, and practices) and much more

What people care enough to do something about is the key asset in every community. Making these things visible invites others, who recognise common ground, to unite to act. This is the foundation of community organising and creates a strong foundation for building successful community partnerships.

It takes both strong people and effective programmes to build strong communities. Working out the most effective role for agencies is crucial – agencies can offer good services while also helping people to do what only strong citizens can do: mobilising the wider community to work together.

There is no one model or recipe for effective community development. Each circumstance must find its own unique path to success. While we can use other people's experiences to help us build our own approach, we will build the road as we walk it.

Where do we start? A good place to start is to consider the conversations we are having with and around communities – what sorts of questions we are asking?

In *'Imagine Chicago: Ten Years of Imagination in Action'*, Bliss W. Browne and Shilpa Jain offer some insights around the power of the asking the right questions.

"Appreciative Inquiry questions are always positive questions around affirmative topics. In asking and answering them, we get focused on what has life, meaning and value. When communities use **Appreciative Inquiry**, they share in a way that stretches collective vision. By bringing their valued experiences into public view, they become civic actors by choice and can act on behalf of what they value. People see themselves as subjects of a system they can actively transform rather than as objects of a system that constrains

their imaginations."

Browne and Jain go on to offer some further insights into the power of positive questions

- The person who sets the question sets the direction and has the power of a change agent. (Consider the difference between asking a police chief about crime vs. asking about community safety).
- Images of the future are powerful. We move in the direction of what we can imagine.
- Negative images and conversations weaken us mentally and physically; positive images strengthen us and what we can accomplish.
- Positive communication is essential to mental health and requires practice. We are surrounded by negative vocabulary and need to replace it with self-confidence and community affirmation.
- Positive images of youth are essential to creating a social culture in which young people are encouraged to contribute. Because many people now see young people as problems to be solved or criminals to be feared, we need to showcase positive stories and images of what young people value and can accomplish and contribute.
- Human systems want to move in a positive direction (like plants seeking the sun). Positive questions and feedback create energy — like the sun, they literally make it possible to live and to grow. Young people can help create this positive environment and also hold others accountable to doing so. This requires leadership and courage.
- It is important to name and claim what's working as well as what needs work. This is a place from which you can build.

"Human systems grow toward what they persistently ask questions about."

-David Cooperider and Diana Whitney

To design good appreciative inquiry questions, consider the following:

1. **Allow questions to bring up ultimate concerns: ask about high point stories, most valued qualities, etc.**
2. **Use positive questions that build on positive assumptions, i.e. what about this neighbourhood makes you especially pleased you live here?**
3. **Give a thought-provoking, appealing definition of the topic, e.g. "a leader is anyone who wants to help at this time."**
4. **Present questions as an invitation; use expansive, positive, feeling, practical words.**
5. **Enhance the possibilities of storytelling, by asking questions that focus on personal experiences.**
6. **Phrase questions in a conversational, friendly tone, and listen with as much interest as you would to a close friend.**
7. **Ask open questions to which you do not know the answer, expecting to learn something surprising and brilliant.**
8. **Value the experience of the person being interviewed.**



Community Waikato Workshops

■ Sept-Dec 2023

Funding Workshops

Come to a free funding workshop delivered by the local community funders

- Huntly - 6 Sept, 9.30am to 11.30am
- Meremere - 27 Sept, 9.30am to 11.30am
- Hamilton - 4 Oct, 9.30am to 11.30am
- Hamilton - 18 Oct, 5.30pm to 7.30pm

Governance in Small Organisations

This free workshop will take you through the basics of governing community organisations

- Huntly - 6 Sept, 10am to 12noon, Huntly Friendship House, Free
- Thames - 13 Sept, 5.30pm to 7.30pm, Thames Community Centre, Free
- Zoom - 18 Oct, 6.30pm to 8pm
- Zoom - 19 Oct, 11.30am to 1pm

The Art of Giving Feedback – Foundation Workshop

13 Sept, 9.30am to 11.30am, Zoom, \$75 community

Some love it, some hate it. All need it. Feedback. Most people have mixed feelings about feedback based on their good and bad experiences. Everyone loves positive feedback but how hard is it to give and listen to criticism?

Coaching and Mentoring for Community Organisations

13 Sept, 10am to 12noon, Community Waikato, \$75 community

This workshop provides an overview of contemporary thinking about coaching and mentoring.

Understanding the Treaty of Waitangi

20 Sept, 8.30am to 4.30pm, Aratiatia Marae, 25 Bankwood Road, Hamilton, \$150 community

Knowledge of the Treaty of Waitangi's intentions and implications is now required in most workplaces & professions. This one-day workshop provides in-depth training & resources in a marae setting.

PodCurious

Session One: 19 Sept, 10am to 12noon, Community Waikato

Session Two: 31 Oct, 10am to 12noon, Community Waikato

Curious about whether a podcast could work for your organisation, but not sure where, whether or how to start? This is the workshops are designed with you in mind.

Thriving at work

26 Sept, 10am to 12noon, Community Waikato, \$75 community

This seminar demonstrates the way success or otherwise of the team is ultimately determined by the actions of the team leader and the team's culture.

Teams at their Best

11 Oct, 10.00am to 12noon, Community Waikato, \$75 community

This seminar focuses on the important role that teams play in an organisation. It includes the complexities of team culture, how teams' function, and the good and the bad of how team membership plays out.

The Art of Giving Feedback - Mastery Workshop

25 Oct, 9.30am to 12.30pm, \$75 community

This workshop is to deepen your knowledge gained from the online foundation workshop. Discuss, ask, reflect on what works, get help, practice.

Leadership in Practice Masterclass - 3 Days

1 to 3 Nov, 9am - 3pm, \$450 community

Become an effective leader in today's world. This three-day Masterclass offers a practical approach to growing organisational leadership to enhance organisational effectiveness. It includes an exploration of contemporary leadership theory and practice.

Register online at www.communitywaikato.org.nz/workshops