



TE PŪ HARAKEKE
Community Collective
Manawatū

Report of the 2022 Palmerston North
Social Wellbeing Forum

Weaknesses:
What is not working well
in this space?

5 minutes on post-its
5 minutes sharing

PSYCHEDELIC NORTH
SHARING STRENGTHS
EMPOWER COMMUNITY

7



Mihi

E ngā mana, e ngā reo,
e ngā karanga maha o tēnei kaupapa

Kei te mana whenua, arā ko Rangitane,
otirā ki ngā mauri o te rohe nei.

Kei te mihi, kei te mihi, kei te mihi.

E mihi ana ki te rangi, e mihi ana ki te whenua,
e mihi ana ki ngā pae maunga me ngā wai hōrapa
nei i tēnei rohe ataahua o koutou, ko Manawatū.

‘Tini whetu ki te rangi, ko Rangitāne ki te whenua’

He kōrero tēnei:

Hutia te rito, hutia te rito o te harakeke

Kei hea te komako e kō?

Kī mai ki ahau, he aha te mea nui,
he aha te mea nui o te Ao?

Māku e kī atu

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata, hei!

He rīpoata tēnei hei awhina i ngā rōpu tūhono o
Te Pu Harakeke, te rangatōpū-ā-rohe me
ngā hunga whaipānga o te rohe nei.

He pitopito kōrero o ngā kaimahi o tēnei hāpori hei
miramira i ngā mea nui mo te rangai-a-hapori.

Nō reira, ki ngā kaipānui o tēnei rīpoata
tēnā koutou katoa.

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Report of the 2022 SWF

Background

The Social Wellbeing Forum (SWF) has been held regularly since 2007, first initiated and hosted by Palmerston North City Council, it was later taken over by Te Pū Harakeke (formerly Palmerston North Community Services Council) to host on behalf of the community/social sector. The goal of the SWF is to bring the community sector together to discuss concerns and solutions, present their perspective of what is happening 'on the ground,' identify areas for collaboration and action, and to inform and influence policy and programmes across local government, central government agencies and the social sector.

The forum has taken various forms over the years, and in 2019 a new format was trialled, with the intention of moving from an annual forum to a 3-year cycle. Initiatives proposed at the forum were to be piloted in the intervening years.

A number of challenges arose following the 2019 forum – these included a lack of clarity about who would 'own' initiatives, and difficulty securing resource for Te Pū Harakeke to conduct further feasibility studies. Additionally, some proposed initiatives, though aspirational, were well outside of the scope of what could be achieved within our sector, or even by any amount of collective action within our region. Conversely, some initiatives, such as changes to zoning and consenting for new homes, progressed at a national level without us being the driving force.

In addition to these challenges, we recognised that the period of time between the 2019 and 2022 Forums has been a time of extraordinary change to the environment in which our sector operated, and indeed the nation and the world.

10 months after the 2019 Social Wellbeing Forum, the World Health Organisation declared a global pandemic relating to COVID-19. The subsequent public health efforts aimed at curtailing the spread of the disease had the single biggest impact on the daily lives of New Zealanders and the operation of all sectors of society since at least the second world war. The long-lasting impacts of the pandemic are myriad and have included loss of employment and income security for whānau, a massive increase in social isolation and disconnection from community, increases to inflation and the cost of living, as well



as changes for community groups in funding models, new challenges in compliance, and adapting to ever changing modes of service delivery.

These, coupled with ongoing challenges, for example dealing with the effects of climate change, the housing crisis, poverty, and mental health concerns, meant that the 2022 Social Wellbeing Forum is a particularly important opportunity for us as a sector to take stock of where we are now. We also recognise that this document will provide a historical record of our sector, in our place, at our time.

Method

The Social Wellbeing Forum aims to take a broad snapshot of the 'state of the sector' and provide an avenue for those working 'on the front lines' to add their voice to the conversation. To achieve this, kaimahi working in the Community Sector in Palmerston North and the wider Manawatū region were invited to participate in pre-forum interviews and site visits, a survey, and to participate in discussions at the forum itself.

Pre-forum interviews and site visits were conducted with community groups selected from within Te Pū Harakeke's diverse membership and aimed to give the forum's planning group insight into the operations and challenges experienced by groups at a grass-roots level. 15 visits were conducted with groups covering the diversity of Te Pū Harakeke's membership.

The invitation to participate in the pre-forum survey was sent to 425 kaimahi with links to the community sector using the *Flax Pānui* email distribution list. 49 individuals completed the survey. In order to give voice to those who are working on the ground in the community/not-for-profit space, those who indicated that they worked in 'Local Government/Government' and 'Funder' were separated from the other survey results. This left 44 responses.

The questions in the pre-forum survey were in two parts: 'Our Community', which focused on the challenges faced by and aspirations of the whānau and individuals who kaimahi hāpori (community workers) work alongside. The second part, 'Our

Organisations', focused on the challenges faced by community organisations in carrying out their mahi. We also asked respondents to complete a SWOT analysis of the sector as a whole.

The results of this survey informed the topics which were chosen for each group to discuss at the forum.

Invitations to the Forum were sent to the same distribution list as the survey. Additionally, specific invitations were sent to other stakeholders such as city councillors, funders, and representatives of other government agencies.

The forum was held on the morning of Friday 28 October 2022 at the Palmerston North Conference and Function Centre. 70 individuals attended the forum, representing 42 organisations / groups.

The forum was divided into two parts, along the same lines as the survey.

For Round One, attendees were asked in advance to choose one of the following topics, (based off the survey) and were assigned to discussion groups on that basis:

Housing

- Access and availability of affordable housing
- Transitional & emergency housing
- Social housing

Health & Mental Wellbeing

- Access to health & wellbeing services
- Social isolation & related issues
- Anxiety & mental health

Cost of Living

- Cost of living & financial pressure
- Household debt & financial security
- Food security

Each group considered the following questions in relation to their assigned topic:

1. What is working well in this space?
2. What is not working well?
3. What opportunities are there to do better or meet the need?
4. What threats or risks are present?

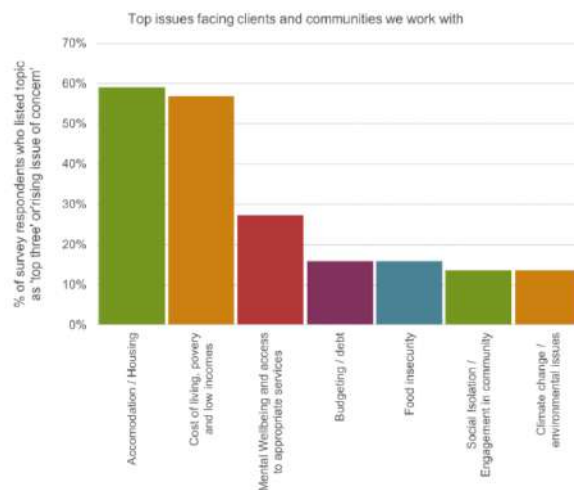
For each question, participants wrote their responses on post-its and shared these with the group.

For Round Two, attendees were placed into groups at random, and each group selected two or three of the following 'how might we...' questions relating to organisational challenges to discuss and write their ideas on post-its.

Facilitators from each group were selected from the community sector, and where possible, facilitated a topic which links to their own work or professional interest.

Following the forum, we collected the post-it notes from each discussion and met with each group facilitator to discuss their notes and key takeaways and to note any additional context to assist in preparing the report which follows. The full list of responses under each topic are included along with some commentary in the appendices to this report.

The findings and recommendations which follow are based of the insights gained throughout this whole process – interviews, survey and forum discussions.



Findings & Recommendations

Housing

Housing was the biggest issue raised in our research. Just under 60% of survey respondents indicated that housing was one of the top three issues facing the communities they work with. The cost of living was close behind.

Supply continues to be the major issue. Costs are high both to rent or purchase/build, and social housing waitlists remain stubbornly high.

Much of the forum discussion focussed on increasing the construction workforce available – including through government programmes to encourage trades training and making changes to enable immigration for workers in this space.

Others suggested focus on speeding up consent processes, though we note that consents for houses are at the highest level in decades nationally, and that the government are currently working on RMA reform and urban planning rule changes have already been introduced.

A number of participants made positive references to papakāinga housing models and multi-generational living as both positive and worthy of further investigation.

The provision of social housing to house the most vulnerable is a responsibility that falls on all parties: Council, Kāinga Ora, private and community providers. Community providers lack the capital to do this. If private providers had the capacity or desire to develop social housing, they would – it is clear there would be sufficient demand – however, there has not been any signs of this happening at significant scale. Therefore we recommend that Council continue developing additional social housing.

Some participants highlighted challenges in emergency and transitional housing, including the quality of housing stock available, and concerns about safety which have been traversed in the media in recent months.

Some also raised challenges with people being able to access the help they need easily. We suggest that consideration needs to be given to creating a single place when people with urgent housing needs can access the help they need – whether that is a shelter people can drop in, or an existing agency that people can contact and know that they will not be bounced around between agencies, as is

sometimes the case at present. This agency needs to be open every day.

Health & Mental Wellbeing

There were common themes through all groups who discussed aspects of health and mental wellbeing. In particular a struggle to find the staff organisations need to operate and meet demand and a need for much greater funding to community providers. The two are obviously interlinked and are discussed further in 'challenges for organisations.'

Social isolation is an issue that has come to the fore since the last forum, arising out of the pandemic and associated responses, or in some cases further isolating communities and individuals who were already at risk. The issue was raised by a number of groups in our pre-forum research, particularly in relation to youth who have disengaged from the education system, and in many cases, this severs links to other support systems, such as health services. This then affects both mental and physical health.

We note that those who are already accessing help from agencies often benefit from referrals to other services, which enables them to receive more holistic support – but the challenges are in reaching those who are not engaging with any part of the health, education, or social services system – and in making sure those systems have strong links between them.

The groups discussing this issue suggested that this might be addressed by a focus on local or neighbourhood services, events and activities – ensuring these are available and visible in local communities; using a variety of ways to reach a variety of demographics – social media, activities in the places people gather, utilising existing community networks.

Some noted that public transport is important to making activities accessible. Increased frequencies and lower costs would benefit those most socially isolated.

Household Finances

The tables discussing finances, the cost of living, and kai security highlighted the same staffing and funding issues as discussed in other areas. As with other topics, groups raised some concerns around

people getting bounced around between agencies, a need to increase awareness amongst the public of what support is available and continue working to reduce stigma. Some ideas to address these are addressed elsewhere.

Challenges for organisations

Throughout the SWF 2022 process, some key themes appeared throughout all the topics of discussion.

We feel it is worth noting that overall, confidence within the sector is reasonably high—in particular, the sector appears to have confidence in its capability, with approximately 65% fairly or very confident they have the capability to achieve their desired outcomes. Groups were least confident (29% fairly or very confident) that they have the capacity (time, resources and energy) to achieve their desired outcomes.

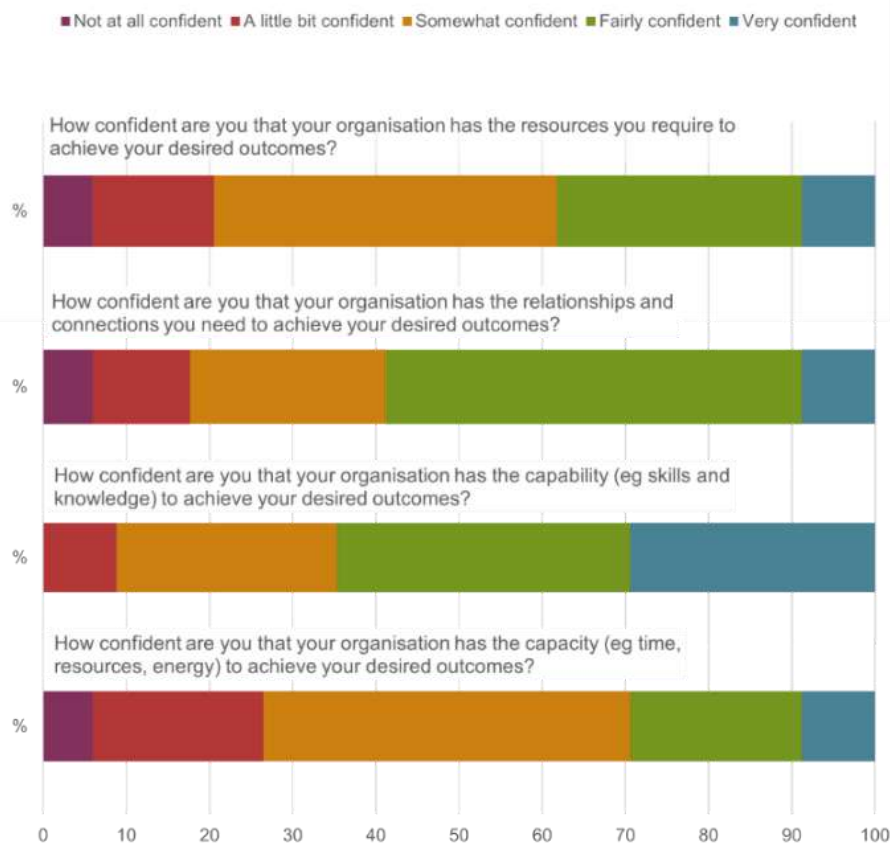
We delved into this further at the forum, asking groups to choose to discuss how we might address some of these capacity and capability challenges.

Broadly, we suggest that the ‘answer’ in many cases is not new programmes, services or organisations – but rather increasing the resourcing (in particular funding), which in turn enables organisations to meet the demand, employ staff who have the skills and qualifications required.

The reality is that services exist for most needs, they need help increasing their capacity and in getting the word out to the community. This is not to say that there are no gaps in services in the Manawātū, but rather that in most cases, there are already capable, dedicated organisations doing the mahi, and we should invest in those.

Funding and reporting

Funding and reporting can be points of frustration. Some participants discussed the need for grant eligibility to be broader, as they feel the need to shoehorn their programmes to fit criteria which doesn’t match the needs. Many indicated a desire for more funding to be available to cover staff wages. Through the pandemic, we saw what was



possible when funding was made available quickly and in a high-trust model, and we suggest attempts should be made to maintain that model going forward.

Staffing

Increasing pay was the most common response amongst the numerous groups who chose to discuss the question 'how might we address challenges with recruiting, training and retaining staff and volunteers?' However, many also emphasised the importance of ensuring that organisations have a positive culture, are flexible in their working arrangements and provide adequate professional development opportunities for staff.

Some participants noted that they would like to employ workers from overseas to help meet demand for services, but that challenges interacting with the immigration system prohibited this. In particular, the assessment of applicants for the skilled migrant visa category bases its assessment on the wages associated with the role, meaning that it is nearly impossible for community organisations to use this channel.

Connection and collaboration

Another theme which came up in a number of discussion groups is the topic of being connected and working together. We suggest that there was a sense that people were pleased to be able to reconnect through the social wellbeing forum and note that many participants referred to the importance of building strong networks in the sector to address challenges. We suggest that this shows the need for ongoing investment in sector lead organisations who take on the challenge of building and maintaining these relationships throughout the sector.

Many within the sector recognise the importance of collaboration, and we have seen some great examples of collaborations through the pandemic.

Community engagement

Finally, one of the challenges identified in the early part of this research was around the ability of community organisations to communicate our stories, raise awareness of services and engage with the community. Many organisations are already working towards improving in this area, and partnerships with, for example, local media provide opportunities for groups to get their stories out there. A number of participants suggested that the return of community events may help to improve engagement between social services and the wider community, as well as helping to address issues around social isolation which were mentioned previously in this report.

We suggest that in order to reach the most disconnected members of the community, there should be a diverse range of events on offer, including a range of event or activity offerings, including varied events at a neighbourhood level. We encourage both community organisations and Council to continue their important work in this area. Council assistance with running these events and taking an oversight role in scheduling a diverse calendar of events is appreciated.

Summary of Recommendations:

What the community sector can do:

1. Note the importance of strong relationships in the sector and investing time in networking activities.
2. Continue work on bridging and connecting organisations, looking for opportunities for collaboration between groups.
3. Continue working to improve public awareness of services available, e.g. profiles in local media.
4. Continue delivering training and development for the sector, supported by council and government with funding.

What the sector needs Council and Central Government to do:

5. Note that housing is still the biggest issue facing our at-risk communities.
6. Develop more social housing and enable more housing development with urgency.
7. Explore ways to streamline or coordinate housing support agencies to ensure there is a single, clear, accessible contact channel for those who need emergency housing.
8. Note that the high cost of living is having a significant impact on the most vulnerable in our communities.
9. Increase or, at a minimum, maintain current funding levels for the for-purpose sector (at real, inflation-adjusted levels).
10. Note the reliance the sector has on local and central government funding and contracts, and the flow-on effect that this has on our ability to employ a sufficient, qualified, and well-supported workforce.
11. Recognise that roles in the social services are skilled roles and make these available to migrant workers when skilled residents are not available. This could include removing the minimum salary requirement for visa applications for community and social service providers.
12. Continue to review funding priorities and models, increasing the focus on longer-term outcomes over short term outputs, and taking risks on innovative projects.



Appendix 1: Notes From Discussions—Our Communities

Housing

Housing Availability and Affordability

Housing prices have risen steeply for a number of years, and housing affordability has been a frequent topic of conversation in the community.

The group identified this awareness as a strength. It was also acknowledged that the government has been pushing building projects to fill the need. However, with the average house in New Zealand taking 10 to 12 months to build, there is still an urgent need to meet the immediate demand.

The group recognised the different stressors that were present, including the poor living conditions that people are subject to, given the cost of rent. There were discussions around the labour shortage, long wait lists, and high bank interests. We need more houses being built, but also for there to be more builders.

The group brainstormed ideas about how to make the latter happen, including suggestions such as mimicking the 50's model of having apprentice builders on the marae or developing more housing under a papakāinga model, or whānau living in multiple dwellings on one subdivided patch of land.

The housing market is always susceptible to the threat of rising prices, often driven by speculation, and work must continue to make the opportunity available for average New Zealanders to rent or own a healthy home.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- More houses built in new development area.
- Increase in consents and builds.
- Acknowledgement of delays.
- Collaboration between organisations and businesses.
- New technology being developed to speed up builds.
- We see the negatives.
- We are also working on getting Kāinga Ora and MSD to come into our space so that fruitful collaborative work can begin.
- Community helping each other = overcrowding smaller footprint.
- Promotions of town (Woodville) via promised new highway = but not enough housing.
- Rangitane and Kahungunu.
- Appreciation across the board.
- Common challenges are on the board.
- Those who own the houses are making good money.
- Govt. subsidy for first-time house owners.
- Availability of credit facilities like mortgages.
- Provision of low-cost housing for low-income earners.

Weaknesses

- High bank interests.
- Price increase for buying and renting.
- Not enough info especially for migrants.
- Land availability.
- Cost! Huge increase in rent and housing values.
- Supply of labour.
- Not enough trades.
- Cold and mouldy (if affordable).
- Supply of goods, supply chain.
- Inflation.
- Supply vs. demand.
- Large wait lists.
- Expensive, higher interest rates.
- Cost of living causes pressure on housing affordability.
- Insufficient housing and slow rate of housing development.
- Poor quality of available housing.
- Families having to take in adult children and their children = stress for whānau = overcrowding.
- Not enough building/builders occupying.
- Council consents.
- Increase in rates resulting in house to rent hikes.

Opportunities

- Futureproof.
- Workforce - encourage more people into trades.
- More info available to community.
- Stabilize house prices in market.
- Look at what is working out in other cities that could work here.
- Collaboration across govt. Local and central development agencies.
- Papakāinga models – whānau living on multiple dwellings on sections.
- Multi-generational living.
- New ways and technology to build affordable new houses.
- Visas for construction workers.
- Bring in more builders.
- Tiny homes.
- Social housing.
- Better mortgage options.
- Need for speed in land developments.
- Advisory grants.
- Opportunities for employment in the housing/building/construction industry.
- Copy 50's model of training builders on the marae.
- Simplify consent process.
- Public builds.
- Community efforts.
- Apprenticeship building.

Threats

- Cheap/quick house built may not be good quality.
- Quality.
- Too many rules.
- Speculators driving up prices.
- Labour force and lack of people to build.
- Over-crowding.
- Poor labour force.
- Biases on who gets the houses.
- Families leaving town for more affordable homes.
- Increase in mental health and physical issues.
- Increase of homeless families.
- Increase in population.
- No nest eggs.
- Next generation won't own their own homes.

Social Housing

As we have seen in the previous section, the cost of housing has become increasingly unaffordable, meaning the need for social housing also increased. The number of people on the housing register has climbed dramatically over the last few years. The group saw increased awareness of this issue as a strength, and was thankful that the social housing system exists.

However, the high cost to rent, low availability, and unhealthy living conditions are weaknesses within the system. The threats in the social housing space were evident to the participants. Social housing doesn't necessarily fit the needs of the individuals and whānau. The simple factor of location can mean the client is away from their support networks. Rates of mental illnesses are often higher in vulnerable living spaces, as well as rates of domestic violence.

The group were concerned about the impacts of possible legislative changes in future, which could see vulnerable people in social housing fall through the cracks. They suggested that higher levels of collaboration and communication across the sector are needed. New initiatives such as rent-to-buy programmes may provide an opportunity to address the need.

What the discussion group said: (Note: this group discussed housing more broadly than social housing)

Strengths

- Affordable housing
- Lots of talk and awareness of the needs
- Awareness of the problem
- Building of new social houses
- Appears to be a strong commitment to creating more housing.
- Council committing funding for more social housing in last plan.
- Funding
- Iwi/Papakāinga builds.
- The idea that social housing in itself is good.
- Different agencies trying to help people to get more housing.
- Healthy home reforms

Weaknesses

- Cost affordability
- Availability
- Debt
- Only available away from support nets
- Unhealthy homes
- High rentals, price gauging, high bonds
- Long processes
- Square pegs not catering to an individual's needs.

Opportunities

- Rent to buy.
- To listen to new voices
- Getting people where they want to be rather than where they need to be.
- These forums, to get people talking about what is really needed.
- Identifying problems
- Education

Threats

- Vulnerable living situation
- Reliance on private sector to provide.
- Profits that are tax free
- Change of government
- Changes to legislation to advantage landlords
- Less rights
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mental health

Transitional and Emergency Housing

The cost of housing has increased rapidly and the demand for emergency and transitional housing has followed. The group noted the considerable media attention on the topic and saw it as a strength since it brought increased awareness to the issues. More houses are also being built at higher frequencies in order to address the problem.

Though being in these forms of housing doesn't necessarily expose you to additional danger, stories of uncomfortable living situations including conflict are common enough and were noted as weaknesses and threats. The group highlighted clients feeling unsafe disconnected, angry and hopeless, with feelings of being unsafe for themselves and their families. Isolation was also a common issue along with the mental health issues associated with loneliness.

Stigma and misconceptions around 'created homelessness' were highlighted, and we feel it is worth noting that despite the misconceptions, homelessness is rarely self-created, and is always situational. What is true is that transitional and emergency housing is stressful.

Housing is a basic need, and many other problems tend to follow when that stability is threatened. The problem is overwhelming. A weakness of the current system that the group noted is that it is common for clients to be bounced between government agencies and housing organisations, just for them to be referred back to the first agency, and so on. There appears to be difficulty in ensuring that everyone involved in the system is providing up to date information for clients.

The support for people to find housing needs to expand, however organisations working in this space are at full capacity, with difficulty finding staff with the skills necessary to undertake this challenging work.

As more houses are being built, the group noted the development of a night shelter as one opportunity.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Community providers getting involved
- Increasing numbers being built by local and central government
- Media attention
- More awareness about the need to provide
- Tenant has more protection than before if house is not healthy
- People are concerned about other people being homeless
- Known need for more facilities and process in place to increase
- Media attention where it is not working
- There is a system that at least exists
- People have few options of housing choices
- Fewer people sleeping rough
- Govt. Seems to recognise some of these issues
- More being built
- Funding being increased
- Safety taking priority
- Needs are being recognised by govt
- Fast access to help
- Offering support to find a forever home
- More support, advocacy, and assistance

Weaknesses

- Unable/limited ability to communicate and access services
- Can be too difficult or a daunting experience
- Moving
- Self-isolation
- Not provided equally or judgement free
- Too many hoops to jump through
- Cost is still daunting with rent even after subsidies
- People need more than just a roof over their head
- Staffing
- Funding
- Experienced people or staff
- Some are worse off financially in transitional houses as they lose WINZ help
- Not provided equally or judgment free
- Can't get out of transitional housing
- Cost of living
- Violence
- Feeling unsafe
- Mental health increase
- People with high needs being placed in unavailable house situations

- Not enough supply or stock who needs it
- Overcrowding
- Insufficient need more, yesterday!
- Safety concerns for family
- Close interactions can be difficult e.g. anxiety
- Not enough for those who need them
- Not accessible or appropriate to have houses for disabled people
- Rent is high
- Overcrowded houses
- Disconnect from whānau
- Not enough permanent houses
- Safety concerns for families in transitional houses

Opportunities

- Night shelter
- Advocacy support Consult people on how and where they want to live
- Invest in modifying business
- Info to get support if needed
- Rent control
- Listen to community led solutions
- Affordable houses
- Less documentation – simple processes
- More houses
- Real investment in better and more facilities for emergency housing
- Allow and encourage fund building on the marae
- Teach housing tenancy at school budgeting
- Investigate empty houses
- Intensify development in the right parts of the city
- Work with tenants to maintain tenancies
- Code of conduct for T.H

Threats

- Isolation from whānau
- Stigma of homelessness
- Mental health concerns
- Health
- An underclass – disinterested
- Increase in crime and gang activity
- Intergenerational trauma
- Crime, drugs and violence
- Abuse toward women
- Frustration
- Anger
- Hopelessness
- Poor mental health
- Suicide
- People settled for substandard unhealthy housing because its better than no housing
- Risk to children
- Crime

Health & Mental Wellbeing

Anxiety and Mental Health

Mental health and anxiety remain a high concern for those working in the community sector. The biggest strength identified by the discussion group was the gradual de-stigmatisation of mental health, and that conversations about mental wellbeing are becoming normalised. Alongside this, an increase in government funding, with additional COVID-19 related funding, were seen as positives.

In terms of weaknesses, kaimahi in the sector have noticed a significant increase in demand for services. One even went as far as to say that there is a 'suicide and anxiety pandemic' in New Zealand. This is especially evident among youth. The general stresses over the last few years have compounded into problems ranging from intense social anxiety to increased drug addiction. There isn't enough capacity to deal with this. As organisations try to adjust, they are dealing with resource problems on the other end. It's not uncommon for some mental health referrals to take a year before the initial meeting because there are not enough staff to meet the need. More needs to be done to increase the number of qualified mental health practitioners.

Kaimahi have observed that the existing funding models don't fit mental health organisations, with some suggesting that it is too focused on output, not outcomes. In a sector where progress can't just be measured by the number of appointments and hours, old funding models can lead to limited results. Some raised the example of the lack of follow-up care for clients after they've received the full length of their therapy sessions because follow-up sessions weren't funded. As the mental health landscape changes, so must the frameworks in the sector.

With the demand for services far outstripping the supply, there are various risks that could lead to a dangerous snowball effect. Staff in the sector are often overworked and face the risk of burnout. For vulnerable clients, waiting a year for services almost always leads to worse outcomes. The groups discussed opportunities to help build capacity in organisations, including looking at how volunteers or students could contribute, and how we can make counselling in the not-for-profit sector more attractive to new graduates.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Offering food is a starter of people in opening.
- People reaching out.
- Public awareness.
- Community talking about mental health and anxiety.
- Dedicated knowledgeable staff.
- Very slowly- stigma is disappearing.
- Parents are speaking help.
- De-stigmatisation.
- Group targeting well- being mental health.
- Awatapu College is looking to the more employees- Social workers and Counsellors.
- Institutions (Schools, ED) supporting students to remain engaged.
- People are motivated to learn about themselves and growing.
- Awatapu College takes on provide us W/ Experience and give students more opportunities to.
- Organisations are working hard to advice stigma around accessing mental health services.
- That word is getting out that people need help conversations are happening.
- Talking to strangers gives us the chance to get to know people on the street.
- Slowly becoming important to central government. Some targeted funding Anxiety- mental health.
- Govt (Education)/ Funding (During lockdown)
- Training opportunities
- Welcoming people visiting our city and finding out how they feel about the city.
- Support for parents- Counselling and parenting programmes.
- Workplaces are making more of an effort to provide support. Daily check ins, EAP services.
- More youth safe space is formed.
- Goodwill/ Care
- Triple P- "fearless" online at ACROSS
- Focus on mental health from governance/ Board committees
- There seem to be more organisations who are trying to help.

- There are still people (individuals) who care.
- Parent supporting, children and young people
- More funding, more people are trying to find solutions
- Assistance Dogs
- Student reaching out for help on their own.
- Agency, Networks
- More students at school are accessing support within school and engaging with guidance.

Weaknesses

- Supply and demand
- Invisible to most, awareness unknown
- Not enough qualified experienced counsellors
- Qualified workers
- 'Must be perfect' mentality
- Untreated ADHD can lead to further issues
- Competing to get funding for providers
- The cost of service is more than most can afford
- Not enough people want to be in similar roles
- Still some stigma amongst people
- Excessive workloads can make it difficult to provide thorough and quality support
- Support systems lacking care
- Life outcomes effected by mental health
- Drug addiction is massive, and challenges are too hard for youth and kids
- Huge workloads
- Not enough after school programs for kids
- Wait lists
- Adult relationship breakdown
- People not able to access support
- Employment threatened by poor mental health well-being
- Students out of school
- Lack of awareness of community supports
- Parents struggling to maintain positive relationships with children
- Not taken seriously by younger people
- Staffing levels low
- Funding
- Slow uptake on counselling as a career
- Staff getting burned out
- Social stigma between peers
- Making more spaces for people to connect
- Lack of resources and funding
- Real people communities are disappearing
- Social media portrays the best so we can't be real with each other

- Super low central govt. Response to mental health
- Wages are low for social service workers
- Workplace sustainability
- Lack of volunteers
- Under-funded and under-staffed

Opportunities

- Providing more opportunities for professional development
- Opportunity for genuine collab
- Listen to service users directly about their challenges and where they think more support is needed
- Big brother, big sister
- Iwi/Māori development in social service space
- Self-growth
- More accessible resources
- Promotion and support of students and look at this sector
- Employ more people
- Hiring new graduates – fresh perspectives
- Collab with other volunteer groups
- Funding opportunities with continued acknowledgement of issues
- Community based work
- Focus and include more community leaders
- More funding
- Get rid of cancel culture
- National resources support local initiatives
- Social media platforms
- Refocus on the social importance of not-for-profit organisations
- Funding is in short supply
- Drive for staff
- Change school curriculum to allow for more life skills, cook, clean – real world skills
- Accept all levels of knowledge
- Encouragement
- Industry wide lobbying of central government
- Positive parenting
- More advertising and raising awareness
- Empower people
- Focus on mental health and well-being in school classes
- Take out the bureaucracy
- Diversity
- More funding
- Higher wages for community and social workers

- Training for the workers

Threats

- Gangs and drugs
- Harm
- Loss of process or productivity
- Not enough support from employees
- Emotional harm
- People feeling like they have to get worse before receiving help
- Limited access to services
- Change of government
- Too much sector change

- Stigma
- Lack of knowledge around support
- More hidden mental health issues
- People who lose someone due to depression or suicide
- Collapse of society
- Lack of support
- Self-harm
- Lack of funding
- Clients feeling like they don't matter and are losing hope
- Long wait times to receive support

Social Isolation and Related Issues

Though lockdowns, the alert level system and the traffic light system are all things in the past, effects of anxiety and social isolation that became apparent through this time continue. Some anxiety relates to a fear of getting sick, but it is also the general social anxieties that developed from people being separated. Communities are aware of this issue, though some members of the discussion group wondered if it was seen as a priority.

Events have started up again, and this was seen as a strength by the group. There have also been programs such as friendship services for the elderly that have helped people stay connected. With COVID-19 receiving so much media attention, success stories of people reconnecting have also been celebrated, bringing helpful narratives to the public's attention.

Progress is happening, but it is slow. The group noted that social cohesion is a difficult phenomenon to measure, which makes it more difficult to put resources into. As a result, pockets of our communities are still at risk of social isolation. Kaimahi in the youth and education sectors have expressed difficulties in getting youth to engage with their activities, events and services.

The group discussed the importance of early intervention and strengthening social relationships before clients hit 'rock bottom'. With the long wait times in our mental health services and a shortage of affordable, qualified counsellors, it is important to address social isolation early. Not doing so creates risks involving mental health issues spiralling and people becoming more vulnerable. Having a robust sense of community is an important facet of mental health.

The group suggested that more events would be beneficial, to create more opportunities for various parts of our community to re-engage with each other. This included general social events and activities, as well as things specifically relating to the social sector. Promotion of what events are available is important, as are addressing other barriers to engaging, such as the cost of transport

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Actually talking about anxiety and isolation
- Strategies shared between agencies
- More creative
- Elderly still nervous about not going out
- Rural isolation
- Collaboration and sharing resources
- MSD enabling better outreach in multi-cultural sector here
- Certain sectors still isolating
- Events are starting again
- Rural communities
- Awareness of issue
- Resilience of outreach communities
- Food pantry
- Community newsletter
- Events to keep connected
- Helping those who had covid
- Stories shared of positive outcomes
- Connections being made
- Senior reference group
- Disability reference group well established

- Greater awareness from community centres to have community events
- Services looking outside the box
- Services reflect client based
- Some funding is targeting this space a little more
- More services available to meet wider community needs
- More groups talking to each other to share info and connectors
- Connections being made

Weaknesses

- Shame and stigma
- Inaccessible info
- Measuring social cohesion
- Capacity
- Investment
- Not enough resources
- Measurements
- Transport
- Timing
- Funding risks

- Facilities and accessibility
- Some groups struggle to recruit
- Events slowly coming back
- Language barriers
- Mental health support in our vulnerable communities
- Funding still needed to continue process
- Volunteers withdrawing
- Time demanded to a volunteer to take place on a role due to police checks etc.
- Not being a priority
- Some communities are still at risk
- Bureaucracy holding back events
- Lack of communication between org. And volunteers
- Funding and resourcing
- Not knowing what's available

Opportunities

- Better communication around what is available
- Build investment case for early intervention
- Connect all community with events
- Narratives as data collection
- Transport for elderly, youth and workers
- Social service agencies collaborating
- Free courses and workshops
- Letting other groups know what we are doing so we can support
- Build on neighbourhood level connections made in lockdown

- Local govt. Reform, change in priorities
- Better monitoring and reporting
- Reach out and invite people to attend activities
- Funding opportunities
- More community events
- One stop shop for social service agencies
- Replicating success
- More support for “the little guy” in partnership to help lift
- Borders broken
- Awareness of social isolation
- Connected communities – know your neighbours

Threats

- Momentum is lost because people get tired or overwhelmed
- Mental health issues
- Lack of neighbourhood watch or similar
- Burn out of staff and volunteers
- Safety
- Exploitation of vulnerable people
- Funding
- Continued drive to individualism of society
- Funding at a appropriate level to recruit and retain skilled staff
- Focus shifts off to other priorities
- More services needing to provide for community pushed down by the govt.
- Resurgence of covid

Access to Health & Wellbeing Services

Health services experienced a major surge in demand throughout the pandemic, managing illness from COVID-19 itself, as well as the surrounding mental health issues, on top of routine healthcare.

When asked to list the strengths in this space, the group noted that clients were more open about their health needs, and increases in funding – mostly related to COVID relief. There has been increased funding for physical and mental health, including new facilities at the hospital as an example of this.

However, it remains quite common for clients to wait a month for a GP appointment. Specialist appointments often take between a few months to a year. For clients with complex needs, having such a delay could significantly limit the progress they make in all their related health issues. There was a fear around the group that the funds that were given out around COVID would cease, even though the aftereffects are every bit as prevalent as before. Beyond organisational capacity, a client's finances and lack of knowledge of services were suggested as major barriers. Practical limitations such as access to transport were also issues.

Threats in this space include clients feeling disempowered by the health system — unmotivated to seek health services because they know they'll be put on a waitlist for months or be triaged as non-urgent at the hospital and wait hours for basic care. This disempowerment can lead to health issues going unaddressed and worsening.

For organisations working in this space the risks involve the potential loss of resources. When health services are barely keeping afloat, losing valuable funding could mean that health services are even less likely to reach those in need.

The group called for sustainable funding, and a more collaborative approach to services. This included working together on projects, but also the possibility of 'sharing' funds between organisations. Funders may need to consider changing their eligibility criteria, so different organisations can be more adaptable to fill gaps in the system.

There are also opportunities for organisations to be more proactive in promoting their services. This will allow clients to find the services they need more easily, and for the institutions that do have the capacity to lighten the load for others. One way to do this could be to increase their presence at local events and activities and other places where people already gather.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Te Pū Harakeke as a leader and advocate.
- Budget for health interest at 30%.
- Increase in budget distributed to physical and mental health.
- New extensions underway at the hospital.
- More collaboration and educational institutions.
- There is still some post-Covid extra funding.
- People are more willing to acknowledge their mental health and wellbeing needs.
- An awareness that we need more staff.
- Connectedness between organisations.
- Organisations are keen to help.
- Wake up call for the needs of the people.
- Actively committed volunteers and staff.
- Work of volunteer groups.
- Ongoing commitment of existing social. community groups and organisations.

Weaknesses

- Not urgent enough.
- Shortage of health workers.
- Financial issues exacerbating other issues for individuals and organisations.
- Not enough staff to employ.
- Wait times are longer.
- A lack of info on what's out there.
- Overwhelmed people and organisations.
- Complex needs of many in system.
- People / families don't know what there that can help them.
- Money is a barrier for most people.
- Physical barriers to access e.g. no car.
- Complex needs of many in the system.
- Educational institutions becoming more responsible for well being.

- Demand is high some organisations don't have enough resources.
- Social determinants and poor health outcomes.
- Empowering and engaging clients who require help.
- Lack of qualified personal and advocates.
- Inequity.

Opportunities

- Grants.
- Encouraging organisations to be more vocal.
- Contact city councillors.
- Make submissions to council.
- Ask more subsidies.
- Scholarships.
- Vigorous and concerted lobbying.
- Advocacy to central govt. For more support.
- Becoming more active in the area.
- Honest discussions and genuine engagements.
- What opportunities exists overseas externally of via technology.
- Pooling or sharing funds.
- Collaboration.
- Sharing info.
- Changing the rules about things such as eligibility for funding.
- Contact the MP.
- Funding for challenges.
- Review or analysis.
- More structural collaboration amongst organisations to avoid.
- Mentoring of family and friends.
- More advertising of services at neighbourhood level.

Threats

- People and organisations being territorial.
- Feelings of hopelessness in the young e.g. climate change.
- Disengagement if things are too hard.
- Running off energy, steam, giving up etc
- Procrastination.
- Complacency.
- People feel disempowered to make change.
- No improvement in funding.
- Situation gets worst.
- Complacency.
- People not engaging in education due to poor physical and mental health.
- The money funds “dying up”.
- Govt and legislature change.
- Global economic and political impacts on social issues e.g. inflation.
- Having unqualified people giving inaccurate advice.
- Consistency of info given.
- People who do not wish to engage despite issues.
- Funds drying up.
- Org. not being able to hire staff with the skills needed.
- Too many ideas.
- Return of the pandemic.

Finances & Costs of Living

Impact of Cost of Living and Financial Pressure

With the cost of living rapidly increasing, the group discussing this topic has responded with a variety of ideas. The group acknowledged that MSD has been trying to become more accessible. The increased number of community gardens, half price for public transport, and the strength of our food networks and food banks are all strengths worth celebrating — helping reduce living costs for people in the community, and established financial literacy services help people manage the finances they do have.

The cost-of-living increase has nonetheless put pressure on whānau and individuals, and weaknesses in this space were evident to the group. The general health of our communities has decreased because the cost of maintaining health has increased, while health services have become harder to access. Transport costs and health costs are becoming less sustainable for clients since they need to pay more for basic living costs. Experiences of social isolation have also increased because of this.

For kaimahi working on the front lines, the true price of poverty is very apparent, and stories of people spiralling into bad living conditions are common. The group noted risks of increased domestic violence exacerbated by financial stress. This may be especially worrying given that New Zealand already has some of the worst rates of family violence in the OECD. Some have also noted higher risks of suicide. It is therefore worth bearing in mind that financial difficulties always have a human cost.

With much of the conversation focusing on the isolating factors of poverty, the group saw opportunities for more localised support — services based in and serving specific suburbs so they can better reach their clients. It may be useful to take the opportunity to better map the services within our communities so members know where to find the help they need.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- MSD trying to become more accessible.
- More funding in community work.
- Supporting organisations helping with budgeting and financial literacy.
- Opportunity for low-cost Wi-Fi.
- More people putting in gardens.
- ½ price for public transport.
- Increased in community collaboration.
- People seeking or getting access to the community.
- Increase in free food stores.
- Food banks.
- Food networks.

Weaknesses

- Mental health.
- Rent and people not being able to get into places due to high cost.
- Rise of cost for everything.

- Isolated people are less likely to access community services.
- Lack of staff in agencies meaning they can't deliver on their promises.
- So many services are going online which makes it difficult for computer illiterate.
- High medical costs.
- Decrease in doctors.
- Long wait time on calls to government organisations.
- Being able to meet schools.
- Skills are needed to ease the burden.
- Constant rise in mortgage and interest rates.
- Rural transport.
- Cost of living payment.
- Criteria for student funding that restricts employment and educational opportunities.
- Too busy or too tired to seek out or access services.
- Increase in basic living.
- Can't get an appointment due to high fuel prices.
- Rent and house prices increased distance study.
- Lack of connection increase in isolation.

Opportunities

- Increase in funding for social services.
- Increase services in isolated rural communities.
- Increase in resources to hire more staff to assist clients promptly.
- Community support and collaboration.
- Promoting services.
- More face-to-face services.
- Stop increasing basic living expenses.
- Skills sharing.
- Community mapping.
- Increased.

Threats

- Increase in anxiety depression, suicide and breakdown of families.
- Increase in DV.
- Decreased tertiary education.
- Domestic violence.
- Nothing to look forward to.
- Bankruptcy.
- Mental health.
- Higher rate of suicide.
- Anxiety.
- Flow on affects across the community.
- Increase in addictions.
- Trauma.
- Loss of funding.
- Deficit in social skills.
- Lack of money leads to isolation.

Household Debt and Financial Security

Household debt and financial security have been major issues. As a result of rapidly rising inflation, clients have been struggling. On a positive note, some of the discussion participants reported that lenders have been more responsible. The fact that students can have face-to-face appointments with StudyLink has also been beneficial. Technological advances also created an increase in useful financial management apps. These are all factors that the group has noted as being positive.

However, there is still stigma around struggling financially. The group also talked about the piles of paperwork involved in getting help, the long phone calls where you are left on hold, being passed around agencies, and other barriers. Poverty is often stressful and suffocating.

In considering how organisations working in this space are faring, it was noted that staff in the sector are feeling financial pressures as well, and financial advisors within the community sector are sometimes forced to change sectors. Staff retention was the most commonly noted threat to the debt space. Furthermore, different members of the group highlighted the lack of sign-posting for those in need towards available assistance. Much like other parts of the community sector, the financial space can still benefit from better promotion. In the meantime, clients can get lost in the confusion, getting passed from one agency or organisation to another trying to find the best fit.

The opportunities in this space primarily aim to increase accessibility. Creating a codes of practice students was one suggestion. There was also a call for higher levels of collaboration, including with organisations that do not primarily deal with finances.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Referrals in and out of budgeting services for better catering of clients' needs.
- Responsible lending.
- Networking.
- Food parcels and student help.
- Organising whānau meetings.
- Increase in money management apps.
- Akonga asking for help.
- Face to face access to StudyLink.
- Navigators funded through MSD.
- Media attention.
- Funders channelling funding to assist needs.
- Conversations are happening/beginning within organisations.


Weaknesses

- Small organisations have less capacity to meet need.
- People not sure where to go.
- Stigma.
- Not feeling safe/judgement from others.
- Whakamā.
- Loss of income to study.
- Not enough \$\$.
- Lots of barriers.

- Long phone calls.
- Passed around agencies.
- Paperwork.
- Cost of living.
- Competition for funding.
- Capacity limitations.
- Not enough education.
- Stigma.
- Not well signposted.
- Reliance on lower wages.

Opportunities

- Focus on finances in society.
- Lots of experienced organisations in this space.
- Code of practice for tertiary students.
- Creating safe environment for people to reach out.
- Partnerships with other groups to support.
- Community in financial mentoring.
- Linking with more external organisations.
- Working together as an organisation for the clients.



Threats

- Losing staff.
- Funding changes.
- Judgement from staff or community.
- Confusing resources.
- Little info/availability.
- Political support for the social services sector funding.
- Change of central government.
- Low wages in community sector.
- Expertise retention.
- Lack of time for services to embed before political change.
- Lack of part time and summer work.
- Allowances and loans not keeping pace with inflation.
- Staff moving onto other roles due to inflation.
- Finding staff.

Food Security

The kai resilience sector had notable strengths in the last three years, with the Manawātū Food Action Network making a significant positive difference. The food resilience groups, environmental sector, academia, and health organisations are well-connected with each other and there are good relationships the foodbanks and others involved in this space. The group also recognised strong support for grassroots initiatives, with many noting the community orchards and gardens.

Nevertheless, there are still concerns. Food is only increasing in price, with inflation being as high as it is. The group noted legislative barriers, along with policy barriers both on the local and national levels, causes obstacles. Much of the current work around food security has been focused on the short-term, meaning long-term solutions still need to be developed.

In discussions with the facilitator, it was noted that almost all the food distributed to those in need in Palmerston North is distributed in one way or another through the big three social food providers, meaning many in the city rely on these organisations.

The group considered that both local and global bring risks in this space. On the local level, changes in funding and losing knowledgeable staff would impact the capacity of key organisations. On a national level, changes in government policy could impact the overall funding the sector receives. On a global level, climate change is affecting how food is grown and its availability.

In terms of opportunities, there is a desire for a clearer regional plan when it comes to food security. Our communities may have to become more self-reliant when it comes to kai, and that is an opportunity for education.

What the discussion group said:

Strengths

- Collaboration w different groups.
- Having strategic community plans and approaches increased publicity.
- Support for grassroots initiatives.
- Costs of food in general.
- Costs of food increases so people are looking for other ways.
- Having dedicated resource for the mahi.
- Community orchards.
- Relationship alliance.
- Community fruit harvest.
- Increasing social trends towards plant-based food.
- Community gardens.
- Improved engagement across various groups.
- Forced us all to network digitally.
- More people are becoming aware of food security issues.
- MFAN.
- Love the community initiatives encouraging food security.
- Full staff.
- Committed volunteers.
- Change in perspective.

- Schools settling down to routines and welcoming groups again.
- More schools showing interest in growing and cooking programmes.

Weaknesses

- Labour shortages.
- Short term solution thinking.
- What happens when it is not top of mind.
- Council and govt. policy.
- Legislative barriers.
- Cancellation of food drive.
- Regional plan.
- Need for a city made strategy.
- Long term future of food availability to all sectors of the city in NZ.
- Amendments to food.
- Increase in community organisations working in food security.
- Reliance on a couple of orgs.
- Monetary policy.
- Cost of living.
- Lack of policy or diagnostic clarity.
- Council strategies where food is being developed.

- Cancellation of food drive.
- Uncertainty of funding.
- Fluctuation of available food for food banks.
- Lack of awareness and services.

Opportunities

- Regional approach.
- Food – shame there's not enough for the family.
- Somehow create a sustainable funding source.
- Upskilling the commercial capacity of traditional social service providers.
- Closer collaboration.
- Education to self-reliance.
- Have a good base to grow from.
- Food resilience.
- Shift to a model of food production which balances large scale vulnerable to disruption.
- Change in govt. and funding.
- Looking at all socio-economic groups.

Threats

- Political change.
- Macro-economic deterioration.
- Climate change.
- Food is seen as commodity not a right.
- Inflation.
- Political changes.
- Not enough people with knowledge.
- Funding.
- Lack of investment.
- Change of purpose.
- Time poor communication.
- Apathy.
- Changing and growing seasons.
- Geo-political disturbances affecting supply and distribution.



Appendix 2: Notes From Discussions—Our Organisations

How might we work stronger together and avoid silos across the sector?

There is strong desire for the sector to work closer together. Out of the nine groups, seven chose to brainstorm about avoiding silos. Familiar desires were expressed by wanting more events, sharing each other's success stories, and sharing resources. As organisations continue to grow relationships, we can strengthen our links with processes and projects. It may be helpful for there to be higher-level initiatives to help move this along.

Some have suggested different funding models, possibly projects that require multiple organisations to deliver together on shared initiatives. In a world where organisations are busy delivering the day-to-day services that they are contracted to do, the bigger picture can get lost in the muck. It may ultimately save money to fund projects with joint contracts and bigger shared outcomes.

For joint projects that are truly innovative, teams need time and extended communication to brainstorm ideas. However, this can be challenging if team members feel that they may be giving up valuable time with if they feel that they are already busy constantly 'fighting fires'.

What the discussion group said:

- Continue to develop skills and capabilities of the organisation and staff.
- Work for the need not the requirement.
- Decolonisation process (boxed in).
- Social well-being forum.
- Acknowledge and accept changes.
- Sit in partnership.
- Developing trust among related organisations.
- Finding common fields of endeavour.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Recognise expertise and knowledge-holders.
- Don't gate keep information.
- Online groups.
- Allocated leave.
- Sharing news.
- Updates.
- Opportunities.
- 100 cups of tea and coffee.
- Re-think competitive funding applications to show synergy between "like" organisations.
- Streamline referral systems/access to services.
- Connect and partner with opposite services that compliment the work.
- Build better relationships.
- Join Te Pu Harakeke.
- Shared projects with other organisations.
- Discuss and building relationships with funders.
- Plan these outcomes.
- Understanding values.
- Community connectedness.
- "Agency speed dating".
- Manawatu funding council.
- More networking.
- Knowledge of oneself to develop a deeper connection while working together.
- Accessible options to network.
- Ensure we are welcoming of seemingly unconnected connections.
- Identifying complimentary services.
- Local Iwi.
- Empower staff to make decisions and connections.
- Know what you're up against.
- Join organisations like Te Pu Harakeke.
- Network in person.
- Regular meetings.
- Work with one another – not alone (unless you have confidence that you are right!
- Identifying complimentary services to connect and refer.
- Community connectors.
- Knowing your community and its needs.
- Be generous.
- Share info.
- Learn to accept others and diversity.
- Collective funding.
- Keep Te Pū Harakeke (strong and well connected).
- No pre concepts.
- Open minded.
- Strength base others.
- Network.

- Collaborative events like SWF.
- Share successes.
- List of organisations available.
- Think big, aim high.
- Less pride, more humble.
- Understand differences.
- Sharing best practices.
- Meaningful free speech meeting with cake.
- Having a community liaison.
- Be friendly and supportive.
- Stop being precious.
- Pick up the phone.
- Meaningful free speech.
- Pool resources.
- Avoid territorial attitudes.
- Face to face engagements.
- Identify who is responsible for this collaboration in each org.
- Networking/partnerships/identify community connectors with similar kaupapa.
- Take time with others – relationships are key.
- Communicate.
- Monthly newsletter.
- Consult and collaborate with other agencies.
- Seek out others for help training support.
- Identify each other's strengths within and outside our orgs.
- Share with, support, and encourage within team.
- Share resources.
- Communication between each other.
- Communication, consultation and regular meetings to stop silos.
- Partnership.
- Opening up.
- Attend hui or networking opportunities.
- Responsibility for each org. To collaborate and avoid duplication of services.
- Willingness to learn so we can do better.
- Identifying strengths and bouncing off that.
- Take time to build relationships with other orgs.
- Work stronger together.
- Providing more networking and collaborative platforms.
- Arrange to catch up face to face with similar orgs/people to korero.
- Community events.
- Hui.
- Identifying the connectors/relationship brokers.
- Celebrating others success.
- Focuses on outcome rather than methods.
- Review communication strategies.
- Review communication strategies.
- Run an open-door policy to encourage free flow of idea sharing and feedback mechanisms.
- Hold frequent meetings to review collectively.
- Overview of organisations in our region.
- Whakawhanaungatanga.
- Talk.
- Encourage networking, personal connections.
- Event collaboration and council events.
- Reach out to colleagues of the similar role once a month to de-brief, brainstorm and chat.
- Share adverts in each other's newsletters.
- Talk and see where you/we can collaborate.
- Target /market similarities.
- All workers have training.
- Collaboration.
- Trust building.
- Resource sharing.
- Client specific resourceful purpose.
- Networking.
- Evolution.
- Email connections.
- Talk to funders about working collaboratively with others.
- Greater/more collaboration at work.
- Shared resources and services.
- More workshops and training.
- Changing the criteria of funding.

How might we address the challenges around recruitment, training, and retention of staff and/or volunteers?

Limited funding has meant that staff turnover rates in the sector are high, and this has been worsened in the recent job market. Organisations were well-aware of this. They are also aware of their reliance on volunteers, and we had many discussions around retention.

What are the solutions? The factor which would make the single biggest impact is an increase in resourcing to allow not-for-profit organisations to pay wages which are more closely aligned to the public or private sectors.

Aside from offering more money, the groups reiterated the importance of focusing on the organisation's mission. It's not uncommon for kaimahi and volunteers to lose sight of the bigger goals when they're caught up in keeping the wheels turning. Focusing on the "why" can lead to better morale and retention.


When the community sector lacks the funds to compete with the private sector, social organisations need to provide benefits that are not just monetary. When it comes to staff, the community sector is ultimately competing against the public and private sectors. If it cannot match other offers in terms of salary, there must be other reasons one would want to stay.

These are not revolutionary ideas, however many workers have experienced insufficient organisational attempts at 'team-building,' when much more is needed to make a workplace attractive and supportive. Organisations in the sector could consider flexible working arrangements, ensuring that they are providing opportunities for staff to upskill, ensuring that staff have up to date technology and equipment that they require to do their jobs, and making a real effort to acknowledge the mahi of staff and volunteers.

What the discussion group said:

- Money.
- Wages.
- Pay parity.
- Incentives such as pay rates and student loans.
- Acknowledge the cost of living is up and pay accordingly.
- Offer higher salaries.
- Funding at a level that encourages staff to apply and remain Cost of living allowance.
- Competitive pay scales.
- Funding for wages made accessible.
- Bring back the WINZ volunteer payment.
- Find more money to have more paid time.
- More funding.
- Salary matches workload.
- Pay parity.
- Attractive salaries.
- Koha for volunteers.
- Better pay.
- Pay and rewards.
- Write job descriptions and pay rate to attract the right workforce.
- Flexibility.
- Being flexible to employee needs.
- Job sharing.
- Ability to fit family demands.
- Flexible working environment.
- PD or learning incentives.
- Professionalism with social services.
- Provide training at accessible times.
- Better training.
- Professional development is important.
- Continuing professional development.
- Offer training.
- Identify pathways for growth to staff in the organisation.
- Training can be an incentive for volunteers to have growth and develop opportunities in an area they're passionate about.
- Invest resources in training for staff and volunteers.
- Make time to train and support staff and volunteers.
- Personal development.
- Education.
- Provide training.
- Invest in professional development.
- Ensure manageable workload.
- Certainty.
- Clarity of roles (smaller and more structured).
- Professional development.
- Longer term contracts.

- Providing safe, work environments with fair hours and workload.
- Acknowledge the mahi people do and try and scale the work appropriately.
- Make the roles clear.
- Be realistic on volunteers.
- Flexible hours.
- Better work/life balance.
- Flexible hours.
- Be clear on why the job.
- Do an evaluation on staff performances.
- Employment pathway to newcomers and immigrants.
- Use and train refugees.
- Take staff welfare seriously.
- Look after those you have.
- Wellness in the workplace in practice.
- Relationships.
- Asking what staff and volunteers needs are.
- Strong leadership to support team.
- Staff mental health and wellbeing acknowledged.
- Provide supervision for staff to empower them to deal with issues.
- Be there to answer questions.
- Create a suitable and friendly environment.
- Focus on wellbeing.
- Let the staff voice be heard.
- Show people they are valued.
- Find ways to reward volunteers.
- Sticking up for staff and volunteers.
- Co-operative staff welfare services.
- Supportive environment.
- Small incentives.
- Prevent conflict and address ahead of time.
- Spread the load.
- Being clear about what you are trying to achieve and a clear strategy.
- Tackle problems and support conflict management.
- Create a safe multicultural respectful work environment.
- Relationships/respect/value/togetherness and inclusion build confidence and collaboration.
- Value and understanding are critical.
- Safe working environment.
- PNCC funded dinner twice a year.
- Good internal wellbeing.
- Investing in non-financial ways that demonstrate respect and value.
- More emphasis on a culture that enable staff.
- Building on strengths.
- Quality experience of staff and volunteers.
- Appreciate staff and volunteers to keep them engaged.
- Business continuity/succession planning.
- Buffer.
- Sources of funding.
- University programmes.
- Volunteer strategies.
- Recreate office culture.
- Apply “out of box” approaches.
- Work with national and local govt.
- Conversations and responsibility
- Talk up the industry.
- Providing technology.
- Word of mouth recommendations.
- Extrinsic vs intrinsic individuals for work.
- Recognition: Awards or bonuses.
- Group fundraising.
- Face to face interaction.
- Regular contact.
- Work with tertiary providers to promote roles and organisations.
- Exercises.
- Thinking differently about structures in our orgs. and how we bring in qualified professionals.
- Create a positive and nurturing work environment where people enjoy their jobs and feel valued.
- Training and support.
- Be there for them.
- Deal with any issues that arise.
- Acknowledging the work being undertaken.
- Building a whānau-centred wairua so people are interested in and believe in.
- Emphasise the “why”.
- Don't overwhelm people.
- Thanks goes a long way.
- Meet staff needs.
- Ability to grow within the role.
- Consciously and consistently celebrating success and effort.
- Organisations offering more programs.
- Acknowledge strengths accordingly.
- Retention of volunteers.
- Ability to grow within the role.
- Make sure volunteers feel values.
- Recognition.
- Transparency in roles.
- Career paths.
- Diversification.

- 
- Value the contribution.
 - Good supervision.
 - Cover expenses for volunteers.
 - Give autonomy.
 - Poach staff.
 - Succession planning.
 - Advocate for big picture solutions.
 - Create great team environment.
 - Support staff well.
 - More work on pathways to employment.
 - Stress management.
 - Transparency in recruitment.

How might stakeholders help us to meet the needs or gaps in services?

When the sector looks at its relationships with stakeholders, funding will likely always be top of mind —This is understandable, as financial resourcing is one of the major limiters and resources within social and community services.

However, much like the discussion around retaining kaimahi and volunteers, the groups who discussed this topic also recognised other useful activities that these stakeholders could participate in. There is a desire for improved communication between funders and providers, and to develop funding models that fit the sector's ways of working better. This includes funding for more diverse costs, including overheads and wages.

Some have suggested the need to improve the nature of evaluation or feedback required by funders so that we can use measures that more accurately communicated the impact our organisations make.

What the discussion group said:

- Support projects based on client led need/feed-back.
- Have the same systems across all departments.
- Capacity – mentoring or internship to help less resourced organisations.
- More funding / Clearer parity of funding.
- Shared resource.
- Recognition of complexity.
- Realistic expectations.
- Seeing the bigger picture.
- Less bureaucracy and less barriers.
- Making it easier to do business.
- Getting to know the mahi and the impact it has on the community.
- Building better relationships.
- Identify the gaps.
- Develop a national food council.
- Service and needs mapping.
- Community organising stakeholder analysis.
- More stakeholders in general.
- More stakeholder involvement in services (meetings, feedback, and suggestions).
- Stakeholders working more collaboratively.
- Increase funding.
- Reach out to the community.
- Targeted funding.
- Collective support.
- Info sharing.
- Stakeholders can support publicity and vice-versa.
- Breaking barriers.
- Inspire collab work.
- Build trusted relationships.
- Head of guidance needs to appeal to the school principal and outline the need for more social workers on counsellors at schools.
- Use media connections.
- Stakeholders can be our advocates.
- Funding.
- More staff and more hours.
- Understanding what the gaps are and organisational roles.
- Engaging with experts and providing cheaper services.
- Being more open to help with wages.
- Helping digital systems to stream better.
- Sharing of resources.
- Understanding the priorities of the gaps.
- Listening to community voices.
- Bulk buying with agency discounts.
- Easier access to the people with the knowledge.
- Joint initiatives.
- Joint planning and project delivery.
- Stakeholders need to work.
- Come and meet and talk to us.
- Funding policies.
- Communication.
- Let us know their needs.
- Let us know how we can help.
- Supporting initiatives.
- Donation of goods and services.
- Reach out to community organisations.
- Clear feedback.
- Get involved in decision making.

How might we raise the profiles of our organisations or engage well with the communities we serve?

The profile of an organisation not only influences whether clients know about services, but also potential donors and volunteers. Despite the efforts of many in the sector, many still have a low profile and members of the public are often unaware of the broad variety of services and assistance available to them.

There are certainly existing practices that the sector can improve and expand on. Most organisations are using social media, and many have newsletters. However, this alone is not enough to grab the attention of the average person with the sheer abundance of information that one is presented with.

Those who discussed this topic expressed a desire to try new types of promotion, with many groups relying on word of mouth or more traditional forms of advertising. Some have suggested establishing stronger relationships with journalists, articles within news publications may still have a level of authority that a Facebook post may not.

What the discussion group said:

- Funding to promote events.
- Be visible.
- Celebrate success.
- Create info pathways.
- Connecting and networking.
- Champion organisations.
- Building relationships with key partners.
- Facebook.
- Build and cultivate a responsive culture.
- Look after your own well-being.
- Work in a client focused way.
- Friendships.
- Understand the community that we serve through many conversations.
- Record activities and results.
- Outreach work to engage.
- Media, adverts, interviews.
- Community stories.
- Have the right people in the role.
- Coffee.
- Participate in event.
- Community events.
- Do a good job.
- Radio apps.
- Social media.
- Letter box drops.
- Radio – Te Pū Harakeke does an interview.
- Advertise funding.
- Do a good job.
- Word of mouth.
- Community events free family day.
- Connect with other organisations.
- Make sure doctors know community organisations.
- School leadership and teachers.
- Listen to community needs.
- Be accessible.
- Visit the organisations.
- Meet with key staff.
- Engage with other organisations.
- Find organisations with similar work/interests.
- Listen to what the communities are wanting.
- Hold discussion sessions.
- Collaborate with other community organisations.
- Interaction and cooperation.
- Reaching out to people.
- Invite community leaders to be a part of planning and projects.
- Leave our desks and visit communities.
- Use social media.
- Talk to groups.
- Look out for aspects of our work we can promote.
- Word of mouth.
- Business after 5 networking.
- Social media.
- Media stories.
- Sustainable advertising budgets.
- Work with other organisations.
- Look at the demographic of people using services.
- Expo's.
- Newsletters.
- Developing relationships with stakeholders.
- Networking/coffee.
- Engage with journalists.
- Community days at UCOL for instance.

- Encourage clients and communities to refer or discuss.
- Talk about issues.
- Encouraging member volunteers to promote the work.
- Accessibility – being able to be contacted if needed.
- Improve orgs' structure in terms of practices.
- Iwi Māori partnership board.
- Increase inter-agency collaborations and partnerships.
- Branding and positive hype on social media.
- Word of mouth.
- Local media and emphasising word of mouth.
- T-shirts for staff and volunteers.
- Flax making.
- Networking with schools, similar agencies and orgs. Iwi and multi-cultural society.
- Living libraries.
- Being creative and looking for creative opportunities.
- Partnering with other organisations.
- School programs.
- Tell success stories widely.
- Networking.
- Build relationships with other services.
- Social media.
- Keep current and relevant.
- Be a part of the communities we sit in and listen.
- Have value.
- Diverse community voices.

How might we increase our organisations' sustainability or longevity?

Questions of sustainability ultimately boil down to the resources we have and how those are managed. The same themes that were discussed in previous sections, such as sustainable funding and working stronger as a sector, are also applicable here. There is a stated desire for the sector to learn and grow. This could be through informal information sharing, but also through more formal programmes, such as mentorship initiatives.

Through the years of COVID-19, organisations have been reminded of the importance of flexibility. As the sector continues to upskill, it will continue to grow in resilience. The real risk to that progression is losing staff from the sector.

Furthermore, the need for governance was recognised as a way to strengthen the sector. If the waters are going to be stormy, we need good captains to steer the ships. With effective strategy, financial literacy, and other parts of governance, organisations would hopefully be more equipped to deal with whatever comes their way.

What the discussion group said:

- Further develop organisational capability.
- Organisational structure not impacting on management structure.
- Through appreciate inquiry.
- Create a valued safe and healthy environment.
- Ability for employee to teach and learn.
- Update policy and procedures.
- Staff morale, trust in staff.
- By raising awareness of what we do, affecting change for our communities.
- Increase opportunity for funding.
- Build strong networks, collaboration with other social service organisations.
- Increasing our capacity to cover other areas for Pasifika.
- Health and well-being.
- More funding for projects.
- Incest in providing family-based initiatives.
- Develop leadership or employee programs that increase input.
- Take on student or volunteers.
- Keeping up to date with sector and community needs.
- Stable/secure funding.
- Relationships with other services.
- Grow volunteer base.
- Political action.
- Create the board from people who want to help.
- Change our narratives around how, what and who we fund.
- Promote strong relationship with network.
- Prioritise funding applications to ensure we have the resources to do all the work.
- By constructive collaboration.
- Cross-party positive community development.
- By pooling funding and sharing resources.
- Don't rely on things being organic.
- Create the change we want.
- Lobby our governments nationally and locally.
- Interagency conversations and collabs.
- Stronger leadership: governance and management.
- Strategic plans/organisational plans.
- Forward thinking of how to be a fence rather than an ambulance with future planning.
- Increase the profile and knowledge of organisations.
- Adaptable and flexible.
- Good practice and procedures.
- Developing workable and achievable strategic plans.
- Relationship building.
- 3rd party funders.
- Meaningful and sustainable contracts.
- Look at areas we can fill gaps through collabs.
- Mentoring.
- Be prepared to invite new people.
- Not holding onto our positions too tightly – look for people to replace us.
- Reviewing strategic plans.
- Updating workflow processes.
- More funding.
- Promote strong client-based relationships.
- Deal with internal conflict.

How has COVID-19 changed your mahi or organisation?

Organisations became more flexible during COVID-19, with almost every employer exploring the options of online appointments and working from home. COVID-19 has caused a lot of anxiety in the community, but the discussions around the groups were not exclusively negative. On a deeper level, we were given an opportunity to question if everything we did was actually best practice. Although COVID has created stress and drained us of our energy, it was also a test of our resilience.

The most intense waves of COVID-19 are now in the past, and the sector is thankful that we received funding to help us through those trying times. For some, the challenge is now to keep afloat once that funding is cut. Despite the physical effects of COVID being less prevalent, the mental aftereffects are arguably more intense. The pressure for some services may actually now be higher. The health sector is ever-changing. The one constant is that the demand does not seem to be falling.

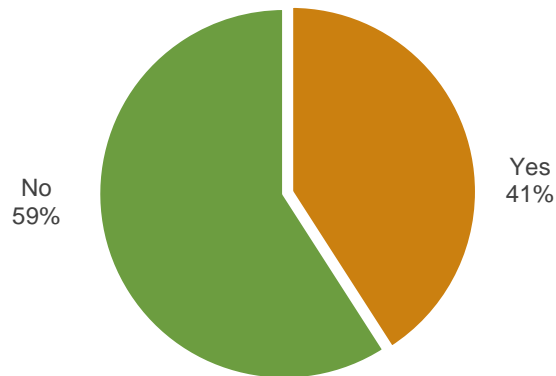
What the discussion group said:

- Increase in welfare responses has been needed.
- New roles to opportunities have been created but other roles have been lost.
- Personal stress.
- Working from home – good and bad.
- Easy to stay at home if you enjoy seclusion.
- Planning projects post covid is much harder.
- Everything can change – having multiple back plans.
- We have increased our welfare response.
- Financial assistance.
- Perception that cuts to services should be made to address affordability.
- Financial assistance for volunteers.
- Online meetings.
- Less get-togethers and functions.
- Spend more time with family.
- We have looked hard at inclusion, challenged our own operational approach.
- Cost increasing.
- Project delays.
- People tired and less resilient.
- Increased assistance to the elderly.
- Restructure and job loss.
- Working from home and flexibility.
- Increasing anti-social behaviour.
- Less participation.
- New roles opening for community support.
- Waiting to be paid instead of volunteering.
- Zoom can be frustrating.
- Cloud based system.
- Improve the work/home balance.
- Outcome focused for work.
- Health vulnerability.
- People taking time to trust face to face services.
- People aren't volunteering out of caution/fear.
- Working from home 1-2 days a week.
- Remote working.
- Risks of breaking confidentiality.
- Awareness of quality vs. quantity of work.



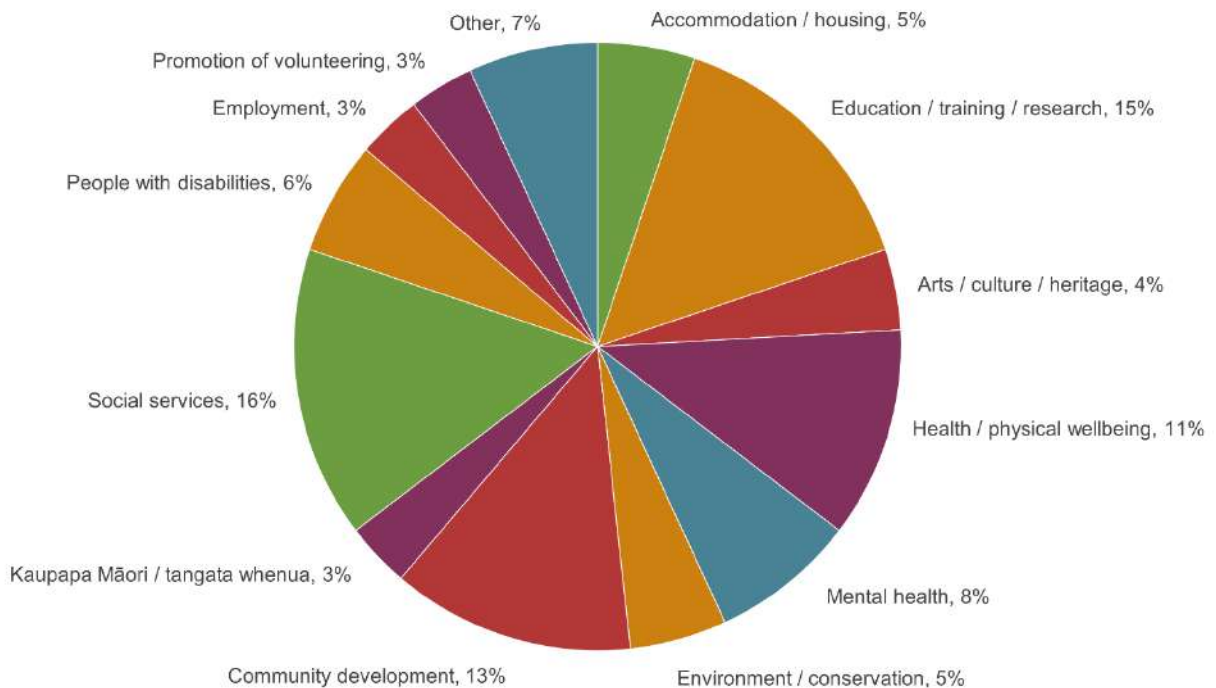
Appendix 3: Pre-Forum Survey Results

Have you attended the Social Wellbeing Forum previously?



What area (s) do you work in?

Note: Responses who answered this question with 'Govt / Local Govt' or 'Funder' have been removed from this dataset.



What are the three biggest issues the community/clients face right now?

1	2	3
Availability of affordable accommodation isolation	Upskilling themselves so that they can have better wages information	Better at budgeting and prioritising their spending lack of creativity and joy
Inclusivity/connectivity/social isolation access to affordable housing	Social wellbeing - Healthy communities help with consumer related issues	Less dignity within ageing sector WINZ advocacy
Housing	Alcohol and drug harm	Domestic violence
Access (broadly defined) to healthy food	Affordable, stable, warm & dry housing	Neighbourhoods / social environments that enhance mental / spiritual / emotional well-being
Lack of understanding of Safeguarding of vulnerable disabled adults at risk	Lack of cohesion of social services working together in the safeguarding space with the disability community	Lack of funding to support this ongoing work - to build sector capacity
Cost of living	High Interest debt	Debt
Housing / Homelessness	Funding	Lack of good mental health services
Poverty	Insecure housing	The issues that arise out of poverty (Housing, food, inability to stay in study, violence)
parenting challenges	adult relationship challenges	financial & housing
Finding affordable suitable housing, lack of bigger housing 4+ bedrooms for larger families	Understanding the financial aspects of housing and the 'stuff' that goes along with having a home.	After care for people/families coming from Emergency/Transitional Housing and going into Private rentals
Food insecurity	Housing insecurity	Lack of Money
Food insecurity	Climate change and the mitigation of this	reduction of Carbon emissions and a move towards active, sustainable transport.
Clients feeling that their reduced circumstances are their own fault as they should have saved or prepared when that was not possible on their low incomes	Increasing rates, rents and electricity with no options of how to mitigate these necessary costs.	Increasing sense of isolation, fear over loss of car for socializing and travel, limited abilities to maintain and upkeep properties but not able to afford the increasing prices
Education	Poverty	Identity
Cost of living	Housing	Access to services in their neighbourhood
Rent increases	Cost of living	Access to Mental Health Services
Mental health	Housing	Safety
Housing	low incomes	support with managing children's behaviour and health issues
Inter-generational trauma	Housing Crisis	Inflation
Cost of living	Not knowing where to access support	Cold, damp housing
Poverty	Access to affordable healthy housing	Mental Wellbeing and access to appropriate services
Cost of Living - rent and food	Affordable Housing - lack of	Mental health - anxiety
The fallout after Covid	Environmental issues	Finances
access to services	health system barriers	cost of services
Gender gap	Women's issues	Poverty
Housing	Health	Climate Change
Lack of affordable housing options	Food Insecurity	Cost of Living
Budgeting	Cooking skills	Social interaction

isolation and loneliness - social disconnection	destabilisation of social norms and sense of safety	limited access to services due to financial strain or because of system overloads
Lack of volunteers	Lack of resources	Lack of access to funding
Housing	Cost of living	Lack of support at WINZ
Reduced staff capacity	Housing	Service and funding delays and issues
Need for more community support for older people.	Poverty - government superannuation is no longer sufficient to live on.	Housing - seeing more older people who are homeless as they cannot afford private rentals and there are waiting lists for social housing.
Cost of living (food and housing)	Limited access to education	Lack of counsellors and mental health support in the region
Volunteers	Fund	Succession
Cost of housing	Accessing affordable food	Accessing GP services
Having the financial capability to afford a device and or internet for their educational needs	Basic financial knowledge to budget and keep on track	Time to learn
Mental health challenges	Lack of sufficient support	Financial burden

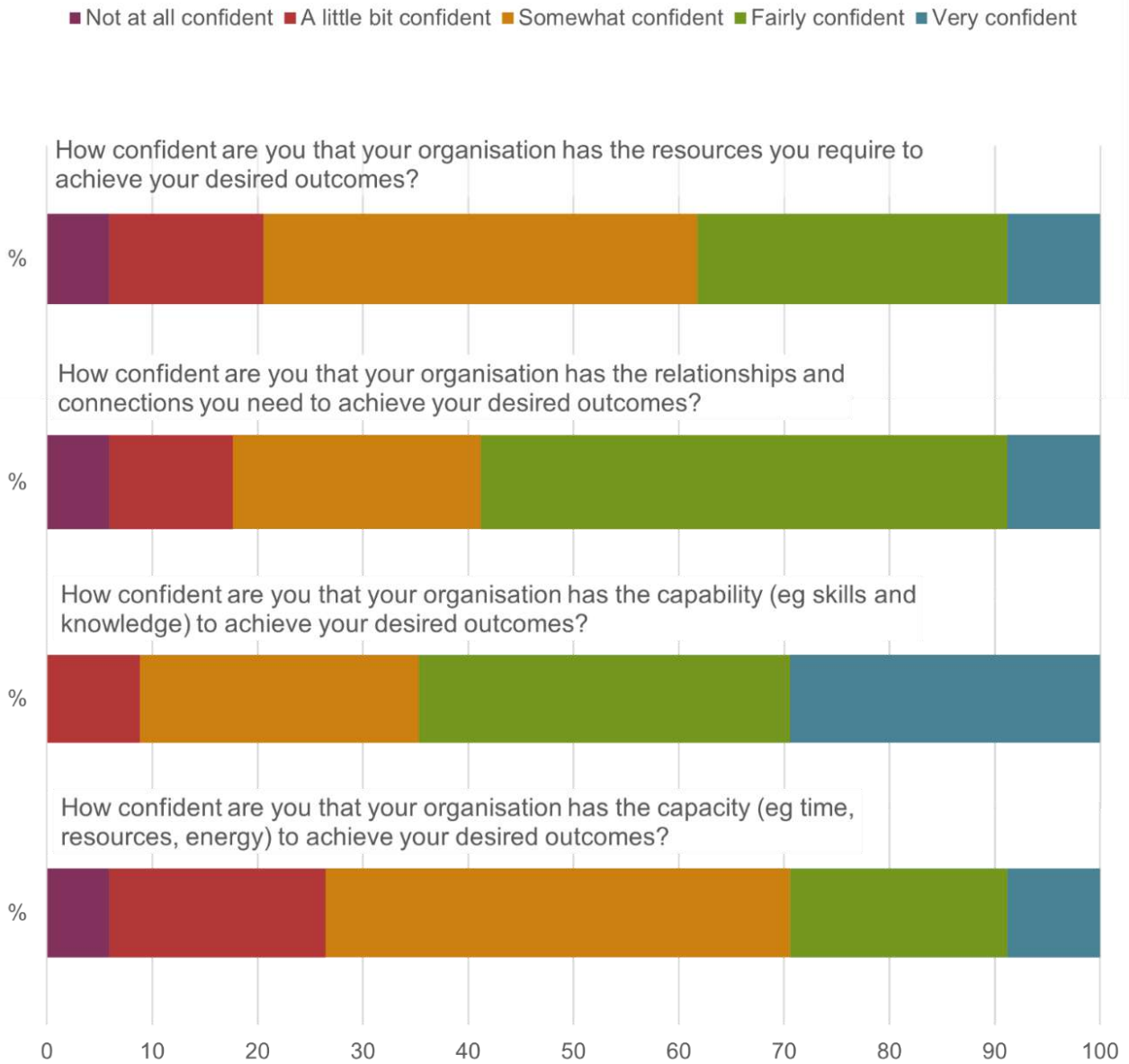
Are there any other growing social issues in our region that you are concerned about?

- Sometimes we have our people not able to get out of the 'rut' or area of their life where they needing the same help
- health and wellbeing - not knowing what there is/what exists that can help them
- As above really.. lack of Family/Whānau care/aroha prevalent in all demographics
- putting food on the table for families
- Poverty and food insecurity
- Inequity.
- Heightened risk of family and other violence in the community
- Clients having greater expectations than are available
- teenagers running wild and police and others cannot do anything about it due to their hands being tied by legislation
- Sexual violence against women that they do not wish to report.
- children/young people's engagement in education
- Mental health concerns and the care available for everyone,
- The need for increased localisation to ensure a sustainable future for our children and whānau and how we move towards this
- There is in some parts of Palmerston North a loss of identity and community engagement, possibly due to the high numbers of rentals and a very fluid population.
- Government social construction does not work
- Children's wellbeing
- The effects of methamphetamine use in the community.
- Financial Hardship due to the high cost of living, rental costs etc
- Lack of housing
- Increase in gang influence. Teenagers living without hope.
- effects of limited access to safe housing and mental well being services and this double whammy on individual and community
- Never before - so many families with such major multiple issues
- Mental health
- The wait time for clients to get supports then need.
- Climate change
- Gender pay gap
- Climate change, public transport, waste, biodiversity.
- Mental health
- Inappropriate or uninformed social responses to those who are marginalised by mental health, or who are perceived as different.
- Poverty
- WINZ
- Lack of young people in the disabilities sector
- Seeing more older people who have mental health issues. These may be lifelong mental health issues.
- Homelessness
- Pokie use and gambling harm within whānau.
- not that I can think of
- Trauma of children and those children not being supported and therefore leading to future challenges e.g. offending, physical and mental illness, family violence. Interventions are not early enough. By the time they're teens it can often be too late to alter their trajectory.

In your experience, what are the barriers that prevent your clients/community from achieving the wellbeing outcomes they want?

- Not having a good grasp of understanding English language, so this becomes a barrier as some do not know what is required so they miss out on opportunities
- I provide solutions in the work that I do - bring people together, exercise and dance creatively, give them opportunities to exchange information and be social
- Lost in the various systems... overtaken by changes... not feeling 'they fit in'... not knowing how or where to go for help...
- The lack of affordable social housing, insufficient level of financial support for low-income earners and those unemployed and on benefits, rising cost of living
- Feelings of hopelessness and oppression
- Long-term impacts of social injustice, including colonisation and land confiscation, and also 'colonisation' by money-oriented culture / system
- A systemic lack of knowledge of all agencies/ NZ entities working with the disability community and what safeguarding means in this space. We work to uphold the rights of all people, particularly disabled people, under all NZ legislation, including the UN Convention of the Right of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).
- Not sure
- Funding, legislation, waiting lists for counsellors or getting into doctors etc
- Poverty, lack of money, insecure life circumstances
- financial struggles - need to work full time if they can
- lack of understanding of their finances, not having an address for postal mail (needed for finding homes) limited technology- cell phone/ computer-availability and knowledge, Support systems underwhelming for the people asking for help
- Time I think is a big barrier, as is the ability to work collaboratively, though this is improving.
- Societies expectations on the community
- Poverty; Benefits not at an affordable level; Unaffordable housing; Lack of access to good quality social welfare services for families.
- Whakamā/Shame is a huge barrier for our community.
- Language, isolation, mental health, education
- No transport, childcare, long wait times to access support from agencies for mental health, hospitals, counsellors. Lack of available spaces with GPS.
- Systemic issues of resource distribution
- Not being able to afford heating, sub-standard housing, overcrowding
- barriers to access of above
- mental health funding for organisations to employ more counsellors
- Services being under resourced.
- Getting information out to women
- Equality
- Lack of suitable, affordable public transport; plenty of food grown and produced in the region, but not affordable or accessible by communities; lack of policies that ensure adequate access to food, transport, and reduce waste.
- Lack of knowledge
- crisis support services are overloaded and there are waiting lists that extend out to several months
- 2. there are few post-crisis support services available
- 3. people are confused, don't know about or are unable to access options
- Poverty
- WINZ
- Funding
- Practical - many older people don't know where or who to go to for support. Logistical - they may no longer have a car or be able to drive and find it hard to get transport to services that they need to access.
- Employment
- low incomes and not enough jobs available, not enough housing locally, mental health and addictions
- Pride and finances
- Mental health services are not sufficient. Not enough wrap around services. The trauma is ingrained into society and it's hard to break the cycle.

How confident do you feel about each of the following?



What obstacles are preventing you from delivering outcomes you want to see?

1	2	3
Having other social service agencies and org's working cohesively and in co-operation so that our people and communities can be advantaged	Having more funding so that we are able to deliver or provide better service	Spreading our wings to deliver other service areas like health and well being as part of our service, i.e. mental health, for example
In general the obstacle to providing services is that a proportion of people that need them do not know they exist	ineffective promotion of activities/services across various organisations	organisations not promoting other organisations services widely or actively enough or being selective in what they promote
The scale of overall social disruption is sapping people's wellbeing	Funding - being sought by some many organisations and individuals that it is difficult	Inequality/social deprivation
our mission is to provide advice and where appropriate refer clients to other agencies. We do not provide the services required by clients so the question does not apply.	as above	as above
Resources	Training	Man and womanpower
Funding to build workforce capacity for this important work.	A lack of knowledge from other agencies - to understand what safeguarding means when working with the disability community and adults at risk.	Attitudes towards collaboration - agencies can be defensive in their approach and may want to 'protect their patch'. This can prevent good outcomes for the people we are trying to protect from further harm.
Clients not committing	lack of communication from clients	lack of self discipline
Funding	not having the women to be able to provide services needed on a regular basis	time
More staffing	More hardship funding	lack of community housing
capacity/funding	workforce experience/training/availability	engagement before crisis
Staff availability	(Personally) not understanding/ knowing the other services to connect with	policy limits
Space	Time	Finance
Staff capacity.	That change in our field needs to be radical, but generally, people are only prepared to be incremental.	Volunteer capacity.
Burn out of quality volunteers. Covid has had the effect of everyone reassessing their life plans, myself included.	The challenge of having to deal with Local Government and the myriad different responsibilities that I thought was their job, and then shipped off to a Central Government department that also said Not Their Problem. I feel that without the volunteer and community programmes	In Palmerston North in my view, there needs to be better collaboration and sharing of resources of many like, similar groups. I think why not share good Governance Boards or even cross Management teams as these skills are priceless and these people know the ropes. My understanding was that was why Hancock House was set up.
Government Finance & funding	Skilled human resources	Community Resources

Funding	local agencies not taking to each other, because we are vying for the same pot of money.	Compassion Fatigue
capacity	language	education
Lack of housing	Long wait times to access other support for clients	Time and money
Human resources	Logistics	funding
Ability to access further funding	Capacity	Current funding has limitations on what it can be used for
access to specialist mental health services	access to ensuring families have affordable safe housing	combination of the above
More funding for the increase in client organisational capacity and longer term contracts	Employing tertiary educated staff with comparable pay parity to the government and private sector	The new post covid normal is not being addressed, we need clear Central government leadership and approaches to issues quickly. Social services are always quick to respond to trends of need, but always lack the funding and to work through bureaucratic red tape to do so.
Space	funding	Resources
Gender Pay	Women's Issues	Poverty
What we can afford to offer free of charge or at subsidised rates - and still survive ourselves	Time and people - limited staff and limited hours worked	Not having the equipment/ additional contract support we need - or the time to complete yet another funding application to fund this (and then report on it)
Infighting and lack of community cohesion	Everyone is so busy to commit to community	Apathy and torpor.
Working with ACC restrictions	Funding from or lack of funding from ACC	ACC Case Managers who are not medical professionals but make medical decisions
Ease of access in to appropriate housing	Community strategy for recruitment into disability and health support workers	Unified approach to other community services and relationship building
Funding - we provide community support to older people, but are not funded to do this.	Staff shortages	experienced staff
Staffing - It is hard to recruit staff.	Lack of community funding	knowledgeable networks and connections
There is a shortage of social workers throughout New Zealand.		
Lack of profile in some of our communities e.g. Samoan	Time to do this, limited with hours and can only do so much	Being able to get into schools with turbulence of covid 19
Number of workforce e.g. paid and unpaid	Funding	Lack of suitable people who really get what we do and can truly work with clients in the way they need to address their trauma in a meaningful and helpful way

What do you see as the community sector's strengths?

- I feel that there are a few social services in our sector
- That there is a wide variety of services
- Service clubs (Lions/Rotary), social service organisations e.g. Age Concern.. volunteering across and within several community organisations, and business and corporate organisations
- formal and informal networks
- Relationships
- There are some great social and community agencies in Palmerston North and the wider Manawatu.
- Availability
- Well trained and knowledgeable people in many areas.
- that each organisation have people with the passion for that organisation working for them
- It is small we all know each other and what we do
- lots of services
- there are heaps of organisations out there wanting to help! its fantastic
- Covid has brought many of us together, to work more closely and collaborate.
- Is well funded and supported by PNCC
- Good chances to network
- It is generally quite well interconnected with little duplication.
- Close relationships with local funders
- Communication and networking.
- Our whānau, our community, our conversations are our collected strength.
- Connections, understanding, wisdom
- Caring communities
- Great volunteers and staff within organisations
- community agencies working together at local level
- Contained within relatively small geographical boundary so agency's collaborate
- those who give up their efforts for reduced wages etc
- Walking facilities.
- Biking trail
- some great providers doing some really hard work, with limited resources. People who really care for others.
- Justin's enthusiasm and his team's commitment to delivering as many opportunities as possible to build confidence, sharing of resources, knowledge and care across the region to ensure that opportunities to share and care are maximized
- Those we do engage with are welcoming and assist us when needed.
- Good range of services. Good networking.
- A high percentage of the population study in Palmerston North, this can be a strength as the educational facilities bring in people from all around the world and country to make Palmy their home

What do you see as the community sector's weaknesses?

- Nothing much in the way of Pasifika services
- that the services are not well promoted
- Lack of collaboration.. many organisations are trying to do similar things and trying to gain support and funding which is stretching..
- Silo thinking and action has to be overcome...
- my guess is that with more funding, more could be done
- Resources, time ,labour, money
- A lack of awareness of some of the issues facing different groups of people within our community. Often these issues are hidden or not well known, or resourced.
- Tied by rules and regulations
- Not being able to meet the wage entitlements that each person deserves to be paid
- same as our strengths - we all know each other - it is a small pool of only a certain amount of resources that are stretched tighter and tighter
- Sometimes services try to do too much of a range of things that might also be being done within other services.
- Iwi / Māori services still developing & not always talking with previously established services
- disconnection between the organisations and willingness to share information, resources and support
- Unreliable funding
- The need exceeds capacity, which is always the case.
- Passionate people who do burn out because of the barriers presented in helping them do meaningful work.

- Lack of understanding of their own constitutions and the limitations of their constitutions. In some cases the constitutions have little relevance to what those entities now do. I hope with a rewrite that the Government has asked for that each entity will review and adjust their constitutions to reflect what they now do. I also have found that a sense of exclusivity in some groups is detrimental to inclusiveness and an understanding of true community spirit. In my experience time limitations on Board members is necessary to keep good people involved rather than having a same old same old Executive.
- Silo approach from the NGO's.
- Competition for funding, personality clashes
- Some duplication of services
- Limited funding sources
- lack of specialist services for families
- The need a of greater combined political decision making and push for distribution of any resources to the region
- being under funded
- Improved transport.
- Better bus services
- Limited capacity - heavily reliant on goodwill of organisations that often operate on limited, contestable funding - and we complete with each other for this
- Apathy and fear.
- Recruitment is an issue, incentive into the disability sector is an issue. We are wondering how we can access potential staff or attract them if they have had no lived or known experience of those with disabilities.
- unsure
- Mental health services

What do you see as the community sector's opportunities?

- This is just starting to open up, as more awareness is being realised
- wider cooperation within the sector and wider promotion
- Much more collaboration and cohesion.. sharing goals and outcomes.. sharing facilities and thinking and action.. brining resilience to the fore with trusted leadership ...
- further strengthen the sectors networks
- Small victories
- A collaborative approach to partnering together to provide positive outcomes for all people, including disabled people, in our community.
- willingness to seek information
- Willingness to work with other community organisations
- the old chestnut of Palmerston north is under developed and has so much potential in so many areas. We never quite seem to be able to get it together to make change. Maybe new city councillors might help? Some really community minded people on council would be a bonus.
- Iwi & Māori services
- Growth
- Working on collaborative funding opportunities for collective change.
- To increase our learning from each other. Possible PN based inter organisational intern programme?
- The opportunities in my view, is in the retiring Baby Boomers who should not be called volunteers but Specialized Consultants.
- I believe there is an opportunity to truly walk alongside whānau and community members if we as practitioners are open to the fact that we do not have all the answers, but can be part of the discussion which leads to solutions and healing.
- Covid funding, community engagement
- Organisations working together more
- Engaging more rangatahi in kaupapa
- to build on the local networks
- Combination of the strengths and the need to have greater combined political decision making and push for distribution of any resources to the region
- growth
- Good place for young families to live.
- Education facilities
- Connecting with each other to offer more holistic support and to share what is on offer in each others spaces
- It's people.
- Diversity and knowledge. Experience and transferable skills into different sectors. Innovative thinking by young people entering the workforce. Young people are the future.

What do you see as the community sector's threats?

- Not enough support given to organisations like ours to be encouraged to do more for our people. This means recognising the need for more like us, and the backing.
- rising costs, lack of time and creative approaches to promotion solutions
- Community organisations, their leaders and membership continuing to do their own thing, not listening to or even considering there may be a better way ...
- Ongoing social disruption, nationally, locally has a major effect..
- further economic decline might reduce level of direct and indirect funding
- Worsening economic disparities
- Lack of engagement.
- Government laws and mandates
- not enough funding to keep the organisation going
- inflation, continued poverty, constantly increasing rates, lack of housing, over all cost of living
- Re- direction of funding
- hoarding of limited funding from organisations that do too much of everything but nothing to the full potential.
- We need to share resources and information much better than we do. Lets work together
- Too many organisations and no extra money to bring in
- Changes in government and policy.
- Burn out of Volunteers who feel undervalued because the term volunteer means giving freely!!
- Dependence on the Goodwill of Council.
- Limitation on cross fertilization of ideas and cooperation as the system has been set up as one of competition rather than collaboration in my view.
- Lack of appropriate funding from the government.
- Central government funding drying up
- Competitive/contestable funding systems limits organisations working together
- Limited volunteers
- Volunteer burnout
- government strategies that do not fund the needs of families in health
- Nationalisation of services
- unsustainable funding
- unsecure funding
- Climate Change
- Flooding and other disasters
- covid relief has pumped a lot of extra funding into our sector. What happens now? How do we move forward and continue the momentum if the funding pool dries up and we have to go back to the constant cycle of ongoing project based applications and reporting?
- Conspiracy theories. The fear in the world and lack of trust in the media.
- A transient culture is a threat I.e. Uni students who leave the area at the end of their studies. Institutions offering more money for employment of the same nature i.e. hospitals. Lack of innovative thinking by community planners. Lack of community engagement outside of your sector.
- Funding.
- unsure



Appendix 4: Preliminary Report—Taking Stock

Prepared by Justin Ngai in advance of the Forum, this report provides a summary of themes identified in interviews with community organisations and other social issues. A summary of this report was presented at the Social Wellbeing Forum 2022.

Held regularly since 2007 and most recently in 2019, this is the first Social Wellbeing Forum since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We believe it is a timely opportunity to bring the sector together to take stock of the needs and issues facing our communities and the social services sector in Palmerston North and the Manawatū. This timing also aligns with a new local government triennium, and so this is an opportunity to highlight the important issues to both new and returning elected members.

The discussions at the Forum, along with some other research being carried out by our team, aim to identify areas for collaboration and action. It also aims to inform and influence policy and programmes across local government; central government agencies and the social sector. Te Pū Harakeke has conducted interviews and sent out survey questions to its members. We thank everyone who have taken part. The key themes are highlighted below.

COVID-19

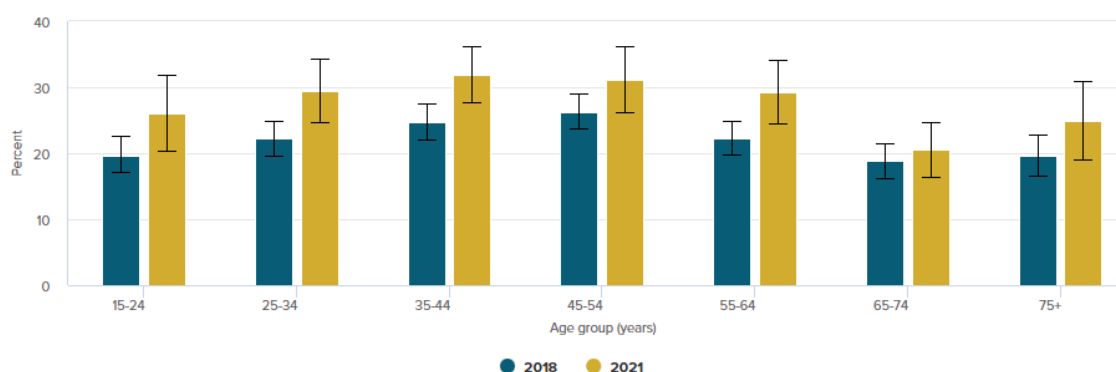
COVID-19 has impacted all of us. In February 2020, New Zealand closed its borders, with the four-tier alert system and nationwide two-month lockdown shortly following. Its successor — the COVID-19 Protection Framework ("traffic light system") — was introduced in December 2021. The systems of masks, vaccine mandates, and social distancing were eventually retired in September 2022. During the initial lockdown of 2020, restrictions meant that organisations could not operate at full capacity. Only 27% of healthcare and social

services; 6% of educational; and 0% of arts and recreational services were fully operational.

The series of COVID-19 adjustments have affected organisations in different ways. This has meant an increase in demand for some, but for many organisations, their capacity decreased. Face-to-face appointments became untenable or more difficult, therefore impacting services to varying degrees depending on their nature. Organisations that delivered food to the hospital for example could function largely unaffected, albeit with a higher demand, while mental health providers missed the connections that came with appointments in person. Some organisations have noted that this forced decline in appointments has created problems for them in terms of funding applications.

It may be hard to pinpoint the exact effects of COVID-19, but speaking to organisations around the sector, it is almost universally accepted that the social effects of the pandemic have exacerbated the pre-existing issues. While much of the sector — especially the health system — was focusing on the pandemic, other problems were left to fester under the surface. This includes physical health issues, but also issues surrounding mental health, addiction, poverty, and so on. The lack of social engagement and general COVID stress could be contributing to lower rates of mental wellbeing. In a survey from Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa (2021), the reported rates of people with poor mental health wellbeing rose from 22% in 2018 to 28.2% in 2021.

Proportion of people with poor mental wellbeing, by age group, 2018 and 2021



The impact of COVID-19 has been large and varied. With the pandemic creating such a strain on our systems, it has undoubtedly had a lasting effect, with many individuals slipping through the gaps. It is often up to workers in the social and community sector to deal with these aftereffects.

Housing

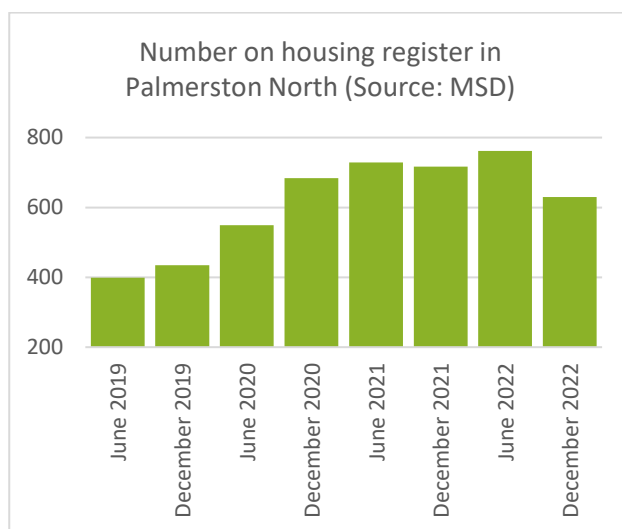
The cost of housing has increased dramatically over the last few years. In October 2019, the average house price in New Zealand excluding Auckland was \$400,000. By December 2021, it rose to \$647,000. Rent has also increased. Over the same period, median rent rose from \$350 a week to \$460 in the Manawatū-Whanganui region (Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa, 2022).

The need for social housing has also gone up. The Housing Register shows the number of people who were eligible and ready to be matched with social housing. In June 2019, Palmerston North had 399 people on the register. In June 2022, there were 762 (Ministry of Social Development, 2022).

The increase in demand is not necessarily met with an increase in supply. The number of managed housing rental properties for social housing has only gone up by 79 in Palmerston North within the same period.

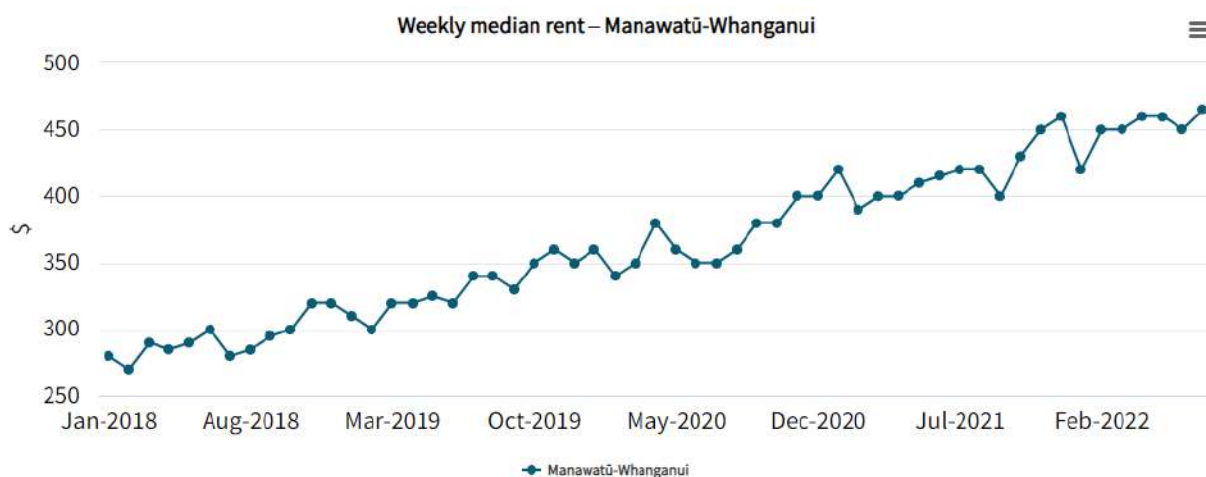
Unsurprisingly, housing was one of the most often-mentioned topics among our survey participants and interviewees. Being one of the base needs in Maslow's hierarchy, it is hard to brush off the importance of housing and shelter. As such, clients who are seeking housing are often amongst the most desperate and need specialised staff for support. However, it is unclear if the system can support the demands given the current capacity. In response to

the housing crisis, there has been a rise in construction projects. In March of 2022 alone, 5303 new dwellings have been consented across the country — the highest number since at least 1995 (Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa, 2022). However, this is not specific to the Manawatū. With houses and apartment complexes taking often taking more than a year to build, construction projects cannot necessarily meet more immediate demands.



Poverty and High Cost of Living

Between June 2021 and June 2022, New Zealand experienced a 7.3 percent spike in inflation — the highest spike in 32 years. The cost of household goods including petrol, eggs, and milk increased by 8.7% — the biggest difference since this measure has been recorded in 2000 (Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa, 2022). This can largely be explained by international factors such as the war on Ukraine, and the sanctions on Russian goods, including oil.



This affects all New Zealanders, but especially those who are the most financially vulnerable. Almost every organisation interviewed said that the higher cost of living has been a major obstacle for their clients. It was noted that these increased costs not only affected their ability for housing to buy food and other necessities but also for transport and paid services. As financial restraints added pressure on individuals, and their need for social services increased, their access to services decreased. Food banks have felt the strain, but also health services, budgeting services, and other organisations around the sector.

Our most at-risk communities are also the most affected. Although the rates of poverty have decreased in the last three years, for those who are still under the poverty line, the situation can be worse. As a kaimahi in the food sector stated “it doesn’t matter how well you budget if you have no money in the bank”.

Isolation and Anxiety

According to Stats New Zealand Tauranga Aotearoa (2021), New Zealanders in 2021 felt lonelier than in 2018. People who said they felt lonely at least a little of the time in the last four weeks increased from 39 to 43 percent.

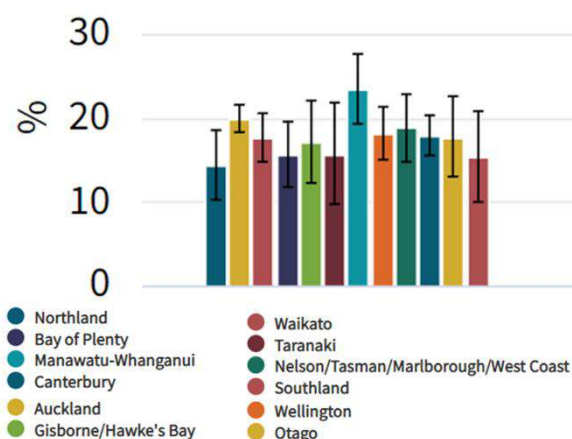
New Zealand was going through different alert levels at the time, which would have played an important factor. However, it is still salient to note that the Manawatū-Wanganui still had higher rates of loneliness compared to the rest of New Zealand, including Auckland, which had higher alert levels (Stats NZ Tauranga Aotearoa, 2021).

Why is Manawatū-Wanganui region especially lonely? The answers aren't clear. However, the statistics do seem to be supported by anecdotal evidence. Kaimahi from the health and education sectors have stated that their clients have been less likely to make appointments and participate in events. Although New Zealand retired the COVID-19 Alert System in December and the COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic lights system) in September, the aftereffects of social isolation are still present. Organisations that have run events were faced with lower numbers and cancellations throughout the COVID process, but we have still not re-turned to the levels of social engagement before COVID.

Some have avoided these institutions due to fears and habits around COVID, including social anxieties that have been created at that time. Anxiety is a widely

acknowledged mental health issue, but kaimahi have noticed a subsequent decline in service use because of this. Social anxieties have prevented those in need from accessing services. In a world with complex needs, our kaimahi often want to equip those in need with information about mental health, housing, budgeting, and other services. However, to engage with them with this information, we must first engage people in general.

% of people who reported feeling lonely at least some of the time in the last 4 weeks (March 2021), by region.



Funding

Funding has always been a contention a source of limitation for non-profit organisations. We have several funders in the region, with several grants and contracts that support the sector. However, even given the support, funding will always remain one of the biggest resources an organisation needs to manage, issues will always arise.

Funds are not necessarily simple to attain. Every grant has specific requirements and evaluate applicants with different measures. Finding the right fit can often be an issue. When the fit is not perfect, some organisations find themselves stretching the truth to fit the funders' criteria. A group working in cancer research for example may apply for funding for a fundraiser through an arts event fund and getting declined. Certain items are also more difficult to get funding for. Funders often have a preference to fund programs and events but not an organisation's overhead. It may be easier to see the benefit of funding a certain initiative or project, but the truth of the matter's that rent, the carpet, the printer — these are all important costs for an organisation.

Even when an organisation's funding application fits a funder's needs, there is a skill to applying for grants. Many organisations view other organisations as direct competition for their funding. The quality of the application matters, but knowing how to apply for grants effectively is a skill that staff are not necessarily trained to do.

Communicating our stories and services

Many of the organisations we've interviewed stated that they have issues with name recognition amongst the public. Potential clients often don't know what organisations are in our sector or what services offered. These visibility problems are also often working in tandem with stigma against seeking help, e.g. for food banks, mental health institutions, or services to do with the justice system. The access to services is diminished.

Even when an organisation is made known to potential clients, it is important to note that recognition is only the beginning of the journey. It is one thing for someone to have heard about an organisation, it is another step to get the person to trust them at a base level, and yet another step for them to use the organisation's services. Effective marketing requires an ongoing plan, often involving the ever-changing space of social media and its complexities. Kaimahi in the sector can bemoan the difficulties involved. To run a successful non-profit organisation often requires people who are knowledgeable in promotion. However, this a skill that staff are often not recruited for and therefore remain an ongoing issue for organisations.

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Appendix 5: List of Attendees

Community Kaimahi

Mark Ah Koy, Niuvaka Trust
Kate Aplin, Volunteer Central Whatunga Tūao
Sally Babbage, Te Pūkenga UCOL
Jo Berrington-Hince, Manawatū Rural Support
Sairah Birchlerm, Awatapu College
Victoria Blockley-Powell, Te Pūkenga UCOL
Turia Brackenbury, Returned Services Association
Garry Buckman, Te Pū Harakeke Board
Wendy Carr, Central Economic Development Agency
Shane Casey, Youthline
Lynne Clough, Housing Advice Centre
Anri Dreyer, MUSA
Bonnie Ellery, Bulls & Districts Community Trust
Bronwyn Ewens, Digits Charitable Trust
Ebele Ezepue, Manawatū Multicultural Council
Noor Fatima, MUSA
Meriam Findlay, Palmerston North Street Van
Julie Gillam-Hill, Housing Advice Centre
Peter Grey, Mana Whaikaha
Josephine Gutry, Te Pū Harakeke
Sheryll Hoera, Te Pae Hauora o Ruahine o Tararura
Cam Jenkins, Manawatū Tenants Union/MaLGRA
Tim Kendrew, Te Pū Harakeke
Helen King, Environment Network Manawatū
Nina Kirschbaum, Manawatū Multicultural Council
Teisa Kurene, Manawatū Multicultural Council
Aumetua Lackey, Just Zilch
Cameron Lock, Te Pūkenga UCOL
Maira Lourerio, Palmeirinhos
Jono Naylor, Environment Network Manawatū
Justin Ngai, Te Pū Harakeke
Chianti O'Neale, Manawatū Multicultural Council
Emma Ochei, Manawatū Toy Library
Jody Parker, Te Roopu Oranga o Highbury
Miriam Peel, Moneywise Manawatū

Kim Penny, Te Pū Harakeke
Raewyn Persson, Parentline Manawatū
Amy Proctor, Housing Advice Centre
Carla Renata, Volunteer Central Whatunga Tūao
Cat Rikihana, Financial Freedom Trust
Ron Rowe, Age Concern Palmerston North
Helen Scully, Bulls & District Community Trust
Karen Seccombe, Square Edge Community Arts
Stefan Speller, Parafed Manawatu
Antoinette Stratford, ARCS
Yun Tang, Mental Health Workshop
Hern Teo-Sherrell, Citizens Advice Bureau
Jada Tiepa, Te Pū Harakeke
Leah Tombleson, Awatapu College
Antoinette Umugwaneza, New Zealand Red Cross
Liz Ward, Pathways Presbyterian Church
Maddison Ward, Awatapu College
Norelle Ward, Mana Whaikaha

Stakeholders

Mayor Grant Smith, PNCC
Cr Brent Barrett, PNCC
Cr Rachel Bowen, PNCC
Cr Lorna Johnston, PNCC
Cr Kaydee Zabelin, PNCC
Cindy Nguyen, PNCC
Ahmed Obaid, PNCC
Danu Sefton, PNCC
Stephanie Velvin, PNCC
Janine Hawthorn, Manawatū District Council
Tangi Utikere, MP for Palmerston North
Rachel Gildea, Palmerston North Electorate Office
Brooke Carter, Department of Internal Affairs
Jeremie Corroenne, Department of Internal Affairs
Pooja Jayan, Department of Internal Affairs
Neomal Attapattu, Eastern & Central Community Trust
Nadia Hardie, Eastern & Central Community Trust

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Te Pū Harakeke gratefully acknowledge the support of Palmerston North City Council in planning this forum, and providing funding for both the event itself and to us as an organisation. We could not undertake this work without this support.

Thank you to Todd Taiepa and Mayor Grant Smith for opening the forum event, and to Stacey Seruvatu and her colleagues from Te Tihi for sharing about their mahi and presenting a challenge to us on the day.

Thank you to the facilitators who assisted with the smooth running of the day and kept us all on track: Kate Aplin, Jono Naylor, Emma Ochei, Cat Rikihana, Helen King, Cameron Jenkins, Amy Proctor, Maria Loureiro and Karen Seccombe. Ngā mihi ki a koutou.

Thank you to Justin Ngai and Josephine Gutry for MCing the forum, and for your work in the lead up to the forum and in pulling the report together. Also to Cat Rikihana, Jada Taiepa, Tim Kendrew and TPH board members for your contributions to this final report.

Finally we thank everyone in the sector who contributed to this project through participating in surveys, interviews and the forum. Tēnā koutou katoa.



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