

## Notice of Meeting:

I hereby give notice that an ordinary Meeting of the Community Forum Subcommittee will be held on:

**Date:** Tuesday 2 August 2016  
**Time:** 9:30am  
**Meeting Room:** Council Chamber  
**Venue:** Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton

Richard Briggs  
Chief Executive

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## Community Forum Subcommittee OPEN AGENDA

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### Membership

Chairperson Cr M Gallagher  
Deputy Chair Cr P Yeung  
Members Cr K Green  
Cr D Macpherson  
Cr L Tooman

**Quorum:** Three Members

**Meeting Frequency:** Quarterly

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Emily Acraman  
Committee Advisor

**26 July 2016**

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**Terms of Reference:**

- To provide a forum for discussion on issues affecting our community.
- Make recommendations to the Strategy and Policy Committee on community related matters.
- Receive reports from Government agencies and social services organisations working in our communities about their priorities and work in Hamilton to ensure elected members are kept up to date on social and community issues and policies.
- The Strategy and Policy Committee may ask this sub-committee to consider and report on specific social and community issues.
- This sub-committee may recommend Council involvement and/or advocacy on social issues.

**Power to recommend:**

- The sub-committee must make recommendations to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

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**1 Apologies**

**2 Confirmation of Agenda**

The Committee to confirm the agenda.

**3 Declaration of Interest**

Members are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as an elected representative and any private or other external interest they might have.

**4 Public Forum**

No Public Forum required.

**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee Minutes 4 May  
2016

**Author:** Brendan Stringer

<b>Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Recommendation

That the Subcommittee confirm and adopt as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Community Forum Subcommittee Meeting of 4 May 2016.

## 1. Attachments

- Attachment 1 - Community Forum Subcommittee - Open Minutes - 4 May 2016

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## Community Forum Subcommittee

### OPEN MINUTES

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Minutes of a meeting of the Community Forum Subcommittee held in the Anglican Conference Room, Te Ara Hou, 100 Morrinsville Road, Hillcrest, Hamilton on Wednesday 4 May 2016 at 9:30am.

#### PRESENT

Chairperson	Cr M Gallagher
Members	Cr K Green
	Cr L Tooman

In Attendance	Lance Vervoort – General Manager Community Deanne McManus-Emery – Community Development and Leisure Manager Andy Mannering – Social Development Manager Nick Chester Social development Policy Advisor Judy Small – Disability Advisor
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Committee Advisor	Mrs W Verschaeren (Democratic Process Coordinator)
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#### 1. Apologies

**Resolved:** (Crs Gallagher/Green)

That the apologies from Councillors Yeung, Macpherson, Chesterman and Her Worship the Mayor be received and accepted.

#### 2. Confirmation of Agenda

**Resolved:** Gallagher/Tooman

That the Subcommittee confirm the Agenda.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

No members of the Committee declared a Conflict of Interest.

#### 4. Chairperson's Report

The Chair stated that the presentations that would be given today would be fed through to the Strategy and Policy Committee.

**Resolved:** (Crs Tooman/Green)

That the Report be received.

#### 5. Community Forum Subcommittee Minutes 17 February 2016

**Resolved:** (Crs Gallagher/Tooman)

That the Subcommittee confirm and adopt as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Community Forum Subcommittee Meeting of 17 February 2016.

#### 6. HCC Context - Social Wellbeing/Poverty

This Item was presented by Andy Mannering, Social Development Manager. The following was highlighted:

- Today's presentations would demonstrate the impact social wellbeing and poverty had on Hamilton.
- It was appropriate to emphasise that Council is not only involved with increasing the economic health of the city, but also with its social health.
- The Report contains data about the demographics of the city. This was important to gain awareness of the diversity and the potential intrinsic vulnerability of its population. It would help with formulating responses to issues that might arise from these topics.
- Council gave out 1.26 million dollars annually to community organisations. The bulk of this money was committed to 29 organisations in multi-year grants. However, \$292,000 was allocated as single-year grants to various organisations. The aim was to fund as many organisations as possible; at the Meeting of 3 May 2016, the Allocation Committee decided that 94 organisations would receive a single-year grant.

**Resolved:** (Crs Gallagher/Green)

That the Report be received.

## 7. Salvation Army Social Statistics

This Item was presented by Alan Johnson, Social Policy Analyst for the Salvation Army. The following was noted:

- One of the key purposes of the Salvation Army in New Zealand was to eradicate poverty.
- They set up a social policy to advocate about poverty to Local Government Authorities. This resulted, eight years ago, in a social progress report: “State of the Nation”, published every year in February; this Report was based on 23 indicators across five policy areas.
- In August 2015, Salvation Army, published a document: “Mixed Fortunes”. Reflecting on the changes in our society over the last 25 years; it demonstrated that some areas in the country performed better than others and that the Government lacked a growth model that was all inclusive. What was necessary was the creation of a growth model that distributed growth opportunities more equally over the entire country.
- The “Mixed Fortunes” Report, demonstrated that in Waikato some areas performed really well, but some towns were bypassed: these included Ngaruawahia, Tokoroa and Paeroa.
- When compared to other countries, in term of social progress, New Zealand appeared on the fifth place on the list; however, the same list also showed that New Zealand’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was a lot lower than that of the other western countries. This demonstrated that money was not the only indicator of social progress and that New Zealand was a good place to live in.
- The distribution of wealth in New Zealand however, was very uneven, as 1% of the population owned 16% of the wealth and 50% owned less than 5% of the wealth.
- A large proportion of the wealth in our country was based on the appreciation of the house prices. The concern was that fewer people owned houses, which in turn also meant that fewer people owned the majority of the wealth.
- To progress into the future, it would be crucial to determine which factors were actually important. The information used to establish this needed to be reliable and credible; it therefore had to come from a trusted source and present a believable picture. The information also needed to be regular, critical, relevant and comprehensible for a targeted audience.
- Though the information gathering we would gain insights and from these insights we could develop policy and the main aim of policy was to offer leadership and gain the wisdom to progress into the future.

**Resolved:** (Crs Gallagher/Tooman)

That the report be received

**The Meeting adjourned from 11.30am to 11.45am**

## 8. Poverty Action Waikato Windows on Poverty Report

This Item was presented by Dr Anna Cox and Dr Rose Black of Poverty Action Waikato (PAW). The following was noted:

- The presenters acknowledged Te Ara Hou Village and also Trust Waikato for the initial three years of funding which allowed the work and research undertaken by PAW.
- Over the last five years, PAW produced several reports which provided an insight into poverty issues in the Waikato.
- A new report would be available at the end of May 2016.
- A New Poverty Action Working Group had been established recently to continue the work of PAW in the future.
- The PAW's research provided a window into poverty in the Waikato. The methodology existed in talking to some people and groups, recording their stories and looking for common themes and concerns shared with different organisations.
- The concerns related to:
  1. The increasing barriers and conditions that people encountered when they were faced with a need;
  2. The neglectful state which saw poverty as an individual failing; and
  3. Debt and the dominance of market structures.
- Positive aspects of the research included the experience common good culture based on relationship and solidarity with the most vulnerable and between services. It demonstrated that organisations tried to prevent conditions getting worse by:
  1. Food provision;
  2. Creating opportunities for nurturing and belonging;
  3. Looking out for children and young people in the community; and
  4. Providing consistency in the services available to the people with inclusion of advocacy.

Cr Green left the Meeting at 12.20pm during the above Item.

**The Meeting lapsed due to lack of quorum; a workshop session occurred instead.**

**It was noted that the remaining reports would be received at the next Meeting.**

It was also highlighted that:

- The Commerce Commission had done a lot of research about the problem of retail trucks that toured parts of the city where there was more poverty. The research showed that frequently they did not comply with the Fair Trading Act; they offered credit purchases and often charged exorbitant prices. It would be necessary in the future to also monitor these trucks on a local level as they targeted the most vulnerable people in the community.
- People often isolated themselves in the community by building fences around their houses which prevented them from knowing their neighbourhood. Creating local events and opportunities for socialising would help in breaking down those barriers.
- Common green spaces in the community also helped with creating the necessary interconnectedness. Hamilton City Council (HCC) gazetted the green spaces that fell under

the Reserves Act; there was an Open Space Policy which stated that, although the city was growing, there would not be less green space held by HCC.

It was noted that the following would progress to next meeting:

- a) The report; and
- b) Each of the recommendations made by the presenters after their executive summary on p.24-25 of the Agenda; staff were requested to provide actions undertaken by HCC in those areas.

## 9. Disability Policy Review

This Item was presented by Judy Small, Disability Advisor. The following was highlighted:

- The Report included a Draft Disability Policy Review for 2016 with inclusion of an Action Plan for 2016-2017.
- The Report was endorsed by the Working Group and would progress to the Strategy and Policy Committee Meeting of 7 June 2016.

## 10. Community Development Activity Report

This Item was presented by Deanne McManus-Emery, Community Development and Leisure Manager. The following was noted:

- At the last Meeting, the Subcommittee requested to receive an update regarding the Enderley Housing Project and the Waikato Refugee Forum; these points were currently included in the Report.
- Successful applicants for the community grants would receive their letter in the next 10 days.
- It was requested that all Elected Members receive a hard copy of Attachment 1 – Hamilton City Health Profile (District Health Board ) – April 2015.
- The Report would progress to the next Meeting of the Subcommittee.

## 11. Community Forum Subcommittee Action List - 4 May 2016

The following was noted regarding:

- Actions 7, 8 and 9 were in progress and care was taken not to duplicate information.
- Action 10: confirmation had been received that the Hamilton Residents Survey would be held in October 2016.
- Actions 19 and 20 had been included in the Community Development Activity Report.
- Action 24: Professor Koopman-Boyden and Mrs Francis had confirmed that they would be attending the Subcommittee Meeting in August 2016.
- Action 26: The Chair stated that, before the Strategy and Policy Committee of 7 June 2016, he would liaise with the Disability Advisor, to ensure that all areas of concern were addressed.

## 12. Summary Discussion

During the Summary Discussion the following was highlighted:

- To help strengthen the connectedness of the different areas in the city, a nationwide annual initiative 'Neighbours Day' took place during a weekend in March and this was strongly supported by HCC. It was not only beneficial to create a feel good environment, but also from a civil defence response, as in times of crisis it was important to be able to rely on neighbours.
- There were a few funding streams available for organisations that helped support people to break out of isolation and socialise.
- Volunteers played an important part in strengthening the community.
- The Chair thanked Te Ara Hou and Anglican Action on behalf of the Elected Members for the warm welcome; he also thanked the presenters for the excellent presentations that would allow HCC to take the necessary steps in the right direction.
- Especially partnerships with agencies and organisations would allow Council to make the right decisions.

**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** New Zealand Disability  
Strategy Review

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Disability Policy and Disability Action Plan</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is no budget allocated Amount \$Nil</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- To update council on the ongoing review of the New Zealand Disability Strategy 2001.

## 3. Executive Summary

- The New Zealand Disability Strategy was adopted in 2001 to guide best practice in improving the lives for people with disabilities and their families
- The strategy is currently been reviewed in 2016.
- Professor Peggy Koopman-Boyden, a member of the Reference Group that is guiding the review will provide an update on the review.

## 7. Recommendation from Management

That the report be received.

## 8. Attachments

- There are no attachments for this report.

## 10. Key Issues

### 11. Background

- The 2013 Disability Survey conducted by Statistics New Zealand reveals that 24% of the New Zealand population (1.1 million) and 26% of the Maori population (176,000 people) are living with a disability.
- The New Zealand Disability strategy 2001 is the guiding document to improve the lives of disabled New Zealanders and their families.

**14. Strategy Review**

15. Throughout 2016, the strategy is being reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and achieving its aims.
16. In March 2016, a National Reference Group was established to guide the process to review the national Disability Strategy.
17. Professor Peggy Koopman-Boyden, chair of Hamilton's Older Persons Advisory Panel was selected as a member of the Reference Group.
18. A number of open workshops were held with stakeholders in May 2016, which council staff and a member of the Youth Council Advisory Panel attended.
19. A draft disability strategy has been released, and is currently being consulted on during August 2016.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Poverty Action Waikato,  
Windows on Poverty Follow-  
up

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Social Wellbeing Indicator Report</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is not budget allocated</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

1. **Purpose of the Report**

2. To provide a summary of recommendations that Council can give effect to from the recommendations identified in Poverty Action Waikato's presentation at the 4 May 2016 Community Forum Subcommittee.

3. **Executive Summary**

4. There are four areas within the control of Council that are highlighted in the report. Alcohol and Gambling outlets, Mobile Retail Trucks and Contestable funding to Community Houses.
5. Existing Council policies and bylaws govern these matters. Should Council wish to change these policies, then direction would be required to undertake a relevant policy review.

6. **Recommendation from Management**

That the report be received.

7. **Attachments**

8. Attachment 1 - Poverty Action Waikato Window on Waikato Poverty Issue 6 - Neglect and Nurture

9. **Key Issues**

10. **Background**

11. Poverty Action Waikato presented the findings of their latest Window on Waikato Poverty Report to the 4 May 2016 Community Forum Subcommittee.

12. The Chair of the Community Forum Subcommittee requested a follow up report be presented by staff addressing the recommendations of Poverty Action Waikato.

13. **Recommendations of Poverty Action Waikato**

14. The following recommendations are within the attached report. They have been divided into three categories, those directed at Council, or within the potential control of Council, recommendations that Council could have some influence and those directed to other agencies or the wider community.

15. *Recommendations that are within control of Hamilton City Council*

- Limit the number of alcohol and gambling outlets in Hamilton.
- Lobby for Hamilton City Council to introduce a by-law to ban mobile retail trucks.
- Lobby Hamilton City Council to invest in community houses and centres as places of connection and support. Eliminate contestable funding. Reinststate a solid and generous funding base for each community house and centre.

16. *Recommendations that have a limited influence from Hamilton City Council*

- Work with the Regional Council to ensure that public transport is affordable, or free, for people with limited resources.
- Support access to budgeting services and debt elimination and reduction services.
- Support consistent and ongoing local (suburb level) community events so that relationships can be restored and developed within local communities.
- Support and endorse a local social housing plan.
- Lobby for a local warrant of fitness (WOF) for all houses or dwelling that people live in throughout Hamilton.
- Support initiatives to retrofit all rental accommodation in Hamilton so that it meets a WOF standard.

17. *Recommendations that are directed at the wider community*

- Support advocacy services for people with limited resources so that they are able to navigate State welfare services and access all the income and service benefits they require.
- Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure that licensing programmes are accessible and available to all people (including young people) with limited resources living in Hamilton.
- Facilitate forum with Work and Income to discuss experiences and provide evaluative feedback regarding structural reforms.
- Lead opportunities between central /local government, health, and social service sectors enhance collaborative work with our most vulnerable people.
- Facilitate regular forums where the sectors can come together (at grassroots level) to discuss policy, care and nurture issues.
- Reform foster care.
- Ensure achievable contractual outcomes for the most vulnerable.
- Provide opportunities for participation for people with criminal records.
- Provide support, care and housing for people with mental health and addiction problems.
- Develop a Pasifika Peoples Resource Centre in Hamilton to support people migrating from the Pacific Islands to make their way in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Item 7

- Extend support for people with refugee backgrounds to enable more time to strengthen community connections.
- Ensure affordable rental accommodation is available.
- Provide emergency accommodation facilities.
- Reclaim the social justice values and imperatives of the social service sector.
- Work to restore Mana and well-being.
- Build an inclusive common good culture.

### 18. **Relevant Council Policy**

19. The following Council policies and bylaws give effect to the recommendations within the control of Hamilton City Council.

#### 20. *Gambling Venues*

21. [Class 4 Gaming Venues Policy](#) was adopted by Council on 28 April 2016, to be reviewed March 2019, with the purpose to control the growth of Class 4 gambling venues and minimize the harm caused by Class 4 gambling.

22. This policy regulates the location and number of Class 4 gaming venues within the city.

#### 23. *Alcohol Venues*

24. [Provisional Local Alcohol Policy](#) was notified on 27 January 2016, and is currently in the appeals process. The Policy sets a clear framework for the District Licensing Committee when making decisions on license applications in Hamilton City and to provide a guide to those applying for a license in the city.

25. The objective of this provisional Policy is to balance the reasonable need regarding the sale and supply of alcohol in Hamilton City, while minimising the harm caused by excessive or inappropriate consumption of alcohol.

26. [Hamilton Alcohol Control Bylaw 2015](#) is also still valid.

#### 27. *Mobile Retail Trucks*

28. [Public Places Policy](#) and [Public Places Bylaw](#) were adopted by Council in February 2016 to be reviewed February 2021. These provide guidance and enforcement for a wide range of activities in public places across the city, including outdoor dining, signage, mobile trading and busking. The Public Places Bylaw 2016 should be read in conjunction with the Public Places Policy.

29. All Mobile Traders require a permit to operate, however the policy does not explicitly speak to the activity of Retail Trucks within neighbourhoods.

#### 30. *Community House Funding*

31. [Community Assistance Policy](#) was adopted by Council in April 2015, to be reviewed April 2018, addressing the process of Council funding of community organisations through contestable funding.

32. The move to contestable multi-year funding was to support a greater number of organisations providing community infrastructure to deliver services, programmes and activities that benefit the wellbeing of communities within Hamilton. Prior to adoption of this Policy and the allocation of the Multi-Year Community Grant, 12 Community Organisations had a service level agreement with Council for a total of \$616,000 per annum. Each of these organisations is still

funded by Council for a total annual commitment of \$611,000, with an additional 16 organisations holding multi-year funding contracts of \$287,000 per year.

33. **Recommendations from Poverty Action that have limited influence from Hamilton City Council**
34. The following points are made in relation to the recommendations from Poverty Action that Council has a limited level of influence on.
35. *Public transport is affordable, or free, for people with limited resources*
36. Hamilton City Council is a participant in the Hamilton Public Transport Joint Committee with the purpose to consider and recommend on matters relevant to the implementation and monitoring of the Regional Public Transport Plan as it affects Hamilton City. This forum could be utilized to further advance conversations around access and affordability of services within the city for those who are most vulnerable.
37. *Local events and access to budgeting services*
38. Council supports grassroots organisations through the single-year community grant. This grant supports local community led events and projects.
39. *Local Social Housing Plan*
40. Council has contributed to the development of a Housing Plan for Hamilton. Council will continue to support the efforts of the sector as it implements the plan.
41. *Local WOF on rental accommodation*
42. Rental WOF is currently being addressed by central government.

### Signatory

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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•Poverty • Action • Waikato •  
Te Whakatika Mahi Pohara i Waikato

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*Writing back to the Hamilton community about...*

# Neglect and Nurture

Dr Anna Casey Cox and Dr Rose Black



## Window on Waikato Poverty – Report 6

May 2016



## Acknowledgements

Rose and Anna would like to thank the many people who have contributed to this report. We especially thank all the front line community, health and social services who gave their time to share their stories, concerns and reflections about the day to day realities of poverty and hardship in our community. Thank you to Dr Bill Cochrane, Dr Beat Huser and Dr Tim Cox for their support for some of the statistical components of this report. Thank you to Robert Moore for his ongoing support and calming nature. Thank you to Carolyn Casey for her editing work; to Professor Martin Thrupp and Associate Professor Polly Atatoa Carr for their recommendations; and to Dr Kyro Selket for the developing a synopsis and abstract of this report. We are thankful for the opportunity to work with people in Hamilton to advocate for social justice and flourishing lives for all people.

### *Disclaimer*

While every effort has been made by Poverty Action Waikato to accurately collect and interpret statistics and data provided in this report it is recommended that readers check original data sources where possible.

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Window on Waikato Poverty Report 6, May 2016 | NEGLECT AND NURTURE



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## Abstract

In the report, *Writing back to the Hamilton community about...Neglect and Nurture* (2016), Anna Casey-Cox and Rose Black interviewed people working in 16 Hamilton community and social service organisations. The report reflects the observations of those who participated about how neglect and nurture operates in Hamilton and offers insights for building a responsible society.

Participants pointed out that people utilising services are struggling to access income, food and accommodation needed to live. To address this it was suggested that a combination of good policies, effective action and services underpinned by the values of manaakitanga, collaboration, unconditional love and interdependence are essential for enabling society to flourish. Community houses and centres are highly valued resources, offering an essential point of contact for people in need. In many cases, community and social service providers have to go beyond the call of duty, so as to ensure people are accessing the best possible all round care and support.

*“Walking alongside someone in need in a holistic way is valuable work that is time intensive and under resourced in our community”.*

Consequently, the report suggests greater investment in community centres, community houses and advocacy services. Thus ensuring that our most vulnerable populations have access to resources and the time and space to self-nurture and care for one another. By prioritising people and communities, Hamilton as a city will also flourish.

To read the full report and recommendations please go to:

<http://povertyactionwaikato.org/>

*Writing back to the Hamilton Community about ...*

## **Neglect and Nurture**

### **Executive Summary**

The experiences of neglect and nurture in the community exist in tension with one another just as they do for each of us in each of our lives. For some of us, experiences of neglect are more painful and more frequent and are felt in all sorts of ways. People with complex needs and limited resources face many challenges in their day to day life. Nurture is actively provided by individuals, communities and social services, although the ability to do so is squeezed and somewhat compromised at times. In this report, we write back to the community and social service sector about the stories, the narratives, of their experiences while serving people in both their work and private capacities, and we invite the wider community into the conversation.

Group and individual interviews were undertaken with people from 16 different community and social service organisations based in Hamilton. The research questions invited participants to share their observations of neglect and nurture operating in our communities and the ways in which we can build a responsible society. All of the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed for common themes. The research data, including stories and statistics, is organised under the following identified themes: Barriers and Conditions, The Neglectful State, Debt and the Dominance of Market Structures, Community Serving Community, and Common Good Culture. As researchers we are concerned that these stories paint a picture of a society that has become increasingly punitive. However, we know that there are many people who are as concerned as we are and who are rising up to ensure that all people in Hamilton, and throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, are able to live their best lives.

The findings and discussion in this report are limited to the stories and statistics we collected and by the analysis we present. The stories in this report contain various perspectives that will prompt questions and discussion. We encourage people, to talk with one another about the stories. Through dialogue, conversation and action we can invite each other to restore the values of the common good.

At the end of each identified theme there is a list of suggested actions, however we have left open the responsibility for picking up these actions rather than target a specific agency, service sector or group.

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Window on Waikato Poverty Report 6, May 2016 | NEGLECT AND NURTURE

### Barriers and Conditions

It is hard work living on a marginal income and with limited resources. The administrative processes, criteria and expectations of government welfare and housing services, now provided by the Ministry of Social Development, are significant. Many people are not aware of the entitlements when receiving a benefit or on a low income and support from Work and Income can be difficult to access. While attending a budgeting service is usually a requirement when making an application to Work and Income for assistance, budgeting services are often booked out and there can be waiting lists of 2-3 weeks.

Service time delays, including getting appointments with Work and Income caseworkers, for example, can compromise people's ability to live well because they do not have the resources that they need to get by. Transport options that are affordable and accessible for people on low incomes are limited in Hamilton and may act as an impediment to taking up training and work opportunities. This is particularly pertinent for young people who also need opportunities to get their driver's licence to increase their mobility and accessibility options.

*We need a system that intervenes early in the problem before it is a problem. We have a system that manages by excluding people who don't meet certain criteria and we have a system that finds it difficult to share information between agencies (The People's Project).*

### Suggested actions

- \* Support advocacy services for people with limited resources so that they are able to navigate State welfare services and access all the income and service benefits they require.
- \* Work with the Regional Council to ensure that public transport is affordable, or free, for people with limited resources.
- \* Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure that licensing programmes are accessible and available to all people (including young people) with limited resources living in Hamilton.
- \* Support access to budgeting services and debt elimination and reduction services.
- \* Facilitate forum with Work and Income to discuss experiences and provide evaluative feedback regarding structural reforms.

### The Neglectful State

New migrant peoples need ongoing support to understand and navigate the cultural and social systems in Aotearoa. Some reported great difficulty in getting adequate direction from Government services. People applying for residency spoke about the difficulties in accessing any support from Work and Income resulting in stresses and strains particularly in Pasifika communities. People new to New Zealand may need more in depth support at times to enable them to settle well in this environment and culture.

People with limited resources are often coping with increasingly complex situations and pressures in their lives. Vulnerabilities may have been created by being put into foster care as a child and living in multiple homes; engaging in behaviours that have led to a prison sentence; experiencing poor mental health; addictions to alcohol, drugs or gambling; arriving in New Zealand as a new migrant with little knowledge of English or local cultural practices, to name a few. The sense of and experiences of vulnerabilities tend to be increased in a society that operates to exclude and punish people rather than offering opportunities for inclusion, redemption and restoration. There is a need for a way of working that lifts people up and restores their mana and sense of wellbeing so that they can realise the possibilities of a happy life.

There are indications from the stories told of the need for increased support for some people living with mental health problems in our community. However, it is not a function of this report to provide a comprehensive assessment of the care provided to people with mental health issues living in Hamilton.

While many people are working very hard to provide nurture and care in a range of services, for some people experiencing mental health problems, including addictions, the care they require is not

*Often [Pasifika] families have come here under the PAC [Pacific Access Category] scheme. PAC is like a lottery in the islands...They arrive here and are expected to find work without a work visa... Employers are reluctant to give work to people without a work visa. When they can't get a job offer or work they are left with no income and no support because as non-residents they cannot access WINZ, so they come to the agencies for food parcels and support. These people often end up relying on other Pasifika families for support (Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Coordinator).*

*Many of the people who do come and stay in the shelter have been in foster care in the past and they have been let go from foster care at 17 years of age...Being left on your own at 17, without a home to go to, is one of the precursors to homelessness (Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager).*

*His [Simon's] ears were full of wax. So it was back to WINZ to get the next form, to get approval, to get the ear wax removed. All of this ended up taking months. If he had money, he could have just gone and got it all fixed up quickly. This is the way that poverty impacts people – they just don't have the same choices (Community Mental Health Nurse).*

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being offered in cohesive and connected ways that adequately meet their needs.

People discharged from hospital mental health services do not always have adequate accommodation and care, and therefore struggle to remain well in the community. Greater collaboration between mental health and broader health and social services would be beneficial.

The values of competition and collaboration exist in tension with one another. Contestable funding and the contracting of services has intensified the experience of competition in the social service sector and this affected the level of trust in the sector. The shift to outcomes reporting is concerning because achieving specified outcomes for the most vulnerable is challenging. The social service sector is impacted by the contractual demands of Government.

*...it's often difficult for our clients to reach the criteria that are required in the timeframe that is required. The Government is not supporting the most vulnerable and the poorest but the next layer (Salvation Army 6).*

When under pressure, and with the ongoing tensions of a competitive contracting environment, the sector has the propensity to turn in on itself, blaming the various spokes of operation for the struggles they are experiencing, thereby creating cracks in its own fabric. The restoration of the social service sector united by its core values is vital for the wellbeing of the most vulnerable of us.

***Suggested actions:***

**Collaboration and Forums**

- \* Lead opportunities between central /local government, health, and social service sectors enhance collaborative work with our most vulnerable people.
- \* Facilitate regular forums where the sectors can come together (at grassroots level) to discuss policy, care and nurture issues.

**Policies and Services to support the most vulnerable**

- \* Reform foster care
- \* Ensure achievable contractual outcomes for the most vulnerable
- \* Provide opportunities for participation for people with criminal records
- \* Provide support, care and housing for people with mental health and addiction problems
- \* Limit the number of alcohol and gambling outlets in Hamilton

**Manaakitanga for our new New Zealanders**

- \* Develop a Pasifika Peoples Resource Centre in Hamilton to support people migrating from the Pacific Islands to make their way in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- \* Extend support for people with refugee backgrounds to enable more time to strengthen community connections.

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### Debt and the Dominance of the Market Structures

Managing on a low household income with debt and struggling to make loan repayments is a daily reality for many people. The stringent conditions of Work and Income services can create levels of desperation and in times of financial crisis people may turn to instant finance companies as a solution to meet their immediate needs. Easy to obtain offers of credit, with high interest and stringent terms of repayment, also exacerbate levels of debt. For example, mobile retail trucks prey on the lower income communities of Hamilton. They sell expensive goods on credit with very high interest rates and penalties for non-payment.

*They don't have enough money in the house and they can't fix their homes if they are leaking. Meeting the costs of school uniforms is difficult. Because they don't have disposable income, they can't keep their car up to date and then they can't get to where they need to get to like to the doctors or schools. (Community Health Worker 6).*

People with debt are often excluded from support and excluded from housing. There are increasing numbers of people with insecure tenancy, sleeping on couches and in garages, caravans and cars. While people might have a roof over their heads, crowded housing conditions are not sustainable and are creating tensions in family relationships.

The barriers and conditions of government welfare services are preventing people from getting the care and housing that they need. People with limited resources can struggle to compete in the private rental market and the pool of available State owned houses is diminishing. There is a lack of affordable, accessible and adequate rental accommodation in Hamilton.

Families and individuals are presenting to The People's Project with significant housing need. Families are sleeping in cars and people are sleeping on the street or in overcrowded situations.

Often available and lower cost rental accommodation is of poor quality which has a negative impact on the health of people living in these properties. Research evidence now links the effects of poor quality housing to increases in the costs of providing health services in our communities.

*Over the last couple of years I have seen a real change in housing. In one of my schools there is a family that has ended up living out of their car with their children. And another family with five children has had to send two children to a friend's house, two to another home and one to another. The parents are living in the car (Social Worker in Schools).*

Warrant of Fitness schemes for rental properties have been shown to be affordable and beneficial. There is an urgent need for emergency accommodation and a readily accessible pool of affordable, quality housing in Hamilton that will meet the needs of people with limited resources and/or complex needs.

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**Suggested actions:**

- \* Lobby for Hamilton City Council to introduce a by-law to ban mobile retail trucks.
- \* Lobby for a local warrant of fitness (WOF) for all houses or dwelling that people live in throughout Hamilton.
- \* Support initiatives to retrofit all rental accommodation in Hamilton so that it meets a WOF standard.
- \* Ensure affordable rental accommodation is available.
- \* Provide emergency accommodation facilities.
- \* Support and endorse a local social housing plan.

**Community Serving Community**

The increasing conditions of, and barriers to accessing, State welfare and housing services has necessitated the development of a new level of service, described as navigation or advocacy. Frontline health and social service organisations are providing advocacy and navigation services, so that people get access to the support they need.

Time needs to be spent with people to build their capacity to live somewhat independent lives, however the stories in this report indicate that the barriers now in place to access resources that will help people to manage can be difficult to overcome both for the social service providers and the people they serve.

Many people and services are providing advocacy on top of and in addition to their contracted services. The People's Project, for example, is a non-funded service assisting people to navigate Work and Income and social housing services including the private rental market to get the housing that they need. There is a requirement for increased levels of advocacy services in our community so that people get the assistance they need.

*There are so many layers of service that they have to try and work their way through and some people do not have the capacity to work their way through that...so it comes down to agencies like ourselves who try and put it in the context of what is available and advocate on their behalf. There is a great failure of The State providers and The Government is setting it up so that people have to have an advocate, but often the advocate is not there. The Government are requiring agencies like ourselves to become the advocates and the navigators of the system (Salvation Army 9).*

Communities are rising up and are finding ways to nurture in between the cracks created by inadequate service provision and the impacts of consumer society. Yet the pool of available resources for community based services is small. Some people have the energy and desire to do more for and with their communities but they lack the resources.

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**Suggested actions**

- \* Lobby Hamilton City Council to invest in community houses and centres as places of connection and support. Eliminate contestable funding. Reinststate a solid and generous funding base for each community house and centre.
- \* Support consistent and ongoing local (suburb level) community events so that relationships can be restored and developed within local communities.

**Common Good Culture**

Central and Local Government organisations need to focus on the rebuilding of common good communities with values that emphasise caring, manaakitanga, collaboration, unconditional love and interdependence. The current value placed on competition and economic development is failing to support the health and well-being of all members of society.

Restoring the community of the common good with an emphasis on collective provision is a responsibility we can all aspire to and contribute to. The community of Hamilton is crying out for a greater commitment to rebuilding the relationships between people with all their diversities. Together, social service agencies, government institutions and community can support the rebuilding of the society of the common good.

*We need to create a new culture that fills needs and meets needs (Manager Social Service).*

**Suggested actions:**

- \* Reclaim the social justice values and imperatives of the social service sector
- \* Work to restore Mana and well-being
- \* Build an inclusive common good culture

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Window on Waikato Poverty Report 6, May 2016 | NEGLECT AND NURTURE

## *Writing back to the Hamilton Community about ...*

# Neglect and Nurture

## Introduction

The vast majority of people care about nurturing the wellbeing of their whānau, family, and friends and are concerned about the wellbeing of people in their communities and neighbourhoods in Aotearoa New Zealand and across the globe. Neglect and nurture are experienced in different ways across our society. When society, communities and individuals neglect to care for one another this has devastating consequences. Babies, children and young people often suffer the most from neglect. This suffering can impact their whole life journey. Without opportunities for healing and restoration, experiences of neglect can result in further suffering. When the nurture of our most vulnerable populations and the care of one another is prioritised by individuals, communities and society flourishing and wellbeing are enabled.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, we are fortunate to have the resources and political processes available to ensure that every New Zealander has their needs met. However, in reality a number of barriers have been created that mean many people in our communities cannot experience fulfilling and happy lives. Many interrelated factors create poverty and hardship. These factors are described by New Zealand researchers, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Tankel and Groot (2014) as the “societal determinants of health” (p.98). The societal determinants that are associated with poor health and wellbeing outcomes for people include:

- social and economic exclusions,
- educational difficulties,
- stigma,
- physical hardship,
- under-employment,
- inadequate housing,
- food insecurity,
- violence, and
- constrained access to health and social services (p.98).

Many of the stories told by the people in this research reflect these interrelated factors that largely contribute to a state of neglect, poverty and hardship for those experiencing a number of them.

This research is based in Hamilton and this report reflects some of the social realities of the Hamilton community. Our purpose, as researchers with Poverty Action Waikato, is to listen

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to and describe the experiences of everyday people who are facing difficulties and struggles. To do this, we have chosen to listen to the voices of community and social service agencies who work with the most marginalised people in our communities. We hope to relay the stories of these agencies and the people that they serve in a way that deepens everyone's understanding of how poverty situations are created. Our report highlights the ways in which the organisation and structure of our society affects people and their life journeys. By documenting the many barriers to wellbeing that people are experiencing, we join with many other social researchers in creating a basis for action.

The stories that we tell each other shape the way in which we see the world. In this work we tell some of stories in a way that reminds us of the responsibilities that we all share for the creation of a more just, connected and fair society.

Most people believe that we have a moral imperative to care for the most vulnerable people in our society. Our Government, public servants, community, churches and social institutions can enable this care. Unfortunately, the care and wellbeing of the most vulnerable is not always our collective or individual priority. Our hope is that this report encourages actions that will renew the social and moral obligations that we have to care for one another and particularly for the most vulnerable. This moral imperative or obligation was described by Bourdieu (1998) as the renewal of the social contract that underpins the provision of both government services and charity that supports people who are made vulnerable.

This report will provide Hamilton City Council, social services and community with information that will encourage development for a future where poverty and neglect are not tolerated and all people are supported to live flourishing lives.

This research was in part funded by the Social Development Division of the Hamilton City Council.

## Background

Poverty Action Waikato (PAW) is a regional advocacy and research project. Poverty Action Waikato aims to research and to advocate for action to meet immediate social needs and to bring about necessary structural change over time. The researchers, Rose Black and Anna Casey Cox, are based at Anglican Action.

Over the past 6 years, Poverty Action Waikato (PAW) has produced six reports detailing different aspects of the poverty and inequality experienced in the Waikato community. PAW's reports draw together stories of poverty from the social service sector with the latest statistics available and provide a comprehensive picture of the ways in which poverty is experienced. PAW is intentional in drawing attention to the structural causes of poverty in

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our communities. The latest report, developed in 2013, focused on the imbalances and inequalities and described the inequities of poverty and privilege experienced in the region.

Recent stories shared with Poverty Action Waikato suggest that experiences of poverty and neglect continue to undermine the wellbeing and security of our communities. People are presenting to social services with ever more complex needs. Low wages, an inadequate supply of affordable housing, inadequate income and the increasing costs of living are all factors in the creation of a society that is increasingly inhospitable to people living on the margins. Stories of neglect and a lack of responsibility for the care of one another are disturbingly common.

## Methodology

Poverty Action Waikato believes that realities are socially constructed and not naturally occurring. The focus in this research is to story the structural creation of poverty and inequality as we are reminded by Nelson Mandela quote that “poverty is human-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings”. We recognise the interplay of structural influences and actions of personal responsibility. We do not position responsibility solely at the individual level but as a function of the layers of relationships between individuals and the communities, societies and world we all live in. We believe that as individuals we are not only responsible for ourselves but also for each other and the common good.

### Research process

In our research we invited various Hamilton based social services and community groups to participate in a discussion group or individual conversations facilitated by either/or both Anna and Rose. The participating groups and individuals were asked for their verbal agreement for the interviews and conversations to be audio recorded.

Group and individual interviews were undertaken with the 16 different community and social service organisations based in Hamilton, including: Catholic Social Services; Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank; Hamilton Homeless Trust; Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager; Salvation Army Hamilton; Family Works; English Language Partners New Zealand; Anglican Action, The Peoples Project and 7 others. We identified further research participants based on the recommendations of the groups we talked with - this is referred to as a snowballing method. There are many services whose stories would have contributed to a more comprehensive picture of neglect and nurture in Hamilton. However, talking with more organisations was beyond the scope and resourcing of this research. Developing opportunities for further discussion and dialogue is one of our recommendations. The

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development of this report was partially enabled by funding contributed by Hamilton City Council along with the volunteer contributions of the researchers.

The research questions that guided our conversation were as follows:

1. Tell us about the ways you observe and experience both neglect and nurture operating in your communities?
2. Reflecting over the past few years, in what ways have you seen aspects of neglect and nurture change?
3. In what ways do you think we can build a responsible society where neglect is not tolerated and the care of the most vulnerable is prioritised?

### Analysis

All of the interviews conducted by the researchers were recorded and these recordings were then transcribed. After developing the transcripts we sent these back to the people we interviewed for their consent to have the transcription notes included in the research material that we have drawn on for this report.

The transcription process was our first level of analysis because it required listening and re-listening to the stories that we were told. We noted down themes that became apparent to us as we listened to and typed up the transcripts and read them. The next step of our analysis involved highlighting sections of transcripts that related to the selected themes. These themes became the backbone writing up the first draft of the report.

Each participant was sent a draft report and was invited to feedback any comments, edits and suggestions. This feedback has been incorporated into the final draft of this report. Participants will be invited to any public presentations of the report.

This report is organised into the following identified themes:

- 1) Barriers and conditions: In this theme we present stories that highlight the local reality of people in need who struggle to navigate the increasing conditions of State welfare services.
- 2) The neglectful State: In this theme we highlight the ways in which our State welfare services and contracted services do not always meet the needs of the most vulnerable.
- 3) Debt and the dominance of market structures: In this theme we highlight the challenges that vulnerable people face in a market based society.

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- 4) Community serving community: In this theme we highlight how the community of Hamilton is responding to increased poverty.
- 5) Common good culture: In this theme we highlight some of the ways that people have suggested to us that society needs to develop in order to ensure that all people are able to live interconnected and flourishing lives.

What to do about poverty and marginalisation is a contentious issue. Poverty researcher, Brian Perry writes:

Whatever else poverty is understood to be, it is in its essence an unacceptable state-of-affairs – it carries with it the implication that something should be done about it. How best to address child poverty is a vigorously contested area where empirical evidence, social norms, personal values, views on inter-generational equity, political philosophy and pragmatic compromise all play legitimate parts. Different judgements on these matters lead to different “solutions” to child poverty (Perry, 2015, p. 5).

While Brian Perry’s reflections are in relation to child poverty, the same influences apply when considering what to do about all poverty. In the concluding section of this report, based on the stories we have heard and provided in this report, we provide some recommendations for actions to reduce poverty in our community.

## Theme 1: Barriers and Conditions

### Falling Through the Cracks

The increasing conditionality of public and social services in Hamilton is evidenced by the stories we present. This increased conditionality is creating some level of desperation and exasperation for people attempting to access welfare support. Hodgetts et al. (2013) describe the everyday lives of people in receipt of government welfare as an obstacle course. The stories that we heard describe this obstacle course as sometimes demeaning, debilitating and exhausting.

Support to help people navigate government welfare and housing services and get their needs met is not readily provided in our community. However, some organisations are rising up to take on this role, often doing so over and above what they are contracted to deliver. The demands for proof of 'deserved need' are potentially creating inefficiencies in the system. Instead of being able to get on with providing the care that they are contracted to provide, such as important health, mental health and education services, agencies are increasingly being caught up in supporting their clients to navigate government welfare services and make their case for food, housing, transport or whatever their needs might be.

Community services now spend a considerable amount of time supporting people to meet the requirements demanded by Government departments in order to access the resources such as benefits, disability support or accommodation supplements. The increasing conditionality of services, combined with limited advocacy services, means that more and more people are falling through the cracks, getting further into debt and are suffering from a lack of housing, food and other essentials.

There is an increasing pool of vulnerability that is widening by the day. Some people are punished for life for actions and decisions

#### **What is Conditionality?**

*Conditionality is the requirement for people in receipt of benefits to behave in a particular way, defined and mandated by the State. According to researchers, Hodgetts et al. (2013), conditionality is a key concept in understanding the recent welfare reforms in Aotearoa New Zealand. Failure to comply with certain conditions or meet certain obligations such as 'work readiness' or parenting obligations, including having their children participate in education and health programmes, can result in benefits being reduced or stopped altogether.*

#### **30 years of change:**

*Over the last thirty years the universal entitlement to receive welfare support as a citizen in need has decreased while obligations to behave in a certain way have increased with the focus on productivity and economics. This shift is evident in the change of name from the Department of Social Welfare to the current Ministry of Social Development. Hodgetts et al. (2013) report that sanctions against beneficiaries have increased two-fold on an annual basis since the current Government took power in 2007.*

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they made earlier in their lives and they are often offered no hope of forgiveness, redemption or restoration. The stories presented here suggest that society in general takes a punishment approach rather than supporting opportunities for the redemption or restoration of people.

Some of the support that people need in our community relates to the level of basic functioning. For some people even taking care of personal hygiene is a challenge. Government contracts and funding do not always enable support to be provided at this basic level of functioning. Not only have social services become more conditional, funding has also become more conditional. Social services used to be funded through a bulk system but now funding is increasingly tagged to individuals and the outcomes that may be achieved for each individual.

#### Increasing Conditions of Service

Social security in Aotearoa New Zealand, once provided with recognition of our shared vulnerabilities, is now provided with a series of conditions that people must meet in order to receive support.

**The People's Project:** We need a system that intervenes early in the problem before it is a problem. We have a system that manages by excluding people who don't meet certain criteria and we have a system that finds it difficult to share information between agencies.

People who experience the hardships of limited income, a lack of paid work opportunity, illness or disability are now expected to navigate an increasingly complex welfare system. Their experiences of attempting to meet the conditions of government welfare services often make their lives harder. This reality is evidenced by the stories shared in this report

The increased conditions of the services offered by Work and Income, and the impacts of this on people's lives, were described by many of the social services we talked with. There is a requirement for people to provide evidence of their budgeting before they receive financial support from Work and Income. Foodbank services also require that people receiving food parcels have a letter from Work and Income stating that they are not entitled to any further financial assistance and that they are receiving budgeting support. However, the availability and accessibility of budgeting services is limited. The lack of access to budgeting services can exacerbate an already desperate situation. This has prompted some services to provide increasing levels of budgeting support:

*"Today, families receiving welfare are subject to intensified scrutiny over their lifestyles in a manner that serves to individualise welfare as a form of 'dependency', treat poverty as a personal deficit (see Barnett et al., 2007), and excuse current economic arrangements and actors of responsibility for increases in poverty (Boyer, 2006)", (Hodgetts et al., 2013b).*

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**Social Worker in Schools 3:** They [Work and Income] say that people have to go to budgeting, but you can wait up to 3 months for this service. So we have these expectations that they will go to WINZ [Work and Income]<sup>1</sup> and then they are told to do this and that, but it does not happen that easily. And by the time they have done all that WINZ wants them to do they are starving, they can't afford rent and they don't have power on because they can't afford to pay the bill.

**Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Coordinator:** There is a requirement that people who access the foodbank receive budgeting support, but this is very hard to get. People can wait for months to get an appointment. It is very under-resourced. If budgeting is going to be a requirement in terms of accessing support then it needs to be resourced appropriately.

**Community Health Worker 18:** There are a number of families that we work with that are homeless and that are in homes that have no kai. Hence, we are getting back up to date with our budgeting services because budgeting is a requirement attached to every application for housing or anything to do with putea or kai.

People are not always able to access support from Work and Income in a timely way and the barriers to accessing support are sometimes too great.

**Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Coordinator:** People will show up at our various partner agencies without a letter from WINZ. They have tried to get an appointment with WINZ but can't get in for two or three weeks, so the agencies use their discretion and give them a food parcel. We encourage them to get along to WINZ as soon as they can.

**Social Worker in Schools 2:** Logistically it is challenging for this Mum to get out and about. Her two youngest are medically frail, yet somehow she has to get out with these two babies. And in order to get the support she needs she has to jump through one hoop at one agency, then go to another agency, then go and get a letter of support and then finally pick up her parcel - it's just too hard for her. The weather only needs to be bad and she can't go out with her babies.

**Community Service Whānau Support Worker:** [To get a benefit] you need an address and two forms of ID - one that is a photo ID. It is hard if you do not have the income to get the birth certificate to get the photo ID. They are not cheap and WINZ won't pay for you to get an ID.

People reflected on their client's stories of demeaning WINZ experiences.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** WINZ workers can be quite demeaning to people and this can re-victimise the family – it makes them feel like they can't trust anyone and that they can't go anywhere because no-one wants to hear their story.

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<sup>1</sup> Research participants often referred to Work and Income as WINZ.

**Christian Social Service Worker 1:** They come and tell me the way they have been humiliated or laughed at by people who work there [at WINZ] who are supposed to be supporting them and telling them what they are entitled too. They get humiliated and a lot of people don't understand their rights and need an advocate. So they come to us really embarrassed.

People can spend considerable amounts of time navigating social and welfare services or keeping their needs prioritised on waiting lists. The people we talked with reflected on the frustrations that vulnerable people experience when they are navigating the system attempting to get their needs met.

**Community Whānau Support Worker:** If you want to access the foodbanks you have to prove you have been to WINZ and been declined. You have to wait for a WINZ appointment so that you can be declined and then you can go to the foodbank.

**Community Services Coordinator:** One thing that frustrates me is that people can go down to any foodbank parcel collection centre, they go through the processing, filling in the form and then they are asked to come back at 3pm to collect the food. You have to take the family to the collection centre, drop them all off and pick them up again.

**Community Service Administrator:** A lot of people think that people with no income don't do anything, but these people spend their whole week dealing with the bureaucracy, WINZ and the forms, trying to understand what is going on and trying to get help, trying to get to one place or the other, catching a bus, walking or biking, just trying to get somewhere, trying to get gas in the car...

**Community Health Worker 4:** I am working with a Mum. There are 10 children in the home because she has had to move in with another family and a friend. I'm trying to support her...government processes are really difficult to go through. In order to keep on the Housing New Zealand [now Ministry of Social Development] waitlist, families have to ring every week, or every three days at least, so that Housing New Zealand keeps them on the same level of need. The families have to do this because there are categories and numbers that they are continually been assessed for. If the families don't call Housing New Zealand, they can easily fall below their current level of assessed need and have to start over. Housing New Zealand is constantly reassessing people's situation, but their situations have often not changed from the week before or the week before that.

**The People's Project:** In most cases, when we start working with people, we hear about the barriers, frustrations and rejections they're experienced within the system. We firmly believe people must take responsibility for their actions and choices, but it has become clear that in some cases our social systems are contributing to people's homelessness.

The following stories indicate that people who are on the breadline can struggle to make their way around town and to various appointments. The lack of affordable transportation

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options is a barrier to opportunity and creates unnecessary stress and strain in our communities and on our social services.

**Community Health Worker 6:** There is not much accessible employment - a lot of our whānau who are not educated have to source mahi on the outskirts of town and they can't get there. We are finding that they need transport.

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** The other issue that the women [former Refugees] face is finding the transportation to get to [English Language] class and to the doctor if they need to. When they come to Mangere, the centre usually tries to get people who are able through the learner license programme. However, this means that we have women driving to our English language classes on a learner's license, often in a clapped out car if they have one. They often have no other way to get to class because the bus system does not necessarily work for them. Also they often cannot afford the buses because if they are in private rental accommodation they often have \$20 left for food by the time they have paid all their bills. English Language Partners pays two drivers to make a "taxi" run to take learners to class and pays for bus tickets for those who are not on the "taxi" route. There is no budget for this, but it is often the only way to get learners to class.

People recommended that the Council lower the bus fares to make them more affordable. Currently, the adult fare is \$3.30 one way [*or \$2.40 with a busit card which costs \$10 to buy*].

In the 2013 census, nine percent of households (4182 households) in Hamilton indicated that they did not have access to a motor vehicle.

**Table 1: Hamilton Suburbs with at least 10% of households without a motor vehicle**

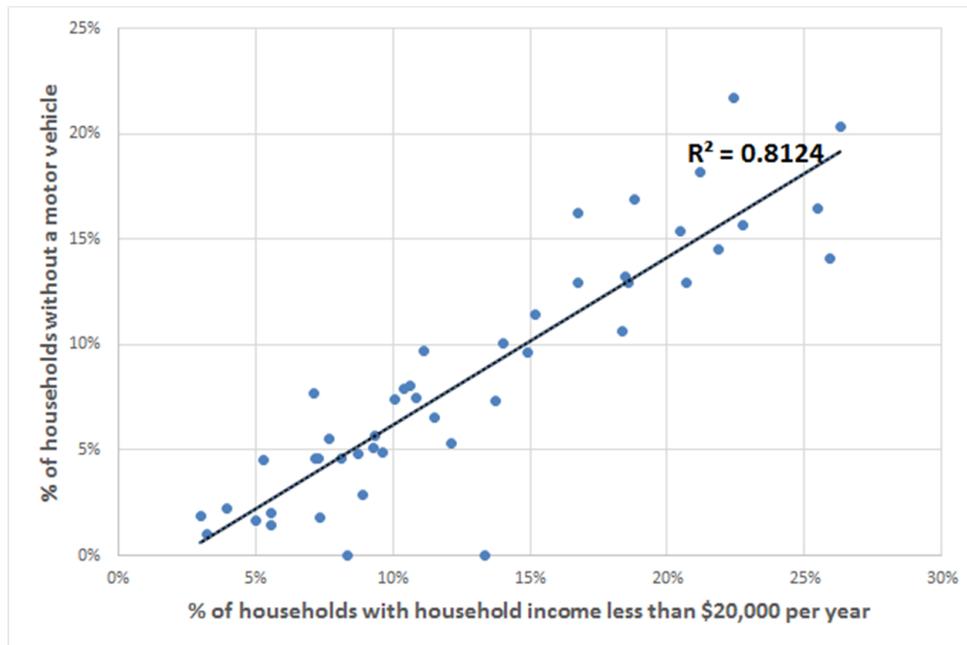
Suburbs	Percentage of households without a motor vehicle
Grandview	10%
Hamilton Lake	10%
Maeroa	10%
Silverdale	11%
Bader	11%
Porritt	13%
Clarkin	13%
Naylor	13%
Crawshaw	13%
University	14%
Swarbrick	15%
Enderley	15%
Hamilton East	16%
Frankton Junction	16%
Te Rapa	16%
Claudelands	17%
Peachgrove	18%
Insoll	20%
Hamilton Central	22%

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Suburbs where over 10% of the households do not have access to a motor vehicle are listed in Table 1. One in five households in Insoll and Hamilton Central do not have access to a motor vehicle.

There is a relatively strong relationship between households with no access to a motor vehicle and households with a household income of less than \$20,000 per year (see Figure 1). The R<sup>2</sup> is a measure of this relationship. Based on the R<sup>2</sup> (0.8124) value, 81% of the variability of how many households don't have a motor vehicle can be explained by the fact that these households have an annual income of less than \$20,000 per year.

Figure 1: Relationship between no motor vehicle and low household income in Hamilton



Drivers' licenses are an important precursor to participating more fully in society. However, there are a number of financial and logistical barriers to getting a driver's licence and to maintaining it. This has particular negative impacts on those seeking work, or on rangatahi who are attempting to make their way forward often with few resources.

**Community Health Worker 12:** I was just thinking about jobs – helping families to find jobs. There are a lot of roading jobs coming up, but these require licenses and they're quite expensive to get. The Council could provide some funding to assist our whānau with getting licenses for these jobs so that then they would be in position to apply for them.

**Community Health Worker 5:** I am concerned for our rangatahi. A lot of our rangatahi will sit on a learner's license and then they will get fined. Most of the rangatahi don't have proper cars or warranted cars. It would be good to have a programme to help them out.

**Community Health Worker 3:** There is a process that if someone is caught without a license, warrant or registration then they get a certain number of days in which they have to get it. However, their situation is not any better than it was the day before. There is enormous pressure and they are incurring fines when they don't have any money to pay the fines. You can't get the rego [registration] without the warrant. Then the families can't get kids to school and then they get in trouble with that and it is just this continuous barrier. They are living under the bread line and whose fault is that?

Some of the administrative processes of the government welfare services do not work well and can result in people being cut off from vital welfare services. A lack of good welfare administration can increase and exacerbate vulnerability.

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** A number of our clients got their benefits reduced before Christmas. A number of them have a supplementary benefit, because the basic benefit is not enough for them to live on. The supplementary benefit lasts for 3 months and for a number of our clients the 3 month period ended on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December. Due to the holiday period and delays in the post, our clients did not get the letter regarding their supplementary benefits until too late. They received the letter more or less on the same day that the benefit stopped. One of my clients had rent arrears and could not find anyone to talk to at WINZ because a number of them were on holiday...She could not make an appointment to negotiate things. My client was told that she needed a budget advisor but we could not book one because they were on holiday.

People may be exhausted from their lives, trying to keep up with their issues, including mounting debt and this can result in appointments being missed.

**Salvation Army Worker 5:** So any programme that we might be doing like budgeting - they may not come along to because they just want to stay home and sort their lives out. They miss appointments. They have no way to get here. There is a huge gap in their learning.

The stringent conditions that can come with particular services can result in debt or incomplete treatments if the conditions of service cannot be met.

**Salvation Army Worker 6:** And it is easy to accrue debt. If you are 15 minutes late picking up your child [from childcare] then you will get charged. If you are 15-20 minutes late collecting your child a few times a week then you might owe \$10 at end of week.

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**Family Worker 1:** I think it [not going to the doctor] relates to the prescriptions that they may have to get. For new-borns prescriptions are free but it is not that way for adults and children...The parents hold back on their medication and get the children's medicine or as much of the medication that they can afford.

The conditions of services can result in inefficiencies and confusion. Even social services can find it difficult to navigate the criteria and the processes involved with accessing care and support.

**Salvation Army Worker 3:** The Government gave Family Works the Early Learning Payment (ELP) and it can take up to 6-8 weeks for that to be sorted out. Even Family Works say that there is a problem with the way it is being processed and that families are really getting affected by it. So if you come into a new area and you want to work, or if you are stressed and need a break, you can only engage with this programme if you have a child under 2. The fund is only available to Family Start families.

Just recently we had a mother with three children who came into our service. She had a 3 year old, a 2 year old and a baby and Family Works was able to cover the costs of the baby in childcare. They were on board with the early childhood education and were helping her to get her children enrolled, but then her baby was taken away by the father and they...had to pull away from assisting that family.

The support that a child can get for early childhood education up until 2 years of age, what they can get from 2-3 years of age and what they can get once they turn 3, varies from centre to centre. The administrative requirements of accessing early childhood services and the confusion that develops can be a barrier to participation. Sometimes people are also not aware of their childcare entitlements.

**Salvation Army 3:** It's really confusing and we are working with lots of different centres. Our parents are trying to figure it out – it's hard. And then they've got to do the enrolment forms and the WINZ form with no car and children in their care. And the centre that they can access may be in another area. Some centres are running vans and some aren't. Sometimes you can get funding at one place but they don't offer a van service so you can't get your children over there anyway.

Every child over 3 years of age is entitled to 20 hours free childcare, but not every centre has the capacity to provide this care. You have got to find a centre that will take your child for that. It is another barrier.

**Community Service Manager:** We have childcare at the centre and if the parents are working they can get the subsidy. Part of it is educating them to fill out the form. If you are working you can qualify for the subsidy unless you have a very high income.

### Above the income threshold with no support

It was noted that the pool of vulnerability is increasing. The people who come to the meals served by the Hamilton Homeless Trust are not only the traditional rough sleepers. The Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinators describe the community that attends the meal service provided every night of the week in Hamilton:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** We have the traditional homeless, like rough sleepers, and then we have a number of people who are between homes and who don't have a permanent address. And then people who have fallen through the system in terms of WINZ and other support - they maybe can't meet conditions or who have just come out of prison who are trying to reintegrate in the world. There are unemployed and working people – people who are working but still living in poverty, families and young people, and people of different race and ethnicity – Pākehā, Māori, Pacifica, Asian. It is hard to say there is a typical person.

Some families are caught in a situation where their wages are low but they are unable to access any additional support. People can begin to spiral down with no State safety net to prevent the fall and they are turning to community for support.

**Salvation Army 2:** Wages are quite low. I have worked with quite a few families where the Dads are earning just over the income threshold for WINZ support - they can't get food when they need it or get support with the bond payment - they are cut off from the additional supports yet they earn just over the threshold.

If they have a couple of days off sick then they don't get paid. They go to WINZ for support but they have no entitlement. They are on minimum wage but supporting a family with children. One chap had used all his sick leave and went to WINZ but because of his income there was nothing they could do, so WINZ sent him to the foodbank. They are pushing people to go to work, but the wages are not covering the costs of living. These people can't go and get financial support to pay a bond for example. If they have to move to cheaper accommodation they don't have all that support with the moving costs that they would get if they were on a benefit.

**Christian Social Service Worker 1:** The other day a woman came to us who had been to WINZ to ask for some support to get some food and the lady there laughed at her and said "you're not getting any food – you have too much money". That's the attitude and she felt really humiliated and came to us for food because she didn't like the way she was treated. People don't complain because they might not get any more support.

**Salvation Army 1:** There is poverty in working families. I was working with a family going through a separation and custody dispute. The partner who was on the benefit was entitled to legal aid and the other partner who was working had no support. The partner with legal aid gets their court work done at a much reduced price, while the partner that is working has amassed a bill of \$35,000 after trying to get access to the child. Because he was working he was charged full costs. So I've started to tell

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parents to represent themselves at court, so that you don't have to pay really expensive lawyer fees and I've seen some success. I'm starting to say to parents – "You can't afford those costs – go and represent yourself". The judge is more sympathetic to the person who does not have a lawyer. The father in this story was about to give up his visitation – he said "I can't afford more money; I'm just going to give up and not see my child anymore". I think that is why a lot of fathers don't see their children – they have the court process to get through, so that leaves a child thinking that they do not have a father.

People living on the breadline are sometimes not informed of their benefit entitlements. A transition to employment from a benefit, switching between benefits, becoming a couple or beginning study can result in a 'benefit stand-down period' and weeks of no income. Some WINZ workers do not always tell people about all their entitlements during these transitional times. This lack of income can create desperation and people turn to the social services such as the Salvation Army or instant finance companies:

**Salvation Army 2:** People will turn up at our service with a letter that says that they have had no income for weeks because they are in a stand down period.

**Salvation Army 6:** They just go into debt or don't pay the rent, or go to Cash Converters and Chequers Finance.

**Salvation Army 2:** There has been a huge increase in quick fix loans. If someone has gone from two incomes to one income, or an unemployment benefit to study, they are basically left with no option but to go to these quick fix loan places.

**Salvation Army 8:** I had a volunteer work in the store - a solo Mum who went onto 20 hours a week pay and lost her benefit. The first pay day was two weeks after she got the job – so she had a two week period with no income. There was no way around that for her.

**Salvation Army 2:** WINZ staff don't tell you that there is an entitlement. There is a cross over bridge but they never tell you. These poor families go for weeks without income. WINZ is required to tell them about their entitlements but they don't.

**Salvation Army 9:** When they find work, it is like WINZ says "oh good no benefit".

**Salvation Army 4:** If they ask for the entitlement they will get it, but otherwise no. They might say that they want to empower you to ask for your entitlements.

**Salvation Army 2:** If you get a good worker at WINZ they will look after you. It is all about the individual worker

**Salvation Army 2:** I tell my clients - WINZ is legally bound to inform people of their entitlements. We teach people to question them on it, to go back and to not just accept what they tell them.

Government services do always account for the all the costs associated with its processes. This can push people further to the margins and more into debt.

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**Salvation Army 4:** And if they appear before court and they are bailed to an address they are still having to pay rent to the previous address. Until their new accommodation has been approved they are paying rent to two places and on top of that they are paying for loans and bank fees.

**Salvation Army 1:** There are some struggles for families that have to attend court. For example, they may have started off their court proceedings in Tauranga and then shifted to Hamilton but they are still expected to travel back to court in Tauranga or another city. There is extra cost that goes with this. And it is difficult to try and get a case transferred to Hamilton. They have to pay for costs of the buses and people to look after their children.

**Salvation Army 2:** Once a child has been removed and gone into care, the biological parents have a reduction in income. They have got to manage with what they have and the children come for weekends and holidays and they don't have the financial assistance to be able to feed those children when they do come. This creates financial stress.

Some people in need are not entitled to any support from WINZ. This is a particular concern within the Pasifika communities. People come over to New Zealand from the Pacific Islands with an expectation to find work and without a work permit. When they cannot find work they cannot access any support from WINZ and they are dependent on any family that they might have in New Zealand. This situation exacerbates financial hardship and strain within Pasifika communities.

**Hamilton Combined Christian**

**Foodbank Coordinator:** We have seen an increase in the numbers of Pasifika people coming to the agencies for food parcels. Often families have come here under the PAC [Pacific Access Category] scheme. PAC is like a lottery in the islands and people are attracted to the idea of a higher living standard in New Zealand. They arrive here and are expected to find work without a work visa. They are required to get a job offer before then get a work visa. Employers are reluctant to give work to people without a work visa. When they can't get a job offer

**About PAC:** People who are citizens of the Islands of Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu or Tonga, and aged 18 to 45 years, can apply to settle in New Zealand under the Pacific Access Category (PAC). The PAC is run by ballot. PAC allows, including partners and dependent children, 250 Fijian citizens, 75 Kiribati citizens, 75 Tuvaluan citizens and 250 Tongan citizens to be granted residence in New Zealand each year. People can only apply for residence under the PAC if they lodged a registration during the annual registration period and their registration was drawn from the ballot. To be granted residence under this category people need to be of good health, good character, have a minimum level of English, and be a citizen of a PAC country between 18 and 45 years of age. People also need to have an acceptable offer of employment when they apply for residence or have a partner included in your application who has an acceptable offer of employment. The job offer must be for work that is permanent and full-time. Source: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/>

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or work they are left with no income and no support because as non-residents they cannot access WINZ, so they come to the agencies for food parcels and support. These people often end up relying on other Pasifika families for support. I have seen multiple families cramming into one house and sleeping in garages.

#### Summary

The administrative processes of State welfare services are often experienced as time consuming and can be devastating, particularly when people are cut off from vital services. People's experiences of WINZ are sometimes demeaning. Service conditions can be confusing and result in barriers to service. The requirements for accessing welfare and social support can be stringent, such as needing a letter from WINZ for a food parcel or two forms of ID to get a benefit. These conditions come on top of pressing needs to pay rent, pay bills or to feed a family.

People are not always informed of their WINZ entitlements, particularly when they are making transitions to work or if they are shifting between benefits. WINZ services are not always available to people who sometimes require more income to be able to afford essential items or to cover unexpected expenses. Low wages are often not enough to live on and people on low wages are often not entitled to access any support from WINZ. This lack of support can create stress and strain in the community.

People coming to New Zealand from the Pacific Islands on the PAC scheme are particularly vulnerable when they cannot find work. Without residency they cannot access WINZ services and have to resort to family for support. This can create extra stress and strain in Pasifika communities. Sometimes people simply give up trying to get their needs met. Without adequate support people reach new levels desperation and sometimes seek support from instant finance companies which leads to debt and further problems.

People accessing WINZ services are required to receive budgeting support. However, there is an inadequate level of budgeting services in our community, which means that people waiting for a budgeting appointment are left with nowhere to turn in the meantime.

The processes associated with government services can mean that people incur expenses. Expenses can add up when people are required to get across town to an appointment or travel out of town to attend court. The government often takes no account of these expenses. A lack of accessible and affordable transport makes living on the breadline even more challenging. Driver's license courses do not appear to be readily accessible to people living on the margins.

Living on the breadline in Hamilton is challenging and people do not necessarily find the support they need when they access welfare services. The barriers that people face to accessing support in a timely way can create further problems and exacerbate an already stressful situation.

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#### Suggested actions

- \* Support advocacy services for people with limited resources so that they are able to navigate State welfare services and access all the income and service benefits they require.
- \* Work with the Regional Council to ensure that public transport is affordable, or free, for people with limited resources.
- \* Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure that licensing programmes are accessible and available to all people (including young people) with limited resources living in Hamilton.
- \* Support access to budgeting services and debt elimination and reduction services.
- \* Facilitate forum with Work and Income to discuss experiences and provide evaluative feedback regarding structural reforms

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Window on Waikato Poverty Report 6, May 2016 | NEGLECT AND NURTURE

## Theme 2: The Neglectful State

*You see an increase in crime to survive and an increase in addictions to cope.*

*(Salvation Army Worker)*

Many people in need are finding it very difficult to access adequate housing and social welfare services, or employment. There are indications of the shift from the State provision of a safety net of welfare for our most vulnerable people to an emphasis on individual responsibility and social development. The obvious signal of this shift is the name change decision by Government from the Department of Social Welfare to the Ministry of Social Development. This shift in the emphasis of service provision is reflected in the stories told to us by the front-line workers of community and social services in Hamilton.

Stories that describe the ways in which people are finding it difficult or impossible, to access support and nurture from government welfare services are woven together in this chapter. The government is functioning in a way that George Lakoff (2008), a professor of science and linguistics, would describe as a 'Strict Father'. The Strict Father requires certain behaviours or conditions to be met if ongoing support is to be provided. The failure to adhere to particular conditions or to behave in particular ways is met with punishments that are intended to coral people, the children of The State, into what is deemed to be acceptable moral behaviour. Lakoff (2008) argues that by acting principally as a 'Strict Father', The State neglects its role as a nurturing parent capable of protecting and serving the most vulnerable people in our society.

The stories we present here indicate that there is an extreme expectation for people to develop their own capacities, no matter their histories, life stories and experiences. They are expected to rise above circumstances of poverty, abuse, and dysfunction and simply get on and make the best of their lives.



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However, some of the vulnerabilities people live with are not temporary, they will continue for the duration of people's lives. Other vulnerabilities are deep and complex, requiring intensive care and layers of support that appear to be limited. Many of the vulnerabilities people experience have been created over time and have rippling effects through past, present and future generations.

### Blaming and Shaming

There is a prevalent discourse of blaming and shaming people who are vulnerable. The power and pervasiveness of the 'blame culture' and the desire to allocate responsibility are captured in the following quote.

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** There is a growing sense that if you are poor that it is your fault. We are looking down on people that have need. If you are in need, people will be condescending toward you. They will look at you and ask "Why have you not sorted your own stuff out?" There is a growing culture of blame. I know I do it – I look at people who are poor as if they are not the same as me and somehow differently human...

A common suggestion, made to people at the frontlines of social and community services, is that poverty is an individual failing and that all the individual needs to do is take action to resolve their failing, such as get a job.

In the story of the 'Strict Father', people in poverty are cast as amoral beings that have ended up where they are because they have not been obedient to the rules of The State. This story of blame enables more privileged people to negate their own responsibilities in terms of creating a more compassionate society.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** Some people say that many people that are homeless chose to be homeless. I disagree with that. The vast majority, 98%, don't choose to be homeless. But even if they did, the fact that someone would choose that lifestyle over the mainstream conventional society - what does that say about their experience of society that living on the streets and in poverty is a preferable choice than trying to fit in a society that is unaccepting?

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** I'm always asked "is it their own fault?" There is a whole story. It's not a choice to be homeless.

*A society operating as a 'Strict Father' deems the vulnerable as 'the undisciplined ones' requiring punishment to bring them back into line (Lakoff, 2008). Within this frame, Poverty is no longer conceived as a societal failing but rather one that positions the responsibility for poverty solely with the individual. The emphasis on individual responsibility is also reflected in the shift away from universal support and an understanding of interdependence to one of independence.*

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**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** Often I hear that homeless people should get a job. Which job does not require you to come in clean clothes? Where exactly? ...How do you get a job if you don't have an address? ...I've been told that they can do odd jobs. How do you get a lawn mower and keep a lawn mower? And some people have said that they could be 'grocery carriers' – I mean are you saying that you would just go up to a random stranger and say "can I carry those for you?" It just doesn't work like that.

**Social Worker in Schools 3:** And people will say that there are jobs out there and that people can get a job. They say they are benefit bludgers and that they don't want to work. Generally, families on benefits want to work.

In these comments people at the coalface of social and community services in Hamilton are reporting what they are hearing about how the people they serve are positioned in wider society. Sayings like 'get a job' roll off the tongue very easily, however the stories above suggest that there is little recognition of all the barriers people experience in terms of finding work. Some of the barriers are practical, e.g. access to clean clothes if you do not have a regular place to live, and others are more hidden and complex and may include drug and alcohol addictions, mental health issues and criminal records.

People have deep psychological responses to inequality and social hierarchy, including the tendency to equate outer wealth with inner worth, according to social epidemiologists Wilkinson and Pickett (2009). These responses to wealth and worth greatly influence self-esteem and the way we interact with and treat each other.

**Christian Social Service Manager 1:** I think the terrible thing that we have lost, and the worst thing that we see, is the loss of the human value one for another. I think we have lost the sense of I am my brother's or sister's keeper. This is my brother or sister and this is my neighbour and I need to care about my neighbour...I think what I find so distressing is the way we treat each other and almost in a type of psychopathic way we have sort of lost empathy to love one another.

There is a dominance of status competition in unequal societies that can result in a lack of empathy for one another and a more judgmental and distancing society, rather than one that understands and appreciates interconnectedness.

### Failing the most vulnerable

In this section we relay a story about Simon, told to us by a Community Mental Health Nurse (CMH Nurse) working in Hamilton. The story illustrates the ways in which the delivery of services both nurture and neglect people like Simon. Some service workers, including the CMH Nurse, go to great lengths to try to ensure continuity of care for people with mental illness like Simon living in our community. Yet, despite their nurture, this story illustrates

that many hurdles, created by fragmented service delivery, prevent Simon from having the care that he needs to live his best life.

The increasing fragmentation of family and community means that government welfare services are the primary way in which some of the most vulnerable people will receive the care that they need. Simon does not have the resources to pay for the care that he needs – he does not have access to the private health and dental care that the more affluent might. Government welfare services are Simon’s safety net.

Despite the passion and commitment of the staff and people that care for Simon in various ways, the safety net that we collectively provide Simon, through our taxes and through our collectively funded services, has many holes. The CMH Nurse told us that Simon is only one example of many of her clients whose needs are not being met in a way that support them to live well in the community.

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** On the face of it, Simon looks as if he gets pretty well cared for. There is an organisation that provides care for him twice a day. They go in to shower him and that sort of thing, but there is so much more to it than that. Simon has had [a mental illness] for most of his life – for nearly 50 years. He didn’t ask for it, didn’t do anything to get it, it just happened to him.

Simon has had multiple strokes and is incontinent. He can’t afford the sanitary supplies that would help keep him clean and tidy...He does not have all his teeth, so he can’t chew properly and so sometimes he does not really eat properly...If he had money he would be able to go and get his teeth fixed...but that’s not the case – he’s on a disability benefit. Free or accessible dental care is impossible to find.

Simon spits when he talks – he has chronic respiratory disease and with no teeth this is just what happens. He swears frequently, it’s a habit that he has developed, just trying to cope when he often feels so frustrated. Participation in groups is difficult. People don’t always want to be around someone who looks odd, is difficult to understand and frequently swears...has smelly clothes and spits when they talk. It is so difficult.

A few months ago I noticed that Simon’s hearing was getting worse. He does not have hearing aids and I noticed that I was having to yell to be heard. I knew something was up with his hearing and that he needed to see someone. I went to WINZ to get a referral to see a hearing specialist. It took weeks to get the approval and then along we went. His ears were full of wax. So it was back to WINZ to get the next form, to get approval, to get the ear wax removed. All of this ended up taking months. If he had money, he could have just gone and got it all fixed up quickly. This is the way that poverty impacts people – they just don’t have the same choices. Simon did not choose to have [a mental illness]; he did not choose this life.

This story illustrates the way in which government funded mental health services are striving to meet the complex needs of people in their care. There are many challenges to achieving comprehensive care for people with complex needs who have limited resources.

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For Simon, timely access to particular practical resources, and/or income, would enable greater levels of care to be achieved and this would improve his quality of life.

#### Poor mental health and addictions – old companions

Poor mental health, including addictions, is associated with increased inequality and the destruction of the common good fabric of society (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). There is an increased prevalence of mental illness and a raft of addictions in our community. Addictions threaten the nurturing capacity of our society.

**Social Service Manager:** The families are accessing [food bank] services but the flip side of that, when we talk about putting basic food on the table, is the parents just blowing their benefit on drugs and alcohol and they don't worry about putting food in the cupboard. It is a real thing but it goes back to mental health and drug and alcohol issues and how are we supporting people to address these issues? No parent wants to purposely neglect their children, but everything else is going on around them.

**Christian Social Service Worker 2:** Several families now that come to the homeless trust meals are meth users and the children are becoming addicts as well. We have set a rule, probably about 3-4 months back saying that anybody that comes with substances is no longer welcome. But if I see them outside the door and I can see that they are really hungry I will send somebody out with a plate of food – I can't turn people away – I just can't do it.

**Community Service Administrator:** When we did the tree planting - at 11am in the morning, a three year old boy answered the door at this house, a mongrel mob house. We said "we are here to plant some trees". The mother had come out drunk earlier in the week and asked if we could plant some fruit trees around her house. We asked the three year old "is your Mum still there?" He said "Mum is asleep but I will go and get her", but he could not wake her up. And then the little two year old trundles out to see us. The house is full of rubbish, bottles and flies everywhere. I was worried that the Mum was dead, but I popped my head in and you could hear the Mum snoring.

These three stories are good examples of the difficulties people in our communities are having with addictive substances such as alcohol and a raft of drugs and point to an ease of access to these substances. When feeding an addiction takes priority over meeting the needs of family members the protection of any children in a family may become an issue. Appropriate steps need to be taken to ensure that children are safe and risks are mitigated. There is also a need for steps to be taken to limit access to these harmful substances in society.

There is also some suggestion that the now illegal market of synthetic cannabis is resulting in a more toxic product that is creating serious issues for users.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** They can still get hold of it [synthetic cannabis] and quite often what happens as a result of their consumption is worse than before. The men that were taking it before [when it was legal] - they would come back to the shelter, but now I get a call from the hospital because they have had a seizure or some other severe reaction. It seemed a lot milder when it was sold legally. It is being brought in from out of town. When it was legal there did not seem to be a change of mix.

Government welfare services do not always facilitate the provision of layers of support or connected care that people need for mental health and addiction issues.

**Social Service Manager:** The constraints are getting tighter and tighter and issues are getting more complex. As a society we are not bringing together key services like drug and alcohol and foster care... and addressing issues like drugs and alcohol and mental health.

In the following story the public servant can see the inadequacy of the government's welfare service but is hamstrung to do anything about it. The conditions of service can be too restrictive and the need for support then falls back to the community. The community may be willing to provide these supports but does not always know that the need is there.

**Salvation Army 1:** Recently, a woman with three kids wanted to do an addiction course. The course runs from 9am-1pm. The mother was expected to get to the programme by 9am, dropping three children at three different places using the bus system. The buses did not even allow for this possibility – she would have had to come into city and go out three times on buses from there. One member of community paid for another member of community to pick up children and drop them off. But that is very rare...This story shows you the complexities of supporting a mother who identified needing help with her addiction. She realised she was in poverty because of her addiction, but was so restricted in being supported to make changes in her life. Her WINZ worker was frustrated too and said “Can you not do something about this?” The WINZ worker had tried to advocate in their system and they could not help, so they were reaching out to us so that we might advocate to WINZ for support. It is an ongoing problem.

Mental illness, addiction and homelessness are common counterparts in the stories of the people who stay at the Hamilton Christian Nightshelter.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** Many guys that come here do have addiction issues. They have been in a cycle of homelessness for a long time. Quite often our guests will have mental health issues – close to 60% have mental health issues. 99% of those that can't move on from the Night Shelter have mental health issues...The mental health issues for the men and women have got worse over the last two years...Some of the people need more intensive care than we can provide.

The Hamilton Christian Nightshelter describes becoming a 'go to place' for mental health services who may have limited resources to find more appropriate and suitable accommodation for their clients. In 2015, there were 2110 mental health consumers

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discharged from the WDHB and of these, on discharge, 24 were 'homeless', 440 living in 'supported accommodation'; 1615 'independent'; and the housing status of 31 was 'unknown'(Waikato District Health Board, cited by Hungerford, 2016). If a mental health consumer is discharged as 'homeless' it is likely that they will present at temporary accommodation facilities such as the Hamilton Christian Nightshelter.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** I will get a call from the CAT (Crisis Assessment and Treatment) team and they will even offer to pay for a night's accommodation...They are picking people up from the police station, the Henry Bennett Centre or the wards. I get people discharged from hospital to the nightshelter. Mental health has become like a fracture clinic. You go in and they fix your fracture and then you are referred to your GP if you need more services. There is a big gap. People often need ongoing support to prevent mental health episodes but the support is not there. Often the episode will recur and they will go into a service and engage again, get some care again, supposedly 'get well' and then they will be out again. There is a lot of this going on.

...I had a call regarding a lady who came in through community mental health and I said that we would have her, but then I got a call two days later to say that she had to go and have a minor operation for a women's problem. They asked if she could come back here after the operation. I told them "No - that's not possible because we are a nightshelter". They said "Okay we will try and find respite care". They wanted to get her into us. They would have put her in a taxi and sent her to us and that would have been their bit done. I asked "Can you keep her on the ward?" and they said "No because it is day surgery". They said they would find her respite care and they should have done this in the first instance and as the first option. They did not want to look at respite care because it costs and we are relatively cheap - only \$15 a night.

While this story is likely to be representative of about 1% of people being discharged from hospital as the numbers above would indicate, it is none-the-less disturbing that it occurs at all.

A lack of support for some people can result in a revolving door between prison and community services like the Christian Nightshelter:

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** The police came in the other night with a man. I have had a camera installed so that I can see what goes on. They walked the guy up the driveway and he put his boot through the front door. The police put him on the ground and they put him in the car and took him away. The window cost \$375 dollars to fix...The man has gone to court now and I have to do victim impact statement. I don't want money - I want him to do a programme. The programme would be a stepping stone for the next programme. He knows me well and says "Hi Pete" when I see him on the street. The next day I showed him the video so that he could see what he was doing when he was drunk and he said "Oh Pete". So we have that victim thing coming up. He has no money anyway. He comes out from jail soon.

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He keeps going in and out. I've known him to go into jail for 5 weeks, come out, do something else and go back in. There is a revolving door between the shelter and jail. He lives between jail and the nightshelter. He is young, only 35. He will drink hand sanitiser or anything to get high.

The experiences of people with mental health and/or addiction problems point to many gaps in the current range of services that both state and community based agencies are providing. Many of these problems may be from or point towards people having on going stories of vulnerability.

### Vulnerable histories

The Coordinator of the Nightshelter reflected on the challenges of foster care and what he considers to be a precursor to homelessness.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** There is a push for permanency within the foster care services, but there are still regulations and rules before you can achieve that. Once a child is 14, 15, 16 years old and starts pushing boundaries, very often the foster parents will not stay with the kids because it is too hard work - it is full on.

The neglect that I see relates very much to experiences of foster care. Many of the people who do come and stay in the shelter have been in foster care in the past and they have been let go from foster care at 17 years of age. Even though they have been taken away from their biological family and lost contact with them, suddenly, at 17, they are left to go off into the world. Being left on your own at 17, without a home to go to, is one of the precursors to homelessness. I used to work at CYFs and I have seen some of the lads that I used to work with come in here. 1 in 4 people in the shelter have been in CYFs care. Neglect is: kicking young people out from foster care when they are 17 rather than keeping them in care until they are 21 or until they are ready to leave - like you would do with your own kids.

The impacts of foster care for Māori can mean a lack of connection with wider Māori society.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** 60-70% of our guests are Māori and many have lost contact with whānau, family and iwi. Quite often this loss of contact relates to having been in foster care when they are young.

The services reflected on the Foster Care system, the historical challenges of the system and the need for the system to be given increased support.

**Christian Social Service Manager 2:** We had this mum come up and she had 46 homes she lived in when growing up – who expects people to grow up normally on that sort of life...this is State sanctioned neglect.

Services reflected on the amazing giving of foster care families and the need for more families to do the same.

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**Practice leader – Foster Care:** I am really fortunate to work in a service where people are willing to put their hands up – they are happy to take a person into their home and endure the tantrums of that young person because of neglect. We don't have enough people putting their hands up. But the kind of families that we work with, they come from families like that and they want to give back and give it forward.

**Salvation Army 7:** Some of the foster children that come here are not supported well. 'Homes for Life' is long-term foster care. The children are placed in homes that are supposed to be permanent and their foster family is not supposed to be asked to care for another child for two years. Unfortunately that does not happen and there are other children coming and going, so the child that is meant to be permanently with the family does not get settled.

Many vulnerable people are punished for life for poor decisions made at a particular time of their lives and are denied the opportunity for restoration. We are no longer a society that believes in restoration and redemption.

**Salvation Army 6:** The biological parents are also expected to pay maintenance for those children once they go into permanency...The biological parents are penalised financially. They have to come for supervised access and this costs. It becomes absolutely overwhelming. They are told "You are bad parents and we are going to financially punish you". There is so much emotion and guilt.

**Salvation Army 2:** There is just no support for the biological family or for that child when all of that happens. The biological family is just removed from that child's life and that's the end of that.

**Salvation Army 4:** And the biological family is told that they can see their child for an hour every 3 months or twice a year – it depends on the circumstances.

**Salvation Army 6:** It used to be that once you'd done your time, you'd done your time, but now people are punished in an ongoing way. There are registers of where people live. It creates a class of people that society is saying "we don't want you to be engaged".

**Salvation Army 6:** If you have a bad upbringing you are punished for the rest of your life

**Salvation Army 1:** There was a nana who wanted to look after her grandchildren because she had her children uplifted. She wanted to have the opportunity. She had had her children uplifted 15 years ago and she is still being punished. There is a grandmother shouting from the doorway – "I can do it" but no-one will let her do it. Why would you try? She tells her friends "Why bother?"

Vulnerable people are defined, segregated and potentially punished for life. Social Services are supporting people to realise their capabilities and to overcome the judgements that have been made of them by the State and society.

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**Functional Family Therapist:** I think of a few of my scenarios, families have been overwhelmed with professional services – they are unable to communicate because of a lot of judgment. They are judged and labelled. They have already been labelled and they are inundated with too many services – it becomes quite overwhelming for families and they give up. They do hand their children over.

**Salvation Army 1:** We had one mother with us and she was told that she and her children would need to live with another family member for the rest of their lives. She had lived with them for 10 years and we advocated for her to come on our 'Changing Places Programme' to prove that she could live independently. She now lives in the community and her children attend school and she does not need to live with any other members of the family...We are a bridge we say to people "You walk back over that bridge whenever you need".

There is an increasing pool of excluded people in our communities. The social services are concerned about the limited opportunities for participation that people with criminal records may experience.

**Salvation Army 8:** A few years ago, our Bridge Alcohol Programme was run by recovering alcoholics – their story was not told, their history was not told, but now with the police checks they can't really engage in the same way.

**Salvation Army 9:** There is a problem emerging that I can see and I'm not sure what we will do about it. We have a policy that any employee or volunteer must be police checked and if there are offenses, particularly against people, then an assessment needs to be made to see if they put vulnerable people at risk. I'm not saying that we should change this process, but every time we say no to someone, they get added to a pool of people who are excluded people. Maybe by their actions they have excluded themselves but they are excluded. What happens to all of those people? One by one the pool gets bigger and they become the underbody of society that no-one looks to. I worry about that and I don't know what the answer is but it is a social issue.

**Salvation Army 6:** We used to be the organisation that gathered those people [people with criminal records and addictions] but now with funding restrictions and compliances we can't be that place because we have to be caring for other vulnerable people. The pool of vulnerability has increased -vulnerable children, vulnerable adults, aging population, kids, adults and the vulnerable in between.

**Whānau Support Worker:** And the ones that unfortunately have criminal records that are really awesome workers – they are turned down for work. I know so many people who have been turned down for having a criminal record. Turned away because of something in their past. This is the reality of a dumb decision.

People were described as being fearful of government services that potentially judge, punish, divide and segregate people and families. Some people are afraid to share their vulnerabilities as they may be interpreted in particular ways and also be seen as a sign of failure.

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**Christian Social Service Worker 2:** But the other thing about that is as soon as CYFs finds out there are children not living in a stable environment they are ripped off the parents so everybody keeps it quiet.

**Salvation Army 1:** Especially with parents working and the pressure to work –there are some real gaps, children being home alone, all that type of thing is still a real poverty, but it is kept very secret now. It has gone underground. Gone are the days when the kids could play on the street, or bike ride around. It is now very secretive. Siblings are often left in charge of very young children but they know to keep that really quiet – it’s secrecy that keeps poverty where it is today.

The development of a secretive society that can no longer share its vulnerabilities has consequences that further exacerbate the poverties already experienced.

**Community Services Coordinator:** They might be hiding under a bridge or committing suicide. Lots of the tangi that I’ve been to in past two years have been for suicide...It is not until a couple of weeks later when you talk to the close family that you find out that the guy got set off a job and got refused a benefit or the benefit got cut because he did not know how to fill out a form. There are too many incidents like this in my distant relatives and it has been males...You find out that there was no problem with the home relationships and that the debt was normal, but it was the fact that they got refused something and they feel that they can’t provide for their family. They did not know how to fill out the form or were refused a benefit. These are 30-40 year olds guys. What impact does this have on our teenagers?

I have just come back from another tangi and that is where I found out about the backstories and the whānau try to cover it up. Sometimes they do not take the diabetic medicine and let themselves go into a diabetic coma and die. The death has nothing to do with relationships - it is because they are being told to sign this paper and that. It is suicide but in a different way. It is hidden. This story is starting to be more familiar...We need to start looking at the whānau who do not have jobs and see who is not working.

People with vulnerable histories, such as been raised in Foster Care Homes, spending time in prison, or working in employment situations which are far from permanent and usually minimum wage may well lead people to feel excluded and marginalised. Sometimes professional help can be overwhelming particularly when it is tied to the “strict father” mentality where conditions are imposed and maybe very difficult to meet therefore adding to a sense of failure rather than resilience.

#### Outcomes reporting and the challenges of complexity

People talked about a lack of services for people with more complex needs and more complex lives who are sometimes unable to achieve the expectations or outcomes that may be expected by Central Government in their contracts for service.

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**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** One of the challenges is that we can't continue to have people in the class if they don't come to class often enough. We are funded for 200 hours for each learner...The woman with 7 children previously did not come to class very often and so I had to make a case to continue having her in the class. She was always having to go to appointments with her children and there were many complexities to her life. She seems to be getting to class more frequently now.

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** There are many NGO mental health services in the community that do a body of work with people. The trouble is that for people like Simon, the care needs to be ongoing because he is not going to recover, or get better – schizophrenia is a lifelong thing. It's as if they think that all people are going to somehow recover, graduate from the care programme they offer and be 'set free'. For 10-15% of my clients, it is just not like that. They need ongoing care in a consistent, reliable and coordinated way.

Priority services may be given to people who are potentially able to achieve outcomes deemed valuable by The State:

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** At the Migrant Resource Centre, I asked why this woman did not have a tutor and why she was not on a driver's license course. I was told that you get a tutor if there is one that lives near you - there are no tutors in her area. She is not a priority because she will not be out working. If you are in a position where you are likely to get work then you will be a priority. There are various reasons why she was not a priority.

Contracts and funding do not always recognise the complexities of needs and the way work needs to be done to be able to support people in the next stages of their journey.

**Salvation Army 6:** The complexity of the issues that people are presenting with has increased. And because there are now more clearly defined criteria for service access, there are a large number of people falling into the gaps. The 'gap people' have complex issues and restricted ability to find the resources that they need to make any sort of change in their lives.

**Health Worker 12:** That is one of the biggest differences I see coming from mainstream to coming here – ours aren't simple visits. It's not just a matter of getting a referral and making an appointment...Every visit usually involves a lot of time for staff to go back and forth. Most of the time they won't have phones or... They are anxious and won't answer so staff go out and it is that face-to-face and getting that connection that allows the next step to happen so nothing is simple.

**Health Worker 45:** One part of the system that doesn't get recognised is how much time we need with our families. With the different contracts here everyone is doing the requirements and meeting the criteria for their own contracts but for our families it takes a little bit longer – the time taken to make progress and achieve outcomes takes a lot longer than what all of our contracts stipulate. And we put in that extra time sometimes and it is out of our own time and our own pockets because we as Pacific Island people will do whatever it takes for our families to make

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progress. But if that time is not recognised by our own system and it is not acknowledged in our contracts then that restricts us as professionals...It will eventually come at a cost to our own families – that is a consequence.

The pressure towards outcome based funding is having an impact on the quality and type of services that are provided:

**Salvation Army 6:** The Government seems to be focused on a client group that is above ours – the outcomes that they set are not for our client group, so it's often difficult for our clients to reach the criteria that is required in the timeframe that is required. The Government is not supporting the most vulnerable and the poorest but the next layer. An example might be The Government push to have computer courses offered. Our client group needs support to get into addiction courses. You can easily get support to access a computer course but not an addiction course.

**Salvation Army 1:** The Government will pay for childcare for computer programmes, but not childcare for a person to attend an addiction course.

**Salvation Army 9:** The assumption appears to be that a person doing a computer course can give back and the person going to an addiction course can't give back.

**Salvation Army 1:** However, by doing the addiction course there could be millions of dollars saved because the person would potentially not be on the benefit for the rest of their lives. And there is the flow on effects of the addiction, the passing of the addiction to the next generation – this could be prevented.

**Health Worker 48:** Sometimes those outcomes don't necessarily match the people as well. Sometimes the outcomes we are trying to reach don't necessarily reflect the progress that we can make with our families. And sometimes that work is not necessarily ignored but it is not given a standard that is recognised. We have that skill to work with our families to make this kind of progress. If it is not in our contract it doesn't matter – so the construction of those can sometimes be a restriction.

The requirements of Central Government contracts do always recognise the importance of supporting people with basic levels of functioning. There is a lack of residential care services for people with high needs. Services, such as the Hamilton Christian Nightshelter, that are intended to provide temporary accommodation for people, offer ongoing care for some people who might otherwise have nowhere to turn.

**Salvation Army 6:** Becoming a contributing member of our community appears to outweigh the need for basic functioning. It would be great if everyone was at that level of being able to make a contribution but they are not – a lot of our clients need support with basic functioning.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** I have a guest with an intellectual disability who slips through the cracks and receive no services. He was downstairs but had personal care issues and needed to be more closely monitored. He has a room upstairs now so that we can monitor him. Having a room upstairs has helped

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him to become more settled and his personal care issues have settled down. If something traumatic happens to him then they flare up again, but at least upstairs we can keep an eye on him. He wanders the street and collects cigarette butts. I've tried to get him to look for accommodation and also to look for volunteer work. But it's tricky because he needs support with personal hygiene. We do this as a Nightshelter and without our support he would just slip through the gaps. The Nightshelter supports some people with aspects of their lives so they can then make the next step.

Services are delivered as if people are in a particular state of readiness. Yet often they are in various states of readiness and sometimes unable to comprehend or digest the information that is being provided to them and the requests that are being made of them.

**Health Worker 42:** That is what I experienced in the field as a social worker, when you come from a statutory organisation everything is set – you go to see the families and tell them all these things but you forget the people are trying to survive. When you are in the survival phase the system doesn't allow for that. As a helper you help them to settle and to survive and "Oh we were told all these things", but they can't take it all in.

Without support for addictions and basic levels of functioning, issues may easily spiral into increasing pain and disconnection while the opportunity for intervention and healing is disregarded.

**Clinical psychologist 1:** One of the boys that I'm working with who is in foster care - his Mum has a real problem with drug and alcohol. She has been told that she will receive counselling when she gets her drinking habits under control. To me...It should be the other way round...This [lack of counselling support] has a whole lot of downstream effects including that she does not have access to her child.

Serving people with complex needs often takes more time and it may be that a range of help is required to provide support that enables them to live in better ways than just surviving from day to day. With the current contracting environment and outcomes focus it can be difficult to predict the time and resources that people may need and to balance those needs with the agreed outcomes a service is trying to meet.

### Failing our *new* New Zealanders

The stories of people migrating to New Zealand suggest the need to increase the values of hospitality extended to these communities. Services such as English language classes need to be increased. The classes provided are constrained in being able to cater for the wide variety of learning styles and levels that people are at.

**Health Worker 21:** They look at people back home who have had no education and they come here and they expect to do free education for one year and that is not enough for an ESOL person to learn English.

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**Health Worker 22** - ...for the majority of people a year [of English language] is just not enough, especially if they have never had any education before.

**Health Worker 24** - Also with ESOL there are different steps to go through and you have to start with the basics. If you can't manage the basics over that year then you are looking at taking it again and it depends on available slots... you have people who go onto those programmes, although they have done a test and they follow certain ways, they still have differences in learning abilities. And you still have one person there trying to teach a class of 30 students and some people may be following along but they are not receiving the help they really need.

Without access to English language literacy and interpreter services, people move readily into debt and the cycle of poverty can begin.

**Health Worker 23:** And then they go back to further their education and they take out a loan and then they are going to end up back in the poverty cycle again. And that is what we see over and over – it's a cycle – get education, pay for it, the cost of education is high and there is a consequence to that.

**ESOL<sup>2</sup> literacy teacher:** There used to be a fund for face to face interpreting for vulnerable clients but this is now exhausted- some medical practices do not take on clients with very low levels of English because of communication difficulties.

There are inequities between the services offered to different groups who come to live in New Zealand. One person reflected on the English language services offered to refugee and new migrant families from other parts of the world.

**Health Worker 25:** It would be good to have a programme like that. I've seen a programme like that where the whole family comes in to do, I think it is a lifestyle course for families which is really good. I think it is a programme that is under the refugee system and that is so good – it is so good for families. It would be good if it was offered to our new families.

New migrants and people with refugee backgrounds struggle with being able to navigate their lives in Aotearoa New Zealand, including in Hamilton. Even a bus journey to school can be a traumatic experience, particularly if the expense of the trip affects your ability to provide care for your family.

**ESOL literacy teacher:** I had one woman who moved...because her rent was too expensive and the house very cold...She decided that she wanted to [continue bringing her children to the school they had been going to]. The first morning they hopped on a bus and she arrived in tears. She was devastated because it had cost her the bus fee to come into town and then she had to bus home and then back to get the children after school and then home again. This experience ended up being a crisis for her...on top of the difficult and challenging experiences that she may

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<sup>2</sup> ESOL = English to Speakers of Other Languages

experience day to day; she has got the trauma of what she has been through before she arrived here.

The services provided by The New Zealand Red Cross and English Language Partners complement each other in offering support to people with refugee backgrounds. The Red Cross works with new families for a minimum of 6 months and volunteers help families with many practical aspects of life including setting up appointments with Work and Income, getting the power connected and supporting families to enrol children in school. English Language Partners provide an English as a Second Language Home Tutor Service. In Hamilton, 60 volunteers are trained per year to work one to one with a refugee or migrant background learners in their home to help them gain confidence and independence with using English (personal communication, English Language Partners, New Zealand, Waikato). However, as the following story illustrates there may be a need to offer greater levels of support to families with refugee and new migrant backgrounds.

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** Quite often [when I visit the families with refugee backgrounds] there will be numerous letters from the power company, a whole lot of bills, no volunteers to help and nobody that is English speaking or able to read English in the household. In a way, the lucky ones are the ones who go through the mental health services because they will get support from someone like me.

### Culture Shock

There is a level of trauma involved in relocating to Aotearoa New Zealand, including to Hamilton, from a different cultural and social context.

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** This woman that I saw today represents everything that makes it difficult for a refugee to settle here – she is a woman on her own with three children. The children are in different age ranges and are at three different schools. She is not literate in her own language. Quite honestly, one rarely gets to the early trauma because the biggest trauma is adjusting to here...What we need to make sure of is that there is the follow-up in our society beyond this crisis intervention point and that we work with refugees and anyone who comes here in an ongoing way.

The failure to provide adequately for the people who are new to New Zealand can result in situations that compound poverty, such as overcrowding.

**Health Worker 6:** Just looking at the overcrowding – there are a lot of factors that contribute to that problem. You have people ... who migrate here under the immigration scheme and because they have to wait for a certain period of time in order to apply for assistance – that is the reason they have to live with other people who are already here. Another reason I think because I went through the same thing when I came over - people who are my friends from the islands have no idea what's here and even when there is a migrant resource centre they are not told about it until quite late. I remember when I came here – I was really lost. I didn't know

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anybody. I didn't know anything about New Zealand so I had to grope my way around to find things. It took me a couple of years before I actually knew quite a little to find my way around. And I think that is part of the reason why there are problems with our families and that is why people are living with other people in order to do that.

One woman described her experience of Work and Income when she first arrived in New Zealand and her feelings of being let down and unsupported in Hamilton. She suggests that this is not an uncommon story.

**Health Worker 6:** And then we have Work and Income – I am not saying this in a bad way this is just based on my experience. You go there and somebody I met there said there was an internet café on Victoria St and you can see if you can find a job from there. Then somebody said go to Work and Income and see if they can help...I went there and I gave him all I had, my folder and stuff and I begged them for help cause it was 2 months into living here and I felt for my husband. And you know what they said to me – “I am sorry I cannot help you because...” whatever ... I was trying to argue my case with him asking – “All I need is a direction from you where do I go from here?” and he didn't provide that for me – that was really sad – that was really, really sad. So if I am there with whatever English I have and they weren't able to help me – can you imagine people with a language barrier trying to go through the same thing. I just thought I would put that out there because I hear some of our community members telling the same thing, the same story. It is like a cycle that goes on and on.

There are big challenges that come with living in a new cultural landscape where the dominant culture is less collective. Some people are drawn into the consumerist society and the idea of 'getting ahead'. There are large challenges with this approach to life and this expectation. If a family is fully participating in Pasifika cultural life in New Zealand this will impact on their resources and their ability to cope financially.

**Health Worker 38:** As Pacific Islanders the first thing we think of when we immigrate here is a better living, a better future and some people get that and some people don't. What I see if people come remembering what they experience in the Islands, hard life, hard to get anything if they are not working. Some people they put it behind their back and looking at pride and trying to get what other people have that are living here...they are not going through with their own pace and level but looking and trying to get up there...That's why we have more problems with poverty.

**Health Worker 42:**...people say you have the highest priority of spending money at your churches – but that is where they feel comfortable and they feel their support there and then do they really get into the system of this country?

**Health Worker 43:** It is hard for the Samoan people to get away from their culture and that is part of the problem they are struggling with and there are so many aspects of the culture they are trying to satisfy – it's just the way they were brought up. I don't know whether it will be a problem that will go away or can be made to

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fit. It has been around for years and years and I am pretty sure it is just going to be a problem. And no matter how much budgeting we do with our families they still donate so much to the church because they believe that is where their blessings come from. It is really hard to change the frame of mind...That is some of the reason our families struggle financially – they much prefer to give that much to the church and to cultural responsibilities than to develop themselves.

**Health Worker 38:** ...the family are more involved with church activities and fundraising and meeting the family and extended family needs and leave aside the school needs and the food and power and basic needs – I am just saying this from my own experience. When you first move here it is for better living and better life and some people get there and some people are not just because they don't prioritise their life and their needs.

Navigating elements of a collective culture together with the demands, requirements and expectations of the individualistic dominant culture in Aotearoa New Zealand can be challenging. The values and workings of self-preservation conflict with notions of collective culture where resources are shared and distributed within a wider group.

**Health Worker 44:** Whether you can fix it in a way that is not going to take away the cultural component because that is a part of their identity and that is something you can't take away from them. It's a catch 22.

**Health Worker 39:** It's that lifestyle change trying to adapt to the way New Zealander's live.

**Health Worker 40:** It's a cultural change and an environmental change.

**Health Worker 41:** Its human nature – we go to a place and we have expectations and we have to work through the new ways and if we are struggling and a lot of people become frustrated.

Some health workers reflected on the resilience of people when they come to New Zealand and that coping with adversity can be a strengthening.

**Health Worker 49:** Just remember the word struggle – I know it is used a lot with poverty and is a good word because it builds resilience for the families. Back home that is how it is so a lot of people learn to live and make do. A lot of the time we use struggle as a negative in these contexts but I think it is also good to go through the struggles because that is how people get stronger.

**Health Worker 50:** I think it is used more in a political context – the word struggle. I think from a strength based perspective – our families have their own strengths – and that is from home and that is transferred here. So even if they do fall through the gaps or struggle initially, eventually they will find a way. It is a strength that has been built through unity.

The struggles of adapting to a new way of life in a new country and cultural environment tend to strengthen both individuals and families. However the services currently available

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need to be developed so that people new to communities learn and thrive with the supports they need.

### Summary

When considering 'the neglectful State' as a theme we have discussed the ways that difficulties to accessing services are in part justified by the blaming and shaming of people who are poor and in need. A number of participants discussed the increasingly complex situations people who are vulnerable are trying to manage. Vulnerabilities may have occurred through being put into foster care as a child and living in multiple homes, engaging in behaviours that have led to a prison sentence, experiencing poor mental health or addictions to alcohol, drugs or gambling, arriving in New Zealand as a new migrant with little knowledge of English or local cultural practices, to name a few.

Time needs to be spent with people to build their capacity to live somewhat independent lives. However the barriers now in place to access resources that will help people to manage can be difficult to overcome both for the social service providers and the people they serve. The time delay in getting appointments with WINZ caseworkers, for example, can lead to delays that compromise people's ability to live well. The outcome reporting criteria can be difficult to achieve when working with the complex lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities as progress, while being made, is often rather slow.

New migrant peoples need ongoing support to understand and navigate the cultural and social systems in New Zealand. Some reported great difficulty in getting adequate direction from Government services.

### Suggested actions

#### Collaboration and Forums

- \* Lead opportunities between central /local government, health, and social service sectors enhance collaborative work with our most vulnerable people.
- \* Facilitate regular forums where the sectors can come together (at grassroots level) to discuss policy, care and nurture issues.

#### Policies and Services to support the most vulnerable

- \* Reform foster care
- \* Ensure achievable contractual outcomes for the most vulnerable
- \* Provide opportunities for participation for people with criminal records
- \* Provide support, care and housing for people with mental health and addiction problems
- \* Limit the number of alcohol and gambling outlets in Hamilton

#### Manaakitanga for our new New Zealanders

- \* Develop a Pasifika Peoples Resource Centre in Hamilton to support people migrating from the Pacific Islands to make their way in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- \* Extend support for people with refugee backgrounds to enable more time to strengthen community connections.

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### Theme 3: Debt and the dominance of market structures

How we treat each other in our day to day interactions depends to some degree on the pressures, expectations and influences of wider society. The way we organise in our communities, how we choose to structure the ways in which things happen, has increasingly become governed by 'market' based principles, values and processes. Basic needs for housing, food, utilities, education and healthcare are organised largely by markets and our participation and opportunities are increasingly determined by our ability to pay. In this section we highlight how the arrangements of some markets exclude people while others target people preying on their specific vulnerabilities.

Markets both ancient and modern are an efficient system used for distributing goods and services. However in recent years market systems have come to dominate many of the ways our society functions. As we highlight in this section, there are particular instances where market processes do not serve all of us well. Home ownership is now an impossible dream for many people, and those with limited resources find it increasingly difficult to access rental housing markets. Their ability to do so very often depends on the goodwill of private real-estate agents and their individual social concern to provide for those most in need. The cost of accessing education also places pressure on families. There are increasing costs associated with attending public schools and the start of the school year is an extremely stressful time for some families with the costs of school uniforms and fees due at the same time.

Relationships are affected by the most dominant values in society. Competition is the primary value of market based organisation and individuals and organisations are increasingly pitched against each other. The ability to participate in markets determines your opportunity to 'get ahead' in a competitive society. Inequality has burgeoned in New Zealand since the 1980's with a widening gap between people at the high end of the income scale and those at the lower end. Some people have gathered wealth while others are simply 'left behind', increasingly excluded and often in debt.

People trying to manage on low incomes face many desperate situations and at times need to borrow money immediately. With limited places to turn for support and with the increasing conditions of welfare services, people turn to the instant loan and finance companies. Debt is a common experience in communities with limited resource. Financial strain escalates when the ability to service this debt is limited.

The pressure to consume is insidious and everywhere and is a pressure we all experience. 'Feel good and consume' messages abound and we are expected to be savvy and rational in this highly marketed environment. Some of us can afford to consume and to be vulnerable to consumer pressure, while many of us can't. The challenges of living in an environment dominated by exploitative markets are considerable.

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A growing body of research shows that inequality damages the social fabric of the whole society<sup>3</sup>. The effects of inequality are not confined to people who are poor. Through psychosocial processes, inequality gets under the skin. In societies where there is greater levels of inequalities mental illness, drug addiction, obesity, loss of community life, imprisonment, unequal opportunities and poorer wellbeing for children are more common. Increased rates of inequality have been associated with increased rates of child poverty and child abuse<sup>4</sup>. The stories in this section demonstrate that we are living in an increasingly challenging environment, underpinned by values that are not serving the majority of us including the most vulnerable.

#### The broken promises of markets

People associate the dominance of the market based organisation with the pressure to move away from family for job opportunities and an ensuing loss of social support and increased vulnerability in the community.

**Christian Social Service Worker 2:** I am kuia status... People around my age would say it is the loss, all the losses that have accumulated over many generations. In saying that we have to take some sort of responsibility somewhere but this responsibility is actually taken away from us. It is generally down to policies, procedures and government laws and government actions that move our people away from where we want them to be. You will find with our groups of people when you go back to a marae and look around the family isn't there anymore, there are only bits and pieces of family. That's because, like you were talking about, the marketing has drawn them out into the community, drawn them into the townships, drawn them overseas. And its money, its riches, its homes – all the physical things that they have become attracted to, not the spiritual things that we used to actually honour.

**Community Health 16:** Many people have not got extended family... Loneliness is a high statistic amongst our older people... Nowadays our extended whānau have to be working so they can't awahi their whānau like they used to be able to do. For this reason, the elderly are left alone.

**Family Worker / Team Leader:** Some mothers are made to go to work and they get less than they were getting on the benefit. They are making mothers get work when their children are younger and younger – and that is neglectful too - where is this mind-set coming from? This is neglectful of the children.

**Christian Social Service Worker 3:** I think that not only is there the problems with family abandonment but also family move away and they become quite isolated.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/09/society-unequal-the-spirit-level>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24515511>.

There is no one around to help them and if they are in their own homes then the costs now keeping that home, the maintenance. And of course the cost of heating – in winter they huddle in one room and don't put heating on or anything. They are also scared they are going to get broken into as the rate of burglaries has risen. It's quite a scary place for a lot of elderly because they are quite vulnerable.

People are made vulnerable by shifting labour markets. People may move for work opportunities but the work may be transient and insecure. People are sold an illusion of security and move for the sake of a promise of a better life.

**Health Worker 21:** I just don't get why they have to do those seasonal schemes where they go to the Islands and bring people across to work, when we have a lot of people here who are residents and not working. Why can't they pick them up and employ them so they can earn some money. And just looking at that – there is the incentive thing with Christchurch – how long is that going to be? How long will that incentive last? And then you have a family who has shifted down there because of that and then you have a change of Government who will probably have a different perspective on things, different plans and then people are stuck. Most of the people who moved away from Christchurch because of the earthquake I hear a lot of them want to go back to Christchurch because that is their home.

**Health Worker 58:** There are also time limitations on visas so they have to get their tickets and they never think that it is going to be a hard life if they come here without any money.

**Health Worker 60:** From the date they receive their package to when they come here is just 8 months. For most of them they acquire a job here just to come in and we don't know whether they will maintain it. They can end up living with families which is another burden for the families that are here.

People who are highly qualified in a labour market in one location are only able to access low skilled work in another. This can be a soul destroying experience for people.

**Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Coordinator:** People who are in very good positions in the islands, like a headmaster of a school or a doctor, chose to come to New Zealand because of the possible opportunities and also because their homelands may becoming less inhabitable. This is true in Kiribati where, because of Climate Change, the sea levels have risen so much that children are going to school with water up to their knees. However, when they arrive here, these highly skilled people can end up picking fruit.

**Health Worker 57:** New Zealand has a system where they match your qualifications to here. We have people who are actually doctors from Fiji which I believe is an accredited University, yet we have people who get their qualification for their Universities back home and they find it really hard to find a job here because according to the New Zealand system it is not good enough – they are not recognised here. It just breaks our hearts to see some of our people who are doctors

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back home and they come here and they have to work in other places because their qualifications are not recognised.

People are in debt to loan companies and to The Government. Government services and the loan companies appear to be operating in much the same way, instigating and perpetuating the cycle of debt.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** We have a service agreement with Work and Income. We will complete an agent form and we will invoice Work and Income for the nights that they stay in with us. This money comes out of their benefit at \$2 a week, so they end up with a debt for staying here. And usually they have massive debt already. But because we have a service agreement with Work and Income we can get around the debt. For example, if they wanted to buy a washing machine they couldn't get a grant for this unless they went to budgeting, but because we have a service agreement with WINZ they can accrue a debt on top of their already existing debt.

People may be housed for a period of time but they typically accumulate debt. When the MSD gets involved, people have to pay for all the expenses they incur. There was a story about a woman in Auckland who was put into emergency accommodation in a hotel and she had to pay for that expense - it accumulated as debt.

People suffer from the effects of a predatory market based system that sells big promises with unspecified and undetailed costs. This system often puts added pressures on families and households.

**Health Worker 6:** Now the thing with the immigration schemes is that they go over to the Islands and they recruit people from the Islands and that is it. They do not inform the families of what actually happens here...With the immigration pact – the Samoan quota for one, anybody can access that and this is looking at people who haven't had education back home – if they are lucky enough to be selected to come across – then they come here with no experience, no education and then they struggle big time. They have a hard time and then they depend on whoever they come across to try and help and guide them.

I remember when we came here that first year we decided to buy a car. Now we were actually pressed into buying a car, and when we went to buy the car I thought 'okay I will buy it', not knowing it was expensive. I am pretty sure that is what our people go through – you know you need a car – you go to buy a car – and whoever tells them to go and do it they will do it, because there is just no proper guidance and no information given to them in order to do what will be affordable for them so they are able to survive.

... We are not informed. I think personally that if Immigration are going to recruit people for their schemes they should take all the information they have for the people before they migrate because it is not just the principal applicant – it's the

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principal applicant plus their family members. And if you have seven kids and a wife who hasn't worked her whole life and one income, because the threshold for Samoa is that the job offer has to be at \$28,000 (note- minimum wage rate). If that is the threshold then for a family of seven or eight people that is not a lot and you come and stay with another family because they are willing to take them in – how are they going to survive with an extra family to support.

**Health Worker 8:** A lot of people are coming from the Islands with a view that New Zealand is a land of milk and honey – they have little education, they don't see the consequences of it.

Vulnerable people find it hard to get a footing in particular markets, such as housing markets and 'childcare' markets. The childcare market, as one Salvation Army worker reflects, is more geared towards meeting the needs of a more affluent group of people:

**Salvation Army 1:** Some working parents can afford to pay for childcare and some can pay top price for this care. This is why the centres limit their 20 free hours because there is a market out there for working parents. Our parents are trying to fit into that market.

People are corralled into and organised by labour markets and are pressured by various consumer markets. The pressure to consume impacts all people, including the most vulnerable. Commercial advertising techniques are increasingly manipulative. To understand and decipher the ways in which we are each influenced in an increasingly 'messed' society is a well-nigh impossible task.

**Christian Social Service Manager 1:** Everybody is marketed to – everybody is pressured to be a consumer. And sometimes we do despair with our young mums. Sometimes they prioritise having a cell phone over some of the necessities for their children. I can see individual neglect of children but I can also see that's because like the rest of us they have been marketed to – that to stay linked into the social world you have got to have a cell phone. We have all been subjected to that indoctrination – it's just that they don't have the money to do it. But it is still the same expectation on them to participate – that's their way of participating in the world. But we have got babies getting neglected. The basic physical needs of a child and emotional needs of a child are being neglected because of that.

*You have got to do the structural analysis as well as the individual because otherwise it is too easy to get into blaming people's poor choices when in fact those choices are informed by a whole economic system that relies on us all behaving like this so it's kind of a catch 22 isn't it (Christian Social Service Manager 1).*

To some extent we all have the potential to fall victim to the manipulations of consumer marketing. While people with greater access to wealth may be able to afford to succumb

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there is an expectation that people with fewer resources will somehow find within themselves the power and agency to resist the temptations they are surrounded by.

**Community Health Worker 6:** In my role I see a lot of whānau who live in areas where there are liquor stores, takeaway shops and there are no good kai shops. A lot of our whānau are not getting good nutrition. They get sick and their children are undernourished. They come to doctor and have health problems because of it. They can't access the beach like we might; they can't access the normal healthier kai like the sea food.

A sizeable number of low income households and families are struggling to make ends meet. In 2013, 11% of households (4866 households) in Hamilton City earned less than \$20,000 per year. In some suburbs of Hamilton, over 15% of the households earn less than \$20,000 per year (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Suburbs with at least 15% of households earning less than \$20,000 per year**

Suburb	Percentage of households earning less than \$20,000
Silverdale	15%
Hamilton Lake	15%
Enderley	17%
Maeroa	17%
Bader	18%
Insoll	18%
Nawton	19%
Bryant	19%
Peachgrove	20%
Hamilton East	21%
Claudelands	21%
Melville	22%
Naylor	22%
Hamilton Central	23%
Horsham Downs	25%
Swarbrick	26%
University	26%

Every day activities such as raising children, meeting housing costs, along with general living place a strain on low income households. The inability to pay for one thing can readily spiral into a series of events that exacerbate an already difficult situation.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** In my schools, the day before benefit day a lot of kids are absent. We have food at the school that we can feed them with. Often families

will keep children home because they don't want people knowing that they don't have any food.

**Community Health Worker 6:** They don't have enough money in the house and they can't fix their homes if they are leaking. Meeting the costs of school uniforms is difficult. Because they don't have disposable income, they can't keep their car up to date and then they can't get to where they need to get to like to the doctors or schools.

**Community Health Worker 8:** In terms of uniforms for children we are limited to funders who are able to support whānau in that area...Even if the parents are both working this is still a lot to fork out, especially at the beginning of year when you have got all sorts of other things happening as well, like starting new schools or if a school changes their uniform - this is quite costly. A school jacket for example can be anything from \$80 to \$150 dollars in some schools.

**Community Health Worker 9:** I have families that I have done a whānau direct application for, to help them with their uniforms and to get their car fixed, but it is still not enough. In one family that I work with, the mother has three children in college and all the schools have fees, so at the beginning of the year that is \$900 and that is just for the fees, not even the uniform.

**Health Worker 11:** So for a lot of families at the moment school uniforms are a big issue and that impacts on the children getting to school.

Low wages were noted as particular barrier to being able to afford certain items.

**Health Worker 53** - Right, for those that are truly trying to look after their families. If you are on the minimum wage and you have seven or eight children, which is common with Pacific Islanders, it is not enough because you have the rent for the house, the groceries which are quite expensive and running a car – it's not enough. And then there are the school expenses.

*Most people are earning just \$22,000 and even with both parents working most families don't even reach the \$19.25 [Living Wage rate in 2015] between them. So they fall into the poverty trap immediately (Health Worker 26).*

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** My client was a young woman with mental health issues. She [can't afford some clothing items that she needs]... and so she just has to cope without ... and all of that discomfort. This is the way that poverty and a lack of income affect people and their lives.

Vulnerable people turn to instant loan companies to help them in desperate situations such as benefit stand-down periods. This debt can exacerbate an already desperate situation.

**Salvation Army 2:** The interest rates are huge and it's daily interest at these kind of the loan providers - every day there is interest going on to that initial loan. They may have initially got a 2-4 hundred dollar loan and they are paying back 7-8 hundred dollars. If they lapse, they are defaulted and there are penalties, so they don't know

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where to turn or they go to another loan place. They are paying off 3-4 different loan companies because they have no other option. We have seen an increase in these situations.

Living with levels of personal discomfort, poor health, attempting to manage on minimum wage or benefit incomes contribute to people going to 'loan providers' who charge high interest rates that exacerbate debt.

#### Predatory markets

A number of people reflected on the impact of mobile retail traders (the trucks) in their community. Mobile retail traders provide access to a variety of products, including electronic goods, bedding, clothing, outdoor equipment, toys, bikes and food usually priced substantially higher than the cash price for comparable goods at mainstream retail outlets (see table 3).

**Table 3: Mobile trade prices compared with mainstream retail outlet prices**

Product	Mobile trader price	pricespy.co.nz price
Samsung Galaxy S5 mobile phone	\$1,950 to \$2,152.80	\$494 to \$899
Russell Hobbs slow cooker	\$135.07 to \$148.20	\$49 to \$89.99
Playstation 3	\$1,550	\$390.99 to \$529.99
Mitsubishi MR-385C refrigerator (white)	\$2,400	\$1,099.99 to \$1,149
Acer Aspire E1 series laptop	\$999	\$345 to \$499.99
Panasonic microwave	\$399	\$159.99 to \$257.89

Source: Commerce Commission, 2015

**Community Service Manager:** They come around in fleets. There are at least five companies operating in the Nawton area.

**Community Whānau Support Worker:** The trucks might as well live out here [Nawton]. And each family can access all five companies. Some families will have one truck leave and then the next one will come... The families fall for the finance and the trucks because it is easy access. The parents think that their kids won't get something like that otherwise and the trucks know that so that is why they target them. The trucks provide the finance as well. They go door knocking to get customers.

**Community Service Administrator:** They are really pushy. We had some older people coming into the centre telling us that they opened their front door to the sales people and all of sudden they were inside selling them stuff and it is hard to make them leave.

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**Community Health Worker 5:** The trucks that go around to the neighbourhoods. They're only on one side of the town – they zone in on the ones that have little money and they go nowhere near all the ones that are rich.

There is no law that restricts the price that mobile traders can charge for their goods. However, there are laws, such as the Fair Trading Act, that stipulate amongst other things that a business must detail the true costs of their products and be contactable. The trucks operating in Hamilton appear to be very difficult to get hold of if you want to cancel an order for example.

**Community Service Administrator:** I am quite good at tracking down and finding out information and using 'Open Corporate' - the company's office. I have to go to great lengths to firstly get a phone number and then to reach someone to cancel anything. The companies' only point of contact with the community is the truck turning up to sell stuff. I have found that it is impossible to get in touch with them to say that you want to return something and cancel payment - and if we find it difficult, how would it be for people who can hardly use a computer and who have poor literacy skills? How many more have slipped through?

Communities and Social Services are responding to support people with debt and to cope in a predatory market. The following story illustrates this care, as well as the complexity of knowledge and resilience that a person has to have to cope with, and navigate themselves in, a market based society.

**Salvation Army Worker 10:** We've had many positive stories in our budgeting. Many families have come in with thousands of dollars debt and who are now living debt free. They have new knowledge about how to not get there again....it's just about education - how to communicate with the creditors, with the agencies, how to manage with what they do have coming in, how to shop better and smart power usage and how to plan for things that they know are going to come

***The work of the Commerce Commission***

*In 2014, The Commerce Commission identified 32 mobile traders operating in New Zealand (mostly in the North Island and concentrated in Auckland) and continues to identify new traders. The size of the mobile traders varies, from owner/operators to sizeable enterprises with more than 35,000 customers and more than \$7 million in annual revenue. One group of three associated companies reported annual revenue of nearly \$22 million in the 2013/2014 financial year.*

*The commission's enquiries highlighted that compliance with the Fair Trading Act and Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act is inadequate across the mobile retail industry. The Commerce Commission determined that 31 of the 32 mobile traders visited did not, to varying extents, comply with all of their obligations under these Acts. The Commission has issued letters regarding compliance and will be following up with the traders during 2016.*

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instead of waiting for it to come...We don't do total money management. We prefer to use education rather than taking control of their money for them. We like empowering instead of letting them become dependent on us. We want them to stand up and have a voice and know what other agencies are out there for them and that they don't have to do this alone.

Being in debt has ongoing ripple effects and can prevent people from meeting their needs.

**Community Whānau Support Worker:** Debt is a barrier to getting housing, to putting kai on the table, everything really. When you are paying off a big debt, you don't have money for kids' lunches, uniforms, transport, the list goes on.

### Housing Markets

Vulnerable people, usually on low incomes, are reported to be having a great deal of difficulty accessing housing. In the following conversation Salvation Army Workers highlight the process and the challenge for vulnerable people to find housing and the challenges of navigating the private rental market on a low income.

**Salvation Army 1:** The real-estate agents do house viewings for rental properties now. Prospective renters have to come at a certain time and date and view the property. Anyone who is interested in renting the house comes together at the viewing. People have to attend the viewing before they can put in an application for the house. People can no longer look on trade me – they have to drive past first and agree to go to a viewing. Then they have to put in an application form with a whole lot of other people that have come to that viewing also. And if a mother has to come to a viewing with a whole lot of children, then this speaks for itself that there are some problems in that family. So we have found that families are very affected by this new process.

One mother with three children had to get to a number of real-estate viewings using the bus – she had to try to get to one viewing in Hamilton East, one viewing in Dinsdale and then to a viewing in Te Rapa. She then has to get back to school to collect her children. As a mother she was forced to make a choice to not send her children to school, because she could not get back in time to collect them. This kind of thing is very stressful.

**Salvation Army 2:** And then on top of that [attending viewings and applying to rent a property] they have got to go through the credit check which can eliminate them straight off the bat if they have lots of defaults. The police checks can go against them as well.

**Salvation Army 3:** The agents are asking the client to pay for the credit check. Not only do they need to do a credit check that they know they not going to pass, but

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they also have to fork out the \$20 for the credit check. So people are choosing not to bother.

**Salvation Army 4:** If they are given the go ahead to get a credit check then they go to WINZ, but they can wait 2-3 days for an appointment. By the time they get the approval from WINZ the house has gone.

**Salvation Army 5:** And they may not have enough for the bond either.

**Salvation Army 1:** They need to go in and pay for the credit check themselves. WINZ only supports the two weeks advance and the bond. They have to pay for moving costs, first weeks rent and the letting fee as well.

**Salvation Army 4:** And the support for these costs is only available for those who are engaged with WINZ [not for those on low incomes that are just above WINZ income threshold].

There is an underclass of people who are finding it more and more difficult to get access to housing. Some of this may relate to their own histories and lack of knowing how to care for a house and themselves. Vulnerable people are unable to compete in the private rental market.

**Practice leader TFCO programme:** It has a lot to do with Housing New Zealand – they have had a bit of a tough lesson housing people into these brand new homes, so sometimes when they see the housing history of family, they might be a bit skittish to put these families into their homes.

**Social Service Manager:** Just as the families can't rent from a rental agency, they cannot rent from Housing New Zealand. A lot of homeless would not be able to rent a house. You can't rent a house these days unless you have a good reference. They have to provide references and if you don't have a good reference then you can't get a home.

**Community Service Administrator:** Often the woman's partner has been trouble in the past and so she can't get a house anymore because of the rental record. The women are often not with the partner anymore, but they have still got the kids and the kids are too old for them to go into refuge.

**Community Whānau Support Worker:** For Women's Refuge - if there is a boy, the age cut-off is 15 or 16 - it just depends if there are girls in the houses. Domestic violence has to be a factor. Some women try and use domestic violence as an excuse to try and get into the refuge, which is sad, but they need somewhere to live.

Bad credit is a huge one in terms of accessing housing. Landlords will not take you on with bad credit. And these days they all have bad credit – bad credit is really easy to get.

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**Community Health Worker 1:** In the work that I do, which has been quite broad-based working with men who come out of prison, there has been a notable lack of places for them to go to when they are released. Offender housing is certainly something that the Council should look at. These men have to go somewhere and that somewhere is really sparse.

People relayed stories regarding the number administrative hurdles people have to navigate in order to access rental accommodation and welfare support. For example, by the time people have an appointment with Work and Income, the house that they are applying for may have gone, or their food situation has become more desperate.

There are many costs associated with insecure tenancy. The average stay in a rental property is only eleven months in New Zealand (Howden-Chapman, 2015). Some proposed housing solutions, such as the suggestion for people to relocate from unaffordable housing areas, do not recognise the importance and value of social connectedness and whānau relationships.

**Health Worker 15:** It [Timaru] is too far away from families because it is isolated. Some people are trying because there is more space and housing. The only thing that we see with most people – they are so homesick and that is understandable – it is human that they are feeling lost not knowing the people around them. But there are a lot of people who are moving if they have a job there – trying to cater for their families.

**Health Worker 16:** I think with The Government incentive to shift people to these larger areas where there is affordable and available housing is going to get them isolated and disconnected from their families and from my experience – you will see issues of psychological depression arising.

The provision and accessibility of State housing in Aotearoa New Zealand has changed dramatically over the past decade:

**Health Worker 1:** Ten years ago there were houses when you rang to request one. Now there is a different story they are saying that there are a lot of people on waiting lists – especially the homeless and the people who are trying to meet the criteria to get housing.

People reflected that the housing situation has got worse with no apparent attempts to replace houses that have been sold or condemned:

**Health Worker 2:** ...they took out all the complexes of Housing New Zealand homes out in Fairfield, they took a whole block out. I didn't really see any new developments of Housing New Zealand houses being rebuilt to cater for those

*Housing researcher, Philippa Howden-Chapman (2015), provides a succinct account of the changing landscape of housing in Aotearoa New Zealand, highlighting how State housing sell-offs have been a continual policy of National Governments.*

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who lost their homes. There was a huge loss to the community there and they have been pushed into private rentals and that is where we saw lots of struggles.

The high cost and lack of availability of housing is leading to more and more people having to rely on temporary living situations such as garages or cars.

### Sleeping in their cars with no place to go

Many of the social and community services described the experiences of their clients sleeping in cars or living with family and friends, unable to afford their own accommodation.

**Christian Social Service Manager 2:** In one month recently, I think we had three or four families living in cars, things had happened and they had been evicted so they were staying in cars...there is a need for somewhere for them where there are children. They can't go to Women's Refuge.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** Over the last couple of years I have seen a real change in housing. In one of my schools there is a family that has ended up living out of their car with their children. And another family with five children has had to send two children to a friend's house, two to another home and one to another. The parents are living in the car.

I have worked with some of these families for days just trying to find somewhere for them to go. While they are looking for a permanent place, I have tried to find emergency housing for them, but there is nothing. There is nothing available particularly in the area of emergency housing. There is a really high need. There needs to be more emergency accommodation available because there are families that, for whatever reason, need to have somewhere to stay.

**Community Service Administrator:** A lot of people have been living in their cars lately – they come to the centre trying to seek housing because they are having difficulties with Housing New Zealand...Just last Saturday night I spent the night observing in town - I spent about 6 hours there – there was a minimum of five families sleeping in their cars in the CBD. ... One family's car actually had no back windscreen, it was tape and a bit of plastic – there was a 6 year old boy and Mum and Dad in the car.

**Family Worker 2:** I have noticed a couple of whānau that are starting to move in together and it is getting overcrowded. They move in together because of their financial situation. It could be related to losing their job - there is no income, so they have no choice but to move back in with someone else

The majority of the social services we interviewed referred to the lack of affordable, accessible and adequate accommodation in Hamilton. One health worker reflected that government's assessment of housing needs appears to be that if you have a "roof over your head" then you are housed. The quality of the housing and the degree of overcrowding

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appears to be deprioritised by government, despite the stress, strain and ill-health that it may be creating.

**Community Health Worker 18:** We are coming across one bed units where grandparents are taking on the children and their mokopuna who are living in the shed. We have two families with seven children living in the shed.

The whānau have to split their families up and are having to send their children to ex-partners or to extended whānau who they do not trust. They do this because there are issues with their children, truancy for example or they are not able to care for all 7 children in one place. They have to send the children out and there are issues with this as well. The putea has to follow the child now, so if the children go and live with the extended whānau then there is less money in the family home and this creates additional stresses.

Grandparents are afraid that they will lose their homes by opening them up to their whānau - they are worried that they will be evicted so they are telling their kids to get out. The relationships are stressed again.

We have these families in this situation currently and it has been three weeks and Housing New Zealand and rental agencies are not stepping up. Our korero is "Please help, please help, you have to do something about this whānau" – their response is "Sorry it has gone – sorry the home is gone". These are the things that our families and staff are having to do - we have to advocate on behalf of our families.

**Social Service Manager:** We have been working with a whānau for 8 months now and they should be caring for their moko but they don't have a house to live in. So they can't care because we can't find them a house. They are living in a caravan at the moment.

People described families caught between the inadequacy of The State housing services and the inadequacy of the private rental market.

**Community Health Worker 5:** They [a family] moved into a private rental and they are now paying more rent than they were to Housing New Zealand. They can't afford the private rental and now they have a leak in their house. They got someone to say that the roof is flat and this is why they have a leak. The family has huge health issues. I don't know where to go to. They moved out of their Housing New Zealand house because it was cold and moved into a private rental and it is worse. How do you go to a private rental landlord and say that their home is not up to standard? They say it's warm and everything, but then when you look...

**Family Worker 1:** A lot of real-estate agents are not doing a good job and they should be more accountable. They are renting their homes out and some of the houses are really damp hovels with damp, soft spots in the bathrooms and fire walls by the stoves. However, people are so desperate for housing they will take anything and that's just how it goes. And around and around it goes.

People move from one location to another in search of more affordable accommodation

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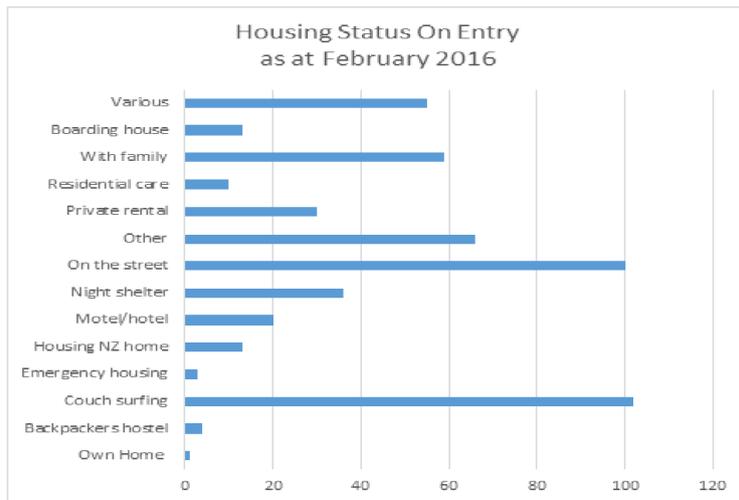
**Health Worker 4:** I have also noticed an influx of Pacific Islanders in the Waikato and that is due to the cost of living in Auckland that has pushed them down and so I don't know how Hamilton is going to cater for that...I think the pressure is on with the influx of Pacific Islanders coming down not having that housing available to them - we will see another struggle.

The People's Project supports people to navigate the accommodation options available. The People's Project began with housing people who were 'on the street homeless' but they are now working with a broader community of people in need of more adequate accommodation and secure tenancy.

**The People's Project:** We are not bound by a narrow definition of homelessness – our work includes people who are sleeping on couches or in overcrowded conditions as defined by Statistic NZ.

Since the inception of The People's Project in August 2014, 584 people have registered for help from the project, including 142 families. 156 people, including 29 families, have been rehoused into more adequate accommodation. A further 146 individuals and families have found housing solutions themselves with the People's Project assistance.

**Figure 2: The housing status of the people who have registered for help with The People's Project**



When people access The People's Project for support with their accommodation they are asked about their current accommodation. Figure 2 highlights the kinds of accommodation that people have had when they access The People's Project. Seventeen percent or 100 of the 584 registrations have come from people living on the street and just over 100 of the registrations have come from people who are couch surfing (currently staying on someone else's couch).

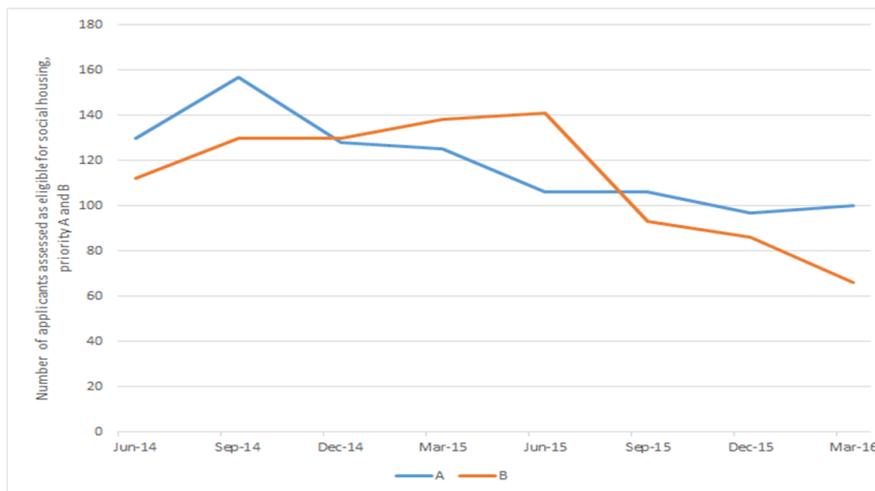
In March 2016, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) social housing register in Hamilton has approximately 166 social housing applicants assessed as having a serious housing need, classified as A or B (see table 4 for definitions).

**Table 4: Definitions of Priority A and B Groups on MSD Social Housing Register**

Priority A	People who are considered ‘at risk’ and includes households with a severe and persistent housing need that must be addressed immediately. The household is unable to access and/or sustain suitable, adequate and affordable alternative housing.
Priority B	People who have a ‘serious housing need’ and includes households with a significant and persistent need. The household is unable to access and/or sustain suitable, adequate and affordable alternative housing.

Figure 3 shows that the number of MSD applicants assessed as Priority A has reduced markedly since September 2014 and those on Priority B register have reduced significantly since June 2015.

**Figure 3: MSD<sup>5</sup> Social Housing Register for Hamilton - Priority A and B**



In April 2014 the responsibility for the administration of social housing shifted from Housing New Zealand to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). This move was suggested by the MSD to enable improvements in the delivery of housing subsidies and design new ‘housing products’ that better serve the need of New Zealanders (MSD, July 2014). The Housing New Zealand administrative database on social housing and Work and Income database related to benefit receipt (including the Accommodation Supplement) were merged as part of this restructuring.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.housing.msd.govt.nz/information-for-housing-providers/register/>

Responsibilities for the handling of applications and assessments for social housing, and for the social housing wait list lie with MSD. Housing New Zealand as a social housing provider can respond to people who are on the MSD waitlist but they are no longer responsible for who is deemed to be eligible for social housing.

A policy push to move people out of Housing New Zealand accommodation into the private rental market seems to be operating. As Housing New Zealand houses are vacated, if the MSD consider that there is no demand for these houses, then they are likely to be considered for sale. From the stories we have heard, it appears that there are some barriers and challenges to getting on the MSD social housing waitlist and/or staying on it. It is unlikely that all people with housing need are on the MSD social housing waitlist and therefore the waitlist is unlikely to be reflective of the degree of housing need in the community. This situation raises concerns about the current Government's decision to sell off housing stock that is deemed to be no longer necessary.

In April 2014, The Government directed the MSD to undertake a major Housing Assistance Reform programme over three years. One of the first strategies implemented as part of the Housing Assistance Reform was the development of the client segmentation framework. This framework was developed to gain a picture of a households rather than individuals (MSD, July 2014). It will identify where people are in the housing market: whether they are in private rentals without assistance, private rentals with assistance, social housing or in severe housing deprivation.

The stories presented in this report suggest that, due to challenging financial circumstances, multiple families and individuals are living together in one dwelling as a household. The unmet housing need within any one household may be considerable.

The MSD client segmentation framework involves a review of housing circumstances and the development of a new integrated data set that includes information on incomes, housing subsidies received and details on any work undertaken by MSD with clients regarding work/employment. It also involves the MSD 'drilling down' into further details and characteristics of people and households receiving welfare benefits. These characteristics include, age, household composition, labour force status, likelihood of Long term Benefit Receipt, duration in social housing, duration on a benefit, work obligations, type of incapacity such as mental health condition or intellectual disability, supplementary benefits, and affordability ratio (outgoing to income ratios) (MSD, July 2014). There is a considerable amount of information recorded by the MSD regarding people in receipt of a government income benefit, social housing or housing assistance.

Through the implementation of the client segmentation framework and social housing tenancy reviews, the MSD has identified groups of people that they consider able to

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transition out of social housing into the private rental market with assistance. In the initial stages of the client segmentation framework, the MSD identified a considerable difference in degree of accommodation support received by people in social housing compared with people in the private market receiving accommodation subsidies (see table 5). The MSD concluded that over half of the social housing tenants have the potential to move out of social housing into the private rental market with assistance (MSD July 2014).

**Table 5: Findings from MSD Client Segmentation framework**

<b>Finding 1 - People in similar situations receive very different amounts of housing assistance and have different affordability outcomes</b>			
The following table illustrates the difference in average subsidy between a number of segments in social housing and the private market.			
Segment	Social Housing (average subsidy)	Private Market (average subsidy)	Difference
Beneficiaries in Work Focused Case Management	\$235 per week	\$78 per week	\$157 per week
NZ Superannuitants	\$200 per week	\$57 per week	\$143 per week
Non-beneficiaries with high subsidy	\$299 per week	\$117 per week	\$182 per week

The MSD review has resulted in some people being shifted out of social housing into the private market with assistance (MSD, October 2014). The social housing vacated by these people may have been utilised to service people on the social housing register or waitlist. This may explain the reductions in the social housing waitlist in figure 3 above.

We were unable to find any evidence regarding how these shifts are translating into improved social wellbeing outcomes for the people involved. The stories presented in this report suggest that people are not always able to access accommodation in the private rental market or the housing subsidies available. Further, the shift towards the provision of housing in the private rental market with subsidies means that less rental income is being retained by the Government and is instead being transferred to private landlords.

The client segmentation framework has resulted in the MSD segmenting those in receipt of the accommodation subsidies into two groups: one that may need ongoing support, and one that is deemed to need support only for a certain period of time. The group that may only need support for period of time was determined to be able to either find employment or increase their income. This group was mostly made up of sole parents and single people (MSD, July 2014). The stories that we have heard suggest that parents require support with childcare arrangements and wrap around support so that shifts into paid work do not result in children receiving inadequate care. The housing needs of single people can be particularly

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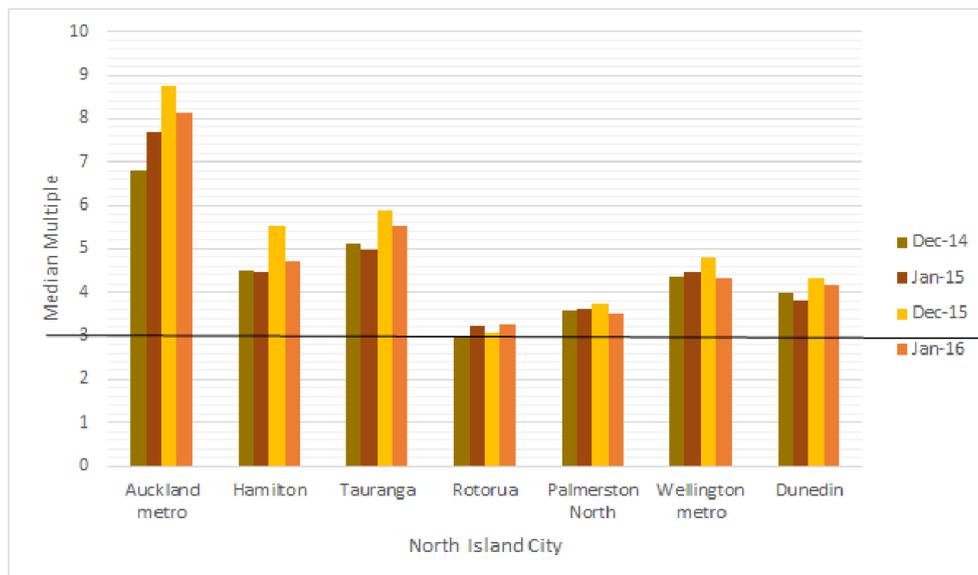
complex if there are mental health problems, disability or barriers to employment and participation such as a criminal record.

The numbers of people registering at The People’s Project and the types of accommodation that they register with (see Figure 2) suggests that there is a greater need for housing than might be reflected in the MSD register. The reflections shared by those in the social services regarding the MSD process suggest that people may be discounted as having serious housing need if, for example, they are living with family.

A brief look at measures of housing affordability

According to the median multiple measure housing is unaffordable in Hamilton and in the majority of locations across New Zealand (see figure 4).

Figure 4: The Median Multiple and Housing Affordability in North Island Cities



Source: *interest.co.nz*

This median multiple is an internationally recognised measure of housing affordability and it is defined as the ratio between median house price and median annual household income, otherwise known as the median multiple. A median multiple of 3.0 times or less is generally accepted to be a very good marker for housing affordability.

The Waikato Regional Council describes housing affordability in the following way:<sup>6</sup>

The ability of households to rent or purchase housing in a locality of choice at a reasonable price, the capacity to meet ongoing housing costs and the extent to which discretionary income is available to achieve an acceptable standard of living.

*There is a crisis of housing affordability in New Zealand. This is reflected in the house price-to-income multiple. The crisis of unaffordable housing is a nationwide problem, experienced with greater intensity in Auckland, but a stark reality in the smaller localities as well.*

From a social justice perspective, affordable housing would also leave enough residual income to cover other basic living costs, allow households to save for irregular but unavoidable costs and participate in society.

The Waikato Regional Council measures housing affordability in the Waikato as the cost of housing<sup>7</sup> as a proportion of household income (figure 5).<sup>8</sup> Using this measure, there is no observable trend over recent years (2007-2015) and no overall improvement in housing affordability in the Waikato. It also shows that housing in the Waikato is more affordable than average New Zealand.

In 2012, Statistics New Zealand, in response to the 2009 Review of Housing Statistics, developed a measure to assess the affordability of rental accommodation in various locations across New Zealand. The figures for Waikato are presented in Figure 5 and indicate a relatively steady level of rental affordability.

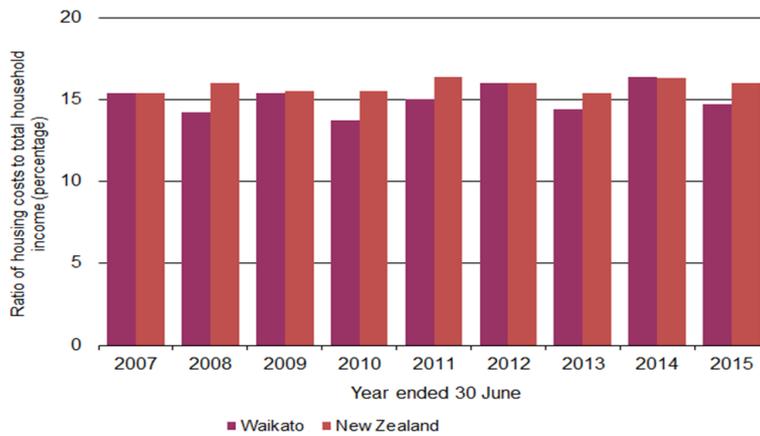
The measures of overall housing affordability (figure 5) and the rental affordability measure (figure 6) are both likely to underreport housing affordability issues. Housing affordability issues have the most impact on people with low incomes. The measure of overall housing affordability (figure 5) includes households that own their homes and people that are renting. Therefore it does not provide a picture of housing affordability for people with limited resources who are most impacted by rising costs.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Community/Waikato-Progress-Indicators-Tupuranga-Waikato/Report-cards/Housing-affordability/>

<sup>7</sup> Housing expenditures accounted for in the measure include mortgage principal repayments, mortgage interest payments, mortgage application fees, rent payments, other payments associated with renting (for example bonds paid in the last 12 months), property rates payments (both regional and local government), and payments associated with building related insurance.

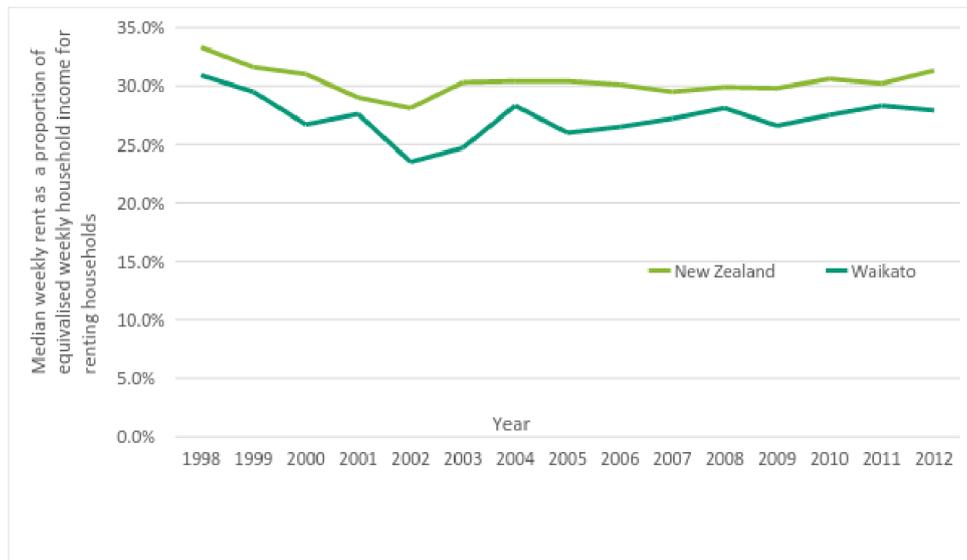
<sup>8</sup> While this measure, included in the set of 32 Waikato Progress Indicators (<http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Community/Waikato-Progress-Indicators-Tupuranga-Waikato/>) the Waikato Regional Council also collects and analyses data on rental affordability (as per figure 5).

**Figure 5: Housing Affordability in the Waikato**



Source: Waikato Regional Council.

**Figure 6: Rental Affordability: Median weekly rent as a proportion of equivalised weekly household income for renting households by year 1998-2012**



Source: Waikato Regional Council.

The rental affordability measure (figure 6) relies on income data from the New Zealand Income Survey (NZIS). It is not possible to distinguish incomes of households that rent from households that own when using NZIS data. Census and Household Economic Survey data show that household income is lower for households not owning their dwelling. Therefore,

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because the rental affordability indicator uses overall household income it is likely to underreport rental affordability issues.

People who own their own homes often have higher incomes than people who are renting. The median weekly income for households in rental occupied private dwellings in Hamilton City in 2013 was \$914<sup>9</sup> compared with a median income of \$1231 for all households.

The data in table 6 below suggests that housing costs as a proportion of income are considerably higher for people who rent than they are for the population overall. The calculation of the median income of renters is an estimation based on the assumption that incomes for households that rent in Hamilton have risen as much as the median income for all households in the Waikato. There is no observable trend in the affordability of rental accommodation in Hamilton. However, based on the median incomes of households that rent, it appears that Hamilton rental accommodation is consistently and relatively unaffordable.

**Table 6: Median income and average rents in Hamilton**

	2013	2014	2015
Median weekly income - Waikato region (Source: NZIS)	\$1,270	\$1,238	\$1,329
Median weekly income for all households in Hamilton (Source: 2013 Census)	\$1,231	\$1,200*	\$1,288*
Median weekly income for households in rental occupied private dwellings in Hamilton.	\$914	\$891*	\$956*
Mean weekly rent <sup>10</sup>	311	310	321
Percentage of rent as proportion of income for renters	34%	35%	34%
Housing costs as a proportion of income for population overall (Waikato) (Source: Waikato Regional Council).	14%	16%	15%

All prices adjusted to 2013. \*Calculated based on 2013 figure and applying regional income increases

<sup>9</sup> \*2013 census Data - Housing Tables. Weekly rent paid by household by household income (grouped) 2013. <http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx#>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/housing-property/sector-information-and-statistics/rental-bond-data?utm\\_source=Tenancy+Services&utm\\_campaign=b1f2ca5a05-Market-Rent-Statistics-12-2015&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_885ad61d66-b1f2ca5a05-46604977](http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/housing-property/sector-information-and-statistics/rental-bond-data?utm_source=Tenancy+Services&utm_campaign=b1f2ca5a05-Market-Rent-Statistics-12-2015&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_885ad61d66-b1f2ca5a05-46604977)

There has been a recent spike in the price of houses in Hamilton City. The average cost of a property in Hamilton increased 22 % between February 2015 and February 2016<sup>11</sup> with slightly greater increases in the suburbs of Fairfield/Fairview Downs (26.5%), Dinsdale North/Nawton (23.7%) and Dinsdale South/Frankton (23.4%). These price increases may have a negative impact on the affordability of rental housing in Hamilton. Rent increases of over 9% (see Table 7) are expected in the suburbs of Dinsdale North/Nawton, Dinsdale South/Frankton and Hamilton Central/Maeroa/Frankton Junction.

**Table 7: Median rents, median house prices and annual expected rent and property value changes.**

Suburbs	Median Rent	Median E-Valuer*	Annual Rent Change	Annual E-Valuer Change
Te Kowhai/St Andrews/Queenwood	\$380	\$492,000	5.60%	20.90%
Flagstaff/Rototuna	\$480	\$596,000	6.20%	16.00%
Claudelands	\$240	\$399,500	-11.10%	18.90%
Fairfield/Fairview Downs	\$340	\$358,000	3.00%	26.50%
Hamilton East/University	\$280	\$411,000	-6.70%	22.00%
Hillcrest/Silverdale/Tamahere	\$367	\$451,000	4.90%	20.60%
Dinsdale North/Nawton	\$360	\$402,000	9.10%	23.70%
Dinsdale South/Frankton	\$350	\$337,000	9.40%	23.40%
Hamilton Central/Maeroa/Frankton Junction	\$285	\$375,000	9.60%	21.80%
Deanwell/Melville/Fitzroy	\$325	\$381,000	4.80%	21.30%

\* An E-Valuer is an estimate of the current market value for a property. It is an Automated Valuation Model (AVM) and is based on recent, nearby comparable sales.

Source: <https://www.qv.co.nz/>

The following story indicates that people may be experiencing some substantial rental increases.

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** One of these women came to New Zealand with 7 children. She was on her own and her 14 year old daughter was pregnant. They have gone through all sorts of things...They live in a group of houses – the rent has recently been put up over 100 dollars a week. They got a warning that the rent would be going up, but this is tough for a large family on a benefit.

People with low incomes are entitled to an accommodation subsidy. However, this subsidy is often difficult to access.

**Community Health Worker 3:** Housing New Zealand houses are more affordable than private rentals. Even though WINZ helps with the accommodation supplement,

<sup>11</sup> Source: <https://www.qv.co.nz/resources/monthly-residential-value-index>

this is capped and they don't get so much. The accommodation supplement is still not enough

**Community Health Worker 18:** Whānau can't access this money, the accommodation supplement, without advocates. It is so difficult. The only time you get a 'yes' is when you are with someone helping to advocate. A lot our whānau do not get what they are entitled to from WINZ.

Using the figures in Table 5 and the online accommodation supplement calculator<sup>12</sup>, we tested a particular scenario. A single mother with two children earning \$956.38 per week (before tax), paying rent of \$321.44 may be entitled to a \$9 accommodation supplement. Even with this supplement, her accommodation costs are still 33% of her total before tax income.

Regardless of the affordability of the existing housing stock, there does not appear to be enough affordable housing available or accessible to people who need it. Some people having to resort to living in caravans and cars.

#### The costs of poor quality housing

People described the poor quality housing that they see their clients living in and consequences of this including poor health and high heating costs.

**Family Worker (1):** If we look at reasons why people have to take the children to the doctors, respiratory, skin ailments...these diseases have come about because of the houses that they are living in. The walls might be streaming, so the parents take the kids out of the bedrooms and they all collect into the lounge because they have a little heater in the lounge. They are always going back to doctors for eczema, skin infections and for recurring respiratory issues - all these illnesses come from the house but things are changing now with the insulation programmes.

**Family Worker (2):** One of my clients is a single mum, recently separated, with four children. The children are constantly sick because the house is freezing. They stay in one room with a heater. You can feel the draft coming from somewhere. It is just so cold. Even the rent is a lot - it is over \$300 for a house like that.

**Social Worker in Schools (10):** Even just thinking of myself. I pay \$405 a week for my house which has been renovated, but it's still freezing. I had to move home to my Mums this winter because I was so cold. We had a gas heater on, but the whole house was so cold. If I'm in that situation then there must be lots of people that are. We are all working full time and flatting and in a decent brick house it is insulated underground, but the joinery is really old and there are drafts coming through.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz/calculator/index.jsp>

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** Housing is a big issue for our refugee communities. It is not only that the houses are not insulated, but it's also the costs of heating. Then their homes are cold and damp, again affecting their health. Many of the women in my class and their families suffer from asthma. Many families will get the stand alone gas heaters and they put their health at risk when they use these heaters as well.

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** A big proportion of the families come here in the winter and they come from somewhere hot. They go to houses that aren't insulated. They get a heater and they put it on because they are cold and then they are met with a huge power bill...one particular house that I can think of – it is part of a group of two storied flats – they look nice from the outside, but in some of these houses the jib board has rotted away from the sinks and the landlord won't fix it. These are privately owned. The families used to have state housing but there is not much of that around now.

**Community Health 5:** Many private rentals are not up to the warrant of fitness standards. Our families have not got the things that they need to repair houses, like plumbing skills and the homes that they are in are not healthy. The families phone the private rental company and they don't comply with their requests and make the home healthy. The older Housing New Zealand homes are not insulated. I had a family move out of a Housing New Zealand home because it was cold. I tried with a letter to Housing New Zealand. The man that responded said that the family had to be tested, but they had already been tested for over a year and were sitting on a waiting list.

There are many challenges that come with overcrowding, including the potential for a lack of routine and the spread of infections including nit infestations

**Manager – Social Service:** Housing is a big issue. There are negative impacts to loads of people living in a house. To nurture is about routines and boundaries for children and a functioning household. When you've got people left right and centre coming in because there is no-where else to go, these routines are harder to establish.

**Family Worker / Team Leader:** Moving in together and overcrowding impacts on everything – nit infestations for example or once one person has a cough then they all get one.

There is a failure of landlords to keep up with their inspections and to have a continuity of inspections.

**Community Health 16:** Some real-estate agents provide no continuity of inspections. Some of the whānau have not had their houses seen to. This is neglect from the real-estate agent's responsibility. For example, I know this older person who likes to collect cats. This is an issue because there are cat faeces in the house. The carer can't go into the house because they can't handle the problem. Housing New Zealand does not keep up their continuity of inspections. Inspections are the responsibility of the rental agency...The rental agencies are not being responsible and they are not

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saying to the whānau that this is where the boundaries are in terms of how they keep their homes.

The poor quality of housing that is available in the rental market has led to calls for some form of quality control such as a warrant of fitness.

#### Warrant of Fitness – why not?

Housing New Zealand carried out a trial of 500 Housing New Zealand properties to assess the viability and costs of a proposed Warrant of Fitness scheme (Bosch, 2014). The proposed Warrant of Fitness (WOF) scheme had three risk categories that criteria were assessed against and four categories of compliance. Across the 400 properties surveyed, only 4% of the houses (17 properties) were fully compliant, or passed all Warrant of Fitness Criteria. The other houses had varying levels of non-compliance, with 192 properties (48%) requiring urgent repairs.

**Table 8: Degrees of Compliance – WOF trial, Housing New Zealand**

Categories of Compliance	Risk Criteria	Percentage of properties	Estimated costs to remediate
Fully Compliant	None	4% (17 properties)	\$0
Non-Compliant – Urgent repairs:	High risk criteria, remediation within 2 days or potential vacation of the house.	48% (193 properties)	\$ 22,033
Non-Compliant - High priority repairs	High risk criteria, remediation within 10+ days	32% (127 properties)	\$ 98,354
Non-Compliant – Scheduled repairs:	Low or Moderate risk criteria, remediation within timeframes defined in the risk and remediation framework	16% (63 properties)	\$110,105

A similar trial was undertaken by housing researchers Bennett, Chisholm, Hansen and Howden-Chapman (2014) in collaboration with five Councils. The private rentals involved in this trial were 'self-selected'. Of the 144 private rental houses that were assessed, eight (6%) passed the WOF. If houses in the trial fixed low-cost items that included the correct installation of smoke alarms, security stays on the windows and hot water at a safe temperature range, 44 additional houses would have passed the housing WOF assessment. That would have given a pass rate of 36%.

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**Table 9: The top five reasons for failing the rental housing WOF checklist**

Item	Percentage that did <b>not</b> pass the check
water temperature	40% of houses
security stays	38% of houses
a fixed form of heating	37% of houses
handrails or balustrades that meet the Building Code Standards	31% of houses
working smoke alarms	30% of houses

Twenty-nine landlords or landlord representatives were interviewed in this trial. Many of these landlords were responsible for multiple houses (116 of the total 144 assessed). Two-thirds of the landlords (66%) supported the WOF for a variety of reasons, including improving quality, protecting the vulnerable, increasing tenant knowledge and keeping bad landlords in line. Most landlords (83%) intended to make improvements to the house/s after the WOF assessment; however, in the case of over a third of them, the improvements were already planned prior to the WOF assessment.

The conclusion of both WOF trials was that a WOF programme is feasible and can be achieved at a reasonable cost and will lead to improved health and safety outcomes for tenants.

Respiratory disease is the country's third biggest killer. The Asthma and Respiratory Foundation research shows that there is a much lower risk for European ethnicities and conversely a higher risk of hospitalisation or death for respiratory disease for people of Māori, Pacific or Asian ethnicities<sup>13</sup>. The Foundation released its National Respiratory Strategy outlining the issues and solutions related to respiratory illness in New Zealand recommending that The Government implement solutions such as a warrant of fitness on rental homes. Despite these clear recommendations and conclusions of the WOF trials, The Government has instead proposed a number of amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 including:

- 1) a new requirement for smoke alarms in all residential properties
- 2) new requirements for ceiling and underfloor insulation (where possible) to be phased in between 2016 and 2019, with accompanying disclosure requirements for landlords;
- 3) changes to enable faster resolution of tenancy abandonment cases; and
- 4) changes intended to strengthen the enforcement power of the Act.

The amendments relating to Residential Tenancies Act enforcement seek to address the fact that tenants can be discouraged from asserting their rights to adequate housing by fear of

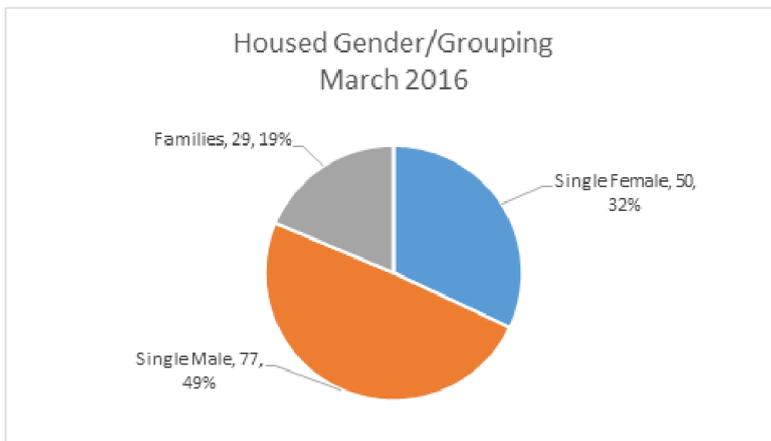
<sup>13</sup> <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/293637/maori,-pasifika-respiratory-disease-rates-a-scandal-doctors>

endangering their tenancy. Under the new law tenants will have four weeks to apply to the tribunal on the grounds of retaliatory notice rather than the two weeks they presently have and landlords who give retaliatory notices will be subject to an increased maximum penalty of \$2,000 (Cabinet Social Policy Committee, 2015, p.3). However, the new standards rely on tenants making a complaint. A rental housing warrant of fitness would ensure all houses passed comprehensive minimum health and safety standards without the onus of responsibility for rental standards being left with the tenants. Tenants are even less likely to complain about their rental accommodation if there is a shortage of rental accommodation.

**Wrap around services and social housing**

The People’s Project has made a notable difference to homelessness. This Project has directly housed 157 people (including 29 families, see figure 7) and supported a further 146 self-directed individuals and families since its inception in August 2014.

**Figure 7: People housed by The People’s Project since its inception in August 2014**



The first priority for this service is to provide people with accommodation.

**People’s Project:** House people first, then align the support services, they need to be successful in their lives and the cycle of homelessness stops. It makes perfect sense. It also saves money. Internationally this has been proven that this approach works. People sleeping rough is a complex issue, but it can be solved when communities and agencies work together, when people work together.

For some people this project has provided exactly what they need:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** For Tom – that’s what he needed – and he now has his garden. He says “I’ve got a sofa”. He is making a home. For him, his life is on track.

Many of the social services described the importance of wrap around care and additional supports that need to be provided for the most vulnerable. As an example, at the community meal provided by Methodist City Action a retired nurse volunteers to offer advice and helps monitor the health and wellbeing of some of their more vulnerable people (Community Waikato, March 2015). Wrap around services and extra supports are provided by a number of services in Hamilton thereby strengthening the care that is provided to the most vulnerable:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** So we were able to help source just the basic necessities [for recently housed person] – I think we did this quite well. We put the word out to wider community.

There is sometimes an expectation for people with complex needs to coexist without any support. People are sometimes not able to find accommodation with the appropriate wrap around support.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** Many of the clients, if they were to leave here they would need to move in with others and share accommodation. There are many dynamics at the shelter that take a lot of careful management. Last night there were 14-15 guys, some with intellectual disabilities, some with mental health issues, others just out of prison - so you can imagine the dynamics. I am just trying to manage those dynamics and make sure that one person does not bully another. And they have to learn lessons about hygiene. If they are going to leave the shelter then they will have to move in and share accommodation with others - that is just the reality of the benefits and housing. It is really difficult for them to move in with others if they don’t have basic skills.

There are tricky relationship dynamics and issues in communities and especially in communities where people suffer from addictions and mental health issues. It is not simple to find adequate accommodation.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** There are tricky dynamics with this also, because when some of these volunteers get under pressure they react in a totally different way than what you would expect them too. You have to be careful. You have to be careful who you get to do what and you have to try to be one step ahead. For one of the men in particular, if I ask him to do something, I’ve got to do it in a way that I’m not really asking him. I have to guide him. There is that kind of stuff going on here all the time. If there are battles then I’ve got to get them to sort it out then and there. The dynamics of the shelter takes lots of energy and then to find energy to look for accommodation, all in 30 hours, is a challenge.

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### An abusive system and increasing abuse

The workings of a market based social system that maybe underpinned by the operation of exploitation is being mirrored or replicated within families.

**Salvation Army 2:** We have also seen family loaning to families who are now charging interest on their loans and becoming private family loan sharks. Family members are taking money cards from the family who owe them money and they are not giving these cards back until the next pay day. They go to the cash machine with the family member who owes them money to make sure that they get their money. The family member who was in debt is then right back to the beginning again with no place to turn.

Poverty can result in a lack of mana, a lack of empathy and a lack of respect for other aspects of life. When people believe that they are unworthy of love their behaviour will emulate this belief.

**Functional Family Therapist:** Many families that I go into have underlying issues like poverty and lack of food, drug and alcohol and they get to a stage where they lack empathy for their families as a result. Through Functional Family Therapy I am in there empowering their own mana to come back out from where they are. They have sunk so low that they don't know how to think anymore or communicate effectively as a family.

**Practice leader TFCO programme:** I was working in a neighbourhood with brand new homes that were funded by Housing New Zealand. Eighty percent of the families, within a year, their homes were neglected so sorely because the conditions that these families brought into the homes had not disappeared. Sometimes the families don't have the capacity to understand the value of something...Housing may be available in some areas but it's the context of those families that are going into these homes that's important - it's whether they understand how rewarding it is.

**Christian Social Service Manager (2):** In our work we come across people who have lost hope all the time, things in life have crushed them and it's our job to help them gain hope again. I was remembering a woman who had stopped trying to see her kids and she starting saying things like "I am never going to have a good relationship with my kids now, I've lost them I might as well give up"...Those sorts of situations happen right across from our budgeting service ... They don't expect anything, they don't have money and they don't have expectations of anything.

The rippling effects of domestic violence are devastating. Violence can be understood as a normal response to relationship challenges.

**Social Worker in Schools (3):** I see a lot of domestic violence in the community and children growing up and seeing violence. Domestic violence is what they see as normal. What they see in the home affects their behaviour in school. It affects their learning, because if they are a child that responds violently to another child then

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they are taken outside of the classroom and then they are not learning and not engaging well in the school. This has an ongoing effect.

The impacts of domestic violence and neglect affect children in deep psychological ways requiring them to grow up quickly and take on the worries of their parents.

**Family Worker / Team Leader** - Sometimes the children become the nurturers of the mothers. This happens especially in families who experience domestic violence. Mothers lean emotionally on their children, which is a big responsibility for the children to carry and the children don't quite know what to do with all of that emotion and responsibility.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** I see this, children taking on more responsibility, especially in families of multiple children. You will often see the older child parenting the younger ones. We know some of the families and some families we don't know. With some of the families living with domestic violence, if there are parents present they are emotionally distant or absent because of all the worries that they are going through. The kids kind of fend for themselves and fend for each other.

**Family Worker / Team Leader:** A few years ago I was working with a family in the Restore Programme. The oldest girl seemed intellectually or developmentally delayed and her younger sister seemed more of the boss or the leader. I went to drop them off at home after the Restore Programme around 4.30/5pm, but there was no one home and I could not leave them at home alone. Their mother did not turn up till after 7pm. I was watching them at home and the older girl just took charge. They were only young kids and she took charge and was getting the dinner ready and organising things.

Each week, Waikato police respond to an average of 200 domestic violence incidents. In the year 2014-15, there were nearly 10,000 family violence incidents reported to Waikato police. Some reports suggest that less than 20% of domestic violence cases are called in to the police<sup>14</sup>.

When children are not adequately parented their understanding of how to parent when they become adults can be limited.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** A lot of the parents we see lack some common sense. There are things that we take for granted, like parenting strategies that we know, that some people just don't know. We have the Incredible Years parenting programme- I was talking to a participant about how it went and I asked about what

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<sup>14</sup><http://www.stuff.co.nz/waikato-times/news/72182309/Two-womens-stories-highlight-dangers-of-domestic-violence>

sort of things they had learnt – it was just like a light bulb had turned on for them. They learnt this stuff that for me and for my kids I would take for granted knowing.

The inadequacy of The State in providing wrap around support for families, particularly in crisis situations, means that one dysfunctional situation can lead to and create another.

**Salvation Army Social Worker 1:** Sometimes, even though the situation has been dysfunctional, and the police or CYFs say to a couple that they have to separate, it can actually bring a lot of financial strain on a family very quickly. The person who has left the main property has to go and find somewhere to live and has to pay for that place. By having extra costs on that family immediately it means that their housing is in jeopardy. What the couple can afford together is different to what they can't afford when separated. They have to get out of the family home because they can no longer afford to stay there. This raises the stress and there is usually days missed from school because the parents have to go to lots of house viewings.

A punitive system increases the likelihood that people on the margins will not cope.

**Psychologist, Social Service:** This situation [a lack of housing and income] increases the likelihood that you are hostile and frustrated with your kids. For example, if a child breaks something and you can't go and get another one because you can't afford to, you are more likely to get really cross at your child. This is especially true for those who do not manage parenting that well anyway and this increases the chances of neglect and abuse. There is a strong link between poverty and neglect.

**Community Service Administrator:** It is such a big process. A lot of forms that WINZ have are complicated. Even very able people find it difficult to fill in the forms and say what it is that they want. People fill the form in incorrectly and then they have to do it over and over again. I'm surprised that more people don't snap. I'm surprised that there is not one incident like there was down South [Ashburton WINZ office shootings] every week. There are way more people smashing the windows and I'm surprised that there is not more. People do rage at WINZ but I'm surprised that the numbers are so low. People must put their frustrations elsewhere like back on the families and on the kids.

The influence and appeal of gang culture was discussed. Services have various reflections on gang culture. Some suggest it is a choice and a lack of priorities, while others recognise the appeal of the sense of belonging that can accompany gang life and that can influence the choices that people make.

**Foster Care Worker:** And there is a flip side to this also with parents who chose a lifestyle – they chose to live in that underground world and in the gang life. Some parents love that lifestyle and that is how they survive. Their priorities are not their kids. They forget about their kids. These are the intergenerational issues. They need to ask - what's my priority, is it gambling or is it my kids?

**Social Service Manager:** When we think about gangs, there is a sense of belonging – we could all think of something positive about being in a gang. Our cultures are in that negative space and we need to think about how we shift those.

### Summary

Markets are inherently exclusive and are not geared towards meeting the needs of people with limited resources. The vulnerability of people is exacerbated by the requirement to move away from family and support networks in order to find paid employment.

People with limited resources are often in debt to the government, to loan companies or to both. There are many challenges associated with living on a low income, including for example, meeting the costs of school uniforms and school fees. In desperation, people will turn to instant loan companies for money, spiralling themselves into a cycle of debt. Mobile retail trucks charge exorbitant prices for their products and prey on the vulnerabilities of people with limited resources, perpetuating vulnerability.

Families and individuals with limited resources face many challenges navigating the private rental market, such as a lack of transport and childcare to be able to attend real-estate viewings. There are also various expenses associated with the process of applying for a house including credit checks. The challenges of finding adequate rental accommodation can be so significant that families and individuals will resort to sleeping in cars and spreading themselves between the houses of various family members.

There is a lack of affordable, accessible and adequate rental accommodation in Hamilton. Some measures of housing affordability tend to under report affordability issues. The median multiple, an internationally recognised measure of housing affordability, shows that housing in Hamilton and in the main centres throughout NZ is unaffordable. The median household incomes of people that rent and the average rental costs in Hamilton suggest that households who rent spend a significant proportion (34%) of their household income on housing. People who rent appear to spend a far larger portion of their household incomes on housing than households overall. The poor quality of some rental accommodation is a significant issue. There is solid evidence that a warrant of fitness scheme is workable, affordable and would result in improved housing conditions with a raft of health benefits.

One notable omission in the way housing is both talked and written about is the concept of a house being a home. A house becomes a home when people have the opportunities to get settled and establish a sense of belonging in a community. Houses have increasingly become regarded as a commodity to be traded in the Market place for profit, rather than a stable place for people to live in.

The vulnerabilities of people are increased in a society that excludes and punishes people rather than offering opportunities for redemption and restoration. An abusive system will

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perpetuate abuse. There is a need for a way of working that lifts people up and restores their mana so that they can realise the possibilities of a happy life.

**Suggested actions**

- \* Create a by-law to ban mobile retail trucks.
- \* Create a local warrant of fitness (WOF) for all houses or dwelling that people live in throughout Hamilton. Support an initiative to retrofit all rental accommodation in Hamilton so that it meets a WOF standard.
- \* Ensure affordable rental accommodation is available.
- \* Provide emergency accommodation facilities.
- \* Support and endorse a local social housing plan

## Theme 4: Community Serving Community

Community groups along with established social service agencies in Hamilton are responding to the increased levels of poverty evident in our community. The raft of conditions associated with accessing housing and welfare services means that many people are left with unmet needs. Advocacy or navigation is a level of service that has developed to support people to find their way through the complexities of social and welfare services in our community. Some new services, wholly dependent on the generosity of community, such as the meals provided by the Hamilton Homeless Trust, have also emerged.

There are increasing requirements to provide evidence of need in order to receive support from Work and Income NZ. Budgeting services are oversubscribed as people try to manage their debt and if they access support from Work and Income NZ they are continually required to assess their spending and reassess their budgets. For the thousands of people managing their low incomes, limited allowances are given for the ways in which things can go wrong in any lives and households, with unexpected expenses throwing into disarray any best laid budget plans.

Community meals and foodbank packages help families and individuals to make ends meet and they may also provide a level of social connection and belonging. Community meals are based on the value of unconditional service, with an underpinning ethos where all are welcome. If you are hungry, lonely and even if you are neither you are accepted at the various community meals provided in Hamilton.

Community houses and projects provide access to affordable food and other essentials thereby preventing troubles and struggles from escalating. Community houses and centres offer many opportunities for participation and connection in local communities.

Health and Mental Health service providers based in communities are undertaking some of the advocacy role that is now required to enable people to access the services and support that they need. Valiant attempts are continually being made by people at the frontline of these services to secure the income, housing and transport people need to be well and to function in our society. It is not easy. The often time consuming advocacy work required is an added burden in the provision of health and education services and may contribute to inefficiencies with in these systems.

Many people in the frontlines of community, social and health services are working 'above and beyond' the call of duty to care for the more vulnerable members of our communities. There are large expectations on the shoulders of a very often under-resourced and oversubscribed sector of our community that is effectively attempting to fill a void created in part by less accessible State welfare services.

The people who are working within the system of State welfare and health services are required by the State to serve people in a particular way, that stipulates conditions and requirements and may lead to a refusal to provide welfare if conditions are not met. Public servants while caught up in, may also contribute to, a system that expects people to behave

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in particular ways with limited supports to meet rigid requirements to attain welfare services.

#### Community responses to food need

Numbers of people in our communities at times struggle to make their incomes stretch to feeding themselves or their families. With the increased conditions of the State system, a number of community groups have developed their own services to ensure that, at the very least, people have access to the food that they need.

Many Church based groups (e.g. Methodist, Catholic, Baptist, and Salvation Army) have offered a range of either free or low cost community meals every week over a number of years. Table 9 highlights the community meals that are currently provided in Hamilton each week.

**Table 10: Community meals provided in Hamilton**

DAY	PLACE	TIME	COST
Monday	Methodist City Action Methodist Centre 62 London Street Hamilton	12.00 noon	\$1.00
Tuesday	St Mary's Cathedral 494 Grey Street Hamilton East	12.00 noon	\$1.00
Tuesday (fortnightly)	Phoenix House 22 Richmond Road Hamilton	6.00 pm	No cost
Thursday	St Vincent de Paul High Street Frankton	12.00 noon	\$1.00
Friday	St Vincent de Paul High Street Frankton	12.00 noon	\$1.00
Sunday	Te Whanau Putahi 37 Oxford Street Fairfield (Off Heaphy Tce)	12.00 noon Following Church Service	\$2 Adult \$1 Child

The organisations providing these community meals have decided to charge a small fee as an acknowledgement of the service and a way of encouraging responsibility.

- *The value of unconditional love and service*

The meals offered by Hamilton Homeless Trust complement these services and they also articulate the desire to reinstate the values of unconditional love. The Hamilton Homeless Trust, coordinates the service of hot nutritious food that is free and open to anybody, every night of the week in Hamilton. Approximately 50-60 people attend each meal service. Rosters of volunteers cook and serve the food and the people coming to the meals help with the dishes and cleaning up.

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**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** There are too many conditions in society today. If you don't meet certain requirements you don't get help. So I look at what we do, how we run our meal serves. It is unconditional. We don't ask questions. Anybody is welcome to come to the serves.

It is common to hear people talking about people abusing the system. However, as one coordinator of the Hamilton Homeless Trust suggests, a service based on unconditional love and support, cannot be abused:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** Over the past few months I have had people come to me and ask "How do you know that the people that are coming to the serves really deserve it? Do you get people abusing the service?" To me, you can't abuse the service, because it's unconditional. You don't have to be a certain kind of poor, in which case it is not possible to abuse it.

It can be challenging to resist the "need to know" why people come to the meal service and further, to resist the temptation to judge who might be deserving or undeserving.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** Unconditional service and love. It is not our business to know why people come. We have to make it our business to love them while they are with us, for the duration of the time that they are with us.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** And they can talk, but whatever they say does not affect what they are given. We do support them as much as we can. If they are ready to talk, that's fine. It's not necessarily about changing their lives. It's about accepting people how they are and working with them if they want to.

The Hamilton Homeless Trust reflected on the challenges of remaining unconditional in service provision:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** It's a challenge to keep things unconditional. The Hamilton Homeless, before it became a trust, was renting a house. People could stay there and pay rent. But then bills did not get paid. So I can understand why it is difficult to keep that sort of thing unconditional because to keep it functioning it requires conditions. We can stay unconditional because we keep it simple. It's a meal and love and I guess because we have not had to rely on funding. We are not dependent on funding - we are dependent on volunteers. It is a huge amount of work. I wouldn't like to think about the hours put in.

The Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinators articulated their intention to provide an unconditional service and to operate on the value of unconditional love. These values are at the heart of all of the community meal services operating in Hamilton and inform the way most social service agencies strive to practice, often in the face of judgements about "the deserving or undeserving poor".

A number of factors such as high demand and limited resources can lead to organisations implementing some conditions when providing a service. The Hamilton Combined Christian

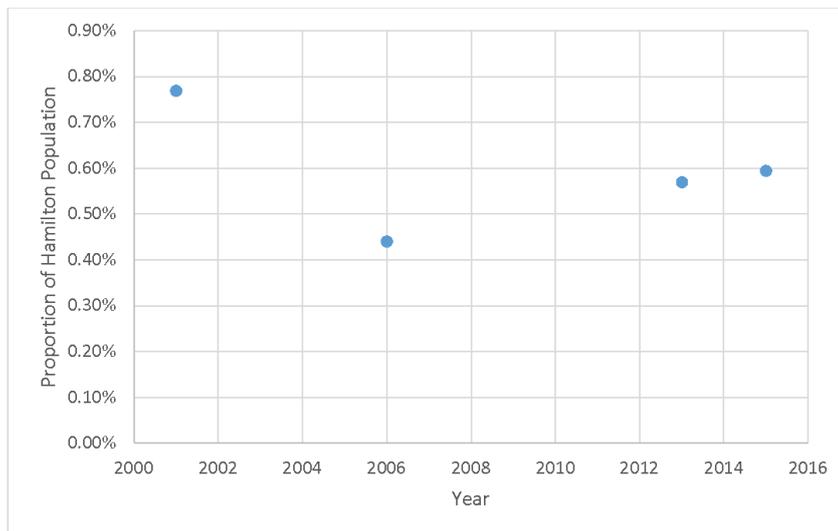
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Foodbank, while having some conditions, does use empathetic discretion when deciding whether or not to issue food parcels.

**Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Coordinator:** We decline some people for food parcels. For example, a family may turn up at one of the agencies for a food parcel two days in a row. If they have clearly not been budgeting well with what they have, we will turn them away. Sometimes it may be that their pantries have been cleaned out by hungry teenagers and in that instance we will give them another parcel.

The demand on the Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank, as measured by the proportion of population accessing the service, reduced between 2001 and 2006 but has increased again since (see figure 8).

**Figure 8: Proportion of Hamilton Population Served by Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank**



The Salvation Army in Hamilton reported a reduced number of requests for food parcels, suggesting that the provision of community meals, such as the Hamilton Homeless Trust meals, may have reduced this demand. Reduced demand for food parcels is not reflected nationally.

*In the year to September [2015], it [The Salvation Army] recorded a 7 percent increase in requests for food parcels compared to the previous year - the biggest rise since 2011...Community Ministries Secretary Pam Waugh said the difficulty of securing affordable housing, mounting debts and bills were factors...Ms Waugh said unexpected situations, such as a family member getting sick, made people's situations worse...Most of the people asking for help had children, but there was an increase in requests for assistance from single men.*  
<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/290874/more-families-in-need-of-food-salvation-army>

The following stories illustrate that providing a little bit of food when needed can make a significant difference.

**Social Worker in Schools (1):** Schools are more involved now with breakfast clubs and lunch programmes, whereas in the past this was harder. No child will go hungry at school and some children come for a second breakfast.

**Community Services Coordinator:** We get those who come door knocking at the centre and they come in and talk to [staff member]. They may need bread and milk for their kids. They come on a bike or walking and they are quite happy because they know that they can ask and they will get something. Even if we don't have milk, they will walk out with something to eat, something that will last them. It's not a hand out because they do not come often. You know they are stuck because you don't see them when they are okay.

**Community Services Coordinator:** If they are really hungry then they are looking forward to the food and they want to have something to eat. But then they find that they have to wait many hours, so we bring them back here to the centre and give them a cup of tea or whatever and then take them back to get their food.

Without food provision in the community there may be more unsettled and frustrated people because they are unable to find the food that they need. Consistency of care matters to the most vulnerable.

**Christian Social Service Worker (2):** I was telling him [manager] that at our meals our patrons [at Hamilton Homeless Trust meal serve] were getting quite aggressive, which is not a normal thing for our patrons. They are so thankful for their food they are never aggressive toward each other let alone the people who are serving them... So we had a little bit of a look around and I asked him to get the list of meals that come out in the community every week and I noticed that there was a huge gap between Tuesday to Friday for meals during the day...Now when that happened and we talked about it – my manager decided that he was going to see what he could do about starting a Thursday lunchtime meal which started last week. In saying that the guys changed – they don't have the aggression anymore, they are much more placid, they are much more communicative. I'm telling you there is something going on in our community that people are trying to tell us and we have to be aware of what is happening. Just that one change has calmed everybody right down.

We heard stories of the community stepping up, without funding, so that they can provide support in a way that makes sense for the community and without the conditions.

**Social Worker in Schools - 2:** Huntly West Community Hub has just started up a breakfast club and lunch for the kids. My colleague spent a couple of mornings down there. On the first day there was not that many children but the next day there was heaps because the word started to spread. In Huntly we know those kids might only get one meal a day. It is all run through the church organisations out there. It is not

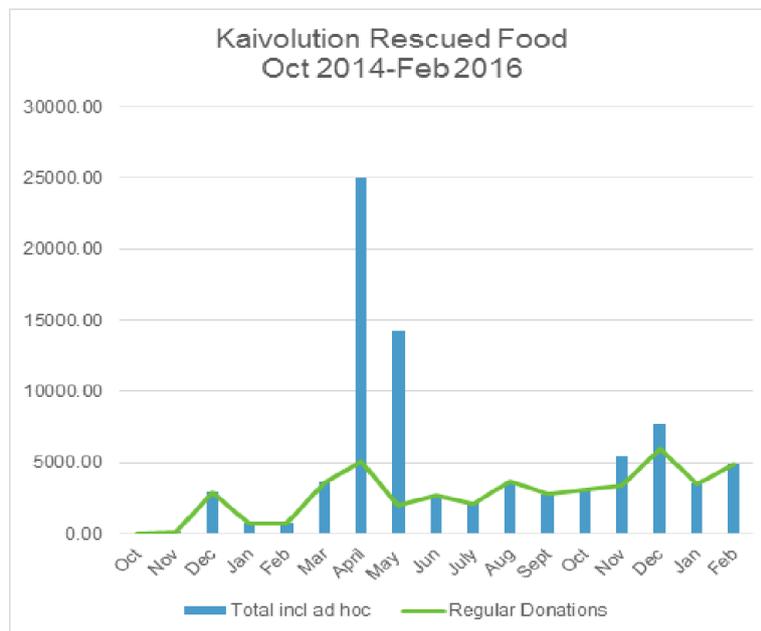
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funded through a contract or grant - they are just running off what the community has brought in...

Kaivolution, a food rescue service operated by the Waikato Environment Centre, has helped free up food resources in the community. Kaivolution rescues food that is “good enough to eat but not good enough to sell” from food retailers, distributors and growers and redistributes this to charities serving people in need.

The kilograms of food rescued by Kaivolution and redistributed to charities throughout Hamilton are highlighted in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Kilograms of food rescued by Kaivolution Oct 2014 - Feb 2016



The food provided by Kaivolution has been particularly valued by the community and is providing some relief to families who have empty pantries and who cannot afford to buy 'fancy lettuce'.

**Community Service Manager:** One of the cool things is Kaivolution. We get all the salad and we drop it off at those kind of houses that we identify in the community. And we have boxes here and people come and pick it up. It is a real boost for the families because buying salad is expensive. Of all our Facebook posts – food posts get shared the most. People do look out for each other. Kaivolution is a good way of getting good kai into people’s homes. A lot of times people would not buy the sort of food that comes through. They have never had rocket and certain types of lettuce

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and they would not buy it. They would buy bread and others bits and pieces and processed food, but not fresh food. Getting fresh food in there is different and cool for them. The lettuce can go in a burger or something like that.

Systems like Kaivolution that gather and redistribute food are not only providing a valuable service to people in need, they also have beneficial environmental impacts by reducing the amount of food waste going to landfills.

### Practical support

A manager of a social service agency reflected that it was not hard to get food packages, but that supporting people with issues sometimes preventing them from achieving sustainable food security was much harder.

**Manager Social Service:** The families are accessing services but the flip side of that, when we talk about putting basic food on the table, are the parents just blowing their benefit on drugs and alcohol and they don't worry about putting food in the cupboard. It is a real thing but it goes back to mental health and drug and alcohol issues and how are we supporting people to address these issues? No parent wants to purposely neglect their children, but everything else is going on around them.

Social service providers report a need for practical support in the community.

**Social Worker in Schools 3** - I think there are basic needs that all families need – food, a house – and as social workers we are as stuck as anyone to provide what people need.

Community based services are potentially more able to provide this kind of support because their support comes with less conditions.

**Social Worker in Schools 3** - It is really difficult to get practical support for people. The agencies that are most practically supportive in terms of food and helping her [young mother on her own with children] out are the church based agencies. They are much easier to contact to get things like food and basic needs. Otherwise, for this family and for others, there are fairly big hurdles to get things like food, grants for nappies and formula and the practical support needed.

**Community Service Administrator:** People are unable to get a private rental and also unable to access the internet and phone services to actually be able to look for properties. So we provide internet and phone access here. One family has spent the past three weeks here, daily, trying to get houses and interviews and getting friends to then take them to the interviews.

We have worked really closely with about five families over the past year – we have wrapped around them and done everything from appointments, jobs, CVs, helped the kids get stuff done, computers, provided clothes and bedding and we just made their lives more liveable so that we can actually move onto someone else. For some

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of the families [our work with them] would be about 3 or 5 months...They start to come in and start to access the services and they are gradually on their way.

We have seen quite a few people who have got into a bad financial situation very quickly and who could be in that situation tomorrow – they have gone from ‘Mum and Dad both working’ to a crisis in just two weeks. Dad loses his job and Mum is up against it. Dad has to move to Auckland to get a job. The vegetable packs provided through the centre can help people in those circumstances. Some churches help out. We have helped move people out of houses when there is no other way of doing it...We do what we can to prevent things from getting worse.

Community based agencies are offering considerable support to people in times of need that complements and supplements what is provided by the State. The diversity of services and the good will of people who are providing services in an attempt to meet the desperate needs of people is the foundation of our communities in Hamilton.

#### Creating whānaungatanga - places of nurture and belonging

Community, Church and Social Service agencies who value interdependence rather than individualism are offering places of nurture and belonging. The combination of increased requirements to participate in the workforce and low paid work stretches the capacity of parents to independently nurture and care their children in ways they wish to. Some parents do not have the resources to afford before and after school care or holiday programmes. If affordable and subsidised programmes do exist families do not always know how to access them. Community initiatives, programmes and centres can also provide some level of safety, and care for children and families.

*Communities who offer whānaunagatanga stand in stark contrast to values of individual aspiration and responsibility that have become prevalent in wider New Zealand Society since the 1980s (Rashbrooke, 2013).*

**Community Service Administrator:** Some parents are at work but do not have enough money to put their children into after school care programmes so they say “Go and hang out at the park or at the community centre” where they know the kids will be safe.

**Community Service Manager:** A lot of kids are left to their own devices after school. If we weren’t here they would likely be alone. We have 20-30 kids each day using this centre as a base – they will be down here until 6-7pm at night. The ages range from 5-13 year olds.

*Children in New Zealand are more likely to be poor, and less likely to feel safe and well, than children in most other developed countries (Grimmond, 2011).*

**Community Service Administrator:** We even have some 4 year olds on their bikes, just roaming the streets – this is at the very end of the scale.

**Community Service Manager:** So these kids are all in the mix. We keep a good eye on what happens at the skate park. It could be a lot worse if we weren't here. I guess that is part of the reason why parents might think 'sweet'. I guess that is a positive thing that the community is reasonably trusting and you hope the parents are trusting of the kids and not just sleeping and saying "Off you go".

This last quote reflects some of the tensions between the responsibility of parents to provide for their own children and the role a community centre plays in offering extended care without judgement or conditions.

Community meals can provide an important place of belonging. This view is supported in a report from Community Waikato after visiting the Methodist City Action meal service.

*Food is clearly not the only benefit of this meal. It is also a key opportunity for guests to interact with Catherine and others and give their views on community issues. People are treated as important and valued and they are not judged. Someone commented that this is a place where they feel acknowledged they exist and that someone cares, especially for those living on the streets. This may bring with it a sense of invisibility as a result of being generally ignored or avoided by other members of the community (Community Waikato, March 2015).*

Consistency is part of a nurturing society. Community houses and centres, together with local schools, can provide spaces of connection, belonging and opportunity. Consistent care and positive opportunity provided through local services, projects and programmes can promote a feeling of security that is particularly essential in the lives of children.

**Christian Social Service Worker 2:** Our guys [people who come to the Hamilton Homeless Trust meals] do need educating, but when you have been out on the street for too long you don't have the capacity to retain anything – so it takes more than a once a week kind of education system. And not too many people are willing to work with homeless people anyway. So there has got to be some sort of consistency like the lunch every day. Once they get to know you and they start talking their things through with you and before you know it you have their life story. Now you haven't asked them but they have seen you consistently for so long they trust you.

**Community Service Administrator:** The kids look forward to the sports days and they are down there at the park waiting. They see the van coming and stream out of the houses.

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**Youth Development Worker:** It is important to show consistency and planning. There are some key guys that are a bit older now and they come through the ranks and take the initiative to get the sports gear out. They are the junior leaders and we are always building on that. We see three or four generations coming through. There is the older lot, our mates' kids, and their kids' kids. The programme has been running for 14 years. It was initially a City Council initiative.

**Community Service Manager:** We have four community days. They provide something to look forward to – it is their Rainbows End for the year. The events are a big part of what we do here. Our events are low cost for families. Everyone feels good about living in their community...It is important to have those traditions and milestones throughout the year. We have got adults who came earlier now bringing their kids along. The older teenagers don't come, but as soon as they have kids they come back or send the kids.

**Community Service Administrator:** It [consistent community events] gives them a really good sense of community. It is amazing to see the families get together and they see everyone they know. Someone has moved from one street to two blocks over. Everyone gets together. One 17 year old drops litter and one of the Mums, does not matter which one, tells him to pick it up. The events create a real sense of community.

The predictability of community events and activities can enable participation, opportunities for leadership, intergenerational connections, and relationships thereby building up the fabric of an interconnected and supportive society.

For people who are struggling and dealing with issues of poverty, affordable community events can make a positive difference in their lives.

**Community Services Coordinator:** Those that are poverty stricken in one way or another, when they come to these events it is magic, because they will get food, even if they are not able to buy it someone will give it to them. You see that kind of thing. A little baby has got no kai so someone will walk up and give food to them - it becomes a magical spot. We get good feedback. Some of the kids don't see much because Mum is not taking them out. For the under 5s, for those not the school, the events provide an opportunity for them to go out.

Despite the value of these community initiatives and the support they provide, funding is difficult to get.

**Community Service Administrator:** We can't get as much funding for the events as we did, but we still want to keep it really awesome.

We heard stories of community creating spaces of belonging.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** ...the atmosphere at our dinner service, they vary each night – but most of the time we try and create the whānaungatanga – that place - that sense of belonging.

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**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** We've got people who used to come and now they are doing better. They come and be part of it. And they don't necessarily come and eat, they come and be.

Another value raised by some participants was the importance of purpose, which is emphasised by Mary Clark (2002), in her book 'In Search of Human Nature'. Having a sense of purpose and its relationship with mana and wellbeing is a challenge many people living in poverty experience.

**Practice leader TFCO programme:** I am wondering if it's about purpose. Maybe there are people who don't have a long-term purpose – and I'm talking about the extreme wealthy and the extreme poverty stricken – what's their real purpose?

In my conversations with people in extreme poverty, it was always about this lack of purpose. Their lives were about just getting through the day, just waking up and whatever happens in their day – their purpose may be to get a hit or press the pokies. This translates into a disconnect with mana.

It is a good question - what's your purpose? People in poverty and neglect may not actually have one; the weight of the world may be too much for them to actually have a purpose.

When people find a purpose it can have a transformative effect. The following stories illustrate how Community centres can be places of belonging and enable purpose.

#### **For the price of pizza**

**Community Service Administrator:** We have kids who come in and we give them something to do. One kid, his Dad had lost his job and he was a big hassle to us. The kid was angry at everyone and everything. I was getting annoyed...I said to him – "Do you want to organise [something]... We said "We will sort out the prizes, print off registration forms and you get your mates and choose who does what. You can have a meeting". They put on an amazing event. It poured with rain the whole time...The boy turned from a menace to being really helpful - he comes into the centre now and vacuums...He has turned from a hassle to the most helpful little guy and all we did was give him some tools. It cost us almost nothing. For \$30 we saved society \$50,000. We turned it around with an invitation to participate.

#### **A room, some flyers and lots of happy little girls**

**Community Service Administrator:** We had one lady - a 'stay-at-home Mum' who had been out of the workforce. She started up a dance class for under 5's and 5- 7 year olds. We gave her the venue for free. We do that for people for however long it takes. We give them free advertising and print off flyers for them. She started up a little business and now the money is coming back into us and she has some income...and there are heaps of happy little girls. They did a big dance recital for the

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community at 'Treats in the Park'. Everyone loved it. Their families came over from Cambridge – little girls in the audience are saying "I want to be one of them". It just grows.

Community centres, schools and public spaces are places where social connections, relationships and opportunities are enabled in ways that reinforce the value of the people they serve.

**Community Service Administrator:** This guy had been working his whole life, but had been out of work for so long. He was maintaining how he was, wearing clothes like he was ready for work, coming in, bringing all the change he could bring to get copies of his CV...One day, a recruiting agency...came over...I knew this guy and his CV...While the company was here visiting the centre, the guy came in to make more copies of his CV and I said "You guys need to talk to each other." They went in the meeting room for half an hour and when the guy came out he was beaming. It had been about three months with the CV and he was reaching the end of what it takes. Stuff slowly starts to fall off.

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** The school where we have our classes has started having an international food festival each year and our community of women have been participating.

In the first year, the principal asked if the women would like to cook something for the festival. I tried to explain that the ingredients could be paid for, but the women refused this and said that they would pay for the ingredients. The first year was really successful. The women were blown away because people were buying their food and appreciating their food.

We did it again the next year and cooked the food in the school hall. And then last year the Afghani women cooked in our classroom and the Somali women decided to cook at home and bring their food. Some of the women also helped serve the food so this was a good learning experience as well as for self-worth, it was also good for the school community.

It was getting the message out there that these people, the refugee community, don't have much, but they have skills and will share what they have...they have that pride. By facilitating the festival, the school is enabling the women's nurturing.

Often relatively simple ways of creating opportunities for participation have a significant impact on the lives of people.

On the other hand there is also an ongoing need for Central and Local Government to increase the level of community based resources to meet the diverse needs of groups in our community. There is a gap in the provision of a central place for Pasifika Peoples to be able to access support. Information can be networked through the churches but the churches are not a place for everyone.

**Health Worker P37:** There is a real need for a Pasifika hub in Hamilton. There is not one space for Pasifika to congregate. There are lots of different churches but there is not one space. Originally when the Hamilton City Council set up the Migrant Centre they thought it would be somewhere for Pacific people to go as well. But they [Pacific people] don't see themselves as part of the refugee settlement I guess and so they do things quite separately.

**Health Worker P56:** We really do need to have a better orientation and information pack for those new people coming into New Zealand because they get here and it is hell for them. They can't drive, they don't have money and they don't get the \$19.25<sup>15</sup> an hour. There should be a good orientation system for those people who are coming so that every year they get a pack so that people get the information they need to continue on.

We heard many stories of people who give everything they have to care for the people that they connect with in their community and in their work. Their ability to build relationships enables them to be the people that others will turn to in need.

**ESOL<sup>16</sup> literacy teacher:** I had a woman in a class and she was living next door to an abusive neighbour. She did not say anything. She just put up with it, because she was in a Housing New Zealand House and she felt that she should be grateful for everything that she has been given. She finally confided in me. She did not want to call the police because she thought that this might make her neighbour even worse.

People are going the extra mile, because it is simply needed. Adults with mental illnesses don't necessarily have a family to take care of them.

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** Adults, unlike children, with mental illness often have to take care of themselves. They need to find their house, their 'this and that' - the person who is unwell has to do this work. You hand the responsibility and safety back to the adult client as soon as they walk out the door.

This client, the woman with three children, has been taken to hospital twice with really risky behaviour, overdosing, so that is partly where my compassion comes in - it is too risky to not be supporting her...People don't tumble forth to help with this work.

**Christian Social Service Worker 4:** The people who volunteer – are there enough?... I am acutely aware that I come from a faith community as well...and it's hard for me to see them moving their feet. And so I am self-assessing them, but it is good to be part of a faith community and I have experienced the things that [friend] is experiencing and it's one of the most humbling things I have ever had to do was go down and get food from the Salvation Army. I had scraped and done whatever I had to in terms of my mortgage and kiwi saver to keep going and get ahead and pushed forward with my studies. But again my daughter was in need and someone from that

<sup>15</sup> \$19.25 was the 2015 living wage hourly rate, the 2016 rate is \$19.80 (<http://www.livingwage.org.nz/>)

<sup>16</sup> ESOL = English to Speakers of Other Languages

faith community gave the money to support her – so it is beautiful to be part of that community.

The service providers in this study generally practice with values such as consistency, cohesion, and interdependence that support and strengthen communities. Places, spaces and events bring people together in ways that offer care, nurturing, interaction and connection to break the many forms of isolation experienced by people, particularly those who are struggling with poor health or the pressure to make ends meet for themselves and their families.

#### Advocates - supporting people to deal with an abusive system

The increasing complexity and conditionality of State welfare services appears to necessitate, or has pre-empted, another layer of service that could be described as brokerage or advocacy. Without this layer of service, people in need are less able to access the support that they are entitled to. Advocacy is often provided for free by the community. Occasionally this layer of service is contracted out as another layer of service.

**Salvation Army 9:** There are so many layers of service that they have to try and work their way through and some people do not have the capacity to work their way through that. The Government does not help people to make their way through it - they hide benefit access from people, so it comes down to agencies like ourselves who try and put it in the context of what is available and advocate on their behalf. There is a great failure of The State providers and The Government is setting it up so that people have to have an advocate, but often the advocate is not there. The Government are requiring agencies like ourselves to become the advocates and the navigators of the system.

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** I have noticed an issue with accessing glasses. A lot of women in my classes have never had to read fine print or a whiteboard before. We encourage them to go and buy \$2 shop glasses. I called WINZ for one of the women to see if she could get a subsidy. This is a long process, negotiating an appointment with Specsavers and organising an interpreter. It takes time to organise all this and this is often after my teaching is finished.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** The people that are showing up at The People's Project may have 10 people in their house. They may live in overcrowded conditions or in accommodation that is not suitable, or they may be sharing with people who they don't want to share with...They are homeless in a sense but not in need of emergency accommodation...

The People's Project has created another tier or layer of service...I had a client that was looking for a house and he went to Housing NZ and they said it would take 2 years to get him a house. The People's Project is probably relatively immediate.

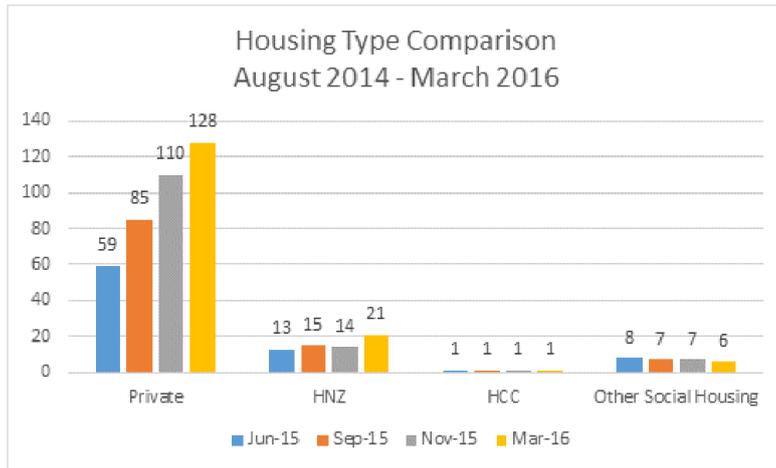
**The People's Project:** We advocate and support people through the Housing New Zealand Housing assessment process managed by Work and Income.

**What is The People's Project all about?**  
 The People's Project has been established because so many people in Hamilton are concerned about people who are living on the streets or sleeping rough. We need a community wide response. No single organisation alone has the ability to solve this challenging problem. People sleeping rough is a complex issue and it will take many of us working together to solve it. (<http://www.thepeoplesproject.org.nz/>)

The People's Project is enabling people with housing need to find adequate accommodation in the private rental market. Navigating this market on your own, with many layers of vulnerability and with limited resources, is challenging.

Figure 10 highlights the type of accommodation that has been found for 156 people by the People's project. The majority (82%) of these people have been housed or rehoused in private rental accommodation. Of which 91% have remained housed.

**Figure 10: Type of accommodation found for people by The People's Project**



Services are having to draw together all of their resources to advocate to State services on behalf of their clients. This work is resource intensive.

**Community Health Worker 4:** People are staying out of their overcrowded houses for as long as they can and only coming back at night. Some of the teenagers are staying with their friends, because there is no space in the house. Everyone is in each other's face. There is a lot of brewing up of different personalities and characters and so they do their best to stay away from the place...

We are going through a process with strengthening families, and all the internal and external services to put more pressure on the housing services. We see this often throughout all the families that we work with.

Services are forced to find housing for people because government housing services are not doing the job.

**Community Health 18:** We have housed more than 25 families and we are not even a housing agency. This is getting ridiculous. WINZ is aware of the stats but according to them, if the whānau have a roof over their head then they are fine.

There is some expectation that with encouragement and education people will find their 'voice' and be better able to name their problems and to advocate for themselves.

**Salvation Army 1:** In our parenting programmes we really encourage people to see services as working for them and not working against them. So we have had to change the mind-set of the people coming. We say "Make the organisations work for you, get them on board with you, tell them what you want" - that has made them have a voice and if they have a voice we will be more able to identify what the problems actually are.

There is energy for increased advocacy in the community especially when there are some success stories to draw on such as the 2001 Valarie Scoble case heard by the Wellington High Court where WINZ were challenged to inform people about their benefit entitlements.

**Salvation Army 9:** There is case law – Scoble versus the Crown. A woman, Valarie Scoble, in Lower Hutt was not offered information about her entitlement and she got to the point where she had to sell her house. A social worker became involved and realised there was an issue – she took the crown to court and eventually won. There was a huge back pay and there was a change in policy that made it so that all information had to be put on the table by WINZ. So if we find that people have not been told about their entitlements then we should challenge this... We should try and capture some of those cases and advocate.

Even with the advocates, there are still barriers to service. The gatekeeping role played by WINZ staff can place expectations and demands on the person in need to meet requirements for support.

**ESOL Literacy Teacher:** One woman in my class had post-traumatic stress. She needed a letter from WINZ that she was in my class. I told her that I would drop the letter off to WINZ for her. I was going to meet her at WINZ and she was a little bit late. Finally I got to speak to someone and I was told that I could not leave the letter with them and that the woman needed to bring the letter in herself. This woman ended up going to WINZ, but when she got there she was made to stand in line. When she finally go to the front desk they told her that she was late and that her appointment was off. If she was there on time, waiting in line, how could she be late? There are some gate keepers to get through.

The need for advocacy is using up valuable skills in the community and is creating a multitude of extra work requirements for social and community service workers. There are a lack of interpreters and people to help with the work of supporting new migrants to be able to access services and live well in our communities.

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**Health Worker 10** - A lot of the work social services do is advocacy around getting our families to understand the systems in New Zealand. We have come across that as a major issue. We know there is a language barrier and an interpretation barrier which is even bigger.

**Clinical Psychologist 2:** This one woman...has 6 children. She has found two of her children since she has been in New Zealand. These two children are still back where she came from and she is desperate to get one of them out here. I spend a long time trying to help her with this. A lot of my time is spent helping the women with this sort of thing.

I had gone to this family (woman with six children) and there was a pile of mail that had not been opened. Some of the mail was not for her. I wrote 'return to sender' on this mail - that is foreign for her and too difficult to explain.

There were bills with arrears owing – what she nor I understood was that if you fail on one automatic payment then they do not keep trying and you lose the automatic payment - it falls over, so she was \$875 dollars in arrears. I called the power companies with her and with an interpreter – it would have been at least 45 minutes to go through the whole lot and set up the automatic payment again.

Community based services that are able to go between services, identify issues, provide needed support and advocate on behalf of families are at times able to prevent issues from escalating.

**Social Worker in Schools 1:** As social workers in schools we see these sorts of things. Teachers, because they are focused on the education side of things, don't necessarily see the things we see. I was chatting to a boy recently and I noticed some school sores that looked infected. The public health nurse checked them and spoke to Mum and she went to the doctor and they got the sores treated. Who knows what would have happened if that had not happened.

As social workers in schools we have the time to talk with the kids and to listen to something that they would not necessarily say to their teachers and then we can act on this.

**Community Service Administrator:** The three year old said that his sister had had a drink the previous night and he remembered having food before lunch the previous day. We had a meal here for the volunteers that day after the tree planting. We went back to the house and a bunch of cars had turned up. Mum and a bunch of young guys were drinking and smoking weed. We went up to the kids and gave them some food and showed him where to hide the food in some cupboards in the lounge that did not look like they were opened very much. We had sandwiches and filled rolls and I told the boy to hide them for today and tomorrow.

Sometimes noticing what is going on and responding to an immediate need can make a difference to children, although the living situation they are in will be much more complex to deal with.

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Community centres can support people to cope with the manipulations of some markets.

**Community Service Manager:** When an easy credit & high interest finance furniture & appliance shop opened at the Nawton shopping centre we got in early and did a front page story on that and we did a front page story on the trucks as well....We have had people in at the centre and we have rung the companies – one lady cancelled her order and they still took all this money out of her account. She had just met the timeframe for cancelling her order but they still took money out of her account. There is a bit of a fee they charge for cancelling an order. However, this lady rang the company back and said that she had 7 working days to cancel and that they had included a weekend in their assessment of 7 days. It took quite a few months to get her money back. They said “We will get back to you - we will look at it.” We recorded all the phone calls. The companies are quite hard to deal with and track down. The lady eventually got her money back.

A manager of a social service agency in Hamilton reflects on the increasing conditions of service and highlights the possibility of doing things differently.

**Social Service Manager:** You can't access support if you don't meet that threshold and you will only just get your benefit. There are people out there who want work but who don't have the support they need...yes they have got issues to work on, so empower them to do so, teach them different ways. Society just puts up barriers. There are community initiatives out there, but they are not big enough - they can only awhi these people - they cannot remove the barriers.

Advocacy has become an increasingly important role in negotiating between people needing support and State agencies. This research project has focused on the experiences of Social Service agencies and offers a number of critics of the service people experience when working with Work and Income NZ (WINZ). The researchers have not sought a response from WINZ, largely due to limited resources.

### Summary

Community based services become the glue in seeking assistance to access resources that help in holding people vulnerable states together enough to find a way through difficult situations. In response to the observed increase in conditions of service, some people are rising up to reinstate the value of unconditional love. This value was the foundation and beginnings of social services in Aotearoa New Zealand and has become somewhat tempered by both beliefs related to and the practicalities of managing resource limitations.

Practical support can be challenging to find in the community and social services appreciate the community centres, community programmes and churches who can offer practical support, such as food and clothing, without conditions.

One of the ways that the community responds to need is with food. Food is a readily shareable resource by people who have enough. Places of connection, community and sustenance in our community are being facilitated through the various community meals provided in Hamilton during the day or evening supported by various Church Groups and

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the Hamilton Homeless Trust. The newly established food rescue service Kaivolution has also freed up food resources in the Hamilton community and is greatly appreciated.

Community houses and centres also provide nurture and opportunities for people to participate in events and activities. Consistent, local community events are appreciated by the community. Predictability tends to provide a sense of security. Community centres generally enable a sense of belonging and purpose, which are the hallmarks of a fulfilling and happy life.

A new level of service has emerged in the community and is described as advocacy or navigation. These are vital services that enable people to navigate welfare services and housing markets to get their needs met. More of this type of service is needed in our community.

#### Suggested actions

- \* Lobby Hamilton City Council to invest in community houses and centres as places of connection and support. Eliminate contestable funding. Reinststate a solid and generous funding base for each community house and centre.
- \* Support consistent and ongoing local (suburb level) community events so that relationships can be restored and developed within local communities.

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## Theme 5: Common Good Culture

The culture of common good and community has been dismantled and needs rebuilding. The mana in some families is hidden and needs to be resurfaced. There is a need to build relationships and awhi people where they are at in their journey. Within this section are stories of the kinds of relationships that underpin the restoration of a society that has lost its way. There are stories of manaakitanga and of non-judgemental, unconditional love.

Community houses can be places of connection enabling the accessibility of services. There is a need to consider the breadth of the community houses in the city and the places of inclusion and participation. Community houses and centres can nip challenging situations in the bud before they escalate. Community houses and centres can support people to access the food and budgeting services they need and they can support people to navigate the complex interface of welfare and social services.

The stories we have heard indicate a need for more accessible addiction services. These services could be provided through community centres or they could make referrals and facilitate access. Hamilton City Council could partner with churches who have facilities that could be more accessible to the community and that could facilitate access to resources.

There is a need for emergency housing for families so that they do not have to sleep in their cars. There is a need for more affordable accommodation and this need is urgent. The Council needs to look at development possibilities and facilitate the creation of mixed affordable homes. There is a need for single units for people with complex needs who are trying to get back up on their feet again.

The People's Project has helped both rough sleepers and people with insecure tenancy to navigate government welfare services and private rental markets to find accommodation. There is a grapevine in operation in the community and people are aware that The People's Project will advocate on their behalf. The People's Project is founded on the principle of Housing First, providing accommodation first followed by wrap around services.

There is a need to increase services for new migrants, both the refugee community and also migrants from the Pacific nations. People with good English and literacy skills are struggling to navigate an increasingly complex system. The challenges faced by people with low English and literacy skills would be considerable.

The Hamilton City Council has many opportunities to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. The Council's support of planting fruit trees in Nawton could be extended. Community houses, if appropriately resourced, can work with the community to facilitate these plantings and the ongoing care of the fruit trees.

There are many possibilities for providing increased cohesive support for people with limited resources. The development of these possibilities will require a reprioritisation of resources from central and local government and a focus on the creation of the common good society so that all people are afforded the opportunity to live a flourishing life.

#### Relationship and solidarity with the vulnerable

*The reason our society is being neglected is because its leaders are neglecting it. We have great churches because we have great leaders. Strong Māori communities have strong Māori elders. I can tell you now that my whānau don't know who the Hamilton City Councillors are, but they do know who the president of the mob is and they do know the CYPS staff member down the road. It would be nice to see our Councillors do the ground work with the whānau and lead them from the ground up (Community Health Worker 6).*

The development of relationship across spheres of difference enables increased empathy and the realisation of shared humanity. A comprehension of shared humanity is one of the hallmarks of a society that values and promotes the common good.

With traditional charity people may not have the opportunity to recognise and notice the wider context of poverty and hear the life stories that in turn enable them to recognise their own vulnerability and shared humanity. The following stories highlight how more privileged people can come to realise their shared humanity with people who are less privileged.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** So many people have come back and said "I'm getting so much more out of it that I'm putting in". By doing this, it's not only helping others, it's helping them. There is something about serving others. With the people that we serve there is a lot of gratitude, a lot of reciprocity, not from everybody but from those that can. There are people that will stay back an hour and a half at the end to clean up... it's not just a hand out. It's nurturing the volunteers and the whānau that come.

**Functional Family Therapist:** Equally too, we need to come from their worldview not ours. They are sharing their stories with us. When they are sharing with you it is important to not just look at the risk factors but to not tread on their mana, because you are giving them an opportunity to share their mamae or their hurt. We tend to do a lot of reflecting with the families and pluck a bit of strength that they do have and work on that to bring them up again to face the world and society, because that's the ultimate goal - to empower them to be able to go out on their own and stand tall.

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**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** There are a lot of challenges that you do go through. The work and the connections that we are making with people – it has broken me. But it keeps me real. It keeps me grounded and despite the challenges I'm still very passionate about what we do and who we serve. Each of them still have a voice.

People serving with the Hamilton Homeless Trust are surprised by the humanity of people who are most vulnerable. The dominant story operating in our community suggests that people with limited resources and complex vulnerabilities are somehow differently human. The development of connections across communities helps to dispel this dominant story and enables a new story of understanding and compassion to emerge.

**Christian Social Service Worker 5** – I was really choked when I went there and oh I couldn't believe it - and it is still eye opening, every day you learn something from people.

**Christian Social Service Worker 1** They are very respectful. When Catholic Family Services have their turn – you know they [the people eating at the meal] have the table cleaned up and tidied up beautifully and they helped us.

The experience of being in relationship with the most vulnerable can be a transformative experience. One of these transformative experiences was relayed to the coordinator of the Hamilton Homeless Trust:

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 1:** They [a couple] said to us “When we left here last night, we left here differently. When we first started coming, we were just serving meals, that's what it looks like, but after last night, it's more than just serving meals”. The woman got a bit emotional; she said “I was really touched last night by seeing the community rally around”. A man had collapsed and there were a couple of other things that were happening as well...I think she just picked up on the dynamics and she just thought “this is community”.

People, experiencing their own vulnerabilities, often give back. Being in a community and in relationship gives people the opportunity to care for one another, to participate and to feel good.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** One lady that comes for the meal - she works in...the bakery, so she brings the leftover bread for the serving. It's almost like that is her contribution.

**Christian Social Service Worker 2** – Well I think in the homeless community, you know how I was talking about the aggression going on, well the reason I was so shocked by that was I have seen them take care of one another. When somebody comes onto the street fresh they actually gather around and say “Have you got anything to sleep with, have you got a place sleep, have you got kai”? And they

would take that person under their wing and take care of them until they can stand on their own two feet.

The relational approach creates community and people begin to look out for each other. This connection and care is part of the common good society.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** It was quite an interesting experience - basically on my night there was a bit of a fight going on – and I tried to break it up and I got a bit stuck in the middle of it. But the response to that was incredible. My Dad was at the serve as well. And when he saw that I was receiving some of the blows, which has never happened before, never...He actually tried to come as a protective father, but he couldn't reach me because so many of our whānau had moved to protect me too. Everyone just came and to the point where my own father could not come and rescue me.

A 'life-time' ban from the Hamilton Homeless Trust meals was imposed on the person who started the fight.

**Hamilton Homeless Trust Coordinator 2:** And they made it like – “You can't come back to this place because this is a good place” – they stepped up and took ownership. It is a real strong community.

There are always some conditions that come with service and care. Creating an expectation and understanding of standards of behaviour is an important part of a functioning community. At the community meal provided by Methodist City Action, for example, “there are expectations of behaviour and these are strictly enforced which contributes to the air of courtesy and respect” (Community Waikato, March 2015, p.8).

The following two stories illustrate the ways in which relationships of trust are developed and how these relationships are in turn the foundations of a society that minimises harm and creates opportunities for connection and change.

#### **The man on the bridge**

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** There is another guy that also lives between jail and the nightshelter – he is in and out, in and out. I had to talk him down from the bridge the other day. I got a call from the police to see if I could come down to the bridge and talk to him. He was on the rafters of the Bridge Street bridge and they had to close the bridge down.

So I said to the guy on the bridge “What are doing up there?” and he said “I'm sitting”. And I said “Can you come down because the bridge is closed off?” And so he came down and we both got driven away in the police car...he said that he would not come down from the bridge for the police, but that he would come down for me. His birthday was on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December and I gave him undies, socks and chocolates. Just imagine having a birthday that no-one celebrates. Finally they can feel like someone is acknowledging them.

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### The Nawton Homeless Guy

**Community Service Administrator:** We have a local homeless guy - he is just [young]. His parents threw him out because he wants to drink himself away. He is living in the bush at one of the parks and has made a house there. He hangs out here and we give him some food. He is known as the Nawton homeless guy. He suffers from addiction but he is not ready yet to give it up. We always say that we are here for him and we give him food to eat and say "Eat it up to get some strength back"...some people may see it as enabling, but we know where he is at.

**Youth Development Worker:** He is around 24'7- there would be a lot more tagging and a lot more damage if it weren't for him. The kids know him. We told him not to drink when he is here and he understands that enough.

**Whānau Support Worker:** As a parent, when I first saw him I was like "who the hell" but then I got to know him and talked to him and I understand why the guys help him...What he knows right now is what he knows.

**Community Service Administrator:** He can't imagine himself doing anything else. We are slowly trying to seed these ideas into him.

**Whānau Support Worker:** He needs reassurance that someone is there for him.

Relationships of trust and ongoing relationships of care can protect people who exist on the margins from increasing vulnerability.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** I have long-term men that have left the shelter that I will still support. I will drop food and clothes to them if they need them so my relationship with them is ongoing and it does not break off. You can see that they need assistance now and again. I would rather that they stay in their own houses rather than come back here.

People talked about the need to create a culture of solidarity, belonging and inclusiveness so that the fabric of society is strong and supportive.

**Manager – Social Service:** I think culture is an interesting one, culture in a broad sense, cultures of the way in which families' function. This is our biggest challenge - the culture in which they live and the culture of their lifestyle. If we think about culture in its true sense - they are two worlds apart - how we bring that back together so that, as the Functional Family Therapist says, the families have some mana?

**Manager – Social Service:** When we think about gangs, there is sense of belonging – we could all think of something positive about being in a gang. Our cultures are in that negative space and we need to think about how we shift those – we talk about the loss through the Treaty and if we look at the percentage of Māori that we work with, it's about linking them back into their true culture versus the culture that has been created around them. Those basic needs - Whānau, hapu, iwi, a holistic approach, creating a new culture because they are caught up in this other culture. We need to create a new culture that fills needs and meets needs. The question is

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how do we break that cycle when we listen to all the barriers that are put up in our communities? It's a biggy.

**Foster Care Worker:** I really like the whānau ora in my area, in the Coromandel – they do this brilliantly. It's not just about me but about my whānau, hapu and iwi – the regrouping is not just about my whānau, but about resourcing the hapu to provide support for my whānau...I have seen some success of whānau ora and it works in smaller communities.

One person reflected on how breaking away from a culture of individualism and consumerism will have costs and that a transition to a common good society will not be easy. There are many challenges associated with cultural change.

**Christian Social Service Worker 2:** It will be costly, regardless of the choices we make it will be costly for people to pull out of all the lifestyle choices they have made now. It is not just going to cost them finances, it is going to cost them relationships, it's going to cost them all the work they have done over the years to build up to all the positions they have been in. And that is a lot of losses – it's just as many losses as when they first went there. It's quite a horrific thing to actually do.

However, the creation of a culture of solidarity and care was described as not always about going back. Sometimes people assume that Māori can go back to whānau, but they may not want to do this if this is their greatest source of pain. Sometimes the most important work is to create community where people are. One person described this as the creation of the 'modern marae'.

**Christian Social Service Manager 1** - That reminds me of when quite a few years ago I went to a conference in America around social justice and there was this black American woman and she stood up and basically said "I don't want to go back amongst the poor, I came out of the poor, I don't want to return there. So I couldn't go and work there because I don't want back in my life all that that represented". It sent a shockwave through the conference actually but it was her truth.

And sometimes we want people to do that – we expect people to go back to the places where they felt the greatest pain in their life actually.

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** A policeman came the other day and dropped this guy off. He said "I've been having a word with him to tell him to go back to family". I said "He can't go back to family because when he was in family he was abused, and when he was in care he was abused and he has been homeless ever since. This is the only home he has had". This guy has his own room at the shelter and he looks after things. He is a bit of a volunteer. He has no other home to go to. The policeman was Māori and he thought that this man could go back to whānau, but that is not quite the way it works. He is not the first generation of his family to have been removed to foster care - he would be second or third generation.

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### Relationships and solidarity between services

There is a need for consistent, connected, coordinated care and wrap around services for vulnerable people. The following story illustrates this need. Many social services are restricted by their resourcing in terms of being able to provide comprehensive wrap around support, but there is a need to find ways of working collaboratively that will result in positive outcomes. Without coordinated care, people with complex vulnerabilities are less likely to receive the care they need.

**Community Mental Health Nurse:** One morning I had tried to get Simon collected by one of the health transportation companies so that he could go to the doctor, but I could not get anyone to do it and some of the services are way too expensive. So I said "I'll do it" - I went along to this house, cleaned him up as best I could and off we went to the doctor...

Simon would not have been able to get the help he needed with his hearing without me. GP practice nurses don't see it as their role to go around the community, advocating to various places for the support that people like Simon need. Mental health services do pick up a lot of slack. They have paid for Simon's carpet to be cleaned – as it has been soiled on numerous occasions - and they paid to have his ear wax removed. All of these things are not really related to his mental health...his mental health is mostly managed. The issues that most affect him relate to his physical and community health needs and these are not adequately provided for.

I worked hard to set up a care plan for Simon so that he could be discharged from our service and managed in the community by a variety of services. I really sweated over it, I had the GP, the social worker and the practice nurse all lined up. However, three months after being discharged, Simon was back in with us. The GP had completely ignored the care recovery plan that I had worked so hard to set-up. The GP had determined that the only time he could see Simon was at 9am. At 9am, Simon shows up at the GP office, having soiled himself the night before and smelling. The carer that comes to wash him does not come until 10.30am in the morning. The GP, seeing that Simon was soiled, considered that he is not well and refers him back to our service. Yet, the issues that Simon is dealing with have nothing much to do with mental health, they are more to do with the coordination of his care in the community.

The carers that shower and clean Simon come in during the morning and the afternoon – the morning carer comes in at 10.30am and the afternoon carer at 1pm. Simon can be effectively left from 2pm until 10.30am the next day – if he soils himself at 3pm, he is left in this state until 10.30am the next day. I have talked with the carer services about this, but the afternoon carer explains that the agency does not pay him enough to be able to travel across town again to shower Simon later in the day. I've tried to advocate to the service manager but they just don't get it.

The achievement of coordinated care for the most vulnerable was noted as requiring some fundamental changes in the system.

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**People's Project:** There is however some fundamental changes that need to occur in our system, because they [government services] are perpetuating the problem. We need to stop managing by exclusion. We need interagency systems that share information and we need to remove the bureaucratic barriers for our most vulnerable people.

What we need is a whole system approach that identifies when a problem is going to happen and intervenes early to provide the right support in a timely way so that individuals and families don't reach their rock bottom.

The People's Project sees a future that looks very different. A future in which instead of homelessness, we have a system of care.

There are various levels of collaboration between the social services who often find ways of working together in mutually supportive ways. Having time to talk together is a valuable aspect of service collaboration and integration that can result in better service delivery. Contracts for service need to recognise the time that is involved in collaborating and in building relationships across the various sectors involved in providing care and support for the most vulnerable.

#### Threads of common good society

People remembered the times when they considered that the values of common good were stronger in the community.

**Social Workers in Schools 4:** There has been a change in philosophy. My Dad went through the depression and at his school they had a koha basket. If his family had made a lamb roast one night then they made extra sandwiches for other children in the classroom the next day. And there would have been other days that Dad would have taken sandwiches from the basket. There is a different kind of mentality today. In my father's generation it was expected of the community that you shared and looked after each other.

**Community Health Worker 17:** I remember as a kid there was a lot more sense of community togetherness. The area I grew up in was not a rich area but the neighbours took care of each other's kids, fed each other's kids, and disciplined each other's kids. Everybody knew each other – this is part of where this neglect and abuse is coming from. We are not taking care of each other. How many of us know who our neighbours are? When I grew up, there was a lot more sense of community ownership.

Threads of a society that values collective provision and care were described.

**Social Worker in Schools 3:** At [one of my schools], quite often there is a box in the staff room for people to contribute to that goes to people in need. Like a Mum might

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be in hospital and auntie is taking the children so there will be a box put together for auntie. There is quite often a box of groceries delivered from the school.

**Social Workers in Schools 1:** In one of my schools, there was a family with about 6 kids and their house burnt down and the family lost everything. The school put up a white board outside the school hall saying “If anyone has any bed sheets, blankets, food etc. please donate” and people just brought it in and donated what they could.

We heard stories of communities developing processes that enable participation and reduce the exclusions of a market and money based system.

**Salvation Army 1:** There is a new centre on Grandview Road called Creators. It is really pro families and is making it possible for our families to be able to attend. It is marae style – so parents can actually do some work in kitchen or garden in part payment for the childcare. It has a whole new way of being funded and is backed by a church.

**Community Services Coordinator:** They buy them [schools uniforms] from the schools. They have a system where you can work off your school uniform. Mums can go to school and voluntarily work. They have the same system for fees.

We heard about the importance of providing consistent opportunities for participation so that people can know the rhythms of their communities and are able to plan.

**Whānau Support Worker:** If you know it is happening in a couple of months then you can find a way to pay for it.

**Youth Development Worker:** We provide consistency so that the community can prepare ahead. Families post [Facebook] that they are putting away a couple of bucks each week. The events have got such a history to them. We provide 2000 packs for the families. People can come and volunteer and make up the packs so there are other ways of making the events affordable and possible for all the families.

**Community Service Administrator:** People will post that they have no way of getting there and someone will go and pick them up.

The common good values of sharing and caring were described as being alive in smaller communities.

**Social Workers in Schools 4:** In terms of the families that are living in [small rural communities] – food is not quite the issue that it is in the city because you have got the bush and the rivers and hunting and things like that. In our rural community...if there is a stew being made down the road then there will be other people, the nieces and nephews, who will have wandered down to join in and eat together. I’m not saying that their houses are beautiful in these places, they are run down, but in terms of the kai, there is food for the kids.

**Family Worker 1:** They tautoko each other in smaller communities.

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The society of the common good was described as more challenged in the context of a larger community.

**Social Workers in Schools 1:** In a city, in a way, you can be more isolated. You can be just another faceless person really. Even foodbanks or similar services, they check if you have had a food parcel before and if you have then they can't give you another one. I know they have to do that, but it is difficult for people. A lot of it seems to be about numbers but not about people.

There is considerable support for the work of community centres and houses and people articulated the need to create places of belonging in the community.

**Community Health Worker 1:** The Council needs to provide more resources in terms of neighbourhood community houses. They are key areas for the city. The Council needs to be marketing these houses as access points for people to go to and they need to resource the community houses adequately.

**Community Health Worker 3:** The amount of funding that is provided to community houses actually needs to cover their operational costs. I think the Council needs to improve the resourcing of these houses.

Dismay was expressed at the lack of Council investment in community houses and centres, and concern was expressed regarding the shift to contestable funding for these places.

**Community Health Worker 3:** ...the Council are starting to reduce their footprint in the community housing area. This is sad because the community has got nothing else. The Council is not putting investment into that area [Enderley] or that building [Enderley Community Centre].

**Hamilton Christian Nightshelter Manager:** Community houses are community trusts and they get Council funding but it is contestable now...There was no new money and other organisations, if they satisfied the criteria, could apply to the fund. There was a service level agreement for each community house. They got an average of \$40,000. Now something else can start up and dip into that funding.

The lack of practical support can be the thing that tips the scales. If they don't get basic things they may lose their accommodation. That is why the community houses should be supported and thrive – they can nip issues in the bud. That was one of the concerns around the Council's change of funding. If community houses are functioning and funded really well, then people should be able to go to them as a first port of call. The houses are in their neighbourhood.

People at the front lines of social and community services express hope for greater investment in community facilities and services and developments that support families.

**Community Health Worker 10:** I work in the Fairfield area. There is hardly anything out there for our rangatahi. There are very few alternative after school recreations and nothing to keep them busy. The Council could create or increase the recreation

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opportunities out there. There are some, but there needs to be a lot more and a lot more options. A lot of these kids don't get to see or access the opportunities...We need to increase community services especially for our youth and offer more alternative education options.

**Salvation Army 6:** [What needs to be done?] Definitely reducing isolation. There is fear in a community for all sorts of reasons and this has created pockets of people isolated in their own communities and in their own homes. I think that potentially what we need to do is start building neighbourhood connections. We don't often have neighbourhood connections within our own families, because we are splintered so we need to build those families in our communities – this could be a huge step in reducing the neglect because there are more eyes on people.

**Health Worker 33:** We have got families who are living in rows and rows of flats in Frankton and there is no space for the kids to play – seriously and I thought Council allowed that to happen. If you are having developers and builders building these flats isn't there something for the Council to say you need to have a space in the back for the kids to play...It's like a nice place but there is nothing to do – there is nothing to do nothing for the children to do and the Council allowed that to happen – they are the cause of the problem.

Community houses can keep people active and engaged. They are local, easily accessible places where people can develop relationships and get to know about the community services available. Community houses and the services and connections they offer can prevent issues from escalating. There is a desire to offer more opportunities for participation in the community, but barriers to achieving this.

**Community Health Worker 11:** In terms of community programmes - is there anything that the Council could do in terms of subsidising or granting community exercise and health programmes or facilities for families? In Enderley they have a gym, but he is wanting to do community group work and he wants to open a gym but there is no funding.

**Community Health Worker 3:** The Council is basically getting rid of the overhead associated with their facilities and the expense of looking after them – they are renting out the spaces and they are looking for people who can pay. A lot of people want to do stuff in the Enderley area, but they have no money to do it. The Council are looking for people to pay without them having to put a cent in.

Churches can still provide places and spaces of support for people in the community. People reflected that across all the Pacific communities, the church becomes the hub of community:

**Health Worker 28 -** There are some people that get the information and take the opportunities and they make a go of it, find a job and whatever they can do to support their families – I think it is a good sign but some of them are saying we have no choice but to get into it and get on with it. But the churches are their main support here in New Zealand.

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**Salvation Army 9:** One of the very practical things that we try to do here with our worshipping congregation, is look for positive accessible gateways for clients to enter into a community of people that they ordinarily would not mix with.

**Health Worker 30** ...for the Tongan community we have about 15 different churches across Hamilton and these are the places people belong to and go to for support.

### Summary

There are many people providing social services in our communities that also value the development of a common good culture where all people are included and cared for in various ways and in times of crisis and need. There are good hearted people in services that provide food for the hungry and are attempting to do this with love, heaps of volunteers and very few conditions. There are people who work with the homeless to ensure they have shelter and beyond that for some a place to call home. There are families who stretch their meagre resources to assist others in need and there are social workers, teachers and school communities who really do care for the children who attend and find ways to support their families at times.

*We need to create a new culture that fills needs and meets needs (Manager Social Service).*

There are people in our communities who are assisted by the kindness and generosity of the professionals who have roles in health, mental health, education or refugee and migrant services to name a few. Many of these professionals go beyond the call of duty to ensure the people they serve are getting the best possible all round care and support.

Community houses and centres were noted as being places of connection and learning for people in some of Hamilton's lowest decile communities. The services they provide offer hope and even a lifeline to people in times of crisis and need. The contributions back to the community are hard to quantify, however the overall quality of communities is improved.

The common good culture is growing as are the are calls for the Hamilton City Council to be generous in its support of the Social Service sector and Community Houses and Centres which give such sterling service to people in our communities who are experiencing vulnerabilities.

### Suggested actions

- \* Reclaim social justice values of sector
- \* Work to restore Mana
- \* Build common good culture

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## Conclusion

Many opportunities exist for the restoration of lives and the rebuilding of the common good society. Policies, actions and services underpinned by the values of caring, manaakitanga, collaboration, unconditional love and interdependence enable the common good society to flourish. The public services provided through central and local government, along with health services, social and community services, and people gathering together in their communities all have a part to play.

Calls were made throughout this research for greater collaboration between local and central government, housing, health, welfare and community sectors in Hamilton. Participants expressed a need to build and strengthen networks and improve the quality of service provided to people experiencing vulnerable circumstances.

The accepted arrangement in New Zealand society where people pay taxes to central government and in return those taxes are used for the common good of all people would appear to be under stress. Many stories were shared about the increased conditions and the requirements to be met by people, sometimes in desperate need, when accessing welfare and housing services from Work and Income NZ in particular. Timely access to budgeting services to support applications for financial help was a frequently highlighted issue.

Concerns were expressed about the time it took to get help, and the lack of respect and care some vulnerable people were experiencing in their dealings with Work and Income. These experiences indicate considerable levels of stress both within the very complex benefit system and in the way people experienced difficulties in accessing this system. There appears to be some gaps in the provision of services that provide more holistic and longer term care. Such services can enable and ensure social change and development. As it stands now, there is a constant need for 'ambulance at the bottom of the cliff' services

Social and community service agencies could be described as the glue that holds and supports people to live well in interdependent relationships in our communities. They work with people who are trying to manage a range of vulnerabilities experienced through their life journeys. Vulnerabilities may have occurred through being put into foster care as a child and living in multiple homes, engaging in behaviours that have led to a prison sentence, experiencing poor mental health or addictions to alcohol, drugs or gambling, arriving in New Zealand as a new migrant with little knowledge of English or local cultural practices, to name a few.

People with limited resources and complex needs are struggling to access the income, food and accommodation that they need. Good hearted people are working to provide food for the hungry either through community meals or food bank services and are attempting to do this with love, heaps of volunteers and as few conditions as possible. Advocacy services, currently provided by a variety of front line health and social services in Hamilton, are making a difference and they need support, development and strengthening. Walking

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alongside someone in need in a holistic way is valuable work that is time intensive and under resourced in our community.

There is clear research evidence that shows the relationship between the number of alcohol outlets in a community and increased alcohol related harm (New Zealand Law Commission, 2010). The current accessibility and affordability of alcohol and gambling in Hamilton does not support people to make positive choices in their lives. Hamilton City Council, through Hamilton's Provisional Local Alcohol Policy<sup>17</sup>, have some power to limit the number of alcohol outlets in Hamilton. Further, some people experience accessibility issues such as funding, childcare and transport that become barriers to attending available addiction programmes. Lack of attendance may then impact on the ability to care well for their children.

Moving around Hamilton city can be a challenge for people with limited resources. Many households do not have access to a motor vehicle so their only options for transportation are to walk, bike or catch a bus. Public transport such as bus services are expensive for people on low incomes and do not always get people to the places they need to go. This presents a barrier, for example, for families getting children to schools and can disrupt school attendance. There is an urgent need for Hamilton City Council and Waikato Regional Council to find ways to support more affordable and accessible public transport options. In general people rely on motor vehicles to get about the city and the lack of a drivers licence can be a significant barrier to employment opportunities particularly for young people. Programmes that support people to get a driver's licence need to be funded and accessible for people with limited resources.

New migrant peoples need ongoing support to understand and navigate the cultural and social systems in New Zealand. Many migrant peoples are supported through, for example, the Migrant Resource Centre and the Red Cross, as well as community and family networks. Members of Pacific communities are working towards setting up a Pasifika resource hub in Hamilton City. Greater public and local government support is needed for this hub as the burden of supporting new migrants from Pacific countries is stretching the resource base of families and churches in the city.

Growing inequality between those with more wealth and the least wealthy is a significant impact of 'market driven' economic policies throughout New Zealand and across the world. Houses have become a key commodity and investment in the market place resulting in increased availability and affordability issues for many people in our communities. The poor quality of the general housing stock, especially at the lower end of the market, across New Zealand is a further issue that has been brought to our attention in recent years.

Poor quality housing has negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of our community. The rates of respiratory illnesses and rheumatic fever are disturbing and are responsible for a high number of hospital admissions and associated with many deaths in New Zealand. The

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.hamilton.govt.nz/our-services/alcohol-licensing/Pages/Local-Alcohol-Policy.aspx>

Government is implementing minimum standards for rental accommodation, but the onus for making a complaint about poor housing conditions remains with the tenant. Many tenants will be reluctant to complain, particularly when affordable rental accommodation is hard to find. Warrant of Fitness (WOF) schemes have been shown to be affordable and feasible resulting in improved housing conditions. Advocacy is required to lead the way in creating a local WOF for all dwellings that people live in throughout Hamilton.

All families and individuals require secure, affordable, warm, dry accommodation, yet for many people with limited resources and complex needs, access to suitable accommodation is limited. It is difficult to find suitable accommodation options for people with mental illness being discharged from hospital. More advocacy initiatives are needed to support people in need of more adequate accommodation.

The People's Project, for example, has successfully worked alongside a number of people, helping them to navigate social housing services and access the private rental market to get the accommodation that they need. They have been actively involved in developing a social housing plan for Hamilton.

There is a need to ensure that adequate accommodation is provided for people being discharged from prison and hospital, and that wrap around social service are facilitated. There is a stark need to provide temporary emergency accommodation facilities in Hamilton. Work and Income currently puts some people in need of emergency accommodation into hotels. More appropriate and low cost emergency accommodation is needed.

The stories presented in this report suggest the urgent need to open up and expand accommodation options for families and individuals who face multiple barriers to accessing the limited pool of State housing and the private rental market. People in need are caught in between limited State housing provision and an exclusionary housing and rental market. Their wellbeing is dependent on the conditional and limited generosity of the State and the generosity of some private landlords prepared to take a 'risk' to provide housing. The generosity of the State is reflective of our collective generosity and our commitment to the common good and the wellbeing of one another.

Community houses and centres are a highly valued resource and offer a point of contact for many people who are in need of social support in their local communities. They build and restore local relationships and are uniquely positioned to be able to coordinate suburb level events and activities. Consistent local events are tremendously valued by the community.

Further, community houses both observe what is happening and build support for local actions to improve their communities. Two examples of actions are fruit tree planting initiatives and advocating for the banning of mobile trucks. Mobile retail trucks operate in the lower income communities of Hamilton. The marketing techniques they employ are manipulative and prey on vulnerability; and the prices they charge are generally much higher than city retail outlets.

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With better resourcing community houses could provide a range of services including greater access to debt elimination and reduction support and be a point of access for school uniforms. A commitment from Hamilton City Council to increase investment in and reinstate a solid and generous funding base for each community house and centre in the city is called for. Strong, supportive and interconnected relationships are central to the wellbeing of any community. The work of the Hamilton City Council’s Community Advisors and Community Development team is vital contribution to the wellbeing of the Hamilton community.

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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Community Assistance  
Funding Policy 2016

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Community Assistance Funding Policy</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is budget allocated Amount \$1,160,000</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- Is to provide the Community Forum Sub-committee with the context of the requirements to register with the charities commission, and the impacts this has for community organisations funded through the Single-Year Community Grant.

## 3. Executive Summary

- The Community Assistance Funding Programme was reviewed in 2014, and was approved in 2015. The Community Assistance Funding Policy and funding eligibility guidelines provide clarity of how to allocate the funding, but also provides fair and transparent parameters for organisations then considering an application to the funding programme.
- Registering with the Charities Commissions and the cost of compliance for small community organisations is significant compared with the total amount of funding received.
- The Single-Year Community Grant Allocation Committee recommends amending the Community Assistance Funding Policy criteria that requires organisations to be registered with the Charities Services, to include the following criteria for organisations to be a registered legal entity that includes; Charitable Trusts, Incorporated Societies and Limited Companies.
- Should the subcommittee wish to amend the Community Assistance Funding Policy, then a recommendation would be required to be made to the Strategy and Policy Committee.
- The City Councils and Philanthropic funders identified in the report, do not require community organisations to be registered with the Charities Services to be eligible for their small grant funding.

## 9. Recommendation from Management

That the report be received.

## 10. Attachments

11. There are no attachments for this report.

## 12. Key Issues

### 13. Background

- The Community Assistance Policy was adopted at the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting on [8 April 2015](#), upon the completion of the review of the Community Assistance Funding Programme and Policy by the Working Group during 2014.
- Council requested that applicants be registered with the Charities Services as a level of assurance that organisations receiving public money existed for charitable purposes and comply with industry reporting standards.
- Charities Services, Ngāa Raatonga Kaupapa Atawhai is part of the Department of Internal Affairs, and is legislated by the Charities Act 2005. It exists to promote public trust and confidence in the charitable sector and to encourage the effective use of charitable resources. This is done through registering and monitoring charities and processing Annual Returns. Good governance and management practices are supported by providing educational support, advice and materials.
- Registrations under the Charities Act 2005 has a significant influence on public trust of the sector. The fact a charity was registered under the Charities Act 2005 was the fifth most important driver for public trust in [national surveys](#) conducted.
- There are 27,000 charities currently registered nationally, all advancing charitable purposes. It is unknown how many organisations are advancing charitable purposes that are not registered.
- At the 14 July 2016 Finance Committee it was requested that the Community Forum Subcommittee consider the charitable status criteria within the Community Assistance Funding Policy.
- Eighteen organisations failed to meet this eligibility criterion, as they were not registered with the Charities Services.
- Captured in this report is a recommendation from the Single-Year Community Grant Allocation Committee and benchmarking of other grant makers.

### 14. Benchmarking

#### 15. *Tauranga City Council*

- Tauranga City Council allocates small grants within the community development match fund, and has an upper limit of \$1,000. Applicants at that level do not need to be a registered charity, trust or organisation. The rationale is to support grass roots community by making the process simple and accessible.
- Medium grants between \$1,000 and \$10,000 are also available for non-formalised groups, however for these amounts an umbrella organisation is required to administer the funds on their behalf.

#### 16. *Christchurch City Council*

- All groups need to meet the following criteria, a community based not-for-profit community, recreation, sporting, arts, social service, environment or heritage organisation.
- All Groups applying for more than \$2,000 must be incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 or the Charitable Trust Act 1957 or be a legal entity that is registered for charitable purposes.

17. *Wellington City Council*

- All applicants need to be a legal entity; this includes Charitable Trusts, Incorporated Societies and Limited Companies. Individuals are not funded through grants.
- Organisations that are not legal entities can apply for funding with an umbrella agreement, where an organisation agrees to take responsibility for the project and the funding.

18. **Local Philanthropic Benchmarking**

19. Local Philanthropic Trusts do not require applicants to be registered with the Charities Services for the following reasons:

- Due to the amount of compliance relative to the size of the group and the funding they receive. eg: small groups with less than \$10,000 of funds going through their accounts, with a donation of \$1,000 would have to do an annual return to the commission and also comply with accounting standards. This seems an unreasonable amount of compliance for such small funding.
- Some groups do not qualify to register. eg: sports groups, schools, advocacy groups.
- Cost and time to complete annual return may out way any benefits they may receive from being registered.

20. **2015/16 Single Year Community Grant Statistics**

- In 2014/15 the Hamilton City Council “Small Grant (Community)” and “Arts and Culture Grant” combined received a total of 181 applications, requesting \$761,298 of which 124 were successful, allocating a total of \$405,000. This means an average grant of \$3,266.13 was allocated.
- In 2015/16 the Hamilton City Council “Single-Year Community Grant” had a total of 151 applications, requesting \$703,581 of which 94 were successful, allocating a total of \$292,000. This means an average grant of \$3,106.38 was allocated.
- The following table provides the number and the size of an organisations annual income that applied for funding through the Single-Year Community Grant 2015/16.

<b>Organisations Annual Income</b>	<b>Number of Organisations</b>	<b>Organisations Funded</b>	<b>Organisations not registered</b>
Under \$15,000	26	16	8
\$15,000 - \$50,000	26	14	8
\$50,000 - \$100,000	18	16	1
\$100,000 - \$250,000	36	27	0
\$250,000 - \$500,000	14	12	0
\$500,000 - \$750,000	13	9	0
Greater than \$750,000	18	0	1
	<b>151</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>18</b>

21. **Strategic alignment**

- The [Community Assistance Policy](#) was adopted at the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting on 8 April 2015, upon the completion of the review of the Community Assistance Funding Programme and Policy by the Working Group during 2014.

22. **Legislative requirements or legal issues**

- Council is not legislatively required to provide community assistance funding. However the Local Government Act anticipates grants as an activity of councils.
- Section 5 of the Local Government Act provides a definition for the term ‘activity’:

*Activity means a good or service provided by, or on behalf of, a local authority or a council-controlled organisation, and includes;*

- a. the provision of facilities and amenities, and
- b. the making of grants, and
- c. the performance or regulatory and other government functions.

**23. Financial and Resourcing Implications**

- 24. The 10-Year Plan budget has approved \$1,160,000 per annum to be distributed through the Community Assistance Policy.
- 25. In the years 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18, \$868,000 per annum has been approved to 27 Community Organisations through the Multi-Year Community Grant. A further \$292,000 will be allocated annually through the Single-Year Community Grant.
- 26. Any change made to the policy will require it to go through the full adoption process and may necessitate consultation with stakeholders. The revised policy will then have to be recommended to Strategy & Policy Committee for approval before recommending the revised policy for adoption by Council. Accordingly, with provision for consultation, the resourcing required to complete the review of the policy is estimated at \$4,000.

**27. Risk**

- 28. An allocation committee, comprised of members from the community has delegated authority to allocate and approve community grant funding on behalf of Council.
- 29. Successful applicants must have produced accountability reports for previous grants received to be considered for further funding.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Sports Facilities Fees and  
Charges

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## 1. Background

2. Following a request from Council, a cost of Community sport analysis was completed in 2014. The purpose of the analysis was to compare the cost to Hamilton City Council to provide the facilities required for 13 sporting codes.
3. The scope to undertake this analysis included community sport only. High Performance Sports facilities such as Waikato Stadium, Seddon Park and Claudelands Event Centre were excluded.
4. The initial analysis identified the net cost to Hamilton City Council to provide facilities to the 13 sporting codes. The costs range from \$0.23 to \$2.72 per person per hour of play, with the average net cost to HCC per person per hour of play as \$0.87.
5. The Sporting codes that require a high level of maintenance of their facilities (such as Cricket), or codes that have a low club membership numbers, such as Volleyball and Touch, have the highest cost per person per hour of play. It is important to note that social players are excluded from this analysis.
6. When considering the operational costs alone, Netball and Athletics are self-sufficient and are no cost to Council; however the capital investment required by Council to resurface courts and tracks, does impact the cost to HCC per person per hour of play, which increases to \$0.71 and \$1.72 respectively.
7. Should Council wish to use the information for future planning and decision making purposes, it is recommended that:
  - Further work is undertaken to quantify participation numbers (including social and school leagues), and usage of Council facilities.
  - Further analysis and discussion with codes and user groups is undertaken to increase accuracy of cost allocation to each individual sporting code.
  - Additional Budget will be required to undertake further analysis.
8. Due to the complexity of the information, it is important to note that the result of the attached analysis is read with the following limitations in mind.
  - The analysis identifies the cost to Hamilton City Council to provide sports specific facilities.
  - Club number information has been provided by Sport Waikato.
  - For the purpose of this analysis, player numbers counted only includes Club Members.

Social league / Pay per play and school leagues have been excluded from the analysis due to difficulties in obtaining consistent information across all codes. Further work is required to gather this data.

- All Clubs based in Hamilton have been included in the analysis, regardless of whether they use Council facilities or not.
- HCC has NOT engaged with each code individually.
- The capital investment costs don't include land purchase costs.
- Includes Capital expenditure from the past 10 years (2005-2015) as averaged per year.
- Facilities with multiple codes have had maintenance costs divided equally by number of codes, assuming equal contribution by all user codes.
- Operational and Capital expenditure allocated to Swimming are estimated to be 5.7% of total costs, based on Swim Club users making up 5.7% of total visitor numbers to Council's pools.
- Operational and Capital expenditure allocated to individual sporting codes are related to the sport specific facility requirements.
- The cost of amenity facilities such as changing rooms, toilets, park furniture, fences/bollards, gardens and car parking are NOT included.

**9. Recommendation from Management**

That the report be received.

**10. Attachments**

- 11. Attachment 1 - Cost of Sport analysis 2014

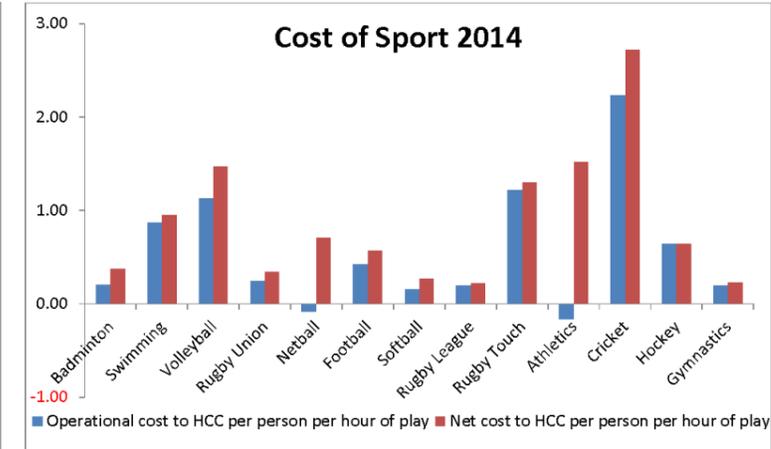
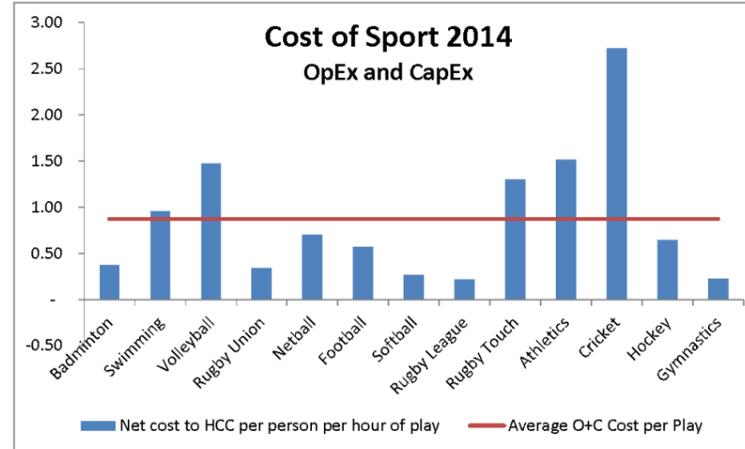
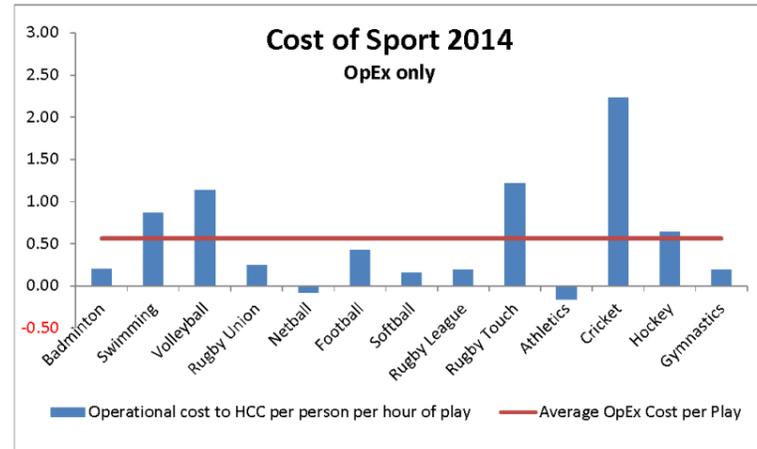
**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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## Hamilton City Council - Cost of Sport 2014

Sporting Code	Players	Hrs/Wk	Wks/Yr	Total hours of play	Operational Cost to HCC to maintain	Revenue from code to HCC	Operational Cost to HCC to provide	Operational cost to HCC per person per hour of play	Code contribution to OpEx	Average Capital Investment per year	Total OpEx + CapEx to HCC per year	Net OpEx + CapEx to HCC per year	Code contribution to OpEx + CapEx	Net cost to HCC per person per hour of play
Badminton	250	2	52	26,000	23,000.00	17,646.00	5,354.00	0.21	77%	4,518.17	27,518.17	9,872.17	64%	0.38
Swimming	840	4	52	174,720	273,600.00	121,518.85	152,081.15	0.87	44%	15,084.85	288,684.85	167,166.00	42%	0.96
Volleyball	127	2	52	13,208	23,000.00	8,000.00	15,000.00	1.14	35%	4,518.17	27,518.17	19,518.17	29%	1.48
Rugby Union	3,279	4	26	341,016	125,144.06	40,640.00	84,504.06	0.25	32%	34,313.47	159,457.53	118,817.53	25%	0.35
Netball	747	4	26	77,688	9,160.00	15,635.00	-6475.00	-0.08	171%	61,379.12	70,539.12	54,904.12	22%	0.71
Football	3,750	4	26	390,000	225,024.09	57,652.00	167,372.09	0.43	26%	56,537.19	281,561.28	223,909.28	20%	0.57
Softball	204	4	26	21,216	4,744.74	1,375.00	3,369.74	0.16	29%	2,363.15	7,107.89	5,732.89	19%	0.27
Rugby League	2,315	4	26	240,760	57,338.76	9,545.00	47,793.76	0.20	17%	6,067.79	63,406.55	53,861.55	15%	0.22
Rugby Touch	348	4	26	36,192	52,524.56	8,251.00	44,273.56	1.22	16%	3,024.68	55,549.24	47,298.24	15%	1.31
Athletics	1,022	2	26	53,144	1,960.86	10,613.00	-8652.14	-0.16	541%	89,481.70	91,442.56	80,829.56	12%	1.52
Cricket	767	4	26	79,768	202,091.79	23,522.00	178,569.79	2.24	12%	38,411.35	240,503.14	216,981.14	10%	2.72
Hockey	560	4	26	58,240	40,000.00	2,500.00	37,500.00	0.64	6%	-	40,000.00	37,500.00	6%	0.64
Gymnastics	674	4	52	140,192	29,900.00	1,989.00	27,911.00	0.20	7%	4,518.17	34,418.17	32,429.17	6%	0.23
<b>ALL CODES</b>	<b>14,883</b>			<b>1,652,144</b>	<b>1,067,489</b>	<b>318,887</b>	<b>748,602</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>320,217.81</b>	<b>1,387,706.67</b>	<b>1,068,819.82</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>0.65</b>
Average								0.56					22%	0.87
Median								0.25					19%	0.64



**Limitations:**

1. The analysis shows the cost to Hamilton City Council to provide sports specific facilities.
2. Club number information has been provided by Sport Waikato.
3. For the purpose of this analysis, player numbers counted only includes Club Members. Social league / Pay per play and school leagues are EXCLUDED from the analysis due to difficulties getting consistent information across all codes. Further work is required to gather this data.
4. All Clubs based in Hamilton have been included in the analysis, regardless of whether they use Council facilities or not.
5. HCC has NOT engaged with each code individually.
6. The Capital investment costs don't include land purchase costs.
7. Only includes Capital expenditure from the past 10 years (2005-2015) as averaged per year.
8. Facilities with multiple codes have had maintenance costs divided equally by number of codes, assuming equal contribution by all user codes.
9. Operational and Capital expenditure allocated to Swimming are estimated to be 5.7% of total costs, based on Swim Club users making up 5.7% of total visitor numbers to Council's pools.
10. Operational and Capital expenditure allocated to individual sporting codes are only those relating to the sport specific facility requirements.
11. Cost of amenity facilities such as changing rooms, toilets, park furniture, fences/bollards, gardens and car parking are NOT included.



**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Hamilton City Youth Report  
2016

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Rangatahi Youth Action Plan</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is budget allocated</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- To present to Council the current and emerging issues being faced by the city's young population.

## 3. Executive Summary

- Hamilton has a relatively youthful population and understanding issues facing young people in the city is critical.
- Significant issues identified by young people in Hamilton include housing, identity and disengagement, social space, media, and disabilities.
- A number of young people and agencies working with them have been consulted for the purposes of this report.

## 7. Recommendations from Management

That the report be received.

## 8. Attachments

- There are no attachments for this report.

## 10. Key Issues

### 11. Background

- Hamilton has a youthful population. The median age for Hamilton is 32.2 years, compared to the national average of 38.0 years.
- Although Hamilton is an ageing population, this will be at a slower rate than most other areas in New Zealand and youth issues will continue to be of importance.

**14. Identified Issues for Youth**

15. A number of agencies operate in Hamilton with a focus on youth development. These agencies provided information of the issues affecting youth in the city.
16. The West Hamilton Interagency Group includes government and non-government agencies working with youth in Nawton and Crawshaw. The issues identified in their Youth Futures Action Plan are school attendance and community participation in West Hamilton, as well as reducing youth offending.
17. The Vulnerable Youth Waikato Governance Group meets regularly to discuss youth issues in the Waikato. This is a multi-agency governance group of central governments departments, focused on the following priorities: disengaged youth, Iwi partnerships and mental wellness/resilience.
18. Council facilitates a number of “Htown Youth Connect” agency meetings throughout the year. Participants at the meeting on 1 July 2016 were asked for their views on youth issues in Hamilton. The four major concerns are captured below.

**19. Housing**

20. Housing is a significant issue for youth agencies who were consulted. This ranged from general issues of the quality and availability of housing to more specific issues around the lack of emergency housing available in the city.

**21. Identity and disengagement**

22. Some young people feel disengaged and lack identity and belonging within the community. This is seen as a cause for various issues affecting young people, including self-harm.
23. Feedback also indicated that disengagement was caused by a lack of family support. Greater societal support for parents would help address this.

**24. Social Space and media**

25. There was an identified lack of social space for young people in the city, which could lead to unsafe situations. Safety issues for young people in the central city at night, particularly after the night market on Saturday were being observed by many.
26. The use of social media amongst young people is creating safety concerns (i.e. being used to film organised fights and posting online were highlighted).
27. The prevalence of social media and smart phones is leading to a perception that young people are being exposed to adult issues and forcing young people to “grow up” more quickly.

**28. Youth with Disabilities**

29. Agencies working with young people with disabilities report that there is a lack of opportunities for them once they finish school.

**30. Strategic alignment**

31. Council adopted the reviewed Rangatahi Youth Action Plan in August 2015.
32. The Youth Council Advisory Panel provides strategic advice to council.

**33. Legislative requirements or legal issues**

34. Section 10 of the Local Government Act provides direction to Council to ensure the current and future needs of communities are considered in decisions.
35. Section 14 of the Local Government Act speaks to the following principles specifically related to this report;

- (c) when making a decision , a local authority should take account of-
  - (i) the diversity of the community, and the community’s interests, within its district or region; and
  - (ii) the interests of future as well as current communities
- (h) in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take into account –
  - (i) The social, economic, and cultural interests of people and communities

**36. Consultation**

- 37. Council undertakes regular consultation with key youth agencies in the city. Staff regularly meet to discuss opportunities to work together and share information.
- 38. Issues detailed in this report were predominantly sourced from discussions held at the HTown Youth Connect meeting in July 2016.
- 39. Elected members were invited to attend HTown Youth Connect meetings to discuss with young people and agencies their concerns and to gain a better understanding of the issues that face them.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Hamilton City Older Persons  
Report 2016

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Older Persons Plan, Age Friendly Cities Global Network</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is budget allocated</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- To present to Council the current and emerging issues being faced by the city's older population.

## 3. Executive Summary

- Hamilton has an ageing population and understanding the issues facing older people in the city is critical.
- Issues for older residents include housing, social concerns, transport and access, and safety.
- A number of agencies who work with older people have been consulted for the purposes of this report, as well as notes taken from an older persons open forum hosted by Council in April 2016.

## 7. Recommendation from Management

That the report be received

## 8. Attachments

- There are no attachments for this report.

## 10. Key Issues

### 11. Background

- Over 16,000 people in Hamilton are 65 years of age or over, about 11 per cent of the population.
- It is expected that the largest population growth over the next 30 years in Hamilton and throughout New Zealand will occur in the older age group.

**14. Identified Issues for Older People**

15. A number of agencies in the city support older people in Hamilton. These agencies have been consulted on current and emerging issues for older people. Below are those deemed to be the highest priority.

**16. Housing**

17. Housing continues to be a major issue, both in terms of availability and quality. For older people, being able to maintain homes and live independently for as long as possible is the main challenge. Quality dry warm healthy housing is a requirement to minimise the impact on their health and wellbeing.
18. The needs of older people are becoming more complex as they age. This will create more demand for more appropriate housing for older people in the future. There is a particular need for smaller (2 bedroom) rental homes more suited to the needs of older people.
19. There are concerns of what happens with older people houses when they move into residential care – often this can be caught up with what plans the family has for the house. Age Concern also suggested a central source of information that identifies social housing, and where to get support.
20. It has also been suggested that development contributions could be reduced for those building housing for older people in the city, to make this more viable.

**21. Social concerns**

22. Social isolation was also an issue, with many older people living alone and with no family close by. Limited incomes meant that engaging in social activities was difficult, and agencies providing assistance getting people to essential services such as doctors' visits had limited resources as well. Elder abuse is still a significant issue, and often the Power of Attorneys is being inappropriately used by family members.
23. There are intergenerational issues emerging. Often grandparents are required to care for grandchildren after school to allow both parents to work full-time. There is an increase in people aged in their sixties caring for parents in their eighties and nineties. Many in the 60-64 group are in need of greater assistance that they didn't qualify for until they turn 65.

**24. Transport and Access**

25. Generally, public transport systems were seen to be effective and working well for older people in the city. However, there have been some reported incidents of older people experiencing falls on buses as they are not given adequate time to be seated before the bus moves off again.
26. City pathways need better maintenance to accommodate for older people who may struggle with cracks in paths and or paths that are slippery or overgrown with vegetation. With more people using mobility aides, paths also needed widening.
27. Access in around Hamilton Gardens was raised, as well as the need for more age friendly park benches for older people to stop and rest.

**28. Safety**

29. The intersection of Barton St and Bryce St was noted by several agencies as dangerous for older pedestrians, as there were no clear rules around when cars should give way. Gaps in traffic were also short and older people were uncomfortable trying to cross if there was limited mobility.
30. Safety for older people in the CBD remains a concern, with perceptions of Garden Place being unsafe still prevalent.

31. There is a perceived shortage of suitable lighting and road crossings in some areas where older people live. Some older residents also requested more speed bumps to slow traffic and make it safer for pedestrians.

**32. Strategic alignment**

33. Council’s Older Persons Plan aims to help make Hamilton a more desirable place for Older People to live. The plan looks to improve areas of council business for older people and is one year into implementation.

34. The Older Persons Advisory Panel provides strategic advice to council.

35. Hamilton’s inclusion in the World Health Organisation’s Age Friendly Cities Network will help to address many of the needs of older people in the city. Council supported this initiative and a steering group has now been formed to develop an Age Friendly Plan for Hamilton.

**36. Legislative requirements or legal issues**

37. Section 10 of the Local Government Act provides direction to Council to ensure the current and future needs of communities are considered in decisions.

38. Section 14 of the Local Government Act speaks to the following principles specifically related to this report;

(c) when making a decision , a local authority should take account of-

(i) the diversity of the community, and the community’s interests, within its district or region; and

(ii) the interests of future as well as current communities

(h) in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take into account –

(i) The social, economic, and cultural interests of people and communities

**39. Consultation**

40. Council staff regularly meets with key agencies in Hamilton that provide services for older people. These include Age Concern Hamilton, Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust, Crosslight Trust, Habitat for Humanity and the Western Community Centre. These agencies have been consulted as part of the production of this report.

41. An open forum for older people was facilitated by staff and supported by the Older Persons Advisory Panel in April 2016.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Hamilton City Ethnic Report  
2016

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Hamilton Plan Rangatahi Youth Action Plan Older Persons Action Plan</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is budget allocated</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 2. To present to Council the current and emerging issues being faced by the city's ethnic and migrant populations.

**3. Executive Summary**

- 4. Hamilton continues to grow as an ethnically diverse city.
- 5. Government and Non-Government Agencies mandated to work with Refugee and New Migrant families have intensified their collaborative response to issues being experienced within the city.
- 6. Sector discussions have identified the following three areas requiring collaborative action in the coming year; Language support and interpreting, Transition to the community and Recognition and funding.

**7. Recommendation from Management**

That the report be received.

**8. Attachments**

- 9. There are no attachments for this report.

**10. Key Issues**

**11. Background**

- 12. Hamilton is an ethnically diverse city, made up of more than 160 different ethnicities, with 24% of Hamiltonians born overseas. In the 2013 Census, the largest proportion of Hamilton's

population (69.5%) identified themselves as New Zealand European. This is lower than for New Zealand as a whole (74%).

13. Approximately 30,000 people in Hamilton identify with a culture or ethnicity that is not NZ European or Maori. New migrants bring with them their own cultural traditions, customs, arts and music, enriching our culture and lifestyle. They also bring connections from their home countries that enhance Hamilton’s global relationships.
14. The current figures show that approximately 4000 International students study within Hamilton.
15. 115 Refugees have settled in Hamilton between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016. These families have come from Colombia, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ecuador, Myanmar and Somalia.
16. Quarterly migration figures from Stats NZ for the preceding 12 months show that Hamilton has grown by 1,514 through international migrants.

<b>Period</b>	<b>Arrivals</b>	<b>Departures</b>	<b>Net</b>
June quarter 2015	539	415	124
September quarter 2015	896	410	486
December quarter 2015	759	380	379
March quarter 2016	997	472	525
<i>Total April 2015 – March 2016</i>	<i>3,185</i>	<i>1,677</i>	<i>1,514</i>

17. **Identified issues in 2015**

18. The following two specific pressure points were presented to the Community Forum Subcommittee in 2015 as needing directed action.

*Language Support to Access Services*

19. Decypher is the sole professional interpreting/translating agency in the Waikato and is the main source of language support for the Waikato Hospital, the Waikato and Bay of Plenty Courts, the NZ Police, various prisons, the Immigration Department and other key clients.
20. Decypher has a team of over 80 professional interpreters that have been trained to work specifically in a community setting and cover over 40 languages, carrying out an average of 300 assignments per month in the Waikato and surrounding regions.
21. Decypher has a limited ability to offer additional free interpreting services to the community. Not-for-profit organisations, including Shama and Migrant Resource Centre are not funded to hire professional interpreters to deliver their service.
22. The sector has estimated the financial gap to cover the need of interpreters is approximately \$20,000 per annum.

*Employment*

23. Research shows that migrants are more likely to experience racial discrimination in the workplace than non-migrants (people born in New Zealand). Racial discrimination is not only associated with a person’s ethnic group, but also whether or not they were born in New Zealand.
24. The unemployment rate in Hamilton of those born outside New Zealand is 6.9 per cent, compared to the Hamilton average of 9.5 per cent. However, census data indicates that there is a lower proportion of ethnic Hamiltonians on incomes above \$50,000 than the Hamilton average, and more people on incomes of less than \$20,000.

25. Hamilton is now the home of migrants and former refugees who are keen to find employment and raise their families. A concerted effort to address the current employment gaps as well as prepare for its future employment needs is required.

26. **Progress on 2015 Issues**

27. The following key actions have occurred in relation to the issues raised in 2015.

*Language Support to Access Services*

28. Interpreting and translation needs were raised at the November 2015 and March 2016 Community Health Forum Meeting and was table for presentation to the Waikato DHB Board.

29. Midlands Health will renew its contract with Decypher to provide free interpreters at Midlands registered clinics.

30. Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is currently undertaking a stocktake of Interpreting provision across the country.

31. Local sector discussions continue with regards to language support and interpreting needs.

*Employment*

32. Exploitation of new migrants and international students has been raised in Migrant Employment Group Discussions.

33. Immigration Summit held in Wellington in April 2016 introduced the renewed focus of the [NZ Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy](#) with Employment, Education and Training, English Language, Inclusion and Health and Wellbeing as outcomes.

34. A regional immigration summit occurred on 18 July 2016 with Judi Altinkaya, National Manager presenting the strategy.

35. **2016 Key Concerns**

36. A Refugee resettlement strategic group has meet throughout 2016, comprised of 12 organisations committed to the sector. This group is made up of Government and Non-Government Agencies.

37. The sector groups met to look at what the common challenges were between and among them, and identify if any collaborative action could be pursued. The Sector has identified the following three areas alongside specific action to occur in the coming year.

*Language Support and Interpreting*

38. The issue identified is the lack of language and interpreting support for refugee families as an ongoing issue not only in Hamilton but also nationally.

**Item 12**

CHALLENGES	WHAT'S IN PLACE	ACTION POINTS
<p>Interpreting is not consistently available in primary health care.</p> <p>Only GP practices with Midlands Health have some provision available, but this is limited by funding.</p> <p>Service providers such as Shama, Counsellors and others are unable to provide their much needed services without an interpreter. Their funding is only for the delivery of the actual service.</p>	<p>Red Cross staff including Cross Cultural Workers who speak the language of clients.</p> <p>Decypher interpreting/translating provides 24/7 professional interpreting at cost to the hospital, the courts, NZ Police, GP and other areas as requested.</p> <p>If funding allows, Decypher provides community rates to not-for-profit service providers.</p> <p>Language Line is sometimes available in various government offices such as Work and Income.</p> <p>Language Link of the CAB can also be accessed at certain days and times of the week depending on the language requested.</p> <p>Bilingual support is often provided by community members and staff as needed.</p> <p>Healthline is a national service that could be used by those with limited English clients when trying to get a range of health information.</p>	<p>MBIE is looking nationally into the issues of interpreting.</p> <p>Research how other areas provide interpreting service to their clients.</p> <p>Adapt translated information materials that clients might find useful.</p> <p>Develop database for Stocktake of bilingual professionals that clients may be able to use. Send out to communities for their input.</p>

*Transition to the Community*

- 39. This group is looking into how former refugees could be supported during the transition period which starts from their arrival to at least the end of their first year.
- 40. Red Cross is contracted to facilitate settlement for the first three months upon arrival. They also have the support of at least three volunteers during this period. The support of Red Cross may be extended to a year depending on the needs of the clients. At the end of the year, individuals and families are expected to have learned and are now able to do basic tasks by themselves.

CHALLENGES	WHAT'S IN PLACE	ACTION POINTS
<p>Some individuals and families who have issues 'shop around' for support and assistance, going from one provider to another or one individual to another until they find one they think has solved their problem.</p> <p>Many become too reliant on others (service providers, community members, interpreters) for all their concerns.</p> <p>Red Cross Office is less accessible than the Migrant Centre and so many just go to the Centre for assistance.</p> <p>Individuals and families need to learn and realise that at some point they have to do things themselves.</p>	<p>New arrivals have the support and assistance of Volunteers who work with them for three months.</p> <p>Waikato Refugee Forum is the main group that support and advocates for former refugees in general.</p> <p>Community members who speak the same language also volunteer and assist former refugees.</p> <p>An Assistance and Advice Service is already in place at the Migrant Centre to respond to queries and requests for assistance.</p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau Hamilton offers face to face new migrant services.</p>	<p>A Combined Agency Referral Record developed to keep track of the issues/challenges that clients report on and the local agencies they have been referred to.</p> <p>A Settlement Marker Poster will be developed showing the expected knowledge and information for families within the year of their arrival.</p>

*Recognition and Funding*

41. The group have explored how refugee communities and their volunteers can be recognised for the work they are doing.

CHALLENGES	WHAT'S IN PLACE	ACTION POINTS
<p>Community members with their limited finances still assist and support newly arrived refugees.</p> <p>Waikato Refugee Forum is not set up to financially support other community groups.</p>	<p>Waikato Refugee Forum is the main organisation advocating and supporting refugee communities.</p> <p>There is funding available through various funding sources such as Hamilton City Council, Lotteries, Settling In, Trust Waikato etc.</p>	<p>Group will meet again to clarify the following;</p> <p>What kind of recognition is expected?</p> <p>What kind of funding is needed?</p>

42. The sector is committed to working together for the betterment of new settlers within Hamilton.

**43. Legislative requirements or legal issues**

- 44. Section 10 of the Local Government Act provides direction to Council to ensure the current and future needs of communities are considered in decisions.
- 45. Section 14 of the Local Government Act speaks to the following principles specifically related to this report;
  - (c) when making a decision, a local authority should take account of—
    - (i) the diversity of the community, and the community’s interests, within its district or region; and
    - (ii) the interests of future as well as current communities
  - (h) in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take into account—
    - (i) the social, economic, and cultural interests of people and communities;

**46. Consultation**

- 47. Hamilton City Council’s Ethnic Development Advisor has strong working relationships with government and non-government organisations working with the ethnic communities of Hamilton.
- 48. Since 2005 Hamilton City Council has facilitated an annual open forum providing the opportunity for ethnic communities to discuss with Council issues and concerns that are occurring for them within the city. This year’s event occurred on 13 July 2016 at the Migrant Resource Centre.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 02 August 2016

**Report Name:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee Action List and  
Summary Discussion - 2 August  
2016

**Author:** Brendan Stringer

<b>Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
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## Recommendation

That the Report be received.

### 1. Attachments

2. Attachment 1 - Community Forum Subcommittee - Action List 2 August 2016
3. Attachment 2 - Community Development Activity Report - 4 May 2016



**COMMUNITY FORUM SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Action List - 2015/16**

**OPEN**

Ref.	GM Responsible	Action	DUE DATE for reporting back	Status (relative to due by date)	Notes	Meeting Date	Item #
1	GM Community	<p><b>Community Occupancy Policy</b></p> <p>i. Staff would check on the progress with the consultation of all groups regarding the implementation of the new occupancy rates. Staff would provide regular updates to the Subcommittee as to number of applications for hardship grants and the number so granted.</p> <p>ii. <b>19 August 2015:</b> GM Community to discuss process for hearing from applicants for exceptional circumstances cases at the Finance Committee, with the Chair and Deputy Chair of that Committee.</p> <p>iii. Staff to consider, with Chair of Subcommittee, issues in relation to application of the Policy vis-a-vis Melville Park.</p>	22-Mar-16	Completed	<p>Staff presented the six-monthly report at the 19 August 2015 Subcommittee meeting.</p> <p>Six-monthly update report was presented at the 22 March 2016 S&amp;P Meeting. This outlined ongoing implementation of the policy – how many leases have been granted, how many have expired, current state of play with any others of note.</p>	15 August 2014	12
2	GM Community	<p><b>Fairfield Feasibility Study</b></p> <p>Staff to update the Subcommittee in relation to the ongoing feasibility of Fairfield Hall.</p>		In progress	<p>The feasibility study of Fairfield Hall was completed, and was being progressed for public consultation. A copy of the feasibility study was circulated to Elected Members.</p> <p>A community consultation on the feasibility study was held on 15 July 2015 . General agreement was given to the recommendations of the feasibility study, with representatives from agencies involved in the consultation to separately decide on level of involvement possible going forward.</p> <p>HMS Trust and Te Whare O Te Ata are progressing actions and will present back to Council in 2016.</p> <p><b>8 December 2015:</b> Strategy and Policy Committee resolved that options to devolve management of Fairfield Hall be explored with Community Organisations, with Staff to present a report to Council should a decision be required on the future use of an individual community facility.</p> <p>Community groups assessing information provided by staff.</p>	24 October 2014	12
4	GM Community	<p><b>Subcommittee and Social Wellbeing</b></p>		In progress	<p>Subcommittee to have an oversight role of Social Wellbeing issues (by way of monitoring and reporting) and arrange communications/updates with key external stakeholders (eg DHB) as required.</p>	15 April 2015	
7	GM Strategy & Communications	<p><b>17 February 2016:</b></p> <p>iii. Staff to confirm that surveys undertaken are not duplicating information obtained.</p>		In progress	<p>The surveys review that is currently being undertaken will ensure the surveys will not duplicate information. <b>The review is expected to be completed by October 2016, and staff will report back to the new Council.</b></p>	17 February 2016	10

Updated: 26/07/16 09:58

Ref.	GM Responsible	Action	DUE DATE for reporting back	Status (relative to due by date)	Notes	Meeting Date	Item #
8		iv. Benchmarking exercise on the Quality of Life Survey to assess how other local authorities use information obtained.		In progress	Hamilton City and Waikato Region have agreed to share the data from upcoming Quality of Life surveys. This will ensure we can build a wider Waikato view and understand how Hamilton City sits within that view. <b>This work will commence in September.</b>  Benchmarking of all the Quality of Life survey participants is provided as part of the standard reporting. Staff will request confirmation of the Quality of Life Survey participants and engage with them around how they internally use the data.  <b>The QOL survey is in progress; results to be released to participating councils in October 2016.</b>	17 February 2016	10
9		v. To confirm the Hamilton Plan deliverables are covered under a survey Council participates in.		In progress	Staff are working on the outcome reporting of the Hamilton Plan to ensure these are either addressed in the Quality of Life Survey or Residents survey. <b>Refer to Action 7 above on the timing of the surveys review.</b>	17 February 2016	10
10		vi. To consider best time to undertake the Hamilton Residents Survey and the source providing sample group for the survey.		In progress	There is a project <b>underway</b> to review the Residents Survey. This project commenced in May and an outcome of the project will be around the specific content and timing of the Residents Survey.  <b>The Hamilton Residents Survey will be held in October 2016.</b>	17 February 2016	10
12	GM Community	<b>Enderley Social Housing Project</b>  i. Ngā Rau Tātangi to circulate a website link in relation to the Otago University research being undertaken on the Project.		In progress	i. The research being conducted by Otago University is still occurring, no documents are currently available for distribution.	3 June 2015	9
13	GM Community	ii. Staff to provide a general update on community developments, including the Enderley Social Housing Project, at the Subcommittee Meeting on 4 May 2016.	04-May-16	In progress	Update report presented as part of the Community Development Report at the 4 May 2016 Subcommittee Meeting. <b>The matter will be referred to in the August 2016 report, as the Subcommittee lacked quorum at the 4 May meeting when this item was discussed.</b>	17 February 2016	11
14	GM Community	<b>Ethnic Communities Forum</b> <b>17 February 2016:</b>		In progress		19 August 2015	12
19	GM Community	v. Staff to provide an update on the Waikato Refugees Forum.	04-May-16	In progress	Update report will be presented as part of the Community Development Report at the 4 May 2016 Subcommittee Meeting. <b>The matter will be referred to in the August 2016 report, as the Subcommittee lacked quorum at the 4 May meeting when this item was discussed.</b>	17 February 2016	8
20		vi. Staff to liaise with DHB representatives in terms of difficulties encountered by migrant and refugee communities in relation to access and availability of quality interpretation services.	04-May-16	In progress	Update report will be presented as part of the Community Development Report at the 4 May 2016 Subcommittee Meeting. <b>The matter will be referred to in the August 2016 report, as the Subcommittee lacked quorum at the 4 May meeting when this item was discussed.</b>	17 February 2016	8
22	GM Community	<b>Disability Action Plan</b>		In progress		24 November 2015	

Ref.	GM Responsible	Action	DUE DATE for reporting back	Status (relative to due by date)	Notes	Meeting Date	Item #
23		<b>24 November 2015:</b> That the Disability Action Plan be presented at the Strategy and Policy Committee (March 2016).	07-Jun-16	Completed	Reviewed Policy and Action Plan presented to Stratey and Policy Committee at 7 June 2016 meeting and adopted by Council.	24 November 2015	13
24		<b>17 February 2016:</b> i. Staff to arrange for Professor Koopman-Boyden and Mr Francis to present to the Subcommittee on 2 August 2016 in relation to the National Disability Strategy.	02-Aug-16	In progress	Prof. Koopman-Boyden will be present but Mrs Francis is based in Dunedin so will not be in attendance.	17 February 2016	7
25		ii. Staff to assess best ways to increase awareness of the government's Mainstream Programme in the Hamilton business community.	04-May-16	Completed	Staff are working on different media options to increase awareness around the Mainstream Programme within the business community of Hamilton.  Media releases were sent out, stories picked up by the Chamber of Commerce and Hamilton Central Business Association.	17 February 2016	7
26		iii. Chair to update Subcommittee following meeting with members of the disabled community.	04-May-16	Completed	Chair will be able to provide a verbal update at the 4 May Subcommittee meeting.	17 February 2016	7
27	GM Community	<b>Poverty Action Waikato Windows on Poverty Report</b> i. The new Poverty Report to be presented back to the Subcommittee at its August meeting.	02-Aug-16	In progress	Update report to be presented at the August 2016 Subcommittee meeting.	4 May 2016	8
28		ii. Staff to report back to the Subcommittee on the issues addressed in the <i>Neglect and Nurture</i> report presented to the Subcommittee (refer to pp 3-4).	02-Aug-16	In progress	Refer to Action 27 above.	4 May 2016	8
29	GM Corporate	<b>Hamilton City Health Profile (DHB)</b> A hardcopy of the DHB profile to be circulated to all Elected Members.	02-Aug-16	Completed	Copy circulated to Elected Members and local Members of Parliament, following the 4 May Subcommittee meeting.	4 May 2016	10



**Committee:** Community Forum  
Subcommittee

**Date:** 04 May 2016

**Report Name:** Community Development  
Activity Report

**Author:** Deanne McManus-Emery

<b>Report Status</b>	<i>Open</i>
<b>Strategy, Policy or Plan context</b>	<i>Hamilton Plan</i>
<b>Financial status</b>	<i>There is no budget allocated</i>
<b>Assessment of significance</b>	<i>Having regard to the decision making provisions in the LGA 2002 and Councils Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendations is not considered to have a high degree of significance</i>

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- The purpose of the report is to update the Subcommittee on current community trends and activity as identified through the work of the HCC Community Development and Leisure Unit.

## 3. Executive Summary

- Community Advisors have facilitated 12 Community Network and 6 interagency meetings across the city since January 2016.
- The meetings provided attendees the opportunity to network and share relevant information. The local level interagency teams exist to specifically address safety, wellbeing and quality of life issues for local neighborhoods and citizens.
- Key themes and concerns highlighted by participants include:
  - Concerns from organisations around the increased requests for emergency accommodation and food assistance.
  - Increased conversations regarding the mental health needs within the community.

## Recommendation from Management

That the report be received.

## 7. Attachments

- Attachment 1 - Hamilton City Health Profile (DHB) - April 2015

## 9. Key Issues

- [Hamilton City Health Profile 2015](#)

11. The Waikato District Health Board has released a 2015 Health Profile. The Health Profile presents a range of statistics gathered from Hospital admissions and the 2013 Census.
12. Inside Waikato
13. Statistics NZ released in March 2016 an [Inside Waikato Infographic](#). This was the fourth release in the series that includes Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.
14. The Inside Waikato infographic uses information from a range of Statistics NZ data sources to look at the region's population, social support networks, housing, income, and labour market.
15. Neighbours Day Aotearoa 2016
16. Neighbours Day Aotearoa is a collaborative campaign organised and supported by Lifewise, Inspiring Communities, The Mental Health Foundation, Neighbourhood Support NZ, Christchurch Methodist Mission and Public Libraries of NZ. Thousands of neighbours, organisations, local government and local businesses have been involved, bringing neighbours together over the last weekend in March each year.
17. Initially launched by Lifewise in Auckland in 2009, Neighbours Day Aotearoa became a nationwide initiative and campaign in 2011.
18. Neighbours Day continues to be a catalyst for thousands of Kiwis to connect with their neighbours and turn their streets into neighbourhoods, ata whaingia te pa harakeke. Atawhaingia te pa harakeke – this whakatauki or proverb speaks to the essence of what Neighbours Day is looking to achieve, nurture familial bonds in the solidarity and unity of community. Atawhaingia is to nurture, protect, cultivate and love. The Pa Harakeke is the Harakeke (flax) grove of the village, used as a metaphor for an intertwined community.
19. There were 60 unique events across Hamilton, that registered online to support the celebrations this year.
20. Enderley Housing Project
21. Council requested an update on the Enderley Housing Project being developed by Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa.
22. Ngaa Rau Taatangi Board of Directors have announced that Gibson Construction Ltd has been confirmed to undertake the completion of existing homes, the contract will be signed off by Gibson Construction and work will commence immediately. Gibson Construction has committed to completing all five units and closing in (weather/water tight) the sixth unit by end of June.
23. The Civil works being undertaken by Civil Construction Ltd, including storm water, drainage and foot paths are currently 75% completed.
24. The show home will be finished first, a special opening will be held where we will profile the project with positive publicity. Once this date is known information will be distributed accordingly.
25. Stage one of the project includes a further 20 homes. Ngaa Rau Taatangi intends to carry out a further tender process for this work to ensure no further delays occur and continuity of the build is maintained.
26. Enderley Community Centre
27. Enderley Community Centre was damaged in an arson attack at the beginning of March. The South end of the building remains closed while repair work is undertaken. This is anticipated to take a few months.

28. Waikato Digital Youth have relocated from the South end to the mezzanine floor at the North end of the facility. The gym, courts area and dining room are again being utilized by the community.
29. The local community has responded with a series of hui in partnership with Council to both address concerns over vandalism and investigate potential positive activity that could occur at the Centre.
30. Waikato Refugee Forum
31. At the 17 February 2016 Subcommittee meeting staff were asked to update elected members on the Waikato Refugee Forum.
32. The Waikato Refugee Forum is still very active within Hamilton City. The communities include: Somali, Congolese, Afar, Colombian, Afghan, and Burmese.
33. The current president is Mohammad Khalif with Christian Damba as Vice President.
34. The Waikato Refugee Forum supports refugee groups in the region. Alongside Red Cross they help welcome new refugees arriving into Hamilton City.
35. The Waikato Refugee Forum looks at the wellbeing of refugee communities by providing networking opportunities, facilitating and advocating for the needs of its members and raising issues and concerns to the national forum and the National Refugee Resettlement Group.
36. DHB Interpretation Services
37. At the 17 February 2016 Subcommittee meeting staff were directed to liaise with DHB representatives in terms of difficulties encountered by migrant and refugee communities in relation to access and availability of quality interpretation services.
38. Staff have been working with Decypher who met with Martin Gallagher, Crystal Beavis (both DHB Board members) and senior staff of the WDHB re interpreting issues.
39. Midlands Health interpreting funds have run out so interpreters are not available at Midland's clinics until the start of a new contract on 1 July 2016.
40. Refugee families are now accessing Tui Medical Centres and using Language Line.
41. This issue was raised via the Community Health Network who are escalating it within the WDHB.
42. Encouraged relevant organisations to provide feedback on the Draft WDHB Strategy particularly around refugees and access to services.
43. Older Person's Advisory Panel
44. The Older Person's Advisory Panel wanted to enhance the interaction between themselves and the wider older person community in Hamilton. A plan of action was to host a forum where individuals and agencies could come to hear what the Panel has been discussing and provide feedback to the Panel around issues currently affecting other older people.
45. The forum was held on 4 April 2016 with 65 people attending.
46. Information received from the Forum was discussed as an agenda item at the subsequent Older Person's Advisory Panel meeting on 15 April 2016. Recommendations from the Panel will be reported to Council as per agreed process.

- 47. Single Year Community Grant
- 48. The [Community Assistance Funding Policy](#) was adopted by the Strategy and Policy Committee on 8 April 2015.
- 49. In accordance with the Policy, \$868,000 was allocated per annum through the Multi-Year Community Grant to 27 Community organisations for the funding years of 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- 50. Therefore there is \$292,000 to be allocated via the Single-Year Community Grant for the funding years of 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.
- 51. The Single-Year Community Grant was open to receive applications between 1 March and 31 March 2016 for the 2015/16 funding year. 152 applications were received with a total funding request of \$703,583.17.
- 52. Decisions will be made and communicated within 6 weeks of the grant closing.

**Signatory**

Authoriser	Lance Vervoort, General Manager Community
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