

Networking and Collaboration Needs Analysis

A Report Commissioned by the
Wellington Housing Trust

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Executive summary

- This project was undertaken on behalf of the Wellington Housing Trust to identify networking and collaboration needs of the social housing sector in Wellington.
- Information was gathered from a range of organisations with an interest in social housing, from other housing networks around New Zealand and from a range of other sources.
- This project found that there is wide support for the concept of setting up a network in Wellington with a specific focus on social housing.
- The ability of groups to collaborate and work effectively together is dependent on having well established relationships based on trust and respect and a good knowledge of each others services. At the moment these relationships and knowledge of services in the Wellington community housing sector are not well enough developed to enable groups to easily undertake collaboration.
- Establishing a network with the initial purpose of sharing information and developing relationships will provide the experience and knowledge necessary for the growth and implementation of successful collaborations.
- The examples of other networks and the wide variation of suggested options from groups interviewed, demonstrated that there is no one-size-fits-all model for successful networking. Networks and collaborations will develop in unique ways in response to specific environments and conditions. The Wellington community housing sector will need to meet face-to-face to develop a consensus on the most appropriate networking model to meet their needs.
- Informal networks develop organically and good informal networks currently exist between groups in Wellington. However attempts at formal networks and collaborations have been less successful. The research shows that networks require discussion, planning, resourcing and ongoing management.
- Formal networks survive when they provide ongoing benefits to members. The major barrier identified was the relationship between the time required to support a network and attend meetings and the benefit derived from this – the time/benefit ratio.
- Networks and collaborations develop in response to a clearly identified need. The most commonly expressed need identified in this project was for an improved information sharing and support network.
- There was a range of other needs and collaboration opportunities identified, and a strong commitment by a smaller number of groups to working towards meeting these needs.
- Successful networks are mutually beneficial, meet a collective need and are not used to meet individual agendas.
- Documentation of the purposes, principles and planned activities of a formal network helps to generate community buy-in and commitment, makes networks accessible and helps build collaborative relationships. The elements and principles of effective networking also apply to the development of effective collaborations and partnerships.

- Management of networks usually devolves to a small group of people or a single organisation that is passionate about the purpose of the network. This can create imbalance and burn out. The work of managing a network needs to be recognised, acknowledged and supported.
- Resourcing needs of a network need to be quantified and met in an ongoing and sustainable way.
- Complicated structures and funding processes draw energy away from the purpose of the network. Simplicity and transparency make networks more efficient.
- This report concludes that there is a need for a network in Wellington with a specific focus on community housing, for improved information sharing and to provide the basis to develop future collaborations.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report was commissioned by the Wellington Housing Trust to identify the networking and collaboration needs of organisations involved in the social housing sector in Wellington.

The Wellington Housing Trust (WHT) is a charitable trust that has been providing social housing to low and moderate income families and individuals in Wellington since 1981. It currently owns ten properties with 25 rental units and houses a diverse range of people. Its rental charges are approximately 70% of market rent.

It contracts out its property management services to a local property management company. It is one of a wide range of community-based organisations in Wellington providing community housing and related services.

The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees and employs a part-time co-ordinator to manage its day-to-day activities.

The aims of the Wellington Housing Trust are to:

- (a) provide affordable appropriate housing to its client group;
- (b) collaborate with other agencies providing social support services to its clients;
- (c) advocate to central and local government and the wider community for greater provision of affordable appropriate housing and support services.

The values statement of the WHT is as follows:

"In all its activities the WHT operates in ways that are:

- **Sustainable** - Ensuring a safe, efficient, healthy housing stock
- **Empowering** - Working with our clients in ways that are inclusive, participatory and uphold human rights
- **Innovative** - Tailoring solutions to meet specific needs
- **Approachable** - Acting as a landlord with a human face
- **Cooperative** - Working positively with other agencies to find solutions to housing needs"

This project was carried out by an independent community development practitioner.

1.2 Need for project

The WHT undertook this project not only to meet its own aims but on behalf of other organisations involved in the social housing sector in Wellington. The need for this project was identified in many ways and came about after several years of discussion within the sector. The WHT received overwhelming support from the wider community housing sector for this project.

Community-based housing providers and social service providers have been meeting on an ad hoc basis in Wellington for many years. Prior to 2004 these meetings did not focus solely on housing, but in that year a meeting to discuss a forum for 'housing only' issues was organised. The forum met approximately five times in that 2004, the meetings focusing on getting to know what housing services each organisation provided and discussing common issues and concerns. Officers from Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) and Wellington City Council (WCC) were invited to meetings.

At the meeting attended by WCC, the forum lobbied Council officials to organise a day-long social housing forum where all organisations with an interest in housing could attend. It was hoped this meeting would identify the needs of the sector in Wellington and identify future options for networking.

In April 2005 WCC organised the Social Housing Forum. A range of groups attended but only about half of the community-based housing providers were present. The Forum had several speakers on current topical issues and events. However there was little time for discussion and its original objective of identifying networking options was not fully met.

No other meetings occurred until August 2005 when the WHT along with Community Housing Aotearoa Incorporated (CHAI) took the initiative to organise another housing forum meeting. Since then there have been meetings in October 2005 and March 2006. However at these two meetings only four organisations attended and they expressed frustration at the lack of input into networking and how infrequently meetings happen.

While there is clearly a desire within the sector to develop effective networking and collaboration strategies, the low attendance, high frustration levels and sporadic organisation indicated that there are issues and barriers.

This project therefore aimed to work with organisations in the community housing sector to clarify their networking and collaboration needs, identify barriers and establish the elements of effective networking models to meet both the aims of the WHT and the needs of the sector.

1.3 Outcomes

This report provides information and analysis to both the WHT and the wider community housing sector in Wellington. It includes recommendations that will help to develop a supportive and successful networking model, meet local networking needs, encourage organisations to build positive relationships with each other which will form the basis of collaborations, and ultimately to provide a better service to the community.

The report will be presented to a meeting of all organisations interviewed, other Community Housing providers and interested groups at the end of the project. All participating organisations will receive a copy of the report.

1.4 Acknowledgments

This project was made possible through funding from HNZC's Housing Innovation Fund. The WHT and the author would also like to thank HNZC for its encouragement and ongoing support for the project.

The project was completed with the support of the WHT Board of Trustees and the invaluable help and guidance of Alison Cadman, Coordinator of the WHT.

Given the nature and capacity of community groups and the demands placed on them, all the groups approached for interviews were generous with their time and knowledge.

2 Methodology

The methodology used for this project was based on the community development principles: that sectors or communities are best able to define their own needs; that communities are rich in resources and experience and can develop appropriate responses to meet their own needs; that communities can learn from reflecting on past and others experience; that people working together increases community capacity; that timely inputs of relevant information and resources can empower communities to take action on their own behalf.

2.1 Process

The following process was used to carry out this project:

1. Interviewing a range of organisations involved with community housing within the Wellington city area to identify their networking and collaboration needs
2. Gathering basic data on the organisations interviewed
3. Identifying barriers to networking
4. Gathering current information on other housing forums in New Zealand
5. Gathering general information on networking processes and principles
6. Developing suggestions and models for future networking in Wellington to address barriers
7. Producing a report outlining findings and listing recommendations for consideration by the WHT and wider social housing sector.

2.2 Assumptions

- Those most closely involved in the work of a sector have the knowledge and information necessary to identify best practice for that sector.
- A facilitative approach to drawing out, formalising and documenting that knowledge and expertise is most effective in helping a sector develop the capacity to perform and carry out its functions effectively.
- Long term capacity in a sector is enhanced by having access to good baseline information against which to evaluate its progress.
- Effective development of a sector requires that both process and product are given equal value.

Using these assumptions and principles, the intention of this project is to provide information and resources which will empower the community to come together to take action on its own behalf; to use a developmental process to create a model of working specific to its own needs; and not to preempt the outcome of that process.

2.3 Scope

2.3.1 Organisations

- (a) Providers of social housing, i.e. organisations providing beds to those clients that meet their criteria. This will include community-based organisations as well as local and central government agencies.
- (b) Organisations providing services that aim to house clients that meet their criteria.

2.3.2 Geographical area

Organisations interviewed for this project deliver services in Wellington city. Some organisations included in this research operate in Wellington city and also have a regional and/or national focus. However this project relates only to the needs of the Wellington city community housing sector. "Wellington city" refers to that area covered by the Wellington City Council rating area including Johnsonville, Tawa and Kaiwharawhara.

2.3.3 Focus

The focus of this report is on the initial need for a generic community housing network in Wellington city. Maori, Pacific Island and other communities of interest may also have specific networking needs relating to community housing. These have not been identified through this research. However, over time and as a result of this project, the need for other networks may be identified and should be supported in an equitable way.

2.4 Groups interviewed

Fifteen groups were interviewed for this project. They were selected on the basis that they represented a cross-section of the diverse range of services provided and include a range of sizes and capacity, from sole workers to corporate structures. Support services as well as accommodation providers were included. The accommodation providers included those providing emergency, supported, short, medium and long term accommodation (see Appendix A).

Other groups identified through the course of this project, with an interest in community housing in Wellington, and who may be interested in participating in a community housing network are also listed in the Appendix. (see Appendix A).

In general, the individuals who participated in interviews were workers, those involved directly with delivery of services and those who would normally participate in networking activities as part of their day-to-day service delivery role. This included senior staff in two large organisations, but members of management committees, Boards of Trustees and politicians responsible for setting high level strategic direction were not interviewed. During the process of this research, it has been identified that there would be benefits in involving people in these roles in networking, and this should be considered in the development of future networking options.

Recommendation: That members of management committees, boards of trustees and those responsible for setting high level strategic direction be included in future networking options.

2.5 Housing networks approached

Three current community housing networks operating in other regions in New Zealand were approached, and information gathered on their history and operations. They were asked about the aims, structure and membership of the networks, and any important knowledge of networking that they have gained from their experience (see Appendix D for contact information).

Overseas social housing networks operate in political and social environments that vary substantially from that found in New Zealand in general and the Wellington area particularly. Their complexity, size and levels of resourcing means that they do not contribute information relevant to the current situation being addressed in this report and therefore have not been included.

2.6 Other information

Generic information on networking, its structures, principles and operation were gathered from community development agencies and incorporated into this report. The Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD) 2003 Networking Resource Pack was particularly useful (see Appendix G).

2.7 Method of analysis

Statistical or quantitative data was not collected during this research. An interview outline was provided to groups prior to meeting with them, to stimulate thinking and discussion (see Appendix C). Interviews were open-ended and wide-ranging, and covered a variety of topics dependent on individual interviewee's areas of interest or concern. The interviews provided narrative and qualitative information.

The author of this report has drawn on her experience and knowledge of over 12 years working in community development in Wellington, to evaluate and analyse all the information gathered and develop recommendations.

3 What is networking?

3.1 Principal aspects

This description of networking has been drawn together from the information gathered from interviews with groups; discussions with other housing forums in New Zealand; and the community development experience of the author of this report. The principal aspects of networking include those identified from The Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD) 2003 Networking Resource Pack (see Appendix G). They are that it is a process; it is developmental; it is relationship based; it is inclusive; it serves a variety of purposes; it can have a variety of structures to meet specific needs; and has both positive and negative characteristics.

(a) A process

Networking is the process of making and maintaining mutually beneficial links between groups and organisations working within a sector or community of interest. The best outcome will be achieved through gaining buy-in from a wide range of groups. The process used will have a big impact on its success or otherwise. Therefore attention needs to be paid to the process of network development. As with any process, networks are dynamic and need to be able to develop and respond to changing needs.

(b) Developmental

Networking facilitates formal and informal communication and information sharing. It provides opportunities to establish and develop relationships and helps clarify boundaries. Successful networking will build relationships through the development of trust, understanding and respect. It can also strengthen relationships by increasing levels of credibility and accountability. Networks can develop from informal linkages to more formal structures and eventually to collaborations and partnerships.

(c) Relationship based

A network is based on a complex set of relationships between organisations. As the network develops these relationships will be strengthened and provide more cohesion within a sector. They will provide the basis for mutual support and the opportunity to identify collaborative ventures, partnerships and resource-sharing protocols. They can also develop further, to provide the basis for a collective voice, strengthen advocacy on behalf of a sector, provide training opportunities, lobby for increased resources and influence policy development processes.

(d) Inclusive

Networks will optimise the development of these relationships when they are non-hierarchical, inclusive and diverse in their membership. They will thrive when information can flow freely, when they provide a variety of opportunities for people and organisations to interact, meet, learn and share knowledge. They will be well supported when they contribute to the ability of member groups to achieve their aims, meet client needs and develop capacity.

3.2 Purpose of network

Depending on its purpose The Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD) 2003 Networking Resource Pack (see Appendix G) describes networks in four different ways:

- Personal networks providing individual support
- Information sharing networks based on common interest and responding primarily to service delivery requirements and client needs
- Dialoguing networks developing ideas, problem solving, resource sharing and learning
- Influence networks strengthening advocacy for the sector, providing a lobbying base and influencing policy

The examples of other networks in New Zealand demonstrates that it is also possible to have

- Combination networks that meet more than one of these purposes

3.3 Differing characteristics

Personal networks and information sharing networks tend to develop spontaneously in reaction to the ongoing needs of day-to-day work within a sector. They can be informal with no specific structure or management. They can be patchy in their coverage and limited by dependence on interpersonal relationships.

Information sharing networks can also have a more structured format – e.g. regular meetings. They are accessible, open to a wide membership and this can mean a better coverage. They are efficient ways of sharing and distributing information and creating connections. They require someone picking up responsibility for their management. However, when information sharing becomes repetitious, relationships will stagnate and the network will cease to provide ongoing benefits to participants, and will atrophy.

Dialogue and influencing networks require more formality. They involve meetings, discussion and often decision making. They develop as a result of a more conscious desire to address problems proactively, increase capacity or develop a collective voice. They will tend to attract those organisations with shared values, and can become exclusive. They will need to develop higher levels of trust if they are undertaking collective action.

Combination networks may meet more than one of these purposes. This can be an efficient use of time and resources, and can attract a wide diversity of organisations. However tensions can arise if the different purposes are not clearly stated or there is a clash of values and expectations between groups.

4 Summary of findings

4.1 Interviews with groups

- All groups interviewed were extremely positive about the project and the possibility of developing networking and collaboration options.
- There was consistency across all groups in identifying the value of networking and its importance to their work.
- The main driver for the development of networking and collaboration was to provide improved services to clients.
- All groups were involved in 'informal' networking with a range of other providers, to meet their immediate service delivery and client needs. However there was little evidence of more formal collaboration.
- All groups have an ongoing commitment to networking – often this is specified as a requirement in job descriptions.
- It was difficult for most groups to identify partners for possible collaborative ventures.
- A small number of groups were established to have networking as a priority and main driver for their work – eg Kites, Inner City Project (ICP)

- There was a range of potential networking and collaborative opportunities identified from improved sharing of information to developing joint solutions for ongoing structural issues, advocacy, research and influencing policy processes affecting the sector.
- There was no consensus on precisely what model of networking and collaboration would work best in Wellington. Suggestions ranged from purely social gatherings to regular information sharing meetings to the development of joint projects.
- Developing a new network will require a process where groups meet and develop a consensus about a model to which the widest variety of groups can commit themselves.
- The most commonly expressed immediate networking and collaboration need was to improve information sharing, specifically to know where current housing/accommodation vacancies existed, and the relevant referral processes.
- For a smaller number of groups there was a strong emphasis on the need for networking and collaboration to move from information sharing and problem identification to positive action and developing collective solutions to generic problems.
- Collegial support available through networking was important to all smaller agencies.
- Negative time/benefit ratios were the major barrier to participating in formal networks.
- The most commonly cited network currently attended by groups was the Inner City Mental Health Liaison Group.
- Many groups were also aware of The Homelessness Prevention Group.
- There is no one uniformly used community networking resource; groups tend to develop their own resource.
- The most commonly used resource was Kites Mental Health Services Directory.
- The Downtown Community Ministry's "Survival Guide" was another well used resource.
- No group was aware of any web based networking resource for the Wellington community housing sector.
- Very few groups accessed the web for information on current issues and developments, research etc in the sector.
- There was a low level of awareness of Community Housing Aotearoa (CHA).
- There is a wide diversity of services and delivery models within the sector.
- Groups with experience in delivering training or education were very willing to share this resource.
- The sector is extremely complex, with many overlapping relationships, different capacities, structures and levels of involvement from statutory agencies to small NGOs. This reflects the complex nature of housing needs.
- The most commonly expressed long term need for the sector was for more accommodation/beds in Wellington city.

4.2 Findings from interviews with other NZ housing networks

(a) Christchurch Housing Forum

This forum has been running for five years. There are 450 members on the mailing list and 40-60 attend the regular six weekly meetings. The aim of the Forum is to build relationships and trust, to share information and provide opportunities for groups to network around particular areas of interest.

The Forum has a flat structure with a planning group of six elected from the membership at the beginning of each year to manage and organise the agenda and topics for meetings. Each meeting has a specific focus or topic and those people presenting will take responsibility for managing and running that particular meeting. An evaluation is carried out each year to gauge satisfaction and find out what topics are of interest.

The Forum administration is carried out by staff at the Tenants' Protection Association. This includes regular minute taking, managing the mailing list and other secretarial duties. This staff time is not funded separately, but Tenants' Protection sees this work as vital to the continued existence of the Forum and is happy to contribute their time. HNZA funds the cost of mail outs, and the Christchurch City Council covers costs of venue hire.

The Forum has a written kaupapa that is available to anyone interested which outlines its values and rules (see Appendix D). Members are asked to commit to these at beginning of each year. It is important that the Forum is a safe environment for everyone attending.

Members of the Forum include representatives from central government, local authorities, community and the private sector. Consumers are also part of the Forum. The Forum does not have a lobbying role as this would have the potential to set up tensions between different sectors represented in the Forum. However if it is agreed, they may express a joint view on a specific issue.

(b) Nelson Housing Forum

The Nelson Housing Forum was established by Nelson City Council as an outcome of its 2003 Community Housing Policy (see Appendix D). It meets quarterly in Council chambers and is chaired by the Deputy Mayor.

The Council Housing Policy notes that there could be benefits from a greater level of communication between community and government organisations providing social housing. Its aims for this Forum are, therefore: to facilitate and provide administrative support for quarterly meetings; to initiate joint planning and coordination of services; and to monitor home affordability and other housing issues and when necessary take an advocacy role.

There is representation at the Forum from organisations involved in community housing, including community organisations, both Nelson City and Tasman District Councils and government agencies. Private landlords are also represented as well as other interested groups such as Grey Power. Approximately 20 organisations regularly attend and minutes are distributed by Nelson City Council.

While community groups find the meetings somewhat useful to exchange information and touch base with other organisations, there is a level of frustration at what is practically achieved from the meetings.

There is another community-based network in Nelson called the Community and Whanau Group which meets regularly. This is a broad based group and among other topics includes discussion of community housing. Representatives from the Community and Whanau Working Party on Housing were part of the Council reference group used to develop the Councils Community Housing Policy.

(c) Housing Action Porirua

Housing Action Porirua is a network of organisations and individuals who have an interest in housing issues in Porirua. It was formally established in 1999. Formation of the network was triggered by HNZA's Community Renewal project in Eastern Porirua.

Its aims are to disseminate information, raise debate on social housing issues and hold quarterly meetings (see Appendix D). It has a position of influence on housing issues in Porirua and is able to create strategic linkages for the development of projects. Meetings are held in a central location – usually in a hired City Council venue which is provided by Council at a reduced rate.

There are 120 groups and individuals on the email/ mailing lists. Membership is open to any group or individual who has an interest in housing and includes representatives from health providers, mental health agencies, local and central government, churches, and local community groups such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, and residents' associations.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Porirua City Council provides funding of \$8,000 per annum to cover costs of the network and to provide an honorarium for a co-ordinator for 6 hours work a week. Extra funding is applied for, for specific projects. The network is not a formal entity, and funds are managed by a separate umbrella organisation. The forum feels that this informal structure is a strength, as energy is not drawn away from the core issues in order to manage a formal group.

Each meeting has a key speaker and a time for feedback, information sharing and making connections. While attendance at meetings may be relatively low, minutes from meetings are distributed to the membership and a newsletter is produced approximately every six weeks. The network has carried out a number of successful projects.

One of the keys to the operation of this network is having a co-ordinator who is very familiar with the sector; has a wide range of personal contacts; provides a central contact point and can act as a broker to establish relationships; has a passion and personal interest in the sector; who is proactive in following up on issues and gathering information and who is prepared to donate voluntary time.

4.3 Key points

- One model of networking did not fit all circumstances. Each community developed its own specific model of networking and collaboration
- Each network developed in response to specific local conditions, needs and availability of resources
- All examples had a central consistent organising group or co-ordinator
- All the groups required funding and resourcing to cover costs
- All groups had a diverse membership
- None of the networks were set up as formal entities
- One network was established to meet a single organisation's goals. The other two arose out of collaboration between organisations
- All examples had mailing and email lists that were managed at a central point
- All examples had a specific focus on housing issues as the purpose of the network
- There is a variety of approaches between the groups towards managing relationships, and becoming involved in lobbying, advocacy and formal collaborations
- In two of the examples, joint activities and collaborations had developed as a result of the relationships established through networking

Recommendation: That the community housing sector in Wellington meet to develop a consensus about a networking model which meets the specific needs of the Wellington community and to which the widest variety of groups can commit themselves.

5 Analysis

5.1 The current situation

5.1.1 Personal networks and information sharing

The dominant methods of networking that currently occur for organisations interviewed for this project were personal networks and informal information sharing. The major driver for the maintaining these networks were to meet client needs and provide professional and efficient services. When presented with a particular client need or issue, workers needed to be able to quickly locate appropriate information and resources.

There was a wide range of relationships between groups and while groups had a fairly good knowledge of others working in the field, they all identified the need to keep this information current and up-to-date. Contact through these networks was most commonly made on an ad hoc one-to-one basis. This is mostly a 'reactive' form of networking, where workers are seeking to resolve an immediate client centred problem.

These networks were seen as extremely important for the effective delivery of services, day-to-day running of their operation and meeting client needs. They are an inherent part of working in the community sector and develop organically, without the need for formal structures. They also function to provide a certain amount of personal support for workers in sole charge or small agencies.

General information relevant to the sector was also shared through these contacts, but there were gaps in knowledge and an uneven spread of information. For example the majority of groups were unaware of Community Housing Aotearoa (CHA), the recently established national umbrella organisation for community housing providers.

The most commonly expressed need regarding this level of networking was for improved opportunities to share information related to meeting client needs, particularly in relation to the availability of emergency accommodation; to be able to update information and contacts in a more timely way, and to improve support between workers.

This level of networking is mostly based on personal relationships and these need to be renewed often to take staff turnover into account. The ability to resolve problems and meet client needs effectively may also be affected by the quality of these inter-personal relationships. Maintaining contact lists and positive relationships, updating information and keeping knowledge current is an ongoing task for individual workers in each organisation.

5.1.2 Dialogue and influence networks

There was little evidence of more formal dialogue or influence networking occurring within the sector. Working proactively to address problems, identify opportunities to collaborate, or develop a strong advocacy role is not addressed effectively through the informal networks that currently exist.

While most groups did not express a need for these types of networks at this time, a small number of groups did identify this as an important area of networking to develop and were prepared to put energy into achieving this.

5.1.3 Formal Collaboration

There was little evidence of groups being involved in formal collaboration or joint projects together. Groups had difficulty in identifying appropriate partners to work with on specific collaborations. This was mostly due to a lack of in-depth understanding about each others services, capacities, aims and goals. However there were a number of groups who were

particularly keen on exploring options for this and were able to identify a range of possible future collaborations which would enhance the development of social housing in Wellington.

The principles and processes required to develop successful networking are the same as those required to develop more formal collaborations. Successful formal collaborations are dependent on a high level of trust and understanding between potential partners and these require time and commitment to develop.

The development of a successful networking model would contribute to enhanced relationships and greater knowledge and understanding between groups. While it appears that the sector is not cohesive enough at this time to instigate major collaborations, the opportunity to work effectively together as a sector to develop appropriate networking options will provide the experience and knowledge necessary for success in future formal collaborative ventures.

5.2 Networking resources

The most commonly cited published networking resource was the “Kites Mental Health Services Directory” (see Appendix E for contact details). This directory lists organisations providing a wide range of services in the Wellington region relating to mental health, including housing and accommodation services. It is available free in paper form and can be distributed electronically. Over half of interviewed groups knew about this resource.

Another resource identified by groups was the Downtown Community Ministry’s “Survival Guide” (see Appendix E for contact details). This is a free booklet providing information on low cost services and facilities in Wellington including housing services.

No group interviewed had knowledge of any web-based directory or networking resource currently available for the community housing sector in Wellington. There was a very low level of awareness of the CHAI newsletter. (see Appendix E for details)

Recommendation: That a networking directory specifically for the community housing sector in Wellington be developed.

5.3 Other networks in Wellington

There is a regular information-sharing meeting that occurs on a monthly basis known as the Inner City Mental Health Liaison Meeting (see Appendix F). Most of the groups surveyed were aware of this resource and many attended on a regular basis. It includes community housing information as part of its general information-sharing role on mental health issues. It is coordinated by Inner City Project staff who reported that attendance at this meeting has fallen away recently after a change of venue.

A number of groups interviewed were aware of the Homelessness Prevention Group (see Appendix F). This group developed out of an Interagency Forum brought together to look specifically at issues of homelessness in Wellington. It is coordinated by Regional Public Health. It is currently developing specific strategies and plans to address issues relating to homelessness in Wellington through a number of subgroups. These subgroups address various aspects of homelessness including Outreach Services, Prisoner Reintegration and one looking specifically at Accommodation Options.

Organisers of both these groups were supportive of the idea of a network being developed specific to the community housing sector and were keen to create links between their existing networks and any new network that is developed.

A third network is also being established under the auspices of the Wellington Regional Refugee Health and Well Being Action Plan. The Action Plan has confirmed six key priority areas for action. The fifth key priority area relates to housing and on page 34 of the Plan states:

“5. Housing

Goal: to improve access to affordable, appropriate and healthy housing for refugees in the Wellington region

Actions: Hold collaborative regional workshops and forums to share information about:

- Benefit entitlement
- Alternative housing options
- Budgeting services
- Healthy housing
- Other information as required

Workshops to be community based and ongoing.”
(see Appendix F for contact information)

Recommendation: That any new networks established in the future create links with existing networks that have an interest in housing issues.

5.4 Barriers

There was a high level of consistency across all groups interviewed about what the major barriers to networking are. The most common barrier cited was the time/benefit ratio. Groups need to see a clear benefit to their organisation and to improving services to clients when committing time to support and participate in networking meetings.

5.4.1 Major barriers

Major barriers identified by all groups were:

- Negative time/benefit ratio
- Lack of a clear aim or purpose
- Lack of strong facilitation of meetings
- Lack of a clear agenda for meetings
- Repetition of information – e.g. long ‘introduction rounds’ at every meeting
- Lack of an adequate, accessible, consistent venue
- Lack of adequate parking at venue or not being close to public transport
- Lack of recognition of the resources required to manage the network functions, e.g. organising, facilitating, minute keeping, mail outs, notifying of meetings.
- Time of day and length of meetings.

Facilitation of meetings is a key factor identified. The facilitator needs to have a mandate from the meeting to manage the process to meet the aims of the group. While it can be good to rotate this responsibility around different groups, not everyone has the skills to facilitate well. This needs to be acknowledged and roles clarified, and training provided if there is a need and resources are available.

Length of meetings and time of day can affect outcomes. People need to know about meetings in sufficient time, and the length of meeting needs to be managed. For some groups two hours is too long for meetings, and for groups who only have part-time workers, the time of day the meeting is held may affect their ability to attend.

For some groups a neutral venue was important. For others not having a consistent venue was a barrier. Inadequate parking, travel costs or difficulty in access is a real issue. Size, usability and level of comfort in the venue can be a put-off.

Recommendation: That a consistent venue be identified, which is easily accessible, affordable, appropriate and, if possible, neutral.

5.4.2 Other barriers

Individual groups also identified a range of other barriers to networking and collaboration.

(a) Skills

Exploring collaborations requires time, energy, sound analysis and an ability to identify the big picture. Not all groups have these skills and the sector is not practised at working together. It is easy to assume that everyone thinks the same way. There can be professional arrogance and clashes of philosophy. This can impact on the ability of groups to work together to identify partnerships and new models of service delivery.

(b) Resourcing

Resourcing of networks can be a problem. One group identified the lack of resources as the major reason why previous attempts to establish forums in Wellington have struggled. Where there is a lack of commitment, and in a purely voluntary situation, the work of managing a network tends to devolve to one or two people. This means that one or two groups are taking on more work than others and using their own resources to maintain the network. This can lead to stress and imbalance between groups. Responsibility for resourcing, managing and developing networks is a key issue.

Recommendation: That the costs and resources required to manage the network be quantified and fairly distributed.

(c) Continuity and clarity

There needs to be continuity and clarity for a network to survive. When meetings are irregular or there is short notice about meetings groups find it difficult to make a commitment. Groups find it easiest to make a commitment when meetings are held at regular intervals with dates established well in advance. The format and agenda of meetings needs to be known ahead of time. The purpose of the meetings needs to be clear and roles and responsibilities defined. It is easy for meetings to become unfocused and lose sight of its purpose. While networks need to be flexible it is important to have consistency about the purpose and roles of the group and to gain agreement on these.

(d) Name

The name of the network is important. It should reflect the purpose of the group and let people know what the group is about and what to expect. For example if the purpose is to undertake projects or develop initiatives, including “action” in the name would indicate this.

(e) Accessibility

Being unfamiliar with other members of a network can be a barrier to participation in a meeting environment, as is lack of focus in meetings. It can be disruptive when there are a lot of people coming and going. It is important that everyone has an equal chance for input and that meetings are not used by one group to promote its own agenda. There needs to be equity between smaller and larger groups. It only takes one bad experience at a meeting to put people off so meetings need to be welcoming and accessible to all.

(f) Client/consumer involvement

For one group in this research, involvement of clients and consumers was an important issue. They felt that there needs to be client representation in forums or networks, that their voices need to be heard and that their contribution is given equal value.

5.5 Benefits

All groups interviewed could identify many important benefits from networking and collaboration. Many of these benefits related to meeting client needs through the efficient and timely sharing of information, and the gathering of up-to-date knowledge about other groups and their activities. The most often cited immediate need was for access to information on current availability of accommodation – particularly emergency accommodation. All groups supported the idea of developing a network which could meet these needs.

The other major benefit that groups identified was the ability to work together as a sector to develop a collective voice, identify and address sector-wide issues and develop collaborative ventures that would improve social housing in Wellington.

5.5.1 Examples

The benefits of networking as identified in this research fell into three main categories: (a) information sharing to better meet client needs, (b) developing sector capacity, and (c) identifying and developing collaborations. Below are examples of benefits that groups identified.

(a) Information sharing to meet client needs

- Knowing where and what accommodation is currently available
- Knowing exactly what other groups do, what services they offer and who their client group is
- Knowing the hours of operation, staffing and when people are available
- What the application and referral processes of other groups are
- Ability to have a one off process, or central point to cover all this information and to record changes in a timely way
- Being able to direct people in the right direction – avoids sending clients on wild goose chases
- Managing expectations
- How to access services prior to a crisis
- Understanding internal processes of other organisations
- Preventing delays
- Understanding each others specialities
- Reduces chances of clients playing organisations off against each other – organisations speaking with same voice to individual tenants
- Having information that will help support clients.

(b) Developing sector capacity

- Avoiding overlaps in services
- Making best use of resources
- Providing brainstorming opportunities
- Sharing experience of funding applications – tips, techniques, support, sources
- Keeping in touch with others we don't normally have a lot of interaction with
- Recording, storing and making information available to members of the network
- Deciding what future services will be required
- Identifying geographic spread of social housing
- Help establish clear boundaries
- Nurturing and support of workers
- Giving access to history and experience
- Orientation for workers new to the sector
- Identifying need for niche services
- Counteracts patch protection
- Dealing with urban myths and rumours
- Providing a central point for others types of organisations to contact – eg private landlords – boarding houses etc.
- Reduces duplication and reinventing the wheel
- Provides opportunity for evaluation and reflection

(c) Identifying and developing collaborations

- Ability to make joint submissions
- Finding appropriate partners based on common aims, goals and values
- Identify problems and constructive ways to work on them
- Using resources collaboratively in a strategic way
- Provides a range of perspectives on issues and problems
- Builds relationships and trust
- Identify training needs and opportunities.

5.5.2 Evaluation and review of a network

Identifying the potential benefits of networking is important because it provides a goal to aim for when designing and implementing a network. If groups' expectations from networking are not being met, they will withdraw from participation because the time/benefit ratio is no longer beneficial to them. All groups cited this as the major barrier to successful networking.

Regular evaluation identifies specific outcomes and benefits for groups, provides feedback about where needs are not being met, and how the network needs to change or develop. It also identifies successes and achievements which can be acknowledged and celebrated.

It is likely that not all groups will have all their expectations met nor that all groups will gain the same level of benefit. Therefore it is important to prioritise the expected outcomes and benefits so groups are realistic in their expectations.

6 Future possibilities

6.1 Improved information sharing and support

Groups were consistently positive about the possibility of networking and collaboration in the future. All were supportive of the idea of developing a network that has a specific housing focus. There was general agreement that improved information sharing and support would be an initial key focus for a network in Wellington.

There were also a number of groups that indicated an interest in working together to develop other possibilities. They offered a range of ideas about possible collaborations and other outcomes that could be achieved for the sector as a whole. These included:

- Identifying and researching problems and issues common across the sector
- Developing new initiatives, creative solutions and joint projects
- Identifying and providing learning, education, training and skills development opportunities for the sector
- Identifying research needs
- Developing joint proposals for funding and resources
- Developing a collective voice for lobbying and advocacy
- Developing and disseminating 'best practice' guidelines for the sector
- Identifying expertise and resources within the sector and developing protocols for sharing these
- Producing networking and information sharing resources eg directories, newsletters, email lists, web sites for the sector
- Providing opportunity to reflect on, share and learn together from the experiences of others
- Celebrating successes and achievements together.

6.2 Other possibilities for collaboration

There is clearly a wide range of topics and issues which impact on the housing sector. This reflects the complex nature of the sector. Groups also made suggestions about specific topics and areas of interest where they felt there would be greatest benefit if explored collectively. Groups with specialist knowledge or training experience were all very happy to share these resources with others and contribute them to the network.

The suggestions below from groups cover training and learning needs, analysis and assessment, needs identification, resource development, best practice models, idea generation and brainstorming. They are in no particular order.

- Developing relationships with private landlords, backpackers, boarding houses
- Developing a list of respite services
- Developing a list of house sitters while people are in hospital
- Housing sector website development
- Community development within council flats
- Healthy housing
- Destigmatising training
- Barrier free housing
- Assessing the need for emergency accommodation
- Developing tenant management protocols – consistency across the sector or between agencies
- Media clipping service
- Information on resource consent procedures
- Systemic Advocacy
- Gentrification
- Artificial keeping of land prices high
- Tenancy Act
- Housing maintenance – rip-offs etc
- Funding for upgrades
- Moving into home ownership
- Social inclusion
- Safety – for clients, for workers, in designing and developing housing options
- Insurance
- Ideas about how to build homes in a more cost efficient way.

Achieving most of these outcomes requires a more formalised approach to networking than currently exists. Developing ideas and producing concrete outcomes such as those listed above requires ongoing dialogue and regular meetings established for that purpose.

Among the groups interviewed for this project there were a small number who articulated a desire to develop these aspects of networking and collaboration. There was a high level of frustration in these particular groups at the current lack of these opportunities.

Networking can be perceived as time expensive. Combining different purposes in a single network can be a more efficient use of time. However there must be clarity around the different aspects of the purpose of the network, and the ability for groups to choose what aspects they're involved in.

The two main networking needs identified by groups interviewed for this project were

1. Improved information sharing;
2. Working proactively to identify and address issues facing the sector in a collaborative way.

These two needs could be incorporated effectively in a combination networking structure.

Recommendation: That when looking at establishing new networks in the community housing sector, consideration is given to forming a combination network that is structured to suit more than one purpose.

7 Elements and principles of effective networking and collaboration

This report has identified that while there is wide support for establishing a housing network in Wellington there was not a consensus on what model or structure would work best. When deciding how a network would operate in Wellington it is therefore useful to be aware of what elements and principles are important for a network and collaboration to be successful and well supported.

The elements and principles identified below were developed from The Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD) 2003 Networking Resource Pack (see Appendix G), are based on community development principles, drawn from the experience of other networks in New Zealand; and respond to the barriers identified by groups interviewed for this project. They are provided to give guidance and support to the sector in Wellington about the process of network development.

7.1 Clear purpose – what is the network for?

In order to gain support, networks need to be developed in response to an identified community need. Time should be taken to clarify and agree on this. The predominant need identified in this project was for more and better information sharing within the social housing sector in Wellington. There is no one 'best way' to develop a network. This will depend on the agreed function that the network seeks to achieve. The process of clarifying and identifying a clear aim will give focus to the work of the network, establish clear boundaries, and provide a base line for evaluation.

Some examples of purposes for networks:

- Information sharing: Keeping members in touch with current developments
- Making contacts: Members can meet others for mutual benefit
- Mutual support: Keeping up confidence and expanding capacity
- Promotion: raising awareness of members' activities, services, and current accommodation availability
- Advocacy: Promoting a view on a particular issue or event
- Learning: Identifying specific topics for discussion and learning, skill and knowledge sharing, providing training opportunities
- Planning: Identifying emerging trends and issues.

7.2 Agreed activities – what will the network do?

There is a wide range of activities and outcomes that a network can achieve. It is important that network members are realistic in their expectations of what a network will achieve, what activities it will undertake and what commitment will be expected from them in return. These expectations and commitments can change and grow over time as the network develops. It is important to prioritise outcomes and manage expectations, to clearly state what activities the network members can be expected to be involved in, and to state what activities are outside the scope of the network.

Some examples of activities for networks:

- Holding regular information-sharing meetings.
- Organise speakers, presenters, and lectures.
- Organise conferences, workshops and seminars
- Produce resources, directories, and newsletters.
- Maintain membership lists, email lists, and archives.
- Develop websites, online discussion groups or internet portals.
- Conduct surveys.
- Hold planning days.
- Run training sessions.
- Develop joint proposals and submissions.
- Develop and support partnerships and collaboration.
- Facilitate evaluation, brainstorming and feedback sessions.
- Organise social events and celebrations.

7.3 Style and structure – how will the network operate?

The style of operation and the structure of a network should reflect its purpose and outcomes. For example networks that are mainly for information sharing can have a fairly light structure and a more informal style. Responsibilities may be able to be rotated between members more easily.

Dialoguing and influencing networks will need a more formal structure, with consistency in roles and responsibilities. Joining a network where you are unsure of the structures or procedures can be intimidating. In order to contribute and benefit from networking, people need to feel safe and understand what acceptable behaviour is.

Some examples of network structures:

- Responsibility for managing the network is rotated around different member organisations
- One organisation undertakes the responsibility for managing the network's operations
- A small group of organisations cooperate to manage the network
- An elected committee manages the network
- Members form subgroups to manage different aspects of network activities

The style of the network will reflect its values and aims and the nature of the communities it serves. Some options are:

- Informal social gatherings for chat and sharing, serving food and refreshments
- Facilitated meetings with an open agenda
- Workshops on specified topics
- Regular meetings at set times with pre-set agenda
- Irregular meetings called for specific purposes.

7.4 Defined roles and responsibilities – what jobs need to be done and who will do them?

Depending on the purpose and activities of the network there will be a range of roles and responsibilities required to ensure healthy functioning. At a minimum, in the least formal networks, there will need to be responsibility for notification and hosting of meetings. Other roles that may be required include:

- Facilitation
- Minute keeping
- Programme organising
- Maintaining membership and mail lists
- Resource development eg directories, newsletters
- Convening action or project groups.

7.5 Membership – who can join this network?

Generally speaking the wider and more diverse the membership of a network, the healthier and better supported it will be. This is particularly true of information and support networks.

It is particularly useful if a network can provide a safe space to bring together people who would not normally have an opportunity to interact. Several groups interviewed for this project mentioned the need to bring private landlords and others such as backpackers' hostel managers and private boarding house managers into a housing network.

Being explicit about membership requirements provides clarity and safety and helps manage expectations. Some options for membership include:

- Central and local government housing providers
- Community and the NGO sector providers
- Private sector landlords
- Consumers/clients
- Paid and unpaid workers
- Board and management committee members
- Politicians
- Funders
- Business representatives.

7.6 Organisational capacity – what can you contribute?

The ability of voluntary organisations to engage in networking is often determined by the level of staff and other resources available to them. When small organisations are funded on the basis of individual projects, this can affect their ability to devote time and energy to networking – especially if it leads to no positive return. Larger established organisations tend to have a greater resources and greater ability to engage in networking.

Recognising and acknowledging different organisational capacity enables groups who would otherwise be marginalised to participate in networks. Working co-operatively to spread the costs and demands of maintaining a network, gives equal benefits to a range of organisations.

7.7 Tools – what resources and tools will the network need?

Some tools and resources that could be considered are:

- Membership list
- Directories
- Mail outs
- Newsletters
- Email lists, internet groups
- Websites
- Telephone trees
- FAQ Sheets
- Tenants handbooks
- Best practice guidelines
- Press clipping service
- Library and archives.

7.8 Resourcing the network – how will the costs of the network be met?

Networks do not operate on thin air. There will always be a cost component in developing a network. The level of resourcing required will depend on the activities of the network, but at a minimum there will probably be some administration and maybe venue costs.

There are a variety of ways that these costs can be met and often member groups or organisations are willing to contribute towards meeting these. Groups may have specific resources they can contribute, such as meeting rooms or staff time. However if there are ongoing costs that are not acknowledged or taken for granted it can lead to resentments and imbalances within the network.

While it is tempting to think about raising funds to support the network, for example employing staff, this will throw up substantial challenges around accountabilities, employment issues and financial management responsibilities. These issues need to be explored and thought through carefully.

Resourcing requirements need to be discussed openly and transparent agreements reached. Trust and good will is an important component of networking so the simpler and more straightforward these arrangements are, the less energy they will require to maintain. Energy is more usefully directed at achieving the purpose of the network.

7.9 Evaluation processes – how will you know how well the network is doing?

As circumstances and needs change it is important that a network can be responsive and flexible. Regular evaluation and reflection provides the basis for positive development of a network. The successes of the network should be measured against its stated purpose and the benefits that members feel they have gained. Some things to consider about evaluation are:

- Frequency of evaluation
- Written or verbal feedback
- Decision making processes for making changes

- Planning processes
- Indicators to gauge progress
- Accurate recordkeeping of activities.

7.10 Acknowledging and celebrating successes – how will the network celebrate what it has achieved and have fun!?

Too often we forget to acknowledge and celebrate the successes and achievements we accomplish. As in any relationship, having fun and enjoying ourselves is important for healthy networking relationships. Celebrations boost morale, raise energy and reinvigorate. These are all important outcomes of successful networking. It is also an opportunity to honour the work of its members and thank the people who have contributed to the management and activities of the network, especially if these have been done on a voluntary basis.

7.11 Principles of successful networking and collaboration

Developing a clear set of agreed principles that will form the basis of how the network or collaborative venture operates and what behaviours are expected can prevent misinterpretations and misunderstanding. It helps to clarify expectations and promotes honest relationships. Some principles common to different types of successful networks are:

- Purpose/role is based on common concerns
- Diversity is respected
- There is a balance between structure and creativity
- There is equality of access
- The structure is non-hierarchical and cooperative
- The environment is respectful and understanding
- The network is inclusive and open
- Focus is on the collective agenda, rather than individual agendas
- Network is fun and energizing
- There is acknowledgment of input, energy and costs.

Recommendation: That all the elements of successful networking are fully discussed and agreements reached about them as part of the initial development of a new network.

Recommendation: That these agreements are documented and are made available to all current and future network members.

Recommendation: That the principles on which any new network is based are fully discussed, agreed and documented.

8 Conclusion

There is currently a good level of informal networking occurring in Wellington between groups involved in the social housing sector driven by the need to provide good services to clients. However recent attempts to establish a more formal networking have been unsuccessful. The major reasons for this were the lack of resources and insufficient community buy-in.

There is little evidence of joint projects or collaborations however despite this, this report has identified that there is strong support for further development of networking and collaboration, provided that groups can clearly identify benefits. This is most likely to occur when there is

clarity around the role and purpose of the network, and where groups can be involved in the process of working collectively to develop these.

The major immediate networking need that this project has identified is for improved information sharing to meet immediate client needs. This is particularly important in relation to information on current availability of accommodation and in accessing emergency accommodation for clients. Closely linked to this is the need for information on referral processes and client criteria.

A smaller number of groups identified a need for networking to develop further to collectively address ongoing sector issues, develop collective solutions and collaborations, increase capacity and advocate on behalf of the sector. Networking can meet more than one need and can provide the basis to develop collaborations and partnerships, provided these are clearly articulated and groups can identify the areas and groups they wish to be involved with.

This report has identified elements of successful networking and collaboration and made recommendations on a process that will address these in a proactive way. It recommends that groups work collectively to achieve consensus on these, reach common understandings and formalise agreements.

This report therefore concludes that there is a clearly identified need for the development of a network with a specific focus on community housing in Wellington. While there are some barriers, there is also enough interest, diversity and capacity within the sector, for groups to develop a network that addresses these barriers and best meets their needs. In addition, the development of successful networking will provide the basis for future effective collaboration.

Provided that a development process is employed that generates community buy-in, an ongoing commitment and a willingness to contribute actively to sustaining the network, there is much to be gained, and many positive collaborative outcomes that can be achieved.

8.1 Summary of recommendations

1. That members of management committees, boards of trustees and those responsible for setting high level strategic direction be included in developing future networking options.
2. That the community housing sector in Wellington meets to develop a consensus about a networking model which meets the specific needs of the Wellington community and to which the widest variety of groups can commit themselves.
3. That a networking directory specifically for the community housing sector in Wellington be developed.
4. That any new networks established in the future, create links with existing networks that have an interest in housing issues.
5. That a consistent venue be identified, which is easily accessible, affordable, appropriate and, if possible, neutral.
6. That the costs and resources required to manage the network be quantified and fairly distributed.
7. That when looking at establishing new networks, consideration is given to forming a combination network that meets more than one purpose.
8. That all the elements of successful networking are fully discussed and agreements reached about them as part of the initial development of a new network.

9. That these agreements are documented and are made available to all current and future network members.
10. That the principles on which any new network is based are fully discussed, agreed and documented.

Appendices

Appendix A Organisations interviewed

CCS

Ph: (04) 568 9000

Interviewed: Tanya Lake (Branch Team Leader); Melissa Yaxley (Service and Administration Co-ordinator)

Provides: Supported Lifestyles for youth and adults with disabilities. Finding suitable accommodation and encouraging independence.

Beds: No Beds

Staffing: FTE = 12 (11 working in housing area)

Speciality: Understanding and supporting people with life long disabilities

Downtown Community Ministry – Project Margin

Ph: (04) 384 7699

Interviewed: Di Landy (Project Margin Co-ordinator), Dougall Spier (Social Worker)

Provides: Outreach to homeless people to obtain and sustain suitable housing.

Beds: No beds

Staffing: FTE = 3 for Project Margin

Speciality: Facilitating relationships between tenants and landlords

Easy Access Housing

Ph: (04) 499 1064

Interviewed: Miriam McCann (Co-ordinator)

Provides: Temporary, transitional accommodation for users of mental health services.

Beds: 16 beds

Staffing: FTE = 1.075

Speciality: Providing a platform for users of mental health services to move to permanent sustainable housing

Housing New Zealand Corporation

Ph: (04) 439 3007

Interviewed: Kathy Parsons (Regional Manager), Sanjay Sewambar (Regional Advisor)

Provides: State housing to those in greatest need

Staffing: FTE = 12 (11 have a networking role)

Speciality: Generalist in developing and delivering social housing services

Wellington Housing Trust

Ph: (04) 384 4854

Interviewed: Alison Cadman – Co-ordinator

Provides: Long term affordable housing

Beds: 60 beds

Staffing: FTE = 0.6

Speciality: Housing management

IHC

Ph: (04) 472 2247

Interviewed: Andrew Wilson (General Manager Properties, National); Matthew Nathanson (Regional Property Manager)

Provides: Long term, emergency and temporary accommodation for people with disabilities.

Beds: 47 beds in Wellington city

Staffing: FTE = 0.15 allocated to Wellington city

Speciality: Understanding needs of and providing accommodation for people with disabilities

Inner City Project

Ph: (04) 389 3788

Interviewed: Rapai Tehau (Team Leader); Jocelyn Malcolm (Community Mental Health Co-ordinator)

Provides: Advocacy and support for people with mental health issues who have slipped through the cracks.

Beds: No Beds

Staffing: FTE = 2.0 (1/3 of both jobs focusing on interagency collaboration)

Speciality: Co-ordinating services, creating linkages.

Kites

Ph: (04) 384 3303

Interviewed: Suzy Stevens (Project Development Worker)

Provides: Support for communities to plan, organize and carry out new initiatives, promoting the self reliance of people who experience mental illness.

Beds: No beds

Staffing: FTE = 2.0

Speciality: Networking and Community Development

Locus Housing

Ph: (04) 801 8500

Interviewed: Stewart Fenton (Locus Property Manager), Karen McGuire (Homelink Social Worker)

Provides: Secure, affordable, appropriate long term housing for mental health service users

Beds: 8 Houses

Staffing: FTE = 0.5

Speciality: Peer run and organised social housing for people who have used mental health services.

Night Shelter

Ph: (04) 385 9546

Interviewed: Barry McDonald (Manager)

Provides: Emergency shelter for those who would otherwise be without it. Not for families.

Beds: 23 emergency dormitory beds; 22 short term hostel beds

Staffing: FTE = 2.12

Speciality: Emergency accommodation for individuals.

Salvation Army

Ph: (04) 389 0594

Interviewed: Sieni Clarke (Co-ordinator Emergency Accommodation), Lee Edney (Community and Family Services manager)

Provides: Emergency accommodation for families

Beds: 5 Houses

Staffing: FTE = 1.0 working in housing area

Speciality: Working with families who have emergency accommodation needs.

Te Ata Hou Trust

Ph: (04) 495 7660

Interviewed: Anne Paraku (Live-in Manager)

Provides: Short, medium, long term non-permanent boarding accommodation for transients or low income workers and students with low support needs.

Beds: 40

Staffing: Live in management and security.

Speciality: Managing a boarding facility.

Te Menenga Pai Trust

Ph: (04) 972 6246

Interviewed: Blossom Tropman (Manager), Chris (Admin support).

Provides: Short to long term accommodation in a safe supportive environment for mental health consumers.

Beds: 19 beds

Staffing: FTE= 4.0 (2 voluntary, 2 paid)

Speciality: Working with mental health consumers in a whanau setting based on Tikanga Maori.

Wellington City Council Housing

Ph: (04) 499 4444

Interviewed: Vicki McLaren (Manager); Susan Atkins (Senior Tenancy Advisor, Operations)

Provides: Long term housing

Beds: 4,000 beds

Staffing: FTE = 13 (where there is a networking component of job description)

Speciality: Generalist, landlord of last resort. Strives to ensure clients live well and build positive futures

Wellington Women's Boarding House – Women only

Ph: (04) 384 5950

Interviewed: Caroline Aurora (Resident House Manager)

Provides: Short-medium term accommodation.

Bed: 16 beds + 1 emergency room.

Staffing: FTE = 1.0

Speciality: Safe environment for women on their own with low support needs.

Other groups identified

Pathways

27 Jarden Mile

Ngauranga

P.O. Box 7443

Wellington Sth

Te Roopu Whakapakari Ora Trust

P.O. Box 13247

Johnsonville

Tapu Te Ranga Marae

44 Rhine Street

Island Bay
Wellington

Te Kaika Whanau
54 Freyberg St
Lyll Bay
Wellington

Wesley Care
17 Constable Street
Newtown
Wellington

Womens Refuge
P.O. Box 16-079
Wellington

Te Whare Rokiroki Maori Womens Refuge
P.O. Box 7245
Wellington Sth
Wellington

Suzanne Aubert Compassion Centre (Soup Kitchen)
132 -134 Tory St
Wellington

Mahora House
31 Mahora St
Kilbirnie
Wellington

Capital City Lodge
82 Hanson St
Newtown Wellington

Wellington Peoples Centre
P.O. Box 9491
Te Aro
Wellington

SF Wellington (Schizophrenia Fellowship)
163 Thirndon Quay
P.O. Box 355
Wellington

Public Health Service
Level 1 transport House
275 Cuba St
Wellington,

Community Development Practice

Valuing Community - Supporting Development



Kia Ora

Re: Networking and Collaboration Needs Analysis

My name is Jenny Devereux and I have been contracted by the Wellington Housing Trust to conduct research with organisations involved in social housing in Wellington. I have a background in Community Development in a variety of roles and have worked in this area for the past 12 years.

The research is a networking and collaboration needs analysis and the aims of the research include:

- Providing an up-to-date knowledge of current service providers.
- Identification of current unmet networking needs/gaps/overlaps in the sector
- Identification of barriers to networking and collaboration.
- Identification of benefits/outcomes/expectations of better networking.
- Providing understanding of the range and diversity of services and organisations within the sector.
- Providing information on and recommendations of models for successful networking to the WHT and to the wider housing sector in Wellington.

I am contacting a range of groups working in the sector in a variety of roles to organise an interview, and would appreciate your contribution to this research.

The research will be completed by the end of July 2006 and a copy of the final report will be available to all participating organisations. This project is being funded by Housing New Zealand through their Growth Funding initiative.

I have enclosed an outline of the interview questions which cover the main areas I would like to explore, however I am interested in all relevant information and experience related to the subject.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Devereux

Community Development Practice

Appendix C Questionnaire outline

May 2006

Interview outline for WHT Networking Research Project

These are the general topics that will be covered in the interview.

- 1. The services your organisation provides in relation to community housing in Wellington eg:**
 - Your mandate – eg legislation, Trust Deed, policy, mission statement etc
 - Number of years of operation
 - Nature of services
 - Number of beds available
 - Client group
 - Your service model
 - Specialties

- 2. Capacity of your organisation eg:**
 - Staffing - FTE's
 - Roles and requirements of staff
 - Revenue/Resources
 - Gaps or needs in services that you cannot currently meet

- 3. Knowledge of the sector in Wellington eg:**
 - Other organisations you are aware of providing housing or related services in Wellington
 - Relationships with other organisations
 - Sources of information regarding community housing – newsletters, meetings, surveys, internet, research, contacts etc
 - Areas that you would like more information or education on/can provide information or education on
 - CHAI

- 4. Networking/Collaboration eg:**
 - Networks or forums you have been involved in
 - Reasons for attending
 - Outcomes/usefulness/value of networking – what you hoped to gain
 - What you have to offer
 - Barriers to networking
 - Collaboration projects you have been involved in
 - Outcomes of collaboration
 - Barriers to collaboration

- 5. Future Development eg:**
 - Areas you would like to see your organisation developing
 - Identifying trends and changing needs in community housing sector
 - Knowledge, education or information you need to develop further
 - “Outside the box” ideas, wish list for community housing

Appendix D Other NZ housing forums information

D1 Housing Action Porirua

Contact:
Lynne Renouf
P.P. Box 50281
Porirua
04 236 0047
Renouf3@xtra.co.nz

(Alison - Insert HAP Action Plan here. When I try to insert it in the document it changes all the headers/footers settings. I've emailed it to you separately)

D2 Christchurch Housing Forum

Contact:
C/- Tenants Protection Assn
Helen Gatony
03 379 2297
141 Hereford St
Christchurch
tpa@xtra.co.nz



The Christchurch Housing Forum

141 Hereford Street Christchurch Ph: (03) 3791122 Fax: (03) 3668535

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The Christchurch Housing Forum was established in November 1999 as the result of identified community need (an outcome of Tenants Protection Association Housing Forum August 1999).

At their first meeting local housing groups agreed to the following purpose:

- ✓ *Meetings will be for information sharing and should include a wide range of groups, government departments etc involved in housing issues. Action groups on particular issues could arise from meetings, but the focus will not be on lobbying (to allow all to participate).*

The forum meets every six weeks for two hours to discuss housing issues, keep up to date about what is happening in the housing sector, maintain relationships and expand networks. Because the focus of the forum is on information sharing and relationship building, and not lobbying it has been possible for all parties to come together. It is not unusual for tenant advocates to be sitting beside landlords. The forum involves not-for profit housing providers as well as private providers and government providers and various interest groups around housing for example disabled persons, mental health etc. Work and Income regularly participate as well as Government Health, Housing, and Justice Departments.

The forum has no formal structure. Each year the members elect a planning group and ratify the purpose. The planning group proceeds to organize the forums for the coming year, they volunteer their time to the Forum (with the blessing of their employers). Every 2-3 years the Forum Planners organize a National Forum.

The Christchurch Housing Forum current planners for 2006 are:

Ali Brunel/Helen Gatonyi TPA; Julie Grenfell Methodist Mission; Louise Lewis Comcare; Phil Clearwater CDHB; Robyn Steel CCC; Jo Williams HNZC; Gerard Manley Community Assets Bank. The forum would not be successful without the commitment of the planners and the support of their respective employers.

There is no formal membership application, only a commitment to adhere to the purpose and attendance at forum meetings when they are of interest. We also ask members to fill in an evaluation form at the end of the year, re-examine the purpose and vote for a planning group.

Evaluation Document

The housing forum was set up in Nov 99 as a result of identified community need. At the first meeting the groups agreed to the following purpose "meetings will be for information sharing and should include a wide range of groups, government departments etc involved in housing issues. Action groups on particular issues could arise from meetings but the focus will not be on lobbying (to allow all to participate)"

Do you still agree with this purpose?

If not what should the purpose be?

What are the benefits of the housing forum to you/your organization?

What could the housing forum do better and how?

What are the emerging issues and/or trends in housing for you or your organization that you would like the Housing Forum to consider as meeting topics/presentations in 2006?

Any other suggestions or comments?

D3 Nelson Housing Forum

Contact:
Keith Preston
Sustainability Ltd
03 546 6607
keith@sustainability.org.nz
2 St Johns Drive
Nelson

Nelson City Council
Community Housing Policy
25/09/2003

Objective

1. Improve the opportunities for Nelson residents to access quality affordable housing.

Goal 1.4

Facilitate a quarterly housing forum

Action

Facilitate and provide administrative support for a quarterly housing forum comprising representatives of interested community, central and local government organisations and private landlords

Initiate joint planning and coordination of services through the housing forum

Monitor home affordability and other housing issues and when necessary, take an advocacy role

Appendix E Networking resources

Mental Health Services Directory 2006
Wellington – Hutt – Porirua – Kapiti

Kites Trust
P.O. Box 9392
Marion Square
Wellington
Level 6 Education House
178 Willis Street
Wellington
Tel (04) 384 3303
Fax: 384 3308
Email: admin@kites.org.nz

Survival Guide

Downtown Community Ministry
P.O. Box 6133
Marion Square
Wellington
75 Taranaki St
Wellington
Ph 384 7699
www.dcm.org.nz

CHAI quarterly newsletters

CHAI Community Housing Aotearoa Inc.

“CHAI emails quarterly newsletters to our members to keep them updated on activities, events and resources that impact the community housing sector. We also send frequent e-letters to members to make them aware of any time sensitive issues in the sector, as well as to keep them abreast of CHAI’s ongoing work.”

P.O. Box 11543
Manners St
Wellington
Level 9, Century Capital Tower
175 Victoria Street
Wellington
Tel: (04) 385 8722
Fax (04) 385 8721
Email: support@communityhousing.org.nz
www.comunityhousing.org.nz

Appendix F Existing Wellington networks contact details

Homelessness Prevention Group

Contact: Clare Aspinall
Regional Public Health
Level 1, Transport House
275 Cuba Street
Wellington
Mobile: 027 445 3886
Ph: (04) 570 9002
Fax: (04) 473 4972

Inner City Mental Health Liaison Group

Contact: Inner City Project
7 Hall St
Newtown
Wellington
P.O Box 7200, Wellington Sth
Ph: (04) 389 3788
0800 150 303
Email: 2karaka@icproject.co.nz

The Wellington Regional Refugee Health and Well Being Action Plan

Contact: Sue Driver
Project Co-ordinator, Family and Community Services
Ministry of Social Development
PO Box 12 136
Wellington
Ph: 04 913 2436
Mobile 027 447 2001

Appendix G Websites

Community housing

Housing New Zealand Corporation

www.hnzc.co.nz

Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

www.jrht.org.uk

Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute

www.ahuri.edu.au

Centre for Housing Research Aotearoa New Zealand (CHRANZ)

www.hnzc.co.nz/chr/index.html

Community Housing Federation of Australia

www.chfa.com.au

National Community Housing Forum (Australia)

www.nchf.org.au

Community Housing in NSW

www.communityhousing.org.nz

Imagine Better – working to implement the NZ Disability Strategy

www.imaginebetter.co.nz

Community development and networking

The Standing Conference for Community Development (SCCD) 2003 Networking Resource Pack

www.quest-net.org

Department of Internal Affairs, Community Development Resource Kit

www.dia.govt.nz

Communitynet – Aotearoa

www.community.net.nz

Making Networks Work

www.makingthenetwork.org/nets/

Social network analysis

www.odi.org.uk/rapid/Tools/Toolkits/Communication/Social_network.html

Department of Internal Affairs – Community Development

www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf

Community Toolbox

http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_main_1229.htm