

Growing Confident Communities Together

Whakarangatira Ngaa Hapori



JUNE 2013 ISSUE 4

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Establishing a community social enterprise for local employment

Kia ora! We are very excited to share new of our *Growing Confident Communities Together* forum held on 4 May at the Migrant Action Trust office. It is indeed encouraging to see the initiatives (ie 3 previous forums) bearing fruit although our journey to our destination has only just begun. Our coming together with an attitude of self-reliance and our ability to develop local solutions to our problems are indicators of our strength as a community.

Our forum was enriched by the diversity of the participants. Those who attended included new to the *Growing Confident Communities Together*, the Japanese community and visiting urban planning students from Auckland University. Our own *Kaumatu*, Tame Cassidy, started us off with *karakia* which was followed by a prayer from Zena Wrigley, the Roskill Community *Kaiarahi*. As with all previous forums, Helen Te Hira was our facilitator of the day and we are very grateful for her commitment to the initiative.

The first part of the forum comprised a report on the last forum held on 3 November 2012. The report shed light on what has been done so far and our current situation in order to bring new participants up to speed. Prior to the 4 May 2013 forum, the members of *Growing Confident Communities Together* had a site visit to waste management company Xtreme Waste in Raglan. Other community representatives also attended and they gave a report of their findings at the forum.

The objective of the May forum was to discuss the way forward in line with our

planned community social enterprise and to form a working group that will steer the vision of the project. We therefore invited Warren Snow from Envision New Zealand, an expert in this field, to share his experiences with the forum and to offer advice on where to start. Warren was a perfect fit with what we were looking for in terms of his experience and expertise in the area we are looking to develop. Survey questionnaires were circulated during the forum that was geared towards the formation of the new trust to be established that will run the community social enterprise.

Annie Newman, from Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand, was invited to talk about the living wage campaign because the community social enterprise is intended to be a living wage enterprise. She talked about her campaign in New Zealand and how it can be achieved even through small scale enterprise businesses. Before the closing ceremony of the forum, urban planning students from the School of Architecture and Planning at Auckland University got the chance to provide feedback and observations of the forum.

They were acknowledged with a duet from Helen Te Hira and Lena Henry, a lecturer at the School of Architecture and Planning. Richard Barter, Migrant Action Trust secretary and chairman for Puketapapa Local Board, then closed the meeting. The rest of this newsletter reports in more detail on developments at this forum.

We now look forward to exciting times ahead with the formation of our own community social enterprise.



Jane Mueke, community development worker for the *Growing Confident Communities Together* project



Report on previous forum



Malabika Bhaduri from the Probasee Bengalee Association of NZ.

Malabika Bhaduri from the Probasee Bengalee Association of New Zealand

gave a brief history of the three *Growing Confident Communities Together* forums we have held so far.

She explained how we initially came together as 36 ethnic groups to brainstorm on the solutions required to address our issues and how we decided that it was time to stop talking and start taking action by working together to leverage resources. In the second forum we invited local politicians and local board members but neither provided any solutions and nor were they able to give assistance.

The third forum was a platform for generating social enterprise ideas as a

solution to the most common problem to all: unemployment. From the more than 30 ideas that were generated a Resource Recovery Centre was the project that made sense to pursue.

That brought us to the fourth and latest forum where we deliberated on how to move forward with our social enterprise. Trust Manager, Agnes Granada, gave a brief presentation on how improving the environment can create jobs in the process. There are indeed business and employment opportunities that can be created from waste management and minimization.

Site visit to Xtreme Waste Raglan



Butoyi Dieudonne from the Auckland Refugee Community Coalition.

Butoyi Dieudonne from the Auckland Refugee Community Coalition started off by noting that he was impressed to learn that the Xtreme Waste initiative in Raglan was owned and operated by the community. He related how this experience brought home the famous saying, "One man's rubbish is another man's treasure".

He listed three things he learned from his visit to the site: First was the opportunity that Xtreme Waste gives youth in terms of employment and workplace experience that will enable them transition to labour market.

Second, how the enterprise helps the community in time of crisis. For example, in the case of a disaster they provide relief necessities such as beddings and equipment. Finally, he was amazed by the number of jobs the enterprise has created and the revenue it generates every year.

He recommended that others visit the site and expressed the hope that a similar operation would be established here.

Thin Myat also spoke as a representative of the Auckland Refugee Community Coalition. Thin was inspired by creative ideas from the enterprise and gave two examples that caught her attention.

One was a small house built by joining two broken windows and which is now used to grow vegetables. It was surprising to learn that it was a popular commodity in the community and it costs \$50. The second idea was the use of old bathtubs for vermiculture (process of composting using worms) that produces worms and worm urine that are used as a fertilizers.

Thin felt that if the same was replicated in Puketapapa Local Board it would benefit the refugees and migrants who

cannot find jobs due to language barriers. She mentioned that behaviour change can be achieved through community education by teaching people to care for the environment. Lastly, she said that she thought the community social enterprise would boost the local economy of Puketapapa.

Lena Yang of the Chinese Action Network-Bridging Trust had a lot to say to the participants at the forum. She was impressed by the Zero Waste principle that the Raglan community has adopted and its determination to reach that goal. She said that the Xtreme Waste community enterprise was started in 2000 and has diverted 76% of waste from the landfill. Lena added that it makes more than half a million dollars by selling rubbish and even exporting some of their recycled plastic bottles overseas.

In addition, she presented a future scenario by saying that with the global population now more than 7 billion and New Zealand's population expected to reach 5 million by 2050, it was a wise decision to, reduce, reuse, repair, recycle and compost as many of our resources as possible. She told

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the participants that the benefits for the community of having a similar scheme in Puketapapa are very clear:

- We can create a better environment. In the long run, our community can reach zero waste as well.
- We can create more jobs. The money we make would go back into the community.
- We can offer education so that people will be more aware of the zero waste principle.
- We would like to see more people wear reused clothing and eat lunch in reusable packaging.
- We can build greater social capital in our community.

She finished by saying "Let's start now to do something very good for our community."

The fourth presenter was Haruko Tabuchi, a new member of *Growing Confident Communities Together*. She related her experience in New Zealand of living in apartments where she has observed that people do not sort their rubbish. She told the forum that in Japan there are strict regulations around waste management and cited an initiative that the Japanese government has put in place to reduce waste. Train stations in Japan no



Thin Myat (top) from the Auckland Refugee Community Coalition got excited about the idea of a worm farm using an old bath tub.

longer have rubbish collection bins and the passengers are expected to act responsibly by disposing of their own rubbish.

She praised Raglan for having reduced 70% of its waste and for sending only 22% to the landfill. One of the things that impressed her was the difference between staff sorting rubbish as opposed to it being sorted by machine. The use of manual sorting has meant that less waste is sent to the landfill and this has enabled the community to save a lot of money. She added that we all came to New Zealand to settle and therefore are responsible for caring for the environment.

Liban Ahmed, a leader of ONKOD Somali Youth, was the last to speak and he also praised the creativity of the people of Raglan. He applauded the fact that the Raglan community is able to take care of the concerns of its people in every way, including economic and social needs.

He was really inspired by the history of Xtreme Waste and how the company, which originally employed two staff from Hamilton, was transformed into a community enterprise. He explained further that originally these two staff picked up the rubbish, took it to the landfill, got paid and then went to Hamilton. Since the community took over the operation it has created more than 20 full time and 15 part-time jobs.

Liban was also impressed by the design and the layout of the centre which includes a space for mothers to breastfeed while they are in the centre. He reiterated the point made by Haruko that manual sorting of rubbish has reduced by 30% the amount that was previously sent to the landfill.



(Top to bottom) Lena from CAN-B Trust, Haruko from the Japanese community & Liban from the Onkod Somali Youth expressed their impressions of the site visit.



Rick Thorpe, Waste Management Project Coordinator from Xtreme Waste, showed the delegation how they operate the recycling centre



Inspirations from Warren Snow of Envision NZ



Warren Snow is a respected expert and authority in the establishment of resource recovery centre around New Zealand.

He has a wealth of experience and knowledge and has developed a lot of tools and resources for communities wishing to establish the same. During the forum he shared his insights on the things to consider when establishing a resource recovery centre.

In his opening remarks he quoted a phrase that he heard from someone when he first entered this field. He said that if a community is not in control of economic processes then it is very hard to control social processes. He commented that for every community like ours that has many issues and problems employment is a key factor in solving a lot of these problems.

He gave an example of his work in a North Island community that had many social issues similar to ours. Many solutions were proposed by many different groups but the problems remained the same. He therefore came up with the solution of creating a community enterprise that had a business model as a driver. The community wanted a model that had an environmental focus and would create jobs and boost the local economy.

Any community enterprise has to be a social business that is community

owned and operated. Examples of social business include Sanitarium, which is owned by the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and Fonterra, which is owned by farmers.

Warren emphasised the fact that such an enterprise has to be entrepreneurial and business thinking so that it does not rely heavily on funding from local or central government. Such funding has its role to play in the initial stages but the enterprise should be able to sustain itself without relying totally on this funding.

The social business model has lot of advantages and is one is that provides social venues that give opportunities to professionals to contribute through volunteering. It is also leads to the creation of other cluster businesses and can be business incubation for community wanting to start a business. Things to consider when starting a resource recovery centre include the formation of a working group that is prepared to develop the vision and willing to put in time through volunteerism during the initial stages. Other things to consider are land options, legal structure, business plan, materials required and funding.

Warren also advised of the need to look for support from existing networks like Resource Recovery Network Auckland that do offer support and resources for such initiatives.

Finally, he added that if run well the benefits of a resource recovery centre are massive and include the creation of employment, income from new projects, education in new ways of treating resources and our planet, saving in landfill, reduction in cost of waste services and cheaper goods for people on low incomes.

If a community is not in control of economic processes then it is very hard to control social processes



Annie Newman - Living Wage Campaign

Annie spoke on behalf of Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand and educated forum participants on the meaning of a minimum living wage and its implications. She told them that it is a fairly new movement which started last year in New Zealand. Migrant Action Trust is one of the founding members and it has endorsed a statement that for all New Zealanders should receive a minimum living wage.

According to Annie, the definition of a living wage is the amount of money you need to survive and participate in society. She added that many New Zealanders don't have enough to survive, not because they don't work 40 hours a week, but because the minimum wage is low. The wage that the current Government has set is \$13.75 per hour and across a week it is not enough for people to survive and support their families, said Annie.

She went on to say that as a result of this movement many organisations New Zealand have come together to form the living wage movement which is composed of 1/3 faith groups, 1/3 union and 1/3 secular groups.

Together, they felt the need to unite around something that they have in common and there are currently 130 organisations that have joined the movement.

A living wage is the amount of money that one needs to survive, to live with dignity and participate as an active citizen in New Zealand. Annie said that it is good to have a job but is not that much fun if the money earned is not enough to pay the bills. The minimum wage recommended by Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand is \$18.40 per hour. How has this been calculated?

This rate was arrived at by independent calculation based on methodology determined by the Family Centre Social Research Policy unit in



Annie Newman from the Living Wage Movement.

Wellington. The calculation is based on a 4-person family, i.e. 2 adults and 2 children.

Internationally, the Living Wage movement started in the USA and spread to UK where 20% of the councils are now paying a living wage not only to employees but also to contractors and every person associated with council.

Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand is advocating the campaign at Local Boards, Advisory Panel, Pacific People Advisory Panel level and is seeking endorsement from those associated with councils because they have the power to make a difference.

Annie's challenge to *Growing Confident Communities Together* is that she hopes we will have a social enterprise working in Puketapapa that will pay workers a minimum living wage.

She acknowledged that it will not happen immediately but we will investigate it further to find out what the barriers are because we do not want to send anybody into financial crisis.

The idea is to work out how we can make it happen by drawing on all the knowledge that we have to try and influence all the important decision makers and the people who hold the purse strings.



Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand

A living wage is the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life. A living wage will enable workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society.

We call upon the Government, employers and society as a whole to strive for a living wage for all households as a necessary and important step in the reduction of poverty in New Zealand.

<http://www.livingwagenz.org.nz>



The social enterprise working group



Working group members (L-R) Zena Wrigley, Fukiko Otsuka, Hajime Otsuka (hidden), Haruko Tabuchi, Arjeet Baweja, Narinder Grewal, Thin Myat Khine, Evans Ndugu Musa, Jennya Charomora, Liban Ahmed, Rebecca Mcilwraith, George Misa, Alvin Jung. Not in picture are Yonas Gebremichael, Malabika Bhaduri, Lena Yang, Emma Morris, Mohammed Ousmand and Murad Nurhusein.

During the forum 50 survey questionnaires were distributed to the participants to allow for broader participation and to provide a way of giving input into what the proposed community social enterprise should look like.

The questions included, 1) Do you agree with the proposed name – Earth Warden and if not, suggest a name? 2) Do you agree that a minimum living wage should be one of the items to be discussed by the working group? 3) Do you wish to express your interest to be part of the working group?

There was a 94% response rate: out of 47 questionnaires 42 respondents agreed with the proposed name of Earth Warden, five respondents said no and one respondent said "maybe".

Even though the majority of participants at the forum voted for Earth Warden here is a list of the names suggested: (1) Earth Shepherd (2) RRR Warden (Roskill Rubbish Recycle Wardens) (3) Earth Lovers (Motto: Love the earth, love the golden waste" (4) WORMS (Waste Organisation Recyclers of Mt Roskill), (5) Waste Wise, Earth WORMS - Waste Organization Recyclers of Mt. Roskill (6) Earth Keepers (7) Earth Action Trust (8) Earth Keepers, Earth Captains, Earth Capital (9) "Warden" (one respondent said warden has a negative connotation to it) (10) Earth Carer and (11) Earth Guardian.

The second question had 46 respondents who said "Yes." The one respondent who said "No" felt that the discussion needed to be taken to a higher level and that it was more important to establish as many jobs as possible.

In response to question three, 17 participants put their names forward to be part of the working group while two forwarded their names prior to the forum because they were unable to attend the forum that particular day.

They are: Fukiko Otsuka, Hajime Otsuka, Yonas Gebremichael, Evans Ndugu Musa, Jennya Charomora, Zena Wrigley, Arjeet Baweja, Narinder Grewal, Liban Ahmed, Alvin Jung, Thin Myat Khine, Rebecca Mcilwraith, George Misa, Malabika Bhaduri, HarukoTabuchi, Emma Morris, Lena Yang, Mohammed Ousmand and Murad Nurhusein.

This committee will develop the vision of the new trust to be established as well as being responsible for its setting up and its initial operations.

Feedback from urban planning students, Auckland Uni

In the second session of the forum students of urban planning from the School of Architecture and Planning at Auckland University were given the opportunity to comment on the forum and they were introduced by their lecturer, Lena Henry. We felt honoured to have the students with us on the forum because we strongly believe in the po-

tential of young people to shape the future.

Lena asked the students to stand up in order for the community to see them. She explained to the forum that the students were urban planners in their third year and it is her desire for them to interact with the community before they become the decision makers of Auckland and part of the world.

She called them an army of planners and leaders not of tomorrow but of today and we couldn't agree more. She thanked them for taking time on a Saturday to attend the forum even though they had other commitments. Lena noted the desire of the students to be involved and mentioned the two students

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who volunteered to be part of the working group. The students also gave a koha of \$175.40 – thank you!

Thomas James: Thomas said that he was impressed by the successful recycling enterprise in Raglan and how it has become profitable. He found the presentation on the living wage very interesting and educational. He finished by saying that attending the forum was an enjoyable experience.

Andrew David: Andrew did not know what to expect when he came to the forum and thanked everyone for welcoming them. It was an eye opening experience for him. He talked of his discussions with his colleague on what comes up out things than slip out of the radar he wouldn't have thought it existed. He said that the forum was amazing.

Tina Tsvetanova: Tina did not know what to expect at the forum but she found it very welcoming and was happy with the results. According to her, the projects undertaken and the living wage campaign relate to what they have been studying and interesting to see how it translates into real life. She added that she learnt a lot in one meeting for few hours and saw evidence of great community involvement.

Sebastian Bennett: Sebastian felt warmly welcomed and thanked the Trust Manager, Granada, for inviting them, Helen Te Hira for facilitating the forum and all the participants. He commented that they have learnt about caring for the environment and community development and that it was inspiring to see it working effectively.

He was amazed at the great participation and involvement with the community and for the community. Sebastian went on to say that as students, they are a diverse group and what they picked out from the forum was an inspiration and will take it back with them to their com-



Auckland University urban planning students (L-R) Sebastian Bennett, Thomas James, Andrew David and Tina Tsvetanova

munities. He concluded by saying that as an Aucklander himself he is happy to see groups like Migrant Action Trust working and serving the community and forms part of the city.

Lena finished the feedback session from the students by telling the forum that one of the platforms Urban Planning stands for is sustainability and to be able to come to a community meeting and see it in action got students away from dealing only with theory.

She added that she hoped the students had taken a lot from the forum and agreed with Tina that they although they have been studying for two years they learnt so much in just two hours. Lena endorsed the students' *korero* by singing a duet with Helen Te Hira.

*Because you're magic young people to me
You are magic to me
With your head held high let your voices cry
you're proud to be a rangatabi.*

*In this crazy old world that we live in today
Where power seems to have all the say
Where people don't care about good clean air
Just blowing people
And I wonder inside where the answers must lie
So I turn to the youth today
I say come on kids,
Come give it a try
You show us the way.*

*Because you're magic young people to me
You are magic to me x2
With your head held high let your voices cry
You're proud to be a rangatabi.*



(L-R) Helen & Lena



Closing remarks from Richard Barter



Richard Barter, Secretary of Migrant Action Trust and Chairperson of Puketepapa Local Board, endorsed the *korero* by acknowledging all the participants.

He said that as a resident of 30 years he has never been more excited about what is happening in the community. He pointed out that the Trust Manager, Granada, is action oriented and makes things happen, unlike some people who just talk and complain.

He also thanked the students from Auckland University for taking the time to come to the forum and that he felt privileged at their understanding of our story. He told them that they were the people who will play a major role in shaping our city.

He acknowledged the migrants for their warmth, richness and their many skills and ideas. He related his experience of working in some of the countries that they come from through his role at Tear Fund New Zealand. He thanked them for choosing to come to New Zealand and for attending the forum.

In addition, he noted the work of Warren Snow and his contribution towards waste management and minimisation in New Zealand. He mentioned his interaction with Warren during his work at Kaitaia and his

enormous achievement in that community.

Richard talked of how he witnessed behaviour change in the people in the Kaitaia community when one young mother came and started sorting her rubbish. He recognised Warren's efforts in making a difference in a way he had never considered and felt it was a job well done.

Lastly, he thanked Annie Newman for her presentation and mentioned how he had discussed with her statistics on benefits are paid out to in New Zealand. Half of them go to retirement while a big chunk goes to people who

are working but cannot meet their family's needs. He supports the living wage campaign and said that it needs people with experience and knowledge to make it happen.

He is committed to the idea of a resource recovery centre and he is securing a site for its operation. He has already begun engaging the government body and local council. Mr. Barter closed the meeting with a word of prayer.

The *Growing Confident Communities Together*
Whakarangatira Ngaa Hapori

project is supported by the Department of Internal Affairs' Community Development Scheme Fund

THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Te Tari Taiwhenua

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