



Kaiti Community Cohesion Project Report [excl. appendices]

Prepared for the Ministry of Social Development
Full report may be downloaded at: www.kapaikaiti.com

Kapai Kaiti Charitable Trust
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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

Kapai Kaiti is a residents group established in 2000 with the aim of “making Kaiti an even better place to live”. It has approximately 120 members, a mailing list of over 200, seven trustees and an ad hoc working group who coordinate the various activities undertaken by the voluntary organisation.

An initial survey of Kaiti residents, conducted by Kapai Kaiti in 2001, found that a key issue was difficulty in accessing a range of existing community services. Amongst others, the idea was proposed that a community centre in Kaiti could provide a more accessible variety of services and facilities for Kaiti residents.

Since 2001, Kapai Kaiti, on behalf of the Kaiti residents, has been undertaking further research, and pursuing potential avenues and sources of funding to establish a community centre in Kaiti. A small contract was developed in June 2005, between Kapai Kaiti and the Ministry of Social Development to undertake a community consultation and scoping project.

The aim of the project was to complete a robust report that identified any substantive need for a community centre in Kaiti. The report would include:

- Background information on the profile and needs of the Kaiti community.
- The type and range of services, facilities and activities required to meet these needs.
- A stocktake of existing community services, facilities and activities in the wider Gisborne district and current utilisation of those by Kaiti residents.
- Any issues and/or barriers to Kaiti residents accessing existing community services, facilities and activities.
- An analysis of options to address identified issues and barriers to access, including the pros and cons of each option.
- If the establishment of a community centre was identified as an effective option for addressing the need then the report should also include:
 - Potential risks and issues in establishing a community centre in Kaiti and ways of successfully managing these; and
 - Preliminary ideas on the feasibility of potential sites/locations and operational matters, such as how the centre would work in practice and be sustainable in the long term.
- Next steps for moving forward.

This project was completed in August 2005 and this report is a summary of the information required by the Ministry of Social Development.

Key Findings

The suburb of Kaiti is characterized by established families with a strong affinity to their community and a desire to challenge the negative reputation of Kaiti by making Kaiti a better place to live.

The current range of services available in Kaiti are utilised by its residents but, out of necessity, many travel outside the suburb to access services such as hospitals, high schools and tertiary providers. Residents have definite ideas about additional services that are needed and how these may be developed. Key social and economic indicators

suggest that the ability of Kaiti residents to access existing services both within and outside of Kaiti is difficult.

Community cohesion within Kaiti is limited to a few community-building initiatives and lacks the range of events and activities it needs to flourish. Existing community facilities do not meet the community's needs or aspirations for shared, accessible and appropriate spaces.

New strategies are needed across the community to encourage greater levels of connectedness and discussion on issues impacting Kaiti residents. The overwhelming choice of research participants is for the development of a community space to:

1. Initiate greater community cohesion;
2. Facilitate events, activities and services to the community; and
3. Bring about whanaungatanga and pride amongst residents.

Kaiti residents recognise the issues and potential risks associated with the establishment of a community space in Kaiti. More in-depth research is needed to explore feasibility and operational issues. In addition, financial and human resources are needed to facilitate and coordinate this research on behalf of Kaiti residents and alongside the voluntary work of Kapai Kaiti.

Recommendation

Based on the key findings of this report, and in light of results from other related research, it is recommended that a subsequent project be resourced to co-ordinate a Kaiti Community Cohesion Strategy that includes:

1. a Community Engagement Plan designed to generate interest, ownership, deliberation and cooperation around community cohesion processes and initiatives including:
 - mechanisms for monitoring social cohesion,
 - guidelines and mechanisms for participatory planning processes, and
 - a community communication strategy,
 - guidelines of community-defined principles and practices of engagement and relationship-building with organisations, businesses and agencies controlled by individuals and groups outside of the community;
2. a Community Action Plan designed to generate interest, ownership, deliberation and cooperation to:
 - address priority issues identified by residents of Kaiti;
 - build on existing community building initiatives such as the Waitangi Day events, community forums and the community centre planning process;
3. Strategic Community Goals & Indicators for Kapai Kaiti Charitable Trust (residents association) and any other Kaiti-based groups that wish to include their plans in these documents; and
4. A robust evaluation mechanism in subsequent stages of these processes.

It is estimated that at least one fulltime position and associated project expenses including specialist advice and administrative support would be required over a period of between nine and eighteen months to complete the work outlined above depending on the agreed scope of each component and additional resources and support available.

2. Literature Review

A review of literature from the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand was undertaken to solicit information about existing community centres and to identify the role, structure, services and success factors of these centres.

Evidence for achieving a successful and sustainable community centre is readily available through a variety of different sources from the United Kingdom and Australia. There is also sufficient information to indicate that community centres in New Zealand are also growing in popularity. Currently, valuable community amenities, facilities and resources contribute to local community connectedness. These spaces are often supported by with local authorities in the form of people resources and financial resources.

Research findings from the United Kingdom confirm positive outcomes from effective engagement with local communities. Development work is more easily sustainable when shaped and delivered by active neighbourhood involvement and community action. This is more often than not prompted or spearheaded by interest generated from activities within community centres.

The characteristics of a community centre can include:

- A focal point for the local community;
- A provider of mechanisms for engagement;
- A pool of shared resources, partnerships and networks;
- A facilitator of community development; and
- A source of quality services to empower individuals and groups.

The function or purpose of most community centres follows four vital themes:

1. Promotion, encouragement, sharing and support to learn, achieve or succeed;
2. Address community issues, disadvantage and challenge anti-social behaviour;
3. Help to build or create equality of opportunities and endorse good practice and diversity; and
4. Community development and strategic planning.

The types of activities promoted or facilities provided by a community centre can be numerous but should principally address community needs and aspirations.

There is ample evidence citing the value and numerous advantages of creating a local community centre, especially one that is developed and shaped by involvement with the community. There is also support for the development of short and long-term plans, which aim to build upon current knowledge and get residents to effectively influence the shape of facilities, services and involvement tools or mechanisms.

3. Community Profile

The information used to create this snapshot of the community of Kaiti is solicited from three sources:

1. The 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings;
2. The 2001 Household Economy Survey; and
3. New Zealand business demographic statistics.
4. NZ Police Incident Records
5. Gisborne District Council '2004 Community Directory'

Kaiti is a community of approximately 10,000 people living in over 3,000 residences. The suburb is bordered by the Turanganui River to the west, Wheatstone Road and Sponge Bay to the east, Kaiti Beach to the south and Gaddums Hill to the north. The four units within Kaiti, as recognized by the 2001 Census, are Tamarau, Kaiti North, Kaiti South and Outer Kaiti.

The Kaiti community is made up of different ethnic groups including (from largest to smallest population) Māori, European, Pacific peoples and Asian. Within Kaiti the number of females only just outnumbers the number of males. The spread of residents across Kaiti is relatively even, although slightly more people live in Kaiti South. Most people living in Kaiti are between the ages of 15-64.

Kaiti South has the highest rate of unemployment, followed closely by Outer Kaiti. Those employed and living in Kaiti work in the areas of Service and Sales, and Agriculture and Fisheries. Over one-third (40%) of residents of Kaiti have no qualification. Most residents of Kaiti earn below \$20,000. The number of residents of Kaiti receiving a benefit has halved over the past eight years.

There are 2,331 families residing in Kaiti. A significant proportion of families in the suburb of Kaiti are single-parent households. Many families are raised in Kaiti and still remain in Kaiti.

Despite sometimes stark differences within the four units of Kaiti, as a whole the suburb is below average when compared to average figures for the Gisborne district and for New Zealand. These statistics include:

- Employment rates;
- Income levels;
- Qualification levels;
- Access to a telephone;
- Access to the internet;
- Access to a motor vehicle; and
- Annual household spending.

Organisations based in Kaiti offer a range of services that are utilized by Kaiti residents. Healthcare services include two pharmacies, two medical centres, a physiotherapist and a school-based dental clinic. Kaiti residents can access hospitals, medical laboratories and dental care for adults outside the suburb.

There are a range of education services at the early childhood level (including Kohanga Reo and Kindergartens) through to the primary level. Residents of Kaiti must travel out of the suburb to access high schools or tertiary-level providers. Access to a library, swimming pool complex and the YMCA requires travel.

A range of retail outlets, accommodation and hospitality services are based in Kaiti. The suburb has one law firm, one marae and one memorial hall. Churches in Kaiti cover a range of religious backgrounds. Te Poho o Rawiri, the only marae in Kaiti, welcomes members and non-members of the local tribe. Te Runanga o Ngati Porou and a Work and Income NZ office are the only government services based in Kaiti. However, many other organisations deliver services to Kaiti.

The suburb of Kaiti has a dozen parks and reserves but few sporting and recreational facilities. Sport and Leisure services are restricted to a fishing club, yacht club, bowling club, waka ama club and gaming machines. Choices for young people and disabled people living in Kaiti are minimal. Older people have the choice of two aged care services.

Some organisations, although based outside of Kaiti, deliver services in Kaiti. There is a greater number of organizations or services that aren't based in Kaiti but, out of necessity, are used by Kaiti residents despite a limited bus service and access to a private vehicle.

4.0 Methodology

As mentioned previously in this report, this project relied on three sources of information; an international literature review, community surveys and focus groups. This section focuses on the latter source.

Several research projects have been undertaken by Kapai Kaiti with Kaiti residents between 2001 and August, 2005:

<i>Research</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Date completed</i>
1. Kaiti Residents Survey.	105	March, 2001.
2. Tairawhiti Funeral Services Survey.	21	April, 2001.
3. Pilot survey of Kaiti residents examining their priority needs for community services.	25	December, 2002.
4. Survey of Kaiti residents to explore their requirements for public/community facilities (as indicated by previous surveys) and identify their stipulated needs/uses for improved community services and/or a local community centre.	244	2003
5. Focus groups held with Kaiti residents to increase understanding of current household and neighbourhood needs in relation to community-building and community buildings.	50	August, 2005.

The collation and analysis of data from the first four surveys identified that the vast majority of local residents continue to share hopes for a community centre in Kaiti and that this collective goal is based on their family members needs for improved neighbourhood services, whether these are articulated as either welfare, social, cultural or educational services.

Further analysis indicated the need to undertake additional research to increase understanding of these needs in relation to community-building and community buildings. This section is an explanation of the methodology used for this particular gathering of information between June and August 2005 through focus groups (5).

The original project plan proposed that data would be gathered solely through focus groups. A document was developed by Kapai Kaiti and distributed to stakeholders for comment. Feedback from stakeholders (Ministry of Social Development, Gisborne District Council, Tairāwhiti PHO, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Te Puni Kokiri) helped to prioritise four key themes that formed the structure of discussion guidelines. These guidelines were then developed into a semi-structured interview schedule was to be used with focus groups.

The research sample was aligned to the population statistics for Kaiti. The research was primarily targeted at the Māori population of Kaiti aged between 15-64 years. All participants had to be residents of Kaiti. Some participants were identified according to a particular group they belonged to, for example, a church group or voluntary organization.

Following initial informal canvassing of potential participants, a letter was sent out from Kapai Kaiti. This letter outlined the purpose and aim of the research, and introduced the researchers (see Appendix Two). Potential participants were advised of their right to participate and the intended use of the data they shared. The letter also included a copy of the interview schedule (see Appendix One).

The focus groups were a mixture of publicly advertised forums and organized meetings hosted by particular organizations and groups based in Kaiti or with membership from Kaiti residents. Spot prizes were offered to encourage attendance at public forums.

Two focus groups were planned as public forums. However, due to attendance, only one of these focus groups eventuated. The facilitator used the interview schedule as a survey to get participants to begin to think about the issues. Copies of the schedule were given to participants to fill in. Following this, a more in-depth discussion was held around key issues identified. This discussion was recorded in written form by the researchers, and the completed interview schedules provided additional records. Participants were asked to provide age, gender and ethnicity details and were advised that all other information shared would not be traced back to individuals.

Smaller focus groups were facilitated by researchers with 5 or less participants each. Participants of these focus groups were part of a common group, for example, high school students residing in Kaiti. A total of nine focus groups were held by 31 August 2005, involving 50 participants.

5.0 Key Findings

Data gathered through the focus groups presented interesting results relating to the needs of the community and solutions for meeting these needs. These results were not too dissimilar from findings of previous research¹.

Residents identified many positive aspects of living in Kaiti. The sense of community is very strong. The size of the suburb contributes to a familiarity amongst community members with each other, lending to a close-knit community. Many residents have family and friends living nearby. Access to services such as kohanga reo and primary-level schools was identified as a positive. Furthermore, access to support services focused on healthcare was also identified as a positive. The presence of Te Poho o Rawiri marae helps to facilitate whanaungatanga and iwitanga. Outdoor spaces such as the many parks in Kaiti are an asset to residents. Kaiti is central to Gisborne City services, has good parking and is spacious.

For those long-term residents of Kaiti, pride in their community is evident. For many residents, Kaiti is a formative part of their identity. Families that have been raised in Kaiti are advocates for a positive community. A sense of belonging and whanaungatanga is felt by residents. For those with tribal links to Kaiti, the whenua holds special significance.

Residents of Kaiti see definite potential in the future of Kaiti, particularly the youth who make up a high proportion of the population. Many positive role models for youth have come out of Kaiti and teams representing Kaiti are proud. However, the stigma attached to Kaiti is not easily overcome.

Kaiti is plagued by a negative reputation that is related to an increasing gang presence, poverty and crime. Perceived intimidation by gang members raises safety concerns amongst residents. Crime and graffiti in the suburb is seen as a negative factor. The perceived increase in the level of unemployment is accompanied by the perception that little work exists in Kaiti.

A lack of work contributes to low poverty levels within the suburb. Run-down buildings, abandoned housing and roaming dogs create a negative picture of Kaiti. So too do some areas of Kaiti, for example the Kaiti Mall, where more aesthetic work is needed. A lack of street lights in some parts of the suburb is a safety concern.

Residents identified that there is a lack of activities for children (including babies) and their parents. The absence of an indoor recreational facility and gym, alongside limited children's play areas was noted. A change in neighbourhood composition and support is

¹ See research projects (1-4) on page 7 of this report.

evident in some parts of Kaiti. Combined with a lack of indoor public spaces, the Kaiti community could potentially become disconnected. Bus services are integral to Kaiti residents, given the distance to the nearest high school. No service on the weekends makes it difficult for the high proportion of residents without private transport.

Despite negative aspects, residents were positive about making Kaiti a better place to live. Furthermore, they had some clear ideas about how this can be achieved:

- An emphasis on the importance of education was proposed to enhance employment opportunities for residents and decrease poverty.
- A community-wide clean up and installation of pathways, fencing and street lights was proposed to improve the aesthetics of Kaiti.
- Lobbying of the Council was proposed to improve transport links.
- A visit by the Council twice a day was proposed to decrease the number of roaming dogs.
- A community space was proposed to build community relationships and provide a facility for activities for all residents.

Currently, there are key places within Kaiti that facilitate community gatherings. These include the Kaiti Mall, Waikirikiri Park, Te Poho o Rawiri Marae, sports fields and Kaiti beach. There are also key activities that bring the community together including shopping, accessing medical care, sports, Waitangi Day events, school gala days, housie, hui, tangi and free events.

A lack of appropriate space in Kaiti is identified as the reason that many community-building activities or events do not take place, despite the aspirations of Kaiti residents. Potential events include youth gatherings, talent quests, dances, functions, community barbecues, neighbourhood meetings, summer galas, concerts and flea markets.

Additionally, residents of Kaiti would like more sporting and cultural events to be held. They would like to see clubs that no longer exist, revitalized. They would like to have a space for events, games, hui, advocacy, clubs and groups; space that could facilitate all the events and activities that the community desires.

Such a space has the potential to provide numerous activities, services and events for the community. Residents prioritized these according to their needs to build a picture of what a community centre might look like. Most participants agreed that a community centre should be a place where residents can share facilities and activities, contribute ideas and influence community centre plans, gain awareness and opportunities for participation with planning the centre events, and help manage the centre or become a staff member or volunteer. Furthermore, a community centre should facilitate awareness of local information, services and neighbourhood issues, and should allow opportunities for community members to learn new skills and empower themselves.

Residents forecasted some of the risks that a shared space could involve and these included:

- Determining the location of the space;
- Issues related to control of the space;
- Buy-in from the community of a vision for the space;
- Objection from community members living closest to the space;
- Tension regarding membership of the space;
- Security of the space;
- Health and safety issues;
- Sustainable financial support; and
- The possibility that the community does not use the space or provide adequate input.

Mitigation strategies would need to be developed to address these potential issues. Many would require lobbying of organizations including the Gisborne District Council, Housing New Zealand Corporation and the Ministry of Social Development. These strategies would require coordination, either by the community themselves or involving the community.

Preliminary ideas about feasible locations and operational issues of a centre were not fully explored in this research. However, participants did emphasise the importance of continued community input in decision-making processes for the development of any community space.

Finally, the perceived gains for Kaiti residents in using a community centre included whanaungatanga, mana and pride, friendship, confidence, community involvement, stronger sense of ownership, increased communication between community members, and increased awareness of what Kaiti has to offer. The enormous value of a community centre to residents of Kaiti is influenced by these perceived outcomes.

6.0 Conclusion

Almost one-third of the population of Gisborne city resides in the suburb of Kaiti and around 25% of the regions entire population². Kaiti is characterized by established families with a strong affinity to their community and a desire to challenge the negative reputation of Kaiti by making Kaiti a better place to live.

Social cohesion amongst Kaiti residents is relatively high, but the perception amongst participants is that these connections are not as strong as in the past. This cohesion is limited to concepts such as neighbourliness and adult socialising, or the few community activities and events based in Kaiti.

The current range of services available in Kaiti are utilised by its residents but, out of necessity, many travel outside the suburb to access services such as youth-specific services, hospitals, high schools and tertiary providers. Residents have definite ideas about additional services that are needed and how these may be developed. Furthermore, existing community facilities do not meet the community's needs or aspirations for shared, accessible and appropriate spaces.

Key social and economic indicators in Kaiti reveal a disproportionate picture when compared against average figures for the Gisborne district and New Zealand as a whole. Access to employment and transport is below average. Qualification and income levels are below average. Further research is required to provide concrete evidence of how these indicators affect accessibility to existing community services and the case for the establishment of new or supplementary services in Kaiti.

Dialogue on issues that matter to residents such as family, education, health, justice, the environment and cultural development are confined to small groups of familial, workplace and peer groups, instead of active engagement across the community. In addition, dialogue on concepts such as citizenship, democracy and kaitiakitanga has relatively low currency in Kaiti compared to dialogue on televised entertainment, social events and petrol prices.

New strategies are needed across the community to encourage greater levels of connectedness and discussion on issues impacting Kaiti residents. The overwhelming choice of research participants is for the development of a community space to:

1. Initiate greater community cohesion;
2. Facilitate events, activities and services to the community; and
3. Bring about whanaungatanga and pride amongst residents.

² Te Hau Ora- Te Tairawhiti Inc., Kaiti Community Hui Report, 2001.

A review of international literature shows that successful and sustainable models of community centres exist. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that community centres can facilitate effective community engagement. Short and long term planning must incorporate community input,

The results of previous surveys³ with Kaiti residents identified the need and aspiration for a community centre. Data from two surveys⁴ from organizations external to Kapai Kaiti also identified the need for a community centre. Kaiti residents are willing to contribute significant time and energy toward a strategy, alongside stakeholder organisations (including the Ministry of Social Development and the Gisborne District Council) and the voluntary efforts of Kapai Kaiti.

7.0 Recommendation

Based on the key findings of this report, and in light of results from other related research, it is recommended that a subsequent project be resourced to co-ordinate a Kaiti Community Cohesion Strategy that includes:

5. a Community Engagement Plan designed to generate interest, ownership, deliberation and cooperation around community cohesion processes and initiatives including:
 - mechanisms for monitoring social cohesion,
 - guidelines and mechanisms for participatory planning processes, and
 - a community communication strategy,
 - guidelines of community-defined principles and practices of engagement and relationship-building with organisations, businesses and agencies controlled by individuals and groups outside of the community;
6. a Community Action Plan designed to generate interest, ownership, deliberation and cooperation to:
 - address priority issues identified by residents of Kaiti;
 - build on existing community building initiatives such as the Waitangi Day events, community forums and the community centre planning process;
7. Strategic Community Goals & Indicators for Kapai Kaiti Charitable Trust (residents association) and any other Kaiti-based groups that wish to include their plans in these documents; and
8. A robust evaluation mechanism in subsequent stages of these processes.

It is estimated that at least one fulltime position and associated project expenses including specialist advice and administrative support would be required over a period of between nine and eighteen months to complete the work outlined above depending on the agreed scope of each component and additional resources and support available.

³ See research projects (1-4) on page 7 of this report.

⁴ See all three Te Hau Ora – Te Tairāwhiti Inc. reports (2001).

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British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres: www.bassac.org.uk

British Urban Regeneration Association (UK): www.bura.org.uk

Cambridge Health & Seminar Centre: www.cambridge.net.nz/community/hcs.html

Centre for Local Economic Strategies: www.cles.org.uk

Community Development Foundation: www.cdf.org.uk

Groundwork Institute: www.groundwork.org

Housing Corporation UK: www.housingcorp.gov.uk

Joseph Rowntree Foundation Research Unit (JRF): www.jrf.org.uk

Ponsonby Community Centre: www.ponsonbycommunity.org.nz

Wallace Foundation: www.wallacefoundation.org

Waitakere City Council: www.waitakere.govt.nz

Wellington City Council: www.wellington.govt.nz/services/commcentres

Wairoa District Council: www.wairoadc.govt.nz/culturecommunity/commcentre/

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