

# Strengthening Our Streets with Manawatahi

Practice Note March 2024

## Who we are



**Kaiya Irvine** is a community empowerment specialist advisor at Auckland Council. With a history in the Events team she has great ideas and innovative ways to support locals to be the change in their communities through Local Board funding.

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**Maree Beaven** (Bloom.kiwi) is a community facilitator and connector who is passionate about helping to grow communities through a strength-based practice. She is a part of Papakura community and has previously been part of Randwick Park, Manurewa (Mitre 10 Community of the Year 2017). She believes that community success comes through connecting over everyday things and being yourself.

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**Hamish Lindop** is an Innovation Capability Coach who supports staff at Auckland Council and people in the communities of Auckland to try new ways of innovating in council and communities, particularly around peer to peer co-creative approaches like the Participatory City Approach.

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## ***Where 'Strengthening Our Streets' came from:***

Strengthening our Streets was originally developed with the Manurewa Local Board in 2021. The projects involved in making this happen have been small but effective. In year one we created RewaProud which explored and celebrated the best of Manurewa. Through an award winning Lego display we gathered the community's own collection of things they were proud of. We empowered a local designer to make a graphic that was printed on t-shirts that were used as prizes and giveaways. We designed a scavenger hunt that sent families to Manurewa's favourite places, some known but a few hidden gems too. There were small amounts given to local organisations to support and provide resources for young people. Resilience workshops with our young people showed us the way they saw the streets and what they wanted to see.



# **Strengthening Our Streets Framework**



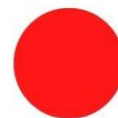
- **Reporting a Problem**
- **Building Trust in Council**
- **Advocating to and for MLB**

That community would care about their neighbourhood and trust Manurewa Local Board and Auckland Council to report issues that need addressing.



- **Connection**
- **Enabling and Empowering**
- **Community Champions**

Supporting community to work together to make Manurewa even better. To strengthen those areas we know makes us strong.



- **Internal and External Initiatives**

Using the strengths and talents of those in Manurewa Local Board but also trusting the community to lead their own change.



What People are Proud of in Manurewa



Coreflutes



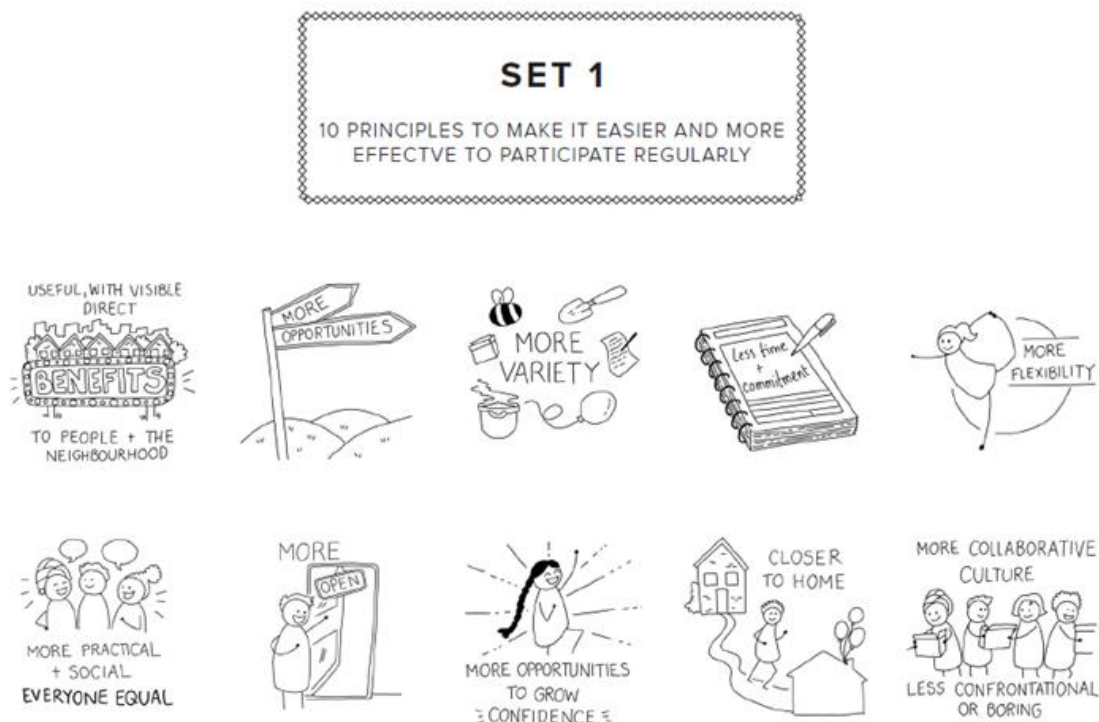
Bumper stickers



## Applying Manawatahi to Strengthen Our Streets

Tessy Britton and The Participatory City Foundation observed and studied the emergence of participation culture in neighbourhoods and communities around the world: ordinary people doing more every day “common denominator activities” together: cooking, eating, sharing, repairing, and more. They have developed a [platform model](#) to help participation culture grow. Hamish Lindop from the Community Innovation team has been exploring where participation culture, and supportive platforms have been emerging in Auckland. We are using the name Manawatahi (unifying of hearts) to name this work.

Hamish joined Kaiya and Maree in the second half of 2023 to apply a participation culture lens, and in particular the practical insights of the [“tomorrow today streets/open streets” method](#), a way of growing participation culture between neighbours in streets, as a particularly focussed way of developing resilience, cohesion, and collaboration between neighbours, very literally “strengthening our streets”.





## 2024 Street Cafes



We invited residents in streets to cocreate “street cafes” as a very accessible, easy way to get started creating connections with neighbours over tea and coffee, by posting through local social media channels. Streets from across Manurewa Local Board showed interest, with seven streets progressing to cocreating street cafes.

Maree developed a street cafe kit including a gazebo, table, reusable cups, first aid kit, blue tooth speaker and more which provided some elements as a base for residents to cocreate around. The ‘platform’ in Participatory Culture is a very important part because it is the support and starting blocks for the projects to begin.



“What Next” board also prompts conversations for neighbours to consider further opportunities to cocreate different participation projects together with our support.



## *A Street Cafe Story*

Hosts: This is a family with girls who already have a great connection with their street but there had been people who had moved in in the last few years that hadn't been included in the get togethers. When they saw the post they reached out to include those households.



This street was clearly used to participating as the number of people that contributed was much higher than some others. Someone came over and dropped off some freshly made bread even though she was not able to be there. Someone else brought some smoked marlin dip to share.

One of the neighbours pulled out some games for the kids to play, another offered a golf game that the adults had a lot of fun playing, another brought out a rocket launcher which got many laughs as it launched a plastic bottle high into the air. I was also encouraged by the self organising of a second gazebo to shelter from the very hot afternoon sun and the many deck chairs that came out.



The street has an old bar leaner that belonged to one of the neighbours that is secured to the ground in the cul-de-sac's parking island. I was told it is used all the time for afternoon drinks of coffee, G&Ts, beers etc.



One of the street's connections is with their animals. A tomcat had recently visited and 3 of the neighbour's cats had kittens which they were rehoming. 2 dogs also joined the gathering and enjoyed the attention with all the pats. This provided much common conversation.



This street is in a more affluent part of Wattle Downs and people were happy to connect and share drinks and food. The street is made up of predominantly home owners and many were happy to watch out for others in the street. They have a walkway down to the water and were concerned for the blind lady who walks everyday who trips on the untrimmed flax that crosses the path. They didn't have a lot of concerns about the street.

I arrived at 1:30pm for a 2pm start. We had around 27 that came and went over the afternoon. The youngest was 4, there were primary, teens, young adults and parents in their 30s to 50s.

I started packing up at 4pm as agreed and later got a text to say that they finally all went home at 6:30pm. The difference for this street is the work they have already done to connect. They try to have an event every year with a dinner etc. I did plant the idea of maybe doing something else together from which came some conversation about a shared curry night or a halloween event. I have offered any support to do this if needed but they are already doing it well.



## Early Indications of Outcomes

We have captured early indicative evidence, after only two months of operation that the street cafes are contributing to objectives in all areas of Manurewa Local Board's five outcome areas. As further participation projects and participation culture grow out of the street cafes, we expect the cocreated impact on local board outcomes to become more extensive and comprehensive over time.

### Number of Participants in Streets

Kotuitui - North	45
Gambia - Off Mahia WD	45
Becker - Waimahia	25
Ellen St - Greenmeadows	8
Elie Place - WD peninsula	27
Trossach - WD mid	40

He aronga poto ki tā mātou mahere

### Our plan at a glance



Christmas in the Park, Mountfort Park

#### Our people

Our people are resilient, connected and engaged. We take pride in Manurewa, enjoying quality of life, diversity and a sense of safety and connection.



Weymouth Wharf

#### Our environment

Our environment is protected, restored and enhanced. We care for our natural treasures, restored waterways and flourishing urban forest. We're reducing our carbon footprint, greenhouse gas emissions and waste, and building community resilience to climate change effects.



Manurewa Netball and Community Centre

#### Our community

Our communities enjoy responsive services and facilities that enable great participation. Our facilities and public places are popular gathering points. They offer choices for people from different backgrounds and life-stages to take part in sports, recreation, creativity and play.



Gallaher Park, Manurewa

#### Our places

Our urban development attracts quality employment, community and sustainability outcomes that meet the needs of our growing population. Our transport network is accessible, affordable, offers choice and makes it easy to move around.

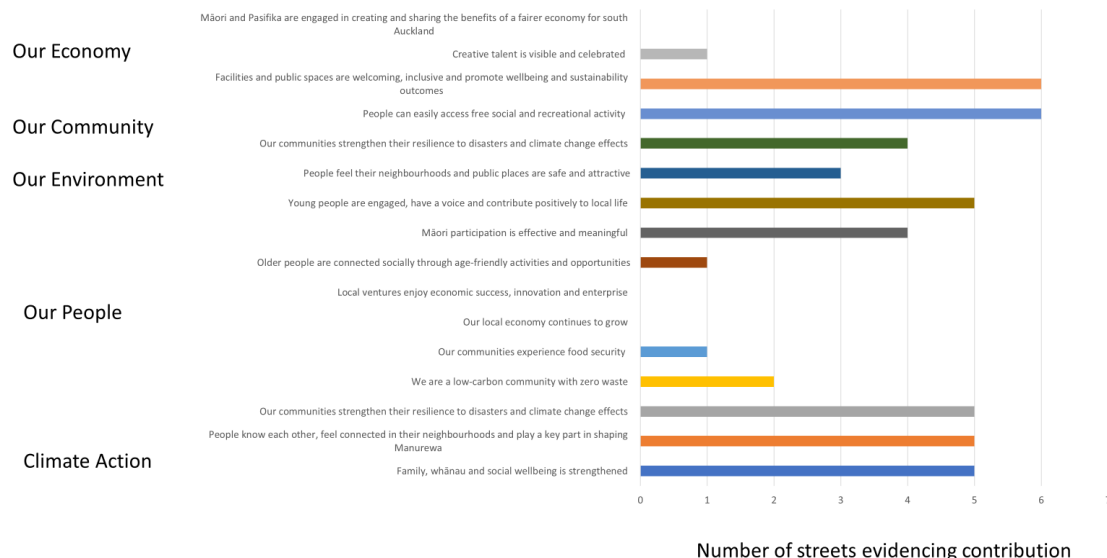


Southmall

#### Our economy

Our local economy is strong, and our town centres are thriving. People can live, work and play close to home. Businesses want to invest here, local people can get quality local jobs, and young people are well prepared for, and engaged in, the workforce.

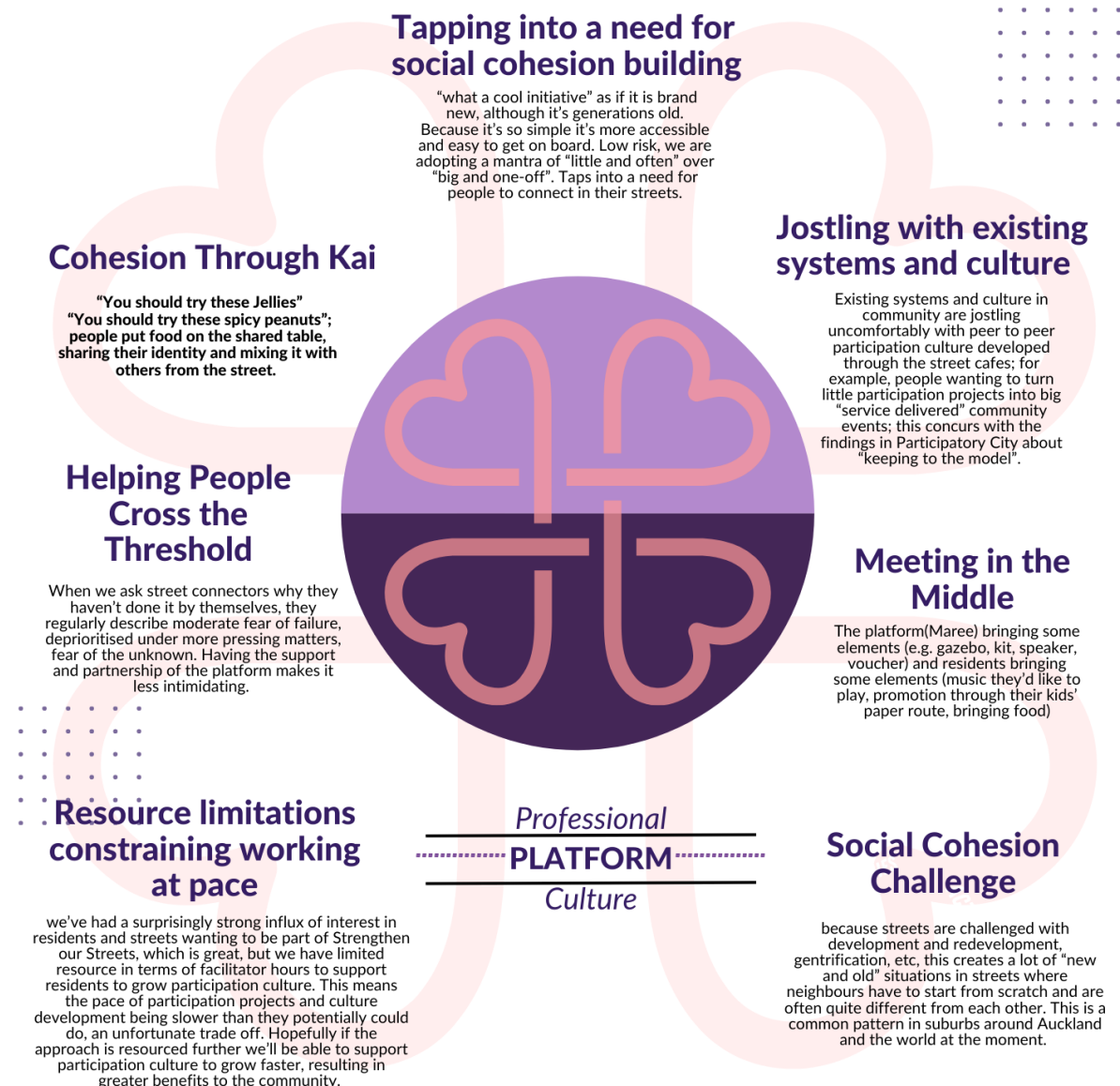
### Local Board Objectives Contributed to in Streets





## Practice Insights

A number of practice insights are emerging from “scaling across”, taking an approach originally developed and tested in a London borough context and applying it in a contextually sensitive way in Manurewa, Auckland.



## Where to Next?

We are connecting with the street connectors who cocreated street cafes with us, to find out more about what the flow on effects have been, e.g. increased social cohesion, neighbours talking together about more things that they could do together, etc. We'll have a celebration event to bring together the street connectors and celebrate their achievement with us, and also give them an opportunity to connect with each other. Streets may want to have further street cafes to increase connectedness and trust, or may start to sprout other ideas for things they want to do together, like cooking, gardening, composting, easter egg hunts or whatever they are inspired to do, and we can provide examples of participation projects to help jog their thinking.

Over time we expect this to grow a deep and strong participation culture in these streets, with increased cohesion, resident cocreation capacity, and a range of other outcomes as indicated above. The Strengthen Our Streets initiative is currently supported by Manurewa Local Board so should provide a platform to support the growth of participation culture for the foreseeable future.

## Want to Know More?

Get in touch with:

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