



Community Waikato

‘Thriving communities’, that is the vision of registered charity the Community Waikato Trust (Community Waikato - CC24579).

Community Waikato supports the development of communities, organisations, marae and groups in the Waikato-Tainui region. They help develop skills, knowledge and connections in the groups they work with, contributing to a strong and resilient community and social service sector.

With a mission so holistic, the scope of their work is vast. Community Waikato have a small team of 10 that are constantly working on a range of projects.

Over lockdown the team collaborated with the Wise Group to develop a tool to connect those in need. They developed **Here to help u** which is still connecting people to social service providers.

Another project Community Waikato is working on is helping local marae develop a strategy and plan to realise their aspirations. They run a series of workshops, tailored to each individual marae which captures the history of the marae, the vision for the future and a pathway to realising that vision.

Community Waikato also support networking in the region. They connected two networks of food providers, one working in rural communities and the other from the urban centre. These networks meet regularly to share knowledge and identify issues affecting the sector. Community Waikato also facilitate the community transport forum and the Managers forum for the region.

On top of this, Community Waikato also help by: developing resources for communities, managing funds, facilitating planning sessions, and offering training and professional development on governance, leadership, finance and more.

For a small team with a large workload, planning is vital to get their important mahi done. “Planning is fundamental to success,” says Holly Snape, Chief Executive of Community Waikato. Community Waikato started planning for 2021 last year, and it shows. They have workshops organised across the region almost every week until mid-2021.

Community Waikato does strategic planning regularly. “It connects each of the team to the strategy and creates a pathway to work towards achieving those broad strategic goals,” says Holly. They do their operational planning after completing their strategic plan. This involves creating an annual plan that outlines the work needed to be done to achieve their strategic plan.

Community Waikato also does regular financial planning. They set an annual budget which allows the team to keep track of their financial position and ensure they have the funds to provide their services.

Organisations may need to plan for various reasons. It’s important to think about why you’re planning and what types of plans are important for your organisation. Strategic and operational plans are very important, but Holly notes that some important areas are often overlooked, including “replacement of technology, professional development of staff and succession planning.”

Regular planning is important for an organisation to succeed. However, plans can be useless if they aren’t checked on a regular basis. A good plan defines the direction of your organisation, so you need to regularly check in to assess your progress. “A plan is a living document. It shouldn’t sit on a shelf once it is done. It is your roadmap to success,” Holly says. Community Waikato’s successful planning is vital to their success. It is one of the reasons they are so effective and efficient in the work that they do.





Community Waikato also supports community groups in creating their own effective plans. They facilitate planning sessions for groups as well as providing resources, so groups have what they need to succeed.

To find out more visit the newly refreshed **Community Waikato website** or follow their **Facebook page**. You can also learn more about **Community Waikato** by watching this short video.

Looking ahead into 2021, Community Waikato has a lot organised. They will be working to support the development of local marae by running trainings and workshops, supporting ethnic communities and mentoring, while still offering their usual services.