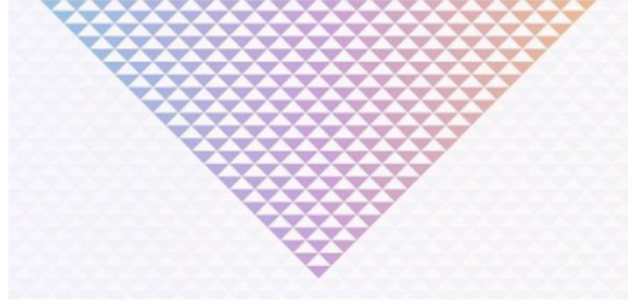




POWERING UP COMMUNITIES TO DELIVER LOCAL WELLBEING

Community Case Study:
The Community-led Development Trust



This case study was curated to spark thinking about local structures and approaches that can enable communities to improve their own wellbeing. It's part of a wider Think Piece commissioned by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

See https://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/ic_resource/powering-up-communities-to-deliver-local-wellbeing/ for the full report.

Cover image sources: Paekākāriki Housing Trust (top left), The Community Led Development Trust (top middle), Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki (top right), McLaren Park Henderson South Community Trust (right middle), Environment Network Manawatū (bottom right), Focus Paihia (bottom left).



CASE STUDY: OUR PROJECTS, OUR WAY

Name	TCLD (The Community Led Development) Trust <i>Governance</i> Trading as TCLT (The Community Led Team) <i>Operations</i>
Location	Whanganui
Community Context	The 64km long Whanganui River Road is made up of eight settlement communities which are spread alongside the lower reaches of the Whanganui River.
Legal Structure	Charitable Trust
Vision	Our projects, our way. Community-led development for residents of the Whanganui River Road settlements with a focus on improved social and economic wellbeing.
Started	2017
Purpose	The TCLD Trust will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in community-led development with the eight settlement communities along the Whanganui River Road seek to create improved standards of wellness and wellbeing take a balanced long-term versus immediate approach provide other support and assistance consistent with their vision.
Annual Turn over	\$600,000.
FTE	Eight
Relationship with local government	Strong through developed and invested time in aligned mutual returns.
Interviewed for this case study	Daryn Te Uamairangi Selina Percy Nihi Houia

JOURNEY TO DATE

There is an improved sense of communal spirit, which keeps driving those living at home wanting to realise their dreams and aspirations. Lack of employment prospects has been a significant challenge along the Whanganui River Road for many years and even with a resurgence of whānau returning home, having to travel into town for work is still a concern. Fortunately, the road has been upgraded and maintained, primarily though, to grow the region's economy by increasing the tourist market.

The Community-Led Development Programme (CLDP) offered by the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) in 2017 was timely and opportune. The Community Led Development Trust (TCLD Trust) as the governance authority and The Community Led Team (TCLT) as the operational arm were established for legal and independent purposes to allow capability and capacity to deliver on the ground community desired projects and programmes.

WHĀNAU, STAY INVOLVED, KEEP EVOLVING

Community-led development is about working together to create and achieve locally owned visions and goals. The TCLT journey has had its ups and downs; sometimes taking one step forward and landing two back especially at the beginning and acknowledging that change was never going to be easy.

There have been many interesting moments, from the delight of being selected for the programme, to the excitement of actually getting started, to sharing the concept amongst local people, to gaining their buy in and trust, to dealing with misunderstandings and miscommunications, to completing projects within their communities and to then celebrating the successes of collaborative actions and outcomes.

It has been a steep learning curve for all involved, understanding and undertaking duties of responsibility and service. These lessons have helped set a solid foundation to operate over the coming years.

TCLT now has its structure (governance, financial and accounting systems, policies and procedures, operational experience, employment capability, etc) in place, after an experiential time of early programme provision and successful implementation of projects such as:

- Hunt Nation Festival (Pipiriki)
- Recycling bins and bags for whānau (Pipiriki, Jerusalem, Rānana and Matahiwi)
- A purpose-built recycling trailer (Rānana)
- A bus shelter (Matahiwi)
- Security solar lamps (Matahiwi and Rānana)

- Road safety mirrors on dangerous corners (various sites)
- Zumba on the AWA (Jerusalem, Rānana and Matahiwi).

“Having an idea-based philosophy approach means very little if you don’t win the hearts and minds of the people.”

There’s no place like home and many whānau leave early in life to pursue education or work opportunities. In 2011 after many years away, Daryn and his wife Ramari came back to Whanganui equipped with a unique capability aligned to the teachings of te kauae runga (celestial knowledge). To many who know them, they’re viewed as wairua-based people able to employ physical attributes, qualities and experience to link with whānau and deliver practical-based solutions.

Ramari’s heart and Daryn’s career experience placed them alongside family, hapū and iwi championing initiatives that promoted people and place. Roles at the marae led to service within the rūnanga and soon after Daryn was mandated as an Iwi Chair, filling the seat vacated by respected Kaumātua, Bernard Haami. He reflects that, *“Uncle Barn gave his blessing with a directive, do what you’re good at boy and we’ll (Kaumātua) support you in the rest.”*

In the seven years that followed, Daryn held numerous Māori governance roles learning about and studying the political iwi landscape. In parallel with this work, which was done ‘in-kind’, he designed the Aumangea Programme, an Army leadership initiative, testing resilience of mind and body beyond self-perceived limitations.

“I designed a program that encapsulated the warrior ethos and using those same building blocks of resilient thinking, a methodology was developed that would meet the unique needs of our home people.”

The findings also pointed toward a residential-led approach rather than a marae or hapū-led approach. This aligned perfectly to the intent and principles of the newly piloted CLDP. All activities would be decided by those living in the community. This paradigm shift would clearly require a new way of thinking and doing.

Around this time, Community Strategic Enabler (CSE) Nihi Houia, recalls Daryn visiting him and sharing his vision of wanting to assist his people along the Whanganui River Road.

“Our people being rural, remote and isolated have been very reticent in working with government agency representatives because of past policies of inequity and disadvantage. We needed to show that their projects could be delivered to their satisfaction, if the chance was taken.”

“It was their voices and their decisions to allow us to do things with them and alongside them. Rather than as has been the usual practice of having a few people decide and then having it done to them.”

TCLT deliberately stayed out of environmental and cultural issues to circumvent perceived cross-over concerns, leaving them to marae and hapū delegates to address.

The role of the CSE is to find funding and resourcing to enable agreed community projects to be successfully completed and then reported against expected outcomes.

“Our first bit of funding received we thought we were the richest trust on earth. It was as if we had won Lotto.”

TCLT’s approach involves forward planning guided by its strategic plan, researching and applying to project relevant funding sources and then crossing their fingers and toes that applications upon submission are successful. If they are, then TCLT tap into their network to invite like-minded groups and organisations who may wish to collaborate and contribute (not always financially) to particular project outcomes for mutual investment return by enhanced intrinsic and extrinsic impact in the community impact.

Doing business this way has enabled TCLT to grow its credibility with its stakeholders. Their ability to leverage and negotiate to get multiple community projects completed, is a critical performance factor. Underpinning this is the key understanding of relational value and multi-partnering advantage.

Operations Manager, Selina Percy became involved through Daryn meeting her and sensing her potential to add value to TCLT. Fast forward a year later and she has managed the rigorous application process to gaining Level Three Social Services Accreditation as a Ministry of Social Development (MSD) service provider.

Selina speaks of her desire to inspire people to be the best they can be through employment, providing opportunities where they live, work and play so they don't have to leave the awa/river. When asked what TCLT would do with a blank cheque, Daryn responded:

"I don't need a blank cheque; I need blank minds so that people can see what is truly possible without any hindrances."

Daryn is keen to support marae and hapū development when they are ready. Selina feels that there are a number of agencies and organisations looking for ways to connect and engage with communities such as those along the Whanganui River Road.

"With us they have a connection and TCLT can facilitate that possibility through opening discussions with our settlement whānau along the awa."

Daryn talks about needing to have the moral courage to lead, create and support change. It requires a team effort and team approach knowing that at times, a person may have to make the hard and final decision.

"Everyone is a leader in their own right, a CEO doesn't know everything, if an issue is to progress then all staff's input and their various experiences are acknowledged and welcomed."

Alongside this is the importance of capturing the intangible and tangible outcomes of the journey. Using monitoring and assessment tools such as video stories and social media help celebrate and archive what was and is possible.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD FOR TCLT:

- Bringing hopes and dreams to life for community people cannot be underestimated
- Being available to support community-led development is a privilege
- To date, projects have been based on mainly community requested social development projects and programmes
- Next year, and beyond, the focus will be on wealth and economic development at home

**ADVICE FOR COUNCILS AND OTHERS LOOKING TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
DELIVERING LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTCOMES:**

“Trusted relationships are paramount – if you have the connection and understanding then you have a chance to prove your worth.”

- The purpose to connect and engage should be respectful
- Relationships and decision-making levels must be acknowledged and honoured
- Information should be communicated clearly and in a timely fashion
- Any opportunity to partner must be cooperative and mutually beneficial
- The right people and resources need to be in place for successful outcomes
- How will future projects be strategically planned for and implemented?
- How will the relationships be maintained and elevated?

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