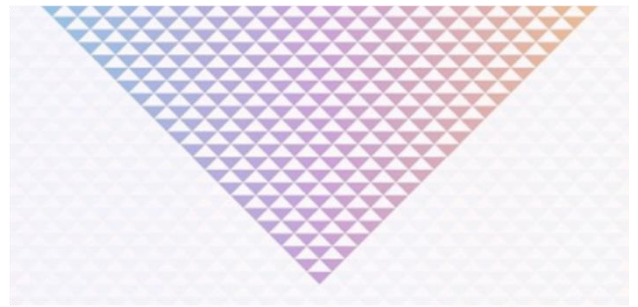




POWERING UP COMMUNITIES TO DELIVER LOCAL WELLBEING

Community Case Study: Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki



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: TE PUNA ORANGA O ŌTAKI – A WELLSPRING OF ABUNDANCE

Name	Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki Charitable Trust
Location	Ōtaki
Community Context	Ōtaki is a small coastal village on the Kāpiti Coast with a population of 9,000 and is referred to as one of the country’s most well-known bilingual towns with a very high Māori population. It’s home to Te Wananga o Raukawa, a Māori centre of higher learning.
Legal structure	Charitable Trust, with four trustees, registered 2022.
Focus	Raising the health and wellbeing of the Ōtaki community.
Vision	Kia angitū ai te hauora o te iwi, mā te mahi tahi, te ako tahi, kia mauri ora te hāpori whanui tonu. <i>A thriving community, built on collaboration and ongoing development to ensure equitable wellbeing outcomes for all.</i>
Mission	To be a centralised source of wellbeing for Ōtaki, working collectively to increase our community capacity to support the health and wellbeing of our people and whānau.
Values	Mā te huruhuru, ka rere te manu. <i>Adorn the bird with feathers so it can fly.</i> Whakapapa (reinforcing the connections between people, kinship ties) Kotahitanga (unity and commitment to shared goals) Rangatiratanga (responsibility, generosity, and the ability to lead others) Manaakitanga (inspiring generosity to others) Pūkengatanga (striving to be bold) Kaitiakitanga (protection of people and place).
Started	In 2012 as Ōtaki Integrated Family Health Centre under the umbrella of the Central Public Health Organisation (PHO). Named Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki when a separate legal entity was created in 2021.
Annual Turn over	\$2.1m
FTE	Nine full time, six part time kaimahi (staff).
Relationship with local government	Established relationship with Kāpiti Coast District Council, currently contracted to deliver social investment projects that reconnect communities in Ōtaki, funded through yearly contestable funding. This includes activities with kaumatua, rangatahi-led social gatherings and activities, and whānau days in partnership with Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki to deliver these.
Interviewed for this case study	Kiwa Raureti, CEO Ōtaki Integrated Family Health Centre, October 2023

JOURNEY TO DATE

Having sought guidance from local kaumatua, the Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki (TPOoŌ) logo depicts the many divergent springs that run from the source of the Ōtaki River. Like the logo, TPOoŌ embodies the wider Ōtaki community, connected through their locality and meeting both needs and community aspirations. They are a Kaupapa Māori organisation, not an iwi or hapū provider.

Originally funded as the Ōtaki Integrated Family Health Centre when it started in 2012, TPOoŌ began its journey slowly, navigating its way with one part time project manager that sought to build relationships in health service provision across local providers. Funds initially were held and managed by the Central PHO, which suited the small group finding their way. In 2021 after grappling with their place in the community, and after considering the need and relevance, the TPOoŌ board decided that yes, they have a place and took the leap, invested in their future, and become a legal Charitable Trust.

At that time, they had no physical location to base themselves and were a third party in a significant Regional Development (He Poutama Rangatahi) funding contract, with minimal staffing. Despite this, the board saw this as an opportunity to become independent and seek further funding to start building their mission, which at that time was to raise the health and wellbeing of the Ōtaki community. Ōtaki Integrated Family Health Centre CEO and Chairperson for TPOoŌ, Kiwa Raureti says this change of circumstance gave them the confidence to back themselves and pointed out the nature in which Ōtaki organisations do things a *bit differently* through rangatiratanga – a sense of self determination.

“There is a long line of both Māori and community examples such as Te Wananga o Raukawa, Whakatapuranga rua mano, Māoriland Film Festival, and Energise Ōtaki - all thriving in a small coastal town developed from a need but really just getting on and getting things done.”

As a community-led resource, Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki sees its role and function to ensure this occurs across Ōtaki and aim to do this by:

- Facilitating inclusive community leadership and direction
- Communicating with and being accountable to stakeholders
- Supporting aspirational wellbeing initiatives across Ōtaki
- Advocating for Ōtaki, to grow and develop its capacity towards self-determined autonomy.

Understanding what the community wanted and thought, saw some brave initial engagements where the TPOoŌ Board and Ōtaki Medical Centre owner encouraged people to come along and have their say in public forums regarding health services, and current access to medical care. While parts of the community were initially angry and frustrated at the state of current services, eventually

the public perception changed as they began to empathise with the realities of the situation health service providers were in and they understood the difficulty in finding doctors to service the town, a common theme in the lower North Island at the time. This strengthened the vision for the organisation and saw them focus on health provision.

TPOoŌ had an original goal to purchase half the medical centre and find ways to ensure people had access to services. As a result of their holistic Covid 19 response, they now have a stand-alone clinic offering basic services to whānau including wellbeing checks and immunisations and a more recent addition of a mobile health unit to offer direct services to whānau in neighbourhoods where they live. It is also taken to community events. This has been a game changer for a small town, in particular for those who are not able to get appointments or are unable to travel.

Services currently include:

- Hauora clinic – clinical health services
- Te Hunga Rangatahi - youth employment programme
- Community Connector – supporting whānau navigating challenging times.
- Ka ako Ka ora – lunches in schools programme
- Healthy homes project – ensuring homes are healthy for all.

“Iwi and community voices are important because we don't want to be another organisation that is deciding what is good for you.”

ORGANISATIONAL MODEL

Identifying that the TPOoŌ project manager needed additional support and authority, a change process was instigated which reflected the growing nature of the organisation and desire from the board to move into a governance role. Prior to this they were assisting with management functions due to the stretched staffing, absence of sound infrastructure and an increase in demand for services.

The rapid upscale in funding through the Covid health response put a different strain on the organisation. It increased human resources needed, along with compliance requirements and demands for a physical space for TPOoŌ, as well as the crucial role of ensuring their community was looked after. The lack of office space had challenges and at one point the organisation was spread across four different locations.

Reviewing the TPOoŌ strategic plan post Covid 19 gave the board time to reassess lessons learnt, understand what the priorities were and finally pause from frantic Covid related activities. While community governance boards are an essential legal requirement, and have a large amount of goodwill, they cannot do it all. Time was taken to look at realistic appraisals of future opportunities and expansion and seeing if the governance documents were going to have longevity for what was needed. Shoulder tapping a general manager to lead the organisation through its next phase and

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further solidifying its role in the community has seen the organisation grow and build on relationships nurtured during Covid. Updated governance policies have made it clear the only one involved across both operational and governance spaces is the Chair, who meets with the general manager regularly, and reminds the governance team of their role and place.

Kiwa notes the substantial number of community organisations across the country, and how the process of setting up a legal structure, policies and people resources is time consuming and often puts groups in competition for funds. In a small town, collaborative ways of doing things brings greater impact and less stress on people's time as the shared social space is small. An example is a newly formed group Te Tahuaora o Aumenga, who are aiming to work with groups of individuals, sports teams, other groups, teachers, and rangatahi in the mental wellbeing and capacity building space. They do not have funding for that, most of the work is voluntary but they now come under the umbrella of TPOoŌ. It is not unusual for emerging groups to approach TPOoŌ to be fund holder or backbone to assist with infrastructure support, basic administration and venue sharing. It is a better approach than going it alone to set up a whole new legal entity says Kiwa.

Like the many wellsprings that diverge from the source of the Ōtaki River, TPOoŌ know that it is the united strength and resilience found within the Ōtaki community that will bring positive change and propel them into the future.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki are a kaupapa based Māori organisation, not an iwi or hapū mandated one. There is a distinct difference. Nga hapū o Ōtaki serve the whānau of the five hapū of Ōtaki and the three marae in the rohe of Ōtaki, which consist of:

- Ngāti Maiotaki
- Ngāti Pare
- Ngāti Koroki
- Ngāti Huia
- Ngāti Kapumanawawhiti
- Te pou o Tainui
- Raukawa Marae
- Katihiku Marae

Regular meetings with the Chairperson of the hapū are essential to keep the lines of communication open says Kiwa, and TPOoŌ wants to be of service to the hapū, an added value not a burden. Although the majority of the Board members have whakapapa (kinship ties) connections to the hapū, there is a formal hapū rep, nominated by the hapū on the board and this ensures a hapū voice is present, as well as transparent communications back to the hapū. TPOoŌ always saw themselves as a place holder, holding the space until, and if, the hapū were ready to step in and take things over.

Mandated by the hapū to manage and lead the local Covid-19 response, hapū representatives were invited to be part of panels when interviewing key TPOoŌ staff, so they had some visibility,

ownership of the roles, and some input into the people being hired. As the health sector locality conversations start to develop further down the track, collaboration and communication will grow with individual hapū to determine individual hapū needs, rather than with TPOoŌ.

Another key relationship is the Ōtaki networking group which has been running informally for over 30 years and provides an effective way for interested community groups to quickly network, collaborate, and keep informed about Ōtaki issues - as well as share good stories that celebrate local success. Meeting monthly, the networking group also provides a sounding board for new providers to the area, offering direction, challenging duplications, access to key people and is an integral way to have visibility over various roles and responsibilities.

Often goals change and priorities diminish, seeking community feedback and understanding identifies that there are lots of different solutions to the same problem. Finding groups who share a common problem, coordinating efforts and bringing different funding streams together to address the issue, helps achieve far greater impact than individual groups working alone.

FUNDING AND SUPPORT

Initial funding was slow, and project based, with the organisation in a relationship building phase rather than leading big projects. It took some time to work out best ways to develop solid infrastructure and be in the right place to take on personnel to enable to direct delivery to whānau. Multiple funders were involved supporting diverse community needs. Funders also started to challenge their own way of thinking and began to work together; a good example was Department of Internal Affairs who could not fully fund an essential service, who collaborated with Wellington Community Trust to co-fund alongside them. Rather than TPOoŌ having to extend resources to find extra funding or reduce services to partly fund a project, the funder decided to take a creative approach and collaborate which ensured the service could be fully funded.

TPOoŌ would like to see more of this funder behaviour as it allows groups to get on with the business of doing. Where once TPOoŌ was once involved but not leading, they are now fund holders determining the direction of the services and shaping them to best fit the needs of the Ōtaki community bringing on essential expertise as and when needed. Relationships formed, nurtured, and strengthened during Covid have paid off with TPOoŌ focusing its efforts on building and mobilising key outside resources to achieve goals for the community.

ENABLERS OF SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

From the perspective of TPOoŌ, wellbeing is not only founded upon presenting individual health factors, but also includes an *oranga* or a holistic wellbeing approach. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Te Whānau, family-centred wellbeing and self-management
- Te Kainga, improved living environments and capacity
- Te Hāpori, knowledge and access to appropriate community resources
- Te Taiao, participation in and advocacy for wider environmental impacts.

While these are broad, it means largely that whānau can determine what this looks like for them, without being boxed into western understandings. TPOoŌ are committed to looking after the *mauri ora* or total wellbeing which makes all the difference and is the key enabler when talking with whānau.

CHALLENGES:

- Relationships that enable TPOoŌ to carry on. The biggest challenge is collaboration rather than being in competition for the same funds and for the same work. This means that groups will over promise and under deliver.
- Transport for local rangatahi to get to places is key, with a desire to encourage them to venture out and seek employment or recreational activities. This is challenging when the public transport system has barriers to access.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Being recognised by funding agencies and having a track record means TPOoŌ can present themselves as a reputable provider that delivers.
- A more recent aspiration is to have a startup *Sport Kāpiti*. The strength of Ōtaki typically is on the performance field. This is untapped as Kāpiti is producing athletes for the world stage at early ages - how do we invest in this?
- Further collaboration and investment are essential for small communities and the right for Māori to self-determine their own destination should see them leading this as Māori.
- Identifying good paying jobs that are needed in Ōtaki and providing pathways towards these. This will further develop the capacity of local people so they can work, live, and thrive in their hometown.

ADVICE FOR COUNCILS AND OTHERS LOOKING TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY STRUCTURES THAT SUPPORT DELIVERY OF LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTCOMES:

“We just want people to stay in their lanes and let’s collaborate to understand our lanes.”

- Often meetings are called with urgency - get the right people in the room at the right time, not after the fact. Identify the expertise required before gathering everyone. Communities are busy and often stretched for time and resources, so decisions are more easily made when the right people are there to progress and find solutions.
- Community organisations have a wealth of on the ground knowledge, but often competing views and conflicting solutions. Organisations like TPOoŌ understand this and work with this, listening to what people (communities) are saying and then (Council and other agencies) can assist the community to get on with it.
- Often groups claiming they represent communities are not the ones the community want to represent them. There are communities within communities, TPOoŌ recognises that they only represent a part of the community, yet councils often prefer to work with one organisation who is making the biggest noise, or who council already have an easy relationship with, but may not be doing the bulk of the work. Investing in community knowledge and taking the time to find out who is on the ground is helpful in the long term and removes many frustrations for everyone along the way.
- Community organisations know how to engage with Māori, some do it respectfully and with intent. Often councils have these expectations of their community but not of themselves when wanting to consult on their urgent multiple workstreams.

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