

Shore to Thrive

**Community-led Development in the
Bayswater/Belmont Area**

**Executive Summary of a Developmental
Evaluation**

December 2019

Prepared by Kathryn Nemec

Nemec Montague Associates Ltd

- Shore to Thrive has been a community-led development project that focused on supporting community connections and strengthening relationships to improve child and family/whānau wellbeing since February 2016. At that time a Community Development Worker (CDW) was engaged by Shore to Thrive to activate community- based projects, activities and initiatives in the Bayswater/Belmont area. It has been a partnership project between Auckland North Community and Development (ANCAD) and the Takapuna Methodist Church (TMC).
- Shore to Thrive has been operating for three years and the Kaitiaki Group were keen to understand the effectiveness of Shore to Thrive in terms of contributing to its guiding principles. As a result, a developmental evaluation was undertaken in September/October 2019 which focused on identifying and articulating outcomes and changes that have occurred within the Bayswater/Belmont community. The evaluation involved discussion groups and interviews, and wider community engagement at an end of year event.
- Shore to Thrive has been successful in improving a range of outcomes consistent with both the project’s guiding principles, and a CLD approach. Strategies such as facilitating activities where people come together and create community connections are particularly effective and helped build bridges within the community and create a sense of belonging. The project has confirmed that a CLD approach has helped achieve these outcomes and is a useful approach for other communities.
- Key project outcomes were identified and clustered around the Shore to Thrive guiding principles. These included:

Shore to Thrive guiding principle	Key outcomes
Create spaces and activities for people to come together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of spaces and activities have emerged from the Shore to Thrive initiative. • Local people are attending and participating. A core group of supporters has emerged. • The number of local people and residents participating in Shore to Thrive has increased.
Facilitate and support relationships and social connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships and social connections between local people have been built and deepened. • Relationships have developed and provided the basis for partnerships and other initiatives to be built. • People have a greater ‘sense of community’ and a ‘sense of belonging’.
Improve tamariki and whānau wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced physical wellbeing. • People have contributed to their community. • Friendships formed between families, and individuals. • Enhanced sense of wellbeing and belonging, and more opportunities to address social isolation.
Upskill and support parents, whānau and the wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with ideas have been supported to realise them, and local leadership has been catalysed. • Local leaders have emerged and have opportunity for capacity development.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are learning skills relevant for building a resilient community.
Effective partnering with local people in strengths-based ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections between groups who don't usually work together have developed. • Links between community-led and regional initiatives have been fostered. • Numbers of volunteers available to help with activities have increased.

- Key successes were flagship projects and initiatives that have been established as part of Shore to Thrive and taken on a life of their own – these include Zero Waste, Kaitahi (a monthly community dinner), and Repair Café. These projects generated many positive outcomes for the community and are examples of how the provision of knowledge, advice, networks and general community development ‘know how’ helped launch locally generated ideas into tangible locally owned activities and events.
- Local leaders have emerged, highlighting that capacity development, support and coaching provided by the CDW has been effective. The local leaders that have emerged to lead the flagship initiatives are community volunteers, sustained by their desire to contribute to their community and vision for what it could be.
- Critical success factors for Shore to Thrive included:
 - A perceived level of community readiness for a community-led approach and many enthusiastic people keen to be involved.
 - The CDW had an existing network of relationships and connections within the Bayswater/Belmont community. The high trust relationships held by the CDW helped activate projects, build community networks, and support emerging community leaders.
 - Experienced CDW with a wide range of skills and knowledge.
 - Engagement of the local primary school with Shore to Thrive and a strong supporter of community events. Bayswater Primary School increasingly hosted Shore to Thrive activities and projects and provided the opportunity for families experiencing material need or who lack confidence to participate, to be included in community events, often through their children.
- Reaching into and engaging rangatahi and Māori communities within Shore to Thrive has been a challenge for the project in the first three years. However, there was anecdotal evidence that this may be changing, primarily through starting to host Kaitahi at the Bayswater Primary School and engaging more tamariki in the event. Strategies to intentionally engage and facilitate participation of excluded communities in activities and events should be considered for future CLD projects.
- The evaluation identified governance factors that enhance the success of a CLD project and could be improved. These include ensuring local community leaders and other voices are

represented on the governing body, and making Te Tiriti obligations explicit with consideration of who's represented and how decisions are made. In addition, the practice of ongoing reflection and learning about the project, and documenting adjustments made over time is critical for capturing the journey of a CLD initiative.

- The sustainability of Shore to Thrive will be tested when the CDW finishes at the end of 2019, and there are community concerns about the future of the Shore to Thrive. However, the foundations of Shore to Thrive are solid, strong connections and relationships exist within the community, flagship activities are well supported and highly valued, and the role of Bayswater Primary School in building bridges that span diverse sectors are all factors that will enhance the likelihood that some Shore to Thrive activities are sustained.
- Future evaluations should include a survey of the wider community in order to understand the reach of CLD developments such as Shore to Thrive. This evaluation gathered information from those that had been involved in Shore to Thrive, and their experience was positive. However, the extent to which Shore to Thrive has reached into the wider community is not clear, and information about the experience of community members 'outside' the project has not been gathered.