



Eastern & Central
COMMUNITY
TRUST

31 August 2017

Feedback Report - here's what you told us

The Trustees and staff of the Eastern & Central Community Trust would like to thank you for your participation in our community consultation in April this year.

Your contributions are highly valued and have helped us to deepen our understanding of the region's strengths, challenges and opportunities – and the role that ECCT can play alongside you to help support and strengthen our communities.

A summary of the hui are below, and a full report is available on our website. We welcome any feedback you have about opportunities to engage with your community. This feedback will inform our future programme of consultation activities.

Please email any comments to: enquiry@ecct.org.nz by 22 September 2017.

Consultation

In April 2017, you attended one of four consultation meetings across the region (Central Hawke's Bay, Manawatū, Wairarapa and Gisborne/East Coast).

We were pleased to have such in-depth participation from a range of community members, volunteers, and non-profit organisations across the four meetings. Over 100 people participated in discussions and activities, where we asked for your ideas and priorities for our region:

- What are key strengths of your community?
- What strategies are successful in helping to strengthen communities?
- What is your vision for a stronger, more sustainable community?
- What are the key challenges in your community? What are the priorities for investment to achieve a stronger, more sustainable community?

Based on what you told us some clear themes emerged. These are summarised in this feedback report.

The importance of people

At each of the consultation meetings, the passion and commitment of people was evident and was also described by participants as a significant strength of the communities and organisations in our region. Having passionate, committed and skilled staff and volunteers was seen as a key to achieving positive community impact. Investing in volunteer development and organisational capacity/capability was therefore seen as being important; as was supporting key community leaders who can mobilise communities to work together around a shared vision for success.

Partnership & collaboration

Across the consultation meetings, participants highlighted the importance of collaboration and partnerships. Networking and whanaungatanga were seen as existing key strengths in our communities, and there is a strong appetite for collaborative working across our region's community sector. Sharing skills and resources, developing a shared vision, and co-designing projects with community were seen as good collaborative practices that should be supported. It was also evident from the consultation meetings that the community sector is looking for both financial and non-financial support from funders like ECCT to form and maintain effective partnerships. Such support might include the resourcing of emerging partnerships, funding key facilitators, and brokering cross-sector conversations.

Community responsiveness

Participants at the meetings agreed that where initiatives are evidence-based, respond to community needs and aspirations, and are co-designed alongside community, there is the greatest potential for impact. The most effective ways of responding to community needs were described by participants as those that are strengths-based, 'mana-enhancing' and empower communities to be self-determining.

Priority issues

Participants put forward a range of issues that were seen as priorities in their communities. Across the four meetings, key themes included:

- Supporting outcomes for children and young people through education, youth development and pathways to employment
- Supporting community economic development and community enterprise to enhance community sustainability

- Supporting community wellbeing through a broad range of inter-related issues including the accessibility of services for vulnerable or isolated communities, affordable housing, and activities/facilities that enable community participation, cohesion and connectedness.

Vision for stronger, more sustainable communities

ECCT's vision is to help build stronger, more sustainable communities. Consultation participants described strong, more sustainable communities as those that are:

- Engaged and participating in positive community activities
- Empowered and self-determining, with strong community agency and effective local leaders
- Inclusive and equitable, so that people have a sense of belonging and connectedness
- Supported by a vibrant and collaborative community sector
- Enterprising and self-sufficient

Funding options

Participants suggested a range of ways that funders like ECCT might best support organisations to help build stronger and more sustainable communities. These suggestions included longer-term funding options for effective organisations, resourcing collaboration, funding innovation, investing in organisational capacity development and co-funding in partnership with other funders.

Our Research Report

Our in-depth **Community Consultation Report** is available on our website under **Publications**, for you to read at your leisure. This provides an overview of all the consultation meetings held across our region.

Next steps

Your views are now being used to help inform our thinking about the future strategic direction of our Trust. We are now in the process of reviewing our funding strategy and funding options as we seek to strengthen the role that we play alongside our communities. Our grantees, stakeholders and communities will be kept informed about this process over the next 6-18 months.

In the future, we plan to continue engaging with our communities to inform our direction. **We welcome any feedback you have about opportunities to engage with your community.** This feedback will inform our future programme of consultation activities. Please email any comments to enquiry@ecct.org.nz by 22 September 2017.

Please feel free to forward this information on to people or organisations you think may be interested.

*Thank you again for your time and
valuable contribution to our consultation
process*

