



Wellington City Council – Youth Services Mapping in Karori
Summarised

1. Executive Summary

This social research project has been conducted to provide three core outcomes:

- Identify high profile youth services available in the suburb of Karori, and those city wide which young people from Karori may access
- Ascertain whether there are any prominent gaps in service provision based on community perception
- Characterise the current landscape of youth services in Karori based on key stakeholder and youth perspectives

The report has utilised research that was provided to the author between February and April 2015. This has included previous reports and research, comments via interviews and focus groups from a range of key informants, and discussions with subject experts and individuals from the community who have reason to comment on the project. A mixed method approach was used to gather data to assist in triangulating key trends and themes in content.

There are similarities between Karori and Wellington City across a number of demographic indicators such as ethnic breakdown, a growing population, and similar percentages within several service age groups.

The youth sector is an industry in its own right with its own areas of expertise, models of operating and qualifications structure.



A range of issues and characteristics of young people have been identified. Collective opinion is that these have not changed significantly over time apart from the development of social media which presents some new risks.

Wellington City Council is seen by stakeholders to have a large role to play in the youth sector across six key areas; funding; facilities; community projects; resources and knowledge; opportunities and duplication; communications and way finding.

The youth services delivered by the Karori Community Centre both historically and currently, have a very high value placed on them by the community. The current operation has several areas where it could be improved.

In preparing this report it has been necessary to make a number of assumptions on the basis of the information supplied. The recommended actions contained in this report are subject to a level of uncertainty depending on how future events evolve. Information in this report has been primarily constructed from feedback from a range of community stakeholders. The author has done his best to quantify statements where possible but takes no responsibility for omissions or errors in information provided by external sources.

2. Key Findings and Recommendations

1. Currently Karori is well catered for in youth services. Note this includes the provision from the Karori Community Centre.
2. Youth services delivered from Karori Community Centre are required in the community. These must be delivered within a youth development framework and with wider industry support. Without provision from Karori Community Centre there would be a clear gap in services.
3. There are a number of improvements to service delivery that providers and partners could undertake which would enhance the quality of youth service provision in the community. A number of these have been discussed in the appendices.

3. Background

This report highlights key youth services available to people between the ages of 12-18 in the suburb of Karori, notes gaps in service provision, and the role of Wellington City Council and partners in the youth sector from a community point of view.

There are a number of community centres located throughout Wellington City funded by the Council. Funding for these centres is on a three year contract. The exact funding amount is calculated based on the size of population and the deprivation index of the serviceable population.

In Karori, Wellington City Council owns the community centre building and covers the maintenance and replacement costs associated with this asset. Karori Community Centre Trust retains any rental income obtained from hiring spaces to other groups.

The Karori Community Centre historically sourced additional funding from central government, contestable Wellington City Council funding (note this is separate to three year contracts), and lotteries to provide youth services such as a drop in centre. Funding from these sources has recently ceased, and the Karori Community Centre wishes to approach Wellington City Council to reinstate funding for youth services.

A full demographic profile of Karori has been included in the appendices. In general, it would appear that Karori is similar to Wellington in many ways, and overall has some positive attributes including higher qualification levels and higher household incomes. Karori features in the bottom quarter of Wellington suburbs in the deprivation index list, and below the Wellington City average (note that the lower the score, the less deprived a suburb is).

What is apparent from stakeholder comments is that there is a clear distinction between those who are in a higher socio-economic area, which is predominantly northern Karori, and those in a lower socio-economic area, which primarily is south and west Karori. This is discussed in more detail in the appendices.



Overlooking Karori

4. Scope

The scope of the project is to provide a report to Wellington City Council which includes three parts. Firstly a stock take summary of high profile youth service providers that are located in, or operate in Karori, and key data sets for each. It should be noted that due to the scope, the stock take has focused on major providers and should not be treated as an exhaustive list. Stock take data has been captured to the best of the author's ability within the timeframe given and it should be noted that not all data sets were provided for each service.

Secondly, a commentary on gaps in youth service provision is included. This is not a full needs analysis, rather it is an examination of perspectives of those based in and around the Karori community. Conclusions have been drawn based on the accumulation of data from the stakeholders, young people, and stock take information.

Lastly, some comments have been made on the landscape of youth services, including specific services within the Karori environment.

5. Methodology

Data sources have been identified as:

- Wellington City Council staff contacts
- Wellington City Community Directory
- Wellington City Council previous reports
- Internet
- Stakeholder interviews
- Youth focus groups
- Karori Community Centre Committee (Chairperson as representative)

Data gathering methods include:

- Desktop analysis utilising all provided reports, community directories and other information from existing Wellington City Council sources.
- General search on the internet.
- Walk around Karori suburb.
- Contacting each service identified to obtain stock take information.
- Interviews with key stakeholders including phone, face to face and email contact as required. Stakeholders were asked a series of questions about their knowledge of youth service provision in Karori, accessibility, gaps, and key trends/themes that they have observed.

Youth focus groups (minimum 2 conducted). A series of questions will be asked in an informal setting to obtain information about the perception of youth service provision in Karori, accessibility, why or why not young people choose to use a service and any perceived gaps in services.

A list of those interviewed is included in the appendices.

6. Discussion

The Youth Sector

Over time the youth sector in Wellington has become more self-determining. The Wellington City Council has stepped back from employing youth specialists in favour of supporting organisations who deliver services to the community. As a result the sector has become more industry led, with funding support from Council enabling the sector to build networks and develop social capital. The sector collectively feels that expertise is sitting in the right place, from within the sector itself.

There are several key models of youth work that different organisations buy into such as the Circle of Courage and Te Whare Tapa Wha. Images representing these models are in the appendices. They epitomise a youth centred, holistic approach to development. This is the cornerstone to best practice youth work and high quality youth organisations embed these models into their practice.

There is a clear differentiation in youth services between those which are clinical, or a reactive service addressing an acute issue, and those that are proactive and developmental in nature which try to prevent issues from surfacing. The latter are often referred to as “alongsiders” and are present to support and develop the young person holistically. It is seen as vitally important to have a mixture of both of these types of services available to young people.

There is a dependence on volunteers to deliver youth services and an associated issue of volunteers over committing. This provides a challenge to services to ensure that they have realistic expectations of volunteers and provide sufficient support to enable them to achieve the work they wish to do. A balance between the capabilities of volunteers in terms of knowledge, training and time, and providing a high quality service to young people is required.

“Time is the most valuable currency.”

A key to the Youth Work industry is the connections and cohesiveness of the youth workers within a community. Working in isolation leads to high levels of staff turnover and less outcomes for young people. Smaller organisations appear to have less structured methods for ensuring networks are built and maintained. Long term relationships are often required by young people for successful interactions, so events which sever relationships present significant risk.

The reliance on contestable funding for the youth industry is a relatively recent phenomenon. Historically churches have been a cornerstone of youth work, however as they have become less relevant in the lives of young people, so too their level of input has dropped. Nevertheless quality across the sector is generally seen as high, and improving. There is an abundance of training and development opportunities offered to youth workers in the sector for both paid staff and volunteers. There are both formal qualifications through NZQA and informal training led by experts in the sector. A national code of ethics exists (included in reference section) and nine core competencies for youth workers will be released shortly. The Wellington Youth Workers Network has been in existence since 2009 and provides networking and professional development and this training is open to anyone who is a volunteer in the sector.

“There are pockets of gems all over the place but the sector is as strong as the people that are doing it.”

Stock Take

A stock take has been included in the appendices which includes the following data sets:

- Service title
- Which organisation delivers this service
- Target group for service
- Accessibility (times open, days of week, months of year, location, community profile)
- Which sector does this belong to (sport and recreation, social services, health, religious, arts and cultural, educational/training, hobby's and connections, justice and crime) note services can belong to multiple sectors.
- Capacity of the service
- Current numbers of use
- Location
- What are the qualification levels of staff/volunteers
- Contact information
- Funding model/sustainability
- Other notes

Commentary on Gaps

A total of 31 youth providers have been identified that are located within Karori. As noted in the scope this is not a comprehensive list but a collection of high profile services. Similarly, 46 youth providers have been listed that are located outside of Karori but either currently service, or historically have serviced, young people living in this suburb.

Sector Spread

The sector spread within Karori providers was broad. There is reliance for education to be completed outside of the suburb for secondary school students, with only Marsden available locally. Most secondary school students attend Wellington College or Wellington Girls High School. Few specialist health and social services are located in Karori itself but city wide there is adequate provision and stakeholders and young people believe that these cater for the needs of Karori young people.



Mountain Biking Makara

Sport and recreation is an obvious strength of the Karori community. It has a large amount of green spaces, sports fields, tracks and trails, and people value this amenity within the community. Not only have numerous organisations been identified in the stock take table which fall within the sport and recreation sector, but among all stakeholders and young people interviewed this was mentioned in a positive light.

The biggest area of deficit in service provision which is seen in Karori is in the arts/cultural space. There is no Marae in Karori, an arts centre which is dominated by older adults, pay to use services and day time classes, and little cultural activities present. This may however be adequately supported via secondary schools for this age group.

Social/hobby's and connections, religious services, and justice and crime all have specific providers identified which fall into these sectors.

Accessibility

Those services which specifically target young people tend to be accessible during times which suit. Those organisations which have a wider focus than just young people appear less accessible as they often align more closely with office work hours.

Transport is an issue for some young people in Karori, but not all. There is good infrastructure however the cost and time required to use public transport are seen as barriers. This has some impact on accessibility of clinical services as these are primarily based in Wellington City. Due to the frequency of visits to the city for other activities this is not deemed a large concern.



Bus Route

Qualifications and Quality

The qualifications of staff vary among youth providers. The sector relies heavily on volunteers, many of which are unqualified but have undergone training by the organisation itself or parent body. Several providers have highly qualified staff with masters or doctorates. These tend to be in clinical providers which belong to both the youth work sector and other industries.

Best practice would indicate that specific youth development training is required. In addition basic requirements for organisations working with young people such as Police vetting should be mandatory.

The bulk of organisations included in this stock take have a mixture of paid and volunteer staff. While no red flags were raised during this project in relation to adequate training or qualifications the highly variable nature of volunteers remains a potential issue for the sector. It is advised that any Council co-ordinated or driven initiatives include minimum expectations in regards to training and on-going supervision.

Capacity

It is difficult to comment on capacity in a general sense as many organisations did not provide this information. From discussions with stakeholders it appears that quality services are utilised well and are at or over capacity.

Communication and Collaboration

There are good levels of collaboration reported among the larger established youth providers, however this does not transcend all organisations in Wellington. All providers would benefit from more collaboration.

There is a group of community organisations which meet within Karori regularly. The benefits of this in its current form has received a mixed response. Some of those interviewed see the value in this and attend regularly while others do not. The author believes there is merit in the concept of a community wide meeting however logistical issues make this a difficult task to co-ordinate. There is also no value in this initiative unless there is buy in from all organisations working within the community, it is well led and has a clear purpose.

Young people predominantly access services through friends and word of mouth or via social media. This is a key when considering communications and marketing. Services have articulated that they are limited in their capacity to effectively market themselves as they are focused on delivering their respective services. Services may need to review how they are marketing themselves to ensure this is effective and an efficient use of their time.

Schools

Schools have been noted numerous times as key connection points for young people to access services. They are seen as an existing location where young people are engaged in meaningful activities. Most are willing to allow providers into the school for promotion and outreach services.

Young people within the 12-18 age range leave Karori to attend secondary school. Wellington Girls college has 351 students, Marsden approximately 200 students, and Wellington College 485 students from Karori. This makes up 79% of the total number of 12-17 year olds (1,317), with the remainder spread across a number of other schools. The assumption would be that young people access services and support in the city immediately after school however there is a clear divide in opinion from stakeholders and young people in this. The reality is likely to be a mixture of young people remaining within the city and coming back into Karori.

Schools tend to be under significant pressures internally with teachers focusing on curriculum outcomes and support staff on clinical work. This means that there is limited ability to assist students to find and access services outside of the school environment.

Overall

The current provision in Karori includes services delivered from the Karori Community Centre. Assuming these services continue, there is no major gaps present in the community.

The feeling from a large proportion of stakeholders, and from young people, is that Karori is a well catered for suburb in terms of services and activities taking place. This was especially so when discussing Karori in comparison to other areas of Wellington.

If the Karori Community Centre were to cease operation of youth services then there would be a clear gap in the provision within the community.

“The desire is to have every young person involved with a youth work provider who helps develop them as a person.”

Young People

Two focus groups have been undertaken with young people in Karori. Information from these focus groups has been interlaced throughout this report. Views from both stakeholders and young people are very similar and no divergence was seen in any of the material. This indicates youth service providers have a good understanding of young people. A range of key characteristics and issues have been identified by young people and stakeholders. These have been included in the appendices.

Wellington City Council and Partners

Wellington City Council is seen unanimously as having a role to play in the youth sector. Stakeholders have identified a series of six key areas which they believe the Council should remain, or become involved. These have been included in the appendices.

11.1 Community Centres

The Council funds community centres across the city. Some of these are run by Council in-house and others are run by community trusts. Karori Community Centre is run by a trust. Community centres are seen by their communities as being integral hubs to assist the public in accessing required services. They are a front line to the community and an asset to service providers to facilitate engagement with target populations. . They are a prime location for outreach services to occur, social change projects to be led, and for communities to share their voice.

11.2 The Karori Community Centre (KCC)

The KCC is run by a trust which receives funding from the Council of approximately \$45,000 per annum. The Council undertake maintenance on the building and charge no rent.

Karori Community Centre has historically had a component focused on young people including a youth space. The Karori Community Centre has high aspirations for this space and there is a clear desire to expand provision from a drop



Karori Community Centre

in centre to more structured programmes and activities. The Karori Youth Centre has previously operated in this manner and had a paid youth worker for 20 hours per week.

There was a reliance on third party funding to pay for the youth worker role to the value of approximately \$15,000 per annum and funding ceased in 2014 leading to the centre being closed. In February 2015 it re-opened without any form of paid employee or structured programmes as a drop in centre and it currently runs in this form three afternoons/evenings per week.

The trust have plans to reinstate the services that have previously operated from the centre. The key limitation for this to occur is committed funding however there are also other models based on volunteerism which could enable high quality services to be delivered. For example, several of the older youth who attend the centre have expressed desire to be involved to a greater degree in administration and management functions.

11.3 Karori Community Centre Value Proposition

The Karori youth drop in operates three days a week from approximately 3:30pm – 6:00pm. It provides a space for young people to socialise in the centre of Karori.

The Karori Youth Centre is perceived by the Karori community, young people, and a number of city wide stakeholders as high value with the caveat that it is properly resourced and supported to deliver services using a youth development methodology.

There is conflicting opinions among stakeholders of the value of purely a drop in centre with no structured activity.

The current Karori Youth Centre caters for a niche market and does not duplicate any other service locally.

11.4 Karori Community Centre Perception and Current Operation

Stakeholders and young people feel that the centre should be run on a day to day basis by young people or a dedicated youth worker who is networked and connected to the wider sector.

The Karori Community Centre holds its' own activities in very high regard. This is both the current and previous model of operation. Young people found the youth worker who was previously employed to be extremely valuable in developing them as individuals across a range of spheres of wellbeing.

The current model has some areas for improvement from a youth point of view. An example has been given in the appendices.

Some stakeholders mentioned a perceived issue with the youth centre regarding anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol. This was not a prevalent issue across stakeholders or young people. This is something for the Karori Community Centre Trust to monitor and address if it becomes significant.

11.5 Target Market

Current attendees of the youth centre range in age which is positive as this means the centre is known within different peer groups in Karori. There does not appear to be duplication of the Karori Youth Centre target market with other providers. With over 1,300 young people in Karori it is the authors' opinion that there is a significant market of young people that currently do not engage with any of the sport, recreation, or social services on offer in Karori or Wellington City. There is the potential for growth of Karori Youth Centre if a high quality product is delivered and marketed well.

11.6 Church Youth Groups, Sport, Recreation Centre and the Library

There are two Church Youth Groups in Karori. Both of these are strong with active members and a youth development approach threaded throughout their operation. These groups are not solely for members of the church and approximately 50% of the Karori Baptist Church Youth Group are not church members. Despite this there is still a perception among the majority of the community that these groups are only for church goers and this is a barrier for people to attend.



St Mary's Church

There is a Council run library and recreation centre in close proximity to the Kaori Youth Centre. The library in particular is well utilised as a drop in space after school and provides areas for study and to 'hang out' with free wifi. They do not run structured activities or programmes for young people. The recreation centre on the other hand only runs structured activities which often have a small charge associated. Young people see value in both these organisations.

As noted, sport and recreation activities such as Scouts and Girl Guides are a strength of this community.



Karori Pool and Recreation Centre



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