

Workshop 3D Community Owned Assets for Community Benefit by Anne Ramsay, Jane Stevens and Meredith Youngson.

Swanson Railway Station:

- Local community initiative.
- Considerable sweat equity involved.
- Brought old Avondale railway station for \$10.00.
- Had a lot of bureaucracy with 3 different Councils and New Zealand Post to deal with.
- Park gifted to Council so they maintain it.
- When it was moved it was covered in graffiti – not what we exactly expected.
- Took far longer to do up than anticipated.
- Had to buy land to put it on then decided to make the rest of it a park.
- Needed someone to lead the project (took almost full-time hours).
- Got community involved in it early stage, had to maintain momentum.
- Win-win for the council: - fulfilled need for bus access transport so formed in fracture. Community gain, now self-sufficient, don't need any grants.
- This asset is worth money. Café lease money goes into maintenance and money left over has been able to pay for free community events, annual picnics. Icon of community pride.

Ngaruawahia Community House:

- 10 years ago in 1993 a community resource centre was set up after a big need. In a cohesive community with a big heart – majority of population young and Maori.
- Low income, average income \$20,000, 11% unemployed.
- A Dep. Index of 10.
- 43% of over 15 year olds have no qualifications.
- 22% speak Maori.
- Crime rate 10% lower than national average.

- 2003 brought the Anglican monastery to use as a community house and hub. Got mortgage through council, also fundraised and received grants for its purchase for \$170,000 approximately. Now valued at over \$700,000.
- Now charge council rent for space offset.
- There are rooms available for community services.
- Vegetable co-op, cooking classes and after school programmes.
- Provide rooms for professional services e.g. lawyers and dentist.
- Currently 20% of main income is from rental rooms, rest of income is from grants.
- Provide power, phone/internet, copying service.
- Small but stropky committee.
- "Go to" place in town with "yes we can" attitude.
- Hub of community activity.
- Grand plan to buy derelict shops and start up community business and café.

Issues and challenges:

- Good relationship of Ngaruawahia Community House to local iwi (Taninui heartland). But needs to be worked on more in response to Taninui social development issues.
- Always takes more time than thought.
- Requires passion and activism.