

Napier Connects Draft Project Plan

1 Goal and objectives

The *Napier Connects* project aims to encourage older people who are either socially isolated or at risk of becoming so, to become more engaged with their community by getting involved in a wide range of activities to enhance their social connectedness and participation. The project will achieve this goal by:

- promoting the benefits to older people, their families and the wider community of staying active in a wide range of activities
- promoting the valuable contributions older people make in their community, neighbourhoods and families
- working with the community to identify what existing services and supports can be enhanced
- working with the community to identify projects that support the goals
- raising awareness about the positive impact that social connectedness has on older people's health and wellbeing
- raising awareness about the benefits of volunteering and the range of activities that this includes
- busting myths about older people, volunteering and what it means to contribute
- developing a framework/model that can be adapted by other communities to improve the social connectedness and participation of older people.

2 Background

In the literature/research social isolation is often presented as a continuum while lack of social contact at one of the spectrum and extensive social networks at the other. This does not tell us much about the quality of people's contacts or their personal feelings about social connectedness.

The literature suggests several risk factors associated with social isolation. These include the recent experience of loss- in relationships, health, function, mobility, employment, social networks. People who have poor health, mental health issues, caring responsibilities, live alone, recently moved area or into residential care as also at risk, as are older people who have negative attitudes about ageing.

International research suggests there are significant social and personal costs of social isolation. UK research¹ suggests that social as an effect on mortality that is similar in size to cigarette smoking. It is associated with conditions such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension and dementia. Socially isolated and lonely adults are more likely to undergo early admission into residential or nursing care.

The New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy² has identified the importance on increasing opportunities for social participation as important for local communities to champion as one way to improve the quality of older people's lives.

Addressing social isolation is a priority area for the Minister for Senior Citizens. The overall goals of Napier Connects respond to this priority area.

¹ Summit on Combating Loneliness, 2012

² New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy, 2001

The Napier City Council’s *Safer Napier*³ policy provides excellent links with the national strategy, the Minister’s priority and overall goals of Napier Connects. While older people are less likely to be victims of crime they are more fearful than other age groups about crime. Fear of crime inhibits participation and enjoyment of life. Being connected is important if older people are to age well in their communities. Many of the Napier Connects projects will provide an opportunity for people to get to know their neighbours and feel safer in their neighbourhood, leading to increased community connectedness and engagement.

3 Scope

- Based in Napier
- Role of Steering Group- link to the community connectors

4 Deliverables

This section identifies the key deliverables of the *Encouraging a sense of community in Napier*. As these are very high level and description, a break-down of the key task will be developed for each deliverable if required.

Deliverables	Description	Timeframe
Evidence	Review of the New Zealand and international research on the effectiveness of interventions to promote participation as a way to prevent/reduce social isolation	
Map of existing services	What existing services could be enhanced and/or promoted	
Community Internship Programme application	Complete and submit the CIP application	26 Sep 2012
Identify community connectors	Identify the older people and other key community connectors whose support for the project is vital. Have small workshops with them about the project and their role within it.	
Focus groups and workshops with key providers of services	Identify the key services and providers who interact with older people, and find out their views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is there an issue • what services are available • what more could be done Workshop the ideas, gain support for the World Café	
Focus group with AVS and DHB social workers	Find out their views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who is most at risk • what services could be expanded • how to support older people develop their own solutions 	

³ Adopted 6 April 2011 - <http://napier.digidocs.com/policies/safer-napier-policy.html?view=swf>

Deliverables	Description	Timeframe
World Café	Workshop of key service providers and community groups to scope out the existing services to address the goals of increased participation and how these could be expanded to meet some of the Napier Connects objectives	5 Dec 2012
Entrusting the Gift initiative	Promoting the benefits of older people as mentors, intergenerational focus	
Identifying older people at risk	Develop a quick survey that can be used by AVS, DHB social workers and other to identify older people who need to be supported to become more engaged with their community	2013
Develop a framework that can be shared	Produce a framework that identifies the key actions needed to be undertaken by communities who what to address this issue	
Evaluation of initiatives	Need an evaluation of the overall project but also the moving parts within it-	
Increase awareness of the value of volunteering and older people in Napier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Café • community newspaper profiles of older people engaged 	
Report to Minister for Senior Citizens	Provide Minister for Senior Citizens with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notes from Steering group meetings • updates on other activities • report on overall project, the different initiatives and evaluation 	

5 Outcomes

Key outcome is to promote positive ageing in Napier so that all people have a positive view of ageing and older people.

NOTE: the project plan will be regularly updated and revised