



THE FAMILY CENTRE
SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT



Empowering Whānau Through Papakāinga: Insights, Impact, and Pathways

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Ngā Whakataukī

Ko te whare e hanga te tangata, ko te tangata e hangaia e te whare

The whare builds the people, and the people build the whare

Nāku te whare i hanga, nā te whare i hanga i au

I built the whare, the whare built me

Bruce Stewart, Tapu Te Ranga Marae





Photo: Te Hika o Papaumā ki Te Wairarapa - Regan Potangaroa

Kōrero o Te Whaea

“I want to make sure that you understand, I've made it my business all these years to remind my whānau that we were moved off this land by the gun – 1848. Eventually, we came back onto it, and we were moved off again by resource consent in the 1960s, and we were able to overcome that. And we're back again. We're never going to leave this land. It doesn't matter what you put on us from now on. But getting back onto the land has been about developing relationships, being conversant with each other, looking after each other and finding ways to move forward. And that's what we're doing now.”

The kōrero of a papakāinga kuia, aged 75, April 2024



Photo: Josie McClutchie

Contents

1. Whakarāpopototanga / Executive Summary	6
2. Tīmatanga Kōrero / Introduction	13
3. Arotake Mātātuhi / Literature Review	15
4. Tukanga / Methodology	27
5. Ngā Kite / Findings - Whānau Perspectives	33
6. Ngā Kite / Findings - Development Leads Perspectives.....	60
7. Ngā Otinga / Conclusions	89
8. Ngā Taunaki / Recommendations.....	95
9. Ngā Tohutoro / References	97
Appendix 1: Case Studies and Case Descriptions.....	102
Appendix 2: Whānau Participant Information	105
Appendix 3: Whānau Consent Form	108
Appendix 4: Development Leads Participant Information.....	110
Appendix 5: Development Lead Consent Form	113
Appendix 6: Whānau Interview Guide.....	115
Appendix 7: Development Lead Interview Guide	116

The photography in this report shows whānau from two of the six papakāinga that participated in the research.

The quotations in the report are not attributed to individual whānau members or to particular papakāinga.

Cover photo: Quinn Phelan

1. Whakarāpopototanga / Executive Summary

Research purpose

In late 2023, Awhi Whānau - The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (Awhi Whānau) was commissioned by Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) to conduct research on papakāinga housing in Aotearoa New Zealand. The study aimed to examine the benefits for whānau living on papakāinga, identify the barriers to development, identify what works and what does not work when developing papakāinga, and to describe the post-development experiences.

Research scope and methodology

The study involved qualitative research. The participants were purposely selected, as a non-random sample (not statistically selected) of six papakāinga. All papakāinga are located in Te Ika-a-Māui (the North Island) and developed between 2016 and 2022. These papakāinga were selected as representing successful completed models.

The researchers interviewed 45 participants: 32 whānau members and 13 development leads or trustees. Ethics approval was granted by Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee and informed consent was obtained from all participants. The research adhered to kaupapa Māori research and analysis principles, engaging with hapori Māori, including whānau, development leads and trustees. The data from interviews and the literature was analysed using thematic analysis guided by whānau narratives and government frameworks. This research had limitations as a strengths-based, small-scale study of six papakāinga selected from a database provided by TPK.

What are the main benefits for whānau from papakāinga developments?

The key benefits identified were:

- **Health-related benefits:** whānau reported improved mental and physical health due to better living conditions, reduced stress levels from community support, and access to communal recreational facilities.
- **Cultural benefits:** whānau experienced a deeper connection to heritage and traditions, integration of cultural practices into daily life, enhanced sense of identity and belonging, and increased access to cultural capital through people, services, and facilities (especially when near marae).
- **Social benefits:** whānau reported strengthened community cohesion, increased social interactions and support networks enabled though

papakāinga design, and reduced social isolation - particularly for kaumātua and rangatahi.

- **Economic benefits:** papakāinga provide affordable housing for both owners and renters, opportunities for whānau economic development through communal businesses, reduced living costs through shared resources, and enhanced economic stability through collective asset management.
- **Improved quality of life:** residents of papakāinga enjoyed the community and whānau aspects of co-living arrangements, some whānau described access to high-quality housing as a 'dream come true'.

Overall, the papakāinga model provided significant benefits in terms of housing affordability, cultural connection, community support, and overall wellbeing for whānau. These benefits made the challenges of papakāinga development worthwhile, with many whānau expressing they would 'do it again' if given the opportunity.

What are the main barriers to papakāinga development?

The barriers identified in the research were:

- **Complex and time-consuming processes:** The papakāinga development process is complex and time-consuming. Local authorities and the Māori Land Court are often involved. Inconsistent responses and requirements from these entities sometimes complicate the process.
- **Governance and leadership challenges:** Effective governance requires long-term commitment, which can be intermittent and problematic. Succession planning for governance roles is often challenging, as is adapting to changing requirements from feasibility to post-development stages.
- **Regulatory and compliance issues:** Local authority requirements, especially around environmental compliance, can be seen as overly onerous. Specific requirements relating to stormwater filtration, roading, and other environmental risk mitigations can cause tension among the community and increase costs for developers.
- **Infrastructure limitations:** Rural papakāinga face significant infrastructure challenges, particularly with electricity, water, and sewerage. The lack of qualified tradespeople and companies in rural areas exacerbates these issues, sometimes necessitating innovative solutions like using relocatable houses.
- **Dependence on individual expertise:** There is a high dependence on individuals with expertise and personal relationships within the system, which

can limit the transmission of knowledge and experience to others, and advantage some developments over others without access to such expertise.

- **Post-development management:** Managing tenancies and maintaining properties presents new challenges for papakāinga trustees, including rent collection and dealing with anti-social behaviour. Effective property management systems and support are crucial to ensure the sustainability of the papakāinga initiatives.

These barriers highlight the need for streamlined processes, better regulatory collaboration, and robust support systems to facilitate the successful development and sustainability of papakāinga.

What works when developing papakāinga?

Based on the research findings, here is a summary of what works when developing papakāinga:

- **Effective leadership and community involvement:** strong whānau leaders and experienced development leads; engaging the community at every stage of the development process; trustee leadership and vision in managing tensions.
- **Expertise in project management:** utilising experienced project managers with an understanding of cultural and regulatory landscapes; strategic project management, especially in planning and financial management; building collective capability and capacity.
- **Development of effective kawa and tikanga:** incorporating culturally appropriate design principles that adapt to changing community needs while respecting traditional values; integration of communal spaces for cultural gatherings and fostering community connectivity; opportunities for cultural connection and activities.
- **Post-development management:** effective tenancy management practices; robust financial management strategies; community support systems such as formalised, regular feedback hui with trustees and whānau to ensure any problems related to the papakāinga are addressed or minimised.
- **Innovation and adaptability:** whānau innovation in completing tasks (for example, decorating whare during the COVID-19 lockdown); finding creative solutions to challenges (for example, using relocatable houses in rural areas to reduce development costs).

What are the 'post-development' experiences?

The experiences of residents living on established papakāinga were mixed. The positive aspects reported were:

- **Health and wellbeing benefits:** many whānau commented on improved health in all areas. Mentally, physically, emotionally, socially and financially they were better off.
- **Housing affordability:** living on papakāinga was more affordable and allowed whānau to have more money for other things.
- **High-quality housing:** many whānau described their new homes as a 'dream come true', enjoying the experience of living in new, high-quality housing.
- **Community aspects:** residents appreciated the community and whānau aspects of co-living arrangements. This helped reduce social isolation, especially for kaumātua and rangatahi.
- **Cultural reconnection:** some whānau were enthusiastic about re-linking or connecting for the first time with cultural activities.

The negative aspects reported were:

- **Anti-social behaviour:** some residents reported issues with partying, inconsiderate behaviour around communal resources, and concerns about tolerating potential criminal behaviour.
- **Privacy concerns:** while proximity to whānau had advantages, some felt their privacy was compromised if boundaries around individual houses were not maintained.
- **Management challenges:** ongoing management, operation, and maintenance of papakāinga presented new issues for trustees. These included: building maintenance, climate change mitigation, ensuring financial viability, managing tenancies and rent collection, and managing loan repayments and other financial responsibilities.
- **Complexity of issues:** several complex situations were identified, such as: expectations of home ownership not being achieved within the expected timeframe; relationship breakups leading to non-whakapapa whānau remaining in papakāinga housing; and questions about the duration of tenure for residents.
- **Behaviour management:** establishing and enforcing kawa and tikanga (rules, guidelines, and protocols) proved challenging and required the establishment of robust support systems.

Conclusions

Overall, while papakāinga were generally successful, the post-development phase revealed the need for effective management practices, support systems for residents, and clear guidelines to address the complexities of transitioning into communal living arrangements. These experiences highlighted the importance of balancing community benefits with individual needs and expectations in intentional papakāinga communities.

All papakāinga in the study were examples of successful development, resulting in improved housing conditions - affordable, warm, dry, modern homes. Whānau reported that they experienced better health, social, and cultural outcomes. While regulatory barriers posed challenges, particularly with council consenting processes, proactive trustees, experienced project leads, and strong communication were key to overcoming these obstacles. Nevertheless, post-development disconnection within papakāinga communities and property maintenance issues continue to be areas requiring attention.

Recommendations

Our analysis identified five main recommendations for TPK:

- **Policy engagement and advocacy:** Engage with policymakers to facilitate regulatory adjustments that better support the unique aspects of papakāinga. TPK could actively put the case for more sympathetic and efficient processes for papakāinga developments to Local Government New Zealand and local authorities where papakāinga developments are occurring. There is no other body with comparable knowledge and status equipped to carry out this task. Approaches to the Māori Land Court outlining research results and offering to facilitate dialogue or workshops with papakāinga development leads and Māori Land Court officials could improve efficiencies and develop greater mutual understanding. TPK could develop policy briefs and engagement seminars to articulate the research findings and propose specific changes to support papakāinga.
- **Community empowerment and capacity building:** Continue to fund and implement training programmes to build leadership, resilience, and governance capabilities within papakāinga communities. Effective leadership, project management expertise, cultural responsiveness, and good communication skills clearly help papakāinga developments to succeed sustainably. TPK could facilitate a range of upskilling and training opportunities through: (a) enabling a development leads conference designed with papakāinga communities to share struggles and successes; (b) working with development leads to bring in trainers in areas they would value mentoring, and (c) providing incentives to develop leadership capability within

papakāinga. TPK could establish continuous learning and support networks to foster community resilience, capacity building, cultural understanding, and sustainable management.

- **Strategic planning and resource allocation:** Enhance planning processes to include comprehensive feasibility studies and environmental assessments. Enable skilled papakāinga development leads along with Māori planning and environmental experts to provide accessible training and exposure experiences on papakāinga development planning, feasibility studies, and environmental assessments for papakāinga whānau and development leads. Explore innovative funding models that align with the communal and cultural nature of papakāinga.
- **Monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge sharing:** Work with papakāinga whānau and development leads to develop papakāinga-friendly mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of papakāinga to inform shared ongoing improvements. Create platforms for sharing successes and lessons learned among different papakāinga, promoting networking and best practice across the sector.
- **Small, flexible, and informed troubleshooting team:** Establish a small and flexible troubleshooting team to be available to papakāinga development leads when they require advice on a particular problem, find themselves in difficulty, or wish to plan new stages of development. The team would need to be experienced in, or at least well-informed about, papakāinga developments, Māori cultural heritage, and strategic planning. They need to be able to respond quickly to a call from anywhere in the country and communicate warmly and effectively. Their primary role will be to help problem solve, inspire confidence and lift capability within papakāinga.



Photo: Quinn Phelan

2. Tīmatanga Kōrero / Introduction

In 2023, TPK commissioned Awhi Whānau to conduct a qualitative research study with six papakāinga to explore papakāinga housing from the perspectives of whānau and development leads (trustees and project managers). TPK has had significant involvement in the funding and support of papakāinga development across Aotearoa.

The research is timely as Aotearoa continues to be in the middle of a housing crisis. Many Māori have difficulty finding affordable housing in the larger towns and cities. Where the opportunity has arisen, some whānau Māori have chosen to leave unaffordable rentals to return to their ancestral land in the hopes of improving their housing situation, and as a consequence also improve their social, cultural and economic circumstances.

Papakāinga housing projects have become more prevalent as an affordable housing option for whānau who have access to whenua Māori (Māori freehold land) and/or General Land, and where there are sound governance structures to manage the development of papakāinga. This coincides with an increasing interest by whānau to return to their traditional land or create housing communities with kin on general land.

TPK commissioned this research to strengthen the evidence base, identifying what is working well and where barriers remain, in order to enhance its support for papakāinga and to contribute to better Māori housing outcomes. The questions to be answered for the research were as follows:

- What are the benefits for whānau of papakāinga living?
- What are the barriers to developing papakāinga?
- What works and what does not work in terms of developing papakāinga? (e.g., land tenure, Māori Land Court processes, house design, Council processes, resource consent, building consent; and construction processes)
- What are any post-development experiences relating to managing tenancies, tax obligations, and repaying debt?

The research explores the research questions from the perspectives of whānau living on papakāinga and development leads who plan and develop papakāinga on Māori land. TPK, as a policy body, wanted a qualitative base of evidence that informed them how whānau have fared living on papakāinga and how the regulatory matters and development issues of papakāinga are being addressed, to better support current and future developments.

In the chapters that follow, there is a review of the literature related to papakāinga housing initiatives, findings from the perspectives of whānau who live on

papakāinga, the experiences of development leads who have built them, and the regulatory and cultural requirements they have adhered to, in order to complete the developments. The last chapter provides an overview of the benefits and challenges for whānau who reside on the papakāinga; and what has worked and what has not worked for trustees and development leads with the projects. Our recommendations are future-focused and anticipate what may need to happen next for these papakāinga developments and their whānau.

3. Arotake Mātātuhi / Literature Review

This chapter presents a literature review on papakāinga and papakāinga housing schemes. The bulk of the research literature involves qualitative enquiry which focuses on exploratory research questions investigating multiple outcomes that typically include: a housing, financial, social and/or cultural focus. There are a number of case studies or case descriptions of papakāinga including some evaluative research.

The research findings paint a relatively consistent picture, with multiple benefits typically outweighing the logistical challenges involved with lengthy and complex development projects. It is largely biased in a strengths direction. That is, the documentation of successful papakāinga developments dominates the research narrative.

The research shows us that papakāinga offer numerous benefits for Māori communities, addressing both immediate housing needs and broader socio-cultural objectives (Henry & Crothers, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2017). These schemes are designed to provide culturally resonant housing that aligns with Te Ao Māori values and worldviews, fostering a sense of community and belonging. One of the primary benefits is the improvement in health and wellbeing outcomes mostly through the reduction in exposure to poor housing, and social and cultural risk factors (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2020). Research has shown that reducing exposure to cold and damp by fitting insulation and heating, and reducing home hazards, significantly enhances health, which has been a cornerstone of government policies like the Warm Up NZ-Heat Smart programme and the Healthy Homes Standards for rental housing (Howden Chapman et al., 2004; Howden-Chapman et al., 2023; Keall et al., 2021).

Papakāinga housing schemes support the cultural and social needs of Māori by creating environments where whānau can thrive. For instance, the Marae Ora, Kāinga Ora (MOKO) project in South Auckland demonstrates how marae can play a pivotal role in housing provision, thereby strengthening community ties and cultural identity (Jenny et al., 2021; Lee-Morgan J, 2023).

Papakāinga may also help address the inequities faced by Māori in the housing market, providing a pathway to home ownership and stable rental housing, which is crucial given the disproportionate impact of housing crises on Māori (Lee-Morgan J, 2023). Furthermore, the tuakana-tēina (older sibling-younger sibling) peer education programme has shown that culturally resonant, strengths-based approaches can significantly improve health and social outcomes, emphasizing the importance of community and cultural connections in enhancing quality of life (Oetzel et al., 2024).



Photo: Josie McClutchie

The development of kaumātua villages provide an example of tailoring housing solutions to the needs of older Māori, ensuring they can age in place within supportive, culturally resonant environments (Knox et al., 2023; Sophie et al., 2022). Literature on social housing initiatives in Ōtautahi Christchurch, for example, highlight the importance of creating a sense of community and belonging, which is integral to the Māori concept of 'home' (Els et al., 2023).

What are the main gaps in the research on papakāinga?

The research, while extensive, reveals several critical gaps that need addressing to fully understand the potential of papakāinga housing developments for Māori communities. One significant gap is the lack of comprehensive, up-to-date research into Māori housing aspirations and experiences, including the perspectives of kaumātua (Henry & Crothers, 2019; Smith et al., 2024). Existing literature often highlights negative aspects, such as overcrowding and associated health issues, without sufficiently exploring successful models or positive outcomes (Smith et al., 2024). Additionally, the administrative and bureaucratic hurdles faced by Māori landowners in developing papakāinga are well-documented, yet there is limited research on effective strategies to streamline processes and provide practical guidance (Webb & Williamson, 2022). The Whangārei District Council's efforts to remove roadblocks through targeted planning are a step in the right direction, but empirical research is needed to evaluate the impact of such initiatives (Webb & Williamson, 2022).

Furthermore, while there is a growing body of kaupapa Māori research that incorporates Māori values and ethical principles, there remains a need for more studies that apply this methodology to Māori housing outcomes by adopting a community development approach, focusing on holistic benefits rather than just housing numbers (Henry & Crothers, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2017; Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021). This approach could better address the aspirations of Māori communities, including economic opportunities and social cohesion, which are often overlooked in traditional housing research (Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021).

Research evaluating long-term health outcomes for papakāinga whānau is also lacking. To fully understand the long-term health impacts of papakāinga living, there is a need for more targeted, long-term studies that specifically examine health outcomes in these communities over extended periods. Such research would provide more definitive evidence of the health benefits of papakāinga living and could inform future housing and health policies for Māori communities.

Lastly, the variability in urban papakāinga builds, driven by differing interpretations of what papakāinga means to various Māori groups, complicates the development of standardised, scalable solutions (Smith et al., 2024). Addressing these gaps requires a multi-sectoral research agenda that includes qualitative insights from Māori communities, quantitative and evaluative research on health and other

outcomes, practical solutions for administrative challenges, and a holistic view of community development that aligns with Māori cultural values and aspirations.

How does the evidence relate to the current research?

This section synthesises insights from various sources to provide a current understanding of the multifaceted role of papakāinga across the four research questions.

Benefits for whānau

Papakāinga offer a range of benefits that align with the Whānau Ora Outcomes Framework, emphasising holistic wellbeing (Cram et al., 2022; NZ Government, 2014; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016; Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021):

- **Cultural identity and social cohesion:** By enabling Māori to live on ancestral lands near their marae, papakāinga reinforce cultural practices and strengthen community bonds. Proximity fosters intergenerational knowledge transfer and supports a strong cultural identity.
- **Economic empowerment:** papakāinga facilitate communal economic activities and resource management, enhancing financial stability and promoting self-sufficiency within Māori communities. This includes local employment opportunities and the development of communal enterprises.
- **Health and wellbeing:** Improved housing conditions contribute to better physical and mental health outcomes. The supportive community environment provided by papakāinga enhances overall wellbeing.
- **Environmental sustainability:** Incorporating sustainable building practices and managing natural resources effectively, papakāinga reflects the Māori stewardship of the land, ensuring environmental preservation for future generations.

Barriers to development

Papakāinga developments face several challenges (Carroll et al., 2019; Controller and Auditor General, 2011; Livesey, 2012). The Auditor-General's 2011 report on housing on Māori land found the process to build a house on Māori land to be fraught, describing the challenges as:

- **Difficulties in raising finance:** banks have been reluctant to loan money for mortgages on Māori land because of the risk of recovery if a borrower defaults.
- **Planning restrictions:** Māori land is often zoned as rural even when it is close to a town, which restricts the number of houses that can be built under

district plans (and can affect designs and plans) on Māori land; requiring costly resource consents that are not conducive to housing development.

- **Rates arrears:** rates arrears have often grown on Māori land, so owners can be reluctant to build in case they become responsible for the collective debt.
- **Infrastructure:** because the land is usually zoned rural, there are many difficulties getting connected to key infrastructure services like water, stormwater, electricity and wastewater. The costs can be prohibitive.
- **Gaining consent to build where there are many owners:** On average there are 86 owners of each Māori land title. Contacting all of them and gaining agreement can be costly and time consuming.

As a result, despite the potential, many of the plans and aspirations that whānau, Māori trusts, hapū, and iwi have for building housing on their land are yet to be realised. This is frustrating to many families and trusts, as well as for many staff of the public entities that are involved.

Effective practices

Certain practices have proven effective in overcoming challenges and ensuring the success of papakāinga projects (Carroll et al., 2019; Napier City Council, 2024; NZ Government, 2014; Te Amokura Consultants, 2021):

- **Community-led planning:** engaging the community throughout the planning and development process ensures that the projects meet the actual needs and aspirations of the community.
- **Adaptive financial models:** innovations such as the Kāinga Whenua loan scheme, which provides financing options for Māori land, help facilitate development.
- **Infrastructure support:** ensuring adequate infrastructure development on Māori land is crucial for the sustainability of papakāinga.

Post-development experiences

Managing the dynamics of papakāinga communities involves addressing several key issues (Carroll et al., 2019; Cram et al., 2022; Te Amokura Consultants, 2021; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021):

- **Tenancy and financial management:** Effective management of tenancies and ensuring financial sustainability are crucial. This includes dealing with tax obligations and developing strategies for repaying debt.

- **Ongoing community support:** Continual support and adaptation to the evolving needs and economic conditions of the community are vital for the long-term success of papakāinga.

Papakāinga play a transformative role in Māori development, not only in providing housing but in fostering sustainable communities that support the cultural, economic, and social aspirations of Māori people. Papakāinga stands as a foundational component of Māori community development, crucial for the wellbeing and prosperity of Māori communities. This perspective highlights the importance of integrated approaches and community-centric planning in addressing the unique challenges faced by Māori in order to develop sustainable and culturally appropriate housing.

Traditional/pre-colonial papakāinga

In pre-colonial Aotearoa, papakāinga were traditional Māori settlements. They were family-based villages or pā (fortified villages) where extended families lived together. The settlements included rectangular wharepuni (sleeping houses) made from timber, rushes, tree ferns, bark, thatched roofs, and earth floors (Schrader, 2024). Other important buildings included pātaka (storehouses), kāuta (cooking houses), and whareniui (meeting houses) (Schrader, 2024). The design of papakāinga supported communal living, with separate sleeping houses for each family and larger communal buildings for meetings and gatherings. The whareniui, often intricately carved, served as the focal point for community life and ceremonies (Berry, 2022). This structure reinforced the importance of whānau (family) and collective living in Māori society.

Papakāinga were not just residential areas; they also supported various non-residential activities that helped maintain and enhance Māori culture and traditions. This included agricultural practices, food storage, and sometimes industrial and commercial activities (Napier City Council, undated). As centres of Māori life, papakāinga were crucial for maintaining and enhancing Māori culture and traditions. They provided a space for the intergenerational transfer of knowledge, customs, and practices (Simpson et al., 2022).

Papakāinga also played a crucial role in traditional iwi social structures, serving as the foundation for communal living and cultural preservation. This included: maintaining deep ancestral and spiritual connections to land and the sense of tūrangawaewae (a place of belonging); economic activities such as agricultural practices, food storage, and sometimes industrial and commercial activities; social support by fostering strong social bonds and mutual support systems; and tribal leadership, governance and decision-making (Simpson et al., 2022).

In essence, papakāinga were more than just physical settlements, they were the heart of Māori society, embodying the principles of collective living, cultural continuity, and connection to the land.



Photo: Josie McClutchie

Case Studies identified in the literature review

While not intended to be exhaustive, a summary of 10 case studies and case descriptions on papakāinga housing developments in Aotearoa are outlined in Appendix 1. These case studies and case descriptions illustrate the diverse approaches and benefits of papakāinga housing developments, highlighting cultural connection, sustainability, community engagement, and affordability. Each project reflects the unique aspirations and values of the whānau involved, demonstrating the potential for papakāinga to provide culturally appropriate and sustainable housing solutions for Māori communities.

Methodologies and evaluative approaches

The case studies often utilise kaupapa Māori research methodologies, which prioritise Māori knowledge systems and values. This approach ensures that the research is culturally relevant and respectful of Māori perspectives. For instance, the Tū Whare Ora project used hui (meetings) with Māori professionals to gather insights and develop assessment models like the mauri model, which is rooted in mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and allows for quantitative comparison of different design outcomes (Awatere et al., 2008). This process-based assessment runs parallel to the planning, design, building, and living stages of papakāinga development, ensuring continuous feedback and improvement.

The literature includes 'formative and summative evaluations' to assess the effectiveness and impact of papakāinga developments. For example, TPK commissioned evaluations that aimed to inform the implementation of community development methodologies, measure changes resulting from the projects, and determine whether the intended outcomes were achieved (Smith et al., 2020). There are also 'impact evaluations', such as those conducted by the TPK Māori Housing Network that assess the tangible benefits of papakāinga, including improvements in housing quality, community engagement, and overall wellbeing (Duckworth et al., 2018). These studies often involve feasibility assessments and workshops to support papakāinga development, ensuring that projects are viable and aligned with community needs and aspirations.

Case study research also highlights challenges in navigating resource consents, securing funding, and dealing with local council regulations (Awatere et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2020). These challenges underscore the need for supportive policies and frameworks to facilitate the successful implementation of papakāinga projects. The case studies and other evaluative research on papakāinga have employed qualitative and quantitative approaches that are designed to be culturally responsive and community centred. They provide insights into the benefits, challenges, and best practices for papakāinga development, contributing to the broader understanding and advancement of Māori housing initiatives.

Characteristics, design principles and success factors

Several researchers have investigated the development and use of papakāinga and attempted to identify the factors which contribute to successful papakāinga. A recent (January 2024) study identified five key cultural characteristics which are necessary within urban papakāinga development: whanaungatanga; manaakitanga; kaitiakitanga; rangatiratanga; kotahitanga and haumarutanga, (Smith et al., 2024). A 2009 study identified nine key characteristics for Māori sustainable development and papakāinga housing (Rolleston & Awatere, 2009). These characteristics aim to increase Māori participation in urban planning, including the increased use of mātauranga Māori in design, preserving cultural landscapes, and strengthening Māori community identity.

Papakāinga serve as a vital mechanism for preserving and enhancing Māori cultural identity. They enable Māori to reside on their ancestral lands and close to their marae, which supports the maintenance of cultural practices, traditions, and languages. This proximity to cultural roots strengthens community ties and fosters a strong sense of identity and belonging. Additionally, papakāinga support the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, ensuring that cultural heritage is preserved and celebrated within communities (Cram et al., 2022; Napier City Council, 2024; NZ Government, 2014; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016).

The role of papakāinga goes beyond housing to foster strong, resilient communities. It supports the development of social networks, shared responsibilities, and mutual support systems that enhance the collective wellbeing of its members. By living in close-knit communities, individuals and families benefit from shared resources and collective action, crucial for addressing social issues and enhancing community wellbeing. This aspect of papakāinga promotes a sense of community ownership and mutual support, which are essential for cohesive community living (Cram et al., 2022; Napier City Council, 2024; Te Amokura Consultants, 2021; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021).

Economic empowerment

Papakāinga plays a significant role in economic empowerment by facilitating communal economic activities and resource management. This approach not only aids in achieving financial stability but also promotes economic self-sufficiency within the Māori community. By creating opportunities for local employment and enterprise, papakāinga contribute to the broader economic health of the area. This includes the promotion of Māori entrepreneurship and the use of local resources, which together enhance the economic independence and prosperity of Māori communities (Carroll et al., 2019; NZ Government, 2014; Te Amokura Consultants, 2021; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019).

Health and wellbeing

By providing quality, secure, and culturally resonant housing, papakāinga significantly contribute to the health and wellbeing of its residents. Improved living conditions help reduce health issues associated with poor housing quality, such as respiratory problems. The supportive community environment also enhances mental wellbeing and overall quality of life, making papakāinga a means of promoting healthier lifestyles among Māori populations (Cram et al., 2022; NZ Government, 2014; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016, 2019).

Environmental sustainability

Papakāinga incorporate sustainable building practices and designs that respect the natural environment, aligning with traditional Māori values of guardianship (kaitiakitanga). This includes the use of sustainable materials, energy-efficient designs, and the management of natural resources in a way that minimises environmental impact and preserves the ecosystem for future generations. Papakāinga thus play a crucial role in promoting environmental stewardship within Māori communities (Carroll et al., 2019; Te Amokura Consultants, 2021; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019; Te Puni Kōkiri Māori Housing Network, 2021).

Legal and bureaucratic challenges

Papakāinga trustees or development leads play a critical role in navigating the complex legal and bureaucratic landscape associated with Māori land. By addressing challenges related to land tenure, zoning, and access to finance, papakāinga help unlock the potential for housing development on Māori land, which is often hindered by systemic barriers (Carroll et al., 2019; Livesey, 2012; Napier City Council, 2024; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2016).

The role of papakāinga therefore focuses not just on providing housing but on nurturing and sustaining a Māori way of life that reinforces cultural values and enhances the social, economic, and environmental fabric of communities. The literature reviewed highlight papakāinga as a foundational component of Māori development, integral to the wellbeing and prosperity of Māori communities. This holistic approach underlines the transformative potential of papakāinga projects in supporting thriving Māori communities that are economically viable, culturally vibrant, and socially integrated.

Conclusion

The research on papakāinga housing developments to date reveal a complex, intersectional understanding of the cultural, social, and logistical aspects necessary for successful implementation. Key cultural characteristics of these developments identified include whanaungatanga (connectedness and relationships), kaitiakitanga (guardianship), manaakitanga (hospitality), rangatiratanga

(leadership), kotahitanga (unity) and haumarutanga (safety and security), which are essential for fostering a shared vision among whānau, iwi and mainstream stakeholders, and ensuring the sustainability of urban papakāinga communities (Smith et al., 2024).

Successful papakāinga developments are rooted in traditional Māori values and practices, emphasising the holistic nature of Māori life and the importance of intergenerational living, which historically enabled Māori to thrive in fortified settlements with communal facilities (Smith et al., 2024). However, the process of establishing papakāinga is complex, often requiring extensive administrative navigation and collaboration with various agencies, including the Māori Land Court and local authorities and councils, to overcome barriers and streamline resource management issues (Webb & Williamson, 2022). Research also highlights the historical context of Māori housing, noting that past policies have often failed to address the unique needs of Māori, leading to persistent disadvantages in housing access and quality (Henry & Crothers, 2019).

Modern papakāinga initiatives aim to rectify these issues by incorporating Māori values and aspirations into housing designs, promoting community interaction, and ensuring healthy living environments (Henry & Crothers, 2019; Smith et al., 2024). Practical steps for developing papakāinga include securing research funding, validating housing needs through workshops or surveys, and considering land and housing tenure options, which are critical for the viability of these projects (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2017). The twenty-first century papakāinga model emphasises self-determination and collaboration among whānau, integrating modern science, technology, and innovation to create resilient and sustainable communities (Tait-Wall et al., 2022).

Despite the challenges of logistics, funding and whānau dynamics, the ongoing efforts to develop papakāinga housing reflect a commitment to enhancing Māori wellbeing through culturally appropriate and community-focused housing solutions.



Photo: Quinn Phelan

4. Tukanga / Methodology

This study examines the benefits for whānau living on papakāinga, identifies the barriers to development, highlights what works and what does not work when developing papakāinga, and describes the post-development experiences.

Kaupapa Māori research principles

The tikanga-based approach of Awhi Whānau is consistent with academic descriptions of kaupapa Māori research by researchers such as Love (1999) and Pihama (2021). When undertaking research, Awhi Whānau is guided by the knowledge gained through the 'acts' of research characterised under kaupapa Māori, tikanga-a-iwi, and broader mātauranga Māori methodologies. These apply longstanding values, worldviews, ethics, and processes to modern research contexts. We acknowledge the role of kaupapa Māori in the ethics process.

Whānau Narrative Inquiry

Whānau Narrative Inquiry (Love, 1999) aligns well with kaupapa Māori research because authentic oral retelling and narratives are essential components of indigenous cultures that have been passed down from generation to generation. Whānau Narrative Inquiry is a formalised qualitative research methodology, taking the approaches of narrative inquiry and integrating cultural practices and values into them.

The research team for this study provided the opportunity for whānau participants to share their personal narratives in relation to their lived experience of papakāinga. The following kaupapa Māori research principles by Pihama (2021) were most relevant to this research:

- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi:** as a Crown agency, TPK adheres to Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles. Te Tiriti defines the relationship between Māori and the Crown in Aotearoa. It affirms the tangata whenua status of whānau, hapū and iwi and their citizenship rights. Te Tiriti, therefore, provides a basis through which Māori may critically analyse relationships, challenge the status quo, and affirm Māori rights. It was appropriate that this principle was central to the papakāinga research. It demonstrated the strong connection between whānau Māori on papakāinga and the crucial role that TPK plays in the practical and significant provision of funding pathways, information sharing, knowledge building and guidance for Māori with relevant housing initiatives.
- **Āta:** the principle of growing respectful relationships. Pihama (2021) identifies the principle of āta as a transformative approach within service organisations to others. Āta relates specifically to the building and nurturing of relationships.

It acts as a guide to the understanding of relationships and wellbeing when engaging with Māori. It is a relational approach to in-person interaction that ensures that the mana of all the participants is prioritised at all times during the interview process. It is crucial to create a space where participants feel safe and comfortable to impart their knowledge and experience. As participants will be Māori, we want them to feel tautoko (emotionally supported), aroha (compassion and empathy), and manaaki (to be physically hosted and looked after). Awahi Whānau enacted this principle ensuring that the development and maintenance of the relationship between the research team, TPK and the research participants was at all times, high-functioning, deeply respectful, collective and collaborative.

- **Tikanga Māori:** refers to the principle of customary practices, ethics, and cultural behaviour, considerations, and obligations. Tikanga Māori is essential to enable us to navigate and operate within a Māori context and make judgements and decisions within this space. Awahi Whānau honoured customary practices for the interview process. When conducting interviews with tangata Māori in wāhi Māori, we ensured that participant opinions, worldviews, and perspectives were respected. Awahi Whānau were culturally aware and responsive with all research participants prior to, during and after the interview process.

Research sample

Awahi Whānau and TPK agreed that data collection would take place at six papakāinga due to the timeframe to establish and complete interviews. The papakāinga were in the following four rohe (regions): Te Taitokerau, Tāmaki Mākaurau, Ikaroa Rāwhiti, and Te Tai Tonga. All were within Te Ika-a-Māui (the North Island).

The research sample was purposive and non-randomised. Purposive refers to being able to intentionally select the participants. The research team chose which papakāinga to visit from a short list provided by TPK. The sample was designed to provide coverage of geographical characteristics: a mixture of rural and semi-rural, urban, marae-based and non-marae based papakāinga. All of the papakāinga were funded through TPK and had been successfully built to completion with significant financial support and guidance provided by them between 2016 and 2022.

The data collection phase began at the beginning of March 2024 and involved establishing the dates and times that whānau and trustees were available to be interviewed. Awahi Whānau travelled to the different rohe so that whānau and trustees could be interviewed kanohi-ki-te-kanohi. All of the interviews were conducted in person, with the exception of one interview, where one researcher was present with the participants and the other joined online from Auckland. The last of the interviews was completed at the end of April 2024.

Data collection

Whānau and trustee/development leaders were interviewed using a semi-structured interview approach. The question lines were designed to allow a broader range of open-ended responses, enabling participants to be unimpeded and free flowing with their kōrero during the interview. On average, each interview took forty-five minutes to one hour to complete.

Data collection by the numbers

Whānau Interviews		
Rohe/Region	Groups	Total # People
Te Tai Tokerau	3	8
Tāmaki Makaurau	2	14
Ikaroa-Rāwhiti	2	6
Te Tai Tonga	2	4
Total number of people for whānau interviews		32

Trustees/Development Lead Interviews		
Rohe/Region	Groups	Total # People
Te Tai Tokerau		1
Tāmaki Makaurau	2	8
Ikaroa-Rāwhiti	1	2
Te Tai Tonga	1	2
Total number of people for trustee/development lead interviews		13

Participant demographics

Rohe/Region	Age range of Participants	Housing tenure
Te Tai Tokerau	35 – 80 years of age	Rental: 3 whare
Tāmaki Makaurau	40 – 90 years of age	Rental: 14 whare
Ikaroa-Rāwhiti	20 – 60 years of age	Rental: 6 whare Owner Occupied: 3 whare
Te Tai Tonga	40 – 50 years of age	Rental: 4 whare

Research steps

Prior to the data collection, two separate question lines for semi-structured interviews were prepared. One was for whānau living on papakāinga and the other for developmental leads, respectively. The question lines reflected the four research questions set out in the research brief.

A plan for engagement with whānau and development leads was provided to TPK for comment and alignment with the research goals. Once there was agreement, the data collection phase was able to proceed.

The research team contacted TPK Regional Directors as a courtesy to inform them that the trustees in their rohe would be contacted for an initial kōrero about the research, to explain what the study would involve and establish the interview process. It was the role of the trustees to arrange the interviews with whānau and development leads. The days and times were negotiated depending on the most convenient time and place to gather everyone together.

Prior to the interviews, trustees were asked about the appropriate kawa and tikanga for each papakāinga to ensure that local tikanga protocols were observed. It was important that a warm, safe and engaging atmosphere was created for the interviews. Whānau and development leads shared their knowledge and experiences of papakāinga living and development. All responses were valued.

The research team's focus was to gather the responses from the participants regarding the research questions. The role of the interviewers was to ask straightforward questions, probe for greater understanding, and record participants' experiences and whakaaro.

Regular status reports were submitted to TPK to ensure accountability and transparency with all phases of the research, particularly during the data collection phase.

Audio recordings and transcripts of all interviews took place as permission was sought specifically in the consent forms. The transcripts were carefully analysed

and themed around the question line inquiry topics and aligned with frameworks approved by TPK. Initial findings and resulting themes were clearly prepared for a wānanga presentation at the TPK Nau Mai Room on 30 May 2024. These initial findings were shaped into a draft report. It was agreed that a final report would be readied for completion at a time agreed with TPK.

Kaupapa Māori analysis methods

For this project, kaupapa Māori analysis methodology was used to analyse the data. The Māori researchers conducted thematic analysis using their knowledge and understanding of Te Ao Māori to analyse the participants' worldviews and comprehend the weight of their whakaaro.

The research team applied this knowledge and understanding to the whānau and development lead interviews. As an example, when whānau explained how they were connected by their whakapapa to their whenua, the researchers were able to utilise their own experiences as Māori to respect and relate to the context from which this kōrero had arisen. The prevalence of similar cultural ideas, perspectives and words were used to code the themes.

This conscious awareness of the 'cultural capital' of te ao Māori systems, knowledge, people and processes meant the research team could appropriately interpret and understand the information that was intertwined with tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori. This enabled them to acknowledge the wider cultural and societal context that shaped the research material.

Ethics approval

Awhi Whānau sought ethics approval from an Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee in January 2024. Ethics approval was granted and received in February. Interview data was anonymised, and consent forms and appendices are attached as references in this report.

Limitations of research

The primary limitation of this research was that the interviews were conducted with only six of a larger pool of potential papakāinga for selection. The sample was not indicative of all papakāinga, therefore the research findings should be taken as an indication of the sample interviewed. It was important to ensure that the papakāinga chosen represented the spectrum of geographical characteristics (urban, rural, semi-rural, marae and non-marae papakāinga) to avoid selection bias.



Photo: Josie McClutchie

5. Ngā Kite / Findings - Whānau Perspectives

Introduction

The personal perspectives of the whānau who resided on the participating papakāinga were an illuminating element of the research study. It was important for the researchers to understand what families considered were the benefits and challenges of papakāinga living. A broad range of themes emerged from the interviews, including educational opportunities, health and wellbeing, cultural knowledge and participation, housing affordability, and future aspirations.

Educational opportunities

Educational opportunities have a positive influence on the futures and aspirations of whānau on papakāinga. Two of the papakāinga highlighted the importance of education to the whānau who reside there. They have access to a range of educational institutions and want their rangatahi to aspire to do their best to contribute back to their hapori/community:

*“We've got a college, we've got an intermediate, we've got a kura kaupapa. There's a primary school, a church school. Some of our kids here go up to ***** to school. We have about ten school children on the papakāinga from college kids down to preschoolers. Our tamariki and rangatahi are doing well in education – we have high hopes for them and just want them to do their best.”*

Capability and capacity building

One of the papakāinga aspired to be less reliant on government financial resourcing and wanted to become more self-managing, independent, and autonomous. However, they knew that those aspirations would take time:

“It would be great to have financial support so that we can train more of our whānau to build our own capacity. I don't know everything. When we first started, I didn't know a thing, and I want to be able to say that we can bring more of our young people in to be involved. It's capacity and capability because we can do all these great things saying our whānau can build our own capacity. We can tap into external providers and consultants to help us do all this mahi. But, if we can resource ourselves to do that because our whānau know best, that would be great. I think that is a big barrier.”

They had ideas for possible opportunities they would like to take advantage of in the near future. They would like funders to consider financial support for future capability and capacity building for whānau on papakāinga:

“Further financial support for everything. But things like project management, financial management, asset management. Support to go and train to do that. For instance, I looked at training programme the other day, which I think will be great for us to do. It's \$1,000 for one person to do. And we can capture all this potential with this knowledge, just powerful knowledge.”

One whānau member was doing papakāinga development mahi free-of-charge on top of all the other responsibilities that she has on a day-to-day basis. This is having an impact on her ability to do anything particularly well. There is no financial support for whānau to participate in capacity-building programmes:

“But we can't afford any of these capacity-building programmes at all. And even organising this hui to meet you today for instance - it's time taken from me, I've had to work full time and then I'm going to school and then working at night. And so, if we were able to have financial support to help us do this mahi to build our capacity, even better, and then we can tap into external consultants and learn from them.”

One whānau member spoke about capacity building in the form of succession planning and rangatahi stepping up to become trustees:

“We have no idea what the future looks like. All we can do now is do things now that maybe would help those future generations. One of my nieces is a lawyer, only in her 30s. She is very good and has become a trustee. We need that younger mindset. We have trustees and we have a constitution. Then our next generations can go back to these documents and say, here's the answers.”

Capability and capacity building within papakāinga is limited, or has not been discussed in-depth by whānau just yet. This means that the future development or ongoing management of papakāinga is left to only a few people and raises questions about their sustainability in the future. Opportunities could be provided for whānau on papakāinga to workshop or network with supporting organisations or with each other about sustainable development practices.

Health and wellbeing

The opportunity to live a holistically healthy lifestyle can be dependent upon the environment in which whānau live. Four out of six of the papakāinga whānau felt that living where they do now has allowed them to have a better quality of life than before they lived on their whenua. One koro had seen a huge positive shift in his taha tinana (his physical, mental and emotional wellbeing) since he arrived back home:

“In terms of hauora, in terms of health wise. It has been better. When we were living in the city, he was in and out of hospital. For the last five years, he was in and out of hospital continuously with his heart, with his breathing. Yeah, but, we’ve been home on his papakāinga since September 2022, and, he hasn’t even been to hospital. He hasn’t had any issues. Mental health has improved as well. It has just been so good to see he’s healthy, living healthier, breathing healthier and being healthier.”

Another whānau member became very emotional when they had to explain how their physical, mental and emotional health circumstances had been impacted and changed for the better now that they resided at the papakāinga:

“I got very sick. And being home with my family around as well. Not only my daughter. ...It’d been hard. It’s been a year and I feel so great being here. It’s everybody backing you up. I had to stop work and the burden of it has solely been on my daughter. And we’re getting older. We’re all super annuitants. I’m so happy to be healthy now. And now I just love it. Where else would I be? And I’m so grateful for that.”

Another key factor to improved wellbeing was mentioned by whānau on this papakāinga. They pinpoint taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing) as a crucial part of maintaining their hauora:

“Everything we said to you today is part of wellbeing. Spiritual wellbeing – wairuatanga are important to us. We have Ringatū, Mihinare, Hauhau, Rātana-Mōrehu, Atua Taiao, many faiths within our whānau. It is part of being Māori, our wairua.”

Whānau on all of the papakāinga had an idea of where they were at with their personal health and wellbeing. They had the opportunity to be responsible for their decisions and determine what they wanted to do and where they wanted to be:

“I guess my wellbeing was bad before and improved when I moved into the papakāinga. It was good knowing that I had a stable home to live in after being without a permanent home in the past.”

A whānau on one of the papakāinga made comment about the importance of being able to heal from trauma that they felt had been caused by colonisation. They feel fortunate to be where they are now:

“The significance of the conversations, over the many years to do with our different whanaunga – have been about a dream to be able to live together again. So, a big part of it has enabled a bit of a healing from the displacement and abuse caused by colonisation. Some of it could help more than just those of us that live at the papakāinga, but those of us there are very lucky, very blessed.”

Whānau on two of the six papakāinga, despite securing a whare, still felt an element of uncertainty and anxiety about the relationship dynamics with their whānau as neighbours:

“I am just slightly frustrated about some of the dynamics with my neighbours within the papakāinga. There's positives and negatives, but it's how you deal with the negative space. You know, you've got to find your way of so it's not impacting on you. A koro who lives here, gets really pissed off with whānau coming and going all the time. And I said to him, just lock the door, you know, if you don't want disruptions, especially if you're at home by yourself. And if you don't want people walking in and out.”

There were also questions for one whānau about tenure and whether or not they could stay on the papakāinga long-term. This had been unclear for them and has had an impact on their wellbeing:

“I still feel a little bit of stress regarding that. I still feel a bit stressed, like I could get kicked out or something like that. But I want some more reassurance in life. I am 51. You know what I mean? And housing is like a big part of that.”

Overall, from a health and wellbeing perspective, many of the whānau say they are much happier, healthier and at peace with their situation on papakāinga now compared to before they lived there. They feel that the papakāinga has been a place to heal and reinvigorate their wellbeing. However, some of the whānau on two of the papakāinga expressed concerns about housing security and the uncertainty of being able to continue to live there and this had caused them personal stress and anxiety for the last two years.



Photo: Quinn Phelan

Cultural knowledge, language and participation

Whānau on four of the six papakāinga say they have a stronger sense of their identity since living on papakāinga. They have learned or want to learn a great deal more about their whānau whakapapa and hītori (history), te reo me ona tikanga Māori (language and cultural ways of being and doing). They were comfortable in te ao Māori:

“We're Māori and we, we definitely know where we come from and who we are. And we definitely continue to retain taonga tuku iho. So, I don't know if there's a dimension, but it is the way we are. I do feel more connected to my Māoriness having lived on a papakāinga. I absolutely do.”

Being able to return to whānau whenua has meant a greater reconnection to the traditional ways and values that their ancestors used to live:

“It's just the Māori thing, you know? That's just how Māori people are. I think we're not the only whānau like this. A lot of Māori whānau are like that. But I think this new day and age, it's giving whānau an opportunity to come together. Because a lot of Māori have been disconnected from their whenua and from their whānau. And so, these papakāinga are giving our whānau an opportunity to return home and live together on their papakāinga. How it used to be.”

The revitalisation of te reo Māori and the increased exposure to Māori performing arts such as kapa haka were essential motivation for whānau to reconnect to their cultural practices:

“One of the biggest things is the exposure to reo Māori and kapa haka, because our whānau is a kapa haka whānau. We see it every day now, every gathering. It's all that, the whole ritual, karakia, they have waiata and, we're more confident having a go at te reo Māori than we were before – especially me.”

For others, it was an opportunity to re-indigenise themselves and their family members in this realm and learn more about what it means to be Māori:

“We've now got a lot of the young ones that want to learn their whakapapa as well and go back to that. So, we're starting up whakapapa wānanga through the local wānanga connection. We're going to get that going as well. And it's really good because I've got nephews in Black Power and all that sort of thing, but they don't see that side. So, they don't know their pepeha and such. We need to

teach them that. We need to teach all our whānau who want to learn those things.”

Of the six papakāinga, four state that whānau are valued and contribute to Te Ao Māori on the papakāinga in whatever ways they can. The Māori values of aroha (love and compassion), whakaute (respect), manaakitanga (hospitality), awhinatanga (caring for others) and tautoko (support) are lived daily. Many of the kaumātua see it as their responsibility to ensure that these values are upheld:

“We have had te reo classes and I’ve never learned so much te reo Māori since I have been here in all my life. I never spoke it growing up, my parents didn’t speak it when they were at school. And so, it is a big thing and a blessing for me. I can stand up and say a few words on the paepae. Yeah, so since I’ve been here, to be able to speak te reo Māori on the paepae has been great. On the weekends, when it is just the whānau here on our own - I can do the whaikōrero for pōwhiri or mihi whakatau.”

One of the whaea from a whānau was particularly proud of her husband as she had seen his personal cultural confidence grow since they had moved on to the papakāinga. The opportunity to learn new things in a culturally safe environment was seen as essential to whānau health and wellbeing:

“He’s done well. When we first moved here, he had absolutely nothing in te reo Māori. Now, he can start a hui with karakia, get up and do mihi for manuhiri and he really enjoys it, he really does, and he feels safe here.”

A lead trustee had high expectations for the whānau living on the papakāinga. It was expected that there would be a reciprocal cultural relationship, with the awareness that it takes time for whānau to build their confidence to share what they know:

“There is an expectation that you contribute in some way. As a kaikaranga, kaikōrero, kaitautoko, mātauranga pou. Just have a chat with our kaimahi at lunchtime. There is hundreds of years of experience here and history. That’s an awesome contribution with whānau who come off the street too. So, it isn’t difficult, but they contribute in-kind as kaumātua.”

One whānau member spoke about their experience of negative perceptions of their papakāinga in their community. This can have a negative impact on the whānau that live there. Currently, there are no te ao Māori activities that promote or encourage cultural interaction on this papakāinga. She said that because Māori

reside on papakāinga, many non-Māori think they must be 'slum-like, or gangs helped to fund them':

"A misconception about papakāinga is that there's something shady going on because it's Māori-owned. You know I see racism. And because we have carved Pou out the front, it's a visibly Māori property. And sometimes I feel like people sort of think there might be something fishy going on with us."

Another whānau member shared their aspirations to learn more about their whenua, cultural practices and being Māori, but said that expertise is becoming limited as many kaumātua grow older and pass away. Making sure that they have the ways and means to gather accurate details from their elders is a challenge for them.

"We want to learn more about the papakāinga. Especially for the kids. We want to teach them about our whānau history and the whenua. What it means to us. What we do here. Many of our tūpuna have passed on and our kaumātua are not getting any younger. It's always going to be an ongoing learning thing. The stories and the names they tell us."

Whānau on papakāinga have become motivated to participate in te ao Māori by making and taking opportunities to learn more about their language, customs and traditions or sharing what expertise they already have is a form of giving back to their people. As their kaumātua with the cultural knowledge age, whānau on one papakāinga call upon their capability to retain their cultural heritage and teach their tamariki more about their Māoritanga.

Housing affordability

All whānau on papakāinga commented on the possibility of home ownership, but quite a number of trustees stated they were not able to offer that to whānau yet. There were two whānau on one papakāinga who owned their whare mortgage-free, as they had the finances available to purchase these homes at the outset. However, this is not normally the case for most of the families on papakāinga.

"I feel really fortunate to live on the papakāinga through the whakapapa of my husband's whānau. We were so lucky to be able to buy our home and that the trust allowed us to do so."

Because the rents were more affordable on papakāinga, most whānau felt they were better off and could live better than they did in the past. Many reported that they have more disposable income than if they were living in a standard market rental:

“Affordable. It's affordable for me. And I'm guessing it's affordable for most people here too. It's \$240 per week for rent. That's good. I'm not behind on bills. I can afford to buy the bags to put my rubbish out. I can afford kai. I can afford to get to and from mahi daily. I am so much happier all round.”

“Absolutely affordable. So, in Auckland, we had a three-bedroom home that we were paying 600 for before we moved. Got a notification that that was going to go up another \$50. So, \$650 if we had stayed in Auckland here. We're saving, \$400 per week. So absolutely affordable for us.”

Financial stress and anxiety burdens had lessened greatly or were gone after whānau had moved onto a papakāinga:

“It's different now because I don't need to worry about money, I don't need to worry so much about him. We can afford luxuries like going fishing. We can choose between getting groceries or going out to the mall or do both if we want to.”

“We charge \$200 per week, which I think is a really, reasonable rent. We had the idea of us painting them ourselves to keep these costs down, because if we had a bigger mortgage, we would have had a bigger cost on our repayments. But everyone does their bit to keep the place tidy. My sister mows the lawn. The rent is really cheap because when we've enquired in town. It's like \$400 plus. It's expensive.”

A young wāhine feels extremely fortunate to have a modern and affordable whare to live in with her whānau:

“I see how lucky everyone is to live on a papakāinga. And because I know people that can't get houses in town, we're just so lucky to have something like papakāinga. And because I used to live in Hamilton, it was very expensive as well. \$600 per week for a flat.”

Another rangatahi pays minimal rent, so she makes an effort to contribute to her papakāinga and hapori in a variety of other ways:

“She's our go-to kōtiro [girl]..... If someone needs something or a cousin needs a ride or someone needs tautoko for an interview or locals need help, they just pick up the phone. She can take Nan to the doctor...but she also studies. So, you got a good idea of what the cost of living was like when you were at university and the cost of flatting.”

Many whānau were grateful for the improvements in their housing situation. Having an affordable, modern, warm, dry and secure home to live in boded well for their wellbeing and their future. As a result, their general economic circumstances improved. Rents were much lower than in larger towns and cities. Living was more affordable, and this in turn enabled better life choices and options. Previously difficult day-to-day decisions became easier to make.

Home ownership

A majority of the whānau on papakāinga were renting, but on five of the six papakāinga were considering offering home ownership for whānau. Much was dependent on the governance, current financial situation, and post-development care of each papakāinga. One papakāinga trust was aiming to address this as soon as they had paid off their development debt:

“These three homes are still under the trust, but we want to hopefully keep them affordable. We’ve only got a \$90,000 loan left for these three houses, which I think is cool. And we’d like to sell the whare to our whānau so that they own their own homes. That’s what we’re aiming for. We probably have to get rid of the \$90,000 debt first and then go from there. We’ll get there. We’ll try and work something out.”

Another papakāinga aspired to offer this as an opportunity in the future.

“Currently, the trust holds the mortgages. The trust owns the homes. So, the intention is to have rent to buy. So, the whānau will own the homes. Right now, we might at least hold a couple back, maybe the duplexes as a form of income. But the rest of the homes will hopefully be passed on to our whānau. And that’s the hope. We want to turn that hope into action.”

While home ownership had been a consideration for one papakāinga, they made a decision to keep the whare on the rentals for future kaumātua coming in.

“Only rental now, all rental at this stage. The idea or the kaupapa is that we want them to stay available for renting because we have whānau coming through to that age that they would need to have somewhere to go to. And it’s a bit of a revolving door where you shuffle off over here to the urupā and they come in the other end.”

On one papakāinga, some whānau said they had been promised an opportunity for home ownership after a period of time, as descendants of the original trustees. However, the conversation had never taken place:



Photo: Josie McClutchie

“As a part-owner due to whakapapa, the home ownership opportunity, that has not been clear. It would be really good if it was, because before I moved in, I was, being an artist and on the dole for some time on sickness benefits and stuff like that.”

This particular whānau was incredibly disappointed at being told they had ‘special status’ to be able to live there as descendants of the original families, but then their own children miss out on having a space there in the future. The lack of clarity and resolution from their trustees about their tenure had been frustrating:

“That home ownership conversation has never been clear. And it's been really disappointing for a lot of us. It's so good to be here. I'm here with my kids. I want this place for them. And so that is also a problem that that conversation is not clear that there is. We don't know if there's an opportunity to own it or not. And sometimes it does just feel like we could get kicked out by property management. We kind of have a special status beyond that. But it's not very clear what that is. So that's been a problem.”

Most papakāinga currently provide rental accommodation for their families. They want to be able to offer home ownership one day, but are not at that stage just yet. The barriers for the papakāinga varied. Four were still paying off mortgages or loans. One of the papakāinga had considered the idea, but providing flexible rental accommodation for future availability for other whānau was more important for them. Trustees on another papakāinga had yet to kōrero with whakapapa whānau despite numerous requests for engagement regarding home ownership matters.

Leadership and communication

Whānau on five out of the six of the papakāinga felt there was strong, collaborative leadership which supported and enabled them to embrace the vision for the papakāinga and see it through to completion of the developments.

One papakāinga had a particularly long and historical connection to its whenua Māori with strong, solid leadership from kaumātua and a special context to draw from. The kaumātua were compelled to ensure that their history of resilience in addressing colonisation on their whenua is passed down to all whānau across the generations as a testament to their resilience and persistence with the retention of their land:

“I want to make sure that you understand, I've made it my business all these years to remind my whānau that we were moved off this land by the gun – 1848. Eventually, we came back onto it, and we

were moved off again by resource consent in the 1960s, and we were able to overcome that. And we're back again. We're never going to leave this land. It doesn't matter what you put on us from now on. But getting back onto the land has been about developing relationships, being conversant with each other, looking after each other and finding ways to move forward. And that's what we're doing now."

The next generation of whānau on this papakāinga were appreciative of all the mahi that had been accomplished by their tūpuna and the current kaumātua still in residence on their whenua. They have been able to come in and tautoko in whatever way they can:

"Just hearing the stories of how we got taken off the land, it brings us more pride than anything to still have our bloodlines here. We will always remember what happened then. And it's so lovely to know that we are still around. We are still generations of those people. We still live on. And seeing our mokopuna here growing up now. But that knowledge that we have too, it's kind of special that way. At least I get to enjoy what my father and his father always wanted for this place, this area. So, the families could all come back together and live together in a harmonious village."

There was a similar kōrero from a different papakāinga that acknowledged the work of their whānau over many years:

"It's our kaumātua, parents and grandparents who have done all the hard yards. From clearing this whenua to the rezoning, to all the legal successions and landowner stuff and all the Māori Land Court stuff. And we came in right at the end. I came back in 2009 and just came at the right time to take on what I need to do for the next generation."

A prominent kaumātua expressed their gratitude to a trustee for their ability to be proactive and implement the vision of whānau for the papakāinga to be built. He felt that everyone on their marae has benefited from the work that has been achieved and that whānau contributions to the development have been important and valued:

*"As far as I am concerned, it is the brainchild of *****. While we have had the ideas, we never, ever had the ability to put them into action or bring them to fruition. Now we do. I want to give him credit for this because of his drive. We were just along for the ride. He knew what he was up to. Not only for the papakāinga concept, but the whole marae and all our whānau here. But we are the beneficiaries of all that and we all have a part to play."*

Many of the papakāinga development leads demonstrated resilience, persistence and resoluteness regarding the development process, and one whāea was inspired by the leadership of their trustee:

*“One of the other things I want to say is that we had a strong leader in ***** - like she just kept at it and at it and at it. She never gave up. We were always included.”*

Another papakāinga whānau could see the potential to help fulfil Māori housing visions. The whānau were empowered to take on an eventual development leadership role to support the whānau vision, decision-making processes and building of future papakāinga developments:

“I began as a whānau trustee here first and got into the development side as we went along. Now, I have got eight team member staff. My wife and myself. So, there's ten of us. My daughter works for us. My son works for us. He's a builder. He's come through the process. He's a builder-project manager, my daughter, does our accounts. Her partner works for us. He's my infrastructure project manager. So, you're able to create an environment where you can bring your whānau in on mahi papakāinga builds.”

Whānau on five out of the six of the papakāinga said that communication from trustees was consistent and there was support to allow them to make informed decisions about important kaupapa:

“We had two-weekly hui. Started with weekly hui to measure progress..... You know, the whānau, project manager, the builder, the subcommittee as well as trustees and board executives. So, communication was a big part of it. You know what's going on? What's up? How much are we spending?”

These whānau had confidence in the skillsets of their trustees to advance their collective interests during the development phase:

“Even though we have a trustee board here, we communicate with all our kaimahi and whānau, especially our kaumātua respectfully to ensure that their mana is always enhanced. It is important for everyone to know what is going on and what concerns them.”

The remaining papakāinga was challenged by disconnection issues from their governance body, however. There had been a tense relationship with tenancy managers since the papakāinga was built and tenancies are now managed by an external property management group:

“Unfortunately, there is definitely a divide between contact with the iwi and contact with the housing management. So, there is a problem with it. It hasn't been that easy to contact the iwi owners and kōrero with them about things and a lot of people feel like we're just another social housing project. Even though we whakapapa to here, we're not feeling like we're getting anything specifically special from that. That is quite apparent a lot of the time.”

The whānau from this papakāinga wanted guidance, advice, and tautoko from governance. They had attempted to make contact many times with no response forthcoming:

“I would love a boss-type person on this papakāinga that I can talk to - a kaumātua, a trustee. Everyone else greases up to the boss. I do wish that we had someone from the whānau who has leadership skills and was respected by everyone and could solve problems in a timely way. Currently, we don't have that. Despite being a 'part owner', I feel like there's a disconnect from the actual trustees.”

Leadership was a key element to the success of papakāinga in the study. Many of the papakāinga had strong, reliable and responsible leadership who were supportive, empowering and had excellent communication processes. Communication in various forms was important to whānau to achieve their aspirational goals. Tino rangatira and mana motuhake continue to be a part of those aspirations. Participation in important, collective decisions made whānau feel like they were contributing to a greater cause and that they were valued. Many whānau expressed gratitude to be living on whenua Māori and were appreciative of the efforts of their ancestors to retain the land. The challenge for one papakāinga has been to remain connected to trustees post-development.



Photo: Quinn Whelan

Kawa and tikanga

Whānau on four of the six papakāinga stated they value high-functioning, positive relationships with the other whānau residents. It was not exactly rosy 100% of the time, but generally everyone was aware of what guided whānau on each papakāinga and they adhered to the kaupapa laid down to ensure that there was respect for one another and a sense of peace and safety for all.

“It's good that it's all done now and it's good for our whānau that are in these homes. It's made a huge difference to our whānau in all ways possible. Being on the papakāinga has brought peace of mind and a sense of safety to all the whānau that live here.”

Four of the papakāinga demonstrated cohesiveness, resilience, and nurtured their whānau particularly well. Whanaungatanga, mahitahi, and kotahitanga were key values mentioned in their hapori often. All of the whānau had clear expectations and guidelines to follow about the bigger picture and the day-to-day living aspects:

“It's not easy, but I think what we work with is tikanga Māori. There's a lot of things that go in there, you're talking about respect, you're talking about communications, you're talking about all those sorts of things, remembering that you are living in an environment where other people are living as well.”

The acknowledgement of respect, kindness and compassion for one another was also important:

“The tikanga and kawa that I know here is to be kind to one another, look after each other and respect each other's space – that's aroha. So, the tikanga is a part of this place. We just totally understand what needs to happen and how it happens.”

One whānau mentioned how being nurtured and cared for on a daily basis was essential for their hauora and wairua:

“The manaaki and awahi is very strong here. There are a whole lot of things that happen here that we just take for granted because of the good quality of the homes and the good spirit on the marae, the wairua and the cooperative nature of all the people that live here.”

The communication of rules and guidelines was an important factor in papakāinga functioning effectively. All of the papakāinga had kawa and tikanga in some form that they adhered to. There were variations between papakāinga in how consistently these were monitored. On some papakāinga the kawa was discussed and decided verbally:

“When tough things come up we tend to have hui. We have to have a way we get together and sort things because we all live here. On the other hand, if someone needs to do something cool or fun, we're going to have a barbecue or something. We all get together. It's not really a set of rules. We all know each other.”

“We decided that for each of these whare, this is our tikanga: no drinking down here, no drugs and no patches. This community is big on gangs. It's quite prominent in this community. And drinking is another thing that's not good, but we thought that we would have our rules. No drinking, no parties. We did make that part of our rules and regulations of our papakāinga.”

Another papakāinga was more formal in their approach and documented their kaupapa for circulation to whānau. Ensuring information is updated regularly is important as papakāinga become older:

“Each whānau were given a pukapuka (booklet). And it was just when we first developed. And it's something we need to update because the whare have been built in stages. So therefore, we've gone from having four whānau to thirteen. We need to address that again in the near future.”

Positive interactions between one another were important to ensure that everyone felt valued. One matua commented on how consistently well he and his whānau were treated by the people on the papakāinga:

“I can speak as part of the wider community for the contribution that these people make. I have engaged in various different relationships with every single one of these kaumātua. They help me and my son. I come and see matua for prayer. I lost my grandparents when I was really young, so they have been contributing to my life in so many ways. They contribute to those here, but to me and those outside as well.”

One of the papakāinga has struggled with the lack of clarity regarding some of the kawa and tikanga. This was supposed to be communicated to whakapapa whānau at the time they moved in, but no communication from the governance group had occurred:

“The original kaupapa Māori on which the papakāinga was premised is still in progress and it can only be fulfilled by the people that are there. So, it's as though it's still a work in progress. That needs to be done for sure. I think I've given us a pretty good example of where

that hasn't happened. You know, specifically with my mother's family.”

Another papakāinga had some issues regarding the lack of direction on how to go about conflict resolution:

“We each individually live our own lives in our houses, and we don't want to take that away from each other - how we live. For me, there is meant to be an understanding that you just help and look after everybody. And if you have some bigger issues, we should all be able to get together and have a hui to try and resolve it. If you can fix it yourself. It's not a big issue, but if it involves a majority of us or changing something or the way we live - then it becomes a bigger issue. We don't do that nearly enough around here at the moment.”

Relationships between papakāinga whānau were valued and the aims were to ensure they remained positive and high functioning. Whānau on papakāinga are making efforts to be more connected to each other and function responsibly in their communities. Kindness, respect and aroha are key values they would like to maintain. There was an awareness that there would be the occasional difficulty, but that whānau had the capacity to sit down together and kōrero to address any issues in respectful and peaceful ways. The challenge for whānau on two of the papakāinga is centred mainly around their inability to resolve issues within the papakāinga as communication with trustees is difficult.

Communal spaces

Communal spaces on papakāinga played a key role in the development and maintenance of whanaungatanga. Four of the six papakāinga had a similar formation and layout. The houses were situated to allow for whānau to watch over their families and have a central area where everyone could congregate for cultural events (such as pōwhiri and mihi whakatau, whānau learning opportunities, and social get-togethers like hākari and hāngī). These events were crucial in promoting kotahitanga and mahitahi.

“The kaupapa for the layout here. Tamariki and mokopuna in the middle, then you come out to the whare where the wāhine are, they are looking inwards at the kids in the tāne are looking outwards in terms of going out to work. There was a whakaaro Māori model. Then one of our trustees, who was in hauora at the time, had sort of picked up on that.”

“We have Middle Earth, which is our ‘Marae Atea’ in the centre of the papakāinga. We have a garden – māra kai. You just have a go at it and

everybody brings whatever, you know, everybody brings like plants or whatever. And then you just go and plant them. The kids go there more often than we do.”

“In the middle we've got a whole communal space. We have got a whole middle area that is paved and got a canopy shade and a barbecue area and stage two has yet to be defined. We can use the BBQ area at least once or twice a year. We can sit out in the middle and make use of that space.”

“That building over there is going to be our whare hui. We hope to use it as a wānanga space. A communal space for all of us.”

Whānau on four of the papakāinga felt that communal spaces helped to maintain aspects of whanaungatanga when they were used regularly. However, whānau on one of the papakāinga commented that while they aspired to use these spaces as best they could, it did not always work well for social gatherings:

“The way it's designed, there are the two main buildings on either side of a common area. And a lot of thought supposedly went into what could happen in that common area. There were meant to be shared spaces. But that part has been hard to achieve and continue with that sort of joint activity in that space.”

Another whānau on a different papakāinga spoke of having a communal space, but expressed their disappointment at how under-utilised it was:

“There are the barbecues out there for all of us to use, but for whatever reason, not all the whānau use the barbecues much anymore, which is a shame, but they have been used in the past.”

The use of communal spaces by residents in each papakāinga depended on what was organised and who was organising it. Good forms of communication also had a part to play in bringing whānau together for special occasions. The lack of communication could often be a challenge.

Proximity to local amenities

Whānau on three of the six papakāinga said they had good access to amenities and services in reasonable proximity to where they were situated. They seemed fairly satisfied with the services on offer:

“We have the papakāinga, we have the marae and there is a special community garden, our club rooms and kohanga reo across the road. The supermarkets, doctors, hospitals, and petrol stations are

only five minutes down the road. It is not too far to go. We are quite lucky to be close to most things.”

Another papakāinga felt that their access to health services and places to purchase daily kai were adequate:

“We have quite a good wraparound service over here. We've got a hospital 30 minutes away that way. We have another hospital about 30 minutes the other way. We've got other wraparound services in the town itself. We're about five minutes away from the centre of town, where we have all the other facilities. There's two supermarkets, a New World and a Woolworths, five minutes away.”

The whānau on a rural papakāinga were aware of the operating hours of essential services locally, so it was important to ensure they were organised with their requirements and had the transport to their nearest town when they needed to:

“The banks, the post office, all those things. Although they are operating at scheduled hours. They're all in the five-minute range.”

A whānau on one papakāinga was most concerned about the lack of access to proper dental care:

“Dental would be the focus that has been missing around here..... There's a lot of our older generation with hospitals. They would prefer them to be a bit closer to here because they probably require more hospital visits than us. But I think there's not enough done here for dental care.”

On another papakāinga, transport options to get to services were limited for those who do not drive or have a car:

“There's no public transport. If someone needs to catch a ride, we don't have taxi services. I don't even know if we have our own taxi service. But if you need to catch a ride, service, or bus to Auckland say - then you've got to get to town somehow. You've got to do that.”

By contrast, another papakāinga had relatively easy access to amenities. However, they have experienced difficulties with parking. Where the papakāinga is located only allows for one carpark per whānau. Residents from a set of apartments across the road often took their parking spots. As an example, if they went to the supermarket, they would often return to find their carpark taken and therefore had to park quite a distance from where they lived.



Photo: Josie McClutchie

“I have accumulated thousands of dollars in parking fines because of the carpark issue. I end up parking on yellow lines just to be closer to my whare. The inconvenience has been a hōhā, but I don’t care anymore.”

Half of the papakāinga felt they have good access to the essential amenities for their day-to-day requirements. The other half experienced some difficulties related to access to dental care, public transport and problems with parking.

Behavioural challenges

In communal living environments there will often be challenges with how people interact with one another. On four of the papakāinga, whānau described experiences with inappropriate behaviour or criminal activity. They were aware of many of the challenges and issues that their whānau encounter:

“Trouble? We have trouble. We do have things like a marching police line that comes down to get one of ours. I know the trustees don't call an immediate hui, but at the next trustee meeting, we will say things like, hey, what was happening at this party? Does anyone know what's happening here? And usually, one of the family representatives will say, yes, all of that has been sorted. This is what happened. But this person is now being moved on from the whānau and I have dealt with that now. I have some support around those examples of whānau and they are now learning how to manage their own whānau.”

The whānau on this papakāinga wanted to be able to determine for themselves how to handle what happens within their whānau on their whenua. They had developed strategies to deal with these situations. One of them was a collective behaviour agreement amongst all whānau residents that established very clear boundaries early on:

“We've had our challenges. Definitely had our challenges. But we have had whānau kōrero. People don't come down here. A lot of people don't come to us. I have had one of my nephews who had his patch on and the whole family got together, and we just told him, ‘Get your patch off’ - all of us as his aunties. And he ranted and raved and clowned around but he eventually took his patch off. We've had another one come down on the car with his patch on and I told him, ‘get his patch off - we don't want no patches down here’. He took it off. He was all good. I think you've got to set those boundaries before

you start. Otherwise, it's hard. Even with the drinking, we've had that problem. But I think we've worked it through, and, we've said, 'nah, we're not going to put up with it'. We're not going to have it down here because we don't want them to be party houses. So, we didn't put all that mahi in for nothing. Our whānau want to live here without the big parties and the raruraru and everything else."

One trustee was philosophical about the challenges papakāinga faced. They felt that as Māori they could handle anything that was thrown their way:

"It happens in all papakāinga. We're not doing anything special, right? It happens. We're special in our own way. But you know the same kind of issues and challenges happen everywhere. Yeah, we just have to deal with it."

There have been incidences of challenging behaviour from some whānau members on papakāinga. Most whānau have developed successful strategies to deal with difficult behaviour. One solution from whānau has been establishing the rules early on. Another was for an external agency to provide whānau with conflict resolution training. It would be valuable to connect papakāinga who have similar issues to enable them to work out ways to solve these problems with each other.

The environment and future aspirations

All six papakāinga had clear ideas for caring for the whenua and moving into the future. One would like to develop a restoration project to restore their local roto (lake) to its former glory and to acknowledge the former taiao work and teachings of their ancestors:

"So, one of our other exciting projects is actually to do with the restoration of the lake, which is a site of significance for us because that's why we had so many hapū in this area, because it was a major resource for kai. And so, you know, that's a different sort of vision, but it's all connecting us back to the same values and principles that our tūpuna taught us."

Another papakāinga had worked hard with all their whānau to plant a lot of shrubs and trees around all of their whare to improve the natural environment. It had been quite an inspirational process for them as many of the whānau had never been 'green thumbs' before moving onto the papakāinga:

"We try to keep it nice. We have done landscaping, we have got some new trees. We're trying to build on what we've already got and put in some fruit trees. We did have a big māra kai over there. When

we had the māra kai, that was cool. We would like to put another māra kai in.”

One papakāinga aspired to maintain their māra kai and reestablish a deeper sense of community with all the whānau:

“We've planted some gardens, some māra kai. The kids have been helping us. They are maintaining them at the moment. Which is really special.”

Another papakāinga was fortunate to have natural springs below ground. They were keen to explore what they could do to develop a future sustainable water supply.

“We were thinking about our own water. One good thing about this property is that it's got plenty of water. We have got heaps of springs underground. It would be great to get our own water supply up and running, on top of the rainwater system.”

A marae-based papakāinga had ambitious visions for their future as a potential emergency hub. This made sense to them due to their location, capability and their status in the community:

“It would be good for the marae to have more solar power panels. The facilities are here in case of emergencies. They can cater for those, right throughout Aotearoa. This place is one of the places. I think the power for marae should be government-funded somehow, because we have the facilities that they don't have to build.”

Long-term, this papakāinga expressed a perspective that was reiterated by the other papakāinga. They wanted to ensure that the future looked brighter for their tamariki, rangatahi, and mokopuna in the years to come:

“As for what I would like to see, the learning and the knowledge about this whenua carries on for generations.... To be able to teach our kids how to take care of it and become more sustainable with our living. I'd like to be a lot more freehold and affordable in the future for my kids. I don't want my kids or grandkids to be paying what we're currently paying because this is our land. We paid our dues. We should be able to walk away with a freehold at the end of the day. Rates that have been attached for our whānau land, you know, might be a different idea about it happening in the future. And just teach the young minds to grow with respect, honesty and be appreciative of what you got and be grateful for what you get. Build an easier, brighter future for the young ones after me, I guess.”

Conclusion

The opportunity to interview whānau about the benefits of living on papakāinga provided many insights. Families spoke of the positive impact that living on papakāinga had made on their health and wellbeing and there seemed to be less stress and worry, particularly with financial matters. There were aspirations for whānau to build their capability through education so they could contribute more towards the papakāinga and achieving mana motuhake in the future.

The way in which kawa and tikanga were determined and enacted on papakāinga was crucial to the healthy development and maintenance of whanaungatanga and their relationships with one another. Being able to live on papakāinga had motivated some whānau to increase their participation in cultural activities and to learn what it means to live in te ao Māori. It was very clear that collaboration and collective effort by and with whānau contributed greatly to the success of papakāinga. Being able to maintain their kotahitanga post-development will be an ongoing challenge. While there were some contrary opinions as described above, and areas for improvement (such as capability training), most whānau spoke very positively about living on papakāinga.



Photo: Quinn Whelan

6. Ngā Kite / Findings - Development Leads Perspectives

Introduction

The development of papakāinga involves a complex set of processes that require a good deal of experience and expertise to be completed successfully. The findings are set out here under the headings of the six-step approach outlined in the TPK's 2017 publication *A Guide to Papakāinga Housing*. They are:

- **Whānau planning:** developing a shared vision with whānau.
- **Workshops/research:** Gathering relevant information about the whenua and its governance.
- **Project feasibility:** Developing costed options for the detailed technical design.
- **Due diligence:** Finalising the papakāinga development plan and finances.
- **Building/project management:** Securing consents, managing the build and project management finances.
- **Housing operations:** Ongoing tenancy management and maintenance of homes.

Whānau planning

The development leads were convinced that the foundational stage of papakāinga development - whānau planning - sets the tone and direction for the project. It involves developing a shared vision among the key players (whānau members, local authorities, construction specialists, tradespeople, etc.), which can be a complex process requiring extensive coordination and communication:

“Our vision has been on the ten-year plan right from the start. The new whare coming are not a raru, because it's still all part of the same kaupapa. They all knew there were three stages. And at the same time, at the end of the day, there were going to be fifteen houses in total. And it's all part of the same papakāinga.”

They noted that gathering and aligning multiple family members and key players can be particularly challenging because of the diversity of opinions, expectations, and priorities inherent within large family groups. They said the emphasis must be

on the iterative and ongoing process of building consensus among key players. One lead said:

“The process has not really changed. Capture your vision with whānau, get it on paper and then you have something to talk to. Talk to the whānau.”

Whānau members often have different views about issues like the use of the land, modernity versus tradition, or varying levels of commitment to the project. These issues need to be worked through so that whānau feel heard, engagement is maintained, and key decisions are reached together.

Development leads said that it was important to ensure that the development of papakāinga aligns with Māori values and practices, not only for regulatory or aesthetic reasons, but because of the need for a profound commitment to cultural preservation. This involves more than just adhering to traditional architectural styles or using native materials; it encompasses a deeper understanding and integration of Māori perspectives on land, community, and sustainability. The development should resonate with and reflect the community's cultural heritage:

“Maintaining cultural integrity and ensuring that developments are in line with Māori values and practices is essential.”

“It's other things like, how we speak te reo Māori. A lot of us here speak te reo – we're far more connected to our whenua because we also have a connection to our language.”

Leads also stressed that a participatory approach is required to ensure the project genuinely reflects the community's needs and fosters a sense of ownership and commitment among all involved. Leadership plays a key role in this process, often with a whānau lead and project manager acting as key conduits between the development team and the wider whānau:

“Leadership? Absolutely. Both on the development and the whānau side. There should always be a whānau lead. You know, that's the conduit to all the whānau, because you don't want to be having to go through all the whānau. And you need a decent project manager who's just got a good account of what needs to happen.”

Effective communication, facilitated through regular meetings, workshops, and informal gatherings, is required for receiving good feedback, adjusting plans, and addressing challenges. It can involve managing differing communication preferences for example, and engaging family members who may not be physically present. Development leads must not only consult with the whānau but actively involve them in the decision-making process. This leadership structure not only streamlines communication, but also helps navigate conflicts and maintain

alignment, ensuring the project's success and the community's long-term commitment.

Planning the building and project management activities requires a flexible approach to organisation. Logistics, such as where and when to hold meetings, how to document decisions, and ways to keep everyone informed, are non-trivial and can impact the pace and success of the planning stage. The logistical efforts also extend to legal and administrative tasks, such as documenting land ownership, understanding zoning laws, and navigating the permissions needed to begin physical development.

One interviewee noted that the planning stage makes particular demands on project leaders. It requires a certain type of resilience because they have to be prepared to handle setbacks, mediate disputes, and revise plans in response to community feedback or changing circumstances. The ability to maintain momentum while ensuring inclusivity and transparency is pivotal and can be emotionally and intellectually demanding.

“The way I look at it, we got the right project manager, he was chosen because of his expertise in that space, because of being an ex-town planner. And he was contracted to support us and to project manage us through those relationships with councils, funders, philanthropists, landscapers, with different parts of the council. But the key part of this whole strategy was, rather than us, dealing with 10,000 people within council, we had one key contact, and he ran around for us to set up this and that. We worked smarter in terms of our liaison with the different councils.”

Funding is a further consideration, particularly because developing housing projects are expensive. Uncertainty about financial risks was expressed by the development leads indicating a need for supportive, strategic financial planning in papakāinga developments. The following quote reflects concerns about potential reductions in Māori housing funding, based on rhetoric in the lead up to the 2023 general election.

“Well Māori housing funding is going to be reduced so we won't have that. And do we know that for sure? Well, no it's an assumption based on the rhetoric that was coming out pre-election.”

The whānau planning stage of papakāinga development sets the project's physical and financial parameters, and critically ensures that the development is culturally resonant, community-focused, and inclusive. This stage prepares the groundwork for a successful development that serves the needs and aspirations of its community, embodying the principles of whānau, the retention of cultural heritage, and tino rangatiratanga.

Workshops/research

The development leads agreed that during the early stages of papakāinga development, initiating workshops and research to assess community needs and the potential for a development, are central for setting the foundation of the project. During these initial stages, identifying and securing funding sources became a critical task, as it supports the subsequent phases of the development.

*“And then ***** was working here at ***** and I was a trustee in 2013. And he approached me to say, ‘Hey bro, there’s this bucket of money in Wellington. We reckon, you know, it’s for Māori housing. We reckon the old undivided trust board would be a good candidate. And as a first cab off the rank... Let me fund me for six months and let me have a go at this. And our project manager and you know self-fund from there through the process. And they did, and I did.”*

Most of the development leads had the appropriate level of skill and understanding for this phase of papakāinga development. Undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the land's characteristics, expertise in governance, and robust engagement with various key players were crucial elements in ensuring a successful project outcome. It was noted that the process could be riddled with complexities due to the unique nature of Māori land ownership and community dynamics. Where they could not manage some aspects of the project, they sought out those with the necessary credentials for the build.

Leads spoke of the importance of determining the governance structure of Māori land, especially if it is under multiple ownership or managed by a trust with diverse key players. This phase often involved navigating the intricacies of communal ownership, which requires clear and effective governance. One lead spoke of it in this way:

*“So, that means that we established our trustees when we set up the *****_***** Trust. Two from each family, there are three families, we have six trustees. We have seven, actually two from each family. And then one for our family (my brother’s another one and my sister). We are there on behalf of our whānau trust. So, we have these whānau trusts that become the shareholders and all of those beneficiaries in that whānau trust come under that one shareholding. And there’s three of them.”*

The development leads had learned important lessons in forming governance structures that were manageable, inclusive and representative of their whānau members. They stated that if the governance structure was not manageable or straightforward, delays in confirming ownership details could stall planning and approvals, and disputes about land use rights may arise. One lead noted:

“So, the whenua is Māori-owned by the trust, the trust looks after the land. The trust was used to set the papakāinga up. We’ve only got four trustees on our trust, which is good. It just makes things easier, too.”

It was evident that whānau who had simplified their governance structures, for example, by choosing fewer but effective trustees, could streamline decision-making and facilitate smoother project management. The reduced bureaucracy made it easier to reach agreements.

The development leads interviewed knew about practically all aspects of their whenua and if there was anything they did not know, they made sure they carried out their own research to find out. Detailed assessments of the land's development suitability (covering topography, utility access, and environmental constraints) are crucial but can be expensive and technically demanding. The challenge involves also ensuring that development respects both the environmental and cultural significance of the land.

“...building consents just seem to be getting harder and harder to obtain, like building, the ground is getting like old. It seems like all the good ground's gone, you know, and Māori Land is rural, so there's obviously been a lot of crop farming and it's like, you know, sometimes the topsoil, the black gold is 400 mm deep, and then you've got to go down quite far. Generally close to rivers and low. So, stormwater, the resource consent and the wastewater discharge because here we're on a big aquifer, you know, and it's different levels.”

Inadequate research can result in unexpected construction issues later, due to poor soil conditions or lack of essential services for example, leading to increased costs and delays. Development leads can also use infrastructure setbacks to mitigate some other issues as noted in the following comment:

“And you've got your setbacks so you can use your setbacks for those types of infrastructure. So, instead of it being a wasted land because you can't build on it, well, then you put your swale there or you put your road over there in that part, so you can then build your houses.”

All of the development leads understood the fundamental and foundational role of strong, sustained relationships and effective communication in successfully launching and completing a papakāinga development. The initiating action and initial push, the support, the quality of experience, and the long-standing relationship with TPK, all contributed to a deep understanding and effective collaboration on various initiatives, not just the specific housing project mentioned.



Photo: Quinn Whelan

“We have an open, professional relationship with TPK. We've had contracts with TPK for ages, So, this wasn't just this housing project. It's all about relationships. But we're into making sure that this is all the communication, open, honest, open-book kind of stuff.”

These elements combined illustrate a philosophy where enduring partnerships and transparent communication are not just beneficial, but essential for project success. Development leads knew how imperative it was to maintain whanaungatanga with the key players.

*“It was funded through government funding. We had a particularly good relationship. We had an incredibly good relationship with TPK over here in *****. But even down to Wellington, you know, they knew me quite well down there. And then they all came up here, you know, they've all been here.”*

Ensuring governance over the land and securing resource consent are pivotal, as noted by a participant:

“My tips for whānau on this journey would be having governance over your whenua and having resource consent because that's the only way you're going to get to talk to people like TPK or MHUD.”

Project feasibility

The feasibility phase focuses on assessing technical design, exploring options, and evaluating associated costs. It determines the project's viability and plans for sustainable development, balancing technical requirements, financial constraints, and cultural values. All of the development leads said they faced financial and infrastructural challenges during the feasibility assessment of papakāinga projects. One lead described negotiating with the local authority to try to reduce costs:

“We've got a pump station where we flush the toilet it goes to and it pumps off into the council system about a kilometre away. But we got our own bore, you know. So, user pays but the development contributions. We're charged per house. It costs us \$80,000 to pay development contributions, you know so we petitioned. Well, we asked the council you know ‘Hey this is a social affordability issue. We're not developers. We're not building to sell at a profit. And all this, can we have some at least have some reduction?’ No.”

Leads described the challenges of working alongside whānau and experts to craft a detailed technical design that accommodated community needs and complied with

regulatory standards. They considered it gratifying, though, particularly when integrating traditional practices with modern building codes. A leader shared:

“From my perspective of many other whare that I've seen that this is a stand-out Māori design and development for them. Normally it's just the one little whare, a whare box, but these are well designed to look like a wharenuī with pou out the front of each one, future-proofed for many years, they are flash and warm.”

Development leads noted that while there were logistical difficulties encountered when dealing with remote whenua, in some regions these sites could still be considered for a papakāinga using prefabricated housing trucked in as sections or modules:

“Regarding the offsite construction of whare, I would say it is all about location. So, we have sites all over the region, where it's probably better financially to build offsite rather than get your suppliers there and tradies out there every day. But, if you're not too far from a main district, a main city, then I would argue the fact that it is more affordable to build on site.”

The quote below highlights how successful design decisions that consider how Māori live, with input from both management and governance, can lead to 'outstanding' outcomes. While the original plans may have required adjustments, the changes were made thoughtfully to better align with cultural needs. It emphasizes the importance of collaboration and cultural sensitivity in refining the design, and ensuring whare meet the functional and cultural expectations of a papakāinga:

“We had made good decisions about design and layout, considering how Māori people live and some of the stuff that originally came out of the plans, and how we changed it up. And the whare are outstanding today because we'd taken that time and the input from not only the management but it's also governance. There are other inputs in terms of that design layout.”

This approach helped avoid potential issues by adapting the designs to suit the community's way of living. Because the papakāinga were built on ancestral land there was an intergenerational approach, spanning at least three to four generations. Another papakāinga also described a strong historical connection:

“It is about mahi that her and the uncle and aunties have done for 40 years. I didn't always appreciate it until now because I was too busy fluttering around overseas. And so, I think that the preparation of

everything is appreciated, and the main goal was to bring us our whānau home and they did it all.”

Another development lead said:

“The kaupapa we set down was to build houses, affordable homes for our whānau, who we have living here now. My whānau, my aunties and my uncles. So, there’s three - two sisters and a brother. So that’s why we have the land. The whenua here belonged to my grandfather.”

Accurately predicting construction costs - including materials, labour, and unforeseen expenses - is inherently difficult as there are often cost overruns. Thankfully, most of the development leads stated that they kept a close eye on the budget. They trimmed funds where necessary or had contingency plans in case of increased costs:

“We initially budgeted for four truckloads of earth moving but ended up with seventeen truckloads. Luckily, we had also built some extra fat into it and that got us through.”

Most of the papakāinga leads had aimed to keep everything as affordable as possible for their whānau. Financial miscalculations could require additional fundraising or scaling back the project and potentially compromising its goals. This did not seem to be too much of an issue with those interviewed in this study.

The statement below emphasises the constraints and challenges faced by development leads when deciding how to effectively utilise land for papakāinga, considering the need to maximise space while adhering to local regulations and community needs. It highlights the complex decision-making involved in balancing land use efficiency with cultural, environmental, and regulatory considerations.

“So, we had a cool part there basically one-acre sections, you know, and to try and put housing because you want to maximise it try and put housing on. Yeah. You know you’re sort of limited.”

There was extensive consultation and engagement with all whānau and other key players to ensure that proposals were both practical and culturally appropriate. All development leads stressed the importance of regular and structured engagement sessions with project managers and iwi representatives to discuss project scale, funding, and operational details. This demonstrates the importance of ongoing dialogue to manage and ensure the alignment of project objectives with community needs and regulatory frameworks. Structured engagement helps manage complexities relating to scale, pace, and place, ensuring that both regulatory frameworks and iwi aspirations are met:

“The vision coming through from our original kaumātua was that it was always going to be a place for healing, a place for people to belong. Also the opportunity for our iwi to grow - that's what the kaupapa was. And it was shared... There was always the understanding, not just from the trustees who were establishing the build, but through to all the representatives, and the public sector for the foundation of the building and the kaumātua during the process and at the opening... This was for the people. There was a shared understanding that it was not a right for us to be here, but a privilege. It was a shared understanding that we value and respect what this place means, and that whānau could heal and grow in it.”

While funding support from TPK for papakāinga is helpful, development leads say there is still a large financial burden when whānau must fund the feasibility work. Development leads stated that while the whānau will do what is necessary to find these funds, this also means that there has to be scrimping and saving in other areas to make it happen. This can be a stressful process for many family members:

“Feasibility, if you can get funding for feasibility it takes about \$90,000 to do a proper feasibility study. That is about 9 to 12 months. They [funders] have only been approving 1-2 feasibility studies. We're getting a lot of whānau self-funding their own feasibility. Therefore, everyone reduces their rates to make it less costly to the whānau. We have had 7-8 whānau be successful and self-fund their own feasibility. They will spend \$50,000 to 60,000 to get a \$5,000,000 grant. So, trying to keep the cost down, you're not getting wastewater discharge or stormwater discharge consent. You have to get resource consent, but you're not getting those other ones. There has to be a better way.”

There are often significant up-front costs.

“We're paying consent application fees because our land is rural. How to get a resource consent. That's \$2,000 stormwater discharge consent and a wastewater discharge consent \$2,300 each. And then building consents are probably coming in around about \$8,000 to 9,000 a house at the moment.”

There are various regulatory and compliance costs that significantly impact the overall budget of papakāinga developments, especially those situated on rural land as indicated above. These fees are important for maintaining ecological standards and ensuring that the development does not adversely affect the local environment with its waste and runoff.

Another development lead said:

"For a ten-house development you're looking at over \$100,000 just in debt. And then you pay the development contributions, which is around about \$10,000 [per home], which is another \$100,000 to \$200,000 just in fees."

This initial debt likely covers preliminary expenses such as planning, design, and possibly land costs, reflecting the significant financial investment required even before actual construction begins.

Development contributions are charged by local authorities to cover the infrastructure needs created by new developments. This considerable sum represents a critical financial challenge, significantly increasing the overall cost of the development.

"Just in terms of moving through the financial system. You might have to stage it out as there's big funding later. If there are ten houses, you might get funded for five in the first instance. So, you build those. You can't get in a big team for that. You might bring in two teams, and that might take 7-9 months and then you go back and get more funding support for the next part."

These figures illustrate the heavy financial commitments involved in papakāinga development, underscoring the need for careful financial planning and potentially substantial fundraising or financing efforts that development leads and whānau had to make in order to complete the projects. The high costs illustrate the complexities and financial hurdles that developers face in creating affordable and sustainable housing within these community-centric projects, highlighting the broader economic challenges in addressing housing needs in indigenous communities.

All of the development leaders spoke of the overall affordability of papakāinga development projects for whānau members. This form of communal living meant that families who would normally not be able to afford to live in a brand-new home could now do so. They could also have a say in the planning and design of the whare.

"And it's all about affordability. Then if you can afford a bit more, then you can top up the loan a bit more because then we always say the bigger the house, the bigger the cost, the bigger the loan, the higher the rent, right? So, you know we're not building spaceships like Elon Musk taking people to Mars."

Leads emphasised the trade-offs between housing size, cost, and affordability. They sought to ensure that homes are affordable while still meeting the needs and

aspirations of the community. The process involves continuous engagement with key players to align expectations with financial realities:

“But if you do drive back...look over and you'll see three beautiful brand-new homes. They're on a floodplain. One of them is like 1.3m out of the ground. Yeah. So built on piles. Yeah, they have to be built on piles because it's Māori freehold land. So, they have to be transportable and relocatable in case we don't pay our loan you know.”

There can be additional costs and design considerations required for building in challenging locations such as flood prone areas. The need for homes to be built on piles and be relocatable adds to the complexity and cost, affecting the affordability and feasibility of the development. These factors necessitate careful planning and budget management to ensure the projects remain viable and meet community needs without compromising their cultural values.



Photo: Josie McClutchie

Due diligence

One development lead spoke about how the focus on Māori housing had intensified significantly as the broader housing crisis deepened, drawing increasing attention and concern. The shift in focus toward Māori housing, driven by the housing crisis and iwi advocacy, has led to increased government funding. However, governments change and funding can reduce again. These changes impact the financial feasibility of projects. In the due diligence phase, it is important to verify that adequate funding is available and aligned with the project's goals. Understanding these funding streams and how they may evolve is needed for appropriately assessing long-term viability:

“And then it just started growing because they were going into a housing crisis. Then you know there was a whole kōrero about the housing crisis and that sort of thing. And then the next minute Māori housing is a big strategy. And then with it, you got iwi you know putting pressure on the budget and then it's the funding and it has just been growing from the government.”

The due diligence phase covers aspects relevant to the broader themes of project management, financial scrutiny, and stakeholder engagement. This includes focusing on finalising the development plan, scrutinising financial structures, and deepening engagement with funding bodies such as TPK.

“Most Māori land is near rivers. Now, you're on flood plains. There is a lot of bureaucracy you've got to go through... before you even start putting a shovel in the ground and start building a house.”

Discussing and finalising development plans within the context of stringent regulatory frameworks requires careful navigation and adherence to legal standards by the development leads. It is essential to capture all elements of a project accurately and ensure compliance with regulatory demands.

This was key to successful project execution. These tasks are not only complex but also time-intensive, involving multiple layers of governance and legal requirements, which the development leads we interviewed handled well. One lead explained the process this way:

“Initially, the focus is on ensuring all necessary documentation is in order. This includes establishing a governance framework, typically for a trust, and securing resource consent. These are critical first steps that must be in place before approaching TPK for support. Having these documents means the governance is set, and the resource consent allows for building. With these elements secured, the pathway through TPK becomes clearer and more structured.”

The intricacies involved in obtaining necessary consents and setting up the right governance can greatly slow down the process. However, if you make sure your consents and governance are in order, then getting through the various processes can be smoother, as noted by another interviewee:

“First of all, you go through the documents that are vital. The governance, and you need a trust or similar. And then a resource consent. So those are two things that you'll be asked for when you turn up at TPK's door. You've got to have resource consent to build on here. And you have governance over there. Once you're there, then the process is all in place when you go through TPK.”

One development lead explained how an application for papakāinga was lodged with a regional TPK office, but the application seemingly stalled and was not addressed for a reported four years. It was not until a crucial community meeting that interventions were made to address and resolve these obstacles:

*“TPK ***** was the biggest obstacle in advancing our papakāinga application. My application was with them for many years. It was only when I met ***** at a hui in ***** that he asked TPK ***** to review our application that we made progress.”*

Despite the example above, the development lead interviews were generally positive about the role of TPK. Several participants highlighted the supportive role of TPK, emphasizing the beneficial and long-standing relationship that has contributed significantly to various initiatives. Leads also credited TPK for providing frameworks and guidance that are instrumental for those embarking on new projects. One participant said:

“TPK have asked us to figure out what are the sort of general frameworks for public buy-in and what lessons can we learn, and tips can we give those that are starting out on their kind of journey.”

The support they provide is important for understanding best practice and learning from previous experiences. The testimonies they carry, provide a balance showing TPK as a supportive and integral partner in papakāinga projects and emphasise their role in facilitating successful outcomes through effective collaboration, guidance, and long-term partnerships.

Development leads reported that creating robust and sustainable financial plans aligned with the project's long-term goals added another layer of complexity. Accurately predicting costs, including materials, labour, and allowing for unforeseen expenses, was necessary to protect budgets. One lead highlighted this point:

“Generally, we are building a minimum of 3 x houses to qualify for funding. This requires the following consents:

1. 1 x District Council resource consent (\$8K).
2. 1 x Regional consent to discharge consent for wastewater to ground (\$2,300);
3. 1 x Regional consent to discharge stormwater to ground (\$2,000);¹
4. 3 x Building consents @ \$8K per dwelling:
5. Development contributions @ approx. \$10K per dwelling”.

The example underscores the importance of careful financial management and the challenges of adhering to budget constraints.

Development leads described how they had many hui with whānau regarding planning for future expansions and improvements both during the initial stages and after the developments were completed. This required not only foresight but also strategic insight into how the development could evolve. Discussing the potential for growth, one leader shared:

“We’ve probably got about four and a half, five acres maybe, that we can use to create a sustainable financial future. The whole block is nine hectares. And we’re saving four to five hectares for gardens, for orchards, for whatever. However, we want to go ahead and build an income”.

This ambitious vision highlights the dynamic nature of papakāinga projects and the need to incorporate scalable and flexible planning from the outset. It also involves consideration beyond the planning horizon from the current generation to future ones and what that might mean for the planned development.

All development leads spoke of providing essential services like water, sewage, electricity, and internet, especially in remote areas, which could involve complex infrastructure planning. Operational issues often arose, requiring innovative solutions to ensure that the community's basic needs were met efficiently and sustainably. A practical approach to these challenges was noted:

“Unfortunately, that’s the way it is, so we tell whānau: You don’t have to buy the land, get the infrastructure down. You’re buying all the house. Stay within your budget, pay off the loan as soon as you can then you will have discretionary money you can put outside of the papakāinga.”

All the papakāinga leads were clear about land ownership and the responsibility it carried for maintenance and effective infrastructure management in papakāinga

projects. Simplifying governance structures could significantly streamline decision-making and improve overall management:

“We've streamlined our governance by reducing the number of trustees. This simpler structure has made it significantly easier to manage everything from funding to implementation. It cuts down on bureaucracy and speeds up decision-making processes.”

During the due diligence phase, a methodical approach to regulatory compliance, financial scrutiny, and strategic planning is essential. Engaging key players ensures the project's long-term viability and alignment with community aspirations. Effective governance, coupled with clear ownership and maintenance responsibilities, forms the foundation for addressing the complex requirements of land management and ensuring the sustainable success of the development. It was clear that the development leads interviewed for this research had carried out their due diligence for their respective projects.

Building/project management

Development leads stated that the building and project management phase was the most challenging of all the stages, but also the most exciting. This phase involves translating detailed plans and feasibility studies into physical structures. It encompasses securing necessary consents, managing construction activities, and overseeing the financial aspects of the build, all the while ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and maintaining engagement with the community. This can be a challenge:

“Resource consent is a pain... stormwater is an issue on all projects because you've got to keep your stormwater inside your boundary... You've got to basically engage an engineer, a Three Waters engineer. He's got to do all the calculations and then figure out what design needs to happen... so you're not affecting anything else.”

One of the most interesting aspects of the building and project management phase are the decisions on what kind of housing to build for the papakāinga. For papakāinga in rural or semi-rural areas, it was more cost-effective to hire a company that pre-fabricates the whare and then move them onto the site. This is less expensive than hiring tradies or transporting building materials to rural sites. In urban areas, however, it was cheaper and more affordable to build onsite, because they were closer and more accessible to both tradespeople and materials:

“It's better to build offsite rather than get your supplies there and your tradies every day... but if you're building around, you're not too far out from a main district, a main city, then I would argue the fact that it's just as affordable, if not more, to build onsite.”

Navigating the intricacies of building consents, compliance with local council regulations and Māori Land Court processes is a daunting task. Development leads found this phase the most difficult. The number one issue regarding regulatory barriers was dealing with local councils. Leads often had to contend with a multitude of regulatory layers which varied significantly from one region to another. A lead explained the logistical and regulatory hurdles in this way:

“Then you come into the setbacks and the floodplain, you know your floor height and everything like that, and because it's rural, flushing the toilet is going into the wastewater treatment system and then you're discharging to land. So therefore, basically you're taking up at least a minimum of one site per project just for your discharge. So, you've got a resource consent with the district council for land use, you've got a stormwater discharge consent and a wastewater discharge consent to get with the regional council, you've got to get all that, and then we go for building consents.”

The complexities of compliance can lead to increased costs and potential legal complications. Navigating through the different regulatory requirements is challenging. Some regions have specific requirements that add another layer of complexity:

*“Some district councils have crazy setbacks e.g. 50m setback in rural areas in the ***** District. Some district plans have a papakāinga section and some don't. Having a papakāinga section in the plan means there is a process to follow in terms of satisfying any district council criteria. Mainly local barriers relative to different regions.”*

The message from development leads was that variability between councils slowed down projects, made them more unnecessarily complicated, and added minimal to no value to the communities they were going into:

“Another thing is added compliance details to Geotech reports (again not because we were papakāinga, but because we were developing), as we had already done a Stage 3 Geotech report in 2021 but needed to do an updated one because of the new changes such as enhanced earthquake resilience, slope and stability and bearing capacity, and detailed lab test and analysis.”

Another development lead had this to say:

“We found that the Māori Purpose Zone under the unitary plan placed additional compliance hurdles on consenting the project that wouldn't ordinarily be required for a market-based residential

development. For example, needing to provide evidence that our developments design and character incorporated mātauranga and tikanga. While this is not a problem to provide, it provides another layer of reporting and compliance to add to project costs and requirements.”

While this was not viewed so much as a negative intervention by the development lead, it was a source of frustration for them because they had already complied. The additional costs involved were substantial and questions were raised about the value added for the development.

Development leads had to become effective construction managers with robust project management skills to coordinate contractors, manage supply chain logistics, and ensure quality control. The logistical aspects of managing large-scale constructions, with multiple houses are being built simultaneously, are complex. One lead described their approach:

“The good thing about them is they had a project manager and especially for ours, because we were building a lot of houses, that looked after things in the contract that I had signed with them that I didn't have to look at. I went about it in a way of saying, okay, we're going to start building our infrastructure now. The infrastructure of this place cost \$1.1 million. We'll start building the infrastructure and we'll build it around how they can supply houses, ensuring that they can get their houses on track as it should be.”

Any mismanagement by development leads or project managers could lead to delays, cost overruns, and quality issues. A key factor in avoiding these challenges is a careful selection of the project manager :

“Our project manager was good because he's done so many now. But I mean, he had his own contractors, and we were able to go outside of that. I'd rather use local. It's cheaper. And we want to get our own contractors and we did it. We got our own contractors, which made it a lot cheaper for us too”.

The development leads in this study were discerning when it came to choosing suitable contractors for their projects as the different building phases were completed successfully.

Managing budgets and addressing financial shortfalls due to unforeseen expenses or delays in funding was critical work for the development leads. Funding complexities often reflected the unique challenges of financing developments on Māori land. As one leader said:



Photo: Quinn Whelan

*“The hardest thing is getting the funding. That’s when ***** was going around the motu and basically seeing if it was like a square peg in a round hole. Is it too hard to get the funding to build whare or is it that our whānau don’t have the capacity? So, it was a mixture of both, but it was a square peg in a round hole because the multi housing funding was with a non-Māori agency which was in the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment. There was the Social Housing Unit that had a Māori Housing Fund of 14 million, \$14.3 million over three years for the motu.”*

The development leads recognised that financial challenges could severely impact the project timeline and completion. The complexity of securing appropriate consents for funding and aligning with budget expectations is a common concern. However, most leads were able to manage these challenges adequately.

Four of the six papakāinga had aspirations to offer home ownership opportunities to whānau. They had kōrero about paying off their house mortgage loans as a way to grow their wealth and protect their financial sustainability. Most whānau felt incredibly grateful for the whare they were in, and that they had had a say in what was suitable for them, and what the whare would look like. They wanted to be less reliant on government sources to get through and eventually develop their own mana motuhake (self-reliance):

“That’s what stands out for me, for us to be in our mana motuhake. It’s not just building these homes but supporting a sustainable enterprise so that we can do more. You know, we can do it. We can leverage what we have now. We’ve got these whare, we’ve got the land. Let’s think about not only our next stage. Let’s think about our mokopuna in 50 years. What are we going to leave them? And we can’t just stop there. It’s for us, so we can set ourselves up for the future, and then we have options so that we’re not dependent on external funding like we are now.”

One of the papakāinga leads felt confident that they would be able to establish a more robust financial base for all of the whānau residents:

“I think it’s pretty good. Especially if we are in a position where we say that we can start building a financial future with the rest of the whenua. But in saying that, what we’re doing is we’re building up the rental income and our commitments to our loan and other costs around here. We still have a very healthy surplus that’s coming through the rental income.”

Most of the development leads were proactive about maintaining positive relationships and clear communication with the community throughout the

construction process. They knew it was necessary but could also be difficult. The dynamics of decision-making within the community could be delicate or frustrating, requiring constant attention and involvement. A community leader reflected on the engagement process:

“Decision making with the beneficiaries on the papakāinga? They all have a say. They can call special meetings whenever they want to. We had an AGM, which only happened just the other week, last weekend.”

Development leads reported that disputes or misunderstandings could lead to resistance or objections that might stall the project, highlighting the need for continuous and transparent communication.

Engagement with councils was generally seen as problematic by development leads. The historic colonial context of discriminatory interactions by local authorities still influenced current relationships, as noted by one community member:

“[The council] didn't like it when we had the consents for the homes. We couldn't, we weren't even allowed to repair the homes that were here on our land. Yeah. We had signed forms that said we were not allowed. Always council boys. The city council. They were bullies. The relationship was difficult back then, we called them the ‘Barracudas.’”

The building and project management phase was a dynamic and challenging stage of the papakāinga development process, requiring adept coordination, strict compliance with regulatory standards, and a responsive approach to community feedback. The complexities encountered in this phase test the project's foundational planning and the resilience and adaptability of the respective development leads and their whānau.

Housing operations

The final phase in the papakāinga development process centres around housing operations, maintenance, and management. It concentrates on ensuring the long-term sustainability and functionality of the papakāinga project. This phase is important for maintaining the viability and success of the development through effective tenancy management, proactive maintenance practices, and dynamic community engagement:

“The tenancy management aspect has really grown over the years. We always knew that the houses were going to be tenanted from the beginning. So, when we did our papakāinga, our entity had to have a suite of housing policies. We joined a housing organisation to utilise

their housing policies. We stayed with them for a year or two and then came out.”

Development leads commented on the importance of integrating cultural values into the management and operational strategies of papakāinga housing. They spoke of the importance of cultural impact assessments and community engagement in managing the environmental aspects of papakāinga projects, as well as ensuring that operations align with traditional knowledge:

“The vision coming through from our kaumātua was that it was always going to be a place for healing, a place for people to belong as Māori, but also the opportunity for our iwi to grow. But it was always about the healing. That's what the kaupapa was. And it was shared and the communication there was always the understanding, not just from the kaumātua at the opening, but through the representatives, and the public sector for the foundation of the building. There was a lot of public media exposure to it, and it was always the key. This was for the people. This is for the healing.”

Development leads described how managing tenancies involved creating clear and transparent processes for tenant selection, rent collection, dispute resolution, and compliance with lease agreements. The balance between the needs and rights of tenants with operational requirements could present challenges, but development leads were able to work through issues with whānau in proactive ways. One lead noted:

“Having whānau manage tenancies with whānau on papakāinga was actually not a good idea. And so having someone external, but who was Māori was still quite good. They have come in with systems, processes, and experience. They are fantastic. We've got a property manager and they're Māori-owned, they're not related to us because it's better to have someone outside.”

This example highlights the complexities involved in managing relationships within the community and the benefits of professional external management. Most of the papakāinga had 'professionalised' this aspect of operations.

The trustees determine who gets to live on the papakāinga. All of the papakāinga had selection criteria and processes that they had to follow, though the implementation of these methods varied. Four of the six papakāinga had some type of 'whakapapa whānau' selection process, whereby whare were allocated specifically for whānau members. For example, one papakāinga had Māori freehold land from their tūpuna and from the beginning only engaged with the immediate owners:

“The kaupapa we set down was to build houses, affordable homes for our whānau. Who do we have living here now. My whānau, my aunties and my uncles. So, there’s three - two sisters and a brother. So that’s why we have the land. The whenua here belonged to my grandfather. That is where it came from. So, we have sisters, brothers and cousins living here.”

The other two papakāinga allowed the selection net to be cast wider, from whakapapa-whānau, to whānau Māori, to market renters and immigrant refugees:

“The rules that I know of, that to live there, if you whakapapa to us, then you have priority. Then Māori in general, you have second priority. And then it's also social housing. And so, we have people with refugee status who are there as well. And then it's also open to whoever is just on a market rate.”

The whānau from this papakāinga have expanded the housing stock, this created a slightly different environment for them to navigate:

“You must whakapapa to the papakāinga first. And so, the first stage was a whakapapa-based papakāinga and we were tight. And now we’ve got 20 houses and as you go wider and wider and bigger with our whānau, then that has a different social dynamic.”

One papakāinga was happy that they had the capacity to offer a bigger house to a very large whakapapa-whānau who were originally living in very cramped conditions that were inappropriate for their needs:

“What happened was, as far as who was chosen to live here, it was really all about the whānau most in need. And these were the whānau most in need. We did have another whānau but then they decided they didn't want it. So, we were able to put our niece with her eight children in here. That's worked out really well. It was because they came from a situation where there were two whānau in one little house. Āe, she’s got eight tamariki. But it's better than the situation she was living in before that.”

One of the development leads was pleased to be able to offer an alternative to one of their whānau who had experienced difficulties with finding housing:

*“So, you know, they've come from very small houses, not enough room. So, it's a blessing to have these whare because it's taken a burden off their finances. My nephew was staying in a shearing quarters up the road. *****, her brother, and their mokopuna were living in a one-bedroom kaumātua flat down here and my sister was*

living in town, paying big rent. So that's a blessing to hear these stories because they were pretty much in overcrowded housing before they came here."

Another development lead shared a narrative from a whānau who had whakapapa to their whenua and a harrowing situation with the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle. It had been a relief for all to know that they had somewhere permanent to go to and some certainty and surety with their housing:

"They moved out here because of the cyclone. Their house was flooded. It was as high as the windowsill but wasn't quite in the door, so I think they were quite lucky, but still it was a not good. So, they lost everything in there, including the car. They were actually outside when it was coming. So, they saw it all happening and were able to get out. That's good though because they got somewhere they could come to. They didn't have to worry about whether they were going to be kicked out of their house. And they know now that they will always have this."

Prior to moving onto their papakāinga, a whānau shared their sad circumstances and the impact of not having a permanent whare to live in:

"I was homeless for six months before I moved in there. So that doesn't mean I was sleeping on the street, but it just means I did not have a home. And so, I was like, sleeping at a friend's place or at a studio space that I had, which was like, what I had to do. It was a pōuri time for me."

This whānau explained how they were able to have permission to move into this particular papakāinga. They did not whakapapa directly to the hapū but had worked with the people on the papakāinga in the past and were well-respected by the trustees. The trustees were able to kōrero and make a decision to allow them to live there:

"We had actually retired from city and we went back to his [her husband's] rohe to give him some time with his whānau where he grew up and we were living in his family home, but his siblings decided to sell it and we were left with nothing. So, I rang whānau here and they offered for us to come back to the marae. We came and stayed with one of the other tenants. When the unit build was completed, we were lucky enough to go into it. We did have a happy life in the other rohe, and it took a little while to get used to being back in the city, but once we settled in again, we have been so grateful."

Development leads spoke of the impact of ineffective tenancy management that could lead to high tenant turnover, rent arrears, and unresolved disputes, impacting community stability and the sustainability of the project. It was important for them to acknowledge the issues and then find proactive ways to address them:

“If we are talking about our papakāinga, we haven’t managed it well. As a trust, we have not managed it well, post-development. So, something to address moving forward into the future.”

Communication could exacerbate these issues. A tenancy management group commented about this concern:

“One thing I have from the tenancy management perspective. My role is to look after the tenancy management. And, around the tenancy management one of the challenges is that people... aren't connected to each other. Most of them have been there right from the beginning. They know things are happening, but they don't tell us. And then there is an expectation from us to fix the problems without that information. So that makes it difficult.”

Most of the development leads and tenancy managers agree that ensuring that properties are well-maintained, and repairs are carried out in a timely and efficient manner requires proactive maintenance management. The quality of construction and the subsequent maintenance can significantly affect the longevity and liveability of the housing. As expressed by a participant:

“Everything's falling apart and. And even the builders said from the start when I was, you know, I was moving in, I see two builders. How's it all going in there? And this is out of the builder's mouth. I tell you what, it's a rush job. It's a rush job. From the builder's mouth, too! But we didn't care back then because we were thankful to have a house.”

Neglecting property maintenance can lead to deterioration of housing stock, reducing tenants' quality of life and lead to higher long-term repair costs:

“Sure enough, within months, everything came out. And I've been rectifying it with the roof and vents and the dishwashers and the appliances, the toilet seats. The hot water cylinders were expired within the year replaced. So, for example, that sort of maintenance, you know, It was the oppression that they were able to do because no one wanted to speak up and lose their house. And that's the truth.”

Some of the development leads and tenancy managers acknowledged that there were ongoing maintenance issues for their papakāinga. Some have not been fully addressed due to communication breakdowns between parties to trustees' reluctance to engage. It suggests a need for deeper investigation. Addressing tenants' concerns is important to the smooth running of papakāinga.

Creating a supportive and cohesive community environment is necessary for the overall health and sustainability of the papakāinga. One papakāinga resident expressed a desire for stronger community bonds and improved relationships between tenants:

"I would love to see a stronger community. I would love to see people getting on together. Planning events. We've got four raised [vegetable/flower] beds. One is looking wonderful. The others are looking a bit neglected. I would love for people to be using them. More community. I would love to have more, I'm not sure what the right word is, but I would like to have a better relationship with a couple of tenancies that haven't been so open with us. Would love to have that improved. Having more of a stronger sense of community in it."

The emotional toll of disputes between tenants could be significant, with whānau sometimes feeling unheard or marginalised:

"This koha I am sharing with you because it's from a lot of hearts and hurt. I made a formal complaint. I just went into my other role, which is let's address this. The response I got was not satisfactory."

Building a supportive environment was a priority for the majority of papakāinga leads. This is as important as providing physical spaces for interaction. It also requires effective mechanisms for communication and conflict resolution.

Conclusion

The insights provided by development leads underpin the multifaceted benefits and challenges associated with papakāinga development. All of the development leads reported that many of the regulatory barriers lie with local councils and that finding ways to work with councils to streamline their processes would be of great benefit. Development leads need to apply a collaborative approach within papakāinga and externally with regulators and stakeholders. Their role involves clear communication, consistent consultation and strategic planning, adept handling of regulatory environments, and robust community engagement.

Development leads faced multiple challenges, both within and beyond their papakāinga, including good governance, robust consultation, financial

management, and strategic planning. Enhanced support from agencies like TPK, streamlined regulatory processes, and the provision of more accessible funding options will be significant for mitigating barriers and fostering the successful realisation of papakāinga projects. This collective effort can ensure that papakāinga not only serve as housing providers but also as vibrant, sustainable communities that fully embody the aspirations of their whānau.



Photo: Quinn Whelan

7. Ngā Otinga / Conclusions

The findings from the research reveal the multifaceted impact of papakāinga on the lives of whānau, as well as the diverse challenges encountered during and after the development process. What do these findings, based on the interviews with whānau and development leads, suggest as responses to the four research questions posed for this study? These are addressed below looking at each research question separately.

1. Benefits for whānau of papakāinga living

The whānau residing in papakāinga have experienced profound benefits that include stable and affordable housing and enhanced material wellbeing. However, there are other substantial benefits that go beyond those things. They reported on the potential for future educational opportunities to build the capability and capacity of whānau members, and many commented on improved holistic health and wellbeing, and less stress than before. Most of the whānau talked about their reconnection to Māori knowledge - ways of doing and being and the use of te reo Māori in a caring environment. There were also opportunities to kōrero about the potential of home ownership and their aspirations for the future which are ongoing. Many of the whānau were grateful to be living on ancestral land, where they felt safe and supported. In this study, the benefits of living in papakāinga enriched the lives of many whānau in multifaceted ways that transcend the basic provision of affordable shelter.

Specifically, the key benefits identified were:

- **Health-related benefits:** whānau reported improved mental and physical health due to better living conditions, reduced stress levels from community support, and access to communal recreational facilities.
- **Cultural benefits:** whānau experienced a deeper connection to heritage and traditions, integration of cultural practices into daily life, enhanced sense of identity and belonging, and increased access to cultural capital through people, services, and facilities (especially when near marae).
- **Social benefits:** whānau reported strengthened community cohesion, increased social interactions and support networks enabled through papakāinga design, and reduced social isolation - particularly for kaumātua and rangatahi.
- **Economic benefits:** papakāinga provide affordable housing for both owners and renters, opportunities for whānau economic development through communal businesses, reduced living costs through shared resources, and enhanced economic stability through collective asset management.

- **Improved quality of life:** residents of papakāinga enjoyed the community and whānau aspects of co-living arrangements, some whānau described access to high-quality housing as a ‘dream come true’.

Overall, the papakāinga model provided significant benefits in terms of housing affordability, cultural connection, community support, and overall wellbeing for whānau. These benefits made the challenges of papakāinga development worthwhile, with many whānau expressing they would ‘do it again’ if given the opportunity.

2. Barriers to developing papakāinga

The journey of the six papakāinga encountered barriers, primarily bureaucratic in nature. Development leads consistently point out the complexity of dealing with land tenure issues and the slow processes of the Māori Land Court, which often delay projects. Council processes, including obtaining resource and building consents, are similarly cumbersome and can be discouraging due to their protracted and costly nature. Additionally, securing adequate funding remains a significant challenge, as financial resources are critical from the feasibility stage through to the completion of their papakāinga. These financial and regulatory hurdles are compounded by the need for alignment among various stakeholders, including whānau members, which can sometimes lead to conflicts and setbacks. The barriers papakāinga face extend beyond the logistical challenges of construction, into the realms of regulatory, financial, and social complexities.

Specifically, the key barriers identified were:

- **Complex and time-consuming processes:** The papakāinga development process involves numerous activities that are complex and time-consuming. Local authorities, and the Māori Land Court are often involved. Inconsistent responses and requirements from these entities sometimes complicate the process.
- **Governance and leadership challenges:** Effective governance requires long-term commitment, which can be intermittent and problematic. Succession planning for governance roles is often challenging, as is adapting to changing requirements from feasibility to post-development stages.
- **Regulatory and compliance issues:** Local authorities’ requirements, especially around environmental compliance, can be seen as overly onerous. Specific issues include stormwater filtration, roading, and other environmental mitigation practices that can cause tensions and increase costs.
- **Infrastructure limitations:** Rural papakāinga face significant infrastructure challenges, particularly with electricity, water, and sewerage. The lack of qualified tradespeople and companies in rural areas exacerbates these

issues, sometimes necessitating innovative solutions like using relocatable houses.

- **Dependency on individual expertise:** There is a high dependency on individuals with expertise and personal relationships within the system, which can limit the transmission of knowledge and experience to others. This idiosyncratic nature can advantage some developments while disadvantaging others without access to such expertise or relationships.
- **Post-development management:** Managing tenancies and maintaining properties post-development presents new challenges for trustees, including rent collection and dealing with anti-social behaviour. Effective property management systems and support are crucial to ensure the sustainability of the housing initiatives.

These barriers highlight the need for streamlined processes, better regulatory collaboration, and robust support systems to facilitate the successful development and sustainability of papakāinga.

3. What works and what does not work in developing papakāinga

Successful papakāinga developments are those that have strong, proactive leadership combined with clear and consistent communication among all parties involved. These aspects were evident in different ways in each of the six papakāinga. Development leads who can navigate the complexities of funding, regulatory requirements, and community engagement effectively could be expected to facilitate smoother processes and ultimately better outcomes.

On the other hand, projects that lack these elements tend to encounter obstacles. Specifically, inadequate planning and misalignment of expectations among whānau members can derail projects. Moreover, failure to anticipate the full scope of regulatory and financial requirements often lead to delays and increased costs, undermining the feasibility of the development. What is interesting is that all of these six successful papakāinga encountered at least one or two of these issues but were able to work through them.

Specifically, a summary of what worked when developing papakāinga were:

- **Effective leadership and community involvement:** strong whānau leaders and experienced development leads; engaging the community at every stage of the development process; trustee support and vision in managing tensions.
- **Expertise in project management:** utilising experienced project managers with an understanding of cultural and regulatory landscapes; strategic project management, especially in planning and financial management; building collective capability and capacity.

- **Development of effective kawa and tikanga:** incorporating culturally appropriate design principles that adapt to changing community needs while respecting traditional values; integration of communal spaces for cultural gatherings and fostering community connectivity; opportunities for cultural connection and activities.
- **Post-development management:** effective tenancy management practices; robust financial management strategies; continuous community support systems such as formalised, regular feedback hui with trustees and whānau to ensure any problems related to the papakāinga are addressed or minimised.
- **Innovation and adaptability:** whānau innovation in completing tasks (for example, decorating whare during the COVID-19 lockdown); finding creative solutions to challenges (for example, using relocatable houses in rural areas).

4. Post-development experiences

The ongoing work of managing tenancies, meeting tax obligations, and repaying debt presents a new set of challenges for papakāinga. Some whānau express dissatisfaction with the management of these aspects, particularly when external property management groups are involved, leading to feelings of disconnection from the governance of their own homes. The transition from a development focus to a sustainable management model that respects and maintains the cultural and community integrity of papakāinga can be significant. Effective post-development management that is inclusive and transparent can mitigate these issues, ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of papakāinga.

The narratives belonging to the six papakāinga in this study reflect the complex interplay of cultural aspirations, community dynamics, and practical challenges in papakāinga development and management; highlighting both the transformative potential of these communities and the ongoing efforts required to realise and sustain their benefits.

Specifically, the positive experiences of residents living on established papakāinga were:

- **Health and wellbeing benefits:** many whānau commented on improved health in all areas. Mentally, physically, emotionally, socially and financially they were better off.
- **Housing affordability:** living on papakāinga was more affordable and allowed whānau to have more money for other things.
- **High-quality housing:** many whānau described their new homes as a 'dream come true', enjoying the experience of living in new, high-quality housing.

- **Community aspects:** residents appreciated the community and whānau aspects of co-living arrangements. This helped reduce social isolation, especially for kaumātua and rangatahi.
- **Cultural reconnection:** some whānau were enthusiastic about re-linking or connecting for the first time with cultural activities.

The negative aspects reported were:

- **Anti-social behaviour:** some residents reported issues with partying, inconsiderate behaviour around communal resources, and concerns about tolerating potential criminal behaviour.
- **Privacy concerns:** while proximity to whānau had advantages, some felt their privacy was compromised if boundaries around individual houses were not maintained.
- **Management challenges:** ongoing management, operation, and maintenance of papakāinga presented new issues. These included: building maintenance, climate change mitigation, ensuring financial viability, managing tenancies and rent collection, and managing loan repayments and other fiscal responsibilities.
- **Complexity of issues:** several complex situations arose, such as: promises of home ownership not being fulfilled within the expected timeframe; relationship breakups leading to non-whakapapa whānau remaining in papakāinga housing; and questions about the duration of tenure for residents.
- **Behaviour management:** establishing and enforcing kawa and tikanga (rules, guidelines, and protocols) proved challenging and required robust systems to implement and regularly update..



Photo: Josie McClutchie

8. Ngā Taunaki / Recommendations

1. Policy engagement and advocacy

We recommend that TPK:

- Engage with policymakers to facilitate regulatory adjustments that better support the unique aspects of papakāinga.
- Make the case for more sympathetic and efficient processes for papakāinga developments to Local Government New Zealand, and to key local authorities and district councils where papakāinga developments are occurring. There is no other body with comparable knowledge and status equipped to carry out this task.
- Approach the Māori Land Court outlining our research findings and offer to run dialogue or workshops with key papakāinga development leads and Māori Land Court officials could begin discussions that may improve efficiencies and develop greater mutual understanding.
- Develop policy briefs and engagement seminars that articulate the research findings and propose specific changes to support papakāinga development.

2. Community empowerment and capacity building

We recommend that TPK:

- Fund and implement training programmes to build leadership, resilience and governance capabilities within papakāinga communities. Effective leadership, project management expertise, cultural responsiveness, and good communication skills clearly help papakāinga developments to succeed sustainably.
- Facilitate a range of upskilling and training opportunities by (a) enabling a development leads conference designed with them to share struggles and successes (b) work with leads to bring in trainers in areas they would value mentoring on, and (c) provide incentives to develop a broader range of capable leadership within papakāinga than the current situation.
- Establish continuous learning and support networks to foster community resilience, capacity building, cultural understanding, and sustainable management.

3. Strategic planning and resource allocation

We recommend that TPK:

- Continue to fund feasibility studies and environmental assessments with the potential to increase the amount funded and how they are funded within the next three to five years.
- Enable skilled papakāinga development leads along with Māori planning and environmental experts to provide accessible training and exposure experiences on planning papakāinga development, feasibility studies, and environmental assessments for papakāinga whānau, prospective papakāinga whānau, and development leads.
- Explore innovative funding models that align with the communal and cultural nature of papakāinga.

4: Monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge sharing

We recommend that TPK:

- Develop with papakāinga whānau and development leads papakāinga-friendly mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of papakāinga to inform shared ongoing improvements.
- Create platforms for sharing successes and lessons learned among different papakāinga, promoting networking and best practices across the sector.

5: Small, flexible, and informed troubleshooting team

We recommend that TPK:

- Establish a small and flexible troubleshooting team to be available to papakāinga development leads when they require advice on a particular problem, find themselves in difficulty, wish to plan new stages of development, or solve problems. The chosen people need to be experienced in, or at least well-informed about, papakāinga developments, Māori cultural heritage, and strategic planning. They need to be able to respond quickly to a call from anywhere in the country and communicate warmly and effectively. Their primary role will be to help solve problems quickly, inspire confidence and lift capability within papakāinga.

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Photo: Josie McClutchie

Appendix 1: Case Studies and Case Descriptions

Papakāinga	Location	Key Features	Summary	Citation
Mangatawa Papamoa Blocks	Western Bay of Plenty	Social and cultural objectives, affordable housing, financial feasibility	Provides affordable housing addressing social and cultural objectives. Emphasises financial feasibility while avoiding land alienation. Includes shared vegetable garden, sports field, and day-care facility.	(Mangatawa Papamoa Blocks Incorporated, 2024)
Makahae Marae	Western Bay of Plenty	Historical, spiritual, and cultural associations	Driven by historical, spiritual, and cultural values. Emphasises inter-generational social and cultural outcomes over financial returns. Designed to be self-sustaining and culturally resonant.	(Livesey, 2012)
Te Pā o Tahu	Christchurch	Sustainable design, geographical location, cultural facilities	Emphasises sustainable design and the importance of geographical location. Includes proximity to cultural facilities and resources. Reflects whānau aspirations and offers affordable, flexible spaces that can be personalised.	(Simons, 2021)
Taupō District Papakāinga	Taupō	Rural setting, sustainable and self-sufficient, eco-tourism	Located in a rural setting with a focus on sustainability and self-sufficiency. Includes eco-tourism elements, protection of natural river environments, and a strong community focus. Development supported by local council provisions and funding schemes like Kāinga Whenua.	(Scott, 2019)
Ngāti Awa Papakāinga	Te Teko	Community engagement,	Emphasises community engagement and	(Bailey et al., 2023)

Papakāinga	Location	Key Features	Summary	Citation
		sustainable design, cultural heritage	sustainable design. Focuses on preserving cultural heritage and integrating modern amenities with traditional values. Development process Involved significant whānau participation and vision.	
Ranginui 12 Trust Papakāinga	Tauranga Moana	Affordable housing, communal living, cultural connection	Provides affordable housing with a focus on communal living and maintaining cultural connections. Includes nine new whare with shared infrastructure and resources. Supported by government funding and local initiatives to increase papakāinga developments.	(Livesey, 2012)
Reporoa Papakāinga	Reporoa	Rural community, government support, communal facilities	Located in a rural community with government support for development. Focuses on creating communal facilities and maintaining cultural practices. Part of broader government initiatives to support papakāinga housing developments.	(Livesey, 2012)
Kāinga Tuatahi	Auckland	Innovative design, urban setting, cultural integration	An innovative 30-home development by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei. Reflects modern papakāinga design principles in an urban setting, integrating cultural values and providing affordable housing options.	(Stevens Lawson Architecture, 2016)
Ranga-Bidois Whānau Papakāinga	Ngāruawāhia	Whānau-led initiative, government support, skill development	Developed by the Ranga-Bidois whānau with support from Whānau Ora and government funding. Focuses on creating homes and building	(Flavell, 2015)

Papakāinga	Location	Key Features	Summary	Citation
			skills and experience in planning, funding, and implementation of papakāinga housing.	
Tūrangi-based Whānau Papakāinga	Tūrangi	Sustainable and self-sufficient, eco-tourism, community focus	Emphasises sustainability and self-sufficiency. Includes protection and enhancement of natural river environments, eco-tourism elements, and a strong community focus. Supported by local council provisions and funding schemes like Kāinga Whenua.	(Scott, 2019)

Appendix 2: Whānau Participant Information



THE FAMILY CENTRE
SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

Papakāinga Research Whānau Participants Information Sheet and Consent Form

Tēnā Koe

Ngā mihi ki a koe. You are invited to take part in research which will provide valuable evidence for the experiences of those living on papakāinga or who have supported the development and building of papakāinga. **You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are a Māori person who would like to share your papakāinga experiences.** We sincerely hope you will assist us and agree to an anonymous interview which will take between 1-2 hours of your time approximately.

Whether or not you take part is your choice. If you do not want to participate, you do not have to give a reason. If you do want to take part now, but change your mind later, you can withdraw from the study at any time. **If you choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences and no negative consequences will arise if negative comments, views or perspectives are shared in interviews.**

This Information Sheet is provided to help you to decide if you would like to take part. It sets out who we are, why we are doing the study and other key information that you need to know. Please read all the Information provided on this sheet and the Consent Form carefully before you decide to participate in the interview.

About us and the research.

We are Awhi Whānau – The Kaupapa Māori Research arm of The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit based in Te Awakairangi-Lower Hutt.

Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) has commissioned our research team to conduct a project with the whānau and development leads, trustees, and project managers who

either live on papakāinga or who have been involved in the development of papakāinga from across Aotearoa.

The findings from these interviews will help us explore and understand yours and other participants' perspectives, life experiences and views.

Who are the research leaders of the project?

This project is carried out by the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (FCSPRU) under the leadership of the Principal Investigator: Monica Mercury, (Te Iwi Mōrehu, Ngāti Kahungunu).

Professor Regan Potangaroa, (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairarapa), and Professor Chris Cunningham (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa) will contribute to the research in an Expert Advisory capacity, and Charles Waldegrave (Ngāti Pākehā, Tangata Tiriti), the Founder of The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit will assist with the analysis of the data and report writing.

Please feel free to visit our website to learn more about us and the rest of the Awhi Whānau team: www.familycentre.org.nz

How is the interview conducted?

If you decide to participate, the interview can be conducted as follows:

1 | Whānau: An in-person face to face interview is preferred. Where an in-person interview is definitely not possible, we can arrange an interview via Zoom (or another online video chat platform) on a date and at a time that suits you.

The questions are straight forward, and each question asks you about your experience on papakāinga.

Agreement to Participate

If you choose to take part in the study, we will ask you to participate in the research project for one interview. We will require you to read all the Information provided carefully and to agree to all the statements on the Consent Form.

With your permission, **interviews will be recorded using an audio device. We will generate transcripts of the interview using the Trint transcription website AI tool. Trint does not use recordings to train their AI. The completed interview transcript will be stored in a password-protected file**

on the Trint transcription website , for analysis. All the interview transcripts will be checked for accuracy by the Principal Investigator.

Participant Confidentiality

Any identifying information and all personal details gathered **from** the participants remains confidential. . Te Puni Kōkiri have asked us to provide brief update reports for each Papakāinga set of interviews. However, you will not be identified in these reports, and we will remove any identifying details.

The Provision of a Koha for your time:

A gift card will be offered to every individual participant on the completion of an interview.

We want to make this important part of the research as easy as possible for you as we want to hear your thoughts. All the information and personal details gathered from the participants remains anonymous and confidential. You will not be identified personally.

You can contact the Awhi Whānau team for further enquiries or awhi via the following:

Email: mercury.m@fc.org.nz

Text or call: 027 275 7452

Ngā manaakitanga ki a koe



Monica Mercury (Te Iwi Morehu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairarapa ki Te Wairoa)

Kairukuruku Māori, Kairangahau Māori

Awhi Whānau – The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

[This research has been assessed and approved by the Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee (AREC24_03). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Manager of AREC, Dr Keely Blanch, on manager@aotearoaresearchethics.org]

Appendix 3: Whānau Consent Form



THE FAMILY CENTRE
SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

Papakāinga Research Whānau Participants

Consent Form

Please read this Consent Form carefully

I have read and I understand the Participant Invitation and Information Sheet.

I am happy to share my experiences, views and perspectives about papakāinga.

I agree to participate in an interview. I give permission to be audio recorded and I aware that the recordings will be transcribed.

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. If I choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences and no negative consequences will arise if negative comments, views or perspectives are shared in interviews.

I understand that any information data that I have shared in an interview prior to withdrawing may not be able to be removed if it will change the meaning of what has already been said by others in a multiple-person interview.

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material which could identify me personally will be used in any reports on this study.

I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general. ☒

I wish to receive a **summary of the results** of the study. ☒

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in the study.

Participant's name:

Signature: _____ Date:

Declaration by member of the research team:

I have explained the research project to the participant and have answered the participant's questions about it. The participant understands what the study involves and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name:

Signature: _____ Date:

If you agree to participate in the study, you can sign the form and give it to the researcher in the hui or you can give verbal consent to the researcher/interviewer to sign on your behalf.

[This research has been assessed and approved by the Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee (AREC24_03). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Manager of AREC, Dr Keely Blanch, on manager@aotearoaresearchethics.org]

Appendix 4: Development Leads Participant Information



Papakāinga Research Development Leads Information Sheet and Consent Form

Tēnā Koe

Ngā mihi ki a koe. You are invited to take part in research which will provide valuable evidence for the experiences of those living on papakāinga or who have supported the development and building of papakāinga. **You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are a Māori person who would like to share your papakāinga experiences.** We sincerely hope you will assist us and agree to an anonymous interview which will take between 1-2 hours of your time approximately.

Whether or not you take part is your choice. If you do not want to participate, you do not have to give a reason. If you do want to take part now, but change your mind later, you can withdraw from the study at any time. **If you choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences and no negative consequences will arise if negative comments, views or perspectives are shared in interviews.**

This Information Sheet is provided to help you to decide if you would like to take part. It sets out who we are, why we are doing the study and other key information that you need to know. Please read all the Information provided on this sheet and the Consent Form carefully before you decide to participate in the interview.

About us and the research.

We are Awhi Whānau – The Kaupapa Māori Research arm of The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit based in Te Awakairangi-Lower Hutt.

Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) has commissioned our research team to conduct a project with the whānau and development leads, trustees, and project managers who either live on papakāinga or who have been involved in the development of papakāinga from across Aotearoa.

The findings from these interviews will help us explore an understand yours and other participants' perspectives, life experiences and views.

Who are the research leaders of the project?

This project is carried out by the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (FCSPRU) under the leadership of the Principal Investigator: Monica Mercury, (Te Iwi Mōrehu, Ngāti Kahungunu).

Professor Regan Potangaroa, (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairarapa), and Professor Chris Cunningham (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa) will contribute to the research in an Expert Advisory capacity, and Charles Waldegrave (Ngāti Pākehā, Tangata Tiriti), the Founder of The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit will assist with the analysis of the data and report writing.

Please feel free to visit our website to learn more about us and the rest of the Awhi Whānau team: www.familycentre.org.nz

How is the interview conducted?

If you decide to participate, the interview can be conducted as follows:

1 | Regional Coordinators: An in-person face to face interview is preferred. Where an in-person interview is definitely not possible, we can arrange an interview via Zoom (or another online video chat platform) on a date and at a time that suits you.

The questions are straight forward, and each question asks you about your experience on papakāinga.

2 | Development Leads: An in-person face to face interview or where an in-person interview is not possible, via Zoom (or another online video chat platform). We can arrange a date and time that suits you.

The questions are straight forward, and each question asks you about your experience on papakāinga.

Agreement to Participate

If you choose to take part in the study, we will ask you to participate in the research project for one interview. We will require you to read all the Information provided carefully and to agree to all the statements on the Consent Form.

With your permission, **interviews will be recorded using an audio device. We will generate transcripts of the interview using the Trint transcription website AI tool. Trint does not use recordings to train their AI. The completed interview transcript will be stored in a password-protected file on the Trint transcription website, for analysis. All the interview transcripts will be checked for accuracy by the Principal Investigator.**

Participant Confidentiality

Any identifying information and all personal details gathered **from** the participants remains confidential. Te Puni Kōkiri have asked us to provide brief update reports for each Papakāinga set of interviews. However, you will not be identified in these reports, and we will remove any identifying details.

There will be on-going reporting to Te Puni Kōkiri in addition to a final report.

The Provision of a Koha for your time:

A gift card will be offered to every individual participant on the completion of an interview.

We want to make this important part of the research as easy as possible for you as we want to hear your thoughts. All the information and personal details gathered from the participants remains anonymous and confidential. You will not be identified personally.

You can contact the Awhi Whānau team for further enquiries or awhi via the following:

Email: mercury.m@fc.org.nz

Text or call: 027 275 7452

Ngā manaakitanga ki a koe



Monica Mercury (Te Iwi Morehu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairarapa ki Te Wairoa)

Kairukuruku Māori, Kairangahau Māori

Awhi Whānau – The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

[This research has been assessed and approved by the Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee (AREC24_03). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Manager of AREC, Dr Keely Blanch, on manager@aotearoaresearchethics.org]

Appendix 5: Development Lead Consent Form



THE FAMILY CENTRE
SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

Papakāinga Research Development Leads

Consent Form

Please read this Consent Form carefully

I have read and I understand the Participant Invitation and Information Sheet.

I am happy to share my experiences, views and perspectives about papakāinga.

I agree to participate in an interview. I give permission to be audio recorded and I aware that the recordings will be transcribed.

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. If I choose not to participate, there will be no negative consequences and no negative consequences will arise if negative comments, views or perspectives are shared in interviews.

I understand that any information data that I have shared in an interview prior to withdrawing may not be able to be removed if it will change the meaning of what has already been said by others in a multiple-person interview.

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material which could identify me personally will be used in any reports on this study.

I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.

I wish to receive a **summary of the results** of the study.

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in the study.

Participant's name:

Signature:

Date:

Declaration by member of the research team:

I have explained the research project to the participant and have answered the participant's questions about it. The participant understands what the study involves and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name:

Signature:

Date

If you agree to participate in the study, you can sign the form and give it to the researcher in the hui or you can give verbal consent to the researcher/interviewer to sign on your behalf.

[This research has been assessed and approved by the Aotearoa Research Ethics Committee (AREC24_03). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Manager of AREC, Dr Keely Blanch, on manager@aotearoaresearchethics.org]

Appendix 6: Whānau Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE – WHĀNAU

	Research Question lines for Whānau Living on Papakāinga
1.	How would you define papakāinga? What does 'papakāinga' mean to you and your whānau?
2.	Describe the cultural and communal aspects that are significant within the papakāinga.
3.	Could you describe any shared facilities in your papakāinga, and how accessible are essential services in your community?
4.	How does the papakāinga contribute to the well-being of individuals and the community?
5.	Can you share some of the key tikanga, kawa, or rules that guide life on your papakāinga?
6.	Did you have home ownership aspirations, or do affordable rentals better suit your circumstances?
7.	Share your experiences regarding the suitability and affordability of housing within the papakāinga.
8.	<p>We are really interested in what your life was like before you moved into papakāinga. We are interested in what it was like regarding taha wairua, (spiritual wellbeing), taha hinengaro (mental/emotional wellbeing), and taha tinana (physical wellbeing). Can you tell us a little of what it was like for you in back then in those days?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell us what it was like for your whānau wellbeing? • What were your feelings about the whenua (land) and the place you were living in? • What we are interested in how you felt about your access to employment, education and being able to live in a manner that you could afford? • Overall, what was it like for you culturally as a Whānau Māori?
9.	<p>We are also really interested in your life now. What is it like about taha wairua, (spiritual wellbeing), taha hinengaro (emotional wellbeing), and taha tinana (physical wellbeing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell us about what your life is like now since you have been on papakāinga? • Can you tell us what it is like for you presently? Can you tell us what it is like for your whānau wellbeing now? • What are your feelings about the papakāinga whenua (land) and the place you are living in? • How do you feel about access to employment, education and being able to live in a manner that you can afford? • Overall, what is it like for you culturally as a Whānau Māori?
10.	Are there specific aspects of the papakāinga that you would like to see changed or improved? What suggestions do you have for enhancing the overall quality of life within the papakāinga?

Appendix 7: Development Lead Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE – REGIONAL COORDINATORS/DEVELOPMENT

LEADS

	Research Question lines for Trustees (Development Leads) Project Managers
1.	Share insights into funding sources, including grant funding and bank finance.
2.	Can you outline the process of reaching agreements with whānau and landowners? What challenges did you encounter, and looking back, what support would have been beneficial?
3.	Describe the overall experience of the development process, considering whānau dynamics, Māori Land Court processes, council consents, and the building process.
4.	From your experience, are there specific regulatory barriers which have negatively impacted or affected Papakāinga development? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they national or local barriers? • Do they relate to particular organisations, if so which ones? • What are the impacts?
5.	What regulatory settings would you like to see changed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local or National • Do they relate to particular organisations • What do you think the improvements might be?
6.	If you were giving advice to other Papakāinga Developers on how to streamline the process, what would you advise? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a whānau level (eg Trusts) • At a whenua level. (eg Resource Consents) • At a whare level (eg Building Consents)
7.	Can you please elaborate on what the hurdles were for the papakāinga development and how you managed to overcome them?
8.	Highlight challenges and successes related to tenancy management within the papakāinga. How did you manage tenancies and debt repayment? What challenges did you face, and with hindsight, what support would have been valuable?
9.	Can you tell us about the availability and quality of advice, guidance, and support from agencies throughout the development process.

10.	Identify any gaps in the process that could potentially be filled by Government agencies.
11.	Share experiences of working with TPK on the development.
12.	Discuss future aspirations for the papakāinga, considering potential expansions or improvements.
13.	Reflecting on the project, did your initial plan evolve? Also, what are your future aspirations for the ongoing development of the papakāinga?