"We All Get Along"
Social Cohesion in Three Auckland Suburbs

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"We All Get Along"
Social Cohesion in Three Auckland Suburbs

Carina Meares
Amanda Gilbertson

Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit
Auckland Council

Executive Summary

The vision articulated in the Auckland Plan is for Auckland to become the world's most liveable city. Underpinning the achievement of this vision are several transformational shifts and strategic directions, including radically improving the quality of urban living and creating a strong, inclusive and equitable society (Auckland Council, 2012: 30, 31). Understanding the factors that contribute to social cohesion is a fundamental part of working towards an inclusive and equitable society, an urban life of high quality and, ultimately, a more liveable city.

Social cohesion is, we believe, a valuable framework for examining the factors that bring and hold Auckland neighbourhoods and communities together. It is particularly salient at this time in our history as we begin to understand the challenges and opportunities presented by an ageing population (Jackson, 2012); significant and increasing levels of ethnic diversity; and growing levels of inequality.

Despite its frequent usage in academic and policy literature, social cohesion remains an ill-defined term for which there is no commonly accepted definition. Canadian social theorist, Jane Jenson, defines a "socially cohesive society" as one where all groups have a sense of "belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy" (Jenson, 1998: 15). For the purposes of this research, we use three of Jensen's five dimensions of social cohesion: *belonging*, *inclusion* and *participation*. These are the domains in which Auckland Council operates and within which the organisation can make the most impact through various aspects of its core business.

This report describes the results of a research project on social cohesion in Auckland that was conducted by social researchers from Auckland Council's Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit (RIMU) with support from Ignite Research. The main objectives of the research were: firstly, to contribute to the understanding of factors that promote social cohesion, particularly in relation to ethnicity and disability; and secondly, to contribute to the understanding of what Auckland Council could do to further promote social cohesion, particularly between different ethnic groups and for disabled people.

The research focused on three geographic areas of Auckland – Albany, Papatoetoe and New Lynn – and involved focus groups with community workers (one in each area) and interviews with residents (18 in each area). Key findings from these focus groups and interviews are described below.

Most residents felt a sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods. A sense of belonging was associated with feeling safe and comfortable in an area, feelings that were described as arising from knowing one's neighbours and being able to turn to them for help if necessary. Participants suggested that disabled people, those with mental health issues, the elderly, and some migrants and refugees are vulnerable to isolation. These observations were supported by the fact that the few residents in our research who reported feeling lonely and isolated were migrants and/or suffered from mental health problems.

Most people felt positive about their neighbourhoods. Things that people liked about their neighbourhoods included the proximity of their home to places of work, leisure or shopping; proximity to friends and family; and the quietness of their area. Other reasons included friendly neighbours; the availability of good public transport; and the safety of the area. A few residents

specifically mentioned the ethnic diversity of their neighbourhood as something they appreciate and enjoy. In terms of neighbourhood participation, most people did not have close relationships with their neighbours but felt that people in their neighbourhood 'get along'. Exchanging greetings and casual neighbourly assistance were valued by participants and were seen as contributing to feelings of safety and security. Although most participants were happy with their level of neighbourhood participation, some wanted to know their neighbours better. Busyness and a transient population were seen as the main barriers to increased neighbourly interaction.

Residents participated in their communities in a number of ways. Social infrastructure such as community centres and halls, sports clubs, swimming pools, churches, parks, schools and kohanga, and, particularly, libraries were important sites for community participation. Other arenas for community participation included markets and events such as festivals. Community participation was valued because it made people feel good, offered them an opportunity to care for each other, and allowed them to create a better future for children. The small number of residents who did want to be more involved in their communities listed time; a lack of knowledge about what is happening; and a lack of events, activities and spaces as barriers.

When asked what Auckland Council could do to promote neighbourhood and community participation, residents talked frequently about events, particularly neighbourhood-level events such as street barbeques and tree planting days. Community facilities, particularly those catering for young people, were also called for. Residents and community workers had feedback for council on the ways it consults and engages with residents, and suggested that council should play a partnership role in neighbourhood-led development rather than directing initiatives themselves.

This research project had a particular focus on the extent to which ethnic and disabled people participate and are included in their neighbourhoods and communities. Although most residents expressed positive views of the increasing ethnic diversity in their neighbourhoods, some articulated concerns about the insularity of Indian and Chinese groups and the potential for these migrants to dominate culturally. Migrant residents in turn talked about the difficulty of forming meaningful relationships with non-migrants and their desire for more opportunities to volunteer and engage with their local communities. Language was a barrier to inclusion and participation identified by a number of interviewees. Although many felt that there was no need to 'force' inter-ethnic interaction, others suggested that increasing opportunities for residents from different backgrounds to interact would foster stronger communities.

Disabled residents' narratives were focused on accessibility. While all participated in their communities in a number of ways, they described instances where they were excluded due to the inaccessibility of some spaces. Disabled residents suggested that Auckland Council should involve them fully in the planning of accessible spaces.

Many of the key themes described above are closely aligned with priorities, directives and initiatives described in various Auckland Council plans and work programmes, specifically the Auckland Plan, the Thriving Communities Strategic Action Plan and the 'key initiatives' of Community Development, Arts and Culture (CDAC) for 2013/2014. In particular, the research findings support neighbourhood-led planning and development.

This research has identified a number of opportunities for Auckland Council to create welcoming, accessible places and spaces that bring people together; for facilities and the people who run them

to enable meaningful contact between different groups; and for council to act as both leader and partner in its engagement with diverse communities.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

The vision articulated in the Auckland Plan is for Auckland to become the world's most liveable city. Underpinning the achievement of this vision are several transformational shifts and strategic directions, including radically improving the quality of urban living and creating a strong, inclusive and equitable society (Auckland Council, 2012: 30, 31). Understanding the factors that contribute to social cohesion is a fundamental part of working towards an inclusive and equitable society, an urban life of high quality and, ultimately, a more liveable city.

Reflecting this importance, social cohesion is also a key feature of the People theme in Auckland Council's Research Strategy (Research Investigations and Monitoring Unit, 2013), developed by the Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit. The 'People' theme in the Research Strategy, for example, lists the following broad research areas: understand the drivers of social and community cohesion and their role in creating the world's most liveable city; and investigate the effects of age and ethnic sub-cultures on social cohesion. During internal consultation on the Research Strategy, officers across council said that social cohesion was of particular interest to them and an understanding of it was critical to the work they do. This research report on social cohesion in three distinct areas of Auckland is an important contribution to these broad research areas and was developed in consultation with colleagues from Region-Wide Community Policy and Planning; Community Development, Arts and Culture; and Community and Cultural Strategy.

Social cohesion is, we believe, a valuable framework for examining the factors that bring and hold Auckland neighbourhoods and communities together. It is particularly salient at this time in our history as we begin to understand the following issues and the challenges and opportunities with which they present us: an ageing population (Jackson, 2012); significant and increasing levels of ethnic diversity; and growing levels of inequality (Rashbrooke, 2013). Social cohesion's focus on shared norms and values complements the valuing of cultural diversity (Hickman et al., 2008: ix) and provides an alternative perspective to neo-liberal discourses that privilege the market in the distribution of resources and power (Jenson, 1998: 7). In addition, social cohesion provides a common language with which to communicate with other countries; major international and national bodies use social cohesion as a concept for framing their responses to the challenges of the future. In sum, as Jeannotte (2003: 12) claims, "…almost everyone living in a community, region or nation state has a stake in understanding 'what will hold us together'". Promoting cohesion in a world where there are many forces working to pull us apart is not an easy task, but it is one that is likely to become more important as we advance into the 21st century".

The report begins with a literature review where we provide an overview of the development of social cohesion as a concept; work through key definitions in local and international scholarship; discuss the relationship between social cohesion and social capital; outline and respond to criticisms of the concept and then examine factors that promote or erode social cohesion. In the Methodology chapter that follows, we list the research objectives, context and questions before outlining the methods used in responding to these. Next, we look at the three study areas: Albany, New Lynn and Papatoetoe. Each of these chapters contains a summary of the area's demography; a list of previous research where available; and an overview of important themes from interviews and focus groups.

Subsequent chapters focus on the results of the analysis of resident interviews and community worker focus groups in all of the study areas. These are assembled thematically and structured

according to three dimensions of social cohesion – belonging; participation at both a neighbourhood and a community level; and inclusion for ethnic, disabled, older and young people. The Discussion chapter considers these results in relation to the original research questions; examines the relevance of social cohesion to several strategic council documents; and concludes by focusing on a number of lessons that might be taken away from this project. We conclude with a summary of key findings and a re-articulation of the core arguments for using social cohesion as a framework for understanding what holds Auckland's neighbourhoods and communities together.

2.0 Literature review

Although academics and policy makers have long been interested in social cohesion (Chan et al., 2006; Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Friedkin, 2004; Jenson, 1998), there has been renewed interest in the concept since the 1990s, particularly in Canada, the United Kingdom and the European Union. The Canadian federal government introduced the idea of 'social cohesion' onto its official agenda in the 1990s (Chan et al., 2006) and has subsequently devoted considerable resources to its definition and measurement as well as to the development of a policy response (Spoonley et al., 2005). Similarly, the United Kingdom, Canada and the European Union have established specific organisations to articulate and disseminate understandings of social cohesion (Jeannotte et al., 2002).

Jenson (1998: 8) claims that the resurgence of concern about the subject occurred in response to the shift to neo-liberal[1] economic and social policies that have led to increased poverty, a decline in population health and a decrease in trust in public institutions. In Europe, policy makers' interest in social cohesion has increased alongside growing anxiety about the 'failure' of multiculturalism and the perception that ethnic diversity is a threat to social cohesion (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005). Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2126) locate current concerns about social cohesion in the problems of cities "and particularly the problems of poor people in poor neighbourhoods". What each of these explanations have in common is that the resurgence of interest in social cohesion is taking place in the context of significant change: demographic shifts; globalisation; and the surge in technological and communication advances. As Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2125-26) point out, concern about social cohesion historically occurs during periods of significant social, political and economic change.

Despite its frequent usage in academic and policy literature, social cohesion remains an ill-defined term (Chan et al., 2006) for which there is no commonly accepted definition (Jeannotte, 2003; Jenson, 1998; Spoonley et al., 2005). In addition, there is no consensus on whether social cohesion is a cause or a consequence of other aspects of social, economic or political life (Jeannotte et al., 2002: 20; Beauvais and Jenson, 2002). Some scholars treat social cohesion as an independent variable that generates outcomes, while for others social cohesion is the result of effects on one or more different areas. Friedkin (2004: 421) describes it as a "domain of causally interrelated phenomena…in which some of the major dimensions…occupy different theoretical positions with respect to one another as antecedent, intervening, or outcome variables". In this section of the report, we list some definitions of social cohesion and clarify our use of the term; briefly explore the relationship between social cohesion and social capital; articulate some criticisms of the concept; and then examine those factors which are believed to promote or erode social cohesion.

2.1 Defining social cohesion

A report on immigration and social cohesion prepared for the Ministry of Social Development in New Zealand follows Canadian social theorist, Jane Jenson, in defining a "socially cohesive society" as one where all groups have a sense of "belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy" (Jenson, 1998: 15). Jenson deconstructed the concept into five dimensions:[2]

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[1] 'Neo-liberalism privileges the market for distributing resources and power, seeks to limit the role of the state, and emphasises individual (and family) freedom as the core value' (Jenson, 1998: 7).
[2] Paul Bernard argued that 'equality/inequality' should be added to this list (Jeannotte et al., 2002).

- Belonging/isolation
- Inclusion/exclusion
- Participation/non-involvement
- Recognition/rejection
- Legitimacy/illegitimacy

In fleshing this out into a local definition of social cohesion, Professor Paul Spoonley and colleagues (2005: 98-99) explain the five elements of social cohesion as follows:
- Belonging involves a sense of being part of a wider community, trust in other people, and common respect for the rule of law and for civil and human rights.
- Inclusion involves equity of opportunities and of outcomes, with regard to labour market participation, income, education, health and housing.
- Participation includes involvement in social activities, in community groups and organisations, and in political and civic life (voting or standing for election on a school board of trustees).
- Recognition involves valuing diversity and respecting differences by all groups, including the host country, protection from discrimination and harassment, and a sense of safety.
- Legitimacy includes confidence in public institutions that act to protect rights and interests and to mediate conflicts, and institutional responsiveness.

The United Kingdom Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007) propose that a cohesive community contains trust, a willingness to support one another, a sense of belonging, and importantly, a respect for differences. Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2129), also in the United Kingdom, describe the domains of social cohesion as follows:

Figure 1: The domains of social cohesion

Domain	Description
Common values and a civic nature	Common aims and objectives; common moral principles and codes of behaviour; support for political institutions and participation in politics
Social order and social control	Absence of general conflict and threats to the existing order; absence of incivility; effective informal social control; tolerance; respect for difference; intergroup cooperation
Social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities	Harmonious economic and social development and common standards; redistribution of public finances and of opportunities; equal access to services and welfare benefits; ready acknowledgement of social obligations and willingness to assist others
Social networks and social capital	High degree of social interaction within communities and families; civic engagement and associational activity; easy resolution of collective action problems
Place attachment and identity	Strong attachment to place; intertwining of personal and place identity

Source: Forrest and Kearns (2001)

For the purposes of this research, we use three of Jensen's (1998) five dimensions of social cohesion: belonging and isolation; inclusion and exclusion; and participation and non-involvement. As she notes in her overview of the literature (1998: 18-19), researchers and policy makers interested in community at the local level have focused mainly on these three areas. Moreover, these dimensions are most closely associated with the overall purpose and activities of local government, which are to enable local decision-making and action; and to meet the current and

future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure and public services.[3] In order to fulfil these objectives, local government needs to foster an environment within which communities feel a sense of belonging, inclusion and participation. In sum, these are the domains in which Auckland Council operates and within which the organisation can make the most impact through various aspects of its core business.

2.1.1 Social cohesion and social capital

Social capital is often seen as a contributor to or component of social cohesion (Verhaeghe and Tampubolon, 2012). Jeannotte (2003: 6) explains the relationship between the two concepts in the following way, "[s]ocial capital is to social cohesion what saving is to wealth: in other words, social capital appears to be one of those investments that a society needs to make in order to guarantee downstream revenue pay-offs in the form of social cohesion". In some instances, the two terms are also used interchangeably. As noted in the previous section, definitions of social cohesion include ideas such as common values, social order, social solidarity, place attachment, social networks, interaction, shared values, and associational activity, all of which also feature strongly in definitions of social capital (Laurence, 2011: 72).

Social capital can be defined as ''features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions'' (Putnam et al., 1994: 167). However, for Bourdieu (1984) social capital refers to the resources that individuals have access to as a result of their connections to particular (well resourced) groups or individuals. Keeping Bourdieu's definition in mind, presenting social capital as an inherent good is problematic because it can disrupt meritocracy (i.e., you succeed because of who you know instead of what you know) or simply be relatively ineffective – although those of low socio-economic status may have strong social networks, these networks may be better able to help them cope with social problems than to overcome them (Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Cheong et al., 2007). As Cheong (2006: 384) argues, "social capital is not a cure-all as particular manifestations of social capital may be of limited value or even counterproductive in achieving civic engagement and social cohesion". Due to this complexity, we do not consider social capital as a component of or contributor to social cohesion in this report and instead explore the less contentious dimensions of belonging, participation and inclusion.

2.1.2 Criticisms of social cohesion

Criticisms of social cohesion fall into two main areas. In the first, researchers argue that neighbourhoods or communities may be internally cohesive but in conflict with other groups (Forrest and Kearns, 2001). Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2134) explain that the simplest observable measure of a cohesive community would be groups of local residents getting together around a common cause. This might include organising an annual street party, petitioning for a better local service or indeed forming a vigilante group to hound out 'undesirables'. As they go on to conclude, "[s]ocial cohesion at the neighbourhood level is therefore by no means unambiguously a good thing. It can be about discrimination and exclusion and about a majority imposing its will or value system on a minority" (2001: 2134). Like Jenson (1998: 38), we believe that "it's important to consider the impact of the emphasis on common values and consensus on disadvantaged communities and the risk of allowing a focus on social cohesion to divert attention from very real issues of disadvantage, differences in power, social justice, and diverse values". It is also important

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[3] Local Government Act 2002.

to note here that communities are not just place-based phenomena – communities may comprise people of the same ethnicity or those linked by biological ties or an interest or passion in an activity. An individual may, therefore, belong to multiple 'communities'.

The second and related area is that social cohesion may promote homogeneity at the expense of allowing for the expression of diverse views and lifestyles. As mentioned earlier, European policy makers' interest in social cohesion has grown in parallel with increasing concern about the 'failure' of multiculturalism and the perception that ethnic diversity is threatening social cohesion. Cheong et al. (2007), for example, claim that the focus on social cohesion in the United Kingdom is part of a broader agenda that privileges homogeneity and consensus over approaches that emphasize material and cultural difference. In the dominant discourse, they explain, social cohesion is taken to mean "a common national identity built via the development of common values, shared symbols [and] shared ceremonies…" (Cheong et al., 2007: 39). Citing the work of Ash Amin (2002), they argue that the danger of locating social cohesion in social solidarity is that it can slide into cultural assimilation and Western conformity. Amin (2002: 972) argues instead for an active citizenship built "not only on social solidarity and order but also through a local public sphere that supports open-ended engagement, vibrant opposition and negotiation". It is important to mention that social cohesion does not require that *all* values must be shared; instead it is necessary to identify which values can differ without threatening the development of a sense of community (Jenson, 1998).

As noted in the Introduction, we believe that social cohesion is a valuable framework for examining the factors which bring neighbourhoods, communities and nation states together. Firstly, it is a useful response to neo-liberal policies that privilege the market in the distribution of resources and power, seek to limit the role of the state and emphasise the core value of individual freedom (Jenson, 1998: 7). Secondly, major international and national bodies use social cohesion as a concept for framing their responses to the challenges of the future (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002). Thirdly, social cohesion's focus on shared norms and values can complement rather than substitute the valuing of cultural diversity. As Hickman et al. (2008: ix; emphasis in original) conclude, "[i]t is important to enable and support both expressions of *unity* and *difference* for the social cohesion of local communities".

2.2 Factors that promote and erode social cohesion

2.2.1 Ethnic diversity

A significant body of international research focuses on the effects of ethnic diversity on social cohesion. Many have suggested that (too much) diversity poses a challenge to or erodes social cohesion (Costa and Kahn, 2003; Goodhart, 2004; Putnam, 2007). Others argue that ethnic diversity has a minor impact on social cohesion and that the socio-economic status of the neighbourhood is the main factor that undermines social cohesion (Breton et al., 1980: 9-10; Letki, 2008; Twigg et al., 2010; Laurence, 2011). The latter group of scholars contend that policy attention ought to be devoted to reducing deprivation by addressing the structural determinants of access to resources, rather than focusing on neighbourhood institutions that promote inter-ethnic interaction (Letki, 2008: 122; Twigg et al., 2010: 1436).

James Laurence's research (2011) provides some insight into the complex ways in which ethnic diversity interacts with social cohesion. His research in the UK showed that:

- Higher levels of ethnic diversity in an area were correlated with lower levels of trust in neighbours. The strength of this relationship was halved when socioeconomic disadvantage was controlled for.
- Higher levels of ethnic diversity in an area were correlated with higher levels of tolerance. This was only the case when socioeconomic disadvantage was controlled for.
- Higher levels of ethnic diversity in an area were correlated with greater incidence of interethnic ties. The strength of the relationship between increased ethnic diversity and decreased trust was much weaker for those with interethnic ties. The increased tolerance associated with increased ethnic diversity was dependent on increased interethnic ties.

Most Auckland and New Zealand research does not use the language of social cohesion, but addresses related concepts of segregation (Brookes, 2009; Johnston et al., 2011a); ethnoburbs (Xue, 2008; Johnston et al., 2008; Hong and O'Sullivan, 2012; Johnston et al., 2009; 2011b); inter-ethnic contact (Collins, 2006); migrant feelings of belonging (Tepavac, 2006; Pio, 2010); attitudes towards immigrants (Ward et al., 2011) and policy approaches to diversity (Collins and Friesen, 2011).

2.2.2 Disability

Milner and Kelly (2009) argue that the policy understanding of inclusion is focused on access and participation rather than on a sense of community connectedness through relationships, which is what really counts. They identify several attributes of meaningful community participation that might foster a sense of genuine inclusion and belonging:
- A sustained presence likely to lead to a valued social identity (as opposed to fleeting and irregular visits);
- Access to private worlds of intimacy (rather than only public spaces);
- Equal, humanised relationships, unfettered by professional understanding;
- Self-authored, autobiographical activity (as opposed to activities controlled by service provider);
- Being inside communities at ordinary times and places
- Relationships bound by mutually understood and reciprocated giving and receiving;
- Active member expected to contribute (as opposed to passive service consumer); and
- Collective community source of reciprocal support (as opposed to person with a disability as recipient of support).

Participants in this research talked about the danger of being ghettoised within disability settings; the importance of being present in community settings; and the challenges of discrimination, intolerance and more subtle forms of exclusion in 'mainstream' settings.

Research on New Zealand children with a physical disability (Clark and MacArthur, 2008) found that 67 per cent of children had one or more problems taking part at school, with problems including difficulties joining in games and sport at school (59%), going on school outings or camps (28%), playing at school (47%), and or making friends (35%).

2.2.3 Other factors

Professor Karen Witten from Massey University has worked with other researchers on a number of social cohesion-related projects. They explored social cohesion in the Auckland suburb of Massey

which has comparatively poor access to community resources. Respondents suggested a lack of social cohesion in Massey might be attributed to a lack of clear suburb boundaries or a hub of local shops and services as well as residential mobility (Witten et al., 2003). They also undertook an analysis of the factors that contribute to a sense of community in Waitakere and the North Shore. This research showed that schools were sites of community belonging for 36.4 per cent of Māori and 37.9 per cent of Pākehā respondents. For Pacific parents (41.2%) and Asian parents (30.2%) church was the most commonly identified site of community belonging. Other factors identified as contributing to belonging to place were proximity to family and whānau, seeing other people like themselves in neighbourhood streets and venues, being recognized as a local person in these places, and the networks formed through contact and engagement with local facilities and institutions (Witten et al., 2007).

Analysis of perceptions of neighbourhood cohesiveness and associations with alcohol, cannabis and tobacco use (Lin et al., 2012) found that more damaging patterns of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use were correlated with lower individual-level neighbourhood cohesion. Lin, Witten and colleagues proposed the following hypothesis for the negative correlation found between perceived neighbourhood cohesion (at an individual level) and substance use in the case of smoking and drug use. Individuals who perceive their neighbourhood as more cohesive, they suggest, may feel either more integrated within and/or more watched and monitored by others and hence more likely to refrain from health-damaging behaviours; and that higher perceived neighbourhood cohesion may decrease substance use as a result of lower levels of stress and anxiety inherent in trusting social relationships. Witten and colleagues also undertook a qualitative study of transport-related barriers to social inclusion (Rose et al., 2009) and developed an index of neighbourhood social fragmentation (Ivory et al., 2012).

Home ownership has been associated with higher levels of social cohesion. In Australia, compared with owning a home, renting (public or private) is negatively associated with most of the indicators of social connectedness at a neighbourhood level: attachment to area, neighbourhood trust and cooperation, shared neighbourhood and identification with local area (Stone and Hulse, 2007). Similar research undertaken in New Zealand also found that there is a significant relationship between home ownership and sense of community. However, the researchers also found that there was no statistically significant difference in sense of community between those living in state-owned rental accommodation and those who owned their own home (Roskruge et al., 2013).

A final factor identified in the literature as impacting on social cohesion is arts and culture. Jeannotte and Stanley (2002: 133-34) define culture as "the arts" and as "the creative elements of our existence – expressions of who we are, where we come from, and where we wish to go". They argue that there are three ways in which culture influences social cohesion: it builds social trust and social capital; it is a venue for democratic inclusiveness and civic participation; and it is a laboratory that allows people to experiment with social innovation and test new symbolic resources.

3.0 Methodology

We began this research project with two main objectives: firstly, to contribute to the understanding of factors that promote social cohesion, particularly in relation to ethnicity and disability; and secondly, to contribute to the understanding of what Auckland Council could do to further promote social cohesion, particularly between different ethnic groups and for disabled people. In order to meet these objectives, we developed research questions that were intended to address the following dimensions of social cohesion: belonging and isolation; inclusion and exclusion; and participation and non-involvement (Jenson, 1998). These are the domains in which Auckland Council can make the most impact through various aspects of its core business. Our research questions were as follows:

1. What are people's experiences of inclusion and exclusion in terms of their neighbourhoods and broader spatial communities? Similarly, although to a lesser extent, what are people's experiences of inclusion and exclusion in terms of other communities such as those based on ethnicity or faith?
2. What organisations, places, spaces and events enhance or inhibit people's sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods and wider spatial communities? What other factors enhance or inhibit people's sense of belonging?
3. Do people have meaningful social interactions with people who are different from them in their neighbourhoods and wider spatial communities?
    a) What organizations, places, spaces and events facilitate these social interactions? What factors inhibit positive social interactions?
    b) Do these interactions contribute to people's experiences of inclusion or exclusion?

It is clear from these research objectives and questions that we were interested in neighbourhoods and communities. Like Healey (cited in Meegan and Mitchell, 2001: 2171), we believe that neighbourhoods provide a useful scale for studying the social relations of 'everyday life worlds'. Similarly, we have also paid considerable attention in this research to the concept of place; we agree with Parker and Karner (2010) when they argue that contemporary debates on social cohesion require greater attention to the particularities of place and local identity. We selected New Lynn, Papatoetoe and Albany for very specific, place-based reasons.[4] Albany was chosen because it is one of the city's newest suburbs; it has experienced considerable population growth in a relatively short period of time; and its residents are ethnically diverse. Papatoetoe was selected because it is one of Auckland's older suburbs (1875); it is located in the Southern Initiative,[5] and has experienced significant demographic change over the last 20 or 30 years. We chose New Lynn because it has undergone considerable economic and social change in recent years as well as alterations to its built environment such as the new train station.

Another reason for our choice of these three areas is that together they represent a mix of new and settled communities. As Threadgold et al. (2008) note in their United Kingdom-based research, there is a need to explore social cohesion across new and established communities, groups and areas. Taking this idea one step further, our research participants were chosen because they were

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[4] For more information on each area see Chapters 4, 5 and 6.
[5] The Southern Initiative is 30-year programme that focuses on developing stable homes and employment opportunities for children and families in four local board areas: Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara Papatoetoe, Manurewa, and Papakura (Auckland Council, 2012: 90-91)

part of longer-established Māori, Pākehā and Pacific communities as well as new migrants and refugees from a range of different source countries.

There can be no doubt that a number of groups, not just ethnic minorities and disabled people, are at risk of isolation, non-involvement and exclusion – youth and older people, those at home with young children and those on very low incomes, for example. This project sought to understand fairly complex issues in some depth, which could only be achieved, given budgetary and time constraints, by restricting the scope of our research questions. The decision to focus on ethnicity and disability was made in response to the following:

- the significant interest shown by staff across Auckland Council in the implications of increasing ethnic diversity; and
- the tendency for disability to be overlooked in other Auckland social research.

It is not our intention to suggest that those from minority ethnic groups and disabled people are the *most* at risk of isolation, non-involvement and exclusion, and we have included participants' discussion of other vulnerable groups where appropriate.

Qualitative methods – one-on-one, semi-structured interviews and focus groups – were chosen for this research because they elicit the kind of data necessary to provide an in-depth understanding of complex social processes. Although this data is not statistically representative, it does provide us with important insights into the experiences and perceptions of members of Auckland's diverse communities. Ignite Research[6] were contracted to undertake recruitment and data collection; see Table 1 for an overview of the research sample and interview medium. Interview guides for residents, community workers and key informants[7] (Appendices A and B) were developed collaboratively by researchers from Ignite Research and RIMU.

Table 1: Overview of research sample and interview medium

Participants	N=	Medium
Community workers Albany New Lynn Papatoetoe	 9 6 7	 Focus group + telephone (2) Focus group Focus group
Residents Albany New Lynn Papatoetoe	 18 18 18	Interviews were undertaken in residents' homes or in neutral venues such as libraries and cafés. 4 interviews were conducted over the phone. Some interviews were undertaken with more than one family member.
Key informants	4	Telephone interviews
Total participants	80	

3.1.1 Focus groups with community workers

Focus groups were intended to gather the expert opinions of those who work in Albany, Papatoetoe and New Lynn and have extensive insight into the specific issues facing each area. Focus group participants included Auckland Council community workers, NGO personnel and one

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[6] http://www.igniteresearch.co.nz/
[7] Data from the key informant interviews has not been included in this report.

school principal, all of whom were recruited through Auckland Council networks. An attempt was made to involve representatives from a range of service providers working with different groups – migrants, the elderly, youth, the disabled. The focus groups were held in community centres/houses in each of the three areas and lasted for approximately two hours. They were facilitated by researchers from Ignite Research. We acknowledge that there were selective processes involved in working through council networks and only talking to those who could attend at the designated time, but such selective processes are necessary in all research. While the focus groups cannot be seen as representative of the views of all community workers in each area, they provide valuable context to residents' perspectives.

NGOs represented in the focus groups were:
- Albany – Raeburn House (2); Albany High School (Board Chair); Albany Community Coordinator; Yes Disability Centre; Kiwisport and Active Asian; North Shore Community and Social Services; Auckland Council (Senior Community Development Facilitator; Upper Harbour Local Board member)
- New Lynn – Ecomatters; Lions Club; Whau Ace Education; Dayspring Life-changing Community Services; Auckland Council (Community Development Facilitator)
- Papatoetoe – Sikh Association; Age Concern; Clover Park Community House; Chanting Wheel Buddhist Temple; Auckland Council (Community Development Facilitators [2])

The focus groups were recorded and transcribed. A prize draw koha (three prizes of $100 to nominated charity) was offered to incentivise NGO participants.

3.1.2 Resident interviews

Eighteen residents from each of the three areas (54 interviews in total) were recruited through a panel, community agencies, word-of-mouth, street intercept, and the research team's networks. Interviews were conducted by researchers from Ignite Research in residents' homes or in neutral venues such as libraries and cafés. Four interviews were conducted over the phone when initial face-to-face interview arrangements fell through. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes. Each respondent was given a $35 koha and was entered into a prize draw for a $100 Warehouse voucher.

The detailed resident sample is set out in Appendix C and was developed by Ignite in consultation with the authors. The final sample included: people from a range of ethnicities that are reasonably representative of the ethnic composition of the area; respondents aged 18-80; roughly equal numbers of women and men; people from a range of socioeconomic strata, as reflected by their current employment or educational status; and a selection of interviewees who might be at risk of social isolation. The latter group included carers; people with disabilities; elders living alone; recent migrants, including elders; and sole parents. Carers were defined as those supporting either one or more elders or another family member with a significant disability.

Four interviewees had insufficient fluency in English to answer the interview questions; these participants were assisted by a family member or a support worker from a migrant support agency. Similarly, one person with a speech impairment due to cerebral palsy was assisted by a relative. All interviewees gave informed consent at the point of recruitment for their interview to be audio recorded and half of these were transcribed. The criteria for selecting interviews for transcription were: relevance to the research topic; inclusion of interviewees from a range of ethnicities, age,

gender, socioeconomic status, and risk of isolation; interesting or unusual viewpoints. Having only half the interviews transcribed allowed for more interviews to be conducted than would have been possible within our budget if all interviews had been transcribed. The notes we received did not lend themselves to in-depth analysis, which has had some implications for our ability to draw strong conclusions from our research.

3.1.3 Analysis and presentation

Data from the resident interviews and focus groups was coded and analysed by the authors using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo in order to identify key themes. The data included verbatim transcripts from half of the resident interviews; notes from the remaining interviews; and verbatim transcripts from the three focus groups.

As noted in the Introduction, the results of the analysis of resident interviews and community worker focus groups in all of the study areas are assembled thematically. In order to enable readers to focus on those areas of most interest to them, each of these sections may be read as a standalone chapter. As a consequence of this, some quotes may appear more than once and readers may notice a degree of overlap between sections. We have used a combination of text and selected verbatim quotes to convey the breadth and depth of the content in each section. All quotes appear in italics; changes have been made to verbatim text only for the purposes of intelligibility and confidentiality, and these appear in square brackets. Each quote is followed in brackets by the area, gender, approximate age and ethnicity (as described by Ignite researchers) of the participant in order to provide context to the interview fragment.

4.0 Albany

Albany is located 15 kilometres northwest of the Auckland city centre in the Upper Harbour Local Board. For this project, Albany has been defined as including the following Census Area Units, North Harbour East (508807), North Harbour West (508806) and Albany (508701), as shown in the map below.
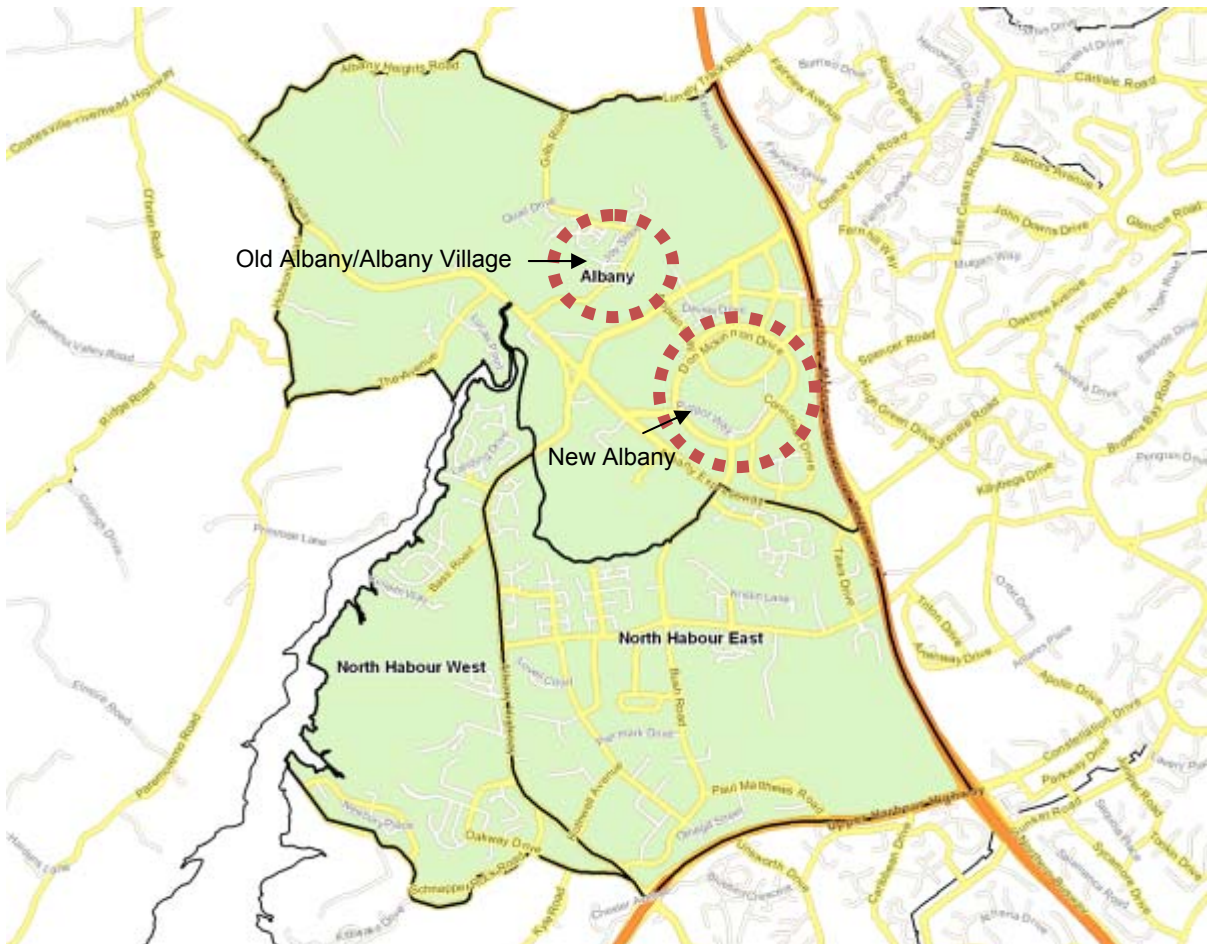
Albany is one of the city's newest suburbs. It was a town in its own right until relatively recently and much of the land to the north of Albany is still semi-rural. The area grew rapidly, both in terms of population and in terms of the development of the built environment, following planning decisions and land sales made by central and local governments in the 1980s and 1990s. Considerable housing development was facilitated by the extension of the Northern Motorway through the area.

In 2005, a development plan for a new northern regional centre at Albany was approved. These plans included a new retail and entertainment complex, homes and workplaces for at least 10,000 people, hotels, a library, and a municipal swimming pool. Although the economic recession caused by the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 has had some effect in limiting the pace and scale of development, the urban form of Albany has changed significantly in accordance with the 2005 plans. Westfield Albany opened in August 2007 on Don McKinnon Drive. This 'supermall' has over 142 shops and an indoor area of 7 hectares. Following these developments, Albany has become a major shopping destination. Albany also has one of Auckland's newest sports facilities, North Harbour Stadium, which draws up to 25,000 spectators to games.

Many Albany residents talk about 'old' Albany and 'new' Albany. Old Albany or Albany Village refers to the area around Kell Drive and was the centre of Albany when it was a town independent of Auckland. New Albany refers to Westfield mall and the surrounding retail and office space around Don McKinnon Drive, southeast of Albany village.

At the time of research, Albany did not have any clear, easily accessible central facility/service hub from which residents could access resources, services and opportunities for socialisation. 'Albany House' is a small community hall that accommodates the Albany Community Coordinator and provides space for local activities and events. The Albany Community Coordinator reports to the Albany Community Coordinator Trust Board and works within the Upper Harbour Board community to support and develop local initiatives, liaising with a broad range of local organisations with a particular focus on young people. This role was vacant for some time with a new recruit starting in May 2013.

The Upper Harbour Local Board, as outlined in its Local Board Plan, has allocated a capital budget of approximately $1.2 million for building a new local, multi-functional, community facility in Albany in the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years. The former North Shore City council identified the need to respond to the shortage of community meeting and socialisation spaces in Albany after extensive consultation with community representatives. Other plans for Albany include a new aquatic facility, expansion of the Albany park-and-ride, increased car parking for Albany Village and a youth recreation project (Upper Harbour Local Board, 2011).

4.1 Demographics

Figure 2: Overseas-born Albany residents
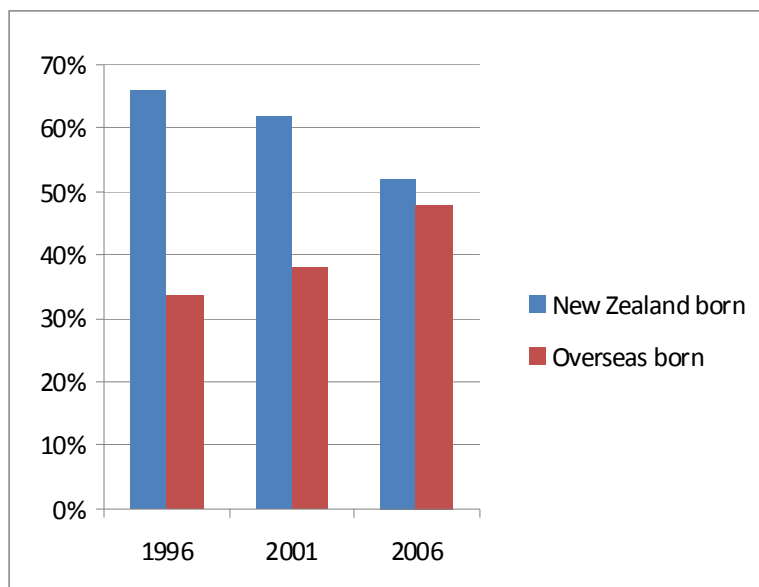
Albany's population grew significantly in the decade between 1996 and 2006 from 1920 to 8,881. During this period, the proportion of the population who are overseas born also increased significantly from 34 per cent in 1996 to 48 per cent in 2006. It is likely that the 2013 Census will show that this trend of a growing migrant population has continued.

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

The proportion of those of European ethnicity in Albany declined from 95 per cent in 1991 to 62 per cent in 2006. During the same period the proportion of Asian residents in Albany increased from 1 to 26 per cent. Note that part of the decline in residents of European ethnicity can be explained by the reclassification of 'New Zealander/Kiwi' responses as 'Other' rather than New Zealand

European in the 2006 Census. Māori and Pacific populations in Albany are small (in 2006 5% and 1% respectively) and have remained relatively steady.

Figure 3: Ethnicity of Albany residents (Level 1)[8]
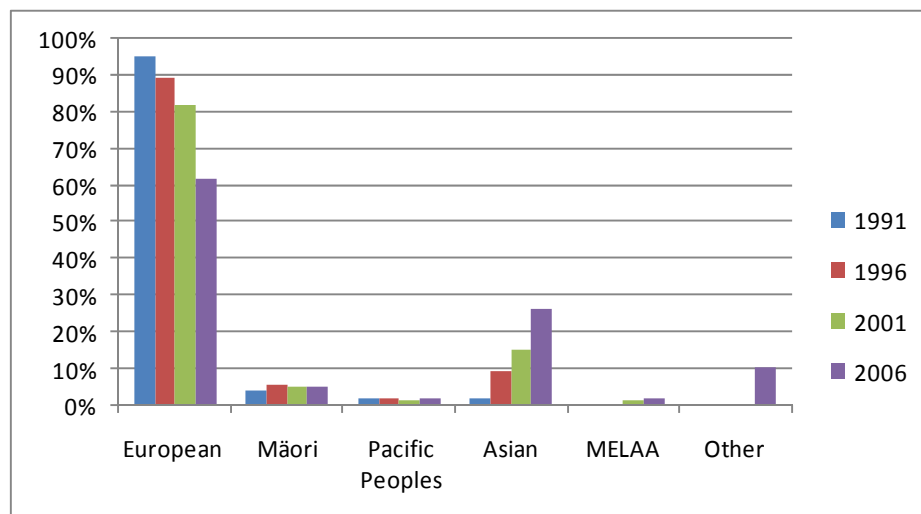
Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

A closer look at the top ten 'level 3' ethnic groups in Albany shows that in 2006 Asians in Albany were mostly Chinese and Korean, with a smaller proportion of Indians.

Table 2: Ethnicity of Albany residents (Level 3)

Ethnic Group	Count	Percent
New Zealand European	4356	51.0%
Chinese	852	10.0%
Other Ethnicity	846	9.9%
Korean	765	9.0%
Other European	465	5.4%
Māori	390	4.6%
Indian	300	3.5%
British and Irish	267	3.1%
Other Southeast Asian	120	1.4%
Filipino	99	1.2%

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

In terms of age distribution, Albany has a high proportion of residents aged 20-24 and 35-39 compared to Papatoetoe, New Lynn and Auckland as a whole, perhaps reflecting large numbers of Massey University students and new migrants.

At the time of the 2006 Census, over a third (36%) of Albany residents had been at their address for less than a year and 41 per cent had been resident for between one and four years. A total of 77 per cent in their residence for less than 5 years for Albany can be compared to 59 per cent in their residence for less than 5 years for all of Auckland.

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[8]The standard classification of ethnicity is a hierarchical classification of four levels. Individual ethnic groups are aggregated into progressively broader ethnic groups from level three up to level one, according to geographical location or origin, or cultural similarities. Level one of the classification has six categories (European, Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African, Other Ethnicity) and level two has 21 categories.

A relatively large proportion of Albany residents earn comparatively high incomes. In 2006, over a quarter (26%) of Albany residents earned over $50,000 per year compared to only 11 and 12 per cent of residents in Papatoetoe and New Lynn respectively, and 22 per cent of Auckland as a whole.

4.2 Previous research

A number of studies conducted in Albany in recent years have generated findings that have strong parallels with this research project. These studies are summarised below in an effort to bring together in one place all evidence on the factors that contribute to and detract from social cohesion in Albany.

4.2.1 Northern Ward community report

As part of the process of producing a community profile in 2009, North Shore City Council held a number of focus groups with those living and working in the Northern Ward (NW) to gather their views on community and social planning and development into the future, with a particular focus on young people. Although the Northern Ward is a much broader area than that considered in this social cohesion project, there is clear overlap between some of the key themes discussed in the 2009 community profile focus groups and those raised by social cohesion project participants (North Shore City Council, 2010). Some of the key themes raised in the 2009 focus groups included:

- Seeking better outcomes for migrant support;
- An understanding of the relationship between urban form and community behaviour (e.g. severance of the NW community by SH1, competition between the village centre and the big-box format retail of the Westfield area);
- A need for a stronger sense of community;
- A need for the NW to have a 'heart' for the community to focus on, such as a hub where services and community facilities are co-located.
- A need for more responsive services and facilities, tailored to the NW community (focus group participants felt that services provided on an aggregated basis for the whole North Shore resulted in other wards and centres being prioritised over the NW).

4.2.2 Settling In Albany Migrant Community Social Services Report

The Settling In initiative was introduced in 2004 in response to New Zealand's increasing ethnic diversity and a growing awareness that intervention was required beyond the early settlement period to maximise outcomes for refugees and migrants. Settling In is a strengths-based community development programme that works directly with newcomer communities to help them find solutions to meet their own needs. The main purpose of the 2010 'Settling In: Albany Migrant Community Social Services Report' was to highlight key issues for migrants who had settled in Albany and to identify needs, gaps in services and suggestions for further action. Research for the Settling In report comprised of focus groups with local migrants, involving over 100 participants from around 23 different homelands (Settling In, 2010).

The most significant issues raised were as follows.
- Poor access to services:

- o   no local information resource to support newcomers on their arrival (in a range of languages)
  - o   insufficient ESOL[9] provision and language development opportunities
  - o   limited structured opportunities to volunteer within the community
  - o   lack of community facilities, in particular those that:
  - o   promote community connections and cohesion;
  - o   provide socialisation opportunities (especially for young and older migrants); and
  - o   provide recreation opportunities (especially a swimming pool, gym and an adequately sized library).
- Lack of opportunities for migrant-host interaction
  - o   the size of some migrant communities means that they tend to socialise together, despite wanting more contact with others from outside their community.

4.2.3   Me MahiTahiTatou Focus Albany Leadership Training Workshops Evaluation Report

A number of project partners joined together to deliver two four hour leadership training workshops in Albany (attended by eight people). The project partners were Inspiring Communities, North Shore Community and Social Services (NSCSS), Raeburn House, Auckland Council, Safer North, EDGE Employment, and Flaxroots Village Planning Network (FVP). The project partners wished to support and grow street-level engagement and neighbourhood-led development in Albany. They looked to identify and support local leaders to drive this initiative (Manley, 2012).

Discussions around barriers to social cohesion in Albany took place. Community fragmentation was the key barrier identified and was described as involving the following factors:
- Urban form: ad-hoc development, a lack of a coherent and unified vision for Albany (other than the development of a commercial hub), and ultimately, fragmentation and a sense of disconnectedness.
- Lack of public transport.
- Ethnically diverse population: a large community of refugees and migrants who have English as a second language and face more social inclusion barriers than English-as-first-language people. Social isolation, lack of community links, and limited knowledge of the community resources necessary to assist in social development increases disconnectedness.
- Large youth population: transient with secondary and tertiary education requiring mobility and travel.

4.3   Key social cohesion research themes in Albany

A community worker from the Albany focus group said: "it is repeatedly, repeatedly said to us. Albany has no heart." By this she meant that Albany lacks a sense of identity and belonging. These comments were supported by other community workers:

> *… in Albany whilst it's maybe economically strong, when you have people who don't feel they belong in that place, I think you're fighting a tough battle to make the place better … in*

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[9] English for speakers of other languages.

Albany you put an intervention in and … we're fighting a tough battle because they don't know their community … (Albany Focus Group)

Although many Albany residents said they did feel they belong in the area, the following quotes from Albany residents reflect the sentiments expressed by focus group participants:

I don't feel I really belong anywhere because I love to travel. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

I feel I belong with my family but not the neighbourhood. (Albany, male, 20s, Chinese)

Yeah, because I've only been here for a year and a half and so I still don't think this is my home. I'm still trying to find new things around here to do and stuff. I don't know what's around other than the mall, I don't know much else. (Albany, female, 20s, Māori)

Most residents described choosing to live in Albany because of its convenience, particularly its proximity to their places of work and education and (to a lesser extent) leisure, as opposed to any particular affection for the place.

What I like about Albany is lots of families … I like the mall … For us with [my daughter] in the wheelchair there's parking out the front, there's parking below if it's raining. The developers really did a good job with the accessibility of Albany Mall. (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

… having a big shopping centre like the Westfield certainly helps because I don't need to travel outside Albany to get something, everything is so central. Public transportation is very good, there are buses that run right across the road to pretty much everywhere. There is Albany Park & Ride bus station which is within a 15 minute walk so everything is very convenient. Having the Massey University right next door to us is also a great benefit because they've got the onsite gymnasium, the basketball courts, leisure facilities which you don't have to be a student to use it. Plus you've got the Albany Tennis Park. There's a lot of things that are in the area. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

The newness of Albany both in terms of its built environment and in terms of length of residence were themes common to both resident interviews and the focus group. A Māori lawyer in his fifties described Albany as a typical new, affluent suburb where 'people keep to themselves' and there's no sense of a local identity. He suggested that Albany was not old enough to be cohesive. A community worker made similar comments:

We have two brand new schools, we have very few families that have been here generation after generation, so there's not the firm identity – it hasn't established its identity for me yet. Old Albany they talk about chickens, they talk about the village. So that has a bit of an identity, but the new part – and I live here now, and as a resident I don't feel any affinity to Albany. (Albany Focus Group)

These discussions suggested that while Albany may have its problems, it may also just need time for relationships, places and a sense of identity to develop.

Community workers talked about the mall as a problematic centre of Albany:

A   *People have tried to make the mall a central focus point – so in particular young people. Because it is in the middle and it's a place where they feel they can meet, young people have tried to make the mall a destination. Inevitably, lots of them have been trespassed out of the mall because they are just generally a nuisance. So now they've made the car park a destination, and they're sort of being moved from that. So you've got these transient young people looking for somewhere to be. If you look at the mall out here you'll have a beautiful holiday day and the mall is full, full, full of lots of local people – absolutely crawling, because it is a place where people will gather. The mall is the central gathering place for people living in Albany…*

B   *But the problem with the mall, if that was to be the heart the challenge is with the financial pressures – unless the mall does something innovative to really support creating that space, I think it creates another pressure.*

The concerns expressed by community workers echo the academic literature:

> shopping malls have, in some ways, become the new version of the 'village pump', where citizens gather in all weathers to use services but also to mingle with others and possibly socialize … Unlike real public spaces, the primary purpose of a shopping mall is to generate profits for the businesses that operate there. This does not inevitably lead to the exclusion of 'non-consumption' activities, but usually they will have to be justified in terms of business benefits. (Shaftoe, 2008: 30)

A strong sense of Albany identity did not emerge from respondents' narratives. Instead, Albany was characterised as a relatively wealthy area, inhabited mostly by busy working families and a transient population of students. There were strong parallels between the narratives of Albany participants and the results of research conducted in Massey by Karen Witten and colleagues (Witten et al., 2003). In both Albany and Massey, the lack of a hub of 'local' shops (as opposed to a mall) and services as well as residential mobility were associated with a lack of social cohesion in the area. However, only a couple of Albany residents talked negatively about the mall and most talked about it as a positive local place for shopping and dining.

A few residents talked about Albany's built environment – sprawling and centred around buildings of an industrial size – as inhibiting neighbourliness and a sense of community. A Māori lawyer in his fifties said that Albany had not been designed for community or cohesion – it had been planned primarily as a commercial area and residents were an 'afterthought'.

Interviewer   *Do you think that there's anything that the council could be doing to make it easier for people to get together to have a greater sense of community in Albany?*

Resident   *I think they've hindered the ability to do that by making Albany like a town centre and building a mall and a stadium and all those things there because it's become more of a small city almost than a community.*

(Albany, female, 20s, Pākehā)

Just looking at what is actually in the area, you've got a great big car place and garage and that takes an enormous amount of space down the road. A few little shops that were built, accommodation for uni students, big tennis courts before you get to Mitre 10. Because of the very nature of what's here and the huge amount of space that the uni takes and the facilities they have, I can't see what they can do to Albany. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

Community workers also talked about Albany's problematic built environment, but their focus was on its lack of walkability, and the resultant lack of opportunities for bumping into neighbours and incidental conversations:

A   *You don't see children on the streets. Most people have electronic garages, so they literally press a button and go in, the garage goes down and they go into their internal access house – there is quite new housing.*
B   *They can't walk. In some areas they can't walk. There isn't a footpath, there are no safe areas to walk in…*
A   *Albany doesn't have a walking school bus… You don't even have a path. You've got Albany Junior High, so you come out of there onto the main highway, there isn't even a proper path that the kids can walk. They have to cross a massive main road to get to the other side to walk … there is no way my kids will walk to school here.*

Interestingly, Albany residents did not talk about the difficulty of traversing their neighbourhoods on foot.

Residents talked a little about the lack of a place such as a community centre where residents could meet, but when asked what changes they would like to see, they talked mostly about events such as outdoor movies, which were perceived as having been a success in the past. The lack of events was also a concern of the Albany community workers.

Albany community workers talked a lot about the lack of activities for youth in the area. This was reinforced by young Albany residents who talked about going to the city centre for their leisure:

What is there to do? There's the mall but we're all so poor at uni … We go to the mall and there are those bars around there but we usually go to the city as well because they want to try and get away from this. I'm sorry, but we don't like this area. Once we go to the mall there's nothing new next time. (Albany, female, 20s, Māori)

Another concern of community workers and residents was the need for opportunities for newcomers to get involved in their neighbourhoods. A young Chinese student, for example, talked about trying and failing to volunteer at a local retirement village to improve his English and expand his network of acquaintances. Another young Chinese student talked about wanting to be more involved in the community but not knowing how. An elderly Korean resident talked about wanting to connect with 'Kiwis' but finding it difficult due to her lack of English. And a recent Korean migrant talked about wanting meetings to be organised to enable neighbours to get to know each other.

A final issue that Albany community workers (but not residents) were concerned about was the provision of services by organizations located outside Albany. Community workers felt that having services provided by local agencies would be preferable as these agencies would be more in tune with the specific needs of the community.

5.0 Papatoetoe

Papatoetoe is located approximately 18 kilometres southeast of Auckland's city centre in the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board. For this project, Papatoetoe has been defined as including the following Census Area Units – Puhinui (522400), Grange (523401), Papatoetoe Central (522202), Papatoetoe North (522201), Papatoetoe East (522302), Dingwall (522301), Kohuora (524303), Papatoetoe West (522100) – as shown in the map below.
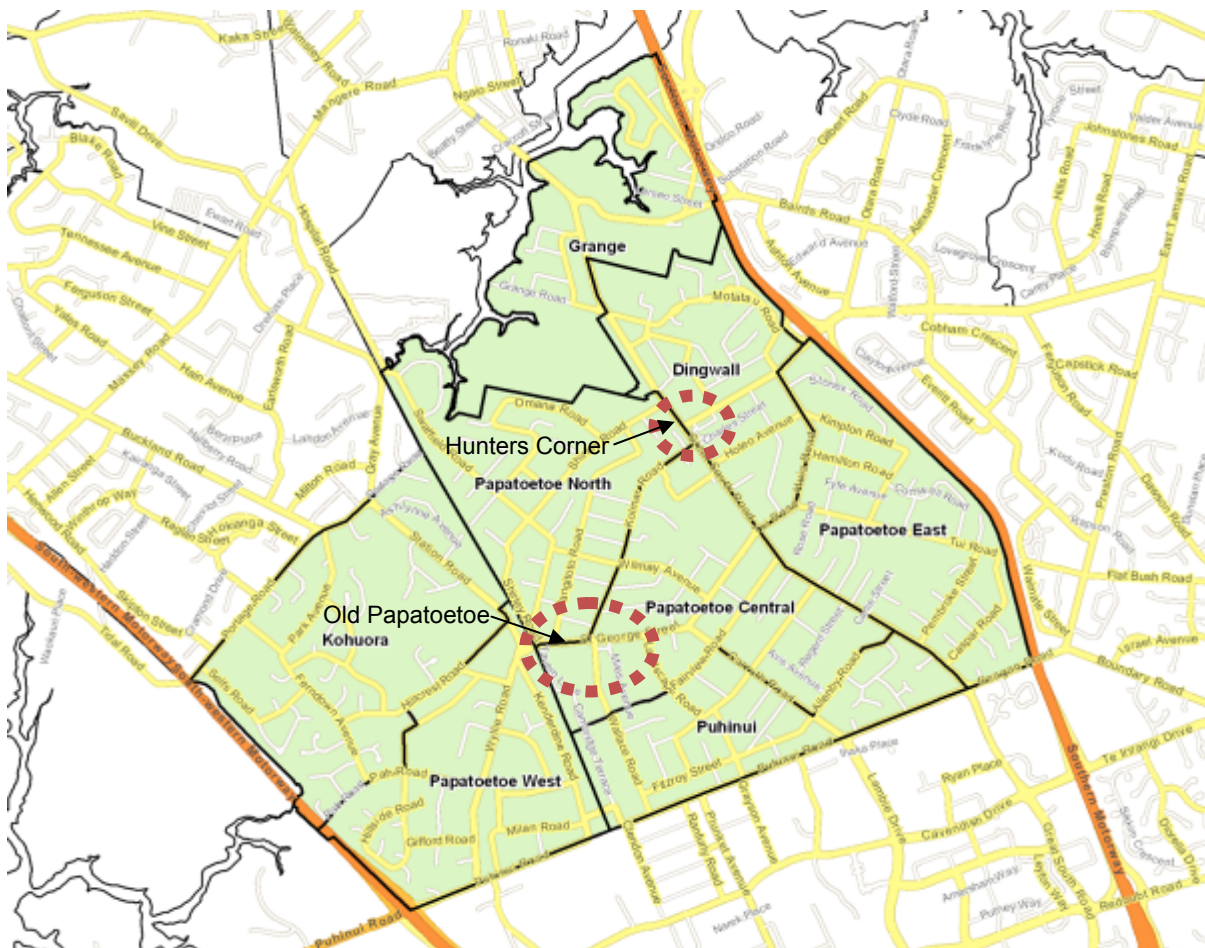
Papatoetoe's growth into a town began with the opening of the railway station in 1875. In 1919, the Papatoetoe Town District was formed and Papatoetoe then grew steadily for several decades, becoming a borough in 1947 and a city in 1965. The area's main population growth occurred after World War II, when many returning service men received housing in the area. By 1980, population growth slowed, with all available land taken up, though some infill housing growth occurred later. In 1989, Papatoetoe City lost its independent status when it became the Papatoetoe Ward of an enlarged Manukau City.

Papatoetoe is relatively well serviced by social infrastructure including the Allan Brewster Recreation Centre, the Papatoetoe Citizen's Advice Bureau, the Papatoetoe Centennial Pool and the new multi-sport Papatoetoe Sports Centre. The changing population of the area is reflected in the opening over the past twenty years of a number of temples including the Shree Swaminarayan Hindu Temple, Kadampa Buddhist Centre (Tibetan Buddhist temple) Sri Darmesh Darbar Gurudwara (Sikh temple).

In early 2009, Manukau City council announced plans to spend millions revitalising the town's centre in the St. George Street area (Old Papatoetoe). New apartment buildings and nearby sports facilities (centred around the multi-sport Papatoetoe Sports Centre which opened in 2011) were proposed.

Efforts to revitalise Papatoetoe's centres have continued under the newly amalgamated Auckland Council. The 2011 Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board Plan includes plans for revitalisation as well as open space and sport ground development at Hunters Corner, and town centre revitalisation along with a new museum and arts facility for Old Papatoetoe (Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board, 2011).

5.1 Demographics

Figure 4: Overseas-born Papatoetoe residents
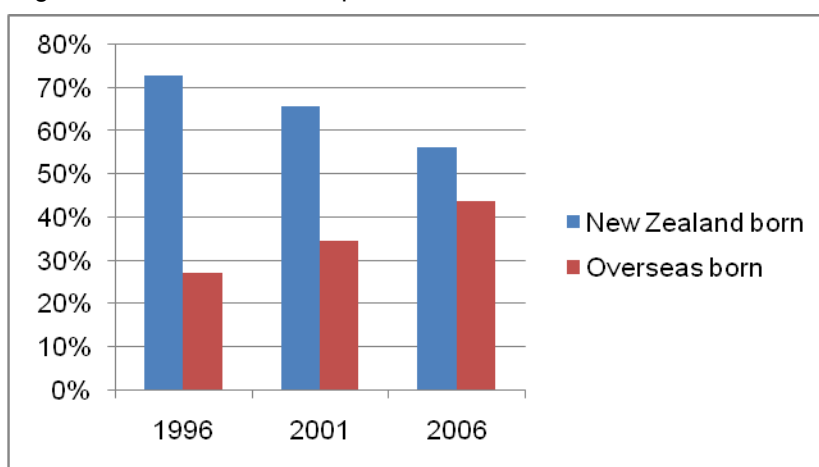
The population of Papatoetoe grew from 28,443 in 1996 to 33,891 in 2006. The proportion of residents who are overseas born has increased from 27 per cent in 1996 to 44 per cent in 2006.

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

The proportion of Papatoetoe residents who identify as European has declined from 71 percent in 1991 to 35 percent in 2006. Note that part of the decline in those of European ethnicity can be explained by the reclassification of 'New Zealander/Kiwi' responses as 'Other' rather than New Zealand European in the 2006 Census. The proportion of Pacific Peoples in Papatoetoe increased from 14 to 25 per cent between 1991 and 2006. In this period, the proportion of residents who identified as Asian increased from 7 to 33 per cent.

Figure 5: Ethnicity of Papatoetoe residents (Level 1)
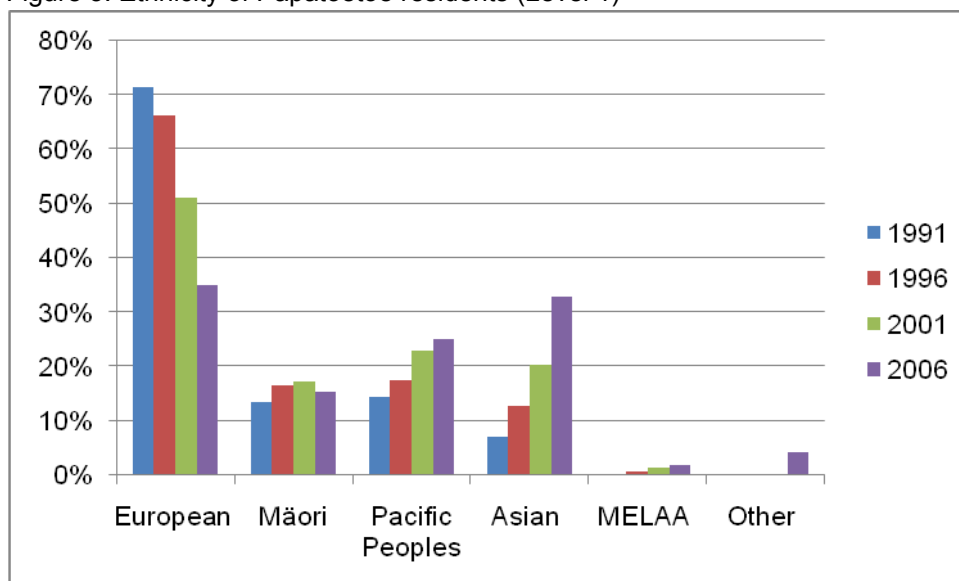
Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

A closer look at the top ten 'level 3' ethnic groups in Papatoetoe shows that in 2006 the largest Asian group in Papatoetoe was Indian (22% of all Papatoetoe residents) and the largest Pacific Peoples group was Samoan (14% of all Papatoetoe residents).

Table 3: Ethnicity of Papatoetoe residents (Level 3)

Ethnic Group	Count	Percent
New Zealand European	10083	31.6%
Indian	6957	21.8%
Māori	4932	15.4%
Samoan	4344	13.6%
Chinese	2022	6.3%
Cook Islands Māori	1650	5.2%
Tongan	1608	5.0%
Other Ethnicity	1389	4.3%
Niuean	708	2.2%
British and Irish	531	1.7%

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

In terms of age distribution, Papatoetoe has a high proportion (32%) of residents under 20 compared to Albany (28%), New Lynn (26%) and Auckland as a whole (30%).

In terms of years at usual residence, Papatoetoe has a smaller proportion (61%) than Albany (77%) of residents who have been in their residence for less than 5 years, but this proportion is still higher than that for Auckland as a whole (59%). Of the three areas, Papatoetoe has the highest proportion resident for 10-29 years (18%).

In terms of personal income, Papatoetoe has a much lower proportion of residents earning $50,001 or more (11%) than Auckland as a whole (22%), suggesting it is a relatively low-income area.

5.2 Key social cohesion research themes in Papatoetoe

When Papatoetoe residents talked about what they like about their neighbourhood, they focused on a sense of familiarity and safety:

> … because I know the streets and I know this shop or something, or I know what kind of people are around, I'm really comfortable with just walking up the road to a store. I'm just really comfortable with the suburb and the community around… If I moved from Papatoe I would move from my family as well. Not only do I have my friends here, but I have my family here too. It is good to keep together. I wouldn't mind a change, but it is good being at home. (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

> Everyone lives here, Indian, Samoans, Cook Island, Māori and Tongans, Niue. We mix with everyone. We have a new next door neighbour here, they're Samoans, but they're very nice people. I reckon over here I feel safe because sometimes I forgot my key and I didn't lock my door, I just close it and just leave it like that. Once I come here, everything in my house is still there. Nobody touch anything. That's why I trust all my next door neighbours aye, I feel safe living here … I love living here, I never want to move. It's very nice around here … No, no fighting, all good …The hospital. Middlemore Hospital is right there. It's safe

for my family. When my little boy gets hurt I just walk there. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

Unlike in Albany and New Lynn, a few Papatoetoe residents felt ambivalent or negative about their neighbourhood:

> *At one stage I thought it was a good neighbourhood then a lot of burglaries started happening in a short space of time. My immediate neighbours got hit quite a few times, except for our house. In that way it has changed my attitude towards security and making sure that my family are safe. To me it is getting a little worse, as opposed to when I was growing up … In general I'm happy. I'm happy with the schooling, I'm happy with the activities my children are in. I'm happy with things that are out there that we can participate in. I'm just a little bit unhappy with security.* (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

> *It's OK. We'd love it if we could afford to live in Parnell or Remuera because of the quality of lifestyle but this suits our needs and we're not unhappy.* (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Papatoetoe interviews reflect the mix of long-term residence and recent arrival described above. Two residents who had lived in the area for 15 years said 'everybody knows everybody' and several other long-term residents talked positively about the familiarity of the area and its people. At the same time, the influx of Indian migrants was a common topic of conversation. Many non-Indian residents talked about the insularity of the Indian community. While some mentioned diversity as something they particularly like about Papatoetoe, others presented the Indian community as a challenge.

> Interviewer   *What do you like most about Papatoe?*
> Resident   *… The diversity of it. All the cultures in here. There is so many cultures in here, so it is cool seeing different cultures.*
> (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

> *I personally find the Indian cultures very insular. They come, they settle in but they only move within their own communities, their temples and they only shop at their own shops. I don't think they integrate as well as they could. We don't have the attitude that they shouldn't be here, they don't belong here. What I don't enjoy is when they impose their culture on us …You're in New Zealand and we do things slightly differently … They bring valuable things to our culture as well. As long as they don't dominate.* (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

The community workers who participated in the focus group talked extensively about the need for settlement services and opportunities for inter-ethnic interaction, but also the need to be sensitive to how older long-term residents might feel about their changing neighbourhoods.

> *For me, social cohesion is about looking at the whole picture of why the person migrated to New Zealand. How do those services adapt to the needs of those who have come to settle in this country? It's important that any delivery of services are culturally appropriate to some of our people … Social cohesion for me is about having access to those services but we have to have a need to access those services, even on a voluntary basis. Often a new*

migrant volunteers their services to get into employment or to connect with others in the community. Once you get a job, that will alleviate some of the issues. It's surrounding that barrier to participate in the community. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

I think you've also got to recognise that a lot of old people, older residents, existing residents, when new people come in, sometimes they feel quite threatened that everything is going to change. They don't know the culture, the food, the language, it's very difficult for them. The new person coming wants to assimilate and become part, whereas the existing person may not have that desire. They might want everything to stay the same. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

Papatoetoe community workers talked at length about the value of small community events like Neighbours Day and planting days in bringing people together and promoting social cohesion. However, residents' ideas about areas for change were more focused on addressing issues like prostitution, rubbish, liquor and legal high stores, and poverty. The most frequently mentioned issue in Papatoetoe was prostitution. Although not all residents talked about prostitution, those who did indicated that this had a very negative impact on their feelings about their area.

The prostitutes aren't supposed to be there anymore, but they are … That makes [the] community not want to go there. They are so aggressive if you go by there or you say something to them. A lot of them just think that you want to fight them, so they're ready to fight you. (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

There is something that I really don't like which is the prostitution and stuff that happens in Hunters Corner. Sometimes I work at [ ] at nights and I finish at 11pm, even when I'm coming home from rugby training at 8pm, they're all out on the streets trying to wave you down … You see it from East Tamaki Road to Great South Road to Kolmar Road. It's quite embarrassing when you live near Hunters Corner, that the reputation of Hunters Corner is prostitution. (Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

There's a legal high store that's set up and we don't want it in our community. We've talked to our local MP about it via email and we know that legislatively there's not a lot they can do until the law has changed but that's a real concern to us. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Yeah, financial the people are suffering … I [am] happy because my wife's wages are good. But I think the other families are suffering. A lot of families in the community are suffering. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

Despite these challenges, Papatoetoe stood out from the other two areas in some positive ways. While many residents in Albany and New Lynn talked about the lack of activities and facilities in the area, particularly for young people, Papatoetoe residents spoke more favourably about the opportunities for community participation in their area:

I met most of my friends through the library. The community centre is right next door … It's mostly a hall that people use, they can hire it out. … I see that as [an] opportunity to connect with other people through common interests … That community hall has right behind it a youth centre and they hold real physical activity stuff for youth. It's pretty good.

In the same area at Walter Massey Park they have rugby teams, both league and union there. This neighbourhood has got almost everything. (Papatoetoe, male, 17-20, Samoan)

I go to [the] night market every Friday, the one in Hunters Corner … I meet a few of my friends there. They text me and go "hey sis, are you coming to the night market?" and we all meet there and all eat together and we all come here and talk and they all go home. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

I can see that the council has started to provide a lot of opportunities for my kids at stages and at times that I can't provide. So the council has opened up a lot of activities for them to join into … Sporting activities and having things down at our local parks, like the movies in the parks, rock climbing … They're free ... I always take my baby – the council provides wriggles and rhyme classes for kids up at the library. I do take him to a lot of those just to get out of the house. Since winter is coming up it is probably warmer to be up there than in this house … It is good for him to socialise with other children. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

When I went to the park and played volleyball there with my family, we saw all those people with their own [community] garden there and I was like "woah". They were talking and knowing each other and I was like "mean, that's what I want too, I want to know them too" … that's a good thing to get people along and talk and get to know each other. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

Church featured prominently in both resident interviews and the focus group with community workers. It was clear that church was a key arena for community involvement for many Papatoetoe residents, particularly those of Pasifika and Indian ethnicities.

6.0 New Lynn

New Lynn is located approximately 10 kilometres to the southwest of Auckland's city centre in the Whau Local Board. For this project, New Lynn has been defined as including the following Census Area Units – New Lynn South (511302), Lynnmall (511303), New Lynn North (511301), Rewarewa (511402) and Fruitvale (511401) – as shown in the map below.
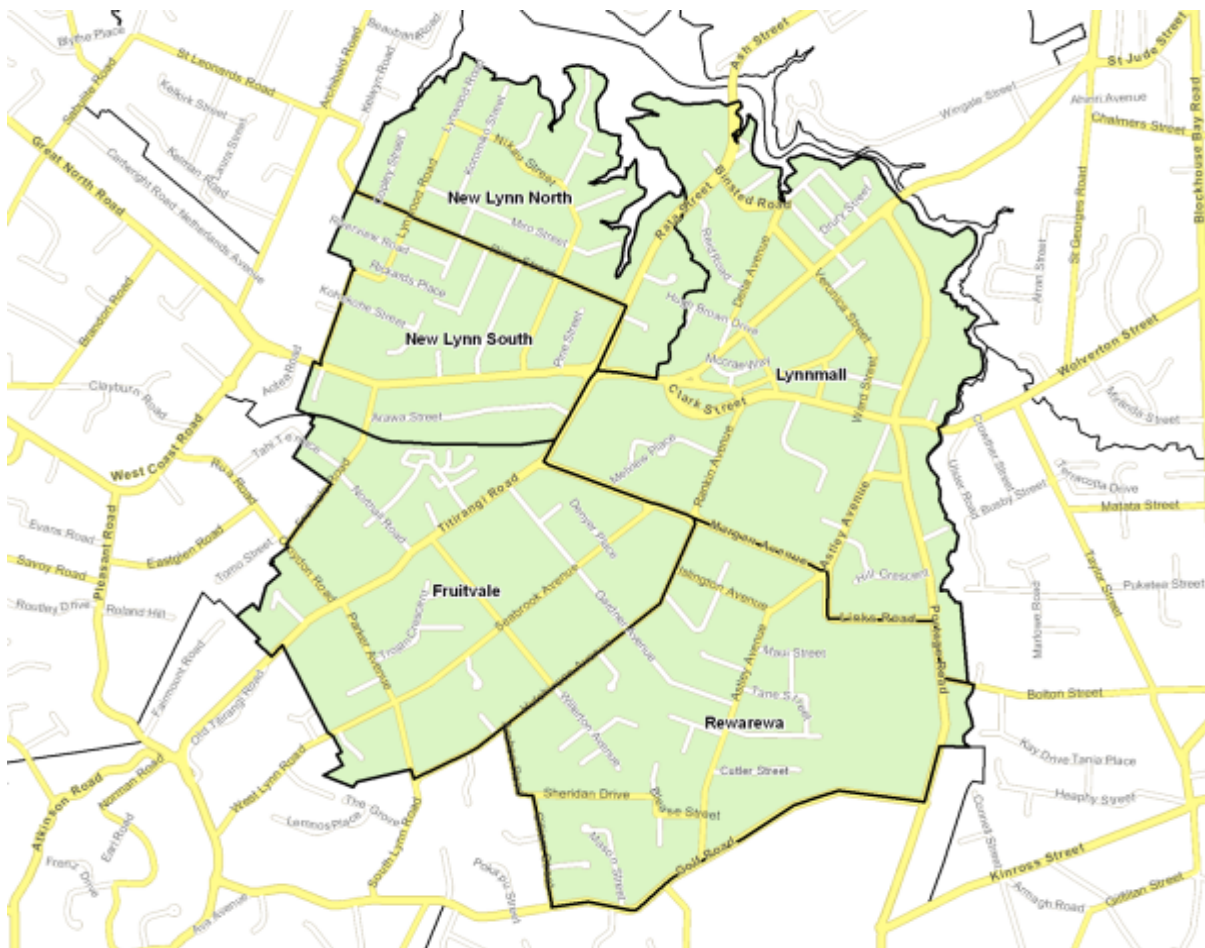
New Lynn grew rapidly over the first few decades of the twentieth century due to the expansion of the Western railway line, which had been established in 1880, and New Lynn's development as an industrial centre on the basis of its abundance of clay and access to waterways. The primary industries were brick-making, ceramics and tanning. New Lynn became a Town District in 1910 and a Borough in 1939. Auckland's first American-style shopping mall, LynnMall, was opened in New Lynn in 1963. The New Lynn Borough became part of Waitakere City in the local body reforms of 1989.

Waitakere City Council began thinking about a revitalised New Lynn centred around a transport hub in the 1990s, but it wasn't until 2005 that changes were made to the District Plan to enable a more intensive form of development in the centre. Since then, there has been considerable investment in rail, roading and other infrastructure in New Lynn. New Lynn Train Station, located next to the bus transport centre and the LynnMall shopping centre, was upgraded in 2008–2010 to allow trains to pass beneath, rather than through, the New Lynn town centre. Sinking the rail line was the first step in a process intended to revitalise New Lynn. The next stages involve completing

a new park and public square and the construction of medium-density housing. According to the 2011 Whau Local Board Plan, further planned investments in New Lynn's physical and social infrastructure include the construction of a swimming pool and the New Lynn Clay Pit urban park and continued support for the New Lynn Moon festival, an annual celebration of Chinese language and culture (Whau Local Board, 2011).

6.1 Demographics

Figure 6: Overseas-born New Lynn residents
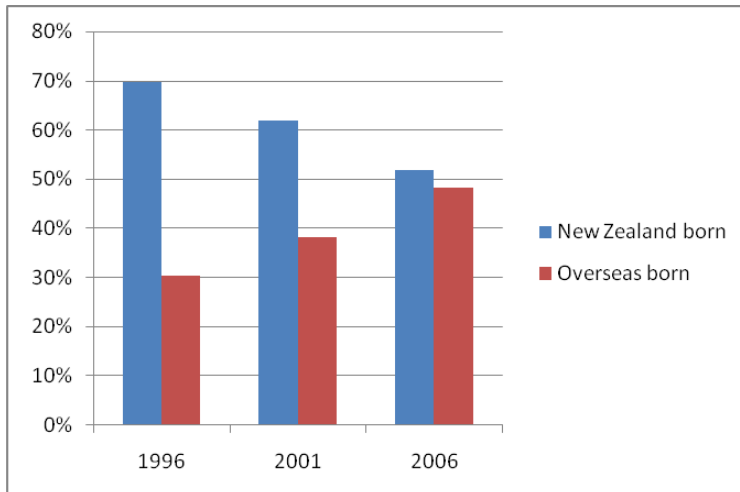
The population in New Lynn grew from 12,375 in 1996 to 15,504 in 2006. There has been an increase in the overseas born population in New Lynn from 30 per cent in 1996 to 48 per cent in 2006.

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

The proportion of those of European ethnicity in New Lynn declined from 75 per cent in 1991 to 43 per cent in 2006, partially as a result of the reclassification of 'New Zealander/Kiwi' responses as 'Other' rather than New Zealand European in the 2006 Census. The Asian population in New Lynn has grown from six to 36 per cent in this period. Between 1991 and 2006 there have been slight fluctuations in the Māori and Pacific populations. In 2006, 9 per cent of New Lynn residents identified as Māori and 15 per cent identified as Pacific Peoples.

Figure 7: Ethnicity of New Lynn residents (Level 1)
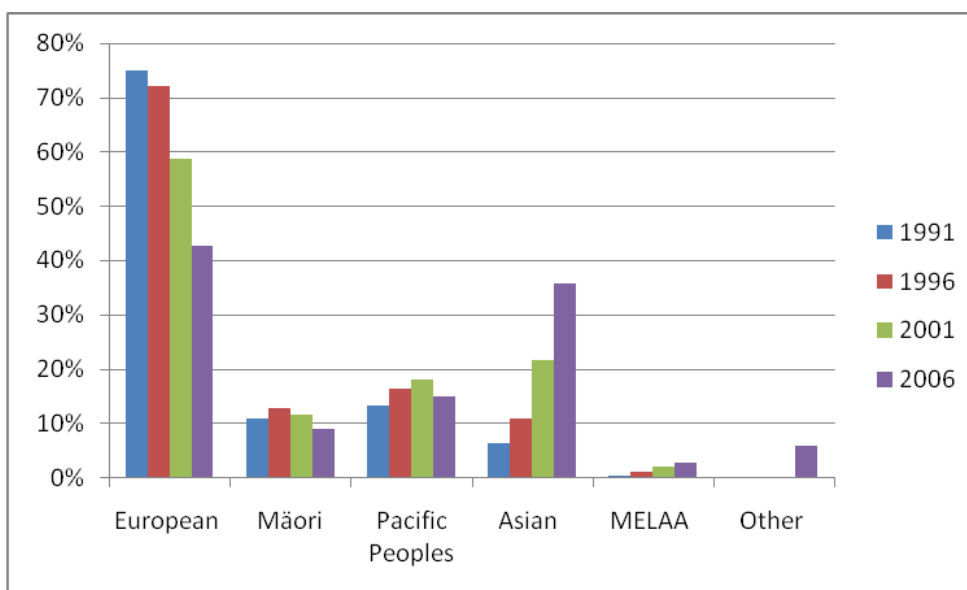
Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

A closer look at the top ten 'level 3' ethnic groups in New Lynn shows that in 2006 the largest Asian groups in New Lynn were Indian (19% of all New Lynn residents) and Chinese (10%), and the largest Pacific Peoples group was Samoan (12% of all New Lynn residents).

Table 4: Ethnicity of New Lynn residents (Level 3)

Ethnic Group	Count	Percent
New Zealand European	15513	33.5%
Indian	8871	19.1%
Māori	6210	13.4%
Samoan	5589	12.1%
Chinese	4428	9.6%
Other Ethnicity	2226	4.8%
Tongan	2019	4.4%
Cook Islands Māori	1920	4.1%
Niuean	906	2.0%
British and Irish	864	1.9%

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006

In terms of years at usual residence, New Lynn has a smaller proportion (64%) than Albany (77%) of residents who have been in their residence for less than 5 years, but this proportion is still higher than that for Auckland as a whole (59%).

In terms of personal income, New Lynn (12%) has a much lower proportion of residents earning $50,001 or more than Auckland as a whole (22%), suggesting it is a relatively low income area.

6.2 Key social cohesion research themes in New Lynn

Community workers suggested that New Lynn is not a particularly socially cohesive community:

> …if you walk down the street you want to say hi to your neighbours and not feel like you're on your own. You can turn to people for help if you need something and vice versa. I don't really think New Lynn has got that…Really head down bum up, that is what we're doing. You focus on it and you tend not to look at the community around you. (New Lynn Focus Group)

Community workers felt that New Lynn had had a sense of community in the past when it was a largely working class suburb centred around the brick and ceramic industries, but had lost that as the area became more of a 'commuter suburb'. Although residents did not express a consistent New Lynn identity, most felt positive about the area. Many long-term residents talked about the familiarity and comfort of the area, while others talked about its convenience in terms of location and services, its proximity to green spaces, and its diversity:

> I don't know if it is the bush and the nature – I don't know. But everyone seems friendly and there is always lots of people going for walks…What would you call it – like different cultures all together …It just kind of all works together. Especially down at the Margan Ave shops. People get along with each other I suppose. (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

> It's handy and the people; there are different people from different cultures. It's got places where you can go and meet other people, like the library, the shopping mall … and the

transport is all in one spot… I think New Lynn is a lovely, beautiful area to live in. I'm smiling every day, I'm happy every day, I'm doing what I love doing every day. That's the main thing. (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

We've settled and we've been here 21 years and we know everyone around the place. We know where to get our milk from, we know where the good vege shops are. The transport system is handy, the railway station is right there … The schools have been good. It's not too far away from the city. The mall is handy. There are lots of things. I like being out west … The beaches, the nature, the markets, the people. You go to other areas and you notice the difference in people…That's one of the things that I really love about out west … More working class. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

Some community workers felt that a sense of community was increasing following recent infrastructure development in New Lynn. This positive view of recent infrastructure changes in the area was also expressed by residents:

…with the recent changes that have happened in the upgrade of the town centre, because they've worked really hard to make it more accessible for pedestrians, they've flattened out all the gutters and it's actually been a huge advantage to wheelchair users I think. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

New Lynn, Rata Street, they had a new little playground behind the library, they upgraded that and now it's more like any traffic that goes through has to drive a bit slower. I like that. I love that … When you walk you feel safe and you don't worry about a car dashing through because cars have to slow down there … That street is nice. When they upgraded that they had a little fair … I think that's nice. (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

Community workers suggested that there is a lack of 'common ground' or shared space in New Lynn and a need for more places where people could 'hang out' such as a theatre, cafes and bars. As in Albany, the mall in New Lynn was described as a problematic centre because "*it's all so rushed in there. You need a place where you're going to bump into people and chat. In the mall you don't do that.*" (New Lynn Focus Group)

These sentiments were reinforced by residents who talked about a lack of 'things to do' in New Lynn, particularly for young people, and said they went out of New Lynn for much of their leisure:

I think that we need to look at what we're providing for young people. (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Māori)

… if we're not at someone's house it's going to be more likely outside New Lynn. There's not much you can do in New Lynn. There are no events or outdoor activities you can do... I don't mind travelling to find something that appeals to me… Most of the things are outside New Lynn that interest me to be honest … There's nothing really that keeps me in New Lynn if I think about it. (New Lynn, male, 20s, Indian)

However, some residents felt that there was a lot to do in New Lynn:

There's always something happening. They have the Christmas parade, different exhibitions and stuff around – like the Eco Friendly House and those kinds of things.

There's always something in the Western Leader if you want to do something. They used to have a lot more community classes at the schools and everything but they've cut all that down. Of course there's the bars and cafes as well. That's got quite good now. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

Community workers and residents talked about the need for a community centre that was more welcoming and accessible to the community. Community workers talked about the fact that the centre is rarely used, many people don't know where it is, despite it being one of the biggest structures in New Lynn, and it lacks a community feeling. Residents talked about the lack of opportunity for casual use:

A   *… I just felt that there has been a lot of money spent on this huge facility and very rarely I see anybody in here …*
B   *I reckon you could change it if you had some regular friendly faces here. If you walk in and no one is here to help you and you're just like 'where do I go?' There is no sign … You just need to see a person.*

There's nothing there for all our children, especially the teenagers … They need some resources and a place where they can go. You can't just say to these young ones 'there's a community centre, you can go there'. They can't, it has to be by appointment to see whether there's availability there… I think they should put more resources in the community. A community place where everybody can come in. Not like a community thing where you have to book and pay. (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

They have the community centre but you can't just openly walk in and pay $2 and use it. There's nowhere like a rec centre where kids can go and hang out on rainy days to keep them out of trouble. (New Lynn, male, 20s, Fijian)

In addition to issues around community spaces, residents were also concerned about safety and transport:

I would say the crime. We don't see it but it happens. I know at our old house we lived there for five or six years and my car got broken into three times. We lived down a long driveway, the neighbours behind us they lived in Tahiti and they only came back every three to four months. Their house got broken into a few times and their stuff got stolen. But we were always there, so it was happening when we were there. (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

In New Lynn that would be cool to have some more cycle lanes. It would bring us closer together as a community, to be able to go on cycle rides together. (New Lynn, male, 20s, Indian)

There's not a lot of art stuff here actually, you'd have to go to Titirangi or to Henderson and the Corban Estates Art Centre. That's something that could be an improvement in the future. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

7.0 Belonging

Belonging is the first dimension of social cohesion identified by Canadian social theorist, Jane Jenson (1998). A sense of belonging has also been identified as central to a socially cohesive society by Jeannotte and colleagues (2002). In fleshing this out this dimension of social cohesion, Professor Paul Spoonley and colleagues (2005: 98-99) explain that belonging involves a sense of being part of the wider community, trust in other people, and common respect for the rule of law and for civil and human rights. For Jenson, the opposite of belonging, and an indication of a socially non-cohesive society, is isolation.

In order to explore local understandings and experiences of belonging and isolation in Albany, Papatoetoe and New Lynn, we asked residents:

- Do you feel like you belong in this neighbourhood? Why? Why not?
- Do you think there are any people who are a bit isolated? Who? Why?

Their responses, along with community workers' discussions of belonging and isolation, are presented below.

7.1 Belonging

When residents were asked whether they felt that they belonged in their neighbourhood, most said yes and generally explained their sense of belonging in relation to the length of time they had lived in their neighbourhood, their levels of familiarity with the area and sometimes both these factors.

I would say so. I say that because we are one of the longest to be here. (Albany, male, 65+, Pākehā)

Yes, yeah. I'd have to say we do … by and large it's a community where people have tended to stay. You get multiple generations … You do get to know people … It helps that sense of belonging because people aren't shy about coming up and saying "hi, how are you? I've noticed you somewhere", or they'll come up and offer help and have a chat. It's quite open. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

I belong here … for me my roots [are] here in Auckland and Papatoe. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

Others explained their feelings of belonging in terms of the positive characteristics of their neighbourhood – feeling safe, their neighbours' friendliness or willingness to help:

Yeah … there's something about Albany that makes you feel as if you're belonging to the community … It's also the people as well in Albany. To be honest, I don't think I've ever come across any nasty people and that's once again going back to me feeling that this is a very peaceful neighbourhood and everybody is quite nice in this area. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

Definitely … You just feel comfortable, secure. We don't get involved with our neighbours but we can wave to them and if something was to go wrong we could go to the neighbour

and say "can you help me? I've been locked out" or whatever. We're certainly not on their doorstep at all. The main thing is that you feel comfortable and secure. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

Yeah … I used to walk and exercise every evening or afternoon. I walk around and there are nice people. When I meet them on the road they talk and say hello. I think Papatoe is [a] safe place to live. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

Curiously, people suggested that feeling safe and secure in one's neighbourhood created a sense of belonging, *and* that feeling a sense of belonging made one feel safe and secure:

… when you feel like you belong you feel safe and secure … I just know the area so well and where everything is. And friends. I've been to school here. It is just you feel comfortable – just because you know everything and your whole life is here. If I moved somewhere else it would be far from friends. I wouldn't really know where to go, even just to shop. Just the little things like that. (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

The emphasis on safety and security in relation to belonging is particularly evident in Papatoetoe residents' suggestions about areas for change in their suburb. These focused on addressing issues like prostitution, rubbish, liquor and legal high stores, all of which negatively impacted on their sense of belonging and safety. These findings support the definition of belonging articulated by Spoonley et al. (2005); that it comprises a sense of being part of the wider community, trust in other people and a common respect for the rule of law and for civil and human rights.

Home ownership also featured in several residents' discussions about belonging, providing some support for research that suggests that home ownership is positively associated with some aspect of social cohesion (Stone and Hulse, 2007).

Interviewer	*Sounds to me that you feel that you belong quite a lot in this neighbourhood. You feel comfortable?*
Resident	*I do. I think the biggest downfall is that you have rental properties right next to you who don't care about the property like [we] do. Same old thing though, if you love your property you keep it clean and tidy. Some people out there – it is an investment property. Basically you have to come out of your house and tidy up their section and mow the lawns just to make your place a little bit tidier and the whole street. It is just pride …*

(Papatoetoe, male, 50s, Māori/Chinese)

Resident	*Yeah. I grew up in Papatoetoe. We both slot in wherever we are because we've both lived overseas long term at times. Your home is where you are.*
Interviewer	*Any other reasons why you feel you belong here or is it mainly the childhood?*
Resident	*Probably because we own our property and we're freehold.*

(Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

It is also important to remember that a sense of belonging can be impacted by economic factors, as these participants explain:

Well, I don't [feel at] home in Albany. I don't want to live in Albany in New Zealand because life is very expensive … I paid to [do] my language course and then separately my daughter

paid to [attend] the primary school, it is very, very expensive for us … money is a big problem. (Albany, female, 30s, Korean)

Yeah, financial the people are suffering … I [am] happy because my wife's wages are good. But I think the other families are suffering. A lot of families in the community are suffering. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

Being tangata whenua was intrinsic to this Māori resident's sense of belonging:

In our street, the number of houses that have been purchased by Indian families have grown quite a bit. In fact, in the last five years probably all the properties that have gone up for sale on our street have been purchased by Indian families. Do I feel threatened by that or [do I] still … belong? Absolutely yes. That's probably because I'm very secure in being Māori. There is nowhere in this country that I wouldn't feel a sense of belonging. There's no other place for me to call home. This is it for us. We can't go back to Samoa and Fiji, this is it. I'm very secure in the knowledge that I am tangata whenua … (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

Some residents, particularly in Albany, reported having no feelings of belonging. They explained this primarily in terms of having lived in the area for only a short time, a lack of involvement with local people and activities, and having other more meaningful communities of belonging:

I don't feel I really belong anywhere because I love to travel. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

I've only been here for a year and a half and so I still don't think this is my home. I'm still trying to find new things around here to do and stuff. I don't know what's around other than the mall, I don't know much else. (Albany, female, 20s, Māori)

In a way. I don't really think I've called any place home yet. (Papatoetoe, male, 17-20, Samoan)

In Mangere, I got together more often with [my neighbours] and I felt more of a sense of belonging. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Fijian Indian)

7.2 Isolation

Residents and focus group participants identified the following groups as being particularly vulnerable to isolation in the three neighbourhoods: people with mental health problems and/or disabilities; particular groups of migrants and refugees; and the elderly. In many of the examples discussed in this section, isolation is a consequence of being part of more than one of these vulnerable groups.

7.2.1 Mental Health

Several of the residents interviewed for this research talked about their feelings of isolation. An Albany participant with mental health problems, for example, talked about feeling very lonely and not having anyone to talk to other than her sister. She felt that a lack of transport options and language problems made it difficult to connect with others. Similarly, an Iraqi refugee suffering from

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder also talked about feeling very isolated. She didn't feel settled in her neighbourhood, had no social networks and had difficulty speaking English. A community worker in the New Lynn focus group explained:

> *Just from my own experience, those women experiencing mental health issues [are most likely to feel isolated]. That is why [organisation] is there, to bring them together and break their isolation. Post-natal depression and all those sorts of things … They're at home with their baby. That is one of the things. Violence in the home – they go into their cave, they're ashamed … that is why [organisation] runs a crèche for the mums who attend our programmes for free.* (New Lynn Focus Group)

7.2.2 Disability

Disabled people, according to residents and focus group participants, are also vulnerable to feelings of isolation in their neighbourhoods. This was, participants explained, sometimes due to the challenges of negotiating the built environment. However, isolation was also linked to society's attitudes towards disabled people and a sense of being outside of, or external to, the daily lives and concerns of 'mainstream' society. Milner and Kelly (2009:38) suggest that meaningful community participation that fosters a genuine sense of inclusion and belonging is characterised by (among other things) access to private worlds of intimacy; equal, humanised relationships; and a sustained presence likely to lead to a valued social identity.

> *I work in the disability sector and … I would say that it would be that community that would probably be more isolated. We've got the largest deprivation statistic in the country. We have the biggest population of people with disabilities in South Auckland … and I would say that there are a significant population that is largely ignored.* (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

> *Our youth with disabilities [are] quite [isolated]. Whether they're in a special needs school or a mainstream school, it's often very isolating with their accessibility or ability to get to places on their own.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

> *I was using a manual wheelchair and I found it quite isolating because I couldn't push [it] very far or get it in and out of my car easily. I think if you have a mobility impairment or something that affects your stamina or fatigue … it would be extremely isolating – particularly if you're unable to drive.* (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

7.2.3 Ethnicity and migration

Particular groups of refugees and migrants can also feel isolated. For many, the common factor is a lack of fluency in English, as these residents and focus group participants explain:

> *Some people talk to more people, any kind, it's alright, but mostly I … can't really … my English is not that good …* (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Chinese)

> *I don't think [my neighbour] speaks very good English because she's always speaking in Punjabi and if the husband is away it's easy for a person to become overwhelmed. She's got three kids.* (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

However, as the following quotes illustrate, a sense of isolation related to a lack of English language fluency can be exacerbated by having few opportunities to interact with others outside of your community as well as problems negotiating transport infrastructure. An additional issue for refugee (and other) communities, although not explicitly articulated here, is a lack of financial resources. All of these factors can have a significant cumulative impact on people's ability to have meaningful interactions with others.

> *Probably with English as a second language it can be difficult to participate in things where you'd have to communicate a lot. Our Sri Lankan neighbours are an interesting example of that because the Mum has good English but Dad doesn't. Dad works fulltime and he works with people from his own culture so he's talking [his own language] all day and his English never improves … I would think it would be really hard for him to do anything other than go shopping at the supermarket where you don't have to talk to anyone. To actually come to the library and ask questions or go somewhere else and ask questions would be really hard.* (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

> *The refugee community is really struggling in New Lynn. There is no place for them to meet and they are so isolated … It is the Somali that are struggling because their set up is in Mt Roskill, which is great, but travelling from New Lynn to Mt Roskill is not easy. So they are very isolated out here, which may be why you don't see them because they're not getting out of the house.* (New Lynn Focus Group)

7.2.4 Ageing

The elderly were identified by many residents and focus group participants as being vulnerable to loneliness and isolation, particularly when old age was accompanied by English language difficulties, illness, lack of mobility or disability. This was reinforced by the experiences of some residents. For example, an elderly Indian resident said that she feels quite isolated because she does not speak English. In addition, she relies on her family for transport as she isn't able to walk or take the bus due to mobility issues.

> *There is an aging population and they're outliving all their friends so they've got no one else to talk to.* (New Lynn, male, 20s, Fijian)

> *One of the biggest health issues which they've said has as much health consequences as smoking is isolation and loneliness … The majority of those are older people where language is a barrier, mobility is a barrier, disability is a barrier. They're the ones who need the social cohesion probably more than anybody and they get it the least.* (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

7.3 Reducing isolation and increasing belonging

Community workers who participated in the focus groups felt that community or neighbourhood involvement was important in creating a sense of belonging and in decreasing feelings of isolation:

> *… it stops people feeling isolated and alone and I think that is one of the biggest concerns today… When people aren't connecting face to face and they don't know who they're living*

around or by or communicating with, I think it can impact on their feelings of safety and their wellbeing and belonging to a community. (Albany Focus Group)

… what actually furthers that sense of belonging is the sense of community that is around you and supports you and that you have an interaction with. (Albany Focus Group)

A   *People like to feel a sense of belonging.*
B   *Exactly. They want to feel that they belong to this area.*
C   *They want to be part of something and working towards something.*
D   *What they can call their place …*
E   *I think that I personally believe that people are meant for community and connection, it's the way we're wired.*
(New Lynn Focus Group)

It's a whole thing, it's holistic. If you've contributed all your life in another country or at another age or in another state of ability and then something happens and you have a disability or a language barrier or isolation as a barrier, it's not just that that's the problem. It's the lack of being able to participate and being valued. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

These comments were reinforced by elderly residents who described the value of connecting with other older people in the community:

There are some amazing people. Some of the stories they have. Yes, I do enjoy it. The personal interaction and learning something new … (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

We've got a community centre up here, very convenient. It's also got certain classes I attend, exercise classes I have to have. I also go to the New Lynn Community Centre where they have a folk dancing class every Wednesday. It's a bit of English, Scottish … We're not that active, ours is just a hop and the skip but the senior citizens there are very good, they remember their steps. I enjoy going to that class … The senior citizens are very friendly and very nice and if you're a newbie they really make you feel welcome. They talk to you and tell us we're dedicated members, very nice … That's one thing I love about New Zealand, age doesn't matter. In Singapore "oh I'm 50 I can't do this, I'm 50 I can't wear that colour". You wear what you want and do what you want and even at 70 you can still go to uni and study. I really appreciate it. (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

The following chapters describe how people get involved in their neighbourhoods and communities, the value they place on different forms of participation, and their ideas for increasing participation and involvement.

8.0 Participation: Neighbourhood

According to Jenson (1998: 15), participation is an element of a socially cohesive society, while non-involvement can be indicative of a lack of social cohesion. Participation, as defined by Spoonley and colleagues (2005: 98-99), includes involvement in social activities, in community groups and organisations, and in political and civic life.

In this research project, we have considered people's participation and involvement at two scales: neighbourhood, understood as the area surrounding a person's residence; and community, understood in terms of both broader spatial communities and communities of interest. Consideration of participation at both a community and a neighbourhood scale makes it clear that the different dimensions of social cohesion are interconnected – residents' participation and involvement enhanced their sense of belonging and inclusion. This chapter explores people's feelings about, and involvement in, their neighbourhoods.

8.1 Understanding neighbourhood

There are a range of definitions of neighbourhood in academic literature (Meegan and Mitchell, 2001) and our respondents demonstrated a similar diversity of opinion about the spatial limits of their own neighbourhoods. When asked to describe these, a number of people simply gave the name of their suburb – Albany, New Lynn or Papatoetoe – while other participants thought of their neighbourhood as a much smaller area – the houses immediately adjacent to theirs or the few blocks of houses that surround their own:

> *Albany. For me Albany is my neighbourhood.* (Albany, female, 30s, Pākehā)

> *When I define my neighbourhood I'm not necessarily talking about people living right next to me but … talking more broadly in terms of the Albany village here.* (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

> *I would include New Lynn, Kelston, parts of Avondale and maybe going down to Green Bay. I would probably say that would be it. That's where a lot of my friends are so I do visit those areas quite often. It's quite a large neighbourhood I'd say. Not just an average small one.* (New Lynn, male, 20s, Indian)

> *Basically the houses you can see. That one down there, the two in the front, the one opposite our driveway. Everyone that surrounds our property.* (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

As evident in the preceding chapters on Albany, Papatoetoe and New Lynn, almost all residents said that they like living in their neighbourhoods. The most common reasons given were the proximity of their home to places of work, leisure or shopping, proximity to friends and family, and the quietness of their area. Other reasons included friendly neighbours, the availability of good public transport, and the safety of the area. A few residents specifically mentioned the ethnic diversity of their neighbourhood as something they appreciate and enjoy.

8.2 Neighbourhood participation

In exploring the idea of neighbours and neighbourhood, most participants indicated that they did not have close relationships with their neighbours. Some were dissatisfied with their lack of interaction, often contrasting this with their experiences in the past or in other areas:

> *We really don't have a lot to do with our neighbours which is something that I think is a shame. I've been here for 21 years and every now and then you'd like to pop over to see someone to see how they're doing but you just don't do that because everyone is in their own little world and it's really difficult to knock on their door and go "hi, I'm your neighbour, want to have a coffee?". They'd look at you really weird. Those are the kinds of things that you used to do and it was quite good.* (New Lynn, female, 40s, Pākehā)

> *I loved it when I lived in Birkenhead and Northcote and we would have these activities in the street and all the families would come out, so I made friends, I got to know people. I don't know a single person in my street, and I've lived there two years.* (Albany Focus Group)

However, most participants felt that people in their neighbourhood 'get along' and they spoke positively about the casual interactions they have with their neighbours. Discussions about these interactions centred around exchanging greetings, providing occasional help, coming together at times of crisis, and working together on shared neighbourhood projects. We look at each of these interactions in turn.

8.2.1 Greetings

A number of residents talked positively about the fact that they know their neighbours, can recognise their faces and cars, and exchange greetings with them. For these residents, saying 'hi' was a sign that people in their neighbourhood 'get along'. Several residents clearly stated that exchanging greetings was the limit of their interactions with their neighbours, interestingly often presenting this limited interaction in the context of the ethnic diversity of their neighbourhood.

> *My next-door neighbours are Indians and the first neighbour Israeli but they're all very cooperative. Whenever we pass by at least we say hello rather than turn the face. If we have the time we do catch up with them or if we are busy we say hello and see you next time.* (New Lynn, female, 50s, Indian)

> *There is such a lot of nationalities in that complex … most people are friendly and will say hello and how are you but no mixing.* (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

> *Because of the different ethnicities of the neighbourhood, we don't all have parties at everyone's house if you know what I mean. It is on a nodding basis. Or you stop and say hello in the street.* (Albany, male, Pākehā, 60s)

> *I walk around and there are nice people. When I meet them on the road they talk and say hello.* (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

Several residents also mentioned knowing their local shopkeepers as something that they value in their neighbourhood:

> *Yeah, the fish and chip shop and the fruit shop – even the dairies. The owners are pretty much always outside having their own conversations with people, but everyone knows them and they get along with everyone. They are always asking how you are and how is the family.* (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

Some people, particularly in Albany, mentioned that the opportunity to exchange greetings with neighbours frequently arose when walking their dogs:

> *We've got a small dog so when I walk the dog in the morning there are three or four people that I see every day. You recognise them. A couple of those regular walkers are Chinese, so their communication is difficult but you still make sure that you acknowledge each other.* (Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

It is worth noting, however, that while dogs were seen by some as promoting neighbourly interaction, others saw dogs as a barrier to engagement. A Pākehā New Lynn resident in her forties, for example, discussed how, as a woman and a wheelchair user, she feels vulnerable in some situations. She said that she is wary of dogs because they can easily jump up onto her in her wheelchair. Similarly, a young Indian man from Papatoetoe explained:

> *Sometimes it's scary walking on roads with dogs without a leash on the street. I don't know if they're registered or not. That's the only thing that stops the family walking around the neighbourhood.*

8.2.2 Casual neighbourly assistance

Many residents articulated an appreciation for acts of neighbourly exchange and kindness such as keeping an eye out for each other, sharing food, dealing with rubbish, and looking out for elderly neighbours. The following quotes are illustrative of these types of casual neighbourly assistance and how respondents feel about them:

> *I had to get my second car from that house here and I said 'hey, I need your help. Come along with me for a drive, we just go down the road and get my car' and he offered to bring my car … You never know when you may need that.* (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Indian)

> *On the left hand side there is a family who are Chinese. They are very good neighbours of mine. We help each other every day. Like when we take our rubbish to the front we help them and they help us. They look after our property when we're going somewhere.* (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

8.2.3 Crisis brings people together

When asked what kinds of things bring neighbours together, a number of participants mentioned times of crisis, as these residents explain:

> *If things are going wrong people generally come out and question it.* (Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

The neighbour up the road was ill and he died and everyone got together … It would be nice if people got together on a happy occasion instead of having to wait for something bad to happen. (New Lynn, female, 40s, Pākehā)

In my experience I've probably got together with neighbours over the years more than anything through crises. We keep an eye on the elderly lady next door and if we don't see her for a day or so we check up on her. She's aging and she had a stroke and falls. We will get groceries for her or take meals or whatever so it's situations like that. Other than that basically Kiwis just get on and mind their own business kind of thing. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s, Pākehā)

It appears that situations of crisis can offer people the opportunity to step out of everyday habits of interaction and come together in new and more intimate ways. Amin describes how this kind of contact allows people to 'learn to become different through new patterns of social interaction' (2002: 970).

8.2.4 Shared neighbourhood projects

A number of respondents talked about their neighbours coming together around a particular cause – to maintain or improve infrastructure, for example, or to prevent development that was considered detrimental to their neighbourhood. A young Indian man in Papatoetoe talked about how he and his neighbours cooperate to keep their shared driveway clean; an elderly Pākehā man from New Lynn talked about residents in his neighbourhood banding together to prevent a road being built through their cul-de-sac; and an Albany resident talked about tidying and maintaining shared gardens with his neighbours.

8.3 Value of neighbourhood participation

When articulating what they like about their neighbourhoods, participants talked frequently about safety and a sense of reassurance that came from knowing they could rely on neighbours for assistance. This sense of safety was presented as a key benefit of neighbourly interaction:

It's quite a quiet street and I feel safe and partly because I'm up a right of way but my neighbours are very good as well. They don't bother me but if I do need help they'd be there. (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

Interviewer   *What does it feel like [when] you walk down the street and you know everyone?*
Resident   *It feels safer. You know that person, you know what they're like. You're not just walking past a stranger who you think what are they going to do to me, are they nice or not? It is better that you know them. They wave, and you don't feel like you have to cross the road because of the way they look.*
(Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

Safety point of view first of all. It is always your neighbour who listens to the alarm going off. It has happened to me so many times. The last two to three years it has happened four or five times and my neighbour was the first to call me to say the alarm has gone off. I had a

burglary last year in my house and my neighbour was the first to wake up her son and follow the burglars. Unfortunately he couldn't trace them but he ran after them in his car. It was a big thing for me. My neighbour is so careful and she is so watchful of what's happening next door. See? It's very important. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

Although most residents valued neighbourly contact in terms of safety and availability of help, many felt that there was no need for any more interaction and that some people will always choose not to be involved. Some residents explained that they were too busy, had too many other commitments, or were more focused on themselves and their own families than on their neighbourhood.

I have my group of people and I have the things I do in the weekends and it doesn't involve spending time in my community. (Albany, female, 20s, Pākehā)

I have quite a lot of interaction with my grandkids here and my daughter and good friends. I don't need interaction with my neighbours. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

As discussed in previous sections, communities are not exclusively place-based entities and nor do residents belong to only one. It is important, therefore, to acknowledge that levels of desired neighbourhood participation are likely to be different according to residents' connectedness with other communities and to their individual needs and desires. However, a closer examination of the reasons interviewees gave for not wanting more neighbourhood interaction suggest that busy lives, which we examine more closely in the next section, leave little time and energy for the kind of meaningful interactions that bring neighbours together and contribute to social cohesion. It is likely that these busy lives are, to some extent, the result of structural factors such as the impact of the global financial crisis, elevated house prices, extended working hours and lengthy commuting times, all of which affect people's ability and desire to invest more time in their immediate neighbourhoods. Unpacking these reasons and the factors behind them reinforces our earlier point that it is critical to consider issues of social justice and equity and their relationship to social cohesion.

8.4 Barriers to neighbourhood participation

Two key factors were identified by residents as limiting interactions in neighbourhoods – people being busy with work, family and other commitments; and the transience of neighbourhood populations.

8.4.1 Busyness

Like the participants in Hickman et al.'s (2008) research on social cohesion and new immigration in the United Kingdom, residents from all three Auckland areas said that paid and unpaid obligations and a subsequent lack of time had a significant negative impact on family life and neighbourhood social relations.

Everyone is just so busy and that's the big thing. It's so sad people are so busy all the time. It's not just with your neighbours, it's friends and you see them and say 'I've been meaning to catch up but I'm so busy' ... It's really sad that everyone is always rushing around so busy. (New Lynn, female, 40s, Pākehā)

Albany is quite busy. Most of the families are working … I see that the street – most of the doors are closed or garages are closed, it is very quiet. (Albany Focus Group)

8.4.2 Transient population

As discussed in the preceding chapter on 'Belonging', many residents made a connection between length of residence and having a sense of belonging and positive relationships with others in the neighbourhood. Conversely, respondents who had moved into their neighbourhood relatively recently or felt that their neighbours were constantly changing as people moved in and out suggested that this was a barrier to neighbourhood interactions.

It takes time to bring people together. You can't just make people and say right, here you are, here is a network. You have to build those relationships and then the traditions and that are slowly built up over time. (Albany Focus Group)

Related to the issue of length of residence is the newness of an area. A number of people in Albany commented on the fact that much of the area had only been recently developed and that it would take time for a sense of community to develop. The discussion below about Botany reveals similar themes:

New means it is clinical and too clean. Not enough character to the place. You need the trees really. You need the trees to grow up before it starts happening. You need a generation go through and another one come in, or something anyway. I imagine you will get a whole group of South Africans going in and a whole group of Chinese and one lot will move out and the other will move in. So it changes all the time. … I've heard that a lot of people have moved to Botany to a new home and then felt they were excluded, the community wasn't there or it just wasn't the same. So they've tried to move back. … They felt like there was something here that that place didn't have. Maybe it's the history. I don't know what it is. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s, Māori/Chinese)

9.0 Participation: Community

9.1 Understanding community

Community, like neighbourhood, is defined in various ways in academic and policy literature (Meegan and Mitchell, 2001). Residents' definitions of their communities were similarly diverse, ranging from the naming of geographic boundaries; the linking of community to friends, family and workmates; and the description of communities of interest not linked to a specific geographic area. It is also interesting to note that some residents did not explicitly mention the various communities to which they belonged in response to the question about how they defined their community. However, when asked about the ways in which they were involved in their communities, and about the kinds of organisations, places, spaces and events that bring people together, the range and diversity of activities and what these revealed about residents' communities was quite astonishing.

The following respondents talked about a spatial community that encompassed a broader area than their neighbourhood.

> *It's pretty much Albany. Albany encompasses my community. It's where I shop, where I'll meet a girlfriend for a coffee, where I work, where we do our banking, where I go to the gym.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

> *I would say New Lynn … I'd say probably going that way to West Coast Road where Kelston is, coming down Great North Road … and then to the bridge on Great North Road where all the car yards are – down there. And then back around to here.* (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

> *I think of my community as not my Tongan people, it's just my whole people who live around here … I just think about whoever in this mix, these people who live around here, I call them as my community people.* (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

Others talked about their friends, family and workmates as their community.

> *We've still got family and family come here and we go to them so that is still a big part for us. Then you have your work colleagues. People come here to work so you see them during the day and you converse with them as a community. You've got that as well as the evening community, the people who stay behind.* (Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

> *My immediate thought is family and then it goes out from there. So families, hobby, sport, work and people related inter connected within that, and businesses. I try and support all my local business and I look at communities in that way.* (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Māori)

For some people, community meant their communities of interest – ethnic communities, church or other religious communities, sporting and other recreational groups, and community organisations of various kinds.

Community is you have a passion, an interest, a reason to commit to something and you've found people who share that. That's not to say neighbourhood can't be community but neighbourhood isn't always community. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

A spiritual community. We belong to a church in Manukau, Baptist Church. Neither of us have family and that's like our second family. Community would also be my peers at school. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

9.2 Community participation

As mentioned in the previous section, participants described a wide variety of places, spaces, organisations and events that they believed brought people together in their communities and in which they participated personally. The following quotes provide some insight into the diversity of these activities and the communities within which they take place.

… while the family was growing up we had a lot to do with scouting and guiding. We had the scouting and guiding community. The other groups that we belonged to, we're still involved with Lions. My wife is a Lions member. We have an involvement there. (Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

There was a drive that happened that was a 12 week weight loss challenge and a couple of the community health services got people to enter into this 12 week lose as much weight as you possibly can challenge. People at our school and around our street joined up. It was the first time that I noticed people walking after work trying to lose weight. They were laughing at each other because you were given these T-shirts that [said] you were on the 12 week challenge … people were pointing and laughing and saying hello to each other because they all recognised they were on this challenge … It was great … It made the neighbourhood feel different because you weren't worried about whether this person behind you was following you or whether you should look at the man standing at the bus stop, there was none of that. It was just a whole lot of people on the street that you knew were doing this and for some reason you trusted them and you laughed at them or told them to keep going. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

In the sections that follow, we examine the main ways that communities come together.

9.2.1 Community facilities

Respondents talked about a variety of community facilities, both in their neighbourhoods and further afield: community centres and halls; swimming pools and sports' clubs; and most frequently, libraries.

Having the Massey University right next door to us is also a great benefit because they've got the onsite gymnasium, the basketball courts, leisure facilities which you don't have to be a student to use it. Plus you've got the Albany Tennis Park … time to time there are events being held in North Harbour and that brings a lot of locals together. Like this week when the Blues were playing France, I wasn't at the match but I have been to the stadium a few times and it's good to see quite a few locals getting together. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

I think this library is a really huge community resource … A lot of the older people in the community spend lots of time here. A lot of people with English as a second language spend a lot of time here reading the papers and there's quite a big section of Chinese literature now. Obviously with the Citizens Advice Bureau just in the same building, as a centre this is a really good hub. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

I always like to take my children to the library in the holiday time. I'm very strongly support of my children in their studies, I push them in their study and also sports. I take them to rugby training every Tuesday and Thursday, and games on Saturday. Me and my wife always support our sons in their games. Yeah, they always go to Papatoe swimming pool. When we move here they found out about the swimming pool here and they always go there. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

9.2.2 Church

Many residents talked about church as a key means through which they get involved in their communities.

I go to church … The people there, they're all different personalities that get along together … You get such a happy vibe when you go inside and then you just walk out smiling because you just had a good day with friends from church. (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

Churches were described as places of worship for specific ethnic groups:

My church is in Papatoetoe here ... In November or September, we have to do this Tongan thing, like a dance, like festival, and then we have to have netball and it's like a challenge with all the churches. It's a good thing, that's how we know each other. We know everyone because of those kinds of things … It's not only our Tongan church, some other Methodist churches – different Catholic, those people, they want to come and play. That's how we know some Samoan people and some of our Tongan people go and get some Samoan boys and girls to come and play for their team and that's how we know each other. We think it's very good because that's how we know every Tongan. I know every Tongan mostly. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

But also as places that brought people of different ethnicities together:

I like that church because you come across people from different places. I like that church because it is big. (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Indian)

When I first went to church here, to the Methodist here, they always come and when they see me coming to church they always want to come and talk to me – everybody. They see that I'm new in the church. It is a mixed culture ... I feel comfortable in the first time I went to church. I didn't feel strange at all. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

9.2.3 Parks and open spaces

Parks and open spaces were important to many residents: for their aesthetic and affective value and for the role they play in providing a space where people can come together. Participants described how chance meetings in parks and open spaces generated a sense of belonging and made them feel better, and they also talked about the way that groups get together around specific activities like yoga or organised sports.

> *Allenby Park, it's near the Papatoetoe High School, the other side … sometimes I'll go there when I'm sad.* (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Chinese)

> *So the reserve is the magnet for the community in that respect and people meeting each other. I think without that reserve it would be very difficult to relate to people down here.* (Albany, male, 65+, Pākehā)

> *The parks should be kept going because it's a good place for families to relax or just to have a picnic … It's a good place for exercise too and running around … I see a lot of families … I see a lot of them that goes down there and plus a lot of groups uses the park for exercise.* (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

> *We just have a park over here … they're playing rugby, playing volley and I go there with my people and just play touch and that. We see them and say hello – if we see some of our country people they say "hey" and speak my language and that's how we know each other there … and the park over here, I run there with my hubby and my son and just playing around.* (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Tongan)

For some residents, however, parks were inaccessible. The second quote below illustrates the sometimes competing interests of different parts of the community with respect to community resources, but also perhaps that young people will create spaces in which to congregate as best they can in an area with few alternative facilities.

> *I can't do anything at a park pretty much. If the grass is wet I can't go on the grass because I'll sink and I just don't know what to do there except maybe sit and eat fish and chips or something.* (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

> *…there's a little cul de sac … It's a dead end and there's this beautiful creek that they've spent a lot of time building a nice walkway over there and a bridge and really nice bush. When I first got my power chair I used to cut through that walkway a lot because it was quicker and made my journey shorter … Over time the overgrowth in the bush is quite significant but also it's become a local hangout for young people and people who are sitting around drinking and wanting to hang out down the back of the bush. It feels unsafe so I never go there anymore.* (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

9.2.4 Sport

Sport was an important activity for residents from all three areas and many of our participants talked about the way that sport can bring diverse groups of people and communities together.

… sporting complexes bring a lot of the locals together … Sports is a common language, doesn't matter where you go … (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

... sport brings us together. Although we have challenges, we connect through them. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

I like to mingle and stuff. I play a sport but that's with a sport community. I'm in a … Powerchair Football [Club] and we play football in a gym. That's really cool. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

The only place where I meet people heaps is the rugby club. When I take my sons there, my son to his game and training, I meet the people there. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

I think it's quite a cool concept of all these people with different backgrounds and different situations coming together to achieve one goal which is to win each game. I like that. Everyone putting things aside to achieve what the team wants to achieve. (Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

The Papatoetoe Sports Centre[10] was identified by many as a great 'connector' of people.

We're in a soccer team, my boy is playing soccer. There are Indians in that mix as well, and Polynesian. Everybody who lives in Papatoe goes to that centre, which is good. I think the best thing they've ever done is put in that centre … The Papatoe Sports Centre … Not only do they have soccer they have Indian wrestling there as well. And if you're willing to engage in all those cultures to join the club then you get a good mix. (Papatoetoe, male, 50s, Māori/Chinese)

9.2.5 Events and festivals

Events and festivals, according to many residents and focus group participants, are good ways of bringing communities together. In Albany, participants mentioned movies in the park, planting days and the screening of the Rugby World Cup. New Lynn has a well-established Christmas parade and also hosts the increasingly popular Legends of the Moon Festival.[11] Christmas parades have changed in recent years to reflect the diverse ethnic make-up of communities and, as explained in the quotes below, now include participants who showcase the costumes, dance and art of their ethnic and spiritual communities. Similarly, cultural festivals such as Legends of the Moon showcase the cultural, spiritual and artistic heritage of particular ethnic groups, bringing diverse people together and creating new ways of 'being' in old spaces. Papatoetoe also runs a large Christmas Parade and many residents spoke positively about the celebration of the area's 150th anniversary that took place in 2012.[12]

Community planting days, I enjoy very much … I strongly encourage the newcomers, particularly like Korean family. Because they are not familiar with the planting with the community because we don't have that kind of programme in our country … we family just

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[10] http://www.papatoetoecricket.co.nz/
[11] http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/newseventsculture/events/Events/Pages/legendsofthemoon.aspx
[12] http://www.papatoetoe150.co.nz/

planting some trees in this area and maybe two or three years later the trees are growing also. I'm living here and my belonging is growing – [like] my tree. (Albany Focus Group)

For 20 plus years we've run a Christmas parade which used to go down Great North Road, through here … We had a group from the Chinese choir who sang, we had a local band … kids from the local dance studios … It was really good. There was so many and they stayed. (New Lynn Focus Group)

We started participating in Santa parades. We started celebrating our own festivals like Diwali and Baisakhi. Kiwi people started coming to our festivals. They've been participating, they've been visitors, they've been the audience, they've been even chief guests. This has all started merging into the mainstream ... we are holding our Diwali Festival on a very large scale now. Cook Islanders and Samoan people are showing off their dances, beautiful dances … Our children are participating in … Pasifika. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

We have the Papatoetoe Santa Parade every year which is the second biggest one in Auckland behind the Queen Street one. It's not even much of a Santa parade anymore, more a community parade. Half the time there's not Christmas themes going on. There are religious groups that probably don't believe in Christmas. I usually have a few mates and we watch it and sometimes you walk to the Alan Brewster Centre at the end where they all finish and it becomes a bit of a social event. That's a real community thing of showing off what you do sort of thing. (Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

9.2.6 Schools and kohanga

Participants talked about schools as important sites of community engagement, past and present.

There is always different things happening at schools … I'm involved in that through my connections, through my whānau. I always support them. And kura as well. (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Māori)

We used to take the kids down to the local primary school but all the schools are gated up now … It costs them less in the long run to put the fence up than it does to repair all the damage done by vandals. It's a shame. We used to go there and take the kids to use the netball hoop and everything. Sometimes we'd go and have lunch down there so the kids could play in the playground but now you can't because it's all high fences with arrows at the top now. (New Lynn, male, 20s, Fijian)

I'm involved less with high school as I was with primary, I was always there. PTA and all that … I used to meet friends at the schools but once the children are going to intermediate you don't really go down to the school so you don't meet the parents and talk to the teachers like you did at primary school. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

My son's school has been a very active community and that's mainly been the parents and the kids that make up those families. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

Similarly, many people talked about the role children played in bringing people together.

Korean families are … very energetic to support their children. When their children are involved in school, or when their children engage in a local community programme, they are more likely step forward for supporting their children. (Albany Focus Group)

Our kids bring in that Kiwi culture. My son came here and he only spoke French … Now he speaks with a Kiwi accent. As he grew up he became accustomed to the Kiwi way of life and he used to bring his friends to our home. From there we would connect through the friends and connect with Kiwi or different ethnic backgrounds. It started the linkage between us and the whole community. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

9.2.7 Volunteering

A number of residents were involved in their communities through volunteering. A New Lynn resident talked about volunteering at the zoo and with Meals on Wheels before his recent illness and another New Lynn resident volunteered one day a week at the Citizens Advice Bureau. Volunteering is a form of participation that contributes to the community, increases the wellbeing of the volunteer and creates a sense of shared purpose between the volunteer and his or her host organisation.

I'm part of the day care … Sort of like a grandma help whenever it is needed. I used to be at Citizens Advice Bureau, I was a volunteer there. I'm a volunteer with budgeting… For when people need help and that. I do Age Concern which is for elderly … Where and whenever I have the time in between I'll visit somebody … I just enjoy it. It keeps me going. I'm just that type of person that gives. It's about being involved as a community, involved in other things. (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

I like the Greek culture and unfortunately the Greeks that came here in the 60s, like my parents, are getting older and they have to pass it on to somebody else to do. The unfortunate thing is that my generation are not really interested. I was a bit coerced into the position because nobody wanted to do it and I didn't want to see the Greek culture die off because I wanted it for my kids. I put my hand up and I've been doing it now for four years. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

9.2.8 Adult education

A number of residents talked about adult education as an important way in which they get involved in their community and some had made diverse friends through such classes. The decrease in funding for community education was considered a significant loss for developing social cohesion in communities:

I tend to go to Browns Bay quite a bit more for U3A meetings than I do in Albany. There isn't one here. The main monthly meeting had about 220 people that go and they get some brilliant speakers too … We've got 27 individual groups that people belong to and do all sorts of things… It keeps the brain going. Those are the groups that I go to. Some people go to a movie group or walking group but I prefer to do that. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

I do have a group of friends. We used to call ourselves the Yaya Sisters.I started that when I went to a course at the Blockhouse Bay Centre … So from that class I formed very strong

bonds. We had a Croatian lady, Indian lady, two Kiwi ladies, a Māori lady, myself. We meet once a month and take turns to host. (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

> A *I think a lot of the downfall is in the community education funding, I must be honest. I think that would have been one of the ways into cohesion for the Chinese and Indian population.*
>
> B *That is where I see it the most, when you talk about cohesion and they do – they come together as groups. So the English classes that we have, now all those ladies in there are coming back term after term and they're going away together and meeting at each other's houses now. They've become their own community within a community – a sub community.*
>
> C *A support network amongst themselves, which is what you want to see …*
> (New Lynn Focus Group)

9.2.9 Markets

Residents also talked about local markets as important facilities within their communities, although there were differences between the three areas. Most Albany residents interviewed did not know about or did not attend the Albany markets, but a few mentioned it as something that brings people in the community together:

> *… they've got Albany Village Market which is held once a month. They get a lot of the local suppliers putting up stalls in this area … I take a short stroll and have a look to see who is out there. It's pretty much the same every month but it's good to see the village with a whole lot of people visiting. They go to the library, have a cup of tea at the bakery.* (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

New Lynn night markets started in June this year, and were mentioned only by participants in the focus group. In Papatoetoe, where the night market is longer established, a number of residents talked about markets as popular community activities:

> *… the night markets, they've just started in Papatoe. That is a good community thing. So many people go there. It is a real good way for the community to get together as well … I'm not sure if they're all local, but I think the ones who are selling the clothes and the accessories are all local.* (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

9.2.10 Arts

Although increased provision for visual and performing arts featured in discussions of what people would like to change in New Lynn (see Chapters 6 and 10), the arts did not feature prominently in people's descriptions of the ways in which they are currently involved in their neighbourhoods and communities:

> *Every single one of my friends is a musician except for me … I do go to quite a few gigs with them and that would be a community, me and my friends hanging out and they go to critique music and I go to hang out because I think I'm tone deaf.* (Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

9.2.11 Online communities

Some residents talked about their virtual connections to others, through online gaming, social media sites like Facebook, and email.

9.2.12 Work

A small number of residents, from both small and large businesses, talked about their work colleagues as an important part of their 'community'.

> *At work, because it is a big arena, it is such a massive place you've got the security guards, the concession stand people, a lot of people. But yeah, we all mix and mingle with each other after we've finished from work.* (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

> *There's work … I work in retail in quite a small business. We have a lot of team building exercises and dinners and meetings and things. It's a really nice family business and everyone is really caring and supportive.* (Albany, female, 20s, Pākehā)

9.3 Value of community participation

While neighbourhood participation was most frequently valued by residents in terms of safety (see Chapter 8), perceived benefits of community-level participation were the sense that people care for one another; the positive reward of 'living your values'; a better life for their children; and a sense of satisfaction from being able to help others.

> Interviewer *How much would you say that community togetherness matters to you?*
> Resident *Probably a lot because then it shows that people care and to get along with people.*
> (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

> Interviewer *What are the benefits for you of being involved in all these community activities?*
> Resident *It's about being involved as a community, involved in other things. Where I come from, I've been brought up to respect people, elderly. Everything my grandparents taught me, to this day I hold it.*
> (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

> *A better life for [my daughter]. The knock on effect of that is for all other families who have a child with a disability. You gather with likeminded people who want to pave the way and make changes. One ant on his own can't do much but an army of ants can take down a forest. We can take on council and have our voices heard. I just want equal opportunities really. Because I am a Mum, what I'm wanting is things for our youth to do whether they're disabled or not. I want activities fundamentally for our youth but I want them accessible for all – Mums and prams, kids in wheelchairs, Nana and her walker.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

> *When people come to you … you do get a sense of satisfaction from being able to say I've heard of this that may help you. The fact that you are able to listen to people and let them*

into your home and have a drink, sit down and let them unwind and you get your little niggles out of your head as well. There is satisfaction in that. (Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

Focus group participants talked about the ways that community participation increases the resilience of community overall; that it has benefits for those who give and those who receive, that community involvement is a virtuous circle; and that it generates a sense of worth and of belonging.

I think that is why you build the community heart, so that no matter what life throws at you, you've got that resilience within you to actually come together and find solutions. (Albany Focus Group)

If we had a lonely old person and we match them with a volunteer visitor, we've actually had quotes come back saying they bring the world in and they've learnt something from the person who thought they had nothing to give. They've taught the visitor something. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

If you've got people who are connected and involved and valued, and they value others, then you end up with people who are thriving and able to contribute more to the community as a whole … Human beings need other human beings. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

9.4 Barriers to community participation

Although participants generally acknowledged the benefits of being involved in their communities, many people responded in the negative when asked whether they would like more involvement. A Papatoetoe resident said she 'didn't have the time or the energy', while another said that he was happy just spending time with his family.

I don't mind that I'm not completely active in the community because a lot of people in Papatoetoe go and do their own thing and it's not like I wish I was a part of them. Everyone seems pretty satisfied with just doing their own thing. (Papatoetoe, male, 20s, Pākehā)

To be honest, I don't really get much involved with the community at all but would I like to involve myself more, probably not. I let the other people do that with the community stuff… It's probably not my thing plus I've got this business which I really need to focus on. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

Others talked about already being very involved and not having time for much else:

…even though I'd like to be [more involved], I don't know if I would be given my level of commitments elsewhere … For example, you can see the games night advertised up there. We've seen that poster and gone 'oh that would be really fun, we could bring the kids down here' but on a Friday night we're a bit stuffed and we sit at home and maybe [watch] a movie. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

With my own activities … I think I'm quite fully committed. (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

The few residents who did want to be more involved in their communities described time, a lack of knowledge about what is happening, and a lack of events, activities and spaces, as barriers:

Time is my biggest barrier. I'm a naturally nosy person and I like to be involved in a whole lot of things but I tend to be a bit of a lump of butter that's spread too thin over a whole lot of toast. I've just got to be a bit more selective with my time. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

I think Albany is hindered by the fact that the mall is here though. It's like a destination. There are so many people that come up to go to the mall and you don't know who is from Albany and who just wants to do some shopping. It's pretty massive and quite industrial … I don't know if there's anywhere to get together. To me it seems like Albany has the people that live here but then there are so many people that come in every day to work or go to the mall or go to the stadium or go to uni so it's hard to know what's actually Albany at the end of the day. (Albany, female, 20s, Pākehā)

10.0 Increasing participation

We were interested in residents' and focus group participants' views on what they would change about their neighbourhoods and what Auckland Council could do to make it easier for people to mix more. Respondents suggested a range of activities, facilities and infrastructure; in this section we look at each of these in turn.

10.1 Social infrastructure

Community facilities that allow people to come together were highly valued.

> *Better facilities can bring people together … if there is a park … where you can jog and have physical activities … Instead of going to the gym people can come there … I'm sure people would get together because we can't all afford the gym.* (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Indian)

In particular, participants identified a need for more opportunities for young people to participate in their communities. Community workers at all three focus groups talked a lot about the lack of local spaces and activities for young people and some of the consequences of this such as boredom, getting into trouble, and disconnection from the community. Witten et al. (2003) note a similar lack of amenities for young people in the West Auckland suburb of Massey.

> *Because it is in the middle and it's a place where they feel they can meet, young people have tried to make the mall a destination. Inevitably lots of them have been trespassed out of the mall because they are just generally a nuisance. So now they've made the car park a destination, and they're sort of being moved from that. So you've got these transient young people looking for somewhere to be … Our youth are really disconnected … you see them in the street on their skateboards and long boards because they've got nowhere to go.* (Albany Focus Group)

> Facilitator   *What do young people do in New Lynn? How do they congregate, how do they get together?*
> A   *They hang around out here for example, when I came in. They were spitting at me when I walked up.*
> B   *…but where they can go? Just down here right next to [ ]. It is a computer internet café. That is grotty as. They're all hanging out the back. It is actually quite scary. I find myself, even during the day time, being quite scared.*
> C   *They hang out in the mall and there is heaps in the library*
> (New Lynn Focus Group)

Residents also identified a lack of places and activities for youth, particularly in Albany and New Lynn.

> *At my age, at 22, there's not much stuff to do so I find it really quite boring. I came from the city and when I got this job I didn't think there'd be much around here. There is the stadium but other than that for leisure there's not much around here … There is the mall but other*

than that there isn't much around here so I'm not really keen on here … Straight to the city, bus to the city. (Albany, female, 20s, Māori)

There's nothing there for all our children, especially the teenagers … When they come here they sit around and smoke, drink and that's it. When people come past you can see them going off at anybody for money or a smoke...I think they should put more resources in the community. A community place where everybody can come in (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

There's also a big youth population here and I'm not sure we do the best for them. My son used to complain all the time about there being nothing for teenagers here. You've got to go out of New Lynn. You'd have to go to Henderson for the movies and you've got to go to Avondale for the skate park, Henderson for the pools. He was always frustrated that there was nothing here in New Lynn for him and he's still like that now, he only comes here for a bit of shopping and that's it. At 20 he's always going out of New Lynn for stuff. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

The provision of arts infrastructure was also viewed as important, particularly in New Lynn.

I think having a theatre around here would be fabulous. I'm talking about live theatre – a little theatre, something really funky. (New Lynn Focus Group)

More art places … If we had a museum, that would be great. Something like that that would offer to display something for the community. (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Māori)

10.2 Events, festivals and neighbourhood projects

Many interviewees said that events were a great way to bring people together. Street or neighbourhood-level events were mentioned most frequently, suggesting that knowing neighbours was perhaps more important to people than feeling a part of a broader community:

Street barbeques – if council or anybody else could support that as an initiative. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

Maybe more events, more local and public events where people can attend. I guess it's got to be an event that attracts all the different types of people together and bring them together as a community. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

We don't have much events happening, especially in winter. Nobody wants to go out in the cold or anything, but you can always have an inside event or something. That would be like really cool to have … Maybe like a music show or movies in Telstra Clear or something. Just a massive way of the community coming together. That would be good. (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

I'd like someone from the neighbourhood to organise something so it's a street affair – be it a garage sale or a food fair or something so that we really get to know each other and form a little neighbourhood watch. A neighbourhood community where we could say 'OK, this

month we'll have something at Alice's place and following [that] we'll have something else'.
(New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

Others talked about projects to improve their neighbourhoods such as working bees or tree planting:

If the council instigated a working bee, like I described before, and they called for volunteers from here I think you would get a lot of people volunteering to look after their community, and it is also that social interaction that people have been looking for too.
(Albany, male, 60s, Pākehā)

… environmental clean-up days … I'm thinking about the missed opportunity down in the bushy area. It might be that that could be a way of bringing people together and actually get some shared ownership over that space between local business and community … Having a focal point like that can bring people together to improve something for the greater good.
(New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

10.3 Physical infrastructure

Although the built environment may not, in and of itself, promote 'mixing' (Amin, 2002: 968), it can facilitate the kinds of routine and informal interactions (Beider, 2011: 8) that are critical to people coming together in their neighbourhoods. Most suggestions focused on infrastructure to support or enhance residents' mobility:

And a bridge between the mall and old Albany, that is what the youth said – we'd go there if we had a bridge, just getting across the road we get run over. (Albany Focus Group)

Parking would be my number one, more mobility car parks to cater for the community. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

In New Lynn that would be cool to have some more cycle lanes. It would bring us closer together as a community, to be able to go on cycle rides together. (New Lynn, male, 20s, Indian)

10.4 Communication, consultation and engagement

Improvements in communication, consultation and engagement were mentioned by a number of residents. They wanted more advertising of events and more information about services. Others wanted council to rethink the way it consults and engages with residents, noting that these processes are so pivotal that they can significantly facilitate or hinder community building:

Sometimes getting involved in council is like 'really, do they even listen? Am I wasting my time?' I want to be with my family, I don't want to be at fricken council meetings where they're not taking notice and not listening or giving you lip service. We actually have better things to do. (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

… get hold of people with disabilities and keep them in the loop when they're renovating areas. I love to get involved in that sort of thing. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

Advertising in mall for events would be good – everyone in New Lynn goes to the mall.
(New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Chinese)

I think the … easing people into a relationship stuff is highly undervalued. People think 'we put all this money into blah blahblah, why didn't it work?' and there are real simple reasons. You don't throw people in that have never met each other, never said hello. There was none of that introduction either [at a neighbourhood watch meeting]. It was 'this is what's been happening in terms of the burglary rate and the crime rate compared to other suburbs in the area. These are the sorts of things that people do.' Everyone just sat there and they didn't know each other's names or addresses. It was an unwise approach to get people who geographically live together to get to know each other and take a step together.
(Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

Community workers who participated in focus groups also talked about the importance of communication. At the New Lynn focus group, there was a lot of discussion about the challenges of getting local newspapers to publish stories about local events and services; the need for a community newsletter; and the high cost of advertising; and the difficulty of working with Auckland Council's communications team. New Lynn community workers also talked about the need for council to rethink how it engages with residents:

A *I've met with the planners and they're actually so lovely and it gives me so much more faith in what they're doing … But I just think it is going too fast … It is not saying that we're anti-growth, I don't think we are in this area, it is just that nobody likes having anything imposed on them. If they had the neighbourhood get together I'm sure they could probably come up with some pretty amazing ideas of what to do with this space.*

B *And if they thought that someone would take some notice of it.*

A *If what they said mattered and it showed tangibly and quickly, I think you'd probably get a lot more social cohesion and a lot more people involved if they felt they were being heard. And if they were leading, instead of 'yes we've got this big unwieldy plan that no one can read, and now you have 10 days to make a submission'.*

At the Albany focus group, discussion centred on the importance of 'constant communication':

The other important thing that I've noted down in my experience in working with community development is communications … what works ... is … constant communication – everyday about what is on and what is up. It has to have feedback too, it is not one way communication. It has to be constant and there and reliable. It is very important … It's multiple – Facebook, social media but also newsletter – some people want hardcopy newsletters. Consistent – in your face.

Community workers at the Papatoetoe focus group talked about the different strategies they use to spread the word about their services:

I still think if you want community development, it has got to start from community and it can't start from a third party. It has to come from a champion in the community, from the initiator in the street, and I don't think the council can do that. I think they can provide the resources, like give postcards to put in everybody's letterboxes in the street or something like that, but

you still have to have the person who has the initiative to do it. It's like neighbourhood watch, all the paraphernalia comes from Police or whatever, but it's not the Police who do it, it's the street. They do it because they see a benefit for themselves and what's in it for them. You have to have the energy.

10.5 Other opportunities for Auckland Council

In addition to the suggestions for change described above, residents talked about a number of other ways that Auckland Council could help:

I guess also helping assist with some of the local sporting competitions … sports is a common language, doesn't matter where you go. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

… neighbourhood watch … encourage people to get together and know each other and have phone numbers and things like that. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

I really wanted … to learn how to grow my own veggies so I could do it from home. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

I think just having more opportunities for our kids to allow them to get involved with different things. Making it cheaper for us, I guess. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

Several residents, however, felt that it was up to individuals to get involved:

I don't think Auckland Council can do anything. I think people should be self-sufficient. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

I actually think it's just up to the people. Whether they want to come or not. Most people don't end up going to events, usually because they're already well connected. (Papatoetoe, male, 17-20, Samoan)

You have to be careful you don't get into too much social engineering. If I want to connect with them and they want to connect with me, we'll find a way to do it. I don't want someone engineering my life. I'm an intelligent being and I can figure it out for myself. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Community workers at the focus groups talked about the ways in which council could support community organisations. These centred on the common themes of partnership; the sharing of skills and resources; and community led development.

A *They want partnership as well I think with council. If I think about Lucas Creek, the group that wanted to get together with one of the local churches with volunteers going to council saying can you help us advertise, can you support us with getting some rubbish taken away. We'll clean it all out but it is very expensive to get rubbish taken away. So there was a partnership between those three groups - volunteers, the people who love Lucas Creek and then council taking away the rubbish and providing rubbish bags and a bit of advertising. Everyone felt ownership and partnership in making that happen.*

B	*There is a really good example at Paremoremo of that happening. They have monthly meetings where council turn up – Parks & Reserves, and they supply compost and shrubs and that. With a community partnership they plant trails and things, so it is resources. They don't necessarily want money or funding, it is a community partnership. We will provide the labour, you provide the plants.*

A	*And they also want to know how to progress their ideas. They might have a street meeting and say we want to do these three or four things, but we don't know what to do. We'd like more people to be involved, we don't know how to get them involved.* (Albany Focus Group)

I think [it] is important that council try to be present as a player in developing those neighbourhood days but I think the ultimate thing is to empower the community to drive those events themselves. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

11.0 Inclusion: Ethnicity

11.1 Attitudes toward ethnic diversity

Ethnic diversity was positively valued by some residents but not by others in Witten et al.'s (2003: 330) research on neighbourhood and social cohesion in the West Auckland suburb of Massey. Similarly, most of the residents and focus group participants in our research expressed an appreciation for the ethnic and/or cultural diversity of their neighbourhoods, some claiming that it was the characteristic they valued the most about their area. A small minority of respondents, however, did not share this view.

The following are illustrative of the positive views of ethnic diversity expressed by interviewees.

> … the essence for Albany is its community and we're diverse and we have a lot of South African families and English families and Kiwis but collectively it's a nice community … Fundamentally we all want the same things. Whether you're from Japan, South Africa, New Zealand, when you're a family and you've got teenagers or you're a family and you've got young children, you all gravitate to the same sort of events. (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

> Interviewer *What do you like most about New Lynn? It's handy, is that the thing you like most?*
> Resident *It's handy and the people. There are different people from different cultures.*
> (New Lynn, male, 50s-60s, Cook Island Māori)

> Interviewer *What else do you like about [New Lynn]?*
> Resident *What would you call it? Like different cultures all together.*
> Interviewer *So people from different cultures, they seem to come together and get on well?*
> Resident *It just kind of all works together. Especially down at the Margan Ave shops. People get along with each other I suppose.*
> (New Lynn, female, 20s, Māori)

Less positive views of ethnic diversity were characterised by anxiety about 'cultural domination' and a sense that certain ethnic groups were less likely to mix than others. For example, an elderly South African from Albany described the influx of Asian residents as an 'intrusion' and talked about how 'difficult' he finds Asian culture. He also believed that Asian people 'tend to gravitate towards their own' and noted that a homogenous community is usually a happy community. He thought that Chinese people 'live pretty isolated existences' and thought that more integration would only be good if it didn't affect his rates. The following respondent describes similar anxieties:

> I personally find the Indian cultures very insular. They come, they settle in but they only move within their own communities, their temples and they only shop at their own shops. I don't think they integrate as well as they could. We don't have the attitude that they shouldn't be here, they don't belong here. What I don't enjoy is when they impose their culture on us, i.e. the way [my neighbour] was screaming and yelling at her kids. You're in New Zealand and we do things slightly differently. That's the only issue I have … they bring

valuable things to our culture as well. As long as they don't dominate. (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

It is interesting to note that the majority of more negative views about ethnic diversity were focused on those of Asian ethnicity. Results from two New Zealand-wide surveys provide some context for this. A Statistics New Zealand report based on data from the 2008 and 2010 General Social Surveys noted that people who identified as Asian reported the highest levels of racial discrimination in any setting, followed by Māori and Pacific peoples (Statistics New Zealand, 2012: 4). Similarly, when respondents were asked about their perceptions of discrimination in the annual survey conducted for the Human Rights Commission, Asians were mentioned first as the group most discriminated against by 20 per cent of respondents (Human Rights Commission, 2013: 36).

Other respondents reflected thoughtfully on their own attitudes and behaviours towards other groups and how these had changed over time.

> *I think this area is quite diverse, there is different cultures and all walks of life here now. It has really changed. In general, yeah, I'm pretty sure there is racism out there, you can see it. But in general I guess everyone gets on well … Even for myself I think at times I'm still racist against cultures coming into our community and owning shops and businesses. But I do see that they work hard for that. But I guess at times I can be a bit like that … I think it all comes down to how I was raised as well. I was raised in a Māori family and not liking Islanders. I think I just carried it on. I have changed – I will not show that side to other people, to other races. I am pretty good in general. I do get on well with other ethnicities.* (Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Cook Island Māori)

Some participants argued that increased ethnic diversity made little difference to them, and that what matters is whether people are 'lovely' or 'horrible':

> *There's a lot of houses that go up for sale, like families will leave or old couples will leave and Asians will move in. Not in a negative way but there's a lot more of them coming in every time the opportunity opens, they're the ones that will move in. That house there is for sale and not a single New Zealand couple has looked at it. It's interesting to see ... From my point of view, I don't see any difference between if my neighbours are Asian and they're lovely, I'll make friends with them. If they're White and horrible then I wouldn't. It doesn't make a difference to me where they're from … I suppose that's just the way I am. I was raised in Asia so there is no differentiating for me.* (Albany, female, 20s, Pākehā)

It is interesting to note the ways in which participants used language to delineate the margins of particular ethnic groups. In the above quote, for example, the interviewee contrasts the idea of a 'New Zealand couple' with being Asian, as if it were not possible to be both. The resident interviews and focus groups contain myriad other examples of this juxtaposition of 'Kiwi' and 'other':

> *It is no use going like 'oh well the Korean community just want to stay in their grouping' or whatever. It is how we step forward to engage them … Often as Kiwis we think they can come to our things.* (Focus Group, Albany)

> *I've got some Kiwi friends, some Indian friends, my girlfriend is half Filipino and half Kiwi.* (New Lynn, male, 20s, Indian)

Although what counts as 'Kiwi' is not explicitly defined, it is nonetheless often implied that 'Kiwis' are Pākehā New Zealanders. This is evident in the following quotes:

> *There is a Chinese community group that runs near Greenslade Park, out of the St Luke's Methodist Church, and it is a Chinese Kiwi friendship group. There are about 40 Chinese people and 10 local people, so whether that is Kiwis or Pacific or Māoris. They get together and it is really cool.* (Albany Focus Group)

> *So from that class I formed very strong bonds. We had a Croatian lady, Indian lady, two Kiwi ladies, a Māori lady, myself. We meet once a month and take turns to host. We talk about our aims, our career. If we have a problem we bring it up to see how they can help us. We help each other. That was brilliant. I really enjoyed that time.* (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

This association of 'Kiwi' and 'New Zealander' with Pākehā has been well documented in other New Zealand research, suggesting that this dominant majority ethnic group is seen as setting the racial and cultural norms for New Zealand society (Ward and Lin, 2005: 163; Bell, 1996: 149; Roscoe, 1997: 87-88).

Some interviewees talked about their experiences of racial or ethnic discrimination. A Korean Albany resident, for example, reported being targeted by racial comments twice in public in the two months he had lived in Auckland, which is not something that he had ever experienced in Whangarei where he lived previously. Others described similar experiences:

> *Sometimes I feel if it is a Kiwi customer they do tend to say 'hi, how are you?', but when it comes to my turn, no … Maybe they think that I don't speak English so they don't even try to say hi or anything and just key in, that's it, finish.* (New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

> *I've seen some local boards that would be still very anti-migrants and yet the face of that community is actually 30% Chinese.* (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

A Papatoetoe resident talked about 'fear' being at the root of insularity and the need for communication and understanding:

> *I think there's a bit of fear behind that. I've spoken a couple of times to people on our street and it's just in passing but the different ceremonies that the Indian community have and a couple of times neighbours have complained because there have been a whole lot of cars parked up and down our street and blocking driveways and they're having a ceremony and no one seems to know what it is so they put a complaint in and things skyrocket. I think there's a certain fear by the Indian families holding the ceremony and the residents who don't understand what the ceremony is about and feeling like they're being encroached upon when those emotions are raw, pretty much the temperature on the day means things get out of hand. The fear of that drives [insularity]. They keep to themselves for fear of people complaining or not understanding or ridiculing and I've now decided people are mistrustful because they don't understand what's actually happening. I think there's a degree of racism that drives that ignorance and those are the things that you can overcome if the right mechanisms are in place for people to feel safe to share and to feel safe to be exposed to a new knowledge base.* (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

11.2 Ethnic people's participation

Residents had a range of views about the extent to which people from different groups participate in communities beyond their own ethnic communities. Some thought that inter-ethnic interaction was a common occurrence:

We have got a really diverse ethnic makeup here. Really diverse. I remember coming to something for the Japanese community last year … It is through [my Japanese friends] and going to the Moon Festival, it brought in a whole heap of the Asian community, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Singapore-Chinese, and then South Asian so the Indian, Pakistani. It was fabulous … In this community across the road at the [] shop … The people who have it now are South Indian, so we get some really exciting food in there. My sister shops there … she used to play soccer. People who were in her soccer team were from South Africa, from India, from Fiji and there was only about five New Zealanders in her team, the other six were from different parts of the world … There is a bigger and greater number of businesses that are now owned by non-New Zealanders … We all get on with our business. We all know what we like, the mix is good … Even here in New Lynn we're getting more Middle Eastern people. In my street where I live there is a lot of Chinese families. People who can't speak English. In the flats across the road I try and talk to the old Chinese people over there. I don't want them to think that they can't talk to me and I'm not approachable … I go past a house on my way to work in the morning … where sometimes the man in the house is saying karakia out the front of his place … so this morning I acknowledged him being there and I was going to talk to someone at work to ask whether it is Ramadan, but I don't think it is. (New Lynn, female, 50s-60s, Māori)

Others thought that there was a general friendliness between groups but a lack of mixing:

The immediate neighbourhood is very mixed race because a lot of the apartments are rented but there is Asians, Filipinos, Saudis, Indians, I'm not too sure. It's quiet, very quiet indeed. … There is such a lot of nationalities in that complex and here from what I see, most people are friendly and will say "hello" and "how are you?" But no mixing. (Albany, female, 70s, Pākehā)

When we're thrown together or we come together – even sometimes I've seen it in public meetings through issues of importance for the whole community, different representatives will turn up and there's a clash of wills going on. For valid reasons too a lot of the time but you can tell there hasn't been the preparation done so that people, rather than fighting for their little piece, they're aware of the issues from a bigger sense. We tend to fight for the crumbs off the table instead of having the space to make the bread together. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)

Chinese and Indian ethnic groups 'keeping to themselves' was also a common theme. As mentioned in the literature review, communities may be internally cohesive yet remain disconnected from other groups:

In Papatoe there is a lot of Indians that don't like to community with the other cultures. They like to keep in their group. They talk to the Indians. Unless of course they own a shop or something, then they're alright with us. My mum was saying she has an Indian friend and

she was even saying there are too much Indians that don't want to talk to us; they just want to talk to each other. That would be the only thing. (Papatoetoe, female, 17-20, Māori)

We've got a large community of Indians in Papatoetoe. They usually tend to keep to themselves. Because there are so many of them. There's an Indian Church in old Papatoetoe. You always see groups of Indians together, you don't really see them socialising with others. Maybe it's an English barrier thing. I don't mind Indians but you don't really go out of your way to speak to them because they're usually together. (Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

Results from Asia New Zealand's annual survey provide some context for these observations. In *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples in 2012* the authors noted considerable diversity of views about the extent to which Asian peoples mix well with [other] New Zealanders. However, around one-third (35%) agreed with the statement that Asian people did not mix well while 42 per cent disagreed. These proportions differed with age, with 40 per cent of those aged 40 or over agreeing that Asian peoples did not mix well while the percentage of those aged 15 to 29 years was only 28 percent. There was general agreement (69%), however, that Asian people could do more to learn about New Zealand's culture[s] (Colmar Brunton, 2013: 64).

Examining the issue from a different point of view, a number of migrants described locals as friendly but not wanting to be friends. A young Chinese student from Albany, for example, talked about it being easy to meet people casually, but difficult to make friends. This was, he felt, because many people make strong friendships in high school and have little interest in making new friends at university. A Korean migrant, also from Albany, said that Kiwis say hello but are reluctant to talk too deeply, perhaps because they have a lot of relatives so don't need to make friends. She felt more comfortable with her English and American friends who "know my frustration and understand me". She thought that some people blamed migrants like her for rising house prices. A third Albany resident said that he and his family want to get more involved with the New Zealand community but he is not sure how or where to start. This view was reflected in the Albany Focus Group:

I know that when [they] held the focus groups going back into the last research, the migrant communities said they really would like to meet others – meet Kiwis and meet and interface. That was actually a challenge because going to work and coming home no one is around in the street. How do they connect and interface? (Albany Focus Group)

Community workers at the Albany focus group felt that some ethnic groups were doing well in terms of creating a strong ethnic community and that people may not feel the need for community involvement beyond their ethnic group:

I think a neighbourhood that does real well is the South African neighbourhood which is just on the other side. You will often see a big BBQ going on outside the little African shop and all the South African community come together – they're a very strong neighbourhood. They will do things on their own outside of big organisations … I think the Korean community are actually quite happy with their connection with their churches. They're very good at using different parks and things to do stuff. You will see heaps of them out having a fun afternoon or whatever. (Albany Focus Group)

Community workers in New Lynn also talked about a lot of interaction happening within rather than between ethnic communities:

> A   *They tend to do things within their own communities …*
>
> B   *If we can get, in my opinion, the Chinese community to mix in more that would be a huge step forward because there are some brilliant people in there. Once you get to know them at the hall, they've got a choir that practices every Saturday afternoon. You haven't heard anything until you've heard Onward Christian Soldiers or Jingle Bells sung in Mandarin.*

People from the Papatoetoe focus group talked about the challenges of interethnic contact:

> *Some migrants have said 'we have tried to connect with Kiwis, we give them our curry and we give them our curry and nothing ever comes back in return'. I think it's building the bridges so that there is two-way communication and we can do that by the way we communicate, the messages that we send through.* (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

> *I think you've also got to recognise that a lot of old people … feel quite threatened that everything is going to change. They don't know the culture, the food, the language, it's very difficult for them. The new person coming wants to assimilate and become part whereas the existing person may not have that desire. They might want everything to stay the same. If they let somebody in, it's harder.* (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

11.3 Barriers to inclusion – language

Language difficulties were the most frequently mentioned barriers to connecting with others in the community or neighbourhood. These were exacerbated, respondents explained, when people had other challenges such as mental illness, advanced age or mobility problems.

> Interviewer   *You said before that you'd like to know your neighbours more but you don't know how, is there anything else that you think is stopping you from meeting more people?*
>
> Resident   *I think probably the language.*
>
> Interviewer   *I think your English is very good.*
>
> Resident   *No, not good. I'm afraid of meeting local guys because sometimes they are speaking very fast, not like you. Some of them speak very fast and I can't understand. That's the problem.*
>
> (Albany, male, 20s, Chinese)

> *If I speak English well I could do everything, but I still have no confidence [in meeting] the other people … I need to be more [confident].* (Albany, female, 30s, Korean)

> *A lot of people would like to learn the English language and I think there's not enough places where they can learn for free. When I work in the Bureau I come across a wide cross-section of people. A lot of Asians, even though they've stayed here for 17-20 years, they still can't speak English. I'll ask them why, partly because they work so hard. They go off early in the morning and don't come back until late. They'll be too tired to do anything and they just go to bed and they miss out. That's a pity. I keep telling them 'you're in an English speaking country, you must try to learn English'. Even when they have problems*

with their neighbours they couldn't communicate. I told them 'you have to learn English'.
(New Lynn, female, 60s, Chinese)

To be honest, I don't really hang out with the people who are Indian because the way we talk is different. We can't really communicate. (Papatoetoe, female, 20s-30s, Chinese)

11.4 Enhancing inclusion

Although some residents felt that it was important for different ethnic groups to mix, others thought it unnecessary:

I think it is really important. I think diversity is all part of our culture. We embrace differences. If we expect people to embrace us and our differences, it has to be a two way thing. I think mixed cultural events are really important because we are all a mix of that.
(Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

I think it's important because if the different types of people don't mix together in the community then you generally tend to find – I'm referring to ethnicity once again – you'll have Koreans doing their own thing, Chinese doing another. It creates a little bit of a barrier and to me that's probably not a nice community. Community itself has to mix together whether you're from China, Korea, India or whatever you're from. (Albany, male, 30s, Korean)

We don't really care. If we make friends who are that type of person that's cool but if not sweet as. That's just me. I don't care what type of race you are. (Albany, female, 20s, Māori)

Definitely. Everyone is living in the same community, they should get to know each other … If you know people you can be more caring. (New Lynn, female, 40s, European)

I don't think there's a real need to. Like I said, there's no animosity between anyone so we shouldn't try to force Indians to hang out with White people because there's a lot of White people and a lot of Indians in the community. We don't need to become best friends when we're happy enough doing our own things. I don't think there's a need to force anything.
(Papatoetoe, male, 22, Pākehā)

Depends what you consider mixing well. I think there has to be good communication between all parties. Communication and understanding where each person is coming from is really important otherwise conflict can arise, just like in any life situation. We shouldn't seek to make ourselves like them or them like us because that's not how we're made.
(Papatoetoe, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Several residents talked about migrants' need for opportunities to volunteer and get involved in their neighbourhoods. An Albany resident explained that he had left his number at a retirement village hoping that he could improve his English by reading to someone. He wanted to mix with people beyond his mostly Chinese network, but nobody had called him.

A lot of [Chinese people] just look after their grandchildren and do some housework and after that they think 'I can't speak, I can't drive, I'm useless'. So we try to go to every person and talk to them and try to introduce some English speaking people as their friends. Little by little they feel they can find a place to go, they can visit English speaking friends. So they start to think Papatoetoe is a very good place and they start to ask me 'can we do something for the community?' …They can … work as a volunteer at the hospice … just to sit there quietly and say 'if you need me I'm outside' or something. These people start to think 'yes, I can do something'. That's quite good. That's what we get. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)*

… when newcomers come in Albany they really want to contribute, some positive contribution to the community development, also a sense of belonging as well … Community planting days, I enjoy very much … I strongly encourage the newcomers, particularly like Korean family. Because they are not familiar with the planting with the community because we don't have that kind of programme in our country. So when they come here as a newcomer and where do I need to go, come on [and get involved] with local community …just planting some trees in this area and maybe two or three years later the trees are growing also. I'm living here and my belonging is growing [like] my tree. (Albany Focus Group)

Others talked about events as having potential to bring people from different ethnic backgrounds together:

Put on diverse events. An international food day, the lantern festival and multicultural day. Embrace. Have a South Africa Day. Have a Queen of England Day. Embrace our cultural diversity and arts and music and dance, embrace all of that. (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Community workers at the Papatoetoe focus group talked about the need for Auckland Council to ensure its consultation and engagement processes are accessible to all:

The consultation processes need to be simplified. The communities who have English as a second language, they don't even understand what they are being consulted on and what it is … if you need submissions on certain things, take them to [the community's] premises instead of inviting a public forum. They don't come. They don't have that confidence yet to come. If you take the submissions form to a temple or to a church or a mosque, yes you will get at least 10-20 submissions made there and then, if one of them is there explaining it in their language as well. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

They also talked about the role council could play in communicating positive messages about migrants and ethnic diversity:

I suppose council could have messages that help to connect communities instead of just talking about [the] Papatoetoe community … something that connects the newcomer and the New Zealander who is here … Our Auckland could have some message so that every publication from council acknowledges that the face is changing and we are continually saying 'let's connect, let's be one community'. (Papatoetoe Focus Group)

12.0 Inclusion: Disability

12.1 Disabled people's participation

Disabled residents and their families talked about the important role that community organisations and support networks play in their lives. An Albany resident whose daughter has cerebral palsy, for example, talked about the strong network of friends she had developed through her involvement with disability support services. She described this group of friends as 'our village' and talked about their understanding of each other's needs as families with disabled children.

> *As families we do things together. It's easy, we're wheelchair accessible. We can get the kids in and out of the pool and it's all good. If one of the Mums needs to tootle off for half an hour to toilet and shower their child with a disability, we just carry on or if I need to disappear for half an hour they all get it.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

She and her daughter talked about the important social outlet provided by PHAB,[13] a network of weekly social groups for young people with disabilities. PHAB provides opportunities for the mother to have some time to herself and enables the daughter to do things that other young people enjoy:

> *Without PHAB there wouldn't be anything. It gives her the opportunity to do normal teenage stuff. Her younger sister goes to the mall and meets friends there, goes to the movies, goes to the food court and goes clothes shopping. Now [my daughter] gets to do exactly the same thing with her PHAB group.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Other young disabled people also valued PHAB and the range of activities and networks it facilitates.

> *There is this thing that PHAB has called the PHAB ball. It's like a school ball. It brings all 17 groups from across Auckland into one place for one night. It's about making disabled people feel good about themselves. When I went to the first one I didn't know there were so many cultures in PHAB. People didn't see people for their culture or their disability, they just saw people. That was really good.* (Papatoetoe, male, 17-20, Samoan)

Similarly, a blind Papatoetoe resident talked about her involvement with a Pacific blind support group that provide seminars, trips, functions, and dinners out. The organisation also plays an advocacy role and members provide support for one another.

Participants also described less formal support networks:

> *I'm on dialysis now … Also going to hospital every day, 3 times a week, and meet people there … A lot of people I meet there and we start to know each other.* (Papatoetoe, male, 50s-60s, Tongan)

For others, however, disability support groups no longer meet their needs:

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[13]http://www.phab.org.nz/

I don't go to any disability support, it doesn't interest me. I went to PHAB years ago and it's for physically disabled people. You just go there and sit there and talk or play games and that's not me. I can't stand that sort of thing ... I like to mingle and stuff. I play a sport but that's with a sport community. I'm in a club … and we play football in a gym. That's really cool … Before that I was playing wheelchair hockey, soccer and rugby for years and I competed over in Australia in a national tournaments. That was good. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

This participant's comments support the argument made by Milner and Kelly (2009) in their research about the need to avoid situations where disabled people become 'ghettoised' in disability settings due to a lack of other opportunities to connect with the wider community.

12.2 Barriers to inclusion – accessibility

Disabled residents talked about a number of barriers to connecting with people in their neighbourhoods and wider communities. A blind Papatoetoe resident, for example, explained that it was hard to meet her neighbours because she cannot see their faces. She said it would be better if her neighbours initiated the contact because "*I'm the new one, they should come to my house*". Safety was an important issue for her – she said that she felt vulnerable to attack because of her blindness. In addition, she explained that she could not use the bus because she cannot see where to get off. All of these factors, she said, made it difficult for her to mix more with others in her community. A New Lynn wheelchair user also talked about the challenges of meeting new neighbours and getting involved in her community:

> *I can't get to know anyone because I can't get to their doors. That house has got steps, there are two houses here and I went in that one and I got chased out by two dogs so I thought forget that … I'm not involved in community groups because then I have to get there and transport is a big issue for me.* (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā).

Another barrier, although articulated by few participants, was society's attitudes towards disabled people and a sense that they are outside of, or external to, the daily lives and concerns of 'mainstream' society. Accessibility, however, was the main issue identified by disabled residents and their carers. Several respondents talked about well-designed, accessible structures in their communities and the positive difference this makes in their lives:

> *The developers really did a good job with the accessibility of Albany Mall. The underground parking, you have the facility to reverse into your car park because they've provided space if you reverse in, because [my daughter] is in a wheelchair and we use a ramp in her van, so rather than having to drive into the car park and drop the van in the driveway of cars coming back and forth, we can reverse in, offload safely rather than out where cars are coming. That is fabulous … Also there are different areas of disabled parking at the Albany Mall. If you're wanting to go to the Twin Lake side of things, if you're not actually wanting to go into the mall but wanting to enjoy the lakes and the walkways they've put in through there, there's some disabled parking around there as well. They seem to have thought it through … It is about accessibility. If they put on an event or there's a venue and it's not wheelchair accessible then that's it, forget it … It's about making things accessible for the whole community.* (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

I began using a powered wheelchair about two and a half years ago and that changed my access to the community quite considerably … I can power chair down here to do my grocery shopping, go to the library, go to the post office, hairdresser in the mall. The local businesses are very friendly and open and helpful … and with the recent changes that have happened in the upgrade of the town centre, because they've worked really hard to make it more accessible for pedestrians, they've flattened out all the gutters and it's actually been a huge advantage to wheelchair users I think … It's a really nice sloping design and it's great. You don't have to wander around looking for a proper ramp in the curb because it's all nice and accessible in the town centre… If something looks like it's going to be a problem I'll ring ahead and check it out. All the local restaurants are open and friendly and they'll move furniture around and stuff like that … Before that I was using a manual wheelchair and I found it quite isolating because I couldn't push [it] very far or get it in and out of my car easily. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Several residents also described the advocacy role they played in order to ensure that Auckland Council takes accessibility into account:

When council were talking about accessibility and footpaths, we contacted them and they said 'OK, meet with us,' and they did. We had three people in wheelchairs and we did a bit of a perimeter up to the North Harbour Stadium, over to Albany Uni and pointed out some of the things that do make access impossible. You can't cross the road here and you have to walk half a mile to cross the road and then come all the way back … You do have to pre-think when you're pushing a wheelchair about how you're going to get from here to here. There's no point in making a disabled car park miles away from the ramp … Who better to bring on board on a round-the-table discussion on the design process than somebody that actually has lived experience? (Albany, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

I've been here through the process of them widening Clark Street and doing the footpaths … I've contacted the people that are doing it and saying 'you've got to make sure that we can still use the footpath or else I'm stuck' … I tell them my situation and that I use Portage Road and Clark Street by my chair to get to Lynn Mall or the train station and I need access while they're doing the footpaths … Anything they're developing I make sure I get involved in because I want to make sure they do it properly as in access wise. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

12.3 Enhancing inclusion

Reflecting the focus on accessibility in the previous section, disabled residents explained that the following would improve their ability to engage positively with others in their neighbourhoods and communities: talk to disabled people and engage meaningfully with them in the development of their neighbourhoods; consider the impact on all members of the community of changes to the environment; and provide adequate car parking facilities. A blind Papatoetoe resident, for example, said that she needed better advice about potential dangers for blind residents; that fees should be reduced for people with disabilities; and that council should consult with blind support groups regularly to find out what their issues are.

Get hold of people with disabilities and keep them in the loop when they're renovating areas. I love to get involved in that sort of thing … you've got to think of the size of the

wheelchairs and stuff like that … It's the ramps. On the trains the ramps are terrible. They built the platforms and made them higher because of the longer trains that came out which meant the ramps weren't as steep to get from the platform to the train because the steeper they are, the harder for a wheelchair to climb up safely. Let alone coming down. I went up a steep ramp, I don't know why I did it, but my chair stopped at the top and my front wheels were up in the air. I was on my own and the conductor was just standing there. I thought I was going to end up on the tracks. I lent myself forward and grabbed the front and the wheels went down and I went in. That was freaky. Someone went and checked the electric trains that are coming and everyone is asking about how people in wheelchairs and prams and people on bikes get on the train. Is there going to be a ramp? But no there's not, there's going to be an actual thing that comes out so you just wheel on like in Australia. It's like a platform. That's what you need, it needs to be safe. (New Lynn, female, 30s, Pākehā)

Parking would be my number one, more mobility car parks to cater for the community. There are a lot of retired or older people in this community … You notice it often on pension day that there are no car parks. For the disabled community and the older adult community, there just needs to be more car parks and access needs to be good for those groups. (New Lynn, female, 30s-40s, Pākehā)

Interestingly, the role council might play in bringing disabled people together with the wider community/other communities was not articulated. Participants, as illustrated in the comments above, focused on engagement only insofar as it facilitates better accessibility for disabled people. Perhaps the prioritisation of accessibility reflects the questions that were asked, or perhaps our participants were unaware that council might play such a role.

13.0 Discussion

In this penultimate section, we examine the contributions of this research to the broad objectives articulated at the beginning of the report: to better understand the factors that promote social cohesion and, through this process, to identify ways in which Auckland Council could promote social cohesion among its diverse communities. We begin by considering the high level findings in relation to the three original research questions; examine the relevance of social cohesion to several strategic council documents; and conclude by focusing on a number of lessons that might be taken away from this project.

13.1 Question One

The first research question focused on Aucklanders' experiences of inclusion and exclusion. Most of the residents interviewed for this research said that they felt included in their neighbourhoods and communities. However, residents and community workers identified the following groups as particularly vulnerable to isolation: people with mental health problems and/or disabilities; some groups of migrants and refugees; and the elderly. The extent to which participants felt included depended, they said, on one or more of the following factors: the relative age of their community and the length of time residents had lived there; the degree to which they felt safe in their neighbourhoods; the scope and strength of the personal and professional networks anchoring residents to that space; and the rigours of balancing the demands of work and family commitments. We look next at each of these factors in turn.

Residents and community workers felt that the lack of identity, community and 'heart' in Albany was due to its relative newness as a suburb and that these characteristics would change with the passage of time. Although some Albany community workers felt that the mall (and other aspects of the built environment) contributed to this lack of community identity and social connectedness, residents seemed less convinced of this. Disabled people and their families, for example, described the mall as an excellent example of accessible design and an important part of their weekly routines. In contrast to the newness of Albany and the relatively short tenure of its residents, several New Lynn and Papatoetoe respondents talked about how long they and their families had lived in their neighbourhoods and the sense of familiarity, safety and belonging they felt there as a consequence.

Interviewees in all three areas emphasised the importance of safety, often making an explicit connection between feeling safe and knowing their neighbours. They explained that small acts of kindness and consideration, particularly in times of crisis, assisted in generating and maintaining these connections. Although crime was mentioned by a few residents in all three areas, it was most commonly raised by interviewees living in Papatoetoe. Participants from this part of Auckland also discussed the negative impact of prostitution, rubbish, liquor and legal high stores on their sense of pride, safety and belonging in their neighbourhood.

The scope and strength of networks also impacted on respondents' experiences of inclusion and exclusion; having friends and whānau living in close proximity gave residents a sense of attachment to their neighbourhoods. The rapidly changing demography of all three study areas means that many residents are new to these communities; some arrive from other parts of the city or country but many are also new to New Zealand. New arrivals, particularly those who have come from outside New Zealand, and those who have difficulty communicating in English, lack the kinds

of friendships and connections that provide a sense of belonging and inclusion. It is also important to note, however, that some residents' networks lay beyond the boundaries of their immediate neighbourhood and most of these participants felt that this was a perfectly satisfactory state of affairs. Their networks were based on a range of shared factors including age, ethnicity and religious belief.

Busyness was considered by many to be a barrier to participation, a sense of belonging and, ultimately, feelings of inclusion in their neighbourhoods. Work and family commitments, residents and community workers explained, meant that people left home very early in the morning and returned home late in the evening. This left them with very little time, energy or opportunity to establish and maintain relationships with neighbours.

13.2 Question Two

We turn now to the organisations, places, spaces and events that enhance or inhibit people's sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods and wider spatial communities. Residents and community workers stressed the importance of community centres and houses as places that bring people together and generate a sense of belonging in Auckland's neighbourhoods. The absence of such a space in Albany, and the consequences of this lack, were common themes in participants' narratives. It is not only the centre, however, that matters, but also the physical configuration of that space and the way it is managed. In New Lynn, for example, the layout of the community centre and the absence of a full-time manager were identified as barriers to its use. In contrast, the sports centre in Papatoetoe, and the no- or low-cost activities for children offered there, were highly valued and frequently used by residents. There were, according to residents and focus group participants in Albany and New Lynn, a lack of activities, spaces and places for young people that impacted their sense of belonging in those areas.

Community workers and residents also felt that neighbourhood and community-level events bring people together. These include local festivals such as New Lynn's Legends of the Moon and Papatoetoe's annual Christmas Parade, as well as the night markets in both these locations. Working bees and planting days were also given as examples of the kind of place-based initiatives that bring people together and generate a sense of inclusion and belonging for residents. Libraries too were held in high esteem and used regularly by many respondents. Participants noted the wide range of activities that occurred in libraries and the diversity of those who used their services: old and young, women and men, newcomers and well-established members of the community and people with a range of disabilities. Three attributes of place and space were identified as particularly important by our respondents: aesthetics, safety and accessibility. Taking parks as an example, interviewees talked about the beauty of such places and how it was essential to keep them that way; they noted concerns about safety relating to other users of the park or infrastructure that was considered faulty or dangerous; and they pointed out the importance of appropriate infrastructure in and around the park, particularly for disabled people.

13.3 Question Three

The last research question focused on meaningful social interactions between different people in neighbourhoods and spatial communities. The key finding, as suggested by the title of this report, is that most participants felt that people in their neighbourhoods 'get along'. Similarly, most of the residents and focus group participants positively valued the ethnic diversity of their

neighbourhoods and communities. There are, nonetheless, several tensions that suggest it is not quite that simple or clear-cut: the sense of anxiety expressed by white New Zealanders about cultural domination by other, non-white, ethnic groups; the exclusion implicit in using the terms 'Kiwi' and 'New Zealander' to imply only Pākehā New Zealanders; the sense that some ethnic communities 'stick together' rather than mixing with others; and the other side of that, which is the feeling that longer settled communities are friendly but reluctant to be friends. A lack of English language fluency was considered the most significant barrier to more meaningful relationships between communities.

Although some of our interviewees thought that it was important for different ethnic groups to mix, others did not. With respect to the organizations, places, spaces and events that facilitate meaningful interactions between people of different ethnicities, participants expressed similar views to those described earlier about those that enhanced a sense of belonging in neighbourhoods and communities: well-run, well-designed facilities; and local events and festivals.

The predominant theme in the narratives of disabled participants and their carers was accessibility. Interviewees stressed the importance of community agencies and support groups in their lives, although several respondents said that they preferred to be involved with groups focused around a particular activity rather than disability per se. Bringing disabled people together with the wider community/other communities was not articulated by those spoken to for this research project.

13.4 Social cohesion and strategy

Many of the key themes described above are closely aligned with priorities, directives and initiatives described in various Auckland Council plans and work programmes. In this section we reflect on the relevance of our findings to three areas of Auckland Council's work - the Auckland Plan, the Thriving Communities Strategic Action Plan and the 'key initiatives' of Community Development, Arts and Culture (CDAC) for 2013/2014.

The first area of connection is around the theme of community-led development. Community-led development features strongly in the Auckland Plan because

> international and local experience shows that actions to address economic, environmental and social challenges are most successful when 'owned' and led by communities. Such development empowers individuals and communities by building their leadership, capacity, skills and resources (Auckland Council, 2012: 69).

The comments in this report from residents and community workers about the need for Auckland Council to act as a facilitator and enabler of community-led initiatives reinforce the appropriateness of the Auckland Plan directive: "support community-led development and work with communities to develop leadership, skills and capacity" (Auckland Council, 2012: 86).

Community- or resident-led development also features prominently in the Thriving Communities Strategic Action Plan, which includes the 'focus area' "enable resident and community-led action to flourish" and 'actions' around facilitating and supporting resident and community-led development and planning. Residents and community workers talked particularly about the role council could play in enabling them to organize and run events, evidence that reinforces the intention of CDAC's Events Unit to "build community capacity in the events area" in 2013/2014.

A second area of connection concerns exclusion and barriers to belonging and participation for some groups. The Auckland Plan includes the directive "promote inclusion, reduce discrimination and remove barriers to participation, particularly for disadvantaged groups" (Auckland Council, 2012: 89). This directive is supported by the identification in this research of barriers to inclusion and participation for disabled people, particularly in the form of accessibility issues, and for ethnic minorities and migrants, particularly in the form of discrimination and language difficulties.

Some residents and community workers involved in this research described barriers to belonging, participation and inclusion that arose from poverty and other structural issues that Auckland Council is less able to impact on directly. Such issues were particularly apparent in the narratives of participants from Papatoetoe. These comments could be seen as indicative of the need for council to play an advocacy role in addressing socio-economic issues, particularly in South Auckland. This research is therefore broadly supportive of the following:
- The Southern Initiative: a place-based initiative within the Auckland Plan which includes a directive to "produce an agreed multi-sector plan for the area"; and
- The focus area within Thriving Communities on maximising council's positive socio-economic impacts by continuing to be an advocate.

In this report we have noted the close relationship between feelings of safety and feelings of belonging. This evidence provides support for the assertion in the Auckland Plan that "safety in public and private places is fundamental to a strong and inclusive Auckland" (Auckland Council, 2012: 84). This research suggests that the directive to "improve community safety and feelings of being safe" (Auckland Council, 2012: 85) is an important one. The focus on 'place based projects' in CDAC's key initiatives for 2013/2014 is particularly appropriate in this context. As described in this report, research participants suggested that feelings of belonging and safety were closely connected to knowing one's neighbours and feeling able to rely on them for assistance in times of need. Residents and community workers expressed a desire for neighbourhood-level projects or events, described by CDAC as "neighbourhood development through place based projects", in order to foster safety and belonging via neighbourliness. Place based projects are thus another area of connection.

Two final areas of connection are:
- Thriving Communities action "improve council engagement with communities" – reinforced by the suggestion by research participants that council needs to improve its ability to communicate with those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, continue to involve disabled people in the planning of accessible spaces, and generally ensure that consultation and engagement with the public feeds meaningfully into decision-making.
- CDAC key initiative for Events Unit "Deliver an enhanced Movies in Parks programme": reinforced by comments from Albany residents and community workers about the success of such events in their area in the past.

These close alliances between our research and the directives of various other pieces of council work are positive – they show that Auckland Council, community workers and residents have some shared understanding about what needs to happen. However, the fact that residents and community workers felt the need to make these comments indicates that council still has some work to do in terms of turning its various plans and strategies into action.

13.5 So what can we do about it?

We began this discussion section by considering our research findings in relation to the three original research questions and then examined the relevance of social cohesion to several strategic council plans and work programmes. In doing so, we have provided a solid foundation for the last part of this chapter, where we suggest a number of lessons that might be taken away from this research. Each of these lessons focuses on the ways in which Auckland Council could contribute to the development and maintenance of social cohesion in its diverse communities; these fall into the following three inter-related areas: built environment; community facilities; and communication, engagement and partnerships.

Meeting the aspirations of Auckland's diverse communities and facilitating positive relationships between them presents challenges for council, particularly in the context of budgetary constraints; an ageing population; significant and increasing ethnic diversity; and growing levels of inequality. Conversely, there are also many opportunities: to create welcoming, accessible places and spaces that bring people together; for facilities and the people who run them to enable meaningful contact between different groups; and for council to act as both leader and partner in its engagement with diverse communities. Lastly, but very importantly, we remind the reader of the point made earlier in this report, that it is critical that discussions about social cohesion do not obviate the need to attend to issues of social justice. As Hickman et al. (2008: xi) note, "Tackling the long-seated problems, inequalities and discriminations 'in place', is essential for social cohesion for all …"

13.5.1 Built environment

Although changes in the built environment may not, in and of themselves, bring communities together (Amin, 2002: 968), they are often an important facilitator of social interaction. Beider (2011: 8), for example, writes about the significance of routine and informal connections in shops, schools and on the street, interactions that are more easily made in the context of structures and spaces that bring people together. The impact on the Albany community of the lack of such spaces and structures and the negative effect of the poor design of the community centre in New Lynn are clear illustrations of their importance. The quality of the built environment is particularly critical for disabled people; the elderly; children; and those travelling on bicycles. As several respondents noted, well-designed, accessible structures and spaces make an enormous difference to people's ability to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with each other.

With respect to children, Professors Karen Witten (Massey University) and Robin Kearns (Auckland University) describe the impact of the built environment (among other factors) on children's levels of mobility in their Kids in the City Project (Witten and Kearns, 2013).[14] Children from nine schools across Auckland said that they liked the following things in their neighbourhoods: friends close by; places to play; amenities near-by; quiet and peaceful places; and school. When asked what they disliked, dangerous traffic was a common response. Witten and Kearns suggested that council could accommodate children in an intensifying Auckland by creating safe streets for walking and scootering; and assist in the creative re-purposing of existing spaces. An example of the former is a project called Te Ara Mua – Future Streets[15] that is currently being

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[14] http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/departments/centres-research/shore/projects/kids-city-marsden.cfm
[15] http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/manukau-courier/9367866/Streets-lead-to-safer-NZ

trialled in Mangere. A partnership between a multidisciplinary research team[16] and Auckland Transport, the project's aim is to improve walking and cycling options in the area. An example of the latter strategy would be to identify spaces that are used for one purpose during specific hours and facilitate their child-centred use outside of these times. One example of these kinds of spaces, they said, are city car parks that can be turned into skate parks or basketball courts outside of business hours (Witten and Kearns, 2013).

13.5.2 Community facilities

Community facilities and the people who run them are important too: community centres and halls; swimming pools, parks and sports' clubs; and, in particular, libraries. They bring people together around a common interest, passion or activity and thus create opportunities for people to make the kinds of connections that promote a sense of safety, belonging and inclusion. The staff are a critical element of this social infrastructure, acting as facilitators, mediators and communicators in neighbourhoods and communities. They provide information, advice and support and also play a vital role as links between council and the diverse communities it serves. The absence of such a person in the New Lynn Community Centre was identified as a significant barrier to community use of that facility.

Providing space and other resources for community organisations, particularly those that are new and emerging, is another important role of community facilities. Several participants explained that they did not expect council to 'do everything', rather, they wanted to be supported in responding appropriately to the needs of their own communities. For some participants this was about meeting spaces, for others it was about tools, advice or other resources. Also important is the provision of low- and no-cost activities for families with little or no disposable income. Interviewees, particularly those living in Papatoetoe, talked about how frequently they took advantage of these activities and how much they valued them.

All of these functions of community facilities play a vital part in creating, developing and supporting participatory democracy and active citizenship. In addition, they also play a role in facilitating meaningful contact between disparate communities, as Ward et al. (2011: 28) explain:

> [w]hile contact per se is associated with more positive outcomes, international research has shown that contact under favourable circumstances (intimate, cooperative, positive, and equal status contact with shared common goals) is most effective. Facilitating and improving this type of contact where culturally diverse groups routinely meet … will promote harmonious relationships and a more socially cohesive society.

13.5.3 Communication, engagement and partnerships

Neither welcoming, responsive community facilities nor a built environment that is safe and accessible are possible in the absence of effective communication, engagement and partnerships. It is perhaps in this area that there are most opportunities for council to build levels of social cohesion. Residents and focus group participants clearly articulated a desire for a particular kind of relationship with Auckland Council and its officers. They stressed the value of the following: listening well to the needs and aspirations of communities; clearly communicating important

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[16] From Transport research company Ternz, Auckland University, Massey University and Auckland University of Technology.

messages about council activities, particularly in relation to planned changes in the built environment; and working collaboratively as partners.

Community organisations also valued the idea of partnership, of sharing skills and resources and using a community- and neighbourhood-led model of development. As noted in the previous section, council is already developing its capacity to work with communities in this way. An example of this kind of partnership relationship is the neighbourhood-led planning initiative sponsored by Roger Blakeley's Community-led Planning Champions Group.[17] The first of four anchor projects is the proposed upgrade of the Sandringham Neighbourhood Reserve located in the Albert-Eden Local Board area. Instead of the 'business as usual' approach where communities are consulted about council-led plans for their area, this way of working involves communities as partners at every stage, from the development of a vision through to the selection of a plan, its implementation and beyond. The Research, Investigations and Monitoring Unit are involved in the documentation and evaluation of this process so that council and its officers can develop best practice in this area.

Other opportunities in this space include the following: provide leadership by communicating explicitly the social and economic value of ethnic and cultural diversity; provide information for diverse communities in their own languages and in ways that facilitate meaningful engagement; use council's extensive communications network to formally welcome newcomers to Auckland and provide a portal for information and assistance; support the acquisition of English language skills in whatever way possible; build residents' capacity to host their own neighbourhood events; and involve disabled residents in the planning of accessible spaces.

One resident spoke eloquently of the need for Māori, as tangata whenua, to provide a welcome to newcomers to New Zealand.[18] We see this as another example of a potential community-led initiative or an opportunity for a partnership relationship between Auckland Council and Auckland communities, of the kind described by so many of our participants. This illustration of the possibility of community strength in diversity is therefore a fitting close to this section of the report:

> *One of the roles that we have as Māori is to look after the visitors. It's that principle of manākitanga… If you're going to take the huge step of lifting your family from your homeland and moving to another homeland, you've probably done some research to do that … I think when they get here we have obligations as communities to be able to provide them with knowledge about ourselves. I don't think for the Māori community, and it's the only community that I really can speak about, that we've done that well. I think others have described us instead of us doing that ourselves. Making sure that the relationship is reciprocated so that we learn from the people coming and they learn from us. That shared forum is not something that I think has had enough effort or investment. (Papatoetoe, female, Māori/Tongan)*

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[17] The group's name has yet to be finalised.
[18] This kind of activity has already been undertaken in Wellington in a programme called the Marae Welcome Programme. See http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/bringing-maori-culture-to-newcomers-the-wellington-regional-settlement-strategy/

14.0 Conclusions

As the title of our report suggests, many of the main findings of this research are positive. Residents and focus group participants in Albany, Papatoetoe and New Lynn generally liked where they lived; felt a sense of belonging in their areas; were satisfied with the level of interaction they had with their neighbours; and valued the ethnic diversity of their neighbourhoods and communities. There were, nonetheless, people who felt isolated, lonely and disconnected from those they live amongst. As Watson clearly articulates in the quote below, contemporary cities are sites of both exclusion and inclusion for their inhabitants:

> For most contemporary city dwellers, or indeed visitors to the city, the experience of walking along a city street, and musing on the diversity of faces they see and languages they hear, on the shops with arrays if different products and smells, restaurants displaying foods and recipes from across the world, is a sensory delight. This is the contemporary phantasmagoric 'multicultural' city, where people of different races, ethnicities, class locations, ages and sexualities live side by side, produced by a complex set of socio-economic, global/local, political and socio-demographic shifts which mean that living with difference, though always a feature of urban life, is probably now quintessentially what city life is about. But running alongside the celebratory urban narrative, constituted by the very same processes, is the city as a space of segregation, division, exclusion, threat and boundaries, where the story of city life as mixing and mingling is replaced by a story of antagonism, fear and exclusion (Watson, 2013: 2).

In this final section of the report, we summarise the key findings of the project in relation to the three original research questions and reiterate the arguments made earlier for the value of social cohesion as a framework for understanding what holds neighbourhoods and communities together.

In relation to the first research question, most residents interviewed for this project said that they felt included in their neighbourhoods and communities. The extent to which they felt this way depended on how long they had lived there; how well established the area was; how safe they felt; how connected they were to the people in their neighbourhood; and how much time and energy they had left after fulfilling their obligations at home and at work. People in Albany were more likely to feel disconnected from their relatively newly-established area, while in Papatoetoe and New Lynn residents talked more often about how long they had lived in their suburb and how this tenure had generated a strong sense of identity, belonging, inclusion and safety. Aspects of the built environment also had an impact on people's sense of inclusion, although opinions differed on whether and to what extent this was the case. The Albany mall, for example, was considered by community workers to be a site of exclusion while disabled people and their families praised its accessibility. Although crime was most frequently raised as an issue by Papatoetoe residents, safety was identified as critical for participants in all three areas and connected explicitly to knowing one's neighbours. New arrivals, especially non-English speakers from outside New Zealand, frequently lack the kinds of intimate relationships that generate a sense of inclusion. The 'busyness' of those who work long hours in paid and unpaid work can also be a barrier to feelings of belonging and inclusion. These factors notwithstanding, certain groups were identified as being particularly vulnerable to isolation: people with disabilities and/ or mental health problems, some migrants and refugees, and the elderly.

We turn next to the second research question on the organisations, places, spaces and events that enhance or inhibit people's sense of belonging. Residents and community workers emphasised the important and positive role played by community centres or houses and their staff; neighbourhood and community level events and festivals; and libraries. Community centres and houses with multi-use spaces and well-trained staff, participants said, bring people together and generate a sense of belonging in neighbourhoods and communities. The lack of such a centre in Albany, and the poorly set out and unstaffed centre in New Lynn, were perceived as problematic for those areas. A concurrent lack of activities, spaces and places for young people in those two suburbs was also considered to have a negative impact on their sense of belonging. Place-based events, local festivals and markets also bring people together and generate a sense of community identity, inclusion and belonging. Libraries too were considered important community assets because of the varied activities available there and the wide range of people who use these services. Participants identified three attributes of space and place that were particularly important to them: aesthetics, safety and accessibility.

The last research question focused on meaningful social interactions between the peoples of Auckland. As suggested in the title of our report, most respondents valued the diversity of their neighbourhoods and communities and believed that people living in them generally 'get along'. Despite this mostly positive finding, however, a number of tensions and anxieties emerged along the fault lines of birthplace, culture, identity, language and disability. Identifying these fissures and understanding their impact on people's lives is the necessary first step in addressing them. Therein, we believe, lies the value of this project and the social cohesion framework upon which it is based.

We conclude this report, therefore, by restating the arguments made earlier for the value of social cohesion as a framework for understanding what holds us together. Its focus on common norms and ideals provides a balance to the valuing of difference; we have argued throughout the report that it is critical to hold both of these positions in relation to our diverse communities. Social cohesion's emphasis on belonging, inclusion and participation also enables us to frame an alternative to discourses that privilege the market in the distribution of resources and power. Nonetheless, as we highlighted in earlier chapters, a focus on social cohesion does not obviate the need to identify and address the effects of political, social and economic marginalisation. We are currently awaiting the results of the 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings. In addition to the overall growth of Auckland's population, we expect the results to reinforce existing trends towards population ageing, increasing ethnic diversity and a growing gap between those who have and those who do not.[19] The social cohesion framework provides us with ways of understanding, and therefore ameliorating, the challenges presented by these significant demographic, economic and social shifts.

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[19] The New Zealand Deprivation Index is a composite of a number of census-based variables and ranges from 1 to 10, with 1 indicating the least deprived 10 per cent (decile) and 10 indicating the most deprived 10 per cent in New Zealand.

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Appendix A   Resident interview guide

Introduction (5 mins)
- Personal introduction / mihimihi
- Purpose of the research
- Intended use of and access to the findings
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Koha and thanks
- Demographics – confirm as on recruitment info

Concept of neighbourhood (5 mins)
- How long have you lived here? Who lives with you?
- What do you think of as your neighbourhood? (Explore main parameters - use map if useful)

Attitudes towards neighbourhood (10 mins)
- So, do you like living in this neighbourhood? What do you like most about it?
- Do you feel like you belong in this neighbourhood? Why? Why not?
- Do people from different backgrounds know one another and get along well together around here? Why? Why not?
- What kinds of things bring people in the neighbourhood together? *(Explore places, activities, events – see Appendix)*
- Are there any kinds of people locally who don't tend to mix so much? Do you think there are any people who are a bit isolated? Who? Why?
- Is there anything about your neighbourhood that you wish was different?

Concept of community (5 mins)
- What do you think of as your community or communities? (Explore communities based on locality, interest, ethnicity, religious, online, etc)
- In what ways do you connect with them? Does that tend to happen locally or outside of (suburb)?

Social cohesion activity (15 mins)
- In what kinds of ways do you get involved in your neighbourhood and local community – either informal or organised activities?
    - o Probe: (see Appendix)
        - ▪ Informal activities
        - ▪ Organised activities
        - ▪ Use of community facilities and programmes
- What you get out of being involved in those activities?
    - o Probe:
        - ▪ Sense of belonging / attachment / identity / inclusion
        - ▪ Safety
        - ▪ Tolerance and good relations
        - ▪ Support / help
        - ▪ Other ?
- Where does most of your involvement with the local community happen? Why is that?

- What are the most usual places in your neighbourhood or local area for people to get together or mix?
- What kinds of activities or events in your community bring different types of people together? *(Explore Appendix)*

Barriers (5 mins)
- Would you like to be more involved than you are now in your neighbourhood or local community?
- Is there anything stops you from being more involved in your neighbourhood and local community?
  - Probe:
    - Social/structural barriers
    - Poverty or wealth
    - Disability (inc medical)
    - Isolation
    - Cultural diversity
    - Safety factors
    - Other?

Enablers (5 mins)
- Is it important for the different kinds of people in (suburb) to mix, or doesn't it really matter? *(Explore reasons)*
- Is there anything that council could be doing that would make it easier for people in (suburb) to mix more?

Appendix - Places, spaces, events and organisations
- '*Spaces'* e.g. open spaces, street corners, retail/commercial areas
- Organisations and places
  - programmes provided by organisations e.g. cultural organisations, playgroups, adult education, migrant support, disability support
  - community centres or houses
  - community or rural halls
  - arts or cultural facilities
  - youth facilities
  - aquatic facility or swimming pools
  - recreation and leisure centres
  - libraries
  - parks, reserves, sports fields and community gardens
  - schools
  - kohanga/kura
  - marae
  - places of worship (e.g. church or mosque)
  - sports clubs
- Events
  - community and neighbourhood events

Appendix B   Focus group guide

Introduction (15 mins)
- Personal introductions / mihimihi
- Purpose of the research
- Intended use of and access to the findings
- Confidentiality – not available due to the group context, so self-monitor accordingly
- Koha and thanks
- Input in their community worker role, and as 'locals'

Benefits of community involvement (10 mins)
- Do you think there are any benefits for people of being involved with their neighbourhoods and communities? What are they? What <u>evidence</u> is there of that?
  - o Probe:
    - Sense of belonging / attachment / identity
    - Safety
    - Tolerance and good relations
    - Support / help
    - Philosophy of cohesion
    - Other

Sense of neighbourhood and community belonging (10 mins)
- How well included in their neighbourhoods or local communities do you think people who live in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] feel? What evidence do you have that supports your perception?
- What are some of the factors that make people feel included here?
- Do you think this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get along well together? Why/why not?
- Do you think some groups feel less included or less like they belong here than others?
- What are some of the contexts or factors through which people might feel excluded in this community?
- Do you think that people who live in this area feel a sense of pride in their community? Why/why not?

Social cohesion activity (40 mins)
- What are some of the ways people in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] get involved in their neighbourhoods or communities?
- Do you think some groups are more involved in community or neighbourhood activities than others?
- What are the most important places in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] for people to get together? Do you think these places contribute in any way to people feeling included in their communities?
- To what extent and in what ways are community facilities used locally?
- Can you think of particular places or events in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] that bring different types of people together? *(Explore differences in ethnicity, disability and socioeconomic status)*

Barriers (20 mins)

- Do you think people locally are wanting to get more involved in their neighbourhoods or communities? What evidence is there of that? If not, why not?
- What kinds of things prevent people locally from being more engaged with their neighbourhoods and communities?
  - o Probe:
    - Social/structural barriers
    - Poverty or wealth
    - Disability (inc medical)
    - Isolation
    - Cultural diversity
    - Safety factors
    - Other?

Enablers (15 mins)
- Can you think of some things that could be changed in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] that would make people feel more included or more like they belong here?
- What would need to change in [Albany/New Lynn/Papatoetoe] for people to become more involved in neighbourhood or community activities?
- How could those changes happen? How do they need to be supported?

Social cohesion (5 mins)
- Just to wind up and thinking over our conversation of the past couple of hours, how relevant and important do you think that 'social cohesion' is in your community as it grows from now on? Why?

Appendix C   Resident interview sample

	Ethnicity	Age	Sex	Special attributes
Papatoetoe				
1	Māori	17-20	F	Student
2	Māori /Cook Island	30-40s	F	Mother at home
3	Māori/Chinese	50-60s	M	Business owner
4	Samoan	19	M	Disabled; born in New Zealand
5	Samoan	20 – 30s	F	Unskilled
6	Tongan	50-60s	M	Skilled
7	Tongan	20-30s	F	Customer service
8	Samoan	30-40's	F	Profession
9	Pākehā	22	M	
10	Pākehā	30-40s	F	
11	Pākehā	50-60s	M	Unskilled; long-time resident
12	Chinese	20-30s	F	Retail; long-time resident
13	Niuean	50s	F	Blind
14	Fijian Indian	20s-30s	F	Mother at home
15	Indian	50-60s	M	
16	Indian	20s	M	Skilled
17	Indian	80s	F	Living alone
18	Māori/Tongan		F	Carer
New Lynn				
19	Iraqi	30s	F	Training; lives alone; refugee
20	Māori	20s	F	Solo mother
21	Māori	50-60s	F	
22	Pākehā	30s	F	Disabled
23	Cook Islander	50-60s	M	Long-time resident migrant
24	Fijian	20s	M	Professional; long-time resident migrant
25	Pākehā	30-40s	F	Disabled(mobility)
26	Pākehā	20-30s	F	Mother at home; sole parent
27	Pākehā	30-40s	M	Skilled
28	European	40s	F	Management
29	Pākehā	70+	M	Retired
30	Chinese	40-50s	M	Businessman
31	Chinese	30-40s	F	Mother at home
32	Chinese	60s	F	Living alone
33	Korean	30-40s	M	Business owner; new settler
34	Indian	20s	M	Training

35	Indian	30-40s	M	Skilled
36	Indian	50-60s	F	Business owner
Albany				
37	Pākehā	20s	F	Training
38	Pākehā	20s	F	Unemployed
39	Pākehā	30-40s	F	Carer
40	Pākehā	20's	M	Disabled (cerebral palsy)
41	Pākehā	60s	M	Business owner
42	Pākehā	70+	F	Retired; living alone
43	Pākehā	65+	M	Retired
44	South African	70+	M	Long-time migrant resident
45	Chinese	17-20	M	Student; new settler
46	Chinese	20s	M	University student; new settler
47	Chinese	30-40s	F	On benefit; long time resident migrant
48	Malaysian	60s	M	Business owner
49	Korean	30s	M	Business owner; long time resident migrant
50	Korean	75	F	Widow living with family
51	Korean	30s	F	Mother at home
52	Māori	20s	F	Skilled
53	Māori	40s	M	Professional
54	Korean	40s	M	Resident 9 years; business owner

Find out more: phone 09 301 0101
 email research@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz
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