



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Open Attachments (Under separate cover 1)

Meeting Date: Thursday 12 February 2026

Time: 9.30am

Venue: Large Exhibition Hall
War Memorial Centre
Marine Parade
Napier

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Āhuru Mōwai

Napier/Ahuriri Homeless Shelter Society Inc

Report to Napier City Council
12 February 2026

Executive Summary

- The Napier Ahuriri Homeless Shelter Society (the Society) was established in March 2025 to support whānau pounamu – those sleeping rough in Napier and experiencing chronic homelessness.
- The Society's membership encompasses a wide range of stakeholders, including non-government organisations, community trusts, church leaders, mana whenua representatives, and community leaders.
- Āhuru Mōwai 370 Hasting St opened in July 2025 providing overnight shelter, support and food for up to ten chronically homeless men (tāne).
- Āhuru Mōwai is managed by Whatever It Takes Trust who employ experienced front-line teams who are known and trusted by whānau pounamu open the doors seven days a week 4 pm to 8 am.
- Tāne who participate in the programme commit to developing Personal Development Plans, with the aim of transitioning into their own accommodation. They help establish the rules that govern how the shelter operates. It is a dry shelter without drugs or alcohol.
- Āhuru Mōwai staff facilitate the management of the tāne medications, access to health services, engagement with the Ministry of Social Development, Corrections and Justice.
- Volunteers actively support whānau pounamu to attend day activities off-site, fostering a sense of community, belonging and supporting them to walk to wellness.
- 23 tāne have participated in Āhuru Mōwai. Ten have transitioned into permanent or transitional housing and there is an active waiting list.
- Āhuru Mōwai is a lean organisation but requires \$35,000 a month to operate.
- Funding to date is from two significant one-off grants, Napier City Council \$100,000 and the Eastern and Central Community Trust \$100,000, individual and corporate donations of approx. \$50,000. Ministry of Social Development has provided the salary for one full time staff member.
- The Society continues to seek financial support from a wide range of Government, Local Government, regional, corporate, philanthropic and community groups.
- The Society has partnered with Eastern Institute of Technology who are completing a six month research and evaluation project.
- The Society is collaborating regionally with Kuhu Mai in Hastings and having ongoing discussions with the Regional Housing Leadership Group.
- We recognise the need to support wahine, rangatahi, provide meaningful daytime activities and staff Āhuru Mōwai during the day.
- The Society has enough funding to continue for a further six months, time we will continue to use to get more sustainable funding in place.
- The Society also recognise the need for ongoing food security and a community day hub for those experiencing homelessness.



Background

Overview

The name Āhuru Mōwai means ‘a calm restful haven’ and was gifted to the Society by mana whenua, specifically the Kahui Kaumātua of Te Taiwhenua o Te Whanganui ā Orotū. This rōpū have been both our greatest supporter and critic. Te Taiwhenua o Te Whanganui ā Orotū and our Kaumatua Matiu Eru have walked alongside the Society every step of the way.

Membership of the Ahuriri Napier Night Shelter Society (**Appendix one**) includes a range of organisations across Napier and Hawkes Bay. Each member is an active participant attending regular meetings and working groups to progress fundraising, policy developments and ongoing development of the Society.

Since Āhuru Mōwai was opened in early July 2025, over 23 chronically homeless tāne have become part of the Āhuru Mōwai whānau. Ten have moved forward enough to be able to transfer from the shelter to their own home, several have left deciding they were not ready for the transition and a further nine are currently resident at Āhuru Mōwai.

Operations

The Āhuru Mōwai premises are located at 370 Hastings St and rented by the Society from a Napier businessman who has operated the site as the Stables Backpackers for several years. Initially catering for backpacking tourists with 33 beds in ten rooms. When the backpacker numbers fell dramatically, it was leased out to Recognised Seasonal Employer workers. In July the Society agreed to a six-month rental agreement with the right of renewal for a further six months. The second option was agreed in December 2025.

How it works The Society has a contract for Services with Whatever It Takes Trust (WIT). The shelter is open and staffed seven nights a week between the hours of 4 pm and 8 am. Between eight and ten tāne are resident at any one time, each having their own room. WIT, under the leadership of Āhuru Mōwai Manager run a programme based on Mana Motuhake (self-determination) has been developed.

The basic parameters of the shelter’s operation (kaupapa) have been established by the Society. It is a dry shelter currently only for tāne who agree to have bag checks upon entry. Tāne are expected to make a financial contribution towards their board of \$150 per week. Beyond this the tāne supported by staff establish the day-to-day operations (tikanga) of the shelter and establish ground rules (kawa). They are actively involved in any dispute resolution and in major decisions when there are transgressions.

Key to the success of the programme is that on entry each tāne works with the manager and other staff to develop a personal development plan (including a Hua Oranga assessment). This plan identifies their hopes and aspirations for the next few months and actions that need to be taken if these are to be realised, which can involve:

- A reassessment of the medications
 - Support in managing medications
 - Liaison with public Health Services including Te Kupenga Hauora Ahuriri
 - Access to Mental Health Services
- Liaison with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)
 - Ensuring they are on the right benefit
 - Assessment of their eligibility for Accommodation Supplement
 - Ensuring they have the right address
- Liaison with Housing providers
 - Correct identification on the Housing Register (Kainga Ora)
 - Meeting with Housing First Providers



- Liaison with Police and Napier City Council (NCC) Napier Assist Āwhina Tāngata street patrol team
- Connection with Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
 - Court support where necessary
 - Liaison with Corrections regarding parole
 - Sorting out unpaid or outstanding fines

Research and Effectiveness:

The Society has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Eastern Institute of Education (EIT) to provide research into the effectiveness of Āhuru Mōwai. Two senior researchers are leading the evaluation and have produced a three-month interim report up to November 2025 (**Appendix two**) A six-month report is currently in progress. EIT Head of Research has also indicated an interest in leading a longitudinal study into the effectiveness of Āhuru Mōwai.

Occupancy data

During the first six months of operation (July–December 2025), Āhuru Mōwai operated every night and supported a total of 23 tāne. Nightly headcount typically ranged from 4–8 tāne. On any given night absences do not indicate under-utilisation or disengagement; rather, it reflects the complex realities of tāne managing whānau responsibilities, social relationships, addictions, health issues, and legal obligations. The complex realities of tāne stabilising after long periods of rough sleeping is evident.

From Week nine onwards, all rooms were fully allocated, indicating sustained high demand. Actual nightly presence varied, but administrative occupancy remained consistently full. Overflow nights (9+) occurred occasionally but were rare. Weekly patterns showed lower occupancy on Mondays (≈67%), rising mid-week, and more volatile but generally high occupancy across weekends.

These patterns align with whānau narratives describing early instability followed by increasing clarity and routine once safety was established. As one tāne explained, “I could gather my thoughts... I wasn’t locked up in the head anymore,” reflecting the stabilising effect of the whare.

Table 1: Occupancy Table

Measure	Result	Notes
Total tāne who stayed overnight (July–Dec 2025)	23	Based on nightly logs and weekly summaries
Occupancy	Full from Week 9	All rooms allocated
Typical nightly headcount	4–7 tāne	Fluctuations linked to predictable life pressures
Average nightly headcount	5.5 tāne	
Tāne transitioned into permanent or transitional housing	10	Many maintaining ongoing connection
Active waiting list	Yes	Demand remained high throughout



Housing Pathways

Those who moved into permanent or transitional housing, found this was supported by improved clarity, agency, and engagement with services.

- *“Without this place I’d still be living under a tree... with their help and support I got a house.”*
- *“I’m on the actual list now... they’ve shown me the track.”*
- *“I’ve got my own Āhuru Mōwai now.”*
- Many carried the whare’s values into their new homes, maintaining boundaries and routines that supported ongoing wellbeing.

Successes

In its first six months of operation, Āhuru Mōwai has proven to be a safe, stable and effective haven for tāne who have been living rough in Napier. The whare has operated every night since opening, with clear routines, consistent staffing, and a kaupapa that places dignity, safety and mana at the centre of daily life.

The tāne themselves have played a major role in shaping how the whare runs. With the basic parameters set by the Society — a dry house, evening entry checks, individual rooms, and a financial contribution. A key operational success was the co-creation of the kawa, a living framework developed by whānau pounamu and staff. This co-design approach has created a strong sense of ownership and responsibility. The kawa is now a living document that guides behaviour, decision-making and conflict resolution. Whānau describe it as their “Tiriti o Waitangi,” reflecting the pride they take in maintaining it.

The whare’s relational approach — “a home, not a shelter” — was repeatedly emphasised by tāne and staff. Tāne spoke of entering “a family environment rather than an institution,” and consistently acknowledged the commitment of staff who “take time out of their own thing to come and bloody watch us or look after us.” This relational intensity was central to stabilisation, emotional regulation, and progress toward housing.

The impact of this approach is clear. Tāne consistently report that Āhuru Mōwai is the first place in years where they have felt genuinely safe, able to sleep properly, and able to think clearly about their next steps. The atmosphere is calm, relational, and grounded in aroha and accountability. Staff are acknowledged by the tāne for their consistency and care, and former residents return regularly to support their “brothers,” reinforcing the whānau-based model.

This stability has translated into strong outcomes. Ten tāne have moved into permanent or transitional housing, and others are actively progressing through their Hua Oranga plans. Many have reconnected with whānau, addressed long-standing health issues, corrected benefit entitlements, and re-engaged with services they had previously avoided. Reduced harm is evident, with several tāne reporting decreased substance use and improved emotional regulation.

Operational successes include:

- **Consistent nightly operation** with stable routines and clear expectations
- **High demand and full room allocation** from Week 9 onward
- **Strong housing outcomes** 10 tāne moving into permanent or transitional housing
- **Effective restorative practice** with incidents resolved through hui rather than exits



- **Reconnecting with family/whānau** several of the tāne have reconnected with family/whānau who they had lost contact with, or where relationships had been strained, over the course of the pilot
- **Strengthened partnerships** with MSD, Housing First, Te Kupenga Hauora Ahuriri, Trinity Church, and others
- **Whānau have more active engagement with** MSD, health services and where necessary, Justice agencies as well as re-establish employment skills through meaningful community work
- **Whānau-led leadership**, including tuakana-teina roles and returning residents supporting current tāne

Partnerships have strengthened throughout the pilot. Agencies such as MSD, Housing First, Te Kupenga Hauora Ahuriri, Trinity Church, and others have engaged directly with the whare, often meeting tāne on-site to reduce barriers. With the closure of the Outreach Centre on Clive Square West, Āhuru Mōwai has become a stabilising anchor for many who previously had nowhere safe to go.

Overall, the first six months demonstrate that the Āhuru Mōwai model works. It provides safety, restores dignity, and supports tāne to move from crisis toward stability, connection and long-term housing. The evaluation report (**Appendix two**) indicates that Āhuru Mōwai is delivering meaningful, culturally grounded, and transformative outcomes, with strong alignment between kaupapa, daily operations, and resident experience.

Impact on whānau pounamu

Whānau Pounamu reported wide-ranging improvements across safety, wellbeing, identity, emotional regulation, and connection. These outcomes reflect both the stabilising effect of the whare and the deeper cultural and relational shifts that occur once tāne feel safe, valued, and supported:

“At the end of the day it gave me the safety to do what I needed. My own room, I could shower twice a day, live healthier, love myself better.”

Safety and Stability

Tāne consistently described Āhuru Mōwai as the first place in years where they felt physically and emotionally safe.

- *“It was unsafe on the streets. I am safer now.”*
- *“I can sleep here. Proper sleep. That changes everything.”*
- *“It’s a place to call home for now.”*

Having their own room, predictable routines, and a calm environment enabled tāne to rest, think clearly, and reduce exposure to harm.

The men who live at Āhuru Mōwai call themselves whānau and are called whānau by the staff. As in any whānau, the place runs on love, offering aroha, support and challenge.

“Without this place I’d still be living under a tree. It took me off the street like stepping into a family environment. You don’t just think of yourself. On the street you have to think of yourself first.”



Identity, Mana, and Self-Worth

The whare supported reconnection with identity, whakapapa, and dignity.

- “I remembered who I was. Not just a homeless guy.”
- “Being in the house gave me self-worth... I was looking towards something.”
- “I have a healthier, happier love for myself.”

Whānau described feeling genuinely valued — a shift that enabled them to make changes they had long struggled to achieve.

The original whānau established Kawa o Te Whare, to differentiate how they would live together in the whare from how they live on the streets. The kawa is seen as a powerful, living document, which can be discussed, refined and added to. Whānau refer to it as *our Tiriti o Waitangi*. It features words outlining respectful living, ranging from the aspirational (*aroha, to be kind, gentle, compassionate, mana motuhake*) to the matter of fact (*Do not stomp down the hallway, clean up after yourself in the shower*).

The restoration of dignity and self-worth as part of the journey from street living to sustainable housing is also highly valued by the whānau.

“It’s all about communication. They told me to be honest with myself about the change I needed to make for myself. They gave me tools to love myself better.”

Emotional Regulation

Whānau reported significant improvements in managing anger, stress, and conflict. Hui processes helped tāne express emotions and develop healthier communication patterns.

- *“They saw my demon come out... instead of bottling it up, I learned to communicate.”*
- *“Honesty is the only way forward... with yourself first and foremost.”*
- *“When you have a problem, it’s shared... you find out there’s five different solutions.”*

Reduced Harm

Tāne reported reduced substance use, fewer unsafe nights on the street, and improved mental clarity.

- *“Getting off the drugs, the clouds cleared... I’ve got a new outlook on life.”*
- *“You don’t have to be stealing just to pay someone to let you live there.”*

The drug-free threshold and relational accountability were key protective factors.

Access to, and engagement with services

Āhuru Mōwai facilitates access to health and social services that have been difficult for whānau to engage with while on the streets, including having some services such as WINZ come to the whare to meet with whānau. *“Oh, it’s definitely a good thing being here. They help us out with all sorts of things.”* Before involvement with Āhuru Mōwai, many of the whānau have been on incorrect benefits or assessed on the wrong step for the housing register. *“And so, it’s a better step than where I was anyway because I wasn’t even on the list and I didn’t even have a number before.”*

That the whare is home to the whānau means that when they move out to their own home, the support of home is still there.



“Someone actually cares. People care and would like to see you do better for yourself. It's the family feel that I lost. I started not caring about myself anymore. It's lucky the wraparound feel carries on. I can go back any time I want.”

Financial Reporting:

Funding to date

NCC Special Projects Fund	One off	\$100,000
ECCT – Grant	One off	\$100,000
MSD – Funding for staff FTE	Until June 26	\$ 65,000
Community Donations		\$ 34,750
Fundraising Events (2 * Film Nights at MTG)		\$ 19,115
Corporate Sponsorship		\$ 5,500
Interest Income		\$ 1,015
Special Targeted Donation for Van		\$ 8,000
Residents Contribution		\$ 4,768
Total Income Received to 26 January		\$338,150

The Society has been actively engaged in seeking ongoing sustainable funding for the future success of the Society and Ahuru Mowai.

Approach to funding

1. **Central Government agencies** including MSD, Kainga Ora and Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

To date we have been able to have 1 FTE subsidised from MSD funding.

We have a contingent of senior managers from various agencies visit however nothing concrete has been forthcoming.

We are all aware of the tight constraints that are prevalent, however are attempting to keep pursuing this initiative
2. **Community support** – have raised \$50k though community donations and fundraisers will continue to seek support.
3. **Corporate Sponsorship**- We have approached most of the larger HB business entity with limited success to date however are hopeful. Many are interested; however, before committing many have asked what support there is from Central Government.
4. **Philanthropic Trusts**- We were successful recipients of the one-off ECCT grant of \$100k and will be applying for a longer-term partnership agreement. We have approached or applied to numerous other Philanthropic Trusts for funding without success to date.

Both the Tindall and Simplicity Foundations have declined our requests.

We have approached Royston Trust whose funding is focused on health, particularly for young people.

We have had some discussions with Hawkes Bay Foundation without success to date.



We have met with the Board of Anglican Care Waiapu and have had all the Board visit Āhuru Mōwai but as yet they have not contributed funding.

5. **Regional Collaboration**- We have been in discussions with a wider group of social service providers in HB particularly around homelessness and those with Mental Health and addiction issues.

This includes Kuhu Mai – the day hub for homeless operating in Heretaunga-Hastings.

There may be opportunities where we can be part of joint initiatives with Government funding to improve the lives of those more vulnerable whanau in HB.

WIT have commissioned a Feasibility Study to explore a coordinated accessible day hub and service for people experiencing homelessness or housing stress. This will inform future discussions on investment, including whether and how to establish a homelessness day service and combination of outreach or place-based services would be most effective and sustainable.

The generosity of Napier City Council (\$100,000) and ECCT (\$100,000) has allowed Āhuru Mōwai to establish and demonstrate the short-term effectiveness of Āhuru Mōwai. Apart from significant support from MSD support we have not been able to source any central government funding or support.

The Society has enough funding to continue for a further six months, time we will continue to use to get more sustainable funding in place.

As well as the \$200,000 we have received from the NCC and ECCT, we have received over \$38,000 in donations from community groups and individuals and our two fundraising film evening events have brought in \$19,000.

The Society has met with MP Katie Nimon, the Society has unsuccessfully sought to engage with central government. We were guided to apply for the Proceeds of Crime alongside MSD; however, Government have refocused the fund on projects to address methamphetamine. We are also not eligible for the \$17 million homelessness funding that was announced by the Minister of Housing last year, as it was targeted for Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Hamilton. Despite many efforts we have not been able to engage with Ministers directly who oversee this fund.

We have received excellent feedback and interest from senior leaders from across Government who attended a breakfast at Āhuru Mōwai on 20th November 2025. The delegation included the Eastern Region Commissioners for Kainga Ora and MSD and MHUD's Deputy Chief Executive, System Delivery & Performance the Society continue to advocate for funding for additional staff at Āhuru Mōwai. We will also be approaching NGOs across Hawkes Bay seeking their support, again suggesting staffing.

WIT has secured funding from MSD for two full -time staff (October 2025- June 2026) which equates to \$130,000. WIT is using this funding to cover both staffing costs at Āhuru Mōwai including funding the Manager and outreach community work for whānau pounamu.

We have commenced a rollout of corporate sponsorship / funding and have had some early success but have a way to go. We have received \$5,000 already with some expectation and commitment for this year.

The Society has also made several unsuccessful grant applications to philanthropic organisations. Our newness makes it difficult to build a compelling case.



As of December 2025, Tāne have contributed \$3,000 and all are now redirecting portions of their benefits to the Society automatically. We are currently working with them and MSD to increase the level of contribution to that they would likely need to make if in social housing supported by Government funding and subsidies. All tāne in the shelter who have been there for more than three weeks are contributing \$150 per week.

Challenges & Future (next steps)

The Society is aware of the significant challenges we face. In October 2025, the Society initiated strategic planning to inform a framework, including the vision, mission, priorities, 3-5 year implementation plan and outcomes (**Appendix three**) which is summarised in the overview diagram (**Appendix four**).

The Society acknowledges the need to support and include wāhine and rangatahi members of the whānau pounamu. We are actively seeking greater collaboration with Kuhu Mai day outreach programme operating in Hastings and finding ways to work together.

Many whānau pounamu in the community including tāne in Āhuru Mōwai face challenges keeping themselves occupied during the day. Until the Community Hub (based on the recently completed Feasibility Study) can be established, the Society is actively seeking support and resources for meaningful activities for whānau to engage in:

- During the day (e.g. Māra Kai gardening programme at Whakatu). A number of these activities require transport and staffing.
- Food security and support for whānau outside the shelter continues to be delivered by other community organisations and individuals who actively volunteer and ‘fill the gap’.

The Society is very positive about the outcomes we have achieved in the first six months of operation which have far exceed our expectations. We believe with an expanded programme that includes wahine, rangatahi, supported by a community hub that includes meaningful day time activities and food security this level of success will be maintained, ensuring that whānau pounamu are supported to leave the streets and return to housing.



Appendices:

Appendix One: Society Membership

Matiu Eru	Kaumatua	Ngāti Kahungunu
Mark Cleary	Chair	Napier Pilot City Trust
Maxine Boag	Secretary	Former Napier City Councillor
Phil Ross	Treasurer	Former WIT CE
Alwyn Corban	Deputy Chair	Hastings District Councillor/Napier Pilot City Trust
Sam Aberahama	Member	CE WIT/Former Tairawhiti Police Area Commander
Sally Crown	Member	Deputy Mayor
Peter Findlay	Member	Community Worker/Activist
James Gaudin	Member	Trinity Church/Open Door
Joanne Gaudin	Member	Trinity Church/ Open Door
Nathan Harrington	Member	CE Te Kupenga Hauora Ahuriri
Mark Johnston	Member	Minister St Paul's Presbyterian Church
Mat Mullaney	Member	CE Te Taiwhenua o Te Whanganui ā Orotū
Shyann Raihania	Member	Napier City Councillor/Te Hiwa a Māhaki
Martin Williams	Member	Principal Shakespeare Chambers/Former HBR Councillor
Kirsten Wise	Member	Principal Black & White Accounting/Former Mayor

Advisors:

Matiu Eru	Kaumatua	Ngāti Kahungunu
Kahui Kaumatua	Guidance	Te Taiwhenua o Te Whanganui ā Orotū
Rebecca Peterson	Advisor	Senior Policy Analyst Napier City Council
Sally Rye	Research	Eastern Institute of Education
Chris Malcolm	Research	Eastern Institute of Education
Mandy Pentecost	Research	Eastern Institute of Education



Appendix Two: Draft EIT Three Month Evaluation Report

Āhuru Mōwai December report (final draft)

Epigraph

Āhuru Mōwai is far more than a place to stay; it is a relational environment that restores mana and enables sustainable wellbeing.

He oranga ngākau, he pikinga waiora. *When the heart is well, wellbeing rises.*

The kaupapa of Āhuru Mōwai is carried in the relationships formed within its walls — the quiet conversations, the shared routines, the willingness to walk alongside one another. Strength grows here not through individual effort but through connection, trust, and reciprocity. This report enters that relational space, exploring the context that shapes the whare's everyday life.

Executive Summary

This six-month evaluation examines the implementation, utilisation, and outcomes of Āhuru Mōwai, a kaupapa Māori night shelter for tāne experiencing homelessness in Ahuriri/Napier.

This evaluation recognises that homelessness for many tāne Māori is shaped by structural inequities that intersect with their personal challenges. These include colonisation, racism, intergenerational poverty, and potentially epigenetic factors associated with these factors. The report therefore interprets outcomes not only as influencing individual change but also as a call to create a critically aware environment that responds to these wider conditions.

The evaluation draws extensively on interviews with Whānau Pounamu, members of the governance group, and staff reflections. It also makes use of nightly occupancy data, weekly summaries, and other administrative records held by WIT.

A mixed voice approach is used: findings are presented in a formal, governance focused manner, supported by narrative from whānau and others mentioned above. Methodological and interpretive commentary is provided in the evaluator's voice but also draws on other voices where appropriate to provide this interpretive framing.

Key sources are:

- a) The Whānau pounamu (men who stay overnight at Āhuru Mōwai, sometimes simply referred to as "whānau" here);
- b) The Pou Ārahi (Staff);
- c) Pou Aroha (Volunteers);
- d) Shelter Society members (governance group); as well as some voices from the wider community.

What are the significant outcomes that Āhuru Mōwai (the whare) has delivered?

Although the occupancy levels are quite dynamic, the Whānau Pounamu consistently described the whare as a place of safety and belonging. One tāne explained that Āhuru Mōwai was "*the first place I could actually sleep properly*" and that this "*changed everything*" (AA). Another described arriving to "*a family environment*" *rather than an institution* (BB).



Eight tāne transitioned into permanent or transitional housing during the pilot. Staff and whānau co-created a living kawa that guided daily practice, conflict resolution, and collective responsibility. Partnerships strengthened across the pilot. Reconnection was seen with whānau (less so were links to hapū and iwi). The whare became a stabilising anchor in the absence of the Outreach Centre.

While some of these are more conventional (Western) measures of “success” we would caution against narrow individualised metrics and encourage the reader to see these within a wider frame of navigating the inequities and systemic challenges faced by many tāne Māori today. The evaluation finds that Āhuru Mōwai is delivering meaningful, culturally grounded, and transformative outcomes. Yet there are a range of issues including sustainability, staffing, future service design, and strategic oversight arrangements/mana whakahaere that require governance attention.

1. Introduction

Āhuru Mōwai was established as a six-month pilot to provide safe and mana enhancing overnight accommodation for tāne experiencing homelessness in Ahuriri/Napier. The whare operates with eight beds/bedrooms (and a spare room), guided by kawa and tikanga codesigned with Whānau Pounamu. The operating model emphasises manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and mana motuhake, with relational practice at its core.

Whānau Pounamu and the Manager referred to the whare as “a Home, not a Shelter” (MM), highlighting the intentional creation of a calm, relational environment where tāne could stabilise and reconnect with themselves and others.

This evaluation, undertaken by Chris Malcolm and Mandy Pentecost of EIT/Te Aho a Maui, assesses the effectiveness, utilisation, outcomes, and sustainability of the pilot. It also examines the cultural integrity of the model and the lived experiences of tāne who engaged with the whare.

2. Evaluation Scope, Purpose and Questions

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation was commissioned to:

- assess how effectively Āhuru Mōwai operated over its first six months
- understand utilisation and occupancy patterns
- identify outcomes for tāne
- examine cultural and kaupapa fidelity
- assess partnerships and system interface
- identify sustainability considerations
- provide recommendations for future service design



2.2 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation addresses the following questions:

- How effectively did Āhuru Mōwai operate during the pilot period?
- What were the actual occupancy and utilisation patterns?
- What outcomes did tāne experience?
- How well was the kaupapa implemented and maintained?
- How did the whare interface with the wider system and community?
- What are the implications for sustainability and future design?

3. Background and Context

Homelessness in Ahuriri/Napier is shaped by complex intersections of housing scarcity, addiction, trauma, whānau disconnection, disconnection from hapu and iwi and systemic barriers. Prior to the pilot, tāne relied heavily on the Outreach Centre for daytime support and informal night-time arrangements. The closure of the Outreach Centre increased vulnerability for many.

Āhuru Mōwai was designed as a kaupapa Māori response that:

- provides safe overnight accommodation
- restores identity and belonging
- supports emotional regulation
- strengthens whānau, hapu and iwi connections
- reduces harm
- builds pathways to housing

One tāne described life before the whare as “*unsafe on the streets... I was hangry at everything*” and believed he “*could have harmed someone or myself*” (AA). Another said that without the whare he “*would probably be dead of gangrene*” due to untreated infection while living rough (BB). These accounts illustrate the severity of need the whare was designed to address.

The whare is staffed by a small team operating within a relational, restorative, and culturally grounded framework. Whānau Pounamu play an active role in shaping kawa, supporting new residents, and maintaining the emotional and cultural integrity of the whare.

4. Methodology and Data Sources

This evaluation uses a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data.

Quantitative Data

- nightly occupancy logs (1 = present, 0 = absent)
- weekly summaries
- housing transitions
- incident logs

Note: This report was compiled in mid/late December, so data for the last two weeks of December was not yet available for review.

Qualitative Data

- interviews with three tāne (AA, BB, CC)
- interview with the Manager (MM)
- Notes made by the interviewer



- staff reflections
- hui notes
- interview with the Shelter society members (SS)
- observational insights

Analytical Approach

- thematic analysis
- kaupapa Māori principles remain central to interpretation
- integration of lived experience voices
- occupancy data used to identify weekly and long-term trends
- mixed voice reporting: formal findings supported by transparent evaluator commentary

The Manager (MM) noted that many tāne arrive “*staying afloat for as long as you can*,” and once they reach “*a little bit of dry land, all sorts of things happen*” (MM). This insight shaped the evaluation’s attention to emotional regulation, volatility, and stabilisation processes.

5. Findings – Operational Effectiveness and Service Delivery

Āhuru Mōwai operated every night during the six-month pilot, from early July to the end of December, providing safe overnight accommodation, relational support, and practice grounded in kaupapa Māori principles. Staff maintained a stable routine, with nightly check-ins and morning transitions based on clearly communicated expectations. Whānau Pounamu contributed to the emotional and cultural integrity of the whare, supporting new residents and helping maintain kawa.

One tāne described the whare as “*a place to stay... a place to call home for now*” (CC), reflecting the sense of stability and belonging that underpinned daily operations. He noted that staff “*take time out of their own thing to come and bloody watch us or look after us... they do a pretty good job*” (CC), illustrating the relational intensity of the model.

The whare’s operating model is relational rather than transactional. Staff, governance members and whānau emphasised that the whare is “*not a bed service*” but a whānau home, with a strong sense of community where safety, identity, and belonging are restored through shared practice. “*a shared community with boundaries that help people succeed*. (S1) The Manager described this intentionally: the whare is “*a home, not a shelter... an extended whānau for those who come through*” (MM). This relational approach underpins the outcomes described later in the report.

“A governance member (S4) highlighted that although having a home is a major milestone, “it still requires intense support... when you’re in your own home, that’s it — the support is critical.”

Tāne spoke of entering a family space and feeling aroha and love. “*Someone actually cares. People care and would like to see you do better for yourself. It’s the family feel that I lost. I started not caring about myself anymore.*” (AA)

6. Findings - Occupancy and Utilisation Analysis

6.1 Overview

Nightly headcount typically ranged from 4–7 tāne. Absences followed predictable trends and recurring patterns. Rooms were allocated to individuals, with the spare room used as people transitioned in or out. Overflow nights (9+) occurred but were rare.



The whare was administratively full (all rooms allocated) from Week 9 onward. Actual headcount on any given night was lower. This does not mean capacity was underutilised. As in most lives, there are reasons to be away from home overnight: invitations to family events, to parties, to travel for a few days, or the occasional crisis. For these tāne, adjusting to life in a whare with a number of others is a significant change from living on the streets, and they are still navigating the complex realities of addiction cycles, health issues, and legal obligations of that life.

A governance member (S4) noted that many tāne remain in “survival mode” even after entering the whare, “*sometimes sleeping with the door open or on the floor because that is what their bodies are used to.*” Having a designated room and bed to return to is critical in adjusting to a new mode.

6.2 Weekly Occupancy Summary

Over these six months the following themes or trends emerge:

Weeks 1–5: Early establishment phase, starting with six Whānau Pounamu and building toward eight whānau.

Weeks 5–7: Consolidation of set-up.

Weeks 7–10: Middle period - High occupancy and stronger cohesion.

First exit to stable housing: **Week 9.**

Weeks 11–23+: **Later period:** Stable state, with more visible volatility as tāne transition in and out, and some cycle through crisis events.

These patterns align with whānau narratives describing early instability followed by increasing clarity and routine. One tāne explained that once he felt safe, “I could gather my thoughts... I wasn’t locked up in the head anymore” (AA), reflecting the stabilising effect of the whare.

6.3 Night by Night Trends Across Six Months

Mondays: Lowest occupancy (≈67%), reflecting return lag after weekends.

Tuesdays: Highest occupancy, linked to benefit cycles and regathering.

Wednesdays: Stable.

Thursdays: Predictable dip as tāne drift outward.

Fridays: Rise before the weekend.

Weekends: High but volatile, shaped by substance use, safety concerns, and whānau visits.

These rhythms mirror participant accounts of navigating the street environment while residing at the whare. One tāne described avoiding certain spaces during the day because he didn’t want to “look like that” or be visibly homeless (CC), illustrating the pressures that shape daily movement.

6.4 Interpretation Summary

The occupancy patterns across the six-month period reflect the realities of tāne navigating complex lives while stabilising within a kaupapa Māori environment. Administrative occupancy remained high, with all rooms allocated from Week 9 onward, while actual nightly presence fluctuated in predictable rhythms shaped practical and emotional pressures they are still



managing as they regain equilibrium. These absences are not indicators of disengagement; rather, they reflect the lived pressures tāne continue to manage while building stability.

The data aligns closely with whānau narratives: once safety is established, tāne begin to “gather their thoughts” and reengage with services, whānau, and future planning. The whare’s relational model supports this transition, providing a consistent anchor even when tāne move in and out of the space.

7. Findings - Transitions after Āhuru Mōwai

Across the six-month pilot, Āhuru Mōwai supported a steady flow of tāne moving through the whare and into more stable living arrangements. Ten tāne transitioned into permanent or transitional housing, with several maintaining ongoing connection to the whare. Some returned in a tuakana-teina capacity, supporting newer residents and reinforcing the whare’s relational culture.

Transitions were not linear. Some tāne exited temporarily due to crisis events, safety concerns, or personal circumstances, and later re-engaged.

A governance member (S1) explained that the model is intentionally selective, inviting tāne who are *“ready to engage with the experience,”* and that boundaries allow people to return when they are genuinely ready.

Staff and whānau emphasised that movement in and out of the whare is expected within a kaupapa Māori model that prioritises mana, relationship, and readiness rather than rigid timelines.

The relational approach — “walking alongside” rather than “moving people on” — was central to successful transitions. Tāne described gaining clarity, agency, and confidence in navigating housing systems once stability was established.

8. Findings - Whānau Outcomes

Whānau Pounamu reported significant improvements across multiple domains. These outcomes reflect both the stabilising effect of the whare and the deeper emotional, cultural, and relational shifts that occur once tāne feel safe, supported, and connected.

8.1 Safety and Stability

Tāne consistently described Āhuru Mōwai as the first place in years where they felt physically and emotionally safe.

One man stated plainly: *“It was unsafe on the streets. I am safer now.”* (AA)

Another described the immediate relief of having his own room and a secure place to rest: *“I can sleep here. Proper sleep. That changes everything.”* (AA)

A third highlighted the basic but transformative shift from carrying all possessions to having a stable base: *“We can come back and sleep comfortably... it’s a place to call home for now.”* (CC)

Having a secure room, predictable routines, and a calm environment enabled tāne to rest, think clearly, and reduce exposure to harm. Being at Āhuru Mōwai is *“so much safer... from theft of their gear and for ... personal security.”* (S3)

8.2 Emotional Regulation

Whānau reported improved ability to manage anger, stress, and conflict.



Describing how whānau hui helped him confront long suppressed emotions, one of the tāne said: *“They saw my demon come out... instead of bottling it up, I learned to communicate.”* (AA)

He went on to explain the shift in his internal processes: *“Honesty is the only way forward... with yourself first and foremost.”* (AA) *“I don’t snap like I used to. I can breathe now”.*

Another tāne described how collective problem solving expanded his sense of possibility: *“When you have a problem, it’s shared... you find out there’s five different solutions.”* (BB)

Hui processes supported tāne to express emotions, resolve tensions, and develop healthier communication patterns. This emotional regulation was foundational to other positive changes.

8.3 Identity and Mana

The whare supported reconnection with identity, whakapapa, and self-worth. One governance members said that she thought Āhuru Mōwai gives the whanau “hope for the future”. (S3) Not having to constantly struggle to be safe, warm and fed creates a “stabilising” platform that allows whanau to shift their focus from immediate survival towards longer-term goals.

Whanau mentioned that Āhuru Mōwai helped them reconnect with talents and tools they had lost sight of, and it supported them to develop new ones.

On entry tāne complete the Hua Oranga assessment tool to provide an initial wellbeing “snapshot”. Ideally Hua Oranga would be repeated to record these gains, though a Te Whare Tapa Whā lens. The manager noted that, due to lack of resources and staff training, Hua Oranga was not used as often as intended. Strengthening capability in the use of this tool - or a similar one - remains an important opportunity for the future.

Others tools, potentially drawing on the Meihana model, could widen the focus to include the whānau of these tāne, and offer a more detailed way of assessing not only individual change but also the responsiveness of systems and services surrounding them.

This shift of reconnecting with talents and tools can be seen in the following comment: *“I remembered who I was. Not just a homeless guy.”* (AA)

Another explained that being in the whare restored his sense of value: *“Being in the house gave me self-worth ... I was looking towards something.”* (BB)

A third described the pride he carried even during hardship: *“I never lost the mana of helping others ... that kept me going.”* (BB)

Tāne described rediscovering dignity, pride, and a sense of purpose.

As one of the governance group (S1) reflected: being treated as valuable *“allows people to start making the changes they haven’t been able to make before.”*

The kaupapa Māori environment played a central role in restoring mana and strengthening cultural identity. Whanau spoke of an increased sense of worth from their time at Āhuru Mōwai. They sensed that others genuinely cared for them, which gave them an opening to feel better about themselves.

“Someone actually cares. People care and would like to see you do better for yourself. It’s the family feel that I lost... I started not caring about myself anymore”. (AA)

“Being in the house gave me self-worth, looking towards something. On the street, I had nothing to lose, tomorrow you might have nothing, nothing is of value”. (AA)



A Shelter Society member noted that “*If you’re treated like crap you start feeling like crap, but if you’re treated as though you’re really valuable and you’re worth investing in and you’re going to be given opportunities to secure housing and make lifestyle changes, you start feeling better about yourself, and therefore you start making some of the changes that you haven’t been able to make before.*” (S1)

He continued “*what I’ve noticed is a growth in pride and a realisation of their achievements, which I don’t think we can underestimate. I think the shelter has given them a platform to actually reconnect with themselves and with the community, and they’re proud of that.*”

He also noted the “*level of ownership and pride*” shown in the way they leapt to their feet in response to a question about who has been involved with Āhuru Mōwai at a public fundraising event.

One of the whanau said “*I’m actually quite proud of myself, completely different to that hangi the first day. I have a new outlook on life, I’m not depressed any more, I have a healthier happier love for myself.*” (AA)

Tāne are proud of the koha they pay to Āhuru Mōwai and to contribute to its upkeep, cleanliness and hosting responsibilities.

8.4 Whānau Reconnection

Stability enabled tāne to reconnect with children, parents, and wider whānau.

An example of reconnecting with his mother after a long estrangement is seen in the following statement: “*She was over the moon... said it was the best day of her life.*” (CC)

Another spoke of wanting to be a better role model for his daughter: “*Time to give it (drugs) up... I want to be a better role model for my daughter.*” (AA)

These reconnections were often described as deeply meaningful turning points, supported by improved emotional regulation and clearer decision making. (S4) One of the governance group highlighted that each tāne “*has a story behind them,’ and reconnection often requires careful, ongoing support beyond the whare.*” Another (S2) emphasised the importance of reconnection to whanau, hapu and iwi as foundational to mana motuhake.

Notes to the occupancy data indicated the importance of these connections, when the tāne go to spend the night with cousins or other whanau. The evaluators would like to point out, however, that while there was clear evidence of increase connection with whānau, we did not hear or read about much of an increase connection with hapu or iwi.

This is not solely a matter of Āhuru Mōwai reaching outward. A reciprocal approach would also invite hapū and iwi partners to step inward — helping to identify pathways for their own uri who are staying at the whare, supporting reconnection processes, and creating opportunities for participation and contribution when the time is right. Developing these links can restore a sense of identity (tuakiri) and belonging. These are key components of reconnecting with self and others and strengthening te taha wairua.

8.5 Reduced Harm

Tāne reported reduced substance use, fewer unsafe nights on the street, and improved mental clarity.

One tāne described the shift from synthetic cannabis use to sobriety: “*Getting off the drugs, the clouds cleared... I’ve got a new outlook on life.*” (AA)



Another contrasted street survival with the safety of the whare: “*You don’t have to be stealing just to pay someone to let you live there.*” (BB)

The drugfree threshold and relational accountability within the whare contributed to safer behaviours and reduced exposure to harm. One of the governance group commented that: some tāne are “*not ready for a home*” (S4) and view the increased level of taking responsibility as a major shift. And, suggested that this reinforces why harm-reduction boundaries must remain firm.” One of the tāne appeared to concur with this, noting “*It’s a safe place because it’s drug free. Drugs and contraband are taken at the door.*” (AA)

8.6 Housing Pathways

Ten tāne moved into permanent or transitional housing. Stability at the whare enabled tāne to engage with Housing First, MSD, and other providers.

Describing this the turning point: “*Without this place I’d still be living under a tree... with their help and support I got a house.*” (BB)

Another explained the shift from passivity to agency: “*I’m on the actual list now... they’ve shown me the track.*” (CC)

A third described carrying the whare’s values into his new home: “*I’ve got my own Āhuru Mōwai now... people support me because they see I want positive change.*” (AA)

Many carried the whare’s values into their new homes, maintaining boundaries and routines that supported ongoing wellbeing.

9. Kaupapa: Values, Tikanga, and Practice

The kaupapa, kawa and tīkanga of Āhuru Mōwai are not exclusively Māori, yet the pilot has been unmistakably grounded in Māori values, tikanga, and relational ways of being. These foundations have shaped the flavour, rhythm, and expectations of the whare from the outset, giving it a distinctive character that is responsive to the whānau who live there, and their context.

9.1 Developing the kaupapa and establishing the Kawa

Once the physical premises were secured, conversation turned to how Āhuru Mōwai would operate. Governance had set out a small set of non-negotiables, but not the flavour of the day-to-day operation of the whare. “*It’s going to be dry, it’s going to have hours of attendance, and you know, people are going to have to have their bags sort of looked through as they come in*” (S5) but “*from then on, it was handed over to the men to establish how it will work with the tikanga and the kawa*” (S5).

Several of the Shelter Society members spoke of the influence of the Manager in developing the co-design approach. Her commitment to mana motuhake, kaitiakitanga, and rangatiratanga/self-determination, as well as manaakitanga and whanaungatanga, is evident in the creation of ***The Kawa***, a living, co-created framework guiding behaviour, shared responsibility and conflict resolution.

9.2 Living the Kaupapa Day-to-Day

Whānau Pounamu Hui were central to maintaining cultural integrity, enabling tāne to process emotions, repair relationships, and reinforce shared expectations. One of the first whānau said “*The kawa is what keeps us safe.*”



Whānau described the whare as a *home*, not a shelter. This distinction reflects the purposeful design of the environment that is relational, restorative, and grounded in manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and mana motuhake.

Tāne increasingly took on kaitiaki roles within the whare, and staff modelled these values daily. A telling example was the way the Manager always accepted a cup of tea if it was offered, she explained that she did so to support the tāne thinking of, and caring for, someone else's needs.

The entry process reinforced this kaupapa. New residents at Āhuru Mōwai are asked to go and carefully read the kawa, then to come back and talk about something on it that “*stuck with them*.” They are also asked if they can see themselves abiding by this kawa.

The *Kawa* can be added to, usually through a hui process, but sometimes individual suggestions. However, to remove an aspect of the kawa would require agreement of a whānau hui.

9.3 Avoiding tokenism and deepening the kaupapa

One governance member cautioned that without consciously embedding tikanga into daily decision-making, services “*risk becoming ‘tokenistic’ rather than kaupapa -driven.*” (S2) Tikanga provides more than generalised Māori elements, it is grounded in relationships, people and place. The establishment of the Kawa provides important first principles for helping to explore tikanga and embed tikanga in the life of the whare.

Another governance member observed the pivotal; role of the current manager in this: “*I think, (she) very accurately understands that the power actually has to lie with the residents here. And it's her job to encourage them to understand that and then for them to use it in a way that will improve their lives and the way the shelter runs.*”(S5)

9.4 Avoiding tokenism and Deepening the kaupapa

The evaluators note that much of the fidelity to the kaupapa, the Kawa, and to tikanga Māori has been driven by the current manager. To ensure this focus can be maintained and enhanced over time, attention will be required in staff selection and training, and also succession planning. Governance and Management will need to consider how to operationalise the tikanga and kawa in ways that retain their dynamism, responsiveness and integrity, and to avoid ‘tokenism’.

10. Findings - Safety and Staffing

10.1 Safety and Incident Management

Incidents were managed through restorative practice, de-escalation, and relational accountability. Only a small number of tāne were exited due to safety concerns. Most conflicts were resolved internally through hui, reinforcing the whare’s commitment to maintaining safety without compromising mana.

The drugfree threshold was a key protective factor. Tāne described how this boundary supported their own wellbeing and influenced the standards they set in their housing after exit. One tāne is clear that he will not allow drugs or alcohol to his whare: “I've got my own Āhuru Mōwai now” (AA).

10.2 Staff Practice and Emotional Labour

Staff operated within a high trust, relational model that required emotional steadiness, cultural competence, and restorative practice. The emotional labour was significant, particularly during periods of high churn or when tāne arrived carrying trauma, addiction, loneliness, and hunger.



Whānau frequently acknowledged staff commitment and consistency. The relational intensity of the model is both a strength and a sustainability challenge, requiring adequate staffing, supervision, and support to maintain quality and prevent burnout.

10.3 Whānau as Kaitiaki

Whānau increasingly saw themselves as role models and protectors of the whare and its kawa, both inside and outside the whare. This aligns with the tuakana-teina roles observed among longer stay residents and those who have moved into housing. “Bro’s breakfasts” are held occasionally where tāne who have left Āhuru Mōwai for their own homes host their street brothers.

11. Community Partnerships and System Interface

11.1 Partner Agencies

Partnerships strengthened across the pilot, improving tāne access to health, housing, and social services. Key partners included Housing First, MSD, Trinity Church, Te Kupenga, Wellesley Road Health Centre, Menz Shed, and Orange Sky. We wonder: are there other hapu and iwi partners who could be constructively included here as the whare develops? When services visited the whare tāne engaged more easily, reinforcing the importance of relational trust and culturally safe environments.

With the Outreach Centre now closed, Āhuru Mōwai has become a stable anchor and base from which to go out and engage in daytime activities. This reinforces the need for coordinated support across agencies working with the homeless community. Also, with the Outreach closing food security has become a more pressing issue. Āhuru Mōwai provided reliable kai at the beginning and end of each day, and information about when and where kai is available elsewhere. Tāne described this as stabilising and mana enhancing.

A strength has been the close connection between Āhuru Mōwai and wider community initiatives, particularly those led by Papa Pete: Transport, hunting and butchering for hāngī, links with the Menz Shed and particularly the mara kai at Kohupātiki. This can be seen in the recently produced publicity video. Many of the people involved in these projects are linked to both spaces, creating a naturally integrated, whānau-centred approach. These activities give tāne meaningful, mana enhancing opportunities to contribute, learn, and build relationships and confidence. Tāne remain closely connected to the volunteers who provide these opportunities.

Members of the governance group noted that services working with the homeless community can sometimes be “quite siloed.” They emphasised the goal of interweaving supports so tāne experience a seamless journey. Āhuru Mōwai contributes to developing this wider wraparound network making warm referrals and supporting engagement—rather than operating as a stand-alone solution.

Āhuru Mōwai’s work is grounded in ongoing whanaungatanga. As the Manager said, “Once you’re whānau, you’re whānau.” Tāne echoed this continuity of care, with one noting, “It’s lucky the wraparound feel carries on. I can go back any time I want.” (AA) This enduring relationship is not only a values statement; it describes how support is offered before, during, and after tāne move into their own homes.



11.2 Neighbourhood and City Impact

Anecdotal reports suggest reduced visibility of rough sleeping near the whare, though broader city-wide patterns remain influenced by the closure of the Outreach Centre. Some concerns about loitering were raised, reflecting wider community dynamics rather than issues specific to the whare.

11.3 Food Security

With the closure of the Outreach Centre, food security became more pressing. Āhuru Mōwai provided reliable kai at the beginning and end of each day, which tāne described as stabilising and -mana enhancing.

12. Summary of Findings, Sustainability and Future Design

12.1 Strengths

Āhuru Mōwai enters the next phase of development from a position of having largely achieved its initial intentions.

The whare has demonstrated strong fidelity to the Kaupapa that was set. The Kawa developed has guided daily practice and shaped a strong relational environment that tāne describe as stabilising and transformative.

Demand has remained high throughout the pilot, with full room allocation from Week 9 onward, reflecting both the depth of need and the credibility the whare has established in the community.

Positive outcomes are visible across safety, emotional regulation, identity, whānau reconnection, and housing transitions, each made possible through the whare's relational model and strong staff practice.

Effective partnerships have been maintained with Housing First, MSD, health providers, and community groups. These reinforce the whare's role as a trusted anchor within a fragmented service landscape.

Governance has supported these strengths through enabling the service to develop the initial kaupapa, maintaining relational integrity, and fostering collaboration across agencies.

12.2 Challenges

Despite these strengths, the whare faces several structural challenges that require careful governance attention.

The closure of the Outreach Centre has intensified the need for reliable daytime support and safe spaces — a gap the whare was never resourced to fill.

Staff continue to shoulder significant emotional labour within a high-intensity relational model, creating sustainability pressures that will only increase as demand grows.

Funding uncertainty remains an ongoing risk; as one governance member (S4) noted, government funding "can turn off like that," requiring a deliberate long-term resourcing approach. Clearer governance direction is also needed to support the ongoing embedding of tikanga, strengthening staff capability, and maintaining fidelity to the Āhuru Mōwai values as the whare develops.



Governance must balance supporting the whare's relational ethos with safeguarding staff wellbeing and organisational sustainability.



12.3 Future Design Considerations

Looking ahead, a continuing coordinated design approach is needed to strengthen sustainability and build on the relational gains achieved.

A key priority is to align with the development of a Day Hub or equivalent daytime service to provide continuity of support, cultural safety, and access to services in the absence of the old Outreach Centre.

Sustaining kaupapa fidelity remains essential; this will require intentional training, succession planning, and mechanisms that embed tikanga across staff roles rather than relying solely on individual leadership.

Stable staffing is needed to maintain relational practice without risking burnout, while partnership development should continue to deepen wraparound support and reduce service siloes.

Governance will play a critical role in establishing a sustainable funding model, advocating for system level change, and ensuring that hapū and iwi relationships strengthen over time. back into wider networks of belonging.

Encouraging local Māori leadership and embedding decolonising practice will help ensure the whare remains grounded in the values that have made it successful. Āhuru Mōwai could open relational doorways for hapū and iwi partners to tautoko their people.

13. Conclusions

Āhuru Mōwai has shown that a stabilising, relational, and culturally grounded response to rough-sleeping and homelessness in Ahuriri/Napier can deliver outcomes that reach well beyond providing a bed. Tāne consistently reported feeling safe, rested, and supported — often for the first time in years. This has led to clearer thinking, reduced harm, restored mana and identity, strengthened whānau relationships, and successful transitions into permanent or transitional housing. These outcomes reflect the strength of the whare's kaupapa, the living Kawa, and the steady, trustworthy support that anchors tāne as they regain balance.

These gains were made possible because the whare operates as an environment shaped by pono and whanaungatanga (integrity and relationship). It has seen enhanced access to services that had previously felt out of reach and has provided the safety many tāne needed to reengage. At the same time, the model carries real pressures — especially the absence of daytime support since the Outreach Centre closed, the emotional labour placed on kaimahi, and ongoing funding uncertainty. These pressures make clear that sustaining the model requires strengthening its support structures.

Future development should focus on sustainability, secure funding, better resourced staffing. It would also address integration with daytime support(s) to complement the whare's strong nighttime model. Also, it would and continue to critically respond to wider systemic factors affecting homelessness. With continued investment and clear governance direction, Āhuru Mōwai can continue to provide a pathway from crisis to stability, enabling sustainable wellbeing.



Appendix Three: NAHSS Strategic Framework

1. Purpose

To provide a safe, dignified, and culturally grounded place of shelter, connection, and opportunity for people experiencing homelessness in Napier/Ahuriri and Te Matau a Māui (Hawkes Bay)- strengthening wellbeing, restoring mana, and supporting pathways to long-term stability and independent living.

2. Vision

A community where every person has a place to belong, the support they need to thrive, and the opportunity to participate fully in the life of Te Matau a Māui/Hawkes Bay.

3. Values

- Manaakitanga - Offering care, hospitality, and respect to all who walk through our doors.
- Whanaungatanga - Building relationships that strengthen community and belonging.
- Kotahitanga - Working collaboratively with iwi, agencies, funders, and the wider community.
- Dignity First - Upholding the inherent worth of every person.
- Evidence & Impact - Using data, lived experience, and research to guide decisions.
- Sustainability - Ensuring long-term viability through ethical, transparent stewardship.

4. Strategic Priorities (3-5 Years)

Priority 1: Deliver Safe, High-Quality Shelter Services

Objectives:

- Maintain a warm, safe, and welcoming environment for residents.
- Provide consistent access to food, hygiene facilities, and essential items.
- Ensure culturally responsive practice, including kaupapa Maori approaches.
- Strengthen staff and volunteer training in trauma-informed care.

Success Indicators:

- Increased resident satisfaction and sense of safety.
- Reduced incidents and improved wellbeing measures.
- Strong partnerships with iwi and cultural advisors.

Priority 2: Support Pathways to Stability and Independence

Objectives:

- Provide personalised support plans for each resident.
- Strengthen partnerships with housing providers, health services, and employment agencies.
- Facilitate access to mental health, addiction, and primary care services.
- Offer life-skills programmes (budgeting, cooking, digital literacy, tenancy readiness).

Success Indicators:

- Increased transitions into stable housing.
- Improved health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Higher engagement in skills and employment pathways.



Priority 3: Embed Lived Experience Leadership

Objectives:

- Establish a Lived Experience Advisory Group to guide service design.
- Create opportunities for residents to share stories safely and voluntarily.
- Employ people with lived experience in peer support and leadership roles.

Success Indicators:

- Lived experience voices shaping policy, programmes, and evaluation.
- Increased peer-led initiatives.
- Greater trust and engagement from residents.

Priority 4: Strengthen Community Partnerships & Public Understanding

Objectives:

- Build strong relationships with local businesses, churches, iwi, and community groups.
- Develop a public education programme to reduce stigma and increase understanding.
- Recognize and celebrate funders, supporters, and volunteers in culturally respectful ways.
- Advocate for systemic solutions to homelessness across Te Matau a Māui/Hawkes Bay.

Success Indicators:

- Increased community support and volunteer engagement.
- More collaborative initiatives with local organisations.
- Improved public perception and reduced stigma.

Priority 5: Ensure Financial Sustainability & Ethical Stewardship

Objectives:

- Diversify funding through grants, philanthropic partnerships, and community fundraising.
- Maintain transparent reporting and strong governance.
- Align investment and spending with ethical and kaupapa Māori principles.
- Build reserves to ensure long-term stability.

Success Indicators:

- Stable multi-year funding streams.
- Clean audits and strong governance reviews.
- Increased capacity for long-term planning.

5. Implementation Plan

Year 1: Foundation & Strengthening

- Consolidate core services and staffing.
- Expand services to include wahine and rangatahi.
- Establish lived experience advisory group.
- Begin data collection and evaluation framework.
- Build relationships with iwi, health providers, and housing partners.

Years 2-3: Growth & Integration

- Expand wraparound support services.
- Launch community education and advocacy initiatives.



- Strengthen partnerships with local employers and training providers.
- Implement digital systems for case management and reporting.

Years 4-5: Innovation & Long-Term Impact

- Explore transitional housing or supported accommodation models.
- Develop social enterprise opportunities for residents.
- Conduct a full impact evaluation with research partners (e.g., EIT).
- Publish a community impact report to guide future strategy.

6. Measuring Impact

- Housing outcomes
- Health and wellbeing indicators
- Service utilisation
- Resident satisfaction
- Community engagement
- Financial sustainability
- Cultural responsiveness measures

7. Governance & Accountability

- A diverse, skilled board representing community, iwi, and lived experience.
- Transparent decision-making and financial reporting.
- Regular review of policies, risk management, and strategic progress.
- Commitment to continuous improvement and cultural safety.



Appendix Four. Overview Diagram

