

## **BOP and Lakes Healthy Housing Forum Notes**

22 November 2016, 1.30-3.30pm

Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service, Rotorua

### **Present:**

Alastair Rhodes, Bay Trust (and representing other funders, TECT, RECT, EBET, Acorn)  
Rosemary Viskovic, Rotorua Lakes Council, Sustainable Living and People portfolios  
Pip King, Lakes DHB  
Brian Pointon, Planning and Funding, BOPDHB  
Jo Smith, CoBOP (Collaboration BOP)  
Lorreen Hartley, Whakatane District Council Community Development Team  
Mike Bryant, Ministry of Social Development (MSD)  
Hana Edwardson, Kawerau District Council, Neighbourhood of Healthy Homes  
Philip King, Tauranga City Council  
Heather Holt, Taupo District Council  
Hellmuth Hartung, Taupo District Council  
Liane Gardiner, Te Puni Kokiri  
James Scarfe, Public Health Analyst, Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service (TTO)  
Jim Miller, Medical Officer of Health, TTO (Chair)  
Ronda Cleland, Health Improvement Advisor, TTO (Minutes)

### **Apologies:**

Bill Hewitt (EECA)  
Rachael Davie, WBOPDC  
James Low, BOPRC

## **1. Introductions**

Notes:

Bay Trust - funders need to see a long term coherent plan  
Lakes DHB – Ministry of Health funding is for assessments rather than interventions in Healthy Homes program  
MSD – address emergency housing and social housing supply

## **2. Background and work preceding the forum**

Jim Miller:

- TTO wanted to reduce childhood admissions from acute rheumatic fever, respiratory infections and skin infections. Underlying determinant was housing – overcrowding, state of housing.
- TTO pulled information together on housing stock in BOP.
- Focused on state of housing and impact on admissions to hospital
- Taking a short to medium view, eg insulating houses, rather than addressing long term issues such as affordability
- Ran housing seminar about what is known – 25% not good quality housing, location dependent, ran through range of initiatives making a difference. Patchy. \$3m in funding is not a lot but can this be used more efficiently?

Discussion around data:

- There is good information in NZ about how making a difference in housing makes a difference in health.
- Next BRANZ housing survey due soon – last one showed rental condition in quite poor condition

- There is a gap in information about the number of homes that are still uninsulated in the BOP. Are we likely to run out of homes that still need insulating? Not in the short or medium term.

Brian Pointon:

There has been a lack of national housing policy so lots of agencies try and fill the vacuum. Now there is lots of activity but is there a way to coordinate this and link together rather than having isolated pockets of activity?

Discussion: It is difficult to work out who does what, and things change eg EECA subsidies.

### 3. Terms of Reference

Brian Pointon discussed that the TOR have been adapted from the Northern Housing Forum.

Key things – what are we trying to achieve:

- Making funding area more coherent – 17 funders – try to pull them together, more certainty for providers
- Efficiencies improved – infrastructure, reduce costs if more competitive pricing environment, then can scale up.
- Share best practice across community projects. Should help scale, quality, engagement
- Work at our level but not get in the way of communities wanting to make a difference in their communities.

Discussion notes:

Short term vs long term - best scenario is to bulldoze worst houses but that will not happen soon so have to make worst houses as good as possible. TOR focus is improving quality of existing housing stock, so short to medium term fixes.

Past focus has been around insulation etc, whereas problems around homelessness and housing issues have only been picked up more recently by media and more publicly known. Also, criteria has broadened as 10 years ago family living in garages were not termed homeless.

James Scarfe showed the Continuum of housing condition and health impacts diagram (attached): If we concentrate on first two circles then there will be the biggest impact on health.

How are priorities determined? Brian Pointon discussed a national steering group housing initiative that has been tasked to come up with a pathway and priorities around heating, insulation, draught stopping. It will give an idea of what to look for first with the first question being, “Do you still want to live in this home?” Once this has been determined, then start to look at the most important things to do, eg initial repairs, then heating, then curtains etc. [This work has been finalised (attached)].

Alastair Rhodes discussed how it is very important for funders to know rough numbers otherwise funders don't know how far through solving the problem they are. Need to know scale of issues including potential impacts of recent government legislation re insulation in rental properties. Any numbers would be better than “we don't know”. Ask Bill Hewitt at EECA whether he has any data on number of houses that still need insulation in the BOP.

James Scarfe cited a housing survey where 40% rentals were graded as 1, 20% owner occupied graded as 1 - which means things need to be immediately addressed. Owner occupiers underestimated how bad their homes were. Brian noted we accept poor housing

here which is unacceptable in Europe. Jim Miller discussed that we are not going to be able to come up with a manageable number that we can knock off in 10 years. Need to look at where we can start.

Hana Edwardson discussed what has happened in Kawerau. It was good to know they had funding for 3 years then it was extended by 2 years. Now they don't need to do insulation so much, but they have developed a community that can do basic maintenance.

Discussion about doing bulk buying from stores, eg The Warehouse. Although cheaper, people and projects still have to get the money to buy those beds etc from Warehouse. Council can use targeted rates and also put things on rates, though landlords can be an issue. Council can fund the purchase, but then use rates for it to be paid back. Rotorua Lakes Council is looking at putting this through in next annual plan. Brian noted that in Murupara, homeowners were asked for a \$400 contribution towards insulation but they were finding it difficult to find \$400.

Jim Miller asked if we can get a clearer picture of deprived communities. Can we make the BRANZ survey clearer to councils? Can we ask councils where communities are that have acute housing needs? They will have an idea – eg deprivation of neighbourhoods.

Philip King suggested if a housing stock assessment is done and DHB has admissions data then you could use that as a point of entry with family and an entry to neighbourhood/homes. Question about information shared re benefits of reducing health care costs, and should there be a focus on children? James has information on skin infections available and census area units - he will send this out (with caveats explaining limitations).

Mike Bryant suggested that if we become aware of other data, we think about how we share it and how it gets escalated (eg poor housing has been known about for years but media has only picked it up in past year). Jim Miller talked about the responsibility of local authority to know where insanitary homes are, eg councils are supposed to survey their areas. It was mentioned that these are usually reported to council (rather than looked for) and are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Liane Gardiner noted that it is hard to know what services partner agencies offer and what their role is. Agreement by others that this understanding is needed and is a function of the forum, eg who does home insulation, how does Bay Trust fit in etc. It was noted that some of this information is quite local. There is a need for a list of what partner agencies do.

*Action:*

1. Under SCOPE EXCLUSIONS (page 3), include *Functional overcrowding*
2. Under SCOPE INCLUSIONS (page 3), include *access/making houses more accessible*.
3. Brian to share report from national steering group housing initiative (that is developing a pathway and priorities around heating etc) once it is finalised.
4. James to send information on skin infections available and census area units (with caveats explaining limitations).
5. Agencies to notify James what services they offer / criteria for service so a list can be compiled of agency roles and services.

*Questions / potential action:*

6. What are the numbers / what is the scale of the issue for funders?

7. How do we get a clearer picture of deprived communities? Asking councils? Combining housing stock information with DHB admissions data (understanding some do not attend hospital due to access)?
8. BRANZ survey information for councils
9. Council use of rates for funding and payments.
10. Should there be a focus on children?
11. How do we share new information and data about housing so that it can be escalated?

#### **4. Current projects underway in region**

James Scarfe has compiled a list of current projects currently active in area. If you know further projects, please send details to James. Brian Pointon noted that under the 'Lessons and Challenges' section, anything denoted with a question mark are Brian's opinions.

Mike Bryant asked if doing house assessments can we do social assessments?

#### **5. Forming a draft work plan**

Divided into groups to answer questions – see attached summaries

#### **6. Conclusion (Jim Miller)**

##### *Actions*

1. Feedback from the group conversations will be compiled and sent out
2. Revised terms of reference will be sent out.
3. Meeting notes from this meeting will be sent out.
4. A draft framework for action will be developed and to be discussed at the next meeting.
5. James will send out a doodle to determine time for next meeting  
**Next meeting date: 13 December**
6. Email addresses for group members will be sent to group so everyone has each other's contacts
7. Send in summary information about projects, include contacts for leads
8. Try and put some figures to things – numbers of houses being addressed in each project (on summary of projects).

Mike Bryant told the group that he and Alastair Rhodes are organising a meeting of people interested in investing in emergency housing in WBOP – people can put interest in becoming providers. They are also wanting to do something in Rotorua – especially around Emergency Housing. Mike will send a paper about this to James and this can go with Minutes. If anyone is interested in being emergency housing/social housing provider, please get in touch with Mike.

**Next Meeting:**                   **13 December 2016, 11am – 1pm**  
  **At Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service, Rotorua**

