



# KAI WEST IMPACT REPORT



**2018 - 2023**



**KAI WEST**

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# ABOUT US

Kai West emerged from the Collaborative Marketplace in 2017, where community organisations came together to find ways to collectively support the people of West Auckland, with a focus on prioritising Māori and Pacific people and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The organisations who came together to talk about kai during this time, still make up the core membership of the collective today. The collective has the shared vision of:



## KAI WEST

**A nourished West Auckland, where people have access to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food from a local and regenerative food system**

### **Kai West members include:**

- West Auckland Enterprise Skills and Training (WEST)
- Visionwest
- McLaren Park Henderson South Trust (MPHS) Community Hub
- Massey Matters
- Healthy Families Waitākere team from Sport Waitākere
- Glenavon Community Hub
- Garden to Table
- Fair Food
- EcoMatters
- Community Waitākere
- Auckland Council

*More details on Kai West development can be found in our timeline in the Appendix.*





# THE COLLECTIVE WORK TOWARDS THIS THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTIONS INCLUDING:

- 1 Building capacity and capability of partner organisations and community champions

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- 2 Sharing learnings, challenges, and insights across the network and with key partners

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- 3 Collaborating on actions to enable local food initiatives to thrive

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- 4 Enhancing food resiliency and sovereignty in West Auckland

Each partner organisation brings to Kai West their knowledge and connections to their own community networks.

The collective continues to evolve with a clearly articulated purpose and vision and strong relationships between members, operating as a steering committee.





# A THRIVING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM IN WEST AUCKLAND

West Auckland has a rich history with kai. Vineyards, fruit orchards and vegetable plantations made up the majority of the landscape for many years.

Today however, there are challenges around people accessing nourishing and affordable kai. Many suburbs in West Auckland are described as food ‘deserts’ with a saturation of unhealthy food outlets and very few affordable places to access healthy food. Community efforts to produce food on public land are stymied by regulation and inadequate resourcing, inhibiting people’s ability to produce their own food.

Despite all this, kai continues to attract community energy and action - people love to connect through kai - cooking, sharing excess, swapping recipes, growing and celebrating. People want a community that is centred on care and belonging - kai always offers a practical means to express that.

Kai West works to champion projects across West Auckland. In this report, we share some of the work of Kai West and its achievements over the past five years.



# **KAI WEST ACHIEVEMENTS**

## **2018 - 2023**

- 1. Te Puna Market**
- 2. Free Food Forum**
- 3. Future of Food West Auckland Event**
- 4. Kai Villages**
- 5. Waitākere Urban Farm Feasibility study**

# TE PUNA MARKET

Te Puna Market emerged as a response to a vital community supermarket's closure for renovations in 2019. In collaboration with Panuku Development Auckland, Kai West created Te Puna Market, a vibrant Saturday morning marketplace nestled in the heart of Henderson. The name for the market, Te Puna, was gifted by the local iwi, Te Kawerau a Maki. As a verb, Puna means to well up or flow. As a noun, it's a spring of water, a well or a pool. Historically, a Puna was the place people would gather water and during this activity, an important kaupapa (topic, initiative) was to share stories and socialise, similar to conversations that happen when people meet through kai.



**“The market was a place for everyone; a place where people could be happy, dance and listen to music. It was not just about selling, sometimes customers were interested in growing the veges so I brought seeds to share. We were sharing the love”**

***Lema, Artist and Food Grower from Rānui***

This market was dedicated to offering fresh, locally sourced, affordable fruits, vegetables, crafts, ready-to-eat food, and much more. It played a pivotal role in the broader Te Puna Village concept, fostering connections between the community and local suppliers like EcoMatters Bike Hub and Kākano, a youth art collective.

Te Puna Market served as a platform for over 25 local market gardeners, artisans, and others to directly engage with the local community, enabling them to showcase and sell their products. When the challenges of COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns arose, Te Puna Market swiftly adapted to a convenient click-and-collect service. The market went through iterative models to best meet the needs of local community, ultimately leading to its learnings becoming a cornerstone of Kai West and partner initiatives.

Looking ahead, Kai West is exploring opportunities to work with local food rescue initiative, Food Together, testing pop-up fruit and vegetable stores across West Auckland. This initiative aims to provide local residents with locally sourced, affordable fruits, and vegetables. Kai West member, Massey Matters is currently piloting this model as part of the Kai Village Kaupapa.







## FREE FOOD FORUM

In response to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the changes in access to food through traditional channels, Kai West took the proactive step of creating the Free Food Forum: a platform for organisations dedicated to free food aid in West Auckland to connect, share experiences and find ways to work together and strengthen the system during the early stages of the pandemic.

With funding support from Auckland Council's Waste Wise team, Kai West created and tested a platform to connect food relief services, identified priority areas, and explored potential ways to minimise waste and duplication by emergency food parcel providers.

By coordinating efforts, pooling resources, and sharing skills and knowledge, community organisations were able to strengthen their services and reach families needing support swiftly and safely.

This network of small community groups shared more than 2 million meals worth of free food each year. In addition, the network was able to mobilise quickly during the flood and cyclone emergency response.

The collective continues its activity through Fair Food, which provides 12 tonnes of free fresh food to more than 40 organisations every week.

**“Our community is incredible and takes excellent care of each other, so it was no surprise that many groups wanted to provide food support during the pandemic. It was invaluable to have coordinated approaches, so social service providers knew where to direct their clients, and food could more easily be distributed in a safe and culturally-appropriate manner. Ultimately, you can't solve hunger with food, so being part of Kai West allows us to advocate for systems change that reduce inequality. Our goal is to not be needed.”**

**Michelle, Fair Food  
General Manager**



# FUTURE OF FOOD FOR WEST AUCKLAND

A number of priorities were discussed, with a key focus being on the need to keep a strong local emphasis on neighbourhoods and suburbs returning to a 'village concept' where food is a connector.

Several local projects were shared, including Mana Motuhake o te Kai, alongside collective aspirations for a new initiative to come to life; Kai Villages.

In 2021 Kai West hosted the Future of Food West Auckland event, providing a space for local people, community groups and organisations to share their experiences and ideas on how to strengthen food resilience in West Auckland.

*"To really deliver a difference, easy access to affordable and healthy kai needs to be happening within a small geographic locality, as close as a few neighbouring streets. This is necessary not only for practical and logistical reasons but also for growing connections and bringing neighbours together."*

**Miriam Gabriel, Community Developer from Community Waitākere.**

Whau, Henderson Massey and Waitākere Ranges Local Boards provided funding to make this forum a possibility and also committed seed funding to develop the ideas and innovations identified at the forum, including Kai Villages.

For more information about the Future of Food read the full report [here](#).

# KAI VILLAGES

The idea of building a 'kai village' is now at the heart of a new initiative in Massey and Glenavon. The Kai Village concept was identified as an opportunity to develop strong community connections, foster local food growing and consumption, and work towards building better food resilience in local areas.



The Massey Kai Village is based at Massey Matters and has started a cooking club and community pantry, helping people access ingredients and skills to put together a simple and nourishing meal. In addition, there are a few edible gardens around the Village where the community can come together for hands-on experience on growing kai and looking after the environment. The kai village has activated a pop up for affordable fresh fruit and vegetables, in partnership with Food Together. The initiative has been very popular with local people, with orders regularly topping 100 a week.



Glenavon's Kai Village (part of the Glenavon Community Hub) has tested an event food truck, Kaitahi Mobile Kitchen, providing healthy, hot kai to whānau in the local community. Glenavon also started a 'breakfast club' in partnership with Santarum to provide meals for students at Glenavon Primary School before school. Glenavon Kai Village sees potential in the development of a māra kai, community dinners, and a social enterprise of frozen meals under the Kai Village/ Kai Aroha logo. This would offer the opportunity for our locals to make, create and then offer hot or frozen meals to seniors, local community whānau.

**'Our hope is to breathe new life into our Kai space and be the mechanism for change as a pathway to greater Kai Resilience. For us; education, exploration and the celebration of our indigenous kai practices and knowledge sharing through Mana Motuhake o te Kai is a pathway for our community to aroha.'**

**RJ Thomson, Glenavon Community Hub Coordinator**



Both hubs have identified an opportunity for a Kai Village Coordinator, which will be supported by Auckland Council Climate Action Regional Funding. The role would focus on connecting the resources that already exist within the community with those that need it, as well as strengthening the initiatives that already champion local kai for local people.





# WAITĀKERE URBAN FARM FEASIBILITY STUDY



In 2020, Kai West started exploring opportunities to revitalize unused land and turn it into places where communities can learn to grow food locally and connect to their environment through healthy kai.

Kai West's ground work with partners has paved the way for the initial concept of the Waitākere Urban Farm Feasibility study and the process to unlock funding support from Auckland Council. Healthy Families Waitākere led the project alongside Place Creative, scoping potential land across the three Local Board areas for urban farming and to conduct a feasibility study.

After assessing some of the sites put forward by the collective, several challenges emerged. With learnings from this study, members in Kai West were able to speak to Local Boards to influence the regulatory controls over Auckland Council land.

*For more information please read the full report [here](#).*

# OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Kai West partners created a support services handbook during COVID-19, sharing support available for people across food, financial, wellbeing and more. This handbook was shared extensively across Tāmaki Makaurau, including District Health Boards, Lifewise, Aged Care and more. Kai West has a Facebook community group with nearly 1,000 members, sharing upcoming opportunities for community-based initiatives including submissions, funding, conferences, and more.
- During a Kai Villages design workshop at Massey Matters, several local schools identified an opportunity to work together growing food for students and the wider community. Kāhui Kai Māra o Tiriwa now includes five local schools.
- Kai West continues to advocate across Local Boards and Auckland Council to support initiatives that localise food systems and prioritise fresh and affordable kai. This includes submissions to local board plans and proposed budget cuts, alongside presenting at deputations. This resulted in the inclusion of food and local community resilience outcomes in the 2020 local board outcomes plans
- Kai West was included as an advisory group for a Kai Strategy as part of the Henderson Massey Local Climate Action Plan in 2021. Most recently, local boards included “supporting local kai sovereignty initiatives” as part of their draft future plans.
- Kai West is a trusted advisory for Local Boards and Auckland Council for local food-related approaches and knowledge. The collective was invited to co-host kai innovation meetings alongside the Community Impact, Kai Kōrero team at Auckland Council in March 2022 and 2023
- Kai West collective efforts and meaningful relationships with Auckland Council also influenced funding flow into West Auckland for projects including Te Puna Market, Future of Food event, Free Food Forum, Waitākere Urban Farm Feasibility Study, and Kai Villages.
- Other trusted relationships with Department of Internal Affairs and WEAVE (Working Together Fund), helped Kai West hire a coordinator to support the backbone and functionality of the Steering Committee and to start developing a collective impact strategy and action plan.





## What's Next?

**It's time to elevate collective impact with a targeted focus on what will have the greatest impact for the people and environment of West Auckland.**

## SHARED APPROACHES INCLUDE:

- 1** Create a strategy and action plan for **collective impact** to establish sustainable mechanisms that aid Kai West in advancing its vision.
- 2** Regional and national connection: Continue to connect and **partner with key regional and national** stakeholders to influence resources flow and to advocate for change where policies, regulations and bylaws act as a barrier to food resilience and sovereignty.
- 3** **Strengthen collective capacity** by adopting Tiriti-responsive practices, promoting equity for Māori and Pasifika communities. Enhance practices through systemic change and regenerative approaches to spearhead collective impact and innovation.
- 4** Enhance **communication and storytelling** by spotlighting the rich history and existing initiatives promoting locally grown, nourishing kai in West Auckland. Celebrate and showcase these narratives to strengthen the community's connection to food.

# APPENDIX 1: OUR CULTURE

## **Transparency:**

Network members are open and honest in their communications with team members, sharing information where appropriate and ensuring that everyone has access to the necessary information to make informed decisions.

## **Inclusivity:**

We celebrate diversity and create a welcoming space that is inclusive of all members of the community.

## **Empowerment:**

Members are empowered to take initiative, make decisions, to participate and contribute their unique skills and knowledge.

## **Equity:**

Recognises disadvantages and underrepresented populations, emphasising the importance of addressing existing disparities to promote fairness and equal access to opportunities.

## **Service:**

In the community to enhance the quality of life ensuring community well-being and empowerment of all its members, and to foster a sense of belonging.

**Accountability:** Individuals and groups take responsibility for their actions and commitments. Members hold themselves and others accountable for meeting or Kai West objectives and fulfilling their roles effectively.

## **Collaboration:**

Collaboration is encouraged and facilitated. Working groups are often formed to drive innovation and progress to further the goals of Kai West.

**Respect and Fairness:** Respect for one another's opinions, ideas and contributions is fundamental.

## **Supportive Environment:**

Members operate in a high trust model prioritise creating supportive and psychologically safe environments.

## **Sustainability:**

We will strive to protect and preserve our natural environment for future generations and community-led initiatives.





# APPENDIX 2: KAI WEST TIMELINE

2017 /18

7th November 2017  
Kai West was formed at the Collaborative Market Place

2019

Strengthening Kai West relationships, vision and purpose

Understanding West Auckland Food System / mapping local kai initiatives

2018  
Defined a collective purpose of sharing knowledge and resources / supporting one another

Develop shared community vision, including the goals and needs that families identify for themselves and their communities

Activated Facebook Community Group

2020

Defining Kai West as collective made up of people and organisations working on building resilience within community-based initiatives that focus on access to food and the local food system

Started deep diving into collective impact

Launch of Te Puna Physical market. Adapting into a Click and Collect during the pandemic

The first Free Food Forum was held with the aim to foster collaboration and across the food relief system and potential opportunities for collaboration

Initial design of Te Puna market with Panuku Development funding granted for Te Puna market Coordination was allocated with WEST

Engaged with Local Boards and collective submission to influence outcome plans

2021

Relaunch Te Puna physical market Presented to local board strategic community brokers – unlocked funding for the Future of Food hui

Collective professional development on Regenerative design and facilitation (6 workshops) in preparation for the Future of Food hui

Future of Food for West Auckland hui – Kai Village idea was put forward by the community

Updated the Kai Initiatives database

Facebook community page had 737 members - 40% increase in membership since March 2020

Kai West Kaupapa presented at the NZ Nutrition Society Conference  
Free Food Forum skills share Hui

Revised and reflected on our vision, purpose, values and focus areas and developed the Kai West whare

Reimagining Kai West session with partners to grow commitment for 2021

Started developing a position description for a coordination role for the collective

2022

Redesigning Te Puna market into a co-op model - adapting, testing, learning and exiting

Local Boards and DIA funding supported the scoping of Kai Villages in Massey and Glenavon

Funding support from the Community WasteWise for the Free Food Forum

Collaboration with Auckland Council Community Impact team to co-host a wider network hui at Papatōetoe Food Hub

Free Food Forum - Hui Shared goals and strategic timeline created for 2023

Connecting and exploring links to support Mana Motuhake o te Kai - Te Ao Māori Food Security Plan for West Auckland

DIA funding granted for Kai West Coordination was allocated with Ecomatters

Recruited and onboarded a coordinator

Developed a relationship with WEAVE and was invited to put a proposal for seed fund to support the development of Collective Impact Strategy and Action Plan

2023

Onboarded new members (Glenavon Hub and new representatives from Eco Matters, Community Waitākere and Matauranga Māra rūpu)

Transition of backbone role into coordinator

Kai Villages upholding Mana Motuhake o te Kai as guiding principles for the implementation of their kaupapa

Collective reviewing their goals and vision through the PATH process

Working towards a collective charter  
Collective wrap around support for a fast community emergency food response during floods

WEAVE seed fund granted

Collaboration with the Good Data Institute to develop a data visualization tool to capture information about local food initiatives

Kai West members and partners attended the Partnership Brokers workshop – supported by WEAVE

Collaboration with Auckland Council Community Impact team to co-host a wider kai network hui at Massey Matters

Fair Food taking the lead on the Free Food Forum

Facebook community group has close to 1000 members

Wider network event - supported by Love Food Hate Waste

Treaty of Waitangi workshops at Ecomatters and Community Waitākere extended to Kai West members

Acknowledgments to all who have contributed throughout the journey Kai West.

# APPENDIX 3: OUR MEMBERS

**WEST (West Auckland Enterprise Skills and Training)** is a not for profit organisation providing skills and training to access employment, develop an existing business or start up idea and to support initiatives to develop enterprising communities, where local residents, community groups, organisations and businesses contribute to and benefit from their local economy.

**Visionwest** Waka Whakakitenga exists to end homelessness, reduce poverty, support the elderly, and ensure young people have hope for the future. We offer a range of wraparound support for whānau that are struggling with food insecurity and the cost of living, including: Social housing, Financial Mentoring, Youth Education, Counselling, Foodbank and social supermarket. We also offer Community Connection services and Home Health Care support for older people and those with disabilities.

**MPHS (McLaren Park and Henderson South) Community Trust:** Community development organisation running projects and programmes that enable residents and community to thrive; serving the Henderson South and McLaren Park community, with an extended focus to the wider west Auckland area.

**Massey Matters:** Community Development Organisation empowering West and East Massey community through delivery of a wide range of activities, workshops, funds, networks, programmes, events

**Healthy Families Waitākere:** Brings community and community leadership together in a united effort to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play by taking a systems approach for prevention. The initiative is hosted by Sport Waitākere and has an explicit focus on equity, improving health for Māori and reducing inequities for groups at increased risk of preventable chronic disease. The team at Healthy Families work collaboratively with local leaders and organisations to identify, design and implement changes to help people make healthier choices and live healthier lives. Increasing access to affordable nourishing kai is one of our key focus areas and Healthy Families Waitākere has been working with multiple partners in a range of initiatives to enable the conditions for a more equitable, localised, and regenerative food system.

**Glenavon Community Hub:** serves a small, ethnically diverse community of approximately 6,500 people or 500 households located in between Blockhouse Bay and Avondale, Welcoming all and connecting local Whanau together through events and activities. The Hub uphold the Values of Manaakitanga, Nurturing Relationships, reflecting Aroha, Generosity, Hospitality, Support and Compassion.

Numerous additional organisations and community members have been engaged over time as part of wider network events or with specific initiatives as appropriate. The wider community is also connected with Kai West on the online community group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kaiwest>

**Garden to Table:** Charitable trust that supports primary and intermediate schools and kura to take learning into the garden and the kitchen to empower tamariki to grow, harvest, prepare, and share good quality food

**Fair Food:** Food rescue charity that started in 2011 based on a collaboration between NGOs that recognised a local need for healthy food access. They rescue fresh food (produce, meat, dairy, bread) from nearly every supermarket in West Auckland and serve as a Tier 1 distribution hub for NZ Food Network. Fair Food helps preschools, community hubs, transitional housing, domestic violence shelters, young mums, social service providers, and many other community organisations to provide culturally responsive emergency food support.

In 2022, Fair Food kept 621 tonnes of fresh food out of landfill, which is 1.8 million meals of fresh healthy food shared across our community.

In the community to enhance the quality of life ensuring community well-being and empowerment of all its members, and to foster a sense of belonging.

**EcoMatters:** West Auckland based environmental conservation non-profit organisation supporting the community with knowledge and tools to restore nature, reduce waste, and live more sustainably: “Our aim is to be a tohu (focal point) to connect people and the environment and to nurture a sense of guardianship (kaitiakitanga) for our beautiful planet.”

**Community Waitākere:** a charitable organisation working with West Auckland communities for the past 40 years, with the purpose to create connected, thriving and resilient West Auckland communities. We believe that community and the environment are inextricably linked, and to have a healthy community you also need a healthy environment. We do this by: creating opportunities for communities to engage with environmental restoration and te taiao; advocating for local change and supporting social campaigns; building capacity for community-led change and leadership development; supporting collective action and resilience; sharing knowledge and engaging in cross-organisation action.

**Auckland Council:** representatives from community, environmental and local board services. Includes nominated members per local board to support the Kai West collective

