



REPORTING BACK ON...

The public forum on the needs of people with disabilities

4 March 2010



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Background

In 2006 Upper Hutt City Council developed a community consultation model call SHAW (Safety, Health and Wellbeing). The SHAW model is a reflective framework which entails active consultation with the community to identify and address significant areas of need.

Previously conducted analysis has classified the following areas as having social and cultural issues which impact the Upper Hutt community: youth, older people, migrants and refugees, families/whanau, community safety and the disability sector. In response to this, the Upper Hutt City Council facilitates regular forums for each focus area, one of which is an annual public forum to identify the local needs. The remaining forums are for community groups and agencies working within these focus areas and interested individuals to better determine the needs of the community and appropriate responses to these needs.

The 2010 SHAW Public Forum on Disability Needs in Upper Hutt was held on 4 March. This was the fourth annual SHAW public forum held for people with disabilities in Upper Hutt.

2009 Public forum on disability needs

The 2009 Public Forum on Disability Needs highlighted safety, employment and financial security, respite services and carer support, as well as general feedback. A benefit of living in Upper Hutt, attendees noted, was the ease of getting around with both public and private transport. This was due to the city being flat, the reliable train service, free parking and the cost of petrol being relatively minimal due to the city being small.

In 2009, attendees felt that initial intervention and preventative measures were the most effective way to decrease crime and enhance the feeling of security around Upper Hutt. On a recommendation from the 2009 Public Forum Report on Disability Needs in Upper Hutt on safety, a neighbourhood safety information kit has been developed for distribution to the wider community as a part of the Upper Hutt Community Safety Strategy.

On another note, attendees felt that respite services and carer support needed attention as it was not meeting the needs of people with disabilities. It was generally felt that the unsatisfactory assistance which was currently on offer was due to: limited funding, lack of accessible information and lack of carers in the area to use for respite care allocation. In response to this, speakers from relevant agencies were invited by the previous Community Development Advisor to attend a special disability forum later in 2009 and speak about possible solutions to the issues that had been raised in regard to respite services and carer support.

The findings from the 2009 Public Forum Report on Disability Needs in Upper Hutt also led to the selected discussion topics of accessibility, social and emotional isolation and safety for the 2010 forum.

2010 Public forum on disability needs

This report outlines the issues raised at the 2010 Public Forum for Disability Needs in Upper Hutt and provides recommendations and suggested actions in response to the matters raised. This report is divided into four sections. The first section outlines the methodology involved in selecting focus issues, and the approach taken to stimulate public engagement in the forum. The second section outlines the discussion topics and main findings of the forum. The third

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section pinpoints the specific areas of Upper Hutt where attendees felt merited further attention in regard to roading and safety. The final section provides recommendations and proposed actions in response to the primary issues raised. Notes from discussion groups at the forum as well as the marked map provided to the attendees are included in the appendices of this report. The appendices also include a summary of attendees' evaluations and a list of community groups represented at the forum.

Methodology

The forum was promoted to the community through an advertisement in the Upper Hutt Leader on 17 February followed by editorial the following week. There were also numerous posters in the central business district and selected suburbs in Upper Hutt, as well as targeted spaces, including doctor's waiting rooms, retail outlets and various agencies. Information about the forum was also promoted through service providers and community groups working with people with disabilities including targeted letters to church groups and rest homes.

The Hapai Club was chosen as the venue for the forum as it was accessible and close to public transport. During the registration process, attendees were asked if they required assistance with special needs on the day. All written material on the day was in plain English and available in large format. No other special requirements were requested.

Approximately 40 people attended the forum. This is similar to the numbers from the previous year.

As was the case last year, goody bags were given away to participants as incentives to attend the forum. The free goody bags included relevant community information on Community Services information sheets and lucky dip giveaways. The giveaways included vouchers from Upper Hutt City Library, H2O Xtream, Mayfair Café, Ascot Cinema and MTA.

There was a high degree of promotion around the forums and similar to 2009, the goody bags appeared to be a key incentive for attendees.

After a welcome and introduction as to the format of the session, participants broke into groups to discuss three topic areas. Each topic had a related speaker and discussion group questions if relevant for the break out groups. Following last year's format, the presence of relevant speakers at the forum was a method of escalating knowledge and information amongst those with disabilities and those who work with people with disabilities. There were two speakers, and three areas of discussion. Each table of participants was appointed a scribe to record the key points from their discussion.

The main topic areas and relevant speakers were:

- Accessibility, with a presentation about a recent accessibility audit of H2O Xtream from Michael Mercer, Activation, Upper Hutt City Council
- Social and emotional isolation
- Staying safe, with a presentation on the culture of safety from Barry Hislop, Injury Prevention Consultant, ACC

The groups were asked to use the following questions to guide their discussions:

1. Accessibility

- In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?
- What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible?
- How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?
- What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?



- Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

2. Social and emotional isolation

- What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc)?
- What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?
- Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network. People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in. Would you agree with these definitions?
- Before answering the next question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social and emotional isolation, and read this example as a group: "John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn't have a car and doesn't belong to any hobby or interest groups." Is John experiencing social and emotional isolation? Please discuss as a group.
- Who determines if a person with disabilities is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If a person with disabilities is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?
- What could be some of the solutions to social and emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?
- By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes. Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.
- What are solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?
- How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

3. Staying safe and general questions

- What makes you feel safe in your home?
- We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?
- If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?
- What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?
- Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?
- What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

- What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?
- If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be?

Main Findings

1. Accessibility

There was a broad definition of accessibility used by the groups when answering the discussion questions. Accessibility included issues around road safety, hazards and accessibility to services in Upper Hutt. It was concluded that while accessibility options in Upper Hutt for people with disability is generally good, it could be improved.

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

Attendees generally felt that accessibility in Upper Hutt is reasonable, with some improvements that could be made. There was appreciation for the recent painting of disability car parking spaces to a brighter shade of blue.

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible?

A prominent issue raised by three of the five groups was the proposed grey colour for the bollards in the CBD as part of the current Main Street upgrade. The concern some attendees had was that the bollards would then be indistinguishable from their surroundings because of their dull shade. This could potentially pose a safety risk, particularly for those with visual impairments. Where possible, it was explained to the attendees that Council had undertaken a great deal of research around the colour. It was explained that feedback had been received from the Royal Foundation for the Blind, and their opinion was that contrast was a more pertinent issue, as opposed to the base colour. There was still discussion around the lack of consultative process for something that was seen as being a key issue for the community. It was noted that should there be any incidents as a result of the changed colour, corrective action would be comparatively cheap to implement.

Many of the groups mentioned slippery surfaces in the mall and around the CBD area which makes getting around difficult, especially for those in wheelchairs. A suggestion was that tactile indicator tiles be installed as a universal and inexpensive solution.

Some attendees felt that the CBD area is too cluttered with sign boards and café chairs on the footpaths, which was a particular concern on windy days. Some also felt that certain curbs need to be levelled as they are currently a safety hazard for those with wheel chairs and mobility scooters.

It was expressed that access to some corporate and social services which are located higher than ground level is difficult as there are no elevators for those in wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

It was suggested that publishing a map of mobility parks online would be very helpful. One of the groups stated that having another Public Transport Open Day would also be beneficial and appreciated by the public.

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

Attendees reported that they use these facilities quite often. Extensive use is made of the library and parks as these facilities are very user friendly. The library is easily accessible for those with visual impairments and they have taken on past suggestions and feedback constructively.

One group had queries regarding the wheelchair hoist at H2O Xtream, which appears to currently be out of use. A suggestion by the group was for the staff at H2O to undergo more

disability training to be able to provide appropriate support, including how to operate the wheelchair hoist.

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

Attendees expressed that the staff at the library are incredibly helpful especially for those with visual impairments. In terms of Parks and Reserves, attendees felt that the wheelchair access at the parks was very good, especially at Harcourt Park and Trentham Memorial Park.

One attendee suggested having an assessment of all park signage in Upper Hutt to ensure that these are suitable for visually impaired people.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

Attendees felt that the public toilets need to be cleaned more often, especially those by Hazelwoods and in Harcourt Park.

Some participants wanted to know more about school holiday programmes and how children with disabilities can participate in them. It was also highlighted that it is difficult for adults with disabilities to get taxis which have hoists in them during school holidays, as they are all committed to the Ministry of Education. Although calling Driving Miss Daisy is an option, it is not necessarily the most cost effective alternative. Attendees felt that this might be something Upper Hutt City Council could explore further. They also felt that it would be useful to have more information about how many vans with hoists are available in Upper Hutt, and how to contact the appropriate companies.

There was also comment made about Council's elected officials. Some attendees mentioned that the Mayor's involvement with disability groups is 'exceptional and head and shoulders above everyone else nationally'. They also commented that council communication with community groups is very good and members of the public feel that their voice is being heard.

2. Social and Emotional Isolation

Following the findings of the 2009 public forum, it was felt that social and emotional isolation needed to be discussed and explored further with people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers. Attendees were asked various questions about their understanding and experience of social and emotional isolation, and about how accessing help.

What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc)?

There were a range of responses to this question. Some attendees stated that they are actively involved with their families, churches, hobby groups, visiting the library frequently and spending time in the CBD. This is perhaps to be expected as participants in a public forum are likely to have community involvement in other ways. Others mentioned that knowing others in your community, for example shop keepers and other business people, or having friends and acquaintances made them feel connected to their community.

Attendees felt that community attitudes to their disability are a significant contributor to their sense of wellbeing and overall, the attitude of those in the Upper Hutt business community is



good but that it could improve. There was a feeling that being accepted by the community is essential to full community participation.

Those present expressed that the public forums are very positive and make people feel connected.

What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

This question received a strong response. The experience of prejudice and a lack of respect and awareness of people with disabilities were identified as barriers, for example being teased. Some attendees also felt that it was difficult to find and connect with social groups.

Another important factor identified was the difficulty for some people with disabilities to go out in the evenings. Daytime activities may be more appropriate for some. The issue is one of the diversity of ability along the spectrum – dependant on age, type of impairment and support systems, there is no “one size fits all” solution to participation. It was noted that this forum was held during the day, potentially excluding people with disabilities that work during the day time and may have been more likely to attend an evening forum. Participants were not aware that in previous years, public forums on disability issues were scheduled for a daytime and a night-time session as a result of this type of feedback. However the night session was completely unattended and therefore cancelled two years in a row. It is unknown whether this is because people with disabilities who are active in the workforce do not feel it necessary to advocate for disability issues through this type of community engagement.

Other issues mentioned which hinder participation was the lack of knowledge on where to get help, the lack of ongoing support and financial constraints for those on low incomes or benefits. A representative of an agency which provides support for individuals with intellectual disabilities felt that some assistance with training on literacy, maths and basic budgeting skills could be beneficial for a few people with disabilities. Attendees expressed that some governmental schemes or projects were short lived or not funded well enough. It was felt that more resourcing or better ongoing support would assist with their participation.

Attendees felt that employers with a better understanding of the disability community would make their own participation in the community much easier.

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

The discussion groups felt that although these are generally thorough definitions, there are other factors which make them difficult to define.

One group felt that social isolation does not necessarily mean voluntary withdrawal by a person as implied in the definition. They expressed that it does get more difficult to stay connected to others as a person gets older and if they have a disability, as they may have

limited mobility and funds. The group stated that it is more difficult for a person to initiate social activity when they are dealing with so many other things.

One attendee conveyed that as the parent of a disabled child, they feel more isolated than their child, and raised the point that families of people with disabilities may also experience isolation.

Before answering the next question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social and emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

“John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn’t have a car and doesn’t belong to any hobby or interest groups.”

Is John experiencing social and emotional isolation? Please discuss as a group.

There were a variety of responses to this question across the groups that responded to this question.

One of the groups felt that undoubtedly John was experiencing both social and emotional isolation. Other groups felt that John appears to be both socially and emotionally isolated only at face value, as more opportunities do exist for him to be included and engaged. They also noted that isolation cannot necessarily be identified by others, as perhaps John wishes to be alone and is comfortable with his current situation.

Three groups thought that John cannot be identified as an isolated person without more information. They felt that judging whether John is isolated or not is dependant on other factors such as his relationship with the person who visits every fortnight, and that he may also be using the internet and the phone to keep in touch with others.

Attendees also felt that a person cannot be socially isolated or emotionally isolated separately - but that each inevitably leads to the other and they are very closely linked.

Who determines if a person with disabilities is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If a person with disabilities is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

The three groups which responded felt that cases are often diagnosed by others, for example family or medical professionals. However, the groups also felt that others cannot assume or impose a lifestyle preference onto others. Although a person may appear socially or emotionally isolated, they may prefer their lifestyle. It was felt that some people like their alone time; they might not be a ‘people person’. One group stated that “it is not a problem if the needs of the person in question are being met.”

What could be some of the solutions to social and emotional isolation, either John’s or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes.

Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

The discussion groups had numerous ideas and solutions around social or emotional isolation.

It was suggested that people contact agencies such as Age Concern and BEST, join their local Neighbourhood Support group or get involved in a neighbourhood group (such as the TOP Trentham neighbourhood project). Attendees expressed that robust, easy to find information about services available would be beneficial.

Some participants also suggested volunteering, getting involved in a community garden or establishing a "Men's Shed" where people can come together. Another idea was having a venue where people can drop in for a chat and a coffee. One attendee liked the idea of coordinating mystery bus trips as a social activity.

Other suggestions were having after school programmes specifically for children with disabilities, and also encouraging personal counseling which could be effective in dealing with issues of social and emotional isolation.

There was no identification as to which group or agency would take ownership of, or provide resources for, these suggested projects.

What are solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

Only one group directly answered this question. They suggested that Upper Hutt City Council hold another forum specifically on social and emotional isolation, how to identify the problem and where to find help for it. They also suggested extending an education awareness programme to rest homes and churches, as they are both strong vehicles for the dissemination of information in the community.

The Community Services division will be examining the responses from this Public Forum to determine whether the need from the community is great enough to go ahead with these suggestions.

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

There were few responses to this question. One group felt that it is relatively difficult for people with disabilities to access information, especially with printed material like pamphlets and brochures as they are usually not specifically printed for the visually impaired. Size 12 font and black and white print is the most ideal for the visually impaired.

It was suggested that some tutoring on computers and using the internet would be helpful as some people with disabilities need assistance with using these facilities effectively. Unfortunately not all websites cater for the visually impaired and those with visual impairments may not be able use these websites without assistance.

3. Staying safe and general questions

While there was a broad definition of safety covered by attendees, there were also some specific responses to the questions. Attendees were asked to think about what makes them feel safe, if they knew what they to do in dangerous situations and how to feel safer in their community.



What makes you feel safe in your home?

Common factors which made some attendees feel safe in their homes were locks, burglar alarms, alarm stickers, security doors and dogs. Other participants commented that having a consistent routine and familiarity with their neighbours were important to building a sense of security.

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, night time or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

Attendees expressed that having a good support system and someone to call on when they feel unsafe is very important. Having a chain on your door or a window to look out of is also helpful. One attendee mentioned that peepholes are not convenient for people in wheelchairs as they are too high.

Other suggestions by some participants on ways to feel safe were: knowing how to deal with telephone calls when home alone, having a security door, having security lights and having the Upper Hutt Police station phone number nearby.

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?

Three of the five groups which answered this question felt that if they needed someone to call on, they would contact the police, the ambulance, their neighbours and Neighbourhood Support. Other attendees mentioned they would also contact their church minister or their local fire brigade. A few participants noted that medical alarms are very useful as the companies are usually prompt with their response.

What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

Some groups felt that future projects undertaken by the council could have wider promotion as they would like further information about projects which concern them.

A few attendees felt that better lighting in car parks and CCTV cameras could improve the Upper Hutt CBD area. Another suggestion by a few participants was that there be a stronger police presence in the CBD area.

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

Some attendees again expressed their concerns about the proposed colour of the bollards in the CBD as discussed previously. Other groups commented that certain pedestrian crossings in the CBD area were inconvenient and they felt that the proximity to roundabouts was dangerous.

Another issue discussed by one group was the amount of faecal matter from dogs visible around the town area. Participants felt that there should be larger fines for dog owners who do not clean up after their pets and bags sold specifically for the purpose of picking up the faecal matter.

There were a number of positive changes identified by the forum members that have affected people with disabilities. Attendees felt that there has been considerable improvement in council's response to community issues, including many of the issues

identified at last year's public forums. They felt that the council's consultation with the community is proving effective and that council is aware of their needs and community minded. They also noted that council events have been successful.

The Upper Hutt City Library was acknowledged as a great resource for people with disabilities. It was also appreciated that the library has taken on suggestions which are helpful for those with disabilities who visit the library.

The Upper Hutt Public Transport Open Day held in 2009 was recognised as a successful and beneficial council event. Attendees of the forum felt that since the open day, there has been a noticeable increase in the use of public transport, particularly buses.

Attendees commented on the liquor ban enforced by council as both a positive and negative change in Upper Hutt. One group stated that the CBD area now has less 'rowdy' behaviour due to the ban. However, participants felt that the people responsible for this behaviour have started 'hanging out' further from the CBD and towards suburban areas. Some attendees have noticed that there is an increase broken glass in residential areas which makes them feel unsafe.

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

The three discussion groups which answered had a very positive response towards the Upper Hutt City Library which they all felt was 'always cutting edge for understanding disability' and extremely helpful in providing information and activities.

Other agencies and groups mentioned favourably were the Citizens Advice Bureau, Work and Income, the i-Site Information Centre, Expressions Arts and Entertainment Centre, the Cossie Club and the Upper Hutt City Council.

What do you think are the three biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

Three major issues surfaced commonly across all the groups which answered this question.

One of the key issues was the attitude of others towards their disability. Some attendees expressed that they would like more welcome and acceptance from the community, particularly in the workforce. They felt that the attitude of young people, bus drivers, train drivers, taxi drivers and the community in general is very important, and currently it is not as positive as it could be.

Another integral issue participants identified was physical accessibility. As mentioned earlier in this report, a few of the attendees felt that a review of pedestrian crossings in Upper Hutt could be undertaken to re-assess some safety concerns¹.

One participant conveyed that there are little to no office spaces at ground level in Upper Hutt for a self-employed person with disabilities to use as premises. Similarly, some attendees stated that there are some professional services, such as lawyers, who are located on upper levels where access is only via a staircase which may not be ideal.

Money and financial matters were also mentioned by one group as one of the biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt.

¹ Please refer to page 12 under the heading "Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?"

Final Question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be?

Each group had a different response to this question.

The suggestions received from all of the groups ranged from having an after-hours medical care in Upper Hutt to improved public transport, physical accessibility and roading in the CBD area.

Some attendees commented that they would like more inclusion in activities both recreationally and in the community, while other participants wanted better community education for younger people with disabilities to increase their own awareness about their conditions.

Suggestions for improvements in the CBD: map feedback

At the forum, a large scale map of the Upper Hutt CBD area was provided where attendees were invited to mark out areas and points which they felt needed improvement. A scaled down version of this map is available in the appendices.

Attendees made a number of suggestions as follows:

- The pedestrian crossing on Park Street is very close to the intersection (near Goodshed Road). They felt it should be further down Park Street.
- It would be beneficial to place a pedestrian crossing on Railway Avenue instead.
- A pedestrian crossing should be placed on Fergusson Drive in front of Woolworths.
- The proximity of the pedestrian crossings on the three-way roundabout between Main Street and Pine Avenue are too close to the corners. This is dangerous to both drivers and pedestrians. The placement of these crossings should be reviewed.
- It would be constructive to have a pedestrian crossing on Gibbons Street near the top when you turn in from the Main Street roundabout. It should be a safe distance from the roundabout.
- The pedestrian crossing on Gibbons street when you turn in from the McParland Street intersection has a "steep entry".
- There should be a pedestrian crossing on Logan Street when you turn left from Queen Street at a safe distance from the roundabout.
- The pedestrian crossing on Queen Street when you turn left from Savage Crescent should be removed.
- The all the pedestrian crossings by the roundabout between Fergusson Drive, Main Street and King Street, are too close to the roundabout. Attendees felt that the crossings should be taken out and moved further down the streets.
- A disability car park space outside the Salvation Army on Queen Street would be helpful.
- The asphalt in the carpark behind the Salvation Army shop needs to be renewed and the car park needs to have better signage and flow.

These comments have been discussed with the Roading Manager at Upper Hutt City Council. It is important to note that safety is always taken into account by the Roading Division when items such as pedestrian crossings are installed, and decisions are well researched.

Overarching Themes

An issue which appears to be of concern for a number of attendees was the proposed grey colour of bollards in the CBD area. This matter arose frequently amongst the various discussion groups as it has in previous years. It should be noted that careful research has been undertaken by the Council regarding this issue. However, it appears that concerns are around the lack of consultative process for a topic seen to be a key issue for the community. A possible strategy then could be to evaluate the bollards with an open mind to potentially place a contrasting strip around the bollard or a change in colour should the concerns of the community be realized.

Another matter raised consistently throughout the forum was the placement of pedestrian crossings in the CBD area.. A large scale map of the Upper Hutt CBD was provided to the attendees during the forum for their suggestions on improvements to the area. Participants proposed numerous ideas and these findings are available on page 15 of this report. The majority of the concerns attendees had were around pedestrian crossings being too close to intersections and roundabouts, leading to potential safety hazards, especially for people with disabilities.

A further significant topic related to office spaces for the self employed as well as other corporate and social services which are located higher than ground level. Attendees felt consideration should be given as to how these can be accessed by people with physical disabilities. Participants suggested either placing lifts or relocating the spaces for easier accessibility to all members of the public.

Attitude towards people with disabilities was also a strong theme. Attendees expressed that to avoid social and emotional isolation in people with disabilities there could be an improvement in acceptance and empathy by the wider Upper Hutt community, such as young people, bus drivers and taxi drivers to name a few groups. Some participants mentioned a lack of awareness within the community about disabilities and people who have them. They felt that education and awareness programmes within community groups might be positive solutions for this issue.

Safety was covered again as a topic in 2010 as it was an issue of concern in previous years. The attendees of the 2010 public forum reflected that they knew to some extent where to get help and what to do if they were in a situation which frightened them. Based on information from the 2009 and 2010 forum, the Community Services team has outlined several recommendations in the next section of this report.

A positive recurring theme was the appreciation of the council's recreational facilities which are very accessible such as the Upper Hutt City Library, where the staff members are helpful and accommodations have been made for those with visual impairments and the easy wheelchair accessibility at the council Parks and Reserves.

Recommendations and Proposed Actions 2010/2011

This report will be circulated around the disability forum, relevant agencies, groups, areas within Council, and to the participants who indicated an interest in receiving the findings.

Specific areas for action from this report will also be investigated with members of Hutt Valley Disability Advisory Group.

There are some points that were raised in the forum where work is already underway or is planned. Some of these are outlined below. Possible new initiatives as a result of the issues raised by attendees at the forum are listed for further discussion through Hutt Valley Disability Advisory Group.

Accessibility

Early in 2010, the Manager of Recreation Services advised that disability training for staff is a priority. H2O Xtream now trains all staff on how to use the wheelchair hoist. All staff will also be attending the "No Exceptions" training during 2010, giving staff a broader understanding of supporting customers with disabilities in recreation, as part of the Hutt Valley commitment to the No Exceptions Strategy².

Community Information

Community Services has developed community information sheets on relevant topics for people with disabilities in Upper Hutt. The information sheets are available in branded information stands placed in public venues in the city as well as www.upperhuttcity.com under the Community Services community information sheets page.

Current information sheets specifically targeted to people with disabilities are: "Help with working if you have a disability," "Making life easier – equipment and transport options if you have a disability," and "Getting the support you need – when you have a disability". There are a wide range of other information sheets available that may also be relevant to people with disabilities, for example, community information sheets for parents or youth social services.

Community Services will continue to expand the range of community information sheets in response to the needs of the community and plans to increase the number of brochure stands available in the city.

Recommendations for further information to be available regarding specific topics discussed at the forum are listed below in their topic area.

Emails with news and opportunities relevant to people with disabilities or agencies working with those with disabilities are sent regularly to the Disability Forum network. It is expected that this information is passed on to people with disabilities who may be interested although we can not be completely certain that this is always the case.

² The "No Exceptions" strategy is a nationwide policy of SPARC (Sport and Recreation New Zealand). Upper Hutt City Council is a signatory to the Hutt Valley "No Exceptions" district.

In response to the concerns of the attitudes of the community towards people with disabilities, the Community Services division will be looking towards investigating education and awareness programmes and actions taken by other councils regarding this issue to see if it is appropriate to implement them in Upper Hutt.

Safety

Community Information is a key way of addressing safety by giving people access to information about services available.

Five thousand copies of a neighbourhood safety information kit called "Be Safe, Stay Well" will be distributed throughout the community. The "Be Safe, Stay Well" information kit has been developed as part of the Upper Hutt Community Safety Strategy. The kit offers information with tested guidelines on what to do and how to manage certain situations in order to be safe and stay healthy and well.

It covers topics residents have identified they would like help with, such as personal safety, home safety, safety in public places, family safety and tips on being and staying healthy. In direct response to suggestions from the community on better access to clear information, the kit also highlights where to get detailed information by telephone, internet and in print, and where to go for more help. There is a pocket in the back cover of the booklet to keep pamphlets collected as information is gathered on topics of particular interest to the reader.

Community Services will also be initiating a programme of self-defence workshops specifically for people with differing mobility needs. This programme was a recommendation from the 2009 forum; however, due to re-prioritising in 2009/2010, this meant that this project was postponed. It will be a priority early in 2010/2011.

The self-defence workshops will focus on a variety of ways to keeping safe including verbal self-defence, how to call for help and increasing confidence in public spaces and potentially intimidating situations.

Roading and transport

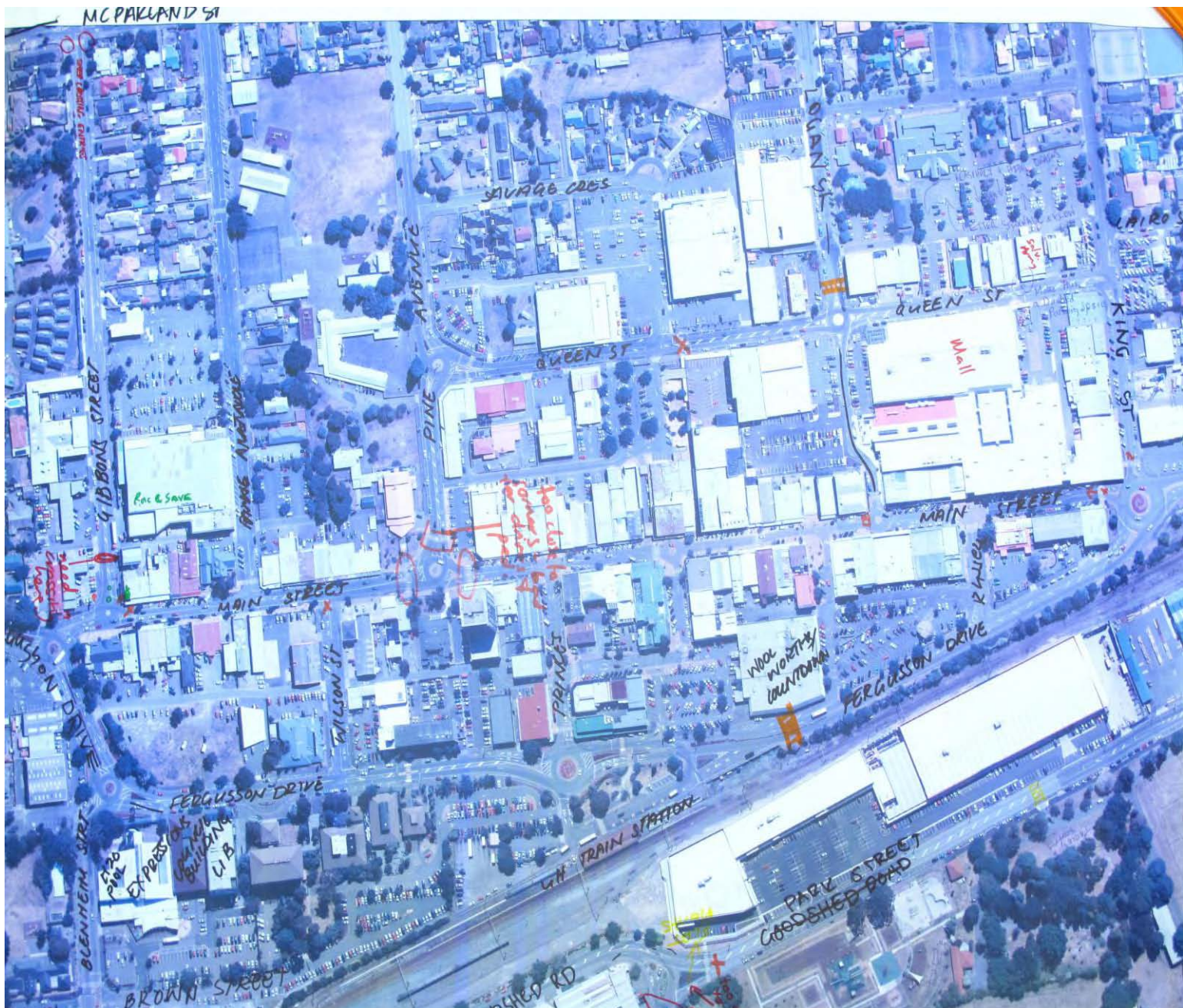
The Community Services Division will be passing on comments relating to pedestrian and road safety to the Roding Division of Upper Hutt City Council.

It will also be explored whether a map of disability carparks in Upper Hutt can be made available on Upper Hutt City Council's website.

A flyer about accessibility on public transport in the Wellington Region has been produced by Great Wellington Regional Council. Community Services will look at ways of assisting in further circulating this flyer from Metlink.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Map of the Upper Hutt CBD



Printed above is a scaled down version of the map (as mentioned on page 15) which was provided to the attendees to mark with their suggestions. The roads have been marked by the Community Development Advisor in black marker and the remaining comments and drawings have been marked by attendees of the forum.

Appendix 2: Discussion notes from the break-out groups

Group 1

1. Accessibility

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

- Pretty good-some gaps
- Buildings upstairs are not too accessible- no lifts
- CBD towers lift
- Not the wall though
- Professional services Eg: Lawyers
- General layout of the town is difficult for those with visual impairments- lack of tactile tiles.
- Recently parking spaces painted blue-bright-stand out more.
- Easier for push chairs- wheelchairs in suburbs.
- Parallel parks- are not long enough for the hoists to get a wheelchair off the back.
- “Gun Grey” color for bollards on going issue-
- Not good for those with impairments-Dull colors.

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible? (e.g. transport, parking etc)

- Lot of curbing that are not level- safety hazard for those with wheel chairs and mobility scooters.
- Currently in the maintenance plan.
- Get more complaints
- More mobility parking spaces
- Lot of spaces for the size of our city.
- Appropriate spaces- convenient
- Tactile tiles-fairly inexpensive fix
- International/universal design.

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

- Quite a bit- Situation with the lifts at H2o xtream needs query.
- Accessible to get in- but not if your in a wheel chair and want to go in the pool. Hoist taken out cause no one knew how to use it.
- Extensive use of the library and parks
- Got public to walk through library and library is visual for those with impairments.
- UHCC taken on suggestions.
- Use all facilities in some way facilities are user friendly.
- Any suggestions?
- Maybe council staff at H2o could under go some disability training to provide appropriate support.

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

- Signs- get someone to go around some of the parks and check how good.
- County Lane (end of)
- Somebody with a wheelchair wouldn't be able to get through.
- Bike trail- have to open the gates have to get keys
- Netball courts and rugby grounds
- Where SPARC is at with their 'no exceptions' programs.
- Parks with the swings- move accessible to those in a wheel chair.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

- School holiday programs- how children with disabilities can participate?
- Xmas breaks, council activities
- How can they take part?
- People in wheelchairs- taxi with a hoist- can't get them during school holiday programs
- Licensed to MOE
- transportation gets difficult.
- Driving Ms Daisy
- Perhaps council could provide solution.
- Nice to know how many vans with hoists are available in Upper Hutt.

2. Social and emotional isolation

What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc).

- Being accepted by the community that you are living in- if not this can be a big barrier.
- Actual participation, making the effort to
- People go towards common areas of interest.
- Those with disabilities will group together- comfort zone.
- Uh has many different events and activities.
- Some of the OSH requirements can be a barrier.

What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

- Large barriers for some ethnic groups.
- Maori people- Marae based Maori in wheel chair cannot get in.
- PI are in a similar situation they often don't seek help from different agencies- stay at home isolated.
- Lack of knowledge- some info is not readily available to everybody.
- Needs to be support for somebody to venture in.
- Ongoing support
- Schemes- can be quite short lived and government funding.
- People do find their own ways of networking using technology- Internet.
- Financial constraints for those on low incomes or benefits.
- Travel cost
- Fees
- Cultural values or beliefs.

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

- Not necessarily the withdrawal- but it gets more difficult as people get older.
- Limited mobility
- Funds.
- Tougher to initiate response.
- Hard to get back
- Choice- Could be a conscience decision.
- Children finding it more difficult to do things than others- Find themselves more and more at home.
- Many disabled people can't find work, things to do after school finishing



- Lack of daycare facilities
- Not much in Upper Hutt, Petone Thumbs Up , Stokes Valley, Not much
- What is available to the community not always available to DP population.
- Brain injury association support systems at various levels.

Before answering the next question question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social or emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

“John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a week to help him around the house. His family lives in Lower Hutt, and mostly visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn't have a car and doesn't belong to any hobby or interest groups”

Is John experiencing social or emotional isolation?

Please discuss as a group.

- Depends on a whole lot of factors.
- Depends on the relationship with the person who visits once a week could be personal or not.
- Depends on the person – They could be ok with being alone.
- Could be socially isolated but not emotionally.
- Internet, phone
- Depends on what you know.

Who determines if an older person is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If an older person is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

- We can't assume- we need more information.
- No it's not a problem their needs are being met.
- You can be lonely in a crowd
- Might be difficult for people to make a relationship past an acquaintance
- Could be a choice social and emotional isolation go hand in hand.
- Deaf community- can be isolated because they are not included in the convo.
- The prisoner reintegration group some have disabilities.
- Social isolation and emotional isolation for families.
- Those new to the area.
- Orongomai Marae is working on this.
- Might not be a people person
- Not point in forcing someone to do something
- Can't impose our likes and dislikes on others
- People have their own expectations on what they want out of their life.
- Human nature

What could be some of the solutions to social or emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes.

Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

- Advocate for what John needs, empower client through information sharing.
- Age concern/BEST
- Cultural input
- Support caregivers needs (family needs)



- Neighbourhood Support groups eg: TOP
- Information given to made widely available for choice.
- Eg: age concern visiting, volunteering support, relevant GPS-Seniornet, Sunday evH2o, Leader feature ,Letterbox drops, CAB, Winz ,Library.
- After school programs to include children with disabilities.
- Day time activities for youth with disability after leaving school.
- Accessible programs for people with high disability support needs.
- Good easy to find information services.
- More advocacy services.
- Encourage them to visit the library.
- Night classes
- Ask family if they could be more involved if that's what they want.
- Talk to neighbours
- Make friends with home help.
- Expanding circle of interests.
- Introductions to networks and groups, changing dependant mindset, self help.
- Peer support
- Information re: clubs, groups of interests.
- Personal counseling (re: Emotional isolation).
- Provide options and support if person would like it.
- Introduce them to others in same situation
- Question family about individual situation.

What are the solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

- Maybe another forum and maybe better publicized
- Networks, service providers
- In the interests of people to come depends on the topic
- Community safety – social and emotional isolation could be looked at under their umbrella.
- Educational awareness program for those in rest homes
- Like a forum to raise awareness amongst the residents and the staff.
- All the issues already highlighted which the UHCC could support.
- To take it out to church communities- church visits to groups a lot of information.
- UHCC could target some of the ethnic groups to receive some info regarding events/forums so that they could attend also.
- Could follow up and see why they didn't attend- or maybe hold a separate.
- Maori and Pacific Islanders very little access to paid services.

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

- Relatively difficult for most printed material, Pamphlets. Size 12 print black and white.
- If they can competently use the computer, internet.
- Websites that don't always cater for visually impaired people
- They don't have access or can't use them without assistance.
- Big gap for the Valley, was a huge resource for equipment.

From previous forums, we have found that support and community connectedness for full-time or part-time family careers is an issue. Can you think of local community initiatives that support careers or provide relief for them?

- Biggest gap in the disability sector is respite care- affects the family.
- Once a month at CAB support group for careers.
- Lack of info and resources
- People won't approach or seek assistance because they feel guilt about being a burden to others

- Workbridge has support groups
- Help that is available isn't about the family needs or it's not available.
- Huge element of trust
- Family member careers
- Relief careers – How do you get them to work with somebody with high needs.
- Appropriate training
- CAB
- New website
- For public
- User friendly
- Confidential info still through CAB

3. Staying safe and general questions

What makes you feel safe in your home?

- Knowing your neighbours in your vicinity, knowing where to get help.
- Good security
- Fire alarm
- Burglar alarm
- Locks
- Alarm sticker

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

- Having a good support system, someone to call on at any time.
 - Having a chain, window to look out of.
 - Knowing that neighbours would check up if there's anything out of the ordinary.
 - Practicing an escape route/ trial incase of emergencies
- Houses are generally inaccessible- difficult to get out of.
- Personal medical alarms
 - Having support on speed dial.

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?

- Police, ambulance
- Neighbours get to know them
- Neighbourhood Support
- Phone trees

What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

- Greater promotion of projects
- Better lighting in car parks
- CCTV cameras
- Walkwise
- Patrolling the streets wardens, security, community police often have a high profile.
- Viewing of police stations
- Providing self defense classes- for people with disabilities.
- Intervention should be at a low level.
- Strategies

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

Positive

- Issues raised at forum last year getting looked at.
- Process of consultation with the community- at least the council know what people think.

Negative

- Transport open day
- Gun Grey color-Dull

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

- CAB
- Those that are visible
- People know about, Government agencies- WINZ workbridge, Not particularly easy but frontline.
- Lot of local groups in UH
- Library (UH) going out of their way to make it better.
- Depends on information- how well agencies are able to promote themselves.
- Depends if people are able to find you.

What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

1. Accessibility – CBD
2. Community Attitude
3. Being Hurt? – How do you deal with issues across such a varied group of people

Final question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be? Please decide on one thing as a group and we will get you to report back to everyone in the room (in one or two sentences!).

UH Issue:

- After hours medical centre in Hutt Valley
- Accessibility
- Transport
- Greater promotion of the no exceptions program- there is room to extend it through the communities.
- Employer attitudes
- To be heard- to have publicity
- Schooling
- Working – Access and inclusiveness
- Human Rights
- About people rather than abilities.

Group 2

1. Accessibility

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

- G-For someone with a power chair very good.
- S- Oh k for walking- trips and falls over because of the tree roots lifting the footpath in Victoria St- Don't want to lose the trees could these be re sealed or so no cracks.
- Heavy shop doors are a problem.
- G-Issues with tiles on floor- dog thinks that the floor is glass.
- Very slippery tiles if wheel chair wheels are slippery inside mall.
- Some shops are very cluttered unable to move through easily.



-Windy days with the signs outside or on footpaths are dangerous.

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible? (e.g. transport, parking etc)

- Promote driving Mis Daisy
- Do like painting disability carparks blue, visually better
- Motorised scooter are not able to go on the train
- Ramps too steep
- Scooter too cumbersome
- Public transport- Sally getting on a bus and driver taking off before she is seated. Some drivers impatient when trying to understand what Sally says.
- Should wait till everyone is seated.
- G- has had to tell bus drivers that they actually have a ramp faulty.
- Having an annual transport day would be good.
- Accessible toilet in Hapai club has a wheelchair inaccessible
- Hand dryers too high to reach.

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

- Are talking books available at the library. How extensive?
- B-Buys talking books for Sally
- B-H2O Xtream- Sally kept breaking out in eczema and now unable to attend. Attends Togzone
- Changing rooms disgusting Grimy, Not clean
- Has Harcourt Park done a concrete footpath for wheelchairs from car park to sound shell.

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

G- Library staff incredibly helpful especially for those with visual impairment.

G-Has given Library feedback to library about distances between shelving.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

G- have some of the best parks in Wellington and very good for letting off guide dog.

G- Public toilets possibly need to be cleaned more than often ones by Hazelwoods.

L- Toilets in Mall very clean and accessible toilet upstairs is unisex therefore G does not use this one.

-Paper plus is very cluttered and not very accessible for motorised scooters and wheelchairs. Writing books in paper plus too high to reach.

-Grey Poles visual impairment possibly put yellow stripe around pole.

2. Social and Emotional Isolation

What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc).

-G and H Self employed work

Upper Hutt business community very good.

S-Works in the Salvation Army shop Tuesday mornings

S-Goes into shops and more and gets paper, walks down Main Street and calls into various shops and the staff know her. Lesley from Archibald's takes her on her school run on a Tuesday and picks up kids from Oxford Cres.

L-Some shop keepers know what coffee you buy.

B-Work and income – Helen always says hi to Sally by name.

L- Yes work and income

B-When husband died case manager cried and gave b tissues.

G- Book club at Upper Hutt Library. Very enjoyable.

B- Knows all neighbours they know Sally



What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

G-Attitude of some people- Upper Hutt petanque not good for people with disabilities.

B-Having to go to Lower Hutt one way class as no meetings, get together in Upper Hutt

P- Aspergers teen class is in Tawa once a week, nothing in Upper Hutt.

G- Use Hapai club rooms for more functions etc, for people with disabilities.

P- Lack of tolerance, lack of empathy, lack of understanding of people with disabilities.

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

B- As Sallys mum B feels more isolated than Sally.

B+G- Families of people with disabilities get feeling of isolation.

B- Bullying of young people with disabilities from other young people.

Before answering the next question question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social or emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

"John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a week to help him around the house. His family lives in Lower Hutt, and mostly visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn't have a car and doesn't belong to any hobby or interest groups"

Is John experiencing social or emotional isolation?

Please discuss as a group.

-Yes both (all agree)

Who determines if an older person is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If an older person is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

-Some like their alone time, some might not want people to know that they are hurting and feel isolated.

G- Telephone tree- ring once a week to others.

B- Day programme for men was great and gave B a break.

P- Mens shed for Upper Hutt men at earthlink?

-at one of the schools, colleges and teach young ones re tinkering.

What could be some of the solutions to social or emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes.

Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

-Mens shed

-Community garden

-Vege Garden at resthomes

-Mystery bus trips

-Tinkering shed

-Withdrawn, separated and divorced group.

Sessions running in Island bay this term.

- Driving Miss daisy- possibly phone tree ring once a week and relations.
- Phone tree
- More social groups.

What are the solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

- Believe very few people have no-one to assist
- Citizens Advice

From previous forums, we have found that support and community connectedness for full-time or part-time family carers is an issue. Can you think of local community initiatives that support carers or provide relief for them?

- B- Find it hard to ask for help
- B- Does not use respite care.

3. Staying safe and general questions

What makes you feel safe in your home?

- Family
- Locks on doors
- Dogs that bark
- Security doors
- B andS- Smoke detectors – more put in so Sally could hear sound when she had hearing aids out.
- Panic button
- Cellphone clipped on to pants
- Unable to use deadlock
- Leave keys in doors at night
- Deadbolts on ranch sliders
- Feel you can call out and neighbours will come.
- Neighbourhood Support
- Neighbours

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

- Peep hole at Sallys level.
- Know how to deal with telephone calls if home alone
- Security door
- Check property before going to bed at night
- Having a dog
- Having street lights

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?

- Yes

What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

- Personal responsibility to set up network.

- Proper street lighting, some streets not well light
Side streets not well light.
- Do not see the community constables much anymore walking the streets of Upper Hutt.
- Register of people with disabilities who may need assistance in a national disaster, use civil defence, list needs to be updated.
- Ensure have civil defence list of requirements in a disaster eg: water, food.

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

- Liquor ban
Street more broken glass out of liquor ban area and groups of young people hanging out further from the main part of town.
- disability parks painted.
- Dog poo, ignorant, larger fines and dog poo patrol, doggy poo bags.
- Freed the access on Goodshed Road-made curb ramps easier.
- Ebdentown access great.
- Awareness of pedestrian crossing coming up. Broadway shops is great.
- No street cleaners to clean the CBD area

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

- Library
- Work and income
- Still too steep gradient for entrance to mall but slipperiness fixed.
- Archibalds one of the least cluttered shops
- Upper Hutt health centre

What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

- Attitude in general
le:youth, bus drivers, traindrivers (staff), Taxi drivers (not driving Miss daisy though).
- For self employed if want premises no office space at ground level in Upper Hutt or very little.
- Try to find a lawyer who is at street level or has lift access

Reg Newell

Lawyer by National bank

Upper Hutt law will meet you at a Coffee Shop

Final question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be? Please decide on one thing as a group and we will get you to report back to everyone in the room (in one or two sentences!).

- More activities Inclusion, recreational activities community groups for Upper Hutt people with Disabilities and their supporters/caregivers.

Group 3

1. Accessibility

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

- Lack of wheelchair access in some shops
- Door at Mc café opens out at ramp access.
- Trentham railway station platform to train- much lower than train. (unhelpful staff)
- Concrete grinding/Un evenness of footpath inch gap levels between two parts of concrete.
Harder for people with walkers(strollers)
- Busses fantastic although problems for people in wheelchairs with their legs facing out (no special seat and isles to narrow)

- Public toilets by library- pathways uneven
- Tree roots invading pathways (petone)
- Golders road footpaths- bad for being uneven (pushing wheelchairs)
- Lips on footpaths where driveways meet footpaths.
- Gibbons Street and Mc Parland Street crossing very bad. Footpath meeting road goes in a V shape. Wheel chairs caught in a dip.
- Car park at Sinclair street outside medical centre- drainage issues affect physical access. (big ditches)- needs new asphalt resurfacing.
- some carparks have safety issues re: don't know where the cars are coming from.
- The mall flooring is too slippery
- Seddon St- one tree designed to trip people up- also surface uneven a problem.
- Applaud blue carparks. Wonderful- good size and good amount. Better than Lower hut.
- More disabled carparks at Fergusson drive resthome.
- Lower shelves at library need to be tidied up.
- Toilets at Harcourt park old and disgusting.
- is there a disabled toilet in the public toilets by the library? If there is they aren't visible the mens and womans toilets are not accessible to disabled.
- Disabled car park by Salvation Army needed.
- Events at Trentham park- portoloos are provided but what about toilets for the disabled are they open?
- Pedestrian crossing on Gibbons street by Pakn Save needed.
- Pub on Fergusson drive by Caltex Rimutaka
Always a min of 100 broken bottles(pub should take responsibility).

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible? (e.g. transport, parking etc)

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

- Library programs are great for disabled and well advertised especially tea and tales, sleep overs and poets corner.

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

- Mayors involvement with disability groups is exceptional- heads and shoulders above everyone else nationally.
- Council communication is good everyone feels heard.

2. Social and Emotional Isolation

What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc).

- Community forums
- Feeling accepted useful and wanted
- Churches, hobby groups- but how do you get the disabled connected when they don't feel accepted.
- College students can make disabled feel isolated because of bullying.
- Discrimination in employment is seen to still exist.
- Kids being very intimidating was discussed at a length.

What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

- Lack of respect, prejudice experienced

- People not educated about people with disability
- Teased and called names if disability affects appearance.
- No groups we feel comfortable being part of
- Finding the group is hard
- Cut backs to community education
- Library chess group, adult literacy very good for participation.

Easier to participate

- Encouragement/ respect
- understanding of employers
- Unkind adults a real problem
- invisible and non- apparent disability considered (not just physical) increase awareness ie: epilepsy, autism, smell social behavior – not obvious learning disability.
- People leaping up and helping physical disabled can be good and bad.
- No need to talk down.
- Wellington Mayor- get homeless out of city and already moved drunks out- should take a different direction- expose and fix rather than hide. Homeless are homeless due to social dis orders- anxiety autism) alcoholism drugs- cant cope with responsibility of housing bills cleaning bathrooms etc. Re think the way housing package is offered. Some people prefer to be isolated/ reclusive. Isolation like this aren't always drug and alcohol isolated. At least 8 in Upper Hutt like this.

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

- Agree- good definitions.
- There needs to be a place to just "hang out" without meeting mental issue criteria- like library but more.
- Not easy for people to connect. They might like to meet people on a regular basis first to get trust.
- drop in centre with tv, coffee, nothing flash the service is just place and chair and cup of tea.
- more time to hang out- but have a reason for people to turn up.

Before answering the next question question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social or emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

"John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a week to help him around the house. His family lives in Lower Hutt, and mostly visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn't have a car and doesn't belong to any hobby or interest groups"

Is John experiencing social or emotional isolation?

Please discuss as a group.

- Depends on individual but based on face value he is both.
 - Opportunities exist for this man to be included and engaged.
- How can you be socially isolated but not emotionally isolated?

-Hard to convert into the momentum to get out of house even if the opportunity is there.
Are ace house opening in Upper Hutt? Day programme for people not working or studying and cant.

Who determines if an older person is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If an older person is deemed by others to be socially or

emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

More cases than not- diagnosed or identified by others/family/medical professionals. Many problems associated with isolation being identified by other people especially when people are given solutions for their isolation that don't suit them.

-Doctors giving green prescriptions are good. It would be nice if there was a yellow prescription for isolated people.

What could be some of the solutions to social or emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes.

Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

-Better education and connection with group and organisations.

-Bring back after care and care centres.

-Various rest homes have day care where clients are picked up and returned home.

-befriending a person to find out what is the best way to help that person.

-Having a venue where people can drop in for a chat and a coffee if nothing else.

-Encouraging groups that deal with anxiety mental health intellectual disabilities and non-apparent disabilities that separate people.

-(Win after care) Invite ACE house (Mt Vic and Petone) to set up a day program in Upper Hutt.

-Open space available to any individual person to attend without agenda- no exceptions.

-Wellington after care day centre

What are the solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

-No more funding cuts to tailored services for identifying solutions for isolated people.

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

From previous forums, we have found that support and community connectedness for full-time or part-time family carers is an issue. Can you think of local community initiatives that support carers or provide relief for them?

3. Staying safe and general questions

What makes you feel safe in your home?

-Reliable neighbours

Neighbourhood support

Knowing your neighbours

Retirement villages feel safe because you know your neighbours

Police number in emergency

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

-Police number handy

-Have a police station in Upper Hutt- very important

-Present caring neighbour

-Neighbourhood watch aware of disabled residents.

-Ability to identify people at door ie: peephole

-Only four ways in and out of Upper Hutt. Cameras at each exit and entry may help to deter crime from outsiders.

-Feel good about cameras in CBD.

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?

-Neighbours- although this is changing due to people moving around.

-Police

-Church minister/leaders

-Fire brigade are great- they often come first and good to ring them first-police often too busy

-Medical alarms- better than phones careful about choosing an alarm- some are better than others.

What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

-More cameras

-Police walking the streets (visible)

-Community cop (see more regular)

-More encouragement of neighbourhood Support

-Street lights maintained so they work.

-Don't like empty shops- draw riff raff in.

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

-Some council suggestions have been acted on.

-Color scheme of city needs to be reviewed. Bullet grey not good for disabled. Contrast not there with pavements. Color is depressing. Yellow or orange for poles would be good for sight impaired.

-Pedestrian crossing proximity to roundabouts in Upper Hutt is often dangerous.

-distance below crossing is often too far ie: gibbons stret pak n save.

-there needs to be a crossing near the shops on Fergusson drive near Brentwood, Tawai.

-Additional crossing near Oderings needed esp for Hutt Gabels residents.

-Cant think of anything council has done in last 12 months except for library development.

-Although as residents they feel council are aware of needs, are very community minded and this is improving. Events have been great. Big improvement.

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

-The library number one. Always on cutting edge for understanding disability, information provision plus recreational groups.

-Mobile library great.

Not easy to get on to but staff great and helpful.

-CAB

-Cossie Club

-Expressions very good

-Café Cibo

-Farmers market-but not the one in the mall

-Council events.

-UHCC for willing to hear views

-60s up groups

-Salvation Army

-H20

-Church

-Grey Power

-Church beside fire station "connections"



What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

Final question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be? Please decide on one thing as a group and we will get you to report back to everyone in the room (in one or two sentences!).

-Community education of young people about their disability awareness.

Group 4

1. Accessibility

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

- Generally flat
- Signage generally good
- Grid
- Upper Hutt more accessible than the Hutt
- Car access good easy for people to come into town "ribbon city"
- Houses close to town, enjoy walking
- Bus route good
- Club accessibility good
- Parks accessible

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible? (e.g. transport, parking etc)

- Clutter on footpath, Main St
- Pedestrian by round about issue.
- Council painting poles grey
- they said sufficient distraction of color on footpaths
- Council to be aware of chair users eg: café
- Social skills
- Moss on footpaths
- White substance hard to walk on
- CCTV at the library
- Possibly improve wheelchair access at parks.

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xtream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

- Use library sometimes
- Use library regularly
- Use park weekly
- Parks are great

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

- Wheel chair access at Harcourt park good
- Trentham access is good
- GW parks have great access
- Use parks to take Grand children to play
- Movies in the park

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

- Use aqua aerobics very occasionally
- Stokes valley hands out coffee free, Xmas party- It's a safe pool.

2. Social and Emotional Isolation



What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc).

- Bowling club
- Being part of committee for blind
- When somthings new maybe have an open day for disabled committee contact agencies.
- Go to activites with others and join
- Just being a part
- involvement with family

What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

- If I had more time
- I'm doing things a lot slower
- Not easy to get out in evenings- shut out from night activities
- Having someone else to encourage your participation
- Mobility
- Teach social connection/communication

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

- Everyone's got a connection, Its about how to use that connection.
- There's a personal education in how to connect ton network
- need to attain skills to cultivate authentic connection
- Sustainability of staff encouraging
- Social skills through housing, sports clubs
- Some isolation is due to the nature of the disability
- Technology helps socialization

Before answering the next question question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social or emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

"John is 74 years old and lives in Upper Hutt. He lost his wife a few years ago. He lives by himself, and someone visits once a week to help him around the house. His family lives in Lower Hutt, and mostly visits once a fortnight or so. John doesn't have a car and doesn't belong to any hobby or interest groups"

Is John experiencing social or emotional isolation?

Please discuss as a group.

- It's the person themselves
- End of the day individual needs to be empowered.

Who determines if an older person is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If an older person is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

What could be some of the solutions to social or emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes. Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

- Fill your car princable
 - "The talking Pole"
 - Role modeling
 - Making activities more accessible for younger people
- Eg: Accessibility at bars.

What are the solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

From previous forums, we have found that support and community connectedness for full-time or part-time family carers is an issue. Can you think of local community initiatives that support carers or provide relief for them?

- Skills and safety issue
- Got to have a relationship
- Organizing a social network for careers
- Inter connections of agencies.

3. Staying Safe and general questions

What makes you feel safe in your home?

- Burglar alarm
- Dog
- Husband
- Myself
- Ensure doors are locked
- Familiar surroundings
- Lock Up
- Telephones everywhere
- Having personal staff around

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

- Wait for staff

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?

- Yes but not close family
- Yes mum (family) manager
- Family in Wellington, neighbours
- Who next?
- Call 111 and get in contact with Police

What would Police response be to a disability call?

What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

- Monitoring public areas in general
- Especially notorious streets
- Ones without sense of purpose causing trouble
- Utilising regular forums promoting key messages
- More regular patrolling of police in their cars

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

-No not seen

-Question over movement of "No exceptions" model which was tabled for years. What has visibly changed?

-Have council put money against it?

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

-CAB is a good one

-Isite is useful

What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

-Money

-Communication

-Transport

Final question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be? Please decide on one thing as a group and we will get you to report back to everyone in the room (in one or two sentences!).

-Pedstrian crossings and a social message people can believe.

-Consultation

Group 5

1. Accessibility

In general, how accessible do you think Upper Hutt is?

-Transport

Kneeling busses- good

-Training for bus drivers

Close to footpath

Time to access

-Kerbs

Wheelchair friendly

Flat appropriate surfaces

-CBD not too bad eg: mall access, lift

Toilets are good there-side access-main st access, Bad rails.

-Public toilets, wide enough

-Pelican crossing

Crossings next to roundabout

(Gibbons and main exceptionally bad)

-Also crossing from pak n save.

-Outside police station yellow nobly bits are bubbling.

-Information re: Block footpaths

Public notices

In forming the blind

Detours

-Crossing at Wallicville/Alexander road roundabout

-Old karaoke bar roundabout no pedestrian crossing

-Golders road, need new pedestrian crossing.

-Hard surfaces for a boardwalk eg:maidstone park

- Having a small armit that was paved and having a paved way of getting to the river trail- particularly mobility scooters, wheelchairs, walkers and people in retirement villages.
- IDEA services people use maidstone park but coming from Blenheim St, Its dangerous because the pedestrian crossing is the long way round.
- Bollards in the alleyway between Expressions and UHCC are grey on grey concrete in a shadowy area so people cant see them.
- Raised brick areas on main road, people think it's a crossing and cross un safely.

What could be done to make Upper Hutt more accessible? (e.g. transport, parking etc)

- Are there wheelchairs at the mall like Queensgate?
- Logan St into Main St near Pizza Hutt its quite a way to get to a pedestrian crossing.
- Next to Salvation Army- the crossing here is the only crossing in a long way.
- Pools- automatic doors are good, great for wheelchairs.
- Wheelchair hoist training service provides careers all trained-ACC requirements. Maintenance- are pool staff trained? Eg: Two people to use at once.
- need more support-Mobility Eg: Library
- Hapai doors are rubbish
- Need more mobility parks
- Publish map of mobility parks online
- Information campaign, look for other places to publicize.
- Public policy re extension of time EG Wellington.
- Doctors surgeries eg: radius, Silverstream fitting through two doors.
- Signaling accessibility of facilities and services in community directory.
- TMP really good- Nice flat surfaces, great.
- More tables at Maidstone park- not so that people can come behind.
- Look at Goodshed road- Accessibility to Eg: gym

How frequently do you go to council's recreational facilities such as H2O Xstream, the Upper Hutt Library or Upper Hutt parks?

What do you most like about these facilities? What makes them accessible for you?

Is there anything else you want to tell us about accessibility or council recreational facilities?

2. Social and emotional isolation

What makes you feel connected to the community? How do you participate (for example, work, volunteering, recreation groups, childcare/school, neighbourhood support, church etc).

- Perception issues prevent inclusion in clubs
- But eg: Cossie club is good
- Sports especially difficult-Who acts as advocates.
- Day to day perception takes away advocates
- Lack of opportunities but Eg: RDA, Silverstream 9 hole.
- Again lack of positive media
- Council needs to talk with the people who work with the people
- Night time activity less practical. Daytime options.
- Age appropriate- 40s-50s missed age group.
- Existing groups eg: young mums older adults.
- Cost a real barrier
- People who have had ACC support stop (long term what can they do?)
- Retirement village activities- not as accesiable to disabled as well as older
- Geographic change of support.
- Library has great programme



- Gyms friendly to groups meeting at a certain time.
- YMCA gym small but accessible.
- Use the leader
- Hardest thing to do- stuff between 9 and 3 cheap accessible, what are those things?

What stops you from participating? Is there anything that would make it easier to participate?

- Literacy skills- Weltec
- Read write plus their good
- Maths- basic budgeting
- Woman non-working

Multi focus ie: Needs no longer being met, creates hostility more invisible impairments.

- Need support people
- Encouraging others with impairments to join?

There is a counter incentive. Level of natural support for a few, but not so many that overwhelm the group.

- Art
- Spaces to do art
- Youthtown-morning-Access? CAB, Library
- Is there a model?

Social isolation can be defined as the withdrawal or avoidance of social contact or communication – in other words, the person does not have a social network.

People who experience emotional isolation may or may not have a strong social network, but definitely don't have people close to them in their lives that they could confide in.

Would you agree with these definitions?

Before answering the next question question, think of someone you know who may be experiencing social or emotional isolation, and read this example as a group:

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Is John experiencing social or emotional isolation?

Please discuss as a group.

Who determines if an older person is socially or emotionally isolated? Is it the person themselves, or those observing? If an older person is deemed by others to be socially or emotionally isolated, is it a problem if the person is quite happy with their living circumstances?

NA

What could be some of the solutions to social or emotional isolation, either John's or that of someone you know?

By yourself, write down as many solutions as you can think of on post it notes.

Then, in your discussion group, put these solutions into groups and discuss what solutions might work best and why.

NA

What are the solutions to social and emotional isolation that Upper Hutt City Council could support?

NA

How easy is it for people with disabilities to access information about where and how to seek help, should they be experiencing social or emotional isolation?

NA

From previous forums, we have found that support and community connectedness for full-time or part-time family carers is an issue. Can you think of local community initiatives that support carers or provide relief for them?

NA

3. Staying Safe and general questions

What makes you feel safe in your home?

- Making clear walking spaces
- Especially water awareness
- Knowing where everything is
- Choosing to feel safe ie: not being afraid to open windows.
- Consistency, routine
- Making connections to Neighbours
- Being open to the environment.
- Older people not taking due care eg: contact, nutrition sense of time, quality of sleep.
- Eg: Deaf rely on neighbours for Eg: smoke alarms.
- Safety measures ie: security systems, Peepholes
- Strength of neighbourhood support critical.
- Structured way of approaching safety
- Right equipment(chains on doors, latches, safety door, flashing smoke alarms, disability friendly phones, panic buttons)
- Street Lighting – Critical, Pinehaven road/school far end last lamp post by fontage of school
- Mayhour St long drive
- Cost an issue- for disability
- Particular paths get wet leaves- slipping/falls.
- Encouraging residents trees hanging over public paths to trim.
- Community project re:clean up neighbourhood alleys.

We know what makes people with disabilities feel unsafe at times (for example, a knock at the door by a stranger, nighttime or being alone). Bearing this in mind, what could be ways for people with disabilities to feel even safer when these situations happen?

-Reliance's on support services if attached to a service

Eg: 111 calls for non emergency because people don't know who to ask for help. Dementia? Alcoholics Anon helpline, eg just for company

-Samaritians?

Eg: volunteer hutt for time filling purposes.

Pool of volunteers for people not extreme enough for people to be connected into services just for visiting/social connections.

-Up to individuals to make them feel safer.

If you felt you needed to, would there be someone you know well that you could call on (for example, neighbours, friends or family)? Would you know who to call if none of these people were available?



What projects do you think the council could be involved in that would make you feel safer in your community?

Have you noticed any changes (positive/negative) in the last 12 months on issues affecting people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

-Positive

Transport, increase in busses

-Negative

Pedestrian crossing

What agencies/groups are the easiest to access and work with and why?

-Pathways to inclusion, imposed by central government.

-Connectedness eg Library mayor availability and accessibility

What do you think are the 3 biggest issues facing people with disabilities in Upper Hutt?

-More accepted into work

-Less apathy/ more understanding

-Review of pedestrian crossings.

Final question: If you could change one thing in Upper Hutt for people with disabilities, what would it be? Please decide on one thing as a group and we will get you to report back to everyone in the room (in one or two sentences!).

-H2O , Library outstanding service plus some communities

-Quality of forums

-Improvements in slogan

Appendix 3: Community groups and attendees represented at the forum

Members of the public
Idea Services
Royal NZ Foundation of the Blind
Hutt Valley Disabled Resources
IHC
Asperger's Syndrome New Zealand
NZLD
Driving Miss Daisy
Work and Income
CCS Disability Action
Nurse Maude Hutt Valley Services
Citizen's Advice Bureau
Upper Hutt City Council Library
Hutt Valley DHB
Adaptive Technology Solutions Ltd
The Personal Advocacy Trust

