

IMAGE: SIGN OUTSIDE MOA CRESCENT KAUMĀTUA VILLAGE



“

KI TE KORE HE  
WHAKAKITENGA KA  
NGARO TE IWI.

WITHOUT FORESIGHT OR VISION  
THE PEOPLE WILL BE LOST.

KĪNGI TĀWHIAO

**Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village**

**Te Moemoeā: The Dream**

**Rangimahora Reddy, Mary Simpson, Yvonne Wilson, Sophie Nock  
and Kirsten Johnston**

*Ki te kore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi.*

*Without foresight or vision the people will be lost.*

*Kīngi Tāwhiao*

This Think Piece aims to advance knowledge and add to discussions in the area of culturally responsive, secure, affordable, and healthy housing for kaumātua. The paper tells the beginning story of Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village, Kirikiriroa Hamilton, which started in the early 2000s when two community organisations first shared their concerns about the plight of kaumātua wellbeing in relation to housing. These organisations were Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust. We take the position that in order to prepare for the future, we must first look back to learn from the past. The overarching question for the project is: What factors made Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village a success? For this first of three think pieces, we ask: *What could we learn from the stories of 'ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā' (visionaries) about the seeds of potential for kaumātua housing?* Therefore, this paper explores the recollections of ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā.

## **Background**

Since the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, kaumātua housing around traditional tribal communities has been a priority (e.g., Controller and Auditor-General, 2011). Yet, the urgent housing needs of Māori kaumātua (men and women aged 55-years-plus) prevail and many kaumātua continue to experience critical cultural, social, and wellbeing problems (Dyall, Kēpa, Teh, Mules, Moyes et al. 2014). In particular urban models of kaumātua housing of culturally responsive, secure, affordable, and healthy are much needed (Cram, 2016). Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village is one such housing model.

Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village was developed by Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa (and later its subsidiary Ngā Rau Tātangi) during 2012-2014. Kaumātua were actively engaged in the design and planning to ensure that kaumātua residents could ‘age-in-place’ and the needs of people with disabilities were addressed. The village is a mix of 14, fully insulated, one and two bedroom homes of high quality build, designed for kaumātua by kaumātua. Consistent with culturally responsive housing, the village offers shared common areas for village interaction, and enables kaumātua-supporting-kaumātua (e.g., residents growing fruit and vegetables). The 19 current village residents are aged 59-95-years with 15 identifying as Māori. Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust provides ongoing supervision, assistance, care, and support to the residents (see Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2014).

The “He Kāinga Pai Rawa: A Really Good Home” project explores the cultural, relational, and organisational factors that enabled Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village to move from *Te Kore* (the realm of potential), to *Te Po* (the realm of becoming), to *Te Ao Mārama* (the realm of being; Marsden, 1992). The project will produce three think pieces that address each of the three realms. This first think piece explores the world of *Te Kore*, *Te Moemoeā: The dream/vision* of the kaiwhatu moemoeā (dream weavers; visionaries) who first saw the need for kaumātua housing in Kirikiriroa-Hamilton. The second think piece tells the stories of becoming in the realm of *Te Po*: *Kia Tūtuki te Moemoeā: The road to making the dream/vision a reality*. The third think piece tells the stories of being in the realm *Te Ao Mārama*: *Kua ea te Moemoeā: Achievement of the dream/vision*: that

is, the lived experiences of kaumātua Mōa Crescent residents, their whānau and supporters.

Exploring the stories within and across the think pieces, will be used to illuminate “best practices” that may inspire others. Such practice includes actions and strategies, values, whanaungatanga (relationships), and moemoeā (dreams/visions) of those whose lives intersect with Mōa Crescent Kaumātua Village.

### **Our Approach**

Within a Māori worldview, the first ideas for kaumātua housing may be seen as being seeded in the realm of potential, Te Kore, where “only the seed of potential was established ... [with] no form or substance” (Marsden, 1992, p. 131). The seed that was to become Mōa Crescent Kaumātua Village, began with the swirling of Pūrākau o Te Ao Marama (stories of the lived world), pūrākau moemoeā (stories of dreams/vision), and the lived experiences of ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā in their work with kaumātua. For this paper, ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā are four central players in the creation of Mōa Crescent Kaumātua Village.

The focus on stories meant that Smith’s (2018) three element model of Kaupapa Māori Ako Knowledge Transfer provided a helpful methodological framework: Pūrākau (stories, story-telling); ako (learning and teaching); and whakamāramatanga (realising insights and understanding). First, pūrākau are fundamental to Māori oral traditions of legends that connect, nurture, and guide, as well as sustain Māori cultural knowledge (Lee, 2005). In this project, gathering the stories of lived experiences of ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā help to nurture and guide the Māori cultural, visionary, and practical knowledge needed to create culturally responsive, secure, affordable and healthy housing for kaumātua.

Second, ako refers to both learning and teaching and thereby focuses on the reciprocity within the learning-teaching relationship, where each party learns from and teaches the

other. In this project, we learn from those involved in establishing Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village, in order that others may also learn for the future.

Third, whakamāramatanga concerns the resulting “changes in hearts and minds - and the generation of new insights and fresh initiatives” (Smith, 2018, p. 4). In this project, the learnings from those involved in establishing Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village, are converted into accessible stories for sharing with others who have dreams of creating culturally responsive, secure, affordable, and healthy housing for kaumātua.

With the above in mind, we interviewed four champions, or ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā, of Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village; Ms Mere Balzer (CEO), Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa; Mr Tonga Kelly (Chair), and Ms Yvonne Wilson (Manager), Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust (also co-author), and Mr Darren Leith (Builder) who was involved in the early stages. We also reviewed documentation where it referred to the vision stage of the village. Finally we sought feedback from those whose stories we heard, and key stakeholders from Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust, including the four ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā, Trustees, and Expert Advisory Group on the first full draft of this paper.

### **Pūrākau o Te Ao Marama: Stories of the Lived World**

Woven throughout the three think pieces is the interconnectivity between moemoeā and Te Ao Mārama; that is the interconnectivity between dreams and the lived world, and the emerging pathways that bring dreams into reality. The lived worlds of Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust are shaped by both social and economic forces, and individual and collective commitment to address the needs of kaumātua in culturally responsive and practical ways. The stories of these lived worlds are told below.

The whakapapa of Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village has roots firstly, in Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and its subsidiary Ngā Rau Tātangi with the mission “Building Communities through Affordable Housing” with kaumātua residents being housed within caring and

sharing communities and supported with whānau ora wrap-around services. Secondly, roots are also in Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust's manaakitanga of Te Puna o Te Ora the site initiated by Mrs Oraihi Whatu and endorsed by Princess Te Puea in 1938 (Rauawaawa, n.d. A). The vision of Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust is: "Hei Manaaki Ngā Kaumātua" (to enhance the quality of life and well-being of kaumātua; Rauawaawa, n.d. B). Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust are sustained within Māori worldviews, and have a close working relationship that enables each to bring their respective views, people, skills, and resources to community housing projects such as Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village.

In the early 2000s Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa anticipated that housing would become a major issue for the people they were working with. At the same time, Rauawaawa was an emerging service provider, and had noticed increasing housing problems for kaumātua. Their on-the-ground workers were finding that availability of appropriate and secure housing for kaumātua was increasingly limited. Also, they identified that among the kaumātua seeking their services, home-ownership was unlikely. These on-the-ground experiences were the lived outcome of incremental seismic shifts across the social landscape of Aotearoa, New Zealand. These shifts with social and economic forces, in conjunction with land ownership models, legislative barriers (Kingi, 2012), and institutional racism (Cram, 2016) increasingly prevented Māori, and in particular kaumātua, from being able to access affordable, good quality housing (Cunningham et al. 2002; Flynn et al. 2010).

One such shift concerned the urban migration of Māori since the 1950s, which resulted in many kaumātua living away from the ancestral homes (e.g., Livesey, 2012; Williams, 2015) that they whakapapa to (i.e. rohe, marae, and kāinga). Increasingly, Māori were living in urban areas. For example from 1936 to 2013 the number of Māori in Hamilton grew from 1% (of 16,150) to 20% (of 141, 612) of city residents (Te Ara, 2015; Statistics New Zealand, 2013), with 6000 Māori aged 55-years-plus over living in the Waikato region in 2001 (Statistics New Zealand, 2001). In addition, while kaumātua may want to return to their ancestral lands, issues of isolation and dislocation from extended whānau

and their lived community experiences, lack of access to services, and limited transport create another set of problems (Cram, 2016).

A second shift concerned the decreasing rates of home ownership among Māori (Statistics NZ, 2016) and kaumātua specifically (Te Pūmanawa Hauora, 1997). While Māori aged 65-years-plus have higher rates of home ownership when compared to the overall Māori population, their rates of home ownership are far less than those for non-Māori (Statistics NZ, 2016a). Significantly, the gap between rates of home ownership for Māori aged 50-64 years and non-Māori is even wider (Kukutai, 2006; Statistics NZ, 2016a) because this younger group is even less likely to own their own home than older Māori.

Overall, since the 1950s, the gap between Māori and non-Māori home ownership has continued to widen (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2014). Between 1986 and 2013, for example, the percentage of Māori living in an owner-occupied dwelling fell across New Zealand. In addition, while the rate of home ownership for rural Māori increased between 1986 and 1991, it remained largely unchanged until early 2000s. In contrast, home ownership for urban Māori, dropped heavily during the same period, with smaller urban areas being more severely affected than main urban centres. Moreover, Māori home ownership has dropped at a time when Māori birth rates are increasing (Statistics NZ, 2016a). These downward rates of Māori and kaumātua home ownership put pressure on both kaumātua and whānau in terms of resources.

A third shift concerned the increasing rates of Māori who live in overcrowded, temporary, and poor housing (Controller and Auditor-General, 2011; Cram, 2016; Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2001; Statistics New Zealand, 2012). When compared to the rest of the population, Māori are over-represented in waiting lists for social housing and as tenants of social housing (Baker et al, 2016).

Intergenerational solutions to a lack of housing has seen the growth of urban kaumātua living with their children and grandchildren. The breakdown of traditional whānau



systems caused by colonisation (Cram & Pitama, 1998) combined with older Māori (65-years-plus) owning their home and whānau experiencing financial, social, and housing hardship (Cram & Pitama, 1998), results in kaumātua being susceptible to “unreasonable demands” (Cram, 2016) on their financial, social, and housing resources. The flow-on effect of poor housing is profound for Māori and reflected in poor health and wellbeing. In light of the rates of Māori living in poor housing, kaumātua are most likely to be disadvantaged and more negatively impacted in their potential to age positively than their non-Māori counterparts (Baker et al. 2016; Cram, 2016; Davey et al. 2004; Human Rights Commission, 2010; Ministry of Health, 1997; Te Ara, 2013). Solutions that address the needs of urban Māori kaumātua are urgently needed.

One constant across the literature on housing for kaumātua, is that no matter the location, kaumātua identify needs for community and marae involvement; maintaining cultural identity (Ministry of Social Policy, 2001); being connected; and living in a “compatible community” (Cram, 2016). This need for connectivity may suggest that the strength of familial relationships and social networks is more important than location. In this respect while papakāinga housing models address some issues, alternative models that use non-traditional lands and provide innovative and culturally responsive housing to emphasise social and cultural wellbeing, are needed to enable urban kaumātua to access compatible communities.

### **Pūrākau Moemoeā: Stories of Vision**

From the lived experiences of Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust, came moemoeā of ways to address the needs of kaumātua in culturally responsive and practical ways. Initially, these were ideas; the seeds of potential without form or substance. Listening to the stories from the four kaiwhatu moemoeā, revealed their visions for kaumātua, kaumātua housing, and how a shared vision was created. The stories also reveal the ways in which their visions and aspirations for kaumātua housing began to take shape in their actions, values and relationships.

## *Te Moemoeā: The Dream*

The vision for kaumātua housing integrated valuing kaumātua, their right to self-determination, manaakitanga, and community. As one kaiwhatu moemoeā said:

*The vision was born out of our actual mahi and seeing the changes in people lives and just knowing that if [kaumātua] have a good home, one that is warm and comfortable ... they would be looked after and they would look after each other and it would mean that they were safe and secure. (Balzer)*

These statements demonstrate the interconnectivity between the lived experiences and eventual vision of the kaiwhatu moemoeā, the valuing of kaumātua, and the dreams for wellbeing of kaumātua is clear. This interconnectivity is also reflected in another statement: That the vision “*wasn’t just about putting a roof over someone’s head, this was about honouring our kaumātua [who] had worked all their lives and how do we give back to them*” (Wilson).

The wairua (spirit) in the commitment to honouring kaumātua and their potential to contribute was evident in the ways ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā talked of including kaumātua from the outset. For example: “*Looking at a kaumātua build you need the kaumātua from the get go ... they know what works for them or what doesn’t*” (Balzer) and “*they had a little committee of them at the beginning... they got input right from the get go on practical aspects of the build*” (Kelly). These comments show that kaumātua, and their input, were seen as being crucial if the vision was to move from potential to become reality.

The broad vision was to “provide housing for our kaumātua” (Leith). The specific vision for the kaumātua housing, however, changed overtime in response to kaumātua identified and expressed needs.

Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa undertook research with kaumātua twice in four years, and they found that kaumātua aspirations for housing changed over that time. For instance, the first research found that kaumātua wanted bigger housing to enable them to have whānau stay, and yet four years later:

*The kōrero had changed and it changed because the changes in society, ‘our mokos come and they eat us out house and home, they just lie around they don’t help, they don’t contribute, they take our cards and spend our money.’ So it was really interesting, [kaumātua] wanted a space where they could meet and mingle; the family could come in and visit .... but they would go home at night. And, so we determined, that actually what we needed was villages. (Balzer)*

This change in kōrero of kaumātua echoes research about the impact of the breakdown of traditional whānau systems caused by colonisation (Cram & Pitama, 1998) with kaumātua being susceptible to “unreasonable demands” from whānau (Cram, 2016). However, the final statement in the above quote, “what we needed was villages” also speaks to the constants that have been identified over time: that kaumātua need maintenance of cultural identity, connectivity, and a “compatible community” (Cram, 2016; Ministry of Social Policy, 2001).

The original vision of kaumātua housing also changed in response to other factors. For instance, the initial response to the decline of home ownership amongst kaumātua was a vision centred on home ownership. Yet they found that kaumātua did not necessarily want to buy their homes (Balzer). However, even while the vision for home ownership dissipated, the vision for kaumātua housing maintained its emphasis on enhancing the cultural safety, health, and wellbeing of kaumātua (Balzer, Kelly, Leith, Wilson).

Creating a shared vision came about through several connected pathways. The vision was “initially ... a concept, an idea” (Wilson), and “while we were dreaming over here the Rauawaawa was dreaming over there” (Balzer). It took a conversation about mutual concerns to commence the journey from potential to “becoming”:

*The discussion that initially happened, was really about the concerns that we were having at the kaumātua level; seeing that they were being displaced. [Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa] heard our cry for help [and] already had housing on their radar but hadn’t done much about it at all, so ... we collaboratively got together and started to draw up a picture of what that might look like. (Wilson)*

## *Te Moemoeā: The Dream*

While Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust talked about their mutual vision, both groups recognised that resources and other people were needed to further bring the vision from potential to becoming.

Further conversations with potentially interested others harnessed support that helped bring the vision to the next stage. This support centred on people with resources, knowledge and skills who bought into the vision of kaumātua housing:

*We recognised the need for what they were doing; we saw the long term future in it... I saw people who otherwise would not get into housing, moving into houses and that was a buzz, I got a lot out of that. ... One of the main reasons that we took the project on was to see that from a social aspect. (Leith)*

Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust acknowledged the range of support in getting the vision “off the ground” as coming from people across multiple settings and organisations (more on this follows in *Kia Tūtuki te Moemoeā: The road to making the dream/vision a reality*). The hook for these supporters was the vision to “build for the safety and wellbeing of our old people” (Leith).

### **Whakawhanaungatanga: Seeds of Potential**

The primary seed of potential, the vision for kaumātua housing, was born of the work of Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust. The other seeds of potential were born of relationships and connections established and maintained elsewhere, prior to the kaumātua housing issue emerging. These included relationships developed in other work, community and whānau settings. For example:

*We started with just our little team ... and one or two trustees that came on. ... Someone knew Darren and ... was working with him with steel frames and so it was word of mouth mainly and we ... used the Rūnanga lawyers at the time. And Yvonne used a lot of her contacts to bring people in. So, we already had a lot of relationships ... were able to talk to the town planners. (Balzer)*

The visionaries knew that it was important to have people with the right skills and good reputation in terms of those skills (Balzer). Likewise, it was important for those with the said skills to recognise that Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua

Charitable Trust did not have the needed experience in construction and project management. This meant being prepared to engage in “a lot of liaising with the Rūnanga and outside builders and companies” and taking time with “an education process to get an understanding of how the whole thing was going to work and come together” (Leith).

It was existing and diverse relationships, and histories of working together that provided networks of potential for Te Rūnanga o Kirikiriroa and Rauawaawa Kaumātua Charitable Trust. The relationships enabled the vision to be shared with trusted others who had the necessary knowledge and skills to help Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village become a reality.

### **Whakamāramatanga**

This paper started with the question: *What could we learn from the stories of ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā (visionaries) about the seeds of potential for kaumātua housing?* The insights gained from their stories of Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village in Kirikiriroa Hamilton, may be illustrated by the whakatauākī from Kīngi Tāwhiao:

*Koirā a ia i kī ai: 'Māku anō e hanga tōku nei whare. Ko te tāhuhu he hīnau ko ngā poupou he māhoe, patatē. Me whakatupu ki te hua o te rengarenga, me whakapakari ki te hua o te kawariki.*

*I will build my own house. Its ridgepole and support posts will be of humble soft-wood. Those who live within it will be raised on the scatterings of rengarenga and strengthened on the fruit of the kawariki.*

This whakatauākī may be seen as speaking of housing that enables aspects of wellbeing (Turia, 2012). The first aspect is tino rangatiratanga (self-determination); the desire to create and live in one’s own house. The second aspect of wellbeing is being kept safe and warm by “scatterings of rengarenga.” Rengarenga may also be seen as the rich cultural and other bodies of knowledge spread across the motu that can be used to create culturally safe, secure, affordable, and healthy housing for kaumātua. The third aspect of wellbeing is seen in the phrase “strengthened on the fruit of the kawariki.”

Each of the above aspects of wellbeing was featured in the vision for Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village. In this light, we end with a whakatauākī from Kīngi Tāwhiao that

highlights the value of vision in guiding action: “Ki te kore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi.” “Without foresight or vision the people will be lost.”

What we learnt from the stories is that the seeds of potential for kaumātua housing are formed in the vision of those on the ground working in the field; in the connections and relationships of their communities and networks; and in the wairua of commitment to co-visioning with kaumātua, and honouring kaumātua as kaumātua.

The key idea drawn from this initial study, is that the visionaries' commitment to kaumātua meant Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village was envisioned *with* kaumātua, rather than *for* kaumātua. The contribution of kaumātua, to the emerging and developing vision of kaumātua housing was valued at the heart of vision. Ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā not only consulted kaumātua, they ensured kaumātua were part of the collaborative relationship.

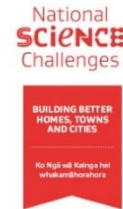
Ngā kaiwhatu moemoeā had a vision to develop new affordable kaumātua housing that would help meet current and future demand. Most critically, they envisioned a new model of working, a new model of urban community for kaumātua, and a new approach to developing housing that would meet increasing demand for culturally safe, affordable housing which put kaumātua at the centre.

### **Next Steps**

In the next part of the He Kāinga Pai Rawa study, we talk with those who helped the vision operationalised the vision; that is those who moved Moa Crescent Kaumātua Village from “vision” to “becoming”. The second think piece will focus on the stories of becoming in the realm of Te Po: *Kia Tūtuki te Moemoeā: The road to making the dream/vision a reality.*

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OF KAUPAPA MĀORI  
KNOWLEDGE TO SUPPORT  
SELF-DETERMINED  
SPACES FOR GENERATIONS**

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AS KĀINGA TAHI, KĀINGA RUA, WE WANT TO HELP MORE MĀORI INTO HOMES AND TO BECOME SELF-DETERMINING BY SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE VERY BEST BUILT ENVIRONMENT SOLUTIONS FOR THEM.



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