

# The Social and Community Benefits of Mayfield Swimming Pools



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### **Letter of Transmittal**

This is the final report on the health and social benefits that community swimming pools can have within local communities. The report emphasises the way which community facilities can facilitate social inclusion and the positive effects this can have in the Mayfield area. This report was conducted with the objective to be used as a documented resource which the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group can utilise for future endeavours.

This report concludes that the implementation of community consultation in the construction of community services is vital. Community consultation is imperative in the construction of community services as it assures that the facilities are adequately utilised by the residents in the local community. The report demonstrates the significant role that community facilities such as swimming pools can play within local communities. The research aims to exemplify the positive health and community benefits that can be attained when community facilities meet the needs of the residents who utilise the resource. Community designed facilities within socially disadvantaged locations have the capacity to relieve the negative social effects experienced by local residents, whilst reinforcing a sense of social cohesion among all members of the community.

I am indebted to the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group for their enduring assistance and access to all available resources and materials at their disposal. I would like to extend a particular thanks to Bill Robertson, the project supervisor who devoted a large proportion of his time and energy into assisting the successful completion of the research project.

Finally I would like to thank the University of Newcastle and once more the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group for allowing the research project to take place. Without both the university and the community group's approval and support this research project would never have been successfully completed.

## **Abstract**

The neighbourhood is an important site for social and cultural development. The research study investigates the significance of infrastructure such as a community swimming pool and the benefits this can have within the suburb of Mayfield. The report maps the socioeconomic trends of Mayfield as a locality and applies past research to evaluate the positive gains that community facilities such as swimming pools generate from a community perspective. Local recreational sites such as such community swimming pools have the capacity to promote positive health and social gains for local residents who utilise the facility. Recreational sites which enhance socially inclusive practices across the locality in turn promote social and cultural cohesion. Within the Newcastle City Council region there is a current management model in place that is utilised to manage local Newcastle swimming pools. However these management models are predominately associated with generating profit. As a result the current Pool Service Delivery Model fails to meet the individual and social needs of the wider community. The research project aims to demonstrate a new approach where the local government and the community can interact and communicate on issues affecting local residents. The research project highlights the need for local communities to be at the centre of all relevant decision making processes which affect their daily lives.

## **Table of Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Results</b>	<b>9</b>
Health and Social Benefits of Community Swimming Pools	<b>10</b>
Social Inclusion and Social Benefits	<b>11</b>
Community Management Models	<b>12</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>15</b>
Health and Social Benefits of Community Swimming Pools	<b>16</b>
Social Inclusion and Social Benefits	<b>16</b>
Community Management Models	<b>17</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>21</b>

## **Introduction**

The research study evaluates and analysis the significance of familiar landmarks and infrastructure such as a community swimming pool and the benefits this can have within the suburb of Mayfield. The project is intended to provide the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group with a comprehensive analysis of the key implications of operating a community facility.

The report draws on academic literature outlining the importance of community infrastructure which promotes inclusive practices in socially disadvantaged communities. The project aims to cover three primary subject areas.

- 1) To present an overall background of the suburb of Mayfield, outlining the significant health and social issues experienced by Mayfield residents.
- 2) Present information on the health and social benefits of community swimming pools and recreational activities. The project aims to demonstrate the relationship between government social inclusion policies and the health and social benefits of community facilities.
- 3) Identify and describe different examples of community management models.

Furthermore the project will go on to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of the different management models and how they in turn relate to managing a community swimming pool.

The Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group was formed by a group of local residence from the Mayfield area. The group officially formed August 2007 in response to the draft Pool Service Delivery Model published in July 2007. Using the Pool Service Delivery Model the Newcastle City Council put forward the proposal to close Mayfield swimming pool. The proposal to close Mayfield swimming pool by the Newcastle City Council was carried out with little community consultation.

The neighbourhood is an important site for social and cultural interaction. Establishing strong social ties are particularly important for individual's who do not participate in the paid labour force. Studies such as Forrest and Kearns (2001) and Wen et al. (2007) demonstrate the key role that neighbourhoods play in the daily lives and interactions of individual's who are confined to their local neighbourhood, in particular youth and elderly sectors of society.

Recreational sites such as community swimming pools promote positive social development for local youths. Studies conducted by Yang et al. (2004) in the United States of America presuppose that community swimming pools enhance positive social interaction among a diverse range of community members. Recreational sites that enhance socially inclusive practices can in turn promote social cohesion throughout the community.

Robert Putnam's (2000) study on social capital and criminal activity suggest that in neighbourhoods where friendship and acquaintanceship ties are established "and where people are active in local communities and clubs there are fewer muggings, assaults [and] burglaries" (Putnam: 2002: 314). Hence community infrastructure can have a central role in reducing the effects associated with social disadvantage.

Over recent years there has been similar campaign's to that which is currently occurring in Mayfield. The Govanhill Swimming Pool Campaign in Glasgow (Mooney and Fyfe: 2006) is an example of community resilience in opposition to government initiatives which have the potential to impact negatively upon the local residents. My project aims to demonstrate the benefits that can be achieved through increasing community consultations on issues that affect local communities. Working on Mooney and Fyfe (2006) paper, the project aims to demonstrate the positive contributions local communities can have in influencing the delivery of local community services

In the Newcastle area there is currently a Pool Service Delivery Model which has been established to facilitate the operation of local swimming pools. However local Mayfield residents feel that the current model is not sufficient in meeting the needs of the Mayfield community. Therefore a more holistic approach in delivering community services to the residents of Mayfield is required. The project aims to demonstrate how the successful incorporation of community consultation implemented by other governments, can be carried over into the current Pool Service Delivery Model of the Newcastle City Council.

## **Methodology**

The project specifically focused on Mayfield and the Mayfield swimming pool as a response to the proposed closure of the swimming facility by the Newcastle City Council in 2007. The study is limited to the Mayfield area, as positive and negative experiences of community infrastructure will vary between localities.

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 Census was utilised as a resource to illustrate the background demographics of the Mayfield area. The project used the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data as it was the most reliable data source available to demonstrate relevant socioeconomic trends. In addition to this, the report utilises Professor Tony Vinson's 2004 report "Community Adversity and Resilience: The Distribution of Social Disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the Mediating Role of Social Cohesion" as a supplementary document demonstrating the adverse socioeconomic trends of Mayfield.

The report uses a variety of literature sources to answer the remaining sections of the research. This research utilises information from professional and scientific journals, books and research articles, council websites and publications. However due to the localised scale of the research project, it can not make large scale generalisations past its applicability to the Mayfield area. The project can not make generalisations regarding the prerequisites of neighbourhoods other than Mayfield, predominately due to the diverse needs of individual communities.

The project used information already collected from the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group to demonstrate the wants of the local Mayfield community. Resources from the community group were preferred as they were the only resources available that proactively advocated for the needs of the Mayfield community. To reaffirm the positions published in resources by the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group I attend regular meetings held by the local community group. Members attending the Save Mayfield Swimming Pool Community Group's meetings represented a wide range of Mayfield community members, including local schools, community groups, forums and business owners. Throughout the meetings clear objectives and wants of the general Mayfield community were discussed at extensive lengths.

The research encountered many hurdles, in particular the limited information available regarding the convergent management models implemented in managing community swimming pools. The report failed to access management options on an Australian scale that utilised a purely community managed option for their facilities, therefore the report utilised examples employed from overseas.

In addition the project deliberately used a diverse range of community facilities where extensive community consultation had occurred. These diverse examples were utilised in an attempt to illustrate the variety of possibilities that can be accomplished on a local level. Case studies from different community facilities were used to demonstrate the benefits that community consultation can have within communities. So far the benefits that community consultation can have in facilities such as a community swimming pool has yet to be tested.

The research project is important as it aims to demonstrate a new approach where the local government and the community can interact and communicate on issues affecting local residents. Only residents who reside within the community truly know what the community needs. Therefore this research project aims to reinforce the need for local communities to be at the centre of all relevant decision making processes that affect their daily lives.

## **Results**

The Mayfield planning district is one of the oldest suburbs in the Newcastle City Council. Today Mayfield is home to a large diversity of people from many cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds (Newcastle City Council: 2008).

Figure 1

	Mayfield	Percentage of Mayfield	Australia	Percentage of Australia
Unemployment	439	10.9%	503,804	5.2%
Medium Individual Income (weekly)	\$362		\$466	
Medium Household Income (weekly)	\$676		\$1,027	
One Parent Families	563	26.1%	823,254	15.8%
State Housing	253	17.2%	306,697	14.9%

Australian Bureau of Statistic (2006)

Mayfield is a disadvantaged location. As supported in figure 1 Mayfield lacks significantly in areas such as unemployment, income, single parent families and public housing in comparison to the Australian national average. As demonstrated in the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics census data unemployment in Mayfield area is double the Australian national average (ABS: 2006). The stark comparison between both the individual and household incomes of Mayfield residence in comparison to Australia's national average presents the economic disadvantage that is experienced in Mayfield. Mayfield has become an attractive location for low – income residents. In 2001 51% of residents in Mayfield earned less then \$15, 500 per annum (Newcastle City Council: 2008). There may be many alternative reasons for Mayfield being an attractive location for low – income earners. However the lower costs in the private housing sector (Newcastle City Council: 2008) and high rates of public housing depicted in figure 1 could be a key determinate influencing the choice of residential location. Mayfield is a residential location which is in close proximity to public transportation such as train

stations and bus stops. Therefore Mayfield emerges as an attractive location as 24% of residents do not have access to private transportation such as a motor vehicle in comparison to 16.4% in the local Newcastle Area (Newcastle City Council: 2008).

### **Health and Social benefits of Community Swimming Pools**

The establishment of community swimming pools have been shown to produce positive effects on the health and well being of local residents. In remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory the construction of community swimming pools have improved the health of residents in local communities. With regular access to local pool facilities the Indigenous communities have effectively reduced infectious diseases, whilst additionally encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle for the local youths. Studies by the National Centre of Epidemiology and Population Health have established that community swimming pools can be an integral tool in preventing infectious diseases (Audera: 1999). The report concluded that swimming facilities in remote Indigenous communities effectively reduced infectious diseases as the facility enabled local youths to improve on their personal hygiene practices. The report additionally concluded that the establishment of community swimming pools had positive effects on the health of Indigenous youth as the site actively promoted regular exercise and a health lifestyle (Audera: 1999).

Cardiovascular disease is a primary contributor of premature death for Indigenous and non - Indigenous Australian's alike (Audera: 1999). Diet and exercise are key factors determining the probability of cardiovascular disease. Therefore recreational facilities which promote regular exercise such as swimming pools may assist in lowering the negative effects of an unhealthy lifestyle.

The neighbourhood plays an important role in the level of physical activity residents engage in. Wen et al. (2007) presupposes that key determinates of the neighbourhood either promote or prohibit the extent in which residents will engage in physical activity and regular exercise. Mayfield swimming pool is a key site for the residents of Mayfield, as it actively promotes regular physical activity in an area where there are few other recreational facilities available. By accessing a facility such as the swimming pool the residents of Mayfield have the opportunity to engage in physical activity across a wide range of age groups.

Studies such as Wen et al. (2007) demonstrate how social capital has a correlative effect on the levels of physical activity that residents within the community partake in. Within Wen et al. (2007) study social capital such as social relationships, support networks and community participation positively increase when there is access to local services that promote healthy physical activity. When services in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods are made available, the facility has the capacity to enhance the social capital evident within the location. As a direct result increased levels of physical activity have been shown to simultaneously increase within the locality (Wen et al.: 2007).

### **Social Inclusion and Social Benefits**

Community swimming pools have the ability to promote a vast quantity of social benefits regardless of an individual's cultural and socioeconomic background. As stated in Yang et al. (2004) swimming pools enable positive social benefits for individuals and the community as a whole. The Mayfield swimming pool is not only a site for social interaction; but also is a facility which may assist in establishing a more inclusive and accepting society. Mayfield swimming pool is a facility where the youth of Mayfield have the opportunity to come into contact with diverse groups of residents which they would not regularly come into contact with on a daily basis (Yang et al.: 2004). Although different community facilities can enable positive community participation; within Mayfield there are few other recreational alternatives that exist apart from the local swimming pool where all ages can participate.

Local communities should have the opportunity to assist in making decisions on issues that affect their everyday lives. The Govanhill swimming pool campaign in Scotland highlights the need for increased community consultation. The Govanhill swimming pool in Glasgow was embraced as an integral community facility, which enhanced many positive community assets (Mooney and Fyfe: 2006). The residents of Govanhill affirmed that the local community swimming pool was a key site in maintaining the physical and social well being of the community. Since the pool's closure the local community asserts that negative social and health issues have occurred as a result (Mooney and Fyfe: 2006). The Govanhill Swimming Pool campaign is a prime example of the positive health and social effects community swimming pools can have in disadvantaged communities. More

importantly however the Govanhill example demonstrates the complex social needs of individual communities that can only be understood by the community members themselves. Therefore any decisions which may impact upon the daily lives of the local community should be negotiated with the local residents.

### **Community Management Models**

In the Newcastle City Council there is a management model currently in place which is utilised to manage local Newcastle swimming pools. The Newcastle City Council's Pool Service Delivery Model provides scope for three management options for Newcastle swimming pools. These options include management by lease, contract management and direct council management (Strategic Leisure Group: 2007). A management by lease option enables the council to be primarily removed from the daily running of the pool. However the management of the facility must fundamentally reflect the management structure set out by council (Strategic Leisure Group: 2007). By incorporating a contract management approach the council retains the majority of responsibility, whilst hiring independent staff members to assist with the daily running of the facility (Strategic Leisure Group: 2007). Alternatively a direct council management strategy enables the council to exclusively oversee the entire management and operations of the community pool (Strategic Leisure Group: 2007). However these management models in place by the Newcastle City Council are predominately associated with generating profit. As a result the current Pool Service Delivery Model fails to meet the individual and social needs of the wider community.

Financial revenue should not be a prime indicator of the success of community designed facilities. There needs to be a holistic approach that evaluates the success of the facility based upon whether it fulfils the aims and needs of both the organisation and the local community. By shifting the focus from the desire to generate profit to a desire to meet community needs, the community is thus not regarded as mere consumers but rather as active citizens shaping their local services. This research feels that currently the Newcastle City Council utilises a purchaser/ provider model in implementing community services. However this model is not sufficient in understanding the complex relationships that local residents have with local community services and facilities. Implementing a

management model that is more inclusive of the needs of the local community, would value public input and participation as essential for the successful operation of community services (Brackertz and Russell: 2001).

Employing a holistic approach in the implementation of community services, the community facilities have the capacity to utilise positive community assets which enhance the services delivered to local residents. To date the World Bank has implemented community projects where the responsibility of development activities has predominately been handed over to the local communities. The World Bank implements community projects which hand over responsibility of choosing and implementing development activities to local communities. This type of initiative is known as community contracting. Community contracting has been implemented as a means for local communities to play key roles in planning, organising and contributing towards community projects (Silva: 2000). The World Bank provides an example of how active community participation can positively contribute to the social cohesion of the community as a whole. Community contracting can unite a local community enabling each member the opportunity to be involved in identifying local needs and implementing facilities intended for their use.

Facilitating active community participation emphasises the positive contribution communities can have in implementing community services. The community toilet block scheme implemented in India is a prime example of the successful operations of a community run facility. The community toilet block programme in India demonstrates the positive contributions the community can have in designing and implementing facilities intended for their use. A successful partnership has been established between local government, non-government organisations and community based organisations, which has resulted in the construction of over 400 toilet blocks between a period of 1999 – 2001. The construction of community toilet blocks has led to the improved sanitation of over half a million local residents (Burra et al.: 2003). When constructing the community toilet blocks the local communities are placed at the centre of the design and construction of their intended facility (Burra et al.: 2003). Although the community toilet blocks in India are a different community facility then a swimming pool; it demonstrates how community management of community facilities can successfully be implemented.

A purely community managed swimming pool would not be feasible as issues can arise around generating a sustainable revenue to maintain the facility. However the fundamental values of community run facilities can enable a new way to address current issues evident in managing community facilities.

A management strategy which tends to be more inclusive of community needs has been implemented by the Auckland City Council in New Zealand. The Auckland City Council proposes a management strategy that has been established to accommodate the needs of the local community (Auckland City Council: 2002). The Auckland City Council leases their local swimming pool to private stakeholders, whilst still requiring some form of council consultation (Auckland City Council: 2002). A primary objective for Auckland City Council is the desire for their local swimming facilities to be managed in a way that promotes an efficient and harmonious relationship with the local community. The Auckland City Council proposes that this can be achieved through acknowledging the benefits of community based programmes inside and outside the community pools (Auckland City Council: 2002). Community based programmes have the ability to assist the swimming pool operators in generating a sustainable revenue for the facility. To create a successful operation the pool operators hold regular meetings with all stakeholders; council, community and pool staff to rise and discuss any relevant issues (Auckland City Council: 2002). The values underlying the management strategy of the Auckland council provides an alterative model which could be adopted to provide a more inclusive way in addressing the management of community facilities.

## **Discussion**

The socioeconomic disadvantage of Mayfield can have a negative impact on the way in which local residents interact with one another. Robert Putnam (2000) suggests that in communities with low levels of social capital there often are higher levels of pugnacity. However when local residents partake in community facilities and organisations the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage tend to decrease (Putnam: 2000) and as result there is also a decline in levels of pugnacity. Access to a variety of recreational facilities for the youth of Mayfield is of pressing concern. The Newcastle City Council recognises that Mayfield has one of the lowest levels of open space available for youth in the Newcastle area (Newcastle City Council: 2008). Therefore Mayfield swimming pool is one of the few community facilities where both youth and adults can utilise and benefit from positive community interaction and intergenerational activity.

Community facilities such as swimming pools can have many positive effects on the social well being of a community. Community swimming pools act as a site for social interaction whilst additionally alleviating the stress associated with personal and residential disadvantage (Thomas et al.: 2003). Social and economic disadvantage is a reality for the residents of South Glasgow, Scotland. However Thomas et al. (2003) report assesses the social and health benefits which can be established by regularly accessing local swimming pools and amenities. The study signifies how swimming pools and facilities are utilised by disadvantaged groups as a means to relieve themselves of the everyday stress associated with socioeconomic disadvantage. The community swimming pools enabled both parents and youth to engage in positive socialisation and recreational activities, in a location where little public space is available (Thomas et al.: 2003).

Mayfield has similar socioeconomic characteristics as Glasgow. To date there has not been studies conducted on the benefits that Mayfield community swimming pool has on the local Mayfield community. However this report expects that the Mayfield swimming pool would have similar social and health benefits as presented in the Glasgow study.

### **Health and Social Benefits of Community Swimming Pools**

Socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods have a strong tendency to lack in areas of health related resources. Government support for sport and recreational facilities which promote social cohesion will enable all members of the community to engage in a healthy and active lifestyle (Wen et al.: 2007).

As demonstrated there can be substantial gains in the health of disadvantaged communities when given the opportunity to access community facilities such as swimming pools. In remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory the construction of community swimming pools has facilitated substantial benefits for the health of the local communities. In addition to this the community swimming pools can simultaneously enable the local youth to positively engage within and contribute to the community. The swimming pool provides the Indigenous youth with the opportunity to communicate with other residents within the community in a healthy atmosphere (Audera: 1999).

### **Social Inclusion and Social Benefits**

A community swimming pool has the capacity to positively impact upon the social fabric of society. For youth a swimming pool is a facility where they can build upon friendship ties thus providing a sense of belonging and place (Yang et al.: 2004). Community based swimming pools can establish the grounds for a more accepting community. Mayfield has a diverse range of ethnicities, these minority groups can be subjected to racial discrimination by the wider community. The Mayfield swimming pool in turn facilitates social interaction, providing the community the opportunity to interact with individuals and groups of people that they may not come into contact with on a daily basis (Yang et al.: 2004). As demonstrated by Yang et al. (2004) through establishing solid race relations across the general community the Mayfield swimming pool can build upon friendships and creates a sense of social cohesion for local residents.

An interesting trend encountered throughout the research project was the information published on health and social benefits of recreational activities and community facilities. A large proportion of research conducted is on the health and social benefits of youth and the positive effects that recreational facilities can have on their social development. As a

result there is not a large amount of information available on the social benefits that open space and recreational facilities enable for older members of society.

The Govanhill Swimming Pool Campaign demonstrates the necessity for local residents to be at the heart of all decision making processes, which affect their everyday lives. The considerable support generated by the residents of Mayfield supports the need for community consultation and the benefits this can generate. The considerable support generated by the residents of Mayfield strengthens the need for community consultation and the benefits this can generate. The resistance the residents of Mayfield enacted against the proposed closure of the community swimming pool represents the community's ability to prevail over socioeconomic disadvantage and reinforce the social cohesion of the wider community.

### **Community Management Models**

The Newcastle City Council currently has a Pool Service Delivery Model which provides three different management structures to run local Newcastle swimming pool, including Mayfield. However the current Pool Service Delivery Model is not adequate in addressing the wants and needs of the wider community. The Pool Service Delivery Model does not capture the complex relationships between community facilities and positive community benefits. Rather the current model adopts a purchaser/ provider model which places the general community in positions of consumers and not citizens. Alternatively the Pool Service Delivery Model should be focused on local residents as active citizens with the capacity to shape and restructure local service to meet the needs of their specific location. A new holistic model is required which evaluates both the services community facilities deliver and the positive personal and community benefits attained by local residence (Brackertz and Kenley: 2001).

Through integrating community contracting into community development projects the World Bank demonstrates the positive effects that community consultation has within the local community. Through increased community consultation the local community builds a sense of shared ownership for their community facilities (Silva: 2000). As a result this then increases community input and the utilisation of the facilities constructed for the local community.

The community – designed, built and managed toilet blocks in India provide an example of how community run facilities have successfully been implemented. The construction of toilet blocks in disadvantaged locations play an integral role in providing a sense of social cohesion within all sectors of the community. The community alongside NGO's have a central role in the design, construction and maintenance phases of the facility. The community toilet blocks have been successful due to the clear and concise structure of the project. Each stakeholder within the project is provided with a clear and set role which they were to execute throughout all phases of the construction (Burra et al.: 2003). This enables the project to be successful as there is an established sense of accountability across all stages of the project.

The toilet blocks as a community facility served several purposes. In a community with little other community facilities the toilet blocks are transformed into an established meeting place for local residents. Therefore community managed facility as demonstrated in India, can create a situation where strong social ties are established.

A purely community managed swimming pool would be difficult to maintain in comparison to the toilet block case in India. However this provides an opportunity to envisage a new way which local councils can manage community facilities. The toilet blocks in India can be applied to Mayfield swimming pool as it enhances the need for community consultation to decide on the services that community facilities should deliver. This is imperative as both the Mayfield swimming pool and the toilet blocks in India demonstrate the way community facilities deliver more than the initial services they are designed to deliver. Increased community consultation as presented in the toilet block case in India is indispensable when delivering community services. The case study demonstrates how community facilities can become a valuable tool for social interaction and facilitate a more cohesive society.

The Auckland City Council tends to integrate aspects of a more holistic approach in the management of their local swimming pools. The Auckland City Council's website portrays the establishments as having solid partnerships between the local government, pool operators and the community. As a result the local council portrays a facility which tends to be inclusive of the needs of all stakeholders. The Auckland City Council

encourages the pool operators to build partnerships with local sporting organisations, such as water polo groups (Auckland City Council: 2002).

However it is important to note that information attained on the Auckland City Council website is solely the aims of the local council. Whether or not these objectives have been attained so far has not been substantiated. There is no research or external data available which either proves or disproves the information inferred on the council website. Despite this however the objectives of the Auckland City Council on their management of community swimming facilities as interpreted by this research project tend to be more inclusive of the needs of the community.

In addition although the management of Auckland swimming pool is similar to Newcastle City Council's Pool Service Delivery Model, management by lease there is one fundamental difference that sets them apart. Auckland City Council represents their swimming pool facilities as integrating aspects of community consultation throughout their management process. The local Auckland Council actively recognise the positive contribution the community and community designed programmes can have for their established swimming complexes and in turn the community. Given that a new council has recently been elected in the Newcastle area, this may provide scope for increased council and community collaboration.

The information from the Auckland City Council website portrays the positive community effects that can be achieved when implementing a more holistic model in managing community swimming pools. Pool operators and the local government need to assess the needs of the local community and implement programs that will assist in producing positive individual and social outcomes. This possibly could be achieved through establishing increased government funding to encourage pool operators to implement free or discounted learn to swim programmes for disadvantaged sectors of the community (Auckland City Council: 2002). This would provide local youths with vital life skills through learning to swim, whilst simultaneously encouraging positive social interaction.

Whilst Mayfield is a disadvantaged location in terms of established measures which rate economic capital, the levels of community involvement in the campaign to save Mayfield swimming pool indicates the capacity of the Mayfield community to achieve positive

community outcomes. If community facilities were supported by the council despite whether they generated economic revenue or not, these facilities would have the ability to enhance social cohesion and social capital throughout the area. If supported by the local government community designed facilities have the ability to produce positive community benefits, thus lessening the negative effects of social disadvantage. This would enable a more positive representation of disadvantaged communities, focusing less on socioeconomic features and in turn placing an emphasise on the positive social ties established across the locality.

As an established trend socially disadvantaged communities do not have access to adequate sport and recreational facilities. Mayfield is no exception, as a locality it has limited space for its youth to partake in recreational activities. Therefore Mayfield swimming pool is an integral community resource, as it is one of a few community facilities available for local youth's to partake in healthy recreational activity.

By implementing a management model for Mayfield swimming pool which enables increased community participation, the Newcastle City Council would have a Pool Service Delivery Model which is more relevant to the needs of the Mayfield community. With increased community participation in designing, implementing and maintaining facilities designed for the local community, this can positively enhance community ties across all sectors of society.

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