

# Motion to Approve Statement of Communal Well-Being

August 26, 2024

## Presented by Calla Barnett, Acting Chair of Action Sandy Hill and Chair of the Community and Social Services Committee

PREAMBLE: On January 29, 2024, the Action Sandy Hill (ASH) Board of Directors approved “Community Wellness” as a priority for the Community and Social Services Committee (CSSC) and director the Committee Chair to develop a position statement. The ASH Board discussed the fundamental importance of “Community Wellness” to the other priorities. CSSC members prioritized a position on “Community Wellness” and undertook research to develop a definition and a position statement to propose to the ASH Board. By community, CSSC intends to communicate the inclusion of all those who live, work, stay and play in Sandy Hill. By wellness, CSSC intends to communicate that those who live, work, stay and play are physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy and that physical, mental and emotional health are continually being improved in Sandy Hill.

With those understandings in mind, the research uncovered that the terminology “Community Wellness” did not convey those meanings. We look to the similar, but more accurate “Communal Well-Being” as the foundational element for the priorities of the CSSC.

### Community or Communal?

Historically, the word *Community* (*n*) has been used obliquely and to exclude residents in Sandy Hill. The are two definitions of Community in the Oxford Dictionary. The first is most applicable to this context “A body of people or things viewed collectively.”<sup>1</sup> However, there are 8 ways in which this can be applied and defined with that definition, and it breaks down even further. While definitions 1.5.a, 1.5.b, and 1.6 (available in [Appendix A](#)) could be applied concurrently to ensure that we are referring to everyone inclusively, the combination of historical exclusion and definitional complexity pushed us to look for a more appropriate term.

*Communal* (*adj*) is defined broadly and is inclusive. In this context, we adopt the Oxford definition “Participated in or shared by the whole community or by members of a group; owned in common; collective.”<sup>2</sup> It is all of us together recognizing each other’s right to belong. As a representation of a neighbourhood, of a place where we live together, this approach is most fitting. It is our location that connects us and our other identities, realities, lived experiences, contribute to the dynamics of that neighbourhood and should be recognized in the context of this location.

### Wellness or Well-being?

---

<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “community (n.), sense 1,” June 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4399690008>.

<sup>2</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “communal (adj.), sense 3,” July 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4044658023>.

*Wellness (n)* typically refers to a state of being in good health (physical, emotional, spiritual, etc.).<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the commodification of wellness – wellness programs, wellness centres, etc. – makes sound like more of a buzz word than an impactful term.

*Well-being (n)* on the other hand refers to “the state of being healthy, happy, or prosperous; physical, psychological, or moral welfare”<sup>4</sup> when used in the context of a person or a community. It seems appropriate, then, to adopt the term well-being in place of wellness to highlight the collective nature of our circumstances in Sandy Hill.

### **Recommendation**

The CSSC recommends that the ASH Board of Directors adopt Communal Well-Being as a priority in place of Community Wellness.

### **Is it really a position?**

The final question we broached on this matter was whether Communal Well-Being required an advocacy position statement or whether it was simply a statement of acknowledgement. A vision for our neighbourhood. Owing to the conversation at the Board meeting on January 29, 2024, about this priority as foundational to all of the priorities, the CSSC realized that this overall statement would be necessary to move forward the other priorities that were identified.

### **Recommendation**

The CSSC recommends that the ASH Board of Directors adopt a vision statement of communal well-being to provide a foundation, and ultimate goal for the work of the CSSC.

---

<sup>3</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “wellness (n.), sense 1,” July 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3365512629>.

<sup>4</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “well-being (n.), sense 1,” July 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/9040087470>.

## **Motion to Approve Statement of Communal Well-Being**

**August 26, 2024**

**Presented by Calla Barnett, Acting Chair of Action Sandy Hill and Chair of the  
Community and Social Services Committee**

### **Motion**

WHEREAS the CSSC has researched and recommended the change from Community Wellness to Communal Well-Being as a priority; and

WHEREAS Communal Well-Being is foundational to the priorities of the CSSC and provides a common goal that links all of the priorities.

Therefore, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Action Sandy Hill replace Community Wellness with Communal Well-Being as a priority for the CSSC.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Action Sandy Hill accept the following statement of commitment to Communal Well-Being to guide the work of that Committee in lieu of a position statement:

Action Sandy Hill is committed to the communal well-being of all those who live, stay, work and play in Sandy Hill. This commitment guides the work of the Community and Social Services Committee, the research and the advocacy that they undertake is to foster the well-being of all of us. Communal Well-Being in Sandy Hill means that each individual who lives, works, stays and plays in the neighbourhood is a member of its commons and has equal rights within those commons, but also a responsibility to the commons and the other individuals therein. It is in that balance of rights and responsibilities that Communal Well-being can thrive.

## Appendix A: Definitions

### **Applicable Definitions of Community**

1.5.a Originally: the adherents of a religion considered in their entirety. Later also more generally: a group of people distinguished by shared circumstances of nationality, race, religion, sexuality, etc.; esp. such a group living within a larger society from which it is distinct<sup>1</sup>

1.5.b A group of people who share the same interests, pursuits, or occupation, esp. when distinct from those of the society in which they live.<sup>2</sup>

1.6 With definite article. The civic body to which all belong; the public; society.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “community (n.), sense I.5.a,” June 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/4399690008>.

<sup>2</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “community (n.), sense I.5.b,” June 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/8919033459>.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. “community (n.), sense I.6,” June 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1142243115>.