

# COMMUNITY HEALTH & ARCHITECTURE ASSESSMENT™

**A Reflective Tool for Understanding How Communities Function, Protect People and Flourish**

**Sharon Mackenzie**  
**Spirit Led Counselling**

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## Before You Begin

Every community has an architecture.

Some of it is visible.

There are leaders, committees, boards, policies, procedures, programmes, rosters, budgets, reporting structures and physical spaces.

But another architecture exists underneath these things.

It is formed through relationships, communication patterns, friendship networks, informal influence, expectations, traditions, shared stories, unwritten rules and the thousands of small interactions through which people learn:

**This is how things work here.**

That architecture matters.

A community can have excellent policies and poor relational health. It can also have wonderful relationships while relying upon fragile systems that work only because a few extraordinarily capable people continually hold everything together.

A charismatic leader can make a structurally weak organisation appear strong.

A committed volunteer can quietly compensate for a dysfunctional process.

A close leadership team can appear wonderfully united while inadvertently creating an inner circle that makes independent accountability difficult.

A successful event can conceal exhausted people.

A friendly culture can coexist with poor procedural fairness.

And an organisation can look healthy during ordinary seasons while responding very differently when something goes wrong.

This assessment is designed to help us look beneath appearances.

It asks not simply:

**Does this community look successful?**

but:

**How does this community actually work?**

And ultimately:

**What are we building together?**

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## What This Assessment Examines

The Community Health & Architecture Assessment™ looks at both sides of community health.

The first is **protection**.

Does the architecture reduce the likelihood that people will be harmed, silenced, exploited, overlooked or treated unfairly?

The second is **flourishing**.

Does the architecture create conditions in which people can belong, participate, grow, contribute, rest, disagree, create and remain fully themselves?

A healthy community needs both.

Safeguarding without flourishing can create a technically compliant but lifeless organisation.

Flourishing without safeguarding can create a warm and exciting community whose weaknesses become painfully visible when something goes wrong.

Healthy architecture holds both.

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# This Is Not a Test of Perfection

Healthy communities make mistakes.

Leaders communicate poorly.

Policies become outdated.

People misunderstand one another.

Programmes fail.

Volunteers become tired.

Decisions sometimes need to be reconsidered.

Conflict occurs.

The presence of a problem does not automatically indicate an unhealthy community.

Often the more revealing question is:

## **What happens next?**

Can the system notice?

Can someone speak?

Can leadership listen?

Can responsibility be identified?

Can the organisation correct course?

Can relationships be repaired?

Can the system learn?

Healthy communities have **movement** in them.

They are capable of recognising when something is not working and responding without needing to protect an image of themselves as flawless.

# How to Use This Assessment

Work through each domain slowly.

For each statement, consider what you have actually observed rather than what the organisation intends to happen.

You may use:

**Strongly Evident** — consistently demonstrated in practice.

**Generally Evident** — usually present, although improvement may be possible.

**Inconsistent** — depends upon the situation or people involved.

**Rarely Evident** — generally absent or unreliable.

**Unknown** — insufficient information to assess.

Do not become overly concerned with individual answers.

Look for **patterns, clusters and contradictions**.

Pay particular attention to what happens:

- repeatedly;
- when something goes wrong;
- when people disagree;
- when resources become stretched;
- when someone important is challenged;
- when the people involved have unequal power;
- and when following good process becomes inconvenient.

Culture often becomes most visible under pressure.

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## PART ONE

### PURPOSE & IDENTITY

#### 1. Purpose & Community Identity

Healthy communities understand why they exist.

Purpose provides orientation. It helps communities decide what to begin, what to continue and, importantly, what to stop.

Consider:

- Is the purpose of the community clear?
- Can ordinary members explain why the community exists?
- Do activities meaningfully connect with that purpose?
- Is there a distinction between core purpose and tradition?
- Can programmes end when they no longer serve the purpose?
- Does the organisation periodically reconsider what it is doing?
- Are new ideas considered on their merit?
- Is success measured by more than attendance, growth, income or activity?
- Are people treated as part of the purpose rather than resources for achieving it?
- Does the stated mission resemble the community people actually experience?

### **Architecture Question**

**What appears to matter most here in practice?**

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## **PART TWO**

# **STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE**

## **2. Governance & Structural Clarity**

Healthy communities make responsibility visible.

Consider:

- Are governance structures clearly defined?
- Do people understand who holds authority?
- Is it clear who can make which decisions?
- Are governance and operational responsibilities appropriately distinguished?
- Are significant decisions appropriately recorded?
- Are governance responsibilities understood by those holding them?
- Is there meaningful diversity of perspective and experience?
- Are conflicts of interest identified and managed?
- Are appointments and leadership pathways appropriately transparent?
- Can governing bodies challenge operational leadership?
- Does accountability extend beyond friendship networks?
- Is independent advice available when internal governance becomes conflicted?
- Can the structure continue functioning when a strong leader is absent?

## Architecture Question

**If something significant went wrong tomorrow, would everyone know who was responsible for responding?**

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## 3. Operational Clarity, Policies & Procedures

Policies and procedures are not simply administrative documents.

They are part of the architecture through which a community governs itself.

Clear processes protect consistency, preserve organisational knowledge and place appropriate boundaries around individual authority.

Consider:

- Are there clear policies and procedures for key areas of responsibility?
- Are they easily accessible to the people who need them?
- Can people find them without needing to ask a particular leader?
- Are they written in understandable language?
- Are they current?
- Are review dates clear?
- Is version control maintained?
- Are people trained in policies relevant to their roles?
- Are policies actually followed?
- Are policies applied consistently regardless of who is involved?
- Are leaders subject to the same policies as everyone else?
- Is there clarity about what happens when a policy does not fit an unusual situation?
- Are departures from normal procedure appropriately authorised and recorded?
- Are policies reviewed when experience reveals genuine weaknesses?

## Architecture Question

**Are our policies documents we possess, or part of the way we actually govern ourselves?**

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## 4. Everyday Procedures & Playbooks

Not every situation requires a large policy.

Sometimes people simply need to know:

**What do I do now?**

Healthy organisations translate principles into practical guidance.

Consider:

- Are there procedural guidelines or playbooks for common situations?
- Do people know what to do when something ordinary but important happens?
- Are there clear procedures for complaints?
- Incidents?
- Conflict?
- Behavioural concerns?
- Volunteer issues?
- Communication problems?
- Emergencies?
- Absences?
- Role handovers?
- Are escalation points clear?
- Do people know when they should stop handling something themselves and seek assistance?
- Do guidelines identify who is responsible?
- Is it clear what needs to be documented?
- Is it clear who needs to be informed?
- Are procedures simple enough to actually use?
- Could a new staff member or volunteer reasonably determine what to do?

### **Architecture Question**

**Does someone need to know the right person in order to know what to do?**

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## **5. Organisational Memory & Continuity**

Important knowledge should belong to the organisation rather than living primarily inside particular people's heads.

Consider:

- Are important processes documented?
- Are handovers expected?
- Is induction adequate?
- Are records stored appropriately?
- Can another person locate important information?
- Are passwords, access and organisational accounts appropriately managed?
- Is historical knowledge preserved?
- Are recurring activities documented?
- Are important external relationships recorded?
- Can another appropriately skilled person step into a role?
- Is succession planning considered?

- Does the organisation repeatedly have to relearn the same information when people leave?

### **Architecture Question**

**If the person who “knows how everything works” disappeared tomorrow, could the organisation still function?**

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## **PART THREE**

# **LEADERSHIP & POWER**

### **6. Leadership Culture**

Leadership shapes what becomes normal.

Consider:

- Are leaders approachable?
- Are leaders teachable?
- Can leaders acknowledge mistakes?
- Are questions welcomed?
- Can leaders be respectfully challenged?
- Is disagreement distinguished from disloyalty?
- Do leaders seek perspectives beyond people who already agree with them?
- Is authority exercised proportionately?
- Are leaders conscious of the power attached to their role?
- Can concerns about leaders be raised safely?
- Are leaders accountable to people sufficiently independent to challenge them?
- Do leaders model expected behaviour?
- Do leaders develop other capable people?
- Can leadership responsibility be shared?

### **Architecture Question**

**What happens when someone respectfully challenges a respected leader?**

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## **7. Power & Informal Influence**

Every community contains power.

Some comes through position.

Some comes through relationships, history, money, expertise, charisma, popularity, information or proximity to leadership.

Consider:

- Who holds formal authority?
- Who holds informal influence?
- Are these the same people?
- Do long-standing relationships significantly influence decisions?
- Are there obvious inner circles?
- Do some people have greater access to decision-makers?
- Can someone without social influence receive a fair hearing?
- Does friendship ever outweigh accountability?
- Are family networks concentrated within leadership?
- Can influential people be challenged?
- Does expertise become permission to dominate?
- Are charismatic personalities allowed disproportionate influence?
- Are quieter voices heard?
- Is information distributed sufficiently for meaningful participation?

### Architecture Question

**Who would have the easiest path to being believed here — and who would have the hardest?**

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## 8. Structural Constraints on Leadership

Healthy architecture does not assume that every leader will always exercise power wisely.

It creates appropriate boundaries around authority.

Policies, governance, delegated authority, reporting requirements, review mechanisms and accountability structures can all reduce dependence upon the personality of the person currently holding office.

This matters because even sincere leaders can become overly confident in their own judgement.

Without structural boundaries, leadership can gradually move from:

**“This is how we have agreed to operate.”**

to:

**“This is what I believe is best.”**

Consider:

- What decisions can a leader make alone?
- What requires consultation?
- What requires formal approval?
- Can a leader simply override normal procedure?
- Are exceptions documented?
- Can governance meaningfully challenge leadership?
- Are financial delegations clear?
- Are conflicts of interest independently managed?
- Are complaints about leaders handled independently where appropriate?
- Does the organisation depend excessively upon trusting someone's character?
- Would existing structures constrain a controlling or ego-driven leader?
- Could one leader gradually reshape the organisation around their own preferences without meaningful challenge?
- Does culture support accountability even when the leader is popular or successful?

### **The Leadership Constraint Test**

Ask:

**What is a leader here actually prevented from doing?**

Not because everyone believes they are a good person.

Not because people trust them.

Not because they probably wouldn't misuse their authority.

But because the architecture itself places appropriate boundaries around their power.

Good architecture should help ordinary people lead well, good leaders remain accountable and potentially harmful leadership behaviour encounter meaningful constraints.

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## **9. Saviour Dependency**

A highly capable person can strengthen a community.

They can also unintentionally weaken its architecture if the system gradually becomes dependent upon them.

Consider:

- Does one person repeatedly rescue difficult situations?

- Does one person hold disproportionate organisational knowledge?
- Are normal processes bypassed because someone “knows what to do”?
- Is one person considered indispensable?
- Does leadership capability exist beyond them?
- Do others become less confident because one person routinely takes over?
- Is responsibility distributed?
- Is knowledge distributed?
- Are other people intentionally developed?
- Could the organisation continue successfully without its strongest personality?

### **The Saviour Dependency Test**

#### **Does this organisation need a particular person to rescue it?**

A community can look extraordinarily effective while becoming structurally weaker because one highly capable person continually compensates for its weaknesses.

Healthy architecture distributes knowledge, authority, responsibility and capability.

The goal is not to build a community that cannot function without its strongest leader.

It is to build one that can continue functioning well after that leader has gone.

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## **PART FOUR**

# **HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS**

### **10. Decision-Making**

Consider:

- Do people understand how significant decisions are made?
- Are appropriate people consulted?
- Are affected people given meaningful input where appropriate?
- Is consultation genuine?
- Are decisions made at the appropriate level?
- Are significant decisions communicated clearly?
- Is reasoning explained?
- Can decisions be reconsidered when new information emerges?
- Can dissent be respectfully expressed?
- Are urgent decisions reviewed afterwards?
- Has decision-making become concentrated?
- Does efficiency become an excuse for excluding appropriate voices?

## Architecture Question

How does this community decide who gets a voice?

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# 11. Communication & Information Flow

Consider:

- Are important messages communicated directly?
- Are people spoken to rather than primarily spoken about?
- Are expectations clear?
- Are changes communicated promptly?
- Does information reach those who need it?
- Are rumours corrected?
- Is triangulation common?
- Is confidentiality handled appropriately?
- Is confidentiality distinguished from secrecy?
- Can people ask for clarification?
- Do leaders communicate difficult information as well as positive information?
- Do informal channels replace proper communication?
- Is information accessible to people outside established social networks?
- Are misunderstandings addressed?
- Does silence become a way of avoiding difficult issues?

## Architecture Question

When something uncomfortable needs to be said, how does information move?

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# 12. Role Clarity & Boundaries

Consider:

- Do people understand their role?
- Do they understand what falls outside it?
- Are role descriptions available?
- Does responsibility come with appropriate authority?
- Are people held responsible for things they cannot control?
- Are professional, leadership, pastoral, volunteer and friendship roles appropriately distinguished?
- Can someone leave a role cleanly?
- Are boundaries respected?
- Is confidentiality clear?
- Are volunteers asked to perform tasks beyond their competence?
- Is appropriate support available?

## **Architecture Question**

**Where does responsibility become blurry?**

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# **PART FIVE**

## **PEOPLE & CULTURE**

### **13. Psychological & Relational Safety**

Consider:

- Can people ask questions?
- Admit mistakes?
- Say, "I don't know"?
- Offer another perspective?
- Disagree?
- Say no?
- Change their minds?
- Raise concerns?
- Express difficult emotions?
- Identify problems?
- Is there pressure to maintain the appearance that everything is fine?
- Are concerns explored rather than automatically treated as attitude problems?
- Is discomfort distinguished from harm?
- Are vulnerable people treated carefully?

## **Architecture Question**

**What would someone risk socially by telling an uncomfortable truth here?**

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### **14. Belonging & Inclusion**

Consider:

- Are newcomers genuinely welcomed?
- Is there a pathway into belonging?
- Can people retain individuality?
- Are different personalities valued?
- Are quieter people included?
- Can diverse perspectives meaningfully influence community life?
- Do particular social groups dominate?

- Can people belong without conforming to every cultural preference?
- Are people valued beyond their usefulness?
- Do relationships survive when someone leaves a role?
- Are people cared for when they cannot contribute?
- Can people belong through difficult seasons?

### **Architecture Question**

**What does someone have to become in order to belong here?**

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## **15. Community Life & Social Fabric**

Consider:

- Are there natural opportunities for connection?
- Do people know one another beyond formal activities?
- Are newcomers helped into relationships?
- Do events strengthen genuine community?
- Are different ages and personalities considered?
- Is informal conversation valued?
- Are celebrations meaningful?
- Are losses acknowledged?
- Are significant life events noticed?
- Is hospitality shared?
- Is creativity welcomed?
- Does the community create shared memories?
- Is there joy?

### **Architecture Question**

**What makes people want to return when they are not required to be here?**

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## **PART SIX**

## **WORK, PARTICIPATION & CAPACITY**

### **16. Volunteer & Workload Sustainability**

Consider:

- Is workload distributed realistically?
- Are the same capable people repeatedly relied upon?

- Can volunteers say no?
- Are roles clear?
- Are expectations realistic?
- Are vacancies recognised as capacity problems rather than simply redistributed?
- Can people take breaks?
- Can someone leave a role without relational consequences?
- Are responsibilities reviewed when programmes expand?
- Are new initiatives matched with resources?
- Is invisible labour recognised?
- Can activities stop when capacity is insufficient?
- Are healthy boundaries valued?

### **Architecture Question**

**Is this community sustainable, or are capable people quietly compensating for structural gaps?**

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## **17. Participation, Contribution & Agency**

Consider:

- Can people contribute ideas?
- Are gifts noticed?
- Are emerging leaders developed?
- Can people initiate appropriate projects?
- Are contributions welcomed outside established groups?
- Are people given meaningful responsibility?
- Is mentoring available?
- Can younger or newer members influence the future?
- Is succession intentionally developed?
- Are people trusted appropriately?
- Is creativity encouraged?
- Can contribution change through different seasons of life?

### **Architecture Question**

**Does this community develop people, or mainly use people who are already capable?**

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## **18. Resources, Capacity & Stewardship**

Consider:

- Does the organisation understand its actual capacity?
- Are finances aligned with priorities?

- Are resources distributed appropriately?
- Are facilities and systems maintained?
- Are volunteers properly resourced?
- Are administrative systems adequate?
- Does the organisation continually add without removing?
- Is capacity considered before new initiatives begin?
- Are hidden costs recognised?
- Is financial transparency appropriate?
- Are major commitments sustainable?
- Are resources invested in people as well as programmes?
- Does the organisation periodically ask what it should stop doing?

### **Architecture Question**

**Is activity designed around actual capacity, or are people continually expected to stretch?**

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## **PART SEVEN**

## **WHEN THINGS GO WRONG**

### **19. Conflict & Difference**

Consider:

- Are disagreements addressed?
- Are people encouraged to speak directly where appropriate?
- Are facts distinguished from assumptions?
- Can each person explain their perspective?
- Is mediation available?
- Are conflicts of interest recognised?
- Can leaders remain appropriately independent when friends are involved?
- Is disagreement personalised?
- Are people pressured toward premature reconciliation?
- Is peacekeeping prioritised over truthful resolution?
- Can relationships survive disagreement?
- Is unity distinguished from uniformity?
- Are recurring conflicts examined for patterns?

### **Architecture Question**

**Does this community know how to disagree without turning people into enemies?**

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## 20. Procedural Fairness

Consider:

- Would a person have a genuine opportunity to tell their story?
- Are people informed about significant concerns involving them?
- Are decisions based on appropriate information?
- Are assumptions tested?
- Are conflicts of interest managed?
- Is privacy protected?
- Are processes consistent?
- Would the same process apply to an influential person and someone with little influence?
- Are all parties treated with dignity?
- Are conclusions appropriately communicated?
- Are necessary records maintained?
- Can serious decisions be reviewed?
- Is there an escalation pathway when usual processes become compromised?

### Architecture Question

**Would I trust this process if I were the least powerful person involved?**

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## 21. Safeguarding & Vulnerability

Consider:

- Are safeguarding responsibilities understood?
- Are policies current and accessible?
- Are relevant people screened and trained?
- Are concerns responded to promptly?
- Are reporting pathways clear?
- Are vulnerable people protected while matters are examined?
- Are external authorities involved when required?
- Is specialist advice sought?
- Is confidentiality handled appropriately?
- Are people protected from retaliation?
- Does pastoral or informal care ever replace necessary professional intervention?
- Does reputation influence safeguarding decisions?
- Are incidents reviewed for systemic learning?
- Are patterns identified across apparently separate events?

### Architecture Question

**When someone becomes vulnerable here, what happens next?**

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## 22. Care, Dignity & Human Value

Consider:

- Are people treated respectfully during disagreement?
- Does care continue when someone challenges leadership?
- Are distressed people listened to?
- Are reasonable needs accommodated?
- Are absent people spoken about with dignity?
- Are departing people treated respectfully?
- Does someone's value change when their productivity changes?
- Are people given room to recover?
- Is dignity protected through difficult processes?
- Does the organisation remember the person behind the process?

### Architecture Question

**How are people treated when they are no longer easy, useful or convenient?**

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## 23. Repair, Accountability & Learning

Consider:

- Can leaders acknowledge harm?
- Can the organisation apologise?
- Are apologies specific?
- Is responsibility placed appropriately?
- Is practical repair attempted?
- Are failed processes reviewed?
- Are affected people heard?
- Is mediation considered where appropriate?
- Is relational repair considered as well as organisational response?
- Are lessons documented?
- Do structures change after failure?
- Is forgiveness distinguished from absence of accountability?
- Can trust rebuild gradually?
- Are repeated failures recognised as patterns?

### Architecture Question

**When this community discovers it has not stewarded someone well, what does it do next?**

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## PART EIGHT

### RESILIENCE & FLOURISHING

#### 24. Change, Adaptability & Resilience

Consider:

- Can the community respond to new information?
- Are outdated practices reviewed?
- Can leaders change direction?
- Does the organisation learn?
- Are emerging risks recognised?
- Is succession planned?
- Can the community survive leadership transition?
- Is institutional memory preserved?
- Are changes communicated well?
- Is grief around change acknowledged?
- Are people supported through transition?
- Can traditions evolve?
- Is there sufficient redundancy?
- Can programmes stop when circumstances change?

#### Architecture Question

**What would happen if three key people left tomorrow?**

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#### 25. Flourishing

Safeguarding asks whether people are protected from harm.

Community architecture asks something more.

#### Can people flourish here?

Consider:

- Is there genuine connection?
- Is joy present?
- Are people encouraged to grow?
- Are gifts developed?
- Is creativity welcomed?
- Can people become more fully themselves?

- Does participation increase agency rather than dependency?
- Do relationships extend beyond organisational usefulness?
- Are people encouraged to live healthy lives beyond the organisation?
- Does the community contribute positively beyond itself?
- Are generosity and mutual support visible?
- Is difference enriching?
- Can people rest?
- Does participation generally strengthen rather than deplete people?
- Would I encourage someone I love to become part of this community?

### **Architecture Question**

**What kind of human beings does this community help people become?**

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## **THE PRESSURE TEST**

Ordinary seasons can hide structural weaknesses.

Imagine:

A respected leader is challenged.

Money becomes tight.

A safeguarding concern is raised.

A significant volunteer resigns.

Two leaders disagree.

An unpopular person raises a legitimate concern.

A programme needs to end.

Someone says no.

A mistake becomes public.

Leadership changes.

Attendance falls.

Someone with little influence needs protection.

The easiest option would protect the organisation's reputation rather than pursue truth.

Now ask:

**What happens to the architecture?**

Does it hold?

Do agreed processes continue?

Does communication remain direct?

Does dignity remain protected?

Does governance remain independent?

Does leadership remain accountable?

Or do normal processes begin disappearing because the situation has become difficult?

**Pressure does not necessarily create organisational culture.**

**It often reveals it.**

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## THE LEADERSHIP TEST

Imagine that tomorrow the organisation appoints a leader who is extraordinarily charismatic, ambitious, energetic and convinced that they know what the community needs.

They are popular.

They achieve things.

People trust them.

They also have a strong ego and dislike being challenged.

Now ask:

**Would the architecture contain them?**

Would governance remain independent?

Would policy still matter?

Would financial delegations hold?

Would complaints still follow appropriate pathways?

Would other leaders challenge them?

Would people still be able to say no?

Would significant decisions still require appropriate approval?

Or would the organisation slowly begin reorganising itself around one person's personality?

Healthy architecture does not depend upon always finding perfect leaders.

**It makes good leadership easier and harmful leadership harder.**

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## THE FLOURISHING TEST

Imagine someone joining this community today.

Five years from now, are they:

more confident or less confident?

more connected or more dependent?

more capable of using their voice or more hesitant?

more comfortable establishing healthy boundaries or less?

more creative or more conforming?

more capable of disagreement or more frightened of it?

more able to take appropriate responsibility for their life or more dependent upon authority?

more generous?

more curious?

more compassionate?

more alive?

A healthy community does more than avoid damaging people.

**It creates conditions in which people can flourish.**

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## THE CONTINUITY TEST

Now imagine that several key people leave.

The long-term administrator retires.

The person who knows every process resigns.

The charismatic leader moves away.

The volunteer who has quietly organised the same event for fifteen years says:

"I can't do it anymore."

What happens?

Can someone find the procedures?

Can someone access the records?

Does anyone know the passwords?

Are responsibilities documented?

Are relationships with external organisations recorded?

Can someone understand why previous decisions were made?

Can another person step into the role?

Or does organisational knowledge disappear with the people who carried it?

**Healthy organisations build institutional memory rather than institutional dependency.**

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# READING THE ARCHITECTURE

Do not reduce everything to a single score.

Look for clusters.

## **Strengths**

What is working beautifully?

Protect it.

## **Fragilities**

What currently works but depends heavily upon particular people, relationships or circumstances?

Strengthen it.

## **Gaps**

What has never been intentionally designed?

Build it.

## **Concerns**

Where are there recurring problems involving power, accountability, fairness, workload, communication, safeguarding or dignity?

Examine them.

## **Contradictions**

Where does stated policy say one thing while actual culture does another?

Pay particular attention here.

The distance between “**what we say**” and “**what we do**” can reveal some of the most important architectural information in an organisation.

# COMMUNITY ARCHITECTURE SNAPSHOT

**What is strong?**

.....

**What is fragile?**

.....

**What depends too heavily upon particular people?**

.....

**Where is responsibility unclear?**

.....

**Where is power concentrated?**

.....

**Where does policy and practice differ?**

.....

**What happens well under pressure?**

.....

**What deteriorates under pressure?**

.....

**Who flourishes easily here?**

.....

**Who might struggle to belong?**

.....

**What organisational knowledge needs to be documented?**

.....

**What is one structural change that could strengthen this community?**

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**What is one relational change that could strengthen this community?**

.....

**What should we stop doing?**

.....

**What should we protect because it is already working beautifully?**

.....

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## **FIVE CORE ARCHITECTURE QUESTIONS**

If you remember nothing else from this assessment, remember these:

### **1. How is power held?**

Who can decide, influence and challenge?

### **2. How does information move?**

Who knows, who is told, who is excluded and what happens when communication becomes difficult?

### **3. How are people treated under pressure?**

Especially those who disagree, become vulnerable, stop contributing or hold little influence.

#### **4. Can the system repair and learn?**

Can it recognise mistakes, accept responsibility, change and strengthen itself?

#### **5. Can people flourish here?**

Not merely attend.

Not merely comply.

Not merely work.

Not merely serve.

**Flourish.**

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## **The Final Question**

Community architecture is rarely created in a strategic planning meeting.

It is built gradually.

Every meeting.

Every appointment.

Every policy.

Every procedure.

Every budget.

Every roster.

Every conversation.

Every conflict.

Every welcome.

Every goodbye.

Every decision about who gets heard.

Every time someone says no.

Every time power is exercised.

Every time someone says:

**“Something doesn’t feel right.”**

And the community decides what to do with that information.

It is built every time someone makes a mistake and discovers whether the system has enough truth, humility and grace to repair it.

And it is built in those ordinary moments when someone experiences the quiet assurance:

**There is room for me here.**

Perhaps the most important question is therefore not:

**“Are we a healthy community?”**

but:

# **“What are we building together?”**

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## **About This Resource**

The **Community Health & Architecture Assessment™** was developed by **Sharon Mackenzie** as a reflective tool for examining the human systems that shape community life.

It grew from work exploring safeguarding, leadership, governance, relational integrity, procedural fairness, power and belonging, and extends that lens into organisational structure, operational clarity, sustainability, participation, resilience and human flourishing.

It is designed for reflection within communities including churches, charities, schools, sporting organisations, volunteer groups, community organisations, boards, leadership teams and other human systems.

The Community Health & Architecture Assessment™ is a reflective and educational resource. It is not an accreditation, compliance audit or substitute for professional legal, governance, safeguarding, workplace health and safety, psychological or organisational advice.

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