



New!

Friends of Wai Ora

Newsletter May 2025

Quarterly Update

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to our Wai Ora quarterly newsletter!

As we move through the year, we're reminded of the strength, resilience, and unity within our community. This pānui is a chance to reflect on the work we've achieved together over the past few months, celebrate lives being transformed, acknowledge challenges overcome, and recognise the deep impact of *kotahitanga* and *faith* in action.

Whether through our social housing program, youth mentoring, training courses, or therapeutic support, every story is a testament to connection, compassion, and our Christian kaupapa Māori values in action. We see daily reminders of hope, healing, and collective progress—signs of transformation that encourage us to keep moving forward.

We're also excited to share updates on new partnerships, upcoming projects, and ways you can stay involved or offer support. We're thankful for the support of our partners, funders, prayer team and Friends of Wai Ora whānau who help make this mahi possible.

Your continued aroha and commitment uplift not only our team, but every person we walk alongside. Together, we're building stronger pathways for those in need—and a brighter future for our community.

Ngā mihi nui,

The Wai Ora Team

Te poipoi i te tōnuitanga me te oranga o waenga i ngā whakatipuranga i roto i tō tātou hapori

Nurturing inter-generational prosperity and well-being within our community

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Community Social Work

Wai Ora is pleased to announce the successful renewal of our social work service contract with Oranga Tamariki for another three years. After nearly six months of uncertainty following government funding cutbacks, we are grateful to have retained our contract while many others were not as fortunate.

Although the funding allocation was reduced, we worked closely with the agency to renegotiate the scope of services, ensuring we could maintain high-quality support. As part of this adjustment, we withdrew the group program in schools, enabling us to focus more intentionally on one-on-one mentoring with new student clients and their whānau.

These changes have allowed us to strengthen the depth of engagement, even with reduced staffing hours. Referrals continue to come from both schools and a broad range of inter-agency organisations.

Encouragingly, our social workers have already exceeded their outcome targets ahead of the June 2025 deadline. *For the first time*, we will be operating a waiting list, with plans to onboard new clients at the start of July 2025.

This increase in demand of services has opened up the scope to increase our contracts and propose additional expressions of interest to provide our social work services.



Social Workers Erana Takarangi-Gerrard and Peter Kempthorne (Dept Manager)

Good News Stories - Social Services Spotlight

Social Work -Therapeutic Mentoring

A **rangatahi** was referred to Wai Ora through the Youth Justice court system, following an assault charge of a serious nature against a family member. Although this was the first formal Youth Justice charge, the young person had been on the periphery of the system for around three years.

Around the age of 11, they experienced the devastating loss of significant people in their life. Struggling to process this grief, they began displaying defiant behaviours, lost focus at school, and made increasingly poor decisions. This formative period also impacted their ability to form healthy relationships, contributing to a deep fear of rejection and abandonment. As a result, they frequently oscillated between a victim mindset and reactive anger when faced with accountability.

Through weekly one-on-one mentoring, they were supported to explore the root causes of their trauma, understand the behavioural patterns at play, and develop practical tools for managing emotions—especially in high-stress or confrontational situations. Over time, they have made meaningful progress in responding rather than retaliating, leading to more constructive outcomes in both personal and social settings.

The presiding judge has acknowledged the growth made, and the client has since identified concrete goals for their future, including full-time employment to help create a stable foundation for their whānau.

Key Insight: Without the opportunity to safely process the trauma behind their actions, this young person may have faced escalating behaviour and

more serious consequences. Mentoring offered a critical turning point — balancing accountability with compassionate support.

Social Housing - Supportive Navigator Role

A **middle-aged person** with a history of severe medical misadventure and personal trauma was referred to Wai Ora after being 'rescued' from unsafe living conditions at a private caravan park.

They arrived with no ID, poor physical and mental health, and struggled to access basic services like banking and suitable healthcare. Their deep loneliness, limited mobility and lack of access to support systems created significant barriers to recovery. Although they were in some debt, they were not financially broken but needed ongoing guidance to manage their finances and daily life.

Initially, we could only provide limited support. However, after securing a small donation, we engaged our social worker Erana, for 2 hours a week in the role of Housing Navigator. **This dedicated role led to real progress** — they regained ID and driver's license, connected with online banking, budgeting, medical and dental services, and began receiving consistent advocacy with WINZ and ACC. Their confidence has since grown, isolation reduced, and engagement with essential services strengthened. We have reset their 12-week housing period as they show clear progress towards stability.

Our Navigator is now preparing an advocacy case for housing priority, working alongside their doctor, psychiatrist and ACC.

Key Insight: This case illustrates the transformative impact of even part-time, tailored social work support. With sustained guidance, individuals facing complex trauma can take real steps toward independence and wellbeing.



On-site Social Housing

Wai Ora's Supported Short-Term Accommodation program continues to see a steady flow of clients who transition through the service. While the typical stay is up to 12 weeks, a small number of clients required extended support due to unforeseen personal circumstances.

The program is more than just a place to stay—it's a short-term, stable environment



Need for Navigator Role

Demand for our housing service remains consistently high with enquiries far exceeding our accommodation capacity.

To respond to increasing community need, Wai Ora is actively seeking funding to **expand our Housing Navigator role**. This position would not only support our on-site residents but could also work

designed to help individuals reset and rebuild. Alongside future tenancy support, we provide wraparound services that focus on personal development, life skills, and preparing clients for long-term, sustainable housing.

The goal is not only to house, but to empower — supporting each person to move forward with greater confidence, independence, and hope for the future.

Over the past 12 months, we have provided 1,998 bed nights and have supported 12 individuals and whānau through our program. Our housing clients vary widely in age and circumstance, reflecting the diverse needs within our community.

Those we've assisted include a young family seeking a new rental, an individual recently homeless seeking stability and reintegration support, a couple of kaumātua needing temporary housing, and several single adults requiring a space while transitioning into their own residential property.

One couple, for example, were awaiting the completion of their modest one-bedroom home but were unable to afford both market rent and mortgage repayments during the construction period. Our support provided the breathing space they needed to stay on track with their housing goals without falling into financial distress.

This service not only offers shelter but also wraparound support to help each client prepare for and sustain long-term tenancies.

directly in the community alongside individuals whānau facing homelessness.

Our proposal aims to secure funding that enables us to deliver more individualised, trauma-informed housing support. With stable investment, we will be able to:

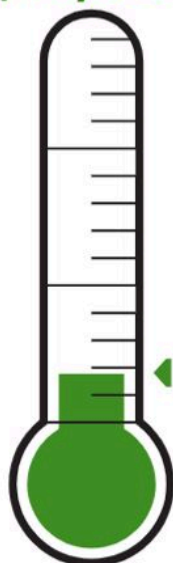
- increase Navigator hours to align with the scale of community demand
- provide deeper, sustained support to our current housing guests
- reach more individuals across Whanganui who are experiencing housing distress
- strengthen local partnerships.

Investing in this role goes beyond supporting one program — it's about enabling long-term transformation for those living on the edge of housing crisis. **With additional capacity, we'll be better positioned to support those we currently cannot accommodate, helping prevent their situations from deteriorating further.**

We have started building collaborative relationships with active involvement in a citywide, church-led mission, supporting a continuum of housing — from emergency shelter to innovative rent-to-buy initiatives led by volunteers. Wai Ora will also continue regular participation in the Council-led Housing Forum to stay aligned with regional strategies and contribute to collective solutions. These partnerships not only improve outcomes for individuals but also strengthen community cohesion and service integration.

Goal for Navigator Role

\$40,000



Raised
\$5,000

Help us expand the Navigator Role

with more hours to support those facing homelessness — because walking alongside individuals facing complex challenges takes time, patience, and consistency.

- **one-off gift**
- **monthly** *or*
- **regular payday giving**

Fuel the Mission—Everyday and Beyond

Your support makes a real difference. Every donation helps Wai Ora continue vital day-to-day work—like mentoring youth, providing short-term housing, and walking alongside those facing life's toughest challenges. It also allows us to grow new initiatives and respond quickly to community needs.

Whether it's a one-off gift or regular giving, your contribution helps us bring stability, hope, and transformation where it's needed most.

SCAN ME



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- **Fast and easy online donations**
- **Immediate Donation Tax Credit receipt (NZ)**

Make a donation by card now

Donate by card:

DonorBox — all online card payments are secured by Stripe.

To reference your payment, when requested, Write a comment — "**Donation**" for general giving or "**Navigator**" to support the Navigator Role.

Internet banking donations:

Wai Ora Christian Community Trust

Bank: ANZ **01-0790-0106845-46**

Particulars: Initial and Lastname eg B Fox

Reference: **Donation** or **Navigator**

If you require a receipt from internet banking, please [email](#) with your full name and address.

Te Kākano Kāinga Ora Ltd – Construction Update

Our business arm, Te Kākano Kāinga Ora Ltd, has recently completed its final build before pausing construction operations. Originally launched to meet community housing needs using specialised SIP panels, the rising difficulty of importing these materials—combined with a saturated market for smaller prefab affordable homes—has led us to take a break from this space.

We're proud of what's been achieved through this five-year venture, especially knowing that proceeds from the builds have directly **contributed to our social housing efforts**, including the addition of two new cabins and construction of the 2-br home on site. A huge thank you to everyone who supported this kaupapa.

And finally, a heartfelt thank you to Eddie Churton, who has served as the Te Kākano Kāinga Ora Operations Project Manager throughout this journey.



The final build by Te Kākano Kāinga Ora Ltd nearly completed — now occupied by first home buyers through a Lease to Occupy agreement at Wai Ora.

Grateful Acknowledgement of Our Funders and Regular Donors



Social Housing - Capital grant for 2br home



Hall roof repair.
Social Housing - Capital grant for 2br home



Breaking the Cycle - behaviour management courses



Community Organisation Grants Scheme

Operating Expenses

Dunbar Trust

Breaking the Cycle - behaviour management courses



Audit fees



Office window replacement



Social housing facilities - front door and extended decking



Exterior paintwork of main office building



Social Work contract for at-risk tamariki

Thanks to private donors who have contributed to our social housing project, Navigator Role, purchase of a trailer and general expenses in the past 12 months.



Operating Expenses

As we wrap up this pānui, we're reminded that transformation doesn't happen overnight—it takes time, consistency, and a community willing to walk alongside others. The stories shared here are just a glimpse of what's possible when support is steady and hope is nurtured.

We're excited for what's to come and remain committed to serving our community with integrity, compassion, and courage. Thank you for being part of the journey—your encouragement, partnership, and prayers continue to make a real difference.

Let's keep building, together.

Wai Ora Christian Community Trust Organisation

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