

SUMMER 2025



### Committees for 2026

Information about the Self Advocacy Subcommittee and the new Social Club Committee for 2026

### Heavy metal, Skulls and Tattoos!

Ricky shares his passions and how he has turned them into art.

### Up coming Events

See what others have been doing in the local community.



# Summer Newsletter

## David Darling – CEO

It has been a year of change, and I am really proud of how the Aspire team has handled it. They have adapted, stayed positive, and worked together to keep things moving. I also want to thank you for your patience, your flexibility, as change occurred, it has not gone unnoticed. Now, we can all look forward to a calmer time ahead, some people have moved house, and now can start to enjoy the new house; it makes me mindful that this is a chance for all of us to settle into our new “usual” and enjoy the results of all the work.

November was an exciting month because we are celebrating the opening of “Foundation, Community Participation”. This is a new initiative that so many people have helped bring to life. If you have not been to see it yet, please do, it is a great space, the team are full of energy, and ready to make it a success.

As we head toward the end of the year, I encourage you to stay connected with family, friends, at home and out in the community. Visit different places, join in activities, get out and about, and celebrate the summer season.

And with Christmas coming up, make sure you take time to enjoy the season, celebrate, have fun, and reach out to other homes if you think they might like an invite. Remember take the chance to enjoy yourself.

Thank you again for all your support this year, I have enjoyed catching up with a lot of you. I am excited about what is ahead as we move into 2026.



## Gerard Knapp – off the cuff



I've been trying to get out into the community lately, but the weather hasn't been playing along! I thought we were heading into spring or summer, but it still feels more like winter.

Recently, we managed to take a trip to Pokeno, one of New Zealand's great spots for ice cream. They charge by the scoop, and I went big with a 7-scoop stacker that cost about \$14! There's even a 15-scoop option for around \$25. (Hence the photo!)

Yes, I did eat all seven scoops myself! So, I can definitely say I went out to explore the community... and I explored an ice cream!



# Summer Newsletter



Hi everyone

What a full-on year it has been. Great to see everyone at the Christmas parties, and looking forward to Christmas.

We are having fabulous weather, but need to be mindful to wear sun hats, apply sun block and wear our sunglasses. Make sure you drink lots of water, juice and have that drink bottle with you when you go out.

Be happy and safe. See you in 2026

Deborah  
Clinical Advisor

Hi Everyone,

Wishing you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season! I hope you all get to enjoy some well-deserved time off to relax and recharge.

As we head into the holidays, let's take a moment to be mindful of our online security. It's easy to get distracted by festive cheer, but please be cautious of suspicious emails or links – they can be more prevalent during this time. Double-check anything before you click!

The IT team will be taking a break too, but we'll still be around to help with any urgent issues please contact [ictadmin@aspire.org.nz](mailto:ictadmin@aspire.org.nz) / [thirumurthi.palanisamy@aspire.org.nz](mailto:thirumurthi.palanisamy@aspire.org.nz).

Have a wonderful Christmas and a fantastic start to the New Year!

Best Regards,  
Thirumurthi Palanisamy  
Aspire - IT Lead



## Christmas jokes

1. Why did Santa go to music school? To improve his wrapping skills!
2. What do you call a snowman with a carrot nose and a six-pack? An abdominal snowman!
3. What do you get if you cross a snowman and a dog? Frostbite!
4. Why did the ornament go to school? It wanted to be a little brighter!
5. What do you call Santa when he loses his pants? Saint Knickerless!
6. What do you call Santa when he takes a break? Santa Pause!





# Self-Advocacy



## Full Self-Advocacy Committee Meeting

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to our Full Self-Advocacy Committee meeting on Thursday, 20th November. We were thrilled to welcome 35 people this year. It was wonderful to see so many voices represented and engaged.

### Guest Speakers

We were fortunate to hear from Vicky from Career Moves, a visit organised by the Self-Advocacy Subcommittee. Vicky shared with us the many ways Career Moves can support people in finding meaningful work and building employment skills. If you would like to connect with Career Moves but would like extra support in doing so, please get in touch with Lee and she will help you do so.

We then heard from Tim Bray, the Team Lead for Community Participation at Foundation, the newest part of Aspire. Tim helped us gain a clearer understanding of what Foundation offers and how people can get involved. Remember you can refer your self or have a family member or support person refer you via our website - [www.aspire.org.nz](http://www.aspire.org.nz)

We covered the new Self-Advocacy Committee Terms of Service, which were created to guide the work of the committee and support strong, consistent leadership. Printed copies were available at the meeting. If anyone would like a copy emailed to them, please contact Lee Samuel and she will be happy to send one through.



### Introducing the 2026 Self Advocacy Subcommittee:

- Gerard Kanpp
- Malcolm Matheson
- Mark Matheson
- Tayt Crawford
- Stephanie Tong
- Adele Whiteside
- Elaine Wilson
- Shona Gregory
- Matthew Dempsey
- Shiona Harris
- Rebecca Marshall

### What the Self Advocacy Subcommittee Does

The Aspire Self-Advocacy Subcommittee plays a vital role in making sure the voices of people we support are heard loud and clear. The subcommittee exists to promote the rights, choices, and leadership of people with disabilities across Aspire.

The Subcommittee's role includes:

- Speaking up for ourselves and others.
- Sharing feedback with Aspire leadership about what matters most to people we support.
- Helping shape Aspire into a more inclusive, person-directed organisation.
- Building confidence and leadership in people with disabilities.
- Creating opportunities for self-advocacy by running workshops, inviting guest speakers, and supporting community involvement.

The Self-Advocacy Subcommittee is an important space where people supported by Aspire help guide decisions, strengthen their leadership skills, and create meaningful change together.

Thank you again to everyone who attended, contributed, and shared their voice. We look forward to another year of growth, collaboration, and advocacy.

We're excited for the year ahead. The new Self-Advocacy Subcommittee will meet in January to plan our 2026 meetings, workshops, and events. Thank you to everyone who took part, we're looking forward to a great year together!



## Introducing Our New Social Club Committee

We are excited to announce the creation of Aspire's Social Club Committee, a new group formed to help plan fun, inclusive activities for everyone we support. The social Club committee was form at the Self advocacy committee meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2025.

### What Will the Social Club Committee Do?

The exact purpose and goals of the Social Club Committee will be developed during the group's first meeting next year, so that the members themselves can help shape what the Social Club becomes. However, the overall idea is simple:

The Social Club Committee will help create fun, social opportunities for people supported by Aspire.

This may include things like:

- Planning group outings and social events
- Coming up with new ideas for activities people would enjoy
- Making sure events are accessible and welcoming for everyone
- Encouraging connection, friendship, and community

The committee will work together to make sure people's voices, interests, and ideas guide all social activities.

### What Happens Next?

The Social Club Committee will meet for the first time early next year, where the group will:

- Write their purpose statement
- Decide how the committee will run
- Start planning events for 2026

We are really looking forward to seeing this new committee grow, build confidence, and create more opportunities for people to connect and have fun.

### Introducing the 2026 Social Club committee:

- Rentia De Vries
- Sharkaela Paora
- Mandy Higgins
- Kim Jones
- Caroline Morrison
- Russel Ram
- Max Nicols
- Jeremy Piercy
- Ana Tahapeehi

### Staff Supporting the 2026 Social Club committee:

- Kim Prasad
- Tina Ranson



## Have Your Say in the Social Club!

You don't need to be on the Social Club Committee to share your ideas. If you've got a great idea for an event or activity, we want to hear it! Write down your idea and send it through — the committee will consider all suggestions when planning the 2026 calendar.

Send your ideas to [lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz](mailto:lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz), and they will be put forward at the committee's first meeting in January.

## Doreen's 65th Birthday Celebration

Doreen celebrated her 65th birthday surrounded by loved ones, including her husband Ricky, the girls at the house (Zoe, Samantha, Shannon, Sophie White, and Sophie Lowther), and guests from the Flats, Tania and Johanne.

Staff prepared a festive birthday setup at the house to mark the occasion. Doreen's preferred birthday cake was purchased, and a meal of fish and chips with soft drinks was served. Music added to the cheerful atmosphere.

A particularly heartwarming moment was seeing Ricky by Doreen's side during the cake-cutting ceremony. The celebration was enjoyed by all and created a joyful and memorable experience for Doreen.



## John's 35th Birthday Celebration

John celebrated his 35th birthday on the 4th of July with lots of smiles and good company. Everyone at the house joined in to sing Happy Birthday, and in the morning, John took a cake to share with his friends at CLT. It was a wonderful day filled with friendship and celebration!



# Celebrating

## When the Stars Aligned for Susan

This week was truly special for Susan Hawkins and her family. For the first time in many years, the stars aligned — with family members travelling from across New Zealand and even from Australia for a short but meaningful two-day visit.

Susan was overcome with emotion, expressing her delight in her own beautiful way. There were tears, laughter, and plenty of heartfelt conversations as her loved ones gathered around her. The family brought treats, food to share, and even a cake, turning the visit into an impromptu celebration. It wasn't Susan's birthday, but it certainly felt like one, complete with singing, smiles, and cheers from her whānau.

For months, Susan had been talking about wanting a party with all her family, and this unexpected reunion made that dream come true. The Aspire team at Allgood Place opened their doors to welcome everyone, creating a warm and relaxed space where family and home came together.



Throughout the day, Susan moved between joyful moments with her family and quiet times to rest and take it all in. Cups of tea were shared, stories were told, and the love in the room was unmistakable.

It was a beautiful reminder of how powerful connection and whānau can be — a day filled with laughter, love, and lasting memories for everyone involved.

## Staying Connected with Family

As adults, life can get busy, work, routines, and responsibilities often take over. But keeping in touch with family is important for our sense of belonging and emotional wellbeing. Whether it's sharing a meal, a quick phone call, or a family get-together, these connections remind us we're part of something bigger. Family ties can bring comfort, laughter, and support when we need it most.

Try this: plan a "family challenge" like everyone sharing an old photo each week, a group walk, or cooking the same recipe together from afar. Small moments like these can keep the connection fun and meaningful.





# Birthdays

# Celebrating

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## A Special Birthday Connection

Colleen and Nicola Johansen recently celebrated their birthdays. Colleen turning 75 on October 22nd and Nicola 57 on October 23rd. The two have always shared their celebrations, often spending time together at the beach.

This year, their celebration held an extra touch of meaning. The vase beside them was originally gifted, with flowers, by a man whose sister once lived with Colleen and Nicola. She sadly passed away in 2019, and her birthday was October 21st, making her part of their shared celebration tradition. In a beautiful coincidence, staff unknowingly placed the vase beside Colleen for this year's photo, a reminder that Merlene's spirit was still very much present.

It's a touching story of friendship, memory, and connection. What special birthday traditions or connections do you have?



Bethany celebrated her birthday together with other flat mates and her family. Her father had initially planned to host a BBQ to mark the occasion; however, due to rainy weather, the plan was adjusted, and lunch was inside instead. Bethany's mother and sister travelled from Wellington to join the celebration for both Bethany and her twin sister. Bethany's picked a cake, and the group gathered to cut the cake together. Bethany's family presented both twins with a framed family photograph as a birthday gift. It was a joyful celebration!



## Happy Birthday

Matty Enjoyed Cake for his Birthday with his flat-mates. Later that evening, Matty's family visited and hosted a pizza party at the house with the staff and other flat-mates. Everyone had a lovely time celebrating together. His family also gave him a birthday card and a present.

As a special birthday treat from his family, Matty will be going on a five-day cruise from the 25th to the 30th of November. Wow have fun Matty and tell us all about it when your back!

summer 2025



# Achievements



## Taking the high road

Recently, Roger took a ride in a hot air balloon, but this wasn't his first time! It's something he loves and has done before. Can you believe it? Roger is also an avid bird keeper, so perhaps he enjoys the same sense of freedom as a bird soaring through the sky. Thanks for sharing your photos, Roger!



## A big well done to everyone who took part in the Round the Bridges walk!

Your effort, energy, and enthusiasm made the day a great success. Fantastic job, team!





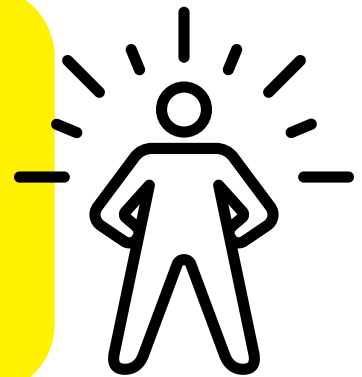
# Initiatives

## Building Confidence Through Boundaries

I (Lee) ran a two-hour workshop all about boundaries, what they are, why they matter, and how we can use them in everyday life. We talked about the idea of “what is me and mine, and what is you and yours” as another way of understanding boundaries. Many people said this wording made more sense and felt easier to understand.

### During the workshop, we explored:

- What boundaries are
- Why they are important for everyone
- How to notice when a situation needs a boundary
- Ways to speak up and put a boundary in place
- Brainstorming our own boundaries and how to use them in real life



A few weeks later, I checked in with participants, and they told me they found the workshop helpful. One person said they liked being able to clearly define what belongs to them – their choices, their feelings, and their space, and what belongs to someone else. Support staff also shared a great real-life example of someone using a boundary after the workshop.

Kim, who attends a cooking group, often brings her own lunch to enjoy with everyone. One day she brought a packet of chips. The facilitator told her she shouldn't eat chips, which made her upset. Kim talked about it and decided to speak up for herself. At the next cooking group, she calmly told the facilitator that she is a grown woman who can choose her own food, and it is up to her what she eats. The facilitator apologised. Kim felt proud of herself for setting a clear boundary.

Boundaries are not about being rude or difficult, they are about respect. Respect for yourself, and respect for others.

When I met again with everyone who attended the workshop a month later, they said they enjoyed it and would like boundaries workshops to continue as an ongoing series. We plan to offer this in 2026 for those who are interested.

If you would like to learn more about boundaries or join future workshops, keep an eye out for updates next year!

### Boundaries Workshop

Join us for a fun and supportive workshop all about setting healthy boundaries. Learn what boundaries are, why they matter, and how to use them in everyday life to feel more confident and respected.

- What boundaries are and why they are important
- Everyday situations where we use boundaries
- Brainstorming and creating your own personal boundaries
- Tips for communicating your boundaries clearly



### Why Boundaries Matter

Learning how to set and keep boundaries is an important skill. Boundaries help us:

- Look after our safety and wellbeing
- Make our own choices
- Say “yes” and “no” when we need to
- Protect our time, space, and belongings
- Build healthier relationships with others
- Feel more confident and in control of our lives

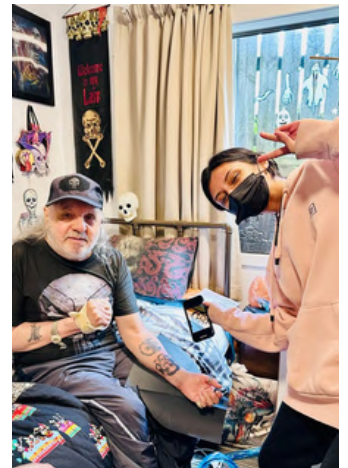


# Achievements

## Skulls, Ink, and Heavy Metal: A Visit with Ricky

I (Lee) was sent some photos of Ricky and his fabulous new tattoo, and I thought, this is a man I have to meet. I was welcomed into Ricky's home, which he shares with his wife Doreen and their black cat, Socks. Straight away, you get a sense of Ricky's passions: hundreds of skulls adorn their home, sitting alongside a large DVD collection, all of them horror films. Doreen's love of cats peeks through the sea of skulls, bringing a softer touch to the room.

Ricky was proud to show me his latest tattoo, a black-and-white portrait of Ozzy Osbourne. I asked if Ozzy was his favourite musician. Ricky grinned and said, for this week, yes. He showed me a collection of photos of Ozzy, from his early days right up to more recent times. We chatted about music, but Ricky made it clear, unless it was heavy metal, he wasn't interested. He also showed me his very first tattoo. When I asked how old he was when he got it, he couldn't quite remember the exact age, but when I asked if he was under 18, he laughed and said, oh yes, definitely.



Ricky saved up to pay for his tattoo, he demonstrated by rubbing his fingers and thumb together, grinning. The tattoo was done by an artist named Rim, who was kind enough to bring all the equipment and complete the work in Ricky's home. This made the whole process so much more accessible for him.

Like many tattoo enthusiasts, Ricky is already planning his next piece. He showed me two designs: one is of a skull with a nail through its head, which he hopes to get tattooed on the back of his own head, and another of a cloud with an eye, created by an artist in Raglan, which he would like on his arm. He isn't too worried about the pain; he must be tougher than I am!

Thanks for letting us into your fun, if slightly spooky, world, Ricky!





# Personal Achievements

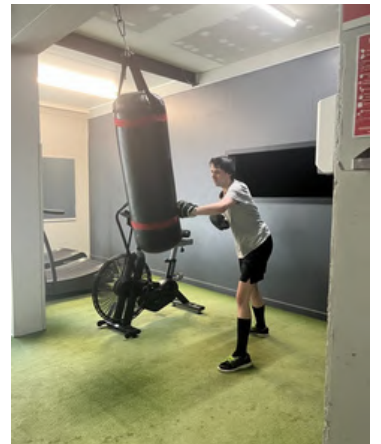
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## Reaching Goals and Building Confidence at the Gym

Tayt has been working hard on one of his personal goals, improving his overall fitness and well-being through regular gym sessions. His commitment to showing up and staying active is a great example of how setting clear goals can lead to positive change.

Going to the gym offers more than just physical benefits. Regular exercise helps boost mood, increase energy, and build confidence. It's also a great way to develop new routines, learn new skills, and connect with others in the community. Each visit is a step toward greater independence and self-belief.

For Tayt, the gym is not just about lifting weights — it's about lifting himself up and staying focused on a healthier, more active lifestyle. We're proud to see his dedication and the progress he's making toward his goals!



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# Achievements

## Launched Event – A Celebration of Talent and Joy

I (Lee) recently had the pleasure of attending the Launched event at Southwell School, a wonderful talent quest celebrating people with disabilities. The day was filled with an incredible variety of performances, from heartfelt songs and energetic dances to a hilarious stand-up comedy routine that had everyone laughing (even when it got a little cheeky!).

Although I was only able to stay for the morning, I was lucky enough to see Patricia Avenue School from Te Awamutu deliver a beautiful kapa haka performance that truly stood out. But the real highlight for me was seeing so many familiar faces from Aspire up on stage, sharing their talents with confidence and pride.

It was uplifting to witness the dedication that goes into learning routines and songs, and the courage it takes to step onto a stage in front of an audience. I left feeling genuinely moved and full of joy from the performances I saw.

Even if performing isn't your thing, I would highly recommend heading along next year to watch. It's a fun, uplifting day out and a great way to support members of our community, both those we know and those we don't. The Launched event is a celebration of creativity, courage, and connection that leaves you smiling long after it ends.



# Achievements



## Shout Out to Sophie!

A big congratulations to Sophie Lowther, who received a Certificate of Recognition from Enrich+ for her radiant positivity and the vibrant energy she brings wherever she goes. Sophie's cheerful spirit inspires joy and connection in everyone around her. She also received a \$20 Warehouse gift card, a well-deserved treat for someone who brightens every room!



## Photo op

The ladies from Horsham Downs enjoyed getting to meet Tim Macindoe, when he came to pick up his sign. taking the opportunity for a photo!





# Achievements

## Malcolm's Long time Dream Comes True: A Ride in a Big Truck!

Malcolm has had a special goal on his wishlist, to go for a ride in a big truck. Finding the right truck, the right company, and the right timing proved tricky... until recently.

With a bit of teamwork and determination, Malcolm reached out to Interactionz, who took the lead in making his dream a reality. Interactionz contacted Mainfreight, and thanks to their generosity and community spirit, a truck ride was organised for Malcolm.

Interactionz were kindly able to support Malcolm on the day, ensuring everything went smoothly despite the last-minute timing. When the moment arrived, Malcolm climbed into the truck with the biggest smile on his face. And that smile didn't go away. He was absolutely beaming from ear to ear the entire time.

The photos say it all, pure joy, pride, and a dream finally fulfilled. Moments like this remind us why supporting people to reach their personal goals, big or small, matters so much.

A huge thank you to Interactionz and Mainfreight for helping make this experience possible. And a massive congratulations to Malcolm for achieving a goal he has held onto for so long.

What an incredible day!



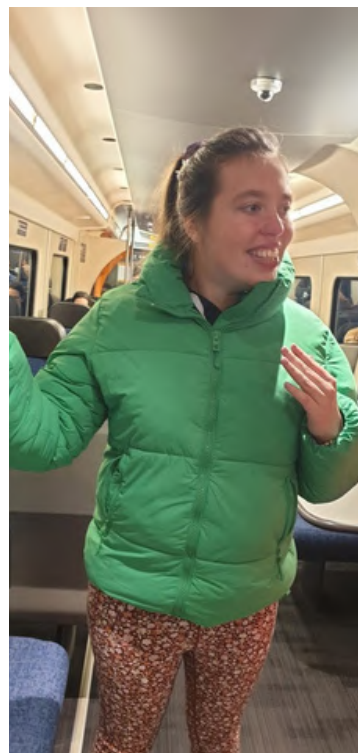


## On Track for a Great Day with Izzy and Erika

Recently, Erika and Izzy enjoyed a train trip from Huntly to Frankton — an outing filled with excitement, learning, and new experiences. The day began with a drive to Huntly, where they boarded the train with support from staff. During the journey, both girls had the chance to explore travel in their own unique ways.

Erika was full of joy and enthusiasm, captivated by the movement of the train and the passing scenery. Izzy enjoyed the calm rhythm of the ride, finding it peaceful and relaxing. With support from staff, both were able to feel confident, engaged, and safe throughout the experience.

Train travel is a wonderful way to encourage independence, sensory learning, and community connection. The sights, sounds, and gentle motion provide a rich sensory experience, while the process of planning, boarding, and travelling helps build confidence and social skills. It's also a reminder of how simple community activities, like catching a train, can become meaningful learning opportunities. For anyone looking for a new experience, a local train trip can be a fun and accessible way to explore the world, connect with others, and build everyday life skills.







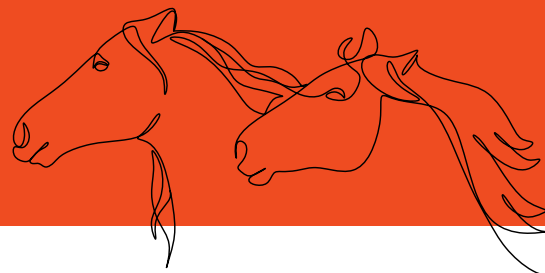
## A Peaceful Visit to Zealong Tea Estate

Ben recently enjoyed a visit to the beautiful Zealong Tea Estate, located on Gordonton Road in Hamilton. He spent time exploring the tranquil gardens, admiring the lake, and discovering the statues and displays that show how tea was carried and made in the past. It was a relaxing outing filled with fresh air and beautiful sights.

If you'd like to visit too, Zealong Tea Estate is open to the public and offers garden walks, tea tastings, and a lovely on-site restaurant — the perfect spot to unwind and enjoy something special. Ben is already planning his next trip to sample their famous tea!





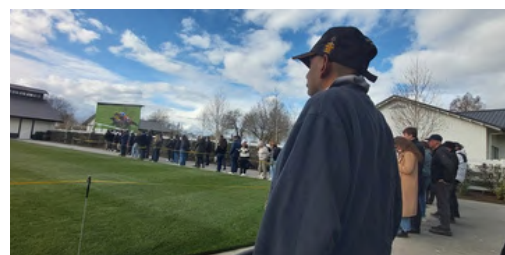


## Horses, Smiles, and Sunshine!

Lashkar recently attended the Sir Patrick and Lady Hogan Cambridge Stud Annual Day Function, where he was warmly welcomed and excited to be part of such a special event. Before the day began, he enjoyed exploring the beautiful grounds and taking in the atmosphere.

The highlight of the event was a presentation and live parade featuring five impressive racehorses, Sword of State, Embellish, Chaldean, Hello Youmzain, and Almanzor. Lashkar especially enjoyed seeing the horses up close and learning more about their stories.

The day wrapped up with light refreshments, and Lashkar received a souvenir booklet and Cambridge Stud cap to remember the experience. It was a fantastic outing filled with smiles, sunshine, and some very elegant horses!





# Community

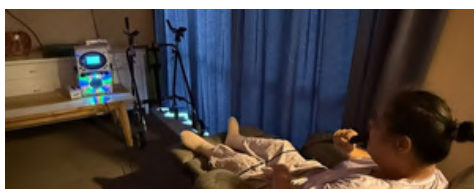
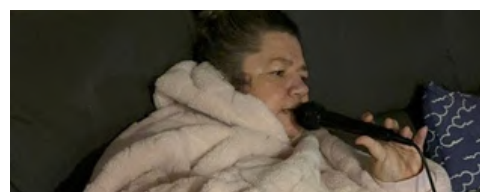
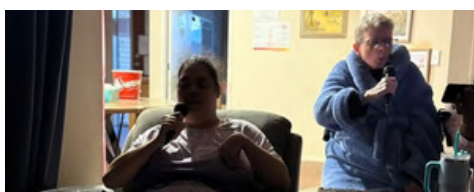
## Pyjamas, Karaoke, and Plenty of Fun!



The ladies recently hosted a pyjama and karaoke party at the house and what a fantastic night it was! Everyone dressed in their comfiest pyjamas, sang along to their favourite songs, and finished the evening with delicious takeaways and desserts.

The karaoke machine (kindly borrowed from our friends at Palmerston Street) set the stage for some amazing performances! Rentia sang classics from Ali Campbell's album, including I Got You Babe and If It Happens Again, while Claire brought the fun with songs from Grease, and Sheryl and Sharkaela kept the energy high with hits from A1, Westlife, and more.

Nights like this are about more than just music, they build friendships, confidence, and a sense of belonging. Singing, laughing, and celebrating together helps strengthen social connections and team spirit in such a joyful, relaxed way. It was truly a night to remember, full of smiles, laughter, and songs from the heart!





## Ross Hosts a Halloween Party Not to Be Missed!

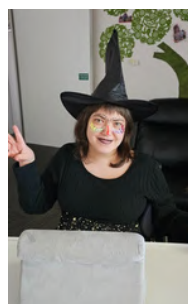
Every year, Ross brings the magic of Halloween to life, and this year's celebration was no exception! With help from his support staff, Ross took the lead in planning, organising, and shopping for the big event. His enthusiasm set the tone for what turned out to be an unforgettable night.

The party was held on the Palmerston House deck, which staff transformed into a fun and festive Halloween space, complete with great decorations and plenty of delicious food. The photos say it all. The atmosphere was bright, colourful, and full of excitement.

Everyone from joined in the celebration: Johanne, Ross, Tania, Doreen, Ricky, Lashkar, Zoe, Samantha, Sophie White, Sophie Lowther, and Shannon, along with staff members. It was a wonderful gathering of familiar faces, energy, and community spirit.

The fun started with snacks and drinks, followed by a lively mix of karaoke and dancing, always a highlight! Laughter filled the deck as people sang, moved, and enjoyed each other's company. The evening wrapped up with a shared dinner and dessert, bringing everyone together for a relaxed finish to a fantastic event.

Ross should be very proud of the effort he put into hosting such a great night. His leadership, creativity, and commitment to making sure everyone had a good time truly shone through. We're already looking forward to seeing what he dreams up for next year!





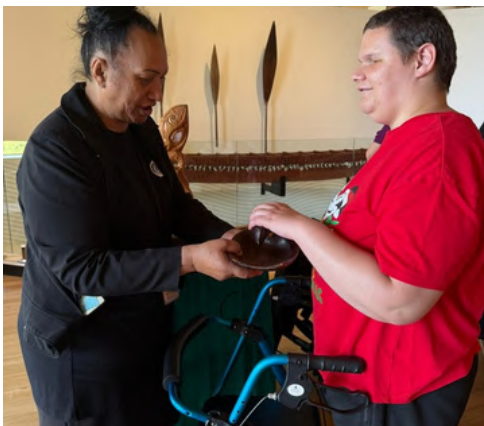
# Community



## TE WHARE TAONGA O WAIKATO MUSEUM & GALLERY

Our group spent a wonderful morning exploring the Museum. The ladies enjoyed discovering the rich history on display, feeling the traditional tools used to shape a waka, and listening to powerful stories through the audio headsets.

Enjoy these snapshots from our visit!





# Community



## A Fun Day Out in Rotorua

This friendly group enjoyed a wonderful trip to Rotorua, where they explored the 3D Trick Art Gallery, a place bursting with creativity, colour, and fun! The gallery's interactive artwork makes it easy to step into the scenes for some great laughs and unforgettable photos.

It was a day full of smiles, connection, and creativity. If you're ever looking for a unique outing, the 3D Art Gallery in Rotorua is a fantastic spot to visit!





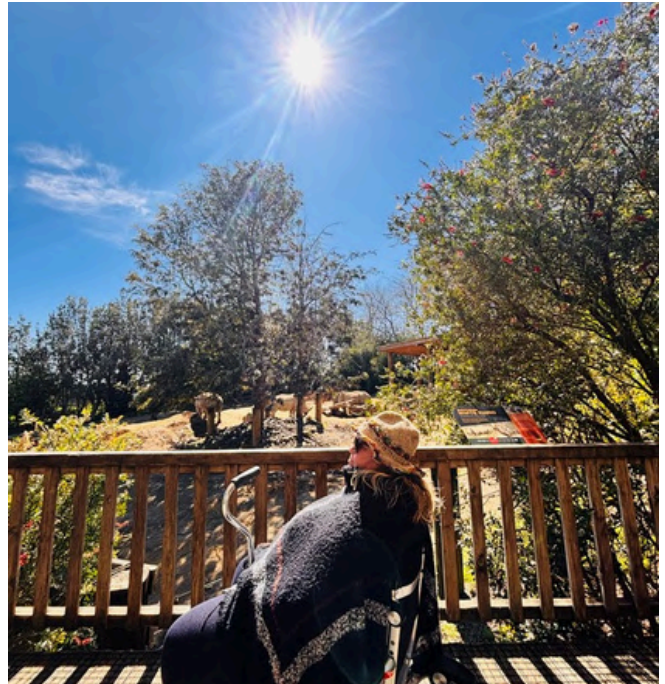
## A Wild Day at Hamilton Zoo

The social club recently enjoyed a fun-filled, sunny day at Hamilton Zoo, where everyone had the chance to explore, connect, and share in a great community experience. Sharkaela, Bethany, and Ben were among those who joined in the adventure, and even got to catch up with friends from Tramway during the visit!

A real highlight of the day was meeting one of the zoo's cheeky parrots, who surprised everyone by saying a very clear "hello!" The unexpected greeting had everyone laughing and made the moment even more memorable.

Outings like this are about more than just seeing the animals, they're opportunities to build friendships, enjoy shared experiences, and create lasting memories together. The sunshine, laughter, and friendly zoo residents made it a day to remember!

If you haven't joined a Social Club outing yet, keep an eye out for future events, they're a great way to get involved, try something new, and share in the fun!





# Community Highlights

[www.aspire.org.nz](http://www.aspire.org.nz)

## Shine Ball



The Shine Ball is always a highlight for people at Aspire, and this year was no exception! With a Paris theme, everyone enjoyed a beautiful night filled with laughter, dancing, and good company. The dancing shoes and wheels were in full swing.

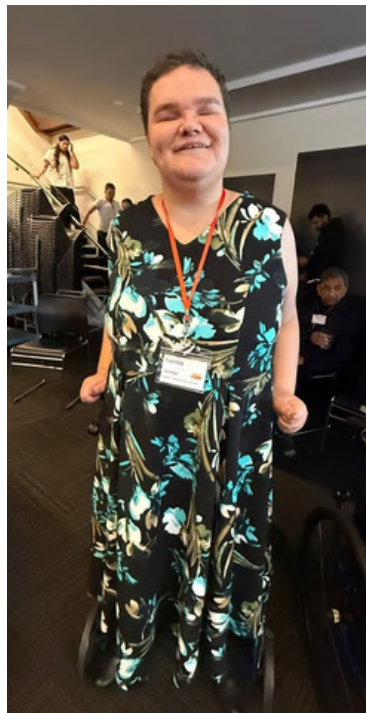


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# Highlights

## Shine Ball





# Community Highlights

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What a fantastic evening we had at our recent Movie Night! Around 30 people joined in, along with staff, to enjoy a fun and relaxed evening together. We watched the movie *Yes Day*, full of laughter, good vibes, and plenty of smiles all around!

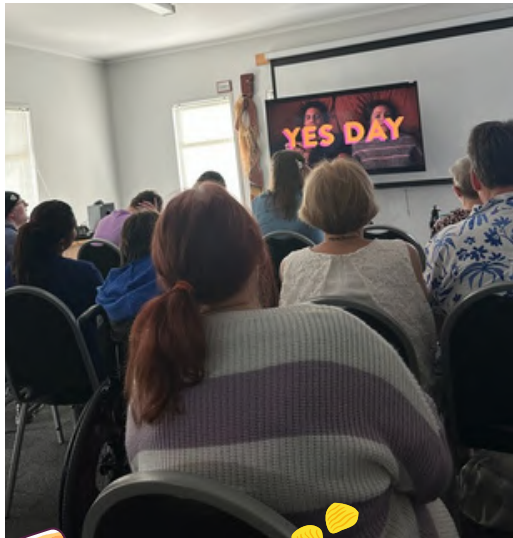
Even though the projector decided to take the night off, we quickly adapted with a huge TV screen, and it worked perfectly. There were tasty snacks for everyone, chips, popcorn, a few sour lollies that gave us a surprise, and even some chocolate treats. To top it all off, everyone enjoyed a dinner of delicious pizza with plenty of choices to suit all tastes paid for by Aspire.

What made the night extra special was seeing everyone helping one another, making sure everyone was comfortable and included. The teamwork and kindness were wonderful to see.

We've received some lovely feedback from those who attended:

"Thank you for your time and effort in supporting our PWS. The Sirius Crescent girls shared very positive feedback about the movie night. They truly enjoyed the chance to spend time with friends and were grateful for the complimentary dinner. They'd love to have more movie nights in the future, these events help everyone connect and enjoy a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere."

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the evening such a success. Here's to more movie nights to come!



summer 2025





## A Great Night Out at The Keg Room!

What a fun night out! Around 30 of us headed to The Keg Room for dinner and good company. The staff put on a special \$20 meal deal just for our group, and the food didn't disappoint!

There was plenty of laughter, conversation, and smiles all around.

We know it's not always easy to get out and about or feel confident accessing our local community, but events like this help us build those connections and feel more comfortable doing things together. It's a great reminder that everyone deserves the chance to relax, socialise, and enjoy a night out with friends.

Thanks to everyone who came along and made it such a great evening!







## Celebrating Diwali in Colour and Joy

Our Diwali celebration was bursting with colour, music, and laughter! The people we support loved dressing up in bright, festive clothing, tasting a variety of Indian sweets and dishes, and watching a wonderful dance performance.

A huge thank you to the staff who went above and beyond to share their culture, prepare delicious food, and create such a warm, inclusive celebration. Their effort made the day not only fun but also a meaningful way for everyone to learn about and enjoy the festival of lights together.







## The Question Everybody is asking... “What is the Foundation all about?”

Foundation is a programme run by Aspire, designed to help people with disabilities or long-term health conditions live better lives, connect with their community, and build independence. It's for people living in New Zealand and is open to folks of all ages who've finished school.

At its heart, Foundation exists to give people more choices: to explore their interests, build friendships, enjoy their community, and pursue employment if that's what they want.

### How Foundation Supports You

Foundation offers a range of services and support tailored to individual needs. Some of the main ways it helps are:

- **Life skills support** — Helping with practical everyday skills like travelling safely, managing money, cooking and personal care, decision-making, emotional health, communication, staying healthy.
- **Community participation** — Encouraging people to be active, valued members in their communities. This might mean volunteering, joining clubs, linking to local groups, making friends.
- **Wellness & recreation** — Opportunities to get involved in activities like yoga, sports, walking groups, swimming, bowling, fun runs — supporting physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Employment support** — For those who want to work, Foundation offers training and support to build skills and confidence to get a job.

### Our Commitments & Values

Aspire's Foundation programme is grounded in strong values that guide how support is offered:

- **Equity of access** — Breaking down barriers so everyone has a chance to participate fully.
- **Encouragement** — Inspiring confidence, celebrating progress, seeing challenges as opportunities for growth.
- **Empathy** — Listening deeply, honouring people's experiences, responding with respect and understanding.
- **Engagement** — Working together with individuals, their families/whānau and communities to create support that fits their needs.
- **Empowerment** — Sharing tools, building confidence so people can shape their own futures.
- **Excellence** — Striving for high standards, always looking for ways to improve and innovate.



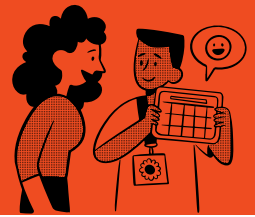
### How to Get Started

It's simple:

- Fill in the online form on Aspire's website with your details and how you'd like to be contacted.
- Aspire will get in touch by phone or email, and you can arrange a meeting to talk about what kind of support you need.
- Aspire will support you in the community — helping you access the services, activities or training that suit you best.

Referrals can come from yourself, your family/whānau, or providers you already work with.





## A message from Tim at Foundation

We're excited to share Foundation by Aspire, a fresh look in a new building, created to help people learn new skills, make connections, and take small steps toward work and being part of the community. It's all about growing, gaining confidence, and getting plenty of encouragement along the way.

Quinn Wilkes and I (Tim) will be here to support you as you explore what matters most and work toward your goals. We know things are better when we do them together, and this is a place to feel included, supported, and connected.

Tim Bray, Community Participation Lead







## Foundation Trip – Mangaiti Gully

Today we went to Mangaiti Gully and had a great time learning new things in a fun way.

First, we fed the eels. Everyone loved it, and we learned lots of cool facts about how the eels live and why they come back to the same stream.

We also looked at a map of the gully. The map helped us see where we were and how big the whole area is. By the end, we could point to where we started and where we walked.

We practised some everyday work skills too:

- When to take breaks
- How to make coffee
- How to clean up after ourselves

These small things are important in any workplace and help us build good habits for real jobs.

The walk was beautiful. We saw lots of native trees and birds, and it felt like we were deep in the bush — but we were only 300 metres from Jae, T and Todd's homes!

This is what Foundation is all about: learning new skills, getting outside, having fun, and feeling more confident.





PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL AS PART  
OF SUMMER IN THE CITY, CREATING A SAFE AND VIBRANT  
CENTRAL CITY FOR EVERYONE

# CAROLS IN THE CITY



**19TH DECEMBER, 2025**  
5 PM - LATE

GARDEN PLACE, HAMILTON CBD

**LIVE MUSIC – FOOD – CAROLS – MOVIE**

ENJOY STAGE ENTERTAINMENT, THE HAMILTON NIGHT  
MARKETS, A CHRISTMAS CAROL SING-ALONG, AND A  
CHRISTMAS MOVIE TO FINISH THE NIGHT.

BRING YOUR PICNIC SET UP.

**GET A FREE BUS RIDE WITH BUSIT TO THE EVENT  
HAMILTON SERVICES ONLY**



**CHRISTMAS MOVIE KINDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY VISION COMPLETE  
EARTHWORKS AND THE PULLMAN HOTEL.**



# experience and **Community**

[www.aspire.org.nz](http://www.aspire.org.nz)

## Visiting the multi-sensory room at



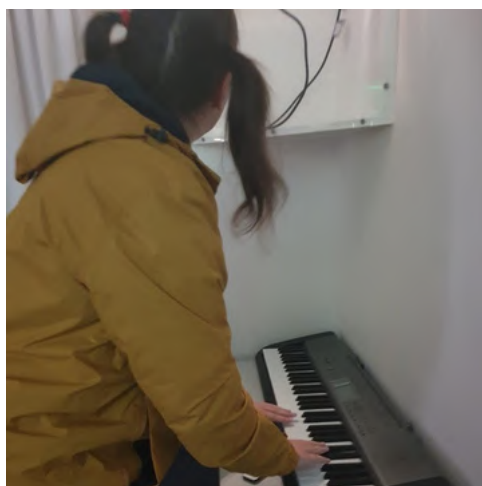
## Your Way | Kia Roha

Erika and Izzy had an amazing time exploring the Whare-O-Rongo Multi-Sensory Room in Hamilton! The room is full of gentle lights, calming sounds, and fun textures to touch and explore, the perfect place to relax, laugh, and enjoy a bit of sensory magic.

Located at Your Way | Kia Roha, 20 Palmerston Street, the room offers sessions for people with disabilities to unwind or be gently stimulated in a safe, welcoming space.

Sessions run Monday to Friday, 9.00am–5.00pm, and Saturdays, 9.30am–12.30pm, at just \$7.50 an hour for one person or \$15 for two or more (support workers attend free with training).

If you haven't tried it yet, book in and see why Erika and Izzy can't stop smiling!



summer 2025





## Building Skills Together: A Health & Wellness Group Bringing People Together

For almost a year now, a dedicated staff member Ana Lantoc, alongside Patrina, has been leading a fantastic internal group that brings together people we support from Waipapa and Sirius Crescent. What began as simple Tuesday cooking classes has grown into a vibrant Health and Wellness programme that supports skill-building, teamwork, and confidence.

The group first came together to learn basic cooking skills, with staff guiding everyone through simple, tasty recipes. Over time, the sessions evolved into something bigger. A space where people could learn healthy habits, cook nutritious meals, and enjoy being active together.

Last term, the group officially re-launched as Health and Wellness Sessions, combining healthy cooking with fun physical activity. One of the highlights has been Zumba dance, which has brought plenty of laughter, music, and movement to each meet-up.

Thanks to Patrina's enthusiasm and her passion for cooking, participants have learned valuable food preparation skills and gained a better understanding of healthy living. The group has not only helped people stay fit and well, it has also created a supportive, social environment where everyone works together and builds confidence.

It's wonderful to see staff and the people we support joining forces from different houses to learn, grow, and have fun. A huge thank-you to the team for creating such an empowering and engaging weekly programme!





# Community

## A Wheelie Good Time at the Car Museum!



Samantha, Zoe, Sophie White, Sophie Lowther, and Kym recently took a trip to the Car Museum. They spent time exploring the impressive range of vehicles on display, from vintage classics to modern designs. It was a great chance to see something different, learn a bit of history, and enjoy a change of scenery.

If you haven't been before, the Car Museum is well worth a visit! It's a fun and interesting outing for anyone who enjoys discovering new things or simply taking a relaxed day out with friends.





Local

# Events



GLOtron! is a magical maze of glow-in-the-dark storyscapes, which create an utterly original world for children to explore. It invites children to wander through its mysterious interactive stories and discover multi-sensory Glow-tastic creatures and characters.

Each twist and turn through GLOtron!'s mysterious maze brings extraordinary sensations for the senses, from knife and fork lightning glowing in the sky, to being eyeballed by enormous giants or feeling the tickles of huge fluffy cylinders. As children enjoy this extraordinary storytelling, they also learn; playing number and word challenges as they move through this whimsical world. This Glow Show's mashup of science, education art, storytelling and puppetry has charmed more than 115,000 children throughout Aotearoa since it was created in 2017, and this very special event in Hamilton comes amid huge demand for a show that is loved by young and old alike.

Grab your tickets from [glowshow.co.nz](http://glowshow.co.nz) now! This will sell out, so get in fast. The experience lasts approximately 40 minutes. Special events may be possible on request. Tickets can include a behind-the-scenes tour.

## CHRISTMAS CREATIVE MARKET

### SUNDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2025

The Barn, Gate 3 Brooklyn Road  
Claudelands Hamilton 8am to 12noon

Buy local Handmade Crafts from the people who make them

## CAMBRIDGE TWILIGHT MARKET

### TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2025

Victoria Square Cambridge  
4pm to 7pm

Come and get your Christmas Day fresh food





# Community

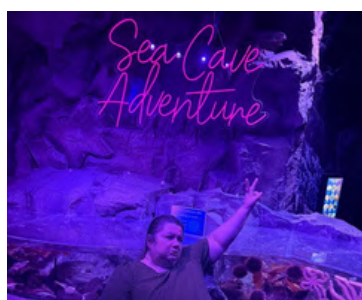
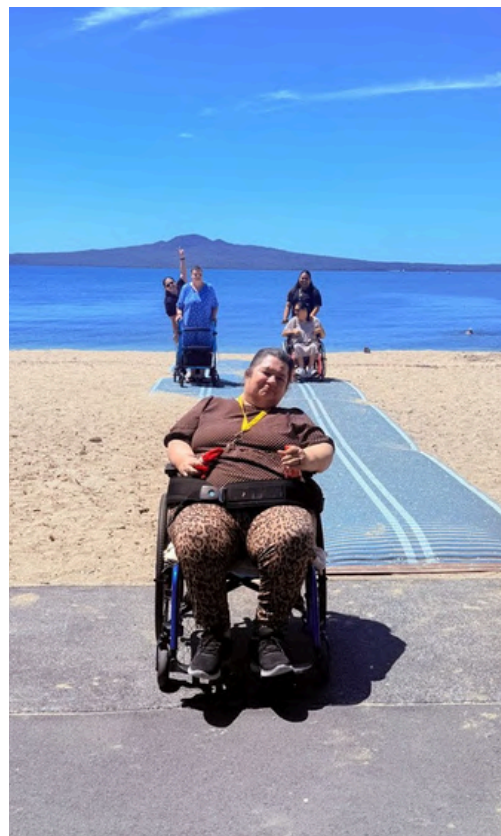
## A Wonderful Day Out in Auckland: Exploring Sea Life & Mission Bay

A fantastic day trip to Auckland, filled with adventure, discovery, good food, and plenty of smiles. Their first stop was Sea Life Kelly Tarlton's, where they spent the morning exploring the underwater world and learning about an incredible range of marine life.

They were able to get up close to penguins, turtles, stingrays, sharks, jellyfish, colourful fish species, and many other fascinating sea creatures. The excitement and wonder on their faces said it all. Kelly Tarlton's offered a truly unforgettable experience.

After their marine adventure, the group headed to Mission Bay for a relaxing lunch by the water. Fish, chips, and squid rings were the favourites of the day, enjoyed together in the sunshine. To top it all off, they treated themselves to delicious desserts from Movenpick, followed by a peaceful walk along the beach.

It was a warm, happy, and memorable outing for everyone involved. The photos perfectly capture the joy of the day. A wonderful combination of learning, laughter, and connection.





experience and

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# Community



**—THE—  
CANVAS  
PROJECT**  
CREATING FOR A CAUSE

**Raising money to support the  
mental health of those with disabilities.**

**Step 1**  
SIGN UP TO  
RECEIVE YOUR  
**FREE**  
CANVAS PACK

**Step 2**  
**CREATE  
&  
SUBMIT**  
YOUR ART WORK

**Step 3**  
**ATTEND THE  
EXHIBITION**  
6-8TH MARCH 2026  
AT TE ANAMUTU  
LIBRARY

Donated artwork will be displayed and sold, with  
proceeds supporting the mental health of people  
with disabilities in our community.

For more information & to sign up go to  
[www.studiotwonz.co.nz](http://www.studiotwonz.co.nz)

**SCAN  
ME TO  
SIGN  
UP**



summer 2025



# Contact us



## Feedback

I'd Love to Hear from You!

Do you have a story, photos, writing, or artwork you'd like to share? We'd love to feature it in our newsletter.

Got feedback or ideas for future editions? Let me (Lee) know, I want to make this newsletter even better for you!

✉ Email me at: [Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz](mailto:Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz)

☎ 022 4967479 - Lee Samuel, Outcomes Manager

Let's keep building this together—your input makes all the difference!

Complaint

Compliment



We value your feedback . If you have a complaint or a compliment, please reach out to us.

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OR you can fill in your details below and drop to our Head Office.

☐

Please call me

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Phone

Email

If you prefer you can contact the Office of the Health and Disability Commissioner Directly

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Fax: 09 373 1061

Email: [hdc@hdc.org.nz](mailto:hdc@hdc.org.nz)

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Website: [www.hdc.org.nz](http://www.hdc.org.nz)



