

WINTER 2026



Carwash success

Hear about the money raised at the carwash fundraiser. Run by the Aspire social club.

What's on at Foundation?

Ever wondered what happens at Foundation? get a peak inside!

What events are coming up!

Including, Boundries workshop, Lonestar dinner and many more.

Winter Newsletter



David Darling – CEO

As we move into winter, I thought it would be a good time to check in and share a bit about what has been happening over the past few months.

It has been a pretty busy time for us. Some of the homes we were renting were no longer available, so we had to find new places to move to. We knew some of these changes were coming, but that did not make it any easier, finding suitable homes proved quite challenging at times.

Our team has been working really hard behind the scenes to manage all of this and to make sure things kept running as smoothly as possible for everyone. They have taken on a lot, and we all should be really proud of how they have supported each other and kept things moving forward.

Along the way, we have learned a lot too. These experiences will help us do things even better in the future when we need to make changes again.

We have also had a few changes in people. Janet, our whaanau liaison, has moved out of the region. We were really sad to see both her and her son Thomas go, but they have moved on for family reasons and we wish them all the very best. Because of this, we are now looking for a new whaanau liaison person to join us. We have also seen a couple of people move on from Aspire, and it reminds me that when change is proposed about something as important as leaving that the persons voice is heard. Leaving is ok if it is wanted by you.

It is hard to believe we are already halfway through 2026! As the weather gets colder, it is a good time to start thinking about how we can stay connected and keep busy. Maybe it is inviting someone over, cooking a favourite meal, or heading out to see a movie.

Be sure to check in with Lee and the team as well, they may have some activities planned that you can join in with.

And do not forget to send us photos! We really enjoy seeing what you have been up to and how you are keeping busy over winter, it is great way for everyone to stay connected.

Thanks for being part of Aspire-Community Support.



Kia Ora Aspire Whānau,

Where has this year gone! We are already in the sixth month — it certainly feels like time is flying by. As we head into winter, I hope everyone has had their vaccination for the upcoming flu season.

I've also been keeping an eye on the news regarding the Middle East, hoping to see petrol prices come down soon so we can enjoy trips a bit further afield from Hamilton.

On another note, if anyone currently has the Aspire fishing rods and tackle box, could you please return them to 3 Hancock Drive? Alternatively, you can drop them off at the Foundation Office at 25 Rifle Range Road. A resident is keen to go fishing at Kauri Point, and it would be great to support this outing.

Ngā mihi,
Gerard Knapp
Off the Cuff Editor Newsletter.

Self-Advocacy



Friday's Bi monthly 1-2pm 25 Rifle Range Rd - Foundation

Coffee Group

Socialising & Self Advocacy

May – Friday 22nd 1 - 2pm

July – Friday 31st 1 - 2pm

September - Friday 25th 1 - 2pm

November – Friday 27th 1 - 2pm



Hosted by
Lee Samuel - Outcomes Manger
Aspire

Julie Noonan - Advocate Waikato
Nationwide Health & Disability Advocacy Service



Coffee, Conversation & Connection

Looking for a relaxed place to catch up with others, enjoy a coffee, and have a chat? Join us at our bi-monthly Coffee Group, hosted by Lee Samuel Outcomes Manager at Aspire and Julie Noonan, an independent disability advocate. Together, we aim to create a welcoming and inclusive space where people can connect, share experiences, and enjoy good company.

There is no formal agenda, just coffee, conversation, and the opportunity to meet new people. If you'd like to talk about self-advocacy, your rights, navigating services, or simply hear about other people's experiences, Lee, Julie, and fellow attendees are always happy to chat. Whether you're looking for advice, encouragement, or just a friendly conversation, everyone is welcome.

Next Coffee Group: Friday, 31 July

Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Location: Foundation

No registrations are required, simply come along. We'd love to see some new faces join us for a coffee, a chat, and a relaxed afternoon of connection and community.

Next meeting



Social Club Committee 2026

Social Club Committee meetings

Held at 103 Tawa street

Monday 13th April 1-2pm

Monday 4th May 1-2pm

Monday 8th June 1-2pm

Monday 6th July 1-2pm

Monday 3rd August 1-2pm

Monday 7th September 1-2pm

Monday 5th October 1-2pm

Monday 2nd November 1-2pm

These meetings are for committee members only.

2026 committee members are - Rentia De Vries, Sharkaela Paora, Mandy Higgins, Kim Jones, Caroline Morrison, Max Nicols, Jeremy Piercy and Ana Tahapehi, Sam Jordan with support from Kim Prasad and Tina Ranson

Sub-committees - Sometimes members will be part of sub-committees that meet between main meetings to help organise and get larger events up and running. Information about these meetings will be provided separately as needed.

Next meeting



Self-Advocacy Sub Committee 2026

Self-Advocacy Sub Committee

Held at Foundation - 25 Rifle Range Road

Friday 17th April 4.30-5.30pm

venue TBC - FULL MEETING OPEN TO ALL

Friday 15th May 4-5pm - Foundation - sub committee

Friday 10th July 4-5pm - Foundation - sub committee

Friday 11th September 4-5pm - Foundation - sub committee

Thursday 19th November 10am-12pm

venue TBC - FULL MEETING OPEN TO ALL

Sub committee meetings are for committee members only.

2026 committee members are - Gerard Kanpp, Malcolm Matheson, Mark Matheson, Stephanie Tong, Adele whiteside, Elaine Wilson, Shona Inglis, Matthew Dempsey, Shiona Harris and Rebecca Marshall.

Full Meeting - These meeting are held twice per year and are open to all people who are supported by Aspire. Staff do not attend unless needed to support individual people. There will be speakers talking about self advocacy, your hear about what the sub committee is doing, and you will have a chance to have your voice heard.

ASPIRE EVENTS 2026

JUNE-DEC

Bookings - All events other than The Self advocacy meetings require bookings. All bookings are done with -
Lee Samuel.
Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz
022 496 7479



12
JUN



BOUNDARIES WORKSHOP

Friday June 12th 10am-12pm - 103 Tawa Street.
Supportive environment learning about boundaries and how to use them in your life. Run by Lee Samuel. Free for people supported by Aspire.

21
JUL



STICKER MAKING

Tuesday July 21st 10am - 11.30am, Rototuna Library, 30 North city road, Rototuna North. Turn your designs into stickers. learning to use equipment you can use again in the future at the library. Free for people supported by Aspire.

14
AUG



TE WHARE TAONGA O WAIKATO MUSEUM AND GALLERY

Friday August 14th Time TBC - Creative workshop based on a current exhibition and time in the interactive area 'Excite'.

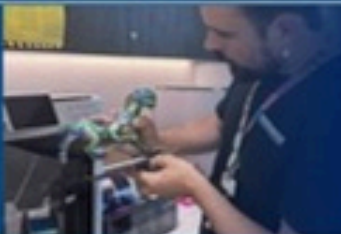
15
SEP



BOUNDARIES WORKSHOP

Tuesday September 15th 12.30-2.30pm - 103 Tawa Street. Supportive environment learning about boundaries and how to use them in your life. Run by Lee Samuel. Free for people supported by Aspire.

6
OCT



3D PRINTING

Tuesday October 6th 10am - 11.30am, Rototuna Library, 30 North city road, Rototuna North. Learn how to use the 3D printer. Equipment you can use again in the future at the library. Free for people supported by Aspire.

19
NOV



FULL SELF ADVOCACY MEETING

Thursday Nov 19th 4.30-5.30pm - Foundation, 25 Rifle Range road, Dinsdale. This is a place where people supported by Aspire can speak up, have their voices heard, learn about self-advocacy, and connect with others in a supportive space.

December Events will be on the Social Club Calendar.

Winter 2026



Social Club Car Wash a Huge Success!

The Aspire Social Club held its very first fundraising car wash, and what a fantastic success it was!

The Social Club, which was established earlier this year and is run entirely by people we support at Aspire, came up with the idea as a way to raise funds to help make future events more accessible for everyone. Club members understand that the cost of tickets, meals, and activities can sometimes make it difficult for people to participate, and they wanted to do something about it.

The car wash was completely their idea, and while staff had a few questions about how it might work, the Social Club members were determined to give it a go. They certainly proved that determination pays off! An incredible 17 people we support volunteered on the day, supported by just 6 staff members. Together, they washed an impressive 32 cars in only 3 hours – that's one car every 5 minutes!



But washing cars was only part of the story. There were many important jobs that helped make the event run smoothly. Team members welcomed customers, handled payments, directed traffic, managed the flow of vehicles, cooked and served food from the BBQ, looked after the drinks table, played music to create a fun atmosphere, and held signs to let passing traffic know about the event.



The commitment shown by everyone was inspiring. Several people arrived more than an hour early to help set up and stayed afterwards to pack everything away. Throughout the day there was a real sense of teamwork, pride, and community spirit.



One of the most rewarding parts of the day was hearing comments such as, "I'm really good at this job!" and "When can we do this again?" The event gave people the opportunity to contribute, learn new skills, work as a team, and showcase their abilities.

recently

Social Club

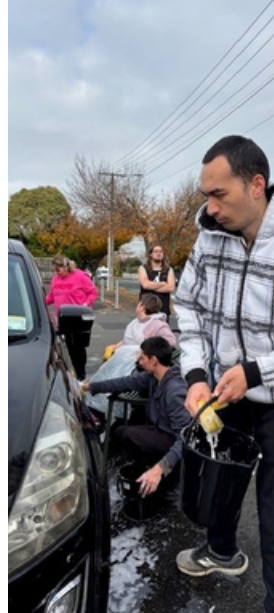
www.aspire.org.nz



We were also delighted to welcome people from other Aspire services who came along to support the fundraiser and see the incredible teamwork in action. Thanks to the hard work of everyone involved, the car wash raised an amazing \$370. This money will go directly towards helping people supported by Aspire participate in Social Club events, ensuring that cost is less of a barrier and that more people can enjoy the opportunities to connect, have fun, and be part of their community.

The car wash was about much more than raising money. It was a powerful example of people coming together, supporting one another, and showing what can be achieved when people are given the opportunity to lead. The Social Club should be extremely proud of what they accomplished.

The social club have a number of exciting initiatives coming up. These include events designed to celebrate and highlight Māori culture, as well as several other new activities and opportunities that the club is currently developing. If the success of the car wash is anything to go by, there are some exciting things ahead for the Social Club and the wider Aspire community.





LONE
STAR

Lonestar
Dinner

FRIDAY 19TH JUNE 6pm

LONESTAR ROTOTUNA
16 Horshamdown road Hamilton

\$28 MEAL DEAL

Pick one of the following 6 meals + a drink (juice or fizzy)

Mussel Mania

southern fried chicken

Glen Campbell Burger(chicken)

Gerhard Burger(Beef)

Timmy the Taco(Chicken, beef or Vege)

Midnight Nachos(chicken, beef or Vege)

Quesadilla(chicken, beef or vege)

Burrito(chicken, beef or vege)

Aspire Social club event

**•LED BY US
FOR US•**

BOOK NOW

Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz

022 496 7479

Celebrating

Happy Birthday Howard!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Rentia!



Happy 49th Birthday Nai

Nai celebrated her 49th birthday surrounded by her flatmates and plenty of smiles. Everyone came together to make the day special, singing "Happy Birthday" and sharing a delicious lemon and raspberry cake. Nai really enjoyed the celebration and all the attention, joining in with the candles and soaking up the happy atmosphere. It was a lovely day filled with laughter, good company, and shared memories.



Celebrating



Happy Birthday Ross

Ross celebrated his birthday on 31 March with a great day shared alongside his housemates and staff. He kindly shouted food for everyone, making the celebration extra special. Ross was really happy with how the day turned out and appreciated all the decorations, effort, and support that helped make his birthday such an enjoyable occasion.

Happy 
Birthday****

Nadine

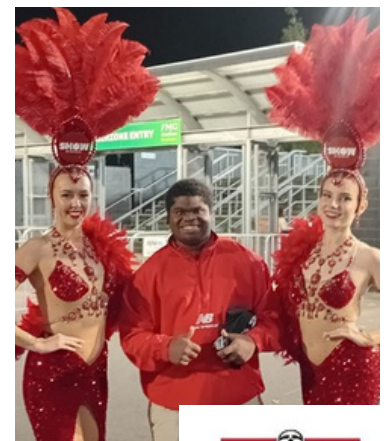


Achievements



Keeping Moving This Winter

As the days get shorter and the temperatures drop, it can be harder to find the motivation to get out and exercise. That's why it's great to see Reon and Kelor continuing to make their health and wellbeing a priority. Whether it's building strength, improving fitness, or simply enjoying the routine of getting out and about, every gym session is an achievement worth celebrating. Their commitment and determination are a great reminder that staying active is important all year round. Fantastic work, Reon and Kelor, keep it up!





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.

12th June Friday 10am-12pm

OR

15th September
Tuesday 12.30-2.30

Aspire Head office

103 Tawa Street

Bookings are essential - contact
Lee 022 496 7479 or Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz



What we will cover

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

This workshop is open to people supported by Aspire, at no cost to them.



Achievements



Reconnecting After Seven Years

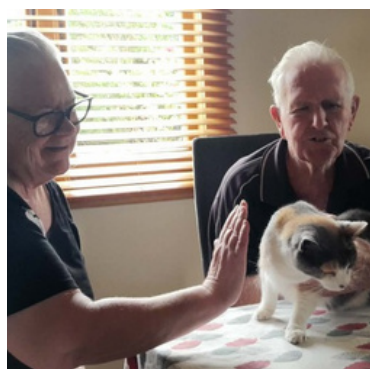
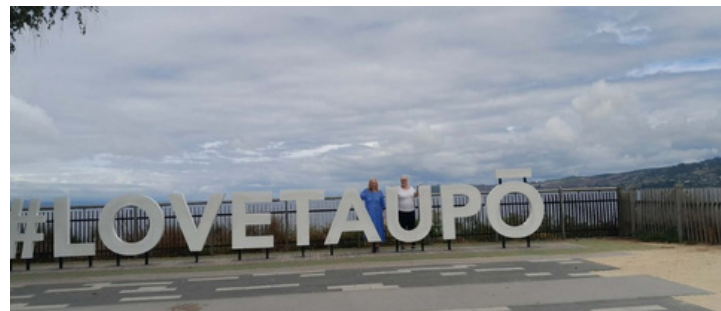
One of Joy's personal goals has been to reconnect with her cousins, Mavis and Eric, whom she had not seen for seven years. Recently, with support from staff, Joy was able to make that goal a reality during a special three-night, four-day visit.

For many people, reconnecting with family after a long time apart can feel exciting, but it can also be a little daunting. Life takes people in different directions, and years can pass before opportunities arise to spend time together again. Taking that first step can require courage, but the rewards are often well worth it.

Joy was delighted to spend time with Mavis and Eric, sharing memories, catching up on each other's lives, and strengthening family connections that are so important to her. The visit was a meaningful experience and brought Joy a great deal of happiness.

At Aspire, we know that goals are not always about learning new skills or trying new activities. Sometimes the most important goals are about relationships, belonging, and maintaining connections with the people who matter most. Joy's visit is a wonderful reminder of the value of family and the positive impact that reconnecting with loved ones can have on our wellbeing.

Congratulations, Joy, on achieving such an important goal. We are thrilled that you were able to reconnect with your cousins and create new memories together.



Community

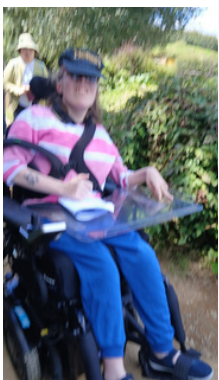
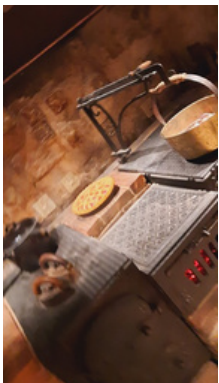
Visiting Hobbiton



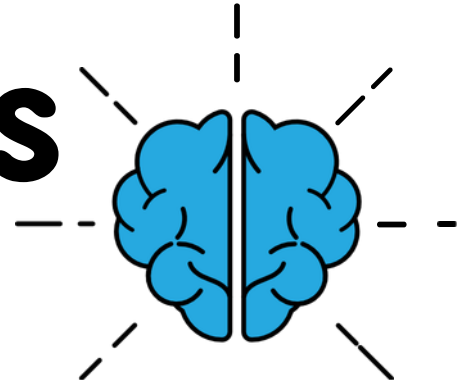
I recently enjoyed a wonderful visit to Hobbiton, one of New Zealand's most iconic attractions. I was delighted by the beautifully maintained movie set, complete with charming Hobbit holes, lush green gardens, and the famous Party Tree. The guided tour brought the magic of Middle-earth to life, and I especially loved hearing behind-the-scenes stories from the filming of The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit trilogies. Make an note that Just to be ready for the bumpy rides and long walk.

At the end of the tour, visitors acn go for some shopping and purchase something for their loved ones. A highlight of the day was visiting the Green Dragon Inn, where I feel relaxed with a refreshing drink and soaked in the unique atmosphere.

It was totally unforgettable experience for me and I highly recommends Hobbiton to anyone looking for a touch of adventure and fantasy in a stunning countryside setting. - Bethany Harward



Try out COPING SKILLS BINGO




Take a walk outside.	Stretch for 5 minutes.	Drink a glass of water.	Do 10 jumping jacks.	Try deep breathing for 3 minutes.
Write in a journal for 10 minutes.	List 3 things you're grateful for.	Draw or doodle your feelings.	Listen to your favorite calming music.	Practice self-compassion with an affirmation
Call or text a friend.	Spend time with a pet.		Write a letter to someone you miss.	Compliment someone genuinely
Ask for a hug or give someone one.	Start a small DIY project.	Color in a coloring book.	Bake or cook something new.	Rearrange a small corner of your room.
Try a 5-minute meditation.	Watch the clouds or stargaze	Light a candle and relax.	Practice grounding by naming 5 things you see.	Visualize a favorite peaceful place.

Small Steps, Big Impact: Find Calm, One Square at a Time!

create your own **COPING SKILLS BINGO**



**Small Steps, Big Impact: Find Calm, One Square
at a Time!**

Foundation

Big Smiles and Fresh Coffee at Fosters!

We are so excited to share some wonderful news! Kim and Adele just had their very first visit to Foster Group Limited and it was a huge success.

They are currently training to start work experience as baristas right in the Fosters reception area. It's been a great journey so far, with training happening at both the Foundation and on-site at Fosters to get everything just right before they officially start.

Hear from our new baristas:

"I'm proud and happy that I can start... I get to make new mates... it's nice to be challenged." — Adele

"It's a challenge and I'm looking forward to working there... they're friendly people." — Kim

A massive thank you to Fosters Construction for opening your doors and welcoming us into your space. We love seeing our community come together like this!

Stay tuned for more updates as Kim and Adele start serving up those brews!



Panel and Paint visit

A big thank you to Ross and Heather at Chartwell Panel & Paint for welcoming Foundation in for a tour of your business today.

We all had the chance to look around the workshop, see different parts of the business in action, ask questions, and learn more about the work that goes into panel and paint.

Visits like this are really valuable. They help us look outside of ourselves and see what's out there in the community, what kinds of environments people enjoy, and what interests could grow into goals or pathways down the track.

Just as importantly, these experiences also help us learn what might not be the right fit, and that's valuable too. Finding out what you don't enjoy or feel comfortable with is part of building confidence, direction, and independence.

We really appreciate Ross and Heather taking the time to share their knowledge and open their doors to us.

Foundation

Explore plus plus plus

Huge shoutout to everyone taking part in our brand new Foundation programme, Explore PLUS!

Every week, our participants are given a destination somewhere in Hamilton. From there, it's completely up to them to act as the navigators and timekeepers, working out the public transport routes, tracking the buses, and managing the schedules to get the whole group there.

There's no backup vehicle waiting around. If a bus is late or a transfer gets missed, the team jumps into action, works together, and figures out the next step.

We are so incredibly proud of the independence, problem-solving, and amazing teamwork on display. This isn't just about reaching a cool spot in town, it's about building the confidence to handle real-life challenges together. Every successful arrival is a massive win because our participants made it happen themselves.

Brilliant work, everyone. You absolutely rock!



Baking Up a Storm with David!

Our fearless CE, David Darling, recently stepped into the kitchen to show off his stellar baking skills!

He treated the crew in the Kitchen Project to a hands-on masterclass, teaching us all how to bake his famous pear, ginger, and white chocolate muffins.

Needless to say, they were absolutely delicious! The fantastic news? This recipe is officially locked in for the upcoming Foundation Cookbook. Keep an eye out for when it drops, you won't want to miss it!



Building Friendship Through Shared Goals

When we think about goals, we often imagine something personal that we work towards on our own. But goals can also be a great way to build relationships, stay connected, and support one another.

Claire and Shona have recently started meeting regularly as part of Claire's goal to spend more time catching up with friends. During their first visit, the pair shared morning tea and came up with an exciting plan to combine friendship and goal setting.

Together, they created a range of "little goals" and "big goals" that they can work towards as a team. Their little goals focus on everyday wellbeing and personal growth, such as practising meditation, learning new recipes, exploring a new language, and developing healthy habits. By encouraging each other and sharing their progress, they can stay motivated while having fun along the way.

Their bigger goals are all about creating opportunities to spend quality time together and build new experiences. These include hosting morning teas, planning activity-based outings, enjoying monthly movie dates and lunches, taking part in pampering sessions, and working together on baking and cooking projects from shopping right through to preparation.



What makes this approach so special is that the goals are not just about achieving a task. They are about creating connection, building confidence, and strengthening a friendship. Having someone to share goals with can make them more enjoyable and can help us stay motivated when things get challenging.

Claire and Shona's story is a great reminder that goals can be adapted to suit what is important to us. For some people, goals might focus on learning a new skill, becoming more independent, or improving health and wellbeing. For others, like Claire and Shona, goals can be a way to nurture friendships, create meaningful experiences, and support one another to live fulfilling lives.

We look forward to seeing what adventures, achievements, and memories Claire and Shona create together over the coming months.

A Fantastic Day at Hamilton Zoo's Disability Day

Several people supported by Aspire recently attended the Annual Disability Day at Hamilton Zoo, hosted by the Hamilton Dinsdale Lions Club.

The day was filled with fun activities, social connection, and plenty of smiles. Attendees enjoyed face painting, colouring activities, live music, refreshments, and a sausage sizzle, as well as the opportunity to explore the zoo and visit the animals.

The live band created a wonderful atmosphere throughout the event, with Sophie and Doreen even taking turns singing songs of their choice with the band. It was fantastic to see the confidence, joy, and enthusiasm shown throughout the performances.

Many people also enjoyed independently choosing face painting designs, connecting with others, and taking part in the relaxed and welcoming community atmosphere.

The free event provided a wonderful opportunity for community participation, social interaction, and trying new experiences in a supportive environment. Everyone returned home in high spirits after a day filled with laughter, music, connection, and fun memories.





Aspire Community Museum and Gallery Day a Huge Success

Recently, Aspire partnered with Waikato Museum to host a community museum day that brought people together for creativity, connection, and new experiences. Around 22 people attended the event, with most attendees being people supported by Aspire. The day was also opened up to people supported by Progress to Health and Enrich+, creating opportunities for wider community inclusion and social connection. Interestingly, opening the event to other organisations also encouraged greater participation from Aspire-supported people who were already attending Enrich+ day services that day.

The team at Waikato Museum warmly welcomed the group and guided everyone through several exhibitions, sharing stories and information in an engaging and accessible way. Many attendees shared that despite living locally for years, they had never visited the museum before. There was also positive feedback about how accessible the space felt and how friendly and supportive the staff were throughout the visit.

The exhibitions themselves created many natural opportunities for conversation, curiosity, and connection. People shared memories, asked questions, discussed different artworks and displays, and connected with others through shared experiences and ideas. For many attendees, the museum environment provided an easy and welcoming space for social interaction without pressure.

Following the tour, the group also spent time in Exscite, the museum's hands-on interactive exhibition space, where everyone had the opportunity to explore and engage with a range of creative activities together.

Beyond simply visiting a museum, the day created opportunities for people to build confidence, connect socially, and experience a community space that many had not previously felt comfortable accessing. Events like this help create stronger connections within our wider community and encourage people to explore new opportunities and interests. Due to the positive response, another museum day has already been booked for 14 August later this year.

If you have never visited Waikato Museum yourself, we highly encourage you to head along and explore everything they have to offer. The exhibitions are regularly changing, the interactive spaces provide fun for all ages, and the staff are always welcoming and happy to help.





Winslow Voices Lead the Way

At Winslow, self-advocacy has led to a meaningful change that is already making a real difference in daily life. The women living at Winslow identified the need for a more accessible bathroom and spoke up about what would help them feel safer, more comfortable, and more independent in their home. Their voices were listened to, their ideas were valued, and together a plan was put into action.

The newly completed bathroom was officially opened by Karen Shanks, who kindly cut the ribbon at the celebration. The project was made possible through the support of the Property Trust, and the finished result has been warmly welcomed by everyone involved.

Also pictured is Logan Yan, who managed the project from start to finish, working closely with contractors to help bring the vision to life. Holding the flowers while Karen performed the official opening duties, Logan proved to be a very worthy accomplice and played an important role in ensuring the project ran smoothly.

This project is a wonderful example of what can happen when people feel empowered to speak up about their needs and are supported to have a genuine say in the spaces they live in. Winslow's new bathroom is more than just a renovation, it is a celebration of listening, inclusion, and self-advocacy in action.



Frankton Thunder 2026





Sky city bowling

We recently enjoyed a fun-filled outing to SkyCity Hamilton for an afternoon of bowling, laughter, and friendly competition. Everyone arrived excited and ready to play, quickly getting into the spirit of the game by cheering each other on and celebrating each turn.

There were plenty of laughs throughout the day, with strikes, near misses, and even gutter balls all adding to the fun atmosphere. The outing created a relaxed and welcoming space for everyone to connect, encourage one another, and enjoy spending time together.

More than just a game of bowling, the day provided a great opportunity for social interaction, confidence building, and trying something active and enjoyable as a group. Everyone left in great spirits after a successful outing and is already looking forward to the next adventure together!



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

☎ 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.

07 839 0183

Lee.samuel@aspire.org.nz

Head Office, 103 Tawa Street, Hamilton

www.aspire.org.nz

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

Please call me

Please email me

Please visit me

Name

Phone

Email

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

PO Box 1791, Auckland 1140

Fax: 09 373 1061

Email: hdc@hdc.org.nz

Freephone: 0800 11 22 33

Website: www.hdc.org.nz

