

# Wellington Women's Refuge



**Annual Report**  
**1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023**

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## Organisational Overview

**This is our 45<sup>th</sup> year providing services to women and children in the Wellington Community. We work alongside our sister Māori Women's Refuge, Te Whare Rokiroki who provide services to Māori women and children. Our services are confidential and we support women whether they choose to leave or stay in a relationship. We work in a holistic way with survivors of domestic violence, walking alongside and empowering them to make safe decisions for their future.**

**Vision:** *All women & children living free from fear and violence.*

**Mission:** *Intervention, Prevention and Advocacy for all women and children experiencing domestic violence.*

**Who:** We work with women and their children who have experienced or who are experiencing domestic violence. Domestic violence involves one person dominating and controlling another person in a relationship. This can include a range of power and control tactics and may not always involve physical violence; the abuse

does not have to be physical violence for someone to access our service. The women we work with are from a range of ages, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and socio-economic backgrounds.

**Where:** The area we cover is Wellington city and surrounding suburbs up to but not including; Newlands/Johnsonville which is covered by Porirua Refuges and Petone which is covered by Hutt Refuges.

**How:** Wellington Women's Refuge provides support, information and advocacy to survivors of domestic violence; walking alongside and empowering them to make safe decisions for their future. We believe in women making their own decisions and don't put pressure on them to take steps they are not ready to or don't want to take. We will refer to other agencies as required and advocate with services such as police, lawyers, courts, housing, Oranga Tamariki or Work & Income. We provide women and their children with the option of a safe place to stay, and also support women and their children in the community. We operate a community office and a 24 hour

crisis telephone line assisted by a roster of volunteers responding to the crisis line outside working hours.

**Structure:** We operate under a governance board, currently made up of six members; some came on board as experienced crisis-line volunteers with our organisation and others new to the organisation, were invited on for their skills and experience. Day-to-day operations are coordinated by our manager; we have a team of 6 paid staff ensuring comprehensive services are available to clients and around 20 dedicated volunteers who support the organisation including filling the crucial role of answering the crisis-line outside of working hours.

**How to refer:** We are a free and accessible service; we don't have waiting lists for our crisis and social work support services. We take self-referrals as well as those that come from other people such as agencies, police, family and friends. A referral is as simple as a call to the crisis line or office.

## From the Manager

Reflecting on the last year I am proud of the work that has been achieved and positive about what we can accomplish going forward. The harsh reality of domestic violence means sadly it has been another busy year for Wellington Women's Refuge illustrating there is more work to be done addressing this issue.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated team of staff and volunteers who all contributed to our vital services of 24-hour crisis support, counselling and social work support and advocacy.

I am privileged to manage a team with such dedication and passion for providing an empathetic and respectful environment for all who walk through our doors seeking support.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our team for your commitment to ensuring women and children seeking safety from domestic violence have available the support they need. Your efforts have been outstanding over what has been another demanding year.

I would also like to thank our Governing Group for their support over the past year guiding us through and as always being available, responsive, and supportive.

A very heartfelt thank you to our Wellington community for your ongoing generosity in the form of donations, fundraisers and the like. From business & workplaces through to families & individuals. Your kindness not only supports our work but reminds us we have a community behind us.

We are pleased to see the results of increased awareness of domestic violence evident in responsive communities. However, on the ground, we still see the realities of systems that could be improved to prioritise safety and wellbeing for those experiencing domestic violence and we are passionate about continuing to advocate for the women and children we support.

As we look towards the year ahead we are committed to developing our team and our innovative specialist services to support women and children to live lives free from fear and violence. Moving forward we are well placed to navigate a path through whatever future challenges we encounter.

***Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi***



***Philippa McAtee***

## Chair's Report

It is my pleasure to present the annual report for Wellington Women's Refuge (WWR) 2022-2023. WWR has had another steady year, with 118 women and 77 children receiving support as community or safe-house clients. During the last few years we have faced the challenge of a more difficult recruitment climate, however we are proud to say we have been able to recruit and maintain a strong team of staff and volunteers to ensure a quality service is available to support women and children experiencing domestic violence.

The Governing Group is very grateful to our manager Philippa and to our staff and volunteers for their ongoing mahi. WWR staff continue to be based in our community office open to the public 9-5 weekdays.

A quarter of the way into this financial year, we unfortunately farewelled a dedicated long-term Governing Group member, Treasurer Olga Pleijte. Olga showed exceptional commitment to WWR and her considered and thorough approach to her role as Treasurer was greatly appreciated. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge her support of and commitment to WWR throughout her extensive time as a member, and to wish her all the very best as she returns to the Netherlands.

We also welcomed two new members to the Governing Group: Sonya Reid and Luisa Avia. Sonya has many years' experience as a mortgage broker in Wellington, while Luisa is a long-term volunteer with WWR and has a background working for Ministry of Health. We are thrilled to have the benefit of their respective viewpoints, skills and experience.

An achievement of the last financial year has been the completion of a new strategic plan, which set goals and objectives for the next three years. Our operational goals going forward include team development, strengthening and enhancing our service and maintaining a strong, independent identity as an organisation.

We continue to focus on maintaining our provision of high quality support to those experiencing family violence. We are proud of the very positive feedback that WWR regularly receives from the women we work with.

As was the case last year, we can be confident in being able to continue providing quality services to our community thanks to the ongoing generosity of and support from our community, as well as government funding and grants received.



**Cara Thorburn**



## Community Services: Social work support and advocacy



**WWR Social Work Team from left: Caitlin, Rita (Team Leader), Regan and Maani (front).**

Our community office based at 44 Wigan Street is open 9-5 weekdays. The office is easily accessible to clients and is a base for enquiries from the public, support work with clients, meetings, education and provision of our programmes.

Over the past year, Wellington Women's Refuge has supported **101 women and 72 children as community clients.**

Our community clients may be seeking support to leave an abusive relationship, have somewhere safe to stay, be rebuilding their lives after moving out of the safe-house, or the focus may be on remaining safe in their homes. While not needing to reside in our safehouse, community clients are still very much in need of crucial ongoing support and advocacy.

The service provided to these clients includes a non-judgmental and confidential listening ear, information, referrals and safety planning. Also provided is crucial emotional support and advocacy with other agencies such as police, lawyers, housing, Work & Income, Oranga Tamariki and support through court processes.

The families we work with represent a diverse group of women and children from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and identities. These families show immense bravery and strength during a stressful and often traumatic time in their lives. The majority of families who access Wellington Women's Refuge do so through self-referrals and many are reaching out for the first time.

### **Community Client feedback 2022/23:**

*'A huge sense of relief in asking for help and being given all the tools to help me through my situation.'*

*'I was referred to your service from a friend. I didn't think I would be able to access support as usually there are income thresholds, but income becomes a bit irrelevant when going through this. I just felt really supported. during a time when I needed it most. Thank you.'*

*'The help I got from Women's Refuge was amazing, I didn't know Women's Refuge did so much to help, I am grateful. I have gotten a lot more confident. I can drive again without feeling to anxious. Don't feel worried or scared anymore and I'm a lot happier.'*

*'I cannot really describe in words what it means to be supported in the way this service offers- at an incredibly vulnerable time, the words, the guidance and the follow up.'*



## Safe-house Support

The Wellington Women's Refuge safe-house is a residential home at a confidential location where women and their children who are escaping domestic violence can be safe while they plan for their future. Coming into the safe-house is a huge and often frightening step and women can feel safe in the knowledge that their safety is our top priority and that their choices regarding their future will be listened to and respected.

Over the past year we supported **17 women and 5 children** in our safe-house, a slight decrease on the previous year. We are committed to not turning away women needing safe-house accommodation for safety from domestic violence.

The average stay was **24 nights per family** this average includes women who may stay for one or two nights during a crisis and those who may stay a few months or longer due to the need to ensure ongoing safety and also waiting for long term housing to become available.

Access to housing is very much an issue for our clients with both private rentals and social housing very difficult to access in Wellington.

We provide information, support, and advocacy to all families during their stay with us and this support carries on once the family returns to the community for as long as it is required. Thanks to generous donations from the public we are often able to assist families with furniture, bedding and other household items for their new home. This can make a significant difference to a family that may have had to leave their home with few belongings.

### **Maani Williams our dedicated safe-house Coordinator**



*'I was referred to Refuge by police officers, I came into the safehouse feeling overwhelmed with emotions and anxieties, by the time I left I was feeling calmed and hopeful.'*

*'Maani was great! She was always on to it, quick in response, in delivering, helpful and supportive in many ways.'*

*'The safehouse was great, it accommodated my needs, provided a lot to get me started and I did feel safe. My cute little bedroom was just right for me, cozy and comfortable''*

*'I will always be thankful for everything they did for me, from giving me a safe place to stay when I had nowhere, to new furniture for my flat. They will always be in my heart.'*

**- Feedback from safe-house residents 2022/23**

## Crisis-line volunteers

**Wellington Women's Refuge operates a 24/7 crisis line which received 684 calls in the last year, an increase on the previous year. This is a vital service as accessibility is a must for women experiencing domestic violence who may have limited opportunity to ring or are in need of crisis support outside of our office hours.**



**We would like to take this opportunity to express how much Women's Refuge and our clients benefit from the time, energy and dedication of our volunteers, a heartfelt thank you to you all.**

Our after-hours crisis line volunteers work from their homes, with an answering service connecting the phone calls through to their own mobile phone. We are dependent on the huge number of hours donated by these voluntary staff. Our crisis line offers a 'non-judgmental ear' for women experiencing domestic violence and also offers support, information & advocacy.

In addition to providing support over the phone, if needed crisis-line advocates go out to meet women at places such as the hospital, police station, the safe-house or safe places close to where women are calling from. As valued members of our organisation we appreciate their enthusiasm and the range of skills they bring, crisis-line volunteers also contribute to the organisation in other areas.



Refuge members gathered at our annual Christmas Party

### **Feedback for crisis-line service 2022/23:**

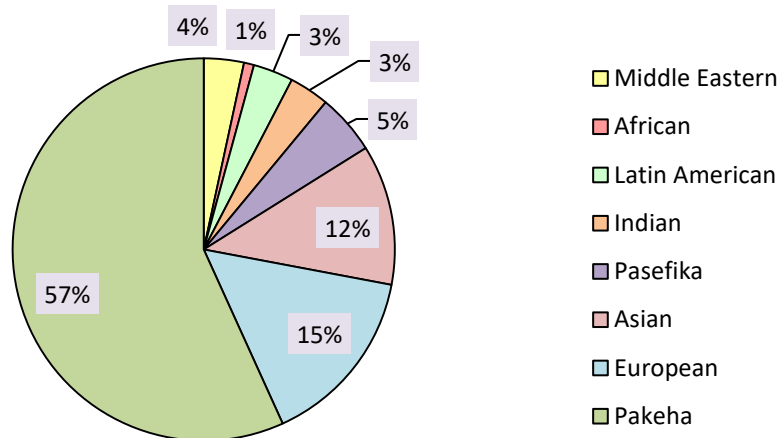
*'Amazing and supported, I contacted the afterhours crisis-line as I needed support to go to the police station.'*

*'From that first call I felt safe and secure and I felt as though I was going to be able to get through this.'*



## Statistics

### Ethnicity: Community

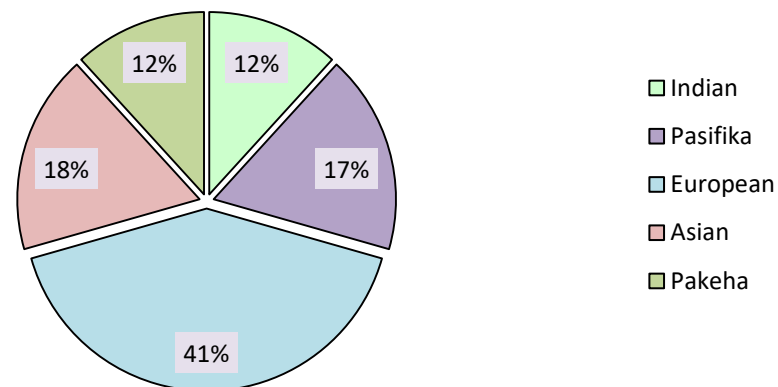


The above graph reflects ethnicity of women coming into our community services within the period.

The largest portion being Pakeha New Zealanders, followed by European, Asian and Pasifika. This is very similar to last year with the exception that the number of Pakeha women receiving support has increased by 18%.

European and Asian incorporate a wide range of ethnicities meaning those clients not from New Zealand are in fact relatively evenly spread out among a wide range of countries.

### Ethnicity: Safehouse



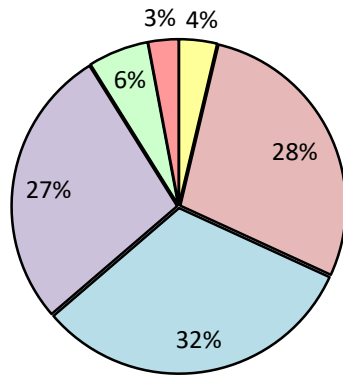
The above graph indicates the ethnicity of women coming into our safehouse within the period.

Women staying in the safehouse of European ethnicity have increased by 22% from the previous year. While women who are Pakeha have decreased by 30%.

## Statistics

### Age of clients

16-20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 60+

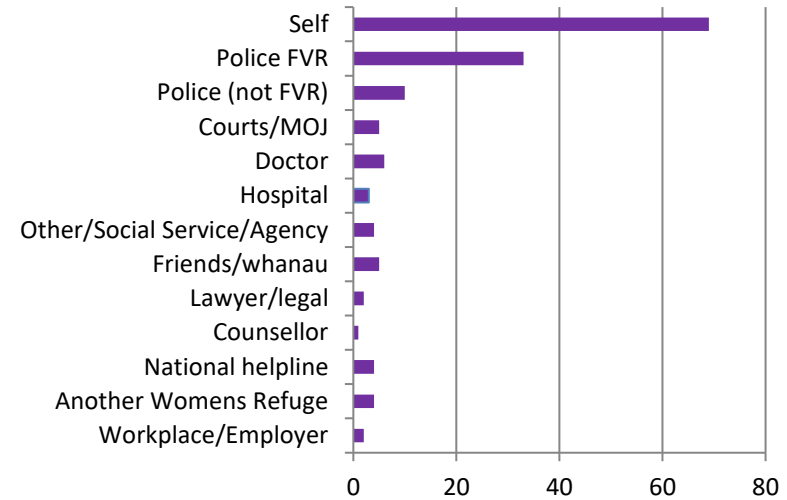


The above graph shows the age groups of women receiving our safe-house and community services. Within the period we had clients ranging from age 19 to 78.

The largest group was in the 31-40 age bracket.

In comparison to the previous year's figures we have an increase in the 31-40 age group.

### Client referral Source



The graph above shows referral pathways into our residential and safehouse service, illustrating that by far the largest number of women come into our service via self-referrals, although categorised as self-referrals we are aware some of these women are encouraged to access our services by supportive people in their lives.

Our next highest number of referrals come from police. In smaller amounts, clients come to us via MOJ, Doctor, hospital, other social services, family or friends etc.

# Tamariki Programme

The Tamariki Programme is a 10-session programme for school age children, coordinated by Jo Cattermole along with social worker Regan Wallace. The programme increases understanding on what abuse looks and feels like, keeping safe, and involving parents in developing positive communication skills for understanding and sharing feelings.

It is incredibly rewarding to see children flourish in the programme and the success of the programme is evident in the positive changes reported by parents. **19 children completed the Tamariki programme** in the 2022/23 year.

## **Quotes from Parent's for Children's Programme 2022/23:**

*'The programme has helped the boys feel safe and gain awareness of their emotions and meant they have a head-start in dealing with anger and abuse in their lives.'*

*'They talk to me more about things and are not so angry as before.'*

*'The programme has worked amazingly for her, she is sharing more and more expressive in her feelings.'*

***Our Children's Programme space***



## Women's Programme: Hope, revive, flourish

Our women's programme Hope, Revive, Flourish is a valuable part of our service, providing longer term therapeutic support for women rebuilding their lives after domestic violence. This year we ran two 13-week programmes over the course of the year **with 25 women participating in the programme.**

The group is facilitated by our Women's Programme Coordinator Rita Harris alongside Ange Chaney from Te Whare Rokiroki, Māori Women's Refuge. Rita and Ange are both qualified social workers with many years experience in the specialised field of domestic violence.

The programme is responsive to a wide range of women the work done in this space enhances ongoing safety and empowerment. Supporting women to better understand the impact their experience has had and empowering them to move forward in their lives with confidence and purpose.

### **Feedback from Women's Programme attendees 2022/23:**

*'The group gave me a safe space to talk. I have built more self confidence. Gained new friends and learnt that I am not alone.'*

*'Recognising abuse, knowing my worth. Wanting more for myself. Looking forward to a brighter future.'*

*'The programme was empowering and life changing.'*

*'I have a whole new outlook on myself and life.'*

*Comfortable & confident in my own skin. Grateful that past trauma is no longer a heavy weight , I am set free.'*

*'This programme was life-changing. It was the best course I have ever been on. The facilitators were knowledgeable , smart caring and funny.'*

*'The programme gave me tools I needed to heal and get my life back on track. It felt safe nurturing and positive and I looked forward to coming back each week. Ange and Rita have helped me immensely and are amazing facilitators. I also really appreciated the extra touches like the food.'*



## Community Education

Community education remains a focus for Wellington Women's Refuge as our commitment to preventative work in the field of domestic violence. This year we delivered training to **6 organisations**, this was one area of our service still impacted the by Covid pandemic with less requests for group trainings. This may well also reflect the many workplaces continuing with days working from home.

Trainings were delivered on request to organisations who had requested domestic violence training specific to their workplace or group.

We also attend speaking engagements, utilising the opportunity to educate our community about our services, the work we do and how to support victims of domestic violence.

Much of our training is delivered alongside Te Whare Rokiroki, Māori Women's Refuge reflecting our parallel development model.



***Our manager Philippa McAtee representing Wellington Women's Refuge at a Women's Day event hosted by the Royal Thai Embassy, speaking alongside Rob McCann from White Ribbon and Suzanne Manning from National Council of Woman NZ***

## Collaboration

**We endeavour to establish strong working relationships with relevant agencies and organisations to ensure the best possible outcomes for the women and children we work with. Some of the collaborative work we do is explained below.**

### Police:

Our collaboration with the police enables us to contact women after police 111 call-outs to family violence incidents to offer victims of these incidents support from Wellington Women's Refuge. For many women this is a time of crisis - when they are looking at their options and in need information, support with safety and a confidential listening ear.

Next to self-referrals, our largest numbers of referrals come from the police. Over the past year we have received **656 family violence reports (polFVR)** from police, this is an increase from the previous year. We attend weekly case management meetings with Police, Courts, Probation, Oranga Tamariki, social housing providers and other services to ensure that families are receiving appropriate follow up and support and to identify when further collaborative support may be needed.

We value the benefits of being affiliated members of the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuge's (NCIWR) and having close working relationships with our sister Refuges particularly those in the Lower North region.

### **Feedback on our relationship with other services 2022/23:**

*'Particularly helpful was the relationship they have with the police- this was very important in my case, also lawyers.*

## Treasurers Report

As the figures on the following pages show Wellington Women's Refuge recorded a total income of \$1,025,753 for the financial year beginning 1st of April 2022 through to 31st of March 2023. The total expenditure was \$819,163. The resulting balance is a surplus of \$426,410.

This surplus is a result of increased government funding and bequests received. Once again we closed this financial year with a healthy balance.

Grant funding was successful this year due to the great work from our Funding Coordinator and Manager.

We are extremely grateful for the following bequests:

Margaret Ann Tibbles Trust Annual Distribution - \$7,200

Margaret Mallet - \$834.00

Gabrielle McLauchlan - \$40,000

Our Women's Programmes, Children's Programme and Strengthening Safety Services continued to provide steady funding streams through funded referrals from MOJ with whom we are contracted to provide these services. Alongside the MSD contract that comes through our National Office this is a great funded service for WWR.



***Deenie Roche***



**Wellington Women's Refuge Group Incorporated (Group)**  
**Statement of Financial**  
**Performance**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2023**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Group 2023</b>	<b>Group 2022</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue	1	314,070	215,089
Revenue from providing goods or services	1	833,201	784,379
Interest, dividends and other investment revenue	1	39,635	18,350
Other Revenue	1	58,667	58,667
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>1,245,573</b>	<b>1,076,485</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Expenses related to fundraising	2	3,327	1,887
Volunteer and employee related costs	2	527,059	396,241
Costs related to providing goods or services	2	36,738	52,072
Other expenses	2	252,039	243,997
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>819,163</b>	<b>694,197</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>		<b>426,410</b>	<b>382,288</b>

*This financial information is extracted from the full financial statements which are available on request*

**Wellington Women's Refuge Group Incorporated (Group)**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at 31 March 2023**

	Note	Group 2023	Group 2022
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Bank accounts and cash	3	660,563	561,278
BNZ Term Deposit	3	1,340,373	1,020,342
Debtors and prepayments	3	16,552	10,280
GST Receivable		2,142	8,137
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>2,019,630</b>	<b>1,600,037</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	116,069	124,305
Investments	3	252,007	257,987
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>368,076</b>	<b>382,292</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>2,387,706</b>	<b>1,982,329</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors and accrued expenses	4	40,446	59,830
Employee costs payable	4	46,956	48,377
GST Payable		-	-
Funds belonging to another Organisation		-	-
Grants received in advance		14,056	14,284
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>101,458</b>	<b>122,491</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>101,458</b>	<b>122,491</b>
<b>Total Assets less Total Liabilities (Net Assets)</b>		<b>2,286,248</b>	<b>1,859,838</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>			
Accumulated Funds Surplus Reserve	6	2,286,248	1,859,838
<b>Total Accumulated Funds</b>		<b>2,286,248</b>	<b>1,859,838</b>

*This financial information is extracted from the full financial statements which are available on request*

**Changes in Accumulated Funds  
This Year**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Accumulated Surpluses or (Deficits)</b>	<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Total</b>
Opening Balance	1,859,838	-	1,859,838
Surplus/(Deficit)	426,410	-	426,410
Transfer (to)/from Reserves	-	-	-
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>2,286,248</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,286,248</b>

**Last Year**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Accumulated Surpluses or (Deficits)</b>	<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Total</b>
Opening Balance	1,476,961	589	1,477,550
Surplus/(Deficit)	382,288	-	382,288
Transfer (to)/from Reserves	589	(589)	-
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>1,859,838</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,859,838</b>

*This financial information is extracted from the full financial statements which are available on request*

## Fundraising

*In the challenging economic environment, we continue to put a lot of thought and energy into seeking funding. While over half our operating costs are now funded by government we face the challenge to meet the remainder of our operating costs of our crisis and social work services but also find ways to expand our services to include a strong preventative element to our work and ensure quality services for both women and children.*

**Annual Appeal:** this is run jointly with Te Whare Rokiroki, Māori Women's Refuge, with the total being shared between the two Refuges. This year our annual appeal achieved a **total of \$ \$66,762**. This was a great total and we are very grateful for the wonderful support we receive from our community; without which we could not continue the vital work we do in the Wellington area. We would like to thank the dedicated collectors and site managers who braved the cold weather to collect for us, and funding coordinator Jo Cattermole who co-ordinated the joint appeal she once again put in a huge amount of effort and enthusiasm to help make the event a success.

**Pasifika Wellington branch collecting for our annual appeal.**



**Providing WWR around \$6000. per year in donations, Payroll Giving via participating employers is a simple way for participants to donate directly to a charity of choice via their employer with supported by IRD instant tax credits.**

## Acknowledgements

**Funders and Supporters:** We are hugely appreciative of our funders who help keep our service going by providing funds for salaries, rent and general operating costs. We also get a wonderful amount of support from our community in the form of bequests, regular donations, payroll giving and one-off cash donations from individuals, businesses, community organisations and education institutions. These make up a significant portion of our income and are vital to our operation.

*As a charitable organisation we depend upon donations and grants to fund our work. We would like to acknowledge the following funders for their support for which we are hugely grateful.*

<b>Funder</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
MSD via NCIWR	Direct services to family and whanau.	\$548,000
Lotteries Community Funding	Towards the salary of our manager and an advocate	\$130,000
Wellington City Council	We have a 3-year partner contract with the WCC to deliver services to our community. This was put towards the salaries of our paid Social Workers/Community Advocates.	\$40,000
Lion Foundation	Counselling for women	\$1,520
Wellington City Council Betty Campbell Grant	Funding towards community office rent	\$10,000
COGS - Community Organisation Grants	This funding was granted towards a Community Social Worker/Women's Advocate salary.	\$7,000
Bowen Trust	Operating costs	\$10,000
Jack Jeff's Trust	Operating costs	\$15,000
TG Macarthy Trust	Nutritional Food for Families working with Wellington Women's Refuge	\$5,000
Wellington Community Trust	Funding towards Volunteer and Funding coordinators Salary	\$15,000

## **Businesses, Individuals & Community Organisations who Support Wellington Women's Refuge**

*We really appreciate the generous support we receive from our community. There are so many people who have assisted, supported, offered skills or resources or stood alongside us in our work. We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere admiration, respect and thanks to the following:*

- ♀ Our dedicated, motivated, inspirational volunteers, we ask so much from our volunteers and they give to this cause with so much energy and aroha. We are very grateful for everything you bring.
- ♀ Good Bitches Baking, for the delectable baking delivered on a weekly basis for our clients.
- ♀ Khandallah New World for hosting a food collection bin for our safe-house.
- ♀ The inspiring and skilled lawyers at Cuba Family Law who are dedicated to working in the area of domestic violence.
- ♀ The Wellington police force, particularly the Family Harm team, who we can rely on when we need their support.
- ♀ Karen who donates weekly, lovely homemade frozen meals for our safehouse.
- ♀ Jethro Carr our unsung IT hero who always makes himself available when needed to give us free I.T. support.
- ♂ Wellington Quilters Guild- for their ongoing annual donation of beautiful handmade quilts.
- ♀ Our sister Refuge Te Whare Rokiroki who provide a service for Māori women in the Wellington community and moral and collaborative support for Wellington Women's Refuge.
- ♀ The Wellington individuals, businesses, agencies, schools, individuals and government departments who supported us with fundraisers, Christmas collections and other donations.
- ♀ Hazel and Izzy from @TheCarewellProject who have donated regular toiletry donations throughout the year, undertaking fundraising projects to put together these packages.

***Our final tribute goes to the women and children with whom we have worked, and learnt from over the last year. Your strength, dignity and spirit are a constant source of courage and inspiration for us all.***