HOSPICE WHANGANUI VOLUNTEER NEWS

OCTOBER 2026 | #3



Tēnā koutou,
The last quarter has been a busy time at Hospice Whanganui, and we have been heartened by the ongoing support of our community and local businesses.
We are also delighted to have completed our solar panel project at our Virginia Road facility. Thanks to a generous $50,998 grant from Meridian and the Decarbonisation Fund, we are now generating our own electricity. This investment will help reduce our energy costs and environmental impact, strengthening our ability to continue caring for our community into the future.

Our retail project is also underway, with a focus on improving our retail systems and processes to better support our shops, staff, and volunteers, and to ensure that we are able to continue to provide our free 24/7 specialist palliative care service well into the future. Last month we bid farewell to Fiona McIvor our Retail & Operations Manager who had served in a number of roles at Hospice Whanganui for 10 years. We thank Fiona for her contribution to Hospice Whanganui and wish her all the very best for the future.
To our team, volunteers, supporters, and community partners: thank you for the time, care, and aroha you bring to Hospice Whanganui. Your contribution makes a real difference to the patients and whānau we support every day.

Helen

RETAIL PROJECT UPDATE

We have been keeping our Retail Project moving along until our new Retail Project Manger joins us. We look forward to introducing you to them once their appointment is finalised. They will be overseeing the revitalisation of our retail outlets and the establishment of our online sales operation, working closely with our CEO, shop managers, volunteer coordinator, and our wider hospice team.
The new Point of Sale system has been purchased and over the next few weeks we will be setting it up, training staff and volunteers, and establishing it in our Gonville and East shops. As we start to get valuable sales information from this system we will continue to develop our shop spaces to improve our shopping experience and the whole shop environment for everyone. The valuable feedback we've received from our volunteers is already contributing to this process as initial design concepts are being developed.
A huge thank you to our shop managers, staff and volunteers, for the great work you've been doing in our shops

DAVID - FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS & PAYROLL/HR COORDINATOR



Born in Hamilton, David grew up in Tauranga surrounded by the support of his wider whānau. The support of family made all the difference with David's older brother, a highly intelligent and gorgeous soul with complex neurodevelopmental needs. Growing up in Tauranga instilled in David a lifelong love for beach, bush, and the natural environment.

Moving to Auckland for university, David completed a Bachelor of Technology, and a Masters in Structural Biology before deciding to follow his interest in business.

Already working at T2 Tea part-time, he progressed to Manager of New Zealand Operations, with 6 stores around the country. At T2 Tea, David experienced another form of education. Mentored by great leaders, he learned the ins and outs of finance, HR, strategy, and sales. He found cultivating a 'spirit of generosity' throughout the team especially rewarding, encouraging staff to bring genuine care for customers to their role.

After nine years at T2 Tea it was time to step away from Auckland's hustle and bustle, so David and his partner relocated to Whanganui. They were attracted by the arts community and the beautiful heritage buildings and gardens. David's first role in Whanganui was as manager at Farmers, where he enjoyed the tight-knit team environment, especially working alongside staff who had worked together for over 30 years.

During the three Christmases David was managing Farmers, he was dedicated to getting the best result for Hospice Whanganui, selling Christmas baubles and collecting donations for Hospice. When the role of Financial Accounts & Payroll/HR Coordinator was advertised, David saw an opportunity to step back from the intensity of managing a large business and to work supporting an organisation that provides an 'incredible service.'

Sadly, David's first connection to hospice services was when he was just 4 years old and his mother was cared for by Hospice Waikato. She was looked after in their home and David remembers one visit from the hospice team when he and his brother were given knitted toys, his was a postman and his brother's a policeman. Even as a young child he remembers feeling that these visitors were there to care for them all and it meant so much to them all that his mother could stay at home with her family.

Home in Whanganui is a 1920's cottage that David and his partner bought in town, with a garden they both enjoy spending time in now that they've combatted the jungle of ivies. David is hoping to eventually replace the grass under the orchard with pollinators, native plants and creepers. Away from the garden David enjoys our thriving creative community, volunteering with the Bason Botanic Gardens Trust Board and dabbling in yoga and meditation.

Welcome David, we're so pleased to have you join us.

THE HUMAN SIDE OF DATA

In the last quarter our integrated services team engaged with patients and whānau 7052 times, and in this same period we cared for 215 patients. These are the numbers that represent what community-centred care really takes. Engagements with our patients can be visits, phone calls, or stays in hospice. We can be setting up equipment or comforting a grieving family member. We don't just help with managing physical pain, we're there to help with emotional and spiritual suffering too. Support for our patients is holistic, whānau centred, and is as unique as each person.

Te Hau Awe

This name reflects our chosen way of working at Hospice Whanganui - ***Hau*** *- the vitality or essence of a person; can also be fluid like the wind(blows in any direction).* ***Our service will go where whānau need us to be and we pivot to their direction.*** ***Awe*** *- influence over one's own health.* ***We are whānau/patient driven.***

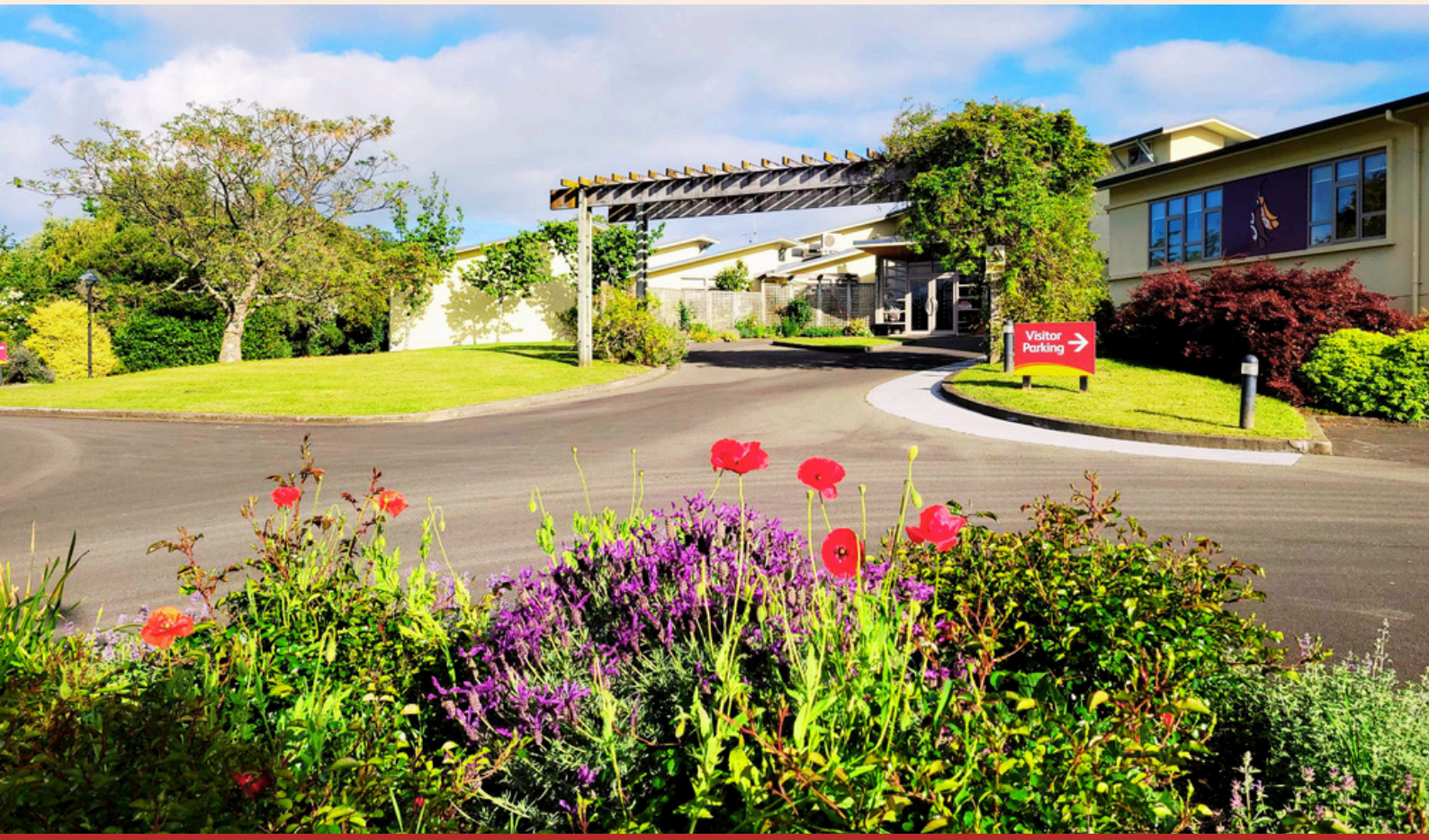
CURIOSITY CORNER

Did you know that the word 'volunteer' originally had a military meaning. Around 1600 it referred to someone who offered themselves freely for military service; broader non-military usage appeared soon afterwards.
The word volunteer comes from the Latin noun voluntas, meaning "will" or "desire," and the adjective voluntarius, meaning "willing" or "of one's free will"
Approximately 2.1 billion people volunteer monthly worldwide. Globally, formal volunteering has recovered slightly from recent lows but remains below earlier levels. Monthly participation was 27% in 2013/14, fell to 16% in 2023/24 and stood at 18% in 2025/26.
- data sourced from UN Volunteers, 2026.

REFRESHING OUR IN-PATIENT UNIT (IPU)



A recent grant from One Foundation has allowed us to bring some fresh decor into our IPU rooms. All of the rooms now have attractive curtains, cushions, bedding, and art, to help make them cosy and restful spaces.
We've also received support from Resene, who have offered a generous discount on the purchase of paint and over the next few months we will be painting the rooms with gentle green and neutral tones.
Our regular respite patients on Thursdays and our monthly 3-day respite patients are already enjoying the refresh.



THANK YOU FOR THE BEAUTIFUL THINGS YOU DO

This is just one of the beautiful plantings by our volunteer gardeners. The vibrant colour of the red poppies against the richness of the lavender is at the top of the drive and is not only beautiful to see on arrival but is an uplifting sight for people as they are leaving.
Thank you to all our volunteers for making our world a more beautiful place.

VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

Gonville

The Gonville team are missing Helen, a lovely volunteer who used to come in once a week to do an extra bit of cleaning, Helen, has now retired and her caring support is missed. If you know of anyone who would be happy to help to keep our spaces looking fresh and welcoming, please let us know. Hours can be arranged to suit.



East

With two buildings to keep an eye on our Whanganui East shop is always seeking people for their customer service team. One quarter of East volunteers are 25 years old or younger, then all ages right through to 85 years old. If you know someone who might enjoy the village vibe, get them to pop in and pick up a form, or call Kisu.

Boutique

With it's busy central location our Boutique shop is a fun place to work on a Saturday. If you know anyone who would appreciate the Saturday buzz and lovely items and clothing in the Ave, please put them in touch.
Saturday hours at Boutique are 10.00am till 2.00pm

People interested in volunteering with us can call Kisu (06) 349 0080 ext 246, or email mikisuh@hospicewhanganui.org.nz

KIMI AT GONVILLE



Kimi's volunteering journey with Hospice Whanganui began with a personal connection. Her ex-sister-in-law, Wiki Alward – the first principal nurse and a founding staff member of the hospice – asked her to volunteer. At the time, Kimi was working at the Masonic Lodge (she worked their 28 years in total), and living in Whanganui East, so supporting the Duncan Street shop was an obvious choice. As an all-rounder in those early days, Kimi did a bit of everything, from sorting donations to serving customers. Back then, the entire operation was housed in a single shed (where clothing and homeware are today). When the shop began bursting at the seams, two additional sheds were built to expand the retail and sorting areas.

Life took an unexpected turn several years ago when Kimi contracted a severe virus while visiting Rarotonga. The illness forced her to step back from the volunteering she loved to focus on her health. However, her passion for Hospice never faded. After Kimi and her husband Wayne relocated to Castlecliff, she rang her old friend Veronica, now the manager of the Gonville shop, and let her know she was ready to come back to volunteering.

Today Kimi is still a valued part of the Gonville team. She focuses on sorting clothing, shoes, and handbags, while keeping the clothing hangers organised too. Her dedication even follows her home, where she enjoys assembling donated jigsaw puzzles to make sure they have all the pieces, a task that also keeps her mind sharp.

While Kimi main reason for volunteering is about helping others, she appreciates the benefit to her well-being as well. "You're not moping or worrying about what's going to happen tomorrow," she shares. "You're too busy focusing on what you're doing, and you only have a certain time span. I try and do as much as I can before I finish my shift."

Away from the shop, Kimi and Wayne love time spent with their big family, including 4 children, 16 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. While they both share a love for gardening, Kimi appreciates her volunteer hours as special time just for her, when she gets to meet new faces and help all kinds of people.

"We're like a family at Gonville," Kimi says. "We've got each other's back if anything happens. They're very compassionate, and they have a lot of empathy."

Needless to say, Kimi isn't planning to finish volunteering with Hospice any time soon!



ELECTION 2026 - PALLIATIVE CARE AND PARTY POSITIONS

Hospices around the country are struggling to meet a growing demand for our services, while trying to retain our experienced and caring staff. Saving and raising money is something we must focus on every day but imagine a world where we didn't have to?

Dying Well: A Palliative Care Policy for Aotearoa, sets out why change is needed and four immediate actions that are urgent and deliverable within the first year of the next Government. Ahead of the 2026 General Election, Hospice New Zealand and their partners in the specialist palliative care sector, are calling on all political parties to commit to action that will ensure people across Aotearoa can access quality palliative care when and where they need it.

1. Progress implementation of the new National Model for Integrated Adult Palliative Care;
2. Invest in the palliative care workforce, including pay parity
3. Ensure children and young people can access the palliative care they need; and
4. Make equitable access to palliative care a national health priority.

We know you care about supporting palliative care so if you want to see what our political parties are committing to, pop along and check out this page.

https://www.hospice.org.nz/advocacy?utm_campaign=kowhai_newsletter_internal_oct&utm_medium=email&utm_source=hospicenz



Dancing for Hospice is so much more than the gala event on the Saturday night, their will be the People's Choice Awards and auctions too.

And don't forget -

Live Dress Rehearsal on Thursday May 13, 2027

We'll be bringing you more information soon, as we grow our plans to make this a very special community event!

ANNIVERSARIES

Thanks to our amazing volunteers who volunteer year after year to support our community,

July

Bernadine Bourke 2014
Diane Atkinson 2018
Graeme Veale 2018
Linda Veale 2018
Barbara Smith 2021
Kevin Hanson 2025
Graeme Rosewarne 2025
Karin Schmitt 2025
Lachlan Udy 2025

August

Trevor Woon 2010
Dawn Fleury 2024
Marion Campbell 2015
Yvonne Brownlie 2017
Diana Stephenson 2018
Joy McCrea 2019
Alwyn Healey 2023
David Wooldridge 2023
Deni Edwards 2025

September

Christine Belchambers 2020
Jude Buller 2023
Pat Goldfinch 2018
Cathy Hastings 2008
Chloe Kelly 2024
Margaret Rowan 1995
Jean Smith 2020

October

Maureen Little 2014
Bruce Peterson 2022
Elizabeth Mendez 2023
Lisa Tarrant 2025

If anyone has friends or family interested in volunteering with us they can check out the Hospice website https://hospicewhanganui.org.nz/support-us/volunteeropportunities/
Or call Kisu 06 349 0080 x 246

WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

We are happy to be welcoming so many new volunteers, it's great to have you with us -

Sian, Terry, Reuben, Chloe, Kōkiri, Amber-Rose, Anita and David

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF

Kelly-Ann - a welcome addition to our Gonville team as the new Stock Coordinator

Cathy – Registered Nurse

David – Financial Accounts & Payroll/HR Coordinator (see his profile on page 2).

Ian - coming onboard in the Operations Manager portion of Fiona's role

And we have two special 'Welcome Backs'!
Firstly to our Social Worker Tracey, after 18 months with another organisation, she has joined us again as a social worker in our Whānau Support Team.

And remember the article in our last newsletter about our student nurse Abby? Well, she graduated and we're delighted to say that when an RN position became available Abby was eager to join the team again!

Te Kahu Pairuri ki Whanganui
hospice
Whanganui