

# ON A MISSION

WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE

ISSUE 3 2026

wellingtoncitymission  
HEI WHAKAMARU O TE KOROWAI  
O TE PANEPANE O TE IKA A MAUI



## You Helped Me Become the Mum My Little Boy Needs

**Alexis and her son, Braxton,  
have been part of the Whakamaru  
whānau for a year-and-a-half.**

I was not in a good place before I came to the Mission. A series of bad things happened, and I had a lot of trauma from a long-term relationship. I was dealing with very deep grief and loss, and I started going down the wrong path, making bad choices, and for the first time getting into addiction and crime.

The next few years were filled with troubles, and I became homeless. I really thought I had no purpose.

Then a couple of years ago, I started feeling that something wasn't right within my body, and my legs were getting really swollen. When I went to the doctors, they told me that I was four months pregnant, that I had a medical condition called preeclampsia, and that I needed to stay in hospital until my beautiful baby boy, Braxton, arrived.

I'd told the hospital about my issues straight away, so they had to inform Oranga Tamariki, who became involved in our lives from then on. But I wanted to make sure Braxton would always stay in my care. I had to find a place for us to move into quickly. I didn't have any family or friends I could rely on, so my only choice was a private rental that



● Alexis and Braxton lived with us at Whakamaru from 2025-2026







● Alexis, Braxton and Support Worker, Hollie

was super expensive and only offered a few months' lease. When I was discharged from hospital, it was just me, my baby, his bassinet, and a two-seater couch. I was suddenly in this whole new world, and I had this little life who was depending on me.

Every day was a struggle. After I paid the rent, I had less than \$200 left for food, power, and everything my baby needed, so I had to prioritise whatever was most important that week. It was scary, but Braxton was so cute as a little baby, and every time I looked at him I knew I had to make sure we would be alright.

When our lease was coming to an end, my probation officer introduced me to Whakamaru. I actually expected it to be some sort of shelter, so when I first visited and saw one of the rooms I was amazed – it seemed too good to be true. I was open about my issues during my interview, and when I was told we could move in, I was overwhelmed with relief.

Coming from years of not doing so well, you are automatically a bit standoffish to receiving help, so it can be hard to put yourself out there. But Whakamaru was perfect, and the Mission's support is so genuine. You feel acknowledged, seen and heard, and the staff talk to you in a way that means you never feel like just another task in their day. I haven't had anyone care

about me like that in a long time, and Whakamaru gave me the feeling of 'home' that I was missing.

It was everything I could possibly have dreamed of to create a safe and healthy environment for my little boy and me, and I embraced everything on offer. I started counselling once a week to help with my addiction and trauma, helped with cooking in the weekly resident kai workshops, and just started spending time with other adults in a positive setting which didn't involve drugs and other bad influences. I also started Total Money Management with the Financial Mentoring team, to learn how to manage my budget and help build up some savings.

One huge thing was getting my teeth completely fixed in the Whakamaru Dental Clinic. Firstly, being able to get into the dentist, and then also feeling supported about how bad my teeth were instead of ashamed, was a really big thing for me. My new teeth make me feel like a totally new person!

In the year and a half I've been here, I've come a long way. I've had long periods of sobriety, I've got some savings, and Braxton is healthy, happy and still in my care. I'm just so thankful to have been given a chance to better myself and give my little boy the mum he deserves.





**27**

**Residents**  
currently living with us  
at Whakamaru

**41**

**Residents**  
have been supported into  
permanent housing over the  
last 18 months



The last step for us is moving to a family rehabilitation centre in Auckland, where Braxton can stay in my care while I become fully abstinent.

Although it is a pretty stressful time right now, deep down I know that nothing bad can come from the next part of our journey. Knowing the Mission will be here for me afterwards is a key part of that too, because they've told me there's a place for me at Whakamaru when I've completed my rehabilitation and we're ready to transition into permanent housing.

I think Whakamaru is just so amazing for our community. Having the doctors, cafe, laundry, showers, Social Supermarket, and everything else people need is incredible, and I especially like that anyone who needs help can come here. It really lets you flourish.

I don't know how to put into words how much the Mission donors are helping the people here. Their generosity is going to a very good cause, and without them, there wouldn't be such a special place like this.

For me, their support has actually been life-changing. I've done a complete 180, and I wouldn't have been able to do that on my own. Life wouldn't be as great as it is now. I have purpose, and that feels good!





# A Brighter Future, Made Possible by You

Richard and Alison have generously chosen to leave a gift to the Wellington City Mission in their Will.

As a local charity, the Wellington City Mission has relied on donations from Wellingtonians for 122 years. Mission supporters have empowered countless individuals and families to build more stable, connected and contented lives.

It's an honour getting to know our donors a bit more when we can, and Alison and Richard are two long-term donors. Originally from the UK, they became regular givers (or ChangeGivers as we now call them) in the 90s, and have also included a generous gift to the Mission in their Wills.

We asked them to share a bit about why they continue to support the Mission...

*"I worked as a GP for 40 years," Alison started. "In the UK, all of that was in inner-city practices, so I saw a lot of homelessness, substance misuse, and dependence. For most people, the basis of those challenges went back to some sort of adverse life event, usually (but not always) in childhood.*

*"Those experiences have always made me aware that my life's been pretty fortunate, really. I had good luck being born where I was, having my parents, and getting a good education. And because we're not terribly extravagant people (apart from our animals!), we have enough for what we need and want and feel like anything extra we have can go towards something useful."*

**Richard added:** "One of the reasons I like the Wellington City Mission comes back to a formative moment when I was at school. One Christmas, an old church hall was opened up, and we went around encouraging people to come to it, many of whom were living in cardboard boxes at Waterloo station. People had a chance to wash, get some clean clothes,

*and eat hot food. Sadly, it only lasted a few days and afterwards everyone had to go back to square one. It's a real shame to think that some 50 years later, homelessness is still happening and even increasing."*

**Alison explained:** "We really like how the Mission always treats people with such respect. These people are so resilient and incredible really. It's good to think that they are being honoured and recognised.

*"We love reading people's stories in the newsletter. They show how something could happen to any of us, but with a bit of support someone can get out the other side. I really take my hat off to everyone who does the mahi to get themselves straight, because I'm not sure I could do it if I were in their shoes."*

*"What does really hack me off though," Richard offered, "is when people oversimplify homelessness and other complex situations. There can be so much more going on for someone, from poor health to drug-related issues, trauma, and broken-down relationships with families.*



*"People with skills and talents can be knocked sideways for whatever reason. Some of us can get through that more easily than others, which may be because we have good support in times of distress."*

*"But that's also why we love coming to visit Whakamaru. You see the great respect for everyone here, and it's non-judgemental. Everybody is made to feel welcome. It doesn't matter who you are or why you're here – come on in and join us because isn't it nice to be able to help someone else if we can?"*

**Alison added,** *"We feel very connected to this place. There's a sense of shared ownership, and it gives me a really good feeling contributing to it. You know that the money you donate is going towards something really*

*practical and constructive, and that the Mission is a permanent thing that's with people for the long term. It's a place and need that will outlive us, and that's why we've included the Mission in our Wills. There's something special about supporting a place like Whakamaru, which will continue to be here for many people long into the future."*

**Thank you so much, Richard and Alison, along with all of our generous supporters, for trusting the Mission with your gifts! You are enabling the Mission to plan into the future, and giving so many people in our community the care they need to transform their lives.**



**Gifts in Wills**

**A brighter future, made possible by you.**

## Find out what becomes possible when you leave a gift **in your Will.**

Leaving a gift in your Will is an act of generosity that costs you nothing now, and keeps making a difference long after you're gone.

We know your loved ones will come first, but an additional gift to the Mission will transform lives in your community.



We partner with Footprint and EveryWill, two reputable online platforms, to give you options when considering a Will.

**A gift **in your Will** helps us look ahead, enabling us to:**



Plan and deliver for generations to come, as we grow our services



Offer long-term support to people rebuilding their lives



Ensure we're able to respond quickly in time of crisis or natural disaster

**To request your free guide to our Gifts in Wills programme, please contact:**



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# I Climbed Mountains at the Mission

**Kai has transformed his life, after living with us at transitional housing site, Te Pā Pori.**

Until about five years ago, I was going OK in life. I had a flat and worked for myself as a plasterer. That was until I had a bad falling out with one of my good friends. It escalated to the point some people started damaging my work vehicle pretty much every week. Because I kept having to pay to fix it, I started getting behind on rent.

I ended up getting evicted, and with nowhere else to go, I ended up living in my vehicle. I was still working for myself as a plasterer, but work wasn't consistent, and I was in a bad place mentally. Everything was hard and I lost my focus in life. Substance abuse became a way to cope and escape, and I became addicted to drugs for the next few years. It was the lowest time of my life.

One day, I just thought, 'I'm sick of this cycle, and I'm sick of being broke.' I needed a place to recover, to get some rest from the constant struggle, and give up the drugs. And in April last year, I moved into the Mission's Supported Transitional Housing, Te Pā Pori.

I still had my guard up for a while as I figured out what the Mission actually was. At first you're worried about who else is in there with you and what the staff are all about. But I soon realised that the Pā was the best place I could have been. It was where I needed to be to reset my life and make the fresh start that I wanted.

I started talking with all the staff and using the programmes. It was a really safe environment, and being there lets you open up to receive the help you need. The weekly AOD counselling was huge for me, and the daily routines also helped a lot – like every morning making sure your room is tidy and joining Whakaaro mō te Rā (Thought of the Day). Whakaaro gave me a lot of clarity, and helped me learn my own faults so I could seek advice.

My kaiarahi, Craig, was a legend. He helped me do things in months that I couldn't have done for myself in years. He helped me not only with my problems and finding my

equilibrium but also with practical things. He pushed to get my teeth all fixed because they were really bad. I got my smile back because of that, and I'm so thankful.

I climbed mountains when I was at The Mission. In one year, I'd built myself up, started working properly again and got off drugs. Then we started looking for a house for me to move into. It took a month for them to find a place in Mount Cook through Housing NZ, and I moved in. It's amazing, it's warm, and it's my home.

I changed who I am through the Mission, and life is so good. Work is going well, I'm budgeting, and most importantly, I'm nearly a year completely clean from drugs. God is the centre of my life again, and I still visit the Pā every month with my church to give back.

I made it because of all the programmes and resources the Mission offers. The things you learn there become ingrained in your mind, so when you walk into the real world it's all automatic to you. That keeps your life balanced and moving in the right direction. But it's also just the way they treat you. You're never just a number, you're a person who needs a bit of help.

So I want to thank everyone who works at the Pā, and give a huge thank you to everyone who supports. To Mission donors, I say please keep donating! The residents at the Pā appreciate your support from the bottom of their hearts, and they need it to keep going.



● Kai, hard at work





## Quarterly Newsletter - Spring 2026

### Pip's Message

Murray is currently taking a well-earned sabbatical, and I have the privilege of stepping into the Acting City Missioner role for a few weeks, which is why you're hearing from me in this edition of our newsletter.

My usual role is Assistant City Missioner – Service Delivery, where I'm part of the Mission's strategic leadership team and oversee Whakamaru and Te Ō, two of our sites. Every day I get to see the breadth of what happens across the Mission; the complexity of the challenges people are navigating, the commitment of our teams, and the difference that can be made when people have the right support, opportunities and community around them.

Over the past few weeks, I have begun to notice some early signs of spring. After the shorter, cold months of winter, there is something beautiful about spring's arrival. The days start to stretch out; we get outside more and start to reconnect with the people and places around us.

My favourite part of spring is when the blossoms start appearing. It is a beautiful reminder of possibility and new beginnings.

That sense of possibility is at the heart of this newsletter, and it is something we get to witness every day at the Wellington City Mission. But none of it happens in isolation. It is made possible by a community of people who choose to stand alongside the Mission and the people we serve.

In this edition, you will meet Alison and Richard, who have supported the Mission for more than 30 years, and have chosen to continue that support through gifts in their Wills. It is people like Alison and Richard who help make these possibilities real.

For many people connecting with the Mission for the first time, it can be difficult to think beyond simply making it through today. When so much energy is focused on surviving what is happening right now, imagining a different future can feel a long way away.

This is why our role at the Mission often starts with the basics. A meal, groceries through the Social Supermarket, a shower, somewhere safe to stay, or someone to walk alongside you. Meeting those immediate needs can give people the space to start believing that things can be different.

You will see that in the stories in this newsletter. For Alexis, having a safe home at Whakamaru and support around her has created space to focus on herself and her son, Braxton, and to take some significant steps towards the future she wants for them both.

For Kai, the stability and support he found at Te Pā Pori helped him rebuild his life. Today he is living independently, working again and returning to the Pā to cook and give back to others.

Both stories are different, but they show what can happen when people have somewhere safe to be, the right support around them and the opportunity to move forward.

As we head into spring, I hope these stories give you a sense of what you are helping to make possible. Sometimes it starts with meeting a very immediate need. But with safety, stability, support and community around them, people can begin to believe that something different is possible.

Thank you for being part of that community, and for helping make those possibilities real.

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

***With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive.***



**Pip Rea**  
Assistant City Missioner, Service Delivery



## Donate to fund high quality meat deliveries for our Social Supermarket!



Good food can make a difference. Through GameChanger NZ, donated wild venison is delivered to our Social Supermarket. Each donated deer can provide up to 200 meals for whānau!

Every \$120 raised will give a registered hunter the green light to harvest a wild deer for us, before the meat is professionally processed by a local butcher and delivered to us.

For our Social Supermarket, this means we can offer protein-rich, nutritious and high-quality meat to whānau experiencing food insecurity. For a service that prides itself on dignity of choice, we are also excited to be able to offer our shoppers an even bigger range of stock on our shelves.

This is what our work is about: supporting people with dignity, choice, and nourishment, while collaborating with our community to create lasting, positive change.

To learn more about GameChanger NZ and how you can support the initiative, visit [gamechanger.wgrt.org.nz/foodbank/FBWN06](https://gamechanger.wgrt.org.nz/foodbank/FBWN06)

## The Change You Enabled: May - July 2026



# 7,789

meals

provided for manuhiri in our supported transitional housing accommodation



# 838

people

supported through our Community Services and Financial Mentoring



# 1,623

shoppers

supported through our Social Supermarket



# 282

manuhiri presentations at Kua Mākona i Whakamaru (Crisis Recovery Café)



# 1,462

showers & laundry users at Whakamaru



# 13,013

hot meals served at Craig & Gail's Café

### FIND US

Street Address:  
4-8 Oxford Terrace, Mount Cook, Wellington



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Contact us on (04) 245 0843 or [donations@wcm.org.nz](mailto:donations@wcm.org.nz)

If you ever want to make changes to your regular giving, just give us a call.

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