

A Helping Hand

2022/2023

Bell Gully's Pro Bono & Community Report



BELL GULLY

This year Bell Gully celebrates a notable milestone – the 15th year since our Pro Bono Programme was formalised.

While pro bono work has always been part of the fabric at Bell Gully, back in 2009 we saw the value of putting in place structure and processes around how we source, manage and promote pro bono work, with a key objective of leading by example, and encouraging other firms to make comparable contributions.

There are so many worthy organisations, and having a structured programme allows us to reach more of them, and to do so more effectively. We consciously choose to support a range of charities supporting diverse communities with wide ranging challenges. The work that our pro bono clients do is truly remarkable, and we feel privileged to be able to play a small part. By taking care of their legal needs, we help them to get on with the real mahi – taking care of people in our local communities.

Casting our minds back 15 years, the world was reeling from the Global Financial Crisis. Times were incredibly tight, and the need for support within our communities was high. Today, as we face rising inflation, and the cost of living continues to climb – the same bite is being felt.

In this issue of A Helping Hand, we highlight two organisations at the coal face of these challenging times, who are tailoring their response to meet specific needs. One of them is The Kindness Collective, which aims to connect families with the things that they need – from everyday essentials, to moments of joy. Acting as match-maker between people in need and those who have more to share, they recognise that one size does not fit all when it comes to providing support.

Another organisation showcased in this issue is FinCap, which was established to prevent people getting into debt, and helping people out of it, by providing free financial mentoring services. Recognising that each

whānau's needs are different, FinCap works one-on-one to empower people to take control of their finances.

Our natural environment is also front of mind, and our Pro Bono Programme has recently helped two organisations adapt to changing conditions.



**Welcome,
Haere mai**



ChildFund New Zealand established an office in Kiribati with a focus on providing access to clean water in the face of climate change challenges. And closer to home, we have assisted the Marlborough Kaikōura Trail Trust with the legal work required to establish the 'Whale Trail' – a walking and cycling trail rising up in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in the region.

We also catch up with pro bono partners who we consider 'old friends' – some with new faces and one with a whole new look. For many years Bell Gully has supported Breast Cancer Foundation NZ by providing pro bono legal services, holding annual Pink Ribbon fundraising, and with partner Anna Buchly in the role as Trustee. In this issue, we interview new BCFNZ Chief Executive Ah-Leen Rayner.

The firm is also a long-term ally of the NZ AIDS Foundation, which has launched its exciting rebrand as the

Burnett Foundation in the last 12 months, honouring the legacy and the work of its founders. It also has a new CEO Joe Rich, who explains the shift in focus from AIDS-related illnesses to a more holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

Although we are marking 15 years of our formal Pro Bono Programme this year, in many ways it still feels like the beginning of a much bigger journey. The firm is incredibly proud of its pro bono work and we look forward to continuing to support inspiring organisations like the ones highlighted in this issue of A Helping Hand, playing a small part in their essential mahi.



Rachael Brown

CHAIRPERSON

PRO BONO AND
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

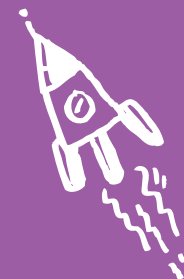


SPREADING KINDNESS

“Be Kind” was the catchphrase during the pandemic, and one that deserves to stick. The good folks at The Kindness Collective certainly think so.



KINDNESS COLLECTIVE
FOUNDATION



The Kindness Collective is a New Zealand charity that spreads kindness by connecting children and families with the things they need – from everyday essentials, to moments of joy.

Founded in 2014, the Kindness Collective began as a small, behind the scenes, group of people wanting to do good in their community.

Founder Sarah Page says “We know Kiwis are inherently kind and want to help. The Collective acts as a match-making agency, matching those in the community with needs, to those who have more to share. What we do is a bit different, and our mahi is varied, because we know that one approach and one solution can’t

suit everyone. Our community-led approach allows us to direct help to where it’s actually needed”.

The charity’s projects include: “100 Acts of Kindness” where they are completing 100 meaningful acts of kindness across the country, “The PJ Project”, which is providing over 5,000 pairs of warm, winter pyjamas for children in need, and the “Christmas Joy Store”, which was New Zealand’s first social toy store. The Collective also completes “Build Projects”, like community gardens and playgrounds.

Tax special counsel, Campbell Pentney has worked closely with the charity to assist them with revising their Trust Deed and ensuring

compliance with new legislation impacting charitable trusts.

Employment lawyer Simon Moore and IP senior associate Sebastien Aymeric also assisted with employment documentation and protection of the charity’s intellectual property.

“The Kindness Collective is very grateful to Campbell and the team for the time, effort, resource and knowledge they’ve poured into our charity. Being donated expertise from renowned firms like Bell Gully means we can trust we have the best people in the business, with the best skills working on our organisation, which means we can focus on serving our community,” says Sarah.

The Kindness Collective registered as a charity in 2020 and is now a network of

OVER **10,000**

people with active donors, volunteers, brands and businesses all working together to build a kinder Aotearoa.



161,874
deliveries of
essentials



128,500
moments of joy
delivered



\$1,020,915
worth of kindness
in community
donations



40
events & experiences
for tamariki, schools
& ECE centres



3,750
books donated



Over 20,000
items of clothing
for families



A hidden Coastal Gem

The 2016 Kaikōura earthquake was truly devastating, but ultimately led to a very special opportunity for the region, thanks to the Marlborough Kaikōura Trail Trust's efforts.

The Trust's vision that walkers and cyclists could follow the whales' migratory path down the east coast of the South Island is an evocative one, and the idea for a coastal cycling and walking trail – The Whale Trail – was first mooted back when State Highway 1 was being rebuilt.

In the post-COVID-19 economic recovery plan, the 210km Whale Trail from Picton to Kaikōura became one of the government's 'shovel-ready' projects to get the country moving again.

Projects lawyer Jonny Logan is enthusiastic about the project as a whole, and the pro bono work Bell Gully has assisted the Trust with.

"It's going to be an iconic trail, a must-do for locals and international tourists and will have long-lasting benefits to the region."



**The
Whale
Trail**

The Whale trail will ultimately connect Picton, Blenheim, Seddon, Ward, Kekerengu, Clarence and Kaikōura, giving cyclists and walkers access to special natural and historically significant places not currently on the tourist map. Designed to be accessible from several entry and exit points along the journey, the trail will offer a wide range of experiences, and is expected to pump more than \$100 million into the Marlborough economy over the next two decades.

Jonny says, "We worked with the Trust to negotiate a funding agreement with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to secure \$18 million for the project as part of the Infrastructure Reference Group's pipeline of 'shovel-ready' projects."

"Once the funding was in place, we advised the Trust on entering into a financial contribution agreement with Waka Kotahi for the Wairau Clip-on bridge to be funded and constructed by Waka Kotahi on the Trust's behalf."

Trust Chair Luke Van Velthooven worked with our team, "We were very appreciative that Bell Gully provided us with the first-class legal advice we needed at such a pivotal time in the project. The team were a pleasure to work with, and we are all grateful for their assistance with this very significant community project."

Partner David Chisnall was also happy to be involved. "It's been an absolute pleasure to be part of this exciting project and to have the opportunity to work with the trustees. The Trust has worked hard to involve communities, iwi, councils and the government in the development of the trail so that it will reflect what people want, and respect the history and special significance of the area. We do also wish to pay tribute to former trustee Ian McNabb's contribution to the Trust (as well as his wider contribution to the Marlborough and South Island community). Sadly, Ian passed away last year and we acknowledge our special friendship with him."

"It's going to be an iconic cycle trail, a must-do for locals and international tourists and will have long-lasting benefits to the region."

Picton



Seddon



Ward



Kekerengu



Clarence



Kaikoura

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



A year and a half into the role, we check in with Ah-Leen Rayner, new CEO at Breast Cancer Foundation NZ.



A long time pro bono client of Bell Gully, Breast Cancer Foundation New Zealand (the Foundation) is a charitable trust with a vision that one day, no one will die of breast cancer. The Foundation, which promotes awareness and early detection, funds technologies, information and equipment, supports breast cancer patients, and advocates on behalf of New Zealanders, welcomed Ah-Leen as its new CEO eighteen months ago.

Ah-Leen describes herself as a strategist and influencer. Prior to joining the Foundation, her career experience was in multinational listed and family companies, construction and State Owned Enterprises. It was in her last role as Executive General Manager Tourism at KiwiRail that she became interested in pivoting to a not-for-profit.

"I noticed how tourism and product development enabled regional economic development in areas that needed support. Realising that supporting people in need was a key motivator for me, I sought a role in the not-for-profit space where I could make a difference". "I'm used to navigating complex environments, creating a shared vision and uniting teams to deliver results" – all of which Ah-Leen is now bringing to the Foundation.

"The charitable sector has elements that are identical to the private sector, but has substantial differences in other areas. The key distinction is that everything at the Foundation is driven by the vision of achieving zero deaths from breast cancer, so the focus shifts from the commercial world of banking profit, to investing in the cause to deliver advances on the vision."

"In working towards our vision, there is a lot of work required to address equity issues. Both Māori and Pasifika are more likely to be diagnosed with

breast cancer, with poorer survival outcomes. Breast cancer is survivable if it is caught early."

Like all not-for-profits, Ah-Leen acknowledges that the COVID environment has been an especially challenging one for the Foundation.

"The lockdowns were incredibly hard, significantly impacting our ability to fundraise. As we don't receive any government funding, we took a big hit through delayed Pink Ribbon Breakfasts and cancelled Pink Ribbon Walks. Last year, with Auckland and parts of the Waikato under lock down, the Street Appeal was also significantly impacted. We adapted to virtual fundraising events, but they just don't raise the same income as in-person fundraising."

In addition, the amount of women whose mammograms were delayed by lockdown is very concerning.



“There is a backlog of 50,000 women who are overdue their mammograms. Which means there are now likely to be 300 women who have missed the chance to have their breast cancer diagnosed early, delaying their access to treatment.



The Foundation's advocacy saw a petition presented to Parliament asking for \$15 million to clear the mammogram back log – that's 1,000 extra mammograms needed to be performed by BreastScreen Aotearoa each week to catch up.

Bell Gully partner and Foundation trustee Anna Buchly says Ah-Leen has been a fantastic addition to the Foundation.



“Ah-Leen has challenged our thinking on how we accelerate our vision of zero deaths from breast cancer by pushing for new frontiers in early detection, treatment and support and, together with our broader team, delivering programmes and strategies to achieve this.”



New name, New brand, New CEO



Burnett Foundation Aotearoa (Burnett Foundation) is the new brand formerly known as the New Zealand AIDS Foundation. We ask CEO Joe Rich, himself new to the role but not the organisation, why the change?

Joe Rich has been involved with Burnett Foundation for the past 11 years, and he's excited to take the helm at an important juncture for the organisation.

"It is such a privilege and honour to step into the leadership of an organisation with the powerful legacy and track record Burnett Foundation has. We've played such an important role in the wellbeing of our communities over the past four decades – something I have personally benefited from – and I'm committed to ensuring we continue to do that, and more."

The new brand is testament to the success of the founders of the NZ AIDS Foundation.

Joe says, "They fought to end the AIDS epidemic in New Zealand. And they did an incredible job. AIDS-related illnesses have continued to decline, and are now very low in number. Having the word 'AIDS' in the name was creating an issue because it's no longer relevant to the programmes and services we offer."

The organisation needed a new name that reflected the challenges of today and tomorrow, while recognising past efforts.

"Our new name not only honours the powerful legacy of Bruce Burnett, one of our co-founders, but also provides the space for the range of programmes and services we've developed that intersect with HIV, such as sexual health, mental health, and addiction."

In the early 1980s, Bruce Burnett returned home from San Francisco feeling unwell. Having seen the devastating impact AIDS had on his community overseas, Bruce shared his own story of living with AIDS to educate and protect others. He made

countless TV appearances and spoke at events. He even set out on a one-person tour of the country to educate at-risk communities about AIDS, all while becoming increasingly sick. At a time when homosexuality was illegal in Aotearoa and AIDS was feared, Bruce spoke openly about both, to save lives. Bruce passed away in 1985 at age 30, shortly after helping to set up the National AIDS Support Network (which would later become the New Zealand AIDS Foundation).

"Our new name acknowledges the mahi done by Bruce and many others that worked alongside him, as we continue working to eliminate HIV stigma and end HIV transmission in Aotearoa."

Burnett Foundation's vision of an Aotearoa with zero HIV transmission, and where people living with or affected by HIV flourish is simple, and everyone can play their part.

"We work to achieve this by preventing transmission, reducing stigma, and maximising the wellbeing of those most affected by HIV."

"The biggest thing people can do to support us is help us change attitudes toward HIV. We won't achieve zero transmission if people are too scared to get a test because of outdated attitudes and misconceptions. These days, people on treatment for HIV are living long, healthy lives, and they're not able to pass the virus on to sexual partners. We have hundreds of volunteers who help us with events and with condom packing and distribution, as well as many generous donors who support our work every day."

Bell Gully are proud to support the Burnett Foundation, including by providing pro bono legal advice.

"We're very thankful for the pro bono support that Bell Gully has provided with important areas of our work – including preparing for re-naming the organisation, updating our privacy policies, and developing contracts to protect us when we're producing large-scale events in a COVID world. It's so nice having the Bell Gully team in our corner – it allows us to keep focused on our important mahi."



providing
**FINANCIAL
CAPABILITY**





Phone



Live Chat



Email



Text

Last year the Government introduced changes to the consumer credit regime in an effort to make lenders more responsible – ensuring that consumer loans are suitable and affordable for borrowers.

FinCap (the National Building Financial Capability Charitable Trust) aims to prevent people from getting into financial hardship in Aotearoa. To achieve this, they partner with 200 free financial mentoring services to assist people who want help to regain control of their finances.

FinCap provides support with day-to-day money matters, in particular with budgeting and debt management.

Says Chief Executive Ruth Smithers, “Financial mentors provide more than just budgeting.

Their MoneyTalks team offers free, confidential advice by phone, text, email and live chat, and can put people in touch with local services for further help from a financial mentor.

They provide a one-on-one service focusing on empowering people to get control of their money. They work alongside a person, and their whānau, building trust and taking into account the complexity of their needs.”

“Therefore, a cornerstone of our service is financial mentor training. We offer a comprehensive introductory course for new mentors, as well as regular professional development. We’re committed to making sure our mentors are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to provide safe and effective outcomes for our clients.”

Litigation special counsel Andrea Pazin is one of the Bell Gully lawyers who has been assisting the organisation.

“We’ve provided a mixture of employment law, commercial services and property law advice to FinCap. We’ve reviewed their employment documentation, provided advice about collective bargaining, employment agreements, independent contractor agreements and holiday and leave entitlements, together with advice on a range of other employment matters. We’ve also assisted with their commercial services agreements and induction processes for financial mentoring organisations, and most recently have been assisting FinCap with some property law matters.”

“It’s a pleasure to work with this organisation that is providing much-needed, practical support in the community. As inflationary pressures rise they are seeing even greater need out there so it’s been great to be able to help them, so that they can help others.”



Helping hand for ChildFund Kiribati communities this

For more than 10 years, Bell Gully has been a pro bono partner of ChildFund New Zealand (ChildFund), a child-focused international development organisation that supports children and youth living in vulnerable communities in the Pacific, Africa, and Asia.

By supporting ChildFund, Bell Gully is helping build the healthy environments that children and youth need to thrive, and empowering them to create lasting change in their own lives and communities.

“We have been delighted to be able to provide ChildFund with extensive legal support over the years, including restructuring their governance framework, and helping them establish an office in Kiribati,” says Bell Gully partner Toby Sharpe.

“ChildFund is doing great work with our Pacific neighbours, particularly in Kiribati where the local team not only delivers positive parenting courses to address domestic violence, but also provides improved access to clean water, sanitation, food, and better hygiene that can stand the impacts of climate change.”



Kiribati is one of the least developed countries in the Pacific with widespread inequality, hardship, and incidences of extreme poverty. Access to clean water, proper sanitation and hygiene are critical for children's right to health and wellbeing. Only with these essentials can children have a fair chance to grow up, reach their potential, and thrive.

“Access to clean water is a major daily issue for people in Kiribati,” says ChildFund CEO Mark Collins.

“Limited freshwater resources, climate change and overcrowding, are fuelling water scarcity. This is also closely linked to waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery, which mean the country has the highest infant mortality rate in the Pacific.”

“Thank you for Bell Gully's continued support that is helping children, their families and communities in Kiribati access life-saving clean water.”

This project is co-financed by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and reaches more than 17,000 people living in Betio, South Tarawa.



World Water Day was held on 22 March with the 2023 theme of 'Accelerating change'. Read more about ChildFund's work in Kiribati [here](#).

ChildFund
New Zealand

and World Water Day



“We have been delighted to be able to provide ChildFund with extensive legal support over the years, including restructuring their governance framework, and helping them establish an office in Kiribati.”

Toby Sharpe
PARTNER



How else do we help?

The Bell Gully event calendar is full of annual charitable fixtures that many of our partners and staff volunteer for, some of which are highlighted here.

Diversity

We are committed to the inclusion and support of the LGBTQI+ community. Each year the firm marks Red Friday and Pink Shirt Day.

City Missions – Auckland and Wellington

We support the annual winter appeals to restock much needed foodbanks, and donate gifts and cash towards the Christmas appeals in both centres.

Shine – Light it Orange

Once again, we were proud to support Shine's Light it Orange campaign to bring more awareness to the issue of domestic violence, and to raise much needed funds.

Pink Ribbon

We love supporting long term pro bono partner Breast Cancer Foundation NZ with our annual fundraiser morning tea.

Spirit to Cure

Bell Gully teams participated in the inaugural Spirit to Cure Challenge supporting Leukaemia and Blood Cancer NZ and Cancer Research Trust NZ.





Some of the organisations we support



Pro bono 2022 facts and figures



23
partners



89
lawyers



1,983
hours



157
matters



Approximately
NZ\$1,000,000
fee equivalent



59
pro bono clients



NZ\$139,670
benefitted three local
community law centres



For more information about Bell Gully's
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BELL GULLY