

A HELPING HAND

Bell Gully's Pro Bono
& Community Report

2020/2021

BELL GULLY



Welcome, Haere mai

Welcome to
the twelfth
issue of A
Helping

Hand, in which we once again showcase some of the remarkable entities that we're proud to support as part of our Pro Bono and Community Programme.

Continuing COVID-19 restrictions have meant that now, more than ever, charitable organisations are in need of help and support. Despite the challenges brought by COVID-19, we are committed to working together with our clients, and we continue to embrace the same approach to our Pro Bono and Community Programme.

We consciously choose to support a range of charities supporting diverse communities with wide-ranging challenges. The common aim of the entities that we support is to make a positive impact towards improving lives and circumstances.

We are inspired by these organisations and the outstanding work that they do. We are fortunate to work alongside them, and offer our support in a number of ways - from pro bono legal advice to hands on practical help, to building awareness, and fundraising.

Our people are at the heart of our Pro Bono and Community Programme efforts, and so in 2021 the firm supported causes where our people put their own time and money by making cash donations to some of the charities that we support, including in some cases, matching staff and partner donations.

This issue of A Helping Hand offers a snapshot of the work of some of our pro bono clients in 2021, including:

- Conservation efforts for our beloved native trees by Project Crimson.
- Empowering communities to build their own sustainable future by supporting World

Vision aid projects in the Pacific and Melanesia.

- Making wishes come true for critically ill children with Make-A-Wish.
- Organisations that are making a more even playing field for marginalised communities:
 - Rainbow Tick, promoting diversity, inclusion and safe workplaces for all, and
 - Downlights, creating meaningful job opportunities for young adults with Down Syndrome and intellectual or learning disabilities.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Rachael Brown
CHAIRPERSON
PRO BONO AND
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

A NEW ZEALAND CANDLE BRAND MADE WITH LOVE



Downlights is a New Zealand owned, certified social enterprise that manufactures luxury candles. Managing director Jennifer Del Bel is passionate about her product and passionate about her people.

“Downlights is proud to employ young adults with Down syndrome and cognitive disabilities and support their learning and development with a variety of workplace skills. We became a certified social enterprise in 2019, and in 2020, an accredited Living Wage employer and Living Wage Partner.”

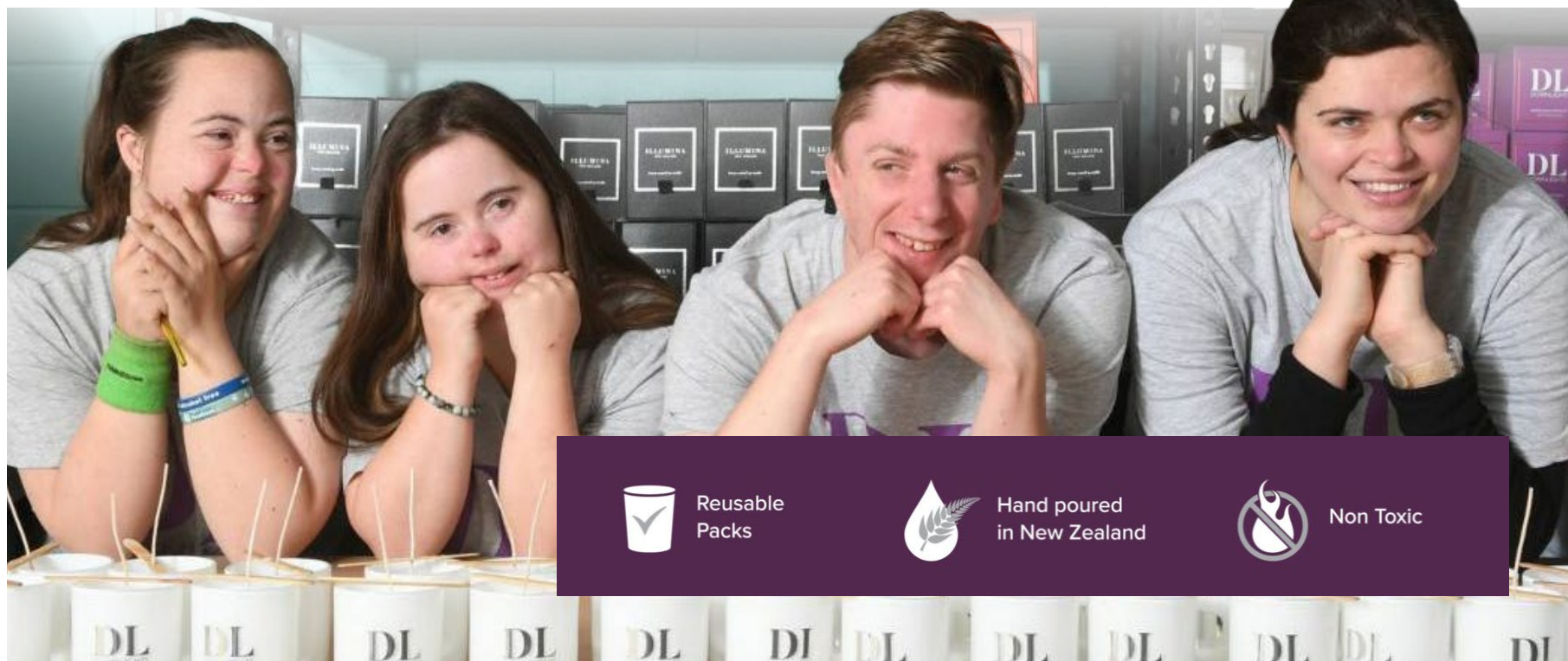
“We are also very proud that \$1 from every candle sold is donated via the Downlights

Charitable Trust to organisations like youth disability provider Recreate NZ and the New Zealand Down Syndrome Association, so our beautiful products also have a big heart and give back to our Kiwi community.”

With the successful social enterprise going from strength to strength, Bell Gully were pleased to be able to help with legal advice.

Simone Cooper, Tayla Crawford and Natasha Garvan originally introduced Downlights to our pro bono programme after hearing Jennifer speak at a Women in Infrastructure event earlier this year. Since then the team including Tania Goatley, Evie Bello, Sooyun Lee and Augusta Cohen have provided advice on trademarks and possible franchising opportunities.

Lawyer, Augusta Cohen, worked with the charity. “Downlights is an inspiring organisation which empowers young adults with Down Syndrome and learning or intellectual disabilities through employment opportunities. Downlights is leading by example and doing great work to foster greater acceptance and diversity in the workforce. It has been a pleasure to work with Jennifer and very rewarding being able to support Downlights through the Pro Bono programme.”



Reusable
Packs



Hand poured
in New Zealand



Non Toxic



Helping make wishes come true

Make-A-Wish New Zealand is on a mission to grant the wishes of children with a critical illness.

From creating magical memories with family, to tree huts, bedroom makeovers, princess playhouses, meeting celebrities or swimming with dolphins, each wish is unique and only limited by the child's imagination.

Each year Make-A-Wish New Zealand grants over 150 magical wishes. In 2021 Bell Gully summer interns were lucky enough to help make that magic happen.

We had the amazing opportunity to spend a day volunteering at the Make-A-Wish Foundation's head office in Newmarket. We heard moving stories about the positive and inspiring wishes that Make-A-Wish grant for children with critical conditions. The Foundation works closely with children throughout their 'wish journey', building hope and something to look forward to everyday. "It was clear to see that the Foundation brings a positive light to these kids in a time of need," says Jaimee Miller, Bell Gully summer intern.

"We were immersed in a range of tasks, including filing, present wrapping, wish-box preparation, chocolate goodie-bags, sorting through dress ups and toy cupboards – feeling as if we were in Santa's workshop!"

"We learned so much about how the Foundation makes a life-changing impact on the children and their families, and we were happy to support the staff with some extra helping hands."

In addition, for many years Bell Gully has provided pro bono legal advice to the Foundation on a number of matters including reviewing sponsorship agreements and other funding arrangements with commercial organisations, and reviewing trust documentation.

Says CEO Pam Elgar, "When you are a small charity the support by professional firms such as Bell Gully is a huge relief and benefit. More importantly we really value the relationship we have been able to develop over the many years of support. It was such fun to have the energy of the Bell Gully volunteers in our office, and my team love sharing our wish stories and what we do with others."

Bell Gully's Rainbow Tick journey started six years ago. In our first focus group for partners and staff, we learned that the Rainbow Tick was not just a compliance or tick-box exercise. It was about ensuring Bell Gully is a safe place for all of us. "We found the accreditation process extremely rewarding," says David Friar, partner and head of the firm's Rainbow Network. "Rainbow Tick were great to work with on our journey."

"There was plenty of goodwill and honesty in those initial focus groups, with people sharing their observations and experiences."

The firm was proud to gain its Rainbow Tick in 2017.

Each year, we review our policies, procedures and training with Rainbow Tick, to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and support our Rainbow Network staff and partners. As part of this, we offer rainbow diversity training across the firm, we measure and report for rainbow diversity, and we continue to show leadership for rainbow diversity and inclusion through our Rainbow Network, supporters of the network and our Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Beatrice Clarke, Rainbow Tick Programme Director says "Bell Gully should be commended on the thoroughness of their documentation for reaccreditation and their uptake of our education workshops. They make a point of ensuring that law clerks and new graduates attend sessions. These guided conversations are robust, as many of this generation are well-versed in the Rainbow space, meaning the discussion of allyship in the workplace can be in-depth."

A Safe Place for all

According to David, "The work is ongoing. We continue to develop Bell Gully's culture to support our people and allow us all to be our true and authentic selves at work."

"Bell Gully's renewed accreditation each year confirms our strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. We look forward to continuing to work with Rainbow Tick and its network of organisations to further support diversity and the inclusion of the LGBTQI+ community in New Zealand workplaces."

Working with Rainbow Tick has also meant advising them as a pro bono client.

Last year we facilitated and hosted a workshop for member organisations on navigating freedom of speech and LGBTQI+ inclusion, and provided legal advice on these issues for the purpose of the workshop, with a view to developing guidelines for member organisations in this space.

"The workshop was a valuable opportunity to discuss how Rainbow Tick members, from media to universities to local authorities, face different issues and different legal obligations when trying to balance freedom of speech and LGBTQI+ inclusion. These aren't easy issues and we hope that everyone walked away with some 'food for thought' on how their organisation might manage their own processes in the future", says Simone Cooper, one of the Bell Gully lawyers who facilitated the workshop.



Melanesian countries are among the poorest in the world, with one in four families living below the poverty line.



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

World Vision New Zealand works across the Pacific to improve access to education and healthcare, build resilience to climate change and natural disasters, and develop economic opportunities for remote communities.

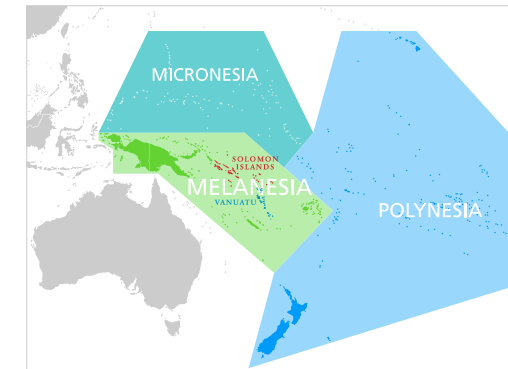
Following our work with another multi-national NGO with close associations to World Vision in 2020, we advised World Vision New Zealand on the delivery of an aid project in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. The project aims to enable the success and empowerment of women and youth in agribusiness, with wider goals to reduce rural poverty, improve nutrition, and create sustainable agriculture within their wider rural communities. Bell Gully was approached to assist on the logistical aspects of the project, including the contracting arrangements between World Vision New Zealand and the international grant agency providing

funding for the project, and between World Vision and its in-country operational partners to establish firm foundations for the project's implementation and delivery.

"It was such a rewarding experience to work with World Vision New Zealand and see something we had worked on provide such a tangible benefit to communities in need of aid assistance and support. As you might imagine, there are some complexities involved with delivering aid projects in the middle of a pandemic, in addition to the natural challenges presented in the countries these projects are rolled out in. Having the opportunity to work with the passionate people at World Vision to navigate these practical challenges was incredibly rewarding" says solicitor, Tasha Lea who worked on the project. "World Vision employs decades of experience, and proven, effective development and relief practices to empower communities to become self-sufficient and bring real, lasting change. They are the trusted partners of the New Zealand Government's Aid Programme across the Pacific."

Sarah Williams is the Head of Pacific Development, Grants Acquisition and Management for World Vision New Zealand.

"We are extremely lucky to have had the services of a professional firm like Bell Gully. The expertise that Bell Gully was able to provide was instrumental in helping us to negotiate a contract with a large funder. Their timely and professional advice meant we were able to anticipate risks and use our systems to manage them appropriately. We are now confident we will be able to manage this large, multi-country programme well for the development of the rural communities we work with in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and understand all the requirements of the funders. Working with Bell Gully's solicitors was a learning experience that we will be able to carry through to future programmes such as these, and we are very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with them."



Splashed by the sea.
That's one evocative translation
for our beloved coastal-growing
pōhutukawa tree.

Splashed by the sea

Thirty years ago the pōhutukawa was in peril, largely from possum attacks, and the Project Crimson Trust was formed. Its strategies to turn the pōhutukawa population around included widespread fencing to keep out pests, possum control, restoration planting and extensive community education.

It was a passion project for all involved and its quest to save the North Island's iconic native tree quickly captured the hearts of schools, communities, iwi and rural landowners around the country.

In 1996, Project Crimson expanded its mandate to include the northern and southern rātā, which enabled the group to widen their planting and conservation efforts to include the South Island.

With the help of thousands of volunteers, Project Crimson planted over 300,000 pōhutukawa, rātā and southern rātā species around the country – significantly turning around the fortunes of the iconic native trees.

Project Crimson's work is far from finished, with new environmental threats such as the airborne disease myrtle rust, and the ongoing impact from possums. In 2016 the Trust launched its flagship programme, Trees That Count, which brings together business, community and everyday Kiwis, with the vision of helping plant 200 million of Aotearoa's special native trees and shrubs across the country.

"I love working with Project Crimson Trust – I get to work with clever people, who are focused on fighting climate change, strengthening our threatened biodiversity and growing healthier communities," says Bell Gully consultant, Kate Redgewell.

"Project Crimson has great clarity about the outcomes it is seeking for increased native tree planting and the benefits that derives, and it is prepared to innovate to deliver on its outcomes and build stronger, more sustainable communities by doing so. This means we get to work with the Trust on really interesting, as well as personally fulfilling, work."

Bell Gully has helped the Trust with the growth of its Trees That Count programme, and introduction of its carbon calculator and tree counts. Through these, Trees That Count has kept track of the native trees planted through New Zealand since 2016, with the total exceeding

33 million trees to date. These trees have the potential, over 50 years, to remove more than five million tonnes of carbon dioxide from our atmosphere.

Trees That Count works to increase native tree planting in New Zealand. Its marketplace enables individuals and businesses to fund or gift native trees, which are then matched to deserving planting groups around the country: from iwi and community groups restoring local reserves through to farmers who are improving waterways and the health of their land. More than \$5 million has been raised to plant over 680,000 native trees, supporting 729 planting projects around Aotearoa – and this number grows by the day.

Kate says, "We are also working on a new initiative for the Trust, which demonstrates its ability through native tree planting to connect business, individuals and communities to deliver sustainability for the local community, with biodiversity and climate change benefits for us all. Watch this space."

Says CEO Adele Fitzpatrick, "Bell Gully provides invaluable support to Project Crimson. Not only do Simon Watt, Kate and the wider team give me expert advice, they are personally engaged in our kaupapa and that really shows. I know I can have a conversation with Simon and Kate about a big idea and they'll support and help me to make it happen."

To find out more about Project Crimson's amazing work, visit www.projectcrimson.org.nz





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.

Diversity

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

Jammies in June

Each winter, as temperatures drop, we rally the Jammie Army, providing warm pyjamas and donations to Kidz First Children's Hospital at Middlemore, in Auckland. In 2021 our Wellington team got involved, donating pyjamas to Wellington Children's Hospital in what we expect will become an annual event.

SPCA

Our annual SPCA Cupcake Day at the firm is the sweetest way to make a difference for animals in need.

City Missions – Auckland and Wellington

With COVID-19 restrictions affecting so many families again in 2021, we were pleased to support the annual winter appeals to stock foodbanks, and donated gifts and cash towards the holiday season appeals, in both centres.

TupuToa

We value our partnership with TupuToa, an internship programme creating additional pathways for Maori and Pasifika students.

Shine - Light it Orange

We are 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 an annual fundraiser morning tea.

Some of the organisations we support



Pro bono 2020-2021 facts and figures

2020

Exceeded
NZ\$1,000,000
fee equivalent budget



107

lawyers



30

partners



182

matters



2,466

hours



54

pro bono clients



More than
NZ\$125,000



benefitted three local community law centres

2021

Just under
NZ\$1,000,000
fee equivalent budget

110

lawyers

25

partners

166

matters


2,167

hours

63

pro bono clients

Just under
NZ\$115,000



For more information about Bell Gully's
Pro Bono and Community Programme,
please contact:

Rachel Gowing

Pro Bono and Community Programme Manager

EMAIL
rachel.gowing@bellgully.com

DDI
+64 9 916 8825

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