



Annual Report

2020 - 2021





Contact details

People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi

**Street Address:**

Level 4, 173-175 Victoria St
Wellington 6011

**Postal Address**

PO Box 9199
Marion Square
Wellington 6141

**Phone:**

04 381 3242
0800 20 60 70
(National Office)

**Email:**

ask@peoplefirst.org.nz

**Website:**

www.peoplefirst.org.nz

**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/
peoplefirstnz](https://www.facebook.com/peoplefirstnz)



Mission statement and Purpose

“People First New Zealand
Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi is here to
empower and support people
with learning disability to be
strong and valued individuals
in New Zealand.”

People First's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the Treaty of Waitangi

Māori are the Tāngata Whenua
of Aotearoa and we will support
the rights Māori have under the
Treaty of Waitangi.





People First New Zealand is here to:



- make sure that people with learning disability can speak out and be heard on things that are important to them in services, in communities and in government.



- represent people with learning disability who cannot speak up for themselves.



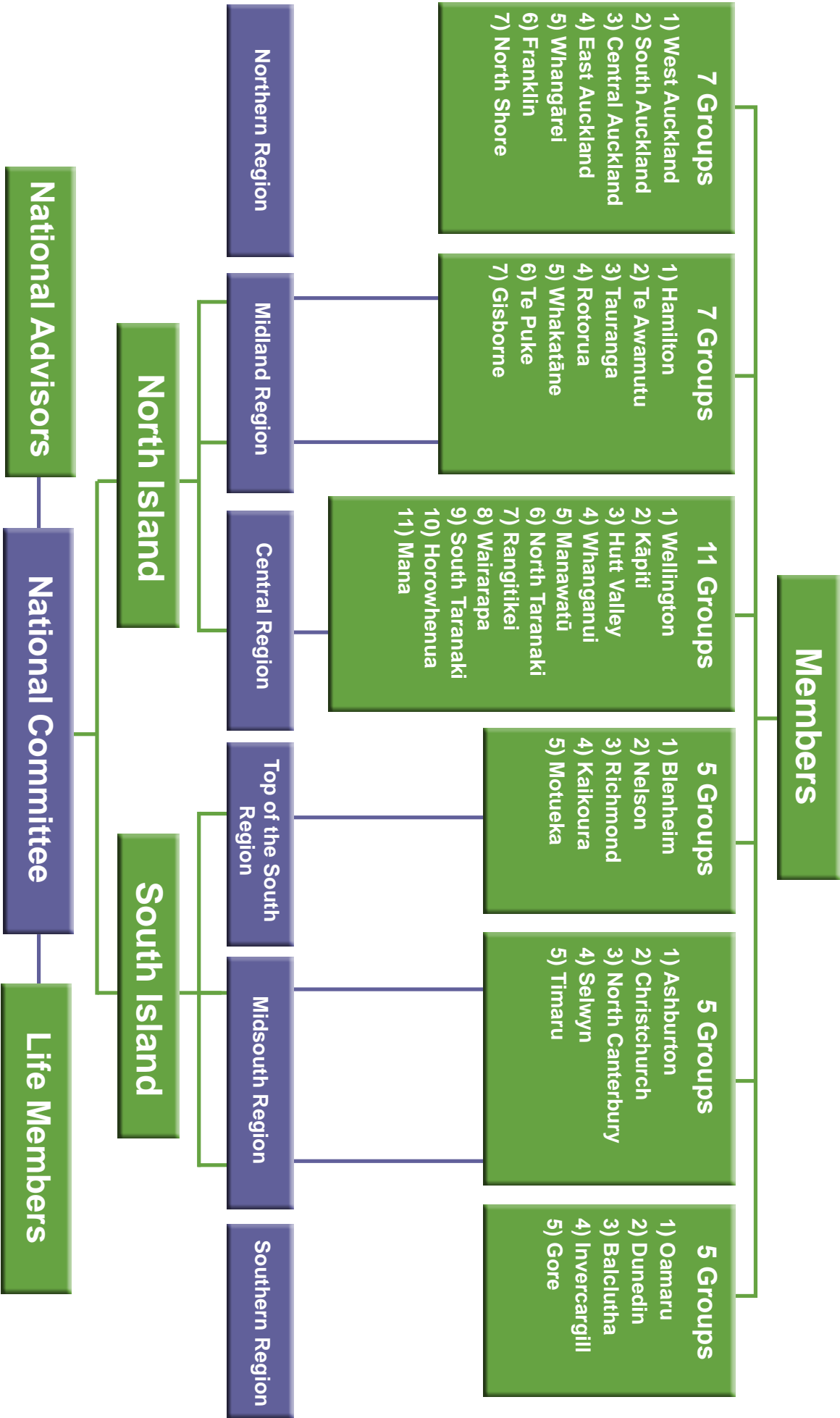
- promote the rights of people with learning disability.



- make sure people with learning disability are listened to.

People First New Zealand Inc.

– Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi Governance Chart





The People First National Committee

The National Committee meets to make decisions about People First. They get reports about the work and projects that are happening, and about People First's funding. At the meetings, there are reports from:

- **National Chairperson**
- **Regional Presidents**
- **Member representatives on advisory boards.**

The National Committee also invites guest speakers from other organisations to its meetings, to keep up to date with what is happening in the disability community and in government.



National Chairperson: Penelope Banfield

Vice Chairperson: Kris Roguski

Northern Region President: Ronnie Sione

Midland Region President: Kris Roguski

Central Region President: Jason Donovan

Top of the South Region President: Penelope Banfield

Midsouth Region President: Shane McInroe

Southern Region President: Cheryl Wallace



Non-voting Advisors:

Brigit Mirfin-Veitch and
Gordon Boxall

National Chairperson's report - Penelope Banfield



This has been another busy and challenging year for People First New Zealand.

I have enjoyed my role as National Chairperson. I have been to lots of meetings throughout the year. To keep doing my role during COVID-19, I have learnt to use Microsoft Teams and have been part of many online meetings.

One of the major highlights from the last year was the National Leadership Forum we held in Wellington in April. This year's forum was also a celebration - as it was the first face to face meeting we'd had at a national level in 12 months.

At the forum, members learnt more about their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and about being a leader.

It is always great to get together at our forums, and to see the members grow through having these opportunities.

Another highlight was attending the New Zealand Down Syndrome Association National Achievement Awards ceremony at Government House in Wellington. It was great to hear about the amazing things that young people with Down Syndrome have achieved. It was my first time at Government House - and it's amazing! I really enjoyed the whole experience.

People First New Zealand is proud to be part of the Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) Coalition. It is great to work alongside the other DPOs and the Government through the important work of the DPO Coalition. We are all working towards making the rights under the United Nations Convention a reality.

As the National Chairperson, I have been attending the DPO Coalition workshops and meetings along with People First National Manager Cindy Johns. Every DPO takes its turn at chairing 6 meetings - and it was my turn



this year. This was another highlight for me. It was challenging at times but a good experience. It really helped to have a Meeting Assistant alongside me.

As COVID-19 has continued, it has certainly brought challenges to all of us. The People First New Zealand National Committee has had to make some hard decisions about stopping face to face meetings, courses and events to keep everyone safe. We had to keep checking those decisions throughout the year. We had to keep thinking about our members and how COVID-19 can affect them.

I am really proud of how People First as an organisation has coped with COVID-19. It was great that the staff reached out to members, and members reached out to each other, to make sure they were well supported.

The Make it Easy team worked very hard, putting lots of government information about COVID-19 into Easy Read so everyone could have access to information in a way that worked for them.

COVID-19 revealed some long-time issues for people with learning disability - such as not having cell phones or other devices, not having enough money to buy what they need and to pay for the internet, and not having good support from some disability services. People First needs to keep speaking up about these issues.

I want to thank the National Committee for working together as a team and keeping People First strong. Thank you to Kris Roguski, the Vice Chairperson, for stepping in for me when I haven't been available.

Thank you also to the Advisors to the National Committee, Brigit Mirfin-Veitch and Gordon Boxall, for sharing your time and advice.

And a big thank you to all the People First staff, volunteers and contractors throughout New Zealand for your hard work and assistance.

This will be my last report as National Chairperson, as I have now finished my term on the National Committee. I would like to welcome the new members to the committee, and I wish the new National Chairperson and committee all the best in leading People First.

Regional reports



Northern Region

Ronnie Sione

My name is Ronnie Sione and I am the President of the Northern Region. This is my second Annual Report.

2 things we are proud of from the last year:

- In October 2020, members from the Northern Region attended the NZDSN National Symposium, and had an information stall at the event. In March 2021, I got to attend the NZDSN's Banking Issues Forum. Approximately 100 people attended both events. We talked to people about our organisation and handed out Easy Read material and pamphlets.

- In April 2021, 3 members represented the Northern Region at the People First National Leadership Forum in Wellington.

What we are working on doing better:

- We are working on making our Local Groups more diverse and multicultural. This is because we would like to see more kinds of people represented within People First.

On behalf of the members of the Northern Region, I would like to thank:

- All of our members who show up to support their peers
- Our Regional Coordinators Patrida and Russell, who are always working hard and looking out for us
- Our Local Assistants Dianne (Whangārei), Meisha (South Auckland and Franklin) and Maninder (Central Auckland), who have kept our Local Group meetings happening and assisted with growing our groups
- The staff and support workers who transport some of our members to their meetings
- Our funders
- All our friends and whānau who have supported us.



Midland Region

Kris Roguski

Hi, my name is Kris Roguski. I am the President for the Midland Region. This is my fourth year as Midland Region President.

2 things we are proud of from the last year:

- In July and August 2020, we ran a Money Smarts Made Easy course in Whakatāne. In January and February 2021, we ran a Keeping Safe Feeling Safe course in Tauranga. Everyone who attended the courses really enjoyed them. They got to learn how set up their money goals, what different types of abuse look like, and how they can keep safe.

Special thanks to BayTrust and Imagine Better for another opportunity to deliver these 2 courses!

- The Midland Region had a busy year with groups and members represented in community projects. The Whakatāne Local Group is the member of the Inclusive and Accessible Eastern Bay Group. This group made a submission to the Whakatāne District Council Long Term Plan and participated in a charitable project called Accessible Transport Solutions. The Tauranga and Rotorua Local Groups are both members of the CCS Access Group, which contributed to Rotorua Lakes District Council's 2021 Long Term Plan.

What we are working on doing better:

- We have been working hard to grow the membership and promote the Te Awamutu and Hamilton Local Groups.

On behalf of the members of the Midland Region, I would like to thank:

- Regional Coordinator Yi Small for building my leadership and self-advocacy skills
- Our Local Assistants and volunteers – who all work tirelessly to build a strong Midland Region and make People First more well-known
- Our funders for supporting the Midland Region
- All our friends and whānau for their support.

Central Region

Jason Donovan

Hi, my name is Jason Donovan and I am the President of the Central Region.

2 things we are proud of from the last year:

The Central Region has been very busy - so it was hard to decide on just 2 things!

- We are proud that our members are part of many advisory groups and are contributing to improving accessibility for disabled people. For example, our members attended a civil defence workshop, had a meeting with 3DHB staff about accessible healthcare services, and contributed to plans for an accessible COVID-19 vaccine rollout.
- We are also proud of our members who have been featured in videos about the disabled community. Jenna was interviewed in a video about lockdown last year, Fiona appeared in a video about disabled people getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and Sir Robert Martin was in a video supporting the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

What we are working on doing better:

We would like more members to join our Local Groups. We would also like to see our members learn more te reo Māori and use karakia at meetings.

On behalf of the members of the Central Region, I would like to thank:

- The National Committee, National Advisors and National Office staff for supporting our meetings and keeping People First running
- Elizabeth and Yi, the Acting Central Region Coordinators, who have been working hard to support our region
- Our Local Assistants: Lucy (Whanganui and Manawatū), Kirsty (Taranaki North and South), Yvonne (Wairarapa), Eleanor (Horowhenua), Elizabeth (Kāpiti and Mana), Anne (Wellington), Trish (Rangitikei) and Phil (Hutt Valley) who have kept our Local Group meetings happening
- Our funders for supporting the region
- All of our members who show up to support their peers
- All our friends and whānau for their support.





Top of the South

Top of the South Region

Penelope Banfield

My name is Penelope. I am the President for the Top of the South Region. We have had another busy year in our region, with lots of exciting things happening. We have had new members join our groups and we remember some of our members that have sadly passed away this year.



2 things we are proud of from the last year:

- The Top of the South members really enjoyed attending our Regional Meetings. Funding from Tasman District Council and Marlborough District Council meant we were able to hire a bus to transport all our members so they could attend.
- We are very happy that we have recruited a new Local Assistant for Blenheim. Her name is Karen McCarthy and we look forward to her starting work with the group.

What we are working on doing better:

- We are planning to do more presentations to local organisations, schools and community groups so that more people know about People First.

On behalf of the members of the Top of the South Region, I would like to thank:

- Brigit and Gordon who advise us on the National Committee
- National Manager Cindy for all her hard work and the team at National Office that works so hard behind the scenes
- Pam Shanks (South Island Team Leader), Patrick Doherty (Regional Coordinator) and Andrea Lee (Local Assistant for Nelson)
- All the funders that support the work we do (Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council, Marlborough District Council and COGS).

And finally, thank you to all the People First members that continue to speak up!



Midsouth Region

Shane McInroe

Hi, I am Shane McInroe, the Midsouth President. This year, we have enjoyed having face to face meetings - but when this wasn't possible, People First members and staff kept in touch remotely to pass on information and support.

2 things we are proud of from the last year are:

- People First Midsouth and the Christchurch and Districts branch of the Disabled Persons Assembly organised an online Q and A session about the COVID-19 vaccine. Officials from the Ministry of Health joined us on Zoom to talk about the vaccine rollout and answer questions.



- Members and staff in Midsouth have been very involved in groups promoting the Enabling Good Lives principles. In the last year, Midsouth members have:
 - o represented People First on the Waitaha Regional Leadership Group
 - o attended the Disabled Persons Core Group.

What are we working on doing better:

We are very pleased to have the West Coast Local Group up and running. We are looking for a new Local Assistant for Ashburton. We have a new Local Assistant for North Canterbury, but we are looking for a venue and time that will suit everyone.

On behalf of the members of the Midsouth Region, I would like to thank:

- Pam Shanks, South Island Team Leader, and Marg Matheson, Midsouth Region Coordinator
- Our Local Assistants Sharon Glavish, Dan Cresswell, Carole Watson, Wanda Hemmings, and Rashida Hashmi
- Our volunteers Warren Cresswell and Bette Corliss
- Our Funders: Christchurch City Council, COGS and the Rata Foundation.

Your support helps to keep the Midsouth Region strong.



Southern Region

Cheryl Wallace

2 things we are proud of from the last year:

- We are very proud of the great work the Dunedin Local Group members have been doing in their community this year. They have been involved in many events and projects. This has included working with young people with disabilities, the local council and the wider Dunedin community. This means more and more people in the community know about People First New Zealand.
- We are proud to see our members in the Southern Region growing in confidence when it comes to speaking in front of others. This is something we have focused on in our Local Groups and it is wonderful to see people be brave!

What are we working on doing better:

- We are working very hard to grow our smaller groups in the region - Balclutha, Invercargill and Oamaru. COVID-19 was very hard on our small groups, with membership numbers dropping. We are working hard to build these groups up again.

On behalf of the members of the Southern Region, we would like to thank:

- Our Local Assistants Aileen Findlater and Stephanie McLaren
- Our Dunedin volunteers Felicity Bond and Lisa Ward
- South Island Team Leader Pam Shanks and Southern Regional Coordinator Lee-ann Wightman
- National Advisor Brigit Mirfin-Veitch
- All our funders (Dunedin City Council, Otago Community Trust, Community Trust South and COGS).

National Advisors



Brigit Mirfin-Veitch and Gordon Boxall

As we come to the end of another year, COVID-19 continues to be a threat to all New Zealanders.

We also know from overseas that COVID-19 can be very dangerous for people with learning disability.

However, in spite of how difficult the virus has made our everyday lives, there have been many positive outcomes for People First New Zealand.

- We are very pleased that, in these challenging times, the Government has recognised that Easy Read information is important to people with learning disability and other members of our community.
- We are proud that People First has played a huge role in making official COVID-19 accessible for our members and others.
- We are impressed with how quickly the National Committee has accepted that face to face meetings are not always possible, and virtual meetings have become the norm. With a new virtual way of working, People First has continued to run smoothly.
- We are also impressed with the way People First staff have supported the National Committee members to learn new computer skills, and to get comfortable with new systems.

It has certainly shown us that National Committee meetings could be paperless - and how resourceful people with learning disability are when given the right tools, great training and support.

In this Annual Report, you will see the many activities and projects that People First has been involved in during the year.

It is clear that our projects are getting bigger and are responding to a wide range of important issues.



People First's success is due to staff, the National Committee and members all working together to achieve its goals. We are getting better and better at collaborating in this way!

It was great for members to get together face to face to celebrate Life Member Sir Robert Martin KNZM getting presented with his knighthood medal at the end of 2020. It was also positive for the National Committee, members from across all 6 regions, and the staff to attend the National Leadership Forum in April.

While we know we can meet online, these events were a reminder of how important these face to face sessions are for personal wellbeing and good governance.

We are also pleased that local elections were able to happen this year - and look forward to welcoming new Regional Presidents to the National Committee.

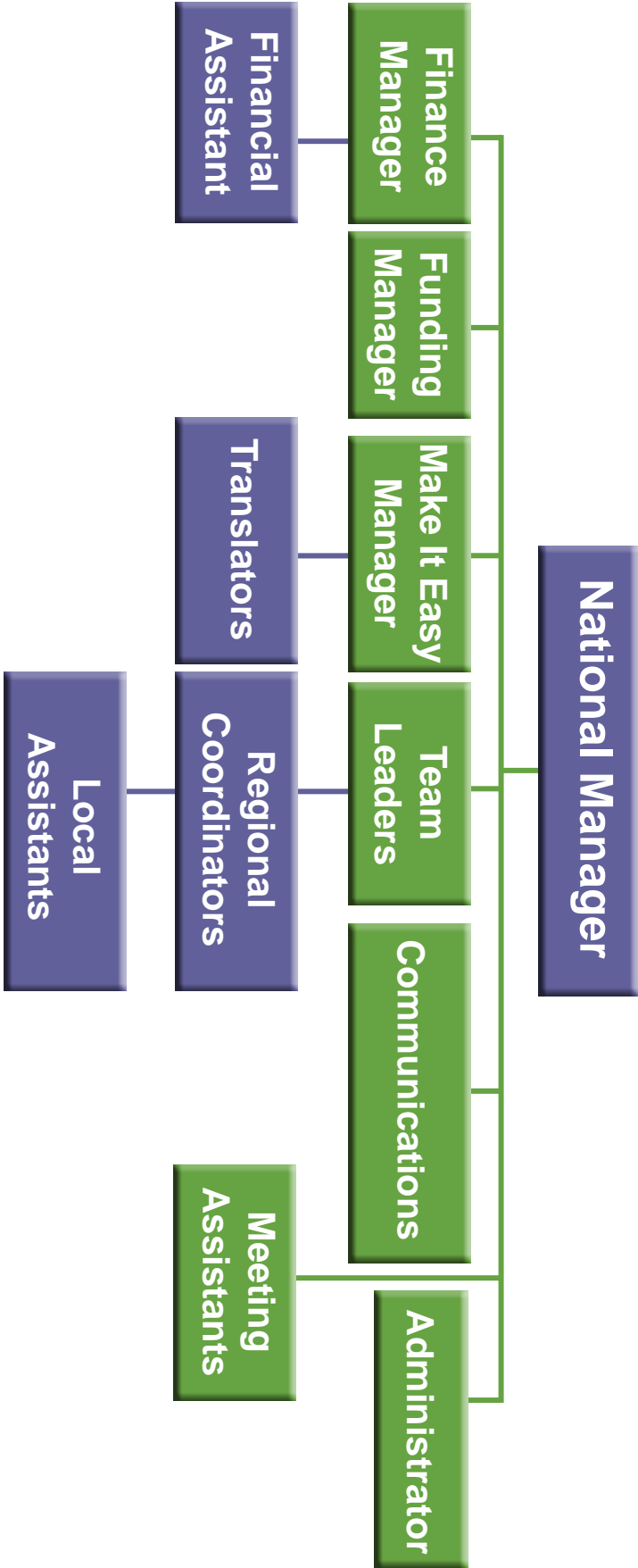
We acknowledge the commitment and hard work of National Manager Cindy Johns and her team, who provide real co-leadership with National Committee colleagues and the People First members.

We are proud of our advisor roles with People First, and look forward to supporting the important work the organisation does in the future, within the disability sector and beyond.



People First New Zealand Inc.

– Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi Management Chart





National Manager's Report

Cindy Johns

As National Manager, it has been a privilege serving People First New Zealand members over the past year, and working with a dedicated team of staff, members and volunteers.

Once again, COVID-19 has caused a lot of disruptions. There were times when we were unable to hold meetings, forums and deliver courses - and we have had to learn to roll with it. National Committee had to keep reviewing their decisions and put everyone's health and safety first.

However, I am pleased to report that there have still been many highlights for People First.

Highlights have been:

- Providing all the National Committee members with their own laptops so that we can hold meetings online. We even managed to go green - meaning we stopped printing all the National Committee papers and instead looked at them on our laptops.
- Holding the National Leadership Forum (on the third attempt to do so!) - which saw members celebrating being together, developing confidence, skills and knowledge, and having opportunities to speak up.
- Presenting the Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Self-Advocacy award to David King from Dunedin, and the Make It Easy Award to Anne Hawker and her team at the Ministry of Social Development.
- Attending Sir Robert Martin's investiture service at Government House and co-hosting a morning tea to honor him with the Office for Disability Issues.
- Continuing to be part of the New Zealand Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) Coalition and its work with the New Zealand Government. The DPO checks that the Government's Disability Action Plan is on track and gives advice to many agencies as they work to improve the lives of disabled people. Also, as a member of the DPO Coalition, People First is a partner in the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM). The IMM and the DPO Coalition are putting Articles

4.3 and 33 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into real action.

- The ongoing amazing support of our members by all staff during the different levels of COVID-19, and our members' support of one another.

I want to thank:

- All the members for making People First a great organisation. Throughout the year, there have been times when groups couldn't meet due to COVID-19, and I know members have found this very hard. Thank you for your patience and your courage.
- National Chairperson Penelope Banfield, National Vice Chairperson Kris Roguski, National Committee members Cheryl Wallace, Jason Donovan, Ronnie Sione and Shane McInroe for your commitment and decision-making.
- National Advisors Gordon Boxall and Brigit Mirfin-Veitch, for your ongoing commitment to People First and the members.
- Our volunteers, who assist with Local Groups and driving members to meetings.
- Make it Easy Manager Kath Parrish and all the translators for the great work of the Make it Easy service. Kath and the Make it Easy team continue to grow the service - which has produced lots of information in Easy Read for the Government and other organisations.
- All the staff - local, regional and national - for all their great work and dedication, especially during COVID-19 where they have had to be more creative, flexible and patient than usual.
- The funders, without whom we would not be able to make real changes in the lives of people with learning disability.

Together, we achieve a lot and make a difference.





People First New Zealand goals for 2020-2021



In 2018, members of People First from all over the country talked about what they wanted the organisation to work on for the next 3 years.

Here are the 7 goals that have been guiding our work since 2019, and a bit about some of the work we did this year towards each goal.



1. People know about People First New Zealand:

- at the local level – in the towns or areas where we live
- at the national level – all over New Zealand
- at the international level – around the world.



2. People First New Zealand has strong leaders.



3. People First New Zealand speaks up for the rights of people with learning disability:

- at the local level – in the towns or areas where we live
- at the national level – all over New Zealand
- at the international level – around the world.



4. People First New Zealand respects and welcomes people from all cultures.



5. People First New Zealand has an Easy Read translation service that is:

- well run
- excellent.



6. People First New Zealand has courses for people with learning disability that are:

- well run
- excellent.



7. People First New Zealand is a strong Disabled People's Organisation.

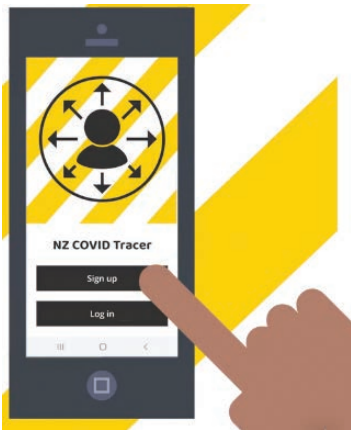


Goal 1: People know about People First New Zealand

Every year, more and more people get to know about People First New Zealand.

Getting the word out

This year, People First's Facebook page continued to be very busy and active. With COVID-19 still showing up in the community, we kept posting a lot of information about COVID-19 in Easy Read. This included information on the different Alert Levels, how to protect yourself against COVID-19, the COVID-19 vaccine, masks and what to do if you cannot wear a mask.



We also shared:

- stories about People First members – speaking up and being part of community projects
- news articles about people with disabilities and disability issues from around New Zealand and overseas
- updates about disability policy and major disability-related projects in New Zealand
- events our members may be interested in
- Easy Read information from government agencies, councils and other organisations.



At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, our Facebook page had **2770** likes.

The People First website also has a range of information, including COVID-19 updates, Easy Read information and resources, and the latest news from the organisation. This year, the website was used **8796** times.

Disability information and advisory service

People First New Zealand has a disability information and advisory service. This means we answer questions that members and others in the community may have about disability issues. These include questions about:

- issues people with learning disability face
- rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- how to speak up for your rights as a person with learning disability
- services for people with learning disability throughout New Zealand.

We give out information to a lot of different people, including People First members, people with learning disability, whānau and support workers, and other interested people.

People First also has its own helpline, freephone 0800 20 60 70, which people with learning disability and their whānau can call for advice and information. This year, we received **756** phone calls to the helpline.

Conferences and expos

Every year, People First members attend disability conferences, symposiums and expos all over New Zealand. At these events, members often hold information stalls – to promote People First and show all the information we have available.





This is a great opportunity for members to meet and connect with others in the disability sector, improve networking skills and talk to other disabled people about human rights.

This year, members attended and represented People First at:

- The New Zealand Disability Support Network (NZDSN) National Symposium - held in both Auckland and Rotorua
- Enabling Good Lives' Next Steps 2020 Expo – held in Christchurch
- Disability Connect's Transition Expo - held in Wellington
- NZDSN's Banking Issues Forum – held in Auckland
- “Connect-Ability”: The Federation of Disability Information Centres' National Conference - held in Queenstown
- Volunteer Bay of Plenty's “Volfest” - held in Tauranga.

People First members also get to speak at conferences on different topics that affect people with learning disability - such as self-advocacy, school and work, staying safe, and money.

In March 2021, People First assisted with the NZDSN's Banking Issues Forum (along with IHC and the Bankers Association) - about supporting people with learning disability to manage their finances. Members Ronnie Sione and Jenna Maguren did a presentation about issues People First members have had with using banking services.



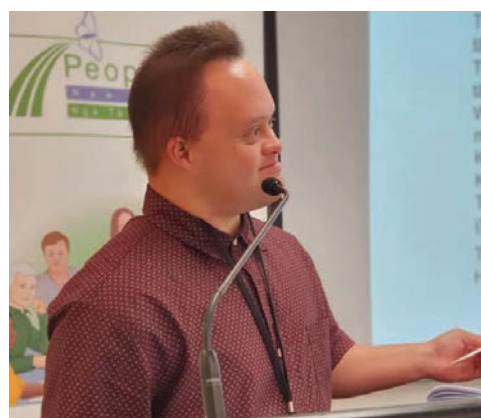


Goal 2: People First has strong leaders

National Leadership Forum 2021

In April 2021, People First held a 2-day National Leadership Forum in Wellington. 27 members and 9 staff from all 6 regions attended the forum. From each region, 4 members (plus each Regional President) were chosen to attend.

The purpose of the Leadership Forum is for members to develop confidence, skills and knowledge – by participating in workshops, learning about rights, meeting new people, and practicing speaking up in a safe environment. Members take the skills they have learned and use them in positive ways – for example, when serving on national advisory groups and speaking up for change in the community.





At the forum, members took part in workshops that relate to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Topics included:

- human rights
- the Health and Disability Code of Rights in New Zealand
- the 8 General Principles of the UNCRPD
- how to use the UNCRPD in your life
- the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

At the workshops, members got to work on public speaking skills, sharing thoughts and ideas with the group.

Each of the People First National Committee co-lead one of the workshops, and gave presentations to the members about their leadership experiences. Members also heard a presentation from Sir Robert Martin KNZM about his role in the development of the UNCRPD.

The forum ended with an awards dinner, where each of the members received a certificate for participating. The certificates were presented by guests Paula Tesoriero, Disability Rights Commissioner, and Brian Coffey, Director of the Office for Disability Issues.



Balclutha member **Philippa Henderson** had this to say about the forum: “My major highlight was meeting Sir Robert Martin and gaining more knowledge. I felt encouraged by others to step up and become a leader and I gained a lot of confidence. I’m not afraid to stand up and advocate for someone. I now know this is what I want to do: stand up for people with disabilities.”

Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Self-Advocacy Award 2021

Leona Gitmans was passionate about people with learning disability knowing about self-advocacy. When Leona passed away, her parents asked family and friends to make donations to People First, rather than bring flowers to her funeral service.

We would like to say a big thank you to the Gitmans family who, in Leona's memory, support People First to this day.

The People First New Zealand National Committee gives an award every year, in Leona's name, to a person with learning disability who has been a strong leader in self-advocacy in their community. People First New Zealand was thrilled to present the 2021 Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Self-Advocacy Award to Dunedin member David King.

Southern Regional Coordinator Lee-ann Wightman had this to say about David:

“David is a fantastic advocate for the rights of people with learning disability. He is not afraid to speak up and is a strong voice in the local disability community in Dunedin.

“Most importantly, David continually offers huge amounts of encouragement, support and guidance to the younger People First members. He has become a mentor in his Local Group and always brings with him a great sense of humour.”

At the Leadership Forum awards dinner, David was presented with a beautifully carved pounamu (greenstone), a certificate, and a cash prize. Congratulations, David!





Goal 3: People First speaks up

Advisory group work

Members from around New Zealand represent People First on many local, regional and national advisory groups and committees working for disability rights. Their role is to be a voice for people with learning disability, and make sure all policies will assist people with learning disability to lead good lives.

Thank you to all the members who have taken on these roles. This year, People First members were on **9** national advisory committees. Topics discussed by these committees included:

- employment
- housing
- transport
- justice
- banking and money
- making disability supports better.

People First New Zealand provides trained Meeting Assistants for members who represent People First on advisory committees. People First would like to thank everyone who has worked as a Meeting Assistant over the last 12 months. Your work allows people with learning disability to have an equal voice when speaking up for human rights.





Speaking up in the community

As well as contributing to groups and committees, People First members have been involved in many community advocacy projects - speaking up to make life better for people with learning disability.

Some of these projects are:

- making presentations to local councils about ways to make their home towns more accessible
- meeting District Health Board staff to talk about better health supports for people with learning disability
- meeting with police to talk about stopping violence and how to work better with disabled people
- being part of a workshop with civil defence providers on how to better assist disabled people in an emergency.

Well done to all the members, and their Local Assistants, whose feedback and ideas have assisted to make communities that are more accessible and that everyone can be part of!

Submissions, surveys and consultations

People First New Zealand makes submissions to the Government when it is thinking about making new laws. Knowing what New Zealanders think helps the Government choose what to include in these laws, and how they affect people's lives. We think it is important that the Government hears from people with disabilities.



As well as making submissions to the Government, People First also gives its feedback to major disability organisations and committees, so they can make policies and guidelines that include everyone.

This year, People First has made submissions on many different topics, including:

- preventing family violence and sexual violence against disabled people
- supporting and assisting disabled people to testify in court
- organisations making their work more accessible and including all people
- supporting disabled people to live in the community.

DPO Coalition

People First New Zealand is part of a group called the DPO Coalition. DPO stands for Disabled People's Organisations. "Coalition" means a group that works together.

The DPO Coalition meets every month, and its goal is to make the rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a reality in New Zealand. People First is represented at these meetings by National Chairperson Penelope Banfield and National Manager Cindy Johns. Every DPO representative gets to be chair – and, this year, Penelope got to chair 6 meetings.

An important project for the DPO Coalition this year was making a group of short videos called "Disabled People & COVID-19." These videos showed members from all the Disabled People's Organisations talking about issues disabled New Zealanders faced during the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. Topics discussed included food shopping, social distancing, communication, mental health, and accessing support. People First member Jenna Maguren appeared in one of the videos.

Sir Robert Martin KNZM

People First New Zealand is extremely proud of Life Member Sir Robert Martin, who continues his role as an independent expert on the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In November 2020, Sir Robert was re-elected to the United Nations Committee for another 4-year term.

Sir Robert's role usually takes him to Geneva, Switzerland, twice a year, but he has not been able to travel due to COVID-19. He has been taking part in meetings with the United Nations via Zoom, assisted by People First.

The United Nations committee Sir Robert serves on looks at the countries that have signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to see how well they are putting the rights within the Convention in place. This year, he has taken on the role of Co-Chairperson of the United Nations' working group on deinstitutionalisation.

In October 2020, Sir Robert got to attend his investiture ceremony (which was delayed due to COVID-19), where he was presented with his New Zealand Honours medal by Dame Patsy Reddy, Governor-General of New Zealand. The next day, People First and the Office for Disability Issues hosted a morning tea for Sir Robert to celebrate all his achievements. People First members presented him with a pounamu, and Central Region Co-Vice Presidents Hamish Taverner and James Carr made speeches in his honour.





Goal 4: People First respects and welcomes people from all cultures

Te Tiriti o Waitangi training

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) is the founding document of Aotearoa. People First New Zealand has made a commitment to honour Te Tiriti and support the rights of Māori, the tāngata whenua of Aotearoa, under Te Tiriti.

As part of its Learn With Us course on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, People First teaches members about Te Tiriti, its importance to New Zealand, and how Māori rights are made real. This year, we delivered a Te Tiriti workshop at the National Leadership Forum, led by Sharon Glavish, the Local Assistant for Selwyn.



As part of this workshop, members got to write and practice their “pepeha” (a way of introducing yourself in te reo Māori), with assistance from Sharon and members from Midsouth. Members really enjoyed learning this new skill.

Promoting tikanga Māori

Te reo Māori is an official language of New Zealand – and it is important to People First to promote te reo and help keep it alive.

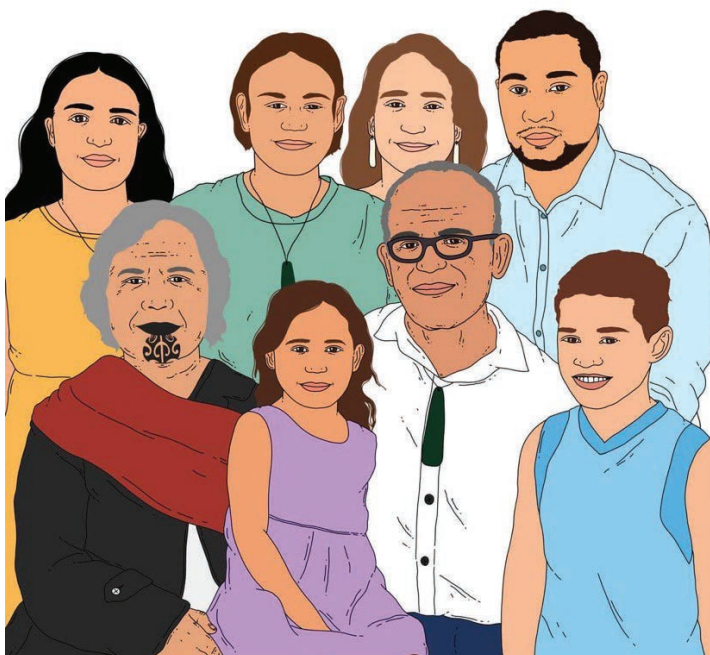
Since 2018, the Selwyn Local Group has led the inclusion of te reo and tikanga Māori in the Midsouth Region. The members have developed a booklet of Māori waiata and karakia to use at their Local Group meetings, and also use meetings as a chance to use and practice te reo. Learning te reo and tikanga Māori together brings whanaungatanga (connection) to People First - and helps members connect with their culture.



Goal 5: People First has an Easy Read translation service

Easy Read is a way of making information accessible for people with learning disability. Easy Read uses everyday words, large print and pictures to make complex information easier to understand. Easy Read can also help other people, such as those who have low literacy, are older, are Deaf, and use English as a second language.

People First New Zealand's Easy Read translation service is called Make it Easy. In the 2020/21 financial year, the Make it Easy team translated **137** documents.



People First is part of the Accessible Formats Working Group, which is led by the Ministry of Social Development. This group works hard to make sure government services know about the Accessibility Charter. The Accessibility Charter says that New Zealand government services need to display their information in 5 accessible formats: Easy Read, New Zealand Sign Language, Braille, large print and audio.

Putting government information about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine into Easy Read continued to keep our Make it Easy team busy. The team also translated many important documents for government departments and other organisations, including:

- a guide to voting in the 2020 Election, and information on the End of Life Choice Act and Cannabis Regulation and Control Bill



- the New Zealand Bankers Association Code of Banking Practice
- reports from the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care
- the Government's report on health and disability reform
- the Ombudsman's report about the removal of babies from disabled parents by Oranga Tamariki
- information for OUTLine for parents on how to support their LGBTQ+ children
- Napier City Council's Long-Term Plan and Positive Ageing Strategy
- CCS Disability Action's Disability Leadership Plan and Māori Development Plan.

The Electoral Commission gave this feedback about working with People First on its Easy Read materials on the 2020 Election:

“The People First team provided invaluable advice as we worked together to create our Easy Read guide to voting for the 2020 General Election and referendums. At each phase of the process, from getting the content right, to feeding back on design of the guide, People First were there to help and ensure we got it right. It was a seamless process, and we're thrilled with the final product!”

Thank you to Kath Parrish, Make it Easy Manager, Andi Buchanan, Senior Translator, and all our translators for their fantastic work. Thank you to all the agencies and services who have used the Make it Easy service to make their information more accessible. Thank you also to People First members and staff who speak up and ask for information to be made available in Easy Read.



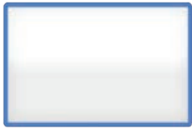


Make It Easy Award 2021

Every year, the People First New Zealand National Committee gives out an award to an organisation or person who has made a great commitment to displaying their information in Easy Read. At the Leadership Forum in April 2021, People First gave the award to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). MSD showed strong leadership during COVID-19: publishing COVID-19 factsheets in Easy Read and promoting accessible information to other government departments.

People First would particularly like to acknowledge Anne Hawker ONZM, Principal Disability Advisor at MSD – who has, for many years, been a strong supporter of Easy Read. Anne's colleagues at MSD, Jo Orange and Callum McMenamin, accepted the Make It Easy Award on her behalf.

Well done, MSD – thank you for making sure disabled New Zealanders had the information they needed during this difficult time in history.



Goal 6: People First has courses

Learn With Us is the education arm of People First New Zealand. Members and staff write and teach courses together.

People First knows how to teach and organise courses in a way that works for people with learning disability.

This year, COVID-19 continued to make it difficult for us deliver all the courses we had planned. However, the courses we were able to run were very well received by the members who attended.

In 2020/21, Learn With Us delivered:

5 Money Smarts Made Easy courses, which **63** people attended altogether

3 Keeping Safe Feeling Safe courses, which **39** people attended altogether

2 Work and Your Rights in New Zealand courses, which **30** people attended altogether

1 UN Convention course, which **23** people attended

1 Speaking Up course, which **15** people attended.



Here is some feedback from people who attended this year's courses:

“People might be angry, sad or worried - and I got to practice things that help. In the [role] play someone ran away with my purse, and I learnt to go to the police for help.”

“My autism and anxiety world isn't as scary now that I'm learning to keep myself safe.”

“We all have rights. The right to be safe. Don't be shy to speak up. Thank you.”

“I learnt the knowledge and skills to speak up. I feel more confident speaking up about any problems I have.”

“My favourite part [of the course] was going to the police station and trying on the police vests. We also learned about consent: yes means yes, and no means no.”

Thank you to all the members and staff involved with Learn With Us this year.





Wellbeing Digital Tool Project

This year, People First received funding to develop a digital tool to help deliver Learn With Us courses online.

People First put together a Project Team, made up of 5 members and 6 staff from around the country, to design this online app. The Project Team has been meeting with Springload - a digital company from Wellington – to brainstorm ideas and come up with new concepts.

The final product will be a very visual and interactive tool, which is easy to use. It will help people with learning disability to:

- learn about rights
- stay safe in the community
- participate in the community as equals
- connect with one another.

People First is very excited about this project – and we're proud of all the ideas our members have spoken up about so far.





Goal 7: People First is a strong DPO

Strong Governance

The National Committee of People First New Zealand, which meets at least 3 times a year, provides strong governance and leadership.

Throughout COVID-19, National Committee members have learnt to use Zoom and Microsoft Teams, and have held more meetings to talk about how to keep People First members safe during the different COVID-19 Alert Levels.

People First staff work hard to keep the organisation strong at all levels - local, regional and national - through having good systems, policies and practices in place.

The People First Funding Manager makes applications to get funding to:

- support Local Groups
- cover costs such as rent and stationery
- run Learn With Us courses
- run regional and national projects.





During COVID-19, People First staff have continued to work very hard and have:

- reached out to members during the various Alert Levels
- ran a helpline through the free 0800 number
- worked alongside the Government to distribute information and resolve issues facing people with learning disability
- distributed Easy Read information.

Annual General Meeting 2020

To help keep our members safe, our 2020 AGM was held via Zoom – a first for our organisation! It was a great event that celebrated People First New Zealand's work and achievements from the last year. **73** people joined the meeting - including members from all over New Zealand, with support from staff and whānau.

Reports were presented to the members, including reports from the:

- National Chairperson
- Regional Presidents
- National Manager
- Funding Manager.

A report was also presented on People First's financial performance for 2019/20.

People and organisations that People First New Zealand would like to thank

Thank you to the members of People First New Zealand.

Thank you to the staff, volunteers and contractors of People First New Zealand.

Thank you to the organisations that People First New Zealand has worked with this year. These are:



Access Alliance
The Australasian Society for
Intellectual Disability
Badminton Oceania
Balance Aotearoa
Blind Citizens NZ
CCS Disability Action Auckland
CHANGE
Christchurch Community House
Community House Whanganui
Deaf Aotearoa
Disabled Persons Assembly
The Donald Beasley Institute Inc.
The Gitmans Family
The Health and Disability
Commissioner
Hearing Nelson
Hot Ice Travel Limited
IHC New Zealand Inc.
Kāpo Māori o Aotearoa
Moore Markhams

Muscular Dystrophy Association of
New Zealand
The New Zealand Disability
Support Network
The New Zealand Federation of
Disability Information Centres
New Zealand Human Rights
Commission
Office for Disability Issues
Office of the Ombudsman
Ohnyx IT Solutions Ltd.
The Personal Advocacy and
Safeguarding Adults Trust Inc.
Photosymbols Ltd.
Primeproperty Group Ltd.
Promohouse
Red Pepper Print
Sam Corliss
Springload
Tahi Design
Workbridge



Thank you to all the organisations who give us funding to do our work

Anstiss-Garland Charitable Trust

BayTrust

Christchurch City Council

Community Trust South

Department of Internal Affairs -
Lottery Grants Board

Dunedin City Council

Frozen Funds Charitable Trust

Helen Graham Charitable Trust

Hōhepa Canterbury

Horowhenua District Council

Hugo Charitable Trust

Imagine Better

Invercargill City Council

JBS Dudding Trust

The Lion Foundation

Masterton District Council

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Social Development

New Zealand Disability Support
Network

New Zealand Lottery Grants Board

Nikau Foundation

Office for Disability Issues

Otago Community Trust

Rata Foundation

R G and E F Macdonald Trust

Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust

Selwyn District Council

Tasman District Council

Tauranga City Council

Tauranga Energy Consumer Trust
(TECT)

Te Pou o te Whakaaro Nui

Te Tahua Mā Ngā Whakahaere i Ngā
Hapori: Community Organisation
Grants Scheme (COGS)

Te Tahua Mā Te Minita Anō Te
Tohatoha: Lottery Minister's
Discretionary Fund

Upper Hutt City Council

Waitaki District Council

WEL Energy Trust

Wellington Community Trust

Western Bay of Plenty District
Council

Whakatāne District Council

Whanganui District Council



**For the full performance report, please
contact the People First New Zealand
National Office on:**



Phone:

04 381 3242

0800 20 60 70

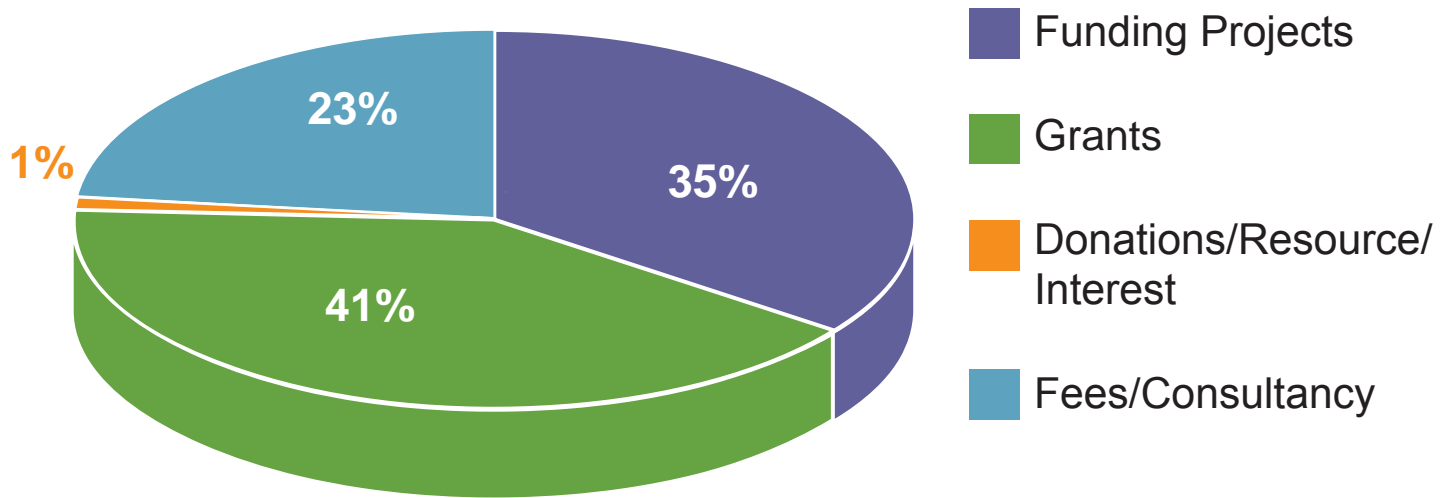
This number is free to call from anywhere
in New Zealand.



Email: ask@peoplefirst.org.nz

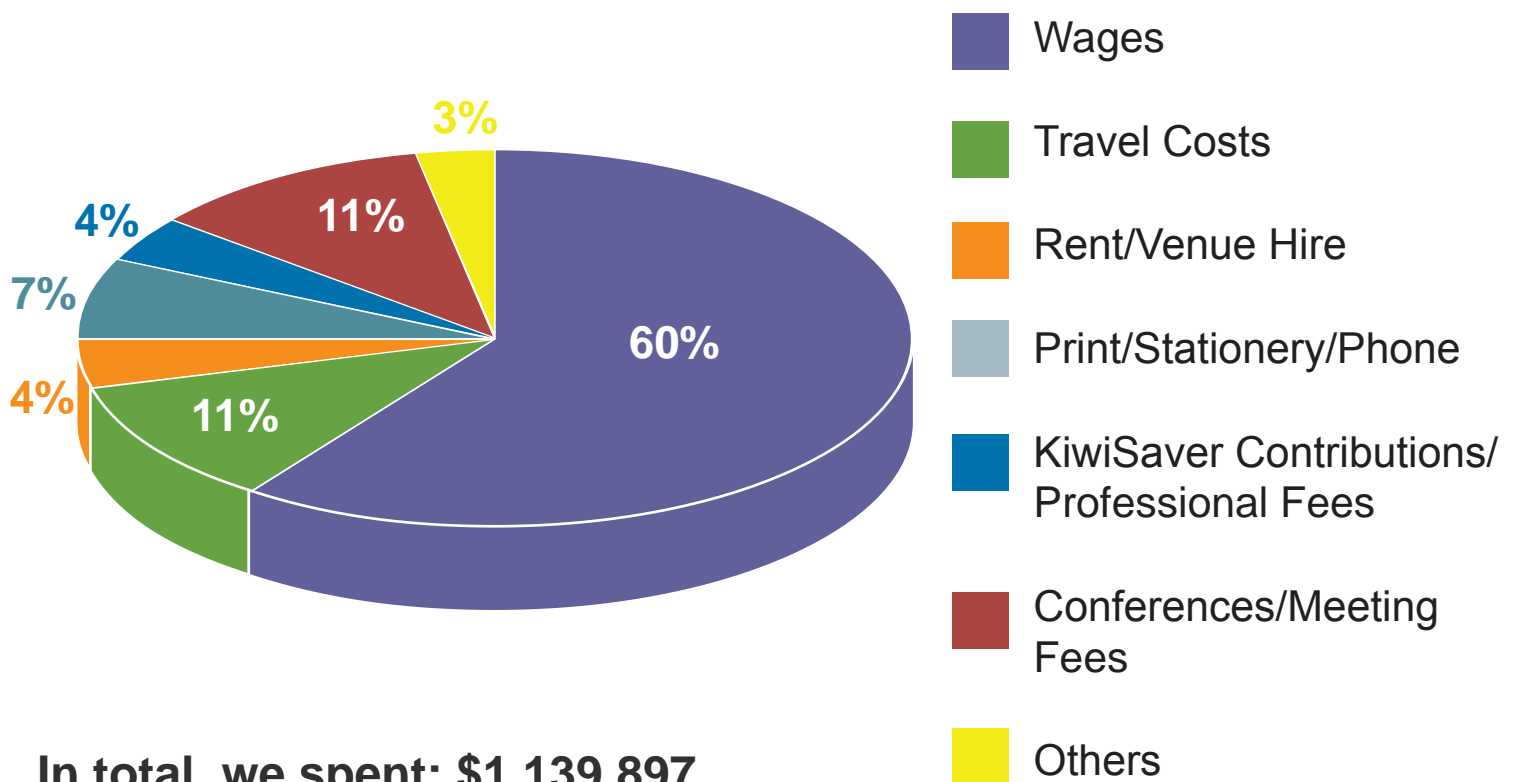


The money we get in



In total, we got: \$1,193,950

The money we spend



In total, we spent: \$1,139,897

Statement of Financial Position

Current assets	\$1,576,212
Fixed assets	\$20,971
Total Assets	\$1,597,183
Less	
Current Liabilities	\$696,176
Total Liabilities	\$696,176
Net Assets	\$901,007



What these words and numbers mean

Current assets

These are the things that People First owns, which change over time - such as the amount of money we have in the bank.

At the end of this year, the money amount of these things is 1 million, 5 hundred and 76 thousand, 2 hundred and 12 dollars.

Fixed assets

These are the things that People First owns, which do not change – such as computers and office furniture.

At the end of this year, the money amount of these things is 20 thousand, 9 hundred and 71 dollars.

Total assets

These are things that People First owns, such as money in the bank, computers and office furniture.

If we add our current assets and fixed assets together, this gives us our total assets.

At the end of this year, the money amount of these things is 1 million, 5 hundred and 97 thousand, 1 hundred and 83 dollars.

Current Liabilities

These are the things that People First owes to other people or organisations.

At the end of this year, the money amount of these things is 6 hundred and 96 thousand, 1 hundred and 76 dollars.

Net assets

This is how much money People First can say it has, after taking away the money it owes.

At the end of this year, the money amount People First has is 9 hundred and 1 thousand, 7 dollars.

Remembering our friends

It is important to remember those who have walked the path before us so that we can honour them in all our future work.

People First New Zealand remembers and says thank you to the members who have passed away this year.

We remember in particular:

Lynne Fleming, from Blenheim, who passed away in August 2020. Lynne always turned up to every meeting with a big smile on her face - and she is sorely missed by all her friends at People First.

Lucy Smellie, from Christchurch, who passed away in February 2021. Lucy was a member of People First right from when it first started. Her friends say she was always kind and polite, was a great baker of scones, and loved performing and art and crafts.

Haere haere haere nga Rangatira o tatou kua e titiro whakamuri mai. Haere haere haere.

Farewell, our leaders. Don't look back, you can leave us now. Farewell.

People First New Zealand's Make it Easy translation service has provided the Make it Easy images for this report.

Make it Easy uses images from:

- Changepeople.org
- Photosymbols.com
- Sam Corliss.



All images used in the document are subject to copyright rules and cannot be used without permission.

