

September 2020

Dear Friends and Family of Totara Farm Trust

Reading back on the last newsletter in March we were blissfully unaware of how our lives were about to be upended. Along came Covid and all that encompassed for the people supported by the Trust and the staff.

As you have been kept updated around the lockdown phases I won't linger on this other than to say you should be so proud of your family member or friend. It has been remarkable how everyone has adapted and to a large degree accepted the impact of the restrictions on their lives. We truly did 'unite against Covid'.



We had an amazing pizza party to celebrate the end of the Lockdown 1.0 and the karaoke machine was an inspired idea – we have some serious singing talent.



General

Amidst all the ups and downs over the past number of months we have still been progressing with as much business as usual as possible.

We had a follow up Ministry of Health audit during Lockdown 1.0 which was conducted remotely and completed face to face when we moved to level 1. Some of you will have been contacted by the auditors and your feedback and engagement is important and much appreciated.

The results from the audit were really encouraging and bear out the massive progress Team Totara has made around updated policies and procedures and associated reporting organisation wide. While the standard of support has always been very high the methods around proving this were less than perfect. A massive thank you is due to the Leadership Team and the wider staff in embracing change and contributing to our drive towards a gold standard.

The outcome of the audit was a handful of requirements and recommendations that are very achievable, and we are on track to meet these before the end of the year.

One of the requirements is to update some of our records so Joanna will be in touch with you this week to confirm we have accurate information on file.

If you are interested in the audit feedback, please feel free to get in touch to discuss.

We had grand plans around arranging holidays this year for those who are keen for a break and a change of scenery. While some have had mini breaks, booking accommodation and making plans is difficult with the moving feast that is Covid. Our sense is planning mini breaks with a short lead time is the most practical option. We will keep you individually informed as plans progress.

Organisation Structure

Sadly, Daniyell, Team Leader for Waterview Rd finished up with the Trust about 2 months ago. We took the opportunity to review our structure. After much discussion and consultation, we now have put in place a revised structure and completed the recruitment process. An updated organisation chart is attached to this newsletter for your information.

The House Leaders will be primarily on the roster with some scheduled time for administration and reporting. This will translate to a more constant presence of senior staff on all properties ensuring all

standards are achieved on a day to day basis. The revised structure also results in a reduction in overhead costs which remains an area of focus for the Leadership Team.

We are all really excited by these changes and are confident it will add to the progress we have already made.

Properties

Waterview Road: We now have 4 men living at Waterview Rd as 2 men have transferred from other properties. It is a happy, settled household and the Waterview Team are to be commended for their response to all the changes at their property.

Station Rd: We welcome Nicholas to Station Rd. Nicholas has transferred from another provider and has settled in seamlessly with his flatmate and others living at Station Rd. This vacancy became available as a result of the transfers mentioned above. Again, it is a contented property and life is ticking along well.

We have continued with renovations at Station Rd. The property is looking much tidier and we have further plans to complete this project by the end of the year.



Kingseat: Tim Mahon has recently moved to another provider closer to his family in the Waikato region. This is a big deal as Tim was an original member of the Trust and we really miss him. We are currently reviewing options as a result of this move and will update you in the next newsletter with developments.

Ed Street & The Flats: Kimberley from Ed Street moved to Kingseat for a trail just

before Lockdown 1.0 and is very happy to remain there. Over this period Gemma moved back home which means we now have only two women living at the Ed Street property. As with Kingseat, we are discussing next steps and will be able to update you in the next newsletter.

New staff joining Team Totara:

Kamol Barber: House Leader, Waterview Rd

Maxine Panapa: Part Time Support Worker

Tilak Matara: Casual Support Worker

Ryan Hayward: Casual Support Worker

Karlana Misivepa: Casual Support Worker

Brenda Stead: Casual Support Worker

We have increased our casual pool to ensure we have reliable coverage for staff leave. They're a great group of Support Workers and most have completed several buddy shifts so they are well acquainted with the people supported and our systems and processes prior to coming on shift. Most of the new staff took part in an assessment centre approach to recruitment which was a lot of fun and really successful. Special thanks to several of the people we support who took an active part in this process helping us to pick the very best candidates. They were amazing and really bought the process to life.

Staff Farewells:

Two valued members of the team have taken a well-deserved retirement. Frith Thornton and Ann Ewing have both been incredibly committed to their jobs and have spent many years working in the sector. While we will miss their attitude and expertise, we wish them both all the very best.

Totara Farm Trust website

Updating our website has been on the 'to do' list for many months now and we are finally making some progress. It is not ready for launch yet, but we have a structure we are happy with. The intention is to have a family and friends' portal so you can log in and access all of the newsletters, policies and other documents that you may find interesting. It will also have a staff portal so

induction can begin prior to the first day of work and can log in via the website for all software and documents they need in their jobs.

Save the Date for Christmas

We have set the date for the annual Christmas celebration. It will be a brunch at Karaka Hall on 29th November 2020. We will send you an invite with details closer to the date.



BOARD UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2020

What is the role of the Board and what have we been doing?

The Board ensures that the Trust meets the terms of the Trust Deed which outlines our purpose and our objectives. In other words, why we exist and what we want to achieve. This Deed is currently being updated. A copy will be made available once this is completed. The Board also ensures that Totara Farm Trust is financially secure and operates within current legal requirements.

There have been some changes to the legal responsibilities and role of Trust Boards and Board members. To ensure we are familiar with these changes and meeting current legal requirements we began Governance Training in February. This is on-going and supported by Cam Brinsdon of Board Clarity.

The Board is made up of four members who have an independent interest in the disability sector and three members who have a more intimate connection to one or more of the people we support. This may be a direct family relationship or a friend connection.

There have been some changes in membership since the last update.

It is with much regret that we accepted a resignation from Marilou Graham effective from March this year. Marilou has made a significant contribution to the Board and will be sorely missed. We wish her well in her family's move to Cromwell and look forward to her continued support of her brother Stewart.

With the departure of Marilou and the earlier departure of Marilyn Palmer and Jenny Mahon and Kevin Ball, we were in need of three family representatives and an independent member.



We welcomed Brian Hussey and Anne Todd to the Board in the last few months. We would like to have two more family representatives join us in the near future. Please talk with Bernadette or Wendy if you or a family friend might be interested.

Current Board members are Sue Crockett, Maureen Parkinson, Jeff Small, Anne Todd and Brian Hussey.

Covid 19 and its consequences for the operation of the Trust has directed much of our conversation since mid-February. Moving forward, we are engaged in strategic planning for the future of the Trust. As part of this and in line with our Governance training, we have appointed a Board Secretary part-time. Welcome Helen Fletcher who joins us this month.

Nga manaakitanga ki a koe me o koutou whanau

Sue, Trust Board, Bernadette and The Leadership Team