

Wellington Samaritans 2023-2024 Impact Report

samaritans
Aotearoa New Zealand



Listening / Connecting / Saving lives

samaritans.org.nz/wellington

“Thank you for the call. I was really down and in tears earlier and you have given me a good laugh and lots of useful things to do.

Wellington Samaritans Caller

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata

What is the most important thing in the world?
It is people, it is people, it is people



About us

We are here for all people across Aotearoa.

- We respond to people calling for help. We listen without judgement, day and night.
- We help people cope. We take action to prevent crises.
- We connect with people to save lives.
- We are working tirelessly to achieve our vision: that fewer people die by suicide.

How we work

When someone needs to speak for any reason, we listen. Our phone helpline volunteers take referrals from specialists when they cannot help. We provide ongoing connection for people experiencing loneliness. Our volunteers are trained to help when crises are happening. Other parts of the system have long waiting lists or criteria that must be met before people are served; Samaritans does not.

No matter who they are, if a caller is in need, a Samaritan will support them.

Samaritans makes it simple. Call us – we are here to listen.



Message from the Board Chair and Operations Committee Chair

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

This has been a year of building and change. First, I would like to thank the volunteers for their continued focus and energy in helping our communities and the people in need of support and a compassionate ear to listen without judgement. We all understand the importance of community based services that support people in stress, loneliness and struggling with their mental health.

Second I would like to acknowledge and thank Samaritans Wellington staff. We wish the people that have left us well in their career choices and welcome the new team that is making a big difference in their drive and energy.

We are delighted to see the recruitment of new volunteers underway and the skills programme up and running. We are committed to creating a positive work environment for our people, and this includes regular social as well as learning opportunities.

Our ongoing challenges still remain unchanged from last year which include achieving sustainable funding levels to safeguard the future of Samaritans and building our volunteer base. This remains a priority for the Board. We are confident that our organisation and our people will be successful in the long term.

I wish to acknowledge the resignation of our Co Chair Christina Sit Yee and Board member Ruth Belton from the Board. Their contribution has been significant and their work, insight and leadership will be missed. I would like to thank both for their years of service. We also need to welcome Synteché Collins (our Deputy Chair), Eka Goswami (our Treasurer) and Brenda Blaikie (our Board Secretary) to the Board.

Lastly, I would like to say “thank you” to all our volunteers. This takes many forms from Board members, volunteers on the phone to people that help our organisation run. You are all the heart, backbone and strength of Samaritans Wellington and you do make a difference to people in need in our community. At a personal level you inspire me. We are truly grateful for your ongoing commitment, and the care and support you show to our callers.

Ngā mihi nui,

Allan Frost, Board Chair

This past year has seen greater coordination with other Samaritans centres in New Zealand to ensure we are providing as much coverage as possible to our callers and working together to align our capabilities. Like most organisations, we have seen significant turn-over in volunteers but we have in place a very good training and recruitment team which has allowed us to maintain our volunteer levels and thereby our performance. It has been great to see new volunteers step up to help us in a variety of areas beyond answering the phones but ultimately it is all to support our phone volunteers doing the great job they do.

Kevin McCarthy, Operations Committee Chair



Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

After joining the organisation in late November 2023 it was a pleasure to see the work that had been done by my predecessors over a number of years and the initiative's deployed to support the amazing work done by the helpline volunteers.

The current environment has its challengers in the fundraising space with more organisations looking for financial assistance in an environment where the financial support is diminishing.

For us the future focus is to create sustainable avenues for generating revenue while growing and recognising our existing dedicated team of donors who continue to support the valuable work being done in the community.

The volunteers are the inspiration for this work, and I congratulate the entire team on the dedication and commitment to improving the situations people find themselves in, take a bow and remember to sign up for another shift because the calls keep coming proving the need for the service provided is still there.

David Birnie, Funding & Engagement

As an organisation, we are indeed fortunate to have a Chair and a Board with such a clear vision of what our role is and how to deliver it. As a long term volunteer and now staff member, I have seen many changes in personnel in the Board, staff and phone volunteers, and I think this is our strength in that new people bring fresh ideas and ways of doing things. But what remains constant is a desire to help people, and to make a positive difference in our callers lives.

I am enjoying being part of a new team and look forward to the year ahead. I see my main role as liaising with volunteers to ensure they have the best experience possible as a Wellington Samaritan volunteer, and that they get the support they need and the recognition they deserve for their hours of service.

David Johnsen, Volunteer Coordinator

The heartfelt words from the Chair are deeply appreciated. As a volunteer and now also a staff member (since May 2024) has been incredibly rewarding. The foundation laid by dedicated volunteers, previous staff, and board members has provided immense potential for the future.

Witnessing the efforts and hard work that have built Samaritans, it is clear that much can be done to enhance our current processes and systems. This motivates me to help build a better way to recruit and support volunteers. I am so grateful to be part of Samaritans and I look forward to seeing it continue to blossom and make a positive impact on our community

Beverly Yau, Helpline Service Officer and Volunteer



Message from Staff

Our **Impact**

every **20**
minutes a Samaritan
answers a call

8,476
hours on the phones nationwide
listening to our callers

21,270
calls answered
nationwide

80%
of callers felt somewhat or
substantially better after calling us

Our **Wellington Samaritans Volunteers**

42
active volunteers
serving as Samaritans

7,565
calls answered

3,501
hours on the phone

41%
of total shifts covered across the
national roster

Our **Wellington Samaritans Volunteers**

2 training courses held by our volunteer trainers training **11** new Samaritans

3 on-going skills sessions held with **60** Samaritans attending

Our **Callers**

18%
of callers call because of loneliness or isolation

10%
of callers call because of mental health concerns

14%
of callers call because of whānau or relationships

8%
of callers had suicidal thoughts or planned to take their own life

“Really appreciate your time and how we’ve come through to the other side.

Samaritans Caller

“Thank you for not making me feel alone with my pain.

Samaritans Caller

“The sheer kindness you showed to me is immeasurable, and thank you.

Samaritans Caller

“I don’t know what I’d do if I couldn’t ring up you lot.

Samaritans Caller

“Feel fantastic that I could get it off my chest!

Samaritans Caller

“Thank you for the call. I was really down and in tears earlier and you have given me a good laugh and lots of useful things to do.

Samaritans Caller

“Never spoken as openly with anyone like that before.

Samaritans Caller

“Thanks for listening. It’s given me some space to breath today.

Samaritans Caller

“When my wife had breast cancer, samaritans supported us through the whole thing.

Samaritans Caller

“It has been uplifting talking with you today and I feel I can have a good day.

Samaritans Caller

Manaakitanga

Manaakitanga means to extend aroha (love and compassion) to others. It is found in acts such as helping a loved one, encouraging one another or even supporting a complete stranger.

Our Volunteers

“Volunteering with Samaritans has provided me to an opportunity to be an ear that enables a caller who is feeling sad, lonely, depressed or in crisis to know that someone cares about them. Being a telephone volunteer has made me realise what a difference it can make for someone to be heard/listened to, and to have their feelings validated. When you can hear from the tone of a caller’s voice or from a quiet word that they feel a bit better simply from being listened too, you realise giving up a small amount of time each week to volunteer on the Samaritans telephone line is so worthwhile.”

Wellington Samaritans Phone Volunteer

“I’ve been a phone volunteer with Samaritans for 18 months. I wanted to offer my time helping people and was drawn to Samaritans as I liked the fact that they provide a listening service that is available to anybody. I didn’t need to have any specialist knowledge or experience, other than to be willing to listen to callers with empathy, warmth and patience. The training, mentoring and support provided by trainers and fellow volunteers has been wonderful and has helped me build my confidence in the role.

There are all sorts of reasons why people choose to call Samaritans, and we never know what a caller might want to talk about when we answer the phone. However, we’re always ready to listen.

I get satisfaction from being there for a caller to talk through their issue, listening and encouraging them to find their own solution; or to be a friendly voice for someone who hasn’t spoken to another person all day. It’s always good to hear them say that they’ve appreciated being able to talk to me.”

Wellington Samaritans Phone Volunteer

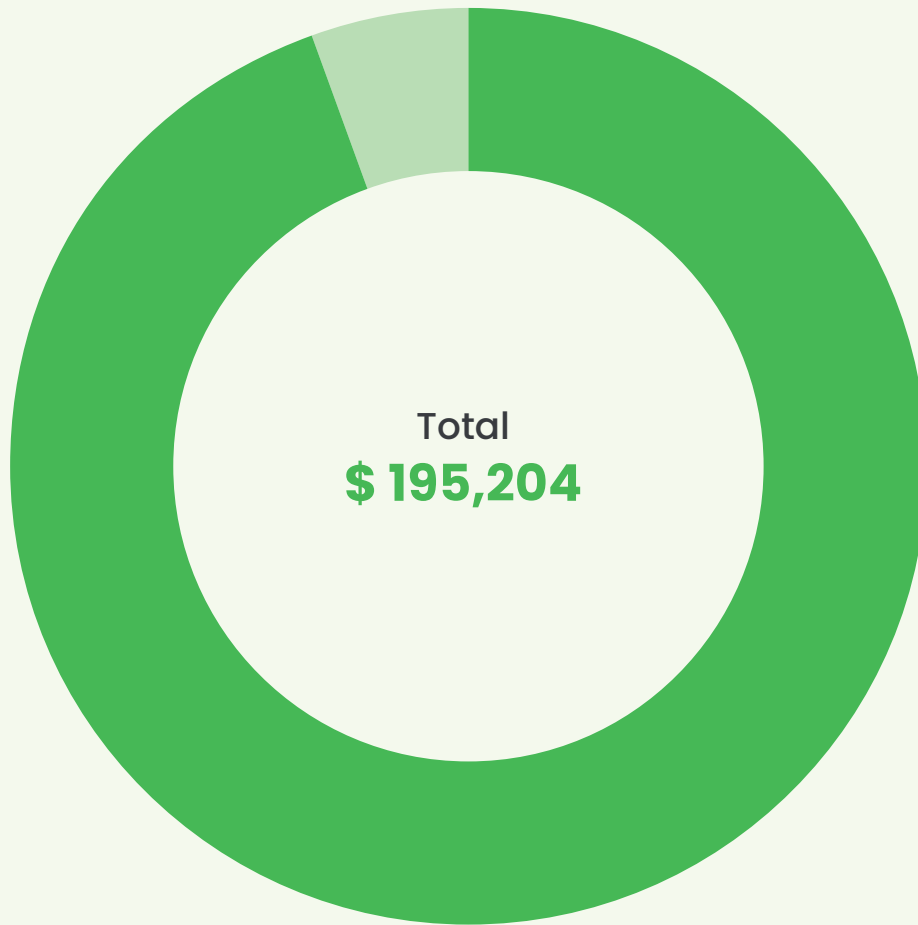
“As a Samaritan I am learning as much about me as a person as I am about the power of effective listening. The organisation provides opportunities for continuous development and I try and reciprocate by supporting my fellow volunteers – sharing shifts, supporting and mentoring new volunteers and learning from the skilled and experienced people around me.

Before I started volunteering for Samaritans, I did not fully understand just how many troubled souls abide amongst us in what is for most of us, a relatively safe and fortunate society. These souls face hopelessness, loneliness, deep fears and debilitating anxieties; and for many, they experience these emotions day after day. It is a privilege for me to give some of my time to be a supportive and empathic listener to our callers; that this small and modest contribution may make a positive impact, even if only for a brief moment.

When a caller quietly says, “Thank you for listening to me,” our work feels of value.”



Wellington Samaritans Phone Volunteer

Revenue

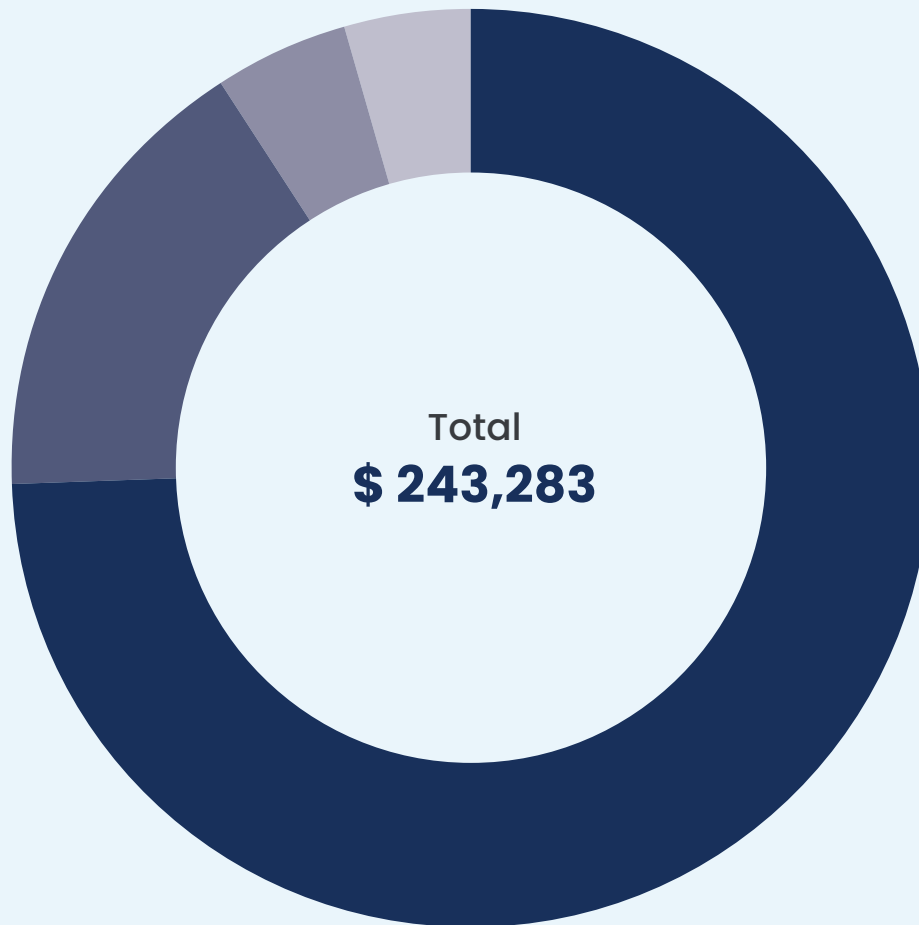


Total
\$ 195,204

Financial performance for the year ending **31 March 2024**. The information in this report has been summarised from the reviewed annual financial statements. Samaritans of Wellington incurred a net surplus of **\$21,921** for the **2023-2024** year, as compared with the previous year net deficit of **\$16,533**. While revenues increased slightly we have been grateful for the **\$70,000** donation from the Samaritans Foundation. Samaritans of Wellington continues to rely on donors and grants from funders to be financially sustainable.

-  94.7% Donations, fundraising, and grants
-  5.3% Other revenue

Expenses



Expenses were **\$29,467** or **10.8%** less than budgeted. The decrease in expenses is mainly due to the disestablishment of the Operations Manager role that was unfunded. We expect this saving to continue in future years. The Board continues to monitor expenditure given that revenue is increasing tight, especially from donors and grants. Net assets were **\$120,080** as at **31 March 2024** compared with **\$98,561** the previous year. Total cash at the end of **31 March 2024** was **\$103,679** which was **\$11,987** more than the **31 March 2023** total cash of **\$91,692**. The full financial statements are available for download on the Charity Services website charities.govt.nz.

- 74.6% Volunteer and employee costs
- 16.3% Service costs
- 4.7% Fundraising costs
- 4.4% Other costs



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Allan Frost, Chair, Co-Chair
- Christina Sit Yee, Co-Chair (until April 2024)
- Kevin McCarthy, Operations Committee Chair
- Peter Barnett
- Tony Robinson
- Ruth Belton (until July 2024)
- Samradhni Jog
- Rebecca McKenzie
- Philippa Tomoana
- Synteche Collins (from August 2024)
- Brenda Blaikie (from August 2024)
- Eka Goswami (from August 2024)

STAFF

- Gill Ranson, Fundraising & Marketing Officer (until October 2023)
- Jenny McMurchie, Operations Manager (until December 2023)
- Tina Francis, Administration Officer (until April 2024)
- David Bernie, Fundraising & Marketing Officer (from November 2023)

- David Johnsen, Volunteer Coordinator (from January 2024)
- Beverly Yau, Helpline Service Officer (from May 2024)

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

- Kevin McCarthy
- David Johnsen
- James Middleton
- Christina Sit Yee (until April 2024)
- Jessica Tuthil (until October 2023)

SHIFT LEADERS

- Emma Felix
- Kate Ford (until August 2024)
- Sean Gannon
- David Johnsen
- Jay Kole
- Kevin McCarthy
- Dawn Nippert (until November 2023)
- Hayley Ellison
- Tami Louissin
- Joan Foster

TRAINERS

- Peter Barnett
- David Johnsen
- Janet Keilar

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

- Lyn 26

FUNDING AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Tony Robinson
- Rebecca McKenzie
- Katie Knowles-Leppien
- Saurabh Dhawan
- David Birnie Fundraising & Marketing Officer

PATRON

- Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Dame Cindy Kiro, GNZM, QSO, Governor-General of New Zealand

CHAMPIONS

- Justin Lester
- Todd Muller, MP

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS

- Awarded by the Board of Directors to Kelly Wright for dedication and excellence of service.

“Your kindness made my pain disappear, you listened!
Thank you

Samaritans Caller

FUNDERS

- C H Izard Bequest
- Community Organisations Grants Scheme
- Four Winds Foundation
- Hutt Mana Charitable Trust
- NZ Lottery Grants Board
- Pelorus Trust
- T G Macarthy Trust
- The Lion Foundation
- The Tai Shan Foundation
- W & M Bear Charitable Trust
- Wellington City Council Social and Recreation Fund
- Wellington Community Fund
- Nikau Foundation Grant
- W N Pharazyn Charitable Trust

SPONSOR

- 360 RNR
- Baker Tilly Staples Rodway
- Datacom
- Guthrie Bowron Wellington
- Katy Sweetman
- Lions Club of Lower Hutt
- McCann Consulting
- MiddleWare NZ
- Ministry of Plumbing
- New World – Churton Park, Thorndon, and Wellington City
- PAK'nSAVE Kilbirnie
- Phil Mears from Tommy's Real Estate
- Sprig & Fern Tavern, Tinakori Road
- Stan Kalafatelis – Ray White
- Leaders real estate
- The Newman Family Trust

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Altrusa Ohariu
- Anxiety New Zealand
- Chalet Catering
- Dusted and Delicious catering
- Ecostore
- Google Adwords
- Harbour City Security
- Lions Club of Lower Hutt
- Lodge Homewood, Freemasons
- Microsoft
- Mitre10
- Nick Salmon Design
- Phantom Billstickers
- Prestige Print
- Russ Finnerty Photography
- Scotts College
- Stuff
- t leaf T
- Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington
- Volunteer Wellington
- Wellington Access Radio
- Wellington Cathedral of St Paul

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Annual Report

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