



**Deafblind Association
New Zealand
Taringa turi kapo**

Be Seen Be Heard Be Connected

Taringa Turi Kāpō Rōpū Deafblind Association of New Zealand Charitable Trust February 2021 Newsletter

Welcome to the First quarterly newsletter for 2021 of Deafblind Association NZ Charitable Trust. This newsletter is about us, for us, and specific to deafblind needs. This issue offers a chance for you to really get involved no matter where in the country you live and we are just so excited to let you know about it so here we go...

Amanda Stevens, Executive Officer

Deafblind Association NZ Seminar

Many of you may remember that the Blind Low Vision NZ, formerly Blind Foundation, used to run a deafblind camp. In 2021 Deafblind Association NZ with financial support from Blind Low Vision NZ are refreshing the concept to focus on communicating your needs with confidence. There will be the chance to chat with your Board Members, talk about hearing aids and other technology, explore communication techniques you can help develop, and some break out times to move and be creative. We were busy squirreling away in the office planning it for 2020 when Covid-19 hit Auckland first and then the rest of our beautiful country. We put plans on hold and can now offer you the date and venue for the seminar for 2021. This is your seminar and, most importantly, we want your input on what you would like so here is a little information and some questions for you:

Dates – Sunday 25 April to Wednesday 28 April inclusive. As ANZAC Day has been Mondayised to 27 April we are looking at sessions for international guests by Zoom and a good chance for us to have discussions. We can all travel in on the Sunday and check out for travel home after lunch on the Wednesday.

Venue – Vaughan Park Anglican Retreat Centre, Browns Bay, Auckland. Accommodation is in villas for seven people with one twin room and five single rooms. It's a very short five minute walk to the beach and Guide Dog friendly. There is accommodation for 36 people so places will be limited and there is also an opportunity for anyone in the Auckland area to drop in for a day, or to sign up for the seminar but stay off site, in which case we will be able to offer more spaces.

Cost – This has not yet been finalised except for the wonderful opportunity Blind Low Vision NZ have afforded us with financial support that will cover all accommodation and meals and snacks. This means you won't go hungry and won't have to live on my vegetarian offerings!

We do hope you are interested, and we have a few ideas on seminar sessions that will support interest across our diverse community. We are looking at leadership potential across all geographical areas in Aotearoa New Zealand too. We really want to know your ideas as this is for all of us so here are a few questions for you:

- Are you able to commit to the dates?
- What barriers might prevent you coming?
- What would you like on the agenda?

If you can get your expression of interest back to us on any of the contact details at the bottom of this newsletter on or before Friday 5 March, we would be grateful. We can then work with you to sort out the best option for you and then send you a registration form or help you fill one in if you need that. We will also be looking at how we might Zoom you in for particular discussions if you cannot make it in person. This will be our first ever seminar under our banner and it is the planning that will make the success!

If you would like to attend the seminar but have any questions or have concerns about your ability to do so for any reason, then please call or email as there may be ways we can assist you in overcoming these.

Peer-to-Peer Network Support Keeps Expanding

Networking is our core business – we are here to help you connect. We already have established networks in Nelson, Auckland, Napier, and evolving ones in Dunedin and Invercargill. This is just the beginning and we want to support you wherever you are. There is no committee necessary as we want to make this as easy as possible to seek out your voice about what matters to you as a person with dual sensory loss. It just takes someone on the spot to take notes and feed them back to our office so we can support you. Please let us know if you are interested in forming a network in your part of the country. We will help you find a venue suitable to your needs, help you source transport, and put you in touch with each other in a safe way. It is up to each group how you want

to gather. Nelson members, for example, bring food for a shared lunch once a month in a quiet venue and Auckland meet biannually at Awhina House for in-depth discussion. Blind Low Vision NZ have offered us their meeting rooms and all we have to do is book, but you could easily choose somewhere else that suits you.

Your Board

In January your Board met in Christchurch to set our priorities for the year. It was enriching because it was the first time Vaughan Dodd, as incoming president, met the whole team, including Sarah Walters, our new Board Secretary. We welcome Sarah into our team and I personally express my delight at working for a Board who are so motivated that they are willing to meet so early in the year! The first question is always the same – how can we serve our community best? The discussion then revolves around what we can do and how we all have a part to play to achieve it. Funding is always a priority of course but it is the agent for the real purpose which is to focus on the peer to peer support group development around the country and we think the Deafblind Association NZ Seminar is pivotal in seeking out what is really important for you so we can action your needs. In the same way as this face to face Board Meeting for the first time in a year brought positive interactions and relationship building within our executive team we know the seminar will do the same thing on a wider scale with diverse input that will nourish our work. We are so looking forward to being with you in person.

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM is scheduled for Saturday, 28 August, at Braille House, 121 Adelaide Road, Newtown, Wellington. It starts at 10:30am, followed by a light lunch at noon, and, as in past years, we then hold a Meet and Greet with the Board. This is an opportunity to ask questions and have informal conversations in a relaxed atmosphere. We will remind you again in the coming months.

The minutes of last year's AGM are on TIS, option 5 3 4. You can also request a copy in your preferred format. Please note that we outsource Braille production, and this can take up to two weeks.

Funding

We are grateful to Blind Low Vision NZ for funding our work so generously. We also want to thank Call A Geek Nelson for offering us free technical support for all of October just when we were all Zoomed out – you are wonderful chaps!

You can find the link to join our national Deafblind Discuss List on our website, <http://www.deafblindassociation.nz/dbanz-discuss/>

Remember you can access our Strategic Plan 2020-2023, available here: <http://www.deafblindassociation.nz/?s=strategic+plan> or ask for a copy in your preferred format.

Would You Like to Join Our Board?

Like most organisations, we are looking to strengthen our Board. We encourage you to contact us if you are interested in a leadership opportunity in a governance role, and have the time to commit to our work and the community we serve. For two years now, the Board have mostly met monthly by Zoom for a maximum of one and a half hours. Additionally the board have one face to face meeting annually as well as our Annual General Meeting.

Your Board Trustees:

Vaughan Dodd, President

Kevin Prince, Vice-President

Don McKenzie

Georgie McLeod

Lynda Colee, Financial Officer

Contact us

If you have not received this newsletter in your preferred format, or if your preferred format has changed, please let us know so we can keep you informed.

Deafblind Association NZ Contact Details

Toll-free: 0800 450 650

Email: info@deafblindassociation.nz/

Website: <http://www.deafblindassociation.nz/>

Thanks to Our Funders

