



caninefriends
pet therapy
Dogs helping people



Proudly supported by Dogs New Zealand

Around the regions — Wellington Central

Supplied by Vicky Graham, President



Regional Founders Day Awards ceremony, 2021. Photo Alisdair McKenzie.

The wider Wellington region is divided into manageable geographic areas: Wellington Central, Hutt Valley, Johnsonville to Whitby and Kapiti. Together we are a hub of local Canine Friends Pet Therapy activities.

Whenever dogs are requested for a special event the call goes out to members from across the wider Wellington region. Regional members also get together for events such as the end-of-year social and our annual Founders Day celebration of the birthday of Canine Friends founder Eileen Curry. Eileen is a long-time resident of our region.

Wellington Central membership has remained constant, at around 45 members, for many years. Visiting options within the city include rest homes, aged care hospitals and day care units, disability day care and residential programmes, and hospice facilities. A few members also visit selected units within the Wellington Regional Hospital. The dogs have been greatly appreciated, especially since the COVID-19 crisis.

Wellington city is home to several university campuses, two of which regularly invite Canine Friends throughout the academic year for stress management for staff and students alike.

A growing number of schools include Canine Friends and dog handlers in their reading buddy programme. Some school boards have made specific changes to their policy of 'no dogs on school

grounds' to allow Canine Friends to come in for reading-to-dogs. Members are now returning to their regular community aged care sites after a prolonged break due to the 2021 lockdowns and the great NZ summer shut-down. However, we had no sooner returned than Omicron arrived, requiring additional precautions including needing to pass a rapid antigen test at the door, wearing medical grade masks as well as face shields, and maintaining a one-metre social distance when visiting aged care facilities.

Some facilities have imposed their own lockdown as case numbers rise in their community. All of this has not made it easy to deliver pet therapy. Our visits benefit staff as well as the service users. The current situation is especially stressful for staff who may interact with children and the wider community in their home life and then go to work knowing that the virus could wreak chaos if it was introduced into the work environment.

Wellington Central currently has placement vacancies as a result of changes of circumstances for some visiting members. We are also looking for a new team to start visiting at a brand new aged care facility. Anyone interested in applying for our current vacant visitor slots can begin that process online on our website. 🐾

Helen Moriarty

Wellington Liaison Officer

Disclaimer: 2021 photos were taken when no PPE was required.



From top to bottom:

Helen Moriarty, Wellington Liaison Officer and Ciarrai the Cavoodle working his magic in a retirement care centre.

Willow and Bear bring comfort and joy to Victoria University during Orientation Week

Wolfy the reading buddy (photo Kathy McKechnie 2021, published with permission from the parent of the student).

Lola, one of our smallest dogs, brings huge pleasure to staff. Photo Gay Keast 2022.



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MUSEUM TRUST

Dogs New Zealand is served by a small group of volunteers dedicated to preserving its history. Executive Council agreed at its April, 2018 meeting that a standard advertisement should be placed in each edition of the *NZ Dog World* highlighting the names of those involved, with contact details set out should any member wish to donate items and/or monies to the Trust, or to make general enquiries.

Keith Brown (Chairperson) parkavon@xtra.co.nz	021 780 336
Cathy Garvey-Webb (Secretary) cathywebb@xtra.co.nz	027 443 3996
Lauren James (Treasurer) kievsams@hotmail.com	(04) 236-5294
Jill Brooker bayparque@gmail.com	(07) 867-5542
Jan Brownlie laytons@xtra.co.nz	027 723 5498
Anne Dobie annedobie@xtra.co.nz	(04) 528-6594
Pip Hancock pipsdragon@gmail.com	021 487 962
Bronwyn Murdoch bronwynmurdoch@hotmail.com	027 231 6656

Further to the above, any member wishing to make a bequest in their will specific to the Dogs New Zealand Museum Trust should contact the chairperson, Keith Brown, to discuss this matter and any conditions they may wish to have applied to such a bequest. 🐾

If you and your dog would like to join us, please visit: www.caninefriends.org.nz