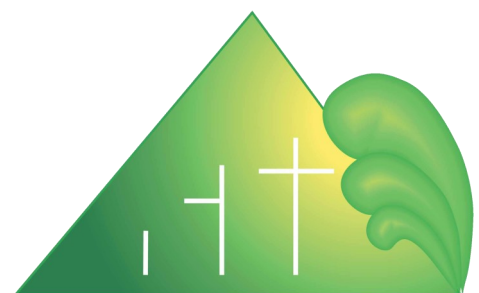


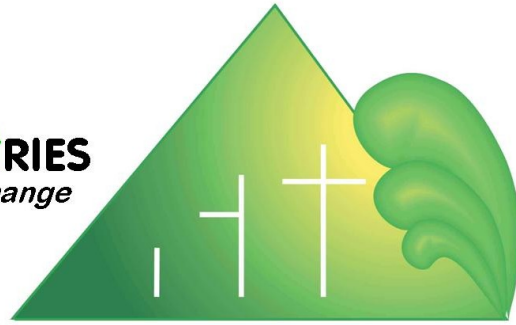
# PRISON CARE MINISTRIES

ANNUAL REPORT  
2019-2020

" I hope  
one day  
they will  
forgive  
me.

My  
offending  
has hurt  
so  
many. "





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# **Prison Care Ministries**

Registered as a Charitable Trust

1st September 2004.

Building relationships with prisoners,  
assisting them to regain independence on release  
and supporting them as they reintegrate with family

## **Purpose**

To provide an environment  
for meaningful reintegration

## **Mission Statement**

To provide accommodation and  
rehabilitative support for men released from prison  
and those involved in the Criminal Justice System.

## **Value**

When people care,  
people change

## **Aim**

To reduce reoffending and ensure  
a safer community

# Thank You

To the funders and supporters who ensure that Prison Care Ministries continue to provide support to those involved in the Criminal Justice System.

Trust Waikato	Wages
HCC Community Well-Being	Mileage
WEL Energy Trust	Wages
COGS	Office/Volunteers
NZ Lottery Board	Wages
Norah Howell Charitable Trust	Beds
Spark	Residential Phone
Interspeed	Internet Domain
Fusion Print	Printing
NZ Bible Society	Bibles
Rhema Broadcasting Group	Word for Today
Maori Postal Aotearoa	Calendars/Magazines
Plastic Welders	Support
Te Rapa Mowers & Chainsaws	Support



We appreciate the support from:

- Community Probation Service
- Work and Income
- Prison Staff & Chaplaincy
- Auditor

and a big thanks to:

- our private Landlords ( 3 ) as they need to negotiate with their Insurance companies to enable their houses to be used to accommodate those who have a criminal record
- 1 Real Estate Agency that we that we have tenancy agreements with
- our residents who really encourage us to keep going.

## Chairpersons Report - 2020

Well it been another great year and the 31st March 2020 marks six months of PCM operating successfully under the care of Sev, John, Catherine and Wendy.

A few things have changed as the team have each contributed in their own personal style and eased into their new roles, but the core values and caring heart for the men in our care remains as strong as ever.

Jill has continued as a trustee and Geoff meets regularly with Sev for supervision sessions, support and encouragement. Both Geoff and Jill are also pretty busy as full-time great-grandparents, caring for their great-granddaughter.

The team continues to “walk alongside” the men and we’ve welcomed several new volunteers into the PCM team. They provide additional support to both the men and the ministry and it’s great to see and hear positive feedback of their involvement. PCM couldn’t function to the same level without volunteers and we’re very thankful for them.

I reported last year that PCM had become a Professional Counselling Service Provider and I’m pleased to report its been a successful new service we’re able to provide in-house and it’s been well received by the men, as they work through the challenges of re-integration.

Sev has been working on some new possibilities with Corrections and we’re hopeful of being able to extend the services PCM is able to provide in the future but it’s a long process.

This year has continued to see more disruption, with a few more of the houses we rent being sold. Thankfully we’ve been able to quickly find new houses, but we’ve had to also do a lot of shifting of men and furniture, on top of the normal activities.

It’s with some sadness that one of our long serving trustees Pam Neilson has given notice of her intent to resign at the 2020 AGM. Pam has served as both a trustee and volunteer and has helped Jill and the team over the years in many practical ways. Pam’s involvement and contributions will be missed. Pam, thank you so much for all you’ve done for PCM and the men – we’ll miss you.

Finally, I’d like to thank our donors and supporters who have journeyed with us for many years and look forward to PCM continuing to do what we do best.

Respectfully submitted



Alex Shepherd





### **Trustees - left to right**

**Robbie Ahu:** Self employed business owner. Married with 5 tamariki and 4 moko. They attend Gateway church. Qualified as a high performance coach in Rugby League. Robbie loves quality family times, fishing, diving and in summer motorbike riding. Previously approved volunteer to Waikeria prison.

**Maraenui Taituha:** Staff at Fairfield College. Maraenui is married to Alison and they have three children. They attend St. Marks Church. Maraenui was previously an approved volunteer to Waikeria Prison.

**Bruce McDowell:** Bruce is married to Jenny, and they have 4 adult children. They are members of Hillcrest Chapel fellowship. Bruce is self employed as a Civil Engineer, managing his own business, McDowall Structures. Bruce is also a volunteer with PCM standing alongside some of the men.

**Alex Shepherd:** Trust chairperson and Software Architect, NetValue Ltd. Alex and Judi have 3 children (one married) and attend Chapel Hill Community Church. Alex has been an Elder (served five-year term) and is part of the Church Missions Team. Alex was previously an approved visitor to Waikeria Prison.

**Jill McMillan:** Co founder (as is Geoff) of Prison Care Ministries. Jill and Geoff have 4 children, 13 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. They attend Chapel Hill Community Church. Both are approved visitors to North Island and Christchurch Prisons.

**Pam Neilson:** Pam is a retired Nurse/Midwife/Counselor. Widowed with 3 daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Pam is a Host to Israeli Travelers) and attends New Life Church. Pam also does the house inspections every two months.



## **Sev Simwinga**

### **Manager**

#### **New perspectives**

The Covid19 pandemic has forcibly ushered us into an unprecedented era where we have had to think and rethink how to do things. We have had to rearrange priorities and find smarter ways of getting things done.

Engaging with services essential for reintegration such as Work and Income, banks, medical centres and Community Probation has been challenging particularly during levels 4 and 3 of the lock-down. Nevertheless, we navigated our way through it because the needs of the men under our care essentially remained the same. We thus soldiered on and managed to accommodate a yearly total of 65 residents. We have 47 prisoners waitlisted and a further 33 with their papers submitted for our support accommodation many of whom will be released into our care in the next 12 months.



#### **Some Changes**

##### **Housing Portfolio**

During the course of this year three of our landlords who we have had for many years decided to sell their properties resulting in a loss of three houses from a stock of seven. Thankfully, we managed to acquire four houses and a flat, consequently increasing the housing stock to nine and a bed capacity of 25. The downside to this scenario is that the average rent we pay has gone up because the newer houses all came with higher rental charges.

##### **Staff:**

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 we celebrated the formal retirement of Geoff and Jill as well as the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Prison Care Ministries. On that day people from all walks of life including community leaders as well as Prison Care Ministries' residents and former residents packed Chapel Hill Community Church to celebrate. This was the opportunity to acknowledge and salute Geoff and Jill McMillan who founded Prison Care Ministries and remained at its helm from its inception in 2004. This occasion also served as the day they formally handed over management to me (Sev). Though they have retired, Geoff and Jill continue to support Prison Care Ministries as volunteers. We are thankful to Geoff and Jill for their selfless service over the years. God richly bless you.

In February 2020 Wendy tendered her resignation and left Prison Care Ministries in March 2020 after serving her notice. She left having made an indelible contribution to the ministry. It was a rather short but an effective stint with Prison Care Ministries and as such she has left a gaping hole which we are now trying to fill.



### **Restoring Shattered Dignity and Broken Egos**

Here is a little peek into what the journey looks and feels like for most of our men: Their journeys are often rife with despondency and frustration, alienation from their whanau and mistrust from their communities of origin. For these men their tomorrows are, more often than not, a mirage devoid of hope and promise. Men with shattered dignity and broken egos yet they hold on to a macho image which, for most, is nothing but a facade and yet it is the only thing they have left. So they hold on to it – it is their hiding place. Anger, anxiety or resignation is the emotion they default to at the slightest amount of stress, pressure or challenge. They are angry and they do not know why; they are anxious because they have little or nothing to aspire for; and they are resigned because it is easier to give up and regress back to the regimented, structured and familiar life in prison – “regression to the norm” one might say. Expressions of love and concern for these men are frequently met with cynicism. However, it is the persistent demonstration of genuine love which overwhelmingly breaks through the facade and breaks down the barriers. It is not uncommon to see men ‘ball their eyes out’ for the first time in a long time and often they do not even know why. It is comforting, refreshing and encouraging to see the love of God play out, as we *walk along side them* and help them to reclaim their ‘mana’. Yes, when people care people change.

Here is a letter from one of our residents who found his feet recently:

*Sev Family & staff at PCM*

*“Just a quick & easy way of saying thank you for all your support. I truly don't know how I could have got through it without you guys & I am truly sorry I have not done more to show how much it means & how thankful. You guys give hope to the ones no one else will and that is all some of us need. You are the light in a place where it is so dark. I could not have found a way out without it. Thank you and I hope you realise how much you have helped me & many others.*

*Keep it up, you guys are doing good & are what the world needs, God bless you”.*

Another letter from someone we support in prison reads in part,

*“Thank you for the last letter Sev, God bless. Thank you for your support, and every time I read your letter I feel happy because I know someone cares for and help me in jail. I still remember that we started in 2014 and we still write to each other...I know you and the team are alright and I love you all and I hope to meet Geoff and Jill again one day. Good bye”.*

### **Going Forward**

The future of Prison Care Ministries continues to look good. Last year we purposed to reach more men and help them find their feet in the community post-release and we have. It was also our intention to increase our housing stock and we have achieved that too. The focus now is growing the team – staff and volunteers. The objective remains that we touch and affect more lives and rescue some from the cycle of recidivism and help restore their shattered dignities and broken egos.







**John Brennan**  
**Office Manager**

I took over as office manager at the beginning of April last year. It was a bit of a fast start. Jill McMillan had ably handled the administrative needs of the organization since its inception and so it took some time to learn all that is involved in keeping the organization running smoothly. I had some new routines and processes to set up and on top of this it was also the end of the financial year which

meant getting everything together for the audit. It was also coincided with an influx of new residents that filled our accommodation.

My role primarily involves supporting the work of the other staff to help them work as efficiently as possible. As a taste of what this can involve take the case of counselling funding. We identified last year that our men were eligible to receive government funded counselling. It did involve quite a learning curve though. The process begins with the preparation of three forms with the men's details, two of which have to be signed off by a doctor. Once that consultation is complete, those forms along with the third one, (that authorizes a redirection to our bank account), have to be delivered to Work & Income. But that is not the end of process. First, there is the need to check that the payments have started coming, but I also needed to keep track of how many payments have been made because if they go over a certain number, the money PCM receives starts being deducted off our client's benefit – resulting in one very unhappy client! It took a little while to set up a system using the database to efficiently monitor the sessions and the payments and to be alerted to when the sessions were coming to an end.

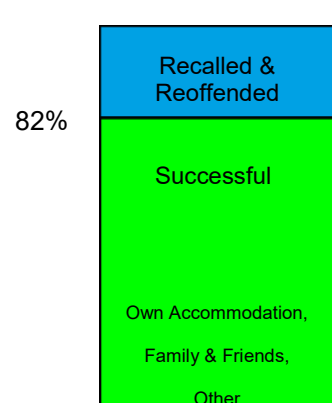
I generally don't have a lot of ongoing involvement with the men. I do help some to get their CV together. Many have such broken work histories. Others I help with budgeting, or orientate them in regards to navigating government processes.

There was one client who used to regularly visit the office for a chat. He would have to claim the title of 'model resident'. We never had any problem with him. In fact he 'shocked' me one day when he brought back the bedding we had loaned him on release. The duvet had got damaged in the washing machine and he insisted on paying for it! He already had a job when he was released from prison which he faithfully and reliably continued to turn up to every day. However he did face some choices involving work and accommodation which we often discussed when he came into the office. It was encouraging to see him eventually gain the confidence to move into his own accommodation which was closer to his workplace.

Of the 65 residents in our care last year, 32 either started work or continued in work



**Resident Outcomes  
for the last five years**



## **Catherine Simwinga**

### **Counsellor**

It's been a strange year for all of us so far with the Corona Virus hitting the world like a Tsunami. With the advent of the virus, we have had to work differently with social distancing, masks and remote counselling. Prison visits were a no-go at the start of the year but we have since resumed visits. So far I have been able to visit the men at Tongariro Prison and it was good to be able to see the men in person.



During the lockdown, I was able to catch up with the men remotely just to check on their well-being and most of them were doing quite well. Like anybody else in the country, some men struggled with the lockdown as it served as a reminder of prison and some ended up back inside.

We are now getting Work and Income to pay for counselling sessions and though it hasn't been without its challenges, it's working well.

We are still offering pre-release counseling to some of the men who visit PCM on what is called a guided release. The men are released for part of the day from prison for the primary purpose of attending counseling.

The other new area of counselling is the opportunity to provide support for students from University of Waikato's Masters Program. This is the second year that we have had an intern working with us and it's been an exciting opportunity.

As we continue to expand our counseling services, we still covet your prayers and support. There are new opportunities to explore and areas of growth we are yet to venture into but at the moment we are still building and solidifying what we already do.



Sev, Catherine, Sandy (counselling intern) & John

## Wendy Grant Support Worker

Tēnā Koutou PCM Whānau

My role at PCM has changed considerably over the last 6 months.

Having started on six hours doing mainly admin I gradually moved into more of a social work role with 18 hours a week. My focus was on the men and their housing needs.



We have seen a growing demand for our housing, and the wrap around services that our clients need. As we continue to grow we want to enhance our programmes alongside maintaining and strengthening our current relationships and services

During the year to March 2020 we have had 53 men released from prison to our service. (that's one a week!) We have also increased the number of beds from 19 to 25 in nine houses around Hamilton. We had to relinquish three houses due to landlords selling the properties that were rented to us.

We have seen a substantial increase in rental costs. Our average cost per bed for rent only has increased 28% since 2018.

The increase in our transitional housing bed numbers is a significant accomplishment given that the housing stock in Hamilton remains depleted and the need for housing is on the rise.

According to the NZ Herald (14/1/20) since 2017 the waiting list for public housing has doubled from 6000 families to 14,500 (Nov 2019). This current and ongoing housing crisis affects our men and their Whānau significantly. It affects their ability to make good pro-social choices both pre and post release. Many motels in Hamilton are now being used by Kianga Ora (formally HNZ) and Housing and Urban Development for transitional housing purposes. For most if not all the men who come to us, these houses would not be suitable, the addresses would not be approved by probation resulting in them remaining in prison.

We are currently working with four real estate agents and three private landlords with our current housing stock.

The men and referring agencies are thankful for the availability of our beds and the services that PCM provides.

Kia whakamoemiti ki te Atua (*thanks be to God*)

Ngā mihi nu

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Our office at 70 Kent St. Frankton provides the ministry with a central hub for:

- Administration
- Inductions
- Mentoring
- Counselling
- Meetings
- And much more





## **Geoff and Jill McMillan**

### **The end of an era:**

#### **1st April to 30th September 2019**

The 1st of April 2019 arrived and the handover of all finances/funding applications had mostly been achieved and we both went onto a casual employment contract. The following 6 months saw us tidying up loose ends, cleaning out our office drawers, (first real clean up since moving from Liverpool St 3 years ago), and generally making sure that all items on our “to do before the end of September “ list was done.



The 15th Birthday for PCM was held on 1st September at Chapel Hill Community Church. There were some well-known community leaders present, as well as many residents and past residents. It was also our finishing time as staff and publicly handing over to Sev as Manager, although he had been carrying out this role for some time.

The 30th September arrived rather quickly. Sev and John are well prepared for the future of Prison Care Ministries. It has been a 3 year process which has worked well to make this successful. We found ourselves unemployed!!! Bored? Never! A couple of months earlier I, (Jill), had made a comment about needing a new project for our retirement. Well, we had one.

#### **1st October 2019 – 30th March 2020**

### **A new beginning:**

Our retirement from Prison Care Ministries is best described as organized chaos, (sometimes just chaos). Two weeks prior to retiring we gained a Parenting order, (custody), for our two – year-old great granddaughter and joined the 5000 other grandparents and great grandparents bringing up (great) grandchildren. Our life now is one of Day care, organizations such as Grandparents raising Grandchildren, Kids in Need, and support from organizations that go with having a child with a disability.

Our 50th wedding anniversary came up on Saturday the 19th October so plans to celebrate this were set in motion. Two weeks prior to our anniversary, our great granddaughter broke her arm! This was caused by her undoing the seatbelt on her wheelchair, then another child at day-care pushing her! One week before our anniversary Geoff ended up in hospital twice in that week. Two days later we celebrated with family, friends and some of the men. In November we treated ourselves to 5 nights in Rarotonga, (on our own). This was well needed.

We are personally still supporting several men who we have been visiting and corresponding with for 15 + years, who have been incarcerated for 20 plus years and have little hope of being released. We have kept our prison visitors approval up to date to be able to continue to visit these men who reside in Wanganui Prison. There are also some men we have corresponded with that we will continue to spend time with once they are released.

Jill remains as a Trustee of Prison Care Ministries and Geoff as Sev’s supervisor. If this is what “retirement” looks like, we have not retired!

### End of year BBQ

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019 we held a Christmas BBQ on the lawn outside the Prison Care Ministries office.

It provided for a time to congregate as staff, trustees, volunteers and current and former residents. Interestingly, it coincided with the wedding of one of our former residents. He and his bride joined in briefly



### A Prison Cell

Four walls to this my prison cell  
One window my only relief from hell  
No sun shines into this lonesome call  
Distant lands starry skies, a story tell

I made mistakes, I'll do my lag  
Locked down days, time will drag  
Nothing to do, I don't have a tail to wag  
Cages like a beast, I do my lag

My mind and thoughts still roam free  
To distant lands blue skies, I would like to be  
Fishing in a boat on a deep blue sea  
Or walking that bush land path so free  
Watching the birds my thoughts may flee

My spirit I let free from this cell  
My body for a time remains in this hell  
The time will come I will leave this hell  
That the time my sorry story will tell  
Of what its like to live in deepest hell

R.H. Past Resident

Hey Miss... "Where can I go when I get out of here."

Waikeria prisoner

**June 2001**

**First meeting post release  
accommodation**

David Stone  
Anton Roest  
Geoff McMillan

**July 2001**

**inaugural meeting**

17 people attended this meeting including a  
Probation officer and released prisoners.

**Nov 2001**

**Hamilton Support  
Accommodation Network (HSAN)  
Committee**

Geoff & Jill Smith  
Eileen Bosher  
Mel Impey  
Anton Roest  
Geoff & Jill McMillan

**HSAN-PCM**

**July 26th 2004** First House opened  
under HSAN. Thanks John.

**September 1st 2004** Prison Care  
Ministries became a Charitable Trust

**April 1st 2005** became a trading  
name under Prison Care Ministries

**January 2008** HSAN committee  
disbanded

**September 2004  
PCM trustees**

Mike Marama Te Ahuru (Chairperson)  
Alex Shepherd  
Len Caley  
Maraenui Taituha  
Geoff McMillan  
Jill McMillan

**Chairpersons 2004-2019**

Mike Marama Te Ahuru  
Alex Shepherd  
LenCaley  
Alex Shepherd (current)

2004 First house opened  
2005 Second house opened  
2007 Third house  
2010 Fourth house  
2014 Fifth house  
2015 Seventh house  
2016 Eighth house opened  
2019 Ninth house opened

2018 Severino Simwinga appointed as  
manager.

2019 Geoff & Jill McMillan formally  
retire.

**Current trustees 2020**

Alex Shepherds  
Maraenui Taituha  
Pam Neilson  
Robbie Ahu  
Bruce McDowell  
Jill McMillan

**Current staff 2019-2020**

Severino Simwinga  
John Brennan  
Catherine Simwinga  
Wendy Grant

When people care, people change



### 31 March 2019

Support Only 27
Pending Decision 36
Waitlisted for Accommodation 70
Resident 14

All New Referrals 122
Of which 78 became Applicants

### 31 March 2020

Support Only 16
Pending Decision 33
Waitlisted for Accommodation 47
Resident 20
No Further Contact 124 (Found Accommodation, Released, Declined, Unknown)

### Letter Writing

During the 2019-20 year, an estimated 635 letters were sent to 185 recipients. A further 103 cards were mailed making the total letters sent 738.

(Based on a random sample of 20% of all clients registered with PCM during the year)

### Prison Visits and AVL interviews

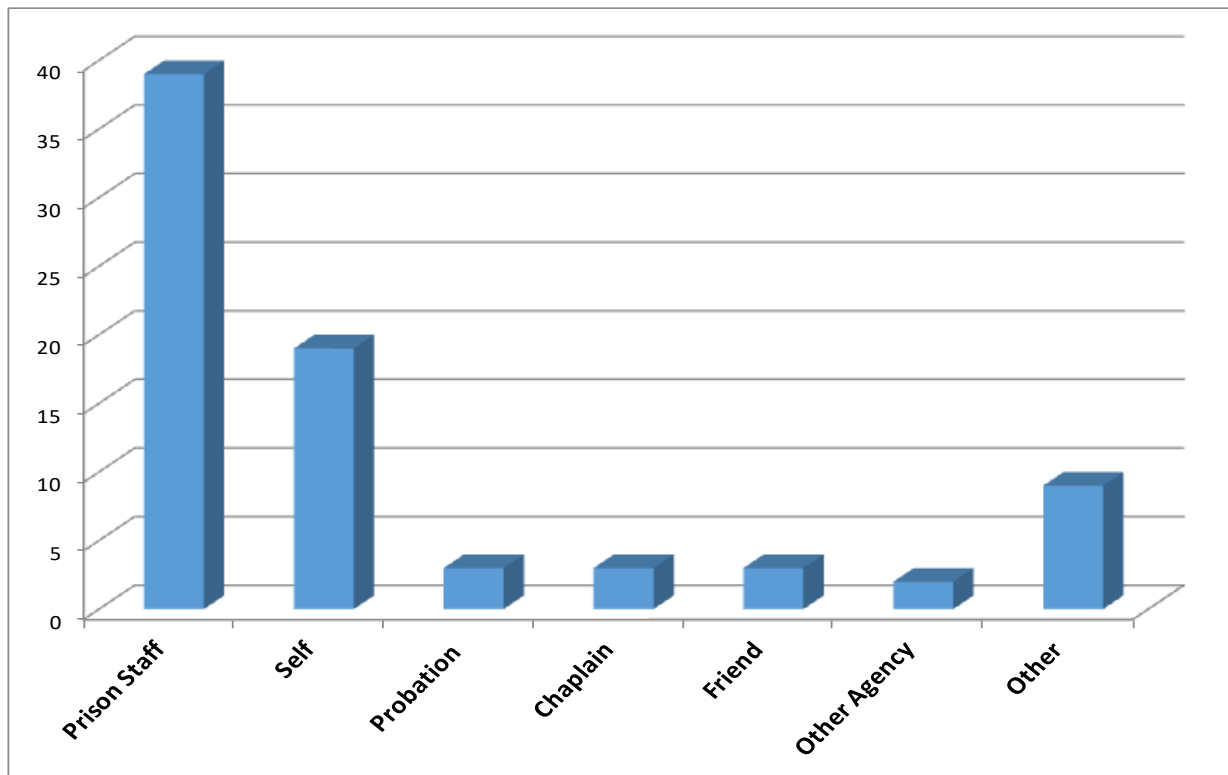
Location	Face to Face		AVL	Phone	Applicants
	Visits				
ASCF	2	6			4
Christchurch				1	2
Hawkes Bay			3		
Mt Eden					1
Nga Wha			1		2
Paremoremo			1	2	2
Rimutaka					3
Spring Hill	5	23	3	2	32
Tongariro	2	5	1		8
Waikeria	2	6	2		12
Whanganui	1	1			
Other			9		
	12	50	11	5	78

Staff visit as many applicants as possible for the initial interview and will do follow-up visits when able. This helps to build the relationship and makes the transition into the community easier for both the men and staff.

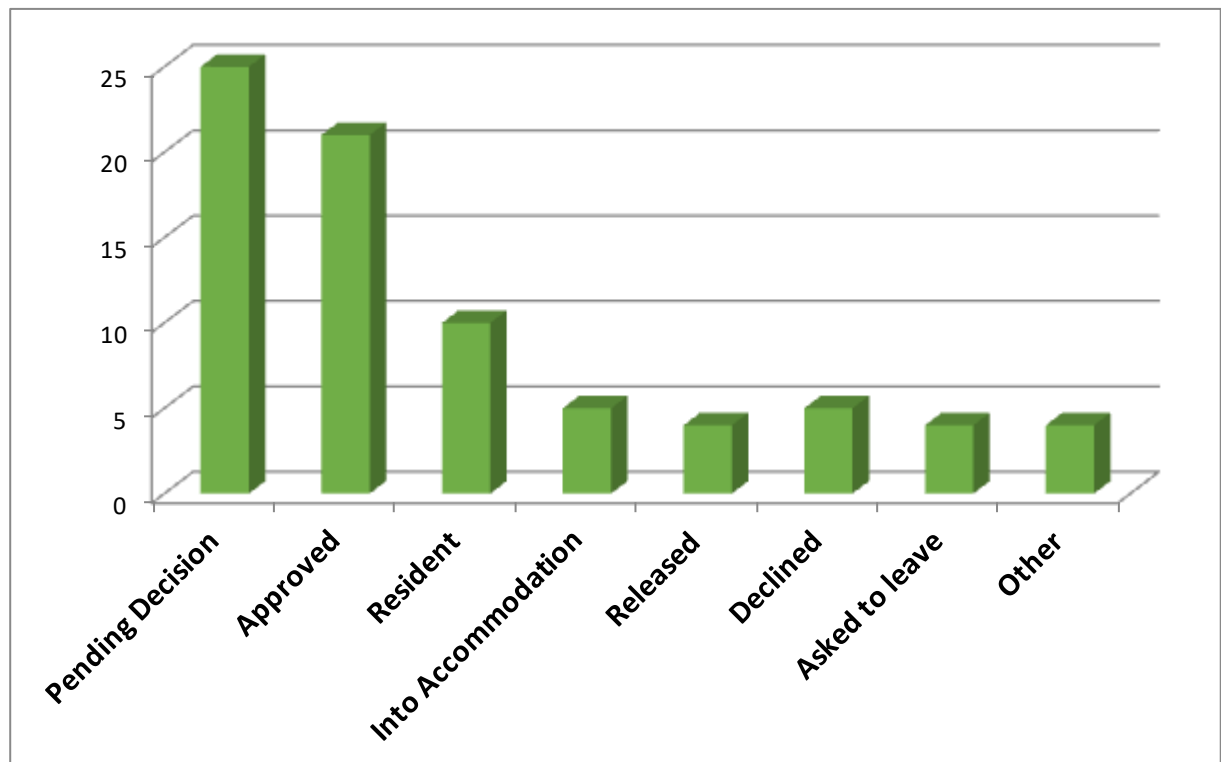
If a face to face interview is not possible due to location or time constraints then an interview by Audio Visual Link or telephone is arranged.

## 78 New applicants during the year

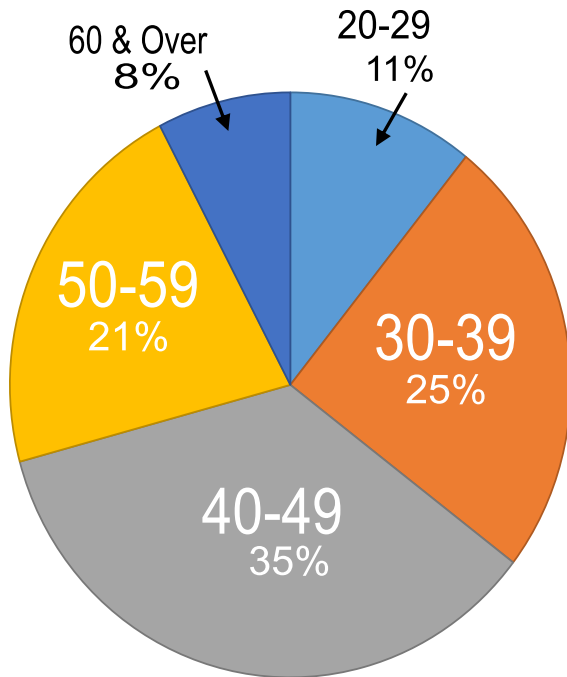
Referred by



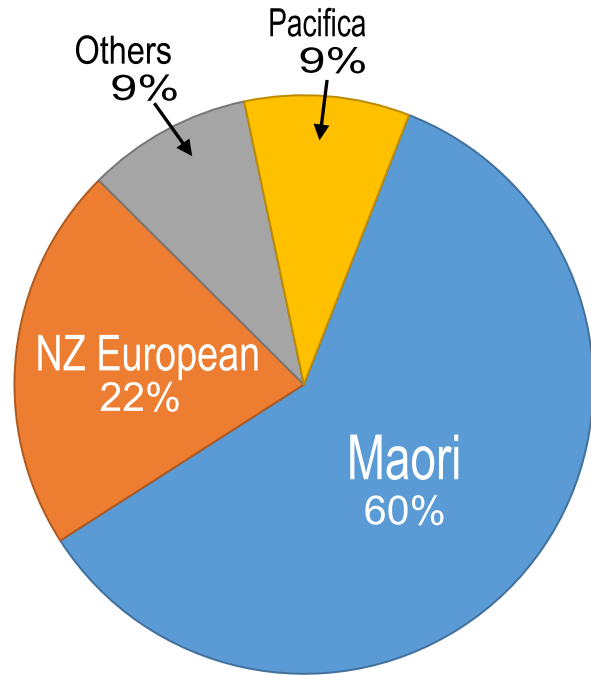
Outcomes



**Residents by Age**

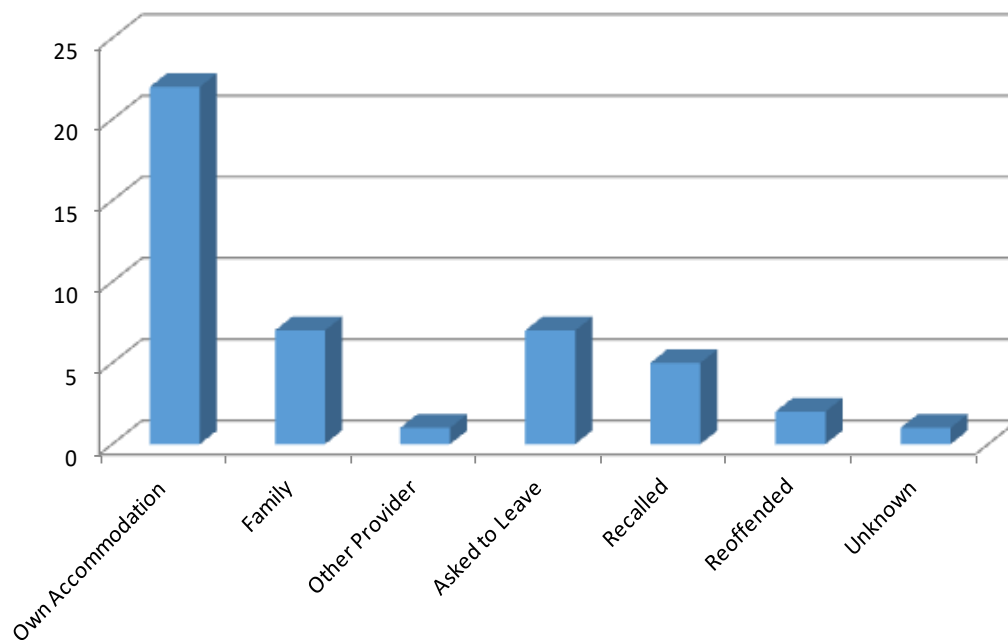


**Residents by Ethnicity**



Average age: 43 years

**Residents Outcomes**



New Residents: 51, (including 17 Emergency intakes)

Men housed during the year: 65

Average stay: 4.8 months

Residents in transition flats/unit: 14