



Blind Citizens NZ

Focus

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In this edition

Rose Wilkinson, Chief Executive

The past few months have been exceptionally busy for Blind Citizens NZ, with several key pieces of work scheduled for completion in September. We successfully completed our annual audit (with flying colours), shared the draft of our new Constitution with members, and concluded the election of our National President and two Members-at-Large. We achieved this while preparing and finalising the programme for our two-day event, where we celebrated 80 years as one of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest disabled people's organisations. These efforts, alongside our regular activities have led to Focus reaching you in October instead of September.

You will read more about the above-mentioned activities in this Focus issue. Additional items, in no particular order, include an overview of significant outcomes of our two-day AGM and Conference, we share the joint National President | Chief Executive report presented to members, and there is a call for the Moderator of our organisational email lists.

While the National President is taking a break from this Focus issue, you can look forward to his column resuming and hearing from him in the December issue.

Last but not least, we welcome member contributions to consider for inclusion in Focus, so do give this some thought...

Overview Blind Citizens NZ

AGM and Conference | Ka mua, ka muri

Walking backwards into the future

Reaching 80 years, and being one of Aotearoa New Zealand's oldest disabled people's organisations, is no mean feat. This achievement contributed towards the success of the recently held AGM and Conference. While there could have been more of a 'celebration' of the occasion, the Board's symbolic approach recognised that the prestigious line-up of guest presenters were each in some way linked to Blind Citizens NZ's history. Of note is the relevance of each of the issues today, where clearly we have more work to do to remove the challenges blind, deafblind, low vision and vision-impaired people (blind people) experience daily.

This year, influenced by Blind Citizens NZ's Te Tiriti o Waitangi Advisory Group, the Mihi Whakatau | Welcome | Roll Call recognised the importance of Pepeha. This allowed each and every attendee to introduce their personal self – to talk about where they grew up, went to school, about their family, etc. Alternatively, they could introduce themselves professionally and discuss their job responsibilities, including the people they work with, etc.

We were honoured to have Don McKenzie officially open this year's AGM and Conference.

A Member-for-Life, his address is entitled 'From whence I have come – what has helped shape my life'. Don McKenzie shared various experiences from his childhood through to adulthood. He spoke about people such as Elsie Laurent, who positively contributed to shaping his life. The importance of Braille and learning to be independent were constant themes throughout his presentation.

Guest presenters, business sessions and memorabilia elements were interspersed throughout the two days. There will be more information in our December Focus Issue about guest presenters and the National President's address.

There were several notable announcements and outcomes. We start with the appointment of Peter Boshier as Blind Citizens NZ's Patron for a two-year term. This decision was reached by the Board of Blind Citizens NZ during its August 2025 meeting and remained confidential until the National President publicised this during the AGM and Conference. Peter Boshier had a brief opportunity to speak to everyone, where he welcomed the appointment. He was Chief Ombudsman from December 2015 to March 2025, during which time he had a little to do with Blind Citizens NZ. Before this, he served as principal judge of the Family Court (2004 to 2012).

The decision to induct Lottie Trevarthen and Donald Hunt into Blind Citizens NZ's Memorial Hall of Honour was unanimous.

This outcome recognised the substantial and outstanding contributions each made over many years towards the advancement of the interests and well-being of blind people in New Zealand and the inspiration they each provided to others in the blind community to overcome barriers to participation in a sighted world.

Peer support is a significant component of our organisational engagement with members. This happens through multiple mechanisms, including social media platforms, Branches, and Geographical and Special Interest Networks. Our AGM and Conference is one of those mechanisms which, on this occasion, led to a group of blind, deafblind, low vision and vision-impaired women getting together to establish a Special Interest Network. Judy Small is the Coordinator, and there will be more information about this development in our December Focus Issue.

The presentation of organisational awards brings about an element of surprise for almost everyone present. Board decisions are closely guarded and remain entirely confidential. That is, unless it is necessary to inform a recipient of the honour about to be bestowed on them. A brief overview follows of all award recipients, along with heartfelt congratulations for their achievements:

Beamish Memorial Medal: presented to Daniel Phillips of Rotorua, this recognises outstanding contributions made to society and the benefits to blind people accumulated from his efforts over some 30-plus years. Daniel is Blind Citizens NZ's Kaumatua - he has made significant contributions through our Te Tiriti o Waitangi Advisory Group.

Unbeknownst to either Daniel or his wife Harete, their daughter Sherri Mason and granddaughter Wairemana Phillips were present. Their presence led to the presentation of Daniel's award happening before dinner, enabling all family members to join in the celebration. Each spoke about Daniel, and the value he brings to his family and his communities.

The Beamish Memorial Medal and Bar was initially publicised in 2023, for presentation to Clive Lansink and Mary Schnackenberg. Due to matters outside Blind Citizens NZ's control, the actual awards were not available for presentation. A considerable amount of time passed before the manufacturer resolved the situation, rectifying the embarrassing 2023 situation. Clive Lansink and Mary Schnackenberg have each, at different times, previously been awarded the Beamish Memorial Medal. The Beamish Memorial Medal and Bar is the ultimate prestigious award, recognising their respective and continued outstanding contributions to society in their particular and many fields of service to the blind community.

Honorary Membership-for-Life was awarded to Victor (Vic) West in recognition of his sustained service to Blind Citizens NZ for more than 40 years. Amongst his contributions, Vic has been a long-serving Southland Branch Committee Member, where he has held the positions of Chair and National Councillor (now Branch Representative). Vic's strong advocacy on issues such as pedestrian safety is legendary in Invercargill.

The **Extra Touch Award** recognises an organisation or individual's outstanding contribution towards improving access or services to blind, deafblind, low vision or vision-impaired people. The recipient of this award is Maurice Sloane of Vision Associates. The award recognises his tireless efforts to ensure technology needed by blind people is available here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Maurice has been involved in the technical, low vision side of the optics industry for more than 40 years and has often engaged directly with blind technology users to ensure they are getting the technology and | or the support that meets their needs. He was joined by his wife, Santa, and many attendees recognised the value both Maurice and his wife have given them. Maurice has literally kept many in the blind community functional and connected through his efforts to revive ageing equipment alongside his excellent after-sales service.

Blind Citizens NZ is fortunate to receive the support of stakeholders and businesses for our event. This is reflected by way of financial, in-kind or reduced pricing. Our Focus Issue is a great opportunity to recognise and thank our supporters, all of whom are listed at the end of this publication.

National President Jonathan Godfrey ONZM | Chief Executive Rose Wilkinson ONZM Report to Members 2025

Note: this report was presented to the AGM and Conference, forming part of the overall organisational Annual Report. Events mentioned as happening at Conference have all happened.

Introduction

As we present an overview of our māhi for the past 12 months, this gives us reason to reflect on the issues we have addressed, our solutions-focused approach, and the influence we have had along the way. There is no doubt this is somewhat of a reality check...

From our perspective, much has been achieved across the diversity of issues, topics, and the ever-changing landscape to which we have needed to continually adapt if we are to remain sustainable and relevant.

We might say the essence of Blind Citizens NZ's efforts is the very fact that this year, we celebrate a significant milestone, and we're in good company. That's to say, while 2025 is a celebration of 80 years for Blind Citizens NZ, the United Nations is also celebrating the same milestone, albeit that this occurs at a different time.

In reality, our theme reflects and draws attention to the way we work organisationally. Highlighting this for our 80 year celebration is the right thing to do, for in order to make a blind bit of difference, we must constantly be reviewing what we have done in the past, while looking at what needs to change to influence positive outcomes.

Ka mua, ka muri | Walking backwards into the future epitomises our history and may well assist us set the scene for the future.

Influencing positive change

Blind Citizens NZ has a proud history and organisationally, we have evidence to uphold this view. All outcomes over the organisation's 80 years reflects in some way, the voices of members as well as those who are on the peripheral, and who stay abreast of our work, contributing as they choose.

For example, for each guest presenter, there is a connection to our history and some of the significant outcomes we've either contributed to and | or achieved. While some of these may be a 'stretch', they nevertheless exist. For example:

- Steve Wiggins, Chief Executive, Payments NZ: Blind Citizens NZ was the catalyst for banks introducing Talking ATMs, and remaining staunch about accessible EFTPOS terminals. We continue to work with Verifone and promote accessibility features on its EFTPOS terminals, and we influence banks through the Bankers Association.
- Karl Le Quesne, Chief Electoral Officer | Chief Executive, Electoral Commission: Blind Citizens NZ was instrumental in the introduction of Telephone Dictation Voting in General Elections, starting in 2014.
- John Sneyd, General Manager Regulatory Services, Regulatory & Identity Services, Department of Internal Affairs:
Blind Citizens NZ played a significant role in the work that involved rebranding of the 18+ card to the Kiwi Access Card, which included increased security.
- Sheldene Seth, Able: whilst recognising advocacy over time by many individuals, Blind Citizens NZ has played an integral and ongoing role with respect to the introduction of Audio Description to New Zealand. Four workshops held in 2010 contributed to the introduction of audio described television programme content, also for live theatre, museums, and art galleries, etc.

There are so many ways that organisationally we influence change.

This is not just about the Board, the Chief Executive and her staff. Blind Citizens NZ appoints people from our membership and | or the blind community as representatives across the many areas we strive to have a voice and influence positive change.

Often, our advocacy paves the way for Blind Citizens NZ to achieve representative status. Sometimes individuals are shoulder-tapped, and other times we call for expressions of interest. First of all, this is an opportunity to recognise our nationally appointed representatives and to thank them for the work they do on our behalf, i.e. Leyna Coleman to BANZAT, Pauline Melham to BLENNZ, Martine Abel-Williamson to the Accessible Books Consortium and our country delegates to the World Blind Union, Thomas Bryan and Jonathan Godfrey.

Then there are opportunistic situations and others that happen because of our advocacy, such as Don McKenzie's representation with Maritime NZ's work to influence the introduction of accessibility on passenger ferries (excluding ferries that travel across the Cook Strait).

We welcomed the opportunity to have representation on Blind Low Vision NZ's Braille Project, where we have two people, and recognise Juanita Willems' input towards influencing each of the scoping exercises.

Valuing Branches and Networks (Geographical and Special Interest)

Over the past 12 months, there have been some ups and downs with our Branches, and both Geographical and Special Interest Networks. Each situation is unique, there are learnings, and most importantly, there is no silver bullet when there is a downward slide. We believe it is important to recognise that Blind Citizens NZ is not alone with its membership experiences. Both here in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally, membership organisations are challenged to know how best to manage any decline in membership, and whether to continue with subscriptions. At last year's AGM and Conference, the decision was made to introduce a change. For the financial year commencing 1 July 2025, annual subscriptions are now \$10 and \$30 for those who can afford it. This has been widely publicised and, in some situations, the change appears to make a difference.

That's not to say our membership has increased, but there is evidence to support the view that some members appreciate the choice now offered.

We celebrate the fact that our Otago Network has gained strength over the past five-plus years and has been re-established as a Branch. Nelson Branch was disestablished in July last year, and we continue to nurture the concept of there being a Nelson Network – we certainly have the members, it's finding someone with the time to be the Coordinator.

Manawatū and Districts is a new and functioning network, while we have some geographic networks struggling. By comparison, there is significant interest in our two special interest networks, as indicated by the need and interest in having side events before the AGM and Conference.

We have commented on changes in membership subscriptions. However, there continue to be notable challenges with respect to membership renewals and attracting new members. We now have the latter situation addressed as we return to being able to receive from Blind Low Vision NZ, contact details of newly registered members who agree for their details to be shared. Once the process is implemented, there will be a reach out from the National Office to Branches and Geographical Networks about the process as it unfolds.

While recruiting new members is important, the retention of existing members by Branches and Geographical Networks, including offering a welcoming environment, has greater significance.

Equally important is that, as of 1 July 2025, the status of financial membership becomes increasingly important. Branches, Geographical Networks, and the National Office are now required to provide information only to financial members.

The provision that the Board introduced for anyone from 2018 through to 30 June 2025 on our database to receive all information, whether financial or not, ceased as of 30 June 2025.

Introducing organisational efficiencies

Work continues with Branches to move bank accounts across to ANZ Bank and to begin using Xero accounting software. At the outset, the Board did not anticipate the length of time this would take. However, it has become evident that each of these two tasks is not achieved as easily as initially believed.

That said, there is no doubt that once the move to ANZ happens, and Xero is utilised, organisational efficiencies very quickly become evident.

It is important to mention that each of these decisions has been made by the Board on the recommendation of our auditor over several years, and that the Board requires the Chief Executive to implement its decisions.

There are no exceptions to this work happening. We anticipate being in the position of proudly informing next year's AGM and Conference that all Branches have successfully moved to Xero, and those Branches that need to transition to ANZ Bank have achieved the required outcome.

Enhancing Communications

While we know there is always more that can be done in this space, there are mechanisms that are proving beneficial for Blind Citizens NZ. Focus, our national publication, continues to be sent to all members in their preferred alternate format (Braille, large print, audio, and electronically).

Up until June 2025, Focus was issued to all Ordinary Members on our database based on the Board's decision mentioned earlier in our report. It is also sent to all Members of Parliament, and now and then we will receive some feedback or a comment about issues and | or topics we've raised.

The digital divide is an issue about which Blind Citizens NZ is abundantly aware, and which we continually strive to address. There is no doubt, however, that we are at times less successful than we aim to be.

Communicating with members caught on the wrong side of the digital divide can prove challenging for Branches, Geographical and Special Interest Networks, and the National Office.

Our National Information Line on TellMe is one option that assists us in overcoming this situation. While we are doing what we can to maintain this Bulletin, our TellMe presence has diminished since our Information Line Coordinator, Vaughan Dodd, passed away suddenly in late 2024.

The Board is very aware that the Information Line is wanted, it is necessary, and that it meets the informational needs of many of our members who would otherwise miss out.

Unfortunately, despite advertising, we have yet to replace Vaughan, whose contributions raised expectations and enhanced people's experiences with our Information Line.

On the plus side, our digitally connected members do get plenty of information via monthly e-bulletins, email lists, and other social media activities. These members and many others outside of Blind Citizens NZ are in a position to learn about our own activities, the work of our representatives, the organisations we work with, and information provided by Government agencies. We hold regular six-weekly online hui opportunities for members to come together with the National President and talk about issues topical to the blind community.

Additionally, topic-specific online engagement opportunities are held to gather information that supports our work.

Good Governance | Progressing and Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Since last year's AGM and Conference, our Te Tiriti o Waitangi Advisory Group has made progress on some of the tasks delegated for its attention.

The most important of these is the recommendation from the Advisory Group to the Board for two members to be co-opted to the Board of Blind Citizens NZ.

The Advisory Group decided to recommend two people from within its number. The Board welcomed and endorsed the recommendation to co-opt Peter Allen and Russell Lowry to the Board for a two-year term. Their respective terms started at the Board's August 2025 meeting. This is a positive step towards ensuring the needs of Kāpō Tāngata Whenua members are incorporated into all our work across the organisation, before decisions are made.

Additionally, this provides a way forward. It allows time for the Advisory Group to develop a plan to engage during 2026 with Kāpō Tāngata Whenua members about a transparent and inclusive approach for them to select or elect people to the Board.

Guided by a discussion | meeting with Graeme Nahkies, BoardWorks, the Board has resolved that succession planning is an area that must be advanced in the coming months.

The catalyst for this work is based on the fact that four current Board Members have served less than twelve months, while three Board Members have each served over 20 years.

The Board is mindful that the 2025 election results cannot address what our external governance advisor described as looking like a sandwich without much filling.

Fostering Relationships

Our involvement in the Disabled People's Organisations (DPO) Coalition, and by virtue of this with the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM), continues to provide opportunities for Blind Citizens NZ to promote the concerns and needs of our members, and others in the blind community. Often, when an issue is raised, such as we did with challenges people in the blind community face when required to produce identification, it will be the realisation and collective effort of all seven DPOs that gets an issue across the line for a Government agency to address.

Our rich history of actively engaging our membership well ahead of the time, when Government agencies come calling, means our position on issues is easy to determine and to communicate to other DPOs and Government officials.

We have begun to engage more regularly with our sister organisation Blind Citizens Australia. Many years ago, there was a reciprocal relationship where we endeavoured to attend their AGM | Conference and they ours.

Several aspects influenced changes in this approach. It's great to have both the President Vaughn Bennison and Chief Executive Deb Deshayes join us in person this year.

In recent times, Blind Citizens NZ has held both Country Delegate positions to the World Blind Union.

Our membership of the World Blind Union is not necessarily about the benefits to Blind Citizens NZ and | or New Zealand, but what our contributions are.

Country delegates might be invited to be part of a global and | or regional committee, and it is these instances where our contributions come to the fore. Blind Citizens NZ has proudly supported both financially and in-kind Martine Abel-Williamson in her respective WBU roles as Treasurer, and most recently as WBU President.

Our financial contributions since 2016 are in the vicinity of \$80,000. During Martine's time as WBU President, reflections on achievements during her time highlight many situations such as:

- participation in the 'We're with U' concert to raise funds for Ukraine. A result of the solidarity is the thousands of dollars collected, and programmes now in place to support blind and partially sighted Ukrainians in Ukraine and displaced persons in Poland and other countries;
- meeting with Lego to help share the word about how Braille Bricks can be a fun tool for learning Braille.

Moving forward, as WBU Immediate Past President, while we will continue to provide financial and in-kind support for this four-year term, we are pleased to share that Blind Low Vision NZ will make a financial contribution towards costs.

The Board resolved that Blind Citizens NZ would become a full member of the Pacific Disability Forum (PDF). This is a step up from our Associate Membership status, which we have held for many years. The change in status means we have opportunities to be involved at a democratic level within the PDF.

Organisational Sustainability

We are in no doubt that Blind Citizens NZ's financial position remains problematic. While we have sufficient funds to remain a going concern, we are slowly but surely chipping away at the reserves we have built up over 80 years.

Our primary funder is aware of the need to increase the total pool of funding to meet the rising level of funds needed by blindness consumer organisations. There are positive steps towards engagement and accountability. From our perspective, the work Blind Citizens NZ carries out potentially benefits all blind, deafblind, low-vision, and vision-impaired New Zealanders, which we continue to do with scarce resources. We continue to consider all options, mindful that our reserves often inhibit positive responses from potential funders such as Lotteries.

We are well on the way towards addressing legal requirements as per the Incorporated Societies Act 2022.

Several mandatory aspects must be brought into the organisation's Constitution.

The eight-week engagement has started, and we will have a great opportunity during the AGM and Conference to talk about specific elements of the draft new Constitution.

Members can look forward to a new Constitution coming into force that ensures Blind Citizens NZ meets its obligations under the Incorporated Societies Act. Once that is finalised, and mindful that the current Strategic Plan ends in 2026, attention will turn towards the development of a new Strategic Plan.

Conclusion

We have provided a summary of happenings since our 2024 AGM and Conference.

Similar to last year, we have an election with three candidates competing for two Member-at-Large positions. Martine Abel-Williamson and Chrissy Fern's positions fall due for election this year. This is an opportunity to acknowledge the significant contributions of all Board Members, and as there is an election underway, we specifically recognise Martine Abel-Williamson and Chrissy Fern. Ms Fern has served six years on the Board, joining in 2019.

Having served a three-year term, she stood for election in 2022, where she was re-elected for a further three-year term.

Towards the end of her term, Ms Fern decided she would not stand for re-election. Martine Abel-Williamson joined the Board in 2004 and is standing for re-election for a further three-year term. By the time we come together for this year's AGM and Conference, we will know more about the election. The position of National President was elected unopposed.

Now we turn our attention to the small team at our National Office who provide support to the Chief Executive. There have been changes to the 'Minute-Taker' position, which are being worked through. For the immediate future, this support is provided via an agency, and we will have Lisa Toon as the Minute-Taker at the AGM and Conference.

A special thank you goes to Mary Yee, Financial Assistant, Thomas Bryan, Accessible Information Advisor, and Emily Tilley, Administrative Support, for your respective contributions and support. These are evident across so many elements of our organisational work. The team works closely with the Chief Executive and each other, and your contributions and support are valued.

We extend thanks to our supporters, donors, funders, and stakeholders for the diversity of support we receive, which is evidenced in so many ways. Most importantly, we take this opportunity to thank our members and those from the blind community who are on the periphery of our work.

Blind Citizens NZ 2025 Election Update

From Rose Wilkinson, Returning Officer

Voting in this year's election of National President and two Member-at-Large positions closed at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, 23 September. As is customary, election outcomes were formally announced during Blind Citizens NZ's AGM and Conference.

The term for all positions being elected concluded at the end of this year's AGM and Conference on Saturday, 4 October.

Congratulations go to Jonathan Godfrey, elected unopposed to the position of National President.

Three candidates stood for election for the two Member-at-Large positions. In alphabetical order by surname, candidates were: Martine Abel-Williamson, Tewai Halatau, and Juanita Willems.

Congratulations are extended to Martine Abel-Williamson and Juanita Willems on their successful election to the Board of Blind Citizens NZ.

The National President and two Members-at-Large each serve a three-year term. This commenced at the conclusion of this year's AGM and Conference, and ends in October 2028.

Outgoing Board Member Christine (Chrissy) Fern is thanked for the mahi carried out on behalf of Blind Citizens NZ during her term of office.

Amending Blind Citizens NZ's Constitution

By Rose Wilkinson, Chief Executive

On 6 September, together with an overview document, a draft new Constitution for Blind Citizens NZ was distributed to financial, Ordinary (voting) Members. The need for amending the Constitution has been well-publicised over the past 12-plus months. This is to ensure compliance under the Incorporated Societies Act 2022 (Act) and the Incorporated Societies Regulations 2023 (Regulations).

The overview document explains that the majority of proposed amendments are mandatory. At the same time as the Board addressed mandatory requirements, this provided an opportunity to review areas of the Constitution that may benefit from attention, and which are considered operational and | or no longer fit for purpose.

There is an eight-week timeframe for eligible members to provide feedback to the Board about proposed amendments.

In its planning, the Board recognised that an ideal opportunity for engagement would be during the 2025 AGM and Conference. It included in the programme time to engage with attendees about all proposed amendments. The outcome of that discussion, and any other feedback received by midnight, Sunday 2 November 2025, will guide the Board in its approach towards the final Constitution.

While there is still time for members to send their feedback through to the Board, either by post or email, there will be an opportunity, 6 pm-7 pm, Wednesday 29 October, to join an online session to talk about proposed amendments. If you plan to attend, then please register your interest with our National Office. We recognise the lateness of this Focus Issue reaching everyone may pose challenges. Registrations will be received up to 4:00 pm on 29 October. Remember you can join using your phone (landline or mobile) as well a laptop, computer etc.

To register, please contact the National Office either by phone on 0800 222 694 or send an email to admin@blindcitizensnz.org.nz

Following the conclusion of the eight-week engagement | feedback opportunity, and pending feedback, the draft new Constitution may be amended. A final proposed new Constitution will then be distributed to Ordinary financial Members to vote on at a Special Meeting of Members on Tuesday 9 December at 6pm. The final proposed new Constitution will be distributed by 17 November 2025.

Moderator, Blind Citizens NZ Email Lists Expressions of Interest Called For

Expressions of interest in the position of Moderator of two of Blind Citizens NZ's email lists are called for, from amongst Ordinary Members of Blind Citizens NZ.

The role of the Moderator is primarily to monitor our lists, ensure that all communications are respectful, and that members of these email lists abide by well-established requirements.

There are two email lists: 'Blind Discuss', where anyone from the blind community can join, and 'Member Forum', which is specifically for members of Blind Citizens NZ. Our lists keep members, and anyone interested in blindness matters well-informed of issues and happenings.

Blind Discuss provides an open forum for members and potential members of Blind Citizens NZ to discuss blindness-related issues. The Member Forum list is specific to organisational matters relative to Blind Citizens NZ.

The Board's decision to publicise this opportunity is consistent with its approach to positions held by someone for several years and is intended to provide an opportunity for anyone who might be interested to put themselves forward. Carl Halliburton has been the moderator of Blind Discuss since 2020 and of the Member Forum since its inception in 2022.

He is eligible for reappointment and can therefore express interest in the positions.

If you are interested in finding out more, please send an email to admin@blindcitizensnz.org.nz with “Moderator” in the subject line. Or phone 0800-222-694.

Ways to Support Blind Citizens NZ's Income Generation Efforts

Blind Citizens NZ has both Charitable and Donee status. This is important for anyone thinking about the mutually beneficial outcomes of making us your charity of choice.

Income received through donations, bequests and payroll giving, for example, goes a long way towards supporting the many facets of our work, i.e. our advocacy, promotional campaigns, and communication and community education. Making Blind Citizens NZ the recipient of a bequest or legacy is another way you can support us.

If you would like to discuss ways to support the work we do, if you have questions, or you wish to make a contribution, please contact Rose Wilkinson, Chief Executive by:

- **Phone:** 021 222 6940 | 0800 222 694;or
- **Email:** bequest-info-blindcitizensnz@groups.io

Membership Renewal | Application Form

Although it's now October, this is a generic reminder to subscription-paying members about membership renewals for 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. Also, for anyone wishing to join Blind Citizens NZ. Membership subscriptions can be paid in person at a Branch or Network event. If these options are not suitable, we have alternate, safe options to replace the in-person approach. You can ask your bank to assist by making a one-off payment to the National Office bank account. You could consider setting up your membership renewal payment so that this happens at the same time each year. Otherwise, internet and phone banking are options to pay your annual subscription.

The base amount for subscriptions as of 1 July this year for Ordinary (voting) Members and Associate Members is \$10 per year, or \$30 per year for those who can afford it. There is no longer a rate that differentiates between working and non-working members. You get to choose the rate that best suits your situation. For Ordinary (voting) Members, remaining financial ensures you have the choice to be involved in Blind Citizens NZ elections, and all other democratic processes. The Member-for-Life subscription is for Ordinary (voting) Members. This remains \$300.

A renewal | application form follows for anyone wishing to take advantage of this reminder.

Blind Citizens NZ, Membership Renewal and Application Form | Financial to 30 June 2026

When depositing funds into Blind Citizens NZ's bank account to renew your membership or to join Blind Citizens NZ, please let our National Office know. You can post this form to PO Box 7144, Newtown, Wellington 6242, phone us on 0800 222 694 or email us at admin@blindcitizensnz.org.nz

As a reference, please include the first letter of your Christian name and full surname, and the reference "MembSubs". Blind Citizens NZ's bank account details are: 06-0230-0002634-00.

Full Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Select your preferred option for receiving information:

Braille | Audio | Print | Large Print | Email

Email Address: _____

Subscriptions for Ordinary and Associate Members are \$10 per year, or \$30 per year for those who can afford it. Below, please select your membership category and the amount you are paying:

- **Ordinary Membership** (people who are registered with or eligible to receive full services from BLVNZ): **\$10 | \$30**
- **Associate Membership** (sighted family | whānau): **\$10 | \$30**
- **\$300.00**, being a one-off payment for Membership-for-Life.

Funding, Sponsorship, and Support 2025 AGM and Conference

Blind Citizens NZ is extremely appreciative of the extent of support we receive via funding, sponsorship, and in-kind support. We take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank:

- Accessible Information and Communications Limited (AI Comms)
- Blind Low Vision NZ
- Brentwood Hotel
- Intopia
- JC Computing
- Little Rocket
- L'Occitane
- Microsoft New Zealand, Rod Park, Technology Strategist
- Ministry of Social Development
- Optics Magazine
- South Canterbury Branch, Blind Citizens NZ
- Stebbings
- TBD Digital
- Blind Citizens NZ Members and Supporters, many of whom prefer to remain anonymous

Blind Citizens NZ – Board and National Office

Board

- **National President:** Jonathan Godfrey:
a.j.godfrey@massey.ac.nz
- **Members-at-Large:**
 - ✓ Martine Abel-Williamson: martine.the1@xtra.co.nz
 - ✓ Peter Allen: Peter.VIDP@outlook.com
 - ✓ Andrea Courtney: andycoute@gmail.com
 - ✓ Beverley Duncan: bev.d.duncan@gmail.com
 - ✓ Russell Lowry: rglowry@xtra.co.nz
 - ✓ Maria Stevens: mariastevens31060@gmail.com
 - ✓ Paula Waby: paula.waby4@gmail.com
 - ✓ Juanita Willems: willems2022@gmail.com

National Office

- **Chief Executive:** Rose Wilkinson:
rwilkinson@blindcitizensnz.org.nz
- **Physical:** Ground Floor, 113 Adelaide Road, Mount Cook, Wellington.
- **Post:** PO Box 7144, Newtown, Wellington 6242.
- **Email:** admin@blindcitizensnz.org.nz
- **Phone:** 04 389 0033; 0800 222 694.
- **Website:** <http://www.blindcitizensnz.org.nz>
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/BlindCitizensNZ/>

Blind Citizens NZ is appreciative of donations and bequests received from our members and supporters and for essential funding from Blind Low Vision NZ

If undelivered within 14 days please return to
Association of Blind Citizens of New Zealand inc.
PO Box 7144, Newtown, Wellington 6242.

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