

Annual report

2023 - 2024

*Living
Wage*

Aotearoa New Zealand



Message from the Chair and Executive Director

It would be an understatement to say that it's been a busy year. We commissioned the Family Centre Social Policy and Research Unit to conduct the five-yearly Measurement Review of the Living Wage, with the new rate of \$26.00 per hour being announced in April 2023. Networks across the country leveraged this opportunity to raise awareness of the Movement, and push for more employers to commit to paying their staff a Living Wage.

We launched our Living Wage Schools campaign in August 2023, calling for central government to provide new targeted Living Wage funding for state and integrated schools enabling them to pay school cleaners, caretakers, canteen staff, and groundskeepers (CCCGs) a Living Wage.

We also continued to advocate for the Living Wage Movement with key decision makers, holding an Election Forum with candidates standing in the general election, and making significant gains with local and regional councils.

None of this would happen without the leaders who work tirelessly in our communities to advocate for the Living Wage. To you all, we extend our deepest thanks — you are our Movement. We acknowledge Living Wage Employers who believe in valuing workers and treating them fairly — you turn the concept of a Living Wage into a reality. Together, we've changed the lives of thousands of workers.

Rev Stephen King
Chair

Gina Lockyer
Executive Director



Rev Stephen King (third left) and Gina Lockyer (first right) celebrating the accreditation of Radio New Zealand in June 2023 (Source: RNZ)

Our Mission

A Living Wage is the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life.

A Living Wage enables workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society.

The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ wants to see all workers in Aotearoa be paid a Living Wage. We bring together community, union and faith-based groups to campaign for a Living Wage and seek to influence those who have the power to change the lives of workers and their families.

Through community organisation, we:

- encourage and promote the development of better policies for working people
- raise public awareness and understanding of the issues associated with low income workers
- develop the capacity and skills of our members to support and advocate for low waged workers.

We focus on workforces where incomes are funded through public money, and on large employers who can afford to pay a Living Wage.

The Living Wage Movement is:

1. non-party political
2. built locally through local relationships and local issues
3. independent of government in terms of funding and association, and
4. comprised of three streams of the membership: secular/community, union, faith-based groups.





2023-2024 Highlights

44

submissions and
advocacy actions
made to local and
national government

18

events run to promote the
Living Wage in Aotearoa

7

active local

Living Wage Networks
in Aotearoa

95

participants in
Aotearoa Living Wage
education and training
courses

376

Aotearoa Living Wage
accredited employers

Living Wage Employer Programme

Living Wage Employers are critical to achieving our vision of a more equitable Aotearoa.

To be granted Living Wage Employer accreditation, employers undergo a robust assessment process, during which our Accreditation Advisory Committee must be satisfied that all the employer's contractors and employees — including any engaged by franchises controlled by the employer — are being paid the Living Wage.

Accredited Living Wage Employers feature on our website, can use the Living Wage Employer trademarked logo and 'Living Wage Employer' phrase, and receive ongoing support from the Living Wage Employer programme team.

Living Wage Employers also contribute to our community advocacy and campaign work, helping to lift even more working people out of poverty.

Over the last year, we have seen a smaller but steady flow of businesses becoming accredited. In 2023-2024, we welcomed our first regional council (*Environment Canterbury*), our first broadcasting service (*Radio New Zealand | Te Reo Irirangi o Aotearoa*) and our first Iwi organisation (*Te Rūnanga O Toa Rangatira*), among others.

We acknowledge and thank all accredited Living Wage Employers, whose decision and commitment to paying all workers the Living Wage, continues to transform lives and communities, particularly during tough economic times.

“As a community-funded NGO, our budget is incredibly tight, making our commitment to fair wages particularly challenging.

We are so proud to have achieved accreditation and mihi to the team at Living Wage for upholding the value of building a thriving community.”

Caroline Silk, CEO, Taranaki Retreat Trust



Regional activity – Auckland

Through training, we can build leaders and capacity in our networks. That’s why training was a real focus for our Auckland Network over the last year. With the support of Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga, we’ve been able to develop our team of community organisers, and roll out more training across the motu.

Our network model, and therefore the training we develop and deliver, is grounded in Community Organising practices and principles borrowed and adapted from those developed by the Industrial Areas Foundation, an international network of local and faith-based community organisations, known for developing leaders and building organisational capacity.

Our training includes identifying and developing sustainable leadership, strategic thinking and, most importantly, how to engage in real conversations about the mission and democratic action of the Living Wage Movement — including the arts of discussion, argument, negotiation and compromise. We also focus on building and maintaining the collaborative relationships that ultimately lead to action.

Highlights for 2023-2024 included:

- Developing the community organising skills of our leaders, preparing them for work on key campaigns, such as the Auckland Council Living Wage accreditation and the Auckland launch of Living Wage Schools. 15 Living Wage Movement leaders attended a five-day residential training that we delivered in partnership with Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga. We also focused our efforts on emerging leaders, and those who missed out on training during the COVID pandemic.
- Identifying Saane Siua at a local training, who we have now employed as the Hamilton Community Organiser.
- A two-day training for E tū union organisers, also delivered with Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga. These trainees work with cleaners and security guards — key workforces for our campaigns.



Regional activity – Hamilton

JR Mckenzie Trust funding enabled us to employ a Community Organiser — Saane Siua — in June 2023, with the goal of growing the existing core team into a larger and more diverse coalition of leaders. By building local community power, we aim to advance our goal of Hamilton City Council (HCC) becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer.

We are already experiencing growth — the Hamilton network increased from four to 35 individuals over the last year. We held three network meetings, focusing on strategic planning, relationship building, and creating a sense of ownership for new leaders, setting the stage for future action.



Our first public action was during Living Wage Week in November. We used the event to build relationships with city councillors and highlight the importance of the Living Wage in dealing with cost of living issues.

In May 2024, a delegation of twenty network members attended a Council meeting and called on HCC to become an accredited Living Wage Employer. Council worker Robert shared his story. Councillors were clearly affected by the presentation and the issue is firmly back on the Council's agenda.

Building on the success of the delegation to Council, it is essential to maintain public pressure for decision-makers, and momentum for movement leaders. We have successfully engaged with several city councillors, who now have relationships of accountability with the movement.

While the circle of leaders in Hamilton has widened, more work is needed to create a self-sustaining local movement and to continue the push to get HCC accredited. With the support of our community organiser, we are pursuing further funding to ensure action in Hamilton can continue.

Regional activity – Wellington

Continuing our advocacy with local councils (the region's largest Living Wage Employers), we made annual plan submissions to four local and regional councils, encouraging them to continue and further their commitments to paying a Living Wage. We also organised a large delegation to deliver an open letter from over 35 member organisations, calling on the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) to become an Accredited Living Wage Employer.

In August, Chair Darren Ponter presented a paper encouraging GRWC to become an accredited Living Wage Employer. We sent a large delegation to urge councillors to support the proposal. The council voted — nearly unanimously — to begin the transition to becoming a Accredited Living Wage Employer.

Through the organising efforts of Kāpiti locals, we also managed to secure Aotearoa's first Living Wage Accredited District Council. We celebrated with the mayor, community and impacted workers. Great stuff Kāpiti!



To ensure we garnered council support for the rate increase, we invited mayors and councillors to celebrate the announcement with members of the local community. We also organised an event with staff and students at Victoria University to celebrate the new rate.

We also hosted a gathering to celebrate Hutt-based accredited Living Wage Employers. Accredited employers and members of the community celebrated with the Mayor. Other local employers were invited to attend and learn more about Accreditation.



Regional activity – Christchurch

We had two reasons to celebrate in April – the increase in the Living Wage and Environment Canterbury (ECAN) becoming the Living Wage Movement’s first accredited Regional Council. Spearheaded by the PSA's Kim Moss, this win had been years in the making.

ECAN Chair Peter Scott graciously accepted the accreditation certificate and declared ECAN happy to be a part of our Movement.



In the lead-up to the 2023 General Election, we met with electoral candidates to secure forum attendance and commitments. For many of our newer leaders, it was their first opportunity to share their story and advocate with a leader. They did exceptionally well and managed to secure clear commitments from all six candidates.

Upon learning that Christchurch’s new mayor, Phil Mauger, was supporting a proposal to sell off Council-owned infrastructure companies rather than meet his pre-election commitment to extend a Living Wage to all workers at these companies, we commenced a broad-based campaign opposing asset sales. This campaign has greatly strengthened our movement, enabling us to build stronger relationships with Christchurch’s port unions and youth climate activists.

And, we won! After months of painstaking relational work, we received 22 hours notice of a key public vote. We were ready, we mobilised, and we flipped the vote to protect our assets and worker’s rights.

We closed the year with a transition from a steering group to an elected local board. With so many brilliant candidates to choose from, we ran an election to make the final selection. We now have an eight-person board with representation from across Faith, Union, and Community groups in Christchurch.



Campaigns

“The full recalculation ensures the Living Wage will continue to address in-work poverty, and offer working people greater security and wellbeing.”

Rev Stephen King, Chair of the Living Wage Movement.



Rate Review

The Five Year Measurement Review of the Living Wage was conducted last year, with the new Living Wage rate being announced in April 2023.

The Living Wage is calculated to support the needs of two adults and two children on 1.5 incomes. In 2023, the Living Wage rate was set at \$26.00 an hour, an increase of \$2.35, or 9.9%, on the previous year.

The announcement was widely covered by the media and celebrated by Living Wage Networks across Aotearoa.

We contracted the Family Centre Social Policy and Research Unit to conduct the rate review, ensuring an independent process and outcome.

The Measurement Review considered the latest national data on the costs of rent, food, power, GP visits and prescriptions, broadband and mobile charges, early childhood, primary and secondary education and miscellaneous but essential expenses including clothing, shoes, services, and modest recreation.

Accredited Living Wage Employers began paying the new rate on 1 September 2023.

In August 2023, we launched the Living Wage Schools campaign which calls for central government to provide new targeted Living Wage funding for state and integrated schools enabling them to pay school cleaners, caretakers, canteen staff, and groundskeepers (CCCGs) a Living Wage.

It's a change that would increase the wage of an individual worker by an average of \$180 per fortnight and would enable thousands of directly employed and contracted CCCGs to achieve parity with other workers in the core public service and hospitals where the Living Wage has become the baseline.

Living Wage Movement supporters around Aotearoa are asking their local schools to pledge their support for a living wage for CCCG staff, and join the call to central government to provide additional funding for this much needed pay boost.

“A Living Wage for cleaners in schools would mean they can put more food on the table, cover their bills, and pay their rent. It would give us self-worth and the feeling that we are being valued for the contribution we make to the school.”

Andre Uncles, School Cleaner.



Campaigns

“The Government can reduce the impacts of poverty, right in their own backyard, by paying the Living Wage. The speed at which this can be achieved, and the mechanisms to make it happen are in their hands.”



Election Forum

Prior to the General Election, we sought political party commitment to pay a Living Wage to employed and contracted workers in the wider state sector.

Our nationwide forum was co-hosted in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, with political candidates joining from the Wellington venue. Almost 600 people from across the faith, union, and community groups in the Living Wage Movement attended.

In 2018, the Government committed to paying workers in the core public service at least the Living Wage, and in 2021, the Government introduced procurement guidelines with Living Wage requirements for new cleaning, catering and security contracts.

Connected via video-link, speakers and attendees united to push for further progress.

At the forum, the Movement asked political parties to continue this procurement practice in the public sector, and extend it to workers in publicly-funded education and health.

Labour and the Greens committed to all five asks; NZ First committed to three. The National and ACT parties declined to attend, leaving thousands of workers uncertain about their future under a National-ACT Government. Te Pāti Māori did not send a representative to the forum.

Financial Report

Statement of Financial Performance

Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ Incorporated For the year ended 31 March 2024

	NOTES	2024	2023	2022
Revenue				
Donations, fundraising and other similar revenue	1	135,068	175,773	126,151
Fees, subscriptions and other revenue from members	1	325,968	322,717	261,133
Revenue from providing goods or services	1	1,391	5,400	-
Interest, dividends and other investment revenue	1	22,014	3,761	543
Other revenue	1	1,050	2,017	3,544
Total Revenue		485,491	509,669	391,370
Expenses				
Expenses related to public fundraising	2	655	1,773	-
Volunteer and employee related costs	2	412,148	272,050	305,854
Costs related to providing goods or services	2	22,942	12,641	1,927
Other expenses	2	115,851	130,764	72,166
Total Expenses		551,596	417,228	379,947
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year		(66,105)	92,440	11,423

The Living Wage Movement's operating income was \$485,491, down from \$509,669 in the 2024 financial year. A deficit of \$66,105 was budgeted to take advantage of the previous year's surplus, accrued during the COVID period of low activity and therefore lower than expected expenses.

With current assets of \$536,441, down from \$670,925 in 2023, the Movement retains a positive financial position for growth in 2024-25, with signs of the accreditation programme re-building after a challenging period in which businesses were impacted by COVID and inflationary pressures.

The primary source of our revenue is the "hard money" of fees and subscriptions. Employer accreditation license fees are just below the previous financial year's fee income (\$213,331, down from \$215,841). Our civil society membership fees have grown, which is a positive sign of grassroots engagement in the Movement (\$63,144, nearly double the \$35,861 taken in the previous year). Principal Partner fees down considerably, as departing Principal Partners have not yet been replaced with new champions for the Living Wage concept (\$49,493, down from \$71,015).

Finally, it should be noted that we have just completed our second review of the Living Wage rate calculation, which cost \$35,000, some of which is recovered through donations given for that purpose.

Acknowledgements

JR McKenzie Trust for over ten years of funding, concluding in December 2023.

Living Wage Movement local networks, for your advocacy and leadership all over Aotearoa.

The Industrial Areas Foundation Pacific for organiser supervision and training, and **Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga** for partnership and peer support.

Our regular and one-off donors. Your donations give us the resources to spread the Living Wage message, projects and initiatives.

The Accreditation Advisory Committee, who uphold the standards of the Living Wage Accreditation Programme.

Our volunteers who support our operations, research, social media, mentoring, communications, and much more. Thanks to you, the business of the Movement ticks on.

The national Governance Board, for your commitment, guidance, and strategic leadership.

Our staff, for your dedication to growing and supporting the Movement.

Member organisations from our faith, union, and community streams. Your participation and generosity are the foundations of our Movement.

Governance Board

Rev. Stephen King — Faith (Chair)

Chas Muir — Faith

John Kennedy-Good — Faith

Kerry Davies — Union

Xavier Walsh — Union

Annie Newman — Union (Treasurer)

Tess Upperton — Union (Secretary)

Alec Toleafoa — Community

Lillian Pak — Faith

Muriel Tunoho — Community

Hiueni Nuku — Community

Accreditation Advisory Committee

David Hall — Faith

John Kennedy-Good — Faith

Hiueni Nuku — Community

Mat Danaher — Union

Jeff Rowe — Union

Kevin Church — Living Wage Employer

Staff and administrative support

Felicia Scherrer — LW Employer Programme Lead

Finn Cordwell — Community Organiser

Nathaniel Herz-Edinger — Community Organiser

Gina Lockyer — Executive Director

Saane Siua — Community Organiser

Sami Smart — Administrator

Teisa Unga — Lead Organiser

Frank Accounting & Thankyou Payroll



Acknowledgements

Our thanks also to our Principal Partners for their support of our Movement and for championing the Living Wage in their respective industries:

