



## Foodbank Report Anglican Church of Bream Bay AGM 2006

*Prepared by Mark Henrickson*

It has been an extraordinary and exciting for the Foodbank this year. Firstly, the Foodbank has evolved from an Anglican Church-only initiative to a community-wide initiative. The Foodbank is now supported by and integrated with the following churches:

- The Anglican Church of Bream Bay
- Holy Family Roman Catholic Church
- Lifepoint Baptist Church
- Waipū Presbyterian Church

As a consequence, we have changed our name to the Bream Bay Community Foodbank. Foodbanks throughout the motu have encountered high demand due to the current economic situation and government funding cuts to social support services, and Bream Bay is no exception.

### Services

From January through June 2025 the Foodbank distributed 34 parcels which supported 133 people, including 58 children under 18 years old. From mid-September through December 2025, there were 37 parcels delivered which supported 131 people, including 62 children under 18.

**In total, then, 71 parcels were delivered in 2025, which supported 264 people, including 120 children under 18.**

For reasons outlined below, these data may not represent the full demand for assistance.

### Volunteers and the evolution of the Community Foodbank

ACBB's Foodbank began 2025 supported by the sole volunteer staff person Liz (Charmaine) Rawhiti. Liz did a remarkable job of responding to high community demand, and organising the Foodbank and its reports to Vestry. However, she also found the work very demanding of her time and energy, and felt that managing the initiative as the sole staff person was unsustainable. On 17 July representatives of the four churches named above met at ACBB to develop a common policies and practices, and to support one another. One of the key areas of concern was clients who were 'foodbank shopping'—that is, calling around each of the food sources for free food—and the practice of pushing older kuia to call on behalf of household members who had been declined for cause for food assistance. Safeguards were put in place to address these issues, and practices more standardised among the churches. A common database was established, and service points can now see requests by clients across all the churches.

In August Liz had to step back for personal and medical reasons, and the ACBB response to community demand was more limited during the latter half of August and September. We therefore have less complete service data for that period. Lifepoint Church managed the requests on behalf of ACBB while we sought to reorganise and recruit volunteers to support the initiative. A call to the community was put out, and Holy Family Church came forward with five volunteers. These volunteers were supplemented by additional ACBB volunteers and clients of the foodbank. These volunteers were trained, and support systems were put in place. By the end of 2025 there were eight volunteers staffing the foodbank for two days of service per week. A robust assessment system was also

supported by the Bream Bay Community Services Trust for challenges like budgeting support and domestic violence prevention. The Community Foodbank was back in full operation by mid-October.

In early 2026 a community volunteer recruitment evening was held in Waipū resulting in two additional volunteers for the Community Foodbank, for a total now of 10 active volunteers. The plan is now to operate the foodbank on a trial basis for another day in the week, for a total of three days.

Especial thanks go to the following 2025 volunteers:

Christine Anderson

Sue Hancock

Susan Crowther

Susan McConnell

Juanita Cranston

Sue Radford

Anne Foley

And of course, Liz Rawhiti

Richard Hancock

## Community support

The Community Foodbank is very well supported by the community. In addition to regular donations by parishioners of ACBB, Holy Family Roman Catholic Church makes monthly food drops of donations from that church. Community members not directly affiliated with member church makes donations of food and cash to the initiative. Fresh Choice donated four trolley-loads of food at Christmas, following its previous donations in the year. These donations are from community shoppers putting food in the trolleys as they leave the store.

The Christmas Tree Festival at St Peter's Church, largely organised by Sally Haigh, is a major end-of-year initiative that supports the Foodbank with cash and food donations from patrons. In December a large pallet of food was donated to the Foodbank, in addition to \$460 in cash.

The Foodbank was supported by a monthly cash donation of \$500 from the Anglican Op Shop; this will be reduced to \$300 per month in 2026. Cash is used to supplement the non-perishable food items on hand with more perishable items like dairy, meats and frozen vegetables.

## Annex

Liz Rawhiti began managing the Foodbank on a temporary basis during the medical leave of the previous coordinator, who ultimately chose not to return to the role. At the time, in 2024, the Foodbank was represented as a small operation with few demands. The reality turned out to be quite different. The demand was much higher than expected, and many requests came from working families experiencing short-term hardship.

Although the agreed arrangement was that food parcels would be collected on Mondays and Fridays, requests for help did not follow that timetable. Phone calls often came at all hours of the week — early mornings, late evenings, and across the full week. Those calls were often from parents trying to feed their children or from workers who had been rained off work and suddenly had no income for the week. The calls themselves were a reflection of the level of need in the community at that time.

That was the part of the work during discussions in July, August and September. Mark was concerned about the way those calls were being managed because of the high demand on Liz and her health, and suggested that responding to calls outside the collection days could wait until the advertised hours. From her perspective that was not an easy position to take. Liz carried the work as best she

could under those conditions while we were trying to work out a more sustainable structure and bring more volunteers into the service.

Later in the year Liz had surgery after waiting nearly three years for a medical procedure due to the lack of an available surgeon. She was by then also working full time, which naturally meant she could no longer continue giving the same level of time to the Foodbank.