

**75th Annual General Meeting of the Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand Inc.
18 October 2026**

Executive Committee Chair's Report 2025–2026

Kia ora koutou katoa, and welcome to the Cerebral Palsy Society's 75th Annual General Meeting.

It is my pleasure to present my first annual report as Chair of the Executive Committee, following the constitutional changes we made to comply with the new Incorporated Societies Act.

This year's AGM is a significant milestone and an opportunity to reflect on the Society's history.

Over the past 75 years, the Society has grown and evolved considerably, but our underlying mission has remained the same – to improve the lives of people living with cerebral palsy and support their families and whānau.

We owe a great deal to those who established the Society, and to the many members, volunteers, staff and supporters who have contributed to its development over the decades. Their commitment and hard work have built the organisation we have today. As the current kaitiaki of the Society, our responsibility is to leave it stronger than we found it, with a sustainable foundation to support our members now and into the future.

As we mark this milestone, we also have an opportunity to look ahead and consider how we can build on that legacy to meet our members' changing needs.

Supporting our members

The Society's core purpose remains supporting people living with cerebral palsy and their whānau to live fulfilling lives, with greater freedom, choice and opportunity.

Over the past year, we have continued to deliver a wide range of services and support to our members.

As outlined in our Annual Impact Report, during the 2025–2026 year:

- We provided financial support on over 1,000 occasions through our grants and funding programmes.
- We provided disability information and advisory support more than 43,000 times.
- We held 90 events, attended by more than 1,400 members and carers.
- We delivered 20 educational workshops and presentations and published 12 research-related articles.

These figures demonstrate the breadth of our work and the important role the Society plays in our members' lives.

The real measure of our success is the difference we make to people's lives. Member feedback reinforces the value of our services, whether through financial assistance, access to information, opportunities to connect with others, or simply knowing an organisation is advocating for their interests.

Advocacy and disability support funding

One of the most important areas of our work over the past year has been advocacy, particularly in response to changes to government-funded disability support services.

These changes have created considerable uncertainty and concern for many disabled people and their families. For people living with cerebral palsy, access to appropriate disability support is essential to independence, participation and quality of life.

A major focus has been the Government's Disability Support Services Bill.

We surveyed our members to understand their experiences and concerns and received one of the strongest responses we have received to a member survey. This feedback formed the foundation of our submission to Parliament. I was honoured to represent the Society and our members' views at the Social Services and Community Select Committee, where I presented our concerns directly to MPs.

Our principal messages were that the Government should retain primary responsibility for meeting disability-related support needs, rather than shifting that responsibility onto families; that support should be based on individual needs rather than family income or assets; and that changes to disability support should involve meaningful consultation and co-design with disabled people and their whānau.

It was encouraging to see that the Select Committee's subsequent report recommended some important changes to the Bill, particularly removing the proposed "family substitution" approach. The Committee also recommended consultation with disability organisations on new funding programmes.

These are positive developments and reflect concerns raised by CPS and others in the disability community. However, the work is far from finished. We will continue to monitor changes to disability support funding and advocate for fair and equitable support for our members, regardless of the political environment.

Our advocacy has also extended to the review of the Government's Disability Strategy, the Carers' Strategy, accessibility issues, and collaboration with other disability organisations.

I believe the Society plays an important role in providing a strong, credible voice for people with cerebral palsy. Our membership has considerable knowledge, expertise and experience, and we need to ensure this informs government policy and decision-making.

Listening to our members

Effective advocacy and delivering valued services depend on understanding what our members need and what matters most to them. Over the past year, we have continued to seek feedback through surveys, events, coffee groups and our many conversations with members.

I want to particularly thank everyone who has taken the time to respond to our surveys or otherwise share their experiences and views.

I know that many of our members and their families lead extremely busy lives, often managing significant additional responsibilities and challenges associated with living with cerebral palsy. We greatly appreciate the time and effort you put into providing feedback.

It makes a genuine difference. It helps us improve our services, identify gaps in support, and ensure that our advocacy is informed by the real-life experiences of the people we represent.

Refreshed strategy and future priorities

During the year, the Executive Committee reviewed and refreshed the Society's strategy.

This was an important opportunity to consider our direction and priorities in an environment where our members' needs, government policy, and the funding landscape are all changing.

Our refreshed strategy reinforces our commitment to five key areas:

- Delivering valued and equitable services to our members.
- Being a strong and influential voice for people with cerebral palsy.
- Building connection and a sense of belonging within our community.
- Supporting research, education and awareness.
- Ensuring the Society's long-term organisational and financial sustainability.

The strategy builds on the Society's existing strengths while recognising that we need to continue adapting and improving.

One key focus area is strengthening our fundraising and advocacy, and raising the Society's profile. We want to advocate more effectively for our members, attract more funding and support, and communicate the important work we do more clearly.

These priorities are closely connected. Strong advocacy and a visible public profile help raise awareness of cerebral palsy and our members' needs. Effective branding and communications also support our fundraising efforts, which in turn provide the resources needed to deliver services and advocacy.

The Executive Committee will be working with management to progress these priorities over the coming year.

Governance and financial sustainability

Another key focus has been continuing to improve our governance processes.

The constitutional changes made in response to the Incorporated Societies Act have provided an opportunity to review and strengthen our governance arrangements.

The Executive Committee has continued to improve its policies, processes, and oversight, focusing on ensuring the Society is well governed, accountable, and positioned for the future.

We have also continued to simplify the Society's organisational and investment structures. We have resolved the outstanding issues relating to Cerebral Investments Limited, enabling that entity to be wound up. This allows us to focus our investment oversight on our managed funds portfolio.

We have also reviewed and updated the Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives for CPS's commercial subsidiary Essential Assets Limited, strengthening

the framework for prudent investment management, risk oversight and responsible investment.

A key responsibility of the Executive Committee is maintaining the Society's financial sustainability. The Society remains in a strong financial position, and I am pleased to report that our financial position has strengthened further over the past year.

As Mike Bishop will explain in his Treasurer's Report, the Society achieved a strong net surplus, almost double the previous year. We also significantly increased our investment value.

These results are very pleasing and reflect strong investment performance and careful cost management. It is important to recognise that much of this year's surplus reflects investment gains, rather than income from our day-to-day operations. Investment returns will fluctuate, which reinforces the need to maintain a sustainable funding base for our services and activities.

Our invested funds are a particularly important asset for the Society. They provide a strong financial foundation and an ongoing income source to support our services and activities. We have continued to strengthen the governance and oversight of these investments to ensure they are managed prudently for the long-term benefit of our members.

We also operate in an increasingly challenging fundraising environment, with greater competition for grants and donations and rising service delivery costs. We cannot assume that the funding sources we have relied on in the past will always be available at the same levels.

This reinforces the importance of our renewed focus on fundraising, developing new relationships, broadening our income sources, and maintaining careful financial management.

Our objective is to maintain a strong financial foundation while making the best possible use of our resources to deliver services, advocacy and other benefits for our members. Financial sustainability is not an end in itself; it enables the Society to fulfil its purpose and serve its members' interests, both now and for future generations.

Looking ahead

As we look ahead, I believe the Society is in a strong position, but we also face important challenges.

The disability support system continues to change, and we must remain vigilant in advocating for our members' interests.

We must keep listening to our members and adapting our services to meet their needs.

We also need to strengthen our fundraising and advocacy capability, raise our profile, and ensure that the Society remains financially sustainable.

Our refreshed strategy provides a clear direction for this work.

As we mark our 75th AGM, we have an opportunity to build on the Society's proud history while ensuring that we remain relevant, effective and sustainable for future generations.

I am confident that, with the commitment of our Executive Committee, management, staff and members, we can continue building on the Society's achievements and making a meaningful difference for people living with cerebral palsy.

Acknowledgements

Finally, I want to acknowledge everyone who contributes to the Society's success.

To Clare and the staff, thank you for your dedication and the care you show our members.

To my fellow Executive Committee members, thank you for your time, expertise and commitment to the Society's future.

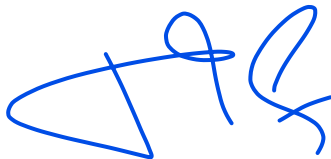
To our donors, funding partners, trusts and foundations, thank you for your generosity and continued support. Without your contributions, much of our work would not be possible.

And most importantly, to our members and whānau, thank you for your support, engagement and trust in the Society. We exist to serve you, and your voices and experiences will continue to guide our work.

Nō reira, e te whānau o Hōkai Nukurangi,

Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui — be strong, be courageous, be resilient.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa



Dan Clay

Chair, Executive Committee
Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand