

## 1.1 Information for the new treasurer

### Introduction

Thank you for taking on the role of treasurer for your local Society, one of the key roles in enabling older people to enjoy the Abbeyfield way of life. This document will give you an introduction to some key aspects of the role.

Please also ensure you have a login to Abbeyfield New Zealand's online resources on [www.abbeyfield.org.nz](http://www.abbeyfield.org.nz) – contact [comms@abbeyfield.org.nz](mailto:comms@abbeyfield.org.nz) or [office@abbeyfield.org.nz](mailto:office@abbeyfield.org.nz) if you don't have one. This will give you access to the Financial Management (and other) manual with more guidance, and if possible, we would love to talk to you by phone or video conference as well.

The treasurer role is best suited to those with some experience in accounting or book-keeping. For those with less experience, we strongly recommend following the manual, using Abbeyfield templates and contacting the national office for help when needed.

### The big picture – national entities

Your local Abbeyfield Society is affiliated with **Abbeyfield New Zealand Inc** – the parent body for Abbeyfield in New Zealand. Each local Society can put forward nominations for the board, and vote in the AGM.

Abbeyfield New Zealand employs the Executive Officer who runs the **national office** with a small team, providing support and guidance for local Societies.

**Abbeyfield Properties Ltd** (APL) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Abbeyfield New Zealand, and now owns 10 of the 14 Abbeyfield Houses, and leases one. For the APL houses, the local Society has entered into a Deed of Management with APL through which they operate the house as Agent. More information is available about the national structure on request.

All Abbeyfield entities are registered New Zealand charities.

### Getting started as treasurer

Your election as treasurer normally occurs at the AGM – however in reality many will be co-opted to the role during the year and confirmed at the AGM. There are a several actions to complete before you can start the role:

1. **Access to the accounting system** used: ideally you will have a handover from the outgoing or former treasurer. If your Society uses Xero and is hosted by Abbeyfield NZ, please contact our finance officer for a log-in: [finance@abbeyfield.org.nz](mailto:finance@abbeyfield.org.nz). See below for more detail.
2. **IRD registration** – MyIR log-in: order to lodge the Society's PAYE and GST returns, you will need to have access to MyIR for the Society. The outgoing treasurer should facilitate this via the MyIR logon settings page. You will need to set up your own username and password.

3. **Bank signatories:** the chair and other signatories will need to arrange with the bank to set you up as a co-signatory. The bank will provide forms for this and if not already a customer with that bank you will need to supply personal ID as they prescribe.

### Accounting system

Most Abbeyfield treasurers now use Xero, the cloud-based system, usually subscribing via Abbeyfield New Zealand. Abbeyfield NZ's finance officer is a certified Xero advisor and can provide training or help if you have questions about using this software. Xero itself has helpful tips and videos (see the help menu top right – a ? in a circle). *See also Man8 /Doc 10 Choosing an Accounting system.*

Access to this is on an individual basis – Abbeyfield NZ will set up your permissions and login.

Some Xero tips as a starting point:

1. **Repeating invoices for resident payments:** Nearly all the income of an Abbeyfield House comes from resident rent. Normally residents set up an automatic payment (a fortnight in advance). Setting up recurring invoices in Xero will enable you to see at a glance if anyone is in arrears. Note: invoices are not given to residents – this is just a system to help you keep track.
2. **Attaching invoices and other documents to transactions:** where possible, ask suppliers to email invoices to you. Attaching the invoice to the transaction is easy and saves a great deal of time in the year end audit process. If the invoice is from an entity also using Xero, use the Xero function to import the invoice directly into Xero as a draft invoice. Let us know if you need help with this.
3. More information is available in the Financial Management manual and will be provided from time to time.

### Payments to Abbeyfield Entities

Regular payments are made by local Societies with houses to the national Abbeyfield entities. Invoices are sent for each of these; please take care to pay to the correct entity as they have separate bank accounts:

1. **Abbeyfield New Zealand** resident levies and membership fees: a charge is made every quarter in arrears for each resident by Abbeyfield NZ. The levy rate is reviewed each year but is around \$20 / resident per week. Abbeyfield New Zealand will send you their estimate based on our awareness of resident numbers – please check this against actual occupancy. This helps fund the operations of the national office. A membership charge for each resident is also included, which helps ensure your local Society always has enough members (usually a minimum of 15 members is required). Once a year an affiliate membership fee is also invoiced by Abbeyfield New Zealand (about \$350)
2. **Abbeyfield Properties:** if your Abbeyfield house is part of the APL group you will receive

- a. a monthly invoice for the **Facility Charge**. This covers any outstanding mortgage, lease payment, or is part of the general funding agreement
- b. A monthly invoice for the **refurbishment fund** charge, to cover long term maintenance and refurbishment of the house. Technically this remains on your local Society balance sheet, but is held by APL on your behalf to ensure there are enough funds to cover larger maintenance items. There is a process for apply for these funds when needed, via the national office.

#### Societies monthly return:

Every month the treasurer sends Abbeyfield NZ a report covering some key facts for the previous month including occupancy, waiting list, bank account totals, number of committee members, health and safety incidents and general comments on how things are going in the house or other news.

This covers key risk factors for the health and continuity of the local society, and the report is reviewed by the Abbeyfield NZ board at their monthly meeting. It can give advance warning of issues that may signal a local Society is in difficulties and is part of our safety net and risk management approach.

In completing this report, the treasurer may need to liaise with other committee members for information. It is good practice to have this information supplied at your regular meeting. This report can also be a useful report for the committee throughout the year, and it can be used to calculate your annual average occupancy for the year-end performance report.

Please see other sections of the Financial Management Manual for helpful guidance.