



TE AWA
Lifecare Village

TE AWA PARTYLINE

December 2025



A word from Nikki

As December draws to a close, it's hard to believe just how quickly the past month has flown by. It's been one of those busy periods where, if you're asked what's actually happened, the mind goes a little blank — yet somehow so much has been achieved in preparation for Christmas.

Our new mail delivery system is settling in nicely and appears to be working well. There are still a few small glitches to iron out, but it's already a great improvement.

This month has also included some significant activity around the village. Archaeological testing was completed as part of the Stage 4 consent process, ensuring this important work was carried out in a timely way. The unveiling of the tūi sculpture on the Te Awa River Ride Trail was a special moment, and necessary tree removals were completed before they became unsafe. At the entranceway, the newly planted grass is coming along well — much to the delight of the pheasants, plovers and pūkeko who seem to be enjoying it just as much as we are... drats.

A reminder that the café will be closed on statutory holidays — Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and the day after. Over summer, the café will operate from 8am to 3pm, with reception running shorter hours of 10am to 2pm.

Finally, I'd like to thank our residents, staff and contractors for the incredible work and support throughout the year. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and look forward to working together again in 2026.

— Nikki



A tūi takes flight at Te Awa Lifecare

A powerful new artwork now takes pride of place along the Te Awa River Ride, with the unveiling of *The Rise* — a striking tūi sculpture set within newly restored wetlands on Te Awa Lifecare land.

The five-metre-wingspan sculpture is the result of a meaningful collaboration between Te Awa Lifecare, local iwi Ngāti Hauā and Ngāti Korokī Kahukura, and the Te Awa River Ride Art Trail. Created by Wānaka artist Nicolas Lupacchino, *The Rise* celebrates both cultural heritage and ecological restoration.

Speaking at the unveiling, Mandy acknowledged the history of the land and the importance of working together in partnership. The ceremony was opened with a blessing from iwi representative Harry Wilson, accompanied by the pūtātara, symbolising a connection between the living, the land and those who have gone before.

The installation is the sixth artwork in the Cambridge precinct of the Art Trail and reflects Te Awa Lifecare's ongoing commitment to community, environment and place.

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Unearthing history

As part of the planning for Stage 4 at Te Awa Lifecare, archaeological testing has recently been completed across the site. This work forms an important part of our consent process with Waipā District Council, and it was essential that it was carried out before the existing consent timeframe lapsed.

While the testing is a technical requirement, it also provided a meaningful opportunity to learn more about the land on which Te Awa sits and the people who lived and worked here long before us. The investigations revealed a rich history of activity, offering insight into daily life, food preparation and land use.

Across the investigation area, a number of fire features were identified. These were predominantly circular, dish-shaped hāngi, complete with oven stones. Several of these features were carefully sampled so they can be dated, helping to build a clearer picture of when this activity took place.

Evidence of gardening was also found within the trench profiles. Beneath the topsoil, a layer of sandy gravel suggested cultivated ground, and two puke features were identified. While historic ploughing has affected some of the more delicate gardening evidence, samples have been retained for future analysis.

A significant number of pits were uncovered during the work, with 32 identified in total. These included two rua, 12 large rectangular pits, and a series of smaller bin-style pits. Four of the larger pits showed clear board slots marking entrances, and importantly, the pits were not intercutting – indicating they were likely in use at the same time.

The testing also investigated a linear ditch visible in historic aerial imagery and LiDAR data. Although no longer visible on the surface, trenching confirmed it had been rapidly infilled. While no artefacts were recovered to date it precisely, its alignment suggests it was likely used for stock control, possibly dating back to the late 1800s or early 1900s.

At every stage of development at Te Awa Lifecare, local iwi Ngāti Hauā and Ngāti Korokī Kahukura have been involved. We are proud to honour the past, to respect the history beneath our feet, and to ensure it is acknowledged as we thoughtfully plan for the future of our community.



Puke: A puke is a small mound or raised area of soil created through gardening activity. These features often result from repeated cultivation and indicate areas where crops were grown and tended over time. **Rua:** A rua is an underground storage pit, traditionally used for storing food such as kūmara. These pits helped keep produce cool and protected, and their presence provides valuable insight into how people lived, prepared for seasons and managed resources.



Two Aspens fewer on Aspen Lane

After a couple of delays due to the weather – mainly high winds – the team finally arrived to remove two Aspen trees, deemed healthy, however potentially to become unsafe by arborists: one beside Di and Brian at V3, and another next to Michael and Lyn at V7. For safety reasons, both couples were asked to vacate their villas for the day.

Right in the middle of the action, Barbara Edgecombe very generously hosted Di and Brian, along with Harley, Mary and myself, at her villa (V8). We enjoyed a ringside seat to the proceedings, as well as lunch and afternoon tea. Many thanks to Barbara for her hospitality!

The process was assisted by a very large crane, which carefully lifted the

heavy branches as they were sawn off. Even so, the skill and agility of the tree fellers was impressive, as they swung from ropes and operated large chainsaws in seemingly impossible positions.

By the end of the day, there was a little more sunshine for Brian and Di – and, at last, Michael's bête noire had been removed.

Malcolm

New year, new you?



Every January, millions of people make New Year's resolutions... and millions joke about breaking them by the second week. It's become such a cliché that many of us think, "Why bother?" But the research paints a very different -and much more encouraging - picture.

Myth #1: 'No one sticks to resolutions anyway.' Not true. People who make resolutions are ten times more likely to make real changes than those who don't make any at all.

Myth #2: 'It's too late to change at my age.' Absolutely not. Research with older adults shows that small changes can make a surprisingly big difference. Adding just 500 steps a day (about a 5-7 minute stroll) is linked with a noticeably lower risk of heart disease.

Myth #3: 'You have to give something up.' Science shows that 'approach goals' work far better than 'avoidance goals'. For example, instead of "I need to stop spending so much time alone," you could try "I'll add one social thing each week like a chat with a neighbour, calling family or friends, or popping into one of the Te Awa activities (even if you don't stay the whole time).

So what does work?

- Start small
- Choose something enjoyable (preferably involving others)
- Build momentum by noticing small improvements
- Ask yourself "what makes this change worthwhile? And who in my life benefits from it?"

And perhaps most importantly, get practical support to make these lifestyle changes. **Te Awa funds a free health coaching session for all its residents as well as a small-group health and wellbeing series.** These workshops were held for the first time last year/earlier this year with anonymous feedback from participants showing that all felt more confident in their ability to support their own wellbeing and would recommend this 4-week course to others.

Annabel Barbosa - Certified Health & Mental Wellbeing Coach Onsite Te Awa Wellness Room Wednesdays 10-2pm or email annabelbarbosa@gmail.com to book a suitable time.



A new year at Te Awa is an invitation – to try something new, discover a fresh interest, or simply say yes to a different day.

Festivities at the Woolshed



Residents' Christmas Party



Family Christmas Lunches



December festivities have been in full swing in The Woolshed, with two wonderful events bringing residents, families and staff together to celebrate the season.

On Friday night, the Residents' Christmas Party set the scene for a night of fun and laughter. With a DJ keeping the music flowing and a photo booth capturing plenty of smiles, the atmosphere was festive and relaxed. The evening was topped off with a delicious Christmas meal prepared by Lorenzo and his team, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The celebrations continued on Sunday, when families joined residents for Christmas lunches. The café and meeting rooms were transformed with festive décor, creating a warm and welcoming space to share food, conversation and special moments together.

These occasions don't happen without a lot of behind-the-scenes effort, and we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our team. Your care, organisation and attention to detail helped make these days truly special for our residents and their families.

From our Care Centre



December has arrived in style at Te Awa Care Centre, bringing with it a month full of colour, creativity and Christmas cheer.

Our residents have been making the most of the warmer days by spending time in the garden, setting up trellis and carefully watering their tomato plants as part of the much-loved Tomato Growing Competition. Sunflower seeds have also been planted, with plenty of anticipation around just how tall they might grow in the weeks ahead.

Indoors, the festive spirit has been just as strong. There has been crafts galore, with residents hand-making Christmas cards for loved ones – each one created with care and thought. The lounge has also been buzzing with hands-on activity, as residents rolled up their sleeves to make mince pies, truffles, chocolate bark and some very cute chocolate pretzel reindeer. Whether these sweet treats were wrapped up as gifts or quietly enjoyed on the spot may never be fully known.

The lead-up to Christmas is shaping up to be just as busy. Next week

will include gingerbread making, a lively game of Christmas pass-the-parcel, and time to relax with some Christmas-inspired movies, including the ever-popular *The Polar Express*.

A special highlight this month was an evening in the courtyard with the Cambridge Brass Band, who treated residents to a selection of festive favourites. Toes were tapping, voices joined in, and it was a truly lovely way to spend a summer evening.

Christmas Day itself will begin with a delicious breakfast, followed by morning tea and lunch in the care dining room, before many tune in later for the King's Christmas message.

We wish all our care residents, their families and our wonderful staff a very merry festive season, filled with love, laughter and good food.

Scan the QR code for Care Centre calendar



A little library magic at Te Awa

We are always delighted when Christine from Waipā Library visits the Te Awa Lifecare Care Centre – and not just because she arrives with an armful of great books.

Through her regular visits, Christine has taken the time to really get to know our residents, learning their reading preferences and tailoring her selections so there's always something for everyone. From much-loved authors to easy reads and conversation starters, her thoughtful choices never disappoint.

Christine's visits are as much about connection as they are about books. There's always time for a chat, a recommendation, or a shared laugh, and our residents truly value the care she brings with her.

And then there's Christmas. Each year, Christine goes the extra mile – this year arriving dressed as an elf, complete with bells on her elf shoes and even her book trolley. The festive cheer (and jingling!) brought smiles all round.

Thank you, Christine, for your warmth, dedication and genuine engagement with the Te Awa community – we love having you as part of our story.