



Supporter Proposal



Working together to help New Zealanders achieve financial resilience has never been more important than now!



debtfix.co.nz
debtrelief.org.nz

Our vision:

New Zealanders are financially resilient and free from problem debt.



About us

The Debt Relief Foundation (DRF) charitable trust (CTN: CC59109) was established in June 2021, and acquired the business and assets of Debtfix Ltd on 1 August 2022. With an independent board of trustees, DRF provides governance and guardianship of Debtfix.

Debtfix provides FREE debt solutions, support and advice to New Zealanders with problem debt. Our points of difference are:

- we provide bespoke debt solutions specifically for people with complex debt issues as alternatives to bankruptcy
- we offer services to anyone struggling with debt including the self-employed and business owners
- we support clients through to the completion of their debt journey, regardless of how long it takes
- all our services are remote providing greater privacy for our clients
- all our staff are qualified financial mentors trained through the FinCap Financial Mentor Introductory Course
- we work closely with FinCap and budget services, and collaborate with other services to provide holistic client support
- we belong to Financial Services Complaints Ltd (FSCL) dispute resolution scheme and advocate for clients' rights under the CCCFA

Our ask

Our aim is to raise \$2m a year. With your contribution we will be able to support more New Zealanders in debt get their finances and lives back on track. We will be able to help them repay their debts safely, easily and without stigma.

Your funding will go towards:

- developing debt solutions so more people (particularly women, Māori and Pacific Peoples) achieve financial independence sooner
- advocating for changes to laws and procedures that stigmatise and penalise people in debt
- working with government, industry, iwi, and community organisations to develop and deliver educational tools that improve New Zealand's financial capability
- working with others to strengthen the performance and perception of the finance sector
- preventing predatory, for-profit debt remediation businesses getting a foothold in NZ

Why this is so important

Debt is an economic and social problem. With New Zealand's spiralling cost of living and the effects of the pandemic, problem debt is growing. Families are struggling to keep their heads above water. People don't have enough money to pay their bills. They can't afford the basics and they can't repay their debts – they're trapped. Debt is causing more debt. Debt is causing poverty. Debt is causing anxiety, depression, stress on relationships, poor job performance, and sadly even thoughts of suicide. Debt is impacting individuals, families, communities, and the nation.

Debt is messy. There are many reasons people get into trouble with their debts:

- Circumstances change. A debt that was perfectly manageable becomes unmanageable due to things like unexpected expenses (car repairs, childcare); ill health or an accident; business failure or a long-term relationship break down.
- Debts are taken on unwisely.
- Loans are offered irresponsibly.

New Zealanders in debt need the opportunity to get their finances and lives back on track safely, easily and without stigma so they can contribute constructively to society.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

"Thank you as always for the ongoing advice, support, guidance, and real information.

You and your team are true superstars for people who, consciously or not, end up struggling in debt with no real knowledge of the process."

LC, Auckland

"I don't really say much in my emails due to being at work so I wanted to reach out to you.

You've really helped me with all this and just kept my head up knowing there is a way out. My dream is to eventually own a house for my family."

Anonymous, Nelson

Our achievements

We are New Zealand's only charity that has developed bespoke debt solutions specifically for people with complex debt issues as an alternative to bankruptcy. As part of a wider eco-system, we collaborate with other services to provide advice and support for people struggling with debt. Collectively we are working to improve financial capability in our communities and help people take back control of their finances.

In 12 months we responded to over 2500 debt-related enquiries, and worked directly with 1550 clients. Of these, 750 people owing about \$30m were offered Debtfix solutions. Our solutions will see about 70 percent of this debt repaid - without us, that debt would have accrued and / or been written off at huge expense to creditors.

We referred another 800 people to alternative service providers or helped them into different debt solutions.



Every New Zealander deserves the freedom to manage and control their personal finances.

The benefits

By partnering with us, you will be recognised within the industry and beyond as a valued contributor to the financial resilience and wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

With your contribution we will:

- ensure a higher percentage of debts are repaid sooner than traditional debt collection
- provide clients with guidance and support so they become better customers in the future (less likely to default on repayments)
- prevent clients taking on new 'expensive' debt to repay old debt
- help clients regain financial control and improve their financial sustainability
- provide safer alternatives for paying back debt with dignity
- improve overall wellbeing
- reduce reliance on unethical lenders

A bit more about us

Christine Liggins and business partner Shaun Adams, established Debtfix in 2018. During COVID, Debtfix was recognised as an official debt solution service provider and granted a contract with the Ministry of Social Development.

We currently have 15 staff members with room for nine additional staff in the Warkworth office and the ability to bring on more remote team members in other parts of the country.

We believe collaboration will provide the greatest impact. We are partnered with FinCap and work closely with all service providers in the Building Financial Capability sector. We also work closely with Christians Against Poverty, Good Shepherd, and Ngā Tāngata Microfinance.

Christine Liggins - CEO & Founder



Christine moved to New Zealand from the UK in 2004, and trained as a budget adviser before moving on to deal with more complex cases and insolvency procedures.

Christine is a debt repayment order supervisor, appointed by the Official Assignee, and a trustee of creditors proposals, working with the courts. She is also a tutor, holds educational seminars and has written various financial literacy programs.

Well known within the sector, Christine has close working relationships with FinCap, Te Ara Ahunga Ora Retirement Commission and Te Wananga o Aotearoa.

Christine is a RITANZ Insolvency Practitioner licensed by New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants.



"There is a lack of awareness about the options available to deal with debt and avoid bankruptcy. Our commitment is to help people exit debt safely and easily."

Christine Liggins - CEO

If you're a lender wanting to contribute to New Zealand's financial capability and resilience, call Christine today!

Christine Liggins - CEO

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christine@debtfix.co.nz

0800
DEBT
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Appendix A

Our Board of Trustees



**Viv Scott
(Chair)**

Vivienne is an experienced non-executive company director. She has over 20 years' senior executive experience having held executive and senior management roles in Construction and Engineering industries in New Zealand and internationally. She brings to the Board experience as a governance kaiwhakahono enabling alignment to deliver outcomes and translating complexity into pragmatism. Her expertise is in understanding corporate governance and managing business development in local markets, assisting organisations in their strategic development and driving performance in bottom-line results. She brings over a decade of governance experience across a range of sectors including government, sporting, iwi and not for profit. She is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors in New Zealand, a member of the Governance Institute of Australia and Infrastructure NZ.



Tim Barnett

A former member of parliament, Tim is also the former CEO of FinCap, responsible for setting up, managing, promoting and developing the Crown entity from first inception. He is currently Chief of Staff for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Attorney General, Northern Territory, Australia.



Alex Howieson

Alex's corporate career spans a variety of industries including aviation, transport, banking and media in an executive capacity that has included reporting to various boards. Relocating from Australia to New Zealand in 2014, Alex has performed senior and leadership roles at Air New Zealand, Fletcher Building, Fonterra, Kiwibank and most recently Sky NZ. Alex currently serves on the NZ Water Polo Board.



Sasha Lockley

A qualified accountant, Sasha has held technical, leadership and executive roles in the accounting sector, financial services and local government. With a passion for making a difference, Sasha made a life-changing decision to leave the corporate world and pursue an entrepreneurial endeavour aimed at providing people with access to financial solutions that are helpful, rather than harmful. She holds several governance positions including being a board member of Friendship House. She is also an Edmund Hillary Fellow and a member of the Institute of Directors.



Monique Pearson

With a career spanning over 20 years, Monique has led organisational strategy, growth, partnerships, projects, operations and business development in the private, public and non-profit sectors. Her work experience includes senior leadership roles in two of the 'Big Four' accounting firms, and GM of a national financial advisory firm based in Tāmaki Makaurau. She has chaired The Mind Lab and Fantail Network Advisory Boards and is an Honorary Member of the New Zealand Bar Association.



Judy Whiteman

A director, facilitator, mentor/coach and consultant in both the commercial and not-for-profit sectors, Judy has many years' experience in senior management and executive positions in the global financial services industry, in New Zealand and abroad. She has been a director (executive and non-executive) on various boards, and is currently an Independent Director, Bank of India (New Zealand) Ltd and a Trustee, NZ Housing Foundation. Judy is a Chartered Member Institute of Directors New Zealand, a Fellow Australian Institute of Company Directors and a member of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand.

