



THE
WELLINGTON WOMEN'S
BOARDING HOUSE
TE WHARE AWHI WĀHINE O WHANGANUI-Ā-TARA

IN OUR WOMEN'S WORDS

LILY'S STORY

Lily* reflects about her time at the Wellington Women's Boarding House, a charity organisation that offers women who are homeless or in transition six to nine months of low cost accommodation and support.



I don't find it easy living in the house.

I arrived here in the midst of painful circumstances. And I'm still coming to terms with those. As I do that I'm also having to adjust to living in a 'boarding house way' alongside people I may not have chosen to live with.

I think this describes a common experience for the woman here. Something has happened to each of us to bring us here. But having that in common is of course our saving grace.

The beauty of the house and garden and Margaret's light touch help.

Thinking where else I may have ended up helps too. Here I can afford the rent, I have as much right to be here as everyone else, and I have time to reinvent myself before I need to move on.

In the meantime I can rest and think, and I can pick the roses in the garden and put them in a vase by my bed. The same way Margaret made me feel welcome when I first arrived.

As I go to sleep I can smell them, sweet, as the wind blows in my top window. And in the morning I see them there pink and white against my dark red curtain.

To find out more about the house go to wwbh.org.nz.

**Please note, Lily is not her real name. It was changed to protect her identity.*