



# Close to Home



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## It takes a village – locals get behind community space



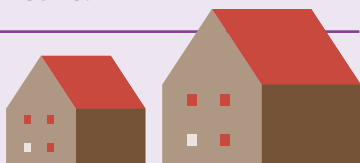
With a nature trail, bike and scooter track, balance beams and four-square grid, there’s always something to appeal to the busy six-year-old.

What started as an empty grassy area with a small, shared pātaka kai and a community bookshelf now also boasts its own stage and a custom-designed mural, thanks to Wahine and other enthusiastic Glenavon locals.

Long-time resident Wahine, who lives six houses down from the bustling community hub, has been asking for an upgrade to the area between Miranda Street, Umbriel Lane and Ruahine Street in Auckland’s Blockhouse Bay for years.

She’s delighted it has finally happened, and that her tight-knit community is making good use of the space.

**When Wahine Tupou takes her grandson to the local space she and her fellow Kāinga Ora neighbours helped create, she has a hard time getting him to leave.**



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## Our thoughts with Tonga

**‘Ikai ha to’a ‘e tu’u tokotaha – no warrior stands alone.**

We know that some of you may have been personally impacted by the volcanic eruption and tsunami that struck Tonga in January. We hope that your friends and family have been found safe and well and are now starting to rebuild their lives. For those of you who may have lost loved ones, we offer our sincerest condolences. If you need additional support, please reach out to our people and we’ll try to connect you to the support you need.

Ngā mihi  
**Kāinga Ora**



# Looking after your wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Keeping you safe

- You can be sure that any Kāinga Ora staff member or contractor who comes into your home has been vaccinated.
- They will ask you screening questions before they make a time to visit and before they enter your home.
- If you are isolating at home, we will still carry out any maintenance or repairs to your home that are essential. If these are needed, the contractor will be wearing personal protective equipment and they may ask you to wait in another room or outside while the repairs are done.
- You are entitled to support whether you are vaccinated against COVID-19 or not. You do not need to show your vaccination status to us or any other agency that is providing you with support services.

## Get vaccinated

One of the most important ways to keep you and your whānau safe is to get vaccinated.

- Aged 18+ and had your 2nd vaccination at least 3 months ago? Get your booster now.
- Your children 5-11 years old can get vaccinated now.

Find out where. Go to [bookmyvaccine.nz](https://www.bookmyvaccine.nz) or talk to the COVID Vaccination Healthline team 8am-8pm, 7 days a week. Call 0800 28 29 26.

Translation services are available in more than 40 languages.



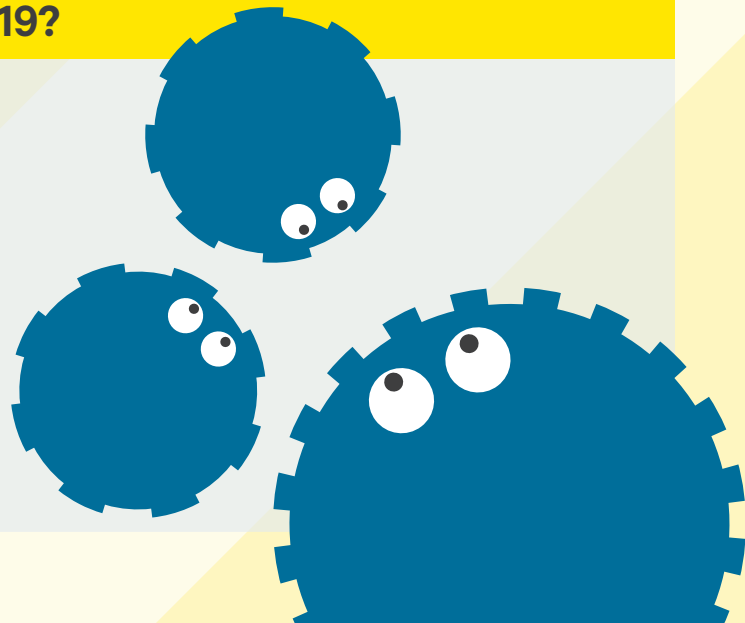
## Are you prepared if you get COVID-19?

We want to make sure you are prepared in case you, or your whānau, test positive for COVID-19 and need to isolate at home.

If you get COVID-19 it is likely you will have a mild to moderate illness, especially if you are fully vaccinated. You, and everyone you live with, will need to isolate by staying at home.

It will be easier to do this if you are prepared.

Self-isolating due to COVID-19? Call 0800 512 337 for welfare support. Calls are answered 8am-8pm every day.



## Make a plan

Use the following plan or download a checklist here:  
[kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer](https://kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer)

### 1 Make sure you have:

- supplies of food, water and other essentials
- basic medical supplies like a thermometer and pain relief
- a supply of your regular medications
- face masks, hand sanitiser and gloves
- emergency contact list with important phone numbers – including your GP
- household instructions if you must go into managed isolation or hospital – feeding pets, paying bills and watering plants.

### 2 Plan for:

- someone who can help with contactless drop-offs of food or supplies
- what happens with children or shared custody arrangements
- work or study from home
- minimising the spread to household members who are not well
- what happens with any in-home carers
- activities to keep you entertained.

For help and support if you have COVID-19 visit:  
[kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer](https://kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer)

Note: Information about vaccinations and preparing for COVID-19 is from the Ministry of Health



### 3 Reach out to friends and whānau

- Stay connected — arrange regular catch-ups with your whānau, friends and community. If you are isolating, make sure these are online or by phone.
- Support your friends, whānau and workmates to make their own plans to get ready.
- Find out what your community is doing – is there a group making meals to freeze, sharing planning tips or just staying in the know?

### 4 Know and share your plans

- Kōrero together – ensure everyone in your house (including the kids) knows what will happen if you need to isolate.
- Share plans with those supporting and helping you (or who you are supporting).
- Use a sign or QR poster on your fence or front door so visitors know your household is isolating.

Download self-isolating poster here: [kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer](https://kaingaora.govt.nz/covid19customer). Create a QR Code poster for your home: <https://qrform.tracing.covid19.govt.nz/>

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

## It takes a village – locals get behind community space

“I’ve seen a lot of people there – especially through summer. Sometimes I just go along and read a book.”

The community worked on the design of the space with Kāinga Ora, and several other organisations – including Watercare, which is building a wastewater tunnel or ‘interceptor’ close to the space, Community Waitakere, Glenavon Community Hub, Glenavon Community Trust, Auckland Council, Whau Local Board and Arts Whau.

Locals of all ages attended workshops and developed a plan for the best use of the space,

Community Development Manager Karen Allen explains.

“The initial workshop (held before lockdown) was at the Glenavon School hall and the second was onsite, where the community got more creative and put pen to paper for their space,” Karen says.

Community Waitakere facilitated these early workshops, and then further workshops were held at the Glenavon Hub to finalise the plans. Karen adds that participants even met over Zoom in lockdown to keep the project going.

The space also features a mural by Samoan comic artist Michel Mulipola, with themes of community and whānau as well as greetings in more than 25 languages.

Resene donated the paint and the mural was developed through extensive co-design with locals and funded by the Whau Local Board.

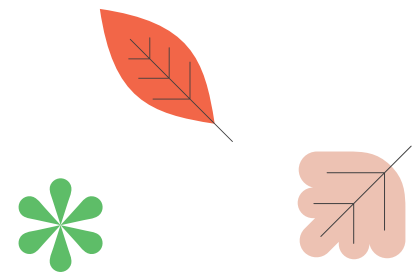


## Gardening tips

**Autumn is the season for rotting: moist, warm air encourages fungi of all kinds – moulds, mushrooms, black spot, blights and mildew.**

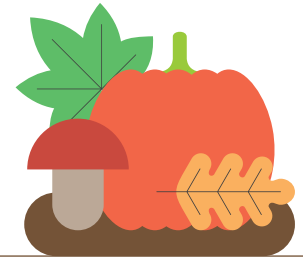
Collect seeds for sowing or edible plants like green coriander seeds for a burst of flavour, before chopping and dropping them on your garden beds. Layer with grass clippings, seaweed, sprinklings of manure and lime/wood ash. If it stays moist over winter, you'll have some great compost ready for spring plantings. Collect leaves, and put either directly over beds as a mulch or into a bin bag with some holes in it. Over the year the holes will allow rain to get in and drain out, to create a perfect potting mix for seedlings next year.

Dig up kumara and potato once the leaves turn yellow. Once fruit such as pumpkins and tomatoes have set, it doesn't do much harm for the leaves to die off. Green tomatoes can be picked and ripened in a sunny, dry place. Pumpkins are best left on the vine until the stalk is totally brown and crispy – prop them on a brick, plant pot or something that keeps them off the wet soil. Raspberries can be cut back and the cuttings replanted right away. As things die off above ground, get your winter brassicas (the cabbage family) planted, and sow winter root crops like carrots, which like the cooler conditions. Aim to have garden beds planted by the end of April (with the exception of garlic to plant in May).



Plant out: beetroot, broad beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, dill, kale, lettuce, mizuna, oregano, parsley, parsnip, radish, rocket, silverbeet and spinach.

Sow from seed in trays: broad beans, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, leek, lettuce, mizuna, onion, peas, rocket, radish, rocket, silverbeet and spring onion.



Thanks to Katie Newman,  
Urban Kai Educator,  
Common Unity  
Project Aotearoa



[www.commonunityproject.org.nz](http://www.commonunityproject.org.nz)

## Changes to the Residential Tenancies Act

**We have now got more ways to support you to live well in your home and manage disruptive behaviour when it happens.**

The vast majority of our customers live well in their homes and are good members of their communities. But sometimes a very small number of people can upset the peace.

When we hear of problems, we quickly try to solve them. We work with customers and whānau to get the support they need to remain in their home and live well.

However, there are times when the situation is too complicated to fix. When that happens, we can now follow the new changes in the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA). These include a clear warnings process, where people are given the chance to change their behaviour – and if that doesn't work, as a last resort we can apply to the Tenancy Tribunal to end their tenancy.

We are committed to providing safe and peaceful homes for those in need, so these new

measures will only be used when absolutely necessary. We will also always provide alternative accommodation and maintain our focus on your wellbeing and the community around you.

If you wish to know more about the changes to the RTA, just talk to your Housing Support Manager (the new name for Tenancy Manager), or phone our Customer Support Centre on 0800 801 601.

# Karen and Pauline celebrate a milestone anniversary at the Kāinga Ora Porirua Customer Support Centre



Cause for celebration as Karen Phipps (left) and Pauline Phillips (right) reach decade milestone at Kāinga Ora.

**If you've ever had to call our Customer Support Centre, you may have spoken to either our lovely Karen or Pauline, who both recently celebrated a decade with Kāinga Ora.**

Karen Phipps, Kāinga Ora Senior Customer Support Advisor, is down to earth, positive and caring. She admires people who can be themselves and not have to change who they are to suit others. Karen enjoys people who are positive, caring and are not afraid to take on new challenges. Her care for her customers comes through strongly in her approach to her work.

“We give our customers a voice so they feel they are not alone. We listen to them and try to assist and guide them in any way we can to make their lives comfortable in the homes we provide,” says Karen.

In her spare time, she's partial to watching sci-fi, murder mysteries, documentaries and comedies. “I also like to take walks, but most of all I love to spend time with my family and good friends,” she tells us.

Based in the Kāinga Ora call centre in Porirua, she supports our tenants in their homes. Her team is the first point of contact for any enquiries people may have about their tenancy, rent, maintenance or any general enquiries. The team takes calls from the wider public requesting information on developments, assets, and home ownership.

Karen says, “I enjoy coming to work as I love to help people in any way I can. If I can go home at the end of the day knowing I have helped just one person, then that's worth coming in to work.”

Like Karen, Customer Support Advisor Pauline Phillips has also been serving Kāinga Ora customers from the Porirua base.

Pauline is empathetic, reliable and honest and her favourite attribute in others is integrity.

“My role is to listen to our customers and give them a voice to resolve any issues they may have called about,” says Pauline.

To relax she walks, reads and spends time with her family, and has dedicated over a decade to servicing Kāinga Ora customer calls.

She recalls a time when she helped the customer resolve a leaky roof and assisted a Housing Support Manager to secure timely repairs for a customer's home. Before the customer phoned Kāinga Ora, they needed to find last minute accommodation in motels every time it rained.

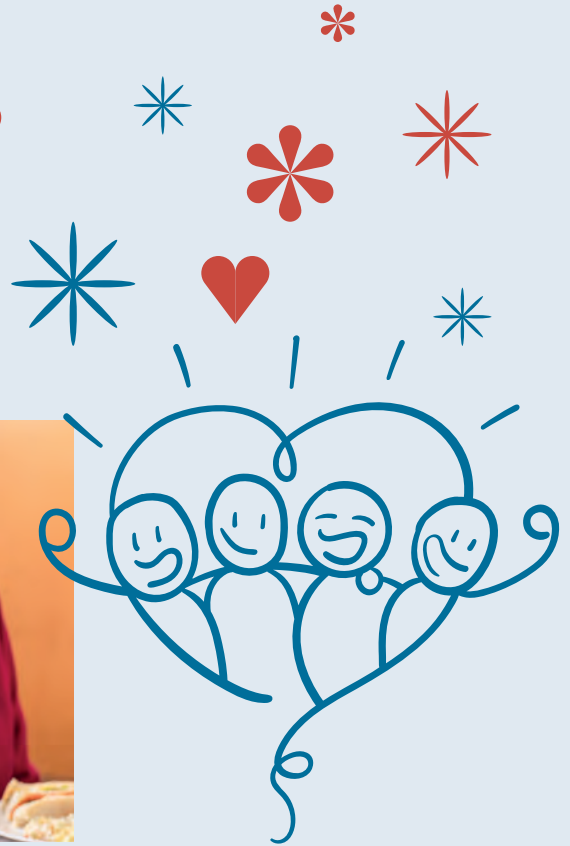
“It turned out for the best as the issue was escalated and a positive solution was found for the tenant, and the roof was repaired.

“This work meant the tenant and his family had a dry and healthy home to live in, which is fantastic,” says Pauline.

Our Manukau and Porirua Customer Support Centres receive around 4,000 calls a day, fielding enquiries covering anything from maintenance, repairs, rental payments, and customer detail updates, to wellbeing and other assistance – it's no wonder the team has had 90 percent of customers feel they were treated with respect\*.

\* Sourced from 'treat you with respect' response in Kāinga Ora customer survey December 2021. Survey conducted as computer aided telephone interviews by a third party supplier with 522 interviews from lists provided by Kāinga Ora. Margin of error is +/- 4.4%.

# Putting people at the heart



**We are always looking for ways we can better support you and your whānau, and have recently made a few changes to how we work with and support you in your home.**

Our changes aim to reflect that we always put our customers at the heart of what we do, drawing on our organisation's values of Manaakitanga (people at the heart), Mahi Tahi (better together) and Whanake (be bold) to form the foundation of the way we operate.

We are also bringing on more people to do the mahi, enhancing services and putting a greater focus on wellbeing, so we think you'll start to notice some really great changes.

## **Feeling supported in your home**

We're focused on helping you and your whānau live well in your home and supporting you to thrive. Our goal is for you to feel safe, secure and supported in your home, connected to your community, and feel in control over your life and wellbeing.

## **Introducing our Housing Support Managers**

One of the people you probably know best at Kāinga Ora is your Tenancy Manager. We want to let you know that they recently had a change of job title to better reflect the mahi they do – they are now all known as Housing Support Managers or Senior Housing Support Managers.

We are also excited to announce that these new job titles have a te reo Māori version that you or your Housing Support Manager may prefer to use:

- Kaitoko Kāinga – Housing Support Manager
- Kaitoko Kāinga Matua – Senior Housing Support Manager

## **Here for you**

As our new way of working gradually comes into effect and we welcome new team members to Kāinga Ora, your Kaitoko Kāinga Housing Support Manager will have fewer customers to look after. This means they will be available to spend more time supporting you and your whānau if that's what you'd like or need.

In some cases there might be a change in the Kaitoko Kāinga Housing Support Manager who looks after you and your whānau, but don't worry – we'll let you know if this is going to happen and the new person will be in touch to introduce themselves to you.

## **More to come**

As further improvements to our service are delivered, we'll keep you well informed through Close to Home and our other channels.

# TIPS



**Pests in the home can be a nuisance but here are a few tips to keep the creepy crawlies at bay.**

## Cockroaches

Keep bay leaves or garlic in your cupboards to keep cockroaches away. Wash the floor and wall behind fridges and stoves regularly, and spray these areas with long-lasting insect spray.

## Ants

Ants in New Zealand are generally harmless but can be a nuisance. Sprinkle ground or whole cloves in cupboards to keep them away.

You can also sprinkle talcum powder or cream of tartar at the point where they come inside. If you find an ant nest, pour boiling water into it.

## White-tailed spiders

White-tailed spiders usually live in cool, dark areas like under bark in gardens, wood piles, litter and walls. They also hide under beds and in clothing left on the floor.

Their bite can cause pain, swelling, redness and small ulcers. Use fly spray to get rid of them.

Total release aerosol pesticide cans (bug bombs) are also available from hardware stores.

## Rats and mice

You can do a lot to keep rats and mice away by keeping your home clean and tidy so they have no food source and nowhere to nest.

If they do get inside, mouse holes and nesting areas can be blocked with steel wool (Steele pads).

You can get mousetraps from the supermarket or buy poisoned bait from garden or hardware shops. Be sure to set bait out of reach of children and pets, and always wear rubber gloves when getting rid of dead rodents.

For more clean and green tips you can download our clean and green booklet for cheap and environmentally friendly hints and tips for around your home.

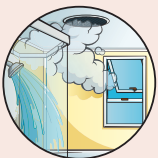


## More about the Healthy Homes Standards



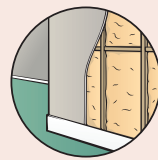
### Heating

Your home needs to have heating capable of heating the living room to an air temperature of at least 18°C. We'll also talk with you about other heating to make your home warm throughout the year.



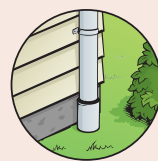
### Ventilation

We need to check you have windows you can open in the living room, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms and the right size extractor fan in the bathroom and kitchen.



### Insulation

We will check your home has the right type of insulation for the region where you live.



### Moisture and drainage

The drainage, guttering and downpipes at your home must all be working properly. We will check for any leaks and repair them.



### Stopping draughts

We will check there are no noticeable draughts, and that unused chimneys and fireplaces are blocked off.



# Keep damp out, air it out!

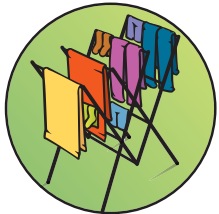
Dry air is easier and cheaper to heat, and helps prevent mould. You can help keep the air in your home dry by...

## Keep damp out



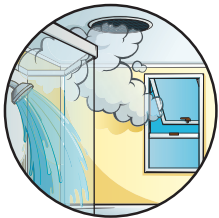
### Dry windows

- Wipe moisture off windows with an old towel in the morning if required.
- If you get moisture building up on the walls that stays there for a long time, please contact Kāinga Ora.



### Dry clothes outside

- Dry your washing outside as much as you can.



### Use bathroom and kitchen fans

- Use your kitchen rangehood when cooking.
- Use your bathroom fan when showering or bathing, and keep the fan going until the mirror and walls are dry.
- Using an extraction fan only costs about 4 cents an hour when running at full speed!

### Did you know?

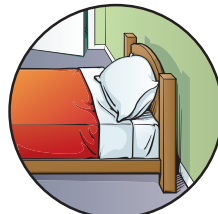
A load of wet washing contains around 5 litres of water. If wet washing is dried inside your home it can make your home damp and can cause mould.

## Air it out



### Open windows twice a day

- Open windows twice a day (for 10 minutes) to let damp out every day in summer and winter.



### Keep beds and mattresses damp-free

- Mattresses need to be raised off the floor to let the air dry them out daily (if possible), especially if co-sleeping in living rooms.
- In bedrooms, keep beds out from the wall far enough to let air circulate. This will help keep them dry and prevent mould.

### Did you know?

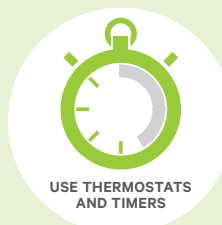
Heating bedrooms in winter can help you and your family stay well.



### Why more heating?

We know families spend a large amount of time in their home so it's really important for your health to stay warm in the rooms you spend time in. Heating bedrooms and other rooms where you spend time helps you be healthier, and enjoy these spaces in the colder months.

**SAVE POWER  
SAVE MONEY**



FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS

# TREEHOUSE

## Easter and autumn jokes

- Q:** What's worse than finding a worm in your apple?  
**A:** Finding half a worm.
- Q:** What did one autumn leaf say to the other?  
**A:** I'm falling for you.
- Q:** How are you supposed to talk in the apple library?  
**A:** With your incider voice.
- Q:** What is the Easter Bunny's favourite kind of music?  
**A:** Hip-hop!
- Q:** Why did the Easter Bunny cross the road?  
**A:** Because the chicken had his eggs!



CREDIT: TWINKL.CO.NZ

Hi, I'm a friendly Morepork (Ruru). Colour me in!

# Cream puffs

**Cream puffs are simple and inexpensive to make and can be adapted for a range of fillings – perfect for a whānau get-together.**

READY IN: 45 MINUTES PLUS COOLING

MAKES: 30+ CREAM PUFFS

## INGREDIENTS YOU'LL NEED

1 cup boiling water

100g butter

1 cup plain flour

4 eggs

300ml cream, whipped – to fill the puffs

Chocolate sauce – optional

200ml cream

200g dark chocolate, broken into pieces

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C. In a medium saucepan melt butter, add boiling water and when liquids come to a rolling boil tip in flour. Quickly stir until the dough cleanly leaves the sides of the pan.
2. Remove from the heat. Cool mixture slightly, then using a wooden spoon or mixer add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat the mixture until it is smooth and glossy.
3. Splash a flat cookie sheet with water. Using a teaspoon and a wet fingertip, dollop plum-sized portions onto the tray leaving



space between each. Bake for 10-15 minutes until well risen. Increase the temperature to 210°C and bake a further 10-15 minutes until they are biscuit coloured and crisp to touch. Remove from the tray, prick with the tip of a knife to release hot air and leave to cool.

4. To assemble, whip 300ml of cream. Slice the tops off the puffs, fill with a blob of cream, replace the tops and dust with icing sugar.
5. To make the sauce: Heat the cream in a small pan or microwave till bubbling. Remove from the heat and stir in the chocolate, stirring till smooth. Pour over the puffs

just before serving. The sauce will set if refrigerated; heat gently to return to liquid.

## VARIATION TIPS:

Make a flavoured cream filling – add a spoonful of lemon curd or Nutella to the whipped cream or try a little instant coffee and icing sugar for a sweet coffee cream filling.

Fold together equal quantities of whipped cream and custard for a custard cream.

Fill with cream and a couple of slices of tinned peaches.

Swap the chocolate sauce for a drizzle of melted white or dark chocolate or a simple dusting of icing sugar.



## ! Driveway safety reminder

Safekids Aotearoa suggests three things you can do to make driveways and other places safer for children:

- **Check** for children before driving off
- **Supervise** children around vehicles – always
- **Separate** play areas from driveways.

### NEED TO TALK?

# 1737

**free call or text any time**

Are you feeling out of sorts or depressed? Are you feeling anxious or just need someone to talk to? Or advice on mental health or addiction issues?

**Whatever it is, you can call or text 1737 any time. It's free, completely confidential and is an independent service.**



**Email option** If you would prefer to receive this publication via email, send your email address to [editor@close2home.co.nz](mailto:editor@close2home.co.nz)

## Get some free budget advice

There are lots of organisations around the country that can give you and your whānau free budgeting advice. The advice is completely confidential.

Most of these organisations are part of the Federation of Family Budgeting Services.

You can find one close to you. Just go to **familybudgeting.org.nz**, email them at [adviser@familybudgeting.org.nz](mailto:adviser@familybudgeting.org.nz) or call freephone **0508 283 438** – your call will be answered by a budget adviser Monday to Friday, from 8am to 4.30pm.



## We care and are here to help

We care about you and your whānau and are here to help. If you need to have a chat to us, you can call our Customer Support Freephone on **0800 801 601**. You can also find some helpful resources on our website: [www.kaingaora.govt.nz](http://www.kaingaora.govt.nz)

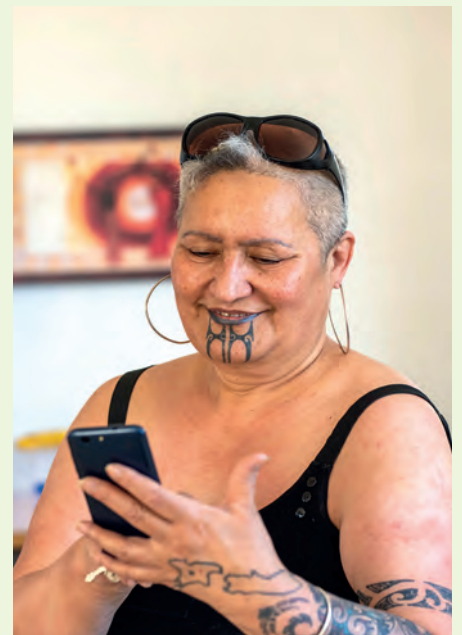


## Get it done online with MyKāingaOra

- Check your rent balances and accounts, and download letters
- Keep your details up to date
- Access wellbeing services
- Book non-urgent maintenance and view progress
- View upcoming scheduled inspections and visits
- Add and update your consented parties
- Te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan and Chinese translations coming soon

If you access MyKāingaOra using Spark, Skinny, Vodafone or 2Degrees there are no data charges – whether you're on a monthly plan or pre-pay. Just ensure you have data turned on when you're accessing it.

Visit [my.kaingaora.govt.nz](http://my.kaingaora.govt.nz)



 **My Kāinga Ora**

**Contact** Publication enquiries should be made to: [editor@close2home.co.nz](mailto:editor@close2home.co.nz)

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