



# Close to Home



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## Josh's story – a journey to supporting others



Josh outside his home in Christchurch.

**When Josh was going through one of the most difficult moments of his life, rather than focusing solely on his own journey, his thoughts turned to how he could help others in the same situation.**

When he was 18 years old, Josh (now 25), from Christchurch was paralysed after a rare autoimmune disease called transverse myelitis damaged his spinal cord. After a month in ICU, he spent another 5 months in Christchurch's Burwood Spinal Unit undergoing rehabilitation – and that's where

he realised he could use his own experience to help other spinal patients.

"I started volunteering [for the New Zealand Spinal Trust based at Burwood Hospital] while I was in hospital because I wanted to come back, but in the end, I never left – I left hospital with a job," Josh jokes.

Josh now works part-time as a peer support worker for the New Zealand Spinal Trust, supporting patients living with a spinal cord impairment.

"It's mostly about translating what the doctors and the rest of the hospital team are talking about, helping patients adjust a bit and to learn other tricks that the hospital can't teach them, like pushing a supermarket trolley or carrying a coffee cup from the bench to the couch," he says.

Josh, who also holds down two other part-time jobs advocating for people with disabilities, moved in to a one-bedroom, wheelchair-friendly Kāinga Ora home 3 months ago – and he is thriving in his new home.

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### Josh's story – a journey to supporting others

“I have this space and the freedom to take control of my own life again. To be able to come home to a house that takes all those issues [of accessibility] away from you is somewhat freeing.

“I can get my Sunday coffee, and I'm close to Kmart. Everything I need is just 5 minutes away, and I can catch the bus to work just around the corner – it's great.”

As a real ‘people person’ with a passion for advocating for those with disabilities, there's no denying Josh is a remarkable individual. But what is it that drives him?



**I know what it was like to receive the support when I was a patient, and I know the impact that made for me personally, so the drive for me is to be able to recreate that for someone else. Don't change the entire world, but you can change one person's world.”**

Josh



Watch our video of Josh's full story on our website – [kaingaora.govt.nz](https://kaingaora.govt.nz).

## A heads up on healthy home upgrades



**It's important that your home is warm, dry and healthy for you and your whānau. This might mean that, from time to time, we need to access your home for maintenance, repair or improvement work.**

That's where we need your help! If your housing support manager or one of our contractors gets in touch to schedule a visit, please work with them to arrange that. We want to make it as easy as possible for you and your household, so the sooner we can access your home, the sooner we can complete the work.

We realise that, in these strange COVID-19 times, we're all trying our best to make sure our whānau are safe, so it's understandable you might feel uneasy about workers in your home. You might even need to isolate in your home at times.



**We'll work with you and our contractors to ensure your health and safety is a priority while any work is carried out.**

### Healthy homes work

You might already know that we need to make sure all Kāinga Ora homes meet the government's healthy homes standards by 1 July 2023. This means we need to visit all our homes to check:

- heating
- insulation – ceiling and underfloor
- ventilation
- drainage
- any signs of moisture
- any noticeable draughts.

When Kāinga Ora needs to check these things in your home, one of our contractors will contact you to make a time to visit. After they have made the checks, they will let you know what needs to be done and when someone will come back and complete the work. It's very important that our contractors can access your home to do the work. Please reach out to your housing support manager if you have any concerns or questions.

**Thanks for working with us to provide a healthy home for you and your whānau.**



## Kauri Place development brings joy to Hastings



Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern meeting Kauri Place residents Marie and Fred.

### The joy of having a new home where they can build their lives shone from the face of two Hastings customers.

Marie and Fred met with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern recently as she opened one of our largest completed housing projects outside of New Zealand's main centres.

The 40 new, warm, dry homes in Kauri Place, Hastings, are fully tenanted and are already changing people's lives. With the residents having moved from cars, motels, garages and other unsuitable living spaces, their new homes will help them focus on the future.

The development will have over 600 homes when completed in 2023.

The development's colours were a collaborative team effort from iwi representatives, St Mary's School and Mahora Primary School, Hastings District Council and Kāinga Ora, who met with architects to develop the colour scheme.

Inspiration was taken from the long-standing name of the street and place. Colours of the kauri tree (trunk, leaves and nuts) and its frequent visitor the kererū pointed the way to a harmonious colour scheme used in the development. Mana whenua also gifted the name of a new accessway created by the development. Ohika Crescent references back to the old Māori name for the land in that area – Ohika Block.



The homes are a mix of single-storey, two-storey and duplex and were designed by working with iwi and Hastings District Council to build understanding of the most important issues for the local area and using this information to build thriving communities at scale and pace.

About 95% of those who worked on the site were local people helping create jobs in the region, while also delivering more high-quality houses at pace.

Kāinga Ora continues working alongside iwi, councils, local organisations and build partners with a shared goal – to share resources and develop a practical plan to address housing needs.

# Crispy Fish Pie

This crispy pie is a fan favourite, and a number of people credit it with being responsible for getting their kids to eat fish. The addition of lemon and gherkins gives a bit of zing, and a cup of cooked rice can be added to the filling to stretch it if required.

READY IN: 1 HOUR  
SERVES: 6

RECIPE AND PHOTO  
SUPPLIED BY SOPHIE GRAY



## Ingredients

350–450 g firm white fish, whatever is available

300 ml milk or enough to just cover the fish

25 g butter

50 g flour

1 tbsp capers, finely chopped (optional)

3 gherkins, chopped small

2 hard-boiled eggs, cooled and chopped

1 tbsp parsley, chopped

squeeze of lemon juice

salt and pepper

2 sheets of frozen puff pastry, defrosted

## Method

1. Place fish into a medium saucepan and cover with milk. Bring to a simmer and cook gently until fish breaks apart when pulled gently with a fork, around 5–10 minutes. Place a sieve over a bowl and strain the fish, reserving 275 ml of the milk.
2. In the same saucepan, melt the butter then whisk in the flour. Cook gently, stirring for 1 minute, then gradually incorporate the reserved milk the fish was cooked in, whisking well after each addition until you have a creamy sauce. Simmer the sauce for 5 minutes then remove from the heat.
3. Break up the fish and add to the sauce with capers (if using), gherkins, egg, parsley and lemon juice. Mix gently then set aside to cool completely.
4. Preheat oven to 220°C. Grease a tray with non-stick cooking spray. Place one sheet of pastry on the tray and brush around the edges with water. Roll the second pastry sheet with a rolling pin to make it slightly larger than the first.
5. Spoon the cooled filling onto the pastry then place the second pastry piece on top, pressing the edges firmly to seal. Slice six long vents into the pastry, brush with milk and bake for 30 minutes or until dark golden and puffed.

**TIP:** Make mini fish pies by folding the pastry into small parcels or put the filling in ramekins and top with creamy mashed potatoes if you don't want to use pastry.



# Time to clean the curtains

Spring is a good time to clean your curtains. Look at the hem of your curtains for the cleaning instructions or follow these instructions:

- Do not bleach, rub or wring
- Do not tumble dry
- Do not use pegs for hanging on the line.
- Either gently vacuum with the appropriate attachment or machine wash on a gentle cycle set at up to 40°C
- Remove plastic hooks before putting the curtains in the washing machine
- Drip-dry in the shade, iron with a cool iron and replace hooks.

# Use the power of the sun – it's free!



Use the sun to your advantage – shake out your rugs, blankets, duvets and pillows and leave them in the sun to air them. Some people say the sun is a natural disinfectant – a couple of hours outside and everything smells clean and fresh. If you can manage it, airing your bed mattress outside in the sun is good too.



# Start now to plan for Christmas

Retailers spend a lot of money trying to lure you into buying things you don't need at Christmas. If you ask people what Christmas and the holiday season are really about, most will say relaxing and spending time with family – not spending loads of money.

So dodge the debt this year by staying away from the shops and reminding yourself that you and your family need a happy, debt-free summer.

## Spread the cost

If you're on a budget, buy what you need over the next few months so that, when Christmas comes around, there's not such a big bill to cope with.

- Spreading the payments out makes it far easier to budget
- Decide what you can afford to spend
- Break down your budget to allow for gifts, decorations, food, drink and entertainment
- Keep track of your spending in the months leading up to Christmas – work within the budget and enjoy a stress-free Christmas.

- Another good idea is to join your local supermarket's Christmas club. Think of it as a piggy bank you can use to help spread the cost of Christmas over the year. The earlier you start contributing to your Christmas club, the more treats you'll have.

You can get free, non-judgemental budgeting and debt management support by visiting [moneytalks.co.nz](https://www.moneytalks.co.nz) for information, resources and a chat.

## @ email

You can email [help@moneytalks.co.nz](mailto:help@moneytalks.co.nz), call 0800 345 123, text 4029 or find a free financial mentor near you at [moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now](https://www.moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now).

## 0800 call

Available 8am–8pm Monday to Friday, 9am–4pm Saturday, 10am–2pm Sunday.

# Great Gardens of Kāinga Ora competition



Is your backyard your pride and joy? Do you have a veggie patch worthy of a prized pumpkin award? Have you turned your balcony into a tropical rainforest? Or does your neighbour have a gorgeous garden worth giving some recognition?

We want to hear from you! Nominate yourself, your neighbour or community member. You and the nominee must be a Kāinga Ora public housing customer. We'll judge all the submissions and select top gardeners from each of our categories to receive Give a Garden gift cards.

If we shortlist your entry or nomination, the relevant Housing Support Manager will be in touch with the gardener arrange a visit and take more photos to help us progress the entry to the next stage.

To enter, see the entry form enclosed or fill out the online entry form by following the QR code.



## Categories

**1. Supreme garden**  
\$250 gift card  
The best overall garden judged by our panel.

**2. Best community gardener**  
\$100 gift card  
To the gardener who has contributed the most to their local community. It could be someone who donates home-grown fruits and veggies to the local community, helps maintain shared parks and gardens or teaches or leads gardening activities for the local school. We want to hear about these gardeners who are doing amazing work in their community.

**3. Best small space**  
\$100 gift card  
Our Great Gardens of Kāinga Ora need not be limited to big gardens. If your nominee lives in a duplex, townhouse or apartment, we want to see how they've made their small green space work for them. Do they live in a houseplant haven, have they made their balcony garden into an oasis or have they built their garden up into a vertical paradise? We want to see your submissions.

**4. Best edible garden**  
\$100 gift card  
Know of a customer who has a backyard like an orchard or market garden? We want to hear about it.

**5. Best junior gardener**  
\$50 gift card  
A young gardener aged 15 or under who has shown they have a green thumb a cut above the competition.

**6. Best water-wise garden**  
A water-efficient Fisher & Paykel front-loading washing machine (sponsored by Watercare in Auckland)  
To the gardener who has created the most water-efficient garden. It could be someone who has selected plants with low watering needs, recycles water from inside the home, collects rainwater or has other water-efficient ways.

**Terms and conditions:** Competition open from 19 September until to 31 October 2022. All valid entries by the deadline to be considered for judging. The nominee (entrant) must currently reside in a Kāinga Ora home. Entries must answer all the criteria outlined in the entry form and include detailed photographs for judging purposes. Winners will be decided by 7 November 2022 by a Kāinga Ora representative and will be notified directly. All decisions regarding winners will be final. The competition is not open to employees of Kāinga Ora or members of their direct family. All entries and associated personal information will be destroyed following completion of the competition. Prizes may be subject to terms and conditions, which you agree to by entering the competition.





Spring has arrived, and it's a great time to get out in the garden. Whether you're an expert gardener or just a beginner, here are some tips to growing a healthy garden that uses water wisely.



### Collect shower water

Put a bucket in the bottom of your shower while the water is heating up. Use the water you collect on your garden.

## Gardening tips



### Save your cooking water

If you steam or boil vegetables, save the water rather than tipping it down the sink. It is full of nutrients and, when cooled, makes a free fertiliser for watering your plants.



### Water your garden early in the morning

Plants love to be watered early in the morning when the sun is still low in the sky and temperatures are yet to climb. If you are unable to water in the early morning, water in the late afternoon when temperatures have dropped.



### Consider plants with low watering needs

Switch out ultra-thirsty plants for plants that are happy in dry conditions such as succulents and camellias.



### Add mulch and seal in the moisture

Adding mulch to your garden will help slow water evaporation as moisture evaporates more quickly from bare soil. Adding a few centimetres of mulch will increase water penetration, improve soil fertility, reduce weeds and protect soil against evaporation and erosion. You can use wheat or pea straw, bark or grass clippings.

## Tips for smaller gardens

Here are some tips on how to maximise a smaller garden while minimising waste with upcycling and home composting.

### Potted bags or grow bags

Grow bags are so easy and cheap to make and are a great solution if you have no usable ground to plant into. You'll need to buy large bags of outdoor potting mix, which you can mix with your homemade compost or store-bought compost. Each will hold 8–10 seedlings. Potting mix is available from nurseries, hardware stores and even the supermarket. Lay the bag down flat and use a sharp knife to poke some holes in the bottom. These allow water to drain out so the potting mix, compost and plants don't rot. Turn the bag over and cut 8–10 crosses in the top side of the bag.

Open out the crosses and make a hollow in the potting mix. Gently plant one seedling per opening. Water them well, and make sure you put the grow bag in a sunny spot. They'll need to be watered every day – if it's really hot, both morning and evening. Within a short time, your plants will grow lush and green.

When the plants have finished fruiting, rip them out and tip the used potting mix and compost into your garden. Having several potted bag gardens or grow bags on the go at the same time is a cheap and convenient way to supply the kitchen with salad greens and herbs. The bag is a garden that even a very young child can maintain and take pride in.

You can position the bags against a sunny wall, on the deck, on a flat roof or by the back door – anywhere you have plenty of sun. You can even put bags in a wheelbarrow – you can wheel it out for the morning sunshine then tuck it in the garage overnight if you think there will be a frost.

### Fabric supermarket bags

Reusable supermarket bags can be filled with potting mix and compost and used to grow anything from potatoes to salad greens. They drain pretty well, are deeper than a compost bag and can be positioned on a patio or on the lawn.

### Tyres

Old tyres make great planters. They're cheap, portable and moisture resistant and retain the heat. Select three or four tyres of the same size. Stack them and fill with compost. If stacking tyres more than three high, it's a good idea to tie them together with some wire so they can't topple. Potatoes do particularly well in tyre gardens as you can plant in layers.

### Paddling pool planting

An old paddling pool as a veggie garden works particularly well for terraces, roof gardens and rocky areas. Punch holes in the bottom of a rigid plastic paddling pool. Lay some scoria or gravel in the base for drainage (you don't want the drainage holes to clog up with soil or the garden will become waterlogged), then fill with compost or soil. The pool will be deep enough for a wide range of crops, it's easy to manage and will last several years. You should be able to reach all the way into the middle from the edges, and it is large enough to be quite productive.

Almost any vegetable that will grow in a typical backyard garden will also do well as a container-grown plant. Vegetables that are ideally suited for growing in containers include tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, green onions, beans, lettuce, squash, radishes and parsley. Climbing plants will need to be staked or positioned near a wall or trellis so that they can scramble up, and a hose or sprinkler handy to where you are growing will be a huge help.



TIPS THANKS TO WATERCARE AUCKLAND.

### Wellbeing in Kāinga Ora Communities

# Te Hotonga Hapori Wellbeing Survey

To complete the survey online, go to [tehotongahapori.ac.nz/survey](https://tehotongahapori.ac.nz/survey)

For a paper copy of the survey, please call Julia on freephone 0800 553 365

WIN

All entries go into a prize draw for 1 of 5 APPLE iPADS\*



AUT

\* iPad 9th Generation 10.2 Inch 64GB

FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS

# TREEHOUSE

Colouring activity



Credit: twinkl.co.nz

What's hiding in here?

Can you find the following things hidden throughout this issue?

- |                      |                               |                                |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. soil – whenua     | 6. butterfly – pūrerehua      | 10. kōwhai tree – rākau kōwhai |
| 2. flower – puaka    | 7. pitchfork – whāoka māra    | 11. kererū                     |
| 3. pine tree – paina | 8. watering pot – pounamu wai | 12. spade – kāheru             |
| 4. hoe – hetiheti    | 9. wheelbarrow – huripara     | 13. snail – hātaretare         |
| 5. bee – pī          |                               |                                |

Hiding spots – 1. page 06/07 2. page 09 3. page 05 4. page 09 5. page 02 6. page 05 7. page 08 8. page 08 9. page 07/08 10. page 01 11. page 03 12. page 08 13. page 10

## Beloved family dog provides great wellbeing for Kim and her two children



Andrew (left) and Alana (right) with their family terrier Kass.

**“She’s part of the family.” These are the words from Auckland Central mum Kim when she talks about their family’s pet dog Kass.**

Kass is a cross between a Jack Russell terrier and a fox terrier.

“We got her in the South Island when we were shearing and brought her with us when we moved to Auckland a few years ago,” Kim says.

“Kass is just like another child and such an important part of our whānau. She makes her needs known to us and is just awesome with our two children – Alana, who is 11, and Andrew, who is 12. Kass is so caring to all of us and even looks after our new puppy,” she adds.

“Andrew just loves spending time and interacting with Kass. Kass is a really important part of Andrew’s life.”

When asked to describe what having a pet means to their whānau, Kim says it means they can enjoy doing things together like going for walks and exercising, and they just love having her around.

Kāinga Ora is a pet-friendly landlord. If you would also like to have a pet that is a cat or dog or you live in a rural location and want to keep a livestock animal, call us on 0800 801 601. We will ask you a few questions and then get it sorted for you.

**No pussyfooting around – it’s the time of year to take care**



It may seem like it’s never going to happen again, but we’re getting close to the time when the temperature finally makes it above 20 degrees Celsius. That also means we need to be extra careful with our cats to avoid unwanted kittens.

Our feline friends breed during the warmer months, and we’re soon heading into kitten season. If we don’t all take responsibility for our animals, the unwanted pet population soars and puts a huge strain on owners and organisations like the SPCA.

It’s really important to act now and get your cat desexed before summer so you can avoid an unwanted litter of kittens. Most places will do this for cats as young as 14 weeks.

The SPCA and other organisations offer free or discounted desexing services for those who need them, so keep an eye out in your area. They can also help with things like vaccinations, flea or worm treatments and other ways of keeping your furry family member in good shape.

**Are you a smoker? It’s also the perfect time for you to quit for your pet.**

When you smoke around your animal, they’re twice as likely to get cancer. You can visit [quit.org.nz](http://quit.org.nz) for information and help on how to kick the habit.



## ! 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 and 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 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 now available.

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**

## MoneyTalks is a free service to help you manage your money

You can get free, non-judgemental budgeting and debt management support by visiting [moneytalks.co.nz](http://moneytalks.co.nz) for information, resources and a chat.

You can email [help@moneytalks.co.nz](mailto:help@moneytalks.co.nz), call 0800 345 123, text 4029 or find a free financial mentor near you at [moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now](http://moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now).



Available 8am–8pm Monday to Friday,  
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