



Close to Home



03 CHRISTMAS BUDGETING TIPS

04 TIPS TO KEEP YOU SAFE AROUND DOGS

07 GARDENING TIPS

08 OUR GREAT GARDENS OF KĀINGA ORA COMPETITION HAS RETURNED!

10 TREEHOUSE CELEBRATES KŌANGA (SPRING) FOR TAMARIKI

11 SCRUMMY OAT CHOC CHUNK COOKIES RECIPE

Crafts and friendship lead to crafty savings for Palema and her weaving group



“I know what it feels like to have absolutely nothing, and I know what it is like to have a little bit of money to my name. I could see the struggle in my neighbourhood when I first moved in,” explains Palema, a mother of four.

“When my Dad was staying with me, he said: ‘Palema, you can help people. Share what you know’. He told me to reach out to others and to strive for the best. And that’s what I did.”

While the Mo’ui Feinga Kihe Lelei meetings that Palema set up look like they’re just about making beautiful Tongan crafts, they serve a deeper purpose. The women not only discuss life’s challenges, they have also set up their own saving scheme.

“We have a secretary and a treasurer and each family decides how much they are going to contribute.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

When Palema and other members of Mo’ui Feinga Kihe Lelei get together for an evening of weaving and craftmaking, they’re also crafting a better future for themselves.

While their nimble hands weave intricate Tongan tapa cloth, the women chat, laugh, uplift each other – and importantly, share tips about how they can support themselves and their families through careful budgeting and saving.

Palema started Mo’ui Feinga Kihe Lelei (Strive for the Best) 11 years ago after her father urged her to share her skills for making money stretch with others in her community.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

Crafts and friendship lead to crafty savings for Palema and her weaving group



Palema and members of her weaving group in South Auckland

“The money goes into the bank and whatever you put in you get out in December. Some of the members were blown away by how much they could save, and what a difference it made to their lives,” Palema says.

Getting the funds back at the end of the year meant it wasn't a struggle to buy Christmas presents and, for some, it meant that it was easier to make sure their kids had stationery on the first day of school.

In the early days of Mo'ui Feinga Kihe Lelei, the group met at Palema's Kāinga Ora home. Neighbours and women from across Auckland heard about the group through word of mouth and Palema's savvy use of social media. The group now has 23 members, including children, and meets monthly in a local hall. At the end of the year, the women hold a special meeting to display the work they have completed over the previous months.

For Palema's neighbour, Kaufo'ou, it's been life-changing. “I learnt how to budget, to save, and to socialise with people. And I have gained self-esteem,” Kaufo'ou says.

Kāinga Ora Senior Housing Support Manager Andy says Palema has had a profound impact on her community through her group.

“She has really empowered members to gain confidence with money. They're saving significant amounts of money, and really benefiting from the power of the group. It has been fantastic to witness, and now they are looking at options for investing,” Andy says.



Check out our video featuring Palema



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 directions:



- 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



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

Housing and Health survey coming soon

Please keep an eye out for an important survey that we'll be sending some customers whose home is a new build or has received one of these upgrades in the last one to two years:

- Heating
- Insulation
- Ventilation
- Draught stopping
- Moisture management

What is the survey about?

We'd like to hear your thoughts on how the upgrades to your home, or living in a new house, might have changed things for you. Is your home warmer and more comfortable now? Has the health of your whānau improved?

Why are we doing the survey?

We want to keep improving the quality of our homes and support our customers' health and wellbeing. Your feedback will tell us what we're doing well and what we can improve on.

In the coming weeks, you might receive a text with a link to the survey. The survey should take about 10 minutes to fill out. Our Customer Support Centre will also follow up with a phone call in case you'd prefer to do the survey over the phone, or speak to someone in another language.

Customers who complete the survey will go into a prize draw for supermarket vouchers to thank you for your time.

Thank you for helping us build better, healthier homes for New Zealanders!

Start now to plan for Christmas

Retailers try hard to lure customers into buying things they 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.

It's easier to dodge Christmas debt by staying away from the shops and remembering that you and your family can enjoy 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.

- Spread the payments out so it's 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



- Join your local supermarket's Christmas club. It can help spread the cost of Christmas over the year. The earlier you start contributing to your Christmas club, the more treats you'll be able to have.

MoneyTalks

You can get free, non-judgemental budgeting and debt management support by visiting moneytalks.co.nz for information, resources and a chat.

@ Email

You can email help@moneytalks.co.nz, or find a free financial mentor near you at moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now



Call 0800 345 123, text 4029

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

Safety around dogs

Kāinga Ora is a pet-friendly landlord, and we like to allow customers to have dogs in their homes, under some conditions like local by-laws and body corporate rules (for homes in apartment buildings).

We also need to make sure people and other animals are safe around dogs too – here are some tips to help keep everyone safe around dogs.

Safety around dogs

Each dog has their own personality and things they like and don't like. You will be aware of these but others may not. It's important to:

- Keep a close eye on children around dogs; especially babies, toddlers or younger school-aged children
- Teach your children how to play, pat and be near dogs in a safe, kind and gentle way. Children are the most common victims of dog-related injuries. Children can put themselves at risk without realising, and may not understand dog warning signs and behaviours
- If someone is afraid of dogs, don't force them to play with or pat your dog, even if you believe your dog is safe.

Making sure your dog is well behaved

- As a dog owner, you must make sure your dog doesn't injure, intimidate or distress people or other animals – so make sure your dog is under control at all times
- Your dog can easily become overexcited by children and this is when most dog bites occur. Always supervise your pet around tamariki or remove the dog to a safe place where it won't feel overwhelmed. Remember that it's okay to say no when someone asks to pat your dog if you know your dog is nervous, fearful or uncomfortable around strangers
- Dogs can be a threat to protected wildlife – so keep your dog on-lead around wildlife.

Desexing your companion pet

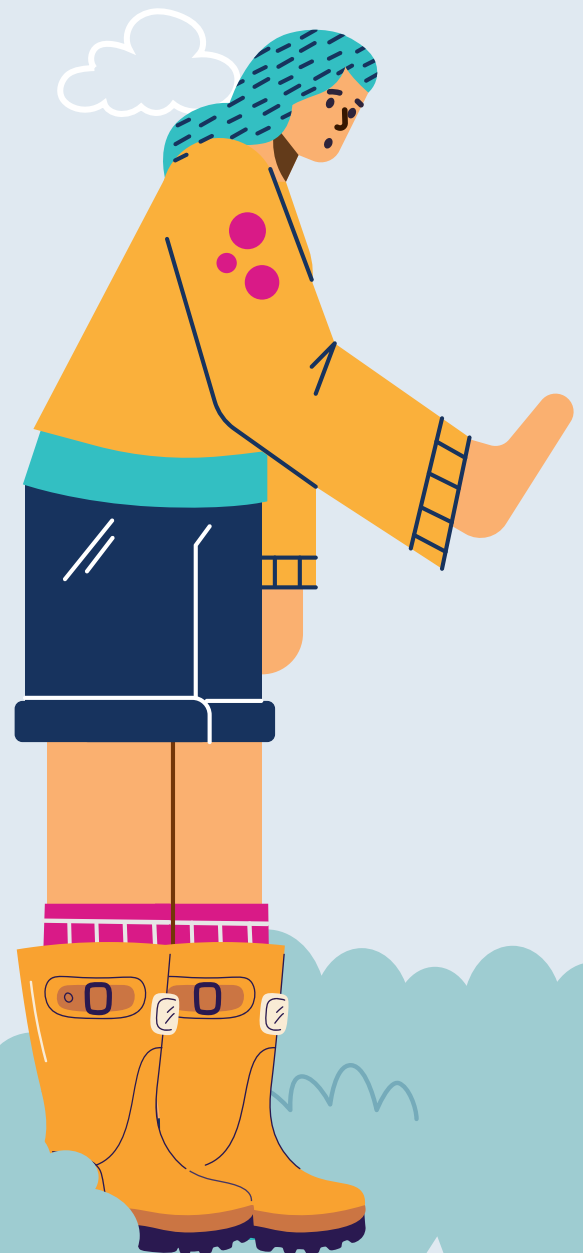
Desexing your pet has many positive outcomes:

- Providing health and welfare benefits for your pet
- Helping protect wildlife and the environment from feral animals
- Reducing unwanted pet populations
- Reducing the strain on animal shelters

Some councils also offer discounted dog registrations for responsible owners who desex their dogs.

I want to get my animal desexed, but I can't afford it – what should I do?

The cost can be a barrier for some people to get their animals desexed. Fortunately, it's a one-off expense and there are many initiatives that offer lower-cost (sometimes free) desexing for pets when people can't afford normal veterinary fees.



You can find these services on:

- SPCA desexing services on their Facebook page and website
- Humane Society desexing fund – humanesociety.org.nz/de-sexing/
- **In Auckland**, Fix your Friends events run by Kāinga Ora in partnership with Chained Dog – chaineddog.org.nz/fix-your-friends/
- **In Wellington**, discounted desexing of cats through Cats Protection Wellington – catsprotectionwellington.org.nz/desex-your-cat/
- CareVets Charitable Foundation Trust – carevets.co.nz/carevets-charitable-foundation-trust/

Considering a pet?

While having a pet can be incredibly rewarding, also consider the ongoing commitment and costs to keep them fit and healthy.

If you are considering getting a pet, be sure to let us know so we can help you prepare your property for your new family member.

Remember, from time to time we may need to visit or have a contractor conduct maintenance. It's important that you keep your dog restrained to keep them safe.

More tips about being a great pet owner can be found at kaingaora.govt.nz/tenants-and-communities/our-tenants/having-a-pet

For more information about owning a pet if you're a Kāinga Ora customer, call **0800 801 601** or search for 'pets' at kaingaora.govt.nz

No data? No problem.

Zero.govt.nz has you covered.

Zero Data means you can now access the Kāinga Ora website for free from your smartphone.

All you need to do is turn on your data and visit zero.govt.nz. If your mobile device is connected to a Spark, Skinny, One NZ, 2degrees, Warehouse Mobile, Slingshot or Orcon network, none of the mobile data you use when you visit websites through Zero Data will count against your data cap or incur any charges.

You can also access websites for health, social services, education and more for free. You'll know you're on Zero Data when you see a green ribbon across the top of the website.



Wellbeing in Kāinga Ora communities survey 2023



Complete the 20-minute wellbeing survey and go into the draw to win an iPad.

Go to: tehotongahapori.ac.nz/survey or scan this QR code



For a paper copy survey call Julia on 0800 553 365.



Te Hotonga Hapori
— connecting communities —

Neighbourly support during Cyclone Gabrielle



Helen and Darienne share a cup of tea over the crossword.

Looking out for each other. That was the natural reaction from residents in a group of five Kāinga Ora homes in Greenmeadows, Napier, to the challenges faced during Cyclone Gabrielle.

“I’m the youngest of the residents here,” says Darienne. “After the cyclone hit, I needed to be sure everyone was okay. Most of us have lived here for at least 10 years so we all know each other.

“We had no electricity for six days and no phone or internet contact for four days. That was frightening for some of us. Not being able to contact friends and family for support meant we had to rely on each other.

“My sister and her husband had to be evacuated and stayed three nights with me. My son and his young family were also evacuated and stayed a night with me. Together we tried to support my neighbours.

“It was just little things – making cups of tea on the gas BBQ, having a chat or charging someone’s phone while I was driving. After six days all the food in our fridges and freezers had gone off. They all needed to be cleaned out and the food disposed of. With the welfare hub set up at St Joseph’s Māori Girls’ College just across the road, I could get food for neighbours who weren’t getting their meals on wheels delivered at that time.”

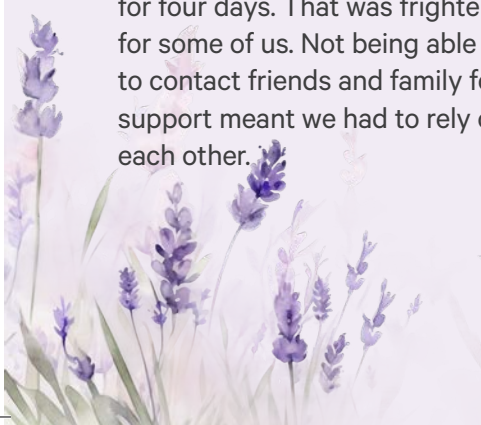
Darienne’s neighbour Helen was grateful to have neighbours calling in. “The floods isolated my daughter and she couldn’t get to me.

I felt quite fed up and with no power and no phone. I just listened to the radio. My leg was injured before the cyclone. Darienne asked the nurses based at the welfare hub to come over and check on it. That was timely as my leg wasn’t doing too well and needed some attention from the doctor.”

Lack of contact with elderly family members was a worry for many after the cyclone. The Kāinga Ora contact centre received a call from a son concerned about his mother. He couldn’t get in touch with her and was very worried. He thought she may have gone to stay with a close friend who lived in one of the five homes.

“We tried to check on as many of our vulnerable customers as possible in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone,” says Housing Support Team Leader Rochelle. “When I received the call about the missing mother, I did a welfare check on all our customers in these five homes. Mum was found safe and sound. That’s when I saw how all the residents had come together as a community to support each other. It was really heart-warming to see them making the best of a very challenging time.”

Housing Support Manager Casey continued to keep an eye on the ‘tight five’, helping some apply for Civil Defence payments to cover their losses and making sure wellbeing support was available for those who needed it.



Leana's mission to share her passion for growing kai with her community



Leana's passion for growing kai was passed on to her by her late grandfather, who had the 'green thumb' within her whānau. He inspired her to share the love for growing kai not only with her young children, but also with her wider community.

Leana lives in Palmerston North with her two children, aged 10 and 2. She's always had a passion for kai gathering – whether it be foraging, growing, hunting or fishing. The recent food shortages and high grocery costs motivated her to start a communal garden that both her whānau and neighbours could enjoy.

Thanks to her time and effort, the community garden in front of her home is now flourishing.

Kāinga Ora Housing Support Manager Kylie connected her with the Manawatū Food Action Network (MFAN), and Leana went on to become an MFAN Community Champion.

She now educates and empowers whānau across Palmerston North through regular gardening activities. Through MFAN she's created vegetable gardens, and provided planter boxes, soil and plants to help others, who are often Kāinga Ora customers like Leana.

"I share my knowledge to make sure they can continue their kai growing journey themselves," Leana says.

As well as being an MFAN Community Champion, Leana also volunteers at Community Fruit Harvest Manawatū.

"It fills my wairua knowing how others can be empowered to do this for themselves and their whānau."

Spring gardening tips

Even the most gardening-averse can feel when spring is in the air!

Blossoms and birds are accompanied by rapid growth of lawns and weeds. Warmth-lovers like tomatoes, beans and pumpkins need to wait until the soil really warms up (after Labour Day) before planting them outside, but leafy greens like lettuce, peas, celery, silverbeet and cabbage can go in earlier.

Spring is the season for all things green and crispy – lettuce, peas, parsley, coriander, spinach and silverbeet all love moist, cool conditions.



Set your garden up for the rest of the year

Gather as much organic material as you can find – straw, leaves, grass clippings, seaweed, manure – and either lay it directly on your beds or pile it up, to rot into compost. The more organic matter in your soil, the better it will hold water over the summer, meaning healthier plants and less watering for you.

Keep one step ahead of the weeds

Pulling them out before they go to seed, and then covering the soil surface in mulch, will save a huge amount of work later in summer.

Make compost

Pile up your prunings, lawn clippings, manure and wood chips. Weeds can be added if they don't

have seeds or thick roots – most home heaps don't get hot enough to kill these. Cover with a sack or some cardboard and it should be ready for your autumn plantings.

Plant shrubs, perennials, herbs and grasses

There is still usually enough wet weather for them to get their roots well established before summer dries out the soil.

Sow

Peas, any greens, early tomatoes and beans. Coriander, carrots and beets can be sown outside once apple trees are in blossom.

Plant

Garlic, borage, calendula, greens (bok choy, cabbage, silverbeet, lettuce, miner's lettuce, land cress).

Great Gardens of Kāinga Ora competition

Last year, our judges had a wonderful time reviewing all the beautiful submissions of gardens from our customers. This year, we've brought it back, so you'll get another chance to nominate a great gardener or enter our 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 a 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 to 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 at surveymonkey.com/r/kaingaora-great-gardens2023 or scan the QR code to enter.

Some of our 2022 winners

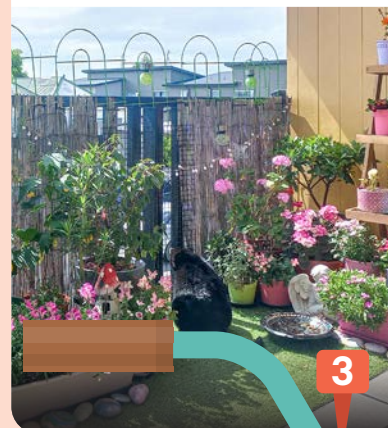
Supreme garden of 2022



Best community gardener 2022



Best small-space garden 2022



Categories

1 Supreme garden

\$250 gift card

The best overall garden judged by our panel.

2 Best small space

\$100 gift card

Our Great Gardens of Kāinga Ora isn't 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.

3 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.

4 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.

5 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 fruit 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.

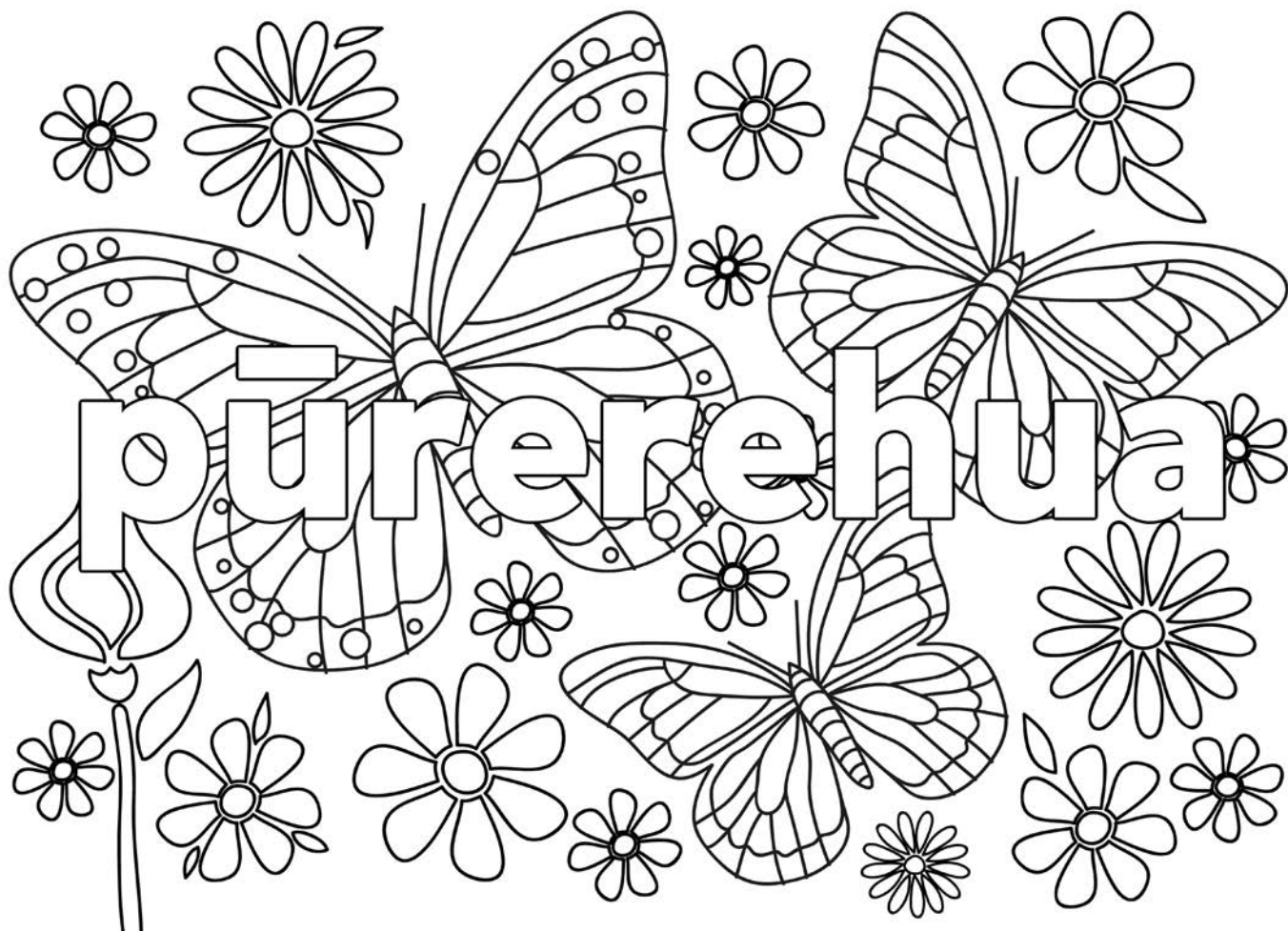
Terms and conditions: Competition is open from 1 to 31 October 2023. All valid entries received by the deadline will be considered for judging. The nominee (entrant) must currently reside in a Kāinga Ora home. Entries must answer all the criteria outlined in the entry form and include detailed photographs for judging purposes. Winners will be decided by 14 November 2023 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.



FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS



Kōanga (Spring)



What's hiding in here?



- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. soil – whenua | 6. butterfly – pūrerehua x2 | 10. lavender plant |
| 2. flower – puaka x4 | 7. peas – pī | 11. socks – tōkena |
| 3. dog – kuri x3 | 8. watering can – pounamu wai | 12. spade – kāheru |
| 4. carrot – kāreti x3 | 9. flax – harakeke | 13. gumboots – ngā kamupūtu x2 |
| 5. bee – pī x2 | | |

Oaty Chocolate Chunk Cookies

READY IN: 40 MINUTES

MAKES 30-36 DEPENDING ON SIZE

These scrummy oat and chocolate biscuits are just the thing to have with a cold glass of milk.

YOU WILL NEED:

225g butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 tbsp golden syrup

1½ cups plain flour

1½ cups rolled oats

1 tsp baking powder

a dash of milk – roughly ⅓ cup or as needed

1 cup chocolate morsels or drops or use ½ cup chocolate and ½ cup dried cranberries

TIP:

Zap the cookies in the microwave for a few seconds before eating to make the choccy chunks soft and gloriously gooey.



1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. In a bowl or processor cream the butter and sugar until light. Add the golden syrup then stir in the flour, oats, baking powder and milk.
2. Lastly add the chocolate chips. If using a processor be sure to stir the chocolate and oats in by hand or the processor may chop them to smithereens. Roll the mixture into balls or just blob onto prepared trays, with a 3cm gap between.
3. Bake for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on racks.





Looking after your mental wellbeing

Everyone goes through times that feel tough and usually we can get through them with kindness from our whānau and friends. But when we need more support, it's time to ask for professional help.

If you're struggling with persistent feelings of sadness, anger, frustration or worry, don't suffer in silence; contact any of these free services:

- Text or call 1737 to chat with a trained counsellor
- Lifeline 0800 543 354 or free text 4357
- Samaritans 0800 726 666
- Anxiety Helpline 0800 269 4389 (0800 ANXIETY)

For rangatahi (young people) aged 12-24:

- Call Youthline 0800 376 633 or free text 234
- Call What's Up 0800 942 8787

If you're feeling overwhelmed and cannot cope, you can:

- Call 111
- Go to the emergency department at your nearest hospital
- Call your local crisis team. You can get the number from Healthline 0800 611 116

If you'd like to meet other people who are struggling with similar issues, ask your GP to refer you to a community support group.

NEED TO TALK?

1737

free call or text
any time

Email option If you would prefer to receive this publication via email, send your email address to editor@close2home.co.nz



Get it done online with MyKāingaOra

- Check your rent balances and accounts, organise debt repayments, 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 are now available
- You can now contact us via the message function once you log in to the portal
- Help centre for frequently asked questions



If you access MyKāingaOra using Spark, Skinny, One NZ 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



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.



Contact Publication enquiries should be made to: editor@close2home.co.nz

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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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