

# Close to Home



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## Tenant shortlisted for New Zealand Gardener of the Year



Credit: Stuff / Dominion Post

Tracy Johnson, teacher, community leader and Kāinga Ora tenant, was named as one of five finalists from the gardeners nominated from across the country in the NZ Gardener magazine's 2019 Gardener of the Year competition.

From her backyard, Tracy leads the Common Unity Project's suburban Agrihood, where she and five other homes in her neighbourhood have turned their gardens into micro-farms, not only feeding themselves, but also putting food into the community.

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## Happy Holiday

Together with everyone at Kāinga Ora, I would like to wish you all a happy holiday season.

We're looking forward to 2020 and the chance to house and support more Kiwis.

This is why we are here. We know it's not just a house, it's a home, a warm, dry, safe place for people to live their lives and in some cases rebuild them.

In 2020 we are committed to being a great landlord and finding new and better ways to deliver the best possible service and support to the people we house.

I hope you all have a good holiday season, enjoying time with family and friends. Keep safe on the roads if you are travelling.

Ngā mihi, Paul Commons  
Deputy Chief Executive

Like us on Facebook

Visit Facebook to read about what our tenants, staff and communities are up to. We're at

[www.facebook.com/kaingaoragovtnz](https://www.facebook.com/kaingaoragovtnz)



## We're now called Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities

We're all about building better cities, towns and communities for New Zealanders, in partnership with other agencies, local government, iwi and Māori, as well as private organisations.

Kāinga Ora supports people across New Zealand to have good quality, affordable homes, and live in strong, healthy communities.

While our name has changed, you'll continue to receive the same level of support and care from us that you do today.

### Key things to remember:

- When you call our Customer Support Centre on our freephone 0800 801 601, we now answer the phone with 'Welcome to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities'.
- You can continue to ask us the same questions you asked before, including requesting repairs to your home.
- If you want to write us a letter use: Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, PO Box 2628, Wellington 6140. Apart from the new name, this is the same address you used before.
- If you want to send us an email use: enquiries1@kaingaora.govt.nz
- The Ministry of Social Development will continue to assess people's need for a house, income-related rent and any changes in circumstances you might have.



From left, back: Tenancy Manager Jared and Area Manager Steve;  
Front: Robert, Lizzy and Jeanette.

## Another year on – Auckland tenant Lizzy turns

# 101

Auckland tenant Lizzy recently had some very special visitors come to see her.

You may remember we did a story about Lizzy last year when she turned 100, on 2 November 2018.

At the time, Housing Minister Phil Twyford and The Breeze radio personalities Robert and Jeanette visited Lizzy to congratulate her. Lizzy's interview with Robert and Jeanette was also on the radio.

Robert and Jeanette said they were keen to visit Lizzy again to see how she was doing and also to interview her again.

Lizzy's friend Anne, who lives in the same Auckland Kāinga Ora village, came along to share in the festivities and listen to the radio interview.

Lizzy and Anne are great friends who like nothing more than sitting down every night to watch 'The Chase'. Lizzy says they enjoy the popular television show with their favourite drinks – either a Lipton's tea or a glass of port.

Lizzy says life's been pretty good and, yes, she confirmed she still loves bananas.



# Stay safe in the water this summer

As you and your whānau enjoy New Zealand's beaches, rivers, lakes, swimming pools and other water spots this summer, it's important to think about water safety for your friends and family.

## Follow these safety tips:

### Learn to swim

It's important you and your children can swim, even if you are not actively involved in water sports.

### Always supervise children near water

Keeping a watch on your children when they're near water is the single most important precaution you can take.

### At the beach

Some beaches in New Zealand are patrolled by surf lifeguards. On patrolled beaches, the lifeguards put up yellow and red flags. The area between the flags is constantly monitored and is the safest place to swim at the beach.

Always check with your local council to see if there are any water quality issues that make swimming there unsafe for health reasons.

For the Auckland area go to Auckland Council's [safeswim.org.nz](http://safeswim.org.nz) website. For other parts of the country, visit your local council's website.

### Swimming pools

Swimming pools and spa pools are part of life for many New Zealanders. They provide wonderful opportunities for family and friends to get together and have fun, but you still need to be careful. Remember these tips:

- The area close to a pool is often slippery – so walk, don't run, around the pool.
- Always obey the pool's safety rules and listen to the instructions of lifeguards.
- Play it safe. Depth can be hard to judge, so avoid diving into a pool unless you know it's deep enough, and remember to check for others before entering the water.

### At home

Always keep under-five-year-olds within arm's reach, and in sight, at all times – whether at the beach, lake, river or at home.

Don't forget, if you're putting a paddling pool up this summer, it must be no more than 400mm high (that's about as high as a bucket). Larger Para pools are not permitted on your property.

On the days you use your paddling pool, remember to empty out the water before putting it away. And remember, at the end of summer, store your paddling pool away for the winter months.

With planning and care, we can all have a safe and enjoyable time around the water this summer.

For more information and water safety tips for this summer please visit [www.watersafety.org.nz](http://www.watersafety.org.nz)

## Be safe in the summer sun!

### SLIP

Slip into a long-sleeved shirt and into the shade.

### SLOP

Slop on plenty of sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and re-apply regularly.

### SLAP

Slap on a hat with a wide brim or a cap with flaps. More people get sunburn on their face and neck than any other part of their body.

### WRAP

It's good to wear sunglasses too. The sun is just as dangerous to your eyes as it is to your skin.

### MELANOMA IS A KILLER, CATCH IT EARLY!

Check your skin regularly, and ask someone to check the back of your neck and your back. If you notice any change in a spot, freckle or mole, get it checked by your GP as soon as possible.





Tenancy Manager Frank and Senior Tenancy Manager Israel congratulate Sharon on her great garden.

## Sharing stories and kai in the Marlborough sun

### Residents recently enjoyed a barbeque at the Weld Street complex in Blenheim.

Senior Tenancy Manager Israel said residents seized the chance to mingle with neighbours, staff and the local Police team, and enjoy a day in the sun – at their place.

“The idea was to connect tenants with each other, and to help make their complex a safe and enjoyable

place to live in. We also provided skips to help get rid of some of the rubbish that accumulates over time.”

A highlight of the day was the presentation of a Great Gardens Award to resident Sharon. She was a florist for much of her working life, evident in the beautiful planting and decorative arrangements around her home.



**You can tell us about any dishonesty or fraud concerns in confidence. Call any time on 0800 8355 469.**

## 8 litres of moisture builds up in Kiwi homes each day.

Simple activities like cooking, showering and hanging your washing inside can cause this build-up of unhealthy moisture.

A dry home is easier to heat. The more moisture there is in the air, the harder and more expensive it is to heat. The good news is that it's easy to get rid of.

**For a dry and healthy home follow these three easy steps:**



**WIPE** any moisture or drips off your windows and walls.



**OPEN** windows in the mornings and while you shower or take a bath.



**HANG** washing outside to dry, if you can. Or in a room with a door closed and windows open.

**Do these simple things to make it easier and cheaper to heat your home:**



**OPEN** curtains during the day to let warmth in and close them in the evening to keep the warmth in.



**STOP** cold air getting into your home by stopping draughts around doors, windows and fireplaces.



**HEAT** your home using thermostats and timers so your heaters only come on when you need them and automatically turn off when the right temperature is reached.

## PETS



# BEAT THE HEAT

## Keeping pets safe during the hot summer months

### Take care when exercising your pet

Exercise them when it's not so hot – in the early morning or the evening.

Avoid long walks on sunny days.

Take your pets to an area that has grass and is shady and cool – if they only want a short walk or want to lie down, let them.

You should have fresh water available for your pet all year round, but it's even more important when it's hot outside.

### Hot cars can kill

Please don't leave your dog unattended in a car at any time of the day. If the purpose of your trip is not to take your dog somewhere, please leave your dog at home.

### Beware of sunburn

Just like people, animals can also suffer from sunburn – use pet-friendly sunscreen to rub on the tips of their ears, on the end of their nose and on their stomach.

### Remember the 3 second rule

Remember if the pavement is too hot for you, it's too hot for your pet. Check it's safe by holding the back of your hand to the pavement for 3 seconds – if it's too hot for you to keep your hand there, it's too hot for your pet to walk on.

### Shade is essential for all animals

Whatever animal you have, they all need to have good shelter that protects them from the sun's harsh rays.



## Avoid falling behind with your rent payments these holidays

We understand Christmas is expensive and it's easier to fall behind with your rent payments at this time of year.

- If you don't think you can make your rent payment at any stage, call us on **0800 801 601** to talk about options that might work for you.
- If you are paid extra before Christmas to cover any time off, make sure you pay your rent for that period.
  - **You can make your rent payment by internet or mobile banking.** Just select Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities from the list of Bill Payee options available and fill in the payment fields.
  - **You can also visit any BNZ branch** – simply inform the teller that you want to make a payment to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities. Then provide your payment reference number – the teller can then give you a receipt as proof of payment.
- For any questions about your payment options, contact us on **0800 801 601** and someone can help you.

# Laughter is the best medicine for these Mosgiel tenants



“If I didn’t have this group to come to I’d be sitting on my own at home.”

Kāinga Ora tenant Eleanor’s words are sadly a sign of a much larger issue. According to Age Concern, about half of all older New Zealanders experience loneliness, and one in 10 are lonely most or all of the time.

For Eleanor, though, a regular catch-up for over-65s run by her Tenancy Manager Stacey means she gets to meet new people, find new hobbies and regularly hear from local community groups.

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world. I look forward to it every time,” Eleanor says.

“Stacey is lovely. I love her to bits. She’s been absolutely awesome to me; she’s my best mate – that’s the only way I can put it.”

The events began when Stacey noticed many of her older tenants in the Mosgiel area “were kind of hanging out for visits”. She now gets notified whenever a tenant in her area turns 65 so she can invite them to join in.

“Some don’t have a lot of family or family has moved away. They see us as a really big part of their lives and we’re really fortunate to be able to go into their homes and see them,” Stacey says.





**“To see them outside of their home, in a setting where they don’t feel that you’re there to check the house – they’re here to have a chat and a laugh – that’s the best part.”**

The get-togethers began informally but quickly developed as more people started coming along, and other local groups saw the benefit of taking part. They’re now held every two months.

Regular visitors include the Community Constable, and members of the local Community Board, Neighbourhood Support and East Taieri Church. Fire and Emergency recently provided tips about lowering fire risk and keeping their homes safe.

The events have encouraged people like Albert, who recently lost his wife, to head along and meet new people.

“I’ve got a couple of mates I know who come down here. It’s good to meet different people as well... it fills in a bit of time and I think it gets

better each time I come because you don’t feel so scared,” he says.

For another tenant, William, it was “a good opportunity to talk to our housing managers if there’s anything we need”, as well as the social aspect.

“The older ones are left alone a lot more than they used to be. Years ago we cared for our grandparents... some of the people who live around me, they don’t have family who visit at all.

**“I think it’s important that we do this and look after each other.”**



## Food safety



### WASH

#### Always wash your hands before handling food

Follow the 20+20 handwashing rule before and after handling food – wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and hot water, and then dry your hands for 20 seconds with a clean, dry towel or paper towel.



### COOK

Defrost frozen food in the fridge before cooking, not on your bench top.

Cool hot foods, covered and for no more than 30 minutes before refrigerating.

Reheat leftovers until steaming hot throughout and don’t reheat them more than once.



### CHILL

Keep food very cold or very hot – a chilly bin is a good way of keeping chilled products cold when taking them home from the supermarket or taking them to beach for a picnic.

Cover leftovers and put them in the fridge until needed.



### FRIDGE TEMPERATURE

Make sure your fridge is set to 5°C or less to ensure bacteria doesn’t grow.



### Sun and rain make for a rush of growth, especially up until the longest day in mid-December.

But sun and wind also quickly dry out your soil and plants. A layer of **mulch** provides protection. Use whatever you have - grass clippings, straw, dried plants (without seeds), old cotton, wool or hessian fabrics. One deep water followed by mulch is better for plants than a light daily sprinkle.

**Tomatoes** are from Mexico, so they like warm, dry conditions. Water the roots, not the leaves, or you'll encourage blights and fungal disease.

Weekly, on a dry day, pinch out the laterals (shoots that grow where the leaves meet the stem) and tie in any new growth to stakes or strings. Feed with liquid seaweed at least once a month for best crops.

**Beans** are a pretty bomb-proof crop even when your soil isn't the best. Dwarf beans are good in windy situations or if you don't have a fence or shed to grow them against. Plant direct from seed.

**Salad greens** can be more of a challenge over the summer months, as they go bitter or go off to seed if the roots dry out. Plant them in the shade of other taller plants, where the soil is nice and moist.

Thanks to Hannah Zwartz,  
Urban Kai  
Co-ordinator/Educator,  
Common Unity  
Project Aotearoa



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

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## Tenant shortlisted for NZ Gardener of the Year



Credit: Stuff / Dominion Post

Soon after Tracy moved into her Kāinga Ora house, she turned her quarter-acre backyard into an incredible vegetable garden that has hundreds of plants sprouting across the entire section.

"Being nominated for Gardener of the Year has been great," says Tracy.

"I love my garden, even though it takes around three hours to harvest all of my veggies.

"This house and property have been awesome for growing my garden. If I'm honest, this house and garden have really made my life happier, so being nominated is kind of the cherry on the top."

While Tracy wasn't the overall winner, she was praised by the *NZ Gardener* Editor who said Tracy was "a great and worthy" finalist.

"How great it was to celebrate the work's she is doing and I hope everything in her garden flourishes."

### Keep your lawns mowed – long grass is a fire hazard

During the summer months, it's important you mow the grass around your home regularly. As the temperature rises, so too does the risk of grass fires.

Long grass is a hazard – it's also a breeding ground for rats and mice.





# Grant loves his Phillipstown home

**Grant's home in Phillipstown, Christchurch is warm and modern, and he and wife Lorraine "get on so well with neighbours" in the 18-unit complex.**

"I wouldn't move from here if anybody asked me to," Lorraine says with a chuckle. "These units are lovely, they're really nice."

Grant also needs that connection with his neighbours and community support as he recovers from surgery and manages his diabetes.

The condition meant being admitted to hospital 15 times this year and taking about 40 different medications each day. "I'm just starting to learn to walk again after I had my legs amputated. That's why I'm in the wheelchair at the moment," he says.

A recent event held by several local community groups, led by Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, aimed to show people like Grant just how much support is available to them.

Police, Neighbourhood Support and Phillipstown Hub members all turned out to chat about their services and – in the case of officers in the Phillipstown Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) – man the barbecue so everyone could share some kai.

**"We try to work in with groups like Kāinga Ora to help build community spirit."**



"We try to work in with groups like Kāinga Ora to help build community spirit. There's a lot of social housing around Phillipstown, with some deprivation and social needs, so we turn up and make sure people know what they can do if they're not feeling safe or have problems in the community," says Phillipstown NPT Sergeant Grant Stewart.

"Some people may feel a wee bit socially isolated. There are some people with mental health issues, but they come out at gatherings like this and make connections with people who can help them when they need it. They might not need our help now, but they know how to approach us if they do."

Kāinga Ora Tenancy Manager Renee, who organised the event, thinks coming up with a name for their village would be a great way to create a stronger sense of community, rather than just referring to it by its street name and number.

**"What better way is there to connect with something than by giving it a name?"**

"I thought it'd help our residents feel a sense of belonging and ownership in their homes – these homes are theirs, and what better way is there to connect with something than by giving it a name?"

Renee and the community hope to settle on a name in the New Year.



# TREEHOUSE



P	B	B	Q	E	V	K
O	X	E	A	N	S	I
H	S	A	N	I	U	R
U	U	C	T	E	M	I
T	N	H	I	F	M	H
U	S	A	M	X	E	I
K	H	S	K	V	R	M
A	I	G	I	F	T	E
W	N	D	N	A	S	T
A	E	Q	L	O	V	E

BBQ                      POHUTUKAWA  
 BEACH                 SAND  
 GIFT                     SUMMER  
 KIRIHIMETE         SUNSHINE  
 LOVE                    XMAS

## Holiday hilarity!

- Q.** Why do mummies like the holidays so much?  
**A.** They're into all the wrapping.
- Q.** What is a bird's favourite Christmas story?  
**A.** The Finch Who Stole Christmas.
- Q.** What do you call a shark that delivers toys at Christmas?  
**A.** "Santa Jaws!"
- Q.** Where do snowmen keep their money?  
**A.** In a snow bank.
- Q.** What do snowmen like to do on the weekend?  
**A.** Chill out.
- Q.** What does Jack Frost like best about school?  
**A.** Snow and tell.
- Q.** What do you get if you cross an iPad with a Christmas tree?  
**A.** A pineapple!
- Q.** Which of Santa's reindeer has the worst manners?  
**A.** RUDE-olph, of course!



## Christmas tree card

### You will need:

coloured card      scissors

green paper      glue


1. Cut a sheet of A4 sized paper in half. Fold the half in half to make a card.
2. Open up the card. Fold the left half to the middle (align the end to the centre fold). Repeat with the other side.
3. Cut a rectangle out of green paper that is smaller than your card. Fold it in half.
4. Draw a Christmas tree half. Cut along the outline you drew.
5. Open up your tree, then cut along the fold.
6. Apply glue on one half of the Christmas tree and stick it on the card.
7. Do the same with the other half, making sure it's lined up with the first half.
8. Write your note in the card and deliver it to someone special!



[www.easypeasyandfun.com](http://www.easypeasyandfun.com)

# Christmas cake ice cream



 **Prep time 20 minutes**  
+ 4–6 hours freezing

 **Serves 8-10 people**

### You will need:

2 litres of store-bought French vanilla ice cream

300g Christmas cake – bought or homemade

2 tbsp spirits such as brandy or rum or use orange or apple juice

Fresh strawberries, halved and Hershey's Kisses or other small chocolates to decorate

1. Remove ice cream from freezer and allow to soften but not liquefy.
2. While ice cream is softening, line a loaf pan approx 22cm long x 12cm deep with a couple of pieces of cling film so it overhangs generously on both sides.
3. In a large bowl, crumble the cake and sprinkle with the brandy or juice. Tip the softened ice cream

into the bowl and gently fold in the crumbled cake.

4. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and tap on the bench to fill corners. Fold excess cling film over the top and return to the freezer for 4 hours or overnight to re-freeze completely.
5. To serve, turn the ice cream out of the tin onto a large serving platter, remove cling film and pile strawberry halves and Hershey's Kisses over the top so they spill down onto the serving platter. Serve in thick slices with the berries.

**Tip:** You can make Christmassy gingernut ice cream in the same way. Swap the crumbled cake for 2 packs of crushed gingernut biscuits, and decorate the ice cream with fresh strawberries and a drizzle of chocolate sauce – homemade or store-bought.

**Thanks to Sophie Gray for providing this recipe –**  
[www.destitutegourmet.com](http://www.destitutegourmet.com)

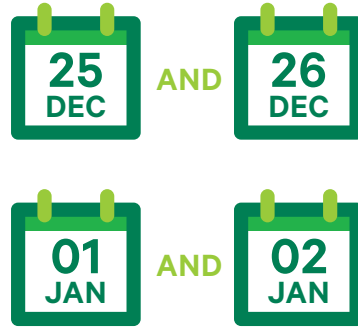


## Our opening hours over the holiday period




Call 0800 801 601

enquiries1@kaingaora.govt.nz

Our Customer Support Centre will only be open for **urgent enquiries** on the following days:



Other than that our service remains the same:

-  Non-urgent calls between 8am and 6pm weekdays only.
-  Urgent calls 24 hours, 7 days a week.
-  Local offices open for drop-in between 9am and 4pm weekdays only.



## 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.



## We want to hear from you if something is not right

It's important that you're able to live well in your home, so if something is not right we want to hear from you.

**Step 1:** If you're dissatisfied with something, contact us and we'll make sure we record your complaint the first time, so you don't have to repeat the story if you contact us again.

**Step 2:** If you're not happy with the way we've sorted out your complaint, you can contact us again and ask us to have another look at it.

**Step 3:** If you're still not happy with how the complaint has been dealt with, you can ask us to refer your complaint to the Office of the Complaints Commissioner for an independent review.

If you don't need us to respond on something, we would still like your feedback on what is working well,

or what isn't, so we can keep improving our service to you.

It's easy to contact us with a complaint, or ask for a review, and give more general feedback – use what works best for you.

- Call us free on 0800 801 601 from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday and 24/7 for urgent calls
- Talk to your tenancy manager
- Call into your local office between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday
- Email: enquiries1@kaingaora.govt.nz
- Use the feedback form on our website: <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/contact-us/feedback-form/> – or click on 'Contact Us'
- Write to us: Kāinga Ora, National Office, PO Box 2628, Wellington 6140

### Thanks to:



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