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issue 29 July 2011



Fairer state housing

CHANGES TO CREATE A FAIRER STATE HOUSING SYSTEM



Working to get ahead

SCHOOL PUPILS ARE GETTING HANDS-ON WORK EXPERIENCE



Brothers in arms

CHALLENGES FOR CHRISTCHURCH'S HOUSING NEW ZEALAND STAFF



Treehouse

NATIVE BIRD AND PLANT PUZZLE

Souping up Gonville

AUTHOR
Shaun Cawston

If a 'wool bale race', a tyre changing competition or splashing down a water-slide sound like your idea of a good time, then the Whanganui suburb of Gonville has got you covered.



Whanganui water action.

Since 2007, Gonville residents have been holding a community event called "Stone Soup". The initiative was started by the local Te Ora Hou group with the local neighbourhood. The name of the event came from an old tale in which the people of a village all become involved in cooking and sharing a giant soup that started with just a stone in a pot.

Every two months the group organises a community day at the local park which includes all sorts of activities for families to interact and have fun together. The area has a large number of Housing New Zealand tenants who

come along or give their time to help out. Local tenants Yvonne Hyland and Tupou McLeod can usually be found serving up the hangi, "it brings people together... I have made many new friends from Stone Soup", says Tupou. Yvonne also helped set up a community garden to grow food for the event.

Kirsty Burgess is the Tenancy Manager for the area. She says "people have embraced the idea and 300-400 people come along to meet neighbours, talk, share food and play with the kids. Te Ora Hou have done an amazing job. This is not a Housing New Zealand initiative, it is something for the community, by the community".

And it's working. A kōrero corner at each event encourages people to discuss ideas to improve the neighbourhood which has led to some great successes. Locals have worked with other organisations to set up a new play area in the park, create a community garden and start really positive initiatives to reduce violence and help unlicensed drivers to get their driver's licence.

Kirsty says that "its been great for the community to get involved, and do it

Welcome



We have reached the coldest and darkest part of the year, commonly known as the winter solstice. For Māori, the arrival of the winter solstice is marked with the appearance of Matariki or Pleiades. It's an opportunity to reflect on the year gone by and look forward to the year ahead. We wish all our Housing New Zealand customers a prosperous Matariki new year.

Editor

for themselves". She still helps out in her own time with the planning and on the day you'll find her in the face painting tent. Make mine a panda thanks Kirsty! ☺

MĀORI FACT

The Māori people are the indigenous people of Aotearoa – New Zealand and first arrived here in waka hōrua (voyaging canoes) from their ancestral homeland of Hawaiki over 1,000 years ago. Today, Māori make up over 14 percent of the population. Their language and culture has a major impact on all facets of New Zealand life.





We're making state housing fairer

Housing New Zealand is making changes to create a fairer state housing system.

We want to house as many of those in the greatest need that we can.

At the moment, there are about 3,500 individuals or families urgently needing a state home. People who have no other option and desperately need our help.

We also have about 70,000 state houses throughout the country, some of which are tenanted by people who can support themselves in private rental, or even buy their own home. We also have tenants who live in homes that are larger than they need.

To make the system fairer in the future, we have:

- adjusted how we decide who gets a state house to ensure we are housing those in the greatest need
- introduced tenancy reviews for all **new** tenants who sign a tenancy agreement after 1 July this year.

By housing only people with a high need for a state house, and reviewing their tenancies, we will be able to help more people.

If you signed a tenancy agreement with us before 1 July you will not be affected by these changes at this stage, unless you request a transfer to another state home.

If you want to move home – either to another state house, to a private rental, or would like to buy your own home – contact us and we will help you do that.

If your house is too big and you have spare bedrooms, we can move you to a smaller house. If you were already a tenant before 1 July 2011, and transfer now because your current home is much too big for you, your circumstances will not be reviewed in your new home at this time.

Your tenancy manager will explain how we can help, or call the contact centre on **0800 801 601** to discuss.

What's changed for new applicants from 1 July?

On 1 July 2011, we introduced revised criteria for new people applying for a state house.

This means only people with an urgent need for housing, and categorised as A and B priority, will be placed on the waiting list.

New applicants categorised as a C and D priority will not be placed on the state housing waiting list anymore. Instead we will offer to help them find alternative housing through our Options and Advice service, and we will record them on a Housing Needs Register.

How do tenancy reviews work?

Anyone allocated a state house from now on will have their need reviewed at regular intervals. This means their tenancy will be reviewed at least every three years or when we become aware of a change in their circumstances, such as higher income or a new partner moving into their home.

By doing this, Housing New Zealand can help people who are ready or able to move towards housing independence or another state house more suited to their needs.

We know that some people in our homes will always need a state house, particularly the elderly and seriously disabled, and those people will be able to remain in state housing.

If you are an existing tenant, you will not have tenancy reviews at this stage, unless you request a transfer to another state home.

However, the Government has said it will consider extending tenancy reviews to existing tenants in 2012, depending on the outcome of the General Election. [H](#)



Questions?

If you have any further questions about the changes please talk to your tenancy manager or call the contact centre on 0800 801 601.



Getting ready for digital TV

Digital television has been available in New Zealand for some years now, and the old analogue transmission system will be progressively switched off across the country between September 2012 and November 2013.

Once New Zealand goes digital, people with older analogue television sets will need to buy some new equipment to keep watching TV.

There is, of course, plenty of time to get ready, but we are encouraging Housing New Zealand tenants to plan for the change now. More than seven out of 10 Kiwi homes have already made the switch and are watching digital television.

That's because digital TV provides better picture and sound quality and more channels than the old analogue system, and makes it easier for broadcasters to provide services such as onscreen TV guides and subtitling for people with sight and hearing impairments.

For most people, all that's needed is a set-top box that plugs into a UHF aerial and existing television, although in some areas a satellite dish may be required. Freeview is the free-to-air digital TV service, while subscription services are also available from SKY.


If you already watch Freeview or SKY, you are already receiving a digital TV signal, so don't need to do anything. If not, you will need to go digital to keep watching television after the switchover occurs.

It's important to remember that a new television set is not required however, as almost any television can go digital with a set-top box.

After going digital, people will be able to enjoy the same channels they currently watch, as well as receiving some new ones.

Going Digital provides a website, www.goingdigital.co.nz and a

free-phone helpline, **0800 838 800**, so people can get the information and advice they need about switching to digital TV.

You can also ask any reputable television retailer for advice and information on what is the best option for you. 



We want to improve service to tenants

Housing New Zealand will introduce some changes over the next few years so tenants can contact us more easily and we can respond quicker.

The changes will involve making our staff more mobile so they spend less time in offices and more time in the community managing tenancies.

We're going to make the most of new technology to give tenants more options – for example one day in the future you will be able to check your account with us online.

Over time we will also have more staff based at Community Link offices

around the country so tenants have a one-stop shop for all government social services. We're going to be working more closely with these agencies so that state housing tenants can get the services they need, such as budgeting or health advice.

We're really excited about these changes because they will mean we can respond better to families who ask for help. These changes will be introduced gradually over the next few years and we will keep you informed along the way.



Working to get ahead

AUTHOR
Marie Winfield

A group of Auckland high school pupils are getting hands-on work experience at the construction of a new state housing complex in Panmure, Tāmaki.

The four students from Tāmaki College work at the construction site once a week, as part of a programme aimed at helping pupils move from school to employment.

TJ Nouata, who lives with his family in a Housing New Zealand home in Glen Innes, is one of the pupils working on the redevelopment in Kings Road, Panmure where 40 new homes are being built for older people.

The 16 year old says he's learning the reality of what it's like to work on a construction site and what a career in construction would be like, including learning to use tools, and working on timber framing of the new homes.

In conjunction with his work experience, he is studying for 20 level 3 NCEA Carpentry credits through the BCITO (Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation).

"It's a great opportunity for me. It's great feeling like one of the boys on the team, and I'm learning heaps," he says.

TJ is now planning to take a building apprenticeship or doing a carpentry course when he leaves school.

Tāmaki College principal, Kathy Miln says the students are very fortunate to be able to gain valuable skills and experience on the Housing New Zealand redevelopment.

Construction on the \$13 million state housing complex will be completed before Christmas.



TJ on-site with Housing Minister Phil Heatley and local MP Peseta Sam Lotu-liga.

The modernisation project will upgrade 120 state homes over the three-year period, July 2009 to June 2012.

So far 80 homes have been completed. The modernised homes are healthier, warmer and have much improved service and living areas as well as enhanced street appeal through thoughtfully designed fencing and landscaping.



The modernisation project will upgrade 120 state homes over the three-year period, July 2009 to June 2012.



Still brothers in arms after Canterbury earthquake

The Canterbury earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks have presented many challenges for Christchurch's Housing New Zealand staff.



Hugh Kotara and his brother outside their damaged state house.

Since the September 2010 earthquake staff in the Christchurch offices have rehoused 193 tenants into alternative housing.

An additional 60 tenants have also had to move out of their properties since the February earthquake and Housing New Zealand is working hard to match properties as houses become available.

The challenges have been huge says Christchurch Regional Manager Kevin Third.

"My staff have been working under enormous pressure but have remained focused on trying to find alternative housing for the people who have been displaced because of the earthquakes.

"I think this disaster has brought out the best in people, not only my staff but also many of our tenants as we all go about trying to rebuild our lives and city."

Mr Third says Aranui tenant Hugh Kotara exemplifies the perseverance and patience that has been needed during this trying time.

He was ready and waiting outside his home when Housing New Zealand arrived to check the damage done to his house in the February earthquake.

Since the earthquake, Mr Kotara's home had no power or running water and Christchurch City Council was still working to fix a sewerage pipe that broke in his backyard during the violent shaking.

A tide mark remained around the base of the house showing the flood of sewage that came halfway up his steps immediately after the pipe burst.

During the earthquake, Mr Kotara was at home looking after his unwell brother, who after the earthquake went to stay with their sister for a while in Greymouth.

Mr Kotara then decided to join his whānau and temporarily went to live with 26 other adult members of his family, their children and pets at his daughter's Riccarton home.

"We filled up the house and spilled outside into tents," he said.

Mr Kotara and his brother have been reunited and have moved to another state house just around the corner from his old home.

"We want to stay in the neighbourhood because my daughter and the rest of our family are close by and I know the area," he said.

He counts himself fortunate that he now has a home with a level floor and one that doesn't shake every time a car passes by.

Are you prepared for an emergency?

Prepare to look after yourself and your family by:

- storing emergency water (at least three litres per person per day)
- having emergency survival items
- having a household emergency plan
- listening to the radio for official information and updates.

For more information on these essential items, please contact your local council or visit www.getthru.govt.nz

MĀORI FACT

In 1984 a Telecom tolls operator was demoted for greeting a customer with 'Kia ora'. She was later reinstated after the Prime Minister intervened.





4
KIDS

TREEHOUSE IS THE 'KIDS ONLY' ZONE FOR CLOSE TO HOME.

TREEHOUSE!

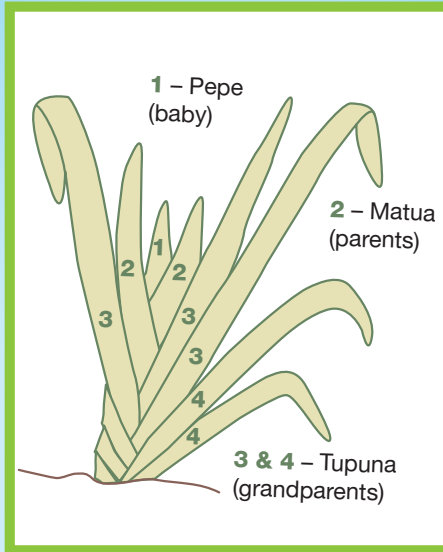
STORY OF THE HARAKEKE

The harakeke plant is one of New Zealand's oldest species. Named harakeke by the Māori, it was called 'flax' by the early European explorers.

Māori use the harakeke for weaving (raranga) such things as mats (whāriki), baskets (kete), fishing nets (kupenga), bird traps (tāhere) and clothing (kākahu), to name a few. It's no wonder that this plant is a national treasure (taonga) and strict protocols (tikanga) are followed when harvesting the leaves.

Before harvesting, a special prayer (karakia) is recited to give thanks to the harakeke, the surrounding area, and life (Mauri) in general. Picking is only carried out on fine days, and during the hours of daylight.

The plants are also likened to whānau (family) and only the outer, older ones – the ancestors (tupuna) are picked.



The next leaves – the parents (matua) and the most inner leaves – the baby (rito) remain. Harakeke is also used as a medicine. Its sticky gum and root juice was used on sores and wounds. The nectar from the flowers was used as a sweetener.

DOT TO DOT



Now colour it in!

NATIVE BIRD AND PLANT PUZZLE

(match the name with the bird/flower)

- Pūkeko
- Native wood pigeon
- Morepork
- Fantail
- Tui
- Kiwi
- Kōwhai bloom
- Pohutukawa bloom



ANSWERS ON PAGE 4

CELEBRATING TE REO MĀORI

For the past four years we have celebrated Māori language week, normally in the first week of July.

Māori language week is a celebration of the unique language of these beautiful South Pacific Islands called Aotearoa – New Zealand. Māori is one of three official languages of New Zealand – English and New Zealand Sign Language are the other two.

The theme for the Māori language week celebrations this year was manaakitanga or hospitality. As a country we are looking forward to hosting the Rugby World Cup and being proud Kiwis we are looking forward to welcoming visitors to our beautiful part of the world and supporting our All Blacks as they give it their all!

Here are a few phrases you could try

Nau mai! Welcome !

Kia ora, e hoa! G'day, mate!

Nau mai ki Aotearoa! Welcome to New Zealand!

Ka pai! That is good!

If you want to go the extra mile here are the words to the famous haka Ka Mate! Ka Mate! that the All Blacks will be performing before their games. Give it a go!

Ka mate! Ka mate!

Ka ora! Ka ora!

Tēnei te tangata pūhuru

**Nāna nei i tiki mai
(!) whakawhiti te rā**

A – ūpane ka ūpane !

A – ūpane ka ūpane !

Whiti te rā! Hī!

Kia ora, e hoa!

WINTER WARMER!

Spinach & Lentil Stew

kindly supplied by Kate Zabranski-Todd,
Housing Access Manager, Porirua

This is a really easy, quick and cheap winter warmer.

You can be easy with the measurements depending on taste. I also find that this recipe improves with age.

Ingredients:

2 onions, halved & sliced into ½ rings

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 tin lentils (more if you are feeding more than four people)

1 tin Indian flavoured tomatoes

1 package frozen spinach (can use fresh silverbeet, just remember that it does reduce quite a lot)

½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground cumin

freshly ground black pepper to taste

SERVES 4

Method:

- 1 Heat oil in a heavy pan over medium heat. Fry onion for 10 minutes or so, until it begins to turn golden.
- 2 Add minced garlic and saute for another minute or so.
- 3 Add lentils and tomatoes.
- 4 Defrost the spinach and add to the mix along with the salt, cumin pepper and extra garlic (if wanted).
- 5 Let it simmer for ten minutes.

COST BOX

Frozen Spinach	4.45
Onion	0.60
Garlic	1.32
Tin of Indian Spiced Tomatoes	2.25
Tin of lentils	1.65
Jar of ground cumin	2.77
Total	\$13.04

Garden diary



July

Kitchen garden

- In warmer areas, sowing of many vegetable crops can begin in July. If the soil is too heavy and wet, sow in seed trays for planting out later. Keep building up vegetable beds with compost.
- Plant seedlings of artichoke, cauliflower, lettuce, onions, potatoes, rhubarb, silverbeet and cabbage. To allow earlier plantings to germinate in cooler districts, protect seedlings with an empty 2-litre soft drink bottle with the neck cut off.
- Sow seeds of broccoli, cabbage, broad beans, cauliflower, peas, lettuce, onions, radish, spinach, silverbeet, swede and turnips. In warmer districts sow carrots, parsnips and beetroot.

Flower garden

- In the flower garden, prune or plant roses, and prune hydrangeas and fuchsias.

Aug

Kitchen garden

- Plant seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, broccoli, silverbeet and spinach. Lay seed potatoes in a tray in a sunny place for 7-10 days until the 'eyes' sprout, then plant.
- Cabbage, celery, spring onion, onions, silverbeet, spinach and lettuce seeds can be sown in trays for transplanting later.
- Divide up the perennial herbs and plant out as the soil warms. Lift and divide clumps of rhubarb.

Flower garden

- Prepare the garden for spring planting, digging in generous amounts of compost.
- Plant new season flowering annuals in containers.

Sept

Kitchen garden

- Plant out cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuces, onions and silverbeet.
- Hoe around all growing crops – loose soil warms more quickly.
- Set out seed potatoes for sprouting. Plant seed potatoes now if your area is frost-free; at end of the month if slightly frost-prone.
- Water indoor plants as the weather gets warmer.
- Feed established fruit trees with citrus food.

Flower garden

- Remove winter flowering annuals and replace with summer bloomers.



Attracting native wildlife to your garden



- Invite the birds over – a good layer of mulch or leaf litter on the garden will encourage insects making good food for the likes of Fantails, Silvereye and Greywarbler.
- Plant their favourite foods – Harakeke and Kōwhai are good, plant them where you can see them from your house, not too close though as the birds are confused by reflections and can fly into the window injuring or killing themselves.
- Birds will fly long distances in search of flowers and fruit. Plant hanging baskets with creepers such as Fuchsia procumbens to attract them. It's a wonderful sight with the red berries hanging down and provides a good incentive for the birds to come and visit.

Contact Publication enquiries should be made to closetohome@hnzc.co.nz www.hnzc.co.nz

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