



Close to Home



03 TE ANIWA'S STORY
– SOMETHING'S NOT
RIGHT WITH DAD

04 CUSTOMER'S SWEET
PAIR OF BEST FRIENDS

05 ATTENTION PET
OWNERS – BOMBARD
US WITH CUTENESS!

07 DIGITAL SKILLS
PROGRAMME FOR
KĀINGA ORA CUSTOMERS

10 SELF-CRUSTING
QUICHE RECIPE

12 GARDENING TIPS
FOR SPRING



From tenancy manager to family member – how downsizing has made a difference



Peter and Tenancy Manager Chloe.

Peter couldn't face the thought of moving from his home of nearly 30 years after his wife passed away. But he agreed to shift and, in the process, gained a new 'family' member.



When Eileen passed away, Peter didn't want to move from his New Brighton home.

His wife had grown up in the coastal Christchurch suburb. The pair had later lived in Blenheim, Marlborough, but needed social housing when they moved home in 1983, so contacted Kāinga Ora (then the Housing Corporation).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

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.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

From tenancy manager to family member – how downsizing has made a difference

“She loved the sea and walking along the beach, so we were lucky to have the opportunity of getting a place there,” Peter, now 85 years old, says.

The Britannia Street property would be their home for almost 30 years. Peter had worked as a news photographer in Marlborough and had an interest in antiques, particularly chiming clocks. Eileen was a keen painter, but Parkinson’s disease later “took over”, Peter says. She passed away in 2012.

“That was the reason why I didn’t want to leave Britannia Street. You’ve got your memories there; it’s part of you.”

Peter stayed in Britannia Street another five years, but the property was large and maintaining the lawn was a big job. The home was up a long path and Peter was struggling to stay warm in the colder months.

In 2017 Kāinga Ora team member Chloe became Peter’s tenancy

manager. The two got to know each other and Chloe could see that Peter’s life and health could benefit from being in a new home.

“She sort of twisted my arm and said these new places were coming up, and she said I should move into one,” Peter says.

“I couldn’t face the thought of a shift, to hell with that – but then it was the easiest shift I’ve ever had.”

Chloe and other agencies helped organise the move and Peter was soon in his new warm, double-glazed unit, among several other Kāinga Ora homes for older customers.

She said she was thrilled to see how much Peter was thriving and enjoying his home.

Chloe wanted to encourage others who might be in a similar situation to think about how moving to a smaller home might benefit them.

“Peter is such a lovely man and I’m so happy he agreed to move to a much more suitable home,” she says.

“I can only imagine how difficult it must be to move on from a place where so many great memories have been made. Seeing how well he is doing in his new home makes it all worthwhile.”

Throughout the process, Chloe and Peter have also become close – the pair speak on the phone regularly, including to wish each other well on Christmas Day.

“All I can say is I think Chloe and her team are great,” Peter says.

“As I’ve said to her, I’ve always regarded her more as family and a friend rather than a Housing Corp manager.”

AT ANY SIGN OF
STROKE
CALL 111



Te Aniwa's story – something's not right with Dad

My dad's first stroke came completely out of the blue. I had taken him to the hospital for an unrelated procedure, but on the way I noticed he was repeating his questions. He was also shuffling while walking, was weak on his left side, and couldn't put his seatbelt on.



When I saw my dad again, after his procedure, he was on the floor with a white sheet over him. He had tried to get dressed, and had fallen. A scan revealed that he had a brain bleed.

One positive to come of the stroke was that the neurologist educated us on the signs to look out for with Dad. So a few weeks later, when he slumped over the table, unresponsive, I took one look at him and dialled 111.

The ambulance was there really quickly and by the time I arrived they were already taking him for an MRI. He then went straight into surgery to drain a huge brain bleed.

Our two experiences with strokes couldn't have been more different. The first time was really traumatic for our whānau. The second time we knew what to look out for, and when we called the ambulance we knew exactly what to say. As a result, Dad got the treatment he needed extremely quickly.

In the six months since his last stroke, Dad's come out of it with very little deficit – he's got no paralysis or speech difficulties. To us that just goes to show how knowing the signs of stroke, and acting quickly, had a hugely positive impact on Dad's health.

After our experience, and with our new knowledge of F.A.S.T., we're hyper-vigilant about his health care and are always watching out for any signs of stroke.

An estimated 11,000 strokes are experienced in Aoteroa each year – that's one every 45 minutes.

This is why the Stroke Foundations F.A.S.T. campaign, in partnership with Te Hīringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency and the Ministry of Health, is so important.

Recognising the key signs of a stroke, and taking immediate action, can dramatically improve the outcome for someone who experiences a stroke. It can even save their life.

It's The Stroke Foundation's vision for everyone to know the F.A.S.T. message, so we'd like you to share this important message with your whānau, friends and colleagues.

And remember, a stroke is always a medical emergency. You are not being a burden on the health system by calling 111 if you believe someone is having a stroke. The sooner a person gets help, the better their chances of recovery.



Customer's sweet pair of best friends



Graham is delighted to have Mac and Tosh in his Kāinga Ora home.

She may weigh only 900 grams, but Tosh, a three-year-old Chihuahua, is in full-on guard dog mode.



Owner and Kāinga Ora customer Graham tells her gently that it's okay.

"We're all friends here, aren't we?" Graham says. But Tosh, who is 21 in dog years, remains on high alert, barking with the conviction of a much bigger creature.

Mac, her roommate and fellow Chihuahua, is less vocal – he prefers to sit watchfully on the couch next to Graham. At 14 (98 in dog years), and more than four times Tosh's weight, this is probably for the best.

Mac and Tosh are named after Graham's favourite, Mackintosh's Toffees (he always has a stash in his car). The dogs are great company for the former long-serving council labourer, especially after the loss of his wife, Debbie, from cancer last October.

Graham loves his Auckland Kāinga Ora home, which he and Debbie moved to after years in a motor home and a short stint in private rental accommodation. "It's marvellous. This is a nice area. There are no cars roaring by. It's lovely."

The best part was that Mac and Tosh could come too, Graham says, adding he was surprised and delighted that Kāinga Ora allows pets.

They're great company, he says. "The best thing is the friendliness. They're so protective."

Mac and Tosh are house trained and fond of their routine. Dinner is at 4.30pm (Tosh is spoon fed) and bedtime at 8.30pm – they will take themselves off to their bed if Graham doesn't prompt them.

Both dogs respect the property boundaries and have never tried to run away. Despite Tosh's impressive guard dog behaviour, they do not disturb the neighbours, with whom Graham has a great relationship.

The dogs are also company for each other, and very playful, Graham explains.

"She [Tosh] will see him [Mac] sitting there not doing anything and she'll run up, nudge him in the guts and start kicking him in the back legs. Then the chase is on and they run from room to room. It's all fun."

Kāinga Ora allows pets in customers' homes, subject to local by-laws and body corporate rules for homes in apartment buildings. 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.



Kitty

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.

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 for information and help on how to kick the habit.



Attention pet owners – bombard us with cuteness!

Share a photo of your furry, scaly or feathered family member with us and be in to win one of five \$100 Animates gift cards.

Ways to enter:

1. On social media via a Facebook or Instagram post
2. Email us, or
3. Send your photos by post



Facebook or Instagram

Post a photo on your account. Tag us in [@kaingaoragovtnz](https://www.instagram.com/kaingaoragovtnz). Include the hashtag **#petsofkaingaora** so we know you'd like to enter your pet in our competition.



Post your photos to us

If you wish to enter via letter, please send your entries to:
 Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities National Office
 PO Box 2628, Wellington 614-0
 Attention: Editor, Close to Home
 Be sure to include a short note with your pet's name, your name, contact phone number and return delivery address.
 Please make sure you send entries via post early, as any entries received after the deadline will not be considered.



Chewie



Stella



Leika

Bugs



Booty



Clark

Cheeto

Terms and conditions: Entries for the pet photo competition are open from Wednesday 1 September until Thursday 30 September 2021. Entries must be received before the deadline to be considered for judging. Winners will be decided on 7 October 2021 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. By entering the competition and submitting your photo you agree that, if you are a winner, the image you submit, your pet's name and your first name may be published by Kāinga Ora in Close to Home Issue 59 on or around November/December 2021. 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.

Want to learn basic digital skills to make life easier?

Enquire now through
Kāinga Ora customer service

0800 801 601

kaingaora.govt.nz



Kāinga Ora
Homes and Communities



**KANORAU
DIGITAL**

www.kanorau.nz

Digital skills programme for Kāinga Ora customers



Skilled up – Te Wānanga and Kāinga Ora help customers go digital

Kāinga Ora recently partnered with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa to deliver Kanorau Digital, the free digital skills programme. We piloted the course with customers in Aranui and Hoon Hay in Christchurch.

The course has helped give people the skills and confidence to live more independently and stay connected to friends and whānau. The COVID-19 lockdowns last year highlighted how important connection with the online world is for wellbeing.

Designed by education professionals, the programme aims to help people access key health, social and education services online,

connect with whānau living out of their region and overseas, and gain the skills needed for today's workforce. Classes are tailored to the needs of attendees, but may include learning to do online banking and use apps, email, social networking and MyKāingaOra.

Christchurch customer Lynne went to the first class with her husband, and says she is “rapt” with the programme.

“It’s so easy when you know how. I can now keep in contact with people who send emails, rather than lose the emails or have them go into space! I’m going to look at doing my banking online now too. The tutors were lovely, and so skilled up. They talked to us right at our level, in simple terms. It was well worth the time.”

For customer Pam, having the learning tailored to her needs was great.

“They took the time to listen to what I was asking, and explain things I wanted to know. I’m not a spring chicken, but not really clever with these things. I came away thinking I’d learnt a bit.”

With the success of the pilot programme, we are currently rolling the programme out to regions across the country. The Kāinga Ora customer services team is taking expressions of interest in the course. If you're interested in the programme, let us know on our website [kaingaora.govt.nz/tenants-and-communities/](https://www.kaingaora.govt.nz/tenants-and-communities/) or phone **0800 801 601** to find out if the course is right for you.

Warm, wet weather could be ideal for mould

Recently, NIWA – the government’s climate research agency – confirmed that June and July 2021 were the warmest winter period on record for New Zealand. They were also wet months for most of the country.

Those two factors – warm and wet – provide ideal conditions for mould to thrive. Thankfully, there are ways to prevent this, such as:



using your extractor fan or opening windows when cooking



keeping curtains open during daylight hours, and closed at night



drying clothes outside



using electric heaters rather than unflued gas heaters.

To find out more about preventing and removing mould at your place, search for ‘mould’ at [kaingaora.govt.nz](https://www.kaingaora.govt.nz) or give us a call on **0800 801 601**.

FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS

TREHOUSE

Spring treasure hunt

Get outdoors this season and explore the flora and fauna spring in Aotearoa has for you to find.

Instructions:

Set yourself a time limit (for example, a day or an afternoon), and find and tick off the following items.

For added fun, team up with a family member or friend, and do the hunt together.



Blooming light re-leaf

Q Why is the letter A like a flower?

A A bee comes after it!

Q How excited was the gardener about spring?

A So excited, he wet his plants

Q Everyone has these on their face. What are they?

A Tulips

Q What do you call a well-dressed lion?

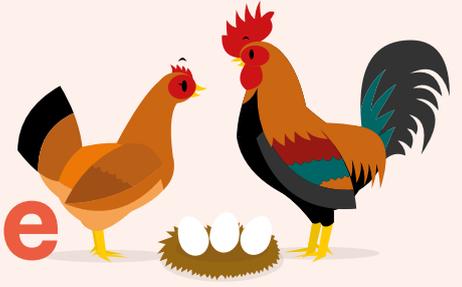
A A dandy lion

Q What do you call a mushroom who is the life of the party?

A A fun-gi

Colouring activity





Self-crusting quiche

READY IN: 45 MINUTES | SERVES: 4-6

A cross between a frittata and a quiche, you can make it cheesy, or spicy, meatless or loaded – pretty much however you want it. The cup of cooked veggies can be roasted, steamed or boiled, so just use this as a base formula and tweak it to suit what's in your fridge. The one in the photo has roasted veggies and cheese, which goes well with a drizzle of sweet chilli sauce.

YOU WILL NEED:

1 tbsp oil or butter

1 large onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1/2 cup self-raising flour

3 eggs

1 cup milk

Seasoning: salt and pepper, plus dried or fresh herbs, Mexican seasoning (see recipe below), Parmesan cheese, and a dash of sweet chilli sauce, pesto or curry powder

2 potatoes, scrubbed, cooked and cubed

1 cup cooked vegetables, canned corn or roast pumpkin, steamed mixed veggies, peas

1 cup grated cheese

Sauce, salsa or chutney to serve (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C. Grease a 24cm baking dish or pie plate.
2. Heat the oil or butter in a small pan and add the onion and garlic. Cook gently, stirring occasionally, till soft, then remove from the heat and leave to cool.



3. Place the flour in a large bowl and set aside. In a separate bowl, combine the eggs, milk and seasonings of your choice, including salt and pepper. Whisk with a fork, then pour over the flour and stir until just combined.
4. Add the prepared vegetables and anything else you are including, then fold in the grated cheese. Pour into the dish and bake for 30 minutes, till puffed, golden and cooked. Cool for 5 minutes before cutting. Serve hot or cold.

TIP: Great for making use of leftovers such as chilli or a cold sausage or two, or add some sliced salami or cooked bacon.

Mexican seasoning mix

This basic combination of flavours will add a Mexican zing to all sorts of dishes.

1 heaped tbsp ground cumin

2 tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

1 tsp oregano

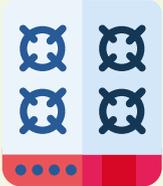
1 tbsp chilli powder or flakes

Place all the spices into a screw-top jar and shake well. Use as a seasoning on potato wedges, to flavour soups, mince and eggs, or make a paste from the seasoning mix with a little oil and use as a spice rub for baked or barbecue food.

CREDIT: RECIPE AND PHOTO SUPPLIED BY SOPHIE GRAY

Did you know that 1 out of 4 house fires start in the kitchen?

Simple things you can do to stop a fire starting in your kitchen:



Keep your kitchen clean and safe

- Clean your stovetop after each use – this prevents spilled fats and burnt foods from building up.
- Clean range-hood filters regularly.



When you're cooking

- Don't drink and fry.
- Don't leave the room when cooking – if you do, turn the heat down on the stovetop elements.
- Remember to keep curtains, tea towels, oven mitts and other flammable items well away from the cooking area when you're cooking.

If a fire starts

- If your pan is on fire, and if you can safely, place the lid on the pan and turn the stove off at the wall switch. If the lid isn't handy you can use a damp tea towel, or large flat object (like a chopping board) over the pan to starve the fire of oxygen. Leave it there until the pan is cold.
- Never throw water onto a pan that's on fire.
- Never, ever attempt to carry a burning pan outside.
- If you have a fire in your oven, keep the oven door closed and try to turn off the power or gas, either at the stove or at the mains.



WHAT TO DO IN A FIRE



Crawl low and fast to escape smoke. **'Get down, Get low, Get out.'**



Shut doors behind you to slow the spread of fire.



Meet at the planned meeting place.



Once out, stay out – never go back inside.



Phone the Fire Service on 111 from a safe place.

Visit fireandemergency.nz for more fire safety tips.

Let's all do the right thing

Here at Kāinga Ora we take our job of creating and maintaining homes for New Zealanders seriously. And we take how we spend money to make this happen very seriously too.

To help us make sure that the good work of Kāinga Ora is not taken advantage of through fraud or other dishonest activities, we have a confidential, independent

freephone number that you can call us on. It's called the Integrity Line and is run by Crime Stoppers.

So, if you become aware of anything happening in our properties that you think might not be quite right, please call us free on **0800 8355 469**.



! Driveway safety reminder

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

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

NEED TO TALK?

1737

free call or text any time

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

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



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

Gardening tips for spring



Even the most brown-fingered 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, silver beet and cabbage can go in earlier. Spring is the season for all things green and crispy – lettuce, peas, parsley, coriander, spinach and silver beet 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, silver beet, lettuce, miner's lettuce, land cress).

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

commonunityproject.org.nz



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

Start now to plan for Christmas

- 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.

For more free confidential budgeting advice, contact the Federation of Family Budgeting Services.



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

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

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