



# Close to Home

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## New home is just right



Opening doors to accessible housing. Jacob in his new Avondale home.

**When Jacob first visited his new home, he wanted to move in right then and there. The Kāinga Ora state home ticked all the boxes.**

“The property is perfect for me,” Jacob says. “It’s light and sunny and has good ventilation. It’s also easy to heat so you don’t need to use a lot of electricity.”

Being a ground floor apartment was a big drawcard, as was the accessible bathroom. When he

opened the bathroom door and saw the wet room shower, he was sold.

The 26-year-old was offered the one-bedroom home in Avondale in May because his state home in Henderson was being refurbished due to water-tightness issues.

“I needed a brand new start. I had recently been made redundant and was ready to move on from my old place because it wasn’t meeting my needs.”

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# Happy Holidays

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

We’re looking forward to 2021 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.

At Kāinga Ora 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,

**Andrew McKenzie**  
Chief Executive

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## New home is just right

Jacob has a range of health issues including developmental delay, vision impairment, obesity, high blood pressure and sleep apnoea at times.

Since the move, his doctor has noticed a big improvement in his health. “The sleep apnoea has gone and the high blood pressure has reduced significantly,” Jacob says.

For Jacob, the move had another unexpected benefit. He struck up a friendship with Kāinga Ora staff member Sam, who he still keeps in touch with regularly.

Sam’s a tenancy liaison officer, who supports tenants whose current homes are being redeveloped or upgraded. He made contact with Sam about a potential move, confirming dates, finding another suitable home, and then ensuring he felt settled in his new home.

“Sam’s done a lot for me,” Jacob says. “He’s been a rock. He really took time to listen and try and find a home that met all my health needs. It meant a lot to be able to trust him.”

For Sam, the process has been equally rewarding. “Helping Jacob has been a real highlight for me. I joined Kāinga Ora to help people. The difference we’ve made to him means the world to me.”

## COVID-19: What you need to know

**As at 17 November all of New Zealand was at Alert Level 1.**

It’s important you continue to follow public health advice like washing your hands, keeping physically distant, covering your face, and tracking your movements by downloading and using the NZ COVID Tracer app if you can.

Remember if you’re sick, please stay at home and call your doctor or Healthline (0800 611 116) for health advice and information.

All our Kāinga Ora offices are open under Alert Level 1.

There’s heaps more information on our website [kaingaora.govt.nz](http://kaingaora.govt.nz) and on the Ministry of Health’s website [health.govt.nz](http://health.govt.nz)



The F.A.S.T. message encourages everyone to learn the key signs of stroke and to think F.A.S.T., act fast and look out for each other by calling 111 if they suspect a stroke. Prompt action can save lives and improve recovery.

A stroke is a brain attack – it’s very serious. The symptoms might show on the face, arm or in speech, but it’s the brain that’s being damaged.

If any of the signs of stroke are recognised, don’t wait, call 111 straight away. A stroke is an emergency. Getting help fast can reduce damage to the brain and give someone a better chance of recovery.

For more information visit:  
[www.stroke.org.nz/fast](http://www.stroke.org.nz/fast)

### Recognise the signs of a stroke:

- F** **Face** – Is their/your face drooping on one side?
- A** **Arm** – Is one arm weak?
- S** **Speech** – Is it mixed up, slurred or lost?
- T** **Take Action** – Stroke is always an emergency. Call 111 immediately.



# Celebrating 70 special years with Linda



Linda at her 70-year anniversary morning tea. L-R Tenancy Manager Gracia, Senior Tenancy Manager Ena and Area Manager Auckland CBD/North Shore Andrew with Linda.



Linda looking at the Thank You award.

**“I still love the house as much as I did when I walked in the door 70 years ago,” Linda says about her North Shore, Auckland home.**

Tenancy Manager Gracia, Senior Tenancy Manager Ena and Area Manager Andrew were on hand recently to mark the very special occasion. Linda says she was so excited about the celebration she didn't sleep much the night before.

Linda had been married only a couple of years in 1950 and she and her husband and their two toddlers were living with her mother-in-law

in the central Auckland suburb of Grafton, and expecting a third child. “I was so keen to get our own home I wrote a letter to the Minister of Housing. Three months later we received a telegram with the good news we had been hoping for.” This home is where Linda still lives, 70 years later.

“The day we moved in was one of the happiest days of my life. We were so happy even though we had no furniture – it was such an incredible moment. The past 70 years have been unbelievable. I've just loved every minute of living here – this is my home,” Linda says.

Ena says it's been an absolute pleasure to look after Linda's Kāinga Ora tenancy.

Linda was presented with a framed Thank You award, which she says will take pride of place alongside a House of the Month award she received from Kāinga Ora's predecessor, Housing Corporation of New Zealand, in September 1988. “Both awards mean so much to me and I am so proud to receive them,” Linda says.

Congratulations, Linda, on your 70-year anniversary.

**Let's all do the right thing!**

To raise any integrity-related issues, dishonesty or fraud concerns, in confidence, any time  
**Call 0800 835 5469**



# We care and are here to help

We care about you and your whānau and are here to help. If you need to have a chat to us, you can call our Customer Support Freephone on **0800 801 601**. You can also find some helpful resources on our website: [www.kaingaora.govt.nz](http://www.kaingaora.govt.nz)



## Looking after your wellbeing

It is normal to feel anxious or stressed about COVID-19. If you need to talk to someone about how you're feeling, help is available through the National Telehealth Service. Call or text for free to 1737 or visit: [www.1737.org.nz](http://www.1737.org.nz)

## Access to health care

If you need urgent medical assistance for severe symptoms of any kind, or have a serious injury, call emergency services on 111, or go straight to hospital.

If you're concerned about any aspect of your health, call your doctor or Healthline (0800 611 116). All calls to Healthline are free and someone is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Access to food and essential items

Most people can access food, medicine and other essentials for themselves and their whānau – either through their own means or through their community providers or support networks like whānau, friends, iwi and neighbours.

If your situation is urgent and you need food within the next 24 to 48 hours, you can contact a local food bank. Work and Income may be able to help you pay for food – if you are an existing client you can apply using MyMSD or contact them by phone on 0800 559 009.

## Free budget advice

There are lots of organisations around the country that can give you and your whānau free, confidential budgeting advice.

Most of these organisations are part of the Federation of Family Budgeting Services.

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



## Don't fall behind with your rent payments – it's hard to catch up

Christmas can be expensive, and it's easy to fall behind with rent payments – if you do, the sooner you call us the better. Ring our Customer Support Centre and talk to a housing advisor about a payment plan.

If you're paid extra over Christmas to cover the public holidays, make sure your rent is kept up to date by putting money aside, or set up a bill payment at the bank – your bank can help you do this.

For information about other payment options, call us anytime on 0800 801 601 and press '2' for 'Payments and Accounts' – it's helpful to have your customer reference number handy.



## Buying a new home with First Home Loan and KiwiSaver



Naing Naing and his family outside their home.

**Big congratulations to a family of ex-tenants who have bought their first home, a modern three-bedroom home in Porirua, using their KiwiSaver and the First Home Loan.**

Naing Naing, his wife Khin and their young daughter had been tenants in Wellington for the past 10 years, after immigrating from Myanmar.

“We want others to do what we have done,” says Naing Naing.

“We were lucky to have support from my boss and our tenancy

manager. Both of them wanted us to succeed.”

The First Home Loan changes the amount of money needed for the deposit of your first home. Normally, 20 percent is required for a deposit, but First Home Loans only need 5 percent. The loans are issued by selected banks and other lenders, and underwritten by Kāinga Ora.

If you would like to see if you’re eligible for a First Home Loan, or other financial support Kāinga Ora provides to help you buy your first home, go to [kaingaora.govt.nz](http://kaingaora.govt.nz)

## No data charges to access My Kāinga Ora online services

Kāinga Ora customers on the Spark, Skinny, Vodafone or 2degrees networks can use our online service, My Kāinga Ora, without using precious internet data.

If you’re on one of those networks and want to use My Kāinga Ora, just make sure your mobile data is turned on before you connect to the online service – it doesn’t matter if you’re on a pre-pay or monthly plan.

My Kāinga Ora lets customers check their accounts, rent balances, maintenance requests and so much more online – much like MyMSD and MyIR.

It can be used on a mobile phone, tablet or laptop.



### 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](http://www.facebook.com/kaingaoragovtnz)

# Tips for saving water this summer



**Water is something we rely on from the minute we wake up until we go to bed at night – it's a precious resource.**

Some parts of the country, including Auckland, are still recovering from this year's drought and it's more important than ever to be careful about our water use.

Here are some tips on how to save water around your home this summer.

## IN THE BATHROOM

- Keep your shower short – four minutes or less is plenty.
- Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth, shaving, or soaping your hands.
- Check your toilet, taps and showerheads for leaks.
- Use the half flush whenever possible.

## IN THE KITCHEN

- Don't leave taps running while rinsing or washing dishes – put the plug in.
- Use a bowl to scrub vegetables in the kitchen sink. You can reuse the water on your plants.
- Keep a jug of drinking water in the fridge instead of running your tap until the water cools down.

## IN THE LAUNDRY

- Wash only full loads of laundry. Washing machines use an average of 122 litres of water every load, so if you can do one less load a week you'll save a lot of water.
- When handwashing clothes, use a bucket instead of leaving the tap running. You can reuse this water on your garden.

## IN THE GARDEN

Water your garden or pot plants in the early morning or late afternoon to avoid evaporation.

Cool off in a small paddling pool instead of under a sprinkler.

Put a bucket in the shower to catch the water as it warms up – then use this in the garden.

By saving water you will also save money spent on power. For more handy water-saving tips go to [www.waterforlife.org.nz/water-saving-tips](http://www.waterforlife.org.nz/water-saving-tips)



## Herby sausage pie

Like a grown-up sausage roll, this quick and easy dish is a winner dinner every time. It's also yummy cold, so is good for lunch boxes and picnics. For dinner serve it hot with veggies and tomato sauce.

### What you will need

500g sausage meat

1 onion, chopped

1-2 tsp mixed herbs

2 sheets of frozen puff pastry, defrosted

Milk to glaze

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 210°C.
2. In a bowl or processor combine the sausage meat, onion and herbs.
3. Lay a sheet of pastry on a greased baking tray, brush the edges with water and spread the seasoned sausage meat inside the pastry square. Lay the second sheet of pastry over the top, pressing the edges to seal.
4. Cut diagonal slits in the top of the pastry and trim the edges to neaten. Brush with milk.
5. Bake for 25 minutes or until it has risen and is a rich golden colour. Serve hot or cold.

# Our Healthy Homes Programme

Kāinga Ora wants to work with you so you have a warm and dry home for your family/whānau.

Our Healthy Homes Programme will help make sure your home meets the healthy homes standards the Government has introduced for all rental homes.

All Kāinga Ora homes must meet these new standards by 1 July 2023.

## What this means for you

Our contractors will need to visit your home to look at:

- insulation
- heating
- draught stopping
- ventilation
- moisture and drainage
- curtains
- carpets.

Our contractor will let you know what work needs to be done to meet the standards and when the work will start.

This is a large programme that will go through to 2023 so we will be in touch with you when your home is coming up.

**Responsive Maintenance Limited recently completed Healthy Homes work for a customer in Hamilton. Our customer says she was very happy with the work that was completed, especially the heater and heat pump we installed in her home. She also commented on how respectful and polite the tradespeople were.**

If we have recently completed Healthy Homes work in your home, you can provide feedback. Just phone us on 0800 801 601. Calls are free, even from a mobile phone.

## Tips to help keep your home warm and dry

These are some of the things you can do to help keep your home warm and dry:

Use lids on your pots and turn on your range hood when cooking



Dry your washing outside

Use the bathroom extraction fan when having a shower or bath and leave the fan running for an extra 30 minutes after, to help clear the steam



Use the sun's free heat by opening your curtains when the sun comes up, and closing your curtains again when the sun goes down



Open windows and doors as widely as possible for 10-15 minutes twice a day to let the fresh air in

Heat rooms at night where young children, elderly or those who are unwell are sleeping



Wipe down any water on the inside of windows daily

Clean off mould as soon as you see it, using white vinegar and water



**Call us FREE on 0800 801 601** if your existing heating is damaged or broken. If you need to contact us about anything else to do with your tenancy please also call our **Customer Support Centre on 0800 801 601.**





# 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 them 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.



## 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 the 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 don't grow.

# 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.

There is some great information on water quality and swimming conditions in the Auckland area on Auckland Council's [safeswim.org.nz](http://safeswim.org.nz) website.

For other parts of the country, visit your local council's website.

## 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, you need to get approval from your tenancy manager first. A paddling pool 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.

## Common Unity Project Aotearoa

**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), or old cotton, wool or hessian fabrics. One deep water followed by mulch is better for plants than a light daily sprinkle.

**Tomatoes** come 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 the 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.

**Salads** can be more of a challenge over the summer months, as they go bitter or go 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)



# Safety in the garden



**As the weather warms up and more of us venture back into our gardens, it's an ideal time to look at the garden chemicals we're using and storing around our homes.**

The Environmental Protection Authority's Safer Homes programme has some handy tips.

"When you're getting back out into the garden, it's a great time to do a stocktake – or even a 'spring clean' – of the chemicals you've got at home," says the Safer Homes programme manager, Lizzie Wilson.

Storing products you no longer use can be a hazard to children. "There's guidance on our website about how to safely dispose of old chemicals that are no longer needed. It's very important people never pour unused product down the drain," says Lizzie.

"Home gardening and cleaning chemicals are safe to use when you follow the instructions on the label, which will also tell you if you need protection, like gloves, a face mask, or safety glasses, even if you are using 'natural', 'organic' or 'environmentally friendly' products.

**Top tips for staying safe in the garden:**

- Wear gloves – check the label to see if you need to wear a face mask or safety glasses.
- Don't spray on a windy day – it may blow into your or someone else's face.
- Keep products away from your eyes and face, and off your skin.
- If you are spraying near or on edible plants, check the label to see how long you need to wait before the plant can be eaten.
- Be careful if you're working near streams or water.
- Try weeding and mulching, instead of using chemical sprays.
- Keep pellet-type products away from young children and pets – they may try to eat them.
- Store chemicals up high and out of reach, and always read the label.
- Dispose of chemicals safely and don't pour leftover product down stormwater drains.

### 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.



# Christmas Shopping

## Some good tips for saving money

### Buy pre-loved

Big-ticket items like bikes and scooters are expensive. Perhaps go to garage sales, or look on Trade Me for second-hand bargains. But make sure whatever you're buying is safe – look for rust, and make sure the brakes work and the wheels are in good condition. If it looks unsafe, don't buy it. And don't forget, it's compulsory to wear a helmet on a bike. It's best to buy these new.

### Shop smarter

If the kids need something practical for school – like swimming goggles or a new school bag – make it a Christmas present. That way you won't need to find more money when the school term starts.

Or if you've got several kids and a stretched budget, get them one cool family present like a cricket set, a board game, or a day at the zoo. That way the whole family can enjoy it together.

### Spread the cost

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

Spreading the payments out makes it far easier to budget. Decide what you can afford to spend.

Break down your budget to allow for gifts, decorations, food, drink and entertainment.

Keep track of your spending in the weeks and 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.



## New LED light bulbs for your home

At your next health and safety inspection, our inspector will ask if you want us to change the light bulbs in your home to new LED light bulbs.

This is a one-off programme we're doing to make it cheaper for you to run your home while also reducing the impact on our environment.

LED light bulbs use less energy, making it cheaper and easier to light your home. They use about 16 percent of the energy and have a much longer life than normal light bulbs – 15,000 hours compared to around 1,000 hours.

Our inspector will give you more information when they are at your home. This will include asking you whether you'd like them to take away all the old bulbs or if you'd like to keep them.

This is optional – just let our inspector know if you don't want them to change your light bulbs over to LED.

For more information and stories about LED light bulbs you can go to [www.eeca.govt.nz](http://www.eeca.govt.nz)





## 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.
- Some local offices are open for drop-in between 10am – 2pm, or by appointment, weekdays only. Call our Customer Support Centre to find out if your local office is open during this time.

## 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.

## 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.

Call 111 and ask for Fire.



### Thanks to:



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