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Close to Home

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Modelling mental health



Left to right: New Lynn Tenancy Manager, Kevin Creado with tenant Glenn Williams.

Every morning Housing New Zealand tenant Glenn Williams gets up, makes his coffee and heads off to work for eight hours a day.

'Work' for Glenn is recreating history, and in a room of his state house in New Lynn he carefully works on historical models, sometimes three at a time, with each model taking up to six months to complete.

A Housing New Zealand tenant for over 20 years, Glenn had worked on models in his youth. He later returned to modelling as a way to

deal with his grief after the death of his wife and son.

"I could not work and I was getting really depressed. This was a way of keeping my brain busy.

I treat it like a job and spend eight hours a day doing this. I come in here with my coffee and get into it. At the end of the day I feel good, like I've achieved something. It's a lot of work, but I love it."

Modelling World War Two and key historical events is Glenn's passion but he has also been known to do models for friends and family.

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Your health and wellbeing are important

If you're worried about the condition of your home, please let us know – call us on **0800 801 601**. Also take a look at this issue to see how you can keep your home warm and dry this winter.



Looking out for others this winter

You may know people who need help with housing costs or other costs they're facing this winter.

If so, please encourage them to contact Work and Income on **0800 559 009** to see what support is available.

There's also a lot of information on the Work and Income website about the help available www.workandincome.govt.nz



02

Prevent the spread of germs



Create as much space as possible between the heads of sleeping children.



Try 'topping and tailing' if your children share a bed.



Try not to have lots of people sleeping together in one room.

Keeping your home warm and dry this winter

Every year we talk about ways to keep your home warm and dry and how important this is to us.

Each household releases around 8 litres of moisture into the home every day from activities like cooking, showering and breathing.

The more moisture there is in the air, the harder and more expensive it is to heat.

Read about some simple things you can do to help reduce moisture, and make it easier to heat your home.



KITCHEN

When you're cooking:

- keep lids on pots, and make sure the pot fits the element and the lid fits the pot
- use your rangehood
- open the window.



BATHROOM

- Open the window when showering and keep your bathroom door closed for up to half an hour after showering.
- Use your extractor fan.





Use firewood that has been dried for a year.



Woolen blankets are warmer.



To remove mould and mildew spray on a mixture of 70 percent white vinegar and 30 percent water.



BEDROOM

- Keep beds and furniture away from the walls.
- Keep wardrobe doors slightly open.
- Avoid putting mattresses directly on the floor.

Condensation can form in closed spaces, always leave a gap so that air can circulate.

WHOLE OF HOUSE

- Open curtains in the morning and close them just before dark to keep in the warmth.
- Air rooms in the daytime with an open window.
- Wipe condensation off walls and windows.
- Stop cold air coming in under the door by blocking its path with a 'door snake'. You can make one by rolling up a towel or filling up an old rugby sock.

School time!

I'm just helping dad get the house ready for the day.



Hey! Did you use my rugby socks for this?

They're too small for you but perfect for a 'door snake'.



Use thermostats and timers so your heaters only come on when you need them and automatically turn off once the right temperature is reached.





HEALTHLINE

If you need advice about influenza, immunisation or any other concerns about your health or your family's health, call Healthline.

☎ 0800 611 116

🕒 24 hours, 7 days a week

All calls are taken by a registered nurse.



Don't let flu stop you in your tracks

Faye Maene receives her annual flu shot from Malelega Tuuilalo Tapu.

Photo credit: Mark Coote.

You and your family/whānau can avoid the misery of influenza or 'flu' this winter by getting an annual flu shot this month (April).

Who can get a free flu shot?

Flu vaccinations are **free** from a doctor or nurse or qualified vaccinating pharmacist from April till the end of December, if you're in one of these groups:

- Anyone aged 65 years or over
- Pregnant women (any stage of pregnancy)

Flu vaccinations are free only from a doctor or nurse if you're in one of these groups:

- People under 65 years of age (including children) with long-term health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, respiratory disease (including asthma that requires regular preventive therapy), kidney disease and most cancers

- Children aged four and under who have been hospitalised for respiratory illness or have a history of significant respiratory illness.

Even if you don't qualify for free vaccination from a doctor or nurse, you may still be able to get one free from your employer.

Please don't spread the flu around

By being immunised, you can help avoid passing the virus on to others close to you.

Flu is not the same as a cold. It's a serious disease that can make other existing conditions, such as breathing or heart problems, even worse, with some people ending up in hospital and some dying.

Check out www.fightflu.co.nz to find out whether you qualify for free flu vaccination or call **0800 IMMUNE 0800 466 863**.



Extra help to keep families warm and healthy

You may be able to get some extra help from Work and Income if your children are unwell or you can't keep warm in your home.

Some types of help are only for people on a benefit, and others are for people on a low income. You can find out more on the Work and Income website www.workandincome.govt.nz or by calling them on 0800 559 009.

If you need help with keeping warm

If you need bedding, blankets, curtains and heaters but can't afford to pay for them, help might be available through an **Advance or Recoverable Assistance Payment** (which you'll need to pay back) or a **Special Needs Grant**.

And if you need help paying your power bills, you may be able to get an **Advance or Recoverable Assistance Payment** (which you'll need to pay back).

If you need help with health costs

Getting a **Community Services Card** means you'll pay less for some health services simply by showing your card.

You may also be able to get a **Disability Allowance**, a **Special Needs Grant** or **Temporary Additional Support**.

Check www.workandincome.govt.nz for more information.





GET HELP TO QUIT

Quitting smoking is one of the best decisions you'll ever make. If you're ready to quit smoking, the Quitline team are ready to help - for free.

Take the first step. Call Quitline any time of day or night on **0800 778 778**. Or sign up at www.quit.org.nz

Quitline
0800 778 778

05

Becoming a pet-friendly landlord



Tenant Diane lives in the sunny Hawke's Bay with her son and their dog Scruffy.

You may have heard that Housing New Zealand is moving towards becoming a pet friendly landlord.

We know that pets can be great companions and contribute real value to you and your whānau's quality of life.

To help support pets in our homes we are developing a new Pets Policy.

There is a lot to consider, so we're seeking advice from animal welfare groups and local councils.

In the meantime if you wish to have a pet, please visit our 'Having a pet' page on www.hnzc.co.nz, or contact our call centre **0800 801 601** for more information.

We will keep you updated with more information on our new Pets Policy in the coming months.

Protecting baby against whooping cough starts in pregnancy

There is a national outbreak of **whooping cough**, a serious disease that spreads easily through coughing and sneezing. Since January, more than 1,000 cases have been reported with 72 people (including 31 babies) needing hospital treatment.

Whooping cough is worse for babies, they can have trouble feeding and breathing properly and can become very ill. This can be very distressing for you and your baby.

Immunisation during pregnancy is an effective way to protect babies before they can be immunised themselves. This is why the Ministry of Health encourages all pregnant women to get immunised against whooping cough and influenza.

Immunisation is FREE and it's safe during pregnancy.

Talk to your midwife, doctor or nurse, or visit: health.govt.nz/immunisation





Fire safety messages



1m

Keep everything at least one metre away from a heater or fireplace as most clothing and textiles will burn and can cause injury or death.

This includes yourself, furniture, bedding or clothes that you want to dry.

Never place or hang clothes on a heater to dry.



In the kitchen

Keep an eye on what you fry!

Don't drink and fry! Save the beers for after you finish cooking.



Working smoke alarms save lives

Keep yourself safe from fire

Test your smoke alarms often to make sure they're working.

New Winter Energy Payment

From 1 July 2018 the new Winter Energy Payment will be paid to seniors and people on a benefit to help with the cost of heating homes during winter.

You don't need to apply - if you qualify you'll get the extra money automatically with your other payments from Work and Income.

The Winter Energy Payment will be paid to people getting

- NZ Super
- Veteran's Pension
- Jobseeker Support
- Sole Parent Support
- Supported Living Payment
- Youth Payment
- Young Parent Payment
- Emergency Benefit.

Single people with no dependent children will get \$20.46 a week, and couples or people with dependent children will get \$31.82 a week. You don't have to pay it back.

This year the Winter Energy Payment will be paid from 1 July to 30 September. Next year it will be paid from 1 May to 1 October 2019.

The Winter Energy Payment won't affect your other payments from Work and Income, or your income-related rent.

Find out more at <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz>

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Modelling mental health

"I've done all the dinosaur models for the grand-kids so they have something to look at when they come around."

A DJ for over 35 years, Glenn has also kept up his love of music and has decorated the walls of his home with music greats.

Glenn is careful to protect the walls in his home and mounts all his pictures and images on a backing board so the wallpaper and walls are not damaged.

A popular room with visitors is the Elvis toilet, complete with a full size image of the King on the door.

"My neighbours often remark they hear people who come to visit me saying that they are off to see Elvis."

Doing it for the love of it is very much Glenn's motto and if anyone wants to come see and his exhibits they only need to ask, and maybe offer a koha.



Get some free budget advice

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

Most of these organisations are part of the National Building Financial Capability Trust.

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.



07

Asking the right questions



Tenants attending the recent tenant workshops hosted by the Customer Support Centre in Porirua and Manukau.

In a Customer Support Centre first, Housing New Zealand recently held tenant focus groups to find out how we can best talk to you, our customers, when something is broken and needs fixing.

“By asking the right questions our staff are able to work out what repair work is needed and book the best contractor to do the job,” says Karina Carr, Customer Support Trainer.

Tenants told us they liked seeing behind the scenes, especially the tour of the Customer Support Centre. They said it helped them understand the working of Housing New Zealand and they’d be happy to participate again.

“We’ll use the feedback from these focus groups to improve customers’ experience when they call in, and to give our staff better questions to ask our tenants,” says Shahnaz Rustomjee, Customer Support Trainer.

“This is a first for us and it’s very exciting to be working with our tenants in this way and putting them at the centre of what we do,” says Shahnaz.



902,152

calls were answered by the Auckland and Porirua Customer Support Centres in 2016/17

79%

of those calls were answered within four minutes

127

full time staff members work in our Customer Support Centres





Read more stories, find more tips, ask us questions.

It's a two-way street and we'd love to hear your stories and any tips that might help others.

www.close2home.co.nz



Building a sense of community

On a very hot summers day in an inner city Auckland suburb, tenants living in four buildings came together with Housing New Zealand, to start to build a new sense of community.

It's fair to say the complex had some challenges. However progress has continued and Housing New Zealand Case Manager Marianne Harlaar felt the time was right for a garden day and barbecue for tenants.

Before the big day, planter boxes, organic garden mix, plants (flowers, vegetables and herbs), seeds, tools and garden seats were bought and delivered to the complex.

Marianne says some tenants told her they had never planted before but were very keen to learn. Even before the day, tenants started to tidy up around the complex, including weeding the communal areas.

After a hard days work by everyone, all the plants were planted and there was a real 'buzz' in the air.

As well as being stoked with seeing all their hard work resulting in overflowing planter boxes, tenants were also excited about the healthy, fresh food they could harvest and eat in the future.

The barbecue was enjoyed by all and the garden group continues to go from strength to strength, with new members joining all the time. The garden group is also responsible for maintaining the gardens and ensuring the gardens continue to thrive.

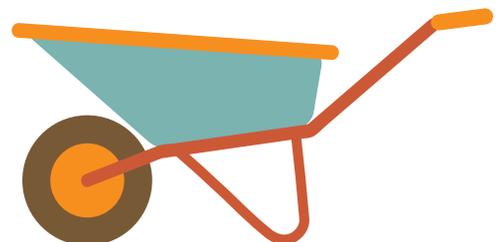
One tenant said the garden day was one of the happiest times in their life, where people were happy and worked together in harmony. Other feedback was about feeling a real sense of pride in the work that had been done and feeling part of a community.



Marianne (centre) and two Parnell tenants at the end of a hard days work in the garden.

It's now a few weeks on and the commitment from tenants continues to grow.

"It's all part of building a sense of community, where people like where they live and get on with their neighbours - which is the outcome we wanted," Marianne says.



What to do in a fire



- 1** Crawl low and fast to escape smoke. Get down, get low, get out.
- 2** Shut doors behind you to slow the spread of fire.
- 3** Meet at the planned meeting place. Once out, stay out – never go back inside. **Phone Fire and Emergency on 111 from a safe place.**

FREECALL 111
for fire emergencies.

VISIT
www.fireandemergency.nz
for more fire safety tips.

09

Noel's inner city vegetable garden



Auckland tenant Noel Le Noel is very passionate about his vegetable garden.

Noel lives in a 42-unit Housing New Zealand complex in Auckland city and grows 23 different fruits and vegetables in a garden at the back of his unit.

When asked to explain where his passion came from, Noel says it began a few years ago when he was diagnosed with lymphoma and started researching natural remedies.

He read that eating chillies may help with some types of lymph node cancer so was willing to give it a go, in addition to chemotherapy and radiation.

"At one time I was growing 14 different types of chillies, from very mild ones to the really hot ones," Noel says.

Noel's cancer has been in remission for seven years and he feels the chillies certainly helped. Since his chilli

growing days, Noel has kept going with his green fingers to create his thriving fruit and vegetable garden.

"I grow just about everything in my garden. You name it and I probably grow it," Noel says.

Noel often shares the fruits of his labour and gives away any vegetables he doesn't need to neighbours and friends.

"Fruit and vegetables are really expensive to buy so if I can help out, I always will," Noel says.

In his spare time Noel uses his many creative talents to make decorative ornaments for his garden, which he paints and decorates with paua and beads.

In recognition of all his hard work Noel is also the proud recipient of a Housing New Zealand Garden Award.

Thank you Noel – all your hard work and efforts in helping others are certainly very much appreciated.



We asked a group of tenants at our Dixon Street Flats what they thought of *Close to Home*

It was the week before Christmas and we shared Christmas mince pies, had a cup of tea and chatted about *Close to Home*.

Everyone enjoyed receiving the newsletter and all agreed it was the stories about tenants they liked best.

Ma Latt, who is mother of a six month old and has recently moved here from Myanmar (Burma) said it would be good to know more about the culture or traditions in New Zealand, so they can be more confident in this new country, particularly as English is not their first language.

The general feeling was that a multi-language approach could help all our readers to get more from the newsletter.

We'll be continuing to talk to our tenants to find out more but if you'd like to make a suggestion please send an email to

editor@close2home.co.nz





- Plant seedlings of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, silverbeet, spinach and spring onions.
- Feed citrus trees with fertiliser.
- Plant garlic, shallot bulbs and strawberries.
- Last chance to plant spring bulbs.
- Start collecting autumn leaves for composting.
- Feed lawns to boost growth and suppress weeds. Bare areas of lawn can be raked over and reseeded.



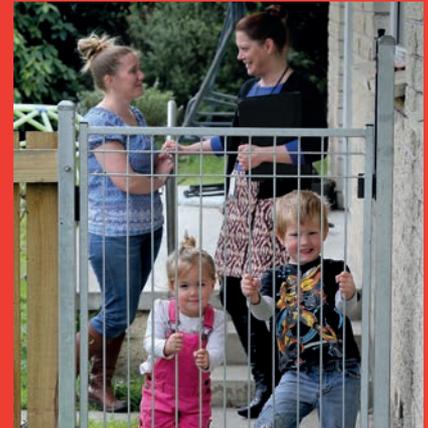
- Raise vegetable beds as the weather cools and the rain arrives, so you can plant a wider range of vegetables.
- Plant seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, winter lettuce, spinach and silverbeet.
- Sow seeds of pea, onion and lettuce.
- Plant pots with pansies, polyanthus and primulas for winter colour.
- Prune hydrangeas. Apply garden lime to improve pink colours and aluminium sulphate for blue.
- Slow down watering of house plants and move them away from droughts.



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



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



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
- **and separate** play areas from driveways.



If you need to talk to us, call

0800 801 601
enquiries1@hnzc.co.nz

- 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.

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

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