



Close to Home



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A new beginning for Lisa and her daughter



Lisa and her Housing Support Manager Piripi Christie.

"I never ever thought this day would come," says Lisa Hema (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairoa), standing proudly outside her brand-new Kāinga Ora home in Wairoa.

After 2 years of uncertainty, displacement and resilience, Lisa and her 8-year-old daughter finally have a place to call their own.

Lisa's journey to find settled housing has been long and challenging. Before the devastating floods, she lived in a bach on her son's property. When Wairoa's second flood hit, the entire property was wiped out. Lisa was left standing waist – deep in water with nowhere to go. She and her daughter found temporary shelter at the Wairoa Memorial Hall and later at their marae, Whaakirangi.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Manaaki this holiday season

A message
from the
Chief Executive
Matt Crockett



When I became Chief Executive, it was because I truly believed in the work Kāinga Ora does – helping people and communities by providing homes to those who need them.

Fifteen months on, I'm proud of how well we're performing and how far we've come. We've put our focus back on what matters most – being a good landlord, looking after our homes, and supporting the people who live in them.

We're doing things better, making smarter use of money, and we are in a much more sustainable financial position. We've delivered against our commitments and built the Government's trust in us. Most importantly, we've achieved this

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A new beginning for Lisa and her daughter



“There was a time when my daughter and I were walking around in the rain, wondering where we were going to go,” Lisa recalls.

“We spent a lot of time on the move. We stayed with family but they were already overcrowded, spent 2 weeks living in a vehicle and then 6 months ago we moved into emergency housing – a studio at the motel.”

“The lack of space and stability took a toll on my wellbeing and my daughter’s development,” she says. “She couldn’t skate or ride her bike outside. We had to sit on the bed to eat. I had to clear a space for her to do her homework, and we couldn’t have family visit us. It was exhausting.”

Despite the hardship, Lisa was determined to give her daughter the best life she could. “I make sure my daughter is clean and ready for school every day and that she has lunch with her – no matter where we’re staying.

“I wanted a stable home so I could get back to work and provide more for my daughter. I was a teacher for many years and worked for

Whānau Ora. But when you’ve lost hope of ever having a settled home, it’s hard to think about the future.”

Lisa had also been learning te reo Māori to support her daughter’s education, but that had to be put on hold.

Now, with a warm, dry and secure home just around the corner from whānau and close to school, Lisa is filled with gratitude. “I am overwhelmed, grateful and humble to have this lovely home. It’s been a big, long journey to get here.”

Lisa’s story is a powerful reminder of why Kāinga Ora exists – to provide homes for people who need them most. Her new home is more than just a roof over her head; it’s a foundation for healing, growth and reconnection with whānau and culture.

“I lost 40 years of my life in the flood,” Lisa says. “But we are resilient. We are bouncing back.”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 01

while making sure our tenants are satisfied with our homes and services. That means a lot to me because, through all the changes, we’ve kept your needs at the heart of what we do.

As I wrap up my time at Kāinga Ora, I’m glad to be handing over to Tracey Taylor, who shares the same commitment to putting our customers and people first, without compromising our commercial and financial sustainability.

One of the best parts of this job has been meeting some of you and hearing your stories. You’re the reason our teams come to work every day – you motivate us to keep improving.

As summer approaches, I hope you get time to relax and connect with the people who matter most to you. Look after each other, stay safe and remember – if you need help, our teams are here for you.

Meri Kirihimete,
ngā mihi o te wā.

Matt Crockett
Chief Executive
Kāinga Ora – Homes and
Communities



Health advice on measles in the community

Measles is a very contagious viral illness that spreads easily between people and makes most people feel very unwell. It can also cause serious health problems, including diarrhoea, chest infections and brain swelling.

Symptoms of measles

The first symptoms of measles are like those of other respiratory illnesses such as a cold, COVID-19 or flu (influenza), which means it can be hard to know you have measles.

Symptoms of measles are:

- fever (a temperature of at least 38°C)
- cough
- runny nose
- sore, red eyes
- rash.

The rash develops 3 – 5 days after the other symptoms. It appears as pink or red spots or bumps that start on the face before moving down the rest of the body. The rash may be harder to see on darker skin. It's not usually itchy. The rash might last for a week or more.

If you have been exposed to someone with measles

If you spent time with someone with measles while they were contagious, Public Health staff will get in touch with you to check if you could be a close contact. Close contacts are people who have been in the same room or had face-to-face contact with someone who is contagious with measles. You might also be considered a close contact if you were present at a measles location of interest (a place that a person with measles visited). You can check current locations of interest by scanning the QR code below. If you have been to a location of interest, phone Healthline for free advice any time 24/7.

Stay home while you are waiting for your test results

You should stay home while you wait for your test results. This will usually take a few days. If your test is positive for measles, you will be contacted by your Public Health, who will advise you on what to do next. If your test shows you do not have measles, your healthcare provider will let you know.

Scan to check
current locations
of interest:



Your best form of protection against measles is immunisation.

Check your measles immunisation status:

- For information about checking if you are fully protected against measles, visit Health NZ measles immunity website or call the Vaccination Helpline **0800 28 29 26**. The Helpline is available from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (except for public holidays). Interpreters are available and you can use NZ Relay.

Getting the MMR vaccine

- The MMR vaccine is free for everyone in New Zealand under the age of 18. It doesn't matter what your immigration status is.
- If you are 18 years and over, the MMR vaccine is free if you're eligible for funded healthcare in New Zealand.
- If you are 18 years and over and are not eligible for free healthcare in New Zealand, you can access free MMR vaccination during an outbreak if this is recommended by a healthcare provider.

Book a vaccination

- You can book a vaccination appointment with some pharmacies, your doctor, nurse, or healthcare provider. Visit **bookmyvaccine.health.nz** for a list of vaccination sites in your area.



Tips for Keeping active over summer

Summer's a great time to get moving and enjoy the outdoors with your whānau. Whether it's a walk around the block, a game at the local park or dancing at home, staying active is good for your health and a great way to spend time together.



You don't need to go far or spend money – just find what works for you and make it part of your summer routine.

Play together – get creative!

- Pick an everyday object from around your home and invent a game with it.
- Dance around the house to your favourite tunes.
- Splash in the puddles and enjoy the rain with your tamariki.



Head outside and explore your neighbourhood

- Take the kids to the local park for a run, climb or kick-around.
- Create a scavenger hunt – indoors or outdoors.
- Play a game while gathering leaves, flowers or kai.
- Visit nearby parks, reserves or nature spots – see what's new.
- Try a new walking track or cycle path close to home.

Find more ideas for games and play:



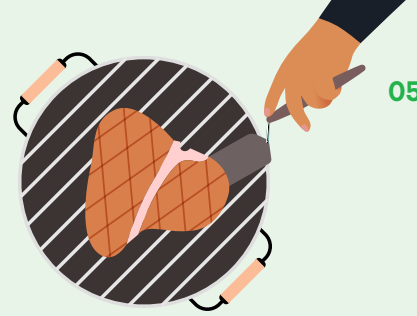
Make a splash this summer

The Z Manu World Champs are back in a city near you! Come along, enjoy the sunshine and watch some spectacular splashes.

There'll be free Push Play sessions at every event, giving you the chance to give it a go. No experience is needed, just bring the good vibes! 'Popping a manu' is a great way to get active and spend time with friends and whānau this summer.

For dates and locations, visit manuworlchamps.com.





Looking out for each other over the holidays

Whether or not you celebrate Christmas, the summer holidays can sometimes feel quiet or isolating, particularly for some older people or others living alone. Regular activities, services and family support may be disrupted over this time.

We can all help by keeping an eye out for anyone who might be alone or finding things tough. Reaching out doesn't have to be complicated – a chat, a card in a neighbour's

letterbox or making or accepting an invitation for a hot drink and a festive treat can make a big difference.

After the break, community activities will be starting again, including visits and social events at Age Concern.

You can contact them for free on 0800 65 2 105 to find out what's available in your area.



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 with us, you can call our Customer Support Freephone on **0800 801 601**. You can also find some helpful resources on our website: kaingaora.govt.nz



Thinking about getting a pet? Here's what's changing

We've made some changes to our pet policy and consent process to make sure you understand your responsibilities if you want to own a pet in a Kāinga Ora home.

We support our customers who want to keep pets, but you'll need to get our consent first. Getting consent helps us check that your home is suitable for the type of pet you'd like to keep and that it meets any local council bylaws or building rules.

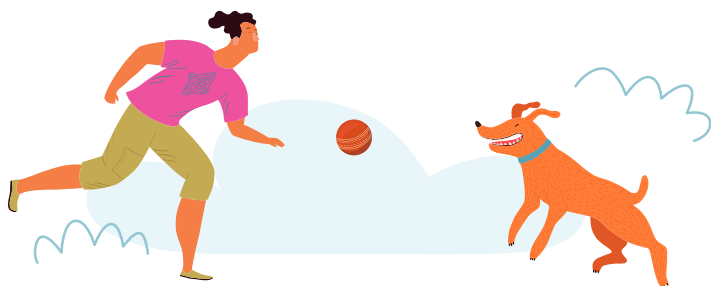
Once you have consent, there are a few conditions to meet to be a responsible pet owner. Pets must be well cared for and safely contained

and not cause damage or nuisance. Their wellbeing is your responsibility.

If you've already received written consent for your current pet to stay at your home, you don't need to complete a new consent form. If you'd like to welcome a new pet, just make sure to get written consent from Kāinga Ora first.

If you're thinking about getting a pet, please contact your Housing Support Manager on 0800 801 601. They'll guide you through the process and help you understand what's needed.

For more information, visit kaingaora.govt.nz/pets



Get it done online with MyKāingaOra



- Check your rent balances and accounts, organise debt repayments and download letters.
- Keep your details up to date.
- Access wellbeing services.
- Book non-urgent maintenance and view progress.
- View upcoming scheduled inspections and visits.
- Add and update your consented parties.
- Te reo Māori, Samoan, Tongan and Chinese translations are available.
- You can contact us via the message function once you log in to the portal.
- Help centre for frequently asked questions.

If you access MyKāingaOra using Spark, Skinny, One NZ, 2degrees, or Warehouse Mobile there are no data charges – whether you're on a monthly plan or pre-pay. Just ensure you have data turned on when you're accessing it. . Visit my.kaingaora.govt.nz

MoneyTalks

MoneyTalks is a free service to help you manage your money.

You can get free, non-judgemental budgeting and debt management support by visiting moneytalks.co.nz for information, resources and chat.



You can email help@moneytalks.co.nz, or find a free financial mentor near you at moneytalks.co.nz/find-help-now



Call **0800 345 123**, text **4029**

Available 8am–8pm Monday to Friday, 9am–4pm Saturday, 10am–2pm Sunday



Lolly cake jelly-topped no-bake cheesecake

TIME: 50 MINS + CHILLING

SERVES: 10+

This pretty cheesecake is a playful trip down memory lane for anyone who grew up in New Zealand. The raspberry jelly topping is a little bit tart, balancing the sweetness of the base. Or use this as a formula for a jelly topped no-bake cheesecake and add your own twist. See tips below for suggestions.



Credit: Recipe and photography supplied by Sophie Gray.

Berry jelly topping

300g frozen raspberries, defrosted

1 tablespoon cold water

1 tablespoon sugar or to your taste

1 teaspoon gelatine

1 tablespoon boiling water

Cheesecake base

90g butter

1/4 cup sweetened condensed milk

200g malt biscuits

125g fruit puff lollies roughly chopped

1/3 cup desiccated coconut (optional)

Filling

2½ tablespoon boiling water

1½ teaspoon powdered gelatine

250g cream cheese, at room temperature

1/3 cup caster sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla essence

150ml cream

2 tablespoon desiccated coconut for decorating (optional)

1. Remove the base from a 20cm spring form cake tin, turn it upside down, cover with non-stick baking paper and clip into place. Line the inside with a strip of non-stick paper and set aside.
2. Make the berry purée: Heat the raspberries, water and sugar in a small saucepan until pulpy. Press through a sieve to remove seeds. Refrigerate until needed.
3. Make the base: Combine butter and condensed milk in a small saucepan. Heat gently until butter is melted. Crush or process the biscuits to fine crumbs and place in a large bowl. Mix in melted butter and condensed milk, then use your hands work in the chopped fruit puff lollies and coconut if using. Press mixture over base of the tin, compacting to an even thickness. Chill in freezer while you make the filling.
4. Make the filling: Combine gelatine and water in a small bowl and set aside for 10 minutes. In a large bowl beat cream cheese until soft and smooth. Add sugar, vanilla essence and cream and beat to soft peaks.
5. Microwave the gelatine mixture for 15 seconds, then slowly add the cream into the gelatine to 'temper' it. Fold the gelatine mixture into the cream cheese mixture then pour into the prepared tin. Tap gently on the bench to level the top. Chill in the freezer until it is beginning to set, around 40 minutes.
6. Make the jelly: Whisk 1 teaspoon of gelatine into 1 tablespoon of boiling water. Stir into the berry purée. Pour over the cheesecake. Refrigerate until set. Gently release from tin and remove lining papers. Pat coconut around sides.

TIPS: Swap the lolly cake base for a gingernut crust made from 250g gingernut biscuits and 90g melted butter.

You can make a jelly for the top from all sorts of puréed and sieved fruits – try a tamarillo jelly for the top with a gingernut base or swirl various fruit purées (without gelatine) into the filling mixture.

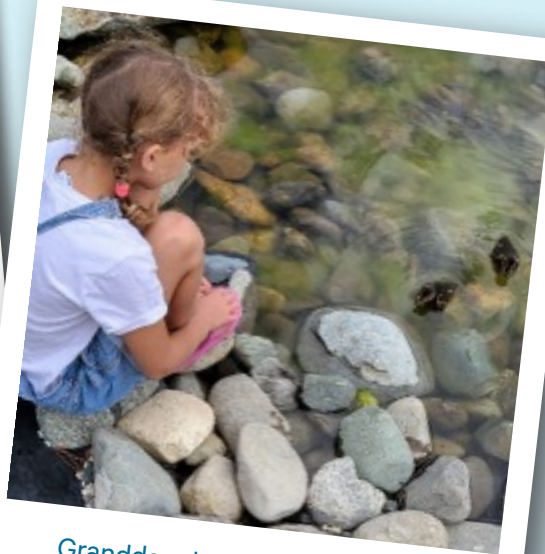
Congratulations to the winners of our 'Show us your summer' photo competition



Winner
Kim – Richmond



The river at
Quinney's Bush Camp



Granddaughter Skylar observes
ducklings at the Nelson Miyazu Gardens



Skylar at Lake Rotoiti, Tasman



At The Vines Vineyard, Gisborne



Winner
Vanessa – Hamilton



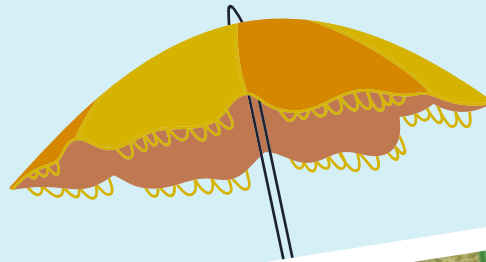
Each photographer received a \$50 The Warehouse gift card.



Winner
James – Christchurch



Taken by James in his garden



Winner
Paula – New Plymouth



At Memorial Park, Palmerston North



At Port Taranaki



Winner
Molia - Māngere, Auckland
(not pictured).



At Mōkau Beach, Mōkau



How to enjoy Christmas on a budget

- 1. Plan, set a budget and stick to it.**
- 2. Set a limit on gifts.** Set a budget (say \$10, \$15, \$20). Perhaps limit the gifts you give to one person through either a Secret Santa or white elephant and open them as a group as a fun game during your Christmas gathering.
- 3. Try crafting your gifts.** Store-bought mason jars are great, but upcycled jars are just as good! Make a salt, sugar or coffee-grounds body scrub by mixing with coconut oil and a few drops of essential oil. Make jams, pickles or relishes with fruit and veggies from your garden. Pack home baking in little parcels, or layer the dry ingredients into a glass jar with attached recipe card so the receiver can bake it fresh themselves! Search online for more ideas.
- 4. Make Christmas dinner a potluck.** If you're hosting, ask your guests to bring their favourite, go-to dish. Your guests will likely want to help, and it also saves you time by sharing the cooking.
- 5. Look out for specials on non-perishable goods.** Stock up on these before the Christmas week supermarket rush to avoid the last-minute panic (and mark-up!).
- 6. Remember to focus on friends and family.** Aroha from friends and whānau is always the highlight of any holiday. Get outdoors and plan to go to the beach or park, set up a game of backyard cricket or footie, have a picnic or use your council-owned shared barbecue. If the weather turns wet, have board games, cards or Lego handy.



Lithium-ion battery safety

Chances are you've got dozens of battery-powered devices and electrical appliances scattered around your home. From e-bikes and e-scooters to vapes, power tools and children's toys, they can be a fire hazard if they are damaged, mishandled, or not properly disposed of. Here are some tips for using appliances safely: www.fireandemergency.nz/battery





WARNING

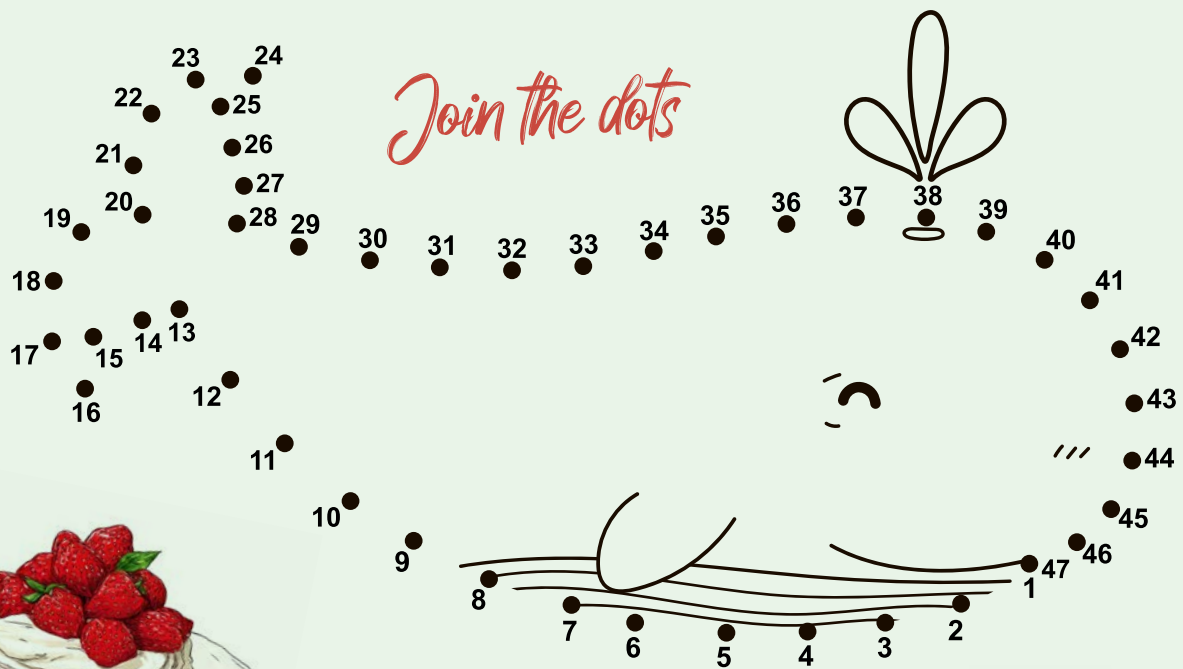
CHARGING YOUR VAPE ON YOUR COUCH OR
BED CAN CAUSE VIOLENT FIRE IN SECONDS.



[FIREANDEMERGENCY.NZ/BATTERY](https://fireandemergency.nz/battery)

FOR KIDS, ABOUT KIDS

TREEHOUSE



Find the *summer holiday objects*
hidden in this issue!

☐ Pōhutukawa

☐ Pavlova

☐ Barbecue

☐ Cricket ball

☐ Strawberry

☐ Surfboard

☐ Jandals

☐ Beach towel

☐ Santa hat

☐ Pine tree

☐ Christmas bauble

☐ Little blue penguin / kororā

☐ Sunscreen

☐ Cat

☐ Bike

☐ Sun umbrella

Colouring in Kākāpō



Keep cool indoors this summer



Get more tips for keeping cool during summer here:



Homes are getting warmer as our summers get hotter. Here are some tips that can help you and your family keep cool during the hot weather.

Top tips to stop your home from getting too hot:

- Open the windows early in the morning while it's still cool outside and close them again before the warmest part of the day.
- Close curtains on sunny windows, leaving windows slightly open behind them.
- Use fans by open doors or windows to bring cooler outside air into your home.

- Turn your heat pump to cooling mode with the temperature set to 24–25°C, before your home gets too warm. This uses less power than cooling to lower temperatures.
- Remember! Turning your heat pump temperature down low and then back up again won't cool your home faster and will cost you more money.

Important note: Storing medication can be a concern in summer as many medications degrade at temperatures over 30°C (86°F), making them less effective. Double check with your GP, pharmacist or the information leaflet to ensure medications are stored correctly.

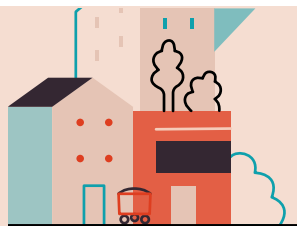
When to get help

If your body temperature starts to climb and you're unable to cool yourself, you may be experiencing heat stress. Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are the two most serious types of heat stress. Symptoms can include headaches, dizziness, fainting, vomiting, confusion, dry skin and seizures.

Heatstroke is a life-threatening condition – if you think you or a family member may have heatstroke, call 111 immediately.

For non-urgent health advice, you can also call Healthline on 0800 611 116.

Summer is a great time to refresh and maintain your home



Summer is the perfect time to tackle tasks like cleaning off mould and freshening up the house. If you have any concerns about the health of your home, you can self-refer to Health New Zealand's Healthy Homes Initiative (HHI).

The nationwide HHI wants to increase the number of children and their whānau/aiga living in warm, dry and healthy homes. HHI providers help whānau who live in a range of homes – a rental, a Kāinga Ora home or privately owned.

HHI providers can visit your home and work with you to develop a plan to keep your home warm and dry. They can support you as a Kāinga Ora customer if you need insulation, curtains, beds and bedding, minor repairs, ventilation, or heat sources.

Visit hhi.org.nz for more information.

Only flush the 3 Ps – pee, poo and toilet paper

Anything that isn't pee, poo or toilet paper does not readily breakdown after you flush it and causes blockages in our sewer pipes. Even wet wipes that claim they're flushable still contain plastic and other synthetic materials, which means they don't disintegrate like toilet paper. **DO NOT FLUSH THEM.**



Summer gardening tips

Kōanga got truly underway as things in the māra (including weeds) started to take off. It's also a very exciting time as Labour Weekend signalled the start of the summer veggie planting season – tomatoes, zucchinis, cucumbers peppers, eggplants, pumpkins and beans.

Although we can still expect a bit more wet spring weather, it's good to prepare for the dry summer months ahead by thinking about how to retain water in the soil. You can do this by covering the ground through interplanting big leafy low crops among taller plants, adding herbs and flowers between your crops or mulching with pea straw, grass clippings or cut weeds. Mulching also helps keep the weeds down so it's a win-win. Water as early in the morning as possible to prevent evaporation and aim to water the soil and roots rather than the plant itself.

If you aren't composting already, now is a great time to start! It's the perfect way to recycle all the nutrients from your food scraps and garden waste back into the garden to help fertilise your veggies. Plus you'll avoid sending it to landfill and creating nasty greenhouse gas.

When you're adding to a compost bin or pile, make sure you balance the greens (nitrogen-rich materials like fruit scraps and grass clippings) with browns (carbon-rich materials like dried leaves and cardboard). This ensures the compost microbes have everything they need for a healthy diet. Cut up any larger pieces of veggies, fruit or bread etc



to help them break down faster, and avoid adding meat, dairy and oily foods (small amounts are okay) as they can attract pests and create odours. Turning your compost regularly helps to aerate it which is also good for the microbes and helps prevent bad smells. You might need to turn it a couple of times before everything is fully decomposed and you have a dark, crumbly compost ready to add to your garden.





No data? No problem.

Zero.govt.nz has you covered.



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.

Our opening hours over the holiday period

Our Customer Support Centre will be open for urgent calls only on 25 and 26 December 2025 and 1 and 2 January 2026.



Urgent calls only –
Thursday 25 – Friday 26
December 2025 and Thursday
1 – Friday 2 January 2026.



Non-urgent calls –
Normal hours and non-urgent
calls resume from Monday 5
January 2026, 8am to 6.30pm,
weekdays.



Some local offices will
be open for drop-ins
between 10am and 2pm
or by appointment on
weekdays only.

To confirm if your local
office is open, contact the
Customer Support Centre
on 0800 801 601.

Date	Day	0800 801 601
Monday 22 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Tuesday 23 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Wednesday 24 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Thursday 25 Dec	Christmas Day	Urgent calls only
Friday 26 Dec	Boxing Day	Urgent calls only
Saturday 27 Dec	Holiday weekend day	Urgent calls only
Sunday 28 Dec	Holiday weekend day	Urgent calls only
Monday 29 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Tuesday 30 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Wednesday 31 Dec	Normal day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Thursday 1 Jan	New Year's Day	Urgent calls only
Friday 2 Jan	Day after New Year's Day	Urgent calls only
Saturday 3 Jan	Normal weekend day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Sunday 4 Jan	Normal weekend day	Open 8am–6.30pm
Monday 5 Jan	Busiest day of the year	Open 8am–6.30pm



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

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