

Our Chat

December/January 2022



Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou, Tēnā koutou katoa — Greetings to you all

Celebrating our selfless local heroes

Janine and Dean acted quickly in emergencies, going above and beyond when needed most.

They're joint overall winners of the annual Housing Heroes Awards run by the Tenant Advisory Group.

They received a certificate and a \$100 voucher for selfless actions that may ultimately have saved lives.

Dean was in his home when he heard a strange noise from outside. He got up to investigate and noticed his neighbour's bedroom window was ajar when it would ordinarily be shut.

He called out to see if she was okay. She wasn't. Dean didn't mess around. He quickly dialed 111 and asked for an ambulance.

When the ambulance arrived, the ambulance officer said the call led to on-the-spot treatment that may well have saved his neighbour's life.

On a weekend in June, Janine was



away from home when she got a call from ŌCHT, who'd had a call from someone worried about a tenant who hadn't been seen for a while.

Janine hadn't seen them but wanted to help however she could, so she drove back to her home.

She visited her neighbour's home and quickly discovered they were there and that they were very unwell. Her quick actions helped avoid the worst.

Janine and Dean were among 33 tenants recognised at this year's awards.

Also among the awards was Christine, who organises a food sharing programme and Liz, who advocated for a tenant who needed help.

Others recognised were involved in everything from Easter egg hunts, food pantry stewardship and gardening, to looking out for vulnerable neighbours, resolving disputes, volunteering their time and supporting people after tragedy.

Congratulations to all the winners - your selfless acts and sense of community are appreciated by us all!

Looking back on a year of challenges and shared achievements

We're nearing the end of another wonderfully busy year with plenty more in store for the next 12 months.

Thank you for supporting your community and ŌCHT as we all met even more challenges posed by COVID-19.

As disruptive as it's been, the pandemic didn't stop nearly 300 tenants using our digital coaching service this year.

It also didn't stop dozens of people engaging with our employment service, getting work ready and many finding jobs.

We were lucky to welcome a tenant apprentice to our tenancy team. I'm thrilled she's now a fulltime member of

our call centre – and one of the voices who answered some of the more-than 30,000 calls we received this year.

Our whānau support service has been active too, helping families settle into ŌCHT communities. This adds to the amazing work of our tenancy operations team and has helped 99% of tenants sustain their tenancies over the past year.

It's been great learning about these personal successes – and many others celebrated with Housing Heroes Awards.

This year, ŌCHT took responsibility for major work such as repaints, re-roofs and refurbishments on city council-owned homes. It's a huge, long-term undertaking but with your support,

we've already made a real difference in many communities.

We're nearing the end of the curtain programme we started after our Warm and Dry heat pump and insulation work. Now, our homes either meet or exceed the government's Healthy Homes standards.

We opened or started building 74 new homes this year. Our communities are growing, and we've been building partnerships to grow what we can do in support. Look out for announcements in the new year!

Thank you for all your support - and all the best for a happy, restful summer.

Cate Kearney
ŌCHT Chief Executive

Greetings from TAG



The Tenant Advisory Group had a stop-start year with meetings and events postponed due to Covid-19.

As we head into Christmas though, we are proud to have been part of the Housing Heroes event again with tenants being recognised and rewarded for their consistent generosity towards their fellow neighbours.

We have recruited two new members to TAG and look forward to more applicants in the new year.

As you prepare for the festive season ahead, with its usual hustle and bussle, please take time out to relax and look after yourselves, and reflect on how lucky we are to live in such a vibrant community.

On behalf of the team at TAG we wish you a very happy, healthy and safe Christmas and New Year.

A special thank you also to Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust staff whom help us in our efforts to bring tenants views to the forefront.

Best wishes,

Chair Dave Wilson
Deputy chair Noeline Monsef

Interested in joining your TAG?

Call ŌCHT on **0800 624 456** or email **admin@ocht.org.nz** and ask to be put in touch with a TAG member.

We'd love to hear from you!

Learn more about TAG online:
ocht.org.nz/tenant-advisory-group-tag

Special holiday recipe: shortbread biscuits

TAG member and ever-busy baker Colleen had only just finished catering the annual Housing Heroes Awards when we asked her to dig into her recipe book for some festive fare. They're yummy - but don't take it from us, have a crack yourself!

Ingredients

- 250g butter
- 3/4 cup icing sugar
- 1/2 cup cornflour
- 1.5 cups of ordinary flour

Method

Cream butter and icing sugar until fluffy. Add other ingredients. Roll out



to 1/2cm thickness and prick with a fork a couple of times. Cut into shapes and bake at 150 for 30 mins.

Let cool and dust with icing sugar. Enjoy!



Keeping your home cool and dry in the heat

Your home can be a welcome refuge from the hot sun. Here are some tips to stay cool, dry and comfortable over summer.

During the day

- Use your heat pump on the cool setting. Select the cool button and set the temperature (18-21 degC is a good guide for a healthy room temperature).
- Use your curtains when the sun's heating your room too much.
- Use the extractor fan every time you cook.
- Cover pots and pans when cooking.
- Limit the use of appliances like stoves, ovens and dryers.
- Take a cool shower and use the extractor fan.

In the evening

- Keep windows open with a fan nearby when you're at home
- Make a cross breeze by opening windows and doors

Did you know?

Opening your windows and doors for 15min twice a day can save you money in heating and cooling.

The reduced moisture in the air makes it easier for your heat pump to do its job!



Plus, here's some additional tips to beat the heat:

- Cool your body
- Protect your pets
- Hydrate
- Avoid sun exposure
- Avoid/limit alcohol and caffeine
- Check on others



Considering a new job in the new year?



It's been a great year for ÖCHT's job coach Lyn who's successfully placed 15 tenants in work.

Lyn's planning and preparing for 2023 and wanting to help many more people in the new year.

Keep an eye out for flyers in your mailbox and community lounges advertising Lyn's service. She'll be visiting each community throughout the year, ready to talk through your skills, CV, job history and where you're hoping to work. Look for Lyn with her pull up banner and stop by to say hi.

As a reminder, we're still running Job Club. This is a free group service, exclusive to ÖCHT tenants, to help prepare for employment.

We understand group settings can sometimes be a little daunting but Job Club is an informal and supportive place where you'll meet helpful people, swap ideas and learn from other job seekers.

If you'd like to make an appointment with Lyn now to meet in the new year, please call 0800 624 456



Work on 35 new homes underway on parkside site at Spreydon

Work on new warm, dry and energy efficient homes for individuals and families in Spreydon is well underway.

Willard Street has been home to social housing since the late 1930s. We're replacing 26 studio units with 35 modern homes that will cater to individuals, couples and families.

It's a great site for families - it's beside Simeon Park and Addington School - and it'll further help the city meet the challenge of the growing need for

family homes on the Public Housing Register.

The new homes were quickly taking shape over December in a build made quicker by having the insulated wall panels made off-site, ready to be craned into place on their new foundations.

Consortium Contracting's site manager is confident the build is on track for completion by mid-2023 - ready for us to welcome new families as soon as we can!



Dora driving to help digital explorers in targeted trail of mobile training service

Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa (DIAA) is delivering its Better Digital Futures for Seniors programme in our community. ÖCHT's digital coach is helping deliver the free trial of mobile training for people aged 65 and over.

Training happens in Dora, DIAA's mobile digital classroom.

Sessions include an introduction to smartphones and email, digital banking and apps used to communicate with friends and family.

People living in selected communities



will be invited to take part in the trial, which will see whether mobile training might be a useful way of helping partners reach our communities.

Keep track of what's happening

We'll be pausing our planned maintenance projects over the Christmas and New Year period (December 23 - January 9) - but don't worry, that doesn't mean we're downing tools completely!

We'll still be operating an emergency repairs service over the holiday period, so make sure you give us a call on 0800 624 456 if you've got an urgent repair that needs a fixing.

We'll get back into our major maintenance projects from January 9. Here's what we've got on our books for the first month of the new year:

- Greenhurst Courts: We're repairing roofs, and we expect the scaffolders to be on site on January 9.
- Proctor Street: We're painting the outside of homes. Weather depending, we expect this work to start on January 19.

We've also got some pretty involved upgrade work happening at Pickering Courts, Roimata Place and Wycola Courts. We're upgrading homes in stages and we expect this work to restart soon after we're back on deck in January.

As always, we'll write to you before we start any major repairs in your area.

Thanks heaps for your patience and cooperation, and for doing what you can to let our contractors get on with their work in the safest and most efficient way possible.

Managing money over Christmas

Christmas can be expensive but it's really important to plan to meet the payments, such as rent, that happen no matter what time of year it is. If you're having a hard time financially, there are places that can help.



Food and essential items

If your situation is urgent and you need food within the next 24 to 48 hours, one of the city's your local foodbank may be able to help.

- Christchurch City Mission: 03 365 0635

- Foodbank Canterbury: 03 930 1065

Free budget advice

- You can get free, confidential budgeting advice from MoneyTalks, by calling 0800 345 123
- sorted.org.nz includes a number of online tools to help you budget, including a debt calculator.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has more than 80 centres across the country so you can just drop in even if you're on holiday. Alternatively, you can call 0800 367 222 or chat online or via email.

ŌCHT is here to help. If you need us, call us on 0800 624 456. It's a free call and available 24/7.

It's worth knowing

You're responsible for your visitors – please make sure they're a good neighbour when they visit so everyone can peacefully enjoy your community.



Follow us on Facebook

Are you on Facebook? If so, follow us! You'll be the first to see our news, alerts, stories, events we're organising, hosting or attending and more! Follow us @otautahicommunityhousingtrust



Our holiday hours

The ŌCHT office on Kilmore St closes at 2pm on Friday 23 December.

We're open again on 28, 29 and 30 Dec, from 8.30am to 5pm.

We're closed again on 2 and 3 Jan. Normal hours resume from 4 Jan.

For holiday-time emergencies, call us 24/7 on 0800 624 456.



Thank you!



Ōtautahi
community
housing
trust

Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust
Ground Floor, 61 Kilmore St, PO Box
54, Christchurch 8140
FP 0800 624 456 LL 03 260 0058
admin@ocht.org.nz
@otautahicommunityhousingtrust
www.ocht.org.nz