



Ōtautahi
community
housing
trust

Our Chat

JUNE 2021

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

New initiatives on horizon

They say change is the only constant in life and as we move from autumn into winter, I've got plenty to tell you about the positive initiatives happening at your Housing Trust.

News of the first big change landed in your letterbox a few days ago, when we announced a partnership with fibre broadband infrastructure company Enable to get free broadband into ŌCHT homes.

So much of what matters happens on the web. We use it for banking and education, to find work, to use social services and to connect with the people we love. But, we also know many tenants don't have the internet at home because what it costs gets in the way.

This stops many people from making the most of what others take for granted. So, we've teamed up with Enable to remove the cost barrier to help eligible tenants into the digital world.

Enable will install what's needed to connect homes to fibre broadband and ŌCHT will be in charge of the broadband service and the education that goes with it. We're still working to gain approval to proceed, and you'll hear more about it later in the year.

The web is also part of other work ŌCHT is doing to make it easier for you to connect with us and to manage your tenancy. We're working on a new computer system featuring an online tenant portal that'll let you do everything from log maintenance jobs to check on your rent payments. We expect that to land later in the year, too.



ŌCHT chief executive Cate Kearney

ŌCHT and the Christchurch City Council are working together to streamline the way property maintenance is managed. From July, ŌCHT will also be responsible for the big jobs such as planned upgrades and roof replacements, through to fixing paths and cutting back trees. It'll be efficient and it'll help us plan for the future.

In my job, it's lovely to learn more about how the futures of so many tenants have been supported by the ŌCHT team and the many people in our community who support us. Our Employment Service—that's the service that also hosts Job Club Monday morning in the city library—has supported 18 tenants into work since July 2020, and it is wonderful to hear so much great feedback from participants and their employers.

You'll read more about some of the highlights of the past few months and the months to come in this newsletter. Thank you for being part of so much positive change.

Cate Kearney
ŌCHT chief executive

Getting free internet into ŌCHT homes

We're really excited to confirm we're working on getting free, high speed fibre broadband internet into eligible ŌCHT homes.

We've teamed up with Enable, the company building Christchurch's fibre network, to develop a plan to connect ŌCHT homes to fibre broadband.

The plan is awaiting government approval but if it goes ahead, Enable will connect homes to its network and will help ŌCHT offer a free, supported service to tenants.

The partnership allows us to offer the service to tenants who live in the Enable network area. Enable covers Christchurch and Lyttelton but not Akaroa.

We'll operate a support service and we'll help people develop the skills and confidence to use the internet.

In the meantime, we're keen to hear from net-savvy volunteers who'd like to help their neighbours use the web when the service gets started.

If that sounds like you, call us on **0800 624 456**.

The approval process will take time—you'll hear more from us after the government releases a decision.

** Frequently asked questions, Page 2*

Why we're doing it

92% of people in New Zealand cities have the internet, but in Christchurch:

37% of ŌCHT tenants have the internet at home and

69% would if cost was not a factor.

With Enable, we want to help more people overcome this barrier.

Free internet: frequently asked questions

ŌCHT and Enable's plan to get free high speed fibre broadband into ŌCHT homes is awaiting government approval. This will take time, so we can't say when the service will start.

But while we wait, we can answer some of the questions you've asked since we made our announcement.

What's happening?

ŌCHT and Enable have a partnership to try and get free, uncapped, ultra-fast fibre broadband to all eligible ŌCHT properties on the Enable network.

Enable plans to connect homes to the fibre network. It will give ŌCHT access to free and fast fibre broadband.

ŌCHT plans to be the service provider. It will offer the free broadband to tenants, sign them up, and provide a help desk and education to help people use their internet connection.

What will it cost me?

It'll be 100% free to join and use.

Where is Enable's network?

The Enable network is in Christchurch and Lyttelton, but not Akaroa.

When will it happen?

Enable needs government permission to offer wholesale fibre broadband to ŌCHT. This process will take time and we do not know when a decision will be made. We will let you know when we get the go-ahead.

How do I join?

ŌCHT will invite eligible tenants to join after the proposal gets government approval. We don't know when this will happen, but we will let you know.

Do I have to join?

No, and you'll be able to change your



mind any time after you're invited.

Do I have to allow my home to be connected to the fibre network?

No. It won't be compulsory and you'll be able to change your mind at any time.

Can I get my home connected but not join your service?

Yes, and you'll be able to use the connection to join any other service. The costs for another service won't be covered by the free offer.

How will the install process work?

It'll follow this process: first, Enable will get the fibre to your home; then it will install and connect the connector box inside your home. Switch on happens after that.

I've already got fibre broadband. How does this affect me?

You'll be able to stay with your provider or switch at any time. If you are on a contract you may need to pay exit fees. If you switch, Enable will need to change the fibre connector box you currently use to access the internet, to give you access to the new service.

Keeping tidy

Christchurch City Council reminds us all to make the most of our red, green and yellow bins.

The green bin is for green waste, food scraps, kitchen paper towels and pizza boxes. If it can't be composted, it shouldn't go in the green bin.

The yellow bin is for material that can be recycled, but please make sure containers and cans are clean — otherwise, they can't be recycled.

The Christchurch Bins app is available in the Apple App Store or Google Play. It can remind you to put out your bin, and tell you what to put in them.

TAGging you in

Here's what your Tenant Advisory Group is involved with this month:

Hello, neighbour

Work developing the "Hello, Neighbour" pilot programme to encourage community lounge use and to make new tenants welcome continues. It's being trialled at Biddick Courts and might provide a template for activities elsewhere.

Community Olympics

Community lounge keyholders are being contacted to gauge interest in an inter-complex competition that'll coincide with the Tokyo Olympics in July. Events will include everything from pool and darts, to quoits.

Housing heroes

TAG is calling for nominations for the annual Housing Heroes Awards. You can nominate a deserving community-minded tenant by calling **0800 624 456**.

To join TAG

Download the application at **ocht.org.nz** — you'll find it on the **Tenant Advisory Group page**; or call **0800 624 456** or email **admin@ocht.org.nz**



Karoro Lane impresses

It's named after the southern black-backed gull – and we hope it will give our community wings.

The second stage of the three stage Brougham St development, Karoro Lane, was officially opened in April, a month earlier than scheduled.

It added 32 new homes to 28 already opened at nearby Korimako Lane in January. The last of the development's 90-homes will welcome tenants after Hoiho Lane is opened in June.

New tenants Te Ariki and Bernice helped cut the ribbon at the official opening of the development of 14 two-bedroom and 18 one-bedroom homes.

Te Ariki was impressed by the standard of the new homes. Bernice said her new home was warm, light and quiet.

All homes are built to New Zealand Green Building Council Homestar 7 standard. They're warm and efficient to heat—and they're a new benchmark for new community homes.

New 37-home complex for Richmond

We've started work on a new development in Richmond that will provide warm, dry and secure homes for more than 40 people.

Our Gowerton Place project will deliver 37 new, high-rated homes by early next year. They are being built by Christchurch company Consortium Construction.

The new homes replace 30 tired community housing units badly damaged in the Canterbury earthquakes. Those units welcomed their first tenants in 1960.

OCHT commercial and development manager Ed Leeson says the homes are designed to achieve at least a New Zealand Green Building Council Homestar 6 rating.

The 37-home build is made up of 34 one-bedroom units, and one each of 2-bed, 3-bed and 4-bed units. They'll be built as six two-storey blocks.

The project design emphasises shared



green spaces and open links to the community, Ed says.

Gardens, lawns, courtyards and paths are part of a total landscaped area of 3378 square metres. That's more than twice the area of the overall building footprint.

The Christchurch City Council transferred the land to ŌCHT as part of the 2014 Housing Accord.

Another 33 new homes will also be built this year at Coles Place, St Albans.

QR codes installed

We're using QR codes at all complexes to help keep track of where people are working and to further improve health and safety.

Visiting workers scan the code to log where they are and to note the details of the job.

The codes should be on walls. If not, please call **0800 624 456** and we'll get them where they're needed.

E-vehicle trial nears

A two year trial of electric vehicles in our communities starts in June.

ŌCHT is supplying two electric cars and five electric bikes. The bikes can be used for free and will be based at charging stations at Karoro Lane and Hoiho Lane, Sydenham.

The cars will be subsidised and will be based at car charging stations at Karoro Lane. Both schemes are open to all tenants. There'll be more about booking and using the cars when the service is launched.

Lincoln University researchers will also survey people living in the area about their transport needs. Thank you for helping them out.

Let's be fire wise

We're installing additional smoke detectors in homes, but we can all do more to keep ourselves safe.

Fire and Emergency NZ says we should avoid overloading power boxes, never leave heaters unattended, and make sure our electric blankets don't have exposed wires.

Please also test your detectors by pressing their test buttons at least once every six months. The alarm will sound if it is working. If not, please call us on **0800 624 456**.

Top tips for keeping warm...

Winter needn't always be cold and dark. Here are some power-saving tips to make the next few months feel much cosier in your ŌCHT home.

1. **Use the sun:** Trap the warmth by open your curtains on sunny days, and by closing them just before the sun disappears.

2. **Manage heating throughout the day:** Set your heat pump to a timer and with a healthy room temperature (18-21degC is a good guide). It's okay to start heating your room before you use it, but most homes shouldn't need more than 10 mins pre-warming.

3. **Stay dry and save money:** Dry homes are cheaper to heat. Did you know we create a lot of water from body heat, cooking and showering? To reduce the amount of moisture in the air, it's a good idea to:

- Wipe down wet surfaces.
- Use the extractor fan every time you cook.
- Cover pots and pans when cooking.
- Open the windows during the day time when you're at home. This

... and dry

Did you know your heat pump can also dehumidify your home?

This is important in winter, when we stay inside longer and there's more moisture in the air, and maybe even some condensation on our windows.

The dehumidifying function is easy to use. When your home is as warm as you need it, use the remote control to switch the heat

will reduce moisture.

- Remove any signs of mould immediately.
- If it becomes an issue, let us know.
- Leave gaps between your bed and the wall - condensation from body heat can lead to mould.
- Wipe condensation off windows.

4. **Wash and dry early:** Try and get your first load of washing done first-thing in the morning on a sunny day and hang it outside on the line. This will give you a full day of free outdoor drying time. Drying clothes inside creates moisture, so try and dry things



pump to DRY. Then sit back and let it do its thing for half an hour.

We recommend doing this in the morning and at night.

outside if you can.

5. **Are you making the most of your new heat pump?** This is the first winter all ŌCHT homes have heat pumps—take another look at the instructions, or call us on 0800 624 456 if you need help.

6. **Are you getting the best power deal?** You can compare deals and switch power companies by visiting www.powerswitch.co.nz.

Need help? You can call our housing champions on 0800 624 456.

The importance of putting things right

We always try to do the right thing and if we make a mistake we work hard to put things right.

A breakdown in communication at ŌCHT this month meant a garden at Feast Place was removed without the gardener being told when it would happen.

About 10 months had passed since we agreed it would happen, but we didn't let our tenant know it was about to start.

We unreservedly apologised and worked hard to get things sorted as quickly as possible.

Work installing new raised gardens started within two days and we were in contact with gardening groups (one with over 70,000 members) to find as many replacement plants and herbs as possible.

We've also taken steps to try and stop this sort of thing happening again. We regret it happened at all.

Thank you!



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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

f @otautahicomunityhousingtrust
www.ocht.org.nz