

HOUSING UPGRADE PROJECT UPDATE



The completed Regent Park Apartments.

Regent Park Apartments

All tenants have now moved into Regent Park Apartments and the new community is settling into life in the new complex.

Central Park Apartments

Central Park is progressing well. Most of the very noisy work has finished and a lot of the work is now going on inside the apartments. We have experienced some delays and are now looking at finishing work in August. Tenants will be able to move back from the end of August.

Newtown Park Apartments

Tenants have moved into Block A, and Block B will soon be ready for tenants. We're doing earthquake strengthening work at the moment which can be quite noisy. We apologise for this disruption to nearby tenants and we're doing our best to keep the noise down.

Marshall Court Flats

Work on these flats will begin in about a year from now, so our relocations team is starting to work with tenants to find them

suitable temporary homes and plan their moving dates.

For information on relocations contact Suzanne Chittenden or Luan Gobie at City Housing on 499 4444.



Berkeley Dallard Apartments

Abdullah Mohamed (far left) was recently reunited with his wife Efenesh Tesfa (centre) and their family after four years of being apart. The family came to New Zealand four years ago and Abdullah, a journalist, remained in Ethiopia. He arrived just in time to help with their move from Berkeley Dallard

An engineer's report has shown that the complex is corroding, putting all tenants living there under serious risk if the building were to collapse. We are working with Housing New Zealand staff to house these tenants temporarily while they work on finding permanent housing for them. City Housing Support Services Manager,

to the brand new Regent Apartments in Newtown. They are pictured here with their son Yousuf Adullahi Mohamed, Efenesh's sister Mulu Tesfa and Tenancy Liaison Coordinator Adele Thomas, who supported them with the move.

The relocations team is continuing to work with the remaining tenants at Berkeley Dallard Apartments to help them find suitable accommodation and plan their moves. Construction on Berkeley Dallard Apartments begins early in 2013.

Etona Flats

Etona Flats is affected by the upgrade of Berkeley Dallard Apartments because it is right next door. For health and safety reasons, tenants are being moved before construction starts at Berkeley Dallard. The City Housing relocations team is working alongside these tenants to find suitable homes and plan their moving dates. The team will be there every step of the way to make the move as stress-free as possible.

Peter Hunter says "it's fortunate that we have a number of fixed-term properties available because of the Housing Upgrade Project, so this hasn't affected our waitlist. The majority will remain Housing New Zealand tenants and we will only take care of the maintenance of these properties."



Housing Minister Phil Heatley, tenants Bruce Hurley and Mema Laua and Mayor Celia Wade-Brown (pictured), cut the ribbon marking the official opening of the new community room and completion of the upgrade of Hanson Court Apartments in Newtown.

HANSON COURT APARTMENTS AND COMMUNITY SPACE OPENING

The \$13.7 million upgrade of Hanson Court included opening a new community centre, landscaping and refurbishing 110 units with improved kitchens, bathrooms, security, rubbish and recycling facilities, lighting, better ventilation, thermal and acoustic insulation, double glazing and communal facilities.

Hanson Court is situated on an old iwi cultivation site. It was named Omaroro by the Wellington Tenth Trust as a sign of respect for the land's

historical significance. The Council's Kapa Haka Group, Me Heke Ki Pōneke, gave a wonderful performance on opening day.

The Hanson Court Apartments project is a finalist in the Property Council New Zealand's Property Industry Awards for 2012. The entire Housing Upgrade Project will eventually see more than 4000 tenants in warmer, drier, safer homes across the city.

For more information on the upgrade, visit the Council website, Wellington.govt.nz – go to 'Services', then 'Housing'.



Tenants from Hanson Court Apartments enjoy the day: Packiara-nee Nadesan and Thankaswari Retnasingam standing outside.

TENANTS RECOGNISED AT AWARDS EVENT

The Wellington Association of City Housing Artists (WACHA) was recently awarded the 2012 Australasian Housing Institutes (AHI) Housing Excellence Award for the best tenant-led initiative in New Zealand.

The award recognised the artists' efforts in coordinating the 'Everyone Has a Story' exhibition and the formation of WACHA.

The four originating artists of WACHA were – Bruce Hurley, Justin Tate, Kay McCormick and Sam Conrad.

WACHA worked with two community art workshops – Vincents Art Workshop and Pablos Art Studio – the Thistle Hall Gallery, the Voice Arts Trust, the Council's housing and arts teams and many volunteers to bring off a successful and well-received exhibition.

WACHA is now holding regular meetings and planning art workshops, and the group

recently sold art and craft at a neighbourhood festival stall. If you're interested in taking part in WACHA phone Justin Tate on 021 044 5320 or Bruce Hurley on 022 013 6104.

New Zealand award winners now go up against those from across Australia in the 2012 Australasian Housing Institute's Professional Excellence Awards.



Pictured accepting the award on behalf of WACHA are Justin Tate, Andrew Morrison, Bruce Hurley – also known as Gypsy Blu – and Kay McCormick.

NEIGHBOURS DAY TENANT SUMMIT A SUCCESS

The City Housing tenant summit held at Te Papa at the end of March was a huge success with more than 90 tenants attending. It was set up to coincide with the national initiative, Neighbours Day Aotearoa, where everyone is encouraged to get to know their neighbours. The theme was 'Say G'day for Neighbours Day' and provided a great opportunity to discuss what being a good neighbour is all about.

It was a fun-filled day of workshops, activities and guest speakers on topics such as emergency preparedness, gardening, digital storytelling and clean, green and healthy living. Beth Te Aho, a tenant from Arlington, who also works at the Newtown Computer Hub, says the most important thing she learned that day was how to involve more tenants in projects so they can get out of their houses and meet each other.



LEISURE CARD TOURS – DISCOVER FREE OR CHEAP ACTIVITIES IN YOUR SUBURB

On Thursday 3 May a number of tenants joined Council staff for a casual walk around Newtown. Together, they discovered a wide range of programmes and services that are available to the public, and extra cheap, with a Leisure Card. These tours take place in different suburbs every few months. If you are interested, phone either Ruth Locker on 803 8699 or Jon Gabites on 803 8350.

All City Housing tenants are entitled to a Wellington City Council Leisure Card, which gives you discounted entry into a range of recreation activities.

You can apply for a card by going to our Service Centre on Wakefield Street or visit our website, Wellington.govt.nz (go to 'Events/Recreation', then 'Recreation', then 'Recreation Support', then 'Leisure Card').



2012 RENT REVIEW

Our annual rent review is under way. You will receive a letter near the end of June saying whether or not your rent will go up. You will be given 60 days' notice of any increase – the new rents will take effect on the first Monday in September. Rent increases will be no more than \$20 a week.

If your rent increases, you might be eligible for an increased accommodation supplement from WINZ. We also offer an affordable rent subsidy if your rent (minus any other allowances) is more than 35 percent of your income.

WINZ accommodation supplement

Check with WINZ to see if you're entitled to an accommodation supplement or an increase in your accommodation supplement by phoning 0800 559 009.

Affordable rent subsidy

If your rent – less any accommodation supplement and other special allowance you receive – is more than 35 percent of your total income, you are entitled to the Council's affordable rent subsidy. If you think you may qualify for this subsidy, or if you need help to work it out, then bring in the income details for everyone over 18 in your household to our Service Centre at 101 Wakefield Street and ask to talk to someone from City Housing.

NEED SOME HELP?

- Bills piling up?
- Suffering stress and sickness?
- Finding it hard to get around – need a helping hand?
- Want to find a way to connect with your community?

If you are going through a challenging time, just remember help is never too far away. City Housing works with a variety of support agencies that may be able to help. Call your tenancy manager on 499 4444, talk things through and get some advice.



SMOKE-FREE HOMES BETTER FOR OUR KIDS

The newly built Regent Park Apartments are smoke-free, the first time for City Housing. One of our tenants, Abdullah Mohammed, was interviewed by Radio New Zealand to see what he thought of the smoking ban. "We are a smoke-free family and we have always asked our guests to smoke outside," he said. Another tenant, Adam Yusuf, who is a smoker, also agreed with the properties being 'smoke-free'. He has always supported smoking outside rather than in homes. We're asking all tenants in the latest tenant satisfaction survey if you want to quit smoking and if you want some help to do it.

Rosie Gallen of Community Action says the idea behind making Regent Park smoke-free is not just about protecting the Council's property. "A number of factors led to this, such as protecting children as they

are especially vulnerable to second-hand smoke. Research in New Zealand shows that young people exposed to second-hand smoke at home are more likely to become daily smokers.

"Regent Park is a brand new complex, and a good opportunity for us to start a smoke-free initiative. There is certainly support from tenants such as Abdullah's family who already have a smoke-free home, and City Housing's Community Action team is keen to support any other families or individuals to do the same."

The Government is planning to make New Zealand smoke-free by 2025. Just remember – if you want to quit now, we can help.

Phone Rosie Gallen, Community Action and Engagement Manager, on 803 8141.

GOING DIGITAL

Our regional switch-over to digital television is set for September 2013. You're probably wondering how it will affect you, so we're planning some discussion forums. These forums will be an opportunity to ask questions and find out what you may need to buy and when.

To be eligible for the Government's installation assistance package you must be watching analogue television (not digital) and be aged 75 years or over with a community services card. You are also eligible if you're receiving an invalid's benefit or a veteran's pension,



Seymour the digital dog

or a former recipient of an invalid's benefit or veteran's pension who has converted to New Zealand Superannuation.

We'll let you know where and when the forums will be held but in the meantime, if you want to discuss the switchover, phone Guy Burns on 0800 838 800.