

EVERYDAY Northcote

JUST RIGHT

New two-bedroom homes 'right-sized' for small households.

FOLDED CURRY

Murtabak filled roti keeps locals coming back for more.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS

A Northcote resident remembers life 'before the bridge'.

CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY



Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of Everyday Northcote. If you've been in and around the area you might have noticed a lot of activity lately. The 43 stand-alone houses in Stage 1, being the Housing New Zealand (HNZ) homes in Tonar Street, Cadness Street, and Potter Avenue, are almost complete and the families will have moved in by late August. Construction is starting shortly on 16 one-bedroom apartments in Cadness Street for HNZ.

Stage 2 is now underway. Buildings have been removed on some smaller sites in Greenslade Crescent and Potter Avenue to make way for new HNZ homes. Further demolition works will begin in Fraser Avenue and Tonar Street over the next few months as well. Stage 2 will create more HNZ homes and – in a first for the Northcote Development – new homes for sale. Some will be priced at an affordable level set by Government for qualifying purchasers and some will be sold on the open market with a focus on keeping the prices at or below the Auckland median.

We appreciate your support as we move the project forward. We understand how disruptive the changes are and will continue to do our best to manage the project closely and carefully.



Robert Graham, Precinct Director, HLC

On the cover Rhys Baker from Universal Homes. Rhys is project manager for the two-bedroom homes in Paetahi Lane.

Left Paetahi Lane is a new lane off Tonar Street with 13 new two-bedroom homes.

Everyday Northcote is published by HLC with the support of Panuku Development Auckland and Housing New Zealand. We welcome your feedback. Email: karyn.haglund@hlc.co.nz to get in touch.

 **Northcote Development**

HLC
Homes. Land. Community.

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Nice one, Northcote

A random selection of some of the everyday good stuff going on in our community.



Te Reo at the Library

Northcote Library will be upgrading its Māori section this year, and now has a Kaikōkiri Ratonga Māori, or Senior Library Assistant for Māori services. Leilani McLean (Ngāpuhi, Tainui, Maniapoto) speaks te reo and is passionate about bringing a fresh, updated Māori section to the forefront of the library. She and others can help with researching your whakapapa, too. Feel free to drop in for a kōrero!

Hands-on learning at Onepoto

Onepoto Primary has a new teacher aide – Santana Luke. With so much construction happening in the neighbourhood, Santana is working with children on ‘Construction Plus’ – a series of building-based projects funded by HLC to help the kids relate to their new environment. So far Santana and the students have created a cute prop for their recent school play, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and planted seeds which will be transplanted to soon-to-be-built vege gardens.



Dances with Lions

The Lion Dance troupe at Northcote Intermediate is hitting the big time. Now one of the biggest in New Zealand, they opened Auckland’s Lantern Festival this year, as well as appearing live on the TV show What Now.

Mandarin teacher Nick Price is the man behind the lions, and Principal Ben Kelsey says the energy he brings to the group is inspirational. They love

performing, so if you’d like to book them for your event, email Nick at nickp@ni.school.nz – and check out the Facebook page ‘Northcote Lions’ for updates.

NEW SCHOOL FOR ONEPOTO

Onepoto Primary is getting a brand new \$19.5m school. The Education Minister, Chris Hipkins, visited on the 25th May to make the announcement. “Onepoto Primary can now plan for the future and be in a position to serve as an important hub in the rapidly growing

local community,” he told reporters. The school’s current roll of 71 is expected to grow as the Northcote Development brings new people to the area. Construction will begin in 18 months time and the buildings will be designed for an eventual roll of 950 students in a decade.



Fresh start for community hall

The Senior Citizens' Hall behind the Northcote Shopping Centre has undergone a magnificent makeover including a repaint, new kitchen, new lino and funky furniture. Michelle Whiu is the kaitiaki (guardian) in charge of the renamed 'Northcote Centre' and welcomes new ideas. "Let me know what you're interested in or what you'd like to happen here and I can help," she says. Currently there are free harakeke (flax) weaving classes on the second weekend of each month, and free preschool play sessions on Monday mornings from 10am. For more info, call Michelle on 027 315 1293, or go to www.kaipatikicomunityfacilitiestrust.org.nz

Matariki at Northart

Frances Atkins has been a member of Northart Gallery for over 12 years. Her family tribal affiliations reach back to Ngati Porou ki Mataora of the Hauraki tribes, but her whanau has been in Northcote since the 1950s. Her latest solo show is timed for Matariki, the Māori new year. "I'm interested in presenting work that has a Māori undertone, but which leaves the works open for viewers to make their own associations. This show has a direct connection to Matariki's theme of new beginnings in that my contemporary portraits document the emerging face of urban Māori." www.northart.co.nz | Exhibition: June 25 – July 20



Frances Atkins, *The Other Girl*, oil on hahnemuhle paper



KIDS IN THE CUBE

Get the kids out of the house and off their screens at a free drop-in workshop in the Northcote Information Centre.

The Northcote Information Centre (in the town centre car park) is hosting children's workshops aimed at kids between the ages of 5 and 10 over the course of the year. The workshops are run by the city's redevelopment agency Panuku Development Auckland in collaboration with Crafty Crew, a collective of local artists and creatives.

Each workshop offers something new and exciting, with an emphasis on craft. Projects to date have included finger puppets, pom poms,

paper rocket ships, upcycled tote bags and Popsicle stick harmonicas. The workshops celebrate the cultural diversity that characterises Northcote. Parents are encouraged to drop in and learn about some of the exciting changes coming to Northcote while the kids are occupied by a fun activity.

For more information, check out the community notice board outside the Northcote Library, or head over to the Information Centre. We'd love to see you.

NORTHCOTE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION CENTRE

1200 new, warm, dry homes coming to Northcote over the next six years

Find out what's happening, and when. Visit the Info Centre: Wednesday to Saturday, 10am–4pm, in the town centre carpark

www.northcotedevelopment.co.nz

The workshops are held on the last Saturday of every month between 10am and 4pm, rain or shine.

Coming up:

Matariki:
Fun with
constellations +
seedling planting
Saturday June 30
10am–4pm

Winter Weather:
Making artwork
with rain
Saturday July 28
10am–4pm



Strawberry Fields Forever

Margaret Harvey moved to Northcote in 1957 to a home on Raleigh Road with a view of the surrounding strawberry fields. When she and her neighbours decided they needed a community hall they raised the money to build it and dug the foundations themselves.

Photography: David St George

Every Saturday, Margaret Harvey goes down to St Luke's Methodist Church on Greenslade Crescent to work in the gardens. She's 88 now and has been involved with the church since the original hall was built over 50 years ago.

"The garden's not spectacular," Margaret admits, "but it has such a nice aspect in the way we look across the playing fields. And I think it's good for a church to be able to pick its own flowers for services." She clears some fallen leaves which cover the remembrance plaque for her husband, Logan Harvey, set under the pohutukawa tree which was planted for him in 2002.

Margaret and her husband, Logan, moved to Northcote in 1957 and built their first home in Raleigh Road. It was pretty much the only road then. "All around," says Margaret, "stretched acres of strawberry fields – and not much else".

Coming from well-established Epsom, it was a bit of a shock for them to find nothing but a vegetable truck which came once a week with fresh produce. "There were no shops, no buses, no telephones and of course no harbour bridge. The only part that had anything going on was Northcote Point, because that's where the ferry came in," she says.

Nevertheless, they forged ahead, pioneers in their own way. A group of young



Left A remembrance plaque for Margaret's husband on the church grounds.

husbands concreted in some footpaths when the winter mud made it impossible for their wives to push their prams. "It was hard to find the time for this when we all had young families," says Margaret, "but the really good thing was that by the end of it, we all knew each other!"

A Sunday School for their children was begun in the home of some other early residents, the Coombridges, but it wasn't long before they all realised the little community needed a proper space of its own. So they decided to build one.

A trust was formed with Logan as secretary and once the Church had bought the land, a small but determined group set to work. The men dug all the footings of the hall by hand and poured the concrete for the driveway, ready for the builders' trucks. The young wives organised rosters for morning teas and lunches, and endless fundraising events were held. Stalls of hand-sewed items organised by the tireless Mrs Mary Crawford, preserves, cakes and biscuits brought in money for the build.

The Harbour Bridge opened in 1959, and the North Shore took off with young families pouring into Northcote. The new hall opened in February 1963 and it soon became the busy hub of the community. Church services, boys' and girls' brigades, badminton and bowls, community fairs, family celebrations, dances and weddings were all held there, and many a romance began and was formalised at the hall.

The new church was added in 1987 and Margaret vividly remembers the very emotional ceremony of carrying the cross and bible from the old hall over to the new altar. Although many things are different now in Northcote, some things stay the same: Margaret pottering around the gardens on a Saturday, and the church philosophy.

"Our church has always been wonderfully multicultural and has always welcomed everyone," she says, firmly. "That will never change." And built as it was with love and commitment, on foundations hand-dug by Margaret's husband and friends, St Luke's itself will be around for a long time yet.



In the Neighbourhood

We asked five Northcote College students who are helping design the new Awataha greenway why they put their hands up and got involved.

Photography: David St George



From left Northcote College greenway group students, Kehaulani and Ana Vave, Fifita Folau, Isabelle Masters, Ella Crooks.

Kehaulani & Ana

SISTERS, YEAR 13 & 11
(FAR LEFT)

“We have always lived in Northcote and we come from a family of eight. I’m Ana and I’m an outgoing person who loves to play sports and I really enjoy school. I’m Kehaulani and I’m a really quiet, funny, shy person. When we finish school we will both serve a full time mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for 18 months, then for me (Kehaulani), I want to try get an apprenticeship in construction, and Ana wants to either study or join the police force.”

What made you get involved in the greenway project? We joined it because we live in Northcote – we’re born and bred here. This will allow us to see the changes that will happen over time.

Which design aspect are you most interested in? We are both interested in construction at school, and so we wanted to know more about the houses they are all building right now.

How important do you think the greenway is for Northcote? We think the greenway project is pretty important to Northcote because it’s a place where the community is able to go for walks, relax and play.

How do you feel about changes happening in the area? We feel that it is a massive change but we are happy that it is for the better.

Isobelle

YEAR 11
(SECOND FROM RIGHT)

“I don’t live in Northcote, however, the fact that I go to Northcote College has inspired me to take up this opportunity. I feel that if the youth of Northcote do not have their input, the greenway won’t be as special as it could be. I enjoy art, design, history, and I’m also very interested in political and humanitarian issues. I think that this greenway will be a chance for me to explore all of those. Northcote is such a diverse community and I would love to see all those cultures represented in the greenway.”

What made you get involved in the greenway project? I’ve always been interested in design and incorporating a theme, identity, or idea into an area. I wanted to be a part of a change in the Northcote community.

Which design aspect are you most interested in? Designing the actual greenway and incorporating Northcote identity into the design.

How important do you think the greenway is for Northcote? Very important. Northcote needs a clean, environmentally-friendly place for people to walk, run, and sit, and feel like they belong there.

How do you feel about changes happening in the area? Some changes are good, like this. I think the Northcote elections are also interesting...

Fifita

YEAR 11
(CENTRE)

“I’ve lived in Northcote half my life with my Dad, Mum and seven siblings. I’m a caring person who enjoys spending time with my family, sports and chilling at the park with friends. I like that Northcote is a playful place with parks and playgrounds, but I dislike how the houses are really close. I live in a warm, friendly community where everyone is considered family. I feel glad that Northcote is developing with these exciting changes.”

What made you get involved in the greenway project? I felt it would be a good experience and help me find my way around the big changes in our area. It’s good that we have an opportunity to contribute and that our ideas will be listened to.

Which design aspect are you most interested in? I’m interested in architecture, carpentry and gardening – these are very useful design aspects in life.

How important do you think the greenway is for Northcote? The students who live here need to know their way around and have ideas to add to their community. This is a serious situation and it’s important to have a say in the changes in our area.

How do you feel about changes happening in the area? I feel happy and interested and I’d like to have a better understanding of these developments in my community.

Ella

YEAR 11
(RIGHT)

“I’ve lived in Northcote for my whole life with my mother, father and my brother. As a creative and energetic person, I would like to see a change to the Northcote area, to make it more lively. When I walk to school and back I enjoy the calm peacefulness, yet I often wish there was more green. I hope that having this greenway would help others feel the same and enjoy our area much more.”

What made you get involved in the greenway project? I’ve been looking for an opportunity to get involved with the community for a while, and this was presented in an appealing way. I was surprised that more people didn’t come. I’m hoping to stay here for a long time, so why not get involved?

Which design aspect are you most interested in? I am interested in planning a functional and beautiful place for all ages. I want somewhere where I can play basketball,

possibly write songs and just take long relaxing walks.

How important do you think the greenway is for Northcote? I think it is very important!

How do you feel about changes happening in the area? I think they’ll bring more joy to the community and make Northcote a nicer place. Change is always good.

SIGN OF THE TIMES



Sports and culture charge ahead at Northcote Intermediate School.

Over summer, Manaia King and Jamieson Waaka, who have both played tag for years, made it into the NZ Maori tag team and played all over Auckland. A three-day tournament in Otara was particularly challenging. "It was really... hot!" says Manaia.

The school athletes are looking forward to two Sports Camps this year – one at the end of June and one in late September. Last year it was a rout – NIS won 18 out of 40 sports – but they'll be up against tougher competition this year. Mid-September they'll head to the AIMS games in Tauranga, an annual event which features over 10,000 athletes from 240 schools throughout New Zealand.

The kapa haka group, led by Hine Jury, has been going from strength to strength. The group performs with mana and pride – mana for themselves, their school, and their community. There are around 40 of them, and after a recent Rotary grant, fantastic new costumes were made by Hine and other local community members.

To cap it off, a few of the group went with others on exchange to China in June and led waiata and haka while there – NIS kapa haka going international!



Above Senior Onepoto Primary students Nature Williams and Rihanna Ekveta with their laptops.

NEW DEVICES CREATE A BUZZ AT ONEPOTO

There's a buzz in the air at Onepoto Primary these days. Acting Principal Colin Dale reckons it's generated by technology.

At the end of 2017, Onepoto had 12 iPads donated by Hillcrest Lions Club. Forty Chromebooks were also bought by another group, with a group of parents sponsoring eight more. In line with the new technology, Google Classroom has been set up for the senior students. It's a free web service that puts class assignments and communications online, allowing children and teachers to connect both in and out of school. And it's personalised for each student.

Deputy Head, Pamela Bhika is impressed with the effects of the new technology. "Not only are they more engaged, students are taking responsibility for their own learning. It allows me more time to work with groups and individuals."

Nature Williams and Rihanna Ekveta are senior students who love the new

system. "It's great!" they chorus. "You just download the app and log in," says Nature. "And if you finish early, you can click on some other links for more."

"And there's Seesaw too, don't forget!" says Rihanna. Seesaw is another online initiative which some of Pamela's senior students are now using. It allows them to upload their work into a digital portfolio. Parents can log in to see their child's progress and get involved to provide feedback and encouragement.

Principal Dale is keen for all classes to embrace both tech initiatives by 2019. "Parents are coming on board, and the children are motivated," says Colin. "They love being in control of their own learning, and the results speak for themselves."

AWATAHA GREENWAY: DESIGNING THE SCHOOLS' EDGE

Panuku Development Auckland and HLC have been working with students from each of the three schools in the development area – Onepoto Primary, Northcote Intermediate and Northcote College – to gather their input for the Awataha Greenway.

In May Helen Kerr, from urban design company, Isthmus Group, led greenway Design Lab sessions with groups of around 30 students from each of the three schools. “The Design Labs give the students an opportunity to learn about the design process for creating a greenway, and to be part of each step in that process – observing, imagining, creating and refining the possibilities together,” says Helen.

The schools' edge portion of the greenway has the potential to become a 'local learning landscape', a place for students to learn in an outdoor classroom setting as well as a place for the wider community to share cultural skills, local stories and knowledge about local ecology. “We're focusing on how spaces within the greenway might work as places for fun learning, and in turn, we are learning from the students about what's important and exciting to them.”



Above Northcote College greenway group students at work.

Below An artist's impression of the greenway bordering the Northcote Intermediate grounds.





HLC

Panuku
Development
Auckland

Awataha Greenway

PROGRESS UPDATE

Panuku Development Auckland and HLC are in the concept design phase for the schools' edge portion of the Awataha Greenway.

For more information visit panuku.co.nz/northcote

- 1 Richardson Place
- 2 Fraser Avenue
- 3 Lake Road
- 4 Tonar Street
- 5 Proposed Pocket Park

KEY

New street linking
Fraser Avenue and
Lake Road



Stage 2C Boundary



Last month saw 'Design-Lab' workshops with Northcote College, Northcote Intermediate and Onepoto Primary (see page 11) and the second Community Reference Group workshop (see page 13) as we work toward a design that reflects the community's wishes.

Meanwhile, the civil works now underway for Stage 2 of the Northcote Development will include the creation of a new street linking Fraser Avenue to Lake Road. The new yet to be named street will include a pocket park which can be reached from a number of streets including Richardson Place. The street is the first section of the Awataha Greenway to be built and will include a shared walk and cycle path, street furniture, play elements and wide berms for street trees.



A Place People can be Proud of

The Community Reference Group is helping Panuku Development Auckland and HLC ensure that the design of the Awataha Greenway reflects the community's wishes. We asked local, Helen Schamroth, about why she joined the group.

Local resident Helen Schamroth has lived in Northcote since 1971. "It's where my children spent their childhood – playing in the bush at the back of our property when they were young and going to the Northcote schools."

Helen is the Chair of Kaipatiki Public Arts Trust. She joined the Community Reference Group because she thought the greenway might offer opportunities to meet one of the trust's key goals. "We like to work with projects that give us the opportunity to bring art out of the galleries and into the community, so we thought we had better get involved and get better informed about the greenway."

Research tells us that public art is an effective way of encouraging pride in an area and that it contributes to a sense of belonging. While it's too early to be specific about the kind of art the greenway might include, Helen says that being part of the conversation early on is worthwhile. "It's always more difficult and more expensive to treat art as an add-on."

"People are more likely to 'own' a place and to enjoy and respect it if it's lovely, rather than just serviceable. My hope is that the greenway will be a safe place where people can meet incidentally – where they just bump into each other. When you design to facilitate a sense of community it works so much better than trying to make do with what you already have."

Top Community Reference Group member, Helen Schamroth, hopes the greenway will be a place you can bump into others and get to know your community better.





The Northcote Development

Proposed Homes in Stages 1 & 2

	STAGE 1 (CONFIRMED)	STAGE 2 (PROPOSED)
STATE	59	221
MARKET	—	249
TOTAL	59	470

Note Over 55% of the market homes will include a more affordable price range (i.e. priced from \$500,000 to \$650,000). Project total 1200 homes.

KEY

- Stage 1
- Stage 2
- Future Stages
- Previously Developed by Housing New Zealand
- Information Centre
- Housing New Zealand Homes





PROJECT UPDATE

Development activity is increasing as we enter Stage 2 of the project. Take a look below to find out what we plan to achieve in this new stage, and by when.

STAGE 2 (IN PROGRESS)



We are excited to be underway with Stage 2, which includes more state homes and the first of the market homes. The market homes will include homes priced below the Auckland median house price and sold on the open market, and affordable homes that have criteria applied by the government to limit who can buy one. These are aimed at people who are finding it hard to afford housing at market prices.

TONAR AND CADNESS



Housing New Zealand residents from 14 existing homes on the corner of Tonar and Cadness Streets are in the process of being rehoused. The new homes that will replace the old homes will be a mix of state and market housing.

ELEVATION ON FRASER AVENUE



NORTHCOTE

STAGE 1 (COMPLETE)



All 59 new homes in Stage 1 are now built and will have families moved in by the end of August. These are all state homes owned by Housing New Zealand.

POTTER AND GREENSLADE



The first sites to be developed in Stage 2 are in Potter Avenue and Greenslade Crescent. Four existing homes have been removed and will be replaced by eight new two-storey homes for Housing New Zealand clients. The homes will range from two- to five-bedrooms.

LAKE, FRASER AND RICHARDSON



On Lake Road (north of Northcote Intermediate), Fraser Avenue and Richardson Place we've begun removing 55 existing houses. The sites will be prepared through the winter and Housing New Zealand will be building new homes on them by the end of the year. The builders will start on the market housing early in 2019. These are a mix of two-storey stand-alone houses, three-storey walk-ups, and five-storey apartments. They'll range in size from studios to five-bedroom homes.

STAGE 2 TIMELINE



BEHIND THE PROJECT

Meet Senior Project Manager, Greg McNeil, who describes himself as the 'eyes and ears' of the Northcote Development.

What does the Senior Project Manager for Northcote Development do? I'm the man on the ground liaising with all the contractors – the builders and demolition companies and the civil teams who do the earth and infrastructure works. There are multiple phases to a project of this scale. I deal with programmes and budgets and award contracts. I also get around the area and meet the different stakeholders, like local businesses, who are going to be affected by the project and let them know what's happening and how we are going to minimise the impact. A lot of my job is just talking to people, hearing what they have to say and fixing problems so the project can move forward. When it's going well it can be very rewarding. It can also be quite challenging.

What do you need to study to end up in a role like yours? My background is civil engineering. I did a Construction Management degree in Glasgow in Scotland and during the degree I came to New Zealand on a six-month work placement, so that's how I ended up catching the bug for New Zealand. I'm currently doing a Masters of Business Administration. I study in the weekends – there's no balance in my life at all at the moment!

What do you like most about your job? Working on the Northcote Development is really cool because we're building much better houses for people to move into. It's great to be giving back to the community not just building to make money. I've rented homes that were damp and as a parent I know what it's like to live in a place you're not happy with and to worry about your kids' health.

You've been in to Northcote Intermediate to talk to the students as part of the Construction Plus programme. What was that like? That was really fun. I was pleased to see how many girls were in the class. There are not many women in construction. Jobs like mine are not hands-on building work at all. It's all about communication and management and women are good at that. Girls should be encouraged to consider engineering and construction careers.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WHEN IT LOOKS LIKE NOTHING'S HAPPENING

Some residents have been wondering (out loud) why there's a gap – sometimes of several months – between old state houses being removed and the builders arriving to start on new homes. Here's a quick rundown of what happens during that period.

Site fencing The sites are fenced, mainly for the public's safety but also for visual amenity. Earthworks look unsightly so it's best to block them out, where possible. In summer mesh construction fencing helps to control the dust.

House removal Materials that can be recycled are stripped from the houses before they are demolished. Some of the houses are removed for relocation, rather than being demolished.

Land remediation 'Remediation' means making the land safe to build on and live on. Sometimes contaminants, e.g. lead that has leached out of old paint, are sluiced off the house by rainwater and collect in the soil, requiring the top layer of soil to be removed. Old obsolete pipes are also dug up.

Civil works This covers the building of the new and upgraded roads and all the work required to get the services like electricity, water and broadband to the house sites and to take away stormwater, grey water and sewage.

Total time? It depends on all sorts of things (such as the weather), but the biggest factor is the size of the site. Smaller sites can be ready in weeks; for larger sites it can take several months to work through these processes.





A Step Up for Small Families

Everyday Northcote popped into the open home for the new two-bedroom state homes in Paetahi Lane to gauge local reaction.

Six brand new two-bedroom homes in Paetahi Lane off Tonar Street are now ready to welcome new families. They belong to a row of 13 on the new lane. 'Paetahi' means "first step".

Suited to couples or small families, every home has the same floor plan; but to create variety and street appeal they differ on the outside in terms of colour, roof angle and cladding materials.

Free-standing and two-storeys high, they have a generous open plan downstairs living and kitchen area which flows outside to a front and back patio or deck area. The design extends the living areas outside during the warmer months, creating more room for the residents. The bedrooms and bathroom are located upstairs.

Local mum, Eva who lives in a Housing New Zealand home in Cadness Street says she'd love a

three-bedroom version of this house. She has three kids aged seven, eight and nine years old, all at Onepoto Primary. Her dream house would have "more space for my kids to do their learning and be easier to tidy up. My house is hard to clean because it is old."

Diana, who lives in a new house on Cadness Street pointed out how much easier the stairs are to use than her old HNZ home in Cadness Street. The tread is larger and the riser not as high, meaning they're safer and easier to both climb up and come down.

Other visitors to the open home liked the two flexible spaces at either end of the upstairs hallway. These have power points and room for a desk so could be used as a study nook or work space.

There is a growing need for homes to cater for smaller household sizes. Take a look at our story on page 21 to read more about why we built these homes.



BAKER'S DOZEN

Those familiar with the imperial system of measurement will be no stranger to the phrase 'a baker's dozen'. The story goes that in 16th-century England, bakers would add an extra loaf to an order of twelve to safeguard against short-changing their customers. And so it became that a 'baker's dozen' refers to a group of 13.

Closer to home, and in the 21st century, Rhys Baker managed the construction of the newly completed two-bedroom homes on Tonar Street. Rhys works for Universal Homes, the company that, in collaboration with HLC, is building many of the new Housing New Zealand homes in Stage 1 of the Northcote Development.

"My job begins with a bare piece of land and ends with the handing over of the completed buildings on that land," says Rhys. "A large part of my role as Site Manager involves managing everyone involved in the project, from the builders, sub-contractors, painters, plumbers and electricians, through to liaising with architects and Council."

Managing a site of this scale at 28 years old says a lot about Rhys, but he is humble about his career achievements. "From school to a

job like mine, it's a pretty straightforward pathway. Just keep working hard and learning and you'll progress. If you have a passion for something, stick at it and get good at it."

The typical route to a career in building starts with an apprenticeship, or by enrolling in a construction management degree. Rhys was 21 when he landed his apprenticeship.

"It was very hands-on. I did my apprenticeship through BCITO which was NZQA administered, so we followed modules or unit standards that we were tested on at the end of each month over the course of about four years. You gain practical experience and knowledge on site, and then the rest is self-taught. There's a lot of effort required after hours."

Rhys says that having maths ability, and the appeal of good old-fashioned hard work led him to a career in the building industry.

"I like that building is so physical. You get a good workout. It's also an art form – you are continually problem solving. It helps that I'm a perfectionist because nothing's ever straightforward."

"At school I was good at sports. I loved PE. I was also good at maths. Maths is a big part of being a builder, but you don't have to be good at maths to get into building. You can learn everything you need to know on the job."

Rhys has found working on the Northcote development rewarding. "These new houses will be really nice to live in. They get all day sun, morning and afternoon. And they're safe too, because your neighbours are close. A lot of thought has gone into the design of these homes."

Rhys says that the fact that homes are all the same design has made them quick and efficient to build. "Each of the 13 houses are the same but the rooflines are different to give street appeal and variety. The simplicity of the design and the repetition

saves cost and time, and the faster we finish, the faster the tenants can move into their new homes."

"We had three or four school groups from Onepoto Primary School come through and check out the new three-bedroom houses on Tonar Street last year. The kids were really excited. Some of them were actually going to be moving into these homes. It really gets you thinking about the people who will live in these houses, because at the end of the day, we are building someone's home, someone's community. It makes my job incredibly satisfying."

Rhys says he has enjoyed being involved in the development of an area, and watching the community grow and strengthen.

"Northcote has just kept growing on me since we started groundworks in October last year. It's a good area and it's so close to town. This renewal of the state housing and the new shopping centre will completely revamp the area. I tell all my friends – anyone who'll listen, really – Northcote's the place."



Made to Measure



While we're working on the development project we're also in the community talking to people and one of the questions that has come up lately is, "why are you building two-bedroom homes in Tonar Street? Aren't they a bit small for families?"

We are building houses in Northcote in a range of sizes for all sorts of families. Some of the homes will be sized to cater for smaller households.

The reason we're building some smaller homes and apartments, is that the number, size and composition of New Zealand households is changing. Statistics New Zealand has projected that by 2038 we will have an extra 433,000 families nationwide. Couples without children will make up more than half of those extra households.

"The projections suggest we'll need more houses for these households, but different houses from what we've typically built, given the likely growth in one- or two-person households," says Peter Doolan, Population Statistics Senior Manager for Statistics NZ.

Couples are defined as a type of 'family' by Statistics NZ (as is a single parent living with one

child). The couple family type includes couples who have yet to have children and older couples whose children have left home – the so-called 'empty nesters'. Empty nester households are becoming more common chiefly because New Zealand has an ageing population. In Auckland, the ageing population will contribute to the number of couple-only families increasing by 64 percent over the next 25 years. That's a big increase. One-person households are also growing in number as our population ages because older people are the most likely to live alone.

The 13 two-bedroom homes in Tonar Street are right-sized for many of today's households, including younger couples starting a family, and will continue to be a good fit as the number of small households grows. You'll see more one and two-bedroom homes, including apartments, appear as the development progresses, alongside three-, four- and five-bedroom homes.

HOUSE BECOMING HOME

Lopeta is on a well-earned break at her work at the Anne Maree Court Rest home when we caught up with her. She's a cleaner there now, but over the last 10 years she's done just about everything: kitchen work, laundry and caring for the elderly clients.



She walks to work – it's just around the corner from Tonar Street – and she's there six days a week. Lopeta is the main breadwinner for her family since her husband of 38 years, Ofa, had a stroke. "But he's getting better now. He's going for some really nice walks."

Lopeta laughs a lot, and is much-loved by all at Anne Maree Court. She's the unofficial fa'e, or mum, of all the new staff – everyone comes to Lopeta for information, advice and support.

Lopeta and Ofa have seven children, but only three are still at home – Troy, 19, Peni, 16 and Aisea, who is 11. The others have grown up and flown the nest, but not too far – most of them have stayed local, as have Lopeta's own five siblings.

The family moved to New Zealand from Tonga in 2002 and lived in Cadness Street before they moved to Richardson Place. They were told that their house was on the demolition schedule early last year. The news was a bit of a shock. "It was a good

house," says Lopeta. "The garden was big – good for hangis. All the children played together and sometimes we would put up a tent as well and have parties. But that garden is too big for me now. It was hard for me to get time to look after it."

The move into the new home was easier than Lopeta thought it would be. The family had time to get used to the idea, and the fact that some of their friends and neighbours moved with them was a huge bonus. Another Tongan family, a Māori family and an Iraqi family from Richardson Place have all moved to neighbouring properties in Tonar Street. Housing New Zealand organised it all, says Lopeta, and it went very smoothly.

Family from Australia came to visit for Christmas last year and were impressed; they posted photos on Facebook. Lopeta says, "Half an hour later, our other family in Perth was calling and saying, 'Wow – so beautiful!'" She's proud of her new home, and spends a lot of time

cleaning, tidying and keeping everything spotless. "We are so lucky."

The kids used to share bedrooms so they are all happy to have their own space. They love to bring their friends home now, and one of Lopeta's granddaughters visits often to hang out with Ofa. The little garden is becoming established and next summer Lopeta is looking forward to getting some vegetables and taro growing. There are no more hangis ("too much work anyway!" says Lopeta), but last summer the barbeque on the back deck had a good workout.

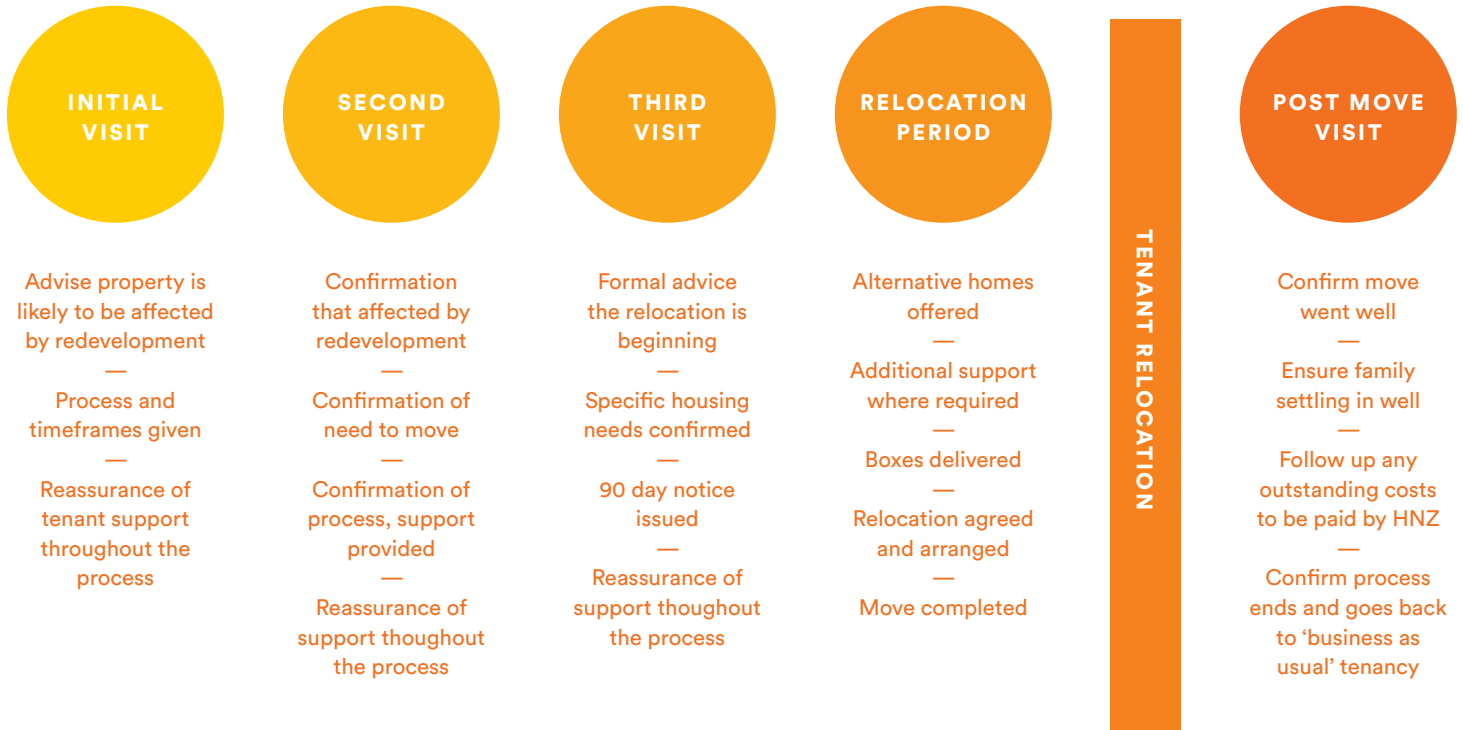
"Now, at the weekend, we don't go anywhere but church – we just want to stay here. My husband likes to sit on the balcony and look at the street. It's a nice atmosphere. It's quiet and we sleep very well. It feels a lot more safe."

It's also warmer. Poor insulation in the Richardson Place house meant it wasn't much fun when the temperature dropped. But this year the family is enjoying a much cosier winter in their new home.

— THE RELOCATION PROCESS —

Ongoing support for tenants from the Tenancy Liaison Team as required

Ongoing contact with tenants to advise progress and to enable site access as required



ARE YOU NEW AROUND HERE?



Settling into a new home and neighbourhood doesn't happen overnight. For many people who are moving into or within Northcote it takes a bit of good luck and courage to meet the neighbours.

Sometimes people work different shifts so don't get the opportunity to bump into their neighbours over the fence. Sometimes they speak different first languages or are inside the house a lot because of poor health.

If you're 'new around here' then meeting your neighbours is important to you feeling a sense of belonging. Miriama Rapana, known to locals as 'Midi', from Kaipatiki Community Facilities Trust has been door knocking

in Northcote to help people who have just moved house to settle in.

It's early days for this initiative, but so far a barbecue has been planned to introduce one group of neighbours to each other. Midi is collecting ideas and registering interest in workshops where residents can meet others in the community and learn something new. So far the ideas that have been put forward include managing the household budget, avoiding food waste, and using public transport to get around the city. English classes and play groups for parents with preschool children have also been suggested.

Best of all, Midi is enrolling residents in being a community connector themselves and taking on the role of welcoming new people to their neighbourhood.



Folded Curry

It's the Murtabak that keeps Connie Clarkson coming back to *Curry Corner*, the only original Northcote Food Hall stall.

Photography: David St George



With two flicks of his right wrist Salem Mohammed, owner of Northcote Food Hall's Curry Corner, turned a palm sized ball of dough into the thinnest pastry skin that you would be able to see through if you held it up to the light. Then, five minutes later, on a hot griddle, a 15cm square roti parcel called Murtabak, filled with hot, juicy aromatic chicken and lots of secret spices materialised and it was marvellous.



Murtabak is a stuffed pancake or pan-fried bread which is commonly found in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Thailand. The name in Arabic means “folded” and usually includes minced meat, beef or chicken, sometimes goat meat, with garlic, egg and onion, and is eaten with curry or gravy, sliced cucumber or syrup-pickled onions.



Mohammed has been making Murtabak for 20 years at Curry Corner, the first food stall on the left as you enter the Northcote Food hall from Killham Avenue entrance. “I arrived from Thailand in 1997 when the economy in Thailand crashed. I had heard from friends that either Canada or New Zealand would be best and chose New Zealand.” It was a good choice. Mohammed continues, “I have now been to 52 countries and New Zealand is still the best and peaceful”. Along the way, he has also picked up more than 10 languages. “I speak Burmese, Korean, Thai, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Malay and a couple of others.” He has never been able to get the hang of Chinese though.



Mohammed and his family loves Northcote and lived in Lake Road for 10 years. They have now moved to Massey to be closer to their other business, the Westgate Food Hall, which needs more looking after than Curry Corner. Westgate Food Hall also offers Thai, Malaysian and Turkish menus

all produced by Mohamed's chefs. The then 27 year old Mohamed left his parents, four brothers and three sisters in Burma for New Zealand and since then has not only created a family of his own, but a food hall business collection over the years. Past businesses include Curry King Indian Food in K Road's Lim Chor Food Court and the Roti Shop at the Ponsonby Village International Food court.

The Northcote Food Hall is legendary and it's the owner operators that have survived. Mohammed is the only original business left while Kahun Pui (Thai), Thai Noodle and Taiwan Delight are long stayers and also owner operated. Mohamed says that owner operated eating establishments have the best chances of surviving because “the owners are there and they look after the food cost and the customers.” He continues to say that, “one single mistake and they (the customers) will not come back.”

Mohammed is a well-known fixture here and tries to cook in Northcote regularly. At the time of our conversation, he had been at the food hall every day that week as they are on the hunt for a new chef. Mohammed learned how to make Murtabak in 1998, “when I went to Malaysia and someone taught me when I was in Kuala Lumpur,” and can obviously turn his hand at the complete Curry Corner repertoire if required. His favorite curry is Vindaloo but as one of his most ardent fans, I love his Lamb Masala. The value for money is undisputed. A plain murtabak and any curry only sets you back \$12.50, and \$10 buys you your pick of two meat and one vegetable curry and rice.

Ironically, when asked where he likes to dine out, this man of many languages and cuisines finds it difficult to arrive at a conclusion. Ultimately, pizza is his dine out du jour – because his kids love pizza.

Curry Corner is located at Food City Food Court, 6 Kilham Avenue, Northcote, and open 7 days from 11am – 9pm.



MY PLACE



A big thanks to all our staff and contractors who are helping bring much needed new homes to Northcote – the builders and broadband installers, digger drivers, demolition guys, designers, drainage gurus, plumbers, project managers, landscapers, linesmen, electricians and engineers – and everyone involved in the Northcote Development. And a special shout out to those of you have made the time to go into the schools and give the next generation a window into the kinds of careers available to them in construction.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID ST GEORGE





My Place

Toku Wahi

Hoku Fiefia'anga

Lo'u Nofoaga

我的空间

나의 생활 터전

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