Housing New Zealand salutes the work of Health and Safety Advisor Rachael Te Toko from Spotless, a Health and Safety Practitioner of the Year finalist at the New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards 2017.

Spotless Contract Manager Nicholas Davidson, says Rachael brought 15 years of invaluable, comprehensive knowledge and expertise in hospitality and the mining industry to the role when she started with Spotless five years ago.

“Rachael has excellent communication skills, a vibrant personality and deep knowledge of Health and Safety practices and procedures. Coupled with a connection to her Māori cultural heritage, all of this makes her invaluable and to be recognised nationally, as a finalist is outstanding.”

Nicholas says the Spotless contract with Housing New Zealand involves delivery of multi trade maintenance services to approximately 6,000 individual homes in the South Auckland region of Auckland. Services include a wide range of deliveries from 24-hour Health and Safety repairs through to larger scale upgrade type projects.

When the new Health and Safety legislation came into effect, Rachael was quick to understand what the new legislation meant to Spotless and what they needed to do. He says she made an enormous contribution with driving health and safety for Spotless contractors.

As for Rachael, she’s far more humble about her achievement.

“I believe that as a Safety Leader, safety is for the people and with the people. Having reached the pinnacle of Safety Practitioner of the year 2017 is a humbling experience, amazing, exciting and most of all a journey shared with Spotless staff and our contractors.”
Hello from the new Editor

Hello everyone,

With the departure of our Editor, you’ll notice a slightly different look and feel to this issue of Contractor Connect. You will see we’ve included stories on other parts of our business which we hope you find interesting. One is about a recent special project in Auckland and the other about the respective roles of Housing New Zealand and Ministry of Social Development in the social housing application process.

You’ll also see some of your favourites. These are stories we know you enjoy reading about people and places, about innovation and what else is going on, around the country.

The other change for Contractor Connect is, I’ve taken over as Editor. This is because the maintenance team is responsible for managing the partnership with you as Head Contractors and your teams who carry out the very important, urgent and responsive repairs on our 63,000 Housing New Zealand properties around the country.

Speaking of which, with the end of the financial year on 30 June 2017, it looks like another big year for everyone. In our next edition we’ll be able to share some of our achievements, for example, the number of urgent Health and Safety requests responded to during the year. For the 2015/16 year, we responded to 122,266 urgent health and safety requests with an average response time of 2.9 hours. It will be interesting to see the results for the 2016/17 year.

Finally, it’s certainly been a great few months with the America’s Cup win, but it’s also been very, very cold and wet in many parts of the country, and not to forget a rather interesting end to the Lions Tour. On behalf of Housing New Zealand I would like to thank you for the hard work you do, to ensure we provide safe, warm, dry and healthy homes for our tenants.

Angela Pearce
National Maintenance & Upgrade Manager

Thanks Spencer Henshaw

As you may know we started our Warm and Dry programme in 2015. Since then contractors have been busy working through our homes and more than 20,000 have received our baseline standards.

South Auckland Tenant, Anne Teao, had the team from Spencer Henshaw out at her home in May. When the team returned to sign the work off Anne was over the moon with the results and couldn’t thank contractor, Lua Momoisea, enough.

Lua says it was a humbling experience.

“Anne couldn’t thank us enough for truly making a difference with carpets and curtains. She said her kids haven’t been to the doctors and everyone in the household is happy. Anne also said to keep on doing what we’re doing and helping others that are less fortunate. She also said “oh the media are so full of it, and don’t see what actually happens out here.” She finished off by saying “thank you for keeping us warm and healthy this winter. I think that’s pretty cool and made my day.”

Our baseline standards are:

1. Triple weave curtains in living areas, dining rooms and bedrooms.
2. A fixed form of heating in the living area, where an acceptable heating source is not present.
3. An extraction fan in the bathroom and range-hood in the kitchen (for three bedroom properties and larger).
4. No bare floors – carpet or vinyl installed over bare floors.
A new Health and Safety approach – Spotless’ new KORU programme

At Housing New Zealand, looking out for each other and being smart about risks is part of our Health and Safety culture. The Health and Safety of workers, visitors and tenants is top priority. Our leadership team will take reasonably practicable steps, to build and maintain a safe workplace for everyone.

To achieve this, our Health and Safety team continues to engage with all of our contractors to ensure Health and Safety is a priority.

One of our Auckland Performance Based Maintenance Contractors, Spotless Integrated Facilities Services, has recently developed a new contractor engagement programme with a focus on Health and Safety. The aim of Spotless’ ‘KORU Contractor Engagement & Mentoring Model Aotearoa programme’ (KORU) is to improve their sub contractor safety culture and as a result, improve overall safety performance.

The intent of KORU is to engage, educate and empower people to contribute to safety.

In developing their new KORU programme, Spotless explained their primary focus was on gaining a better understanding of their sub contractor demographic and delivering a programme to meet the needs of this part of their work force. Some of the tools used to achieve this were recognising groups’ different learning styles, utilising existing cultural hierarchies in their subcontractor workforce and making use of multilingual videos presented by Spotless staff with mana and status within their own communities.

Other tools included new identification cards with the top ten risks on them, onsite mentoring programmes, pictorial risk assessment cards and a new contractor newsletter.

The effectiveness of the new KORU programme was reinforced by visits to sites, that have already been through the programme. All workers at these sites understood the risks and relevant controls and were proactively engaged in making the sites safe and productive.
Housing New Zealand to implement Impac PREQUAL

Impac PREQUAL to be standard for HNZ tenders

Housing New Zealand is implementing an external Health and Safety prequalification process for all its physical works contractors. Impac PREQUAL will become a standard prequalification component for the tendering process for all physical works contracts.

As part of our drive to continuously improve our Health and Safety performance, Housing New Zealand recognises the need to ensure we are involved with managing the safety of our partners who carry out work for us.

Prequalification has been identified as one of the critical elements of good contractor management and allows us to understand a contractor’s likely health and safety capability.

In order to meet our need for an independent, robust and transparent system that has greater benefits for our partners, Housing New Zealand has decided to re-engage with the external support company, Impac to make use of their PREQUAL assessment system.

Principal Health and Safety Advisor Naomi Hosted says PREQUAL is a win-win for Housing New Zealand and our partners, allowing both parties to identify gaps in knowledge and capabilities while targeting areas for future improvement.

Housing New Zealand is holding a series of presentation sessions with Impac to explain the process in detail. The presentations started in July and the response from our contractor partners has been very positive.

Dave Bos, National Manager Education and Commercial of Keith Hay Homes says: “As a company Keith Hay Homes value the great health and safety track record we have built over 79 years of operation. However we cannot be complacent and in reviewing our health and safety systems over the past years, we understand that seeking regular honest feedback from our staff, suppliers and clients is vital to driving the improvements that will maintain that record.

“We also see the Impac PREQUAL process we are about to embark on as a great opportunity to benchmark where we are in relation to others in the industry and also get a sense of what value we have received from our investment, in the systems we have. The feedback we receive will also be a great tool for our management team, staff and health and safety auditors to utilise, to drive further improvement in our systems and processes. The system sets us up to have honest upfront discussions with Housing New Zealand and agree a robust plan before commencing projects so that everyone gets home safe each night.”
Team work keeps Dunedin tenants safe from flooding

A pro-active and prompt team effort by Dunedin Housing Maintenance Contracts (DHMC’s), in July, kept 50 Housing New Zealand tenants in South Dunedin safe. DHMC is head maintenance contractor responsible for the Southern region which goes from Bluff up to Rakaia south of Christchurch and includes the West Coast.

General Manager Mark Dore says after alerts and emails were received from New Zealand Civil Defence around the likelihood of severe and unseasonal flooding in Dunedin, it was decided a pro-active response was needed.

Mark says his team immediately swung into action to identify potential flooding hotspots. In particular the team looked at areas most affected by flooding in Dunedin, two years ago and in April earlier in the year.

“We then contacted Housing New Zealand to let them know South Dunedin was where the risk of flooding was likely to be greatest. We also advised Housing New Zealand sand bagging would help keep these properties protected. Then it was off to bag the sand”, Mark says.

The team placed sand bags at around 50 Housing New Zealand properties in south Dunedin on Friday 21 July 2017. We also advised tenants, what we were doing and why. The sandbags were removed the following Monday (24 July), after Civil Defence lifted the state of emergency.

Looking back, it was a fantastic outcome for our team and Housing New Zealand Mark says.

“Not one of the sandbagged properties suffered any flooding damage. What made this such a great result was that everyone from DHMC was part of it. It was a whole of team effort, involving everyone in the office, to our trades teams on the ground”. We’re really pleased our actions helped keep Housing New Zealand tenants safe in the face of unseasonable heavy flooding in Dunedin”, Mark says.

Contractors play a big part in our 15 calendar day turn around for Auckland Void Programme

The Auckland Void Programme (AVP) has been established in order to provide targeted focus on reducing turnaround time on Housing New Zealand’s Auckland properties. This has come into effect in response to the newly agreed 15 calendar day ‘let to let’ timeframe as established through an agreement between Housing New Zealand and the Ministry of Social Development.

To make this possible, Housing New Zealand recruited a team of specialists from across the Business headed by Void Programme Manager, Miranda Dawson. Miranda says the team are making an impact and working in well with our contractors.

“Because our void specialists are largely from across our business, many have great working relationships with our contractors and this really helps given our collective understanding and the time constraints we are all working to.”

Pictured are Manager Miranda Dawson centre with her team of Void Specialists, (back row) Tracey Leef, Christine Papalii, Sulita Laulu Valaa, Mary Penisio and Farhaz Rehman (front row) Tina McCarthy, Liesel Mendes, Miranda and Alison Cameron. Absent: Evelyn Ireland
Other parts of our business

We’ve recently completed a major project on one of our unique, older buildings in central Auckland

Our Lower Greys Avenue block was built in 1948 and is home to 50 tenants. Over the last few months a dedicated project team along with our project manager, contractor and architects has worked hard to replace an old and leaky flat membrane roof, which was damaging some communal areas and apartments.

This time around, the team worked with a heritage architect to engage with Council and Heritage New Zealand. As a result, permission was granted by Council to install a new mono pitch roof, with all care taken to ensure this did not detract in any way from the heritage status or architectural image of the building from Greys Avenue.

The project which recently finished, is an excellent example of a collaborative team approach, to find the best solution for a building with some very unique challenges.

In addition to managing the physical work, there were more than forty tenants that remained living in their apartments to keep informed and a handful of tenants who had to be temporarily moved so repairs could be carried out inside their water damaged apartments. Housing New Zealand’s dedicated Tenancy Liaison Team worked with the local team to support all tenants throughout the process.

All in all through hard work from everyone involved, a new weather tight roof will keep this heritage building in great shape for many more years to come.

Lower Greys Avenue just after it was built by the Government in 1948

Lower Greys Avenue is also quite different to many of our other buildings and houses. It has status with Heritage New Zealand and also heritage protection with Auckland Council.

It was not possible to install a new roof when a major refurbishment was carried out on the building in 2008. At that time a new membrane was installed instead, but unfortunately this preserved the inherent defects of the original design 1940’s design.

Roof at Lower Greys Avenue pre replacement

New mono pitch roof at Lower Greys Avenue
The social housing application process: 
from Ministry of Social Development to Housing New Zealand

Since 2014, Ministry of Social Development has been responsible for managing eligibility for social housing, and managing the Social Housing Register. Below is an overview of this process.

Social housing applicant:

**MSD**

1. Applies to Ministry of Social Development (MSD) via local Work and Income office.
2. MSD assesses need and deems applicant eligible or not.
3. If eligible, applicant's level of need is assessed and they are given a priority rating based on circumstances.
4. Applicant placed on MSD's Social Housing Register at assessed priority rating.

**MSD / HNZ / OTHER SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDER**

5. MSD updates Social Housing Register.

**HNZ**

6. Housing New Zealand matches people on Social Housing Register with suitable houses, according to:
   - Availability of suitable house in Housing New Zealand's current vacant stock, considering:
     - Preferred area of the applicant
     - Number of bedrooms required by the applicant
     - Requirements for specific modifications
   - Priority level

7. As soon as a suitable and available home is identified, applicant signs Tenancy Agreement and moves into home once inter-tenancy maintenance work is completed.
Switched on contractor keeps Kevin and his mum safe

A Christchurch tenant says he’s forever grateful for reassurance from Brent Moore from Clean Up Canterbury, a local contractor supplying services to Switched On Group. Brent provided support to Kevin Laing, a wheelchair bound Housing New Zealand tenant who lives with his mother in the low-lying Christchurch suburb of Woolston.

Three years ago, days of rain saw water enter their Housing New Zealand property and Mr Laing was nervous a repeat was on the cards when heavy rain fell across Christchurch in July.

As the rain continued and the threat of a king tide emerged, Mr Laing called Housing New Zealand’s free phone number, asking for help.

Within an hour, Brent who is Operations Manager for Clean Up Canterbury had arrived to assess the situation. Kevin recalled having Brent at his house helped put his mind at ease.

“He was there for about 30 minutes and really went out of his way big time. Mum and I were also worried we wouldn’t be able to leave the house or get access to a vehicle,” Kevin says.

They also had no access to sandbags so were concerned the property was totally vulnerable to the rising waters. Kevin says Brent stayed, checked the whole house and ensured they were kept up to date with the latest information.

“Brent was great. He was there, ensuring we were all OK. It was really, really reassuring,” Kevin said.

Brent also returned to the property later to advise Mr Laing the threat of a king tide had passed and the house would be safe from flooding. “That was really, really good of him and I can’t thank him enough,” Kevin says.

Housing New Zealand’s Planned Programmes team is gearing up for another busy year ahead.

Planned Programmes co-ordinates and oversees a large component of the planned work carried out by our Performance Based Maintenance Contractors (PBMC) and other specialist contractors.

Programme Manager, Julie Bukutu, says PBMC contractors carry out a significant amount of work at Housing New Zealand properties, some of which is responsive and routine in nature, as well as planned.

“We are all busy bees working with our contractors to close out as many jobs as we can. With 11 Planned Programmes on the go, staying connected to our contractors is an important part of providing efficient quality to our tenants.”

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Finishing with a flourish

As you know, we end every issue of Contractor Connect on a high note and this issue is no exception. Here’s just a small sampling of the positive feedback received by our Customer Support Centre about work recently done by our maintenance contractors.

Prestige Ltd

Job
Blocked and overflowing drain, East Coast/Hawkes Bay

Tenant feedback
“Tenant wished to thank the very hardworking contractor that attended to fix the drains. She said he did a very thorough job and always cleaned up any mess. She also mentioned his communication was very clear and good.”

Responsive Maintenance Ltd

Job
New roof, Bay of Plenty

Tenant feedback
“Tenant phoned to say how satisfied she was with the overall workmanship of the trade’s team. She said she was 100% happy with the end result and an extra 20%, with how they made sure their working area was hazard free for her grandchildren. She also commented they cleaned up exceptionally well after themselves.”

Switched on Group

Job
New stove, Canterbury/Nelson Marlborough

Tenant feedback
“Tenant phoned to compliment the tradesman who was respectful, had lovely manners and was very wonderful overall.”

Programmed Facility Management NZ Ltd

Job
Blocked bath drain, Wellington/Hutt Valley

Tenant feedback
“Tenant advised the tradesman who attended was absolutely superb in their level of professionalism and excellent work. The tenant said she wanted to let him know how appreciative she was for the great work he had done.”
Spotless Facility Services (NZ) Ltd

Job
Replace hot water cylinder, South Auckland

Tenant feedback
“Tenant wished to compliment the contractor on their prompt attention and polite attitude. Very happy with the work and wished to thank everyone who took part in completing the job. Nice work guys.”

Spencer Henshaw Ltd

Job
Repair range hood pipe, Central Auckland

Tenant feedback
“Tenant commended the repairs undertaken by the tradesman who attended the job. He was very efficient and helpful, got the job done and was professional.”

Prestige Ltd

Job
Replace existing fence with new timber fence, Manawatu/Taranaki

Tenant feedback
“Tenant called to compliment the contractor doing the fence for his professionalism. It looks fantastic and he has been brilliant.”

Switched On Group

Job
Replace putty in windows, Canterbury/Nelson Marlborough

Tenant feedback
“Tenant called to advise the trade has completed the job and was polite and lovely to talk to. He was very professional and one of the best she had ever had.”

More next issue!