

Papakura Courier

stuff.co.nz

Wednesday, July 2, 2014

YOUR PLACE, YOUR PAPER



It has nice wide doorways, enough space for me to get in and out of all the rooms and a bathroom and shower that I can get into on my own

— Jan Butterworth



New home: Jan Butterworth has moved from a house where she felt trapped to one that's been purpose-built to give her as much freedom and independence as possible. **Photo:** TAO LIN

Perfect house for Jan

By TAO LIN

JAN Butterworth once felt trapped in her own house, confined by its narrow doorways and hilly surroundings.

The 36-year-old blogger and university student uses a wheelchair and has struggled to find a suitable house where she can live independently and with dignity.

But that hunt has come to an end thanks to a small Northland housing trust which has built its first set of accessible rental properties in Takanini.

The eight new homes are the first in Auckland built by the Whangarei Accessible

Housing Trust and are purpose-built to accommodate people with disabilities.

The trust has already constructed 20 similar houses in Northland.

Butterworth is delighted to live in one of the new homes after searching for the past four years.

"I'm excited. This is an incredible opportunity," she says.

Features include kick-plates on the doors, touch-pads for lights, sinks with wheelchair room and benchtops, light switches and drawers all at wheelchair height.

The interior has been designed to accommodate all members of the family so

moving into rest homes.

It's a subject that's been lumped into the "too hard" basket but McGoldrick hopes the trust's work will make more people aware of the need for it.

"We know this is just a tiny drop in the ocean compared to the need out there but we're very proud of what we've achieved, particularly because we're a very small team," she says.

"We've delivered on time and under budget and I think we continue to prove that affordable and accessible housing is not something for the 'too hard' basket," she says.

"It's doable."
And it's about more than

just providing people with an acceptable place to live, she says.

"Why pay someone to wash my dishes if I could do that if the kitchen was accessible?"

"It's not about a house, it's about creating a home and life."

Future moves for the trust include building more houses in Northland and researching other appropriate places to build in Auckland.

■ The Government's Social Housing Unit gave \$2 million to the Takanini development. The Jubilee Trust, Ripple Trust, Kiwibank and CCS Disability Action also supported the project.

TODAY



On target

Archer has US in her sights — **P3**



Garden plan

Community gets busy growing — **P5**



Positive move

Benchmark set for town centre — **P7**

ONLINE

Win tickets

There's still time to win a family pass to Motat's latest holiday experience Defying Gravity. Our competition closes tomorrow — go to stuff.co.nz/auckland/win to enter.