

MEDIA RELEASE

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A win-win housing partnership

A home to call their own will become a reality for three more families and whānau in the Nelson region thanks to a new partnership between Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT) and Habitat for Humanity Nelson.

During the year [NMIT carpentry pre-trade students](#) will build three houses at the Richmond campus which will then be signed over to Habitat for Humanity, who will select the recipients and relocate them on sites to be arranged.

The three-bedroom buildings will provide affordable housing for low to moderate income whānau under the [Habitat for Humanity Progressive Home Ownership Programme](#). This programme is a rent-to-buy system, with a strong emphasis on partnership with Habitat.

General Manager, Nick Clarke says the scheme is a hand up for whānau, not a hand out.

“There is quite a rigorous selection process for the families interested in partnering with us—based on their housing need, their ability to manage the financial side of home ownership and their willingness to dedicate mahi or sweat equity to the project,” Nick says.

Reid Carnegie, NMIT Curriculum Manager, Engineering & Construction says the partnership arrangement with Habitat and the house builds is great news for the carpentry students.

“Securing three house builds provides real-life experience for our students. The tutors are there to support them and work alongside them but the students get as close to a real building project as you can,” he says.

He says this liaison with Habitat also reflects the community goodwill towards the students learning as they’ve had amazing backing from NMIT’s industry partners.

“Everyone is keen to get onboard with this project, and our partner organisations are very supportive of the project and the learning needs of the NMIT pre-trade students.”

The NMIT carpentry programmes recently moved to the Richmond campus and a purpose-built facility is scheduled for completion later this year adding to the significant investment NMIT is making in the region.

Once completed the houses will be relocated to a site or several sites. Habitat is still exploring some options at this stage. The houses are then valued and the families enter in to a traditional rental agreement with a view to purchase. The rent-then-buy model helps them build up a deposit or equity which they can use when seeking independent finance to eventually buy their home from Habitat at the amount of the original valuation.

Nick Clarke describes the process as a 'long-walk' for the families, with Habitat supporting them throughout.

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