

# Keep warm to live longer

Story and photo by Annabelle Latz

Warmth and comfort in your own home takes a bit of planning ahead.

Jean Wilson attended The Good Homes workshop on Monday, and spoke to about 40 people in the community, including local residents and members of groups, about the importance of staying warm to keep healthy.

As ex-president of Grey Power in Marlborough, and a regular attendee of hospital board meetings and council meetings, Jean is aware that elderly people need to keep warm.

"If your home is warm, bright and sunny you are going to live a lot longer. I'm over 80 now and I don't consider myself old."

The Good Homes project is funded by the Public Good Science Fund, and Marlborough has been a featuring region in the project that began four years ago.

Jean had double glazing put into her house this week, and said it just took a bit of planning.

"I had a little nest egg to do repairs around the house. I have been saving up for years. As a widow and on superannuation, when you put money aside, it's not too bad."

Jean and her late husband David moved into their Blenheim house in 1955, which was built during WWII.

"It was just a little box when we moved in. We built another bedroom on in the 1960's and put insulation in the ceiling."

Insulation in the walls, floors and ceiling has continued to be a priority.



Jean Wilson spoke at the Good Homes seminar this week in Blenheim, encouraging elderly people to put time and money aside to make sure their house is warm, with helpful additions like double-glazed windows.

"Power bills decrease by one third when a house is well insulated."

Cutting branches that block sunlight, closing curtains when the sun goes down, painting white lines around the outside steps for easy visibility, making sure door handles are easy to turn, and floors are non-slip are other works Jean has done, to make her house safe and warm.

"It's a matter of going through room by room and seeing what needs doing."

Jean would like to see more funding for double glazing in people's homes, as it would help ease the health system.

"People recover better at home, and rates of asthma decrease with warmer homes. And it's about making the home safe."

Good Homes has created a checklist, which helps people identify work that needs doing.

For further information on these Tools, visit [www.goodhomes.co.nz](http://www.goodhomes.co.nz)