

## House of the week: Prebbleton

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The hospitable owners of this Canterbury home wanted a place that suited people and pets alike.

Located in Prebbleton, the house is composed of two wings joined by a communal living and dining area, an outdoor swimming pool, and expansive decking.

The owners, a family of four, are involved in their church youth group and needed a heavy-duty house that was built for serious entertaining.

"We have youth group pool parties. That gives you a crowd of 20 or 30 coming around at any one time," they said.

"I wanted a place where you could have kids getting changed to go swimming without having to traipse right through the house.

"The tiled floors are brilliant because I don't get stressed anymore about everyone running around in their togs, you can just mop it up with an old towel at the end of it."

A long kitchen bench provides the perfect setting for pot luck dining, and the doors open up onto the big deck and barbecue.

"It's not high level entertaining, but it works for us."

It also contains a media room and two living areas.

If the house wasn't full enough, other inhabitants include three cats and two dogs.

"The architect used to roll his eyes at me because I insisted on having a proper dog-sized door so the dogs could go in and out," the owner says.

There is also special shelving in the laundry where the pets all like to sleep.

"I wanted the laundry on the sunny side of the house for that reason. It makes my life easier if they're all stacked on their shelves with a cat or dog blanket rather than dropping hair all over the house."

It's a house where it's easy to have fun, the owner says.

"That's the lifestyle we love, we have lots of people and animals coming and going - we enjoy living like that."

Builder Louie McKenzie said the challenge in building the house was the high degree of workmanship involved.

"It had so much detail, a lot of exposed timber work and teak wall paneling."

The home won a Gold Reserve Award at the Registered Master Builders 2013 House of the Year in the Carters New Homes \$1 to \$2 million category.

At the local Canterbury 2013 House of the Year it won the overall \$1 million to \$2 million category and the Local Craftsmanship Award.

**Build cost:** Over \$1 million

**Builder:** McKenzie Builders Ltd

**Architectural designer:** Dean Cowell of Chris Prebble Architects

**Size:** 493 sqm

**Materials:** Mixture of solid concrete block and cedar.

**Energy efficiency:** Incorporates green energy by utilising solar panels and rain water collection. Inside contains underfloor heating, and is insulated to high level with thermal mass properties.

**Done right:** "I think the indoor-outdoor flow is really good," the owner says. "And where the kitchen is sitting."

**Done wrong:** "Maybe next time I would build a bit smaller. It was so efficiently designed you actually don't need such a big house... I probably didn't make them stick to the budget enough."

**Unexpected:** "Because I chose a good architect and builder I don't think I had any major problems - they were a lot better than I expected."

**Recommend:** "Do your research up front. Don't just choose any old person, make a list of criteria about what you want to get out of them. Make a shortlist of what you have to have in your house, and set a tight budget."

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