

# Media Release

## Residential Advisory Service to be launched

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A free advisory service for residential property owners facing difficult issues with earthquake rebuilds or repairs will tap into a range of expert advice to help the owners find solutions, Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee has announced.

The Residential Advisory Service will be launched next month and will assist property owners with their various issues, including insurance problems.

The independent service is designed to assist those who are facing complex issues, are confused over conflicting advice, or who are in disagreement with other parties. It will work by identifying potential solutions, preventing unnecessary disputes arising, and contributing to a smooth and timely rebuild process.

“What we have achieved through consultation with the community and insurance sector is a service that will help guide people to the advice and support that is right for them,” Mr Brownlee says.

While consideration was given to an advocacy rather than an advisory advice, discussions with other agencies and community groups made it clear that an independent advice service supported by a range of experts is the option for addressing peoples’ needs.

Mr Brownlee says all parties would have liked to have announced the service sooner, but it had taken time to bring together all parties involved and get agreement on a service that doesn’t duplicate existing services and will deliver tangible outcomes for property owners.

Property owners in need can approach the service on their own. The service will operate via an assessment and referral method.

Service clients will initially be interviewed for a thorough assessment of their case, and then appropriate steps will be identified and agreed to address their situations.

Some property owners may require independent advice only, and those with complex issues may progress from an independent advice meeting to an independently facilitated multi-party meeting.

A range of technical experts will be available to support the service. The service’s independent advisers will be able to request direct advice and/or suggestions from these experts.

Funding arrangements for the service are still being finalised, with costs shared between CERA and other agencies and organisations.

Further details on the service will be released closer to the launch date.

[Preliminary information about the service can be read here.](#)