words: Sue Reidy
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it's the people
who make a home

Jim Bolger Chairman New Zealand Post and Kiwibank

Jim Bolger, former Prime Minister, former New Zealand Ambassador to the United States, and currently chairman of New Zealand Post and Kiwibank, is very clear about what home means to him.

"Home is where you have a sense of comfort and ease, a deep sense of belonging. I particularly associate that with my family home and farm at Te Kuiti. We've been there for nearly 40 years. We love the beautiful, expansive location and views. It will always remain for us our turangawaewae."

Mr Bolger's work has meant that for most of his working life, he and his wife, Joan, and their family have operated on a two-home basis.

For 30 years, their second home was in Wellington. After his retirement as Prime Minister and his resignation as a Member of Parliament, Mr Bolger was appointed to Washington, which then became his second home for four years. He has been back in New Zealand now for almost three years, and his work with New Zealand Post, Kiwibank and the gas industry means that he still spends a lot of time in Wellington.

"A home doesn't have to be a fixed location. Political life always comes with an element of uncertainty – you learn to accept the fact that homes of short duration are part of the package," he says. "It's the people who make the house a home, not the building. What matters is what goes on inside the home; what people enjoy about their

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space and how comfortable they feel within it. It's the people who are always the most important element."

He does have a library-cum-study that he enjoys, though.

"I love books and have a large number, covering a wide range. Books have always been a big part of our lives. And, as with any home, ours also contains within its walls the touchstones of our life – photos of our parents and of the family in all its various stages: nine children and eight grandchildren, as well as memorabilia representing aspects of our lives both at home and abroad." **H**