



# Villas make life easier for those with disability

**PHOEBE PIN**

Residents of a new block of accessible villas could hardly contain their excitement when they were invited to take a sneak peek inside their future homes this week.

An initiative of WAI Group, Activ Geraldton, Community Housing Ltd and local builder Campbell Homes, West End Villas in Beachlands was officially declared open on Monday.

From the outside, the units look the same as any other suburban home but each has



**Diane Galea with Kate Lalor.**

been fitted with state-of-the-art technology designed to make life easier for people with disability.

Kitchen counters can be raised or lowered in seconds, doors can open at the touch of a button and hallways are

wide enough for wheelchairs to be manoeuvred with ease.

Geraldton local Diane Galea will move into her new home in the next few days, saying she looked forward to having a place to call her own.

“I can now be more independent and be by myself,” she said.

She is also looking forward to one day getting a kitten to share her new abode with.

Minister for Disability Services Don Punch attended the opening, saying the villas were the first of their kind in regional WA.

“These are six villas that have been purpose-built for people with a range of disability and they incorporate good principles of design and technology so people are able to maximise choices about how they live,” he said.

“People who have a disability may not be able to cook for themselves because the benchtops and the cooking gear is at the wrong height, but in these houses they are actually able to manipulate how high the benches are.

“In a sense Geraldton is being a trailblazer.”