2017

HomeNET User Documentation

HomeNET

The Next Generation of Social Networking

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1 Introduction

HomeNET is a social networking mobile app, built for the android platform. This application has many features, that may be deemed as advanced for users who are new to social networking, or users who are new to a social network of this nature. The purpose of this document is to provide clear, concise guidance to a user who may want information around using the mobile application. This document has been written in such a way that a user with little or no technical background can comprehend.

The system consists of an Android application, as well as a Web API. Users of the system should only concern themselves with the mobile application. The Web API is for developers – people who may want to build applications that need some HomeNET element to it.

1.1 Rationale behind HomeNET

HomeNET defines your “social groups” as Houses. Anyone who has an active HomeNET account can create a house. Once the house is created, users can join the house. When a user posts content (a post or a photo), they have the choice of choosing which audience they want to address (in this case, choosing the house they want to share the content with). Only users subscribed to a specific house can view content shared by other users who are subscribed to the same house. These social circles aim to create a social network that is more “personal”. Users can view basic details pertaining to the house(s) they are subscribed to. Only the house administrator (the user that created the house) can modify details to the house.

2 Getting Started

2.1 Login to Your Account / Create new Account

Users who wish to use the mobile application must either login or create an account. Upon launching the application for the first time, the system will need a couple of moments to fetch necessary data from the server – this data is used by the mobile application in various parts. Once the system has completed its setup task, the user is presented with a login screen. If you have an existing account, you will need to enter your username and password to continue. If you are a new user, you will need to create an account.

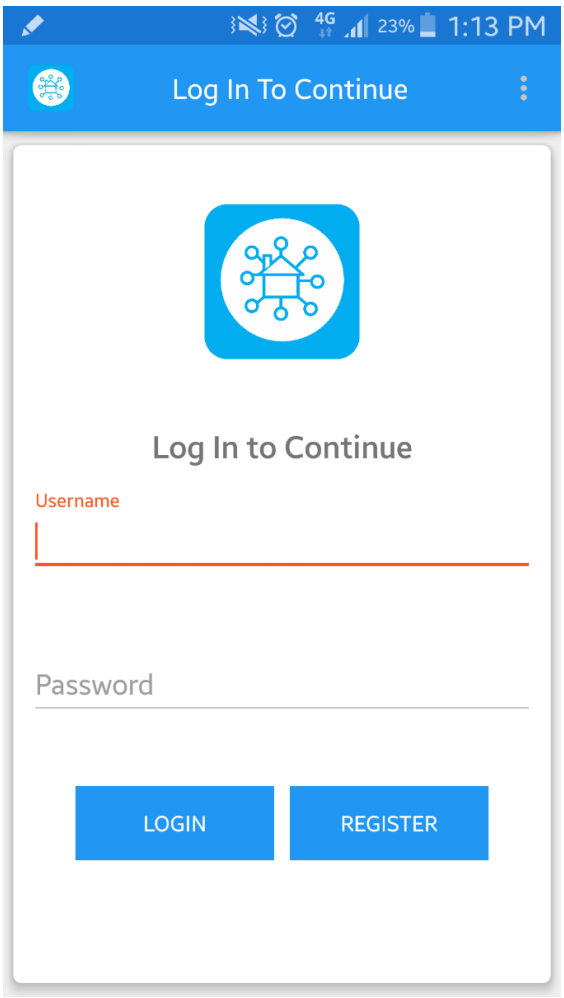

Figure 2-1: The login screen - enter login credentials if you wish to continue

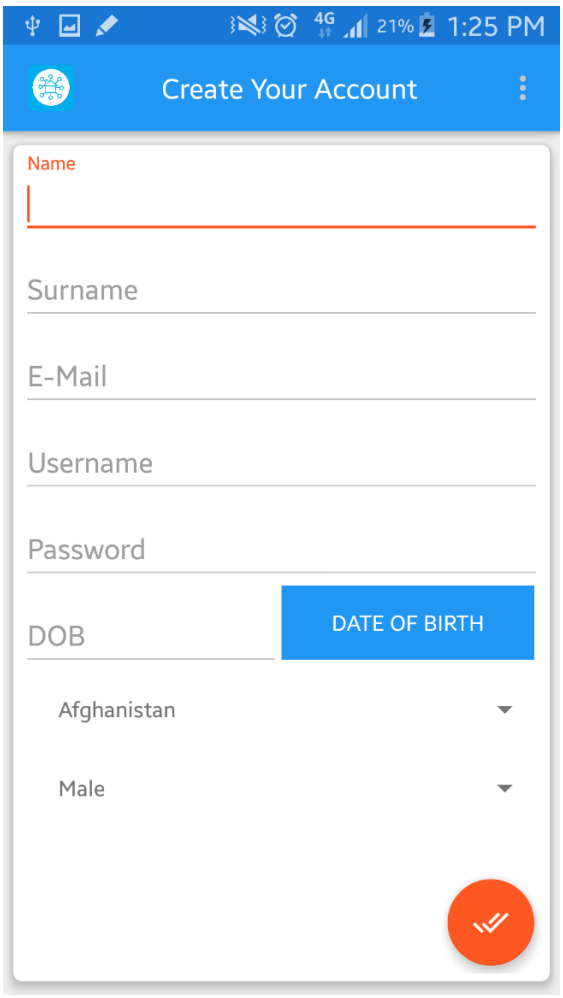

Figure 2-2: The registration screen - select "Register" from the login screen to create an account

Figure 1,1 shows the login screen. If you have an existing account, you will need to enter your username and password to continue. Upon successful login, the system will run a

couple of checks and take you to your news feed, or to the house manager if you are an administrator of one or more houses. Figure 1,2 shows what the registration screen looks like. Every part of the form is compulsory. Once registration has been validated, you will be redirected to the setup wizard where you can choose from creating a house, or joining a house. This is explained in more detail.

2.2 The Setup Wizard

Once you have successfully registered for HomeNET, the mobile application will redirect you to the setup wizard. Here, you will have the choice of creating a house, or joining a house. The wizard is presented in a slider manner.

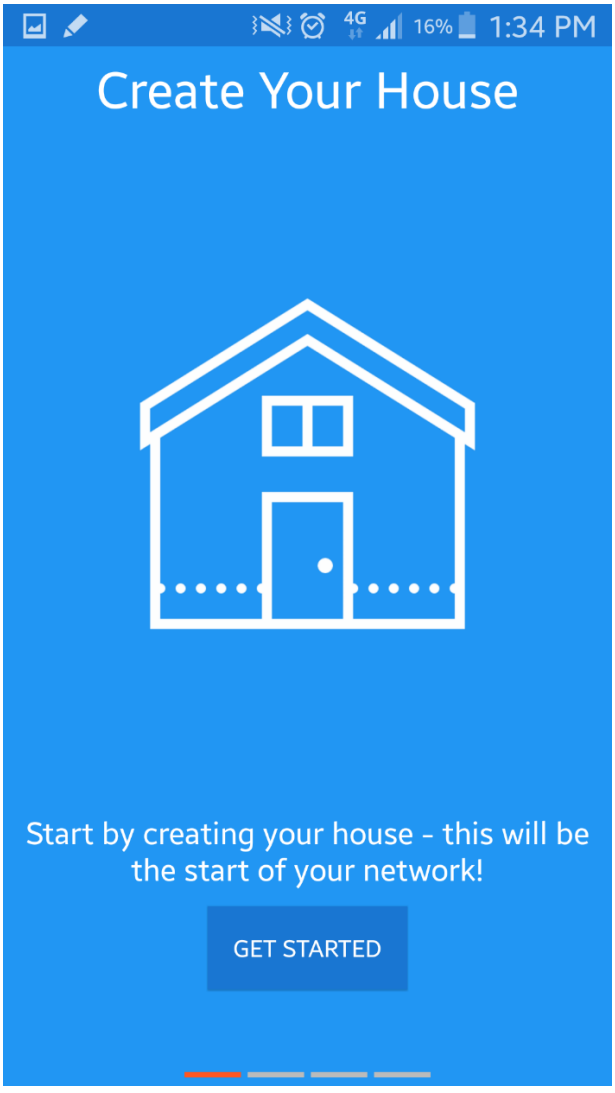

Figure 2-3: Slider 1 of 4 - Create a house. When the getting started button is selected, the user is shown a dialog where you can specify details to your new house.

Figure 2-4: Slider 3 of 4 - Connect to a house. Here, a dialog will appear where you can select a house to join from the system.

For the first version of HomeNET, users will be able to create a house, or join a house. Other options (Creating an Organization) are currently disabled, for future development purposes.

2.2.1 Creating a House

Upon selecting the “Getting Started” button from the create house slider, you will be presented with a dialog, where you can specify details to your new house. Here, you will need to specify house name, description to your house, as well as location data for your house. Once all this data has been submitted and verified, you will be taken to a screen where you can manage your house (view active users, flagged posts, and so forth).

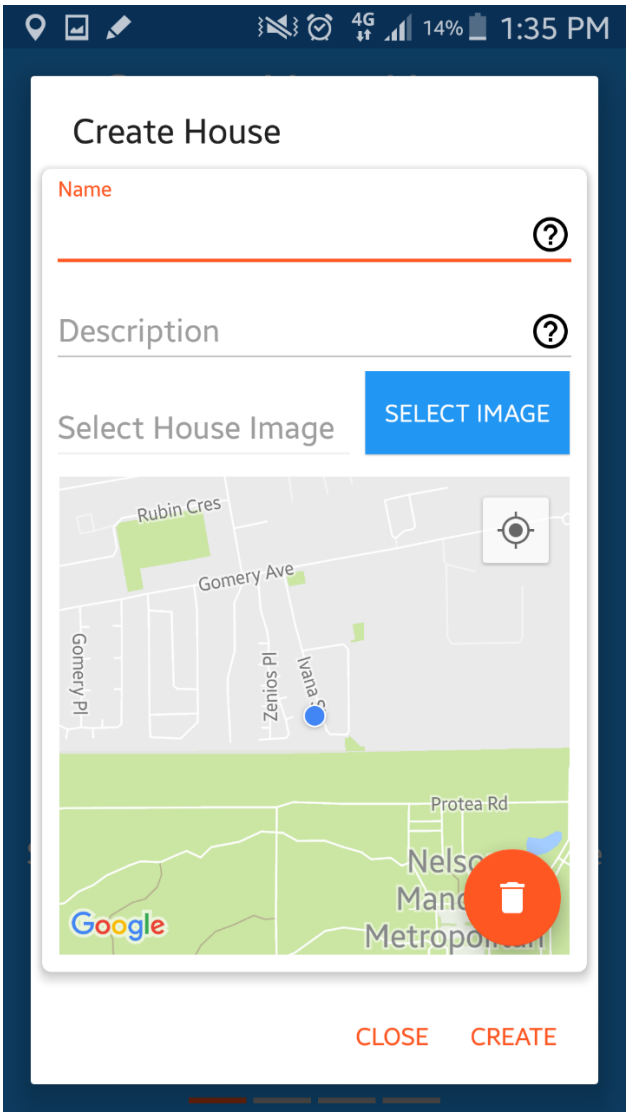

Figure 2-5: Create house dialog. Specify details to your new house

2.2.2 Connect to a House (Join a House)

If you want to connect to a house (join a house) that someone has created, you will need to select the getting started option, from the Connect to House slider. A dialog will appear where you are able to type the name of the house, or say the name of the house you want to join (by selecting the microphone button). Should there be any results, the system will display these and provide options for each – joining the house, or getting more details to the house.

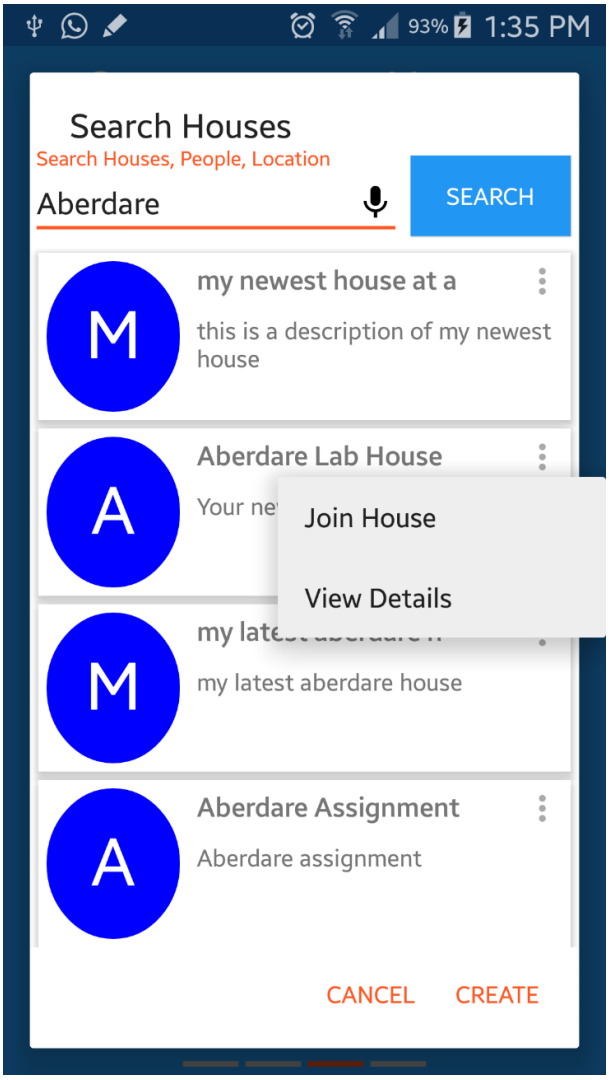

Figure 2-6: Search house results. To join a house, you select the 3-dotted button and select Join house from the menu

NOTE: When joining a house, notification is sent to the house administrator. It is up to the house administrator to approve your request, or decline it.

3 Using the Social Networking Application

Once you are subscribed to at least one house, the mobile application will redirect you to your news feed. The news feed contains posts made by other members in the house(s) you are subscribed to. In this feed, you have the choice of liking the post, or disliking the post. Other parts of the application you can navigate to include Announcements, Settings and Messages. Announcements are messages which are broadcast to every member in a subscribed house, and messages are private messages sent to a specific member of a house.

Figure 3-1: The HomeNET Feed. Posts created by other users is shown here. You can navigate to other parts of the app by using the bottom bar

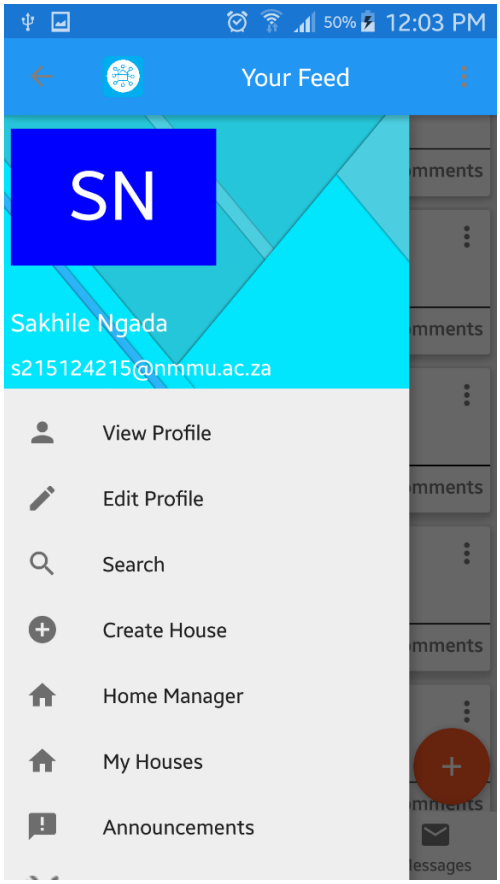

Figure 3-2: HomeNET Feed Navigation menu. More navigational options are offered through the menu

3.1 Creating a new Post

In figure 3,1 you will notice a floating button with a plus sign on it. If you wish to create a new post, select this button. You will be taken to a new screen where you can specify details to your new post.

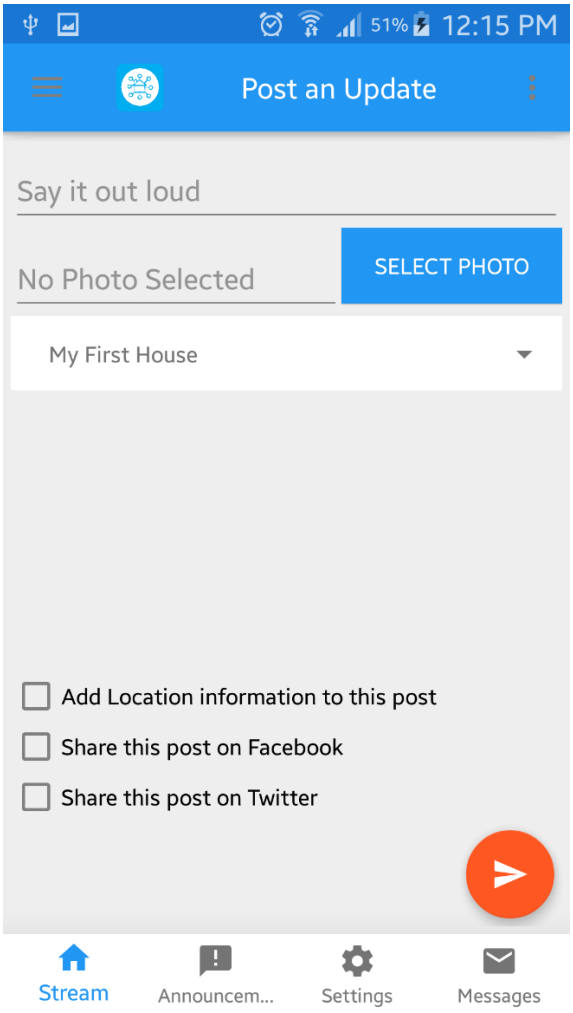

Figure 3-3: Creating a new post. You have the choice of specifying post text or, specifying post title and photo.

When creating a new post, you have the choice of specifying just the post text or specifying text and a photo – if you wish to upload a photo. Should you be subscribed to many house, please be sure to select the appropriate house from the spinner. If you would like to share your post onto external social media sites, you can select the appropriate options. Once you are happy with every detail, select the orange floating button to create the post. Every member in the house is notified of your new post.

3.2 View Post Metrics (Likes, Dislikes, Who Liked/Disliked)

Users of HomeNET can view additional information on a post, such as the total likes, dislikes and the users who liked/disliked a post. Do get to this dialog, a user must select the 3-dotted menu button and then select “View Details” from the pop up menu.

Figure 3-4: Select the 3-dotted button, then select "View Details"

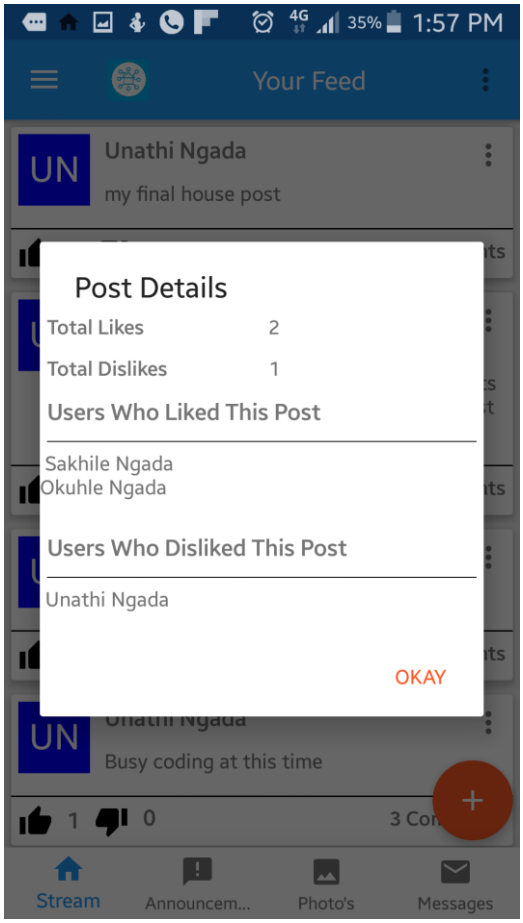

Figure 3-5: Post Metrics

3.3 Viewing Comments / Adding a Comment

To view comments made on a specific post, tap on the related post. This will take you to a screen where you can view the original post, post metrics, and comments made by other users on that post.

Figure 3-6: Comment view. Here you can view comments made by other users, as well as add your own comment.

To add your own comment, simply type in the text area provided at the bottom of the screen. Once you are done, click the floating button with the send icon. This will add the comment to the post and update system metrics.

3.4 Viewing Announcements / Creating an Announcement

An announcement is defined as a broadcast message that is sent to all members of a house. These are useful when you need to send something out to everybody. To view announcements for all houses you are subscribed to, select the Announcements tab from the bottom bar. To create a new announcement, select the + sign.

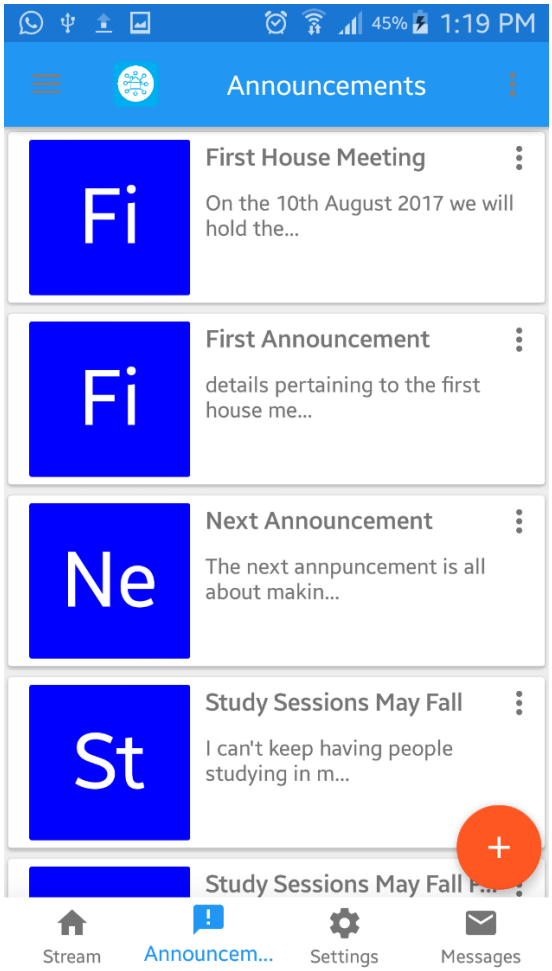

Figure 3-7: View announcements in subscribed houses

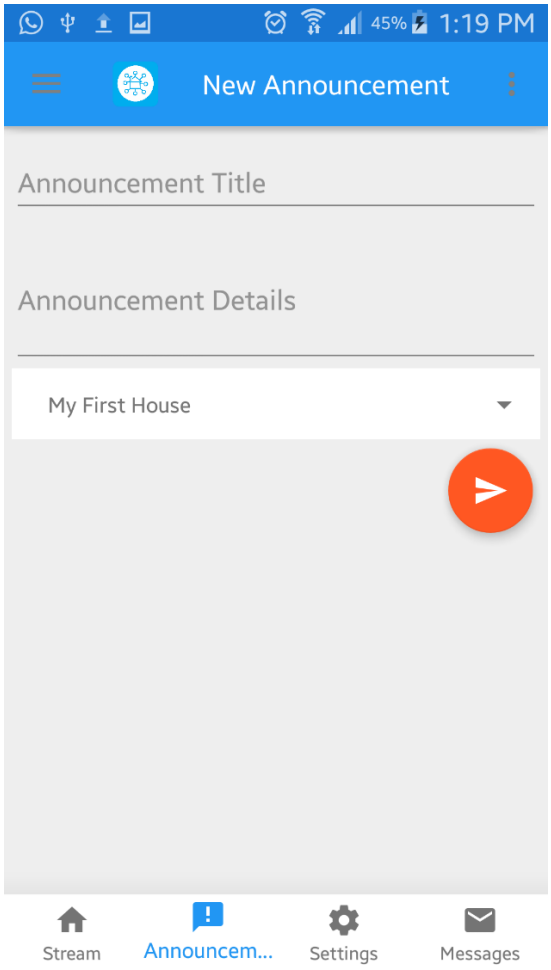

Figure 3-8: Create a new announcement. This data is sent to all users of the house

For an announcement to be valid, you must send a valid title and description. Once the announcement has been saved, all users subscribed to the house you are addressing will get notification that a new announcement has been created.

3.5 Viewing Messages / Sending Messages

HomeNET allows for private messaging amongst members in the same house. To view messages, select the “Messages” tab, from the bottom bar. This will pull up a list of messages that have been sent to you, or messages you have sent to other people in the subscribed house. To create a new message, select the + floating button.

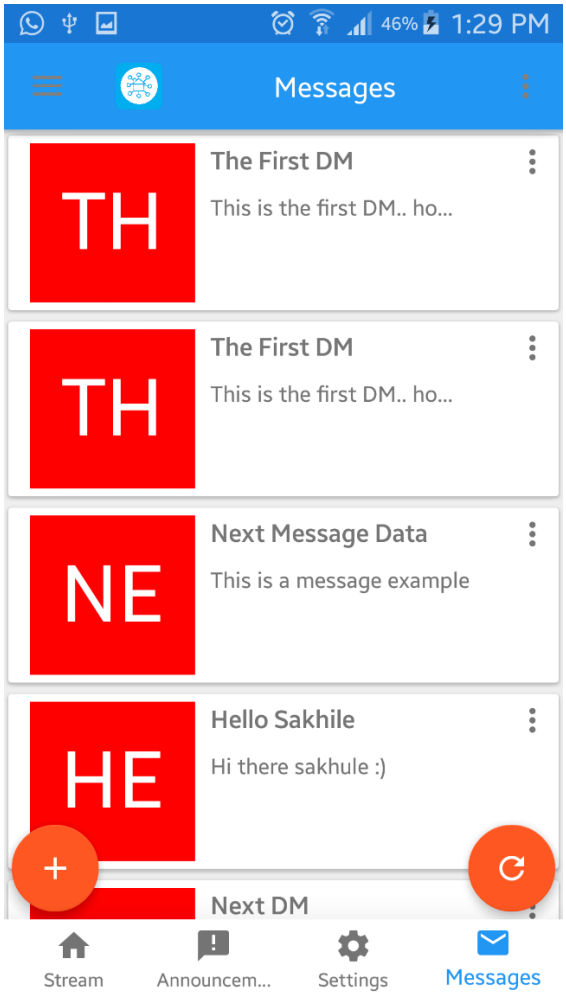

Figure 3-9: View all messages sent to you, or messages sent to other people in subscribed houses

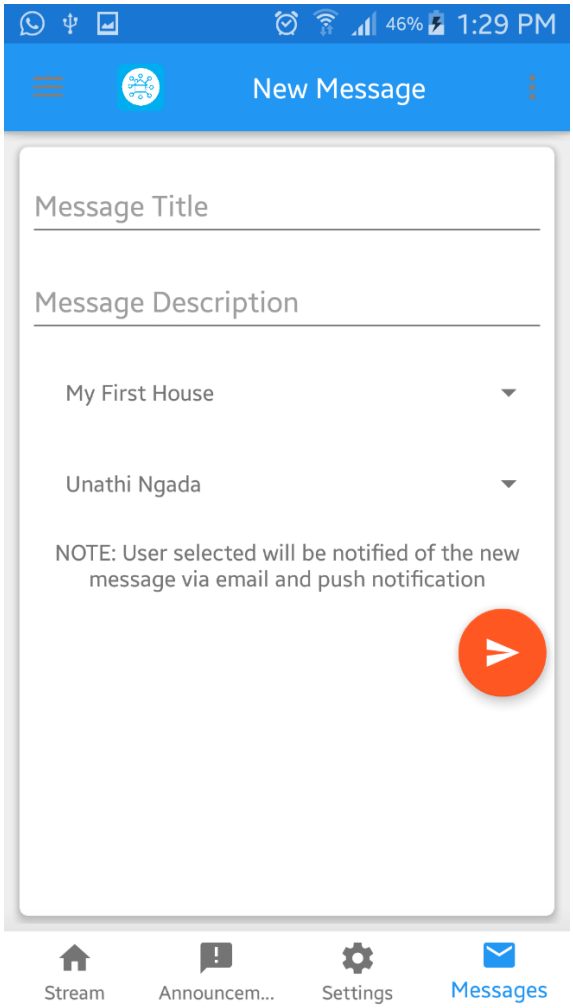

Figure 3-10: Creating a new message. Specify details to the message, as well as the house and recipient

When creating a new message, you need to specify basic details to the message (title and description). If you are subscribed to multiple houses, you will need to select the house you wishing to address. Once you have selected an appropriate house, users in that house will be loaded onto the dropdown list. Select the user you wishing to send the message to, and press the send button when you are done.

3.6 HomeNET Photo Gallery

To view photos uploaded by users who are subscribed to houses you are subscribed to, select the photo's tab on the bottom navigation bar. This will pull up a list of all photos posted by users. Please note that this task can take long, depending on your internet connection and the number of images posted by users.

Figure 3-11: HomeNET Photo gallery stream

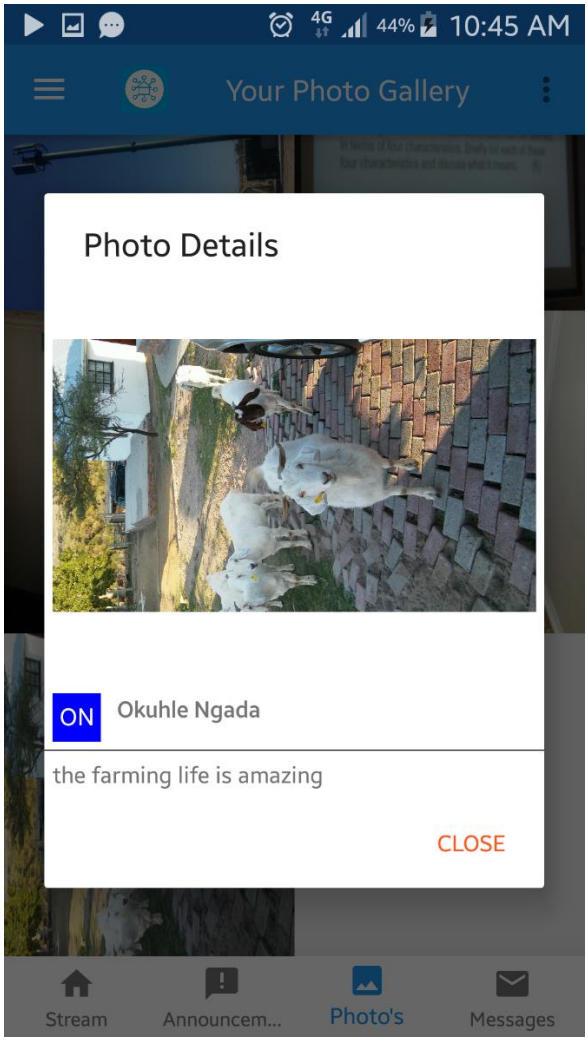

Figure 3-12: When a user taps a photo, this is displayed in a dialog, together with basic post information

To view basic post information relating to a photo (who posted it, together with post text), select the appropriate image. This will result in a dialog being displayed on the user's phone, as illustrated in Figure 3.10.

4 My Houses

My Houses is a feature where subscribers of a house can view a top-level report on how the house is doing. Here, a user can view total posts, announcements, comments, members, and so forth. To view this report, open the navigation menu and select “My Houses”. This will pull up a screen where you can see latest stats on the subscribed house. If you have multiple houses, use the drop down at the top of the screen to refresh the screen with appropriate house metrics.

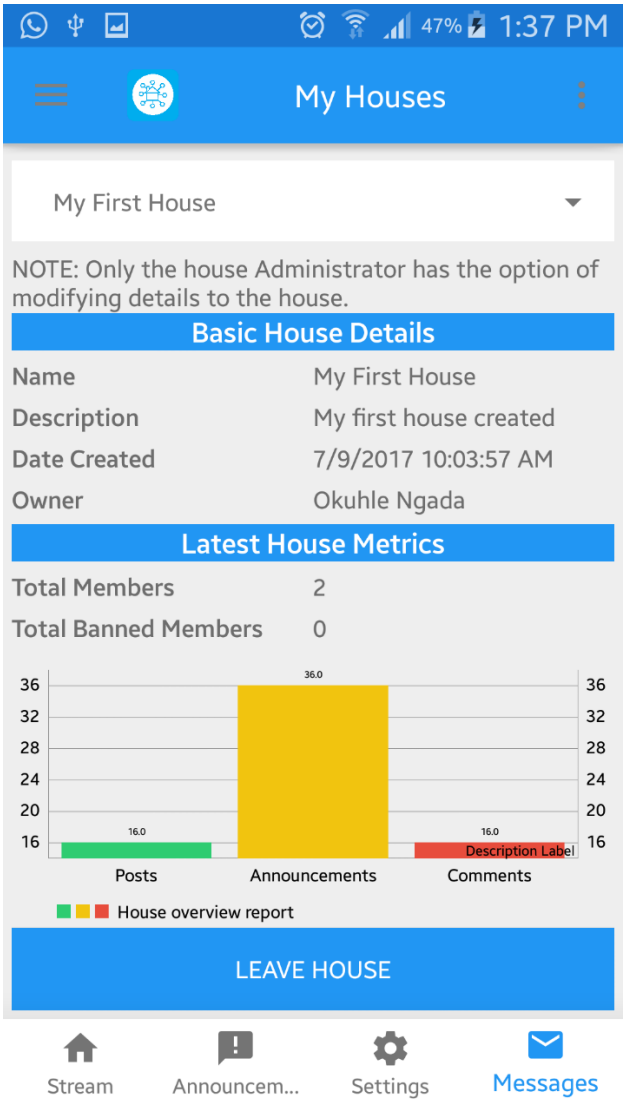

Figure 4-1: Latest house stats are presented to the user in the form of an easy to read graph.

Users also have the option of leaving the house, should they want to end their relationship with the selected house.

5 User Management

The next set of screens deal with managing the user's personal information. In this view, users will have the choice of viewing their profile, as well as editing details to their profile.

5.1 View Profile

If a user wishes to view their profile, they can do so by opening the navigation menu and selecting "View Profile". This will pull up the user's basic details, as well as a report on their contributions to the system.

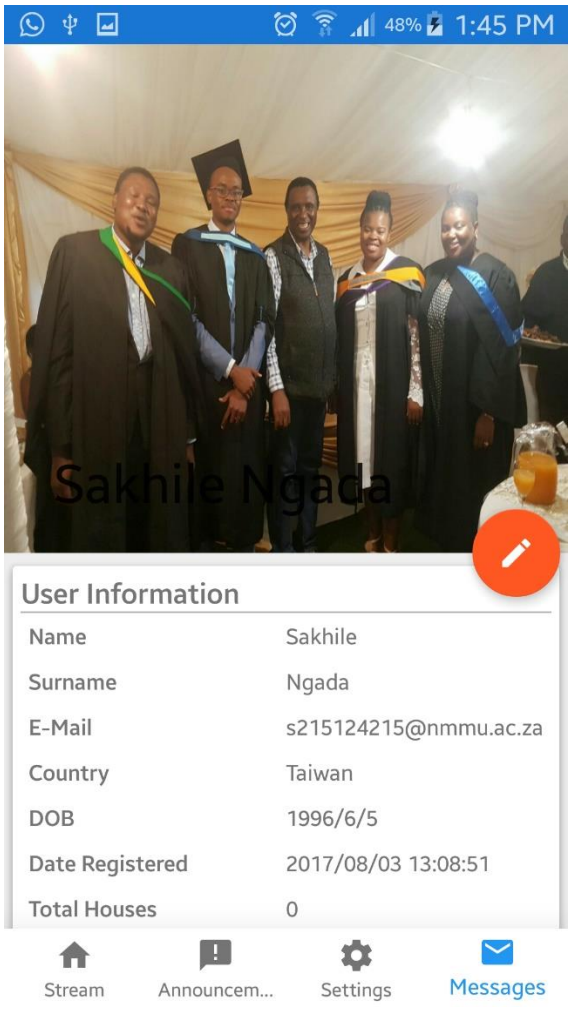

Figure 5-1: User profile shows their profile picture and other statistics

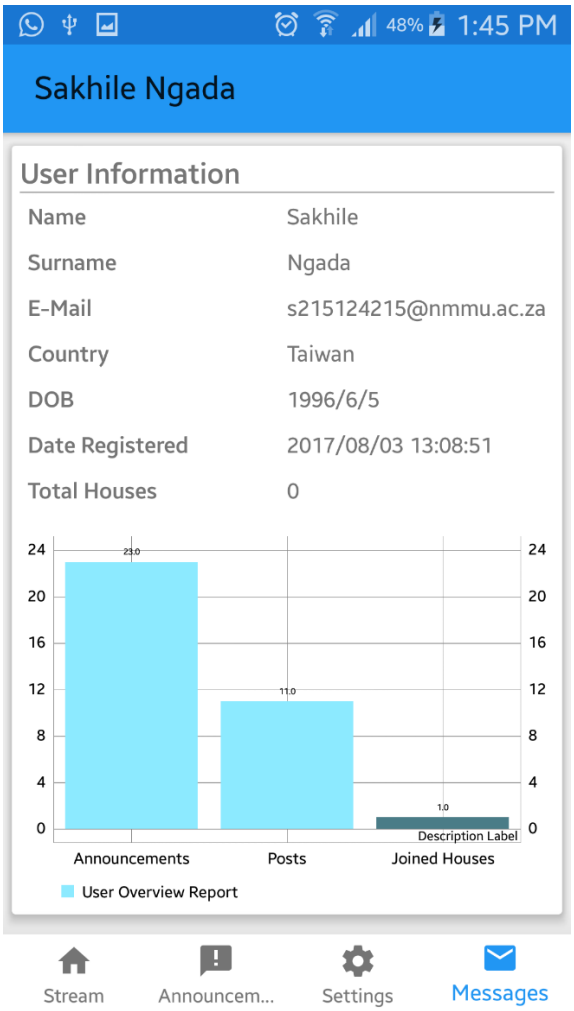

Figure 5-2: User data as well as an overview graph on total announcements, posts and joined houses

5.2 Edit Profile

If you want to edit your profile, open the navigation menu and select the “Edit Profile” option. This will pull up your basic profile information, and allow you to edit your personal information. Unique fields cannot be edited (email address, username).

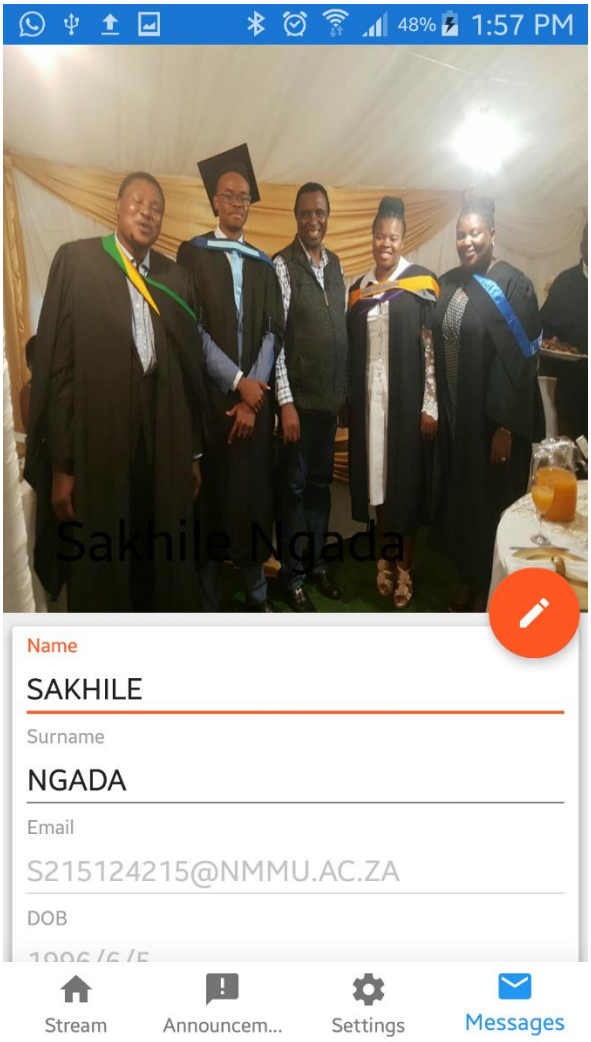

Figure 5-3: Edit Profile screen.

6 House Administration

The following section is applicable to house administrators. Through this functionality, a house administrator can do the following:

1. User Management
    a. View active users
    b. View Pending users – an administrator has the choice of accepting or rejecting a house join request
    c. View banned users
2. Post Management
    a. View flagged posts
    b. Respond to flag posts (either deleting the post, or unflagging it).
3. House Management
    a. View House Details
    b. Edit House Details (Change Name, Description, House Image, etc.)

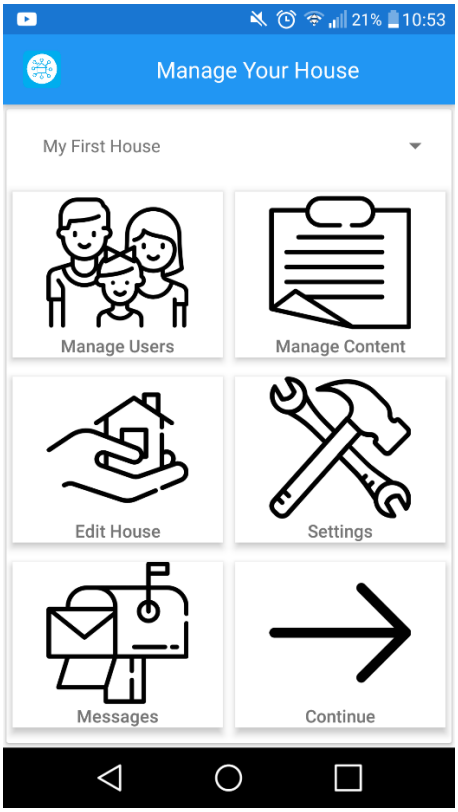

Figure 6-1: House Manager - This is only accessible to house administrators

7 Application Settings

Application settings are useful when you need to change settings such as remembering login so you don't have to login each time, as well as managing your connections. You also have the option of deleting your account, or deactivating it, should you feel you need a break from the system. Application settings are accessible all over the system.

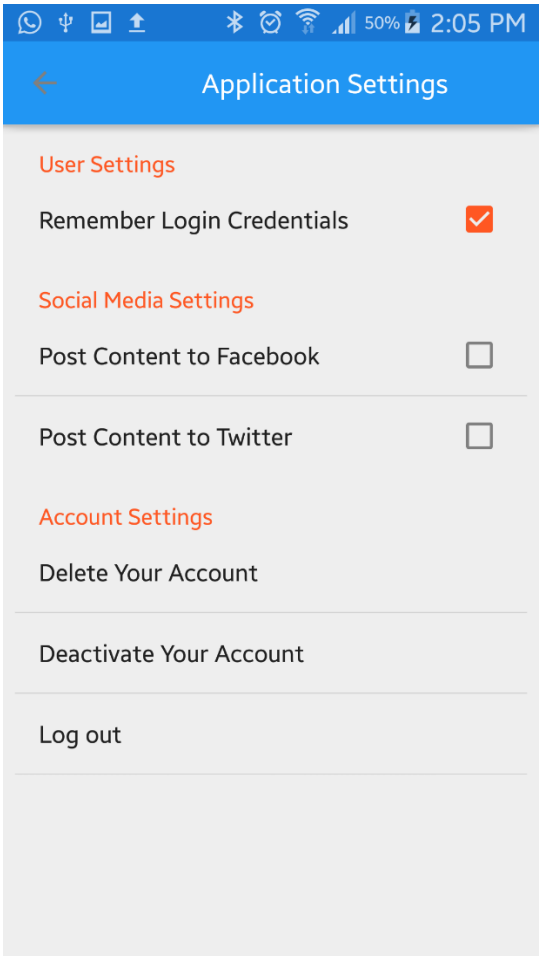

Figure 7-1: Application settings

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