

November 10, 2022

Submission

to Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

CONSULTATION ON THE LONG-TERM INSIGHTS BRIEFING: THE LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF OUR AGEING POPULATION
FOR OUR HOUSING AND URBAN FUTURES

1. Are there implications of housing tenure and housing costs that we've missed?

There is nothing said about the prolonged stay of adult family members within their parents' family home, sometimes bringing new partners to live with them, some even having children. As parents transition into grandparenthood, younger members of the whanau who cannot afford to move out or cannot find suitable housing of their own will crowd the family home with partners and children. At Presbyterian Support we see this occurring and we are concerned about:

=> growing rates of abuse directed toward older people in their own homes

=> growing rates of overcrowded housing

3.1 focuses on splitting older people between those who own at retirement and those that rent. It fails to consider older peoples' changing responsibilities inside wider whanau groupings, and their implications upon housing, for the whole whanau.

2. What are your views on whether and how different forms of housing tenures (rental, home ownership, intermediate) will support an ageing population?

We think Social Services for older people is a missing part of the housing plan picture. Surely with an ageing population and a coincident housing crisis in New Zealand there could be developed an option of regulated exchange of housing for aged care and services. Around the world there are models such as Helpex and Woofing where people who cannot afford accommodation register to trade manual labour in exchange for a place to stay. For older people the labour needed is in caregiving, companionship and support to do everyday tasks. There are also occasional news stories from around the world, of Aged Residential Care facilities providing affordable accommodation to young people who are willing to provide companionship and take on responsibilities in the home. We see these scenarios - with adequate regulation and supervision - having enormous potential to solve two problems at one and the same time.

3. Are there any implications of population ageing for our housing stock and houses that we've missed?

This section focuses on design of new housing stock as a solution. In New Zealand a new phenomenon is mushrooming across the housing sector and writers have failed to note it. This phenomenon is the private construction of minor dwellings on sections, densifying the housing area and creating diversity of housing on site between an older, larger home and a new single unit, perhaps above the existing driveway.

The densification of housing areas should be studied carefully as it occurs across New Zealand. It will have social impacts of its own, including pressure on existing hospitals and health centres. How many of these minor dwellings are developed to house the older members of the owner family? How many are to house next generation families? Should this phenomena be incentivised as an age-in-place solution? How do minor dwellings impact the value of residential property? Analysis of this phenomena should be included in this longterm insights briefing paper, with relevance to older people's housing.

Similarly, we see incentivisation of home-upgrades for household members ageing in place as a pragmatic solution not considered adequately. The majority of older people prefer to stay in place as they age, and this is perhaps increasingly so for Māori and Pacifica peoples. More creative solutions must be identified to enable people "to be independent for longer, reduce the impact of age-related changes in functional capacity and mitigate the impact of ageing with a disability." Existing home upgrades need credible advice, then suppliers and fitters, core parts of the existing building sector already serving Aged Residential Care providers, that should also be equitably accessed by the rest of the older population not housed in Aged Residential Care. Government's provision of home upgrade grants, perhaps incentivised to landlords of renting older people, should be a recommendation within this longterm insights briefing paper.

Furthermore, homecare services and social supports like the ones our Enliven services provide older people at home or close to where they live, should be acknowledged and the increase in demand forecast. Increases in funding for it will be necessary and should be recommended in this longterm insights briefing paper.

4. What do you see as the most important things to ensure our housing stock is fit-for-purpose for an ageing population?

The most important thing we hear from older people we serve in our homes, is that we enabled them to stay connected to their families and their communities. When we do that, we don't just provide them with housing. We give their everyday lives some joy and meaning.

"Housing stock" is fit-for-purpose when family members can thrive within them and communities can thrive around them.

5. Are there implications for our neighbourhoods, towns, and cities that we've missed?

While we like the concept of creating age friendly urban spaces, we are disappointed to see public community gardens poorly featured within figure 3.8 Ngā tū wāhi tāone pai mō te hunga kaumātua - Creating Age friendly urban places. The garden is where many older people are experienced and can teach younger members of their whānau how to grow food, while many poorer families and renters don't have access to their own garden areas. Community Gardens have numerous physical, social and cultural benefits for community members and should not only be visualised but sign-posted prominently alongside other beneficial and age-friendly features within figure 3.8.

6. For our neighbourhoods, towns, and cities to support an ageing population, where should efforts be focused?

Calculate the population of older people who will have little to no means to pay for accommodation after retirement. The National Science Challenge study led by Kaye Saville-Smith 'Aging Well' documents the changes ahead, with the expectation that within 20 years more than 50% of over 65's will be renting. Strategise identifying where among this population ageing in place is feasible and preferred. Anticipate and recommend government's investment in housing assistance supports to sustain ageing in place for this population. Support and incentivise landlords to upgrade homes to make them age-friendly for their ageing tenants.

Where appropriate, support and incentivise owner families to maximise their properties by developing minor dwellings for either their older members to downsize, or for next generation families so that older people can remain in place.

Anticipate and recommend government's investment in at home and/or community-based social support services for older people to meet the growing demand.

Anticipate and recommend government's investment in Aged Residential Care to meet the growing demand.

7. How should new developments be planned to promote integrated decision-making from strategic urban development to age friendly localities?

We support the recommendation of our peak body the New Zealand Christian Council of Social Services, that a Māori Housing Authority, together with Māori Housing providers and organizations are the minimum of what is needed for planning and designing housing requirements for the aging Māori population. Government must continue to entrench this need in policy and legislation, to consult directly with whānau, hapū, kuia and kaumatua to ensure housing policies reflect their needs in accordance with kawa and tikanga.

During hui on resource management reform in 2021, the need for regulation to support Papakainga in urban and rural settings was identified as a priority. This is documented as case studies in Ka Māpuna (Martin & Te Aho, 2021) and would be an excellent start place to develop wider contextual considerations.