

The picture of housing need in the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area

A report prepared by Community Think for Kāinga Ora





Foreword

The following report on engagement work is broader than Kāinga Ora generally undertakes and involved several different communities. We enlisted the help of an independent engagement company, Community Think to help us tap into the different communities and draw out different voices so that we could gather a wide range of perspectives.

Our aim was to have a meaningful dialogue about the need for public and other types of housing in the area and the role that Kāinga Ora can play in helping to address some of that need.

Between March and June 2023 Community Think engaged extensively with the communities in the Hibiscus and Bays area. They have submitted the following report with their findings.

Of note is the reported impact of the purchase of land in 2020 in Bonair Crescent, Millwater that was already consented for new housing. This purchase was to help boost public housing stock, which is limited in this part of Auckland. Across the wider Hibiscus and Bays area, Kāinga Ora has 115 public homes and most of the people on the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) Housing Register needing a home in this area face a long wait.

The Bonair Crescent site represented the opportunity to build 37 good quality, two-bedroom homes.

Over a period of months in 2022, Kāinga Ora engaged directly with the local Bonair Crescent community. ([Refer Appendix Two—Engagement timeline](#)). However, in November 2022 we made a commitment that before we progressed any further with the development of the Bonair Crescent site, we would engage in a broader review of our portfolio needs and plans for housing across the wider Hibiscus and Bays area.

The insights we have obtained through our own engagement along with the report findings and other relevant information, will help inform the development of our housing plans for the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area and enable us to better meet the housing needs in this part of Auckland.

—Kāinga Ora

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Disclaimers: The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the people working at Community Think. Quotes used may be verbatim or indicative.

Executive summary

This report has been prepared following Community Think's engagement with the residents of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area about housing needs. Engagement focused on housing needs in the area, perceptions of public housing, and solutions to housing needs in the area. Throughout the process, significant focus was drawn to the proposed Kāinga Ora development in Bonair Crescent, Millwater, given the ongoing tensions that surround it.

Community Think designed an engagement series that provided opportunities to contribute online and in-person, in one-to-one and small group formats through to larger public drop-in sessions. We targeted those with an interest in housing, including mana whenua, people in emergency and public housing, those in private rentals, and citizen-led and special interest groups. We also partnered with community organisations to hold public drop-in sessions.

Most people we spoke with agree on the need for more housing, including public housing. However, the impact of new housing—particularly increases in housing density—is felt most by those adjacent to proposed new developments. This sentiment was reflected in our engagements, where those adjacent to the proposed Bonair Crescent development for public housing were highly motivated to participate.

Housing needs: There are residents in the Hibiscus and Bays local board area that are in need of secure and affordable housing; however the amount of public housing which could address this need is very low¹. In March 2023, there were more people and families on the housing register for public housing than total housing available in the Hibiscus and Bays. Private rentals are expensive and there is often competition to get into them. Few are suitable for people with accessibility requirements, and there is a perception that the infrastructure to support more housing is lacking.

Perceptions of public housing: There is an assumption that most residents in the Hibiscus and Bays are well off, an assumption that excludes the needs of those who are housing insecure. A significant stigma surrounds public housing and those who live in it, with recent media attention on disruptive Kāinga Ora tenants contributing to it. Many homeowners want to avoid buying near public housing, and associate public housing with bringing down property values.

Housing solutions: Solutions that were offered included increasing housing options (including affordable housing options, accessible housing and older adult housing), public housing spread amongst the community, expanding the criteria for public housing, and for Kāinga Ora to be better equipped to support its tenants and integrate them with the surrounding community.

The Bonair Action Group established itself in response to learning that Kāinga Ora planned to develop public housing in the suburb of Millwater. The group has expressed feelings of being misled by the original developer and by Kāinga Ora on the plans for public housing in the area, and they have provided consistent feedback to Kāinga Ora on the potential development. The group has felt that their concerns have not been acknowledged and have consequently lost trust in Kāinga Ora. Meaningful engagement is challenging when a group has lost trust in the agency attempting to engage them.

The Bonair Action Group has similar perceptions of public housing to the wider area. Their suggestions for the Bonair Crescent development include selling the land back to a private developer, building public housing somewhere else, and that Kāinga Ora should take quicker action to deal with disruptive behaviour by tenants.

The findings from this engagement series point to the broader challenges of public conversations about public housing. Those who would benefit (or want to benefit) from having access to public housing felt confronted by those opposed to it being built ‘in their backyard’, and therefore didn’t feel that they could engage in the conversation. We encourage that readers of this report work to understand the depth and complexity of issues around public housing, identifying ways to work with those affected, including Kāinga Ora, public housing tenants, local renters and local homeowners.

1. According to the published Census data by Stats NZ, the estimated public housing stock in the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area is approximately 0.2% to 0.4%. Aotearoa generally is estimated at 3.2-3.4% of the general housing stock nationwide.

Introduction

Community Think was contracted by Kāinga Ora to engage the wider community of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area to gather the community's responses to three questions about housing:

1. What are the housing needs in your area?
2. What are your perceptions of public housing?
3. What are the solutions to housing needs in this area?

Engaging the community through a [variety of methods](#), we collected the community voices which are reflected in this report.

Many questions arose during this work. Some apply to the future decisions and work of Kāinga Ora, some are larger social and political questions that will not be answered by one agency, and some are philosophical and ethical questions that can only be answered by us personally. Community Think has brought forward these questions but not attempted to answer them, except in places where they have impacted on decisions about our methodology to do this work.

This report has been written primarily for Kāinga Ora, and will also be released to the public. Throughout this report, there will be internal links to help the reader navigate quickly to various sections. A [separate section](#) of the report covers the concerns of people in the Millwater area and those connected to the Bonair Action Group, who were highly engaged in this process.

How to read this report

This report has been designed to be viewed digitally. If viewing a printed copy, please refer to the contents page to navigate through the document where there are jump links.

Mana whenua quotes



Community voices



Voices of Millwater



Information



Auckland Council quotes



[Jump Link](#)

[Hyperlink](#)

Mana whenua perspective

We engaged in a conversation with Delma O’Kane, a representative from the Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust, mana whenua and mandated iwi authority for the Hibiscus and Bays area. The Trust let us know that it is deeply committed to strengthening the Treaty partnership.

“ *Kāinga Ora carries clear responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, particularly concerning partnership principles and its commitments to mana whenua. Aotearoa holds immense cultural significance for Māori, and Hibiscus and Bays is certainly no exception. Our collective responsibility is to our people, community, and environment.* ”

The Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust expressed that it is dedicated to extending manākitanga. For them, this is a commitment to welcome and support those who enter the area. The Trust made clear the importance of trust, established processes, nurturing relationships, and essential infrastructure. Collaborations with Kāinga Ora are viewed as unique opportunities to protect and honour the reputation of both entities.

“ *In Hibiscus and Bays, Kāinga Ora should harmonise its practices with the korowai (protective cloak) and tikanga (customs) of Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust. Our enduring presence and unwavering commitment ensure a shared and lasting responsibility.* ”

Delma’s perspective extends to the well-being of the community, emphasising comprehensive support that extends beyond housing. She talked about the significance of ‘wrap-around’ assistance, an approach that takes into account the cultural, spiritual, physical and well-being aspects, the hauora, of those in Kāinga Ora homes. She told us that her vision is to ensure that every resident, regardless of their background, feels at home and finds abundant support.

“ *The community is evolving, and the increasing demand for housing is a reflection of its vitality. The focus extends far beyond housing, to the creation of an inclusive and harmonious environment where everyone is valued and embraced. Kāinga Ora plays a vital role in enhancing the overall well-being and unity of the community.* ”



Our process

How did we gather community voices?

We were tasked with gathering a broad range of voices from across the Hibiscus and Bays community. As discussed on [page 4](#), there were issues of [relevance and participation](#) that we took into account when creating our engagement plan.

In order to collect the voices of the community, we designed an engagement process that had multiple access-points for community members:

- ◆ Targeted conversations
- ◆ Public, in-person pop-ups
- ◆ Public, online conversations
- ◆ Online response form
- ◆ Emails
- ◆ Response zooms

Targeted conversations

The first engagement was through targeted conversations. Here, snowballing methods were used—which are based on people we talk to connecting us with others in their network—to identify those who may be more invisible in the community, and may not have access to the resources others do to voice their ideas. This led to conversations with:

- ◆ Mana whenua
- ◆ Citizen-led groups
- ◆ People in emergency housing
- ◆ Public housing tenants
- ◆ Renters
- ◆ Specific interest groups
- ◆ Community organisations and services
- ◆ Hibiscus and Bays Local Board

During these targeted conversations, we noted down quotes and stories which were then used to create a recording for the immersive pop-ups. We wanted these pop-ups to be as inclusive as possible, and allow people to have a chance to hear what had been said so far and to respond—removing the barrier of previous knowledge. Residents from Millwater reflected to us that they experienced this audio clip as biased and some expressed that they felt this painted them in a negative light. Scan the QR code to the right to listen to the clip or [click here](#). 



1. Open your camera app and point your phone at the QR code
2. Wait for the camera to recognise the QR code
3. Click the link when it appears on your phone

Public pop-ups

The Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area covers a large geographic space made up of many different communities. In order to get as many people as possible to participate in the public pop-ups, Community Think partnered with local community organisations. These organisations supported us in choosing the venue and dates, promoting the events to their networks, and connecting with their communities. We partnered with:

- ◆ Heart of the Bays
- ◆ Wellbeing Network / Future Whangaparāoa
- ◆ Coast Community Trust
- ◆ Mairangi Arts Centre

There are many advantages to working with community partners and building on existing relationships: Community partners have a greater understanding of community dynamics, are able to have a broader reach and lend authority to the process. One downside is that it also meant we were booked into an inaccessible venue (with stairs) for one pop-up. A further barrier to participation identified by participants was that pop-ups were held on school holidays and the Matariki long weekend. Some in the Hibiscus and Bays community left town for holidays and expressed that holding the public pop-ups on those dates excluded them from participation. In response to this feedback, we pushed back our public online conversation by one week to allow more people to attend.

These pop-ups ran across two weekends and five locations. Attendance was low and largely represented by people from Millwater. This impacted on others' ability to participate—with people letting us know they felt intimidated and/or unable to express themselves in the face of such anger. Please see the [Voices of Millwater](#) section for a full expression of the Millwater experience.

Online response form

The online response form was based on the same questions used in the targeted and pop up conversations ([see appendix](#)). 212 responses were collected on the online response.

Emails and response zooms

Throughout the engagement period, we had a number of people reach out to us via email to share feedback around housing needs in their area. An invitation was sent out to them to take part in an initial online conversation. To wrap up the engagement, we held an online conversation inviting anyone who couldn't make it to an in-person pop-up or had more to share.

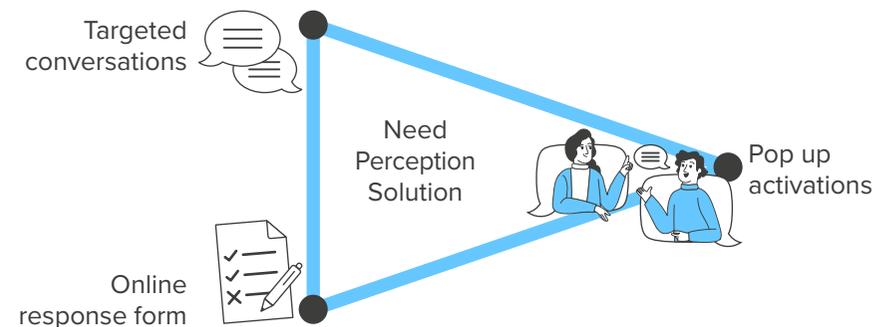
Responses to the themes and draft report

The themes went out to the community. We received several emails misunderstanding the themes to be the final report.

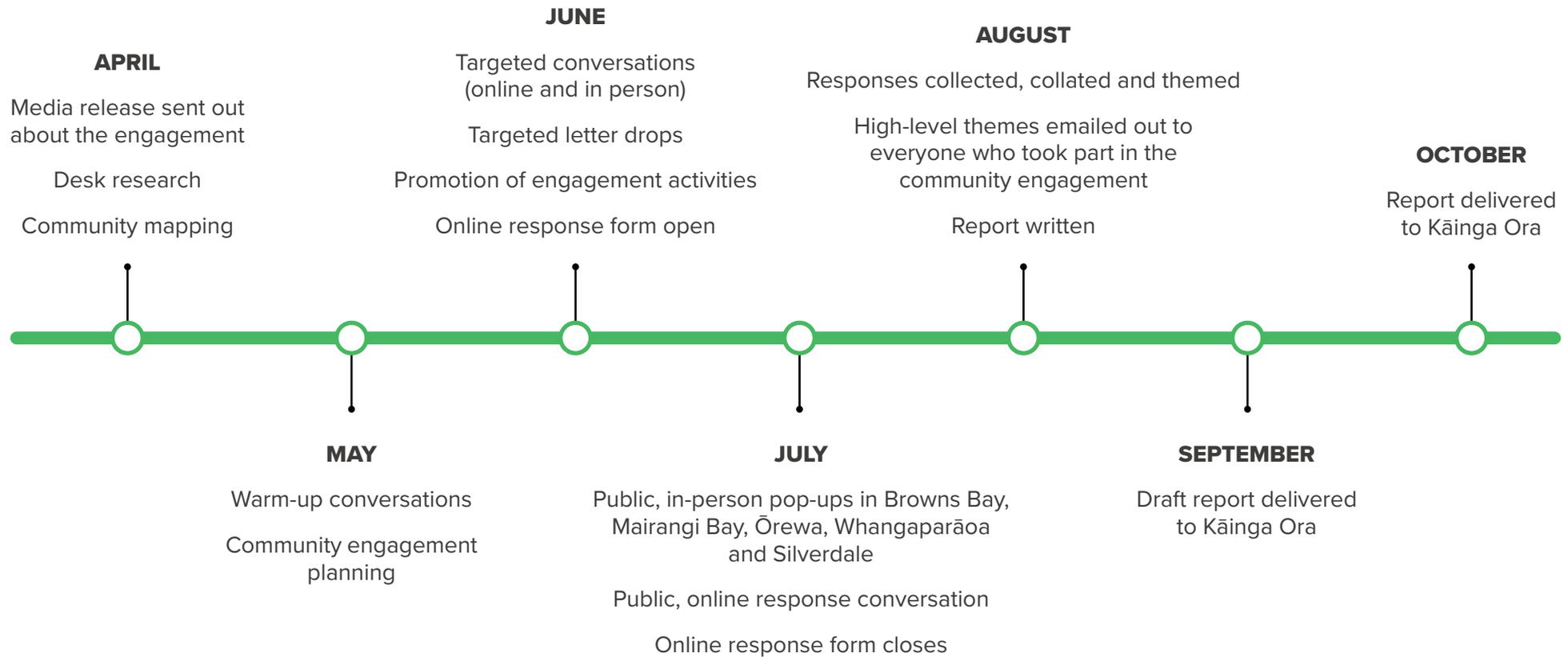
The Bonair Action Group read the draft report and their responses are included in the [Voices of Millwater](#) section.

The engagement

We combined three critical sources of information.



The engagement process



Community engagement in numbers



Communications

In order to promote participation, we undertook a promotional campaign which included:

- ◆ Bespoke promotional packs sent to our co-hosts to distribute via their communication assets, local Facebook community pages and networks
- ◆ Ongoing communication about the engagement activities sent to the contacts we established during the warm-up phase and to key contacts and organisations we identified during the engagement setup
- ◆ Facebook campaign targeting the areas where local public pop-ups were held (reach of over 5,000)
- ◆ Facebook campaign promoting the online response covering the whole the Hibiscus and Bays area (reach of over 10,000)
- ◆ Boosted Facebook event promoting the local public pop-ups
- ◆ Flyers and posters sent to the Hibiscus and Bays libraries
- ◆ Information sent to local media
- ◆ Targeted letter drops
- ◆ Bespoke microsite was created to hold all the engagement information.

Regardless of this promotional campaign, Community Think received feedback that the engagement activities weren't publicised enough and residents didn't know they were taking place.

Collecting community voices

In collecting community voices on an issue that affects a community, we notice that the degree to which community members are directly affected has a significant impact on the likelihood of them engaging and participating in any forum (regardless of location, date, time etc). While we invested resources to encourage wide participation, engagement was by far strongest in that part of the community that felt they were directly affected by the issues, i.e. people living in or near Millwater and Bonair Crescent (see the section [Voices of Millwater](#)).

We achieved a breadth of engagement—hearing from a broad range of voices including older adults, younger people, home owners, private and public tenants from across Hibiscus and Bays. However, there was a lack of depth or strong representation because of the perceived lack of relevance.

In collecting the community voices, we did not plan a quantitative analysis. It is clear that the majority voice in our engagement was that of the Millwater population and the Bonair Action Group. There is however the need for minority voices to be taken into account too. We know from our targeted conversations that there are people in this community who experience stigma and social exclusion. Often, they have experienced negative relationships² with central and local government agencies and agents, and official or institutional processes.

We can assume, therefore, that members of marginalised groups in the area may not have chosen to participate in open forums where the perceived likelihood of them encountering further stigma and disempowerment was high. To ameliorate this, we did identify ways to target these groups, but participation was still low.

To apply a ‘majority rules’ approach ignores the fact that minorities experience significant barriers to participation, while at the same time some individuals were able to express themselves repeatedly, present at several engagements and answering the survey.

Similarly, we observed people who attended public sessions were affected by the strong feelings of some present and changed their views or found it difficult to express views contrary to the majority. Public forums like this may work counter to the purposes of Kāinga Ora in building support for public housing, and the option for people to express their views without influence by others should be upheld.

“Participatory researchers need to consider who is made vulnerable through research and how can we protect those communities most impacted by the injustices documented in the research.”³

2. KIDDLE, Rebecca, “Engaging Communities in the Design of Homes and Neighbourhoods in Aotearoa New Zealand,” <https://counterfutures.nz/9/CF%209%20Kiddle.pdf>

3. C Cahill and M E Torre “Beyond the journal article: Representations, audience, and the presentation of Participatory Action Research” in S Kindon, R Pain, M Kesby (eds), *Participatory Action Research Approaches and Methods: Connecting people, participation and place*, Routledge, London, 2010, p202.

Hibiscus and Bays

The Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area stretches from Waiwera to Campbells Bay, and across the Whangaparāoa Peninsula out to Tiritiri Mātangi Island.

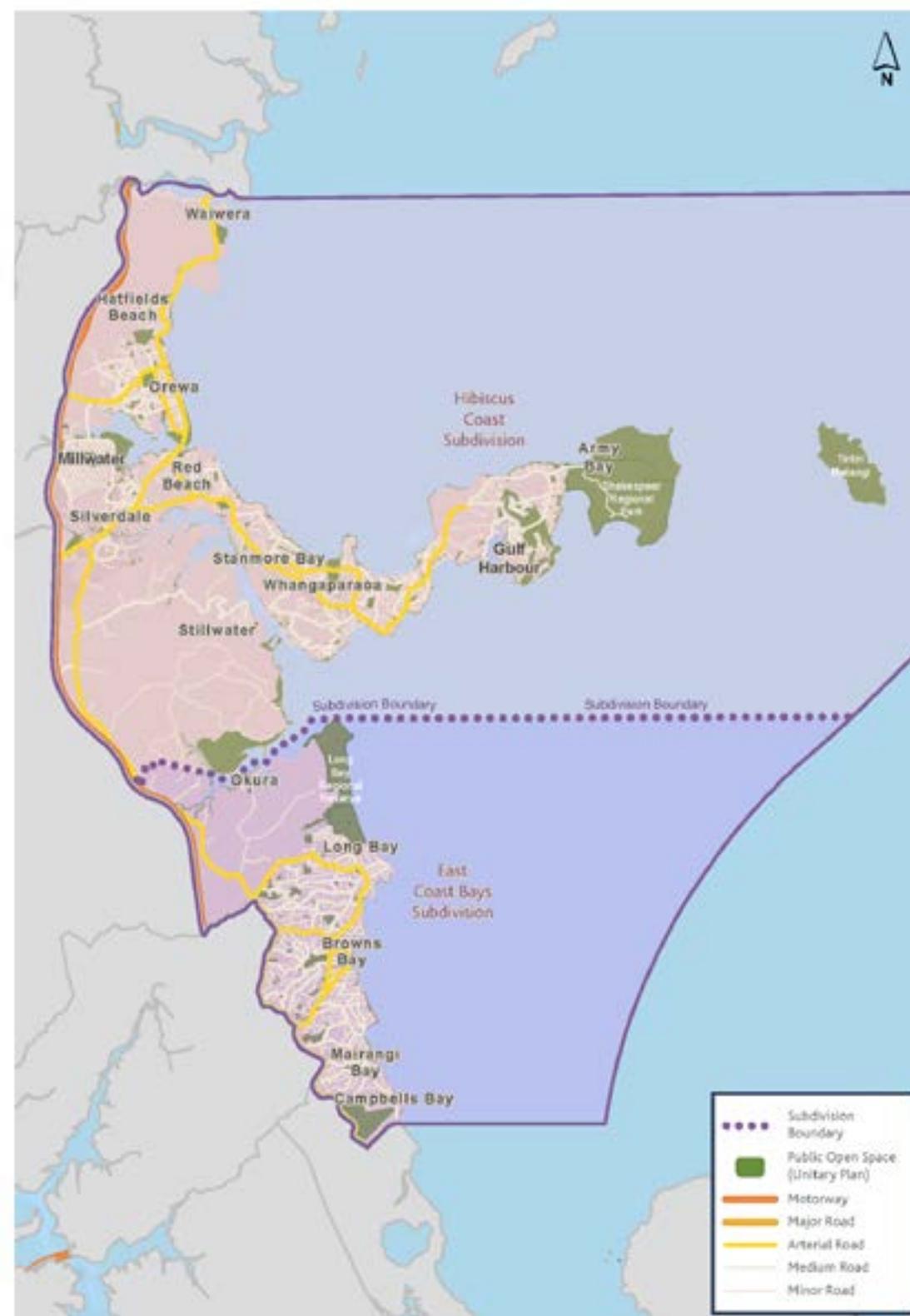
“As one of the fastest growing areas in Auckland, we passionately protect our stunning natural environment and strong communities. We know we are one of the safest places to live within Auckland and we want to keep up that great record.”⁴— Auckland Council website.

Geography and demographics

Town centres in Hibiscus and Bays include Ōrewa, Silverdale, Browns Bay, Whangaparāoa and Mairangi Bay. The area includes many beaches and parks as well as shopping centres, restaurants and cafés. As in most of Aotearoa, the primary type of dwelling is a single-family home on its own section.

The Hibiscus Coast offers 19 primary and intermediate schools and six secondary schools. The Hibiscus Coast Bus Station, located in Silverdale, is accessible from the local area via nine bus lines, and connects to 15 lines travelling out of the area. The car park is open 24 hours a day with over 600 spaces available to people using the bus service. The North Shore Hospital (public) in Takapuna is a 20–40 minute drive from locations around the Hibiscus and Bays area, while a private hospital is a similar distance away in Glenfield. There are 11 medical centres in the area.

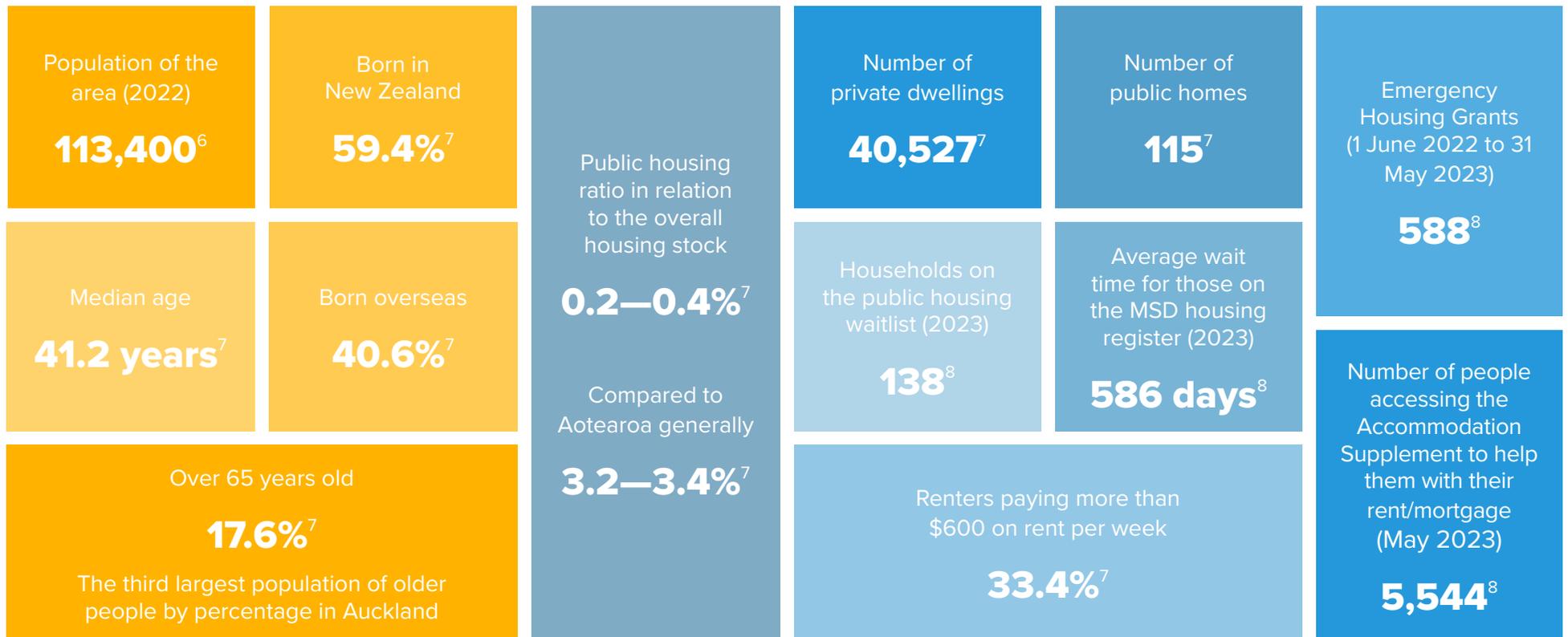
4. <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/about-auckland-council/how-auckland-council-works/local-boards/all-local-boards/hibiscus-bays-local-board/Pages/about-hibiscus-bays.aspx>



The top five employment areas⁵ are:

- ◆ Cafés and restaurants
- ◆ Supermarket and grocery stores
- ◆ House construction
- ◆ Aged care residential services
- ◆ Primary education

In numbers (statistic):



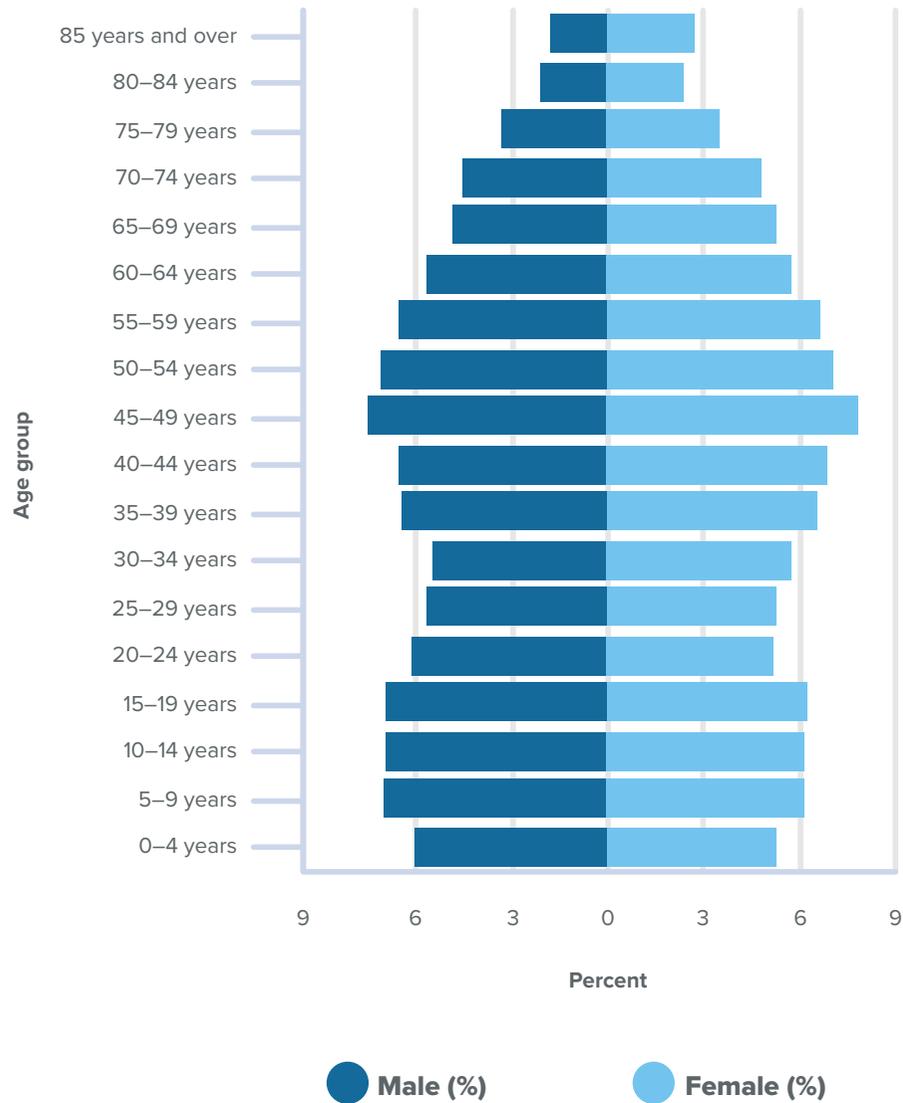
5. <https://ecoprofile.infometrics.co.nz/Hibiscus+and+Bays>

6. *Ibid*

7. All following 2018 Census statistics: <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-place-summaries/hibiscus-and-bays-local-board-area#population-and-dwellings>

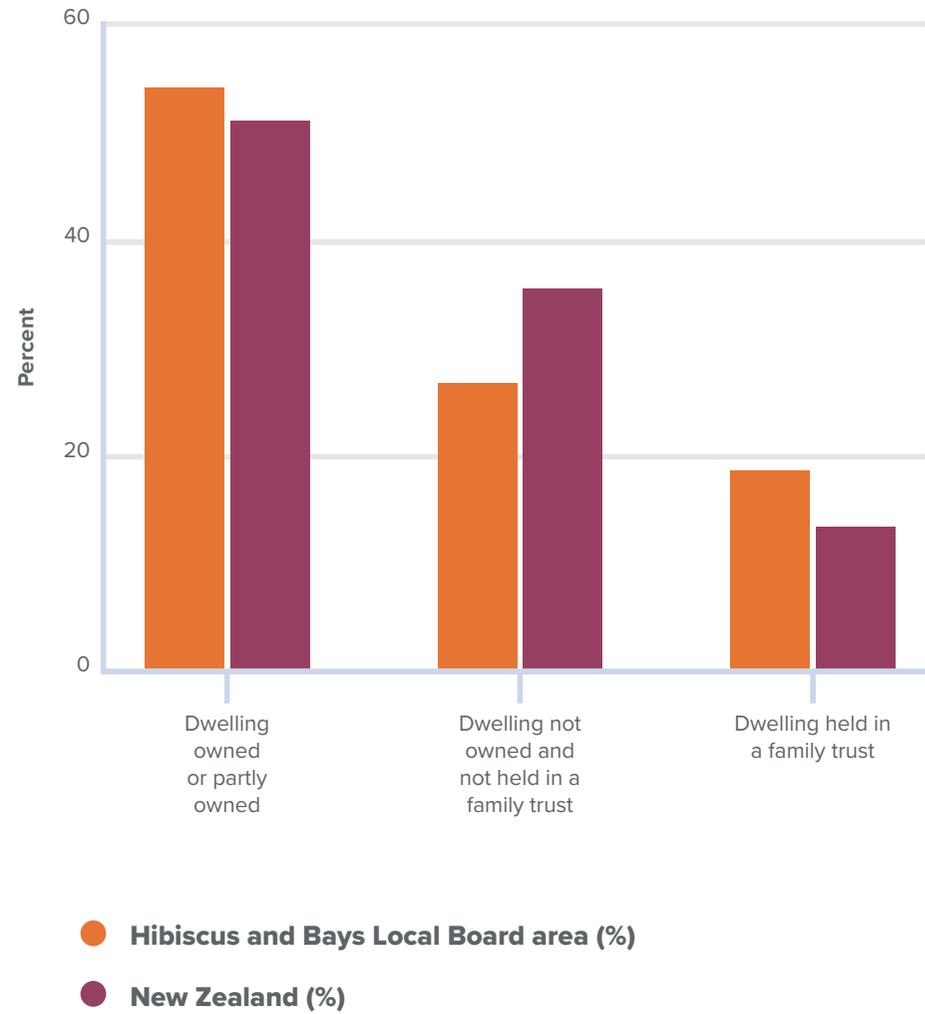
8. Provided by Ministry of Social Development via Official Information Act request

Age and sex of people in Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area, 2018 Census

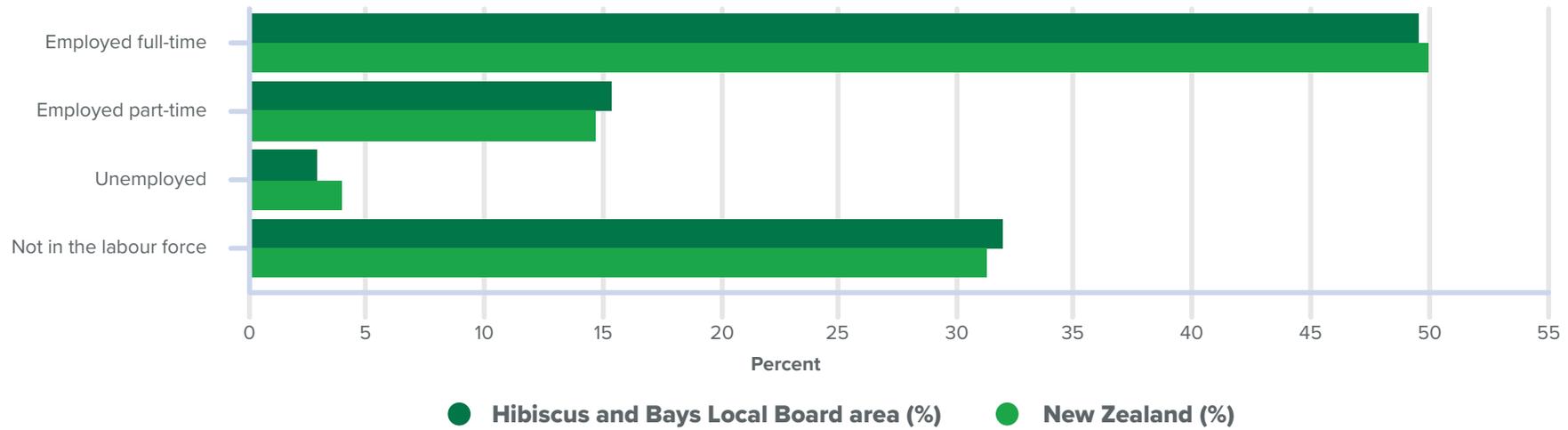


Source: Stats NZ

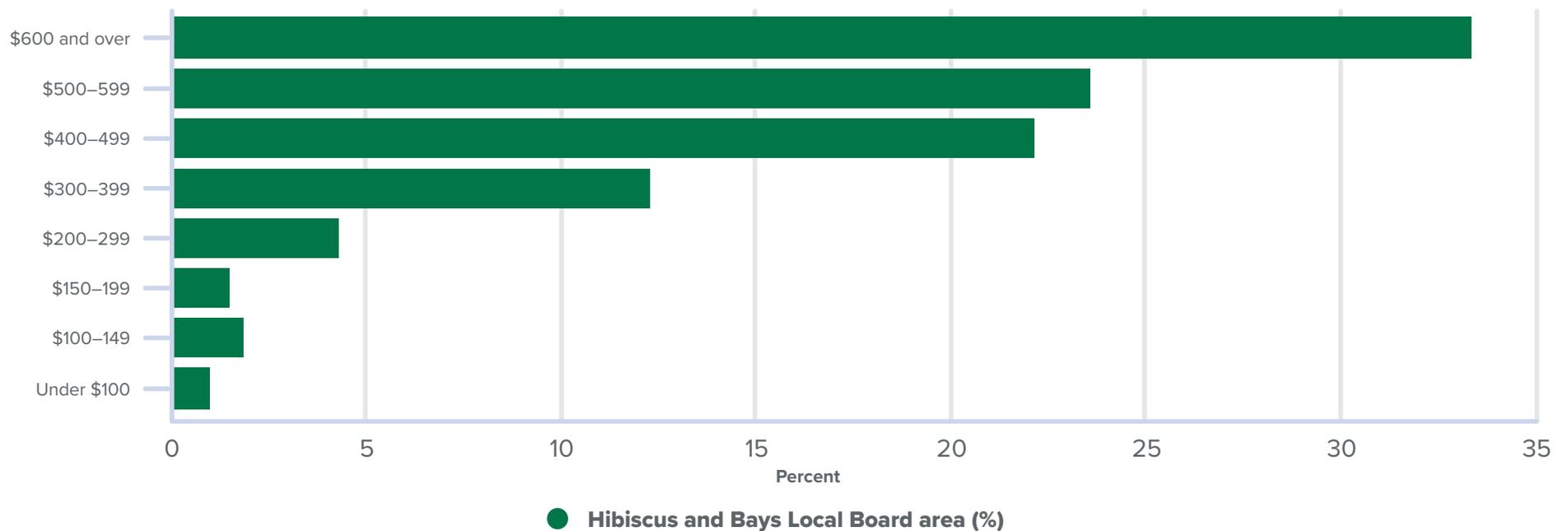
Tenure of households for occupied private dwellings in Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area and New Zealand, 2018 Census



Work and labour force status for people in Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area and New Zealand, 2018 Census



Weekly rent paid by households in Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area, 2018 Census

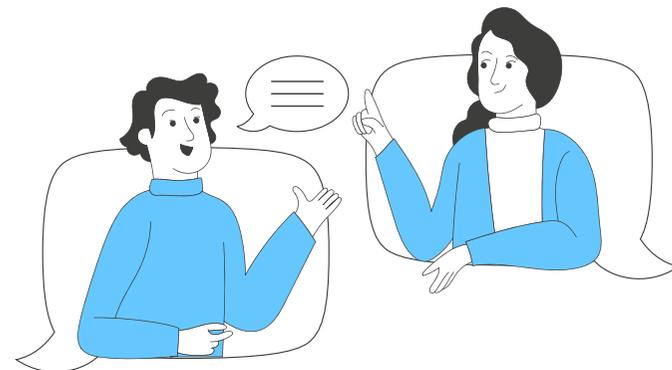


Community voices

In collecting the thoughts, feelings and opinions of the community, several themes emerged—some very strongly and with much repetition. Here we provide a snapshot of those themes that came from repeated statements we heard in person and in our survey. We include here the themes that relate to the engagement questions. The [Voices of Millwater](#) section includes further themes that relate specifically to that area.

Before speaking to housing needs, perception and solution, it is important to say that housing is a Te Tiriti issue⁹. Mana whenua of the rohe of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area include Ngāti Manuhiri.

“ *Kāinga Ora has a wonderful opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions with mana whenua in this area, ensuring that tenants in public housing receive the utmost manāki on these cherished lands. Embracing their Te Tiriti obligations as a Crown agency, Kāinga Ora can work alongside us, the mana whenua, to uphold our duty of manākitanga. We are dedicated to guaranteeing the well-being of those who reside on these lands. It’s a matter of our collective host responsibility, for Kāinga Ora’s commitment to “doing good” extends not only to our own people but also to all people in our rohe (tribal boundary).*



9. <https://tikatangata.org.nz/our-work/housing-inquiry-final-report>
https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/Documents/WT/wt_DOC_197630281/Kainga%20Kore%20W.pdf

People waiting for public homes in the area



As of June 2023, there were 120 households on the housing register for public housing in the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area.¹⁰

Some respondents in the community identified as being on the housing register for public housing. One person reached out to us who was living in emergency accommodation and told us:

“ I am in the process of trying to get into [Kāinga Ora housing]. I am on the social housing waitlist¹¹. I need to be closer to family and support systems in this area. They can't place you anywhere—that's unfair.

Another person, who was struggling to find affordable rentals in the community spoke to how discouraging it was to see the enormity of the housing register and the complexity of getting onto it:

“ I looked at the housing waitlist¹⁰ last week and gave up instantly. I didn't even think it was possible after reading the criteria. The number of people on the waitlist¹⁰ freaked me out. It was shocking. It just shows there is a need. It feels like you're floating—seeing a big waitlist¹⁰ makes you feel stuck. I know people that have slept in their cars, gone to emergency houses.

“ Kāinga Ora puts too many eligibility restrictions so it cuts people out who are in the grey area. It's hard for poor people, you have to be super poor to get help from the government.

One of the obligations for accessing the Emergency Housing—Special Needs Grant from Work and Income is to demonstrate that you are looking for alternative accommodation—being on the housing register for public housing is not enough of a criterion to meet this obligation. As one person told us:

“ I am in emergency housing and waiting for accommodation. Me and my three kids. I've been in there for four months. On the waiting list, you need to be looking for private rentals. I've been to two to three houses a week over the past four months. I have been successful for one but it would leave me with \$200 a week to live on after I paid rent. I would love a three bedroom house, healthy home standard. Ōrewa or on the shore. I would love a backyard, to be near shops and schools. I would love to be around other single Mums, nice and safe.

This speaks to a lot of the stories we heard from private renters and service providers in the area who said that private rentals were too expensive, and there were not enough of them in the area.

10. <https://msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/housing-register.html>

11. Refers to the housing register

Private rentals are expensive, scarce and competitive

There were a lot of people who we spoke to in the community who explained the private rental market in Hibiscus and Bays was too expensive and competitive. We heard stories of people who work locally who cannot afford to rent in the area, people going to view a home and competing with many other applicants, and people who are having to live in overcrowded situations with family just to afford to stay in the area. One renter we spoke to had confronted all of these realities when trying to find a rental:

“ *I have lived in this area the past 13 years, living with family. I work in the area, and have a family of my own but I cannot afford to rent a good quality house. I have applied for rentals before but there are 30 other people also applying.* ”

“ *On a pension, I can't even rent in this area.* ”



Weekly rent paid by households in the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area is higher than in Aotearoa as a whole. 33.4% of renters pay more than \$600 per week on rent.¹²

Another person spoke to the quality of private rentals for homes in their price range:

“ *Me and my partner are trying to find a place... and we can't find anything... For \$500 a week, there's no kitchen.* ”

People spoke about how there are very few private rentals available in the area, making it highly competitive, and discriminatory to people who might be single parents or have debt who might not be chosen over another applicant.

“ *We need a push for help, not for those in need, but those who can afford rent but are struggling to find a nice, comfortable house and with a rent we can afford.* ”

“ *Single parents get discriminated against from real estate agents. The market is tight, you're discriminated against for being a single parent, there isn't much social housing in the area—this makes it almost impossible to find a home. That's why we need more public housing built in the area so people don't get pushed out, kids stay in their networks and at their schools.* ”

“ *A lot of the 1 bedroom studios won't take WINZ clients. There is a stigma that they will be home all day, smoking all day. [Being on income support] can happen to anyone.* ”

12. Housing: <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-place-summaries/hibiscus-and-bays-local-board-area>

“ *There is an emerging [rental] market for single women in their forties and fifties—we’ve got money behind us and we can’t qualify for social housing, but we don’t have enough to buy a place here.*

Other people told us how many people they have ended up competing with when applying for private rentals in the area:

“ *It has become very competitive. It was so competitive—you almost have to submit your CV. 60 people applying for a rental.*

“ *There is a tangible shortage of housing, the rental market is so saturated. When I went for a rental, 50 people showed up, which meant I was competing with a sole mother—it felt bad.*

A picture was painted that there was a shortage of housing in the Hibiscus and Bays area in the form of affordable rentals. Some renters spoke to us about how they do not fit the criteria for public housing but cannot afford market rentals so are stuck.

People want to live in the area but are priced out

There was a generational conversation that threaded through discussions of housing needs. People spoke about their young people who grew up in the area not being able to afford to buy in the area near their work or family, and older people wanting to retire in the area near family but not being able to find an affordable home. Several people spoke about those ‘in the middle’ who were neither wealthy nor poor enough to get support, and were unable to afford to live in the area.

“ *We have an affordability issue in the Hibiscus and Bays area.*

“ *Younger people are struggling to afford to live in this area but also older people are moving in wanting to be close to their whānau—trying to find something within the price range on the pension is hard.*

“ *People don’t want to leave. It’s a really good community but I feel like you need to leave to get something decent.*

“ *I know a lot of people who have struggled to find housing after they left school.*

Some people spoke in particular about the need for affordable home ownership options for those who are struggling to save to buy in the area because of the high rents they are paying.

“ *There is a need for Kiwibuilds and affordable home options for people with adult children who are coming into the market where entry is too expensive. Young professionals are working hard, paying too much rent and are stuck saving up for a deposit.* ”

People spoke to the importance of being able to live near family, amenities and networks.

“ *I'd love to be able to live in this community where I work but I can't afford it.* ”

More suitable housing for disabled people and whānau

We spoke to disability advocates and parents of disabled children who told us that a lot of the design of housing in the area is unsuitable to meet the needs of their whānau.

“ *My child needs residential level support and we want them to live near us, but have been told there are housing supply shortages and a long waitlist. Access to suitable accommodation is a major concern and a barrier for many disabled people being able to live an ordinary life in our community.* ”



Kāinga Ora has a commitment to 15% of their newly built homes having full Universal Design, in the 2022 to 2023 financial year it exceeded that target with 19% having full Universal Design.¹³

People spoke to some of the criteria needed to make homes accessible and shared their concerns that the design of Kāinga Ora townhouses would not meet accessibility standards given the stairs involved.

“ *The new housing stock that I've seen around the North Shore looks reasonable when driving past, BUT does not seem to follow universal design standards, and hence accommodate accessibility needs—which is a huge disappointment, because retro-fitting homes is ridiculously expensive. Housing is a human right—and it's absolutely critical that homes are accessible.* ”

“ *You need big accessible houses so people can share. And you need space for support staff to sleep.* ”

13. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/132390017/disabled-couple-finally-have-new-home-after-long-search-and-homeless-stint>

Infrastructure needed for increased residential development

People we spoke to talked about there being a lack of infrastructure and amenities to support any new development in the area. People expressed concerns that increased development will impact the already oversubscribed services in the area, and the lack of transport options. Some people acknowledged the need for public housing but believed that their communities were not the right area because the amenities were expensive and did not cater to lower income people.

“ Hibiscus and Bays is an overdeveloped area which lacks the infrastructure to support the housing being built. There is a lack of public transport options, overflowing doctors, expensive shops which means low income people cannot afford to live in the area even if they were given a home.

“ I know there is a need for public housing but this is not the right area for it to be built, there is not enough infrastructure to support it.

People spoke to the need to build infrastructure before considering the development of housing.

“ If you look back to the 60s and 70s the state housing were built near the railway, the industry, the motorways.

“ It needs to be well designed, has strict rules around use, noise and numbers of people who can live there, be scattered and not concentrated in one area, prospective tenants are vetted closely for ‘good behaviour’ and for taking care and pride in their homes, community spaces and parks are provided for families to gather together in larger groups.

There was also concern voiced about the space that might be taken up by the cars and rubbish bins belonging to the people in a medium-density housing complex.

“ The current high density development rules are destroying the residential areas, putting pressure on services, parking, road access and overland water flows.

“ Auckland can’t handle more dense housing. We already have pollution, flooding etc.

“ The area is already densely built with a mixture of apartments, townhouses and larger homes with insufficient parking. Further intensification with multiple occupants in public housing will likely add to parking issues.

Homelessness more invisible in this area

Some of the people we spoke to, particularly those working with homeless and income insecure people and families, said that there was a perception that the Hibiscus and Bays communities were wealthy. This perception, they said, contributed to homelessness and people struggling to afford the costs of living being invisible to the wider community.

“ There are a lot more homeless people than people realise.

“ I work with families who need housing and can't find/afford it. They want to live in this area, it's a good area, they've got children and this is a good place to raise kids. They can't find a place.

It also contributed to the struggle of people experiencing hardship themselves as there were less social services available, and stigma as there was shame attached to reaching out for assistance.

“ There is a false idea that everyone here is rich, a perception that everyone is well off and it's not true. People are struggling but because there is an idea that this is a rich area, they feel shame.

“ People are really doing it tough up here but it's not so obvious. It isn't as apparent. You just need to go to the community meals or Love Soup to see that people are struggling and there is a need for housing.

Stigma attached to public housing tenants

When we asked people about their perception of public housing, many people spoke to the stigma attached to it, and many expressed negative views about public housing tenants.

“ We don't want them in our area. They are appalling people to bring into the areas. There is already enough crime with the ones housed here. The area already has begun to have a bad reputation. Yes, you need housing for them. But, the worst of the worst gets housed in them.

“ I support public housing one hundred percent. I don't know if it's the media or politicians but it should be their job to take away the stigma that it has. Everyone deserves a house.

“ The stigma happened to me growing up on the shore and it's shit.

“ How welcome do people who live in social housing feel at the moment? Do they feel like they’re not welcome? There is a concern here about the stigma new tenants will face.

“ You are who you mix with— high density community housing means a massive population group of like minded people. A lot are there because of the choices they made over time—it is a cultural thing and that comes from Pacific Island culture which is laid back and people live in villages.

“ We have issues with neighbours in our neighbourhood that aren’t in social housing and why don’t we talk about that? We have a whole section of social housing in an area and people don’t even know it is social housing.



There are currently 115 public homes in the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area.¹⁴ Public housing makes up 0.2% to 0.4% of overall stock, compared to Aotearoa in general where public housing makes up 3.2–3.4% of the overall stock. This is lower than the OECD average of 7%.¹⁵



14. Latest results—June 2023 <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/housing/housing-register.html>

15. Provided by Ministry of Social Development via Official Information Act request

We spoke with public housing tenants who lived in the Hibiscus and Bays area. People told us they have experienced stigma, stares, and judgement by their neighbours when moving into public housing in the area.

“ Stop being so judgemental. It was one family. They’ve gone now and there is no trouble... They painted a real bad picture and we all felt it.

“ It took me 3-4 years in the supermarket before they thought I wasn’t shoplifting.

“ We are the first social housing here. Some teachers passed judgement on some of the Mums.

Some people highlighted concerns that the stigma around public housing tenants was connected to racism.



80.8% of people in the Hibiscus and Bays local board area identified as European compared with 70.2% for Aotearoa. 6.5% identified as Māori compared to 11.5% Auckland and 16.5% for Aotearoa. 2.1% identified as Pacific Peoples compared to 15.5% in Auckland¹⁶.

As one person who spoke to us said:

“ It has been super tough being the first brown people here.

People who were worried about public housing being built in their neighbourhoods also spoke about stigma, and their fears that public housing enabled ‘anti-social behaviour’ with a lack of adequate vetting by Kāinga Ora. See the [Voices of Millwater](#) section for further details.

A public housing tenant told us:

“ We’re bringing our kids up to be responsible members of society. We’re not what they think we are.

Other members of the community shared their perceptions of public housing tenants.

“ Both my parents and grandparents grew up in state housing but that was at a time when people treated the houses as their own, had pride in their houses and gardens, and were respectful. Now KO will dump anyone into a state house, and they have no respect for what they have been given! No pride or respect for their houses, cars parked everywhere, children and animals left to roam as they pleased, and a landlord that doesn’t do anything to tenants who don’t follow the rules. Not to mention gang members also being allowed to live in them!

16. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-place-summaries/hibiscus-and-bays-local-board-area>

“ A private landlord wouldn’t put up with the behaviour that Kāinga Ora puts up with.

“ Social housing will bring crime and make our lives worrying. I won’t feel safe walking down the street. There are going to be bad tenants—they won’t be getting evicted.

People are concerned public housing will drive down house prices

One of the key perceptions from people living in neighbourhoods where they did not want public housing to be built was their fear that it would drive down house prices. People told us that they had bought in this area because it was a safe area and they were under the impression that public housing was not going to be built there.

“ I wouldn’t have bought in a neighbourhood if I knew public housing was going to be built here.

“ We paid a lot of money to live here and are worried that our house prices will fall.

“ Social housing devalues—100K off the property prices if social housing is built.

Others said that the downward turn in the market was impacting people’s perceptions and that public housing does not impact on house prices.

“ It doesn’t help that we have a downward housing market at the moment—people attribute social housing to this.



There are studies that suggest public housing has an impact on house prices, but that wealthier neighbourhoods tend to absorb this impact¹⁷, but a study in 2022 in Christchurch estimated that public housing after 3 years actually increases nearby surrounding house prices by between 9.1% and 14.7%.¹⁸



Tāmaki Makaurau saw an average property value increase of 34% between 2021 and 2022¹⁹.

Speaking to the Hibiscus and Bays community, it was clear that people had solutions and wanted to share these.

17. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4183778

18. Daniel Watt <https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/handle/10092/104720>

19. <https://ourackland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/news/2022/03/34-per-cent-increase-in-auckland-property-values/>

Expand the criteria for those who can access public housing

Some of the renters we spoke with expressed that they supported public housing being built and wished that they could have access to it. They want affordable rentals but the private rental market in the area is expensive and not good quality so people wonder what public housing could bring to the table for them.

“ If there was an option to expand the criteria of those who can get a public home—of course it should be expanded, but we must first house those in desperate needs.

“ I would like it if Housing NZ [Kāinga Ora] would be available to people like me, who can pay rent but are finding it hard to find a good quality rental at a price we can afford.

To ‘pepper pot’ or not



Pepper potting, or in more contemporary terms ‘social mixing’ or ‘mixed-tenure’ is an urban policy which argues for addressing concerns around economic segregation through having a mixture of housing tenures in a neighbourhood. There is local research where this takes place in low-income or state housing dense neighbourhoods (where a mixture of public, affordable and market housing is built), but not a lot of research where public housing is built in wealthier areas.²⁰

Many people spoke of their concerns around the concentration of public housing and wanting it to be more sprinkled. There was widespread concern about the building of medium- and high-density housing, while people expressed support for the old ‘state housing’ style of building one or two dwellings on a street (rather than blocks of 10+ apartments or townhouses). Others spoke about how people need community and the risks of being isolated in a community.

“ We don’t have an issue with public housing—the problem is the concentration and density of it. It should be pepper potted around.

“ Integrate people so they don’t feel ostracised—sprinkling so people feel part of the community.

“ Affordable housing is the preference and if there was public housing, make it scattered.

“ Sprinkle it throughout all the communities to build social cohesion. So families can stay close together.

20. <https://onetwothreehome.files.wordpress.com/2021/02/2021-what-is-a-mixed-tenure-community-views-from-new-zealand-practitioners-and-implications-for-researchers.pdf>

A person working with homeless people in the community expressed that in larger developments of public housing, each person should have their own home but that there should be more communal spaces so people can connect with each other.

“ *People would benefit more from being with each other, especially homeless people who have just been housed, having their own home but a communal hub where they can meet.* ”

Build infrastructure and improve services

There was a much repeated theme that current infrastructure—schools, shops, medical services etc wouldn't be able to extend to new housing. There was a perception that there weren't enough jobs in the area, that the bus stops were too far, public transport and shops were too expensive, and that the medical centre was at capacity.

“ *I have to travel out of the area to get to a medical centre, and people on benefits are not going to be able to afford the bus fare to get to the doctors.* ”

“ *Not a lot of work opportunities up here.* ”

“ *People want to live close to amenities and affordable shops. Silverdale is really expensive. If you have someone living on a benefit people can't afford to shop there. Even the second hand shops are expensive.* ”

“ *New builds need to come with increases in infrastructure.* ”

“ *The social infrastructure is at capacity e.g. medical centres are not taking on any more patients. Not enough infrastructure.* ”

“ *The parking is very important... You need parking that needs to be wheelchair accessible. We don't think social housing design is going this way.* ”



Connect to the community

There was a perception that tenants in public housing were poorly integrated into the community and that anti-social behaviour may decrease if services were provided to help people feel welcome and find ways to belong in the community where they live.

“ We’ve been trying to run a community group—we’ve put some newsletters out to the private residents too but we haven’t heard much.

“ It’s really important to build public housing like a village with a community hub for people right in the middle so people can connect with their neighbours, have community gardens and projects to work on.

“ We have great ideas and initiatives to support people in social housing. It is hard to get buy-in.

“ What we want to see are regular community events—movie nights. A liaison role (KO) that could help put on events and initiatives as it is exhausting for the tenants to do it.

“ They [Kāinga Ora] have a long-term responsibility—don’t just put in a development and walk away. Take a holistic view that is good for all people but is a responsible expectation with existing residents—that needs to be measured together

Build accessible housing for older people and disabled people

Across the different markets—ownership, rentals and public housing—there is perceived need for accessible housing.

“ There is a need for housing for older people and no stairs. These houses aren’t good for older people or people with disabilities. And spaces for kids to play—stairs and kids—townhouses aren’t great.

“ Accessible homes. I work with older people and I have spent over a year looking for a new rental for an older person with no home.

“ Universal design from the get-go—make sure this is carefully thought about. Level and single story.

Affordable housing options

Many people talked about their own or whānau-members' difficulties affording housing in the area. Hibiscus Bays area is a desirable location for many and housing prices have increased dramatically across all of Aotearoa, with Tāmaki Makaurau seeing an average value increase of 34% between 2021 and 2022²¹. Kiwi-build and first home buyer schemes were suggested as solutions to the high cost of housing.

“ *More affordable housing needs to be made available off the peninsula as is happening around Milldale—this is closer to amenities and has better transport connections.* ”

“ *Create an affordable neighbourhood as a way to reduce stigma of public housing.* ”

“ *Kiwibuild is ideal.* ”

“ *We would prefer Kiwibuild/first home buyers initiatives.* ”

Support systems for tenants

People would like to see Kāinga Ora provide better services for its tenants, working to prevent issues arising because of the compounded challenges that some in public housing face.

“ *We need to wrap support and services around the younger people. A balance between independence and awahi.* ”

“ *It would be good if there was a social worker who could help create community gardens and give the parents the support to bring up their children well.* ”

A vetting system was mentioned by some.

“ *There needs to be a vetting process and correct management of public housing by Kāinga Ora.* ”



The current system for allocation is the MSD housing register where people are placed by priority. In the assessment process, people name the areas where they would like to be located. Kāinga Ora has a more active role in tenancies.

Others spoke about tenant-led community groups:

“ *Screening process for people to move in. The community to be involved in the process ... Come up with the process to come up with the values together.* ”

21. <https://ourackland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/news/2022/03/34-per-cent-increase-in-auckland-property-values/>

Voices of Millwater

This section is pertinent to the suburb of Millwater, near Silverdale. As discussed in the introduction, the majority of responses across all types of engagement in this process was from people living in Millwater, affiliated with the Bonair Action Group, or concerned about Kāinga Ora's purchase of land in Bonair Crescent.

People in Millwater have expressed to us that they have experienced trauma. They wanted to be sure their voices were heard and came to us repeatedly with their concerns.

In this section we represent the concerns around Bonair Crescent, while also including them as part of the overall picture in the other parts of the report.

This dedicated section has been viewed by key contributors of the Bonair Action Group and WFH Properties who were referred to specifically in related engagement sessions.

Setting the scene

Millwater is a northern suburb of [Auckland](#), about 33 kilometres (by road) north of the city centre. The [Auckland Northern Motorway](#) and [Ōrewa River](#) form its western and northern boundaries respectively.

Millwater was built on former farmland in 2005. Developers anticipated a population of around 10,000. In mid-2022, the estimated population was 7,970 with a population density of 1,916 people per square kilometre. In 2018, the percentage of people born overseas was 48.1, compared with 27.1% nationally.

Millwater offers proximity to three kindergartens, three primary and three secondary schools and the Silverdale Retail Centre. Millwater Central is the local shopping precinct. There are also 12 beaches in the area, three golf courses, numerous local parks, walks and reserves, including children's playgrounds.

Although purchasers of Millwater properties were reportedly told by development company WFH Properties Limited that there would be no government agency presence in the area, Kāinga Ora bought a block of land in Bonair Crescent in 2020 and created plans to build 37 semi-detached units of public housing there.

WFH Properties' Response

- ◆ WFH was not approached about government interest for land in Millwater.
- ◆ However, based on media coverage during the early stages of Millwater, it was widely understood prime land in new developments was not financially viable for Housing New Zealand.

“ We came to live here for the lifestyle—a like minded community, people with like minded ideas (there is a brochure promoting this), for our retirement. We have different age groups, ethnicities, retirees, and families. It's really lovely.

“ People have a right to choose whether they want to live near social housing just as much as people have the right to have a warm, safe home.

“ No one for a moment thought there would be any kind of social housing in Millwater.

An engagement resulting from the consequent community concern saw the Bonair Action Group submit substantial petitions and community input to Kāinga Ora, and the building plans were paused.

As we have stated in other parts of this report, Community Think was not contracted to continue or repeat the engagement over Bonair Crescent. However, we feel it is important that space is given to those that saw this engagement as an opportunity to put their points across to Kāinga Ora and the wider community.

“ We're tired. We've been going through a consultation process for 2 years. We just want this to go away.

“ We just want [Kāinga Ora] to listen to our feedback from last year.

“ *Mental health is a huge issue. A lot of people on antidepressants because of the stress of this process.* ”

“ *Our community has spoken.* ”

“ *The Bonair Action Group is representing 10,000 people. How will you weight the research you’re doing?* ”

“ *How will Community Think use the information in the 1,300 submissions?* ”

Perceived lack of transparency

The Bonair Action Group told us that they have zero trust in Kāinga Ora.

People feel that they were deliberately deceived by WFH Properties Limited and Kāinga Ora—that the public housing development was kept a secret from the community because Kāinga Ora was aware of the likelihood of opposition and that WFH Properties Limited may have pressured Kāinga Ora to keep it quiet while they continued to sell the properties that remained at the time of the land purchase by Kāinga Ora.

“ *In 2020 when the original conversations were happening with developers, there were still 500 sections to be sold in and around Millwater. Developers would have wanted to keep it secret so that the other sections would sell without the knowledge of the KO development being planned.* ”

“ *We obtained a copy of a document from KO saying that there was likely to be opposition and outlining plans to keep it secret while they were making plans.* ”

“ *There’s no trust, no one believes what KO says.* ”

“ *What they do needs to be properly—and transparently—planned ahead.* ”

Kāinga Ora Response

Kāinga Ora bought a site in Bonair Crescent, Millwater as a consented development that could deliver 38 homes. With any proposed development Kāinga Ora puts together business cases and project briefs to fund projects. In February 2020 a project brief for the Bonair Crescent site was developed. The project brief for this site noted Kāinga Ora was new to the area and that community opposition was likely. On that basis the brief advised the site be developed under the existing resource consent as the current and approved plan. That statement has been interpreted in some cases as an intention to mislead and not engage with the community. Kāinga Ora always intended to engage with the community, and we have acknowledged that we should have talked with the community earlier than we did. The engagement that we undertook is outlined in Appendix 2 of this report.

WFH Properties' Response

- ◆ The land was originally purchased by Bonair Developments on 8 June 2018
- ◆ Bonair Developments was unable to pre-sell enough units during the downturn of 2018-2019, so with other financial commitments and the pressures brought on by Covid, they chose to take the land and fully consented package to market, as was their right. There is no requirement for WFH permission, as is the case with every resale of property in Millwater.
- ◆ WFH develop and sell land, not purchase land with pre-consented plans.
- ◆ WFH learnt Kāinga Ora owned the land at the same time as the public, in 2022, when a local questioned a contractor erecting fences on the site.
- ◆ KO chose to modify consented plans and have since been told they must comply with the covenants and obtain design approval from WFH (trading as Millwater Developments), as is the case with every new build in Millwater.
- ◆ KO are reviewing what they do with the site and have yet to receive approval from WFH for any modifications.

Engagement concerns

People told us that Kāinga Ora ran an engagement with the community, including drop-in sessions and online submissions in 2022. People also told us that the community was told that they would hear about the results of the engagement in November 2022. Instead, they were faced with further engagements.

“ They’re obfuscating, trying to confuse people. They didn’t get the answer they wanted from the first consultation and they’re trying to manoeuvre and manipulate to get their way.

“ How does talking to people in other neighbourhoods help us? They don’t know what’s happening here, they might be happy for KO to build in Bonair. How can we trust KO’s methodology—casting the net wide and pretending this isn’t about Bonair Cres.

“ KO have not been honest from day one. They just keep creating more and more meetings and processes trying to get a different response. We just want the answer, we want it to be resolved. How can they not know what the community thinks at this point?

The Millwater community no longer feels that there is a possibility to co-create solutions. They don't trust the engagement process that Community Think undertook and brought up questions of conflict of interest because of Kāinga Ora's involvement on the steering group and financial contribution²² to Neighbours Aotearoa, a national community initiative that Community Think is contracted to deliver via the Neighbours Day Aotearoa Trust.

“ *We do not believe this consultation is genuine. Community Think / Neighbours Aotearoa already have a relationship with Kāinga Ora. The staff are bias. The consultation is NOT impartial.*

“ *Community Think is not an impartial organisation and has connections with the Weir Lane development as well.*

“ *Millwater community wants reassurance that the numbers—the quantitative data—captured in the first consultation have fed into this consultation or at least will be factored in as promised by Kāinga Ora. It was a long consultation and people put a lot of effort into it.*

They feel that no matter what they say, Kāinga Ora will go back on their word.

“ *No housing on Bonair at all. No Kiwibuild, no family homes. Why? We don't trust Kāinga Ora. They lied to us from the get-go.*

“ *Older adults housing? KO defines that as 55 plus. None of the houses are designed for elderly. They'd call it elderly but they'd end up using them for the people in the emergency housing in Ōrewa now.*

Property prices

People are not just concerned that property prices may fall if public housing is built in the area, they claim house values have already dropped because of public awareness of Kāinga Ora's plans in Bonair Crescent.

“ *My Mum has tried to sell but she can't. We've spoken to many agents and the prices here have dramatically dropped.*

“ *Some people get recognition for putting food in a food pantry and yet the people of Millwater are supposed to be donating to charity essentially 300K that they may not have. There is no equity in it. You're basically saying that we have to be these massive charity givers and go into negative equity while others get in the paper for opening a food cupboard. How's that fair?*

22. The Homes and Communities group of Kāinga Ora granted \$5,000 to Neighbours Day Aotearoa Trust in 2019, 2020, and 2021.

“ People have spent their life savings. Interest rates are going up, the cost of living is increasing and there are people who can't sell their houses even though they're in desperate need.

“ People are ending up in negative equity and they can't afford their mortgage.

“ My friend is trying to sell and found that the real estate agent had to disclose about the KO development and the buyer pulled out. We feel like hostages.

Concerns around safety

There is a general belief that public housing will be bad for the area, bringing a higher rate of crime and antisocial behaviour. People were in agreement that Millwater was advertised as a safe place for families to settle and that they deliberately bought in Millwater in order to avoid the things that they believe to be associated with public housing. They feel that their choice has been taken away from them, and that their safety and the safety of their children will be compromised.

“ We wouldn't have bought here. I have lived near state housing before and I wouldn't have moved here.

“ Social housing will bring crime and make our lives worrying. I won't feel safe walking down the street. There are going to be bad tenants—they won't be getting evicted.

“ We're being called NIMBY's and racists, we're being made to feel bad for wanting to live in a safe community. We paid a premium to get in and to live here. We work so hard to afford this and we chose this for a reason.

“ I think you'll end up in a situation where people will take justice into their own hands. The community won't stand for it. I won't stand by and watch if my children are playing at the park and there are people doing things that don't seem safe—they won't be tolerated. I didn't spend the money on a home in the area to be in an environment where I don't feel safe. I bought in Millwater so my family would feel safe and be surrounded by like-minded people.

“ The status quo is very good. There is no need to upset it by introducing a different class—both in behaviour and in aspirations—into the area. People who live in Millwater chose to come here because they can afford it.

Parallels drawn with Weir Lane

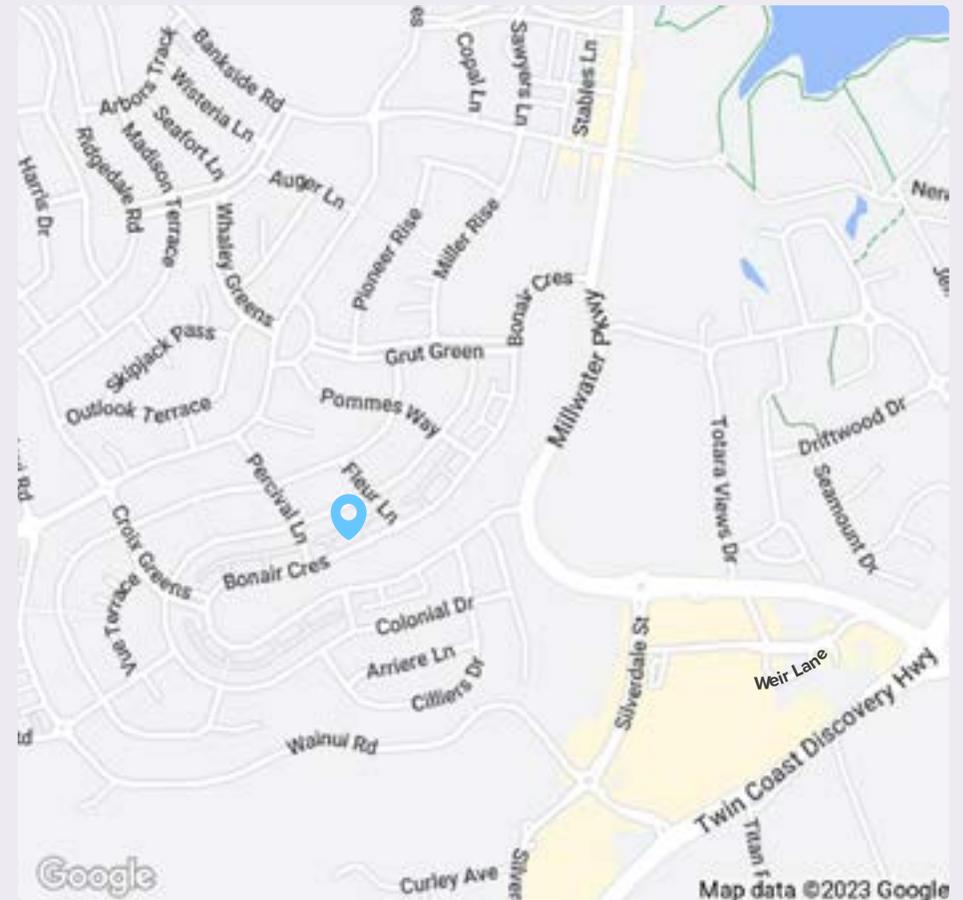
An 18-unit public housing development in Weir Lane, less than one kilometre from Bonair Crescent, is held up by locals as an example of the disruption that public housing can bring to a community.

People indicated that not all public housing tenants are problematic, but that one or two disruptive tenants can cause a lot of trouble not only for the neighbouring homes but also for the other tenants in the complex²³.

“ To be fair, when you say ‘they’ it wasn’t everybody in Weir Lane. There were some really nice families who lived there and they were also terrorised.

“ There were 2 families, gang related, in Weir Lane, who caused massive problems. The police told us there were 120 call-outs. Knife crime, sexual assaults. The people living in the social housing there were also victims of the situation. KO took two and a half years to evict the people causing the problems. People living nearby couldn’t sell. The other people in the housing felt others were looking at them like they were the problem. The issue with Bonair is that the same thing could happen.

“ The media portrayal of KO tenants pre-empts the ability for a neutral or positive feeling, in particular Weir Lane’s very publicised two-year issue and how it impacted on the tenants there as well as others.



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23. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/kainga-ora-offers-to-relocate-mongrel-mob-gang-member-after-herald-story-about-terrified-auckland-neighbours/57GNGZRAEWZUDIE3S2BPNAIUYM/>
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/auckland-family-begs-for-relocation-to-escape-gang-terror-at-kainga-ora-development/ECSJ2LOEF7SKSJF6FH74TCLCOI/>

Sell the land on Bonair Crescent

Foremost amongst the solutions offered is that Kāinga Ora should sell the land on Bonair Crescent to a private developer and put an end to plans for any form of public housing there.

- “ *Keep Millwater to private ownership only.*
- “ *If you put me in a building with 38 units, people with ankle bracelets, people with mental health issues, and in a community where everyone is upset about me living in this community, I can't imagine I'd want to even leave the house.*
- “ *The feedback we're getting is 100% affordable housing. No one wants to live next door to social housing.*
- “ *This piece of land can't be used... too much trauma. Nothing should be done on it.*



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Build public housing elsewhere

Many people suggested other locations that they thought more appropriate for public housing, including Whangaparāoa, Manly and Milldale.

“ Lots of land out on the coast. Whangaparāoa and Manly—put housing up there.

“ They could’ve done it in Milldale—too late now. They need to do it from the start.

“ Put it far, far away from Millwater, Silverdale. If Kāinga Ora wants to provide it, put it next to your head office and your manager’s house. Don’t bother other people’s daily life.

“ Create a completely new area and put housing in there. So people know what they’re buying into. Set them up with a beautiful garden that they can all tend together, grow their own fruit and that would give them some PRIDE!

There was a perception that the potential tenants for the Bonair Crescent housing were not local people, but being brought in from other areas.

“ Who is on the waiting list and do they actually live in Hibiscus and Bays?

“ We don’t believe they’ve originated from here. They’ve been brought into emergency housing in Ōrewa, then KO considers them residents of Hibiscus and Bays after 30 days.

“ We have meth addicts, criminals, 501’s all in emergency housing. Major mental health issues. They’re put into the areas and then considered ‘locals.’ They’re not locals!

Kāinga Ora should be a better landlord

There is a perception that public housing tenants are allowed to stay on even when they are behaving in extremely disruptive ways that would allow for eviction under the Residential Tenancies Act.

Some people said they would like to see Kāinga Ora ‘vetting’ potential tenants so that disruptive people are not placed alongside ‘good’ members of the community in medium-density complexes, and stronger social services and support for people in public housing so that they have an increased ability to integrate positively into the community they live in.

“ *It’s an unchecked system. We have no trust in their management—they have a bad reputation, with many tenants that are high needs and/or anti-social. Housing the homeless that is inclusive of gangs, unstable individuals, drug issues, ex-prisoners, 501s, people on home detention. And there are no repercussions for bad behaviour.*

“ *KO doesn’t do any kind of vetting and they don’t evict people.*

“ *The majority of people in social housing behave. If we could remove the minority that are not behaving and put them elsewhere—some sort of facility where they can be taught some good manners—then people wouldn’t be feeling this way.*

“ *In addition to scattering social and affordable housing through the community, it is important to provide the families/tenants with the support that they need to participate in society e.g. close to public transport, schools, employment opportunities.*

“ *There’s a bigger social issue here. KO doesn’t provide any support for people in their housing.*

Responses to the draft report

In early September, Community Think met once more with Bonair Action Group and showed them the draft of this report. There were some comments that warrant consideration.

Referring to the first consultation about the Bonair Crescent public housing they said Kāinga Ora had promised the community that the quantitative data from that consultation would feed into the broader consultation for the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area.

“ *The community was promised by KO that the results of the first consultation would feed into this. Our community engaged in good faith. Where is the data from that consultation? Is that covered in this report? It is more statistical and shows how many people agreed on the points.*

“ *When you do surveys and consultation, it's great for capturing the sentiment, but when you're dealing with decision-making that seriously impacts a large population, you need to capture the numbers.*

Community Think is clear that the process used to gather information for this report was never intended to be a second consultation about whether public housing should be built on Bonair Crescent.

On behalf of a large group of Millwater residents, the Bonair Action Group has been asking Kāinga Ora for an apology—but more than just an apology, to rectify and resolve the situation. They feel this apology needs to extend to everyone impacted by the situation.

“ *We'd like it reflected that we have asked for an apology. It's not fair that there are people who feel completely ostracised by a community because of what KO has done. Any other business who makes a massive error like this, at some point need to sit down and say 'You know what we f—ed up, we did the wrong thing, we need to back up, fix the mess we've made and do right by the people.' You have to say you're sorry and then fix it. You can't just say sorry and carry on with it.*

“ *We want more than just an apology. Kāinga Ora need to rectify and resolve the situation by selling the land. They also need to extend the apology to everyone in the community who has been negatively impacted by their actions over the past two years.*

Although not disagreeing that the outcome of this process could set a precedent, the group wanted to make clear that they believe the situation in Millwater is unique.

“ We recognised from the beginning that KO can’t be seen to be bullied out of a community because people don’t like public housing - that it could set a precedent. But this is a unique situation because of the deliberate two-year secrecy of the project, while Millwater developers were making all their money.

“ The community in Millwater bought at a premium price, with a lot of very specific covenants and a list of preferred builders who were allowed to buy land in Millwater. Kāinga Ora purchased the last large piece of land and chose to keep it a secret along with the Millwater developers. That is very different from other parts of the country where public housing is being built with the community’s knowledge or on existing land.

“ The insight for KO is there is a duty here to be open and transparent. It isn’t a reasonable expectation for people paying big money that public housing would be included. Where else have they done this, in this way? It is unique, it is unusual. As far as them looking on this as a precedent, it’s something that they have to look at in terms of what they have created. I think the same thing would happen if this played out the same way in any other community. KO need to reflect on everything they have done.

“ The report hasn’t talked enough about the original purchase of the land and that it felt like an ‘inside job.’ It is a cover up. The communication between WFH, Millwater developers, KO – they are stalling on giving us the information and we’ve gone to the Ombudsman. Someone’s clipping the ticket on that.

Appendix one—online response questions

- ◆ What are the housing needs for you and/or your community?
- ◆ What solutions and ideas do you have for addressing the housing needs you have described above?
- ◆ What is your perception of public housing? (Note: state housing/ public housing is long-term housing, provided by Kāinga Ora).
- ◆ Describe the ideal housing situation for you/and or your community?
- ◆ Do you think there is a need for public housing in your neighbourhood? (1-5)
- ◆ Please explain your answer here

Appendix two—Kāinga Ora engagement timeline

Date	Activity
29 April 2022	Request: from MP for Whangaparaoa's office to meet with Kāinga Ora
13 May 2022	Meeting: 1 - with Bonair Action and Information Group, the MP for Whangaparaoa, the Chair of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board, and members of the community.
20 May 2022	Letter: update to Bonair Action and Information Group, the MP for Whangaparaoa, the Chair of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board, and community members
25 May 2022	Letter: update to Bonair Action and Information Group, the MP for Whangaparaoa, the Chair of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board, and community members.
23 June 2022	Meeting: 2 - with Bonair Action and Information Group, the MP for Whangaparaoa, the Chair of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board, and community members
23 June 2022	Letter: to community, re pause on development, launch of engagement, manual feedback form included
24 June 2022	Kāinga Ora webpage update - Bonair development - links to social pinpoint
24 June 2022	Kāinga Ora Social Pinpoint online engagement platform opens
7 July 2022	Email: To schools and ECE - letter of 23 June 2022

Date	Activity
2 August 2022	Drop boxes delivered: To Council library, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Millies Café - manual feedback forms
10 August 2022	Email: To schools and ECE re drop-in sessions information
13 August 2022	First drop-in session: Millwater - attendees 80-100
17 August 2022	Second drop-in session: Orewa - attendees 25-30
18 August 2022	Third drop-in session: Millwater - attendees 20-25
24 August 2022	Request to meet: Bonair Action and Information Group, re closure of feedback/next steps
26 August 2022	Letter: Summary question and answer letter to Millwater residents (3000 printed, 1130 distributed, excluding 'No Circulars' letterboxes)
26 August 2022	Social Pinpoint online engagement platform closes midnight
29 August 2022	Request for information: Bonair Action and Information Group - copy of social pinpoint feedback and meeting request
31 August 2022	Email and manual feedback via drop box close
1 September 2022	Drop boxes collected from Council library, CAB and Millies Café
6 September 2022	Email: to Bonair Action and Information Group, re social pinpoint feedback and meeting dates offered