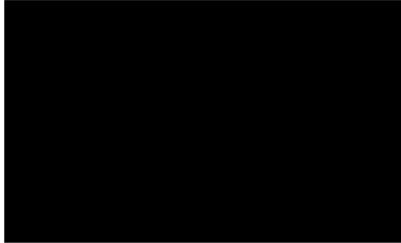


28 July 2020



Thank you for your email of 23 June 2020 to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982:

- *The number of public houses provided by Kāinga Ora that are considered accessible for people with disabilities.*
- *In what forms are information provided to applications and members of the public who are interesting with Kāinga Ora (e.g. Sign language, Braille)*
- *What number of proposed new houses administered by Kāinga Ora will be accessible for people with disabilities.*

Kāinga Ora does not hold information about which of our current or planned properties meet Universal design or other accessible standards, and our systems do not allow us to record this information. For this reason, we cannot provide the number of current or planned state houses that would be considered built to Universal design standard and accessible. Therefore, I am declining this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, that the “*information requested is not held by the department or Minister of the Crown or organisation*”.

Kāinga Ora is committed to increasing the accessibility of its public homes with its new Accessibility Policy 2019–2023. This policy, published in December 2019, sets a target that at least 15 percent of Kāinga Ora public housing new builds will be built to full Universal design standards. We are gathering information about our current properties that meet Universal design standards, and the 15 percent target will officially come into effect beginning on 1 July 2021.

Universal design standards will mean the homes are fit for purpose for most customers, whether or not they have a disability. This includes (but is not limited to) young and growing families, people of all ages who experience temporary injury or illness, those with mobility, visual or cognitive impairments, and the growing ageing population.

With a large proportion of our homes earmarked for development or upgrade over the next 25 years, we have the perfect opportunity to create significant change in our portfolio to better meet the needs of our customers as they change over time.

The Accessibility Policy is available on the Kāinga Ora website at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/news/new-kainga-ora-accessibility-policy/>. The document was published online and in hard copy, large print, EasyRead, English Audio (standard and DAISY), New Zealand sign language, and Braille. The document is also available in a range of translations that can be accessed through <http://infowave.nz/clients/hnz/>.

Modifying existing properties

For some people, Kāinga Ora can modify its homes to address a specific disability or specialised needs.

Kāinga Ora works closely with its tenants, the Ministry of Social Development, and [REDACTED] such as the Ministry of Health and ACC, to make [REDACTED] our homes across the country for tenants with specific [REDACTED] over everything from installing handrails, widening entrance- [REDACTED] ing fire alarms for the hearing impaired, through to providing [REDACTED] ed kitchens. As much as possible, Kāinga Ora makes its [REDACTED] for those with disabilities, so that they can live as [REDACTED] possible.

Accessible information for Kāinga Ora customers

Kāinga Ora wants to ensure our customers get the information they need. Currently our tenant newsletter *Close to Home* is published in English, Maori, Samoan, Tongan, and Chinese. We are constantly reviewing our material both in print and online and looking for opportunities to make it more accessible.

During the COVID-19 lockdown period there was an immediate need for accessible format information to be available to Kāinga Ora customers. With the support of key stakeholders, we were able to translate our key COVID-19 messaging and these formats were published onto the Kāinga Ora website for all members of the public to access.

Kāinga Ora also wants to make it easy for all its customers to be able to contact us directly. We use Ezispeak, which is a free, phone-based interpreter service that lets customers talk to us in the language they feel comfortable using. Customers can ask for Ezispeak whenever they call us.

For customers with speech, hearing, or vision disabilities, they can use the New Zealand Relay service (NZ Relay) to contact us. Information about New Zealand Relay and Ezispeak can be found at <https://www.nzrelay.co.nz/> or <https://www.ezispeak.nz/>.

You might also like to know that Kāinga Ora is part of the all-of-government Accessibility Charter, and the implementation of our Accessibility Policy forms a component of the new Disability Action Plan 2019–2023 which was launched in November 2019 by the Minister for Disability Issues. More information about this can be found at <https://www.odi.govt.nz/disability-action-plan-2/>.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Kelly
Manager Government Relations