

Social housing is a big need in Auckland, with a whopping 6,617 Aucklanders currently on the waiting list for a home.

Local organisation Bays Community Housing Trust (BCHT) is committed to solving this. In October, they completed 5 brand new homes in Long Bay, adding to their existing portfolio of 34 homes across the North Shore. The new Long Bay homes are part of a community setting named Te Whare Manawa Ora – ‘Whare’ meaning House, ‘Manawa’ meaning Heart, and ‘Ora’ meaning Wellbeing.

The name was chosen in consultation with Kaumatua’s from Ngati Paoa and Ngati Whanaunga.

The houses are a new model of what community looks like, says BCHT General Manager John Tiy. They have been intentionally designed to provide homes for people who need them, and to be close to community groups, amenities, and each other.

“Social inclusion - feeling like we’re part of a community - is one of the biggest contributors to a person’s wellbeing” says Tiy. “This means social housing is much, much more than just providing a roof over someone’s head – it’s about ensuring people feel connected to their own community”

Tiy says there is a huge range of reasons why some people need help finding a place to live, and that COVID has exacerbated this. “There are a multitude of factors, including age, family situation, financial situation”. The Trust is committed to helping their tenants feel empowered and self-sufficient (regardless of situation), and employs a team of community co-ordinators to help achieve this.

BCHT has been providing homes to people on Auckland’s North Shore for more than 15 years. It was set up in response to housing affordability issues in Auckland and specialises in providing a place to live for people who are struggling to secure long term housing. The Trust currently provides homes to more than 80 people.

To find out more about Bays Community Housing Trust, visit [www.bcht.org.nz](http://www.bcht.org.nz).