

## MEDIA RELEASE

20 May 2020 – **For immediate use**

### Damp housing stats highlight need for greater supply of good homes

The latest statistics on damp houses highlight the need for permanent, affordable homes that are warm, dry and good to live in – and available to all New Zealanders, says Scott Figenshow, Chief Executive of Community Housing Aotearoa.

He was commenting on findings released by Statistics New Zealand that more than a third of Māori and Pacific people were living in damp housing at the time of the 2018 census (<https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/more-than-1-in-3-maori-and-pacific-people-live-in-a-damp-house> and <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/416997/one-in-three-maori-pasifika-living-in-damp-housing-census-data-shows>).

“No family should have to live with water dripping down the walls or their children getting sick every winter because of mould and damp,” says Mr Figenshow. “We need well-built homes that don’t make us sick.”

He noted the arguments put forward by Green Building Council Chief Executive Andrew Eagles for greater investment in insulation (<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/-6b-annual-cost-tolerating-damp-mouldy-homes-in-nz-outweighs-price-insulate-them-advocate>), and said the country’s community housing providers are committed to providing good quality homes for people in housing need. Earlier this year a number of housing providers took part in a webinar organised with the Green Building Council to learn more about the Homestar and HomeFit initiatives to ensure houses are warm, healthy and efficient.

“Our sector is focused on making a real difference in people’s lives so that means providing homes that are good to live in,” says Mr Figenshow.

Mr Figenshow says the community housing sector has begun identifying ‘shovel-ready’ housing projects. It has already identified 79 housing developments across 15 regions, totalling 2911 homes with a total development cost of \$1 billion – and there will be many more waiting to be counted.

“If we can ramp up the number of dry, well-built permanent, affordable homes available to all New Zealanders – whether rented or owned - then we will start to make inroads into the statistics on damp, mould and the adverse health consequences for our future generations.

“As a sector, community housing providers are ready to develop even more good homes where families will be able to thrive.”

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**Community Housing Aotearoa** is the umbrella group for New Zealand’s community housing sector. Our 90 provider members house approximately 25,000 people nationally across 13,000 homes. More information is available at [www.communityhousing.org.nz](http://www.communityhousing.org.nz).

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