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MEDIA RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### The Four Key Essentials For A Functional Housing System

As KiwiBuild and capital gains tax dominate headlines about the direction of the housing sector, Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities says it has clear evidence of New Zealand's housing delivery system being dismantled over the last 30 years.

This means there is no quick fix, nor is there a silver bullet or one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to building a functional, fit for purpose, housing system from scratch.

In order to deliver housing suitable for all, BBHTC has identified that a widespread shift needs to occur on four fronts.

These are urban wellbeing, Kāinga Tahī, Kāinga Rua (Māori housing), affordable housing and supporting regions to thrive.

The National Science Challenge is focusing on delivering the evidence base for each of these four essentials.

“In the wake of the Christchurch terror attacks, it is even more important that we find ways to engage everybody in our communities in how we plan and deliver homes and spaces that are safe and welcoming for all,” explains BBHTC Director Ruth Berry. “These are the pathways we need to focus on to successfully deliver affordable housing and thriving communities all over New Zealand. The Challenge is investigating innovative solutions that will ensure all New Zealanders are well housed in affordable housing that meets the needs of diverse households at a price that enables people on low and moderate incomes to meet other essential living costs and have an acceptable standard of living.

Within the Challenge, Kāinga Tahī, Kāinga Rua is the flagship, Māori research programme. It is being co-created with Māori communities and designed to deliver healthy, sustainable housing.

“Kāinga Tahī, Kāinga Rua is the support tool to get more Māori into homes,” explains Challenge Director Māori, Dr Jessica Hutchings. “Our research is about Māori researchers and communities coming together and having a supportive, shared experience. We want to reinvigorate communities by empowering them to create their most effective, innovative built environment solutions.”



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Statistically, only 23% of Māori own their own homes and are more likely to access social housing or experience homelessness and landlessness. Māori are also more likely to have moved away from their original ancestral lands and be living in urban areas.

To address housing in New Zealand's largest cities, urban wellbeing and affordable housing are the other key areas of focus for BBHTC's research programmes.

"What our research reveals is that transport, connectivity and climate change underpin all housing. How we plan for these will typify the future success of our neighbourhoods and cities," explains Ms Berry. "Lime scooters is an example of the kind of disruption that can happen to our towns and cities and our evidence is designed to understand how we successfully plan and design for the kinds of challenges that our future will bring."

Outside of the cities, the research is focused on working with communities to gain a true understanding of how to regenerate regions and support local efforts to make these places attractive to live in, visit, work and do business.

"Identifying practical solutions to enable settlement regeneration success is a central goal," explains Ms Berry. "We are examining what initiatives work best as tools for regeneration, how to support regeneration activities and supporting the creation of communities of practice - sharing approaches to settlement development - incorporating private, public, and third-sector practitioners."

In short, for New Zealand to build a functional housing system, it requires a shift in thinking and the successful implementation of a wide variety of evidence-based solutions that are proven to deliver for housing for all.

**ENDS**

#### **Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities Background Notes**

Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities (BBHTC) is one of 11 National Science Challenges, funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Enterprise (MBIE). Since BBHTC launched in May 2016, the Challenge has funded more than 100 research projects - from scientists across both public and private institutions - into New Zealand's built environment. BBHTC undertakes world-class research to shape New Zealand's built environment and strengthen communities. The Challenge develops findings that will empower public, planners and policymakers with reliable information and new tools for fresh thinking and better decisions. The Challenge is discovering new pathways to address the long-standing housing challenges of our most disadvantaged and to support Māori into healthy homes.

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