



**Accessible
Properties**
For thriving communities



Annual Highlights 2019 - 2020

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Accessible Properties - *A place to belong and thrive*

Accessible Properties is a social and disability housing provider committed to providing housing that meets tenants' needs and tenancy services that support long-term successful, inclusive living in a community. Accessible Properties is a wholly owned subsidiary of the IHC Group.

Our purpose as an organisation is to:

- provide good quality housing (and other property) to service providers, such as IDEA Services, to enable them to deliver positive outcomes for people in need,
- provide good quality housing to people in need that meets their need and provides them with opportunities to improve their lives and positively contribute to their community,
- assist IHC in achieving its core charitable objectives.

Chair and Chief Executive Summary



Andrew Evans, Chair



Greg Orchard, Chief Executive

The 2019-20 financial year has been one of unprecedented contrast and challenge.

The COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown has placed even more pressure on the community housing sector, which is already facing extraordinary demand.

However, Accessible Properties is confident we are well-placed to provide good quality housing to even more New Zealanders in need.

Our aim is to provide a place for the people we house to belong and thrive; where they are included and have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to their community.

The shortage of community housing is acute. In June 2020 there were 18,520 applicants on the Housing Register compared to 12,311 in June 2019.

We anticipate the COVID-19 outbreak will create more pressure on the sector.

Whilst house construction will continue, this widening gap is likely to accelerate as the economic environment declines.

We believe the availability of suitable housing represents one of the most significant risks to the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities and other disadvantaged groups in New Zealand.

IHC Group currently owns or leases properties in 89 separate cities and townships across New Zealand.

In October, Associate Housing Minister Kris Faafoi opened new homes on Cameron Road in Tauranga as part of Accessible Properties' plans to help address the city's housing shortage.

Accessible Properties has ambitions to replace 140 former state homes in Tauranga with more than 400 new townhouses and apartments.

The Gate Pā "Pukehinahina Project" aims to work in partnership with and is seeking investment from the government, developers, iwi and other stakeholders.

The ability of Accessible Properties and the Community Housing Sector to do more has been constrained by the Government's current public housing funding settings.

Despite an invitation to provide a proposal on appropriate funding settings to the Minister of Public Housing and sector engagement with Government officials, the current funding settings remain a major obstacle to the sector's ability to deliver more housing to those in need.

In Auckland, another key region, our homes were boosted with the development of a 24 unit complex in Manurewa, Auckland.

Our teams care about the people they house and the difference decent housing and access to appropriate support can make to their lives.

That philosophy is reflected in the Manurewa complex, which is suited for elderly tenants to live healthily and safely in the local community.

We are focussed on achieving the best outcomes for our tenants. For many people we provide hope in the form of a warm, dry, secure home that enables people in housing need to stabilise this aspect of their lives and build a platform for their future.

During the COVID-19 lockdown period we were acknowledged as an essential service which enabled us to perform this important role.

The safety of our tenants and our team was our top priority. Emergency repairs and maintenance were able to be undertaken.

All staff transitioned to working from home and maintaining tenant services remotely. When circumstances permitted, we were able to assist in delivering food and care packages to some tenants.

We would like to acknowledge the commitment and efforts of our team during the period.

We aim to help the people we house feel settled in their homes and more connected with their community, while providing stable housing for the duration of their need. We will engage with our tenants as appropriate to ensure they are able to access support services such as, budgeting and financial assistance, employment support, mental health and disability services.

Over time we will work to provide opportunities for our tenants to achieve housing independence and where possible help them move through the housing continuum.

Our tenant survey found once again a high level of satisfaction with our services.

We continue to work closely with IDEA Services and Choices NZ within the IHC Group to provide safe, suitable housing and facilities for people with intellectual disabilities.

Our commitment to staff health and wellbeing has been recognised with WorkWell Bronze Accreditation, recognised by the Ministry of Health as a leader in workplace wellbeing.

And we continue to partner with iwi in the Bay of Plenty to support and assist tenants dealing with methamphetamine-related issues.

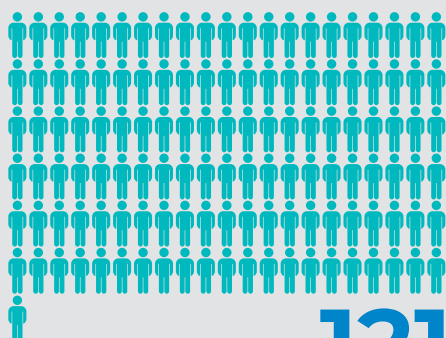
Looking forward, we are continually looking to match our properties to best meet the needs of our existing tenants as well as those that will live in our homes in the future. This includes ensuring we use our expertise to build and modify homes for an aging population, people with disabilities and changing housing needs.

At A Glance



2757

properties managed



121

new tenancies started



59

new builds



1359

public housing rentals



462

affordable rentals



758

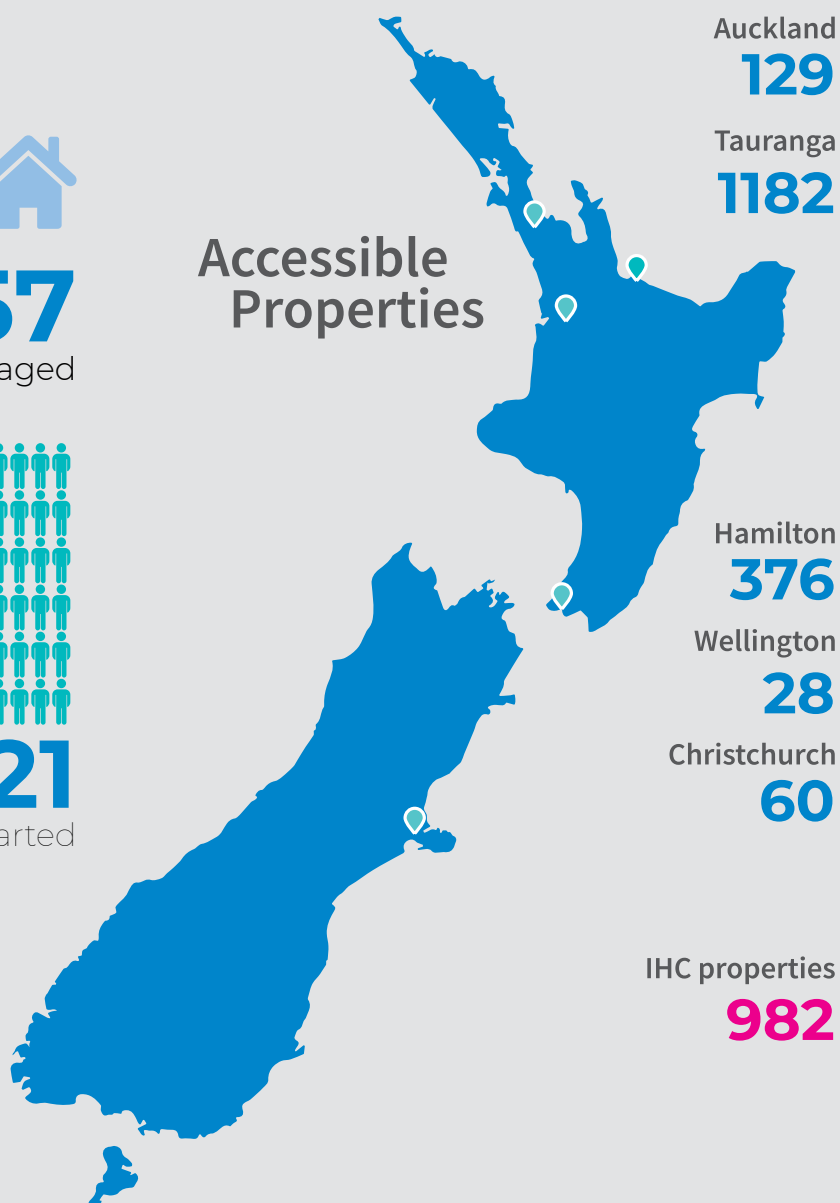
supported accommodation



178

undeveloped and
non-residential sites

Accessible Properties



Auckland

129

Tauranga

1182

Hamilton

376

Wellington

28

Christchurch

60

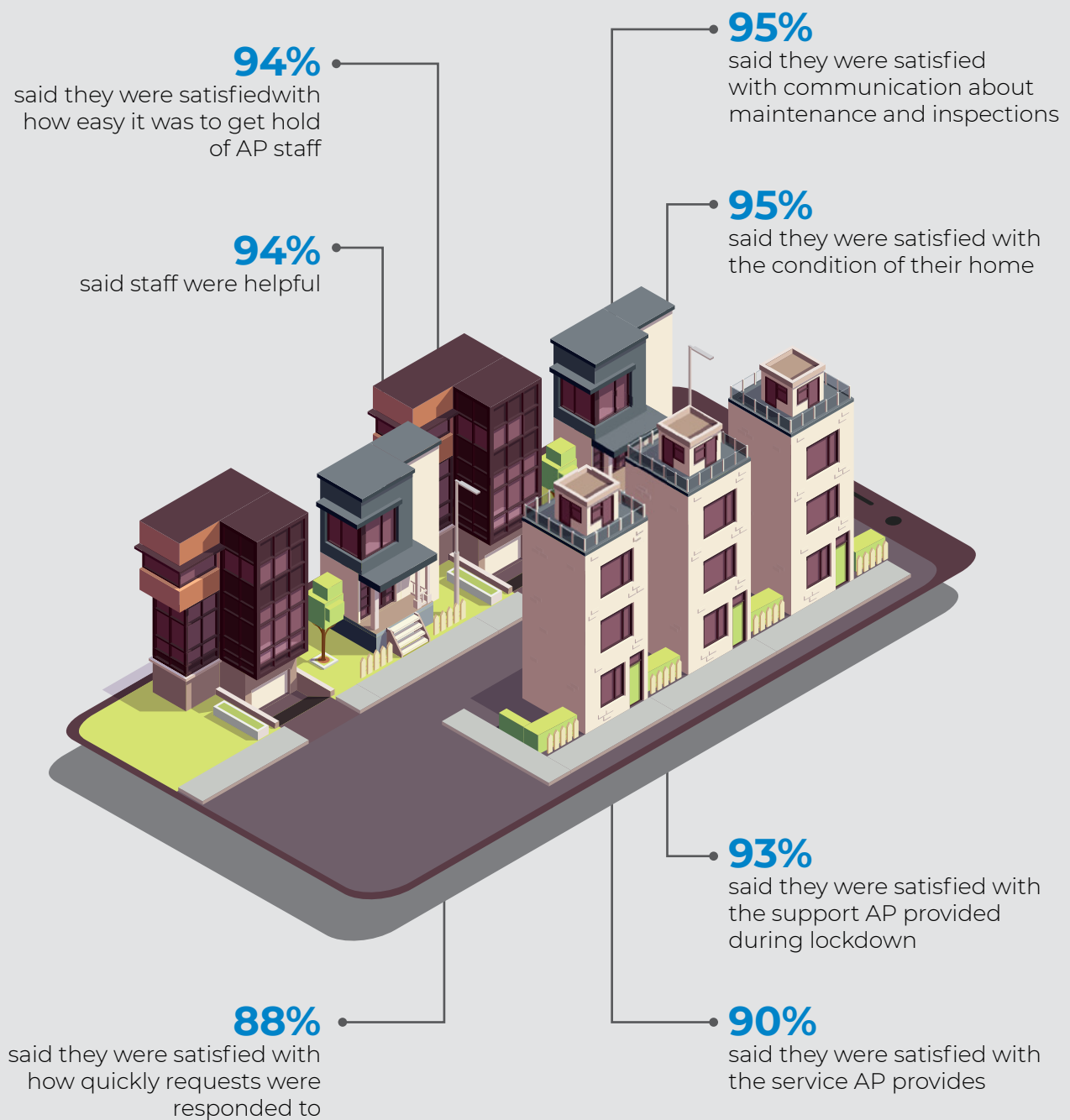
IHC properties

982

2020 Tenant Survey

“Accessible Properties looks after our needs 100%.
I am very fortunate to be housed by you. Thank you”

– unedited tenant response.



New Developments

Cameron Road

In October, Associate Housing Minister Kris Faafoi officially opened new homes on Cameron Road as part of Accessible Properties' plans to help address the Tauranga housing shortage.

One of the new tenants, Raymond, was pleased to see his new home, which he has watched being built from his previous accommodation across the road.

The former serviceman, who is deaf, told the Bay of Plenty Times: "It's a new lease on life."

Accessible Properties is committed to supporting people like Raymond.

The project is an initiative that supports regeneration and provides new homes for people in need. It is an example of the type of development that supports the vision for housing and community revitalisation proposed in Accessible Properties' Pukehinahina Project discussion document.

"Housing wellbeing has become an urgent issue for Tauranga and the Western Bay of Plenty, and Accessible Properties wants to take action, with a housing project that stands for inclusion and choice," Accessible Properties CEO Greg Orchard says.

"We're ready to work with others to achieve this vision, and we hope our proposal will contribute to deepening community discussions Council has underway on the future development of the Te Papa Peninsula.

"We think we can make a real difference to this community, which has become one of the most unaffordable places to live in the country."

The Gate Pā "Pukehinahina Project" aims to work in partnership with and is seeking investment from the government, developers, iwi and other stakeholders.

"We want to see a master planning approach – a diverse range of housing types overlooking the street and shared communal areas," says Greg.

"In addition, we are continually working to improve the quality of the housing we provide to tenants."

Greg says the aim of this project is to better match supply with demand, for example more one-and two-bedroom tenancies, and create great design outcomes from a community perspective.



New Developments

Halver Road

A development at Halver Road in Manurewa, Auckland consisting of 23 two-bedroom units and one single bedroom unit, has been added to the portfolio.

Accessible Properties project coordinator Isabelle said the four-storey apartment building is ideally suited for elderly tenants, or those with mobility issues, and that had been reflected in a number of design features.

“Entry to the units is controlled by residents. Any visitors have to call up to the room over a security system. Residents can not only hear and speak to the visitor, they’ll be able to see them on a screen as well.”

The units are double-glazed for warmth and quiet, with level access bathrooms for safety and ease of use. A large lift and wide hallways make life easier for tenants using walking frames or wheelchairs and efficient ventilation helps keeps tenants warm and dry.

The site is also close to public transport and perhaps most importantly for many of the tenants – a bowling green.

The Manurewa town centre is only 500 metres away, and the Auckland Regional Botanical Gardens only just over a kilometre away.

“We really wanted to establish that good neighbourly, community feel,” says Isabelle.

Charlotte's Story

Charlotte came from a boarding background and after short notice was left with nowhere to live.

After calling on the support from various support providers for emergency housing she was offered a viewing of her now home at Halver Road.

She was pleasantly shocked at the comment of the Senior Tenancy Manager who told her to go “shopping for your forever home”.

Charlotte moved in quickly but successfully before lockdown and says her new home is “so beautiful”. Charlotte has never been able to live alone or independently so to have this opportunity now is a blessing and taken some getting used to.

Charlotte also has a history of Chronic Asthma however since moving into Halver Road has not been ill or felt ill once. “The home is warm, dry, safe and a beautiful place to live” Charlotte says.

She is able to have her grandchildren come to visit from the local school and enjoys that quality time. Life has changed for the better.



More Than Just Houses

The Transition to Employment Project aims to improve the self-confidence, self-esteem and employability skills of social housing tenants in Tauranga by supporting them to access employment and training opportunities.

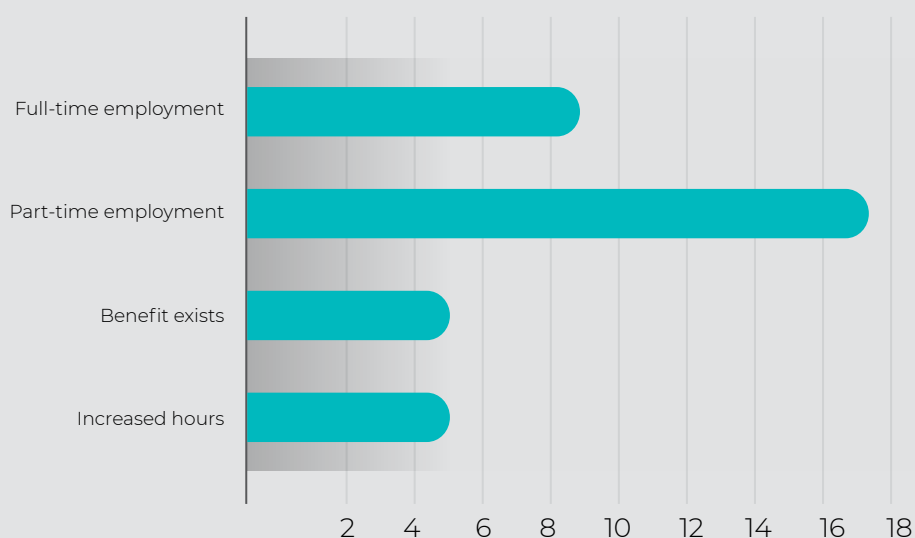
The programme is available to anyone residing in an Accessible Properties property, it is a voluntary, client-led, relationship-focused programme. Referrals are predominately received from tenancy managers who identify tenants via biannual inspections or at tenancy sign up.

An employment profile is completed with the individual focusing on their goals and aspirations, but also considers overall wellbeing and what other areas in their life might be impacting their ability to work or upskill.

There was a total of 63 referrals to the programme over the year June 2019 – May 2020. A third of the referrals were for driver licence support.

COVID-19 resulted in a reduction of new referrals to the programme hence a reduction in employment and training outcomes. Remote support was still provided to tenants however a shift in focus occurred, supporting families to access financial support via the Ministry of Social Development and providing support around essential needs such as referrals to food banks or Good Neighbour Community Trust became a priority.

Employment outcomes for year 2019/2020



Our commitment to supporting people in IDEA Services homes and facilities remains at our core.

Accessible Properties currently has over 800 IDEA Services residential homes, and over 100 day base facilities.

Around 170 people are in supported living in Accessible Properties homes.

A key component of our role is to ensure homes are best suited and equipped for IDEA Services tenants.

More than 25 projects were completed on IDEA Services homes during the period.

This includes modifying bathrooms, access ways and kitchens and other facilities for safety and ease of use.

The safety of tenants is always paramount. During the COVID-19 period, Accessible Properties was recognised as an essential service, in order to perform emergency repairs and maintenance.

If you pay a visit to one IDEA Services home, don't be surprised if you're invited to see the bathroom.

That's because the house – home to four people IDEA Services supports – has been given a sparkling new bathroom makeover.

"They keep saying 'do you want to see the new bathroom? It's so beautiful,'" says Isa, the local IDEA Services Service Manager.

The old bathroom, which contained the full suite of basin, bath, shower and toilet, had been in heavy use for at least the last ten years, and definitely needed some TLC.

Andrew, Accessible Properties Property Manager - Central, knew as soon as he saw it that the bathroom needed to be given priority.

"We didn't mess around, we started looking for the right contractor straight away," Andrew says.

"It's not just about price, it's about finding the right people who will understand and work in with the residents of the property."

It's been refitted as a "wet room" with no steps, so staff can hose it down to keep it clean and safe.

"It's all about providing environments that are fit for purpose for the people we support," Andrew says.

Opposite: The tenants of an IDEA Services home love their new customised bathroom.



Kara's Story

Kara is an Accessible Properties tenant in Tauranga. At first it was a big, and scary, change for Kara and her kids. Over the last year, she's been supported by Employment and Training Coordinator Georgina. Now she's facing an exciting future. Kara tells her story.

This is how I came to be an Accessible Properties tenant: I had a relationship breakdown. I was in emergency housing for 16 weeks. I was in a motel with three children.

I was living in the country and had to move to Tauranga for new home – I was scared and nervous because I was moving away from all my support networks.

But I needed a house, had to do it for my kids.

When I saw my home, I was stoked. It was lovely, felt warm, and was a block away from the beach. It was awesome.

Anything that needed sorting out was fixed up straightaway. I've been here 14 months now.

In my last job I often ended up driving trucks. So I decided I wanted to become a truck driver and get my licences.

Georgina got me on to all the courses and helped me with training. I was the only woman in my classes, the men were a bit surprised to see me. But I come from a farming background, so I know all about heavy machinery. I've done a forklift course, and Wheels, Tracks and Rollers.

I've got three kids, two daughters aged 17 and 14, and my son who's three. Georgina helped me arrange day care for my youngest daughter, so it's not hard to balance courses with family.

My next goal is to become a full-time truck driver as a job. I'm finishing my Class 4 course and talking to people about getting work.

When I moved to Tauranga I had no family or friends. I didn't know where to start. Georgina has been absolutely wonderful. We've done everything together – she even gets me coffee.

I've done three or four courses in six months, even during lockdown. Georgina's really helped and made the process so cruisy. She even organised petrol vouchers for me – all I had to do was turn up to course.

Georgina has been awesome – she's gone over and above.

Kara takes the wheel, with a little help from Georgina (inset, right).

Georgina says:

It's my job to help tenants get work or on to courses, and I really enjoy it.

When I first met Kara, she told me she wanted to become a truck driver.

I am now supporting her find employment and we also worked with Top Kids early education centre to get a full-time placement for her son.

I've been working with her on courses, completed her CV, showed her how to use Seek, helping her actively look for jobs and meet employment agents.

It's been fantastic working with her, and fantastic to see her confidence grow with every achievement.



Tenancy Placement Group

The Tenancy Placement Group (TPG) was formed in response to the need to leverage local transitional housing provider knowledge when making social housing tenancy placements. This programme has been pivotal in helping move tenants along the housing continuum into long-term, sustainable tenancies.

Local Transitional Housing providers and Iwi advocate for clients who are equipped to successfully take on independent tenancies, often as a result of the support they have received through these agencies.

The focus of the group's work is to improve the quality of placement decisions, complimenting and building on the Ministry of Social Development's Social Housing Assessment process.

The Accessible Properties Tenancy Management Team facilitate the monthly THP meetings and this collaboration has enabled innovative solutions to the housing need in Tauranga.

To date, there have been 53 referrals from TPG, with 32 initially housed with us on fixed-term tenancy agreements and 15 of these are now on periodic tenancies.

In one instance, three single applicants on the social housing register were able to be placed together in a home and in another a vulnerable adult son housed by a Transitional Housing provider, was able to be housed with his father, who had a serious health condition and had been living in a tent.

Investing in Tools to Deliver

Accessible Properties has committed to replacing the Qube database and property management system with GT Housing.

The change will enable Accessible Properties to better support tenants and streamline and optimise processes for staff.

GT Housing will improve data quality and our ability to provide analysis and insights to improve decision-making.

The system's flexibility is better suited to remote and mobile working, and allows efficiencies in raising and authorising work orders.

Tenants, including IDEA Services managers, will have access to GT Housing through a portal, allowing them to request maintenance work.

It will also improve communication with tenants, who can access their payments and balances through a tenant portal.

The change will also ensure contractors are engaged and paid more smoothly.

Lockdown Support

The Accessible Properties team delivered much-needed food and care boxes to tenants who were struggling to feed themselves and their families during the Level 4 lockdown.

The boxes, which were put together with the help of community volunteer organisation Good Neighbour, were delivered free of charge.

“We’ve delivered to the elderly and people with disabilities who aren’t able to get out safely, people who have lost employment due to the lockdown, solo mums and people who are finding it hard to make ends meet and access support during this time,” AP Training and

Development Coordinator Georgina said.

A total of 124 food parcels was delivered to families in need during a seven-week period.

Accessible Properties was recognised as an Essential Service by the Government so the deliveries weren’t in breach of lockdown rules.

Accessible Properties would like to acknowledge and thank Good Neighbour for their support and assistance in keeping tenants safe and well.



Investing in Our People to Deliver

In October, Accessible Properties staff gathered in Hamilton for a two-day conference.

The conference gave staff who are based around the country the opportunity to meet and share ideas through workshops and presentations.

Accessible Properties is grateful to Minnie Baragwanath, founder and chief executive of Be.Lab, a globally-networked centre for design and access innovation. Her presentation challenged and encouraged staff to prioritise access in property design and construction.

Accessible Properties also appreciated the attendance and presentation of IHC Group chief executive Ralph Jones.

Staff lead workshops and presentations, while team challenges allowed attendees to think laterally and have some fun.

The next conference is planned for 2021.



Accessible Properties' commitment to staff health and wellbeing has been recognised with WorkWell Bronze Accreditation.

The WorkWell programme has been running for ten years across most of the country, and its developer Toi Te Ora is recognised by the Ministry of Health as a leader in workplace wellbeing.

The Bronze accreditation was awarded in recognition of the work Accessible Properties has undertaken around staff wellbeing since July 2018.

WorkWell focusses on eight priority areas for workplaces: Alcohol and Other Drugs; Healthy Eating; Breastfeeding; Mental Health and Wellbeing; Smokefree; Infection Control and Immunisation; Physical Activity; and Sun Safety.

For the Bronze level, Accessible Properties chose Mental Health, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity.

Staff were surveyed and systems put in place to develop programmes for each area that encouraged organisational, environmental and individual changes.

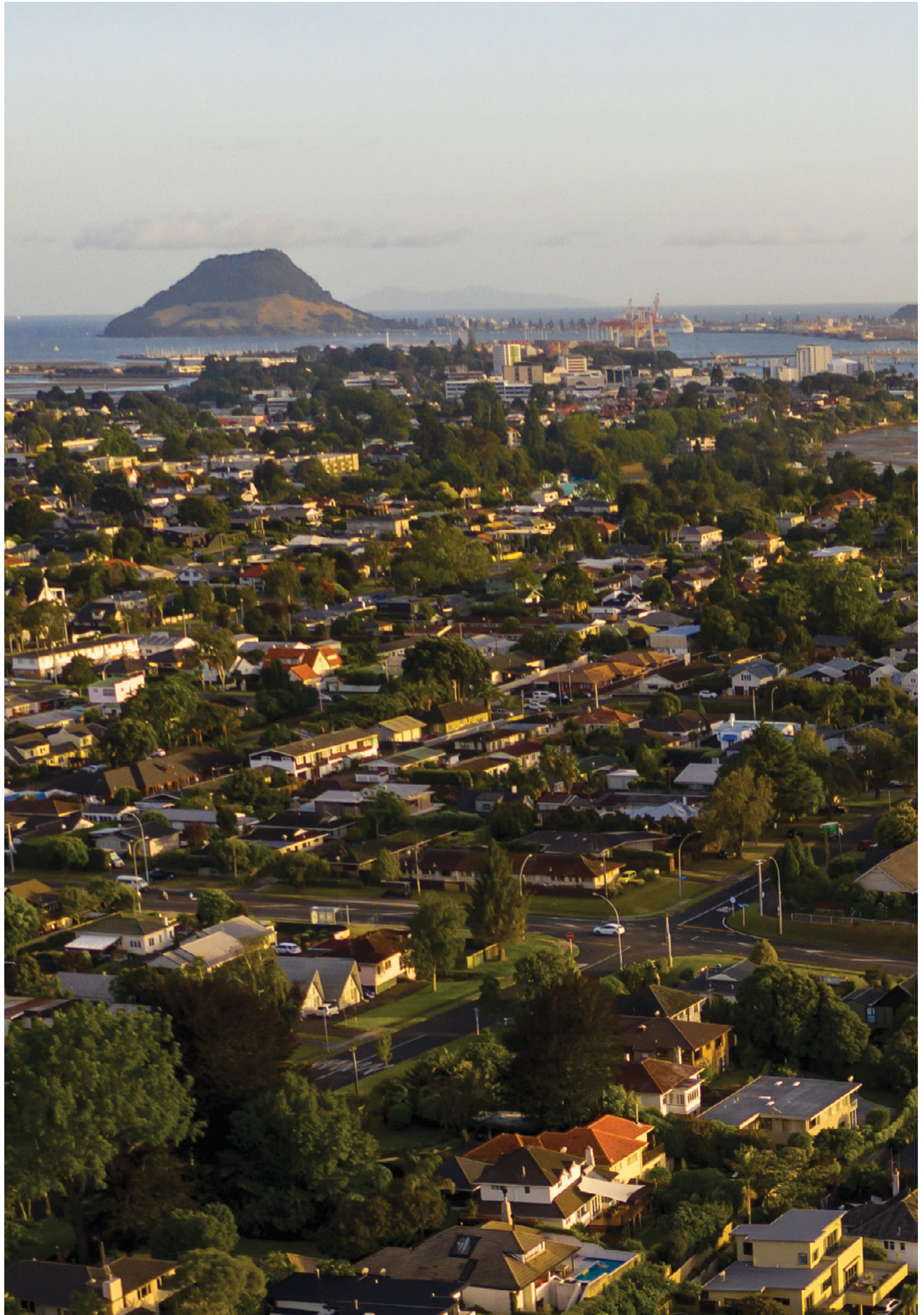
Some of the steps undertaken to improve the three areas included:

- Healthier options at morning tea and fruit for staff
- Taking part in mental health awareness week
- Encouraging walking, with staff collectively travelling the length of New Zealand

One participant said the programme had "definitely given us more focus on what we can do across our offices to increase staff wellbeing."

Accessible Properties is working towards the next step in the programme – Silver Accreditation.







accessibleproperties.co.nz