



# Annual Highlights

## 2020 - 2021



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## Chair and Chief Executive Summary



Andrew Evans, Chair



Greg Orchard, Chief Executive

New Zealand was in alert level 1 at the beginning of the financial year and at the end as well. In between, the country or parts of it, moved in and out of alert levels to try and keep the COVID-19 virus at bay.

Even with the challenges of operating in a pandemic, Accessible Properties delivered excellent services to tenants, built vital new housing and advocated for improvements to social housing.

We also introduced software that has streamlined our computer systems, making them more efficient and accurate. The new 'GT' housing software brings our tenancy, maintenance and financial services systems together, instead of operating separately.

Demand and border restrictions have affected the cost and availability of building materials and contractors. This has delayed delivery of new properties but we still added 49 homes to the portfolio during the year, including 23 in a community housing joint venture in Manurewa.

In December Accessible Properties was awarded first place in the Residential New Build category of the Tauranga Accessibility Awards.

The awards recognise commitment to building an inclusive community and were judged and presented by the Tauranga City Council Disability Advisory Group.

In addition to Accessible Properties' standard design features such as wider doors and hallways, the four-bedroom property had an acrylic shower and tray changed to a level entry in a totally remodelled bathroom and toilet.

Our annual tenants' survey again showed very high levels of satisfaction with Accessible Properties. Ninety-two percent of respondents said they were satisfied with our performance as a landlord.

The link between cold and damp homes and poor health is clear. Accessible Properties' Healthy Homes programme to improve insulation and heating in our properties will lift the wellbeing of our tenants and meet the requirements of the Healthy Homes Guarantee Act.

The programme began with a survey of properties to find out what work needed to be done and purchase of the materials needed. By the end of 2022 we will have installed insulation and heat pumps in all homes that need them.

The demand for social housing has only continued to increase and we are working closely with central and local government to advocate for and support the changes needed to improve New Zealand's supply.

The need is urgent.

There were 24,474 applicants on the Housing Register in June 2021. This compares with 18,520 last year and 12,311 in June 2019.

Bay of Plenty, the location of Accessible Properties' proposed Pukehinahina social housing redevelopment, is the third most expensive region to rent in. Only 2.5 percent of Tauranga's housing stock is social housing compared with 4.5 percent nationally.

We are making progress, albeit incrementally. There is growing understanding of the constraints of the current compensation settings and Kāinga Ora and Tauranga City Council are exploring the Pukehinahina proposal.

Combined with more medium density housing, including apartments and terraced housing, the Pukehinahina project in partnership with others could achieve three times the number of homes that currently exist in the area. With the right approach, it could deliver not only more housing but also a better mix of housing, including a range of sizes, types and prices.

Staff health and wellbeing is hugely important, particularly at a time of increased stress. This year the Accessible Properties' team earned WorkWell silver standard accreditation for its commitment to health and wellbeing, building on last year's bronze accreditation.

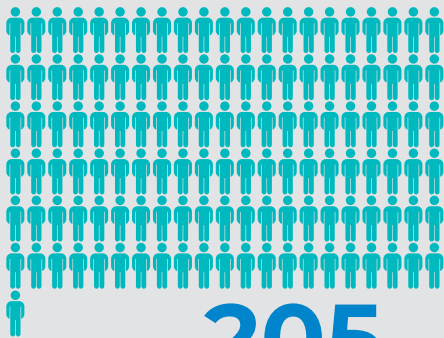
The team introduced initiatives to support sun safety and infection control and immunisation for the silver accreditation.

Good health is vital for resilience, and we have shown resilience throughout a year which has been like no other. Except perhaps for the next one. There has been a lot of talk about the new normal but, for the time being, uncertainty seems to be the new normal. Despite that our commitment to providing homes where people belong and can thrive is unwavering.

## At A Glance



**2774**  
properties managed



**205** new  
tenancies started



**49**  
new builds



**1418**  
public housing rentals



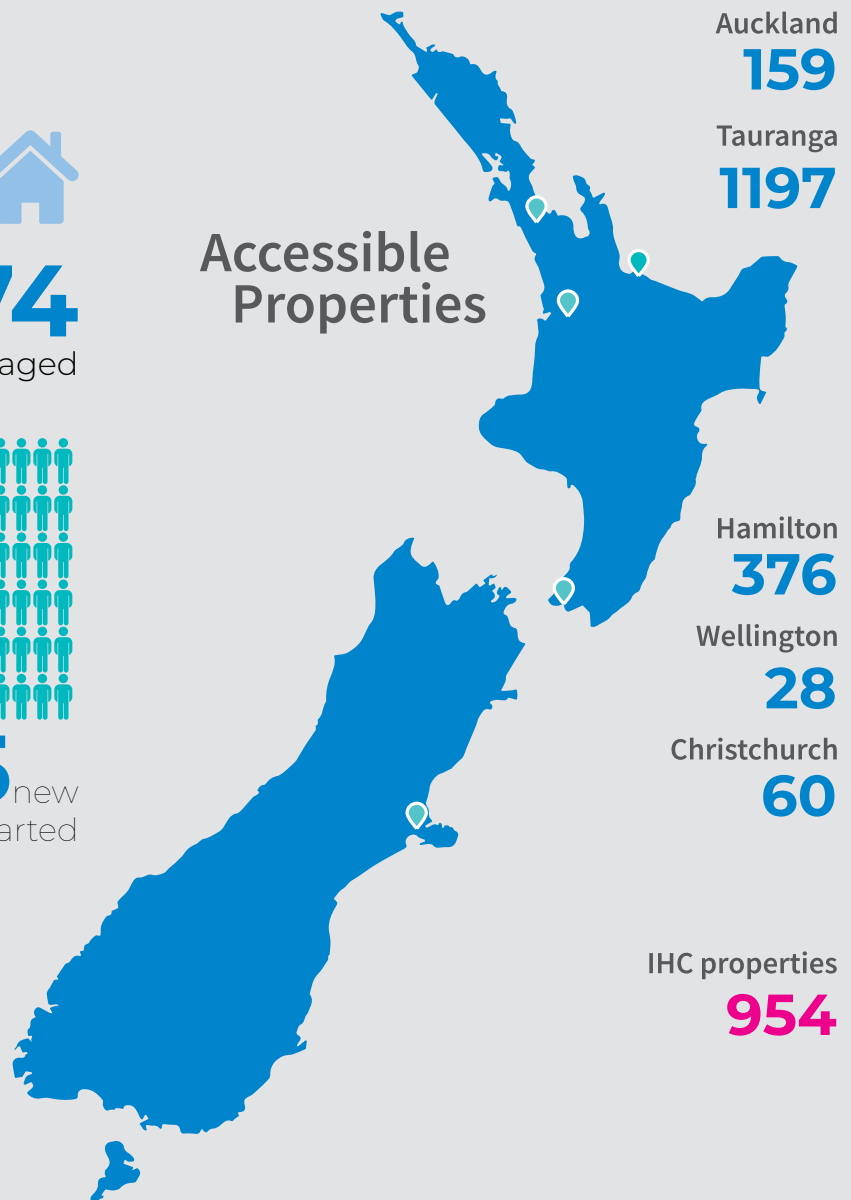
**446**  
affordable rentals



**755**  
supported accommodation



**155**  
undeveloped and  
non-residential sites



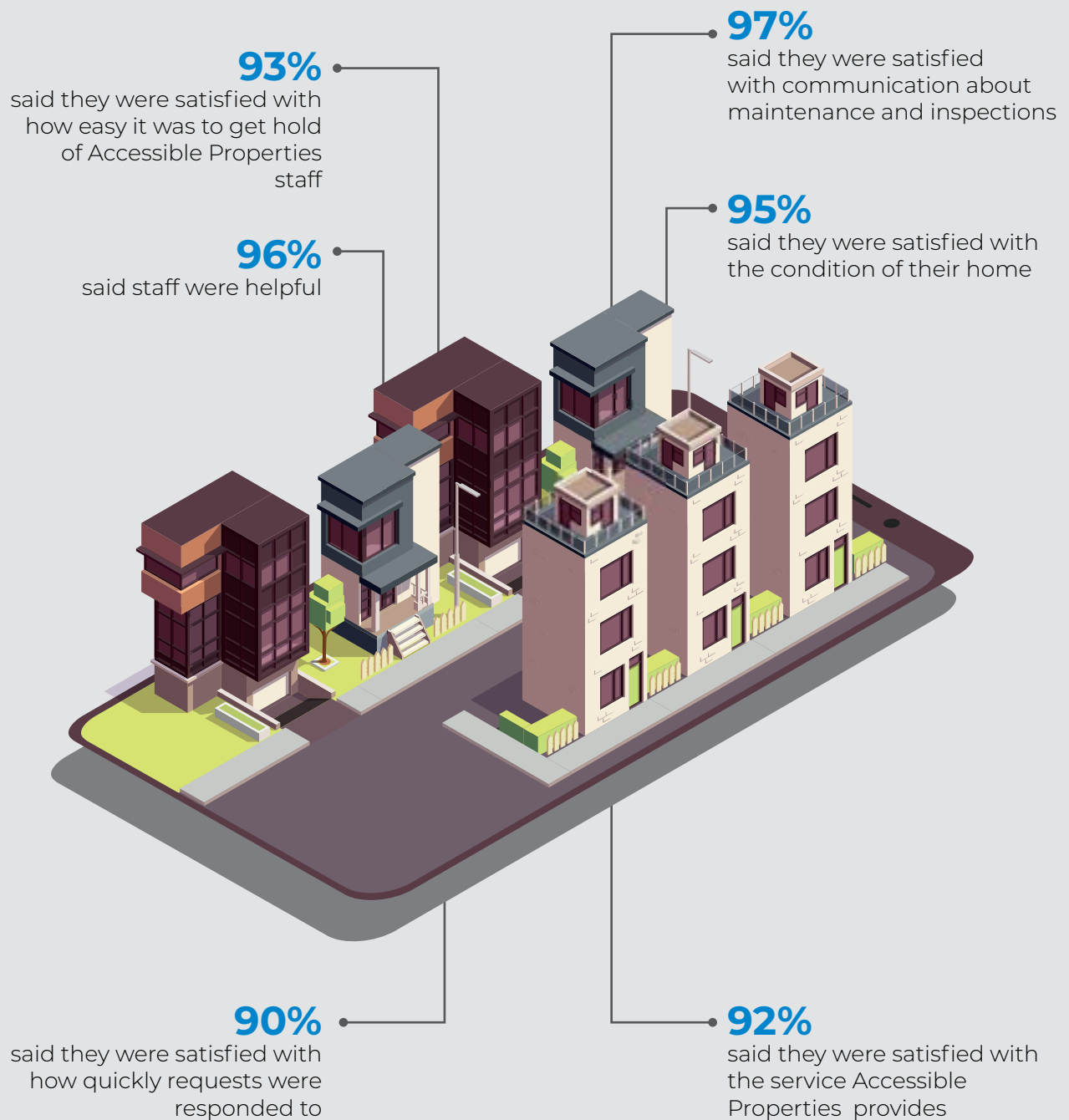
# Tenant Survey

Our annual tenants' survey again shows very high levels of satisfaction with Accessible Properties.

Ninety two percent of respondents said they were satisfied with our performance as a landlord.

This is up a little from last year (90%) and reflects our commitment to providing a good service.

Tenants reported that being kept informed, repairs and maintenance and the quality of homes were the most important services that Accessible Properties provides.



## New Developments

Accessible Properties welcomed tenants into 49 new homes during the year despite supply chain disruptions and lockdowns.

Twenty-three homes in Manurewa, opened at a dawn blessing ceremony in September, are part of a 112-unit mixed tenure terraced housing development.

Accessible Properties was one of three community housing providers, including Penina Trust and Emerge Aotearoa, who worked together on the greenfield development to provide warm, safe and secure homes for social housing tenants.



In Henderson, a four-level, 24-apartment project was completed during the financial year and tenants moved in during July and August 2021.

This development is a replica of our Halver Road, Manurewa development, which opened in 2019. It has 23 two-bed apartments and a one-bedroom apartment.

The building is ideally suited for elderly tenants or those with mobility issues. Entry is controlled by residents. Any visitors have to call up to the units over a security system.

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.

All units are accessible and 20 were awarded Lifemark four-star certificates for accessible design that meets people's changing needs as they age.

Accessible Properties tenant Tracey Harris showed Building and Construction Minister Poto Williams through her house in Manurewa. The Minister, and local MP Dr Neru Leavasa were announcing changes to the Residential Tenancies Act at the mixed tenure development.

## IDEA Services

IHC has provided property services and homes for people with intellectual disabilities for more than 60 years.

Accessible Properties, which was established in 2010 to enhance the management of the IHC property portfolio, has built up expertise in ensuring these homes are fit-for-purpose.

This year we completed 93 projects despite the enormous challenges of working in a pandemic and they have made a real difference to the lives of the people we support.

In Rotorua we reconfigured an IHC vocational services building which is no longer in use and turned it into a warm and inviting home. It is a huge improvement from the property the residents previously lived in.

The new home has excellent wheelchair access, wet area bathrooms and fire egress off all bedrooms and living areas. There have also been significant upgrades to the exterior of the home, including new fencing and gardens.

The Property Services team also transformed a newly purchased property in Golflands, Auckland for a Mt Wellington household living in a home that didn't function well.

It was a key strategic move to a safe and engaging environment, close to other IHC homes - making the sharing of resources and integration into the local community easier. Alterations included a new large, fully accessible wet area bathroom, and widened doors and hallway. We also built a new deck, added an extra turning bay for a mobility van, new fencing, insulation, and sprinkler and central heating systems.

The Healthy Homes programme shifted into high gear during the year. Healthy Homes standards are minimum standards under the Residential Tenancy (Healthy Homes Standards) Regulations 2019 for properties covered by the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA). They cover heating, insulation, ventilation, moisture and drainage and draught control.

COVID complications notwithstanding, the programme is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2022.





## More Than Just Houses

Accessible Properties' mission is to provide a place where our tenants can belong and thrive. That means our work extends well beyond putting roofs over heads.

Through a range of initiatives we help tenants connect with and make a difference to their communities, and provide access to services including budgeting and employment support.

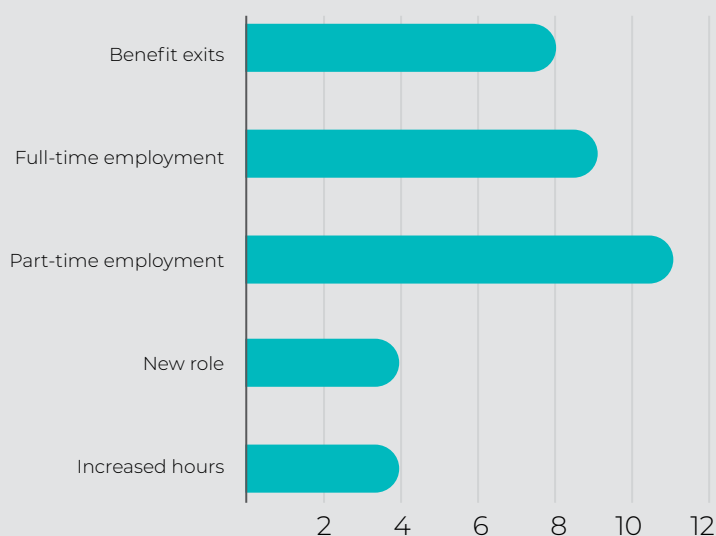
Our Transition to Employment project, funded by the Ministry of Social Development, was set up to improve the self-esteem, confidence and skills of Tauranga tenants to help them get jobs.

Participants are invited to meet somewhere they feel comfortable such as their home, our office or a café. The Accessible Properties team helps them to fill in an employment profile that includes their goals and aspirations as well as whānau wellbeing and any barriers that could affect their ability to work or upskill.

This year there were 70 referrals to the programme and it helped 20 people move into full time or part time employment.

Accessible Properties also joined forces with the Good Neighbour charitable trust's 'Whānau Journey' project which supported families with a series of workshops on training and employment pathways and completing CVs.

### Employment outcomes for year 2020/2021



## Lisa and Noke's Story

In 2020 Accessible Properties' tenants Lisa and Noke were both unemployed. With four children, they were financially stretched.

Lisa has dyslexia, no high school qualifications and limited work experience - all barriers to getting a job and helping her family.

Tongan by birth, Noke had worked at Placemakers and ITM for 15 years but his work visa expired and in 2020 he lost his job.

With the help of the Tauranga-based Good Neighbour Whānau Journey programme, Noke got a new visa.

Accessible Properties was then able to support him to get a job by helping him write his CV and get an interview. Less than two weeks after his visa came through, he was employed on a full-time contract. Accessible Properties has also referred him to a driver's licence course.

We gave Lisa help to update her CV and apply for jobs too. A team member went along to support her at an interview for a role at Countdown and she was offered a 20-hour-a-week position.

Lisa loves the role and works evening shifts when Noke is home and can take care of their children.

She says the family wouldn't be where they are without support from Accessible Properties and Good Neighbour.

*"It has been a very good experience. I was in a black hole, now I can see light and it has lifted a big weight off my shoulders.*

*"I am so happy and feel more confident, I have a purpose and like meeting new people."*



Accessible Properties took part in Envirohub's 'Sustainable Neighbourhoods Project' during the year. Envirohub is a charitable trust that provides and promotes environmental education, advocacy, and action that supports a sustainable future.

Tenants from 11 Accessible Properties' homes received free kiwi bins, garden soil and seedlings to start their own spring gardens. A planting day with 23 fruit trees planted created a fruit corridor in the neighbourhood. Residents were provided with information and workshops to help them become more self-sustainable and in turn support them economically.

### Keeping New Zealand Beautiful

Tenants, staff and Good Neighbour came together during the Keep New Zealand Beautiful week to give some of Accessible Properties' Tauranga homes, fences and neighbourhoods a bit of TLC.

In just one street 27 volunteers and staff collected 1.7 tonnes of rubbish and gave 27 homes a makeover. In another 15 tenants and household members rounded up 3.6 tonnes of scrap metal and half a tonne of rubbish. They also gave nearby Merivale Park a spruce up. Employment and Training Coordinator, Georgina, said it was a great community project. "It really fits with our belief that everyone should have a place where they can feel a part of a community."

*"Marvellous! I could not believe that all the stuff I wanted to get rid of is gone. My home looks so much better. "It was good to see everyone out helping each other and enjoying each other's company."*

Accessible Properties tenant.



## Working Well

With the extra stresses of working through a pandemic, the health and wellbeing of our people have never been more important or under pressure.

This has only served to reinforce our commitment to initiatives such as the WorkWell programme which is designed to help people flourish and achieve their full potential in the workplace.

Running for more than a decade, WorkWell was developed by Toi Te Ora, the public health unit of the Bay of Plenty and Lakes Districts Health Boards. It is recognised by the Ministry

of Health as a leader in workplace wellbeing.

After gaining bronze accreditation last year, we have now been awarded silver accreditation by WorkWell. We have added sun smart and infection control initiatives to the mental health and wellbeing, healthy eating and physical activity initiatives introduced last year.

The organisation's focus on the health and wellbeing of its staff was reflected in the 2020 staff survey results which showed high levels of satisfaction and engagement (86% strongly agree and agree).

## Investing in Tools to Deliver

Accessible Properties has grown from an organisation that managed a few hundred properties in 2010 to one that now manages nearly 3,000.

As it expanded, it became increasingly clear that the business systems in place when the organisation was set up weren't fit-for-purpose.

This year we put in place a new integrated system, designed to meet our needs as a community housing provider so that we can better support our tenants.

GT Housing was launched on 1 November 2020 and has made access to information much

easier, consolidated data into one system and automated most processes.

It is saving time and improving productivity. The coming development of a mobile app and a portal for tenants to access their payments and balances will only strengthen an initiative that has already delivered a step-change in our operations.





[accessibleproperties.co.nz](https://accessibleproperties.co.nz)