

Te Tiratū Iwi Māori Partnership Board

Tauāki Tū *Position Statement*

He Kāinga Pai Rawa, He Whānau Ora.



Tuhinga tīmatanga *Introduction*

The evidence is clear.

A healthy, affordable, secure home in a caring, connected community – he kāinga pai rawa - is a foundation for holistic whānau wellbeing – he whānau ora. On the other hand, poor-quality, overcrowded, or unaffordable housing, disconnected from support, **has direct negative impacts on health.**

Inadequate housing contributes to respiratory illness, breakdown of whānau relationships, financial and mental stress, school absence, transport pressure and avoidable hospitalisation. Significant housing-related health issues within the Te Tiratū rohe include high deprivation, cold, damp, mouldy housing, overcrowding and rural isolation.

Tauāki Tū

Position Statement

To address these issues, Te Tiratū calls for action across the following strategies, underpinned by a commitment to enabling the mana motuhake of Māori communities:

- Alleviate housing insecurity and support whānau mana motuhake
- Ensure safe housing and support for whānau in greatest need
- Improve the health, resilience and adequacy of kāinga
- Address rural isolation and improve access to essential services
- Improve affordability and pathways to Māori home ownership
- Enable Māori-led kāinga and whenua development

Health and housing are intimately connected. Both are complex issues and will require system-level and on-the-ground strategies. Effective action requires collaboration between the health and housing sectors.

Te Tiratū Housing Dashboard

Te Tiratū advocates for the hauora needs and aspirations of Māori within the rohe of the Waikato, Hauraki, Maniapoto, Raukawa and Ngāti Hauā iwi. Around 38% of Māori in the former Waikato DHB area live rurally¹.

Health and housing strategies within the region should therefore cater for both rural and urban contexts.

The dashboard below provides an overview of some of the key housing statistics for the Waikato Region²:

Deprivation

37.7%

of Māori aged 20 and over have an annual personal income of \$20,000 or less.

7.2%

Frequently went without fresh fruit and vegetables.

11.4%

Frequently postponed a doctor's visit³.

Housing Supply

7240

2023 housing shortfall in the Waikato Region (excl. Rotorua and Taupo Districts)⁹.

2860

Average annual housing demand to 2043 within Waikato Region (excl. Rotorua and Taupo Districts)¹⁰.

Homelessness + Housing Precarity

4,311

Māori in the Waikato Region are estimated to be severely housing deprived or homeless⁴.

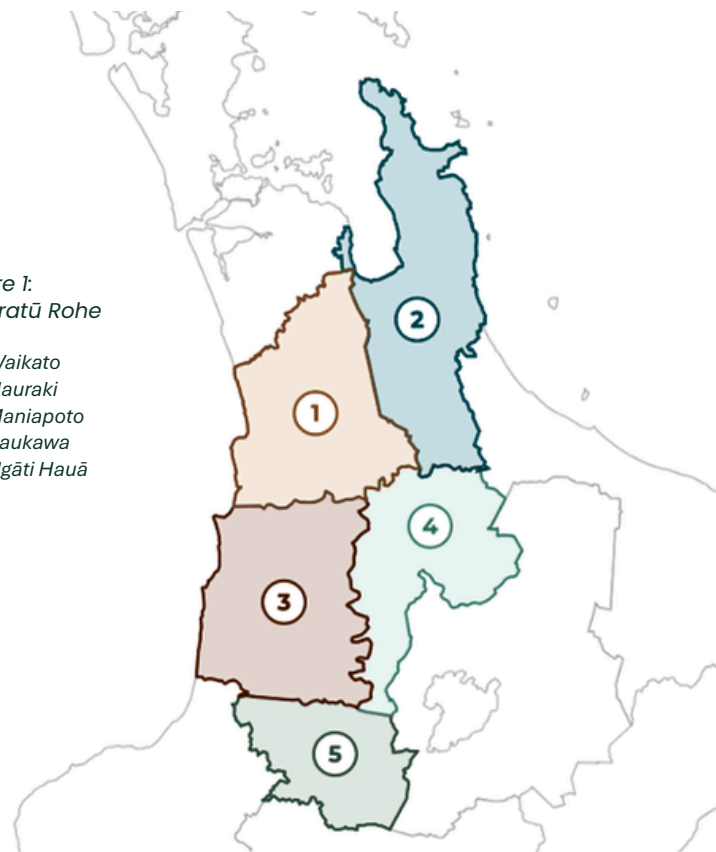
64%

of Housing Register applications in the HUD Waikato operational region identified as Māori – 30 September 2025.⁵

Māori are substantially overrepresented among emergency-housing recipients nationally.

Figure 1:
Te Tiratū Rohe

1. Waikato
2. Hauraki
3. Maniapoto
4. Raukawa
5. Ngāti Hauā



Inadequate Housing

11.7%

of Māori report frequently putting up with feeling cold because of cost.

23.6%

of Māori report household crowding (8.8% non-Māori) – Māori are nearly three times as likely to live in crowded housing.

45%

of Māori report damp housing.

37.2%

of Māori reported mould in their home⁶.

Whenua Māori

There are approximately 294,508 hectares of Māori freehold land within the BERL Waikato rohe, and a further 71,484 hectares held by post-settlement governance entities (total of 365,992 hectares)¹¹.

Nationally, nearly three-quarters of Māori freehold land in primary production has physical limitations affecting its productive use, while approximately 21% has no direct road or track access within 100 metres¹².



Significant health-related housing issues for the Te Tiratū rohe:

Recent data highlights the following issues of significance for the Te Tiratū region:

- **High deprivation** creates financial pressures, and many whānau are making trade-offs between rent, power, food, transport, heating and healthcare. Housing pressure becomes a pathway into delayed care, untreated illness, financial stress and mental distress.
- **Cold, damp, mouldy housing** is a preventable driver of poor health. It increases respiratory risk, worsens asthma, and contributes to poor sleep. Poor-quality housing can aggravate existing health conditions, making it harder for whānau to stay well, especially tamariki and kaumātua.
- **Overcrowding** is strongly associated with higher rates of infectious disease. It contributes to increased humidity and dampness, thereby increasing the risk of damp- and mould-related respiratory problems. It is also associated with increased stress and family violence.
- **Rural isolation** can make it harder for whānau to access health support, such as GPs, dental care, mental health support, specialist appointments, and pharmacies. Inadequate internet connectivity can also limit the use of telehealth.

Karanga kia mahi Call to Action



Targeted strategies for the Te Tiratū rohe:

Te Tiratū calls for action across six strategic pou, which are underpinned by the principle of supporting the mana motuhake of whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities.



POU 1 Alleviate housing insecurity and support whānau mana motuhake.

Support should be available before problems escalate into homelessness.

Te Tiratū supports:

- integrated Whānau Ora, housing-navigation, financial capability and tenancy-sustainment services;
- early identification and coordinated intervention for whānau at risk of arrears, eviction, overcrowding or housing loss;
- support to access income assistance, housing entitlements, education and employment pathways;
- Māori tenancy advocacy and education and practical assistance with rental applications and references;
- fair and transparent tenant-selection practices, stronger action against discrimination, and improved security of tenure.



POU 2 Ensure safe housing and support for whānau in greatest need.

Whānau experiencing homelessness or complex needs must be able to access appropriate housing quickly, alongside the support required to sustain it.

Te Tiratū supports:

- adequate emergency and transitional housing, with clear and timely pathways into permanent homes;
- expanded public housing, Housing First, rapid-rehousing and supported-housing options;
- targeted pathways for wāhine and tamariki leaving violence, rangatahi, kaumātua, whānau hauā, takatāpui and rainbow whānau, and those experiencing mental-health or addiction-related needs;
- larger, accessible and multigenerational homes suited to whānau realities;
- clear agency responsibility and coordinated planning so that no one exits hospital, mental-health or addiction services, prison, state care or family-violence accommodation into homelessness.



POU 3

Improve the health, resilience and adequacy of existing kāinga.

A decent home is essential health infrastructure. Investment in housing quality should therefore be treated as preventive health investment.

Te Tiratū supports:

- sustained investment in programmes that provide insulation, ventilation, energy-efficient heating, moisture control, repairs and maintenance – including for rentals, owner-occupied homes, kaumātua housing and papakāinga;
- action to reduce energy hardship so whānau can afford to keep homes warm;
- increased supply of appropriately sized homes and safe minor dwellings to reduce overcrowding;
- planning for climate-resilient kāinga, particularly in coastal, flood-prone and isolated communities.



POU 4

Address rural isolation and improve access to essential health services.

Rural isolation increases the cost and difficulty of accessing health care, housing support, employment, education and transport.

Te Tiratū supports:

- equitable investment in smaller towns, rural settlements and isolated communities;
- marae-based, mobile and outreach health and housing services;
- affordable transport to primary care, pharmacies, dental, mental-health and specialist services;
- reliable rural broadband, assisted telehealth and digital-access support.



POU 5

Improve affordability and pathways to Māori home ownership.

Whānau should have choices across the housing continuum, from secure affordable rental housing through to sustainable home ownership.

Te Tiratū supports:

- increased public, community and Māori-led retained affordable rental housing;
- sustained investment in papakāinga housing and infrastructure;
- accessible progressive home ownership pathways;
- deposit assistance, financial capability support and accessible finance;
- income support and Accommodation Supplement settings that reflect actual regional housing costs.



POU 6

Enable Māori-led kāinga development.

Iwi, hapū, Māori landowners and Māori providers are best placed to deliver housing that accommodates whānau realities, cultural identity and connection to whenua.

Te Tiratū supports:

- papakāinga, marae-based housing, kaumātua housing and homes designed for larger and multigenerational whānau;
- housing located near marae, kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa, hauora services and other cultural infrastructure;
- more large-scale Māori-led developments across the housing continuum;
- increasing Māori capacity and capability to provide quality kāinga;
- infrastructure investment to unlock whenua Māori;
- removal of unnecessary planning, consenting and financing barriers;
- Māori supply chain participation across planning, design, construction, trades, materials, property management and tenancy services;
- integrated whenua development that provides for papakāinga while enabling economic development, kai production and other activities that sustain ahi kā and mauri ora.



Whakakapi Conclusion

He tūāpapa te kāinga pai rawa mō te puāwaitanga o te whānau – home is a foundation for whānau, not just to survive, but to thrive. Sustained, coordinated action is needed so all whānau have a home that supports them to flourish. Te Tiratū commits to working with iwi, Māori providers and relevant agencies to advance the strategies outlined here.

[Click here to see references on our website](#)

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