



**Community Housing**  
*Nga Wharerau o Aotearoa*

PO Box 11543  
Wellington  
New Zealand  
Ph 04 385 8722  
[www.commmunityhousing.org.nz](http://www.commmunityhousing.org.nz)

30 October 2017

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais Des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

via email: [srhousing@ohchr.org](mailto:srhousing@ohchr.org)

**Attention: Request for Contributions: Designing and implementing effective human rights-based housing strategies**

1. Community Housing Aotearoa (CHA) is the trade association for the community housing sector that provides social and affordable housing throughout New Zealand. We represent the interests of our 100+ members on issues that impact their ability to fulfil their organisational missions. This consultation is of great interest to our members providing residential community housing.
2. Our sector has worked collaboratively over the past three years on development of 'Our Place', a plan to see 'All New Zealanders well-housed' by 2030. It has come to represent the voices of our vulnerable and low-income households, through the direct engagement of providers responding to widespread housing and service needs. As of June 2017, it has been endorsed by 42 organisations. We attach a copy of the document to this letter, and it can also be viewed at <http://www.communityhousing.org.nz/our-place/our-place>
3. We submit this document to your consultation as evidence of the New Zealand NGO sector's commitment to meeting the needs of our most vulnerable, and to fostering pathways of well-being where housing is recognised as a human right.
4. 'Our Place' is based on the belief that everybody has the human right to a home. It applies the UN housing adequacy framework to the New Zealand context, by linking 'well-housed' to mean 'housing adequacy' evidenced by habitability, affordability, security of tenure, accessibility and cultural adequacy.
5. Where 'Our Place' remains a work in progress is in defining the measures, primarily due to missing and inconsistent data. We continue to work with researchers and our government agencies to align the key reporting measures that would enable us to annually publish a scorecard on New Zealand's progress toward achieving the goal of All New Zealanders well-housed by 2030.
6. We note that there is not yet endorsement by the New Zealand Government to 'Our Place', or to a national housing strategy that would meet the tests set out in the consultation document. We look forward to working with our new government on their interest in adopting a national housing strategy, that would be implemented through legislation. This strategy should be based on a human rights approach and provide for meaningful engagement with and participation of vulnerable and low-income households whom have been most affected by our country's ongoing housing crisis.

7. It would be helpful to have support for development of cross-party, cross-sector, long-term agreements that would ensure genuinely affordable housing delivery continues at the pace and scale needed to ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.
8. Working in partnership with the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, we share their call for a 'Homes Accord' that would enshrine the high-level commitments of New Zealand, and make them binding on current and future governments.
9. As the representative body for the community housing sector in New Zealand, our members – and our wider industry partners – are supportive of getting the long-term, institutional settings correct so that we can supply adequate social and affordable housing. We think New Zealand can again lead in this area, as it has in the past. But we are a long way from that position at the current time. There is a huge opportunity to connect climate change and carbon reduction goals with building high quality, fit for purpose, low energy consuming homes that are affordable to build, operate and maintain, but we do not yet see a clear pathway to implementation given the current policies and settings.

We are committed to workable solutions. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. Please contact us at the number below for clarification.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott Figenshow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Scott Figenshow

Chief Executive

[director@communityhousing.org.nz](mailto:director@communityhousing.org.nz)

Office: +64 4 385 8722

Mobile: +64 21 061 9664