

Aotea Great Barrier Local Board feedback to Auckland Council's submission on the draft Better Later Life strategy, He Oranga kaumātua 2019-2034

Context

- Aotea Great Barrier Island lies 90km east of Auckland City in the Hauraki Gulf and is Auckland Council's most remote and isolated area.
- The island has a permanent population of 950 residents (2013 Census).
- 20.7% of people are aged 65 and over, compared with 11.5% of the total Auckland population. The median age is 51.3 years whereas the median age in Auckland is 35.1 years.
- Almost half (44%) of households were one-person households; this is a high proportion when compared with the regional average of 19 per cent.
- In 2013, the median household income was \$30,100, much lower than the regional median of \$76,500 and the lowest income across all local board areas in the Auckland region. 81% of island residents live in the most deprived neighbourhoods in New Zealand and therefore, compared with the other communities in New Zealand, people living on the island have relatively poor social and economic living conditions.
- Transport to and from the island is by either plane, a 35-minute flight one way, or by ferry a four and a half hour trip one way. Both these modes of transport, and our only options, are expensive for our Senior Citizens and are not covered by the Gold Card therefore making it prohibitive for some to visit family and friends on the mainland.
- There is no on-island public transport and therefore no benefits to holding a Gold Card on island. There are also very high fuel and freight costs with petrol being \$3.34 per litre and diesel being \$2.43 per litre as at 17 May 2019.

Feedback

Aotea Great Barrier Local Board supports Auckland Council's submission on the Better Later Life / He Oranga kaumātua 2019-2034 draft Strategy. The local board would like to note in particular:

1. There is no Central or Local Government provision for pensioner, social or affordable housing on Aotea Great Barrier Island. The local board is currently working on a housing strategy for the island and would welcome partnerships opportunities between government, mana whenua, council and community for an on-island solution.
2. The local board supports the community's desire to age in place. There is no reticulated electricity nor water for households. Houses require their own generators, solar panels, wood or bottled gas to heat homes. The maintenance, repair and freight costs for these alternative systems can become a hardship.
3. The local board supports a community-led Life-long Learning strategy to promote education opportunities for all ages. This strategy helps build community support networks, learning new skills, and mentoring opportunities.
4. The island is serviced by a community health trust and family support group which the local board supports through annual grants. They are essential local services that support the wellbeing of our older residents. It's imperative that any implementation plan includes funding for these groups.