# Ira Mata, Ira Tangata
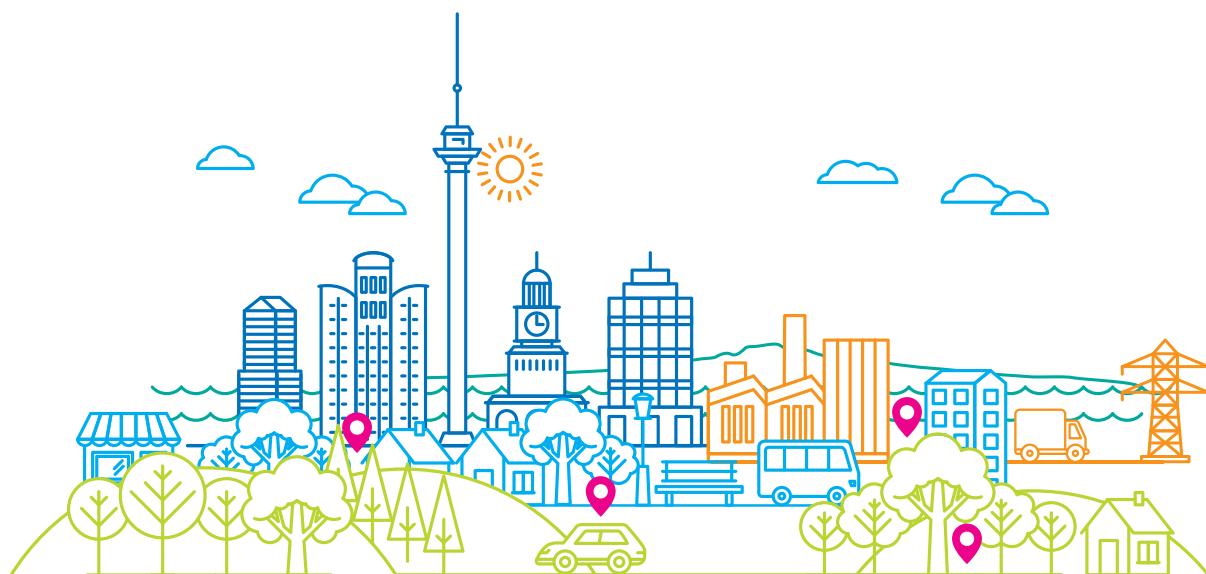
AUCKLAND'S HOMELESS COUNT

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata:*
# Auckland's Homeless Count report

## POINT IN TIME COUNT 2018

HOUSING FIRST
AUCKLAND

# *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*:
## Auckland's Homeless Count is about people

We would like to extend a special thank you to the Housing First Auckland Kaupapa Māori group for gifting the name *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* to this project. While not a literal translation, *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* acknowledges the mana within the whakapapa (lineage) of each person, recognising that each person embodies those who have come before them and those who will come in future. It reflects that a person is not defined by their homelessness and that people who are homeless are valued – they count.

## About Housing First Auckland

Housing First Auckland is a collective of six organisations working together using the Housing First approach to make homelessness in Auckland rare, brief and non-recurring. The collective was formed in March 2017 and contracted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to find homes and provide ongoing wrap-around support for chronically homeless people in the Auckland city centre, and Central, West and South Auckland. Funding for the Backbone that supports the service providers in the collective has been provided by Auckland Council and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

Kāhui Tū Kaha, Lifewise together with Auckland City Mission, LinkPeople and VisionWest are the five service providers in the collective, and backbone support is provided by the Wise Group's Wise Management Services. The strength of the collective is its multi-agency approach to providing ongoing and sustained wrap-around support to help people stay in their homes and never return to homelessness.

As of 28 February 2019, the collective had supported 491 primary adults and 431 children into permanent housing.

Housing First is an internationally recognised, evidence-based approach to ending homelessness. The approach is based on the premise that housing is a human right. Eligibility for housing is not contingent on any conditions other than willingness to maintain a tenancy. It focuses on client-led recovery, choice of housing and supports, community and social integration and the availability of wrap-around support for as long as it is needed.

*Access to safe, secure, permanent housing is a basic human right for all.*

# Acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by the Housing First Auckland backbone team. We would like to extend our utmost thanks to the people living without shelter who shared their stories and experiences with us. We also express our sincere gratitude to all who generously invested time, energy and resources into *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*, and particularly the following groups, people and organisations.

The Housing First Auckland Kaupapa Māori group for guidance and for gifting *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* its name.

The *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* Advisory Group for invaluable guidance in shaping the count's design and delivery. This group included people with experience of living without shelter, and representatives from Housing First Auckland, Auckland Council, James Liston Hostel, the Ministries of Social Development and Housing and Urban Development, New Zealand Prostitutes Collective and the University of Otago.

Chief executives from the Housing First Auckland collective representing Auckland City Mission, Lifewise, LinkPeople, Kāhui Tū Kaha, VisionWest and Wise Group for their strategic leadership throughout the count and contributing to the development of this report.

Representatives from Rainbow Youth and Breaking Boundaries who provided guidance which ensured the count survey tool sensitively and respectfully sought information on gender and sexual identity.

Staff from five Housing First Auckland providers who generously contributed advice and guidance, as well as staff from other teams who assisted at the sub-regional headquarters on the night.

Auckland Council as the funder of the count and, notably, the Arts, Community and Events department and research and policy teams for their guidance and input into developing the final report.

The four sub-regional coordinators for their immense efforts and commitment to coordinating delivery of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* at the local level and ensuring the count was delivered successfully.

Our generous sponsors: MKTG, Picnic Box and suppliers, Glen Eden Baptist Church, Eden Park Conference Centre, Manukau Baptist Church, Windsor Park Baptist Church, Panmure Community Hall and 1Solutions.

Staff from He Kainga Oranga, Otago University, Te Pou o te Whakaaro Nui and Statistics and the epidemiology and Biostatistics departments at University of Auckland for their contribution to the research.

The many organisations that provided data for inclusion in this research included transitional housing providers, district health boards, the Ministries of Social Development and Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Corrections.

Most importantly, thank you to the 657 volunteers, marae and organisations who generously contributed their time to *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

We hope that the findings presented in this report inform solutions to the complex issue of homelessness.

# A message from
# Phil Goff
# Mayor of Auckland

Housing First Auckland, with support from Auckland Council, took a bold step in conducting Auckland's first regional homelessness Point in Time Count. Quantifying the nature and scale of homelessness in Auckland, while a challenging task, forces us as a city to confront the reality of homelessness across our region.

The findings from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* are clear. On any given night, hundreds of Aucklanders are sleeping rough on the streets or in their cars, while thousands more live precarious lives as they move from one temporary dwelling to another, often with children.

We know from the data produced through this project that homelessness disproportionately affects Māori, a cohort which at 11% of the general Auckland population accounted for 42.7% of those surveyed in the count. This report identifies a clear and pressing need for culturally-responsive approaches to tackling the causes of the disproportionate impact of homelessness on Māori, and also on Pacific peoples.

The data reveals that gender and sexual identity also have a bearing on individual experiences of homelessness. These dimensions need to be incorporated into government, council and NGO efforts to tackle homelessness.

Housing First is an evidence-based programme that has been successfully providing housing with support to Aucklanders experiencing homelessness. Since starting in Auckland in 2017, 922 people, including 431 children, have been permanently housed and offered wrap-around support to address the underlying issues that may have contributed to their becoming homeless.

The positive social impact of this is good for the homeless, their families and our communities. It is also fiscally responsible. The financial cost of rough sleeping is estimated to exceed NZD$50,000 to NZD$80,000 per person per year. Investing in helping our most vulnerable people to turn their lives around is therefore the right thing and the smart thing to do.

The count confirms that the reasons for becoming homeless are varied and complex. Our response to tackling this issue must be collaborative and multi-faceted, drawing on resources and expertise from central and local government, NGOs and community providers. It must ensure that programmes such as Housing First and others responding to homelessness, can operate in partnership with other relevant initiatives such as addiction and mental health services.

Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who helped to make the homelessness count happen. It has provided data that will help support the objective of Housing First Auckland, Auckland Council and the Government to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

**Phil Goff**
Mayor of Auckland

# A message from
# **Fiona Hamilton**
# **Housing First Auckland**

On behalf of Housing First Auckland, I'm pleased to share the results of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*: Auckland's Homeless Count – Auckland's first region-wide Point in Time (PiT) Count of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation.

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was ambitious and logistically complex. It would not have been achieved without the commitment and support of many volunteers, people with lived experience of homelessness, community organisations, local businesses, iwi, central and local government organisations, researchers and academics who dedicated their time and resources to this project. *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was about a community working together and taking a step to ending homelessness. The collaborations and relationships formed are a significant outcome of the initiative on which we can and are continuing to build, such as data enhancement work between Housing First Auckland and the transitional housing providers.

Data is incredibly important for understanding and ending homelessness. In undertaking the PiT Count, we learned about the gaps we have in our data and the opportunities that exist for agencies and organisations to work together to strengthen data use. Good information gives clarity around what needs to change, especially regarding accessing services and providing effective responses to people experiencing homelessness.

The findings from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* provide a minimum number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across Auckland, as well as some insight into their demographics, experiences and service needs. In particular, we know Māori are significantly overrepresented among people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation. This highlights the importance of resourcing culturally-responsive approaches that meet the needs of

Māori experiencing homelessness. Other groups disproportionately affected by homelessness include Pasifika people, single female households with children, rainbow people and people with disabilities. Nearly half the people surveyed on the night of the count had experience of state foster care or a group home and had completed a prison sentence, and more than half had visited a hospital emergency department in the past year.

Moving forward, a systems approach that focuses on preventing and ending homelessness is needed, with services working together in a co-ordinated and joined up way. We need a focus on permanent, sustainable homes and the right supports for people to flourish. This report makes recommendations to take us in this direction.

I'd like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who participated in the survey and shared their experiences and stories with us. We are committed to working with you and the many other people living without shelter across Tāmaki Makaurau to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

**Fiona Hamilton**
Housing First Auckland Programme Manager

# Executive summary

This report presents results from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count*, the first Point in Time (PiT) Count of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation, which took place across the Auckland region[1] on 17 September 2018.

In 2017, Auckland Council funded Housing First Auckland to deliver the PiT Count to enhance understanding of the size and nature of homelessness experienced by people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation. With a regional focus, *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*, built on the PiT Counts conducted in the inner city between 2004 and 2016 by central city agencies, including Auckland City Mission.

## Goals of the count

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata had several objectives.*

1. Gather information to improve understanding of the demographics and experience of people living without shelter (through the survey) and in temporary accommodation (through service level data.)

2. Provide data to inform Auckland's progress to ending homelessness, specifically in relation to people living without shelter and those living in temporary accommodation.

3. Design and deliver a count methodology for use in the New Zealand context which can contribute to current policy discussions on measuring and understanding homelessness.

## Scope of the count

The 2015 Statistics New Zealand definition of homelessness was the starting point to determine the scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. The final scope included people in the categories of 'living without shelter' and 'living in temporary accommodation'. The other two categories, 'sharing accommodation' and 'uninhabitable housing', were deemed outside of scope.

## Methodology for the count

The count collected data using two different methods.

1. Between 9.30pm and 12.30am on Monday, 17 September 2018, 577 volunteer interviewers went out across the Auckland region, an area of nearly 5,000 square kilometres, and gathered data through a street count (tally). A survey was also administered if people were awake, approachable and willing to participate, which collected information on people's demographics, experience and history of service use.

2. Following the street count, service level data, including basic demographic information, was collected from participating government departments and service providers to determine how many people were living in temporary accommodation on the same night as the street count[2].

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1   Excluding the Great Barrier Local Board area.
2   More details about data sources are provided in the data collection section of the methodology section.

Volunteer briefing underway on the night of the count.

## The survey sample size

In addition to quantifying the number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation, the street count provided an opportunity for people living without shelter to participate in a short survey about themselves and their experience of homelessness.

However, the small sample size means the survey population does not provide a statistically reliable description of the homeless population and caution is urged in extrapolating the findings of the survey to the wider population of people living without shelter.

The survey data does, however, provide useful insight for consideration.

Additionally, there are lessons relating to delivering the PiT Count methodology (for example, volunteer management) and understanding the reach of the count, that can contribute to policy discussions on quantifying and understanding homelessness across New Zealand.

## Limitations of PiT Counts

PiT Counts are an established research method in North America and can be used by government and local services to identify trends and provide insights that can guide national and local efforts to end homelessness (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012; Government of Canada, 2017). However, a Point in Time Count does not and cannot count every person living without shelter (Cowan, Breakey & Fischer, 1988; Burt, 1993; Dennis, 1993). Factors for this include volunteers not being able to cover the entire region and people living without shelter inadvertently or actively avoiding being counted. More information about the

limitations and considerations of this methodology can be found in the research design and fieldwork section of this report.

## Validating the Auckland PiT Count

A study by Metraux et al. (2001) using administrative data collected from homeless service providers estimated the annual number of homeless individuals is 2.5 to 10.2 times greater than can be obtained using a PiT Count. In response to this limitation, a validation exercise was built into the methodology of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* to quantify the number of people missed during the count in order to provide an estimated number of people living without shelter on 17 September 2018. More information about the data validation exercise can be found in the research design and fieldwork section of this report.

## Findings

This section details the headline findings; more detail can be found in the findings section of this report.

On the night of 17 September 2018, a minimum of 3,674 people were living without shelter or in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region (Figure 1). This number includes a minimum of 800 people living without shelter (which is a validation-adjusted number based on a count of 336 people) and 2,874 people who were reported by providers to be in temporary accommodation.

# People living without shelter and in temporary accommodation

**800** people estimated to be living without shelter based on a validation exercise[3]

▼

Based on the actual count of **336** people living without shelter

**179** people living rough

**157** people living in cars

| **335** adults | **1** child |
|---|---|

▼

Of which, **59** met the screening criteria and gave consent to begin the survey

**45** people living rough

**13** people living in cars

**1** person didn't confirm

A minimum of **2,874** people in temporary accommodation placements[4]

▼

**1027** people in MSD[5] Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant funded accommodation

| **474** adults | **553** children |
|---|---|

✚

**1,768** people in transitional housing and other temporary settings[6]

| **1041** adults | **746** children | **60** age unknown |
|---|---|---|

✚

**79** adults in mental health and addiction services[7]

A minimum of **3,674** people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region.

*Figure 1:* Minimum number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation.

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3   More information on the validation exercise is provided in the methodology section.
4   These 2,874 people are in 1,325 places. A placement may constitute one or more people.
5    Ministry of Social Development.
6   This includes data provided by 12 transitional and other temporary housing providers, and the Department of Corrections on their probation managed transitional housing.
7   This includes data from 12 mental health and addiction services from across Auckland's three district health boards. These 79 adults were homeless upon entering the service and the assumption is that they would have been homeless on night of the count.

## The street count tally of people living without shelter

A total of 336 people were counted as living without shelter on the night of the count. Of this number:

- The largest concentration across the region was in central Auckland in the Waitematā Local Board area (128 people), the second largest concentration was in the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board area (39 people), followed by the Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board area (18 people).

- 47% (157 people) were in vehicles.

## Data from the street survey of people living without shelter

Of the 336 people counted as living without shelter, 59 (17.6%) met the criteria to participate in the survey and provided consent to start the survey. While the small sample size means the results do not provide a statistically reliable description of the homeless population, it is worth noting that:

- Māori, at 11% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among those surveyed at 42.7% (53 people).

- People with a Rainbow identity[8] and disabled people were represented in the sample at a disproportionate level when compared to general population data.

- 45.7% (21 people) had spent more than five years living without shelter.

- 41.3% (19 people) had experienced homelessness before the age of 18.

- People reported a high use of public systems, particularly:

  - 44.7% (21 people) had experienced foster care or a group home as a child.

  - 45.7% (21 people) had completed a prison sentence.

- 54.6% (24 people) visited a hospital emergency department in the past 12 months and 18% reported 10 or more visits.

- 41.0% (18 people) were admitted to hospital in the past 12 months.

## Service data on people living in temporary accommodation

Data provided about people in temporary accommodation including Ministry of Social Development Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (MSD EH SNG) funded accommodation, mental health and addiction services and transitional housing and other temporary settings highlighted:

- At least 46% of people living in temporary accommodation were under 18 years old (1,300 people).

- Māori[9], at 11% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among people living in temporary accommodation at 39.9%.

- Pasifika people[10], at 15% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among people living in temporary accommodation at 38. 8%.

- Single-adults with child/ren are 2.5 times more likely than two-adults with child/ren to be experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation; with 82.6% of single-adults, with child/ren, being female.

# Summary

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was a significant piece of developmental work for Auckland and New Zealand. It is the largest PiT Count conducted in New Zealand to date, both in relation to the geographical coverage area and the number of volunteers involved.

The count found that on 17 September 2018 there was a minimum[11] of 3,674 people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region. It also highlighted that homelessness disproportionately impacts certain groups and people living without

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8  A 'rainbow identity' is an inclusive term to identify people who have a diverse sex, gender identity or sexual identity.
9  Please refer to the results for information on how ethnicity was categorised.
10  Ibid.
11  A 'minimum' because the number does not include data on people living in boarding houses or campgrounds (as included in the Statistics New Zealand definition of homelessness); data on people in emergency departments, inpatient services or Police cells; or data from all transitional housing providers.

shelter reported high use of public systems.

Homelessness has far-reaching impacts on people, whānau and communities, and there are strong ethical, moral and financial drivers to end it.

Homelessness is a complex issue requiring considerable changes to how the system currently works. *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was an important step forward, demonstrating the willingness of people, agencies and organisations to work together to better understand the situation in order to respond more effectively. This collaboration and momentum can continue to be built upon to enhance the way in which we all work together using data to create better outcomes. To be successful, solutions will need to be grounded in partnership to create a joined-up systems approach which improves prevention efforts and services for people experiencing homelessness.

# Recommendations

## a).  Policy

It is recommended that:

1.  Government ministries, particularly housing, health, education and justice, work collaboratively together and with providers to respond early and promptly to prevent homelessness occurring. This would include measures such as discharge planning to ensure people are not discharged into homelessness.

2.  A national homelessness action plan is developed in collaboration with community sector stakeholders to which regions and cities can align their plans and efforts to end homelessness, with a focus on data collection to inform evidence-based responses.

3.  The New Zealand definition of homelessness incorporates a cultural dimension including a Māori worldview.

4.  A coordinated, joined-up and consistent approach is taken to designing and delivering outreach programmes across the region which connect people to housing and support, involving central and local government and government and non-government services.

5.  There is recognition of the high number of children in temporary accommodation and a permanent housing response for people with children is planned and resourced.

## b).  Planning, funding and service delivery

It is recommended that:

6.  Focus is placed on providing people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation with permanent housing options.

7.  Services are responsive to groups who disproportionately experience homelessness including Māori, Pasifika people, rainbow people and disabled people.

8.  A targeted response is provided to support local board areas with the highest concentrations of people living without shelter, including the Waitematā, Ōtara-Papatoetoe and Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board areas. This should be supported by a regional approach that responds to the fact that people are living without shelter across the region, including remote rural areas.

9.  People with lived experience of homelessness are represented at all levels of planning.



Volunteer resources ready for the count.

## c).  Data

Nationally, it is recommended that:

10.  A homelessness data expert group is established to support the development of a national approach to data collection. Membership could include Housing First and transitional housing providers, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and experts on Kaupapa Māori approaches and Māori data sovereignty.

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*: Auckland's Homeless Count report  |  *Executive summary*

For Auckland it is recommended that:

11. Providers move to delivering a coordinated access and By-Name List approach, which involves working in a more coordinated way to improve access to housing and support services. This approach also provides an understanding of the level of need for housing and support services across Auckland to inform city-wide planning and funding.

    11a. Prioritisation is given to developing an approach appropriate for Auckland's cultural context, affirming the mana of people experiencing homelessness.

12. Data collected by government ministries and departments, including housing, health, education and justice, is strengthened to inform sector-wide responses to end homelessness.

    12a. Funders support enhanced data collection, data sharing and planning across the wider social sector to better inform funding and planning.

For other cities and towns considering data collection approaches, based on learnings from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*, it is recommended that:

13. If capacity and collaborative agency relationships exist, consideration is given to developing a By-Name List (which can include delivering a Registry Week). If not, consider proceeding with an anonymous PiT Count and building a post-count validation exercise into the project.

## Further research

It is recommended that more research is required to understand:

1. The number of people in shared accommodation, including couch-surfing and over-crowding, and the nature of people's experiences.

2. Whether the location and availability of transitional housing meets the level and location of demand across the region.

3. The needs of people in temporary accommodation, including people in caravan parks and boarding houses, with a view to creating permanent housing solutions.

4. The situation for women experiencing homelessness.

## Next steps

1. The findings of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* will be reviewed by the multi-agency Housing First Auckland Governance Group to identify opportunities for the organisations that are represented to improve collaboration towards preventing and addressing homelessness so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurring.

2. Work will continue between Housing First Auckland and Auckland's temporary accommodation providers to strengthen and enhance the use of data to improve outcomes, with a focus on consistent data measures and collection.

3. Services within and affiliated to Housing First Auckland will continue to develop a coordinated entry approach, which includes developing By-Name Lists that respond to the Auckland context. This will require services to develop shared data practices that contribute to improving access to services for people experiencing homelessness.

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# Introduction

Homelessness has a significant impact on individuals and families, and results in significant economic costs for communities and the country. The drivers of homelessness are vast and include a range of personal and structural factors. There have been some very useful pieces of research focussing on homelessness in Auckland, and *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* adds to this body of work by helping us better understand the numbers of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region, and the nature of their experiences. In recent years a range of measures have been designed and resourced, at both a central and local level, to respond to homelessness in Auckland; *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* has sought to inform these measures further.

## Background

### Impact of homelessness

Homelessness can ultimately be conceptualised as an exclusion from the basic human right of having a home (Hall, 2016). Whether short or long-term, homelessness is one of the most severe forms of disadvantage and social exclusion a person can experience. People and families experiencing homelessness are often excluded from participating in social, recreational, cultural and economic opportunities in their communities. People who are homeless are less likely to be employed, more likely to interact with the criminal justice system and have higher levels of health care need (Bevitt et al., 2015; Walsh, 2003; Power et al., 1999). Importantly, some health problems are a product of living without adequate shelter, such as poor nutrition, dental health and hygiene, and some health problems contribute to people becoming homeless including substance misuse and unmet mental health needs (Leggatt-Cook, 2007).

Homelessness also results in significant social and economic costs not only to individuals and their families but also to communities and society. The financial cost is significant and increases the longer a person remains homeless (Gladwell, 2006). Based on international research, the annual cost of rough sleeping is estimated to be between NZD$50,000 to NZD$80,000 per person, per year (Ly & Latimer, 2015).

## Drivers of homelessness

Many factors contribute to and increase the likelihood of a person becoming homeless, with research arguing both individual and structural factors play a role (Main, 1998; O'Flaherty, 2004, as cited in Johnson, Scutella, Tseng & Wood, 2015).

Individual risk factors may include income, mental health (also made worse by being homeless), addictions, family violence, head injury, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity, support network, experience of state care and trauma (Teesson, Hodder & Buhrich, 2003; Calsyn & Roades, 1994; Hernmani, Slusser, Struleninlg, & Link, 1997). Elliott, Bjelajac, Fallot, Markoff and Reed (2005) estimated that most clients in human service systems are trauma survivors (cited in Pihama et al., 2017). Structural risk factors may include housing affordability, poverty and employment, housing demand, housing supply, social services and welfare models and health services (Kemp, Lynch & Mackay, 2001; Flatau, Eardley, Spooner & Forbes, 2009; Pinkney & Ewing, 2006; Taylor & Sharpe, 2008).

### Housing supply and affordability
A primary driver of homelessness in the Auckland context is a lack of adequate housing supply. Housing and homelessness are priority issues facing Auckland (Auckland Council, 2017). Rapid growth in Auckland's

population is out-stripping growth in housing supply. Housing affordability (for rent and purchase) is declining. With rents rising faster than wages, progressively more of the household budget is being taken up by rent (Ninness, 2018).

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2017) data shows Auckland has a shortage of 44,738 houses for its population (Miller, 2017). Johnson, Howden-Chapman & Eaqub (2018) provide an alternative estimate of this shortfall (Figure 2), assuming housing is required at a rate that maintains the present occupancy of three people per dwelling overall. This shortfall is estimated at 28,000 dwellings over the past 10 years. Either way, there is a significant shortfall to be met before Auckland has the required housing supply level.

## Current data on demand

Data below is drawn from the Housing Quarterly Report (September 2018) produced by The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In Auckland, compared to the previous quarter (ending June 2018), the number of:

- Applicants on the Social Housing Register[12] increased by 8.1%, from 4,458 to 4,818.

- Approved temporary accommodation places increased by 12.9%, from 949 to 1,071 places.

- EH SNGs approved increased by 43.1%, from 4,099 to 5,867, with EH SNG expenditure increasing from $5,969,545 to $8,071,793.

## Responses to homelessness

In the past four years several national and regional developments have been put in place in response to homelessness.

### July 2016: Increased funding to transitional housing providers

This programme expanded the number of places available nationally for families without secure housing from 643 in September 2016 to 1,663 in September 2017 with a target of 2,155 places by the end of 2017.
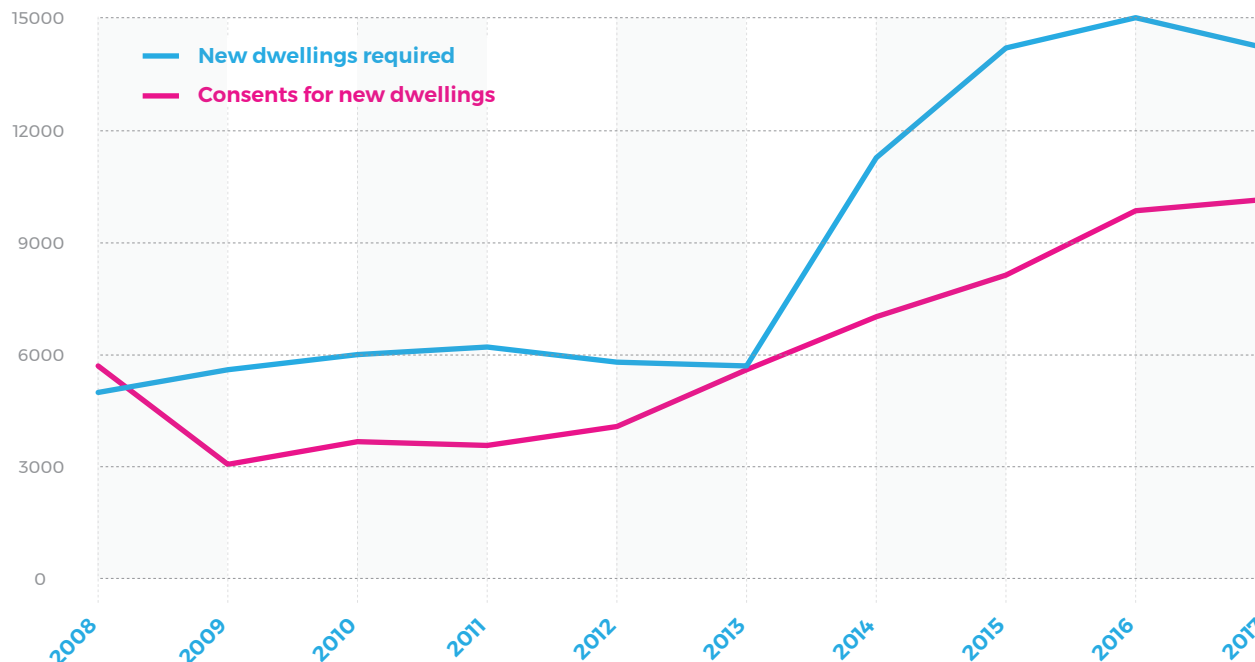


*Figure 2:* Estimate of population-based housing demand in Auckland 2008 to 2017.[13]

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12 The Housing Register is prioritised by need and consists of applicants who have been assessed as being eligible for social housing.

13 These estimates are based on Statistics New Zealand's Sub-National Population Estimates and Building Consents series. They assume the ideal house building rate is the same as the average dwelling occupancy rate of three people per dwelling.

**July 2016: Ministry of Social Development (MSD) introduces Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNG)**

Introduced to fund individuals and families to stay in short-term emergency accommodation, the EH SNG pays for up to seven days accommodation at a time. Accommodation is supplied by commercial and community providers who are not otherwise contracted by MSD to provide accommodation; this often means accommodation in motels (MSD, 2018).

**March 2017: Housing First Auckland is formed**

Auckland City Mission, Lifewise, Kāhui Tū Kaha, LinkPeople and VisionWest are funded by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (formerly MSD) to provide Housing First services for people who are chronically homeless in the city centre and central, west and south Auckland. The objective is to work with people experiencing chronic homelessness to locate permanent housing and provide ongoing, flexible, wrap-around support to help them remain housed and improve their quality of life.

The agencies decide to take a Collective Impact approach in recognition of its strengths in addressing complex social issues (Cabaj & Weaver, 2016), and the Wise Group is funded by Auckland Council to provide backbone services. Strategically, the backbone function supports the collective's leadership team to work on systems change and developing a systems approach to ending homelessness. Operationally, the backbone provides project management and infrastructure support with a focus on enhancing evaluation and research, data collection, stakeholder engagement, shared and coordinated communications and sharing good practice.

**August 2017: Auckland Council adopts a position on its involvement in ending homelessness**

Mounting concern about the increasing number of people experiencing homelessness highlighted the need for council to form a position on the nature and extent of its involvement in ending homelessness. In 2017, Auckland Council (ENV/2017/118) adopted a responsive approach where homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring. Council's role (in addition to the status quo) is to strengthen established levers, with a focus on strategic leadership, including a cross-sectoral homelessness plan; inter-sectoral coordination in terms of a shared vision and goals; systematic integration of homelessness into relevant policies and regulation; development of a sustainable funding base, and monitoring and evaluation.

**October 2017: Auckland Council funds Housing First Auckland to deliver a regional PiT Count**

Responding to a need identified by the sector to enhance data on homelessness. PiT Counts are a method used extensively in North America and it was perceived as an appropriate first step for enhancing Auckland's understanding of the nature of homelessness experienced by people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation.

**May - October 2018: Government announces $100M investment in homelessness responses (New Zealand Government, 2018, 4 May).**

Comprising a $37M investment in a 2018 winter plan response and funding for an increase in transitional housing places, short-term contracted motel units and Housing First places. It also included the allocation of $63.4M to expand and sustain Housing First services in other areas of high need over the next four years.

## Policies, strategies and plans

Currently there is no national strategy on housing or homelessness. However, accompanying the responses above, there are several strategies and plans that have been, or are in the process of being, developed.

- Government has a current policy focus on determining the most appropriate research methods to quantify the categories of homelessness, based on Statistics New Zealand's definition. Learnings from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* will be shared with the newly-formed Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD), responsible for many areas previously held by Ministry of Social Development.

- The Independent Māori Statutory Board (IMSB) has developed the Kāinga Strategic Action Plan: A plan to improve housing outcomes for Māori in Auckland. Development of the plan was supported by Te Matapihi and in collaboration with a range of stakeholders including whānau and community.

- Auckland Council is working with partners to develop and implement Kia whai kāinga tātou katoa: a regional, cross-sectoral homelessness plan for Auckland. This plan focuses on collaborative initiatives across council, government, with Māori, community organisations, housing, and health and social service providers. It has a strong focus on preventing homelessness and intervening early to make homelessness "rare brief and non-recurring" including for tamariki and their whānau.  As part of a system change response, the plan integrates housing solutions with positive wellbeing, and connections with whānau and community. Implementation will build on existing initiatives, with new initiatives to start in 2019.

# Existing research on homelessness in Auckland

This section summarises research relevant to understanding the size and nature of homelessness in Auckland.

## Quantitative research

Between 2004 and 2016 central Auckland's homelessness agencies, supported by Auckland City Mission, undertook regular street counts to determine the number of people living without shelter within a 3km radius of the Sky Tower. Figure 3 shows the number of people counted over this time. Please note, people living in temporary accommodation is not included due to significant variations in the methodology.

Using multiples sources including Census 2013 and service data, Dr Kate Amore (2016) estimated that a population of 20,296 people in the Auckland region were severely housing deprived[14]. This included 3,150 people living in temporary accommodation and 771 people living without shelter.

Data from a sample of community emergency housing providers, collected for A Stocktake of New Zealand's Housing (Johnson, Howden-Chapman & Eaqub; 2018),

found levels of homelessness far outstrip current levels of available assistance. "Over 2017, the 'turnaway rate[15]' for these providers ranged from 82% to 91% – that is, for every 10 homeless people who approached them requiring housing, only one to two people could be accommodated" (p.35).

## Qualitative research

Research by Groot et al. (2008) explored how homeless people live their lives, with a focus on the nature of their resilience. The objective was to increase the understanding of researchers, policy makers and service providers. Their work recommends the need to "address the fundamentally social nature of homelessness as much more than a housing issue. Additionally, this work highlights that it may be important to document how homeless people see themselves in relation to their communities of origin and the wider public" (p.5).

In 2015, *Invisible in the SuperCity: Hidden homelessness in Auckland* was released by the Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit. The report identified several recommendations at the regional and national level including ensuring children have a right to adequate housing, the need for a national homeless strategy, improvements to the volume of affordable and secure housing and improved access to MSD services
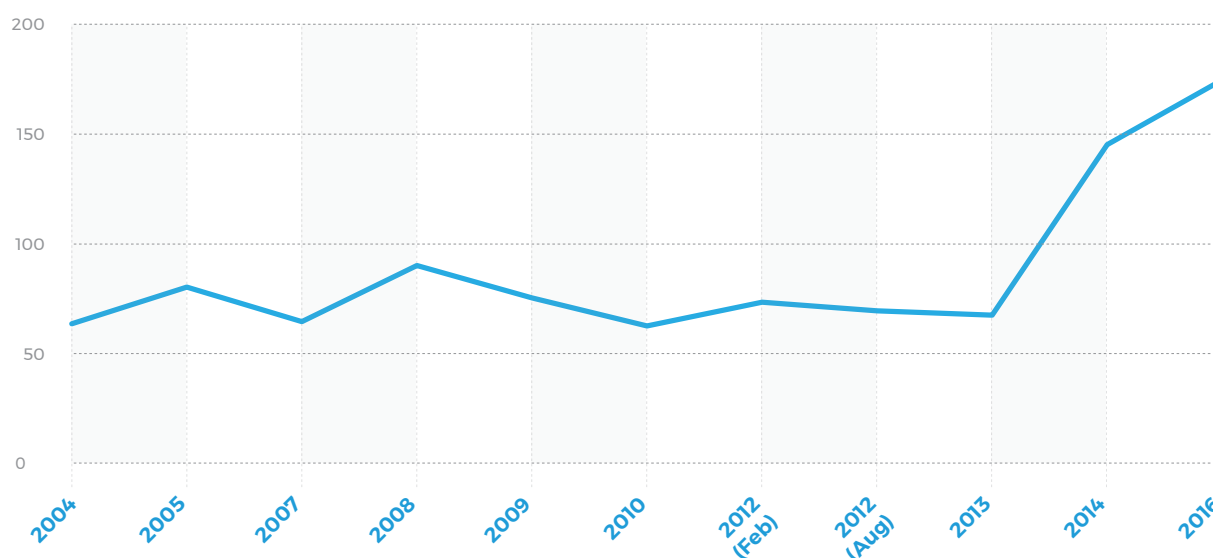


*Figure 3:* Inner city street counts within a 3km radius of Sky City 2004 to 2016.

14  A situation where people are living in severely inadequate housing due to a lack of access to minimally adequate housing. This means not being able to access an acceptable dwelling to rent, let alone buy.

15  A 'Turnaway' situation is likely to involve the person or family being referred to other agencies or providers, who may be able to provide the person or family with temporary accommodation.

for people with acute housing needs. In that same year, Beaton, Cain, Robinson, Hearn and ThinkPlace (2015) produced, *An insight into the experience of rough sleeping in central Auckland*. This was a qualitative piece of research highlighting that many factors contribute to people living on the streets. Additionally, while living on the streets, people are resourceful and develop strategies and methods to cope. The main findings included:

1. People have different reasons for seeking accommodation and the difficulties of being housed can sometimes trigger a return to the streets.

2. While many rough sleepers spoke of their 'choice' to sleep rough, it became apparent that this notion is complex with the 'choice' to sleep rough most often the result of having no other options.

3. Tensions between rough sleepers and the public can arise as rough sleepers live their private lives in the public domain.

In 2018, Te Miringa Trust commissioned Lifewise to improve better understanding of women's experiences of homelessness in the Auckland city centre through a co-design process. Participants were asked to share their stories of homelessness. Additional information was sought, including pathways into and out of housing; the practicalities of everyday life; and engagement with formal and informal networks.

Research described in this section has contributed to improving local government and social service understanding about the number of people experiencing homelessness in Auckland and the nature of their experiences. However, agencies in Auckland identified there was an opportunity to build on this work to better understand the size and nature of homelessness experienced by people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation. In October 2017, Auckland Council made the decision to fund the delivery of a regional PiT Count.

# Research design and fieldwork

This section explains the approach to the research design and fieldwork undertaken as part of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

- Chief executives from the Housing First Auckland (HFA) collective considered whether a PiT Count or a Registry Week (which creates a By-Name List) approach would be taken. Ultimately, they agreed to proceed with a PiT Count.

- The aim and objectives of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* were then developed with a line of sight to Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness. Informal engagement with a range of researchers and community representatives contributed to the research design and delivery. Additionally, a multi-agency advisory group, including people with experience of living without shelter, was formed to guide the project team.

- To deliver on the research aim and objectives, a mixed-method research approach was developed. Ethical approval was sought through the Auckland Council Human Participation Ethics Committee. This valuable process contributed to the design of the research and fieldwork.

- On 17 September 2018, 577 trained volunteers were deployed across the Auckland region to collect data on people living without shelter. The following week, in recognition of the limitations of PiT Counts, a validation exercise was undertaken to inform a more accurate estimate. Additionally, in the two weeks following the street count, providers submitted their available data on people living in temporary accommodation on the night of 17 September.

## Determining the approach

When deciding the best approach for quantifying homelessness and understanding peoples experience of homelessness in Auckland, the HFA chief executives considered two options; the anonymous PiT Count and a Registry Week approach, which creates a By-Name List.

Table 1 provides the definition of each approach and summarises information from the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012), Mercy Foundation (2017) and 20,000 Homes Campaign, (n.d.). In Canada, a PiT Count is required to receive central government funding. However, growing numbers of North American and Australian communities are also taking a Registry Week approach and creating a By-Name List.

Informed by a proposal outlining and comparing the strengths and weaknesses of PiT Counts and By-Name Registry Week approaches, HFA chief executives decided to proceed with a PiT Count in Auckland, on the basis that the level of resourcing in the sector could make it difficult to respond to the demand a regional Registry Week would likely generate. Additionally, there was concern that a Registry Week approach would raise expectations among the homeless community that needs would be met, and if they could not be met, damage relationships.

As with any research approach, PiT Counts have strengths and weaknesses. These are summarised in Table 2 (Allen & Clarke, 2018; National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012; Flaming & Burns, 2017).

Table 1: *Definitions for a Point in Time Count, Registry Week and By-Name List.*

| Term | Definition |
|------|-----------|
| PiT Count | A count on a single night of people in a community who are experiencing homelessness, this can include both unsheltered and sheltered (people in temporary accommodation) populations. A PiT Count establishes the dimensions of homelessness and the nature of people's experience. |
| Registry Week | A Registry Week is a targeted set of activity over a week that harnesses resources from the community to gather identifiable and actionable data on every individual/family requiring housing, and their support needs. This information contributes to a By-Name List. |
| A By-Name List | A By-Name List stores identifiable information on every individual/family requiring housing, and their support needs. Information is collected through use of an initial triage tool, the Vulnerability Index Service Prioritisation Assessment Tool (VI-SPDAT) when people interact with services, outreach or registry weeks. This allows a community to know at any point how many people are homeless and the level of their need. Agencies then actively use this list when matching people and families to services. |

Table 2: *Strengths and weaknesses of PiT Counts.*

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|-----------|-----------|
| More likely to capture people who do not engage with services. | Expensive to deliver. |
| Long history of implementation in North America to provide guidance. | Complex to organise. |
| Anonymised data carries a lower privacy risk. | Does not typically result in an immediate service response. |
| Establish the dimensions of homelessness and help to track progress toward the goal of ending homelessness. | Issues around consent must be carefully managed. |
| Identifying the characteristics of the local population. | Hard to ensure that people are not duplicated -either unintentionally or intentionally. |
| Increasing capacity to undertake a local needs assessment. | Do not count everyone living without shelter. |
| Enhancing system planning and programme development. | Out of date as soon as it is completed. |
| Does not raise expectations that participants will receive a service response in the way that Registry Weeks and By-name approaches do. | Does not provide participants with a service response. |
| Increasing public awareness about homelessness. | |

## Developing the PiT Count for the Auckland context

### Determining the scope of the PiT Count

The scope of the count was developed with a line of sight to Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness, as recommended by the PiT Count Toolkit (Donaldson, 2017). This required acknowledging that the methodology was not intended to, nor could it, meet all of Auckland's homelessness data needs. Donaldson (2017) advises that, "Efforts to make the PiT Count too expansive may reduce the accuracy of your data and mislead stakeholders about the extent of homelessness in your community" (p. 20).

Considering this advice and in consultation with the advisory group, the scope of the Auckland PiT Count would include the categories 'living without shelter' and 'living in temporary accommodation'.

However, two categories, 'sharing accommodation' and 'uninhabitable housing', were deemed outside of scope. These types of living situations are inherently difficult to measure, and a PiT Count is not the appropriate research method to use (Donaldson, 2017).

Table 3 outlines these living situations and whether or not they were included in the scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

### Limitations and considerations of the scope

There are several important limitations and considerations which relate to the scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

1. Due to logistical challenges associated with including Great Barrier Island, the decision was made to not include the island in the count coverage area.

**Table 3:** *Statistics New Zealand's 2015 definition of homelessness and the scope of Ira Mata, Ira Tangata.*

| | Operational category | Living situation | Included | Counted by |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Without shelter<br>Living situations that provide no shelter, or makeshift shelter, are considered as 'without shelter'. | People living rough. | Yes | Street count (survey or tally) |
| | | People living in make shift shelters such as a shack/car. | Yes | Street count (survey or tally) |
| 2. | Temporary accommodation<br>Living situations are considered 'temporary accommodation' when they provide shelter overnight, or when 24-hour accommodation is provided in a non-private dwelling that is not intended to be lived in long-term. | People living in night shelters. | N/A | |
| | | People living in transitional or emergency housing. | Yes | Service level data |
| | | People living in marae transitional housing. | Yes | Service level data |
| | | People living in mental health and addiction services. | Yes | Service level data |
| | | People living in motor camps or boarding houses. | No | |
| 3. | Sharing accommodation<br>Living situations that provide temporary accommodation for people through sharing someone else's private dwelling is considered 'sharing accommodation'. The usual residents of the dwelling are not considered homeless. | People living in someone else's place/couch surfing. | No | |
| 4. | Uninhabitable housing<br>Living situations where people reside in a dilapidated dwelling are considered 'uninhabitable housing'. | People living in uninhabitable housing. | No | |

2. 'Sharing accommodation' is a category within Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness. It includes people and families staying with friends, family or others because they have nowhere else to go. It also includes couch-surfing and overcrowded living situations. However, PiT Counts are not designed to measure the extent of shared accommodation in a community. While outside the scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*, it is important to recognise that sharing accommodation is estimated to be the largest category of homelessness across Auckland at 16,350 people (Amore, 2016).

It is also well-evidenced that because homeless youth tend to couch surf, as a result they are less likely to be included in a street count (Curry et al., 2017). As a solution, many international communities choose instead to deliver targeted youth engagement events to size and understand the nature of youth homelessness. This approach was considered for inclusion in the scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. However, as the scope was not including other groups over-represented in shared accommodation, such as Pasifika people and women, and due to capacity issues and concerns around the method's limitations to accurately gather this data, it was decided to limit the count's scope to 'people living without shelter' and 'in temporary accommodation'. This is an area requiring further investigation.

3. Statistics New Zealand's definition of temporary accommodation includes boarding houses, hostels and caravan parks/campgrounds. However, these were deemed out of scope for *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* for several reasons.

   – This type of accommodation is privately run. Considerable resource would be required to gain access to business data, including client details.

   – People living in boarding houses, hostels and caravan parks or campgrounds may do so because it is a convenient option or they like the company that goes with living in a multiple-person dwelling.

   – Anyone in receipt of an EH SNG who stayed in a boarding house, hostel or caravan park/ campground on the night of the count, would have been included in the EH SNG figures provided by the Ministry of Social Development.

4. Statistics New Zealand's definition focuses solely on homelessness as the absence of shelter, and lacks

a cultural dimension. Memmott, Long, Chambers and Spring (2003) highlight this limitation, finding that indigenous people's needs may be at best misunderstood and minimally serviced, or at worst overlooked and not addressed. The categories used to define 'homeless' people may thus directly influence the understanding and perception of the needs of this group.

Groot and Peters (2016) and Groot, Hodgetts, Waimare-Nikora and Rua (2011) argue that situations in which many Māori find themselves require us to extend official definitions of homelessness. Canada recently launched an Indigenous definition of homelessness: "Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities" (Thistle, 2017, p.6).
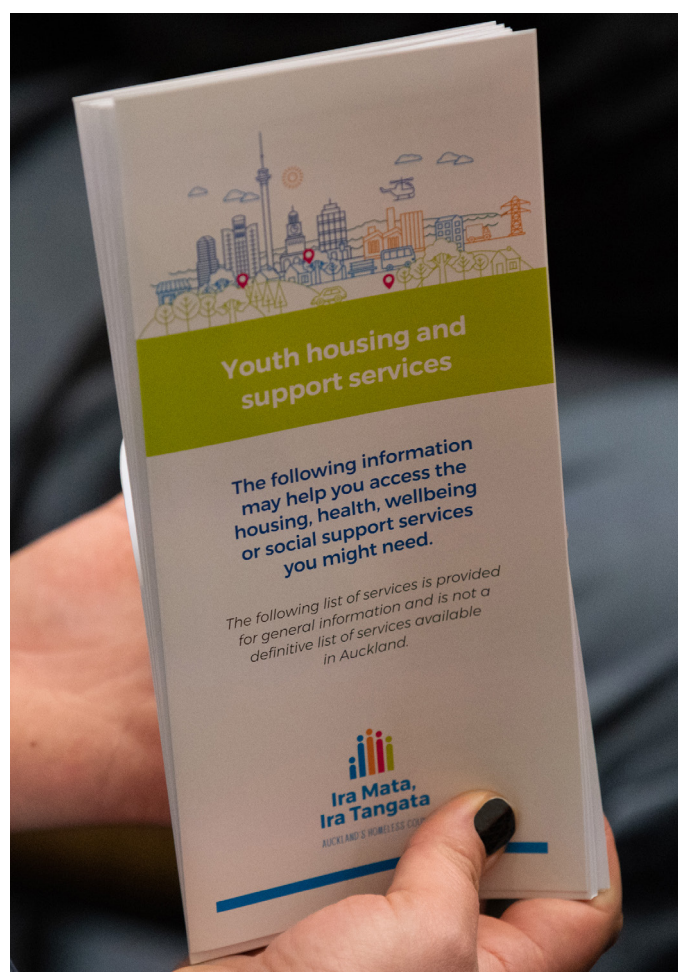


Resources ready to be distributed on the night.

## Aim and objectives

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* aimed to count the number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region on the night of 17 September 2018. The objectives also included:

- Gathering information to improve understanding of the demographics and experiences of people living without shelter (through the survey) and in temporary accommodation (through service level data).

- Providing data on people living without shelter and those living in temporary accommodation to inform Auckland's progress to ending homelessness.

- Designing and delivering a PiT count in the New Zealand context which can contribute to current policy discussions on measuring and understanding homelessness.

## The advisory group

An advisory group was formed to support the design and delivery of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. The group met every three weeks until the count was delivered and was consulted on all major aspects of the project. Membership included people with lived experience of homelessness, representatives from the Housing First Auckland Collective, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Auckland Council, New Zealand Prostitutes Collective, University of Otago and James Liston Hostel.

A set of guiding principles were developed and endorsed, as follows.

1. Do no harm – protect confidentiality and treat everyone with respect and dignity.

2. Consistency across Auckland – ensure a consistent approach across the region.

3. Collaboration is critical – we cannot and are not doing this alone.

4. Housing is a human right – we are doing this because we want to end homelessness in Auckland.

## Method

A mixed-method research approach was developed which included:

1. A street count of people living without shelter – to quantify the number of people in this living situation on 17 September 2018.

2. A survey of people living without shelter who were awake, approachable and willing – to understand more about their experiences on 17 September 2018.

3. A tally and analysis of data from providers about people living in temporary accommodation on the night of the street count – to quantify the number of people in this living situation and understand more about their experiences on 17 September 2018.

## Responsiveness to Māori

Purposeful steps were taken to ensure the inclusion of Te Ao Māori in the design and delivery of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*

- Representation of Māori people with lived experience on the advisory group.

- Engagement with the Housing First Auckland Kaupapa Māori group and implementation of the feedback provided.

- Engagement with Māori service providers.

- Consideration of language, i.e. recognising the definition of 'homelessness' is narrow and problematic, therefore avoided in the survey.

- Downloadable versions of the survey in Te Reo Māori (along with Samoan and Tongan) for volunteers who were speakers of these languages.

## Ethics

Ethical approval for the count was sought through the Auckland Council Human Participation Ethics Committee, which provided valuable feedback throughout the process. Approval was granted on 7 September 2018. The ethical considerations associated with *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* and their management are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: *The main ethical considerations associated with design and delivery Ira Mata, Ira Tangata and how they were managed.*

| | Ethical consideration | How it was managed |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Need to manage incidents and concerns relating to volunteers and participants. | • Protocols developed for volunteers in relation to people with children, those under 18-years-old and critical incidents.<br>• Establish a regional support team for the night. |
| 2. | Volunteers approaching people living without shelter. | • Guidance given that people living without shelter are to only be approached if awake, participation is voluntary, and people are to be treated in a respectful, non-judgemental and friendly way.<br>• Volunteers were sought who had experience of homelessness themselves or working in the social sector.<br>• Volunteers received online training and an hour-long briefing on the night of the count. Volunteer Team Leaders also attended a two-hour training session. |
| 3. | Volunteers might come across people living without shelter with children under 18-years-old. | • Work was undertaken with MSD to secure emergency accommodation for the night. Protocol developed and integrated into the survey to assist people in offering the accommodation should children be present. |
| 4. | Maintaining confidentiality. | • Data was not reported or presented as areas smaller than a local board area.  This ensures locations where people sleep were/are protected. |
| 5. | Protecting and storing the data. | • Limit the number of people with access to the database - only the data analyst had access to the GIS information collected as part of the Count. Aggregate locations to the local board level. |

# Fieldwork

## Planning and data collection: people living without shelter

### Sub-regional coordinators

Sub-regional coordinators were integral to the delivery of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. Four roles were recruited to work across five sub-regions to cohesively prepare a consistent plan for their region/s. These roles were invaluable in supporting community engagement to understand hotspots at a local level, promoting the initiative to potential volunteers, supporting team leader training, mapping routes, determining volunteer numbers for each sub-region and allocating volunteers to teams.

### Community engagement, communications and media planning

To support engagement, communications and media activities, a plan was developed to support the following objectives.

• Informing the design of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

• Promoting the need for hundreds of volunteers and getting people to register to volunteer.

• Raising awareness among people living without shelter that the count was taking place.

• Building relationships with agencies and urban marae to support the dissemination of local information about the count and participate as volunteers.

• Raising awareness of homelessness among the wider community.

*"I am passionate about my community and I believe advocating for people who aren't able to is important. How do we learn if we do not listen?"*
*- Volunteer*

Materials for the volunteers ready to go.

Engagement with a range of stakeholders started in early in 2018. Alongside the advisory group, this included academics, community organisations and networks, potential providers of temporary accommodation data and marae. This was also a useful strategy for generating volunteers.

Additionally, in March 2018, a press conference was held at Auckland City Mission to launch *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. This resulted in considerable media interest and interviews with Radio New Zealand Checkpoint, NewsTalk ZB, Māori Television, The Project and a range of national and local newspapers. This provided the opportunity to not only start generating volunteer registrations, but also raise awareness of homelessness with the general public.

Agencies working with homeless people promoted the event to clients by word of mouth and brochures were provided to hand out. Additionally, a group of people with lived experience, including members of the advisory group, planned and delivered engagement with people currently living without shelter.

While planning the count, some people working with the homeless community expressed concerns about how participants data would be used. Efforts were made to meet with these people to discuss their concerns. However, they decided to proceed with calling for people living without shelter to boycott the count. It is unclear whether this had an impact on participation levels on the night, and if so, to what extent.

## Volunteer recruitment and management

Potential volunteers were directed to the *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* website for further information and, if interested and eligible[16], complete the volunteer registration form. More than 1,000 people registered to volunteer. Information sought included whether volunteers had experience of working with homeless people or in the social sector, had access to a mobile phone, if they would be happy to be a volunteer team leader, if they could drive a car, and any preferences in terms of where they wanted to be based e.g. North, West, Central, South or East Auckland. Volunteers received regular emails in the lead up to the count to keep them informed about the project, and a Facebook group was created which received considerable interest.

## Volunteer training

Online training was assessed as the most effective way to train volunteers due to the sheer numbers and geographical spread across the city. The benefits of online training included time efficiencies in comparison to in-person training sessions and the flexibility to complete online training in people's own time. Informed by a review of overseas training materials, the advisory group and Housing First Auckland practitioners, the training module was developed specifically for *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. Once a person had registered to volunteer, they received an email asking them to complete the online training. The training included an overview of why *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was important, examples of how to approach people living without shelter, some of the survey questions and what people needed to bring on the night.

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16  Eligibility included: based in Auckland, over 18 years old and owner of a mobile phone.

Volunteer team leaders were also required to attend in-person training sessions which were offered across the five regions, during the day and at night to ensure there was a time and place where everyone could attend. This training provided team leaders with information about their role on the night, logistics, health and safety, the regional support team, code of conduct and potential scenarios they could encounter.

## Implementing the count

On the night of the count, 577 volunteers went out across Auckland to count (tally) and interview (survey) people living without out shelter on the streets and in cars.
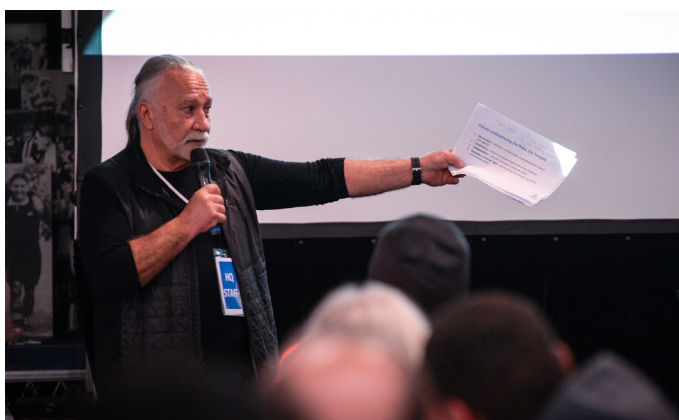


Wilf Holt from the Auckland City Mission briefing volunteers at the central headquarters.

Volunteers were allocated to one of five headquarters or three satellite hubs across the region, staffed by an additional 80 volunteers. These headquarters were located at Albany (North), Glen Eden (West), Kingsland (Central), Panmure (East) and Manukau (South). Due to the vastness of the region, three satellite hubs were operated at Warkworth, Pukekohe and Waiheke. Satellite hubs differed in that there was no sub-regional coordinator on site (support was over the phone or by text), and they linked into the post-count training at one of the main headquarters via a Facebook video conference feature.

On arrival at a headquarter or satellite hub, volunteers were allocated to teams and zones and given their materials and snacks.

Materials included branded volunteer beanies, unbranded participant beanies, high-vis vests, snack packs, portable mobile phone charger, vouchers, clipboard with paper copies of the survey (should the app fail), information leaflets for both youth and adults, and lanyards. Staff ensured all volunteers had downloaded the survey app to their phones and signed the volunteer agreement and waiver form. A 45-minute briefing was provided before volunteers went to their zone to begin the count at 9.30pm.



Beanies and lanyards for volunteers.

Once in the field, volunteers approached people they assessed to be living without shelter based on indicators provided during the post-count briefing (refer Appendix B). Teams were provided with beanies which could be freely distributed to assist with approaching and engaging with people thought to be living without shelter. To determine if a person's circumstances met the criteria for participating in the survey, volunteers asked a series of screening questions; 10 for people in cars and four for those on the street. Those meeting the criteria were then asked to provide consent. This was followed by the survey which asked 23 questions about demographics, experience of living without shelter and service use. The survey can be found in Appendix C. Survey participants were offered a $10 supermarket voucher to thank them for their time and people spoken to were also given informational flyers.

A regional response team, including experienced practitioners, was available during the count and accessible via a freephone number. This team's purpose was to provide support and advice to volunteers, particularly if they met unaccompanied children or had concerns about a person's wellbeing. More information about the role of the regional response team, protocol

for volunteers and analysis of the calls received is provided in Appendix D.
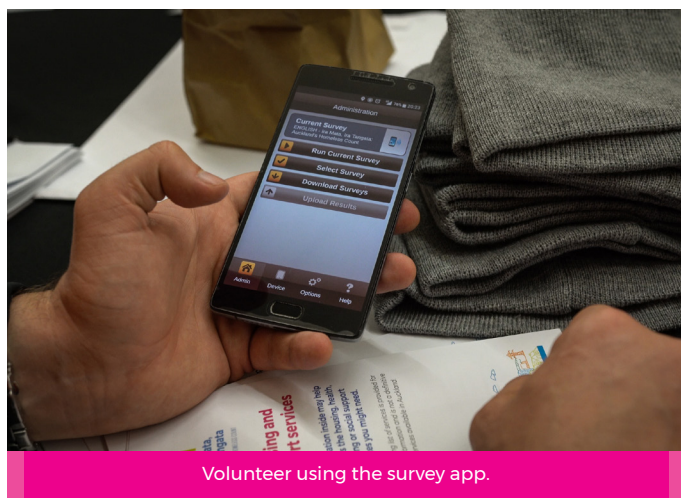


Volunteer using the survey app.

While there will also be a full evaluation of the count, the learnings have been summarised in Appendix E.

## Planning and data collection: people living in temporary accommodation

### Engagement with temporary accommodation providers

In the months leading up to the night of the count, engagement was taking place with services providers who met the in-scope categories detailed in Table 5.

Discussions were held with these providers to understand the services delivered, data points used, ability to provide the desired information and the timeframe required to collate and provide data from the night of 17 September 2018.

Data sought included family role (adult/child, primary client), year of birth, gender, ethnicity and iwi affiliation. Refer to Appendix A for more information on data definitions.

It is important to note, that while police had committed to obtaining data from people living without shelter in holding cells on the night of the count, this would require police staff to deliver the survey. As part of the ethics review process, it was identified that people may feel coerced to participate and a decision was made not to seek data from people in police holding cells. Given the high level of engagement with police this is an area for future consideration should future counts/By-Name Lists be delivered.

### Providing the data

In the week following 17 September 2018, providers sent through data on people living in temporary accommodation. This was combined into one data set to allow for analysis.

## Limitations and considerations with the methodology

It is a well-recognised limitation of the methodology, that PiT Counts do not and cannot count everyone living without shelter on a single night (Cowan, Breakey & Fischer, 1988; Burt, 1993; Dennis, 1993).

A 2001 study by Metraux et al. using administrative data collected from homeless service providers estimated the annual number of homeless individuals is 2.5 to 10.2 times greater than can be obtained using a PiT count. The reasons for this include:

1.  A PiT Count provides only a snapshot on a single day, over one night. It does not provide information on the number of people living without shelter or in temporary accommodation in a community over the course of a year and will not include some people who cycle in and out of homelessness

Table 5: *Source of temporary accommodation data.*

| Temporary accommodation category | Data source |
| --- | --- |
| Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs). | Ministry of Social Development. |
| Transitional Housing and other temporary settings | Transitional housing providers (noting not all providers participated). |
| | Department of Corrections. |
| | Waitemata, Counties-Manukau and Auckland District Health Boards provided data on people in mental health inpatient services and alcohol and drug residential and respite services (noting not all providers participated). |

(National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2017).

2. For safety and privacy reasons, many people living without shelter will have slept in locations non-visible to the public and not have been counted.

3. From a pure 'count' perspective, conducting a street count at a time when people are more likely to be asleep, such as at 3.00am, optimises accuracy of a count. However, it also reduces the opportunity to talk to people and collect information about people living without shelter. In Auckland volunteers were advised not to wake people who were asleep unless there were significant concerns about welfare. This will have impacted how many people were spoken to and invited to participate in the survey.

4. Volunteers could not cover every metre of the designated coverage area. Some locations were not visited on the night of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* including Te Henga, Anawhata, South Head, Shelly Beach, Muriwai, Woodhill, Helensville, Clevedon and the Hunua Ranges.

5. Volunteers were advised to prioritise safety and not to enter private property like abandoned buildings or building sites, which are often places that people living without shelter sleep.

6. It is common for people living without shelter to be cautious about being approached and therefore people do choose to remain hidden on the night to avoid being counted by volunteers.

7. In Auckland, measures taken by statutory agencies prior to the count may have impacted on the total count figure. For example, a group living under a bridge in New Lynn, West Auckland, were moved on just before the count. Members of the group were spoken to as part of the post-count validation exercise and confirmed that although they were expecting to participate, they did not see any volunteers on the night so were not included in the count total.

8. In Auckland, anecdotally, feedback was received that some people living without shelter had intentionally avoided being counted. It is unknown whether and to what extent people avoided being visible on the night of the count and/or participating in the survey. Additionally, during the planning phase of the count, some people working with the homeless community in Manurewa expressed concerns about how participants data would be used. Efforts were made to meet with these people to discuss their concerns. However, despite meeting with these people they decided to proceed with calling on people to boycott participating in the count. It is unclear whether this had an actual impact on participation levels on the night, and if so, to what extent.

9. In Auckland, most of the cars identified by volunteers were not approached but were tallied as having one occupant. This may mean not all people in vehicles were recorded. So, while 157 people were counted in 151 vehicles, the actual number of people is likely to be higher. Also, while some volunteers did come across families with children living in cars, they were less willing to participate due to concerns about triggering involvement from government agencies. Moreover, the tally option did not allow for a distinction between adults or children (under 18), this data was only captured if a survey was completed.

The numbers presented about people in temporary accommodation on the night of 17 September are also considered to be a minimum. The reasons and contributing factors for this include:

10. The number of EH SNGs represents the number of places funded. That is, people who applied and received a grant and not the number of people who stayed in the funded accommodation that night.

11. While attempts were made to engage with all transitional housing providers through the Housing Connections network, not every provider chose to participate. Additionally, for those that did participate, not every provider supplied all data points requested.

12. Auckland's three district health boards supplied internal anonymised data on people temporarily accommodated in DHB mental health inpatient services and coordinated the collection of DHB-funded community-based addiction services; noting that not all providers supplied data. Data was also not provided from emergency departments or other hospital inpatient services due to the anticipated challenges with its collection. This is an area for further consideration and work in the future.

Considering these limitations, the number of people counted and data supplied to *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* should be considered a minimum and the figures presented in this report are likely to be lower than the actual number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation.

Given the PiT Count methodology limitations, identified above, a validation exercise was built into the design of the count and is explained in the following section.

## Living without shelter: data validation exercise

To manage the well-recognised count limitation of undercounting the actual number of people living without shelter, international good practice recommends the use of estimation techniques to quantify the number of people missed (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2017; Benjaminsen, Muñoz, Vazquez & Panadero, 2005). Flaming and Burns (2017) recommend, "To achieve greater accuracy, the research team guiding and analysing the Count should include a knowledgeable statistician with expertise in enumerating hidden populations and sampling methodology". Consequently, under the direction of Dr Nevil Pierse from the University of Otago, a validation exercise was built into the methodology of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* and undertaken following the count.

The validation exercise involved staff from Housing First Auckland services and people with a knowledge of Auckland's homeless community visiting a range of locations across Auckland and speaking with people living without shelter in the week following the PiT Count.

The purpose was to determine whether people were counted on the night. Of the people who were interviewed during the validation exercise, 116 confirmed they were on the street on 17 September and 40% (48 people) confirmed they had sighted or spoken to a volunteer. This would indicate they had been included in the count and that 60% of people were likely not to have been counted.

Following the validation exercise, and extrapolating the 336 people tallied on the night, a population group in the range of 700-900 was calculated by Dr Pierse. For inclusion alongside the temporary accommodation data, an estimate of 800 people living in unsheltered homeless is used.

As highlighted in the previous section, limitations associated with the methodology mean this number is still likely to be lower than the actual number of people living without shelter on 17 September 2018.

*"The camaraderie on the night was wonderful, and the atmosphere was amazing! It was beautiful to see so many people coming together for such a cause. It restored faith that people care about our whānau living without shelter."*
*- Volunteer.*

# Findings

## Number of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation

On the night of 17 September 2018, a minimum of 3,674 people were living without shelter or in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region. This number includes a minimum of 800 people living without shelter (which is a validation-adjusted number based on a count of 336 people), and 2,874 people who were reported by providers to be in temporary accommodation.

Nearly 50% of the 336 people counted as living without shelter were in vehicles (157 people in 151 vehicles).

Of those spoken to, 59 met the screening criteria and consented to participate in the survey. Therefore, the survey population does not provide a statistically reliable description of the homeless population and caution is urged in extrapolating the findings to the wider population of people living without shelter.

Additionally, of these 59 people some did not answer every question or did not complete the survey. Nonetheless, those surveyed provided valuable and useful information about their demographics and experiences of living without shelter in Auckland.

Low survey participation rates could be due to several factors, including:

- volunteers' levels of comfort approaching potential participants and inviting them to take part

- the sensitive nature of the issue for people living without shelter and concern about being approached and asked to provide personal information to strangers.

Potentially, participation rates may increase if count/ registry week activities were repeated and trust could be built over time with people living without shelter.

While a group of people with lived experience, including members of the advisory group, engaged with people living without shelter before the count, given the amount of engagement required, a dedicated resource to coordinate this activity would have been beneficial to raise awareness.

Temporary accommodation data is based on an actual count of people provided by service providers and agencies including EH SNG  funded accommodation, transitional housing and other temporary accommodation providers and mental health and addiction services. This number also needs to be understood as a minimum due to methodological limitations, provided in the previous section.

As outlined in the context section there have been several developments in the past four years such as more investment in Housing First, the introduction of the EH SNG[17] and an increase in funding for transitional housing providers, which may have impacted on the total number of people counted as living without shelter and in temporary accommodation.

Regarding other pieces of quantitative research, Amore (2016) used 2013 Census data to calculate the number of people experiencing homelessness across New Zealand,

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17   MSD has identified the limitations associated with the EH SNG data, which can be found in Appendix F.

# People living without shelter and in temporary accommodation

**800** people estimated to be living without shelter based on a validation exercise[18]

▼

Based on the actual count of **336** people living without shelter

**179** people living rough

**157** people living in cars

| **335** adults | **1** child |
|---|---|

▼

Of which, **59** met the screening criteria and gave consent to begin the survey

**45** people living rough

**13** people living in cars

**1** person didn't confirm

A minimum of **2,874** people in temporary accommodation placements[19]

▼

**1027** people in MSD[20] Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant funded accommodation

| **474** adults | **553** children |
|---|---|

➕

**1,768** people in transitional housing and other temporary settings[21]

| **1041** adults | **746** children | **60** age unknown |
|---|---|---|

➕

**79** adults in mental health and addiction services[22]

**A minimum of 3,674 people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region.**

*This Figure is a repeat of Figure 1 on page 8. It is repeated here for ease of reference.*

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18  More information on the validation exercise is provided in the methodology section.

19  These 2,874 people are in 1,325 places. A placement may constitute one or more people.

20  Ministry of Social Development.

21  This includes data provided by 12 transitional and other temporary housing providers, and the Department of Corrections on their probation managed transitional housing.

22  This includes data from 12 mental health and addiction services from across Auckland's three district health boards. These 79 adults were homeless upon entering the service and the assumption is that they would have been homeless on night of the count.

including figures for the Auckland region, along with demographic analysis. Harris (2015), on behalf of the Salvation Army Policy and Parliamentary Unit, used service level data to calculate the number of people in temporary accommodation and agencies, and central city agencies supported by Auckland City Mission conducted regular PiT Counts in the city centre between 2004 and 2016.

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* builds on these important bodies of work. However, caution is urged in comparing the findings of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* with those of others, particularly the findings of Amore (2016) and the city centre street counts between 2004 and 2016. It is important to recognise that they used different research methods with different objectives and use data collected from different points in time.

## People living without shelter across the Auckland region by local board

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*The Waitematā Local Board area in Central Auckland had the largest number of people living without shelter, with 128 people experiencing homelessness on the night of the count.*

Of the 336 people counted as living without shelter, the largest number of people at 38% (128 people) was in central Auckland, in the Waitematā Local Board area. The next highest number was in the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board area at 12% (39 people), followed by Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board at 5.3% (18 people). Figure 4 provides a breakdown of people living without shelter across the Auckland region by local board.

The density of people living without shelter within the Waitematā Local Board area aligns with international research by McCormack et al. (2016) which identified a number of 'pull factors' for people living without shelter to a city centre, including:

- A concentration of social services, including homeless-specific agencies, within proximity.

- Other people experiencing homelessness and a sense of community.

- Access to drugs and alcohol.

- Opportunities for money and food through begging – higher foot-fall in the city centre because of the shops and perceived affluence of shoppers.

- The presence of other people, lighting and CCTV cameras were all considered to offer a sense of safety and/or protection to individuals perceived to be homeless and living without shelter.

Caution is advised when comparing the figure in *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* (128 people in the Waitematā Local Board area) to the last inner-city street count figure of 177. The reasons for this include:

- The geographical boundaries vary between the two areas (Waitematā Local Board area versus 3km radius of Sky City).

- Volunteers for the inner-city street count were predominantly people working in homelessness so likely to have more experience and familiarity with the inner-city rough sleeping community.

- Several inner-city volunteers would have been staff involved in regular outreach, meaning they would both recognise people living without shelter and be familiar to the people they were approaching/ counting.

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* identified that people are living without shelter across the region including in rural areas. While it is commonly understood people are living without shelter in Central, West and South Auckland, the findings showed people are also living without shelter in North Auckland. With 15% of people counted in Kaipātiki, Rodney, Upper Harbour, Hibiscus and Bays and Devonport-Takapuna Local Boards.

This suggests a regional approach is required responding to the street count finding that people are living without shelter across the region and not just in central Auckland or town centres. It also suggests that further consideration be given to a coordinated and consistent approach to designing and delivering outreach across the region that provides health and basic services, and connects people to housing and support.

## Demographics

This section presents the demographic findings from the data collected.

It is specified whether the findings relate to people

A post-count validation exercise estimated **800** people were living without shelter across the Auckland region.

The validation exercise was based on the actual count of **336** people living without shelter. Of those 336 people, 53% were sleeping rough and 47% were sleeping in cars.

People living without shelter were most likely to be in the Waitematā and Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Boards.

| | Local Board [23] | Actual | % Age |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | Waitematā | 128 | 38.1% |
| **B** | Ōtara-Papatoetoe | 39 | 11.6% |
| **C** | Maungakiekie-Tāmaki | 18 | 5.3% |
| **D** | Waiheke | 17 | 5.1% |
| **E** | Kaipātiki | 15 | 4.5% |
| **F** | Rodney | 15 | 4.5% |
| **G** | Māngere-Ōtāhuhu | 13 | 3.9% |
| **H** | Papakura | 13 | 3.9% |
| **I** | Upper Harbour | 12 | 3.6% |
| **J** | Whau | 12 | 3.6% |
| **K** | Albert-Eden | 11 | 3.3% |
| **L** | Hibiscus and Bays | 8 | 2.4% |
| **M** | Puketāpapa | 6 | 1.8% |
| **N** | Devonport-Takapuna | 4 | 1.2% |
| **O** | Henderson-Massey | 4 | 1.2% |
| **P** | Waitākere Ranges | 3 | 0.9% |
| **Q** | Franklin | 3 | 0.9% |
| **R** | Howick | 2 | 0.6% |
| **S** | Manurewa | 2 | 0.6% |
| **T** | Ōrākei | 2 | 0.6% |
| | Location unknown | 9 | 2.7% |
| | **Total** | **336** | **100%** |

*Figure 4: Location of people living without shelter across the Auckland region by local board.*

23 Great Barrier Local Board was not included in *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

living without shelter who participated in the survey (maximum sample size of 59 people) or people living in temporary accommodation (maximum sample size of 2,874 people).

The maximum responses for each question are also provided to inform the reader of the sample sizes. Also, percentages have been calculated by removing 'do not knows' and 'prefer not to say' responses from both survey and service level data totals.

## Age

Information about age was collected from survey participants and people in temporary accommodation. Table 6 shows most people living without shelter were over 18-years-old, but 46.2% of people in temporary accommodation (1,300 people) were under 18-years-old .

Based on a review of the Canadian Point in Time Count Toolkit (Donaldson, 2017) and ethical considerations, unaccompanied youth under 16-years-old were not eligible to participate in the survey. However, none of the people invited to participate in the survey indicated they were under 16-years-old. On the night of the street count, volunteers supported one person under the age of 18 and one in their early-twenties into emergency accommodation.

Figure 5 shows the age distribution of people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation. Please note this table only includes data where a date of birth was provided. Data coded as 'child' is therefore

excluded from this table which is why the number of under-18s is lower than the child and adult sample sizes presented in Table 6.

Table 6 : *Adult vs child age distribution of surveyed people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation (2,869)*

| Age category | Living without shelter (55 people) | Temporary accommodation (2,814 people) |
|---|---|---|
| Child (under 18) | 0. 3% (1) | 46.2% (1,300) |
| Adult (18 and over) | 99.7% (54) | 53.8% (1,514) |

Of the 2,874 people in temporary accommodation, 47% (1,300 people) were children/young people under 18-years-old. In response, there should be concerted efforts to develop collaborative solutions to move adults with children/young people under 18-years-old out of emergency and temporary accommodation and into permanent housing.

Homelessness compromises a family's ability to maintain routines and ensure consistency and stability for children during an unstable time (Mayberry, Shinn, Benton & Wise, 2014). Research by United Kingdom charity Shelter identified that teachers reported many impacts for children whose families were homeless, including mental health, attitudes and behaviours, educational attainment, clothing and possessions, health and hygiene and social relations (Digby & Fu, 2017).
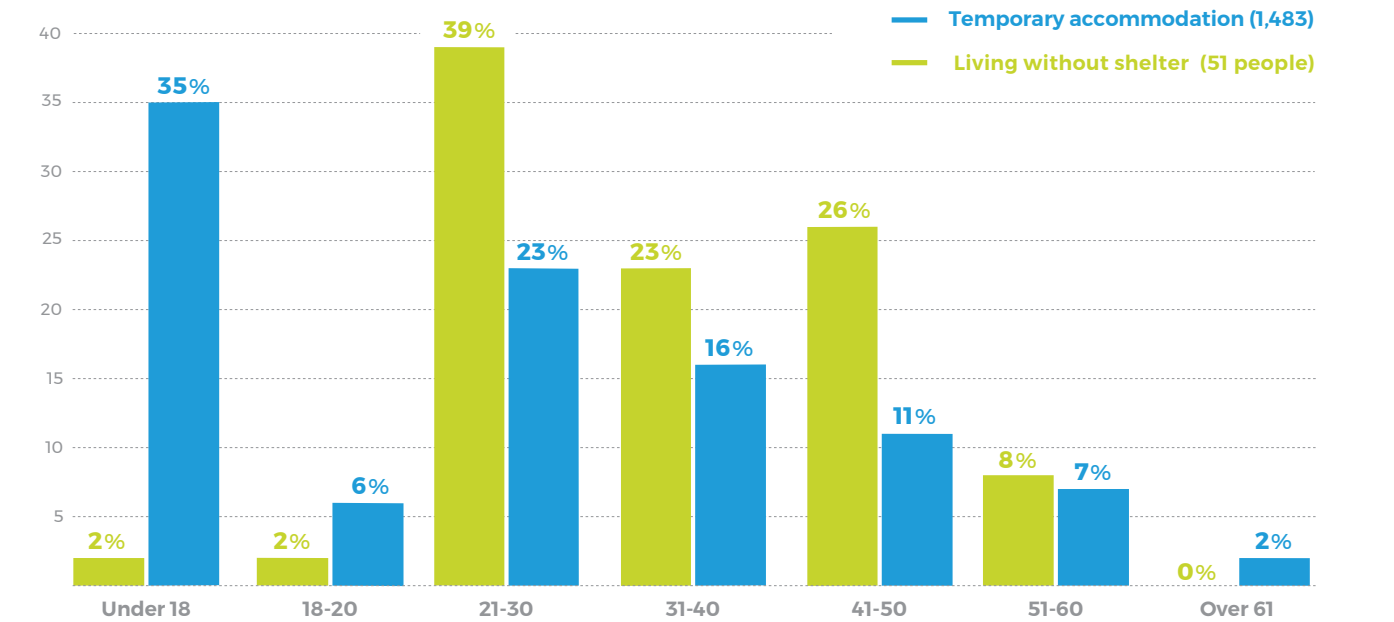


*Figure 5:* Age distribution of survey participants versus people in temporary accommodation (1,534 people).

Considerable instability is caused by families being placed in emergency and temporary accommodation in a community outside of where they previously lived. This includes disruption to schooling and isolation from existing social and support networks (Shelter, 2004). There is a need to ensure adequate housing solutions are available across the Auckland region. More research is required to understand whether existing emergency and transitional housing provision is meeting demand and enabling families to remain in their existing communities during an already a difficult period.

## Family unit by size

Data analysed from temporary accommodation providers highlighted that family unit sizes ranged from one person to 11 people, with the predominant family unit size being one person. In reviewing Table 7 and the number of family unit sizes, it is important to understand these figures reflect the housing supply options available, and not the level of demand for housing or the number of families unable to be housed due to a lack of availability of suitably-sized accommodation.

Table 7: *Family unit by size in temporary accommodation (1,325 places).*

| Temporary accommodation placement size | Percentage |
|---|---|
| 1 | 50.9% (674) |
| 2 | 19.6% (259) |
| 3 | 13.7% (182) |
| 4 | 6.6% (87) |
| 5 | 3.9% (52) |
| 6 | 2.8% (37) |
| 7 | 1.7% (23) |
| 8+ | 1.3% (17) |

## Placement composition

Table 8 shows the placement composition of people in temporary and EH SNG funded-accommodation; a placement may constitute one or more people. Placements with one adult made up 50.4% of places in temporary accommodation, 31.6% were filled by one adult with child/ren, 11.9% were families with two adults and child/ren and a small number were three adults with children or four adults. Analysis of this data found that of the 1,325 reported temporary accommodation placements[24], single-adults with child/ren are 2.5 times more likely than two-adults with child/ren to be experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation and of the 418 (31.6%) single adults with child/ren, 82.6% (346) were single-adult females.

Table 8: *Temporary accommodation placement composition (1,325 places)*

| Placement composition | Percentage | Number |
|---|---|---|
| One adult | 50.4% | 667 |
| One adult with child/ren | 31.6% | 418 |
| Two adults | 5.4% | 72 |
| Two adults with child/ren | 11.9% | 158 |
| Three adults with child/ren | 0.6% | 8 |
| Four adults | 0.1% | 1 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 1,325 |

## Ethnicity

The ethnicity of survey participants and people living in temporary accommodation was examined. Figure 5 presents the ethnicity of unsheltered survey respondents and people in temporary accommodation, compared to the general Auckland population (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

Pākehā/New Zealand European were underrepresented among people living without shelter and those in temporary accommodation. Māori, at 11% of the general Auckland population, were significantly over-represented among people living without shelter (42.7%) and people in temporary accommodation (39.9%). Pasifika people, at 15% of the general Auckland population, were proportionately represented among people living without shelter (17.7%) but

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24  This data excludes people in Corrections and mental health services.

over-represented among people in temporary accommodation (38.8%).

Results presented in Figure 6 are based on Statistics New Zealand's classification of ethnicity and approach to working with ethnicity data, which allows people to identify with more than one ethnic group. As a result, percentages do not add up to 100. Additionally, ethnicity was not provided for every family member in temporary accommodation household. In some instances, ethnicity was only provided for the primary household member, and only this data was included in the analysis. Additionally, the findings also predominantly reflect the ethnicity of adults, because the ethnicity of people under 18-years-old was generally not recorded. Māori ethnicity was categorised using ethnicity which included 'Māori', e.g. Māori, Cook Islander Māori.

Within Auckland, the largest concentration of Māori and Pasifika people are within local board areas characterised by high levels of socio-economic deprivation, typified by lower than average educational, economical and health outcomes (Marriot and Sim, 2014 as cited in Joynt et al., 2016). Joynt et al. (2016) found, "the primary housing challenges that many Pasifika people in Auckland face include higher than average rates of household crowding, lower than average home ownership rates, and less stability as a result of higher than average rates of renting" (p.i). Goodyear & Fabian (2014) found 45.3% of people living in shared accommodation were Pasifika people. According to Statistics New Zealand (2016), in the past 25 years Māori and Pasifika home-ownership rates fell at a faster rate than for the total New Zealand population. Additionally, as home-ownership rates declined, Māori and Pasifika people have increasingly lived in rental properties. This highlights the importance of responsive solutions and services that meet the needs of Māori and Pasifika people.

## Gender

Data about people's gender was collected from survey participants and those in temporary accommodation. Figure 7 shows that while the gender distribution of people in temporary accommodation largely reflected the general Auckland population, approximately four out of five people surveyed as living without shelter, were male.

Overwhelmingly, people who participated in the street count survey (n=52) were male. Research by Bretherton and Pleace (2018) concluded that the female experience is almost certainly being undercounted as female patterns of rough sleeping may mean they are less likely to be recorded in street counts. There are differing schools of thought as to whether this is because:

1. Less females are living without shelter than males. Johnson, Ribar and Zhu (2017) concluded that women were more likely to be living in shared accommodation, living in overcrowded conditions and/or staying in dangerous and unhealthy relationships to avoid living on the streets.

2. Equivalent numbers of females are living without shelter but for safety reasons are more likely to employ strategies to make themselves invisible, such as sleeping in sites that are hidden from view and remaining in plain sight but disguising their homelessness status (Reeve, 2018).

This latter position is supported by a 2006 study that found although 66% of women had slept rough, only 12% had been in contact with a rough sleeper team (Reeve, Casey & Goudie, 2006).

Analysis of the data identified that single-adult with child/ren are 2.5 times more likely than two-adult with child/ren to be experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation; with 82.6% of single-adults with child/ren being female.

Homelessness for women is often linked to domestic violence, and for women from ethnic minorities it is often linked to poverty, marginalisation and discrimination (Calay, 2001 as cited in Bukowski, 2009). Domestic violence commonly emerges as a cause of women's homelessness (Bukowski, 2009; SafeLives, 2018; Women's Aid, 2017). Reeve (2018) found:

> Economic and social constraints can leave women dependent on a male partner for access to housing (private housing, in particular) and therefore homeless when that relationship breaks down or they need to escape due to violence (Rose, 1994; Morris & Winn, 1990). Financially independent women with savings, property, well paid employment and affordable childcare can avoid or escape homelessness in this situation. It is the fact that women are more likely to be the primary carers, the part-time and low-paid workers, unable to afford their own family home without assistance that is the 'cause' of their homelessness, although domestic violence may well be the trigger (p.167).

In the street count survey, one person living without shelter identified as transgender and 0.1% of people living in temporary accommodation identified as transgender. There is a lack of population statistics in Australasia on transgender identity, however, analysis by Gates (2011) approximated that 0.3% of the U.S
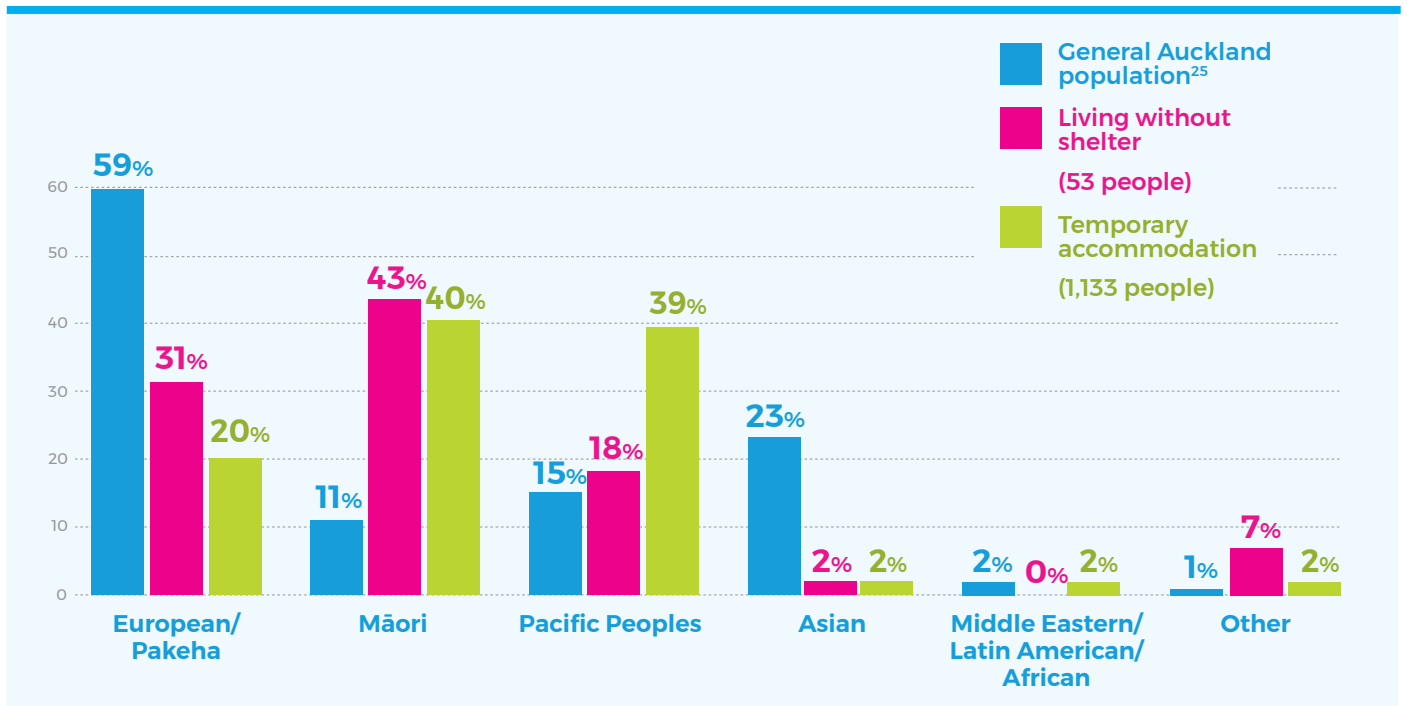
*Figure 6:* Ethnic distribution of survey participants (53 people) and in temporary accommodation (1,133 people) versus the general Auckland population.
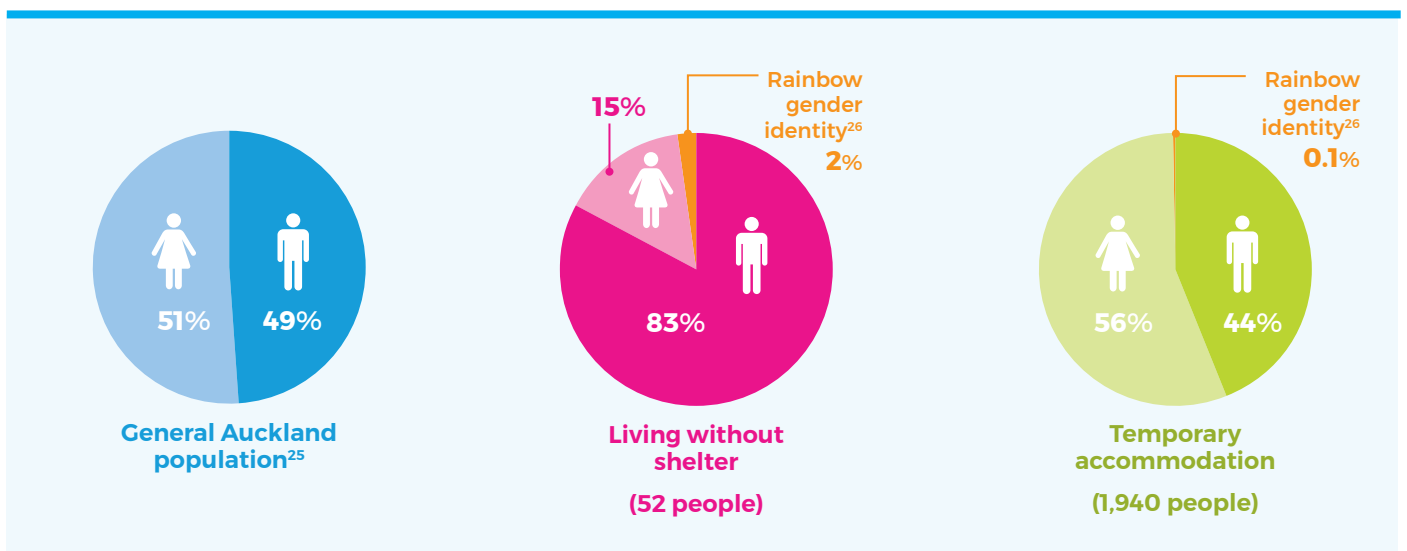


*Figure 7:* Gender distribution of survey participants (52 people) and people in temporary accommodation (1,940 people) versus the general Auckland population.

25  Statistics New Zealand 2013 Census data.

26  Rainbow is an inclusive term to identify people who have a diverse sex, gender identity or sexual identity.

population are transgender. Research from North America estimated that one in five transgender persons have unstable housing or are at risk or in need of shelter services (Spicer, 2012).

## Disability

Information about disability status was collected from 47 survey participants. People were asked if they had a disability, which was described as a long-term condition limiting a person's ability to carry out daily activities. Figure 8 shows nearly half the survey respondents (49.9%) reported they had a disability, which is almost twice as many when compared to the general population. It is estimated that 24% of people living in New Zealand have a disability limiting their ability to carry out everyday activities (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). People with disabilities are, therefore, over-represented among those living without shelter.

Research has found mental health is a risk factor for homelessness and physical health is severely impacted by homelessness (Thomas, 2011; Flatau et al., 2018; Folsom, Hawthorne, Lindamer, Bailey & Golshan, 2005). Supportive housing implemented through a Housing First Pathways approach has been shown to help people with mental health needs permanently stay out of homelessness, improve their health conditions, and significantly reduce their use of costly crisis services (Greenwood, Stefancic & Tsemberis, 2013; Kerman, Sylvester, Aubry & Distasio, 2018).

## Sexual identity

Information about sexual identity was provided by 49 survey participants. When asked to describe their sexual identity, 86% (42 people) identified as heterosexual/straight and 12% (seven people) with a rainbow sexual identity (gay, bisexual and Takatāpui)[27.] Questions about sexual orientation were considered but not included in the 2018 Census (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). Therefore, a comparison has been made drawing on results from the New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study; which interviewed more than 14,000 people about their sexual orientation and found 94.2% of New Zealanders identify as heterosexual, 2.6% as gay or lesbian, 1.8% as bisexual, 0.6% as bi-curious, 0.5% as pansexual and 0.3% as asexual (Morton, 2016). Figure 9 presents the survey results (49 people) which show that, when compared to the general population, people living without shelter are twice as likely to identify with a rainbow sexual identity and were over-represented living without shelter.

Rainbow people face social stigma, discrimination and often rejection by their families, which adds to the physical and mental strains/challenges that all homeless persons must struggle with (Keuroghlian, Shtasel & Bassuk, 2014; Cochran, Stewart, Ginzler & Cauce, 2002). Additionally, rainbow people experience barriers to accessing homeless and health services which are safe, inclusive and responsive to their needs (Grant, et al. 2011; Morton, Samuels, Dworsky & Patel, 2018).
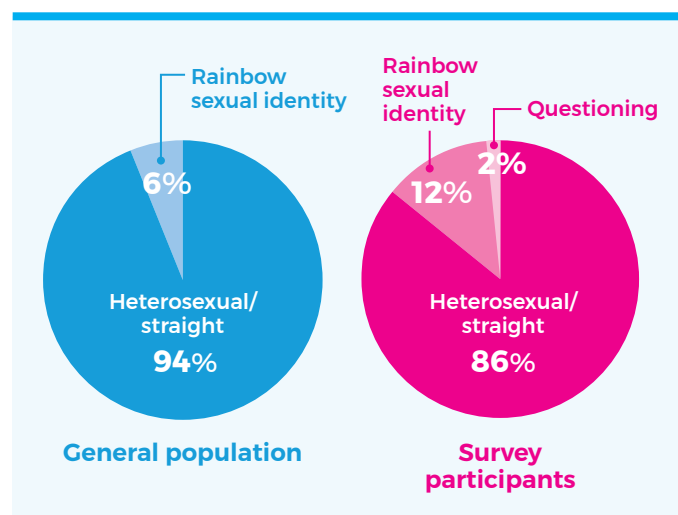


*Figure 8:* Disability of survey participants (47 people) versus the general population.



*Figure 9:* Sexual identity of surveyed people living without shelter (49 people) versus the general population.

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27  A 'rainbow identity' is an inclusive term to identify people who have a diverse sex, gender identity or sexual identity.

## Employment status

Figure 10 details the employment status provided by 47 survey participants, 87.2% (41 people) reporting they were not in paid employment and six people reporting being employed, with five working part-time and one working full-time. Statistics New Zealand (2018a) reports the rate of national employment is 67.7%. Figure 10 highlights that people living without shelter who participated in the survey are nearly six times less likely to be employed compared to the general population.
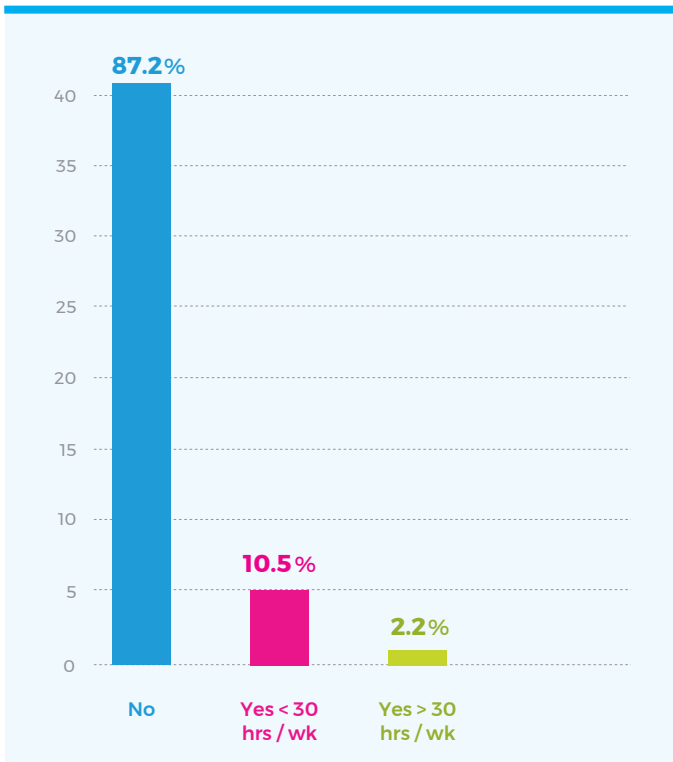
**87.2%**

**10.5%**

**2.2%**

No          Yes < 30        Yes > 30
            hrs / wk        hrs / wk

*Figure 10:* Employment status of survey participants (47 people).

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*Nearly half of the people living in temporary accommodation on the night of the count were children. Being homeless as a child is a risk factor for being homeless as an adult.*

## Benefit uptake and entitlement

Figure 11 shows that just over two-thirds (31 people) of survey participants reported receiving a benefit. Among the 15 people who reported not receiving a benefit, six said they could claim a benefit, four did not know if they could claim a benefit, four said they could not claim a benefit and one person preferred not to say.

**67%**

**33%**

Receiving        Not receiving
a benefit        a benefit
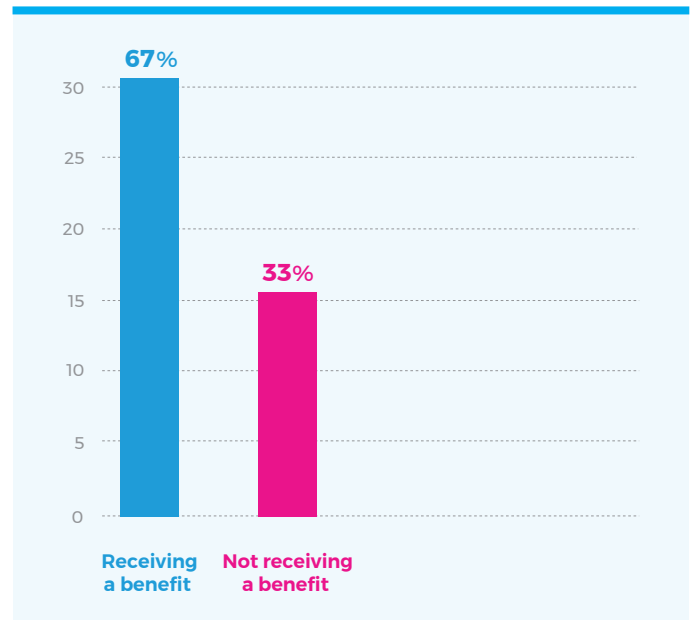
*Figure 11:* Percentage of survey participants receiving benefits (46 people).

## Study

46 people provided information about whether they were studying. Most people (44) reported they were not studying, however 4.4% (two people) reported they were studying full-time at a tertiary institute. Research highlights that housing insecurity affects students' grades, retention and graduation rates (The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 2013; Hallett & Crutchfield, 2017).

## The experience of homelessness

### Where people slept most often in the past three months

Figure 12 shows that nearly three-quarters of the people who participated in the street count survey, 55 provided information about where they had been sleeping most often in the three months preceding the survey. Nearly three-quarters (70.9%) reported they has most often been sleeping rough (in a public place, car or makeshift shelter, tent or shack), 12.7% (seven

people) reported that they had stayed most often in temporary accommodation (including boarding houses, backpackers, hospital or inpatient units), 9.1% (five people) reported couch surfing or with family and friends, and 7.3% (four people) reported being in a home they own or rent including Housing New Zealand Corporation homes.
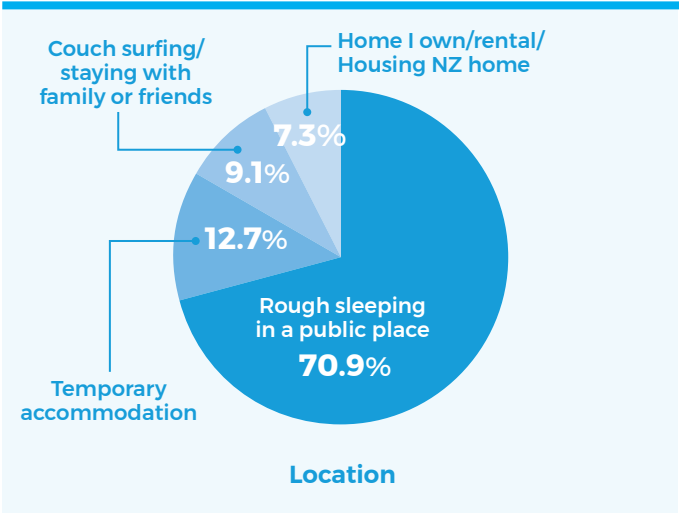


*Figure 12:* Where people slept most often in the past three months (55 people).

## What age did people first experience sleeping rough without shelter

Table 9 shows that 41.3% of survey participants reported their first experience of living without shelter occurred when they were under 18-years-old. By the age of 20, 52.2% had experienced living without shelter. A considerable body of research has identified the path to adult homelessness often begins in childhood (Koegel, Melamid & Bumam, 1995; Herman, Slusser, Streuning & Link, 1997; Kim & Ford, 2006; Lee, Tyler & Wright, 2010) and that trauma often plays a significant role (Evenson & Barr, 2009; Mar, Linden, Torchalla, Li & Krausz, 2014; Brakenhoff, Jang, Slesnick & Snyder, 2015). As young people transition out of the family home or care of the

Table 9: *Age when survey participants first began sleeping rough (46 people).*

| Age | Percentage | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Under 18 | 41.3% | 19 |
| 18 to 20 | 10.9% | 5 |
| 21 to 30 | 21.7% | 10 |
| 31 to 40 | 15.2% | 7 |
| 41 to 50 | 4.3% | 2 |
| 51 to 60 | 6.5% | 3 |

state, it is critical they are well-supported to ensure they do not become homeless.

## Time spent living without shelter in the past three years

Figure 13 shows that 45.3% of survey participants (24 people) reported that they had been living without shelter for two to three of the past three years, 39.6% (21 people) had spent less than 12 months living without shelter in the past three years, and 15.1% (eight people) had been living without shelter for one to two of the past three years.
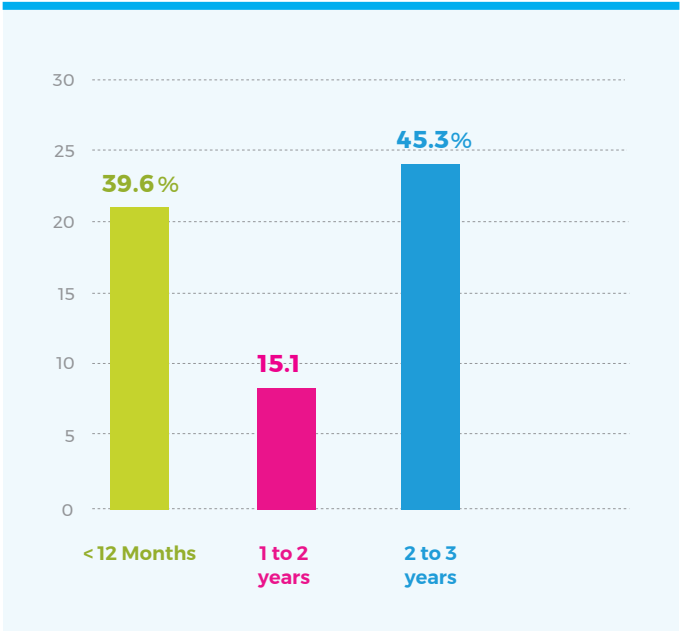


*Figure 13:* Proportion of the past three years spent living without shelter (53 people).

*Existing research concludes that people who are homeless are less likely to be employed, more likely to interact with the criminal justice system and have higher levels of health care need.*

## How continuous is the experience of living without shelter

Figure 14 shows that more than half of those surveyed (58% or 29 people) reported one continuous experience of living without shelter and the remainder said they had experienced multiple episodes of living without shelter.
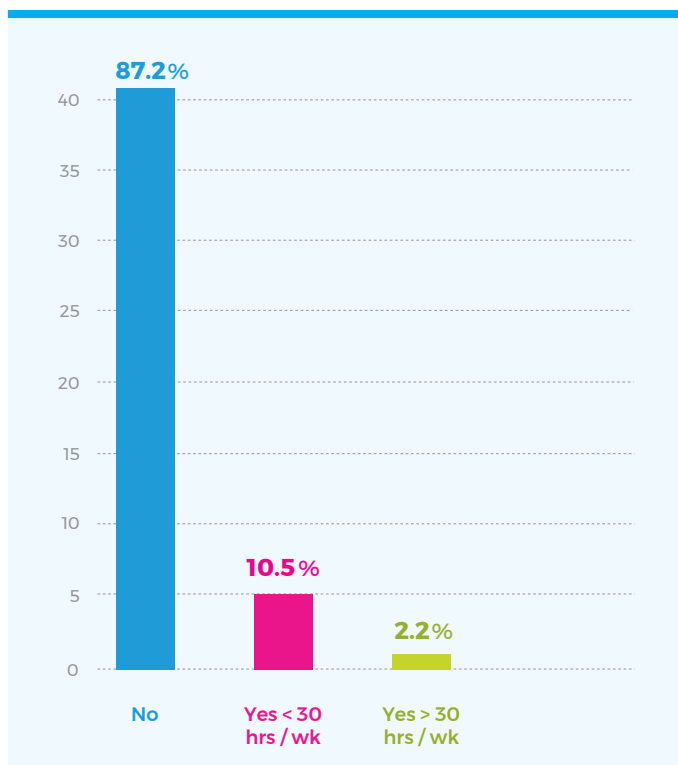


*Figure 14:* Continuous experience of living without shelter versus multiple times (50 people).

## Length of time living without shelter over a lifetime

Figure 15 shows that more than one-quarter of those surveyed (28.2% or 13 people) had spent less than 12 months living without shelter over the course of their life, and half (50% or 23 people) had lived without shelter for between one to 10 years. Nearly one-quarter (22% or 10 people) had lived without shelter for 10-30 years over their lifetime.

## Areas of Auckland where people stayed

In total, when asked which areas of Auckland participants had stayed in over the last year, 47.7% (24 people) reported having stayed in Central Auckland. People reported staying in other parts of the city considerably less: South (19.8%), West (13.9%), North (12.8%) and East Auckland (5.8%). This aligns with the perception that the largest concentration of people

living without shelter is in Central Auckland. This is likely to be driven by factors including location of service providers, public transport options, begging opportunities and public amenities, like libraries (Homeless Advice, 2018).

## Movement around Auckland

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (65.4% or 34 people) reported they had stayed in only one part of Auckland in the past year. This preference is likely to create distinct geographical sub-communities of people living without shelter. This preference for being in one region is also likely to be driven by factors identified in the Insights into rough sleeping report because it assists people with developing their coping mechanisms, such as developing a street whānau/family and creating friendships and forming bonds.

## Movement around New Zealand while living on the street

Additionally, 26.9% (14 people) reported that in the past year they had lived without shelter in another part of New Zealand. This is supported by Statistics New Zealand's analysis of 2001 and 2006 Census data which found, "Māori are much more likely than other groups to move inter-regionally. Auckland lost 13 percent of its Māori population to other regions, while other regions contributed 14 percent of the Auckland Māori population" (Statistics New Zealand, 2016). This highlights an opportunity to explore how approaches, such as Housing First, can respond to this migratory movement.
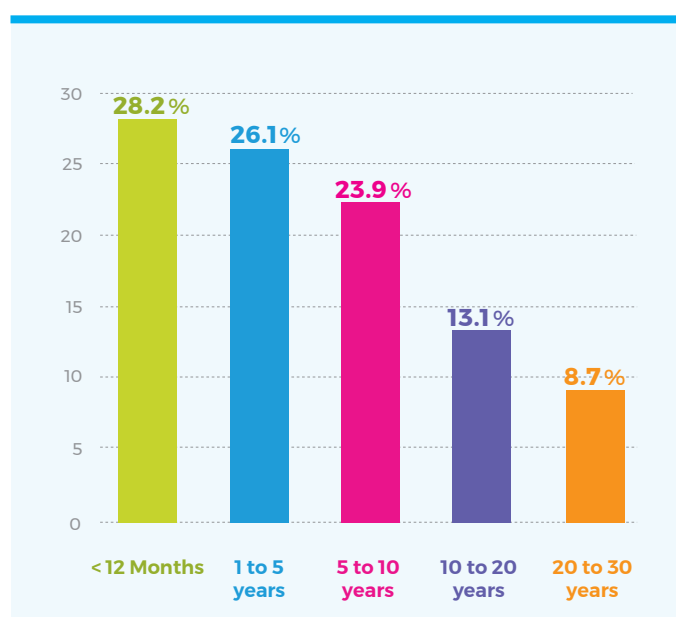


*Figure 15:* Length of time living without shelter (46 people).

## Sense of safety living on the streets

More than half of those surveyed (55.3% or 26 people) reported feeling safe or very safe living on the streets, 27.7% (13 people) felt unsafe or very unsafe and 17% (eight people) reported feeling neither safe or unsafe.

## Service use

Survey participants reported a high use of public systems and services:

- 44.7% (21 people) had experienced foster care or a group home as a child.

- 45.7% (21 people) had completed a prison sentence.

- 54.6% (24 people) had visited a hospital emergency department in the past 12 month and 18% reported 10 or more visits.

- 41% (18 people) had been admitted to hospital in the past 12 months.

### State foster care
It is of concern that nearly half (44.7%) of those surveyed reported experiencing foster care or a group home as a child. Research shows that youth coming of age and moving out of foster care are at high risk of becoming homeless during the transition to independence. An American review of research published between 1990 and 2011 by Dworsky, Napolitano and Courtney (2013) suggests between 11% and 36% of youth leaving foster care due to becoming an adult become homeless during this transition period. By comparison, approximately 4% of an American-wide representative sample of youths aged 18 to 26 years participating in the third American National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health reported ever being homeless. Therefore, the risk of homelessness may be up to 10 times higher for people who have experienced foster care or living in a group home.

### Health
The health issues experienced by homeless people can be more severe than those experienced by the general population, and health issues can both contribute to and be exacerbated by homelessness (Scanlen, 2009). More than half of those who participated in the survey (54.6% or 24 people) had visited a hospital emergency department in the past 12 months and, of these, 18% (eight people) reported 10 or more visits. Additionally, 41% (18 people) reported being admitted to hospital in the past 12 months. A 1999 British study concluded that homeless people seek care from emergency departments more often than any other service and that these visits were more often focused on acute needs rather than illness prevention or health promotion (Power et al., 1999).

It is also well-evidenced that the longer people live on the streets, the greater the risk of poor health and elevated lifetime prevalence rates of serious medical conditions (The Australian State of Homelessness report (2018, p.x; Thomas, 2011). Research in Auckland by Thornley and Marshall (2016) explored the lack of housing, hospital treatment and premature mortality of people in the Counties Manukau District Health Board area. The study concluded that this population has high mortality, and within this group Māori and people diagnosed with substance use and diabetes are at even higher risk of premature death.

### Justice
Nearly half of the people surveyed reported completing a prison sentence. The relationship between homelessness and justice is well-documented. Factors contributing to higher levels of imprisonment than the general population include:

- Homeless people are much more likely to be imprisoned despite committing generally minor offences (Walsh, 2003).

- Experiences of mental illness increase the likelihood of interaction with the justice system and particularly incarceration (Fazel, Hayes, Bartellas, Clerici & Trestman, 2016).

- Alcohol and drugs use, combined with living life in public spaces, is more likely to result in interactions with the justice system (Kushel, Hahn, Evans, Bangsberg & Moss, 2005).

- People with a history of homelessness and individuals with conditions or circumstances that are correlated with homelessness, such as trauma, mental illness and chronic health conditions are also significantly more likely to be homeless upon release from prison (Constantine et al., 2010).

# Discussion

This section presents analysis and interpretation of the results of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*. The discussion is structured into three sections: the disproportionate impact of homelessness, the high use of public systems (by people experiencing homelessness) and improving collaboration and the use of data to end homelessness.

## The disproportionate impact of homelessness

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* has identified priority groups within the living without shelter and in temporary accommodation populations who are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Notably Māori, Pasifika people, children, Rainbow people, disabled people and single-adult families.

- Māori, at 11% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among those surveyed living without shelter at 42.7% (53 people).

- Māori[28], at 11% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among people living in temporary accommodation at 39.9%.

- At least 46% of people living in temporary accommodation were under 18-years-old (1,300 people).

- Pasifika people[29], at 15% of the general Auckland population, were over-represented among people living temporary accommodation at 38.8%.

- Single-adults with child/ren are 2.5 times more likely than two-adults with child/ren to be experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation; with 82.6% of single-adults, with child/ren, being female.

- People with Rainbow sexual and gender identities[30] and disabled people were represented in the sample at a disproportionate level when compared to general population data.

In a literature review of homelessness in Europe, Philippot et al. (2007) suggested stigmatised and excluded groups are more likely to become homeless everywhere. Across nations, two characteristics stand out: minority ethnicity and experience of mental illness.

The adverse impact of colonisation on Māori, and racism experienced by Māori and Pasifika people, must be acknowledged. Groot and Peters (2016) found, "the colonial legacy of dispossession and exclusion also plays a role in exacerbating and maintaining Māori homelessness" (p. 328). Therefore, responses to people experiencing homelessness must be understood and informed by the context of the individual and intergenerational trauma that people living without shelter have often experienced (Elliott et. al., 2005 cited in Pihama et al., 2017). Developing solutions to homelessness grounded in Kaupapa Māori will ensure responses are culturally-appropriate and respect and uphold the mana and world view of Māori people experiencing homelessness[31].

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28  Please refer to the results for details on how ethnicity was categorised.

29  Ibid.

30  A 'rainbow identity' is an inclusive term to identify people who have a diverse sex, gender identity or sexual identity.

31  Example includes Te Puea Memorial Marae which, in winter 2016, initiated a kaupapa Māori marae-led response for vulnerable whānau seeking emergency housing.

There is also a need for services to respond to other groups that experience discrimination and prejudice, such as Rainbow people and disabled people who experienced homelessness at levels disproportionate to the general population.

## High use of public systems and services

Survey participants living without shelter reported notable use of public systems and services across several domains, including foster care, health and justice.

- 44.7% (21 people) had experienced foster care or a group home as a child.

- 45.7% (21 people) had completed a prison sentence.

- 54.6% (24 people) visited a hospital emergency department in the past 12 months and 18% reported 10 or more visits.

- 41.0% (18 people) were admitted to hospital in the past 12 months.

These findings align with a large body of evidence indicating that people who are chronically homeless are also more likely to have unmet physical and mental health needs (Fazel, Hayes, Bartellas, Clerici & Trestman, 2016; Flatau et al., 2018) resulting in high use of acute health services. Additionally, *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* found high numbers of people who had completed a prison sentence and experienced state foster care as a child.

Along with strong moral and ethical drivers to end homelessness there are also financial drivers to house people and reduce the high use of public systems by people experiencing homelessness. The longer a person is living without shelter, the greater and more complex their issues become, and interactions with health and justice systems becomes more likely (Somerville, 2013; Linton & Shafer, 2014). The financial cost of homelessness on homeless people and to society is significant and increases the longer a person remains homeless (Gladwell, 2006). Based on international research, the annual cost of rough sleeping is estimated to be between NZD$50,000 to NZD$80,000 per person, per year (Ly & Latimer, 2015). Therefore, along with improving peoples' quality of life, investment in measures to prevent homelessness provides an opportunity to reduce costs associated with people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation, for both the people affected and society.

## Collaboration and use of data to end homelessness

As discussed in the methodology section, a PiT Count was identified as the most appropriate first step for the Auckland region. The process of working collaboratively with providers and agencies on *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*, identified that while some data is readily accessible, opportunities exists to enhance the collection and use of data about people experiencing homelessness in a consistent and coordinated way across agencies and service providers.

These findings are important in highlighting the need to develop a coordinated systems approach to ending homelessness. A coordinated systems approach involves moving from a collection of individual programmes to a community-wide response that is both strategic and data-driven. The approach requires using local data to inform decisions about how to most effectively allocate local resources, services and programmes to best address the needs of those experiencing homelessness. The main elements of a coordinated systems approach include coordinated access and entry, collecting and examining local data, a shared data system and planning and evaluation (Alliance to End Homelessness, n.d.).

One of the central mechanisms to enhance the collection and use of local data is through a By-Name List approach. A By-Name List is a real-time list that stores identifiable information about people experiencing homelessness in a community. The process of creating a By-Name list requires agencies working together as a system, with shared goals and ways of working, informed by data, rather than operating as a collection of individual organisations.

The approach requires using local data to inform decisions about how to most effectively allocate resources, services and programmes to best address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. There many benefits of a By-Name approach (20,000 Homes, n.d.; Mercy Foundation, n.d.).

- It allows for a community to know in real time how many people are homeless and their levels of need.

- It provides a robust set of data points that support coordinated access and referral at a household and individual level.

- It provides an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level within a City or community.

- This real-time actionable data supports triaging to services, system performance evaluation and advocacy (for the policies and resources necessary to end homelessness).

- The process requires agencies to collaboratively develop decision making processes to inform how people are referred to services based on a framework determined by the sector and community.

- It allows a community to know the real-time demand for housing and support which means that local organisations and agencies can understand the level of housing and support their community needs to end chronic homelessness.

It is recommended that Auckland progresses with developing a referral process using a By-Name List approach. This will focus Auckland's collaborative efforts and enhance how different agencies work together supporting the same people experiencing homelessness.

Creating a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness and their level of need will support people to access to housing and support services more efficiently. It will also provide an understanding of the level of need in Auckland which can inform planning and funding. While some North American approaches and tools are being used in Australia, and are beginning to be used in New Zealand, it is important that we fully consider their suitability for Auckland's cultural context in order to best respond to our communities.

It is critical that any referral process, assessment or tools respond to the identity, language and culture of Māori and Pasifika people, and affirm peoples' mana and respect. Responses to people experiencing homelessness, must also be understood and informed by the context of any trauma that each person living without shelter has experienced (Elliott et. al., 2005 cited in Pihama et al., 2017) and services must adequately engage with trauma from a Māori and indigenous perspective (Pihama et al., 2017). The importance of this developmental work is significant, and time should be taken to develop a kaupapa Māori approach to co-ordinated entry and By-Name List approaches.

## Summary

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was a significant piece of developmental work for Auckland and New Zealand. It was the largest PiT Count to have been conducted in New Zealand to date both in relation to the geographical coverage area and number of volunteers involved. It also supported local and international research which has evidenced homelessness as disproportionately impacting on some groups and contributing to a high use of public systems. The count highlighted an opportunity to enhance data collection to improve responses to homelessness.

Homelessness is an incredibly complex issue requiring considerable changes to how the system currently operates.

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was an important step forward, demonstrating the willingness of people, agencies and organisations to work together to better understand the situation in order to respond more effectively. This collaboration and momentum can continue to be built upon to enhance the way in which we all work together using data to create better outcomes. To be successful, solutions will need to be grounded in partnership to create a joined-up systems approach which improves prevention efforts and services for people experiencing homelessness.

The count found a minimum[32] of 3,674 people were living without shelter and in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region on 17 September 2018.

The recommendations that follow, have been interwoven throughout the report, are based on findings from the count and are offered to guide Auckland's progress and efforts in this space.

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32 A 'minimum' because the number does not include data on people living in boarding houses or campgrounds (as included in Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness); data on people in emergency departments, inpatient services or police cells; or data from all transitional housing providers.

# Recommendations

## a). Policy

It is recommended that:

1. Government ministries, particularly housing, health, education and justice, work collaboratively together and with providers to respond early and promptly to prevent homelessness occurring. This would include measures such as discharge planning to ensure people are not discharged into homelessness.

2. A national homelessness action plan is developed in collaboration with community sector stakeholders to which regions and cities can align their plans and efforts to end homelessness, with a focus on data collection to inform evidence-based responses.

3. The New Zealand definition of homelessness incorporates a cultural dimension including a Māori worldview.

4. A coordinated, joined-up and consistent approach is taken to designing and delivering outreach programmes across the region which connect people to housing and support, involving central and local government and government and non-government services.

5. There is recognition of the high number of children in temporary accommodation and a permanent housing response for people with children is planned and resourced.

## b). Planning, funding and service delivery

It is recommended that:

6. Focus is placed on providing people living without shelter and in temporary accommodation with permanent housing options.

7. Services are responsive to groups who disproportionately experience homelessness including Māori, Pasifika people, rainbow people and disabled people.

8. A targeted response is provided to support local board areas with the highest concentrations of people living without shelter, including the Waitematā, Ōtara-Papatoetoe and Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Local Board areas. This should be supported by a regional approach that responds to the fact that people are living without shelter across the region, including remote rural areas.

9. People with lived experience of homelessness are represented at all levels of planning.

## c). Data

Nationally, it is recommended that:

10. A homelessness data expert group is established to support the development of a national approach to data collection. Membership could include Housing First and transitional housing providers, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and experts on Kaupapa Māori approaches and Māori data sovereignty.

For Auckland it is recommended that:

11. Providers move to delivering a coordinated access and By-Name List approach, which involves working in a more coordinated way to improve access to housing and support services. This approach also provides an understanding of the level of need for housing and support services across Auckland to inform city-wide planning and funding.

    11a. Prioritisation is given to developing an approach appropriate for Auckland's cultural context, affirming the mana of people experiencing homelessness.

12. Data collected by government ministries and departments, including housing, health, education and justice, is strengthened to inform sector-wide responses to end homelessness.

    12a. Funders support enhanced data collection, data sharing and planning across the wider social sector to better inform funding and planning.

For other cities and towns considering data collection approaches, based on learnings from *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* it is recommended that:

13. If capacity and collaborative agency relationships exist, consideration is given to developing a By-Name List (which can include delivering a Registry Week). If not, consider proceeding with an anonymous PiT Count and building a post-count validation exercise into the project.

# Further research

It is recommended that more research is required to understand:

1. The number of people in shared accommodation, including couch-surfing and over-crowding, and the nature of people's experiences.

2. Whether the location and availability of transitional housing meets the level and location of demand across the region.

3. The needs of people in temporary accommodation, including people in caravan parks and boarding houses, with a view to creating permanent housing solutions.

4. The situation for women experiencing homelessness.

# Next steps

1. The findings of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* will be reviewed by the multi-agency Housing First Auckland Governance Group to identify opportunities for the organisations that are represented to improve collaboration towards preventing and addressing homelessness so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurring.

2. Work will continue between Housing First Auckland and Auckland's temporary accommodation providers to strengthen and enhance the use of data to improve outcomes, with a focus on consistent data measures and collection.

3. Services within and affiliated to Housing First Auckland will continue to develop a coordinated entry approach, which includes developing By-Name Lists that respond to the Auckland context. This will require services to develop shared data practices that contribute to improving access to services for people experiencing homelessness.

# Appendix

# List of figures

# List of tables

# Glossary

# References

# Appendix A: Methodology

This appendix describes the methodology in more detail.

## The methodology

*Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was focussed on enumerating people living without shelter (on the streets and in cars) and people living in temporary accommodation across the Auckland region. These are two of the four categories of homelessness included in Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness.

A combination of tally, survey and service level data was sought as outlined in Table 9. The methodology was adapted from approaches taken in North America and drew heavily on The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Point in Time Toolkit (Donaldson, 2017).

### Living without shelter survey: data points

The design of the survey used for *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* was based on the PiT Count survey developed by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2017).

The survey was adapted for the Auckland context by the Advisory Group, Housing First Kaupapa Māori Group, researchers and other stakeholders. The development phase was iterative with the following factors and considerations informing any decisions about the questions included in the survey.

- Could this information be obtained elsewhere? (Via other pieces of research?)

- Is the survey the most appropriate location to seek this information? (Would the service level be more suitable?)

- Is it highly sensitive information to be seeking? (How likely is it to trigger survey respondents?)

- How useful is this information? (What purpose does the information serve? Will it inform policy and funding discussions? The Housing First programme? Individual service delivery?)

An early version of the survey was piloted with 12 people with lived experience through contacts at the Auckland City Mission and Lifewise Merge Cafe. Based on the feedback received, changes were made to the survey and a second round of feedback was provided by 10 people through the Lifewise Merge Café.

Table 10 outlines the final and agreed components of the survey, with a maximum of 33 questions asked of

people living in cars and a maximum of 27 for people on the streets. The survey questionnaire is in Appendix D.

### Temporary accommodation: data points

The project team worked closely with providers of temporary accommodation services to understand the services delivered, information captured, ability to extract the desired information and time required to update and extract information, in order to provide an accurate view of service use on 17 September.

Providers were given the data format extraction definitions in Table 11 to support their participation in the count.

### Providers of temporary accommodation data

Considerable engagement went into brokering participation in *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* by funders and providers of temporary accommodation. The number and type of services and agencies that provided temporary accommodation data are included in Table 12.

### Determining when to deliver the street count: 9.30pm – 12.30am, 17 September 2018

The time and date of the count was decided by the PiT Count Advisory Group. Factors contributing to this decision included:

- the month of the year: September is still cold enough that people who had available shelter as an option would be likely to use it.

- the day of the week: Most benefit payments fall early-mid-week and having the count on a Monday meant people experiencing homelessness were more likely to be present on the streets and included in the count; rather than potentially having spent money on accommodation.

- time of the day: reviewing good practice around the time of the count identified that 9.30pm was a standard time for delivering street counts and that the majority were for a duration of two-three hours.

# Appendix A: Methodology

## Administering the living without shelter survey

Trained volunteers and staff administered the survey. All volunteers were required to complete online training and team leaders attended an in-person training session. The survey was available through the Harvest Your Data app which was downloaded from the App or Google Play stores. Paper copies were also provided should the app fail.

Volunteers were instructed to approach people who displayed characteristics of homelessness as described in Appendix B. They were trained to administer the survey in a friendly and non-judgemental manner. The importance of surveyors being respectful was emphasised, e.g. not waking people or entering their space without permission and respecting peoples' right to not participate or end the survey early. As part of the consent process, respondents were informed their answers would be non-identifiable, their location would not be shared other than at a Local Board level and they could end the survey at any point.

It was decided that unaccompanied youth under the age of 16 would not be surveyed. The agreed process was that they would be advised by volunteers that due to concerns about their age, further advice would be sought from the Regional Support Team.

People determined as living without shelter who chose not to participate in the survey or who were not approached to participate in the survey, or who were asleep, or who were unapproachable were tallied. No other observational data was sought as part of the tally.

## Honoraria/koha and engagement gifts

Volunteers were provided with beanies to engage with people on the streets and in cars. Where people met the eligibility criteria and commenced the survey, they were offered a $10 supermarket voucher for their time. Additionally, volunteers were provided with two different types of information cards to hand out, one with generic homeless and social services and one tailored for young people. The Advisory Group felt it was important to provide people with koha for their time and that $10 was an appropriate amount to recognise their participation, an approach supported by good practice (Donaldson, 2017). Additionally, the Advisory Group informed the decision to not impose any exclusions on the supermarket vouchers so that participants could chose to spend it how they liked.

# Appendix A: Methodology

Table 10: *Overview of methodology*

| Target population | Component 1.<br>People living without shelter (on the street and in cars). | Component 2.<br>People living in temporary accommodation |
|---|---|---|
| Enumeration approach | Unsheltered count (survey or tally) | Service administrative data |
| Date/Time | 17 September 2018, 9.30pm-12.30am. | The night of 17 September 2018 |

Table 11: *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count survey data elements*

| Component | Data set |
|---|---|
| Tally | If people were asleep, unapproachable or did not want to participate. |
| Greeting | - |
| Screening questions | To determine if people had already completed a survey to determine eligibility based on the count scope and understand if further support was required where children were involved. |
| Introduction providing information about the count, its purpose and how the results will be used | - |
| Consent | Gains informed consent to proceed with the survey. |
| Demographics | Covering age, year of birth, gender identity, sexual identity, ethnicity, disability, employment, eligibility and access to benefits and study. |
| Experience of homelessness | Where people stayed, age first become homeless, time spent living without shelter in past three years, whether continuous or episodic, time spent living without shelter over a lifetime, safety and time spent in Auckland and other parts of New Zealand, in past three years. |
| Service use | Frequency of visits to hospital emergency departments and number of hospital admissions and experience of foster care/group home and prison. |
| Closing script | Asking if people would like to receive a copy of the report. |

# Appendix A: Methodology

Table 12: *Temporary accommodation data format extraction definitions*

| Component | Data set | |
|---|---|---|
| Grouping identifier | A way to link adults and/or children to indicate a grouping. This could be a referral or placement reference within your system. | 264461 <br> A1142 |
| Family role | Indicator of adult or child or dependent. Primary client of referral. | Adult <br> Child <br> Primary |
| Year of birth | The year of birth for the person. | 1980 <br> 2016 |
| Gender | The way the person defines their gender. | Male <br> Female <br> Transgender |
| Ethnicity | The ethnicities that the person identifies with the most. | Samoan <br> Tongan <br> Māori <br> NZ/European |
| Iwi | The iwi the person identifies with the most. | Ngāi Tahu |
| Service start date | Date the person was housed. | 1/07/2018 |
| Organisation name | Name of the organisation providing the service (typically your NGO name). | Generic NGO |
| Service name | What does the organisation call the service? | North Transitional Housing |
| Service type | What is the contracted type of service? | Transitional Housing |
| Referral source | What was the referral source that led to the adult(s) and/or children coming to the service? | Other generic NGO <br> Self-referral <br> Ministry of Social Development |

Table 13: *Services/agencies who provided temporary accommodation data*

| Component | Data set |
|---|---|
| Transitional and emergency housing providers | 12 |
| Mental health and addiction services from the Waitematā, Counties-Manukau and Auckland District Health Boards. | 12 |
| Department of Corrections (Probation-managed temporary accommodation) | 1 |
| Ministry of Social Development (EN SNG) | 1 |
| **TOTAL** | **26** |

# Appendix B: Living without shelter indicators

The following information was provided to volunteers on the night of count during the training presentation. It was developed to assist volunteers to determine whether to tally people who appeared to be sleeping rough or in a car but were asleep, unapproachable or chose not to participate in the survey.

## Sleeping rough

- Has gear with them like sleeping bags, bedding, large bags, trolley or shopping bags.

- Person may be observed looking for a place to sit, rest or sleep, perhaps walking the same route looking for some privacy/place to bed down.

- Person may be bedding down for the evening, making a place to sleep.

- Person may be seen begging for money or with sign saying they are homeless (Please note: not all people begging are homeless).

- Some people tend to gravitate to places of shelter, i.e. places with 24-hour opening such as fast food outlets, around buildings with a canopy/street cover, places with natural warmth and water and light/security cameras for safety.

- Others may opt for solitude of parks and reserves so look out for tents and awnings. Check park benches, grandstands, covered areas or under trees.

## Sleeping in a car

- People parked-up and sleeping in the car which has a lot of gear in it.

- Fogged windows.

- Towels/sheets/blankets across windows for privacy/warmth.

- Belongings around or under the vehicle for 'storage'.

- Makeshift tent/awning from side of vehicle for additional people or gear.

## Sleeping in a car

# Appendix C: Survey

The paper version of the survey is provided.

## Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count survey

**Ira Mata, Ira Tangata** — AUCKLAND'S HOMELESS COUNT

### KEY

💬 **Say** – please speak the instructed text

🖐 **Action** – please complete the action

### TALLY **(T)**

**T1. Enter your location as the nearest street and suburb, beach, or park.**

**T2. Is the person in a car?**
- ○ Yes ► T3
- ○ No ► T3

**T3. Is the person approachable and awake?**
- ○ Yes ► C1 if in a car, or R1 on page 2 if rough sleeping
- ○ No ► END

### SCREENING – Person/people in a car **(C)**

**C1. Kia ora/Hello. My name is _____ and I am a volunteer for *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count*. Have you already spoken to someone wearing this vest tonight?**
- ○ No ► C2
- ○ Yes ► END 💬
- 💬 *Thanks for your time.*

**C2. May I ask you a few questions about your living situation?**
- ○ Yes ► C3
- ○ No ► END 💬
- 💬 *Thanks for your time.*

**C3. Before we go any further, are you ok speaking in the car? If not, we can speak outside.**
- ○ Continue in car ► 💬
- ○ Continue out of car ► 💬
- 💬 *Tonight we are speaking with people living on with people living on the streets and in cars. This will help to improve housing and support options in Auckland.*

**C4. Are you a tourist visiting Auckland?**
- ○ No ► C5
- ○ Yes ► END 💬
- 💬 *Thanks for your time, we don't need to ask you any more questions.*

**C5. Will you be sleeping in your car tonight?**
- ○ Yes ► C7
- ○ No ► C6

**C6. Will you be sleeping rough outdoors tonight?**
- ○ Yes, rough sleeping outdoors ► R4 on page 2
- ○ No ► END 💬
- ○ Prefer not to say ► END 💬
- 💬 *Thanks for your time, we don't need to ask you any more questions.*

**C7. Can you confirm you are 16 or older?**
- ○ Yes (16 and over) ► C8
- ○ No (under 16) ► SAY 1 💬 then END
- ○ Prefer not to say ► SAY 2 💬 then 🖐 then END

**SAY 1** 💬 *Thank you for your time but people need to be 16 or older to participate. Here's some information about services that you might find useful. Given your age, I am going to speak to my team leader who will contact the Regional Support Team for further guidance.*

**SAY 2** 💬 *Thank you for your time but we do need to confirm that you are 16 or older to proceed. Thanks again.*

🖐 *If you think the young person is under 16, offer the youth flyer then speak to your team leader who will contact the Regional Support Team for further guidance.*

**C8. Will there be any other adults sleeping in the car with you tonight? If yes, how many other adults?**
- ○ No (1 total)
- ○ Yes, 1 (2 total)
- ○ Yes, 2 (3 total)
- ○ Yes, 3 (4 total)
- ○ Yes, 4 (5 total)
- ○ Yes, 5+ (6+ total)

*Please enter the survey number of each other participating adult in the car:*

**C9. Will there be anyone under 18 sleeping in the car with you tonight?**
- ○ Yes ► C9a
- ○ No ┐
- ○ Don't know ├ ► CONSENT
- ○ Prefer not to say ┘

**C9a. How many under 18s will be staying with you?** *[Indicate the number of young people.]*

**C9b. What is the age of each young person?** *[Separate ages with a comma ','.]*

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# Appendix C: Survey

**C10. As there are under 18-year olds in the car with you, would you like to stay in a government funded motel tonight?**

○ Yes ► 🖐 then CONSENT

○ No ► CONSENT

🖐 *Tell your team leader who will then contact the <u>Motel Placement Coordinator</u>. Then continue with the survey.*

---

### SCREENING – Person on the street/sleeping rough  **R**

**R1. Kia ora/Hello my name is _____ and I am a volunteer for *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata: Auckland's Homeless Count*. Have you already spoken to someone wearing this vest tonight?**

○ No ► R2

○ Yes ► END 💬

💬 *Thanks for your time.*

**R2. Tonight, we are speaking with people living on the streets and in cars. This will help to improve housing and support options for people in Auckland. May I please ask you a few questions?**

○ Yes ► R3

○ No ► END 💬

💬 *Thanks for your time.*

**R3. Will you be rough sleeping outdoors or in a car tonight?**

○ Yes, rough sleeping outdoors ► R4

○ Yes, in a car ► R4

○ Neither/no ► END 💬

○ Prefer not to say ► END 💬

💬 *Thanks for your time.*

**R4. Can you confirm you are 16 or older?**

○ Yes ► CONSENT

○ No ► 💬

○ Prefer not to say ► 💬 then 🖐

💬 *Thank you for your time but we do need to confirm that you are 16 or older to proceed. Thanks again.*

🖐 *If you think the young person is under 16, offer the youth flyer then speak to your team leader who will contact the <u>Regional</u> <u>Support Team</u> for further guidance.*

---

### CONSENT  **CON**

**Before we go any further I would like to tell you about the survey.**

• You will receive a $10 voucher for your time.

• You can skip any questions you don't want to answer.

• I won't be asking your name and you will not be identifiable.

• The findings will be publicly available in a report.

• Housing First Auckland will securely store the data and it won't be shared with anyone.

• The location of this survey will only be reported on at a local board level or higher. A local board includes a number of suburbs, so your location won't be identifiable.

**2**

---

**CON1. Do you give your consent to continue with the survey?**

○ Yes ► Go to Q1

○ No ► END 💬

💬 *Thanks for your time.*

---

### SURVEY – Core questions  **S**

💬 *We are going to begin the survey now.*

**Q1. Where have you stayed and slept most often in the last three months?** *[If a prompt is required please read the list. If someone indicates a home, clarify if own home, private rental or Housing NZ home.]*

○ Home I own

○ Private rental

○ Housing NZ home

○ Backpackers hostel

○ Boarding house

○ Caravan park

○ Couch surfing/multiple places

○ Emergency/transitional housing

○ Residential care or addiction treatment

○ Hospital or inpatient unit

○ Prison

○ With family or friends

○ Rough sleeping in a public place

○ Makeshift shelter, tent or shack

○ In my car

○ Marae

○ Other (please specify)

_____

○ Don't know

○ Prefer not to say

**Q2. What year were you born?**

_____

**Q3. How old were you when you first slept rough on the streets or in a car?**

*Age:*

○ Been living without shelter for less than a week

○ Don't know

○ Prefer not to say

**Q4. In the last three years how much time have you spent living on the streets or in a car in total?** *[Read the response options.]*

○ Less than 12 months

○ 1 to 2 years

○ 2 to 3 years

○ Don't know

○ Prefer not to say

# Appendix C: Survey

**Q5. Was this** *[read the response options]*?

- ○ One continuous experience
- ○ Multiple times (2 or more times)
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q6. Over your lifetime how many years have you lived on the streets or in a car in total?**

- ○ Less than 12 months
- ○ 1 to 2 years
- ○ 2 to 3 years
- ○ 3 to 5 years
- ○ 5 to 10 years
- ○ 10 to 20 years
- ○ 20 to 30 years
- ○ More than 30 years
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

💬 *The next questions help us to understand a bit more about you. Please remember your answers are confidential and you can skip these questions if you like.*

**Q7. Which ethnic group(s) do you identify with?**
*[Tick all that apply. PROMPT: For example, I identify as...]*

- ○ Māori  ► Q7a
- ○ NZ European/Pakeha
- ○ Samoan
- ○ Cook Islander
- ○ Tongan
- ○ Niuean
- ○ Chinese
- ○ Indian
- ○ Other (please specify)
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q7a. Would you like to provide the name(s) of your iwi?**

- ○ Yes  ► Q7b
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know  ► Q8
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q7b. Please record the stated iwi.** *[There may be multiple.]*

**Q8. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? This is a long-term condition that limits a person's ability to carry out daily activities.**

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q9. How do you describe your gender?** *[PROMPT: Read a few examples.]*

- ○ Male/man
- ○ Female/woman
- ○ Trans
- ○ Whakawahine
- ○ Fa'afafine
- ○ Takatāpui
- ○ Tangata ira tane
- ○ Trans female/ trans woman
- ○ Trans male/ trans man
- ○ Genderqueer/gender non-conforming
- ○ Non-binary
- ○ Bigender
- ○ Intersex
- ○ Self-describe:
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

💬 *To inform services, we want to understand how many people living on the streets and in cars are part of the gay or rainbow community. Remember you can skip any question you don't want to answer.*

**Q10. How do you describe your sexual identity?**
*[PROMPT: Read a few examples.]*

- ○ Straight/heterosexual
- ○ Gay
- ○ Lesbian
- ○ Bisexual
- ○ Takatāpui
- ○ Questioning
- ○ Queer
- ○ Pansexual
- ○ Asexual
- ○ Self-describe:
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q11. Could you please name the parts of Auckland you have stayed in the last year?** *[Tick all that apply.]*

- ○ North
- ○ West
- ○ South
- ○ East
- ○ Central
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q12. During the last year, have you lived without shelter in another part of New Zealand for a month or more?**

- ○ Yes  ► Q12a
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know  ► Q13
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q12a. Could you please name the town or cities?**
*[Separate locations with a comma ','.]*

# Appendix C: Survey

**Q13. Are you in paid work?**

- ○ Yes – Less than 30 hours per week
- ○ Yes – More than 30 hours per week
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q14. Are you currently receiving a benefit?**

- ○ Yes  ▸ Q15
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know  ▸ Q14a
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q14a. Can you claim a benefit?**

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q15. Are you currently studying?**

- ○ Yes – college/high school
- ○ Yes – tertiary institute eg university, technical institute
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

💬 *I am now going to ask you some questions that you might find personal, remember you can skip any questions you don't want to answer.*

**Q16. Thinking about your own safety, how safe or unsafe do you feel?**

- ○ Very safe
- ○ Safe
- ○ Neither safe or unsafe
- ○ Unsafe
- ○ Very unsafe
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q17. In the last 12 months how many times have you been to a hospital emergency department?**

- ○ Number of times:

- ○ None
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q18. In the last 12 months how many times have you been admitted to hospital?** *[PROMPT: Have you stayed overnight in hospital?]*

- ○ Number of times:

- ○ None
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q19. As a child, did you ever spend time in foster care or a group or residential home?**

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

**Q20. Have you ever been to prison? If so, how many times?**

- ○ Number of times:

- ○ No
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Prefer not to say

💬 *Thank you, that is the end of the survey. We appreciate your time and help tonight.*

## CLOSING SCRIPT  C

**CS1. Findings from this count, including a report, will be available online and at key agencies. Would you like to receive an electronic copy by email?**

- ○ Yes  ▸ CS1a          ○ No  ▸ **END** 💬

**CS1a. What is your email address? This will only be used to send you a copy of the findings.**

💬 *Here's a voucher to thank you for your time and some information about services and supports available in Auckland. Thanks again for your time.*

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# Appendix D: Overview of the Regional Support Team and volunteer protocols

This appendix describes the:

- Purpose of the regional support team (RST) that was active the night of the count and its membership.

- Protocol volunteers were provided to maintain peoples' wellbeing and safety.

- Analysis of calls received by the RST.

## Regional Support Team

### Purpose

1. Provide a streamlined and efficient support structure across the region to manage incidents and concerns relating to volunteers and participants.

2. Provide consistency of decision-making and practice across the region.

3. Enable sub-regional headquarters to focus on count logistics.

4. Manage the balance between delivering the count in a non-interventionist manner, given the lack of capacity in the system to respond to need, with the need to provide processes which are perceived as adequate and responsive.

5. Minimise the requirement for volunteers to make assessments of what to do.

6. Minimise the risk of volunteers taking matters into their own hands if they perceive count processes are not adequate.

7. Manage calls relating to people with children interested in receiving MSD-funded emergency accommodation.

### Membership

The RST was not intended to represent Housing First or other organisations working to address homelessness across Auckland. Rather, its composition ensured a responsive and experienced front-line team balancing the need for statutory representation with experienced practitioners to provide informed and consistent decision-making.

The RST included people from the following organisations and roles:

- Project lead, Housing First Auckland backbone team.

- Chief executive, Housing First Auckland service provider.

- Service manager, Housing First Auckland service provider.

- Police.

- Oranga Tamariki.

- Ministry of Social Development.

- Experienced practitioners (NZPC, Auckland City Mission, VisionWest).

The RST was supported by members of the project team and a team of administrators to triage calls that were received on the night.

## Protocols for volunteers

Protocols for volunteers participating in the Count were informed by people with lived experience, practitioners, the Housing First Auckland chief executives and Governance Group, and government agencies.

The protocols relate to:

1. general incident management

2. adults with under-18s

3. under-18s (U18) unaccompanied by an adult.

### General incident management

- For anyone in need of urgent medical care, team leaders are to call 111.

- For a person at risk of harming themselves or others, team leaders, where practical, are to contact Police, Ambulance or Fire Service on 111. If the team leader can't, another volunteer is to call 111.

- If the safety of any volunteer is under threat, leave the situation ASAP.

- Team leader must contact the RST to report any incidents (including 111 calls) and confirm if they are continuing or returning to HQ. If they contact the sub-regional HQ or come back to base, sub-regional HQ staff must contact the RST to log the incident.

- Support and debriefing will be available at the sub-regional HQ.

# Appendix D: Overview of the Regional Support Team and volunteer protocols

- For any other concerns about a person's wellbeing on the night team leaders contact the RST for guidance.

## Adults with U18s

- If adults are accompanied by under 18-year-olds, volunteers are to make an offer of WINZ emergency accommodation.

- If the person chooses not to participate in the survey and declines the offer, a general flyer of services is provided and there is no further action.

- If the offer is accepted, team leaders call the RST to arrange accommodation.

- While team leaders are contacting the RST, volunteers are to continue with the survey if participants have given consent.

- Team leaders will be informed when all places are filled. Once filled no more accommodation offers should be made.

## U18s unaccompanied by an adult

- Volunteers may come across young people who either confirm they are under 18-years-of-age or appear to be under 18-years-of-age.

- For any critical concerns about unaccompanied U18s relating to health or harm (as per general incident management protocol), call 111.

- If volunteers have any other concerns about unaccompanied U18s, they are to inform their team leader who will contact the RST for guidance.

- Where possible, the young person is to be offered the youth flyer for service information.

## Analysis of calls received by the Regional Support Team

- 45 calls were received on the night of the count. Table 13 summarises the nature of the calls.

Table 14. *Nature of calls received by the Regional Response Team*

| Component | Data set |
|---|---|
| Logistics | 33 |
| Concern for person/s | 4 |
| Technology issues | 4 |
| Team issues | 2 |
| Other | 2 |
| Emergency accommodation for families | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | **45** |

Most calls related to logistics, including people reporting losing a team member (all were found and accounted for) and teams completing routes quickly and wanting further instructions. Several calls related to technology issues using the app and concerns for people. Five calls were referred to senior practitioners who on-hand to respond to issues.

One of the primary drivers for having the RST in place was to arrange emergency accommodation for families. However, no families accepted this offer. Two individuals, aged 17 and 20, were offered emergency accommodation due to concerns for their wellbeing, and the offers were accepted. Uber for Business was employed to ensure individuals received transport to the emergency accommodation placement.

# Appendix E: Lessons learned

While the full evaluation report is being prepared, Table 15 summarises the key learnings.

Table 15 outlines the key logistical issues associated with delivering the street count and recommendations for future initiatives based on what was learned from implementing *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata*.

Table 15. Key logistical issues associated with delivery of the street count

|  | Logistical issue | Recommendation for future counts/Registry Weeks |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Volunteers not showing. | Allow for 50% of volunteers to not attend. Consider making verbal contact with each volunteer to foster accountability and relationships. Use SMS rather than email to communicate with volunteers (recognising this comes with a cost). |
| 2. | Team leaders being unavailable to attend in-person training. | Provide online training or team leader training on the night of the count. |
| 3. | The teams at the satellite hubs received poor quality Facebook live streaming of the briefing. | Conduct tests prior to going live to ensure adequate sound and visual filming quality. |
| 4. | Some volunteers had difficulty using the app to administer the online survey. | Ensure app simplicity and a user-friendly interface, this might require bespoke app development. More user testing before going live. Ensure there is adequate technical support and knowledge at HQs. |
| 5. | Low response rate to the survey. | Provide survey to volunteers before the night of the count. Provide opportunity for pairs of volunteers to role play inviting people to participate and entering survey data on the app as part of the briefing on the night. A dedicated resource to coordinate engagement with people living without shelter would have been beneficial. |
| 6. | High variation of maps across the region, a result of four different people preparing the maps. Some maps had limited or no detail about the possible location of people without shelter. | Have zoning and mapping functions centralised with a clear template developed. This function would also be responsible for plotting the intel/hotspot information received. More liaison with the street community, outreach and police to identify locations where people might be rough sleeping. |
| 7. | Volunteers completing their route once and returning to headquarters early. | Ensure volunteers are clear about the need to remain in their zone for the duration of the count, as people may not be settled the first-time teams complete the route. |
| 8. | Dealing with remaining materials at the end of the night. | Have a plan for services to take remaining materials. |
| 9. | High demand from media for people with lived experience to provide interviews. | Have a pool of people with lived experience identified early, trained and available to provide media interviews and share the load. |
| 10. | High demand from media for a project spokesperson to provide interviews. | Have several people trained and available to provide media interviews and share the load. |

# Appendix F: Limitations of the EH SNG data

This appendix explains the limitations identified by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) in relation to the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) data it provided about temporary accommodation placements on the night of 17 September 2018.

- The number of EH SNGs represents the number of MSD clients who received paid accommodation for the night of 17 September 2018.  We have included everyone who received a grant paid from 10 September 2018 for a number of nights that means they had accommodation paid for the night of 17 September 2018. For example, if a grant recipient received a grant on 12 September 2018 for three nights they would not be included as the last night of paid accommodation 15 September 2018.

- It cannot be determined that the recipient of the grant stayed in the funded accommodation on the night of the 17 September 2018. The number of grants merely indicates the number of recipients who requested an EH SNG to fund a stay in accommodation and the accommodation provider was paid for this accommodation.

- The number of EN SNGs is the number of people who applied and received a grant not the number of people who stayed in the funded accommodation for the night.

- Ethnicity is self-identified and multiple ethnicities may be chosen by an individual as fits their preference. Multiple selected ethnicities are then prioritised into a hierarchy. Ethnic groups do not currently align with Statistics New Zealand's ethnicity groupings.

- The household total information provided is only an indication of the household size based on information available at the time of producing this information.

- The household size including the number of additional adults and number of children does not necessarily represent the number of people that stayed in the accommodation for the night of the Auckland homeless count.

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# Glossary

**By-Name List**
A By-Name List stores identifiable information on people and their needs, assessed through an initial triage tool. This allows for a community to know at any point how many people are homeless and the level of their need.

**Coordinated systems approach**
This approach sees communities move from a collection of individual programmes to a community-wide response that is strategic, and data driven. Communities which have adopted this approach use data about the needs of those experiencing homelessness to inform the allocation of resources, services and programmes.

**Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG)**
The purpose of the EH SNG is to help people with the cost of staying in short-term emergency accommodation. The EH SNG pays for short-term accommodation for up to seven days at a time, with the accommodation supplied by commercial and community providers who are not already contracted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to deliver accommodation services; this often means accommodation in motels.

**Other temporary settings**
Includes people staying in independently-funded temporary accommodation and temporary accommodation provided by other government departments such as Corrections.

**People living in temporary accommodation**
This category of Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness includes people living in accommodation provided by transitional and emergency housing providers, MSD-funded emergency accommodation and district health board-provided mental health and addiction services.

**People living without shelter**
This category of Statistics New Zealand's definition of homelessness includes people living without shelter, on the streets, in vehicles and in makeshift huts.

**Point in Time Count (PiT Count)**
An unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness that includes both sheltered (temporary accommodation) and unsheltered homelessness (rough sleepers and people living in cars). Establishes the dimensions of homelessness in a community, helps inform funding priorities and tracks progress towards ending homelessness.

**Registry Week**
A coordinated outreach and triage process which collects identifiable and actionable data on every person experiencing homelessness to create a By-Name List. A Registry Week harnesses resources from the community to identify every individual and family requiring safe housing and their support needs.

**Statistics New Zealand definition of homelessness (2015)**
Living situations where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing are, without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household, or living in uninhabitable housing. Table 3 (p.21) provides details about scope of *Ira Mata, Ira Tangata* and how it relates to the definition.

**Transitional housing**
Transitional housing provides warm, dry and safe short-term accommodation for people in need along with tailored support. While formerly a Ministry of Social Development function, this programme is now led by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development with collaboration from Housing New Zealand, transitional housing providers and the wider housing sector.

**Validation exercise**
An estimation technique used to quantify the number of people missed during a PiT street count.

**Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)**
The VI-SPDAT is an initial triage assessment tool used to identify and understand the level of need among homeless people. It is tool that can be used stand alone as part of a Registry Week to create a static By-Name List or integrated into services initial assessment of new clients to create a live By-Name Lists.

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# Ira Mata, Ira Tangata

## AUCKLAND'S HOMELESS COUNT