Elderly Persons Housing - 2026 Policy Review

Summary of feedback

To support Deliberations on 26/07/2026

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1. How are you connected to this topic?

Total number of responses: 62

	Number of people	%
Tenant of Council housing	41	66.13%
Support Provider	3	4.84%
Housing Provider	1	1.61%
Interested community member	13	20.97%
Other	4	6.45%
Prefer not to say	0	0.00%

Elderly Persons Housing Policy Review 2026 > 80% market Rate

Total number of submitters: 62

2. Given the challenges, we're proposing to increase rent for elderly persons housing to a baseline of 80% of market rate. Do you agree with the proposed change to the way rent will be set?

Total Submissions	Number of people	%
Yes	29	46%
No	24	38%
I have an alternative suggestion	9	14%
Total	**62**	

Tenant Submissions	Number of tenants	%	Top Reason
Yes	22	54%	Equity for ratepayers and tenants
No	16	39%	Affordability concerns
I have an alternative suggestion	3	7%	Gradual increase
Total	**41**		

Submitter name	Submitter comments	Staff comments
Yes		
21 - JW & AL Campbell	I think it is still a good deal for us at 80% of the market rate.	
62 - N/A Barton	I definitely see the merit although different areas obviously attract different expectations. At a recent meeting in Ashburton I was shocked at some "tenants" expectations of Council. It appears there is room in their budgets for alcohol, gambling and tobacco. 80% of market value is fair, but collection of comparative community data will take some care.	
Better outcome		
14 - Haurua James	It gives a better outcome to all concern. Good planning safe homes and a balance results for all	
61 - Bruce Germon	Conversely, we will be much better off with a rental increase that should hold well into the 2030s	
Equity		
5 - Brenda Franz	With the accommodation supplement to offset the costs, and only 102 homes affected in the entire district, those affected will have support if they need it. Maintained homes that are healthier and warmer are better for our elderly.	
13 - Murray Hawkes	If there is hardship the tenant should access support from government not ratepayers	
46 - Patricia Dowding	I believe this to be realistic given the rate payers contribute enough given the existing climate. I am concerned that as Council is our landlord they need to greatly look at the units. By law landlords are duty bound to ensure that all rentals are double glazed. Our units are cold and do need double glazing, this is a priority! I am surprised this has not already been done.	All Council Elderly Persons Housing units are Healthy Homes compliant. Existing rental properties are not required to be double glazed under the Healthy Homes legislation.
Gradual increase		
42 - Mary Guenole	But would have preferred a staged approach.	

market rate concerns		
49 - G & P Quinn	Does it have to be 80% of market rent could it be 60%-70%?	Council has undertaken condition assessments on the portfolio. To undertake this work, charging 80% of market rent would break even meaning there would be no ratepayer input required to fund the service. 60-70% would require ongoing financial support from ratepayers.
Not eligible for AS		
10 - Marion Logan	the suggestion that many are able to get accommodation supplement may be very limited. Cash assets allowed are less than your own funeral costs.	Based on the information provided by tenants at the commencement of their tenancies, most would fit within the limits to receive financial support from the government. As this support is specific to each individuals situation, it requires each tenant to engage directly with MSD to determine eligibility.
Update required		
22 - Murray and Virginia Rasmussen	It is a sign of the times, now as the years go by faster than ever and more money is needed for this world to tick?	
24 - Helena Edy	Having paid rent for over 20 years in the private sector I knew your rents were to good to be true and they would have to go up	
No		
44 - Anonymous Tenant	Shouldn't have used your repair money on the sports centre	Budgets for EPH maintenance and renewals are established through the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan processes and are allocated specifically for that purpose. These

		funds are not redirected to other Council projects, such as the sports centre, which are funded through separate budgets and funding sources.
51 - David Campbell	if they do a good job and fix things	
Affordability concerns		
3 - Kerryn Gray	The housing is for people who have no alternative and can barely afford to live in them. I would rather pay a bit extra in my rates to cover this cost, then to make these poor pensioners pay more for their accommodation when things are so tight financially for them as it is. I would rather pay for pensioner housing then for a community event that I do not attend or for power wastage.	
7 - Jen Dearborn	i think its unfair that i single person has to pay almost as much as two people living together. I am happy to pay more rates to support older people to have the housing support they need. Times are hard for retired people with no savings and this will leave more people hungry or cold	Council does not charge per tenant. Rental is set per unit.
9 - Elaine Aldridge	seniors only get a certain amount of money, the price of heating has gone up, food has gone up, now you are strangling pensioners even more	
16 - Barbara Reid	I feel this is quite a substantial increase at one time. The residents involved are my age and older and I feel for them trying to work this into their lifestyle	
18 - Kelly Foster	my elderly grandmother resides in an elderly unit she is on only a pension doesn't get additional support from work and income and is physically unable to live in a bigger home. Its already tough enough for our most vulnerable elderly this would practically cripple them in an extreme cost of living crisis	
36 - Peter Murphy	Fixed income, market rent would be ok if i was working. A fixed income is no joke. People forget the pension is subsistence money only. Little room to change it	

38 - Brian Jonas	Why has this suddenly become an issue. Council have owned some units since 1957 where has the income gone!! Where is the repairs and maintenance / replacement fund gone!! Over the last 5yrs rent has increased $10 per week, $41,500 approx at 80% occupancy, how can you be $49,000 overdrawn? A one hit rent rise of up to $94 will put more strain on tenants fixed income (superannuation has not risen since 1998). Superannuation is means tested - any tenant with more than $8,102 will get no! Assistance. This will not bury a person so things need to change.	Previously Council rents have not been set at a rate high enough to cover costs relating to repairs and maintenance. This has resulted in the EPH fund to be drawn down and it is now in deficit. Operating expenses such as insurance have increased by 315% over the last 10 years with the most significant increase occurring between 2021-2024. Since the late 1990's superannuation has increased by approximately 200% while inflation has increased by 93% Superannuation is not means tested. The $8,102 relates to cash asset limits for the Accommodation Supplement. Eligibility for financial support is individual and takes into account things such as income, savings, rent amount, where they live and household situation.
43 - Eleanor Joyce	Money is already tight. I receive the MSD supplement already with all my other costs it is unaffordable.	
Equity		
6 - Dave Christensen	any increase should only be applied after a current tenant has moved on (in hospital care or has passed away). At that point the unit could be renovated to a higher standard and then the rent increased. However I think 80% of market rates would be too high.	

	Remember an elderly person may have paid rates for years and probably has children or grandchildren currently paying rates.	
57 - John McGirr	My view on the rent to be charged depends on the total cost of supplying housing. See item 4 below.	
Gradual increase		
30 - Robert Clinton	A more gradual increase	
60 - Anonymous 6	Why is there such a big hike zero to 80%, why not gradual say 20% 1st year? 2nd year? 3yr. Our incomes will never go up 80%. Could Council prune some staff or cut back on some events. Be more frugal (concrete slabs near clock tower extremely slippery when wet)	
market rate concerns		
17 - Annie Jacobs	I would like to see rental rates for elderly housing to be proportionate to the pension. Rental rates at 80% of market rates are unfair because the people who may need that type of housing are on a very limited income and the rate of the Accommodation Supplement and hoops required to jump through to receive it is not usually enough to pay 80% of market rental.	
28 - Margaret Jones	My reason is that I'm not sure how you get market rate, as all Council units are one bedroom - how many one bedroom houses are around to get that 80%, it doesn't seem right if its taken on 2 &3 bedroom places	Rental appraisals have been undertaken by an independent third party and takes into account the condition, size, location of each unit etc.
48 - Anonymous 3	How do you calculate 80% of the market rate on 1 bedroom units in Ashburton as I don't believe there are many if any locally	Market rent was assessed using rental appraisals provided from a local property rental provider. Council units were then scored against its condition and features, including the kitchen, bathroom, heating and insulation, flooring and finishes, layout and lighting. The proposed rent was then calculated at 80% of the assessed

		market rate, with the condition score helping to ensure the rent reflects the standard of each unit.
Not eligible for AS		
29 - Rex Le Bas	I worked hard all my life often 3 jobs at once to make ends meet! Six years ago I had a major illness and ongoing consequences. My savings have dwindled. I do not qualify for WINZ accommodation supplement as my remaining savings we earmarked for funeral expenses and donation to charity. Now you are going to hike my rent for an unappealing cold little shoebox of a flat with horrible steps at the front. I feel like I am being punished for having a major illness, for limited savings and living in an unattractive box. I spent a lot of time developing the gardens around my flat and now I feel like why bother? Why bother carrying on with anything?	
33 - Lorraine Lyford	MSD yes, I went to WINZ who were very helpful but it still says that I am unable to receive the accommodation allowance as I have too much in savings. In my case this is because when Don died, I was left destitute as his family took everything, all except my "marbles". Sorry I don't have any suggestions to help.	
I have an alternative suggestion		
55 - Jane Higgins for Christchurch Methodist Mission	Please see our attached document.	
Affordability concerns		
26 - Colin Dennis	With the cost of living and house prices make some struggles. You really want to put the rent in while we're down with cost of living as suffering enough. People are pensioners on no money with the cost of the MSD rates we now what we are paying. At 80% it is no longer affordable EPH. It sounds like your pension doesn't mean much.	
34 - Christine Farrell	Even though WINZ are going to help it will still be hard	

36 - Peter Murphy	Fixed income, market rent would be ok if i was working. A fixed income is no joke. People forget the pension is subsistence money only. Little room to change it	
Gradual increase		
15 - Peter Murray	Gradually increase the rent to 80% of the market rate for existing tenants and immediately for any new tenancies. Evaluate the economic viability of all properties and use the income from any property sales to fund maintenance on the rest to bring them up to standard.	
41 - Jennifer McKenzie	Not everyone is eligible for MSD for those people the increase is too much at once. Maybe a staged increase.	
market rate concerns		
11 - Robin Burgess	As national rents could be away out of line compared to what it actually cost then the rents charged should be what it actually cost plus a modest profit with inflation adjusted, e.g. the national cost could be 600 a week yet the costs of running those flats could be $200, so a $400 difference then should we be making huge profits or evicting the elderly that are generally poor if they are living in those flats to start of.	The proposed 80% is intended to cover the ongoing costs of operating and maintaining the housing portfolio whilst keeping the rents 20% below market rent. There is no intention to make huge profits.
Not core council business		
8 - Colin Lill	I don't think it is council core business to be in community housing. This is a job for Charities or central government	
12 - Graeme Smith	Rent should be at market rate. Central government takes care of the needy	

Elderly Persons Housing Policy Review 2026 > Application Process

Total number of submitters: 58

3. We're proposing to change the way applications for elderly persons housing are considered (i.e. introduce discretionary eligibility). Do you agree with the proposed change?

	Number of people	%
Yes	43	74%
No	14	24%
Comment Only	1	2%
Total	**58**	

Submitter name	Submitter comments	Staff comments
Yes		
15 - Peter Murray	Only those who really need the housing should be eligible.	
16 - Barbara Reid	I do feel this maybe a better process although it will involve more work for your organisation.	
18 - Kelly Foster	there needs to be a needs assessment for someone who generally needs the housing support as opposed to someone who just wants it because they are of right age	
21 - JW & AL Campbell	We think the Council does have to guard themselves when making decisions on applications for housing	
31 - Mary Stuart	It is important that the people in bad need of housing are a priority therefore means testing is important	
36 - Peter Murphy	Maybe, provided its fair and reasonable	
46 - Patricia Dowding	I thought that was the current practice. So will be interested in what Council sees as "Discretionary Eligibility"	
62 - N/A Barton	I am not really familiar with any differences that may be up for consideration. I felt the process I went through was both simple and fair. I appreciate and respect the situation I have found myself in, and personally do not have any expectations around council ownership. Karen is brilliant, professional, compassionate and therefore my experience of council housing is perfect in current format.	
Consistency		
3 - Kerryn Gray	I thought this was already the case. I thought the pensioner housing was for the elderly who could not afford to live anywhere else.	

5 - Brenda Franz	ONLY as long as 'discretionary' still relates to the pensioners. We wouldn't want to see an elderly person missing out on a home because it was occupied by a younger person that had other options.	
7 - Jen Dearborn	those with the highest need should be in council housing but i dont know the eligibility criteria so its hard to comment	The eligibility criteria is provided in the policy, on the application form and on Council's website.

No		
8 - Colin Lill	See above	
9 - Elaine Aldridge	it's all down to money, who has it with today's economy	
33 - Lorraine Lyford	You, the Council will no doubt get undesirable tenants who are very switched on about how to receive folk. The undesired, in my experience, do not respect other tenants, nor the owners or caretakers. Yes, in the future "test" applicants but not "sitting" tenants. Now we have all been put under the microscope those who have dare "saved" are shot.	
36 - Peter Murphy	Maybe, provided its fair and reasonable	
41 - Jennifer McKenzie	Two people who equally want somewhere to live, why should the person with less money get priority. Theres more to it than that.	
57 - John McGirr	The reason I agree with the proposal is that those that meet all of the criteria must be supplied accommodation first without exception - they are the ones in most need. The discretionary applications may be considered - but then comes in the human factor that the allocation officer has to or may consider, for example 2 applicants one has 2 dogs the other has 2 cats, one is a woman the other a man - the issue then comes who do you take who do you leave. Animals is a tough one - first up no animal person gets to be on the top of the list - animals are not really the problem it is the owners. If you accept animals it should be limited to one	Changes to animals in the policy reflect the changes to the Residential Tenancies Act since the last policy review.

	only in total. Not one dog and one cat and one donkey - yes have a laugh been into a state rental and a donkey had the lounge area as a play pen - shit and all.	
Affordability concerns		
28 - Margaret Jones	I know that rent has to go up, but by the amount you are talking about is going to be hard on a lot of us. I have trouble every second pay and don't have the saving to help. What you get from WINZ is something, but it doesn't take the pressure off you, I know from private rental before coming here.	
60 - Anonymous 6	National super should never have to justify eligibility, we have health issues to deal with, no public transport, wait time for doctors appointments, food prices soaring, power rates climbing and to top it off rents 80% which means rates jump.	

Elderly Persons Housing Policy Review 2026 > Other Feedback

Total number of submitters: 24

4. Do you have any other comments or feedback?

Submitter name	Submitter comments	Staff comments
7 - Jen Dearborn	please maintain the status quo	
10 - Marion Logan	council could also allow more one bedroom flats to be built privately	
11 - Robin Burgess	You never know your future despite all the best planning when you could be in those flats then you would think differently	
18 - Kelly Foster	change the eligibility to needs assessed only and leave their rents alone	
29 - Rex Le Bas	I just want this nightmare over. Do what you will. We pensioners are just a number value. You people can afford to spend $45,000 or consultants for the retail sector, money to repaint your ugly council building! But I, a sick old pensioner can be treated like crap.	The proposed changes will enable our elderly persons housing properties to be better maintained.
30 - Robert Clinton	Better heating and ventilation in the kitchen	All units comply with Healthy Homes regulations. 30 new heatpumps were replaced in the last financial year and the proposed improvements to maintenance will ensure further improvements and replacements are carried out.
41 - Jennifer McKenzie	Everyone's situation is different. This doesn't address the whole picture. Not everyone fits into a box.	

43 - Eleanor Joyce	I feel like council will do this anyway. I went to the meeting it is a forgone conclusion. I love my house - recently renovated.	Council held tenant meetings, MSD drop-in sessions, and direct engagement with tenants to ensure those most affected could provide feedback. The feedback will be considered by Councillors before any final decision is made.
45 - Ann Patterson	Units being vacated should be ready for new tenants in shorter space of time - have seen some empty no rents being received for up to 3 months or more. Old units should have more maintenance, paint etc. done on a regular basis.	
54 - Jo Thomas	Animals clauses related to dogs have been updated - what does that actually mean? Visitors who bring dogs seem to need toilet stops on the gardens. Dogs should be banned.	Changes to the Residential Tenancies Act mean that landlords cannot refuse pets without a reasonable reason.
55 - Jane Higgins	Please see our attached document	
56 - Paul Gilberd	Please see our supporting document for our submission.	
60 - Anonymous 6	The elderly are the most vulnerable age group, and many are old school who won't complain and will just carry on head high without letting anyone know they are struggling and feel alone. They have done their bit for king and country. We can't help the fact that jobs and production was easy 1950s-60s company's moved everyone loses.	
62 - N/A Barton	As a retired perfectionist tradesman, I believe more informed scrutiny of trades people involved in the maintenance of said properties should be adopted. Before I moved into a Council property, I observed a roof painting and tidy up of that particular property and was absolutely appalled at the total lack of care or preparation, I hate to think of what was charged.	
Affordability concerns		
1 - John Hopkins	Thank you for allowing the opportunity for a say in the rent increase proposal.	

	I understand rent increases are necessary to ensure elderly housing remains financially sustainable and well maintained. I also realise rent increases in elderly housing is a complex issue with valid arguments on both sides. However as residents live on fixed incomes such as pensions and retirement savings, if any, (that is why they reside in elderly housing) will in many instances create hardship for residents living on limited incomes. A fair percentage find themselves presently in this position. Any decision to raise rents can place significant financial pressure on older people, leaving them with less money for essentials such as food, healthcare, and transportation. This may reduce their quality of life and increase financial stress during retirement Consideration should carefully balance the need for quality housing with the importance of affordability and resident well being.	
3 - Kerryn Gray	Please think of the vulnerable community when doing our town budget. Think of ways that you can cost cut from wastage rather than making vulnerable people pay extra for necessities i.e accommodation.	
9 - Elaine Aldridge	think of something else, people are living on the bread line, you go and charge more and I don't know how people will cope.	
28 - Margaret Jones	My biggest question is how much each year will our rent go up. It's not easy working your pension at the best of times. So because I live in a double unit like everyone in Friendship Lane we all have to pay $256 whether we are a single or a pair.	Rent is proposed to be 80% of market determined annually. Rental is not based on the number of people in a unit. Rent is dependent on the location of the unit, condition, size etc.
33 - Lorraine Lyford	Yes. Council welcome to a "Donald Trump" look alike situation. Now you need to get your thinking caps on and put the blame squarely where it should be and not taking our little piece of "PEACE" from your tenants. It, as you know very difficult times for us all. The ends don't meet. We appreciate having a safe haven at this time of life.	

38 - Brian Jonas	I feel that this is elder abuse! Councillors took pay rises, as to the mayor, why is it so urgent after all the time Council have had property. Where is all the rent going? Not too maintenance, these have been deferred thereby costing more.	
Equity		
5 - Brenda Franz	Finances are tough for everyone. Pensioners do it tough on a limited income but there is little support for hard working kiwi's that are struggling to pay a mortgage that comes with rates, insurances and maintenance, which at the end of the day is more expensive than rent with no responsibility. It's equally unfair on ratepayers to offset everything in the community that needs funding so everyone needs to share the load.	
46 - Patricia Dowding	I am very grateful having a council flat so thank you for that. As long as the increases don't eat into my pension too much it is a fair way for everyone. I will be asking for assistance as any savings I do have will be for my funeral and car upkeep.	
57 - John McGirr	ADC and housing. The housing portfolio must be run as a stand alone business, all costs must be charged, wages, administration, interest, depreciation etc. This total then is the used to work out rents, 80% may cover it, but it may have to be higher nearer 90%. It has been reported in the media several times that landlords are selling up as there is no money to be made hence backs up my view that 80% may be on the light side. If the housing is being run as a stand alone entry at ADC, if full depreciation is being charged and placed in a separate account for capital works I do not have much concern of the rent charged. On the other hand if the housing is not stand alone and ADC ratepayers are picking up the tab I am really concerned and it must not happen. For example a single person living in their own home at 80 years old, paying rates, insurance and maintenance etc is then paying through their rates money to support a	

	person living in cheap accommodation. Take a home with rates at $4000-00, Insurance at $3500-00 plus repairs / upkeep etc of $3000-00 a year = $10500-00 = $201-00 week without any other costs, this represents the rents you propose to charge without all other overheads taken into consideration like depreciation. Why should we flog off the ratepayer to allow others to have cheap rent. I relate to those in the community who do not have the funds available to pay rents and to this end they have the opportunity to apply to the state for funding, the same as others who rent in the Private Sector Your information sheet under "Ratepayers" states that at 80% market rate for rents the housing would be self supporting in 2 years or so - does this figure include depreciation as this is the money you use for funding capital works. Looking at sustainability, some real issues are starting to surface like delayed maintenance - how is this going to be addressed and who pays. I would recommend some of the existing housing stock is sold to make up the short fall. In closing the rents must be set so as to ensure the ADC housing is self funding including capital works without any assistance from the ratepayers.	
Gradual increase		
16 - Barbara Reid	This housing is providing our senior residents with comfortable living also exposing them to a social element for those who choose this. I understand costs rise but to break this to them gently would be more reasonable. Thank You	
Not core council business		
13 - Murray Hawkes	Council should not be providing social housing funded by property rates	