

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 11 May 2016

HOUSING FIRST: AUCKLANDERS ALSO NEED AFFORDABLE HOMES

Lifewise welcomes the Government's announcement of new funding into emergency housing and looks forward to seeing the Government also looking at ways to make housing affordable for Aucklanders.

The provision of 360 beds in Auckland is a step in the right direction but it does not come close to meeting the need. **Research indicates that over 17,000 people in Auckland are severely housing deprived.** If the trend of unaffordable or unavailable housing continues, this number is going to grow.

"Lifewise warns against putting all our eggs in the emergency housing basket," says Moira Lawler, Chief Executive, Lifewise. "In a system geared towards ending homelessness, emergency housing is but one part of a collective effort to house people rapidly and permanently. There is a risk in pouring resource into bricks-and-mortar instead of supporting people to live sustainably in housing of their choice."

According to estimates based on New Zealand and overseas studies, **the average cost of someone remaining homeless is approximately \$65,000 per person per year.** There are many international studies that show it is most effective to support people to move quickly into secure, permanent accommodation.

"For this reason, the new funding to support people who are homeless is especially welcome," says Moira. "What will be critical is how quickly people can be moved out of emergency housing. Supporting people into affordable permanent accommodation requires innovative funding solutions and we look forward to working with government and philanthropies on this issue."

For more information on Lifewise's work, visit www.lifewise.org.nz

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