

Key Area: Creating diverse housing choices and options



Increasing trend



Decreasing trend



No change in trend, or changes are minimal/not significant

Indicators are signs of progress towards what the Better Later Life Strategy and Action Plan aim to achieve. Some figures in these indicators (marked with *) should be taken with caution because of small number of people sampled or counted. This means that changes may not be statistically significant, or the figures are estimates. However, the general trends and overall picture are still informative.

What we want to achieve: People can age in a place they call home, safely and, where possible, independently.

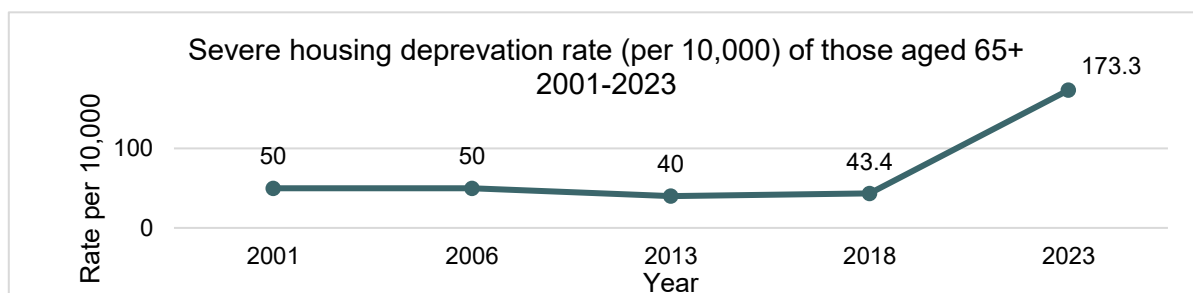
Indicator 25: The number of aged 65+ who are in severe housing deprivation.



The proportion of older people aged 65 years and over who are experiencing housing deprivation has likely increased since the 2018 Census. Historical data shows a relatively stable rate from 2001 to 2013:

Year	Proportion
2001	5 per 1,000
2006	5 per 1,000
2013	4 per 1,000
2018	43.4 per 10,000
2023	173.3 per 10,000 ¹

The 2023 Census included an improved collection strategy for understanding severe housing deprivation. Results are considered estimates because they are constructed from a combination of variables rather than being counted from a single direct question to individuals in the Census. Because of the changed collection strategy, caution should be used when comparing figures between years.²



Category	2018	2023	% Increase
Temporary accommodation or without shelter	1,518	3,501	130.6%
Uninhabitable housing	5,976	8,814	47.5%
Historical grouping (long-term deprivation)	2,772	4,950	78.6%

There may be a growing proportion of older people living in severe housing deprivation, with increases across all categories of deprivation.

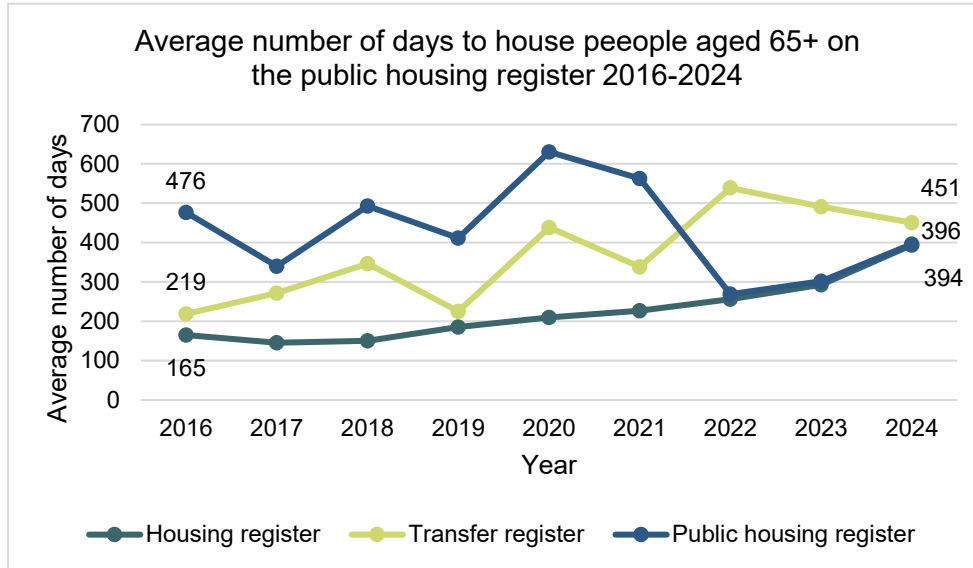
¹ The prevalence rate denominator is the census usually resident population count minus the severe housing category 'excluded'.

² See [Severe housing deprivation \(homelessness\) estimates – updated methodology: 2023 Census](#) for more information

Indicator 26: Access to social housing – number of days taken to house people aged 65+ on the public housing register 2016-2021.



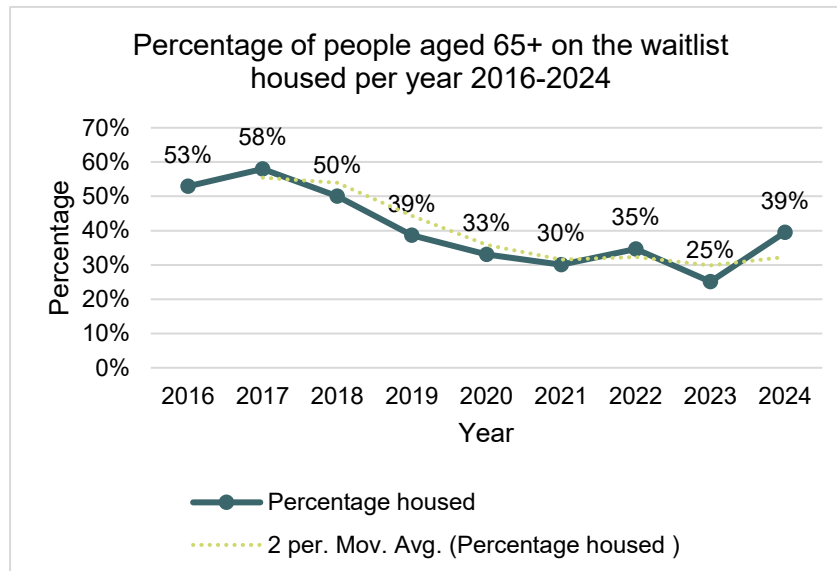
The overall number of people aged 65 and over on the public housing register has significantly increased since 2016 (from 567 to 3,270 in 2024, decreasing from 3,396 in 2023).



From 2016 to 2024, average wait times for people aged 65 and over increased across all housing registers. The Housing Register rose from 165 to 394 days, while the Transfer Register climbed from 219 to 451 days. The Public Housing Register

peaked at 631 days in 2020 before dropping to 396 in 2024. Wait times have risen since 2021, indicating growing demand relative to supply of suitable public housing for older people, particularly those seeking to transfer.³

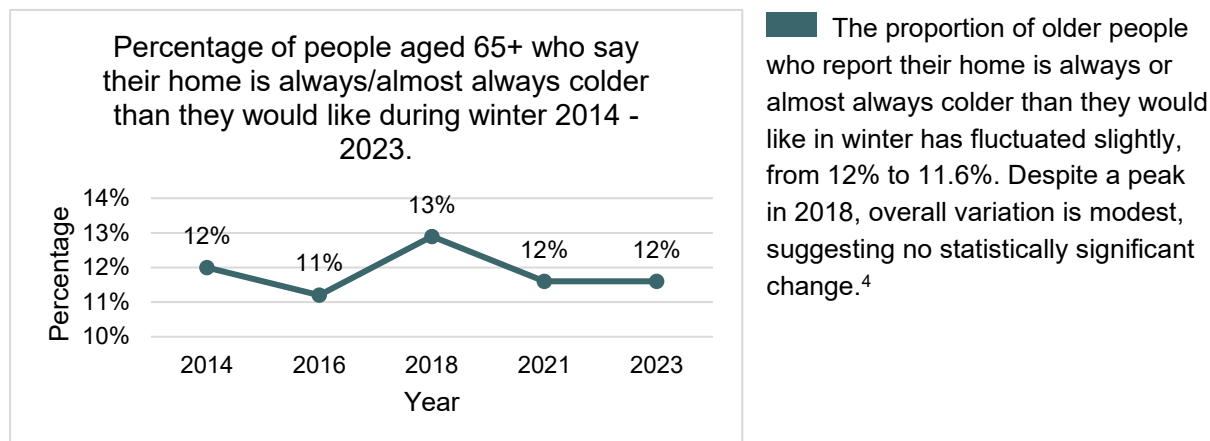
Indicator 27: Percentage of people aged 65+ on the public housing register housed each year 2016-2021.



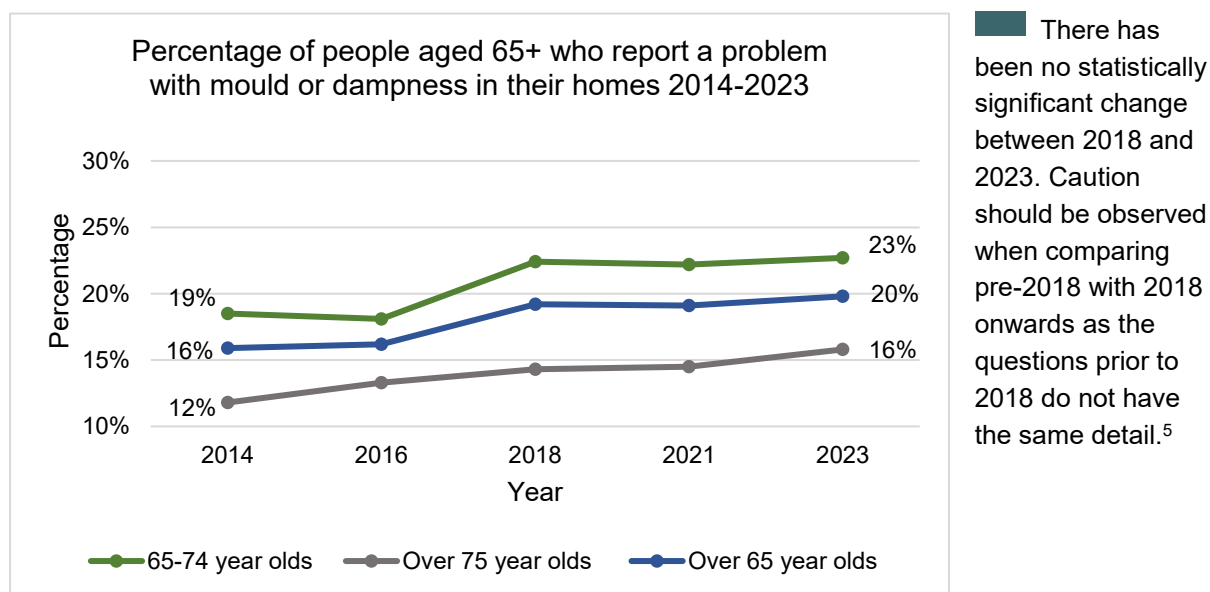
The proportion of people aged 65 and over on the housing register who have been housed has steadily decreased since 2017. This suggests increasing pressure on housing supply and greater competition for available places. The improvement in 2024 may indicate increased housing availability, but the long-term trend reflects growing unmet need.

³ The previously published report for the “average days to house” contained errors. First, the total was incorrectly calculated by summing the averages for those aged 65 years and over, rather than using a weighted average. Second, random rounding was incorrectly applied to average wait times, despite this method being intended only for count data (e.g., client numbers). These errors have since been corrected and corrected figures are reflected in this indicator.

Indicator 28: The percentage of people aged 65+ who report their house is always or often colder than they would like in winter.



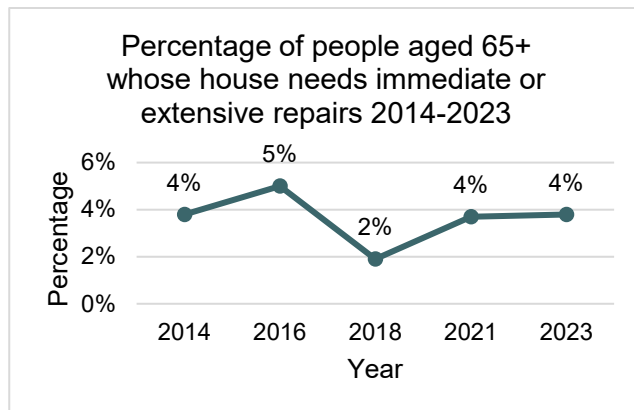
Indicator 29: Percentage of people aged 65+ who report that their house has a problem with dampness or mould.



⁴ This work is based on/includes customised Stats NZ data which are licensed by Stats NZ for re-use under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

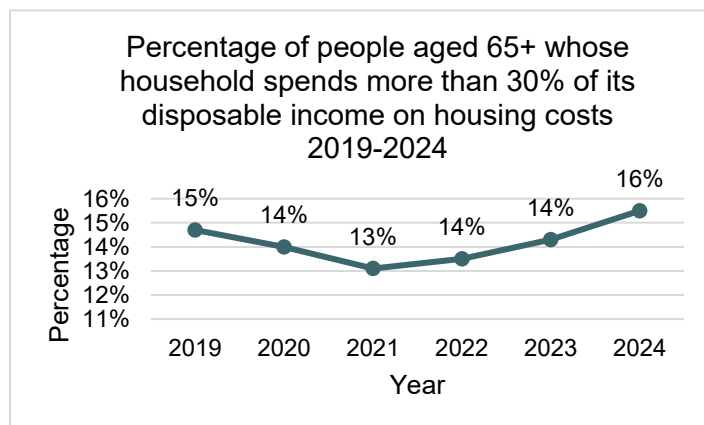
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Indicator 30: Percentage of people aged 65+ who report that their home needs major repairs or maintenance.



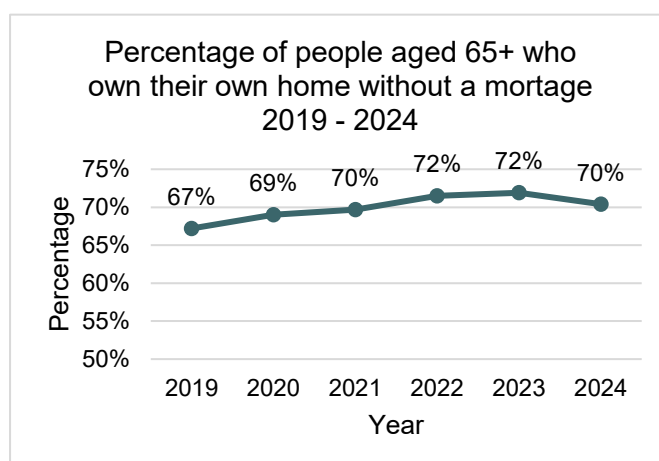
The proportion of those aged 65 and over living in homes needing immediate or extensive repairs has fluctuated between 2014 and 2023. Rates peaked at 5 percent in 2016 before dropping to 2 percent in 2018 and rising again to 4 percent in 2023. These variations suggest instability, but without statistical testing, the significance of this change remains unclear.⁶

Indicator 31: Percentage of people aged 65+ who live in a household that spends more than 30% of its disposable income on housing costs.



The percentage of people aged 65 and over spending more than 30 percent of their disposable income on housing rose slightly from 15 percent in 2019 to 16 percent in 2024. The fluctuations year-to-year are relatively minor and the change is not statistically significant.⁷

Indicator 32: Percentage of people aged 65+ who own their own home without a mortgage.



The proportion of older people who own their own home without a mortgage increased from 67 percent to 70 percent. Rates have relatively stable. The increase is small relative to the margin of error and may be due to chance rather than a real shift.⁸

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Indicator sources:

Indicator	Source
The number of people aged 65+ who are in severe housing deprivation.	2018 Severe Housing Deprivation Estimate, HUD, Housing in Aotearoa 2025
Access to social housing – number of days taken to house people aged 65+ on the public housing register 2016-2021.	Housing register, MSD
Percentage of people aged 65+ on the public housing register housed each year 2016-2021.	Housing register, MSD
The percentage of people aged 65+ who report their house is always or often colder than they would like in winter.	General Social Survey, Stats NZ
Percentage of people aged 65+ who report that their house has a major problem with dampness or mould.	General Social Survey, Stats NZ
Percentage of people aged 65+ who report that their home needs major repairs or maintenance.	General Social Survey, Stats NZ
Percentage of people aged 65+ who live in a household that spends more than 30% of its disposable income on housing costs.	Household Income and housing costs statistics, Household Economic Survey, StatsNZ
Percentage of people aged 65+ who own their own home without a mortgage.	Household Income and housing costs statistics, Household Economic Survey, StatsNZ