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## **Social Services**

Discussion Document

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## Introduction from National Party Leader Simon Bridges

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New Zealand is a country of hardworking people which is rich with opportunity. We have a proud history of delivering the world-class public services that New Zealanders deserve. National is proud of our commitment to the very best in health and education. We have a record which shows when people are in need, we support them to get back on their feet. Kiwis are fair minded and know that if you play by the rules, you have a go and you pay your taxes then you should reap the rewards. For those who might not be so lucky, or for those who need our help, we've got a safety net which will help them out. National believes support should be a hand-up and not a hand-out.

National believes in the 'social investment approach' where social services are targeted at the people who need them most and an evidence-based approach is used. Households have to ensure their money is being well spent, and governments should too. But we know more money doesn't necessarily mean better outcomes.

Using evidence to pinpoint how we can best help vulnerable New Zealanders out of cycles of dependency and hardship guides our approach. We want people to be in charge of their lives and to get ahead under their own steam. This means ensuring the Government has targets so it can be confident that its policies are working.

Our approach to improving those lives starts right from the first 1,000 days of a child's life. We want to ensure all kids get the best start. Life is different for every family, and those first 1,000 days are critical in building strong families. We support more flexibility when parents take parental leave. We want your thoughts on what else can make the lives of new parents easier.

National wants families to keep more of what they earn. We're concerned about the increase in taxes under this Labour-New Zealand First Government. We want to keep the cost of living low as we know it creates challenges and stress for families - particularly food, petrol and rent.

We are alarmed that the number of people on the dole in New Zealand is skyrocketing. This is a direct result of a Government who has taken its eye off the ball and left vulnerable Kiwis to suffer. In just over two years more than 22,000 New Zealanders have gone on the dole. This is despite the Government saying how good the economic conditions are. National believes the best way out of poverty and dependency is into stable and ongoing work.

We want to have a conversation about how we encourage more people into work and keep them there. We know some of the current rules aren't quite right around making sure those on benefits who do some work don't get punished for working extra hours. We want to create an environment where people feel better off in work.

National firmly believes that when the current Government scrapped our targets which included reducing the number of kids in benefit dependent households, the number of people on the dole, the number of kids achieving NCEA and the time it takes to get people into social housing that it has made

New Zealanders worse off. National will reintroduce targets to help New Zealanders lead better lives.

We want people to be in the driver's seat of their own lives. This means ensuring there's the opportunity for people to get ahead under their own steam while ensuring there's a safety net which deals directly with the issues facing some of New Zealand's most vulnerable people. National will make sure New Zealand is the best place to raise your kids and to grow old, and that starts with a government that faces up to some of the complex challenges we are facing. Families are at the heart of everything we do.

Our bottom line is you.

**Hon Simon Bridges**  
National Party Leader  
Leader of the Opposition







## Introduction from Louise Upston

### National's Social Development Spokesperson

National is the party of personal responsibility. We believe families are the best form of welfare.

We recognise that everyone faces challenges in their life, and we believe people can overcome those challenges. Sometimes, that means giving people a little help to get back on their feet.

National's approach to welfare is compassionate, with a focus on ensuring obligations are firm, but fair.

We're ambitious for New Zealanders and we want to put people in the driver's seat of their own lives.

Social Investment is about changing lives one by one. It's about ensuring every New Zealander has the opportunity to be who they want to be.

We believe government is there to help when times are tough, but we also expect people to help themselves as well.

We will pursue the best outcomes for New Zealand. This means having fewer people on benefits, and more people enjoying the dignity of work. We'll provide targeted assistance for those who need it, ranging from housing to additional support for disabilities.

For those who do receive benefits, we believe there should be obligations.

"Social services touch every part of our lives, from the moment we're born through to our golden years. We're committed to ensuring social services support families, help people into jobs and seniors to live fuller lives."

**Hon Louise Upston**

National's Social Development Spokesperson

We're committed to early intervention. We want to get Kiwi kids off to the best possible start. The first thousand days of a child's life, from pregnancy to early years, provide the best opportunity to invest in and intervene where it will make a long-term, tangible difference.

National will focus on the groups of children we know are especially vulnerable, like those in benefit dependent homes, or those whose parents have low levels of education or a criminal history.

The previous National Government introduced targets that focussed public agencies on reducing welfare dependency, child hospitalisations, waiting times for social housing and increasing the numeracy and literacy of children and qualifications of 25-34 year olds.

We'll continue the proven Social Investment approach to government spending and reintroduce the targets that keep government agencies focussed on delivering better outcomes for New Zealanders. We'll ensure we pursue initiatives that are proven to work and deliver support to those with the highest need.

We'll enable New Zealanders to live better lives.

**Hon Louise Upston**

National's Social Development Spokesperson



## Social Investment

“We will continue our Social Investment approach to changing lives, using data and evidence to understand needs, and targeting support to those who need it most.”

**Hon Paula Bennett**

Spokesperson for Social Investment

Each year, approximately \$70 billion is spent on social programmes in New Zealand, from supporting new mums and babies as they start their first thousand days, to helping the elderly in their later years.

For the most part, the system works well, but it does fail some of the most vulnerable people in New Zealand. These people often have the most complex and challenging needs, but the system isn't responsive enough or effective enough. As a result, many who need acute support either miss out, or it's too little and too late.

The current Government's approach to social services consists of throwing taxpayers' money at complex problems in the hope that they will disappear, such as trying to solve child poverty with a baby bonus that isn't means tested.

But these problems haven't gone away. We've seen the number of people on benefits rise dramatically, more hardship grants being paid out and the social housing wait list has more than doubled as desperate Kiwis struggle to put a roof over their heads.

National will seek to tackle the root causes of disadvantage through a social investment approach to tackling poverty and unemployment. Put simply, social investment is about ensuring spending is focussed on targeted interventions that strike at the heart of the issues affecting people's lives.

We can do this by taking advantage of the world-class infrastructure, data and analytics that National put in place during our time in government to know who is most at risk of

poor outcomes. For example, we know that, for approximately one per cent of children in any given age group, or around 600 children each year:

- three quarters will not achieve NCEA Level 2 or equivalent;
- four in ten will have been on a benefit for more than two years before they are 21, and;
- a quarter will have been in prison by the time they are 35.

Each of these children will cost taxpayers an average of \$320,000 by the time they are 35. Some will cost more than a million dollars. More concerning than the financial cost is the loss of these children's potential. A National Government will make the targeted social investment that's needed to improve the life chances of vulnerable children before they enter the welfare system.

## Procurement of Social Services

Families across New Zealand are careful with how they spend their money, and governments should be too. National will be clear about the outcomes we want to achieve and will measure progress towards those outcomes. By having clear targets, we'll be able to ensure we're investing in the right places, meaning better long-term results and value for money.

Results-Based Accountability means making the reasons for purchasing decisions open and transparent. National proposes continuing with the Commissioning for Outcomes model and Results-Based Accountability, as well as ensuring the focus remains on making individuals, families and communities better off.

Across government, social sector agencies have been working together to increase alignment and minimise duplication. National would like to see this continue, with agencies demonstrating a greater degree of collaboration and working across silos in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

An essential part of achieving the best outcomes comes from involvement in local

communities. Strengthening community provision and building those partnerships with communities will yield better results as local organisations know the specific needs of their communities best.

National also wants to encourage partnerships and investment from the private sector to grow initiatives such as:

- KickStart Breakfast, a partnership with Fonterra, Sanitarium and school communities which provides breakfast to over 30,000 children each school day and;
- the Community Finance partnership between Bank of New Zealand, Good Shepherd New Zealand and The Salvation Army, which has provided thousands of low or no interest loans to Kiwis in need.

Extending a results-focused and evidence-based approach for government purchasing of social services for vulnerable people and communities will have the advantage of being more transparent, targeted, flexible and efficient.

- National proposes expanding the use of procurement models where outcomes are purchased (commissioning for outcomes) to gain better long term results and value for money.

## Social Innovation Fund

National wants to encourage and enable innovation in the delivery of social services to those most in need. Local solutions to local problems are often the best solutions, but sometimes face initial funding challenges.

Often, there's enough funding from philanthropic sources to get an initiative off the ground, but not to sustain it in the medium or long term.

National will establish a Social Innovation Fund that would aid initiatives and programmes aimed at tackling long-term social challenges to be funded for more than just the first few years, so they have time to make a difference.

In Budget 2017, National funded 14 initiatives in a \$321 million Social Investment package. The most significant area of funding was \$100 million for a Mental Health Social Investment Fund to trial new, innovative approaches to those battling mental health and addiction issues.

That investment supported Housing First, an initiative which is a proven, internationally-recognised approach to housing and supporting homeless people with multiple, high and complex needs. Funding has continued for this approach in Budget 2019 and the initiative has been effective in helping homeless people with high and complex needs to stay housed and lead healthier, safer lives.



## Social Bonds

Social bonds see private and not-for-profit organisations partner to fund and deliver services to improve social outcomes. They are an innovative way for government to contract for social outcomes and National proposes extending the use of social impact bonds.

There have been only two social impact bond programmes in New Zealand to date: one assisting people with mental health difficulties into work, and the other aiming to prevent disadvantaged youth from criminal offending.

Social bonds are not a replacement for government services: they are a way to allow not-for-profit organisations, charities and social enterprises who are already involved in the provision of social services to scale up promising new innovations and services; or undertake longer and more flexible programmes of services than is currently possible under standard government contracting arrangements.

Social impact bond programmes are often preventative in nature, focussed on achieving long-term benefits through greater short-term investment. They are an important way of delivering social investment and changing lives.

- National proposes to create a Social Innovation Fund so that promising initiatives and programmes tackling long term social challenges have a chance to prove their success.

## Whānau Ora

Whānau Ora is a system change started by National in 2010 that addressed inequity and poverty in some of our most vulnerable populations. It uses a Commissioning for Outcomes model of funding. It places whānau and families at the centre of services and in control of the services they need to work with, building on their strengths to achieve their aspirations.

A report released this year shows that Whānau Ora has 'resulted in positive change for a large number of whānau across New Zealand; however it also identified a number of

challenges around the model. National wants feedback on what parts of the system works best and what parts can be improved.



## Place Based Initiatives

Place-Based Initiatives (PBIs) give local social sector leaders flexibility and support to customise responses based on what works for their community. They're a continuation of National's focus on local solutions to local problems. Engagement with the local community and fostering local connections will enable better decision-making about what services are required and the interventions that need to be made.

The opportunities that PBIs offer are endless and, if implemented properly in the right places, will lead to better local services. National will look to expand PBIs in areas where they are most needed and stand to yield maximum benefit for local communities.

The three initial PBIs were focused on improving outcomes for at-risk children and their families in Northland, South Auckland and Tairāwhiti.

## Case study Manaaki Tairāwhiti

Manaaki Tairāwhiti works with at-risk families using evidence to determine the most effective processes for accessing services. It is chaired and championed by local iwi Chief Executives. Local leaders have flexibility on how to achieve and measure progress.

It has developed community-led action plans, and tailors social services to the specific needs of the recipients.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What is the correct balance between universal support and targeted support for those who have higher needs?
- Should the baby bonus be cancelled?
- Should we keep Whānau Ora in its current form and if not, what changes should be made?
- Should social bonds be extended?

- National proposes to expand Place Based Initiatives, enabling local solutions to local challenges.



## Social Welfare

“People are better off in paid work, so they can live independent lives and provide a better future for their children. Those who can work, should work.”

### **Hon Louise Upston**

Spokesperson for Social Development

National believes the best route out of poverty is through the security of a regular pay cheque. With that in mind, social welfare should be geared towards supporting and encouraging people to move from welfare dependency to work. Not only is it responsible to the taxpayer to ensure that everyone who can work, should, it is profoundly irresponsible of any government to abandon families to welfare dependency.

Being part of a working family has particular benefits for children. Evidence shows that children who grow up in benefit-dependent households are more likely to end up on benefits themselves and to suffer poor educational outcomes, including when compared with low-income working households.

This Labour-led Government has seen over 22,000 more people on the dole despite the increasing employment rate. This is symptomatic of a government complacent about the effects of welfare dependency on families. National is clear about tackling benefit dependency.

We believe all Kiwis should enjoy the economic independence that comes from work, and will tackle welfare dependence by:

- Committing to principles of the Social Security Act about preparing for and finding work;
- Reinstating a firm but fair sanctions regime;
- Using a Social Investment approach to tackle individual barriers to work.

- National will retain the principles of the Social Security Act, which ensures a focus on preparing for and finding work.

## Setting Ambitious Targets

National believes in setting measurable targets for the public sector. Targets drive performance from public sector organisations and ensure that everyone is pulling in the right direction. In Government, National set ambitious targets on reducing the number of people on benefits. We plan to do the same again.

As a result of National's target-driven approach, the number of working-age clients receiving main benefits between June 2012 and March 2017 dropped by over 40,000. That's tens of thousands more people with the security of a regular pay cheque.

- National will set targets to ensure cross-agency work focusses on reducing the number of people receiving benefits and reducing the number of children in benefit dependent homes.

## Abatement Rates

Abatement thresholds are how much someone on benefits can earn in paid work before their benefit begins to reduce, or abate.

As the minimum wage has increased, abatement thresholds haven't risen to keep up. The result is that the number of hours that can be worked by someone on a benefit before it starts abating have decreased.

When abatement thresholds are too low, this provides a disincentive for people to seek further work.

National believes we should increase abatement rates to support New Zealanders who move off welfare and into employment.

The increase in thresholds will mean Jobseeker Support recipients (excluding sole parents) will continue to be able to work around 4.5 hours on the minimum wage before their benefit begins to reduce, and Sole Parents and Supported Living Payment recipients around six hours.

- National agrees with the planned increase in abatement rates so those receiving benefits can keep more of what they earn as a pathway back to independence.

## Obligations and Sanctions

We believe this Government's deliberate reduction in the use of sanctions sends the wrong message. Instead, National will pursue a sanctions regime that is firm, but fair.

We want to look at the mix of obligations on benefit recipients, the sanctions for non-compliance, and the incentives and practical support that enable people to move off benefits.

Existing obligations for those on the dole include being available for work, taking reasonable steps to get a job, accepting offers of work, turning up to interviews, passing a drug test if required by potential employers and participating in training courses or work experience.

This Government also removed the sanction for sole parents who don't name the liable parent. We believe this is the wrong approach and lets deadbeat dads off the hook when they don't contribute to their child's upbringing.

- National will return the sanction for sole parents who don't name the liable parent.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Do you think the planned increase in the number of hours able to be worked without abatement is too little, too much or about right?
- What additional support, incentives, obligations or sanctions should be applied?
- Should additional obligations be placed on those receiving Jobseeker Support or Sole Parent Support? If yes, what suggestions do you have?
- In addition to obligations, what incentives could be used to get more people off benefits?
- For sole parents, should it be a requirement that their child is fully immunised?

## Supporting Self-Employment

National wants to encourage people to start new businesses. Currently, assistance available to help them to do so includes a start-up payment, business training and advice grants and the flexi-wage for self-employment.

National will consider a New Business Assistance Scheme which would go further than the enterprise support currently available and proposes that a bonus payment could be

granted for specific business outcomes to incentivise success and sustainability.

A low-interest loan could be considered for those wishing to purchase an existing business. Sole parents would be given priority access to the New Business Assistance Scheme.

- National wants to encourage people on benefits to consider self-employment and start a new business, and look at whether increased access to an enterprise scheme and flexi wage for suitable candidates – with a particular priority on sole parents – will help achieve that.

## Keeping People in Work

It's important to support people before they become unemployed. Changes in circumstances for employers or employees often mean employees risk losing their jobs. National is keen to consider proposals that would keep people connected to work and prevent unemployment.

These may include things like support for businesses during times of a civil defence emergency, where businesses may not be fully operational for some time.

This could also include situations where, for reasons of illness or family circumstance, employees may need to reduce their hours of work on a temporary basis. In the long run, it's better that they're able to continue in their jobs rather than creating a gap in their employment that may see them back on benefits.



also explore how debts could be consolidated and paid through one agency so that it's easy for people to see how much they owe and pay it off.

Strong information-sharing relationships between departments like MSD and Inland Revenue increase the likelihood of early debt recovery and we'll seek to improve these. We'll also closely monitor clients who have previously committed welfare fraud to prevent reoffending. These initiatives are smarter about discovering debt and better at holding liable parties to account.

We don't want families stuck in a debt trap for receiving payments they aren't entitled to, so we'll work hard to prevent welfare fraud from occurring and large debts from accumulating.

- National proposes to keep people in work when circumstances or needs change e.g. reduced hours for temporary period during an illness so they keep their job.

## Income Support System

Simplifying the Income Support System was a priority for the previous Government, but there's still room to simplify it further.

In 2019, there was \$990 million in overpayments. That's over half of the debt owed to the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Simplifying income support will prevent people from getting into preventable debt. We'll also look at ways to stop Kiwis getting into a spiral of debt by examining the use of recoverable assistance and benefit advances.

National will also improve the collection of debt. MSD would take an intensive case management approach above a certain threshold to ensure that debts don't become unmanageable. We'll

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can government best support small business to keep people employed during temporary low periods for example during illness for an employee or post an earthquake for an employer?
- How can the welfare system be further simplified to reduce the administration of the system and to prevent the occurrence of overpayments and underpayments?

- National proposes to explore options to simplify the income support system.
- National proposes to look at better ways to stop people getting into debt. We propose to look at how to manage an individual's debt to government departments and consider better ways to both make payments manageable for the individual and improve collection rates.

## Gangs

National hates gangs. They peddle misery in our communities and are responsible for the scourge of drugs in New Zealand. In Government, National will crack down hard on gangs. We're releasing a Gang Plan in 2020 and this will include, among other measures, requiring gang members to prove they don't have illegal income or assets before receiving a benefit.

We will also compel government agencies to share information about gang members and their families so that we support them to be violence and drug-free.

- National will ensure gang members and associates cannot exploit taxpayer support.

## Exiting Prison

Leaving prison can be hard, especially when you don't have much support. The first few days and weeks after an offender leaves custody are crucial in determining whether or not they will reoffend. We want to reduce reoffending in order to cut crime. That's why we're committed to improving support for prisoners leaving custody to help them find employment and turn their backs on a life of crime.

There are several options currently available to prisoners to help them find a job and a place to live, and to transition into life outside of prison. Some of those options include the 'Release to Work' programme, 'Out of Gate' service and the 'Creating Positive Pathways' initiative between Corrections, Housing and Urban Development and MSD.

- National proposes to improve the way agencies work together to support people exiting prisons to ensure they have a best chance at independence and lower the risk of them reoffending.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What can the system do better for people exiting prisons so that they are more able to re-integrate into society and less likely to reoffend on release?



## Social Housing

“National is committed to ensuring all New Zealanders have the opportunity to own their own home. It’s important to encourage more New Zealanders to pursue home ownership.”

**Simon O’Connor**

Spokesperson for Social Housing

National believes that good homes build strong families. A home is not simply a place to live, but where relationships are fostered and developed, both as a family and within the wider community.

Owning a home remains part of the Kiwi dream and hardworking, everyday New Zealanders expect to be able to buy their own home. From health, social and economic perspectives, ensuring good quality accommodation is available to all New Zealanders makes sense.

The next National Government will address housing deficiencies largely unresolved by the current Government’s single minded obsession with KiwiBuild. There’s an unmet need for more social housing so that every New Zealander has somewhere warm and dry to live.

During our last term in government we built over 3,000 new state houses. Many of the newest state houses are from projects started by the National Government. We also worked to build the right homes in the right areas. Developments like the Tamaki Regeneration Project sought to insulate all state houses and ensured more money for the maintenance of existing homes.

There are four aspects National is keen to address within social housing:

- increasing ownership options;
- structural reform of Housing New Zealand;
- encouraging rental responsibility and;
- addressing homelessness.

## Home Ownership

National wants to see increasing levels of home ownership, and gives all Kiwis the chance of owning their own home with all the benefits that brings. We're keen to work more closely with Community Housing Providers to develop shared equity and long-term partnership models.

Providers have indicated an ability to expand and a willingness to share their knowledge and experience. Whether it's through 'rent to buy' schemes, a split between the Crown owning the land with families owning the houses or another model, National is keen to partner with providers who will open up home ownership to the most vulnerable.

Rent-to-buy (or rent-to-own) schemes are one way to assist people into home ownership. National wants to explore these schemes further. There's no single model to follow, but many schemes work on applying rent towards the purchase of the property. Importantly, many schemes rely on an assumption that housing prices will continue to rise, increasing homeowners' equity.

Such schemes are not without risks. These risks can be managed, but they may also require government involvement. National believes that if such schemes were to expand, we would need to ensure those participating were fully supported with budgeting, debt management and home maintenance advice.

We also want to explore initiatives like Homes for Homes ([homesforhomes.com.au](http://homesforhomes.com.au)) in Australia, where homeowners donate a small part of the value of their home to a common fund.

Discussion is also needed around a contestable fund for Community Housing Providers to enable them to build equity in the short term. Consideration is also being given to a fund that rewards cooperation between providers.

- National will consider initiatives that improve home ownership rates.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Do you support rent to buy schemes?

## Housing New Zealand & Community Housing Providers

A well run social housing programme not only leads to efficiencies in management but ensures families can find the right home. We know individuals and families come with different needs, to which our social housing must be responsive. National is proposing reviewing the state housing portfolio to ensure that houses are the right size, in the right place and of the right quality for New Zealanders to live in.

We will use data and modelling to inform our delivery of state housing stock both for today and in the future. Part of this will involve exploring whether Kāinga Ora (until recently known as Housing New Zealand), should both build houses and manage tenancies, or whether these responsibilities should be separated in order to ensure that one is not neglected in favour of the other.

- National will partner with a wider range of Community Housing Providers to ensure local solutions to local housing challenges that support people to move from taxpayer funded housing into private rental housing.
- National believes that Community Housing Providers should have the option of managing Housing NZ tenancies.
- National proposes to better manage the financial investment of social housing assets, to build more and better maintain the social housing stock.
- National proposes to accelerate the building of social housing in the top five areas of demand in the country, while acknowledging that some areas – often rural and provincial – will also need tailored solutions to their particular needs.

## Tenancy Management

New Zealanders believe in a fair deal. Social housing is generously provided by taxpayers and in return, it's important to encourage social housing tenants to be responsible for its upkeep.

National will promote in-person tenancy visits and the reintroduction of at least yearly tenancy reviews. This will ensure tenants' needs are addressed, houses are maintained, and efficient use of social housing stock.

We will also explore a remind, remedy, remove system. This would see housing providers providing a warning (reminder) in the case of poor behaviour; assistance to fix an issue (remedy); and in those cases where a tenant refuses to change, they should be removed. We believe anti-social behaviours such as violence and drug use should have consequences.

National will also ensure the state housing stock is not used to produce methamphetamine. Children living in a house that is used for producing meth are at extremely high risk of poisoning, homicides, accidental deaths or burns due to home-based methamphetamine lab fires and explosions. Urgent interventions are needed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children where meth production is suspected or discovered.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should the Government underwrite the building of social houses, holding the risk for Community Housing Providers, allowing them to build more homes?
- Can the services that Housing New Zealand (now Kāinga Ora) currently provides – be that building and owning homes or providing tenancy management – be better done through Community Housing Providers?



- National will focus on sustainable tenancies preventing people from falling out of a tenancy through case management. The priority will be on sole parents and families with young children.
- National believes if tenants have contaminated a house with meth, they should be automatically notified to the Police and, if children are present, Oranga Tamariki.

We want to reduce the time the most vulnerable New Zealanders wait to be housed and will propose a target to reduce the time it takes to house priority clients on the social housing register, which has more than doubled under this Government.

- National proposes to introduce a target to reduce the time it takes to house priority clients on the social housing register.
- National will support Housing First and ensure adequate support to move people off the street and into stable housing including those with mental health issues.

#### **We want your thoughts on the following:**

- What should the rights and responsibilities be for social housing tenants and providers?
- How should a government react to anti-social behaviour by state housing tenants?

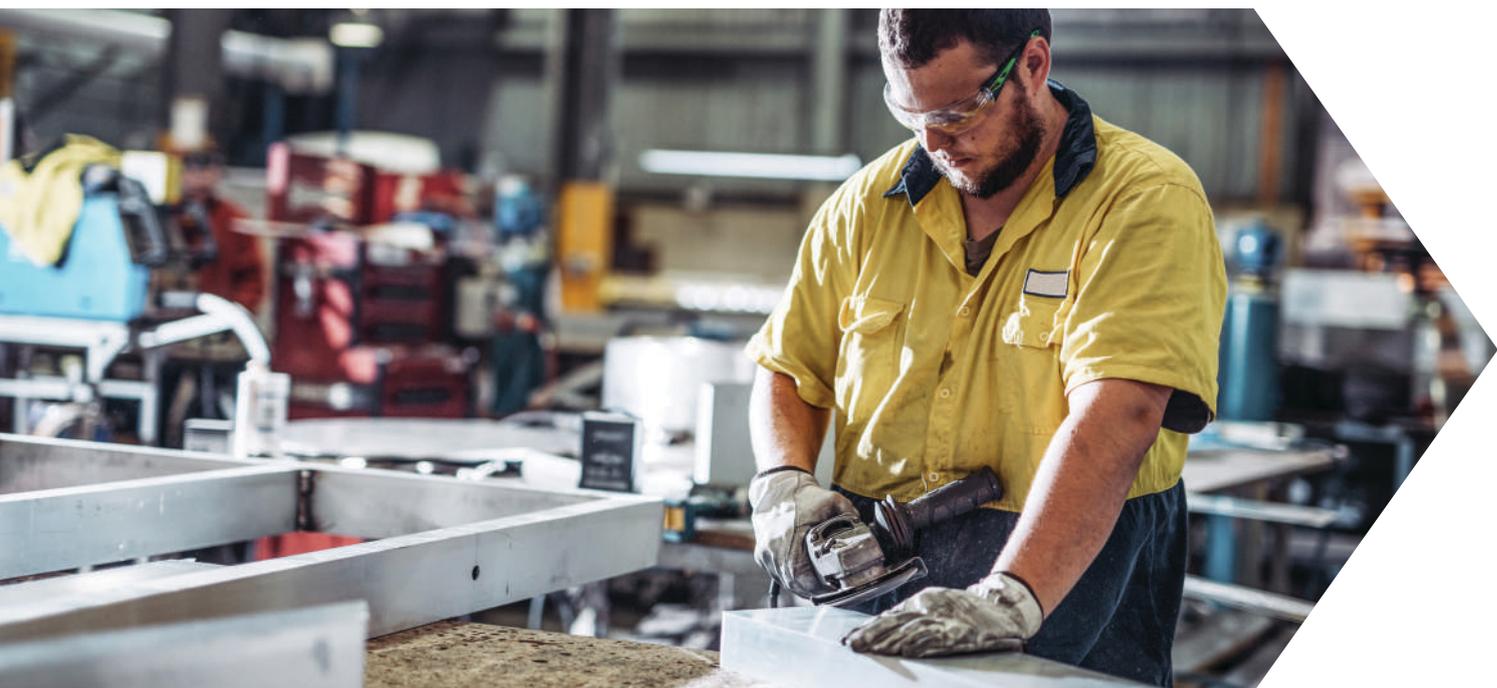
#### **We want your thoughts on the following:**

- If deinstitutionalisation has led to an increase in homelessness, how do we best provide housing for those with intellectual disabilities or mental health challenges?
- Should National introduce a dollar for dollar scheme with existing homeless shelters to either improve or expand their facilities and services?

## **Homelessness**

Any discussion of social housing must acknowledge homelessness. The needs of many, if not most, on our streets are very complex and include physical and mental health needs. Any steps forward need to address not only a place to call home, but also social, medical, physical, spiritual, and emotional support.

National supports the 'Housing First' programme which focusses first on housing the homeless and then enabling further engagement. We would like to see this programme continue and expand in cooperation with local councils.



## Skills and Employment

“National will ensure that Kiwis are equipped with the skills they need to take on the jobs of the future.”

**Hon Louise Upston**

Spokesperson for Social Development

### Jobs and Skills Hubs

National proposes creating local Jobs and Skills Hubs using a model similar to the Tamaki Regeneration Jobs and Skills Hub, which has helped over 400 people into employment.

Jobs and Skills Hubs are models where local businesses, councils and other organisations collaborate and improve opportunities for local people of all ages to train or retrain for jobs in the local area.

Under National, these collaborations will expand further to provide better skills-matching and faster responses to skill shortages.

The proposed hubs would offer a no-cost recruitment service for employers in priority sectors and deliver wrap around training.

They would also provide career advice, information on training opportunities, CV and job application support, job matching and support to remain in work.

We recognise that at-risk young people need help getting into work, and ongoing training and pastoral care to ensure they stay in work.

There could be an additional focus on supporting these young people, with schemes like First Start expanding to include life skills training or assistance to get a driver's licence.

In rural and provincial New Zealand, the existing Sector Workforce Engagement Programme will be an important part of creating new hubs.

Fundamentally, hubs would be created at a local level to meet local needs. They would build on existing initiatives and valuable work being done by the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs.

- National proposes to create local Jobs and Skills Hubs where local employers, organisations and councils can collaborate to improve opportunities for local people to obtain, train or retrain, for local jobs.
- National proposes linking economic and social development and expand initiatives like He Poutama Rangatahi.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What opportunities exist for businesses or industries to create full time equivalent roles where salaries are smoothed over 12 months?
- What support would be required from MSD?

## Youth Employment

He Poutama Rangatahi – Youth Employment Pathways is a cross-agency initiative launched in July 2017 to move young people that were not in employment, education or training into work.

Young people targeted are the most at risk of long-term unemployment, who may need more individualised and ongoing support to connect

with training and employment opportunities. Earlier initiatives piloted by National like Grow Kaikohe proved that customised, intensive support had a positive impact on the ability of young people to connect with and stay connected to work or training.

The initial regions where the initiatives were launched were Te Tai Tokerau, Eastern Bay of Plenty, Te Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay. National will extend this initiative into other areas to give more young people opportunities.

## People with Disabilities

No New Zealander should be excluded from the labour market. Regular, paid work is important for social connection and a sense of purpose and engagement. This is especially important for Kiwis living with intellectual and physical disabilities.

National is committed to ensuring the one in four New Zealanders living with disabilities are supported to enter and stay in employment.

- National proposes to support organisations employing people with disabilities so there is sustainable employment opportunities for them.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should there be a minimum wage exemption or a subsidy to support employers who employ people with disabilities?



## First 1,000 Days

"Some expectant and new mums need better access to support. National's focus is on protecting children from abuse; improving their health; investing early in their future learning; social and brain development; reducing strain on social, health and justice services later in life."

### **Hon Louise Upston**

Spokesperson for Social Development

Kiwi kids deserve the best start in life. We want new mums and dads equipped with the right skills, relationships and access to support services that will see their child grow up in a healthy, secure and nurturing family environment. This starts at conception. We know that the first 1,000 days in a child's life are the most important in setting up their future.

New Zealand's child mortality rate is higher than in other OECD countries. Numerous countries have tackled this by successfully increasing investment in the first 1,000 days of a child's life. National would invest in this approach to ensure that every Kiwi gets the best start in life.

### **Lead Maternity Carer**

Regular engagement with a Lead Maternity Carer (LMC), usually a midwife, is associated with better pregnancy outcomes and normal, healthy births. LMCs also connect mother and child with other core health services, such as general practice, immunisation, Well Child Tamariki Ora, oral health services and other social services as needed.

The previous Government introduced a Better Public Services target that 90 per cent of pregnant women would be registered with an LMC in the first trimester by 2021.

Despite the benefits of having mothers register with LMCs early on in pregnancy, the Government announced in January 2018 that Better Public Services Targets would not continue in their current form. National would introduce targets and improve women's access to an LMC.

- National proposes to introduce a target of having 90 per cent of pregnant women register with a Lead Maternity Carer in their first trimester.

## Postnatal Care

The first few days after giving birth are some of the most important, but can also be the most challenging for new mums. National is proposing that all new mums should be entitled to three days of care after giving birth and that support should be available after each child.

At the moment, new mums have 48 hours of care funded by DHBs, but we know that they're often encouraged to leave as soon as possible.



During the first few days after birth, mums can experience the baby blues, have difficulty breastfeeding, be exhausted and sometimes just need a bit of extra help to build up confidence. Giving new mums the option of staying for three days in a hospital or community or private facility would help new mums and dads to feel supported.

This funding would be ring fenced, meaning if one mum only needs one day in care, the other two days could be used for another mum who might need a five-day stay. The money couldn't be diverted into other areas by DHBs. In supporting parents, we're supporting Kiwi kids to have the best start in life.

- National will increase postnatal stay to three days in a postnatal facility of the mum's choosing.

## Parental Leave

National believes that, in order to build strong families, both parents should have the opportunity to bond with their baby during the first few months of life.

Paid parental leave is currently available for up to 26 weeks. This leave can be split between parents, but not taken concurrently. National will ensure that paid parental leave can be split between spouses or partners who are caring for the child and taken at the same time, provided that the total amount taken between the couple was no more than one parent could take individually.

Selwyn MP Amy Adams already has a Member's Bill in the Ballot seeking to achieve this. The amendments in this Bill are designed to increase the flexibility of arrangements available to families and, as they do not increase the total paid parental leave available to a family unit, they will not increase the operating costs of providing paid parental leave.

- National will ensure paid parental leave can be split between parents and taken at the same time.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- Alongside enabling leave to be taken at the same time, how can we encourage dads to take more of the leave already available to them?



## First Time Parents

We want new mums and dads equipped with the right skills, relationships and access to support so that their kids get the most developmentally advantageous start possible to life. We want Kiwi kids to grow up in a healthy, secure and nurturing family environments.

Early, increased investment in the first 1,000 days could mean less long-term pressure on social and health services and more long-term gain for New Zealand. We believe all children can be supported to reach their full potential, giving them the best chance at succeeding in life.

National would look into suitable e-support to new parents and consider the equivalent of the 0800 Plunket Line available via mobile devices.

- National proposes improving the support for first time parents, focussing on the child's first 1,000 days.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- What additional support (if any) is needed for first time mums?

## Home Visits

National recognises that home visits can be beneficial in supporting families.

During the first six months, they can assist with early identification of any issues or challenges in the home that will impact the child. This is an important part of the Social Investment approach.

Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) providers often have more access to the home than any other health or service provider. It's important to utilise this trusted relationship to support families.

Currently, there are eight core checks within the first six months, provided by the lead maternity carer and the WCTO provider. Often, only the first check by the WCTO provider is a home visit. We would like the majority of checks in the first six months to be home visits.

- National proposes to increase the number of home visits in the first six months of a child's life.

## Vulnerable New Mothers

Some mums have higher needs than others. Using a Social Investment approach, we will ensure we're actively working with them to address the challenges they face.

This includes supporting them into stable, healthy homes, providing access to parenting education, and healthcare, childcare and financial assistance when necessary.

- National proposes to support vulnerable, expectant new mothers by implementing targets for organisations that support them.





## Vulnerable Children

“National stands by its value of the equality of opportunity for all children to get ahead, irrespective of their upbringing.”

### Maureen Pugh

Associate Spokesperson for Children

## Child Poverty

Every child deserves the best start in life to achieve their full potential. That’s why we worked with the Government on the Child Poverty Reduction Act. As a result of our discussions, the legislation was improved in two significant ways.

Firstly, child poverty-related indicators will be specifically measured and reported on.

In government, we laid the groundwork by implementing targets in areas like immunisation, early childhood participation and attainment of NCEA Level 2. We know child poverty is about more than just bank balances.

Secondly, our Social Investment approach was adopted in the Child Poverty Reduction Act,

ensuring effective government intervention and impactful investment of taxpayer money.

- National will continue its work to reduce the number of children living in poverty by implementing the Child Poverty Reduction Act.
- National proposes to review the child poverty targets to ensure they are ambitious and take into account non-financial means.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can we best support mothers and children with challenges like trauma, drug use and foetal alcohol syndrome?

## Workforce

Vulnerable children and their families need support, but not all will need legal intervention or intensive attention from the state. They need help that comes from a connected community of government agency and NGO professionals, family/whānau and concerned individuals.

We all want a children's workforce with a shared culture of child protection that works well together and with family/whānau to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our children.



Our previous work on safer recruitment practices, including safety checking, went wider than the regulated workforce. We launched the Safer Recruitment, Safer Children Guidelines and the

mandatory registration of social workers has also helped to professionalise the sector.

Education and healthcare professionals with concerns for a child's wellbeing should be supported through better access to 24/7, priority responses from Oranga Tamariki (OT). At present we have professionals frustrated, waiting four or five days for a response from OT.

In 2011, National introduced the 0508 EDASSIST service that was introduced in 2011, and extending access to this priority response service from OT to healthcare professions including nurses, midwives, counsellors and others who may have direct involvement and knowledge of children at risk would mean faster intervention and less risk of escalating trauma.

National will also report on call wait times and response times to increase confidence that the priority system works and the system is accountable.

- National proposes to work with the sector to find solutions to workforce challenges in Oranga Tamariki and NGOs who provide essential services for children.
- National proposes to extend the hotline for schools to healthcare professions so they get priority response from OT within 24 hours.

## Carers

National believes foster carers and grandparents raising their grandchildren do an incredible job of supporting Kiwi kids.

Many foster children face significant social and economic challenges because their parents are unfit or unable to parent them, for reasons as variable as meth addiction, alcohol abuse, crime or severe ill health.

We will support foster parents and ensure appropriate and added support for foster carers such as appropriate training and ongoing specialist support to ensure the best outcomes for the child and the carer.

Training for foster parents is important so they feel confident, capable and supported in their role from the moment they're approved and throughout their fostering career. This will include areas in child protection, understanding attachment, building resilience, managing difficult behaviour and understanding the impact of trauma.

In respect of grandparents, a survey has shown that almost half of grandparents raising

grandchildren are still working and supporting themselves.

Some qualify for Working for Families and about 70 per cent of families qualify for the Unsupported Child Benefit, but many families do not qualify for any support. The survey also revealed that Unsupported Child Benefit isn't being comprehensively offered to grandparents on their first approach to Work and Income New Zealand.

National will look at the possibility of making emergency income support available to grandparent caregivers.

- National proposes to improve support for foster parents and grandparents raising grandchildren.





## Youth and Young Parents

“Young people are the future of New Zealand. It’s important that we provide them with the skills and employment opportunities that will enable them to take control of their lives as they transition into adulthood.”

**Nicola Willis**

Spokesperson for Youth

### Increasing Opportunities

National will increase opportunities for young New Zealanders and reduce the number of those under 25 who are not in education, training or employment (NEET). Approximately 12 per cent of New Zealanders aged 15–24 are NEETs. Experiencing a period of being NEET leads to poorer outcomes in terms of employment, education and welfare.

Young people with no or low qualifications are more likely to become NEET. In allowing people to leave school at the age of 16 with no qualifications, New Zealand is failing our young people.

Countries with the lowest rates of NEETs, like Iceland and the Netherlands, have a school

leaving age of 18, and reducing early school leavers tends to reduce the number of NEETs.

The current school leaving age in New Zealand is 16 and 11 per cent of students leave school with no qualification. It’s unacceptable to have a situation where so many young people are leaving school unqualified and without the skills to be employed in a modern economy.

National wants to ensure every young New Zealander has a basic qualification by the age of 18. Some young people will stay in school to complete their qualification, while others will enrol in a qualification through a tertiary institution or their workplace.

**HAVE YOUR SAY > 2019 DISCUSS**

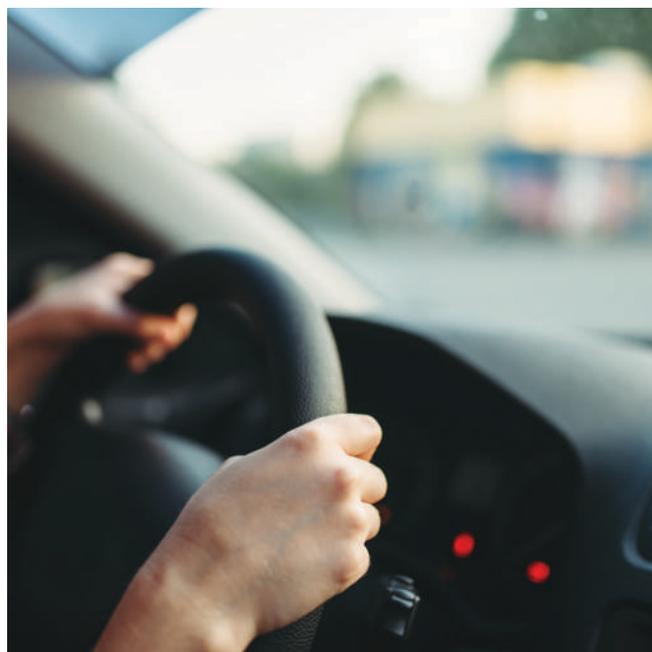
We understand that some young people have learning needs and other challenges that will need to be taken into consideration.

- National proposes to require young people up to the age of 18 to be in education, training or employment and their parents to be held accountable.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What incentives could be put in place to keep young people in education or training up to 18?
- What incentives could be used for employers to employ and train young people aged 16 & 17?
- What consequences, if any, should there be for young people and their parents in the young person is not in education, employment or training (NEET)?

National believes assistance to get a driver's licence should be targeted to those who need support. We would focus support at those aged up to age 24 who currently receive a main benefit and those areas with high NEET rates.



- National will provide targeted support to young people who would otherwise struggle to get their full licence.

## Driver Licences

We know holding a driver licence comes with important social and economic benefits. Being able to drive helps young people to access work and educational opportunities and connect with friends and family. For some young people, there are significant barriers to getting a licence.

There is a wide range of driver licensing initiatives delivered by government agencies. Those funded by MSD in 2014 and 2015 were evaluated and it was found that the programmes increased the time participants spent in employment and their net income.

## Money Management

Money management is a system for youth clients to MSD that will support them to manage their payments, with things such as rent and power being paid straight from their payment.

We believe this is a successful approach and helps vulnerable young people to get the best start in their adult life without falling behind on key payments and into debt.

- National proposes to extend money management to all beneficiaries under the age of 20, and to those up to the age of 25 who don't fulfil their obligations.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should there be a time limit on the dole under the age of 25?
- Should there be restrictions (e.g. money management and restricting overseas travel) for those on the dole for more than six months?
- What additional support would encourage those under 25 to get off the dole faster?

## Support for Young Mums

We know that young mums need support.

In Budget 2017, National allocated funding for an extra 570 families to be seen under the Family Start programme. There are approximately 2,000 births to mums under the age of 20 and 1,400 receiving the Youth Parent Payment.

Family Start provides intensive, home-based support targeting young children in homes where there may be mental health issues, addiction problems, family violence or other child development risks.

National wants to maximise opportunities for teen parents and ensure they have a better chance of a great future.



Solo mums with no qualifications are least likely to accumulate work experience, and are more likely to take on the role of caring for children as it is often more financially viable than entering low-paid work with its associated costs of childcare and travel. This can lead to long periods of benefit dependency.

Supporting young mums to gain skills and qualifications that are valued and recognised by employers contributes immediately to improved outcomes for them and their children.

- National proposes to provide intensive home visiting programmes (such as Early Start or Family Start) to all mums under 18 and to some under the age of 20.
- National proposes an intensive wrap around service for parents under 20 to ensure they achieve NCEA Level 2 and preferably two years post-secondary study.



## Families

“Healthy and happy families are crucial to New Zealand society and we will support mums and dads to give their kids the best start in life.”

### **Hon Louise Upston**

Spokesperson for Social Development

New Zealand is a great place to raise children, but we know that guiding children to become healthy, happy, responsible and caring adults takes effort and focus.

Parenting support gives parents tools to increase their confidence and knowledge as children grow. The tools and resources can be websites and helplines, formal and informal support networks, one-to-one sessions or workshops on good parenting practices.

- National will develop a nationwide action plan to help communities with parenting support and resources.

## Family Planning

New Zealand has high rates of unplanned pregnancies compared with other developed nations – an estimated 40-60 per cent of all pregnancies. In Sweden, the figure is 20 per cent. If we want happy and healthy Kiwi families, there should be a focus on ensuring people are able to plan their families.

Although the Ministry of Health funds the contraceptive advice and services for low income women, there remain access barriers for some women and some contraceptives which may be suitable are not funded.

- National proposes to increase access for women seeking contraceptive advice and services and will extend free access to Long Acting Reversible Contraception and fund Intrauterine Devices that are currently not funded so that contraception is available to more women.

## Antenatal and Postnatal Education

Up to 90 per cent of a child's brain development occurs before the age of five. Parents play the most crucial role in this development.

Some children do struggle with learning, behaviour and relationships, but these can be identified and mitigated early in the child's life. For that to happen, we need to improve parental education.

There's currently significant variability in the delivery and content of antenatal and postnatal education for parents.

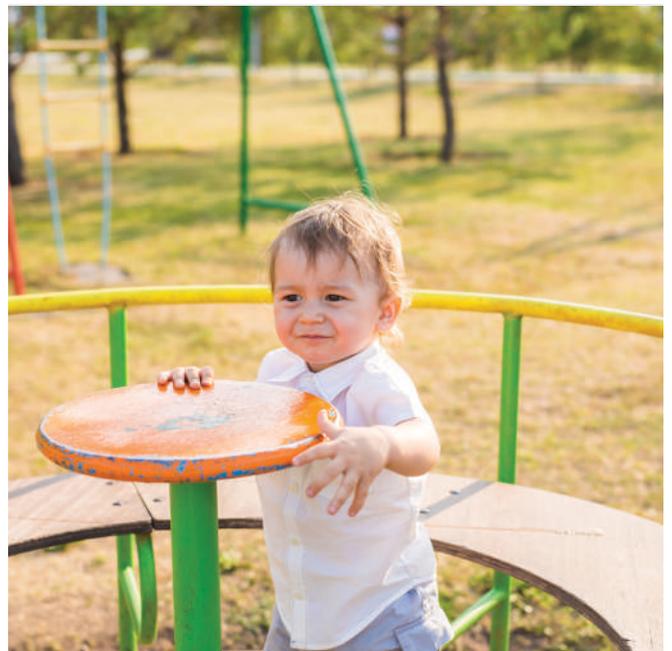
To ensure messages about brain development and the importance of the first 1,000 days are consistently conveyed, minimum standards will be introduced to ensure parents are getting accurate, up-to-date information on how to grow happy, healthy Kiwi kids.

- National proposes to improve antenatal and postnatal education for parents through introducing minimum requirements of course content.

## Early Learning and Childcare

National recognises that early development is crucial and that early learning centres have daily contact with families and are in a unique position to identify families that may be experiencing challenges.

We will do this by increasing data collection and sharing across agencies, including midwives, NGOs, Well Child Tamariki Ora providers and other healthcare and child care professionals. Accurate data and identifying at-risk groups or areas will ensure funding is allocated where relief is most needed.



Some communities will benefit from a holistic approach, so this data is key to identifying those communities. We will ensure that data is held and used with privacy being a key consideration.

National is also concerned about the number of children with specialised challenges such as trauma, foetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or prenatal exposure to drugs.

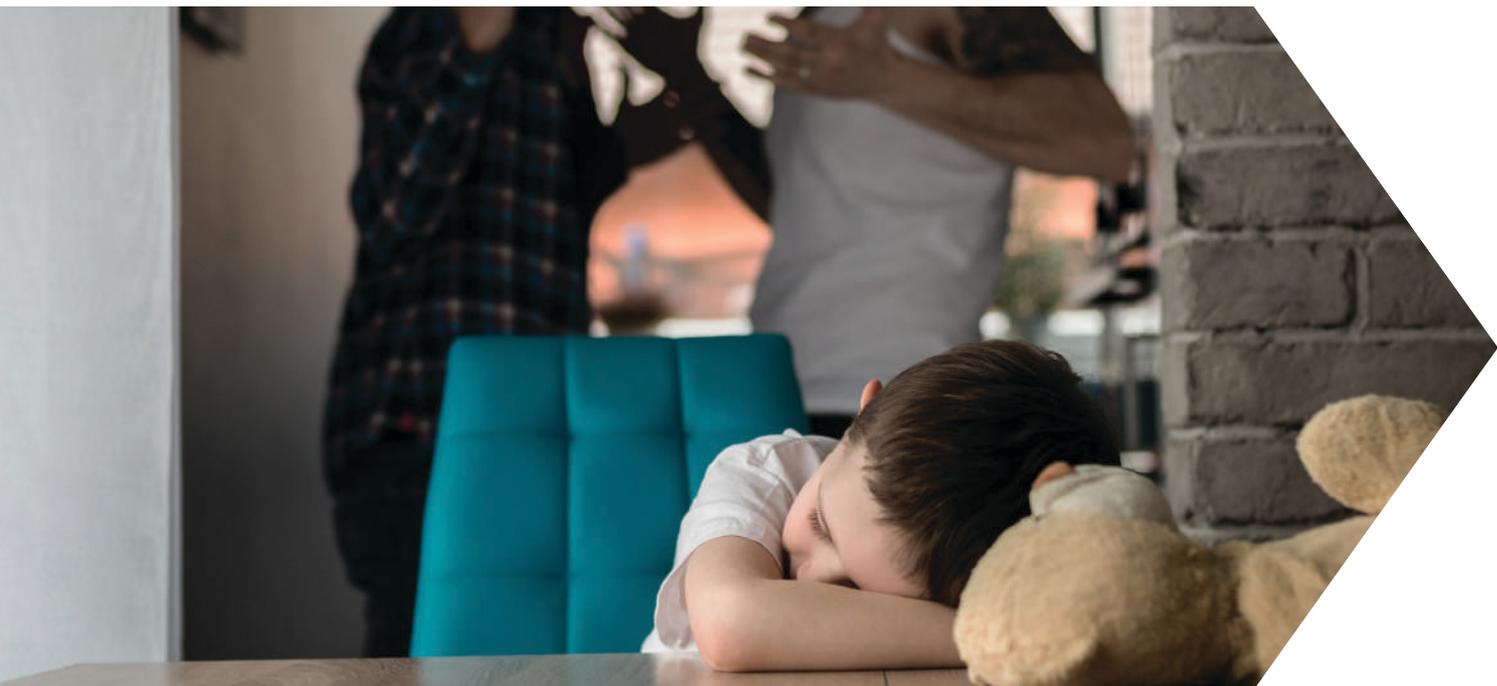
By identifying these red flags, we can target support so these children thrive.

- National proposes increased access to early childhood education and child care, ensuring parents recognise their role in children's early learning, and can identify behavioural and learning red flags early on.
- National proposes increased data collection and sharing across agencies to better identify at-risk groups or areas.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- Is there sufficient access to services for families with children who have experienced trauma?
- What services are the most beneficial for supporting families recovering from trauma?





## Family and Sexual Violence

"Family and sexual violence ruins lives and devastates communities. National is committed to helping save families from the trauma of violence."

### **Hon Louise Upston**

Spokesperson for Social Development

### **Child Abuse**

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of child abuse in the developed world. We also have one of the worst rates of child death by maltreatment within the family. The New Zealand Police respond to one family violence call every seven minutes and:

- Every year Oranga Tamariki substantiates 22,000 cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.
- Fourteen per cent of young people report being hit or physically harmed on purpose by an adult at home in the past 12 months.
- Twenty per cent of girls and nine per cent of boys in New Zealand report unwanted sexual touching or contact.
- National reduced the number of physical assaults on children by a 5.6 per cent drop in physical abuse in the year to September 2014 and was working towards another five per cent reduction in numbers by 2017.
- National proposes to introduce a target to reduce the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse.

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## Integrated Safety Response

Integrated Safety Response (ISR) pilots were introduced by the National Government in 2016 in Christchurch and the Waikato. Led by the Police, they provide a rapid collaborative response to family violence.

Findings from this evaluation suggest the ISR model is delivering on many of its core aims. It found evidence of families and whānau feeling safer and experiencing improved outcomes.

We will extend the initiative to reach more communities and expand the model from crisis response to cover prevention, early intervention and long-term recovery.

- National proposes to extend the ISR initiative to more communities.

## Perpetrators

The best strategies for addressing family violence allow victims to minimise disruption to their lives.

Since 2016, the Accident Compensation Commission has partnered with Gandhi Nivas, Aviva's ReachOut and the Police to deliver early intervention services to perpetrators of family violence and their families.

They support behavioural change to reduce harm for families through free counselling, emergency housing and referrals to social services, and partnerships with Police, Child Protection Workers and other agencies.

- National proposes to support initiatives that focus on the perpetrator and minimise disruption for victims.

## Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is often complex and difficult to detect, but more than 2,300 elder abuse cases are reported annually and three-quarters of the abusers are family members.

National established the 24/7 elder abuse and neglect phone line EA ITS NOT OK and the SuperSeniors initiative to detect and prevent elder abuse. National will boost funding for this helpline.

We're proposing stronger regulations and funding to actively prevent all forms of elder abuse. We would also support day programmes that support ethnic seniors.

- National will reinstate the funding for the seniors' day programmes focussed on the prevention of loneliness, social isolation and elder abuse in ethnic communities.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can financial abuse be prevented and/or detected earlier?
- Are changes required with powers of attorney to protect seniors from financial abuse?



## Seniors

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“New Zealand has an ageing population, so we have a unique opportunity to work with older New Zealanders to ensure we help get them the support they need.”

**Hon Maggie Barry**  
Spokesperson for Seniors

New Zealanders deserve a high-performing social welfare and health system that enables them to lead longer, vibrant lives.

National values the contribution made by seniors throughout their working lives and believes they deserve the best care and support so that they can remain independent and have fulfilling and active later lives.

Feedback from our ‘Have Your Say’ campaign showed New Zealanders want us to focus on ensuring elderly Kiwis can live enjoyable, meaningful lives where their social connections remain strong. The cost of living, elder abuse and neglect and loneliness rated highly as issues that needed addressing. Home-based care and housing choice were also important.

## Dementia

More than 70,000 Kiwis are living with dementia, but by 2050 that will rise to over 170,000. This is in line with an increase across the OECD. It’s important to make sure we have models of care and support in place for dementia patients and their families.

We understand the importance of early diagnosis and wraparound support in the first 12 months for people living with dementia, and want to investigate ways to better support people living with dementia. We recognise that families are the best source of information on how to care for and support their loved ones as they navigate life with dementia.

- National proposes to investigate ways to better support people with dementia to make their lives more meaningful.

- National will lift the age of entitlement from 65 to 67 in 2037.
- National guarantees to keep superannuation at no less than 66 per cent of the average wage.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should we invest more now in emerging and innovative tools to support those living with dementia to stay in their own homes for longer e.g. smart houses, robotics, new remote technology?

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How do we best support older workers to work past 65 if they choose?

## Superannuation

To align with our rapidly ageing population and ensure the sustainability of superannuation, National has committed to lifting the age of entitlement to superannuation from 65 to 67 phased in from 2037.

National also guarantees that the superannuation rate will be at least 66 per cent of the average wage.

With a rapidly ageing population, the number of New Zealanders over the age of 65 will double to 1.3 million in the next 20 years. It's important to plan for this now.

We're committed to supporting older workers who choose to stay employed after they turn 65 and we've proposed allowing employer KiwiSaver contributions to continue past then too. We'll also provide for career transition courses focussed specifically on the challenges faced by an older workforce.

## Seniors' Housing

Affordable and well-located housing is central to the quality of life for people of all ages but especially older adults. In particular, accessibility is a vital consideration.

Australian research has shown that 40 per cent of all Australians over the age of 70 enter residential care, representing a huge cost to the system.

We can help seniors to retain their independence with special housing developments specifically designed for their needs. These allow independent living supported and surrounded by a community of other seniors, at a far lower cost than residential care.

Many seniors don't require round the clock care. For them, a community environment is best and can reduce loneliness, increase the quality of life and provide the level of support they need.

- National proposes to support developments that enable shared living for seniors.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- What is the best way to support older people to remain in their homes for as long as possible?
- How can access to transport and social connections be maintained?
- How can families be encouraged and enabled to look after and care for their elders?

## Healthy Ageing

National will continue to invest in seniors. We understand how important it is for them to have access to the right support as they age so they can enjoy healthy, happy lives.

Loneliness and social isolation are shown to particularly affect the elderly. National is committed to effective strategies to increase social connectivity, such as continuing the roll-out of age-friendly communities as developed in Hamilton and New Plymouth.



- National proposes to promote positive healthy ageing in age-friendly communities.
- National proposes rolling out the Community Connects models piloted in Hawke's Bay to coordinate local seniors groups and combat loneliness and isolation, from MenzShed to tai chi.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- How do we ensure seniors have access to the services they want and need when they need them?
- What range of tools is available to connect seniors groups and help prevent isolation and loneliness?



## Community

“National will invest in a vibrant community and voluntary sector because it contributes to a strong economy and improved social outcomes.”

### Hon Alfred Ngaro

Spokesperson for Community and Voluntary

The voluntary sector makes a unique contribution to the wellbeing of New Zealand’s communities. The work they do makes New Zealand a better, more caring place.

Around a third of all adults contribute at least ten hours a month to their communities. This includes everything from refereeing kids’ rugby team, collecting rubbish on the beach, and raising funds for great organisations. Lots of Kiwis dedicate their time to voluntary initiatives.

One of the benefits of the voluntary sector is its benefits to social connectedness.

Five indicators are used to measure New Zealand’s levels of social connectedness. The indicators are: telephone and internet access, regular contact with family/friends, trust in others, the proportion of the population

experiencing loneliness and contact between young people and their parents.

According to Statistics NZ, loneliness and social isolation are rapidly increasing issues for New Zealanders, with long term effects on physical health and mental wellness.

National values our communities. When there’s a strong voluntary sector, our communities work better. In government, we’ll work with the sector to maximise the impact that we can have together. National will also look at reviewing charity tax laws and deduction levels. We want to make sure we’ve got the right settings to encourage the voluntary sector to grow and thrive.

National will be committed to developing a well-functioning social enterprise sector. Informed by our commitment to local solutions for local challenges, this will only have positive benefits for our communities.

- National proposes to work with the voluntary sector to grow the number of volunteering opportunities so that those not in work have opportunities to volunteer as a pathway to work.
- National proposes to unlock new sources of capital and support for innovative social enterprises.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- How can government work with the voluntary sector to grow the number of volunteering opportunities so that those not in work have opportunities to volunteer as a pathway to work?
- Is enabling social connectedness in our communities something which central government should be funding?



# National's Social Policy Team

2019



**Simon Bridges**  
National Party Leader



**Paula Bennett**  
Spokesperson for Social Investment



**Louise Upston**  
Spokesperson for Social Development



**Alfred Ngaro**  
Spokesperson for Children, Community & Voluntary Sector



**Maggie Barry**  
Spokesperson for Seniors, Disability Issues



**Simon O'Connor**  
Spokesperson for Social Housing



**Maureen Pugh**  
Associate Spokesperson for Children



**Nicola Willis**  
Spokesperson for Youth

# Feedback

## National's vision

Please fill out the below (feel free to add any additional comments) and post them to:

**FREEPOST PARLIAMENT**  
**Hon Louise Upston**  
**Parliament Buildings**  
**Wellington**

Post to Parliament is free so you don't need to add a stamp. You can also visit [national.org.nz](http://national.org.nz) for an online version.

## Social Investment

### Procurement of Social Services

Agree

Disagree

1. National proposes expanding the use of procurement models where outcomes are purchased (commissioning for outcomes) to gain better long term results and value for money.



### Social Bonds

Agree

Disagree

2. National proposes to create a Social Innovation Fund so that promising initiatives and programmes tackling long term social challenges have a chance to prove their success.



### Place Based Initiatives

Agree

Disagree

3. National proposes to expand Place Based Initiatives, enabling local solutions to local challenges.



### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What is the correct balance between universal support and targeted support for those who have higher needs?
- Should the baby bonus be cancelled?
- Should we keep Whānau Ora in its current form and if not, what changes should be made?
- Should social bonds be extended?

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## Social Welfare

4. National will retain the principles of the Social Security Act, which ensures a focus on preparing for and finding work.

Agree Disagree

### Setting Ambitious Targets

5. National will set targets to ensure cross-agency work focusses on reducing the number of people receiving benefits and reducing the number of children in benefit dependent homes.

Agree Disagree

### Abatement Rates

6. National agrees with the planned increase in abatement rates so those receiving benefits can keep more of what they earn as a pathway back to independence.

Agree Disagree

### Obligations and Sanctions

7. National will return the sanction for sole parents who don't name the liable parent.

Agree Disagree

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Do you think the planned increase in the number of hours able to be worked without abatement is too little, too much or about right?
- What additional support, incentives, obligations or sanctions should be applied?
- Should additional obligations be placed on those receiving Jobseeker Support or Sole Parent Support? If yes, what suggestions do you have?
- In addition to obligations what incentives could be used to get more people off benefits?
- For sole parents, should it be a requirement that their child is fully immunised?

### Supporting Self Employment

8. National wants to encourage people on benefits to consider self-employment and start a new business, and look at whether increased access to an enterprise scheme and flexi wage for suitable candidates - with a particular priority on sole parents - will help achieve that.

Agree Disagree

### Keeping People in Work

9. National proposes to keep people in work when circumstances or needs change e.g. reduced hours for temporary period during an illness so they keep their job.

Agree Disagree

## Income Support System

Agree

Disagree

10. National proposes to explore options to simplify the income support system.
11. National proposes to look at better ways to stop people getting into debt. We propose to look at how to manage an individual's debt to government departments and consider better ways to both make payments manageable for the individual and improve collection rates.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can Government best support small business to keep people employed during temporary low periods for example during illness for an employee or post an earthquake for an employer?
- How can the welfare system be further simplified to reduce the administration of the system and to prevent the occurrence of overpayments and underpayments?

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## Gangs

Agree

Disagree

12. National will ensure gang members and associates cannot exploit taxpayer support.

## Exiting Prison

Agree

Disagree

13. National proposes to improve the way agencies work together to support people exiting prisons to ensure they have a best chance at independence and lower the risk of them reoffending.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What can the system do better for people exiting prisons so that they are more able to re-integrate into society and less likely to reoffend on release?

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## Social Housing

### Home Ownership

Agree

Disagree

14. National will consider initiatives that improve home ownership rates.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Do you support rent to buy schemes?

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## Housing New Zealand & Community Housing Providers

	Agree	Disagree
15. National will partner with a wider range of Community Housing Providers to ensure local solutions to local housing challenges that support people to move from taxpayer funded housing into private rental housing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. National believes that Community Housing Providers should have the option of managing Housing NZ tenancies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. National proposes to better manage the financial investment of social housing assets, to build more and better maintain the social housing stock.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. National proposes to accelerate the building of social housing in the top five areas of demand in the country, while acknowledging that some areas - often rural and provincial - will also need tailored solutions to their particular needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should the Government underwrite the building of social houses, holding the risk for Community Housing Providers, allowing them to build more homes?
- Can the services that Housing New Zealand (now Kāinga Ora) currently provides – be that building and owning homes or providing tenancy management – be better done through Community Housing Providers?

## Tenancy Management

	Agree	Disagree
19. National will focus on sustainable tenancies preventing people from falling out of a tenancy through case management. The priority will be on sole parents and families with young children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. National believes if tenants have contaminated a house with meth, they should be automatically notified to the Police and, if children are present, Oranga Tamariki.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What should the rights and responsibilities be for social housing tenants and providers?
- How should a government react to anti-social behaviour by state housing tenants?

## Homelessness

Agree

Disagree

21. National proposes to introduce a target to reduce the time it takes to house priority clients on the social housing register.
22. National will support Housing First and ensure adequate support to move people off the street and into stable housing including those with mental health issues.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- If deinstitutionalisation has led to an increase in homelessness, how do we best provide housing for those with intellectual disabilities or mental health challenges?
  - Should National introduce a dollar for dollar scheme with existing homeless shelters to either improve or expand their facilities and services?
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## Skills and Employment

### Jobs and Skills Hubs

Agree

Disagree

23. National proposes to create local Jobs and Skills Hubs where local employers, organisations and councils can collaborate to improve opportunities for local people to obtain, train or retrain, for local jobs.
24. National proposes to link economic and social development and expand initiatives like He Poutama Rangatahi.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What opportunities exist for businesses or industries to create full time equivalent roles where salaries are smoothed over 12 months?
  - What support would be required from MSD?
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### People with Disabilities

Agree

Disagree

25. National proposes to support organisations employing people with disabilities so there is sustainable employment opportunities for them.

### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should there be a minimum wage exemption or a subsidy to support employers who employ people with disabilities?
-

## First 1,000 days

### Lead Maternity Carer

Agree Disagree

26. National proposes to introduce a target of having 90 per cent of pregnant women register with a Lead Maternity Carer in their first trimester.



### Postnatal Care

Agree Disagree

27. National will increase postnatal stay to three days in a postnatal facility of the mum's choosing.



### Parental Leave

Agree Disagree

28. National will ensure paid parental leave can be split between parents and taken at the same time.



#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Alongside enabling leave to be taken at the same time, how can we encourage dads to take more of the leave already available to them?

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### First Time Parents

Agree Disagree

29. National proposes improving the support for first time parents, focussing on the child's first 1,000 days.



#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What additional support (if any) is needed for first time mums?

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### Home Visits

Agree Disagree

30. National proposes to increase the number of home visits in the first six months of a child's life.

### Vulnerable new mothers

Agree

Disagree

31. National proposes to support vulnerable, expectant new mothers by implementing targets for organisations that support them.

## Vulnerable children

### Child Poverty

Agree

Disagree

32. National will continue its work to reduce the number of children living in poverty by implementing the Child Poverty Reduction Act.
33. National proposes to review the child poverty targets to ensure they are ambitious and take into account non-financial means.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can we best support mothers and children with challenges like trauma, drug use and foetal alcohol syndrome?

### Workforce

Agree

Disagree

34. National proposes to work with the sector to find solutions to workforce challenges in Oranga Tamariki and NGOs who provide essential services for children.
35. National proposes to extend the hotline for schools to healthcare professions so they get priority response from OT within 24 hours.

### Carers

Agree

Disagree

36. National proposes to improve support for foster parents and grandparents raising grandchildren.

## Youth and Young Parents

### Increasing Opportunities

Agree

Disagree

37. National proposes to require young people up to the age of 18 to be in education, training or employment and their parents to be held accountable.

#### We want your thoughts on the following:

- What incentives could be put in place to keep young people in education or training up to 18?

- What incentives could be used for employers to employ and train young people aged 16 & 17?
  - What consequences, if any, should there be for young people and their parents in the young person is not in education, employment or training (NEET)?
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### Driver Licences

Agree Disagree

38. National will provide targeted support to young people who would otherwise struggle to get their full licence.



### Money Management

Agree Disagree

39. National proposes to extend money management to all beneficiaries under the age of 20, and to those up to the age of 25 who don't fulfil their obligations.



### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Should there be a time limit on the dole under the age of 25?
  - Should there be restrictions (e.g. money management and restricting overseas travel) for those on the dole for more than six months?
  - What additional support would encourage those under 25 to get off the dole faster?
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### Support for Young Mums

Agree Disagree

40. National proposes to provide intensive home visiting programmes (such as Early Start or Family Start) to all mums under 18 and to some under the age of 20.



41. National proposes an intensive wrap around service for parents under 20 to ensure they achieve NCEA Level 2 and preferably two years' post-secondary study.



### Families

Agree Disagree

42. National will develop a nationwide action plan to help communities with parenting support and resources.

## Family Planning

Agree Disagree

43. National proposes to increase access for women seeking contraceptive advice and services and will extend free access to Long Acting Reversible Contraception and fund Intrauterine Devices that are currently not funded so that contraception is available to more women.



## Antenatal and Postnatal Education

Agree Disagree

44. National proposes to improve antenatal and postnatal education for parents through introducing minimum requirements of course content.



## Early Learning and Childcare

Agree Disagree

45. National proposes increased access to early childhood education and child care, ensuring parents recognise their role in children's early learning, and can identify behavioural and learning red flags early on.



46. National proposes increased data collection and sharing across agencies to better identify at-risk groups or areas.



### We want your thoughts on the following:

- Is there sufficient access to services for families with children who have experienced trauma?
- What services are the most beneficial for supporting families recovering from trauma?

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## Family and Sexual Violence

### Child Abuse

Agree Disagree

47. National proposes to introduce a target to reduce the number of children experiencing physical and sexual abuse.



### Integrated Safety Response

Agree Disagree

48. National proposes to extend the Integrated Safety Response (ISR) initiative to more communities.



### Perpetrators

Agree Disagree

49. National proposes to support initiatives that focus on the perpetrator and minimise disruption for victims.



### Elder Abuse

Agree Disagree

50. National will reinstate the funding for the seniors' day programmes focussed on the prevention of loneliness, social isolation and elder abuse in ethnic communities.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- How can financial abuse be prevented and/or detected earlier?
- Are changes required with powers of attorney to protect seniors from financial abuse?

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## Seniors

### Dementia

Agree Disagree

51. National proposes to investigate ways to better support people with dementia to make their lives more meaningful.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- Should we invest more now in emerging and innovative tools to support those living with dementia to stay in their own homes for longer e.g. smart houses, robotics, new remote technology?

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### Superannuation

Agree Disagree

52. National will lift the age of entitlement from 65 to 67 in 2037.
53. National guarantees to keep superannuation at no less than 66 per cent of the average wage.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- How do we best support older workers to work past 65 if they choose?

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### Seniors' Housing

Agree Disagree

54. National proposes to support developments that enable shared living for seniors.

**We want your thoughts on the following:**

- What is the best way to support older people to remain in their homes for as long as possible?
- How can access to transport and social connections be maintained?

- How can families be encouraged and enabled to look after and care for their elders?

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Healthy Ageing

Agree Disagree

- 55. National proposes to promote positive healthy ageing in age-friendly communities.
- 56. National proposes rolling out the Community Connects models piloted in Hawke’s Bay to coordinate local seniors groups and combat loneliness and isolation, from MenzShed to tai chi.

We want your thoughts on the following:

- How do we ensure seniors have access to the services they want and need when they need them?
- What range of tools is available to connect seniors groups and help prevent isolation and loneliness?

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Community

Agree Disagree

- 57. National proposes to work with the voluntary sector to grow the number of volunteering opportunities so that those not in work have opportunities to volunteer as a pathway to work.
- 58. National proposes to unlock new sources of capital and support for innovative social enterprises.

We want your thoughts on the following:

- How can the government work with the voluntary sector to grow the number of volunteering opportunities so that those not in work have opportunities to volunteer as a pathway to work?
- Is enabling social connectedness in our communities something which central government should be funding?

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