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Changes to Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities National Science Challenge governance group enhance commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi in key national research initiative

Challenge host BRANZ, and all the Challenge Parties are pleased to announce changes to the governance group of Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities: Ko Ngā wā Kāinga hei whakamāhorahora.

The Challenge, one of eleven national science challenges, is working to identify new ways of living that reflect Aotearoa's unique identity, and respond to our changing lifestyle needs and aspirations.

The Challenge has at its heart a commitment to a Te Tiriti O Waitangi partnership approach. This has been further enhanced at the governance level through a new co-chair arrangement. Graeme Nahkies and Gena Moses-Te Kani (Ngāti Kuia te Iwi, Kurahaupo te Waka), governance group members since 2016, have been appointed as new Challenge co-chairs.

The Challenge has also appointed two further governance group members - Dr Hope Tupara and Hope Simonsen. They replace outgoing members Professor Richard Bedford and Ngarimu Blair.

Dr Tupara is an experienced Māori leader with extensive governance experience and a background in public health research, including wider housing and community issues. She is a ministerial appointment on the National Ethics Advisory Committee and president of Ikaroa Region Māori Women's Welfare League. Dr Tupara is also a former chair of Te Rūnanga o Turanganui a Kiwa and Ngāi Tāmanuhiri Iwi Trust, and was an iwi chair on the Whānau Ora Partnership Group. The Whānau Ora Partnership Group, made up of equal numbers of iwi chairs and government ministers, provides strategic leadership for Whānau Ora including the Whānau Ora Outcomes Framework.

Ms Simonsen has nearly 20 years' experience in affordable and social housing, including community housing, private property and central government. She is currently Emerge Aotearoa's national housing manager. Emerge Aotearoa provides emergency housing and support services and long-term social housing for whānau and individuals from Whangarei to Christchurch. Ms Simonsen is also the chair of the Auckland Community Housing Provider Network – a network of 21 housing providers in Tāmaki Makaurau. She was previously chair of Monte Cecilia Housing Trust for six years.

Background

Building Better Homes, Towns and Cities: Ko Ngā wā Kāinga hei whakamāhorahora (BBHTC) is one of eleven National Science Challenges, funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Enterprise.

BBHTC undertakes world-class research to shape New Zealand's built environment and strengthen communities. The challenge develops findings that will empower public, planners and policymakers with reliable information and new tools for fresh thinking and better decisions. It is discovering new pathways to address the long-standing housing challenges of our most disadvantaged and to support Māori into healthy homes.

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