

## 'Underlying dread' as just two long-term rentals available on Waiheke Island

Erin Johnson 16:32, Sep 14 2022

A trio of 70-somethings who have banded together to find a home on [Auckland's Waiheke Island](#) have been dismayed to find just two long-term rentals available.

Anne Bailey, Richard Cohen and Cathrine Lewis say the properties they have seen have been snapped up quickly, with “tonnes of people” looking.

Lewis has been a resident of the island for 22 years, and is a musician and writer also known as Katy Soljak.

She said she had an “underlying dread” about moving out of her current home in six weeks.

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- \* [Here's what Airbnb can do to a rental market](#)
- \* [Waiheke Island rental listings fall 47 per cent as Airbnb adds to housing shortage](#)
- \* [Why you should think about renting before buying into a holiday town](#)

Since leaving her long-term marriage, where she didn't have to [worry about housing](#), she had seen the reality of how few rentals were available, she said.



*Cathrine Lewis/Stuff*

Richard Cohen, left, Cathrine Lewis (aka Katy Soljak) and Anne Bailey have banded together in the hope of finding a home to rent on Waiheke Island.

“I love Waiheke and I want to stay. I am connected with the community in lots of ways.”

Bailey, who has lived on the island for 15 years, will soon move out of her third home in three years and is looking for a more permanent dwelling, while Cohen has recently arrived from California to be closer to his children and grandchildren.

The long-term rentals listed as available on Trade Me this week are a three-bedroom property going for \$1800 per week and a four-bedroom home for \$1695 per week.

Meanwhile, a search on Airbnb showed more than 200 properties available for short-term rent on a mid-October weekend.

Paul Carew, the chairperson of Waiheke Community Housing Trust, said there was no housing shortage on the island.

“We don’t have a housing problem on Waiheke, we have a distribution problem.”

Carew addressed a community hui on the situation last week, saying a zoning bias favoured visitor accommodation over residential housing.

At [the 2018 Census](#), there were 3780 occupied private dwellings on the island and 2079 unoccupied dwellings. Carew said there were hundreds of properties reserved for holiday accommodation or holiday homes.



*Trade Me/Supplied*

This Onetangi home is one of two long-term properties listed on Trade Me as available for rent on Waiheke Island this week, while hundreds of properties are available for holiday accommodation.

In an effort to add more houses to the rental pool, Carew said, the trust was offering to help property owners to bring their houses up to rental standards.

“The [new requirements for heating and ventilation](#) are daunting. A lot of people on the island are cash poor and have an asset they cannot afford to maintain, including a lot of widows,” Carew said.

The trust was also looking at the option of building a new [tiny home](#) for the owner and then renting out their house, he said.

“Our primary interest is preserving the community infrastructure.



*Trademe/Supplied*

One of just two homes listed as available for long-term rent this week, this three-bedroom property costs \$1800 per week.

“If there is nobody here to make your coffee and clean the toilet it is not going to be much of a holiday.”

Carew would also like to see a change to planning rules to make it easier for property owners to make separate units available for long-term rental rather than visitor accommodation.

An Auckland Council spokesperson said the council’s District Plan for Hauraki Gulf Islands did not easily provide for multiple dwellings, and a district plan change would require both community and political support.

Such a change would take a number of years to research, draft, notify and take submissions on, and even then a new set of planning provisions could be contested, she said.