

In one instance—namely, Waimiha Pa—an effort is being made to clean up the whole village area and to provide adequate accommodation for the people by erecting either new houses or repairing the existing ones. In other instances—*e.g.*, Paeroa (Mill Road), and Tairāwhiti (near Huntly)—houses are being erected in groups, and the creation of small “model villages” should have the effect of not only providing healthy living conditions for the people resident there, but also of presenting a splendid example for others visiting the village.

At 31st March, 1938, approximately 150 applications had been handled, and after investigation and preliminary consideration 90 had been referred to the Board of Native Affairs for decision. In 42 cases advances totalling £11,500 from the “Indigent” Housing Fund were approved, and in seven cases, advances totalling £2,740 were granted from the ordinary fund available under the Native Housing Act.

In practically all instances building operations have been in the hands of the Public Works Department, and arrangements have been made with that Department for the employment of a maximum number of Maori labourers. The procedure adopted is that the Public Works Department appoints a foreman-carpenter, who is in charge of the job and is assisted by a “gang” of Maoris who usually start as either unskilled or only semi-skilled workmen.

Many difficulties have confronted the Department in putting into effect the Government’s proposals, but most of these have now been overcome. The major difficulties remaining are those relating to land titles and to methods of repayment. Though probably not as acute as in the Tokerau district, the problems of Native land titles complicate the obtaining of adequate security. At the same time, the Department is continually being confronted with applicants who, without doubt, are in urgent need of assistance but who, besides having no suitable land on which to build, have scarcely any income from which repayments can be made.

However, definite progress is being made, and the erection of comfortable houses for those Natives able to comply with the requirements is having the effect of encouraging others to put their land titles in order, to obtain regular employment, and to save from their wages amounts which can be offered as cash deposits in support of their applications. Although it is realized that the task of adequately housing the Native people is a gigantic one, foundations have now been laid which should result in bringing about considerable improvement in the existing conditions.

HOUSING OPERATIONS TO 31st MARCH, 1938.

						Number.		Cost.	
						New.	Repairs.	New.	Repairs.
								£	£
Completed—									
(a) Under Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(b) Indigent	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	925	..
In progress—									
(a) Under Act	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	1,200	..
(b) Indigent	..	..	..	..	..	2	3	700	480
Approved but not commenced 31st March, 1938—									
(a) Under Act	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	1,500	} 565
(b) Indigent	..	..	..	..	..	30	5	8,870	
Total authorizations ..						40	9	£13,195	£1,045

WAIARIKI DISTRICT: REPORT ON NATIVE HOUSING.

In pursuance of the Government’s policy for the provision of better housing accommodation for the Maori people, a survey was made of the housing conditions of Natives at various localities throughout this district. The areas selected for a preliminary survey were Ohinemutu, Whakarewarewa, Whakatane, Waioeka, Waipahiti, and Waitahanui, and the surveys in most of these areas have now been completed. In addition, a general survey of the conditions prevailing has been made at Te Kaha, Omarumutu, Torere, Omaio, Rangiuru, and Tauranga. The investigations undertaken disclosed many problems which make a housing scheme for Native communities more complex than is the case with the *pakeha*. In illustration, at Waioeka certain religious beliefs which preclude the use of rain-water for domestic purpose will require the provision of an independent water-supply to meet the health requirements of this community. Multiplicity of ownership is one serious bar to the rapid prosecution of house-building, where the conditions of an advance require a title capable of completion.