

Quality of Life Survey 2020: Waikato results

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Executive Summary

This report presents Waikato regional results from a survey undertaken in parallel with the 2020 [Quality of Life Survey](#) (a national partnership between nine New Zealand councils including Hamilton). It includes results at the overall Waikato region level as well as by age group, gender, and ethnic group. Trends for the period 2006 to 2020 are identified for eight survey indicators reported as part of the [Waikato Progress Indicators](#).

Over 1,200 Waikato region residents aged 18 years and over completed the survey between 23 September and 29 November 2020, including 500 people (41%) from Hamilton city.¹ Questions were asked in relation to:

- Overall quality of life
- Environment (built and natural)
- Housing
- Public Transport
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture, and social networks
- Climate change and sustainability (new in the 2020 survey)
- Economic wellbeing
- Council decision-making processes.

Over the period 2006 to 2020, Waikato respondents were:

- Almost unchanged in the extent to which they rate their overall quality of life positively, from 90% in 2006 to 88% in 2020.
- Slightly more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, increasing from 60% in 2006 to 62% in 2020.
- Less likely to give a positive rating for their overall health, decreasing from 90% in 2006 to 79% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree they experience a sense of community in their neighbourhood, decreasing from 63% in 2006 to 56% in 2020.
- Slightly less likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels, decreasing from 70% in 2006 to 67% in 2020.
- Less likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the past seven days, decreasing from 61% in 2006 to 35% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live, decreasing from 51% in 2006 to 47% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree the public has an influence over decisions their local Council makes, decreasing from 62% in 2006 to 37% in 2020.

The results can be accessed, explored, and downloaded from:

www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/community/waikato-progress-indicators-tupuranga-waikato/

¹ The [Hamilton survey](#) was commissioned by Hamilton City Council.

1 Introduction

1.1 Report overview

This report presents Waikato regional results from a survey undertaken in parallel and consistent with the 2020 [Quality of Life Survey](#), including results by age group, gender, and ethnic group. Regional trends since 2006 are identified for the eight survey indicators reported in the [Waikato Progress Indicators](#) initiative. Results for all Waikato local authority areas have been compiled separately for local councils. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 provides a summary background and context around the Quality of Life Survey, Waikato Progress Indicators initiative and related survey programmes.
- Section 2 presents technical notes to assist with interpretation of the survey results.
- Section 3 provides survey results for the Waikato region; and Waikato Progress Indicators regional survey results by age group, gender, and ethnic group.
- Section 4 summarises Waikato Progress Indicators local results for each of the 10 district council areas in the Waikato region and the Hamilton City wards.
- Section 5 compares the latest 2020 Waikato regional results with earlier 2006, 2016 and 2018 results for the eight indicators included in the Waikato Progress Indicators. This includes discussion of comparability between the 2020 survey results and earlier Quality of Life surveys.
- Section 6 concludes with a summary of findings and outline of next steps.

1.2 Quality of Life Survey

The [Quality of Life Project](#) was initiated in 1999 in response to growing pressures on urban communities and the effects of these on community wellbeing. It was initially a collaboration between councils represented in Local Government New Zealand's (LGNZ's) Local Government Metro Sector forum. The first Quality of Life Survey was undertaken in 2003, repeated in 2004 and has since been undertaken every two years with a varying number of participating councils. Hamilton city has participated in every survey round except 2012 and 2014. The Waikato region has previously collected data for the areas outside of Hamilton city in parallel with the 2006, 2016 and 2018 surveys.

The 2020 Quality of Life Survey was a collaboration between nine councils (eight cities and one region) and a parallel Waikato survey as follows:²

1. Auckland Council
2. Hamilton City Council
3. Tauranga City Council
4. Hutt City Council
5. Porirua City Council
6. Wellington City Council

² For data analysis and interpretation, note that the Waikato regional sample includes the Hamilton City Council sample and all other districts in the Waikato region; and the Greater Wellington regional sample includes the Wellington City, Porirua City and Hutt City Council samples. The Greater Wellington regional council area also includes smaller towns and rural and semi-rural areas.

7. Christchurch City Council
8. Dunedin City Council
9. Greater Wellington Regional Council
10. Waikato region (other than Hamilton City)³.

The 2020 Quality of Life Survey measured perceptions on the following topic areas:

- Overall quality of life
- Environment (built and natural)
- Housing
- Public Transport
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture, and social networks
- Climate change and sustainability (new in the 2020 survey)
- Economic wellbeing
- Council decision-making processes.

Results from the survey are used to help inform local government policy and monitor progress towards strategic social, cultural, environmental, and economic goals.

1.3 Waikato Progress Indicators

The [Waikato Progress Indicators](#) measure the Waikato region's progress by identifying the current situation and trends across each of 32 key economic, environmental, and social aspects. The Waikato Progress Indicators includes selected key results from the Quality of Life survey (refer to section 1.4) and a wide range of other data sources.

Together, the 32 Waikato Progress Indicators provide a dashboard picture of the health of the Waikato region and the wellbeing and quality of life of its people and communities. Information was gathered and summarised from 2001 to the latest available data, with a focus on the period since 2006/07. The information is regularly updated and presented online. It is used to support strategic discussions around which aspects the Waikato is doing well in; where the region needs to improve; and how changes in one aspect are linked with or affected by changes in others. The dashboard also assists to gauge progress towards Waikato Regional Council's (WRC's) [Strategic Direction](#), and selected measures relevant to Council's activities are included in WRC's [Annual Report](#). The data and website information are refreshed annually.

1.4 Waikato Progress Indicators use of Quality of Life Survey data

The following eight Quality of Life Survey items are included as indicators in the Waikato Progress Indicators programme:

1. Life satisfaction – Overall quality of life
2. Perceptions of safety – Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark

³ The Waikato regional sample (other than Hamilton City Council) was not undertaken as part of the Quality of Life project but used the same methodology and survey company (Nielsen) and was carried out at the same time.

3. Perceived health – Perceived overall health
4. Social connectedness – Sense of community experienced
5. Community pride – Pride in look and feel of city/local area
6. Physical activity – Frequency of being physically active
7. Cultural respect – Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity
8. Community engagement – Perception of influence on council decisions.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sub-regional samples

A total of 1,206 Waikato region residents completed the 2020 survey. The survey sought a minimum of 50 responses for each Territorial Authority in the Waikato region, although this was not achieved in some cases (South Waikato, Ōtorohanga, Waitomo and Hauraki). For Rotorua, only respondents living in the part of the district within the region were surveyed. For each of Waitomo and Taupō, where only a few people live in areas outside the Waikato regional boundary, the survey sampled from the whole district.

2.2 Data weighting

To compensate for the disproportionate sizes of different sub-samples compared to population size (as illustrated later in this section), and other reasons such as differences in response rates for certain population groups (e.g. females and older people more likely to respond), a weighting procedure was applied by Nielsen, the company that undertook the survey, based on population size by gender, ethnicity, and ward/local board.

Of the 1,206 Waikato region residents that completed the 2020 survey Hamilton's unweighted sample size is 500 (i.e. 41% of the Waikato regional sample size). Within the weighted adjusted sample, Hamilton's sample size is 422 (i.e. 35%, similar to the 2018 Census population of 35% compared to the region as a whole).

2.3 Missing data

There is a small amount of missing data where respondents have chosen not to answer specific questions. Wherever percentages are reported, the denominator is the number of respondents, hence the results typically add to 100%. Some but not all questions included a 'don't know/not applicable' response, and some of these received relatively large responses (e.g. perceptions of culturally diverse arts scene). 'Don't know/not applicable' responses are included in the denominator for calculating percentages.

2.4 Sampling error

All data presented in this report are point estimates (means). Sub-samples with smaller groups (i.e. cross-tabs with age, gender, or local area data) are less reliable due to higher sampling errors. For further details, refer to the Quality of Life Survey Technical Report.⁴ The table below provides a guide to how much sampling error is indicatively associated with different sample sizes (at the 95% confidence level).

⁴ www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/QoL-Tech-Report-2020-FINAL.pdf

Table 1: Sample size vs sample error (indicative)

| Sample size | Sample error |
|-------------|--------------|
| 6,000 | ±1.3% |
| 1,300 | ±2.8% |
| 500 | ±4.4% |
| 200 | ±6.9% |
| 100 | ±9.8% |
| 50 | ±13.8% |

2.5 Rounding

Due to rounding, some percentages do not sum exactly to the aggregated percentage figure. These are indicated throughout the report where relevant.

3. Results

3.1 Infographic summary

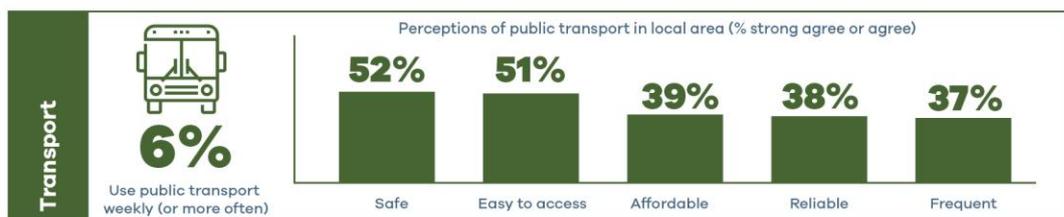
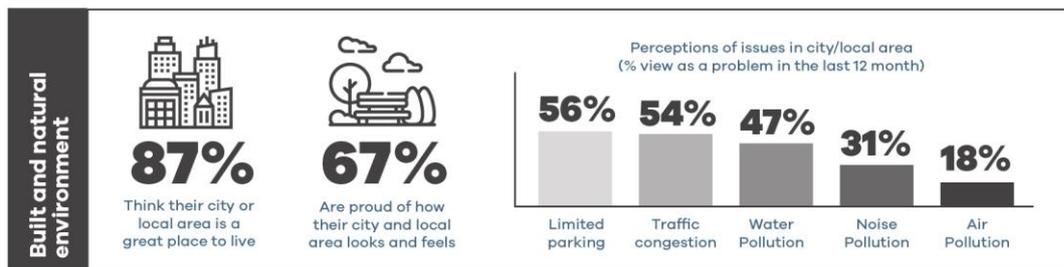
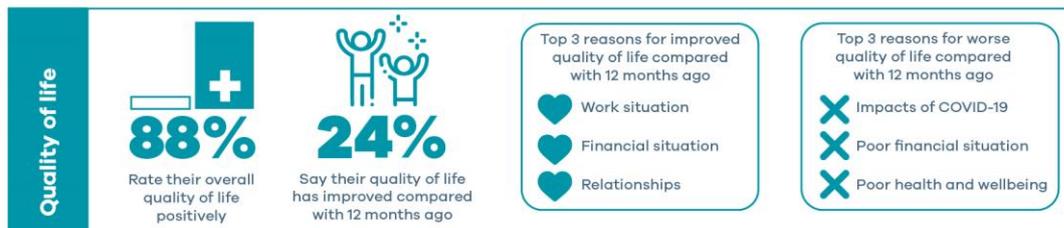
WAIKATO REGION Quality of Life

Key highlights 2020



The 2020 Quality of life survey measures people's perceptions of several aspects related to quality of life.

A random selection of residents were invited to participate either online or via hardcopy questionnaire. The Waikato Survey was completed by 1,206 people aged 18 years and over between 23 September and 29 November 2020.



Source: Quality of Life Survey conducted by Nielsen, 2020

Health & Wellbeing

79%
Rate their overall health positively

35%
Were physically active on 5 or more days in the past week

25%
Always/most of the time experience stress with a negative effect

91%
Have someone to rely on for practical and emotional support during a difficult time

Crime & Safety

62%
Feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark

Perceptions of issues in city / local area (% view as a problem in the last 12 months)

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Theft and burglary | 71% |
| Dangerous driving | 66% |
| Alcohol and drug problems | 55% |
| Vandalism | 54% |
| People begging on the streets | 45% |
| Racism or discrimination | 43% |
| People you feel unsafe around | 42% |
| People sleeping rough | 41% |

Community, culture & social networks

Believe a sense of community in neighbourhood is important **71%**

Feel a sense of community in their neighbourhood **56%**

Top 3 social networks and groups

- Online social networks
- Clubs and societies
- Professional/ work networks

54% Never or rarely feel isolated

47% Say cultural diversity makes their city/local area a better place to live

Economic wellbeing

67% Employed (full or part time)

71% Satisfied with job

62% Satisfied with work/life balance

50% Have more than enough or enough income to cover costs of everyday needs

34% Have 'just enough' income to cover costs of everyday needs

Climate & sustainability

44% Consider sustainability and the environment when choosing what you do, buy or use

39% Worried about the impact of climate change on the future

Council process

35% Are confident in their local council's decision-making

37% Believe the public has an influence on council decision-making

3.2 Waikato regional results

This section presents detailed regional results. Selected results by age group, gender and ethnicity are presented in Section 3.3, and changes and trends over time are summarised in Section 4. A summary of the results is provided in Section 5. All results are based on weighted data to account for sample demographic differences. Indicators that are included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring initiative are **in bold**.

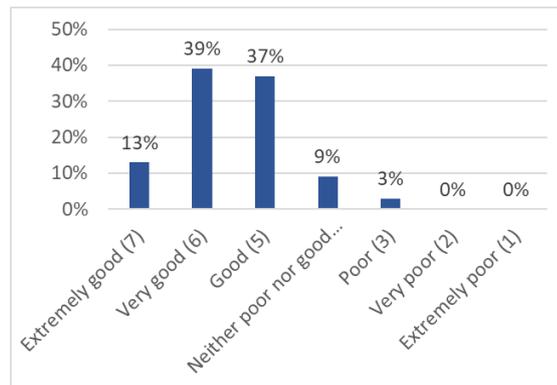
Overall quality of life

Indicator – Quality of life⁵

Most respondents (88%*) rated their overall quality of life positively, with 13% rating it as 'extremely good', 39% 'very good', and 37% 'good'.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 1: Overall quality of life



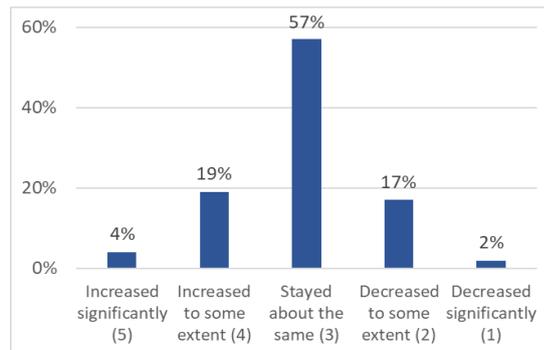
Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Quality of life vs 12 months ago

Around one-quarter of respondents (24%*) felt their quality of life had improved over the past year, while 19% felt their quality of life had decreased. The majority of respondents (57%) identified their quality of life staying about the same.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 2: Quality of life compared to 12 months ago



Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Reasons for improvement/decline

a) Reasons for improvement

Respondents' most common reasons for rating their quality of life as improved compared to 12 months before the survey related to work situation (job/vocation/prospects) (35%), positive financial situation (31%), and relationships (30%).

Figure 3: Reasons for positive change in quality of life

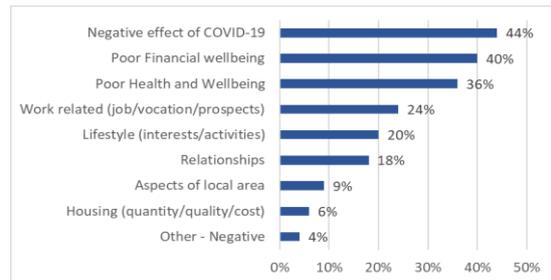


⁵ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

b) Reasons for decline

Most common reasons for those saying their quality of life had decreased compared to 12 months ago related to negative effects of COVID-19 (44%), poor financial situation (40%), and poor health and wellbeing (36%).

Figure 4: Reasons for negative change in quality of life



Base is all respondents. Percentages may add to more than 100% as respondents could mention multiple reasons.

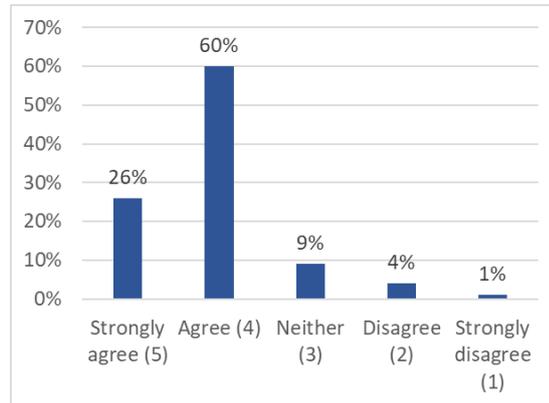
Environment (built and natural)

Indicator – City/local area is a great place to live

Most respondents (87%*) agreed their local area is a great place to live, including around a quarter (26%) who 'strongly agree' and over half (60%) who 'agree'.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 5: Perception of city/local area as a great place to live

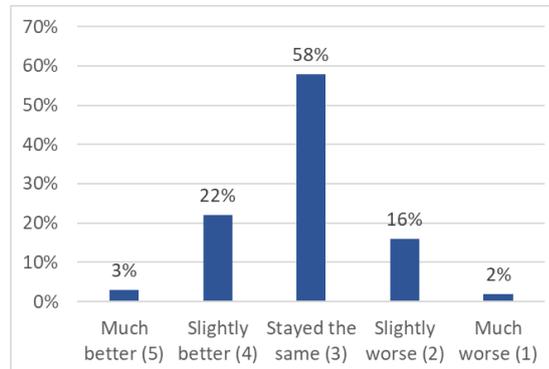


Indicator – City/local area has got better, worse or stayed the same

Around one quarter of respondents (24%*) agreed their local area improved in the last 12 months, compared to more than half (58%) who felt it had stayed the same and one in five (18%) who felt it had become worse.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 6: City/local area has got better, worse or stayed the same



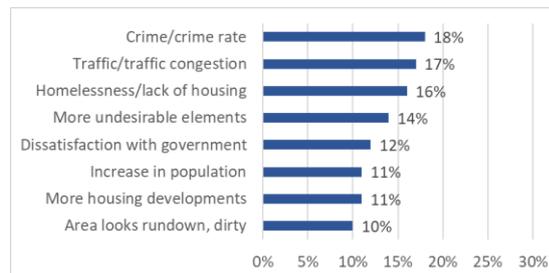
Notes: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Why worse or better as a place to live

a) Why worse as a place to live

Respondents' most common reasons for feeling their local area had become worse in the last 12 months related to crime/crime rate has increased (18%), more traffic/traffic congestion (17%), homelessness/lack of suitable, affordable housing (16%), and more undesirable elements (including gangs/youths loitering) (14%).

Figure 7: Why worse as a place to live



Notes: See below.

b) Why better as a place to live

Respondents' most common reasons for feeling their local area had become better in the last 12 months related to good/improved/new amenities such as shops, malls, movie theatres, libraries, doctors, hospital etc (23%), good recreational facilities/lots of things to do (14%) and building developments/renovations (14%).

Figure 8: Why better as a place to live

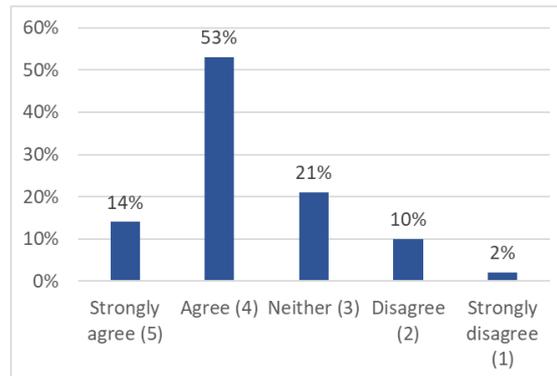


Base is all respondents. Percentages may add to more than 100% as respondents could mention multiple reasons.

Indicator – Sense of pride in city/local area⁶

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) agreed they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels.

Figure 9: Sense of pride in city/local area



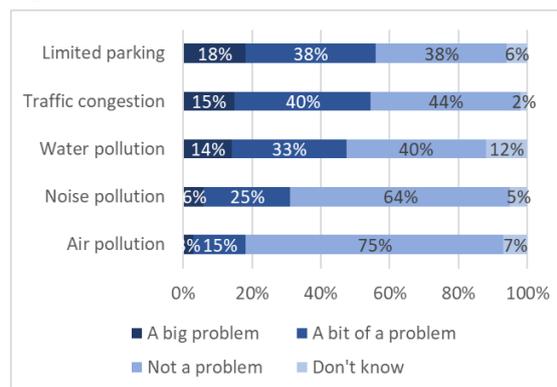
Indicator – Problems in the last 12 months

Respondents were asked to what extent various issues had been a problem in their local area in the last 12 months. Results for five issues relating to the natural and built environment are reported in this section. Results for other issues are reported in the Crime and Safety section.

Issues most frequently identified as being either a big problem or a bit of a problem were limited parking (56%), traffic congestion (54%*), and water pollution including in streams, rivers, lakes and sea (47%).

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 10: Problems in the last 12 months



Note: Not all sum to 100% due to rounding.

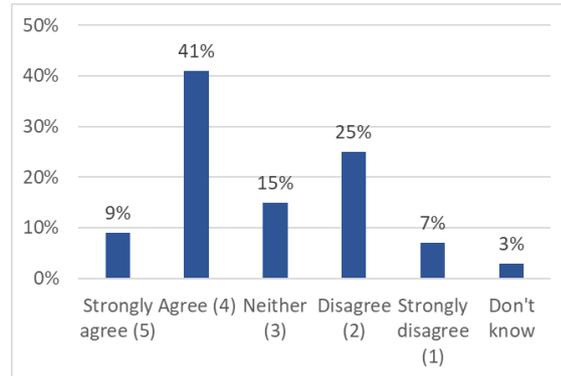
⁶ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

Housing

Indicator – Affordable

Half of all respondents (50%) agreed or strongly agreed that their current housing costs were affordable in terms of aspects such as rent or mortgage, rates, house insurance and house maintenance. Around one-third (32%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that their housing costs are affordable.

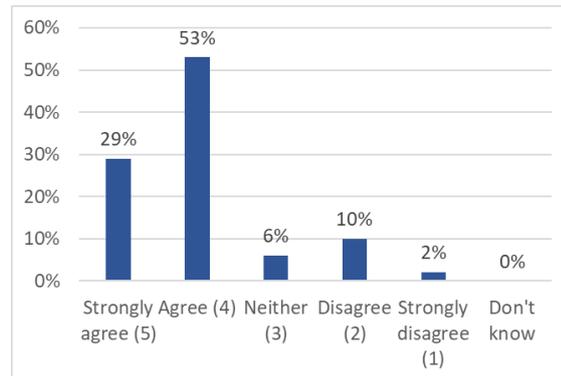
Figure 11: Affordability of housing costs



Indicator – Home suits need

A large proportion of respondents (82%) agreed or strongly agreed that the type of home they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.

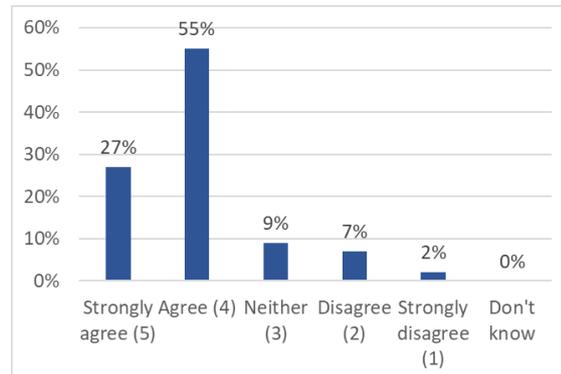
Figure 12: Home suits needs



Indicator – Area/neighbourhood suits needs

Four out of five respondents (81%*) agreed the general area or neighbourhood their home is in suits their needs and the needs of others in their household.

Figure 13: Area/neighbourhood suits needs

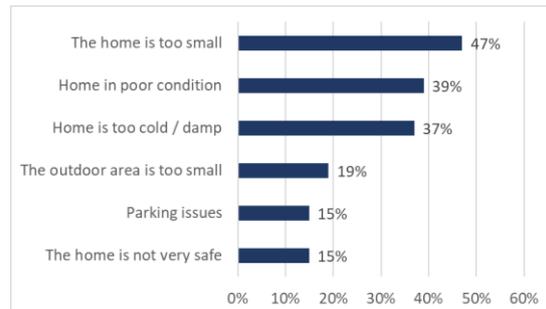


* percentages do not add due to rounding

Indicator – Why disagree or neutral regarding suitability of home

When asked why they disagreed or were neutral regarding the suitability of their home, the most common responses were that the home is too small (e.g. not enough living space or bedrooms) (47%), in poor condition / needs maintenance (39%), and/or too cold / damp (37%).

Figure 14: Why disagree or neutral regarding suitability of home

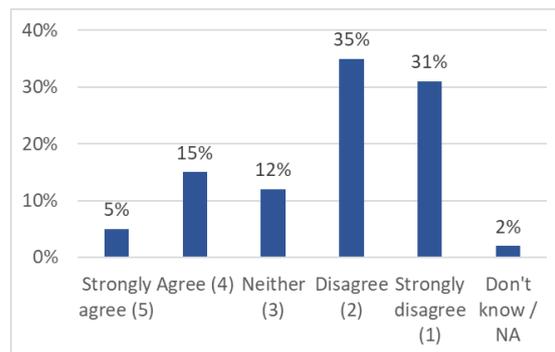


Note: Base is all respondents who disagreed or were neutral regarding the suitability of their home. Percentages may add to more than 100% as respondents could mention multiple reasons.

Indicator – Home has a problem with damp or mould

One-fifth of respondents (20%) agreed or strongly agreed when asked whether they experienced problems with damp or mould in their home during winter. The majority of respondents (66%) disagreed or strongly disagreed when asked whether they experienced problems with damp or mould.

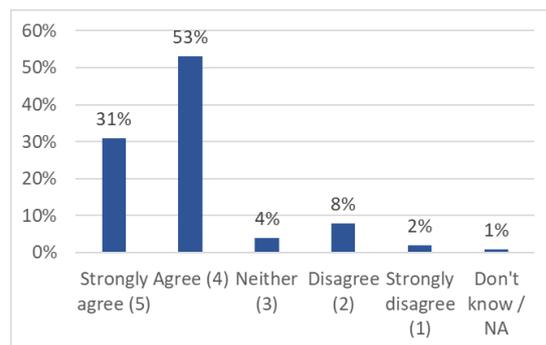
Figure 15: Home has a problem with damp or mould



Indicator – Heating system keeps home warm while in use

Most respondents (85%*) agreed their heating system keeps their home warm when in use during winter. A small percentage (10%) of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their heating system keeps their home warm when in use during winter.

Figure 16: Heating system keeps home warm while in use



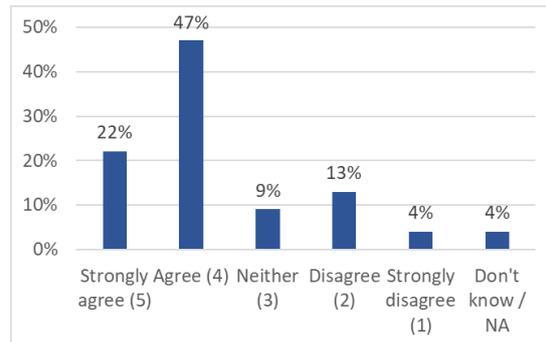
Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Indicator – Can afford to heat my home properly

Around two-thirds of respondents (69%) agreed they can afford to heat their home properly during winter. Nearly one in five (18%*) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they can afford to heat their home properly in winter.

Figure 17: Can afford to heat home properly



Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

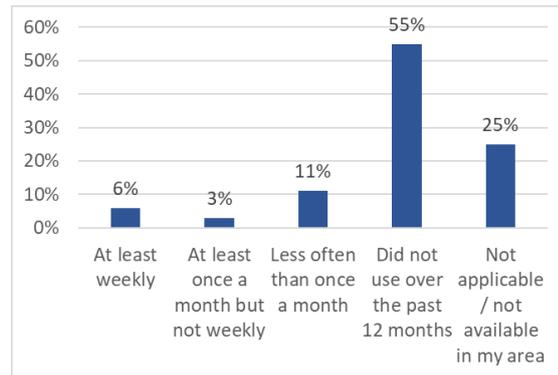
Public transport

Indicator – Frequency of use of public transport

Around 6% of respondents had used public transport at least weekly during the previous 12 months.

Over half (55%) had not used public transport in the last 12 months and a further quarter (25%) said this question was not applicable as no public transport was available in their area.

Figure 18: Frequency of use of public transport



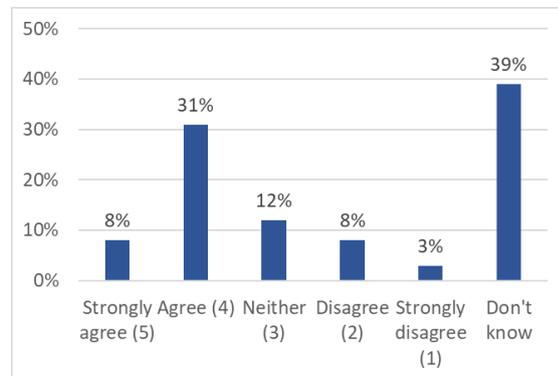
Indicators – Perceptions of public transport

Excluding the approximately one-quarter of respondents who said they have no public transport in their area, all other respondents were asked about their perceptions of public transport with respect to affordability, safety, ease of access, frequency, and reliability.

Indicator – Affordable

Less than half of respondents with access to public transport (39%) agreed or strongly agreed it was affordable. There were 39% of respondents with access to public transport who said they did not know if it was affordable.

Figure 19: Affordability of public transport

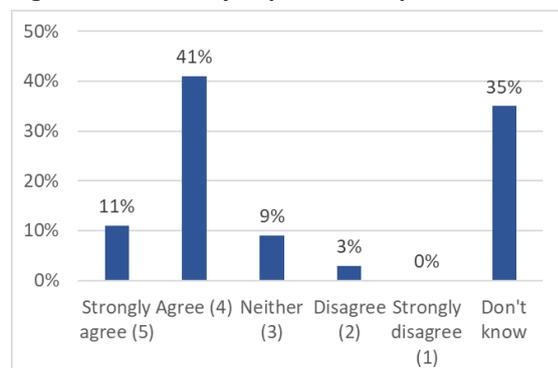


Notes: Denominator is all respondents who had access to public transport (excluding not answered). Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Safe

Around half of respondents with access to public transport respondents (52%) agreed or strongly agreed it was safe. Only 4%* disagreed or strongly disagreed. There were 35% of respondents with access to public transport who said they did not know if it was safe.

Figure 20: Safety of public transport



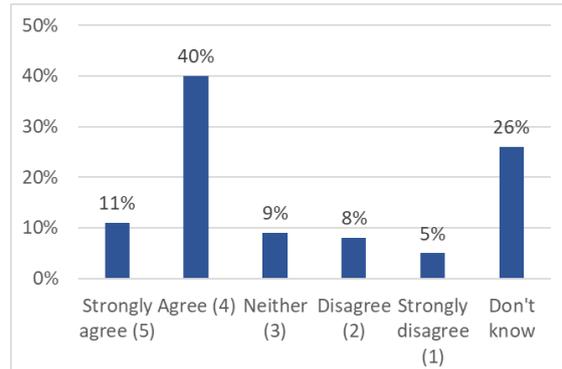
Notes: Denominator is all respondents who had access to public transport (excluding not answered). Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Indicator – Easy to get to

Around half of respondents with access to public transport (51%) agreed or strongly agreed it was easy to get to. There were 26% of respondents with access to public transport who said they did not know if it was easy to access.

Figure 21: Ease of access to public transport

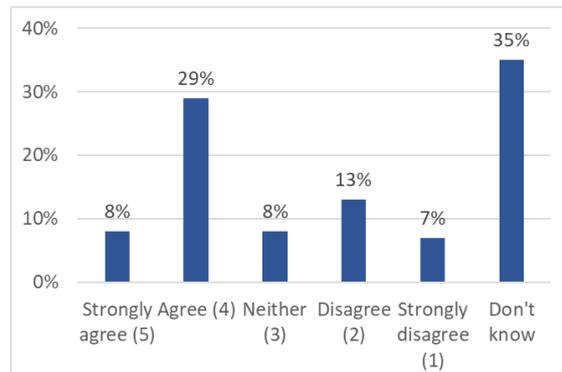


Notes: Denominator is all respondents who had access to public transport (excluding not answered). Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Frequent

Less than half of respondents with access to public transport (37%) agreed or strongly agreed it was frequent. There were 35% of respondents with access to public transport who said they did not know if it was frequent.

Figure 22: Frequency of public transport

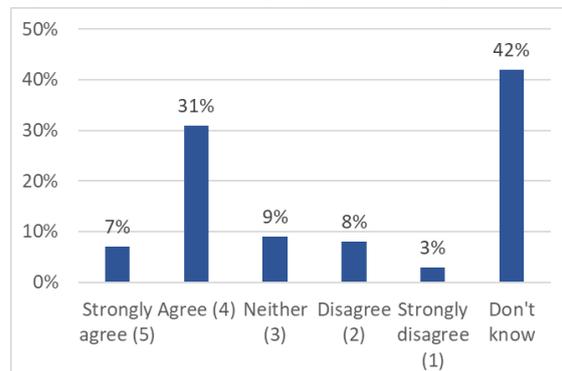


Note: Denominator is all respondents who had access to public transport (excluding not answered).

Indicator – Reliable

Two-fifths of respondents with access to public transport (38%) agreed or strongly agreed it was reliable (i.e. comes when it says it will). There were 42% of respondents with access to public transport who said they did not know if it was reliable.

Figure 23: Reliability of public transport



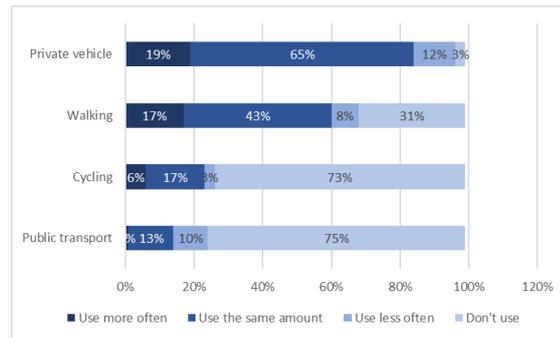
Note: Denominator is all respondents who had access to public transport (excluding not answered).

Indicator – COVID-19 changes to transport use

The 2020 survey asked all respondents whether COVID-19 had changed their use of transport.

Around one-fifth (19%) said that they used a private vehicle more often due to COVID-19, while 12% said they used a private vehicle less often and 65% said they used a private vehicle the same amount as usual.

Figure 24: COVID-19 changes to transport use



Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

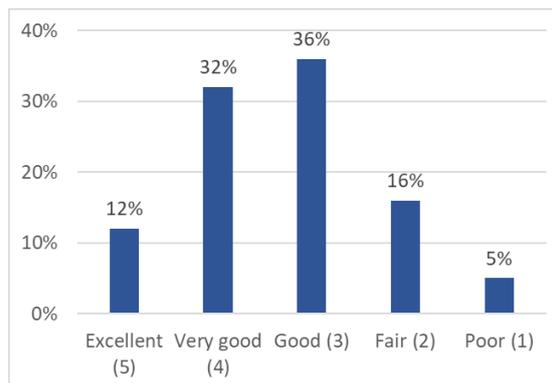
Health and wellbeing

Indicator – Overall health⁷

Across the Waikato region, four in five respondents (79%*) rated their overall physical and mental health positively. This included 12% who rated their health as 'excellent', 32% 'very good', and 36% 'good'.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 25: General rating of health

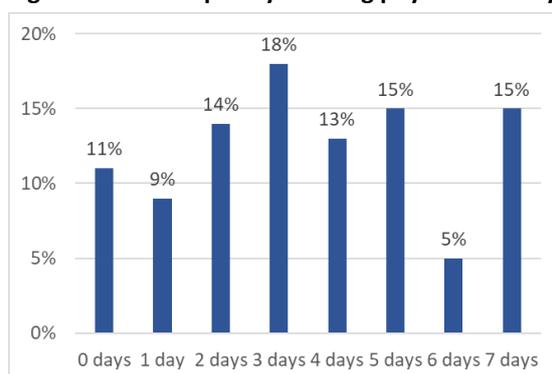


Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Frequency of doing physical activity^{8,9}

When respondents were asked how many of the previous seven days they had been physically active, around one-third (35%) said they had been active five or more days. One in ten (11%) said they had not been active on any days in the previous week.

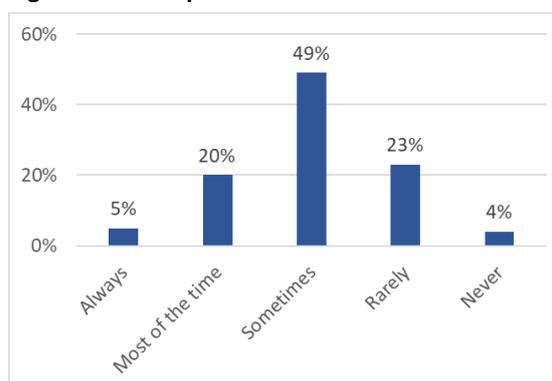
Figure 26: Frequency of doing physical activity



Indicator – Experienced stress

One quarter of respondents (25%) said they always or most of the time experienced stress that had a negative impact on them, while a similar number (27%) rarely or never experienced this.

Figure 27: Experienced stress



Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

⁷ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

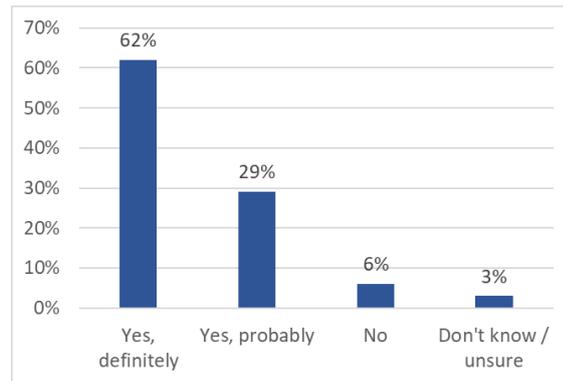
⁸ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

⁹ In the survey questionnaire, 'active' was defined as 15 minutes or more of vigorous activity (an activity which made it a lot harder to breathe than normal), or 30+ minutes of moderate exercise (e.g. an activity that makes you breathe harder than normal, such as brisk walking).

Indicator – Availability of support

When respondents were asked about whether they felt they had availability of support 62% answered with 'yes, definitely', 29% answered 'yes, probably', 6% answered 'no', and 3% answered 'don't know/unsure'.

Figure 28: Availability of support

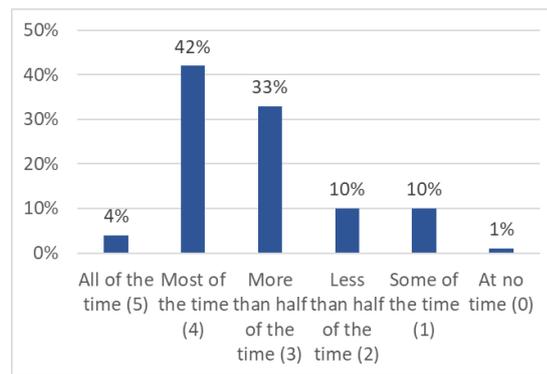


Indicator – Emotional Wellbeing

a) I have felt cheerful and in good spirits

When asked to what extent they felt cheerful or in good spirits over the last two weeks, 4% said all of the time, 42% most of the time, 33% more than half the time, 10% less than half the time, 10% some of the time, and 1% at no time.

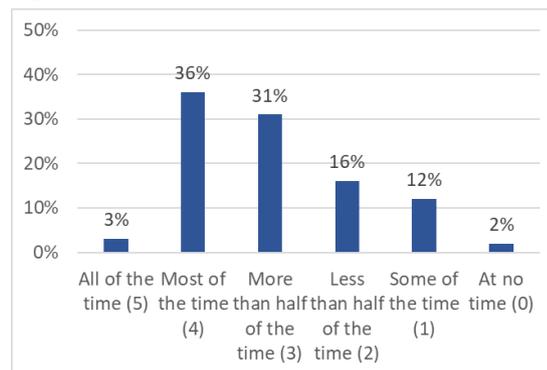
Figure 29: I have felt cheerful and in good spirits



b) I have felt calm and relaxed

When asked to what extent they felt calm and relaxed over the last two weeks, 3% said all of the time, 36% most of the time, 31% more than half the time, 16% less than half the time, 12% some of the time, and 2% at no time.

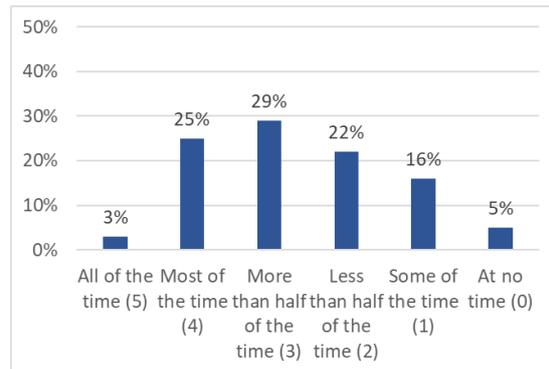
Figure 30: I have felt calm and relaxed



c) I have felt active and vigorous

When asked to what extent they felt active and vigorous over the last two weeks, 3% said all of the time, 25% most of the time, 29% more than half the time, 22% less than half the time, 16% some of the time, and 5% at no time.

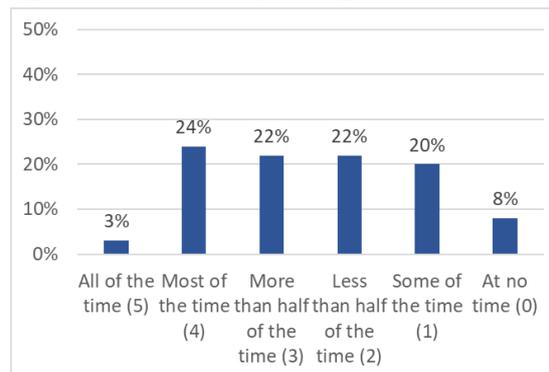
Figure 31: I have felt active and vigorous



d) I woke up feeling fresh and rested

When asked to what extent they woke up feeling fresh and rested over the last two weeks, 3% said all of the time, 24% most of the time, 22% more than half the time, 22% less than half the time, 20% some of the time, and 8% at no time.

Figure 32: I woke up feeling fresh and rested

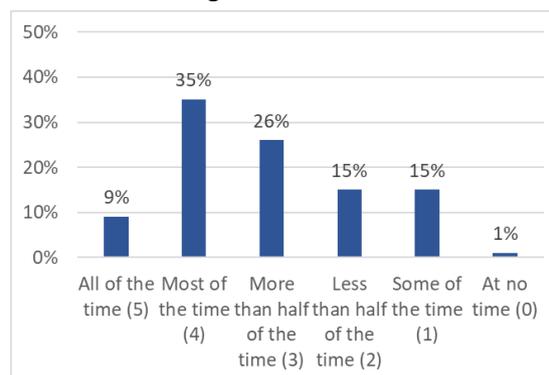


Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

e) My daily life has been filled with things that interest me

When asked to what extent their daily life had been filled with things that interest them over the last two weeks, 9% said all of the time, 35% most of the time, 26% more than half the time, 15% less than half the time, 15% some of the time, and 1% at no time.

Figure 33: My daily life has been filled with things that interest me



Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Crime and safety

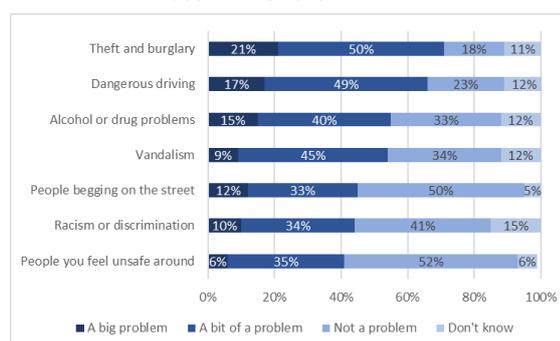
Indicator – Problems of crime and safety in the last 12 months

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived various possible issues had been a problem in their local area in the last 12 months.

Around one-fifth (21%) perceived theft and burglary to a big problem, and a further 50% thought it was a bit of a problem. Similarly, 17% of respondents perceived dangerous driving to be a big problem, and a further 49% thought it was a bit of a problem.

At the other end of the scale, 52% of respondents felt that people you feel unsafe around was not a problem, 50% felt that people begging on the street was not a problem, and 41% felt that racism or discrimination was not a problem.

Figure 34: Problems of crime and safety in the last 12 months

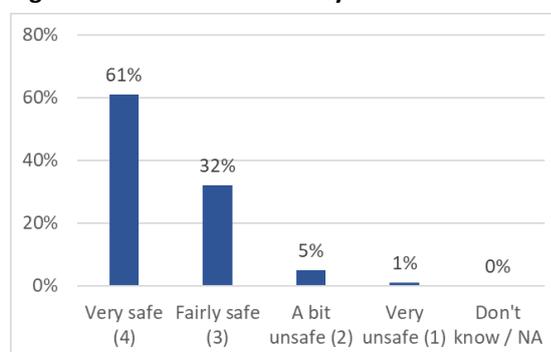


Note: Not all sum to 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Perceived safety in home after dark

More than nine in ten respondents (93%) reported that they felt very or fairly safe in their home after dark.

Figure 35: Perceived safety in home after dark

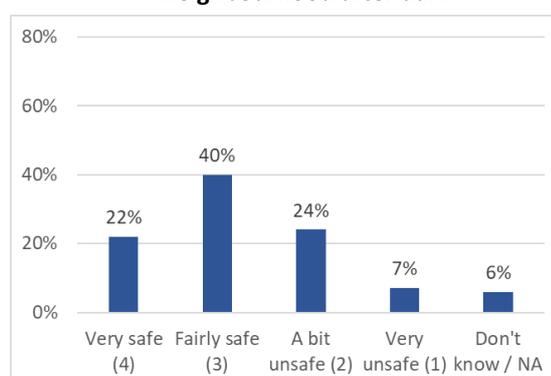


Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark¹⁰

Over three-fifths of respondents (62%) felt very or fairly safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark while 31% felt a bit or very unsafe.

Figure 36: Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark



Note: Sums to less than 100% due to rounding.

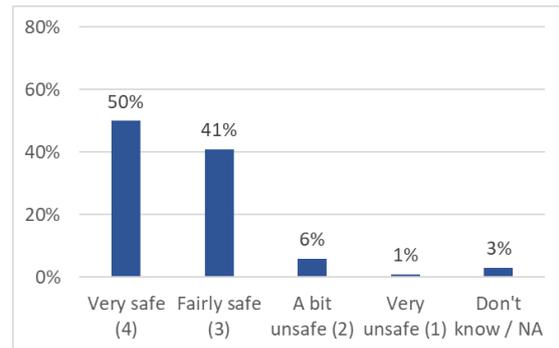
¹⁰ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

Indicator – Perceived safety in city centre during the day

Nine in ten respondents (90%*) felt very or fairly safe in their city centre during the day.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 37: Perceived safety in city centre during day

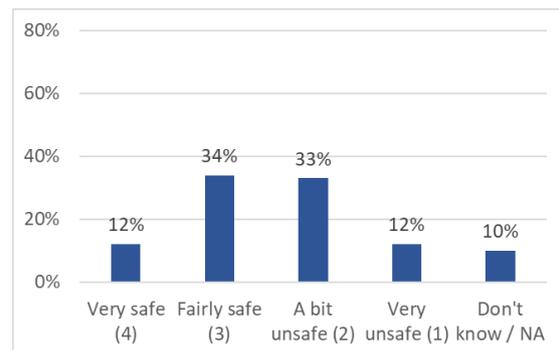


Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Perceived safety in city centre after dark

Less than half of respondents (46%) indicated feeling very or fairly safe in their city centre after dark, while a similar number (45%) felt a bit or very unsafe.

Figure 38: Perceived safety in city centre after dark



Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

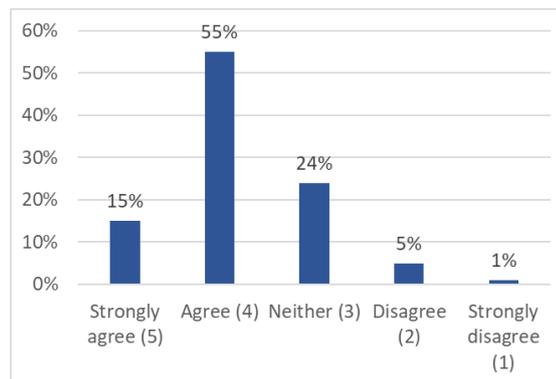
Community, culture, and social networks

Indicator – Importance of sense of community

Almost three quarters of respondents (71%*) considered it important to feel a sense of community with people in their neighbourhood.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 39: Importance of sense of community

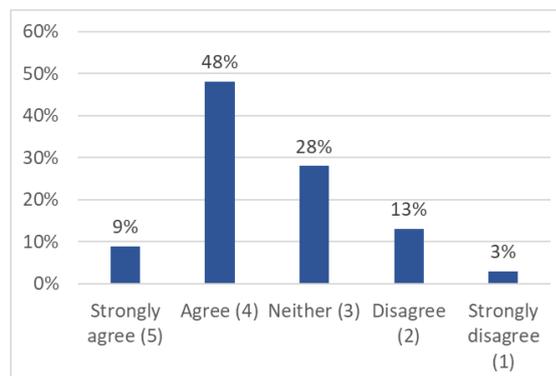


Indicator – Feel sense of community¹¹

More than half of respondents (56%*) agreed they experienced a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 40: Sense of community experienced

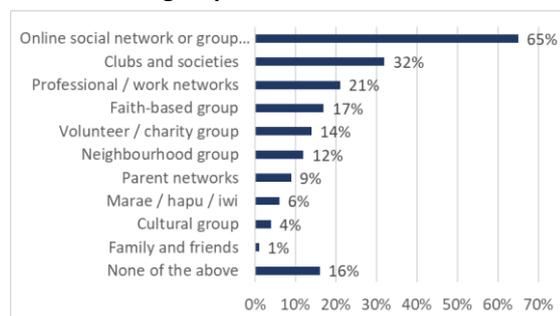


Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Social networks belonged to

Online networks were by far the most common social networks (65%), followed by clubs and societies (32%) and professional/work networks (21%).

Figure 41: Participation in social networks and groups



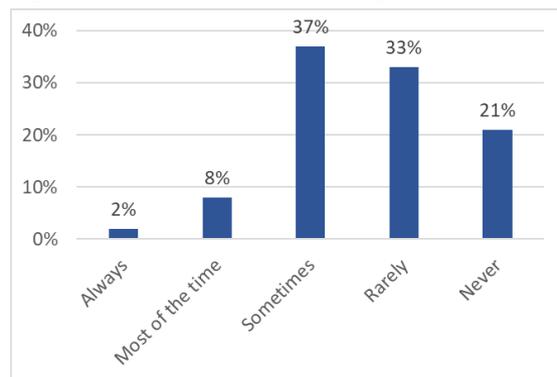
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

¹¹ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

Indicator – Feeling of isolation

One in ten respondents (10%) said they felt lonely or isolated either always or most of the time in the past 12 months. Over half (54%) said they had never or rarely felt isolated.

Figure 42: Frequency of feeling isolated

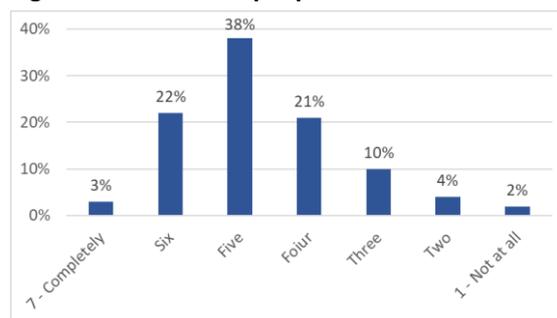


Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Social trust

Respondents were asked whether people can usually be trusted; or you cannot be too careful. The results show almost two thirds of respondents (63%) agreed people can usually, almost always or completely be trusted.

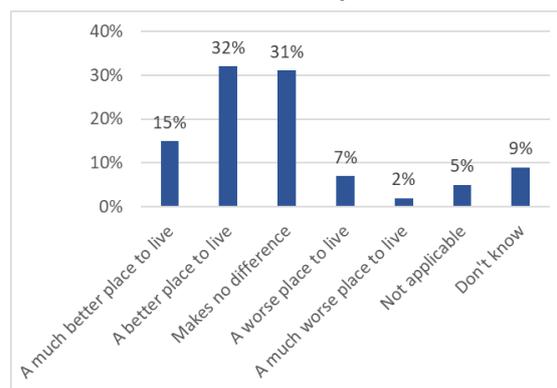
Figure 43: Trust in people



Indicator – Impact of greater cultural diversity¹²

Almost half of respondents (47%) considered that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries made their city or local area a better place to live. One-third (31%) said it makes no difference, and less than one in ten (8%*) thought this makes their city or local area a worse place to live.

Figure 44: Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity



Note: Sums to more than 100% due to rounding.

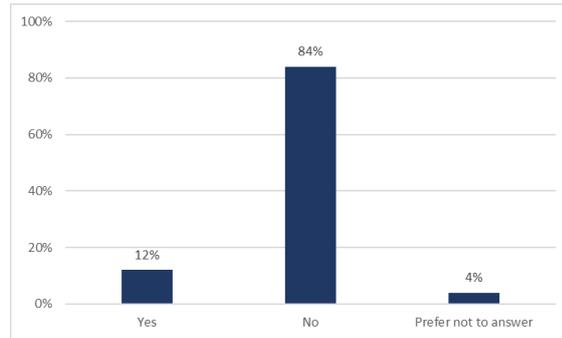
* percentages do not add due to rounding

¹² This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

Indicator – Experienced prejudice

The 2020 survey asked about people’s personal experience of prejudice, intolerance, or discrimination. More than one in ten respondents (12%) said they had personally experienced prejudice in the last three months. The majority of respondents (84%) said they had not personally experienced prejudice in the last three months.

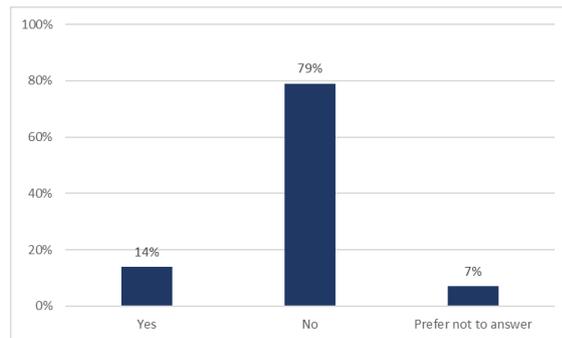
Figure 45: Experienced prejudice



Indicator – Witnessed prejudice

The 2020 survey also asked whether respondents had witnessed someone showing prejudice, intolerance, or discrimination. More than one in ten respondents (14%) said they had witnessed someone showing prejudice in the last three months. The majority of respondents (79%) said they had not witnessed someone showing prejudice in the last three months.

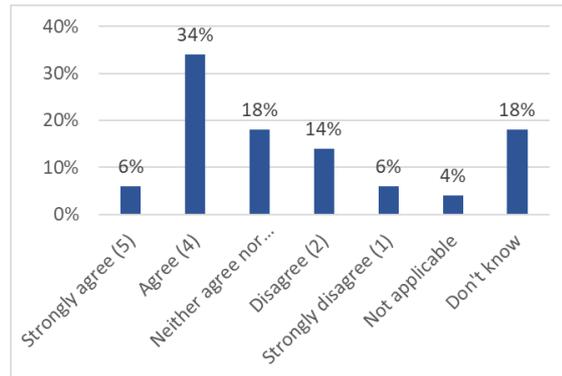
Figure 46: Witnessed prejudice



Indicator – Broad range of arts and activities

Around two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree their local area has a broad range of arts and artistic activities.

Figure 47: Broad range of arts and activities



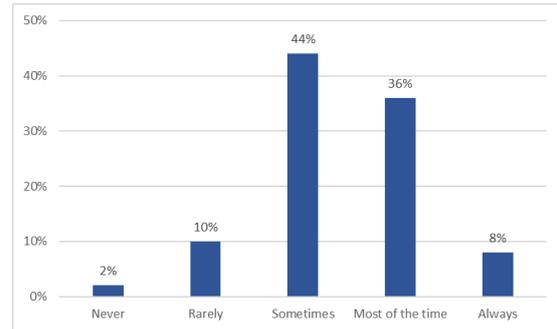
Climate change and sustainability

Indicator – Consider sustainability when buying

The 2020 survey asked ‘In your daily life, to what extent do you consider sustainability and the environment when you make choices about what you do, buy or use?’ Around two-fifths of respondents (44%) considered sustainability most of the time or always when making buying decision, 44% of respondents answered ‘sometimes’, while 13%* rarely or never considered this.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

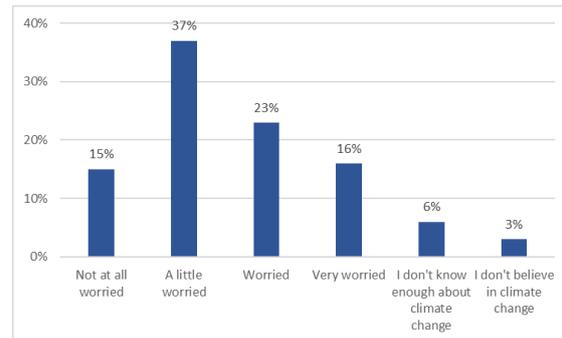
Figure 48: Consider sustainability when buying



Indicator – Worried about climate change

The 2020 survey asked ‘To what extent do you personally worry about the impact of climate change on the future’. The results showed around half (52%) were not particularly worried, 6% said they did not know enough to answer the question, a further 3% did not believe in climate change, and the remaining two-fifths (39%) were worried or very worried.

Figure 49: Worried about climate change



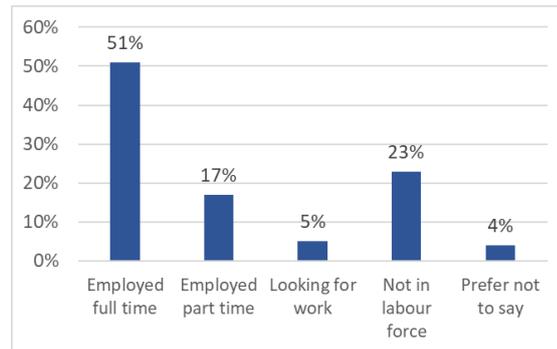
Economic wellbeing

Indicator – Employment/Labour force status

Two thirds of respondents (67%*) were employed in either full-time (51%) or part-time (17%) work. A further 5% were currently seeking work, 23% were not in paid employment and not looking for paid employment (e.g. full-time parent, retired person), and 4% said they would 'prefer not say'.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 50: Employment/Labour force status

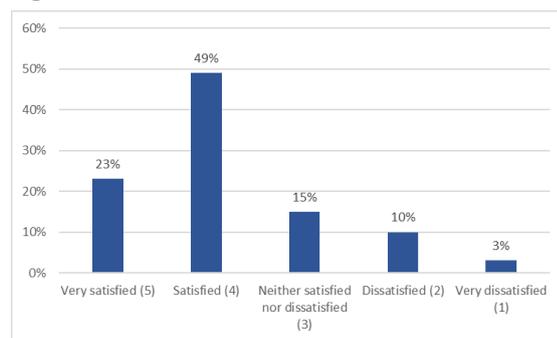


Indicator – Job satisfaction

More than two thirds of respondents who were in paid employment (71%*) said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job, while around one in ten (13%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

* percentages do not add due to rounding

Figure 51: Job satisfaction

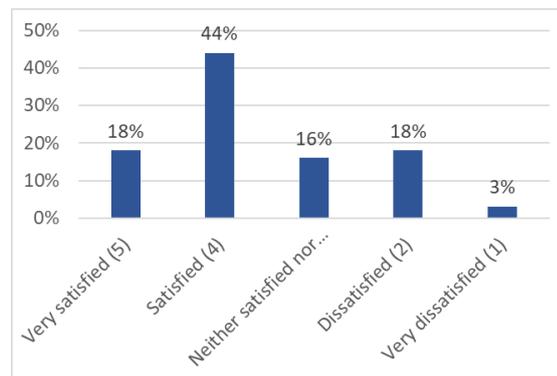


Notes: Base is all respondents in paid employment

Indicator – Balance between work and other aspects of life

Around six in ten respondents who were employed (62%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life, while 22% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Figure 52: Balance between work and other aspects of life

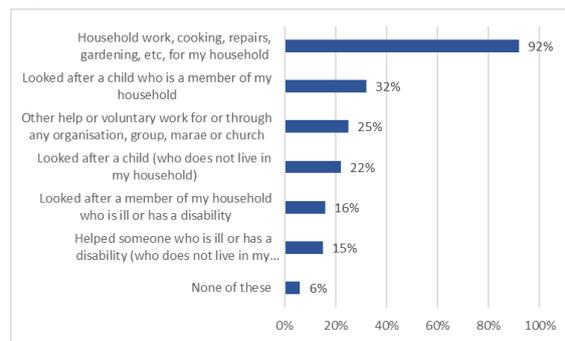


Notes: Base is all respondents in paid employment. Percentages sum to less than 100% due to rounding.

Indicator – Unpaid work in the last 4 weeks

Most respondents (92%) had done unpaid household work over the last 4 weeks. In addition, 32% said they had looked after a child who was a member of their household, and 25% did other help or voluntary work. Only 6% of respondents said they had done no unpaid work in last 4 weeks.

Figure 53: Unpaid work in the last 4 weeks

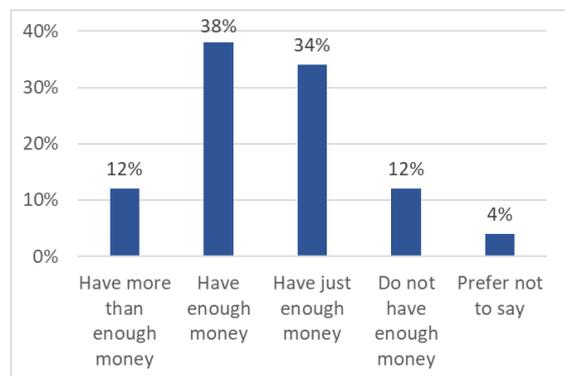


Notes: Base is all respondents (excluding not answered). Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

Indicator – How well income meets everyday needs

Half the respondents (50%) said they have enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs for things such as accommodation, food, clothing, and other necessities. Around one third (34%) said they have 'just enough money', and more than one in ten (12%) felt they did not have enough money.

Figure 54: How well income meets everyday needs

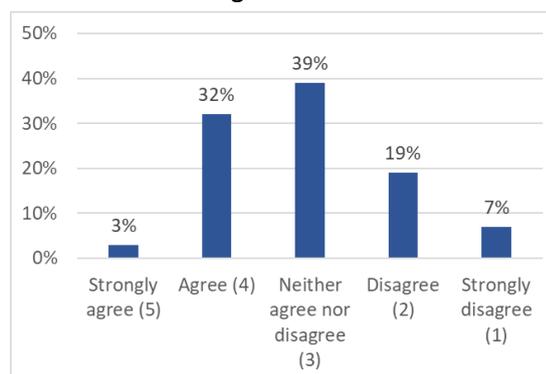


Council decision-making processes

Indicator – Confidence in Council decision-making

Around one third of respondents (35%) said they have confidence their local Council makes decisions in the best interests of their area, while 26% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

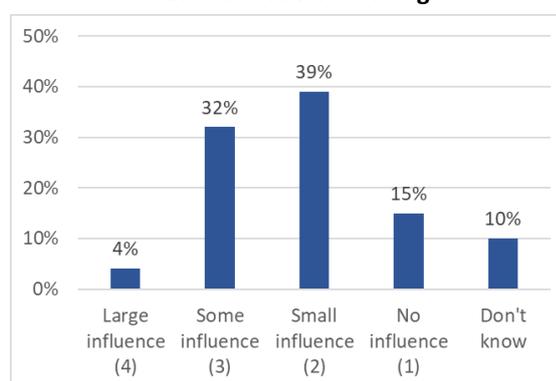
Figure 55: Confidence in Council decision-making



Indicator – Perception of public's influence on Council decision making¹³

Around one third of respondents (37%*) said the public have 'large' or 'some' influence over the decisions their local Council makes, while 39% perceive the public to have a small influence and 15% no influence.

Figure 56: Perception of public's influence on Council decision making



* percentages do not add due to rounding

¹³ This indicator is included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring programme.

3.3 Waikato Progress Indicators results by age, gender and ethnicity

This sub-section provides a summary of statistically significant results by age group, gender, and ethnicity at the regional level for the eight 2020 survey items that are included in the Waikato Progress Indicators (Section 1.4). The purpose of this supplementary information is to help inform policy makers. Due to smaller sample sizes these results have a larger sampling error than the overall regional results.

3.3.1 By age group

Respondents **aged under 25** ($N = 147$) were:

- More likely to agree that they feel unsafe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark (47% compared to 31% for all ages combined); and less likely agree that they feel safe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark (51% compared to 62% for all ages combined).
- More likely to disagree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (25% compared to 16% for all ages combined); and less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (33% compared to 56% for all ages combined).
- Less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (50% compared to 67% for all ages combined).
- Less likely to agree that the public have no/small influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (43% compared to 54% for all ages combined).

Respondents **aged 25 to 49** ($N = 485$) were:

- More likely to disagree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (21% compared to 16% for all ages combined); and less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (51% compared to 56% for all ages combined).
- Less likely to agree they had been physically active on five or more of the past seven days (29% compared to 35% for all ages combined).
- More likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live (53% compared to 47% for all ages combined).

Respondents **aged 50 to 64** ($N = 322$) were:

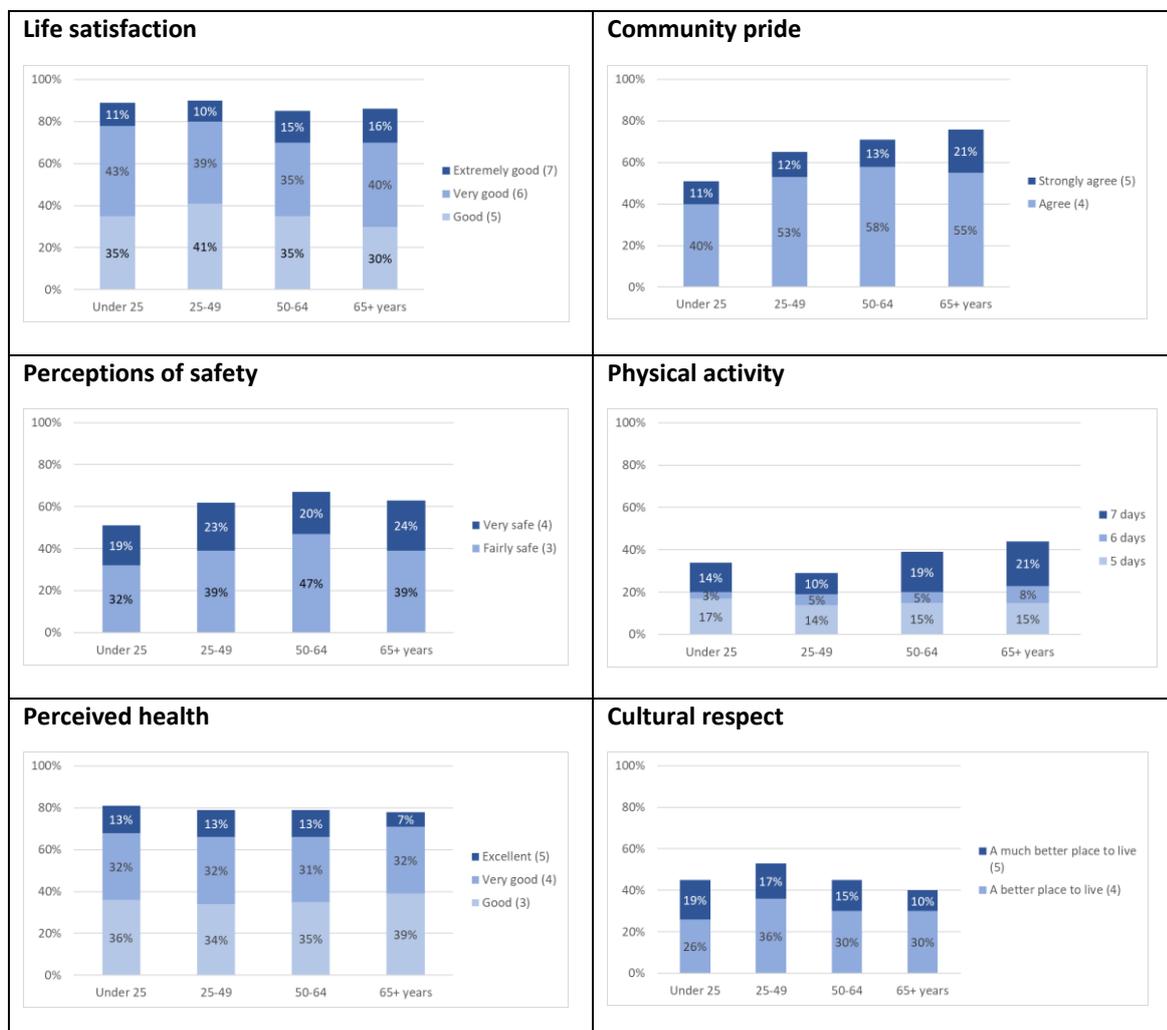
- Less likely to disagree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (11% compared to 16% for all ages combined).

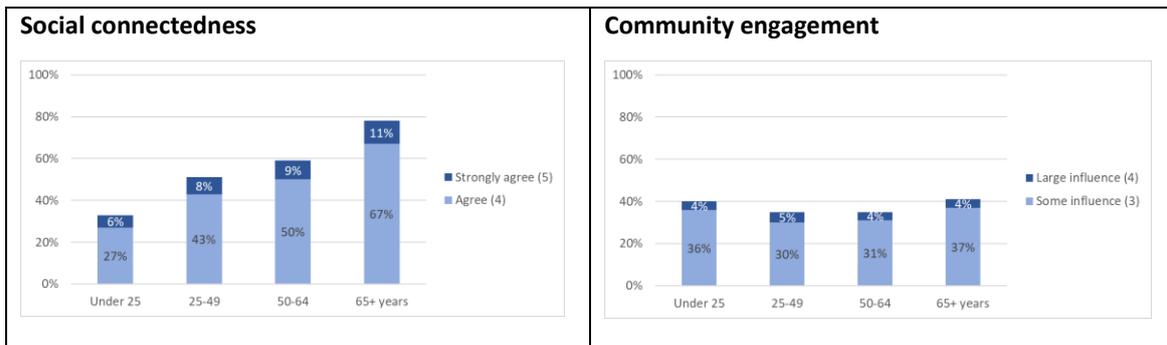
Respondents **aged 65 plus** ($N = 252$) were:

- Less likely to agree that they feel unsafe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark (23% compared to 31% for all ages combined).

- More likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (78% compared to 56% for all ages combined); and less likely to disagree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (5% compared to 16% for all ages combined).
- More likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels (77% compared to 67% for all ages combined); and less likely to disagree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels (7% compared to 12% for all ages combined).
- More likely to agree they had been physically active on five of the past seven days (43% compared to 35% for all ages combined).
- Less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live (40% compared to 47% for all ages combined).

Figure 57: Waikato Progress Indicators results by age group





3.3.2 By gender

This sub-section provides a summary of statistically significant results by gender at the regional level for the Waikato Progress Indicators (2020 survey results).

Female respondents ($N = 647$) were:

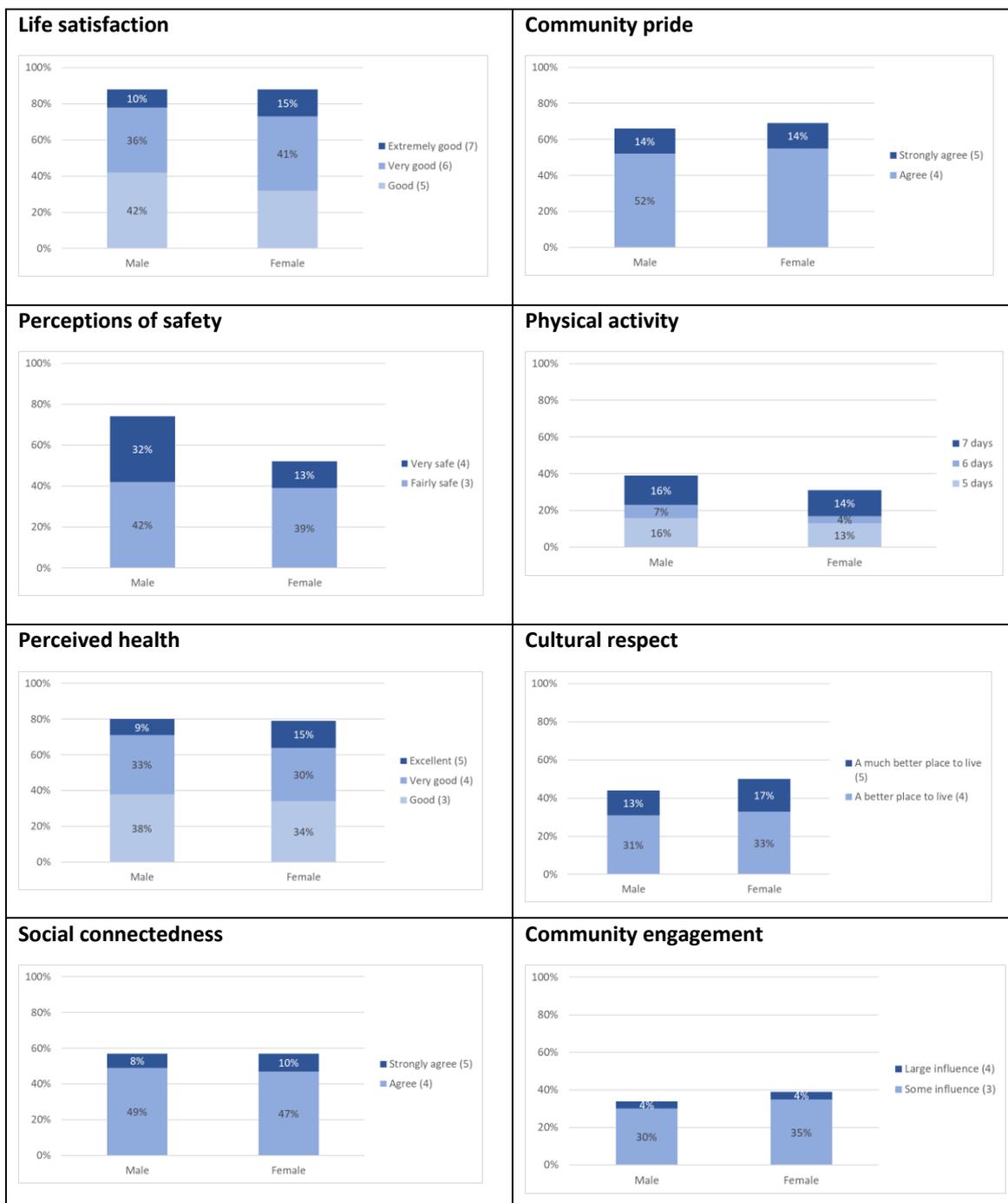
- More likely to agree that their quality of life was ‘very good’ or ‘extremely good’ (57% compared to 52% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that they feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (41% compared to 31% for all respondents); and less likely to agree that they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (51% compared to 62% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that their overall health is ‘excellent’ (15% compared to 12% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree they had been physically active on none of the past seven days (14% compared to 11%); and less likely to agree they had been physically active on five or more of the past seven days (31% compared to 35% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live (51% compared to 47% for all ages combined).
- Less likely to agree that the public have no influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (12% compared to 15% for all ages combined).

Male respondents ($N = 551$) were:

- Less likely to agree that their quality of life was ‘very good’ or ‘extremely good’ (46% compared to 52% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (74% compared to 62% for all respondents); and less likely to agree that they feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (21% compared to 31% for all respondents).
- Less likely to agree that their overall health is ‘excellent’ (9% compared to 12% for all respondents).

- More likely to agree they had been physically active on five or more of the past seven days (39% compared to 35% for all respondents); and less likely to agree they had been physically active on none of the past seven days (9% compared to 11% for all respondents).
- Less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a worse place to live (12% compared to 8% for all ages combined).
- More likely to agree that the public have no influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (18% compared to 15% for all ages combined).

Figure 58: Waikato Progress Indicators results by gender



3.3.3 By ethnic group

This sub-section provides a summary of statistically significant results by ethnic group at the regional level for the Waikato Progress Indicators items (2020 survey results).

Respondents who identified with the **New Zealand European ethnic group** ($N = 961$) were:¹⁴

- More likely to rate their quality of life positively (91% compared to 88% for all respondents).
- More likely to rate their overall health positively (83% compared to 79% for all respondents); and less likely to rate their overall health as being less than good (17% compared to 20% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that the public have no influence or only a small influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (58% compared to 54% for all ages combined).

Respondents who identified with the **Māori ethnic group** ($N = 330$) were:

- More likely to rate their quality of life poorly (5% compared to 3% for all respondents); and less likely to rate their quality of life positively (78% compared to 88% for all respondents).
- More likely to rate their overall health as being less than good (31% compared to 20%); and less likely to rate their overall health positively (68% compared to 79% for all respondents).

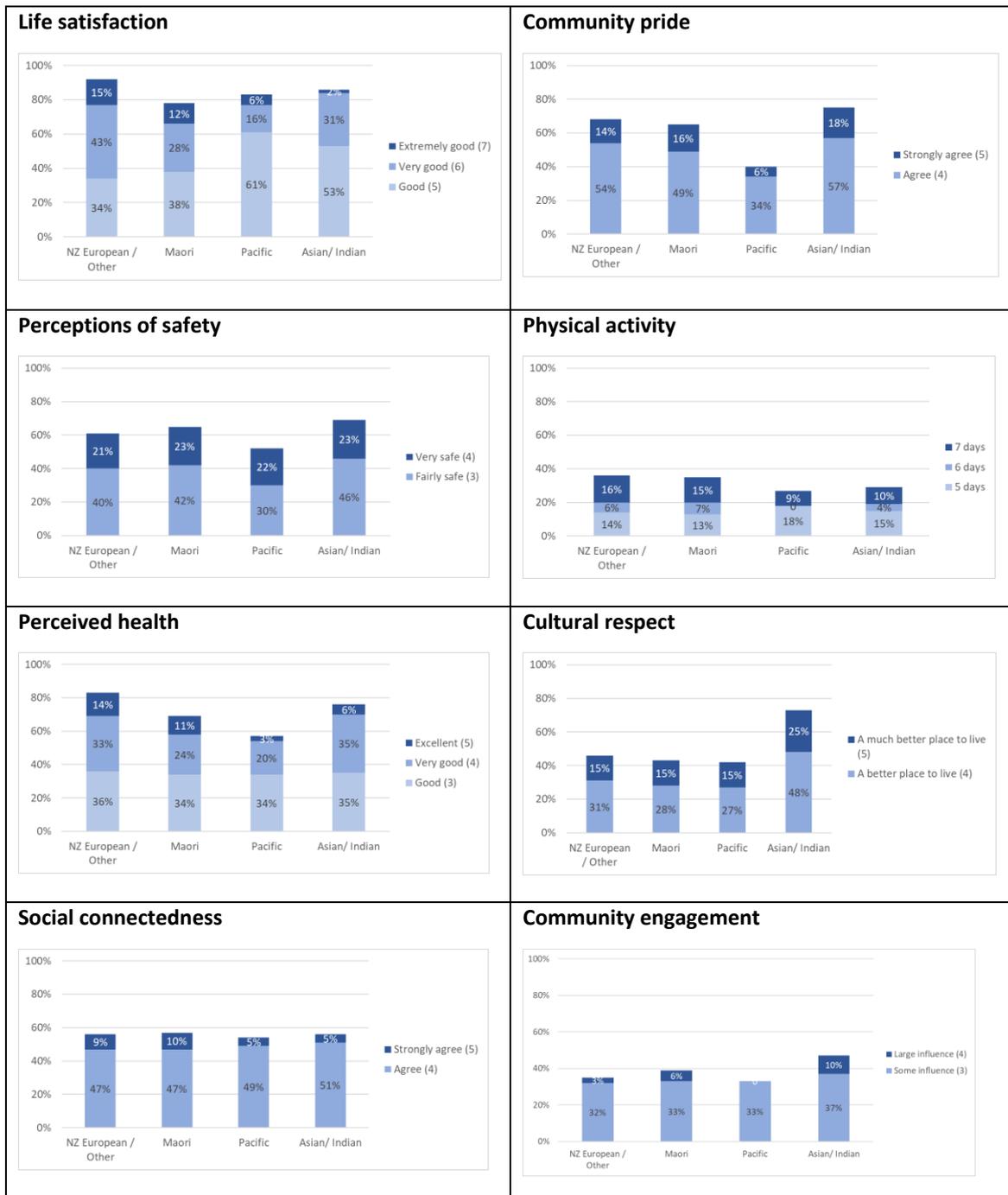
Respondents who identified with the **Pacific ethnic group** ($N = 29$) were not statistically significant from the regional average (for all ethnic groups) on any of the eight Waikato Progress Indicators. Due to large sample errors the results for this group should be interpreted with caution.

Respondents who identified with the **Asian/Indian ethnic group** ($N = 75$) were:

- More likely to report having been physically active on none of the last seven days (22% compared to 11% for all respondents).
- More likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live (73% compared to 47% for all respondents).
- Less likely to agree that the public have no influence or only a small influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (35% compared to 54% for all ages combined).

¹⁴ Due to the large number of New Zealand European / Other ethnic group respondents in the sample, even small differences in results compared to the total sample average can meet the threshold for statistical significance.

Figure 59: Waikato Progress Indicators results by ethnic group

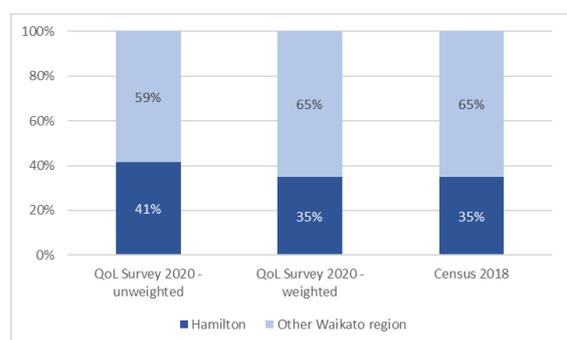


4. Waikato Progress Indicators local results

This sub-section provides a summary of statistically significant results at the local level for the eight 2020 survey items that are included in the Waikato Progress Indicators (Section 1.4). The purpose of this supplementary information is to help inform policy makers. Due to smaller sample sizes these results have a larger sampling error than the overall regional results.

The sampling error for the overall Waikato region including Hamilton was $\pm 2.6\%$ (at the 95% confidence interval) and for the city of Hamilton $\pm 4.3\%$.¹⁵ For other districts, the disaggregated survey results (cross-tabs) are less reliable, with sampling errors ranging from approximately $\pm 8\%$ (Waipa) to $\pm 16\%$. High sampling errors were associated with the South Waikato, Ōtorohanga, Waitomo and Hauraki districts.

Figure 60: Sample size for Hamilton and other Waikato region (vs Census results)



Source: Quality of Life Survey 2020 and Statistics New Zealand Census 2018

Table 2: Sample size by Territorial Authority in the Waikato region – unweighted

| Territorial Authority | Sample No. | Sample % | 2018 Census |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Hamilton: | 500 | 41% | 30% |
| <i>West Ward</i> | 203 | 17% | |
| <i>East Ward</i> | 297 | 25% | |
| Thames-Coromandel | 86 | 7% | 6% |
| Hauraki | 48 | 4% | 4% |
| Waikato | 92 | 8% | 14% |
| Matamata-Piako | 65 | 5% | 7% |
| Waipa | 135 | 11% | 10% |
| Ōtorohanga | 42 | 3% | 2% |
| South Waikato | 37 | 3% | 4% |
| Waitomo | 47 | 4% | 2% |
| Taupō | 60 | 5% | 7% |
| Rotorua | 94 | 8% | 13% |
| Total Waikato region | 1,206 | 100% | 100% |

Note: 2018 Census results relate to Territorial Authority usually resident population aged 20 years and over (including all of Rotorua District)

¹⁵ Refer to www.sphanalytics.com/sample-error-calculator/ for online calculator.

Table 3: Waikato Progress Indicators results by location (2020 Territorial Authority Summary)

| | Life satisfaction | Perceptions of safety | Perceived health | Social connectedness |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Waikato Region | 88% | 62% | 79% | 56% |
| Thames-Coromandel District | 95% | 78% | 90% | 67% |
| Hauraki District | 92% | 53% | 74% | 63% |
| Waikato District | 91% | 68% | 80% | 66% |
| Matamata-Piako District | 84% | 59% | 76% | 47% |
| Waipa District | 93% | 76% | 87% | 62% |
| Ōtorohanga District | 88% | 68% | 84% | 75% |
| South Waikato District | 82% | 40% | 66% | 59% |
| Waitomo District | 81% | 61% | 80% | 76% |
| Taupō District | 93% | 60% | 82% | 54% |
| Rotorua District | 93% | 57% | 86% | 66% |
| Hamilton West ward | 84% | 51% | 72% | 45% |
| Hamilton East ward | 86% | 63% | 79% | 49% |

| | Community pride | Physical activity | Cultural respect | Community engagement |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Waikato Region | 67% | 35% | 47% | 37% |
| Thames-Coromandel District | 64% | 33% | 47% | 40% |
| Hauraki District | 68% | 47% | 42% | 43% |
| Waikato District | 63% | 28% | 44% | 28% |
| Matamata-Piako District | 69% | 33% | 41% | 39% |
| Waipa District | 84% | 38% | 42% | 40% |
| Ōtorohanga District | 76% | 36% | 49% | 59% |
| South Waikato District | 48% | 41% | 41% | 23% |
| Waitomo District | 65% | 48% | 33% | 37% |
| Taupō District | 76% | 48% | 36% | 30% |
| Rotorua District | 62% | 43% | 35% | 25% |
| Hamilton West ward | 61% | 31% | 53% | 44% |
| Hamilton East ward | 67% | 34% | 62% | 35% |

Hamilton West ward respondents ($N = 203$) were:

- more likely to ‘neither agree nor disagree’ that they feel a sense of pride in their city/local area (28% compared to 21%); and less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in their city/local area (61% net compared to 67%)
- less likely to rate their overall health positively (72% net compared to 79%); and more likely to rate their overall health as poor/fair (28% net compared to 20%)
- more likely to report feeling unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (46% net compared to 31%); and less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (51% net compared to 62%)
- more likely to disagree that they feel a sense of community in their local area (24% net compared to 16%); and less likely to agree that they feel a sense of community in their local area (45% compared to 56%)

- more likely to agree the public has some/large influence on Council decisions (44% net compared to 37%); and less likely to agree the public has no/small influence on Council decisions (46% net compared to 54%)

Hamilton East ward respondents ($N = 297$) were:

- less likely to 'strongly agree' that they feel a sense of pride in their city/local area (9% compared to 14%)
- less likely to report feeling 'very safe' walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (17% compared to 22%); more likely to report feeling 'fairly safe' walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (46% compared to 40%); and more likely to report feeling 'very unsafe' walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (10% compared to 7%)
- more likely to disagree that they feel a sense of community in their local area (23% net compared to 16%); and less likely to agree that they feel a sense of community in their local area (49% net compared to 56%)
- more likely to report that an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures makes their city/local area a better place to live (62% net compared to 47% for the Waikato region overall); and less likely to report that an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures 'makes no difference' to their city/local area (23% compared to 31%)
- more likely to say they 'don't know' how much influence the public has on Council decisions (13% compared to 10%)

Thames-Coromandel district respondents ($N = 86$) were:

- more likely to report their quality of life as being 'extremely good' (21% compared to regional average 13%)
- more likely to 'strongly agree' they feel a sense of pride in their city/local area (27% compared to 14%)
- more likely to rate their overall health positively (90% net compared to 79%)
- more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (78% net compared to 62%)
- more likely to report that 'there are few or no different cultures and lifestyles here' (9% compared to 5%); and more likely to report that an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures makes their city/local area 'a worse place to live' (14% compared to 7%)

Hauraki district respondents ($N = 48$) were:

- more likely to report they 'prefer not to say' how they rate their overall health (2% compared to 0%)

Waikato district respondents ($N = 92$) were:

- more likely to agree that the public has no/small influence on Council decisions (66% compared to 54%)

Matamata-Piako district respondents ($N = 65$) were:

- more likely to report having been physically active on 3-4 days (but not more) over the last week (43% compared to 31%)
- more likely to report they 'don't know' how safe they feel walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (14% compared to 6%)
- more likely to report that there are few or no different cultures and lifestyles in their area (13% compared to 5%)
- less likely to agree that the public has 'no influence' on Council decisions (3% compared to 15%)

Waipa district respondents ($N = 135$) were:

- more likely to agree that they feel very/extremely good in terms of overall quality of life (63% net compared to 52% regional average)
- more likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city/local area looks and feels (84% net compared to 67%); and less likely to disagree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city/local area looks and feels (5% net compared to 12%)
- more likely to rate their overall health positively (87% net compared to 79%)
- more likely to agree they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (76% net compared to 62%); and less likely to disagree they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (17% net compared to 31%)
- less likely to disagree they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (10% compared to 16%)

Ōtorohanga district respondents ($N = 42$) were:

- more likely to report their overall quality of life was very/extremely good (72% net compared to 52% regional average)
- less likely to report feeling unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (13% net compared to 31%)
- more likely to agree they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (75% net compared to 56%)

South Waikato district respondents ($N = 37$) were:

- less likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way the city/area looks and feels (48% net compared to 67% regional average); and more likely to disagree they feel a sense of pride in the way the city/area looks and feels (24% net compared to 12%)
- more likely to report their overall health was only poor/fair (34% net compared to 20%)
- more likely to report having been physically active on none of the past seven days (22% compared to 11%)

- more likely to report feeling unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (50% net compared to 31%); and less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (40% net compared to 62%)

Waitomo district respondents ($N = 47$) were:

- more likely to report they 'prefer not to say' how they rate their overall health (2% compared to 0%)
- more likely to report having been physically active on all seven days over the past week (32% compared to 15%)
- more likely to agree they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (76% compared to 56%); and less likely to disagree they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (3% compared to 16%)
- less likely to report that an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures makes their city/local area a better place to live (33% net compared to 47%); and more likely to report that an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures makes their city/local area a worse place to live (18% net compared to 8%)
- more likely to say they felt the public had 'no influence' on Council decisions (29% compared to 15%)

Taupō district respondents ($N = 60$) were:

- more likely to report being physically active on at least five of the past seven days (48% net compared to 35%)
- more likely to report they 'don't know' if an increasing number of people with different lifestyles/cultures makes their city/local area a better or worse place to live (19% compared to 9%)

Rotorua district respondents ($N = 94$) were:

- less likely to report they felt unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (18% net compared to 31%)
- more likely to 'strongly agree' they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (17% compared to 9%)
- more likely to say there are few or no different cultures and lifestyles in their city/local area (13% compared to 5%)
- less likely to agree that the public has some/large influence on Council decisions (25% net compared to 37%)

5. Results over time – 2006 to 2020

The Waikato region participated previously in the 2006 Quality of Life Survey through a regional booster sample, and subsequently in 2016 and 2018.¹⁶ So long as the 2006 and later results are comparable, this enables regional trends to be identified for the eight indicators included in the Waikato Progress Indicators regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

A comparison of survey items over time is included in [Waikato Regional Council Technical Report 2017/11](#) (March 2017). This concluded that overall, there should be a relatively high level of validity in comparing 2006 and later Waikato regional results for the Waikato Progress Indicators items.

5.1 Changes to the quality of life measure

There have been two key changes in the overall quality of life item used as a proxy for life satisfaction in the Waikato Progress Indicators monitoring programme.

From 2018, results for this item relate to a 7-point satisfaction scale rather than a 5-point scale. Analysis by Nielsen Research indicates comparability with prior results.

From 2020, Waikato Progress Indicators results for this item relate to a question asked at the beginning of the survey questionnaire, in contrast to prior results based on a question near the end of the survey which may have been influenced by responses to other questions. Comparative analysis from the 2018 survey suggests this gives a slightly higher measure from 2020 compared to prior Waikato Progress Indicators life satisfaction results.

¹⁶ Although the Waikato regional survey data were collected in 2006 by TNS researchers, they were not incorporated into the 2006 Quality of Life Report. Rather, the booster sample was commissioned by Waikato Regional Council for comparison with a regional Perception Survey undertaken jointly with territorial local authorities in the region.

5.2 Sample demographics 2006 to 2020

The table below shows that each survey wave has had sufficient sample sizes and demographic representation to make strong inferences. Other methodology aspects were also similar as described in the earlier survey reports.

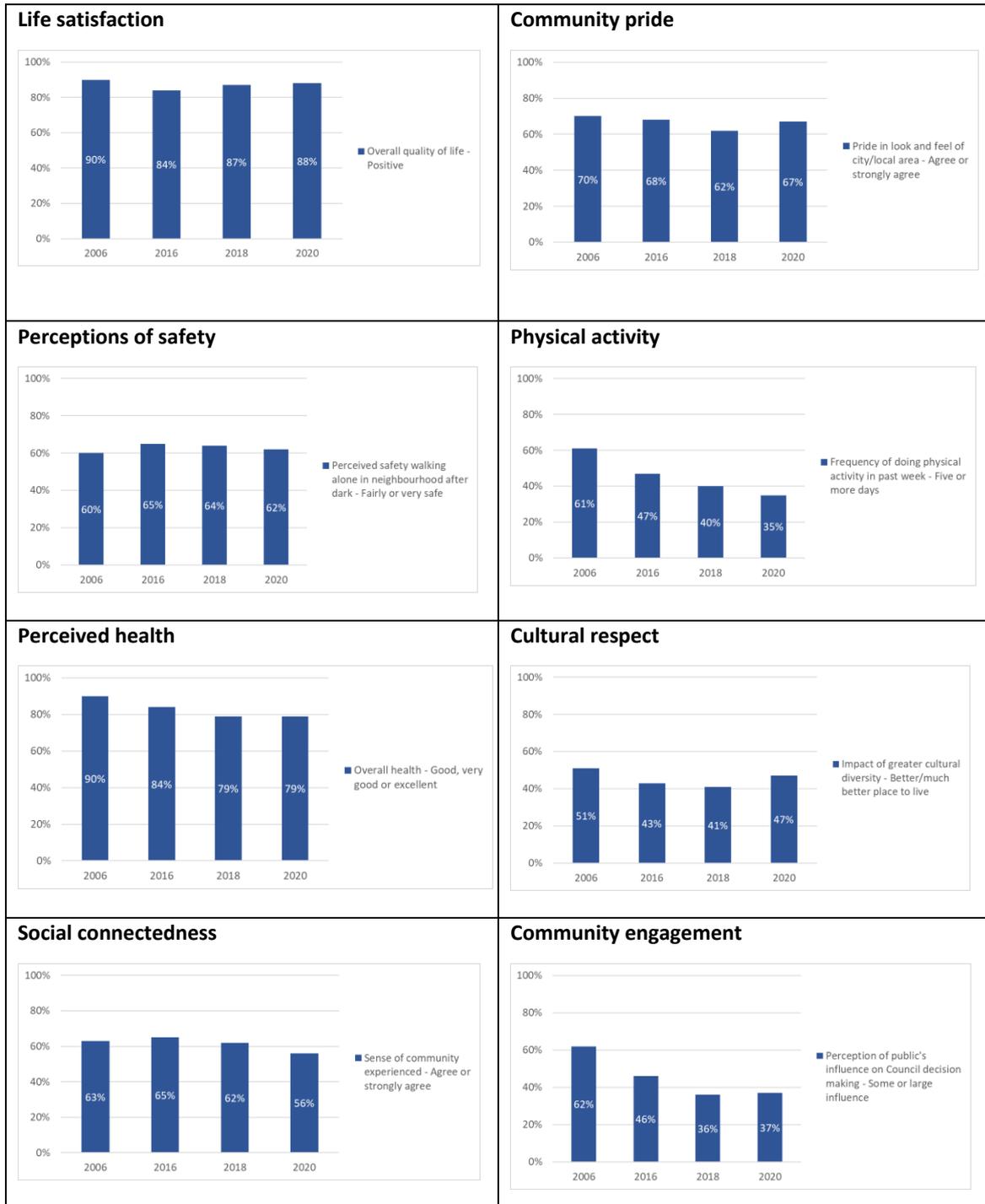
Table 4: Comparison of 2006, 2016, 2018 and 2020 Waikato regional samples

| | 2006 | | 2016 | | 2018 | | 2020 | |
|-----------------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Sample size | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Hamilton | 237 | 34% | 457 | 36% | 572 | 40% | 500 | 41% |
| Other Waikato Region | 455 | 66% | 823 | 64% | 844 | 60% | 706 | 59% |
| Total Waikato Region | 692 | 100% | 1,280 | 100% | 1,416 | 100% | 1,206 | 100% |
| Age groups | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 18 to 24 | 64 | 9% | 188 | 15% | 189 | 13% | 147 | 12% |
| 25 to 49 | 343 | 50% | 393 | 31% | 578 | 41% | 485 | 40% |
| 50 to 64 | 172 | 25% | 329 | 26% | 348 | 25% | 322 | 27% |
| 65 plus | 113 | 16% | 370 | 29% | 300 | 21% | 252 | 21% |
| Total age groups | 692 | 100% | 1,280 | 100% | 1,415 | 100% | 1,206 | 100% |
| Ethnic groups* | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| NZ European / Other | 499 | 72% | 1,131 | 88% | 1,176 | 83% | 961 | 80% |
| Māori | 147 | 21% | 179 | 14% | 314 | 22% | 330 | 27% |
| Pacific | 26 | 4% | 24 | 2% | 28 | 2% | 29 | 2% |
| Asian / Indian | 19 | 3% | 39 | 3% | 82 | 6% | 75 | 6% |

Notes: * Denominator for ethnic groups is total respondents (i.e. can add to more than 100% due to people identifying with more than one ethnic group).

5.3 Time series graphs 2006 to 2020

Figure 61: Waikato Progress Indicators results – Waikato region 2006 to 2020



5.4 Comparing 2006 and 2020 Waikato regional trends

Compared to 2006, Waikato regional survey respondents in 2020 were:

- Almost unchanged in the extent to which they rate their overall quality of life positively, from 90% in 2006 to 88% in 2020. This question has been moved to the beginning of the 2020 survey and may have had a higher result if asked at the beginning in 2006.
- Slightly more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, increasing from 60% in 2006 to 62% in 2020.
- Less likely to give a positive rating for their overall health positively, decreasing from 90% in 2006 to 79% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree they experience a sense of community in their neighbourhood, decreasing from 63% in 2006 to 56% in 2020.
- Slightly less likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels, decreasing from 70% in 2006 to 67% in 2020.
- Less likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the past seven days, decreasing from 61% in 2006 to 35% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live, decreasing from 51% in 2006 to 47% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree the public has an influence over decisions their local Council makes, decreasing from 62% in 2006 to 37% in 2020.

6. Key survey findings for the Waikato region

Quality of life

- A large majority rate their overall quality of life positively.
- Around one-quarter of respondents felt their quality of life had improved over the past year.
- For people who considered their quality of life improved, most common reasons related to work situation, positive financial situation, and relationships.
- For people who considered their quality of life decreased, common reasons related to negative effects of COVID-19, poor financial situation, and poor health and wellbeing.

Environment (built and natural)

- Most agreed their local area is a great place to live.
- Around one quarter agreed their local area improved in the last 12 months.
- The most common reasons for feeling that their local area deteriorated in the last 12 months related to crime/crime rate has increased, more traffic/traffic congestion,

homelessness/lack of suitable, affordable housing, and more undesirable elements (e.g. gangs/youths loitering).

- The most common reasons for feeling that their local area had improved in the last 12 months related to good/improved/new amenities, good recreational facilities/lots of things to do, and building developments/renovations.
- Two-thirds of respondents agreed they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels.
- Issues most frequently identified as being either a big problem or a bit of a problem with the natural or built environment in the last 12 months were limited parking, traffic congestion, and water pollution.

Housing

- Half agreed their current housing costs were affordable, and one-third disagreed.
- A large proportion agreed the type of home they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.
- Four out of five agreed that the general area, or neighbourhood, they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.
- One-fifth agreed that they had experienced problems with damp or mould in their home during winter.
- Most agreed that their heating system keeps their home warm when it is in use during winter.
- Around two-thirds agreed they can afford to heat their home properly during winter.

Public transport

- Around 6% had used public transport weekly or more often over the previous 12 months. Over half had not used public transport in the last 12 months and a further quarter did not have public transport available.
- Less than half of those who had access to public transport agreed that public transport was affordable.
- Around half agreed that public transport was safe.
- Around half agreed that public transport was easy to get to.
- Less than half agreed that public transport is frequent.
- Two fifths agreed that public transport was reliable (i.e. comes when it says it will).
- One-fifth said that they used a private vehicle more often due to COVID-19.

Health and wellbeing

- Four in five rated their health positively.
- When asked how many days in the previous seven days they had been physically active, one-third said they had been active five or more days.

- While one quarter said they had regularly experienced stress, a similar number rarely or never experienced this.
- Nine in ten feel they have someone to rely on for practical and emotional support during a difficult time.
- Almost half said they felt cheerful or in good spirits all or most of the time.
- Two-fifths said they felt calm and relaxed.
- Around one quarter said they felt active and vigorous.
- Around one quarter said they woke up feeling fresh and rested.
- Around two-fifths said their daily life had been filled with things that interest them.

Crime and safety

- Around one-fifth (21%) perceived theft and burglary to be a big problem, and a further 50% thought it was a bit of a problem. Similarly, 17% of respondents perceived dangerous driving to be a big problem, and a further 49% thought it was a bit of a problem.
- At the other end of the scale, 52% of respondents felt that people you feel unsafe around was not a problem, 50% felt that people begging on the street was not a problem, and 41% felt that racism or discrimination was not a problem.
- More than nine in ten reported that they feel safe in their home after dark.
- Over three-fifths felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- Nine in ten felt safe in their city centre during the day.
- Less than half felt safe in their city centre after dark.

Community, culture and social networks

- Almost three quarters considered it important to feel a sense of community with people in their neighbourhood.
- More than half agreed they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.
- Online networks were by far the most common social networks, followed by clubs and societies (e.g. sports clubs) and professional/work networks.
- One in ten said they felt lonely or isolated either always or most of the time in the past 12 months.
- Almost two thirds of respondents agreed that people can be trusted.
- Almost half considered that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city or local area a better place to live.
- More than one in ten said they had personally experienced prejudice in the last three months.

- More than one in ten said they had witnessed someone showing prejudice in the last three months.
- Around two-fifths of respondents considered their local area to have a diverse and culturally rich arts scene.

Climate change and sustainability

- Around two-fifths of respondents considered sustainability most of the time or always when making buying decisions.
- Around half were not particularly worried about the impact of climate change, 6% said they did not know enough to answer this question, a further 3% did not believe in climate change, and the remaining two-fifths (39%) were worried or very worried.

Economic wellbeing

- Two thirds were employed in either full-time or part-time work, and a further 5% were currently seeking work.
- More than two thirds of employed respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job.
- Around six in ten employed respondents were satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life.
- Most respondents had done unpaid work over the last 4 weeks
- Half the respondents felt they have enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs for things. More than one in ten felt they did not have enough money.

Council processes

- Around one third have confidence that their local Council makes decisions in the best interests of their area.
- Around one third perceive the public have 'large' or 'some' influence over the decisions their local Council makes.

Waikato Progress Indicators results by age group

- Respondents aged under 25 were statistically significantly more likely to agree they feel unsafe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark; less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood; and less likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels.
- Respondents aged 65 plus were statistically significantly less likely to agree that they feel unsafe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark; more likely to agree they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood; more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels; more likely to agree they had been physically active on five of the past seven days; and less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live.

Waikato Progress Indicators results by gender

- Females were statistically significantly more likely to report their quality of life was 'very good' or 'extremely good'; less likely to agree they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark; less likely to agree they had been physically active in the past seven days; and more likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live.
- Males were statistically significantly less likely to agree that their quality of life was 'very good' or 'extremely good'; more likely to agree that they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark; less likely to agree that their overall health is 'excellent'; more likely to agree they had been physically active on five or more of the past seven days; less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a worse place to live; and more likely to agree that the public have no influence over the decisions that their local Council makes.

Waikato Progress Indicators results by ethnic group

- Respondents who identified with the New Zealand European ethnic group were statistically significantly more likely to rate their quality of life positively; more likely to rate their overall health positively; and more likely to agree that the public have no influence or only a small influence over the decisions their local Council makes.
- Respondents who identified with the Māori ethnic group were statistically significantly less likely to rate their quality of life positively and more likely to rate it poorly; and less likely to rate their overall health positively and more likely to rate it as being less than good.
- Respondents who identified with the Asian/Indian ethnic group were statistically significantly more likely to report having been physically active on none of the last seven days; more likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live; and less likely to agree that the public have no influence or only a small influence over the decisions that their local Council makes.

Waikato Progress Indicators results by location

There was a considerable amount of diversity in responses to some items between locations. Statistically significant differences from the Waikato regional average include the following general selection, amongst many others, in no particular order:

- Hamilton respondents were more likely to agree that public transport was affordable, easy to get to, frequent and reliable.
- Thames-Coromandel respondents were more likely to report their quality of life as being 'extremely good'.
- Hauraki district respondents were more likely to report they 'don't know' if their housing costs are affordable, whether their home has a problem with damp or mould, or whether they can afford to heat their home properly.
- Waikato district respondents more likely to agree that the public has no/small influence on Council decisions.
- Matamata-Piako district respondents were less likely to be worried/very worried about the impacts of climate change.
- Waipa district respondents were more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city/local area looks and feels.
- Ōtorohanga district respondents were more likely to 'strongly agree' that their housing costs are affordable.
- South Waikato district respondents were more likely to report their overall health was only poor/fair.
- Waitomo district respondents were less likely to agree that their home has a problem with damp or mould.
- Taupō district respondents were more likely to report being physically active on at least five of the past seven days.
- Rotorua respondents were more likely to say there are few or no different cultures and lifestyles in their city/local area.

Waikato region 2006 to 2020 trends

Compared to 2006, Waikato regional survey respondents in 2020 were:

- Almost unchanged in the extent to which they rate their overall quality of life positively, from 90% in 2006 to 88% in 2020. This question has been moved to the beginning of the 2020 survey and may have had a higher result if asked at the beginning in 2006.
- Slightly more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, increasing from 60% in 2006 to 62% in 2020.
- Less likely to give a positive rating for their overall health positively, decreasing from 90% in 2006 to 79% in 2020.

- Less likely to agree they experience a sense of community in their neighbourhood, decreasing from 63% in 2006 to 56% in 2020.
- Slightly less likely to agree they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels, decreasing from 70% in 2006 to 67% in 2020.
- Less likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the past seven days, decreasing from 61% in 2006 to 35% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live, decreasing from 51% in 2006 to 47% in 2020.
- Less likely to agree the public has an influence over decisions their local Council makes, decreasing from 62% in 2006 to 37% in 2020.

7. Next steps

The 2020 Quality of Life survey results give valuable information on public perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. These results will help inform regional and local government policy and support monitoring towards strategic social, economic, environmental and cultural goals.

The latest Waikato regional quality of life survey results will be incorporated into the Waikato Progress Indicators 2021 update for selected indicators (refer [Waikato Progress Indicators](#)).