1. EXECUTIVE INSIGHTS
INTRODUCTION

The 2014 Quality of Life survey is a partnership between six New Zealand Councils. The survey aims to measure respondents’ perceptions in several domains, including:

- Quality of life
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture and social networks
- Council decision making processes
- Environment
- Public Transport
- Economic Wellbeing.

This following report presents the results for the Six Council areas. City level reports are also available for five of the six Councils.

METHODOLOGY

This survey was carried out using a sequential-mixed methodology. A random selection of residents (from the Six Councils) was made from the Electoral Roll and respondents were encouraged to complete the survey online or via a hard copy questionnaire posted to them.

Fieldwork took place between 9 June and 28 July 2014.

Completed questionnaires were received from 5,295 respondents made up of 2,441 Auckland respondents, 611 Porirua respondents, 569 Hutt respondents, 647 Wellington City respondents, 488 Christchurch City respondents, and 539 Dunedin respondents.

Full details of the survey methodology can be found in the Quality of Life Survey 2014 Technical Report.
QUALITY OF LIFE

The majority (82%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas rate their overall quality of life positively, with 20% rating it as extremely good and 62% as good.

Just over a quarter (27%) of the Six Council areas’ respondents say their quality of life has increased compared with twelve months ago.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Overall health

Eight in ten (82%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas rate their health positively, responding with a rating of either excellent (15%), very good (29%), or good (37%).

Frequency of doing physical activity

Just under half (46%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas say they undertake physical activity five or more days a week.

Emotional wellbeing

Nearly three quarters (73%) of respondents rate themselves as having a positive emotional wellbeing, with a rating of very happy (17%) or happy (56%).

Satisfaction with life in general

Just under three quarters (71%) of the Six Council areas’ respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their life in general.

Stress

Almost two in ten (17%) respondents living in the Six Council areas are regularly experiencing stress that has a negative impact on them, with 2% always stressed and 15% stressed most of the time.

Availability of support

The majority (92%) of respondents say they have someone to turn to for help if they were faced with a serious illness or injury, or needed emotional support during a difficult time.

CRIME AND SAFETY

Perceptions of crime and other undesirable problems

Half (49%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas view vandalism as a problem within their area over the last twelve months. Just over half (55%) view car theft or damage to cars as a problem, while nearly two thirds (64%) view dangerous driving (including drink driving and speeding) as a problem. Nearly half (45%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas perceive the presence of unsafe people as being a problem and just over
half (55%) perceive alcohol or drugs to be a problem in their area over the last twelve months. A third of respondents say people begging on the street is a problem in their area.

**Sense of safety**

The majority (96%) of respondents feel safe in their home during the day, with around nine in ten (89%) feeling safe in their home after dark. Six in ten (59%) respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

The majority (91%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas feel safe in their city centre during the day, while just over four in ten (43%) feel safe in their city centre after dark.

**COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS**

**Sense of community**

Three quarters (74%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas agree it is important to feel a sense of community with the people in their local neighbourhood. Just over half (53%) agree that they actually feel a sense of community with others in their local neighbourhood.

The most frequently mentioned reason for a lack of sense of community is a busy life (47%). This is followed by people in the neighbourhood don’t talk with each other (43%) and a preference for socialising with family and friends instead of neighbours (40%).

**Social networks**

The most common social network respondents belong to is people from work or school (50%), followed by online network through websites such as Facebook, Twitter, online gaming communities and forums (49%).

**Contact with neighbourhood people**

Within the last 12 months, the majority (94%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas have had some positive contact with people in their neighbourhood such as a nod or saying hello; over two thirds (69%) have had positive contact with people in their neighbourhood (e.g. a visit, or asking each other for small favours and 38% have had strong positive contact (e.g. support or close friendship). About one in six (15%) respondents have had some negative contact with people in their neighbourhood in the last 12 months (e.g. not getting on with them) and one in ten (10%) have had negative contact, where there is outright tension or disagreement.

**Feeling of isolation**

Just over two thirds (68%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas rarely felt isolated or lonely over the past twelve months.

**Trust**

Nearly two thirds (65%) of respondents say you can trust people, with 9% saying people can almost always be trusted and 56% saying people can usually be trusted.
Impact of greater cultural diversity

Over half (57%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas feel that the fact that New Zealand is becoming a home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their area a better place to live.

The most frequently mentioned reason for greater cultural diversity having a positive impact is *people from other countries and cultures make the city more vibrant and interesting, including bringing more interesting food and restaurants* (67%).

The most commonly mentioned reason for greater cultural diversity having a negative impact is *people from other countries and cultures don’t integrate into New Zealand society* (61%).

Culturally rich and diverse arts scene

Just under half (44%) of the respondents living in the Six Council areas agree their area / city has a culturally rich and diverse arts scene.

COUNCIL DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

Three in ten (30%) respondents living in the Six Council areas agree they understand the Council decision making process. Just over half (54%) agree that they would like to have more say in what the Council does, while four in ten (40%) agree that they have confidence that the Council makes decisions in the best interests of their city. Four in ten (40%) also say the public has an influence on the decisions the Council makes.

BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Pride in look and feel of city/local area

Over three quarters (79%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas agree that their city/local area is a great place to live, responding with a rating of either *strongly agree* (27%) or *agree* (51%). Six in ten (60%) respondents living in the Six Council areas *strongly agree or agree* that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels.

The most frequently mentioned reasons given by those who feel a sense of pride are a *good overall lifestyle* (52%) and *parks, green or open spaces or gardens* (52%). This is followed by *natural environment is beautiful* (48%).

The two most frequently mentioned reasons for those who do not feel a sense of pride in their city’s look and feel are *issues with transport system* (42%) and *crime and safety issues* (40%).

Ease of access to local park or other green space

The majority (90%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas find it very easy or easy to get to a local park or other green space in their city or local area.

Perceptions of issues in their local area

In the previous 12 months, over half (58%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas perceive graffiti or tagging
as a problem, 26% perceive air pollution to be a problem, (44%) felt that water pollution (including pollution in streams, rivers, lakes and in the sea) had been a problem and 40% perceived noise pollution to be a problem.

A new question was included in 2014 that asked about people begging on the street. Just under one third (30%) of respondents felt this had been a problem in their local area in the previous 12 months.

**TRANSPORT**

The majority (84%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas reported that their main form of transport is a car or van.

**Frequency of use of public and private transport**

One in five (21%) respondents living in the Six Council areas are regular users (twice a week or more often) of public transport. The majority (89%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas are regular users (twice a week or more often) of private transport.

**Perceptions of public transport**

Just over four in ten (42%) respondents living in the Six Council areas agree that public transport is affordable. Close to three quarters (72%) agree that public transport is safe, while a similar number (71%) agree that it is easy to get to. Almost half (47%) agree that public transport is reliable and over half (52%) agree that public transport is frequent.

**ECONOMIC WELLBEING**

**Employment status**

Just over half (53%) of respondents living in the Six Council areas are employed full time (for 30 hours or more a week). In addition to this 17% are in part-time work. One fifth (19%) are not in paid employment and are not looking for work, while 19% are not in paid employment but are looking for work.

**Balance between work and other aspects of life**

Six in ten (60%) respondents living in the Six Council areas are satisfied with the balance between work and other aspects of life.

**Affordability and suitability of housing**

Four in ten (42%) respondents living in the Six Council areas agree that their housing costs are affordable (housing costs include expenses like rent or mortgage, rates, house insurance and house maintenance). The majority (81%) agree that the type of house or apartment they live in suits their needs and needs of others in the household.

**Ability to cover costs of everyday needs**

One in ten (10%) respondents living in the Six Council areas say they have more than enough money. Three in ten (30%) say they have enough money, while over a third (36%) say they have just enough money. One in five (20%) respondents say they do not have enough money to meet their everyday needs.
2. RESEARCH DESIGN
RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 BACKGROUND

The Quality of Life Survey is carried out every two years.

This is the second time the Quality of Life survey has been carried out using a sequential mixed methodology. Previous surveys (2010 and earlier) were carried out using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The move to a sequential mixed methodology in 2012 was in response to the relatively expensive nature of CATI and the decreasing number of households with landlines in New Zealand.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF METHOD AND SAMPLE

The full target population for the Quality of Life survey 2014 was people aged 18 years and over who reside in the participating local government areas:

- Auckland
- Hutt City
- Porirua
- Wellington
- Christchurch
- Dunedin

This report outlines results for the Six Councils. The total sample was 5,295.

The Electoral Roll was used as the sampling frame, as it is the most comprehensive database of individuals in New Zealand.

The methodology was the same as selected for 2012, a sequential mixed methodology. This survey used a self-completion methodology, with respondents being encouraged to complete the survey online initially before being provided with a paper questionnaire. Under this method, all individuals on the Electoral Roll are eligible for selection (as opposed to just those who are successfully matched with a phone number – approx. 40% in the previous CATI surveys).

The research took place between 9 June when the first invitation letters were received and 28 July 2014 when the survey closed.

Full details of the survey methodology can be found in the Quality of Life Survey 2014 Technical Report.

An overview of the research process is shown on the next page.
2.3 RESPONSE TO SURVEY

A total of 21,136 respondents selected randomly from the Electoral Roll, 5,295 completed questionnaires were received. The response rate for this survey was 30%. This is calculated as the number of completed interviews as a proportion of total number of selections minus exclusions based on known outcomes (e.g. death, moved out of region, gone no address).

For further details on response rate and a breakdown by council area, please see the Research Design Section of the Quality of Life Technical Report.

Overall, 60% of the surveys were completed online and 40% were completed by hard copy.

The average completion time for the online survey was 23.8 minutes.
2.4 REPORTING

The following are notes regarding the analysis and reporting in this report:

**Significant differences**

Differences between council areas are only reported in those cases where the following two criteria are met:

- The difference between the result for the council area and the result for all other sub-groups is significant at the 95% confidence level. (That is, the total excludes the sub-group being compared to it).
- The raw difference in results for the council area and the result for all other sub-groups is greater than 5%.
- The base size is larger than 50 respondents.

For rating scale questions, significant differences are reported at top-two or bottom-two box level (e.g. for a scale of extremely good, good, neither poor nor good, poor and extremely poor, differences have been tested between sub-groups for extremely good + good).

For open ended questions, significant differences are shown for the top two or three responses (as outlined in the first chart commentary for that question).

For open ended questions only responses with 2% or more of respondents are shown in the charts, for full results to these questions see Appendix II in the Six Councils Report.

Any differences at top-two box level (or within the top-two of these most frequently mentioned responses for open ended questions) that are not mentioned in the commentary are not significant and greater than 5%.

Non-Auckland significant differences have not been reported.

**A word on council area totals**

The results for each city are sampled and weighted to be representative by age, ward/local board etc. It should be noted that within each council (particularly within Auckland with its large geographical boundary) there are a range of results that may differ significantly. For details of differences within council areas, please see individual council reports.

**Nets**

For those results charted in the report, nets are based on the rounded number shown in the charts, not the unrounded figures in the data tables. The unrounded net figures in the tables take into account decimal points, while the rounded numbers in the charts do not. In some cases, true nets might be one percentage point less than those actually reported.

**Base sizes**

All base sizes shown on charts and on tables (n=) are unweighted base sizes.
Please note that any base size of under n=100 is considered small and under n=30 is considered extremely small. Results should be viewed with caution.

**Ethnicity**

In this report total ethnicity is reported rather than prioritised ethnicity (as was used in 2006 reports). This means a person who selected multiple ethnicities will be counted in more than one ethnic group and ethnicity percentages add to more than 100.

**“Other specify” questions**

Responses to “other specify” questions are split out based on codes that were included in the questionnaire and those that have been created based on the themes that emerged from respondents’ answers (when specifying an ‘other’ response).

### 2.5 MARGIN OF ERROR

All sample surveys are subject to sampling error. Based on a total sample size of 5,295 respondents, the results shown in this survey are subject to a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 1.4% at the 95% confidence level. That is, there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a recorded figure of 50% actually lays between 48.6% and 51.4%. As the sample figure moves further away from 50%, so the error margin will decrease.

The maximum margin of error for each of the cities is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Sample Target</th>
<th>Sample Achieved</th>
<th>Maximum margin of error (95% level of confidence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,441</td>
<td>± 2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutt City</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>± 4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porirua</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>± 4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>± 3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christchurch</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>± 4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunedin</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>± 4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Six Councils</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,295</strong></td>
<td><strong>± 1.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>