

# Quality of Life Survey 2016: Waikato regional results

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# Executive Summary

This report presents Waikato regional results from the 2016 [Quality of Life Survey](#), including by local authority area, age group, gender and ethnic group. Trends for the period 2006 to 2016 are also identified for eight indicators to be included in the [Waikato Progress Indicators \(WPI\)](#) regional monitoring initiative.

The 2016 Quality of Life survey was a collaboration between seven city councils (including Hamilton) and two regional councils (Wellington and Waikato). The perceptions of more than 7,000 New Zealanders including 1,280 Waikato regional residents were recorded in relation to:

- Overall quality of life
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture and social networks
- Council decision-making processes
- Environment (built and natural)
- Public Transport
- Economic wellbeing
- Housing.

The Waikato regional survey results will be used to enhance the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative for selected indicators. Due to a high level of consistency over time, valid comparisons can be made between the 2006 and 2016 survey results. The results show that over the past decade, Waikato respondents became:

- less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively (84% in 2016 compared to 90% in 2006)
- less likely to rate their overall health positively (84% compared to 90% previously)
- less likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the past seven days (47% compared to 61% previously)
- less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (65% compared to 80% previously)
- less likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (46% compared to 62% previously)
- 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 or local area a better place to live (43% compared to 51% previously).

The 2016 Quality of Life survey results give comprehensive up-to-date information on public perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in the Waikato region and other parts of New Zealand. These results will help inform regional and local government policy and support monitoring towards strategic social, cultural and economic goals.

Information from this report will be used to develop updated WPI information for publication in early 2017 as part of a regular refresh of environmental, social and economic indicators. The refresh will make use of survey data and key messages to comment on progress across various components of community wellbeing in the Waikato region for the period 2006 to 2016.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Report overview

This report presents results from the Waikato region's participation in the 2016 Quality of Life Survey. Regional trends since 2006 are also identified for eight indicators to be included in the [Waikato Progress Indicators \(WPI\)](#) regional wellbeing monitoring initiative. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 1 provides a summary background and context around the Quality of Life Survey, WPI initiative and related survey programmes.
- Section 2 presents technical notes to assist with interpretation of the Waikato regional results from the Quality of Life Survey 2016.
- Section 3 provides:
  - results for the Waikato region;
  - results by location (Hamilton and selected districts);
  - WPI regional results by age group, gender and ethnic group; and
  - WPI results for the Waikato region compared to Hamilton city, seven cities average, Auckland and Wellington regions.
- Section 4 compares the latest 2016 Waikato regional results with earlier 2006 results for the eight indicators included in the WPI. This section includes discussion of comparability between the 2006 and 2016 surveys.
- Section 5 concludes with a summary of findings and outline of next steps.

## 1.2 Quality of Life Survey

The Quality of Life Project, the focus of this report, was initiated in 1999 in response to growing pressures on urban communities and the effects of these on community wellbeing. The project 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. The Waikato region previously participated in the 2006 survey, and Hamilton has participated in all the survey rounds except 2012 and 2014.

The 2016 Quality of Life Survey was a collaboration between seven city councils and two regional councils as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. Auckland Council
2. Hamilton City Council
3. Wellington City Council
4. Porirua City Council
5. Hutt City Council
6. Christchurch City Council
7. Dunedin City Council
8. Waikato Regional Council
9. Greater Wellington Regional Council.

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<sup>1</sup> For data analysis and interpretation, note that the Waikato regional sample includes the Hamilton City Council sample and other districts; and the Greater Wellington regional sample includes the Wellington City, Porirua City and Hutt City Council samples.

The 2016 Quality of Life Survey measured the perceptions of more than 7,000 New Zealanders on the following topic areas:

- Overall quality of life
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture and social networks
- Council decision-making processes
- Environment (built and natural)
- Public Transport
- Economic wellbeing
- Housing.

Information obtained from the survey will be used to help inform local government policy and monitor progress towards strategic social, cultural and economic goals.

### 1.3 Environmental issues and perceptions surveys

Waikato Region has undertaken surveys which track residents' awareness, attitudes and actions towards the environment (Environmental Awareness, Attitudes, and Actions Survey) and perspectives on the balance between the environment and the economy (New Ecological Paradigm Survey).<sup>2</sup> Since 2006, these two surveys have been run under a combined project. The overall aim of the combined 2016 survey – 'Your Environment What Matters' (WRC 2016)<sup>3</sup> – is to compare and contrast changes in public perceptions of the environment over time, specifically changes in attitudes and priorities about *environmental issues* in the Waikato region.

### 1.4 Waikato Progress Indicators (WPI)

The Waikato Progress Indicators (WPI) measure the Waikato region's progress by identifying the current situation and trends across each of 32 key economic, environmental and social aspects. It includes selective results from the Quality of Life and the Your Environment What Matters surveys.

Together, the 32 WPI 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, and 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 data and website information are refreshed approximately annually.

A review of the WPI was undertaken in late 2015 prior to the 2016 data refresh.<sup>4</sup> As part of this review it was identified that time series breaks were beginning to appear in the WPI dataset due to survey discontinuation or changing questions and scales in various data sources. Many of these issues have now been addressed through finding alternative data sources. Remaining items will be addressed through the inclusion of 2006 and 2016 Quality of Life Survey data.

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<sup>2</sup> For example: Waikato Regional Council 2013. Environmental awareness, attitudes and actions and new ecological paradigm combined survey: A survey of the residents of the Waikato region. Prepared for WRC by Versus Research Ltd. WRC Technical Report 2013/41.

<sup>3</sup> Waikato Regional Council 2016. Your environment what matters. Prepared for WRC by Versus Research Ltd. WRC Technical Report 2016/14.

<sup>4</sup> A key aspect of the review was around harmonisation with other regional and national monitoring programmes.

## 1.5 MARCO Survey

Several indicators in the WPI previously relied on results from a triennial survey programme established in the mid-2000s, known as the MARCO (Monitoring and Reporting Community Outcomes) Regional Waikato Perception survey programme. These were:

1. Community pride
2. Cultural respect
3. Community engagement
4. Physical activity.

The relevance of the MARCO Survey programme diminished over time due to changing legislation, as Local Government Act amendments removed the requirement for councils to monitor and report on community outcomes. While WRC's new strategic direction and monitoring programme takes account of this history and knowledge, the WPI is based around three themes of environmental, social and economic indicators rather than the Community Outcomes framework which underpinned the MARCO Survey.

Of the MARCO Survey indicators above, three are similar to items within the Quality of Life Survey programme – community pride, cultural respect and community engagement. The fourth – physical activity – was replaced in the WPI by results from a similarly worded question from the New Zealand Health Survey which is reported three-yearly. By adopting these national surveys as an alternative data source for the WPI, many of the benefits of the MARCO survey data have been retained and, in addition, comparisons can be made with other areas of New Zealand.

## 1.6 New Zealand General Social Survey

Five indicators included in the WPI were sourced from Statistics New Zealand's (SNZ) New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS):

1. Perceptions of safety
2. Perceived health
3. Social connectedness (self-reported loneliness)
4. Life satisfaction
5. Recycling.

The NZGSS has been conducted five times to date, in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016. Following the most recent 2014 data release in May 2015, time series breaks were identified in relation to four of the above WPI indicators (the exception being perceived health). Because the WPI relies on consistent measurement of indicators over time, this led to a review of whether these NZGSS items remained the right indicators for WPI and how best to treat the time series breaks.

Following the 2016 Quality of Life Survey, four of the above indicators – perceptions of safety, perceived health, social connectedness and life satisfaction – will be sourced from the Quality of Life Survey.<sup>5</sup> The fifth – recycling – will continue unchanged, pending the identification or development of a suitable alternative.

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<sup>5</sup> Further discussions are occurring at national and regional levels on the development of improved recycling indicators.

## 1.7 WPI use of Quality of Life Survey data

In summary, the following eight Quality of Life Survey items are to be incorporated into the WPI programme to address emergent data gaps, enable regional comparisons and identify 2006-2016 Waikato regional trends:

1. Community pride – Pride in look and feel of city/local area
2. Perceived health – Perceived overall health
3. Physical activity – Frequency of being physically active
4. Cultural respect – Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity
5. Community engagement – Perception of influence on council decisions
6. Perceptions of safety – Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark
7. Social connectedness – Sense of community experienced
8. Life satisfaction – Overall quality of life.

A further consideration in WPI indicator selection is harmonisation with the Wellington Region Genuine Progress Index (WR-GPI). All the survey items listed above are included in the WR-GPI indicator set, enabling inter-regional comparisons from a common survey data source.

## 2 Technical notes to 2016 Quality of Life Survey

### 2.1 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 Colmar Brunton to the survey data analysis based on population size by gender, ethnicity and ward/local board. Details of the weighting procedure are on page 15 of the 2016 Quality of Life Survey Technical Document.<sup>6</sup>

A total of 1,280 Waikato regional residents completed the Quality of Life survey. Within the unweighted sample, Hamilton's sample size is 537 (i.e. 42 per cent of the Waikato regional sample size) but within the weighted adjusted sample, Hamilton's sample size is 457 (i.e. 36 per cent) – very close to its Census population of 35 per cent.

### 2.2 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 per cent.<sup>7</sup> Some but not all questions included a 'don't know/not applicable' response, and some of these received relatively large responses questions (e.g. perceptions of culturally diverse arts scene). 'Don't know/not applicable' responses are included in the denominator for calculating percentages.

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<sup>6</sup> Refer [www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2016/QoL-Technical-Report-2016.pdf](http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2016/QoL-Technical-Report-2016.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> This introduces an assumption that non-respondents in the missing data would have provided an identical response profile to those who responded. In practice, there may be survey-related biases present which potentially invalidate this assumption, however insufficient information is available to quantify these.

## 2.3 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 district data) are less reliable due to higher sampling errors. For further details, refer to the Quality of Life Survey Technical Report. The table below provides a guide to how much sampling error is indicatively associated with different sample sizes (at the 95 per cent confidence level).

**Table 1: Sample size vs sample error**

Sample size	Sample error
6,000	±1.3%
2,700	±1.9%
1,300	±2.8%
700	±3.6%
500	±4.4%
400	±4.8%
200	±6.9%
100	±9.8%
50	±13.8%
10	±31.0%

## 2.4 Rounding

This report is informed by survey results provided by Colmar Brunton as a dataset of hard-coded numbers and percentages rounded to zero decimal places. Due to rounding, some columns of percentages do not add perfectly which can create issues of interpretation.

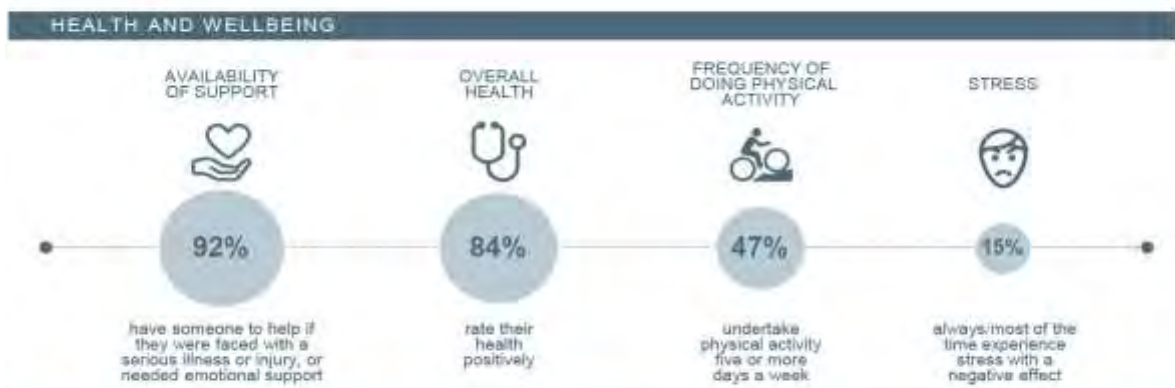
This report presents the results for each item in accordance with published results in the national Topline Report. For each survey item, two or more individual pre-rounded percentages (e.g. ‘% good’, ‘% very good’ and ‘% excellent’) are added to give a final percentage figure. This gives a slightly different result for some survey questions than would have otherwise been calculated by doing the addition first and then the rounding.

# 3 Quality of Life Survey 2016 results

## 3.1 Waikato regional summary infographic



The 2016 Quality of Life survey measures perceptions of New Zealanders aged 18 and over across a range of factors that impact on quality of life. These include health and wellbeing, crime and safety, community, culture and social networks, council decision-making processes, environment, public transport, economic wellbeing, and housing. A random selection of residents from each Council was made from the electoral roll, and respondents completed the survey online or via a hardcopy questionnaire. A total of 7155 New Zealanders completed the survey – 1280 residents from the Waikato (537 from Hamilton and 743 other regional residents), giving a high level of confidence in





## COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS



**78%**  
BELIEVE A SENSE OF  
COMMUNITY IN THEIR  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
IS IMPORTANT



**65%**  
EXPERIENCE A SENSE  
OF COMMUNITY IN THEIR  
NEIGHBOURHOOD

MOST COMMON  
SOCIAL NETWORKS



**39%**

belong to an  
online network  
or social group

NEIGHBOURLY  
CONTACT



**97%**

had positive  
interactions with  
neighbours

SENSE OF  
ISOLATION



**70%**

never or rarely  
feel isolated

CULTURAL  
DIVERSITY



**43%**

say cultural diversity  
makes their city a  
better place to live

ARTS AND  
CULTURE



**45%**

agree their city  
has a culturally  
diverse arts scene

## COUNCIL DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

**38%**

understand how their  
local council makes  
decisions

**53%** ▲

want to have more say  
in what their local  
council does

**40%**

are confident in their  
local council's  
decision-making

**46%**

believe the public has an  
influence on Council  
decision-making

## BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

**85%**

THINK THEIR  
CITY IS A GREAT  
PLACE TO LIVE

**68%**

ARE PROUD OF  
HOW THEIR CITY  
LOOKS AND FEELS

PERCEPTIONS OF  
ISSUES IN THEIR CITY:  
% Big or bit of a problem

**55%**

graffiti or  
tagging

**52%**

water  
pollution

**31%**

noise  
pollution

**19%**

air  
pollution

## ECONOMIC WELLBEING

**68%** EMPLOYED (FULL  
OR PART-TIME)

**64%** SATISFIED WITH  
WORK/LIFE BALANCE

**42%**

HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH OR  
ENOUGH INCOME TO COVER  
COSTS OF EVERYDAY NEEDS



Additional  
**38%**  
say 'just  
enough'

## HOUSING

PERCEPTIONS OF HOUSING:  
% Strongly agree or agree

**88%**

live in  
suitable  
area

**86%**

home is  
suitable

**63%**

home is  
affordable

**80%**

heating  
system keeps  
home warm

**71%**

can afford to  
heat home  
properly

**20%**

have  
problems with  
damp/mould



HOUSING IN WINTER  
CONDITIONS:

## 3.2 Waikato regional results

This section presents detailed regional results. A summary is provided in Section 5 and sub-regional results are provided in Section 3.3. All results are based on weighted data to account for sample demographic differences.

### 3.2.1 Quality of life

<p><b>Indicator – Overall quality of life<sup>8</sup></b></p> <p>A large majority (84%) of respondents in the Waikato region rate their overall quality of life positively, with 21% rating it as ‘extremely good’ and 63% as ‘good’.</p>	<p><b>Figure 1: Overall quality of life</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Extremely poor</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neither good nor poor</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good</td> <td>63%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Extremely good</td> <td>21%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Percentage	Extremely poor	1%	Poor	3%	Neither good nor poor	13%	Good	63%	Extremely good	21%																												
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<p><b>Indicator – Most common reasons for quality of life response</b></p> <p><b>a) Positive quality of life rating (‘extremely good’ or ‘good’)</b></p> <p>Respondents’ most common reasons for rating their quality of life as ‘good’ or ‘extremely good’ related to physical and mental health and wellbeing (39%), relationships (35%) and financial wellbeing (30%).</p> <p><b>b) Negative quality of life rating (‘extremely poor’ or ‘poor’)</b></p> <p>Among the relatively small group who rated their quality of life as ‘poor’ or ‘extremely poor’, the most common reasons for rating their quality of life poorly related to poor financial wellbeing (not earning enough money/expensive cost of living; 62%), low income (not earning enough money/low wages; 56%) and poor physical or mental health (33%).</p>	<p><b>Figure 2: Reasons for positive quality of life</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reason</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Health and wellbeing</td> <td>39%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relationships</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Financial wellbeing</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lifestyle (interests/activities)</td> <td>26%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aspects of local area...</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work related...</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Healthy</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Job/rewarding/good job/work</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Friends/social network</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (nett)</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Notes: See below.</p> <p><b>Figure 3: Reasons for negative quality of life</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reason</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Poor financial wellbeing</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not earning enough/not enough...</td> <td>56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor health / wellbeing</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Declining health/Poor health</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poor lifestyle</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lifestyle (interests/activities)</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work related (job/prospects)</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (nett)</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Base is all respondents who rated their quality of life as ‘extremely poor’ or ‘poor’. Percentages may add to more than 100% as respondents could mention multiple reasons.</p>	Reason	Percentage	Health and wellbeing	39%	Relationships	35%	Financial wellbeing	30%	Lifestyle (interests/activities)	26%	Aspects of local area...	25%	Work related...	18%	Healthy	16%	Job/rewarding/good job/work	16%	Friends/social network	14%	Other (nett)	18%	Reason	Percentage	Poor financial wellbeing	62%	Not earning enough/not enough...	56%	Poor health / wellbeing	33%	Declining health/Poor health	27%	Poor lifestyle	17%	Lifestyle (interests/activities)	17%	Work related (job/prospects)	14%	Other (nett)	20%
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Poor lifestyle	17%																																								
Lifestyle (interests/activities)	17%																																								
Work related (job/prospects)	14%																																								
Other (nett)	20%																																								
<p><b>Indicator – Quality of life compared to 12 months earlier</b></p> <p>More than a quarter (29%) of respondents living in the Waikato region felt their quality of life had improved over the past year.</p>	<p><b>Figure 4: Quality of life compared to 12 months earlier</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Change</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Decreased significantly</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Decreased to some...</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stayed about the same</td> <td>58%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Increased to some...</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Increased significantly</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Change	Percentage	Decreased significantly	2%	Decreased to some...	11%	Stayed about the same	58%	Increased to some...	25%	Increased significantly	4%																												
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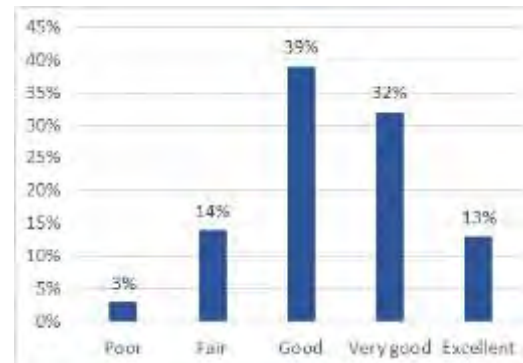
<sup>8</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

### 3.2.2 Health and wellbeing

#### Indicator – Overall health<sup>9</sup>

Across the Waikato region, more than four in five (84%) respondents rated their health positively; 13% rated their health as ‘excellent’, 32% as ‘very good’, and 39% as ‘good’.

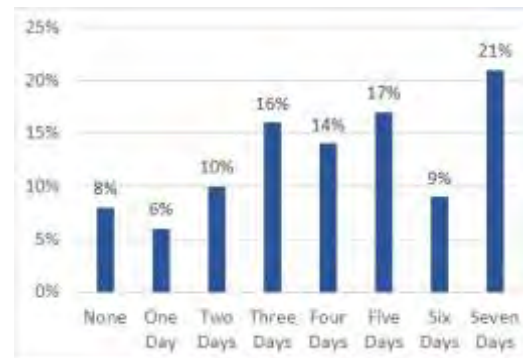
Figure 5: Overall health



#### Indicator – Frequency of doing physical activity in past week<sup>10 11</sup>

When respondents were asked how many days in the previous seven days they had been physically active, almost half (47%) said they had been active five or more days.

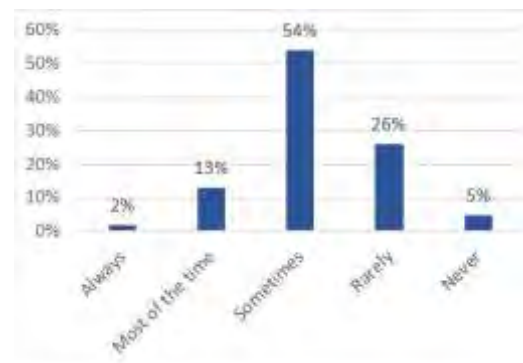
Figure 6: Frequency of doing physical activity



#### Indicator – Stress

While 15 per cent of Waikato region respondents had regularly experienced stress that had a negative impact on them, almost a third (31%) rarely or never experienced this.

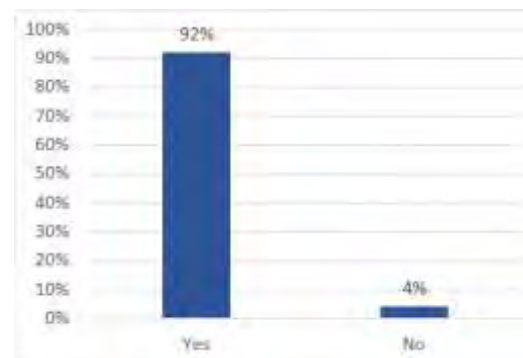
Figure 7: Stress



#### Indicator – Availability of support

More than nine in ten (92%) respondents feel they have someone to rely on for help if faced with physical injury or illness, or if in need of support during an emotionally difficult time.

Figure 8: Availability of support



<sup>9</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

<sup>10</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

<sup>11</sup> 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).

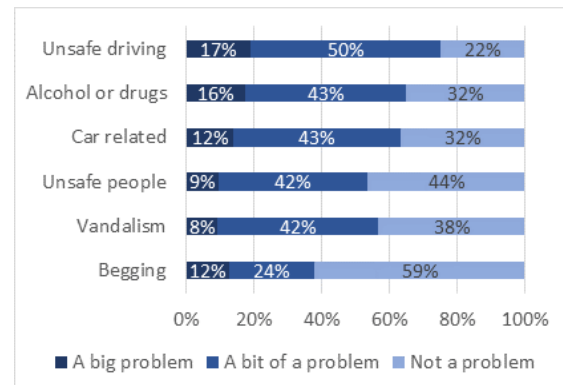
### 3.2.3 Crime and safety

#### Indicator – Rating of issues as problem in local area

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived 10 possible issues had been a problem in their local area in the last year. Results for six issues relating to crime and safety are reported in this section (vandalism, dangerous driving, car theft and damage, alcohol and drug issues, people perceived to be unsafe, and people begging on the street), and results for the other four issues are reported in the Built and Natural Environment section.

Around two thirds (67%) of respondents in the Waikato region perceived dangerous driving as a ‘big problem’ or a ‘bit of a problem’ in their city or local area in the previous 12 months, followed by alcohol and drug problems or anti-social behaviour associated with the consumption of alcohol (59%), and car theft, damage to cars or theft from cars (55%).

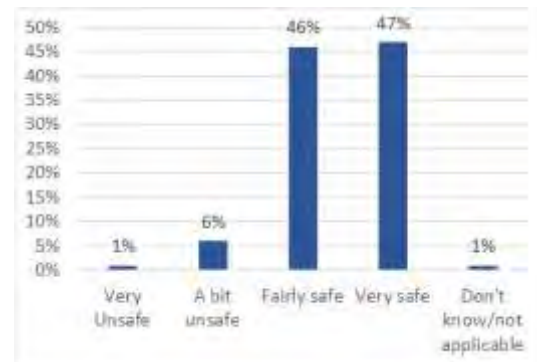
Figure 9: Rating of issues as problem in local area



#### Indicator – Perceived safety in own home after dark

More than nine in ten (93%) respondents in the Waikato region reported that, in general, they feel safe in their home after dark.

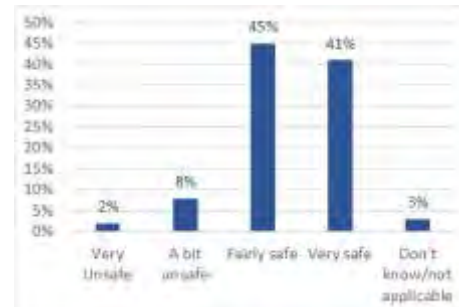
Figure 10: Perceived safety in own home after dark



#### Indicator – Perceived safety in city centre during the day

Almost nine in ten (86%) respondents across the Waikato region feel safe in their city centre during the day.

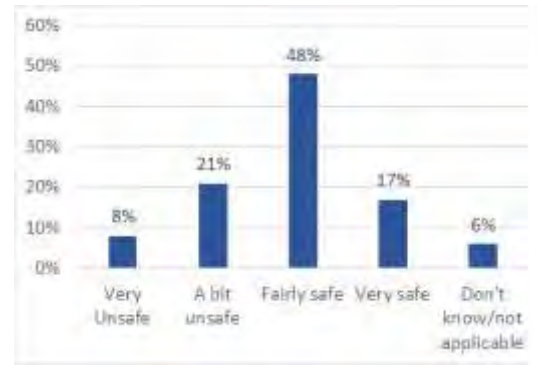
Figure 11: Perceived safety in city centre during day



**Indicator – Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark<sup>12</sup>**

Almost two thirds (65%) of respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

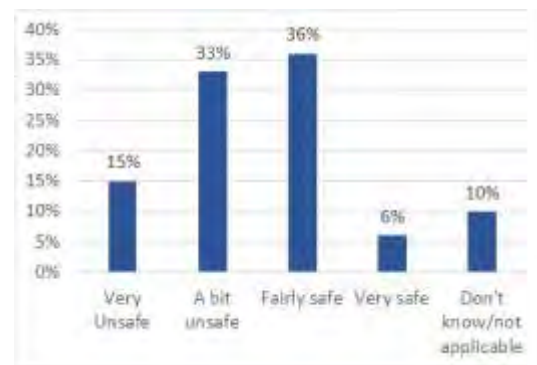
**Figure 12: Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark**



**Indicator – Perceived safety in city centre after dark**

More than four in ten (40%) respondents across the Waikato region feel safe in their city centre after dark.

**Figure 13: Perceived safety in city centre after dark**



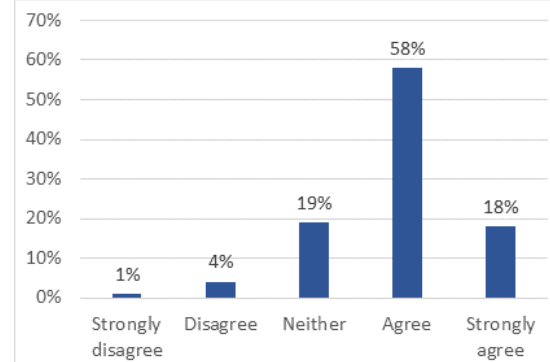
<sup>12</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

### 3.2.4 Community, culture and social networks

#### Indicator – Importance of sense of community

More than three quarters (76%) of respondents consider it important to feel a sense of community with people in their neighbourhood.

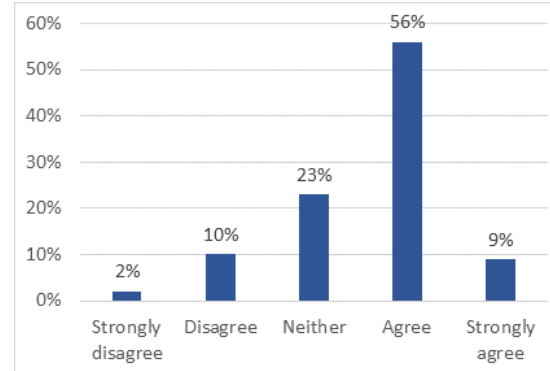
Figure 14: Importance of sense of community



#### Indicator – Sense of community experienced<sup>13</sup>

Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents in the Waikato region agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.

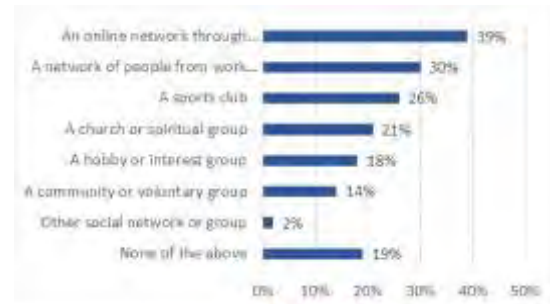
Figure 15: Sense of community experienced



#### Indicator – Participation in social networks and groups

Online networks (e.g. websites such as Facebook/Twitter, online gaming communities and forums) were the most common social networks (39%) that respondents in the Waikato region felt they were part of, followed by work or school related social networks (30%).

Figure 16: Participation in social networks and groups

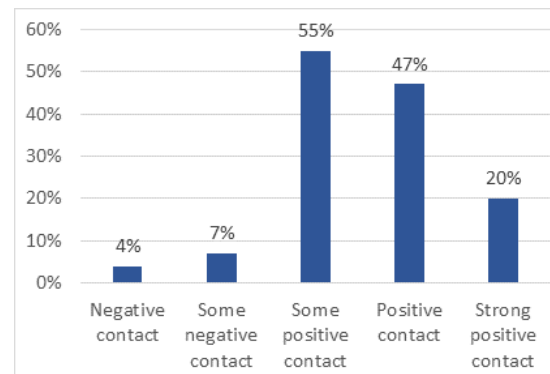


Note: Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

#### Indicator – Contact with people in the neighbourhood

The majority (96%) of respondents in the Waikato region reported they had some sort of positive contact with people in their neighbourhood in the previous 12 months, with the largest group stating they had some positive contact such as a nod or hello (55%).

Figure 17: Positivity of contact with people in the neighbourhood



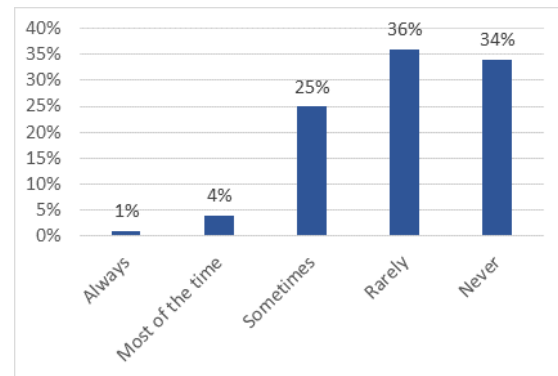
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

<sup>13</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

**Indicator – Frequency of feeling isolated**

Seven in ten (70%) respondents in the Waikato region had never or rarely felt isolated in the last year.

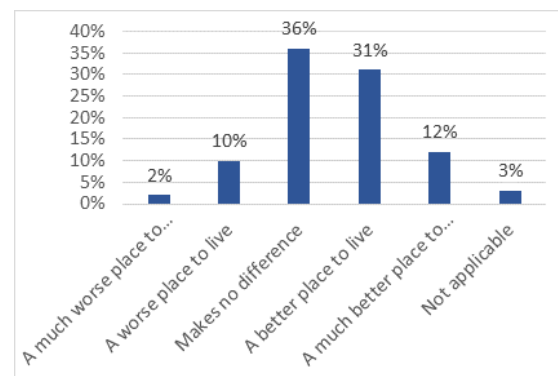
**Figure 18: Frequency of feeling isolated**



**Indicator – Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity<sup>14</sup>**

Over four in ten (43%) respondents across the Waikato region considered that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city a better place to live.

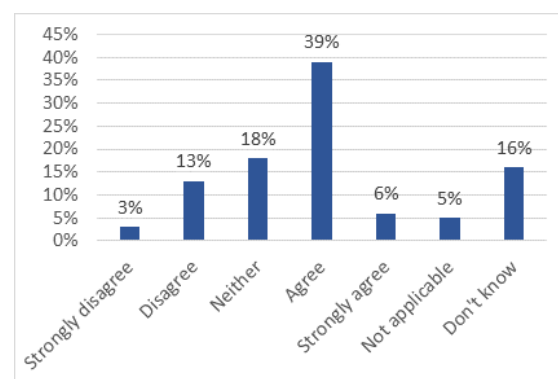
**Figure 19: Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity**



**Indicator – Culturally rich and diverse arts scene**

More than four in ten (45%) respondents consider their local area to have a diverse and culturally rich arts scene.

**Figure 20: Culturally rich and diverse arts scene**



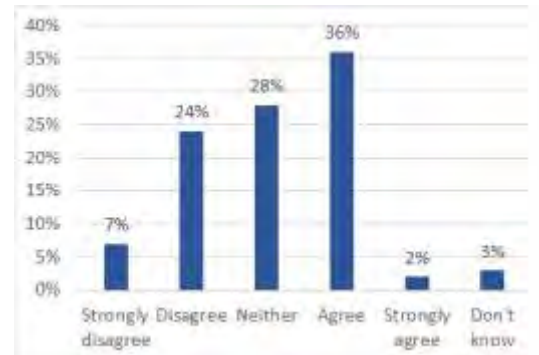
<sup>14</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

### 3.2.5 Council processes

**Indicator – Understanding of Council decision-making processes**

Almost four in ten (38%) respondents in the Waikato region agreed that they understand how their Council makes decisions.

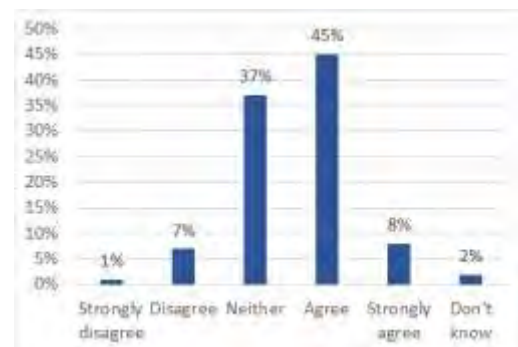
**Figure 21: Understanding of Council decision-making processes**



**Indicator – Desire to have more say in what Council does**

More than half (53%) of respondents would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does

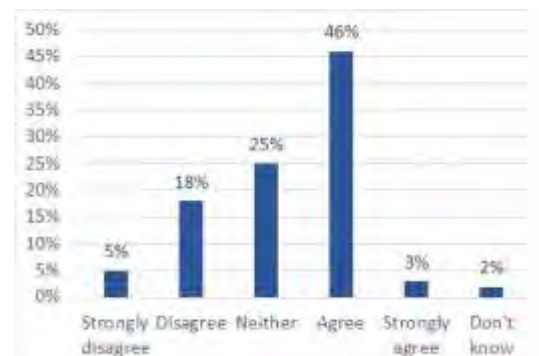
**Figure 22: Desire to have more say in what Council does**



**Indicator – Confidence in Council decision-making**

Half (49%) of respondents have confidence that their local Council makes decisions in the best interests of their area.

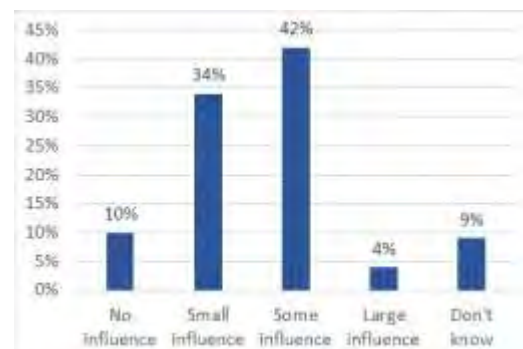
**Figure 23: Confidence in Council decision-making**



**Indicator – Perception of public's influence on Council decision making<sup>15</sup>**

Almost half (46%) of respondents perceive the public have 'large' or 'some' influence over the decisions that their local Council makes.

**Figure 24: Perception of public's influence on Council decision making**



<sup>15</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

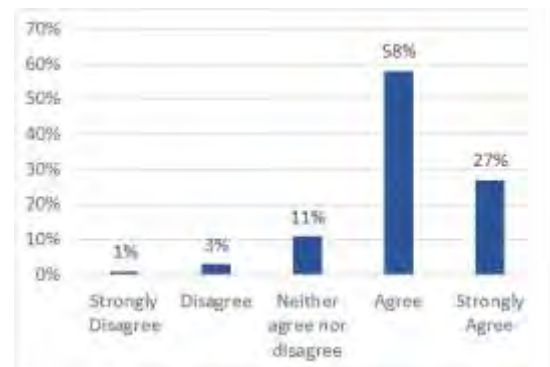


### 3.2.6 Built and natural environment

**Indicator – Perception of city/local area as a great place to live**

More than eight in ten (85%) respondents in the Waikato region agreed their local area is a great place to live, with a quarter (27%) who ‘strongly agree’ and over half (58%) who ‘agree’.

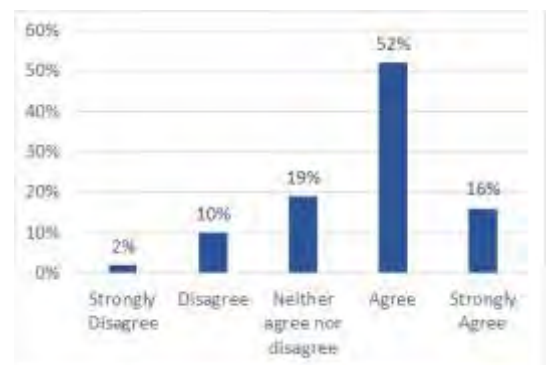
**Figure 25: Perception of city/local area as a great place to live**



**Indicator – Pride in look and feel of city/local area<sup>16</sup>**

Across the Waikato region, almost seven in ten (68%) respondents agreed they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels

**Figure 26: Pride in look and feel of city/local area**

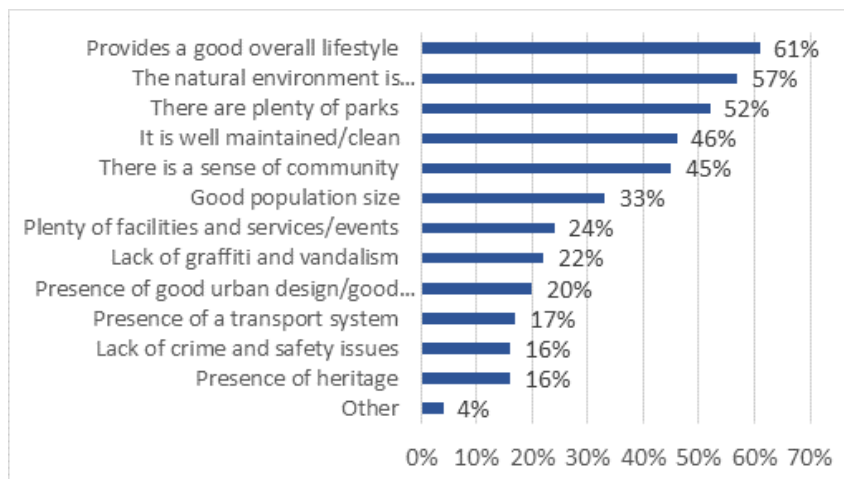


**Indicator – Most common reasons for pride in look and feel of city/local area**

Respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that they felt a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels were asked to indicate why they felt that way, from a pre-coded list of possible reasons.

The most common reasons across the Waikato region for having a sense of pride were that their local area provides a good lifestyle (61%), the beautiful natural environment or good climate (57%) and there are plenty of parks (52%).

**Figure 27: Reasons for pride in look and feel of city/local area**



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

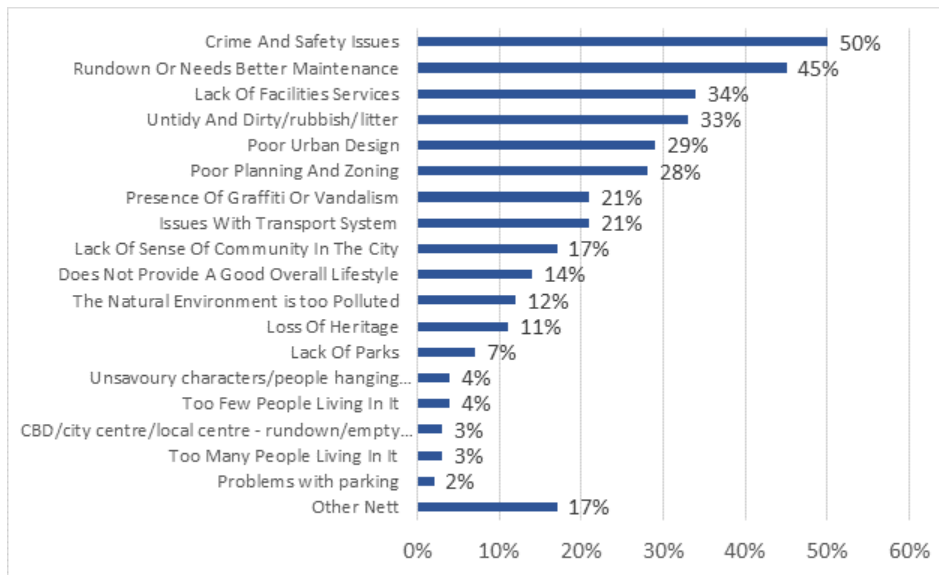
<sup>16</sup> This indicator is being incorporated into the WPI regional wellbeing monitoring initiative.

**Indicator – Most common reasons for lack of pride in look and feel of city/local area**

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they felt a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels were asked to indicate why they felt that way, from a pre-coded list of possible reasons.

Respondents’ most common reasons for lacking a sense of pride in the look and feel of their local area were due to issues with crime and safety (50%), feeling that their local area was run down and/or needed better maintenance (45%), lack of facilities/services (34%) and untidiness (dirty/rubbish/litter) (33%).

**Figure 28: Reasons for lack of pride in look and feel of city/local area**



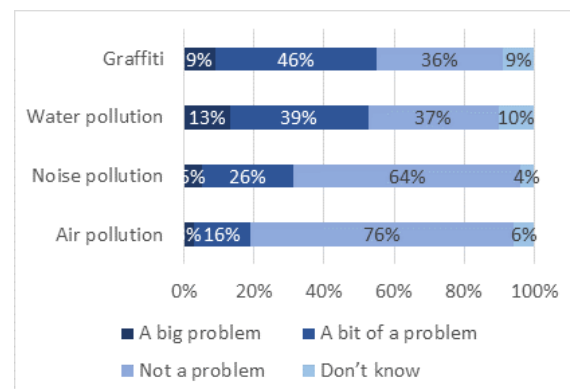
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

**Indicator – Perceived environmental problems in city/local area**

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived 10 possible issues had been a problem in their city or local area in the previous 12 months. Results for four issues relating to the general environment are reported here (graffiti or tagging, and air, water, and noise pollution), and results for the other six issues are reported in the Crime and Safety section.

Across the Waikato region, graffiti or tagging is identified as ‘a big problem’ or ‘a bit of a problem’ in their local area by more than half of residents (55%). Water and noise pollution are also considered to be a local area problem by a substantial percentage of respondents (52% and 31%, respectively), while less than two in five (19%) respondents in the Waikato region areas consider air pollution to be an issue.

**Figure 29: Rating of issues as problem in city/local area**



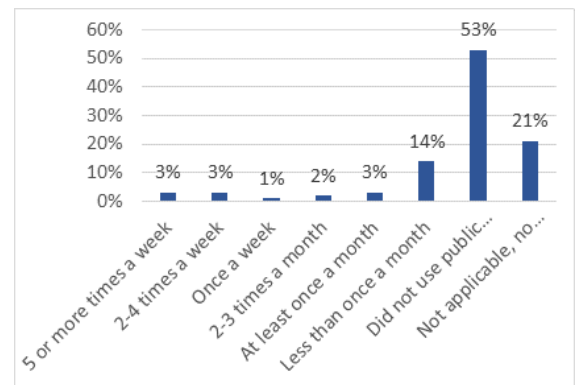
### 3.2.7 Transport

#### Indicator – Frequency of use of public transport

Less than one in ten (7%) respondents in the Waikato region areas had used public transport weekly or more often over the previous 12 months.

More than half (53%) of respondents had not used public transport in the last 12 months. A further one fifth (21%) said this question was not applicable because no public transport was available in their area.

Figure 30: Frequency of use of public transport



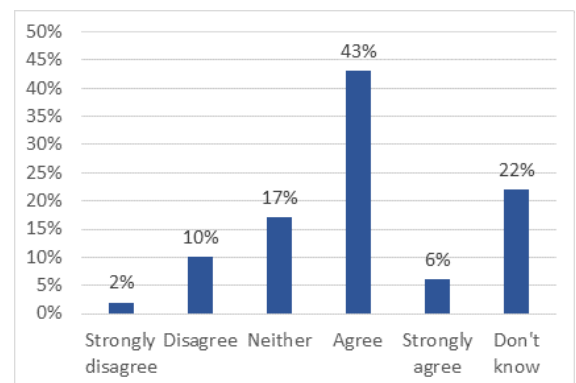
#### Indicators – Perceptions of public transport

Excluding the approximately one-fifth 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 – Affordability of public transport

Half (49%) of respondents with access to public transport agreed that public transport was affordable.

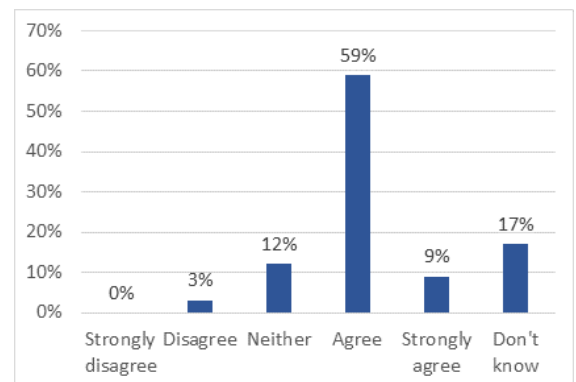
Figure 31: Affordability of public transport



##### Indicator – Safety of public transport

Two thirds (68%) of respondents with access to public transport agreed that public transport was safe.

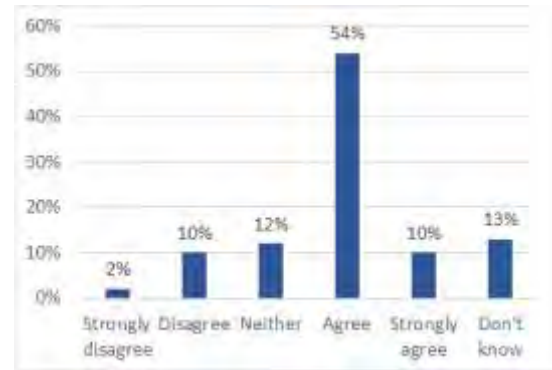
Figure 32: Safety of public transport



**Indicator – Ease of access of public transport**

Two thirds (64%) of respondents with access to public transport agreed that public transport was easy to get to.

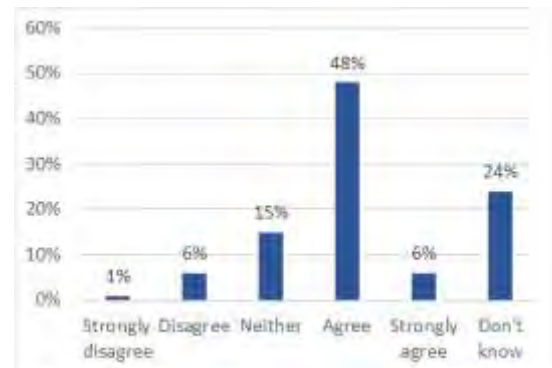
**Figure 33: Ease of access to public transport**



**Indicator – Reliability of public transport**

More than half (54%) of respondents in the Waikato region with access to public transport agreed that public transport was reliable (i.e. comes when it says it will).

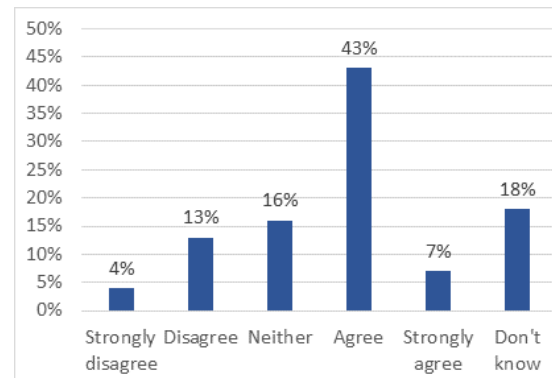
**Figure 34: Reliability of public transport**



**Indicator – Frequency of public transport**

Half (50%) of respondents with access to public transport agreed that public transport is frequent.

**Figure 35: Frequency of public transport**



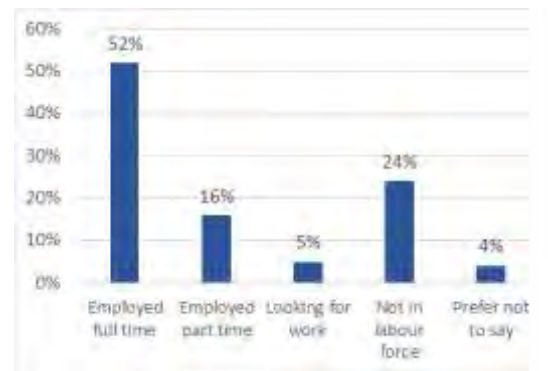
### 3.2.8 Economic wellbeing

#### Indicator – Labour force status

Almost seven in ten (68%) respondents were employed in either full-time (52%) or part-time (16%) work, a further 5% were currently seeking work, 24% were not in paid employment and not looking for work (e.g. full-time parent, retired person) and 4% said they would 'prefer not say'.

Note these figures are close to the June 2016 Waikato regional Household Labour Force Survey estimates of 65.2% employed, 3.3% unemployed (as a percentage of total working-age population) and 31.4% not in the labour force.

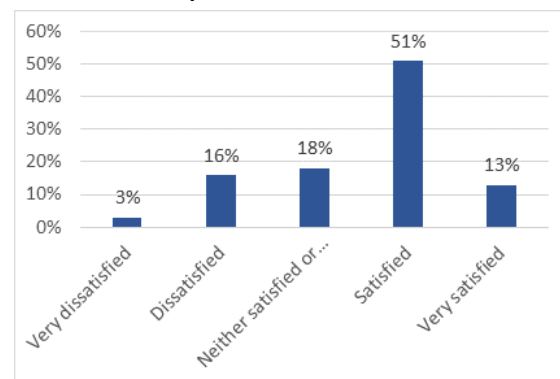
Figure 36: Labour force status



#### Indicator – Balance between work and other aspects of life

More than six in ten (64%) of the employed respondents were satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life.

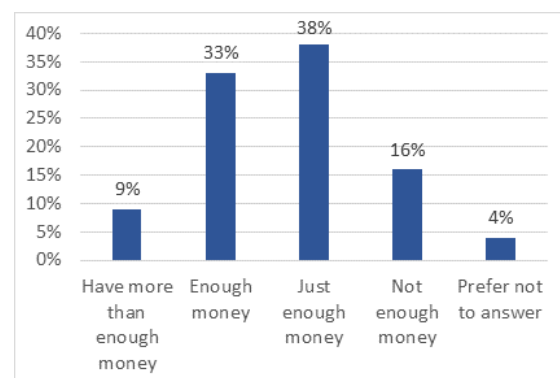
Figure 37: Balance between work and other aspects of life



#### Indicator – Ability to cover costs of everyday needs

Four in ten (42%) respondents in the Waikato region felt that they have enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs for things such as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. Around 16% felt they did not have enough money

Figure 38: Ability to cover costs of everyday needs

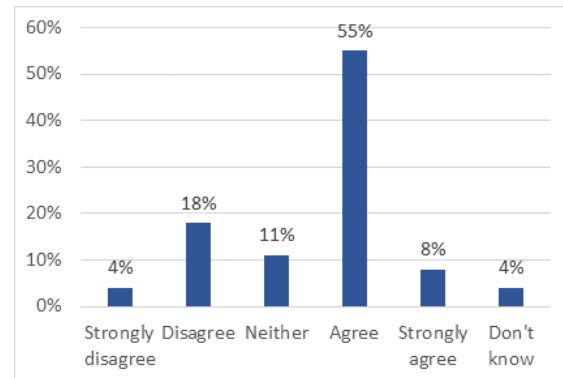


### 3.2.9 Housing

#### Indicator – Affordability of housing costs

Just under two thirds (63%) of respondents agreed that their current housing costs were affordable (housing costs included things like rent or mortgage, rates, house insurance and house maintenance).

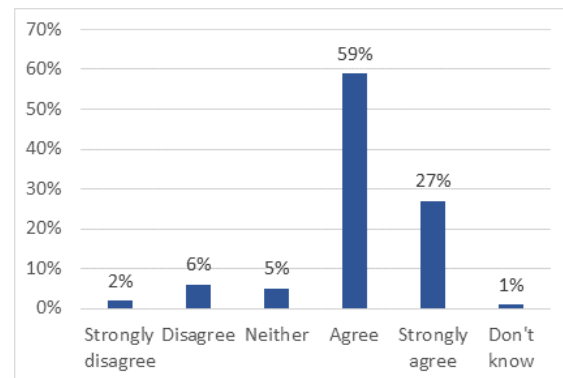
**Figure 39: Affordability of housing costs**



#### Indicator – Suitability of dwelling type

A large proportion (86%) of respondents agreed that the type of home they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.

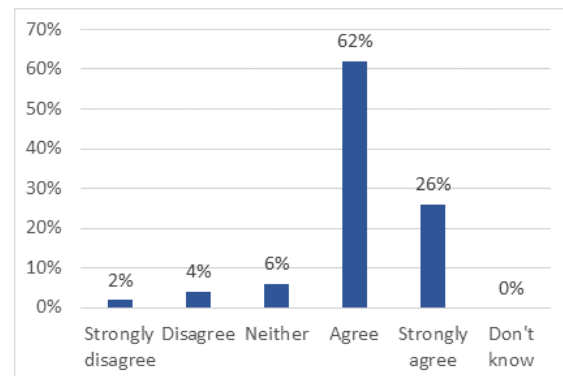
**Figure 40: Suitability of dwelling type**



#### Indicator – Suitability of location of home

A large proportion (88%) of respondents agreed that the general area, or neighbourhood, they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.

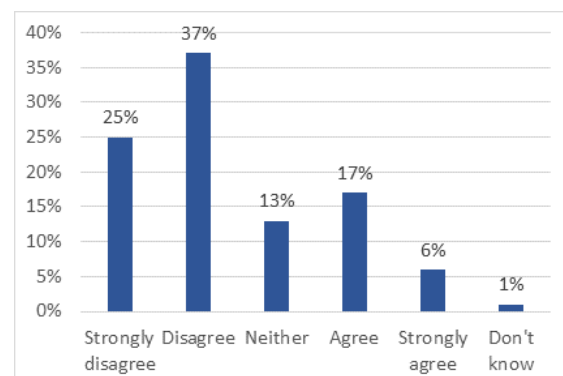
**Figure 41: Suitability of location of home**



#### Indicator – Home has a problem with damp or mould

Just under a quarter (23%) of respondents agreed that they had experienced problems with damp or mould in their home during winter.

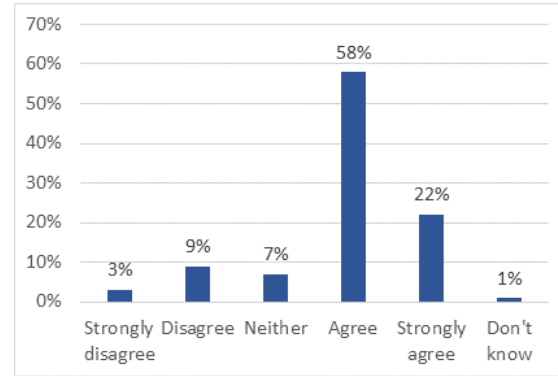
**Figure 42: Home has a problem with damp or mould**



**Indicator – Heating system keeps home warm when used**

Four in five (80%) respondents agreed that their heating system keeps their home warm when it is in use during winter.

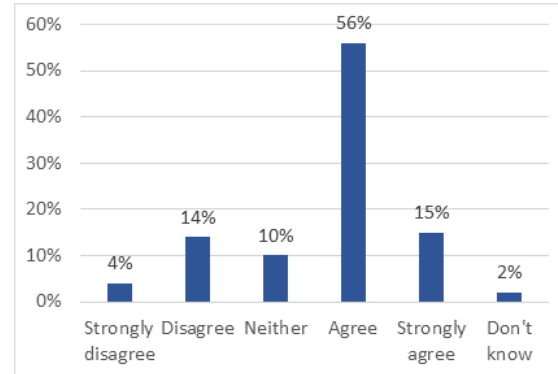
**Figure 43: Heating system keeps home warm when used**



**Indicator – Can afford to heat home properly**

Seven in ten (71%) respondents agreed that they can afford to heat their home properly during winter.

**Figure 44: Can afford to heat home properly**



### 3.2.10 Results by location (local authority areas)

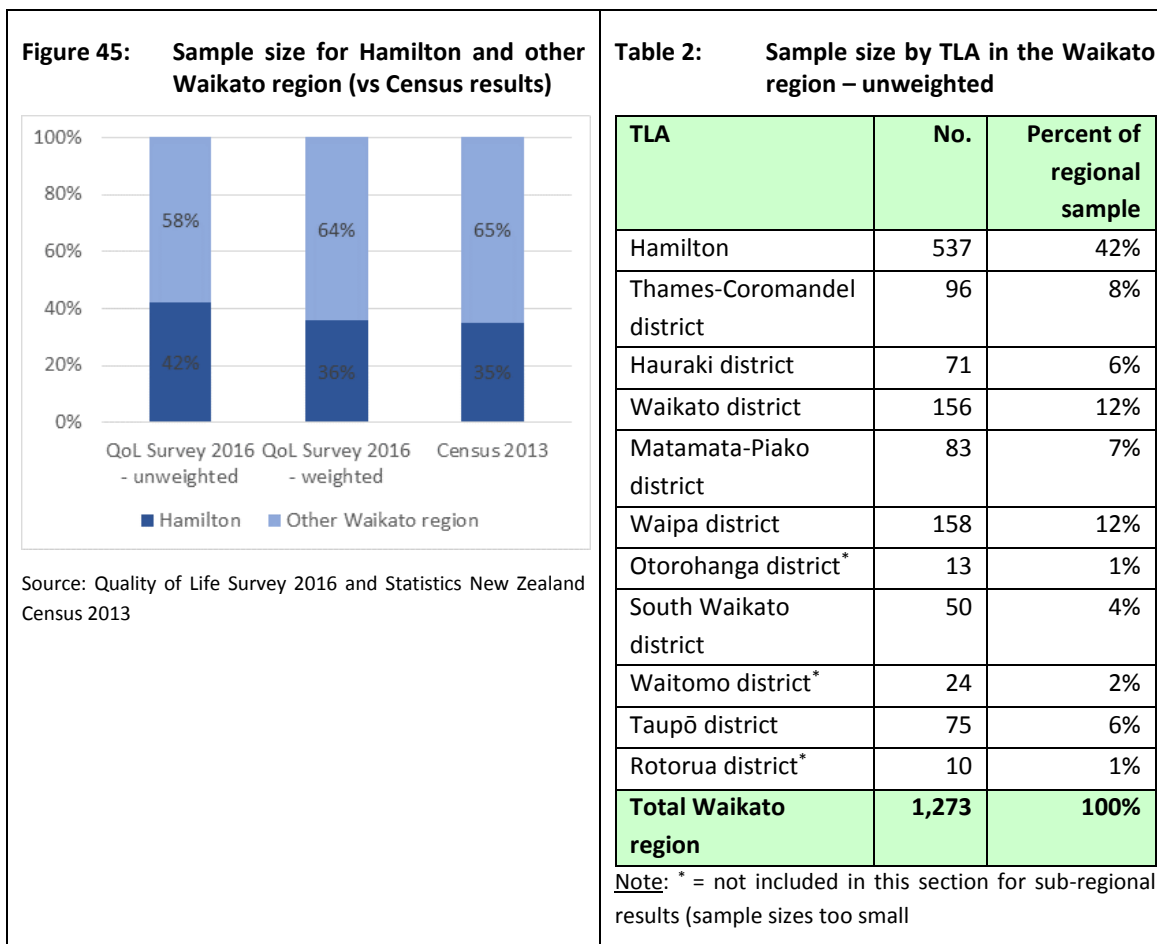
This section provides summary results from selected survey items grouped by territorial local authority (TLA) areas in the Waikato region.

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 results.

Results of statistical significance testing are available and key statistically significant results are reported below. An unweighted sample size below 30 is considered small. In these cases, the results are indicative only and should be interpreted with caution. For this reason, results are not reported here for Otorohanga ( $N = 13$ ), Waitomo ( $N = 24$ ) or Rotorua ( $N = 10$ ).

### 3.2.11 City vs non-city sample size

Of the 1,280 Waikato regional residents who responded to the 2016 Quality of Life survey, 537 (42 per cent) were from Hamilton and 743 (58 per cent) were from other parts of the Waikato region. This provided a sufficient sample size for both the city and other regional results to enable meaningful population inferences. The sampling error for the overall Waikato region including Hamilton was  $\pm 2.8$  per cent (at the 95 per cent confidence interval) and for the city of Hamilton  $\pm 4.2$  per cent.

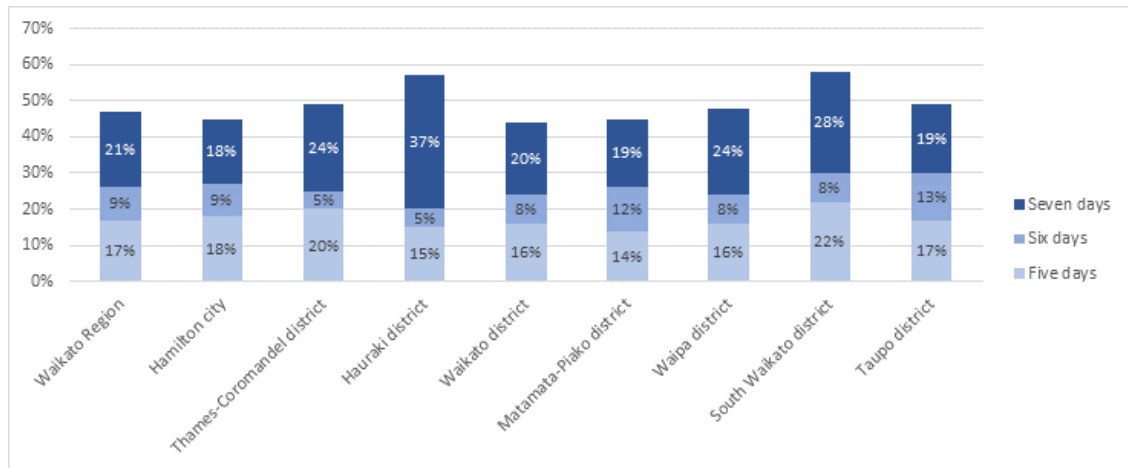


### 3.2.12 Local authority sample sizes

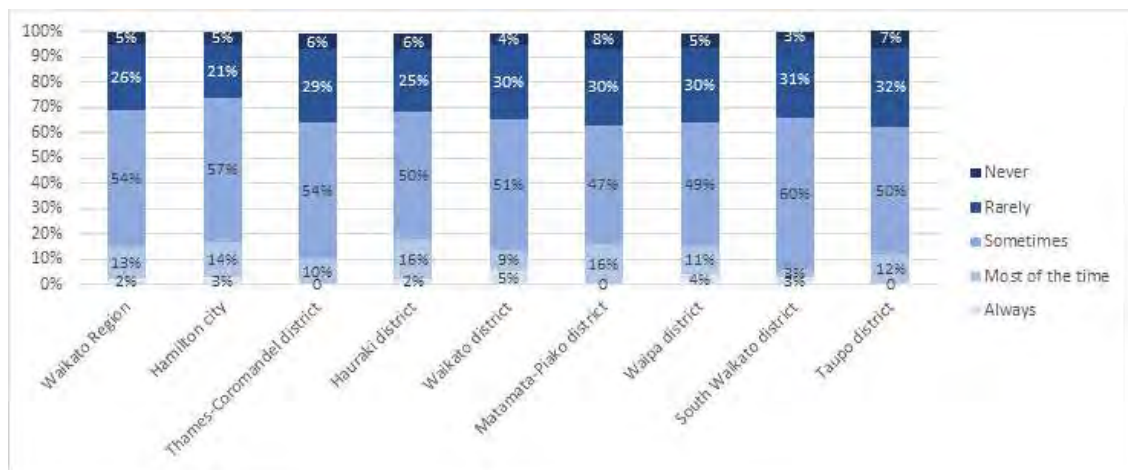
In addition to Hamilton, other regions with relatively large sample sizes ( $N > 100$ ) were the Waikato and Waipa districts. For other districts, the disaggregated survey results (cross-tabs) are less reliable, with sampling errors ranging from approximately  $\pm 10$  per cent to  $\pm 14$  per cent. Sampling errors higher than  $\pm 15$  per cent were associated with Otorohanga, Waitomo and Rotorua (results not reported here).



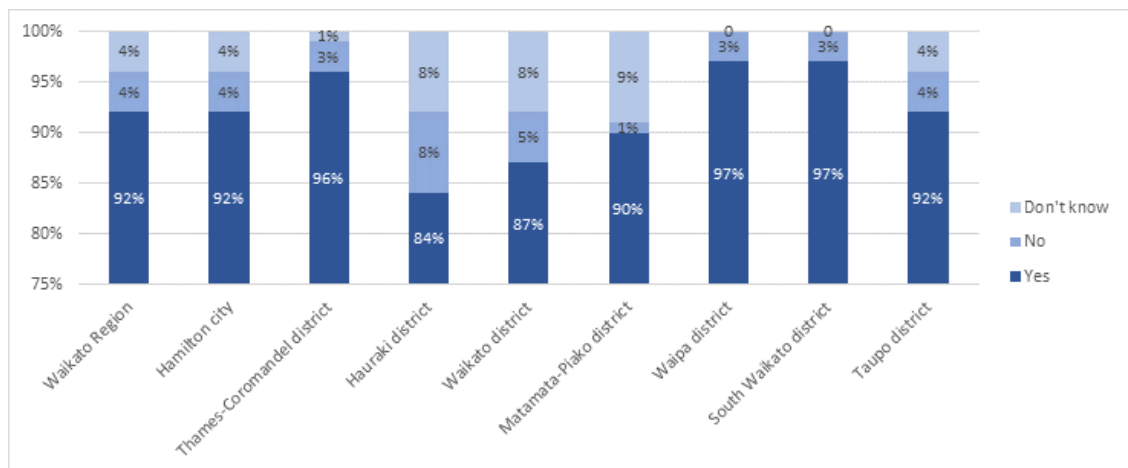
**Figure 46: Frequency of doing physical activity – Waikato region and TLAs**



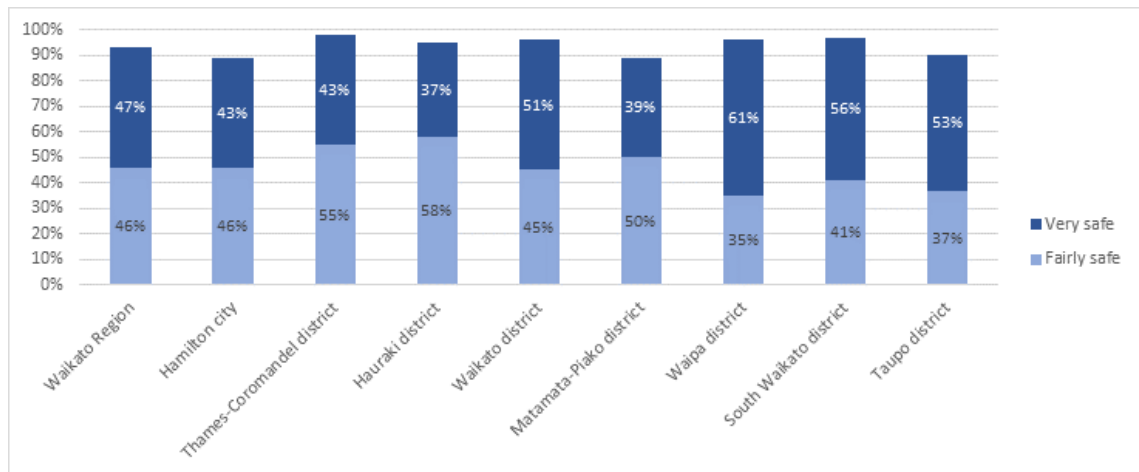
**Figure 47: Stress – Waikato region and TLAs**



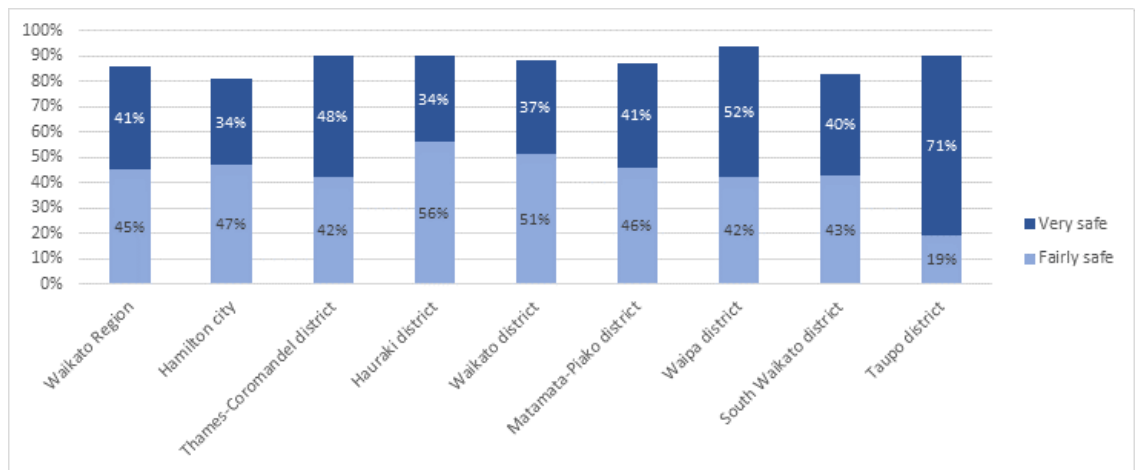
**Figure 48: Availability of support (% Yes) – Waikato region and TLAs**



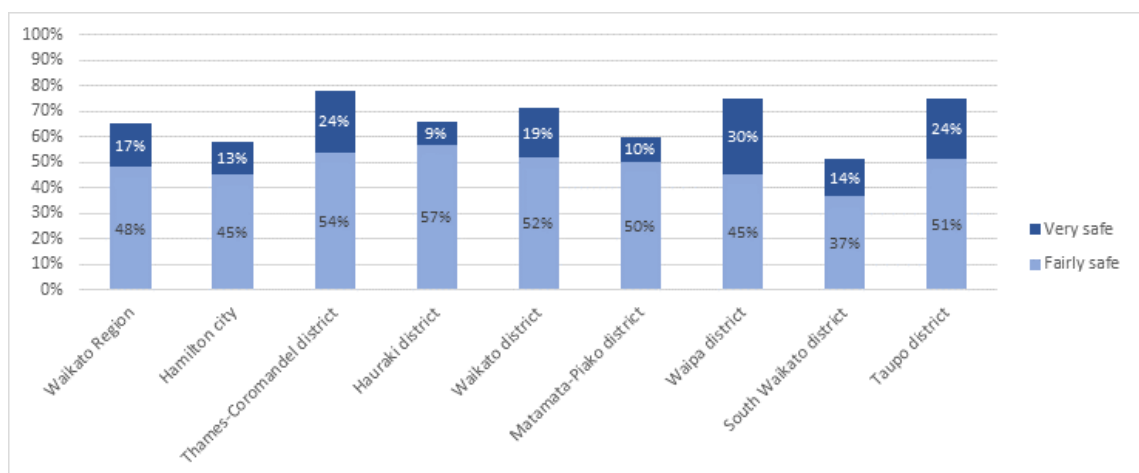
**Figure 49: Perceived safety in own home after dark – Waikato region and TLAs**



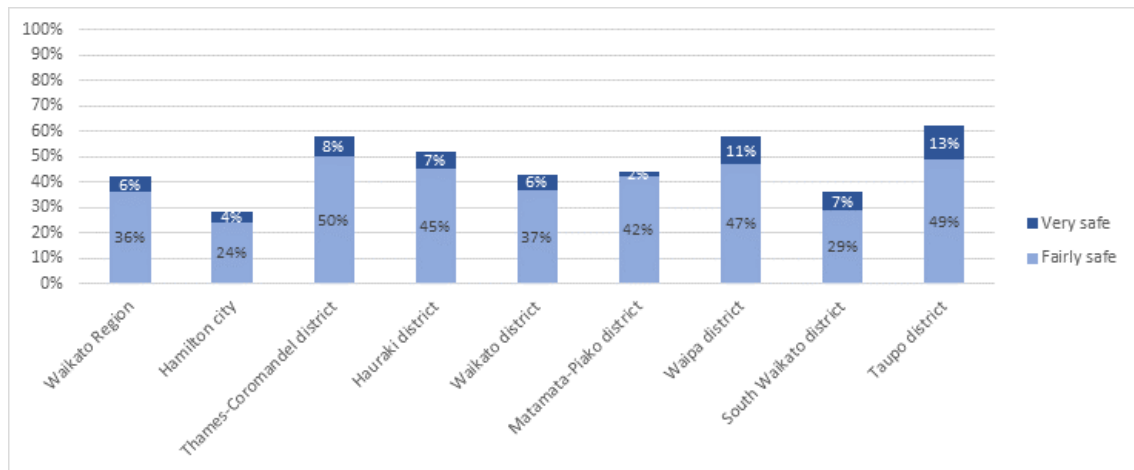
**Figure 50: Perceived safety in city centre during the day – Waikato region and TLAs**



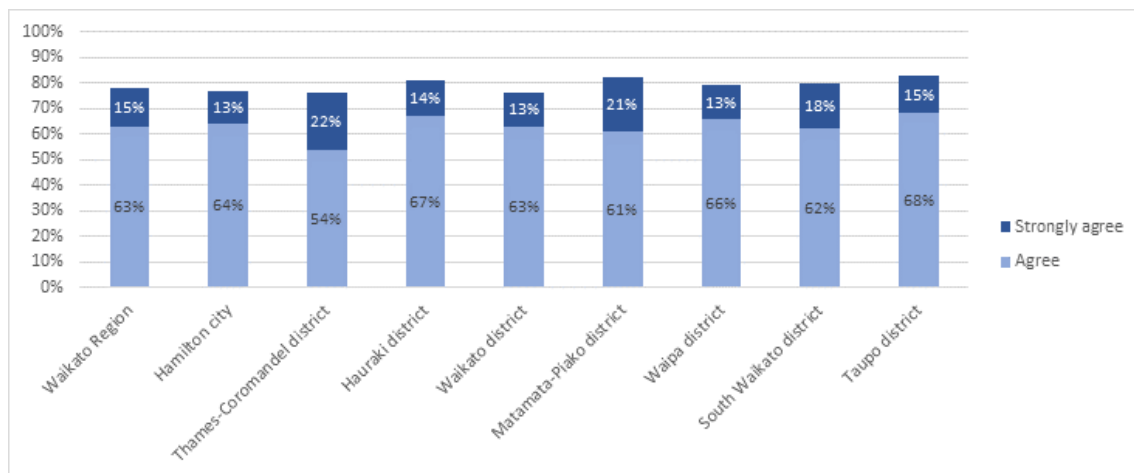
**Figure 51: Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark – Waikato region and TLAs**



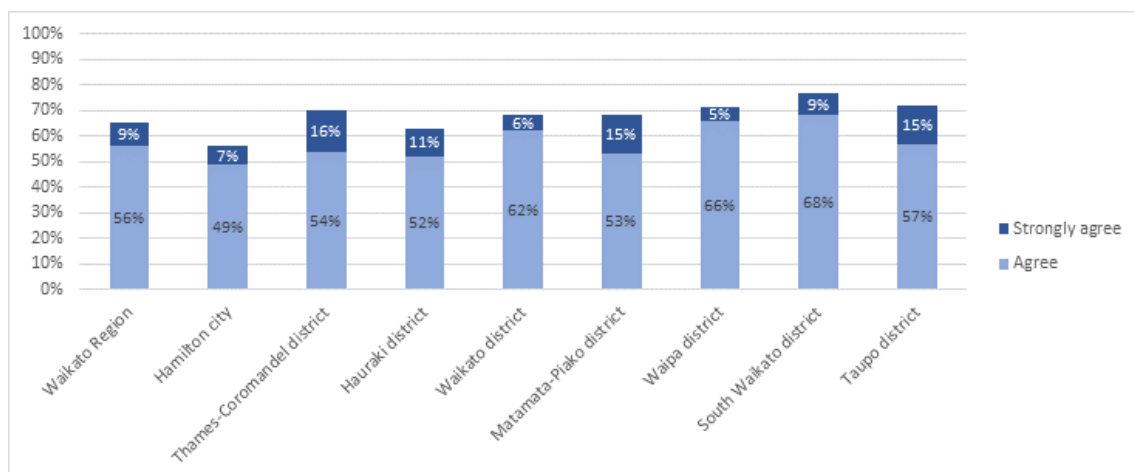
**Figure 52: Perceived safety in city centre after dark – Waikato region and TLAs**



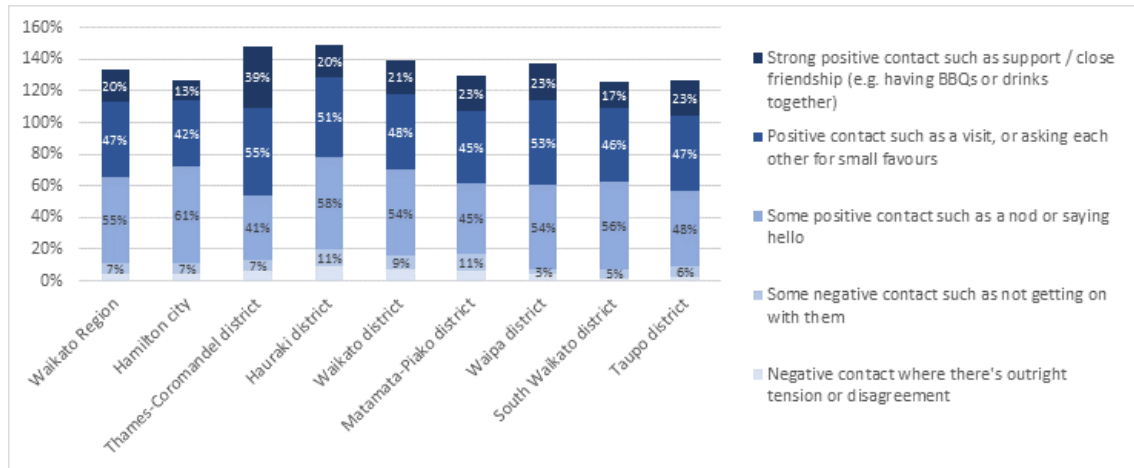
**Figure 53: Importance of sense of community – Waikato region and TLAs**



**Figure 54: Sense of community experienced – Waikato region and TLAs**

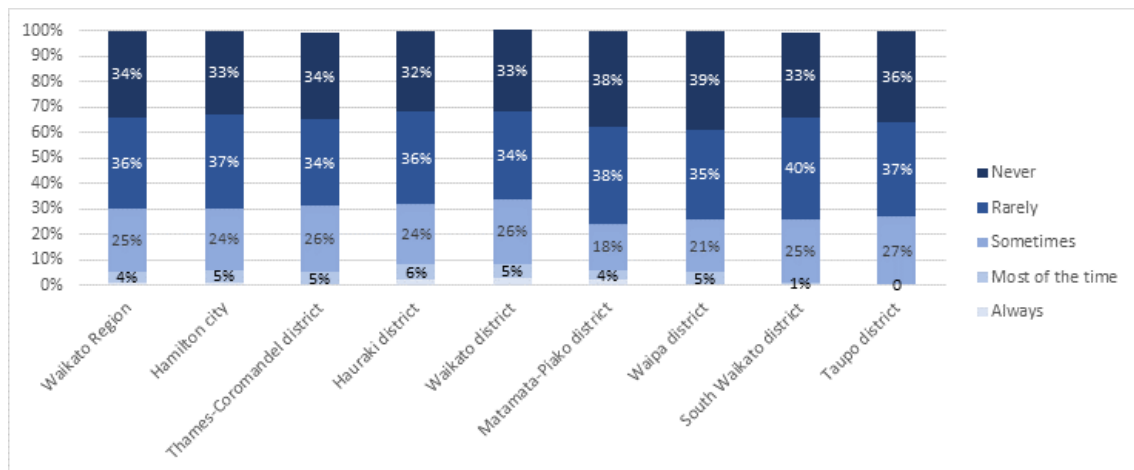


**Figure 55: Positivity of contact with people in the neighbourhood – Waikato region and TLAs**

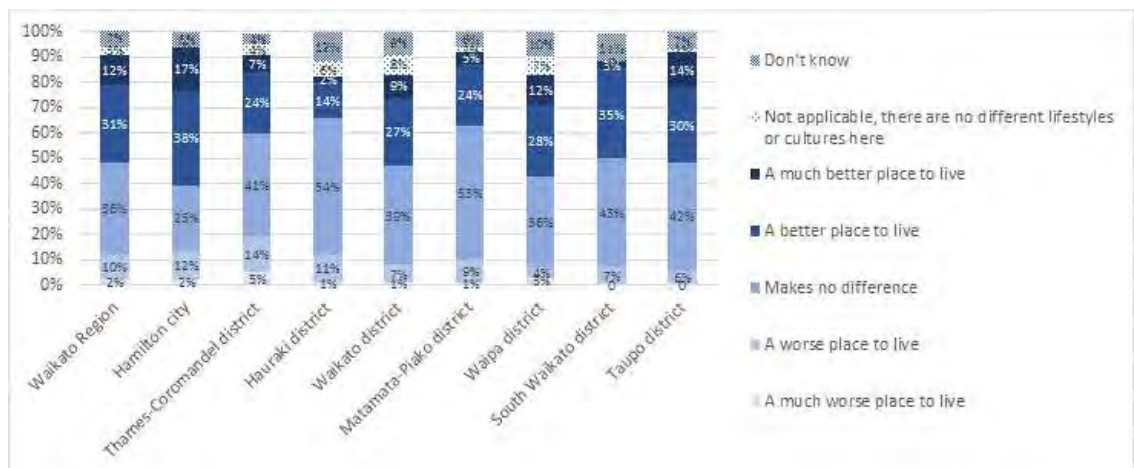


Note: Multiple response question. Percentages will sum to more than 100%.

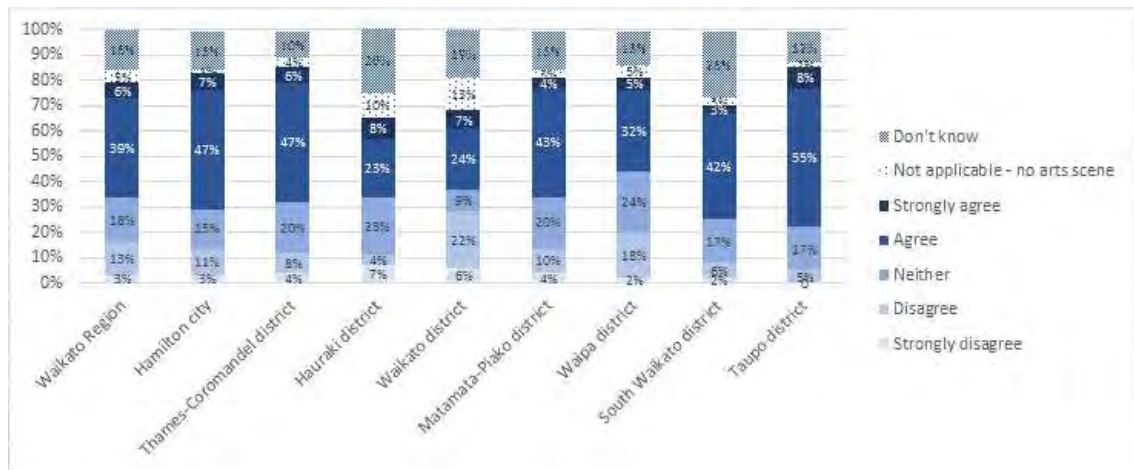
**Figure 56: Frequency of feeling isolated – Waikato region and TLAs**



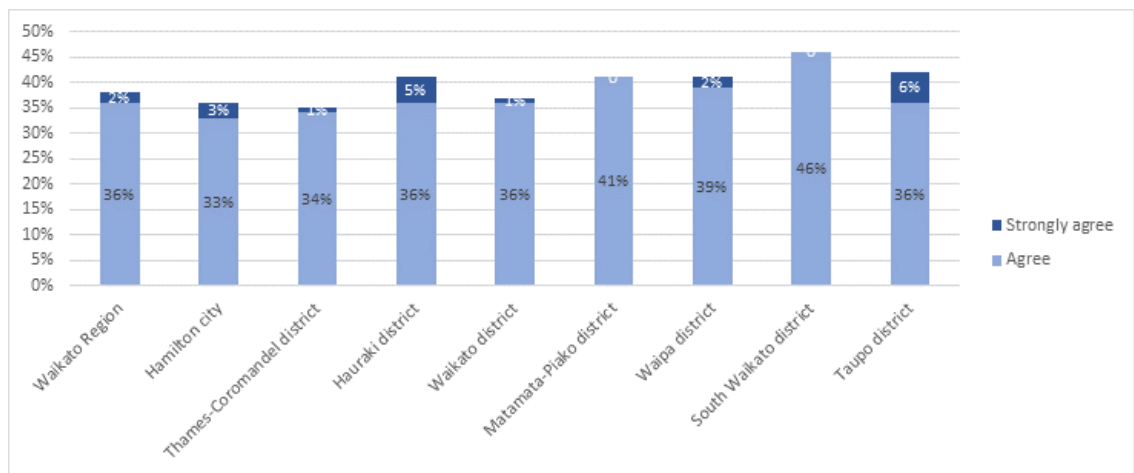
**Figure 57: Perception of impact of greater cultural diversity – Waikato region and TLAs**



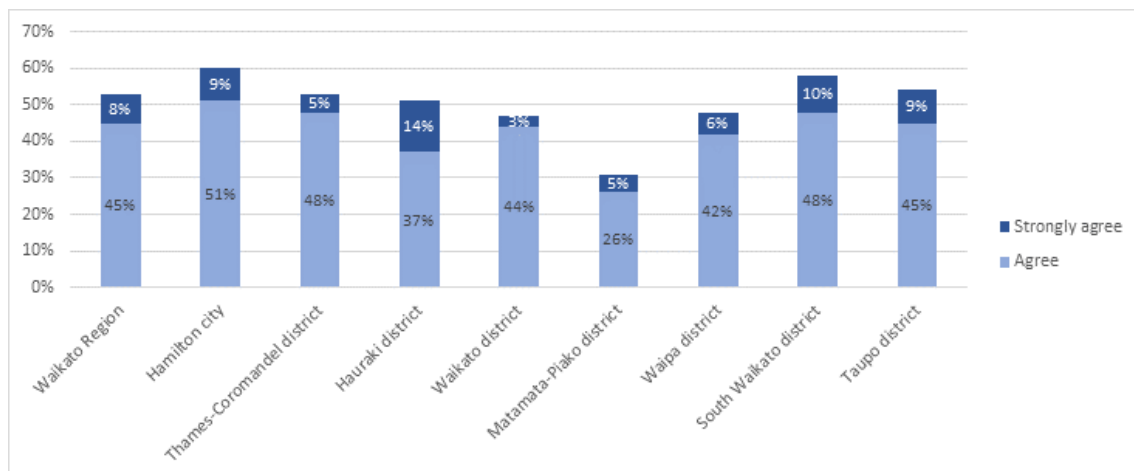
**Figure 58: Culturally rich and diverse arts scene – Waikato region and TLAs**



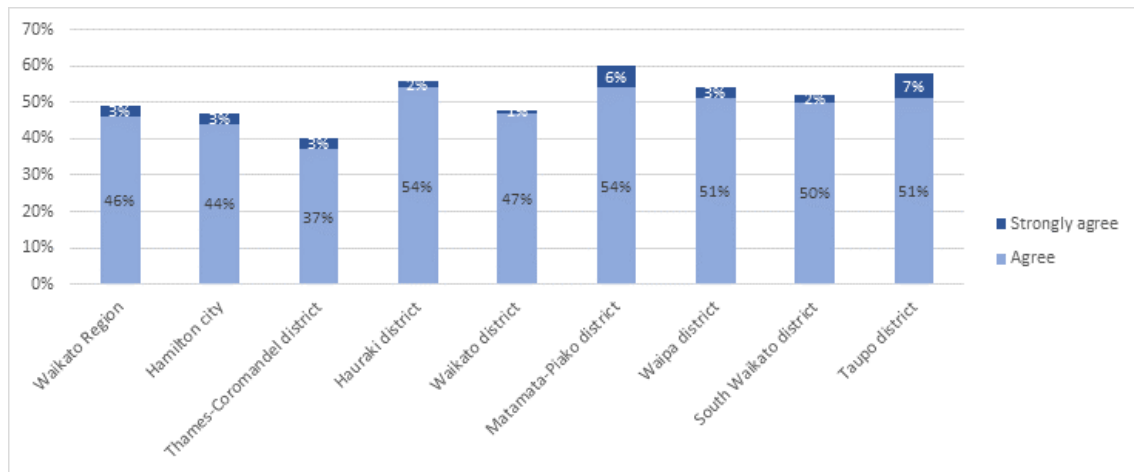
**Figure 59: Understanding of Council decision-making processes – Waikato region and TLAs**



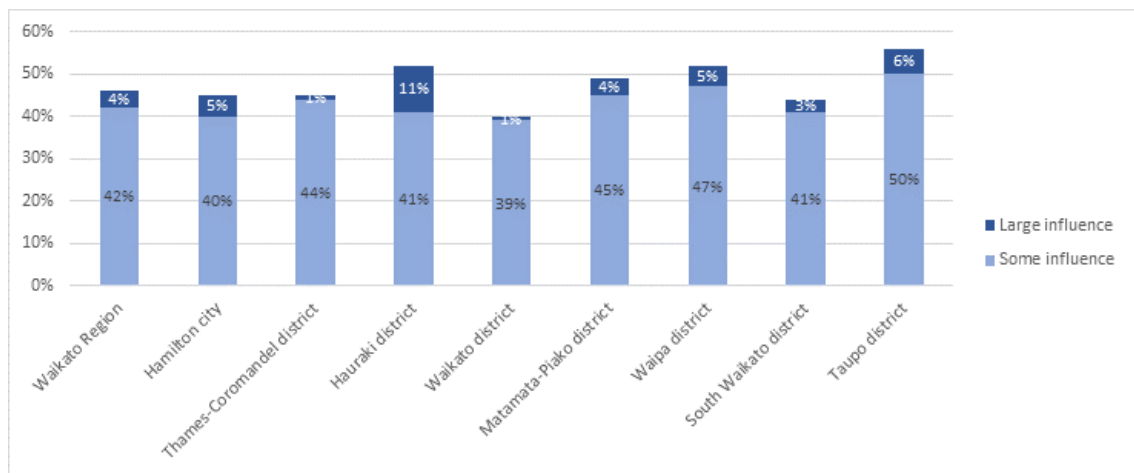
**Figure 60: Desire to have more say in what Council does – Waikato region and TLAs**



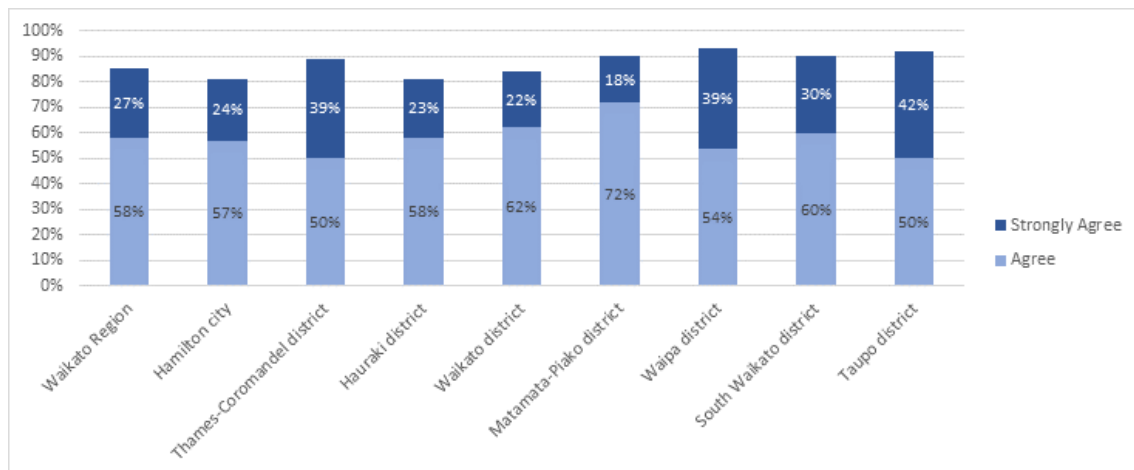
**Figure 61: Confidence in Council decision-making – Waikato region and TLAs**



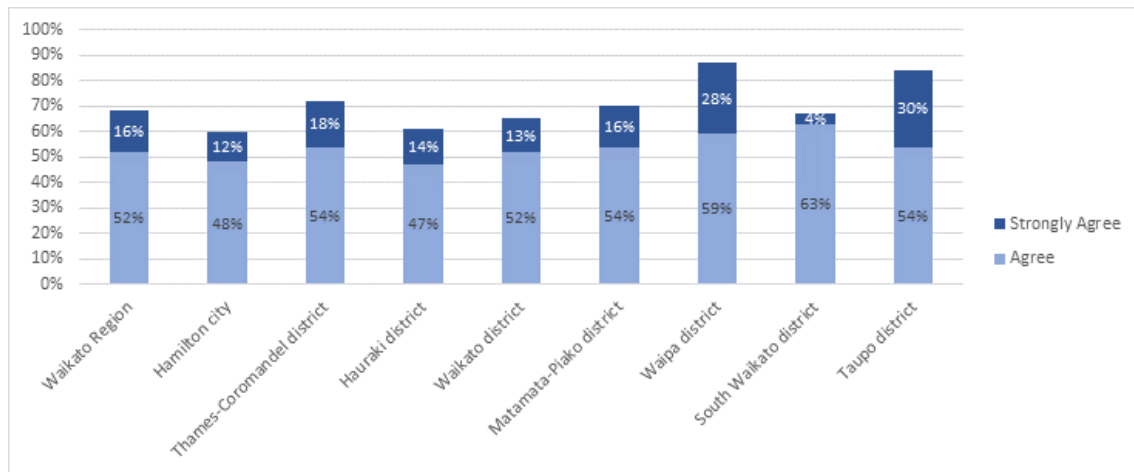
**Figure 62: Perception of public's influence on Council decision making – Waikato region and TLAs**



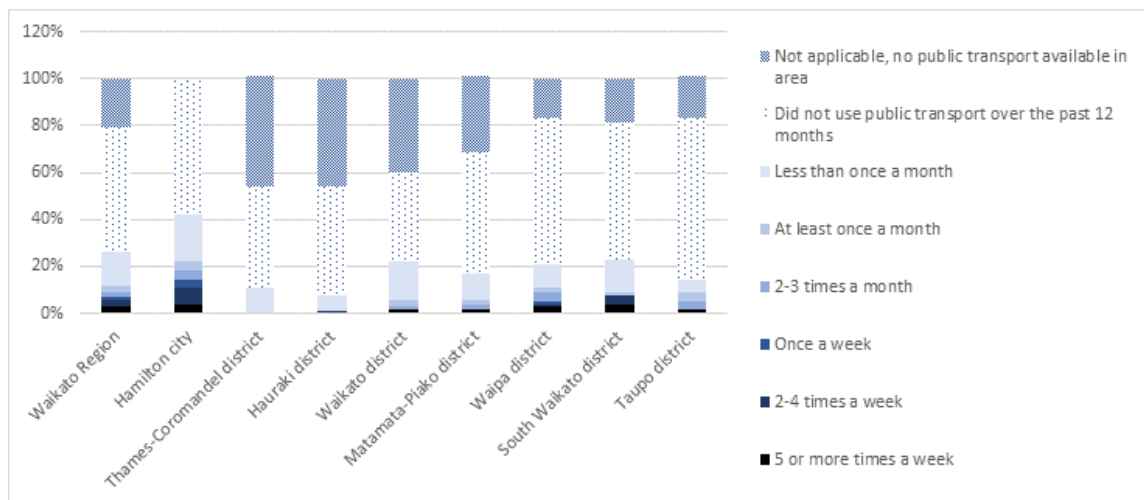
**Figure 63: Perception of city/local area as a great place to live – Waikato region and TLAs**



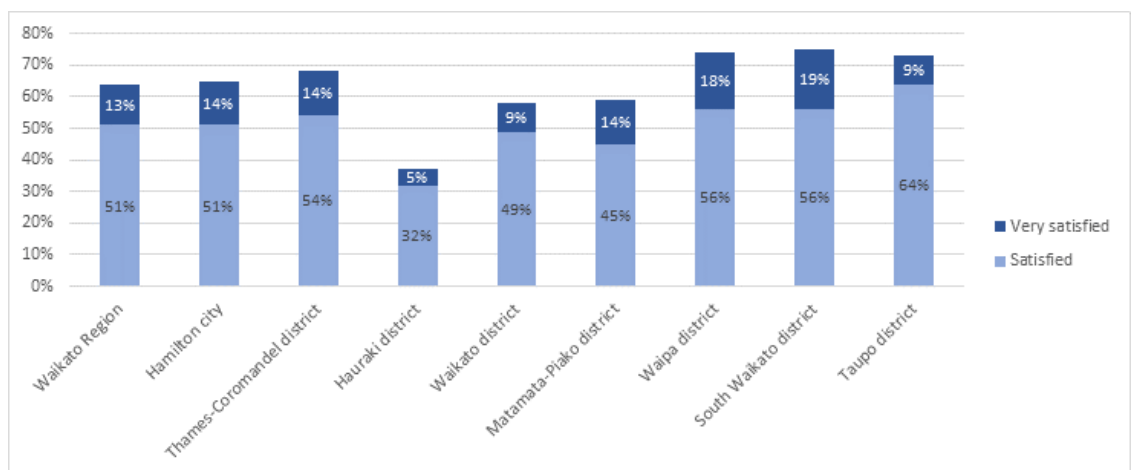
**Figure 64: Pride in look and feel of city/local area – Waikato region and TLAs**



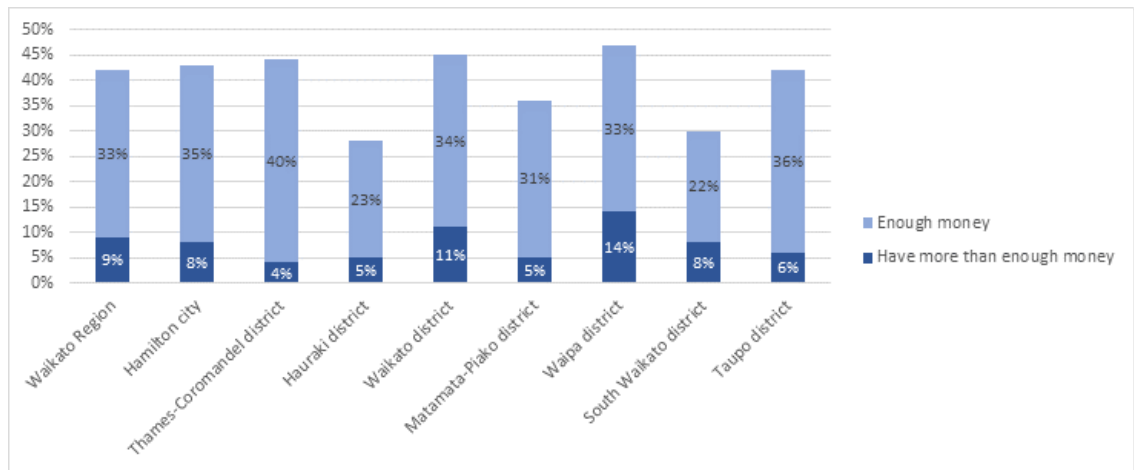
**Figure 65: Frequency of use of public transport – Waikato region and TLAs**



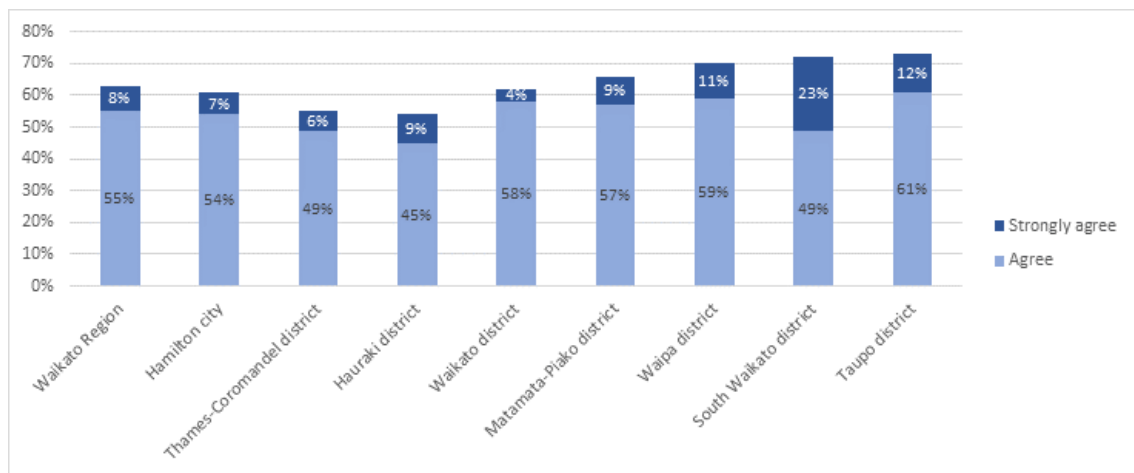
**Figure 66: Balance between work and other aspects of life – Waikato region and TLAs**



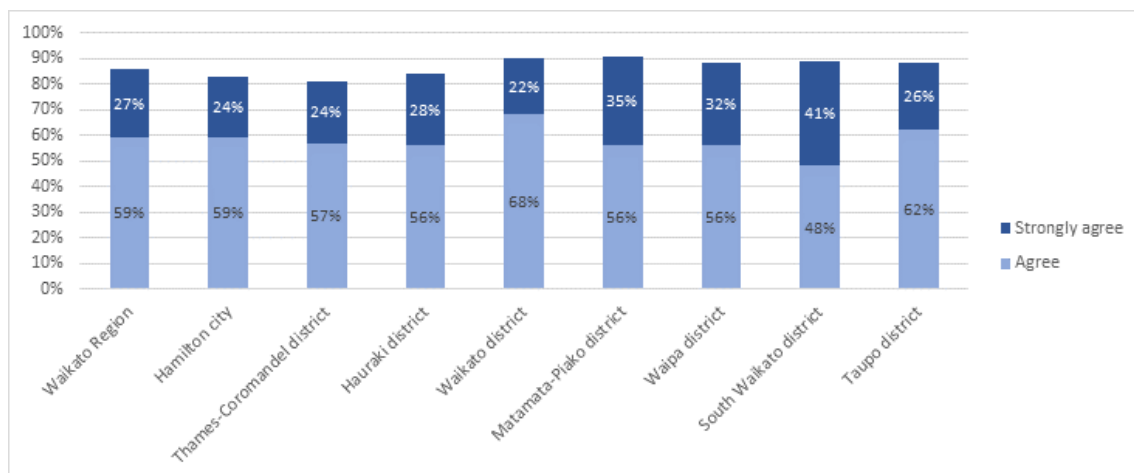
**Figure 67: Ability to cover costs of everyday needs – Waikato region and TLAs**



**Figure 68: Affordability of housing costs – Waikato region and TLAs**

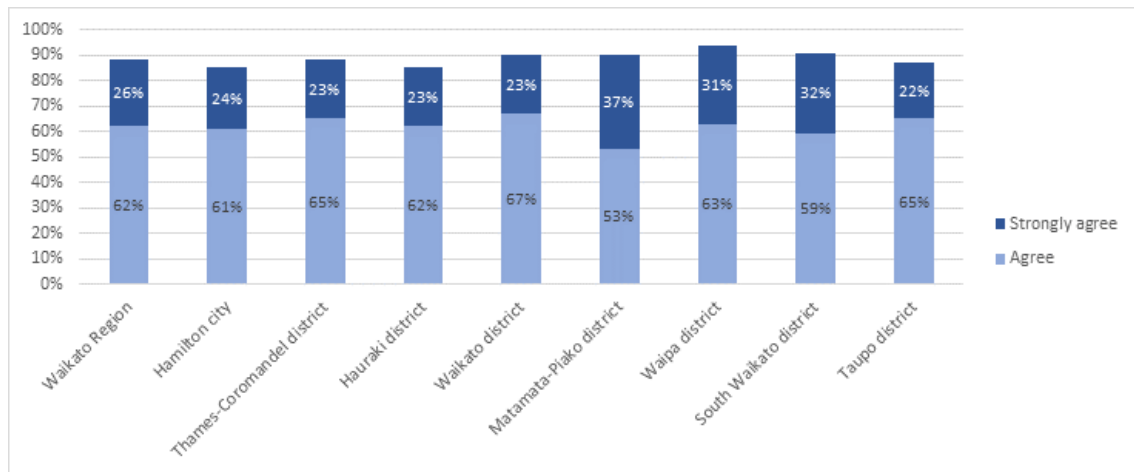


**Figure 69: Suitability of dwelling type – Waikato region and TLAs**

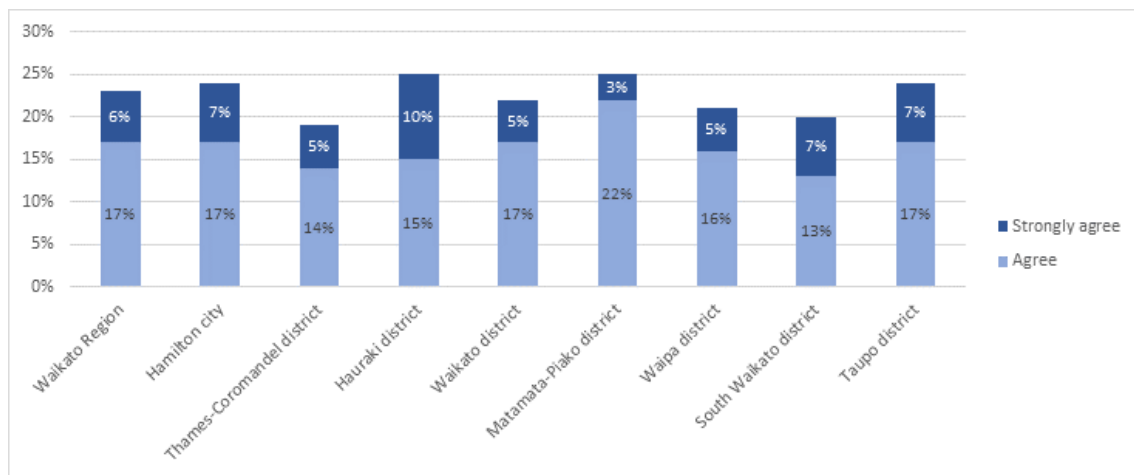




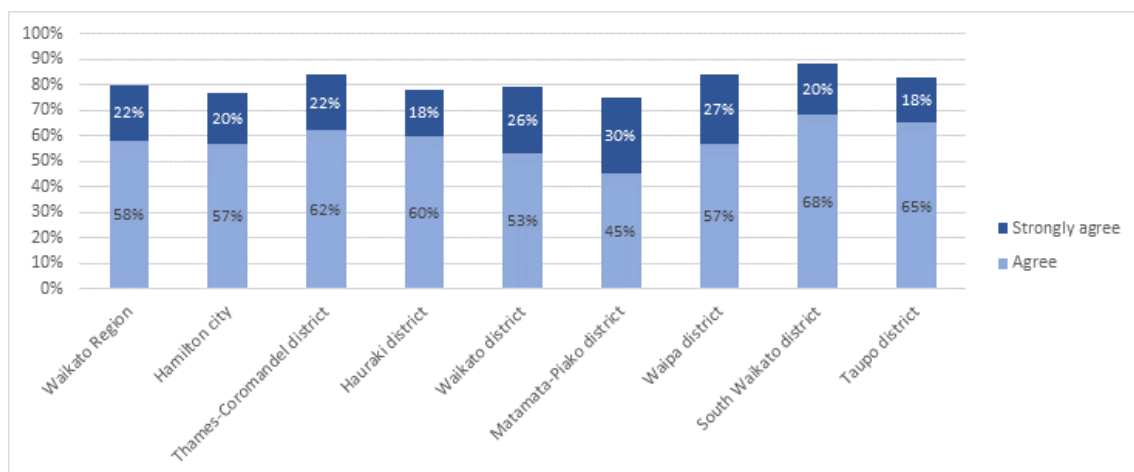
**Figure 70: Suitability of location of home – Waikato region and TLAs**



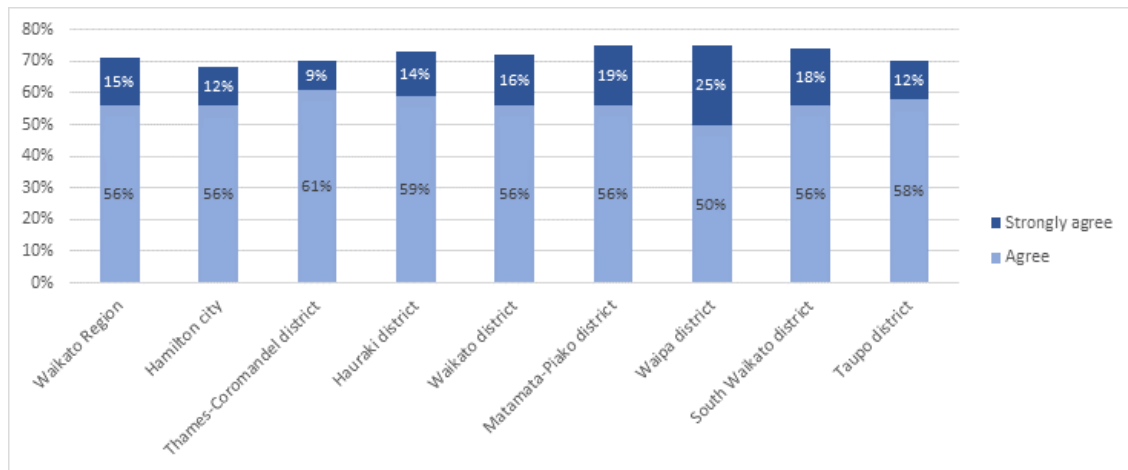
**Figure 71: Home has a problem with damp or mould – Waikato region and TLAs**



**Figure 72: Heating system keeps home warm when used – Waikato region and TLAs**



**Figure 73: Can afford to heat home properly – Waikato region and TLAs**



### 3.2.13 Summary of results by location (local authority)

There was a considerable amount of diversity in responses to some items between TLAs. Statistically significant differences from the Waikato regional average include the following. Note that the statistical significance threshold depends on two key aspects: (1) size of difference between TLA and Waikato region results, and (2) TLA sample size. Differences for some TLAs which are visible on the graphs may not be statistically significant due to their small sample size. Not all survey questions were included in this section, specifically survey questions related to public transport (section 3.2.7) as they are mainly relevant to Hamilton.

**Hamilton city** respondents ( $N = 537$ ) were:

- less likely to report that they rarely or never experienced stress (26% compared to 31% Waikato regional average)
- less likely to report feeling safe in their own home after dark (89% compared to 93%), in their city centre during the day (81% compared to 86%), walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (58% compared to 65%) or in their city centre after dark (28% compared to 42%)
- less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (56% compared to 65%)
- 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 (55% compared to 43%)
- more likely to agree that they would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does (60% compared to 53%)
- less likely to agree that their city/local area is a great place to live (81% compared to 85%)
- less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (60% compared to 68%)
- more likely to use public transport
- less likely to report that public transport is not available in their area, particularly compared to areas such as Thames-Coromandel, Hauraki, Waikato district and Matamata-Piako

- more likely to agree that public transport was affordable (54% compared to 49%), safe (74% compared to 68%), reliable (61% compared to 54%) and frequent (66% compared to 50%)
- less likely to be not in employment and not looking for work (e.g. full-time parent, retired person) (19% compared to 24%)
- less likely to agree that the type of home they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household (83% compared to 86%)
- less likely to agree that their heating system keeps their home warm when it is in use during winter (77% compare to 80%).

**Thames-Coromandel district** respondents ( $N = 96$ ) were:

- more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (78% compared to 65%) and in their city centre after dark (58% compared to 42%)
- less likely to agree that public transport was easy to get to (37% compared to 64%), reliable (35% compared to 54%) or frequent (27% compared to 50%)
- less likely to be employed (52% compared to 68%) and more likely to be not in paid employment and not looking for work (e.g. full-time parent, retired person) (42% compared to 24%).

**Hauraki district** respondents ( $N = 71$ ) were:

- less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively (71% compared to 84%)
- less likely to agree that public transport was affordable (27% compared to 49%), safe (50% compared to 68%), easy to get to (35% compared to 64%), reliable (32% compared to 54%) or frequent (27% compared to 50%)
- less likely to report being satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life (37% compared to 64%)
- less likely to report having enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs for things such as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities (28% compared to 42%).

**Waikato district** respondents ( $N = 156$ ) were:

- less likely to feel they have someone to rely on for help if faced with physical injury or illness, or if in need of support during an emotionally difficult time (87% compared to 92%)
- more likely to *disagree* that they consider their local area to have a diverse and culturally rich arts scene (22% compared to 13%)
- *less* likely to report that they did *not* use public transport over the past 12 months (38% compared to 53%).

**Matamata-Piako** district respondents ( $N = 83$ ) were:

- less likely to agree that they would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does (31% compared to 53%)
- less likely to agree that public transport was safe (50% compared to 68%), easy to get to (44% compared to 64%) or frequent (23% compared to 50%)

- less likely to be employed full-time (40% compared to 52%).

**Waipa district** respondents ( $N = 158$ ) were:

- more likely to feel they have someone to rely on for help if faced with physical injury or illness, or if in need of support during an emotionally difficult time (97% compared to 92%)
- more likely to report feeling safe in their city centre during the day (94% compared to 86%), walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (75% compared to 65%) and in their city centre after dark (58% compared to 42%)
- more likely to agree that their city/local area is a great place to live (93% compared to 85%)
- more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (87% compared to 68%)
- more likely to report that they did *not* use public transport over the past 12 months (62% compare to 53%)
- less likely to agree that public transport was easy to get to (51% compared to 64%) or frequent (38% compared to 50%)
- more likely to report being satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life (74% compared to 64%)
- more likely to agree that the general area, or neighbourhood, they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household (94% compared to 88%).

**South Waikato district** respondents ( $N = 50$ ) were:

- more likely to report feeling that their quality of life had improved over the past year (46% compared to 29%).

**Taupō district** respondents ( $N = 75$ ) were:

- more likely to rate their health positively (96% compared to 84%)
- more likely to report feeling safe in their city centre after dark (62% compared to 42%)
- more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (84% compared to 68%)
- more likely to report that they did *not* use public transport over the past 12 months (69% compare to 53%)

### 3.3 WPI results by age group, gender and ethnicity

This sub-section provides summary results by age group, gender and ethnicity at the regional level for those survey results that are included in the WPI indicators (refer Section 1.7). This information will be incorporated into the next WPI data update in May 2017. 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 results.

### 3.3.1 WPI results by age group

Respondents **aged 18 to 24** ( $N = 164$ ) were:

- less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (56% compared to 68%)
- less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (43% compared to 65%).

Respondents **aged 25 to 49** ( $N = 539$ ) were:

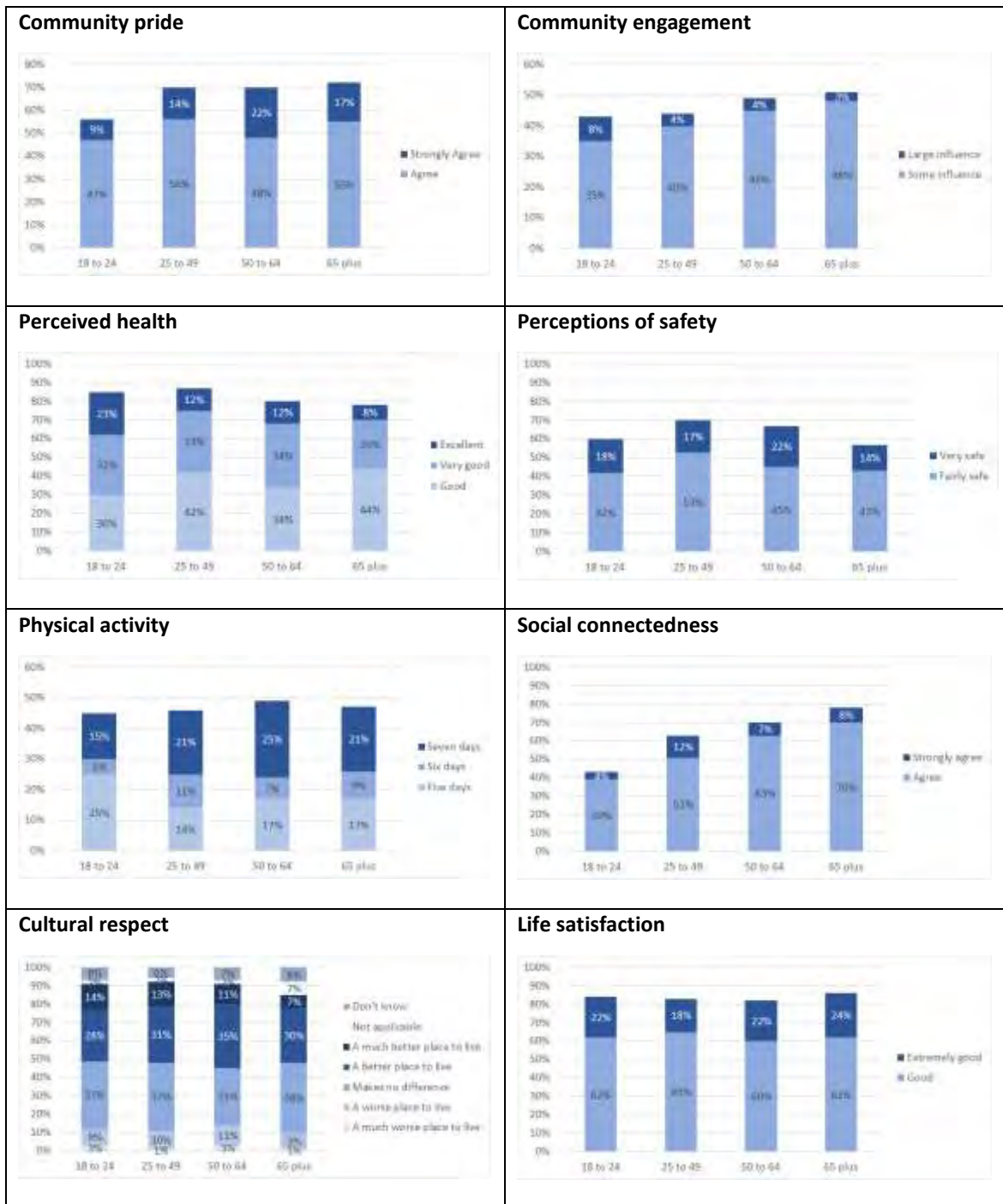
- more likely to rate their health positively (87% compared to 84%)
- more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (70% compared to 65%).

Respondents **aged 50 to 64** ( $N = 321$ ) were not statistically significant from the regional average (for all ages) on any of the eight WPI indicators.

Respondents **aged 65 plus** ( $N = 256$ ) were:

- less likely to rate their health positively (78% compared to 84%)
- 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 (37% compared to 43%)
- more likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (51% compared to 46%)
- less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (57% compared to 65%)
- more likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (78% compared to 65%).

**Figure 74: WPI results by age group**



### 3.3.2 Results by gender

This sub-section provides summary results by gender at the regional level for the WPI indicators. This information will be incorporated into the next WPI data update.

Male respondents ( $N = 613$ ) were substantially more likely than female respondents ( $N = 666$ ) to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. The percentage who agreed or strongly agreed was 78% for males and 53% for females (compared to 65% regional average for males and females combined).

Males and females were not statistically significant from the regional average (for males and females combined) on any of the other seven WPI indicators.

Figure 75: WPI results by gender



### 3.3.3 Results by ethnic group

This sub-section provides summary results by ethnic group at the regional level for the WPI indicators. This information will be incorporated into the next WPI data update.

Respondents who identified with the **New Zealand European/ Other ethnic group** ( $N = 1026$ ) were:<sup>17</sup>

- more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (69% compared to 68%)
- more likely to rate their overall health positively (84% slightly above the sample average)
- more likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the last seven days (50% compared to 47%)
- 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 (42% compared to 43%)
- less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (64% compared to 65%)
- more likely to rate their overall quality of life positively (85% compared to 84%).

Respondents who identified with the **Māori ethnic group** ( $N = 234$ ) were:

- less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively (76% compared to 84%)
- less likely to rate their overall health positively (73% compared to 84%).

Respondents who identified with the **Pacific ethnic group** ( $N = 38$ ) were not statistically significant from the regional average (for all ethnic groups) on any of the eight WPI 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** ( $N = 94$ ) were:

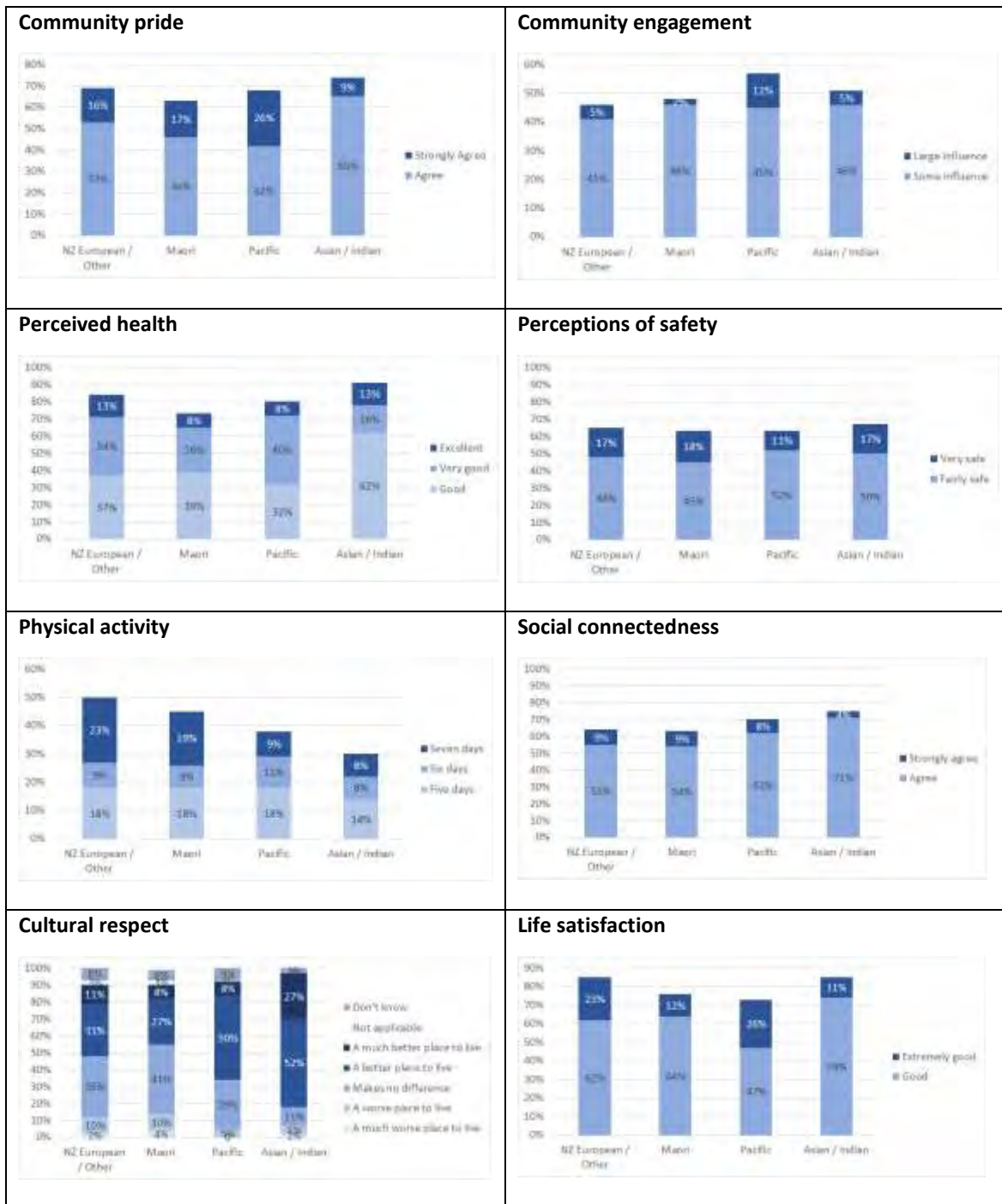
- more likely to agree that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city/area a better place to live (79% compared to 43%)

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<sup>17</sup> 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 76: WPI results by ethnic group



### 3.4 WPI results – region and cities comparisons

This section shows comparative headline results for the Waikato region, Hamilton city, seven cities average, Auckland and Wellington regional areas for the eight WPI indicators (refer Section 1.7). Comparisons with other individual cities are not provided in this report but city-level survey results are available in reports on the Quality of Life website<sup>18</sup>.

#### 3.4.1 Graphs of regional and cities comparisons

Figure 77: WPI results – region and cities comparisons



<sup>18</sup> <http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/>

### 3.4.2 Summary of regional and cities comparisons

- **Waikato region** and **Wellington region** responses were not statistically significantly different from the seven cities total results on any of the eight WPI indicators sourced from this survey.
- **Hamilton** respondents were:
  - more likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (45% compared to seven cities average 40%)
  - less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (58% compared to seven cities average 63%)
- **Auckland** respondents were:
  - 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 a better place to live (52% compared to seven cities average 56%)
  - less likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (36% compared to seven cities average 40%)
  - less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (60% compared to seven cities average 63%)

## 4 WPI results – time series 2006 to 2016

The Waikato region participated previously in the 2006 Quality of Life Survey through a regional booster sample.<sup>19</sup> So long as the 2006 and 2016 results are comparable, this enables regional trends to be identified for the eight indicators to be incorporated into the Waikato Progress Indicators (WPI) regional wellbeing monitoring initiative. The table below shows that both the 2006 and 2016 surveys had sufficient sample size to make strong inferences, and had similar demographic representation. Other methodology aspects were also similar as described in the 2006 and 2016 survey reports.

**Table 3: Comparison of 2006 and 2016 Waikato regional samples**

	2006		2016	
<b>Sample size</b>				
Hamilton	237	34%	457	36%
Other Waikato Region	455	66%	823	64%
Total Waikato Region	692	100%	1280	100%
<b>Age group</b>				
18 to 24	64	9%	188	15%
25 to 49	343	50%	393	31%
50 to 64	172	25%	329	26%
65 plus	113	16%	370	29%
Total age groups	692	100%	1280	100%
<b>Ethnic groups</b>				
NZ European / Other	499	72%	1131	82%
Maori	147	21%	179	13%
Pacific	26	4%	24	2%
Asian / Indian	19	3%	39	3%
Total ethnic groups	691	100%	1373	100%

### 4.1 Comparison of 2016 and 2006 survey questions

A key risk for being able to correctly interpret the results over time is that survey questions and/or scales changed between the 2006 and 2016 surveys.<sup>20</sup> The table below was compiled from a review of the survey questionnaires for each of the eight WPI indicators. This showed that:

- For the 2006 survey design, most questions were kept consistent with previous years but refined, for example, by introducing a more standardised sentence structure across different items. For the 2016 survey design, the 2014 questionnaire was reviewed and some questions were removed (e.g. life satisfaction) and others added (e.g. aspects of keeping home warm in winter) but most questions were kept the same as previous years.
- For questions on ‘Pride in look and feel of city/local area’, ‘Overall health’, ‘Frequency of physical activity’, ‘Sense of community experienced’ and ‘Overall quality of life’, the only material difference from the 2016 questionnaire was inclusion of a ‘Don’t know’ option in the 2006 responses, however this was very seldom given as a response.
- All other aspects were similar between the 2006 and 2016 questionnaires for these eight items apart from minor wording changes, different introductory text in some cases, and

<sup>19</sup> 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.

<sup>20</sup> The 2006 questionnaire is at [www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2006/Appendices.pdf](http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2006/Appendices.pdf). A 2016 sample regional questionnaire is provided in [www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2016/QoL-Technical-Report-2016.pdf](http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/pdfs/2016/QoL-Technical-Report-2016.pdf).

different ordering of questions. Overall, there should be a relatively high level of validity in comparing 2006 and 2016 Waikato regional results for these items.

**Table 4: Comparison of selected 2006 and 2016 Quality of Life Survey items**

Topic	Survey questions and scales	
	2006	2016
Pride in look and feel of city/local area	On a scale of one to five where one is strongly disagree and five is strongly agree rate your agreement with the statement 'I feel a sense of pride in the way (CITY/LOCAL AREA) looks and feels'? Scored from 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree (plus Don't know)	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? 'I feel a sense of pride in the way (CITY/LOCAL AREA) looks and feels' Scored from 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree
Overall health	In general how would you rate your health? Scored from 1 Poor to 5 Excellent (plus Don't know)	In general how would you rate your health? Scored from 1 Poor to 5 Excellent
Frequency of physical activity	Thinking about ALL your physical activities (including any physical tasks you might do at work, doing housework or playing sports) on how many of the last 7 days were you active (by "active" I mean doing 15 minutes or more of vigorous activity (this is activity which makes you breathe a lot harder than normal e.g. running), or 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise (e.g. brisk walking)? PROMPT: Being "active" is defined as doing 15 minutes or more of vigorous activity or 30 minutes or more of either brisk walking or moderate activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vigorous activity includes exercise such as running.</li> <li>• Moderate activities include exercise such as brisk walking, carrying light loads, bicycling at a regular pace, recreational swimming and gardening.</li> </ul> Scored from None to Seven days.	Thinking about ALL your physical activities (including any physical tasks you might do at work, doing housework or gardening, travelling from place to place or playing sports), on how many of the last 7 days were you active? By "active" we mean doing 15 minutes or more of vigorous activity, which makes you breathe a lot harder than normal, "huff and puff" like running, OR 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity which makes you breathe harder than normal, but only a little, like brisk walking. Other examples of moderate physical activity include carrying light loads, cycling at a regular pace, recreational swimming and gardening. Scored from None to Seven days.
Perception of Impact of greater cultural diversity	New Zealand is becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries. Overall, do you think this makes (CITY/LOCAL AREA)... Scored from 1 A much worse place to live to 5 A much better place to live (plus Don't know and Not applicable/no different lifestyle or	New Zealand is becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries. Overall, do you think this make (CITY/LOCAL AREA) ... Scored from 1 A much worse place to live to 5 A much better place to live (plus Not applicable/no different lifestyle or cultures here

Topic	Survey questions and scales	
	2006	2016
	cultures here)	and Don't know)
Perception of public's influence on Council decision making	Overall, how much influence do you feel the public has on the decisions the Council makes? Would you say the public has... Scored from 1 No influence to 4 Large influence (plus Don't know)	Overall, how much influence do you feel the public has on the decisions the Council makes? Would you say the public has... Score from 1 No influence to 4 Large influence (plus Don't know)
Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark	Now thinking about issues of crime and safety, using a four point scale ranging from very unsafe, a bit unsafe, fairly safe to very safe, please tell me how safe or unsafe you would feel in the following situations... 'Walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark' Scored from 1 Very unsafe to 4 Very safe (plus Don't know)	In general how safe or unsafe do you feel in the following situations... 'Walking alone in your neighbourhood after dark' Scored from 1 Very unsafe to 4 Very safe (plus Don't know)
Sense of community experienced	On a scale of one to five where one is strongly disagree and five is strongly agree rate the following... 'I feel a sense of community with others in my local neighbourhood' Scored from 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree (plus Don't know)	How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?... 'I feel a sense of community with others in my neighbourhood' Scored from 1 Strongly disagree to 5 Strongly agree
Overall quality of life	The next question concerns your overall quality of life. Would you say that your overall quality of life is... Scored from 1 Extremely poor to 5 Extremely good (plus Don't know)	Would you say your overall quality of life is... Score from 1 Extremely poor to 5 Extremely good

## 4.2 WPI results for 2006 and 2016

### 4.2.1 Graphs of WPI results for 2006 and 2016

Figure 78: WPI results – Waikato region 2006 and 2016



## 4.2.2 Summary of 2006 and 2016 Waikato region comparisons

Compared to 2006, Waikato regional survey respondents in 2016 were:

- almost unchanged in terms of the percentage who agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels (68% in 2016 compared to 70% in 2006) – however, within this result, a lower percentage ‘strongly agreed’ that they feel a sense of pride (16% compared to 26%)
- less likely to rate their overall health positively (84% compared to 90%)
- less likely to report having been physically activity on five or more of the past seven days (47% compared to 61%)
- 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 (43% compared to 51%)
- less likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes (46% compared to 62%)
- less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (65% compared to 80%)
- almost unchanged in terms of the percentage who agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (65% compared to 63%) – however, within this result, a lower percentage ‘strongly agreed’ that they feel a sense of community (9% compared to 22%)
- less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively (84% compared to 90%).

# 5 Conclusion

## 5.1 Key survey findings for the Waikato region

### Quality of life

- A large majority rate their overall quality of life positively.
- Most common reasons for rating quality of life positively related to physical and mental health and wellbeing, relationships and financial wellbeing.
- Among the relatively small group who rated their quality of life as ‘poor’ or ‘extremely poor’, common reasons related to poor financial wellbeing, low income and poor physical or mental health.
- More than a quarter felt their quality of life had improved over the past year.

### Health and wellbeing

- More than four in five rated their health positively.
- When asked how many days in the previous seven days they had been physically active, almost half said they had been active five or more days.
- While 15 per cent had regularly experienced stress, almost a third rarely or never experienced this.
- More than nine in ten feel they have someone to rely on for help if faced with physical injury or illness, or if in need of support during an emotionally difficult time.



## **Crime and safety**

- Around two thirds perceived dangerous driving as a 'big problem' or a 'bit of a problem' in their city or local area in the previous 12 months, followed by alcohol and drug problems or anti-social behaviour associated with the consumption of alcohol, and car theft, damage to cars or theft from cars.
- More than nine in ten reported that they feel safe in their home after dark.
- Almost nine in ten feel safe in their city centre during the day.
- Almost two thirds feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- More than four in ten feel safe in their city centre after dark.

## **Community, culture and social networks**

- More than three quarters consider it important to feel a sense of community with people in their neighbourhood.
- Almost two-thirds agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.
- Online networks were the most common social networks that people felt they were part of, followed by work or school related social networks.
- The majority reported they had some sort of positive contact with people in their neighbourhood in the previous 12 months, such as a nod or hello.
- Seven in ten had never or rarely felt isolated in the last year.
- Over four in ten considered that New Zealand becoming home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their city a better place to live.
- More than four in ten consider their local area to have a diverse and culturally rich arts scene.

## **Council processes**

- Almost four in ten agreed that they understand how their Council makes decisions.
- More than half would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does.
- Half have confidence that their local Council makes decisions in the best interests of their area.
- Almost half perceive the public have 'large' or 'some' influence over the decisions that their local Council makes.

## **Built and natural environment**

- More than eight in ten agreed their local area is a great place to live.
- Almost seven in ten agreed they feel a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels.
- The most common reasons for having a sense of pride were that their local area provides a good lifestyle, the beautiful natural environment or good climate and there are plenty of parks.
- The most common reasons for lacking a sense of pride in the look and feel of their local area were due to issues with crime and safety, feeling that their local area was run down and/or needed better maintenance, lack of facilities/services and untidiness (dirty/rubbish/litter).
- Across the Waikato region, graffiti or tagging is identified as 'a big problem' or 'a bit of a problem' in their local area by more than half of residents. Water and noise pollution

are also considered to be a local area problem by a substantial percentage of respondents, while less than two in five consider air pollution to be an issue.

### **Transport**

- Less than one in ten had used public transport weekly or more often over the previous 12 months. More than half had not used public transport in the last 12 months and a further one fifth did not have public transport available.
- Half of those who had public transport available agreed that public transport was affordable.
- Two thirds agreed that public transport was safe.
- Two thirds agreed that public transport was easy to get to.
- More than half agreed that public transport was reliable (i.e. comes when it says it will).
- Half agreed that public transport is frequent.

### **Economic wellbeing**

- Almost seven in ten were employed in either full-time or part-time work, and a further five per cent were currently seeking work.
- More than six in ten of the employed were satisfied with the balance of work and other aspects of their life.
- Four in ten felt that they have enough or more than enough money to meet their everyday needs for things such as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. Around 16 per cent felt they did not have enough money.

### **Housing**

- Just under two thirds agreed that their current housing costs were affordable.
- A large proportion agreed that the type of home they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.
- A large proportion agreed that the general area, or neighbourhood, they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.
- Just under a quarter agreed that they had experienced problems with damp or mould in their home during winter.
- Four in five agreed that their heating system keeps their home warm when it is in use during winter.
- Seven in ten agreed that they can afford to heat their home properly during winter.

### **Results by age group**

- Respondents aged 18 to 24 were less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels, and less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.
- Respondents aged 25 to 49 were more likely to rate their health positively and more likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- Respondents aged 65 plus were less likely to rate their health positively, more likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood, and more likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes; but less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, 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.

### **Results by gender**

- Males were substantially more likely than females to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.

### **Results by ethnic group**

- Respondents who identified with the New Zealand European/ Other ethnic group were more likely to rate their overall quality of life positively, more likely to rate their overall health positively, more likely to report having been physically active on five or more of the last seven days, and more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels; but less likely to agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood, 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.
- Respondents who identified with the Māori ethnic group were less likely to rate positively either their overall quality of life or overall health.
- Respondents who identified with the Asian/Indian ethnic group were 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.

### **Results by location**

There was a considerable amount of diversity in responses to some items between TLAs. Statistically significant differences from the Waikato regional average include, amongst others:

- Hamilton respondents were less likely to report feeling safe and less likely to agree they experience a sense of community, but 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 a better place.
- Thames-Coromandel respondents were more likely to report feeling safe but less likely to agree that public transport was easy to get to.
- Hauraki district respondents were less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively, less likely to report being satisfied with their work-life balance, and less likely to report having enough money to meet their everyday needs.
- Waikato district respondents were less likely to feel they have someone to rely on for support, and more likely to disagree that they consider their local area to have a diverse and culturally rich arts scene.
- Matamata-Piako district respondents were less likely to agree that they would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does.
- Waipa district respondents were more likely to feel they have someone to rely on for support, more likely to report feeling safe, more likely to agree that their city/local area is a great place to live, more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels, and more likely to agree that the general area they lived in suited their needs and the needs of others in their household.
- South Waikato district respondents were more likely to report feeling that their quality of life had improved over the past year.

- Taupō district respondents were more likely to rate their health positively, more likely to report feeling safe in their city centre after dark, and more likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels.

### **Region and cities comparison**

Compared to the seven cities average:

- Hamilton respondents were less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, but more likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes.

### **Waikato region 2006 to 2016 trends**

Compared to 2006, Waikato regional survey respondents in 2016 were:

- almost unchanged in terms of the percentage who agree that they feel a sense of pride in the way their city or local area looks and feels – however, within this result, a lower percentage ‘strongly agreed’ that they feel a sense of pride
- less likely to rate their overall health positively
- less likely to report having been physically activity 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 better place to live
- less likely to agree that the public have an influence over the decisions that their local Council makes
- less likely to report feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark
- almost unchanged in terms of the percentage who agree that they experience a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood – however, within this result, a lower percentage ‘strongly agreed’ that they feel a sense of community
- less likely to rate their overall quality of life positively.

## **5.2 Next steps**

The 2016 Quality of Life survey results give comprehensive up-to-date information on public perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in the Waikato region and other parts of New Zealand. These results will help inform regional and local government policy and support monitoring towards strategic social, cultural and economic goals.

The Waikato regional survey results will be used to enhance the Waikato Progress Indicators (WPI) regional wellbeing monitoring initiative for selected indicators. Due to a high level of consistency between the 2006 and 2016 survey methods, comparisons can be made between the 2006 and 2016 results.

Information from this report will be used to develop updated WPI web pages for publication in early 2017 as part of a regular data refresh. These will make use of survey data and key messages from the headline results, cross-tab results and trends, to comment on progress across various components of community wellbeing in the Waikato region for the period 2006 to 2016.

