

## 14. THE 2001 ANNUAL SURVEY OF RESIDENTS - PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

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The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of findings from the 2001 Annual Survey of Residents relating to selected planning, development and environmental issues. A copy of the full report and the summary report are available on the intranet at <http://www.ccc.govt.nz/ResidentsSurvey/2001/>.

The latest Annual Survey of Residents was conducted between March and April 2001. It included the usual series of questions relating to how well the Council is meeting the needs and expectations of Christchurch residents and also supplementary questions pertaining to a range of different issues.

### CHRISTCHURCH AS A PLACE TO LIVE

The latest Annual Survey of Residents shows that overall Christchurch residents continue to be satisfied with Christchurch as a place to live, work and spend spare time. In 2001, 92 per cent of survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the city and only 2 per cent indicated any level of dissatisfaction.

### QUALITY OF LIFE

Respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life. The results showed that 87 per cent said their quality of life was good or very good, with an additional 10 per cent stating they had fair quality of life. Only 3 per cent thought their quality of life was not very good. Nobody rated their quality of life as poor.

Respondents were then asked how they related their current quality of life with their quality of life three years ago. Fifty one per cent thought their quality of life was a little better or much better than three years previous. While 38 per cent thought their quality of life was about the same. However 11 per cent of respondents believed their quality of life had declined in the past three years.

### THE LOOK AND FEEL OF CHRISTCHURCH

Respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the way the city looks and feels. Most (79 per cent) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied. In previous years all respondents were asked the reasons why they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the city. In this year's survey only the dissatisfied respondents (11 per cent) were asked their reasons. The unattractiveness of the Cathedral Square development, the city's dirty appearance and safety concerns were the main reasons behind any dissatisfaction.

### Christchurch - The Garden City

Respondents were asked what the phrase "the Garden City" meant to them. The main responses were:

- Attractive gardens/Lovely flowers;
- Beautiful Parks/Lots of parks;
- Many beautiful trees;
- People taking pride in their houses and gardens; and
- A nice green city/clean green image.

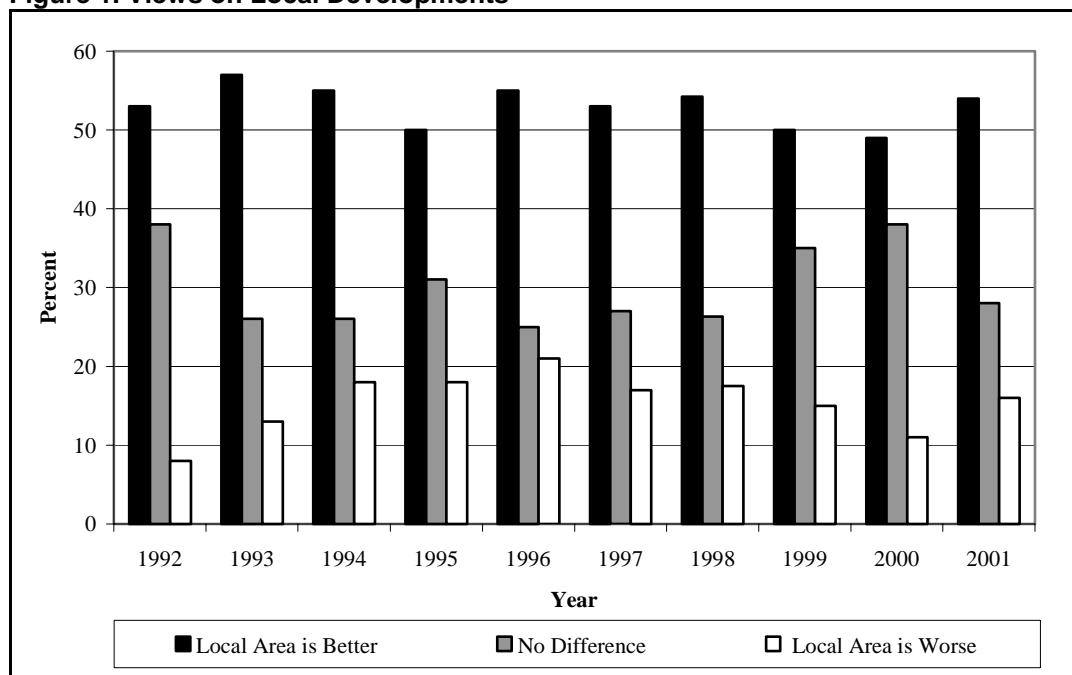
Ninety one per cent of respondents believed that it was moderately or very important for the city to live up to its Garden City image. Eighty six per cent of respondents thought the city lived up to this image either well or very well.

### CHANGES IN CHRISTCHURCH

#### Local Developments

Fifty per cent of respondents were aware of new residential building, alterations, extensions or developments in their local area during the past twelve months. Of this group, most (54 per cent) felt the changes had made their local area better or much better compared to 16 per cent who thought changes had made their area worse or much worse. A growing proportion of respondents (38 per cent) indicated that the changes had made no difference. Figure 1 outlines the trend in approval and disapproval ratings between 1992 and 2001.

**Figure 1. Views on Local Developments**



Covers all respondents who were aware of local developments.

Of respondents who were aware of new developments in their local area, the majority approved of what had been built (76 per cent). Although 20 per cent felt there were examples of developments that should not have been allowed. A summary of their criticisms is provided in Table 1. The majority of these comments related to design issues with specific developments and increased housing densities.

**table 1. development respondents think should not have been allowed**

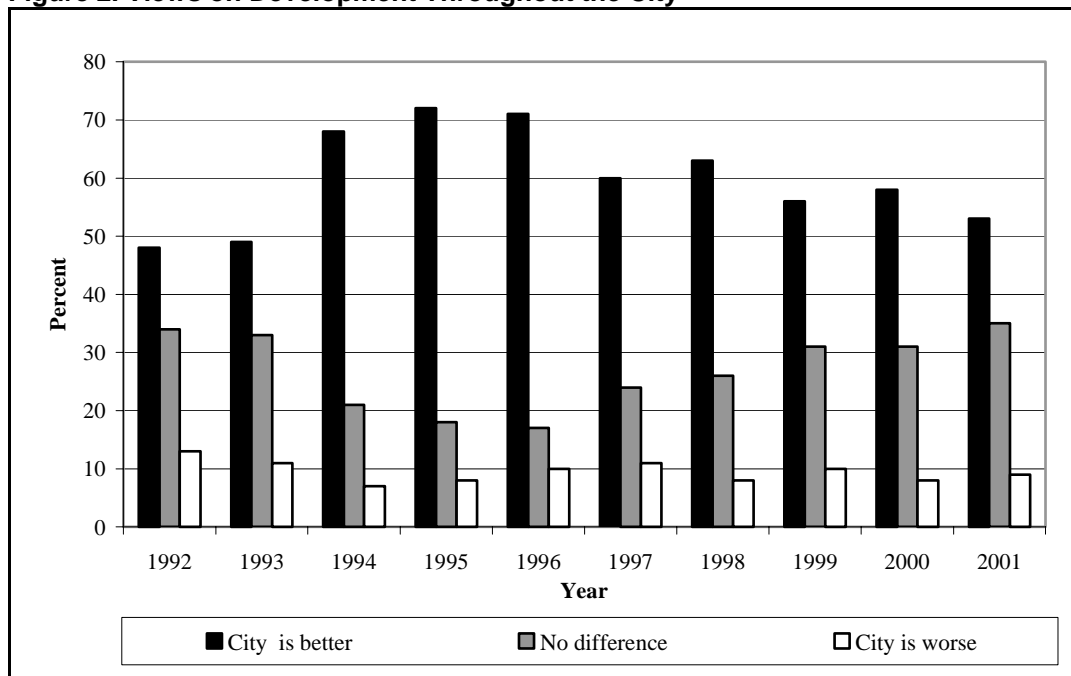
	Number (Responses)	Per cent (Responses)
Specific developments	23	22
Badly designed/eyesores/monstrosities	18	17
Too close together/close to boundary	12	11
Too many subdivisions/overdeveloped	11	10
Big/tall buildings/too high	8	8
Infill housing/building on back section	7	7
No consultation with neighbours re building	4	3
Inappropriate infill housing	3	3
Design not appropriate to area	3	3
Loss of garden/trees	2	2
Too many houses on one section	2	2
Removal of character homes	2	2
Subdivision on Hillside	1	1
Section sizes too small	1	1
Other	8	8
Don't know	0	0
Total	105	100

These cover all persons who said there were developments in the last 12 months that should not have been allowed.

## City-Wide Developments

Most respondents (53 per cent) thought that new developments throughout the city during the last year (2001) had made Christchurch a better or much better place to live. Only 9 per cent believed new developments had made living in the city worse or much worse. The proportion of respondents who indicated that the city is no different as a result of new developments was 35 per cent in 2001 (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Views on Development Throughout the City**



(Covers all respondents)

Those who thought that new developments had made the city worse or much worse gave the following reasons (Table 2);

**Table 2 Reasons Why New City Wide Developments Make the City Worse or Much Worse**

	Number (Responses)	Per cent (Responses)
Ugly/horrible looking buildings	14	15
Too many buildings/unnecessary	12	14
Redevelopment of the Square	11	13
City's Character has been lost	9	10
Loss of living space – too many houses	8	9
Roads are congested/traffic problems	5	5
Cheap buildings – slum of the future	4	4
City Becoming too spread out	4	4
Too many high rises	3	4
Should have kept the old buildings	3	3
Other	14	16
Don't Know/no reply	3	3
Total	91	100

These cover all persons who said the new developments have made Christchurch a worse/much worse place to live.

## THE CITY CENTRAL

### Visits to the Central City

Nearly all respondents (94 per cent) had visited the central city at some time during the last year for non-work purposes (ie between Bealey Avenue, Fitzgerald Avenue, Moorhouse Avenue and Hagley Park). The frequency of non-work visits to the city centre was also high with 45 per cent visiting once a week or more and a further 37 per cent visiting once a month or more. These figures have remained reasonably constant for the past five years.

Two thirds of respondents (66 per cent) were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of things to do in the central city during the last 12 months. Only 10 per cent expressed any level of dissatisfaction with the range of opportunities available. These proportions have not changed significantly in the past five years.

### **City Council Involvement**

Forty per cent of respondents believe the Council is doing enough to encourage people to spend more of their spare time in the central city. However a slightly larger number (44 per cent) thought the Council should be doing more or a lot more. This group identified parking problems and safety in the central city as the main areas of concern.

### **Safety in the Central City**

The latest survey showed that most respondents (89 per cent) felt safe or very safe alone in the central city during the day. However, fewer respondents (26 per cent) said that they felt safe or very safe by themselves in the central city at night.

## **TRANSPORT**

### **Public Transport**

Fifty-eight per cent of respondents indicated that they had used public transport during the previous 12 months. A preference for private vehicle transport was given as the main reason for not using public transport. There was also an increasing percentage of respondents who preferred to walk or cycle instead use public transport.

Of those who did use public transport, 45 per cent used it less than once a month (1-5 times) and only 12 per cent used it every day or almost every day.

### **Road Safety**

Twenty seven per cent of respondents believed it was safe or very safe to ride a bicycle in Christchurch. This is quite an increase compared with earlier surveys in 1996 where only 18 per cent of respondents thought it was safe or very safe to ride a bicycle in the city. As a consequence the number of respondents who thought cycling was dangerous or very dangerous has declined from 58 per cent in 1996 to 46 per cent this year. Previous surveys, which differentiated between cyclists and non-cyclists, showed a small tendency for cyclist to perceive cycling as being safer than non-cyclists. Respondents were not asked this year if they cycled in the city.

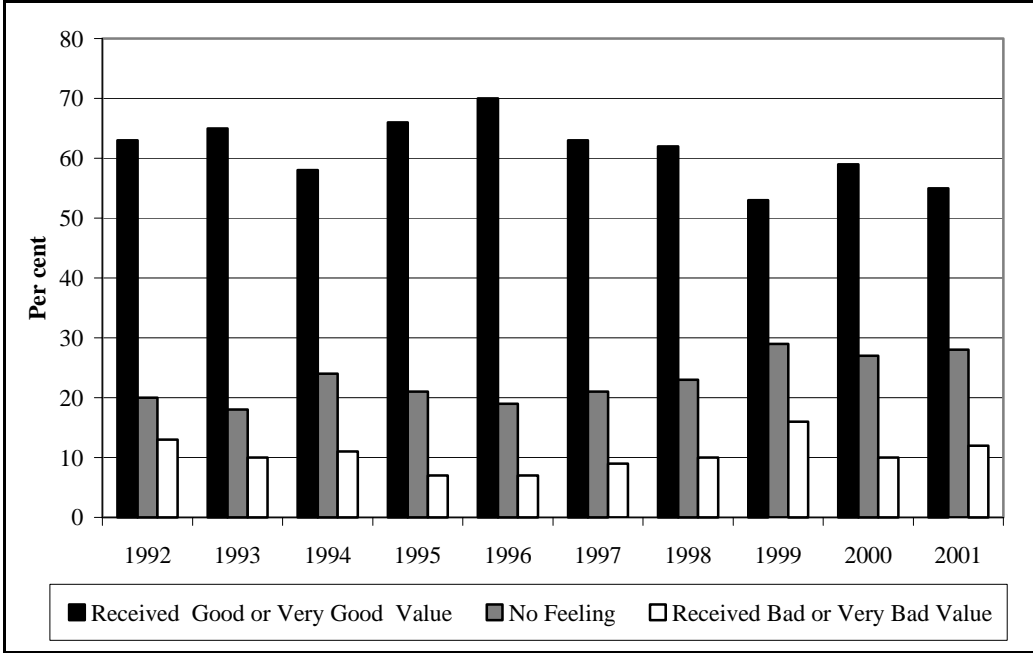
Respondents were also asked whether they felt safe travelling by car in the city. Most of the respondents (48 per cent) believed it was safe or very safe to travel by car in the city, with an additional 35 per cent who thought it was neither safe nor dangerous. However in a separate question respondents were asked whether they thought their neighbourhoods were safe for children to play unsupervised, and of the 40 per cent who thought their local neighbourhoods were unsafe or very unsafe the most often stated reason was busy roads/heavy traffic/fast cars.

## **MEASURE OF ANNUAL PERFORMANCE**

One of the major reasons for carrying out the Annual Survey of Residents is to provide a statistical basis for comparing the performance of the Council in various areas from year to year. In the environmental, city planning and development field, the Council is only one player. The state of the wider environment of the city is the result of many decisions made by individuals and organisations in both the public and private sectors. Nevertheless, the Council through its own actions and through its regulatory instruments such as the City Plan can influence the environmental quality of the city.

As part of the Annual Survey of Residents, respondents are asked each year how they feel about the value for money the city as a whole receives from Council spending on overall city and environmental planning. This year, 55 per cent of respondents felt the value for money was good or very good while only 12 per cent considered the value for money was bad or very bad. Of the remaining respondents, 28 per cent expressed no feeling and 5 per cent did not know. Figure 3 shows that overall approval of Council spending on city and environmental planning still remains relatively high.

**Figure 3. Satisfaction with City Environmental Planning**



Covers all respondents.

**Chairman's Recommendation:** That the information be received.