Life in Christchurch 2022 | Climate Change and Action

Prepared by Monitoring and Research

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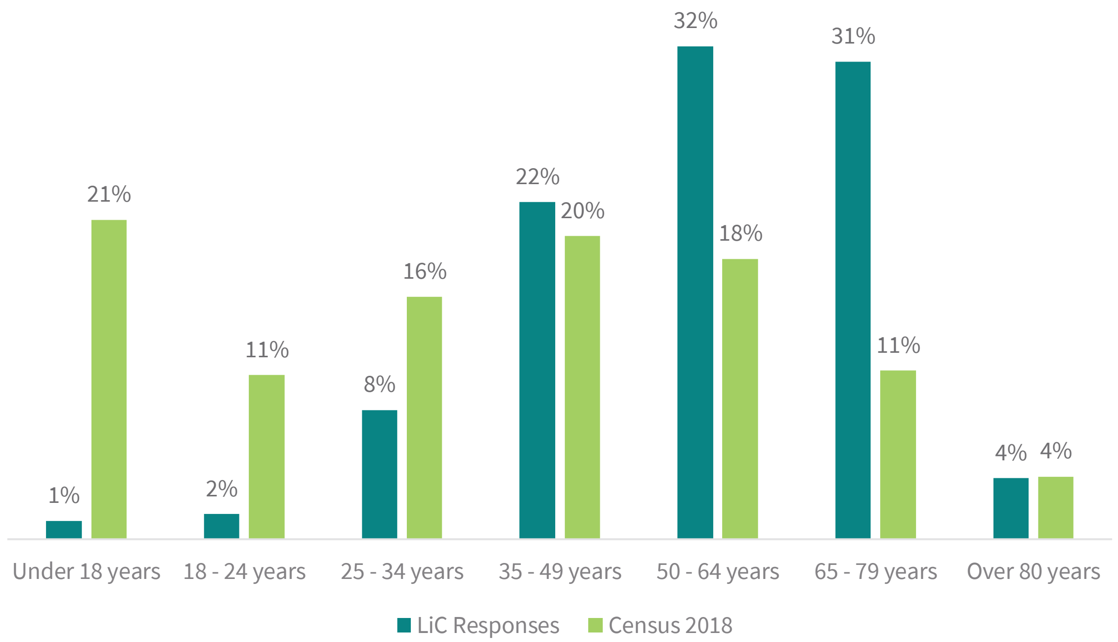
Christchurch City Council

Who did we hear from?

- We heard from around 3,400 people
  - The majority of respondents were aged from 35 – 79 years old
  - Under 35 year olds were underrepresented, while respondents aged between 35 and 79 were overrepresented.



Perceptions around the challenges we face

Generally respondents feel that climate change and climate action and other environmental issues are important issues that we need to address in Christchurch…

But they have competing concerns, including:

- The cost of living and housing affordability
- Violence in society and racism
- Economic pressures
- Mental health issues
- Caring for our aging population.

How important are the following issues for Christchurch?

The pollution of lakes, rivers and seas are perceived by the highest proportion of respondents to be an important or very important issue.

Other environmental issues are perceived by the majority of respondents to be important, although other issues (often perceived to be more pressing) do feature more highly.

	Very important / Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant / Very unimportant
Pollution of lakes, rivers and seas	95%	3%	2%
The cost of living	92%	6%	2%
Violence in society	91%	7%	2%
Mental health issues	89%	8%	3%
Build up of plastic in the environment	88%	8%	4%
Caring for our aging population	88%	9%	3%
Availability of affordable housing	87%	10%	3%
The economy	86%	11%	3%
Racism / hate crime	83%	11%	6%
Climate change	79%	12%	9%
Reducing greenhouse gas emissions	78%	12%	9%

Understanding of climate change contributors

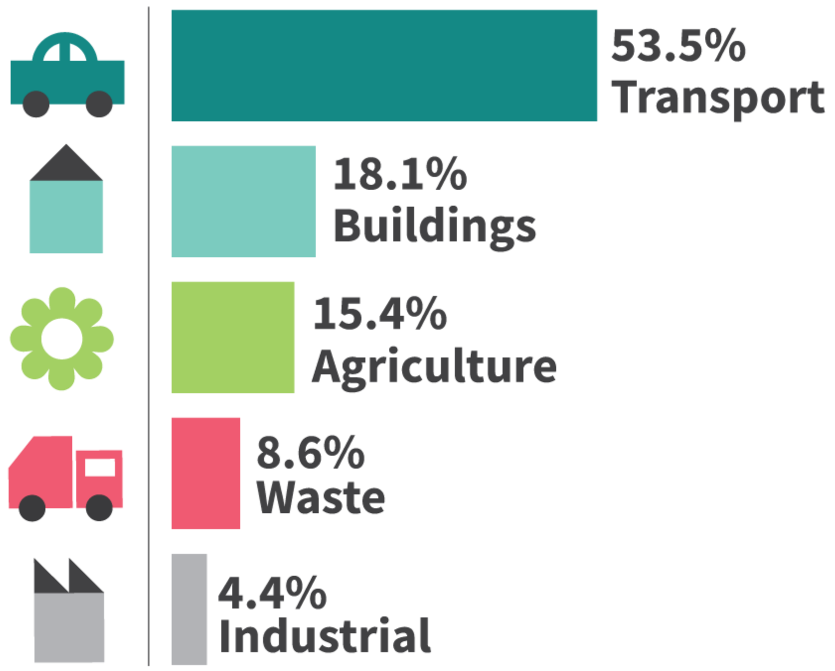
Respondents think the top contributors to emissions in Christchurch are:

- How we travel (60%)
- The waste we produce (53%)
- Deforestation (36%)
- Agriculture (35%)
- Manufacturing (22%)

61% of respondents said using an electric car, bus or bike, reducing waste (55%) and recycling as much as possible (47%) will have the biggest impact on reducing a household's emissions.

In 2020, New Zealand's largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions were the agriculture sector (50%) and energy sector (40%).
(New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990 -2020)

Where Christchurch emissions actually come from



Key takeouts

Respondents understand that transport is the biggest contributor of emissions, however there is a misconception about how much waste actually contributes to emissions compared to other large emitters.

Educating people about where our emissions come from is important to encourage sustainable choices. Our Greenhouse Gas Emission Tracker allows people to see how we are tracking as a city across different emission sources and what our biggest emission contributors are. This is a great resource that people can use to view key information about our emissions.
https://smartview.ccc.govt.nz/apps/emissions/

Who's taking climate action?

Christchurch City Council

Respondents told us that they are already doing a range of things to help reduce their climate impact, and many indicated that they want to do more!

But there are some things making it hard for them to do more…

Cost and affordability are a significant barrier to respondents making some of the bigger changes, including:

- Regular use of an electric vehicle
- Generating their own solar energy

Regular actions taken to help reduce emissions

Recycling as much as possible and reducing waste / rubbish are the top actions respondents take at least once a week to help reduce their household emissions.

A lower proportion of respondents report catching the bus, using an electric vehicle and generating their own solar energy to reduce their emissions.

However, these were popular actions that respondents would like to do more of to help reduce their emissions.

The cost and effort of taking these actions was often stated as being a barrier.

Action	% of respondents
Recycling as much as possible	80%
Reducing waste / rubbish	61%
Shop and buy local products	49%
Grow your own food or buy food locally grown	47%
Eat meat free meals	41%
Use less energy at home	38%
Choosing energy efficient appliances	34%
Working from home	32%
Flying less	31%
Travel by bike	30%
Remote meetings or learning	29%
Catch the bus	16%
Use an electric vehicle	14%
Generate solar energy	11%

Does the perceived importance of climate change relate to climate action?

Climate action	Very important / Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant / Very unimportant
Use less energy at home	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Recycling as much as possible	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Reducing waste / rubbish	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Shop and buy local products	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Grow your own food or buy food that is locally grown	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Eat meat free meals	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Choosing energy efficient appliances	⌃⌃⌃		⌄⌄⌄
Flying less	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Working from home	⌃⌃⌃	⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Travel by bike	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Remote meetings or learning	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Catch the bus	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Use an electric vehicle	⌃⌃⌃	⌄⌄⌄	⌄⌄⌄
Generate solar energy	⌃⌃	⌄	⌄⌄⌄

What does this mean?

Respondents who rate climate change as an important or very important issue are more likely to take action to help reduce their emissions. This applies across all climate actions.

Respondents who said that climate change was neither an important nor unimportant issue were less likely to take climate action. This is particularly prevalent for travel modes such as biking, catching the bus or using an electric vehicle.

The respondents who think climate change is unimportant or very unimportant are less likely to take any actions to help reduce their emissions.

Key

⌃ ⌃⌃ ⌃⌃⌃ The value is statistically higher than if there was no relationship between the variables.

⌄ ⌄⌄ ⌄⌄⌄ The value is statistically lower than if there was no relationship between the variables.

More arrows correspond to a higher degree of statistical significance

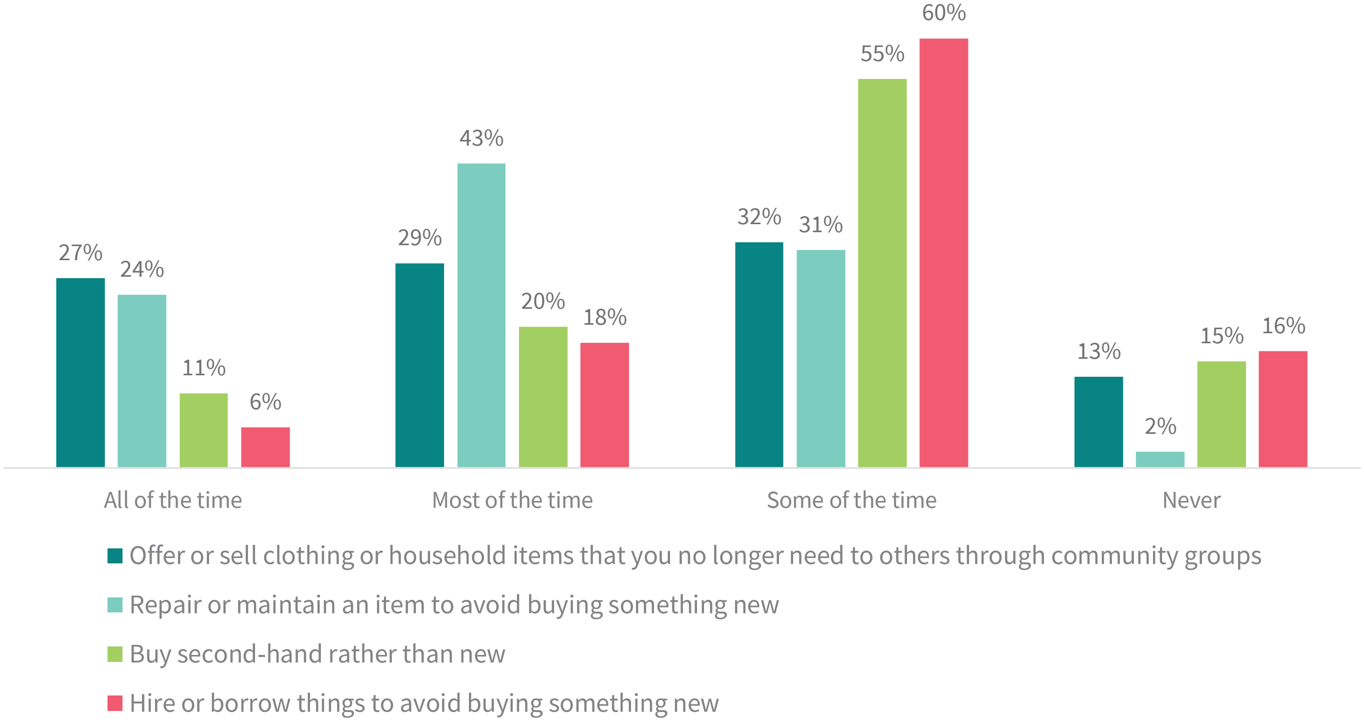
Other climate actions

67% of respondents are likely to repair or maintain an item to avoid buying something new (most/all of the time).

30% of respondents will buy second-hand rather than new (most/all of the time).

23% of respondents will hire or borrow things to avoid buying something new (most/all of the time).

Respondents aged **under 35 are more likely** to buy second-hand rather than new items more frequently than other age groups.



Key takeouts

The affordability and effort required of people are currently our biggest barriers to making more sustainable decisions.

While recycling and reducing rubbish are great actions for people to be taking, the actions that have a greater impact in reducing emissions are often perceived to be too hard, or are unaffordable for most.

There is a desire to take bolder climate actions, such as travelling by public transport, using an electric vehicle or generating solar energy. We need to make climate actions more accessible and easier for people to make those sustainable choices.

Actions are already underway to make low-emission travel easier, safer and healthier including the construction of cycleways, electric vehicle stations at many Council sites, and the improvement of bus shelters and bus lanes.

Are we prepared to make changes to reduce our emissions?

Generally respondents understand and agree that to manage and reduce the impacts of climate change, we will all need to make changes and that it should be factored into major decision making.

But they are more hesitant to take action and make changes that would have financial impacts for them and their households.

Personal preparedness

76% of respondents agree that they are prepared to change their own behaviour in order to reduce their emissions.

68% agree that reducing their emissions now will have some positive impacts on how they live in the future.

Sources of information

78% of respondents tend to agree that there is an expectation that we all need to take action to reduce our emissions, but fewer tend to agree that there is an expectation from friends and family to take action to reduce emissions (43%).

Over 50% of respondents think their knowledge of the things they can do to take climate action is good, with a further 32% who think this is very good. They tend to get their information from…

- Online news websites (57%)
- Other websites and online resources (52%)
- Television (40%)

14% of respondents get their information from our website.

Which of the following actions do you think we should be taking to better prepare for a changing climate?

66% - Factor environment into decision making

54% - Better understand the impacts of climate change

54% - Prepared to make personal sacrifices for the greater good

51% - Prepared to act alone even if others are not

37% - Invest more to reduce the problem

12% - None of the above

Respondents tend to agree that a changing environment needs to be factored into major decision making.

There's also a large proportion who say we should be prepared to make personal sacrifices and act alone even if others are not.

Respondents are slightly more hesitant around paying more to help fix the problem.

Key takeouts

Respondents say they are ready to take climate action now to reduce our emissions and better everyone’s lives in the future.

Respondents are generally open to making changes to their behaviours to reduce emissions and make more sustainable decisions. There is hesitancy around investing further to help fix the problem, likely due to concern about the financial impacts it may have on individuals and households. This concern is especially prevalent today, with the increasing cost of living.

With this in mind, climate action that is affordable should be encouraged and incentivised, removing the burden of cost from peoples sustainable choices.

The Grab-a-way behaviour change campaign is expanding due to its initial success. With the help of local businesses, it rewards people for choosing sustainable transport options.

Climate Action and the Businesses Sector

Christchurch City Council

Generally respondents feel that the business sector has a role to play in taking climate action and that they have a responsibility to do their bit.

But there are mixed opinions around the current commitment from the business sector to do their bit and the transparency from businesses about what they are doing to reduce their emissions and take climate action.

Climate action and businesses

89% of respondents agree/strongly agree that businesses have a responsibility to do their bit in reducing their emissions to slow global warming.

There are mixed opinions about whether businesses make it easy to see the actions that they are taking to reduce emissions.

Respondents are inclined to think that businesses could be doing more to reduce their emissions and take climate action.

How much does a business or brand's environmental and social actions influence purchasing decisions?

50% - A little bit
I sometimes consider the causes businesses or brands support when making purchase decisions

33% - A great deal
I take careful note of the causes businesses or brands support when making purchase decisions

16% - Not at all
The causes businesses or brands support are not relevant to my purchase decisions

Half of respondents are influenced by a business or brand's environmental and social actions 'a little bit'.

33% are influenced a 'great deal'. This is significantly higher than the results from the 2022 Better Futures Kantar Report, at 15%.

Key takeouts

Respondents would like to see businesses take climate action and for these actions to be transparent for the consumer.

A businesses environmental and social actions does have an impact on consumers purchasing decisions.

This presents significant opportunities for businesses and brands to embrace social and environmental actions, making it easier for consumers to choose their brand.

We’re investigating local offsetting opportunities using native regeneration, and working with our family of Council-owned companies and other local businesses to learn from and explore opportunities for environmental actions.

Climate Action and Local Government

Christchurch City Council

Generally respondents want to see us take action, be bold and lead the way to carbon zero.

But there is scepticism around whether we will be able to reach the targets in time. Respondents would like more information about the climate actions we are taking and a clear plan to reduce our emissions.

Awareness of emissions target

59% of respondents are aware that we have set emission reduction targets for Christchurch, while 41% are unaware of the targets.

Respondents are uncertain as to whether we will be able to reach our emission reduction target for 2030, with 36% who disagree and 35% who neither agree nor disagree. A notable proportion stated they ‘don’t know’, indicating that they may not be aware of the actions or plans in place to help reduce emissions.

Opinions are mixed about whether we are investing enough in climate action and reducing our emissions:

- 35% neither agree nor disagree that we are investing enough
- 26% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement

Climate action and Local Government | What respondents told us…

There is a general sense of scepticism as to whether we will be able to reach our targets, with many believing the targets are overly aspirational or questioning what climate actions are actually being taken.

“I dont know enough about what the CCC is doing to agree or disagree. I believe that the Council should do everything in its power, and more if possible. We need everyone everywhere rowing this waka of change.”

“Is invisible as far as council communication and action is concerned, may be doing useful things but hard for general public to make this out especially when acting in an inconsistant manner, best visible act is in forming cycle lanes.”

“The issue needs to be kept high on the agenda and in the public eye frequently. Its so easy for it to slip off for more immediate and/or cheerier concerns.”

“Yes, it's a noble cause but the cost of reducing your emissions (solar panals, electric cars etc…) are to great for some households.”

“There is always more that can be done and what council IS doing does feel like lipservice at times (rightly or wrongly). would be great if council would take more of a stand and more action across the boardly)”

“I haven't received anything at all from the CCC aboutt their plans and projections to reduce the city's carbon emissions by 50% within 8 years. The claim or aim reads as wildly aspirational. I would like to read the specific steps the CCC has planned, what they are contingent on, and confidence levels for success in each sector that they are addressing.”

“There appears to be a target but no plan to show how we will get there?”

“So far there is little evidence of real commitment to reducing emissions. All talk and little action”

Key takeouts

Respondents want us to be brave and take action, commending our bold climate targets.

To reduce the scepticism expressed by respondents about our targets, climate actions and plans need to be clearly communicated in order to demonstrate how those climate targets are going to be met. Many respondents speculated that the targets are mere ‘lip service’ and those words now need to be put into action.

In 2019, we declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency after receiving strong feedback from our community.

The Long Term Plan 2021-31 focuses on climate change and has allocated:

- $11 million to support specific climate projects
- $420 million to improve flood risk management
- $235 million to cycling projects
- $90 million to improve public transport facilities
- $13 million on additional tree planting
- $4.3 million on charging infrastructure for electric vehicles

A climate lens will applied across the next Long Term Plan 2024-34.

In July 2022, nine electric trucks leased by different companies, took to the roads in Christchurch as part of a Council-led initiative aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

How will we use this information?

The results from this survey will be shared to decision makers to help us on the way to achieving carbon zero.

These results provide an indication about the climate actions people are already taking, where we can remove barriers to climate action, and where we and businesses should be focusing.

There is a general consensus that people want to do more, but there are some things that they feel are making it hard for them or limiting their ability to do more.

We need to help our residents feel enabled and inspired to take climate action, and make it a fun, positive and approachable experience.

Appendices

Who did we hear from?

Community Board	Ward	Count	Board Total	%
Banks Peninsula	Banks Peninsula	125	125	4%
Coastal - Burwood	Coastal	211	373	13%
	Burwood	162		
Fendalton – Waimairi - Harewood	Fendalton	315	627	21%
	Waimairi	159		
	Harewood	153		
Halswell – Hornby - Riccarton	Halswell	313	536	18%
	Hornby	87		
	Riccarton	136		
Linwood – Central - Heathcote	Linwood	197	634	21%
	Central	148		
	Heathcote	289		
Papanui - Innes	Papanui	91	215	7%
	Innes	124		
Spreydon - Cashmere	Spreydon	153	450	15%
	Cashmere	297		

Who did we hear from?

Age	Count	%
Under 24 years	93	3%
25 – 34 years	280	8%
35 – 49 years	730	22%
50 – 64 years	1068	32%
Over 65 years	1166	35%

Ethnicity	Count	%
NZ European	2289	83%
Other	275	10%
British & Irish	192	7%
Māori	136	5%
Other European	102	4%

Gender	Count	%
As a man	1266	46%
Female	1450	53%
Gender Diverse	38	1%

Who did we hear from?

Household Type	Count	%
Couple without children	995	36%
Family with mainly independent children	466	17%
Living alone	459	17%
Family with mainly school-age children	419	15%
Living with friend/flatmates	114	4%
Family with mainly pre-school age children	113	4%
Living at home with my parents	40	2%
Other	130	5%