

New Zealand's Housing Survey FAQs

Survey Design

Who designed New Zealand's Housing Survey?

We did! We are The Urban Advisory, a team of urban transformation professionals on a mission to create healthier and more equitable homes, neighbourhoods, towns and cities. Based in Tāmaki Makaurau and working on projects across Aotearoa, we bring together a range of different skills and experiences to turn strategy into action. New Zealand's Housing Survey is the culmination of many years of work in the housing sector; developing housing strategies and housing needs assessments, pilot projects such as the Eastern Porirua Regeneration Project and research projects.

What is the survey about?

New Zealand's Housing Survey asks about how New Zealanders make their housing choices, what kind of housing would suit their needs and what housing they would like to see available, and where, in the future.

The survey is split into three main sections; current housing, future housing and demographics.

Who is the survey designed for? Who is the target audience?

Housing impacts us all so New Zealand's Housing Survey is designed for anyone living in Aotearoa New Zealand. To ensure a comprehensive dataset, we want to reach out to groups who can often be underrepresented to ensure they are included fairly so that everyone is given a voice in Aotearoa's housing future.

What types of questions are included in the survey?

The questions New Zealand's Housing Survey are largely multichoice, in both dropdown and list format, to reduce the cognitive load required of respondents and ensure consistent answers for comparison purposes. In instances of questions where there are multiple questions with the same answer or rating scale, we have used Likert Matrix tables. We have included illustrations throughout the survey to explain answers to certain questions.

How long does the survey take to complete?

On average, the survey can be completed in under 30 minutes. This is dependent on the individual respondent and where they are branched to within the survey flow.

How do people find the survey?

New Zealand's Housing Survey can be accessed at nzhousingsurvey.co.nz or via The Urban Advisory's website. We will be rolling out a communications plan to drive traffic to the survey throughout 2024.

Can the survey be completed offline?

The survey is designed to be completed online but we can create paper iterations of the survey for those people wanting to complete it in hard copy form as part of supporting research projects e.g. those run by local councils or community groups.

How was the survey developed?

New Zealand's Housing Survey has been developed and tested throughout Aotearoa, for Aotearoa and is the culmination of many years of research, pilot projects and housing mahi. These include, building on the PhD of Director Dr Natalie Allen, as part of a private plan change in regional NZ, as part of a comprehensive housing needs assessment in Kāpiti Coast, and for two iwi and a hapū collective developing their housing strategies. It has also included a series of industry and academic reviews and three rounds of user testing to refine the question wording across cohorts. Back end analysis processes have also been supported by a Callaghan Innovation Student Experience Grant.

Who has reviewed the survey?

As well as a series of industry reviews and informal academic reviews, New Zealand's Housing Survey has undergone academic peer review from our collaborators. A big thank you to them for their time.

- Dr Kate Bryson of Axon Consulting, who provided a review of the cognitive loading caused by questions and general ethics across question types and the range of multichoice options available.
- Jade Kake of Matakōhe Architecture + Urbanism who reviewed our survey from a Te Ao Māori perspective.
- Dr Catherine Bentham who reviewed the survey scripting and back end analysis functions.

How is New Zealand's Housing Survey different from other surveys e.g., satisfaction surveys, residents satisfaction, quality of life etc?

New Zealand's Housing Survey goes beyond available statistics to provide a more nuanced understanding of housing need and demand. It is designed to be easily comparable to national datasets to support both quantitative and qualitative research initiatives.

Demographics

What will I be able to learn about households and individuals in my community?

Household composition and makeup, the number of financial dependents, tenure and typology, savings and debt, ethnicity, age, iwi affiliation, current life stage, employment status, household income, if they or someone in their household has a disability or illness.

What will I be able to learn about Māori housing?

Respondents who select Māori specific housing options when asked to describe their living situation are funnelled to a series of questions about types of Māori land and a question that asks if they live in a papakāinga. We also ask for iwi / hapū affiliation.

What can the survey tell me about the financial situation of respondents?

Weekly outgoings in relation to rent / mortgage and living expenses such as travel, food, power and water, financial sacrifices or compromises household have had to make to meet their costs of living, the financial reasons they might / might not own their next home, savings and debt, if they are concerned with meeting future living costs, household annual income. This data is used to build a picture of affordability, and sort the preferences and tradeoffs questions to build a richer picture of the impacts a respondents financial situation has on housing choices and demand.

What can New Zealand's Housing Survey tell me about household composition?

Number of children under 5, number of children 5 - 18, number of people in the house and their relationship, number of financial dependents, who respondents would prefer to live with and who they will likely end up living with. This data is used to sort the preferences and tradeoffs questions to build a richer picture of the impacts household composition has on housing choices and demand.

What can the survey tell me about personal and household disability and illness?

We ask if respondents or someone they live with are personally living with disability or illness. This means that we can track if these respondents think differently about their priorities when choosing a home and how their preferences versus most likely reality might differ from other cohorts.

What will I be able to understand about first home buyers?

We are able to determine who first home buyers are purchasing with, what they currently have saved and what debt they have. This data, along with the reality vs preference location questions and household income questions will allow us to make calculations on housing affordability.

What will I be able to understand about renters?

Our survey has specific questions for those who rent their home, including the length of time taken to find their rental, how much they are paying in weekly rent, the financial and non-financial reasons they do not plan to their next home and how they view renting in a more general sense.

What will I be able to understand about housing for young people?

All questions are able to be filtered by age bracket which means able to get data on young people's current living situation and future housing aspirations. You need to be aged 16 and over to complete our survey.

We also ask about children living in the home and can sort all responses on housing choices and tradeoffs based on whether people have children under 5, or between 5-18 and how many.

What will I be able to understand about homelessness?

We have a specific survey branch for respondents who tell us they are currently living in insecure or temporary housing options. These questions are not designed to elicit data that is necessarily relevant to the housing preferences survey, but are instead designed to safely/ethically draw homeless respondents through the survey without asking insensitive questions about housing preferences. Our questions ask how long they have been in their current living situation, what kind of housing respondents would like to move to, what would help them find their next home and what is important to them in their next home.

Current Housing

What can the survey tell me about respondents' current housing situation?

The questions in our Current Housing section cover:

- Location (where they live and work)
- Household composition
- Tenure and typology (including Māori specific housing options)
- Rental / mortgage costs
- Length of time taken to secure a rental
- How they have adapted to the cost of living crisis
- Why they choose their current home
- Overall feelings about the health of the home

Any respondents that indicate they are currently homeless or living in insecure housing are branched to a different section of the survey and are presented with different questions.

All data can be filtered by age, location, gender, employment status, household composition, tenure etc.

What else can I learn about tenure?

- How housing tenure differs across locations, income, household composition and age
- The split of housing typology across tenure
- How housing type differs by tenure and age bands (i.e. young renters are more likely to live in X type house, whereas young owners are more likely to live in Y type house)
- The difference between those who rent and own
- The time to secure a rental is affected by household composition and size, income, disability and tenure

What else can I learn about housing affordability?

- The relationship between location, income, household composition and age and affordability
- How much different household compositions spend on mortgage / rental payments
- The percentage of households under housing stress (i.e. more than 30% of household income spent on housing costs)

- The effect of the cost of living on tenure
- How respondents support living costs filtered by employment status, household composition and size, income, disability and tenure
- The percentage of households living in overcrowded housing
- How household composition affects housing stability
- What the standard/national/property & income data says the affordable areas are vs. how people actually experience them i.e. do we have a large number of respondents saying they can't afford housing in an area that is supposed to be "affordable".

What else can I learn about housing choices and satisfaction?

- The reason respondents choose their current house and how this is affected by household composition and size, income, disability and tenure
- How feelings about current living situations differ by age, household composition, those living with illness or disability, income brackets, those with / without kids

Please note this isn't an exhaustive list. Reach out to our team if there is a specific question you would like answered.

Future Housing

What can the survey tell me about respondents' future housing situation?

The questions in our Future Housing section cover:

- The features of a house, property and neighbourhood respondents value
- The services and facilities respondents value proximity to
- If their future move will be made by their own choice
- Future ownership and the financial reasons that allow for this option
- What savings and debt respondents currently have
- Financial and non-financial reasons for not owning their next home
- Future housing preferences vs reality
- overall feelings relating to future housing situations.

All data can be filtered by age, location, gender, employment status, household composition, tenure etc.

What else can I learn about tenure?

- How ideal tenure differs across ages i.e. do younger people actually want to own a home or would they prefer to rent?
- How ideal tenure differs across current location and ideal location
- How ideal tenure differs by typology
- How ideal tenure differs by current household composition and ideal composition
- How ideal tenure compares to current tenure
- How does ideal house size differ across current tenure and ideal tenure?

What else can I learn about typology?

- How ideal typology compares to current typology i.e. what does the market actually want their houses to look like/be?
- How does ideal typology differ across age cohorts?
- How does ideal typology differ across current location and ideal location?
- How does ideal typology differ across current tenure and ideal tenure? i.e. are people renting a standalone but want to buy a townhouse?
- Is ideal typology affected by current composition and/or ideal composition?

What else can I learn about location preferences?

- How ideal location compares with current location
- How ideal location differs across age brackets

What else can I learn about housing demand?

- How certain house, property, neighbourhood, proximity to amenities features affect housing demand across varying demographics
- The effect of age / location on housing demand

What else can I learn about future home ownership?

- What factors are impacting certain age groups' ability to purchase a house
- The main reasons a certain group think they won't own their home are X,Y,Z e.g. group = age brackets, household income brackets, current location, household composition

What else can I learn about household composition?

- How ideal household composition differs across ages i.e. do younger people want to live by themselves but older generations want to live with other family in an intergenerational setting
- How ideal household composition differs across areas i.e. do families in East Auckland want to live together in a bigger house (i.e. intergenerational) or do they want to live in smaller household sizes
- How ideal household composition compares with current household composition
- How ideal household composition differs across ideal location

What else can I learn about future housing preferences?

- How many people are living in their "ideal" situation
- Are people satisfied by their future housing options available?
- How ideal bedrooms differs to current bedrooms
- How does ideal house size differ across current composition and ideal composition?
- Are people satisfied by their future housing options available?
- How housing demand by older people is affected by certain property features
- How housing demand by young people is affected by certain property features
- How housing demand by Māori is affected by certain property features (i.e. does it allow for papakāinga/intergenerational living?)
- How housing demand by household composition is affected by certain property features

Analysis and Application

How can the data be viewed?

The data can be viewed as a pdf or spatially using GIS. The Urban Advisory is able to support with analysis and reporting on the data, including professional guidance on what the data means and visualisation support to communicate key messages. Get in touch to discuss how this could work for you.

Can I make a request for a specific dataset?

Yes, we can provide access to data for specific applications as per your requirements.

What other datasets can the data be compared to?

StatsNZ

Census

REINZ property values

Territorial authority consenting data

MSD Public Housing register

MHUD affordability

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority retrofits installed

Who can use the data?

Any organisation with an interest in housing. Organisations are increasingly tasked with determining housing need and demand by national planning requirements yet, modelling relies on historical data. Looking only at past and current housing needs can perpetuate the root causes of housing stress. Organisations who want to create a more stable, adaptive and responsive housing system can use the data to identify projections based on people's future housing preferences and gain an accurate insight into current and future demand so that they can understand what will help people thrive in their communities and what makes the right type of house a home.

Can the data be used to support policy and decision-making?

- Yes,
- Data driven insights: to help in understanding which typologies are needed where, which areas are more in demand and which areas are not. For example, this will help with district planning when making decisions on upzoning.
 - Local context insights: to help understand why a certain area is targeted by certain people and identifying residents' priorities in terms of needs, amenities, etc.

Can the data be used to inform HBAs?

Yes, it can help inform and justify assumptions made for projections, affordability analysis, and it can provide insights into Māori housing demand where sufficient data is available..

Can the data be used to support writing LTPs?

Yes, it can by helping officials understand the current housing matters facing the local community and what the future housing aspirations are, current needs. This survey can be run a year prior to LTP drafting to ensure the information that informs the LTP is as up to date as possible.

Can I use the data to support inclusionary zoning policy?

Yes, our survey results for housing affordability, prevalence of homelessness, financial distress and housing impacts on quality of life will assist you in developing the case for drafting inclusionary zoning policies.

Can the data be used to inform Housing Needs Assessments and/or housing strategies?

Yes, when delivering housing needs assessments our survey is a key ingredient which we support by then also doing qualitative analysis with iwi, community organisations and key stakeholders to ensure we deeply understand local narratives around housing need and can strategically plan for an appropriate housing response by Council and the market.

Can the data be used to inform Future Development Strategies / Spatial Plans and/or to support housing or infrastructure project feasibility business cases?

Yes, by having the survey results at their disposal, officials can easily and quickly identify housing and supply gaps, understand the prevailing tenure profile, and help officials justify investment.

Admin and Backend

How long will the survey run for?

It is our intention that the survey is run over multiple years to enable enough responses to ensure we have a comprehensive and representative dataset.

How is the survey distributed?

The survey will be distributed through online channels. We hope to engage and partner with various district and regional councils, central and local government organisations, housing associations, LGBTIQ+, youth, pacific, youth and insecure housing groups to promote and share the survey.

How long will it be until we can see results?

Once we receive 500 responses we will look to release some preliminary findings. If we receive a cluster of responses from specific areas, we will release findings relevant to these locations. The nationwide application of the data may be limited until we receive an adequate sample size and representative demographic spread.

How is the survey funded?

The survey is funded in its entirety by The Urban Advisory and forms part of our research and development.

How can I be involved?

We have several ways for organisations to get involved with New Zealand's Housing Survey mahi. We are looking for a number of organisations to come onboard as Early Adopters rolling out the survey to their local communities. Reach out to our team if you would like to hear more.

We also have a number of bespoke survey packages and once we have sufficient data we will look to move to an Annual Survey partner subscription model, where Survey partner organisations will be provided with an auto generated report of the key findings, gathered over the year of their partnership.

The Urban Advisory has invested in the design of the survey and procurement of software to ensure high quality data security and analysis capability. We will maintain the front and back end of the survey and have sole responsibility for all subscriptions needed to run New Zealand's Housing Survey.

Does the survey adhere to the Privacy Act?

Yes

How will you protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants?

The data we collect will be converted into anonymised data by removing any information that makes the data personally identifiable. Any analysis, findings or reports published as part of the research will not identify any individuals or households, instead they will be combined with those gathered from other survey participants, and will be analysed as part of a group.

Does New Zealand's Housing Survey meet accessibility standards?

We understand we may have respondents who use third-party screen readers (like JAWS) and it's important for us to make sure our survey is as accessible as possible. We have ensured the questions included in New Zealand's Housing survey are WCAG 2.0 AA (and Section 508) compliant. We have between 6 questions (depending on branching) in our survey that are in likert matrix format, which while not WCAG 2.0 AA compliant meet other standards of compliance, including 508.

Let's Chat!

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