

A Summary of All Right? Research Findings February 2015

Quantitative research was carried out to inform the continual development of the All Right? campaign for greater Christchurch. This summary details the latest research, carried out between 11 November and 30th November 2014. This research provides a comparison to data that was collected in November 2012. The research was undertaken through phone interviews with a representative and randomly selected sample of 800 individuals aged 15 years and over and living within greater Christchurch (the Christchurch City, Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts). However, while the survey collected responses from a representative sample of 800 residents, the findings may not necessarily be applicable to all individuals living in the Christchurch area. As such, the findings should be interpreted with some caution.

Where changes were identified between 2014 and 2012, the changes were statistically significant with 95% confidence.

The qualitative research was carried out between 2nd and 22nd October 2014, and consisted of eight focus groups. The focus groups were structured to ensure a range of gender, ethnicity, age and socio-economic status was represented. The qualitative research allows the research to uncover more about people's experiences (why things may be the way they are) and therefore is an important component of the overall project. Qualitative data is not representative or generalizable, rather it presents the views of those participating in the focus groups.

Quantitative findings showed some significant changes between November 2012 and November 2014, including:

Improvements since 2012

- Fewer respondents reported worrying about another big earthquake happening than in 2012 (45% in November 2014, 54% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents were struggling to deal with things that have happened as a result of the earthquakes than in 2012 (27% in November 2014, 46% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents 'agreed' that they were tired of waiting for authorities or companies to fix their home than in 2012 (29% in November 2014, 42% in November 2012).



- More respondents felt connected to greater Christchurch than in 2012 (54% in November 2014, 46% in November 2012).
- More respondents reported giving time to helping others regularly (43% in November 2014, 36% November 2012).

Challenges in 2014

- More respondents reported finding it difficult to find somewhere appropriate to live (15% in November 2014, 11% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents reported that they are regularly eating well (72% November 2014, 80% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents reported that they keep physically active regularly (49% in November 2014, 56% in November 2012).
- More parents identified lack of money as a challenge to parenting (14% in 2014, 2% in November 2012).

In November 2014, of the respondents that reported that they owned property in greater Christchurch at the time of the September 2010 earthquakes, 90% reported that they had a claim with EQC or an insurance company. Of these respondents, almost a third reported that these claims had not been settled (29% in November 2014, 46% in February 2014 and 69% in November 2012). Of those who had settled, over one tenth were dissatisfied with the final outcome of the settlement (14%). Over four fifths of respondents were satisfied with the final outcome of the settlement (85%). When comparing those whose claim had been settled with those whose claim had not been settled some significant differences were found.

If EQC or insurance claim had not been settled the resident was more likely to:

- Be struggling to deal with things that have happened as a result of the earthquakes (47% not settled, compared to 18% settled).
- Report that their current living situation was getting them down (44% not settled, compared to 9% settled).
- Be tired of waiting for authorities or companies to fix their home (69% not settled, compared to 14% settled).
- Report that life was much worse than before the earthquakes (63% not settled, compared to 27% settled).
- Report more health issues (46% not settled, compared to 32% settled).
- Report that they argued with their partner more than before the earthquakes (19% not settled, compared to 9% settled).
- Experience more financial problems (39% not settled, compared to 18% settled).



- Be grieving more for what we have lost of Christchurch (74% not settled, compared to 51% settled).

Qualitative findings showed that some residents were feeling positive about the future of Christchurch:

“Christchurch has done the down and things are looking up. A lot of demolition has finished and a lot is about the rebuild now”.

However others were feeling resentful, particularly towards those perceived as making the decisions. Some respondents believed that the government had let down the people of Christchurch because it had been focused on the wrong priorities:

“The government should be looking after the people not building a new stadium and cricket pitch.”

There was also resentment of central government at what was perceived as widespread demolition of buildings. Associated with this was a feeling that the city has lost “its heart”:

“One of the difficult things for me, when you drive it’s just like scorched earth, all the familiar things are gone. It makes you feel lost. I am at sea.”

Some focus group participants felt that they had not been consulted on the rebuild and this has led to the feelings of disempowerment.

Impact of earthquakes on physical and mental health and wellbeing

Quantitative:

Significant changes between November 2012 and November 2014:

- Fewer respondents ‘agreed’ that they regularly ate well (72% in November 2014, 75% in February 2014, 80% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents reported keeping physically active regularly (49% in November 2014, 50% in February 2014, 56% in November 2012).
- More respondents reported giving time to helping others regularly (43% in November 2014, 36% in both February 2014 and November 2012).
- Fewer respondents reported worrying about another big earthquake happening than in 2012 (45% in November 2014, 47% in February 2014, 54% in November 2012.)



No significant changes between November 2012 and November 2014:

- A third of respondents 'agreed' that they had more health issues than they did before the earthquakes (34% in November 2014, 35% in February 2014, 33% in November 2012).
- Almost one fifth of respondents 'agreed' that they were drinking more alcohol than they did before the earthquakes (16% in November 2014, 18% in February 2014, 17% in November 2012).
- Less than one tenth of respondents 'agreed' that they smoked more than they did before the earthquakes than in 2012 (8% in November 2014, 8% in February 2014, 11% in November 2012).
- Over four fifths of respondents 'agreed' that they valued others more now than before the earthquakes (83% in November 2014, 80% in February 2014, 83% in November 2012).
- Over one tenth of respondents 'agreed' that they argued with their partner more than they did before the earthquakes (11% in November 2014, 12% in November 2014, 8% in November 2012).
- About one half of respondents 'agreed' that they regularly slept well (53% in November 2014, 48% in February 2014, 50% in November 2012).
- About two thirds of respondents did a lot to "stimulate my mind" (65% in November 2014, 62% in February 2014, 68% in November 2012).
- Over half of respondents had a lot of hobbies or interests (61% in November 2014, 54% in February 2014, 63% in November 2012).
- About one fifth of respondents reported that they did not try new experiences (20% in November 2014, 20% in February 2014, 22% in 2012).
- Four percent of respondents did not notice the simple things that give them joy (6% in February 2014, 3% in November 2012).
- About eighty percent of respondents reported having a better sense of what is important to them now, compared with three years ago (79% in November 2014, 82% in February 2014, 83% in November 2012).
- Almost a third of respondents 'agreed' that they were struggling to deal with things that have happened as a result of the earthquakes (27% in November 2014, not asked previously).
- Over two thirds of respondents 'agreed' that they felt that the gap between the haves and the have-nots had widened over the last four years (68% in November 2014, 77% in February 2014, not asked in 2012).
- About a fifth of respondents (22% in November 2014, 23% in February 2014, 24% in November 2012) 'agreed' that their current living conditions got them down.



Qualitative:

- The ongoing effects of the earthquakes and the associated recovery were described as ‘the daily grind’.
- Stress and tiredness associated with living in an earthquake effected community were commonplace.
- The focus group results indicate that people continue to be affected differently by the earthquakes depending on their life stage.
 - For young singles, the earthquakes were no longer top of their minds, they perceived that normality has returned including increased social opportunities. They were optimistic about the future including the rebuild of Christchurch. The perception with this group was that *“we have hit the bottom and now we are on the up again.”*
 - For adults with dependents, many were still experiencing earthquake related stress. Associated with this stress was a feeling of a lack of control. These people were emotionally exhausted and see others moving on with their lives. Some were feeling bitter about what they consider the ‘second blow’, especially if they have lost money as a result of the earthquakes. Some are feeling let down by ‘those in charge’ due to unresolved issues with insurance companies. Those less affected by the earthquakes are optimistic about the future.
 - Empty nesters, reported that they created a façade that ‘everything is okay’, however some were struggling to accept what had happened and were feeling uncertain about the future. Routines were yet to be re-established due to, for example, housing issues, roading issues, and the damage to the central city. There were reports of tiredness. Some thought that they had their lives worked out and their world has been thrown into disarray. There was a perception that there was limited opportunity for input into the rebuild, which was found to be disempowering.

Impact of earthquakes on children and parenting

Quantitative:

- About a third of respondents who have children ‘agreed’ that their children were anxious or clingy (32% in November 2014, 30% in February 2014, 38% in November 2012).
- Almost one quarter of respondents who have children ‘agreed’ that their children had more health issues than they did four years ago (23% in November 2014, 18% in February 2014, 23% in November 2012).



- The challenges to parenting (identified by respondents with children aged under 18 in the household) included:
 - 22% reported general behaviour issues (14% in February 2014, 16% November 2012)
 - 14% identified lack of money (3% in February 2014, 2% in November 2012)
- Parents identified significantly fewer parenting challenges due to earthquake anxiety (4% in November 2014, 15% November 2012).
- Parents identified significantly fewer parenting challenges due to school or childcare disruption (2% in November 2014, 10% November 2012).
- Parents identified significantly fewer parenting challenges due to stress (1% in November 2014, 10% November 2012).
- Parents identified significantly fewer parenting challenges due to lack of time (0% in November 2014, 10% November 2012).

Qualitative:

- Some parents reported that they believed that their child's sense of security was affected by the earthquakes, manifested for example as anxiety in response to loud noises.
- Some parents reported insufficient finances, this was in part due to the rising cost of living related to the earthquakes.

Support networks and connectedness

Significant change between November 2012 and November 2014:

- More respondents felt connected to greater Christchurch than in 2012 (54% in November 2014, 38% in February 2014, 46% in November 2012).

No significant changes between November 2012 and November 2014:

- Four fifths of respondents felt connected to their family (77% in November 2014, 80% in February 2014, 76% in November 2012).
- Three quarters of respondents felt connected to their friends (71% in November 2014, 66% in February 2014, 71% in November 2012).
- Over a third of respondents felt connected to their neighbours (34% in November 2014, 30% in both February 2014 and November 2012).
- Over a third of respondents felt connected to nature (43% in November 2014, 40% in February 2014, 46% in November 2012).
- Over two thirds of respondents did not feel connected to church, worship, prayer or karakia (68% in November 2014, 64% in February 2014, 73% in November 2012).

The challenges of the recovery

Significant change between November 2012 and November 2014:

- Fewer respondents 'agreed' that they felt angry about the decisions being made by the 'powers that be' (53% in November 2014, 55% in February 2014, 59% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents 'agreed' that they were tired of waiting for the authorities or companies to fix their home (29% in November 2014, 36% in February 2014, 42% in November 2012).
- More respondents 'agreed' that it was difficult at present for them to find somewhere suitable to live (15% in November 2014, 12% in February 2014, 11% in November 2012).
- Fewer respondents 'agreed' that they are grieving for 'what we have lost of Christchurch' than in 2012 (58% in November 2014, 64% in February 2014, 67% in November 2012)

No significant changes between November 2012 and November 2014:

- About the same percentage of respondents 'agreed' that they understood the amount of time it is taking for things to get back to normal as in 2012 (83% in November 2014, 76% in February 2014, 82% in November 2012).
- Over three quarters of respondents continued to 'agree' that authorities are focused on the wrong priorities, for example, should be fixing homes not building new stadiums (76% in November 2014, 76% in February 2014, 78% in November 2014).
- Four fifths of respondents 'agreed' that the house where they live or were living was damaged by the earthquakes (80% in November 2014, 74% in February 2014, 77% in November 2012).
- Over half of respondents 'agreed' that roadworks are a big problem for them in their life (56%, not asked previously).

Attitudes

Almost a third of respondents in November 2014 believed that life is worse now compared to before the earthquakes (32%), almost half of respondents thought life was the same (47%), and over a fifth thought life was better (21%) (question not asked previously). Respondents were asked in what way their life is better than before the Canterbury earthquakes and in what ways their life is worse than it was before the earthquakes.



Of those who identified that their life was better than before the earthquakes, the ways life was better included:

- Work opportunities (24%)
- House issues resolved (17%)
- Change in values and priorities (16%)
- Moving on with life (13%)
- Stronger community (13%)
- Personal growth (13%)
- Improved relationships (11%)

Of those who identified that their life was worse than before the earthquakes, the ways life was worse included:

- Housing issues (27%)
- Roadworks and bad traffic (21%)
- Lost facilities and activities (19%)
- Increased anxiety (15%)
- Worse financial situation (12%)
- Decreased social connections (10%)

Respondents were asked about things that they do differently as a result of the earthquakes. The following things were reported:

- Prepared for emergencies (11%)
- Changes to travel routine (due to roadworks) (9%)
- More aware of surroundings and personal safety (6%)
- Secure things in house (5%)
- Look after myself (5%)

Respondents were asked if they did the following, since the earthquakes:

- Make sure I know where my family members are (66%)
- Keep some cash (52%)
- Look for exits in large buildings (49%)
- Make sure I have at least half a tank of petrol (42%)

How respondent felt

In November 2014 respondents felt (This question has been asked in a different way from previous surveys, so cannot be directly compared to previous responses):

- Happy (69%)
- Grateful (64%)
- Accepting of their situation (59%)
- Lucky (59%)
- In control of my life (59%)
- Excited about the future (52%)
- Tired (50%)
- I have lots of get up and go (40%)
- Stressed (34%)
- Frustrated (29%)
- Anxious (27%)
- My life is full of uncertainty (26%)
- Overwhelmed (18%)
- Angry (13%)

New arrivals to Christchurch

Of the respondents who have moved to Canterbury since 2012 (7% of respondents), the main reason for moving to the area was:

- Education (36%)
- Work (30%)
- For the rebuild (16%)
- Returning home after time away (10%)
- Other (8%).

How new residents felt about living in greater Christchurch

Of the respondents who had moved to Canterbury since 2012:

- Over four fifths of respondents 'agreed' that people had been welcoming (87%).
- Over four fifths of respondents 'agreed' that Christchurch is a great place to live (85%).
- Over four fifths of respondents 'agreed' that they feel bad about the situation of some people who have been through the earthquakes (83%).
- Over two thirds of respondents plan to stay long term (68%).
- Less than a third of respondents 'agreed' that the earthquakes don't look like they were as bad as some people make out (28%).