Wellington City Residents’ Usage of and Attitudes Towards the Town Belt

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Prepared by: Antoinette Hastings and Nathan Newman
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Executive Insights

- The Town Belt is a well known and highly valued feature of Wellington. Three in four Wellingtonians by their own definition *regularly* use the Town Belt. For many, it is a unique feature of Wellington that enhances living in this city.

- The values most strongly associated with, and valued about, the Town Belt that need to be given particular consideration when revising the Management Plan include:
  - **Recreational** use, with specific emphasis on protection of informal and casual use. The walking tracks on the Town Belt are a key element and maintenance of these tracks should be a priority. Walking tracks is the element that spontaneously comes to mind most frequently when residents consider what they value about the Town Belt. It is also the area most residents identify for where money should be spent in the future. Walking is also the most common activity *regularly* carried out on the Town Belt.
  - **Green, natural space** - space that enhances the look and feel of the city, provides a retreat from the ‘concrete jungle’ of the city and that provides natural habitats for birds and other animals
  - **Accessibility** – easy to reach and use – unimpaired views from the Town Belt
  - **Public ownership** – there is resistance to commercial interests on the Town Belt, even those that fit under the recreational umbrella.
  - **Protected space and minimal development** - there is resistance to further development of any recreational facilities outside of the existing recreational hubs on the Town Belt
In relation to further development and planning for the Town Belt, this research sends strong messages that residents are generally happy with the status quo and believe the emphasis should be on maintaining and enhancing what is already there rather than on new developments or big change. In particular:

- Maintaining and enhancing walking tracks
- Planting native vegetation
- Maintaining and enhancing existing recreational facilities (not removing them)
- If new recreational facilities are required, building them in existing recreational hubs
- Maintaining current level of weed control.

The only type of potential new development that might be considered acceptable by most is community orchards and gardens. Childcare facilities and commercial recreational ventures would face considerable opposition, while the picture for cafes/refreshments is less clear, indicating it may depend on aspects such as location and/or size.
Background and objectives

• Wellington City Council is seeking input from residents to feed into the development of objectives for legislation and the drafting of the Town Belt Management Plan over the next three years. This input will also inform the development of a discussion document for public feedback.

• The Council specifically wants to know:
  – How familiar residents are with the Town Belt
  – What residents most appreciate about the Town Belt (values that need to be protected)
  – What residents perceive as the greatest threats to the Town Belt
  – How, and how often, residents use the Town Belt
  – What activities and developments are perceived as appropriate and acceptable on the Town Belt
  – What residents’ attitudes are on the specific vegetation management issues of native versus exotic vegetation and weed control.
Research design

Methodology

Surveys were conducted online via Nielsen's YourVoice panel. This approach enabled us to show maps to respondents to ensure that responses related to the actual Town Belt.

Field work

Surveys were conducted between 10 September – 27 September 2009

Sample size

1037 surveys were conducted among Wellington residents. This gave a margin of error of ± 3%. To provide a reliable estimate of attitudes and usage at Ward level, we aimed to achieve at least 200 interviews in each of Wellington’s five wards. This was achieved in all but the Southern Ward, where the sample size was 175 at the completion of the fieldwork.

Weighting

Results were adjusted by a statistical process called weighting so that the ‘total Wellington’ results reflect the known population of the population falling into each ward, as shown on the following page. Results were also weighted by age and gender within each ward to accurately reflect the Wellington population.
Sample profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward Level</th>
<th>Unweighted</th>
<th>Weighted</th>
<th>Margin of Error at Ward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ward</td>
<td>220 21%</td>
<td>220 21%</td>
<td>± 6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onslow-Western Ward</td>
<td>220 21%</td>
<td>166 16%</td>
<td>± 6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambton Ward</td>
<td>222 21%</td>
<td>309 30%</td>
<td>± 6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Ward</td>
<td>175 17%</td>
<td>142 14%</td>
<td>± 7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Ward</td>
<td>200 19%</td>
<td>199 19%</td>
<td>± 7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Unweighted</th>
<th>Weighted</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>428 41%</td>
<td>496 48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>609 59%</td>
<td>541 52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24 years</td>
<td>168 16%</td>
<td>207 20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39 years</td>
<td>334 32%</td>
<td>353 34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59 years</td>
<td>370 36%</td>
<td>327 32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>165 16%</td>
<td>150 14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed Findings

- Residents’ knowledge of the Town Belt
- What residents value and/or appreciate about the Town Belt
- Usage of the Town Belt
- Future of the Town Belt
- Vegetation management on the Town Belt
Nine in ten Wellingtonians have heard of the Town Belt, with awareness positively correlated with age.

Q5. Have you heard of Wellington’s Town Belt?

- Yes: 88%
- No: 12%

Awareness levels by age group:
- 15-24 years: 67%
- 25-39 years: 89%
- 40-59 years: 96%
- 60 years and over: 99%

Those in the Eastern or Onslow-Western Wards are the most likely to be aware of the Town Belt:
- Northern Ward: 83%
- Onslow-Western Ward: 93%
- Lambton Ward: 87%
- Southern Ward: 86%
- Eastern Ward: 94%

*Base: All respondents (n=1037)*
The main themes to spontaneously emerge when residents describe the Town Belt are recreational space, green area surrounding or close to the city and natural area that cannot be built on.

Q6. How would you describe the Town Belt to someone who is not from Wellington?

Recreation area/walking tracks/biking/mountain biking/dog walking: 36%
Green area/trees, bush, forest, parks around/circling/wrapping the city: 31%
Undeveloped/natural/protected area/cannot be built on: 20%
Green area close to/within city boundaries (peaceful oasis in city area): 18%
Green/natural/bush/wooded space/area/reserve/belt of trees: 12%
Network of green/parks dividing some of suburbs/through the city: 12%
For everyone/residents enjoyment/relaxation/public land: 12%
Green area/bush/parks around the hills of Wellington: 8%
Provides great views/lookouts over city and harbour: 8%

Base: Those who had heard of the Town Belt (n=930)
Note: Percentages under 5% not shown
It is apparent from verbatim comments that understanding of the specific location of the Town Belt is variable.

- "It is the green strip of land that surrounds parts of the city."
- "An important part of Wellington set aside for walking, cycling, running, enjoying."
- "It is the area of bush / parkland that stretches from the sea at Oriental Parade, along the ridge past Mt. Victoria, right through to Island Bay."
- "A wonderful belt of bush that clambers across the city where people can walk, play sport, take their dogs and enjoy nature and from which they can view the city from a myriad of perspectives."
- "A protected reserve accessible & available to all residents and visitors for their enjoyment."
- "Islands & corridors of greenery around the city."
- "The green belt that runs through the out skirts of the Wellington region. It has a great variety of contrasts from rolling farms to forestry blocks that can be accessed free to all who want to."
- "When Wellington city was being laid-out and buildings and suburbs etc decided, the city fathers (and mothers) decided to have a green area that was protected from building and was an area devoted to conservation and recreation."
Detailed Findings

- Residents’ knowledge of the Town Belt
- What residents value and/or appreciate about the Town Belt
- Usage of the Town Belt
- Future of the Town Belt
- Vegetation management on the Town Belt
The great majority of Wellingtonians personally value the Town Belt and over half (56%) place a high personal value on this area.

Q13. Overall how much do you personally value the Town Belt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>0-4</th>
<th>5-7</th>
<th>8-10</th>
<th>Very High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those aware of Town Belt</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24 years (n=116)</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39 years (n=296)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59 years (n=355)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 years and over (n=163)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just over a quarter of Wellingtonians rated the value of the Town Belt 10 out of 10.

Those in the Northern Ward are slightly less likely to feel the Town Belt has high personal value (8-10 out of 10) compared with those in other wards:

- Northern Ward: 47%
- Southern Ward: 53%
- Onslow-Western Ward: 59%
- Eastern Ward: 55%
- Lambton Ward: 62%
Q7. What is it about the Town Belt that you personally most value or appreciate? (Unprompted responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walks/large number, variety of walking tracks (can walk for miles away from traffic)</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to city/green in/around/surrounding city /like a bit of country/rural close to city</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can 'get away from it all' /escape/peaceful/quiet/no traffic</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees/bush (incl native bush)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and unspoilt/natural beauty</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides recreation/outdoor activities area /range of activities (walking the dog, trail running, cycle tracks)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeveloped /no housing/buildings/cannot be built on (protected, cannot be privatised)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green/green area/parks/space/gives Wellington a green image</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open/large open, green space/substantial area</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to home/don't have to travel far to access</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public access/anyone can use it/community open space (free)</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive backdrop to city/green natural section of cityscape/visible from almost anywhere in city</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views/scenery</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird life/wildlife/supports flora and fauna</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change/contrast to buildings/concrete/city not like concrete jungle/away from concrete jungle</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to city centre/walking distance from CBD</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents (n=930)
Note: Only reported if over 5%

Young couples without any children are more likely to value the large number of walking tracks (37% cf. 23% average).

Older residents (60+) are more likely to value the attractive backdrop the Town Belt provides (16% cf. 8% average).

Females are more likely to value the bird life and support the Town Belt gives flora and fauna (10% cf. 5% for males).
Verbatim comments – Aspects of the Town Belt that are valued or appreciated

“Greenery in the city, trees, birds, a place to go and walk, and have picnics. I think it improves the city all around not to be entirely swamped with houses from coast to coast. It’s healthier and beautiful.”

“Somewhere to walk the dog that offers amazing scenery.”

“Adds beauty to the city and ecologically friendly sign of Wellington”

“The fact that it was a far-sighted thoughtful gift to protect the beauty of this unique city.”

“An opportunity to escape, breath and exercise away from the concrete jungle but very accessible”

“The fact that it is NZ native and cannot be found anywhere else. It is great having Tui and Weta in our gardens because of the town belt.”

“Walks among old tall trees, the way it separates different suburbs of the city and provides relief from the concrete sprawl that is typical of most other cities. One of the key reasons I want to continue living in Wellington.”

“I love the look of it - I find it aesthetically pleasing and I like the knowledge that wherever you live in the city you can easily get into wooded land and pathways if you want.”

“During the busy day, you can go there to find a few minutes of peace. You can walk, cycle or drive, you can sit and enjoy the trees, birds, vistas. There is a special freedom in the Town Belt, it allows you to clear your head and breath fresh air.”
When prompted with a number of aspects, views from the Town Belt, the ability to enjoy the outdoors, and the protection to native habitats are more strongly valued aspects of the Town Belt, while recreation facilities and accessibility from work are relatively less strongly valued.

Q14. How do you personally value… (prompted)

The views of city and coast from the Town Belt (n=1004)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 6%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 22%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 72%

That you can enjoy nature/the outdoors (n=1013)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 7%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 7%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 9%

That it protects native habitats for birds and other animals (n=1011)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 11%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 23%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 70%

That it provides a place to get away from it all (n=1006)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 1%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 25%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 65%

Views of the Town Belt from the city and suburbs (n=1004)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 9%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 28%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 63%

The presence of tracks for walking, running and mountain biking (n=1006)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 13%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 27%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 60%

How accessible the Town Belt is from your home (n=992)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 15%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 34%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 51%

Recreation Facilities available for use (n=996)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 21%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 38%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 41%

How accessible the Town Belt is from your work (n=880)
- Low value (0-4 out of 10) 33%
- Medium value (5-7 out of 10) 36%
- High value (8-10 out of 10) 31%

Those in the Northern Ward are generally less likely to place higher personal value on the various aspects of the Town Belt. In particular: views of the city and coast (56% rated it high value), accessibility from your home (23%) and accessibility from your work (18%).

Younger residents (aged 15-24) are also less likely to place high personal value on aspects, particularly views of the Town Belt from the city and suburbs (44% rated it high value) and that you can enjoy the nature/the outdoors (55%).

On the other hand, older respondents (60 years or over) are more likely to place higher personal value on aspects, especially that you can enjoy nature/the outdoors (85%).
Detailed Findings

- Residents’ knowledge of the Town Belt
- What residents value and/or appreciate about the Town Belt
- Usage of the Town Belt
- Future of the Town Belt
- Vegetation management on the Town Belt
Areas of usage

Respondents were shown maps of the Town Belt so they could visualize the area that actually makes up the Town Belt. This was accompanied by the following explanation.

As you may or may not know, Wellington’s Town Belt is 420 hectares of open space that includes lots of walking and mountain biking tracks, sports fields and clubs, as well as areas of native and exotic vegetation. It encircles or surrounds Wellington’s inner suburbs. The large areas of open spaces outside of this inner Town Belt are referred to as the Outer Green Belt. For this survey, we are focusing just on your use of this inner Town Belt. The inner Town Belt can be seen in the map below. Please look at the boundaries to give you a clearer picture of what is in the inner Town Belt.

The Wellington Botanic Garden and the Zoo are also located on the Town Belt. However, for this interview, when we ask you about your use of the town belt, please exclude these.

Respondents were asked to consider what activities they undertake in the areas shown on the map to the left.

After this respondents were shown where formal recreation facilities, such as playgrounds, sporting facilities, Berhampore Golf course, the Renouf Tennis Center and hockey stadium are on the Town Belt. Respondents were asked how often they visited these formal recreation facilities, as opposed to using the Town Belt informally, that is activities such as family outings, picnics, casual sport, walking, running and mountain biking.
Key facts on residents usage of the Town Belt:

- 92% of Wellingtonians use the Town Belt
- 75% of Wellingtonians say they regularly use the Town Belt
- Younger residents are less likely to regularly use the Town Belt compared to their older counterparts (52% cf. 75% average).
- Informal use of the Town Belt occurs more frequently than use of formal recreational facilities, and is likely to be in the form of walking (the most regular activity carried out on the Town Belt).
- Formal use: 9% never use Town Belt formally, 23% use once a year or less, 40% use once every 2-6 months, 28% use at least once a month.
- Informal use: 2% never use Town Belt informally, 11% use once a year or less, 40% use once every 2-6 months, 47% use more than once a month.
- Mt Victoria is the most frequently visited area on the Town Belt. However, walking is not the most common activity undertaken in this area. Activities likely to be undertaken in this area by residents at least once a month are; picnics, jogging or running, and cycling.
- 47% of those with high informal use also have high use of formal recreation facilities.
- 78% of those with high use of formal recreation facilities also have high informal use.

This research was consistent with findings from the Wellington City Council Residents’ Satisfaction Survey. From the RSS we know that 30% of Wellingtonians use the Town Belt or Outer Green Belt at least once a month. This sits between the levels of formal and informal monthly usage identified in this research. The RSS also tells us 32% of residents use outdoor sports fields at least monthly; this is similar to the number using formal recreational facilities at least once a month (28%) identified in this research.
Residents have undertaken a range of activities on the Town Belt, with walking and looking at the views the most popular activities.

Not surprisingly, the different activities undertaken are linked to household composition, for example households with children are more likely to have visited playgrounds or competed in sports, older couples (no children) are more likely to have looked at plants/native vegetation or been sightseeing and those in a flat are more likely to have spent time relaxing/chilling out or jogging/running.

Q8. Activities ever undertaken on Town Belt (prompted)

- Walking: 79%
- Sightseeing/looking at views: 74%
- Spend time relaxing/chilling out: 52%
- Commuting/passing through to get to another area: 50%
- Looked at plants/native vegetation: 40%
- Visited playgrounds: 38%
- Picnic: 37%
- Family outing: 34%
- Community event (e.g. concerts): 27%
- Jogging or running: 24%
- Casual sport (e.g. play a sport with a group of friends): 21%
- Competitive sport (e.g. participate in, or watch, an organised sports event): 21%
- Exercising the dog: 15%
- Mountain biking: 11%
- Cycling: 9%
- Volunteer planting: 4%
- Other (please specify): 2%
- I have not undertaken any activities on the Town Belt: 8%

Base: All respondents (n=1037)
Note: Percentages under 2% not shown
Walking is the activity most regularly undertaken by residents on the Town Belt

Q9. Activities undertaken regularly (prompted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing/looking at views</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuting/passing through to get to another area</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time relaxing/chilling out</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited playgrounds</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging or running</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family outing</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising the dog</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked at plants/native vegetation</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive sport (e.g. participate in, or watch, an organised sports event)</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual sport (e.g. play a sport with a group of friends)</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community event (e.g. concerts)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain biking</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not undertaken any regular activities on the Town Belt</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents (n=968)
Note: Percentages under 2% not shown

Older residents (60+) are more likely to regularly sightsee (45% cf. 28% average).

Residents from Lambton Ward are more likely to regularly commute or pass through the area (34% cf. 25% average).

Residents from Southern Ward and households with children under 14 are more likely to visit playgrounds (22% and 38%, respectively, cf. 14% average).

Male residents are more likely than females to regularly undertake casual sport on the Town Belt (11% cf. 2%)
Informal use of the Town Belt occurs more frequently than use of formal recreational facilities

About three in ten Wellington residents who have used the Town Belt are high users of it formally. Of those, the majority (78%) are also high users of it informally.

Those aged 40-59 are more likely to have high formal usage (36%).

Those living in the Northern ward are less likely to have high informal use (24%).

Base: Those who undertake activities on the Town Belt (n=968)
Mt Victoria is the most frequently visited area on the Town Belt, while Newtown has as many high users as Mt Victoria.

Q12. How often do you visit these specific areas of the Town Belt for either formal recreation facilities or informal use of the open spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Never used</th>
<th>Low usage (once a year or less often)</th>
<th>Medium usage (once every 2-6 months)</th>
<th>High usage (once a month or more)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mt Victoria</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newtown</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hataitai</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt Cook/Aro Valley</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berhampore</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te Ahumairangi Hill (Tinakori Hill)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents who use the Town Belt informally or use the formal recreation facilities (n=958)
Detailed Findings
- Residents’ knowledge of the Town Belt
- What residents value and/or appreciate about the Town Belt
- Usage of the Town Belt
- Future of the Town Belt
- Vegetation management on the Town Belt
Threats to the preservation of the naturalness and size of the Town Belt (such as building, commercialisation, roads, zoning changes) would be of concern to residents.

Q15. What concerns, if any, do you have for the Town Belt? (unprompted responses)

- Development/encroachment into the area (incl housing, building, commercialisation, roads) - 39%
- Retaining/not reducing the size of the Town Belt/enlarge if possible (protecting, preserving area) - 23%
- Selling/privatising any of the land - 8%
- Accessibility/restricting access to Town Belt (incl disabled access, charging entry) - 8%
- Maintenance not kept up (incl reduced budget for maintenance) - 7%
- Preserving the trees/no felling/de-forestation (incl mix of exotic and native trees)/lack of management of forest, trees - 4%
- Lack of track development/maintenance - 3%
- Change from natural/overdevelopment into formal parks/sports fields (keep it a bit rough and natural (eg not paved paths)) - 3%
- Animal and plant pests (incl opossums, weeds)/ that could endanger birds - 3%
- Not replacing exotic (pines) with native trees (too many exotic species) - 3%
- Litter/rubbish being dumped there/pollution - 3%
- Other - 5%
- Nothing/none/no concerns - 18%

Base: All respondents (n=1037)
Note: Only reported if over 2%

Residents aged 40-59 and those from Onslow-Western ward are more likely to be concerned about the ability to at least retain the current size of the Town Belt (31% and 36%, respectively, cf. 23% average).

Residents aged 40-59 are also more likely to be concerned about privatisation or sale of land (14% cf. 8% average).

Those aged 15-24 where more likely to have no concerns (34% cf. 18% average).
The largest proportion of residents spontaneously identify maintenance of walking tracks and paths as the priority for future spending, followed by maintenance in general and more native planting.

Q16. When funding is available, what would you like to see done first? (unprompted responses)

- Maintenance/upkeep/improvement of walking tracks, paths: 24%
- General maintenance/keep clean (incl tree trimming): 14%
- Plant more native trees/plants (eg project crimson): 14%
- More facilities (rest areas, seating, picnic areas, tables, toilets, lookouts): 7%
- Signage/better signage (incl provide maps, LOTR locations): 7%
- More planting/vegetation management/replanting (n/s) (incl Tinakori Hill): 6%
- Access/better accessibility (incl for elderly, disabled, improved parking areas): 5%
- Sports facilities (swimming pools, golf course, sports fields, all weather surfaces, fitness area, equipment): 5%
- Animal and plant pest control/ weed control: 4%
- Playgrounds/playground maintenance: 4%
- Extend/more walking tracks: 4%
- Remove pine trees/non natives: 4%
- Advertise/publicise/increase public awareness of the town Belt: 4%
- Other: 7%
- Nothing: 5%
- Don't know: 14%

Base: All respondents (n=1037)
Note: Only reported if over 3%

Older residents are more likely to want more native trees or plants (27% cf. 14% average). Males are also more likely to want money spent in this area (17% cf. 10% for females).

Males are also more likely to want more sports facilities (7% cf. 3% for females). This is also a preference among younger (15-24 year old) residents (11% cf. 5% average).

Households with children aged 5 or older are more likely to want better access (12% cf. 5% average). In comparison those with children under 5 have greater preference for playgrounds or maintenance to existing playgrounds (12% cf. 4% average).

Older residents (60+) are more likely to want money spent on removing non native tress from the area (11% cf. 4%)
Setting the context for understanding residents’ views on what is acceptable or appropriate development on the Town Belt

• Prior to answering questions on their support or opposition to developments on the Town Belt, respondents were informed of the following:

The Town Belt is governed by a Trust Deed which was established in 1873. The Deed states that the Town Belt is to be used “as a public recreation ground for the inhabitants of the City of Wellington” and “for such purposes of public utility to the City of Wellington and the inhabitants”. The Town Belt contains a range of formal and informal recreational facilities including 12 sports fields, 48 recreational leases for sports and community organisations with associated buildings, an 18 hole golf course, local and community parks and play areas, and over 75km of dual use tracks. Most of the formal sports facilities are clustered in 5 recreation hubs at Hataitai Park, Newtown Park, Mt Albert Hockey Stadium, Wakefield Park and Rugby League Park (at this point respondents were shown a map of these facilities). The current policy in the management plan is that no additional land area shall be developed for organised sport with the emphasis being given to informal recreation. The Council receives frequent requests from community and sports organisations to develop additional facilities on the Town Belt, or to use it for activities that do not fit with the broad definition of recreation, for instance childcare and kindergartens, as well as more commercial pay for play recreation.

• This set the context for understanding residents’ views on what they consider acceptable or appropriate development on the Town Belt.
The balance of opinion is opposed to the development of commercial recreation activities and childcare facilities on the Town Belt. Community orchards and gardens are more likely to be supported, while opinion on cafe/refreshment areas is more polarised.

Q17. Oppose/support the following developments

- **Community orchards and gardens**
  - 64% Strongly support
  - 25% More support than oppose
  - 17% Neither support nor oppose
  - 5% Neither oppose nor support
  - 1% More oppose than support
  - 2% Strongly oppose

- **Cafes/refreshments**
  - 36% Strongly support
  - 27% More support than oppose
  - 21% Neither support nor oppose
  - 18% Neither oppose nor support
  - 12% More oppose than support
  - 2% Strongly oppose

- **Commercial recreation activities**
  - (such as golf driving range or highwire confidence courses)
  - 52% Strongly support
  - 27% More support than oppose
  - 19% Neither support nor oppose
  - 21% Neither oppose nor support
  - 3% More oppose than support
  - 2% Strongly oppose

- **Childcare and kindergartens**
  - 48% Strongly support
  - 26% More support than oppose
  - 24% Neither support nor oppose
  - 18% Neither oppose nor support
  - 8% More oppose than support
  - 2% Strongly oppose

Those from Southern ward are more likely to support development of orchards and gardens (81% cf. 64%). However older residents (60+) are more likely to oppose this development (31% cf. 17%).

Those aged 15-24 are more likely to strongly support development of commercial recreation activities (12% cf. 6% average).

Households with children under 5 are more likely to support development of kindergartens (46% cf. 26% average).

Base: All respondents (n=1037)
Those who place a high personal value on the Town Belt have greater levels of opposition to all potential developments.

Opposition to developments by personal value of Town Belt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Type</th>
<th>Low Value</th>
<th>Medium Value</th>
<th>High Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial recreation activities</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare and kindergartens</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community orchards and gardens</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafes/refreshments</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents (n=1037)
The balance of opinion supports upgrade or replacement of existing recreational facilities. It also supports new development in recreational hubs only. However, opinion is against opening up all of the Town Belt for development of recreational facilities. At the same time there is little support for active removal of existing facilities.

Q18. Favour/opposition development recreational facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>More support than oppose</th>
<th>Neither support nor oppose</th>
<th>Strongly oppose</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allowing new development of recreation facilities anywhere in the Town Belt</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing new development of recreation facilities in recreational hubs only</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more facilities to be built on Town Belt except to upgrade or replace existing recreation facilities</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actively remove recreation facilities from Town Belt and return it to informal open space</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is opposition to actively removing current facilities and just as strong opposition to allowing development anywhere on the Town Belt; maintaining and enhancing the status quo provides a middle ground that will be acceptable to the majority of residents.
The higher the personal value placed on the Town Belt, the stronger the opposition to recreation facilities being developed anywhere on the Town Belt.

Opinion to development of recreation facilities by personal value of Town Belt

- **Low value**
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities anywhere in the Town Belt: 26%
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities in recreational hubs only: 11%
  - No more facilities to be built on Town Belt except to upgrade or replace existing recreation facilities: 22%
  - Actively remove recreation facilities from Town Belt and return it to informal open space: 50%

- **Medium value**
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities anywhere in the Town Belt: 45%
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities in recreational hubs only: 12%
  - No more facilities to be built on Town Belt except to upgrade or replace existing recreation facilities: 28%
  - Actively remove recreation facilities from Town Belt and return it to informal open space: 62%

- **High value**
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities anywhere in the Town Belt: 65%
  - Allowing new development of recreation facilities in recreational hubs only: 19%
  - No more facilities to be built on Town Belt except to upgrade or replace existing recreation facilities: 20%
  - Actively remove recreation facilities from Town Belt and return it to informal open space: 61%

*Base: All respondents (n=1037)*
Detailed Findings
- Residents’ knowledge of the Town Belt
- What residents value and/or appreciate about the Town Belt
- Usage of the Town Belt
- Future of the Town Belt
- Vegetation management on the Town Belt
Setting the context for understanding views on vegetation management

- Prior to answering questions on vegetation management, respondents were informed of the following two points:

  1. The Town Belt is covered in a wide range of native and exotic vegetation including forest and grass lands. Some people believe that it is important that native vegetation be used as much as possible, while others see 'native' as a less important consideration.

  2. Weeds can smother or out-compete plant species and reduce the habitat needed to support wildlife, therefore weed control is used in order to protect and enhance this natural environment. Presently the Council's budget and weed management approach for the Town Belt gives priority to targeting:
     - Noxious weeds - these have significant adverse effects on the native ecosystems. On the Town Belt we target climbing asparagus, old man's beard and banana passionfruit
     - Areas of high amenity value - currently on the Town Belt we control weeds on areas such as Mt Victoria lookout and Central Park.

- These two points provided the context for residents to make an informed decision on the importance of native vegetation being present on the Town Belt, and whether current weed control is sufficient.
The great majority of residents place importance on native vegetation being used on the Town Belt where possible, with over half placing high importance on this.

Q33. How important is it to you personally that native vegetation is used on the Town Belt where possible?

Actual ratings:
- 0: 2%
- 1: 0%
- 2: 1%
- 3: 1%
- 4: 2%
- 5: 10%
- 6: 9%
- 7: 16%
- 8: 22%
- 9: 10%
- 10: 24%
- DK: 1%

Base: All respondents
The balance of opinion supports the Council’s current weed management approach

Q35. To what extent do you agree that the present level of weed control is sufficient for the Town Belt

- Don't know: 14%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 1%
- Strongly disagree: 13%
- Disagree: 26%
- Agree: 40%
- Strongly agree: 7%

n=1037

Base: All respondents