

Snapshot of progress

92% of Wellingtonians say their quality of life is good or very good.

In a global survey, the city ranked 12th in the world for quality of life.

The city's crime rate dropped during the year, leaving most residents feeling safe day and night.

Motor vehicle crashes and road casualties also dropped during the year. These results reflect considerable effort by the Council and communities to improve safety on roads and in the city centre.

Wellington's economy slowed during the year, reflecting the global economic crisis.

Figures from consulting firm Infometrics indicate that the city's GDP per capita has continued to grow during the year (by 0.69%) despite the global slowdown. Despite the slowdown, Wellington continued to attract visitors to the city.

Wellington is one of the greenest capital cities in the world.

The city's total land area is just under 290 square kilometres. Of that, just over 40 square kilometres is protected in the Town Belt and other reserves. We manage this land to maintain its conservation values as well as providing space for outdoor recreation such as walking and mountain biking.

Wellington ranked highly in a global survey of eco-cities.

In the 2010 Mercer Quality of Living Survey's list of eco-cities, Wellington ranked 5th in the world.

This result reflected efforts by the Council and the community to reduce the city's carbon footprint, to cut waste and water use, and to use buses, bikes and other alternatives to private cars when we're travelling to and from the city.

Wellington held on to its reputation as events capital.

A majority of New Zealanders recognise Wellington as the nation's 'events capital' and also as having 'a culturally rich and diverse arts scene'. The city is home to many of the country's foremost arts and culture institutions, such as Te Papa and the NZ International Arts Festival. During the year, events such as the World Press Photo Exhibition and the NZ Affordable Arts show brought thousands of visitors and tens of millions of dollars to the city's economy.

The city has strong and welcoming communities.

In our Residents' Satisfaction Survey, 77% agreed that in Wellington communities work together and people support each other, while 76% agreed that increasing diversity of lifestyles and cultures makes the city a better place to live.

Wellington remains compact and easy to move around despite population growth.

The city's population has grown an estimated 4% (7,800) since the last Census in 2006. Despite this growth, the vast majority (94%) of residents feel the city is easy to walk around. Although only half (49%) feel the city is easy to drive around, 80% of residents feel it easy to access the central city from the suburbs.

People are involved and engaged.

Over 400,000 people attended events during the year. There were 2.6 million visits to our libraries, 1.3 million to our pools and 91,000 are enrolled in aquatic education programmes. Three-quarters (76%) of Wellington residents are either satisfied or neutral in respect of their own involvement in Council decision-making.

The central place of mana whenua is increasingly being acknowledged.

Construction started on the wharewaka on the waterfront and a new space dedicated to Māori art was opened in the City Gallery. We also continued to work with Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding, reflecting the new environment following the 2008 settlement of the Port Nicholson Block Treaty of Waitangi claim.

There are also areas where our performance is declining or has fallen short of the standards we expect.

These include: a decline in use of the Wellington Convention Centre (attributed to economic down turn); delays in processing building consents – 8% took longer than the timeframes that are set; the safety of cycleways (we've committed additional funding in our long-term plan to upgrade cycleways); a decline in the use of walking tracks, which is attributed to poor weather but will be monitored over the coming year. As you'll see throughout this report we'll be working to address the areas where performance fell below expectations.