

Lifestyle



Sections

- Residents' rating of their lifestyle and city
- Sport and recreation
- Modifiable risk factors

Introduction

Waitakere City comprises three broad geographic areas:

- The bush-clad Waitakere ranges and stunning west coast beaches, containing a wealth of flora and fauna
- The eastern foothills which support a rural/orcharding land use
- The lowlands which are largely urban connecting into the rest of the Auckland isthmus.

These striking features provide a unique backdrop and positive lifestyle for Waitakere City residents and the local lifestyle.

Recognising this, Waitakere City Council, New Zealand's first Eco City, is committed to meeting economic and social needs while, at the same time, caring for the environment.¹ For example, the Council plants over 80,000 native trees and plants each year. It has also ensured that over 95% of new homes built in the City are in the urban areas, reducing the pressure to subdivide the countryside and Waitakere Ranges.²

Over the last decade town centres, parks, community and leisure facilities across the City have been much improved. A 'café culture' is emerging and the City is increasingly being recognised as a good place to live.

¹ Source: Waitakere City Council, Agenda 21.

² Source: Waitakere City Council 2004.



However, despite this positive environment, some people are not able to enjoy or choose healthy lifestyles. For example, people who are elderly or on low incomes are less likely to exercise than those who are young or on high incomes.³ Yet, physical inactivity along with smoking are recognised as two key modifiable risk factors for poor health.⁴

Major Policy Influences and Directions

- Waitakere City Council’s Leisure Strategy provides the framework for the development and prioritisation of leisure facilities, services and activities.
- Waitakere City’s draft Community Facility Partnership Policy is for organisations seeking Council funding to develop new or current recreation or leisure assets accessible by the community.
- The Sale of Liquor Amendment reduced the legal drinking age from 20 years to 18 years on 1 December 1999.
- The Gambling Act, 2003 was introduced to regulate the growth of gambling and prevent and minimise the harm caused by gambling, including problem gambling.
- The Methamphetamine Action Plan (2003) deals with New Zealand’s methamphetamine problem.
- The Prostitution Reform Act, 2003.

Some Key Issues

- “There is a lack of facilities for youth of secondary school age – also after school care for school age children.” Nelda Taurua, Wai Health and Social Services, Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust.

- “Pacific youth issues as well as children’s needs have to be articulated so that all Pacific service providers and community work together to address the common problems. Again planning with other agencies involved with youths is important so that we are able to focus on practical issues.” Rita Harder, Pacific Liaison Nurse, Waitakere Hospital.
- Older adults face barriers in participating in sport and leisure activities. Currently there is no concise easily accessible directory containing information on activities, education, organisations and services aimed at older adults. There are few ‘Day Centres’ for older adults to use for company and stimulation, and some older adults feel shy about going to a new ‘activity’ by themselves.⁵
- There are a high number of young people in Waitakere City who smoke. Young Maori females (15 year olds) in New Zealand have the highest smoking rates in the world.
- Alcohol abuse and the high social tolerance of drinking have been identified as risk factors in the yearly average 474 suicides, 71 homicides and 2500 hospitalisations from intentional injury in New Zealand. The sale of alcohol to under age drinkers and the intoxication of young people aged 25 years and under have been identified as key issues in Waitakere City.
- Some community agencies are reporting an increase in the incidence and severity of methamphetamine (P) related crime.

³ Source: Quality of Life Report 2003.

⁴ Source: Quality of Life Report 2003.

⁵ Older adults forum 2003

Some Highlights

- The new \$20m+ Waitakere Trusts Sports Stadium is due to open later this year.
- The development of partnerships between youth providers such as the YMCA, Sport Waitakere, Village Trust, Youth Council and others.
- The Youth Facility Design Development which aims to provide a purpose built passive leisure facility to meet the needs of Waitakere City's youth as identified in the comprehensive consultation completed over the last 3 years. A feasibility study and concept work is complete and will be progressed into design work in 2004/2005.
- The Summerland Drive Community Facility. A new Community facility co-located along with the Summerland Primary School in the Sturges Valley area is being constructed and developed.
- The New Waitakere community action on youth and drugs pilot project begun in 2004 funded by the Ministry of Health.
- The creation of the Eco Matters Trust, which is an umbrella grouping of the Keep Waitakere Beautiful Trust, Tag Out Trust and Weedfree Waitakere Trust.
- The Westwave Aquatic Centre in Henderson.

Residents' rating of lifestyle

Each year, the Waitakere City Council conducts a survey of residents, known as Key Performance Indicator (KPI) surveys. In April and May 2003, around 300 Waitakere City residents were interviewed by telephone. In July 2003, 685 residents selected from the electoral roll were surveyed by mail. The following results are taken from the 2003

surveys:

- Most residents (86%) believed that Waitakere City is a very good or good place to live.⁶
- Most residents (66%) were satisfied with the variety and location of parks.
- Nearly two-thirds of residents felt the Council was creating a feeling of pride in Waitakere City.
- Most residents (73%) considered the leisure and recreational activities in the city were good or very good.
- Most residents (73%) rated the quality of air as satisfactory or better.
- Two-fifths of residents had taken actions to improve the natural environment, including clearing noxious weeds and planting trees.

Leisure Opportunities

- Over three quarters (78%) of Waitakere City residents said that leisure opportunities in the city meet all or most of their needs.
- Reasons for those whose leisure needs are not met within Waitakere City are varied.
 - 26% just like to go further afield for their leisure.
 - 14% say the activities they want are not available within Waitakere City.
 - Many mentioned the need for improvements or maintenance needed in existing facilities.

⁶ This is up from 78% in 1993.

Sport and Recreation

Sport Waitakere provides sport and active recreation based programmes and services to the community including:

- A variety of organised walks
- Rest Home Games competitions
- Green Prescription programmes
- Waitakere Sports Awards
- Pasifika Games; and
- Coaching courses

In the year ending 2003, there were 55,000 attendances on Sport Waitakere programmes.

Sport and Leisure

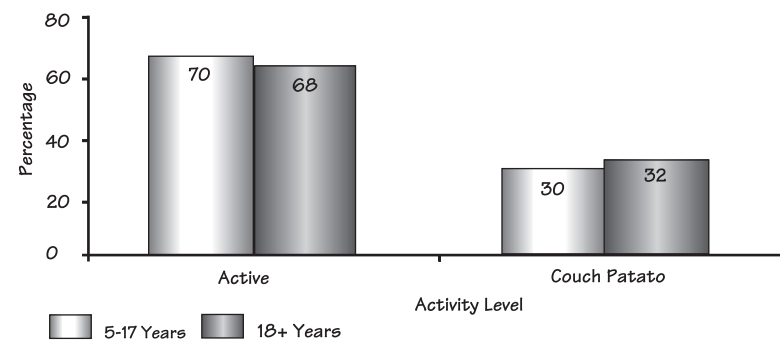
Participation in physical activity is not an easy thing to measure. A Hillary Commission survey found that most people in Waitakere (over two-thirds) led an active lifestyle.

- 70% of those 5-17 years were active
- 68% in the older age group (18 years and older) were active.⁷

Leisure activities included:

- Sports and physical activity (63%)
- Reading and music (27%)

Activity Level in Waitakere



Source: Hillary Commission

- Working on vehicles (24%)
- Gardening/do it yourself (23%)
- Socialising (22%)
- Watching TV/videos (19%)
- Family/child related activities (19%)
- Creative activities (14%)
- Shopping/window shopping (10%)
- Surfing the net (7%)

⁷ Source: Hillary Commission's 1997 and 1998 Sport and Physical Activity Surveys.

Of those who took part in physical activity:

- 31% did so through a team, club or organised group
- 78% belonged to an informal group or undertook physical activity on their own.

Frequency of Physical Activity

A more recent survey of residents in 2002 found that of those who lived in Waitakere City:

- 36% of people took part in physical activity every day or nearly every day.
- 40% took part 2-4 times a week
- 12% took part 2-3 times a month or less.
- 11% of those aged 65 years and over said that they never take part in exercise or other physical activity. This was significantly higher than other age groups.⁸

Barriers to Participation

- Almost half (47%) of Waitakere City residents said that there were barriers that made it difficult for them to participate in the leisure time activities they considered important.
- Barriers to taking part in leisure activities included being 'too busy' (48%). Poor health and not being able to afford the activities were the two other key barriers (21% and 16% respectively).

- Those living in Henderson were less likely to report barriers (38%) than those living in New Lynn (54%).
- Pacific and younger residents (18 – 25) were also less likely to report barriers (27% and 31% respectively).⁹

"With all the current pressures and demands on people it is often not easy to take part in physical activity. If you're working full time, when do you get the time to do it?"

We need to look at making environmental changes – making sure people have an hour off for lunch, or that they have somewhere pleasant and safe to go for a walk at lunch time. A survey by SPARC showed that people need a buddy and the time to do exercise – we need to look at how we can provide the support infrastructure so that it's not so hard." Chris Chadwick, Waitemata DHB.

Use of Leisure Facilities in Waitakere City

A number of organisations, such as churches and schools, hire their facilities out for broader community leisure activities. The Waitakere City Council also has a wide range of facilities and buildings used for community service and leisure purposes.

Massey Leisure Centre

The Massey Leisure Centre is a purpose built leisure facility providing the community with a range of recreation, leisure and sport programmes, and space for hire. The Centre includes a fitness centre,

⁸ Quality of Life Residents' Survey 2002.

⁹ Quality of Life Residents' Survey 2002.

two-court stadium, childcare facility for users, and a community meeting/activity room.

- There were 188,000 visitors in the year ending June 2003.

Westwave Aquatic and Recreation Centre

Originally developed for the 1990 Commonwealth Games, the expanded centre features water recreation and play facilities, a swim school, fitness centre and recreation centre.

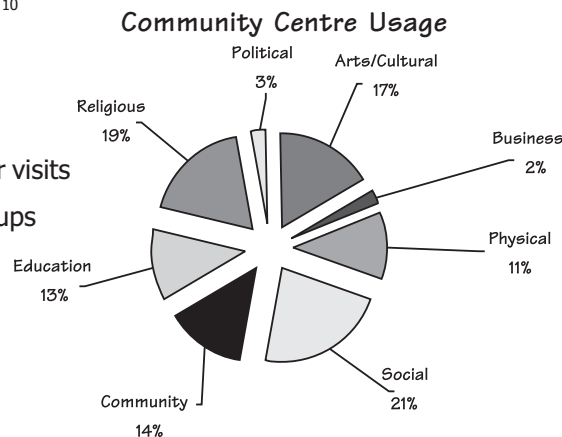
- In the year ending June 2003 there were an estimated 630,000 attendees of the activities.

Community Centres

There are six community centres that people can hire for classes, functions, meetings etc.¹⁰

In the year ending June 2003 there were:

- 275,000 annual hirer visits
- 371 casual hirer groups
- 111,000 casual hirer visits

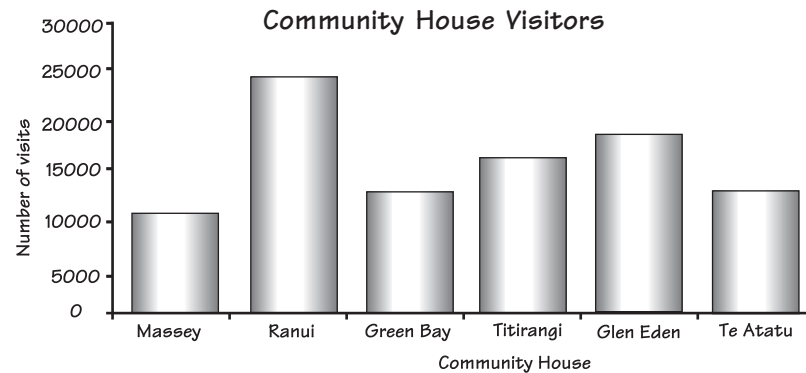


Community Houses

The six Community Houses meet the needs of their local communities by assessing community need and providing relevant services.

In the year ending June 2003 there were:

- 165 programmes
- 130 regular groups using the houses
- 94,500 visits



Community Halls

Community Halls (Council or community owned) are buildings which can be hired for community activities or as places that people can meet. There are 21 Community Halls available for community use in Waitakere

¹⁰ These are located in Te Atatu Peninsula, Te Atatu South, Kelston, New Lynn, Ceramco Park (Glen Eden) and Titirangi

City including 10 that are Council owned (and community operated) and 11 community owned (and community operated).

Waitakere City Council provides support for Community Halls given the community benefits they provide (such as helping to build community spirit by bringing people together).

There are 10 Community Halls owned by Council which are leased to and run by local volunteers. These are mainly used by the local community for:

- Organised public activities
- Private functions
- Activity based user groups such as playgroups Guides, Scouts, and dance classes
- Older groups including senior citizen organisations
- Country Women's Institute groups
- Additional activities for adults include yoga, exercise classes and public meetings.¹¹

Marae

Marae are important community facilities, not only for Maori but for people of all cultures. There are two principal Marae in Waitakere City, Hoani Waititi and Te Piringatahi o Te Maungarongo, as well as a number of Marae based at schools. In its current Marae Support Policy, the Council has identified two new Marae to be developed in the near future.

Community Buildings

Over half (56%) of Waitakere City residents are satisfied with the standard (i.e. quantity & quality) of community buildings within the city.

- Satisfaction is higher for residents living in Henderson and New Lynn.
- As residents become older, satisfaction appears to decrease.

"Some facilities are not easily accessible for older adults e.g. there are too many stairs, sloping paths, no wheel chair access, parking is too far away, or they are not on bus routes etc."¹²

"Town centre revitalisation and other initiatives to increase urban amenity are of direct benefit to business, as well as helping to create an environment attractive to skilled workers."¹³

Modifiable Risk Factors

There are a number of risk factors, such as smoking, heavy drinking, drug taking, problem gambling and early sexual behaviour that contribute to poor health or well-being outcomes.

¹¹ Council owned halls include - Herald Island Hall, Glen Eden Recreation and Community Centre, Laingholm Village Hall, Laingholm Beach Hall, Lopdell hall (note this hall is currently closed), Moire Road Hall & crèche, Oratia Settlers Hall, Oratia Small Hall, Waiatarua Hall, Waitakere Domain Hall.

¹² Older Adults Wellbeing Forums 2 and 3, September 15th and 29th 2003 at Kelston Community Centre.

¹³ Waitakere City Council, 2004.

Smoking

Smoking has been associated with an increased risk of some diseases and premature death. The World Health Organisation states that tobacco is a known or probable cause of some 25 different diseases.¹⁴ Smoking in pregnancy has been linked with low birth weight babies. Babies exposed to smoking are at higher risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Youth Smoking

In 2001 ASH surveyed Year 10 students (aged 14 and 15 years) in a number of schools throughout NZ. In Waitakere 1380 students responded.¹⁵

- Over one-third of Year 10 students said that they had never smoked (39.2%)
- A further quarter (26.2%) said that they had tried but were not currently smoking.
- Of those who smoked 15.8% reported smoking at least daily.
- A further 21.6% said that they smoked more frequently (daily, weekly or monthly).¹⁶

The probability that children will start smoking regularly by age 15 years increases if they are female, have smoked a cigarette by age 11, and come from a disadvantaged background.

“Finland has the highest national rate of youth smoking in the OECD,

with 23% of 15-year-olds smoking daily. However, Maori females of the same age have a smoking rate of 38%.¹⁷”

Adult Smoking

AC Neilson¹⁸ surveyed the smoking habits of 2,779 people in New Zealand aged 18 years and over.

Of those in Waitakere City:

- 30% said that they smoked in the last 7 days.
- Of the 8 largest cities in New Zealand¹⁹, Waitakere had the highest percentage reporting that they smoked.

Ethnicity

There is no local data on smoking and ethnicity.

- A national study²⁰ in 2001 found that the rate of smoking was highest amongst Maori.
 - About 51% of Maori,
 - 31% of Pacific and,
 - 21% of other New Zealanders smoked.

¹⁴ Source: Quality of Life Report 2003.

¹⁵ A response rate of 67%.

¹⁶ Source: ASH 2002.

¹⁷ Te Puni Kokiri, 2004 www.tpk.govt.nz/maori/population/children.asp

¹⁸ Source: AC Neilson 2002 July 01 – June 02.

¹⁹ North Shore, Waitakere, Auckland, Manukau, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin.

²⁰ Source: Ministry of Health (2002) Tobacco Facts.

"A society that values being smokefree, eating healthy food and getting plenty of exercise is fundamental to wellbeing". Candace Bagnall, Ministry of Health.

Alcohol

Alcohol, particularly when drunk in large quantities, is associated with increased hospital admissions, injuries, deaths and motor vehicle accidents. Internationally, New Zealand ranks 23rd in alcohol consumption per capita based on the 50 countries for which data was collected.²¹

Youth Drinking

The 1999 Sale of Liquor Amendment Act reduced the minimum age for purchasing alcohol from 20 to 18 years. There is no data specifically on alcohol consumption for youth in Waitakere City. However, national alcohol surveys²² and studies on Auckland regional drinking patterns²³ show an increase in drinking.

Nationally

- Nationally there was no change in the frequency of drinking among 18 and 19 year olds. However, the quantity has increased from 5 drinks a session in 1995 to 7 drinks in 2000.
- Nationally 14-15 year olds and 16-17 year olds had increased their frequency of drinking and the amount consumed on each occasion.²⁴

Auckland Region

- The quantity of alcohol consumed by Auckland 14-17 year olds has increased from 2-3 drinks a session in 1990 to 5-6 drinks in 1999 following the change in the law.
- A survey of school students in Northwest Auckland found that many students (over one-third) reported binge drinking in the last four weeks.²⁵

Locally, key issues in Waitakere City identified by the Safe Waitakere Alcohol Project include:

- Reducing the social supply of alcohol to young people under 18 years
- Reducing access to off-license purchases by young people under 18 years
- Reducing on-licensed intoxication for under 25s
- Reducing drinking and intoxication in public places
- Challenging the marketing of alcohol to young people in a way that contributes to changing the existing social norms of alcohol use.

²¹ Source: Fact Pack December 2003, Alcohol Liquor Advisory Council of New Zealand

²² Source: Hapgood, S.Caswell, M. Pledger, K. Bhatta (2001) Drinking in New Zealand: National Surveys Comparison 1995 and 2000.

²³ Source: S. Caswell and K. Bhatta (2001) A Decade of Drinking: Ten-Year Trends in Drinking Patterns in Auckland New Zealand 1990-1999.

²⁴ Source: Hapgood, S.Caswell, M. Pledger, K. Bhatta (2001) Drinking in New Zealand: National Surveys Comparison 1995 and 2000.

²⁵ Source: Regional Report from Youth 2000, 2003.

Illicit Drug Use

Drug use can have immediate as well as long term health and social consequences. It is difficult to get data at a local level.

A survey of Northwest Auckland school students found that of those surveyed more than one-third of students had tried marijuana. A few students used marijuana at least once a week.²⁶

Alcohol and Cannabis

“Alcohol and cannabis remain the two highest drugs of concern, particularly binge drinking by young people. They are the main choice of drug for youth, with methamphetamine and other drugs becoming more prevalent in the young adult (18 to 25) age group, where money may be more accessible.” Project Researcher, Safe Waitakere.

Methamphetamine

“There has been a noted increase in reported methamphetamine use by most groups, which has coincided with an increase in those seeking help and information (for example the ADA helpline calls show that calls relating to methamphetamine use rose from 50 in 2002 to 557 in 2003).” Project Researcher, Safe Waitakere.

Overall

Despite the concern around drug issue, in general people are uninformed about the effect of drugs.

Research for the new Community Action on Youth and Drugs project shows that:

- There is a growing trend towards injecting.
- Substance users who are presenting with problem behaviour as a result of their abuse are mainly male and those seeking assistance and advice on how to help users are mainly female.
- Community groups are feeling overwhelmed by the impact drug use has on families, particularly P. This is affecting service providers across the spectrum – from those providing domestic violence counselling to those assisting improving parenting skills.

Gambling

For many people, gambling is an enjoyable recreational activity. For some, it may be once a year on Melbourne Cup day but, for many, it is a normal part of their week’s activity.

However, some people find that gambling becomes a serious problem which they are unable to control. This is known as “compulsive” or “pathological” gambling. Compulsive gambling is recognised as a disorder. It involves gambling behaviour that disrupts or damages personal, family or vocational pursuits. It is known to increase in times of stress and can lead to inattention to work, financial crises and criminal activity in order to obtain money. These problems in turn

²⁶ Regional Report from Youth2000, 2003.

intensify the gambling behaviour.²⁷ It is estimated that problem gamblers affect 5-7 other people.²⁸

- Waitakere City has a low number of machines per head of population when compared to other areas. There are currently 501 gambling machines in 38 venues.
- Within Waitakere City gambling venues are significantly more likely to be located in low income areas and areas with high Maori and Pacific populations.
- Community organisations in Waitakere City are receiving a higher amount of funding per capita from the six major gambling trusts than in other parts of Auckland.²⁹

Types of Gambling

AC Neilson³⁰ surveyed 3242 people over the age of 18 years between July 2001 and June 2002 on their gambling habits.

- Of the eight largest cities in New Zealand, Waitakere City had the second highest percentage of people (68%) who said that they had gambled in the previous seven days. Only Manukau (74%) had a higher percentage.

Types of Gambling by Percentage

Type of Gambling	Percentage
Bet at the TAB	6
Bought Lotto ticket	38
Bought Instant Kiwi	16
Played Keno	6
Played Pokies/Gaming Machines	8

Source: AC Neilson, 2002

Problem Gambling

In 2003 there were 4644 calls made to the gambling problem Helpline from around New Zealand.

- Compared with the national average, more people in the Auckland Region are accessing problem gambling help services.³¹

Figures on problem gambling are not available for Waitakere City.

²⁷ Source: Gambling Problem Helpline: General Information, 2004.

²⁸ Adoption of draft gambling venue policy, Waitakere City agenda item, 11 May 2004.

²⁹ Source: Waitakere City Council, 2004.

³⁰ Source: AC Neilson, 2002 July 01 – June 02 from the Quality of Life Project 2003.

³¹ Social Impact Assessment of Gambling in Waitakere City.

National Callers to the Gambling Problem Helpline

Person calling	2001	2002	2003
Gambler	2404	2978	2997
Significant other ³²	1110	1250	1395
Interested other ³³	301	487	252
Total	3815	4715	4644

Source: Gambling Problem Helpline, 2004

An increasing number of calls related to those gambling on gaming machines.

Primary Types of Gambling of Callers to Helpline

Type of Gambling	1999 Percent	2000 Percent	2001 Percent	2002 Percent	2003 Percent
Gaming machines	76.6	83.3	88.0	89.4	91.4
Casino tables	4.6	4.0	3.2	3.1	2.3
Track & sports	15.0	10.9	7.5	6.2	5.3
Other	3.8	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.0

Source: Gambling Problem Helpline, 2004

Sexual Activity and Young People

New Zealand has the third highest teenage pregnancy rate in the

world.³⁴ In 2003, 388 girls aged 16 years and under had abortions. Of these, 78 were aged 11-14 years.³⁵

A survey of year 9-13 students in Northwest Auckland found that around 30% said that they had had sex.³⁶

- A fifth of the students said that they were currently sexually active.
- Most students (60%) said that they always used contraception to prevent pregnancy.
- Around the same number reported using condoms to protect against STDs.³⁷

Data collected by Family Planning Association show that rates of sexually transmitted diseases at West Auckland clinics are comparable with national rates.³⁸

Teenage Parents

The number of babies born to teen mothers in Waitakere City is high.

- 1169 young New Zealand women between 13 and 17 years gave

³² Significant other: affected by the gambling of someone close to them.

³³ General interest groups, including researchers and students.

³⁴ Source: Save the Children, cited in Sunday Star Times, 23 May, 2004. Note, With 27 births per 1000 girls in the 15-19 year age group New Zealand ranked third behind the United States and Russia.

³⁵ Source: Abortion Supervisory Committee, 2004.

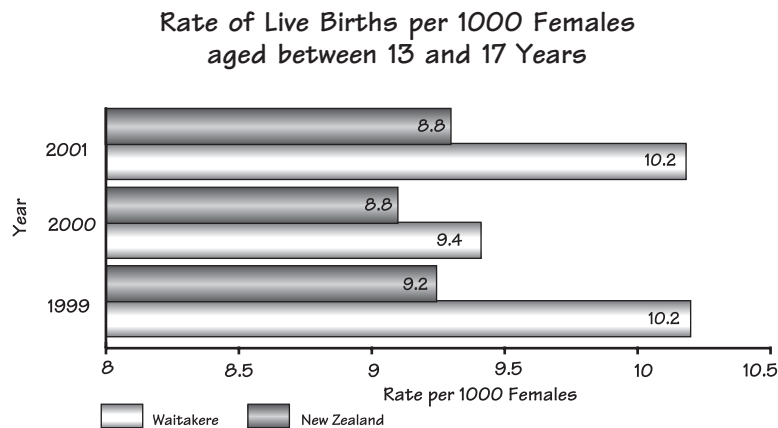
³⁶ These students were aged 12-18 years.

³⁷ Source: Regional Report from Youth2000, 2003.

³⁸ Family Planning Association, 2004.

birth in 2001.³⁹ This is a rate of 8.8 births per 1000 women in this age group.

- Sixty of these were in Waitakere City – a rate of 10.2. This is higher than the NZ rate (of 8.8) and more than double the rate of births to women in this age group on the North Shore (4.6).



Source: NZ Health Information Service, 2002

Questions arising from the community

- Are there local barriers to accessing pregnancy terminations in Waitakere?
- Is the Gambling Act regulating the growth of gambling and minimising the harmful impact?
- Is there a correlation between the growth of independent money lenders and the increase in gambling? What is the full impact of gambling on our community i.e. family violence, abuse and neglect issues?
- Is gambling the cause or the symptom?
- Is it morally right to fund community not for profit organisations through the proceeds of gambling?
- Why do we have a high teenage birth rate, and what services are in place to support those young mothers?

³⁹ Source: NZ Health Information Service 2002.