



May 2025

Changing Family Homes in New Zealand

 LJ Hooker



Executive Summary

New Zealand families are adjusting their living arrangements to accommodate financial realities, evolving family dynamics, and lifestyle preferences. While multi-generational living can be a cost-effective solution, cultural preferences and personal space considerations still shape household decisions. Additionally, the way homes are designed and used is shifting, with younger generations placing renewed importance on dedicated living and dining spaces. This report explores these key trends and provides insight into how Kiwis define their ideal communities.

Key findings include:

- Multi-generational living remains uncommon, with only 27% of Kiwis open to living with their in-laws. If they did, 60% would prefer them to have self-contained accommodation.
- Shared bedrooms for children are a deal-breaker for many parents, with 58% saying they would not consider a home where their children had to share a room.
- Parental support extends well into adulthood, with 52% of parents expecting their children to pay rent after turning 18, though they don't anticipate them moving out until around age 28.
- Younger Kiwis value formal living and dining spaces more than older generations, with 70% of Gen Z considering them relevant compared to 43% of Baby Boomers.
- A quiet, peaceful atmosphere is the most important factor in choosing a community, with 43% of respondents prioritising tranquillity over proximity to amenities and schools.

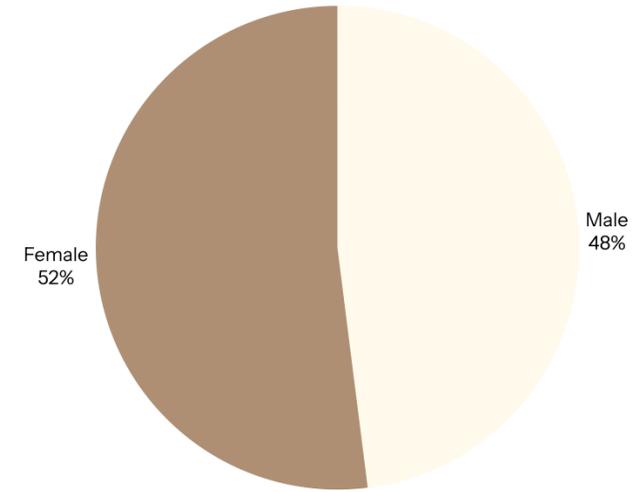
These insights reflect the changing ways Kiwis are making housing decisions and redefining their ideal living environments.



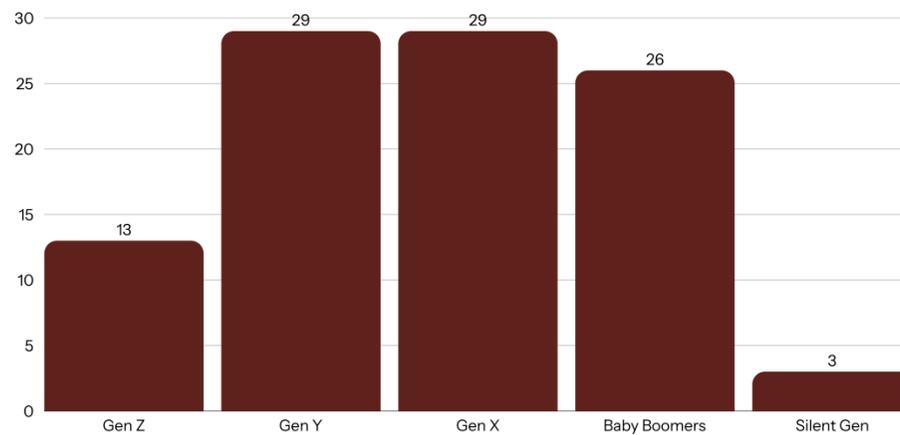
Audience Profile

The survey, conducted by Edentify, gathered insights from 1,000 participants across New Zealand in December 2024. Respondents represented a diverse cross-section of demographics, providing a comprehensive look at New Zealanders' perspectives on homeownership.

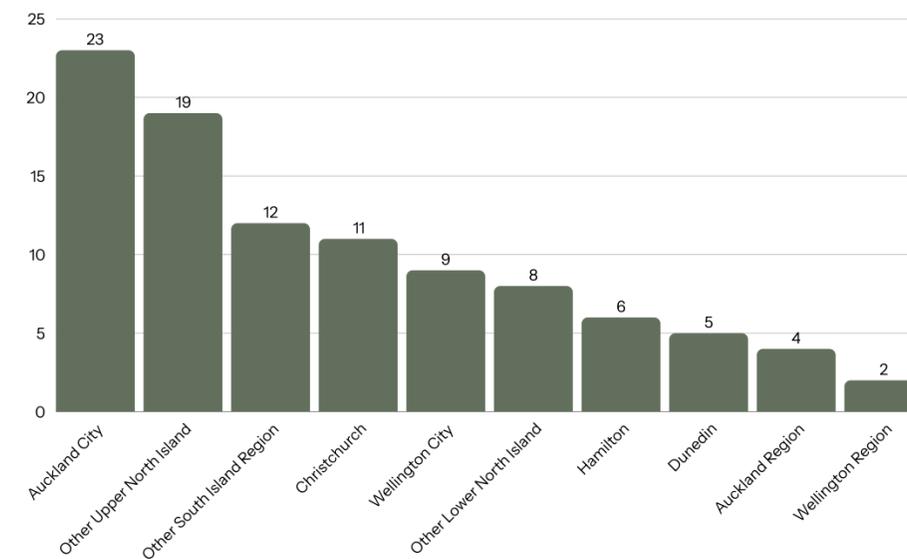
Gender



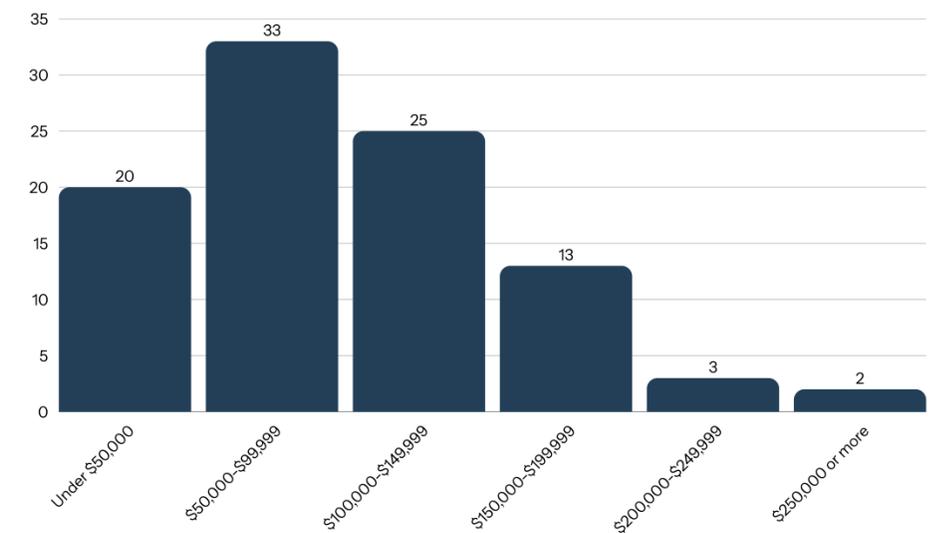
Age Groups (Percentage)



Location (Percentage)



Household Income (Percentage)



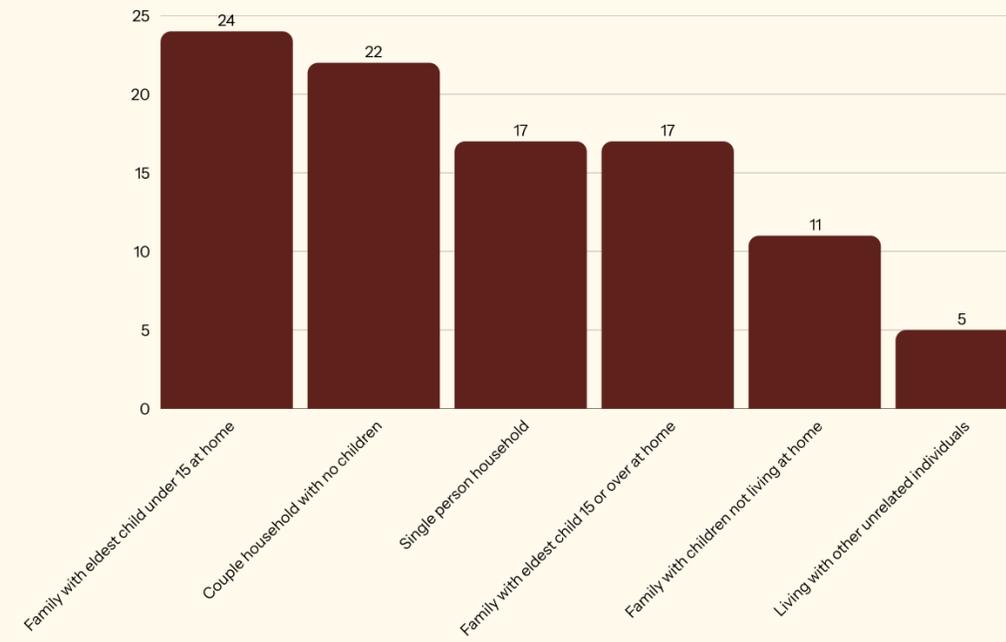


Audience Profile

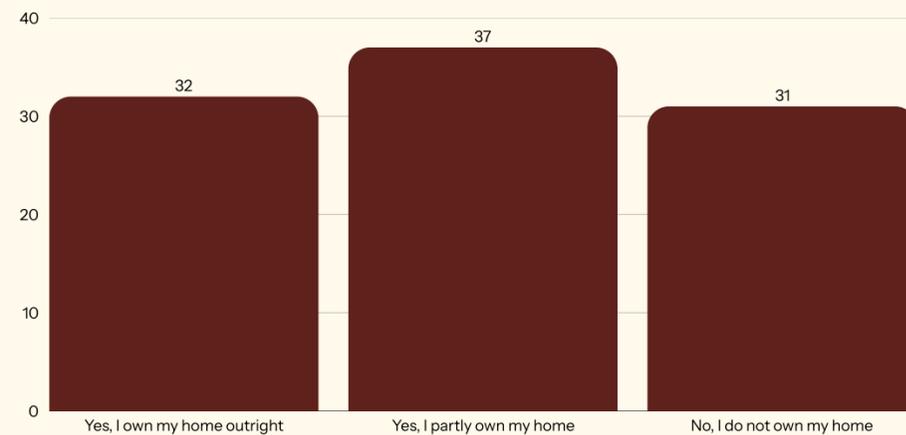
Type of Property Currently Living In (Percentage)



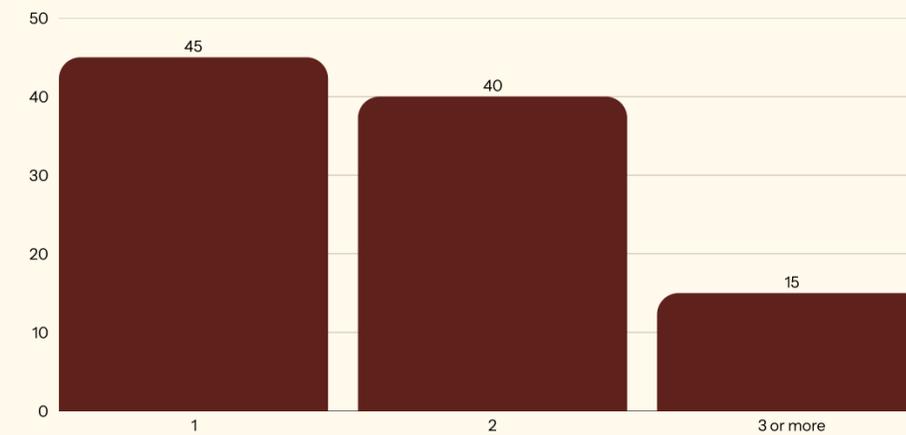
Household Structure (Percentage)



Home Ownership (Percentage)



Number of Kids for Families With Children (Percentage)



01

Multi-Generational Living: A Practical Choice, Not a Preferred One

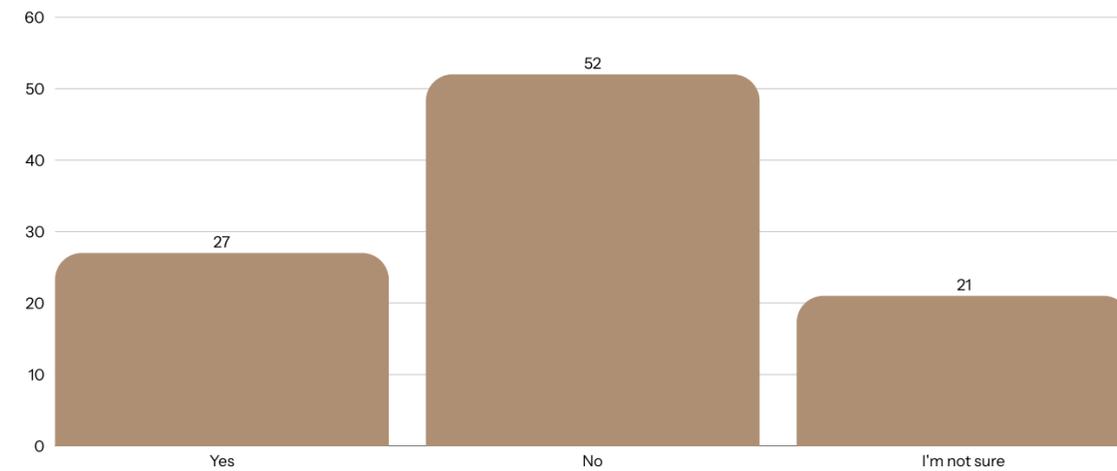




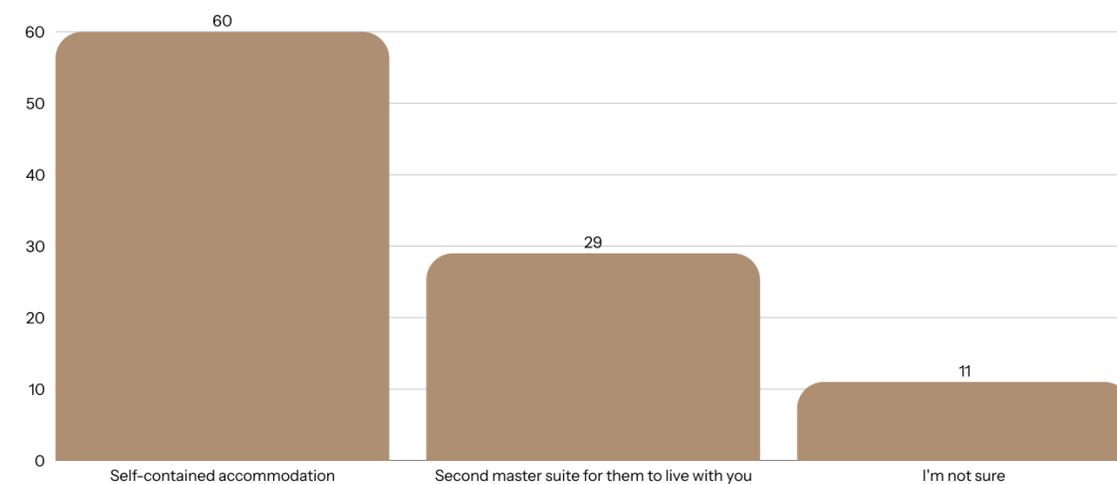
Multi-Generational Living: A Practical Choice, Not a Preferred One

With rising property prices and shifting family dynamics, some families are opting to live together to afford larger homes, secure a place in desirable neighbourhoods, or care for aging parents. Despite this, only one in four Kiwis (27%) say they would be open to living with their in-laws. Even among those who are open to the idea, personal space remains a priority, with 60% preferring self-contained accommodation for extended family members.

Open to Live With In-Laws (Percentage)



Preferred Arrangement, Amongst Those Open to Live With In-Laws (Percentage)



Multi-Generational Living: A Practical Choice, Not a Preferred One

In contrast, when it comes to children's living situations, most parents strongly prefer that siblings have their own rooms. A majority (58%) would not consider purchasing a home where their children would have to share a bedroom, indicating that privacy and space remain key considerations for growing families.

While some parents are comfortable with their adult children staying at home longer, expectations around financial independence are changing. Over half (52%) of parents believe their children should begin paying rent after they turn 18, yet they don't expect them to move out until around age 28.

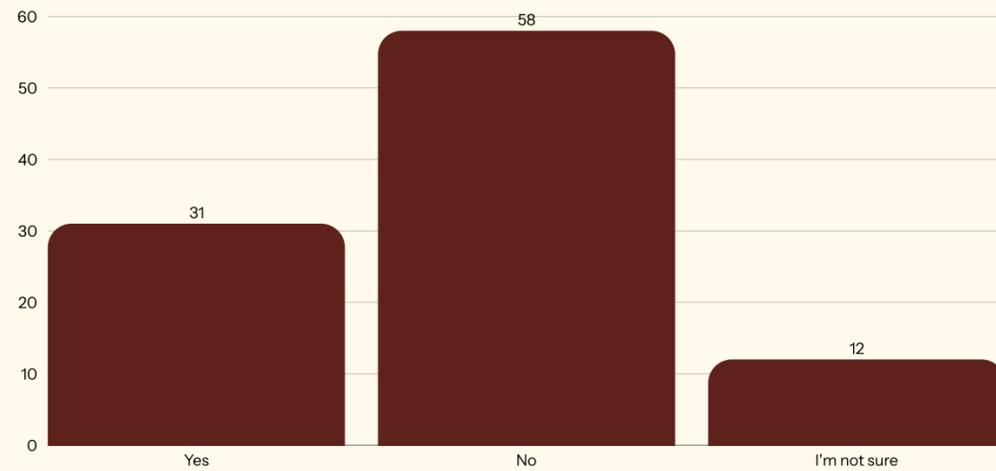
“Dynamics have changed a lot in recent years, and this may mean living with your in-laws or having your children stay at home longer than they may have a decade or two ago,” LJ Hooker Head of Network NZ Campbell Dunoon said. “These decisions are typically made to save money. While they keep the family together, they also allow a child to put extra money aside to get onto the property ladder faster or to figure out their next steps in life. At the other end of the family, it allows aging parents to be near and well looked after.”



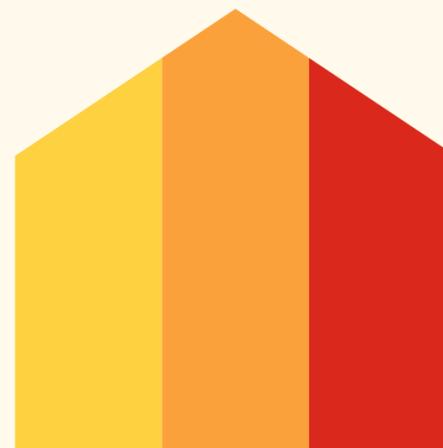


Families With Children Living at Home

Likelihood to Considering a Property Where Children Have to Share a Room (Percentage)

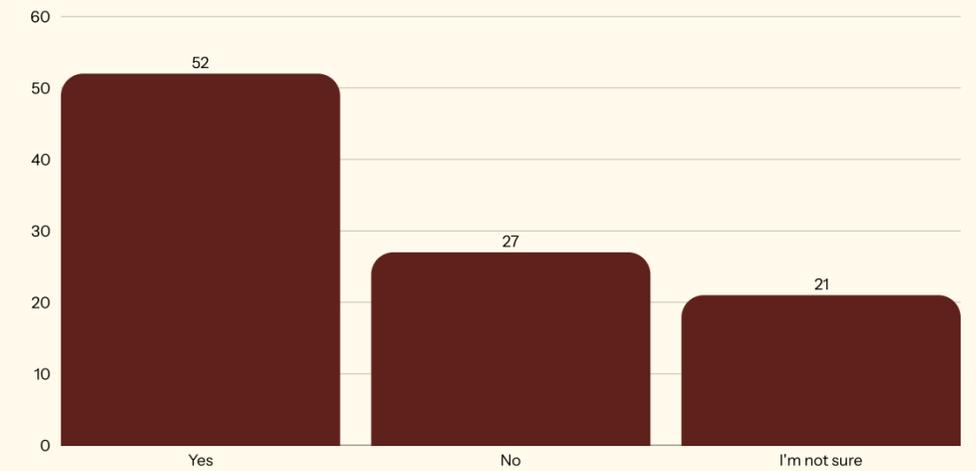


Average Age Until When Parents Are Expecting Children to Live at Home



28-years-old

Expect Child to Pay Rent When Still Living at Home After They Turn 18 (Percentage)



02

Shifting Priorities in Home Design: The Role of Formal Living and Dining Spaces





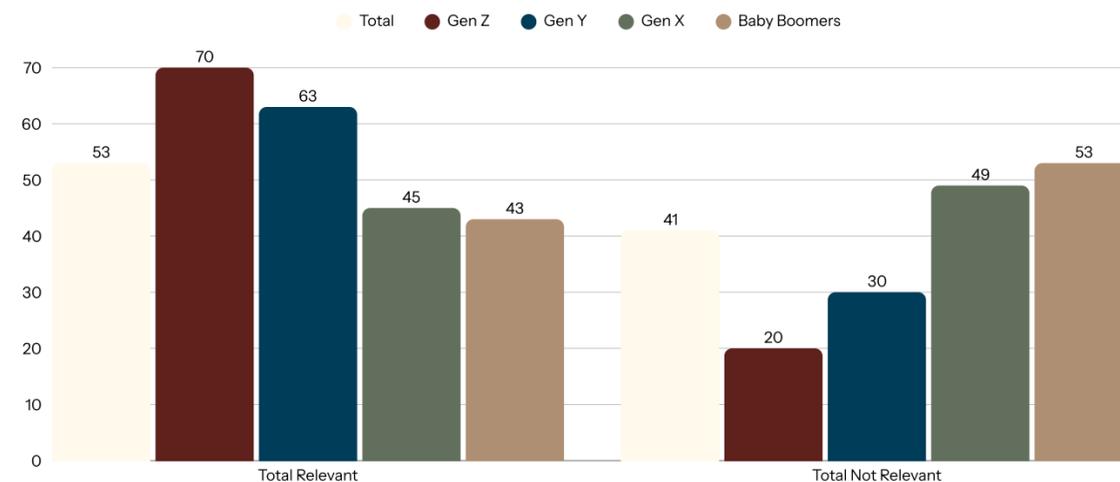
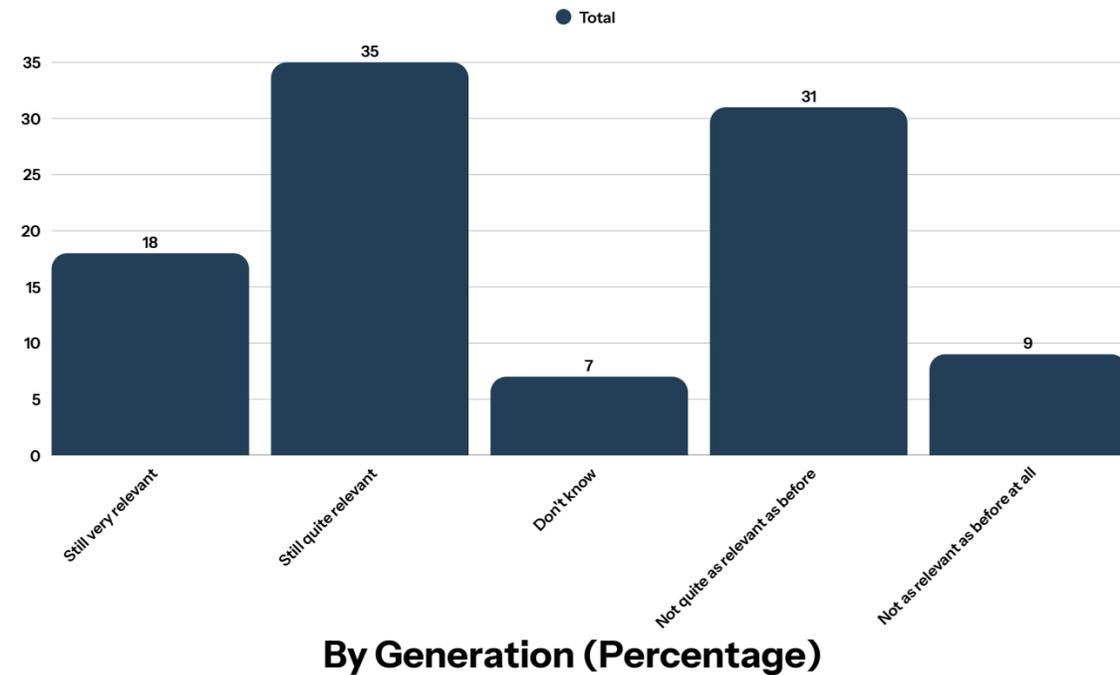
Shifting Priorities in Home Design: The Role of Formal Living and Dining Spaces

The way Kiwis use their homes is evolving. With remote work becoming more common, spare bedrooms are frequently converted into home offices, while garages are often repurposed for storage. Despite these shifts, a surprising trend has emerged: younger generations place greater importance on formal living and dining spaces than older generations.

- 70% of Gen Z believe formal living and dining rooms remain relevant.
- 53% of Baby Boomers, who may have grown up with such spaces, now see them as unnecessary.

“Surprisingly, younger people are seeing more relevancy in having formal dining and living spaces in the home,” Dunoon said. “When we looked into this more, we found that older generations who had these rooms as a cornerstone of their upbringing feel they’ve had their time. They saw their relevance earlier in life but don’t anymore. Meanwhile, younger generations, who may have opted for smaller homes without these spaces, now see value in having dedicated areas for bonding and eating.”

Relevancy of the Formal Living and Dining Areas (Percentage)



03

Defining the Ideal Community: What Kiwis Want in a Neighbourhood



Defining the Ideal Community: What Kiwis Want in a Neighbourhood

While everyone has a unique vision of their perfect community, certain themes consistently emerge in what Kiwis look for when choosing a place to live.

Key Community Features

- Quiet, peaceful, and safe environment (43%)
 - “Nice neighbours and a secure area.”
 - “It is quiet and peaceful, with a beach close by. There is also a low crime rate with a helpful community.”
- Friendly neighbourhood and strong community spirit
 - “It has friendly neighbours for the most part.”
 - “That everyone knows everyone and keeps an eye out for each other.”
- Proximity to amenities (13%)
 - “Activities and shops nearby. Town in 5-minute driving distance.”
 - “Shops and bus services nearby.”
- Access to nature and green spaces (10%)
 - “The view of the mountains.”
 - “The amazing harbour views and beaches and bush being so close by.”



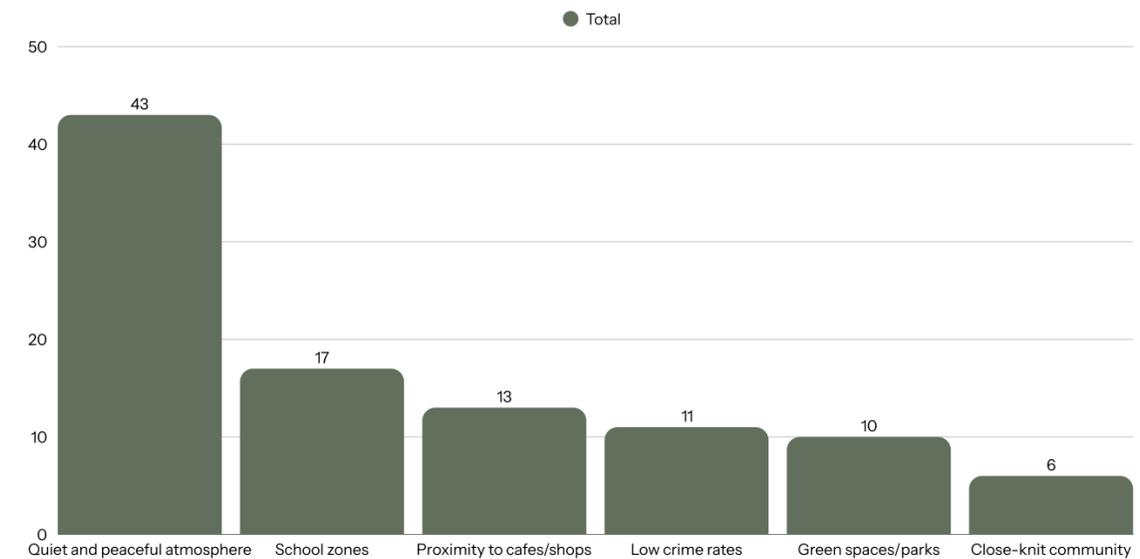


Defining the Ideal Community: What Kiwis Want in a Neighbourhood

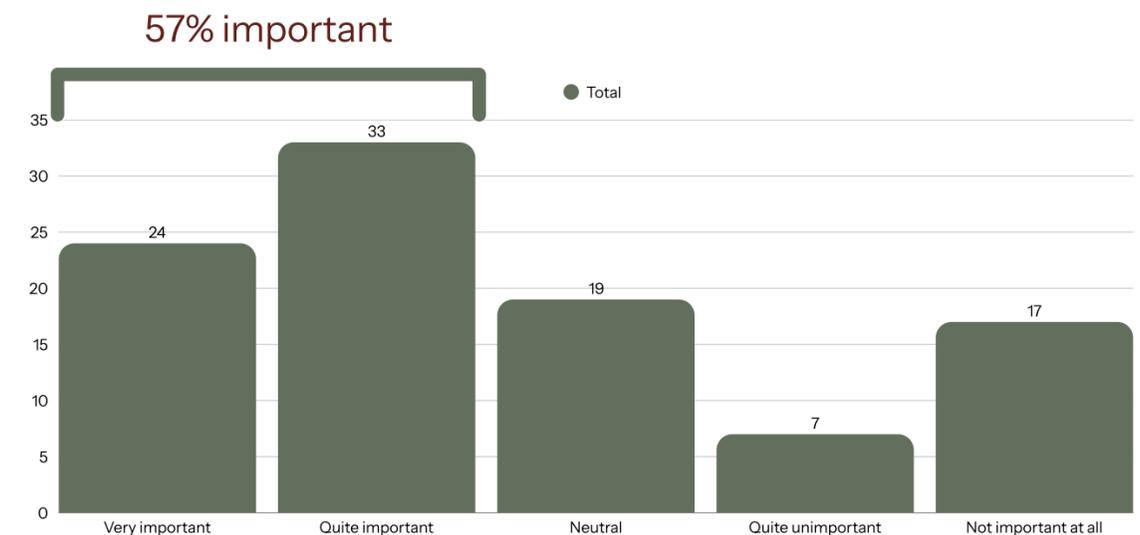
For families with children, school zones are the most critical factor, with 57% ranking them as a top priority when choosing a neighbourhood.

“Everyone has a different vision of what their dream location will look like,” Dunoon said. “But it’s clear that the majority of New Zealanders want a home where they can relax and escape from the rush of day-to-day life.”

Prompted - Most Appealing Features of Your Neighbourhood (Percentage)



Amongst Families With Children - Importance of School Zone When Choosing a Home (Percentage)





Conclusion

The way Kiwis live, use their homes, and choose their communities continues to evolve. While financial and lifestyle considerations influence decisions about multi-generational living, personal space remains a key priority. Younger generations are embracing formal living and dining spaces, while older generations see them as less essential. Additionally, the desire for a quiet and peaceful home environment remains a top priority for most New Zealanders, shaping how they select the best place to live.

Changing Family Homes in New Zealand

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