



QUEENSTOWN LAKES
**Community
Housing Trust**
Unlocking homes in our community.

RENTERS SURVEY 2024

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www.qlcht.org.nz

Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

The Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) undertakes a Renters Survey every three to four years. Its purpose is to understand the Queenstown Lakes District renters community, in terms of housing satisfaction, intentions of settling in the district, aspirations to buy a home and barriers faced. The 2024 Renters Survey is the fifth of its kind, with previous surveys undertaken in 2020, 2016, 2012 and 2009.

The 2020 survey reflected renters' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore the 2024 survey required a shift in focus. Of significance is a current housing crisis cited by many as causing increased houselessness and stress on renters. Consequently, it was agreed to include questions related to houselessness and renters' wellbeing. Following consultation with the community, the term houseless rather than homeless, was used to more accurately describe situations where people are in insecure housing arrangements.

Findings

In line with previous surveys, respondents were predominately female (71%), aged 30-39 years old (48%) and NZ European (40%). However, this year more Wānaka renters responded than in previous years (27%).

This report splits respondents into two profiles, currently renting and houseless.

9% of respondents said they are currently houseless. Worryingly, 20% of those who are houseless have children and this is having a significant impact on their wellbeing. 17% of all respondents stated they have experienced houselessness in the last 12 months. The percentage of Wānaka respondents who experienced houselessness in the past 12 months (21%), was higher than the percentage of Queenstown respondents (15%).

The reasons given for past or current houselessness were the property being sold, converted to a short term rental or the landlord moving back in.

Additionally, houseless respondents reported that use of facilities for hygiene such as showers and laundries were a barrier in their day-to-day lives. Furthermore, getting adequate sleep was cited as a common problem, which impacted functioning at work.

Alongside this, diet was listed as a problem due to a lack of food storage and cooking facilities. Narrative assessment showed high levels of chronic and situational stress, aligning with 'poor/extremely poor' quality of life scores.

Aligning with previous surveys, respondents were asked whether housing affordability is a barrier to their long-term commitment to the district. **76% agreed that it was a barrier, which is an increase from 59% in 2020, and showed a trend towards 2012 data (86%).**

Those responding that housing affordability isn't a barrier, is at its lowest (5%) compared to 2012 data (13%). Respondents also reported availability as a barrier to long term commitment (79%). Despite this, 66% aspire to purchase, with 40% saying they wish to purchase in the next one to three years. This intention to buy has dropped from 78% in 2020. As narrative data suggests, this aligns with the increased cost of living and inability to save for a deposit. However, the majority of respondents said that they intend to stay for the foreseeable future.

9%
of respondents
currently
houseless

17%
of respondents
houseless in last
12 months

76%
reporting
affordability as
a barrier

20%
of those who are
houseless have
children



58%

of respondents
rating QoL as good
or extremely good

32%

of respondents
rating QoL as
average

Median rent
per week

**\$501
-\$600**

Quality of Life (QoL) ratings suggest that the number of respondents who rate their quality of life as 'good' or 'extremely good' is 58%. The percentage who said 'average' was 32%.

However, thematic analysis suggests high levels of residual stress in the population, due to a lack of certainty regarding length of lease and rental costs. The very real struggle of those who are currently houseless is having a ripple effect on the wellbeing of renters through what is described as houselessness anxiety. That is a feeling of a lack of control over lease renewals or rent increases, coupled with competition for available and affordable properties, that could leave them houseless. Comparison to the Quality of Life survey findings suggest that renters may be more likely to rate their QoL as 'average' or 'poor', compared to home owners who rate 'good/extremely good'.

Those renting who say that their quality of life is 'good' or 'extremely good' (58.6%) is significantly higher than those who are currently houseless (33%). Conversely, poor and extremely poor ratings are significantly higher for those who are currently houseless (32%) compared to those who are renting (8.2%). The reasons why people who are houseless might rate their quality of life highly is explored in the narrative data.

In line with Infometrics data, this research has found that the median rent is between \$501 and \$600 per week.

Given the general rule that housing costs should be no more than 28% of annual household income, those renting would need to earn more than \$111,000 per annum to afford the median rent in the district. Currently, only 30% of respondents can afford the median rent. This suggests that perceptions of affordability align with the reality of renting.

Awareness of QLCHT remains moderate (59% 2024, 56% 2020). This is an area that could be explored further, albeit 12% of those houseless would appear not to meet eligibility criteria due to their residency status.

Introduction

Meet the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust.

Working with national and local government, Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) has put 279 households into secure housing over the last 17 years and has the ambitious target of 1000 more households by 2038. They're thinking big. And they have to. This is a crisis that isn't going away.


QLCHT conducts a Renters Survey every three to four years, with the aim of providing an overview of the current renters population. The survey also provides a deep dive analysis into current issues impacting this population. Aligning with narrative in the media, it was decided to explore houselessness as part of this survey, with the purpose of understanding the extent and impact of the problem.

The following report summarises both quantitative and narrative data gathered from this survey. No recommendations or conclusions are made as it is the job of local organisations to find appropriate solutions, and understand the impact these results have in relation to wider lifestyle factors such as work and leisure time.

Furthermore, houselessness presents a legal, ethical and moral dilemma for local leaders. As this research demonstrates, houselessness has a ripple effect on the wider community and undoubtedly those who visit the district.

Utmost care has been taken in selecting narrative accounts, which either align or question the data. It is hoped that in doing so these stories bring to life the data and help decision makers to understand the difficulties many people are facing in finding a house to call home.

The Queenstown Lakes District is a stunning place to live, but that doesn't mean it's an easy place to call home. In a country where housing solutions are spiraling out of control almost everywhere, our district holds the dubious honour of being the hardest place to secure affordable housing. It's also the birthplace to some of the most innovative, effective, and far-sighted solutions to the housing problem.



The Queenstown Lakes District is a stunning place to live, but that doesn't mean it's an easy place to call home.

Research Design

Survey Design

In keeping with previous surveys, some questions have been retained. In addition, housing questions that were not covered by the Queenstown Lakes District Council's annual Quality of Life survey (QoL) were added or expanded on. It was also decided that the survey should explore houselessness, given recent media coverage of this issue. In designing questions regarding houselessness, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) indicators were used, alongside the following definition from StatsNZ 2022:

“Living situations where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing; are without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household or living in uninhabitable housing.”

Furthermore, the Queenstown Housing Initiative advised that the term homelessness can be divisive. Therefore, the term houselessness has been used instead of homelessness to align with the work of the Initiative.

The 2020 Renters Survey focused on the impact of COVID-19 on renters. The 2024 survey has removed those questions allowing exploration of current housing issues, alongside quality of life and wellbeing.

To provide in-depth analysis of current housing issues, a mixed methods design has been used. This approach uses both quantitative and qualitative question design, which results in both numerical and narrative data for analysis. This approach can strengthen findings and provide insights into why people have responded as they have.

Sampling

The target population for this research was people who are renting in the Queenstown Lakes District. In addition, the survey sought feedback from people who are houseless. This research utilised probability sampling, whereby every member of the population had an equal chance of taking part. The survey was advertised both online and in print media and an incentive was offered.

Statistics NZ report that, in the Queenstown Lakes District, 13,143 people do not own or hold in a family trust the property in which they live, representing 40% of the district's population (2018, census). Therefore, the survey needed to achieve a total sample of 575 (95% confidence, $\pm 4\%$ margin of error*). A total of 1132 responses were collected, with a completion rate of 65%. This means that the total usable sample was 950, suggesting that the results achieved are statistically valid within these limits. This means that if the survey was repeated, the same results would be reported 95% of the time, with each result being within a range of $\pm 4\%$. Given that the population of renters is likely to be higher than 2018 data suggests, this increased sample is likely to reflect this population.

Of the 950 responses, 73% were from the wider Queenstown area, whilst 27% were from Wānaka (including Luggate, Albert Town and Hāwea).

Statistical Analysis

The data has been split into two separate profiles; renters and houseless. Data was also received from people who indicated they were currently renting their home through QLCHT. As this subset is a small sample, these results are not presented as a separate profile. However, they are used to compare overall wellbeing between groups. Similarly, data has not been split between Wānaka and Queenstown, however significant differences between these two populations are noted throughout this report.

Where historical data is available, this data is presented alongside 2024 data.

*required to be statically valid.



As this is a mixed methods study, the data has been treated in two ways:

- Quantitative data (values or counts expressed as numbers) has been summarised using simple and comparative statistics. Cross tabulation has been used to look at relationships between variables.
- Qualitative data (data in narrative form) has been analysed using a thematic analysis. This is a method of coding verbatim responses and sorting into overarching themes or patterns in the data. An inductive approach to coding was used, allowing themes to emerge organically.

Although census data provides an indication of population, this is not broken down into specific demographic information. Therefore, the sample could not be arranged for analysis purposes.



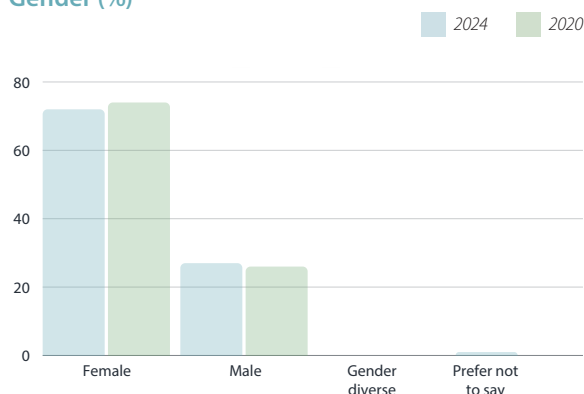
Renters Profile

Demographics

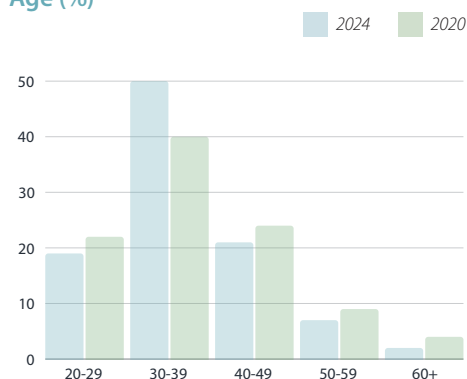
The following section presents data regarding respondents who stated that they are currently renting a home or in a flatting situation.

As with the 2020 Renters Survey, the majority of respondents were female (72% 2024, 74% 2020). However, the 30-39 age group has increased from 40% (2020) to 50% (2024). All other age profiles remain consistent with 2020 reporting. Comparison between Wānaka and Queenstown demonstrates a similar rental profile in terms of age.

Gender (%)



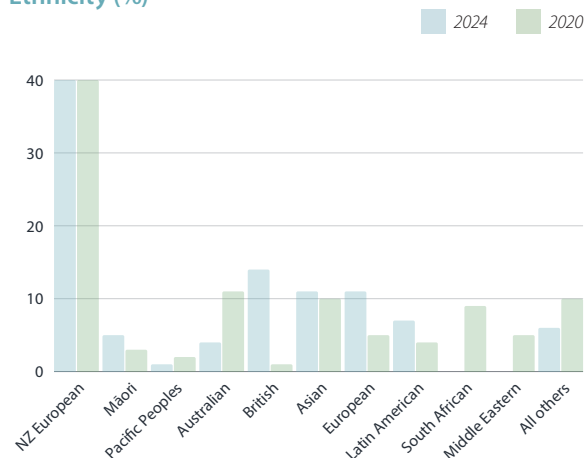
Age (%)



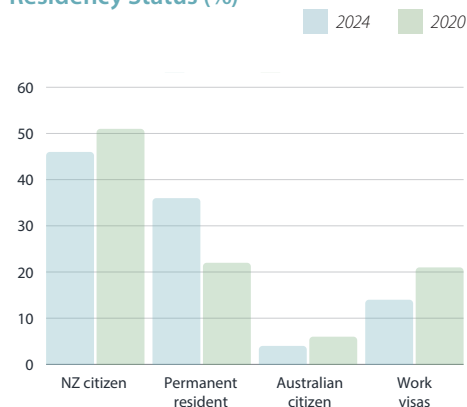
In terms of ethnicity, 40% of renters identified as NZ European, and 5% Māori. There has been a significant increase in British renters from 1% (2020), to 14% (2024), as well as European renters from 5% (2020) to 11% (2024). There has been a drop in Australian renters from 11% (2020) to 4% (2024). Given that the 2020 survey was conducted during closed borders this result is not unexpected.

There has been a marked increase in renters who are permanent residents compared to 2020. NZ citizens, permanent residents and Australian citizens made up the majority of the sample for both Wānaka (92%) and Queenstown (86%).

Ethnicity (%)



Residency Status (%)

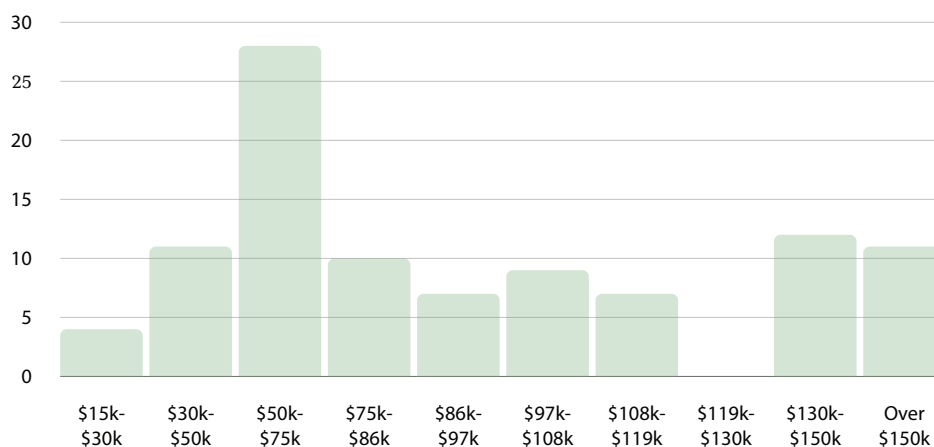


Occupation and earnings

Questions relating to total household income suggest that 52% of household income is made up of just main employment, whilst 28% said it also included their partners/spouses income. Few rental households have a business income (7%) and a small number of renters have other supports such as working for families tax credit (4%) and the accommodation supplement (3%).

In terms of income, 28% of renters indicated their household earns between \$50,000 and \$74,999 per annum. 15% of households earn under \$50,000 per annum. Whilst 30% earn over \$108,000 per annum. There were only marginal differences between the income profile of renters in Wānaka compared to Queenstown. For example, 43% of Queenstown renters indicated their annual household income was \$75,000 per annum, whilst this was 39% of Wānaka renters.

Total annual household gross income (%)



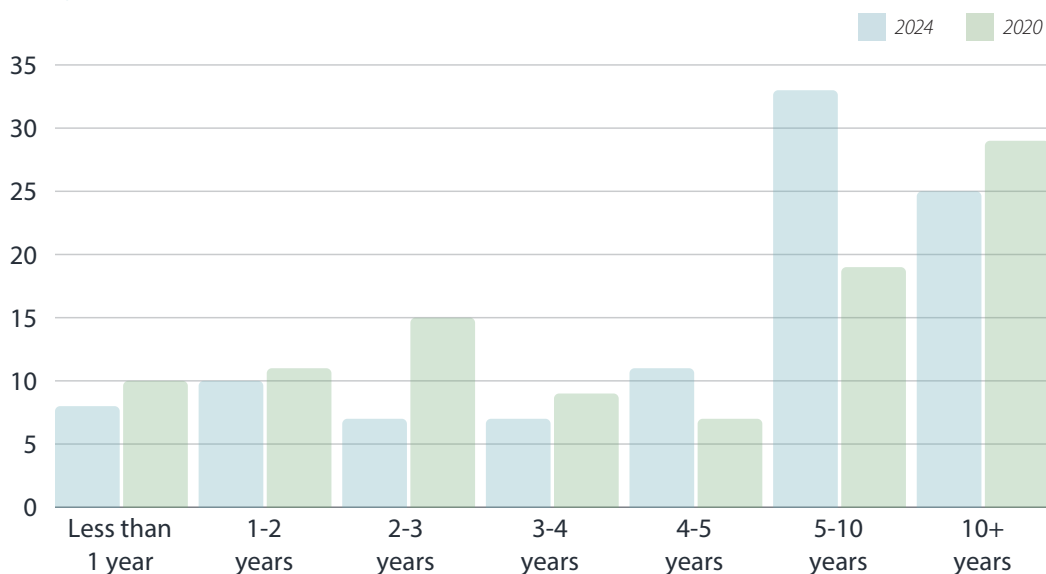
The following table summarises data by occupation, where the response rate was over 5%.

OCCUPATION (TOP 5)	
Accommodation and Food Services	12%
Tourism Operations (e.g. adventure tourism, ski operator, tour operator)	9%
Rental and Real Estate Services	9%
Health and Social Assistance	7%

Length of time in the district and neighbourhood

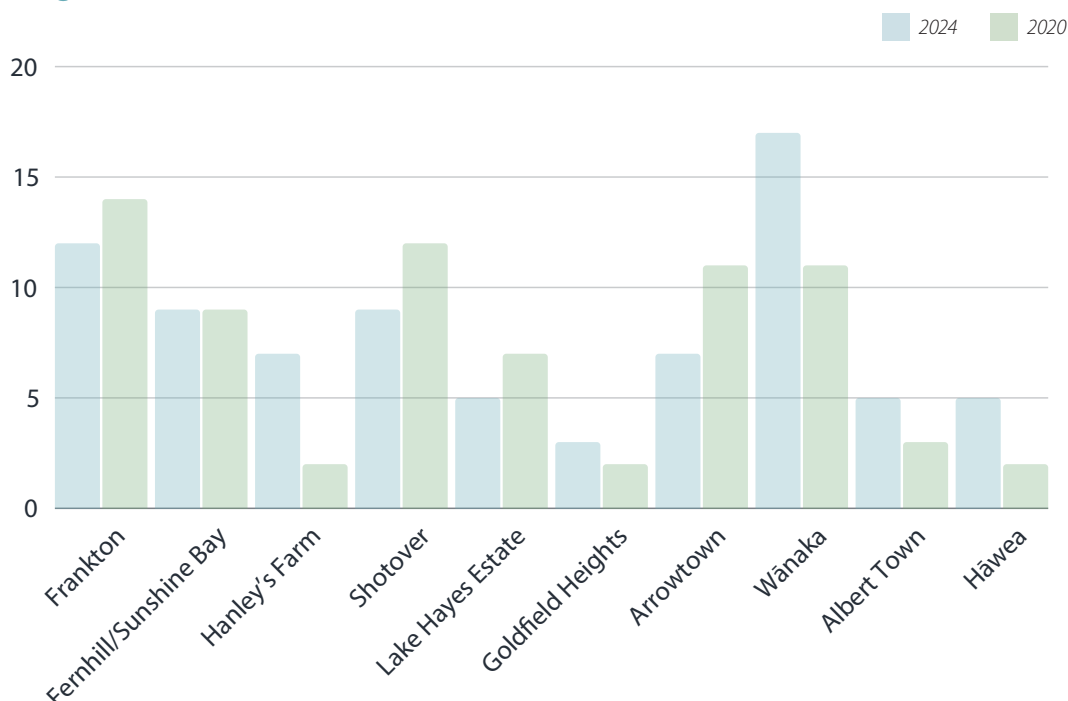
There has been a significant increase in renters who have been in the district 5-10 years compared to 2020, whilst those under five years shows a slight decrease. The profile is the same for both Wānaka and Queenstown renters.

Length of time in the district (%)



Wānaka, Albert Town and Hāwea, alongside Hanley's Farm, have shown an increase in renter population. Arthurs Point, Jacks Point, Kelvin Heights, Quail Rise, Kingston and Luggate were all less than 2%.

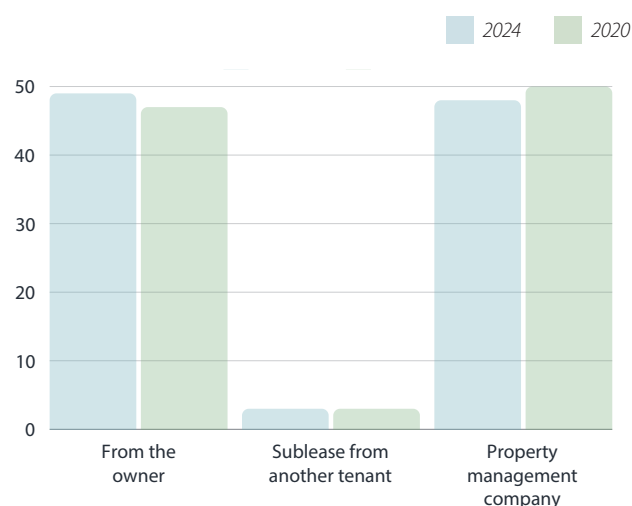
Neighbourhood (%)



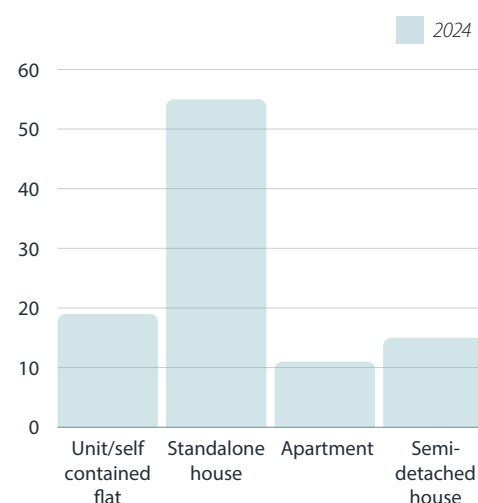
Current tenancy

The majority of respondents said that their current rental is either in a good or excellent condition (65%), with a small minority saying it was in poor condition (7%). Reflecting the district's housing stock, the majority (55%) live in standalone houses.

Who do you currently rent your home through? (%)

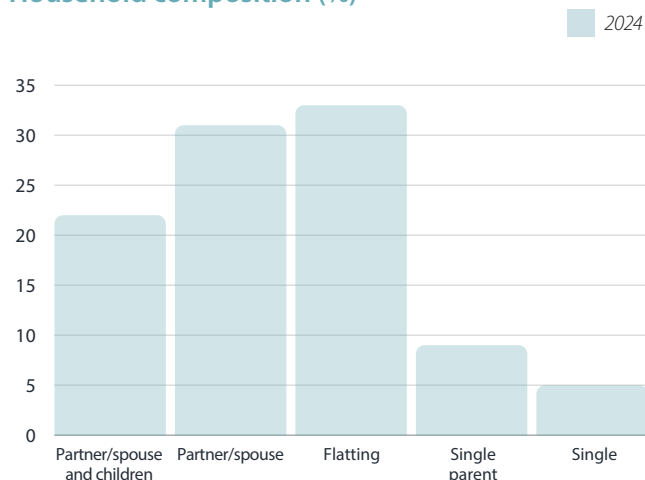


Type of property (%)

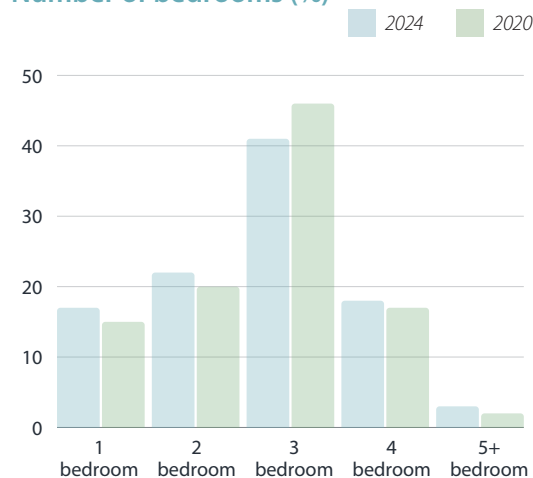


Analysis of who people live with, suggests that 53% live with a spouse/partner, of which 22% of these are also living with children. Comments later on in this research regarding having secure housing to raise children, suggest that families seek to purchase a house. Furthermore, many renters indicate that they have postponed having children due to the lack of security of tenure, and rising rental costs. Interestingly, there has been a decrease in the number of renters with children who also have flatmates, from 8% in 2020 to only 2% in 2024. Furthermore, the number of renters in a flatting situation has decreased from 43% in 2020 to 26% in 2024.

Household composition (%)



Number of bedrooms (%)



21%

of Queenstown
renters paying over
\$800 p/w

12%

of Wānaka
renters paying over
\$800 p/w

The median weekly rent according to this survey sits somewhere between \$501 and \$600 per week. As question responses provide a range i.e. between \$501 and \$600 per week, we cannot provide an exact median weekly rent amount. However, other sources such as Infometrics suggest that median weekly rent is \$599 (2023), which aligns with the upper limit of the range provided in this survey. This is also in line with Trade Me's Rental Price Index (Sept 2023), which suggests the median weekly rent for Otago is \$585. However, 21% of renters in Queenstown are paying over \$800 per week compared to 12% in Wānaka. Those paying at the lower end of the scale are mostly in flatting situations.

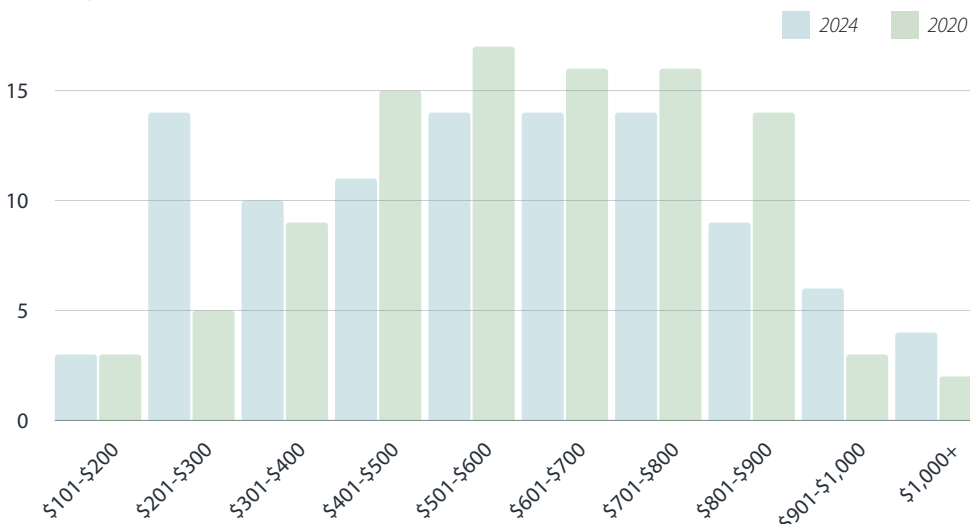
The implication of this is that a household will need to earn over \$111,000 per annum to ensure that their housing costs are within acceptable limits. The generally accepted rule within New Zealand and internationally is the 28/36 rule (mortgages.co.nz). That is housing costs should be no more than 28% of gross monthly income, and no more than 36% on debt servicing. Given that only 30% of households in this survey earn over \$111,000 per annum, this suggests that the median weekly rent is unaffordable for the majority of households. This is confirmed by narrative data from renters who indicate that affordability is a problem.

“Most of our money goes on rent.”

“I am struggling financially and the high cost of rent and lack of rentals make it stressful.”

“We are paying more than half of our weekly income for rent. Just easy to imagine how hard our life is.”

Weekly paid rent (%)



17%

of all respondents
houseless in last
12 months

58%

Of those who have
been houseless,
were houseless for
1-2 months

9%

Of all respondents
say they experienced
discrimination in
securing their
current rental

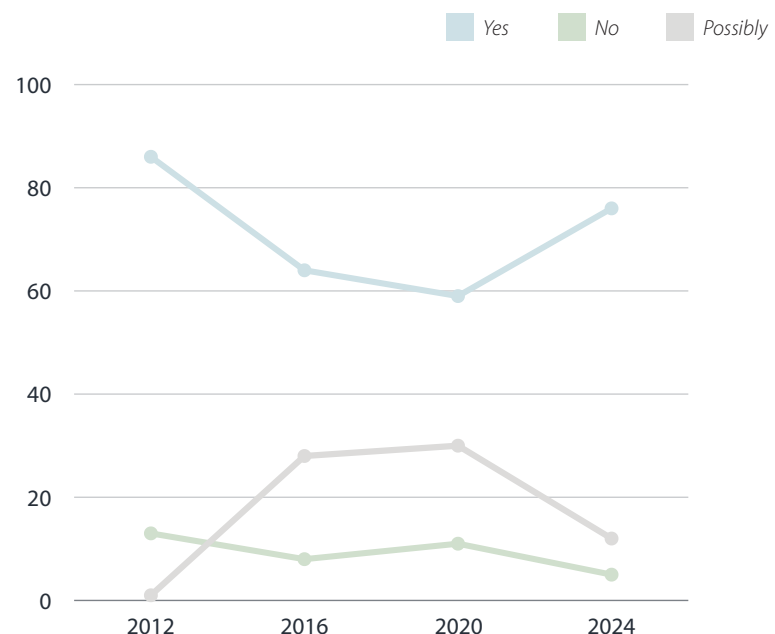
“There needs to be more
affordable rentals and
first time buys.

It's horrible wanting to
settle down somewhere
and not being able to
envision your future there
because of all these
factors.”

Affordability and housing security

Exploration of historical data relating to perceptions of housing affordability as a barrier to long term commitment to the district, suggests that until recently this was showing a downward trend. This trend almost mirrors those who said affordability is 'possibly' a barrier. However, those responding 'yes' (76%) is not as high as 2012 data (86%). Additionally, renters were asked whether availability was a barrier, with 79% agreeing that it was.

% of renters who say that housing affordability is a barrier to their long term commitment to the district.



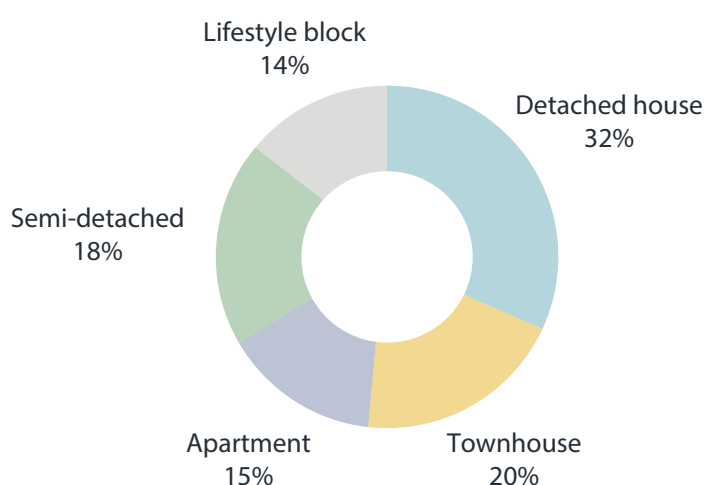
Trends around affordability perceptions may be influenced by a variety of factors, including the percentage of renters who have been **houseless within the last 12 months (17%)**. Comparison of Wānaka and Queenstown data shows that more Wānaka renters have been houseless (21%) than Queenstown renters (15%). Furthermore, **60% of respondents said that it was likely that they will have to move in the next 12 months** (ratings from somewhat likely to very likely). A higher percentage of Wānaka renters (38%) said that it was likely they will have to move in the next 12 months than Queenstown renters (26%). The reason for this need to move is that the **rent is increasing (58%)**, the **landlord is moving into the property (19%)** and the house is **changing to short term visitor accommodation (18%)**. These numbers are reflected in the narrative data, indicating a low sense of housing security.



Future rental

In terms of the sort of rental respondents would like in the future, 32% said they wanted to rent a detached house. This also reflects the finding that 55% are currently renting a detached/stand alone property. Furthermore, 47% of those who said they want to rent a detached house or lifestyle block were aged 30-39. As suggested in the narrative, this reflects a desire to start a family. However, this is being impacted by availability and security of rentals.

Type of house renters wish to live in



“Shared housing and being stuck in rentals shows little promise for having a long term life here or starting a family.”

“I’m lucky that I share a house with good friends, however I’ve been doing so for the last 7 years. Having my own house with my partner would greatly improve my wellbeing.”

In addition, renters were asked if they would be willing to share facilities with others. As summarised in the table below, respondents were happy to share more generic facilities such as parking, gardens, laundries and storage, but less keen to share more personal facilities such as kitchens (6%), living areas (6%) and bathrooms (3%). Furthermore, 9% said they were not willing to share any facilities with others. This reflects the age profile of renters who have a preference for their own space without flatmates.

If you rented somewhere in the district that had shared facilities (an apartment, adjoining units etc.), which of the following would you be prepared to share with others? (TOP FOUR)

Parking	24%	Gardens	21%
Laundries	17%	Storage	13%

Future plans

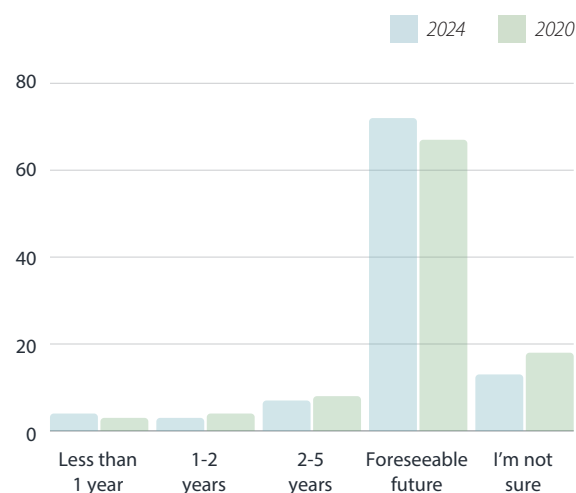
Despite affordability being a barrier to long term commitment to the district, 72% of renters said that they intend to stay for the foreseeable future. Commitment may reflect the ability to purchase a property, as intentions to buy have dropped - 78% (2020) to 66% (2024). Of those who said they do not intend to buy (14%), the majority said that they were unable to afford to do so (71%).

Of those respondents who want to purchase, 40% want to do so in the next 1-3 years, however 26% were not sure. The reasons for this are reflected in the narrative.

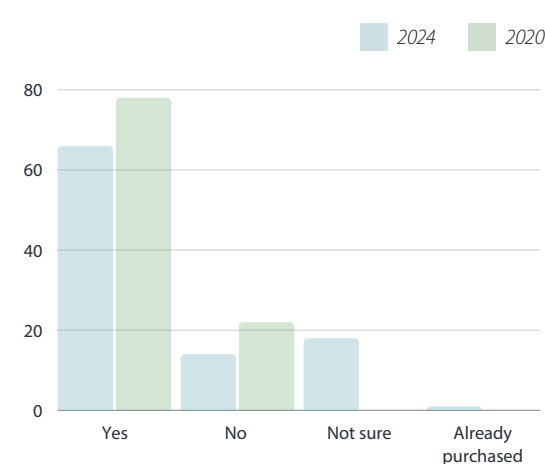
“Having already built a life here for our children, not knowing whether or not we’d be able to buy a house here due to the high prices is very upsetting.”

“I’m a well-educated, hard worker who unfortunately doesn’t have capital backing from my family, which is why buying a house is so much harder and stressful, but it is the ultimate goal to get rid of the houselessness anxiety.”

Intended length of stay (%)



Intentions to buy (%)



In line with the willingness to share facilities as a renter, responses were mirrored when asked what facilities they would be willing to share in home ownership.

If you purchased somewhere in the district that had shared facilities (an apartment, adjoining units etc.), which of the following would you be prepared to share with others?

Parking 20%

Laundries 20%

Gardens 22%

Storage 13%

“It’s Wānaka so there is no real security but we’ve been very lucky to find and keep this property before rentals became insane, the house just sold and we have a new landlord who seems lovely so hoping it stays that way.”

“Wānaka is terrible for renting, I truly think it is shocking what you are expected to pay. When I first moved here it was reasonable and now it’s just ridiculous.”

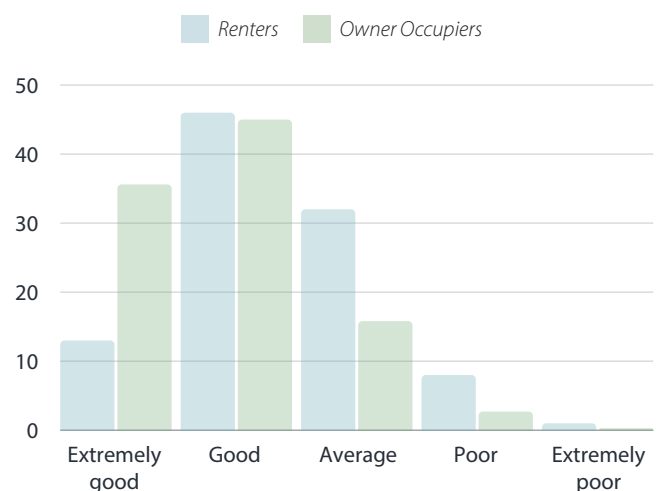
“As we live here in Queenstown, we noticed that the house rent is increasing as it is very expensive already. Our weekly salary is just enough to pay the house rent, bills, and our daily needs.”

“Knowing I have a secure rental (in Queenstown) that is safe and warm means my wellbeing is great.”

Wellbeing

This is the first Renters Survey to explore overall wellbeing. Aligning with Queenstown Lakes District Council’s Quality of Life survey, respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life (QoL). Data regarding owner occupiers QoL was provided by the Council for the purpose of comparison between the two samples. On face value, renters were more likely to rate their quality of life as average (32%) compared to the resident population (21%). Conversely, owner occupiers were more likely to rate their quality of life as extremely good (27%) compared to renters (13%). Comparison indicates that housing security is an important aspect of overall QoL ratings.

Quality of Life - comparison of owner occupiers and renters (%)



Comparison of quality of life ratings between Wānaka and Queenstown suggests that those rating their QoL as ‘good’ was higher in Wānaka (52%) than Queenstown (45%). Additionally, those who rated their QoL as ‘poor’ or ‘extremely poor’ was higher in Queenstown (9%) than Wānaka (5%). This is reflected in the narrative, with both positive and negative comments for both locations.



Thematic analysis of wellbeing

Renters were asked to provide a written response regarding how housing impacts their overall wellbeing. Responses were coded and sorted into common themes, before a set of overarching themes was identified. As the word "stress" was frequently used, this was explored to understand how stress related to different housing situations. Five overarching themes emerged: chronic stress, situational stress, residual stress, reflector stress, and no stress. Interestingly, further analysis of quality of life ratings and wellbeing themes didn't reveal any particular insights, indicating that wellbeing and judgement of quality of life are subjective i.e. residual stress may have a huge impact on your quality of life despite having a 12 month lease on a good property.

Thematic analysis of the question, "In your own words, please describe how your current housing situation impacts your overall wellbeing".

CHRONIC STRESS: Housing situations that are being compounded by health issues or where children are impacted. Key words included 'sick with worry', 'intense anxiety', 'depression', 'disability', 'health conditions', 'skipping meals' (15% of respondents).

"I have rheumatoid arthritis, have not been able to work, struggling to buy the basics, I need to move into my own place, all my support systems are here and I really need them but cannot find anywhere affordable. My age and disability are a barrier."

"It's a heavy mental load that I carry, and it affects everything right down to my sleep. But it's not just my burden to carry as my children also miss out. I can only skip so many meals before they start to notice."

"Up until last week we were facing being homeless with 2 young children with a pure luck we found something out of Queenstown so we are leaving the area."

SITUATIONAL STRESS: Housing situations that are sub-standard, which people feel they cannot afford to change. Key words included 'financial stress', 'poor condition of property', 'problems with flat mates', 'impact on work and leisure time' (32% of respondents).

"I use half of my income for rent. This means I don't travel or go out much. It's my choice to live small in a beautiful environment."

"Having to live with flat mates at my age is not good but because of separation I have been forced to live with others as I can not afford a place on my own."

"Given that we are both qualified professionals contributing to the community, it feels demeaning and discouraging that we aren't able to afford or even find more suitable accommodation."

RESIDUAL STRESS: Housing situations that are currently satisfactory but there is an awareness that this could change. Although general wellbeing was good these respondents used words such as 'worry', 'anxiety', 'concern for the future' (39% of respondents).

"Feeling very lucky and grateful but scared everyday at the same time."

"The uncertainty about my future and retirement and old age is unsettling."

"There is a constant looming sense of impending doom that once our rental runs out or is sold or priced out we will be lost and without being able to purchase there is absolutely no security to raise a family."

"Not owning currently is very stressful, if the rent goes up, I cant afford it. I have dogs so finding a rental is very difficult."

REFLECTOR STRESS: Housing situations that are good but there is an understanding that this is not the case for everyone (4% of respondents).

"I feel quite blessed compared to the stories that I have been hearing from other people."

"It sucks to see the same people posting on Facebook looking for a room. It's really sad. It's easy to put yourself in their shoes and wish you could help."

"To hear what others have to go through as well, it's a huge turn off in regards to Queenstown."

NO STRESS: Housing situations that are safe and stable (10% of respondents).

"The landlords are great people they love the way my partner and I look after their house. They pay me back if I spend money fixing up the house or garden."

"My current housing situation has a very positive impact on my wellbeing."

"House is new-ish (less than 10yrs), i have my own bathroom which is really good for me. And good location to town as well."

Houselessness Profile

This section presents data regarding respondents who stated that they are currently houseless.

Houselessness represents 9% of the sample for this survey. That is 97 respondents.

This number doesn't factor in partners and children.

New Zealand's official definition of homelessness has been used in this survey, that being:

Living situations where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing; are without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household or living in uninhabitable housing.

9%

of respondents
are houseless
(97 respondents)

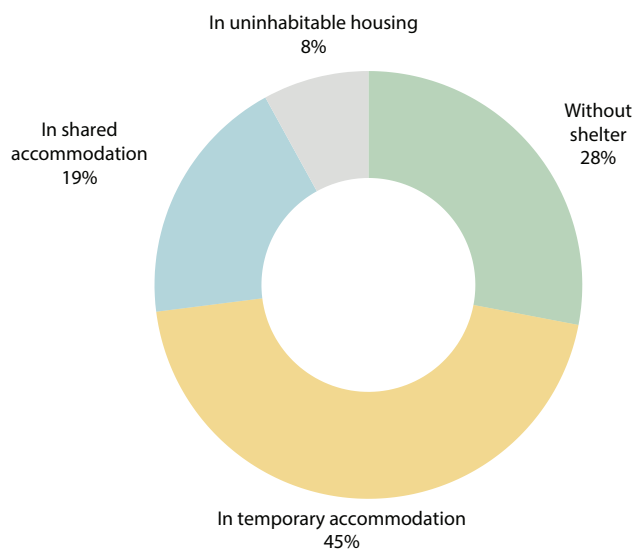
23%

of those who are
houseless report
experiencing
discrimination

It is important to note that:

- Perceptions of a problem are dependent on how we choose to represent the data. For example, when we factor in all of those who have been houseless within the past 12 months, as well as those who are currently houseless, the impact is 1 in every 4 renters. Houselessness fluctuates throughout the year, as is indicated by the number of respondents who said they have been houseless in the last 12 months.
- The survey was conducted during the summer months, which has an impact on both numbers and wellbeing.
- Houselessness still represents a legal, ethical and moral dilemma for local organisations. For the individuals and families who are represented by these statistics, the daily struggle is very real.
- Of those experiencing houselessness, 23% report being discriminated against when trying to obtain suitable housing.
- Both quantitative and narrative data is presented to provide insight into the problem of houselessness.
- To protect the privacy of respondents some data has been combined or not reported. Within the narrative, personal identifying comments have also been removed to protect privacy.

Current living situation for those experiencing houselessness



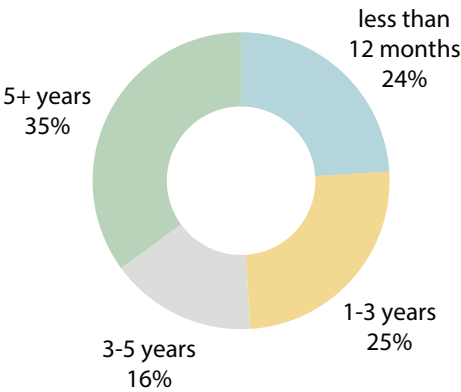


The majority of those who are currently houseless are either New Zealand citizens (59.8%) or permanent residents (17.5%). Around 12% are on work visas. The gender split is roughly 50/50, and the majority are of working age. A small minority are over the age of 65.

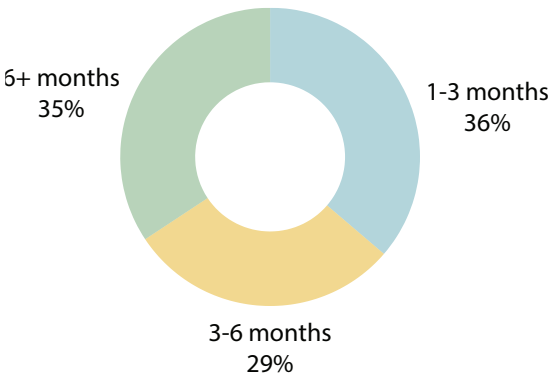
“It’s depressing as I cannot get ahead and I cannot support my child. She misses out on all the things her friends get to do and can’t have playdates and sleepovers.”

Responses regarding length of time in the district suggest that houselessness can impact people regardless of how long they have been here. Additionally, 35% of those who are houseless have been houseless for more than six months.

Length of time in the district



Length of time spent houseless



20%
of those who are
houseless have
children

75%

Of houseless respondents
earn under \$75,000 per annum
(gross), which is not enough to
cover the median weekly rent
at acceptable housing to
income limits

Of those who
are houseless
49%
are NZ
European

and
11%
are Māori

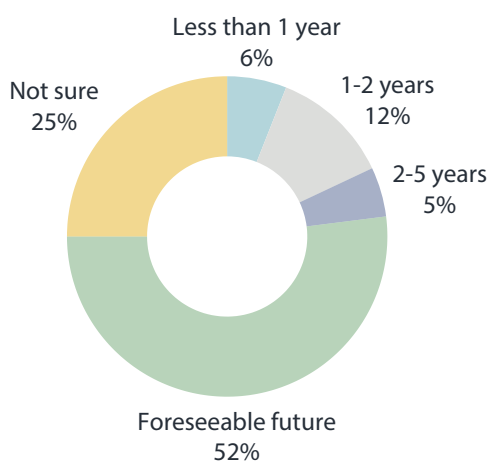
Reasons for houselessness			
Previous rental was sold	21%	Personal reasons e.g. to save money	13%
Previous rental is now an AirBnB	16%	Nothing affordable	15%
Landlord moved into the property	16%	Nothing available	14%

Future plans

In terms of future plans, the responses from those who are houseless reflects less certain intentions to stay or purchase property, compared to data presented in the renters profile. For example, 72% of those currently renting said that they plan to stay for the foreseeable future, however only 52% of those who are currently houseless gave this response. Additionally, 66% of those currently renting said they intend to buy, whilst only 47% of those who are houseless intend to buy. This reflects the finding that 69% of those who are currently houseless say they are unable to afford to buy.

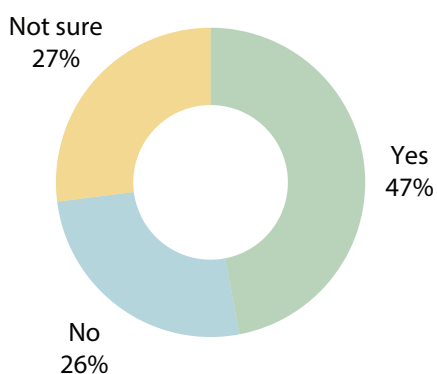
Financial reasons such as saving for a deposit, increasing income and hoping prices will drop accounted for why 59% feel that they are unable to currently purchase a property. As demonstrated in the graphs below, the intention to stay and the intention to buy are similar, suggesting that the ability to purchase a property might impact future plans in the district.

Intentions to stay



“I have always wanted to have house of our own where we can live together and my son to start his family.”

Intentions to buy



“Struggling to settle in as I don’t have a place to call my own. The unknown of where I am going to be living in the future.”

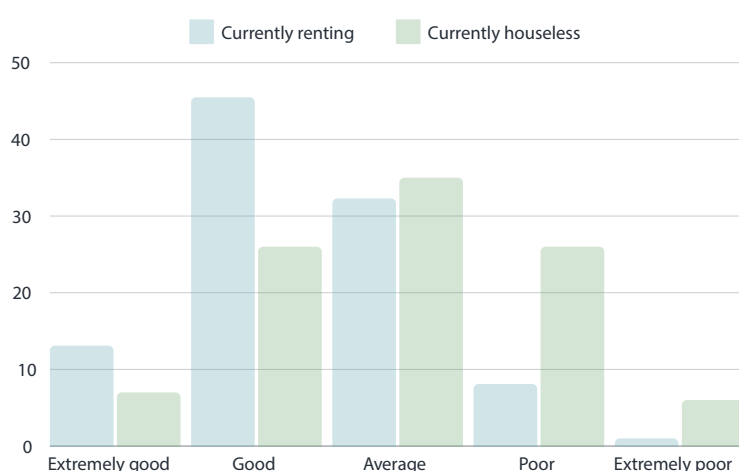
If you purchased somewhere in the district that had shared facilities (an apartment, adjoining units etc.), which of the following would you be prepared to share with others?

Parking	20%	Laundries	20%
Gardens	22%	Storage	13%

Wellbeing

All respondents to the survey were asked to rate their overall quality of life (QoL), reflecting a wellbeing assessment of multiple lifestyle factors. For those who are currently houseless, quality of life looks very different to those who have a rental property to call home. Those rating their QoL as average was the same for both renters and those who are houseless. However, either end of the scale demonstrates a different story.

Quality of Life Rating - currently renting compared to currently houseless (%)



Comparing quantitative data with quality of life scores provides insight into why people responded the way they did. In addition, the narrative data provides important information regarding the impact houselessness has on overall wellbeing. The same themes have been used to analyse this data as with the renter's data. However, only two themes emerged, chronic stress and situational stress.

Thematic analysis of the question "In your own words, please describe how your current housing situation impacts your overall wellbeing."

CHRONIC STRESS: Housing situations that significantly impact health, including situations where children are impacted (50% of respondents). These respondents were more likely to rate their quality of life as average or poor.

"I'm incredibly stressed which is a horrible reality as a mother. I am supposed to keep my children safe and at this point I cant even provide them housing which is a basic need."

"Depressed, stressed, anxiety, panic attacks are part of our daily basis... really sad to love a place and a community and also have to live a car with your family because someone is tired of getting 500 pw of rent, now 750, 800 is better for a 2 bedroom. 1k for 3 bedroom, how is a family supposed to survive that? How are we supposed to save for buying our own property?"

"Massively. It's isolating, precarious and makes it incredibly hard to meet basic needs, never mind have a social life or plan for the future."



SITUATIONAL STRESS: Housing situations that are sub standard which people feel they cannot afford to change (50% of respondents).

These respondents were more likely to rate their quality of life as 'average' or 'good'. With a small minority also rating as 'extremely good'. These respondents tended to be optimistic and reflective of their situation.

"I'm one of the lucky few... Have been to dozens of viewings where I am picked apart sometimes because of my race is pretty demoralising. I do not expect any kindness from locals. But I love these mountains. I hope this is all worth it."

"It just makes it less stable but also gives me the opportunity to reflect on how lucky I am to be here anyways."

"During the summer months it's ok to stay in campsite. But during winter or when it's cold and wet my mood is negatively impacted. It can cause a lot of stress and worry."

Summary of Narrative Data

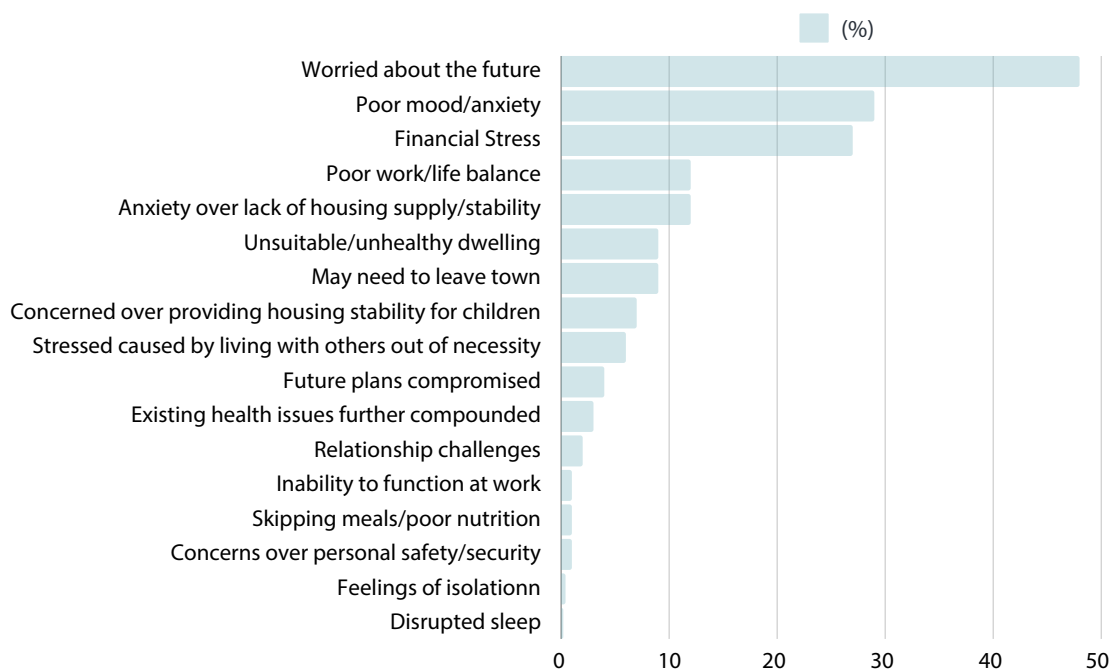
The table below summarises the narrative data from all respondents, sharing the various ways in which their current housing situation impacts their wellbeing.

Worried about the future	How will they get ahead, what happens when rents get out of reach, or the landlord takes the house back. Concerns of ending up houseless.
Poor mood / anxiety	Where mood is impacted solely by their housing situation.
Financial stress	Rents mainly, but also the increased cost of living cited.
Poor work/life balance	Having to work long hours, or multiple jobs to cover rent. Rent taking up so much there's nothing left for social and recreation activities.
Unsuitable / unhealthy dwelling	Homes not well kept by the landlord, or cold and damp, but too scared to say anything for fear of losing their tenancy.
May need to leave town	Acknowledging they will likely need to leave town and expressing their desire for it to be otherwise.
Concerned about providing housing stability for children	Concerned about the impact constantly moving is having on children.
Stress caused by living with others	Couples, families with children, older people living with others out of necessity. Many commented on feeling embarrassed and demoralised.
Future plans compromised	Delaying getting married, starting a family, getting pets, travelling home to see family. Not buying things for the house for fear of having to move.
Existing health issues further compounded	Homes not meeting health needs (both physical and mental) exacerbating poor health.
Relationship challenges	Romantic, family, social and work relationships impacted.
Inability to function at work	Such high levels of worry that concentration and ability to cope at work is negatively impacted, creating issues at work.
Skipping meals / poor nutrition	Not eating well due to financial strain or lack of adequate food storage and cooking facilities. Parents skipping meals to ensure children are fed.
Concerns over personal safety or security	Security concerns in shared housing with people they don't know coming and going. Personal safety concerns from those who are houseless.
Feelings of isolation	Not able to join in with life due to financial and emotional strain.

The graph opposite illustrates the most common impact amongst respondents.

It is interesting to note that even respondents who currently have secure housing still express worry about the future; concerns such as future rent rises, landlords taking the house back, inability to plan for the future or putting off future plans such as travel to see family, getting married, starting a family.

23% of respondents reported no impact to their wellbeing. The remaining respondents reported one or more of the listed impacts.



We would like to thank all the people who took part
in this research and provided honest accounts
of their housing situation.

Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui.



Acknowledgements

QLCHT is an independent, not for profit, community owned organisation whose establishment was initiated by the Queenstown Lakes District Council in 2007, after it recognised a growing issue with affordable housing in the Queenstown Lakes District. It is a registered community housing provider regulated by the Community Housing Regulatory Authority and a Public Housing provider with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. QLCHT offers a variety of housing programmes, both rental and assisted ownership designed to help committed residents of the Queenstown Lakes District into decent affordable housing with secure tenure.

We would like to thank Hannah Sullivan at the Queenstown Housing Initiative who provided valuable input in designing this research. We would also like to thank Queenstown Lakes District Council who provided guidance regarding the survey development.

This report has been written by independent researcher Katherine Davies on behalf of QLCHT, and managed internally by Corina Sommerville, QLCHT Housing Services Manager.

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QUEENSTOWN LAKES
**Community
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Unlocking homes in our community.