

Northcote Child and Youth Development Project

Statistical Profile of Northcote

With a Focus on Children and Young People

AUCKLAND SUSTAINABLE CITIES PROGRAMME

**A regional partnership with the Sustainable
Development Programme of Action**

July 2005

Forward

We are very pleased to support the launch of the Statistical Profile undertaken by the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project. The completion of the Profile shows the well-established links in Northcote between central government, North Shore City Council and the community - these are important building blocks for the future of the Northcote Community.

We recognise that the young people of today are our future in the development of communities and families in our changing world in the 21st century. This project gives us the opportunity to find out and highlight what is important to our young residents and to share this information for the benefit of all who live and work in Northcote.

We would like to thank all of those who have participated in completing this Profile.

With best wishes

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Statements from Governance Group Partners

Our Board believes that Northcote is an ideal model for the Auckland Sustainable Cities - Child and Youth Development project, given the diverse nature of our community. In many ways, Northcote reflects the future of Auckland in terms of its diverse multicultural population, its vibrant and growing youth population and the range of backgrounds, incomes and housing within our community.

Birkenhead Northcote Community Board

MSD strongly supports the completion of the Statistical Profile as a useful tool in planning and delivering future services in the Northcote community, to support children and young people within the context of their families and community. Having a clear, shared picture of what is actually going on for children and young people, is an essential first step and we hope that this profile will also be a useful model for other communities as well as Northcote.

Family & Community Services, Ministry of Social Development

North Shore City Council is pleased to support a project that recognises the young people of today as the community and leaders of the future. The project is a great opportunity to reinforce the already strong and established networks of central government, local government and the community. Together we are committed to developing a collective response to the children and young people of Northcote. This project is about taking action to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people. The Statistical Profile is an important first step in that journey. North Shore City is pleased to be part of this important piece of work.

North Shore City Council

HNZC's Community Renewal programme seeks to enhance social inclusion, foster strong, sustainable communities, create a responsive approach to community development, and explore new ways to interact. We are therefore very pleased to be part of the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project and the compilation of the Statistical Profile. A key component of this project is the cooperation and coordination between project members. The level of collaboration, information sharing and consultation has been outstanding.

Housing New Zealand Corporation

As a starting point to inform further discussion with the Northcote community Te Puni Kokiri sees this as a useful tool in benchmarking future change. The focus should always be towards community outcomes that are multi-dimensional, building on the strengths of the community to create positive opportunities, and in essence doing more than just identifying gaps in services. Māori are a key component of this community and as principal advisor on government-Māori relationships, Te Puni Kokiri is excited about the prospect of working with the governance group partners and community into the future.

Te Puni Kokiri

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How to Use This Document

This is a collection of statistics compiled to show the environment in which children and young people are being raised in Northcote. Its role is to generally inform and highlight issues. As with all statistics care should be taken in their use. How statistics are gathered, when and who for, are important factors to consider. We have, as much as possible, given sources to enable further investigation and to enable trend analysis over time. There are quotes throughout the document which provide another perspective. This report is a starting point for discussions and we hope it will add to your knowledge of Northcote.

Purpose of Northcote Statistical Profile

Our starting point for this report was that we wanted to get a full picture of what is happening in Northcote for our children and young people – how is the population changing, where do they live, what is their health status, what is happening with their education, what issues do they face in terms of safety and how do they spend their leisure time?

These are some of the questions that we have tried to answer by collating information from a wide range of government and community sources.

We hope that this report will be useful to people living and working in Northcote to:

- Give a shared picture of what is currently happening for our children and young people
- Inform discussion about needs and gaps in services
- Benchmark future progress.

Northcote Child and Youth Development Project

This report is the first stage of the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project – a collaborative project to support children and young people in the Northcote community. It is a demonstration project for Auckland Sustainable Cities. The aim over the next three years is to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for children and young people by improving services and support with a focus on:

- Learning what works best at community level
- Looking at the needs of children at different stages of development
- Using research and best practice to inform future decisions
- Increasing the participation of children and young people in decisions that affect them.

North Shore City Council, Ministry of Social Development and HNZA Community Renewal Project are working together in partnership with the Northcote community, children, young people and their families, and a wide range of government and community agencies on this project.

Services and Assets Database

We have also compiled a database of all services available to children, young people and their families in Northcote. This will be available to community and government agencies (initially on CD) to help them find out about and access services in the area. The database will also help the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project to identify any gaps in services.

Next Steps

The Statistical Profile and the Services and Assets Database will together form a comprehensive community profile. The next step in the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project is to identify priority issues for children and young people and address gaps in services to meet these needs. The Northcote Child and Youth Development Project is working with young people, community and central and local

government agencies to seek their views and build a joint action plan for implementation over the next 12 months.

Help for Other Communities to Develop Their Own Statistical Profile

As we are a demonstration project for Auckland Sustainable Cities, we have developed a template and method for other communities to use to build their own statistical profile. We are completing a methodology report based on our experience in Northcote.

Please contact our project team with your feedback on this report or for more information about the project:

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For Government agencies:

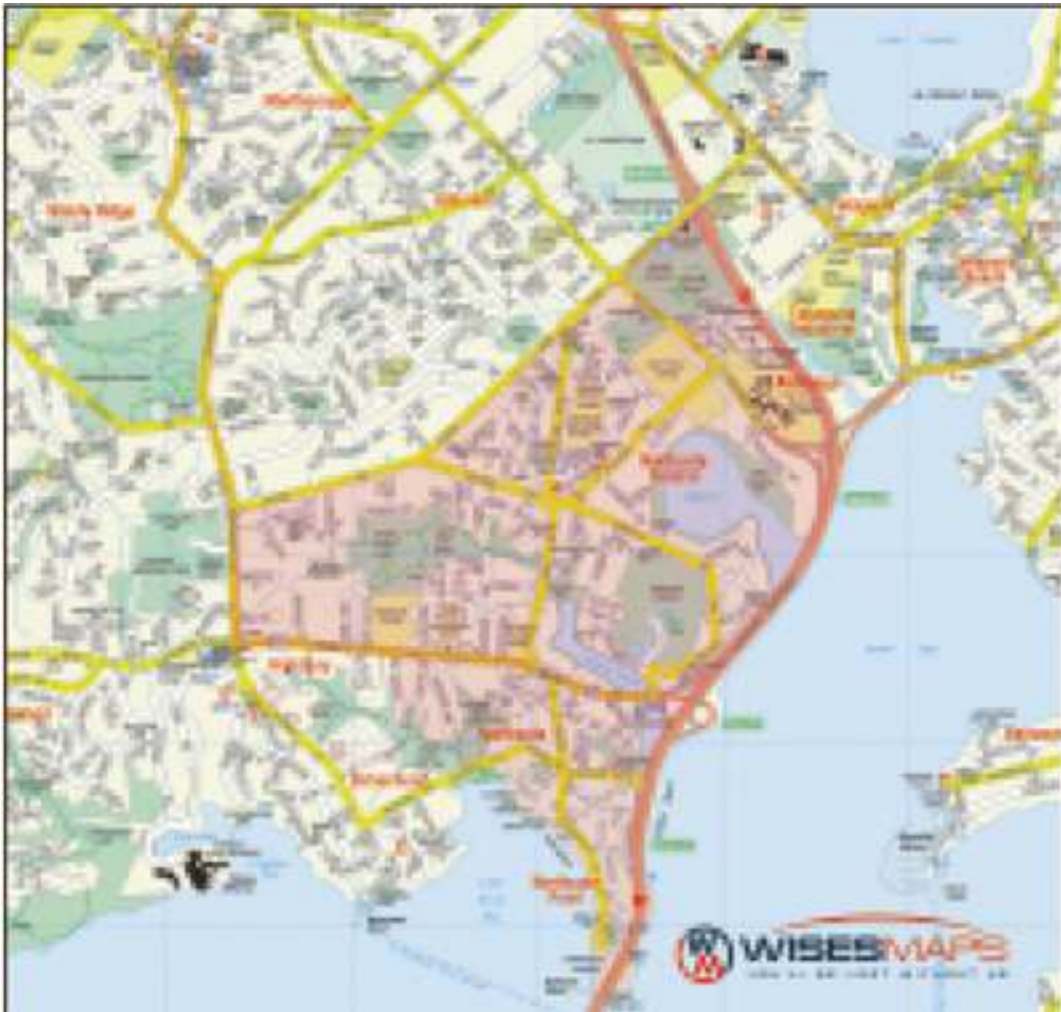
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Northcote Maps

Project Catchment Area



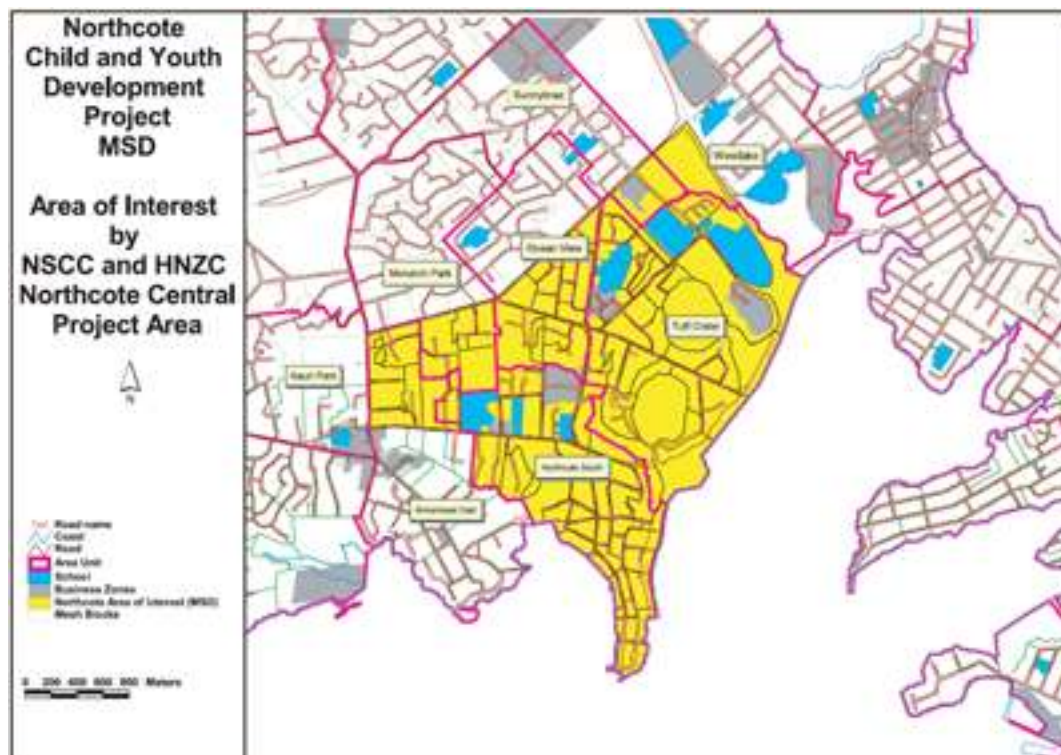
“Red” shaded area = Boundary of Project Catchment Area

Northcote Census Area Units

Meshblocks and Census Area Units

For data relating to the total Northcote catchment area we have used meshblock data as it is a more precise fit of the area. Census area units have been used when looking at differences between different parts of Northcote, even though some parts of the area units fall outside the Northcote catchment area (see the map below).

The meshblocks are the smallest unit of statistical data collected by Statistics New Zealand. These meshblocks are built into larger geographical areas called Census Area Unit. These area units can then be used to build larger areas such as Councils.



Source: North Shore City Council

People

Northcote's strength lies in its diversity of cultures and mix of generations. It is a colourful community which holds lots of community events. It enjoys celebrating its ethnic richness and its children. It is a community keen and willing to do more with its young people.

Key Points

- The face of Northcote is changing. Māori and some Pacific people are moving to other areas and the percentage of Asian, particularly Korean people, is increasing
- Residents are mainly older adults who have lived here a long time, and skilled immigrants and refugees who have been settling here or have settled here in the past 5-10 years
- Of families with children, one in four are sole parent families
- 32 percent of the Northcote population is under 25 years
- Northcote has a larger proportion of people aged 65 years and over than either the North Shore or New Zealand as a whole
- Northcote is characterised by distinct areas of affluence and low income
- The main languages spoken, other than English, are Asian languages
- The population of Northcote is growing but at a slower rate than the rest of New Zealand.

Commentary

Northcote has seen a dramatic change in its ethnic and age profile over the last 10 years.

Northcote is an attractive area, close to the Auckland central business district. The popularity of Northcote as a place to live has put pressure on the housing and rental market. As rental and house prices have increased, some low income families, in particular Māori and Pacific families, have moved out of the area to find more affordable housing.

In addition, older adults, particularly those with larger homes or full sections, are gradually moving out of the area.

Northcote, with its Asian shops and businesses, has become a popular location for immigrant families coming to New Zealand for the benefit of their children and for work and lifestyle opportunities. However, migrants' expectations about work and lifestyle opportunities in New Zealand are not always being met, and this is resulting in high levels of stress for the families concerned.

Refugee families have also settled in Northcote over recent years. Some have come from social, political and economic systems which are vastly different from those in New Zealand and many have experienced years of trauma and hardship prior to their arrival in this country.

Many new settlers, particularly elderly immigrants, wives and mothers who do not go out to work, feel socially isolated. This isolation is compounded for those migrants with minimal or no English, and by a lack of public transport in Northcote.

Thirty-two percent of the population is under the age of 25 years. Of the 2,895 families in Northcote, one in four families with children are sole parent families. One third of the 1,362 children and young people growing up in Tuff Crater are being raised in one parent households.

Many government and community services have been challenged by the rapid demographic changes that have occurred.

Population

At the 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings:

- There were 11,499 people living in the Northcote area
- There were slightly more females (53.7%) than males

Population of Northcote

Gender	Northcote	North Shore	New Zealand
Males	5,316	89,181	1,823,007
Females	6,183	95,637	1,914,270
Total	11,499	184,821	3,737,280

Source: Census, 2001

Population Growth

At the 2001 Census:

- The population of Northcote had increased by 2.9 percent from 1996
- In comparison, the North Shore City's population had changed by 7.4 percent and the population for New Zealand as a whole had changed by 3.3 percent since 1996
- The highest percentage growth in Northcote was in the Ocean View area
- Areas such as Tuff Crater, Monarch Park and Northcote South showed lower than average rates of growth¹

Growth Areas of Northcote

	Tuff Crater	Ocean View	Monarch Park	Northcote South	Northcote Catchment
Population Increase	2.6%	5.7%	1.1%	1.7%	2.9%

Source: Census, 2001

Auckland Regional Growth Strategy

In 1996 there were just over 1 million people living in the Auckland Region. The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy is predicting an 85 percent increase in people living in the region by 2050, bringing the population to almost 2 million. The population on the North Shore is expected to show a 69 percent increase over this period.

¹ Note the census area units have a wider catchment than the Northcote area. The figure for Northcote is for the catchment area using meshblocks.

The parts within the Auckland Region likely to have high population increases will depend on Councils' responses to accommodating growth. North Shore City Council is responding to the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy to 2021, through the Northern and Western Sectors Agreement. While North Shore City doesn't have a policy of promoting population growth or predetermined targets for growth in any particular area of the City, the City Blueprint does plan for residential intensification in and around centres (such as Northcote) and transport nodes, to 2021. The implementation of this intensification is still subject to ongoing community consultation. Northcote has not yet been zoned for intensification.

Age

Most Northcote residents are of working age. The area has a smaller proportion of young people under the age of 15 years than either North Shore City or New Zealand as a whole. However, there is a higher percentage of older adults 65 years and over living in the Northcote area.

At the 2001 Census:

- 17.8 percent of people in Northcote were under the age of 15 years, compared with 20.7 percent in North Shore City and 22.7 percent for all of New Zealand
- 15.7 percent of people in Northcote were aged 65 years and over, compared with 10.9 percent of North Shore City and 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand

Age Groups

Ages	Northcote	North Shore City	New Zealand
0 - 14	17.8%	20.7%	22.7 %
15 - 64	66.5%	68.4%	65.2 %
64+	15.7%	10.9%	12.1%

Source: Census, 2001

Children and Young People

At the 2001 Census:

- There were 3,681 children and young people aged 0 - 24 years in Northcote
- Of these: 1,809 were female and 1,872 were male

Age Group	Northcote	North Shore	New Zealand
0 - 4	687	11,817	270,801
5 - 9	663	12,732	286,203
10 - 14	702	13,638	290,739
15 - 19	831	13,989	265,284
20 - 24	798	12,276	239,784
Total	3,681	64,449	1,352,808

Source: Census, 2001

Age Groups

At the 2001 Census:

Children and young people in Northcote were fairly evenly distributed across the age groups. However, there were a slightly higher percentage of young people in the age groups, 15-19 years (22%) and 20-24 years (22%).

In 2001:

The age structure of the population varied slightly in the different areas of Northcote.

- Northcote South had the highest percentage of preschoolers and children aged 5-9 years old
- Monarch Park and Ocean View had the highest percentage of children aged 10-14 years
- Of the 1,362 children and young people in Tuff Crater, the largest proportion was in the 15-19 year age group²

Young people are integrating into Northcote

“There are programmes for Chinese young people aimed at helping them integrate into the community. The programmes include restricted and learner driving classes, language programmes, tramping training courses and effective parenting workshops. The Sea Scout Group is also popular with Chinese youth. A St. John Youth Division is in the planning stages.”

Youth Worker - Chinese Community

Newborns

Approximately 250 babies are born in Northcote each year.³ Of these approximately fourteen percent are Māori and nine percent are Pacific.⁴

Percentage of Babies Born Annually in Northcote in Each Decile

Decile	Percentage
1 – 4	56
5 – 7	31
8 - 9	6
10	7

Source: Census, 2001

Looking after babies and toddlers

“There are a large number of Asian families in Northcote. Asian families do seem to access mainstream services, for example, they are attending Plunket coffee groups – but staff are wondering whether there needs to be more services targeting this group. As well as Asian there are a large number of other ethnic groups now living in the area.

² The data for this report was analysed in mid 2005, four years after the census. Many of the children will have moved from one age group to another. However, because the face of Northcote has also been changing over this time it is difficult to determine how this would affect the age structure. Because there has been a demographic shift, it cannot be assumed that children have moved from one age group to the next and stayed within the Northcote area, nor that the new babies have been born in the same proportions in the same areas.

³ Data supplied by Plunket, 2005. The deciles are drawn from the deprivation index where decile 1 is the least deprived area and decile 10 is the most deprived area.

⁴ Plunket state that there are a significant percentage of Asian babies born in Northcote each year, however the actual percentage is unavailable.

Staff feel the area is well serviced for families with children under five. They had just had a mother who had recently arrived from England asking about what was happening in the community and they were able to send her away with an array of options.”

Plunket, Northcote

Ethnic Groups

At the 2001 Census:

- 73.1 percent of people in Northcote said they belong to the European ethnic group, compared with 81.8 percent for North Shore City and 80.1 percent for all of New Zealand
- Northcote had a higher percentage of Asian residents (16.1%) than either the North Shore or New Zealand as a whole

Percentage of People in Each Ethnic Group⁵

	Tuff Crater	Ocean View	Monarch Park	Northcote South	Northcote	North Shore	New Zealand
European	60.9%	70.4%	78.9%	85.3%	73.1%	81.8%	80.1%
Māori	10.2%	6.6%	6.2%	6.2%	7.5%	6.7%	14.7%
Pacific Peoples	13.6%	4.4%	1.6%	3.4%	7.5%	3.3%	6.5%
Asian	19.3%	22.0%	16.7	11.0%	16.1	12.7	6.6%
Other	2.8%	2.4%	2.2	0.9%	2.2	1.6	0.7%

Source: Census, 2001

Ethnic integration in Northcote

“I was bought up in a Māori/Pakeha family so I identify with other cultures. I like different ways of doing things and I mix well with other ethnic groups. Single culture environments can be boring.”

Pakeha/Māori male 20 years

“There is a strong cultural perspective in Northcote. It is very much a multi-cultural community. Different cultures celebrate their uniqueness through the schools and shopping centre. I would like to see more integration of the ethnic communities. I would like to see all the cultures learn to accept each other’s ethnic identity and create an interesting cultural community.”

Long Term Resident, Māori

Most Common Ethnic Groups

At the 2001 Census the most common ethnic groups in Northcote were New Zealand European, followed by Chinese, Māori, Tongan, Korean and Samoan.

Ethnic Groups	Northcote	Percentage of People in Northcote (%)
NZ European	7,440	64.7
Chinese	996	8.7

⁵ Note, people could select more than one ethnic group to belong to so the numbers may add up to more than 100 percent.

Māori	834	7.3
Tongan	357	3.1
Korean	336	2.9
Samoan	306	2.7
Indian	132	1.1
English	120	1.0
Cook Island Māori	96	0.8
South African	93	0.8
Niuean	93	0.8
British	84	0.7
Australian	84	0.7
Japanese	75	0.7
Arab	72	0.6
Dutch/Netherlands	69	0.6
Filipino	69	0.6
Irish	45	0.4
Taiwanese Chinese	45	0.4
Fijian (except Fiji)	39	0.3
Indian/Indo-Fijian)		

Source: Census, 2001

“The different cultures in the area are good. You can walk down the street and see people from different cultures”

Pakeha/Māori male 20 years

“I enjoy the diversity of cultures in Northcote, but there is nothing to bring us all together.”

Youth Group Member

Where People Live

At the 2001 Census:

- Europeans were more likely to live in the more affluent areas of Monarch Park and Northcote South
- Chinese were most likely to live in the less affluent areas of Tuff Crater and Ocean View areas
- Korean people were most likely to live in either Ocean View or Monarch Park
- Māori were most likely to live in the least affluent area of Tuff Crater
- Over two-thirds (72%) of the Tongan community lived in Tuff Crater

Percent of Ethnic Groups Living in Each Area of Northcote

	Tuff Crater %	Ocean View %	Monarch Park %	Northcote South %
NZ European	20	24	29	28
Chinese	32	31	25	13
Māori	34	23	23	20
Tongan	72	11	6	10
Korean	16	37	26	21
Samoan	47	29	7	18
Indian	23	18	48	13

Source: Census, 2001

Being Neighbourly

“Being a Polynesian surrounded by Polynesians is great. Everybody knows everyone and we all interact and communicate all the time. Things in Northcote are just like back in Tonga. We all see each other everyday and talk about what goes on in the

community and in our families. Hardly anybody feels uncomfortable letting their child play outside or walk to the shop alone because we all look out for one another and each others children. We also share what one another's got e.g. the next door neighbours go fishing and if they are very successful they will share their fish out with everyone. Recently the neighbours wife died and all of the community each put in lots of cakes and blankets etc and we all went to the funeral at the community house and sang songs of sorrow. Northcote is great because everything is so close, like the doctors, the shops, AUT, the rest-home - everything."

Tongan Resident

Most Common Languages Spoken

At the 2001 Census:

The most common languages spoken in Northcote were English, Sinitic, Northern Chinese, Korean, Yue and Māori.

Language	Northcote
NZ European	7,440
Chinese	996
Māori	834
Tongan	357
Korean	336
Samoan	306
Indian	132
English	120
Cook Island Māori	96
South African	93
Niuean	93
British	84
Australian	84
Japanese	75
Arab	72
Dutch/Netherlands	69
Filipino	69
Irish	45
Taiwanese Chinese	45
Fijian (except Fiji)	39
Indian/Indo-Fijian)	

Source: Census, 2001

Chinese and Kiwis bridging cultures

"We have put in place projects to help Chinese seniors to integrate into the society as well as helping local Kiwis to understand more about the Chinese culture. For example, every Thursday morning we have Kiwis and Chinese people come together. There is more understanding and mutual appreciation between participants (Chinese and Kiwi) and they have started making friends with each other. The Chinese participants appreciated much of the support from the Kiwi friends as well as from the bilingual Chinese volunteers who acted as a bridge between the Kiwi and Chinese participants."

Youth Worker, Chinese Community

Families and Households

At the 2001 Census:

- There were 2,895 families in Northcote
- 16 percent of families (including couples without children) in Northcote were one parent families
- Of families with children, the percentage of one parent families were even higher. One in four families with dependent children in Northcote and one in three families in Tuff Crater were one parent families.

	Tuff Crater	Ocean View	Monarch Park	Northcote South	Northcote	North Shore	New Zealand
Couples without Children	40.4%	40.2%	36.1%	40.9%	41.8%	37.2%	39.0%
Couples with Child(ren)	39.1%	44.5%	48.3%	44.2%	42.1%	46.7%	42.1%
One Parent with Child(ren)	19.9%	15.4%	15.6%	14.6%	16.2%	16.0%	18.9%

Source: Census, 2001

Changing expectations around raising children

“The increasing diversity of ethnic groups brings changing expectations around the raising of children. This includes different ideas about what is normal discipline, what are the normal things for children to do for themselves and the expectations of children in schools.”

A Social Services Manager

“There can sometimes be an emphasis on physical discipline and an expectation that children will be ‘mini adults’ which includes being self sufficient, coming home to an empty house, being organised, making their own dinner, being left at home alone while parents are away overseas. Kids can be quite frightened by that but do not want to say that to their parents.”

A Social Services Manager

Dealing with behavioural problems

“Some of our parents are dealing with children who have anti-social and behavioural problems. There are some parents who have very low self-confidence and do not have a strong sense of identity. Our services are committed to working with whanau/clients to help with home management, life skills and to assist them to cope with day to day problems. Our aim is to help whanau/clients to self-manage their lives more effectively, create their own success with skill and passion.”

Amalgamated Children’s Services, Te Puna Hauora

Discussion Points

1. What do we want Northcote to look like in 2015, 2025 and 2050?
2. What could the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy population projections mean for Northcote?
3. What do we need to do to enable all immigrants and refugees (children, young people, parents and grandparents) to fully integrate into the Northcote community?
4. How do we address any issues that may arise between the different sectors in our community?
5. How do we create opportunities for parents and families to learn about different cultures?

6. How do we support children and young people born outside of New Zealand to adjust to the major changes – social, educational and cultural – in their new community?
7. How do we support single parents in the community?
8. How do we ensure services meet everybody's different cultural needs?

Health

Health professionals working in the Northcote area say the overall health of the children and young people is good. However, in some areas the health conditions of children and young people are similar to those found in third world countries.

It is difficult to obtain data solely for the Northcote area as health information tends to be collected or reported at a City Council or District Health Board level.⁶ Wherever possible, those working with the local community have been interviewed to help build a more complete profile of the Northcote community.

Key Points

- Injuries are the most common cause of hospitalisation in 0-24 year olds in Northcote
- Respiratory conditions (e.g. asthma and respiratory infections) are common in 0-14 year olds
- Pregnancy and childbirth are a lead cause of hospitalisation in 15-24 year olds
- Many of the illnesses and conditions in Northcote, such as respiratory illnesses, are preventable
- Housing, in particular uninsulated houses and crowded households, appear to be associated with poor health in Northcote
- Health workers are dealing with diseases in Tuff Crater more commonly associated with third world countries. For example, rheumatic fever and TB.

Commentary

“Good health is closely linked to positive relationships with others, supportive family environments, good emotional and mental well-being, cultural identity and physical health. Environments free of risk factors such as poverty, violence and abuse are also important for healthy development.”

Ministry of Youth Development

A child or young person's overall health, unless addressed now, could impact on their future health and prosperity. Children and young people in Northcote are experiencing different health outcomes largely depending on the socio-economic status and housing situation of their parents.

Some of today's health problems can be addressed by helping young people and families make healthy life choices and managing the physical and social environment.

⁶ Much of the data for this section has been summarised from the Report on the Health Status of Children and Youth in the Waitemata District Health Board Region, September 2003 by Dr Cathy Pikhholz.

Health problems in Northcote include high levels of teenage pregnancy, scabies, diabetes, and third world diseases. Many of these conditions are potentially avoidable. As the determinants of some of these health problems lie outside health, we need to look outside the health system for solutions, e.g. towards factors such as household income and housing conditions.

Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding has a wide range of health benefits for both the mother and the child. Establishing and maintaining breastfeeding can be influenced by the support and care available to the mother.*

In 2001:

- Most babies (69%) on the North Shore were exclusively breast fed at six weeks. This was higher than the New Zealand rate (65.6%)
- In the Waitemata DHB, Māori (58.3%) and Pacific (56.8%) babies were less likely to be fully breastfed at six weeks than European babies and babies from other ethnic groups (67.9%)

Note: There are almost two (1.8 FTE) lactation consultant positions at North Shore hospital to support mothers to establish and maintain breastfeeding.

Immunisation Rates

In 2003 over half the children attending school on the North Shore received their 11 year old immunisations at school (58.1%). This was higher than the rate for West Auckland (54.9%) but lower than Rodney's (66.1%) Eleven year old children can receive immunisations for tetanus and polio.*

Hearing Screening

Hearing can affect a child's speech, language development, learning and social skills. Hearing tests are carried out in preschool children aged three and four years, and again for new entrants.*

In 2002:

- Only 1.4 percent of four year old children from the North Shore failed their hearing tests, compared with 5.8 percent of children in West Auckland
- 13.2 percent of Māori and 14.1 percent of Pacific five year olds on the North Shore were more likely to fail their hearing tests than Asian (3.2%) or European (4.6%) five year olds.

* Northcote only data not available

Vision Screening

Poor vision can affect physical confidence and learning. Vision screening tests are currently carried out in children aged four years, five years and eleven years. Colour vision screening is carried out on Form One boys.*

In 2002:

- A greater percentage of children in all age groups passed their vision tests on the North Shore than children in West Auckland
- Children on the North Shore were more likely to have a vision defect that had already been detected than children in West Auckland
- Boys on the North Shore were more likely to have colour defects that had already been detected than boys in West Auckland.

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. Statistics are not available for the Northcote area.

Smoking

Smoking has been associated with an increased risk of some diseases and premature death. For young smokers, the physical damage from smoking can begin during adolescence. Young people who smoke have an increased risk of respiratory problems and lower levels of fitness. Children who start smoking at a young age are more likely to become regular smokers.

- Nearly two-thirds of young New Zealanders aged 14 to 17 years have tried smoking
- In 2002, nearly 13 percent of New Zealanders aged 14 to 17 years smoked cigarettes daily
- Between 1999 and 2002, the youth smoking rate decreased for all groups except Māori females.⁷

Alcohol

Alcohol, when drunk in large quantities is associated with injuries, motor vehicle accidents and deaths, and risky sexual behaviour.

National alcohol surveys and studies of drinking patterns in the Auckland region show an increase in heavy and 'binge' drinking amongst our young people.

- Between 1995 and 2000 the frequency of drinking among 18 and 19 year olds remained the same but the quantity of drinking increased from five drinks a session to seven
- Over the same period the frequency and the amount consumed by 14-17 year olds increased⁸

⁷ The Quit Group, 2005 Youth and Smoking, February.

- A survey of school students in Northwest Auckland found that many students (over one-third) reported binge drinking in the previous four weeks.⁹

Illicit Drug use

Drug use can have an immediate as well as long term health consequences. Although it is difficult to get data at a local level, particularly in relation to party drugs and methamphetamine, a survey of Northwest Auckland school students found that of those surveyed, more than one-third had tried marijuana. A few students used marijuana at least once a week.¹⁰

Gambling

It is not known how many children and young people are affected by problem gambling. It is estimated that problem gamblers affect between five and seven other people.¹¹ In 2001, 46,444 calls were made to the gambling problem Helpline.

- In the 6 months to June 2004 there were 70 new callers from the North Shore to the gambling problem Helpline
- Compared with the national average, more people in the Auckland Region are accessing problem gambling help services.¹²

Child Obesity

The prevalence of child obesity in New Zealand has not been accurately determined, however, health professionals believe that child obesity is on the increase.

The 2002 National Children's Nutrition study surveyed 3275 New Zealand children aged 5 to 14 years from 172 schools throughout the country.

The survey found in relation to food intake that:

- Only about two out of five children met the recommended number of serves of fruit (at least two per day)
- About three out of five children met the recommended number of serves of vegetables (three or more per day).

It found that:

- 69 percent of children had a weight in relation to their height that was within an acceptable range
- 31 percent of children were either overweight or obese

⁸ Hapgood, R., S. Caswell, M. Pledger, K. Bhatta , 2001, *Drinking in New Zealand: National surveys comparison 1995 and 2000*.

⁹ *Regional Report from Youth 2000, 2003*.

¹⁰ *Regional Report from Youth 2000, 2003*.

¹¹ Gambling Problem Helpline: General Information, 2004.

¹² Gambling Helpline, 2005.

- Pacific childrens levels of overweight/obesity were 62 percent, Māori 41 percent and New Zealand European and Others 24 percent.

In relation to activity levels it found that:

- During the week, 73 percent of children watched less than two hours of TV/videos per day and about 60 percent did not play computer or video games
- About 50 percent of children were transported to and from school
- No weekend physical activity was reported by 13 percent of children, and this proportion was highest (23%) in girls aged 11–14 years
- The percentage of children watching more than 20 hours of TV/videos during weekdays increased with age.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is not centrally measured in New Zealand and is therefore not easy to gauge.

SPARC, in their 1997, 1998 and 2000 Sport and Physical Activity Surveys, interviewed a total of 16,500 New Zealanders – 12,500 adults (people aged 18 and over) and 4,000 young people (5-17 year-olds) about their participation in physical activity and sport.

Participants were chosen for the survey at random from 12 regions (covering the 17 regional sports trusts). Data for North Harbour Waitakere has been used for the following findings:

Young people aged 5-17 years in the North Harbour/ Waitakere area appear to be more active than young people nationally. Over two-thirds (71%) of young people (5-17 years) in North Harbour/ Waitakere are active compared with 68 percent of all young New Zealanders.¹³ Close to ninety percent (92%) of Auckland's young people take part in some sport or active leisure. The most popular sport for boys is rugby and netball for girls. Swimming is the most popular active leisure activity for both boys and girls.

Of young people aged 5-17 years in the North Harbour/Waitakere area:

- 71 percent participated in sport and active leisure with family and friends
- 64 percent received coaching
- 34 percent belonged to a club
- 65 percent were interested in doing a new sport.

Sexual Health

Studies suggest that between 10 and 30 percent of young people in New Zealand have had sex by the time they reach 15 years of age. Early sexual experiences are more likely with a background of socio-economic disadvantage, the misuse of alcohol in early adolescence and a history of sexual abuse.*

¹³ Based on data from the 1998/1999 and 2000/2001 SPARC surveys

* Northcote only data not available

- There were 283 births to teen mothers in the Waitemata DHB area between April 2000 - March 2001. The Waitemata DHB teenage pregnancy rate (15-19 year olds) was slightly lower than the New Zealand rate
- More Māori babies, than European and Asian babies were born to 15-19 year old mothers in Waitemata DHB area
- Pacific babies were also more likely than babies of other ethnicities to be born to 15-19 year old mothers.

High rates of sexual diseases among our young people

“Nationwide there are high Chlamydia rates in the 15-24 year age group. This is a concern as many women do not know they have it as they may not have any symptoms. It can, however, affect fertility and increase the risk of ectopic pregnancies later in life. The high rate of teen pregnancies nationwide is another important issue that we need to address.

Many of these pregnancies are unplanned leaving young women with difficult choices. We see lots of young people at Family Planning Clinics but we need to see more. Young people in Northcote need to know that if they are sexually active they need to get sexual health checks. They can access free services at our clinics if they are under 22 years. They can get condoms and contraceptive pills on prescription for just \$3.00. Young people need to know that they can access our services at any age and their visit will be kept confidential. We encourage young people to talk to their parents or a significant adult about their sexual health, however this is not compulsory and we will not breach this confidentiality.”

Family Planning Doctor, Takapuna

Hospitalisations

The most common reasons that children aged 0-14 years in Northcote are hospitalised are:

- Injury.
- Respiratory disease/illnesses.

In the 15-24 age groups, the volume of hospitalisations was lower than in the 0-14 age groups. The leading causes were:

- Injury
- Pregnancy and child birth

Preventable Hospitalisations

Many hospitalisations* are considered to be avoidable or potentially avoidable. Between 1999 and 2002 the five major causes of potentially avoidable hospitalisations in the Waitemata DHB region varied according to the age group of the children.¹⁴

¹⁴ The top five preventable hospitalisations were similar for New Zealand as a whole, however, there were slight changes in the order.

Causes of Preventable Hospitalisations by Age Group July 1999-June 2002

Under 1 year	1-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years
Gastroenteritis	Ear nose and throat infections	Ear nose and throat infections	Road traffic injuries	Road injuries
Respiratory infections	Respiratory infections	Recreation injuries	Cellulitis	Suicide
Other infections	Dental conditions	Dental conditions	Asthma	Cellulitis
Kidney, urinary	Asthma	Asthma	Ear nose and throat infections	Asthma
Cellulitis	Gastroenteritis	Cellulitis	Gastroenteritis	Gastroenteritis

Source: Waitemata District Health Board

Third world diseases in Northcote

“As a rule the health of the Northcote community is good. However Northcote Central does have third world diseases, such as rheumatic fever. Despite efforts to improve access to health care, the people tend not to attend health appointments unless health professionals are invited along to ensure attendance.

The Northcote Central community also tends to get the usual problems of lower-socio-economic communities such as impetigo, nits and scabies. Recently there have been admissions to hospital due to parents not assessing the health care needs of their children quickly enough to prevent complications.”

Public Health Nurse

“One of the main conditions we see in Northcote is scabies. We also see a large number of people being treated for diabetes, high cholesterol and asthma.”

Health Professional

Working together to improve community health

“There are a number of preventable illnesses in the Northcote area, such as respiratory diseases, asthma and allergies. These are associated with household crowding and damp living conditions. We are trying to work more closely with agencies such as Housing New Zealand to improve the living conditions of these families. Housing New Zealand, for example, have blocked the chimneys of some of their houses and this is creating damp living conditions*. A dehumidifier in some of these homes would make a difference.”

Amalgamated Children's Services, Te Puna Hauora

*Note: HNZN advise that 218 houses have been insulated in Northcote over the last 12 months to help reduce condensation and improve heating efficiency. Old fireplaces had efficiency issues; they were dirty, polluting and environmentally unfriendly. Fireplaces were blocked off when heaters were installed at the request of tenants.

Mental Health

Mental health services for children in Northcote are provided by the Waitemata DHB. Marinoto North and Marinoto West clinics deliver services to children with a range of mental health problems including depression, psychosis, anxiety disorders and behavioural disorders. There are also family therapy teams. Children from Northcote also have access to the Intensive Clinical Support Services team which covers the Waitemata DHB Region and provides services for children and young people up to the age of 20.

Of the children seen by Marinoto North in 2002:

- About half the children were under 11 years old
- Most children were male
- Over two-thirds were European
- Around 7 percent were Māori
- Very few Pacific or Asian children were seen by any service.

Services need to be coordinated

“We are seeing some of the long term effects of cannabis use in Northcote. This is often familial and intergenerational. We are having difficulties accessing services for clients who have mental health issues triggered by drugs. Health, mental health services and drug and alcohol services need to coordinate and work together more closely. We know where the tini houses in Northcote are. It is time to close them down.”

Health Professional

Dental Health

In 2004:

- 77 percent of five year old children attending Northcote schools did not have cavities compared with 76 percent of those in the Waitemata Health District
- At Year 8 (age 12-13 years), children in Northcote had, on average, 1.3 decayed missing or filled teeth compared with one filling, on average, amongst children in the Waitemata District Health Board.¹⁵

Dental Health at Age 5 Years and Form 2

Dental Health	Northcote Schools	Waitemata District
% Caries Free 5 year old	77%	76%
Caries (DMFT) Year 8 (Form 2)* ¹⁶	1.3%	1.0%

Source: *Waitemata District Health Board, 2005*

Deaths in Children and Young People

- Between 1996 and 1999 the greatest number of deaths in children on the North Shore occurred in children aged under 1 year old (62.7%).

Infant Mortality

The infant mortality rate for the Waitemata DHB area was lower (5.3 per 1000) than the Auckland (6.0) or New Zealand (6.3) rate. Infant mortality rates were two times higher in Māori infants and one and a half times higher in Pacific infants compared with infants from other ethnic groups.

¹⁵ Note the numbers on the sample are small and the sampling error is high.

¹⁶ DMFT: Average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth.

Deaths in Young People Aged 0-14 Years

Between 1996 and 1999, 67 children and young people aged 0-14 years on the North Shore died. Almost three-quarters (72%) were categorised as having been theoretically potentially avoidable through prevention or earlier health care intervention.¹⁷ Most (62.7%) of the children who died were aged under 1 year.

Of these around one-quarter were deaths of Māori children.

The child mortality rate in Waitemata (55.5 per 100,000) was lower than in Auckland (66.5) or New Zealand (65.9).

Child Deaths in Waitemata DHB by Ethnicity, 1996-1999

Source: Waitemata District Health Board, 2003

Deaths in Young People Aged 15-19 Years

Eighty-eight children aged 15-19 years in the Waitemata DHB area died between 1996 and 1999. Thirty-seven of these young people were from the North Shore.

Two-thirds (64.9%) of the deaths of North Shore young people were classified as having been potentially avoidable either through prevention or earlier health care intervention.

The overall youth mortality rate in Waitemata (75.1 per 100,000) was slightly higher than in Auckland (72.6), but lower than the New Zealand rate (83.8).¹⁸

Discussion Points

1. How do we lift the health status of children and young people in Northcote, especially in those areas experiencing poor health, given that many of the determinants of good health require action by other sectors?
2. How do we best address some of the third world diseases faced by parts of our community?
3. How do we identify youth at risk of poor health outcomes e.g. young Māori or Pacific?
4. How do we support children and young people to make healthy lifestyle choices?
5. How do we provide more support for new mothers and new parents?
6. How do we support health professionals to work with families to continue to improve
7. immunisation rates and Well-Child checks?
8. Housing and health are linked. How do we improve housing and living conditions for families with children and young people?

¹⁷ These are types of deaths that in theory can be avoided. It is based on causes of mortality rather than a study of individual cases.

¹⁸ Note the numbers are small so any comparisons should be treated with caution.

Knowledge and Skill

Northcote has a rich mix of education facilities that cater to the different needs of the community. These facilities are well used by the community especially at the Pre-school and Primary levels. In recent years, Northcote young people have benefited from the development of the nearby AUT university campus.

Key Points

- There are a number of parenting programmes available to Northcote residents
- There are six schools in the Northcote area; three primary schools, one intermediate and two high schools
- The rate of stand downs and suspensions in Northcote schools is higher in Northcote than the North Shore or New Zealand as a whole
- On average, Northcote residents are more highly qualified than New Zealanders as a whole
- There is considerable variation in the qualification levels of those living in Northcote, with those in Tuff Crater, on average, less qualified than those from other parts of Northcote
- The Auckland University of Technology, Akoranga campus is based in Northcote.

Commentary

“How we value and look after our children and young people is an important reflection on the state of our society. It is also a predictor of how we will fare in the future. Healthy child and youth development occurs when young people have the opportunities and support to reach their full potential and they can contribute to New Zealand societies in a way that is valued and respected.”

Sustainable Development Programme of Action, January 2003, page 22

The home environment is a key factor in supporting children and young people to succeed at school. Northcote children and young people come from diverse home environments.

While many are successful at school, there are others living in substandard conditions, dealing with stressful situations at home and finding school life a struggle.

Role models and parental expectations are important factors in how children and young people view school and their career opportunities.

The parents of children and young people in Northcote range from those with no formal qualifications to some who are highly qualified. Attitudes to post secondary education and training are changing, and parents are now more likely to encourage their young people into tertiary training opportunities.

Northcote has a wide range of educational facilities. Each school is unique and there are significant differences in the way the various schools interact with their local community. This is reflected in the level of parental involvement in school activities. There are also significant variations in the way the schools approach their role as educators. Each school has different school rules, different norms and different expectations of students. This has influenced how the schools are perceived by parents.

Young people have said that they want to choose where they go to school but often this is a decision made for them by their parents.

Most children who live in Northcote attend primary school in the wider Birkenhead/Northcote area. This is in strong contrast to what happens at intermediate and secondary level when many local children are sent to schools outside the area.

Migrant and refugee families place a particularly high priority on the education of their young people. Parents from these families are saying that they want feedback from schools and want to be actively involved in all aspects of their children's education.

Preschool

A New Zealand study of early childhood education found that the quality of education makes a lasting contribution to children's competency levels. The quality of teacher support for children's learning and their interaction with children is particularly important.

At age 10, literacy and mathematics scores were affected by children's knowledge and practice of language, use of symbols, and skills, and family resources, before they came to school.¹⁹

- There are over 20 kindergartens, crèches or preschool organisations in the Birkenhead/Beach Haven/Birkdale/Northcote area
- There are eight preschool facilities in the Northcote area. These are located on College Road, Queen Street, Nutsey Ave, Kauri Glen Road, Akoranga Drive and Stafford Drive
- There are two Kohanga Reo and one Pacific Preschool in Northcote.

"The lives of the children here reflect the changes that are happening in society. They live in a unique area and the centre reflects the character of the area. The parents have busy lives and the children have busy, activity filled lives. The children's lives and behaviour can be complicated, but they are just brilliant kids."

Early Childhood Teacher

HIPPY Programme

In addition to preschools education, there is a HIPPY programme in the Northcote area. HIPPY is a 'Home Instruction Programme for Pre-school Youngsters'. Tutors visit parents in their homes and train parents about activities they can do with their children to promote learning.

Having a positive impact on the family

"The families we have on the HIPPY programme in Northcote are really enthusiastic. Parents are keen to help their children become successful learners. There are some families that struggle with continuing/completing the programme with their children as they have to deal with huge issues at home, for example being able to put bread and

¹⁹ Cathy Wylie, Jean Thompson and Cathy Lythe 2001, *Competent children at 10: Families, early education and schools NZCER and Ministry of Education*.

butter on the table. Winter is worse with sickness and the costs of heating their homes putting families under even more pressure. Sometimes this does get in the way of them continuing with the programme. Their children's education ends up slipping off the list.

However for the majority of the families that are involved and complete the programme, the success stories are huge. That's what makes it all worth while. HIPPY has an impact on the whole family - the self esteem of the parents goes up, and to see them taking such pride in the achievements and education of their children is a real buzz, and of course the difference it makes to the children, wanting and keen to learn.

We have parents and tutors that make a huge turn around in their lives. They have enrolled in courses to better their own education they have gone on to find fulltime work, because they now have the confidence in themselves to do better."

HIPPY, Northcote/Beach Haven

Schools

- There are six schools in the Northcote area
- The Ministry of Education uses a decile rating system for school funding purposes
- Each decile contains approximately 10 percent of schools. Schools in decile one have the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Schools in decile ten have the lowest proportions of these students
- The Northcote area has significant differences in the decile ratings of local schools.

School Decile Ratings

School	Decile
Northcote School	9
Onepoto School	1
St Marys School	7
Northcote Intermediate	6
Hato Petera College	2
Northcote College	9

Source: Ministry of Education, 2004

Primary Schools

There are three Primary Schools in Northcote:

Northcote School (Decile 9)

Northcote School serves children of families who live in Northcote as well as a number of those who come from adjoining suburbs. In 2004 there were 437 students, most were Pakeha (70%), the rest were; Pacific (9%), Māori (8%), Chinese (6%).

Onepoto School (Decile 1)

Onepoto School is the only decile 1 school in North Shore City. In 2004 there were 141 students. The students were predominantly Māori (27%) and Tongan (30%).

The remainder were predominantly Samoan (4%) or Asian (13%) and included a number of refugee children.

The percentage of Pacific students has decreased since 1999 and the percentage of Asian students is increasing.

“Onepoto Primary School has a big cultural day once a year. What I have noticed is that it brings people from all over Northcote, Glenfield, Beach Haven and Birkenhead.”

Long Term Resident, Māori

St Mary’s School (Decile 7)

St Mary’s School is a full primary school (primary and intermediate) that services the Catholic parish communities of Northcote, Beach Haven and Glenfield. Only girls are taught at Years 7 and 8 (Intermediate).

In 2004, 427 students attended St Mary’s. The school is ethnically diverse. Almost half the students were NZ European/Pakeha (42%). There was a high percentage of Asian students (21%), along with Māori (5%), Tongan (8%), Samoan (5%), Niuean (1%), and Cook Island students (1%) and students from other ethnic groups (17%).

Intermediate School

Northcote Intermediate (Decile 6)

In 2004 there were 302 students at Northcote Intermediate School. Since 1998, the roll of Northcote Intermediate School has increased by 54 percent. This has been due to increasing numbers of students from local schools enrolling.

Approximately half of the students at Northcote Intermediate are Pakeha (46%), the rest were; Māori (11%), Korean (12%), Tongan (8%) and students from other ethnic groups (18%).

High Schools

Northcote College (Decile 9)

Northcote College is a co-educational secondary school. It has a growing school roll and has a strong international students programme. In 2004 it had 1400 students. Almost two-thirds (65%) were Pakeha, however a high percentage of Chinese (11%) and other Asian students (12%) attend the college.

“Parents should not forget that teenagers are children in adults bodies and therefore, like all children, need clear boundaries, guidance, love and affection and not to be cast adrift to their own ends. There is a danger if parents walk away from their parental responsibilities when kids become teenagers. This is a vital development stage”.

Principal, Northcote College

Hato Petera College (Decile 2)

Hato Petera College is a Māori-Katorika (Māori-Catholic) co-educational school with boarding facilities. In 2004 it had 126 students. All its students are Māori and most subjects are taught in Te Reo Māori (Māori language). Although it is a Catholic College, students from other religious traditions also attend.

Māori Education

Hato Petera College, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Raki Paewhenua, and two Kohanga Reo (Māori language preschool), Nga Tikanga Pono and Nga Whareamaha cater for local Māori. There is also a Whanau Unit at Northcote College.

Māori want access to secondary education that is safe and appropriate to rangatahi to continue their learning in te reo me nga tikanga Māori (language and culture). Some 350 tamariki (children) from kohanga reo (preschool) to year 8 are in language immersion units on the North Shore. Small numbers of whanau (family) travel outside of the North Shore City rohe (district) to access appropriate secondary education. The majority of Year 9 students will attend mainstream units.

Truancy

Participating in education is fundamental to student achievement. The Education Act (1989) requires that parents enrol their children at school and ensure that they attend until aged 16 years.

When students are absent from school there are likely to be a number of reasons. These may relate to the student themselves, to the school, or to home/ family circumstances.

A national truancy survey²⁰ found there was an overall truancy rate of 2.9 percent. Rates across the different school sectors differed - secondary schools experienced a truancy rate of 6.0 percent, primary schools 1.4 percent, and intermediate schools 1.8 percent. The rates for Northcote schools were unavailable.

Bullying

To learn well at school children need to have a safe learning environment. A study of 717 students at secondary schools in North and West Auckland looked at students' perceptions of their schools. Most appeared to believe that school offered them a safe environment, however some reported having been badly affected by bullying and said they had taken time off school as they had felt unsafe.²¹

Those surveyed said:

- They liked school or thought it was OK (males 88%, females 87%)
- The teachers treated them fairly (over 80%)

²⁰ Ministry of Education, National Truancy Survey 2002.

²¹ Auckland Northwest Youth: A profile of their health and wellbeing. Youth 2000, University of Auckland 2003.

- Their parents and caregivers felt that it was important that they did well at school (over 95%)
- They tried hard to do their best at school (males 49.4%, females 58.3%)
- Most students felt safe at school, but a few (males 7.7%, females 2.5%) said they were bullied weekly or more often.²²

“We have all been bullied both physically and verbally. None of us reported it. Nothing would happen if you did. You don’t nark. You just accept it. It is the way it is.”

Youth Group

Suspensions and Stand-downs

Suspensions and stand-downs are used by schools to manage student behaviour. Stand-downs remove a student from a school for a limited period of time. A suspension removes a student from the school until the Board of Trustees decides on the next steps. This may include permanent exclusion from the school.

Stand-downs

- At July 2004, the rate of stand-downs in Northcote was 35 in every 1000 students, compared with 28 in every 1000 nationally
- There were 430 stand-downs in the Northcote area between 2000 and 2004
- In every year between 2000 and 2004 the stand-down rates in Northcote were higher than the rates for North Shore City; however the rates should be treated with caution as the numbers are small.

Suspensions

There were 132 suspensions from Northcote schools between 2000 and 2004. In July 2004 there were 12 suspensions for every 1000 students in Northcote, compared with 8 in North Shore City and 7 nationally.²³

Exclusions

Exclusions are the formal removal of a student aged under 16 from the school. Students are required to enrol elsewhere. There were 26 exclusions in the Northcote area between 2000 and 2004.

“Parents should not defend their children from school discipline systems when the young person is in the wrong.”

Principal Northcote College

²² Auckland Northwest Youth: A profile of their health and wellbeing. Youth 2000, University of Auckland 2003.

²³ Although the rates are established using student populations the data records only the number of cases not the number of students.

Alternative Education

The Ministry of Education provides funding for education programmes for young people, aged 13 and a half to 15 years, who have become alienated from school. The criteria for young people to be placed on an alternative education programme include that the young person has:

- Been out of school for two terms or more
- Multiple exclusions (urban - more than one school, rural plus other factors)
- A history of dropping out of mainstream schooling after being reintegrated
- Dropped out of the Correspondence School after enrolment as an 'At Risk Student'

There are two alternative education facilities in Glenfield and one in Birkenhead which cater for Northcote students. There are no alternative education facilities located in Northcote.

Involving the police

"We would like to get involved within the school at any age when a student is stood down for disruptive behaviour, or is violent in class, throws a chair at a teacher or pulls knives at school or anything of that nature."

Youth Aid – Takapuna Police

Setting standards for alternative education

There is a perception that some alternative education sites are very loose with their discipline of students and also what is actually being taught on site. It appears that the standards of behaviour for alternative education are set at a lower level.

The real question is - if it was my son/daughter going to alternative education would I be happy to send them there?

Alternative education is the last stage before employment. Providers should not just be holding young people until they turn 16. That does not prepare the young people for the transition stage to employment.

Because these young people are the most vulnerable in our society then the people who are looking after them should be the most experienced and highly trained. They need to have the expertise to work with the challenging behaviours and complex needs of these young people."

Community worker

Tertiary Education

There are a number of tertiary education facilities accessible to Northcote students.

- The Auckland University of Technology, Akoranga Campus is located in Northcote. The Akoranga campus is home to the school of Health Sciences including Community Health and Sports Studies, Nursing and Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Psychotherapy and Applied Psychology, and Physiotherapy
- The Massey University is the largest campus on the North Shore

- The University of Auckland Business School is based in Takapuna.

Qualifications

Educational qualifications can influence job choices, earning potential and quality of life. Those with few educational qualifications are more likely to be under employed and earn less than those with formal qualifications.

It is difficult to get an accurate picture of the achievement levels of Northcote young people as so many young people attend school outside the Northcote area. Conversely, many of the children attending Northcote schools are not from Northcote.

At the 2001 Census:

- 38.4 percent of people aged 15 years and over in Northcote had a post-school qualification, compared with 37.6 percent for North Shore City and 32.2 percent for New Zealand as a whole.

Qualifications

	Northcote	North Shore City	New Zealand
No qualification	16.7%	16.3%	27.6%
School	44.9%	46.1%	40.1%
Post-school	38.4%	37.6%	32.2%

Source: Census, 2001

Qualification Levels within Northcote

In 2001:

- One in five people (20%) in Tuff Crater have no formal qualifications, compared with one in eight (12%) in Northcote South.

Source: Census, 2001

Beyond School

“I have noticed a real change in the community. When I first came, pupils and their families did not know what a University was for. No-one here attended University. There is a lot more effort made by parents to educate their kids beyond school now. They work hard and actively encourage their kids to attend AUT and University now.”

Primary School Principal

Community Education

- There are a wide range of community education courses available both in the Northcote area and locally
- The courses range from arts and crafts through to computing, cooking, and languages to workshop technology and boating safety. As the area has a large

population of new immigrants there are a range of English Language (ESOL) courses at a variety of levels.

A pathway to lifelong learning

“Community Education is a pathway to lifelong learning and offers a variety of courses covering areas such as leisure, self-improvement, languages, IT, technology, literacy, numeracy and the arts. Tutors are enthusiasts and often experts in their field and classes are small, friendly and non-threatening. Join a course, enjoy and learn for life!”

Director, Local Community Education provider

Discussion Points

1. Are all the young people in Northcote being given opportunities and support to reach their full potential?
2. There seems to be quite a high number of school children being transported around, and in and out of, Northcote to attend school. What is giving rise to this pattern?
3. How are schools communicating with parents who cannot speak or read English?
4. Have we got good models of how schools and families connect? If so, how can these models be used more widely?
5. What happens to students when they leave school? What percentage of Northcote children go on to AUT, University or work? What happens to the young people who do not do this?
6. What further opportunities are available, particularly for Māori students attending kura kaupapa and alternative education programmes outside the Northcote area?
7. Are suspensions, stand-down and exclusion processes being used well and consistently? What options or support are available for children and young people not in mainstream education?
8. Do all young people feel safe and included at school?
9. What do we know about attendance and absences at Northcote schools?

Paid Work and Economic Standard of Living

Northcote Shopping Centre is now a revitalised and busy social hub where everyone comes to shop and to enjoy the array of ethnic food available. There are more jobs than there are people to fill them.

Key Points

- The median income of residents is lower in Northcote than the North Shore, possibly due to the number of retired older adults
- The median income of those in Tuff Crater is just over half (57%) that of those in Northcote South
- There were 431 residents in Northcote in receipt of an income tested benefit. Of these one-quarter were in receipt of the Domestic Purposes Benefit
- A high percentage of professional employees work in Northcote
- A high number of businesses, particularly in the Northcote shopping centre, are Asian owned
- House prices are increasing. Housing is becoming less affordable in Northcote

- Home ownership rates in Tuff Crater are very low
- Rents are increasing and people from lower socio-economic groups are having to shift out of the area
- There are high levels of household crowding in some parts of Northcote
- Crowding is occurring in state and private rentals as well as privately owned homes.

Commentary

“Employment is a key influence on our income, health, housing, social well-being, family life and leisure. For young people (12 to 24 years) it is an important way to participate in society, attain social status and enjoy a sense of social connectedness. Achieving financial independence is an important mark of adulthood in modern society.”

Ministry of Youth Development

Young people living a few kilometres from each other are growing up in widely diverse situations. Their day to day living experiences are profoundly different depending on where they live in Northcote.

Some children and young people are living in harsh environments where day to day living is difficult and opportunities are very limited. Others are living in very comfortable circumstances in families with high levels of disposal income.

At a time when there are more jobs than there are people available to fill them, unemployment and under-employment continue to feature among some Northcote residents.

There are 281 businesses in Northcote. Many of these are retail businesses. There is a strong demand for business and retail space.

Housing quality and type varies widely from gracious villas to suburban bungalows to 1950s style state housing complexes. Access to affordable housing is becoming a problem throughout Northcote. Families are doubling up in houses and overcrowding is occurring in state, private rentals and privately owned homes. (Feedback from community workers)

Income

At the 2001 Census:

The median income of people in Northcote was \$20,200, compared with \$23,300 for North Shore City and \$18,500 for all of New Zealand.

Median Income within Northcote

In 2001 the median income of those in Tuff Crater was \$11,700 less than the median income of those in Northcote South.

Median Household Income

Source: Census, 2001

Income Tested Benefits

At June 2004:

- There were 431 people on a benefit. This is around 4.6 percent of those in Northcote aged 15 years and over
- Of these almost one quarter (23.2%) were on the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB)
- A further 550 people in the Northcote area were in receipt of an accommodation supplement..

Benefit	Percentage %
DPB	23.2
EMA	17.2
Independent Youth	0.2
Invalids	15.8
Non Beneficiary	12.3
Sickness	12.5
Unemployment	15.3
Unsupported Child	1.9
Widows	1.6
Total	100.0

Source: *Work and income, 2005*

Employment

At the 2001 Census:

- The unemployment rate in Northcote was 7 percent, compared with North Shore City percent for 5.7 and 7.5 percent for all of New Zealand
- The most popular occupational group in Northcote was Professionals (17.2 %). The most popular occupational group in North Shore City was Legislators, Administrators and Managers (17.8 %) and for New Zealand as a whole was Service and Sales Workers (14.8%).

Barriers to Employment

Despite low unemployment levels, some groups in the Northcote community are finding it difficult to get jobs. Migrant and refugee families, in particular, face difficulties finding employment. Both unemployment and underemployment amongst these groups is high.

The following are comments from social service providers who work in the area.

“Poor English language skills, lack of NZ work experience and not having a driver’s licence are the key barriers new settlers face when trying to gain employment.”

“People want to work locally – and preferably close to home. They can also be frightened to leave home as they have no language connection or cultural reference outside it.”

“Refugees may have come from an area where paid work is not the most important thing in their lives. They have come from a lifestyle of subsistence living and may

have been in refugee camps for up to 10 years prior to coming to New Zealand. They have witnessed and may have experienced a lot of trauma. Work does not feature highly in their priorities for life. Even after three or four years there can continue to be a heavy reliance on benefits, even if proficiency in English language ability has been achieved.”

“This is a very vibrant employment market with lots of work opportunities. There is more employment than people available. Over the past 12 months employers have become more open to employing people with English as a second language, or those from other ethnicities.”

“We see migrants going from one training course to another – not resulting in paid employment.”

“It is very hard to keep youth in employment. We can place them easily but they do not tend to stay long term – even with In-Work Support Programmes. There is a lack of motivation to turn up for work everyday. This results in a revolving door situation. Role models at home are a factor.”

“There are a lot of small employers e.g. in retail. Northcote does not have a big industrial area. There is a small pocket of industrial firms on the border of Northcote and Birkenhead, however Albany is the biggest employment area. People prefer to work on the North Shore and dislike going over the bridge. There is an early morning bus services that goes direct to Albany. During the day you often need to go via the Takapuna hub.”

Business

In 2002, there were 281 business locations (geographic units) in Northcote compared with 18,487 in North Shore City and 309,749 for all of New Zealand.

Surviving the challenge of new developments

“The Northcote shopping centre is a vibrant, multicultural centre. In the early to mid 1990s it had the standard retail mix of most suburban shopping centres; however it lost two of its three banks along with larger franchises such as Levenes and Mitre 10. At the same time, Auckland was undergoing demographic changes with an increasing Asian population. The establishment of several key Asian shops in Northcote attracted other Asian shops and businesses to the area. Shops and businesses in the Northcote Shopping Centre are now predominantly Asian owned. There is a real demand for business and retail space, but little turnover.

The Northcote shopping centre is unique as it is not on an arterial route. Most businesses appear to be doing fairly well. The biggest challenge is surviving the new developments springing up on the North Shore which could potentially erode our customer base.”

Business Manager

The changing face of the Northcote Shopping Centre

“We moved here in the late 1980’s from Wellington. The reason we chose North Shore was that it was close to the beaches, good schooling, and we had family already living there. When we first arrived there were hardly any Chinese shops in

Northcote and we had to go all the way to Hobson Street to get our Chinese groceries.

In the 1990's there were not many people going to the Northcote Shopping Centre and the shops started to close down. There was a strong Asian community on the North Shore and they took the opportunity to set up businesses in the Town Centre.

Now the Northcote Shopping Centre has everything there in walking distance. A lot of Asian people moved into the houses around Northcote because of the shopping opportunities. All kinds of Asian activities happen there.

Every time I go, I think the mixture is there. The food hall has 12-15 different ethnicities there. Everyone can get the best deal for Chinese groceries. Not just Asian, but I see European, Māori and Pacific people all enjoying the change as well. Whenever there is a traditional festival such as Chinese New Year, not just the Asians turn up, but European, Pacific and Māori as well."

Long Term Resident, Vietnamese

"Without the Chinese, the Northcote Shopping Centre would have closed down."

Northcote Resident, Vietnamese

Housing

Households

At the 2001 Census:

- There were 4,209 households in Northcote
- The average household size in Northcote was 2.6 people, compared with 2.7 for North Shore City and 2.7 for all of New Zealand
- 60.3 percent of dwellings in Northcote were owned with or without a mortgage, compared with 69.1 percent for North Shore City and 67.8 percent for all of New Zealand
- Home ownership was lowest in Tuff Crater with fewer than half of the dwellings (47.8%) owned.

Housing Affordability

Houses in the Northcote area are becoming less affordable. Median house prices in the Birkenhead Northcote area increased from \$364,000 in May 2004 to \$423,000 in May 2005. This is an increase of 16 percent.

According to local housing workers, rents in Northcote are also becoming less affordable for some families.

In 2001, rents were lowest in Tuff Crater.

High demand and rental prices

"The demand for houses in the Northcote catchment area is high, due to its proximity to the Harbour Bridge. It is particularly popular with Asian families. Although Asian immigration has fallen in the past year and the demand has dropped slightly, prices have remained firm due to the popularity of the area.

The rental market is, in part, made up of people who are trying to buy in Northcote. The quality of rental houses has improved markedly over the past seven years. The standard of investors is good. Many renters who were paying lower rents are now being priced out of the market and have been forced to move to other areas.”

Barfoot and Thompson

Government Provision of Housing

The Government provides subsidised housing to the Northcote area through the Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC). HNZC properties make up a large proportion of the total Tuff Crater housing stock. In some parts the proportion is almost 100 percent. Low income HNZC tenants who are eligible for the income related rent (IRR) subsidy, pay rent at no more than 25 percent of their total household income (up to a certain threshold). At December 2004 there were 317 HNZC properties in Northcote.²⁴

The North Shore City Council also provides asset tested rental accommodation for older adults in Northcote. At May 2005 there were;

- 8 double units for couples (cost \$95.25 per week)
- 39 bedsit units with communal laundries (cost \$50.80 per week)

Household Crowding

Crowding can be an indicator of housing affordability. It can also reflect different cultural attitudes towards the number of people living in households.

Crowded households are considered houses that are short two or more bedrooms.²⁵ Living in crowded situations can contribute to poor health outcomes such as respiratory and infectious diseases, e.g. meningococcal disease.

At the 2001 Census there were higher levels of household crowding in Northcote than on the North Shore or New Zealand as a whole. Household crowding was highest in Tuff Crater and parts of Monarch Park.

“I would like to know what percentage of our kids live in an overcrowded home situation. It impacts on their ability to do homework”.

Secondary School Principal

Household pressures

“I see a lot of frustration. People want to know how to help themselves. They want action. The majority of overcrowding issues appear to be mainly cultural. People from the same cultures and who speak the same language are doubling up in houses occupied by families with similar backgrounds. And some may have no actual family ties. This is similar to what happened in South and Central Auckland (1970s and 1980s) for Pacific immigrants. It puts a lot of pressure on the original household.

²⁴ There are also 21 garages owned by HNZC in Northcote.

²⁵ Using the Australian Bureau Index which allocates a specific bedroom to each couple, each pair of children under 5 years, each pair of adolescents the same sex aged 10-18 and any person 18 years or over.

There are no homes to put them in, or at least not suitable for their needs. There are quite diverse cultures here and this brings diverse standards and expectations and this causes friction usually with the general New Zealand raised locals.

Cultural awareness workshops may prove beneficial in assisting frontline staff of agencies and give them insight to bridging different perspectives.”

Community Worker

A Profile of a Current Project

The Northcote Central Project

Residents and businesses in Northcote Central, Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) and North Shore City Council are currently working together on the Northcote Central Project. This long term project aims to help make Northcote Central a great place to work, live and play. The focus is on the community and what the area needs and what needs to change in the future. The project will take seven to ten years to implement.

Through community consultations, the project partners have already agreed on a concept plan and identified outcomes important to the Northcote community and its future. These include: a strong community feeling, clean, safe and attractive environment, more usable open spaces, improved facilities for walking, cycling and public transport, more intensive housing near the town centre, a busy and pleasant town centre, and training/employment opportunities.

The community is represented by the Northcote Central Development Group Trust. This is a charitable organisation whose members are nominated by the community. The aim of the Trust is to make the project happen and to get the best results for Northcote Central.

Northcote Central Community Renewal Project

HNZC's Northcote Community Renewal Project is closely aligned to the Northcote Central Project. It is working with the community and other agencies to improve social housing and to develop the area* so that it better meets the needs of local residents. Over the coming year, the project will focus on increasing safety, improving the physical environment, and supporting diversity in the community.

The Northcote Community Renewal Project has set up a project office, and following extensive resident engagement, implemented extensive fencing and landscape upgrades based on “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” principles. The majority of HNZC houses have recently been insulated with energy efficient retrofits.

Two rounds of consultation with the community and Northcote Central Project Partners have resulted in a Northcote Concept Plan, ‘the future look of Northcote Central’. Community and stakeholders have requested:

- a range of house types that meet the different and changing needs of the community
- that any increase in the number of dwellings be socially, economically and physically sustainable, acceptable and reasonable

- better access for everyone to well-managed existing or purpose-built facilities for the community, particularly youth
- a strong sense of community ownership and pride in the area

Discussion Points

1. How do we improve the transition from school to work, particularly for young people who have no positive role models and lack motivation?
2. How do we grow the number of locally available trade training opportunities for our young people?
3. How do we open up opportunities for migrants and refugees to gain NZ work experience and to use the qualifications they have?
4. How sustainable are the small and medium businesses in Northcote?
5. What do we need to do to ensure healthy, affordable housing options continue to be available throughout Northcote in the future?
6. Which families are migrating out of Northcote? Do we know why?

Civil and Political Rights

Northcote community wants to cherish and celebrate its young people and to provide for young people to work, play and stay on the North Shore. (LTCCP²⁶ consultations, June 2005)

Key Points

- Although children and young people cannot vote until the age of 18 there are other ways of engaging them in the political process
- Children and young people now have the opportunity to take part in decision making processes through District Health Boards and Councils through their Community Outcomes and Strategic Plan consultations
- Young people aged 18 years and over can also stand for election to the local Community Board, Council or District Health Board.

Commentary

The enjoyment of civil and political rights is crucial to people's ability to participate in society, make choices about their lives, and live with dignity. Their identity, sense of belonging and their ability to shape their environment depend on these rights.

Young people in Northcote, aged 18 years and over, have the right to vote in DHB, local body and national elections. However, children and young people can also take part in the consultative processes now required of Councils, DHBs and undertaken by a number of agencies.

This Northcote Child and Youth Development Project is an example of a project that is seeking to engage the voices of children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard.

²⁶ LTCCP – Long Term Council Community Plan.

In addition to political rights, children and young people have civil rights, such as the right to be free from discrimination. In a community such as Northcote, where there is considerable ethnic diversity, this is particularly important.

Elections

North Shore City Council Elections

Voting in a council election is a way that the residents of Northcote can influence the delivery of services to their local community.

The voter turnout in Northcote Birkenhead in 2004 was:

- Lower than the turnout for the North Shore
- Lower than the turnout for the 2001 elections.

Waitemata District Health Board Elections

At the 2004 elections there were 317,361 people eligible to vote. Of these:

- 107,604 (34%) voting papers were returned
- 98,119 (31%) of the votes were valid

Source: Waitemata DHB, 2005

Consultation

Over the past few years there have been increasing requirements on government agencies, DHBs and Councils to consult with their local community before embarking on projects or plans that will affect them. This is a process that enables children and young people under the age of 18 the opportunity to raise issues with these bodies in a more formal way.

North Shore City Council

New legislation (Local Government Act 2002) means that all local authorities around New Zealand are working with their communities to develop a long-term plan that looks at what the community wants in the city and how together this can be achieved, i.e. the LTCCP.

In 2005 Northcote residents, along with everyone that lives or works in North Shore City, have been invited to have a say on how the area develops over time and have been asked for their ideas for North Shore's future.

Community Outcomes and Youth

The emerging themes from engaging with youth as part of the North Shore Community Outcomes consultation process²⁷ are that the community:

²⁷ Part of the Long Term Council Community Plan.

- Wants our young people to be cherished, celebrated and given a place in our community
- Wants an environment that provides for young people to work, play and stay on the North Shore.

In addition:

- There is a sense that young people are leaving the Shore for employment and social reasons
- There is a concern that young people may not be able to buy property on the North Shore
- There is significant support for youth festivals, concerts, and sporting and recreation events
- There is a view that North Shore does not provide enough opportunities for young people and more support is sought for youth destinations, music and arts.

Youth in Action

Paula Gillon
(Councillor 2001- 2004)

At the age of 18, Paula was elected to the North Shore City Council (2001-2004) and both Birkenhead and Glenfield Community Boards. She was a member of several committees, including the North Shore City Council's Strategy and Finance Committee, the Community Services and Parks Committee, plus the North Shore Youth Council and Birkenhead/Northcote Youth Forum of which she was a founding member.

She also served on the Auckland War Memorial and Museum and MOTAT Electoral College and the North Shore City Council Civil Defence committee.

Since leaving North Shore City local body politics, Paula has graduated with a BA double major in English and politics from Auckland University; and is currently working in political communications based in London.

Community Boards

North Shore City has six boards, which provide a direct link between the community and the Council. Northcote is in the Harbour Ward administered by the Birkenhead/Northcote Community Board.

The role of the Community Board is to:

- Represent and act as an advocate for the interests of its community
- Consider and report on all matters referred to it by Council, or any matters of interest or concern to the community board
- Maintain an overview of services provided by Council within the community
- Prepare an annual submission to Council for expenditure in the community
- Communicate with community organisations and special interest groups within the community
- Undertake any other responsibilities that are delegated to it by Council.

Waitemata DHB

In 2005, Northcote residents, along with others from the DHB area, are being asked to comment on the Waitemata Strategic Plan. This sets the strategic health delivery priorities for the future.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently from another person in the same or similar circumstances.

It can be direct or indirect.

Freedom from discrimination is a fundamental civil right. The Human Rights Act set out a number of prohibited grounds and areas of public life that make discrimination unlawful in New Zealand. Discrimination is unlawful if it occurs in one of those grounds, such as ethnicity and in one of the prohibited areas of public life, such as housing or employment. Other forms of discrimination such as racial harassment, are also unlawful.

In New Zealand in January 2003, more than three quarters of survey respondents (79%) thought that Asian people were subject to a great deal or some discrimination, the highest proportion for any group. This was followed by recent immigrants (77%) and refugees (72%).

Perceived discrimination against these groups has increased since December 2001, from 73 percent for Asians, and from 68 percent for recent immigrants and refugees.²⁸

Proportion (%) of survey respondents who perceived selected groups as being subject to a great deal or some discrimination, December 2000 - January 2003

Group	Dec 2000	Dec 2001	Jan 2003
Asians	73	73	79
Recent Immigrants		68	77
Refugees		68	72
People on welfare	75	70	68
People who are overweight	72	65	65
Pacific Peoples	71	65	65
Gays and lesbians	74	65	61
Māori	70	62	57
People with disabilities	61	55	53
Older people	53	48	49
Women	50	44	41

Source: Human Rights Commission/UMR Research, 2003

²⁸ These results do not measure actual levels of discrimination against groups of people.

Discussion Points

1. What do we need to do to improve the levels of engagement in the consultation and election processes within Northcote?
2. What is the cost of not consulting or engaging with the Northcote community?
3. Communities are being asked to engage with agencies and the government sector. How do we turn consultation into action?
4. How can we best engage all the children and young people of Northcote in this project?
5. Northcote is a diverse community with large numbers of new migrants and refugees. Are Northcote residents experiencing discrimination?

Leisure and Recreation

Northcote is proud of its bush walks, trails and harbourside and coastal features. These are all well used. A wide range of sporting interests and hobbies are also catered for, with over 50 clubs and activities operating in or near to Northcote.

Key Points

- Parents/caregivers need a car to access preschool activities and facilities
- There are a large number of small leisure and cultural groups operating in the Northcote and surrounding area
- Many sport groups are active in the Birkenhead/Northcote Harbour Ward area, yet few are located in the immediate Northcote area. Northcote residents need access to a car or public transport to be able to participate. Cost is also a factor
- The Northcote area is very hilly making it difficult for some residents, such as older adults, and the young, to walk far
- There are 89 parks and reserves in the Birkenhead/Northcote Harbour Ward.

Commentary

Information about the leisure activities, clubs and organisations is freely available.

Young people do not seem to use local community facilities, reserves and parks. They prefer to do things with their friends, such as taking part in sports, socialising (eating out), or watching TV, videos or DVDs.

Public transport is limited and young people find it difficult to move around the Birkenhead/Northcote area independently. Safety concerns mean parents are less likely to encourage their children to walk or bike to and from leisure activities. Children and young people often rely on their caregivers or family friends to take them.

Young people have said that they want a space of their own and places where they can go to meet up with their friends, rather than structured activities organised by adults. (Feedback from youth in the community)

Sport and Leisure

In the Birkenhead/Northcote area there are some 50 sporting clubs or teams. Of these, 11 are located in Northcote or represent Northcote. Four of these are located in Little Shoal Bay.

Official sporting clubs include; Rugby League, Yachting, Bowling, Tennis, Football and Cricket.

Leisure activities take place at several leisure centres. AUT Sport and Recreation and the Northcote Birkenhead Rugby Sports Club are both located in the Northcote area, along with the YMCA. Other centres nearby include the Birkenhead Leisure Centre, the Beach Haven Sports Centre and the Birkenhead War Memorial.

These centres provide a wide range of activities and sport teams. These include; soccer, aerobics, Tai Chi, badminton, basketball, a rifle club, rugby league, table tennis, dance, volleyball, and Tae Kwon Do.

“Places that are in walking distance from the Shopping Centre should be considered in the future.”

Community worker

Leisure

In 2004, residents in the Harbour Ward were asked for the three main things that they do in their spare time. For 15-24 year olds, socialising with friends, taking part in sports with friends and watching TV, video and DVDs were the most popular activities.

Activity	Young people %
Socialising with friends in cafes, bars etc /visiting friends/eating out	51.4
Taking part in sports or other physical activity with friends or on your own (fishing, walking, golf etc.)	34.3
Watching TV/videos/DVDs	31.4
Taking part in sports or other physical activity with an organised club (fishing, walking, golf etc.)	25.7
Surfing the net/computer activities	20.0
Taking part in sports or other physical activity (including walking, swimming, golf, fishing etc)	14.3
Attending theatre, concerts or going to see films	11.4
Reading	11.4
Creative activity such as arts, crafts, music/sewing	11.4
Shopping or window shopping	5.7
Home entertaining/talking to friends on the phone	5.7
Family or child focused activities	5.7
Club/group membership	2.9
Attending community education / evening classes	<1
Church or religious activities	<1

Source: *Quality of Life Survey, 2004*²⁹

The main barriers to participating in leisure activities were that the respondents were too busy, or that the activities were too far away.

²⁹ Data from Quality of Life Residents' Survey, 2004.

Young people missing out on sports

“Our students are pretty talented when it comes to sport. They won everything at the local North Harbour School competition and are actively involved in school sports activities. But not many go to team sports outside of school. Most of them drop out at about intermediate as their families cannot afford the sports club fees.

We also have a lot of musically talented young people, but not a lot tend to go to Saturday music classes outside of school. Most families here cannot afford the fees.

Lots of parents work long hours to support their families. They have no time to take their kids to activities outside of school hours. One parent might be working night shift and there is only one car or no car. The combination of the costs of being involved in after school activities, the difficulty getting there and not having adults available to go means it just doesn't happen. It's a shame because the young people certainly have the talent.”

Primary School Principal

Culture and Arts

There are 15 churches in Birkenhead/Northcote area. Of these seven are located in the wider Northcote area. These churches are used by a variety of religions, cultures and organisations.

Some of the organisations that use the churches include; Age Concern, Project K, Girls Brigade, the Onewa Arts Group, the NZ Chinese Youth, Indoor Bowls, Family Fellowship, and a Mother and Toddler group.

Community centres and halls include; the Northcote Citizen Centre and Community House, the Northart Community Arts Centre, the Freemasons Lodge, the Senior Citizens Northcote Point Club, the Lindisfarne Hall and the Northcote War Memorial Hall.

The Northcote Community Centre normally hosts the Early Childhood Centre, the Community Wellbeing Project, the Aged Project, Whanau Support Services and the Youth Project. It also caters to over 15 organisations that operate in the area.

Awataha Marae is regarded as a cultural centre for the Māori community.

We need a pool

“A local swimming pool would be good. The Primary School and Intermediate School do not have swimming pools. Lots of kids cannot swim. They do not go to the beaches because of transport and cost issues. A popular place is the Northcote Library. It is well resourced and well used. I am not sure that it isn't also used as a babysitting place in the school holidays as there are no other alternatives.”

Primary School Principal

Children's Activities and Clubs

There are a range of children's clubs and activities in the Northcote and surrounding areas.

Skate parks are located at Stafford Park in Northcote and at the Birkenhead War Memorial Park. There is the Birkenhead Sea Scouts located at Little Shoal Bay, Northcote Point.

Swimming activities are either at the Birkenhead Leisure Centre or at the Helen School for Swimming.

AUT Sport and Recreation hold Kidzone, junior basketball for those aged under 21 years.

There is no data on the actual number of clubs catering to children and young people's sports, but many of the clubs appear to run junior and children programmes alongside their adult programmes.

Young people know what they want

"We need more stuff for young kids in the area. More activities for kids to do."

Tongan male 17 yrs

"We need a space to call our own. We need a space to hang out and meet. We want a bit of freedom. Our parents want us to be supervised and structured."

Youth Group (Tongan, Samoan, Pakeha, Chinese, Māori aged 13 – 20 years)

"We need a skateboard park."

Youth Group

Activities for Pre-School Children

Plunket offers activities at various clinics around the area. Only one is held in Northcote. The others are nearby in Beach Haven, Glenfield, Highbury, Bayview.

Families in Parks and The Shore Sounds are held every summer. These are free fun events for the family and always well attended. There are some great places in the area to take children but they require transport. These include the Beach Haven Wharf where children can catch sprats, and the playground at Little Shoal Bay. Children can feed the ducks at the Chelsea Sugar Refinery or at Onepoto Domain.

There are coastal walks from Shepherd's Park, coming out at Paragon Ave or Kauri Park Domain. The local libraries host story times for children at various times at the Birkenhead, East Coast Bays, Glenfield, and Northcote libraries. Some sessions are in Mandarin. The Glenfield Community Toy Library can be found on Akoranga Drive, Northcote.

Discussion Points

1. Are the young people's leisure and recreation needs being adequately catered for? How do young people make their preferences known?
2. Do transport problems impact on residents' take-up of leisure and cultural activities?
3. How do we support all children and young people, regardless of their home situation, to have safe access to the leisure options of their choice?
4. Are our facilities and leisure activities keeping pace with the changing needs and expectations of the community?

5. Are the needs of the different age groups, youth cultures and ethnicities being separately considered and catered for?
6. Are there opportunities for young people to interact with each other in the community?
7. Are there suitable places near home for children to play?

Physical Environment

Northcote is an attractive place to live, and has many ecologically important areas. Tuff Crater is a landmark which is well loved by children and old alike.

Key Points

- Air and water quality on the North Shore is comparable or better than other cities in the region, and New Zealand as a whole
- Northcote has a range of areas that are ecologically important and need protection
- Recreational areas are in close proximity to where people in Northcote live
- Most children and young people feel that they have easy access to greenspace in Northcote
- Note: Much of the environmental data is for the whole of North Shore as information was unavailable at a more local level.

Commentary

Many of the big environmental issues for New Zealand in the first decade of the 21st century are also economic and public health issues. More sustainable use of water, managing marine resources, reducing waste, and improving our energy efficiency are all essential for creating wealth and quality of life as well as for environmental sustainability. However, the decline of our unique plants, animals and ecosystems is one of New Zealand's most important environmental issues.

New Zealand's low population and limited industrial base means that our environmental issues are generally less severe than those in many other industrialised countries. However, we need to make progress with these issues if New Zealanders are to have the healthy environment and quality of life they want.

"If we don't reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activity, New Zealand is likely to experience more frequent droughts and floods (with drier conditions in the east and wetter conditions in the west), rising sea levels, changing rainfall patterns and increasing temperatures in some regions. This may impact on our native ecosystems, industries, infrastructure, health, biosecurity and economy."
Ministry for the Environment

Our children and young people in Northcote are living in an environment which seems to be relatively clean and green when compared with other areas of Auckland.

Natural Features

Northcote has a wide range of coastal areas, parks and reserves. In addition to providing recreational opportunities and making Northcote a more attractive place to live, many of these areas are 'ecologically' important.

These parks and scenic bush reserves feature a wide variety of landscapes, from native Kauri forest to mangrove-filled wetlands. There are great examples of coastal plant species and areas of native re-vegetation thrive alongside mature forest.

The native vegetation, mangroves, salt marshes, shell banks and water in Northcote provide an important habitat for birds, fish, skinks and gekos.

- Shoal Bay is a significant area for coastal birds, including oyster catchers and Caspian terns. The shell banks provide a breeding and nesting area for the New Zealand dotterel
- Onepoto and Tank farm are significant examples of broadleaf forest. These are amongst the only examples of this type of forest left on the North Shore
- Northcote Point has a continuous strip of pohutakawa along both coastal edges
- Smith's Bush is a significant area of bush protected by the District Plan.

"I like all the green space and the tennis courts, and the bush in the Northcote area."
Youth Group

Onepoto Basin and Tank Farm

Onepoto Basin and Tank Farm are craters formed by volcanic eruptions 30,000 years ago. They are widely used for recreation.

These areas provide a home for a wider range of birds including; pukeko, white-faced herons, black-billed gulls, red-billed gulls, shags, swallows, fantails, kingfishers, terns, tui, pigeons, ducks, grey warblers and shining cuckoos.

Environmental Monitoring

Air Quality

North Shore air quality compares favourably to that of air quality across the urban region, particularly with respect to Auckland City. Most North Shore residents (72%) did not think air pollution was much of a problem.

- From 1997 to 2001, North Shore exceeded the air quality guidelines on three days per year
- Carbon monoxide levels are low. From 1997 to 2001, North Shore
- 1-hour average CO level was 10.2 milligrams per cubic metre. Ministry for the Environment guidelines are set at 30 milligrams per cubic metre.
- The main source of Nitrogen dioxide in urban environments is motor vehicle emissions. In 2001 North Shore recorded a 24-hour average of 53 micrograms per cubic metre. Ministry for the Environment guidelines are set at a maximum of 100 micrograms per cubic metre.

Beach and Stream/Lake Water Quality

Beach and stream/lake water quality is measured to ensure that the water is safe for human recreational use. High levels of bacteria can directly impact on health and wellbeing. Many North Shore residents are concerned about water pollution. In 2002 half (51%) considered it a problem.

North Shore City tests water quality at 32 of the city's main swimming areas on a weekly basis over summer.

- Tests in April 2005 showed that all sites were considered safe under Ministry of Health guidelines
- North Shore City Council has instigated 'Project Care' which aims to improve beach water quality and reduce the number of sewer overflows.

Drinking Water Quality

Clean water is essential to life. Groundwater rivers and other natural sources for urban water supply and stormwater/wastewater run-off can affect urban water quality, as can the methods of water treatment used and the condition of the water reticulation network.

North Shore has been adjusting their water supply sources and plant during 2002/03.

- Once the new arrangements have been running effectively for over two years, it is expected that they will return to their previous 'A' grading. This means that the public health water quality is satisfactory with a low level of risk
- North Shore complies with E.coli testing procedures. There has been no presence in tap water.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

Waste needs to be managed effectively. North Shore City is comparable with other cities in New Zealand on both waste reduction and waste disposal services. North Shore City:

- Has kerbside collection for recyclables
- Uses construction and demolition waste
- Has a polluter pays policy
- Collects hazardous waste, and has leachate and gas collection systems at landfills
- Has weekly domestic waste collections and annual inorganic collections
- Has a well-established environmental education programme in schools.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity broadly relates to the variety of plants, insects, fish, birds and animals.

North Shore City:

- Collects information on biodiversity
- Is putting in place policies to prevent further loss of biodiversity.

“ There are many protected nature reserves in the city with extensive stands of native and regenerating bush. Pest and weed control programmes are implemented effectively and the city has a marine reserve.”

North Shore City Council

Discussion Points

1. Do we really know what long term damage is being caused to our immediate environment?
2. What will be the effect of climate change on Northcote?
3. Do we understand what we need to do in order to sustain the Northcote environment into the future?
4. How do we encourage children and young people to learn more about waste, energy use and how our daily decisions are affecting the climate?

Safety

There is a willingness to work together in Northcote and to address community problems. The approach to keeping on top of graffiti in Northcote over the past fifteen years is a perfect example of how this can work. Groups are keen to pull together to resolve issues.

Key Points

- There were 85 notifications to Child Youth and Family in 2004. Most placements are within Northcote
- In addition, there are many grandparents caring for grandchildren fulltime
- The leading cause of hospitalisations from injury are falls
- The cause of hospitalisations varies with the age of the child
- Self harm is a significant cause of hospitalisation in the 20-24 year age group in Northcote
- Family violence is a key issue in Northcote.

Commentary

The safety of children and young people is a key component of their wellbeing. Protecting the physical and psychological health of their environment is an important step in enabling children and young people to reach their full potential.

Family violence is a significant social issue in Northcote. Family violence affects families from all cultures, classes, backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances. Violence directly affects wellbeing, is devastating for those affected, and carries significant social and economic costs to society as a whole.

Binge drinking, drug related crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour combined with the growing level of societal violence generally, are cause for concern in all communities throughout New Zealand. There has been some concern expressed by those in the Northcote community about these issues; in particular in relation to drug houses and young people drinking. (Feedback from community)

There is a need to place greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention strategies in relation to family violence and youth offending.

Child Youth and Family Notifications

Care and protection notifications relate to issues such as child abuse, neglect, children left home alone and the ill treatment of children.

There were 85 notifications to Child Youth and Family relating to children from the Northcote area, in the year ending June 30, 2004³⁰. Over one-third of notifications (38.8%) were in the 10-14 year age group.

“Northcote is quite rich in some resources. Children from Northcote often do not have to go out of the area if they do go into care.”

Social Services Manager

Grandparents having to raise Grandchildren

“There are large numbers of grandparents in Northcote raising their grandchildren on a fulltime basis. This is because the children were victims of violence, abuse or neglect, there was substance abuse at home, or the birth parents were struggling with mental illness and unable to care for their children.

At this time of their lives these grandparents are supposed to be thinking of retirement, instead they are dealing with traumatised children, who may have behavioural problems due to the trauma and difficulties that they have faced. We all know that it takes a village to raise a child, yet these grandparents often have very little support as they are not part of the ‘parenting’ community, they do not belong to Plunket or coffee groups, and their friends do not have young children, thus this plunges them into isolation.”

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Charitable Trust

Unintentional Injuries

Nationally, unintentional injuries exceed intentional injuries as a cause of death and hospitalisations for children and young people.

There were 275 hospitalisations as a result of unintentional injuries to children and young people aged 0-24 in the Northcote area in the years 1999-2003.³¹

Intentional Injuries

In 1999-2003, 38 children and young people from Northcote were hospitalised by injuries intentionally inflicted. The highest percentage of those hospitalised were in the 20-24 age group.³²

Leading Cause of Injury

The leading cause of hospitalisations in Northcote was falls. A high percentage of children and young people were hospitalised from road vehicle accidents.

³⁰ Note, notifications are not recorded by abuse type. Abuse types are recorded only after the assessments.

³¹ Northcote South, Tuff Crater, Birkenhead East and Ocean View.

³² Injury Prevention Research Unit, 2005.

Hospitalisations of Northcote children and young people, 0-24 years, by cause of injury 1999-2003

Source: ACC, 2005

Comparison of injury hospitalisation by age and cause of injury from 1999-2003

The cause of injury varied according to the age of the child; however the leading cause of hospitalisations in every age group was falls.

The next main causes of hospitalisations (excluding other) were:

- Lacerations and burns for 0-4 year olds
- Injuries from being struck by an object in 5-9, 10-14, 15-19 year olds
- Self-inflicted injuries in 20-24 year olds.

Looking after each other and ourselves

"We have to look at the different age groups and the issues affecting them. For young people the issues are motor vehicle accidents, suicide and suicidal behaviour. For the younger ones it is falls.

We need to think of creative ways of changing the culture of young people rather than accepting all these injuries have to happen. We need to learn about looking after each other and ourselves as well as having a good time.

As a community we need to manage injury risks while still enjoying life. We need to build a safety culture and support this by the environments we provide".

Coordinator, Shore Safe

Crime

Graffiti removal van

Youth Crime

In March 2003 to March 2005, 326 children and young people in the Northcote area came into contact with the Youth Aid section of Police. A total of 834 offences were recorded.

Offences included:

- Shop lifting
- Burglary
- Truancy
- Disorderly behaviour
- Wilful damage
- Assault (and related offences)
- Drug related offences
- Trespass

Police want to work with the schools

We would like more interaction with youth offenders at an earlier stage. For example we would like to work in schools and be involved when they first start coming to notice and exhibiting disruptive behaviour. We want to get involved with 10 and 11 year olds before behavioural patterns become set. Currently we get involved with 14-16 year olds who already have a 3 year history of violent behaviour all of which has been dealt with within the schools. This causes a problem as we do not know anything about this existing history and so when the young person comes to our notice we deal with them as if this is their first offence.”

Youth Aid – Takapuna Police

Reporting crime

“I have worked in Northcote for about 3 years. At first the Chinese Community (the elderly) actually did not communicate very well with the local community. If they came across any problem they would be patient and tolerant. That was until about 18 months ago when they could not tolerate it anymore. They had been abused and assaulted by some of the local young people.

They put their problem forward to the local media, the Council and to the NZ Herald. There was a quick response at that time. The view was that there was a lot of racial discrimination and that the Police did not care about their problems.

What we found was that the Chinese community did not know the procedure to report their complaints to the Police. Police developed a service to help people to report complaints in their own languages. Once the problems were reported to the Police, the Police investigated the cases. The problem was found to be limited to some naughty young people who have now moved away.

The members of the Chinese community now feel safer and have started to know how to seek help. They found that the Chinese volunteers’ service was very useful in assisting them in reporting crime. The Chinese community hopes that police can continuously tackle the crime problem as there are still many robbery and theft crimes in the region.”

Youth worker, Chinese community

Drugs and Alcohol

There is little information about the incidence of drug and alcohol use in relation to children and young people in Northcote. Various community workers and residents have expressed concern about these issues.

Drug dealing

“There are a few families who are damaging the spirit of Northcote by allowing their homes to become tiny houses or in other words drug selling homes. These drug dealers have allowed outsiders to come in to Northcote and join their ways of living. These drug dealers tend to hang about the streets everyday and night and have unfortunately influenced some of the youth to join them in selling drugs. As well as selling drugs these people also illegally use their cars to speed around the streets and make loud noises. They risk their lives as they wear down the tyres on their cars by skidding on the roads.”

Tongan Resident

Alcohol

“Alcohol is a factor in youth offending but it is not always a factor.”
Youth Aid – Takapuna Police

Violent Crime

Family Violence

Family violence is an issue for some families in Northcote. Family violence does not have to be directed against children to affect their wellbeing. Children and young people raised in violence, even if it is not directed towards them, can suffer long term, and in some cases permanent harm.

Sons now assaulting their mothers

“The age old issue of domestic violence continues to plague Northcote. Safer Families, CYF and Police are working closely together on domestic violence cases. Northcote along with the rest of North Shore will be part of a domestic violence study. We often use interpreters.

An increasing concern is the incidence of teenage sons assaulting their mothers. They have observed domestic violence as they have been growing up and see how those role models in their lives treat women.”
Safer Family Violence Prevention Network, 2005

“I would like to know what percentage of our kids come from violent homes. I would be interested to know that. It would tell us something about what is going on for the kids.”
Secondary School Principal

Family Violence Advocacy sees increase demand

“The North Shore Women’s Refuge and Advocacy Service gets a high number of police family violence referrals from the Northcote area. Some of them are new referrals, but a reasonable number are repeats. The referrals cover families from all socioeconomic groups - the richer parts of Northcote as well as the poorer. There is a mix of ethnicities, including new migrants.

The Refuge is full approximately 80 percent of the time and we often have to turn women away and find them alternative accommodation.

The violence which we see seems to be increasing of late - some of this can be put down to the drug ‘P’ which is becoming more and more common. The age of the women seen is also lowering - young girls between the ages of 17 - 22 are now relatively common.

The Family Violence Advocacy Service has not advertised its service to date as they are already struggling to cope with demand. They are getting busier and busier, with a marked increase in demand over the last 6 - 9 months.

This means that only those who know about our service already get to use it, although more and more referrals are coming via the Hospital, Police and other community organisations.”

Safer Family Violence Prevention Network, 2005

Kidnapping

Some Asian people are reportedly fearful of kidnapping.

“The fear of kidnapping is real. Not only kidnapping for monetary gain but also the fear and threat of children being kidnapped as a means of maintaining emotional control in a domestic violence sense.”

Social Services Manager

Tagging

The Graffiti Removal Project has operated since 1989 and continues to be a source of community pride.

Northcote’s Success in combating graffiti

“The graffiti in Northcote was a lot worse 15 years ago. It was mostly done by intermediate and secondary age kids. We just started painting it out using local kids to help. Some were the perpetrators. Some were not. It will never go away. The best method is ‘get rid of it and stay on top of it’. Kids get to know. Why bother if it will only be painted out again first thing in the morning?”

Community Worker

“The really positive thing is that community groups and agencies are increasingly pulling together. We are adopting a common focus in the way we address problems and work together to resolve these.”

Social Services Manager

Discussion Points

1. What do we need to do to support grandparents raising grandchildren in Northcote?
2. How do we encourage young people to learn about looking after each other as well as having a good time?
3. How do we ensure that our children are being raised in a safe environment?
4. What do we need to do to raise awareness in the community about the impact violence has on the development of children and young people?
5. Are there children at risk, particularly those aged 5 years and under, who are not coming to the attention of Child, Youth and Family?
6. How do we begin to change attitudes towards violence and reduce violent behaviour?
7. How do we deal with alcohol and drug issues in Northcote?
8. Do we know about programmes designed to reduce family violence and how they work?

Social Connectedness

Northcote is a community that is willing to take the lead and proudly celebrate and learn from its diversity. Chinese New Year, Families in the Park, garden visits, and market days give just a hint of the community spirit that is alive and well in Northcote. Māori wardens are often seen working alongside the local community to keep order in a Māori way.

Key Points

- Northcote has a strong sense of community
- Young people feel a sense of community and this is important to them
- Newcomers sometimes find it hard to become part of community
- Onewa Road divides the Northcote community
- There are strong networks between community groups and agencies working in the Northcote area
- Te Puna Hauora is a focal point for Māori residents.

Commentary

Most (89%) young people in the Harbour ward, aged 15-24 years believe that it is important to feel a sense of community with people in their local neighbourhood, however just over half (62.8%) said that they felt that they had that sense. (Quality of Life Survey, 2004)

A significant number of secondary school age young people have limited networks within the Northcote community and know little about their wider local community. This is particularly so if they rely on public transport or attend school outside of the area. If they do not attend a local school then Northcote becomes the place where they sleep but not where they engage in leisure activities or where they socialise.

Access to transport is a key factor in determining whether or not people are able to participate and to move around the area. Young people find public transport relatively expensive and not particularly convenient for their needs. Young people in Tuff Crater are less likely to have access to a telephone, internet or a motor vehicle.

Children and young people want opportunities to mix with the other cultures in Northcote. (Feedback from youth in the community)

Volunteering is a way to engage people in the community and offers a pathway to personal development and career opportunities. Some community groups are finding it difficult to attract volunteers while others have strong networks of volunteers.

At the 2001 Census:

- 97.7 percent of households in Northcote had access to a telephone, compared with 98.5 percent for North Shore City and 96.3 percent for all of New Zealand
- 47.2 percent of households in Northcote had access to the internet, compared with 53.0 percent for North Shore City and 37.4 percent for all of New Zealand
- 88.9 percent of households in Northcote had access to a motor vehicle, compared with 92.9 percent for North Shore City and 89.9 percent for the whole of New Zealand

- Households in Tuff Crater are less likely to have access to a telephone, internet or motor vehicle.

“Northcote’s great because we are all handy to each other.”

Māori male 16 years

Sense of Community

In 2004, young people in the Harbour ward, aged 15-24 years, were asked if they felt a sense of community with others in the local neighbourhood.³³

- Almost two-thirds (62.8%) agreed that they felt a sense of community
- Fewer than ten percent (8.6%) disagreed that they felt this way.

You feel a sense of community with others in your local neighbourhood

	%
Strongly agree	5.7
Agree	57.1
Neutral	28.6
Disagree	5.7
Don't Know	2.9
Total	100.0

Source: Quality of Life Survey, 2004

Young people in the Harbour ward, aged 15-24 years, were then asked if it was important to them to feel a sense of community with people in their local neighbourhood.³⁴ Most agreed that it was important to them.

Its important to you to feel a sense of community with people in your local neighbourhood

	%
Strongly agree	17.1
Agree	71.4
Neutral	8.6
Disagree	2.9
Total	100.0

Source: Quality of Life Survey, 2004

Unpaid Work

Although women have lower rates of labour force participation rates than men, they have higher rates of participation in unpaid work, both inside and outside the household.

People were asked about any unpaid work they had done in the four weeks prior to the 2001 Census. Nationally:

- 87 percent of women and 82 percent of men had done household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, gardening

³³ Quality of Life Residents’ Survey, 2004.

³⁴ Quality of Life Residents’ Survey, 2004.

- 35 percent of women and 27 percent of men had looked after children
- Māori women had the highest participation rates in each type of unpaid activity outside the home. This included looking after children from outside their households or doing voluntary work for organisations, community groups or Marae.

There is a big divide. It is a different world on Northcote Point. People who live in Northcote Point do not want to be part of the broader Northcote community. They 'lifestyle live' in Northcote Point. Their meeting places are the cafes, deli and wine shop. They only go as far as Little Shoal Bay. School Boards provide strong sports links and the churches also provide links. But there is not a lot pulling things together across the community."

Community Worker, Northcote

It's hard for outsiders

"Northcote is a very hard community to get linked into. There are a lot of traditional families who have lived here for generations. It is very hard for outsiders to break in. On the other hand links into the Asian network are quite strong and it is easier for Asian newcomers to link in.

People can be quite secluded and keep to themselves"

Pakeha/Māori male 20 years

Transport

The way the transport is planned and designed affects the environment and people's health through pollution and air emissions. It also affects time spent travelling to work, time spent with families and it affects the household budget.

In 2004, residents in the Harbour ward were asked about the affordability, safety and convenience of public transport.³⁵

Of the 15-24 year olds surveyed:

- 95.7 percent found public transport safe
- 71.1 percent said that it was not particularly affordable
- Only half (48%) found it convenient.

Transportation Issues - Harbour (Northcote/Birkenhead) Ward

Transit Lane

Onewa Road operates a transit lane during the weekday morning peak from 6.30am to 9am. This is a priority lane for buses, cars carrying three or more people, motorcycles and bicycles.

³⁵ Quality of Life Survey, 2004.

Car pooling has risen from nine percent of all vehicles in 1982 to 26.5 percent in 2003. Travel time in the transit lane has been cut by 80 percent – saving bus and car pooling commuters half an hour. Patronage of bus services is rising.

Road Upgrade

A \$36 million upgrade of the Esmonde Road interchange will be carried out over 2005/2006. The upgrade will remove the need for vehicles to travel via the Onewa or Northcote Road interchanges. It will link with cycling and walking networks, and add an additional northbound lane between Esmonde on-ramp and Northcote off-ramp. It will also provide local bus access to the planned bus way corridor.

Ferries

Fuller Ferries operates a ferry service from Birkenhead Ferry Terminal to the city, stopping at the Northcote terminal at request. According to Rideline, commuters have to wave at the ferry when it leaves Birkenhead Ferry terminal for it to stop at the Northcote Terminal. The ferries operate every half an hour to an hour depending on the time of day. The fare at July 2005 was \$9.00 return for an adult, \$4.40 for a child and \$24.00 for 10 trips for a tertiary student.

The Northcote Point Ferry Wharf was renovated in May 2005. The new facilities include a complete canopy cover, new lighting, footpaths, signs and landscaping. Plans are underway for new ferry terminals at Birkenhead and Bayswater.

Youth Group's point of view

"It is easier to get to the City using public transport than it is to get into Northcote or Glenfield. The buses don't run late enough in the weekends."

Youth Group

A Profile of a Community Coordinator

Jill Nerheny has been the Northcote Community Coordinator for the past 15 years and has a very high profile in the area. Jill says, "It is important to do lots of fun things that raise the local spirits of people in general. Northcote has a wonderful community spirit about it, although there are differences, people do pitch in. Northcote is a great community to work with".

The role of the community coordinator is to organise events, promote Northcote to local residents, identify new programs and projects and act as an advocate for people in the Northcote area. In addition the community coordinator works with local groups, organisations and community group networks to coordinate practical responses to local community issues, secure community resources to support local community initiatives and to facilitate joint planning approaches across the agencies working in the area.

A Community Group Profile

The Northcote Birkenhead Community Network is made up of local community groups and meets monthly. At those meetings the community organisations work together with the local Community Co-ordinator to foster community cohesion and develop community skills. The Network is a place where groups can share local

information and identify any issues or trends. The aim of the community network is to connect people.

“Northcote is a strong community and there is a systematic push to address issues collectively rather than as individual agencies. We are increasingly looking at the way resources are applied. That is a beneficial thing.”

Social Services Manager

The Coordination of Government Agencies

The Harbour Ward, which includes Northcote, has established a multi-agency strategic team (MAST) to work with youth, their whanau and communities to ensure that key government agencies coordinate and share information alongside key not for profit community organisations.

A two year Strategic Plan is set bi-annually to facilitate the network and to meet the ever changing needs. Its mission is: Together everyone achieves more.

The network meets monthly. The team is committed to taking a proactive role in reducing youth offending, crime, truancy and increasing parenting skills.

“Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari te toa takitini:

My strength is not that of the individual but that of the multitudes.”

Volunteering In the Community

There are a wide range of volunteers, coordinators, and community workers who operate in throughout the Northcote area. Volunteering is a way of increasing personal skills, connecting into the community and making a difference.

Perspectives on Volunteering in Northcote

“Some groups complain they have no volunteers. Others have a rich and vibrant network of volunteers. I don't think it is any different now to what it was 10 years ago. As time has moved on volunteers want to be revered and trained. They do not want to make cups of tea. They want to be valued, not paid. It is about how you treat them. They are the backbone of any community. Volunteers are the givers of the world.”

Community Worker

“Volunteering is a good vehicle to bring young people through the system and to get a group of people who follow on. You need to give them ownership through the process and need to have an eye out for personal development, employment or skills development opportunities for them along the way.”

Volunteer Coordinator

“Volunteering is a pathway to learning, to personal development, to a career. Volunteering can be used as a means to an end. It can involve quite a deliberate approach and be part of your personal career development plan. Start off as a volunteer fi further education fi confidence grows every year fi further education fi career. This pathway is not followed any more... or not at least as much as it once was.”

Volunteer/Student embarking on second chance career

“No more talking about ‘them’. Community development does not occur by sitting around a table talking about ‘them’. ‘They’ are going to sit around the table and talk about themselves.”

Community Development Worker

“Some people have the skills to develop and maintain a network of volunteers. They are always planning ahead – mapping out initiatives/events and always thinking how to bring new people and groups in. They are the ones that are able to sell an idea and to capture hearts and minds. A good volunteer coordinator is someone with a coat of many colours – astute – able to relate to all walks of life and “mix it” in any gathering. They recognise the strengths in someone, then find a role for them to play. They know how to pick the right time to ask and have a nice way of asking. They bring it all together for the community and for the individual, helping them to develop. It is all about a win win approach. It is an art.”

Volunteer

“Don’t go to the obvious Service Clubs. You need an individual approach. You need to develop individually tailored relationships. You need to be able to tailor incentives to the individual and not treat everyone the same. Small acknowledgements and gifts and conversations along the way which are personal to that individual are important.”

Volunteer Coordinator

“You need to know your community – all walks of life, all age groups, people from the full range of employment status. Then you need to know who is a potential candidate for what role or task. People brush too many people off too easily.”

Volunteer Coordinator

“When I retired I did not go out looking for volunteer work. But I certainly had lots of offers. In the end I picked what I wanted to do. I was invited to produce a booklet. I had not written for 3 years. I learnt a lot about Birkenhead that I did not know and I have lived in the area all of my life. I enjoyed what I heard and it was intellectually stimulating. I could not be an observer. I had to get into the midst of it. That was the satisfying bit.”

Volunteer

Discussion Points

1. How do we support single parents and those without a car to be able to access the opportunities available for them and their children and young people, in Northcote?
2. What do we need to do more of? What do we need to do less of?
3. Are we doing enough to offer opportunities to all young people to become actively involved in their community?
4. Are we training and growing our community workers and our volunteers?
5. How do we engage with those residents who are lonely and isolated or new to the area?
6. Young people want to feel a sense of community with others in their local neighbourhood.
7. What needs to happen for this to occur?

8. Is it important to develop a sense of Northcote as a single community over time?
9. How do we strengthen and build capacity in our existing networks, especially for young people?

Planned Next Steps

The Steps of the Northcote Child and Youth Development Project

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