



Ehara tāku toa i te toa  
takitahi, engari he toa takitini.

My strength is not as an  
individual, but as a collective.

## Acknowledgements

In its capacity as the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), ChristchurchNZ has facilitated the development of this Destination Management Plan on behalf of, and in collaboration with, key strategic partners including the Christchurch City Council, Waimakariri District Council, Selwyn District Council, Ashburton District Council, and with the support of Christchurch International Airport Limited.

Special acknowledgement must be made to the whanau, hapū and rūnanga who have contributed to the development of this plan including Ngai Tūāhuriri and Whitiōra, Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.

In seeking to develop this plan alongside Mana Whenua, the above whakatauki was gifted to provide guidance as we seek to move forwards in managing our destination.

Thank you to Erin Jackson Narrative, Carl Pavletich Fabriko, Kris Herbert Creative Agent and the team at Resonance for your mahi.

## Acknowledging Limitations

While this Destination Management Plan seeks to address the opportunities, challenges, and future aspirations of the region, it is constrained by being a strategic framework with no future funding currently associated, a lack of clarity about an equitable model and system for future tourism funding and no statutory or regulatory compliance components.

For successful implementation of the Destination Management Plan, we will need the buy-in, collaboration and support of those acknowledged within it. Whilst resources and lack of legislative mandate may constrain, we also recognise that a motivated group of people, with a shared vision, and clear actions to take can make amazing things happen.

*To note: Throughout this plan reference to Ōtautahi Christchurch largely means the urban city itself and excludes the Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula as it has its own unique destination management plan. For a complete picture, the Te Pātaka-o-Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula Destination Plan should be read in conjunction with this document.*



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# Executive Summary

Ōtautahi Christchurch and the surrounding Districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Ashburton represent the second largest Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) in New Zealand by regional visitor spend, with \$1.029 billion domestic visitor spend and \$299 million international visitor spend by year-end July 2023. In the Aotearoa New Zealand tourism ecosystem, our geographic area is known as Canterbury.

The rest of New Zealand saw considerable tourism growth in the years between 2011 and 2020. During

this period Ōtautahi Christchurch and its surrounding districts were constrained in tourism growth as the city recovered from the series of devastating earthquakes that destroyed a significant amount of visitor infrastructure, particularly in Christchurch's central city. Therefore, this current visitor spend does not represent an accurate portrayal of the "normal" on-the-ground value of visitor economy, as **the destination is still not back to its pre-earthquake market share of visitor spend** (pre-quake 2010 market share 10.4% vs 2022 market share 8.7% for international & domestic spend combined).

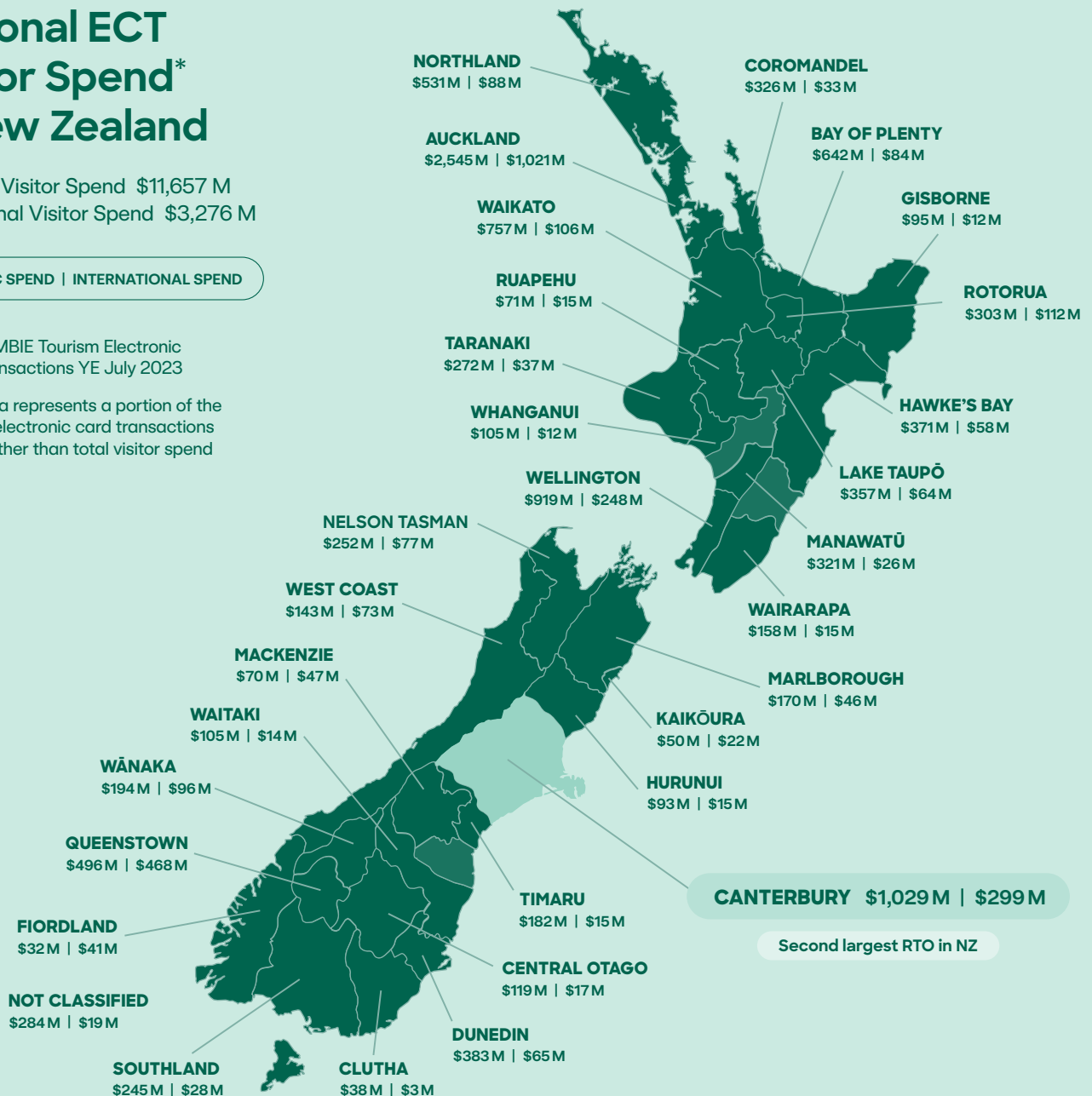
## Regional ECT Visitor Spend\* in New Zealand

Domestic Visitor Spend \$11,657 M  
International Visitor Spend \$3,276 M

DOMESTIC SPEND | INTERNATIONAL SPEND

Source: MBIE Tourism Electronic Card Transactions YE July 2023

\*This data represents a portion of the market, electronic card transactions (ECT), rather than total visitor spend



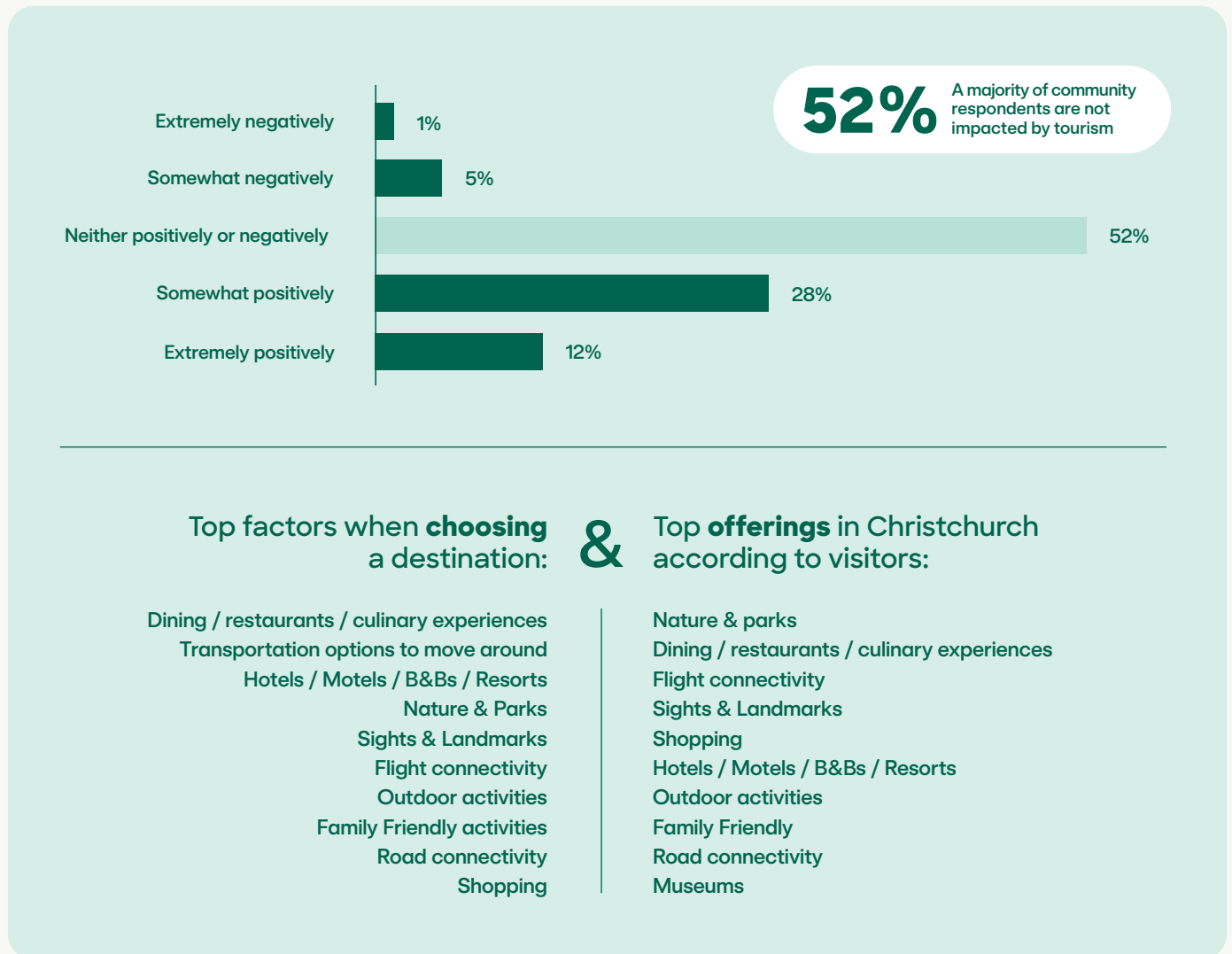
With the impact of the quakes limiting city infrastructure in Christchurch for the past decade, the story for visitors has largely been about being the gateway to the South Island. Today, with key city infrastructure in place, Christchurch has an opportunity to shift from being a “gateway” to a destination in its own right. Between the new city and the vast cultural, culinary and recreational opportunities within the districts we have all the ingredients visitors are looking for in a holiday. Neighbouring districts would also welcome more visitors after a very constrained decade for visitation in the region (post-quake and COVID-19 border closures).

This also includes Hurunui, Kaikōura and the West Coast who jointly go to market with the Canterbury RTO.

This shift will require a commitment to more coordinated and collaborative tourism product development, connectivity and agreed positioning and messaging across the Canterbury RTO region.

Research through the development of this plan identified that the top factors influencing choice of destination for visitors are largely correlated to the top offerings available in the region. See below:

Source: ChristchurchNZ Visitor & Community Surveys, 2022



It is unusual for a Destination Management Plan to be talking about growth in visitors. However, this region has a unique set of circumstances given the impact of the quake and the scale of the new, sustainable infrastructure that has been developed. Christchurch city and the surrounding districts are not currently experiencing over-tourism and have capacity for growth (Important Note: Banks Peninsula has its own, separate, Destination Management Plan with different goals).

This growth would be targeted, focused on attracting visitors with the desired behaviours and value yield (including social, environmental, economic and retained value), balanced with a continued focus on sustainability and thoughtful urban and experience design that is positive for residents and visitors. More data is required to fully quantify the cost benefit and value yield of each of the audiences identified in the plan.

## This plan is striving to rebuild tourism as a regenerative economy – and not an extractive one.

The city's new visitor infrastructure with higher environmental performance standards, planned resilience for natural disasters and an international airport with Airport Carbon Certification Level4/4+ (the highest carbon certification an airport can currently achieve) means the region is well suited to support the broader New Zealand tourism ecosystem by absorbing capacity from other over-touristed areas in the country.

The regional districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Ashburton have some different challenges and opportunities to the more urban Christchurch. Where Christchurch has purpose-built infrastructure and is an urban destination experience, the districts have limited commercial visitor experiences, amenities and accommodation options (noting the exception of ski within Ashburton region). The districts have unique natural destinations to visit and explore and can use the growth of the visitor economy in Christchurch to support and develop their own tourism infrastructure, products and experiences (including festivals and events), leveraging what their natural destinations offer. For example, advancing the journey to a dark sky reserve, progressing cycleways, food trails and developing itineraries for the region that are low emission.

This plan outlines the importance of the visitor economy to Christchurch, Selwyn, Ashburton and Waimakariri and how the city and districts are an interconnected tourism eco-system that rely on each other for success. Without the natural beauty and experiences of its regional hinterland, Christchurch lacks depth of travel experience and tourism product. Conversely, without the infrastructure of the scale of Christchurch city, Selwyn, Waimakariri and Ashburton are constrained in their ability to grow their visitor economies. Both Christchurch city and the districts are stronger when considered as one, rather than a range of distinct destinations. It's a stronger, better story to attract people to the region — because visitors don't see ratepayer boundaries.

The recent Kantar Brand Health and Perception Research August 2023 survey on brand perceptions of Ōtautahi Christchurch is important to consider. 18% of Australian and 19% of domestic respondents still referenced earthquakes when describing the city. This provides insights for future work although it should be noted that Ōtautahi Christchurch is still in the consideration set for travel. In fact for domestic travellers it is the top New Zealand location considered. Interestingly, Australian travellers rated Ōtautahi Christchurch as the top location for being different to other Kiwi cities.





Working more closely together; developing new, complementary attractions, enticing visitors to Christchurch and encouraging visitors to explore the surrounding districts, either on day trips or as overnight excursions, enables tourism to catalyse investment into amenity in the districts. This amenity supports both visitors and local residents. In addition, this increased amenity and product development provides a more attractive district offering to the local resident base of Christchurch. This existing market has potential for more growth encouraging people to “explore their own backyard”, a welcomed lower climate-impact visitor.

Well managed, sustainable, regenerative tourism can provide positive economic impacts to the whole region. It can also support resident pride, place vibrancy, place brand and reputation, and support the existence and continued development of community amenities such as retail, hospitality and experiences that can be used by residents and visitors alike.

The intent of the plan is to get the best possible return on investment in visitor-related initiatives by ensuring all activities align and represent the optimal use of limited resources as the destination continues to evolve and grow. The plan primarily informs local councils and central government decision making and investment. Many other organisations have a significant interest in and/or a key role to play in the region’s success as a visitor destination. This plan provides a common framework that enables everyone to take a joined-up approach to delivering activities that focus on attracting visitors and managing the destination.

And by identifying these areas needed to focus on, everyone is aligned helping to achieve the community aspiration for tourism.

Local government bears significant costs of manuhiri such as public toilet amenity, wastewater networks, rubbish bins, car parks and related infrastructure without related income (i.e. GST, arrival levies). Additionally, tourists take advantage of our investment and ongoing maintenance of road networks, streetscapes (particularly in the central city), facilities like Tūranga and Te Pae. The sector continues to seek a model that equitably considers this, and this plan supports central government undertaking a review of this funding model.

This plan is a reflection of engagement with councils, residents, Mana Whenua and local businesses and what is desired for the Canterbury RTO region Destination Management Plan. It is important to also reference the Te Pātaka o Rākauhautū Banks Peninsula Destination Management Plan that has been prepared concurrently. The plan for Te Pātaka o Rākauhautū Banks Peninsula, based on community consultation, ecological requirements and infrastructure capacity within that region lays out a much different approach for destination management within that unique ecosystem.

It should also be noted that a destination management plan goes well beyond a visitor attraction strategy. Its about working with our residents and considering our natural and built environment to holistically consider the future of our place.

**Both Christchurch city and the districts are strong when considered as one, rather than a range of district destinations.**



The plan is underpinned by three Strategic Objectives and five Themes. Eight Key Success Measures allow the plan to track how it is delivering on its goals.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Champion environmental stewardship and resilience



Strengthen visitor economy by becoming a destination



Work together and enrich our communities

## THEMES



Establish regenerative & resilient tourism practices



Grow our destination & shift from just a gateway



Cultivate our destination experience



Activate our Canterbury RTO region as a whole



Build tourism leadership & excellence as a path towards resilience

## KEY SUCCESS MEASURES

**01**

Establish a plan for reducing the carbon footprint of the visitor economy, including supporting local operator capability building

**02**

Increased visitor participation in regenerative tourism experiences

**03**

Increasing percentage of residents believe visitors can make sustainable travel choices when visiting

**04**

Regain Christchurch's pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy by 2030

**05**

Length of stay increases from 1.8 nights to 2.2 nights by 2030

**06**

Increase percentage of Christchurch residents visiting districts and Banks Peninsula (measured by ECT spend)

**07**

Tracking tourism satisfaction and impact:

- Maintain a visitor Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 75 or better
- Baseline resident tourism impact measures developed. Improvement outcomes post baseline development
- Annual surveys track resident tourism sentiment i.e. impacts on resident life

**08**

Memorandum of agreement established, recognising a commitment by districts to work together as a destination



# 01.

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## Introduction

If we work together, we can create a strong, vibrant, and regenerative visitor economy that improves the lifestyles for people who choose to call Christchurch, Selwyn, Waimakariri or Ashburton home and enriches the experience for those who have come to visit.

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This Destination Management Plan covers a wide and diverse area — stretching from Arthur’s Pass to the Port Hills and from the Rakahuri Ashley River in the north to the Hakatere Ashburton River in the south. This landscape features everything from the fertile Canterbury plains to the jagged peaks of the Southern Alps. It is connected by iconic braided rivers and contains lakes and diverse coastal environments.

This plan covers the urban centre of Ōtautahi Christchurch and expands through regional centres and small rural communities. It encompasses the area overseen by the Regional Tourism Organisation for Christchurch and Canterbury.

The first people to name and inhabit these lands were Ngāti Māmoë followed by Waitaha and then Ngāi Tahu, who remain intimately connected to the land and committed to its protection for future generations. They are represented in this region by Te Taumutu Rūnanga and Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga and Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.



This plan covers the urban centre of Ōtautahi Christchurch and expands through regional centres and small rural communities.



# Ōtautahi Christchurch

As one of New Zealand's oldest but newest cities, Ōtautahi Christchurch is on the cusp of an incredible period in its history, building on its Garden City heritage to tell a story of a city that believes in balance where people can make time and space to play.

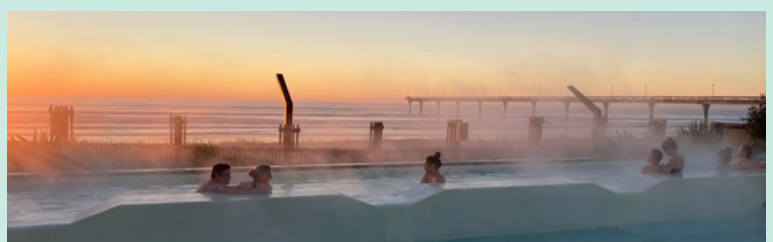
As a destination, Ōtautahi Christchurch is known as one of the few places around the world where you can ski and surf in the same day. The great outdoors is balanced by the great indoors with the city's wealth of dining, arts, and theatrical experiences.

Since the earthquakes a new narrative for Christchurch, one that recognises the heritage of settler culture, and

the Mana Whenua of Ngāi Tahu hapū, Ngāi Tūāhuriri has been established.

Ōtautahi Christchurch punches above its weight in many areas which, today, includes its city infrastructure. The earthquake rebuilding effort continues to deliver several large, state-of-the-art facilities that can be leveraged to bring new audiences to the city. The city now has the capacity to grow as a tourism destination in a balanced way that brings benefits to the wider region and its residents.

By bringing in and showcasing the natural, cultural, and culinary offerings of surrounding regions, Ōtautahi Christchurch can develop tourism opportunities that in turn benefit local communities.





# Selwyn District

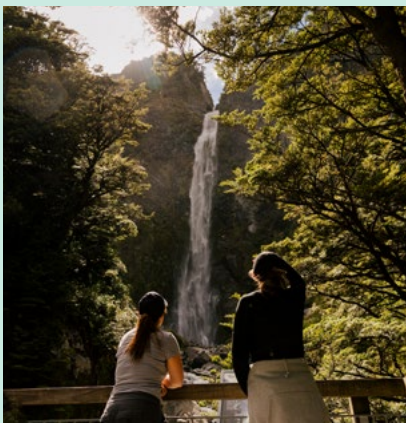
The spectacular Selwyn District stretches across the great Canterbury plains and is bordered by the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers, with Arthur's Pass National Park in the Southern Alps to the west and the Pacific Ocean to the east.

Selwyn is a dynamic, fast-growing district, and its people come from many different backgrounds. Most of the district's population lives on the plains, primarily in the towns of Rolleston, Lincoln, Tai Tapu, Prebbleton and Darfield. Two Rūnanga consider the Selwyn zone part of their takiwā – Taumutu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

From nature and culture to thrilling adventure, Selwyn has activities as diverse as its landscapes. The hills, mountains, plains and rivers offer a wealth of activities

including hiking, mountain biking, farm tours, skiing, ballooning, jet boating, horse trekking and dark sky opportunities. The region's six ski areas located close to Arthur's Pass Village, Lake Coleridge area and the TranzAlpine railway are key tourism features of the district. Kura Tawhiti/Castle Hill and Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere are places of cultural significance to Mana Whenua. Major events such as the Hororata Highland Games and the Selwyn Sounds festival attract 11,000 - 15,000 people.

Renowned for its agriculture with fertile soils, people have farmed and produced from the land for hundreds of years. The region is also known for specialty foods like saffron, honey, truffles, cheeses, organic vegetables, and nuts.





# Ashburton District

The Ashburton District is known for its wide-open spaces, stunning scenery, and outdoor activities. For visitors, it offers the experiences of natural beauty and rural lifestyle.

Three rūnanga consider the Ashburton zone part of their takiwā – Arowhenua, Taumutu and Ngāi Tūāhuriri. The rivers, lakes and wetlands that once covered large areas of the zone have always been an important place and food basket for Ngāi Tahu.

The main attraction of the Ashburton District is the natural landscape, which includes the Southern Alps, the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers, and the expansive Canterbury Plains. Visitors can enjoy activities such as hiking, mountain biking, fishing, skiing, and snowboarding. The new hot pools in Methven have added a wellness component to the destination's attractions and are driving strong visitation from Christchurch residents.

The district has a rich agricultural heritage and agriculture remains the largest employer in Ashburton. The Ashburton district is one of New Zealand's leading producers of crops

such as wheat, barley, carrot seeds and potatoes. Visitors can learn about the region's farming history at museums and heritage sites across the area. Other attractions in the Ashburton District include the Mt Hutt ski field, and Lake Hood Recreation Reserve, which offers water sports such as kayaking and jet skiing.

Ashburton district has disparate offerings of a very busy Methven and Mt Hutt during the ski season and limited visitor experiences elsewhere within the region. The additional challenge of climate change and significant weather events make operation of ski fields increasingly challenging. Data confirms the on-the-ground experience that both tourism business numbers and staffing have declined in the region over the past decade. It's difficult to get suitable staffing and there are limited larger accommodation options in the region. Additionally, many of the current accommodation and dining offerings have lifestyle operators, which can mean there is constrained visitor offerings when they are closed or on extended holidays.





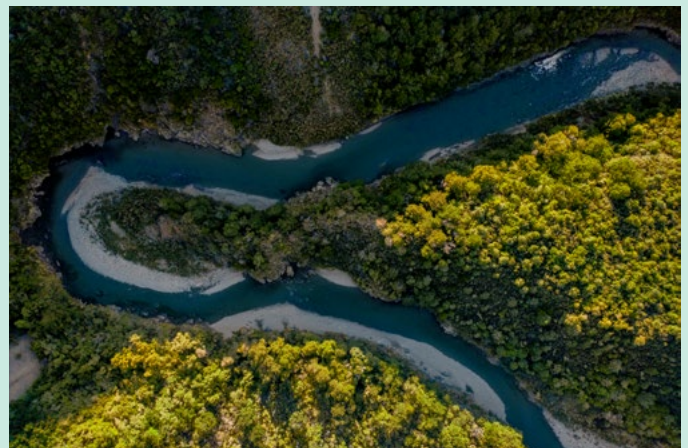
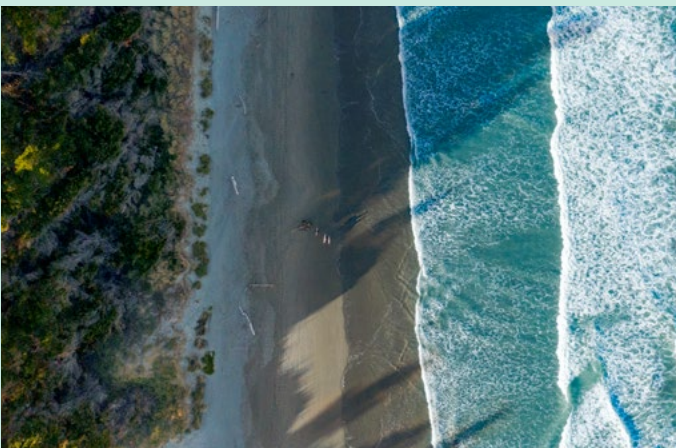
# Waimakariri District

Waimakariri is a district framed by two braided rivers, the Pacific Ocean and the foothills of the Southern Alps. In pre-European times, there were several important Ngāi Tahu settlements in the area that is now known as the Waimakariri District. The centre of Ngāi Tahu was Kaiapoi pa. Today, the hapū Ngāi Tūāhuriri is based at Tuahiwi, to the north of Kaiapoi.

Just 15 minutes north of Christchurch, Waimakariri District is rich in recreational opportunities. Cycling, hiking and walking trails help visitors explore the district's 10 kilometres of beaches, two braided rivers, conservation areas, parks, wetlands and lakes.

The district is home to five golf courses, three farmers markets, three art galleries and four museums. Two urban centres, six smaller towns, villages and beach settlements serve up 70 cafés and dining options as well as 30 boutique shops.

**Cycling, hiking and walking trails help visitors explore the district's 10 kilometres of beaches, two braided rivers, conservation areas, parks, wetlands and lakes.**





# Banks Peninsula

Whilst Banks Peninsula is part of the Christchurch City Council District, a separate Destination Management Plan has been developed for Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula. This has been done on the basis of a recommendation from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment given the significant impact of cruise travel. The recommendation sought a long-term vision and plan for managing visitor arrivals that align closely with community expectations and environmental limits in Akaroa. While the separate Destination Management Plan developed for Banks Peninsula seeks to address those specific issues, there is a clear interface and interdependency between the two Destination Management Plans.

Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula is a key visitor destination and is the location of key historic events which have shaped the area and our nation. The ancestor Rākaihautū dug the lakes of the Te Wai Pounamu, the South Island, and rested his great kō, or digging stick, on the hills above Akaroa. A massacre at Takapūneke in Akaroa Harbour – and the French intent to settle the peninsula – were both catalysts for our nation’s founding document, Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Key historic and geological events define the destination today as a place rich in stories and topography – a place where diverse nature opens its doors to meaningful adventure and where the sea offers recreation and kai. The rich resources of this peninsula attracted the first

people here more than 800 years ago. Their culture survives in four distinct hapū or rūnanga, who remain intimately connected to the land and committed to its protection for future generations. These are Te Hapū o Ngāti Wheke, whose marae is in Rāpaki, Te Rūnanga o Koukourārata, with a marae in Port Levy, Wairewa Rūnanga, whose marae is in Little River and Ōnuku Rūnanga, with a marae set in the scenic Akaroa Harbour.

Banks Peninsula is the hub of cruise activity for Ōtautahi with Lyttelton being the port for large cruise ship visitation while Akaroa attracts smaller, more boutique, vessels. Cruise has a significant impact on both destinations and is a focus of the Banks Peninsula Destination Management Plan. Cruise is also referenced within this plan, as it represents both an opportunity and challenge for Christchurch city, and those areas in the districts which are within a short drive from Lyttelton Port.

**The Banks Peninsula has rich stories to tell and unique geography and ecology that many visitors are keen to see.**

However due to its ecology, geography and infrastructure there are challenges to be addressed in managing volume of visitation. Seasonality also affects the viability of local businesses, and limited infrastructure and road access are key barriers, along with accommodation and workforce housing.





## An Interconnected Ecosystem

The city of Christchurch would not be what it is without its regional hinterland and Banks Peninsula together with a symbiotic relationship with the districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Ashburton. The regional districts of Selwyn, Waimakariri and Ashburton, however, have a very different set of challenges and opportunities to Christchurch. Where Christchurch has purpose-built infrastructure and is an urban destination experience, these regions have more limited commercial visitor experiences, amenities and accommodation options and can positively leverage the growth of the visitor economy in Christchurch to support their own sustainable tourism development.

**By attracting visitors to Christchurch to explore their regions, either on day trips or as overnight excursions, the districts can use tourism to catalyse investment to grow amenities which support both visitors and residents.**

In addition, as Christchurch city strengthens as an economy and choice of location for residents, along with strong residential growth in the Selwyn district in the Rolleston and Lincoln areas, the surrounding districts can continue to capitalise on this resident base as a regional visitor target segment, particularly as new, regenerative product offerings are developed.

The districts to the north, Hurunui and Kaikōura, the West Coast and south to the Mackenzie district all have strong interrelationships to this region and therefore this plan. Longer term connecting of the Destination Management Plans including better low emitting transport options between regions would be desirable.

If we work together, we can create a strong, vibrant and regenerative visitor economy that improves the lifestyles for people that choose to call this place home and enriches the experience for those that have come to visit.

Ngāi Tahu have resided on these lands for more than 800 years, and since 1830 have welcomed all people to our lands and held true to the values instilled in the proverb, 'kia atawhai ki te iwi' 'Care for the people' expressed by Pita Te Hori, Ūpoko of Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas have a unique opportunity to grow and promote New Zealand's second and newest city. The Ashburton, Selwyn and Waimakariri districts (along with Banks Peninsula) offer visitors a modern urban experience as well as access to nature and a taste of authentic New Zealand. Together, we are a place built for families to thrive, in a region that offers care and balance for visitors and communities — with endless opportunities for education, business and play.

Alongside these opportunities, we acknowledge our challenges. We need to work together as regional partners and Mana Whenua to best promote all our region has to offer. This plan addresses who we want to attract and ensures that our visitor economy positively impacts our communities and land. Importantly, we also acknowledge that visitors don't see council boundaries and that a combined story for the region as whole is best for the destination.

The purpose of this plan is to generate alignment on what our destination needs to achieve and prioritise. Therefore, the themes of activity outlined in this plan take into consideration the objectives shared by the different groups, the community and visitors.

Local government reforms are an important support to this work, helping districts to work together more effectively. Additionally, the Resource Management Act reforms and the implementation of the new resource management system is a complex and far-reaching project that also impacts on the work completed, including how to manage risks from natural hazards like flooding in the future.

Our stories, positioning and marketing vary within our region. The Destination Management Plan does not advocate for a unified brand that covers Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas, however it does call for better collaboration in managing and promoting our collective destination, and alignment as far as destination management and visitor experience is concerned.

In parallel to this Destination Management Plan, and on behalf of Christchurch city, ChristchurchNZ commissioned a brand strategy initiative that repositions Ōtautahi Christchurch and creates alignment on a unique narrative that can be applied to tourism, economic development, talent attraction and overall growth.

The new brand strategy positions Ōtautahi Christchurch as a city in pursuit of balance that makes space and time for play. That is based on a redefinition of "Garden City" that underscores that term as a harmony between people and nature. Whilst the surrounding regions have their own positioning, this balance and play positioning works in harmony with the district's offerings and desired visitors.

Selwyn's positioning articulates the significance of the diverse landscapes, a place where people can take a breath of fresh air and discover something new. The proposition "From the land" includes stories of provenance, Mana Whenua, people, past and future.

Waimakariri positions itself as the ideal day-trip destination. "Why not make a day of it?" articulates the region as the perfect place to make a day of it no matter the season with several unique itineraries. It offers active relaxers, adventurers, explorers and families themed seasonal activities to see the Waimakariri District in a whole new light — inspiring them to enjoy more of its friendly towns and charming countryside.

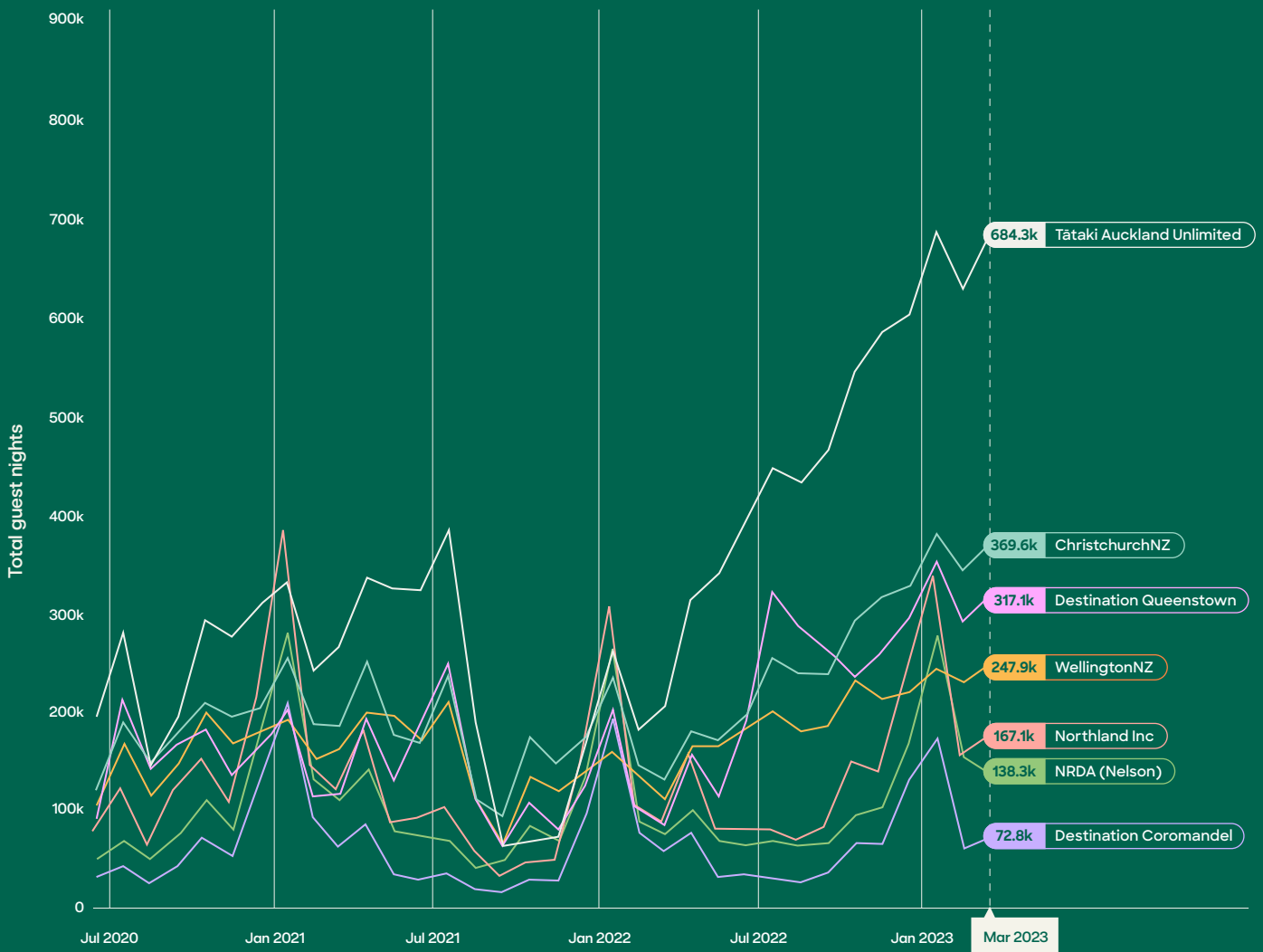
The workshop conducted within Ashburton District highlighted confusion with their identity, particularly as the district name is associated mainly with the town of Ashburton rather than the region. And most of the visitation in large numbers is within the Methven and Mt Hutt region, with that area mostly being associated with "Mid Canterbury." Additionally, there is a strong sense that the region provides an "authentic Kiwi experience", very down to earth with the reflection that this has been lost in other parts of New Zealand. It was identified that there are a lot of small owner operators within the region, delivering "real experiences". A unique opportunity exists for Ashburton to develop its own brand identity as a key outcome of this plan.



Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas in Canterbury Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) form New Zealand's second largest visitor destination, behind Auckland (as of March 2023).

## Total guest nights for all properties by area:

Source: MBIE



Note: Auckland lockdowns and COVID-19 impacts to this data

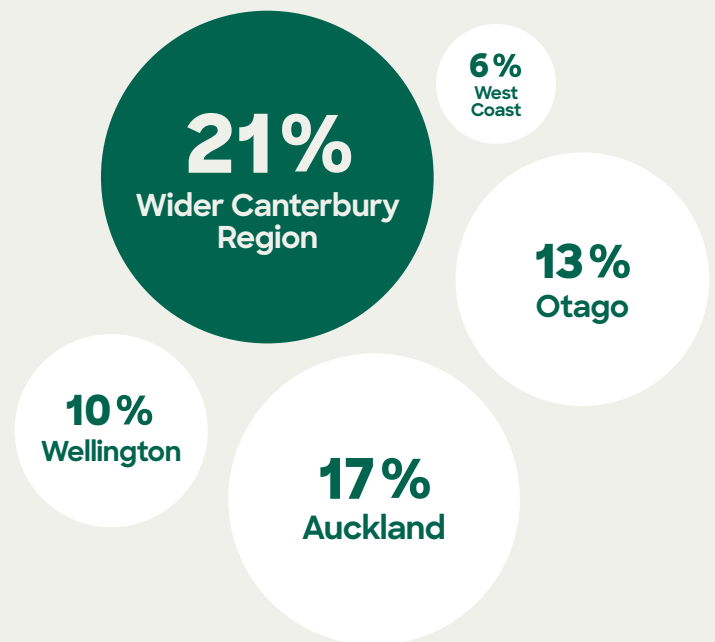
**8.6%** NZ VISITOR SPENDING

Visitor spending in the Canterbury RTO area accounted for 8.6% of visitor spending via electronic card transactions (ECT) in New Zealand in the year-to-date (March 2023).

## Top Domestic Visitor Origins by Share of Visitor Spend 2021/2022

Source: Marketview

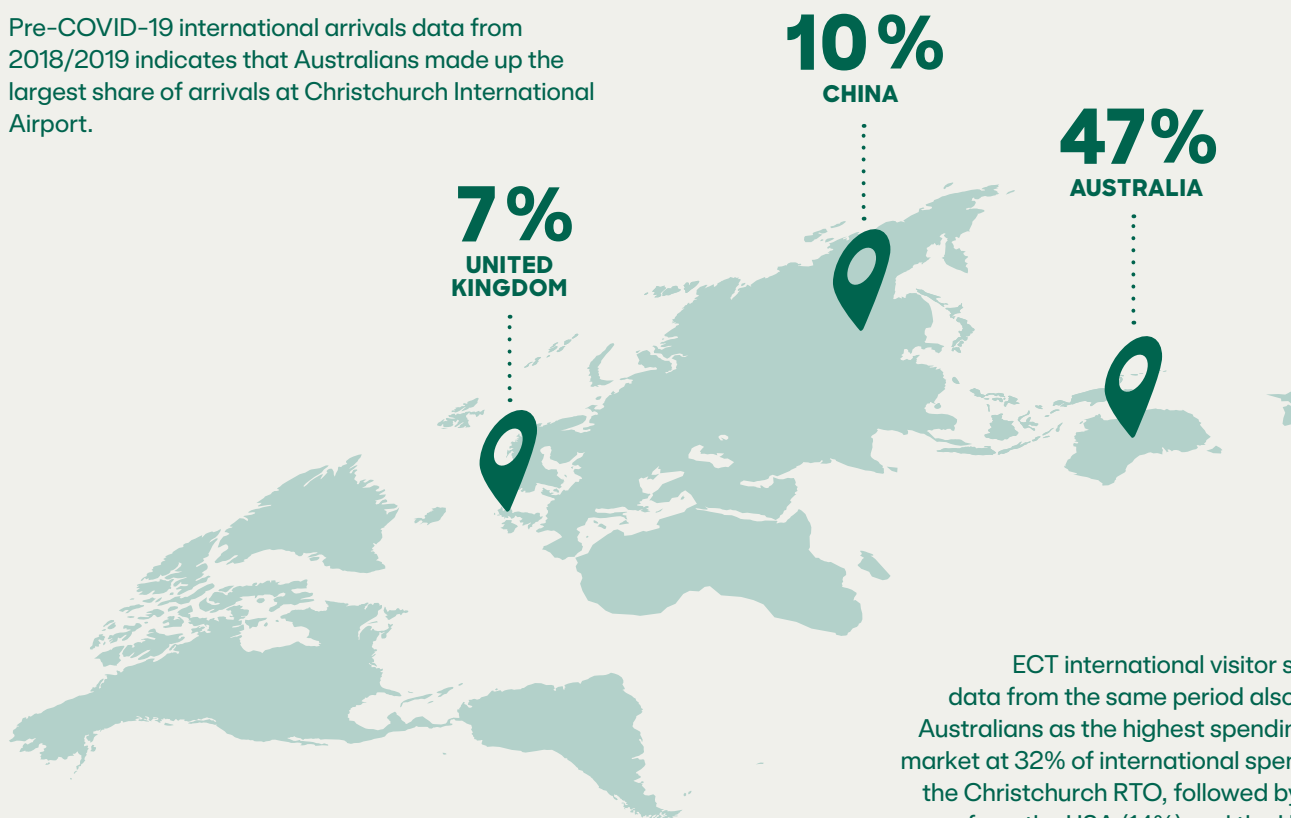
Using domestic visitor spend from 2021/2022 as a proxy indicates that visitors from within the wider Canterbury Region are the largest domestic market at 21% of domestic visitor spend.



## Top Three International Visitor Origins by Share of International Arrivals 2018/2019

Source: Marketview

Pre-COVID-19 international arrivals data from 2018/2019 indicates that Australians made up the largest share of arrivals at Christchurch International Airport.



ECT international visitor spending data from the same period also reflects Australians as the highest spending visitor market at 32% of international spend within the Christchurch RTO, followed by visitors from the USA (14%) and the UK (13%).

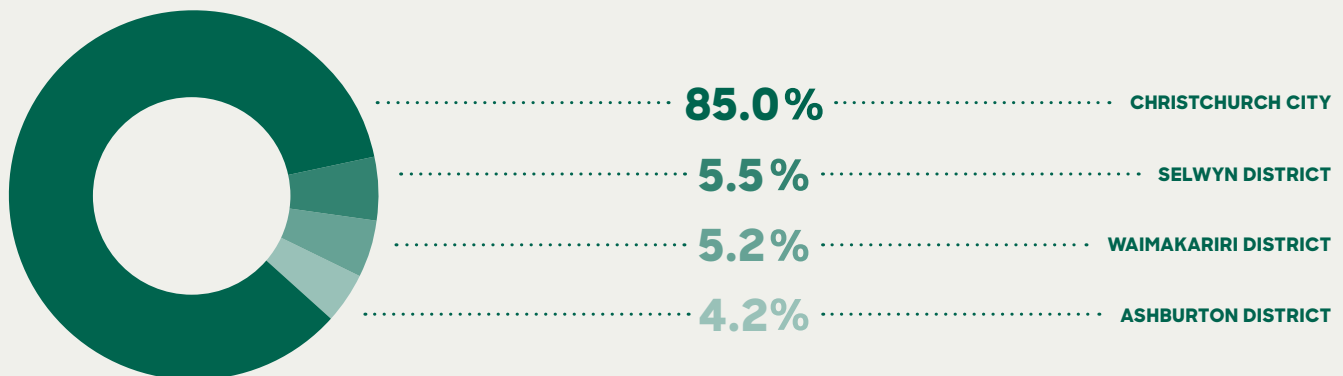


# There is an Uneven Distribution of Tourism Supply within our Region

## Tourism Workforce 2022

Source: StatisticsNZ, ChristchurchNZ

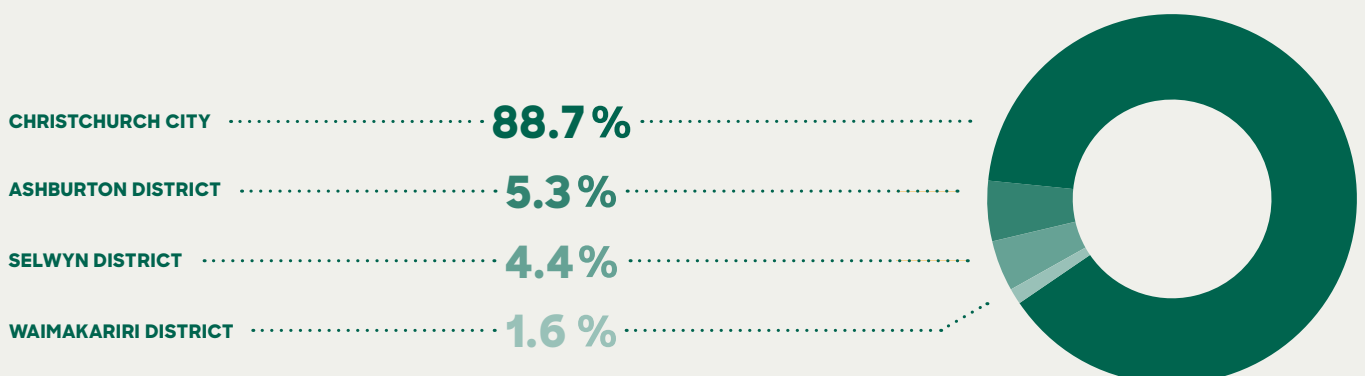
Our region’s tourism and visitation economy are heavily reliant on Christchurch. In 2022, 85% of the region’s tourism workforce and 79% of tourism businesses were concentrated in Christchurch central city. Note these numbers are from February 2022, so would still be COVID-19 impacted.



## Accommodation Visitor Spending 2022 (Via ECT)

Source: Statistics NZ, ChristchurchNZ

Visitor spending is also concentrated in Christchurch. In 2022, 89% of visitor accommodation spending via ECT in the region was concentrated in Christchurch central city.





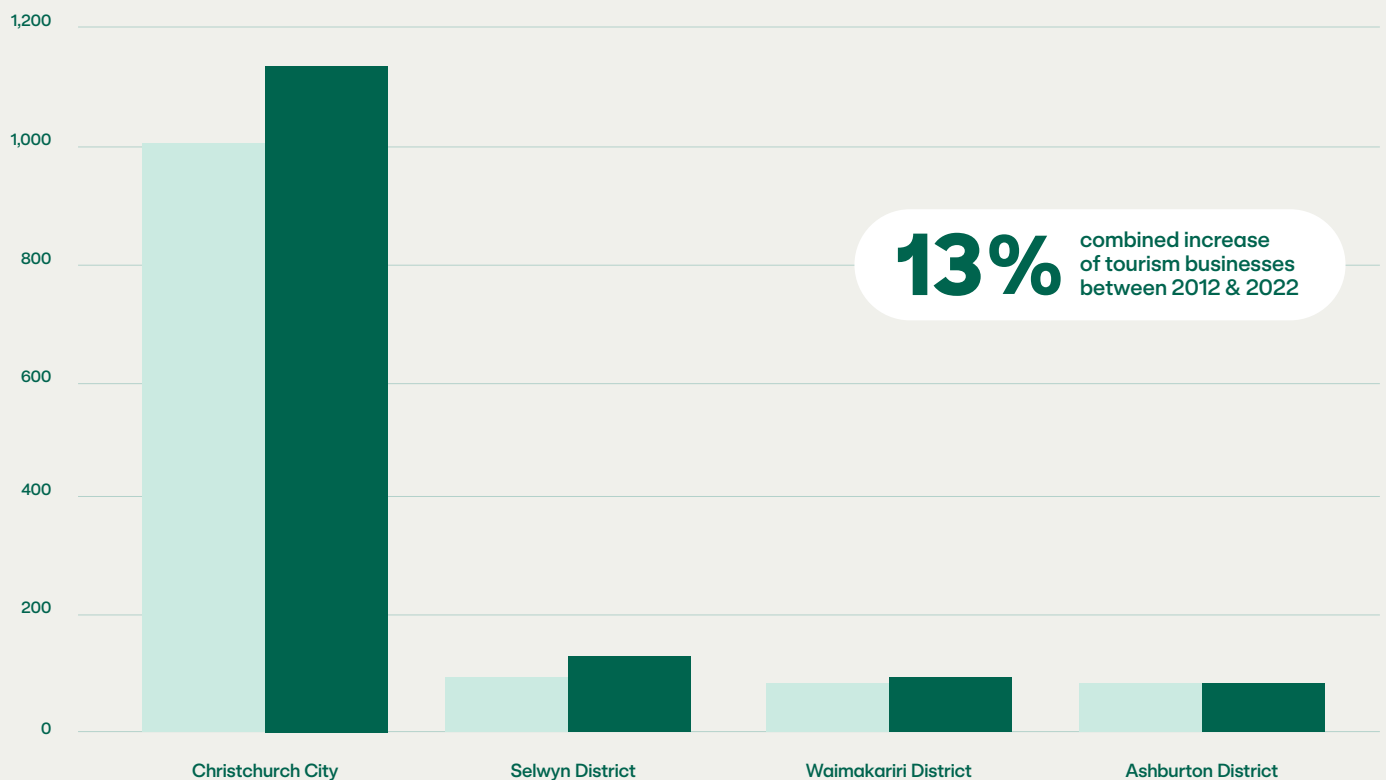
# A Diverse Offering

Our region has an opportunity to continue to grow and mature as a tourism destination.

## Number of Tourism Businesses 2012-22

Source: nzdotstat ● 2012 ● 2022

Our region has an opportunity to continue to grow and mature as a tourism destination. The number of tourism businesses has grown 13% between 2012 and 2022 — here again, unevenly across our region. While Ashburton has seen a decline of 7%, Waimakariri has grown its number of tourism businesses by 8%, Christchurch by 13% and Selwyn by 34%. Note: We have excluded food and beverage services from the tourism figures due to the significant numbers of them (and that they have significant local offering rather than tourism directly).



Number of tourism businesses (Sourced from Stats NZ) for Canterbury RTO were categorized based on business demography data for the following ANZSIC06 categories (business units):

- H44 Accommodation
- H45 Food and Beverage Services  
*(EXCLUDED FOR THIS ANALYSIS)*
- I462300 Taxi and Other Road Transport
- I482 Water Passenger Transport
- I501 Scenic and Sightseeing Transport
- L661100 Passenger Car Rental and Hiring
- N722 Travel Agency Services
- R891 Museum Operation
- R892100 Zoological and Botanical Gardens Operation
- R892200 Nature Reserves and Conservation Parks Operation
- R913 Amusement and Other Recreation Activities

# 02.

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## About Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury

Everyone in the destination must play a part in the success of this plan by committing to be the strongest champions and friendliest hosts, and creating and showcasing a sustainable place.

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Based on the existing tourism data and aspiration from our community, Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas are poised to become one of New Zealand’s premier tourism destinations.

This plan acknowledges that the RTO region has all the elements of a true visitor destination, encompassing a modern urban core and extensive outdoor experiences from the mountains to the sea.

## This is a deliberate and marked shift from just a “gateway”, which has more recently been associated with positioning our destination.

As we can see from the visitor data, our destination as a whole is predominantly Christchurch-led. A strong city benefits the surrounding districts. And ultimately as the city’s scale grows, those local residents become visitors in larger numbers to the surrounding districts.

It is interesting to note that past visitors to the region — half of whom come to visit family and friends — have a

highly positive perception of the destination. On a scale from 1-100, they rank their overall experience of the destination during their visit at 76. On the same scale, they rank their likelihood to recommend the region as a place to visit at 78.

It is also important to note that Christchurch International Airport (CIAL) is a major gateway for the South Island, bringing visitors to the different regions. Its positioning reflects its role in tourism promoting the South Island and New Zealand more broadly. We also await further progress through the decision gateway for a new airport in Tarras. Led by CIAL, the work on Tarras is still in the discovery phase and any potential impacts on visitor numbers to Christchurch are still to be determined.

Through our surveys, both visitors and community stakeholders have identified key priority areas to drive the enhancement of visitor experiences and quality of life. These priorities are reflected in the plan and include ‘Events and Festivals’, ‘Arts & Culture’, and ‘Public Transportation’. ‘Nature and Parks’, ‘Outdoor Activities’ and ‘Dining/Restaurants’ were also identified as strengths that we should continue to grow.

Source: ChristchurchNZ Visitor Survey, 2022



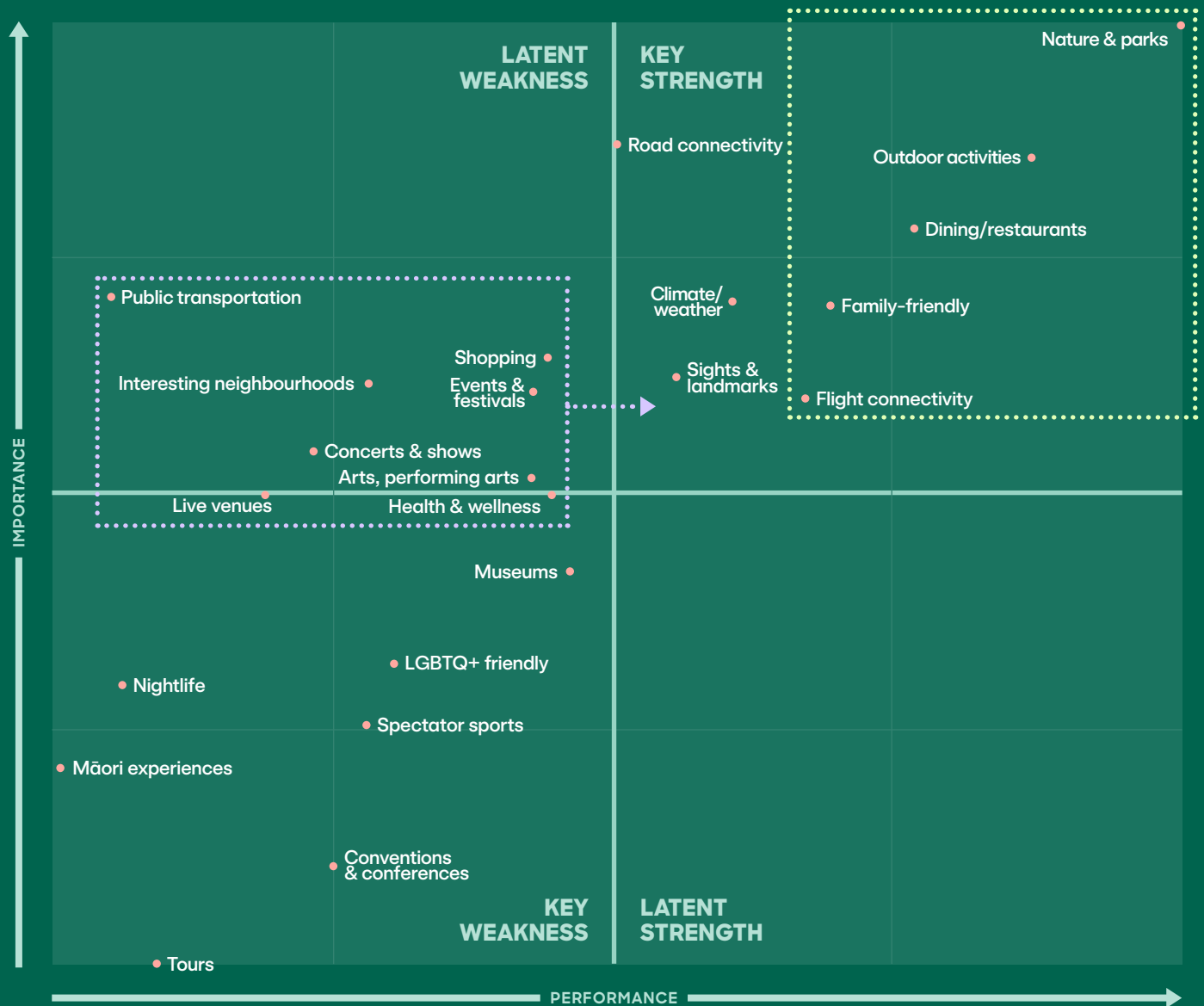


The following matrix plots resident sentiment in traditional quadrant charts to visually represent areas of strength that should be maintained (Key Strength Quadrant), opportunities to be capitalised upon (Latent Strength), growth opportunities where performance should be evaluated (Latent Weakness), and lower priority areas that should be monitored but not focused on (Key Weakness).

Note: These are perceptions, quite often about a quake impacted city, rather than the future.

# Resident Sentiment

Source: ChristchurchNZ Community Survey, 2022



## Key areas of importance that we need to consider to build strength

- Concerts & shows
- Arts, performing arts
- Live venues
- Health & wellness
- Public transportation
- Interesting neighbourhoods
- Shopping
- Events & festivals

## Key strengths residents see for our place

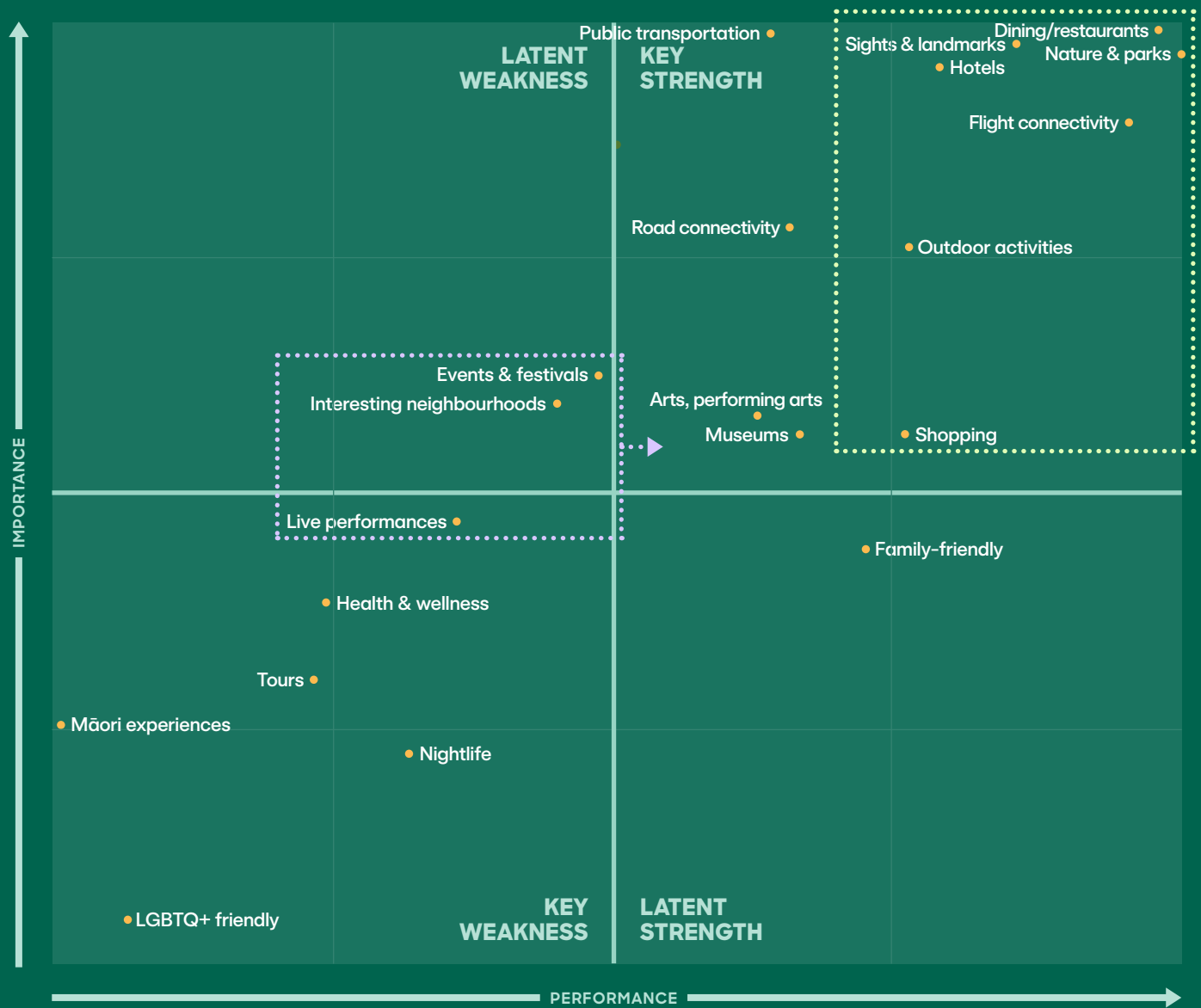
- Nature & parks
- Outdoor activities
- Dining/restaurants
- Family-friendly
- Flight connectivity

The following matrix plots visitor sentiment in traditional quadrant charts to visually represent areas of strength that should be maintained (Key Strength Quadrant), opportunities to be capitalised upon (Latent Strength), growth opportunities where performance should be evaluated (Latent Weakness), and lower priority areas that should be monitored but not focused on (Key Weakness).

Note: These are perceptions, quite often about a quake impacted city, rather than the future.

# Visitor Sentiment

Source: ChristchurchNZ Visitor Survey, 2022



### Key areas of importance that we need to consider to build strength

- Events & festivals
- Live performances
- Interesting neighbourhoods

### Key strengths visitors see for our place

- Dining/restaurants
- Sights & landmarks
- Nature & parks
- Hotels
- Flight connectivity
- Outdoor activities
- Shopping

# The Opportunity to be Bold

The aspiration to regain Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury’s pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy (10.4% in 2010) will require bold decisions and support from stakeholders. Today, the community shares a strong sense of belonging to Ōtautahi Christchurch (67%) in the **Defining Our Place Community Survey, 2022**, characterised by feeling at home (75%), close to friends and family (64%), and the quality of life (62%).

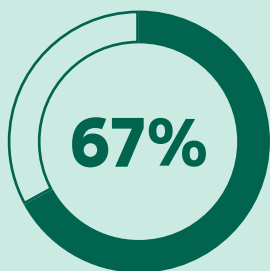
Ōtautahi Christchurch is perceived by residents and visitors as being “Beautiful”, “Welcoming”, and “Resilient”, as well as “Green” and “Clean”. There is a strong level of attachment to these “labels” by different audiences of the city.

Ōtautahi Christchurch is positioned as New Zealand’s second city, ranking after Auckland and ahead of Wellington in the quality of place benchmark. Despite this status, the stakeholder engagement showed that the local community is overly modest about the city’s

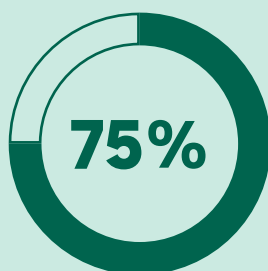
key features. In fact, it is often said that Cantabrians are modest about their achievements and historically have not been comfortable in promoting their place — much to the detriment of attracting visitors and growing economic opportunity. The reality is that our community is instrumental to the growth and management of our visitor economy, especially since 49% of our visitors came to Christchurch and surrounding areas to “visit friends and family” – according to the – **Defining Our Place Visitor Survey, 2022**.

Ōtautahi Christchurch has largely been positioned as a gateway to beauty and the wider South Island, but the region itself is characterised as “beautiful” by both residents and visitors. And most importantly, ranks fourth for “quality of place” amongst its competitive peer cities, and second in New Zealand. Carefully planned, the future opportunities for the local tourism industry are bright and upcoming infrastructure will further strengthen Ōtautahi Christchurch’s position as a key destination in the South Island.

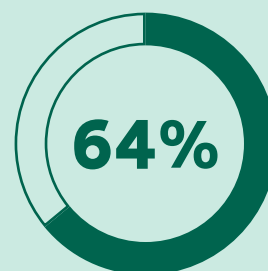
- Defining Our Place **Community** Survey, 2022
- Defining Our Place **Visitor** Survey, 2022



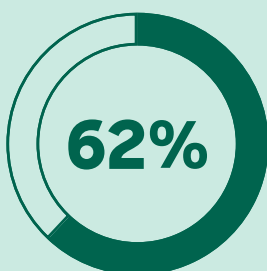
“I feel a strong sense of belonging to the place I live”



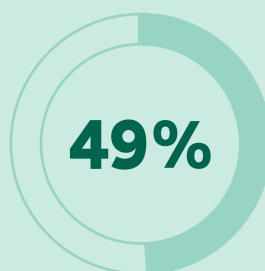
Associate a sense of belonging to “feels like home”



Associate a sense of belonging to “friends and family”



Associate a sense of belonging to “quality of life”



Visitors came to Christchurch and surrounding areas to “visit friends & family”



**Visitation also delivers a range of benefits that are more difficult to measure but are no less important to the destination including:**



**Energy and excitement**, for example, through the activation of central city precincts and the vibrant atmosphere at major events.



**Brand awareness**, or increasing the profile of the city nationally and internationally, that help grow international trading channels.



**Domestic and global connectivity**, for example, the air services sustained by visitation which carry high value exports and support inbound and outbound travel.



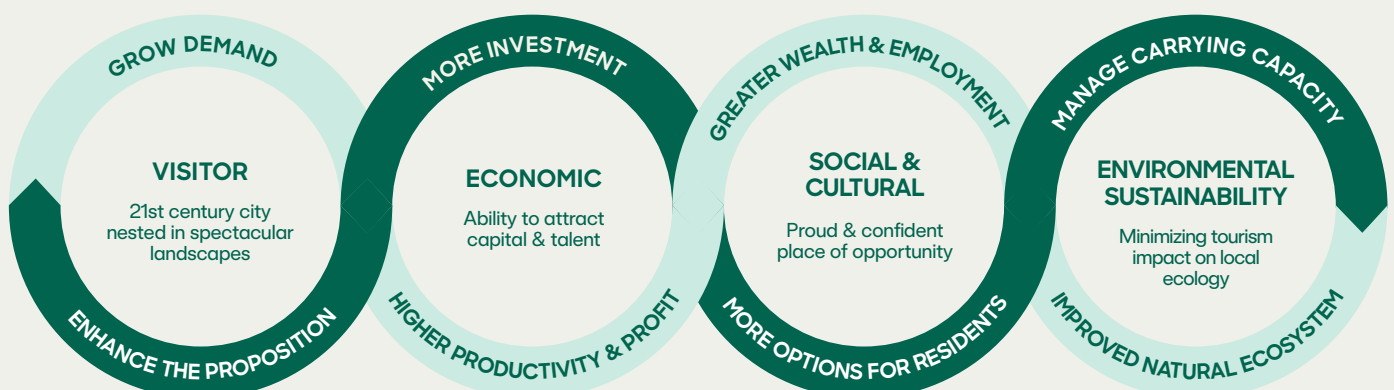
**Investment attraction**, for example, external investment in accommodation facilities and visitor attractions or scheduling of touring shows and exhibitions in Christchurch.



**Business and talent attraction**, by increasing the likelihood that some visitors, particularly international students, will choose to relocate their talents and capital to Christchurch, contributing to the wider economy.

**With careful management these benefits initiate a cycle of improvement that delivers a more vibrant city and higher living standards for local residents.**

The resulting impact on city image, confidence, and pride has far-reaching benefits locally and regionally. Once this cycle has started it becomes increasingly self-sustaining over time as internal and external confidence grows and private sector capital and skills flow to the city and districts.



## Target Psychographic Segments

Based on the visitor survey findings we know that our current visitors fall into five psychographic categories:



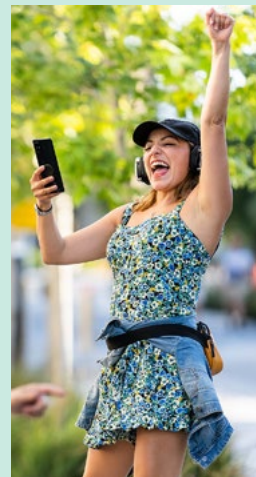
**Family-Oriented Travellers**



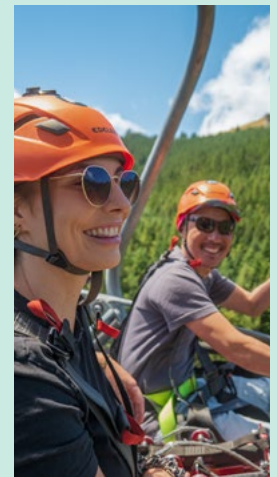
**Sophisticated Explorers**



**Convenience Travellers**



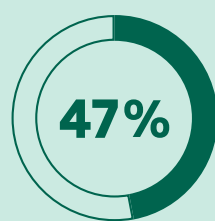
**All-in Enthusiasts**



**Active Adventurers**

Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding districts have traditionally been positioned as an adventure, and explorers' destination.

According to the visitor survey, 47% of visitors are described as 'active adventurers' based on psychographic segments – types of travellers who share similar travel, interest and spending patterns.



**Active Adventurers**

**Active Adventurers** share a keen interest in outdoor sports, engaging with nature, and health and fitness activities. They take fewer vacations per year to farther destinations, and they aren't particularly interested in family or multi-generational vacations. Active Adventurers also enjoy athletic competitions and more extreme forms of leisure. Christchurch International Airport, a gateway to not only Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas but the South Island and Queenstown region has played an important role in the adventure positioning.

However, based on the new infrastructure development in Christchurch and aspirations from our diverse community groups, Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding districts has an opportunity to shift its positioning and drive more visitation from two key target groups: "Sophisticated Explorers" and "Family-Oriented Travellers".

**Sophisticated Explorers** take fewer but longer vacations per year, with the highest average vacation spend. They are more likely to enjoy sightseeing, visiting cultural attractions, learning new things and attending cultural events. Exploring new cultures and traditions while on vacation is most important.

**Family-Oriented Travellers** take fewer and shorter trips that are close to home. As their name indicates, they're fond of family vacations with kids and multi-generational vacations compared to other travellers. They place greater importance on safety, cost and favourable climate. They'd prefer that English be spoken and home currency accepted when travelling internationally, and fun attractions are their favourite activities. Clearly, this is a group that likes their vacations to be easy escapes. Stakeholder feedback supported this belief that there is an opportunity to better promote the Waimakariri river, the ocean, hot pools, local beaches and other water courses to families.



Our community ranks these two audience types as their priority for the future, at 41% and 25% respectively, ahead of Active Adventurers, which rank 16%.



Sophisticated Explorers



Family-Oriented Travellers



Active Adventurers

As such, the recommendations focus on growing the share of “Sophisticated Explorers” and “Family-Oriented” Travellers while continuing to welcome and retain Active Adventurers in the region, as the Christchurch International Airport remains a gateway to many activities that attract visitation and is the main international arrival airport for the South Island.

It is important to note that the above psychographic segments cut across travellers with different purposes — from domestic/short haul travellers to international/

long haul travellers, leisure travellers, and business travellers. These psychographic segmentations enable us to focus more closely on expanding and developing destination experiences and products that respond to motivating factors, personal needs/abilities, and lifestyle preferences, rather than trip purpose and length of stay. This will help us maximise spending opportunity and dwell time regardless of trip purpose.

Based on existing and emerging tourism products and experiences and alignment with Tourism New Zealand mindsets and marketing efforts, we have outlined target audiences for each district as detailed below (by order priority). While the overall strength of the region’s visitor economy will ultimately rely on the success of all regions to work together to pull their weight on extending stays across all psychographic segments, each district may use the following guide to prioritise limited resources early on in the implementation process on target audiences that have closer alignment with existing products. More attractions that reflect the future aspirations for our region (regenerative, embracing our culture and stories) are required to support the region as a destination in its own right.

- High
- Medium
- Low



Sophisticated Explorers



Family-Oriented Travellers



Active Adventurers

Christchurch Visitors



Selwyn Visitors



Waimakariri Visitors



Ashburton Visitors



## TRAVELLERS ARRIVING BY AIR



Accelerating growth in the overall visitor economy is supported by Christchurch Airport’s ability to attract new international air services targeting international markets with which Christchurch has, or can establish, direct and commercially viable air services. In addition to targeting direct air services, work with Air New Zealand and other carriers to bring more international and domestic visitors to Christchurch through the domestic network throughout

the year is required (offerings designed to attract the target psychographic segments). Although Christchurch International Airport has the highest carbon certification an airport can currently achieve, visitors arriving by air have a significant carbon footprint. Focusing on high yield visitors and identifying those visitors that meet our target audience profile that travel shorter distances, stay longer and choose eco-friendly options is an ongoing focus area.

*It is also noted that Business Events growth is also attracting travellers, mainly coming by air, to the region*

## TRAVELLERS ARRIVING BY CRUISE



Lyttelton Port is the site of a purpose-built cruise terminal, one of the anchor investments following the earthquake of 2011. This terminal has the capacity to berth large scale cruise ships and has been built to provide turn-around facilities and service. The 2022/23 season is estimated to have brought \$32m to the region, and financially has benefitted a number of tourism operators in the city. It is noted though that this first season of “normal” cruising post-quake and COVID-19 resulted in travel impacts with bus shortages due to driver shortages.

The Milford Opportunities Project Master Plan considers the prospect of banning cruise from the inner sound, which would limit the attractiveness of cruise ships coming to New Zealand. This project is now at feasibility stage and any decisions relating to this will have a significant impact more broadly on visitation to both Lyttelton and Akaroa.

Currently the cruise ecosystem within New Zealand, and Christchurch and Canterbury lacks the mechanisms, or levers, to pull to influence the cruise industry level of visitation. Whilst cruise ships bring a high volume of visitation, which is increasing, and often catalyse future leisure tourism opportunities, there are community concerns which need to be considered and addressed across the cruise ecosystem in a more collaborative way.

A cruise review is currently underway, and this document can’t pre-empt that outcome other than to say having better controls on the ships that enter our waters, their emissions, their size and engagement with local communities would be beneficial. A national strategy for cruise that answers the question – What does Aotearoa New Zealand want for cruise in our country? would be a welcomed process. This needs to be followed by mechanisms or levers that can be pulled to ensure the experience for the community and visitors is as this country intends, and decarbonisation is prioritised.

## TRAVELLERS ARRIVING FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



International (or “export”) education offers a significant growth opportunity for the region. These visitors are valuable, as whilst their initial carbon impact through their travel distances is high, they stay for an extended period of time, visit local regions and add significantly to our place in social, cultural and economic ways. However, competition for students is increasing internationally so maintaining a competitive international education offering is increasingly important. In addition to generating demand for consumer goods and services, export education attracts bright young people from all over the world to our region. This benefits the local economy by attracting talent that introduce

new ideas and new thinking, bring their global networks, catalyse innovation and may become part of the future workforce. Ultimately, this visitor group creates long-term opportunities to address local skills shortages for future growth industries.

The region is well served by high quality education facilities, from primary school to tertiary level. The local organisation Christchurch Educated very effectively acts as a conduit to tell the story for the region. This body works closely with ChristchurchNZ and the work it does is of significant importance to continuing to attract students to this region.



# 03.

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## About Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury

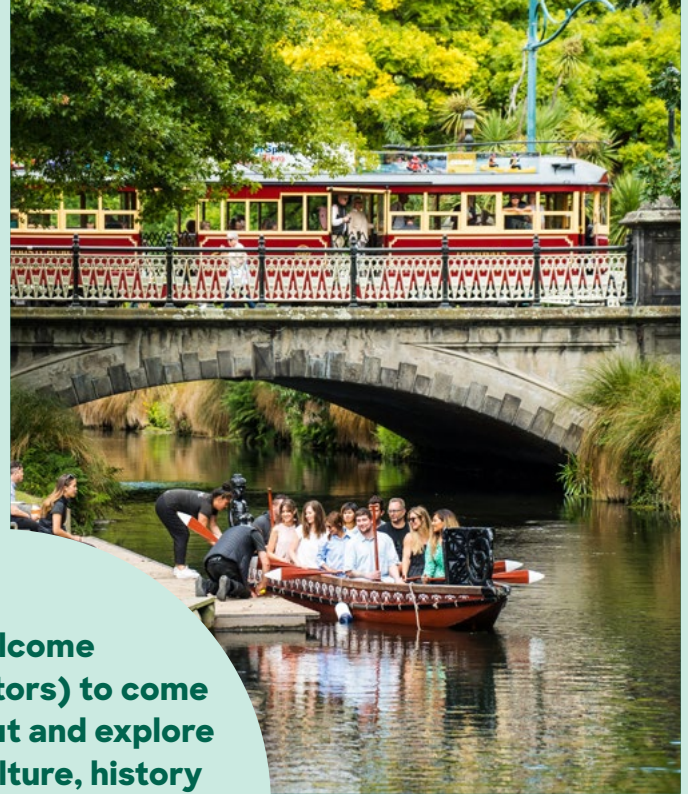
In order to achieve the objectives set out in the plan, it is important to define our shared vision for our destination, that includes a vision statement, values, and guiding principles. Each strategic objective will ladder back to this common framework.

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Our vision is rooted in our destination and communities' aspirations. Our vision sets our common long-term vision for our destination and community.



**We welcome manuhiri (visitors) to come and learn about and explore our unique culture, history and geography in a way that delivers benefits for our taiao (environment), our people, and our visitors**






These principles guide our approach to managing our destination and our visitor economy. They are commitments we make to ourselves (as stewards), to our communities, and to our visitors.

<b>GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b>          <b>VALUES</b>	<p><b>Kaitiakitanga</b></p> <p>We embrace balance to manage growth in a way that cares for our land and people.</p>  <p>Because we cultivate together...</p> <p><b>We are caring</b></p>	<p><b>Māia</b></p> <p>We are bold and creative in our thinking to deliver unique experiences for our residents and visitors.</p>  <p>Because we seek balance and play...</p> <p><b>We are imaginative</b></p>	<p><b>Kotahitanga</b></p> <p>We work together across the region and with Mana Whenua to improve quality of place.</p>  <p>Because we enrich our people, visitors, cultures and place...</p> <p><b>We are welcoming</b></p>
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# Strategic Objectives

Strategic objectives define how we achieve our shared vision, how we guide the long-term development of the destination, and how we work together in inspiring tourism for good. The following are three strategic objectives that have been identified for this plan:

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<p><b>Champion environmental stewardship and resilience</b></p>  <p>We have all the elements of a destination, not just a gateway. If we work together towards a regenerative, resilient and prosperous future for all and to ensure that tourism has a positive impact.</p>	<p><b>Strengthen visitor economy by becoming a destination</b></p>  <p>As a destination, we are committed to responsibly growing our visitor economy (regaining what we lost) and supporting businesses that do so. But we do so in a balanced way, to manage growth in a way that cares for our land and people.</p>	<p><b>Work together and enrich our communities</b></p>  <p>We believe in cooperation throughout Ōtautahi Christchurch and districts. It is only by breaking our silos and working truly together that we will leverage all our region has to offer, maximising the visitor experience and opportunity for economic benefit to the region.</p>
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# 04.

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## Destination Themes

This plan acknowledges that the Canterbury RTO region has all the elements of a true visitor destination, encompassing a modern urban core and extensive outdoor experiences from the mountains to the sea.

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The strategic objectives and themes guide the long-term development of our destination and will strategically set the future direction of the visitor economy and provide a plan for partners and communities to implement recommendations.



Establish regenerative & resilient tourism practices



Grow our destination & shift from just a gateway



Cultivate our destination experience



Activate our Canterbury RTO region as a whole



Build tourism leadership & excellence as a path towards resilience

## 01 | Establish regenerative & resilient tourism practices



On 7 November 2019, the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill was passed. This Act commits New Zealand to zero carbon by 2050 or sooner, sets a legally binding pathway to this target, and requires the Government to make a plan. Nationally work done with The Aotearoa Circle considering tourism climate change scenarios reminds us of the goal “where both the visitor that spends time in nature and nature itself will have their Mauri enhanced, not depleted”. And as per the Tiwaiwaka Principles, Principle 1: Caring for the whenua is the first priority — everything else must be measured against this.

The Christchurch City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set the target of achieving net zero greenhouse emissions by 2045 (with separate targets for methane), and to halve emissions by 2030, from 2016-17 levels.

Developing and leading innovative programs that will help achieve these goals is a key component of this plan. The following themes provide new, innovative solutions that can be implemented to improve our destination for visitors,

families and our community and educate them on how to reduce greenhouse emissions. There is an opportunity to support our community and the visitation experience through innovative and sustainable initiatives, and to build climate resilience into the destination experience for the long-term sustainability of the industry.

At the core of a regenerative practice is to focus tourism development by valuing longer-stay visitors and those who share and support our values and taonga.

Further, our place knows very well the impact of natural forces through the Canterbury earthquake series. The reality of this is that we exist on the Alpine fault line, and planning for future seismic action is mandatory. Ashburton recently experienced significant flooding and the ski fields are vulnerable to climate changes. The Banks Peninsula is separately considered, but as an important part of the Christchurch tourism offering factors such as the roads being closed by flooding or mudslides and the sea level rising and warming are all considerations for future resilience in operations.

### 1.1 Develop a regenerative tourism commitment for local operators

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

- Work with local operators and Mana Whenua to establish regenerative tourism standards and practices and create a system to rate businesses
- Leverage the collective experiences of this group to share knowledge

- Develop a local commitment for businesses that want to practice regenerative tourism to commit to, that includes zero-carbon certification and financial contributions towards biodiversity improvement
- Create financial and/or promotional incentives for accredited green tourism partners
- Consider partnering with Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) to run a sustainable tourism pilot
- Support tourism businesses in undertaking climate resilience audits, helping them identify climate impact risks, mitigations and extreme weather-related response plans
- Work with local operators (existing and potential new) to actively build a programme of decarbonisation, looking to create a roadmap of change

## 1.2 Connect with local Rangatahi Committees to weigh in on future projects and attractions

80% of our community feel that our region is a good place to raise a family (Community Survey, 2022). Ōtautahi Christchurch is a great parenting city — outranking national and international cities of the same size in family-friendly categories.

Creating a better plan for our future generations means they also have a quality place to grow today. These committees can provide recommendations and inputs on key new infrastructure projects, activities, and programs developed by local governments and private investors (when applicable).

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Connect with existing committees that have been established, for example by the Greater Christchurch Partnership
- Connect with international organisations involved in creating better cities for children, for example the Bernard Van Leer foundation
- Create an operating rhythm for regularly gathering feedback from a Rangatahi Committee

## 1.3 Investigate ways to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism operations and increase resilience to climate impacts

Christchurch City Council has identified that 53.5% of gross emissions in the region come from transport. Tourism's dependence on transport, including long haul, needs to be a key focus to reduce ongoing impacts. By raising awareness with operators and visitors, providing tools, and fostering collaboration, this plan strives to empower visitors to make more sustainable travel choices and reduce their carbon emissions, contributing to a greener future for the region.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Develop a carbon footprint and resilience steering committee with different stakeholders
- Develop materials to support operators and visitors to make good choices relating to emissions
- Work with Christchurch Airport and the Lyttelton Port Company to learn from and support their emissions reduction work where possible
- Plan how responses will take place for visitors impacted by a climate-related weather event or natural disaster (linkages to Civil Defence and isite — note provision within isite agreement to include role of key information source for visitors during crisis)



- Develop itineraries for visitors that highlight their CO2 emissions and recommendations on how to lower them, including low emission “visits” e.g. cycle trails through the districts, reusing towels in hotels, eating plant-based and local foods

#### 1.4 Incentivise and attract regenerative visitor experiences

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continue to provide innovation funding for developing proof-of-concept experiences
- Attract international investment for activations and experiences
- Work with the local creative technology sector to develop experiences and stories
- Continue to learn from other regions and countries about best practice regenerative experiences that can be delivered locally

#### 1.5 Involve local community in the regeneration process

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Support and expand community education events based on conservation and regeneration themes
- Establish ongoing partnerships with, and capacity building within neighbouring schools and community groups

#### 1.6 Establish a regeneration-themed annual major, business or community event/festival

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Designate an area of the Otākāro Avon River Corridor (OARC) as an events location, allowing for outdoor festival and event activity
- Define and support a team to develop a purpose-fit festival for OARC

#### 1.7 Prioritise the regeneration of the Ōtākāro Avon River Corridor (OARC)

In 2019, then Minister for Greater Christchurch Regeneration approved the Ōtākāro Avon River Corridor Regeneration Plan (Regeneration Plan) under section 38 of the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Act 2016. The objective of the plan is to create a destination that attracts a wide range of domestic and international visitors, establishes a world-leading living laboratory, where we learn, experiment and research; test and create new ideas and ways of living and demonstrate how to adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by natural hazards, climate change and a river’s floodplain.

The following recommendations and actions leverage the opportunity to create an international attraction that directly aligns with the national shift towards regenerative tourism and to anchor the Ōtākāro Avon River Corridor as a signature destination in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Establish OARC governance arrangements and a clear pathway to support, align and deliver projects
- Support proposals that seek to promote restoration of threatened species within the park and the wider city
- Advocate for the provision of event spaces for marquees, team building and appropriate infrastructure of public toilets, water etc.

- Consider incentivising or supporting innovative approaches to developing carbon offset programmes in the Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor
- Connect kai and food-based experience development with Red Zone stories and foraging opportunities in the Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor
- Work with Mana Whenua to create a traditional Māori playground in the Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor to connect visitors with indigenous stories and add to experiences for the “Family-Oriented Traveller” audience
- Create regenerative tourism (voluntourism) experiences to involve visitors in the restoration of the river and wetlands and re-wilding of the Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor
- Promote cycling, walking, kayaking, paddle boarding as active transport options for exploring the Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor and its current and future experiences
- Use Ōtakāro Avon River Corridor experience to connect the city more closely to He Puna Taimoana Hot Pools and New Brighton hospitality offerings
- Connect areas of interest throughout the OARC with cultural, historical and natural narratives
- Implement wayfinding and interpretations throughout area
- Commission interactive experiences

## 02 | Grow our destination and shift from perception as just a gateway



Ōtautahi Christchurch is a revitalised city on the cusp of an incredible era, and the neighbouring districts deliver spectacular natural experiences. Over the past eleven years the city has been restored, and in-part, largely rebuilt to a higher standard as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes while the districts have experienced considerable growth and revitalisation.

This plan explores how we can promote our new destination to the world while ensuring proper management of the visitor experience. The following themes reflect the opportunity to continue driving events aligned with the city’s identity, with positive economic, social and environmental impacts and opportunities for community benefit through leverage and legacy; managing visitor flows around

Te Pae, Te Kaha and other significant visitor infrastructure; and advocating for our destination to become a balanced centre of sophisticated event attendees while also remaining New Zealand’s best family city.

This focus on the destination of Ōtautahi Christchurch is to the benefit of the surrounding regions, as increased visitors to the city will increase visitation to the surrounding regions.

There is a unique and powerful opportunity to leverage the city’s new identity and infrastructure to shift Ōtautahi Christchurch from a gateway to a destination in its own right while preserving the destination and managing quality of life for residents.

### 2.1 Showcase our destination

Acknowledging the unique attributes of the districts and regions, comparative to Christchurch City, collaboratively develop marketing strategies which position each appropriately while raising profile and driving visitation.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Undertake destination marketing to raise destination awareness and drive visitation during low and shoulder seasons which is targeted to niche audiences and talks to new city narrative
- Develop tools which assist the sector in telling our stories e.g. brand toolkits

- Partner with travel trade to secure the right type of visitations from the most aligned markets
- Create a selection of itineraries which can be adopted and easily modified by visitors and tour guides. These itineraries provide te reo pronunciation as well as cultural and historical talking points
- Undertake training for operators which increases their profile and presence across digital platforms
- Support the implementation of the [Christchurch Airport 2040 Master Plan](#) which forecasts passenger traffic to grow from 6.3 million passengers today to 11.6 million passengers in 2040
- As airline capacity becomes available, resume campaign activity with airlines and Tourism New Zealand to market Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas and drive demand based on the updated narrative
- In collaboration with VIN and the new privately run isite in Ōtautahi Christchurch, ensure that the visitor experience speaks to the broader destination and the values of this plan.

## 2.2 Develop Ōtautahi Christchurch & surrounds into New Zealand’s favourite event destination

Ōtautahi Christchurch’s central city will soon hold the most modern, state-of-the-art, multi-use arena in the southern hemisphere. This plan aims to leverage the city’s assets and enable the regions to position themselves to leverage this advantage while managing impacts for residents.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continued prioritisation and investment, coordination of services and work with private sector to develop unique experiences, wayfinding and connections
- Reduce and simplify requirements to running events (permits, leasing, traffic management), including festivals on public spaces
- Work with the Central City Business Association and the SALT Trust to support development of accommodation, dining and nightlife around Te Kaha stadium to create a holistic, vibrant, walkable precinct experience for event attendees
- Continue to work as an events ecosystem, and the City Partners Group (includes Venues Ōtautahi) to bid for and attract a targeted list of major events aligned with city identity as per the Major Events Strategy
- Share a year-round event calendar with city partners to maximise the outcomes of major events
- Actively manage visitor flow to and from events to achieve good experiences for visitors and minimal disruption for residents
- Encourage and incentivise developers of new projects surrounding key event venues to noise-proof apartments and mitigate impacts on surrounding residents
- Support the ongoing investment in events infrastructure and attraction regionally to enable major and mega events in the city to be leveraged

## 2.3 Position Ōtautahi Christchurch & surrounds as the preferred national & international sporting event destination

When construction is completed in 2025, the Parakiore Recreation and Sport Centre will be the largest aquatic and indoor recreation and leisure venue of its kind in New Zealand. Together with Ngā Puna Wai, Hagley Oval, Te Kaha Stadium, Waimakariri’s Mainpower Stadium and Selwyn Sports Centre, Aquatic Centre and the EA Networks Centre in Ashburton there is the infrastructure and capacity to bring in new audiences through sport.



#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Leverage Canterbury’s extraordinary sporting success across a multitude of sports, including teams like Crusaders, Matatū, Canterbury Rams and the Mainland Tactix through experiences, outreach and storytelling
- Create accommodation partnerships and packages with sporting venues; to attract visitors, supporting the major events activity
- During off-peak seasons, promote local sporting events across the city
- Continue to work together to attract national, regional and school sports programmes and tournaments to utilise the city and region for their events
- Leverage Ōtautahi Christchurch as the home of women’s suffrage movement and continue to grow opportunities for women to participate in sporting events
- Leverage off existing expertise and natural advantage to focus and grow the city’s reputation for hosting events i.e Para Sports
- Work with all in the central city cultural precinct inclusive of new Court Theatre development, Isaac Theatre Royal, The Piano, the Christchurch Art Gallery, the Canterbury Museum when back online and the Arts Centre to create a vibrant year-round calendar that is balanced and attractive to both residents and visitors and supports the major events activity

#### 2.4 Continue to align business events with regional strengths to become NZ’s preferred conference venue and attract new audiences to the city

Ōtautahi Christchurch’s central city will soon hold the most modern, state-of-the-art, multi-use arena in the southern hemisphere along with existing infrastructure, including Te Pae Convention Centre. This plan aims to leverage the city’s assets and enable the regions to position themselves to leverage this advantage while managing impacts for residents.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continue to prioritise and position Christchurch as per the current [Business Events Strategy](#) (ChristchurchNZ, 2020)

#### 2.5 Leverage the cultural and performing arts offerings to attract “Sophisticated Explorer” target audience

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Enhance digital resources and guides to showcase the city and region’s cultural capital and offering including up-to-date events and exhibitions
- Create a new self-guided culture itinerary for the region
- Create new culture-led tourism experiences
- Work with Mana Whenua to identify key sites or experiences in the region to promote
- Develop our cultural and performance venues and spaces by connecting with external spaces and projects such as growing our global street art destination reputation
- Showcase the street and outdoor art scene through guided tours, marketing campaigns, and unique events

#### 2.6 Grow and support family-friendly experiences to attract “Family-Oriented” Traveller target audience

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

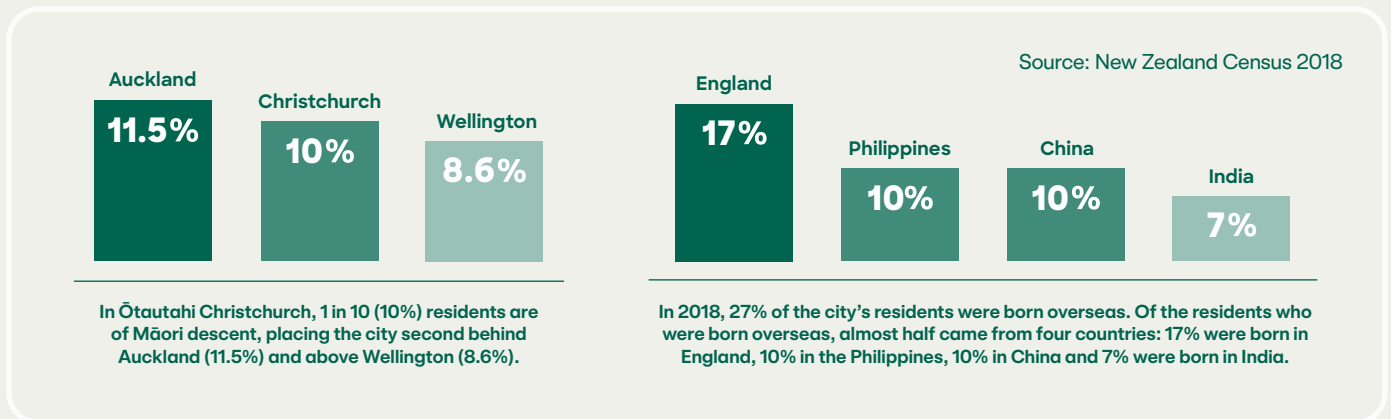
- Leverage green spaces and outdoor education opportunities to develop affordable child-centred experiences
- Package kid-friendly activities, dining and other family favourites into one-day and multi-day itineraries for parents

# 03

## Cultivate the destination experience



By highlighting and developing the unique experiences, stories, and opportunities of the destination, each district and the city are able to better highlight their unique selling propositions and develop tourism products and experiences that are aligned to their place. To do this, we must embrace our multi-cultural history.



In 2017, Christchurch City Council was the first in the country to develop a Multicultural Strategy and Implementation Plan. The vision is that Ōtautahi Christchurch is an inclusive multicultural and multilingual city that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and values our environment — a city where all people belong. Despite this, only 26% of the community in Ōtautahi Christchurch and its surrounding areas would describe their towns as “diverse” and only 24% of visitors consider the destination “diverse”.

As such, this plan calls for a proactive approach to grow diversity and embrace our multicultural history throughout the region.

With this backdrop we need to actively encourage and support a diverse range of operators and ideas to come to fruition. This will engage the community and also provide a wider range of tourism product in the market.

### 3.1 Work together to bring more tourism product to market through the development of a contestable tourism initiative fund

Consider if a contestable regional fund could be developed that would support new tourism initiatives and projects that are diversity-led and provide educational resources — including creating and/or expanding successful cultural events, heritage redevelopment and new tourism sites/attractions. The fund may be managed by a committee of local government, civic and cultural organisations and Mana Whenua representatives.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Determine if initially there is seed funding and support from each district to support the creation of a fund
- Form a steering committee to manage the contestable fund
- Seek ongoing funding partners and/or funding streams
- Promote this fund by conducting outreach to business groups, existing diversity and heritage project owners and to community leaders
- Identify a list of priority spaces/parks/venues/gaps in the market to activate through the use of the funds
- Encourage existing, proven operators to expand offerings in line with target audiences identified within this plan

### 3.2 Support the development and sharing of Mana Whenua stories

Our region has a rich history and culture. There are now many Mana Whenua artworks and co-designed projects around the region, but the stories behind these physical manifestations are not well known. This plan supports further promotion of Mana Whenua storytelling across the region.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Reprioritise and develop the existing content platform and build on the existing [audio stories](#) to include all areas of cultural significance around the region
- Upweight Mana Whenua storytelling in ChristchurchNZ content and marketing
- Work with District Councils to connect Mana Whenua stories around Banks Peninsula and regions to be easily accessed for residents, visitors and operators
- Incorporate kaitiakitanga (guardianship) values and mahinga (natural resource) kai values into all regional promotion and storytelling
- Continue to work with CCC Parks team to bring Mana Whenua storytelling to visitors via interpretation panels that connect digital audio and storytelling

### 3.3 Explore opportunities for Dark Sky development and collaboration

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Identify areas of Dark Sky potential; communities in Selwyn and Waimakariri are keen to explore this and leverage existing infrastructure e.g. Castle Hill, Oxford Observatory
- Undertake analysis of the capital outlay required to change township lighting to low light levels
- Market Dark Sky destinations and support product development and experiences
- Consider opportunities for aerospace viewing in the future e.g. Tāwhaki

### 3.4 Develop culinary leadership

Waitaha Canterbury is one of New Zealand's largest farming regions. People, place and innovation are the heroes of this industry. The "dining, restaurants and culinary experiences" tactic is the #1 factor that drives overall visitation according to our visitor survey. 86% of our visitors rank dining / restaurants / culinary experiences in Ōtautahi Christchurch as good or excellent.

By developing culinary leadership and providing an authentic experience through locally produced "from the land" products for food and dining we provide opportunities for our people, farmers, producers and land to thrive. It also helps us to adhere to our commitments to leaving a better place tomorrow. The objective is to leverage people and place to develop a "culinary" cluster in both product development, supplier support and promotion to help create recognised culinary excellence in our region.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Districts to consider growing agri-tourism programme: training, educational sessions with farmers around agri-tourism, product development, and promotion
- Provide financial support to existing farms to develop new agri-tourism experiences, including farm stays, produce-related events/festivals, farm-to-table tastings and meals
- Develop and promote a "food week" throughout the region, in partnership with Mana Whenua and private partners that will highlight local produce, farmers and producers throughout the region



- Create a restaurant quality label program
- Provide funding and technical support to business applicants to create/expand culinary experiences on existing regional agriculture sites/farms
- Work with Mana Whenua to develop food tourism products around mahinga kai

### 3.5 Implement a regional events framework

Events and festivals are a key driver to grow visitation. 64% of visitors rank events as somewhat or very important when choosing a destination, but only 49% rank events in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas as good or excellent

During a visioning workshop (February 2023), regional stakeholders ranked “Events & Festivals” as second most important

The objective is to advocate for continued management and promotion of our events through an integrated promotional tool while recommending opportunities around “spring” and “culinary” as strategic opportunities for our destination

There is an opportunity to better highlight our local events throughout our region and develop cross-promotional activities. Owning “spring” from an events perspective is an opportunity to drive visitation to Ōtautahi Christchurch surrounding areas during the shoulder months

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Form a regional events committee consisting of representatives from various districts to explore collaboration / cross-promotion of like-minded events and drive sustainable measures
- Develop a quarterly regional event marketing strategy that outlines key event themes to focus on for the quarter, marketing targets/KPIs, and marketing tactics to execute
- Develop a sustainable best practice framework to share with event organisers and producers throughout Greater Christchurch. This can include banning plastic materials, reducing carbon emissions and provisioning for car-sharing and alternative modes of transportation for regional events. The committee will be responsible for developing the sustainable events framework

### 3.6 Research the best way to deliver a coordinated events platform to bring our regional and local events together

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Investigate a centralised online platform / hub to showcase all events, festivals and activities taking place in our region to visitors
- Request event updates from key partners quarterly — including brief description, day/time of events, target audience, and images for use in marketing
- Send out monthly alerts/notifications to industry partners of upcoming events happening regionally

### 3.7 Create a winter offering around Matariki

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Activate the city and districts during Matariki with a story that is appropriate for the region; food and beverage, Māori culture, relevant stars (dark skies)
- Partner with Mana Whenua to celebrate mahinga kai during Matariki
- Promote whānau coming together to bring Kiwis back “home” to our region during this time of year. Showcase unique winter activities in the region

### 3.8 Continue to leverage experiences during the spring season

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continue to promote events within spring
- Activate and connect other parts of the city to these existing events with outdoor arts and culture offerings
- Partner with Mana Whenua to celebrate matauranga Māori and connection to taiao — urban planting, kōwhai flowering, etc.

## 04 | Activate our Canterbury RTO region as a whole



As our region continues to see demographic changes and growth, it is fundamental for our districts to work together to develop and promote Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas. Whereas 88% of visitors visit Ōtautahi Christchurch, packaging our destination as a whole will create more holistic visitation experience, drive blended trips and create new development and infrastructure growth opportunities outside the core area.

The population of Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas is forecast to double to a million people over the next 60 years or even earlier, following rapid growth over the past 15 years. In its 2040 Master Plan, Christchurch Airport forecast passenger traffic to grow from 6.3 million passengers today to 11.6 million passengers in 2040. Its share of international passengers is forecast to grow from 24% to 35% during that time. Connectivity within the region will be a key driver to ensure our community's well-being and access to Ōtautahi Christchurch's labour market, cultural attractions and events.

The Destination Management Plan must build upon the Greater Christchurch 2050 Plan, the Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan and the Ōtautahi Christchurch Spatial Plan to provide a visitor perspective on transportation and guide investment decisions.

In particular, this plan acknowledges that we need to reduce transport emissions to meet our target of zero emissions by 2045. In doing so, it aligns to the draft national Emissions Reduction Plan, and readies us to respond to the upcoming review of the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport, which will have a strong focus on emissions reduction; takes into account national direction on intensification, and the Council's ongoing response to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development; and provides frameworks and tools, including through the national One Network Framework, to align our urban and [transport planning](#). Refer to the [Council's Climate Resilience Strategy](#).

This plan also acknowledges the Huihui Mai (let's come together) engagement that ran from February to March 26, 2023.

The strategies listed in this plan complement those developed in the Ōtautahi Christchurch Transport draft plan, namely:

**Improve access and choice**

**Create safe, healthy and liveable communities**

**Support economic vitality**

**Create opportunities for environmental enhancements**

The following themes address sustainable tourism infrastructure, road improvements, especially around tourism corridors, cycle infrastructure and the exploration of alternative transportation modes.

There is an opportunity to support the Greater Christchurch 2050 initiatives and Ōtautahi Christchurch Transport Plan to improve connectivity and access within Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas.

The following themes cover product development, destination management and infrastructure, and marketing to better activate and package the destination and surrounding areas as a whole in order to spread visitation throughout our region and across seasons.

#### 4.1 Establish a regional working group to drive intergovernmental collaboration in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas

Working together is one of our key strategic priorities and fundamental components to the success of this theme. In order to achieve successful implementation of regional tourism efforts, partners in various districts and neighbourhoods throughout Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas will need to improve communication and collaboration.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Bring together tourism representatives from Christchurch City Council, ChristchurchNZ, Selwyn, Ashburton and Waimakariri District Councils for regular biannual forums to discuss ongoing and upcoming tourism initiatives
- Combine resources to create cohesive marketing and visitor information that preserves the unique identities of the region and townships, including interesting rural villages, catering to the borderless journey of the visitor and connects points of common interest
- Agreement with isite Ōtautahi Christchurch includes a requirement to work together and promote desire to work together and promote the interconnected visitor offering

#### 4.2 Package regional journeys

The Plan calls for an opportunity to better “package” our destination as a whole with the creation of routes and journeys (afternoon, day, weekend) that combine highlights of our destination.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continue to develop key thematic journeys from Ōtautahi Christchurch anchored by key experiences
- Develop regional thematic guides across Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas
- Work with local isites on how to message these journeys

#### 4.3 Support slow tourism initiatives

As a destination targeting “Sophisticated Explorers” and aiming for more sustainable travel, slow tourism is an obvious objective. Slow tourism offers travellers the opportunity to disconnect from their regular fast-paced urban lifestyles and to immerse themselves in a new destination and new cultures.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Continue to promote scenic rail journeys to and from Christchurch and support the development of stopovers throughout the districts that the rail networks travel through
- Advocate for the reintroduction of rail shuttle services between centres. Support rail shuttle project as a pilot
- Support development and enhancement of quality farm stays and scenic, rural all-inclusive stays
- Create a slow tourism campaign that highlights various experiences and products across the region
- Help local producers/artisans develop stories, honing their messages and offerings for these key markets
- Align with Tourism New Zealand international consumer segment **mindsets**; Experienced Connectors and Organised Joy Seekers plus the Considered Rejuvenators (domestic)

*Note the Vibrant Adventurers and Fun-Loving Trail Blazer mindsets are already markets we attract enough visitation from*



#### 4.4 Promote surrounding areas to Ōtautahi Christchurch residents

The surrounding regions have voiced interest in better promoting visitation from Ōtautahi Christchurch residents (and those newer Rolleston and Lincoln residents who see themselves aligned to the city), encouraging visitation during the off-season and improving access for Ōtautahi Christchurch residents to experience what the region has to offer. This also fits the broader trend of environmental and financial considerations of less frequent overseas travel and instead exploring more of their “own backyard”.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Define KPIs within the regions to grow intent to travel from Ōtautahi Christchurch source market, including tracking ECT spend from residents
- Develop and execute local marketing and PR campaign around the activities in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas (1-5 day itineraries)
- Create staycation incentives for off-peak seasons — including accommodation/dinner package, accommodation/cultural institution package — that will encourage local visitors to explore the region. These can be combined with major events in Ōtautahi Christchurch to encourage some residents to visit surrounding areas

#### 4.5 Drive bleisure travel

Blended travel is driving business travel post-pandemic. According to Skift, blended travel was worth USD\$497.5 billion worldwide in 2022, with 2 in 5 employees requesting blended travel according to travel managers. Airbnb data supported this trend within the local region showing people extending stays, with Canterbury being a base for remote working combined with tourism.

Based on the diversity and access to unique experiences, the districts have an opportunity to drive blended travel to the region by working with travel planners, hospitality partners and venues in promoting 2-3 days trips in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Develop blended travel offerings in partnership with event organisers
- Work with operators in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas to drive blended travel trips around key business events in Ōtautahi Christchurch
- isite to have a range of experiences supporting the bleisure tourist, noting close proximity to business event facilities

#### 4.6 Develop a regional trail system that connects all of Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas trail assets

New Zealand, in particular the South Island, is world renowned for its Great Walks and cycle trails. Unlike other regions across the South Island, Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas have very few flagship outdoor experiences. With access to the uniquely biodiverse Southern Alps, Arthur’s Pass Village, national parks, ski fields, unique landscapes and Banks Peninsula and some iconic waterways, Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas have potential to develop some of the best walking and cycling experiences in New Zealand.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Extend and grow the network of successful cycleways, such as Little River Rail Trail and the Northern Corridor Cycleway to connect more regions in the surrounding areas

- Establish a working group to support the development of a collection of sustainable trails (water, hiking, biking, equestrian, motorised and coastal) that offers outdoor opportunities to both residents and visitors, and provide economic benefits to the many partners committed to creating an exemplary trail experience
- Work with DOC and Mana Whenua to assess the potential of developing a new Great Walk
- Continue work with the Arthur’s Pass to Te Waihora cycleway project

#### **4.7 Promote and resource the City to Sea ‘cycleway’**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Promote permanent bike and mobility device hire or share
- Advocate for and incentivise small tours
- Advocate for and incentivise a boat hire service

#### **4.8 Advocate for regional sustainable transportation infrastructure**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Support the development of EV-charging stations on the main tourism corridors / routes in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas to support electric cars
- Provide visitor growth data that supports recommendations from the Greater Christchurch Partnership to develop Rapid Mass Transit transportation options through light rail or bus metro

#### **4.9 Advocate for continued improvement of roads along tourism corridors**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Identify the high visitor use roads and advocate for councils and Government to assess road damage and road conditions and plan for improvements

#### **4.10 Improve regional wayfinding**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Align physical signs/wayfinding with points of interest/attractions in digital guides
- Review and if required create a highway signage program for rural tourism sites/attractions to apply for the installation of directional signage

#### **4.11 Encourage the use of in-destination alternative transportation options**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Create incentives for businesses (tourism and non-tourism) and events and festivals to promote low-emission transportation options, such as shared rides, scooters, bikes, etc.
- Investigate a visitor communications program to increase awareness and ridership of public transportation or low-emission transportation options

#### **4.12 Expand and promote cycle infrastructure**

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:**

- Support the expansion of the cycle lane network to create safe and accessible circuits
- Support the expansions of bike share pilot programs, particularly around tourism attractions and accommodations

#### 4.13 Develop loop bus/trails in Waimakariri and Hurunui

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Conduct a bus loop feasibility study to determine viability of operating a new bus service loop in Waimakariri and Hurunui, including determining options for routes and timetables, identifying potential service gaps and stop locations
- Based on findings from the feasibility study, launch a pilot bus loop service

## 05 | Build tourism leadership & excellence as a path towards resilience



As committed parties who support Te Tiriti o Waitangi, this plan seeks to honour the treaty articles.

With climate urgency and new national policies, a regenerative approach is integral to the Destination Management Plan. Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas have the potential to lead the way in New Zealand by introducing new sustainable frameworks. The Destination Management Plan calls for a framework that measures

the sustainability of tourism development by connecting prosperity, planet and people. The triple bottom line approach seeks to find a suitable balance between the three dimensions to ensure long-term sustainability.

Overall, a regenerative tourism approach and a successful triple bottom line framework will require the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building.

### Prosperity



The objective is to ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities contributing to poverty alleviation.

### Planet



The objective is to make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

### People



The objective is to respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

In addition, talent attraction in the hospitality industry and overall labour supply is one of the global concerns in tourism. According to the 2022 Hospitality Consumer Survey by EY, “One of the biggest issues facing hotels right now is labour shortages. Twelve of the 20 CFOs in the EY survey cited this challenge as causing the most strain on hotel net operating income (NOI)”.

While the tourism industry in New Zealand has historically faced labour shortages, a rapid rebound in visitation, and increased competition from other industries has further strained the

labour market. Tourism labour development will be necessary to sustain long-term growth of the sector, host both domestic and international travellers, and deliver quality services. Without concerted efforts to retain, enhance, and grow the tourism workforce, the destination will risk losing the level of productivity and the supply of tourism assets and businesses that drive the long-term resilience of the visitor economy.

The following themes explore intergovernmental cooperation and policy to better support and drive quality labour in the tourism industry.



### 5.1 Establish a destination stewardship committee to guide tourism development in collaboration with stakeholders

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Define the destination stewardship committee based on future priorities
- Determine how best to facilitate the destination stewardship committee
- Determine ways to engage across the Canterbury RTO in an effective way, whilst also tapping into existing groups so as not to add additional burden to time-poor small business operators

### 5.2 Measure the impact of tourism in the region

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Define a measurement framework with stakeholders and data providers to track and report on the impact of tourism across all three dimensions
- Collect data from all partners to build the measurement index
- Develop a collective data management tool to report on trends and anticipate future challenges
- Identify sources and collect data on visitor target audience value yield (social, environmental and economic) to enhance prosperity, planet and people on an ongoing basis

### 5.3 Monitor community perception of tourism

When unchecked, rapid tourism growth can lead to significant impacts on sensitive cultural, heritage and environmental sites, as well as the day-to-day lives of residents, often resulting in negative perceptions or even resentment towards visitors. Today, 81% of residents believe tourism is important to the economy, but only 41% consider tourism to have a positive impact on their life as a resident. Both the level of support and impact of tourism are key measures to ensure the quality of life of residents and the sustainable development of tourism.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Partner with TNZ and their Pulse of the Nation to gather data that would monitor overall sentiment of the community towards tourism
- Support TIA and ITP Workforce Plans to develop local campaigns to educate residents about the importance of tourism and its impact on the economy and local quality of life
- Work with district surveying of ratepayers to include questions within existing mechanisms to track ongoing community tourism sentiment

### 5.4 Support and expand workforce retention programmes

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Support ongoing industry-level workforce recruitment and retention programmes that build from the government's Go With Tourism recruitment initiative and the six Tirohanga Hou (ways of thinking) developed by MBIE's [Better Work Action Plan](#) for tourism workforce

### 5.5 Grow tourism labour force supply

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Support tourism labour force attraction initiatives as part of the Christchurch Economic Ambition
- Support Go with Tourism to grow awareness and opportunities for roles in the tourism industry
- Showcase Lincoln University tourism programme

## 5.6 Advocate for funds to develop community/ workforce housing and temporary accommodation in regional areas

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Identify workforce challenges especially within the more regional areas of Ashburton, Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts
- Work with the city and district councils and central government to advocate for support where possible
- Consider zoning incentives for employers and property owners providing employee housing on their properties
- Establish workforce housing targets to guide new/planned developments
- Advocate for and educate private sector tourism and other stakeholders to support workforce housing development in regional areas
- Advocate for and expand incentives and resources to allocate land and repurpose infrastructure for housing

## 5.7 Steward diversity in the industry and beyond

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Implement diversity standards across all marketing and communication processes (particularly digital platforms)

## 5.8 Advocate for accessibility standards

To fulfil Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding districts vision as a great place to live, accessibility for all is a key goal for the region in the long-term. Accessibility to places, experiences, and information is essential to connect with all audiences and plan for resilience.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Partner with accessible tourism service providers and specialists to improve and/or highlight accessible tourism opportunities across the region

## 5.9 Support technology to digitalise the industry and mitigate labour pressure

To fulfil Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding area's promise as a great place to live, accessibility for all is a key goal for the region in the long-term.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Support and welcome startups and innovators creating new technology that alleviates pressure on labour resources in the hospitality industry
- Work with developers and hoteliers to provide best-in-class support and training

## 5.10 Attract international students to increase the labour market and attract future talent

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS:

- Showcase Lincoln University's tourism programme
- Continue to work alongside tertiaries to identify international student markets for promotion (in line with the already agreed international relations policy framework)
- Continue to host international education agents to showcase the region as a study destination



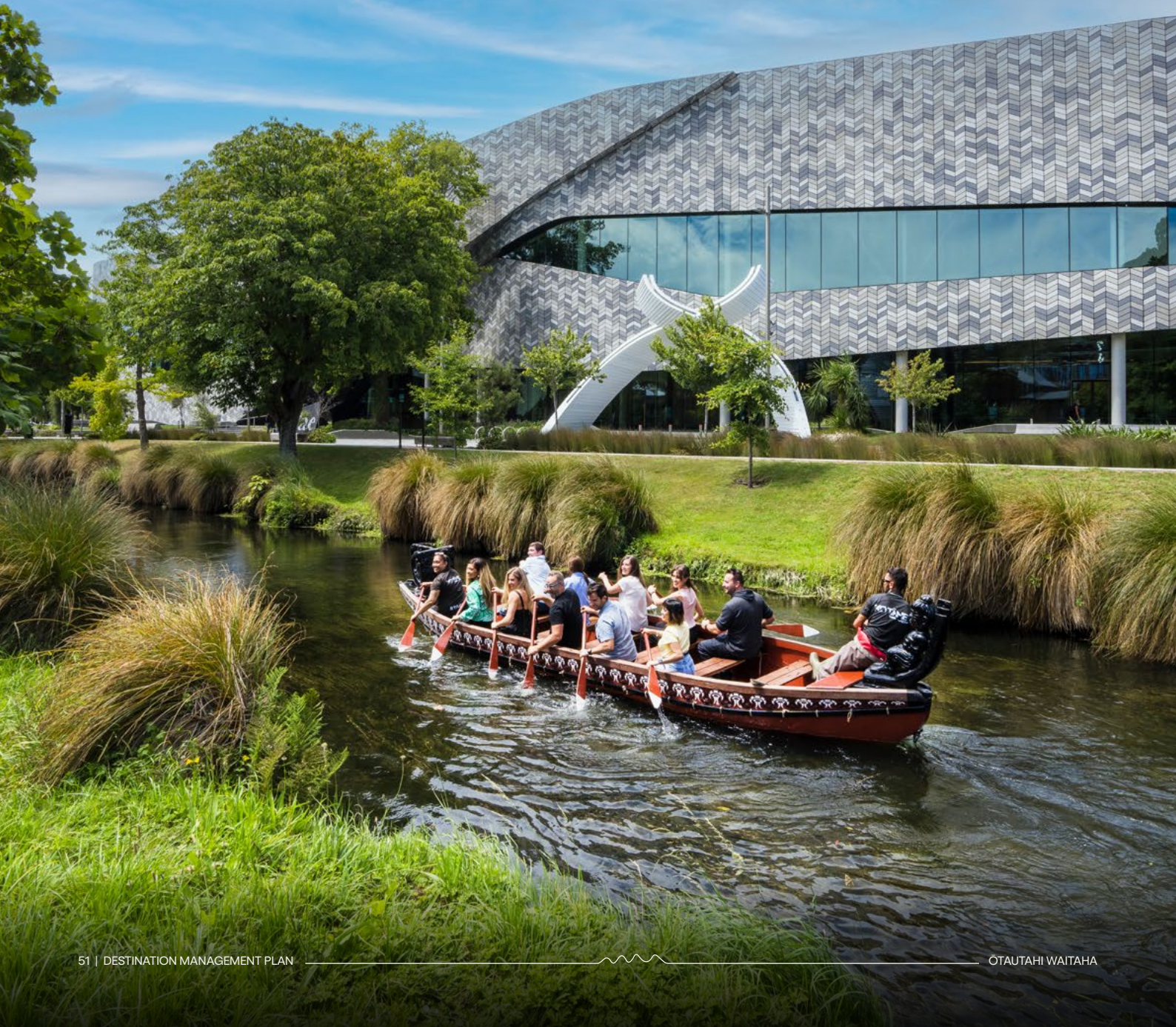
# 05.

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## Success Measures

Well managed, sustainable, regenerative tourism can provide positive economic impacts to the whole region.

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The following success measures are outlined to help the destination monitor its contributions and progress toward achieving each of the strategic objectives previously outlined.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	 <p><b>Champion environmental stewardship and resilience</b></p>	 <p><b>Strengthen visitor economy by becoming a destination</b></p>	 <p><b>Work together and enrich our communities</b></p>
SUCCESS MEASURES	<p><b>01</b></p> <p>Establish a plan for reducing the carbon footprint of the visitor economy, including supporting local operator capability building</p> <p><b>02</b></p> <p>Increased visitor participation in regenerative tourism experiences</p> <p><b>03</b></p> <p>Increasing percentage of residents believe visitors can make sustainable travel choices when visiting</p>	<p><b>04</b></p> <p>Regain Christchurch’s pre-earthquake share of the national visitor economy by 2030*</p> <p><b>05</b></p> <p>Length of stay increases from 1.8 nights to 2.2 nights by 2030</p> <p><b>06</b></p> <p>Increase percentage of Christchurch residents visiting districts and Banks Peninsula (measured by ECT spend)</p>	<p><b>07</b></p> <p>Tracking tourism satisfaction and impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a visitor Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 75 or better.</li> <li>• Baseline resident tourism impact measures developed. Improvement outcomes post baseline development.</li> <li>• Annual surveys track resident tourism sentiment i.e. impacts on resident life</li> </ul> <p><b>08</b></p> <p>Memorandum of agreement established, recognising a commitment by districts to work together as a destination</p>

\*Note: Based on national visitor economy forecasts, this aspirational market share would deliver an estimated \$1billion of additional expenditure and 7,000 new jobs

# 06.

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## Governance & Implementation

It's all about working more closely together; developing new, complementary attractions, enticing visitors to Ōtautahi Christchurch and encouraging visitors to explore the surrounding districts.

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Although ChristchurchNZ will not have ownership of most of the activities outlined in this plan, they will be a champion and advocate for all of them. ChristchurchNZ will take a leadership role in convening governance groups and measuring the success of the plan. Note that the designation of ‘Lead’ in the matrix below does not necessarily mean that the entity is delivering the work — they simply have a key role in guiding the action moving forward.

The following action plan matrix illustrates the wide range of partners and stakeholders whose support and partnership will be critical to the implementation of themes of work identified in this plan. The workbook is intended to be an interactive, working section of the plan to track progress and implementation.

## 01 | Establish regenerative & resilient tourism practices



Action	Christchurch	Selwyn	Waimakariri	Ashburton	Lead / Support	Timeline	Cost	Impact
<b>1.1</b> Develop regenerative tourism commitment for local operators	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Medium
<b>1.2</b> Connect with a Rangtahi Committee to weigh in on future projects and attractions	●	●	●	●	City Council / Districts / ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	Low
<b>1.3</b> Investigate way to reduce carbon footprint	●	●	●	●	City Council / Districts / ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Low
<b>1.4</b> Incentivise and attract regenerative visitor experiences	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Medium
<b>1.5</b> Involve local community in the regeneration process	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / City Council / District Councils	Medium	Low	Low
<b>1.6</b> Establish a regeneration themed annual major, business or community event/festival	●				ChristchurchNZ / City Council	Long	High	Medium
<b>1.7</b> Prioritise the regeneration of the Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor (OARC)	●				City Council / ChristchurchNZ	Medium	High	High



# 02

## Grow our destination and shift from perception as just a gateway



Action	Christchurch	Selwyn	Waimakariri	Ashburton	Lead / Support	Timeline	Cost	Impact
2.1 Showcase Our Destination	●				ChristchurchNZ	Medium	High	High
2.2 Develop Ōtautahi Christchurch & surrounds into New Zealand's favourite event destination	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	High	High
2.3 Position Ōtautahi Christchurch & surrounding districts as the preferred national & international sporting event destination	●	●	●	●	City Council / ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Medium
2.4 Continue to align business events with regional strengths to become NZ's preferred conference venue and attract new audiences to the city	●				ChristchurchNZ	Short	High	High
2.5 Leverage the cultural and performing arts offerings to attract "Sophisticated Explorer" target audience	●				City Council / ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Low	Medium
2.6 Grow and support family friendly experiences to attract "Family-Oriented Traveller" target audience	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	Low

# 03

## Cultivate the destination experience



Action	Christchurch	Selwyn	Waimakariri	Ashburton	Lead / Support	Timeline	Cost	Impact
3.1 Work together to bring more tourism product to market through the development of contestable tourism initiative fund	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / District Councils	Medium	Low	Medium
3.2 Support the development and sharing of Mana Whenua stories	●	●	●	●	Mana Whenua / ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Low	Medium
3.3 Explore opportunities for Dark Sky development and collaboration		●	●	●	District Councils			
3.4 Develop culinary leadership	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / Local Operators	Medium	Low	Medium
3.5 Implement a regional events framework	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / District Councils / City Council / VO	Short	Medium	Medium

3.6	Research the best way to deliver a coordinated events platform to bring our regional and local events together	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Low	Low
3.7	Create a Winter offering around Matariki	●	●	●	●	Mana Whenua District Councils / City Council / ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	Low
3.8	Continue to leverage experiences during the Spring season	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ		Medium	Medium

## 04 | Activate our Canterbury RTO region as a whole



Action	Christchurch	Selwyn	Waimakariri	Ashburton	Lead / Support	Timeline	Cost	Impact	
4.1	Establish a regional working group to drive intergovernmental collaboration in Ōtautahi Christchurch & surrounding districts	●	●	●	●	District Councils / ChristchurchNZ / City Council	Short	Low	Medium
4.2	Package regional journeys	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	High
4.3	Support slow tourism initiatives		●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / Rail Operator	Short	Low	Low
4.4	Promote surrounding areas to Ōtautahi Christchurch residents		●	●	●	District Councils	Short	Low	Medium
4.5	Drive bleisure travel	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	Low
4.6	Develop a regional trail system that connects all of Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas trail assets	●	●	●	●	City Council / District Councils	Long	High	High
4.7	Promote and resource the City to Sea 'cycleway'	●				City Council	Medium	High	Medium
4.8	Advocate for regional sustainable transportation infrastructure	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / City Council	Medium	Low	Medium
4.9	Advocate for continued improvement of roads along tourism corridors		●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Low	Medium
4.10	Improve regional wayfinding	●	●	●	●	Waka Kotahi	Medium	Medium	Low

4.11	Encourage the use of in-destination alternative transportation options	●	●	●	●	District Councils / City Council	Short	Low	Low
4.12	Expand and promote cycle infrastructure	●	●	●	●	District Councils / City Council	Medium	High	Medium
4.13	Develop loop bus/trails in Waimakariri and Hurunui			●		District Councils	Medium	Medium	Low

## 05 | Build tourism leadership & excellence as a path towards resilience



Action	Christchurch	Selwyn	Waimakariri	Ashburton	Lead / Support	Timeline	Cost	Impact	
5.1	Establish a destination stewardship committee to guide tourism development	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / District Councils / City Council	Short	Low	Low
5.2	Measure the impact of tourism in the region	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Medium
5.3	Monitor community perception of tourism	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Short	Low	Low
5.4	Support and expand workforce retention programmes	●	●	●	●	MBIE	Short	Medium	High
5.5	Grow tourism labour force supply	●	●	●	●	MBIE / ITO	Short	Medium	High
5.6	Advocate for funds to develop community/workforce housing and temporary accommodation in regional areas	●	●	●	●	District Councils	Medium	High	High
5.7	Steward diversity in the industry and beyond	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ / District Councils	Long	Medium	Medium
5.8	Advocate for accessibility standards	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Low	Medium
5.9	Support technology to digitalise the industry and mitigate labour pressure	●	●	●	●	ChristchurchNZ	Medium	Medium	Medium
5.10	Attract international students to increase the labour market and attract future talent	●	●			ChristchurchNZ / Selwyn District Council / Education Services Providers / City Council	Medium	Low	Medium



# 07.

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## Background

This Destination Management Plan sits within the context of existing studies, plans and strategies. And is informed by extensive research, data analysis and insights.

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## A Changing World

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the most significant disruption to global travel and tourism in the history of the industry. The pandemic has had a profound impact on travel preferences, shaping industry economics and shifting travel prospects. The economic impact of COVID-19 has been enormous on the tourism sector. In 2020, more than 72,000 jobs were lost in New Zealand at the height of the crisis, and the nation's tourism revenue dropped by \$15.6 billion.

At the same time, costs are rising. Prices for airlines, hotel stays, food, and car rentals have all soared over the past several months as part of a larger inflation trend amid supply chain issues and an economic reopening. The way income and prices play together in the future will significantly impact overall travel demand.

More frequent extreme environmental events such as Cyclone Gabrielle are increasing the global urgency to adapt to climate change by implementing sustainable development practices.

Around the world, and in New Zealand, there have been growing calls for tourism that prioritises communities and the environment.



# Developing the Destination Management Plan

In April 2022 ChristchurchNZ commenced a global tender process in the commissioning of two separate Destination Management Plans, one for Christchurch and the surrounding area and the second for the Banks Peninsula. These two regions, while intrinsically linked from a visitation perspective,

share different challenges when it comes to destination management. A leadership advisory group was put in place to support the development of the plans which included industry experts and Mana Whenua, and the selected supplier commenced work in July 2022.

## Leadership Advisory Group:



**Chair – Paul Bingham**  
ChristchurchNZ Holdings  
Limited Board



**Justin Watson**  
Christchurch International  
Airport Limited



**Rebecca Ingram**  
Tourism Industry  
Association



**Reriti Tau**  
Ngāi Tūāhuriri  
Rūnanga



**Tracy Tierney**  
Greater Christchurch  
Partnership



**Lynn McClelland**  
Christchurch City  
Council

## Mana Whenua:

Reriti Tau, Ngāi Tūāhuriri, member of the RFP Evaluation Panel and Leadership Advisory Group

Engagement with Mana Whenua has been guided by Whitiōra

Approach to engaging rūnanga guided by Whitiōra

Tahu Robinson and Ariki Creative providing creative direction

### This Destination Management Plan was developed according to 16 key elements:

Define the destination

Define the vision

Access

Strategic fit

Brand positioning

Target markets

Experience & product development

Leadership & structures

Amenities, services & infrastructure

Attitudes

Capability & development

Marketing & promotion

Environmental stewardship

Data, research & analysis

Risk & crisis management

Measuring success



## Each Destination Management Plan is built upon our guiding whanonga pono (principles):



## In addition, this Destination Management Plan sits within the context of a wide breadth of existing studies, plans, and strategies, including:

- Greater Christchurch Partnership 2050 Plan
- Christchurch Economic Ambition
- Christchurch Visitor Strategy (2019)
- Christchurch Multicultural Strategy
- Greater Christchurch Public Transport Futures Programme
- Christchurch City Council Long Term Plan
- Key infrastructure development
- [Christchurch Airport Master Plan to 2040](#)
- [Ōtautahi Christchurch Climate Resilience Strategy: Christchurch City Council](#)
- Christchurch Major Events Strategy (2021)
- Christchurch Business Events Strategy (2020)
- [Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor Regeneration Plan \(dpmc.govt.nz\) \(2019\)](#)
- Toi Ōtautahi Christchurch Art Strategy
- Selwyn Long Term Plan
- Selwyn District Plan
- Selwyn 2031
- Draft South Island Destination Management Plan
- Ōtautahi Christchurch Brand Book

# Insights Brand Development Ōtautahi Christchurch

## Quality of Place Benchmarking

As part of the 'Data, Research & Analysis' element, we conducted a Quality of Place Benchmarking exercise that compares the destination's performance against a set of peer competitors.

When you are looking at yourself as a destination it is critically important to benchmark the strengths of the destination against a competitive set to determine how well the destination is positioned to respond to current and future market trends. Through this exercise, the region was evaluated against a competitive set of 13 destinations (selected based on similar geographic,

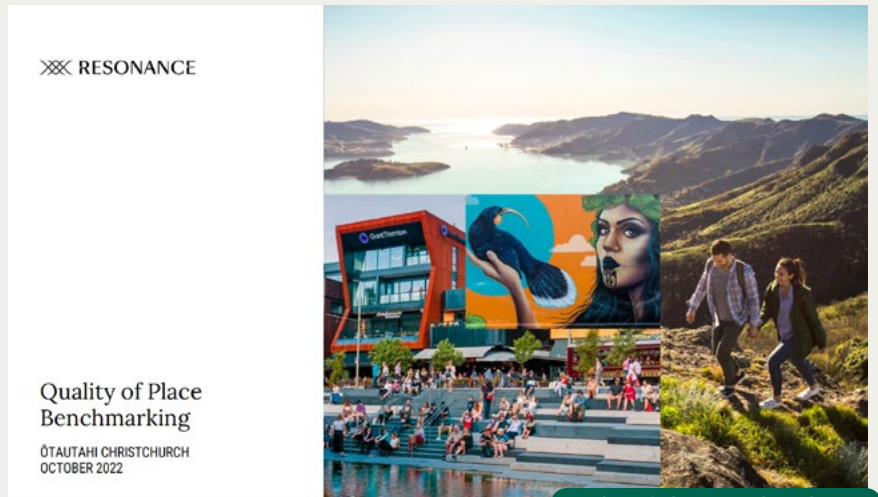
economic, and tourism parameters), across more than 40 different indicators grouped into six categories (Place, Product, Programming, People, Prosperity, and Promotion).

### The competitive set included:

- Auckland
- Dunedin
- Wellington
- Tauranga
- Adelaide
- Hobart
- Cork
- Belfast
- Gothenburg
- Reykjavik
- Vancouver
- Halifax
- Anchorage

Overall, Christchurch ranked as average compared to other destinations, scoring best on the Place category (the area's natural and built environment) and lowest on Prosperity (the area's wealth and economic well-being) and Promotion (the area's reputation and online presence).

In a New Zealand context, Christchurch ranked #2, behind Auckland and ahead of Wellington.



### Some of the Key Insights

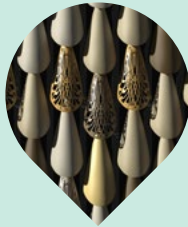
- We love Ōtautahi Christchurch
- We are the best place to be a Kiwi
- We punch above our weight
- Business is in our DNA
- We are not a night time entertainment hub
- We can be a destination
- We are a new city not post-quake

## Behind Our City Story

The city identity is an authentic, evidence-based story about what makes Ōtautahi Christchurch special and why it is a great place to live, work and play.

[Behind Our City Story ↗](#)

To help identify local barriers and opportunities, and to define the vision for the Destination Management Plan, ChristchurchNZ conducted in-depth community and visitor engagement surveys, one-on-one interviews, and multiple workshops with public and private stakeholders.



## Stakeholder Consultation

The primary purpose of the stakeholder engagement was to identify participant opinions, aspirations, and ideas for the future of Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas as a destination, while also building support for the project, which will be critical to implementing the DMP upon completion.

Stakeholder consultation included:

**50+**  
one-on-one interviews

- Mana Whenua
- 50+ one-on-one interviews
- 42 external stakeholders interviewed as groups in tourism, sports, business, and culture
- Trends & Audience workshops
- Stakeholder survey
- Visioning workshops with key tourism stakeholders and representatives from Christchurch City Council, Ashburton, Selwyn, and Waimakariri District Councils



## Visitor Consultation

The visitor survey was designed to help us better understand better understand who the current visitors are to Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas and what types of travellers might be attracted to the destination in the future. The objective was to assess the demographic and psychographic characteristics of previous visitors, identify the motivating factors that drove previous visitors to select Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas as their destination of choice, and assess the quality of and satisfaction with current services.

**9,793**  
visitor respondents

9,793 visitors from New Zealand, Australia, and beyond participated in the survey, noting that the survey was undertaken at a point in time when international visitation had not returned following COVID-19.



## Community Consultation

A community survey helped identify and define general attitudes towards living in the different communities in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas and uncovered the perception of tourism by residents.

In addition, an online social comment board was open during the months of August 2022 to March 2023 for residents to voice their opinions and concerns in six main areas: 'Gaps & Opportunities', 'Barriers & Challenges', 'Aspiration', 'Ideal Visitor', 'What Makes Our Destination Unique', and 'Quality of Life'.

**4,444**  
community respondents

In total, 4,444 survey respondents across Ōtautahi Christchurch, Ashburton, Selwyn, Banks Peninsula, and Waimakariri, participated in the survey.

The following pages contain raw information for the social comment boards in Christchurch, Ashburton, Selwyn and Waimakariri

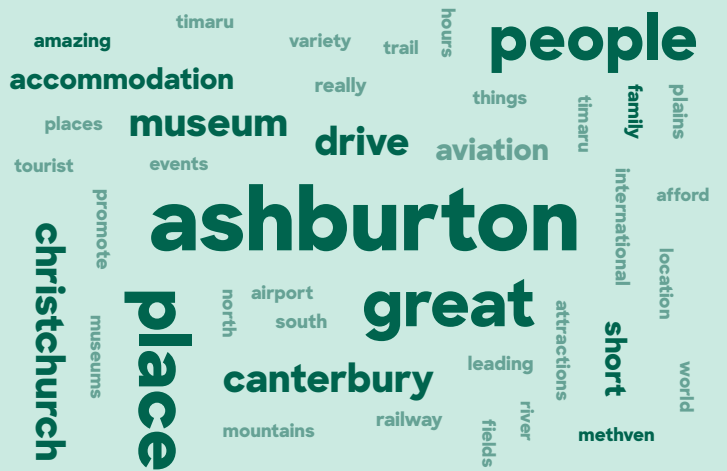




**953** Total Visits      **424** Unique Users      **0:36** Avg Time (min)      **10** Unique Stakeholders      **28** Comments

Shared perspectives:

“  
**Most ‘Liked’ Comment:**  
*“Best ski fields in the country”*  
 ”



Comment board snapshot:

Sort Comments  Recent  Popular

We are a central location , great place to stop if heading north or south , Only 1 hours drive from International airport . Great location for sports tournaments , events and conferences

↑ Uniqueness of Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Tourist don t know where is Mid Canterbury ? Add Ashburton District back into the wording

⚠️ Barriers & Challenges for Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Where is our cycle way trail , Mountain biking and e bikes are on trend ,Mid Canterbury is missing out . Start at Rakaia , Methven, Staveley , Mt Somers old rail way to Woolshed creek and down to Ashburton

📌 Opportunities Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Nothing is driving the Tourist to Ashburton , we need better marketing to promote what we have got and more things to do to drive people so they stop and stay

📌 Opportunities Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍+1 Dislike 👎

Promote a Mid-Canterbury Heritage Trail. Ashburton area is unique - rich in Museums - The Ashburton Aviation Museum, Ashburton Vintage Car Museum, The Plains Railway Precinct, Town and Methven Museums and many others. These places are overlooked for promotion - always the Ski fields, Hot Air Ballooning, Jet Boating etc leading the way - the area has much more to offer for those visitors who can't afford to support these commercial attractions.

💬 View the discussion (1)

↑ Uniqueness of Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍+1 Dislike 👎

Ashburton is the gathering place and for feeding the world with our amazing Food market ,farming and agricultural sectors , Share our story like those that have come before us , Maori History tells as that Ashburton was known as the Food Basket.

💬 View the discussion (1)

↑ Aspirations for Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Amazing scenery but so close to a major city with an international airport

↑ Uniqueness of Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

A destination CBD which attracts tourists and day trippers from Christchurch

↑ Aspirations for Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

It's really important to maintain the essence of the community. Mid Canterbury is a place that people pitch in and help each other

📌 Opportunities Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍+1 Dislike 👎

Being an hour's drive from Christchurch is a good thing but it is also a huge problem. People do not stop, they just pin their ears back and head further south or north

💬 View the discussion (1)

⚠️ Barriers & Challenges for Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

A great place to live and work, affordable yet with job opportunities with world leading businesses

↑ Aspirations for Mid Canterbury & Christchurch  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Mid Canterbury is great for weekends away for people living in Christchurch and Timaru

↑ Ideal Visitor to Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Is sometimes old fashioned, conservative

⚠️ Barriers & Challenges for Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Great places to eat, pretty streets

♥️ Quality of Life in Mid Canterbury  
Like 👍 Dislike 👎

Access to tertiary education

Respects the environment and the locals

Big skies and outdoor lifestyle

Pace of life is slower (in a good way). People are

**664** Total Visits      **285** Unique Users      **0:58** Avg Time (min)      **25** Unique Stakeholders      **43** Comments

Shared perspectives:

**“ Most ‘Liked’ Comment:**

*“Start protecting the environment and do what you say rather than letting it be destroyed. There is plenty of space to be able to keep valuable agricultural soils, established trees, and existing habitats whilst also still developing and being able to house people. Nobody really wants to live in a barren harsh windswept landscape — please start trying to keep what we have and add to it rather than destroying everything to start again.”*

**”**



Comment board snapshot:

DEFINING OUR PLACE

Sort Comments Recent Popular

**1** About

The Waihora Ellesmere Trust's Te Waihora cycle/walk trail looks like a great opportunity. Good to see takata whenua and council getting behind this. May need a couple of small cycle/people transport pontoons to cross LI and Selwyn Waikiri. Linking this to cycle/walk trails from Lincoln, the Rail Trail, Rolleston and Leeston would also be good, and if made into a great circum-lake trail could provide tourism opportunities for landowners en route. Bird watching/Aurora Australis viewings.

**Opportunities for Selwyn & Christchurch**  
Like Dislike

Engage local artists rather than internationals or those based in other areas. Locals appreciate the sense of community that a resident artist brings. Allow new and emerging artists a place as well. Engage with the youth at college to assist and work with professional artists to engender a sense of pride of place. Try not to make everything cookie cutter. An art installation that encourages conversation is worth the investment

**Opportunities for Selwyn & Christchurch**  
Like Dislike

Very limited public transport outside of Rolleston and Lincoln. There needs to be a shuttle of some kind from other townships to join up with existing Rolleston/Lincoln services into CHCH. A train would be great too. We have a train line but no public trains. I know the argument is that we have a single track. Surely we can add some sidings; that can't cost as much as a whole new stretch of road. Of course you would then have to put CHCH railway station somewhere accessible to the city centre.

**Barriers & Challenges in Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

Sustainability: 1. Need to work with industry to clean up the environment, our rivers should be safe to swim in as they were when I (54yrs) was a kid. 2. Transport, safe roads, reduce heavy transport, new modes of transport e.g. EVs, accessible public transport, reduce demand via better internet 3. Health: COVID's not going away and in addition need to be preparing for an ageing population and a balanced zero-growth population

**Barriers & Challenges in Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

Visitors who are here to slow down and really explore the district. Who respect that this is not a tourist playground and that shops aren't open 24/7 for their convenience and that are culturally aware.

**Ideal Visitor to Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

The options here are amazing. I can get up in the morning and ride my horse, walk my greyhound along the roadside by a water race, pop into Rolleston for sushi for lunch, work from home at my international tech job in the afternoon. Then head into Christchurch for a top rated restaurant dinner and grab a movie in Wigram on the way home.

**Quality of Life in Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

A sustainable district which has really turned around the degradation done to our environment especially rivers over the past twenty years.

**Aspirations for Selwyn & Christchurch**  
Like Dislike

Selwyn has the best of everything close at hand, access to the mountains and some of NZ's best river areas as well as everything in Christchurch and it's beaches. Amazing quality of food and crafts pretty much everywhere.

**Uniqueness of Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

Car dependence. Loss of productive land. Lost character of townships. We have an opportunity to be an e emplacements for walkable neighbourhoods.

**Barriers & Challenges in Selwyn District**  
Like Dislike

Protecting our valuable, food producing land, actively supporting agri-Industry to provide the subregion's food needs.

**Aspirations for Selwyn & Christchurch**  
Like Dislike

Really good internet connections for everyone not just schools because there's no point having the skills if you can't get the job because it's based in Auckland. There are heaps of really great roles for someone with the skills and you can be based anywhere if you have a good internet connection.

**Opportunities for Selwyn & Christchurch**  
Like Dislike

Ideally safe biking trails from Darfield to Springfield would be great, I peddled from Waddington to Sheffield for a pub lunch during a sunny winters day, the road was quite scary with the cars and lorries although they did give enough room, and the tramway was hardwork due to the surface, so incorporating even part of the tramway for biking would be great.

**Quality of Life in Selwyn District**





# Supporting Data & Insights on the State of Tourism in the Canterbury RTO Region

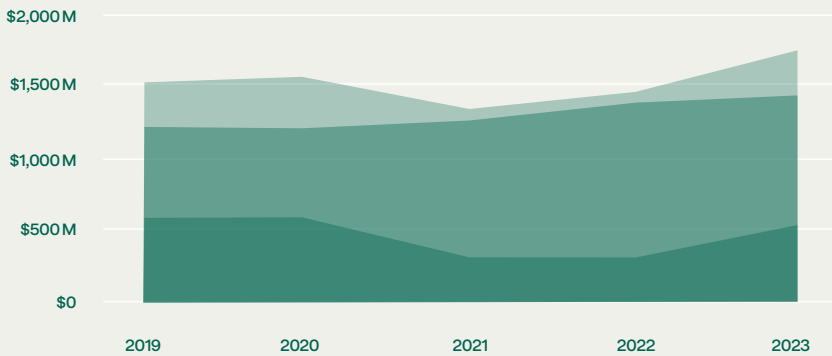
Tourism and the visitor economy are significant contributors to Ōtautahi Christchurch and its surrounding areas. Prior to COVID-19 the visitor sector was valued at almost \$4 billion to the regional economy. With the total economy for the Canterbury Region valued at \$38 billion, tourism was worth 10.3% of the overall regional economy in 2019.

Pre-quake (2010), Christchurch’s market share of visitor expenditure nationally was 10.4%. Domestic market share was 9.4% and international market share was 12.3%. Christchurch has seen good growth in visitor expenditure since 2012 following earthquake disruptions.

Source: MBIE

INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC TOTAL

## ECT Visitor Expenditure, Canterbury (YE March)

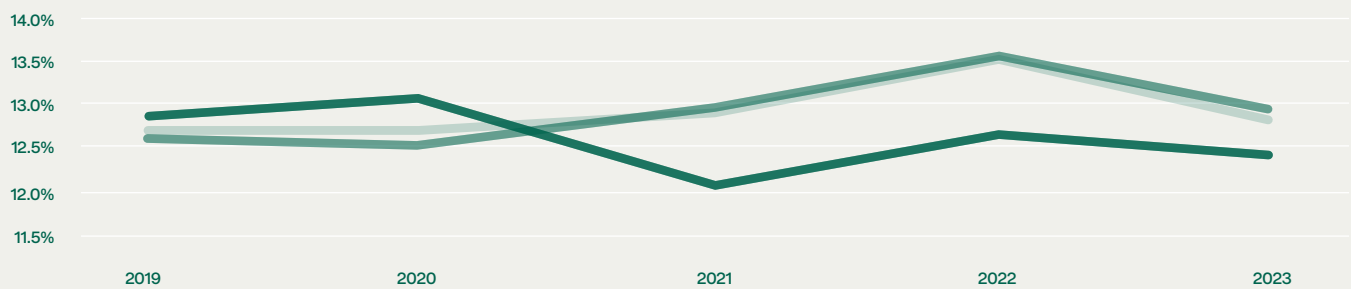


Visitor expenditure has been through a strong growth period in New Zealand overall. However, while spending, due to inflationary levels, in Christchurch is above pre-quake levels, progress towards regaining pre-quake share of the national visitor spend has been more limited. Domestic visitor market share has recovered well, but international visitor market share is still significantly below the pre-quake level.

Source: MBIE

INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC TOTAL

## Proportion of National ECT Visitor Spend, Canterbury (YE March)



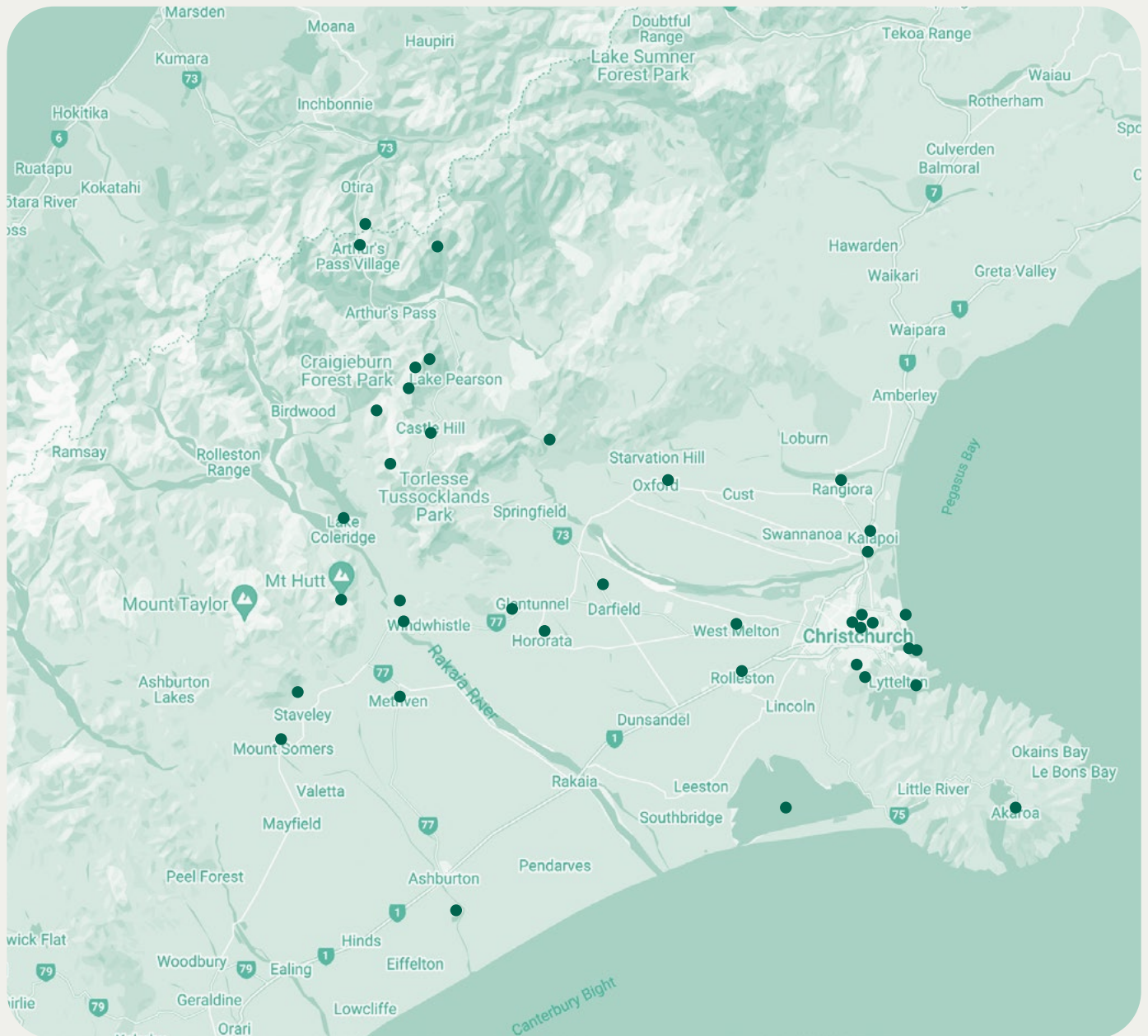
The visitor economy is multi-faceted and reaches wider than what the community might view as traditional tourism. International students, business travellers, visiting friends and family, leisure visitors, special interest visitors (such as wine, ski, luxury) and event visitors make up the market mix that regularly travel to our place.

The most tangible and immediate benefit of visitation is the money spent by leisure, business and education visitors across a wide range of local businesses including

accommodation providers, cafes, bars, restaurants, attractions, transport providers, personal and professional services and retailers. The resulting increase in spending power creates new jobs and materially enhances the wellbeing of residents by allowing the city and districts to sustain a much larger social and cultural footprint than its resident population could support by itself. Residents benefit from this by having many more things to see and do in their place of residence without having to bear the full cost of sustaining them.

# Our Region is diverse, in terms of geography, activities & tourism potential

Map created via interactive workshop with regional representatives, indicating visitor experiences. [Full map available here](#)



Christchurch CBD  
 Craigieburn Valley Ski Area  
 Porters Ski Area  
 Mt Cheeseman Ski Area  
 Temple Basin Ski Area  
 Mount Olympus  
 Broken River Ski Area  
 Lake Coleridge  
 Hororata Events & History  
 Mount Hutt  
 Methven/Opuke

Kura Tāwhiti Castle Hill  
 Conservation Area  
 Staveley Ice Rink  
 Kaiapoi River Queen  
 (River Town)  
 Arthur's Pass Village  
 Arthur's Pass National Park  
 Great Alpine Highway  
 Inland Scenic Route 72  
 West Melton  
 Rolleston

Rangiora Boutique Shopping  
 Fable Terrace Downs Resort  
 Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora)  
 Alpine Airboat  
 Lake Hood  
 Mount Somers  
 Waimakariri River  
 Rakaia Gorge  
 Oxford: Inland Scenic Route 72  
 Akaroa  
 Christchurch Adventure Park

Christchurch Botanic Gardens  
 Beaches: Sumner Beach  
 He Puna Taimoana Hot Pools  
 Port Hills Walking  
 Margaret Mahy Family Playground  
 Tūranga  
 Te Are Ihutai Christchurch Coastal Pathway  
 Ripapa Island





## Economic Impact and Labour

Prior to COVID-19, an estimated 25,000 people were working across approximately 3,700 tourism businesses, which was equivalent to 7.7% of the total workforce within the RTO and **10.6% of the national tourism workforce**. The sector also indirectly supports employment in many other industries, such as the wider retail, transport & recreation sectors, as well as primary and manufacturing firms involved in the tourism supply chain.

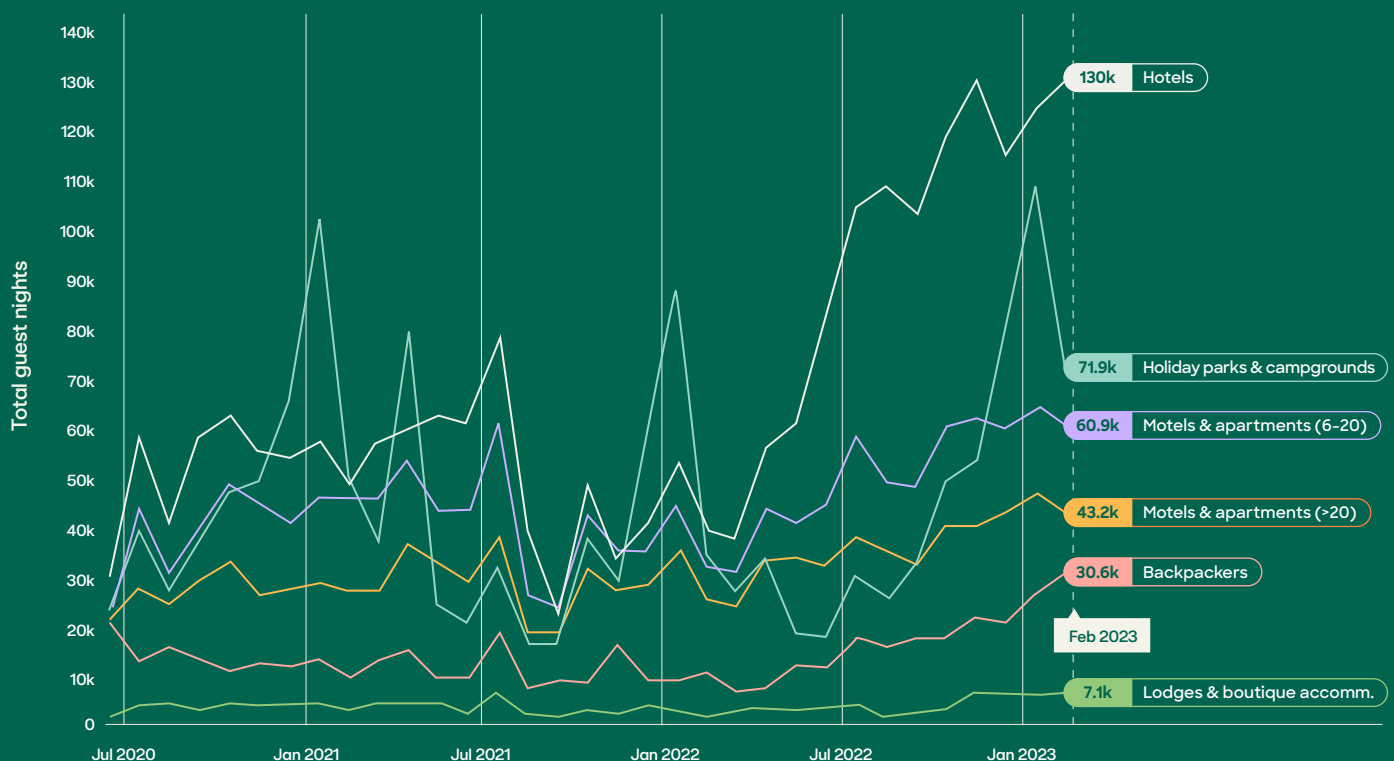
## Hotels Remain a Convenient Choice of Accommodation

According to MBIE, there are 11,700 rooms (hotels, motels, holiday parks) in Christchurch across various property classes. Although there was an uptick through COVID-19 for holiday parks and campgrounds,

as consumers searched for lodging that enabled safe distancing, bookings have since reverted to pre-pandemic trends with hotels making up 37% of visitor stays – the largest growing segment.

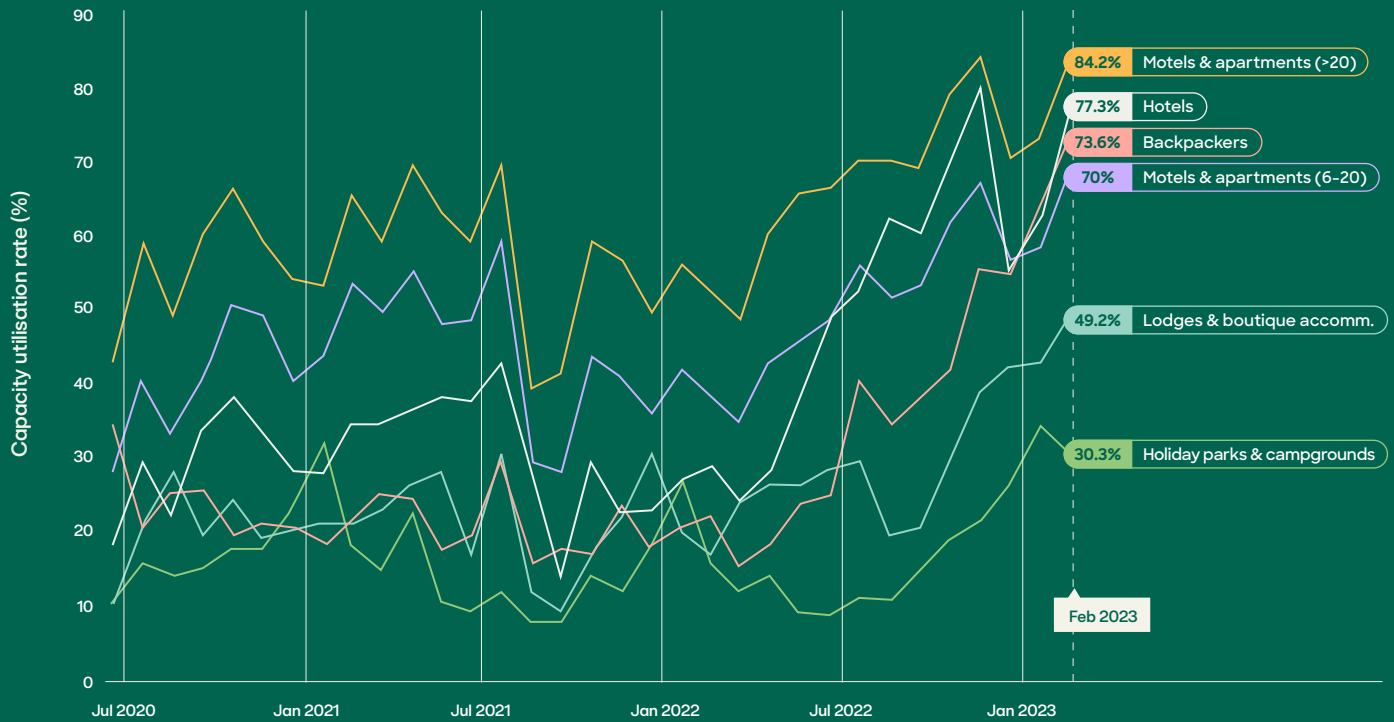
### Total guest nights for Canterbury RTO area by property type (Monthly)

Source: MBIE



Note: Historical data is COVID-19 impacted

## Capacity utilisation rate (%) for Canterbury RTO area by property type (Monthly) Source: MBIE



According to data collected from MBIE, Capacity Utilisation Rate has steadily increased since the re-opening of the borders to 41.6% in February 2023, 0.8 points above the New Zealand average. However, this is unevenly distributed across different categories. While hotel properties reported a capacity utilisation rate of 77.3% in February 2023, campgrounds reported a much lower capacity utilisation rate of 30.3%. *Note: Historical data is COVID-19 impacted.*



# Short Term Rental Apartments are the Highest Accommodation Growth Segment

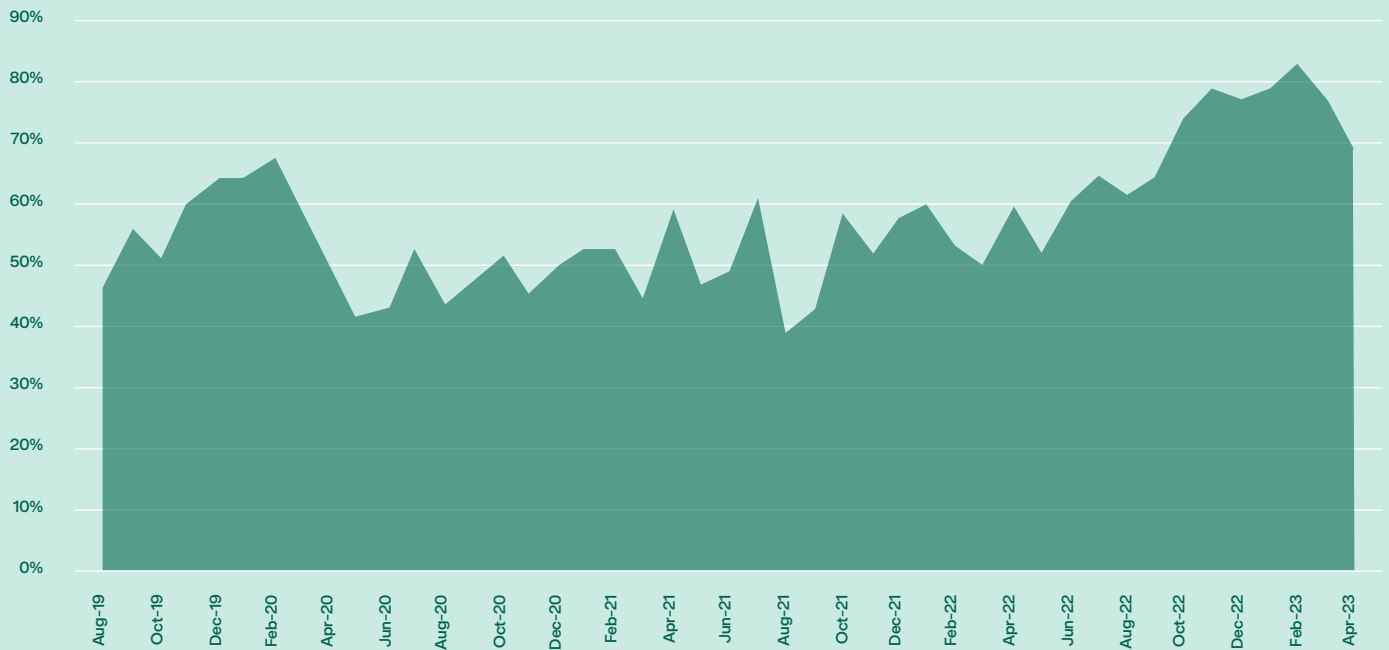
The short-term rental of residences currently plays a small but significant part in the overall lodging supply of Christchurch with less than 500 unique accommodation units. Unlike most regional markets globally, the supply of short term rental units in Christchurch is currently widespread across the region rather than concentrated in the city core. This indicates that short-term rentals primarily serve leisure demand, where travellers have the flexibility to select accommodation farther away from key attractions and convention centres/meeting venues. By the end of 2022, occupancy rates of Airbnb apartments

and capacity utilisation rates of motels/apartments have exceeded pre-pandemic rates in Christchurch.

Although Airbnb and short term apartment rentals took a hit early on in the pandemic, resurgence in demand for this lodging sector has driven average daily rate increases for many markets globally – particularly non-urban destinations. Consumer preferences for these types of lodging may largely be driven by competitive pricing for longer stays and convenience/space factors when travelling in large groups or families.

## Average Airbnb Occupancy, Canterbury RTO

Source: AirDNA



Note: Excludes Ashburton District data

### According to Airbnb:

**18%**

Globally, long-term stays (28+ nights) were 18% of total gross nights booked in Q1 2023, with about half of families staying for a week or longer in 2022.

**60%**

Family travel on the platform was reportedly up 60 percent in 2022 compared to before the pandemic in 2019.

**2 for 1**

Families have been able to book two bedroom/two bathroom lodging for approximately the price of one hotel room at a major chain.



# Visitor Spending & Growing Airport Arrivals

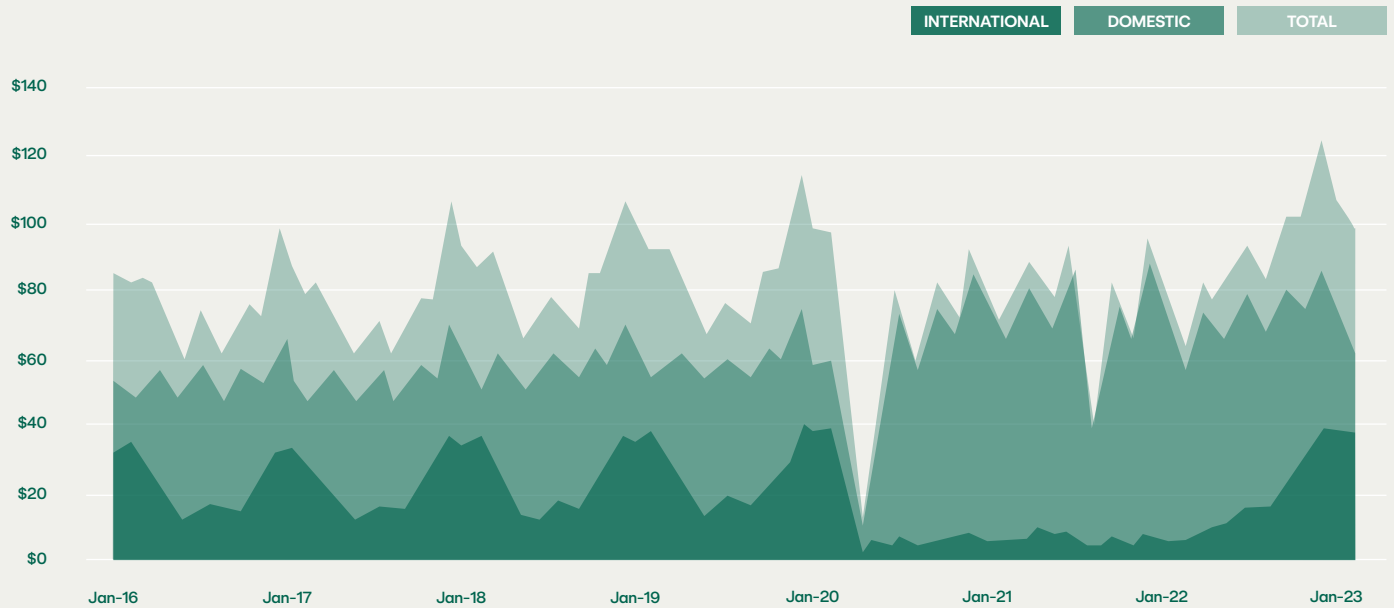
Visitor spending via Electronic Card Transactions (ECT) in the Canterbury RTO area amounted to \$1.05 billion during 2022.

Visitor spending via ECT has surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels. Overall, the value of visitor spending in the Canterbury RTO area during Q4 2022 was 15% higher than the same quarter in 2019.

While this was driven largely by domestic tourism spend (up 22% from pre-COVID-19) vs international tourism spend (-2% over the same period), international arrivals have been increasing steadily and will be expected to grow its share of visitor spending. By Q4 2022, 87,000 international visitor arrivals landed at Christchurch International Airport (CIAL) — up from 50,000 in the previous quarter.

## Visitor Spending, Canterbury RTO Area

Source: Marketview (Electronic Card Transactions)



Note: Excludes Ashburton District data

## Cruise Tourism



In the 2022-2023 cruise season, with the \$67 million Lyttelton berth rebuilt and the country open again to tourism, the bulk of the cruise ship traffic returned to Lyttelton. A total of 73 ships visited Lyttelton and 15 visited Akaroa. Together, this brought an estimated \$32 million in spending to the Ōtautahi Christchurch economy, along with 160,000 passengers and crew.

While cruise tourism has in fact brought with it a significant amount of day visitors to Christchurch central city, it has also highlighted pressure points and calls for a proactive approach to sustainably manage its ongoing impacts. This is further addressed in the Banks Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula Destination Management Plan.



## Business Events

Christchurch pre-earthquake was the second largest market for business events in New Zealand, with a share of 24% of total business events and Australia as a key market. With the infrastructure of Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre, the refurbished Town Hall, and Te Kaha in the pipeline, as well as a closely located International Airport, excellent hotel accommodation supply, and fabulous eateries within walking distance, Ōtautahi Christchurch has an opportunity to reclaim its position as a business events destination and to attract conferences with “beyond tourism” impacts for the region.

Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas offer endless opportunities for blended trips, often referred to as ‘bleisure’, where visitors travel for business and add a holiday at the start or end of their business trip.

The region has significant business events infrastructure, one of the largest in the region is also committed to net CarbonZero operations.

### Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre Features:



**1,400**

Auditorium Seating



**1,600**

Banquet Seating



**24**

Meeting Rooms

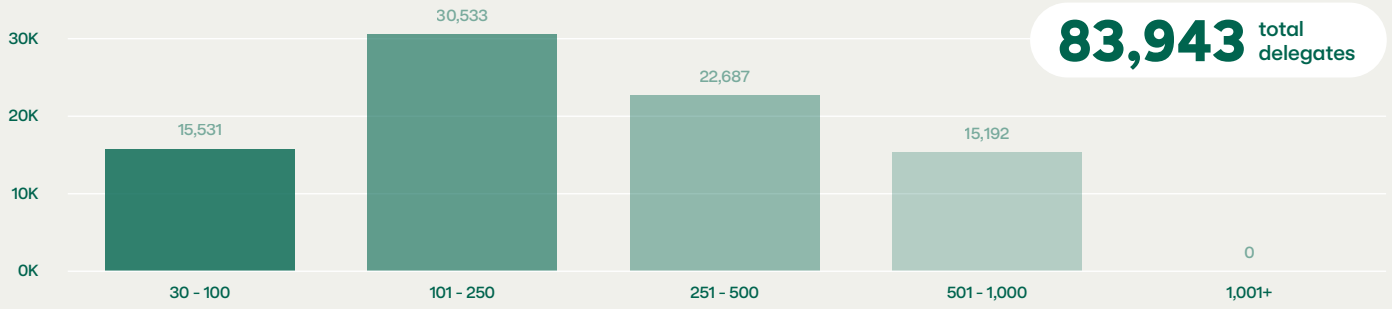


**3,300m<sup>2</sup>**

Exhibition Space

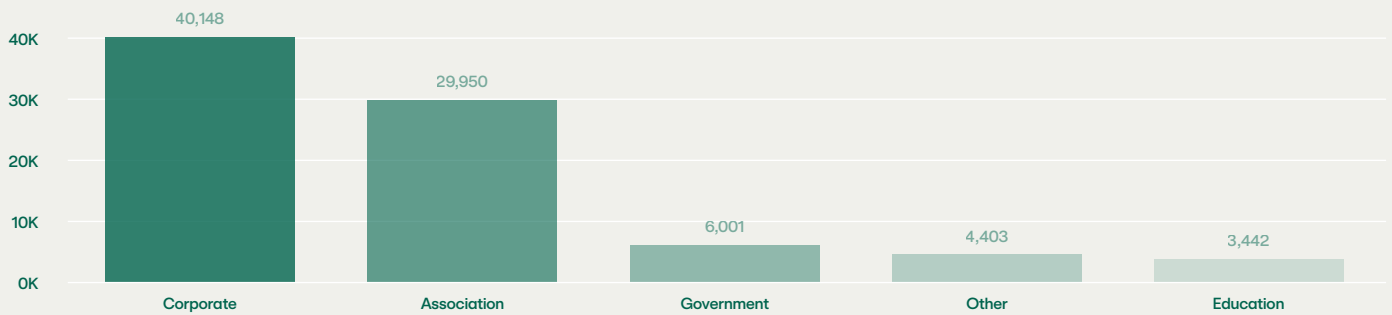
## NUMBER OF DELEGATES

Source: BE Data, Christchurch, Jan - Dec 2022



## CUSTOMER TYPE

Source: BE Data, Christchurch, Jan - Dec 2022



## EVENT TYPE

Source: BE Data, Christchurch, Jan - Dec 2022



Pre-COVID-19, the value of the Business Events sector to the New Zealand economy was worth an estimated \$1.4B annually. With the infrastructure in Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounds today a target has been set by ChristchurchNZ to regain (and slightly better) the local share of all multi-day business events in New Zealand.

It is noted that the surrounding regions have indicated strong interest in further leveraging these visitors, which is the focus of the actions within this plan.

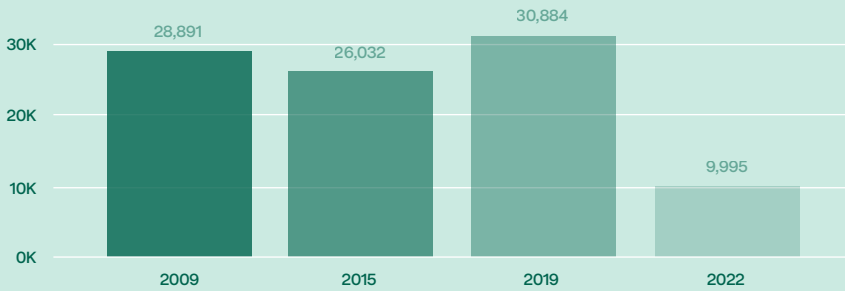


market share by 2025



## International Visitor Arrivals for Business Purpose at Christchurch International Airport

Source: StatsNZ



Outside of business events is the everyday visitation for doing business in the city.

These numbers were drastically impacted by COVID-19 and are slowly rebounding, limited still by airline capacity.

## Community Aspiration

Based on the community survey results, 81% of our community believes tourism is somewhat or very important to their local economy. However, today only 52% of our community are either positively or negatively impacted by tourism (based on the respondents of the community survey). Only 13% are impacted extremely positively by tourism and 1% extremely negatively.

Unlike Banks Peninsula, where the focus of the Destination Management Plan is to manage and limit visitation numbers, the Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas aim to leverage the region's infrastructure.

Acknowledging the importance of managing carbon impacts and maintaining sustainable practices, the region's infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate substantial increases in visitor numbers without degrading the overall experience for others. While we acknowledge the importance of managing carbon impacts and maintaining sustainable practices as we further develop the destination, there is still a significant opportunity to position Ōtautahi Christchurch and surrounding areas as a premier tourism destination, attracting visitors from around the world and stimulating economic growth.

**81%**

of our community believes tourism is **somewhat or very important** to their local economy

**13%**

of our community are extremely **positively** impacted by tourism

**1%**

of our community are extremely **negatively** impacted by tourism



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**Ehara tāku toa i te toa  
takitahi, engari he toa takitini.**

**My strength is not as an  
individual, but as a collective.**

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