

SAFETY

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Both our perception and experience of safety strongly influence wellbeing. People who hold fears for their personal safety are likely to have a lower quality of life and a decreased sense of wellbeing, and may find it difficult to participate fully in their community [1, 2]. Where offending in a community is perceived to increase, or actually does increase, the community may become less appealing for new residents and for people who go there for recreation or other activities [3-5]. Communities with low levels of offending attract greater investment from the private sector, which in turn creates more employment opportunities and contributes to a higher quality of life, as the community is more stable and healthier [6-8].

Key trends within safety

In the Canterbury Wellbeing Survey, respondents from greater Christchurch indicated favourable levels of perceived safety across different locations and times of day (with the exception of Christchurch City centre after dark). The indicators also suggest that there is a downward trend in the number of family violence victimisations for greater Christchurch. However, the number of property-related offences has shown an upward trend, excluding decreases in the number of offences during COVID-19 lockdown periods.

Key equity issues within safety

The perceptions of safety indicator suggests that having a low income or long-term health condition or disability, or being female, older, or non-European are all associated with lower perceived safety. No breakdown data are available for the remainder of the indicators (property-related offences and family violence victimisations).

What this means for wellbeing

The relationship between safety indicators and wellbeing is complex. However, lower levels of personal exposure to harm or loss are generally relatable to improved levels of wellbeing. The data show differences in perceptions of safety for some groups (such as for females after dark in their neighbourhood and/or town/city centre, and for people with a long-term health condition or disability). Property-related victimisations data suggest some recent increase in reported harm.

Indicators in this domain

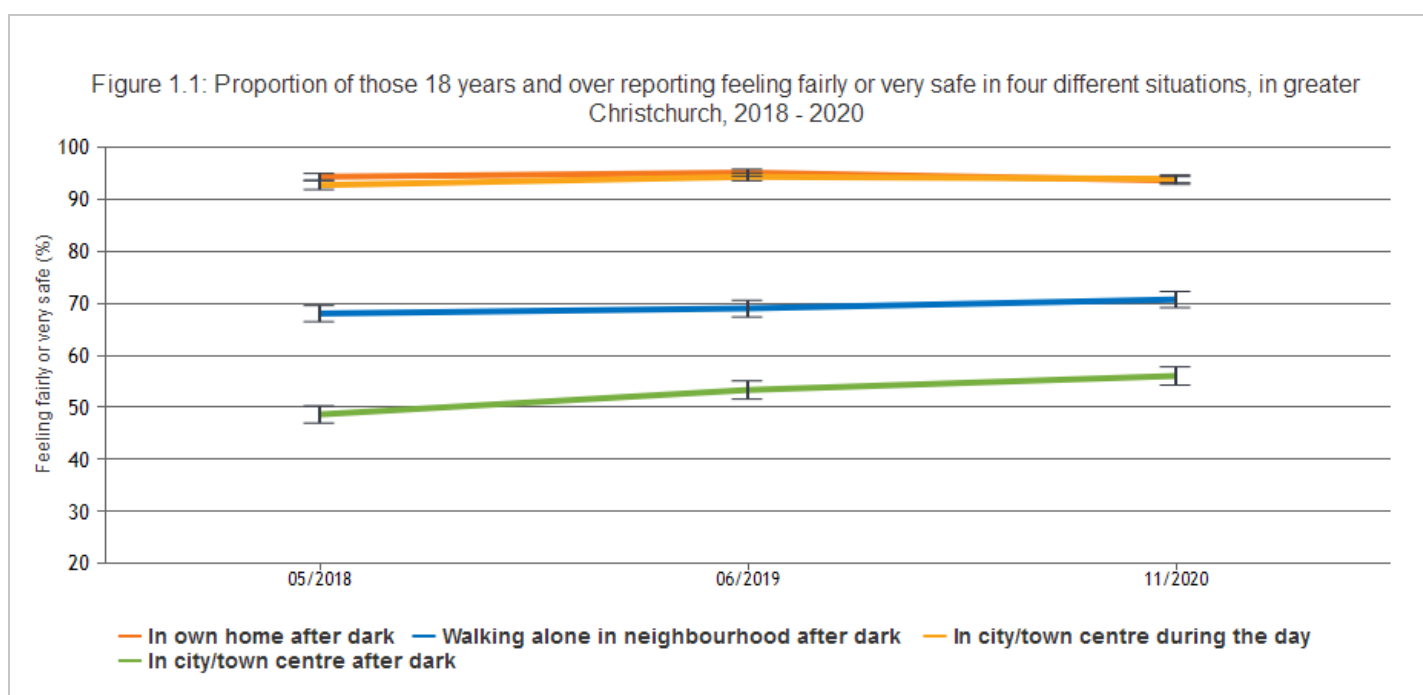
- **Perceptions of safety**
- **Property-related victimisations**
- **Family violence victimisations**

PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

The wellbeing of individuals may be affected not only as a result of direct experience of harm but also as a result of a fear of harm. Individuals' perceptions of safety involves generalised judgements about the chance of injury or loss [9].

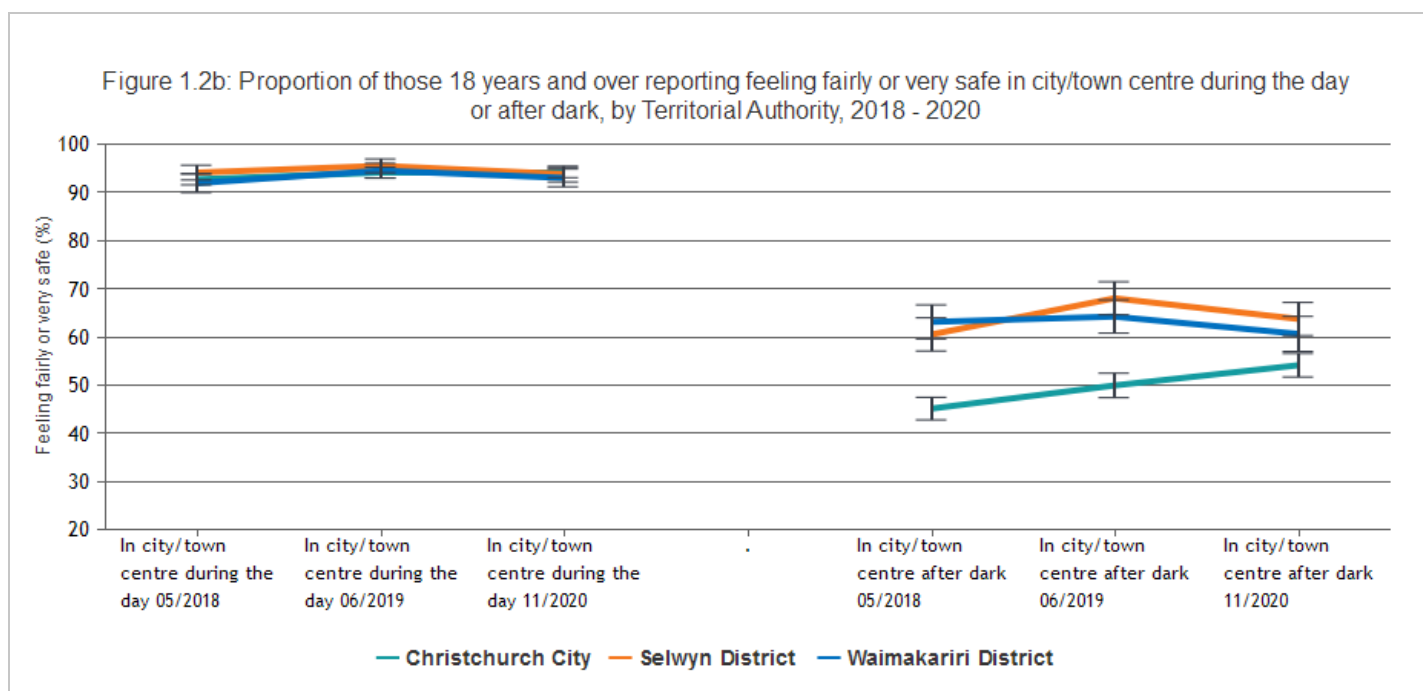
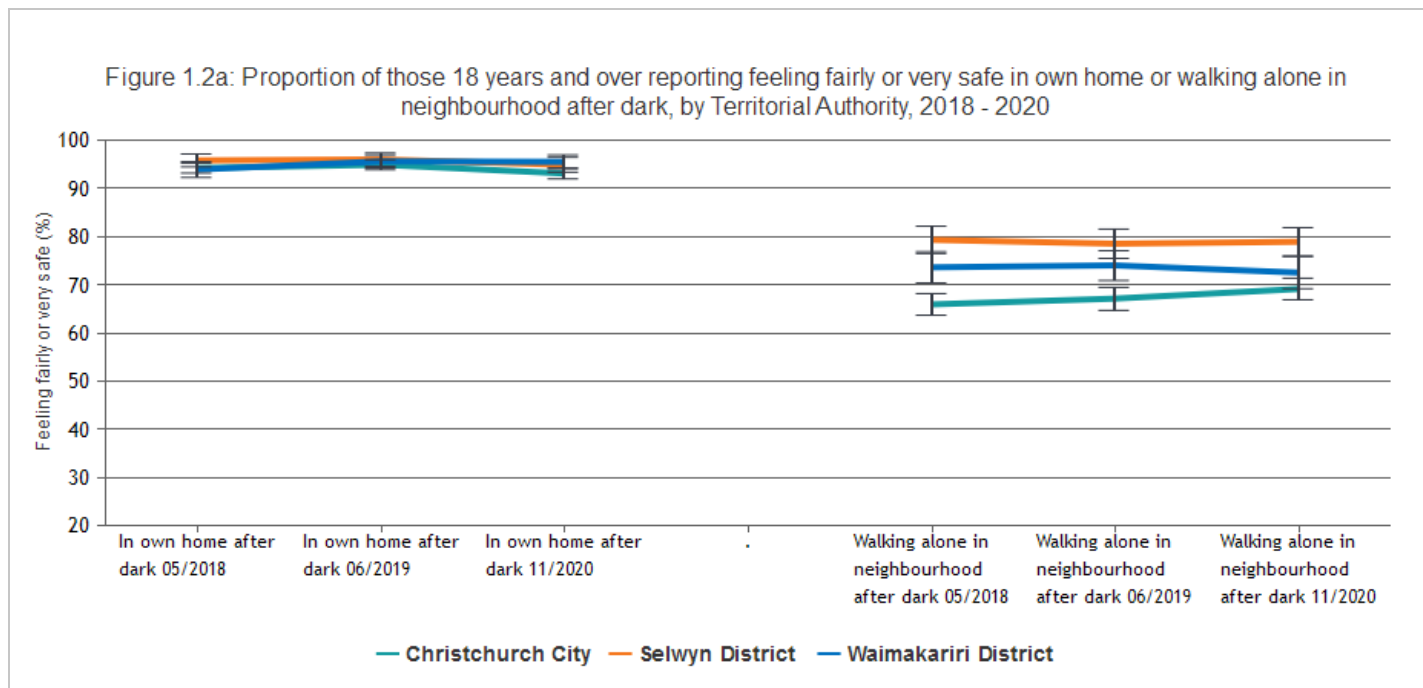
Different circumstances, times of day, and location factors tend to influence individuals' perceptions of safety. Perceptions of safety are particularly sensitive to the physical environment (e.g., one's home vs. public places) because these physical environmental factors are tangible to residents. Fear of crime may cause some people to restrict the choices they make about how to lead their lives, such as avoiding certain areas or avoiding going out at night [9,10]. The fear of crime may have more effect on some residents than actual crime and may have wider impacts on social relations [2].

This indicator presents the proportion of those 18 years and over reporting that they feel fairly or very safe in four different situations: being in their own home after dark, walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, or walking in their city/town centre during the day, and the city/town centre after dark. This question was first included in the Canterbury Wellbeing Survey in 2018.



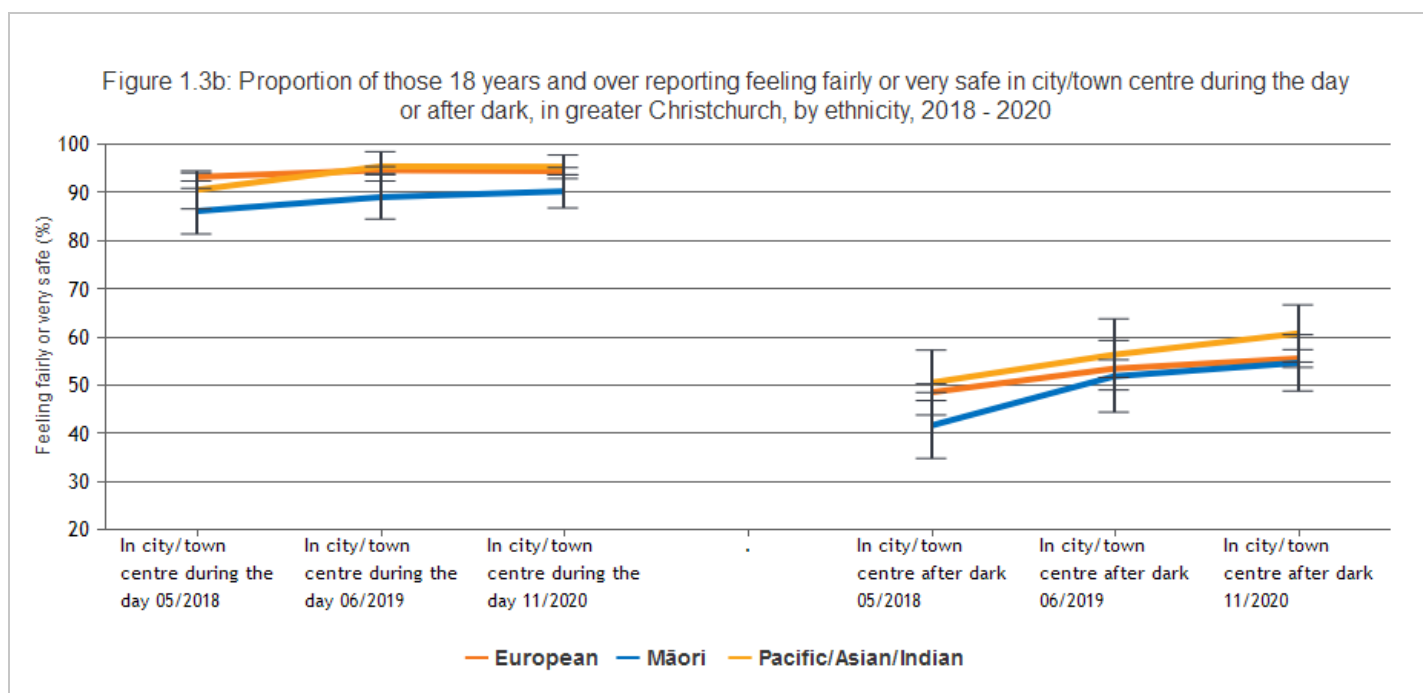
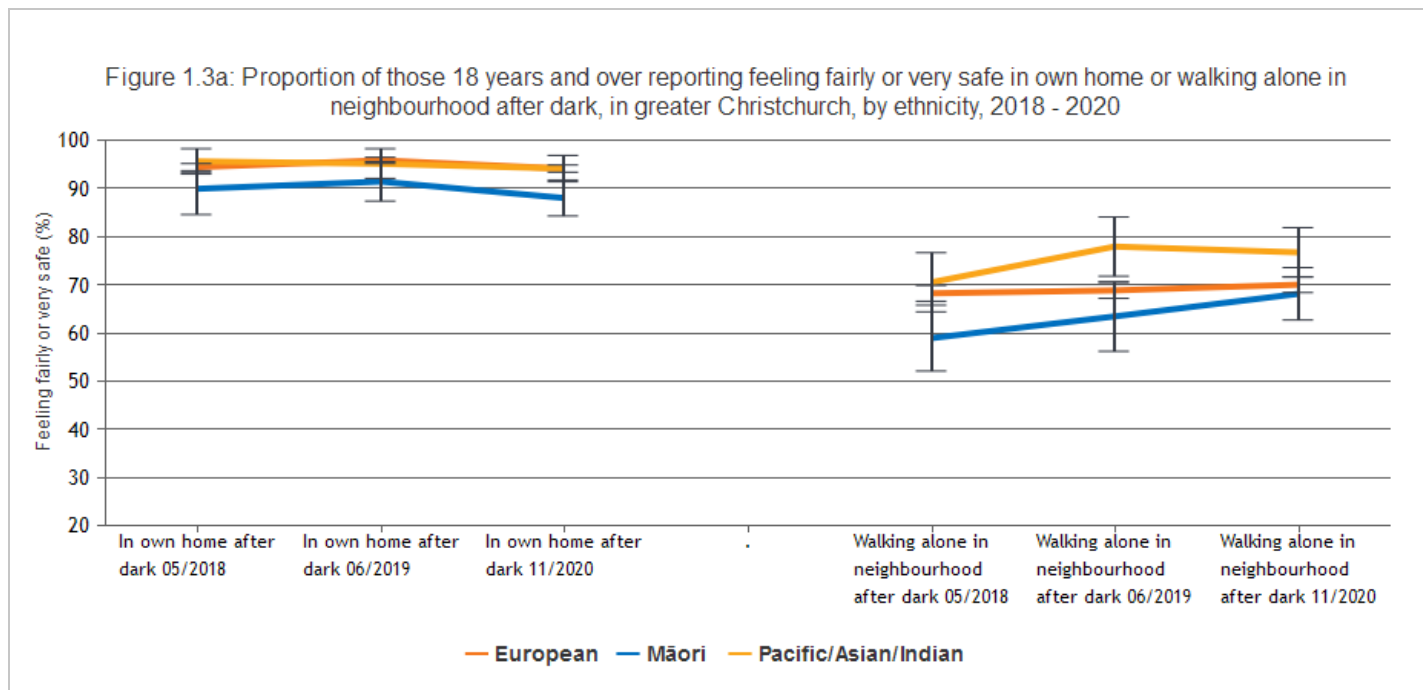
The figure shows that almost all respondents (over 90%) felt fairly safe or very safe in their own home after dark, and in the town/city centre during the day, in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Approximately 70 percent of respondents indicated that they felt fairly safe or very safe walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark (2018, 2019, and 2020). The proportion of respondents feeling fairly safe or very safe walking in the city or town centre after dark increased statistically significantly from 48.6 percent in 2018 to 56.0 percent in 2020. The results show that different circumstances and times of day tend to influence individuals' perceptions of safety.

Breakdown by Territorial Authority



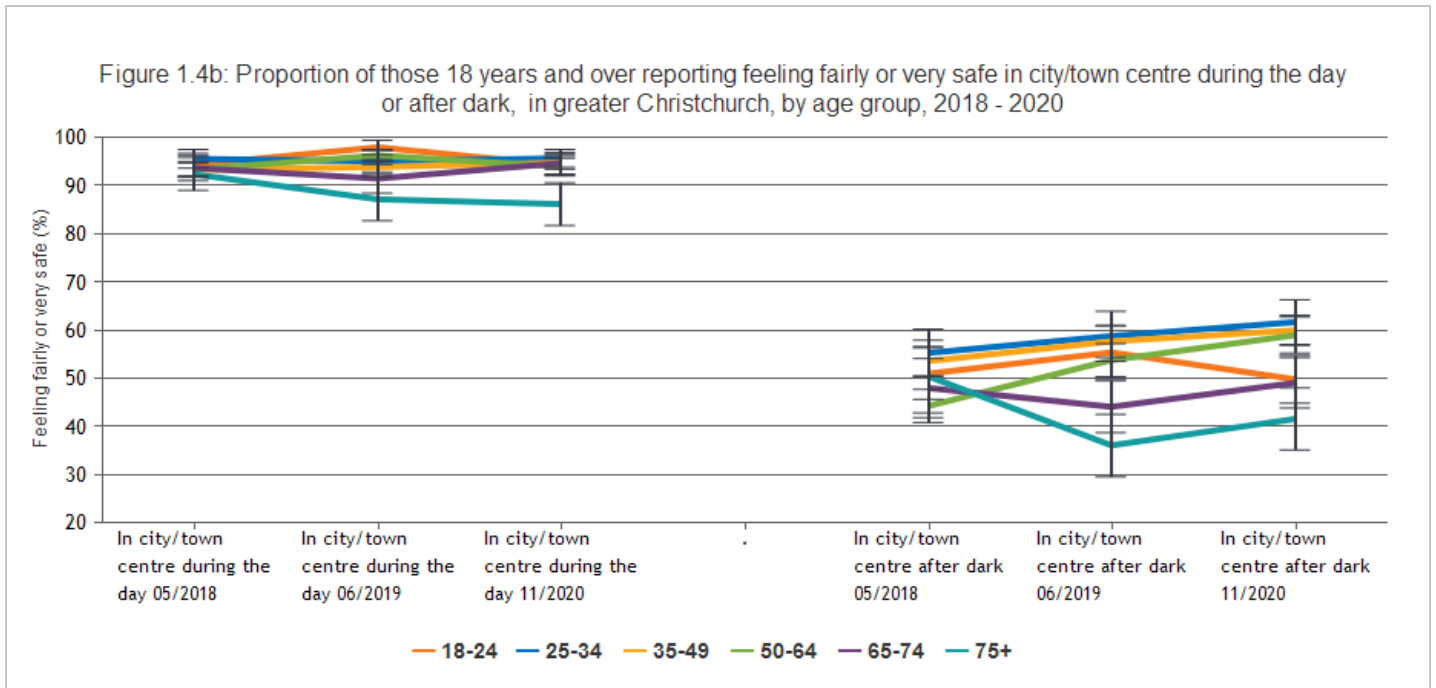
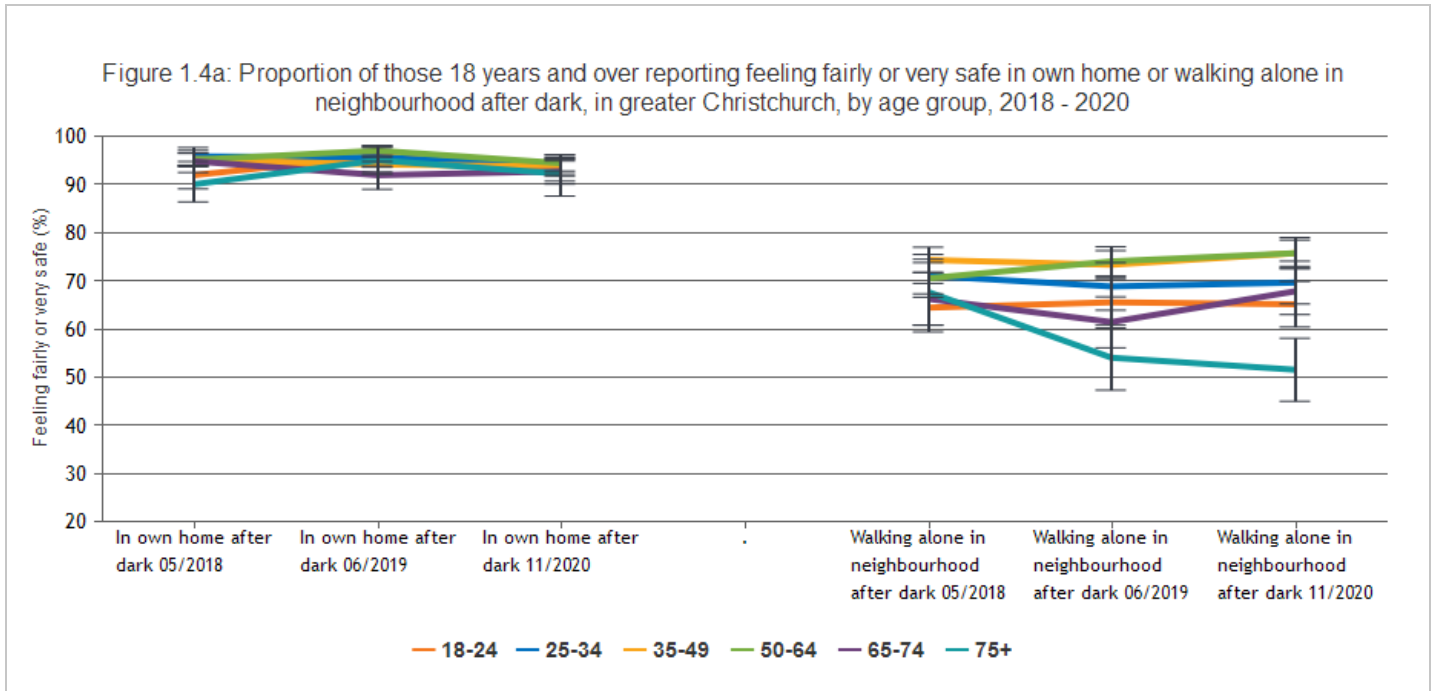
The figures show that a similar proportion of respondents (more than 90%) felt fairly safe or very safe in their own homes after dark (Figure 1.2a) and in the town or city centre during the day (Figure 1.2b), across the three Territorial Authority areas, in 2018, 2019, and 2020. However, statistically significant differences in perceived safety are apparent for the two categories 'walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark' (Figure 1.2a: Selwyn District, 78.9%; Waimakariri District, 72.5%; Christchurch City, 69.1%; in 2020) and 'walking in the town or city centre after dark' (Figure 1.2b: Selwyn District, 63.7%; Waimakariri District, 60.6%; Christchurch City, 54.1%; in 2020). Overall, perception of safety appears to be highest in Selwyn District and lowest in Christchurch City, particularly in the city centre after dark (although this aspect improved statistically significantly for Christchurch City during the period 2018-2020, from 45.1% to 54.1%).

Breakdown by ethnicity



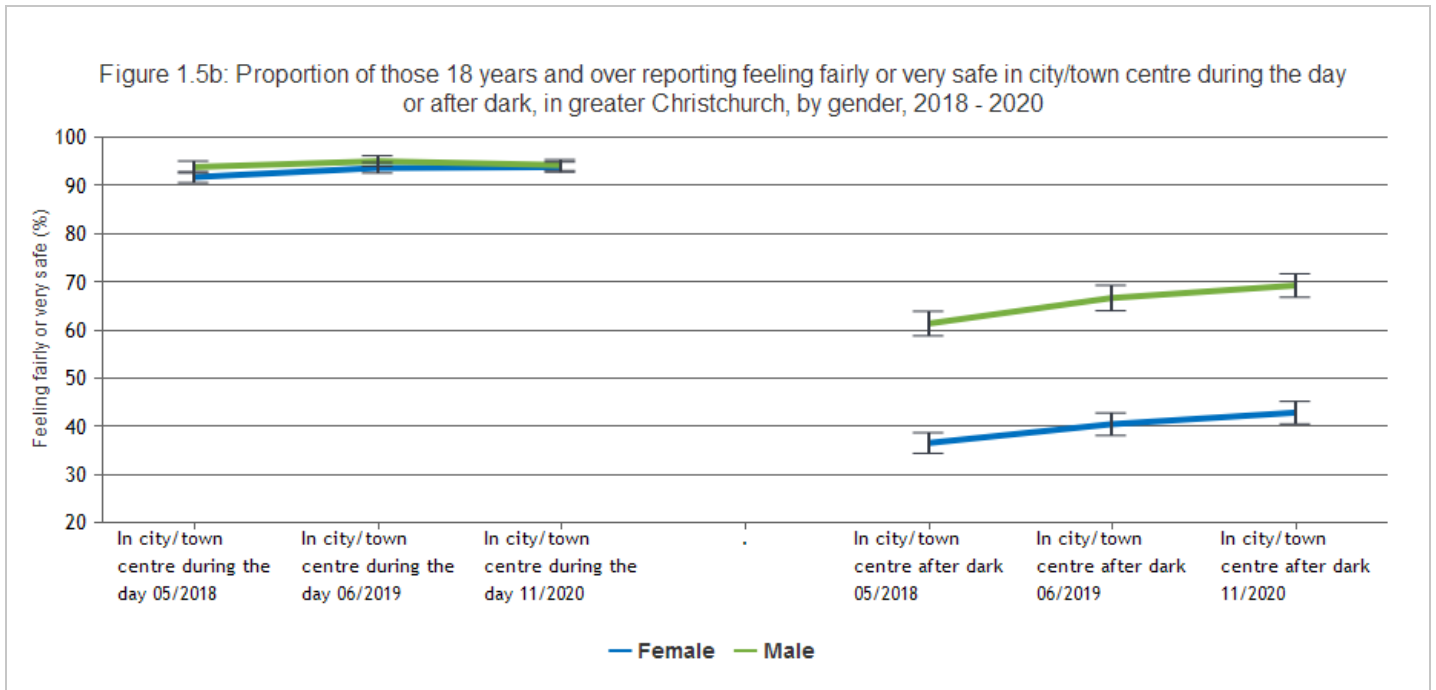
Figures 1.3a and 1.3b show perceptions of safety, by ethnicity, in 2018 and 2019. A similar pattern can be seen across all four situations: Māori respondents generally reported lower levels of perceived safety (proportion feeling fairly or very safe) than European and Pacific/Asian/Indian respondents (but the differences are generally not statistically significant). In 2020, a statistically significantly lower proportion of Māori respondents reported feeling fairly or very safe in their own homes after dark than both European respondents and Pacific/Asian/Indian respondents (88%, 94.1%, and 94.1%, respectively). There were no other statistically significant differences in perceived safety in different situations between ethnic groups.

Breakdown by age



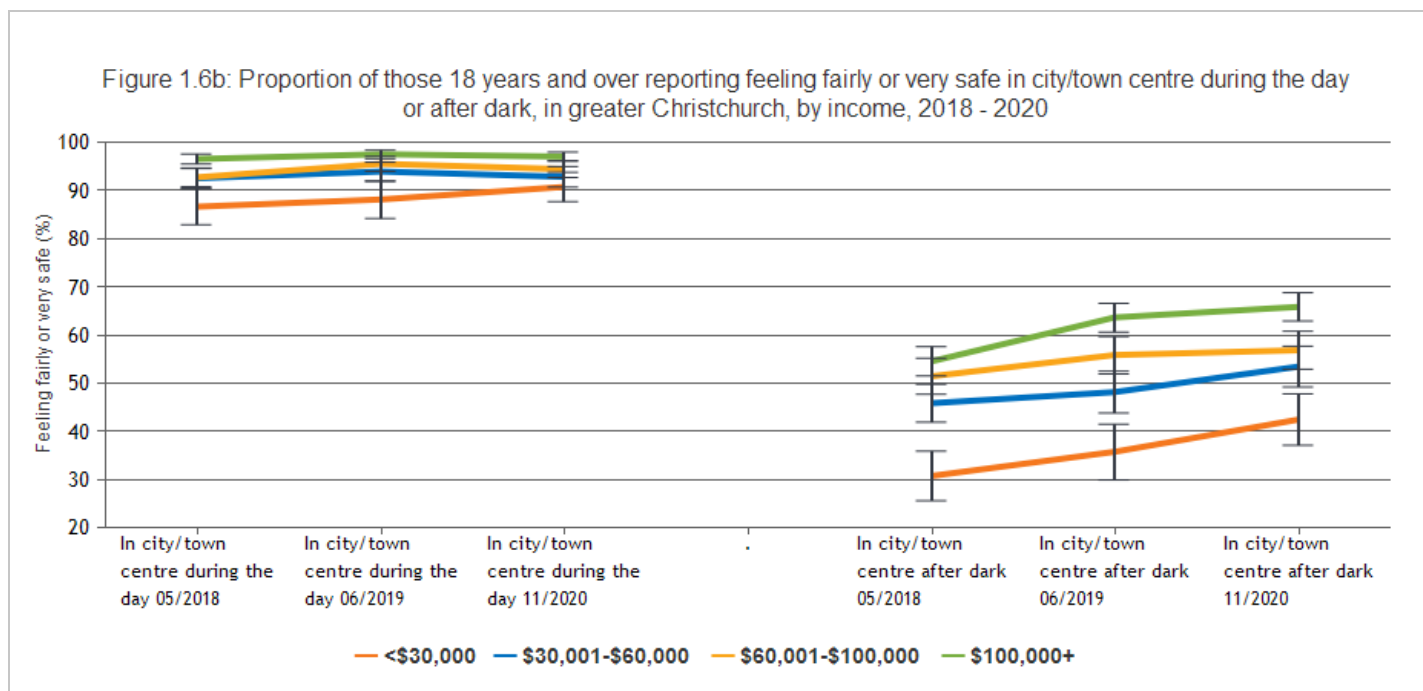
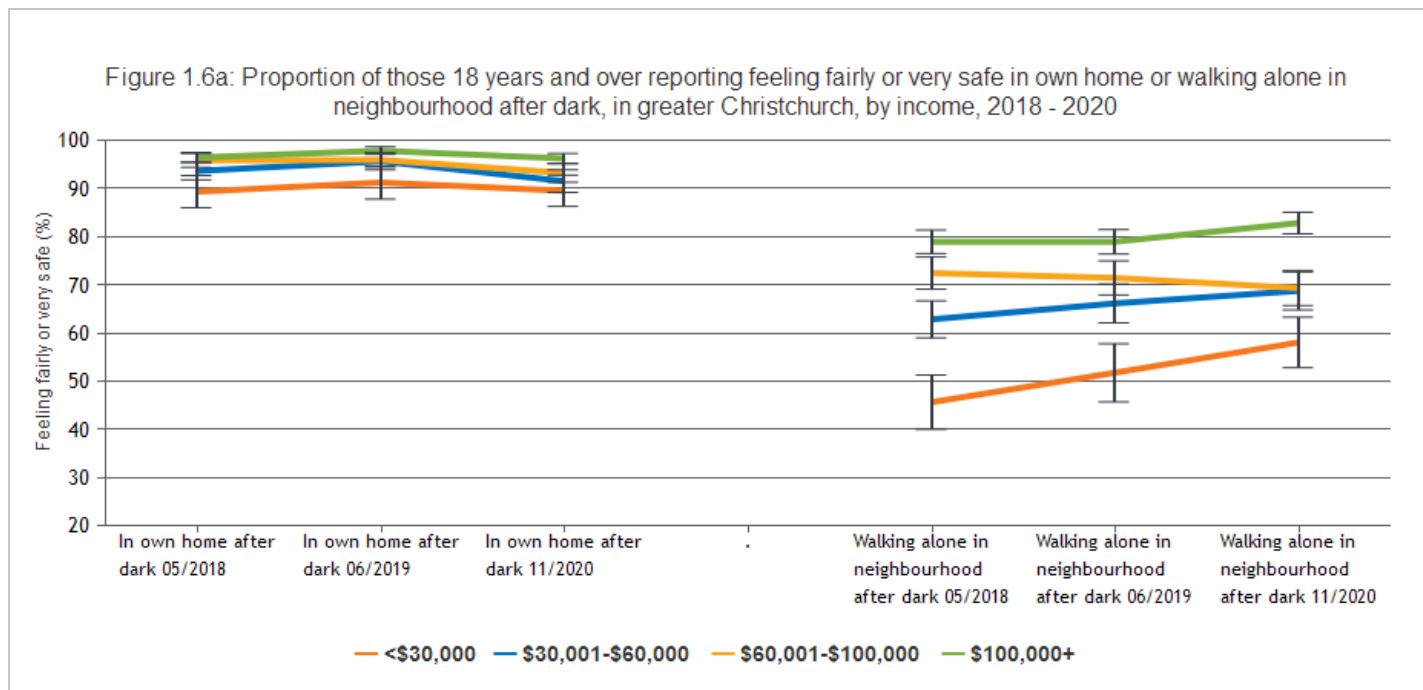
Figures 1.4a and 1.4b show perceptions of safety, by age group, in 2018-2020. Most respondents reported feeling fairly or very safe in their own home, and there are no statistically significant differences between age groups in 2018, 2019, or 2020. The figures show a pattern of generally similar perceptions of safety for respondents aged 18 to 74 years. However, respondents aged 75 years and over were less likely to report feeling fairly or very safe in the other situations compared to other age groups. In 2020, respondents aged 75 years and over were statistically significantly less likely to report feeling fairly or very safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, or in the city/town centre during the day, compared to all other age groups, and in the city/town centre during the day compared to those in the 25-34 years, 35-49 years, and 50-64 years age groups.

Breakdown by gender



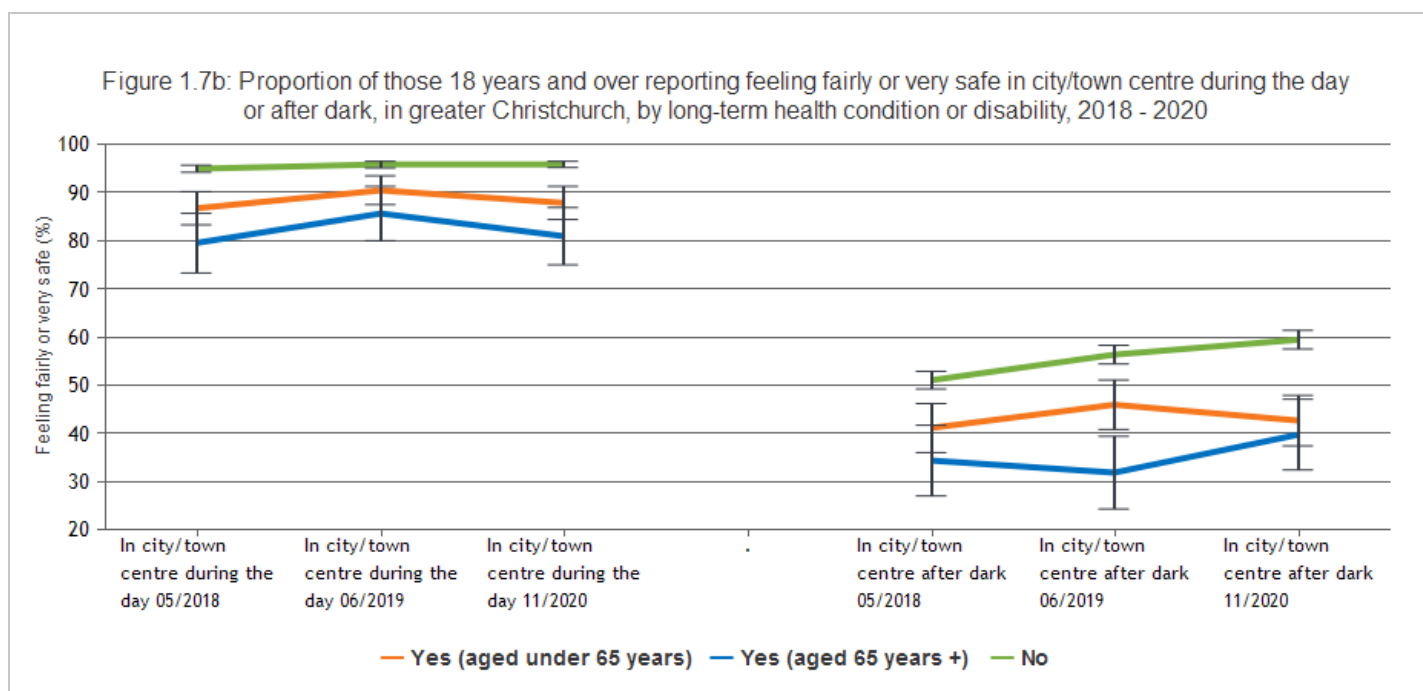
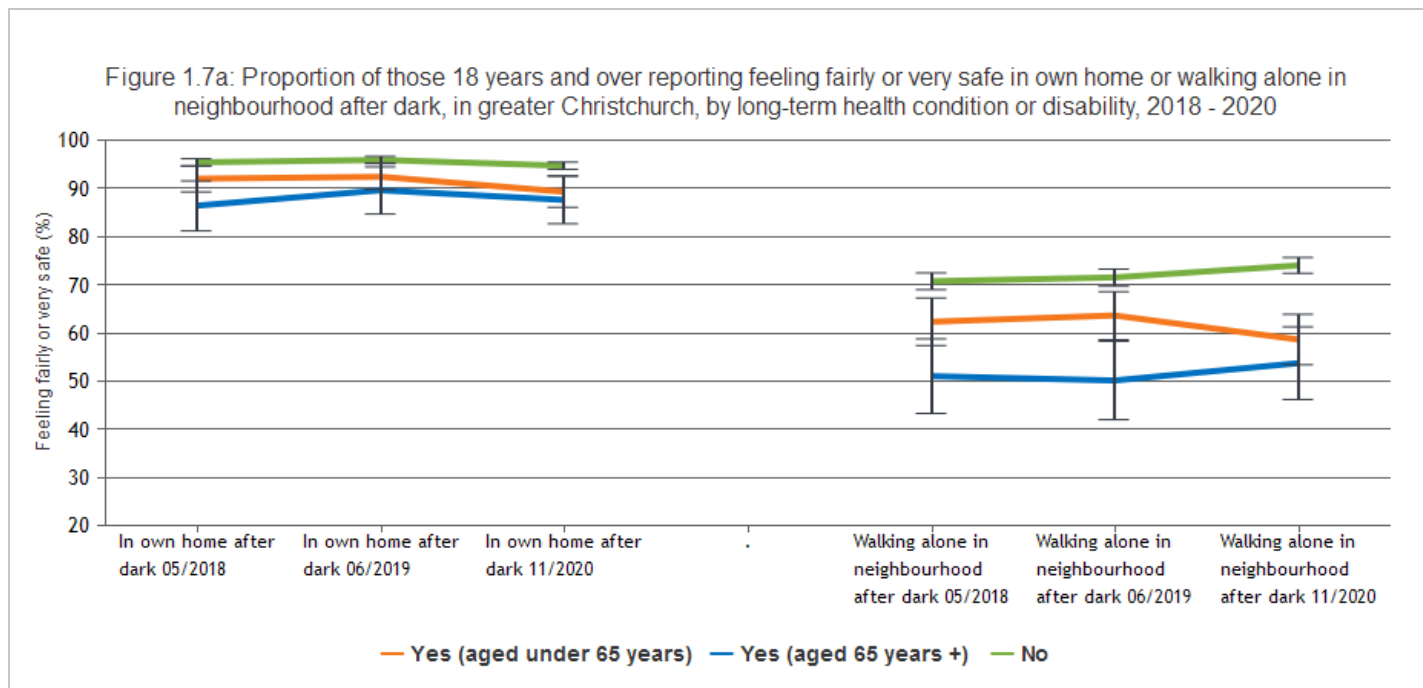
Figures 1.5a and 1.5b show that some aspects of the context differentially influence men and women's perceptions of safety. The results highlight women's statistically significantly lower perception of safety in outdoor environments after dark (for example, in 2020, only 42.8% of female respondents indicated feeling fairly or very safe walking in the city/town centre after dark, compared to 69.2% of males).

Breakdown by income



Figures 1.6a and 1.6b show a clear positive relationship between annual household income and respondents' perceptions of safety. The proportion of respondents feeling fairly safe or very safe in each of the four situations shown tends to increase with increasing income. In all four situations (home after dark, neighbourhood after dark, town/city centre after dark, and town/city centre during the day) respondents from the lowest income group (<\$30,000) had statistically significantly lower levels of perceived safety compared with respondents from the highest income group (\$100,000+). In 2020, the income gradient is most pronounced for the two situations 'in city/town centre after dark' and 'walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark'.

Breakdown by disability



The figures show that in all three situations outside of the home respondents with a long-term health condition or disability (irrespective of age group) had statistically significantly lower levels of perceived safety, compared with respondents without a long-term health condition or disability.

Data Sources

Source: Canterbury District Health Board.

Survey/data set: Canterbury Wellbeing Survey to 2020. Access publicly available data from the Community and Public Health (Canterbury DHB) website www.cph.co.nz/your-health/wellbeing-survey/

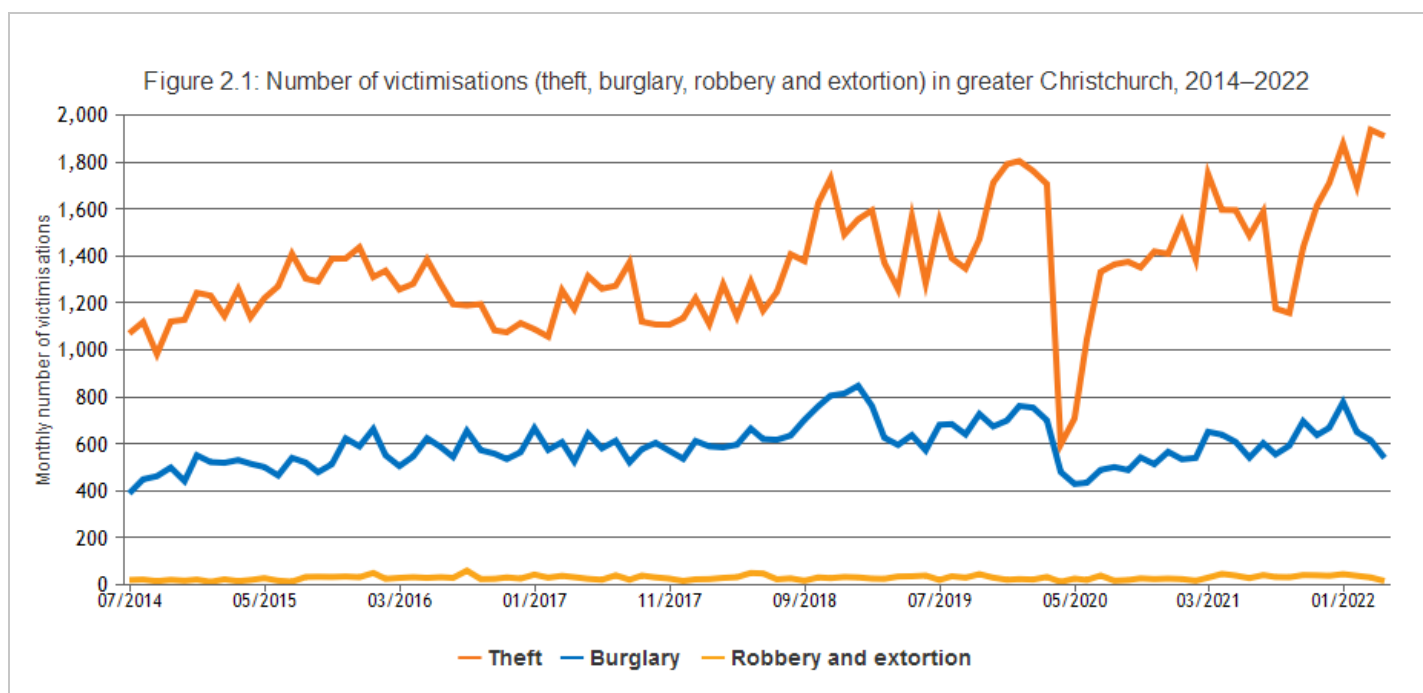
Source data frequency: Annually.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

PROPERTY-RELATED VICTIMISATIONS

A victimisation refers to an instance of a person, organisation or premises being exploited for a given type of offence (where an offence is any act or omission by a person that is subject to a penalty imposed by the New Zealand legal system). Property-related offences are defined as those where the intent of the offence is to obtain property or in some cases to obtain 'a benefit' (an advantage or privilege). The methods of acquisition include theft, the use of extortion or blackmail, or the use of deception [11].

This indicator presents the number of victimisations (theft, burglary, robbery and extortion) by month for the greater Christchurch area (stations from Canterbury Metro Area and Canterbury Rural combined to approximate the greater Christchurch boundary), from July 2014 to April 2022.



Prior to the COVID-19 lockdown in early 2020, the number of victimisations for theft fluctuated from a low of 982 in September 2014 to a high of 1,803 in January 2020. Similarly, the number of victimisations for burglary has ranged from a low of 389 in July 2014 to a high of 847 in January 2019. The figure shows a marked decrease in both theft and burglary victimisations in April 2020 during the national COVID-19 alert level-4 lockdown (to 597 and 480, respectively). There was another decline in theft victimisations in August 2021 during a national COVID-19 lockdown. However, theft victimisations have since increased and reached a high of 1,937 in March 2022. There appears to be a trend of an overall increase in the number of theft and burglary victimisations (excluding lockdown periods). Victimisations for robbery and extortion are recorded at substantially lower numbers. These numbers appear relatively stable, ranging from a low of 12 in January 2015 to a high of 60 in August 2016 (generally less than 40 per month from mid-2018 to April 2022). Note that statistical trend analysis was not available for any of these data. These data are absolute counts of property victimisations rather than rates per head of population and therefore do not reflect changes in population size over time.

The Ministry of Justice also provides information on victimisations from the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS). The NZCVS provides a fuller picture of crime in New Zealand than administrative data because it captures incidents of crime that may not have been reported or recorded elsewhere. The NZCVS is a nationwide, face-to-face, continuous, representative survey of adults aged 15 years and over. Respondents are asked about incidents of crime they experienced in New Zealand during the 12-month period preceding the survey interview. In Canterbury, 30.8 percent of respondents to the fourth NZCVS 2020-21 reported being victimised (all types of offences) once or more during the last 12-months; down from 34.8 percent in the third survey in 2019-20 (New Zealand 29% and 29.3%, respectively). For property offences such as theft and/or damage, 5.6 percent of respondents in Canterbury reported being victimised once or more during the last 12-months in the 2020-21 survey, down from 6 percent in 2019-20 (New Zealand 4.5% and 4.1%, respectively).

Data Sources

Source: New Zealand Police.

Survey/data set: Administrative data to April 2022. Access publicly available data from NZ Police website www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations or from the Ministry of Justice website www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvs/resources-and-results/.

Source data frequency: Monthly.

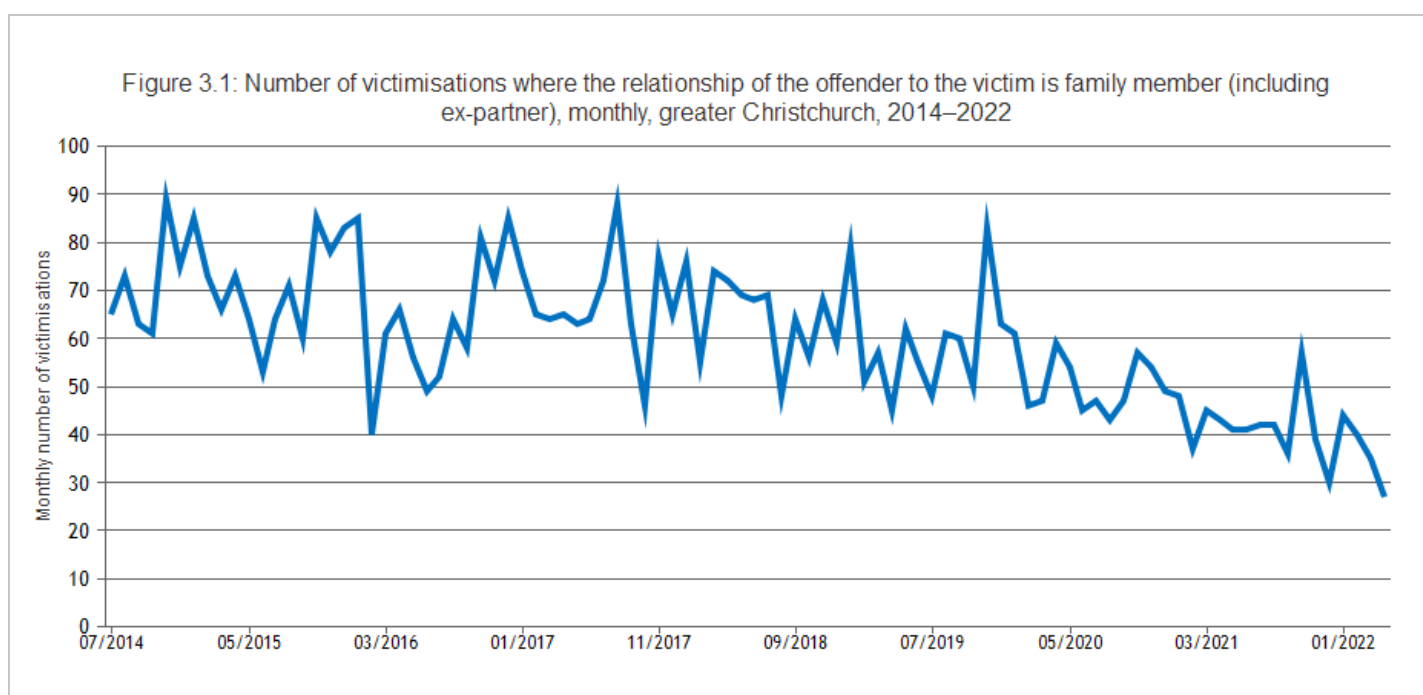
Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMISATIONS

Family violence victimisations are acts intended to cause injury, sexual assault and related offences and abduction, harassment and other related offences against a person where the relationship of the offender to the victim is family member (including ex-partner) [12]. New Zealand has among the highest rates of recorded family violence in the developed world [13] and there are likely many more people affected by family violence than are captured by family violence indicators, as many instances of family violence go unreported [14].

Family violence is linked to a series of negative health and wellbeing outcomes both in the short and long term. For example, children who witness violence between parents or who are victims of parents' violence are at higher risk of experiencing behavioural problems, or bullying other children, or achieving poor school performance [15]. Domestic violence also brings about high public costs for victim support, medical care, mental health services, police, and other losses of productivity [15].

This indicator presents the number of victimisations for acts intended to cause injury, sexual assault and related offences and abduction, harassment and other related offences against a person where the relationship of the offender to the victim is family member (including ex-partner), monthly, in the greater Christchurch area (stations from Canterbury Metro Area and Canterbury Rural combined to approximate the greater Christchurch boundary).



The figure shows that there may have been some overall decline in the recorded number of victimisations for family violence in greater Christchurch between July 2014 and April 2022 (the extent of the time-series data available under the current crime reporting system), however trend analysis is not available for these data. The number of victimisations has fluctuated and ranged between 27 and 89 per month over the period shown. The figure also shows that the number of victimisations for acts of family violence is somewhat higher during the summer months. This is likely to be related to both social and physical environmental factors (related to temperature and changes to patterns of routine activities) [12, 16].

Data Sources

Source: New Zealand Police.

Survey/data set: Administrative data to April 2022. Access publicly available data at NZ Police website www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations

Source data frequency: Monthly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

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FIND OUT MORE

> **NZ Police data**

This interactive website produced by New Zealand Police presents Recorded Crime Victims Statistics (RCVS) and Recorded Crime Offenders Statistics (RCOS) and Demand and Activity data.

> **Family violence data**

The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse collates a wide range of information about family violence.

> **Integrated Safety Response**

This New Zealand Police website provides information about the intersectoral response to family violence operating in Christchurch.

> **Safer Christchurch Strategy**

This interagency collaboration is governed by multiple agencies who are working together to make Christchurch a safer place in which to work, play, live and visit.