

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This document presents statistics on older people in the Rotorua area, with a focus on people aged 65+. The report sets a baseline for monitoring changes in the wellbeing of Rotorua's older people, to help Council and others plan for the future. It was prepared to help development of Rotorua District Council's Older Persons Policy, and as a community resource for the benefit of all older people in the Rotorua District.
- Although Rotorua still has a youthful population profile compared with other parts of New Zealand, its population is gradually growing older. As at Census night 2006, there were 7,296 Rotorua District residents aged 65+. This represents 11.1% of the total population, up from 10.6% in 2001. Forecasts show that by 2021 there will be 12,240 people aged 65+ in the District, or 16% of the overall population. Around 55% of older people in Rotorua aged 65+ are women, and this gender difference is projected to continue.
- Suburbs with particularly high numbers of older people include Springfield, Glenholme and Fenton. These areas contain substantial numbers of pensioner units, retirement villages and rest homes.
- 78.4% of Rotorua residents aged 65+ are in the European ethnic group, and 13.8% are in the Maori ethnic group. Nationally, 4.9% of people aged 65+ are in the Maori ethnic group. The number of older Maori in New Zealand is projected to triple within the next 20 years.
- Around one-third of all Rotorua residents aged 65+ are widowed (32.1%), which is similar to the national average. There is a national trend towards older people increasingly living alone.
- Elderly Rotorua residents have a lower level of attainment of high school qualifications than younger Rotorua residents. Over one-third (35.9%) of Rotorua residents aged 55-64 have no formal academic qualification.
- 18.6% of Rotorua residents aged 65+ are in paid employment, an increase from 12.2% in 2001. Rotorua industries with strong participation by older workers include agriculture, property and business services, retail trade, education, and health and community services.
- Residents aged 65+ are much more likely than younger residents to be self-employed (25.2% compared to 8.6%) or in unpaid family work (8.7% compared to 1.6%).
- 85.5% of Rotorua residents aged 65+ earn income from NZ Superannuation or Veterans Pensions and 67.7% have an income of less than \$20,000 per annum. Only 5.7% of Rotorua residents aged 65+ have an income of more than \$50,000 per annum.

- Real median personal income for people aged 65+ in the Rotorua District mirrored the national trend over the period 2001 to 2006, increasing from \$12,565 to \$12,895.
- Over the past decade, home ownership has been falling at the national level. However, in the 65+ age group 79.4% of Rotorua homes are still owned by their occupiers, which is well above the national average of 66.9% for this age group.

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