Riccarton Ward

Community Profile

September 2026



Shand Crescent fountain

Christchurch City Council

Contents

Ward Area Overview..... 3

Facts and Figures..... 4

Community Infrastructure..... 5

*Socio-economic Deprivation Index..... 6

Strengthening Communities Together Strategy

- People..... 7
- Place..... 8
- Participation..... 9
- Preparedness..... 10

Key Community Issues..... 11



Peace Rock at Harrington Park

Profiles compiled by the Community Support and Partnerships Unit, Christchurch City Council

***New Zealand Index of Deprivation (NZDep)**

The NZDep is an area-based measure of socioeconomic deprivation in Aotearoa New Zealand created by Otago University. It measures the level of deprivation for people in each small area. It is based on nine Census variables. To read more about the variables used and view maps in more detail, visit http://www.ehinz.ac.nz/indicators/population-vulnerability/socioeconomic-deprivation-profile/

Ward Area Overview





Riccarton Farmers Market at Riccarton House and Bush

The Riccarton Ward includes the suburbs of Riccarton, Ilam, Sockburn, and Upper Riccarton. Hagley Park is on the eastern border, extending to Racecourse Road along Epsom Road to the Sockburn roundabout. The northern boundary runs along Matai Street West, around Riccarton Bush, along Totara Street, up Clyde Road, and through to Creyke and Maidstone Roads to Solway Avenue, including the University of Canterbury's Dovedale Campus. Peer Street forms the western boundary onto Yaldhurst Road/Racecourse Road, with the railway line forming most of the southern border.

The ward encompasses the University of Canterbury campus, Riccarton House and Bush, and the Christchurch Railway Station. There are two bus lounges on either side of Riccarton Road, providing interchange functions for city routes and the Orbiter Route. Riccarton Road bisects the ward, creating demographic and social differences. The north side has older houses on larger sections, while the south side has increased housing density, including social housing developments.

There are three major shopping centres: Bush Inn Centre, Tower Junction, and Westfield Mall, the largest retail complex in the South Island. Blenheim Road and Mandeville Street have a mix of commercial and retail premises, with light industrial businesses in Sockburn and south of Blenheim Road.

Facts and Figures

Riccarton Ward 2023 Census

25,593
Population

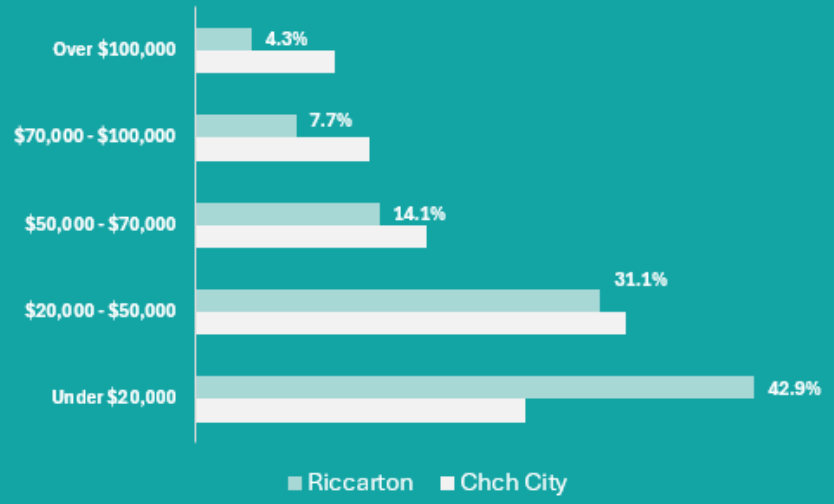
27
Median Age

7,965
Dwellings

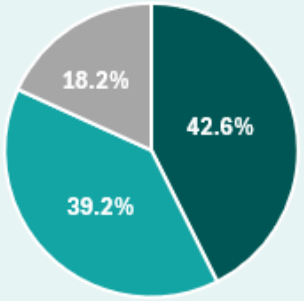
Cultural Diversity

59.2%	European
8.6%	Māori
4.2%	Pacific Peoples
30.9%	Asian
7.5%	MELAA

$ Personal Income



Family Type



- Couple without Children
- Couple with Child(ren)
- One Parent with Child(ren)

Businesses

Approximately
3,579 businesses
employing
23,077 people
(Feb 2024)

Community Infrastructure

The 15 organisations providing community development and/or support to the local community cover a wide range of sectors.

Within the ward there are 25 different organisations providing support to the multicultural sector. This includes eight specialist programmes designed at maintaining the native language and culture to the young people of their communities.

There are a number of faith organisations located in the ward. Within a one-kilometre radius the Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist faiths have places of worship at the Al Noor Mosque, the Gurdwara Centre and the Buddhist Light International Centre respectively.

There is a significant number of organisations providing sporting, recreational and leisure opportunities within the Riccarton Ward. These range from sporting clubs such as Wharenui Gators Basketball Club to hobbyist organisations such as the Crockfords Bridge Club.

Additional to that number are over 100 student-led clubs and societies operating from the University of Canterbury. A significant number of these are also open to the wider community, the University Rugby Club being a prime example.

In addition to the two Council owned community facilities and the Upper Riccarton Library community spaces, the Riccarton area is well served by other groups opening up their facility for other community use. This ranges from churches (e.g. Riccarton Baptist) to schools (Wharenui Primary) and to community organisations that have their own facilities (Crockfords Bridge Club, Christchurch Philatelic Society). The University of Canterbury also has several spaces within the campus that have community use.

15 Community development/support organisations

106 Sport/recreation groups

29 Faith-based organisations

9 Schools

15 Community-owned facilities

2 Council-owned facilities

6 Residents' Associations

1 Council library

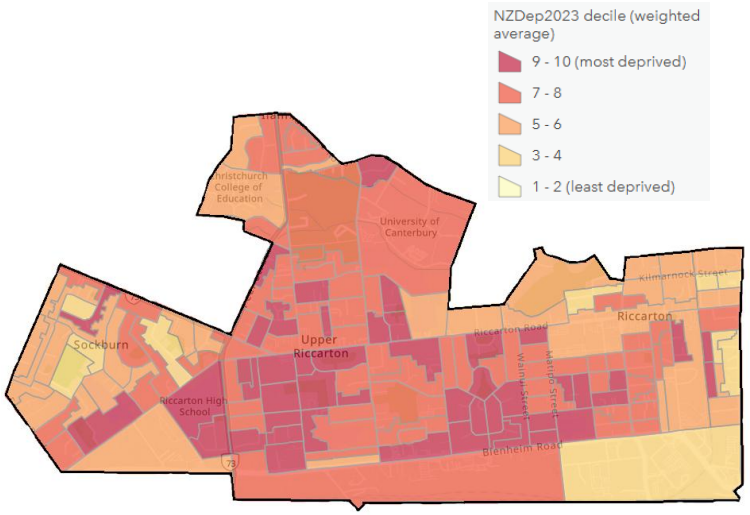
1 University

25 Multicultural Support Groups

Facilities and Amenities

- 1 Council library: Upper Riccarton (Community and school)
- 1 Council service centre: Rārākau: Riccarton Centre
- 3 shopping centres: Riccarton/Westfield, Bush Inn Centre and Church Corner, Tower Junction
- 9 Schools: 5 primary, 1 intermediate, 2 secondary, 1 composite year 1-13
- University of Canterbury
- Two Council managed Community Facilities: Rārākau Riccarton Centre and Waimairi Road Community Centre
- Major Sport and Recreation amenity: Wharenui Recreation Centre Stadium, Sockburn Recreation Centre, Table Tennis Canterbury Centre
- Historical properties: Riccarton House and Bush, St Peters Church and Kate Sheppard House, Middleton Grange Homestead, Chokebore Lodge and Addington Water Tower

Socio-economic Deprivation Index



The scale of deprivation ranges from 1 to 10:

- 1 represents the areas with the least deprived scores.
- 10 represents the areas with the most deprived scores.

Relative to the rest of Christchurch City, Riccarton Ward had higher levels of deprivation overall.

In the Riccarton Ward, around 30 per cent of the population lived in the 'most deprived' areas (i.e. deciles 9 and 10), compared with 16 per cent of all of Christchurch City's population.

Less than 1 per cent of this ward's population lived in the 'least deprived' areas (i.e. deciles 1 and 2), compared with 22 per cent of all of Christchurch City's population.

Compared to the rest of the city, fewer people in the Riccarton Ward have an annual personal income of over $70,000 (12 per cent compared with 24 per cent city wide). Nearly 43 per cent (42.9) have a personal income of less than $20,000 compared to the city figure of 25.3 per cent.

Some of the disparity in income could be attributed to the number of students living in the ward who are on limited income.

There is also a higher proportion of people in the Riccarton Ward (64 per cent) who live in rental accommodation (35.2 per cent city wide). Within the Riccarton ward there are 175 Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust social housing properties. There are 682 Kāinga Ora properties, which is an increase due to the redevelopment of older properties on large sections into multi-unit developments.

The table below shows the median weekly market rent for suburbs in the Riccarton Ward area, according to realestate.co.nz along with median house sale prices over the past 12 months.

Suburb	Median weekly rent	Median house sale price over the past 12 months
Ilam	$782	$987,500
Riccarton	$603	$634,450
Sockburn	$700	$661,000
Upper Riccarton	$749	$705,000

Strengthening Communities Together Strategy

This section of the Community Profile provides a narrative of the ward in relation to the four Pillars of the strategy. You can view the full strategy document on the Council's website by clicking here.

Te Pou Tua Tahi: Te Tāngata

Pillar 1: People

The city actively promotes a culture of equity by valuing diversity and fostering inclusion across communities and generations.



Young performer from Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust at Culture Galore event

Leading the "for the community by the community" approach in the area of Riccarton to the south of Riccarton Road is Oak Development Trust. In addition to employing Riccarton's only Community Development Worker, the Trust also provides specific support programmes to migrant communities, employing three migrants in family worker roles.

Step Ahead and Stepping Stones Trusts provide support to the disability sector while Presbyterian Support offers their Enliven Positive Ageing programme to older adults. Community Development Network Trust and La Vida Youth Trust specifically work with young people, providing amongst other programmes, 24/7 youth workers in four different schools.

Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust works with the Pasifika community in both the Riccarton and Hornby Wards, providing wraparound support.

In late 2022, community members from various Riccarton organisations came together to create the Riccarton Vision. This approach has been boosted by a new initiative - the Riccarton Collective - where community members can gather to discuss issues of interest and importance. A grouping that has emerged out of this is a collaboration of organisations that are interested in working together to support vulnerable people in Upper Riccarton and Sockburn.

Within the creation of the Riccarton Vision, the community identified the following objectives aligning to the People Pillar:

- Riccarton is a well-connected community where people know and watch out for each other.
- Riccarton is valued as a highly diverse multicultural environment where migrants are welcomed and supported.
- In Riccarton we place a high value on informal bumping spaces, both indoor and outdoor, that provide community members the opportunity to connect with others.
- Riccarton's heritage is valued and shared.
- Riccarton has opportunities for intergenerational connections.

Te Pou Tua Rua: Te Whenua

Pillar 2: Place

We support and help build connections between communities and their places and spaces to foster a sense of local identity, shared experience and stewardship.



Riccarton Centre



University of Canterbury

There are three community gardens operating in the ward. Riccarton Community Garden operates in Dilworth Street in tandem with a Community Pataka in Piko Crescent. The other two are based within the University of Canterbury, one in Ilam Road and one in Solway Avenue.

It is also notable that several community organisations in the ward make their facilities available for use by other community organisations. This collaborative approach allows for a greater level of community relationship-building.

Chokebore Lodge is a heritage-listed property opposite Riccarton Racecourse. Stabilisation and protection works of the building have been completed.

The University of Canterbury (UC) is based in the ward and has experienced steady rises in student numbers, bucking the trend experienced by most of the other universities in the country. In 2024, UC's strategic goal of 22,000 enrolments was met. Māori student numbers were up 9 percent in a year to 2180, with Pasifika numbers up 11 percent.

Accommodation is available for over 2,400 students at nine venues/halls of residences through partnerships with different providers. The former Antonio Hall has been demolished and the site is being cleared ahead of construction of a student accommodation village that is projected to add 450 beds. The developer is looking to sell student housing units to investors.

UC's influence on regional economic development is substantial, contributing over $790 million to the local economy. With one in two UC graduates who stay in Aotearoa New Zealand joining the Canterbury workforce, the University is a significant driver of economic growth.

There are 91 liquor licences held within the Riccarton Ward, 14 of these are off licences and 77 on licences. The high number of on licences can be attributable to the higher proportion of restaurants and eateries in the Riccarton area.

The Riccarton ward has some of the lowest areas of greenspace per person in the city. Of the 26 greenspaces in the ward, 14 parks have playground equipment, there are three parks with basketball half courts and one with a standalone football goal. There are no parks with skate facilities, tennis courts or fitness equipment in the Riccarton Ward.

Within the creation of the Riccarton Vision the community identified the following objectives in this regard:

- Riccarton community places a high value on retaining existing green space and the development of additional green spaces where possible.
- The diverse housing make up of Riccarton is acknowledged and celebrated.
- In Riccarton we place a high value on informal bumping spaces, both indoor and outdoor, that provide community members the opportunity to connect with others.

Te Pou Tua Toru: Te Mahi

Pillar 3: Participation

Residents and groups in the wider community are socially and actively engaged and able to initiate and influence decisions affecting their lives.



Riccarton Collective meeting

Six Residents' Groups are currently operating in the Riccarton Ward. Each of these work in very different ways, advocating for the members of their catchment areas and in some cases providing opportunities for residents to build relationships with each other.

In 2023, there were eight presentations to the Community Board's meetings on Riccarton issues by way of the Public Forum, Deputations by Appointment and Petitions. In 2024 this number was 26. Over 75 per cent of those presentations were on traffic issues at Church Corner.

There were 175 submitters to the 2024-34 Long Term Plan who identified themselves as living in the Riccarton ward. (Note there were 4,300 submitters who did not identify the ward they lived in.)

Five of the six Riccarton based residents' groups participated in the District Plan's Proposed Housing and Business Choice Plan Changes (PC14) decision-making processes. The majority of interest by these groups was in the proposed increase in housing density around the Riccarton and Church Corner business districts.

In the 2023 census statistics 10.9 percent of the Riccarton population over the age of 15 stated that they undertook voluntary work for an organisation, group or marae. This is a decrease of the 13.1 percent 2018 figure.

Within the creation of the Riccarton Vision, the community identified the following objective aligning with the Participation Pillar:

- Riccarton is a well-connected community where people know and watch out for each other.



Riccarton Community Fun Day

Te Pou Tua Rua: Te Whenua

Pillar 4: Preparedness

People feel safe in their communities and neighbourhoods and work together to understand, adapt and thrive in the context of change and disruption.

Climate Change Resilience

Climate change is the biggest challenge of our time. It is already affecting our weather, health and wellbeing, natural environment, taonga species, mahinga kai, food production, biosecurity, infrastructure, and the economy.

The Christchurch City Council is responding to climate change in Ōtautahi Christchurch by working towards targets for reducing emissions, and by helping our communities prepare for and adapt to our changing climate.

Key risks identified include hot weather and drought, strong winds, wildfires, heavy rain and flooding, and rising sea level, coastal and ocean changes.

Inland communities of Christchurch faces key risks from increasing temperatures, drought, and more intense rainfall, which threaten terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, while flash flooding from extreme rainfall and river flooding impacts built assets and infrastructure.

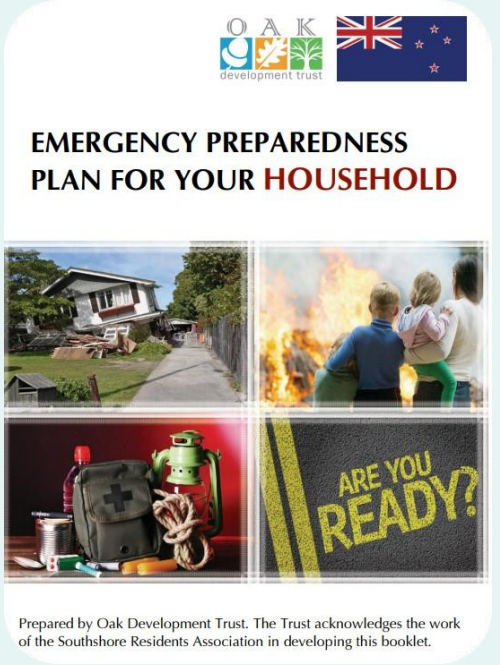
There are currently no emergency preparedness or response plans that have been developed by community groups within the Riccarton Ward, although Oak Development Trust has produced emergency preparedness leaflets in six different languages.

The absence of plans could be due to the fact that the Riccarton ward was directly affected by a lesser extent to the earthquake, fire and flooding emergencies of the past two decades. Additionally, it has been anecdotally suggested from within the Riccarton community that the higher levels of social deprivation in the ward mean that providing the necessities of life are of a much higher priority than considering both preparedness and climate adaptation measures.

Increasing a sense of safety, neighbourliness and well-being are seen as priorities in Riccarton.

Within the creation of the Riccarton Vision the community identified the following objectives aligning with the Preparedness Pillar:

- Riccarton is a well-connected community where people know and watch out for each other.
- Riccarton is a visually appealing place that makes people feel safe and welcome.



Key Community Issues

Issue	Actions being taken
Housing • Increase in housing density • Living standards of rental accommodation particularly for students and migrants	• Regular meetings with organisations working in the Upper Riccarton/Sockburn areas are taking place with a kaupapa of supporting vulnerable people.
Greenspaces and Recreation Areas • A lack of greenspaces in the Riccarton Ward • Sockburn Park state	• The Upper Riccarton War Memorial Reserve has been opened on Riccarton Road on the site of the former volunteer library. A large mural on the western wall depicts a bookcase with various memorabilia that reflects the previous uses of the site. The names of fallen soldiers are inscribed on one of two interpretive panels. Features of the former library are included as installations withn the park. • Some of parks have tree planting plans approved. • The Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan is currently in development. This may identify Riccarton as a future 'Priority Development Area'. • Riccarton House and Bush Trust is undertaking an improvement programme within Riccarton Bush. The new boardwalk through the bush has been completed and the Bush reopened.
Streets • Parking around the University and Riccarton retail areas • Traffic congestion Riccarton Road, Blenheim Road, Curletts Road, Clarence Street and Peer Street during peak travel periods • Traffic safety • Rubbish and trolleys on the streets	• Various traffic calming projects and pedestrian safety upgrades have been commenced throughout a number of residential streets. This includes Bradshaw Terrace, Arthur Street, Darvel Street, Newbridge Pace, Wharenui Road. • High crash rate intersections along Riccarton Road (Ilam/Middleton and Waimairi/Hansons) have received upgrades to address safety issues. • Encourage Snap, Send, Solve use to report and resolve issues.

Issue	Actions being taken
Wellbeing • Support of vulnerable people particularly in Upper Riccarton/Sockburn areas • Students and Migrants are living in sub-optimal housing conditions • The visual increase of the homeless community in Riccarton • Connectivity in an area of high social deprivation	• Regular meetings with organisations working in the Upper Riccarton/Sockburn areas are taking place with a kaupapa of supporting vulnerable people. • Providing grants to organisations that support wellbeing (e.g. Oak Development Trust, Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust, Riccarton Community Garden and Pātaka Trust). • Providing grants to organisations to run events/initiatives to connect communities (e.g. Deans Avenue Precinct Society, Riccarton Community Church, Crockfords Bridge Club). • Orange Sky Van based in Upper Riccarton for half a day each week to support the homeless and vulnerable with washing facilities). • Community run events that provide opportunities for connections (e.g. Culture Galore, Riccarton Street Party, Connect)
Anti Social Behaviour • Anti-social behaviour of young people, particularly around the Riccarton commercial area and bus lounges • A lack of youth facilities and activities in the Riccarton Ward • Residents' issues with student behaviour, particularly around the University • Fly tipping	• Youth Audit of the Riccarton commercial area has been completed. Workshops have been held with young people. • An Interact Club has been started at Riccarton High School with the support of Riccarton Rotary. The Club has been actively involved in a number of projects in the Riccarton area. • Grant to CDN Trust/Riccarton Community Church to develop a mobile youth hub. • Grants to community organisations to provide youth services and initiatives (La Vida Youth Trust, CDN Trust, Riccarton Sports Hub, Epic Sports). • 24/7 workers are based in four schools in the ward. • Encouraging Snap, Send, Solve use to report issues. • The Mobile Youth Trailer has been completed and will be taken to a number of venues throughout the 2026/27 spring/summer event season.