

**QUARTERLY  
ECONOMIC  
MONITOR**



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June

**2024**

Thames-  
Coromandel  
District

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## Overview of Thames-Coromandel District

### Spotlight



The Thames-Coromandel economy grew 0.5%pa in the June 2024, better than the national decline of 0.2%, according to Infometrics provisional GDP estimates. However, weak growth in the second half of 2023 has pulled down Thames-Coromandel's growth in the year to June 2024 to zero. Thames-Coromandel's quarterly growth was led by fishing and agriculture, and to a lesser extent public administration, offset by falls in construction, retail, hospitality and transport.

Employment of Thames-Coromandel residents fell 1.5%pa in the June 2024 quarter, dragging down annual employment growth to just 0.2% in the year to June 2024. Thames-Coromandel's employment fall was sharper than the average for Waikato Region and New Zealand, although it mirrors a pattern of slowing employment growth.

Weaker job opportunities and more people looking for work have put upward pressure on unemployment, driving Thames-Coromandel's unemployment rate to 4.5% over the year to June 2024, the district's highest level in a decade. The number of Jobseeker Support recipients in Thames-Coromandel rose 4.2% over year to June 2024, much lower than the national increase of 11%. However, the number of Jobseeker Support recipients in the district has been elevated since 2020, with June 2024

year Jobseekers 70% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Scarcer job opportunities have also made it harder for youth to enter the labour market, with scarce opportunities in industries that often employ youth like retail and hospitality. In the year to June 2024, 13.3% of Thames-Coromandel's 15-24-year-olds estimated not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET).

Thames-Coromandel's housing market has recovered in recent quarters after the disruption of Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023, but still sits within a muted national housing market. Thames-Coromandel's house values fell 2.7%pa in the June 2024 quarter, as house sale volumes picked up 18% over the year to June 2024. Residential consents improved slightly in the June quarter, but remain around a ten-year low, having declined 29% over the year to June 2024.

Thames-Coromandel's tourism recovery has slowed, with 8.2% growth in guest nights over the year to June 2024 giving way to a 3.6%pa decline in the June 2024 quarter. Domestic guest nights fell 6.6%pa, as international guest night growth slowed to just 11%pa in the June 2024 quarter. Overall tourism expenditure in the district rose 9.2% over the year to June 2024.

## Economic indicators

### Overview

Table 1. Overview of economic indicators

Indicator	Thames-Coromandel District	Waikato Region	New Zealand
Gross domestic product (provisional)	+0.0%	-0.1%	-0.2%
Business counts	+1.4%	+1.9%	+1.5%
Consumer spending	+3.2%	+3.0%	+1.9%
Tourism expenditure	+9.2%	+4.1%	+1.8%
Guest nights	+8.2%	+2.6%	+5.3%
Non-residential consents	+23.1%	-35.4%	-9.6%
Electric vehicle registrations	-40.7%	-25.2%	-26.0%
Car registrations	-20.4%	-9.2%	-11.7%
Commercial vehicle registrations	-14.6%	-27.4%	-21.5%

All measures are annual average percentage changes.

## Gross domestic product

Figure 1. Gross domestic product growth (provisional)  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

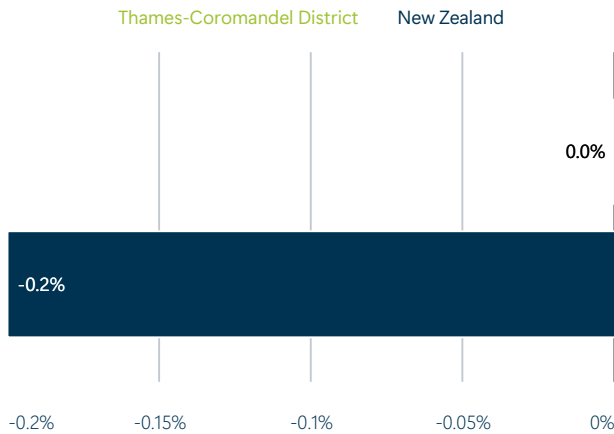
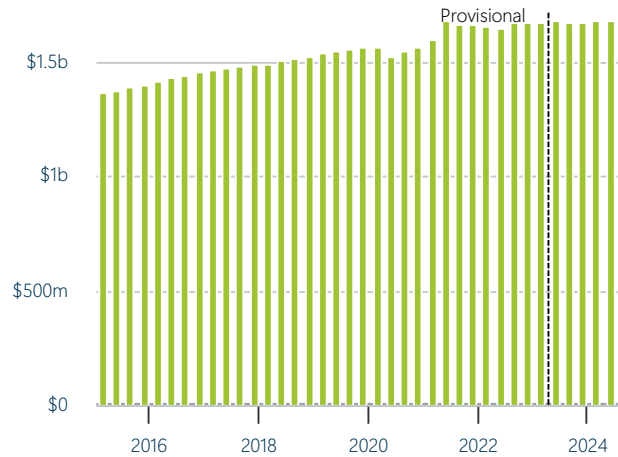


Figure 2. Gross domestic product  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- GDP in Thames-Coromandel District was provisionally unchanged for the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. Growth was negative in New Zealand (-0.2%).
- Provisional GDP was \$1,682 million in Thames-Coromandel District for the year to June 2024 (2023 prices).
- Annual GDP growth in Thames-Coromandel District peaked at 10.1% in the year to June 2021.

### National overview

The economy is clearly weaker, with households tightening their belts as job security deteriorates, unemployment rises, and businesses report lower sales and limit further hiring. Provisional estimates from Infometrics show a fall in economic activity in the June 2024 quarter, with quarterly activity down 0.2%pa from a year ago, taking the year-end result to -0.2%pa as well. Economic sentiment remains poor, with private sector parts of the economy struggling, even as population-driven growth in public sector-related industries keeps headline numbers looking less downbeat than many are feeling. Retail trade activity, manufacturing, and the primary sector are all facing more challenging environments, as are the likes of construction and professional services. The housing market remains flat too, although expectations of interest rate relief at some stage are starting to introduce some limited optimism for the year ahead.

## Business counts

Figure 3. Growth in number of business units  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

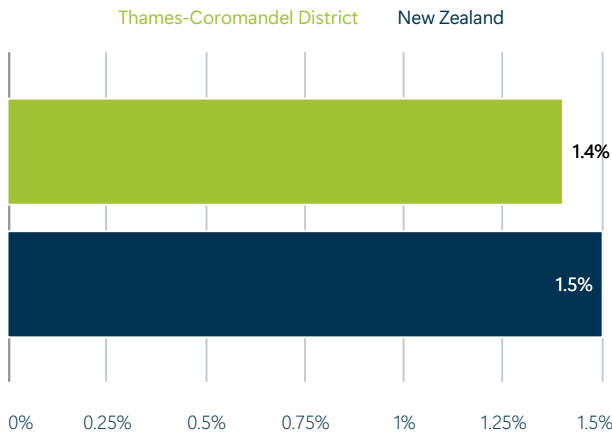
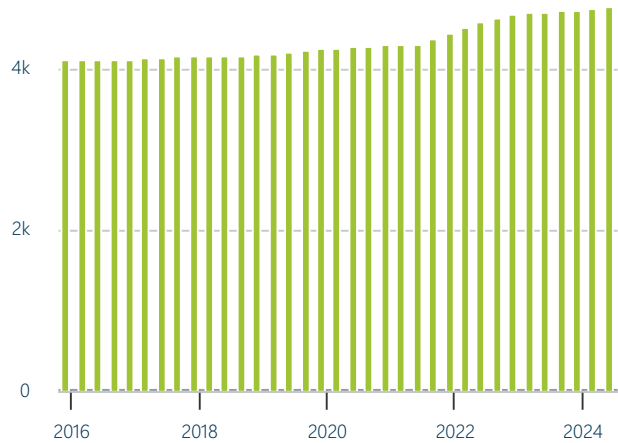


Figure 4. Business units  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of business units in Thames-Coromandel District was up 1.4% for the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (1.5%).
- The number of business units in Thames-Coromandel District reached an annual average of 4,774 in the year to June 2024, up from 4,706 in the previous 12 months.
- Annual growth in the number of business units in Thames-Coromandel District peaked at 6.6% in the year to June 2022.

### National overview

Business units have continued to rise, up 1.5% in the year to June 2024 despite the difficult economic environment for businesses. Growth bounced back, up 0.5 percentage points from the almost 3-year-low in March, although remaining lower than the strong growth in 2022. High borrowing rates, input costs and low consumer spending, combined with limited ability to pass these costs on through price increases, make for difficult conditions for new businesses. A weakening labour market will provide more uncertainty for potential business creators as we will likely see subdued spending as a result.

## Consumer spending

Figure 5. Growth in consumer spending  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

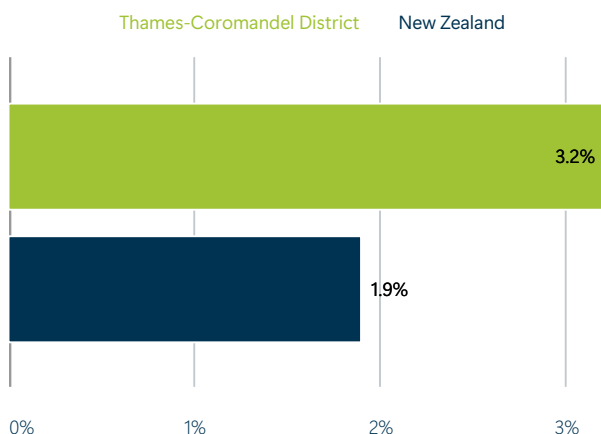
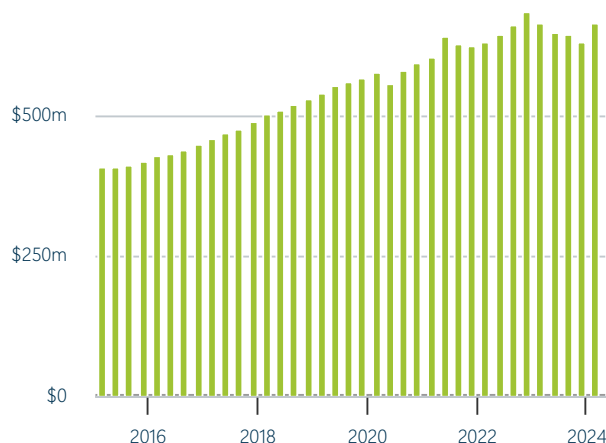


Figure 6. Consumer spending  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Electronic card consumer spending in Thames-Coromandel District as measured by Marketview, increased by 3.2% over the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 1.9% in New Zealand.

### National overview

Marketview data indicates that consumer spending remained subdued, up just 1.9%pa over the year to June 2024. Spending growth was the slowest since the lockdown impacted September 2021 quarter at just 0.3% in June 2024 quarter compared to June 2023. Growth remains slower than inflation (3.3%pa over the same period), meaning consumers are paying more and getting less due to higher prices. Personal income tax cuts beginning from 31 July will provide households with some additional funds to ease the cost-of-living pressures but may not make a material difference for most. We expect the unemployment rate to push up to 5.0% towards the end of 2024, resulting in further concerns for households and further limiting consumer spending growth.



## Tourism expenditure

Figure 7. Tourism expenditure

Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

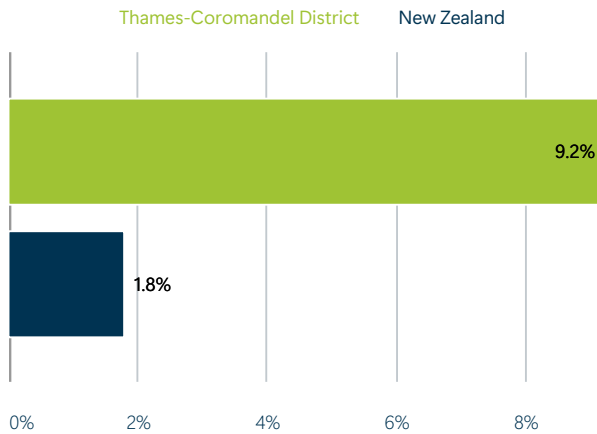
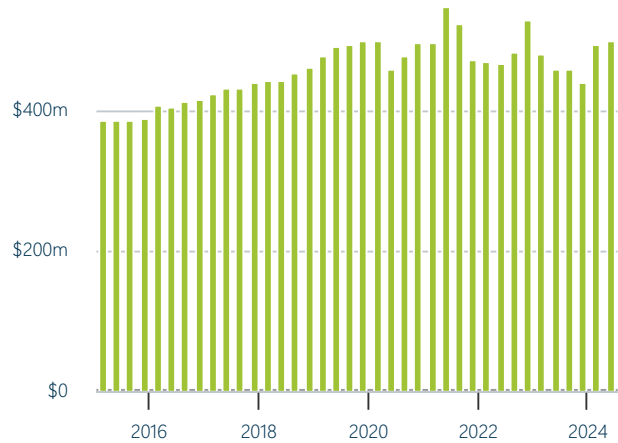


Figure 8. Tourism expenditure

Annual total, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Total tourism expenditure in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 9.2% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 1.8% in New Zealand.
- Total tourism expenditure was approximately \$500 million in Thames-Coromandel District during the year to June 2024, which was up from \$458 million a year ago.

### National overview

Tourism expenditure growth has slowed to just 1.8% in the year to June 2024, weighed down by easing domestic tourist spending and slowing international tourism recovery. Domestic tourist spending fell 4.1%, and international tourist spending rose 15.8% over the year to June 2024.

International visitor arrivals have stagnated at 80-85% of pre-pandemic levels over the past year, with weak global economic conditions constraining further growth in international travel. Weak economic conditions are constraining domestic travel too, as cost of living pressures make discretionary spending scarcer.

## Guest nights

Figure 9. Guest nights

Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

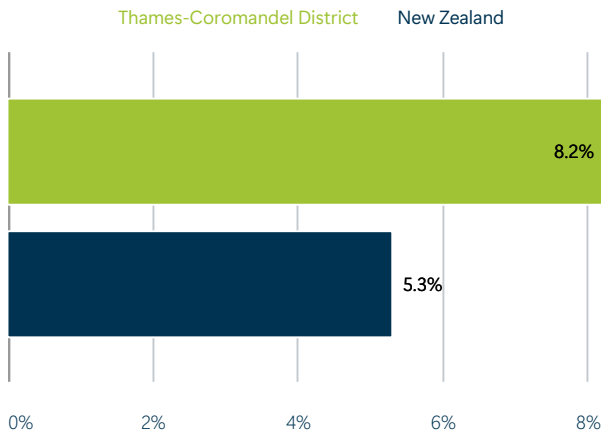
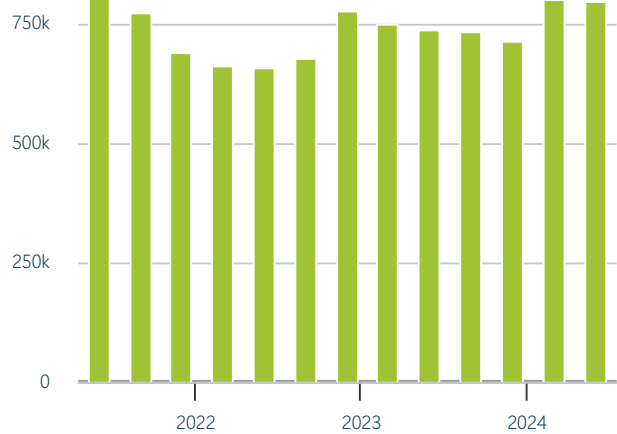


Figure 10. Guest nights

Annual number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Total guest nights in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 8.2% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 5.3% in New Zealand.
- Visitors stayed a total of 796,500 nights in Thames-Coromandel District during the year to June 2024, which was up from 736,200 a year ago.

### National overview

Guest nights have plateaued as the recovery in international tourism stagnates and domestic tourism pulls back. Growth in guest nights slowed to 5.3% over the year to June 2024, driven by a 5.2%pa fall in the June 2024 quarter. International visitor guest nights rose just 2.7%pa in the June 2024 quarter, and domestic visitor guest nights fell 8.4%pa.

## Non-residential consents

Figure 11. Growth in value of consents  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

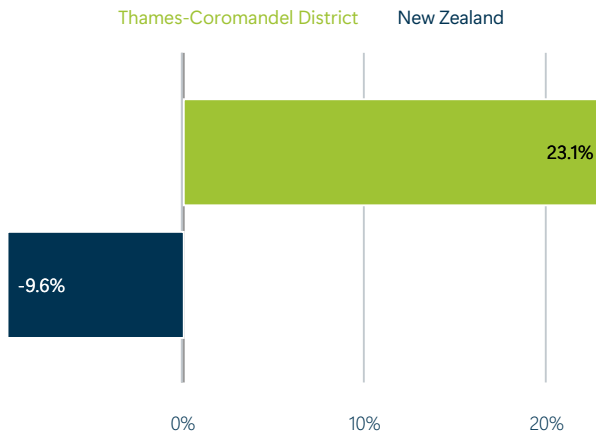
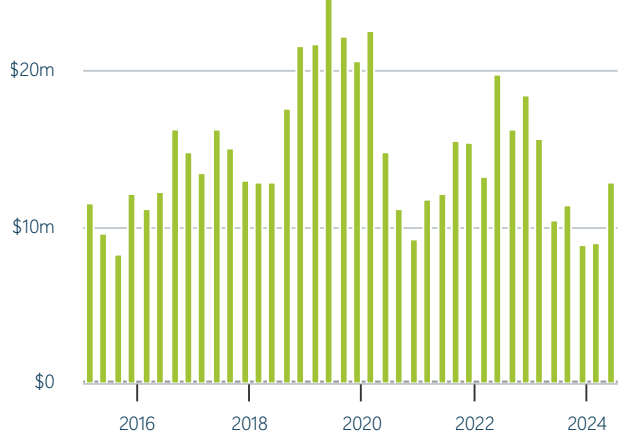


Figure 12. Non-residential consents, Thames-Coromandel District  
Annual running total, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Non-residential building consents to the value of \$12.8 million were issued in Thames-Coromandel District during the year to June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of \$14.5 million.
- The value of consents in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 23.1% over the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. In comparison, the value of consents decreased by 9.6% in New Zealand over the same period.

### National overview

There was \$2.2b worth of non-residential consents issued throughout New Zealand in the June 2024 quarter, bringing the annual total to \$9.1b, down 9.6% compared to a year earlier. Non-residential consents continue to fall considerably, as difficult financing conditions remain. Private sector construction intentions continue to weaken with weak economic conditions resulting in lower sales for businesses limiting retail expansion. Public sector consents are muted with the central government’s focus on fiscal austerity to bring the books back in order. Despite some easing in the first half of the year, construction costs remain heightened, combined with falling property prices continue to deter new developments.

## Dairy payout

Figure 13. Total dairy payout  
May years

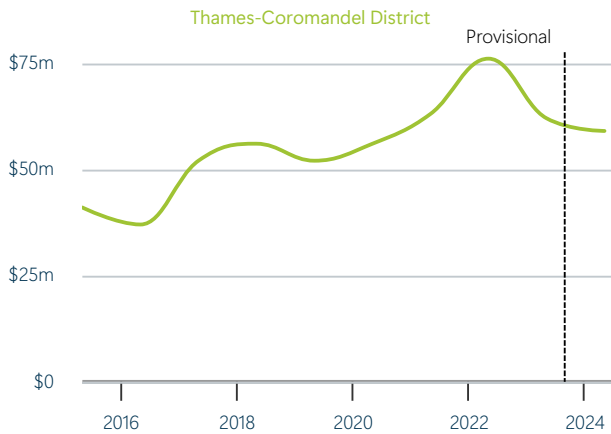
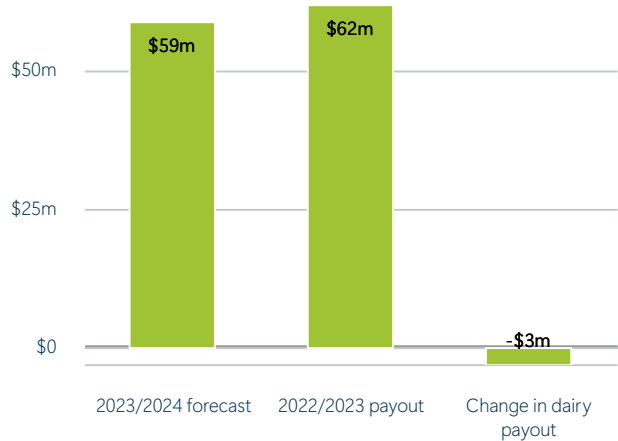


Figure 14. Total dairy payout  
May years



### Highlights

- Thames-Coromandel District total dairy payout for the 2022/2023 season is estimated to have been approximately \$62 million.
- Thames-Coromandel District's dairy payout for the 2023/2024 season is expected to be approximately \$59 million, \$3 million lower than last season, assuming that production levels from last season are maintained.
- The total dairy payout for New Zealand is estimated to have been approximately \$15,396 million in the 2022/2023 season, and is expected to be \$707 million lower in the 2023/2024 season.

### National overview

The new 2024/25 season starts with a stronger milk price than last year, with Fonterra's \$8.00/kgMS being the mid-point of a wide-ranging \$7.25-\$8.75 range. That price is set to deliver a total pay-out of \$15.1b, up \$373m from the previous season. There's some upside risk to that price, although it's tempered with caution. Infometrics anticipates that the milk price could reach \$8.40/kgMS this season, which would deliver an extra \$753m in total. The Global Dairy Trade index is currently up 4.7% in 2024, but has weakened slightly since our last Monitor, down 1.7%. That slightly weaker tone recently highlights the need for caution. Overall, input costs appear to be generally more under control, and other export prices are firming – encouraging signs for the primary sector.

## Electric vehicle registrations

Figure 15. Growth in number of EV registrations  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

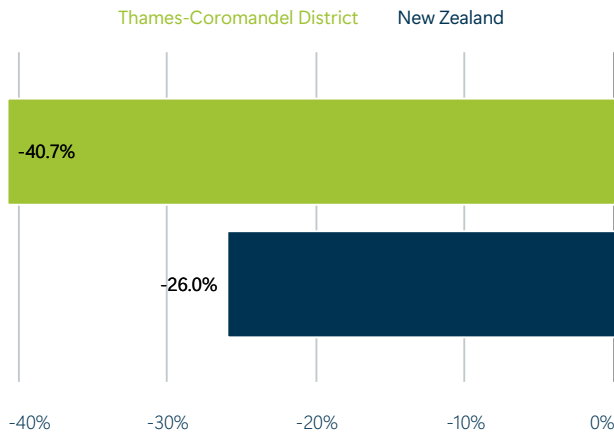
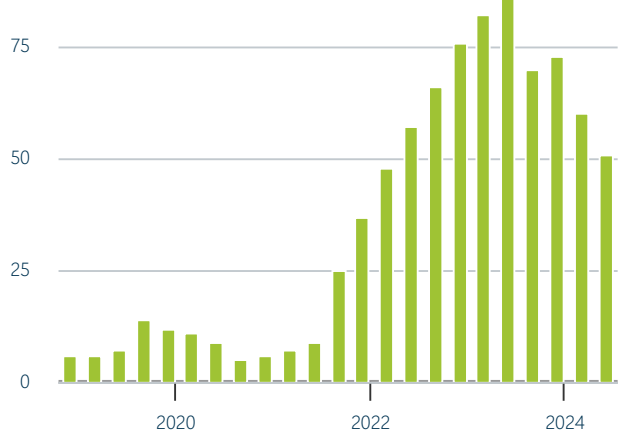


Figure 16. EV registrations  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of EV registrations in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 40.7% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (26.0%).
- The number of EV registrations in Thames-Coromandel District reached an annual total of 51 in the year to June 2024, down from 86 in the year to June 2023 and 57 in the year to June 2022.

### National overview

Annual EV registrations declined dramatically over the year to June 2024, falling 26%pa to the lowest annual level since September 2022. EV purchases during the June 2023 quarter were heavily influenced by changes to the Clean Car Discount (CCD) which was rebates were reduced from 1 July 2023, spurring a rush to receive the full extent of the rebate. The complete removal of the CCD scheme on 31 December 2023 resulted in a rush of pre-purchasing which will likely result in continued subdued demand during the second half of 2024. Road user charges (RUC) were introduced on 1 April 2024, removing some of the financial incentives that drive demand for EV's.

## Car registrations

Figure 17. Car registrations

Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

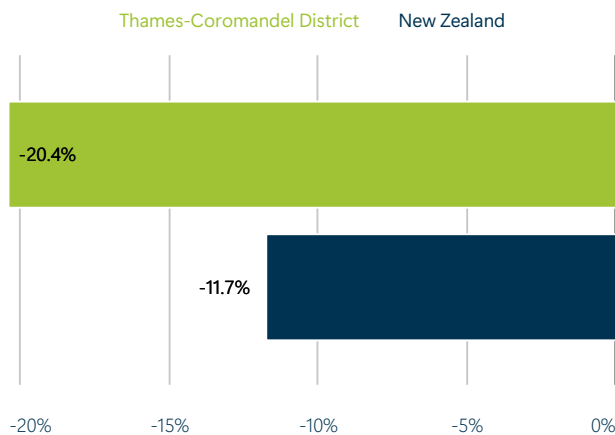
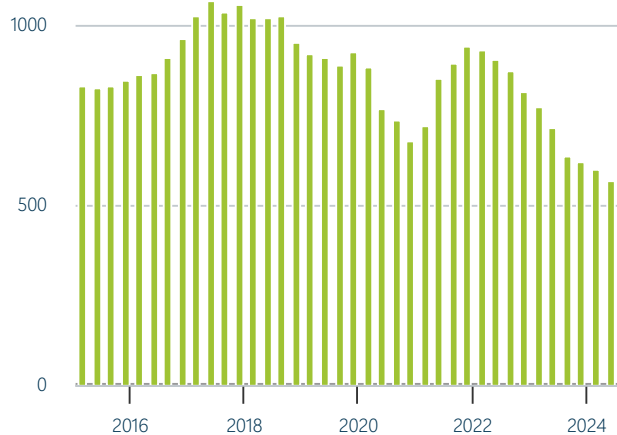


Figure 18. Car registrations

Annual number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of cars registered in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 20.4% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (11.7%).
- A total of 569 cars were registered in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 850.

### National overview

There were 44,570 total car registrations in the June 2024 quarter, down 36%pa from 2023. New car registrations fell 45%pa in the quarter, the largest decline on record (data back to 1976). Used car registrations also fell, down 26%pa, following four consecutive quarters of growth. These figures have been heavily influenced by changes to the Clean Car Discount (CCD) scheme from 1 July 2023, resulting in many consumers buying eligible vehicles during the June 2023 quarter. We expect continued volatility in annual growth rates of car registrations in the coming quarters due to the changes in the CCD scheme last year, making comparisons harder to decipher. Cost-of-living pressures will add additional downward pressure to registrations as consumers delay non-essential, big-ticket purchases due to household budget pressures.

## Commercial vehicle registrations

Figure 19. Commercial vehicle registrations  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

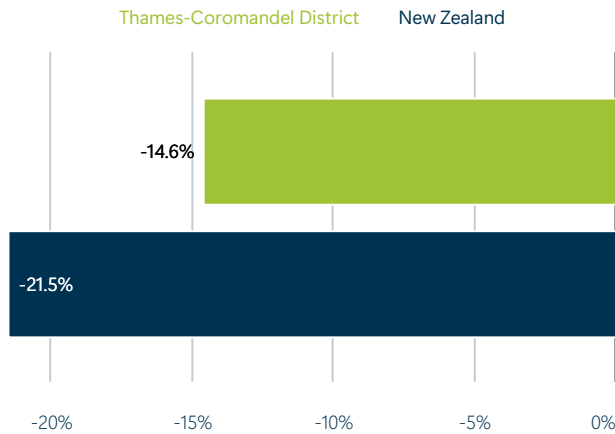
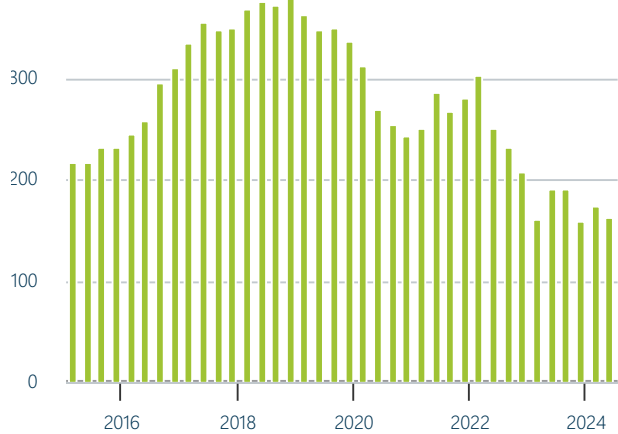


Figure 20. Commercial vehicle registrations  
Annual number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of commercial vehicles registered in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 14.6% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. The decline was not as low as in New Zealand (21.5%).
- A total of 164 commercial vehicles were registered in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to June 2024. This is lower than the ten year annual average of 273.

### National overview

Annual commercial vehicle registrations fell 22% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. The reduction and consequential removal of the Clean Car Discount (CCD) should have provided some financial incentives for businesses to purchase light commercial vehicles, but were 26% lower than the June 2023 quarter. Medium and very-heavy vehicles also saw falls in registrations in the June 2024 quarter, compared to a year ago. Difficult economic conditions continue to weigh on business confidence, as a result businesses are reluctant to purchase new commercial vehicles with higher borrowing rates, as input costs and revenue uncertainty remain.

## Labour market indicators

### Overview

Table 2. Overview of labour market indicators

Indicator	Thames-Coromandel District	Waikato Region	New Zealand
Employment (place of residence)	+0.2% ▲	+1.9% ▲	+2.1% ▲
Jobseeker Support recipients	+4.2% ▲	+10.7% ▲	+10.9% ▲
Unemployment rate <sup>^</sup>	4.5% ▲	5.0% ▲	4.2% ▲
NEET rate <sup>^</sup>	13.3% ▲	13.8% ▲	12.4% ▲

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

<sup>^</sup> Levels



## Employment (place of residence)

Figure 21. Employment (place of residence) growth  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

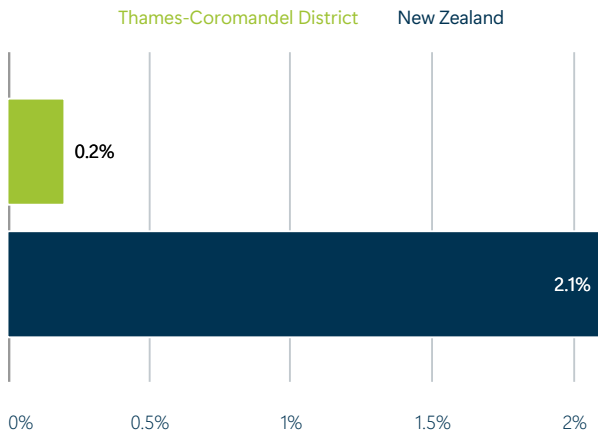
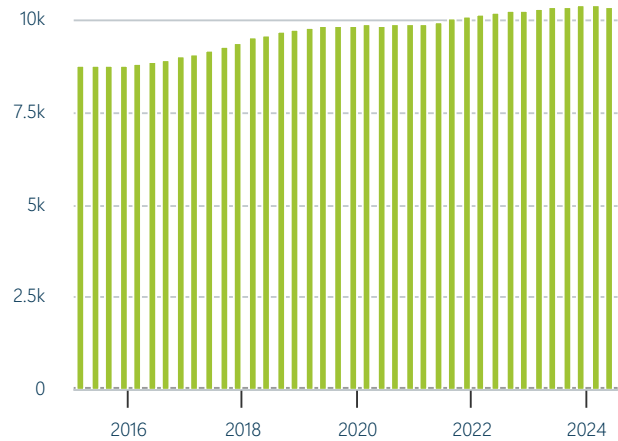


Figure 22. Employment (place of residence)  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Employment for residents living in Thames-Coromandel District was up 0.2% for the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (2.1%).
- An average of 10,390 people living in Thames-Coromandel District were employed in the year to June 2024.
- Annual employment growth for Thames-Coromandel District residents peaked at 4.8% in the year to June 2018.

### National overview

Employment growth has slowed to 0.5%pa, dragging down annual employment growth to 2.1% in the year to June 2024 after a year of broad-based expansion. Growth in employment was led by healthcare and public administration, and to a lesser extent transport, hospitality, and education.

The largest detractors from employment growth were in professional services and administration, and to a lesser extent agriculture and manufacturing.

## Jobseeker Support recipients

Figure 23. Annual change in Jobseeker Support recipients

Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

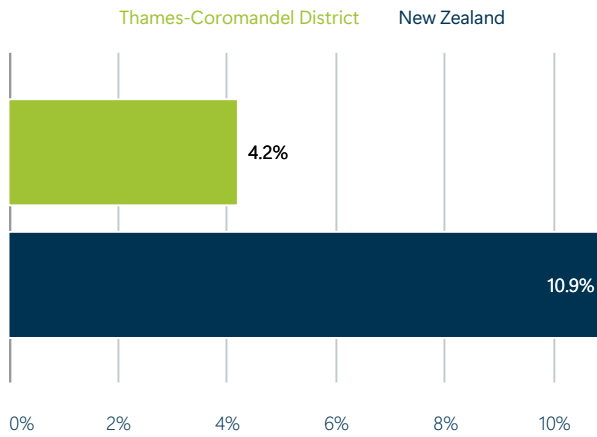
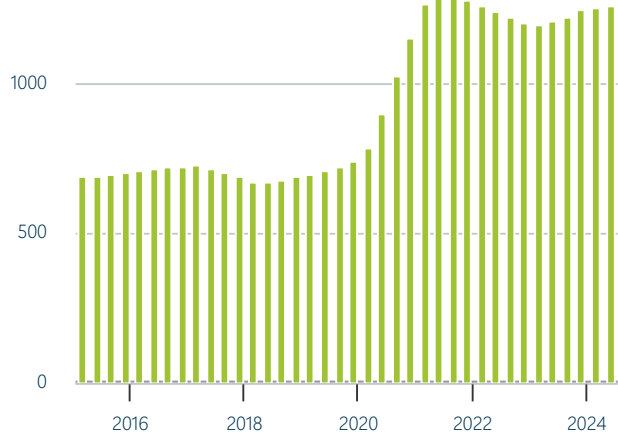


Figure 24. Jobseeker Support recipients

Annual average, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Jobseeker Support recipients in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to June 2024 increased by 4.2% compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (10.9%).
- An average of 1,264 people were receiving a Jobseeker Support benefit in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 941.

## Unemployment rate

Figure 25. Unemployment rate  
Annual average rate to June 2024

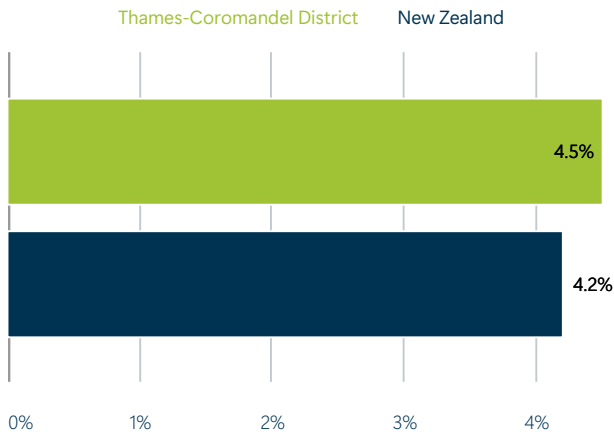
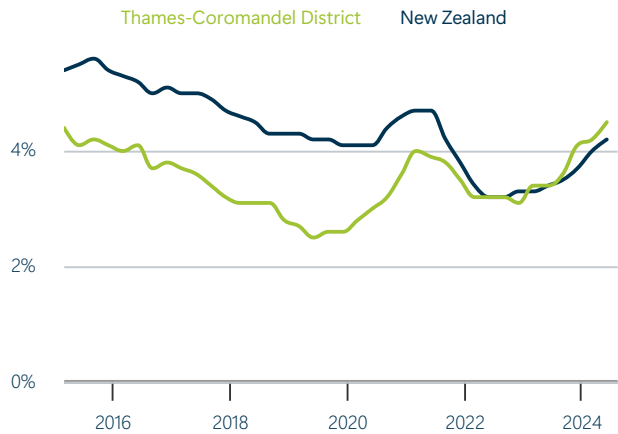


Figure 26. Unemployment rate  
Annual average rate



### Highlights

- The annual average unemployment rate in Thames-Coromandel District was 4.5% in the year to June 2024, up from 3.4% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to June 2024, the annual average unemployment rate in Thames-Coromandel District was higher than in New Zealand (4.2%).
- Over the last ten years the annual average unemployment rate in Thames-Coromandel District reached a peak of 4.5% in June 2024.

### National overview

The unemployment rate rose to 4.5 % in the June 2024 quarter, lifting the average unemployment rate over the year to June to 4.2%. Slowing employment growth means that the number of people joining the labour force has grown faster than employment opportunities. Growth in the labour force has been driven by strong net migration and increased participation, as households seek out more work to cope with cost-of-living pressures. Unemployment is expected to rise further throughout the rest of the year as the labour market continues to soften.

## NEET rate

Figure 27. NEET rate

% of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training, annual average rate to June 2024

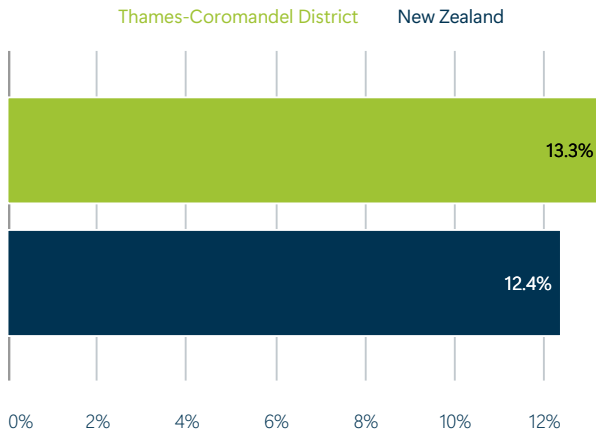
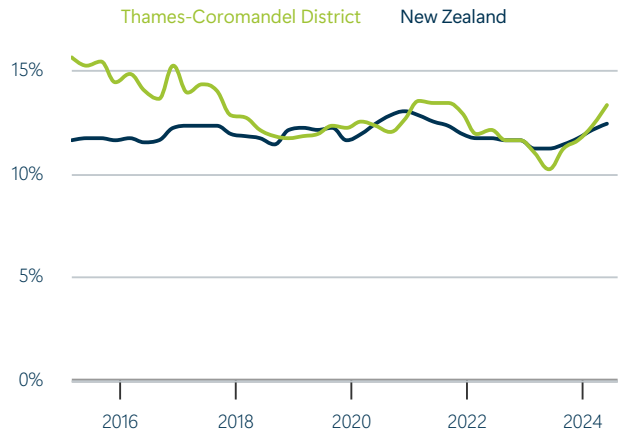


Figure 28. NEET rate

% of people aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training, annual average rate



### Highlights

- The annual average NEET rate in Thames-Coromandel District was 13.3% in the year to June 2024, up from 10.2% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to June 2024, the annual average NEET rate in Thames-Coromandel District was higher than in New Zealand (12.4%).
- Over the last ten years the annual average NEET rate in Thames-Coromandel District reached a peak of 15.6% in March 2015.

### National overview

The NEET rate indicates the proportion of 15–24-year-olds residents who are Not engaged in Education, Employment, or Training.

The NEET rate rose to 12.4% in the year to June 2024, rising from a 10 year low of 11.2 % in June 2023. Industries which often provide entry-level opportunities for youth, such as hospitality, retail, and construction, face weak demand in the current economic climate. As a result, there are fewer job opportunities for youth and competition for jobs in these industries is heightened, with youth potentially having to compete with older, more experienced candidates.

# Housing indicators

## Overview

Table 3. Overview of housing indicators

Indicator	Thames-Coromandel District	Waikato Region	New Zealand
Residential consents	-29.2% ▼	-28.9% ▼	-24.5% ▼
House sales	+18.1% ▲	+15.6% ▲	+12.1% ▲
Real estate listings	+7.7% ▲	+9.6% ▲	+14.9% ▲
House values *	-2.7% ▼	+0.4% ▲	+2.5% ▲
Housing affordability ^	14.6 ▼	6.9 ▼	6.9 ▼
First Home Grant purchases	+29.6% ▲	+32.5% ▲	+5.4% ▲
Residential rents	+6.2% ▲	+7.5% ▲	+6.8% ▲
Rental affordability ^	33.4% ▲	22.3% ▲	22.1% ▲
Emergency housing grants	+0.0% ▶	-35.7% ▼	-23.2% ▼
Housing register applicants	-8.5% ▼	-2.7% ▼	+2.3% ▲

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

\* Annual percentage changes

^ Levels

## Residential consents

Figure 29. Growth in number of new dwelling consents  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

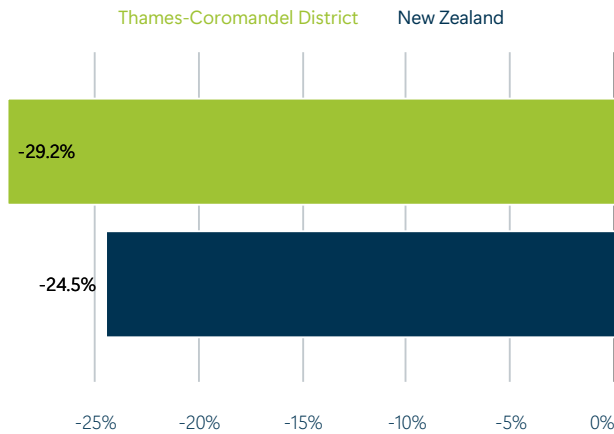
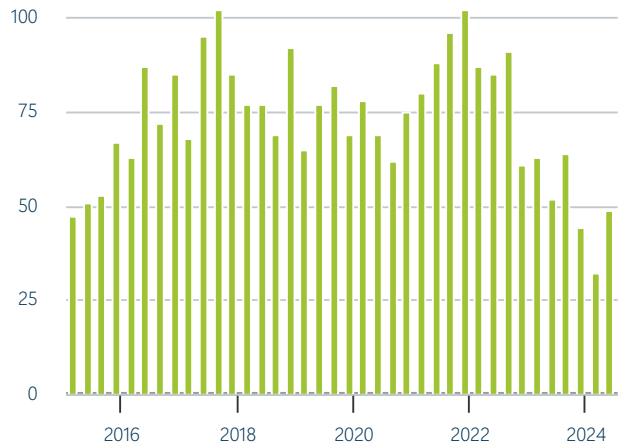


Figure 30. Residential consents  
Quarterly number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- A total of 49 new residential building consents were issued in Thames-Coromandel District in the June 2024 quarter, compared with 52 in the same quarter last year.
- On an annual basis the number of consents in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 29.2% compared with the same 12-month period a year before. This compares with a decrease of 24.5% in New Zealand over the same period.

### National overview

There were 8,279 new dwellings consented across New Zealand in the June 2024 quarter, down 16%pa from the same period in 2023. The annual average decline remained at 25%. The annual decline in house consents stopped accelerating at the beginning of the year, and has started to stabilise at around 34,000 driven by buoyant standalone house consents. Attached dwellings fell sharply in the June quarter, reflecting tighter funding conditions and the weak housing market, although it is important to note this build type is falling from a high base. Interest rates continue to create uncertainty in the housing market, although expectations of interest rate relief at some stage are starting to introduce some limited optimism for the year ahead.

## House sales

Figure 31. Annual change in house sales  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

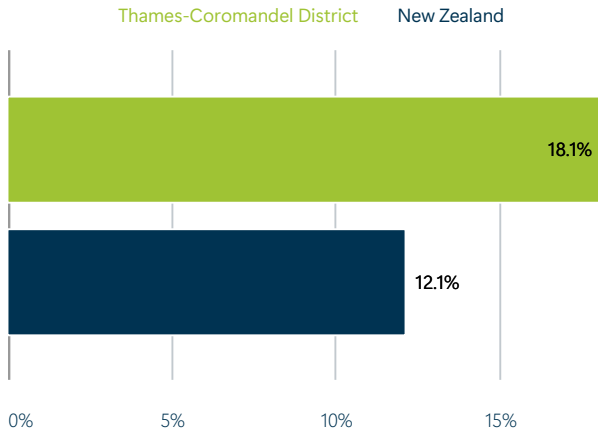
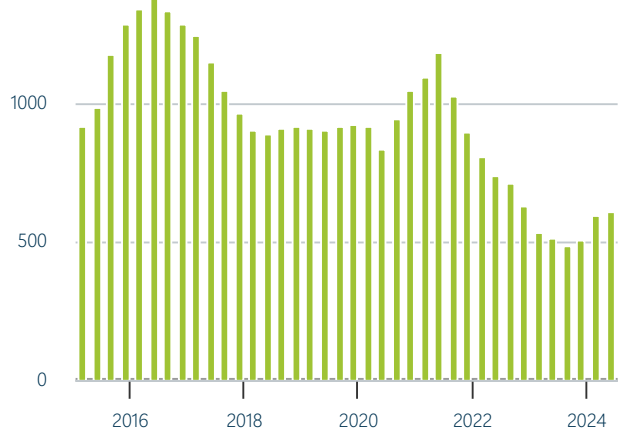


Figure 32. House sales  
Annual number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- House sales in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 18.1% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 12.1% in New Zealand.
- A total of 607 houses were sold in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 921.

### National overview

House sales rose 12.1% over the year to June 2024, hitting their highest level (66,949pa) since the year to September 2022. Sales volumes remain at historically low levels, well below the ten-year average of 78,100, although have risen steadily since the low at the beginning of last year. High mortgage rates and economic uncertainty continue to suppress buyer numbers. We expect sales to remain steady or improve moderately at best over the second half of 2024. Although interest rates are expected to start easing, many potential buyers will remain on the sidelines as, weakness continues in the labour market, and investors unlikely to rush back into the market as house prices are still overinflated compared to rental incomes.

## Real estate listings

Figure 33. Real estate listings

Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

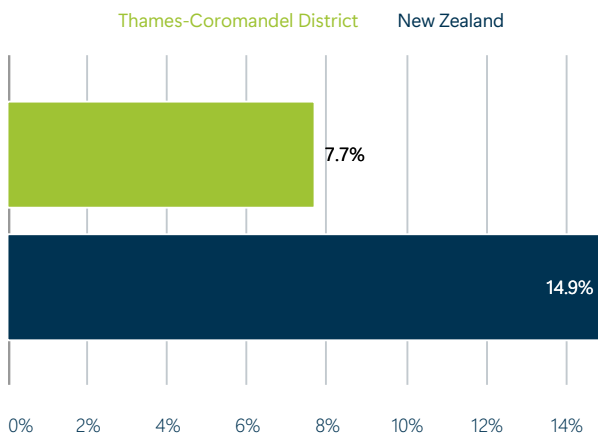
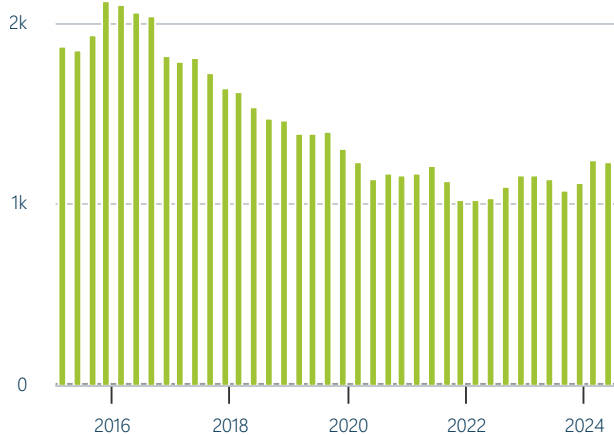


Figure 34. Real estate listings

Annual number, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of new real estate listings in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 7.7% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (14.9%).
- There were an average of 1,231 new real estate listings in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 1,443 new real estate listings.

### National overview

Annual new real estate listing numbers in the June 2024 quarter rose to their highest level since September 2022. New listings rose, 40%pa in the June 2024 quarter. Listing numbers are rising as households make difficult decisions to downsize or exit the housing market altogether in the face of high mortgage interest rates and limited employment opportunities. We expect listing numbers to continue to rise as households continue to face an increasingly difficult labour market, high mortgage payments and other cost-of-living pressures.



## House values

Figure 35. Annual change in house value  
Annual % change in house value June 2023 - June 2024

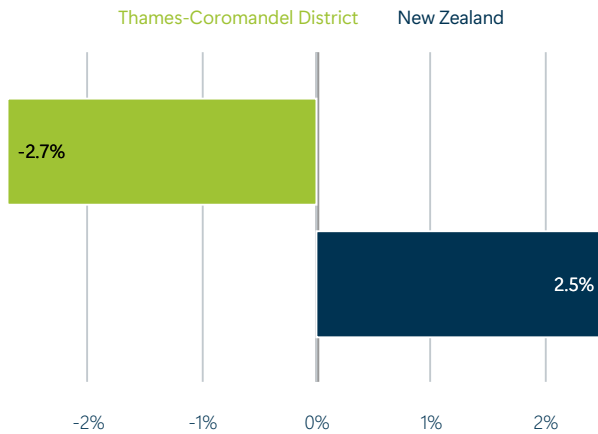
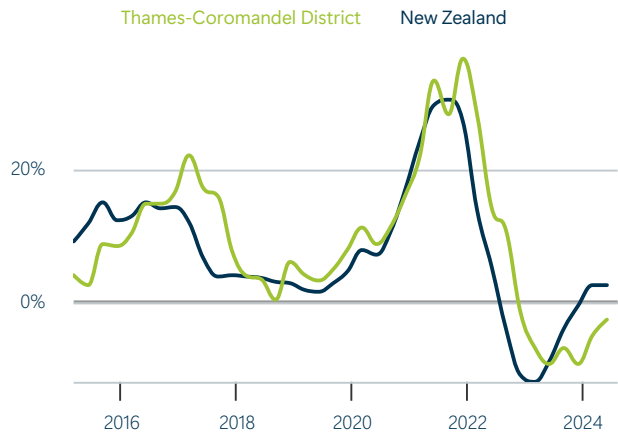


Figure 36. House value growth  
Annual % change



### Highlights

- The average current house value in Thames-Coromandel District was down 2.7% in June 2024, compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (2.5% growth).
- The average current house value was \$1,166,370 in Thames-Coromandel District in June 2024. This compares with \$923,899 in New Zealand.

### National overview

The average house value in New Zealand edged up 2.5%pa to \$923,899 in the June 2024 quarter. High mortgage rates continue to be the driving factor of subdued demand, as households struggle to earn enough to service a mortgage at such high rates. Minor relief in mortgage rates has been seen from major banks with the 1-year fixed mortgage rate ticking down to 7.1%pa from 7.2%pa. Potential home buyers will be waiting for further relief as the Reserve Bank cuts interest rates sometime soon. Listing numbers continue to rise, however, with buyer numbers not going anywhere anytime soon, house price growth will likely continue to be constrained for the remainder of the year.

## Housing affordability

Figure 37. Housing affordability

Ratio of house prices to household incomes, year to June 2024

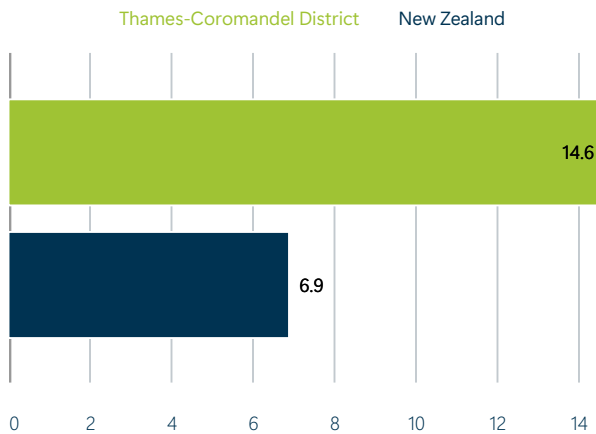
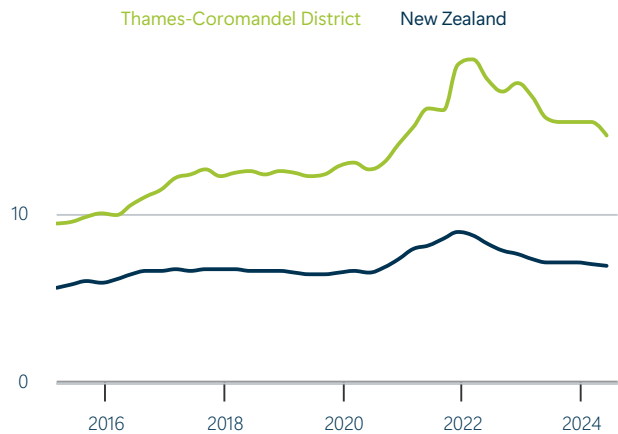


Figure 38. Housing affordability

Ratio of house prices to household incomes, annual average



### Highlights

- Housing in Thames-Coromandel District (14.6) was less affordable than in New Zealand (6.9) in June 2024, based on the ratio between mean house values and mean household incomes.
- Housing affordability in Thames-Coromandel District improved on average between June 2023 and June 2024. Housing affordability has improved in New Zealand over the same period.
- During the last ten years, housing in Thames-Coromandel District was most affordable in March 2015, when the index reached a low of 9.4.

### National overview

The housing affordability ratio improved narrowly, easing from 7.0 in the year to March 2024, to 6.9 in the year to June 2024. Affordable housing is important for people's well-being as high housing costs results in less income left-over to meet essential needs. The affordability metric measures the average house value to average household incomes. Subdued house price growth due to high interest rates along with steady household income growth resulted in an improvement in the affordability ratio. High interest rates and uncertainty over job security make for an uncertain environment for first home buyers.

## First Home Grant purchases

Figure 39. Annual change in First Home Grant purchases  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024, First Home Grant purchases

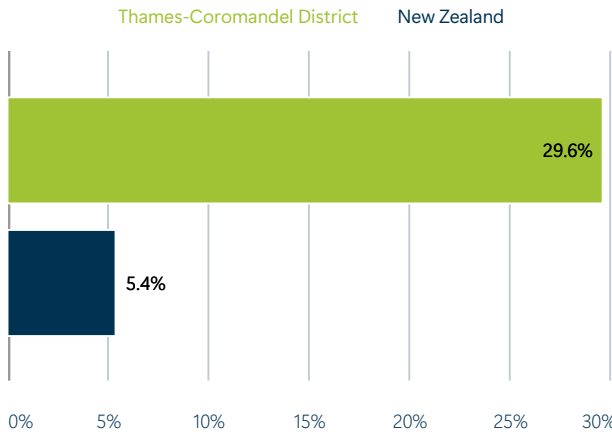
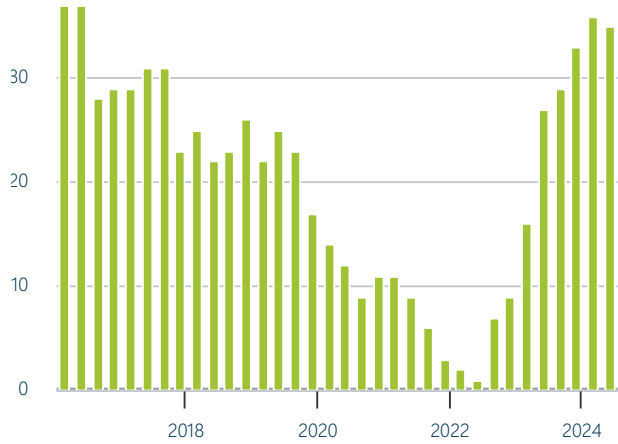


Figure 40. First Home Grant purchases  
Annual number First Home Grant purchases, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- First Home Grant purchases using the Kainga Ora First Home Grant in Thames-Coromandel District increased by 29.6% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 5.4% in New Zealand.
- A total of 35 properties were purchased using the First Home Grant in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the nine year annual average of 22.

### National overview

First home buyers are measured using data from Kāinga Ora on the number of properties bought using a First Home Grant. The First Home Grant offers eligible first-home buyers with a grant of up to \$5,000 to put towards the purchase of an existing/older home, or up to \$10,000 to put towards the purchase of a brand-new property. This does not capture all first home buyers, as some will be excluded by First Home Grant eligibility requirements including maximum annual income and regional house price caps.

First Home Grant purchases have picked up 5.4% in the year to June 2024, totalling 7,902. This the last full quarter of First Home Grant purchases as Kāinga Ora stopped taking new applications for the grants on 22 May 2024.

We will look to introduce a new measure of First Home Buyer activity in coming quarters.

## Residential rents

Figure 41. Annual change in residential rents  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

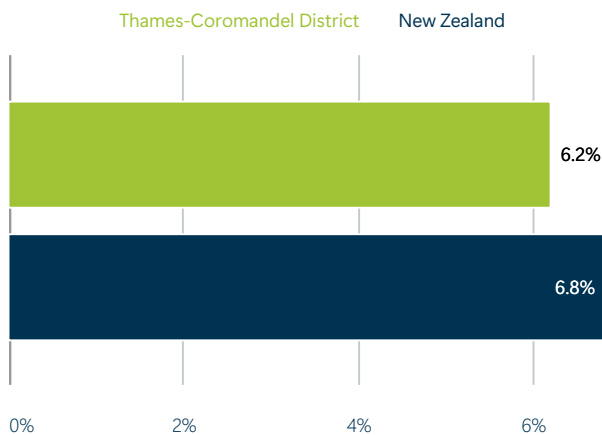
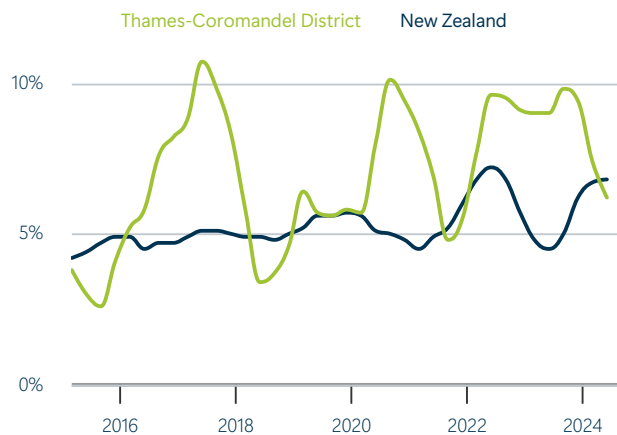


Figure 42. Residential rents growth  
Annual average % change



### Highlights

- The average residential rent in Thames-Coromandel District was up 6.2% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (6.8%).
- The average residential rent in Thames-Coromandel District was \$514 in the year to June 2024. This compares to \$568 in New Zealand.
- Annual growth of residential rents in Thames-Coromandel District peaked at 10.7% in the year to June 2017.

### National overview

Rents reflect the accommodation cost for around a third of New Zealanders and are an important factor in assessing supply and demand in the broader housing market. Analysis from government agencies highlights that rents are not driven by interest rates or the running costs of a rental property, but more usually reflect ability to pay, income levels, and the supply and demand for rentals.

Residential rents continue to gain momentum, rising 6.8% over the year to June 2024. Rents averaged \$568 per week nationally over the year to June 2024, or \$8 higher than they were in the year to March. Higher residential rents disproportionately impact lower-income households and can increase demand for public housing.

## Rental affordability

Figure 43. Rental affordability  
Rents as % of household income, year to June 2024

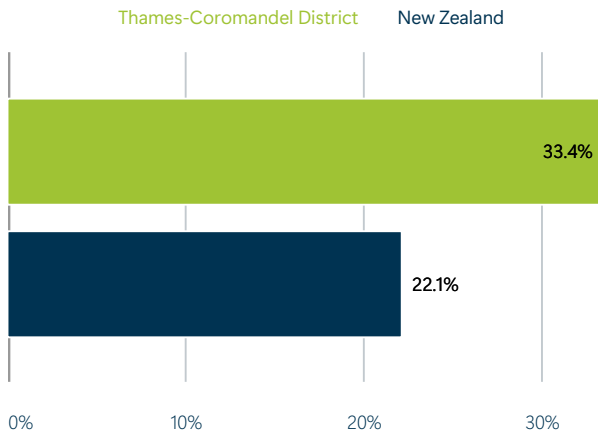
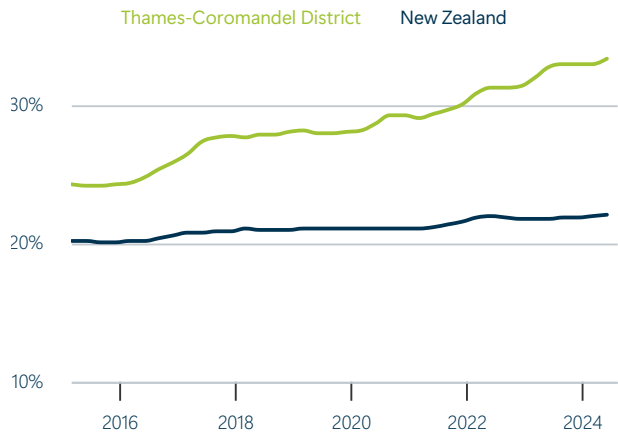


Figure 44. Rental affordability  
Rents as % of household income, annual average



### Highlights

- Renting in Thames-Coromandel District (33.4%) was less affordable than in New Zealand (22.1%) in the year to June 2024, based on the ratio of mean rents to mean household incomes.
- Rental affordability in Thames-Coromandel District deteriorated on average between June 2023 and June 2024. Rental affordability has deteriorated in New Zealand over the same period.
- During the last ten years, renting in Thames-Coromandel District was most affordable in September 2015, when the index reached a low of 24.2%.

### National overview

Rental affordability deteriorated slightly in the year to June 2024, with average rents amounting to 22.1% of household incomes, up from 22.0% in the year to March 2024. Affordable rents are important for people’s well-being, the larger the proportion rents take up of household incomes, the less money that is left over to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, healthcare and education. Average rents grew 6.8% in the year to June 2024, up 2.3 percentage points from growth a year earlier, outpacing mean household income growth of 5.4% over the same period.

## Emergency housing grants

Figure 45. Households in emergency housing  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

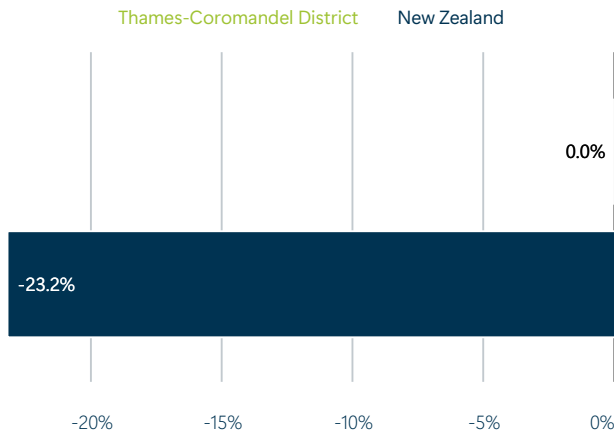
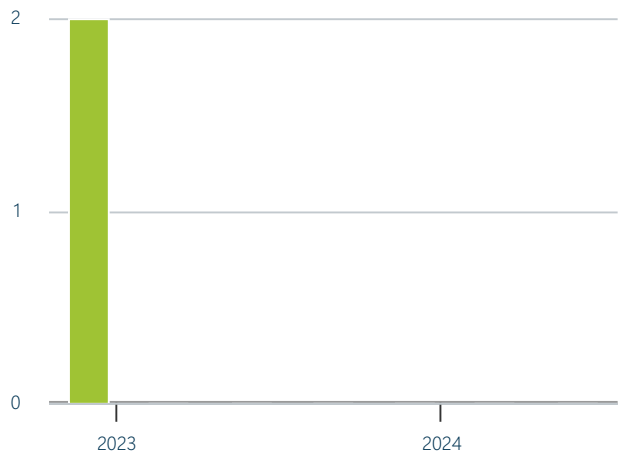


Figure 46. Households in emergency housing  
Annual average, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of households in emergency housing in Thames-Coromandel District was unchanged in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with a decrease of 23.2% in New Zealand.
- 

### National overview

Emergency housing grants measure the number of households staying in short-term accommodation such as motels if they are temporarily unable to access a contracted transitional housing place or private rental. Funding is provided by the Ministry of Social Development.

The number of households in emergency housing fell 23.2% in the year to June 2024, amounting to 800 fewer households.

This reduction comes as the coalition government emphasised tighter operational guidelines would be put in place when MSD considers emergency housing applications.

These measures include imposing a standdown period for those breaking emergency housing rules and pushing families who have been in emergency housing for over three months to the front of the social housing que.

## Housing register applicants

Figure 47. Annual change in housing register applicants  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

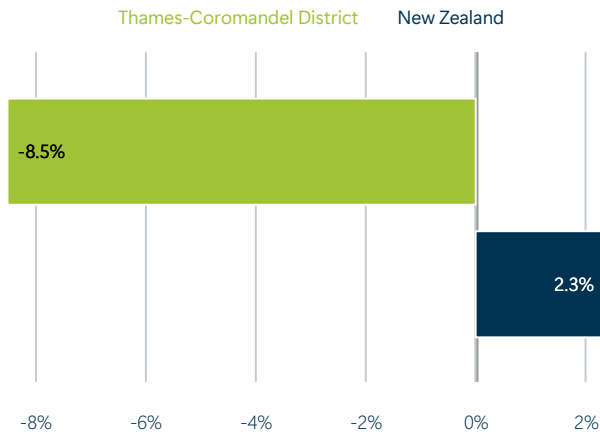
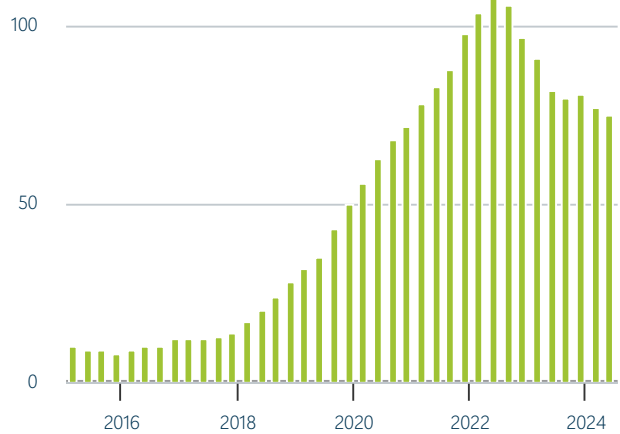


Figure 48. Housing register applicants  
Annual average, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of applicants on the housing register in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 8.5% in the year to June 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with an increase of 2.3% in New Zealand.
- An average of 75 applicants were on the housing register in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 50.

## Public housing stock

Figure 49. Public housing stock  
Annual average % change December 2022 - December 2023

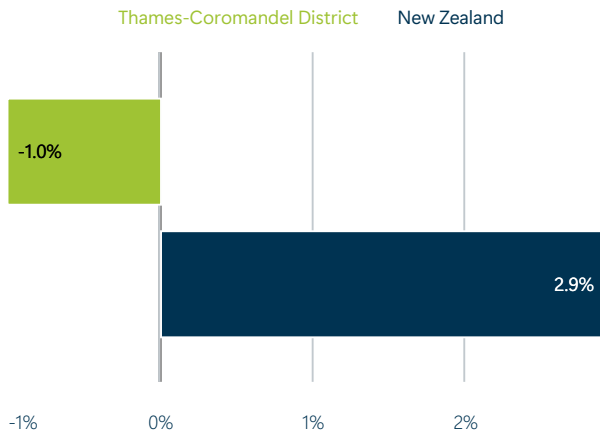
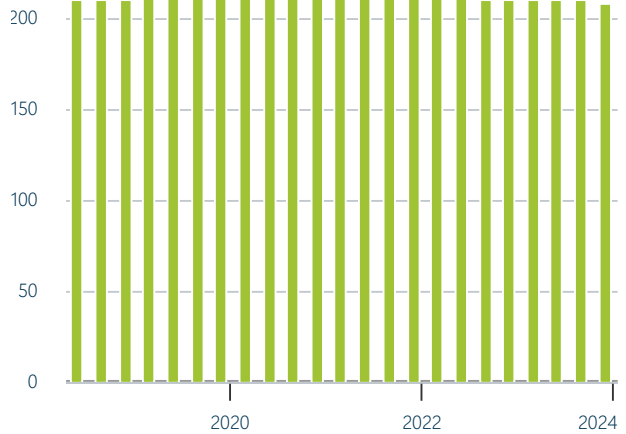


Figure 50. Public housing stock  
Annual average, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- The number of public houses in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to December 2023 decreased by 1% compared to a year earlier. The decline was greater than in New Zealand (2.9% growth).
- There were an average of 208 public houses in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending December 2023. This compares with the six year annual average of 210.
- *Please note that public housing stock is not yet available for the year to June 2024. Data for the year to December 2023 is displayed instead.*



# Social indicators

## Overview

Table 4. Overview of social indicators

Indicator	Thames-Coromandel District	Waikato Region	New Zealand
School attendance <sup>^</sup> <sup>🕒</sup>	44.7% <sup>▲</sup>	49.1% <sup>▲</sup>	52.1% <sup>▲</sup>
Gaming machine profits <sup>🕒</sup>	-5.3% <sup>▼</sup>	-3.2% <sup>▼</sup>	-1.6% <sup>▼</sup>
Crime rate <sup>^</sup>	232 <sup>▼</sup>	273 <sup>▼</sup>	230 <sup>▼</sup>
Health enrolments	+0.3% <sup>▲</sup>	+2.6% <sup>▲</sup>	+2.4% <sup>▲</sup>
Other benefit recipients	+1.6% <sup>▲</sup>	+3.1% <sup>▲</sup>	+3.0% <sup>▲</sup>

<sup>🕒</sup> Data up to the March 2024 quarter.

All measures are annual average percentage changes unless:

<sup>^</sup> Levels

## School attendance

Figure 51. School attendance

% of school students attending greater than 90% of classes, annual average to March 2024

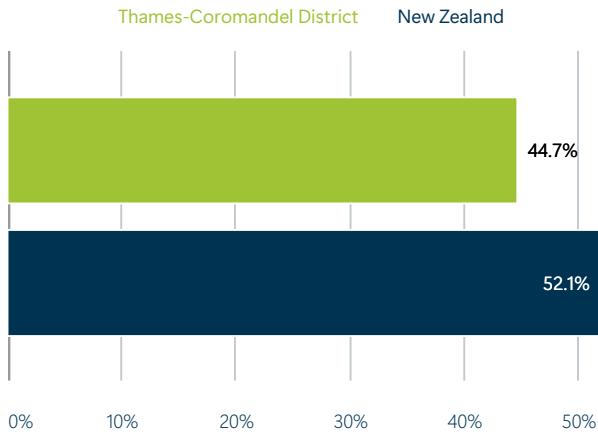
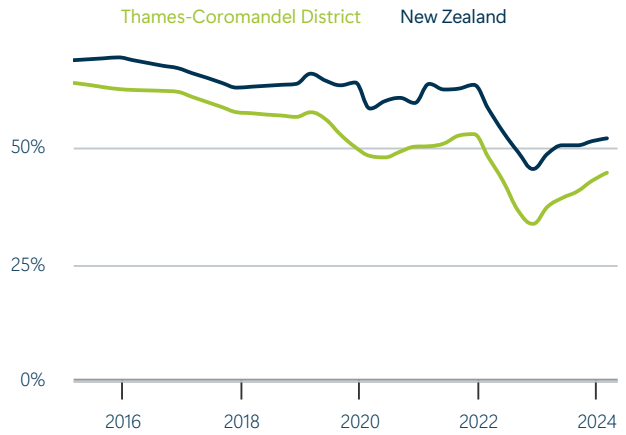


Figure 52. School attendance

% of school students attending greater than 90% of classes, annual average



### Highlights

- The annual average school attendance rate in Thames-Coromandel District was 44.7% in the year to March 2024, up from 37.4% in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to March 2024, the annual average school attendance rate in Thames-Coromandel District was lower than in New Zealand (52.1%).
- Over the last ten years the annual average school attendance rate in Thames-Coromandel District reached a peak of 64.0% in March 2015.
- *Please note that school attendance is not yet available for the year to June 2024. Data for the year to March 2024 is displayed instead.*

## Gaming machine profits

Figure 53. Gaming machine profits  
Annual level, Thames-Coromandel District

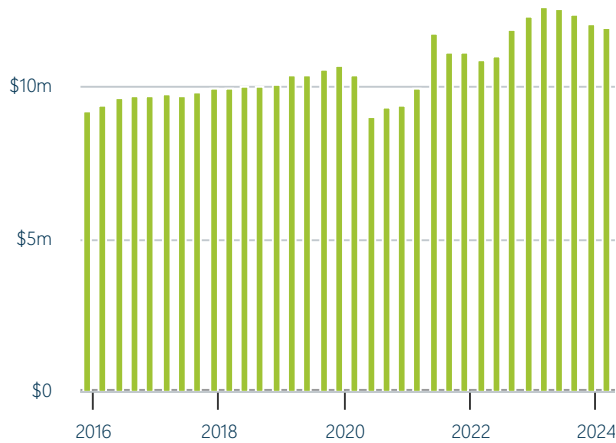
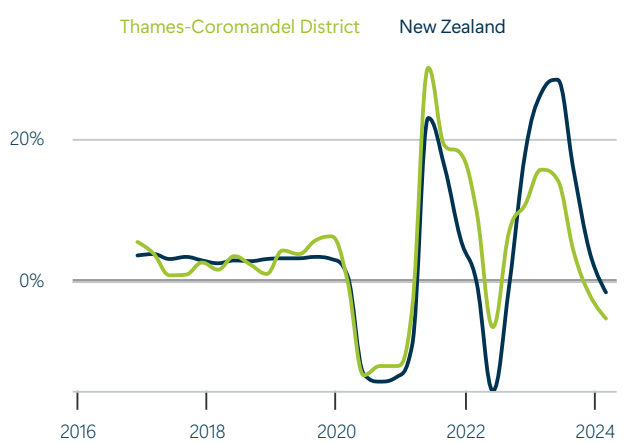


Figure 54. Gaming machine profits  
Annual average % change



### Highlights

- Gaming machine profits in Thames-Coromandel District decreased by 5.3% over the year to March 2024, compared to a year earlier. This compares with a decrease of 1.6% in New Zealand.
- Gaming machine profits in Thames-Coromandel District totalled \$11.95 million in the year to March 2024.
- Annual gaming machine profit growth in Thames-Coromandel District peaked at 30.1% in the year to June 2021.
- *Please note that gaming machine profits is not yet available for the year to June 2024. Data for the year to March 2024 is displayed instead.*

## Crime rate

Figure 55. Crime rate

Criminal proceedings per 10,000 residents, annual average to June 2024

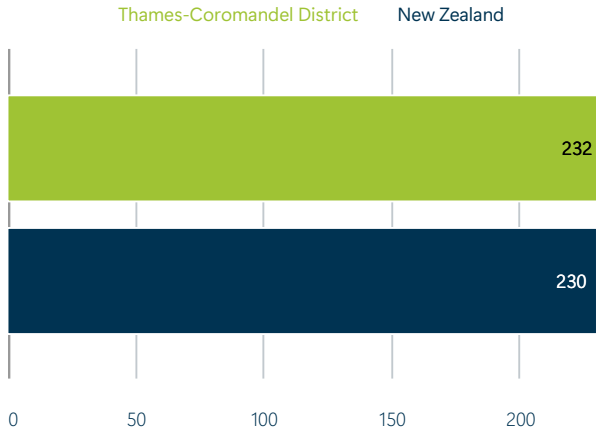
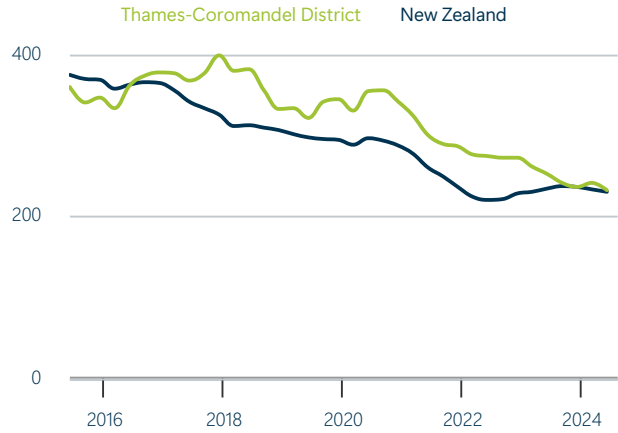


Figure 56. Crime rate

Criminal proceedings per 10,000 residents, annual average



### Highlights

- The crime rate in Thames-Coromandel District was 232 (per 10,000 residents) in the year to June 2024, down from 252 in the previous 12 months.
- In the year to June 2024, the crime rate in Thames-Coromandel District was higher than in New Zealand (230).
- Over the last ten years the annual average crime rate in Thames-Coromandel District reached a peak of 398 in December 2017.

### National overview

The crime rate has eased 1.7% over the year to June 2024, with 230 proceedings per 10,000 residents in the year to June 2024. The largest reductions in crime were across Kawerau, Gisborne, and Masterton Districts, while crime rose the highest in Taupō, Buller, and Kaikōura Districts. The largest contributor to total crimes is traffic related offenses though this has remained relatively stable.

## Health enrolments

Figure 57. Annual change in health enrolments  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

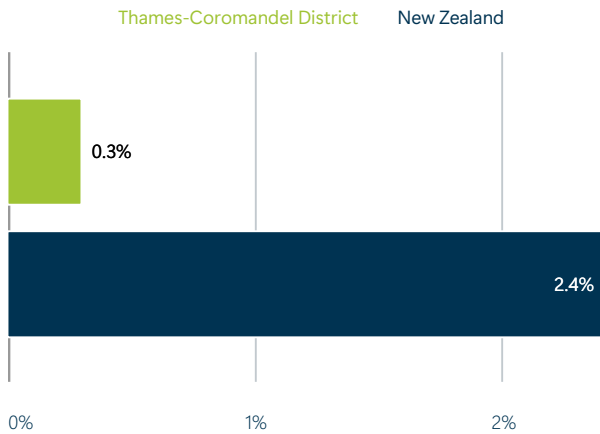
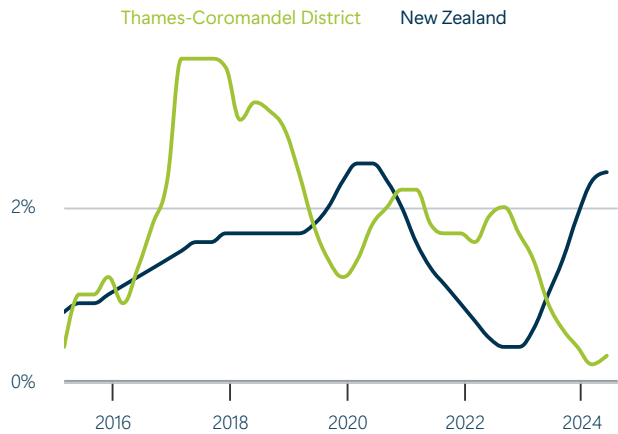


Figure 58. Health enrolments  
Annual average % change



### Highlights

- The number of people enrolled with a primary health organisation in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to June 2024 increased by 0.3% compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (2.4%).
- An average of 30,680 people were enrolled with primary healthcare providers in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 28,701.

### National overview

Health enrolments rose 2.4% in the year to June 2024, up slightly from 2.3% in the year to March 2024. Health enrolments reflect growth in the resident population in territorial authority, serving as a timelier indicator for local population growth.

Stats NZ estimates that New Zealand’s population growth slowed from 2.7% in the year to March 2024, to 2.5% in the year to June 2024. The slowdown in population growth is driven by a drop in net migration, from a peak of 133,700 in the year to September 2023 to 73,200 in the year to June 2024.

## Other benefit recipients

Figure 59. Annual change in other benefit recipients  
Annual average % change June 2023 - June 2024

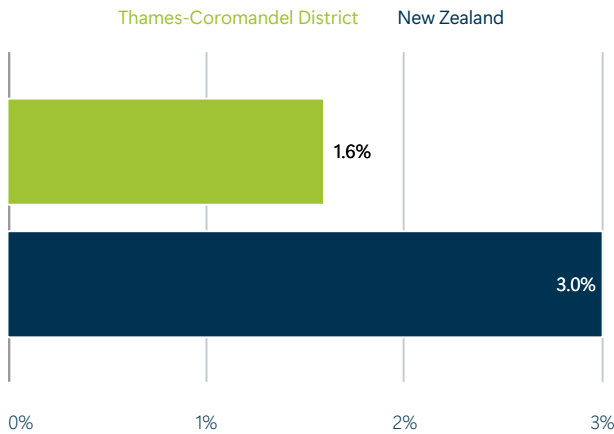
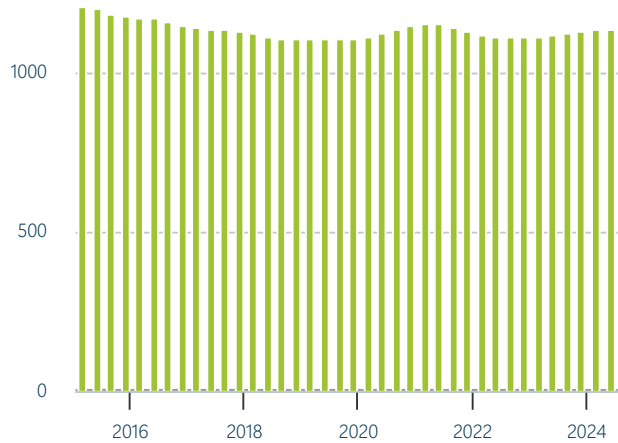


Figure 60. Other benefit recipients  
Annual average, Thames-Coromandel District



### Highlights

- Other benefits recipients (including Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment) in Thames-Coromandel District in the year to June 2024 increased by 1.6% compared to a year earlier. Growth was lower than in New Zealand (3.0%).
- An average of 1,134 people were receiving an other benefit (including Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment) in Thames-Coromandel District in the 12 months ending June 2024. This compares with the ten year annual average of 1,137.

### National overview

Other benefit recipients include Sole Parent Support, Supported Living payment, and others, complementing our measure of Jobseeker Support recipients. Jobseeker Support is influenced by the labour market – it tends to go down when the labour market is tight and go up when jobs are scarcer. By contrast, other benefit recipients are less influenced by the labour market, exhibiting a different trend to Jobseekers.

Other benefit recipients have risen 3.0% in the year to June 2024, driven by modest growth in Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payments, and to a lesser extent growth in smaller benefit categories.

## Technical notes

### Building consents

Building consents data is sourced from Stats NZ. The number of residential consents issued for new dwellings is the measure for residential consents. For non-residential consents, the measure is the value of both new buildings and alterations.

### Business counts

This data is from Business Count Indicators (BCI) from Statistics New Zealand. It is a series based on a monthly count of geographic units as at the end of each month, mostly sourced from administrative data. Geographic units represent a business location engaged in one, or predominantly one, kind of economic activity at a single physical site or base (eg a factory, a farm, a shop, an office, etc).

The business counts data is different from the annually published Business Demography Statistics.

This series is limited to economically significant enterprises. It can be an individual, private-sector and public-sector enterprises that are engaged in the production of goods and services in New Zealand. These enterprises are maintained on the Statistics NZ Business Register, which generally includes all employing units and those enterprises with GST turnover greater than \$30,000 per year.

### Calculating changes

We use several different calculations to calculate change in the indicators used in the Quarterly Economic Monitor.

- Annual average percentage change: Annual average percentage change compares average values over the past year with those in the prior year. For example, the change from the year ending March last year to the year ending March this year.
- Annual percentage change: Annual percentage change compares the value this quarter to the value in the same quarter last year. For example, the change from March quarter last year to March quarter this year.
- Levels: In the case of levels, such as unemployment rate, we do not calculate the change in level – we simply show the latest level value.

### Consumer spending

The consumer spending data is sourced from Marketview. It measures total electronic card spending at 'bricks + mortar' retailers using a combination of spending through the Paymark network and modelled estimates at non-Paymark retailers. For further breakdown of the data by storetype and other variables contact Marketview.

### Crime

The crude crime rate is calculated as the number of crimes committed and recorded (offender proceedings) in an area per 10,000 residents. Crime counts are sourced from the New Zealand Police. Population data is sourced from Stats NZ and Infometrics own population projections (for the most recent quarters).

The data available at a detailed level only included reported crime and does not provide a dimension of how safe people feel. However, higher crime is an obvious proxy for unreported crime (more reported crime would seem to imply a higher overall crime burden), and more crime would logically see people feel less safe.

### Dairy

Dairy data has been sourced from the *New Zealand Dairy Statistics*, a publication jointly produced by DairyNZ and LIC, as well as calculations made by Infometrics. The data accords to dairy seasons, which run from June to May. Total dairy payouts in each territorial authority have been calculated by Infometrics by utilising milk solids production in conjunction with Fonterra's farmgate milk price (excluding dividends) from the dairy season in question. For the current season, Infometrics calculates a payout forecast using our own expectation of the farmgate milk price and the assumption that milk solids production continues running at the same level as the last 12 months.

**Emergency housing**

Emergency housing measures the number of households living in emergency housing at the end of each quarter. This is recorded based on data from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) on the number of emergency housing special needs grants (EH SNG) issued for individuals and families staying in short-term accommodation such as motels if they are temporarily unable to access a contracted transitional housing place or private rental.

Please note that some publications, such as the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's Public housing regional factsheets, report the number of emergency housing grants issued. This number is generally much higher than the number of households living in emergency housing, as the grants have to be renewed every few weeks. For example, a household living in emergency housing continuously through a quarter would receive several grants during that time. We present the number of households as this better reflects the ongoing use of emergency housing.

**Employment (place of residence)**

Employment data is based off a range of Stats NZ employment datasets, and represents the number of filled jobs, based on the area of residential address for the employee (rather than workplace address). This place of residence location means that the employment series reflects trends in employment of an area's residents, which may be different to trends in employment at businesses in an area, particularly when there are strong commuting flows. The most recent quarter is based off the average of Monthly Employment Indicator (MEI) filled jobs from Stats NZ for the past three months, with previous quarters being backcasted using the percentage change in the quarterly Business Data Collection dataset published by Stats NZ.

**First Home Grant purchases**

First Home Grant purchases are measured using data from Kainga Ora on the number of properties bought using a First Home Grant. The First Home Grant offers eligible first-home buyers with a grant of up to \$5,000 to put towards the purchase of an existing/older home, or up to \$10,000 to put towards the purchase of a brand new property. This does not capture all first home buyers, as some will be excluded by First Home Grant eligibility requirements including maximum annual income and regional house price caps.

**Gaming machine profits**

Gambling activity is estimated using gaming machine profits (GMP) data published by the Department of Internal Affairs. This GMP data is based on Class 4 gambling which represents electronic gaming machines, commonly known as 'pokies', located in venues such as pubs and clubs. This excludes all sports betting and casino-based gaming. GMP represents money spent by gamblers which is not returned to gamblers in the form of winnings. A minimum of 40% of GMP are required by law to go back to the community in the form of grants.

**Gross domestic product**

Gross Domestic Product is estimated by Infometrics. A top-down approach breaks national industrial production (sourced from production-based GDP measures published by Stats NZ) to TA level by applying TA shares to the national total. Each TA's share of industry output is based on labour market data from LEED. GDP growth in recent quarters is based on a model which uses residence-based employment from Monthly Employment Indicators that have been mapped to place of work. Estimates of GDP for these recent quarters are provisional until Infometrics updates its annual GDP series in the Regional Economic Profile at the beginning of each year. Gross domestic product is measured in 2023 prices.

**Guest nights**

The number of guest nights is sourced from the Accommodation Data Programme, which is funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and managed by Fresh Info. A guest night is equivalent to one guest spending one night at an establishment. For example, a motel with 15 guests spending two nights would report that they had provided 30 guest nights



### Health enrolments

Health enrolments are sourced from the Ministry of Health. They record the number of people in each area who are enrolled with a Primary Health Organisation (PHO). Enrolment is voluntary, but most New Zealanders enrol at a general practice for health reasons and for the benefits of enrolment, such as cheaper doctors' visits and reduced costs of prescription medicines. Health enrolments are attributed to territorial authorities based on the residential address of patients, regardless of where their general practice is located.

The Ministry of Health changed how health enrolments were coded to areas in 2023, which caused a break in the series between the June 2023 and September 2023 quarter. We have undertaken modelling to combine the series over this period.

### House sales

The number of house sales is sourced from REINZ. The indicator measures the number of house sales at the point when the sale becomes unconditional. The unconditional date is the date when all the terms of an agreement have been satisfied and the sale and purchase can proceed to settlement.

### House values

House values (dollar value) are sourced from CoreLogic. The levels quoted in the report are average values for the quarter.

### Household income

In 2024 we revised our methodology for estimating household incomes to incorporate new data sources. Previously we relied heavily on Stats NZ's LEED-Annual for historical income estimates, however, we have since uncovered a number of issues with how regional incomes are distributed to territorial authorities within some regions.

Previously, we eschewed Census data, due to its tendency to under-report incomes, due to challenge of accurately recollecting incomes when filling out a Census form. Stats NZ have started producing the Administrative Population Census (APC) which draws upon tax data to more completely record incomes, partially overcoming the problem of Census data. In light of the issues with LEED-Annual at a territorial authority level, we now use APC data to indicate each territorial authority's share of regional income. The APC still underestimates incomes, but is a reliable indicator of relative incomes.

These changes have resulted in historical revisions of our household income and housing affordability estimates for many areas, however, we expect future revisions to be minimal. We always recommend that you download a complete time series if looking to compare changes over time.

### Housing affordability

Housing affordability is measured by comparing average current house values from CoreLogic with Infometrics' estimate of annual average household income. Household incomes are a better measure for housing affordability than individual incomes as it reflects the true ability of a household to afford housing. We present a ratio of average house values to average household incomes. A higher ratio, therefore, suggests that average houses cost a greater multiple of typical incomes, which indicates lower housing affordability.

### Housing register applicants

The housing register counts applicants who are not currently in public housing, who have been assessed as eligible for public housing and who are ready to be matched to a suitable property. This is often referred to as the public housing waiting list. Public housing was previously referred to as social housing.

Data is sourced from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and are shown as the average number of applicants. One applicant could represent a single person, couple or family looking for housing. Applicants could be living in emergency housing, unaffordable private rentals, or other insecure arrangements such as couch-surfing or rough-sleeping.

### Jobseeker Support recipients

In July 2013 the New Zealand's welfare system changed to better recognise and support people's work potential. As part of this the Jobseekers Support benefit was introduced. This benefit is for people who can usually look or prepare for work but also includes people who can only work part-time or can't work at the moment, for example, because they have a health condition, injury or disability.

Data presented for the September 2013 quarter onwards is provided by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Data prior to September 2013 are Infometrics estimates based on re-grouping pre-July 2013 benefit categories to be consistent with the post-July 2013 benefit categories. The pre-July 2013 benefit categories used to estimate the number of Jobseekers Support recipients are: Unemployment Benefit and Unemployment Benefit Hardship; Unemployment Benefit Training and Unemployment Benefit Hardship Training; Sickness Benefit and Sickness Benefit Hardship; Domestic Purposes Benefit - Sole Parent (if youngest child is 14 or over); Women Alone and Widow's Benefit (without children or with children 14 or over)

### NEET

NEET rates measure the proportion of young people aged 15-24 that are not in education, employment or training.

Infometrics estimates NEET rates by territorial authority. The following datasets are used in to estimate territorial authority NEET rates: Stats NZ's Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS), Census data, Jobseeker Support recipients by age, and transient secondary school student numbers.

Territorial authority estimates are benchmarked on annual average regional NEET rates from the HLFS, which at this level of disaggregation can be volatile from year to year. Large year-to-year changes are likely to be partially caused by sampling errors in the HLFS, rather than actual fundamental shifts in NEET rates. As the HLFS is the official measure of youth NEET in NZ, we benchmark our data to align with published NEET rates.

### Other benefits

Other benefits include Sole Parent Support, Supported Living and other residual main benefits (excluding Jobseeker Support). Data is sourced from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and are shown as the average number of beneficiaries in each benefit category across each quarter for the current year. Further details of the benefit categories can be found on MSD's website.

### Public housing stock

Public housing includes properties that are owned or leased by Kāinga Ora and other registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) that can be tenanted by people who are eligible for public housing. The totals presented include both occupied and vacant houses. Public housing was previously referred to as social housing. This data is sourced from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

### Real estate listings

Real estate listings measure the number of new listings for residential dwellings on realestate.co.nz. It is based on the number of listings added each quarter or year.

### Rental affordability

Rental affordability is measured by comparing average annualised rents from CoreLogic with Infometrics' estimate of annual average household income. Household incomes are a better measure for housing affordability than individual incomes as it reflects the true ability of a household to afford housing. We present a ratio of an annual ratio of average rent to average household incomes. A higher ratio, therefore, suggests that average rents cost a greater multiple of typical incomes, which indicates lower rental affordability.

### Residential rents

Residential rents (\$ per week) are sourced from monthly data provided by MBIE and averaged across each quarter or year using weighted geometric means. Rental data pertains to averages from data collected when bonds are lodged and does not control for specifications of the home (eg. size, number of bedrooms, age of home, etc).

### School attendance

School attendance is presented as the percentage of school students who attend greater than 90% of their classes. This includes students at primary, intermediate and secondary schools. Some individual students have legitimate absences which bring their attendance to below 90%, but are still counted in this measure as the aim is to reflect overall trends in school attendance. This should not be taken as a proxy for truancy however.

The Ministry of Education provides attendance data on a school term basis. We have apportioned Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4 to the March, June, September and December quarters respectively.

### Tourism expenditure

Tourism Expenditure is based on MBIE's monthly regional tourism estimates (MRTEs).

MBIE published the MRTEs for 2019-2023, and previously published a different MRTE series for 2009-2018. We present a combination of both series in the QEM for a consistent timeseries from 2009 to the current quarter. The MRTEs are based on electronic card transaction data, calibrated to be consistent with national tourism expenditure data shown in Stats NZ's Tourism Satellite Account. This calibration takes into consideration the International Visitor Survey, so that differences in propensities to use cards versus cash for visitors from various countries of origin are accounted for.

MBIE paused the MRTE series again after the September 2023 quarter, however, we have retained this series as the base for our tourism expenditure estimates. From the December 2023 quarter onwards, we use the MBIE's Tourism Electronic Card Transactions (TECTs) to indicate the growth in spending.

### Traffic flow

Due to data supply issues we do not have data for recent quarters.

Traffic flow growth rates are calculated from the number of vehicles passing approximately 110 sites monitored by New Zealand Transport Agency. Each of the sites has been mapped to a territorial authority.

### Unemployment rate

Regional level unemployment rates are sourced from Stats NZ's Household Labour Force Survey. Trends in the number of Jobseekers are used to break down regional unemployment rates to TA levels. The TA level unemployment rates are benchmarked on census following the release of each census. To reduce volatility the unemployment rate is presented as an average for the last four quarters.

### Vehicle sales

Car and commercial vehicle sales data are sourced from New Zealand Transport Authority. Sales are based on new registrations which include the first time registration of new vehicles and used vehicles imported from overseas. Electric vehicle registrations are based on new sales of battery electric cars (excluding hybrid, plug-in hybrid or fuel cell cars).