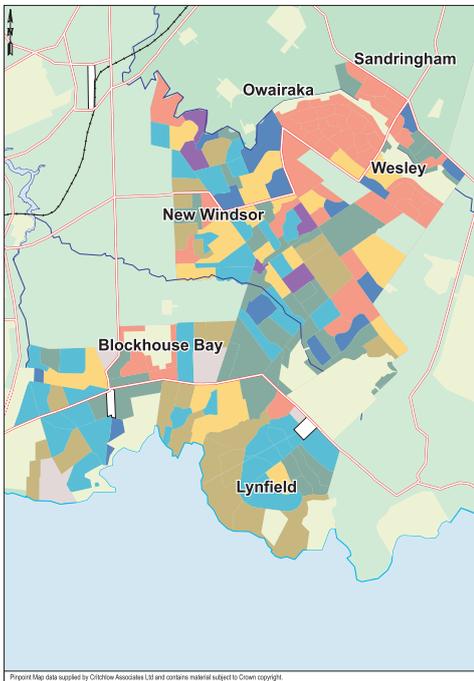


including Wesley, New Windsor and Lynfield



On the up and up is how you could best describe this once low-profile part of the city. Its previously hidden qualities have now been brought more centre-stage as people discover the safe family lifestyle, sea views, affordable housing and even a spruced-up village-style shopping centre. Sitting along the southern edge of the Manukau Harbour, 11 kilometres to the southwest of the CBD. By day you can watch the ships and seabirds coming and going; by night the lights of Glenbrook Steel Mill sparkle on the southern horizon as a city alternative to a starry night. On the city side of Blockhouse Bay, some streets get a view of the Sky Tower. Lynfield is on a quiet point of land further up the harbour, which means there is no through traffic. The name Blockhouse Bay refers to fortifications built to protect early European settlers from Maori attacks.



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For colour key, see page 230

Population Profile

Population	28,263
% Aged Under 15 Years	20.99
% Aged Over 65 Years	11.93
% European	36.42
% Maori	5.21
% Pacific Peoples	13.60
% Asian	38.83

Who Lives There?

Good, solid family-oriented New Zealanders are the traditional residents, with a mix of ages and stages including retirees who like the nice flat walk to the shops. It's more cosmopolitan now, home to a mix of nationalities, including Fijian Indians and Asian immigrants with an increasing population of Indians from the Asian subcontinent. Once popular with first-home buyers and investors, property value increases have skewed towards young families (there are many good schools) and those with slighter higher mortgage-paying capabilities. Many owner-occupiers are in the 30-plus age group and consider Blockhouse Bay a good stepping stone to trade up to suburbs closer to the city.

Lynfield College's strong reputation attracts education-conscious migrants who also see the district as a good starting point in the Auckland housing market.

Typical Homes

The most common houses in this area are weatherboard bungalows built 30 - 40 years ago. There is some terrace housing and also some state housing at the southern end of Blockhouse Bay. Infill housing is common, typically with an older bungalow on the front section, and a 10 or 20- year-old house at the rear. New houses and apartments are still being built demonstrating developers' and investors' continued confidence in the area including a new subdivision off Taylors Rd that has been popular with migrants trading up to their second homes in a better part of the area.

Amenities

Schools ★★★

The area is well served with schools (there are nine within a 2.5km radius), including the well-regarded Halsey Drive School and Lynfield College.

Halsey Drive School is a decile nine school and was recently described by ERO as "very high performing."

Lynfield College boasts state-of-the-art technology and computer systems in all learning areas and has one of the largest English as a Secondary Language departments

in Auckland. The college also provides strong community education and is a leading educator for foreign fee-paying students.

Hill Top School is also worth a mention. The successful private school caters for years one to 10 and was originally founded in 1915 in a Newmarket family home. The school relocated to its Blockhouse Bay character hill top location in 1959 and promotes a quality learning environment for boys and girls in small classes. For a full list, see page 270.

Shops ★★★

The Blockhouse Bay shopping centre has a village atmosphere. A lot of work has gone into beautifying the shopping area, with footpaths being improved and decorative sails erected to emphasise the connection with the sea.

Lynfield has a modern shopping complex including several new fast food outlets and a supermarket.

Leisure ★★★

Local sporting amenities include excellent recreational parks, a skateboard park, an ice skating rink, the Portage Trust Tennis Centre (indoor and outdoor), the refurbished Blockhouse Bay Boat Club, bowling clubs and rugby clubs. There is a good library and many artistic and creative events take place throughout the year.

There are several places with street access to the harbour. It's possible to swim at Blockhouse



Bay and Wattle Bay – the beaches are tidal, but there are beautiful parks with play areas for children nearby. The region has many parks, including Craigavon, Avondale South Domain, Manukau Domain and Wattle Bay Reserve. It is also handy to the Waitakere Ranges.

The local restaurant and café scene is gradually improving. For a more varied dining experience go to nearby Titirangi.

The Blockhouse Bay Community Centre, a complex which includes the historic Armanasco family farmhouse, is home to a number of social clubs and groups whose interests range from bonsai and cheerleading to line dancing, salsa and mahjong.

Real Estate

Trends

Capital gains have been strong and quality homes have held their value. An influx of house-proud new buyers replacing renters has resulted in homes looking more cared for now which reflects well on the area generally.

The new motorway extension is dragging down values of properties close by, but in the long term the greater accessibility it brings will be a boon to the area.

Property values are now such that new developments are aimed at the affluent owner-occupier rather than investors, so it looks likely that the area will retain its respectability, and values will increase.

In Blockhouse Bay it's hard to find a three bedroom house on a full section for less than \$400,000 and for a top-end home you'll pay around \$200,000 more than that. New homes on subdivided sites range from \$550,000 to \$750,000 depending on size and location. Marco Polo Pl has notched up a million dollar sale.

Best Streets

Gilfillan St, Mitchell St, Endeavour St and the seaward end of Blockhouse Bay Rd. Marco Polo Pl, Niagara Cr, Sylvania Cres and Himalaya Cres in Lynfield.

At a Glance...

House Prices

Unit

Bedrooms 
Price \$500,000 – \$600,000

House

Bedrooms 
Price \$700,000 – \$850,000

Bedrooms 
Price \$850,000 – \$1,100,000

Executive house with harbour views

Bedrooms 
Price \$1,500,000+

Average Rents

Flat

Bedroom 
Price \$280/wk

Bedrooms 
Price \$320/wk

House

Bedrooms 
Price \$390/wk

Bedrooms 
Price \$500/wk

Bedrooms 
Price \$620/wk

Travel Times

From Blockhouse Bay shops to:

CBD peak 30 min
off-peak 20 min

North-western motorway 10 min

Airport 20 min

St Lukes mall 10 min

Lynn Mall 5 min

Stagecoach Auckland provides a regular bus service from Blockhouse Bay and Lynfield. The SH20 motorway extension from Hillsborough through to the north-western motorway will be a benefit (drivers will get places faster) without the disadvantages (it's not close enough to be noisy).