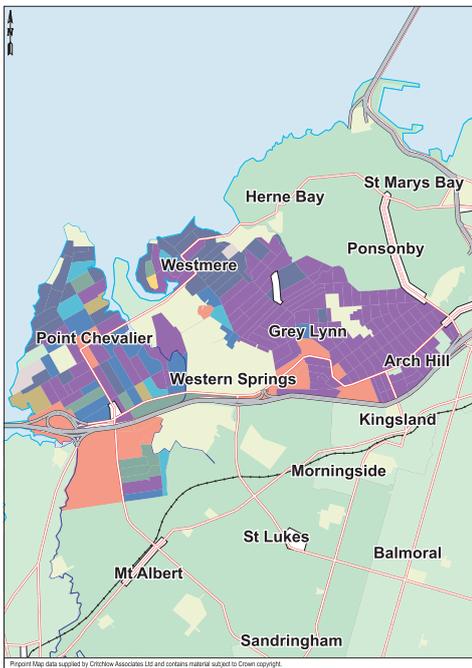


including Pt Chevalier, Westmere and Arch Hill



Grey Lynn is a highly desirable inner-city suburb, seen as a slightly cheaper alternative to neighbouring Ponsonby, and traditional home to free-thinkers and anti-establishment types. Westmere and Pt Chevalier residents exhibit similar tendencies but beneath the liberal veneer, they have more conservative concerns (like, how am I going to pay this mortgage if the interest rate goes up again?). Grey Lynn is a study in social and economic contrasts. Visit the Foodtown supermarket and you're almost guaranteed to bump into someone famous or get cornered in conversation by a disheveled bag lady. Grey Lynn still feels pretty urban in parts and not all of its streets have benefited from gentrification yet. In Westmere and Pt Chevalier things are a little more sedate and the lawns more consistently clipped.



For colour key, see page 230

Population Profile

Population	24,342
% Aged Under 15 Years	18.46
% Aged Over 65 Years	8.77
% European	68.14
% Maori	8.48
% Pacific Peoples	12.99
% Asian	8.18

Who Lives There?

Aside from the neo-hippies, Grey Lynn is where many of the artistically inclined and media types like to live (go celeb-spotting at the local supermarket). It's also the traditional home of gay women – gay men live in the more expensive neighbouring Ponsonby because men generally earn more money and don't have kids to support. Grey Lynn is attracting people on its own merits, which include wider streets, off-street parking and larger sections.

The area attracts young hipster renters who want to be close to the city centre, the clubs and cafés along Ponsonby and Karangahape Rds. Older people who have lived in the

suburb for most of their lives choose to remain and there is a sizeable number of Maori and Polynesian families in long-held family homes, although their slow but steady displacement seems inevitable as more and more affluent buyers are attracted to the area.

Westmere and Pt Chevalier are not as outwardly arty as Grey Lynn, however the suburbs are full of trendy liberals, often with school-age child accessories and their pampered pooches that they drop off at Barkley Manor, the much-talked-about local doggie day-care centre, en route to work in the city.

Westmere's waterfront appeal continues to increase. Pt Chevalier has well and truly shed its status as a backwater appealing only to the elderly. Before Meola Rd linked it to Westmere in the late 1970s, the peninsula suburb was a backwater. Now it is in demand from young professionals and families as a commuter suburb and a great place to raise a family (parks, schools and tidal beaches.)

Typical Homes

Grey Lynn and Arch Hill's villas and bungalows have undergone a steady spit and polish regime during the past decade. Most are now smartly renovated with modern interiors, leaving only a few remaining broken-down houses or those artistically embellished with weird colour schemes. There's a group of well-established terraced houses near the West Lynn shops and

some apartment buildings on the main arterial Great North Rd. Arch Hill has narrower streets, smaller worker's cottages and more do-ups.

Westmere and Pt Chevalier were originally developed as bungalow suburbs in the 1920s and grew directly along the tram routes. In fact Pt Chevalier used to be a popular holiday destination for people living in the city until urban sprawl morphed it into a desirable destination suburb. Westmere has everything from wooden bungalows, ex-state homes and the occasional stucco clad Art Deco house to glamorous award-winning, architecturally designed homes along the water's edge in Rawene Ave. Subdivision of larger sections has meant that there is a good smattering of townhouses, especially throughout Pt Chevalier.

Amenities

Schools ★★★

Grey Lynn adequately caters for all levels of schooling. There are at least six primary schools in the area, Pasadena Intermediate School and Western Springs College.

Pt Chevalier Primary School is highly-regarded. Richmond Rd Primary School has bi-lingual classes for Maori, Samoan and French students. Despite being more than 100 years old, the well-appointed school features high-quality new buildings and renovations,





attractive gardens and well-developed play areas. Westmere Primary School is also very popular and just as old.

Western Springs College has a legendary reputation for innovative school drama productions, musicals and multi-cultural events. It's new \$4million performing arts centre provides the perfect venue to support the students' creative talents. For a full list, see page 270.

Shops ★★

Despite the high real estate values in the area, the main shopping centre at Surrey Cres is still rather lack lustre. The retro furniture shop, Zeitgeist, is unusually chic which might be a sign of things to come.

The West Lynn shops are more gentrified, with half a dozen trendy bars and cafés, organic store Harvest Wholefoods, a boutique wine shop and an organic baby clothes shop - and new footpaths too.

Westmere's little shopping centre had three antique shops not so long ago; it's now down to one with the addition of a café, wine shop and bar.

Pt Chevalier's main retail area is somewhat uninspiring but there are a few good cafes and restaurants among the shops that dot the main road towards the beach.

Leisure ★★★

The annual Grey Lynn Festival (held in Grey Lynn Park) in mid-summer attracts more than 40,000 people to its stalls and entertainment. Auckland Zoo, MOTAT (Museum of Transport and Technology) and Western Springs Stadium

are just down the road. Grey Lynn Park has a free toddler pool and sports grounds and Cox's Bay Reserve has sports fields and a sea view.

Coyle Park at the end of Pt Chevalier peninsula is a lovely open space with plenty of parking. The beach is accessed here or further back off Harbour View Rd and is pretty but tidal. The bottom of Raymond St is popular for launching windsurfers. It is home to the local sailing club.

Meola Reef, the point where some of the lava from Mt Albert's eruption met the sea, is a favourite spot for dogs and their people to get themselves exercised. There's a large off-lead area for socialising with other urban pooches.

Real Estate

Trends

This suburb seems to be immune to property price slumps. Dual income, professional couples love its proximity to the city and quirky bohemian neighbours. Even the villas in streets bordering New North Rd and Arch Hill are being snapped up, opened out and renovated within an inch of their lives. Grey Lynn's future is assured and it would seem like a great place to make capital gains if you can afford the entry price.

Pt Chevalier houses north of Meola Rd used to be more expensive but that gap is closing with southern properties desired for their bigger sections, solid ex-state house styles, classic bungalows, townhouses and handy location.

It might seem like great news for buyers in these suburbs that the average price of a dwelling seems to be going down. Actually, that's only happening because of the large number of apartments going up; but that doesn't mean the apartments will be cheap.

For instance, a two-bedroom, two-car park apartment would realistically fetch \$550,000-\$600,000. A two-bedroom terrace house ranges from the high \$300,000 to the low \$400,000s. Villa do-ups start at \$500,000 and rise depending on the quality of the renovation and the location. Westmere's top waterfront properties hold values of \$2 million and upwards. As with all central city suburbs,

demand is predicted to stay high and outstrip supply for the foreseeable future.

Best Streets

In Westmere, Rawene St and lower Garnet Rd. In Pt Chevalier, Harbour View Rd and Lynch St. In Grey Lynn, the upper reaches of Ariki St, Beaconsfield St and Elgin. Popular in Arch Hill is Cooper St, which is preserved under heritage status.

Why We Live There



Singer Jackie Clarke and film-maker Grant Lahood

When Grant and Jackie moved from Wellington some years ago, Grey Lynn was their choice of suburb. With their creative backgrounds, they typify the profile of the local residents. Says Jackie: "The location is great. It's close enough to the city to still feel in touch with our wild youth [pre two children] when we used to go out a lot. It's a funky neighbourhood with a healthy mix of people. There are good schools, parks, and there are coffee places that are still a bit hokey. There are enough boutique shops to keep you interested but also Polynesian grocers and takeaways that sell everything from fish and chips to pizza. In 10 years time it might become too gentrified but it's good right now. "Although we flirted for about 12 months with moving west for a bigger section, we can't seem to wean ourselves off the 'hood. We occasionally dip our toes into other parts of Auckland but really everything we need is here, including our work."

At a Glance...

House Prices

Spacious new apartment

Bedrooms 
Price \$800,000 - \$1,050,000+

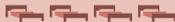
Cottage

Bedrooms 
Price \$750,000 - \$1,000,000

Tidy villa or bungalow

Bedrooms 
Price \$1,200,000 - \$1,600,000+

Renovated house

Bedrooms 
Price \$1,400,000 - \$2,000,000+

Executive house close to the water

Price \$1,700,000+

Average Rents

Flat or apartment

Bedroom 
Price \$375+/wk

Bedrooms 
Price \$550/wk

House

Bedrooms 
Price \$580+/wk

Bedrooms 
Price \$720+/wk

Travel Times

From Grey Lynn shops:

CBD peak 15 min
off-peak 10 min

From Westmere shops

CBD peak 20 min
off-peak 10 min

North-western motorway 5 min

Airport 30 min

St Lukes mall 10 min

Pt Chevalier's shape creates a bit of a traffic bottle-neck. Beach-end properties are more expensive partly because of the alternative route to and from the city via Meola Rd. There are excellent bus services to the entire area, especially along the major arterial roads.