

Rebuild Survey Goes Region Wide

Cantabrians get a chance to indicate how well they are progressing with rebuild and repair, with the opening up of the volunteer-based InsuranceWatch.org.nz survey to regional respondents. The initiative supported by local residents' associations initially surveyed property owners from Ferrymead to Sumner to develop a baseline data set, and now is calling on the rest of the city and broader area to respond.

"We've got a good handle on the sticking points for rebuild and repair, particularly focusing on insurance company performance," says David Stringer, of InsuranceWatch.org.nz. "What we want to see is if that holds true across Christchurch."

The baseline survey included a series of steps for evaluating progress with insurance assistance, identifying significant differences in performance between companies. A number of the brands within the IAG group fared very poorly, while AMI-Southern Response and Lumley scored relatively well. InsuranceWatch.org.nz plans to resurvey respondents over the coming months to see which insurers respond to the feedback and to gauge what progress, if any, occurs.

The baseline survey initially attracted 380 respondents (representing 6% of households in the Ferrymead-Sumner area), and saw property owners in other parts of the city ask to participate. When the survey was expanded, it attracted over 100 additional respondents in the first 24 hours and numbers continue to rise. The survey can be accessed via the InsuranceWatch.org.nz website.

"People are wanting to tell their stories and have someone listen," says Stringer. Alongside that comes hard statistical data indicating the difficulties people are facing with insurer-EQC wrangles, shoddy scoping of work, aggressive, and unresponsive case managers

Public meetings with individual insurers have identified a number of pointers for property owners, from understanding specific jargon to the importance of negotiation. Summaries of the meetings held to date, along with the initial survey results and related information, have been made available on the InsuranceWatch.org.nz website.

Opening the survey wider provides more information and feedback which the team expects could have a major influence on future selection of insurers, not just in Christchurch, but also nationally.

As David Stringer concludes: "This is important not just for Christchurch, but for anyone in New Zealand who has an insurance policy. You want to know who will be there for you when you really need them."

Further information:

Survey is now open to all Cantabrians at:

<http://InsuranceWatch.org.nz> – also has current survey results and FAQ

Insurance issues and survey: <http://InsuranceWatch.org.nz>

Coastal Hills Cluster: <http://CoastalHillsCluster.org> (includes links to the residents groups)