



Whakatāne

District Council

2023-24 Resident
Survey

| SIL Research

FINAL REPORT

July 2024

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CONTENTS

5.

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

10.

SATISFACTION AT
A GLANCE

12.

METHODOLOGY

9.

OVERALL
SATISFACTION

18.

SATISFACTION
WITH COUNCIL
SERVICES AND
FACILITIES

53.

LIFE IN THE
DISTRICT

55.

CONTACT WITH
COUNCIL

56.

COMMUNICATION
AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

58.

COMMUNICATION

60.

COUNCIL
LEADERSHIP

62.

MANAGEMENT

64.

POLICY AND
DIRECTION

SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Parks and reserves	19	Cemeteries overall	36
Walking and cycling facilities in the District	20	Boat ramps and wharf facilities	37
Playgrounds	21	Noise control	38
Sports fields	22	Dog control.....	39
Public swimming pools	23	Kerbside waste collection service	40
Public toilets	24	Refuse transfer station facilities	41
Footpaths	25	Council roads overall.....	42
Street lighting.....	26	Safety of Council roads	43
Libraries in the District	27	Parking in Whakatāne	44
Public halls	29	Tourism promotion	45
Te Whare Taonga o Taketake	30	Whakatāne as a holiday destination and tourism impact on the community	46
Water supply	31	Efforts to enable and promote events	47
Quality of drinking water.....	32	Business promotion	48
Stormwater service	33	Spending priorities.....	49
Sewerage system	34	Potential improvements	52
Whakatāne crematorium facility	35		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to consultatively engage with Whakatāne District's residents to determine levels of satisfaction and perceptions of Council's services, communications and management to identify opportunities for improvement.

Research was conducted quarterly throughout the 2023-24 year (data collected between October 2023 and June 2024). A total of n=600 surveys were used in the final analysis. The 2024 surveys continued the adjusted methodology adopted in 2019-20 (particularly mixed-method data collection, and rating scale expansion), and subsequent refinement to have respondents focus their responses on the three months (rather than the last 12 months) prior to each quarterly fieldwork period.

It remains important to consider the impact of national and regional contextual conditions when evaluating satisfaction levels and ability of the Council to meet community needs in 2023-24. The cost of living in New Zealand continues to increase, with local Whakatāne District residents feeling ongoing financial pressure and becoming increasingly conscious of the impacts on their own finances as well as wider spending within the District. In this context, the latest Long Term Plan consultation process would have brought Council spending and financial management to the forefront of residents' minds, particularly in light of proposed rates increases – with the relative priorities of Council spending decisions especially salient given the anticipated impacts on residents' own household budgets. At this time, perceptions of and reactions to a range of Council-led developments, in addition to regular service delivery, are likely to be viewed by residents with a more critical eye focused on efficiency and cost-saving in a tough economic climate. The Whakatāne District Council operated in a challenging environment marked by these, along with other, factors; which had an impact on the community and potentially influenced the perception of Council's performance.

The main findings in 2024 were as follows:

- 1 Overall, over half of residents (53%) were satisfied with services received from the Whakatāne District Council over the 2024 year (lower than 61% in 2023, but on par with both the overall national (54%) and district council (56%) New Zealand Benchmarking Survey figures.
 - Supporting these overall perceptions, 18 out of 29 (62% vs. 79% in 2023) Council services rated by Whakatāne District residents achieved satisfaction ratings of 60% or above, with 5 services achieving 80% satisfaction or higher.



- Across the 2024 survey year, the five top-rated services were kerbside waste collection (89% satisfaction), Whakatāne crematorium (84%), Whakatāne Exhibition Centre (84%), libraries (81%), and parks or reserves (80%). In contrast, the two lowest-rated services in 2024 were: dog control (40%) and council roads overall (48%).
- Contributing to overall satisfaction, many services saw declines in satisfaction in the last year. The largest drops among users in 2024 were measured for public halls (-19 points), cemeteries (-14 points), and drinking water quality (-10 points).
- In contrast, increased satisfaction in 2024 was measured for noise control (+13 points), road safety (+3 points) and dog control (+2 points).

2 Two-thirds (64%) of residents agreed (somewhat or strongly) that the Whakatāne District is generally a safe place to live (down from 69% in 2023, but remaining above the New Zealand Benchmarking Survey result of 60%). 3-in-5 (60%) of residents believed the quality of their life was *'good'* to *'very good'* (continuing a downward trend compared to recent years).

- In this context, residents in 2024 were less likely to recommend Whakatāne District as a place to live (NPS -16%), which continued a declining trend observed over recent years. Nevertheless, residents remained more likely to recommend the District as a holiday destination (anecdotal NPS +4%), although this indicator also showed a decline compared to 2023.
- Contact with specific Council representatives in 2024 remained similar to 2023. 36% of residents had contacted the customer service front desk (up from 30% in 2023), with 73% satisfied with this contact (similar to 2023). Just 10% had contact with a Community Board Member (also 10% in 2023), with 73% satisfied.
- Community engagement increased in 2024 – overall and across specific activities – with over half (54%) of respondents engaging with Council in some way (up from 43% in 2023 and 40% in 2022). Responding to Council surveys (52%, up from 46%, in 2023), and providing feedback on social media (37%, up from 33%) remained the most prevalent activities. However, there was also a marked increase in 2024 of residents making a formal submission

(29%, compared to 21% in 2023) – likely reflecting engagement with the Long Term Plan process and/or other Council-led consultations.

- ‘*Social media*’ remained the most preferred method of Council communication in 2024; for 60% of residents overall, and 71% of 18-39 year olds; but also an increasing number of older residents (65 or older) - 30% in 2024, up from 14% in 2023. Traditional media (e.g. newspaper, radio) remained important, especially for older residents.

3

On average, 42% of residents were satisfied with Council’s communication and consultation with the public (similar to 2023). ‘*Listening to and acting on the needs of the people*’ (27%) remained the least satisfactory communication attribute (a drop from 35% in 2022). Other communication attributes remained stable, with ‘keeping people informed’ (52%) eliciting the greatest satisfaction.

- Satisfaction with Council leadership did see some decreases in 2024 – overall (36%, 44% in 2023), and in terms of councillor leadership (34%) and strategies for developing prosperity and wellbeing (30%). Satisfaction with Council’s day-to-day business management also saw related declines overall (33%, 46% in 2023), and across all specific attributes. In particular, fewer residents in 2024 trusted WDC’s financial management around value for money (22%), trust to make good spending decisions (20%), and managing finances well (19%).

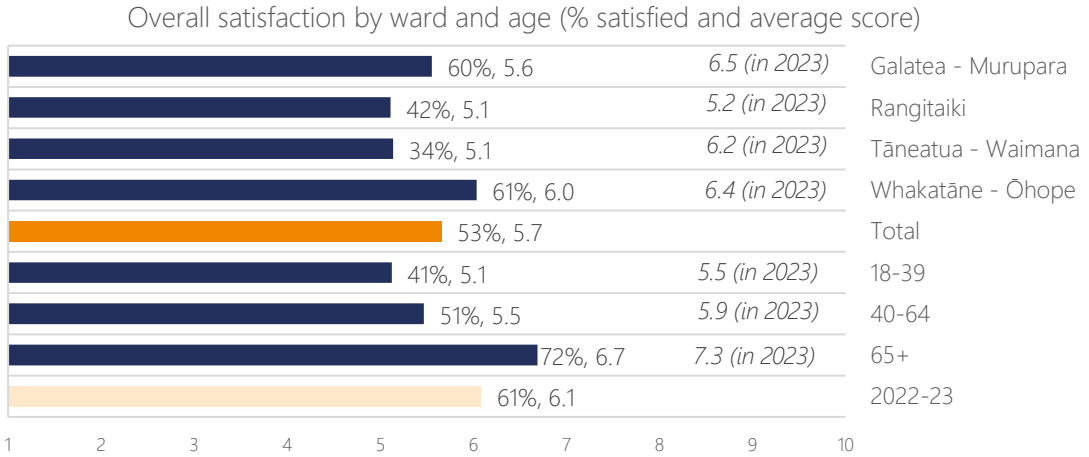
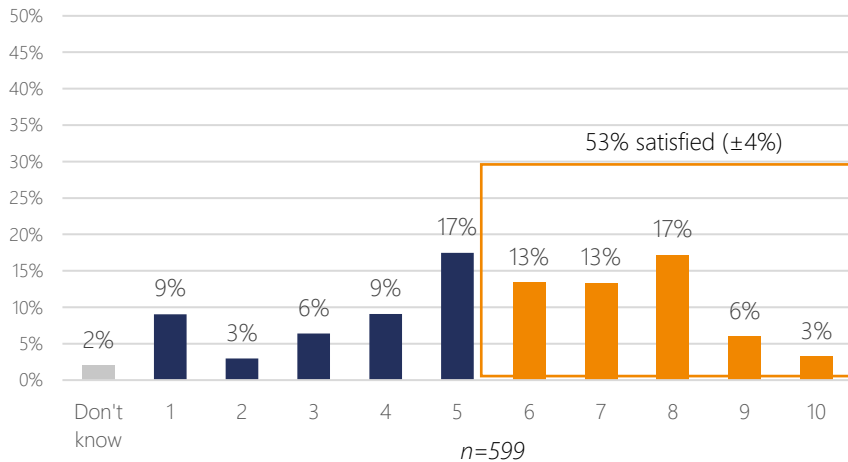
Taken together, 2024 results should be viewed in the context of the challenging economic environment that both Council and residents are currently operating in. Residents in particular are feeling the pressures of increasing costs of living and are more likely to assess Council performance and decision making in this light. The occurrence of the Long Term Plan process in the current year has had a marked effect on resident perceptions in this regard – especially given the reality of increased rates to accommodate Council’s own increased costs and financial demands. In this context, evidence indicates that residents have become even more proactively engaged in Council processes overall, and making formal submissions to Council specifically – highlighting the increased importance of these issues and concerns to residents. Specifically, a significantly higher proportion of residents registered disapproval of rates increases and Council spending in 2024 (41%, up from 18% in 2023) – with investment in roading, boat harbour and other developments of primary concern. In addition, the proportions of residents calling for increased spending in service areas have decreased across the board, while spontaneous comments calling for less spending have increased.

Whakatāne District Council does not face these challenges in isolation – similar effects are being felt by Councils nationwide, as measured in decreases across national benchmark figures in the current year. Despite decreases in WDC's own results, the Council has continued to perform well against broader benchmarks - indicating it is still maintaining comparable levels relative to similar councils nationally. Continuing to focus on core service needs and spending priorities of residents, facilitating and responding to increasingly desired community engagement, and maintaining open and honest communication with the public, will provide the Council with the best means of navigating and maximising opportunities for improvement in these challenging times.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE COUNCIL

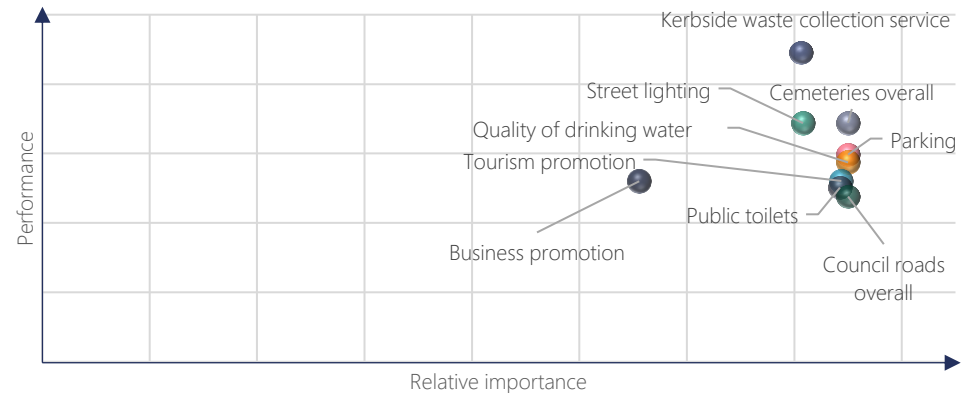
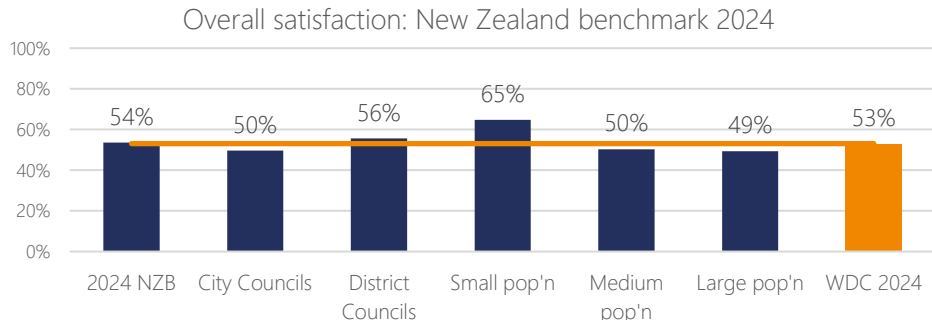
LTP MEASURE

Overall satisfaction with services received from the Whakatāne District Council




- In 2024, over half of residents (53%) were satisfied with overall services received from the Whakatāne District Council (on average rating 5.7 out of 10).
- The current result was lower than 2023 (61% satisfied, average 6.1 rating), with no significant differences, but on par with both the national (54%) and District Council (56%) averages.
- Residents aged under 65 remained less satisfied overall than older residents (aged 65+), with lower satisfaction ratings provided by all age groups compared to 2023.

- Satisfaction differed significantly by area, remaining higher in Whakatāne than in other areas, and lowest in Tāneatua - Waimana.
- Out of all services surveyed, nine showed stronger influence on overall satisfaction.
- Assessing relative importance (strength of relationship) against measured performance of these nine services, Council roads, public toilets and business/tourism promotion represented the greatest improvement opportunity (with significant importance but low performance).



SATISFACTION AT A GLANCE






















LTP MEASURE






Overall satisfaction

WDC 2024: 53% / 5.7

WDC 2023: 61% / 6.1

NZB 2023: 54% / 5.5

 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>
Waste collection service	Art and culture ¹	Refuse transfer station	Swimming pools	Recreation facilities ²
WDC 2024: 89% / 8.2	WDC 2024: 81% / 8.1	WDC 2024: 78% / 7.4	WDC 2024: 77% / 6.9	WDC 2024: 76% / 7.1
WDC 2023: 88% / 8.0	WDC 2023: 84% / 8.0	WDC 2023: 82% / 7.7	WDC 2023: 81% / 7.2	WDC 2023: 78% / 7.1
NZB 2024: 67% / 6.5	NZB 2024: 83% / 7.8	NZB 2024: 60% / 6.3	NZB 2024: 67% / 6.5	NZB 2024: 81% / 7.4
 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>			 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>
Sewerage	Walking and cycling	Street lighting	Community facilities ³	Water ⁴
WDC 2024: 75% / 7.5	WDC 2024: 71% / 6.9	WDC 2024: 69% / 6.5	WDC 2024: 68% / 6.9	WDC 2024: 63% / 6.4
WDC 2023: 77% / 7.4	WDC 2023: 75% / 7.0	WDC 2023: 74% / 6.8	WDC 2023: 79% / 7.2	WDC 2023: 72% / 6.8
NZB 2024: 78% / 7.3	NZB 2024: 63% / 6.1	NZB 2024: 72% / 6.9	NZB 2024: 68% / 6.6	NZB 2024: 71% / 6.9
			 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	
Stormwater	Parking	Footpaths	Promoting events	Noise control
WDC 2024: 65% / 6.6	WDC 2024: 60% / 5.9	WDC 2024: 56% / 5.9	WDC 2024: 56% / 5.8	WDC 2024: 56% / 5.7
WDC 2023: 69% / 6.6	WDC 2023: 62% / 6.1	WDC 2023: 63% / 6.1	WDC 2023: 60% / 6.0	WDC 2023: 43% / 5.0
NZB 2024: 63% / 6.2	NZB 2024: 57% / 5.8	NZB 2024: 61% / 6.3	NZB 2024: 71% / 6.6	NZB 2024: n/a
 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>	 <p>LTP MEASURE</p>		
Tourism	Business promotion	Roads ⁵	Dog control	
WDC 2024: 52% / 5.7	WDC 2024: 52% / 5.5	WDC 2024: 50% / 5.4	WDC 2024: 40% / 4.7	
WDC 2023: 60% / 6.2	WDC 2023: 53% / 5.9	WDC 2023: 48% / 5.1	WDC 2023: 38% / 4.7	
NZB 2024: n/a	NZB 2024: n/a	NZB 2024: 43% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 66% / 6.4	

-  - Good performance (70% and above)
-  - Services with positive performance (below 70% but equal to or above 50%)
-  - Services for improvement
-  - Overall performance indicators
-  LTP MEASURE - Long Term Plan measure
























¹ Aggregated average rating for libraries, Whakatāne Exhibition Centre and Whakatāne museum

² Aggregated average rating for parks or reserves, sports fields, boat ramp/wharf and playgrounds

³ Aggregated average rating cemeteries, crematorium, public halls and toilets

⁴ Aggregated average rating for water supply and quality

⁵ Aggregated average rating for roads and road safety

				
Keeps people informed	Provides sufficient opportunities for people to have their say	Makes it easy for people to transact with Council	Makes it easy for people to interact and engage	Leadership of Mayor
WDC 2024: 52% / 5.5	WDC 2024: 46% / 5.2	WDC 2024: 44% / 5.1	WDC 2024: 44% / 5.0	WDC 2024: 42% / 5.0
WDC 2023: 53% / 5.6	WDC 2023: 49% / 5.4	WDC 2023: 48% / 5.4	WDC 2023: 47% / 5.3	WDC 2023: 47% / 5.2
NZB 2024: 50% / 5.3	NZB 2024: 44% / 5.1	NZB 2024: n/a	NZB 2024: 45% / 5.1	NZB 2024: 46% / 5.1
				
Managers and staff doing a good job	Working with other councils where relevant	Leadership of councillors	Skills and expertise to manage community affairs	Strategies for developing prosperity and wellbeing
WDC 2024: 41% / 4.7	WDC 2024: 35% / 4.6	WDC 2024: 34% / 4.4	WDC 2024: 31% / 4.2	WDC 2024: 30% / 4.2
WDC 2023: 49% / 5.4	WDC 2023: 46% / 5.3	WDC 2023: 44% / 5.1	WDC 2023: 44% / 5.0	WDC 2023: 40% / 4.8
NZB 2024: 47% / 5.2	NZB 2024: 49% / 5.3	NZB 2024: 44% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 49% / 5.0	NZB 2024: 42% / 4.8
				
Efficiency and effectiveness	Continual performance improvement	Listens to and acts on the needs of the people	Value for money	Trust to make good spending decisions
WDC 2024: 30% / 4.1	WDC 2024: 30% / 4.1	WDC 2024: 27% / 3.9	WDC 2024: 22% / 3.5	WDC 2024: 20% / 3.4
WDC 2023: 42% / 4.8	WDC 2023: 38% / 4.7	WDC 2023: 35% / 4.5	WDC 2023: 34% / 4.3	WDC 2023: 32% / 4.1
NZB 2024: 43% / 4.8	NZB 2024: 41% / 4.7	NZB 2024: 34% / 4.1	NZB 2024: 33% / 4.2	NZB 2024: 34% / 4.1
		 LTP MEASURE		 - Good performance (70% and above)  - Services with positive performance (below 70% but equal to or above 50%)  - Services for improvement  - Overall performance indicators LTP MEASURE - Long Term Plan measure
Managing finances well	Overall performance in managing day-to-day business	Overall performance in terms of communication	Overall performance in terms of leadership (Mayor and Councillors)	
WDC 2024: 19% / 3.3	WDC 2024: 33% / 4.4	WDC 2024: 42% / 4.9	WDC 2024: 36% / 4.5	
WDC 2023: 31% / 4.2	WDC 2023: 46% / 5.2	WDC 2023: 45% / 5.2	WDC 2023: 44% / 5.0	
NZB 2024: 33% / 4.2	NZB 2024: 47% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 44% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 45% / 4.9	

METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

As a part of its ongoing consultation process, Whakatāne District Council (WDC) commissions a Resident Satisfaction Survey every year. The purpose of this research was to consultatively engage with Whakatāne District's residents to determine levels of satisfaction and perceptions of Council's services, communications and management, to identify opportunities for improvement.



SIL Research, together with the Whakatāne District Council (WDC), developed a Resident Survey questionnaire in 2020, and repeated this in consecutive years. The initial drafting was based on research previously carried out for WDC.

The questionnaire was reviewed and tested prior to full-scale data collection to ensure the survey was fit for purpose.

MAIN CHANGES

From 2019-20, the Resident Survey has been conducted by SIL Research, and from 2020-21 data collection has been administered four times a year (quarterly) to allow for seasonal variations to be tracked using a 1-10 Likert scale, which provides more robust options for residents to express their views.

For the 2023-24 survey year, the data was collected from October (retrospectively covering the Jul-Sep quarter) to June (covering the Apr-Jun quarter) to align with WDC's annual reporting period of 1 July to 30 June.

With the change to quarterly fieldwork cycles, the recall window for respondents was also adjusted from 2020. Previously, respondents had been asked to indicate which services/facilities they had used or visited in '*the last 12 months*'. From 2021 Q1, respondents were instead asked about the services/facilities they used/visited in '*the last 3 months*'. While representing a shift from the previous method, the use of a narrower recall window should elicit more accurate responses (easier to recall behaviour over the previous 3

months than a longer 12-month period), while providing more sensitive measures of seasonal variations across quarterly cycles.

Every quarter, SIL used a multi-layered sampling technique to ensure a proportional spread of respondents from each of Whakatāne's community board areas, by age and gender distribution. Post-stratification (weighting) was then applied to the full dataset (Q1-Q4) to reflect the age and gender group proportions within each community board area as determined by Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census counts. This ensures more robust representativeness of reported results.

DATA COLLECTION

In each quarter, multiple data collection methods were utilised to ensure residents were well-represented. The mixed-methods approach included:

- (1) Telephone survey. Respondents were randomly selected from the publicly available telephone directories within specified territorial units;
- (2) Social media (available via SIL Research social media platforms, such as Facebook). The invitation advertisement was randomly promoted to District residents within specified territorial units;
- (3) Postal survey. Survey forms were sent to randomly selected Whakatāne District households within specified territorial units.

A total of n=150 surveys were used in the final analysis each quarter, providing a combined annual sample of n=600 for the 2024 year.

DATA ANALYSIS

Surveys were conducted proportional to the population in each of Whakatāne District's community board areas.

Table 1 Responses by community board areas

	Number of responses	Population %
Galatea - Murupara	24 (4%)	8%
Rangitāiki	135 (23%)	27%
Tāneatua - Waimana	47 (8%)	10%
Whakatāne - Ōhope	394 (65%)	55%

Responses were also statistically weighted (post-stratification) to reflect the gender, age and ethnicity group proportions as determined by the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census.

SIL Research ensured quality control during the fieldwork period. In addition, a quality control check was performed using follow-up calls across randomly selected respondents (10% of those who agreed to the follow up) to verify the key responses.

Further checks included, but were not limited to, removal of incomplete responses and responses coming from outside of Whakatāne District.

The main resident groups analysed in this report were: area (community board), age, gender, ethnicity, home ownership and tenure in the District. During the analysis stage of this report, two sets of statistical testing were employed while reviewing data findings: Chi-square tests were used when comparing group results in tables; and ANOVA tests were used when comparing statement averages across groups. The threshold for reporting any statistically significant differences was a p-value of 0.05. Where differences were outside this threshold (less than 95%), no comments were made; where differences were within this threshold, comments have been made within the context of their practical relevance to WDC.

Overall results are reported with margins of error at a 95% confidence level; the key reported measures in the main report include specific margins of errors calculated taking into account the survey design and finite population size correction.

NOTES ON REPORTING

The term '*Resident*' has been used to represent respondents who participated in the survey. Where results are reported by sub-groups of residents, estimates of results may not be statistically reliable due to higher margins of error (for small sample sizes).

Overall '*satisfaction*' percentages presented in this report are aggregated 6-10 responses on a 1-10 scale. Satisfaction percentages will differ from mean scores (average ratings). Satisfaction percentages represent positive ratings only, whereas mean scores provide an average of all ratings across the whole scale. Mean scores were calculated on responses excluding '*Don't know*'.

Satisfaction with Council services and facilities is reported in two ways:

- Total satisfaction percentage for the District (all responses), and
- Satisfaction percentages for '*Users/Visitors*' or '*Generally aware*' (e.g. residents who had visited/used specific Council services/facilities or knew enough to provide a rating).

Note that historical data is shown for '*Users/Visitors*' or '*Generally aware*' responses only.

Regression analysis was used to assess trends in historical results for key indicators. R² is a statistical measure based on the regression analysis of results over time. It was applied to the historical and current aggregated satisfaction ratings. In summary, the closer the R² value is to 100%, the more likely there is a trend towards an increase or decrease in performance ratings over time.

Comparative data prior to 2020 is indicative only; data collection methods before 2020 (including response scales) differed significantly from current methods.

Due to rounding, figures with percentages may not add to 100%. Reported percentages were calculated on actual results not rounded values.

WHO TOOK PART IN THE SURVEY

Table 1 Responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-39	183	31.1
40-64	264	44.8
65+	142	24.1
Total	589	100.0

Table 2 Responses by time lived in the District

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	19	3.3
1 year to just under 2 years	16	2.8
2 years to just under 5 years	45	7.7
Five years to just under 10 years	57	9.7
10 years or more	444	75.3
I'd rather not say	7	1.2
Total	589	100.0

Table 3 Responses by income

	Frequency	Percent
\$20,000 or less	11	1.8
\$20,001-\$30,000	45	7.6
\$30,001-\$50,000	64	10.8
\$50,001-\$70,000	69	11.8
\$70,001-\$100,000	76	13.0
\$100,001 or more	171	29.1
Other	6	1.0
I'd rather not say	147	25.0
Total	589	100.0

Table 4 Responses by home ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Owned	501	85.1
Rented	34	5.8
Private trust	14	2.4
Other	4	0.7
I'd rather not say	35	6.1
Total	589	100.0

Table 5 Responses by ethnicity (multi-choice)

	Frequency	Percent
New Zealand European	432	75.3
Māori	171	29.8
Pacific people	4	0.7
Asian	10	1.7
Middle Eastern, Latin American or African	2	0.4
Other	36	6.2
New Zealander/Kiwi/Not stated	41	4.5
Total	600	100.0

Note: final dataset was statistically weighted to increase accuracy of the reported results.

BENCHMARKING

SIL Research conducts a representative National survey of Councils* to establish a series of benchmarks across a range of Council services. This allows Whakatāne District Council to compare their survey results against a National average (NZB).

The National survey data is collected throughout the year so that annual results can be presented without seasonal bias. The benchmarking results in this report are based on n=400 responses collected in 2024. The data is collected using a 1-10 scale; satisfaction percentages are aggregated 6-10 ratings.

Benchmarking results are reported at 95% confidence level +/- 5%. *Excludes Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

When reading this report, it is important to note that factors such as the timing of unusual or one-off events can affect the ratings that residents give, particularly if they occur close to the time when the survey data is being gathered.

Factors that may have influenced public perception of the Council's performance in 2023-24 include:

Key Q1 factors (September-October 2023):

1. In July-August 2023, following damage from recent rainfall in the past 12 months, several roads underwent repair, including culvert work on Braemar Road and Tāneatua Road.
2. In late July 2023, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency conducted works on SH30, causing significant disruptions to travel in and out of Whakatāne town, which resulted in expressed vocal disappointment from the local community.
3. The Council initiated major renovation work on the main western entrance roundabout to the township, with road closures advised between September and December 2023, leading to traffic delays. The new Landing Road roundabout was open on 15 December.
4. Following an increase in costs due to high rates of inflation, rising interest rates and other national and global factors, the Council has undertaken a review of its fees and charges for 2023-2024. This review was open for the public consultation, with the fees and charges set to change from 1 December 2023.
5. In September 2023, the Council engaged with the community to gather input on draft redevelopment plans for the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub, with the aim of creating community spaces for activities including sports, recreation, arts, culture, events, and overall well-being.
6. The 2023 New Zealand general election took place on October 14 2023, with advance voting beginning at the start of October. Nationwide political campaigns were conducted throughout the country before the election.

General elections can have a significant impact on people's perceptions of local council services, shaping residents' views regarding the quality and effectiveness of the services provided by their local councils.

Key Q2 factors (November 2023 – January 2024):

7. In October 2023, the Council initiated a community newsletter for the Rangitāiki Ward, providing community members with information about local events, council projects, news from community groups, and more.
8. The Council also continued road works and maintenance throughout the District during summer months. Additional road realignment works and watermain installation along a section of Thornton Road commenced in November.
9. In November 2023, the Council announced the installation of water meters on all connected properties within the Matatā water scheme boundary. This initiative aimed to enhance the identification of leaks, contributing to a more effective and efficient water management system.
10. December 2023 witnessed an increased Police presence in Whakatāne due to the large gang presence during two Black Power member funerals.
11. Additionally in December, the Council introduced community safety cameras, deploying a total of 80 cameras across the Whakatāne District. An independent security firm was engaged to monitor these cameras 24/7.
12. Residents of Whakatāne and Ōhope experienced a change in water quality in December 2023, attributed to ecosystem changes in the Whakatāne River resulting from warmer temperatures and increased algae growth.
13. In January 2024, the District welcomed its first international cruise ship visitors at Otuawhaki Wharf.
14. Concerns arose in Whakatāne after reports of pets being killed by dogs, leading to the initiation of a petition urging the Whakatāne District Council to enhance its dog control activities in January 2024.
15. During the holiday season, people tend to be in a more positive and celebratory mood, which can lead to improved public sentiment and perceptions. This can manifest in various ways, such as an increase in social interactions and community activities, an uptick in consumer spending, and

a general sense of well-being and happiness. Summer months also tend to see an increase in the use of public amenities, such as parks, beaches, and outdoor recreational areas.

Key Q3 factors (February - April 2024):

16. From February 2024, the Ministry for the Environment has standardised kerbside recycling strategy across all Councils in New Zealand. The main changes in the Whakatāne District were that residents can now recycle plastics graded 5 and empty pizza boxes, but pressurised cans are no longer acceptable.
17. In February, the Council finished and opened upgraded Braemar Water Treatment Plant, which serves communities from across the Rangitāiki Plains, from the Tarawera River to those just outside the Whakatāne township.
18. Also in February, the Council announced the He Waka Hono Hapori Community Connections and Outreach Project, which aims to provide better accessibility to Council services in remote communities. Council's goal is to bridge the gap between outlying communities and Whakatāne by providing two specially equipped vans that will serve as mobile hubs of engagement and provide information and some Council services to those unable to make the trip to a physical council building.
19. In February 2024, local media reported a 'standing room only' public meeting hosted by a local community watchdog, providing residents an opportunity to express their criticisms and concerns about various Council matters. Primary concerns focused on rates increases in the context of cost of living rises, the need to prioritise a second bridge for Whakatāne, and Council spending on large projects including the Council building refurbishment, boat harbour development and Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub plan.
20. Throughout quarter three, the Council continued with road work maintenance and upgrades (e.g. Braemar Road, Stanley Road, Hillcrest Road, etc.), which also included road sealing of Matatā beach access (off Arawa Road / Pacific Coast Highway).

21. In March-April, the Council consulted with the community on their Long Term Plan strategy. The key consultation areas were the Rex Morpeth Recreation Hub, foodwaste collection, funding gap, and distribution of rates increases.

Key Q4 factors (May – July 2024):

22. In May 2024, voting opened for the Murupara Community Board by-election, open to residents in the Galatea-Waiōhau subdivision.
23. In May 2024, the Council's Infrastructure and Planning Committee approved the Three Waters Consent Replacement Strategy, which outlines the Council's approach to renewing resource consents for drinking water and wastewater. The Three Waters Consent Replacement Strategy aims to ensure the Council meets its regulatory obligations, environmental responsibilities, and community expectations for the three waters services while delivering this large work programme as efficiently as possible. The Council has allocated \$3.5 million in the draft Long Term Plan 2024-34 for the consent renewal program, with the planning, consenting and design aspects expected to take three to five years to complete.
24. In May 2024, Whakatāne District Council Elected Members approved the draft Long Term Plan for audit. The draft plan was the culmination of months of work, including Council workshops and a comprehensive community engagement phase. Council acknowledged this had been a very difficult process trying to balance confronting economic conditions with the needs and desires of the community, with an average proposed rates increase of 17.1 percent in the first year of the plan. The consultation period for public feedback elicited very high public interest with Council receiving almost 1,000 formal submissions from individuals and organisations. Overall, the feedback highlighted the complexity of balancing community needs, financial constraints and strategic priorities.
25. Subsequently, in June 2024, Council announced the adoption of its 2024-34 Long Term Plan had been delayed. The primary reason for this delay was the coalition government's about-face on Three Waters legislation late

in 2023. The flow-on effect was an extended independent audit process in the latter stages of plan development.

26. In June 2024, the Council announced the purchase of the property at 144 The Strand (old Credit Union). This site has been identified as a strategic location within the CBD, playing a crucial role in the town's future regeneration efforts. In the short term, the Council will relocate the

Whakatāne isite Visitor Information Centre to this building starting in late September. This is to ensure uninterrupted visitor services while Bay of Plenty Regional Council undertakes necessary upgrades to the floodwall around the current isite.



TOP PERFORMED

- Kerbside waste collection service - 89%
- Whakatāne Crematorium - 84%
- Whakatāne Exhibition Centre - 84%
- Public libraries - 81%
- Parks or reserves - 80%



LOWEST PERFORMED

- 40% - Dog control
- 48% - Roads overall
- 50% - Public toilets
- 52% - Road safety
- 52% - Business promotion

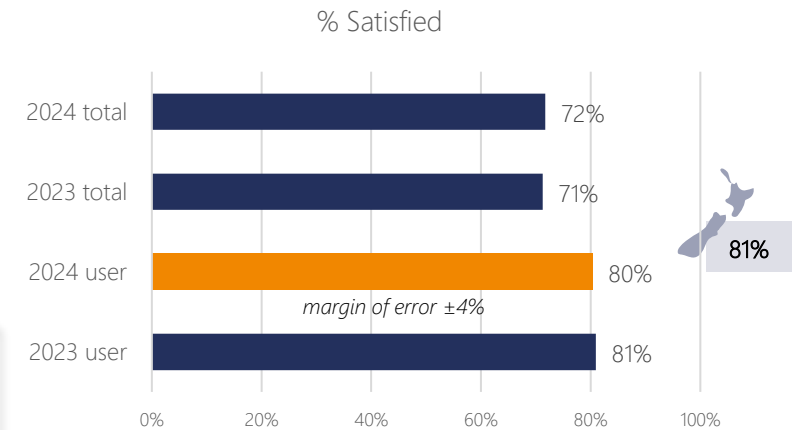
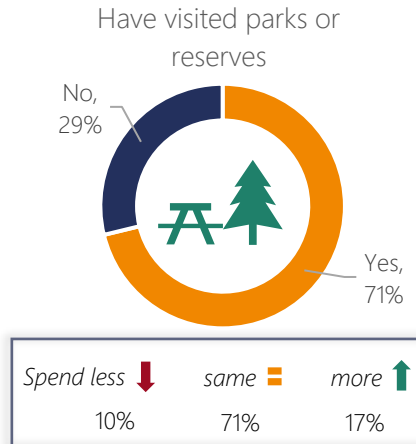
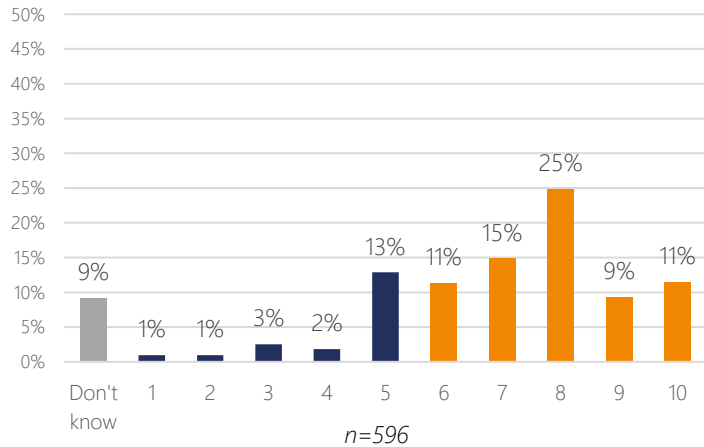


SATISFACTION WITH
COUNCIL SERVICES AND
FACILITIES IN 2024

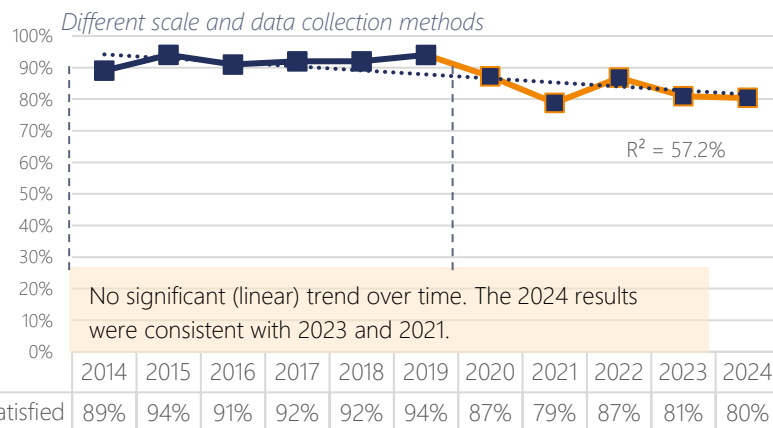
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

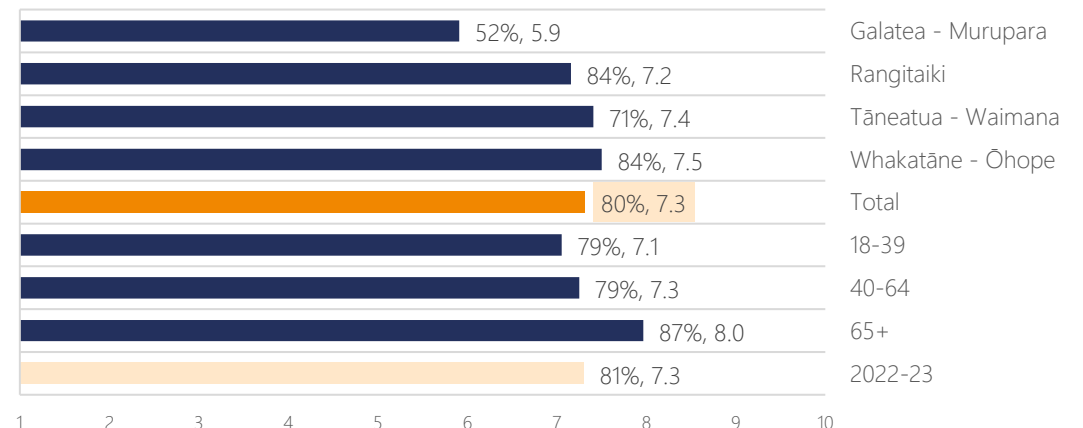
Parks and reserves



- In 2024, 71% of residents stated they had visited parks or reserves in the District (also 71% in 2023).
- 80% of these residents were satisfied with their parks or reserves, which was similar to 2023 (81%), but still below the 2022 level (87%) – but on par with the national benchmark.
- At the same time, the average satisfaction score (7.3 vs. 7.3 in 2023) remained consistent.
- There were significant differences by age and area in 2024. Satisfaction increased with age, with older residents (aged 65+) remaining most satisfied – though all age groups achieved high satisfaction.
- On average, satisfaction remained lower particularly in the Galatea-Murupara community board area.
- Overall, the majority of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on parks or reserves (71%, similar to 67% in 2023).

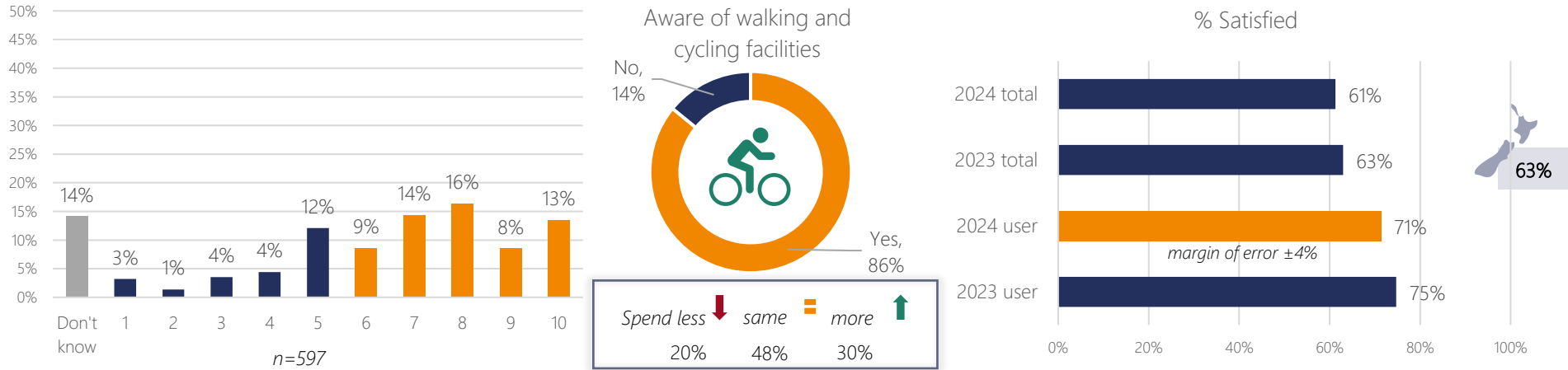


Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)

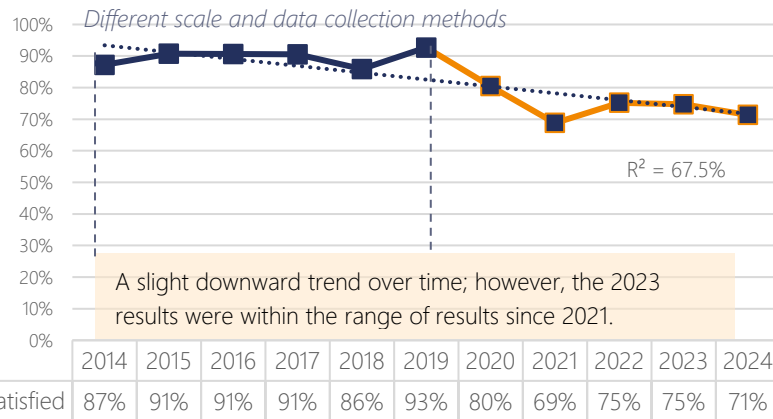


SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

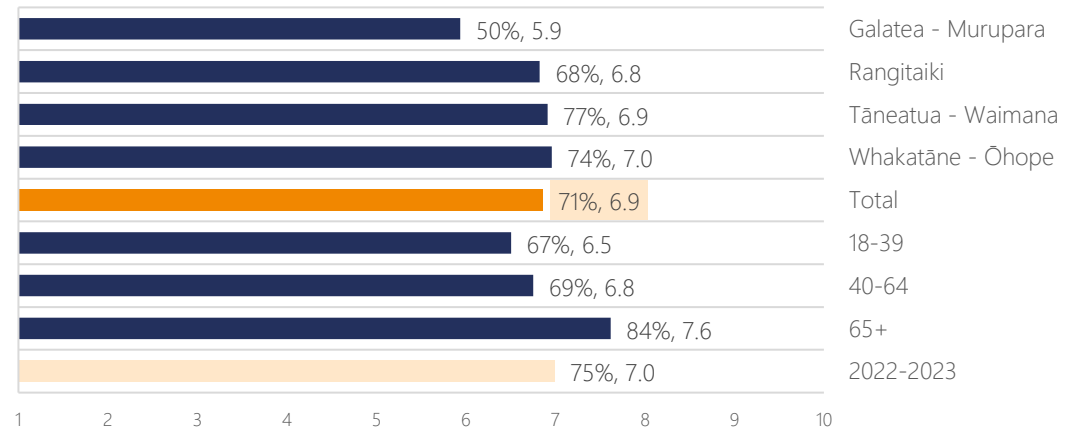
Walking and cycling facilities in the District



- Overall, 71% of residents who provided a rating in 2024 were satisfied with walking and cycling facilities in the District (on average 6.9 out of 10).
- Satisfaction with walking and cycling facilities was slightly lower than 2023 (75%), but within the range of the past four years – and above the national benchmark.
- In 2024, younger residents aged 18-39 remained less satisfied with walking and cycling facilities in the District (on average 6.5 out of 10).
- On average, satisfaction was lower in the Galatea-Murupara community board area (5.9, also down from 6.4 in 2023).
- A similar proportion of respondents stated they would like to see more Council funds in this area (30%, also 30% in 2023).



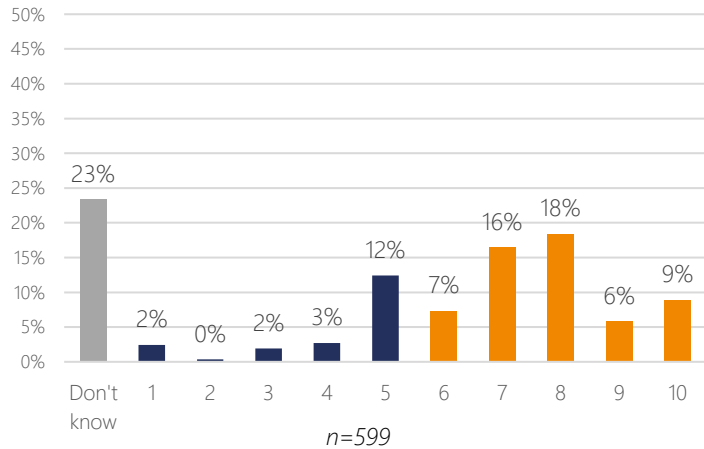
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



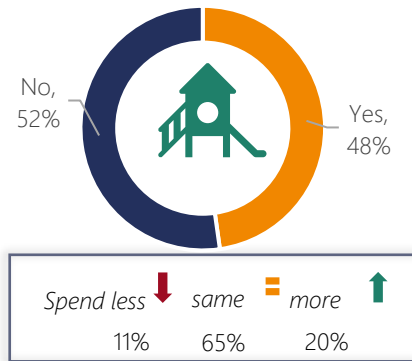
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

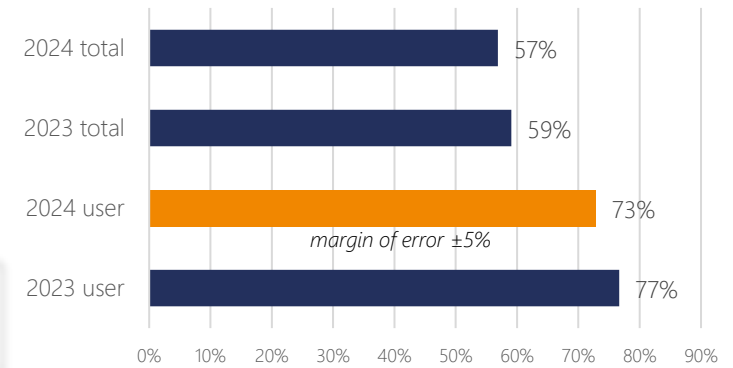
Playgrounds



Have visited playgrounds

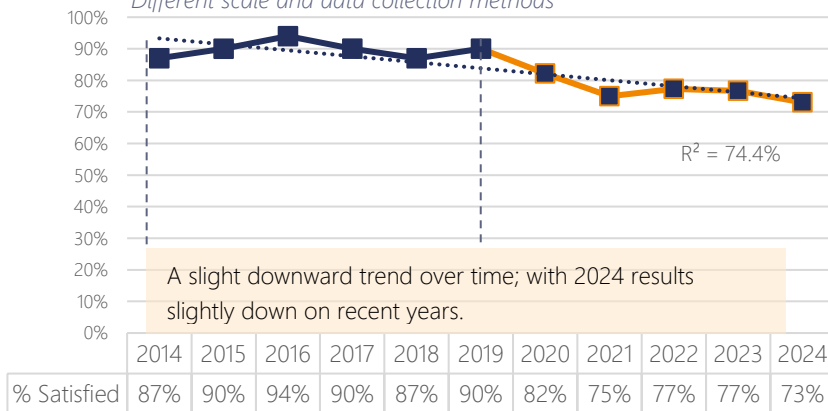


% Satisfied

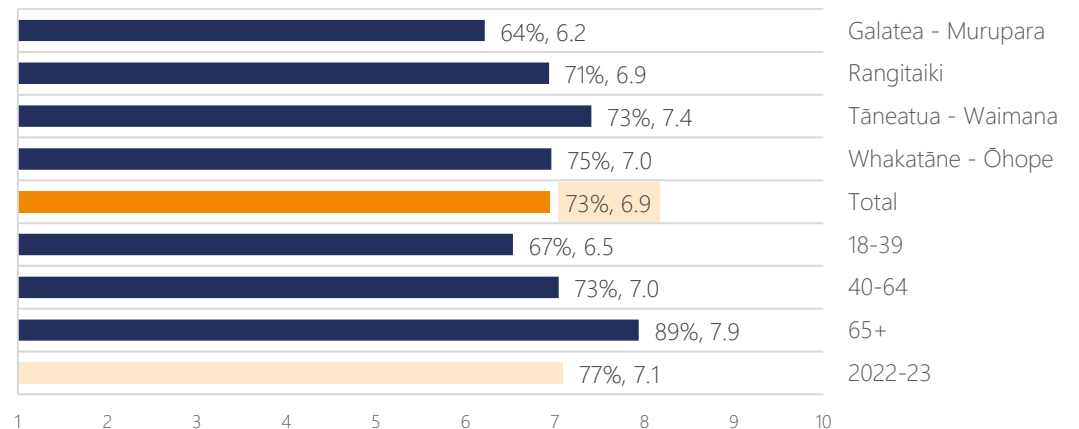


- In 2024, 48% of residents stated they had visited a playground. This was generally consistent with 2023 (46%) and 2022 (42%).
- Among playground visitors, satisfaction in 2024 (73%) was slightly lower than 2023 (77%) and recent years.
- Satisfaction with playgrounds remained lower among respondents aged under 65. Respondents from Galatea-Murupara were typically less satisfied with these facilities overall.
- Overall, 65% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on playgrounds (similar to 67% in 2023).

Different scale and data collection methods



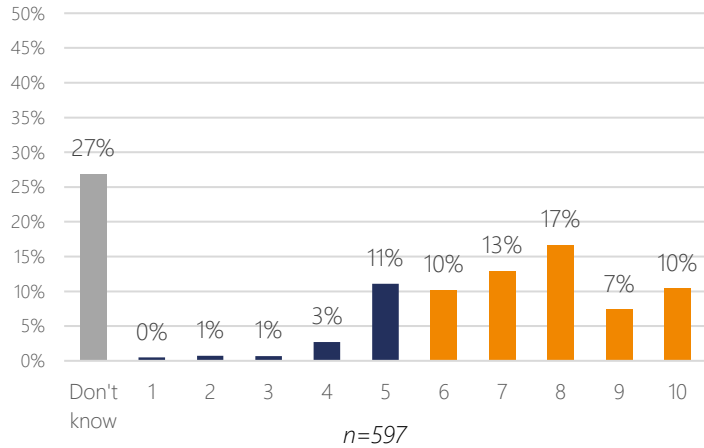
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



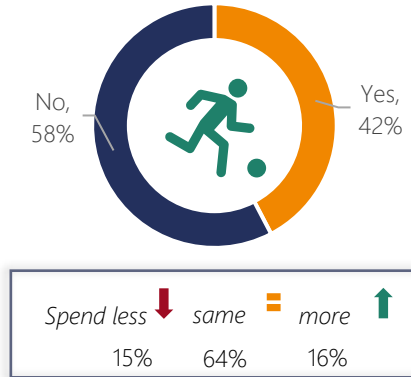
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

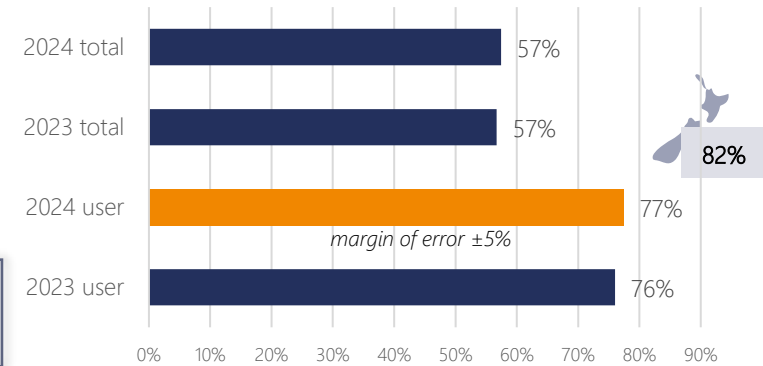
Sports fields



Have visited sports fields

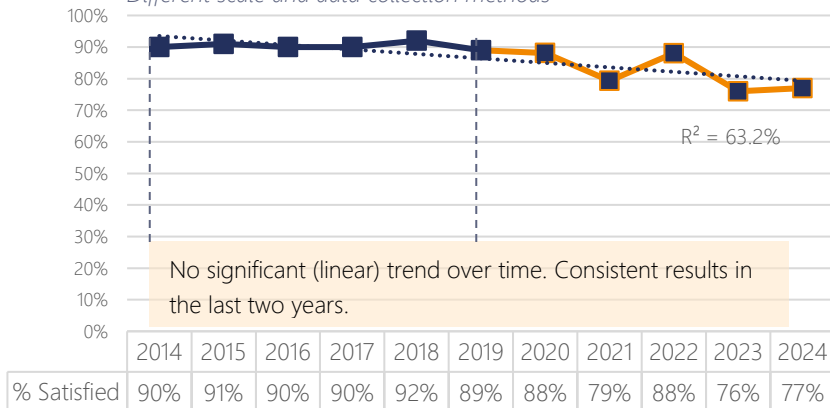


% Satisfied

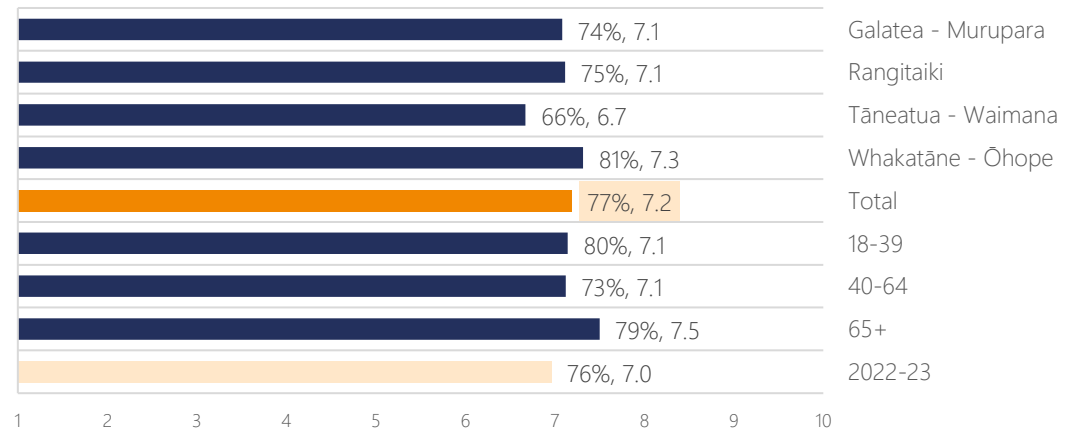


- In 2024, 42% of residents reported visiting sports fields (consistent with 42% in 2023, and 39% in 2022).
- After increasing in 2022 (88%), satisfaction with sports facilities decreased in 2023 (76%) and remained consistent in 2024 (77%). 1-in-10 provided the highest satisfaction rating.
- Satisfaction remained high among 18-39 year olds in particular (80%, up slightly from 77% in 2023).
- However, there were no statistically significant differences by resident subgroups in 2024.
- Overall, 64% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on sports fields (similar to 68% in 2023).

Different scale and data collection methods



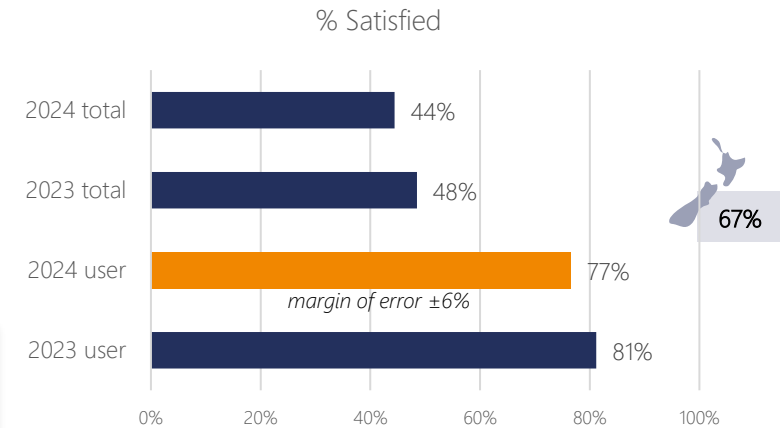
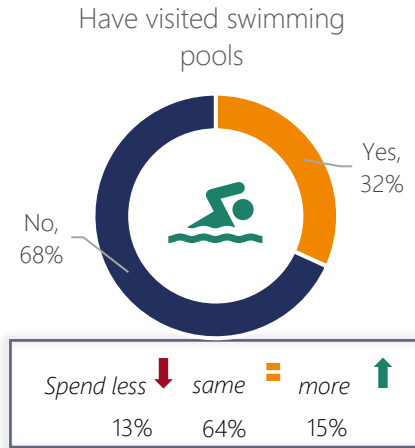
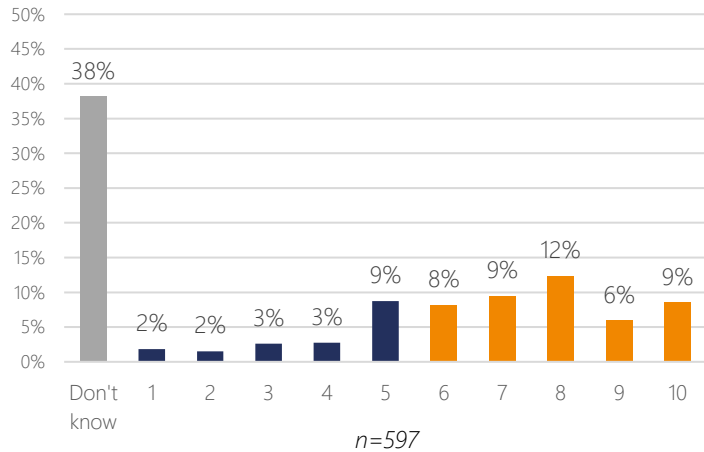
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

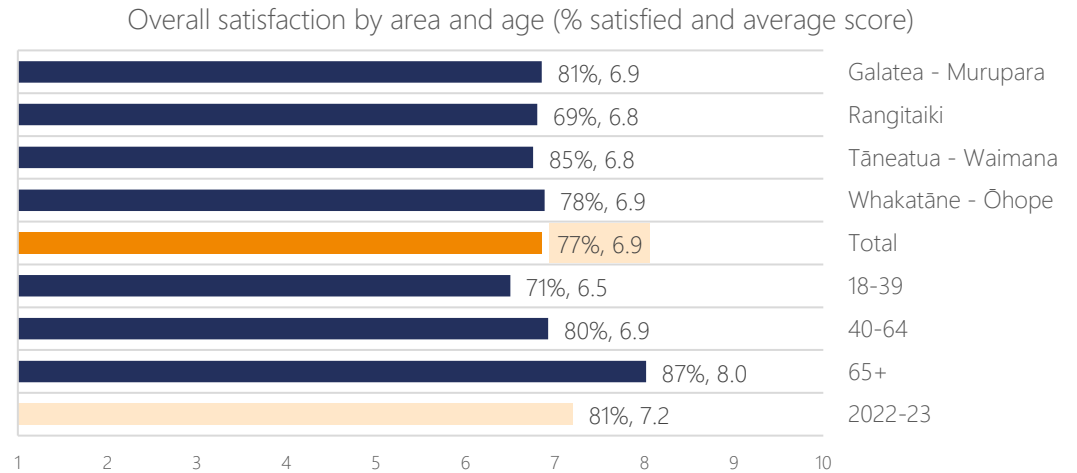
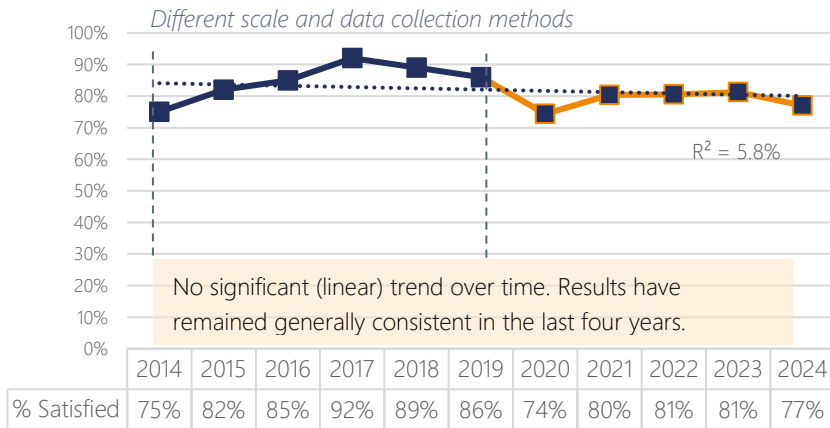
Public swimming pools

LTP MEASURE



- 1-in-3 residents (32%) reported visiting a swimming pool in the District in 2024 (up from 26% in 2023 and 25% in 2022).
- Satisfaction among swimming pool users (77%) in 2024 remained high and similar to 2023 (81%) – and 10%-points above the national benchmark.

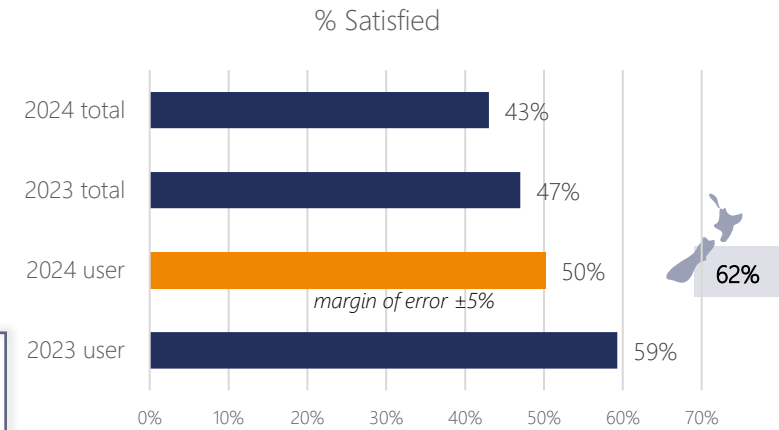
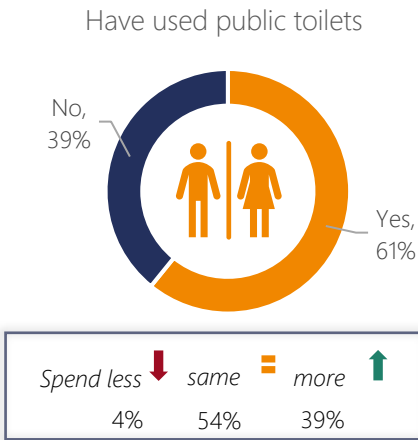
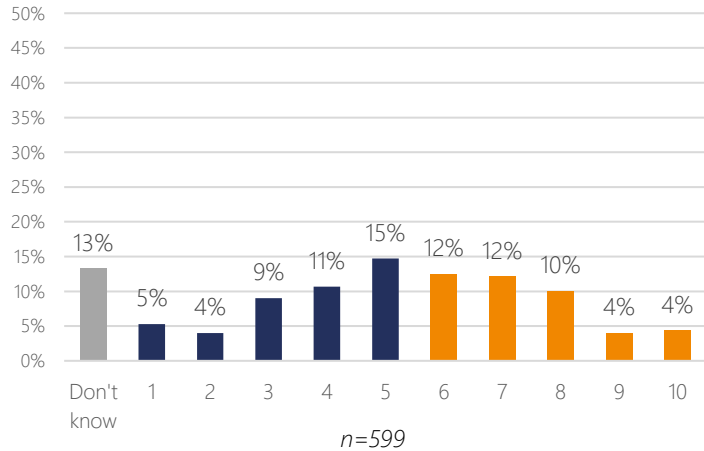
- In 2024, satisfaction was lower among 18-39 year olds; but higher for males than for females (7.3 vs 6.5 on average).
- Overall, 64% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on public swimming pools (65% in 2023).



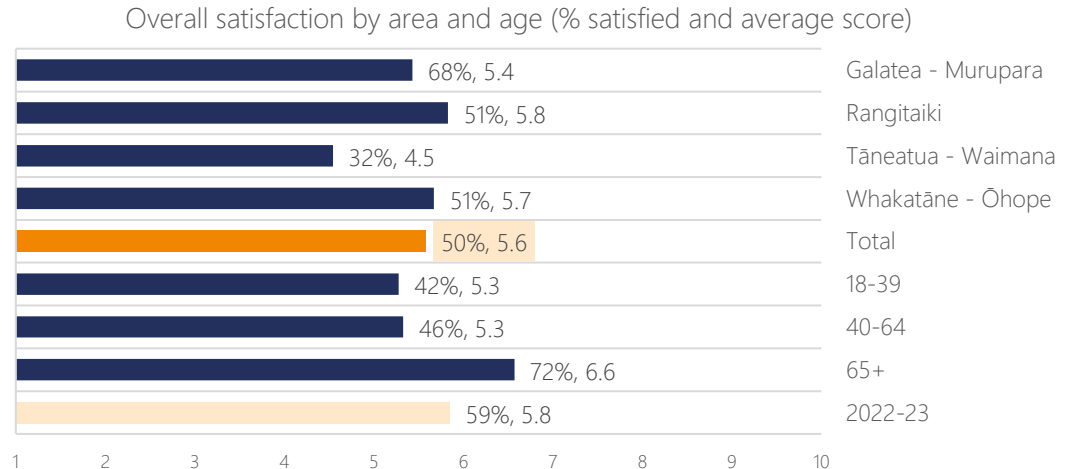
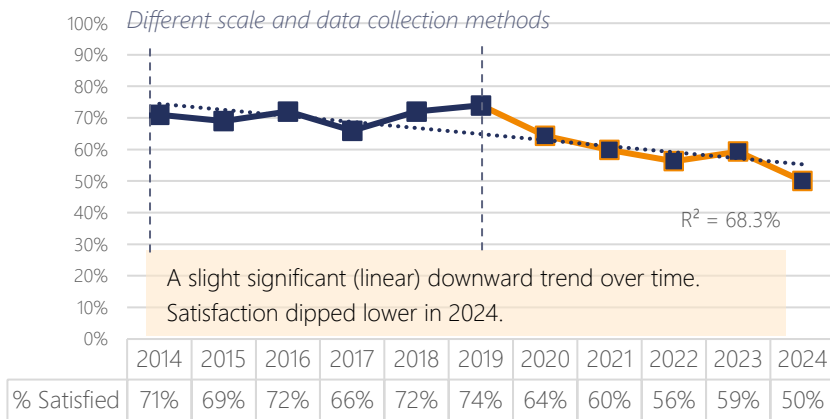
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

Public toilets

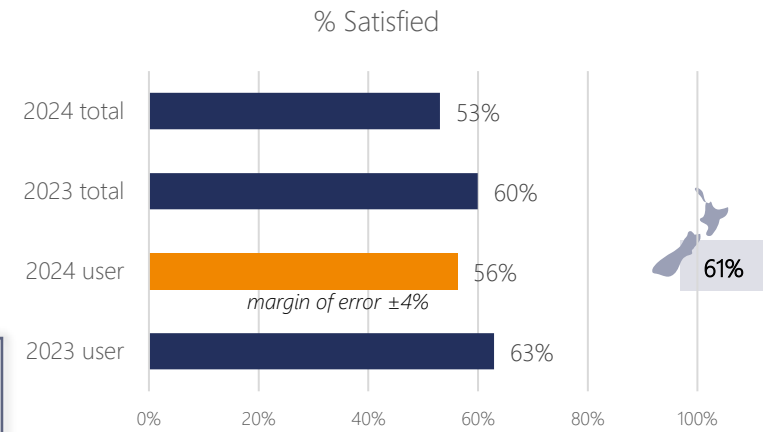
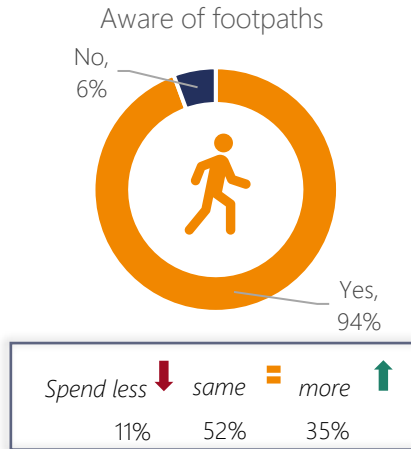
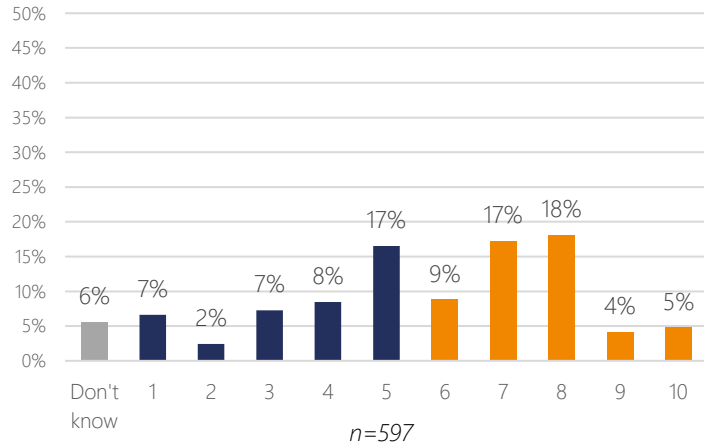


- In 2024, 6-in-10 residents (61%) reported using a public toilet in the District (similar to 59% in 2023).
- Among public toilet users, the percentage satisfied decreased in 2024 (50%) compared to 2023 (59%), although average ratings were consistent (5.6 vs 5.8) overall.
- Respondents aged under 65 remained less satisfied with toilet facilities compared to older respondents. Satisfaction was particularly low in Tāneatua-Waimana.
- Toilets remained a very high priority for more (39%) Council spending in 2024 (2nd highest spending priority, similar to previous years).

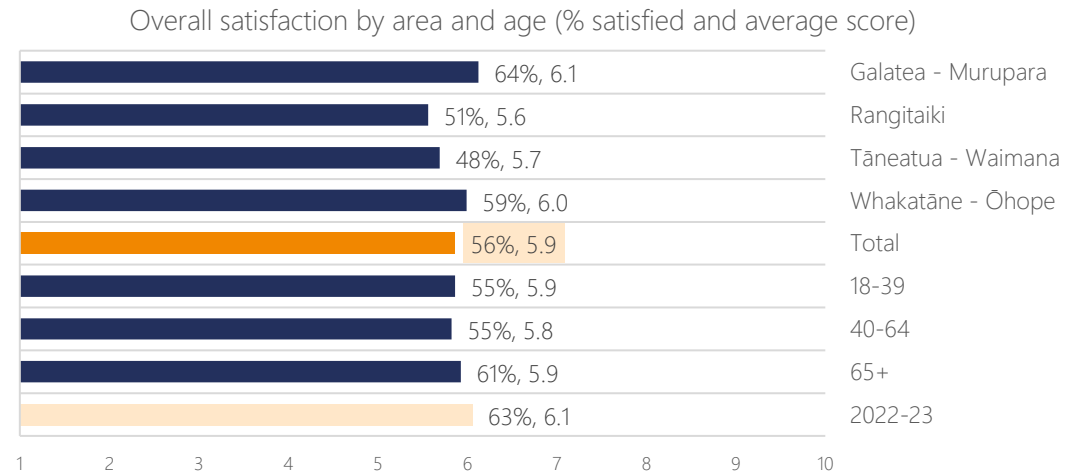
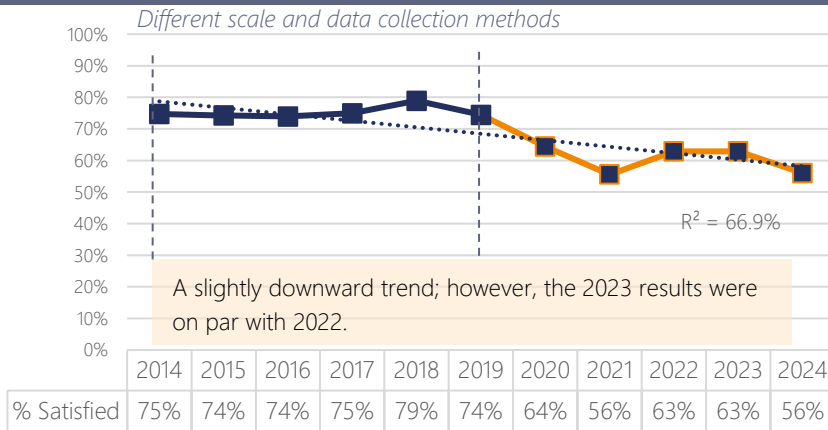


SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Footpaths

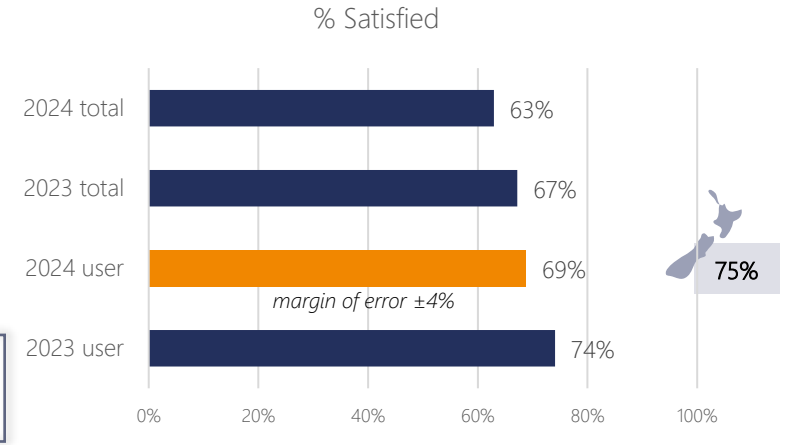
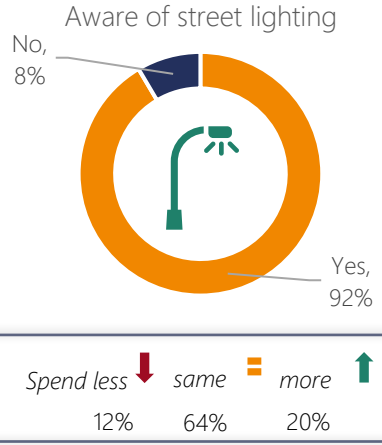
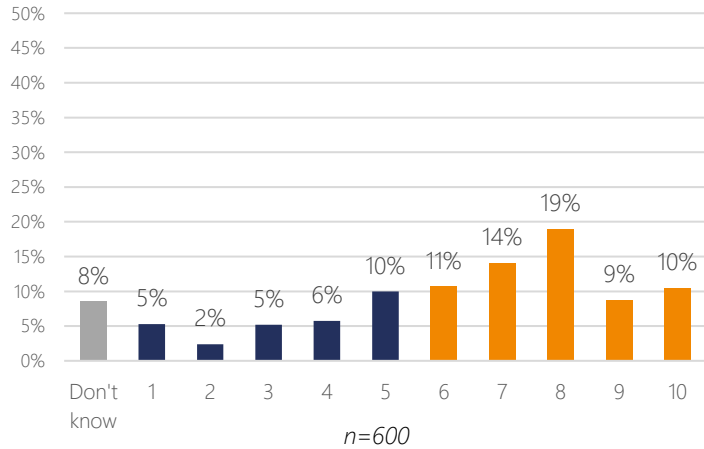


- The majority of residents (56%) who provided a rating were satisfied with footpaths in the District in 2024 (average rating 5.9 out of 10).
- Satisfaction with footpaths in 2024 decreased compared to 2023 and 2022, although returning to the level measured in 2021.
- There were no statistically significant differences by key subgroups in 2024.
- While 52% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on footpaths (also 52% in 2023), this was still a high priority for more (35%) funding.



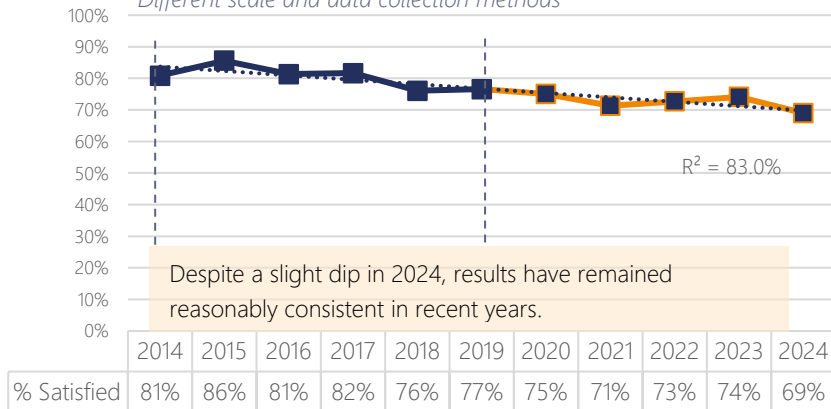
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Street lighting

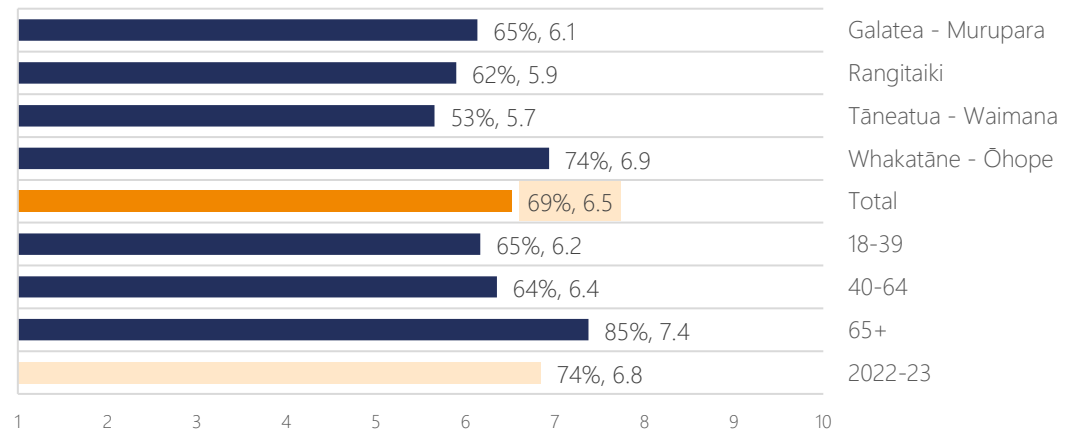


- Satisfaction with street lighting was slightly lower in 2024 than the previous two years (74% in 2023, 73% in 2022) but similar to the 2021 result (71%).
- There were notable variations apparent across the District, with satisfaction lower in Tāneatua-Waimana (53%, down from 79% in 2023), and remaining higher in Whakatāne - Ōhope (74%, similar to 2023).
- Clear age differences were measured, with satisfaction highest among 65+ year olds (85%, similar to 2023). Satisfaction was lower among 40-64 year olds in 2024 (64%) than in 2023 (74%).
- Overall, 64% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on street lighting (similar to 63% in 2023).

Different scale and data collection methods



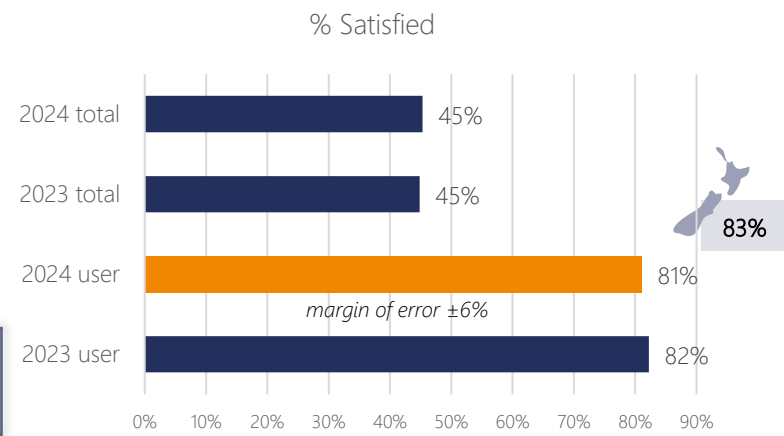
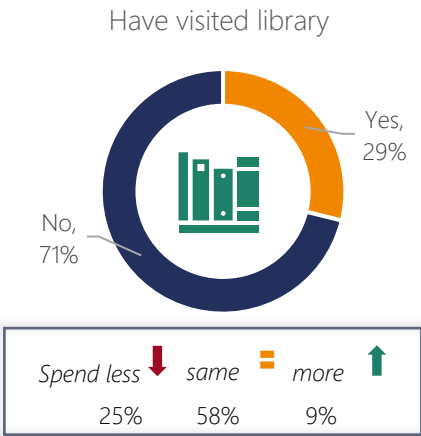
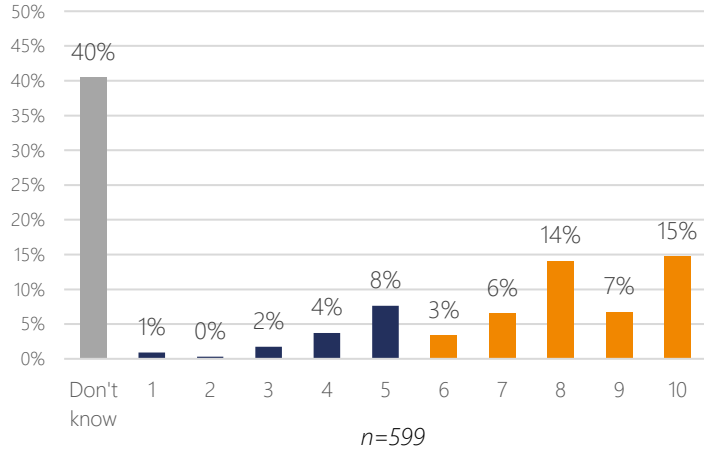
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



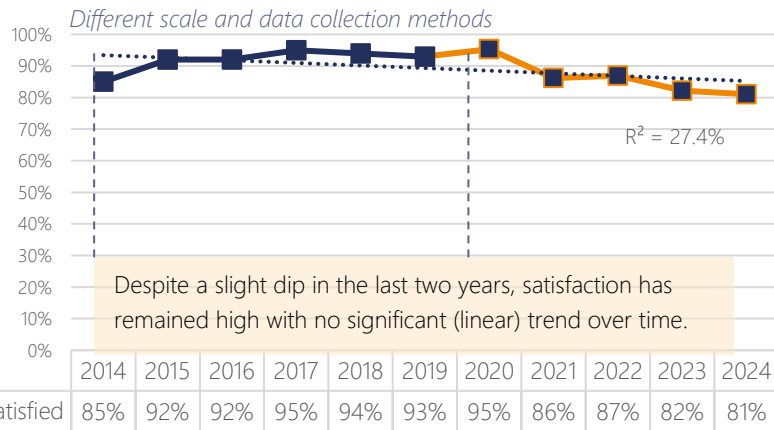
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

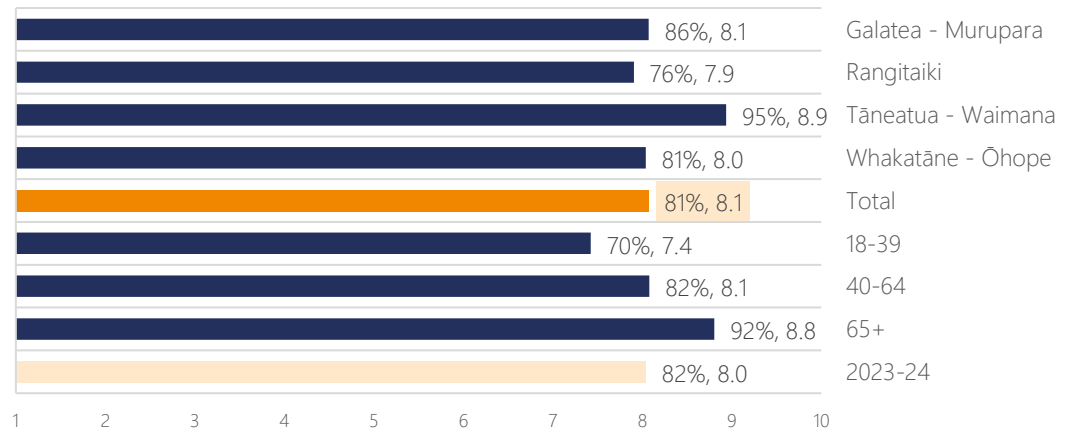
Libraries in the District



- In 2024, almost 1-in-3 respondents (29%) reported visiting District libraries (up from 25% in 2023).
- Among library users, satisfaction remained on par (81%) compared to 2023 (82%).
- Satisfaction was particularly high in Tāneatua-Waimana despite no significant differences by community board areas.
- However, there was a consistent difference measured between the youngest and oldest resident segments. Satisfaction was also higher for females (8.3) than males (7.6).
- Overall, two-thirds of residents (58%) preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on public libraries (64% in 2023); with the 2nd-strongest call for less spending across all measured services.



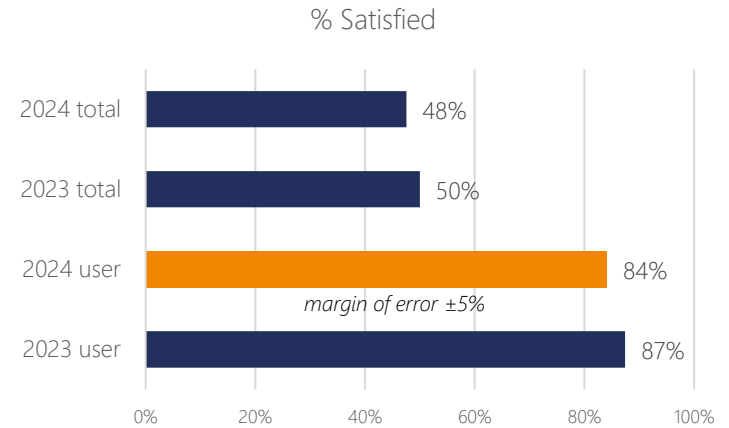
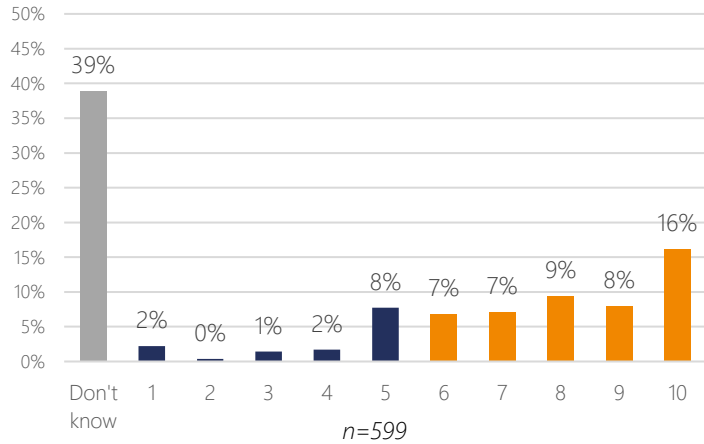
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

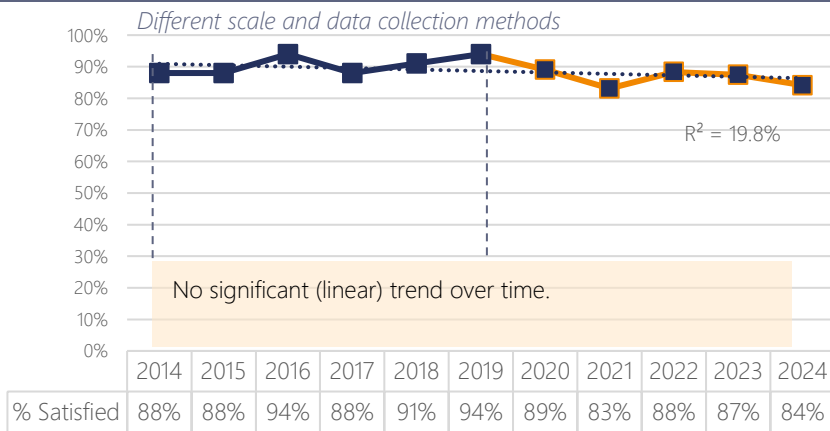
LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

Te Kōputu a te Whanga a Toi - Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre

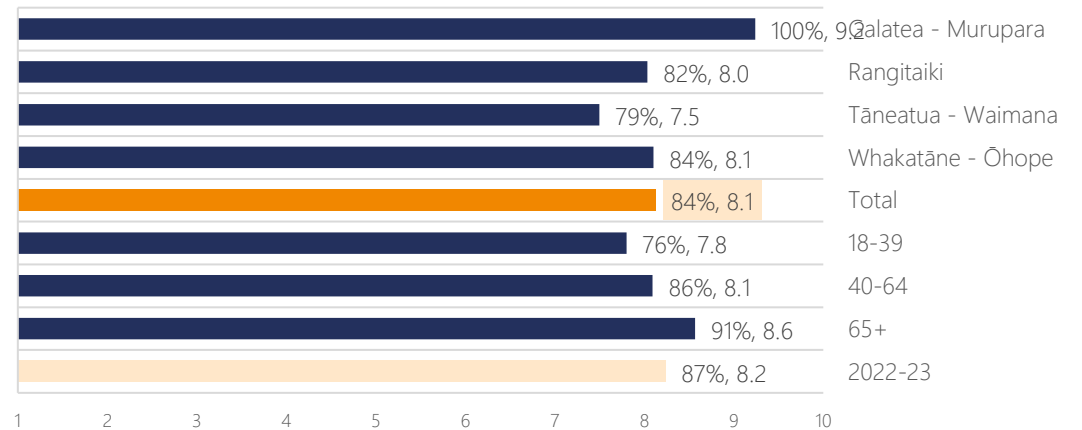


- 1-in-3 (31%) of residents in 2024 reported visiting the Whakatāne Exhibition Centre (up slightly from 29% in 2023).
- In line with low visitation levels, knowledge about the Centre remained low with 2-in-5 residents not able to provide a rating (e.g. 'Don't know' responses).

- However, satisfaction remained high among Exhibition Centre visitors in 2024 (84%).
- Despite few differences between resident subgroups in 2024, females (8.5) typically provided higher ratings than males (7.6) on average.



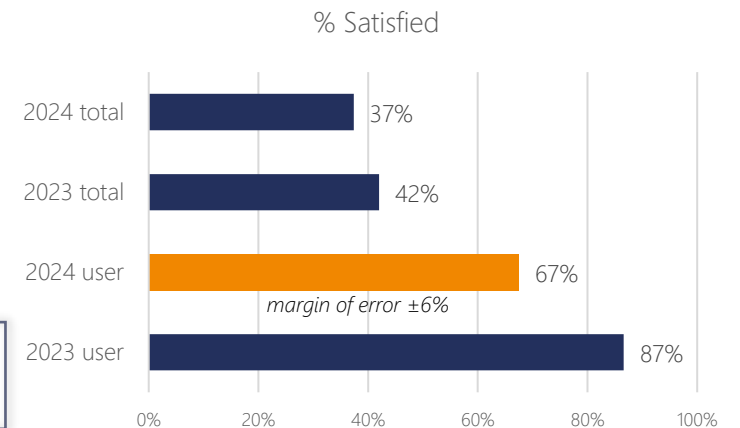
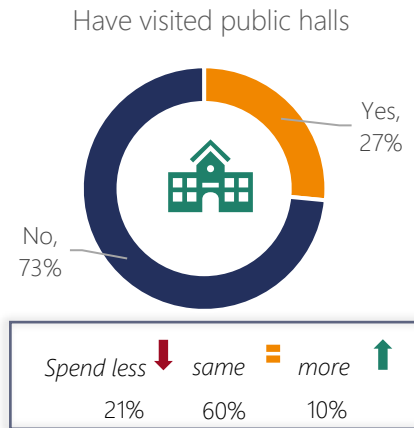
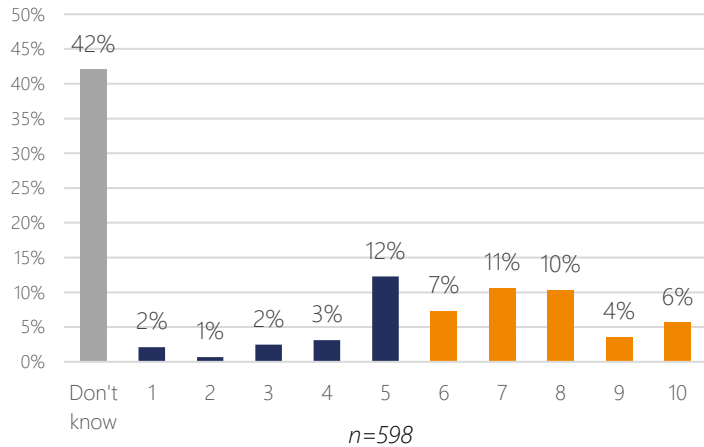
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



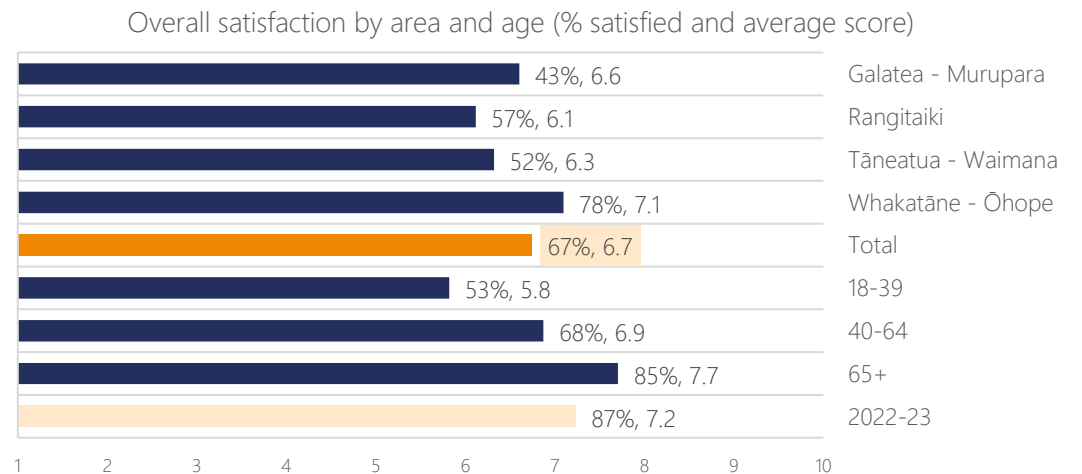
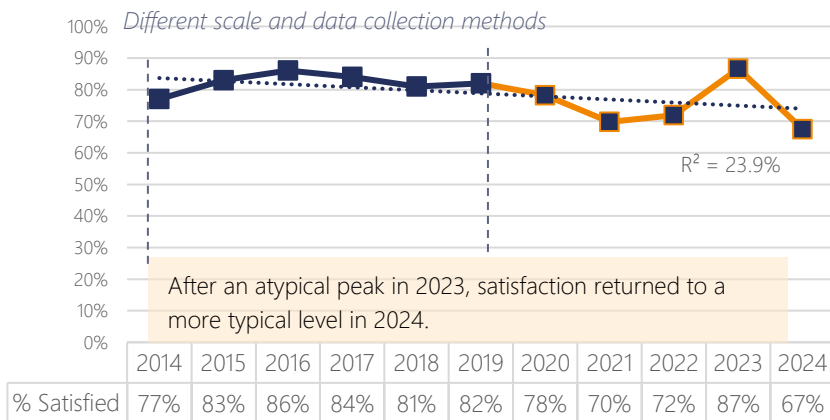
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

Public halls



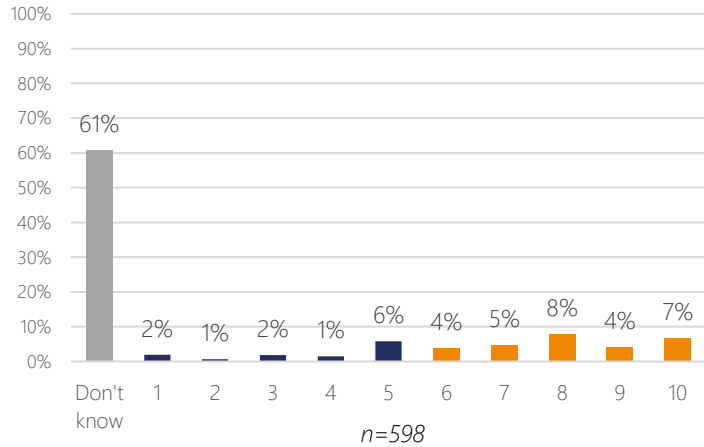
- As with the Whakatāne Exhibition Centre, many residents could not rate public halls in the district. However, visitation of halls increased in 2024 (27%) compared to 2023 (20%).
- Despite low usage, satisfaction among public hall users (67%) dropped in 2024 from the atypical peak of 2023 – albeit returning closer to levels observed in 2021-22.
- The fall in satisfaction was driven by younger residents, with satisfaction lower among both 18-39s (53% 2024 vs 66% 2023) and 40-64 year olds (68% 2024 vs 87% 2023).
- Despite this, halls were not a spending priority - 60% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on public halls, and 1-in-5 wanted less spending on these facilities.



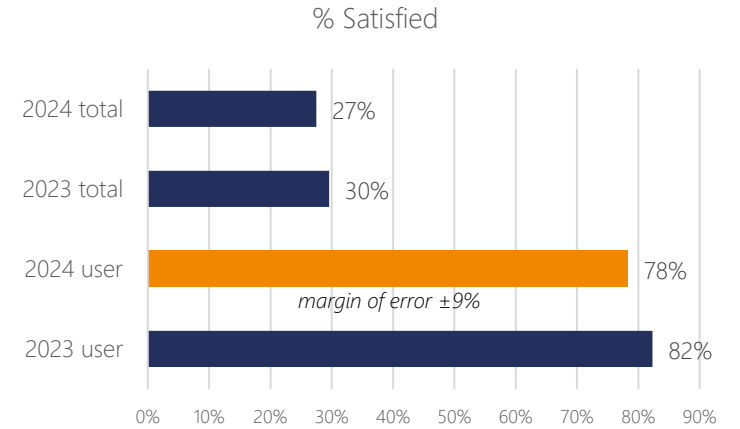
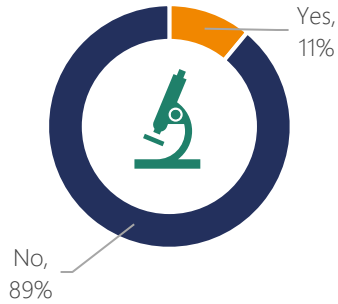
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

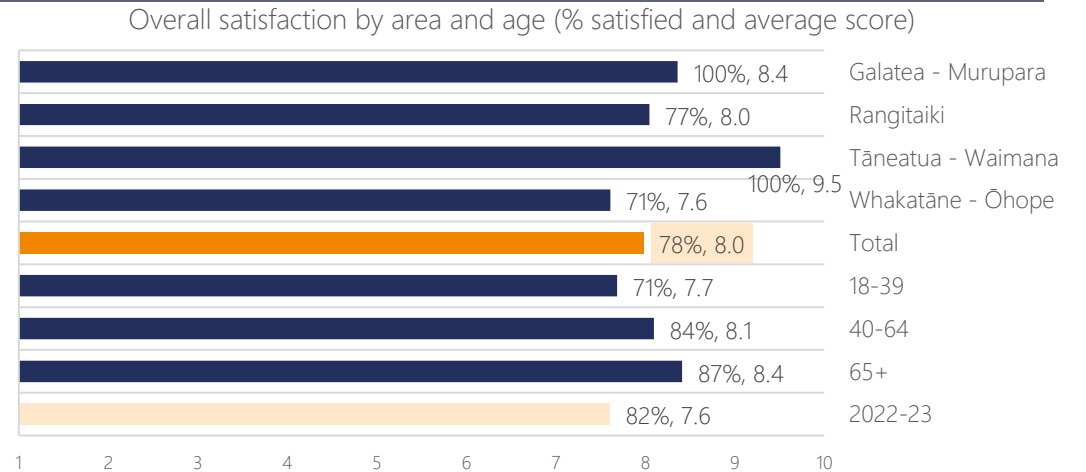
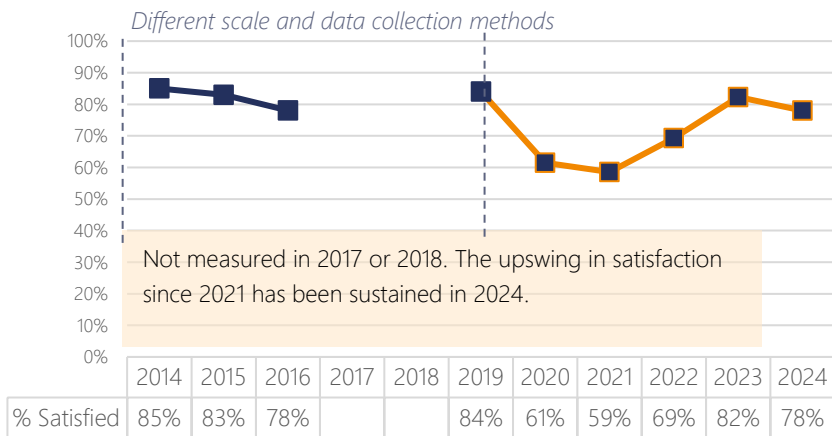
Te Whare Taonga o Taketake - Whakatāne Museum and Research Centre



Have visited Museum and Research Centre



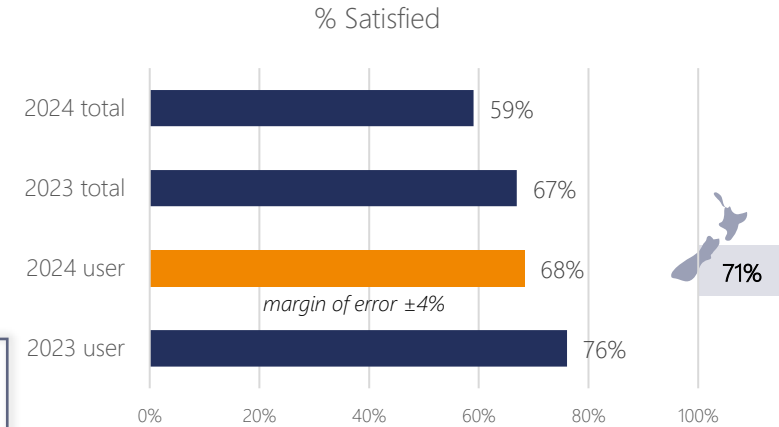
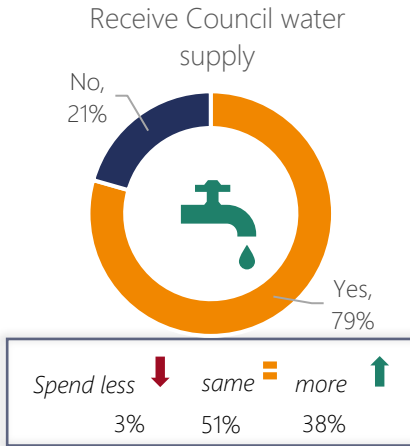
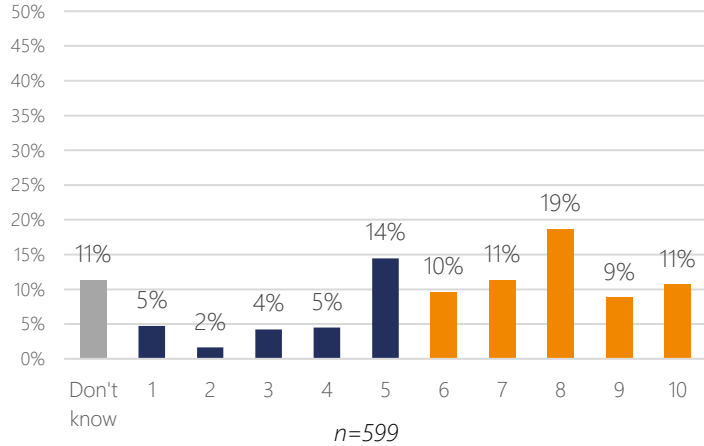
- In 2024, just 1-in-10 residents (11%) reported visiting the Whakatāne Museum and Research Centre (similar to recent years) - again reflected in low levels of knowledge (61% providing 'Don't know' ratings).
- However, visitors report very high satisfaction at 78% in 2024, consistent with 2023 and remaining above results from 2020-22.
- There were no statistically significant differences by resident subgroups in 2024. Observed differences particularly between community board areas were subject to small subsample sizes.



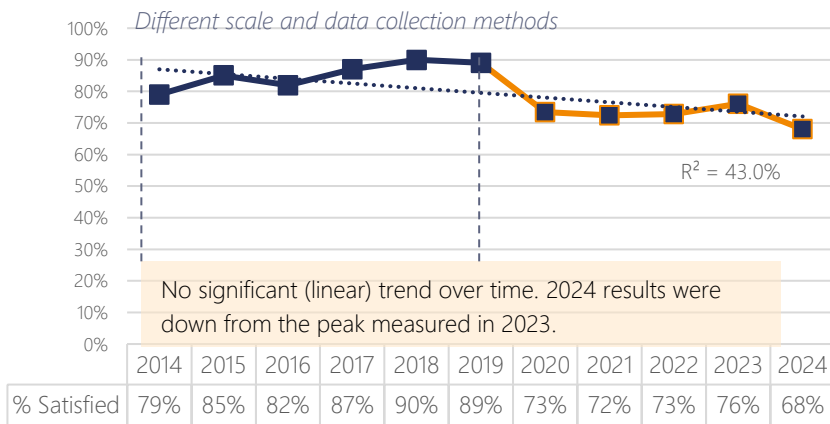
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

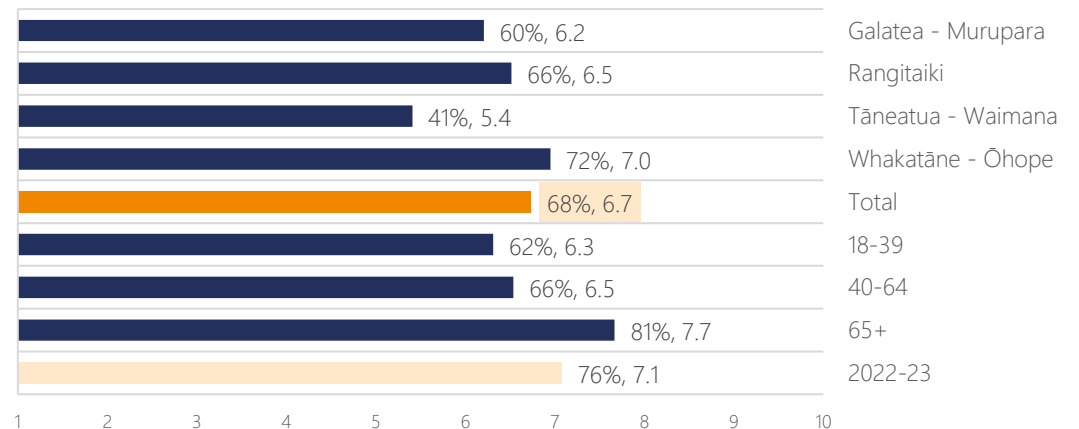
Water supply



- In 2024, 4-in-5 residents (79%) reported being connected to Council's water supply (similar to 78% in 2023).
- Of those residents on Council's water provision, 68% were satisfied with the supply overall (6.7 average rating), although decreasing from the recent peak of 76% in 2023.
- Differences were apparent between areas, with satisfaction notably lower in Tāneatua-Waimana. Residents aged under 65 also remained less satisfied with Council's water supply than did older residents.
- Reflecting the importance of this service, water supply was the 3rd-most preferred service for more Council funding (38%, similar to 35% in 2023).



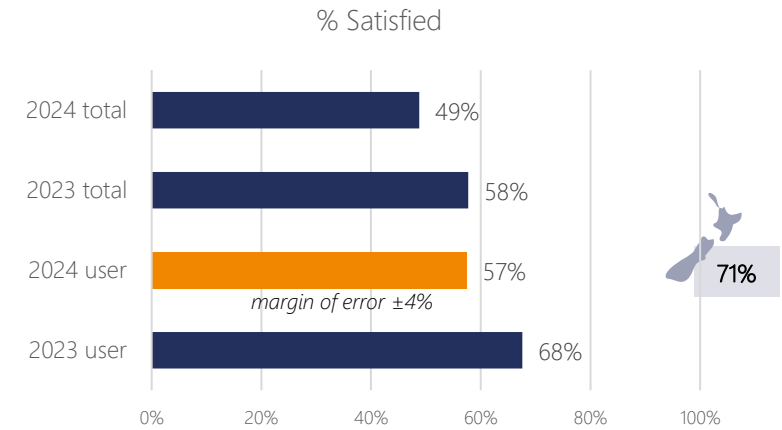
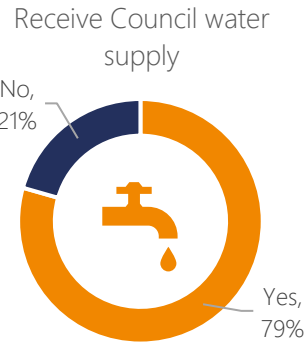
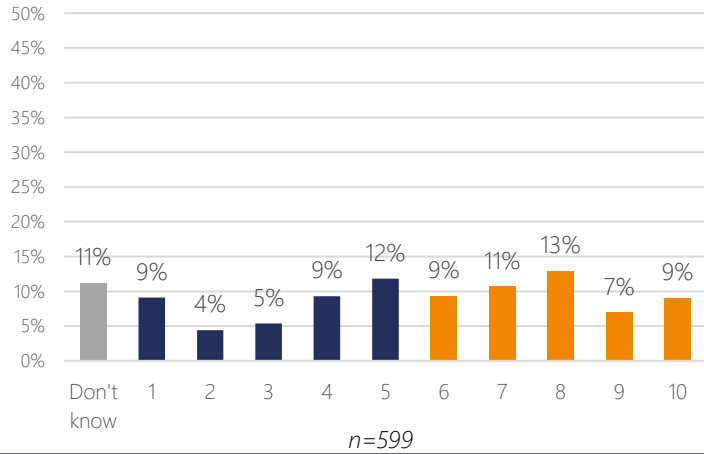
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



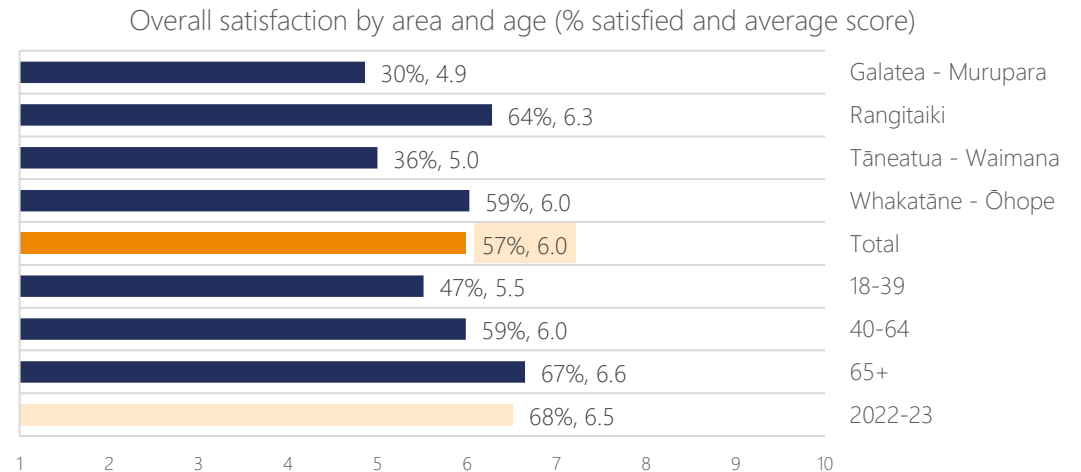
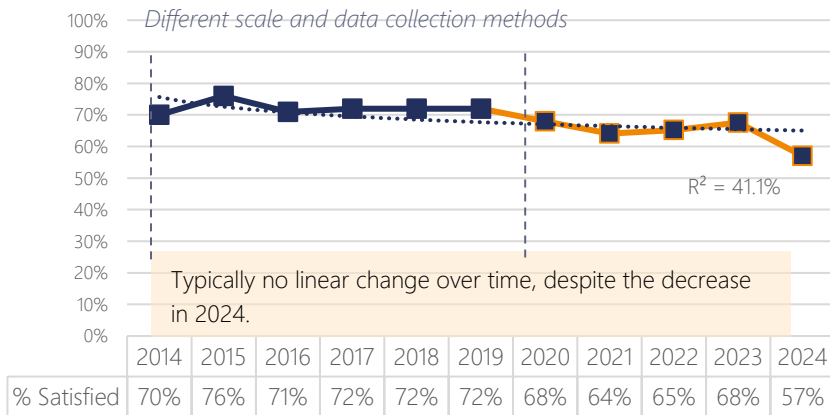
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

Quality of drinking water

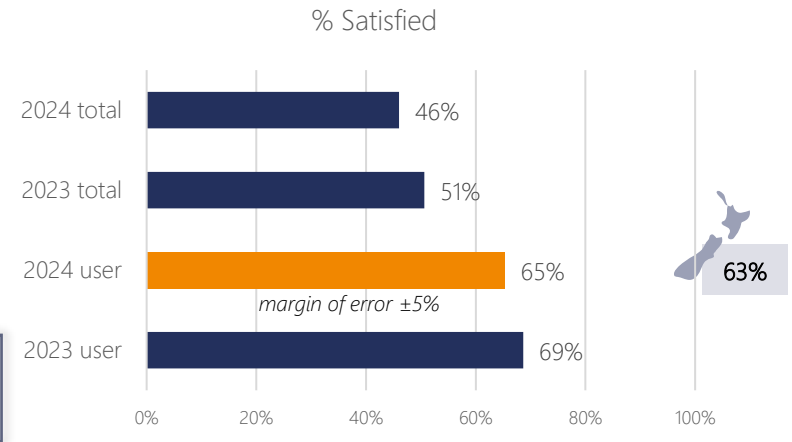
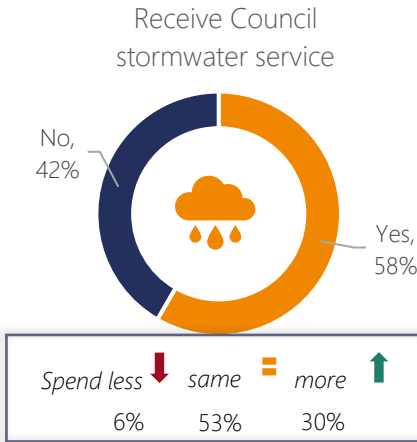
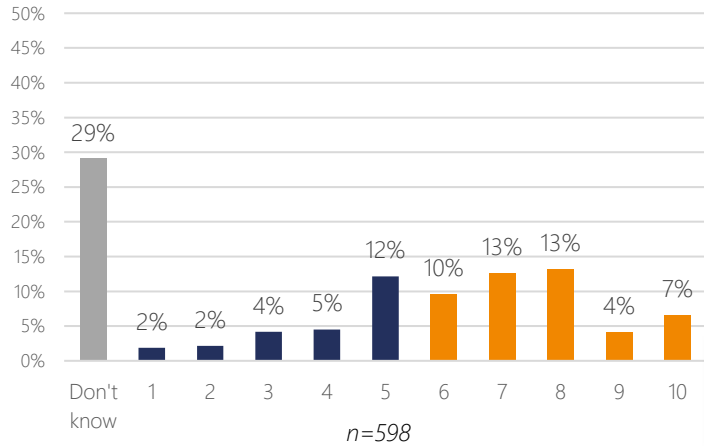


- 57% of residents on Council's water supply were satisfied with quality of their drinking water (6.0 average rating), a decrease from 68% in 2023.
- Quality concerns were particularly noted from Galatea-Murupara and Tāneatua-Waimana residents.
- Residents aged under 65 remained less satisfied with water quality in addition to the water supply generally.

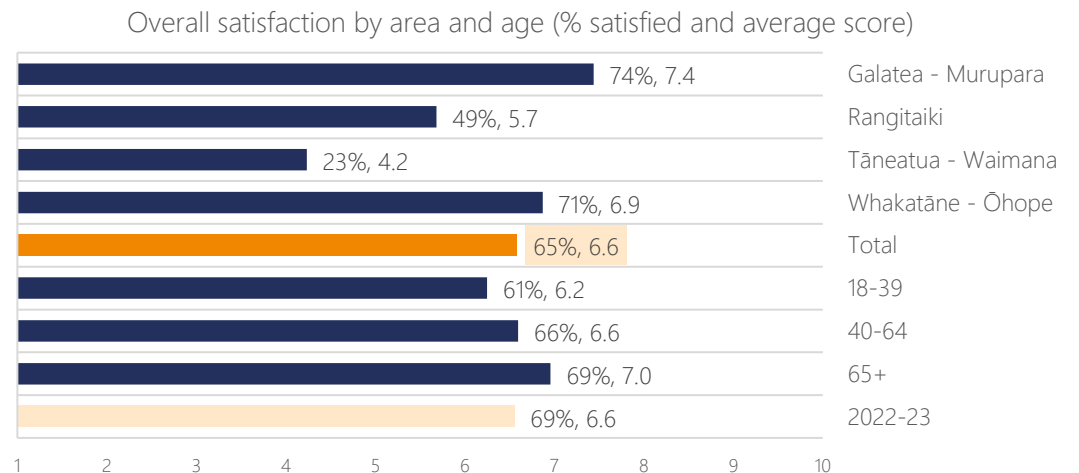
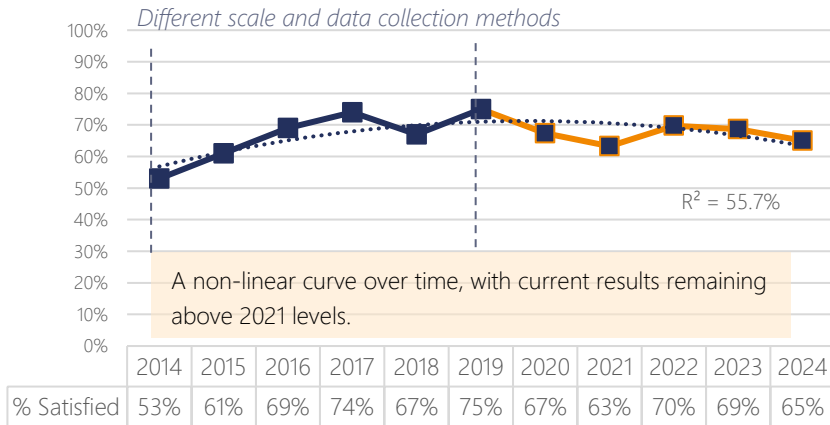


SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Stormwater service



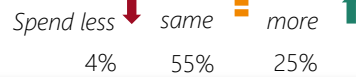
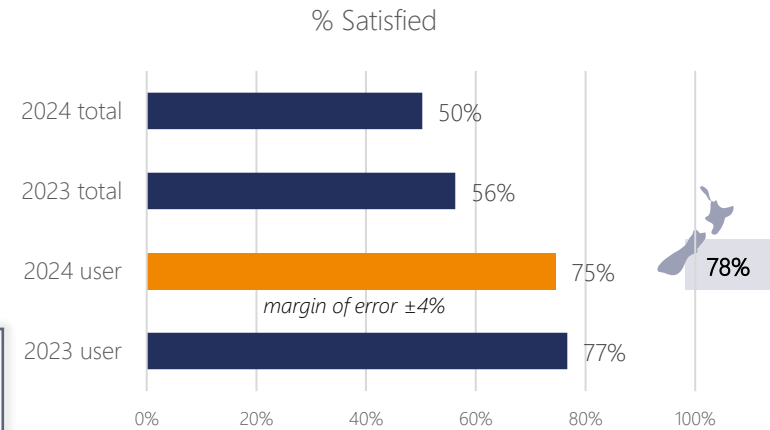
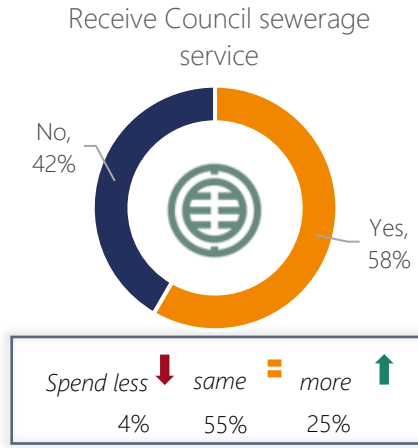
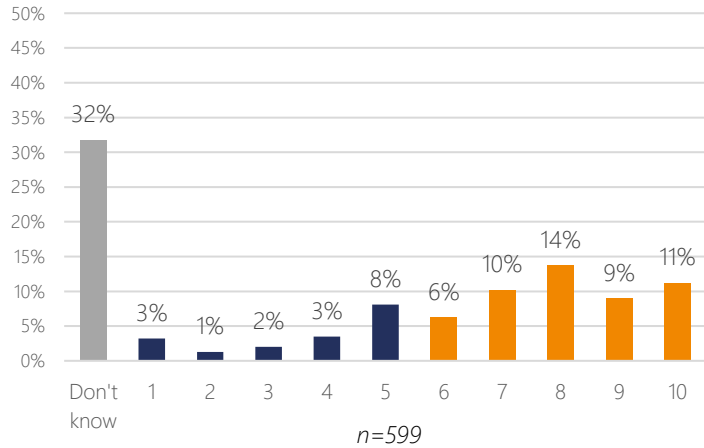
- 3-in-5 (58%) of surveyed residents in 2024 were aware of being on Council's stormwater service network (similar to 62% in 2023 and 57% in 2022).
- Of these residents, 65% were satisfied with this service (6.6 average rating); no significant change since 2023 and on par with the national benchmark.
- Clear difference were noted by area, with satisfaction lower in Tāneatua-Waimana especially, and also in Rangitaiki in 2024.
- 1-in-3 respondents preferred more Council spending on stormwater (30%), although lower than 39% in 2023 (following the substantial rain events in that year).



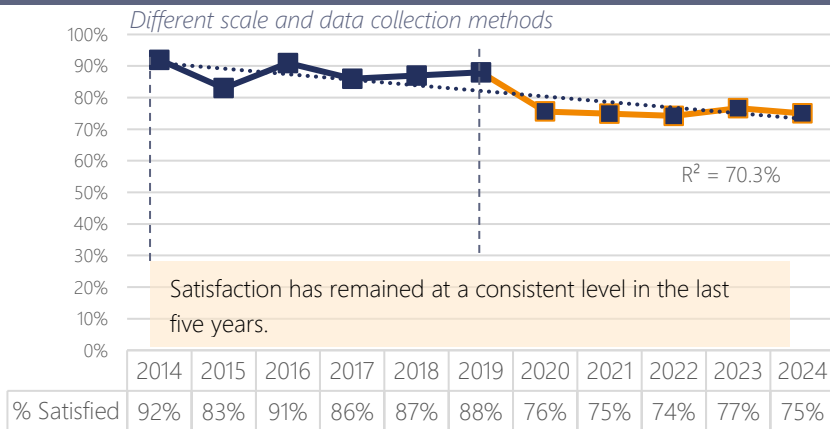
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE

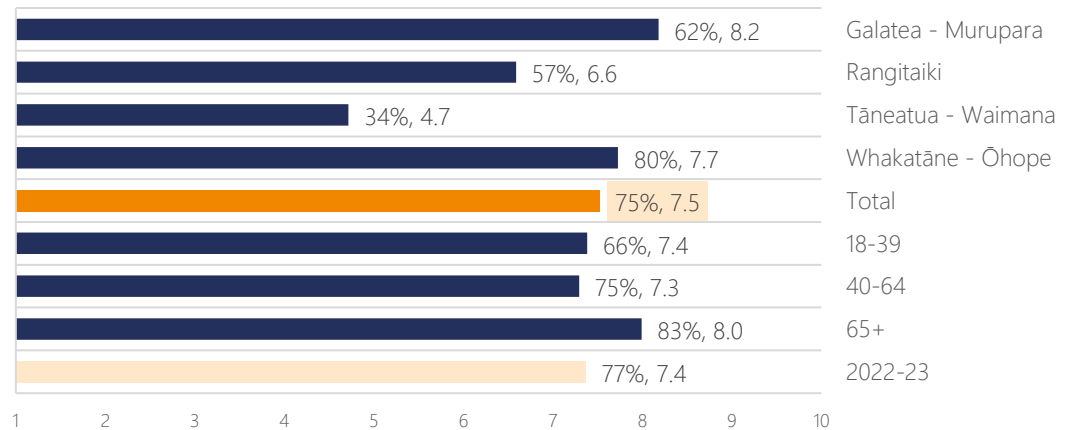
Sewerage system



- As for stormwater, 3-in-5 (58%) of surveyed residents reported being connected to Council sewerage services in 2024.
- 75% of these residents were satisfied with the sewerage system (average rating 7.5); consistent with results observed over recent years.
- Satisfaction was notably lower in both Tāneatua-Waimana and Rangitaiki.
- Residents aged under 65 remained less satisfied with Council's sewerage service on average compared to older respondents.
- Overall, 55% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on the sewerage system, with 1-in-4 wanting more spending on this service (similar to 2023).



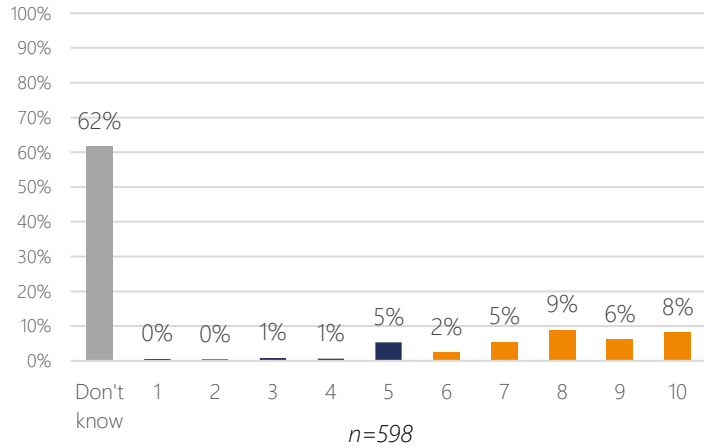
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



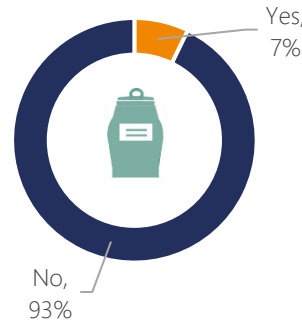
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

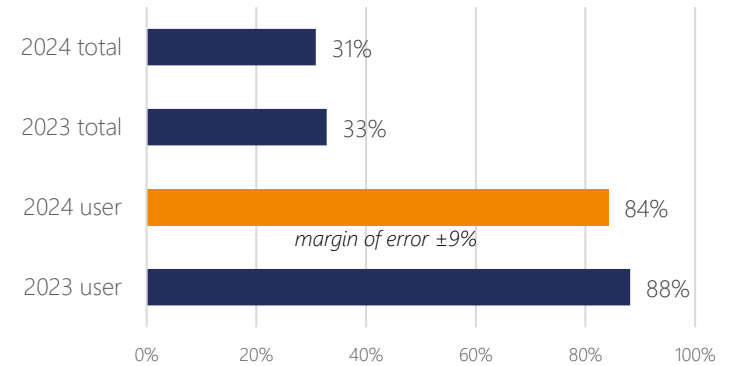
Whakatāne crematorium facility



Have visited crematorium facility

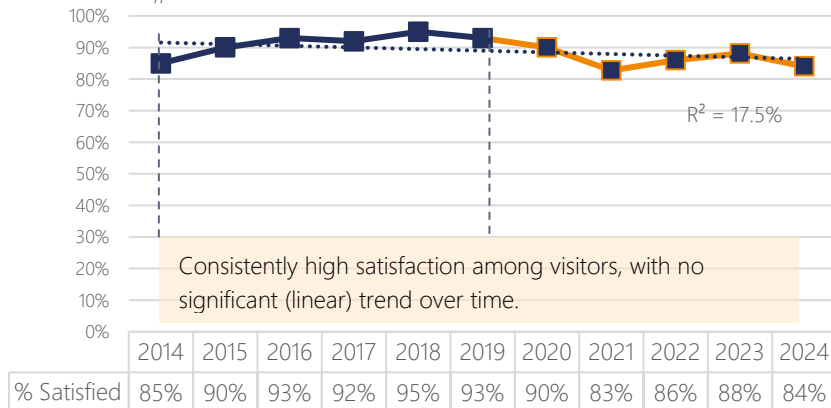


% Satisfied

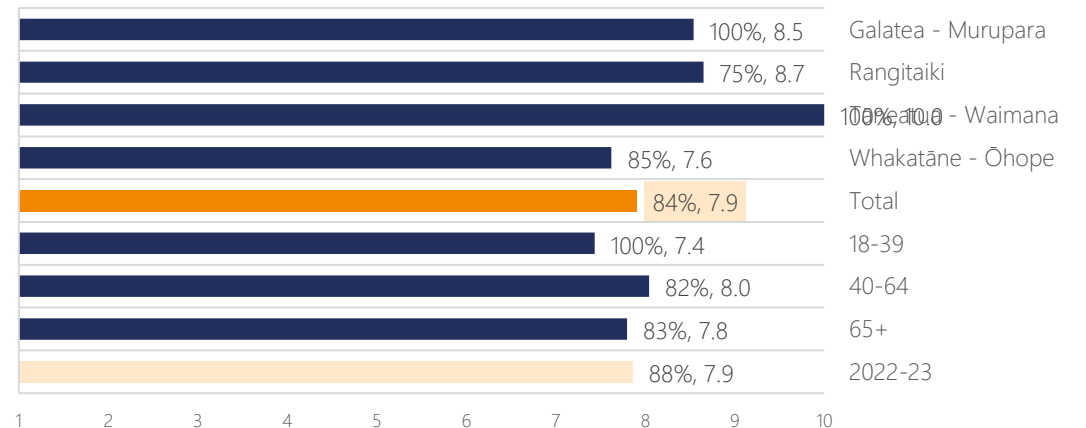


- Visitation of the Whakatāne crematorium remains historically low, with just 7% of residents visiting this facility in 2024 (similar to recent years). Knowledge of the facility therefore is also low, with 62% of residents unfamiliar with it in 2024 (60% in 2023).
- Nevertheless, satisfaction among visitors remained very high in 2024 (84%, average rating 7.9), with no significant differences over time.
- Due to the low sample of visitors to this facility and high margins of error, there were no significant differences between residents' demographic groups.

Different scale and data collection methods



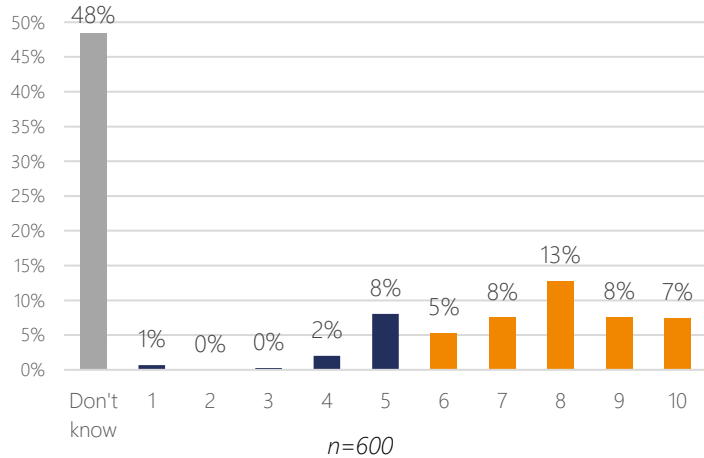
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



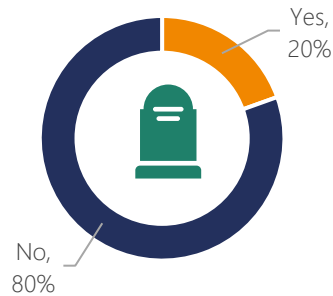
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

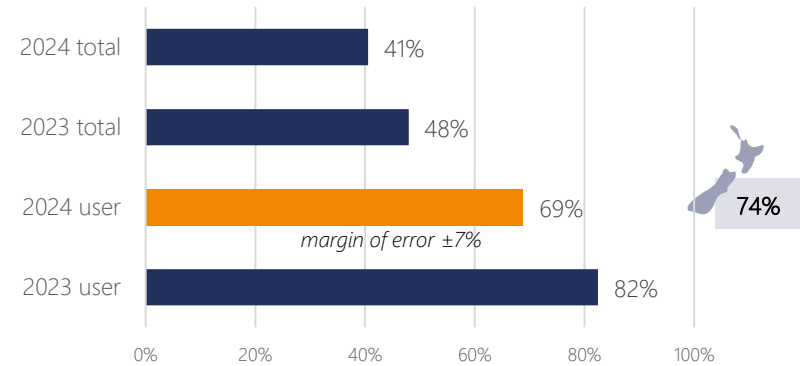
Cemeteries overall



Have visited cemeteries

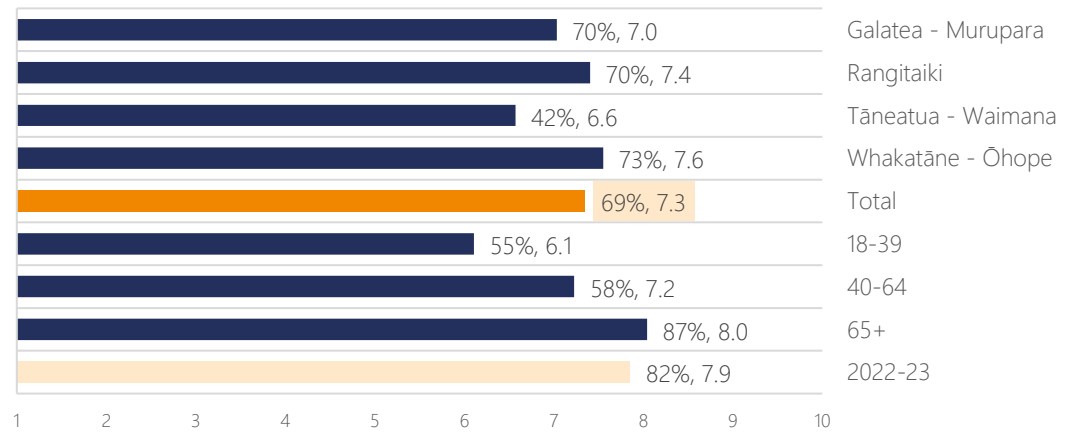
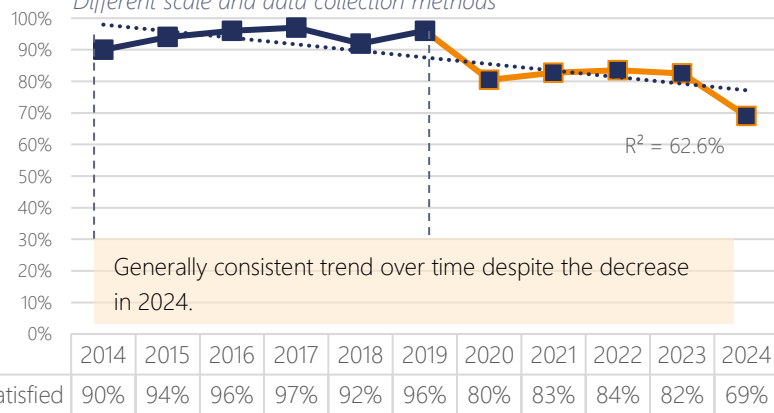


% Satisfied



- Visits to cemeteries remained low in 2024, with 1-in-5 residents (20%) reporting this (similar to 2023).
- 69% of these residents were satisfied with cemeteries overall – although lower than in 2023.
- Residents aged under 65 were significantly less satisfied with cemeteries than older respondents, with satisfaction lower than 2023 for both 18-39s (55% vs 67% in 2023) and 40-64 year olds (58% vs 88% in 2023). Results are impacted by low subsample sizes.

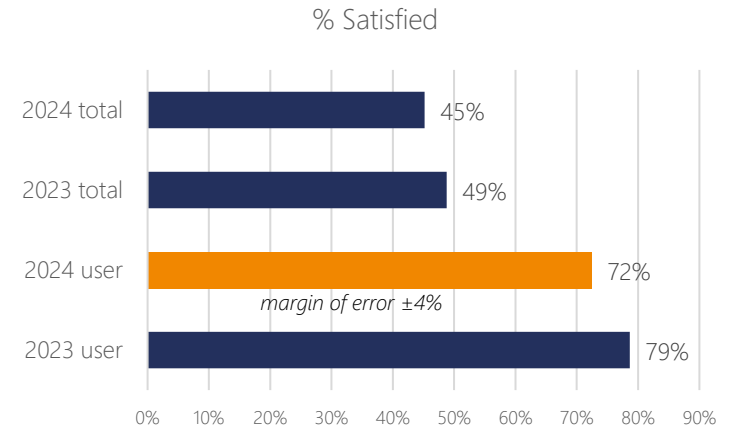
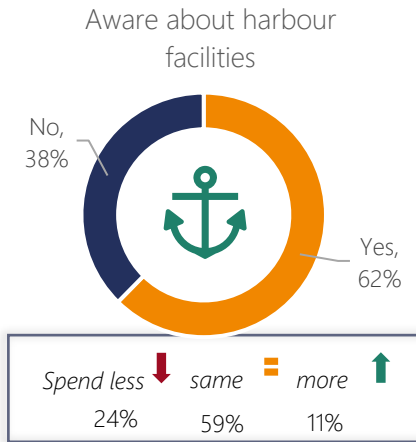
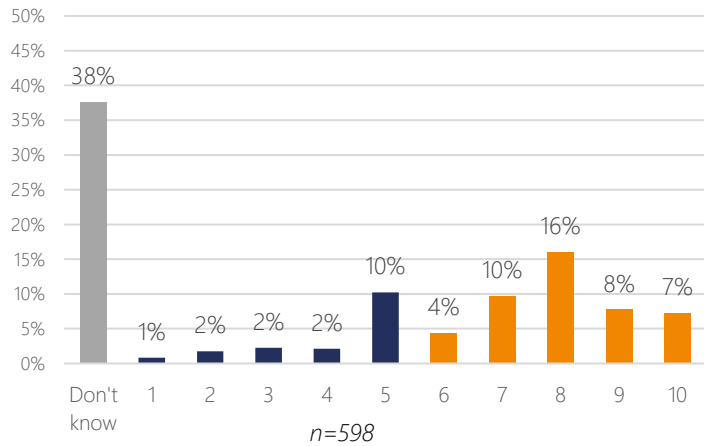
Different scale and data collection methods



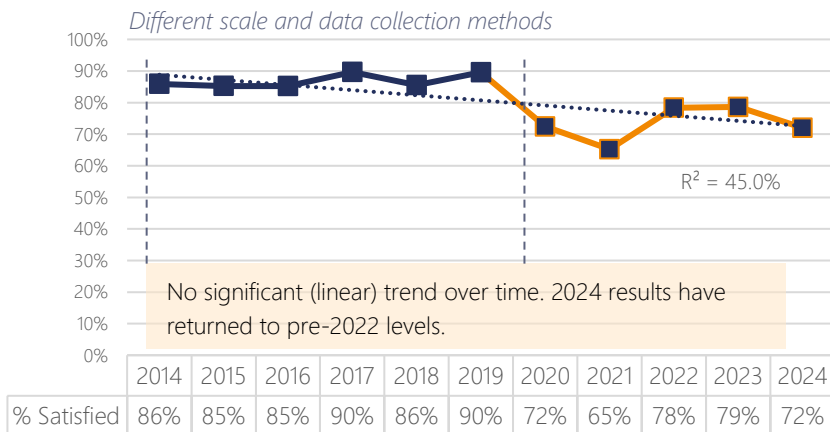
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

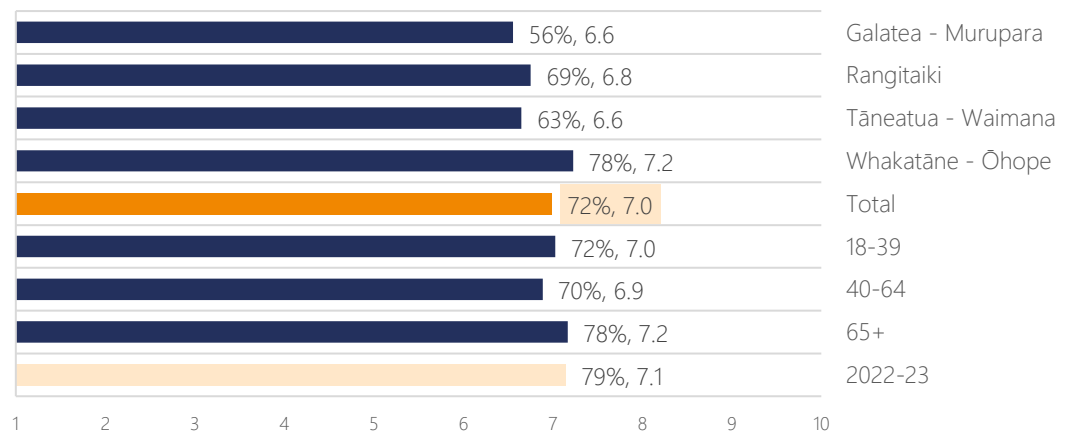
Boat ramps and wharf facilities (new wording in 2022).



- In 2024, 2-in-5 residents (38%) were unsure about boat ramps and wharf facilities in the District, with 62% providing a rating (similar to 2023).
- 72% of residents who were generally aware of these facilities were satisfied, a decrease from 2022-23 although above 2021 and similar to 2020 levels.
- In 2024, satisfaction was significantly lower among longer term residents living in the District for 10 years or more (6.8 on average).
- The shifting trend in spending priorities for boat ramps and wharf facilities observed in recent years continued in 2024, with 24% of respondents preferring less spending for this (20% in 2023), making it the 3rd most suggested service for lower spending.

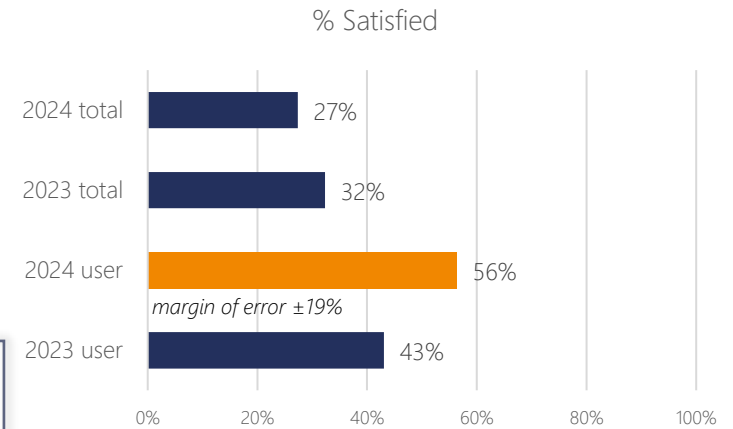
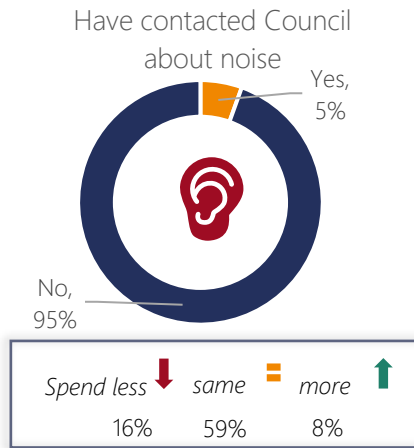
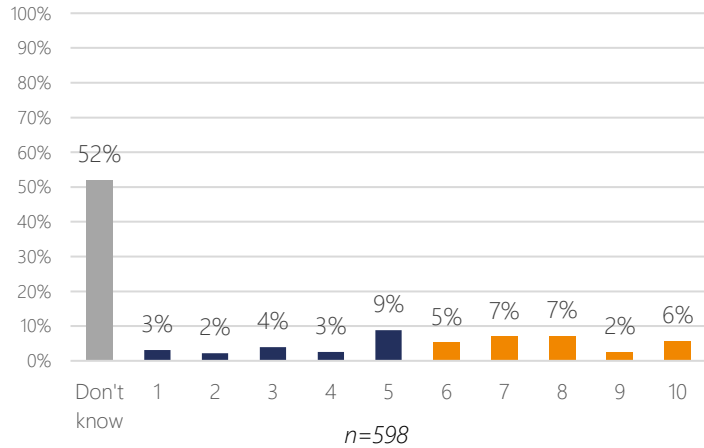


Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)

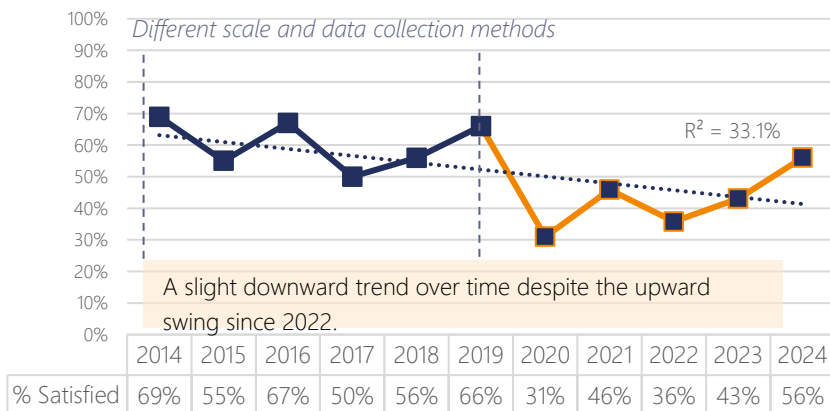


SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

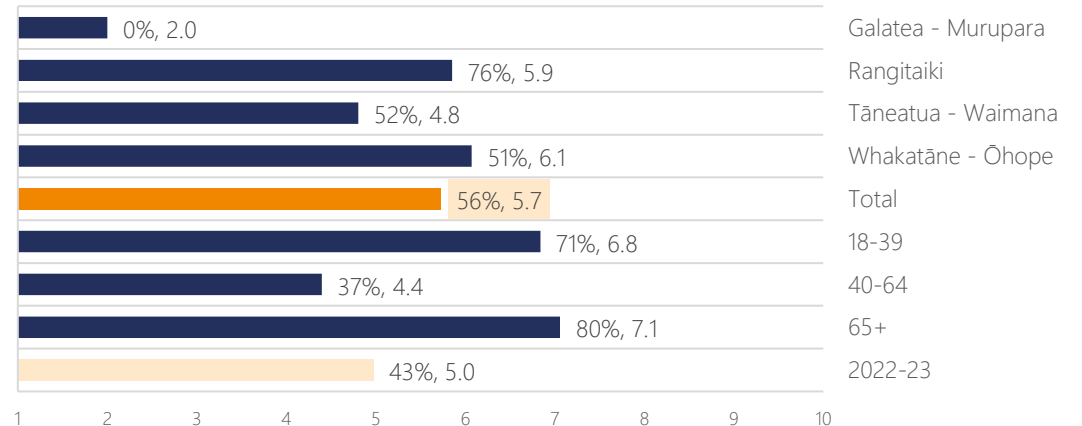
Noise control



- Historically, relatively few residents contact the Council about noise issues – a trend continued in 2024 (5%, similar to 2023).
- Satisfaction with noise control varies notably over time due to low sample sizes and greater margins of error reducing comparability. In 2024, satisfaction with this service continued an upward trend from 2023, reaching a five-year peak of 56%.
- Observed differences between community board areas were not significant due to noted low sample sizes. However, 40-64 year olds were significantly less satisfied with this service than residents in other age groups.
- Overall, 59% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on noise control. However, a higher percentage of residents were generally unsure about spending priorities for noise control (17%). These results were very similar to 2023.

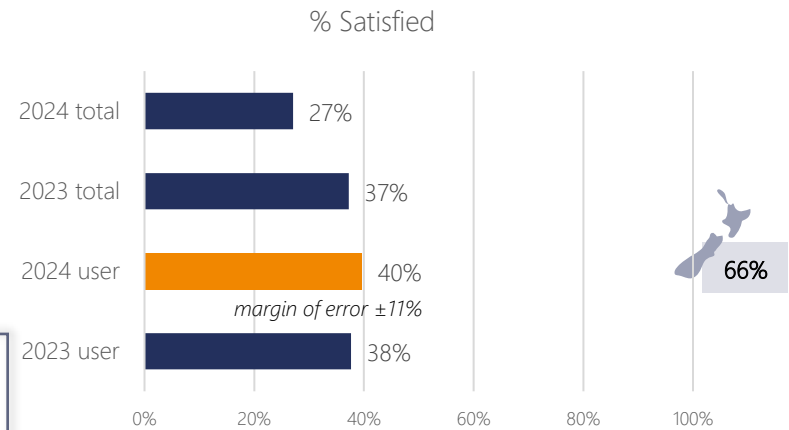
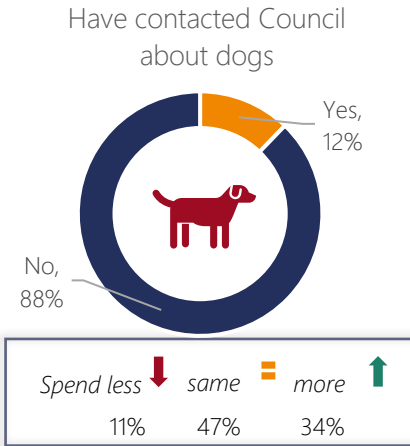
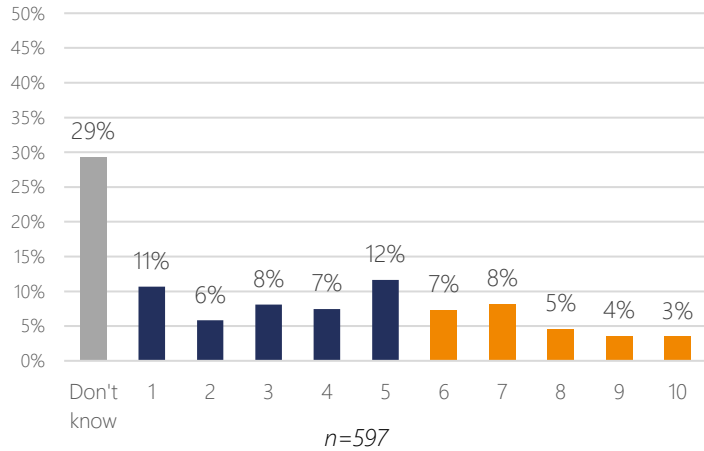


Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



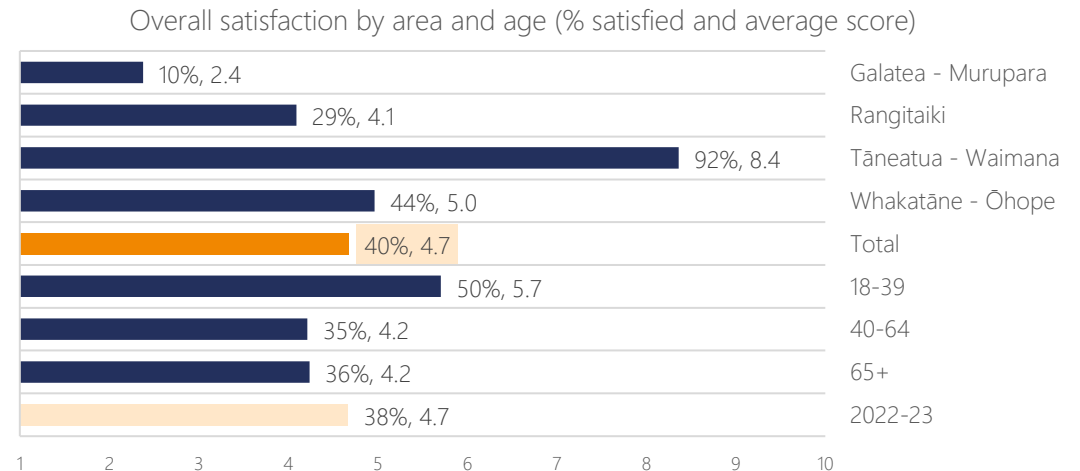
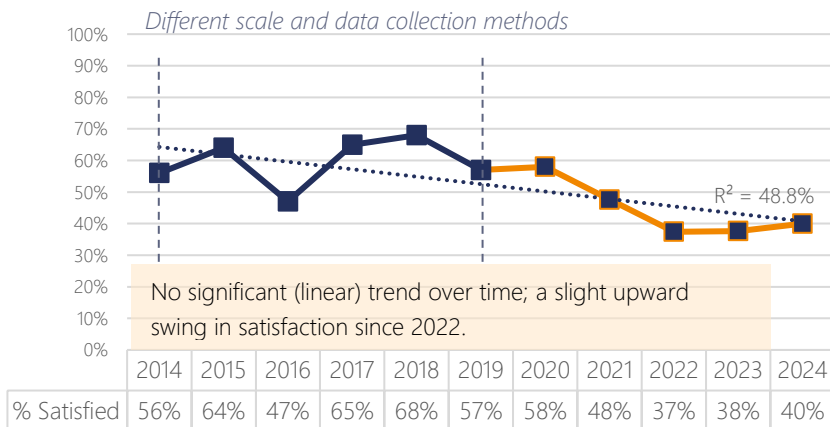
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Dog control



- In 2024, just 1-in-10 residents (12%) reported contacting the Council about dogs (similar to 2023), reflecting low knowledge about this service overall.
- Of residents making contact about dog control in 2024, satisfaction (40%) remained on par with the previous two years.

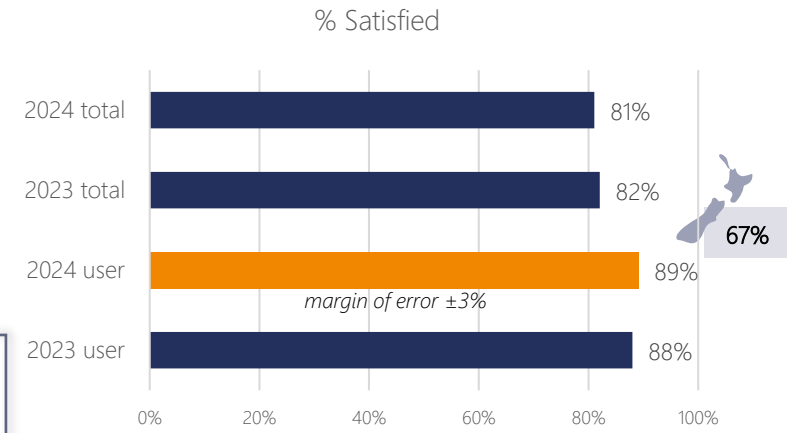
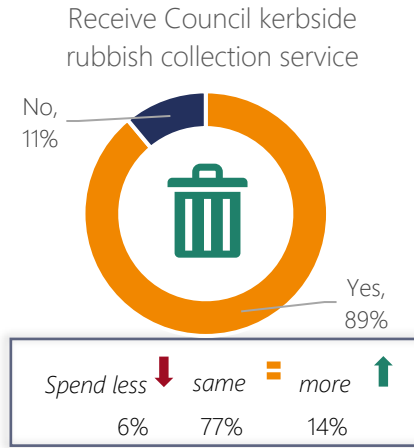
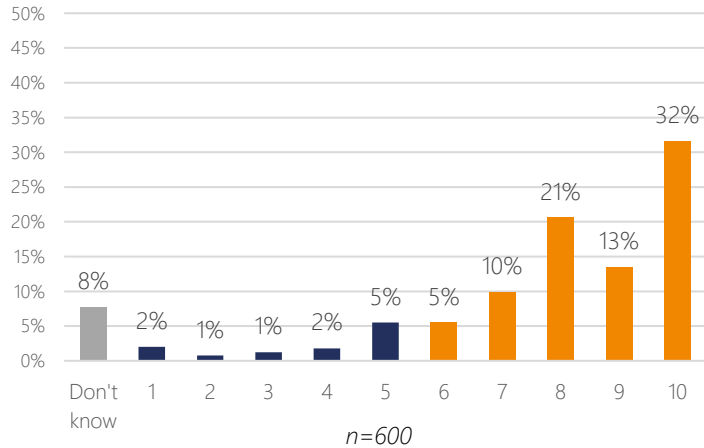
- Despite low sample sizes, residents in Tāneatua-Waimana were significantly more satisfied with this service than those in other areas.
- The desire for more spending on dog control continued to grow in 2024 (34%) from previous years (30% in 2023, 24% in 2022, 20% in 2021) - reinforced by unprompted comments raising concerns about this issue in the District.



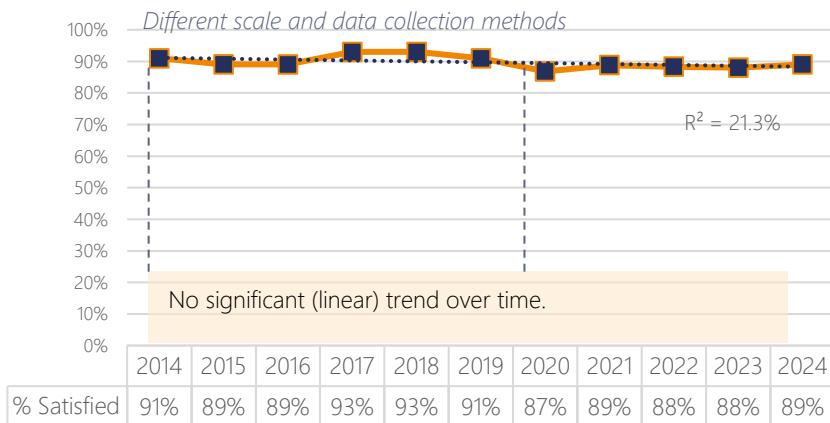
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Kerbside waste collection service

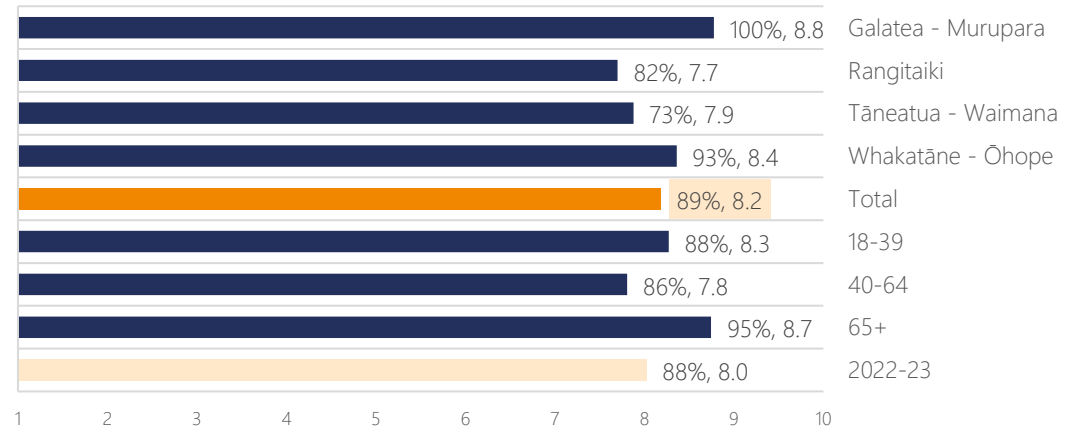
LTP MEASURE



- Most surveyed residents (89%) reported regular kerbside waste collection at their property in 2024 (consistent with previous years).
- As in 2023, this remained the highest-rated service in 2024 with very high satisfaction (89%, 8.2 average rating) - one of the most consistent results across all service measures over time.
- 1-in-3 (32%) respondents rated this service the maximum 10-out-of-10 (28% in 2023).
- Despite very high satisfaction across all subgroups, satisfaction with kerbside waste collection was lower in Tāneatua-Waimana (73%), and higher among 65+ year olds. Those living in the District for 10 years or more were less satisfied on average (7.9).
- High satisfaction was reflected in the high proportion (77%) of residents preferring the same level of spending for waste collection services (85% in 2023), indicating that the current service was seen as adequate.



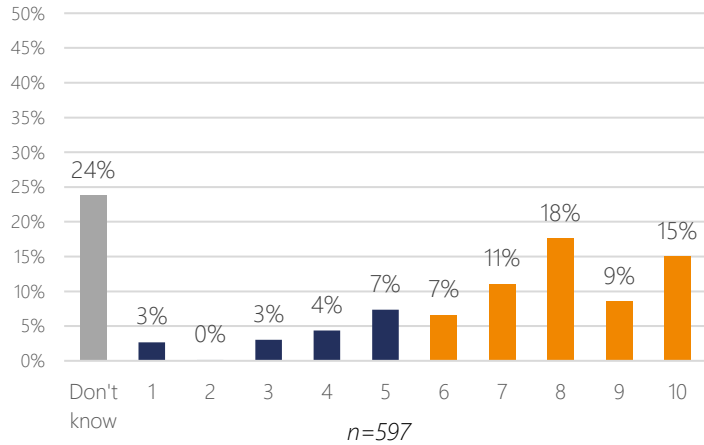
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Refuse transfer station facilities

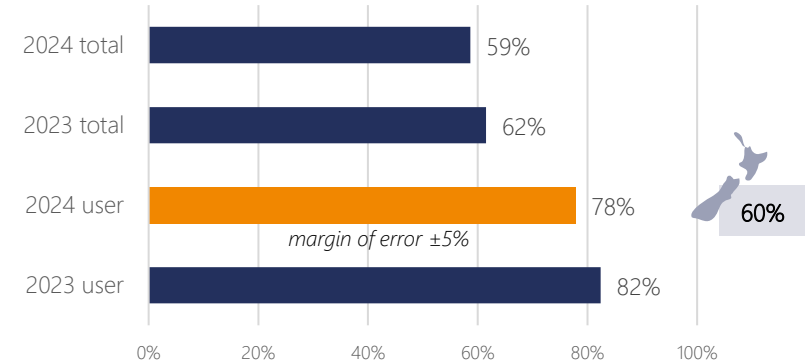
LTP MEASURE



Have used refuse transfer station

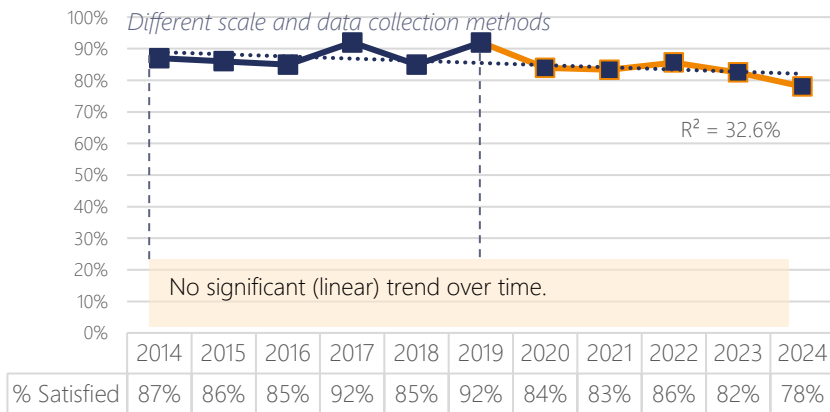


% Satisfied

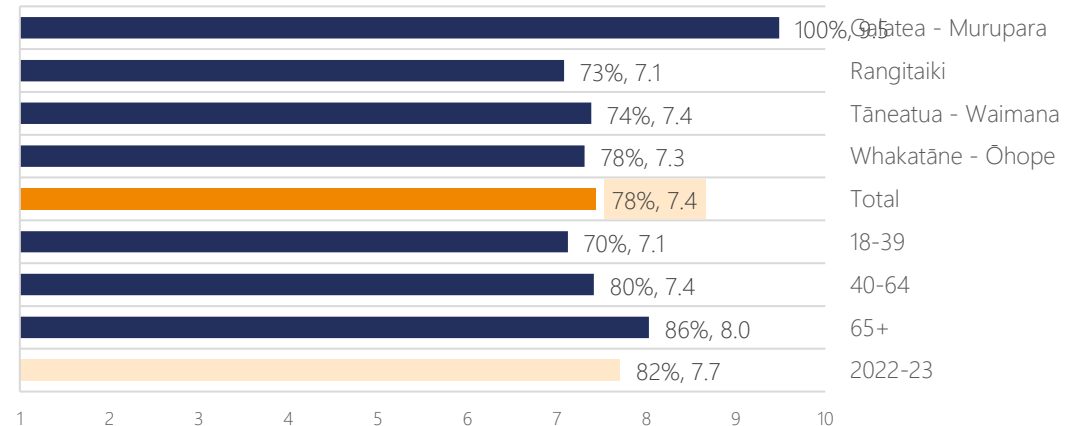


- In 2024, half (51%) of residents reported using the District's refuse transfer station facilities throughout the year (up from 45% in 2023).
- 78% of users were satisfied with these facilities (average rating 7.4), similar to 2023 but down from 2022 – while remaining above the NZ benchmark.

- Satisfaction was notably higher in Galatea-Murupara.
- However, residents living in the District for 10 years or more were less satisfied on average (7.2), especially compared to those in the area for 5-10 years (8.7).



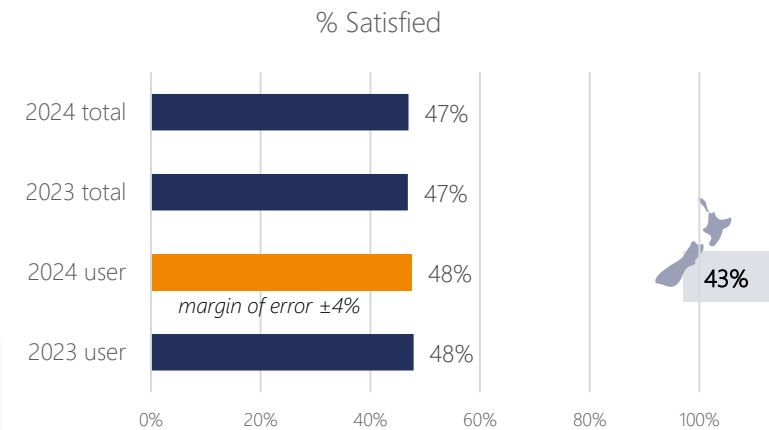
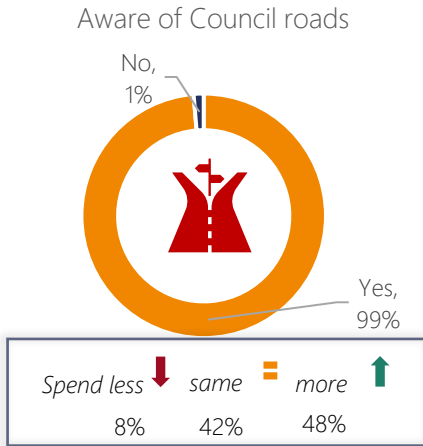
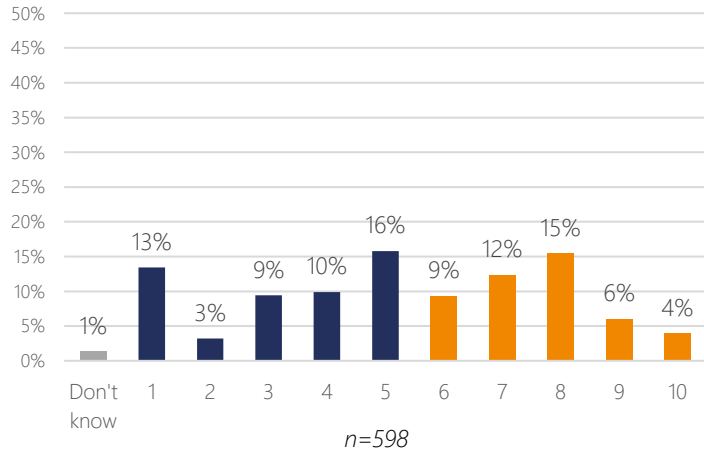
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



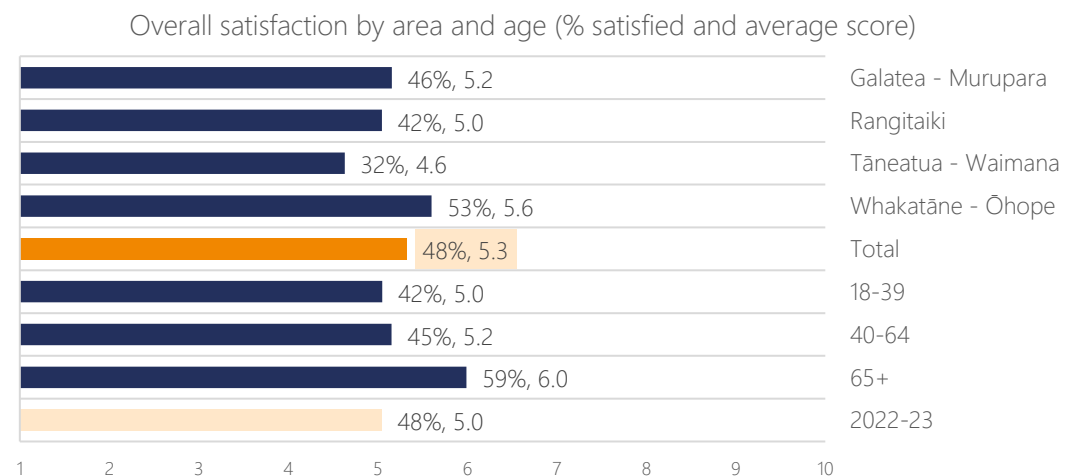
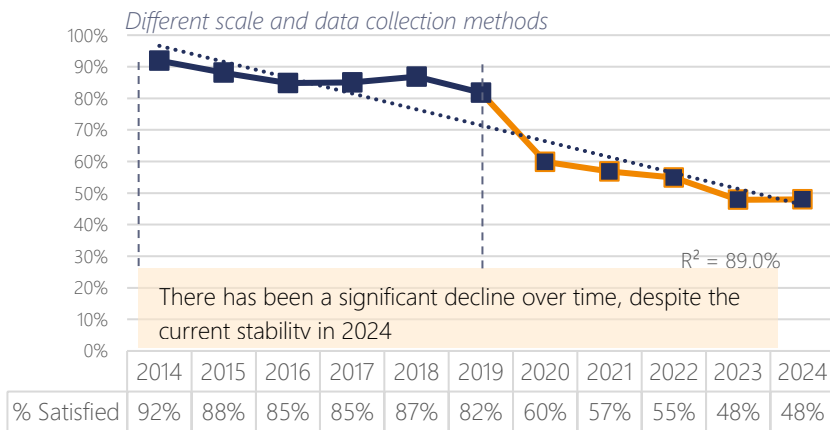
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

Council roads overall



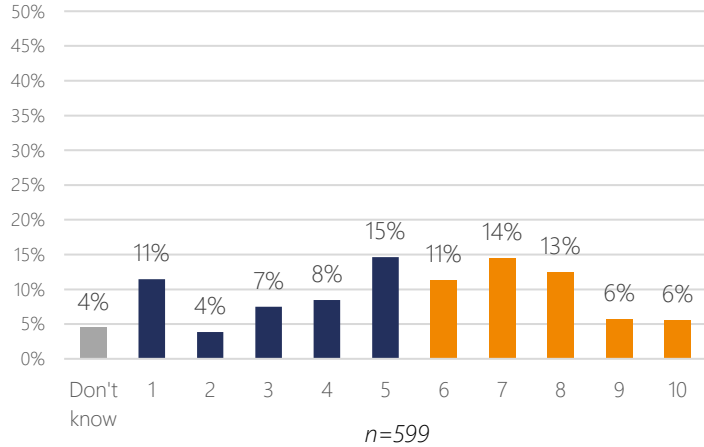
- The recent trending decline in satisfaction with roads finally stabilised in 2024, with satisfaction at 48% - consistent with 2023.
- It is worth noting that satisfaction with roads has been declining nationwide in part reportedly to the increased frequency of extreme weather events and the reported presence of potholes across New Zealand.
- On average, residents in Tāneatua-Waimana were less satisfied with both roads and road safety.
- Satisfaction with roads remained higher among older residents (aged 65+) (59%), compared to younger residents.
- Roads remained the highest spending priority with 48% of respondents requesting more Council spending in this area – albeit down from 59% in 2023). Roothing issues continued to be raised in verbatim comments.



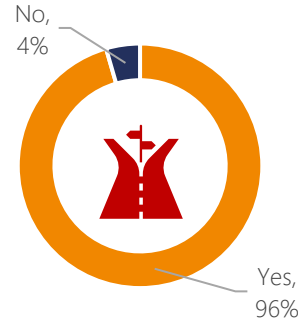
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE
(aggregated)

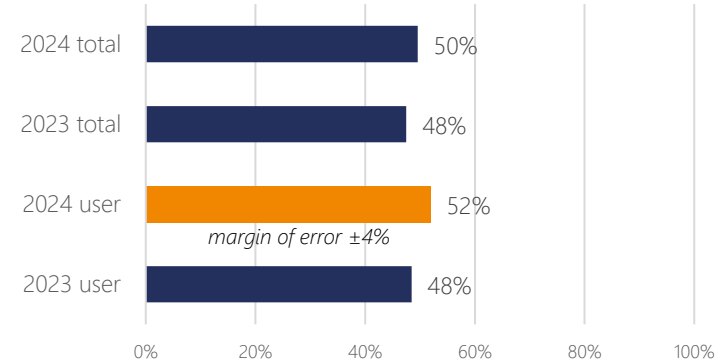
Safety of Council roads



Aware of Council roads

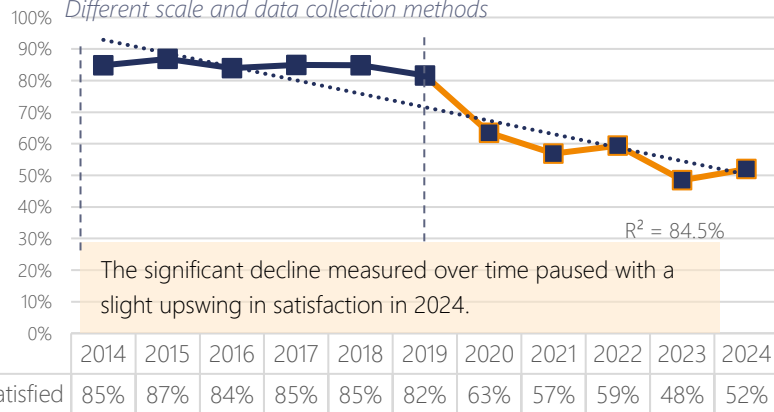


% Satisfied

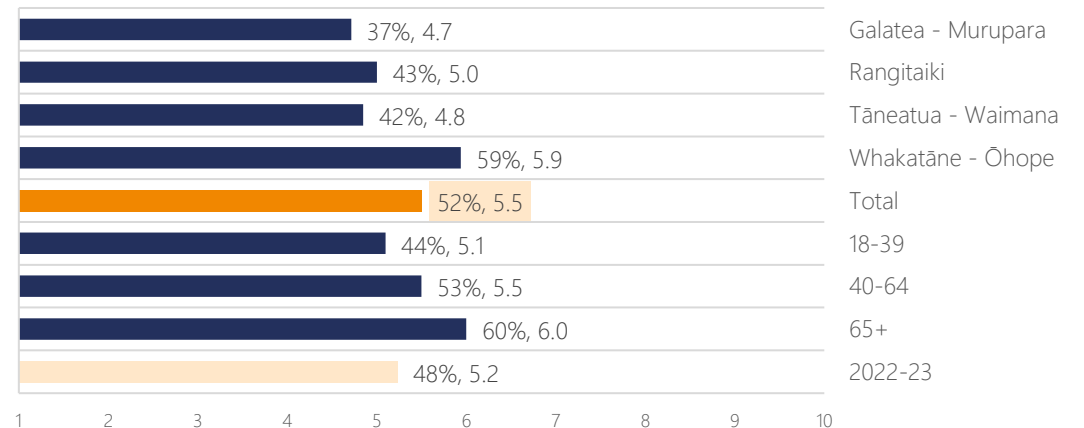


- Similar to roads overall, the declining trend in satisfaction with road safety stabilised in 2024 (52%), with a slight upswing compared to 2023 (48%).
- Satisfaction with road safety was lower outside Whakatāne-Ōhope, and particularly in Tāneatua-Waimana.
- Overall, satisfaction with roads generally and safety of Council roads exhibited a strong correlation with provided ratings.
- Community feedback indicated divided resident opinions about roading and related infrastructure developments, particularly the Landing Road roundabout, other layout and speed limit changes, and the ongoing demand for a second bridge in Whakatāne.

Different scale and data collection methods

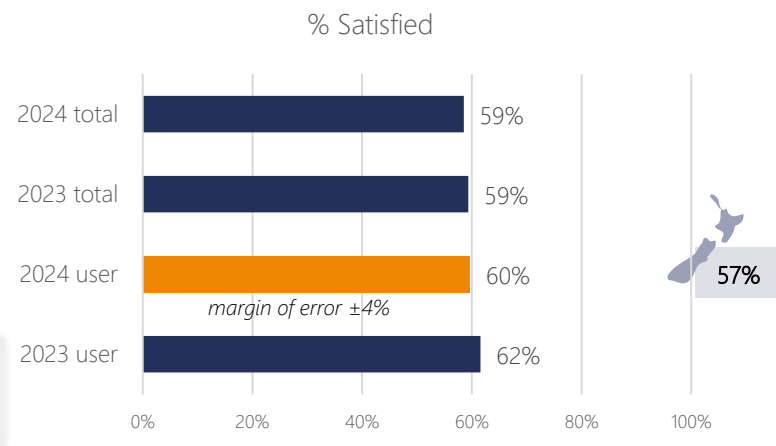
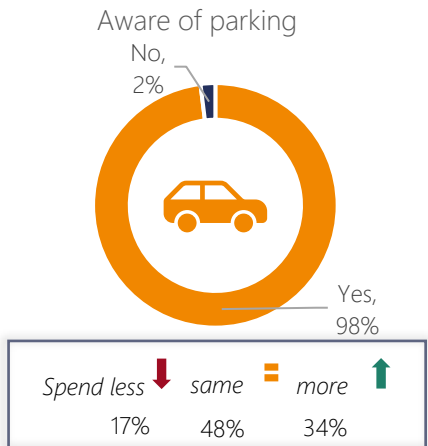
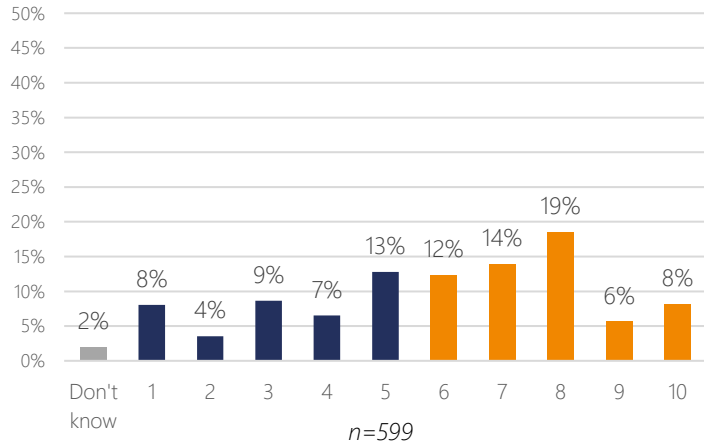


Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)

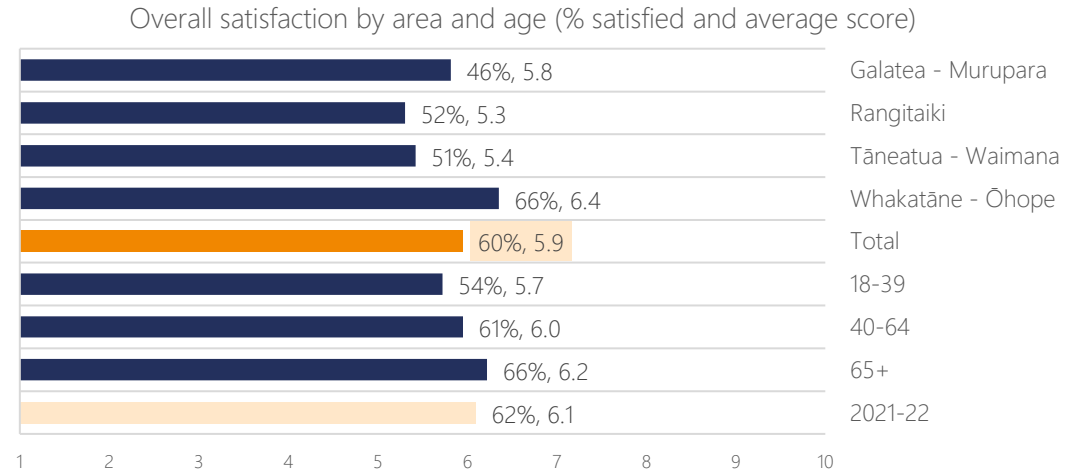
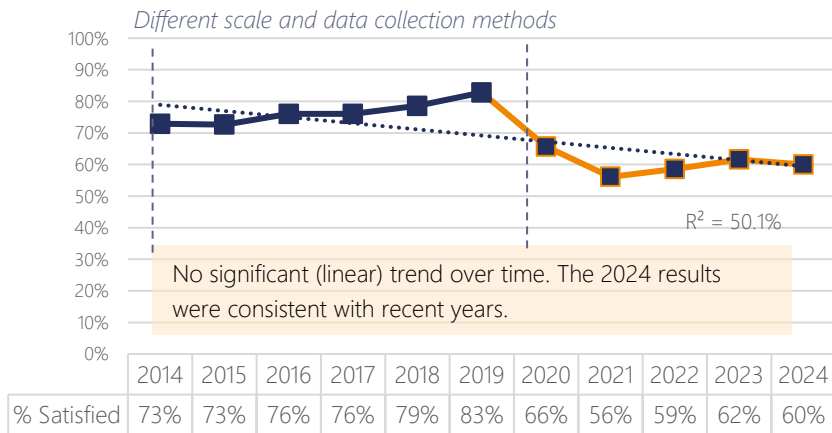


SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Parking in Whakatāne



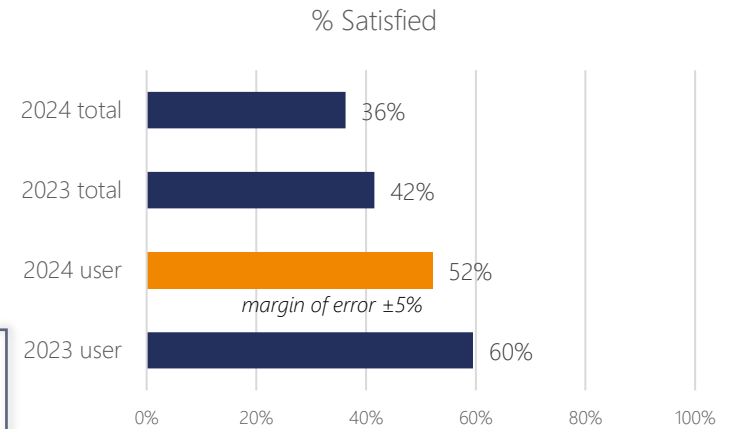
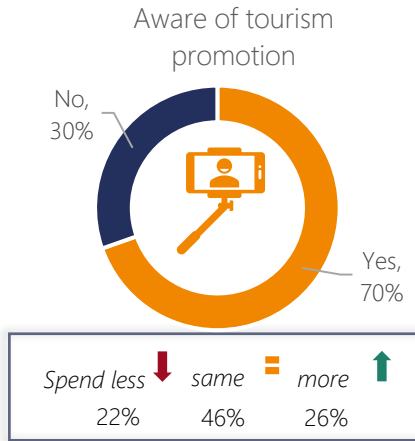
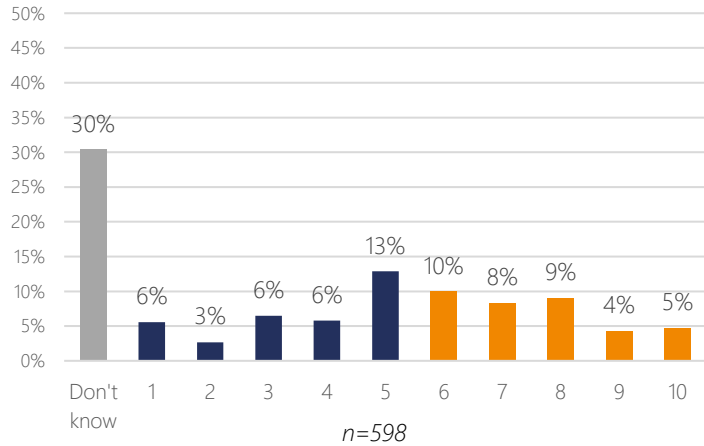
- The recent uplift in satisfaction with parking in Whakatāne stabilised in 2024 (60%), similar to 2023 but above the 2021 level.
- Satisfaction with parking was typically lower outside Whakatāne-Ōhope. No significant age differences were measured in 2024.
- Consistent with 2023, half (48%) of residents favoured maintaining the same expenditure on car parking in 2024, though 1-in-3 (34%) wanted more spending.



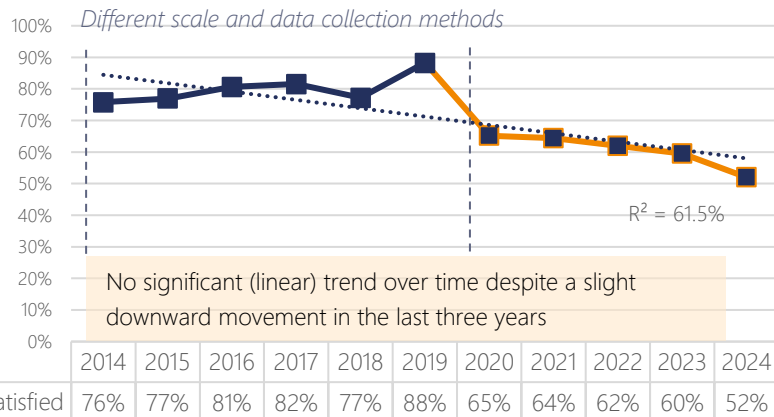
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Tourism promotion

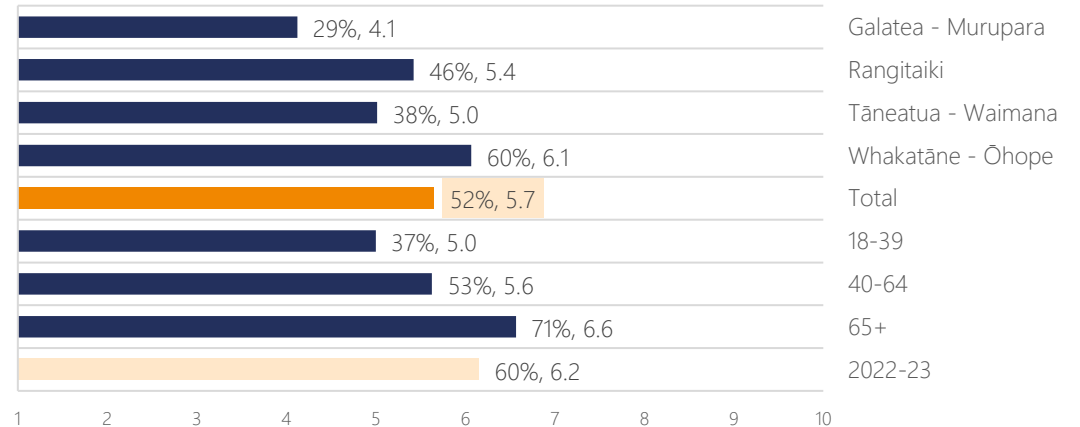
LTP MEASURE



- In 2024, 70% of respondents were able to rate Council's support of tourism promotion. 52% of these residents were satisfied with this service (5.7 average rating), representing a decrease from 2023 and continuing the downward trend measured since 2021.
- Notable differences were apparent in attitudes towards tourism promotion – with lower satisfaction outside Whakatāne-Ōhope, and among residents aged under 65.
- Reflecting these sentiments, preferences for Council spending on tourism promotion were split – while 46% wanted the same level of funding maintained and 26% preferred an increase, this was also the 4th-most area highlighted for less spending (22%, up from 15% in 2023).



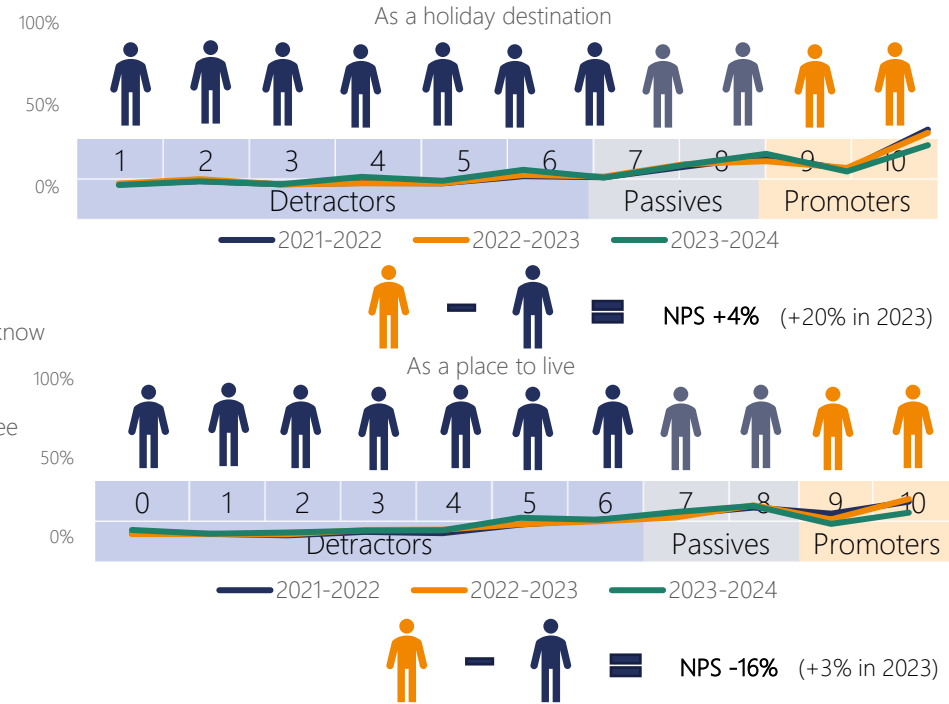
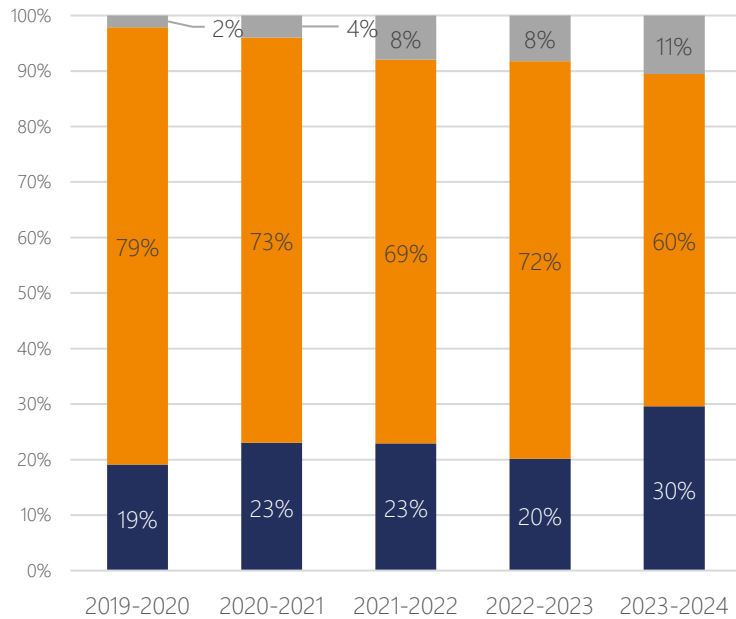
Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Whakatāne as a holiday destination and tourism impact on the community

The tourism sector has a positive impact on the community



- Overall, residents were typically likely to recommend the Whakatāne District as a holiday destination; with 35% of residents providing top ratings of 9 and 10 (44% in 2023).
- The anecdotal NPS (Whakatāne District as a holiday destination) remained positive at +4% in 2024. However, this continued a downward trend compared to recent years (20% in 2023, 24% in 2022, 28% in 2021). This score remained greater than the likelihood of recommending the Whakatāne District as a place to live, which continued to drop but was negative for the first time (NPS -16%, from +3% in 2023, +7% in 2022).

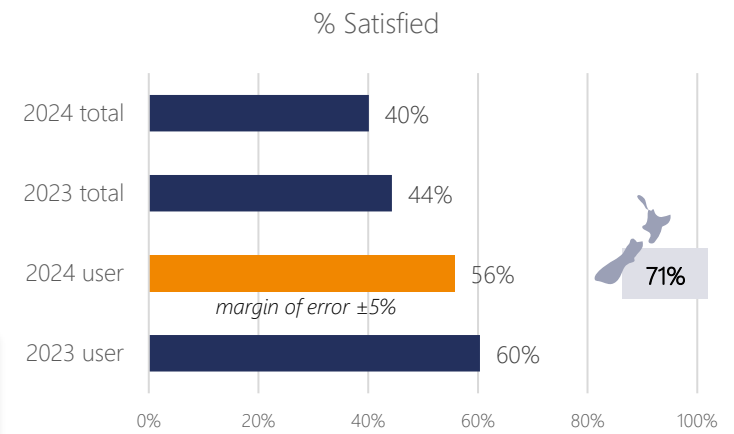
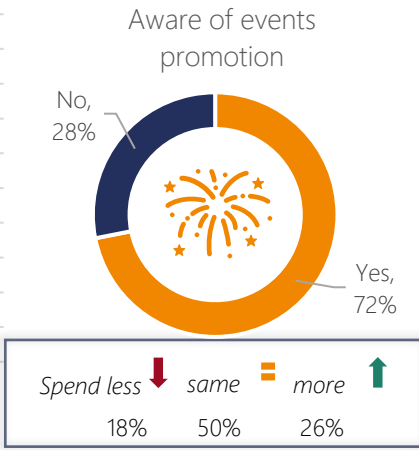
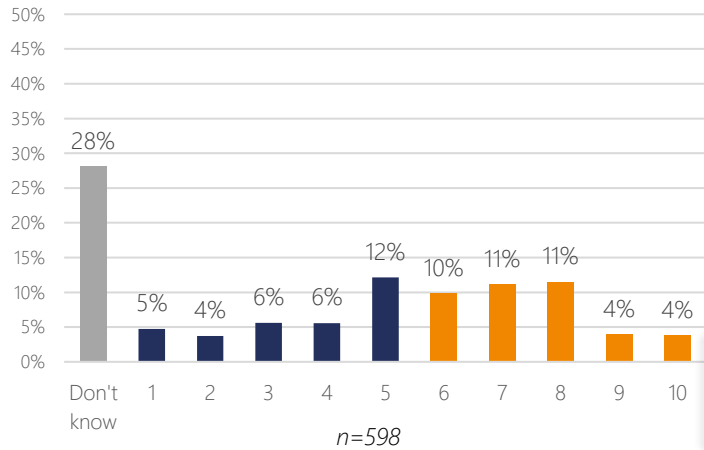
- As seen on p.43, 52% of residents were satisfied with Council’s support of tourism promotion. In this context, the majority (60%) of residents in 2024 continued to believe that tourism has a positive impact on the community (albeit down from 72% in 2023).
- Note: Net Promoter Scores* range from -100 to +100, and can vary greatly across industries. A general rule is to keep the score above 0; results below zero should encourage improvements. In New Zealand, a good NPS should be around +30.

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) question asks respondents to rate the likelihood that they would recommend Whakatāne as a place to live on a scale from 0 ('not at all likely') to 10 ('extremely likely'). The reported score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors (ratings 0 to 6) from the percentage of promoters (ratings 9 to 10).

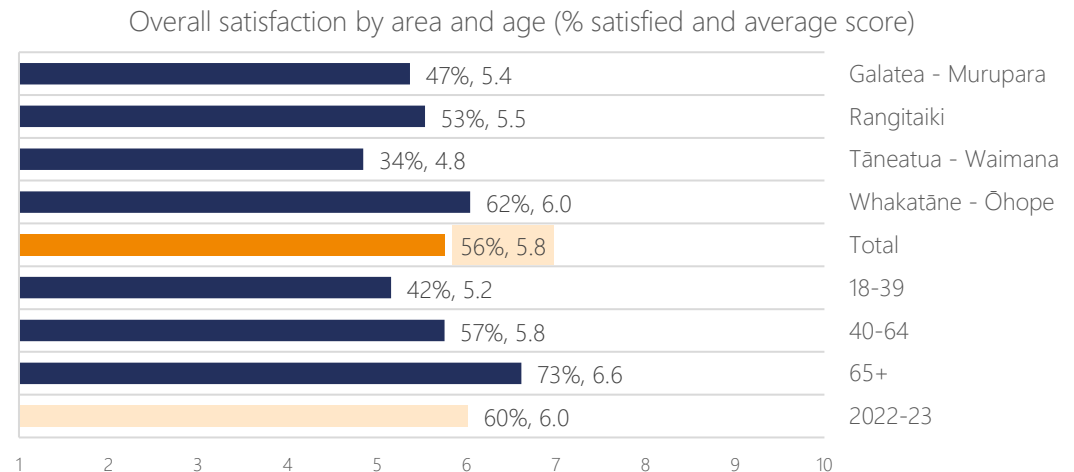
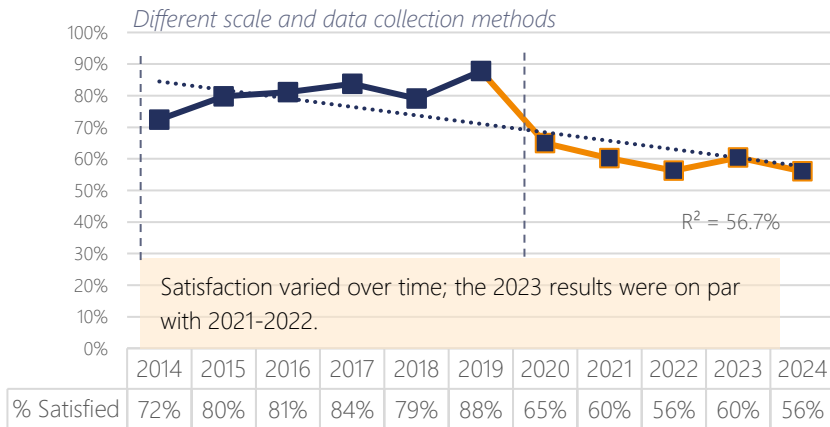
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE

Efforts to enable and promote events



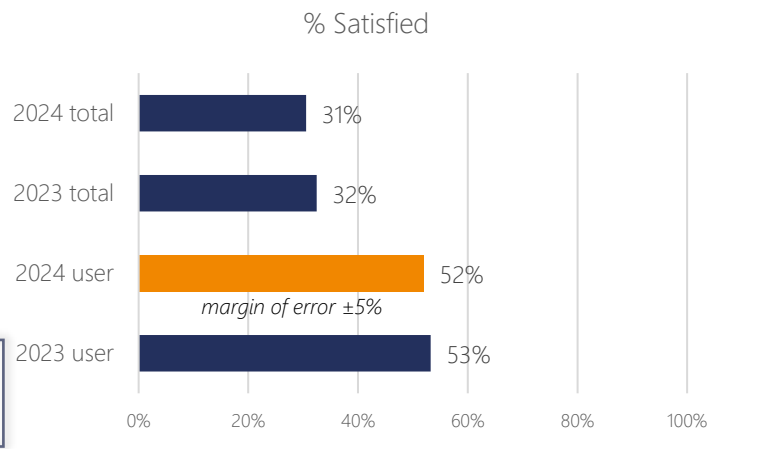
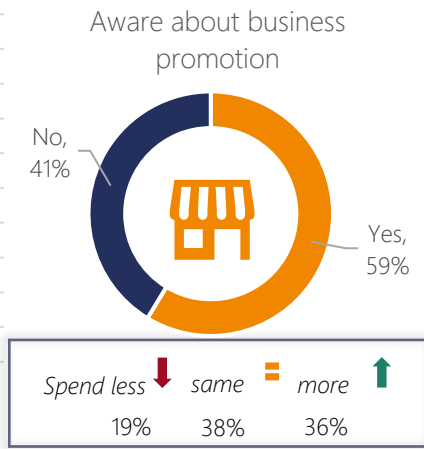
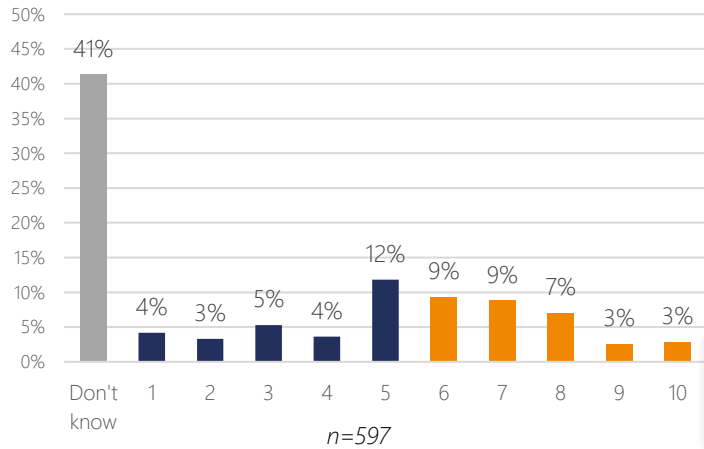
- In 2024, 3-in-4 residents (72%) rated Council's efforts to enable and promote events; uncertainty was still high (28% unsure, 27% in 2023).
- 56% of residents who provided a rating were satisfied with event promotion (average rating 5.8), slightly down from 2023 (but within the margin of error) but consistent with 2022.
- Previously measured differences in tourism promotion perceptions continued, with lower satisfaction among younger residents, and those from Tāneatua-Waimana and Galatea-Murupara.
- Overall, 50% of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on events promotion (consistent with previous years).



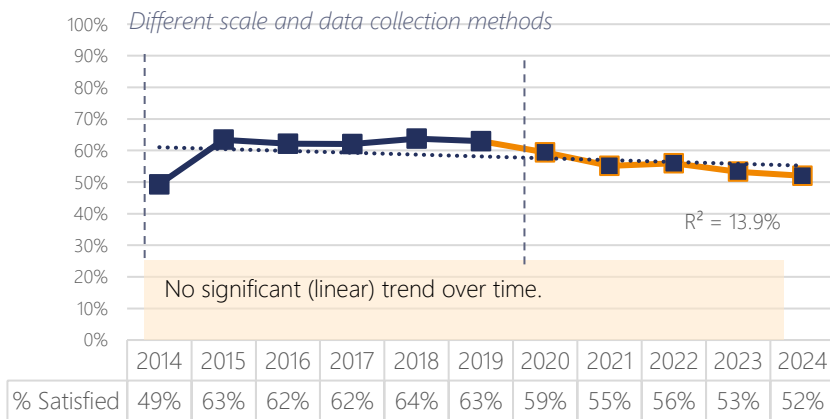
SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

LTP MEASURE

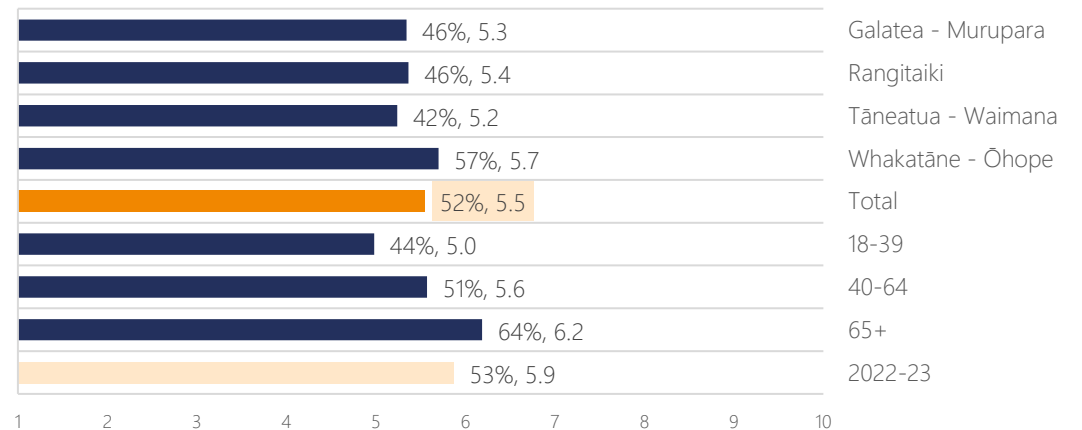
Business promotion



- Lack of knowledge about Council’s business promotion activity continued in 2024 (41% of residents were unaware, similar to 2023).
- Nevertheless, over half (52%) of residents providing a rating remained satisfied with Council’s efforts to attract and expand businesses; consistent in recent years with no significant trends over time.
- Satisfaction with business promotion was not significantly different across community board areas. However, residents aged under 65 remained less satisfied than those aged 65+.
- This activity remained a high priority among residents for more funding (36%) – ranked 4th for more Council spending in 2024.

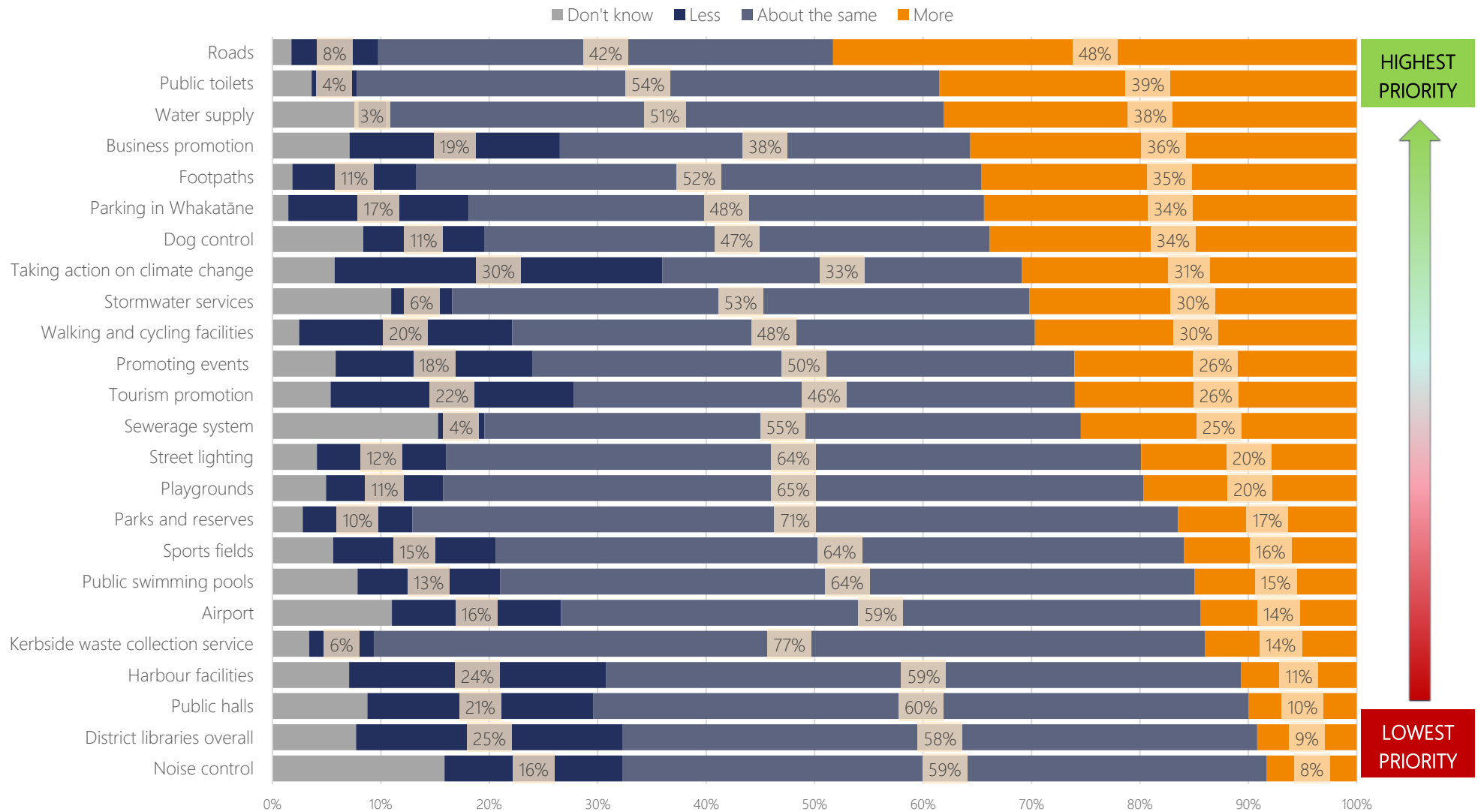


Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

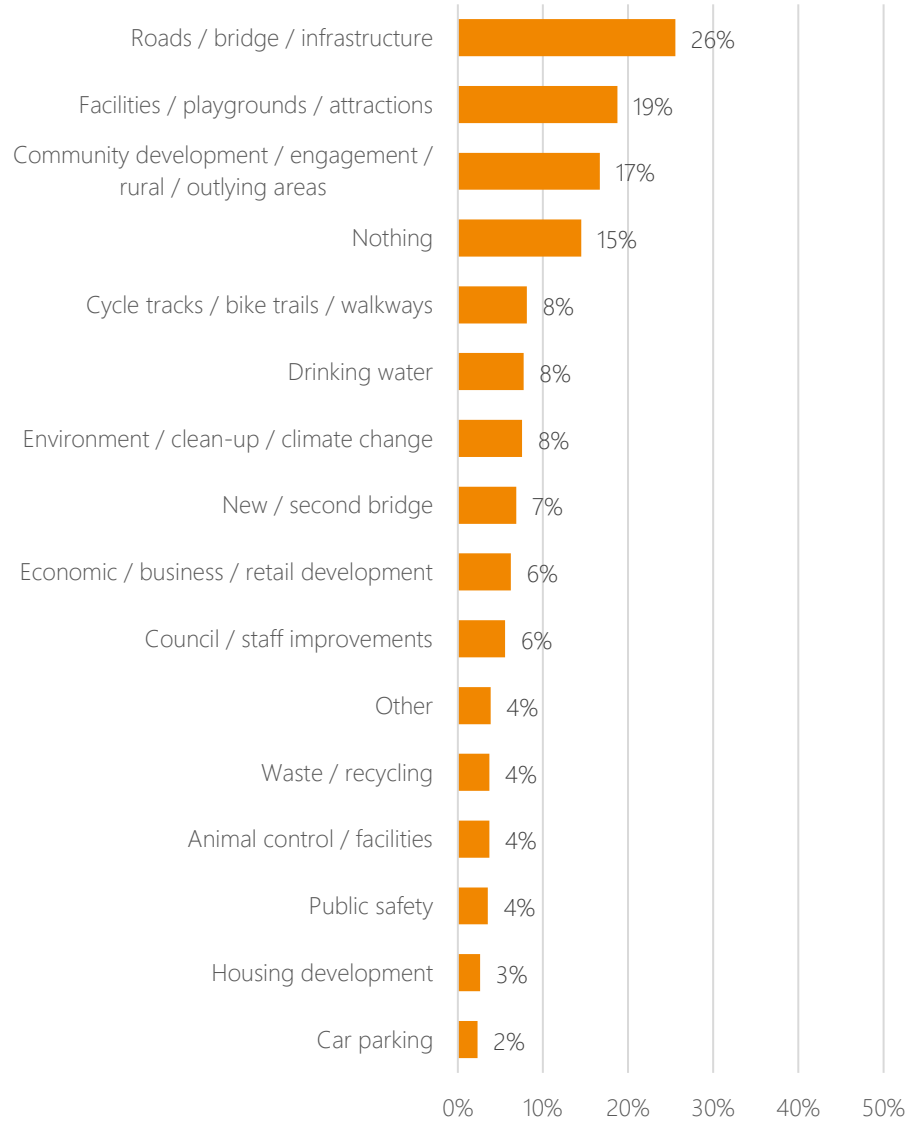
Spending priorities



- Similar to previous years, the highest priority areas for investment in 2024 included roads (48%, albeit down from 59% in 2022) and public toilets (39%). Water supply (38%, ranked 7th in 2023), business promotion (36%), and footpaths (35%) rounded out the top five priorities for residents.
- In addition, among unprompted (free text) comments, roads, bridge and infrastructure were again the most cited areas for further development. Public '*facilities/playgrounds/attractions*' and '*community development / engagement*' were also frequently mentioned on a spontaneous basis (see chart on following page).
- Perhaps reflecting residents' broader concerns around rates increases and Council spending, 2024 saw a general fall in the proportion of residents wanting more funds spent across most service areas. Notably, while roads remained the highest priority area for more spending, preference for this was 11% lower in 2024 than in 2023. Overall, seven service areas saw support for more funding fall by 5%-points or more, including stormwater (down 8%), parks and reserves (down 6%), and climate change action (down 6%). Relatedly, 15% of unprompted comments about further investment suggested no additional expenditure was required.
- In this context, more respondents did suggest further increased spending in a few service areas: dog control (34%, an upward trend from 30% in 2023, 24% in 2022), kerbside waste collection (14%, up from 10% in 2023), water supply (38%, 35% in 2023), and sports fields (16%, 13% in 2023).
- Again, reflecting broader spending concerns, almost half (45%) of residents provided further spontaneous comments to decrease Council spending (up from 31% in 2023). Priority areas for reduced spending were Council costs and general expenditure, investment in the '*Council building*', '*roading / car parks*', and '*unnecessary services / maintenance*' (see chart on following page).
- Priorities for most spending areas differed by area and age.
- Roads remained a high spending priority across all areas, but especially in Galatea-Murupara (60%) and Rangitaiki (51%).
- Galatea-Murupara residents typically wanted greater increased funding in many service areas, including parking (50%), climate change action (48%), dog control (43%), playgrounds (42%), and event promotion (42%).
- Dog control was also a higher priority in Whakatāne-Ōhope (38%).
- Public toilets (59%) were a strong concern in Tāneatua-Waimana. Street lighting was a greater issue in both Rangataiki (25%) and Tāneatua-Waimana (23%).
- Roads were also the highest spending priority for residents of all age groups. Younger residents were more likely to also emphasise car parking (42%), public toilets (41%), and walking/cycling facilities (35%). Footpaths (49%) remained an ongoing investment concern for older residents in particular – level with their desire for more road funding.

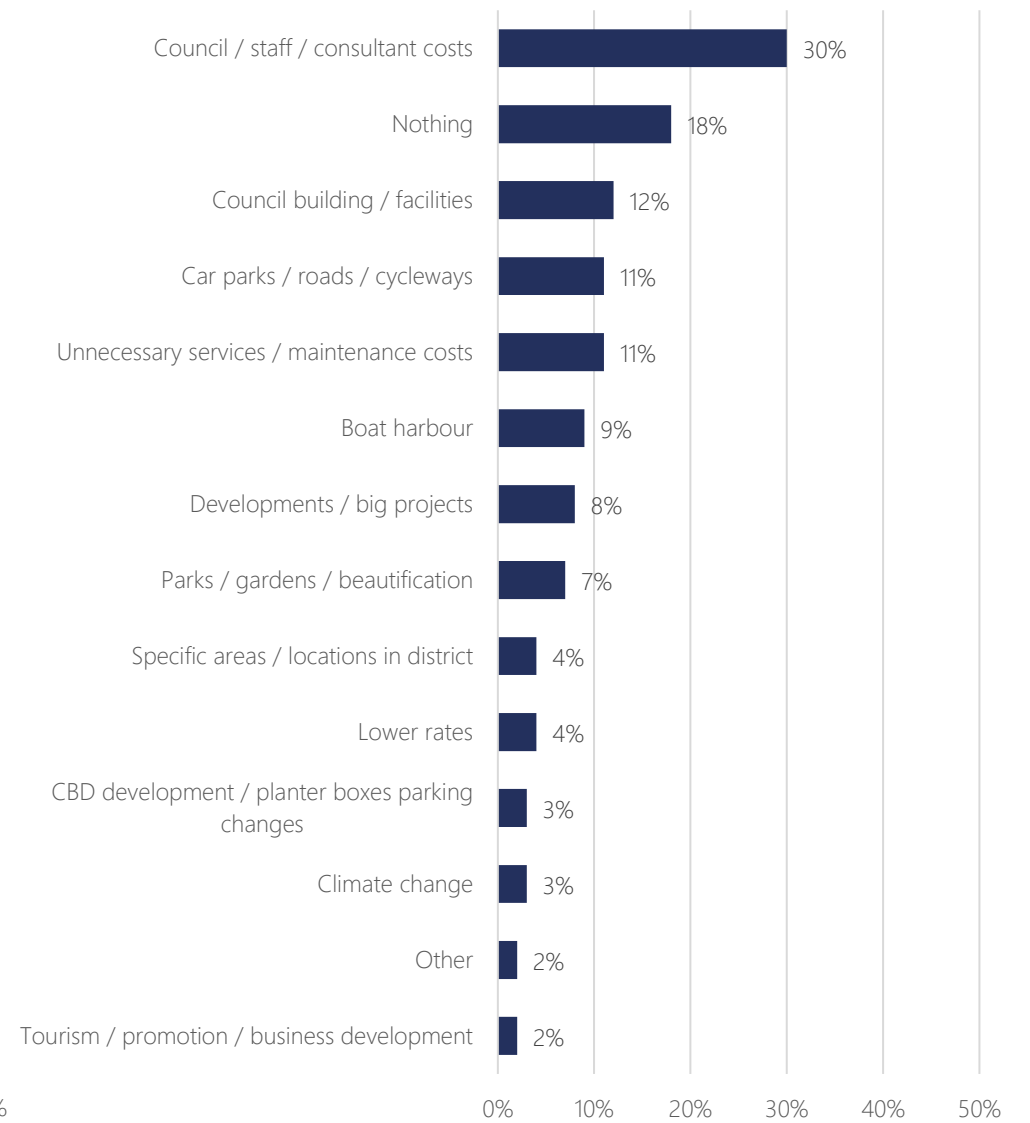
Spend More (coded verbatim comments)

(n=321, 54%)



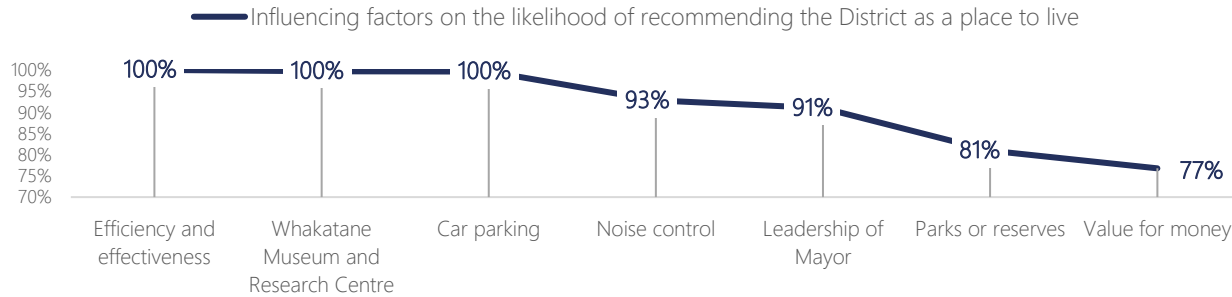
Spend less (coded verbatim comments)

(n=266, 45%)



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Potential improvements



Over half (56%) of residents provided other (unprompted) comments. Almost half (44%) of these comments referred to rates increases and/or Council spending. Other top-cited issues and concerns were:

- Core services and infrastructure
- Better communication, customer service
- Roads / parking
- Community development / services
- Positive feedback
- Economy / tourism / attractions
- Mayor / councillor / staff performance
- New bridge required
- Environment / climate change
- Housing / retirement facilities
- Dissatisfaction with boat harbour project

- Infrastructure provision and particularly roads remained the primary theme identified for potential improvement by assessing relative importance against measured performance, and also being selected by residents as their highest spending priority.
- In addition, Council reputation, financial management, and communication continued to be key factors influencing overall satisfaction with Council performance. In light of the recent Long Term Plan spending decisions and related rates implications, financial and general management were of prime consideration for residents.

- Three areas were identified as having a significant impact on the likelihood of recommending the District as a place to live: general efficiency and effectiveness, The Whakatāne Museum and Research Centre, and car parking – in addition to several other important attributes.
- Public concerns about the latest proposed rates increases were highly salient and planned management of and investment in developments such as the boat harbour, roading layouts, and the Rex Morpeth Park upgrade – as well as the Council’s listening to the perceived needs of residents – had a clear impact on resident satisfaction.



CONTACT WITH THE COUNCIL

- Satisfied with direct contact – 52%
- Satisfied with community board member contact – 73%
- Satisfied with customer service front desk – 73%



COUNCIL POLICIES AND DIRECTIONS

- 16% - Liked or approved recent Council actions, decisions or management
- 55% - Disliked or disapproved recent Council actions, decisions or management



COUNCIL REPUTATION

- Communication with residents – 42%
- Leadership – 36%
- Day-to-day management – 33%

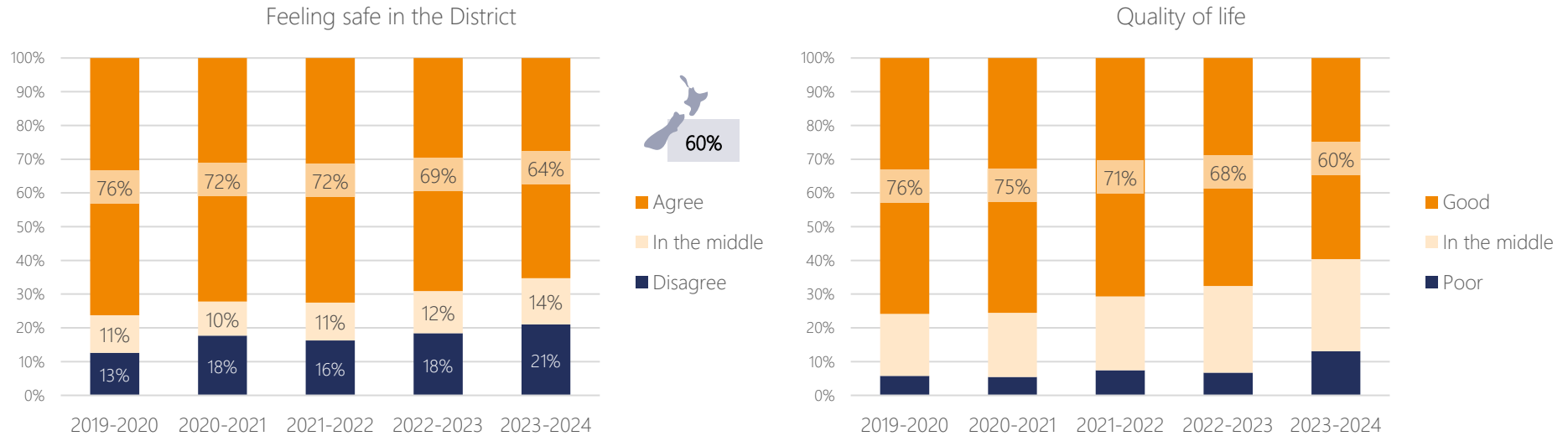


OTHER FINDINGS

2024

LIFE IN THE DISTRICT

Perception of safety and quality of life in the District



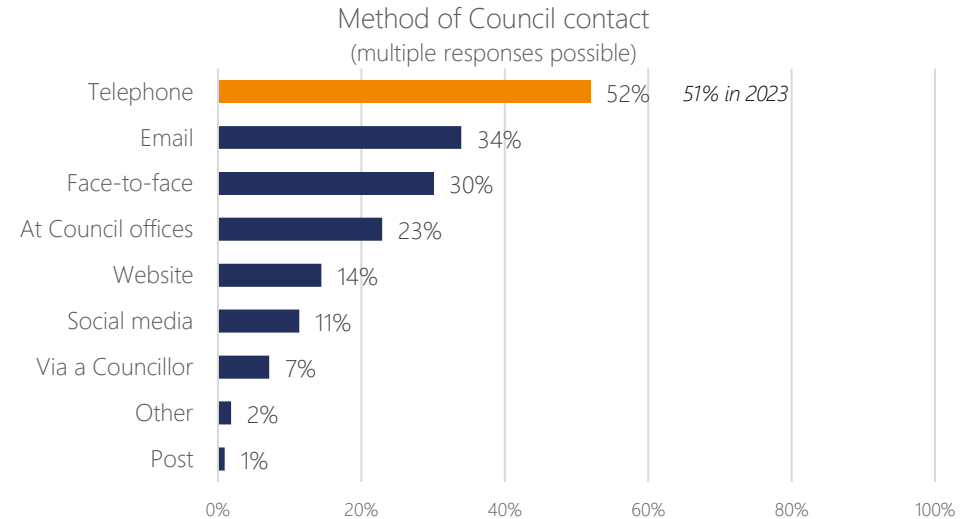
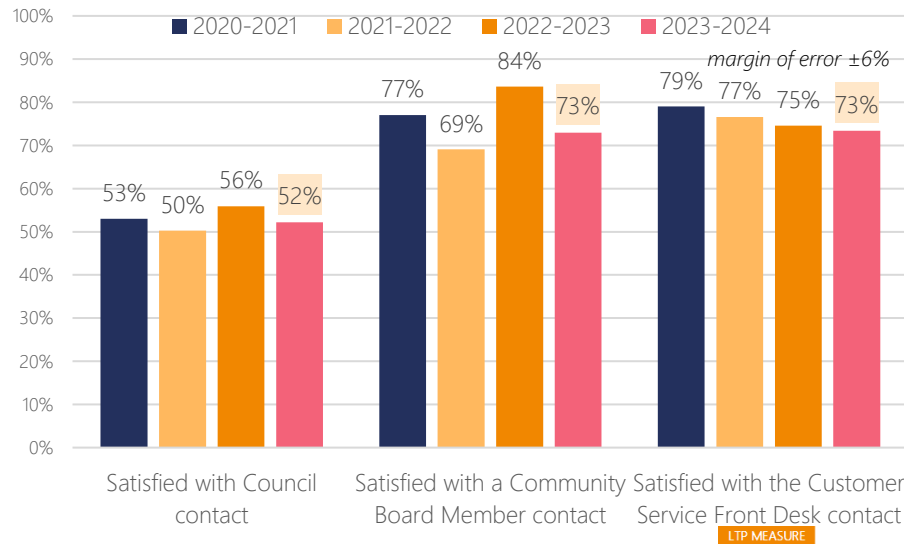
- Overall, 4-in-5 residents (78%) felt that the Whakatāne District is generally a safe place to live, to some extent (similar to 81% in 2023). However, the proportion who agreed (somewhat or strongly) they feel safe has gradually decreased over time (64% in 2024, compared to 69% in 2023). Nevertheless, this does remain above the national benchmark of 60%.
- Respondents aged under 65 typically remained less likely to feeling safe than those aged 65+.

- 3-in-5 (60%) of residents in 2024 believed their quality of life was 'good' to 'very good'. However, this continued a downward trend measured since 2022.
- Again, satisfaction with quality of life increased with age; rated good by 82% of 65+ year olds compared to those aged 40-64 (53%) and 18-39 (51%). Quality of life perceptions also tended to be higher for those living in the District for 10 years or more (60%) than for those residing for 2 to 10 years (52%).

CONTACT WITH COUNCIL

LTP MEASURE

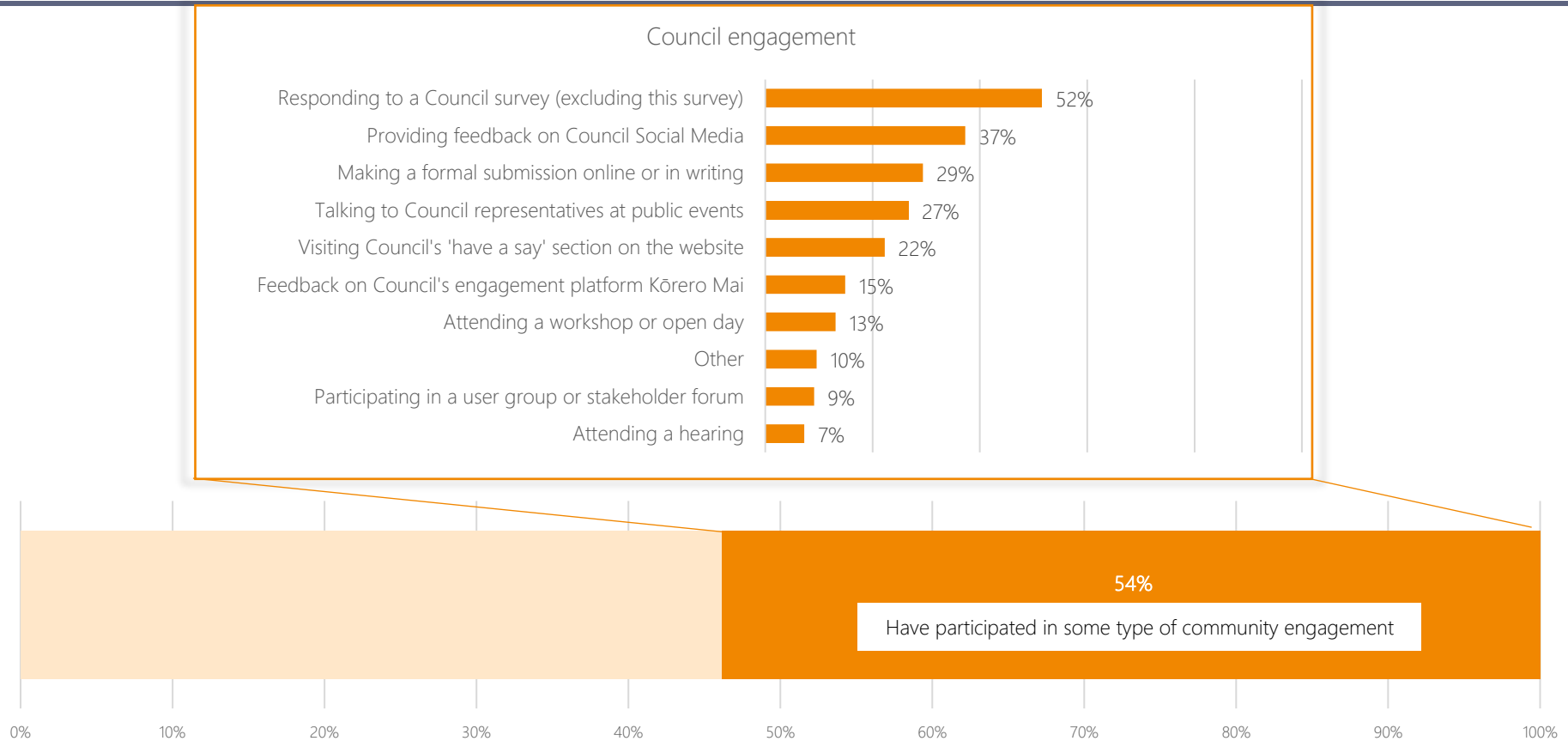
Contacted the Council, a community board member or customer service front desk



- Overall, 46% of all residents in 2024 stated they had contacted the Council throughout the year (44% in 2023).
- The two primary contact methods remained 'Telephone' (52%, 51% in 2023) and 'email' (34%, 32% in 2023).
- Younger residents (18-39) tended to make more contact with the Council by phone (60%) in addition to email (51%), website (24%) and social media (14%). Older residents preferred face-to-face or office visits.
- In 2024, 52% of residents who contacted the Council directly were satisfied with this contact (no significant change from 2023, similar to 2022).
- Longer term residents (10+ years) tended to be less satisfied with their contact (47%). No other significant differences were identified.
- 10% of residents in 2024 reported contacting a Community Board Member (also 10% in 2023), and 36% had contacted the customer service front desk (30% in 2023).
- Whakatāne-Ōhope and Rangitaiki residents remained less likely to contact a Community Board Member, compared to residents in other areas.
- Longer term residents (10+ years) and those from Rangitaiki and Whakatāne-Ōhope were less likely to contact the customer service desk.
- Satisfaction with Community Board contact in 2024 (73%) was down from 2023 (84%), but above 2022 levels (variations subject to low sample sizes).
- Satisfaction with customer service contact in 2024 (73%) was similar to 2023. The gradual downward trend over the last four years was not statistically significant.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

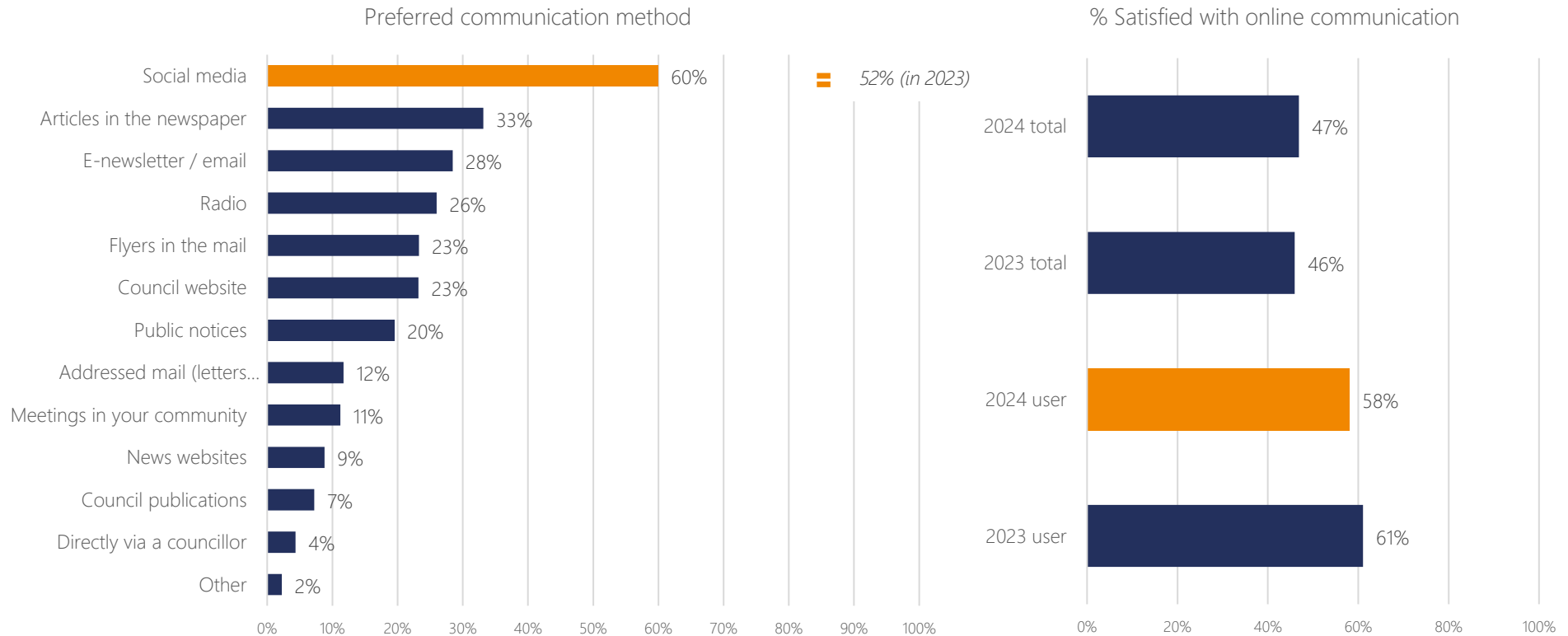
Community engagement



- Over half (54%) of residents in 2024 reported taking part in community engagement of some kind (up from 43% in 2023 and 40% in 2022).
- Half (52%) of these residents reported responding to a Council survey; around one-third reported providing feedback on social media (37%) or making a formal submission (29%, compared to 21% in 2023).
- 46% of residents stated they had not engaged in any Council engagement activities; this remained more likely among older residents (65+).

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

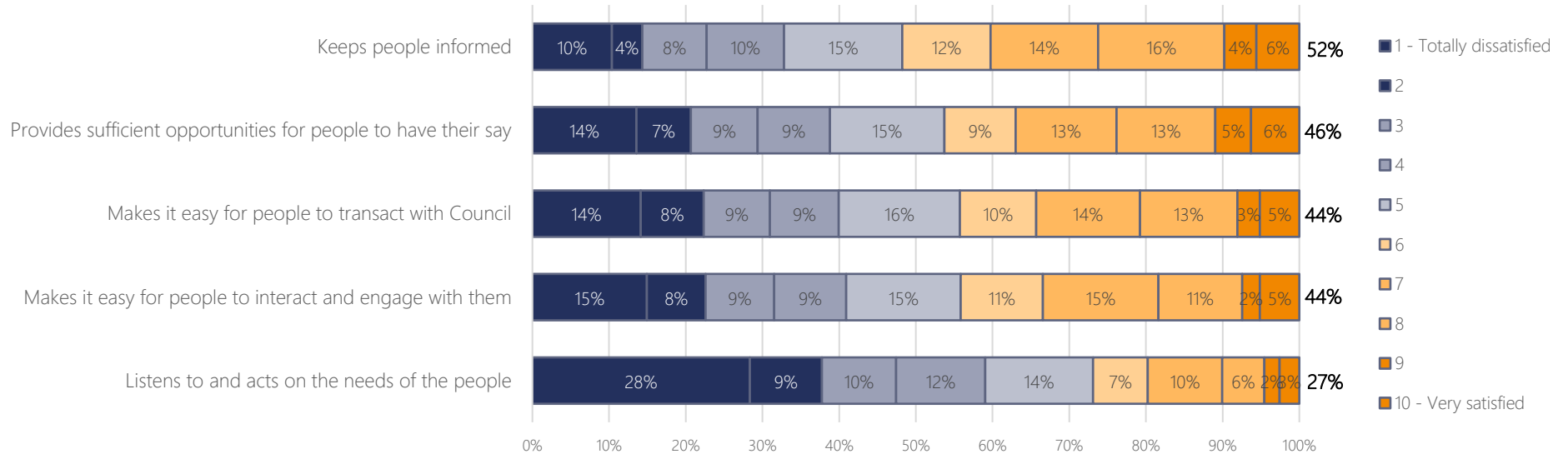
Preferred method of communication



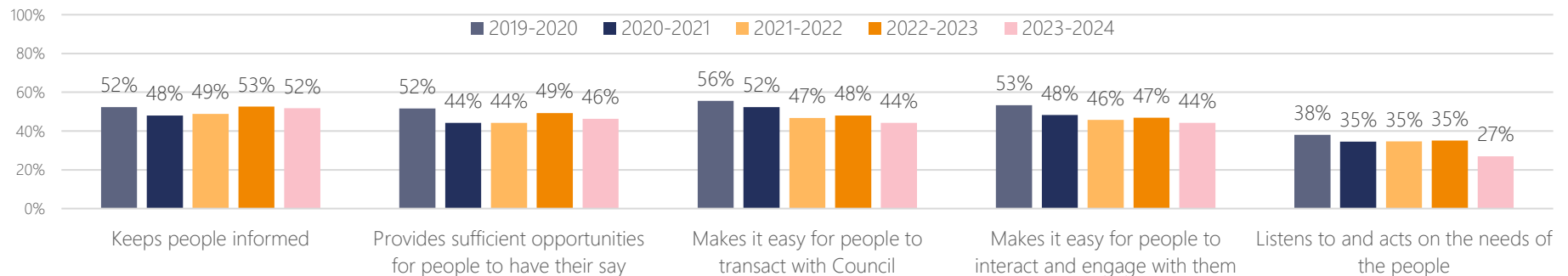
- 'Social media' remained the most preferred method for Council communications, for over half (60%) of residents in 2024 (no change in the past years).
- Social media remained significantly more preferable for younger compared to older residents (71% 18-39, 68% 40-64, 30% 65+); though growing in prominence among those aged 65+ (up from 14% in 2023).
- Newspaper articles were the second-most preferred channel overall (33%, compared to 39% in 2023), and remained most preferred by residents aged 65+ (64%, compared to 14% 18-39, 29% 40-64).
- Social media was most preferred across all wards. Newspaper articles remained less preferred in Galatea – Murupara – where flyers had greater cut-through (55%).
- 58% of residents aware of online Council communications were satisfied with this online service and information provision, similar to 2023 (61%) but below the 2022 result (66%).

COMMUNICATION

Communication with residents



- In 2024, satisfaction with most communication attributes was on par with 2023.
- *'Listens to and acts on the needs of the people'* (27%) remained the least satisfactory attribute, and was significantly lower than in 2023 (35%).
- Ease of both transacting and interacting/engaging with Council have also seen gradual decreases over time.
- On average, satisfaction with most communication attributes remained higher for older (65+) residents than for those aged under 65. *'Keeps people informed'* received the most consistent ratings across age groups.
- Longer term residents (10+ years) were also less satisfied with most attributes on average.

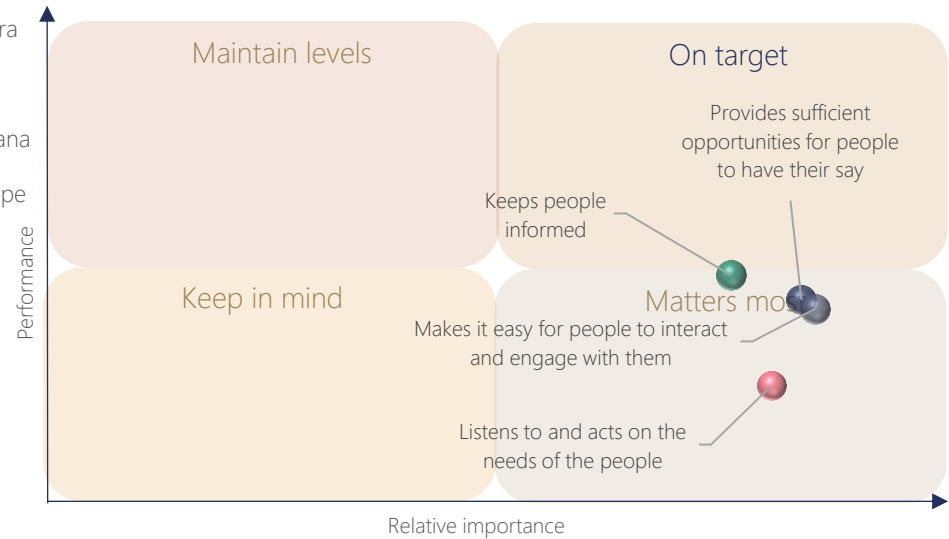
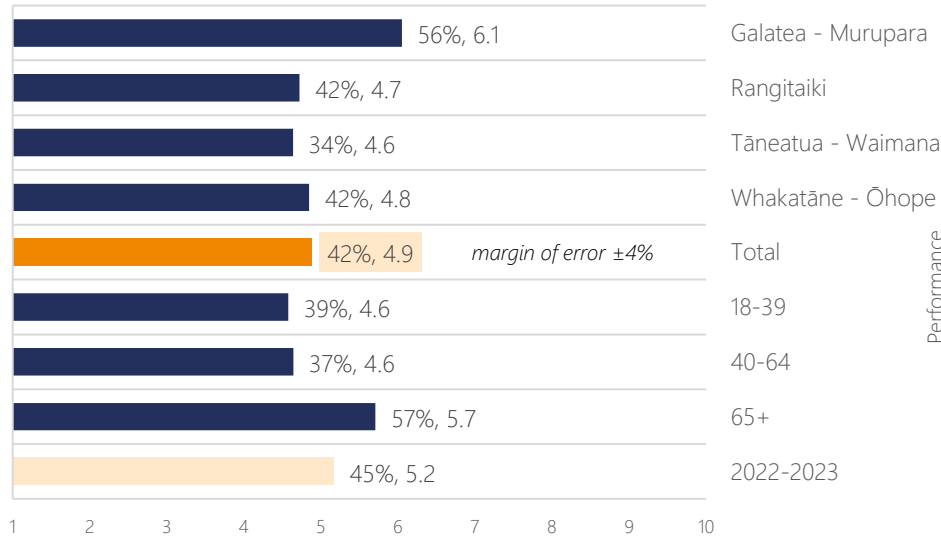


COMMUNICATION

Overall satisfaction with performance in communicating with residents and ratepayers

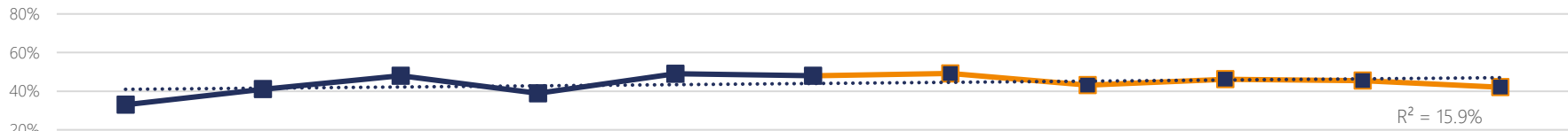
LTP MEASURE

Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



- Overall in 2024, 42% of residents were satisfied with Council’s performance in communicating and consulting with the public (45% in 2023), with no significant trends over time. However, there were noted differences based on both age and area.

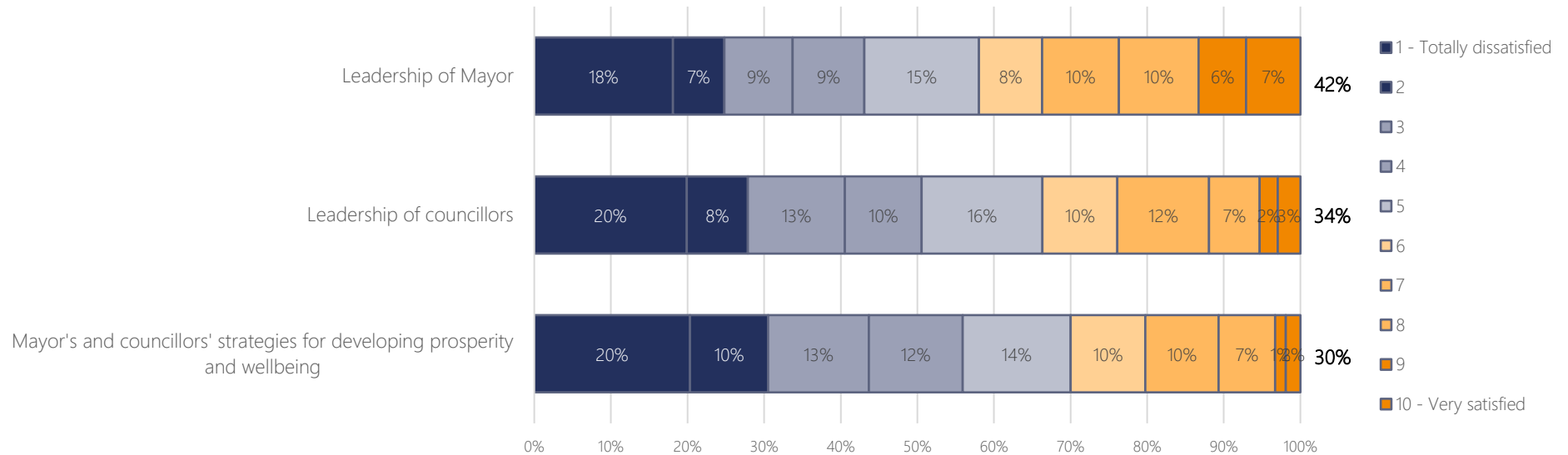
- Four statements relating to communication contributed significantly towards overall satisfaction.
- ‘Listens to and acts on the needs of the people’ (due to lowest performance but still high relative importance) continues to be a key factor that would benefit from further improvement to enhance resident sentiment and increase performance ratings.



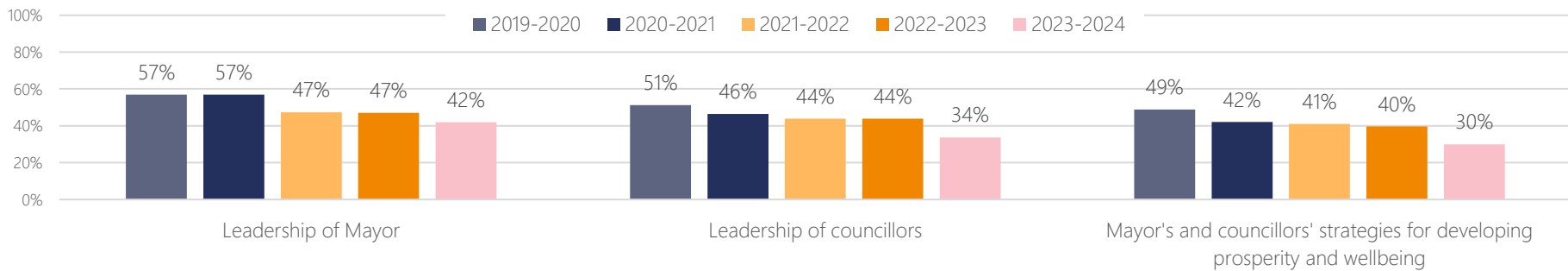
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
% Satisfied	33%	41%	48%	39%	49%	48%	49%	43%	46%	45%	42%

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Performance in terms of Council leadership



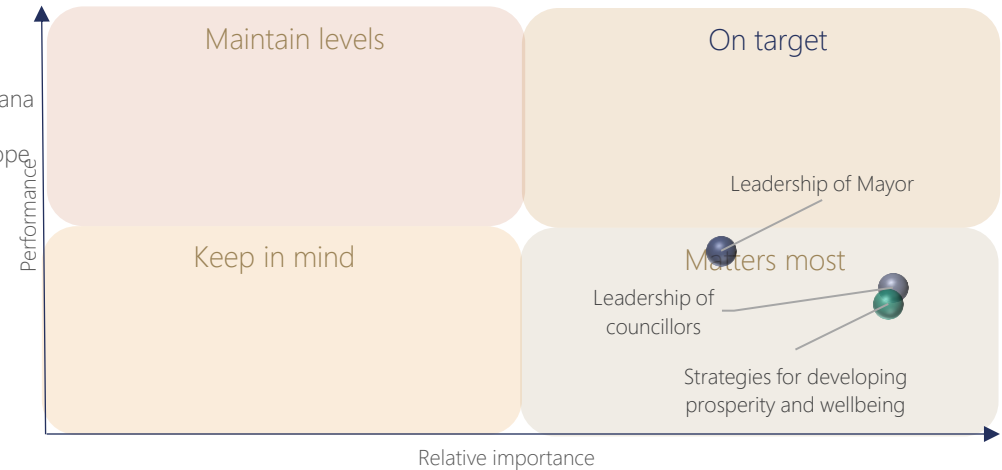
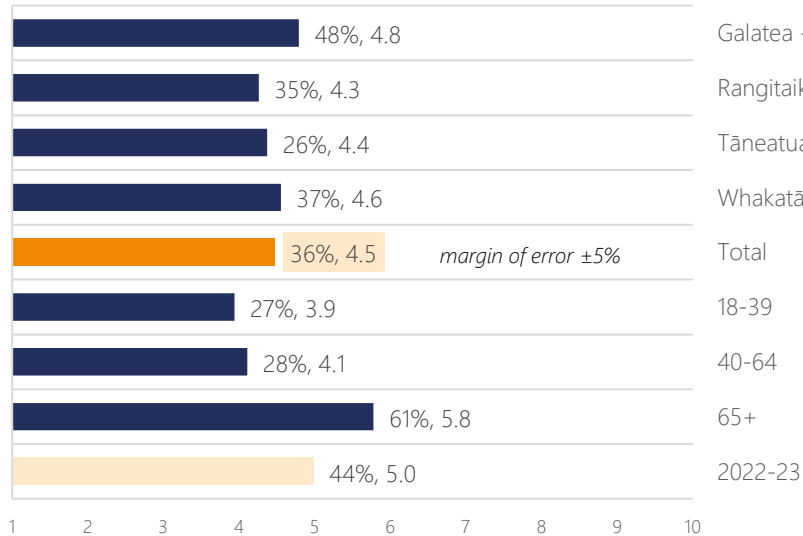
- Satisfaction with Council leadership overall saw decreases in 2024 compared with previous years.
- All three attributes, on average, saw satisfaction decline through the 2023-24 tracking year.
- Satisfaction with Council leadership tended to be lower among younger residents (aged under 65 years), and longer term residents (living in the District for 5+ years).
- Satisfaction with leadership of the mayor was lower in Galatea-Murupara and Tāneatua-Waimana, on average.



COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

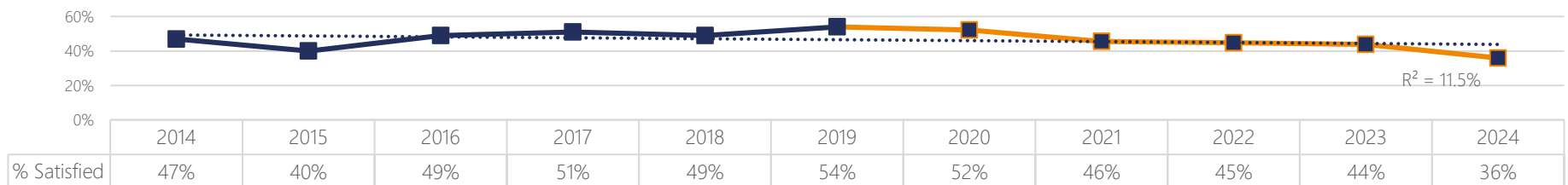
Overall satisfaction with Council leadership

Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



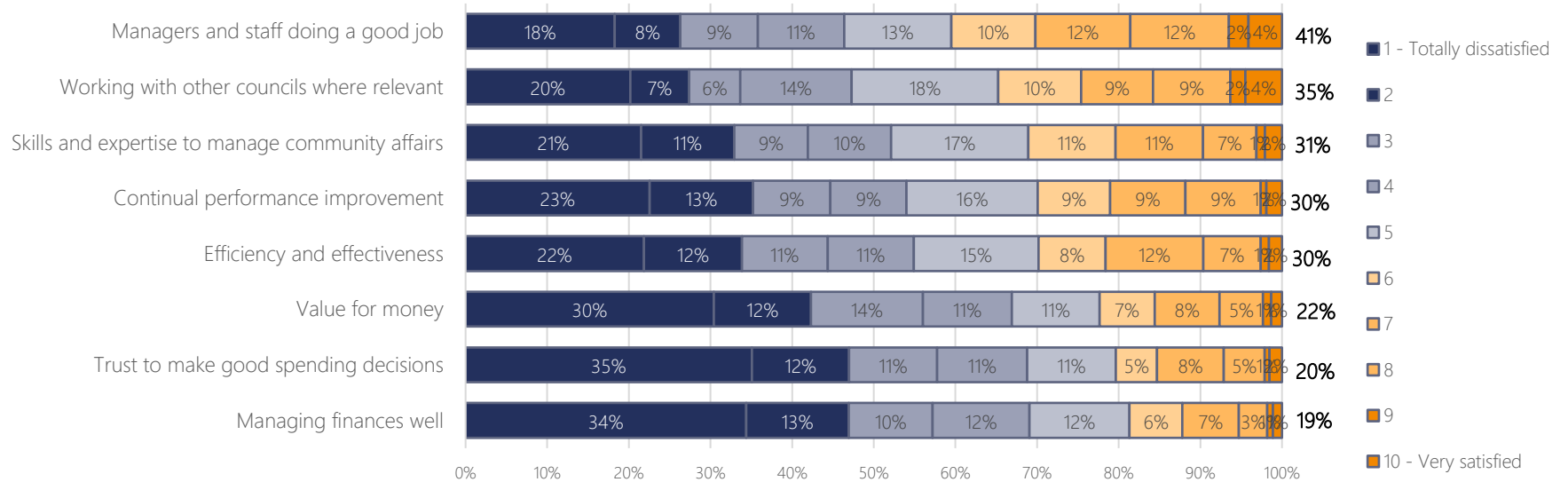
- In 2024, 36% of residents were satisfied with the overall performance of Council leadership (down from 44% in 2023).
- Older residents aged 65+, and females generally, were significantly more satisfied with Council leadership overall.

- All three leadership-related attributes contributed significantly towards overall satisfaction. In the current economic climate, *'Mayor's and councillors' strategies for developing prosperity and wellbeing'* takes on particular importance and additional benefit would be gained from further improvement to enhance resident sentiments of performance in this regard.

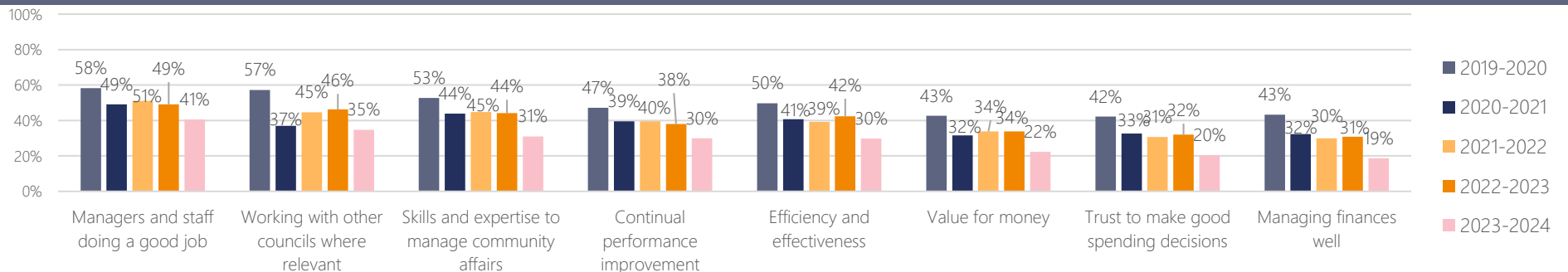


MANAGEMENT

Managing day-to-day business



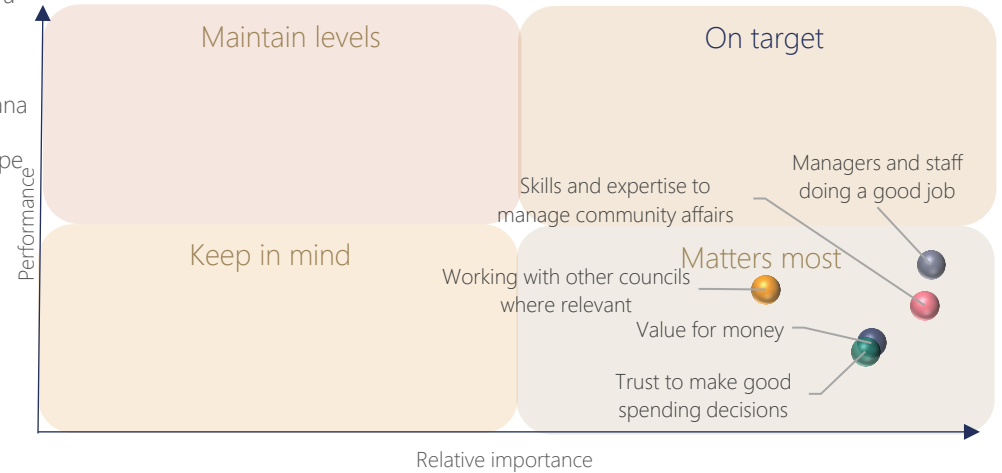
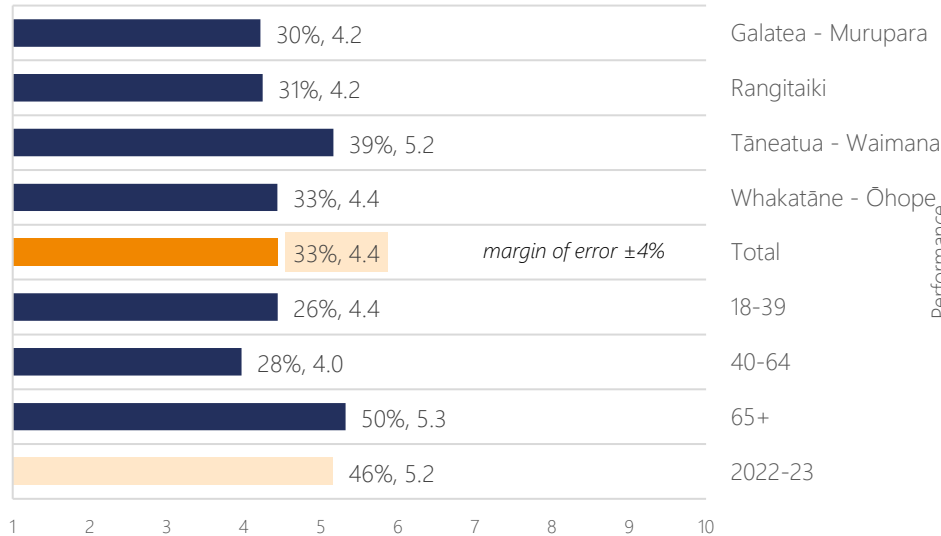
- In 2024, satisfaction with all eight management attributes registered decreases compared to 2023 and previous years.
- Nevertheless, residents in 2024 remained most satisfied with managers and staff doing a good job; 41% rating this 6 or above (49% in 2023).
- Residents continued to be least satisfied with financial management: value for money (22%), trust to make good spending decisions (20%), and managing finances well (19%).
- Financial management was one of the key themes emerging in the community's feedback regarding Council spending.
- Older residents (65+) remained more satisfied with Council management, including financial matters, on average.
- Females were more satisfied than males across many attributes.
- There were no significant differences by area in 2024.



MANAGEMENT

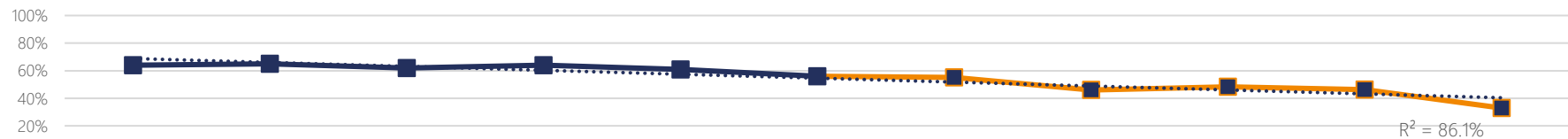
Overall satisfaction with performance in managing day-to-day business

Overall satisfaction by area and age (% satisfied and average score)



- 1-in-3 (33%) of residents in 2024 provided high satisfaction ratings (6 or above) for Council's overall management of day-to-day business; notably down from 2023 (46%).
- Older residents (aged 65+) remained most satisfied with Council management overall (50%), though down from 65% in 2023.

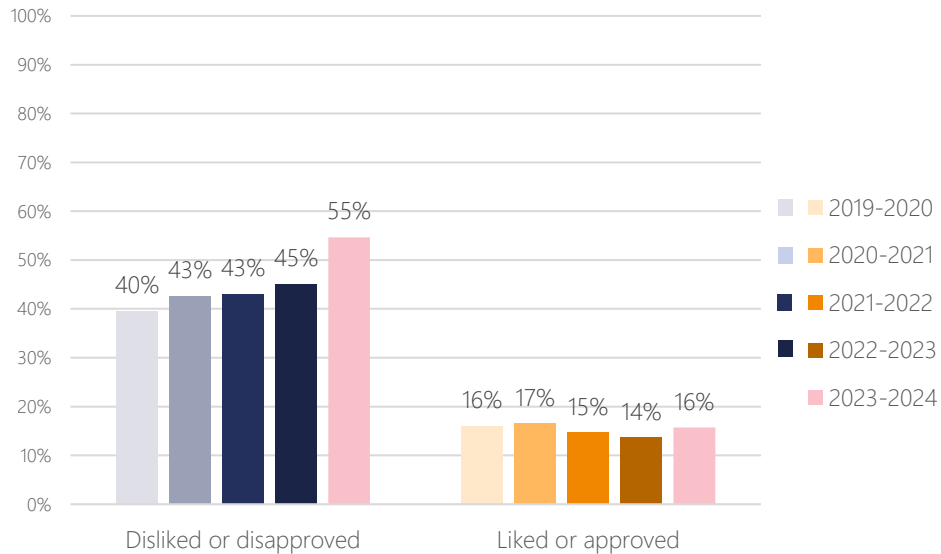
- Longer term residents (10+ years) also tended to be less satisfied with overall Council management (31%).
- Five attributes significantly contributed towards overall satisfaction with Council performance in managing day-to-day business. In light of resident concerns around Council spending, value for money and trust in spending decisions exhibited particularly strong opportunity for improvement.



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
% Satisfied	64%	65%	62%	64%	61%	56%	55%	46%	48%	46%	33%

POLICY AND DIRECTION

Council policy and direction approval or disapproval



- Overall, 16% of residents in 2024 recalled a recent Council action, decision, or management experience they **approved** of (similar to 14% in 2023). These residents mainly referred to Council's road maintenance/repairs (particularly the new Landing Road roundabout), the Rex Morpeth Park upgrade, other maintenance and infrastructure works, and general satisfaction with Council.
- Over half (55%) of residents recalled a recent action, decision, or management experience they **disapproved** of, an increase on previous years (and up from 45% in 2023). Rates increases (and related spending) was the key target of concern (43%, up from 18% in 2023). Other key concerns were roading and roundabout changes, and boat harbour/wharf development.
- Older respondents (65+) (22%) and Galatea-Murupara residents (25%) were more likely to approve of any Council policies or directions; 40-64 year olds (61%) and longer term residents (10+ years) (60%) were likely to disapprove.

- Roading / roundabout / layout changes / speed limits – 41%
- General satisfaction with Council / communication – 18%
- Maintenance / repairs / infrastructure provision – 15%
- Rex Morpeth Park upgrade – 10%

Under 10%:

- Specific plans / policies / strategies
- Boat harbour / wharf / waterfront issues
- LTP engagement
- Events / tourism / regional promotion
- Reduced rates increase / rates rebate

Approved

- Rates / Council spending – 43% (18% in 2023)
- Roading / roundabout / layout changes / speed limits – 24%
- Boat harbour / wharf / waterfront development – 13%

Under 10%:

- Rex Morpeth park / Memorial Hall upgrade
- Council building upgrade
- Council communication / democracy / members
- Maintenance / repairs / infrastructure provision
- Insufficient / lack of service provision
- Lack of second bridge
- Tidal pool / Heads development
- Long Term Plan
- Water management / bottling
- Consents process / delays
- No comment
- Pathways
- Strand / CBD / parking development / other projects

Disapproved