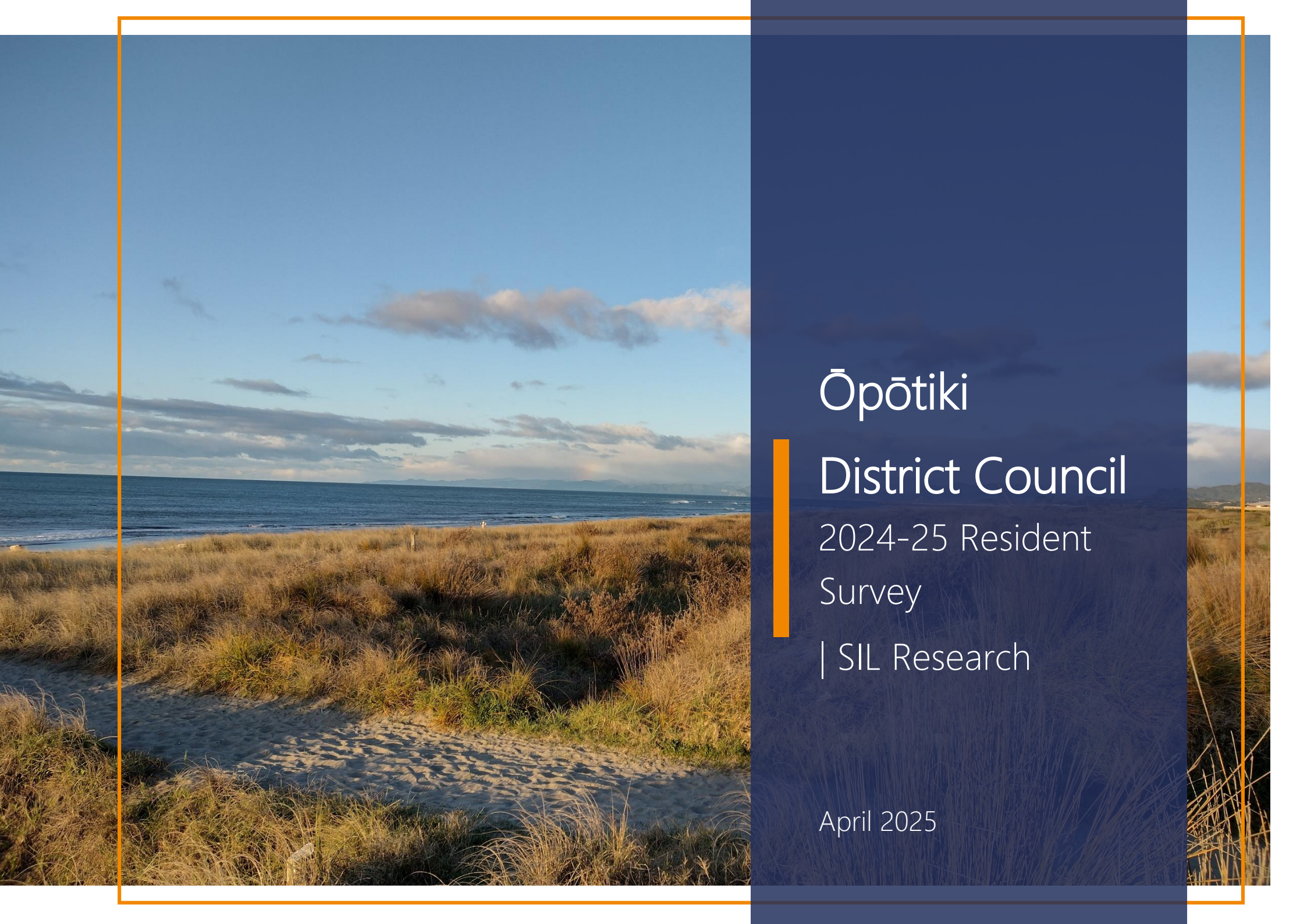




Ōpōtiki

District Council

2024-25 Resident
Survey

| SIL Research

April 2025

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CONTENTS

4.

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

6.

OVERALL
SATISFACTION

8.

METHODOLOGY

15.

SERVICES AND
FACILITIES

40.

CONTACT WITH
COUNCIL

41.

COMMUNICATION

43.

COUNCIL
LEADERSHIP

44.

MANAGEMENT

45.

POLICY AND
DIRECTION



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to consultatively engage with Ōpōtiki District's residents to determine levels of satisfaction and perceptions of Council's services, communications and management to identify opportunities for improvement, as part of an annual series of community survey monitoring.

Research was conducted quarterly in 2024 and 2025. Multiple data collection methods were utilised to ensure residents were well-represented. A total of n=304 responses were used in the final 2025 annual analysis.

The main findings were as follows:

- The 2025 survey of Ōpōtiki District Council's services indicated varying satisfaction levels across various service areas, with noted differences in satisfaction across district wards and between different demographic groups – with less positive sentiment around the Council's reputation, driven to some extent by perceptions of rates increases and other policies and decisions.
- Overall, Ōpōtiki district residents were moderately satisfied with Council services and facilities they experience in their community. Despite decreases in some specific service areas, satisfaction with overall services provided by the Ōpōtiki District Council in 2025 (51%) was maintained relative to 2024 (54%, but within the margin of error), but significantly lower than in 2023 (59%). Nevertheless, Ōpōtiki district's result remained similar to the national benchmark average (54%), which itself has seen decreases (from 62% in 2022 and 58% in 2023) indicating generally falling satisfaction with council performance nationwide.
- Of 23 services and attributes measured, two (9%) were identified as 'good performers' (70%+ satisfaction), nine (39%) as 'positive performers' (50%-69% satisfaction), and twelve (52%) as areas for improvement (below 50% satisfaction). Almost all respondents (94%) were satisfied with at least one attribute (9 attributes on average), although just 1-in-3 (32%) were satisfied with a majority of attributes (i.e. over half, 12 or more), and around 1-in-10 (12%) satisfied with at least three-quarters of attributes (i.e. 18 or more). Just 6% expressed no satisfaction with any of the measured services or attributes.
- One KPI target was achieved in 2025, while eight KPIs were below target (two remained within the margins of error).
- The district library remained the top performing area in 2025, with almost 9-in-10 respondents satisfied with this service (86%) – maintaining the level of satisfaction achieved in 2024. Recreation facilities (70%) and Resource Recovery services (69%) were also among the most highly valued service areas for residents in 2025.
- However, the only area achieving a more positive satisfaction score in 2025 than in 2024 was District road safety and maintenance (50%, compared to 47% in 2024 – although this was within the margin of error).
- In contrast, dog control remained the lowest scoring service area in 2025 (24%), closely followed by value for money (33%), public toilets (33%), and the building consents team (34%) – none of these seeing any marked improvement in recent years.

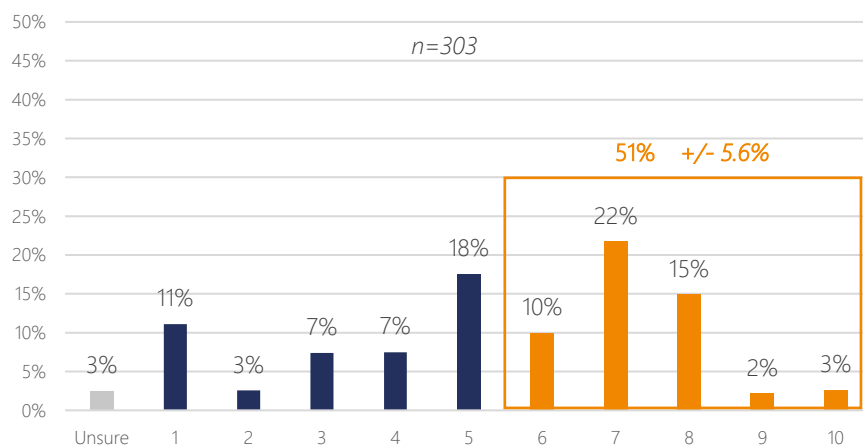
- 2025 saw Council reputation measures take a hit in the eyes of residents following the peaks achieved in 2024 – particularly in terms of leadership and management. Overall satisfaction with leadership dropped significantly (49%, from 61% in 2024), with concurrent falls in satisfaction with leadership of both the Mayor (56%, down from 68% in 2024) and councillors (43%, down from 53% in 2024). Similarly, perceptions of day-to-day council management fell in 2025, most notably in relation to managers and staff doing a good job (50%, down from 59% in 2024) and efficiency and effectiveness (37%, down from 46% in 2024). Satisfaction with council's overall communication with residents also saw lower positivity (45%, down from 54% in 2024), and particularly resident sentiment around opportunities to have their say (46%, down from 55% in 2024).
- Much of this negative sentiment appeared to be driven by concerns around adoption of the 2024-2034 Long Term Plan and associated increases in rates, fees and charges; with cuts also made to several community services to reduce costs. Qualitative feedback from residents reflected these concerns, with increasing negativity around rates rises matching lower satisfaction scores through the year (especially in Q3 and Q4). The town centre upgrades also proved divisive, with contrasting opinions driving discontent with Council decision making overall.
- Satisfaction levels varied across the district, with typically lower scores in Ōpōtiki ward overall (48%, compared to 49% in Coast ward and 58% in Waioweka-Waiotāhe); driven to some degree by lower satisfaction with dog control (16%), road safety (43%), and the town centre (34%). However, Coast residents also express less positivity around lack of recreation facilities (43%), footpaths (42%) and library services (63%).
- Younger respondents (particularly those aged 18-39) remained consistently less satisfied overall (43%, compared to 48% of 40-64 year olds and 69% of those aged 65+); and across various services, especially in relation dog control (16%), building consents (16%), and road safety (40%); also Council listening and acting on their needs (27%), efficiency and effectiveness (27%), and value for money (25%); and direct contact with the Council (49%).
- Ōpōtiki District Council will face challenges to enhance local resident satisfaction, particularly in light of the noted rates increases and related policy changes – and given increased cost of living concerns for residents nationwide. Focusing on core needs and resident priorities will be essential, while maintaining (or increasing) effective communication and engagement with the community. Demonstrating wise spending decisions and communicating value for money is crucial. In this context, working to improve less satisfactory service areas (e.g. dog control, road safety), cutting back costs on less essential developments, while maintaining priority infrastructure areas (e.g. sewerage, water and waste management) and improving overall service delivery will be increasingly important to district residents over the coming year.



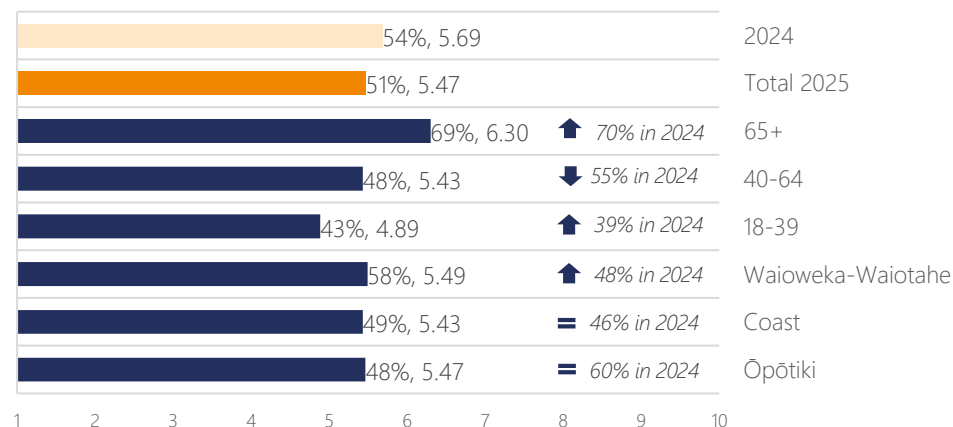
OVERALL SATISFACTION



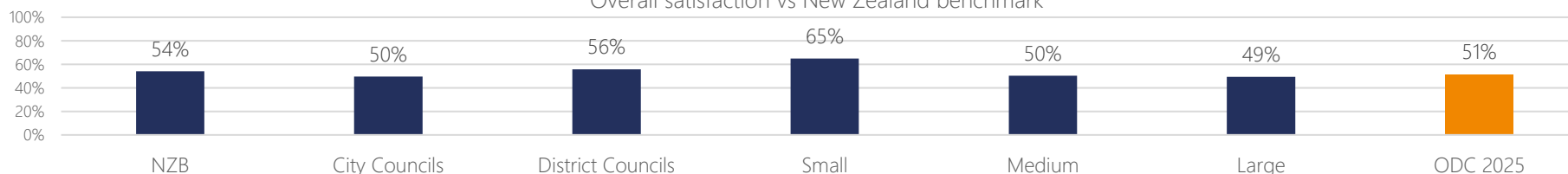
- In 2025, 51% of respondents were satisfied with overall services received from the Ōpōtiki District Council (on average rating 5.5 out of 10). Although this result was slightly down compared to 2024, it remained within the margin of error. However, this was significantly lower than 2023 (59%).
- Through the 2025 survey cycle, overall satisfaction rose from Q1 (54%) to a peak in Q2 (65%), but fell in Q3 (41%) and Q4 (45%) – corresponding with the Long Term Plan 2024-34 announcement.
- The annual decrease was mainly observed amongst respondents from Ōpōtiki ward, and those aged under 65 years.
- Satisfaction in 2025 was similar across wards, though slightly higher for Waioweka-Waiotaha respondents.
- Respondents aged under 65 (particularly aged 18-39) remained less satisfied with the Council services, compared to older respondents – following the pattern seen in previous years.
- The current result was similar to the NZ benchmark average (54%), but below the national results for District councils and Councils with small (under 30,000) populations.



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



Overall satisfaction vs New Zealand benchmark



Overall satisfaction with services received from the Ōpōtiki District Council. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.

					
Public library (p.23)	Recreation facilities (p.15)	Resource Recovery Centre (p.27)	Cemeteries (p.21)	Footpaths (p.31)	
ODC 2025: 86% / 8.0	ODC 2025: 70% / 6.6	ODC 2025: 69% / 6.7	ODC 2025: 65% / 6.2	ODC 2025: 59% / 5.9	
ODC 2024: 86% / 8.1	ODC 2024: 82% / 7.3	ODC 2024: 69% / 6.8	ODC 2024: 70% / 6.8	ODC 2024: 60% / 5.8	
NZB 2024: 83% / 7.8	NZB 2024: 82% / 7.4	NZB 2024: 60% / 6.3	NZB 2024: 74% / 7.1	NZB 2024: 61% / 6.3	
					
Leadership of Mayor (p.43)	Parks & reserves (p.25)	Keeps people informed (p.41)	Easy for people to interact (p.41)	District's roads safety (p.29)	
ODC 2025: 56% / 5.9	ODC 2025: 53% / 5.7	ODC 2025: 52% / 5.5	ODC 2025: 51% / 5.8	ODC 2025: 50% / 5.3	
ODC 2024: 68% / 6.7	ODC 2024: -	ODC 2024: 59% / 5.9	ODC 2024: 50% / 5.5	ODC 2024: 47% / 5.3	
NZB 2024: 46% / 5.1	NZB 2024: 81% / 7.4	NZB 2024: 50% / 5.3	NZB 2024: 45% / 5.1	NZB 2024: 43% / 4.9	
					
Managers and staff (p.44)	Opportunities for people to have their say (p.41)	Strategies for developing prosperity (p.44)	Leadership of Councillors (p.43)	Skills and expertise (p.44)	
ODC 2025: 50% / 5.3	ODC 2025: 46% / 5.2	ODC 2025: 45% / 5.0	ODC 2025: 43% / 5.0	ODC 2025: 42% / 4.9	
ODC 2024: 59% / 5.8	ODC 2024: 55% / 5.6	ODC 2024: 52% / 5.5	ODC 2024: 53% / 5.8	ODC 2024: 45% / 5.3	
NZB 2024: 47% / 5.2	NZB 2024: 44% / 5.1	NZB 2024: 42% / 4.8	NZB 2024: 44% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 49% / 5.0	
					
City Centre (p.33)	Efficiency and effectiveness (p.44)	Good spending decisions (p.44)	Listens and acts on the needs of the people (p.41)	Public toilets (p.17)	Building consents team (p.25)
ODC 2025: 38% / 4.8	ODC 2025: 37% / 4.9	ODC 2025: 36% / 4.4	ODC 2025: 33% / 4.4	ODC 2025: 33% / 4.3	ODC 2025: 34% / 4.8
ODC 2024: 42% / 5.0	ODC 2024: 46% / 5.3	ODC 2024: 39% / 4.8	ODC 2024: 36% / 4.8	ODC 2024: 44% / 4.9	ODC 2024: 35% / 4.7
NZB 2024: n/a	NZB 2024: 43% / 4.8	NZB 2024: 34% / 4.1	NZB 2024: 34% / 4.1	NZB 2024: 62% / 6.2	NZB 2024: 43% / 5.2
					
Value for money (p.44)	Dog control (p.19)	Overall communication (p.41)	Overall leadership (p.43)	Overall management (p.44)	Overall performance (p.6)
ODC 2025: 33% / 4.3	ODC 2025: 24% / 3.7	ODC 2025: 45% / 5.5	ODC 2025: 49% / 5.3	ODC 2025: 46% / 5.0	ODC 2025: 54% / 5.7
ODC 2024: 34% / 4.5	ODC 2024: 25% / 4.0	ODC 2024: 54% / 5.5	ODC 2024: 61% / 6.0	ODC 2024: 50% / 5.4	ODC 2024: 54% / 5.7
NZB 2024: 33% / 4.2	NZB 2024: 66% / 6.4	NZB 2024: 44% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 45% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 47% / 4.9	NZB 2024: 54% / 5.5

-  - Good performance (70% and above)
-  - Services with positive performance (less than 70% but equal or more than 50%)
-  - Services for improvement
-  - Overall performance indicators



METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH GOAL

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

QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROJECT SPECIFICS

From 2022, the Resident Satisfaction Survey has been conducted by SIL Research.

SIL Research, together with the Ōpōtiki District Council, developed a Resident Survey questionnaire in 2022. The initial drafting was based on research previously carried out for ODC.

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

A number of methodology changes (e.g. rating scales, data collection methods, demographic questions) were adopted in 2022 and repeated in consecutive years. From 2022, data collection was administered four times a year 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 2024-25 survey year, the data was collected from July 2024 (retrospectively covering the Apr-Jun quarter) to April 2025 (covering the Jan-Mar quarter) to align with ODC's annual reporting period.

Fieldwork was conducted quarterly in July - August 2024 (Q1), September - October 2024 (Q2), December 2024 – February 2025 (Q3), and March – April 2025 (Q4). A total n=75 responses were collected each quarter, providing a total annual sample of n=304 for the final analysis (n=4 additional responses in Q1). For ease, this report refers to the 2024-25 survey year as '2025'.

With the change to quarterly fieldwork cycles, the recall window for respondents has also been adjusted since 2023. Previously, respondents had been asked to indicate which services/facilities they had used or visited in '*the last 12 months*'. From 2023, respondents are instead asked about the services/facilities they used/visited in '*the last 3 months*'. While representing a shift from the previous method, moving forward the use of a narrower recall window should result in 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.

In 2024-25, a new question was introduced (for Q3 and Q4 fieldwork):

- Satisfaction with "*Provision of parks and reserves*".

Every quarter, SIL used a multi-layered sampling technique to ensure a proportional spread of respondents from each of Ōpōtiki's three electoral wards, by age and gender distribution. Post-stratification (weighting) was then applied to the full annual dataset (Q1-Q4) to reflect age, gender and ethnicity group proportions as determined by the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census (see below for further details).

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 (e.g. wards);
- (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 Ōpōtiki District households.
- (4) Online survey. The survey was promoted and available via ODC channels to increase community awareness.

A total of n=304 surveys were used in the final analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Responses were also statistically weighted (post-stratification) to reflect Ōpōtiki District gender, age and ethnic group (Māori vs non-Māori) proportions as determined by the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census. The 2018 Census was used as the population benchmark in 2024-25 due to the release of 2023 Census figures later in 2024 – after commencement of the 2024-25 survey year. Therefore, the 2018 Census benchmarks were utilised by necessity in Q1 and Q2 of 2024-25, and then maintained throughout the year for statistical consistency. The 2023 Census figures will be introduced as the population benchmarks for the 2025-26 survey year.

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 Ōpōtiki District.

The main resident groups analysed in this report were: ward, age, gender, ethnicity, home ownership and location. 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% significance), no comments were made; where differences were within this threshold, comments have been made within the context of their practical relevance to ODC.

Overall results are reported with margins of error at a 95% confidence level, as indicated below.

Table 2 Margins of error

Responses n=	Reported percentages	
	50%	80% or 20%
300	±5.5	±4.4
200	±6.8	±5.5
100	±9.7	±7.9

The maximum likely error margin occurs when a reported percentage is close to 50%. The key reported measures in the main report include margins of error calculated taking into account the survey design, finite population size correction, and service usage.

NOTES ON REPORTING

Comparative data prior to 2022 is indicative only; data collection methods before 2022 (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.

Open-ended (free-text) responses were also collected and analysed. SIL Research used a content analysis approach to determine certain themes, concepts or issues within this feedback. This represents a 'bottom up' data driven approach where identified themes are derived purely from the collective respondent feedback, rather than fitting responses into pre-determined categories. Results for reported themes may exceed 100% as several themes could be mentioned by a given respondent.

Where results are reported by sub-groups of residents, estimates of results may not be statistically reliable due to higher margins of error (small sample sizes).

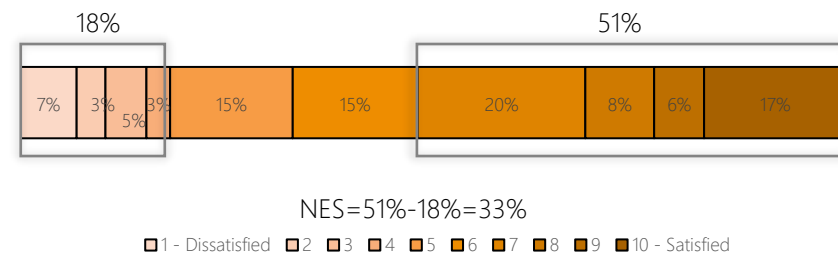
Overall '*satisfaction*' percentages presented in this report are aggregated 6-10 responses on a 1-10 scale. Satisfaction percentages will differ from mean scores (average ratings). Satisfaction percentages represent positive ratings only, whereas mean scores provide an average of all ratings across 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*' (e.g. residents who had visited/used specific Council services/facilities and/or knew enough to provide a rating).

In addition, Net Emotional Scores (NES) show the relative difference between positive and negative emotions associated with Council services. This is calculated by subtracting the percentage of negative ratings (1-4) from positive ratings (7-10) (as per the example below).



The strength of trends or changes over time was also assessed. R^2 is a measure based on regression analysis of results over time. It was applied to the historical and current aggregated satisfaction ratings. In summary, the closer the R^2 value is to 100%, the more likely there is a trend towards an increase or decrease in performance ratings over time.

Regression analysis was used for key driver analysis. This multivariate statistical method investigates the relationships between potential influential drivers (e.g. Council services) and residents' overall perceptions about the Council. Identified key drivers are factors that have a greater potential to improve associated overall scores.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Table 1 Responses by ward

	Frequency	Percent
Ōpōtiki	162	53%
Coast	38	12%
Waioweka-Waiotaha	108	36%
Total	304	100%

Table 2 Responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-39	95	31%
40-64	136	45%
65+	74	24%
Total	304	100%

Table 3 Responses by gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	150	49%
Female	155	51%
Non-binary	0	0%
Total	304	100%

Table 4 Responses by home ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Owned	235	78%
Rented	37	12%
Private trust	7	2%
Other	7	2%
Not stated	14	5%
Total	304	100%

Table 5 Responses by location

	Frequency	Percent
Urban	120	40%
Semi-rural	80	27%
Rural	100	33%
Total	304	100.0%

Table 6 Responses by ethnicity (multi-choice)

	Frequency	Percent
New Zealand European	171	57%
European	38	13%
Māori	172	57%
Pacific people	2	1%
Asian	1	1%
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	1	1%
Other	0	0%
New Zealander/Kiwi/Not stated	3	1%
Total	304	100%

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 ODC 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 over 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 +/- 4-5%.

*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 significant 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 2024-25 include:

Key Q1 (May - August 2024) factors:

1. In June 2024, Council scheduled to resurface some sections of Church Street from Church Street/Elliott intersection to Church Street/Richard Street intersection to extend the life of the road, provide a smoother road surface and to maintain the safety profile of the street. Work was also scheduled to pave a section of the road in line with the Ōpōtiki Town Centre Master Plan, to support the revitalisation of the town centre with good urban design.
2. In July 2024, Ōpōtiki Mayor, David Moore, warned residents that changes to the timing of rates invoices this year could have a significant impact on households and the best thing to do was to prepare now to avoid a 'bigger hit down the road'. The draft Long Term Plan (LTP) included a likely rates rise of around 10% driven by extraordinary cost increases in council core business activities and other factors beyond council's control. In addition, direction from the new coalition government to reinstate three waters infrastructure (wastewater, stormwater, water supply) also meant the timing of the rates invoices would change this year.
3. In August 2024, the Representation Review consultation opened on the Council's preferred option for how representatives will be

elected at the next local body elections in 2025. The review was designed to consider what the council structure will look like with newly established Māori wards included; and with a proposed increase to the number of councillors from the current six to seven plus a mayor elected at large.

4. In August 2024, \$24,000 of funding from Trust Horizon helped light up Ōpōtiki's town centre, replacing seasonal flags along the main street with neon banner lights in a variety of different shapes. The lights were designed to be permanent year-round and to tie in with other upgrades to the street and lighting.

Key Q2 factors (August – October 2024):

5. In September 2024, consultation on Council's proposed new Freedom Camping Bylaw was extended. Due to the sorts of changes that had been made to the draft following initial consultation, council wanted to offer an additional opportunity for formal submissions. In this context, council carried out some site analysis of council land (or land managed by council) where people may want to freedom camp.
6. In September 2024, dignitaries and guests (including the Deputy Prime Minister and Regional Development Minister) visited Ōpōtiki to mark the completion of construction work on the 450m-long harbour seawalls. The event brought together the huge range of people involved in making the vision a reality, bringing together a family of projects that work in concert to improve the opportunities and wellbeing of the district.
7. In September 2024, a slip on a section of State Highway 2 came down on three vehicles at Waioatahe Beach, resulting in minor injuries. Geotechnical engineers assessed the cliff face, and the highway reopened the following day with a reduced speed limit at Waioatahe Beach.

8. In October 2024, the Ōpōtiki Resource Recovery Centres (RRC) introduced a new layout and weighbridge operating on site, following some delays. Moving from a volume-based system to a weight-based system with the weighbridge was considered as an incentive for residents to recycle properly so they do not pay “waste” charges for things that can be recycled. The weighbridge was funded through Better Off and Waste Levy funding.
9. In October 2024, a 10-month police investigation into the eastern Bay of Plenty Mongrel Mob managed to stop a drive-by shooting at an Ōpōtiki marae among other instances of serious violence before it culminated in mass arrests and seizures.

Key Q3 factors (November 2024 – January 2025):

10. In late October 2024 (and made available to the public in November 2024), Council adopted their final 2024-2034 Long Term Plan, with a number of associated fees and charges, policies and documents introduced for the coming ten years. The outcomes of the LTP would likely have a substantial and ongoing impact on the lives and perceptions of local residents, particularly in relation to proposed rates increases (initially around 10% on average but rising in forthcoming years). Through the community submission process, many submitters had specifically highlighted the impact rates rises have on the community. As a result of the late adoption of the LTP (due to delays related to central government’s re-inclusion of three waters management at local government level), the first post-LTP rates demands were sent out in November 2024, likely becoming a salient issue for residents through Q3 of 2024-25. In addition, in order to reduce the impact of rates rises, cuts were made to community services across engineering, parks

and reserves, events, and regional development – all likely to play a notable role in the minds of residents and their sentiments around Council service provision, spending and management.

11. In December 2024, and into 2025, work continued on the ongoing harbour developments. The Ōpōtiki Marine Advisory Group (OMAG) provided an update on a wide range of projects that make up the ‘family of projects’ that are anchored by the aquaculture industry and harbour entrance, including ongoing dredging, restoration of the dunes on the western side of Pākihikura, upgrading of the Ōpōtiki wharf, extension to the public jetty at the Ōpōtiki wharf and extension of carparking behind the Coastguard building ahead of the 2024-25 summer holiday season.
12. In December 2024, Te Ara Tipuna Charitable Trust lodged an application for multiple resource consents to enable the design and construction of Stage 1 of the Te Ara Tipuna public walking trail only running for approximately 500km from Gisborne around the coast to Ōpōtiki.
13. In January 2025, media reports highlighted incidents of dog attacks in Ōpōtiki, including a woman surrounded by four dogs on Ford St in Ōpōtiki, just one such attack noted in the area. The incident was reported to Ōpōtiki District Council, but response from the after-hours contractor took two hours.

Key Q4 factors (February – April 2025):

14. In February 2025, the death of a man in a “violent altercation” involving gang members in central Ōpōtiki was investigated by police as a homicide. Reports indicated the incident was gang related.

15. In March 2025, media reported a shortage of primary and secondary school teachers across the Bay of Plenty, including a school in Opotiki unable to fill a vacant position. Issues such as housing, gang-related incidents and associated negative media coverage were seen as factors contributing to the ability to attract potential employees to the district.

16. In early April 2025, the Local Government Commission released their determination on Ōpōtiki District Council's representation arrangements for the coming local government elections in October. The Commission approved the structure proposed by Council, with continuation of the Coast Community Board, a mayor elected at large, and seven councillors – including the introduction of a Coast Māori ward and Ōpōtiki Māori ward.

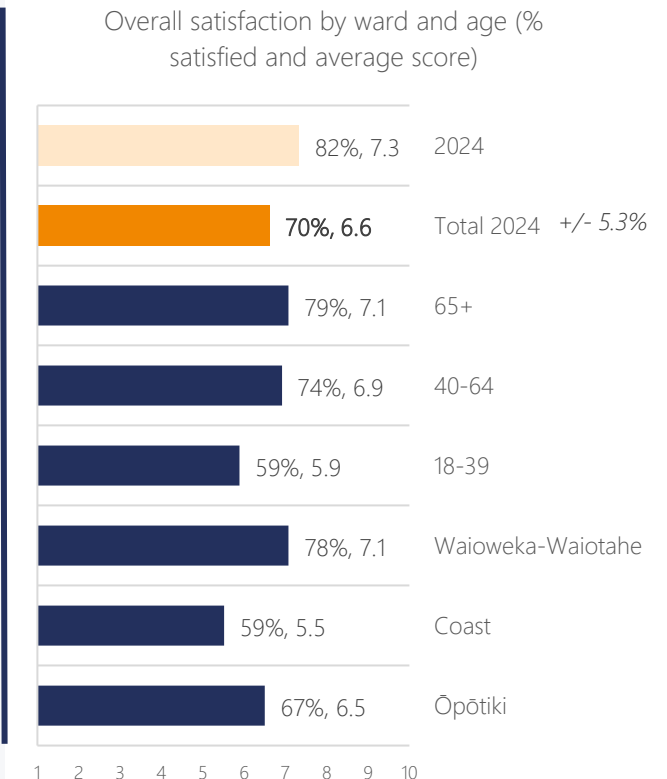
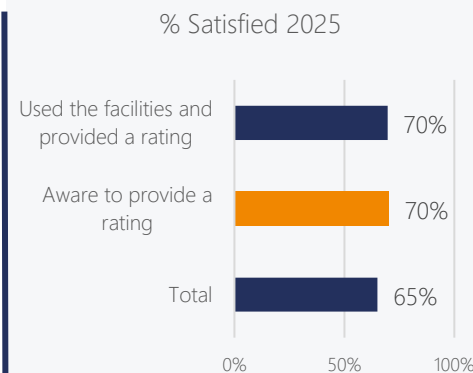
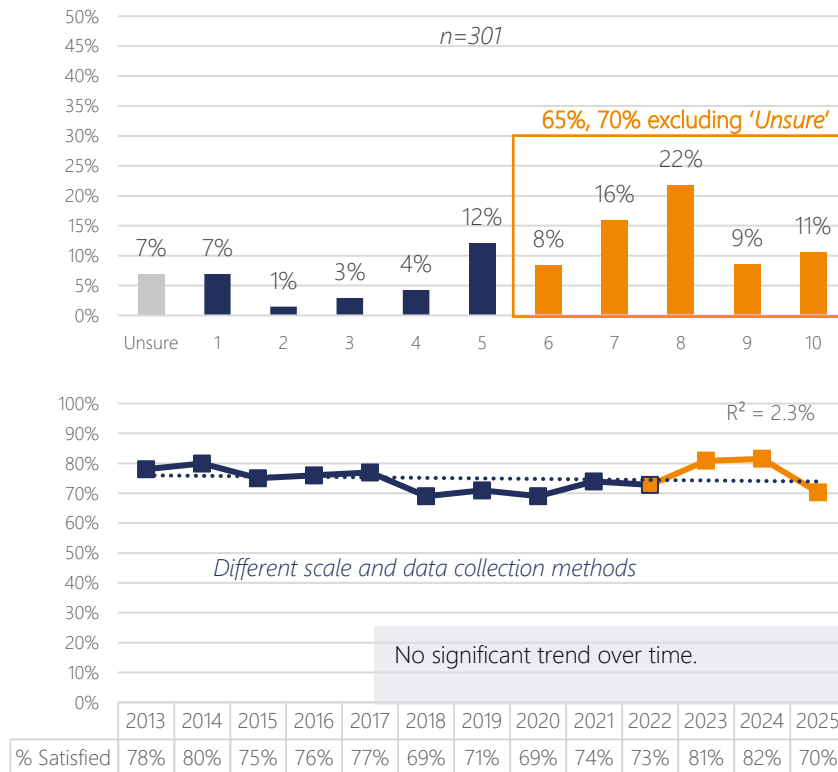


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – recreation facilities

KPI target **75%**
within margin of error



- In 2025, 70% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of recreation facilities (on average, 6.6 out of 10) - remaining the second-highest rated service area in 2025. However, the current score represented a significant decrease from 2023 and 2024, though returning to levels seen in 2022 and earlier years.
- The proportion of respondents using recreation facilities overall (69%) was consistent with 2024 (67%), with little change in frequency (40% 3 or more times per quarter, compared to 45% in 2024 and 35% in 2023).
- Satisfaction with recreation facilities remained lower among Coast residents (59%) than in other wards, with continued concerns about lack of such facilities; though similar to 2024 (66%).
- However, satisfaction was significantly lower in 2025 for Ōpōtiki ward residents (67% vs 83% in 2024) and 18-39 year olds (59% vs 77% in 2024).



Respondents were asked to rate Council's provision of recreation facilities (e.g. the Skatepark and playground). Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



RECREATION FACILITIES – community feedback



Good facilities / general positive comments - 47%
Rose gardens / parks good - 37%
Skate park good / well used - 28%
More needed for children / youth - 17%
Good playgrounds / facilities for children - 14%
Good improvements / upgrades - 7%
Upgrades / improvements / maintenance needed - 4%

Top reasons for satisfaction with recreation facilities

15% of all respondents provided a comment

Not enough / more needed (general) - 64%
Rose gardens / parks good - 20%
Upgrades / improvements / maintenance needed - 17%
More needed for children / youth - 16%
Skate park good / well used - 10%
Good facilities / general positive comments - 9%
Concerns about costs / suitability - 6%
Swimming pool / indoor pool needed - 4%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with recreation facilities

16% of all respondents provided a comment

Provision of recreation facilities – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

The most common reasons residents gave for their ratings of recreation facilities related to the availability and quality of local amenities. Positive feedback highlighted that many found the facilities to be generally good, with specific praise for parks, rose gardens, and skate parks. However, a significant number of respondents felt that more facilities were needed overall, particularly for children and youth. This mix of satisfaction with existing assets and calls for expansion indicates a need to maintain well-liked spaces while addressing identified service gaps.

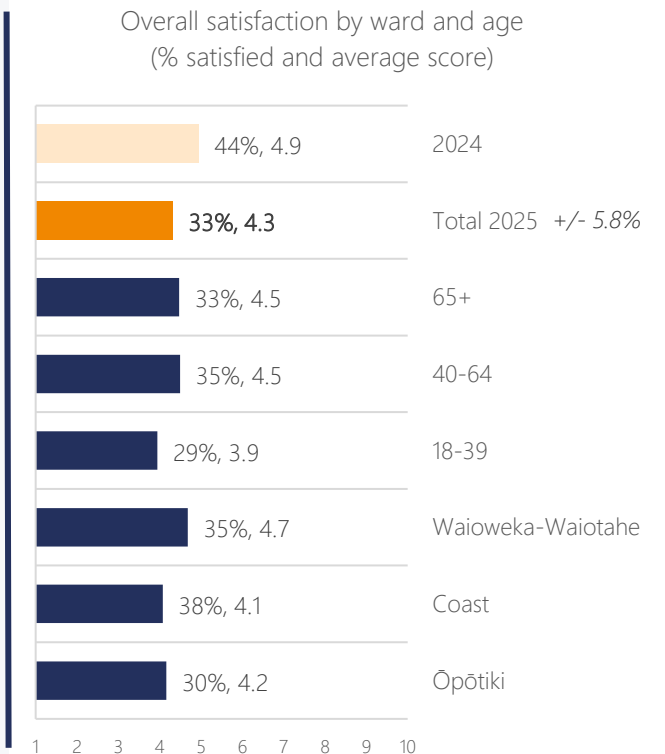
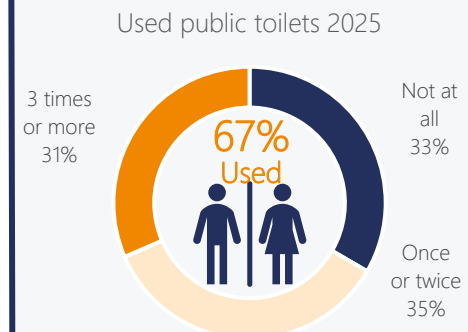
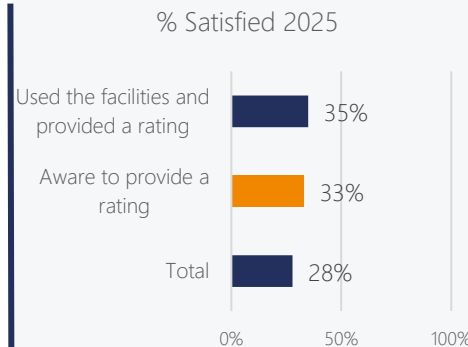
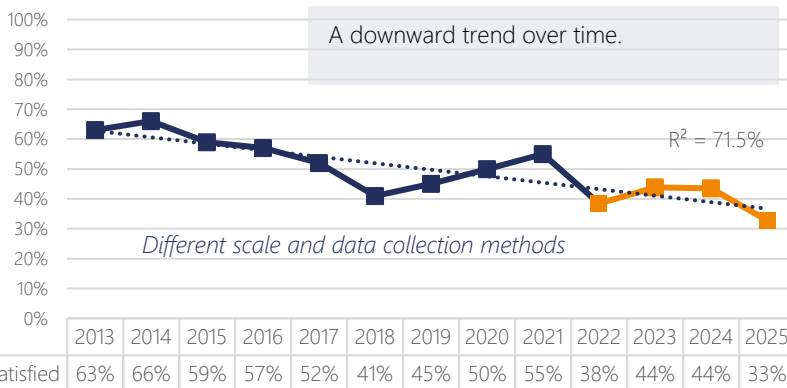
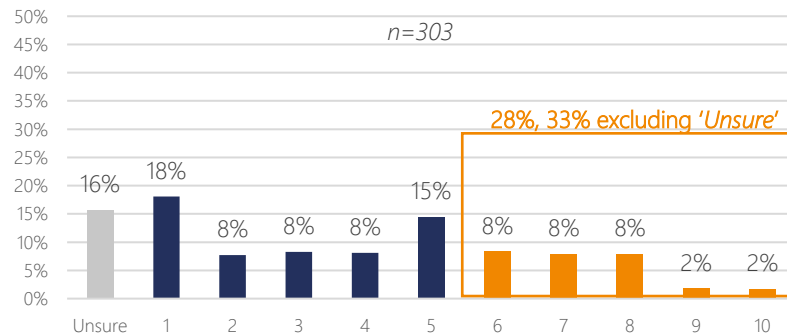


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – public toilets

KPI target 60%
below



- Just 1-in-3 respondents (33%) who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of public toilets (on average, 4.3 out of 10). While lower than 2024 (44%), this was not a significant decrease.
- 2-in-3 (67%) of respondents reported using public toilets in 2025 (consistent with 66% in 2024).
- Satisfaction was low across the district in 2025, with (non-significant) falls compared to 2024 in Ōpōtiki (30% vs 42% in 2024) and Waioweka-Waiotaha (35% vs 52% in 2024); but a slight increase for Coast ward.
- While satisfaction remained consistent for younger respondents (aged 18-39), falls were measured for both 40-64 year olds (35% vs 51% in 2024) and 65+ (33% vs 53% in 2024). Usage remained lower among older residents (52% of 65+ year olds).
- The dissatisfaction with public toilets appeared to involve issues of cleanliness, maintenance, frequency of servicing and availability.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's provision of public toilets (e.g. cleanliness and quality). Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



PUBLIC TOILETS – community feedback



Clean / good standard – 84%
Need fixing / upgrading / maintenance - 5%
Other – 11%

Dirty / need cleaning - 55%
Need fixing / upgrading / maintenance - 39%
Not enough / need more - 3%
Accessibility Issues / no public toilets - 3%

Top reasons for satisfaction with public toilets

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with public toilets

4% of respondents provided a comment

42% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of public toilets – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

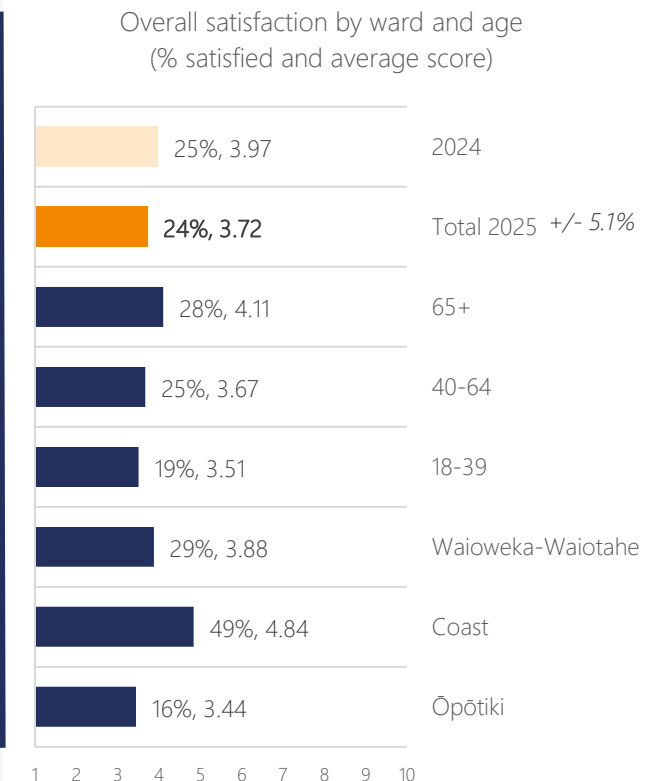
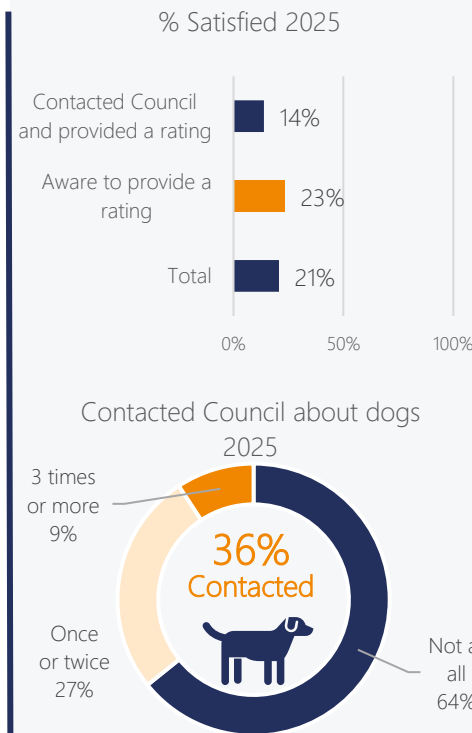
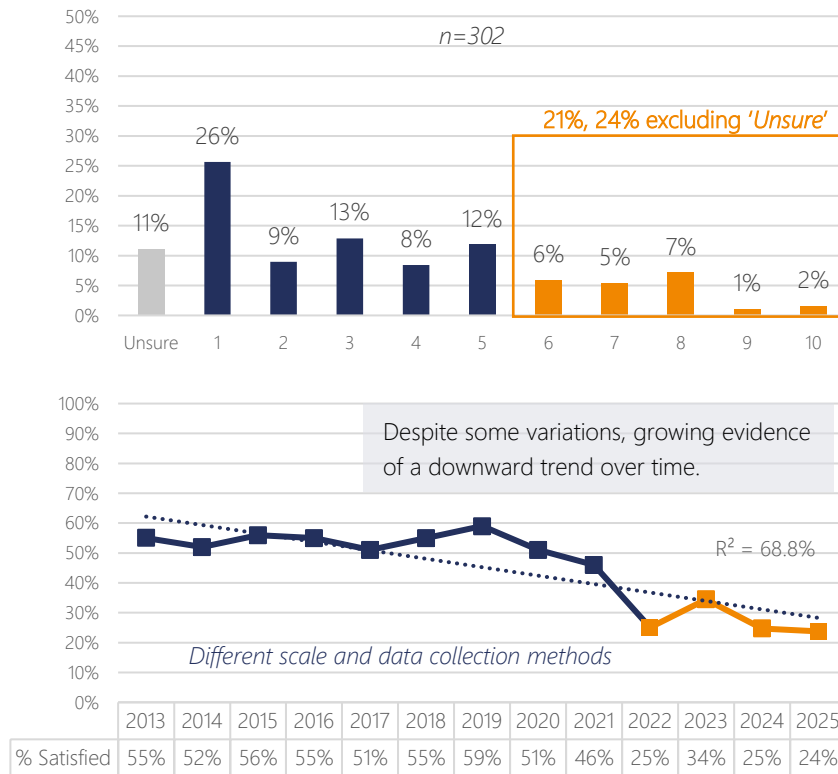
Feedback regarding public toilets revealed several key themes. Many respondents expressed concerns about cleanliness, describing facilities as dirty, smelly, or not cleaned often enough. A significant number highlighted maintenance issues, noting that toilets were run down, poorly maintained, or not serviced adequately during peak times. Others indicated there were not enough public toilets available, while some pointed out limited opening hours or toilets being locked, suggesting a need for extended access or staffing. On a more positive note, a portion of residents rated the facilities highly, describing them as clean, well-maintained, and of a good standard.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – dog control



- A minority (1-in-3) of respondents indicated contacting the Council about dogs in 2025 (36%, up slightly from 29% in 2024).
- 1-in-4 (24%) of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of dog control in 2025 (on average, 3.7 out of 10). This was consistent with 2024 – however, this remained the lowest scoring service area across the survey in 2025.
- 1-in-4 (26%) of respondents provided the lowest rating (1 out of 10) – the most common response for this measure in 2025 (more than other services).
- Nevertheless, satisfaction was higher for Coast residents (49%), especially compared to those in Ōpōtiki (16%) – for whom satisfaction has progressively dropped since 2024 (25%) and 2023 (33%).
- While older respondents aged 65+ were slightly more satisfied than younger adults with this service, positivity has dropped for this older age group (28%, compared to 41% in 2024).
- Respondents continued to express concerns about the number of roaming dogs, and lack of enforcement.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's dog control. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



DOG CONTROL – community feedback



Good service / no problem – 72%

Always dogs roaming – 13%

Horses / other animals roaming – 7%

Always dogs roaming - 74%

Poor animal control service / no response / not effective - 14%

Horses / other animals roaming – 10%

Unsafe / bad reflection / impact on town - 5%

Top reasons for satisfaction with dog control

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with dog control

3% of respondents provided a comment

55% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of dog control – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Most respondents providing comments expressed concern about roaming dogs, frequently mentioning that dogs are often seen wandering unsupervised throughout the area. A significant number also criticised the effectiveness of animal control services, citing poor responsiveness or lack of enforcement. Some comments referred to the presence of other animals such as horses and goats, and a few raised broader safety concerns or noted the negative image this issue presents for the town. While a small number of respondents praised the service or reported no problems, others felt that responsible dog owners were being unfairly targeted or raised issues with registration fees and penalties.

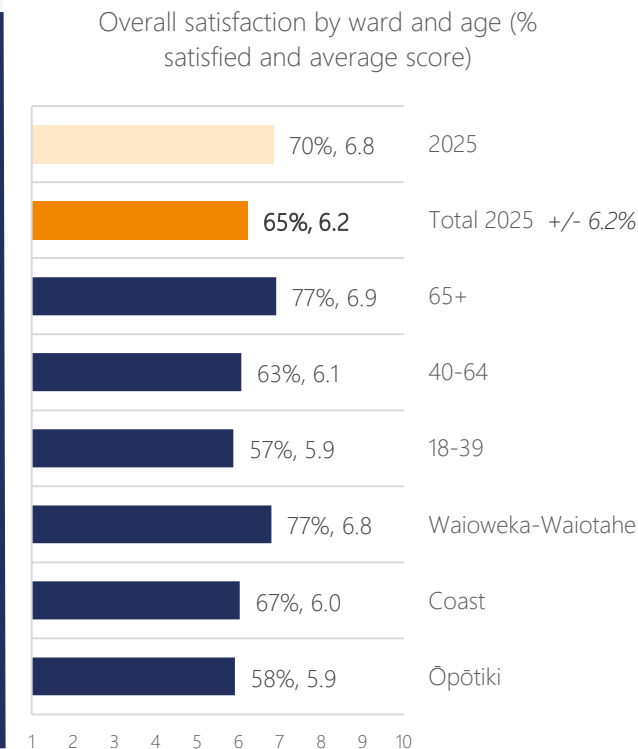
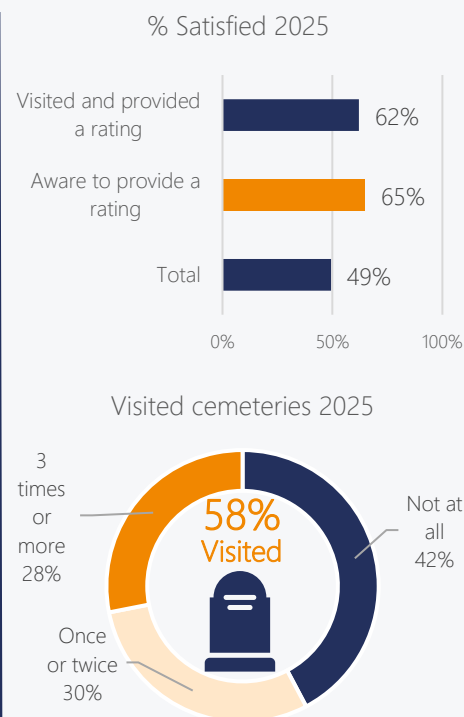
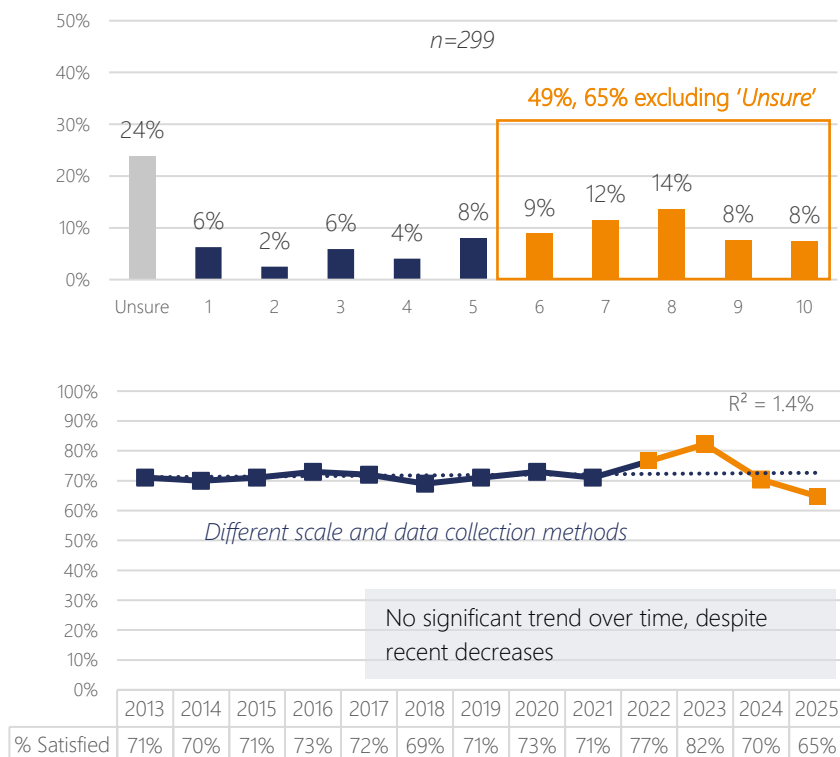


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – cemeteries

KPI target **70%**
within margin of error



- Just over half of respondents (58%) recalled visiting a cemetery in the district (similar to previous years).
- 2-in-3 (65%) of respondents who provided a rating in 2025 were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of cemeteries (on average, 6.2 out of 10). While slightly lower than 2024 (70%), satisfaction with cemeteries has trended down significantly since 2023 (82%) – recording the lowest score to date.
- Nevertheless, this remained one of the highest rated service areas across the survey (ranked 4th in 2025).
- While Waioweka-Waiotaha residents were less likely to visit a cemetery (47%), their satisfaction (77%) was higher than for Coast (67%) or Ōpōtiki (58%) residents – however, declines since 2023 have been measured in all three wards (89%, 78% and 78%, respectively).
- While the typical pattern of age differences was not significant in 2025, positivity has fallen for all groups since 2023; most notably among 18-39s (57% 2025 vs 79% 2023).
- Generally, more respondents suggested more regular maintenance of cemeteries to provide uniformity of standards across the district.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's provision of cemeteries (e.g. maintenance and tidiness). Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



CEMETERIES – community feedback



Tidy / clean / well maintained – 66%
Good / beautiful place / looks nice – 42%
Other – 9%

Grass overgrown / Needs mowing – 46%
Dirty / need cleaning – 33%
Need fixing / upgrading / maintenance – 32%

Top reasons for satisfaction with cemeteries

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with cemeteries

14% of respondents provided a comment

17% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of cemeteries – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

The responses regarding cemeteries were generally positive, with many residents praising them as “well looked after”, “lovely”, or “nice looking”, which aligned with the theme of being tidy, clean, and well maintained. However, some respondents expressed concerns about specific sites, particularly Ranginui Cemetery, citing poor maintenance and a need for more consistent upkeep. Overall, while satisfaction is high for many, there is a clear call for improved and more regular maintenance at certain locations to ensure uniform standards across the district.

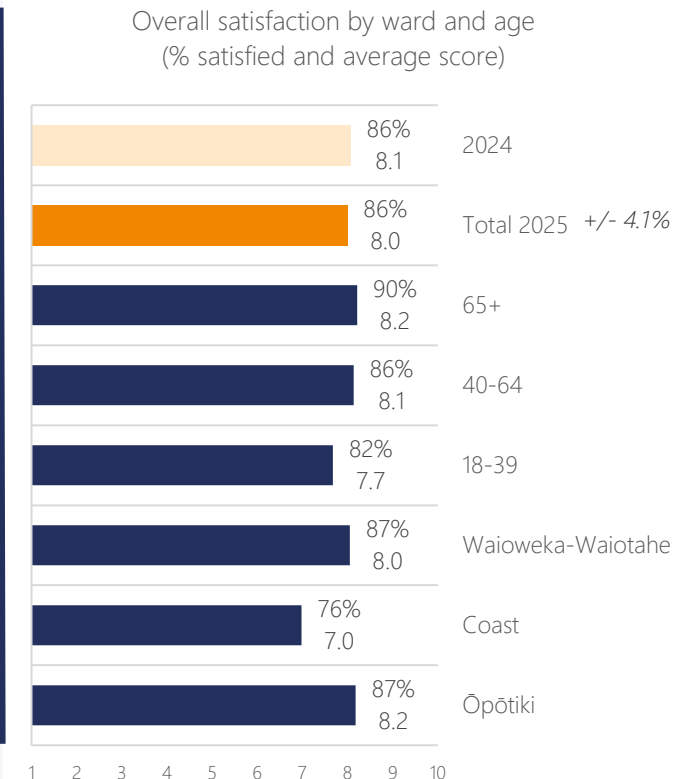
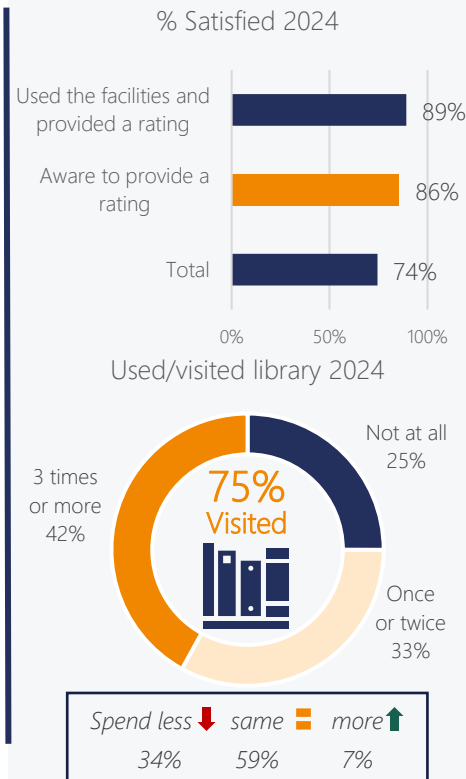
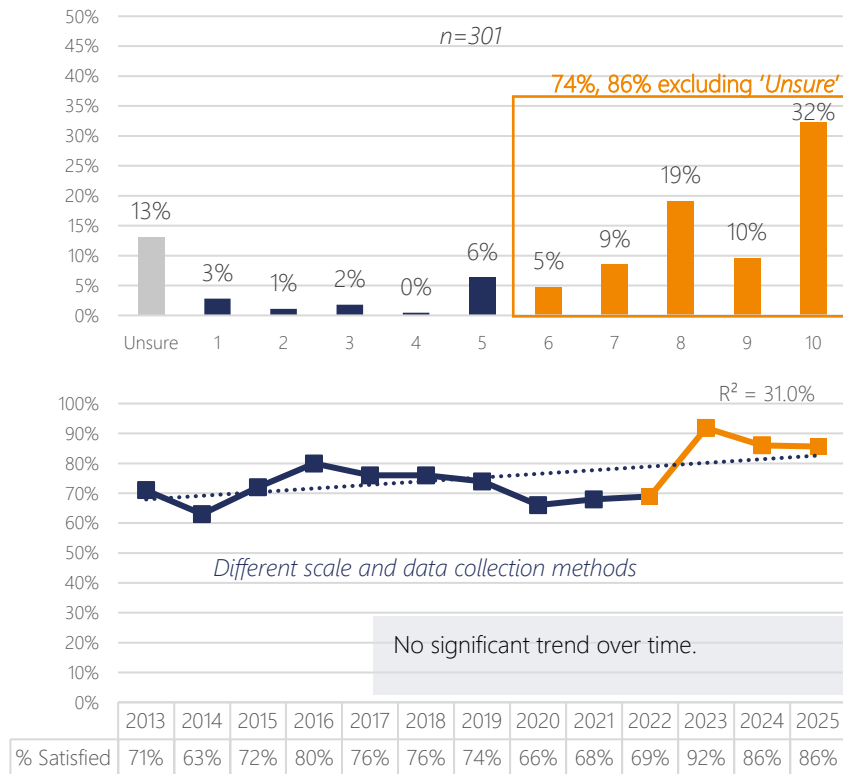


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – library services

KPI target **85%**
achieved



- Library usage hit a new peak in 2025 (75% vs 65% 2024, 58% 2023) – and collectively remained the highest rated service area with 86% satisfaction (consistent with 2024). 1-in-3 respondents (32%) provided the highest rating (10-out-of-10) in 2025 – by far the only service achieving this accolade.
- Satisfaction with library services was consistently very high across all resident segments. The apparent differences between wards was not statistically significant. However, the previous dip in satisfaction for Coast respondents in 2024 (57%) was reversed with a significant improvement in 2025 (76%).
- Satisfaction was above 80% for all age groups in 2025, with usage also high – above 70% for all, though usage was slightly more prevalent for 18-39s (81%) than 65+ year olds (71%).
- Given the overwhelming positivity for existing library services, this area remained the lowest priority for additional Council spending – the majority (59%) preferred maintaining current funding levels and 1-in-3 (34%) called for reduced spending. Overall, feedback leaned strongly towards appreciation for the library's condition, usefulness, and staff service.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's district library facilities and services. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



LIBRARY SERVICES – community feedback



Good facility / building / general satisfaction - 82%

Good staff - 21%

Good resources / Good for children - 19%

Brand new - 3%

Other - 2%

Concerns about cost / original library fine - 51%

Limited open hours / access - 33%

Good facility / building / general satisfaction - 21%

Good resources / Good for children - 15%

Poorly used / utilised / too big - 6%

Top reasons for satisfaction with library services

40% of respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with library services

6% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of public libraries and library services – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Most respondents rated the Ōpōtiki District Library positively, frequently citing it as a good facility with general satisfaction regarding its services, resources, and environment. Many also commended the quality of staff and the library being new or modern. A smaller number of residents highlighted concerns about costs, limited opening hours, underutilisation, and the need for more support or funding. Overall, feedback leaned strongly towards appreciation for the library's condition, usefulness, and staff service.

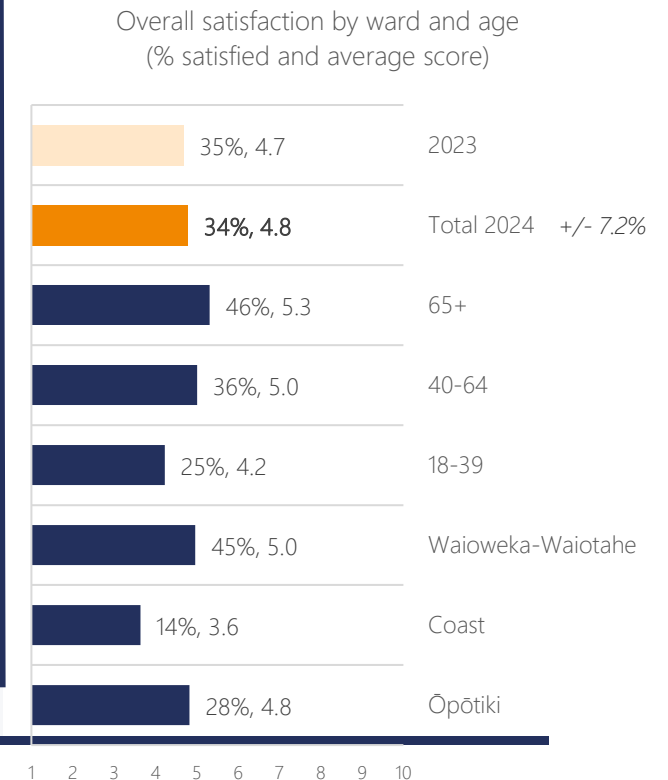
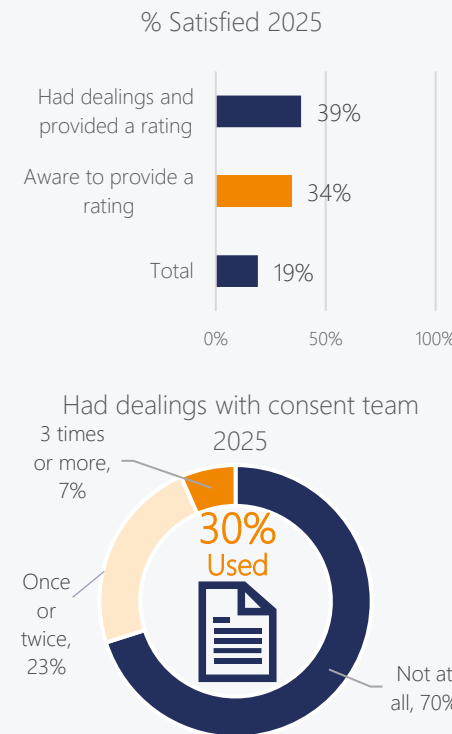
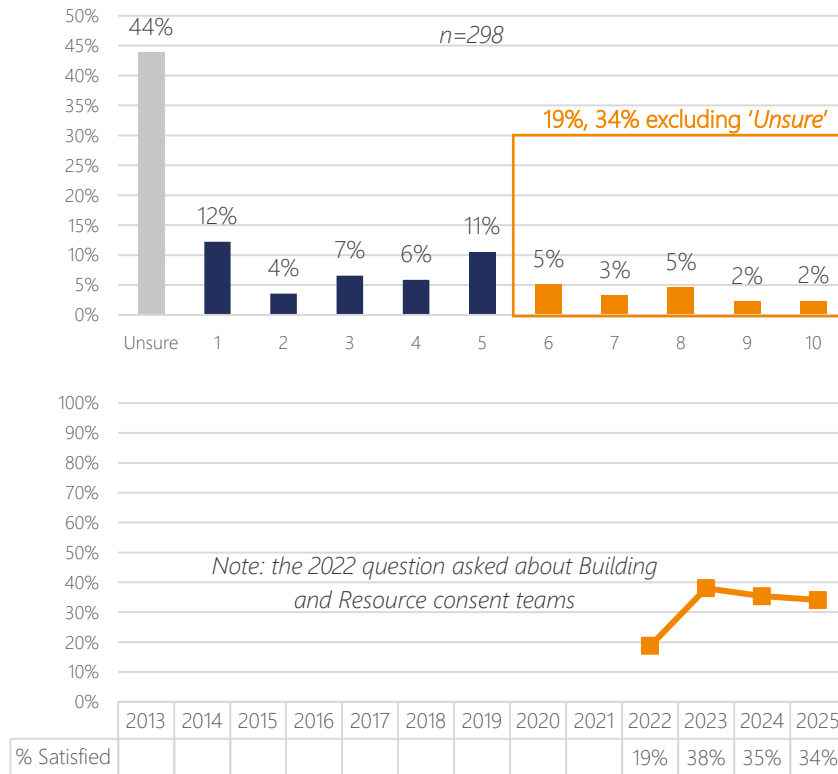


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – building consents team

KPI target **70%**
below



- The building consents team remained the least accessed service area in 2025 (30%), with almost half of respondents (44%) not able to provide any rating due to lack of knowledge – the greatest knowledge gap across the survey.
- 34% of those who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of building consent services (on average, 4.8 out of 10) – consistent with previous years but remaining one of the lowest rated areas across the survey. Satisfaction was slightly higher among service users (39%).
- Dealings with the building consents team remained more likely for younger residents in 2025 (35% 18-39, 32% 40-64, 21% 65+). Observed differences in satisfaction by age or ward were not significant (due to low sample sizes).
- However, Māori residents were half as likely as non-Māori to report satisfaction with this service (24% vs 51%) – a significant difference.
- Open-ended comments reflect frustration with the perceived lack of responsiveness and excessive procedural hurdles.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's building consents team. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



BUILDING CONSENT TEAM – community feedback



Good service – 93%

Other – 7%

Top reasons for satisfaction with building consents

Process too slow - 45%

Poor staff / communication - 21%

Too much red tape / bureaucracy - 20%

Costs - 7%

Need more staff / resources - 1%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with building consents

6% of respondents provided a comment

19% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of building consents – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

The comments regarding the Building Consents team indicate a prevailing sentiment of dissatisfaction, primarily due to delays and inefficiencies. Many respondents described the process as slow or overly bureaucratic, often using phrases like “too long”, “convoluted”, and “too much red tape”. These comments reflect frustration with the perceived lack of responsiveness and excessive procedural hurdles, suggesting a need for more streamlined, timely, and transparent service delivery within the Building Consents function.

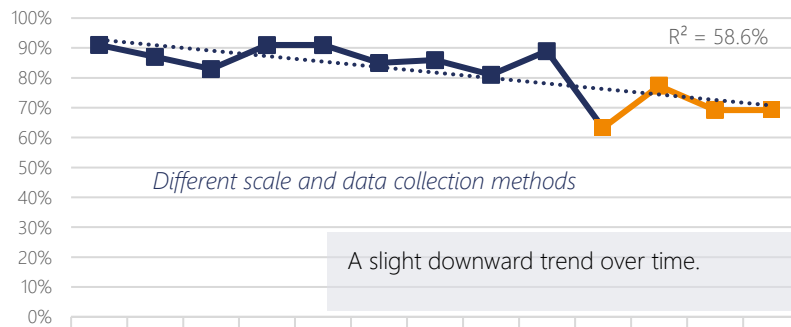
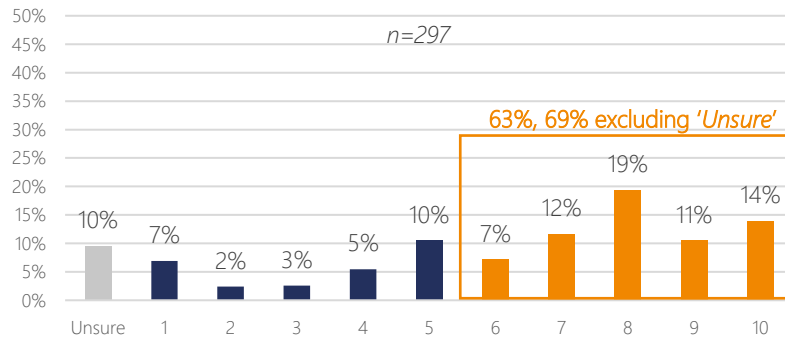


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – resource recovery centre

KPI target 80%
below

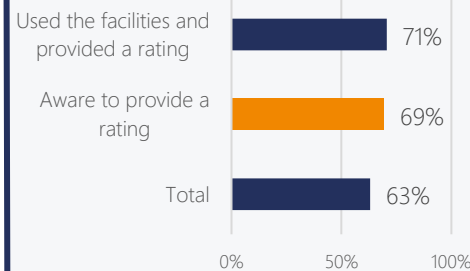


- Resource recovery facilities were among the most used services in 2025 (85%); particularly for Coast residents (93%), and moreso for Māori than non-Māori (91% vs 76%).
- 7-in-10 (69%) of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of Resource Recovery Centre (on average, 6.7 out of 10) – consistent with 2024. Non-users were less satisfied (61% vs 71% of users).
- Satisfaction was higher for Waioweka-Waiotaha and older residents aged 65+ (compared to 18-39s). Māori expressed lower satisfaction (64% vs 76% non-Māori).
- Feedback on Ōpōtiki's Resource Recovery Centres was largely positive, with many residents commending the facilities as well-run, accessible, and useful. However, some respondents noted high costs, limited hours, and inconsistent service as areas needing improvement.

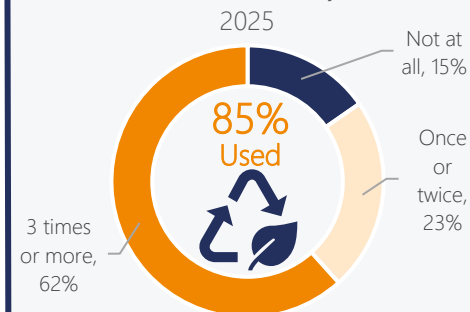


% Satisfied	91%	87%	83%	91%	91%	85%	86%	81%	89%	63%	77%	69%	69%
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025

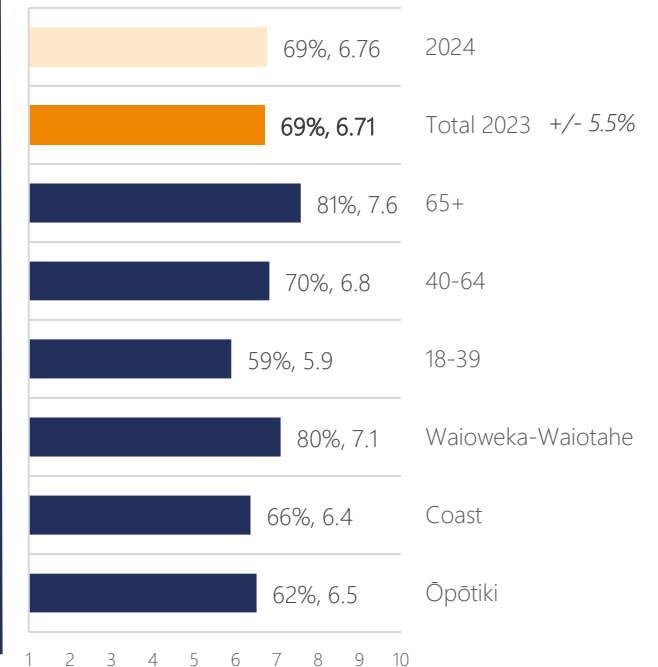
% Satisfied 2025



Used resource recovery centre



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



Respondents were asked to rate Council's Resource Recovery Centres. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE – community feedback



Good facility / service - 70%

Good staff - 53%

Reasonable charges - 11%

Concerns about costs / inconsistent charges - 63%

Good facility / service - 19%

Improvements needed - 13%

Poor service - 8%

Top reasons for satisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

24% of respondents provided a comment

17% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of Resource Recovery Centre – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Feedback on Ōpōtiki's Resource Recovery Centres was largely positive, with many residents commending the facilities as well-run, accessible, and useful. Common praise highlighted good service, tidy presentation, and ease of use. However, some respondents noted high costs, limited hours, and inconsistent service as areas needing improvement. Others mentioned issues with layout, long queues, or the need for a wider range of accepted materials. A small number of comments expressed dissatisfaction with the decision-making process or transparency, while a few simply noted that they used the service without providing detailed feedback. Overall, the centres were viewed as valuable but with room for enhancements in cost, convenience, and operational clarity.

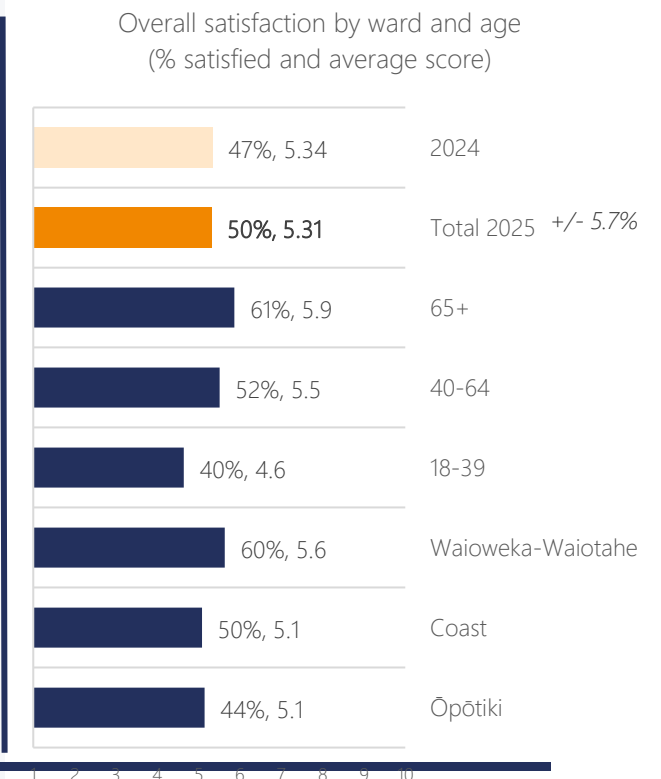
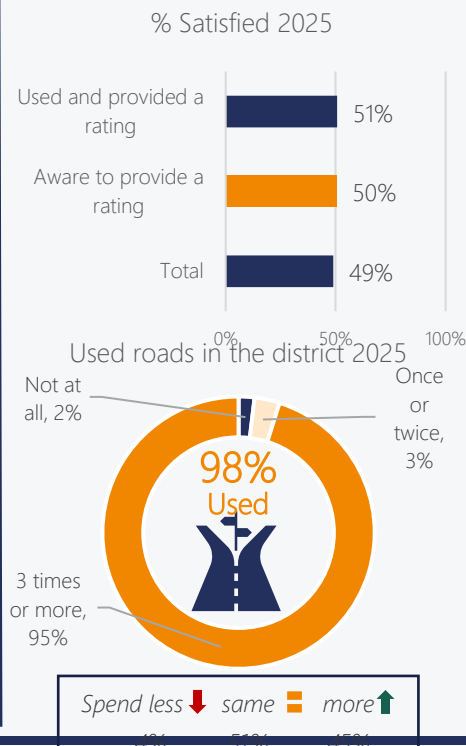
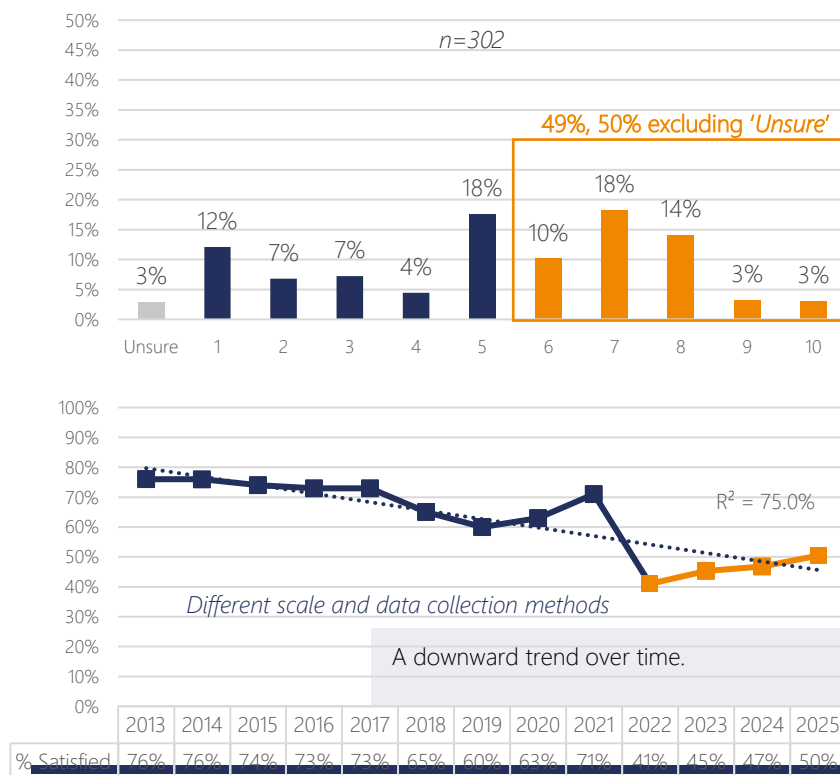


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – safety of district roads

KPI target 80%
below



- Most respondents (98%) indicated using roads in the district. Half (50%) of those who provided a rating were satisfied with safety of district roads (on average, 5.3 out of 10). This represents a gradually improving trend since 2022 (41%) though this is not yet statistically significant.
- Open-ended comments continue to highlight concerns about poor road quality, including issues with sealing and potholes, indicating a strong desire for improvements in surface quality, traffic calming, and ongoing upkeep to enhance road safety.
- Satisfaction continued to vary by ward and age, with greater positivity in 2025 noted among Waioweka-Waiotaha and older (65+) residents.
- Increases over time were mainly measured in Coast (36% 2022 to 50% 2025) and Waioweka-Waiotaha (46% 2022 to 60% 2025) wards, with more consistency in Ōpōtiki.
- Roads remained one of the highest priorities for more funding in 2025 (45% vs 39% 2024), although a similar proportion of residents (51%) preferred spending to remain at the same level.





Respondents were asked to rate safety of the district's roads (excluding state highways). Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.

SAFETY OF DISTRICT ROADS – community feedback



Good condition / service – 71%

Speeding / lack of speed reduction – 19%

Potholes - 34%

Poor quality / sealing / repairs - 28%

Speeding / lack of speed reduction - 20%

Poor street / footpath maintenance - 14%

Unsafe - 13%

Top reasons for satisfaction with road safety

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with road safety

6% of respondents provided a comment

29% of respondents provided a comment

Road safety – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Most comments on the safety of the district's roads highlighted concerns about poor road quality, including issues with sealing and potholes, which were the most frequently mentioned themes. Many residents also noted problems with speeding and a lack of adequate speed-reduction measures, contributing to perceptions of unsafe conditions. While a portion of respondents did acknowledge good road conditions and services, others expressed dissatisfaction with general road and footpath maintenance. Overall, the feedback indicates a strong desire for improvements in surface quality, traffic calming, and ongoing upkeep to enhance road safety.

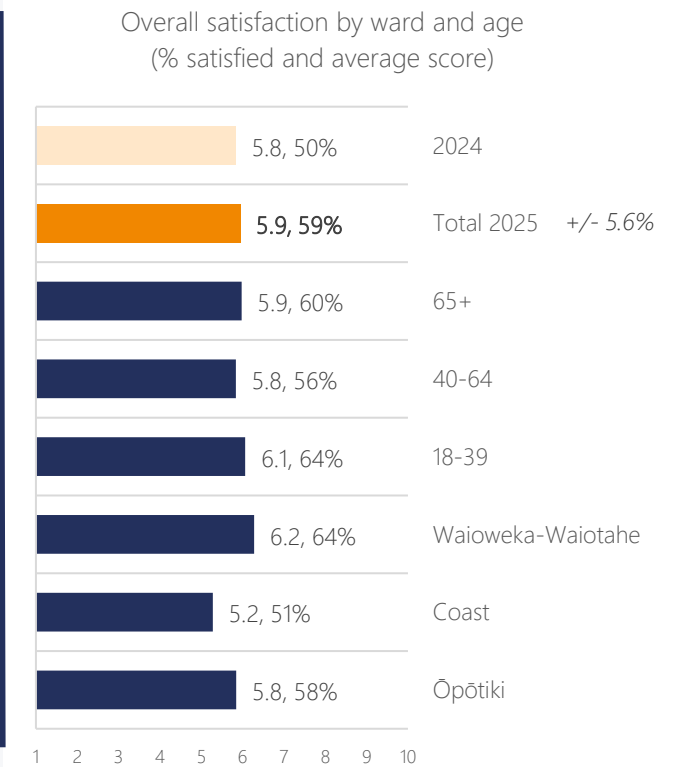
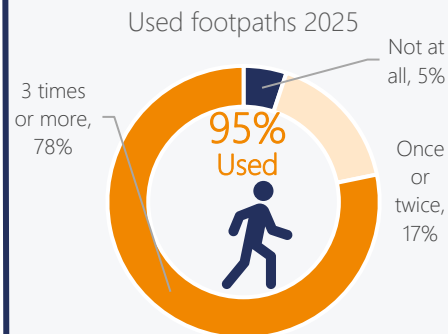
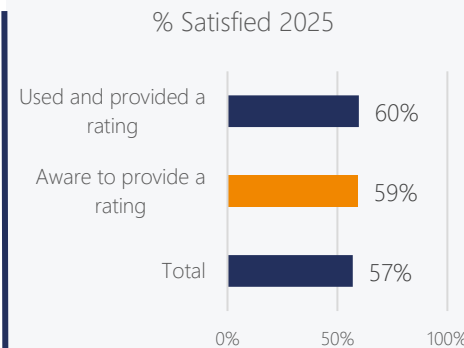
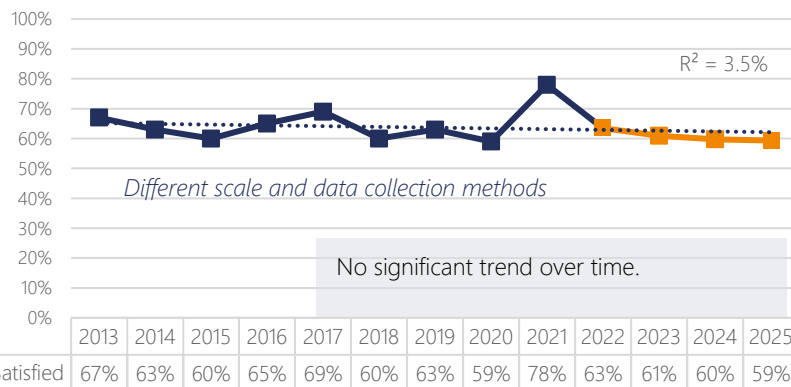
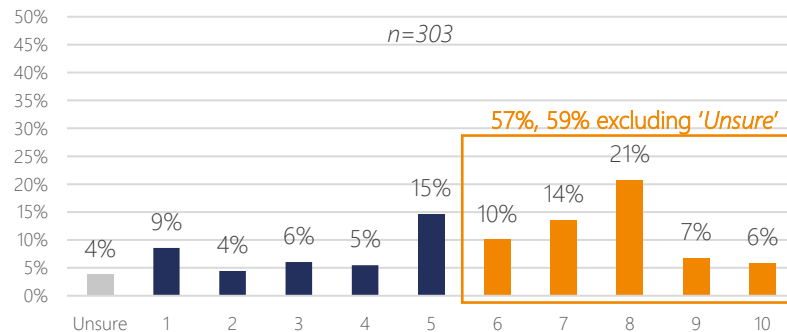


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – footpaths

KPI target 70%
below



- Most respondents (95%) reported using footpaths in 2025, including all 18-39 year olds (100%), but fewer Coast residents (84%).
- 3-in-5 respondents (59%) who provided ratings were satisfied with footpaths in the district (on average, 5.9 out of 10) – making this the 5th highest rated service area in 2025
- Satisfaction with footpaths has remained consistent over the past four years.
- The comments acknowledged recent upgrades and found certain paths to be safe and satisfactory.
- However, a significant number of comments pointed to issues such as uneven surfaces, trip hazards, and the need for repairs or upgrades particularly in areas lacking pedestrian crossings or where tiles were seen as dangerous.
- In this context, satisfaction with footpaths continued to be lowest in Coast ward (51%), though this represented an increase from 2024 (34%) for these residents.
- In part reflecting the Coast results, Māori were also less satisfied overall with footpaths than non-Māori (54% vs 67%).



Respondents were asked to rate Council's provision of footpaths. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



FOOTPATHS – community feedback



Good / no issues / general satisfaction – 62%

New / improved / PGF funded paths good – 33%

Repairs / upgrades needed - 40%

Cleaning / maintenance needed - 27%

Slippery / unsafe - 21%

Lack of footpaths - 19%

Top reasons for satisfaction with footpaths

11% of respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with footpaths

23% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of footpaths – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

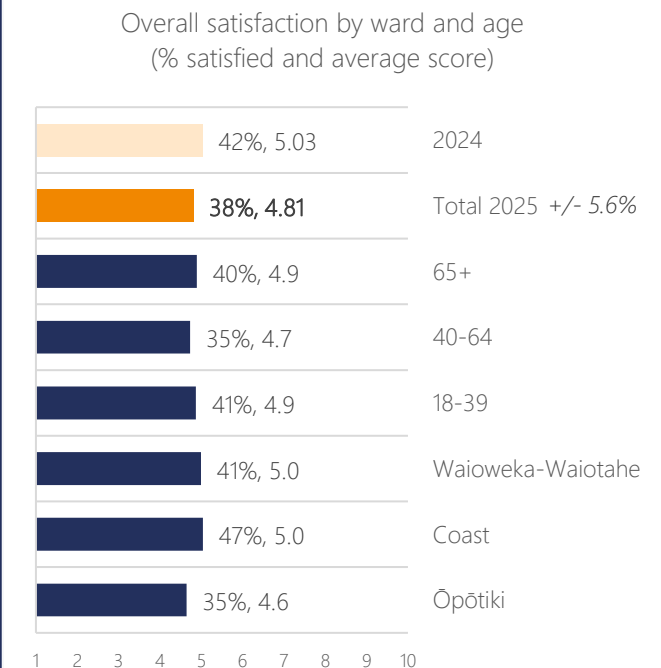
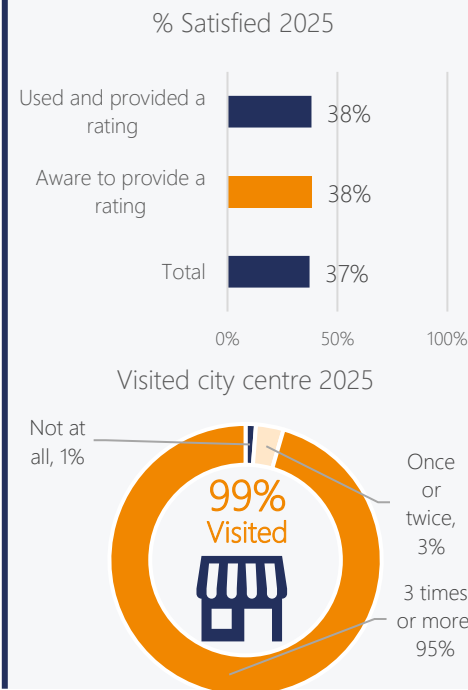
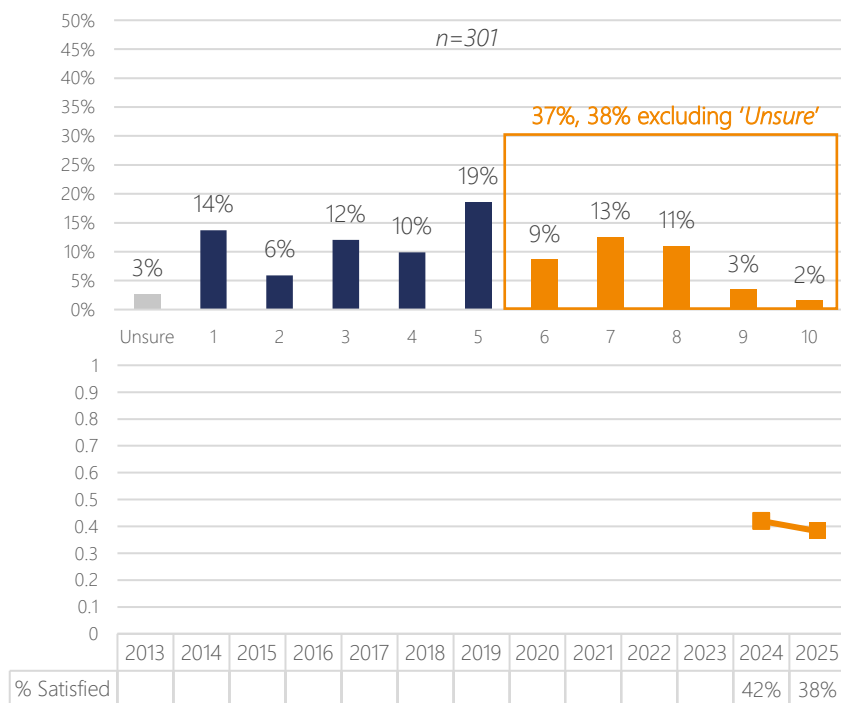
Responses regarding footpaths in the district were mixed. Many residents acknowledged recent upgrades and found certain paths to be safe and satisfactory. However, a significant number of comments pointed to issues such as uneven surfaces, trip hazards, and the need for repairs or upgrades particularly in areas lacking pedestrian crossings or where tiles were seen as dangerous. While some praised the improvements funded through the PGF funding, others emphasised the need for more consistent maintenance and safety enhancements.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – city centre



- The question asking respondents about Council's developing and maintaining of a vibrant town centre was introduced in 2024, and continued in 2025 for its first full year of assessment. Almost all respondents (99%) in 2025 reported visiting the CBD in the last 3 months (throughout the year), with the vast majority (95%) doing so at least three times – the highest rate of use/visitation across the survey in 2025.
- 2-in-5 (38%) of respondents providing ratings were satisfied with the city centre (on average, 4.8 out of 10).
- Satisfaction was generally consistent among resident segments, though slightly higher for Coast residents (47%).
- The comments revealed a mixture of satisfaction and concern. Many residents rated the city centre positively, citing it as "good as is" or expressing no particular issues. However, a significant number raised concerns about infrastructure - particularly footpaths and street works - as well as dissatisfaction with council spending, maintenance, and the lack of appealing shops or vibrancy.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's developing and maintaining a vibrant town centre (as an enjoyable meeting place for all people). Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well
New question introduced in 2024 from Q3.



CITY CENTRE – community feedback



Nothing in particular / Good as is - 63%

CBD / buildings need reinvigoration / beautification – 15%

Tourist / visitor appeal / promotion – 11%

Council spending / priorities – 8%

New facilities / shops / services needed - 7%

Infrastructure / footpaths - 37%

CBD / buildings need reinvigoration / beautification - 32%

Council spending / priorities – 17%

Empty shops / businesses closed - 16%

Nothing in particular / Good as is - 12%

New facilities / shops / services needed - 10%

Tourist / visitor appeal / promotion - 8%

Crime / gangs / homeless - 6%

Top reasons for satisfaction with city centre

6% of respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with city centre

41% of respondents provided a comment

Developing and maintaining a vibrant town centre – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

The findings regarding city centre ratings reveal a mixture of satisfaction and concern. Many residents rated the city centre positively, citing it as “good as is” or expressing no particular issues. However, a significant number raised concerns about infrastructure - particularly footpaths and street works - as well as dissatisfaction with council spending, maintenance, and the lack of appealing shops or vibrancy. Some respondents also highlighted issues with safety, empty buildings, or general underinvestment, suggesting a desire for revitalisation and better urban planning. Overall, while some are content, others feel the city centre lacks functionality, appeal, or prudent development.



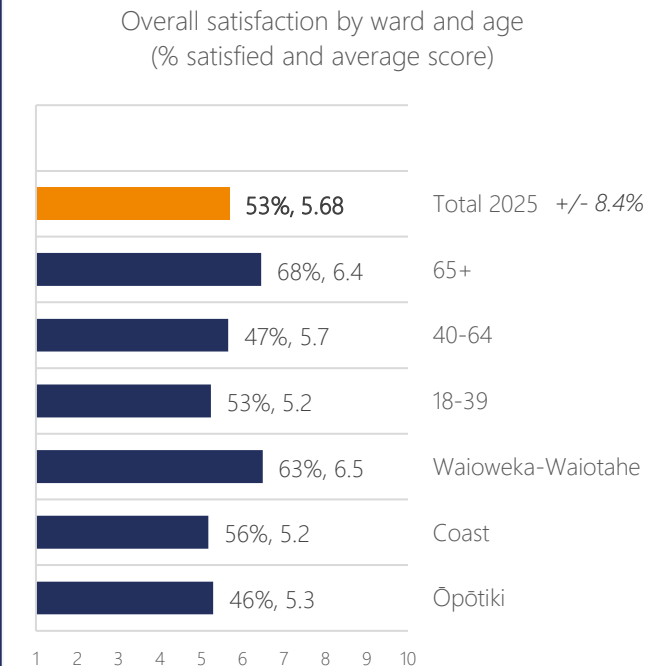
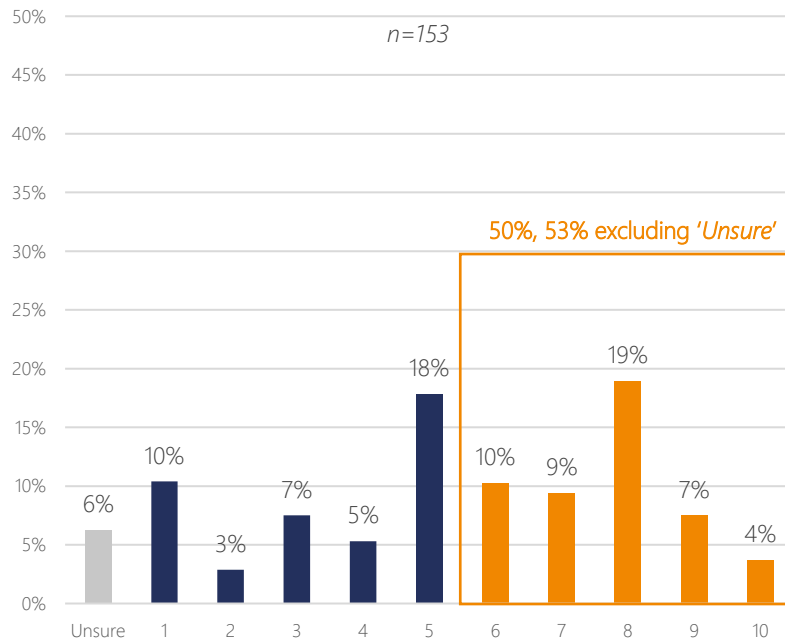
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – parks & reserves

KPI target 75%

below



- New questions introduced in 2025 asked respondents about Council's provision and management of parks and reserves.
- Of those responding to this question (from Q3 and Q4 2025), the majority (86%) indicated using or visiting parks and reserves in the previous 3 months, with over half (56%) doing so at least three times – among the highest usage rates in 2025.
- Of respondents providing ratings, half (53%) were satisfied with parks and reserves (on average, 5.7 out of 10).
- While not statistically significant (due to low partial-year sample sizes), satisfaction with parks and reserves typically differed across wards; highest in Waioweka-Waiotaha (63%) and lowest in Ōpōtiki (46%).
- There was also an apparent trend by age, with higher satisfaction for older residents (68% of 65+ year olds).
- Feedback from residents highlighted a mix of praise and concerns. Overall, responses reflect both appreciation and a call for enhancements in upkeep, functionality, and amenity provision.



Respondents were asked to rate Council's provision of parks and reserves. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well
New question added 2025 Q3 (n=153, two quarters' data available in 2025).



PARKS & RESERVES – community feedback



Well maintained / clean / tidy - 68%

General positive feedback - 16%

Aesthetics / appeal / natural beauty – 9%

Lack of equipment / facilities - 30%

Suggestions for improvement / development - 29%

Poor maintenance / overgrown / unclean - 24%

General negative feedback - 8%

Unsafe / safety issues - 5%

Top reasons for satisfaction with parks & reserves

11% of respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with parks & reserves

26% of respondents provided a comment

Developing and maintaining a vibrant town centre – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

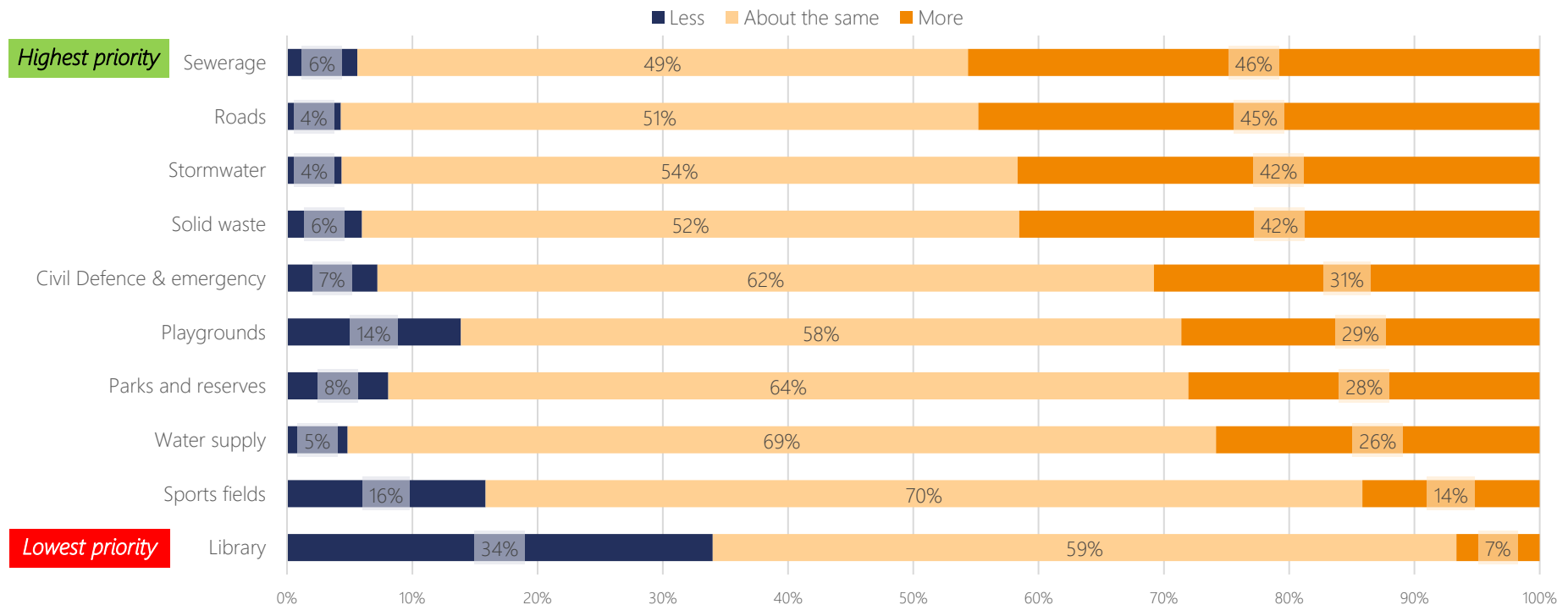
The feedback from residents about Parks and Reserves highlights a mix of praise and concerns. Many respondents commended the spaces for being generally well maintained, clean, and tidy. However, a significant portion expressed dissatisfaction, citing poor maintenance, overgrown areas, or lack of cleanliness. Others mentioned limited recreational infrastructure, suggesting a need for more equipment or facilities. There were also comments about the visual appeal of the parks, with some finding them attractive while others described them as bland or uninviting. A few respondents proposed ideas for improvements, indicating a desire for upgrades or further development. Overall, the responses reflect both appreciation and a call for enhancements in upkeep, functionality, and amenity provision.

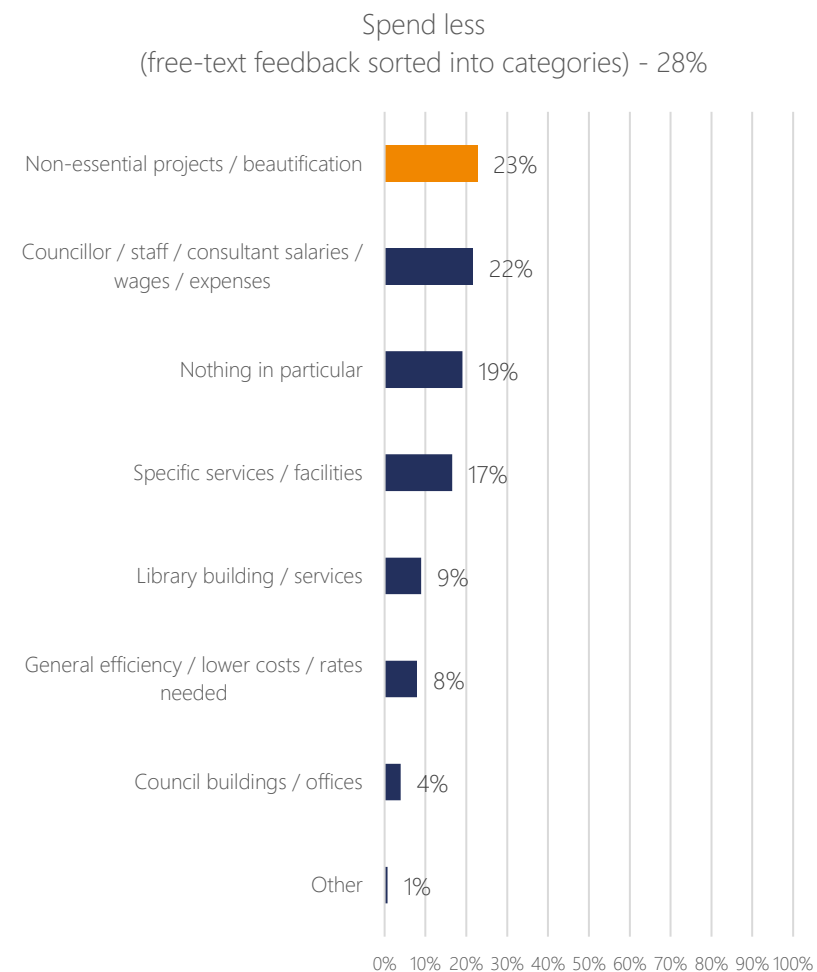
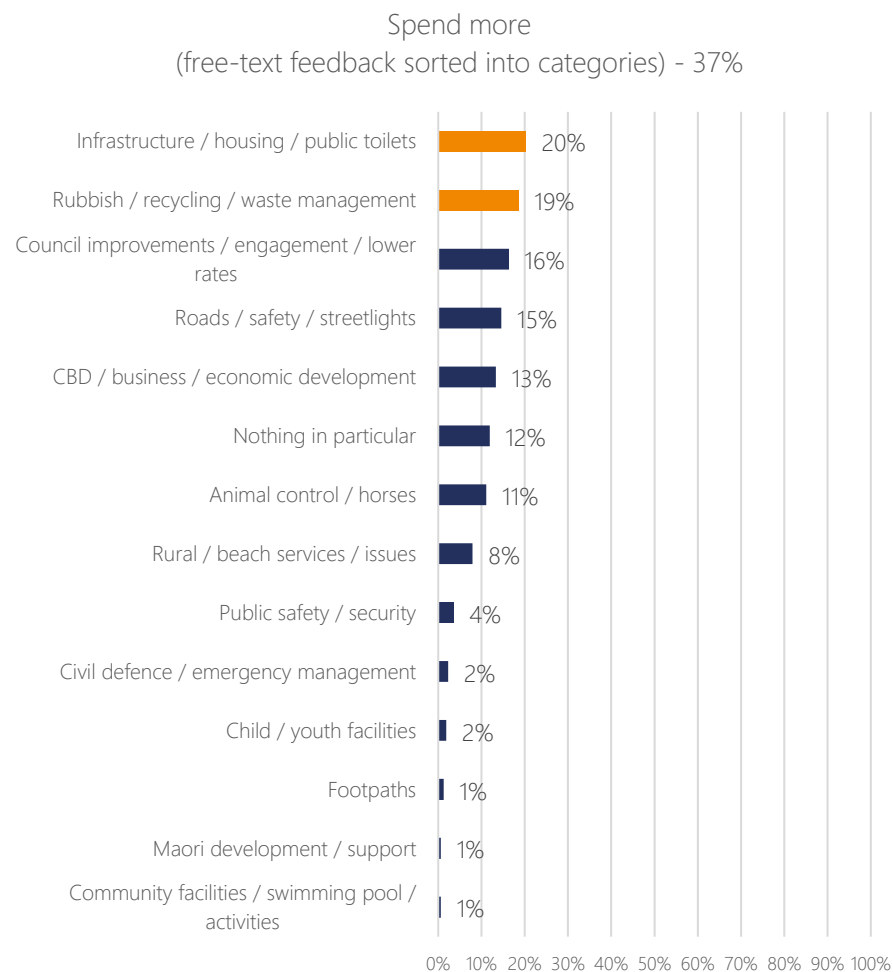


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – spending priorities



- As in 2024, respondents were more inclined to recommend maintained Council spending levels (“about the same”) across all services and facilities, with fewer typically preferring increased spending.
- However, reflecting concerns in recent years, the highest priority investment areas for more spending in 2025 (all above 40%) remained sewerage (46%), roads (45%), stormwater (42%) and waste management (42%). The call for more sewerage funding increased significantly from 2024 (28%), moving this from fourth to first priority for residents in 2025.
- Library facilities remained the area most identified for less Council spending, although more preferred the same amount of spending – collectively reflecting the high degree of satisfaction with existing library services.
- Respondents who were less satisfied with Council performance overall particularly requested more funding for roads (51%), solid waste (48%) and sewerage (43%); but also less funding for library services (49% vs 20% of overall satisfied residents).
- Requests for more funding of sewerage and stormwater were greater from Ōpōtiki residents (53% and 50%, respectively). Coast ward respondents were more likely to suggest more spending on civil defence (47%, though roads and waste were their highest concerns).
- Younger residents (18-39) were most likely to suggest spending more on waste management (57%), parks and reserves (47%) and playgrounds (48%).
- Rural residents’ highest priorities were roads (49%) and managing waste (47%).





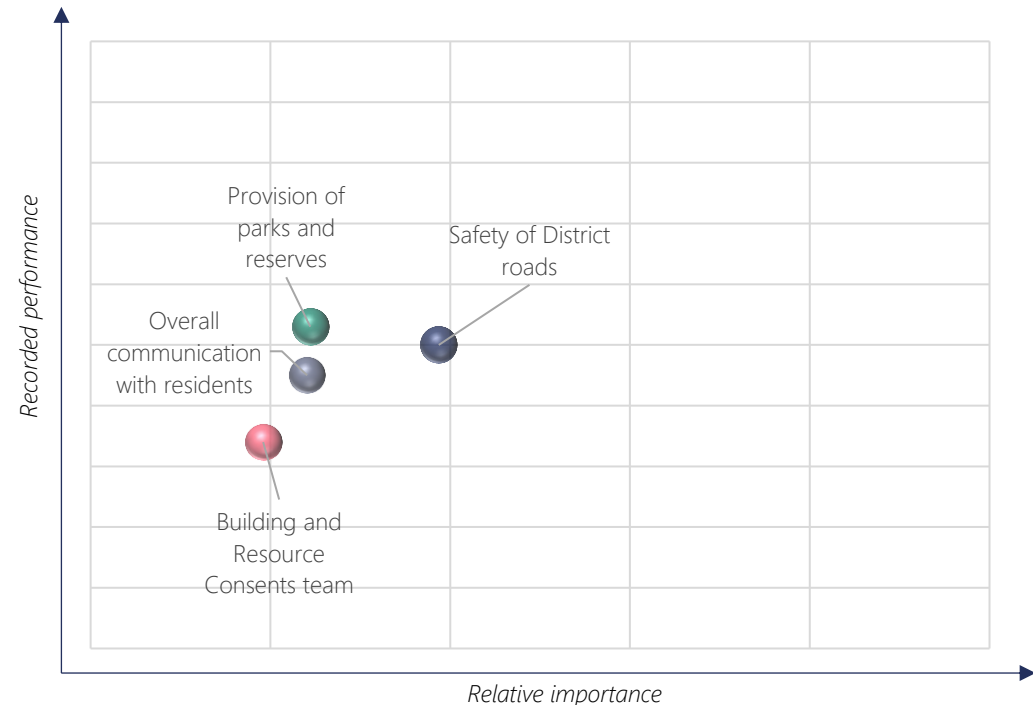
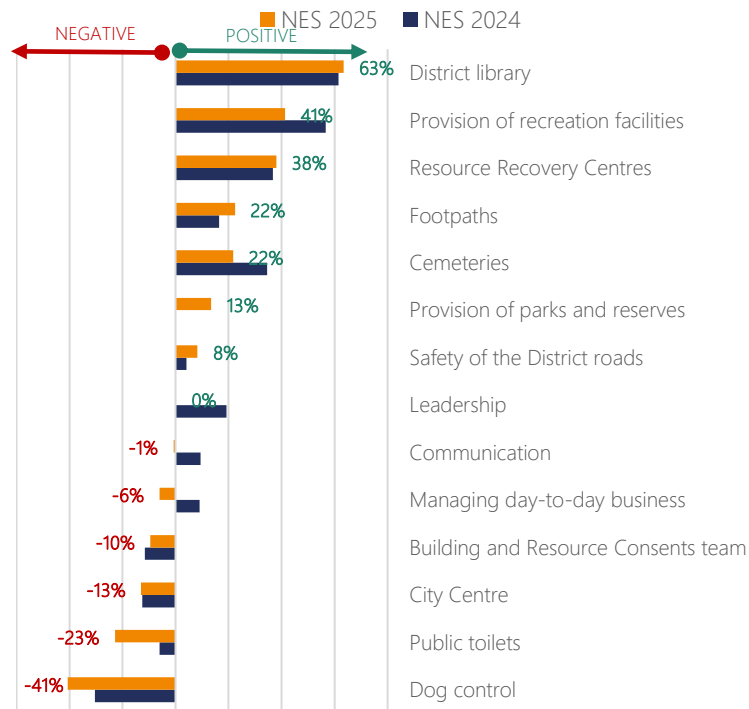
In addition, residents provided other free-text comments in relation to Council spending more (37%) and less (28%).

The most common areas residents would like to see increased spending on include infrastructure such as housing and public toilets (20%), as well as rubbish, recycling, and waste management (19%). Road safety and streetlighting also featured prominently, alongside calls for better council engagement and investment in community facilities like pools and recreational activities. Economic development in the CBD, animal control, and rural or beach services were also frequently mentioned. While a portion of respondents stated there was nothing in particular needing more investment, several others highlighted issues such as public safety, footpaths, and youth facilities.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – potential improvements

- Based on Net Emotional Scores (NES), five areas with negative NES (i.e. more negative than positive perceptions) were identified within the community. The most negative scores were recorded for dog control, public toilets, city centre and the building & resource consents team (generally similar to 2024).
- Footpaths and roads were the only areas with notably improved NES in 2025; leadership, communication and daily management all decreased in 2025, with the latter two areas moving into negative NES territory.
- Across services, the level of impact each service has on overall satisfaction with Council services and facilities varies.
- Four services in 2025 demonstrated the highest relative importance or level of impact, one being the newly introduced attribute related to parks and reserves. Other areas with significant room for improvement were road safety and maintenance, building and resource consents, and overall Council communication, especially engaging with and listening to residents.

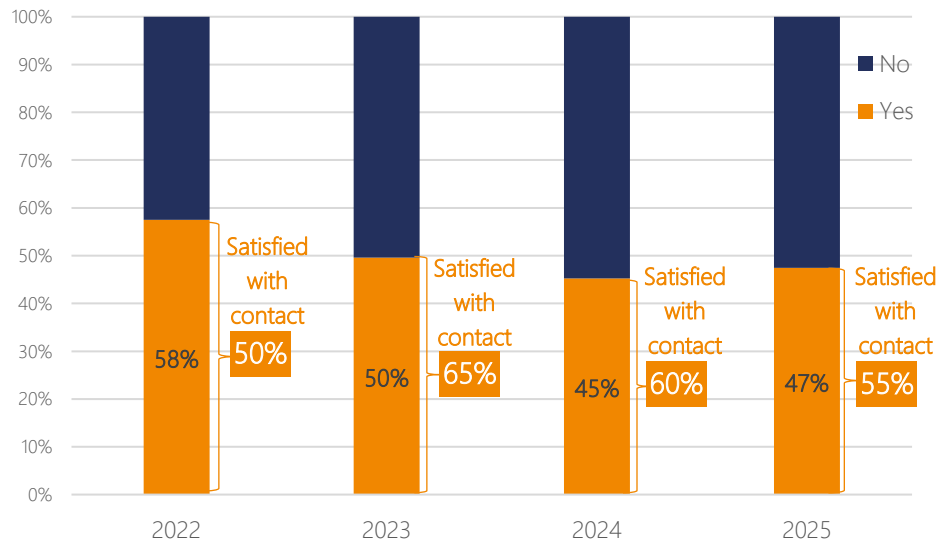




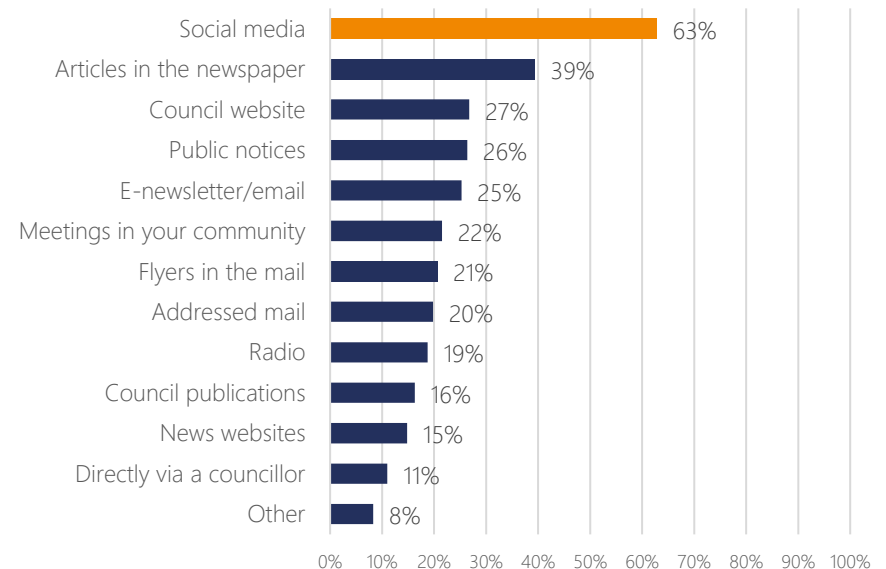
CONTACT WITH COUNCIL

- Overall, about half of 2025 respondents (47%) in the last year stated they had contacted the Council (within the 3-month recall period each quarter).
- Of respondents who had contacted the Council directly, over half (55%) were satisfied with this contact (similar to 60% in 2024). Younger respondents (aged under 40) tended to be less satisfied (49%) compared to respondents aged 40-64 (60%) or 65+ (57%).
- 'Social media' was increasingly the most preferred method for Council communications, for 2-in-3 respondents in 2025 (63%, up from 57% in 2024 and 49% in 2023). 'Articles in the newspaper' (39%) remained the second most preferred method (no change from 2024).
- The contrast in communication preferences between younger and older residents continued; however, social media has become increasingly important even for older residents (ranked 2nd at 37% for those aged 65+) – up from 16% in 2024 when this ranked 4th for these older adults.

Have had direct contact with the
Ōpōtiki District Council?



Preferred communication method



Preferred communication method
18-39 residents

- Social media – 86%
- Public notices – 29%
- Articles in newspaper – 28%

Preferred communication method
40-64 residents

- Social media – 61%
- Articles in newspaper – 41%
- Council website – 32%

Preferred communication method
65+ residents

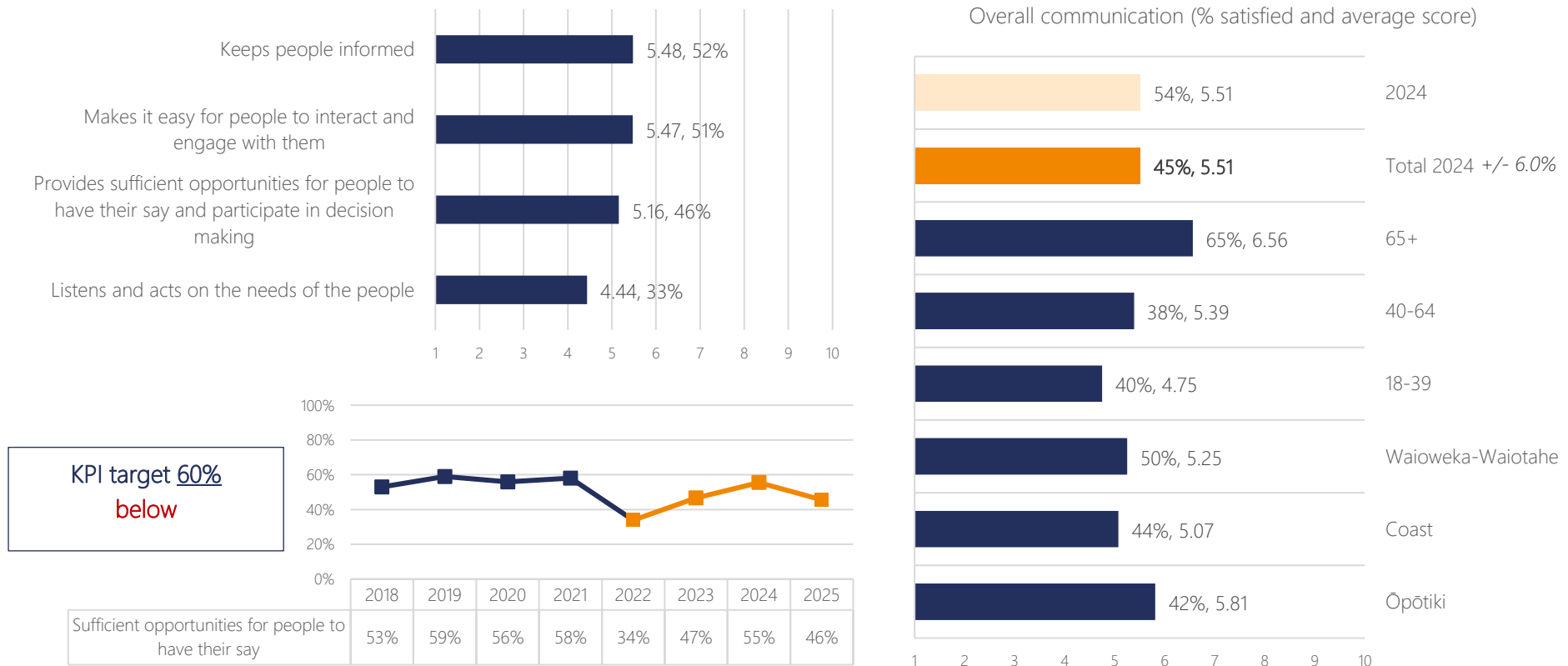
- Articles in newspaper – 50%
- Social media – 37%
- Flyers in the mail – 28%



COMMUNICATION – communication with residents



- Overall, 45% of respondents were satisfied with Council performance in communicating with residents – down from the peak of 54% in 2024, but level with 2023 (46%) and remaining above 2023 levels (37%).
- Satisfaction with communication remained higher among older residents (65+), with the current decrease most notable among 40-64 year olds (38%, down from 55% in 2024), while consistent for 18-39s. A drop was also apparent for Ōpōtiki ward residents (42%, from 60% in 2024), but a return to earlier levels (also 42% in 2023).
- Most communication attributes remained on par with 2024; keeping people informed (52%) the highest rated in 2025 but slightly down from 2024 (59%). Providing opportunities for people to have their say also dipped back down slightly (46%) but consistent with 2023; but lower still for younger 18-39s in 2025 (35%).
- Among those dissatisfied with Council services overall, just 1-in-7 (14%) expressed satisfaction with communication overall (compared to 76% of those satisfied with service provision overall).



Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in the communication areas. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.

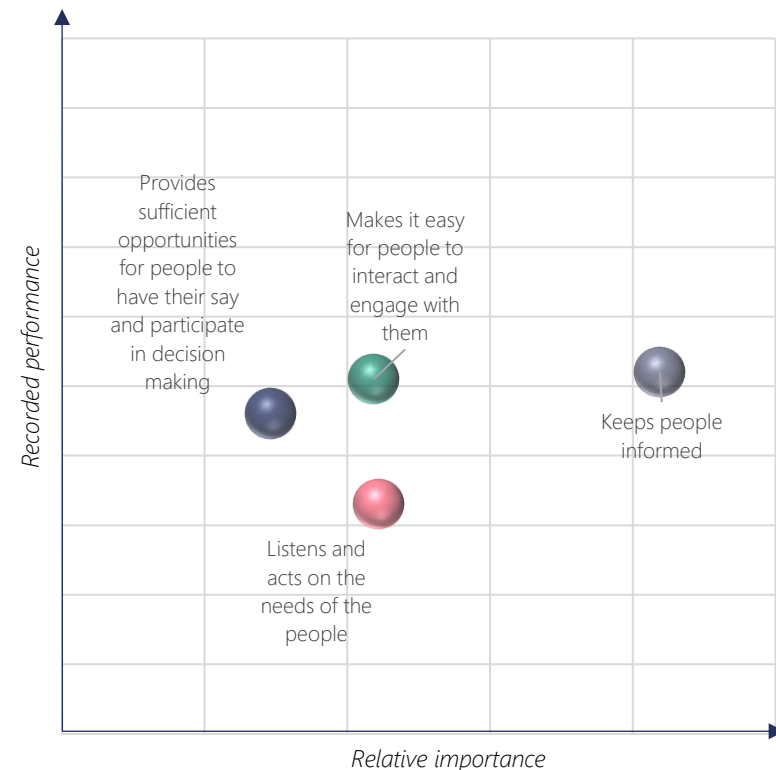
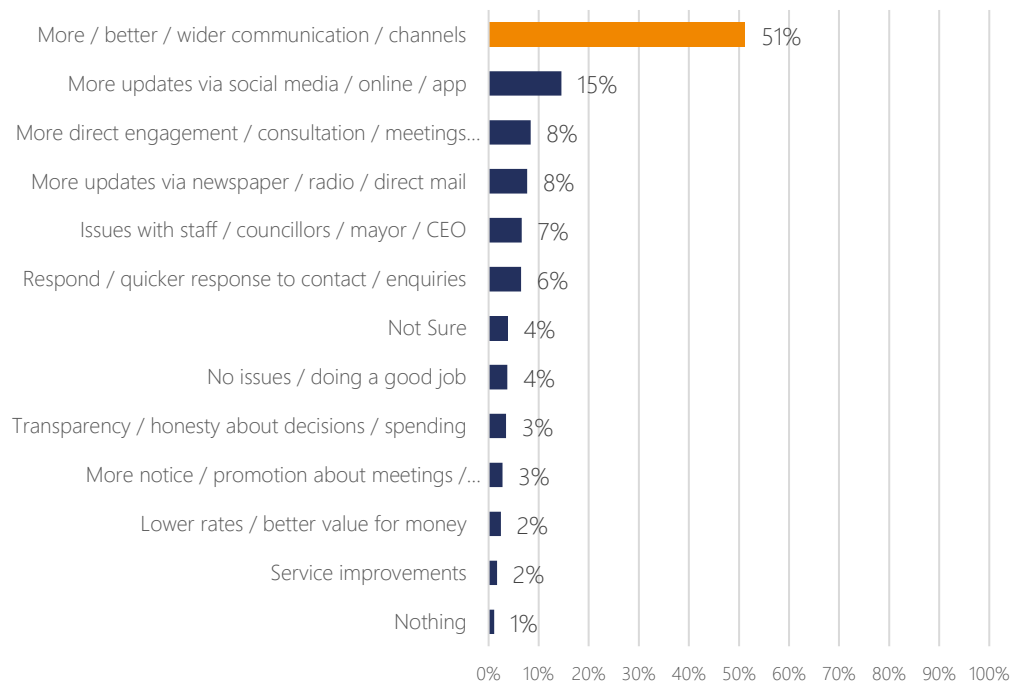


COMMUNICATION – improvements



- All four related statements significantly contributed to overall satisfaction with communication. One statement in particular exhibited greater improvement potential (*'listens and acts on the needs of the people'*) – with the pattern of results very similar to 2024.
- 69% of residents provided further comments in relation to communication improvements.
- The top cited improvement was *'more / better / wider communication and/or channels'*.
- Most respondents recommended that the Council improve communication by providing more or broader updates through a range of channels, including social media, radio, newspapers, and direct mail. Some also called for greater transparency, better responsiveness, and more direct engagement with the community, such as through public meetings or consultations. A smaller group mentioned issues with Council staff or leadership, while a few respondents indicated they were satisfied or unsure about what could be improved.

Suggested communication improvements



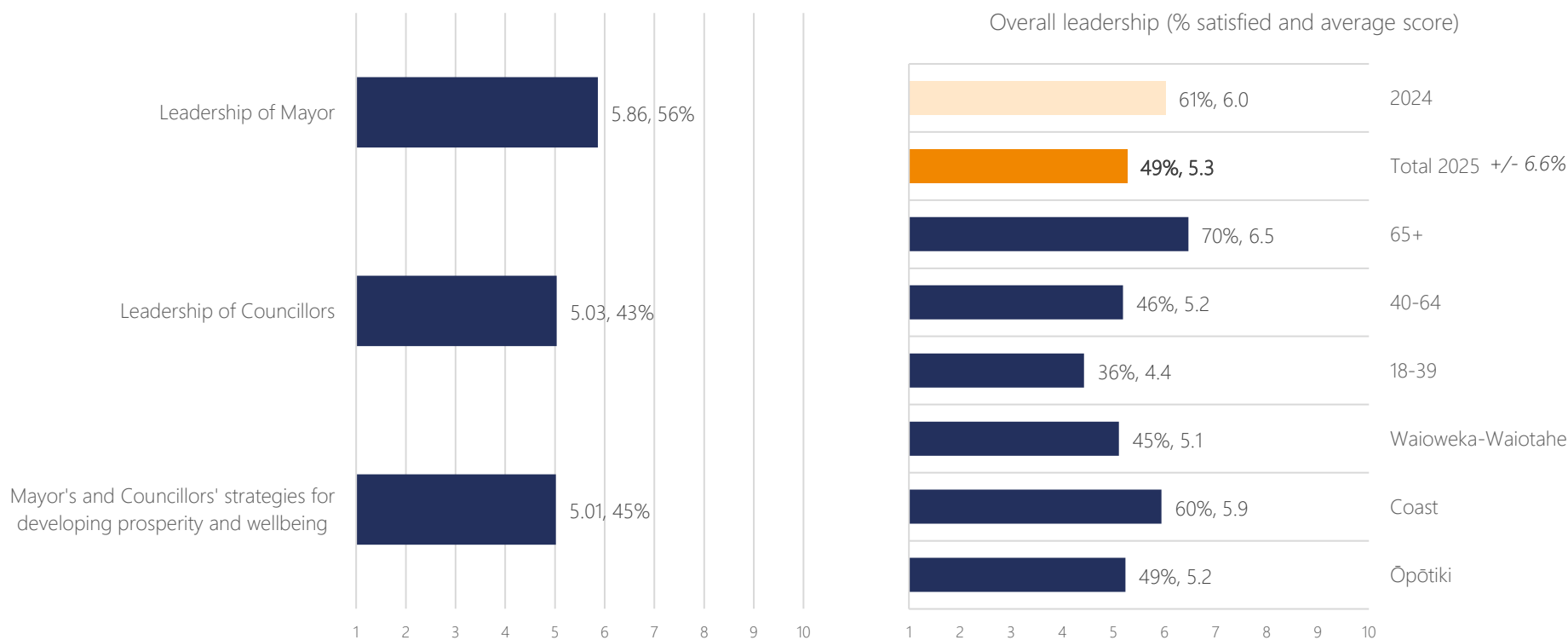


COUNCIL LEADERSHIP — performance

KPI target 75%
below



- In 2025, satisfaction with leadership of the Mayor (56%) dropped significantly (from 68% in 2024), albeit returning to a similar level as 2023 (60%) and remaining above the 2022 result (37%).
- Satisfaction with Councillors (43%) and prosperity and wellbeing strategies (45%) were slightly (not significantly) below 2024 and 2023 levels.
- Due to the influence of Mayoral leadership perceptions, satisfaction with overall leadership also fell in 2025 (49%, down from 61% in 2024), but in line with 2023 (55%) and remaining above 2022 (41%). This satisfaction was consistently lower among respondents aged under 65.
- Among those dissatisfied with Council services overall, just 1-in-5 (18%) expressed satisfaction with leadership overall (compared to 77% of those satisfied with service provision overall).



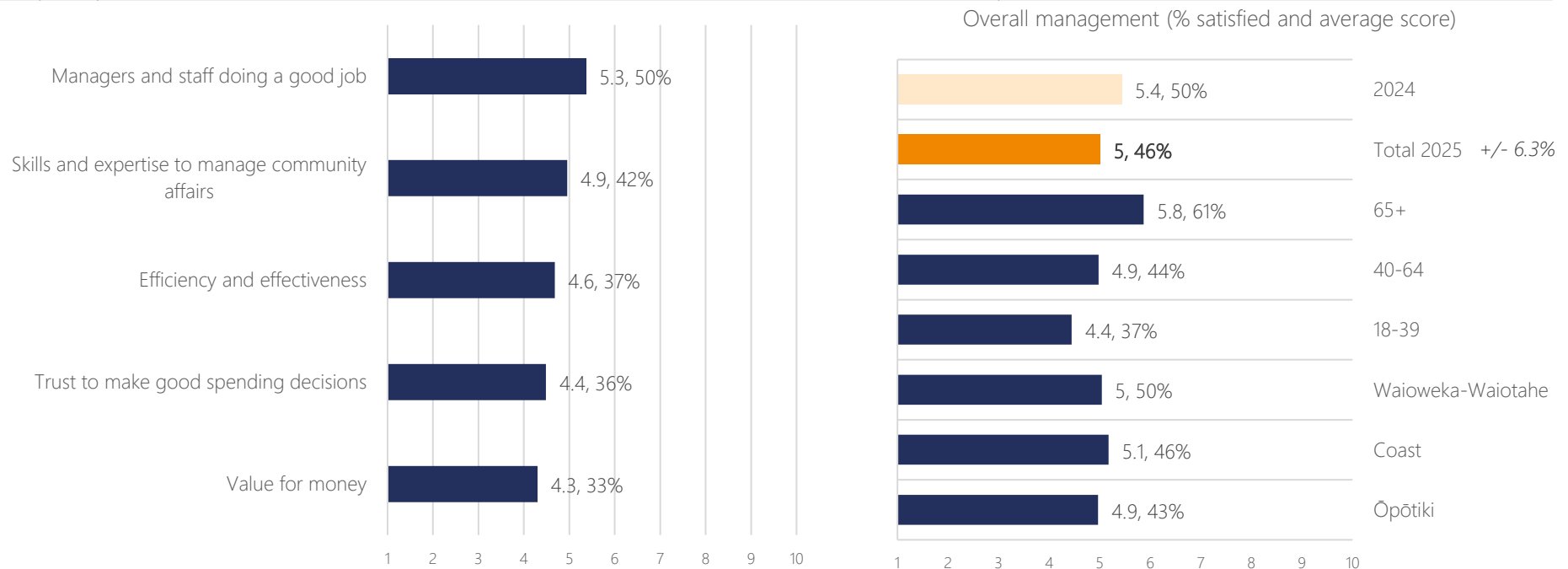
Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in relation to leadership. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



MANAGEMENT – day-to-day performance



- Overall, half of respondents (46%) were satisfied with Council's performance in managing day-to-day business (similar to 50% in 2024).
- Most management attributes showed satisfaction ratings consistent with 2024 and previous years. However, 'efficiency and effectiveness' (37%) continued its decline from 2024 (46%) and peak in 2023 (54%).
- Value for money remained one of the lowest scoring measures across the survey in 2025 (despite consistency with previous years), so consistently represented an opportunity for improvement across all resident subgroups – especially in the context of noted rates rises and other fee increases.
- Overall, satisfaction with Council day-to-day management was consistent across wards and most other demographic groups. Age remained a significant factor, with younger respondents (18-39) being the least satisfied with Council management overall, and particularly with value for money (25%), efficiency and effectiveness (27%), and trust in spending decisions (35%).
- Māori were also less satisfied than non-Māori overall (39% vs 55%).
- Among those dissatisfied with Council services overall, just 1-in-5 (20%) expressed satisfaction with management overall (compared to 70% of those satisfied with service provision overall).

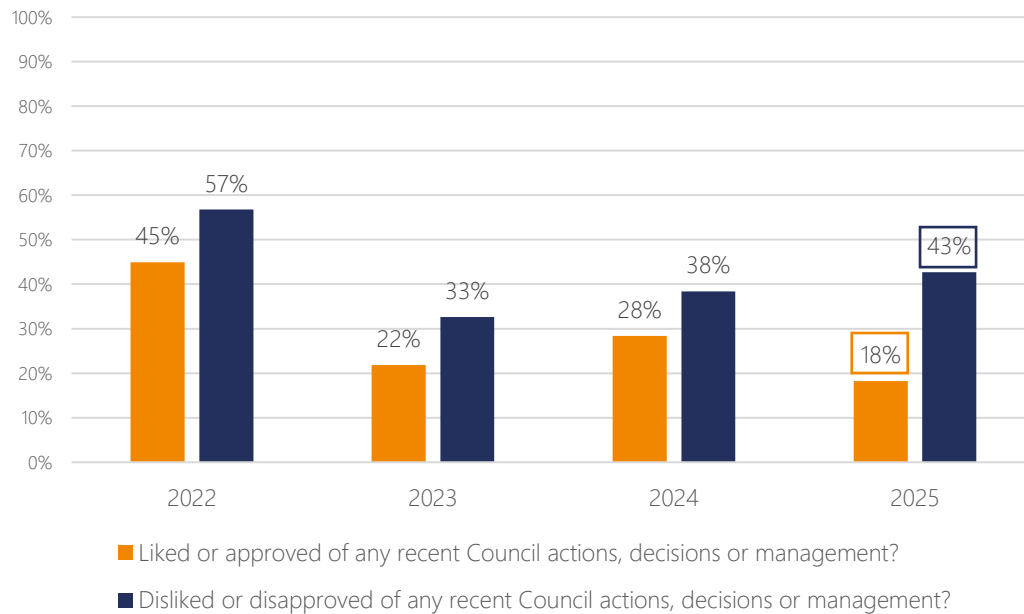


Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in relation to day-to-day management. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



POLICY AND DIRECTION

- Compared to 2023 and 2024, fewer respondents in 2025 reported *approving* of any Council decisions or actions, while more reported *disapproving* of any such decisions – suggesting greater disaffection in public opinion overall.
- 1-in-5 respondents (18%) expressed **approval** of recent Council actions. This included town centre upgrades, particularly improvements to the main street and surrounding areas. Positive feedback also highlighted road and footpath maintenance, enhanced service provision, and upgrades to community facilities such as parks and the wharf, with specific appreciation for initiatives supporting Māori wards and cultural inclusion.
- 2-in-5 respondents (43%) expressed **disapproval**. Town centre upgrades proved to be divisive, also sparking the most mentioned public concern. Rates increases (and related spending concerns) were also a more clear-cut source of resident disapproval, amongst a wide range of other identified issues.



- Town centre upgrades
- Service provision
- Facility / skatepark / playground / parks upgrades
- Council / Mayor performance / communication
- Harbour / wharf development
- Road / footpath maintenance
- Māori wards
- Events / Matariki / Waitangi Day
- Retaining library service / hours

Liked or approved

- Town centre upgrades
- Rates increases
- Council spending / lack of action / decision making
- Service provision / facilities / maintenance
- Waste / Resource Recovery management / fees
- Animal control / registration
- Harbour / wharf / marina upgrades
- Roads / maintenance / speed limits
- Environment / land / property issues
- New Council building
- Reduced library / i-Site hours / service

Disliked or disapproved