Ōpōtiki District Council

2025-26 Resident Survey

| SIL Research

May 2026

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Ōpōtiki District Council
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE

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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 2025 and 2026. Multiple data collection methods were utilised to ensure residents were well-represented. A total of n=300 responses were used in the final 2026 annual analysis. The main findings were as follows.

Key headlines:

- Overall satisfaction remains stable, but underlying community divides persist
- Highly visible community services continue to perform strongly, reinforcing positive perceptions of Council
- Infrastructure and regulatory services remain key sources of dissatisfaction and reputational risk
- Day-to-day management, the city centre, and parks & reserves are key drivers with greatest influence on overall satisfaction
- Perceptions of Council management and value for money remain a significant challenge
- Leadership perceptions are moderate overall, with stronger sentiment toward the Mayor than wider governance
- Communication and responsiveness emerged as crucial opportunities for improvement
- Residents continue to prioritise investment in core infrastructure and visible local improvements

Main findings in 2026:

- **Overall satisfaction with Council services and facilities in 2026 remained moderate and broadly unchanged from recent years**, with around half of residents (52%) satisfied overall and results remaining comparable with national benchmarks for local government. Satisfaction fluctuated through the year, peaking in Q3 before returning to average levels by Q4, suggesting resident sentiment remained responsive to changing local conditions and visible Council activity. However, clear demographic disparities continued to shape overall perceptions. Younger residents, Māori residents, and in some cases Coast ward residents consistently expressed lower satisfaction across many evaluation areas, indicating that Council experiences and expectations were not being felt equally across the community. These patterns suggest future improvement efforts should prioritise more targeted engagement and service responsiveness for these resident groups.

- **The strongest performing service areas in 2026 continued to be highly used community amenities, particularly the District library (89% satisfaction), Resource Recovery Centres (78%), recreation facilities (74%), parks and reserves (70%), and cemeteries (65%).** These services achieved high satisfaction ratings and generally maintained or improved performance over time, with several recording their best results to date. Importantly, residents who directly used these services (especially library and resource recovery) were typically even more satisfied than non-users, indicating that service delivery quality was reinforcing confidence once residents engaged directly with Council facilities. Libraries in particular stood out as a flagship Council service, maintaining exceptionally strong ratings even among residents otherwise dissatisfied with Council overall. These results suggest Council's investment in visible, practical community facilities continues to generate goodwill and social value, and that maintaining service quality in these areas remains important to broader Council reputation.

- **The weakest performing services in 2026 were consistently dog control (20%), Building Consents team (38%), the City Centre (42%), public toilets (44%), roads (50%), and footpaths (52%).** These areas not only recorded comparatively low satisfaction, but also generated the most negative emotional sentiment across the survey. Dog control in particular remained the lowest rated service area overall, generating the most negative sentiment (lowest net emotional sentiment, or NES) with concerns focused on public safety and perceived lack of responsiveness. Infrastructure-related services such as roads, footpaths, and the CBD were especially important because they were almost universally used by residents, meaning dissatisfaction in these areas had broad visibility and likely disproportionate influence on overall Council sentiment. Feedback highlighted concerns around maintenance quality, accessibility, incomplete infrastructure, cleanliness, and perceived delays in improvements. These findings indicate that residents continue to judge Council heavily on the delivery of core "everyday" infrastructure and regulatory functions, and that visible improvements in these areas are likely to generate the greatest uplift in public confidence.

- **Not all services contributed equally to overall perceptions of Council performance: the strongest drivers of overall satisfaction in 2026 were Council's management of day-to-day business, City Centre facilities and enhancements, and parks and reserves.** Improvements in these areas are likely to have the greatest impact on lifting overall resident sentiment. Parks and reserves represented a particularly positive opportunity, combining relatively high satisfaction with strong influence on overall perceptions and improved emotional sentiment over time. In contrast, the City Centre represented a significant reputational vulnerability because of its universal usage, lower satisfaction, and strong influence on perceptions of Council performance. These findings suggest Council should prioritise highly visible projects and operational improvements in areas residents encounter frequently in daily life.

- **Residents continued to express relatively low confidence in Council's day-to-day management and spending decisions.** Satisfaction with management remained below 50% across all related attributes, while perceptions of value for money fell to their lowest recorded level in 2026 (just 31% satisfaction). Concerns about rates increases, spending priorities, and trust in decision-making were recurring themes throughout both quantitative and qualitative feedback. Younger residents and Māori residents were notably less satisfied with Council's efficiency, expertise, and spending decisions, suggesting these groups may feel particularly disconnected from current Council priorities or outcomes. Residents dissatisfied overall were overwhelmingly negative about management performance (13%, compared to 78% among those satisfied with Council services overall), indicating that operational confidence and perceptions of financial stewardship are closely tied to broader Council reputation. These findings reinforce the importance of demonstrating transparent decision-making, practical outcomes, and visible evidence that rates expenditure is delivering community benefit.

- **Resident sentiment toward Council leadership remained stable but moderate in 2026.** Satisfaction with Mayoral leadership (58% overall) continued to outperform perceptions of Councillors (52%) and Council strategies (46%), suggesting residents distinguished between individual leadership visibility and broader governance performance. However, leadership satisfaction remained significantly lower among younger residents and Māori residents, mirroring patterns seen throughout the survey. Residents dissatisfied with Council services overall expressed particularly low confidence in leadership (16%, compared to 84% among those satisfied with Council services overall), indicating that governance perceptions are strongly linked to operational performance and service delivery experiences. Overall, the findings suggest Council leadership would benefit from greater visibility, stronger communication of strategic direction, and more tangible demonstration of responsiveness to community concerns.
- **Communication remained one of the most influential areas shaping resident perceptions, yet overall satisfaction with Council communication stayed below 50% and below previous peak levels**. Residents particularly questioned whether Council listens and acts on community needs, with this attribute again identified as the weakest-performing communication measure (41% satisfaction) and the area with greatest improvement potential. Qualitative feedback consistently called for communication that was more proactive, timely, accessible, transparent, and genuinely two-way. Residents wanted clearer updates on projects, decisions, emergencies, and spending priorities, alongside better follow-up when contacting Council directly. Satisfaction with direct contact with Council has also declined over recent years (currently 51% in 2026, down from 65% in 2023), reinforcing concerns around responsiveness and customer service experiences. Importantly, communication preferences remained diverse, with social media leading overall but residents also emphasising the importance of print, email, newsletters, radio, and face-to-face engagement. These results suggest Council's future communications strategy should focus not only on increasing information availability, but also on building trust through responsiveness, visibility, and evidence that resident feedback influences decisions.
- **Consistent with previous years, residents generally preferred maintaining current service funding levels overall, but infrastructure-related services remained the strongest priorities for additional investment.** Roads remained the dominant spending priority (49% of respondents selected this for more funding, followed by stormwater (37%), sewerage (37%), civil defence (36%), and waste management (32%). Dissatisfied residents, younger residents, and Coast ward residents were particularly likely to advocate for increased spending on infrastructure and recreational facilities, reflecting stronger dissatisfaction with service quality in these areas. In contrast, libraries - despite being the highest-rated service overall - were most commonly identified as suitable for reduced spending (31%), likely reflecting perceptions that these services are already performing well. Collectively, these findings suggest residents are primarily seeking practical improvements to visible infrastructure, maintenance, and resilience-related services, rather than expansion of already high-performing community amenities.

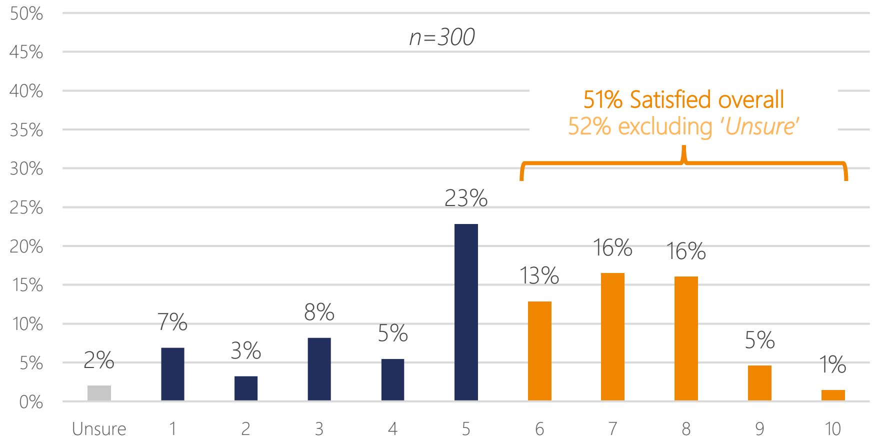
Overall, the 2025-26 resident survey reflected a community with moderate but stable satisfaction toward Council services and leadership, supported by strong ratings for valued community amenities and facilities. Residents continued to highly value services such as libraries, recreation facilities, parks and reserves, and Resource Recovery Centres, demonstrating the positive impact of visible and well-maintained community services on overall Council reputation. However, the survey also highlighted ongoing concerns around core infrastructure, regulatory services, communication, and perceptions of value for money. Roads, footpaths, public toilets, dog control, the City Centre, and consent-related services remained the strongest sources of dissatisfaction, particularly among younger residents, Māori residents, and those dissatisfied with Council overall. The findings reinforced that residents place strong emphasis on practical day-to-day service delivery, responsiveness, transparency, and evidence that Council listens and acts on community concerns. While several areas showed improvement in 2026, particularly parks and reserves, public toilets, and Resource Recovery Centres, the results suggest Council has a clear opportunity to strengthen community confidence through continued focus on visible infrastructure improvements, stronger communication, and improved customer experience by:

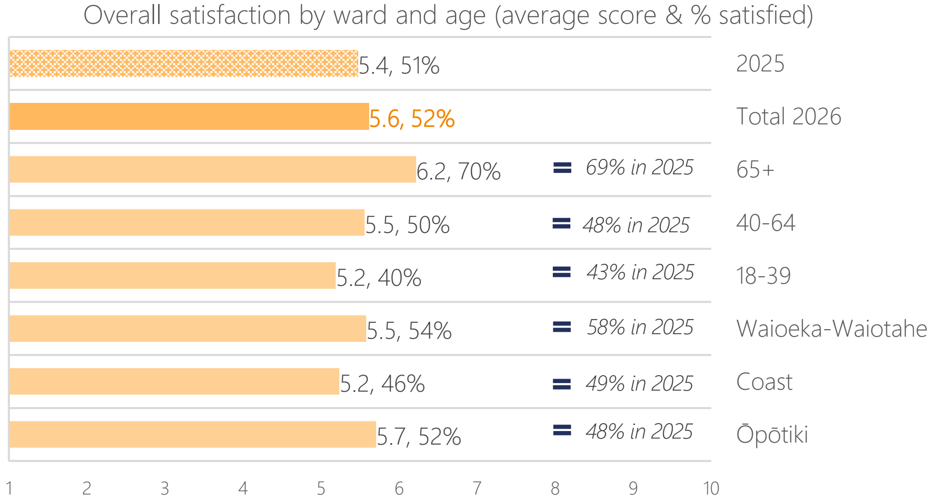
- Prioritising visible improvements to core infrastructure and public spaces.
- Strengthening responsiveness, communication, and community engagement.
- Improving customer experience within regulatory and compliance services.
- Addressing equity gaps in resident experience and perceptions – particularly for Māori, younger residents, and Coast communities.

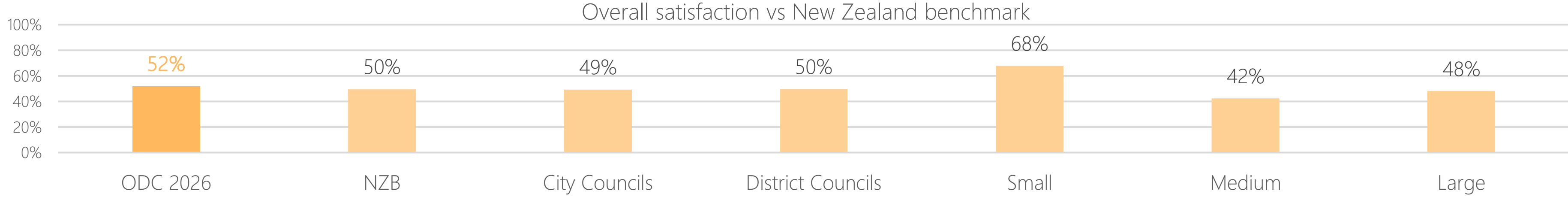
Despite ongoing challenges, the 2026 results also highlighted many positive foundations for the year ahead. Residents continued to strongly support a range of community facilities and acknowledged visible improvements in several service areas, demonstrating that focused investment and responsive service delivery can positively shift public sentiment over time. **With continued attention on core infrastructure, communication, and customer experience, Council has a strong opportunity to further strengthen resident satisfaction and community confidence in the coming year.**

OVERALL SATISFACTION

- In 2026, 51% of respondents were satisfied with overall services received from the Ōpōtiki District Council (on average rating 5.6 out of 10). This was consistent with 2025 (51%) and recent years. While slightly lower than the 2023 peak (59%), the current result was within the margin of error and therefore not significantly below that benchmark.
- Through the 2026 survey year, overall satisfaction rose from Q1 and Q2 (both 44%) to a peak in Q3 (59%), before dropping slightly in Q4 (51%) – aligning with the average annual result.
- Satisfaction in 2026 was generally consistent across wards, close to the 50% level in all cases.
- However, age remained a clear differentiator, remaining significantly lower for younger residents aged 18-39 (39%) and 40-64 (50%) compared to those aged 65 years or older (69%).
- A distinct difference was also observed by ethnicity, with Māori significantly less satisfied than non-Māori (44% vs 62% overall).
- The current Ōpōtiki result remained on par with the NZ benchmark average (50%), though below the national results for Councils with small (under 30,000) populations.







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

Public library (p.27)	Resource Recovery Centre (p.31)	Recreation facilities (p.19)	Parks & reserves (p.29)	Cemeteries (p.25)
ODC 2026: 89% / 8.2	ODC 2026: 78% / 7.0	ODC 2026: 74% / 6.9	ODC 2026: 70% / 6.5	ODC 2026: 65% / 6.5
ODC 2025: 86% / 8.0	ODC 2025: 69% / 6.7	ODC 2025: 70% / 6.6	ODC 2025: 53% / 5.7	ODC 2025: 65% / 6.2
NZB 2025: 78% / 7.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 64% / 6.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 74% / 7.0	NZB 2025: 76% / 7.0 ↓	NZB 2025: 78% / 7.3 ↓

Leadership of Mayor (p.47)	Easy for people to interact (p.45)	Footpaths (p.35)	Leadership of Councillors (p.47)	District road safety (p.33)
ODC 2026: 58% / 6.0	ODC 2026: 52% / 5.7	ODC 2026: 52% / 5.5	ODC 2026: 52% / 5.6	ODC 2026: 50% / 5.3
ODC 2025: 56% / 5.9	ODC 2025: 51% / 5.8	ODC 2025: 59% / 5.9	ODC 2025: 43% / 5.0	ODC 2025: 50% / 5.3
NZB 2025: 45% / 4.8 ↑	NZB 2025: 43% / 4.9 ↑	NZB 2025: 55% / 5.7 ↓	NZB 2025: 39% / 4.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 43% / 4.9 ↑

Keeps people informed (p.45)	Managers and staff (p.48)	Opportunities for people to have their say (p.45)	Strategies for developing prosperity (p.48)	Public toilets (p.21)
ODC 2026: 49% / 5.4	ODC 2026: 49% / 5.5	ODC 2026: 48% / 5.4	ODC 2026: 46% / 5.2	ODC 2026: 44% / 5.3
ODC 2025: 52% / 5.5	ODC 2025: 50% / 5.3	ODC 2025: 46% / 5.2	ODC 2025: 45% / 5.0	ODC 2025: 33% / 4.3
NZB 2025: 46% / 5.1 ↑	NZB 2025: 43% / 5.0 ↑	NZB 2025: 43% / 4.9 ↑	NZB 2025: 33% / 4.1 ↑	NZB 2025: 60% / 6.0 ↓

Efficiency and effectiveness (p.48)	City Centre (p.37)	Skills and expertise (p.48)	Listens and acts on the needs of the people (p.45)	Good spending decisions (p.48)	Building consents team (p.29)
ODC 2026: 43% / 5.0	ODC 2026: 42% / 5.0	ODC 2026: 41% / 5.0	ODC 2026: 41% / 5.1	ODC 2026: 39% / 4.7	ODC 2026: 38% / 4.8
ODC 2025: 37% / 4.9	ODC 2025: 38% / 4.8	ODC 2025: 42% / 4.9	ODC 2025: 33% / 4.4	ODC 2025: 36% / 4.4	ODC 2025: 34% / 4.8
NZB 2025: 35% / 4.3 ↑	pNZB 2025: n/a	NZB 2025: 38% / 4.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 31% / 4.0 ↑	NZB 2025: 30% / 3.7 ↑	NZB 2025: 43% / 5.2 ↓

Value for money (p.48)	Dog control (p.23)	Overall communication (p.45)	Overall leadership (p.47)	Overall management (p.48)	Overall performance (p.8)
ODC 2026: 31% / 4.2	ODC 2026: 20% / 3.7	ODC 2026: 47% / 5.3	ODC 2026: 52% / 5.5	ODC 2026: 47% / 5.2	ODC 2026: 51% / 5.6
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
NZB 2025: 30% / 3.9	NZB 2025: 57% / 5.7 ↓	NZB 2025: 37% / 4.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 37% / 4.4 ↑	NZB 2025: 37% / 4.5 ↑	NZB 2025: 50% / 5.0

- *Good performance* *(70% and above)*
- *Services with positive performance* *(from 50% but less than 70%)*
- *Services for improvement*
- *Overall performance indicators*
- ↑ - *Current result above NZB*
- ↓ - *Current result below NZB*

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. The 2025-26 questionnaire remained unchanged from the previous year to maintain optimum consistency for historical comparisons. This questionnaire was nevertheless reviewed and tested prior to full-scale data collection to ensure the survey remained 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 2025-26 survey year, the data was collected from July 2025 (retrospectively covering the Apr-Jun quarter) to April 2026 (covering the Jan-Mar quarter) to align with ODC's annual reporting period.

Fieldwork was conducted quarterly in July - August 2025 (Q1), October - November 2025 (Q2), January – February 2026 (Q3), and March – April 2026 (Q4). A total n=75 responses were collected each quarter, providing a total annual sample of n=300 for the final analysis. For ease, this report refers to the 2025-26 survey year as '*2026*'.

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.

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 2023 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.

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.

A total of n=300 surveys were used in the final analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Responses were 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 2023 Census. The 2023 Census was used as the updated population benchmark in 2025-26 given the availability of 2023 Census figures (released in late-2024) for the entirety of the 2025-26 survey year.

The main resident segments 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 1 Margins of error

	Reported percentages	
Responses n=	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.

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).

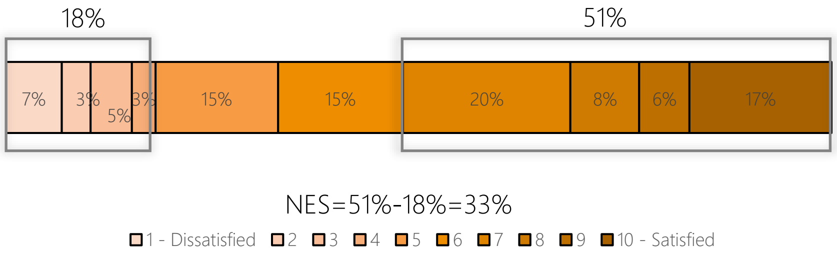
NOTES ON REPORTING

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.

Comparative data prior to 2022 is indicative only; data collection methods before 2022 (including response scales) differed significantly from current methods.

Due to rounding, charts and tables 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.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Table 2 Responses by ward

	Frequency	Percent
Ōpōtiki	160	53%
Coast	28	9%
Waioeka-Waiotahe	112	37%
Total	300	100%

Table 3 Responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-39	98	33%
40-64	122	41%
65+	80	27%
Total	300	100%

Table 4 Responses by gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	121	40%
Female	178	60%
Non-binary	1	<1%
Total	300	100%

Table 5 Responses by home ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Owned	221	74%
Rented	32	11%
Private trust	5	2%
Other	0	0%
Not stated	42	14%
Total	300	100%

Table 6 Responses by location

	Frequency	Percent
Urban	120	40%
Semi-rural	60	20%
Rural	88	29%
Not stated	33	11%
Total	300	100%

Table 7 Responses by ethnicity (multi-choice)

	Frequency	Percent
New Zealand European	160	53%
European	30	10%
Māori	178	59%
Pacific people	3	1%
Asian	6	2%
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	2	1%
Other	5	2%
New Zealander/Kiwi/Not stated	2	1%
Total	300	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 2025. 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 2025) factors:

1. In May 2025, Council released an information document on the 2025-2026 Annual Plan, setting their direction for the coming year and outlining key projects and priorities, and implications for rates – signalling 9.5% rates increase. Formal public feedback on the Annual Plan was not sought because it aligned closely with the recently adopted 2024-2034 Long Term Plan.
2. In May 2025, Council opened consultation on its draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP), setting out how the community should manage and minimise waste in the district.
3. In May 2025, Council opened consultation on its Local Water Done Well proposal, with a decision needed to meet the government's September deadline to get a Water Services Delivery Plan to the Department of Internal Affairs. The most viable options were considered to be a multi-council Water Service Organisation (WSO) or keeping it in house to allow time to find good water partners and the best long-term arrangements for local communities. In June 2025, Council voted to keep council three water services in house while they consider other options over the coming years. Options presented to the public during consultation were clear that under any scenario, the cost to ratepayers would rise significantly due to both new financial compliance rules and higher water standards from water regulator Taumata Arowai.
4. In June 2025, the 2025-2026 Annual Plan was approved and became operative from 1 July 2025, with a confirmed rates rise of 9.8%. To reduce the rates increase from the 10.6% originally proposed for year 2 of the Long-Term Plan, decisions were made to reduce services - including lower levels of service across engineering, parks and reserves, events, and regional development.
5. In late July 2025, heavy rain resulted in power outages across the district, leading to overflows within the wastewater network. Record rainfall in the upper catchments closed several local roads and both SH2 and Wainui road – with slips at Waiotahe corner, and trees and slips on SH35. By 3rd August 2025, all affected roads were reopened and power restored to all areas.

Key Q2 factors (August – October 2025):

6. In August 2025, public consultation opened on the latest review of the Dangerous, Affected and Insanitary Buildings Policy - to ensure that buildings are safe for their intended use and setting out how council will approach the issue – how council defines an unsafe or insanitary building, how they will be identified, and what actions council will take.
7. In September and October 2025, voting for the 2025 Local Government Elections was conducted, with voting closing on Saturday 11 October. Ōpōtiki voter turnout rates (47%) were higher than the national average (32%) and like most rural communities, Ōpōtiki had a higher turnout rate than city centres. However, the return rate was 8% below previous years. As a result, the new council and Community Board

representatives were sworn in on 28 October 2025. The electoral campaign and voting period likely brought local issues and concerns to the forefront of residents' minds as they considered the forthcoming Council term and candidates up for election.

8. In October 2025, Ōpōtiki homeowners received their latest property rating revaluation notices, with updated valuations from Quotable Value (QV). While revaluation doesn't affect the total amount of rates collected by Council, it helps Council work out the share of rates across the different property types. Owners who disagreed with the new rating valuation could lodge their objection with QV by 14 November 2025.

Key Q3 factors (November 2025 – January 2026):

9. In late October 2025, the Government approved funding for four Bay of Plenty flood resilience projects that will help protect more than 5,000 houses and around 20,000 hectares of land. Funding from the Government's Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) will contribute $9.12 million towards priority projects in the region, which will protect more than $5 billion of capital value during severe weather. Bay of Plenty Regional Council is co-funding up to $6.08m towards the projects.
10. In late October 2025, Ōpōtiki District Council's Water Services Delivery Plan was assessed and accepted by the Department of Internal Affairs, as part of the Government's Local Water Done Well legislation. With the plan approved, Council began transition planning to ensure the new delivery model is fully operational by the statutory deadline of 1 July 2028.
11. In November 2025, Council allocated funding in its 2024-34 Long-Term Plan to improve the quality of water supplied to the Te Kaha drinking water scheme. The scheme supplies approximately 270,000 litres of water daily to households and businesses throughout Te Kaha. To upgrade the water scheme, a dedicated project team is investigating options for a new water source, upgrading or replacing the existing water treatment plant, and looking at options for a new reservoir.
12. In mid-November 2025, a large slip occurred on Motu Road near the Ōpōtiki district boundary, with the road subsequently closed in both directions while Council continued to monitor the slip's movement and carried out further investigation works.
13. In late-November 2025, the Mayors of the Eastern Bay of Plenty released a joint statement in response to the central government "Simplifying Local Government" announcement – which proposed replacing regional councillors with a board of mayors who work together on regional issues. The Mayors acknowledged that change may be needed in how local government is organised, and were willing to engage constructively in that discussion. However, they believed any reform of local government must be undertaken in a careful, considered, and integrated way as changes of this scale are constitutionally significant, and warrant a process that reflects that importance.
14. In December 2025, a group of volunteers joined Emergency Management Bay of Plenty and Ōpōtiki District Council staff for a training session on the district's first community emergency hub at Roimata Marae. The hub is a place run without official assistance where local residents help each other in a major emergency, by sharing skills, resources and information, and start organising community clean ups.
15. On 21 January 2026, a Red Severe Rain Warning was issued for the Bay of Plenty, forecasting up to 240mm of additional rainfall

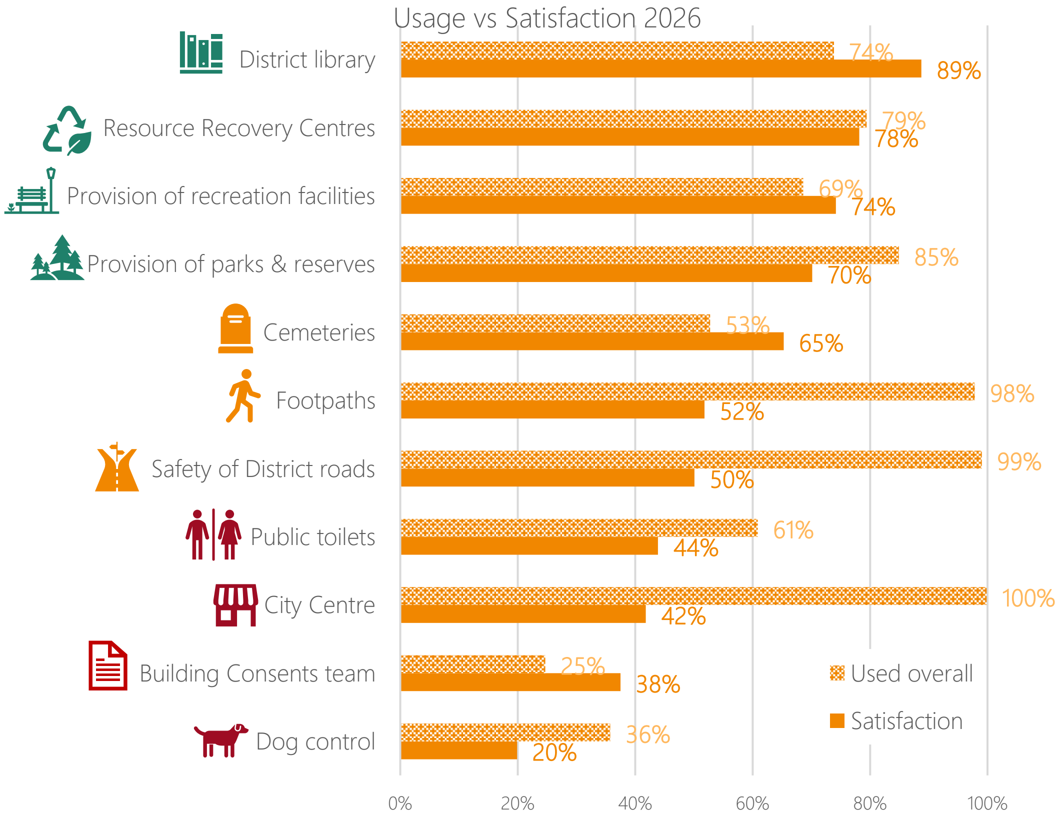
over 24 hours and prompting a region-wide State of Emergency. As heavy rain intensified, rivers rose rapidly, surface flooding and landslips occurred, and major transport routes including SH35 and SH2 were closed, isolating parts of the Eastern Bay of Plenty and cutting through access to Gisborne. Marae and community centres were prepared in case evacuations were required, while emergency operations centres were activated to coordinate the response. By 22 January, rainfall had eased but rivers remained high, flooding persisted in some areas, and significant road closures and detours continued to disrupt travel and supply routes. In the following days, attention shifted from response to recovery, with extended emergency provisions in some districts, ongoing highway closures at Waioweka Gorge and Pōtaka, a rāhui placed on the Waioweka awa, and continued clean-up and slip clearance. Although weather conditions subsequently stabilised, the event had a sustained impact on transport connectivity, local livelihoods and community wellbeing across the region.

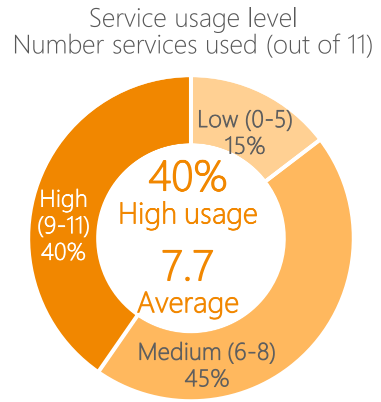
Key Q4 factors (February – April 2026):

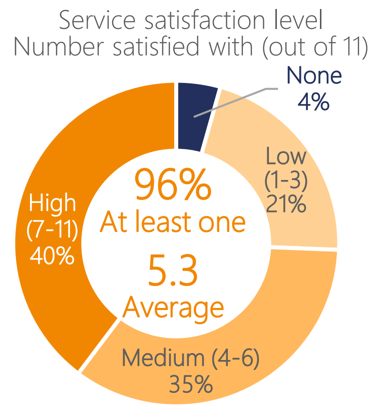
16. In February 2026, Ōpōtiki was heavily focused on recovery from severe weather events, infrastructure repairs, and addressing community safety concerns following a challenging start to the year.
17. In February 2026, State Highway 2 through the Waioweka Gorge experienced major, long-term closures due to significant slips, requiring Waioweka Gorge to reopen with guide vehicles.
18. In March 2026, a Mayoral Disaster Relief Fund was set up by Council to support the people and places directly affected by the severe weather events earlier in the year. The fund is to provide financial assistance to individuals, families, small businesses, community organisations and marae experiencing hardship following a significant natural disaster, with a contribution from central government of $100,000 for the fund.
19. In March 2026, Rangatahi and youth advocates presented to the Ōpōtiki District Council on March 17 to push for a formal youth council and a dedicated youth space in the town.
20. In April 2026, Council commenced its annual reviews of Fees and Charges by seeking public feedback on the draft schedule for the 2026/27 year. Most significantly this year, council is proposing changes to the way water services are funded from 1 July 2026, with volume-based charges for households connected to council water schemes in Ōpōtiki township, Ōhiwa and Te Kaha are proposed to increase significantly (up to 84%).
21. A state of local emergency was declared for the district in response to Cyclone Vaianu around April 11, with the focus shifting from emergency response to recovery by April 13. The cyclone caused extensive damage, resulting in road closures and isolating parts of the region. Over 10,000 power consumers in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, including significant portions of the Ōpōtiki region, lost power after a 110kV line from the Transpower Edgecumbe substation was impacted. High winds and rain caused further issues, including trees falling on power lines and ongoing risks of slips during the cleanup phase.

SERVICE USAGE VS SATISFACTION SUMMARY

- Overall engagement with Council services in 2026 was high, with residents using an average of 7.7 out of 11 services – 2-in-5 residents (40%) were identified as high service users (9–11 services), while only 15% reported low usage (0–5 services), indicating broad interaction with Council facilities and services across the district.
- Satisfaction levels were typically moderate-to-high, with almost all residents (96%) satisfied with at least one service (5.3 average overall) - 2-in-5 (40%) were identified as highly satisfied (7–11 services), with 1-in-5 (21%) low satisfied.
- Satisfaction with individual services was generally strongest for highly used community amenities, particularly the District library (74% usage, 89% satisfaction), Resource Recovery Centres (79%, 78%), and recreation facilities (69%, 74%). However, almost-universally used infrastructure such as footpaths, roads and the city centre scored more moderately overall.
- In contrast, the lowest satisfaction was recorded for infrequently used services, particularly dog control (36% usage, 20% satisfaction) and the Building Consents team (25% usage, 38% satisfaction).



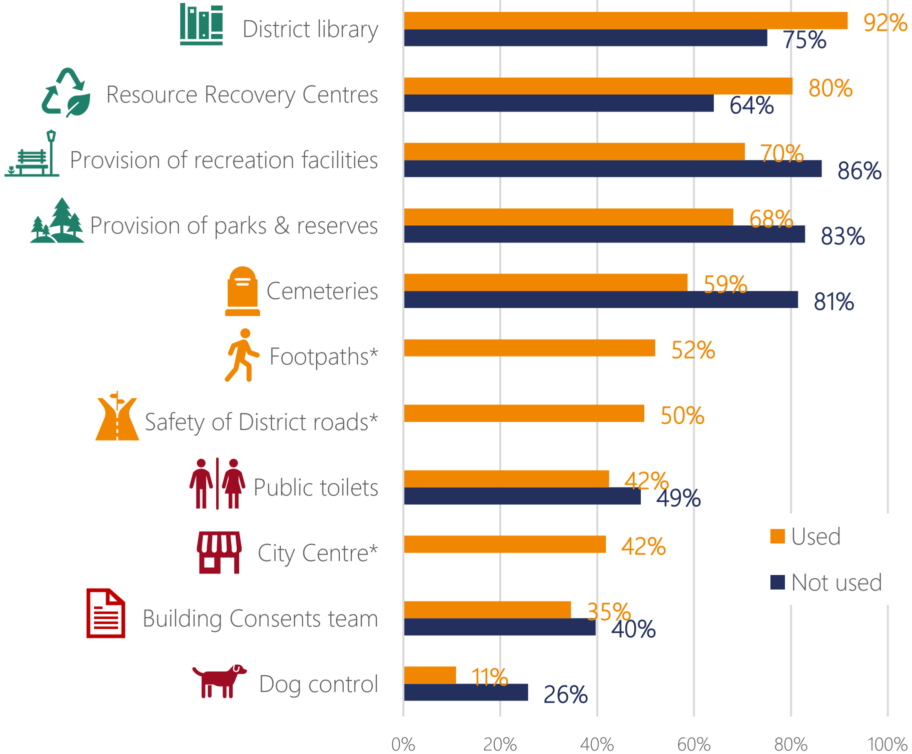




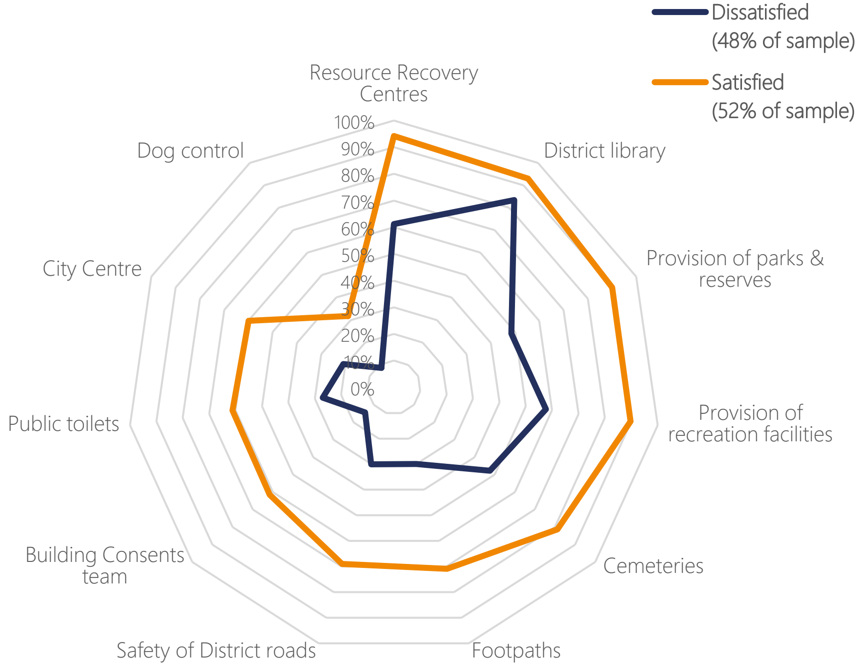
SERVICE SATISFACTION BY USAGE & SENTIMENT

- Satisfaction among users of services was generally higher than among non-users for the most positive community services, including the District library (92% among users vs 75% among non-users) and Resource Recovery Centres (80% vs 64%). This suggests direct experience with these services tends to reinforce positive perceptions.
- However, some services recorded lower satisfaction among actual users than non-users, indicating service experience may not be meeting expectations: especially for cemeteries (59% among users vs 81% among non-users), Building Consents team (35% vs 40%), and dog control (11% vs 26%).
- Comparing residents satisfied versus dissatisfied with Council overall, the widest satisfaction gaps ('pinch points') were evident for footpaths, safety of district roads, public toilets, the City Centre, and dog control - where dissatisfied residents reported particularly low service ratings.
- In contrast, the closest alignment between satisfied and dissatisfied residents was seen for highly regarded services such as the District library and Resource Recovery Centres, suggesting these services maintain relatively positive perceptions even among residents less satisfied with Council overall.

Service satisfaction by users & non-users



Satisfaction with specific Council services - by level of overall satisfaction with services

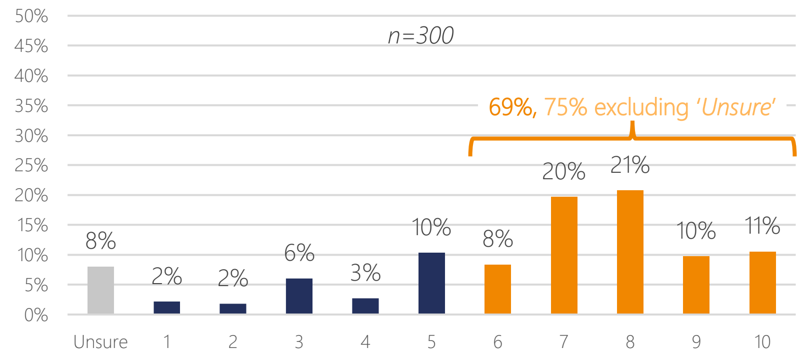


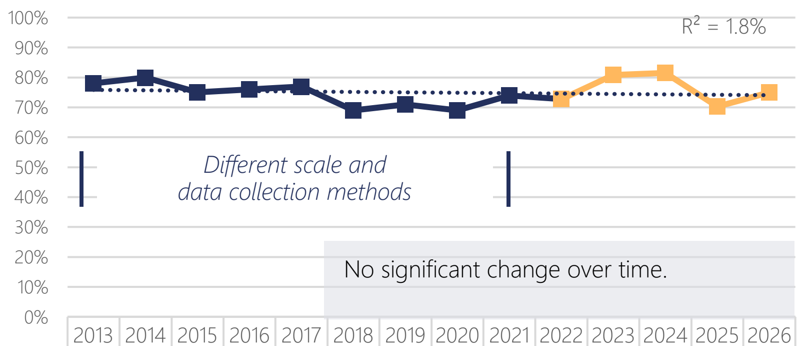
** Services with no 'Not used' figure either have universal usage (no non-users), or too few non-users to analyse as a subsample.*

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – recreation facilities

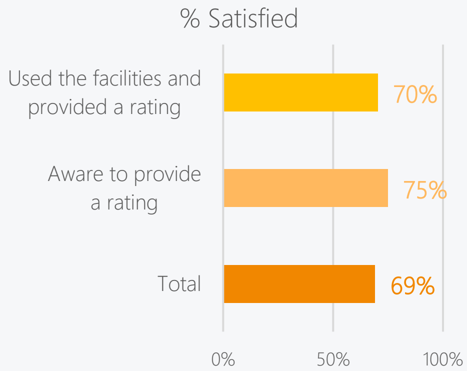
KPI target 75% achieved

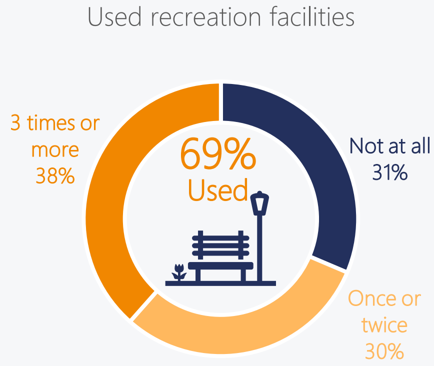
- In 2026, 3-in-4 respondents (75%) who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of recreation facilities (6.9 out of 10 on average) - currently the third-highest rated service area in 2026. The 2026 score was similar to 2025 (70%) despite being slightly below 2023 and 2024 results.
- The proportion of respondents using recreation facilities overall (69%) was also consistent with previous years (69% in 2025), with little change in frequency (38% using 3+ times per quarter, compared to 40% in 2025 and 45% in 2024).
- Satisfaction with recreation facilities remained very similar across the district in 2026, with no differences across wards.
- Satisfaction was also similar across the age range in 2026 (albeit slightly higher for those aged 65+, 82%). Younger 18-39 year olds saw an increase in satisfaction from 2025 (59%, up to 73% in 2026).
- However, Māori residents were significantly less satisfied in this area than non-Māori (69% vs 82%).

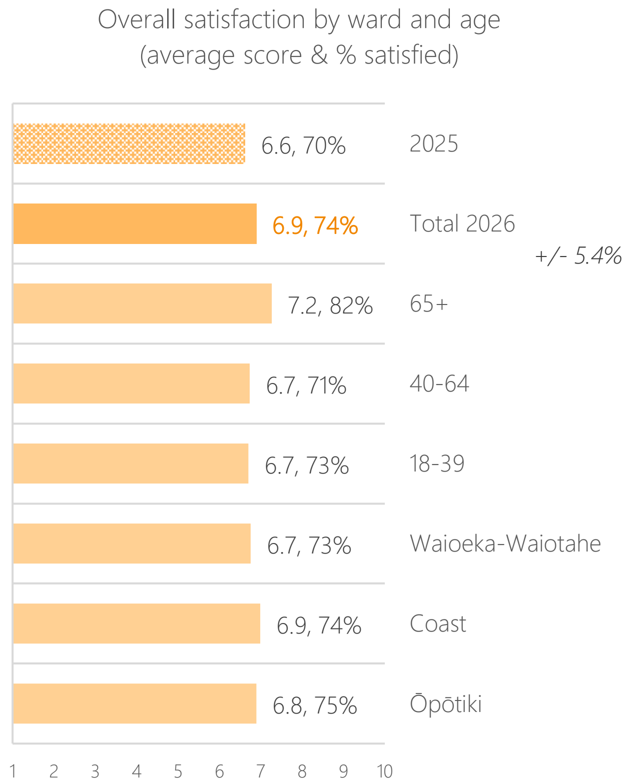




	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	78%	80%	75%	76%	77%	69%	71%	69%	74%	73%	81%	82%	70%	75%







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

Top reasons for satisfaction with recreation facilities

- Positive views / facilities well maintained / attractive / clean / valued – 59%
- Facilities well used / appreciated by children / whānau / visitors – 32%
- Skate park / specific facilities are standout positives – 30%
- Cost / priorities / awareness / limited personal use affecting ratings – 9%
- Safety / antisocial behaviour / public amenity concerns – 8%
- Maintenance / cleanliness / repair issues need improvement – 5%

15% of all respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with recreation facilities

- More facilities / upgrades for different age groups / interests – 58%
- Maintenance / cleanliness / repair issues need improvement – 58%
- Safety / antisocial behaviour / public amenity concerns – 17%
- Uneven access / provision in rural / outlying areas – 9%
- Cost / priorities / awareness / limited personal use affecting ratings – 9%

10% of all respondents provided a comment

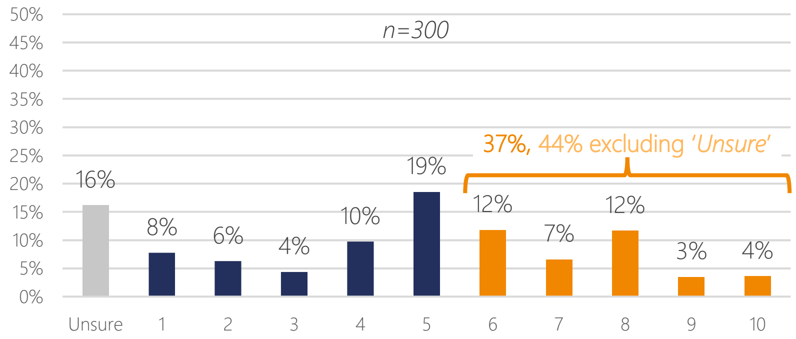
Provision of recreation facilities – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

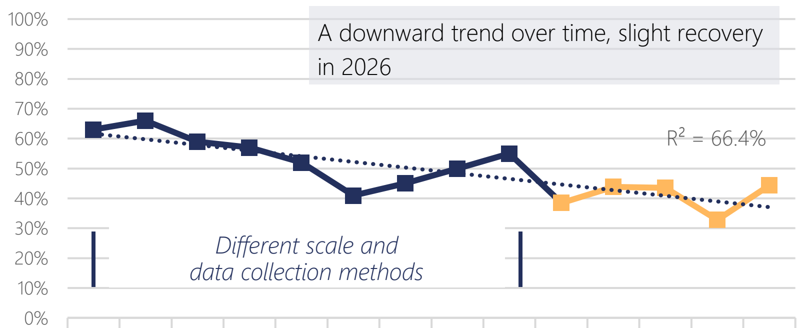
Overall, respondents viewed recreation facilities in the Ōpōtiki District positively, with many describing them as clean, tidy, well maintained, attractive, and well used by children, whānau, families, and visitors. The skate park, playgrounds, reserves, water park, gardens, sports grounds, and green spaces were commonly appreciated as valued community assets. However, some respondents felt facilities need better maintenance, repairs, cleaning, rubbish removal, graffiti control, toilet upgrades, and improved safety. Others wanted more facilities or upgrades for different age groups and interests, including preschoolers, youth, rural communities, and specific activities such as BMX, motorbikes, horses, and indoor recreation. A smaller number of comments reflected concerns about cost, uneven provision across the district, lack of awareness, or limited personal use of the facilities.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – public toilets

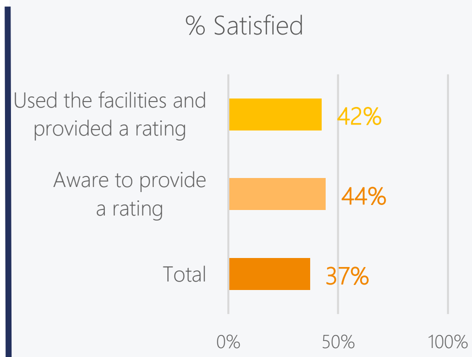
KPI target 60%
below

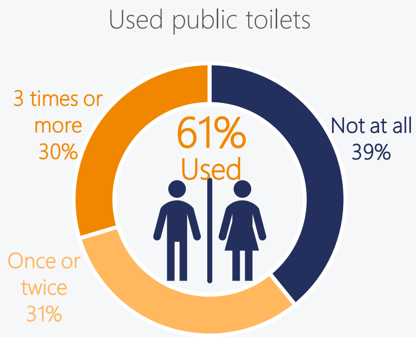
- Just under half (44%) of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of public toilets in 2026 (5.3 out of 10 average). This was an increase from the low in 2025 (33%), though not significantly.
- 3-in-5 respondents (61%) reported using public toilets in 2026 (similar to previous years).
- Satisfaction remained low across the district in 2026, particularly in the Coast ward (23%, down from 38% in 2025). In contrast, increases were seen in both Ōpōtiki (48% vs 30% in 2025) and Waioeka-Waiotahe (44% vs 35% in 2025).
- Satisfaction was similar across age segments in 2026, rising to a new peak for 18-39s (47%, up from 29% in 2025 and 21% in 2022). An increase was also measured for 65+ year olds (49%, up from 33% 2025) though this was consistent with prior years. Usage remained lower among older residents (42% 65+, compared to 71% 18-39 & 65% 40-64).
- Māori were also less satisfied than non-Māori residents (34% vs 63%).
- Cleanliness and maintenance frequency and quality continued to drive discontent with public toilets, based on direct verbatim feedback.

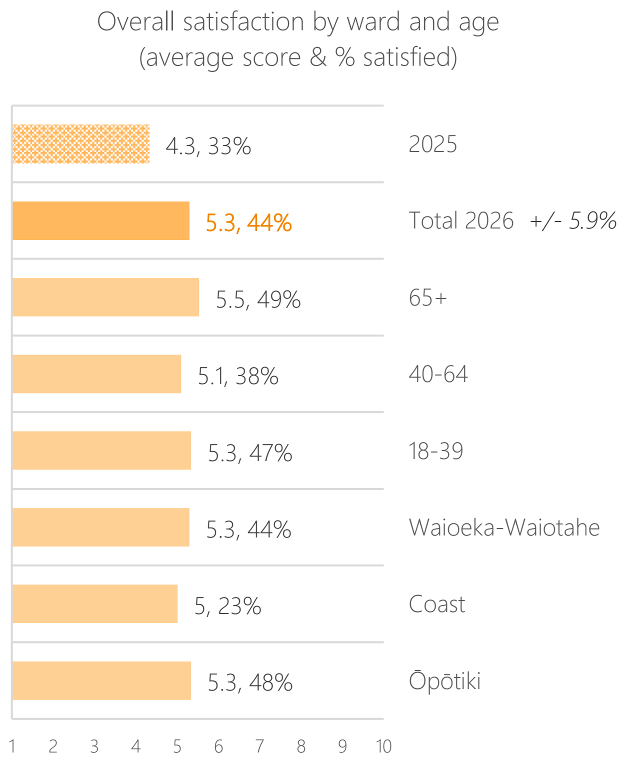




	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	63%	66%	59%	57%	52%	41%	45%	50%	55%	38%	44%	44%	33%	44%







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 / tidy / well maintained / or positive experiences – 98%

Facilities are old / run down / damaged / or need upgrading – 41%

Variation by location or mixed experiences across facilities – 40%

Lack of supplies or basic amenities – 21%

Top reasons for satisfaction with public toilets

6% of respondents provided a comment

Dirty / smelly / unhygienic / or unpleasant facilities – 78%

Facilities are old / run down / damaged / or need upgrading – 29%

Variation by location or mixed experiences across facilities – 26%

Cleaning is not frequent / consistent / or monitored enough – 23%

Access / availability / location / and opening-hours issues – 11%

Lack of supplies or basic amenities – 9%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with public toilets

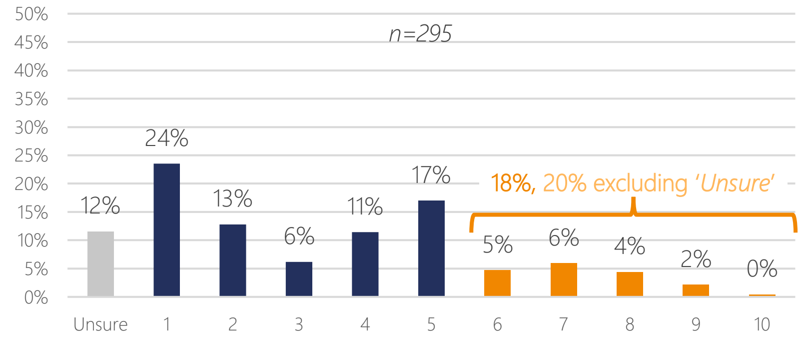
26% of respondents provided a comment

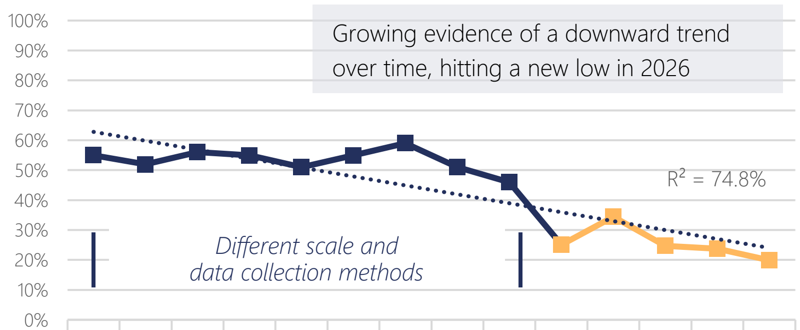
Provision of public toilets – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Respondents' ratings of public toilets were largely influenced by cleanliness, maintenance, and usability. While some people reported positive experiences with clean, tidy, or recently upgraded facilities, many described toilets as dirty, smelly, unhygienic, old, damaged, or in need of refurbishment. Concerns were also raised about inconsistent cleaning, lack of toilet paper or soap, poor access or limited opening hours, and the need for more facilities in some locations. A number of comments also highlighted safety and comfort issues around certain toilets due to antisocial behaviour or people congregating nearby. Experiences varied by location, with some facilities viewed more favourably than others.

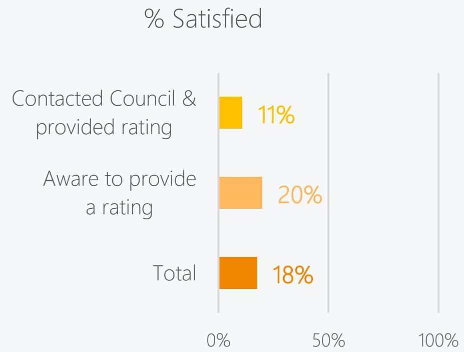
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – dog control

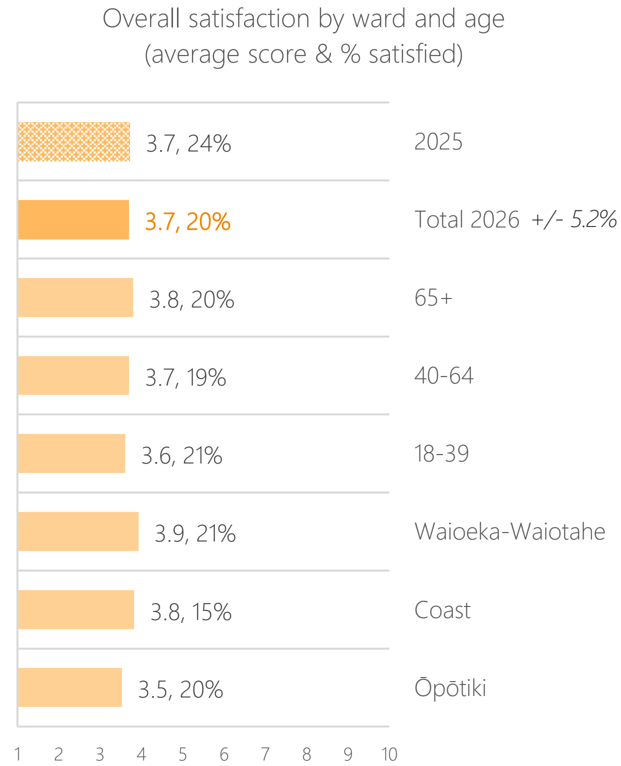
- Just 1-in-3 respondents (36%) reported contacting the Council about dogs in 2026 (consistently low over time).
- 1-in-5 respondents (20%) rating dog control were satisfied with their experience or knowledge in 2026 (3.7 out of 10 average) – a new low for this service area, and the lowest rated in 2026. Satisfaction was lower still (just 11%) among those using the service.
- 1-in-4 (23%) of respondents selected the lowest rating (1 out of 10) – the most typical response for this measure in 2026 (and more than for other services).
- Satisfaction was consistently low across the district, although representing a drop for Coast residents (15%, down from 49% in 2025; albeit low sample sizes limiting comparisons).
- Satisfaction also remained similarly low across age segments in 2026, and reaching a new low for older respondents aged 65+ (20%, down from 28% in 2025 and around 40% in previous years).
- Residents dissatisfied with services overall had particularly low satisfaction for dog control (9%, compared to 32% of those satisfied overall).
- Public safety and lack of Council response continued to impact on satisfaction.





	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	55%	52%	56%	55%	51%	55%	59%	51%	46%	25%	34%	25%	24%	20%





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

DOG CONTROL – community feedback

Positive or improved experiences with Dog Control – 93%

Widespread roaming / stray / unrestrained dogs – 29%

Poor council response / lack of follow-up / weak enforcement – 9%

Dog nuisance / mess / barking / property impacts – 9%

Top reasons for satisfaction with dog control

2% of respondents provided a comment

Widespread roaming / stray / unrestrained dogs – 85%

Public safety concerns / fear / attacks / aggressive dogs – 25%

Irresponsible dog ownership / lack of owner accountability – 19%

Poor council response / lack of follow-up / weak enforcement – 18%

Dog nuisance / mess / barking / property impacts – 16%

Other animal control issues / especially horses and cats – 9%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with dog control

52% of respondents provided a comment

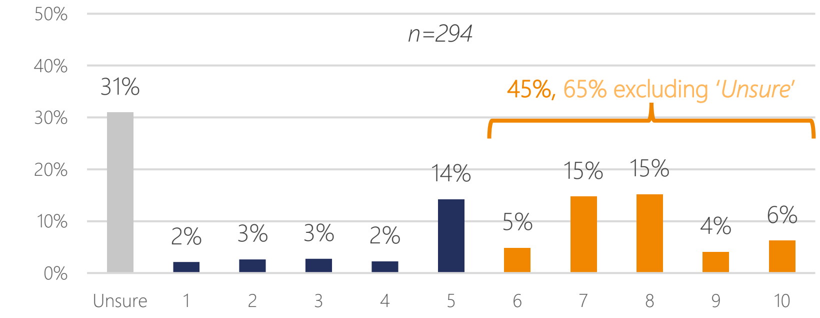
Provision of dog control – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

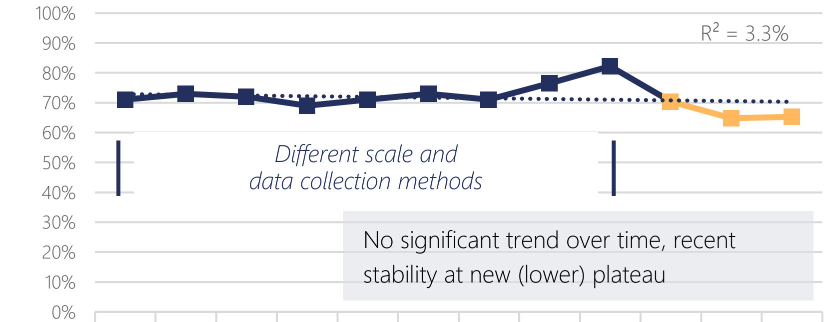
Feedback on dog control was largely negative, with the main concern being the high number of roaming, stray, and unrestrained dogs across Ōpōtiki. Many residents felt unsafe because of aggressive dogs, attacks, chasing, and fear while walking, cycling, or allowing children outside. There was also strong dissatisfaction with council response and enforcement, including slow action, poor follow-up, and a perception that irresponsible owners are not being held accountable. Additional concerns included barking, dog mess, dogs entering properties, attacks on pets or livestock, animal welfare issues, and broader animal control problems such as roaming horses. A smaller group of respondents gave positive feedback, noting that Dog Control had responded well or that the situation appeared to be improving.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – cemeteries

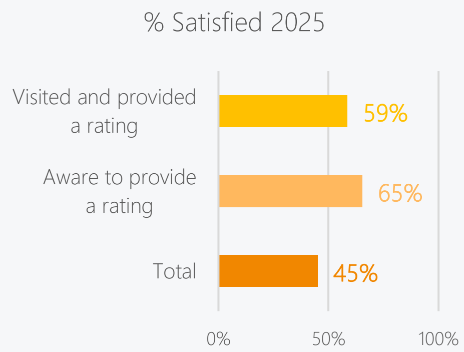
KPI target 70% within margin of error

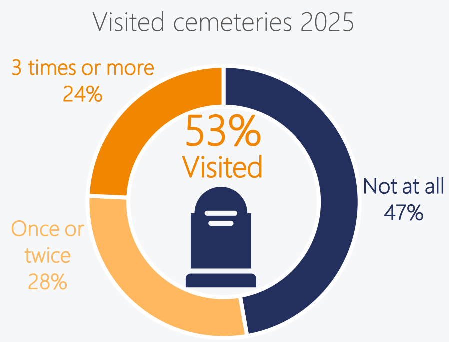
- Just over half of 2026 respondents (53%) recalled visiting a cemetery in the district (consistent over time). Low visitation contributed to a high rate of uncertainty (31% not sure enough to provide a rating).
- Nevertheless, 2-in-3 (65%) of those who rated this area in 2026 were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of cemeteries (6.2 average rating) – remaining at the low level recorded in 2025. Those who visited a cemetery had slightly lower satisfaction (59%).
- However, this remained one of the highest rated service areas across the survey (ranked 5th in 2026).
- Coast residents were less likely to visit a cemetery (22% in 2026), with their satisfaction correspondingly lower (38%, down from 67% in 2025) (despite low subsample sizes).
- Satisfaction did not differ significantly by age segments, although slightly higher for older residents 65+ (74%).
- Māori residents indicated lower satisfaction with this area in 2026 (53% vs 83% non-Māori). Satisfaction was also notably lower for residents dissatisfied with services overall (48%, compared to 81% of those satisfied overall).

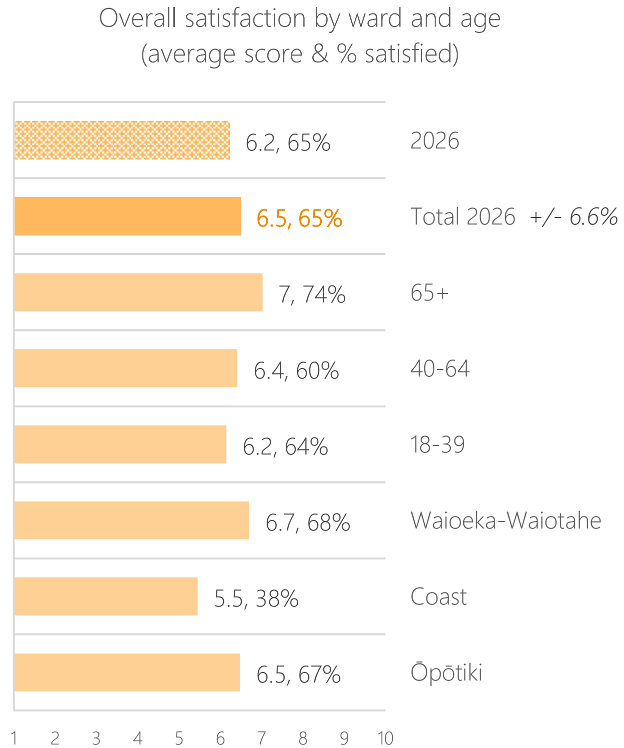




	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	71%	73%	72%	69%	71%	73%	71%	77%	82%	70%	65%	65%







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

Cemeteries are tidy / clean / and well maintained – 90%

Mixed / neutral / humorous / or unclear comments – 6%

Respect / empathy / and care for loved ones/whānau – 5%

Older cemetery areas / headstones / remembrance areas need care – 3%

Top reasons for satisfaction with cemeteries

9% of respondents provided a comment

Grass mowing and vegetation control need improvement – 73%

General appearance is untidy or standards have declined – 55%

Respect / empathy / and care for loved ones/whānau – 18%

Older cemetery areas / headstones / remembrance areas need care – 10%

Need for better facilities and access – 7%

Trees / branches / grounds maintenance create issues around graves – 6%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with cemeteries

9% of respondents provided a comment

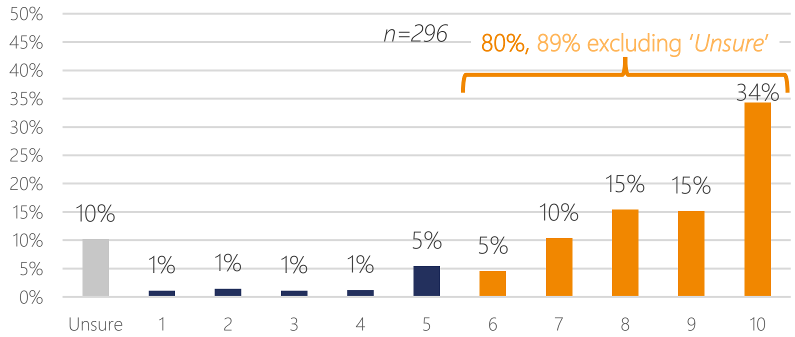
Provision of cemeteries – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

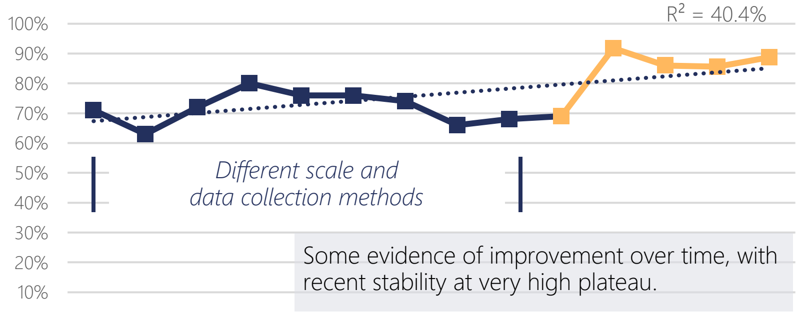
Feedback from residents suggests that local cemeteries are generally viewed positively, with many describing them as tidy, well maintained, clean, and respectfully presented. However, a recurring concern was inconsistent maintenance standards, particularly around overgrown grass, weeds, untidy lawns, muddy conditions, and insufficient mowing. Residents also highlighted issues with ageing infrastructure such as old fencing, neglected headstones, moss-covered remembrance areas, broken tree branches, and limited vegetation control. Some respondents called for improvements including better parking, more seating, regular upkeep schedules, and greater care and respect for older cemetery areas, while a few acknowledged that conditions have improved compared with previous years.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – library services

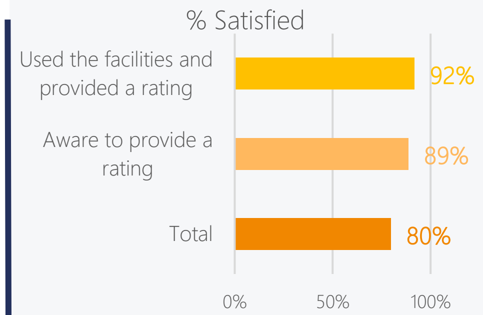
KPI target 85% achieved

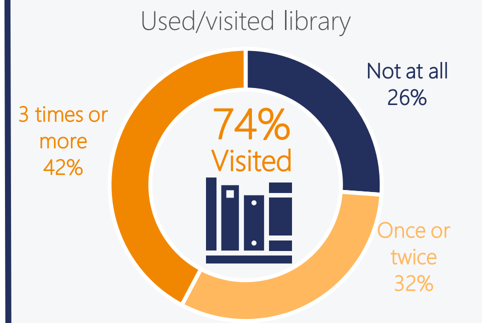
- Library usage remained high in 2026 (74%, following the peak of 75% in 2025), maintaining the status of highest-rated service area with 89% satisfaction (consistent with recent years). 1-in-3 respondents (34%) provided the highest rating (10-out-of-10) – a new peak for this or any other service area. Service users were even more satisfied overall (92% in 2026).
- 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 key segments in 2026, with all age groups and ward residents very satisfied on average. Even those dissatisfied with services overall were overwhelmingly supportive of library services (84% vs 93% of those satisfied overall) – bucking the trend for dissatisfied residents.
- However, male residents were less satisfied than females overall (78% vs 94%), while also indicating less usage (51% vs 89%).
- Library services remained the lowest priority area for Council spending – the majority (60%) preferring stable funding levels and 1-in-3 (31%) wanting lower spending. Feedback was generally very positive about facilities and staff.

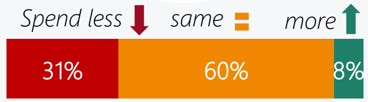


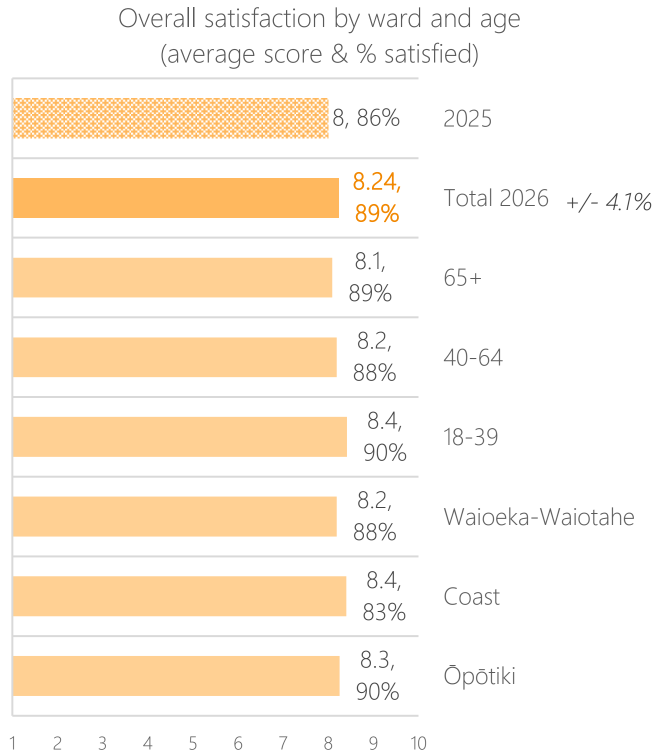


	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	71%	63%	72%	80%	76%	76%	74%	66%	68%	69%	92%	86%	86%	89%









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

Top reasons for satisfaction with library services

Positive overall value / pride and regular use – 49%

Modern / attractive / clean and well-equipped facility – 44%

Friendly / helpful and knowledgeable staff/service – 38%

Good resources / books / technology and practical services – 29%

Community hub / inclusive space and programmes/events – 21%

45% of respondents provided a comment

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with library services

Safety / accessibility / social environment / operating-hours concerns – 61%

Community hub / inclusive space and programmes/events – 51%

Limited use / neutral views or unmet expectations – 35%

Concerns about cost / rates / value for money or need for new library – 30%

4% of respondents provided a comment

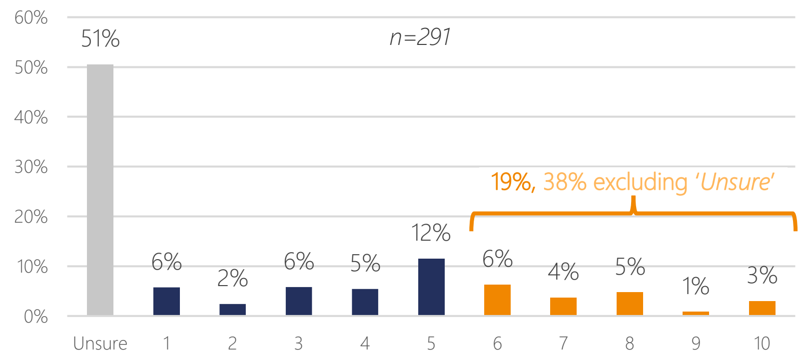
Provision of public libraries and library services – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

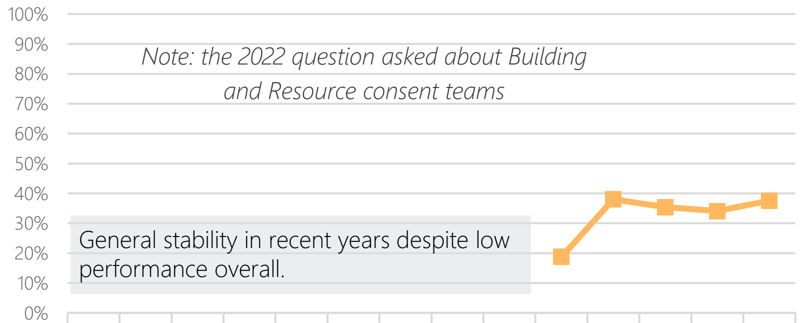
Overall, respondents were highly positive about the District Library, most often praising the friendly and helpful staff, the modern and attractive facility, and the wide range of useful resources, technology and services available. Many viewed the library as an important community hub that supports children, families, vulnerable people and the wider community through programmes, events and welcoming public spaces. Positive comments also reflected strong community pride and regular use of the library. However, a smaller group raised concerns about the cost and value for ratepayers, whether the new library was necessary, safety or social issues around the facility, access and operating hours, and limited use or unmet expectations among some residents.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – building consents team

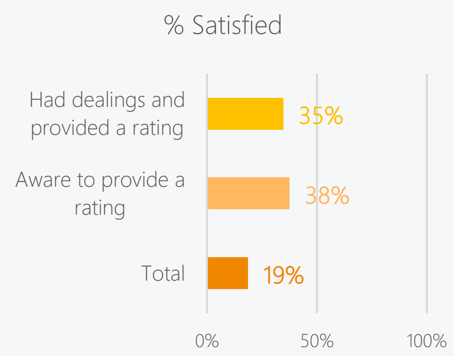
KPI target 70%
below

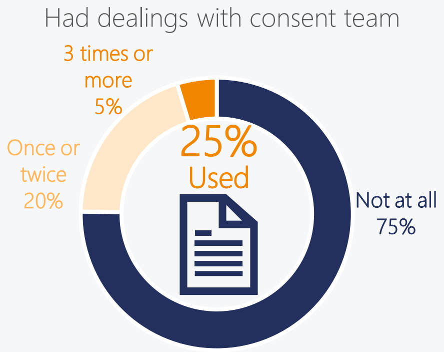
- Building consent services remained the least accessed area in 2026 (25%), with half of respondents (51%) unable to provide any rating – the lowest rate of usage and highest knowledge gap across the survey.
- However, 2-in-5 (38%) of those who rated this service were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of building consent services (4.8 average) – consistent with recent years but still one of the lowest rated areas in the survey. Satisfaction was similar among service users specifically (35%).
- Dealings with the building consents team was relatively low across all segments, highest among those aged 40-64 (35%, compared to just 12% of those aged 65+). Low sample sizes limit comparisons for this service area.
- Māori residents remained half as likely as non-Māori to report satisfaction with this service (28% vs 52%) – a significant difference.
- Those dissatisfied with services overall were especially dissatisfied with this service area (14% vs 62% respondents satisfied overall) - the second-lowest result for this segment (after dog control).

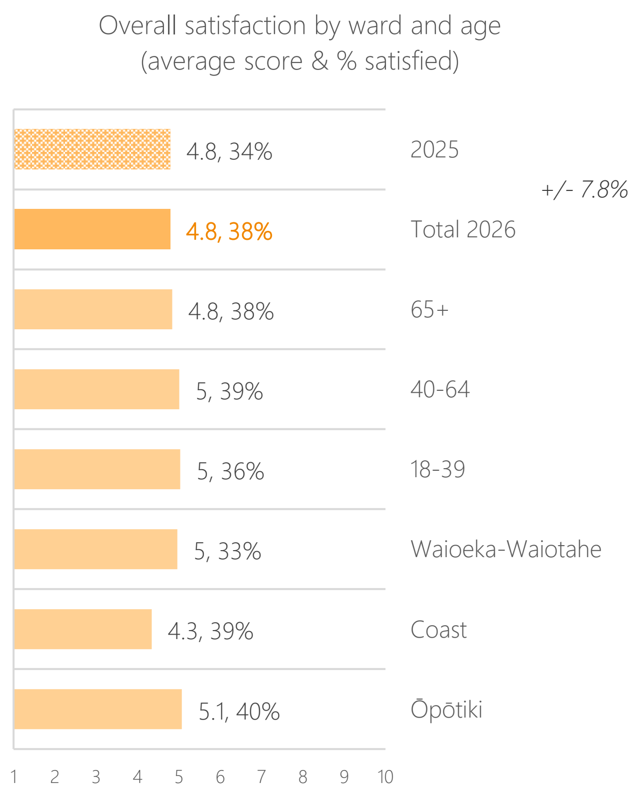




	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied										19%	38%	35%	34%	38%







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

Positive experiences / helpful / efficient / knowledgeable service – 89%

Limited awareness / no direct experience / uncertainty about team – 25%

General dissatisfaction / need for improvement – 11%

Top reasons for satisfaction with building consents

15% of respondents provided a comment

Slow processing / long delays / excessive waiting times – 62%

Expensive / difficult / overly bureaucratic consent process – 23%

Concerns about staff attitude / competence / decision-making – 19%

Concern for broader council decisions / enforcement / community impacts – 17%

Poor communication / lack of responsiveness / unclear outcomes – 13%

Limited awareness / no direct experience / uncertainty about team – 12%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with building consents

4% of respondents provided a comment

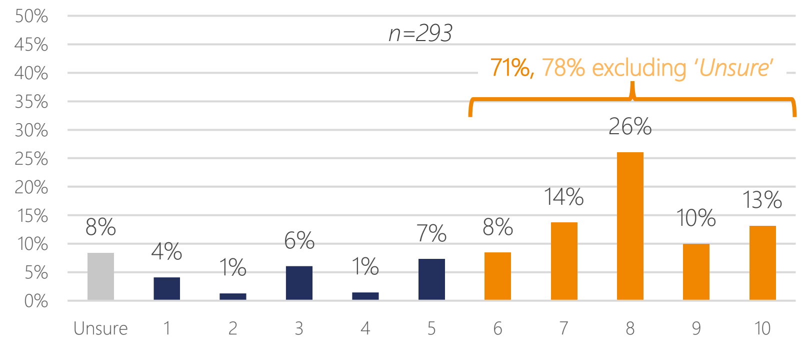
Provision of building consents – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

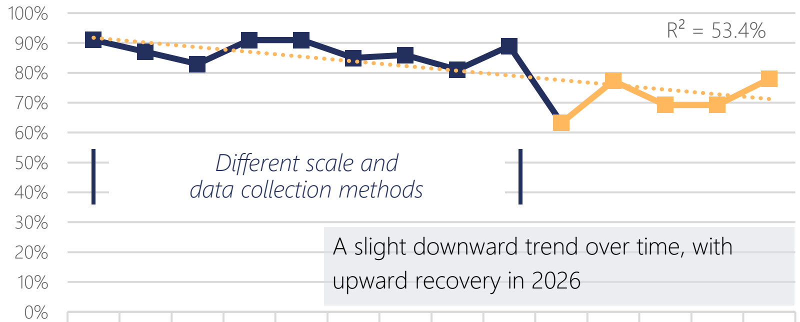
Feedback on the Building Consents team was predominantly negative, with respondents most commonly raising concerns about slow processing times, long delays, high costs, bureaucracy, poor communication, and unclear or delayed outcomes. Several comments also criticised staff attitude, competence, and decision-making, with some respondents feeling the process lacked common sense or created unnecessary barriers to building and development. A smaller number of respondents reported positive experiences, describing staff as helpful, efficient, and knowledgeable. Others had limited or no direct experience with the team, while some used the question to comment on broader council decisions, enforcement issues, housing impacts, or general dissatisfaction with the service.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – resource recovery centre

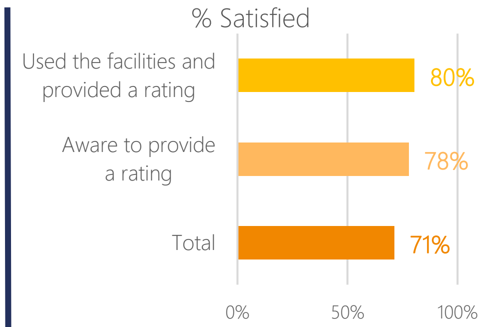
KPI target 80%
within margin of error

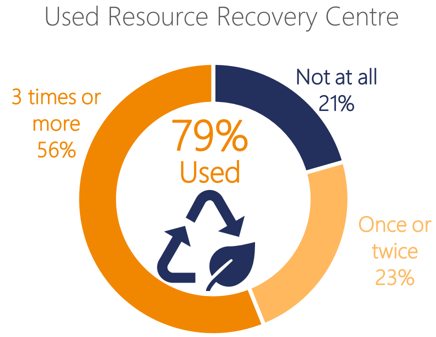
- Resource recovery facilities remained among the most used services in 2026 (79%); especially for Coast residents (93%).
- 8-in-10 respondents (78%) who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of Resource Recovery Centre (7.0 average) – a new peak for this service (compared to 69% in 2025, and previous peak of 77% in 2023). Users remained even more satisfied (80%), significantly more than non-users (64%).
- Satisfaction was consistent across the district, but higher for older residents aged 65+ (compared to 18-39s).
- Māori remained significantly less satisfied (72% vs 87% non-Māori).
- This was the second-highest rated service for those dissatisfied with services overall (61%, behind library services), though significantly below those satisfied overall (94% - the highest rated service for this segment).
- 1-in-3 (32%) residents called for more funding in this area.

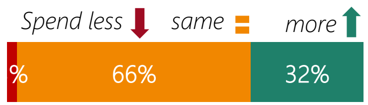


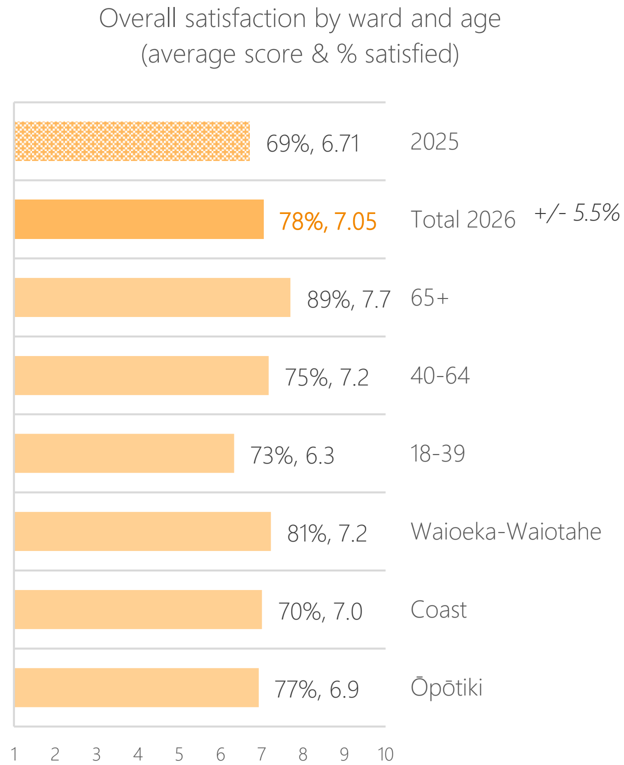


	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	91%	87%	83%	91%	91%	85%	86%	81%	89%	63%	77%	69%	69%	78%









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

Friendly / helpful / hardworking staff – 61%

Well-run / organised / efficient / easy to use – 26%

Cost / pricing / affordability concerns – 17%

General satisfaction / praise / limited/neutral feedback – 17%

Clean / tidy / well-maintained facilities – 13%

Positive views on recycling and recovery services – 11%

Top reasons for satisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

23% of respondents provided a comment

Cost / pricing / affordability concerns – 63%

General satisfaction / praise / limited/neutral feedback – 28%

Gaps in rubbish collection / bins / rural service provision – 17%

Convenience / access / location awareness / opening availability – 11%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

10% of respondents provided a comment

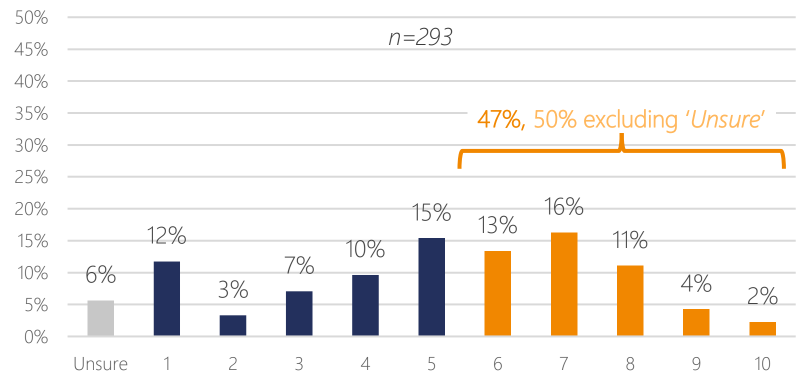
Provision of Resource Recovery Centre – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

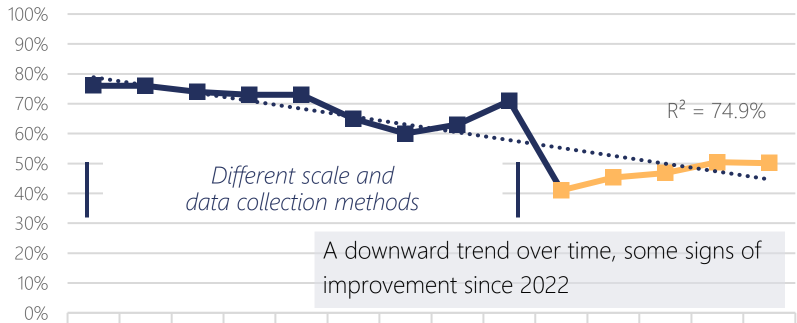
Respondents generally viewed the Resource Recovery Centres positively, most often highlighting friendly and helpful staff, efficient and well-organised services, and clean, tidy facilities. Many also valued the recycling and reuse options available, including free recycling and spaces for pre-loved items. However, some respondents raised concerns about high or inconsistent costs, limited rural or kerbside waste services, bin provision, and access issues such as opening hours, closures, or uncertainty about centre locations. Overall, feedback suggests strong satisfaction with day-to-day centre operations and staff, alongside opportunities to improve affordability, service coverage, and convenience.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – safety of district roads

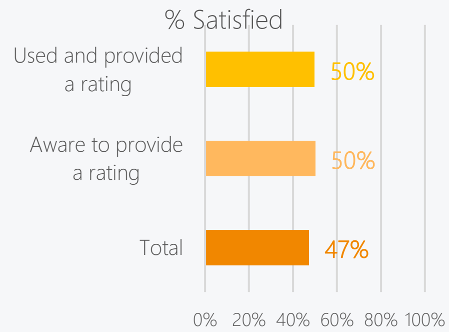
KPI target 80%
below

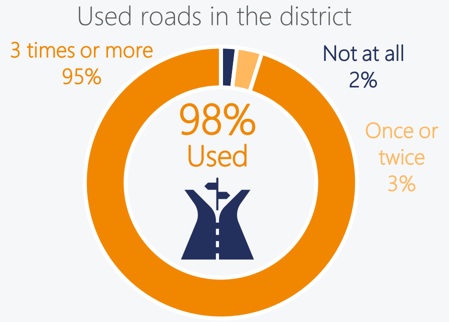
- Almost all respondents (98%) reported using roads in the district. Half (50%) of those who provided a rating were satisfied with safety of district roads (5.3 average) – consistent with 2025 and showing some improvement in recent years.
- Satisfaction was consistent across district wards in 2026, but the typical age differences were apparent, with much higher positivity for older (65+) residents. Just 1-in-3 (32%) of younger (18-39) residents reported satisfaction with roads – half the rate of the older residents.
- Māori were significantly less satisfied with roads overall (42% vs 61% non-Māori).
- Those dissatisfied with services overall were significantly less satisfied with this service area (30% vs 69% respondents satisfied overall).
- Roads remained the highest priority for more funding in 2026, for half of respondents (49% vs 45% 2025); a similar proportion (46%) called for steady funding at the same level.

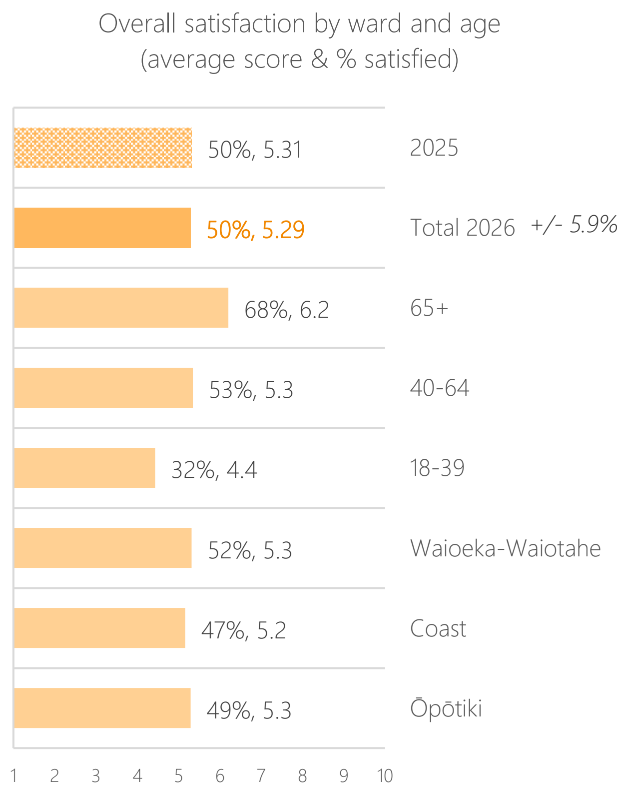




	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	76%	76%	74%	73%	73%	65%	60%	63%	71%	41%	45%	47%	50%	50%







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

Positive / acceptable / general comments about road safety – 92%

Weather damage / flooding / slips / drainage issues – 10%

Rural / coastal / outlying roads unsafe / neglected – 9%

Top reasons for satisfaction with road safety

6% of respondents provided a comment

Poor road surface condition / potholes / uneven roads – 51%

Maintenance quality / slow repairs / dissatisfaction with contractors – 37%

Need for road design / safety infrastructure / upgrades – 29%

Speeding / dangerous driving / dirt bikes / need for traffic calming – 23%

Rural / coastal / outlying roads unsafe / neglected – 22%

Animals / debris / vegetation / uncleanliness creating road hazards – 12%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with road safety

29% of respondents provided a comment

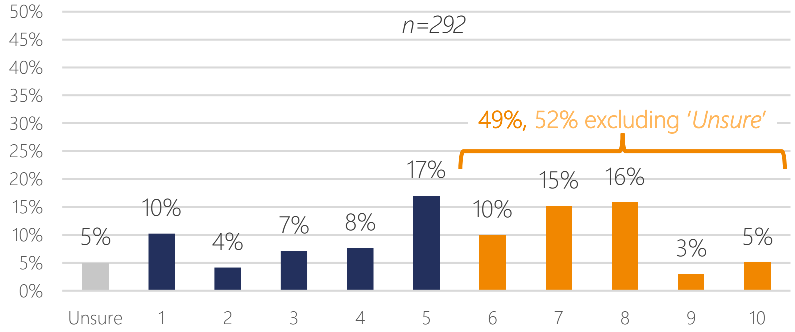
Road safety – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

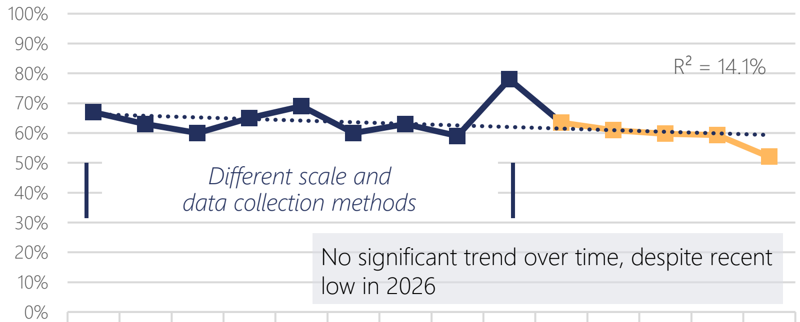
Respondents' ratings of road safety were mainly driven by concerns about poor road surface conditions, including potholes, uneven roads, weak road edges and temporary patch repairs. Many felt that rural, coastal and outlying roads are particularly neglected and unsafe, with concerns about gravel roads, narrow routes, slips, flooding and drainage problems. Several respondents were also dissatisfied with the speed and quality of maintenance, while others highlighted unsafe driver behaviour such as speeding, hooning, dirt bikes and the need for more traffic calming. Additional safety issues included animals, debris, overgrown vegetation, poor signage, lighting, markings, footpaths and other infrastructure gaps. A smaller group gave neutral or positive feedback, saying roads were generally acceptable or safe, though many of these comments were brief or non-specific.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – footpaths

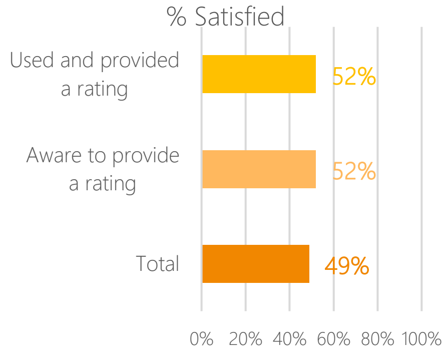
KPI target 70%
below

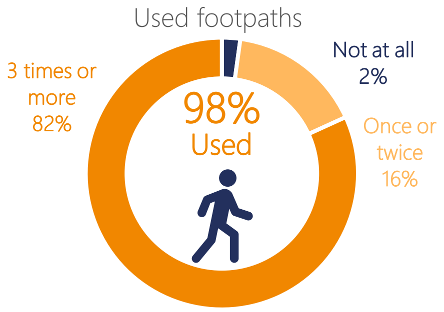
- Footpaths remained one of the most used services (98%) in 2026, across all resident segments.
- Half of respondents (52%) providing ratings were satisfied with footpaths (5.5 average) – the lowest result to-date (down from 59% in 2025), though not statistically significantly.
- Footpath satisfaction remained lowest in Coast ward (30%, down from 51% in 2025), where ratings have historically been lower than other district wards.
- Reflecting Coast results to some degree, Māori remained less satisfied overall with footpaths (45% vs 62% non-Māori).
- Just 1-in-3 of those dissatisfied with services overall were satisfied with this service area (30% vs 69% respondents satisfied overall) – a significant gap.
- Feedback highlighted issues with incomplete paths, safety, maintenance and accessibility, particularly in Coast areas expressing greatest concern.

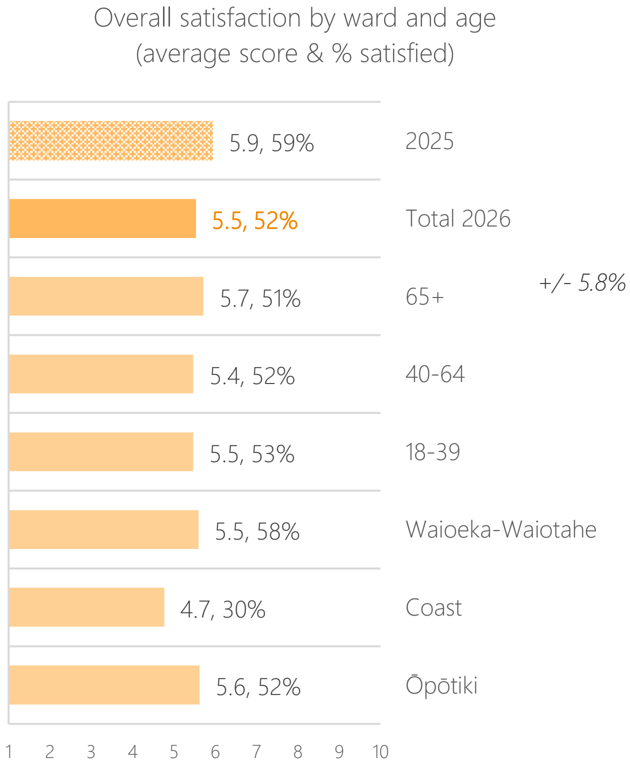




	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied	67%	63%	60%	65%	69%	60%	63%	59%	78%	63%	61%	60%	59%	52%







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

FOOTPATHS – community feedback

Positive feedback / good condition / improvements / appearance / accessibility – 98%

Top reasons for satisfaction with footpaths

8% of respondents provided a comment

Uneven / broken / damaged poorly maintained / trip hazards – 54%

Overgrown grass / weeds / trees / verges / blocked/obscured paths – 26%

Dissatisfaction with Council priorities / upgrades / funding decisions / responsiveness – 23%

Slippery pavers / cobblestones and tiles – 21%

Lack of footpaths / incomplete connections / only on one side – 17%

Cleanliness / debris / drainage / environmental hazards – 15%

Accessibility problems for elderly / wheelchair users / mobility scooters / prams – 12%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with footpaths

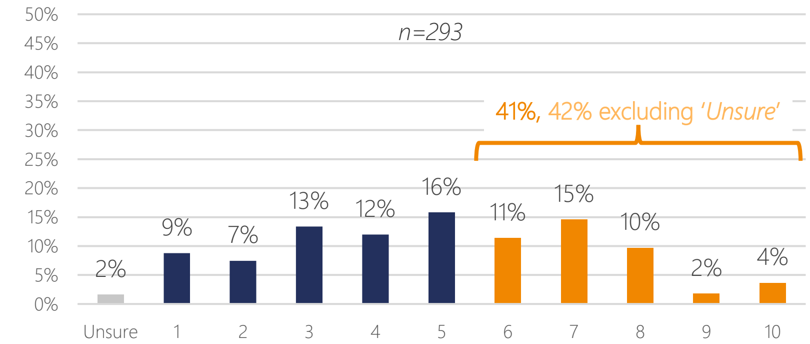
27% of respondents provided a comment

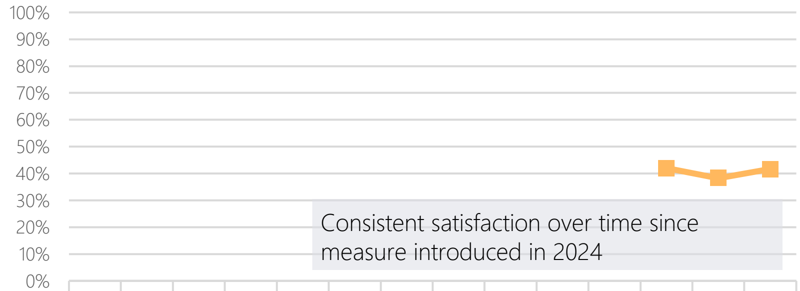
Provision of footpaths – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Respondents' feedback on footpaths was mixed but leaned strongly toward concerns about safety, maintenance and accessibility. Many comments described uneven, broken, slippery or poorly maintained footpaths, with particular concern about wet pavers and cobblestones creating trip or slip hazards. Others highlighted missing or incomplete footpaths, overgrown vegetation, drainage issues, debris and poor cleanliness. Accessibility was also a key concern, especially for elderly residents, wheelchair users, mobility scooter users and people with prams. While some respondents were positive about improvements, appearance and general condition, others felt Council priorities, funding decisions and responsiveness had not adequately addressed practical pedestrian safety needs.

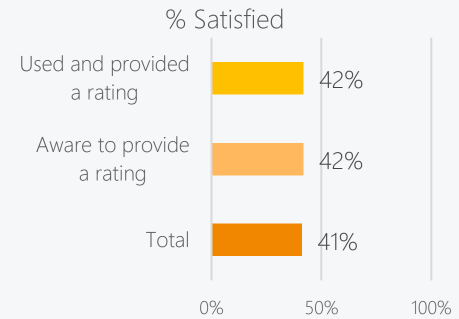
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – city centre

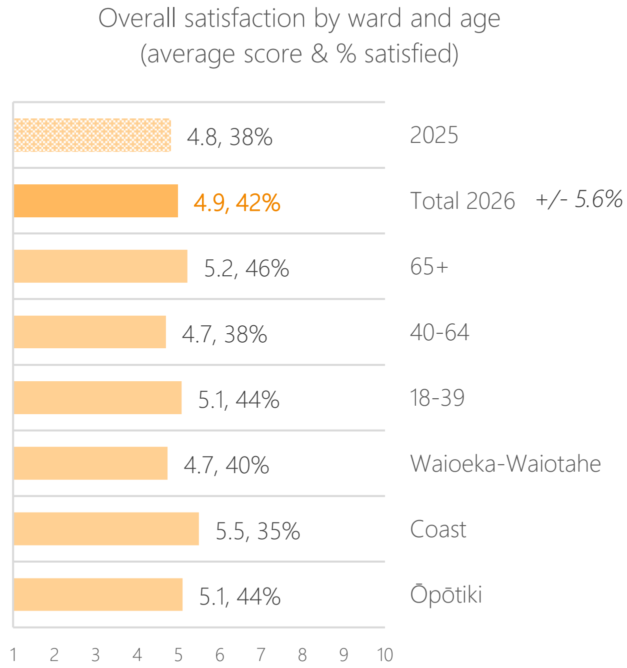
- All respondents (100%) in 2026 reported visiting the CBD in the last 3 months (throughout the year), with the vast majority (88%) doing so at least three times – consistently the highest rate of use/visitation across the survey.
- 2-in-5 (42%) of respondents providing ratings were satisfied with the city centre (4.9 average) – remaining around this level since the attribute was introduced in 2024.
- Satisfaction was consistent among resident segments, though slightly lower for Coast residents (35%, down from 47% in 2025) (despite a higher average rating score in 2026).
- Residents dissatisfied with services overall were significantly less satisfied with this service area (21% vs 60% respondents satisfied overall) – one of the lowest rated areas for this dissatisfied segment (behind dog control and consents services).





	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied												42%	38%	42%





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 Q3 2024 – annual data for 2024 is for partial year only.

CITY CENTRE – community feedback

Top reasons for satisfaction with city centre	Top reasons for dissatisfaction with city centre
Positive / acceptable / mixed views – 74%	Lack of vibrancy / attractions / retail variety / community spaces – 45%
Footpath / paving / traffic / accessibility / infrastructure safety issues – 51%	Run-down / vacant / poorly maintained buildings / shopfronts – 41%
Run-down / vacant / poorly maintained buildings / shopfronts – 23%	Unpopular town-centre upgrades / boulders / parking loss – 29%
Dirty / untidy / poorly maintained public spaces – 21%	Footpath / paving / traffic / accessibility / street-infrastructure safety issues – 25%
	Concerns for Council planning / spending / rates / property management – 24%
	Dirty / untidy / poorly maintained public spaces – 19%
4% of respondents provided a comment	*38% of respondents provided a comment*

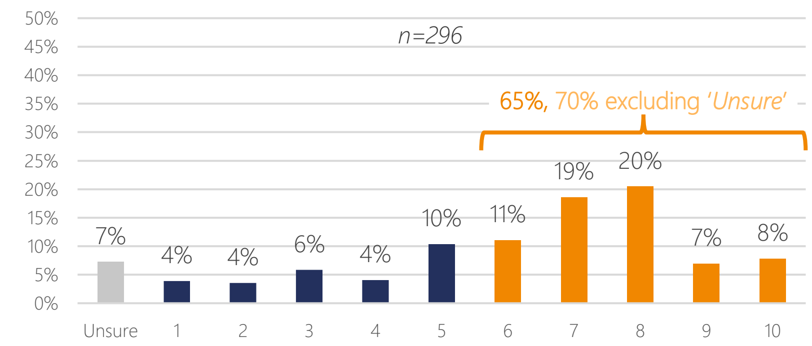
Developing and maintaining a vibrant town centre – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

Overall, respondents viewed Ōpōtiki's city centre as needing significant improvement, with the strongest dissatisfaction focused on the rocks/boulders and town-centre upgrades, which many felt reduced parking, created accessibility issues, and represented poor planning or spending. Concerns were also raised about vacant and run-down buildings, dirty or poorly maintained public spaces, unsafe or uneven footpaths, traffic and parking issues, and an unwelcoming social environment caused by loitering, public drinking, homelessness, or anti-social behaviour. Many respondents felt the centre lacks vibrancy, retail variety, attractions, seating, shade, and community spaces that would encourage people to spend time there. While some acknowledged positive aspects or recent improvements, the overall sentiment was that the city centre appears tired, underused, poorly maintained, and in need of more practical, well-planned investment.

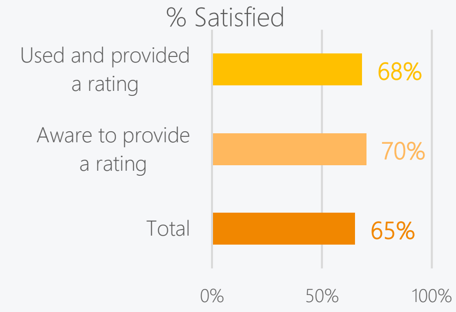
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – parks & reserves

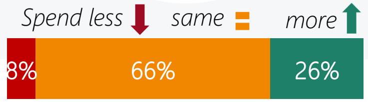
KPI target <u>75%</u>
within margin of error

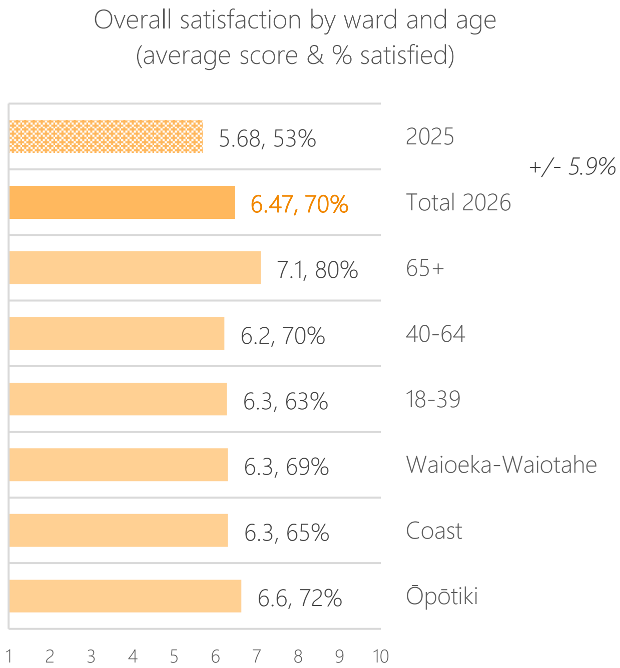
- Introduced to the survey in 2025, questions about Council's provision and management of parks and reserves were asked for the full 2026 year.
- Most respondents in 2026 (85%) indicated using or visiting parks and reserves in the previous 3 months (similar to 86% in 2025), with 2-in-5 (58%) doing so at least three times – the fourth-highest visitation rate in 2026.
- Of respondents providing ratings, 7-in-10 (70%) were satisfied with parks and reserves (6.5 average) – making this the fourth-highest satisfaction level in 2026.
- Satisfaction with parks and reserves in 2026 was similar across wards.
- However, age differences remained apparent, with higher satisfaction for older residents (80% of 65+ year olds, 68% in 2025); but increases also evident for 18-39s (63% vs 53% 2025) and especially 40-64s (70% vs 47% 2025).
- Also, Māori were less satisfied overall with this area (61% vs 83% non-Māori).
- Half of those dissatisfied with services overall were satisfied with this service area (48% vs 90% respondents satisfied overall) – another significant gap.
- Amongst the typically positive feedback, maintenance and upgrades were identified issues to address – while maintaining steady levels of rates funding.



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
% Satisfied						53%	70%







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). Full year of data available from 2026.

PARKS & RESERVES – community feedback

Top reasons for satisfaction with parks & reserves

12% of respondents provided a comment

Parks are well maintained / tidy / clean / visually appealing – 85%

Parks are valued community spaces / accessible / useful / well used – 17%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with parks & reserves

14% of respondents provided a comment

Poor maintenance / overgrowth / asset condition concerns – 43%

Facilities / amenities / upgrades are needed – 37%

Cleanliness problems / rubbish / broken glass / graffiti / drugs / dog waste – 30%

Horses / dogs / vehicles damaging parks / creating safety/hygiene issues – 26%

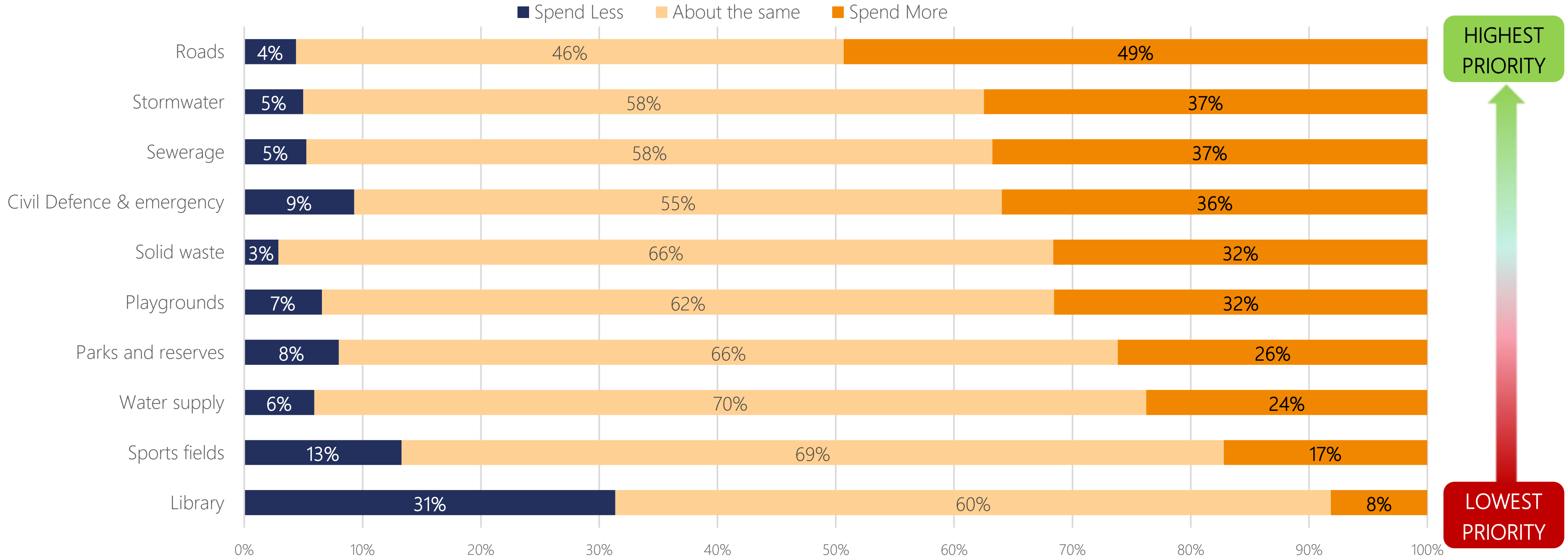
Safety / comfort / social environment concerns – 21%

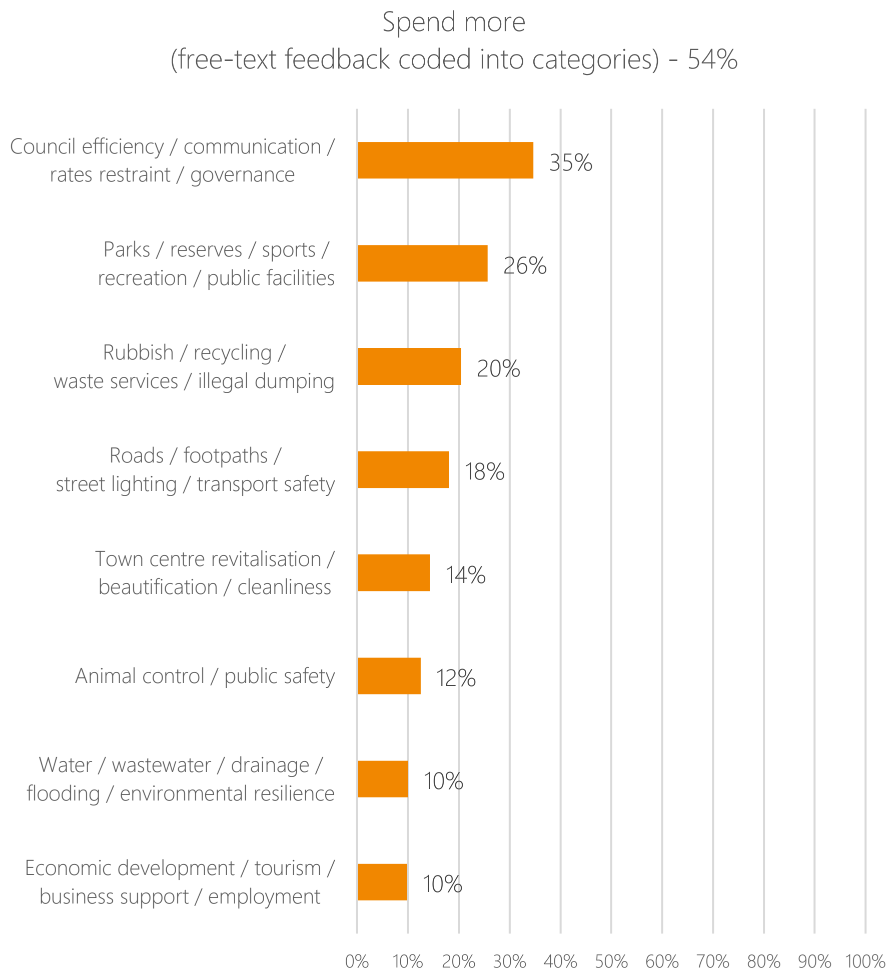
Provision of parks & reserves – open-ended comments coded into theme categories.

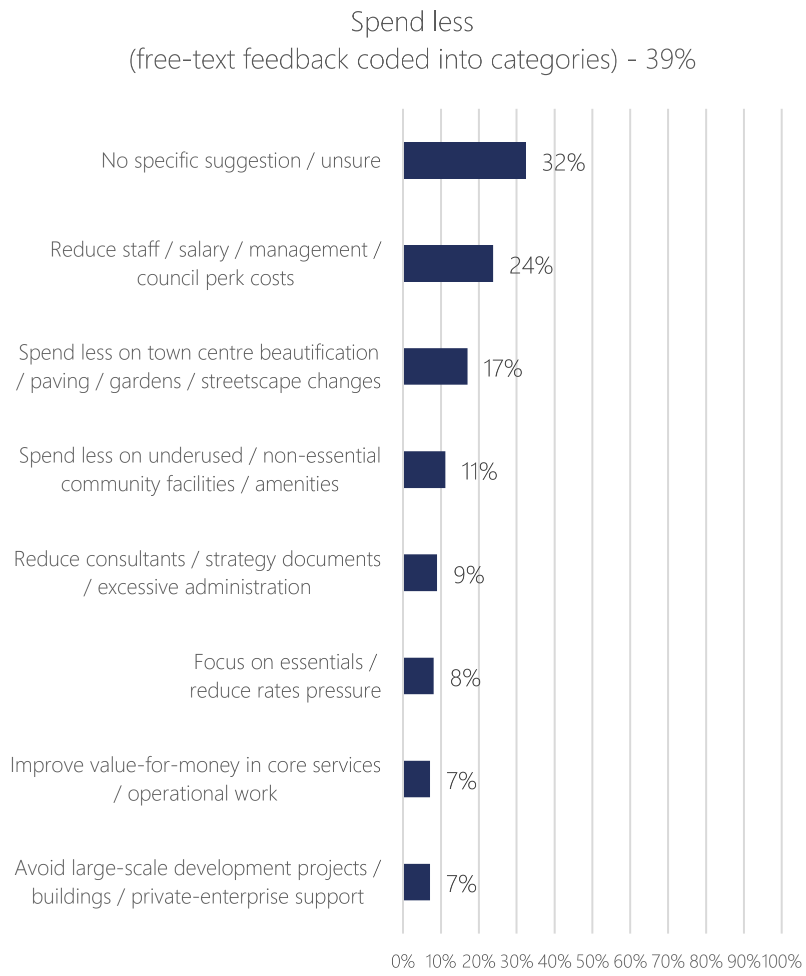
Overall, feedback on Parks and Reserves was mixed but leaned positively where respondents felt spaces were clean, tidy, well maintained, attractive, accessible, and useful for families, sport, play, and community gatherings. However, lower ratings were driven by concerns about inconsistent maintenance, overgrown or tired-looking areas, rubbish, broken glass, graffiti, dog waste, horse dung, and damage caused by animals or vehicles. Some respondents also raised safety and comfort issues, including antisocial behaviour, lack of fencing, insufficient shade, and unsafe or unpleasant park environments. Many suggested improvements such as better toilets, bins, BBQ areas, seating, shade, playground upgrades, water-play facilities, and stronger enforcement, while a smaller number questioned whether Council should reduce spending on parks or prioritise other services.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES – spending priorities

- Reflecting historical trends, respondents in 2026 typically recommended holding Council spending at steady levels ("about the same") across all services and facilities, with fewer preferring increased spending. However, on balance, increased funding was preferred over less spending.
- The highest priority investment areas in 2026 were consistent with previous years; however, only roads (49%) was selected for more spending by more than 40% of respondents. Other priority areas fell slightly in 2026, including stormwater (37%, 42% in 2025), sewerage (37%, 46% 2025), and waste management (32%, 42%). Civil defence spending increased slightly in preference this year (36% vs 31% 2025).
- Library facilities remained the area most identified for less Council spending, although more preferred steady funding - reflecting general satisfaction.
- Respondents less satisfied with Council performance overall requested more funding for roads (56%), playgrounds (41%), parks & reserves (38%), and stormwater (38%); but also less funding for library services (42% vs 23% of overall satisfied residents).
- Coast ward respondents were more likely to request more spending on roads (78%), sewerage (52%) and waste services (44%). Ōpōtiki residents called for more funding of roads (50%), stormwater (47%), sewerage (43%) and water supply (31%).
- Younger residents (18-39) were most likely to suggest spending more on roads (54%), playgrounds (48%) and waste management (57%), parks and reserves (47%) and Civil defence (46%).





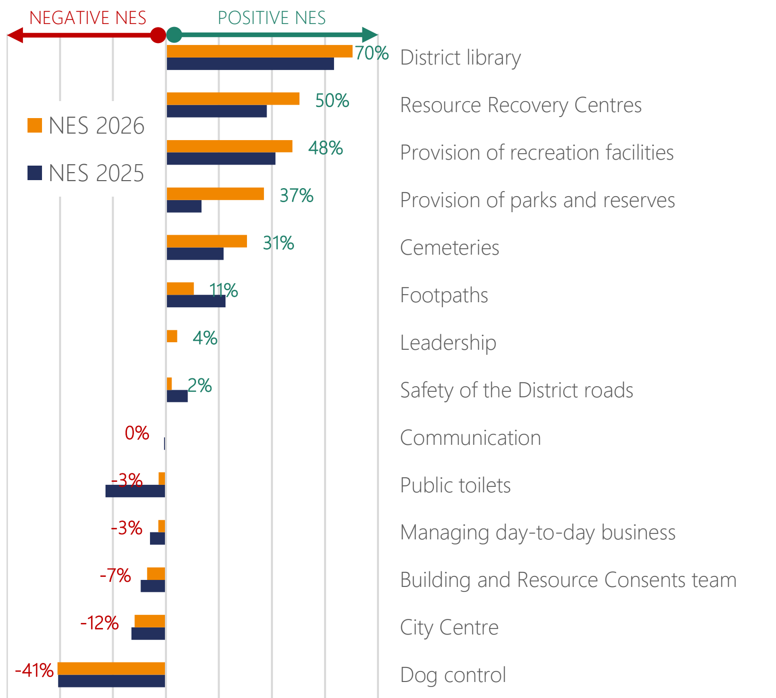


In addition, residents provided other free-text comments in relation to Council spending more (54%) and/or spending less (39%).

Overall, respondents most commonly want Ōpōtiki District Council to prioritise spending on visible core services and community infrastructure. Key areas include better rubbish and recycling services, cleaner and more attractive town spaces, improved roads, footpaths and street lighting, and stronger investment in parks, recreation facilities and public amenities. Many also raised concerns about animal control, especially roaming horses and stray dogs, alongside the need for improved water, wastewater, drainage and environmental resilience. A smaller but important group highlighted economic development, tourism, business support and employment, while others emphasised that Council should focus on efficiency, communication, rates restraint and spending wisely rather than simply spending more.

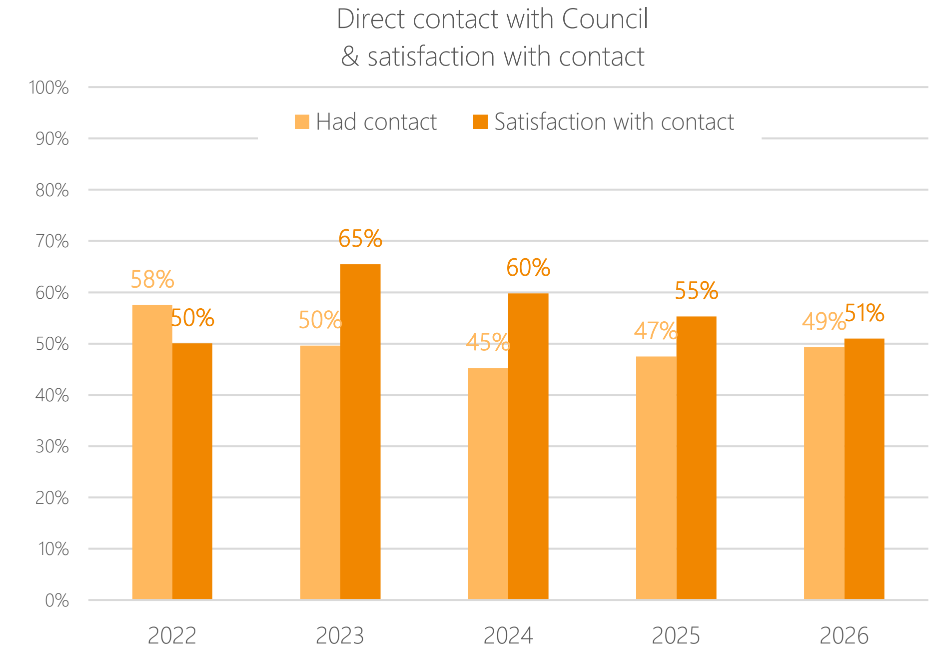
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – potential improvements

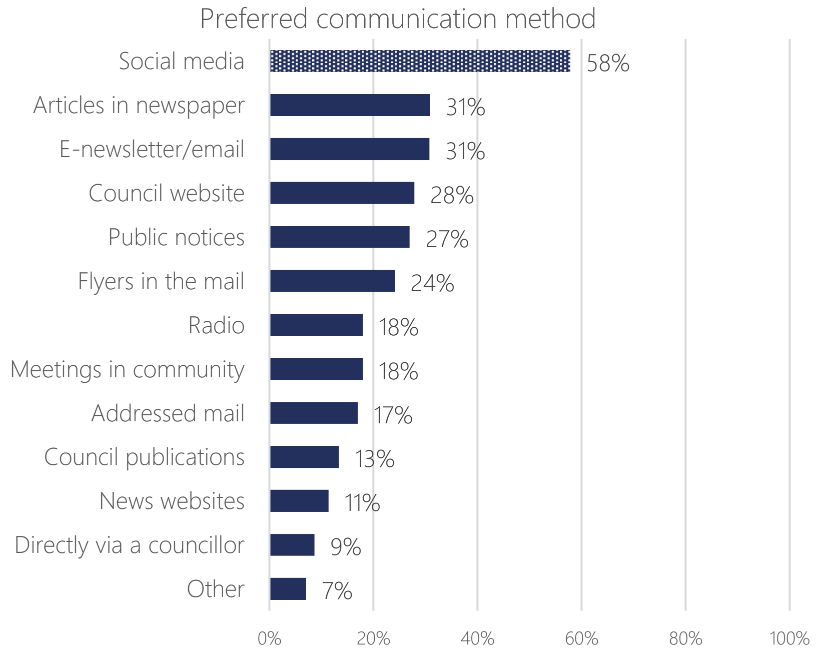
- Based on Net Emotional Scores (NES), five areas with negative NES (i.e. more negative than positive perceptions) were identified within the community. The most negative scores were generally consistent over time, and recorded for dog control, city centre and the Building Consents team. Notably, these scores held steady, with no notable decreases in 2026. While still in negative territory, public toilets saw some improvement since 2025 (from -23 to -3).
- Services with positive NES typically saw increases in 2026: most notably parks & reserves (from +13 to +37), and resource recovery (from +38 to +50).
- Taking all services into account, the level of influence each service has on overall satisfaction with Council services and facilities continues to vary.
- Three services in 2026 particularly exhibited the greatest relative importance or level of impact on general sentiment: Council management of day-to-day business, City centre facilities and enhancements, and provision of parks and reserves. These collectively represent significant levers on overall resident satisfaction and therefore strong sources for potential improvement.



CONTACT WITH COUNCIL

- Overall, half of respondents (49%) stated they had contacted the Council in the 2026 survey year (within the three month recall period each quarter) – consistent over time.
- Of respondents who had contacted the Council directly, half (51%) were satisfied with this contact. Satisfaction with Council contact has notably trended down over the last four years (from 65% in 2023), though this is not a significant decline as yet. Older respondents (65+) tended to be more satisfied with their contact (63%) than respondents overall.
- Residents dissatisfied with services overall were more likely to make contact with Council (59% vs 42% of residents satisfied overall), but typically much less satisfied with this contact (34% vs 74%).
- '*Social media*' remained the most preferred method for Council communications, for 3-in-5 respondents (58%, similar to 63% 2025, 57% 2024). This was the top preference for under-65s, but also among the top three for older residents 65+. The range of other channels selected emphasised the continued importance of a diverse communications mix to ensure Council messaging reaches the widest possible audience.





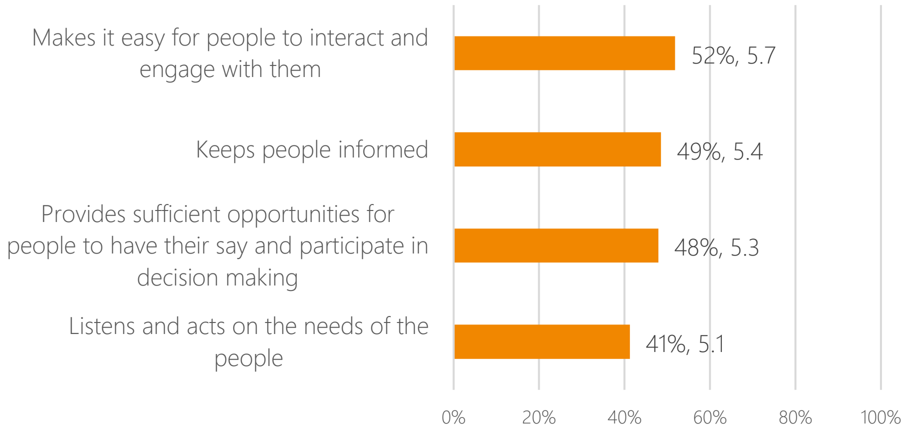
Preferred communication method 18-39 residents
- Social media – 74%
- Public notices – 33%
- E-newsletter/email – 33%

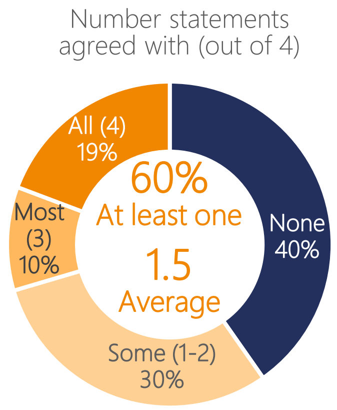
Preferred communication method 40-64 residents
- Social media – 63%
- Council website – 34%
- E-newsletter/email – 31%

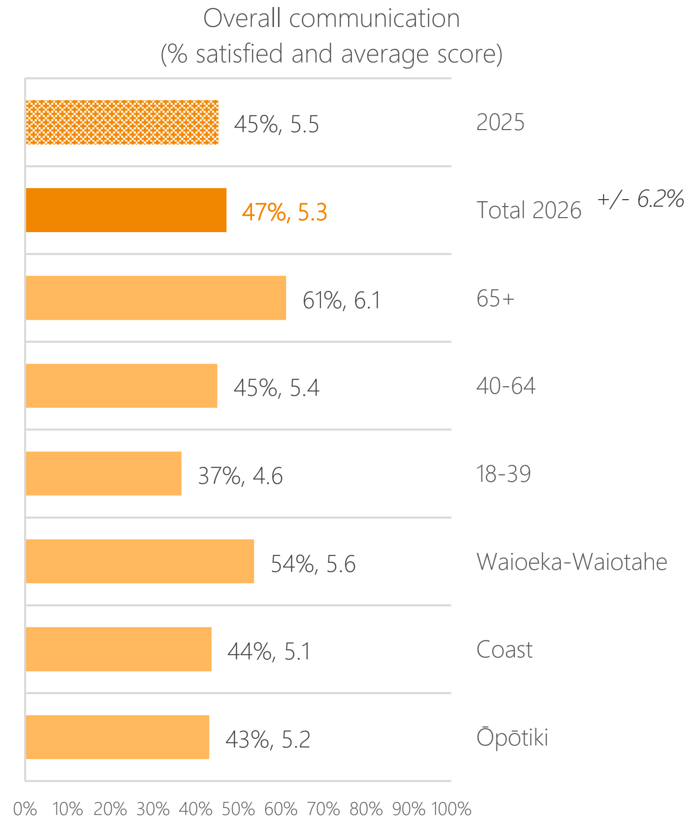
Preferred communication method 65+ residents
- Articles in newspaper – 54%
- Flyers in the mail – 35%
- Social media – 33%

COMMUNICATION – communication with residents

- Overall, around half (47%) of respondents in 2026 were satisfied with Council communication with residents – generally consistent over time, though below the peak of 54% in 2024.
- Satisfaction with communication remained notably higher among older residents (65+), particularly compared to younger 18-39s. Māori residents were also less satisfied overall (39% vs 59% non-Māori). Results were similar across wards, though slightly higher for Waioeka-Waiotahe residents.
- Residents typically expressed moderate sentiment across comms attributes, with 3-in-5 (60%) agreeing with at least one statement and 1-in-5 (19%) agreeing with all four – with 45% average agreement across statements.
- Most communication attributes were consistent with 2025, scoring around 50% agreement; listening and acting on needs of the people scored notably lower (41%), despite increasing slightly from 2025 (33%).
- Residents dissatisfied with Council services overall were significantly less satisfied with Council communication overall (22% vs 71% satisfied overall).

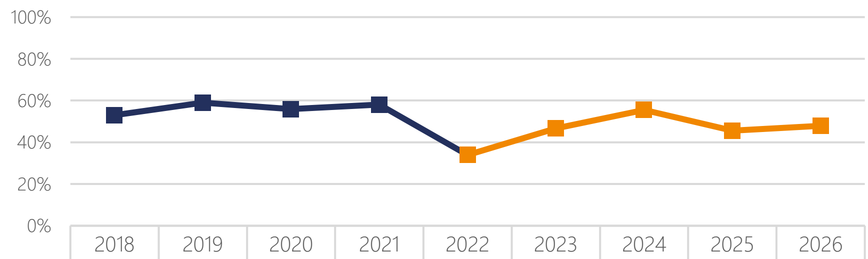






KPI target 60%

below

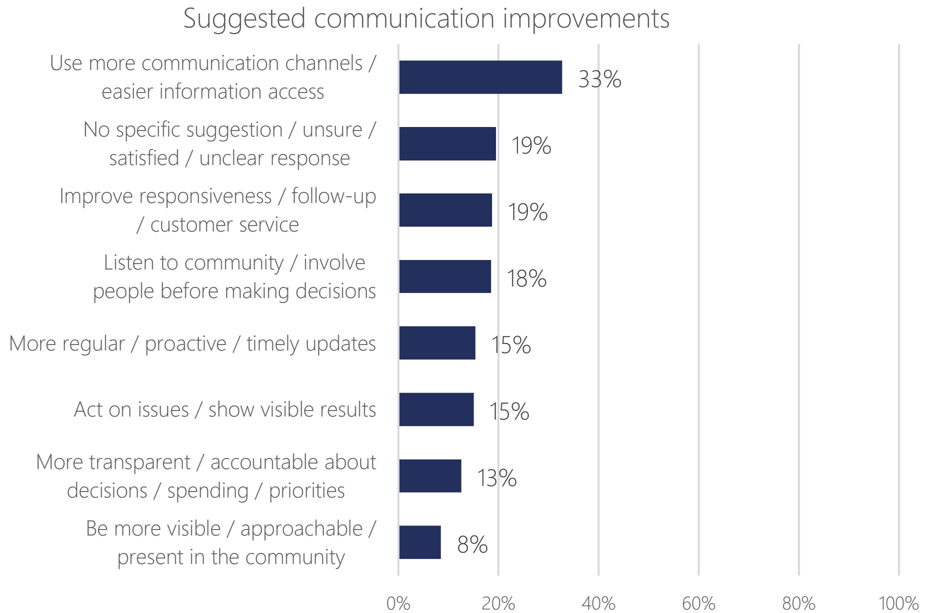


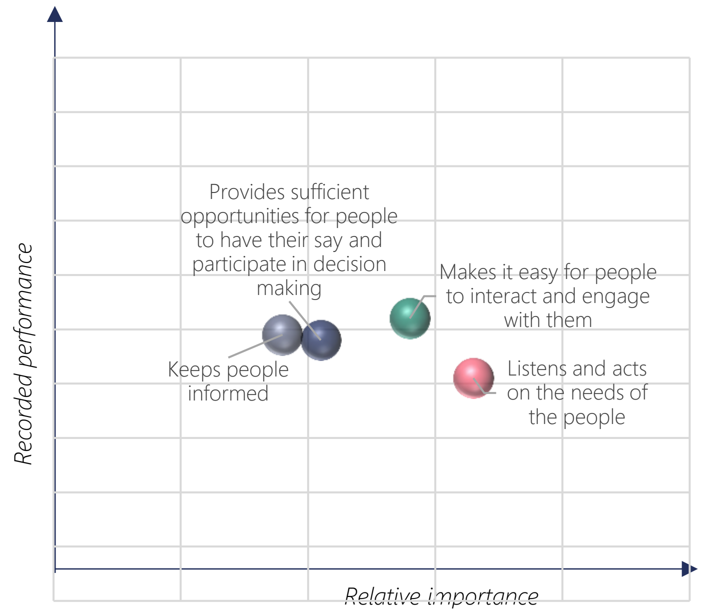
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Sufficient opportunities for people to have their say	53%	59%	56%	58%	34%	47%	55%	46%	48%

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 communications attributes contributed significantly to overall satisfaction with Council communication. Reflecting the specific attribute results above, '*listens and acts on the needs of the people*' again represented the greatest potential for overall improvement, with lower satisfaction overall in 2026 but with some improvement already measured since 2025.
- 3-in-4 residents (73%) provided additional comments relating to communication improvements, highlighting the relevance of this evaluation area.
- Respondents most typically felt Council could improve communication by making information easier to access across a wider range of channels, including print, email, website, social media, newsletters, mail drops, radio, noticeboards and in-person community spaces.
- Many residents wanted updates to be more regular, proactive and timely, especially around meetings, decisions, projects, emergencies and opportunities for feedback. A strong concern was the need for better responsiveness and follow-up when residents contact Council, alongside more genuine two-way engagement before decisions are made. Respondents also wanted greater transparency about spending, priorities and decision-making, more visible and approachable Council representatives in the community, and clearer evidence that issues raised by residents are acted on. Some respondents were satisfied, unsure, had limited contact with Council, or did not provide a specific suggestion.

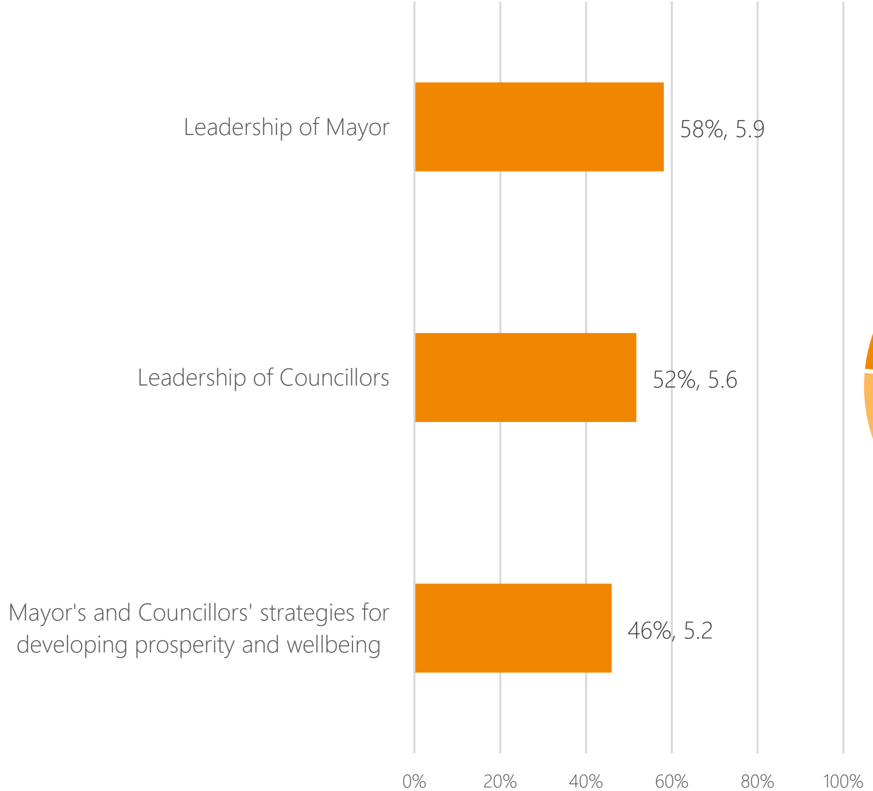




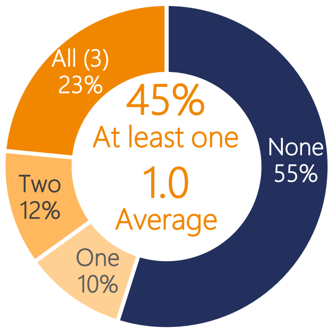
COUNCIL LEADERSHIP – performance

KPI target 75%
below

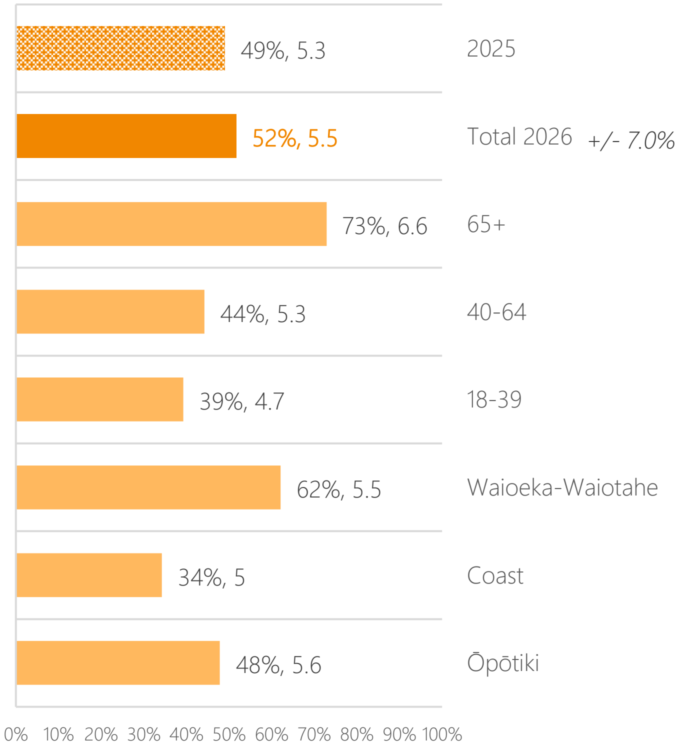
- Residents in 2026 expressed moderate sentiment across leadership attributes, with just under half (45%) agreeing with at least one statement and 1-in-4 (23%) agreeing with all three – with 52% average agreement across statements.
- Satisfaction with Mayoral leadership (58%) remained strongest, consistent with 2025 (56%) but slightly below the 2024 peak (68%). Satisfaction with both Councillors (52%, 43% in 2025) and prosperity and wellbeing strategies (46%, 45% in 2025) remained around the 50% mark, with no change over time.
- Overall satisfaction with leadership remained stable in 2026 (52%, 49% in 2025), though slightly below the 2024 peak (61%). Satisfaction continued to be significantly lower among respondents aged under 65, and was also lower for Māori (41% vs 65% non-Māori). Disparities were also apparent across the district, though ward differences were not statistically significant in 2026.
- Among those dissatisfied with Council services overall, just 1-in-6 (16%) were satisfied with leadership overall (significantly less than 84% of those satisfied with service provision overall); with 22%/81% average agreement for attributes.



Number statements agreed with (out of 3)



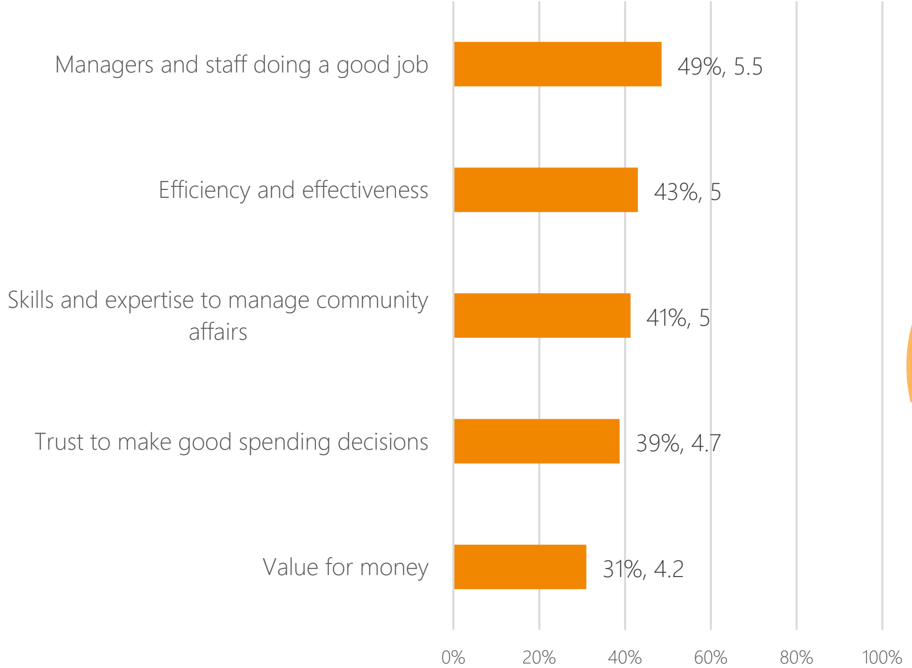
Overall leadership
(% satisfied and average score)

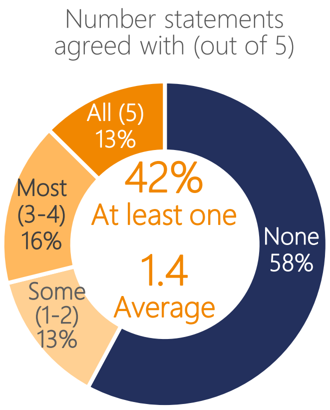


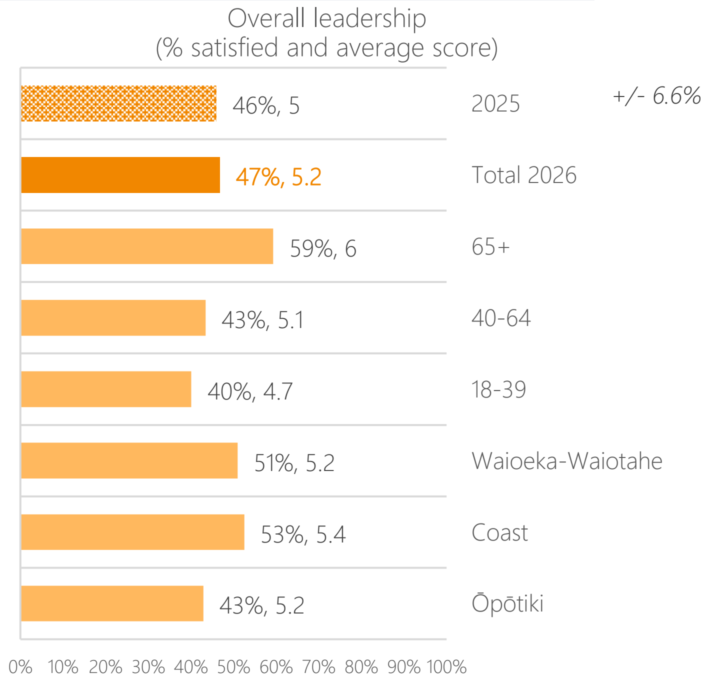
Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in relation to leadership. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.

MANAGEMENT – day-to-day performance

- Residents again expressed low sentiment with management attributes in 2026; just 2-in-5 (42%) agreed with at least one statement (1.4 out of 5 average) and 1-in-8 (13%) agreed with all five – with 41% average agreement across these.
- Management attribute satisfaction was generally consistent over time. 'Efficiency and effectiveness' (43%) recovered slightly from its low score in 2025 (37%), though below the 2023 peak (54%).
- Value for money remained one of the lowest scoring measures across the survey, and hit a new low in 2026 (31%), down from an historic high in 2023 (36%). Perceptions around value represent an ongoing challenge and opportunity for improvement for residents, given concerns around rates rises.
- In this context, overall satisfaction with Council's management of day-to-day business held steady in 2026 (47%, similar to 46% 2025 but below 53% 2023).
- Overall satisfaction was similar across wards (the Ōpōtiki ward score was not significantly lower). Despite the typical age disparity, overall satisfaction was not significantly different in 2026; however, younger residents (18-39) were least satisfied with most attributes, particularly skills and expertise (28%), trust in spending decisions (36%), and efficiency and effectiveness (39%). Māori were less satisfied than non-Māori overall (43% vs 52%), especially on value for money (22% vs 42%).
- Of those dissatisfied with Council services overall, just 1-in-8 (13%) were satisfied with management overall (compared to 78% of those satisfied with service provision overall); with 12%/68% average agreement for attributes. Just 6% were satisfied with value for money (vs 55% of those satisfied overall).



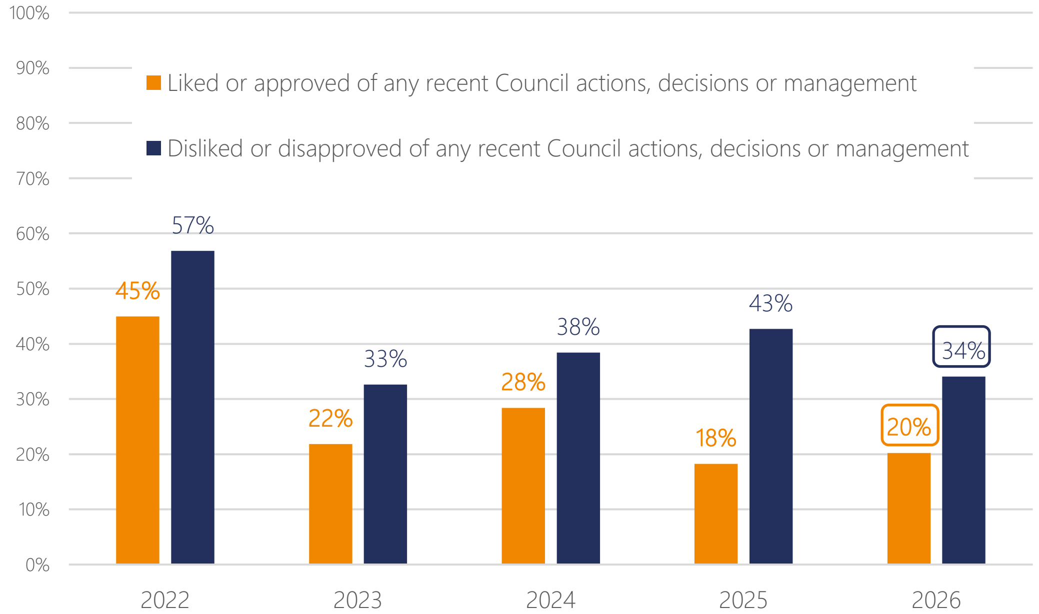




Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in relation to day-to-day management. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.

POLICY AND DIRECTION

- On balance, residents tend to disapprove more than approve of Council actions or decisions. Around 1-in-5 residents typically report *approving* of any Council decisions or actions (20% in 2026). In 2026, slightly fewer reported *disapproving* of any such decisions.
- 1-in-5 respondents (20%) expressed approval of recent Council actions: most commonly for visible council improvements to public facilities, amenities, and the local environment, including toilets, gardens, playgrounds, parks, cemeteries, beach cleaning, trails, and community spaces; also infrastructure and transport decisions, emergency and flooding responses, Māori representation and community engagement.
- 1-in-3 respondents (34%) expressed disapproval: centred mainly on rising rates and related spending priorities, perceived wasteful spending, and poor value for money; also delivery of core services, including town centre/CBD upgrades, infrastructure needs and general management of civic priorities.



Liked or approved

- Public facilities improvements / town beautification
- Emergency management / civil defence response
- Regulation / monitoring / local policy decisions
- Roads / transport / infrastructure decisions
- Council communication / governance / leadership decisions
- Māori representation / local voice / community engagement
- Council staff helpfulness / service experience

Disliked or disapproved

- Rates / council spending / priorities / perceived waste
- Dissatisfaction with town centre upgrades / CBD design
- Infrastructure / roads / wastewater
- Emergency management / flooding concerns
- Rubbish / recycling / public toilets / parks / maintenance
- Poor service delivery / lack of action / weak follow-through
- Harbour / beaches / Waiotahe access / coastal management
- Governance / consultation / transparency / Māori wards / community communication
- Regulatory enforcement / animal control / community safety / local nuisance issues