



Ōpōtiki

District Council

2022-23 Resident
Survey

| SIL Research

April 2023

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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.

Research was conducted quarterly in 2022 and 2023. Multiple data collection methods were utilised to ensure residents were well-represented. A total of n=300 responses were used in the final analysis.

The main findings were as follows:

- Overall, Ōpōtiki residents were moderately satisfied with Council services and facilities they experience in their community. Satisfaction with overall services provided by the Ōpōtiki District Council increased significantly from 45% in 2022 to 59% in 2023; similar to the NZ benchmark average (62%). This positive shift indicates that the Council has been successful to some degree in addressing community concerns and improving service provision.
- The district library was the top performing area in 2023, with over 9-in-10 respondents satisfied with this service.
- 6-out-of-9 services showed significant improvements in 2023, with the greatest improvements observed in library services (92% vs. 69% in 2022), building consents (38% vs. 19% in 2022), and Resource Recovery Centre (77% vs. 63% in 2022).
- No performance areas showed a significant decline in satisfaction in 2023, indicating that the Council has maintained or improved upon the level of services provided in the district.
- Satisfaction with Council leadership also improved in 2023, with 60% of respondents satisfied with the Mayor's leadership in particular – the greatest year-on-year performance improvement in 2023.
- More respondents in 2023 were satisfied with Council communication (46% vs. 37% in 2022); keeping people informed (52%) was the best performing communication area. At the same time, free-text comments suggested that the Council needs to further improve its communication efforts to reach all members of the community, including a consistent mix of different channels.
- Half of respondents (50%) stated they had contacted the Council in 2023, with 65% being satisfied with this contact (up compared to 50% in 2022).
- Half of respondents (53%) were satisfied with Council's performance in managing day-to-day business (up from 47% in 2022).
- Based on the results and community feedback, there was room for improvement in certain Council service areas. Four Council services

received low (below 50%) satisfaction scores: dog control (34%), building consents (38%), public toilets (44%), and roads safety (45%).

- Two areas represented the greatest opportunity to improve overall satisfaction with Council: dog control and safety of roads – both with relatively low performance given their perceived importance.

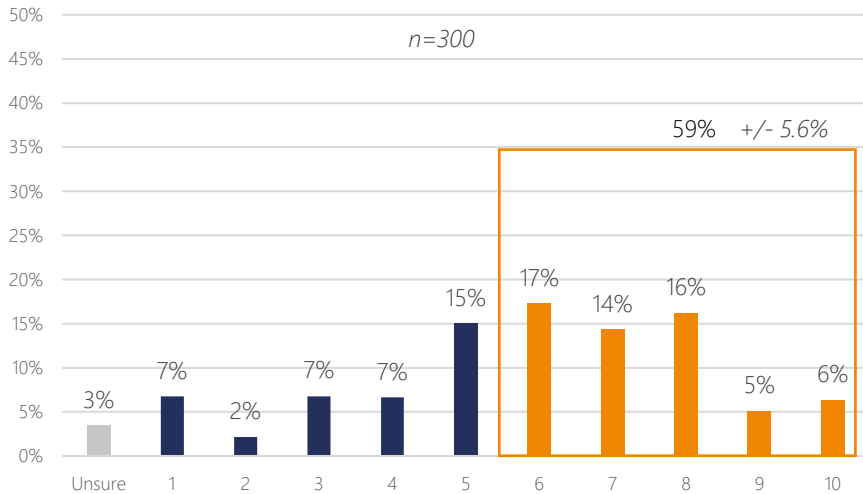
There was also a significant increase in perceived priority of spending related to roads in the district.

- Building consents and public toilets were identified as the other two areas with more negative than positive perceptions. The main suggested improvement for building consents was to expedite the approvals processes; while suggested improvements for public toilets focused on maintenance and general conditions.

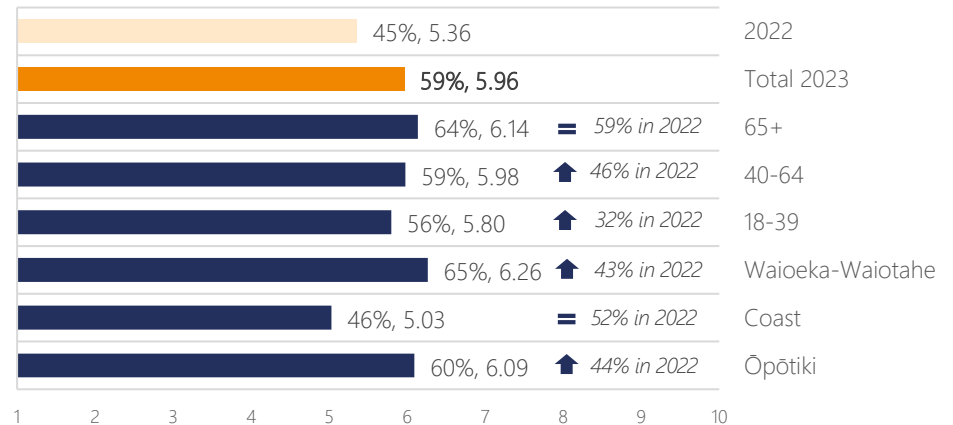


OVERALL SATISFACTION

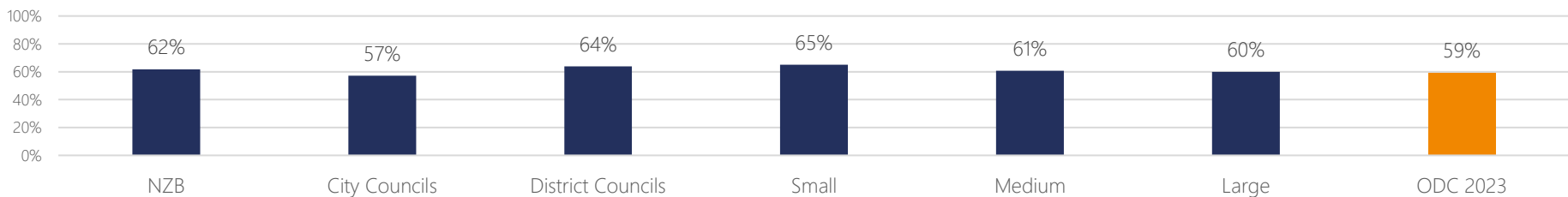
- In 2023, 59% of respondents were satisfied with overall services received from the Ōpōtiki District Council (on average rating 5.96 out of 10), a significant improvement compared to 45% in 2022.
- The increase was mainly observed amongst respondents aged under 65, and from Ōpōtiki and Waioeka-Waiotaha wards.
- Satisfaction differed significantly by ward in 2023, with Coast ward respondents being less satisfied overall (with little change since 2022).
- No significant differences were found between age or other demographic groups.
- The current result was similar to the NZ benchmark average, but slightly below the national results for Councils with small (under 30,000) populations.




























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



Overall satisfaction New Zealand benchmark



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

 Public library (p.23)	 Cemeteries (p.21)	 Recreation facilities (p.15)	 Resource Recovery Centre (p.27)	 Footpaths (p.31)	
ODC 2023: 92% / 8.1	ODC 2023: 82% / 7.4	ODC 2023: 81% / 7.2	ODC 2023: 77% / 7.2	ODC 2023: 61% / 6.1	
ODC 2022: 69% / 6.9	ODC 2022: 77% / 6.9	ODC 2022: 73% / 6.8	ODC 2022: 63% / 6.4	ODC 2022: 63% / 6.4	
NZB 2022: 81% / 7.6	NZB 2022: 84% / 7.6	NZB 2022: 78% / 7.2	NZB 2022: 67% / 6.7	NZB 2022: 64% / 6.3	
 Leadership of Mayor (p.39)	 Managers and staff (p.40)	 Efficiency and effectiveness (p.40)	 Leadership of Councillors (p.39)	 Keeps people informed (p.37)	- Good performance (70% and above)
ODC 2023: 60% / 5.9	ODC 2023: 56% / 5.9	ODC 2023: 54% / 5.6	ODC 2023: 53% / 5.7	ODC 2023: 52% / 5.6	
ODC 2022: 37% / 4.5	ODC 2022: 51% / 5.4	ODC 2022: 45% / 5.0	ODC 2022: 44% / 5.1	ODC 2022: 42% / 5.0	
NZB 2022: 53% / 5.7	NZB 2022: 54% / 5.6	NZB 2022: 48% / 5.3	NZB 2022: 50% / 5.3	NZB 2022: 57% / 5.8	- Services with positive performance (less than 70% but equal or more than 50%)
 Easy for people to interact (p.37)	 Strategies for developing prosperity (p.40)	 Skills and expertise (p.40)	 Opportunities for people to have their say (p.37)	 District's roads safety (p.29)	- Services for improvement
ODC 2023: 51% / 5.6	ODC 2023: 50% / 5.6	ODC 2023: 50% / 5.6	ODC 2023: 47% / 5.3	ODC 2023: 45% / 5.1	
ODC 2022: 42% / 4.9	ODC 2022: 43% / 4.9	ODC 2022: 42% / 4.9	ODC 2022: 34% / 4.4	ODC 2022: 41% / 5.1	
NZB 2022: 53% / 5.6	NZB 2022: 47% / 5.3	NZB 2022: 52% / 5.4	NZB 2022: 57% / 5.7	NZB 2022: 53% / 5.4	- Overall performance indicators
 Public toilets (p.17)	 Listens and acts on the needs of the people (p.37)	 Good spending decisions (p.40)	 Building consents team (p.25)	 Value for money (p.40)	
ODC 2023: 44% / 5.0	ODC 2023: 42% / 5.1	ODC 2023: 41% / 5.2	ODC 2023: 38% / 4.6	ODC 2023: 36% / 4.7	
ODC 2022: 38% / 4.9	ODC 2022: 29% / 4.3	ODC 2022: 35% / 4.4	ODC 2022: 19% / 3.7	ODC 2022: 35% / 4.4	
NZB 2022: 64% / 6.4	NZB 2022: 42% / 4.8	NZB 2022: 41% / 4.7	NZB 2022: 39% / 5.1	NZB 2022: 39% / 4.8	
 Dog control (p.19)	 Overall communication (p.37)	 Overall leadership (p.39)	 Overall management (p.40)	 Overall performance (p.6)	
ODC 2023: 34% / 4.5	ODC 2023: 46% / 5.4	ODC 2023: 55% / 5.7	ODC 2023: 53% / 5.8	ODC 2023: 59% / 6.0	
ODC 2022: 25% / 3.9	ODC 2022: 37% / 4.7	ODC 2022: 41% / 4.9	ODC 2022: 47% / 5.2	ODC 2022: 45% / 5.4	
NZB 2022: 64% / 6.4	NZB 2022: 50% / 5.4	NZB 2022: 53% / 5.5	NZB 2022: 52% / 5.5	NZB 2022: 62% / 5.9	



METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH GOAL

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

QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROJECT SPECIFICS

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

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

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

A number of methodology changes were adopted in 2022 and repeated in 2023. The main changes included:

- From 2022, previous ratings scales (a combination of scales 'Not very satisfied', 'Fairly satisfied', 'Very satisfied', 'Don't know' and 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Only fair', 'Poor', 'Don't know') were updated to a 1-10 scale, which provides more nuanced and robust options for residents to express their views.

- Historically, surveys were conducted predominantly by telephone. In contrast, the 2022 and 2023 surveys used a mixed method approach (including telephone, social media, online and postal methods).
- Changes to the demographic questions.

For the 2022-23 survey year, the data was collected from June 2022 (retrospectively covering the Apr-Jun quarter) to April 2023 (covering the Jan-Mar quarter) to align with ODC's annual reporting period.

Fieldwork was conducted quarterly in June - August 2022 (Q1), September - October 2022 (Q2), January - February 2023 (Q3), and March - April 2023 (Q4). A total n=75 responses were collected each quarter, providing a total sample of n=300 for the final analysis. For ease, this report refers to the 2022-23 survey year as '2023'.

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 Q1, 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 the age and gender group proportions as determined by the Statistics New Zealand 2018 Census.

DATA COLLECTION

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

- (1) Telephone survey. Respondents were randomly selected from the publicly available telephone directories within specified territorial units (e.g. wards);
- (2) Social media (available via SIL Research social media platforms, such as Facebook). The invitation advertisement was randomly promoted to District residents within specified territorial units;
- (3) Postal survey. Survey forms were sent to randomly selected Ōpōtiki District households.
- (4) Online survey. The survey was promoted and available via ODC channels to increase community awareness.

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

DATA ANALYSIS

Surveys were conducted proportional to the population in each of Ōpōtiki District’s wards.

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

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

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

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

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

Table 2 Margins of error

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

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

NOTES ON REPORTING

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

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

Open-ended (free-text) responses were also collected and analysed. SIL Research used a content analysis approach to determine certain themes, concepts or issues within this feedback. This represents a 'bottom up' data driven approach where identified themes are derived purely from the collective respondent feedback, rather than fitting responses into pre-determined categories. Results for reported themes may not add to 100% as several themes could be mentioned by a given respondent.

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

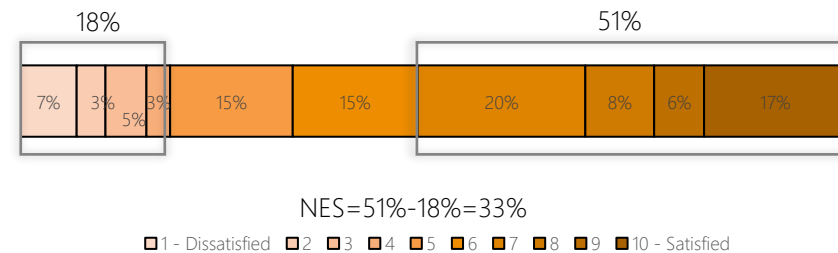
Overall 'satisfaction' percentages presented in this report are aggregated 6-10 responses on a 1-10 scale. Satisfaction percentages will differ from mean scores (average ratings). Satisfaction percentages represent positive ratings only, whereas mean scores provide an average of all ratings across the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

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

- Total satisfaction percentage for the District (all responses), and

- Satisfaction percentages for 'Users/Visitors' (e.g. residents who had visited/used specific Council services/facilities and/or knew enough to provide a rating).

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



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.

The regression analysis was used for key driver analysis. This 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 improvement potential.

RESPONSES USED IN THE ANALYSIS

Table 1 Responses by ward

	Frequency	Percent
Ōpōtiki	142	47%
Coast	54	18%
Waioeka-Waiotaha	104	35%
Total	300	100%

Table 2 Responses by age

	Frequency	Percent
18-39	93	31%
40-64	133	44%
65+	74	25%
Total	300	100%

Table 3 Responses by gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	147	49%
Female	152	51%
Non-binary	1	0.3%
Total	300	100%

Table 4 Responses by location

	Frequency	Percent
Urban	107	36%
Semi-rural	79	26%
Rural	113	38%
Not stated	1	0.3%
Total	300	100.0%

Table 5 Responses by home ownership

	Frequency	Percent
Other	8	3%
Owned	242	81%
Rented	33	11%
Private trust	5	2%
Not stated	11	4%
Total	300	100%

Table 6 Responses by ethnicity (multi-choice)

	Frequency	Percent
New Zealand European	157	52%
European	21	7%
Māori	183	61%
Pacific people	4	1%
Other	12	4%
New Zealander/Kiwi/Not stated	8	3%
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 2022. 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 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 2022-23 include:

Key Q1 factors (April - June 2022):

1. Earlier in July 2022, the Council installed two cycle and pedestrian bridges as part of the cycleway project connecting Ōpōtiki township and Te Ahiaua.
2. In July 2022, a number of state highways were closed and operated with limited accessibility. A stretch of highway between Ōpōtiki and Te Kaha collapsed into the Motu River (SH35), and the section of SH2 between Gisborne and Ōpōtiki was affected by an underslip. Although all works were managed by NZTA, the Council kept the community informed with regular updates.
3. Also in July 2022, the cooperative work of Ōpōtiki District Council and the community-led response to COVID-19 was recognised at the 2022 LGNZ Excellence Awards – having also taken out the top prize in 2021.
4. Throughout Q1, the Harbour Development Project continued to progress ahead of schedule, with estimated completion in mid-2023.
5. Ōpōtiki District Council has provided feedback to the Select Committee on the Water Services Entities Bill, with support from

Whakatōhea, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngai Tai, voicing opposition on behalf of the Ōpōtiki community.

Key Q2 factors (July – September 2022).

1. Following the previous two years of Covid-19 related restrictions and public health measures, the New Zealand-wide Covid-19 Protection Framework ended in mid-September 2022. However, the pandemic and associated responses or considerations may have continued to have a lingering effect on public sentiment and attitudes beyond the cessation of the Framework.
2. In addition, economic impacts of global inflationary pressures continued to grow into Q2 2022-23, with the main drivers being global oil prices and ongoing supply chain issues; with these pressures felt across New Zealand nationally and regionally.
3. In August 2022, Ōpōtiki District Council announced the sale of a 5600m² parcel of land on the corner of Wellington and Union Streets to Kāinga Ora. Plans to build 21 two- to five-bedroom homes on the land have been explored.
4. In late August 2022, Ōpōtiki Mayor Lyn Riesterer joined Mayors from around Aotearoa to present to the Government's Finance and Expenditure committee on the existing Three Waters proposal. The Mayors were part of the Communities 4 Local Democracy He hapori mō te Manapori campaign, representing nearly half of all local authorities in New Zealand asking that the government pause current reform plans to allow time to find a way forward with broader support from councils and their communities.
5. Local body elections were held in late September-early October 2022, with voting closing on Saturday 7 October. 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.

6. Concurrent with local body elections, a non-binding poll was held to determine resident views on whether Ōpōtiki District Council should establish Māori wards.

Key Q3 factors (October 2022 – December 2022).

1. In November 2022, the Council announced that it had successfully secured \$214,000 from the Freedom Camping Transition Fund, administered by MBIE. These funds were to be used over the busy summer months to carry out monitoring, compliance, and education programs at each of the freedom camping sites in the district.
2. Throughout the third quarter of 2022-23, the Council continued to promote coverage of the new Ōpōtiki harbour development. A major milestone was celebrated in mid-October 2022 when over 11,500 hanbars and top blocks for the wall were completed.
3. In November 2022, the Ōpōtiki District Mayor announced that a new Chief Executive would be taking up the role early in 2023.

Key Q4 factors (January 2023 – March 2023).

1. In January 2023, the Council tried a new approach to reduce the lifting and cracking of concrete and pavers caused by tree roots in the CBD. They surrounded the root ball with plastic barriers to improve the safety of footpaths, with later assessments indicating this approach was successful.
2. In February 2023, Ōpōtiki District property owners received notice of updated rating values for their property. The new valuations provided by Quotable Value showed the total rateable value for the district at \$4.7 billion, with the land value of those properties valued

at \$2.5 billion, substantially increasing from previous valuations in 2019. For residential, commercial and industrial sectors, property values increased by 61%, 33% and 66%, respectively; while land values increased by 119%, 81% and 163%, respectively. The average house value was calculated as \$575,000. These valuations, together with increased cost pressures for the Council, were projected to impact rates in the coming year.

3. In February 2023, Council started the latest Annual Plan process, planning to align this with the existing Long Term Plan while accounting for inflationary pressures and increased costs. A public consultation process was planned before the Annual Plan is finalised in June 2023.
4. On 13th-14th February 2023, Cyclone Gabrielle caused widespread flooding and related damage throughout the northern and eastern regions of the North Island, prompting a national state of emergency. While Ōpōtiki was in the path of Cyclone Gabrielle, the Council and partner agencies took precautionary measures to protect residents in vulnerable areas (including provision of evacuation centres); however, the district experienced minimal damage, avoided the worst effects of the cyclone and was not the focus of national relief efforts. Through a national campaign lead by LGNZ, Ōpōtiki District Council partnered with Wairoa to support that district's recovery efforts.
5. An increased number of building consents applications was reported in a year in Ōpōtiki, with 100 applications received during the first six months of 2022-23; a 17% increase on the same period in the previous financial year. This growth was expected in part due to the harbour development and other local investment.
6. In late-February, Council announced its approved application for \$4.68 million from the government's Better Off Funding. This

funding was planned to be used over the following five years to assist a wide range of projects designed to support community wellbeing, with a focus on climate change and resilience, housing infrastructure and community facilities.

7. In March 2023, a building contractor was selected as the successful tenderer for the new playground in Whitikau Reserve, with the final design reflecting local feedback and most of the elements

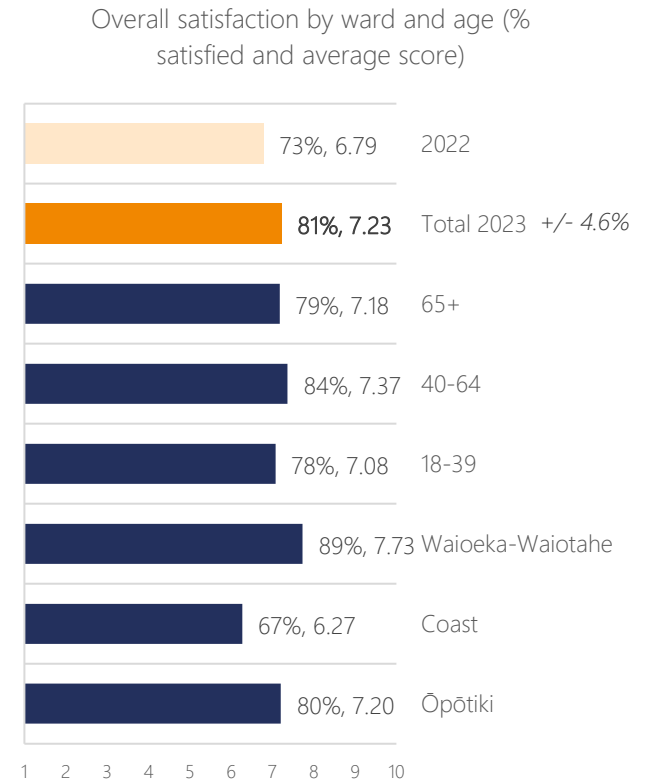
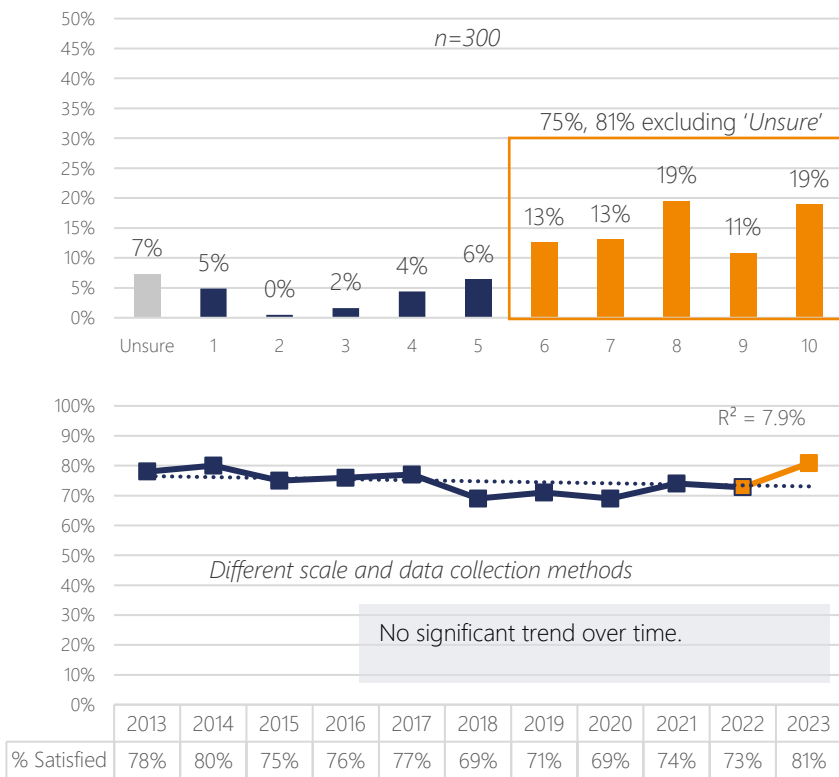
suggested by the community. The installation was planned to be completed in time for the Matariki holiday in July 2023.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – recreation facilities

KPI target **75%**
achieved

- In 2023, 81% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of recreation facilities (on average, 7.2 out of 10). Collectively, recreation facilities were the third-highest rated services in 2023, with a significant improvement compared to 2022.
- The main year-on-year improvement was observed amongst Ōpōtiki ward respondents, and those aged under 40.
- 63% of respondents reported using recreation facilities in the district. Coast ward respondents (39%), and those aged 65+ (38%), were less likely to indicate using these facilities.
- In addition, Coast respondents tended to be the least satisfied with recreation facilities, mainly indicating the lack of such facilities in their area.
- Overall, just under two-thirds of residents preferred seeing the same level of Council funds spent on recreation facilities (63%).



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



RECREATION FACILITIES – community feedback

Good facilities / general positive comments – 61%
Skate park good / well used – 31%
Good playgrounds / facilities for children – 24%
Good improvements / upgrades – 9%
Rose gardens / parks good – 6%

Top reasons for satisfaction with recreation facilities

29% of all respondents provided a comment

Upgrades / improvements / maintenance needed - 43%
Not enough / more needed (general) - 42%
More needed for children / youth - 14%
Swimming pool / indoor pool needed - 13%
Not sure - 12%
Concerns about costs / suitability - 6%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with recreation facilities

11% of all respondents provided a comment

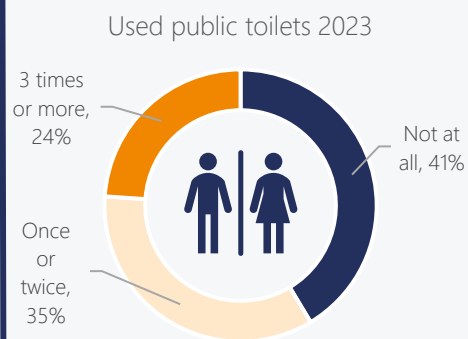
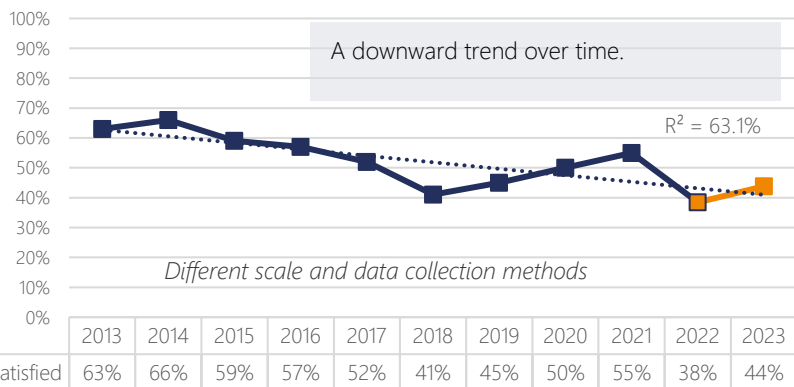
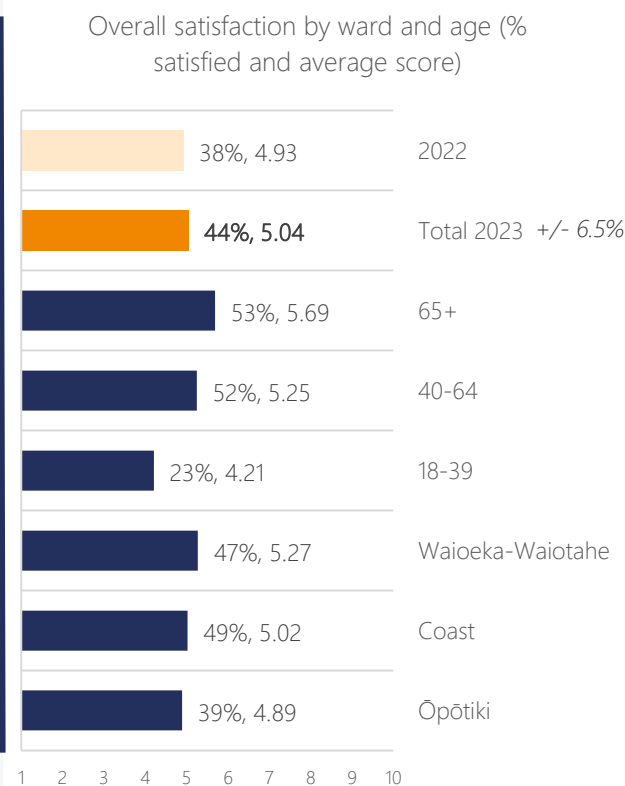
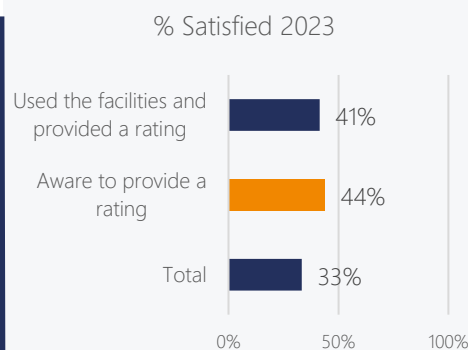
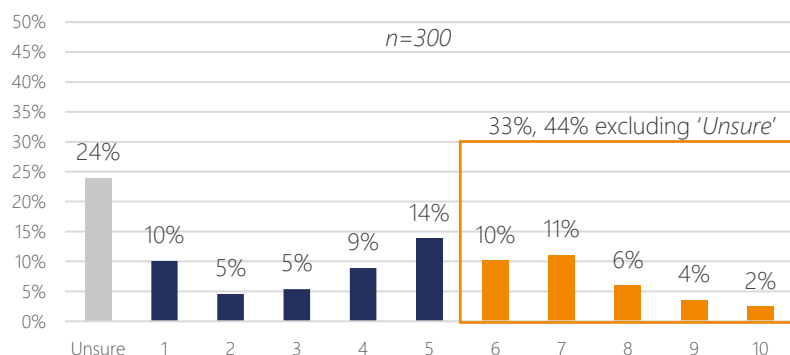
Provision of recreation facilities – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – public toilets

KPI target 60%
below

- 44% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of public toilets (on average, 5.0 out of 10). This result was slightly up compared to 2022 (but within the margin of error), and similar to the 2019 result.
- 59% of respondents reported using public toilets; this usage was reportedly higher in the Coast area (76%), but lower in Waioeka-Waiotaha (47%).
- There were significant differences by age in 2023, with younger respondents (aged 18-39) being the least satisfied (23%).
- No statistically significant differences in satisfaction ratings were observed by wards, or other demographic groups.
- The main cited reason for lower satisfaction with public toilets was their general appearance and condition. Many stated that the toilets were always smelly, unclean, and/or had graffiti on the walls.



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



PUBLIC TOILETS – community feedback

Clean / good standard – 91%
Should be manned / more open hours – 6%
Other – 3%

Dirty / need cleaning - 67%
Need fixing / upgrading / maintenance - 33%
Not enough / need more - 14%

Top reasons for satisfaction with public toilets

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with public toilets

5% of respondents provided a comment

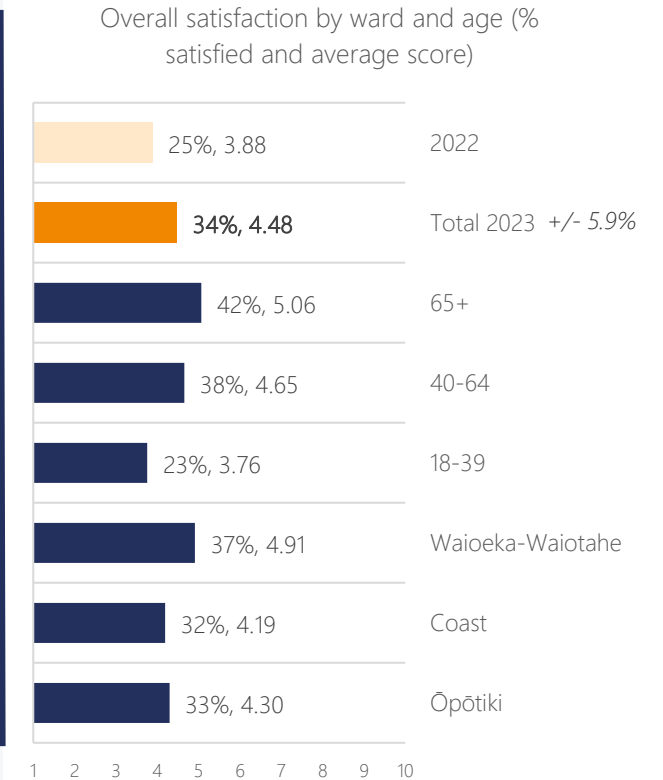
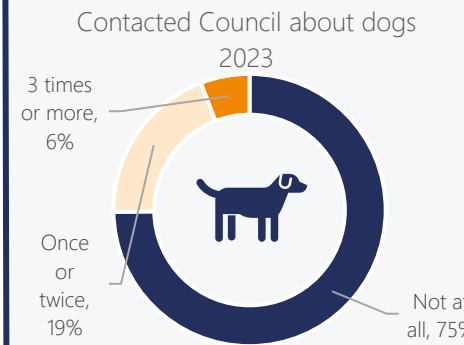
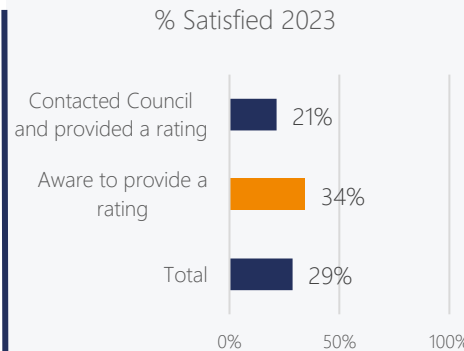
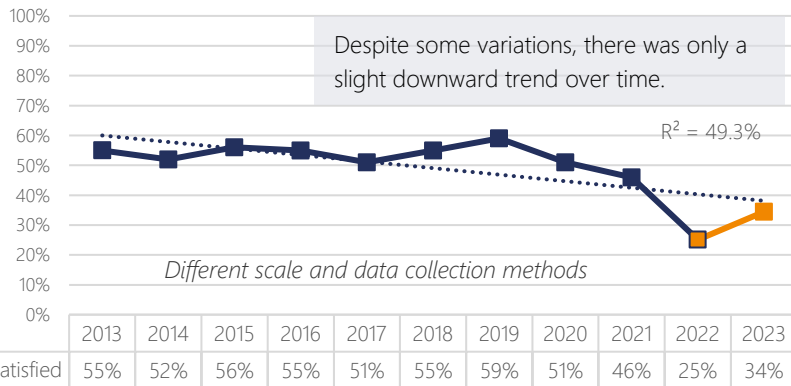
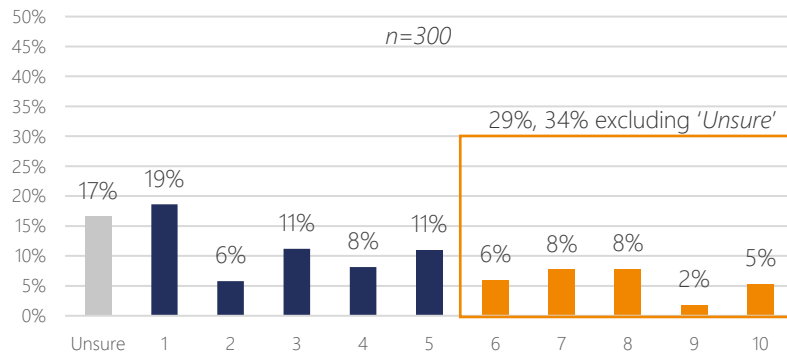
26% of respondents provided a comment

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



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – dog control

- 34% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of dog control (on average, 4.5 out of 10). This result was up compared to 2022.
- Waioeka-Waiotaha and Ōpōtiki respondents were more likely to provide higher ratings compared to the results from last year, whereas Coast respondents provided fewer positive ratings (compared to 2022).
- Respondents aged under 40 were less satisfied with the service, although still on par with the 2022 results.
- Only a small proportion of respondents indicated contacting the Council about dogs in 2023 (25%, within a 3-month recall window each quarter). Ōpōtiki respondents (33%) were more likely to do so.
- The comments reinforced the perceived issue with roaming dogs, with people concerned about the number of dogs wandering the streets.



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



DOG CONTROL – community feedback

Good service / no problem – 93%

Poor animal control service / no response / not effective – 4%

Always dogs roaming – 3%

Always dogs roaming - 75%

Poor animal control service / no response / not effective - 20%

Unsafe / bad reflection / impact on town - 13%

Poor targeting / Responsible owners / easy dogs targeted - 10%

Unfair fines / registration fees / poor value - 9%

Other - 2%

Top reasons for satisfaction with dog control

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with dog control

7% of respondents provided a comment

42% of respondents provided a comment

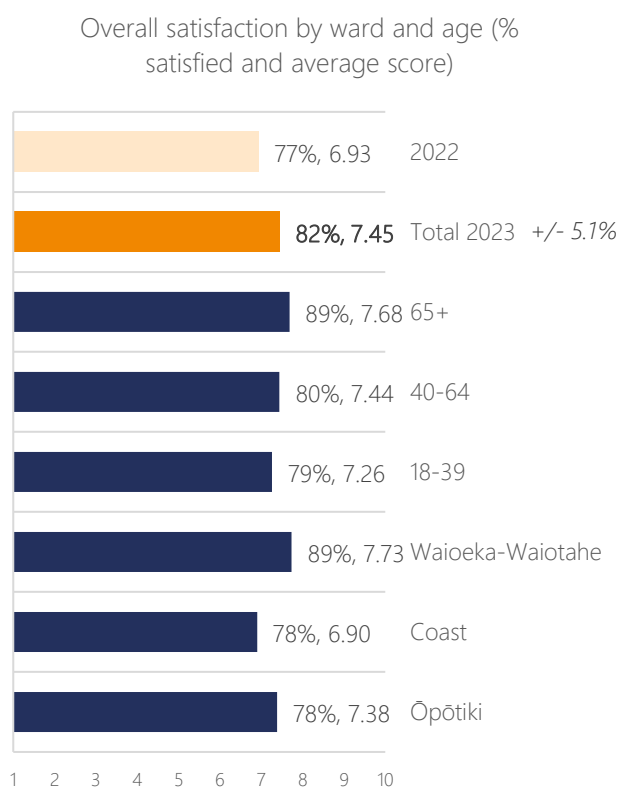
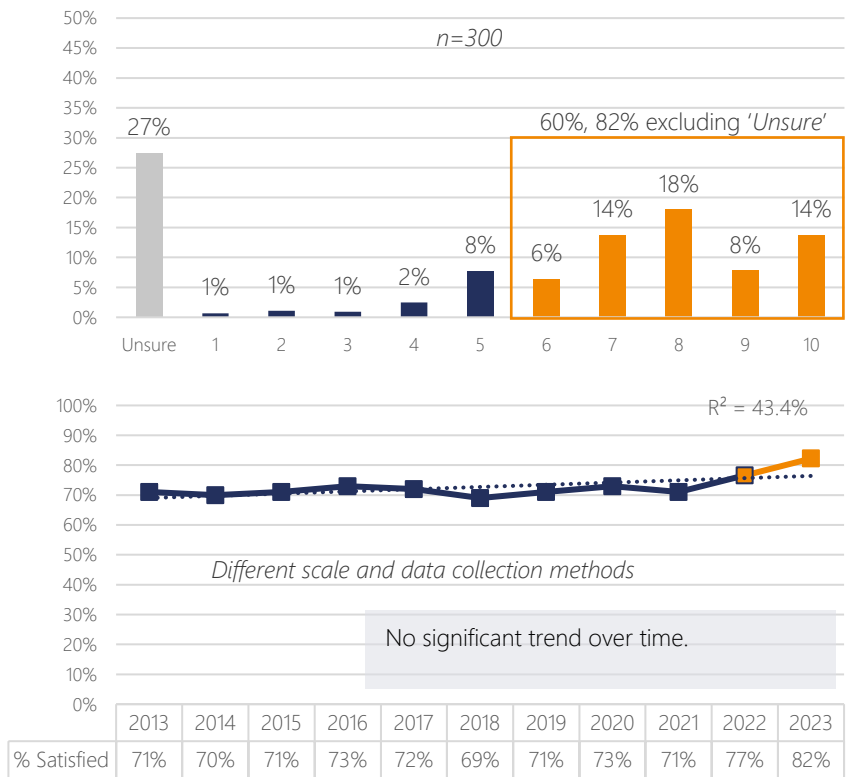
Provision of dog control – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – cemeteries

KPI target 70%
achieved

- 82% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of cemeteries (on average, 7.4 out of 10) – a new peak result. Collectively, cemeteries were the second-highest rated services in 2023, with some improvement compared to 2022 (although within the margin of error).
- The main year-on-year improvement was observed amongst Waioeka-Waiotaha respondents.
- Half of respondents (51%) recalled visiting a cemetery in the district; Ōpōtiki respondents (60%) were more likely to report visiting a cemetery.
- Residents living in rural areas (92%) provided more positive ratings than residents from urban areas (74%).



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



CEMETERIES – community feedback

Tidy / clean / well maintained – 86%
Good staff – 13%

Not tidy / need maintenance - 72%
Other - 12%

Top reasons for satisfaction with cemeteries

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with cemeteries

20% of respondents provided a comment

4% of respondents provided a comment

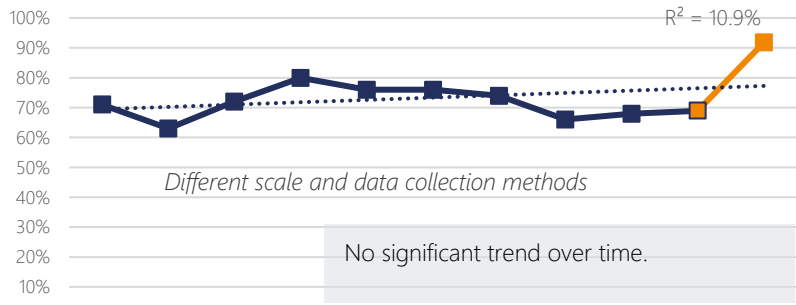
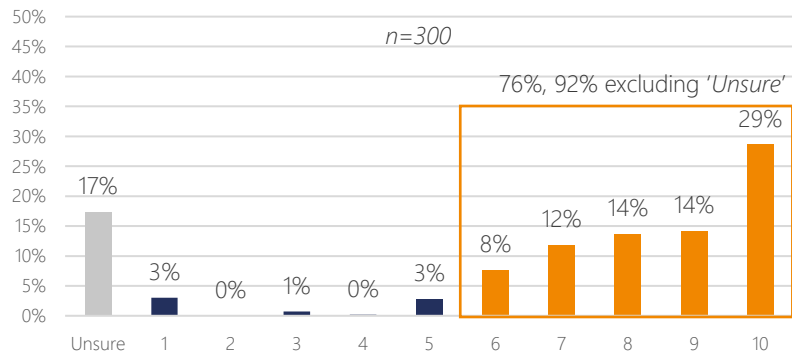
Provision of cemeteries – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



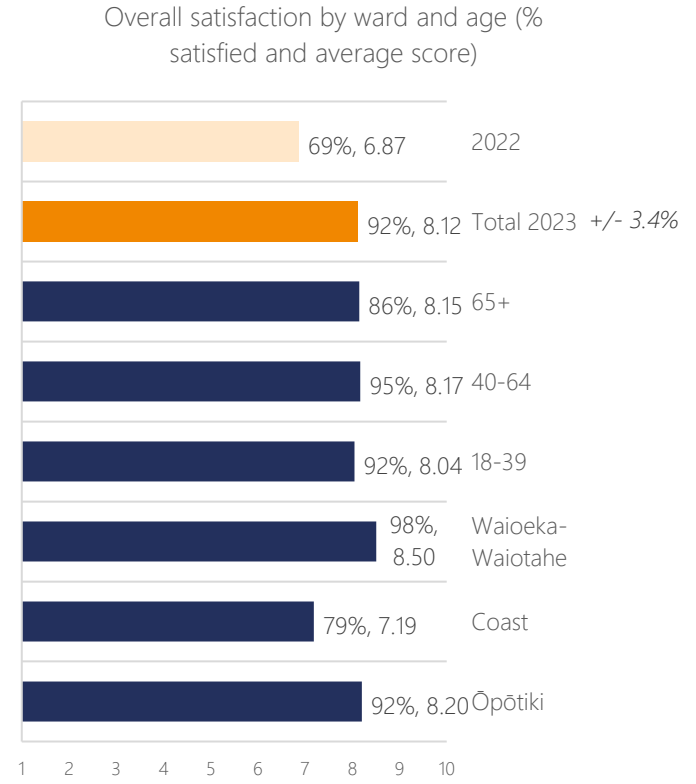
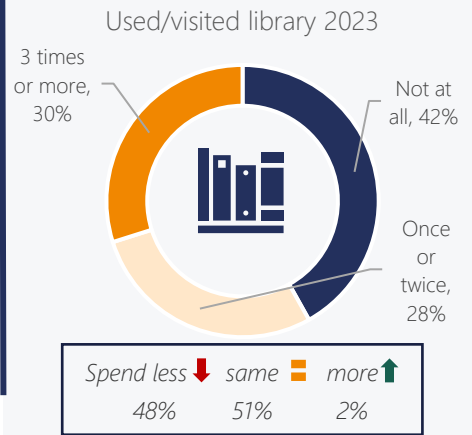
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – library services

KPI target **85%**
achieved

- Collectively, library services were the highest rated in 2023. Satisfaction improved significantly to a new peak after the new Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi facility was opened at the end of 2021; 29% of respondents provided the highest rating, 10-out-of-10, in 2023.
- Satisfaction with library services was lower amongst Coast respondents.
- 58% of respondents reported visiting the library facility or using library services.
- There were no significant differences by age, or other demographic groups.
- Following the new library development, the community felt there should be no increased spending for this service.



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



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



LIBRARY SERVICES – community feedback

Good facility / building / general satisfaction – 84%

Good staff – 38%

Good resources / Good for children – 19%

Brand new – 16%

Need more Māori resources / involvement – 2%

No library [*outside of Ōpōtiki township*] – 62%

Concerns about cost / original library fine - 25%

Poorly used / utilised / too big - 21%

Top reasons for satisfaction with library services

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with library services

38% of respondents provided a comment

4% of respondents provided a comment

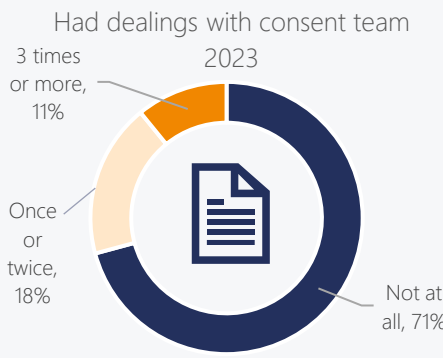
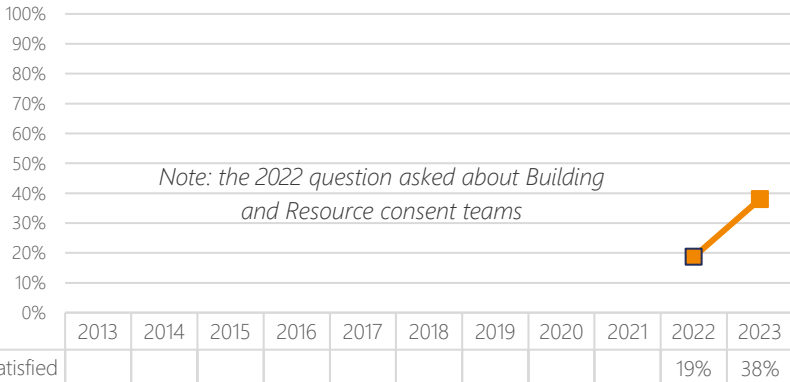
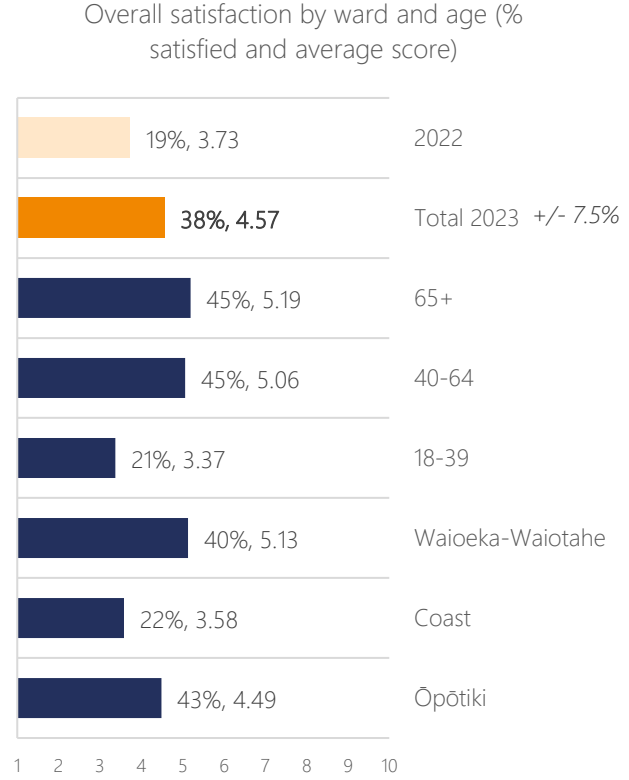
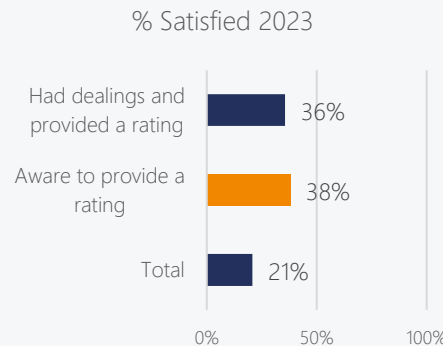
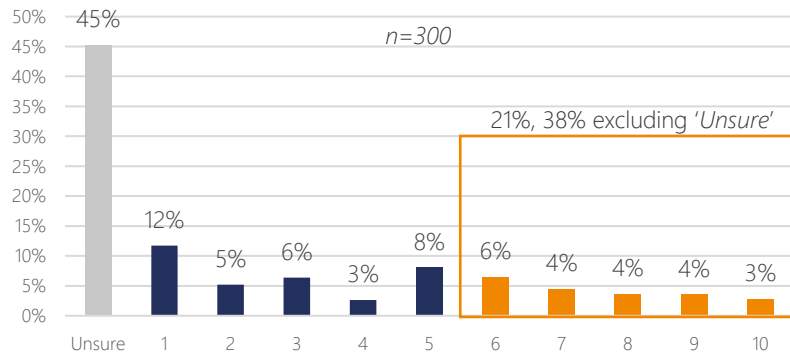
Provision of public libraries and library services – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – building consent team

KPI target 70%
below

- 38% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of building consent (on average, 4.6 out of 10). Overall satisfaction has improved in 2023; however, a change in question wording should be noted.
- Only a small proportion of respondents recalled dealing with the building consent team in 2023 (29%). Respondents aged between 40-64 (41%) were more likely to report this experience.
- Respondents who indicated 3 or more building consent contacts provided more positive ratings (41%).
- At the same time, satisfaction with building consents was lower amongst younger respondents aged under 40 (21%), and Māori respondents (28%).
- The comments suggested that the process of obtaining consents in Ōpōtiki was slow and costly. Some also mentioned specific negative experiences they had with the building consents team.



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



BUILDING CONSENT TEAM – community feedback

Good service – 89%

Need more staff / resources – 11%

Process too slow - 59%

Poor staff / communication - 31%

Too much red tape / bureaucracy - 27%

Costs - 6%

Top reasons for satisfaction with building consents

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with building consents

6% of respondents provided a comment

25% of respondents provided a comment

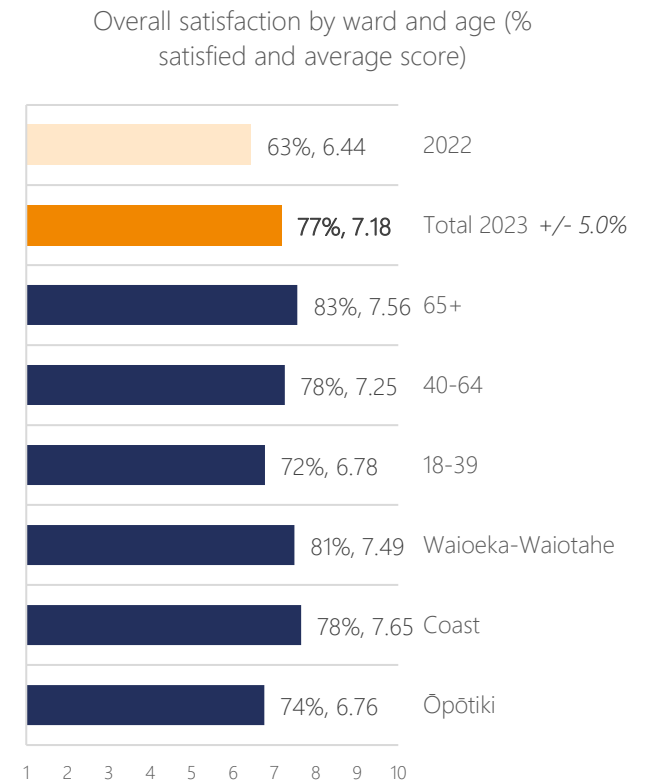
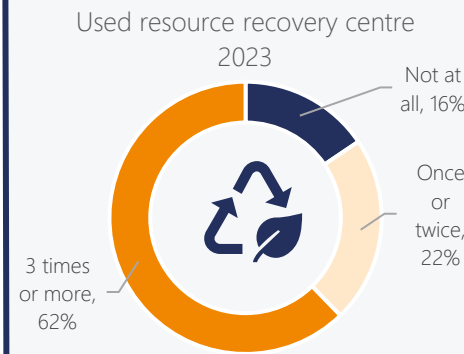
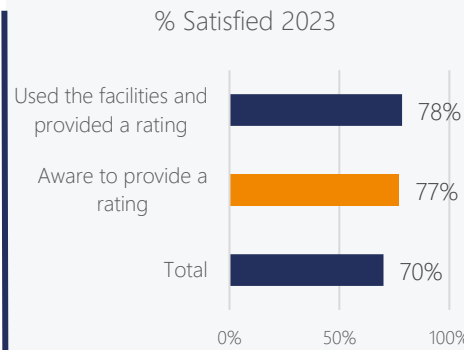
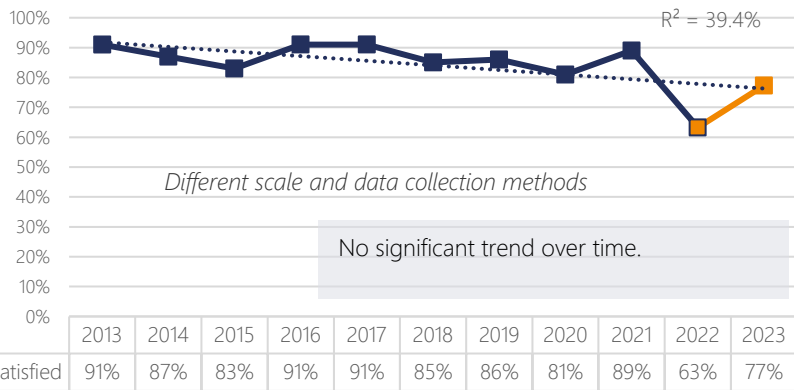
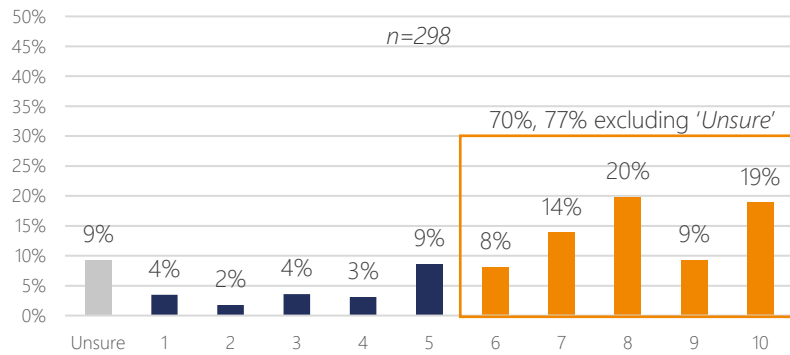
Provision of building consents – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – resource recovery centre

KPI target **80%**
within margin of error

- 77% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with their experience or knowledge of Resource Recovery Centre (on average, 7.2 out of 10).
- Overall satisfaction improved in 2023, with the key year-on-year improvements observed amongst younger respondents aged under 40, and those living in Waioeka-Waiotaha and Ōpōtiki wards.
- 84% of respondents reported using these facilities in 2023; 62% reported frequent usage of 3 or more visits to the centre.
- There were no significant differences by ward or other demographic groups in 2023.



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



RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE – community feedback

Good facility / service – 80%

Good staff – 46%

Improvements needed – 11%

Reasonable charges – 5%

Concerns about costs / inconsistent charges - 57%

Poor service - 47%

Improvements needed - 18%

Other - 5%

Top reasons for satisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with Resource Recovery Centre

25% of respondents provided a comment

11% of respondents provided a comment

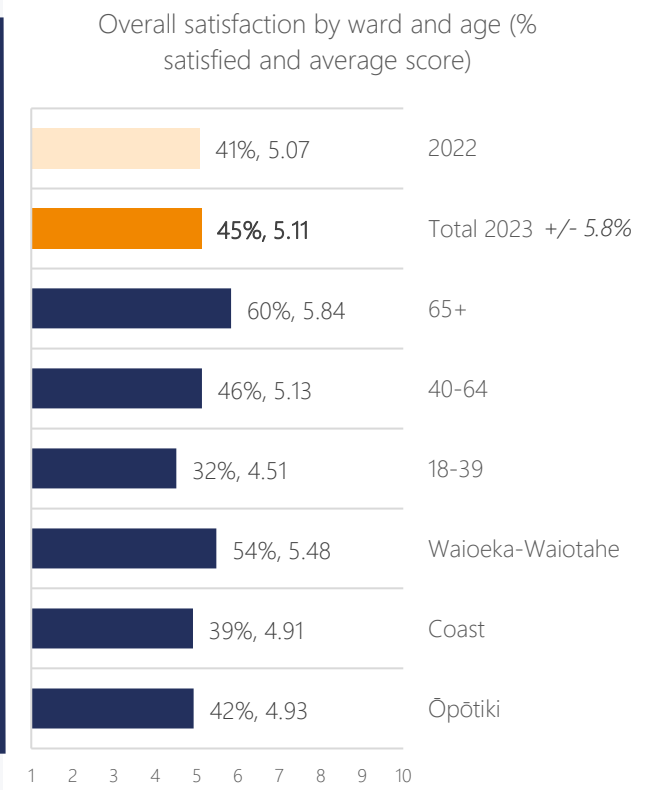
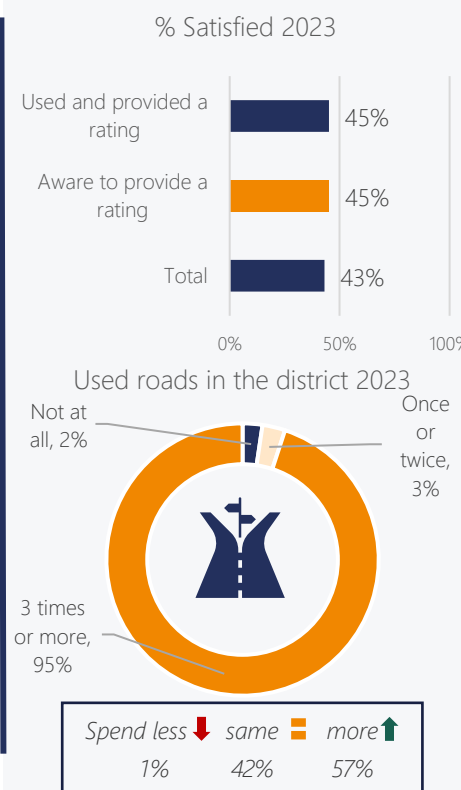
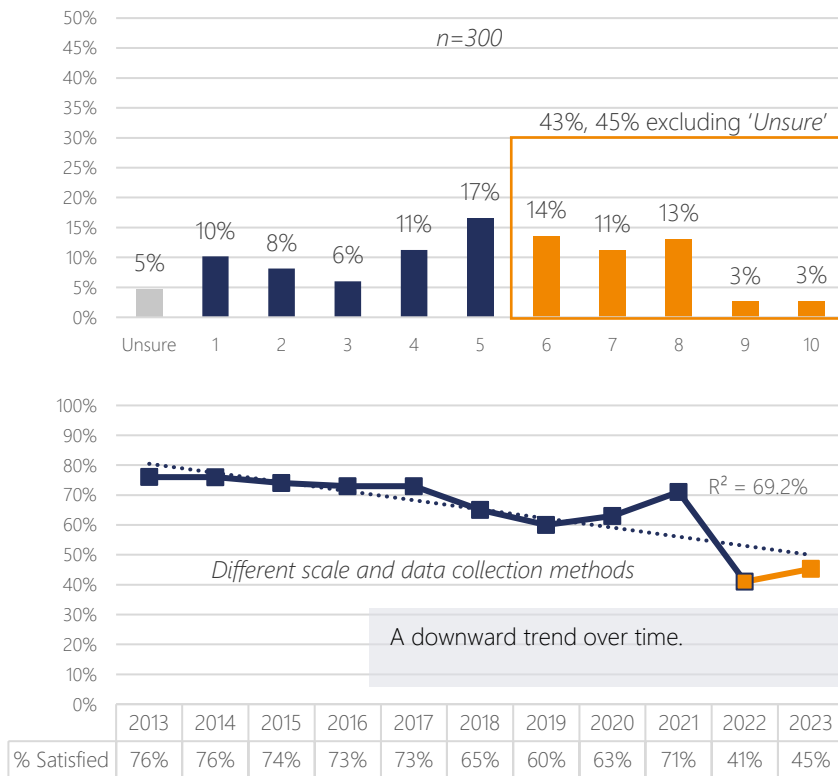
Provision of Resource Recovery Centre – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – safety of district roads

KPI target 80%
below

- 45% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with safety of district roads (on average, 5.1 out of 10); most respondents (98%) indicated using roads in the district.
- Satisfaction with road safety remained on par with the 2022 results.
- The comments suggested that roads in the area require better maintenance, with a need for urgent Council attention and improvements to address potholes and other road hazards.
- Satisfaction varied by age. Respondents aged under 65 tended to be less satisfied (especially those aged 18-39), compared to older respondents.
- Roads were residents' most noted area for more Council spending (57%), with an increase in 'spend more' responses compared to 2022.



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



SAFETY OF DISTRICT ROADS – community feedback

Good condition / service – 90%

Other – 10%

Top reasons for satisfaction with road safety

5% of respondents provided a comment

Potholes - 63%

Poor street / footpath maintenance - 37%

Poor quality / sealing / repairs - 31%

Unsafe - 15%

Speeding / lack of speed reduction - 9%

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with road safety

32% of respondents provided a comment

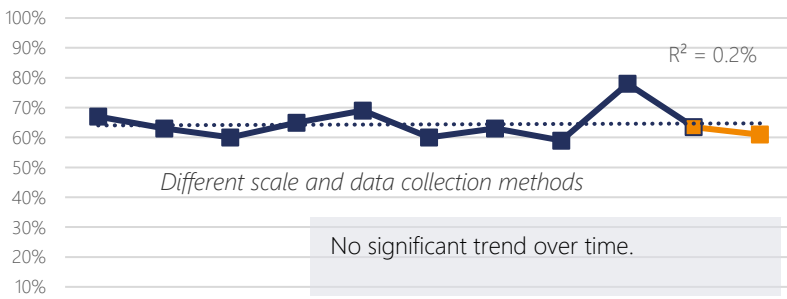
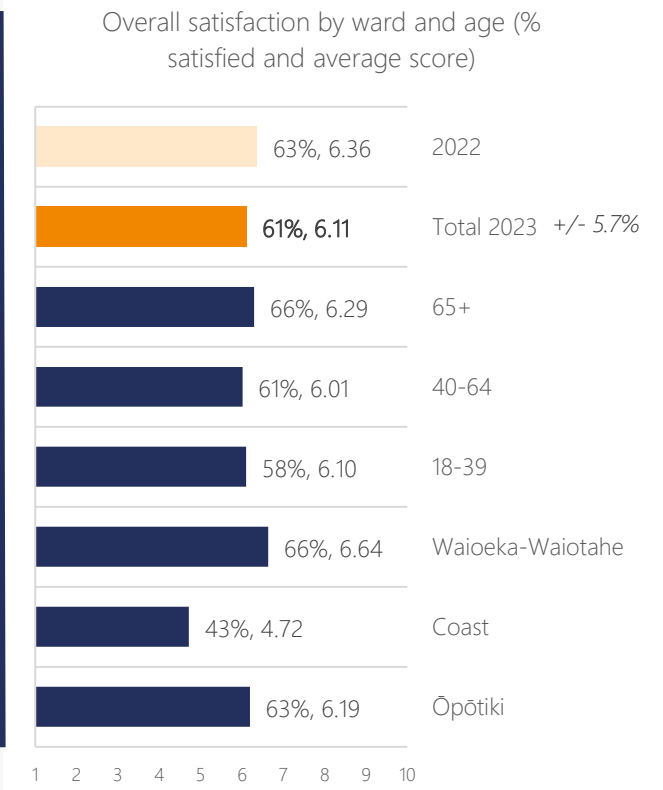
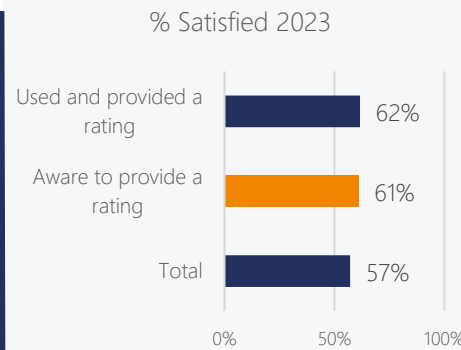
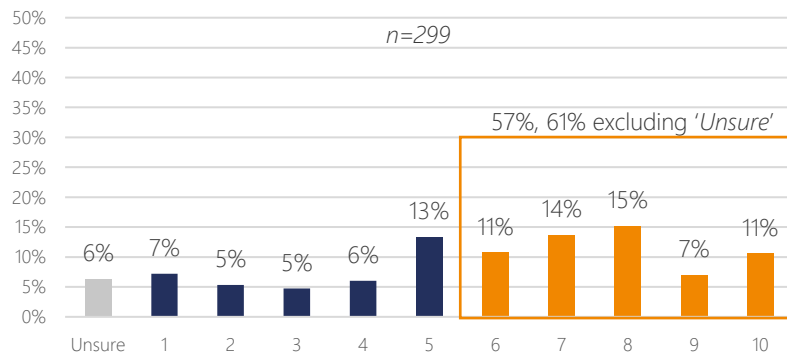
Road safety – open-ended comments sorted into categories.



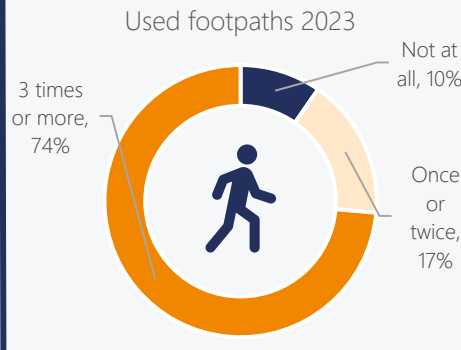
SERVICES AND FACILITIES – footpaths

KPI target **70%**
below

- 61% of respondents who provided a rating were satisfied with footpaths in the district (on average, 6.1 out of 10); most respondents (90%) indicated using footpaths in 2023.
- Satisfaction with footpaths in 2023 was on par with the 2022 results.
- Fewer Coast ward respondents (70%) reported using footpaths compared to those from other areas in 2023. Consequently, satisfaction with footpaths was lowest in the Coast ward.



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



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



FOOTPATHS – community feedback

Good / no issues / general satisfaction – 60%

New / improved / PGF funded paths good – 46%

Cleaning / maintenance needed - 40%

Lack of footpaths - 27%

Slippery / unsafe - 26%

Repairs / upgrades needed - 20%

Top reasons for satisfaction with footpaths

Top reasons for dissatisfaction with footpaths

17% of respondents provided a comment

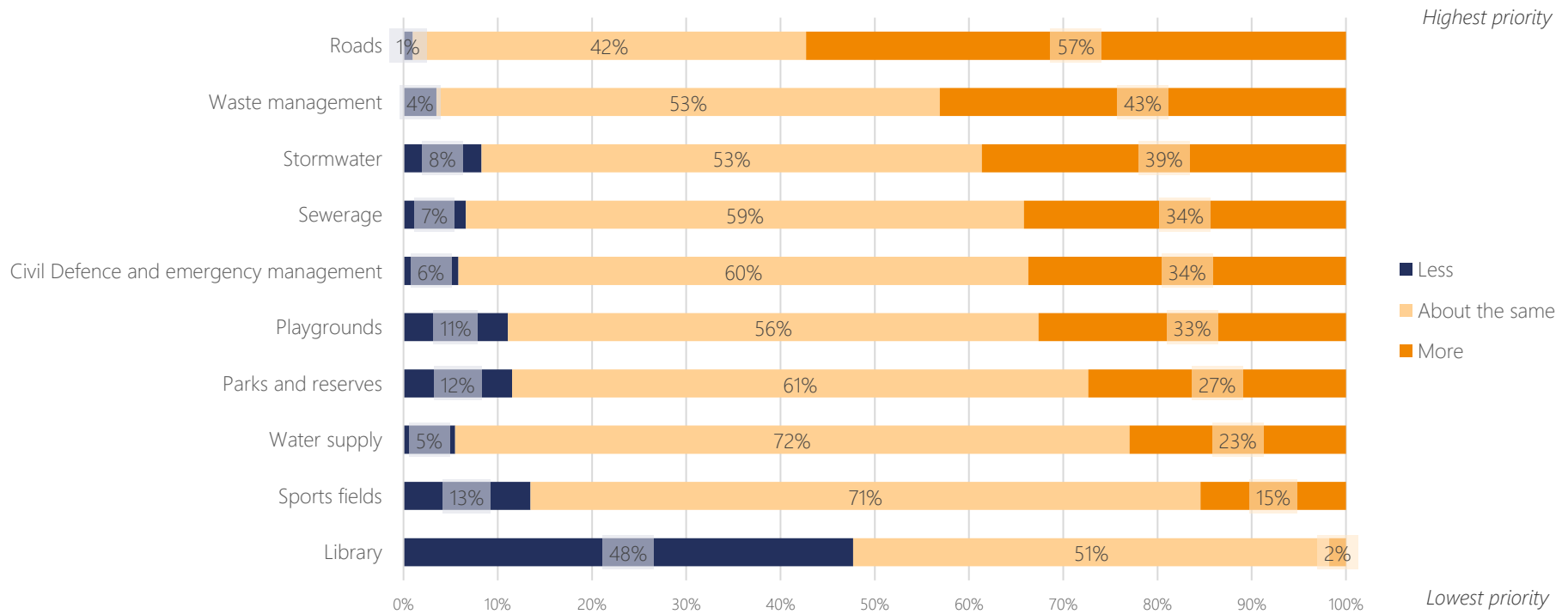
20% of respondents provided a comment

Provision of footpaths – open-ended comments sorted into categories.

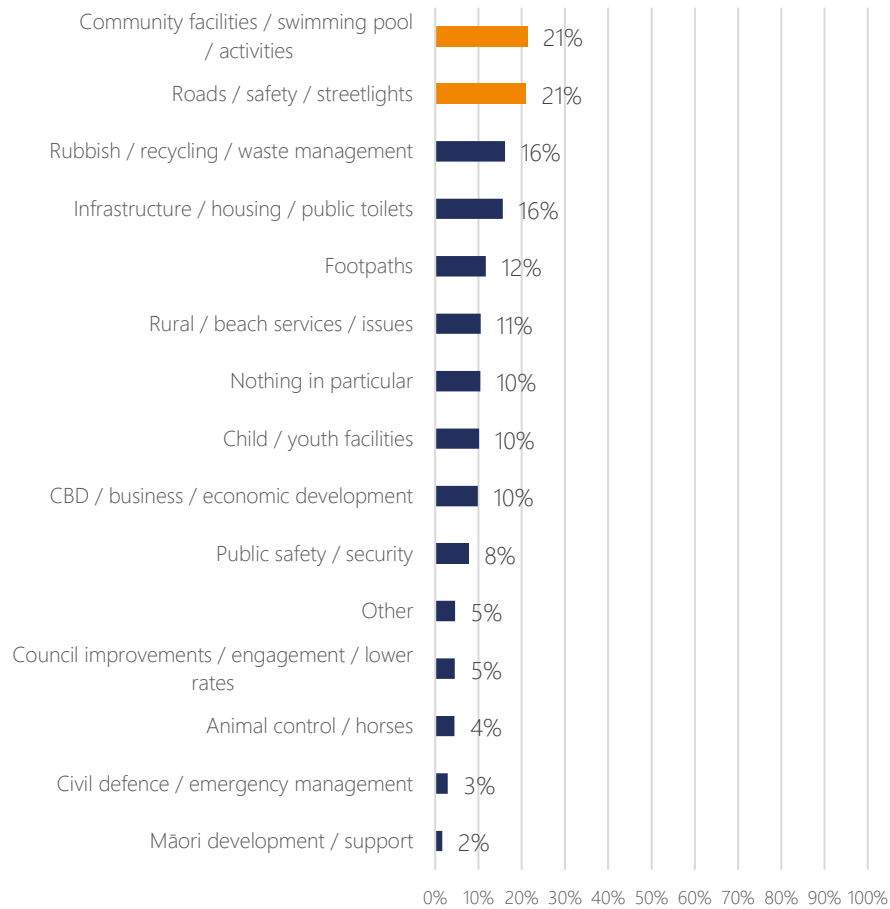


SERVICES AND FACILITIES – spending priorities

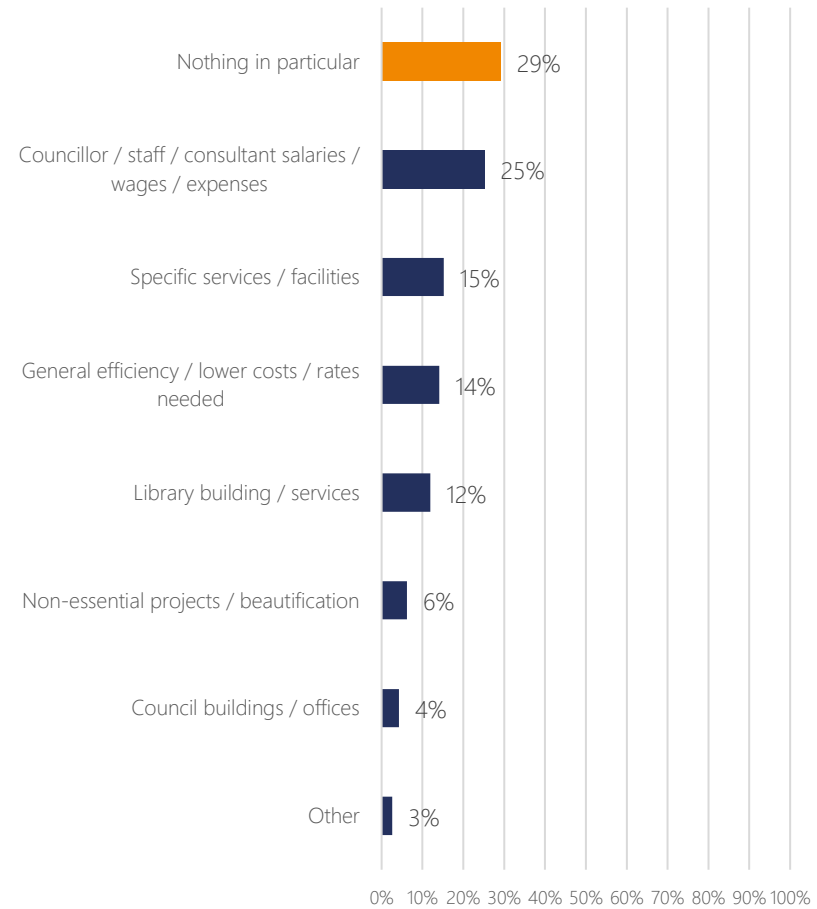
- In 2023, residents were asked which services/facilities they would like to see the Council spend more, about the same, or less funds on.
- The top investment areas in 2023 were roads (57%), waste management (43%) and stormwater (39%) (these services also made the top three previously in 2021 and 2022).
- However, there was a significant increase in priority spending related to roads in the district.
- Library facilities continued to be the area identified for least Council spending.
- Respondents who were less satisfied with Council performance overall, emphasised spending on playgrounds, civil defence, stormwater and water supply.
- Ōpōtiki ward respondents were more likely to suggest more spending on roads (67%). Coast respondents were more likely to emphasise civil defence spending (55%).
- Respondents aged under 40 were most likely to suggest spending more on playgrounds (46%), but less on the library (65%). Respondents aged 40-64 were most likely to suggest spending more on sewerage (43%) and stormwater (48%).



Spend more (free-text feedback sorted into categories)



Spend less (free-text feedback sorted into categories)



In addition, residents provided other free-text comments in relation to Council spending more (60%) and less (36%).

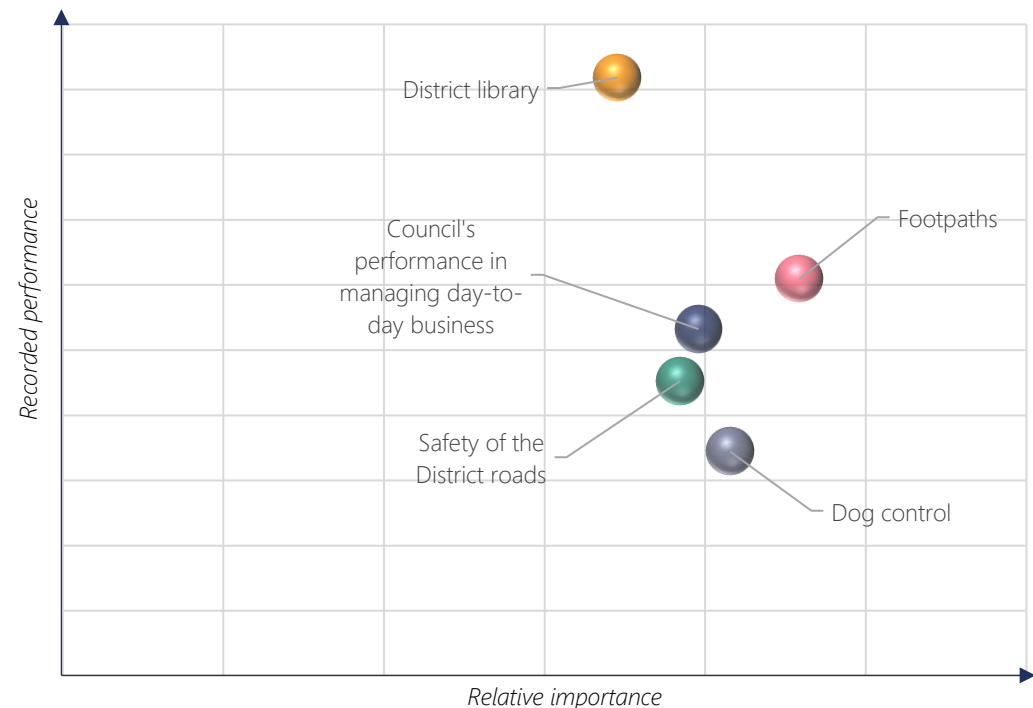
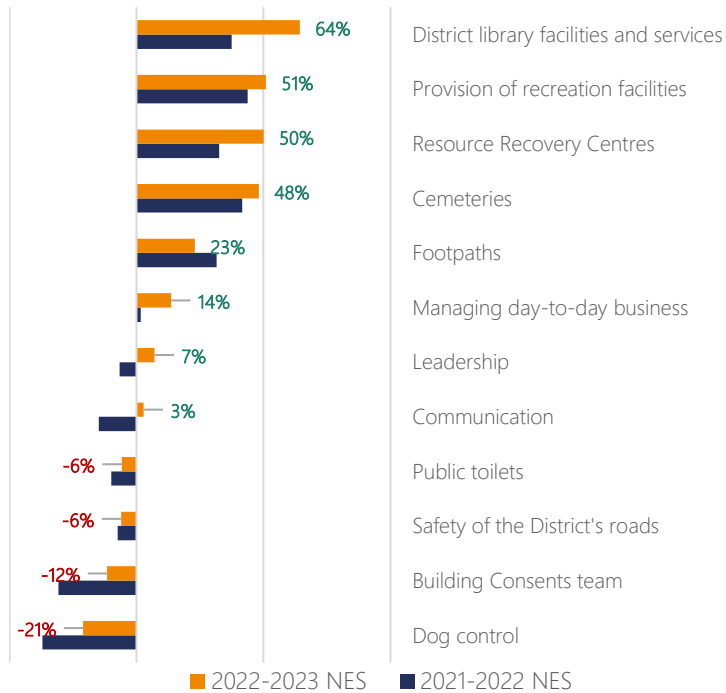
The top mentioned area for additional investment was *'community facilities/activities'* (e.g. recreation facilities, community pools, activity centres, *'Recreation Facilities for Youth - youth gym, indoor sports, pool'*). Waste management (*'Commercial dumpster bins accessible by coastal residents, especially for recycling', 'Rubbish is main one', 'Give us bigger better bins'*) and roads (*'upgrading council roads or the ones that people use the most', 'roads in rural areas'*) were also within the top suggested improvements.

29% of respondents who commented on areas for less Council spending said *'nothing in particular'*. The most mentioned area for lower spending was Council itself (e.g. *'Councillor / staff / consultant salaries / wages / expenses'*).



SERVICES AND FACILITIES – potential improvements

- Based on Net Emotional Scores (NES), four areas with negative NES (i.e. more negative than positive perceptions) were identified within the community. The most negative scores were recorded for dog control and the building consents team (similar to last year, but with some improvement).
- Leadership and communication improved in 2023, resulting in a positive NES in 2023.
- Across services, the level of impact each service has on overall satisfaction with Council services and facilities varies.
- Five services showed the highest (significant) relative importance or level of impact. Based on this impact, two areas represented the greatest opportunity to improve overall satisfaction with Council: dog control and safety of roads – both with relatively low performance given their perceived importance.

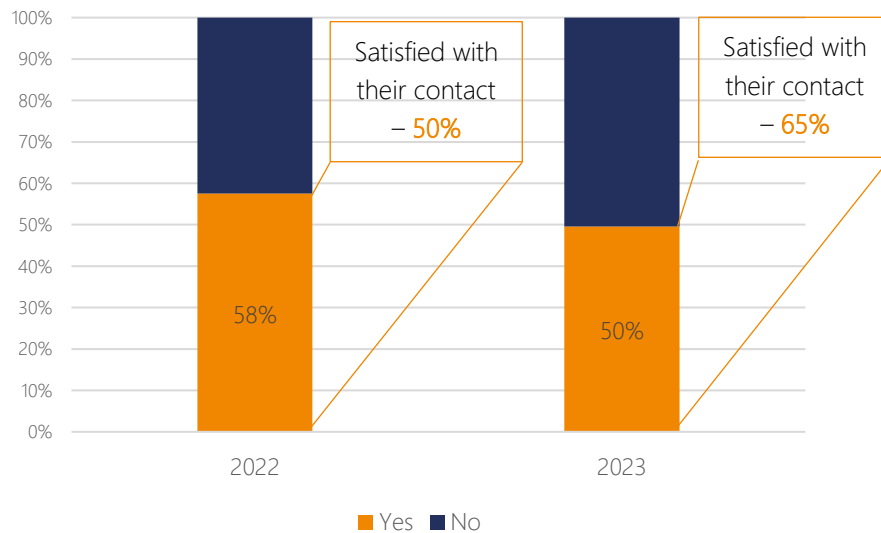




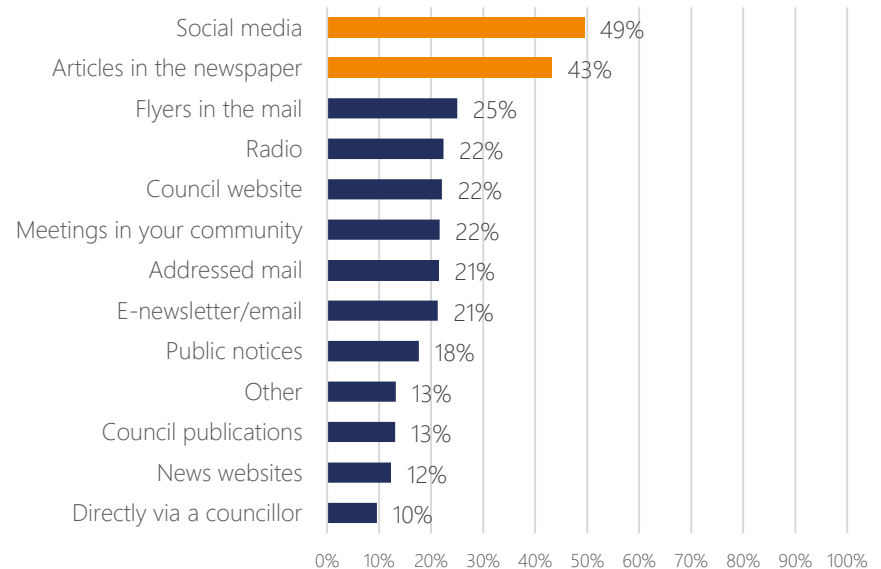
CONTACT WITH COUNCIL

- Overall, half of respondents (50%) stated they had contacted the Council throughout the last year (within a 3-month recall period each quarter).
- In 2023, 65% of respondents who had contacted the Council directly were satisfied with this contact (up compared to 50% in 2022). Younger respondents (aged under 40) tended to be less satisfied (51%) compared to respondents aged 40+.
- 'Social media' was the most preferred method for Council communications, for half of respondents in 2023 (49%, similar to 2022). The second most cited method was 'Articles in the newspaper' (43%).
- There was a large contrast in communication method preferences between younger and older residents, suggesting that a wide mix of channels was still necessary for adequate communication across the community.

Have made a direct contact with the Ōpōtiki District Council?



Preferred communication method



Preferred communication method

18-39 residents

- Social media – 74%
- Radio – 33%
- Addressed mail – 31%

Preferred communication method

40-64 residents

- Social media – 50%
- Articles in the newspaper – 44%
- Meetings in your community – 30%

Preferred communication method

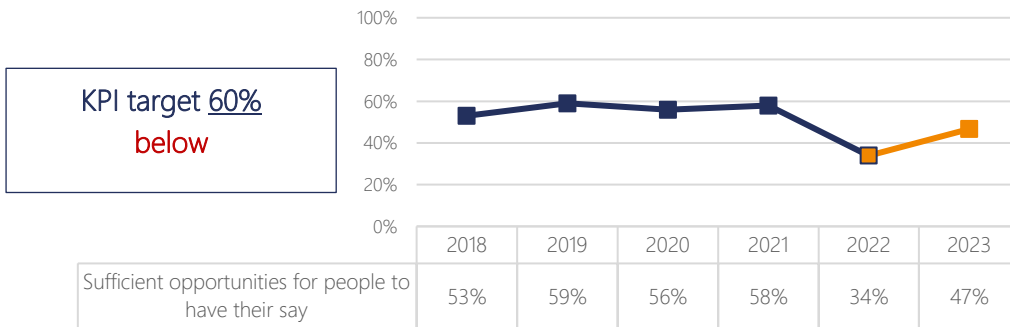
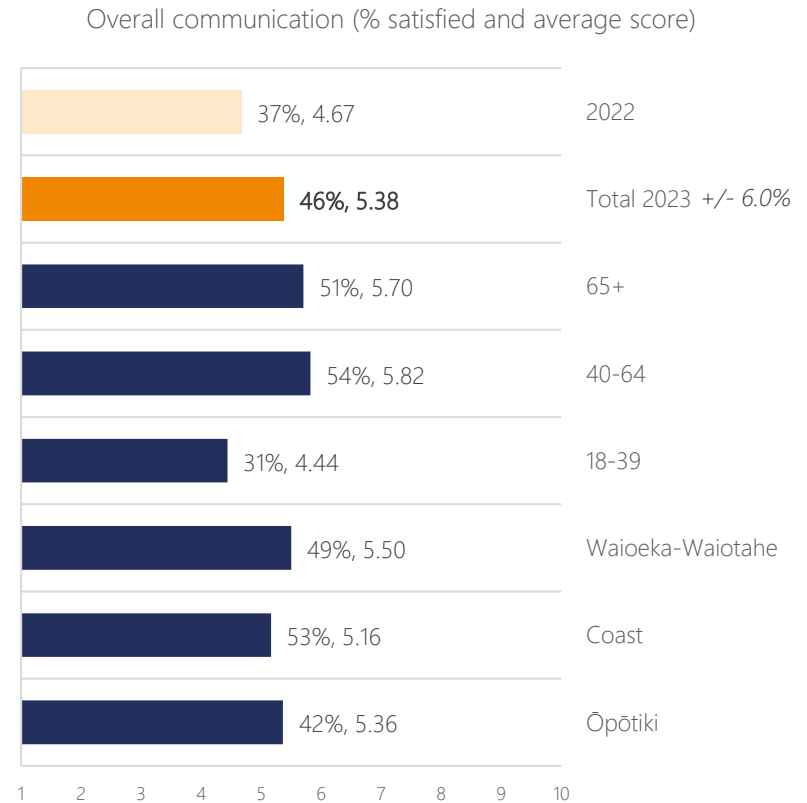
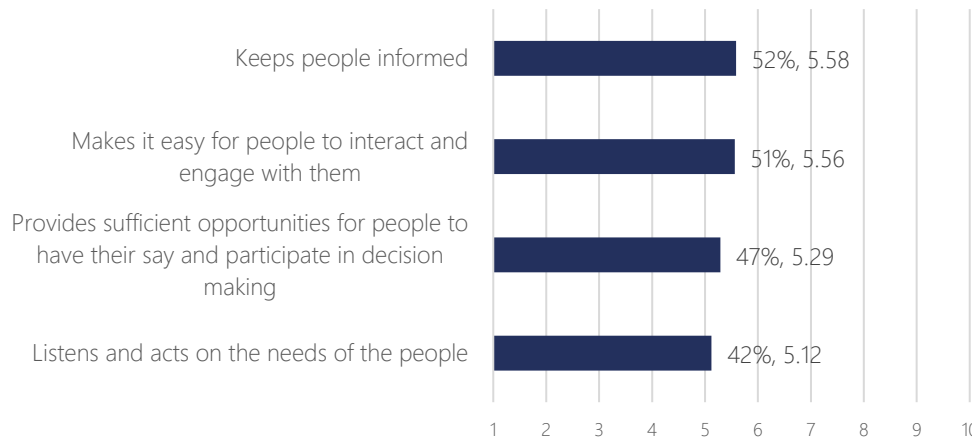
65+ residents

- Articles in the newspaper – 65%
- Flyers in the mail – 28%
- Social media – 18%



COMMUNICATION – communication with residents

- Overall, 46% of respondents were satisfied with Council performance in communicating with residents – a good improvement compared to 2022.
- The key year-on-year improvement in communication was observed amongst young respondents (aged under 40) and those from Ōpōtiki ward.
- All communication attributes showed an improvement in 2023, with keeping people informed (52%) being the best performing communication area.
- Younger respondents found it harder to interact with the Council (37%) and keep informed (36%).



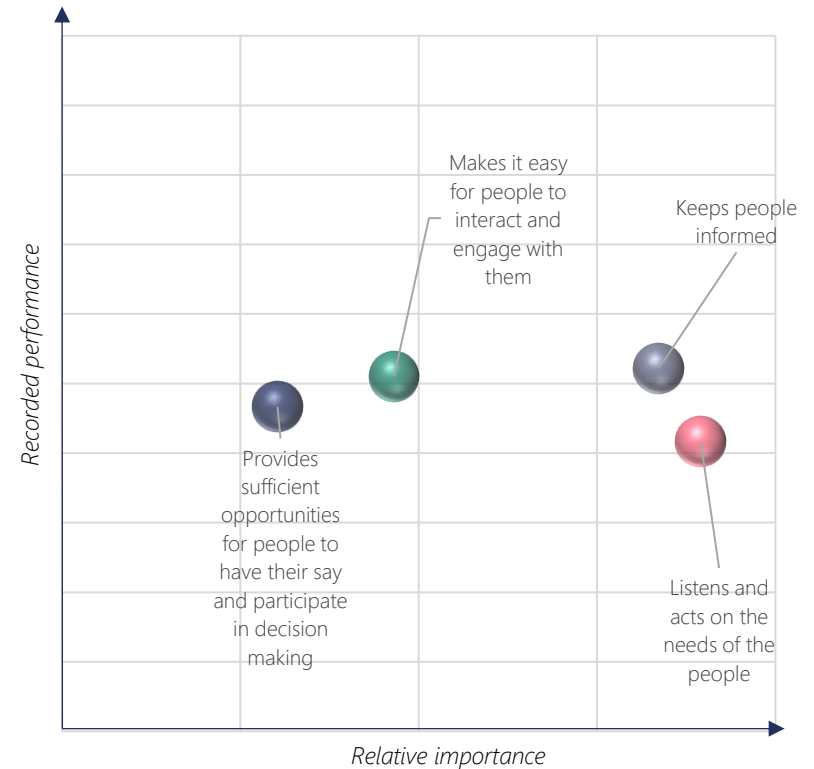
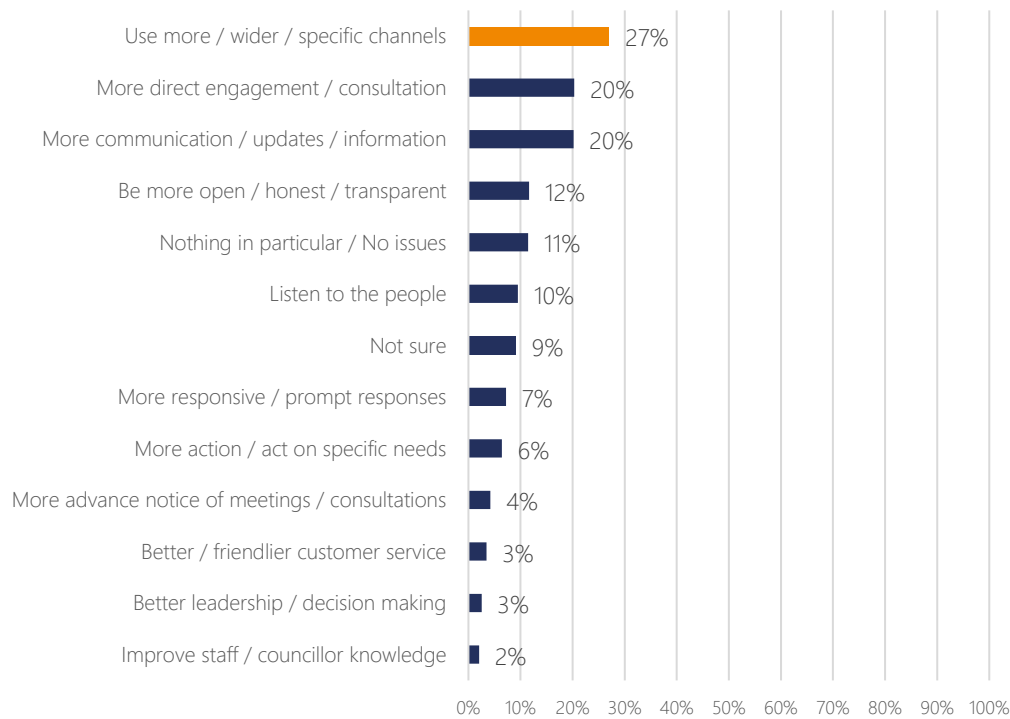
Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in the communication areas. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



COMMUNICATION – improvements

- All four related statements significantly contributed to overall satisfaction with communication. One statement in particular exhibited greater improvement potential (*'listens and acts on the needs of the people'*).
- 70% of residents provided further comments in relation to communication improvements.
- The top cited improvement was *'Use more/ wider/ specific channels'*. The comments suggested that the Council needs to improve its communication efforts to reach all members of the community, including multiple channels. Overall, there was a desire for more two-way communication between the Council and the community, with a focus on making it easier for residents to access information and provide feedback.

Suggested communication improvements

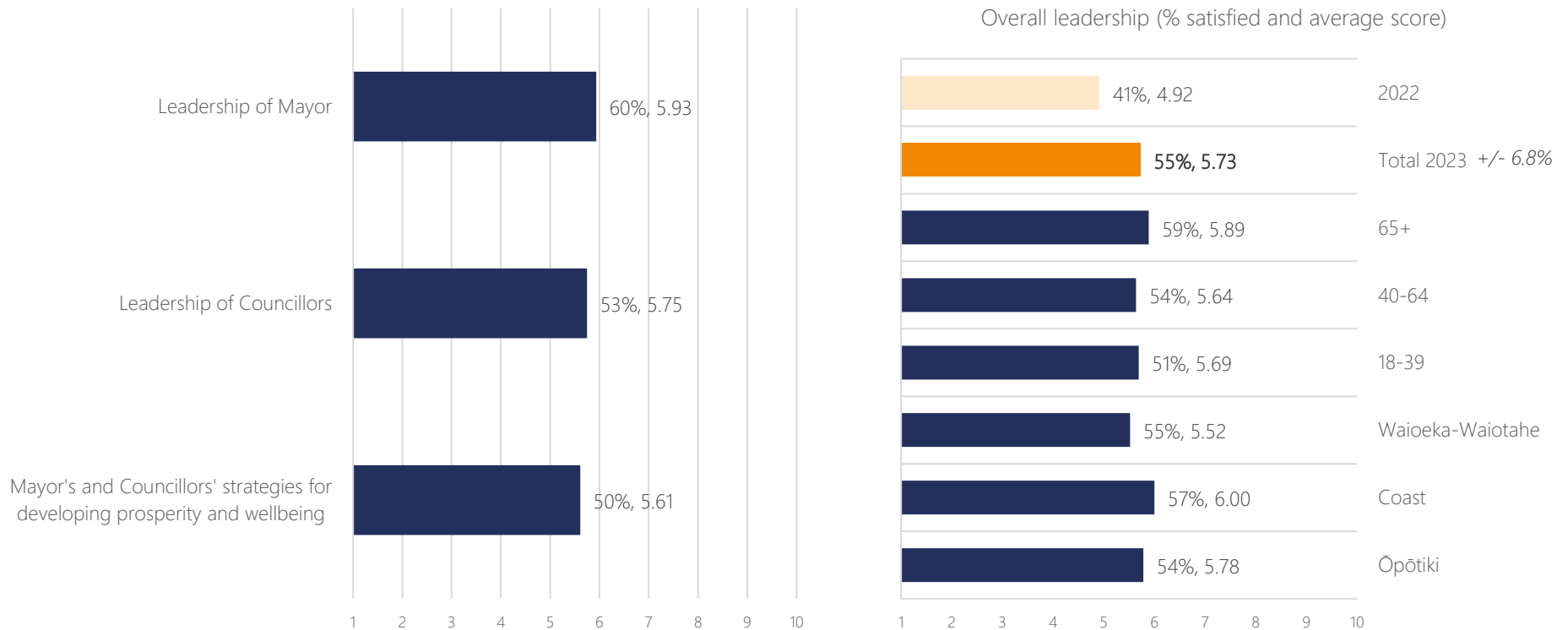




COUNCIL LEADERSHIP – performance

KPI target 75%
below

- In 2023, satisfaction with Council leadership (55%) improved significantly compared to 2022 (41%).
- Leadership of Mayor (60%) elicited the greatest year-on-year improvement (+23% points).
- Overall, satisfaction with Council leadership was consistent across age and other demographic groups.

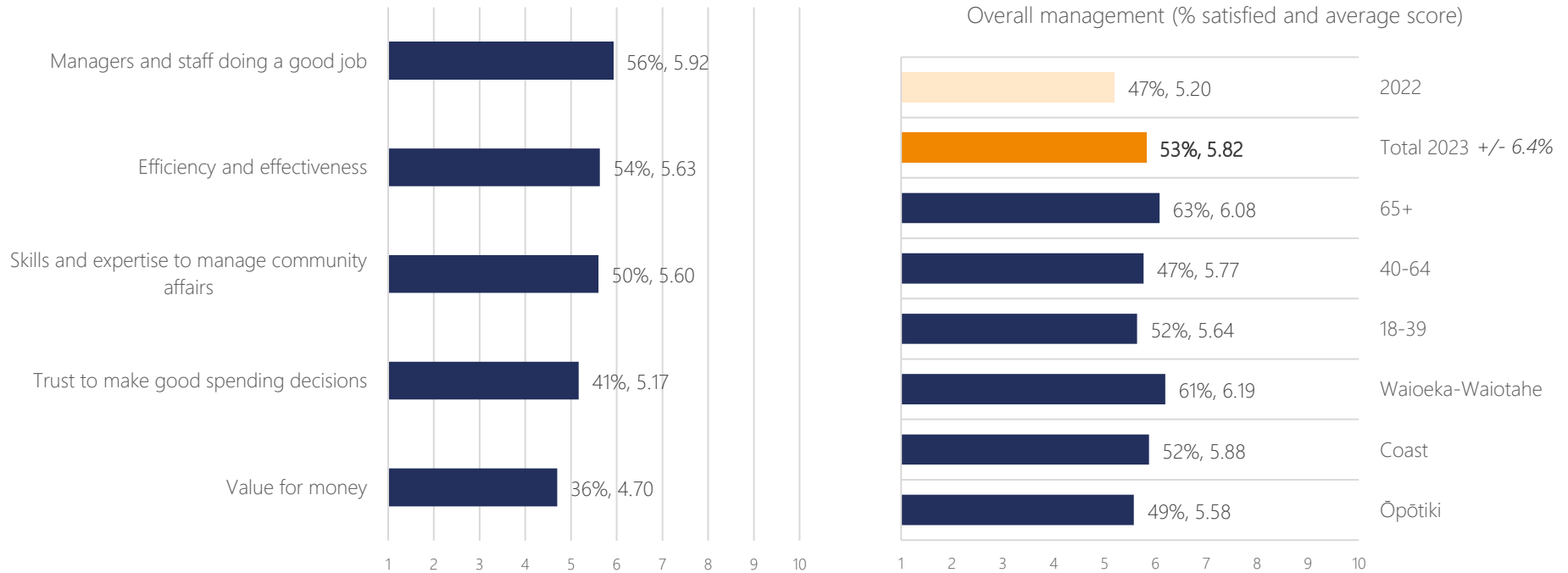


Respondents were asked to rate Council's performance in relation to leadership. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



MANAGEMENT — day-to-day performance

- Overall, half of respondents (53%) were satisfied with Council’s performance in managing day-to-day business (up from 47% in 2022).
- 2-out-of-5 management attributes showed an improvement in 2023: efficiency and effectiveness (54%) and skills and expertise to manage community affairs (50%).
- Value for money generally represented the greatest improvement opportunity, receiving the lowest satisfaction score but exhibiting a strong impact on overall satisfaction with Council management.
- Overall, satisfaction with Council day-to-day management was consistent across age and other demographic groups.
- At the same time, the greatest year-on-year improvement was observed amongst younger respondents (aged under 40).

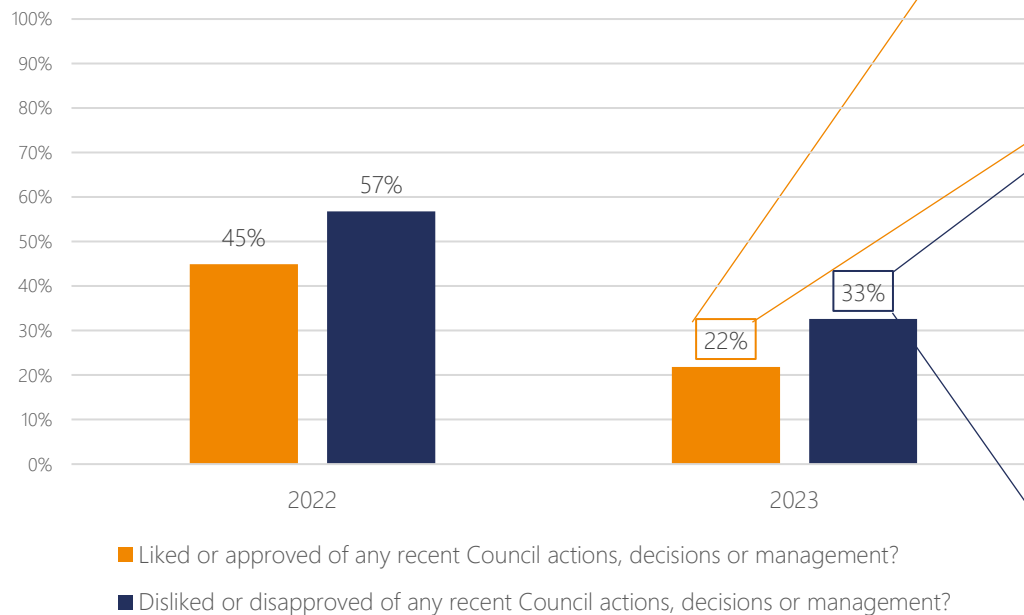


Respondents were asked to rate Council’s performance in relation to day-to-day management. Scale: 1-not at all well and 10-extremely well.



POLICY AND DIRECTION

- Overall, fewer respondents reported approving or disapproving of any Council actions, suggesting more respondents remained neutral about Council's business.
- 22% of respondents expressed approval of recent Council actions. This included Council's communication regarding public upgrades and developments to parks, skateparks, and public spaces; as well as infrastructure development. There were also discussions about the town's library and its role as a community hub, as well as feedback on emergency response and handling of Cyclone Gabrielle.
- One-third of respondents expressed disapproval. Related comments reflected on community concerns about Council services (including infrastructure, rubbish collection, etc.) and communication. Other concerns related to rates, coastguard building, and spending priorities generally.



- Council processes / engagement
- Library
- Parks / Playground
- Skatepark
- Harbour / wharf
- General services / satisfaction
- Footpaths / cycleways
- Town upgrade / beautification
- Other

Liked or approved

- Service / facilities provision
- Library [*library sign, word library*]
- Communication / engagement
- Council management / administration
- Coastguard building / Harbour master plan
- Increasing rates / fees
- New Council office building
- Building management / demolition
- Council spending
- Other
- Footpaths / Cycle paths
- Animal control / horses
- Freedom camping

Disliked or disapproved