

Invercargill City Council Residents Satisfaction Survey – Full results 2025/26



External Report

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Prepared By:
PublicVoice



Prepared by PublicVoice Limited

This report was produced by PublicVoice Limited, in partnership with the Invercargill City Council. The analysis combines quantitative survey research with qualitative thematic coding to provide evidence-based insights for resident satisfaction and service delivery.

About PublicVoice

PublicVoice Limited is a leading research and engagement consultancy headquartered in Wellington, New Zealand. We specialise in public policy research and consultation, providing services to various local and central government agencies throughout New Zealand. To learn more about our work, please visit www.publicvoice.co.nz.

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1 Executive Summary

This report presents full-year findings from the 2025/26 Invercargill City Council Residents Satisfaction Survey, covering all four quarters (July 2025 to June 2026). Results are weighted by age and gender to the 2023 Census population for Invercargill City; this is the first reporting period to apply weighting, and the methodology section sets out the approach and its effect on comparability with earlier unweighted year-to-date reporting.

1.1 Survey Overview

A total of 1,401 responses were included from collection channels across the year: postal letters (38%), the Let's Talk online platform (16%), bus surveys (11%), social media (10%), library intercepts (8%), parks intercept surveys (7%), venue surveys (6%), keyed paper questionnaires (3%), and smaller volumes from posters and democratic process intercepts. Q3 introduced the parks intercept surveys (iPad and paper) and venue-specific surveys for Civic Theatre, Scottish Hall, and Rugby Park, alongside a new parks module added to the main survey covering playgrounds, cemeteries, and tree management.

1.2 Key Findings

Service Satisfaction

Library services recorded the highest satisfaction at 89% (n=573), followed by Civic Theatre at 88% (n=514, including responses from the dedicated venue survey) and Parks & Recreation at 78% (n=788). Splash Palace recorded 73% (n=357) and bus service quality 72% (n=254). Cemeteries, measured for the first time in 2025/26, recorded 69% (n=243). He Waka Tuia recorded 65% (n=169).

Playgrounds recorded 57% (n=269), bus service cost 55% (n=256), Public Toilets 54% (n=454), and Scottish Hall 52% (n=104). Rugby Park showed 41% (n=237) and democratic processes 33% (n=827).

Most services show higher satisfaction in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25. As noted in the methodology, comparisons with previous years should account for both the shift from online-only to postal-led collection and the introduction of weighting this year, which may have influenced results alongside any genuine changes in sentiment.

Community Pride

Among the 932 respondents who answered this question, 72% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I feel proud to live in Invercargill." Pride was higher among older age groups (82% for 65+) and lower among younger respondents (52% for 14-24).

Community Engagement

A total of 74% of respondents (n=826) indicated they had not participated in any community engagement activities in the past 12 months. Satisfaction with opportunities for community involvement measured 33% (n=827), with 51% neutral.

Council Contact

Among the 872 respondents who answered the contact recency question, 41% reported never having contacted Council, whilst 31% had contacted Council within the last six months. Phone (50%) and visiting Council offices (44%) were the most common methods of contact.

Parks, Playgrounds, Cemeteries and Trees

Questions introduced in Q3 provided detailed feedback on these areas across the second half of the year. Playground satisfaction across six aspects ranged from highest for safety (66%) to lowest for seating and shade for caregivers and accessibility for children with disabilities (both 39%). A total of 56% of respondents (n=430) were supportive of Council investing in alternative play experiences beyond traditional playground equipment. Cemetery satisfaction was highest for overall atmosphere and environment (77%) and lowest for availability of seating and shelter (39%). Tree management satisfaction measured 59% (n=424), with 60% of respondents reporting no tree-related issues.

Priorities for Invercargill

A total of 757 responses were received on what Council should prioritise. The most prominent themes related to city development and the economy (417 coded mentions), infrastructure and roading (268), rates and financial management (237), and parks and recreation (231).

1.3 Demographic Profile

The full-year sample comprised 60% female respondents (n=712) and 37% male (n=433) among those who answered, with those aged 65+ making up 28% (n=383) and 35-44 the next largest group at 19% (n=267). Pākehā/New Zealand European represented 78% (n=650) among 833 respondents who answered the ethnicity question, with Māori at 8% (n=64). ICC residential ratepayers comprised 80% (n=813). Responses were received from 45 locations across Invercargill, with Windsor (9%), Waikiwi (6%), Richmond (6%), Glengarry (6%), and Otatara (6%) among the most represented.

Ethnicity and employment status questions were not included in the bus user or parks intercept surveys, resulting in lower response counts for these measures. The demographic profile above describes the achieved (unweighted) sample; weighted results correct for the age and gender skews shown here.

2 Methodology

2.1 Survey Design and Purpose

The Invercargill City Council Residents Satisfaction Survey 2025/26 is a quarterly survey programme measuring resident satisfaction with Council services, community engagement, and priorities. This report presents full-year findings covering all four quarters (July 2025 to June 2026), including a targeted bus user survey and the parks and venue intercept surveys introduced in Q3.

2.2 Changes from Previous Financial Year

The 2025/26 methodology differs from 2024/25 in ways that may influence comparability of results.

Shift to Postal Surveys as Primary Method

The most notable change for 2025/26 is the introduction of postal surveys as the primary data collection method, replacing the previous all-online approach:

2024/25 approach: Data collection relied exclusively on digital channels (Let's Talk online platform and social media).

2025/26 approach: Postal surveys are the primary method. Paper questionnaires with reply-paid envelopes are posted to randomly selected residential addresses across the Invercargill district, with new waves drawn each quarter using an R-based sampling process that excludes all prior wave recipients. Responses arriving via the letter's online link comprised 38% of full-year responses (n=538), with a further 3% (n=44) returned as paper questionnaires and keyed by PublicVoice.

The existing digital channels serve as secondary collection methods: Let's Talk (16%, n=221), social media (10%, n=138), and library intercepts (8%, n=117). A targeted bus user survey contributed 11% (n=156), parks intercept surveys 7% (n=92), and venue surveys 6% (n=82).

Expanded Collection in Q3

Q3 introduced two additional data collection approaches:

Parks intercept surveys: A shorter survey was deployed at parks, recreation spaces, and other locations via iPad (on-site intercepts by field staff) and paper (distributed at these locations). These surveys focused on parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, and tree management questions, with a subset of demographic questions. They did not include ethnicity, employment, or the full service satisfaction battery.

Venue surveys: Dedicated surveys for Civic Theatre, Scottish Hall, and Rugby Park were deployed via QR codes at each venue. These surveys ask about the specific venue experience alongside core demographic and satisfaction questions, with an option for respondents to continue into the full residents survey.

Potential Impact on Results

The shift to postal surveys as the primary method may have influenced 2025/26 results in several ways:

Demographic reach: Postal surveys reached residents less likely to participate through digital-only methods, including those with limited internet access or less comfortable with online participation.

Response patterns and online negativity bias: Research shows that individuals who hold strong opinions about a topic are more likely to participate in voluntary surveys than those with neutral views. Online surveys may be particularly susceptible to negativity bias, where dissatisfied residents are more motivated to participate than satisfied residents. The postal component involves proactive outreach to a random

sample of residential addresses rather than relying solely on self-selection, which may counteract this effect.

Intercept survey effects: The parks intercept and bus user surveys targeted people already using those specific services. Usage and satisfaction figures for these services are influenced by this targeted collection. This is noted in the relevant report sections.

Interpreting 2025/26 Results

Given these methodological changes, it remains difficult to determine whether observed differences from 2024/25 reflect genuine shifts in resident sentiment, or the influence of the expanded data collection approach reaching a broader sample. By maintaining consistent methodology across all four quarters of 2025/26, the quarterly series enables reliable tracking of satisfaction trends within the year.

2.3 Data Collection Methods

Postal Survey

Paper questionnaires with reply-paid envelopes were sent to randomly selected residential addresses across the Invercargill district, accounting for 41% of full-year responses (38%, n=538, responding via the letter's online link, and 3%, n=44, returning the paper questionnaire). A new wave of approximately 750 addresses was drawn each quarter from the electoral roll, with all prior wave recipients excluded to prevent duplicate sampling. This served as the primary data collection method for 2025/26.

Online Platform (Let's Talk)

The survey was available through Council's Let's Talk online engagement platform, accessible via the Council website. This accounted for 16% (n=221) of full-year responses.

Bus User Survey

A targeted survey of bus service users was conducted on-board buses during 8–20 December 2025, contributing 11% (n=156) of full-year responses. Two bus ambassadors administered surveys to passengers across all routes, covering weekday and Saturday services. This intercept approach captured feedback directly from regular bus users, using a shortened questionnaire focused on bus service usage, satisfaction, and basic demographics.

Social Media

The survey was promoted through Council's social media channels, with links to the online questionnaire. Social media contributed 10% (n=138) of full-year responses.

Library Intercept Surveys (Q1)

Trained survey collectors conducted face-to-face intercepts at library locations in Q1, with participants completing paper questionnaires on-site. This contributed 8% (n=117) of full-year responses. In Q2 and Q3 the team continued to collect responses at the library, but through the full residents survey rather than the shorter intercept instrument; those responses are counted under their originating channels (for example the letter's online link or paper questionnaires) rather than as library intercepts.

Parks Intercept Surveys (Q3)

A shorter survey focused on parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, and tree management was deployed at parks and recreation locations from Q3 via two channels: iPad-based on-site intercepts conducted by field staff, and paper questionnaires distributed at parks locations. These surveys used a reduced question set that did not include ethnicity, employment status, or the full service satisfaction battery. Combined, parks intercepts contributed 92 responses to the dataset.

Venue Surveys (Q3)

Dedicated venue surveys for Civic Theatre, Scottish Hall, and Rugby Park were deployed from Q3 via QR codes displayed at each venue, with a targeted email supplement later in the year. Each survey asks about the specific venue experience alongside core satisfaction and demographic questions. Respondents who complete the venue survey are offered the option to continue into the full residents survey. Venue surveys contributed 82 responses across the Civic Theatre and Rugby Park instruments, which are included in the corresponding venue satisfaction figures reported in this document. The Scottish Hall venue survey received a single response by the data cutoff of 30 June 2026, which is not reported separately as one response is not meaningfully reportable.

2.4 Survey Period

Full-year data collection covers Q1 (1 July to 30 September 2025), Q2 (1 October to 31 December 2025), Q3 (1 January to 31 March 2026), and Q4 (1 April to 30 June 2026). The bus user survey was conducted during Q2. Parks intercept surveys and venue surveys commenced during Q3. The survey closed on 30 June 2026; paper questionnaires received by that date and keyed shortly after close are included.

2.5 Response Rate and Sample Size

The full year achieved 1,401 included responses across all collection channels. Partial responses were included where respondents answered beyond the screening questions: for the main survey, respondents who answered the first substantive question (pride in Invercargill) were retained; for parks and venue surveys, respondents who answered at least the age screening question were retained. Response rates varied across questions, with earlier questions receiving higher response rates. Sample sizes are noted throughout the report (n=X).

Not all survey instruments included every question. The bus user and parks intercept surveys used shorter questionnaires, meaning some demographic and satisfaction questions have lower response counts than the total sample. This is reflected in the varying n values reported for each measure.

2.6 Questionnaire Design

The main residents survey questionnaire included demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, employment status, resident status, location), service usage and satisfaction ratings, community engagement, community pride, council contact experiences, and open-ended comments.

In Q3, the main survey was expanded to include a parks-specific module covering playgrounds (visited, age groups, satisfaction, feature preferences), cemeteries (visited, satisfaction), trees (satisfaction, issues experienced), and alternative play spaces (support, type and location preferences). This module included ranking questions where respondents ordered preferences.

The bus user survey focused on bus service usage and satisfaction with basic demographics. The parks intercept survey covered parks-specific questions with age, gender, location, and resident status. The venue surveys covered venue-specific satisfaction alongside core demographics.

Question types included multiple choice, five-point Likert scales for satisfaction and agreement measures, ranking questions, and open-ended text fields. Screening questions ensured respondents only answered satisfaction questions for services they had used.

2.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and cross-tabulations by demographic variables. Satisfaction measures combined 'satisfied' and 'most satisfied' responses (or 'agree' and 'strongly agree' for agreement statements).

Qualitative responses were coded thematically with topics categorised into broader themes. Multiple topics could be identified within a single response, resulting in topic counts that may exceed the number of respondents.

Historical tracking data from previous survey periods (2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25) provide context for 2025/26 findings. Comparisons between periods describe observed differences without attributing causation.

Weighting Approach

This year's results are weighted by age and gender to match the Invercargill City population (2023 Census). Survey respondents tend to skew a little older and more female than the city as a whole, so weighting gives each group its correct share of the overall result. The effect is modest, most satisfaction scores shift by only a point or two. As this is the first period we have weighted, the figures sit slightly below the unweighted basis reported earlier in the year.

Throughout this report, the percentages are weighted, while the response counts (n) shown alongside each figure are unweighted and indicate the actual number of respondents in that base. The one exception is the demographic sample profile, which is presented unweighted because its purpose is to describe who actually took part. A full side-by-side weighted and unweighted comparison of the results is available in the accompanying weighted vs unweighted workbook.

Ethnicity. We did not weight by ethnicity. Māori make up about 18% of the city's population but around 8% of this year's sample. We considered weighting to correct this, but chose not to because the number of Māori respondents is small and a sizeable share of respondents did not answer the ethnicity question. Weighting in that situation would require assuming the people who skipped the question are similar to those who answered, which cannot be relied on and could distort rather than improve the results. The under-representation of Māori is noted here for transparency, and Māori-specific findings should be read with that in mind.

Bluff. We did not weight by location. Bluff residents are well represented in the sample, around 3% of those who gave their location, against about 3.5% of the city's population, so the city-wide figures already reflect Bluff at close to its correct share. An overall indication of how Bluff residents feel can be reported, but with a small-base caveat; we have not broken Bluff results down service by service, as those numbers become too small to be reliable.

Weighting: Technical Detail

Weighting method. Post-stratification weights were produced by iterative proportional fitting (raking) to two margins from the 2023 Census for Invercargill City: age (six bands: 14–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, 65+) and gender (Male, Female). Weights were trimmed to the range 0.30–3.00 (relative to a mean of 1) and rescaled so the weighted base equals the achieved base.

Coverage and handling. Of the achieved sample of 1,401, 1,149 respondents form the raked base (those adjusted to the Census age and gender targets); the remainder retain a weight of 1, so the total weighted base equals the achieved sample of 1,401. Respondents with a valid age but no usable gender (20.7% of the raked base) are weighted on age only (their gender is held at its observed share, so the male/female correction is applied only across those who stated it). Convenience-channel responses (bus intercept and the venue surveys) and the small number with no age are given a weight of 1; they remain in the counts but are not demographically corrected. The weighting design effect (Kish) is 1.13, giving an effective sample of approximately 1,013.

Ethnicity (not weighted). The sample is approximately 8% Māori against approximately 18% of the usual-resident population (2023 Census). Ethnicity was excluded from the weighting because the Māori sub-sample is small and ethnicity item non-response is high this year. Raking on ethnicity would impute the population distribution onto the large non-response group, an assumption that is not supportable and risks introducing more error than it removes. The under-representation is disclosed; Māori-specific estimates carry wide margins of error and are reported with caution.

Location / Bluff (not weighted). Bluff respondents number 27, approximately 3% of those who supplied a location, against approximately 3.5% of the city population. As the achieved share already approximates the population share, there is no material skew to correct and location was not used as a weighting margin. An aggregate Bluff result may be reported with a small-base caveat; service-by-service disaggregation for Bluff is not reported (at $n = 27$ the 95% margin of error is roughly ± 19 percentage points).

Comparability. This is the first reporting period to apply weighting. Weighted estimates are therefore slightly lower than the unweighted basis used earlier in 2025/26. Weighted percentages and unweighted respondent counts are presented throughout, with the full weighted-versus-unweighted comparison in the accompanying workbook, so the basis change is transparent.

2.8 Limitations and Considerations

Considerations when interpreting full-year findings:

- **Full-year coverage:** This report covers all four quarterly data collections for 2025/26 (July 2025 – June 2026)
- **Methodological changes:** Introduction of postal surveys as the primary method and inclusion of targeted intercept surveys may affect comparability with 2024/25
- **Self-selection:** Participation remained voluntary across all channels, which may introduce response bias
- **Variable question coverage:** Not all survey instruments included every question. Ethnicity and employment status were not asked in the bus user or parks intercept surveys, resulting in lower response counts for these measures ($n=833$ and $n=832$ respectively, compared to $n=1,401$ total)
- **Sample size variation:** Response rates varied across questions and services, with some measures based on small samples
- **Intercept survey effects:** Parks and bus satisfaction figures include responses from people already using those services, which may skew results compared to a general population sample
- **Weighted data:** Full-year results are weighted by age and gender to the 2023 Census; ethnicity and location are not weighting variables (see Weighting Approach). Māori are under-represented in the sample and Māori-specific findings should be read with that in mind

3 Demographics

The demographic characteristics of survey respondents provide insight into who participated in the 2025/26 ICC Residents Satisfaction Survey. Understanding the demographic composition helps contextualise the findings and assess how well the sample represents Invercargill’s population. The figures in this section describe the achieved (unweighted) sample; the weighting approach set out in the methodology corrects the age and gender skews shown here in the reported results.

3.1 Survey Response Sources

Survey responses were collected through channels spanning the full year: postal letters (38%), the Let’s Talk online platform (16%), bus surveys (11%), social media outreach (10%), library intercepts (8%), parks intercept surveys (7%), venue surveys (6%), keyed paper questionnaires (3%), and smaller volumes from posters (1%) and democratic process intercepts (<1%). The democratic process intercepts were short surveys collected in person at Council events, which accounts for their low volumes.

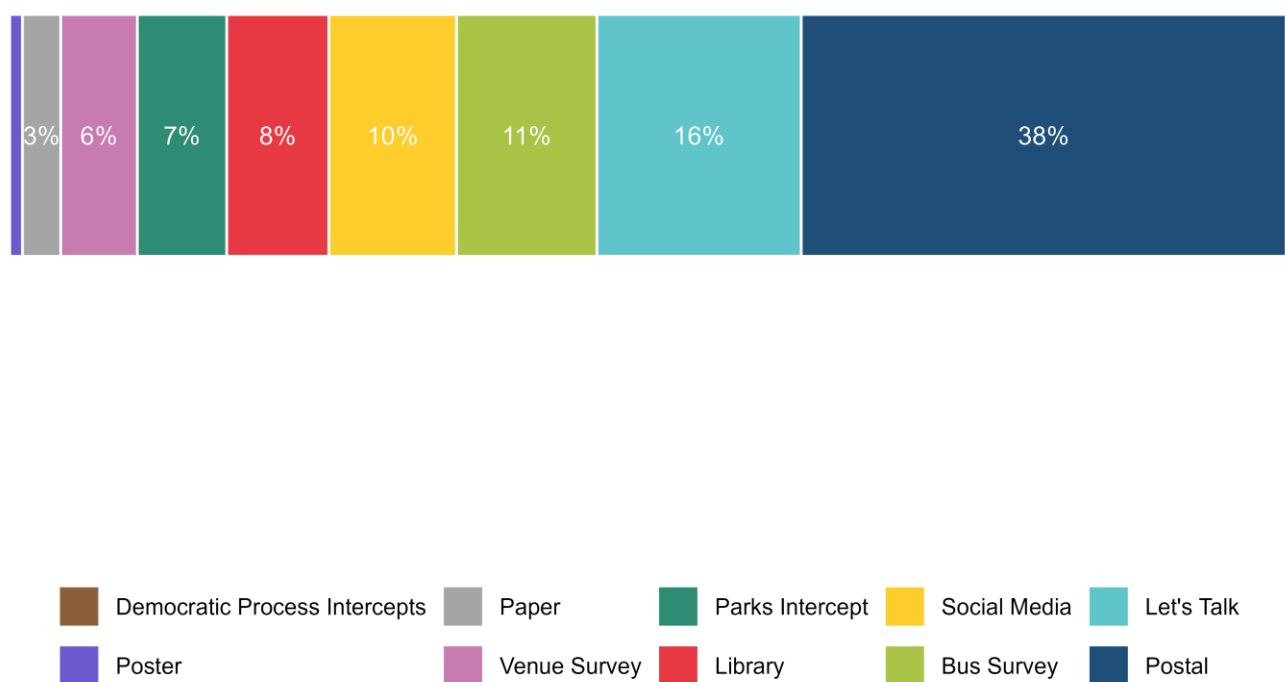


Figure 1: Distribution of survey responses by collection method (n=1,401)

3.2 Age Distribution

The age distribution shows strong representation from older residents, with those aged 65 and over comprising 28% of respondents. The 35–44 age group represented the second-largest cohort at 19%, followed by those aged 55–64 (16%) and 45–54 (13%). Younger residents were represented, with those aged 25–34 comprising 11%, 14–17 year-olds making up 7%, and 18–24 representing 5% of respondents. Only 1% preferred not to disclose their age.

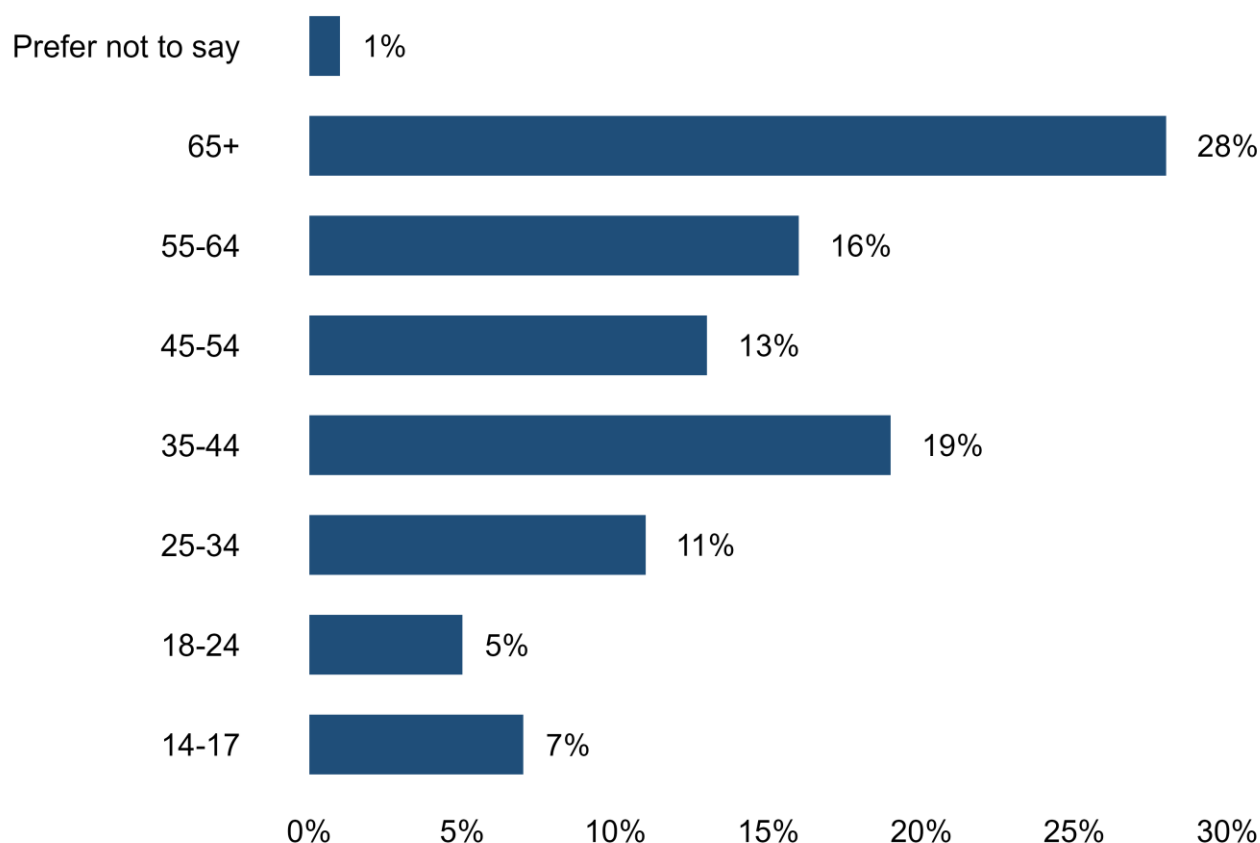


Figure 2: Age distribution of survey respondents (n=1,377)

3.3 Gender Identity

Female residents comprised 60% of respondents, while males represented 37%. A small number of respondents preferred not to disclose their gender (2%) or identified in other ways (1%).

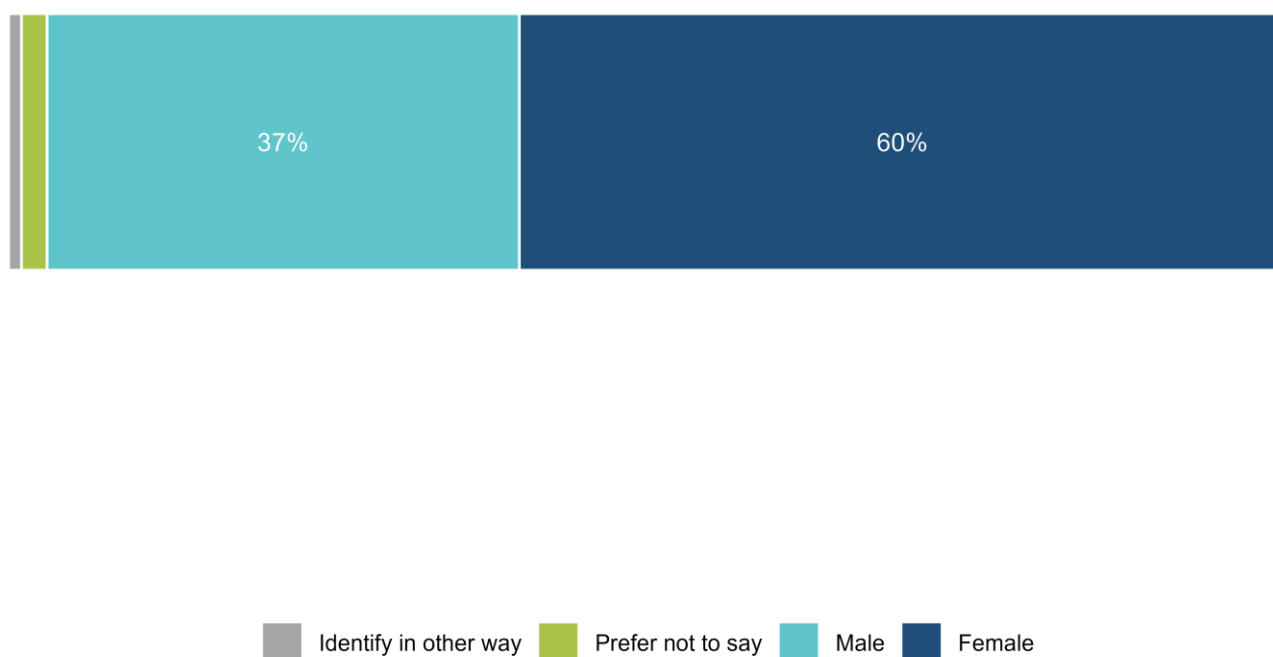


Figure 3: Gender identity distribution of respondents (n=1,181)

3.4 Ethnicity

The majority of respondents identified as Pākehā/New Zealand European (78%). Other ethnicities comprised 17%, Māori represented 8%, Asian 3%, and Pacific Islander 1%. Given that respondents could select multiple ethnicities, percentages total more than 100%. A total of 833 respondents answered this question, as it was not included in the bus user or parks intercept surveys.

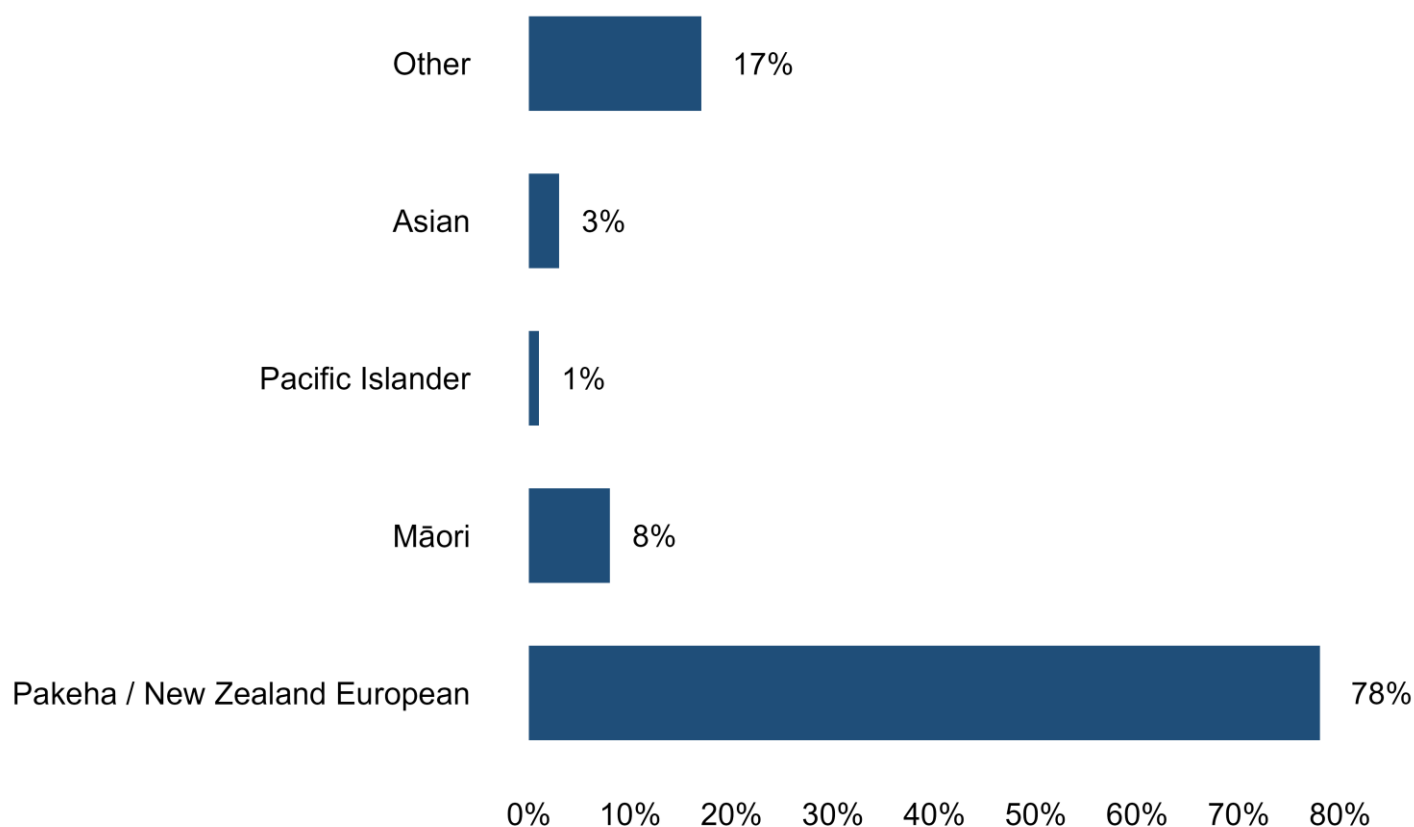


Figure 4: Ethnic diversity of survey respondents (n=833)

3.5 Employment Status

Of respondents who answered the employment question (n=832), the largest group were employed full-time (38%), followed by retired residents (27%), those who preferred not to say (14%), and part-time workers (9%). Self-employed residents comprised 5%, with students (2%), unemployed (2%), and beneficiaries (2%) making up the remainder. As with ethnicity, this question was not included in the bus user or parks intercept surveys.

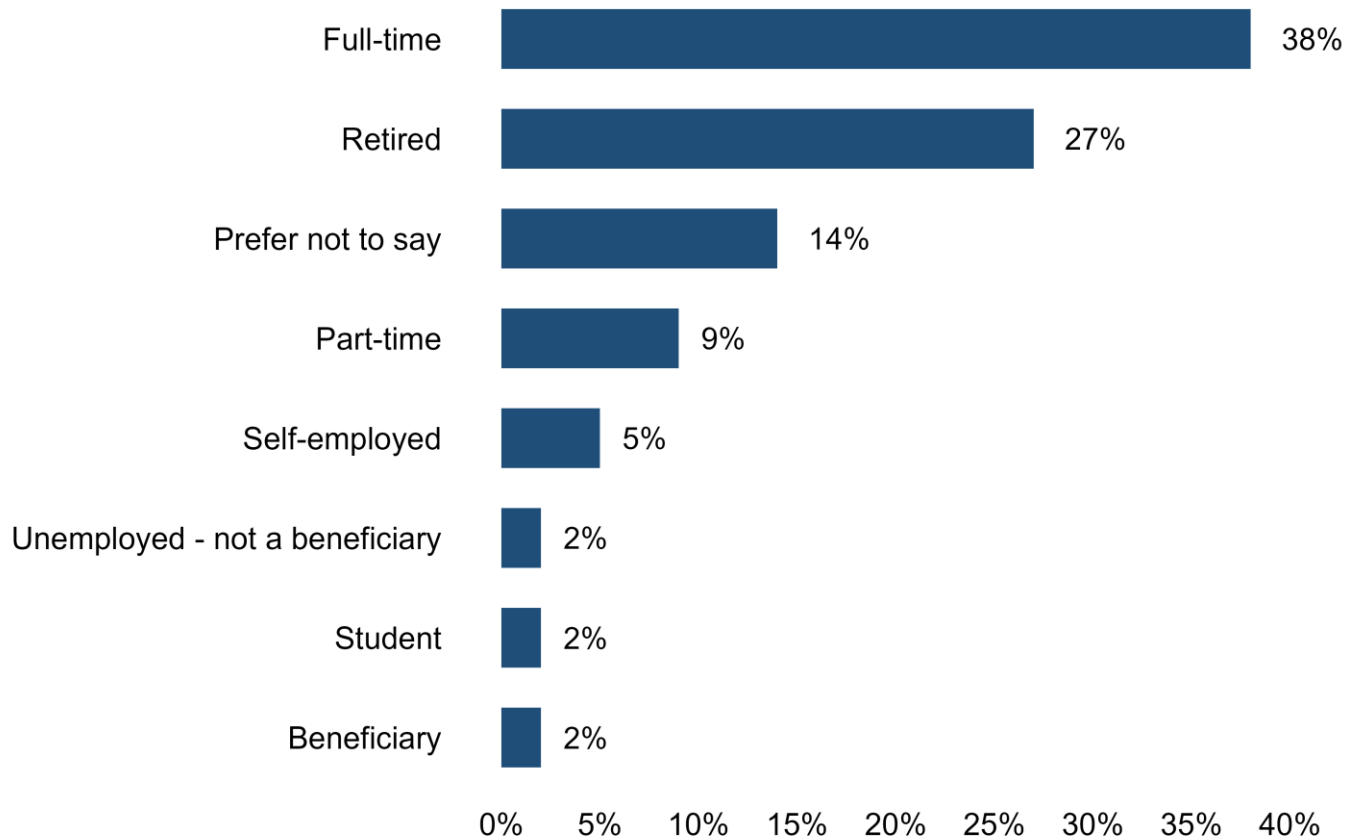


Figure 5: Employment status distribution of respondents (n=832)

3.6 Resident Status

The vast majority of respondents were ICC residential ratepayers (80%). ICC residents who are not ratepayers comprised 10%, while “Other” represented 8%, and non-residential ratepayers made up 2%.

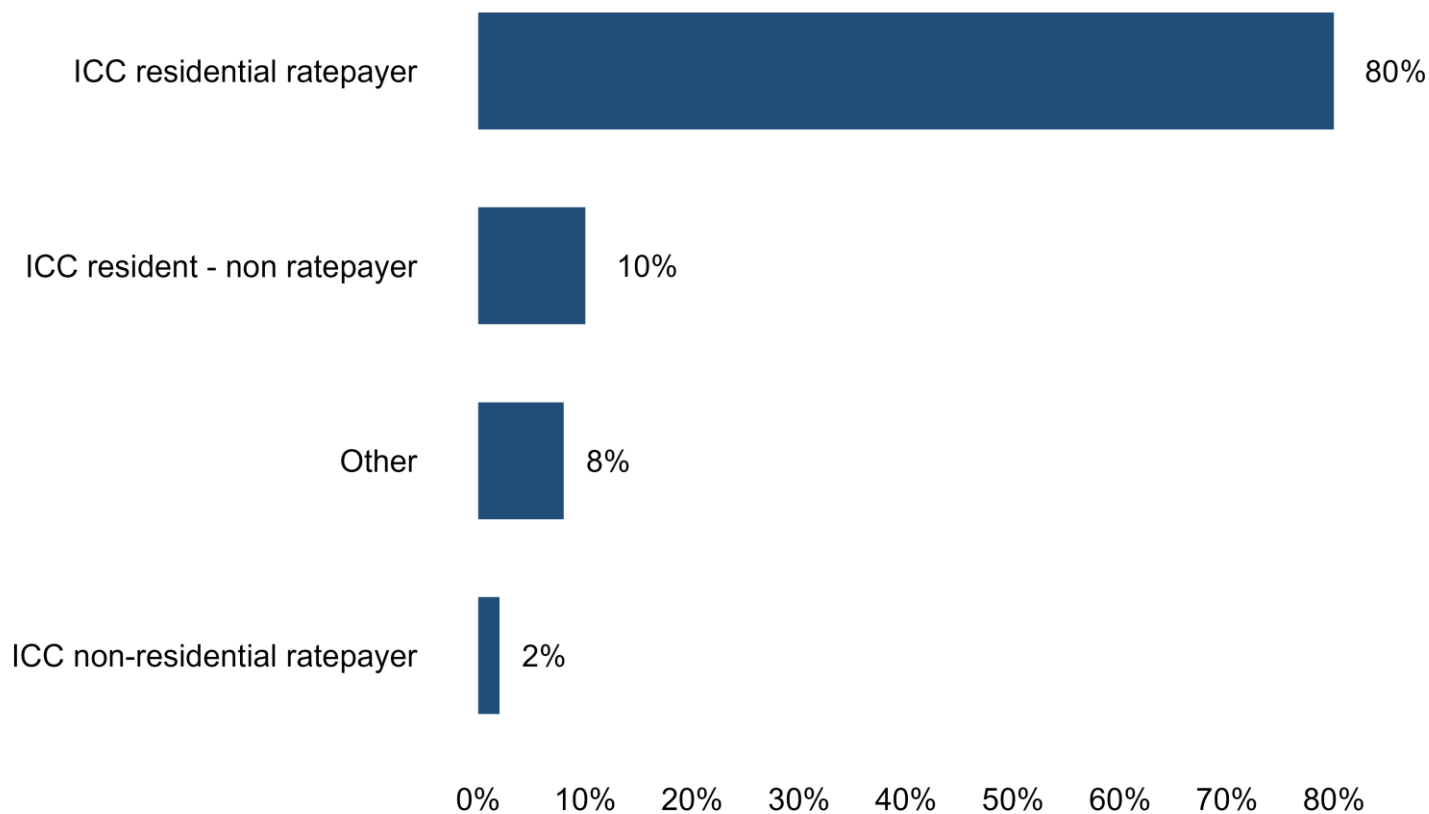


Figure 6: Resident status distribution of respondents (n=1,022)

3.7 Location

Respondents were spread across 45 suburbs and localities within the Invercargill district. The full distribution is shown in the table below.

Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Windsor	95	9
Glengarry	61	6
Otatara	64	6
Richmond	65	6
Waikiwi	67	6
Appleby	51	5
Gladstone	59	5
Grasmere	49	5
Newfield	50	5
Strathern	52	5
Heidelberg	47	4
Waverley	48	4
Bluff	27	3
Georgetown	37	3
Hargest	28	3
Kingswell	33	3
Rosedale	27	3
Avenal	24	2
Hawthorndale	25	2
Prefer not to say	17	2
Andersons Park	8	1
Ascot Heights	9	1
CBD area	10	1
Clifton	12	1
Kew	9	1
Lorneville	9	1
Makarewa	10	1

Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Myross Bush	14	1
Seaward Bush	13	1
Tisbury	9	1
Turnbull Thomson Park	7	1
Waihopai	7	1
Ascot	5	0
Greenhills	2	0
Grove Bush	1	0
Inverurie	3	0
Kennington	1	0
Mill Rd	4	0
Mokotua	2	0
New River Ferry	5	0
Omaui	1	0
Prestonville	3	0
Rockdale	5	0
West Invercargill	3	0
Woodend	1	0

Table 1: Location distribution of respondents

4 Service Usage Patterns

This section presents how frequently respondents reported using Council services and facilities. The survey assessed usage across eleven services, with response rates and usage patterns varying by service.

Usage figures should be interpreted with care. Response rates differ across services depending on which survey instruments included the question, and some results are influenced by collection method. For example, higher reported parks usage partly reflects the inclusion of parks-specific intercept surveys, which targeted people already visiting parks and recreation spaces. Similarly, bus usage figures include responses from the dedicated bus user survey. These figures describe who responded, not necessarily the broader Invercargill population.

The table below summarises usage frequency across all eleven services.

Frequency of ICC Council Services Usage											
Frequency	Parks & Recreation	Playgrounds	Library	Splash Palace	Public Toilets	Bus Service	Cemeteries	Rugby Park	He Waka Tuia	Civic Theatre	Scottish Hall
Daily	14%	5%	2%	2%	2%	6%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%
At least once a week	30%	17%	13%	12%	6%	9%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
At least once a fortnight	12%	7%	9%	5%	7%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%
At least once a month	16%	10%	12%	6%	10%	3%	8%	3%	3%	2%	0%
Once every 2-3 months	15%	10%	15%	11%	18%	2%	12%	5%	7%	12%	2%
Once or twice a year	8%	12%	12%	13%	20%	5%	22%	21%	14%	45%	11%
Less often than yearly	3%	12%	16%	19%	14%	8%	27%	26%	16%	26%	25%
Never	3%	26%	21%	31%	23%	65%	26%	42%	57%	14%	61%
Total	n=847	n=432	n=869	n=747	n=743	n=849	n=464	n=739	n=614	n=808	n=708

Note: Percentages are weighted; the n values in the Total row are unweighted respondent counts. 0% means that no respondents selected that frequency, or that the weighted share rounds to zero.

Table 2: Frequency of Council services usage by Invercargill residents

5 Service Satisfaction

Resident satisfaction with Council services and facilities is examined in this section. Respondents were screened based on their responses to usage frequency questions; only those who had used a Council service or facility were invited to provide satisfaction ratings.

5.1 Overall Satisfaction with Council Services

Overall satisfaction levels varied across Council services. Library services recorded the highest satisfaction at 89% (n=573), followed by Civic Theatre at 88% (n=514) and Parks & Recreation at 78% (n=788). At the lower end, Rugby Park showed 41% satisfaction (n=237) and democratic processes recorded 33% (n=827).

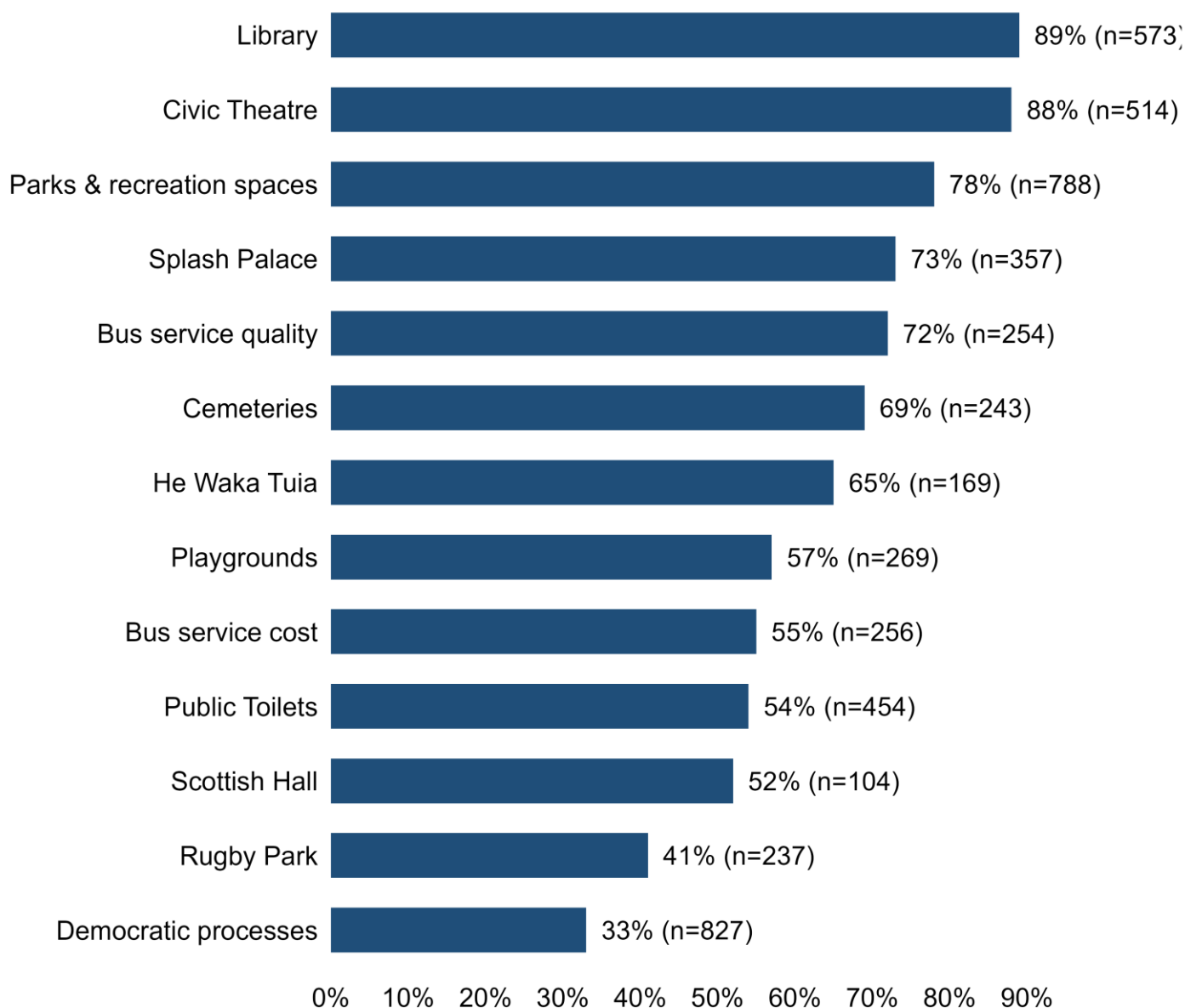


Figure 7: Overall satisfaction with ICC services (n=valid responses for each service)

5.2 Satisfaction Trends Over Time

The table below tracks satisfaction from 2021/22 to 2025/26. Most services show higher satisfaction in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25. As noted in the methodology, comparisons with previous years should account for the shift from online-only to postal-led collection and the introduction of weighting in 2025/26 (prior years are unweighted), both of which may have influenced results alongside any genuine changes in sentiment. Playgrounds and Cemeteries are measured for the first time in 2025/26 following the introduction of the parks-specific survey module.

Two year-on-year changes warrant specific attention. Bus service quality increased from 55% in 2024/25 to 72% in 2025/26, a period in which the dedicated bus user intercept survey was introduced, targeting people already using the service. Parks & Recreation increased from 73% to 78%, coinciding with the introduction of parks intercept surveys at parks and recreation locations. In both cases, the inclusion of targeted intercept respondents who were already using these services is likely to have contributed to the observed increases, independent of any underlying change in satisfaction. The Civic Theatre figure of 88% (n=514) includes responses from the dedicated venue survey introduced in Q3.

Overall Satisfaction with ICC Services - Tracking Over Time

Year	Library	Civic Theatre	Parks & recreation	Cemeteries	Splash Palace	Bus service cost	Playgrounds	Scottish Hall	Bus service quality	Public Toilets	Rugby Park	He Waka Tuia	Democratic processes
'21-22	87%	-	80%	-	74%	65%	-	-	38%	-	-	19%	18%
'22-23	84%	-	80%	-	67%	64%	-	-	34%	-	-	17%	18%
'23-24	81%	-	75%	-	56%	48%	-	-	46%	-	-	23%	22%
'24-25	75%	71%	73%	-	65%	57%	-	51%	55%	36%	34%	54%	23%
'25-26	89%	88%	78%	69%	73%	55%	57%	52%	72%	54%	41%	65%	33%

Table 3: Satisfaction trends with ICC services from 2021/22 to 2025/26

5.3 Satisfaction by Age and Gender

The table below breaks down satisfaction by age group and gender. Across most services, satisfaction tends to increase with age. Gender differences are generally modest.

Overall Satisfaction with ICC Services by Age and Gender									
Service	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female	Total
Library	82% (n=29)	86% (n=65)	91% (n=137)	87% (n=70)	89% (n=78)	95% (n=189)	90% (n=176)	92% (n=347)	89% (n=573)
Parks & recreation spaces	58% (n=75)	72% (n=89)	79% (n=153)	85% (n=114)	82% (n=127)	87% (n=218)	78% (n=288)	80% (n=424)	78% (n=788)
Civic Theatre	86% (n=17)	78% (n=52)	91% (n=108)	82% (n=80)	91% (n=92)	92% (n=155)	88% (n=160)	90% (n=305)	88% (n=514)
Splash Palace	68% (n=15)	59% (n=57)	72% (n=110)	74% (n=56)	79% (n=50)	91% (n=66)	74% (n=112)	72% (n=201)	73% (n=357)
Bus service - cost	45% (n=46)	41% (n=36)	48% (n=49)	44% (n=25)	76% (n=54)	71% (n=24)	56% (n=73)	55% (n=158)	55% (n=256)
Bus service - quality	75% (n=46)	57% (n=35)	79% (n=49)	53% (n=27)	77% (n=54)	62% (n=25)	73% (n=72)	71% (n=160)	72% (n=254)
Scottish Hall	40% (n=5)	17% (n=10)	45% (n=22)	49% (n=16)	73% (n=19)	72% (n=31)	52% (n=37)	48% (n=54)	52% (n=104)
He Waka Tuia	32% (n=7)	78% (n=22)	68% (n=50)	66% (n=21)	56% (n=33)	69% (n=34)	68% (n=46)	61% (n=103)	65% (n=169)
Public Toilets	36% (n=26)	48% (n=56)	49% (n=115)	50% (n=68)	61% (n=66)	71% (n=120)	56% (n=175)	53% (n=230)	54% (n=454)
Rugby Park	65% (n=18)	28% (n=35)	39% (n=60)	40% (n=35)	39% (n=37)	48% (n=47)	40% (n=105)	39% (n=119)	41% (n=237)
Playgrounds	35% (n=52)	48% (n=38)	65% (n=73)	81% (n=28)	60% (n=23)	83% (n=51)	61% (n=82)	59% (n=145)	57% (n=269)
Cemeteries	46% (n=48)	71% (n=22)	82% (n=31)	63% (n=19)	89% (n=31)	84% (n=86)	70% (n=84)	71% (n=137)	69% (n=243)
Democratic processes	40% (n=34)	25% (n=91)	31% (n=161)	32% (n=125)	38% (n=134)	35% (n=271)	33% (n=299)	33% (n=422)	33% (n=827)

Table 4: Satisfaction with ICC services by age and gender

5.4 Qualitative Feedback on Services

The following sections present qualitative feedback for each service, drawing on thematic coding of open-ended comments.

Bus Service

Comments on the bus service were mixed. Riders praised the clean, punctual electric buses and courteous drivers, while the most common complaints concerned operating hours, in particular the lack of evening services for after-work travel, and fares that several considered dearer than driving and paying for parking. Coverage came up repeatedly: no service in Otatara, limited options for Bluff, and long walks to reach stops. Others mentioned inconvenient timetables, poor integration with Google Maps, inconsistent driver helpfulness, wheelchair access on the smaller buses, and portable ramps that are slippery in wet weather.

Comments on the bus service	
Theme	Frequency
Bus Service	89
Support: Good bus service	21
Concern: Timetable and hours inadequate	14
Concern: Fare too expensive	11
Concern: Bus cleanliness and comfort	8
Concern: No service to some areas	8
Concern: Driver behaviour and quality	6
Consider: Extend service hours and days	6
Support: Electric buses and school services	6
Concern: No bus service to Bluff	3
Concern: No electronic payment option	2
Concern: Wheelchair and accessibility issues	2
Consider: Better route information and technology	2
Customer Service	2
Support: Friendly and helpful staff	2

n = 64 respondents. Minimum threshold: 2 mentions.

Table 5: Comments regarding satisfaction with the bus service

Splash Palace

Most comments about Splash Palace were positive, describing a well-maintained, family-friendly facility with efficient and friendly staff. Cost was the most frequent criticism: admission and lesson fees, hydroslide charges, and the added fee attached to the newer online payment requirement. Respondents also noted a shortage of family and baby changing rooms, ageing changing facilities, limited water play options for young children, and the hydroslide being closed at the time of their visit. A few raised hygiene and safety matters, including shoes worn poolside, overcrowding at peak times, and one report of inappropriate behaviour that stopped a visitor attending.

Comments on Splash Palace

Theme	Frequency
Splash Palace	280
Support: Great facility and staff	118
Concern: Admission prices too high	26
Concern: Lane availability and pool space	25
Concern: Facility is dated and too small	22
Support: Well-maintained and clean facility	20
Concern: Not enough family changing rooms	18
Consider: Expand leisure pool and water features	15
Concern: Cleanliness issues	11
Concern: Hydroslide availability	8
Concern: Water temperature issues	7
Consider: Expand spa sauna and relaxation facilities	6
Support: Good swim school	4

n = 202 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 6: Comments regarding satisfaction with Splash Palace

Rugby Park

The partially closed grandstand dominated feedback on Rugby Park. Many respondents described the closure as unresolved, noting that corporate boxes and the referee lounge reportedly remain in use. A number wanted the ground developed as a multi-purpose venue able to host concerts, family events, and higher-profile rugby fixtures. Other complaints covered the toilets at the western end, muddy paths behind the goal posts, limited parking, and drink prices. Several respondents also described enjoyable, accessible match-day experiences attending games with their children.

Comments on Rugby Park	
Theme	Frequency
Rugby Park	206
Concern: Grandstand closure and disrepair	50
Support: Enjoyable venue for events	43
Consider: Fix and upgrade grandstand	35
Concern: Facility is outdated and run down	33
Consider: Multi-purpose venue and more events	28
Consider: Attract bigger events	8
Concern: Poor facilities and amenities	6
Concern: Food and beverage pricing	3
Rates Financial Management	3
Concern: Wasteful spending	3

n = 135 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 7: Comments regarding satisfaction with Rugby Park

Scottish Hall

Respondents valued the Scottish Hall as a historic, affordable community venue, mentioning its heritage, tartans, and architecture, and its role hosting events such as the Rotary book sale, dance competitions, and Zumba. The central location, ample parking, ease of access, and generally clean condition were also noted. Several felt the building is old, basic, or underused and suggested a more inviting entrance, larger windows, and modernised toilets, provided any upgrade preserves the heritage character. A few thought rental costs may be too high.

Comments on Scottish Hall	
Theme	Frequency
Scottish Hall	51
Support: Good functional community venue for events	25
Concern: Dated and needs upgrading	11
Support: Heritage and character valued	10
Consider: More use and lower hire costs	5

n = 45 respondents. Minimum threshold: 2 mentions.

Table 8: Comments regarding satisfaction with Scottish Hall

Civic Theatre

Most comments praised the Civic Theatre as a well-maintained heritage building that hosts quality shows and cultural events, with staff generally described as obliging and welcoming; one attendee reported a poor experience with bar staff before a show. The criticisms were practical: slippery exterior tiles, insufficient disability parking, ticket prices that deter attendance, and an interior ceiling that looks in need of cleaning. A few mentioned the seating layout, chiefly long rows without a central aisle making access awkward.

Comments on Civic Theatre	
Theme	Frequency
Civic Theatre	354
Support: Great venue shows and staff	199
Support: Beautiful heritage building and community pride	118
Concern: Safety and accessibility issues	14
Concern: Seating comfort, layout and sound quality	12
Consider: More variety of shows and events	7
Concern: Ticket prices and affordability	4
General	11
Concern: General dissatisfaction with facility or service	6
Concern: Food and beverage at venues	5
Infrastructure Rooding	7
Concern: Parking cost and availability	4
Consider: More disability and accessible parking	3

n = 291 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 9: Comments regarding satisfaction with Civic Theatre

Parks & Recreation

Queens Park attracted more praise than any other space, described repeatedly as a favourite spot for taking visitors, with Andersons Park, Seaward Bush, and the city's walking tracks also mentioned as well maintained and calming. Specific concerns included tree felling changing Queens Park's character, the redesigned tuatara enclosure being less interactive than before, dog owners not cleaning up after or controlling their pets, and long grass and weeds in summer. Requested improvements covered more toilets and shaded seating, better winter drainage on sports grounds, more indoor and low-cost wet-weather activities, aviary signage, and safer paths within Queens Park. One respondent said the disc golf installation went in without public consultation and now restricts their use of some spaces.

Comments on parks and recreation spaces

Theme	Frequency
Parks Recreation	597
Support: Parks are well maintained	245
Support: Queens Park is excellent	114
Concern: Parks maintenance declining	61
Consider: More family and youth recreation	38
Support: Sandy Point and walking tracks valued	33
Consider: Dog control in parks and public spaces	32
Concern: Queens Park specific issues	16
Concern: Sandy Point issues	16
Consider: More flowers and garden displays	14
Consider: Sports ground improvements	9
Consider: Protect waterways and environment	7
Consider: Community orchards and edible gardens	6
Concern: Anderson Park specific issues	3
Consider: BBQ and picnic facilities in parks	3
Playgrounds	44
Concern: Equipment is functionally obsolete	9
Consider: More seating and picnic facilities	9
Consider: Shade and shelter at playgrounds	8
Support: Good variety of playgrounds	8
Consider: Toilets at playgrounds	4
Concern: Safety issues at playgrounds	3
Consider: Upgrade Queens Park playground	3
Trees Tree Management	24
Support: Good storm response	11
Concern: Excessive tree removal	6
Consider: Better tree replacement planning	4

Comments on parks and recreation spaces	
Theme	Frequency
Concern: Storm debris still not cleared	3
Safety Compliance	14
Concern: Antisocial behaviour in public spaces	7
Consider: Better dog control enforcement	7
City Development Economy	12
Consider: Bluff needs more attention	4
Consider: Housing and district planning	4
Consider: More events and entertainment	4
Walkways Cycleways	10
Consider: Maintain and develop safe walkways	6
Concern: Walkway maintenance issues	4
Council Governance Engagement	8
Concern: Council does not listen to community	4
Concern: Equity across suburbs and areas	4
General	5
Concern: General dissatisfaction with facility or service	5
Public Toilets	4
Consider: More toilets in parks and playgrounds	4
Infrastructure Roding	3
Concern: Stormwater drainage and flooding	3
Rates Financial Management	3
Concern: Wasteful spending	3

n = 462 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 10: Comments regarding satisfaction with parks and recreation spaces

He Waka Tuia

Comments on He Waka Tuia were mostly positive. Respondents mentioned the friendly, engaging staff, the regularly rotating exhibitions, and interactive displays such as the PLAY exhibition. The most common complaint was the lack of nearby parking, which limits visits for older and less mobile people, and many felt the space is too small to show Southland's art and history properly, with some hoping for a larger facility in future. A minority did not know what the facility was, described the exhibitions as niche, or said it would not be greatly missed.

Comments on He Waka Tuia	
Theme	Frequency
He Waka Tuia	114
Support: Excellent exhibitions and activities	42
Concern: Space is too small	19
Support: Friendly and helpful staff	16
Support: Good temporary museum and gallery space	15
Concern: Lack of awareness and name recognition	6
Concern: Parking difficulties	6
Consider: More promotion needed	6
Concern: Museum build too slow	4
General	6
Concern: General dissatisfaction with facility or service	6

n = 82 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 11: Comments regarding satisfaction with He Waka Tuia

Library

Nearly all comments on the library were positive. Respondents wrote about friendly, helpful staff, the range of books, activities, and quiet spaces, accessibility, the absence of overdue fees, children's programmes, and the study environment, along with services such as newspapers and exercise classes. The suggestions that were made pointed to difficult parking, a building that feels dated, a wish for more enclosed study spaces, and repositioning non-fiction closer to fiction.

Desired Activities and Facilities

Requests here were dominated by children's programming: more kids' workshops, weekend craft sessions, and drop-in activities. Cost came up several times, with suggestions that a koha system replace the current \$25 charge for meeting rooms and The Shed, free spaces for non-profits, and cheaper rooms for gamers. Individual suggestions included more books and denser shelving, additional BorrowBox content, a seed library, writing and craft workshops, and computing classes. Many respondents also used the question to praise the existing classes and staff.

Comments on library services	
Theme	Frequency
Library	517
Support: Great facility and book selection	217
Support: Excellent staff	142
Support: Events and programmes valued	61
Support: Wonderful children and family space	54
Support: Good parking and accessibility	16
Consider: More digital content	10
Consider: More children and youth activities	7
Consider: Exterior and entrance improvements	6
Consider: Free or koha meeting rooms	4
General	15
Support: General praise for facility or service	12
Concern: General dissatisfaction with facility or service	3
Infrastructure Rooding	5
Concern: Parking cost and availability	5
Safety Compliance	3
Concern: Antisocial behaviour in public spaces	3

n = 346 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 12: Comments regarding satisfaction with library services

Public Toilets

Experiences of public toilets varied. Many respondents found them clean, tidy, and well stocked; others reported dirty floors, facilities out of order, or sites closed. The most consistent criticism was availability, described by several as “few and far between”, particularly in south city and when out with young children. The removal of the toilets and showers at Wachner Place drew specific disappointment and requests for a replacement service. Some noted that high-use facilities need more frequent cleaning, and that the self-opening toilets in Queens Park have embarrassed users.

Comments on public toilets	
Theme	Frequency
Public Toilets	301
Support: Clean and well maintained	116
Concern: Cleanliness issues	54
Concern: Not enough public toilets	46
Support: Good distribution and accessibility	37
Consider: Keep Wachner Place toilets open	17
Concern: Exeloo problems	13
Concern: Toilets are old and need upgrading	12
Consider: More toilets in parks and playgrounds	6
Safety Compliance	5
Concern: Antisocial behaviour in public spaces	5

n = 250 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 13: Comments regarding satisfaction with public toilets

6 Community Engagement

This section examines resident engagement with Council decision-making processes and satisfaction with opportunities for community involvement.

6.1 Satisfaction with Community Engagement Opportunities

Satisfaction with opportunities for community involvement in Council decision-making measured 33% (n=827), with 51% of respondents selecting 'Neutral'. This is the same measure reported as “Democratic Processes” in the service satisfaction tracking table; the label differs here to reflect the full question wording used in the survey.

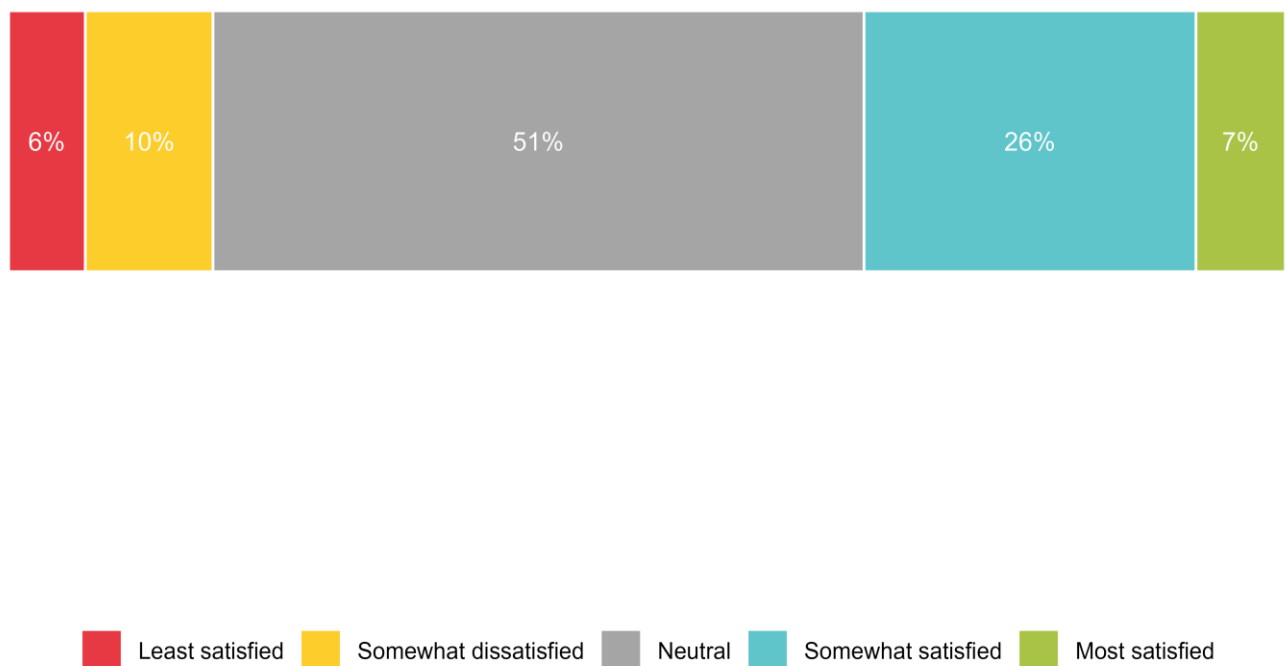


Figure 8: Satisfaction with opportunities for community involvement (n=827)

6.2 Engagement Activities Participation

Respondents were asked about their participation in various community engagement activities in the past 12 months. A total of 74% of respondents (n=826) indicated they had not participated in any of the listed engagement activities.

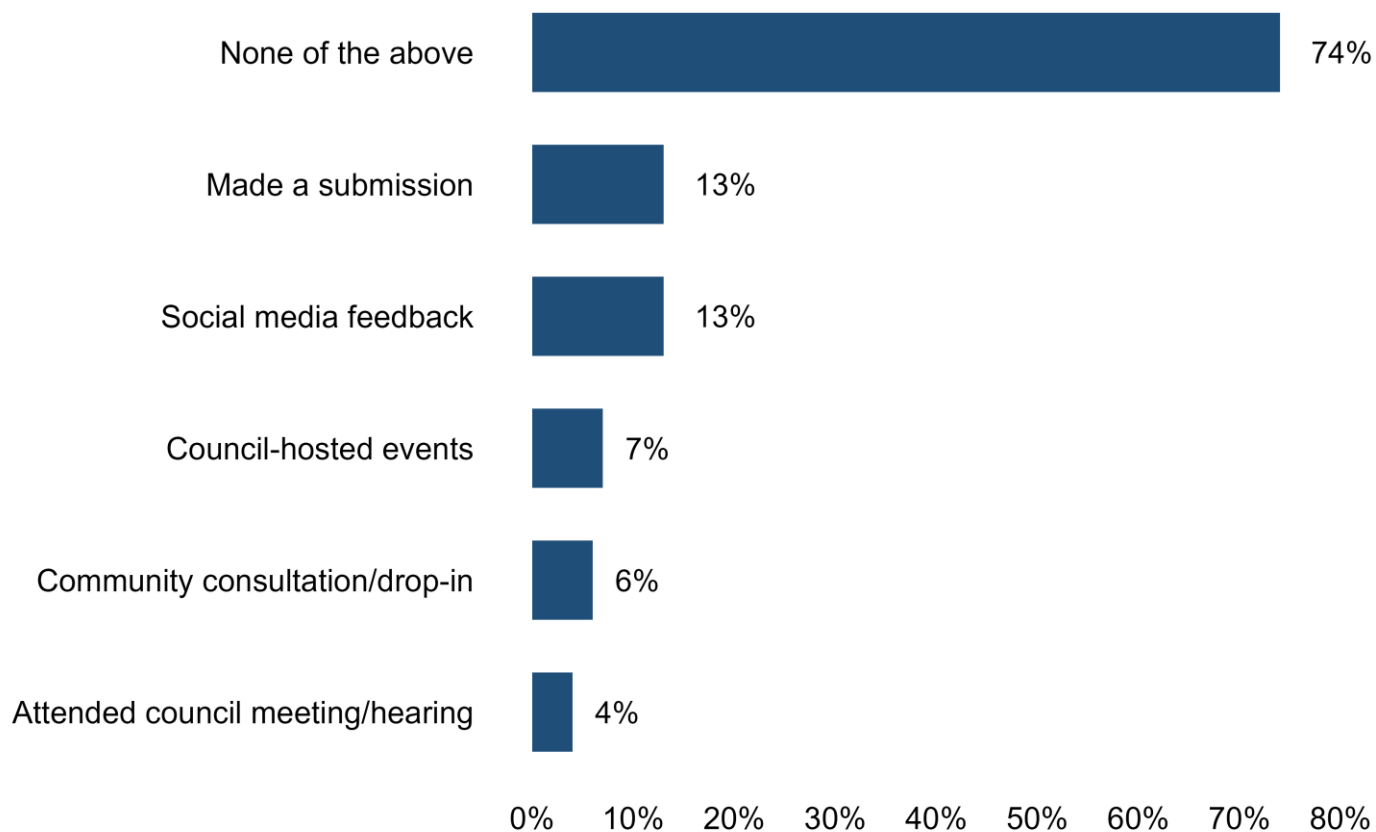


Figure 9: Participation in community engagement activities (n=826)

6.3 Engagement Satisfaction by Age and Gender

Engagement Satisfaction by Age and Gender

Measure	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female	Total
Satisfaction with engagement opportunities	40% (n=34)	25% (n=91)	31% (n=161)	32% (n=125)	38% (n=134)	35% (n=271)	33% (n=299)	33% (n=422)	33% (n=827)

Note: Percentages show respondents who selected 'Most satisfied' or 'Somewhat satisfied'

Table 14: Satisfaction with community engagement opportunities by age and gender

6.4 Engagement Activities by Age and Gender

Engagement Activities by Age and Gender

Activity	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female	Total
Made a submission	15% (n=5)	11% (n=10)	15% (n=24)	14% (n=18)	19% (n=25)	8% (n=23)	14% (n=43)	12% (n=50)	13% (n=107)
Attended council meeting/hearing	12% (n=4)	1% (n=1)	4% (n=6)	4% (n=5)	5% (n=7)	5% (n=13)	5% (n=14)	3% (n=13)	4% (n=37)
Community consultation/drop-in	9% (n=3)	2% (n=2)	8% (n=13)	5% (n=6)	7% (n=9)	5% (n=13)	7% (n=20)	5% (n=22)	6% (n=47)
Social media feedback	-	19% (n=17)	15% (n=24)	16% (n=20)	11% (n=15)	10% (n=28)	11% (n=32)	14% (n=60)	13% (n=106)
Council-hosted events	15% (n=5)	4% (n=4)	8% (n=12)	6% (n=8)	6% (n=8)	6% (n=17)	5% (n=16)	8% (n=33)	7% (n=56)
None of the above	85% (n=29)	71% (n=65)	72% (n=115)	71% (n=89)	70% (n=94)	79% (n=213)	73% (n=218)	75% (n=315)	74% (n=610)

Note: Percentages show respondents who participated in each activity (multiple selections possible)

Table 15: Participation in community engagement activities by age and gender

6.5 Qualitative Feedback on Community Engagement

The most common view, and the largest single topic in the coding, was that consultation feels tokenistic: Council invites feedback through Facebook, pop-ups, and an app, but decisions appear to be already made by the time it is sought. Respondents cited the delayed museum rebuild, tree-removal costs, and the North Road/Vogel Street intersection as examples. Access was the next most frequent issue. Pop-up hours and event timing do not work for people in employment or living outside town boundaries, and some respondents said they simply never hear about opportunities to take part. Positive comments named the new mayor's communication, the Comms team's social media, and follow-up on individual queries. A few questioned whether consultation is used too often for minor matters, suggesting elected representatives should decide, or that contested issues be put to a postal vote.

Council Governance and Engagement

Coding placed 331 mentions from this question under governance and engagement. The largest topics were the view that Council does not listen to the community (87 mentions) and poor awareness of consultation opportunities (54). Positive coding was also substantial: 42 mentions praised Council's engagement and communication efforts, and a further 32 considered the opportunities provided adequate. Other topics included requests for more accessible consultation methods (36), concerns about transparency and communication (31), suggestions for better online and social media engagement (26), and requests for Council to report back on how feedback was used (15).

Rates and Financial Management

A smaller set of 17 mentions from this question related to rates and financial management. Eleven concerned wasteful spending, three consultant costs, and three rates being too high. These generally appeared where respondents tied their view of engagement to particular decisions, most often the museum rebuild and tree-removal costs.

Comments on community involvement opportunities

Theme	Frequency
Council Governance Engagement	331
Concern: Council does not listen to community	87
Concern: Poor awareness of consultation opportunities	54
Support: Good engagement and communication efforts	42
Consider: More accessible consultation methods	36
Support: Adequate consultation opportunities provided	32
Concern: Lack of transparency and communication	31
Consider: Better online and social media engagement	26
Consider: Close the feedback loop	15
Concern: Council infighting and politics	4
Concern: Equity across suburbs and areas	4
Rates Financial Management	17
Concern: Wasteful spending	11

Comments on community involvement opportunities	
Theme	Frequency
Concern: Consultant spending	3
Concern: Rates too high	3
City Development Economy	11
Concern: Wachner Place issues	6
Concern: Museum project concerns	5
Customer Service	3
Concern: Unhelpful or rude staff	3
Infrastructure Rooding	3
Consider: Traffic and speed limit changes	3

n = 251 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 16: Comments regarding satisfaction with community engagement opportunities

7 Community Pride

This chapter examines resident pride in living in Invercargill and Bluff, along with priorities residents identified for making Invercargill an even better place to live.

7.1 Pride in Living in Invercargill

Among the 932 respondents who answered this question, 72% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I feel proud to live in Invercargill.” Pride was higher among older age groups (82% for 65+) and lower among younger respondents (52% for 14-24).

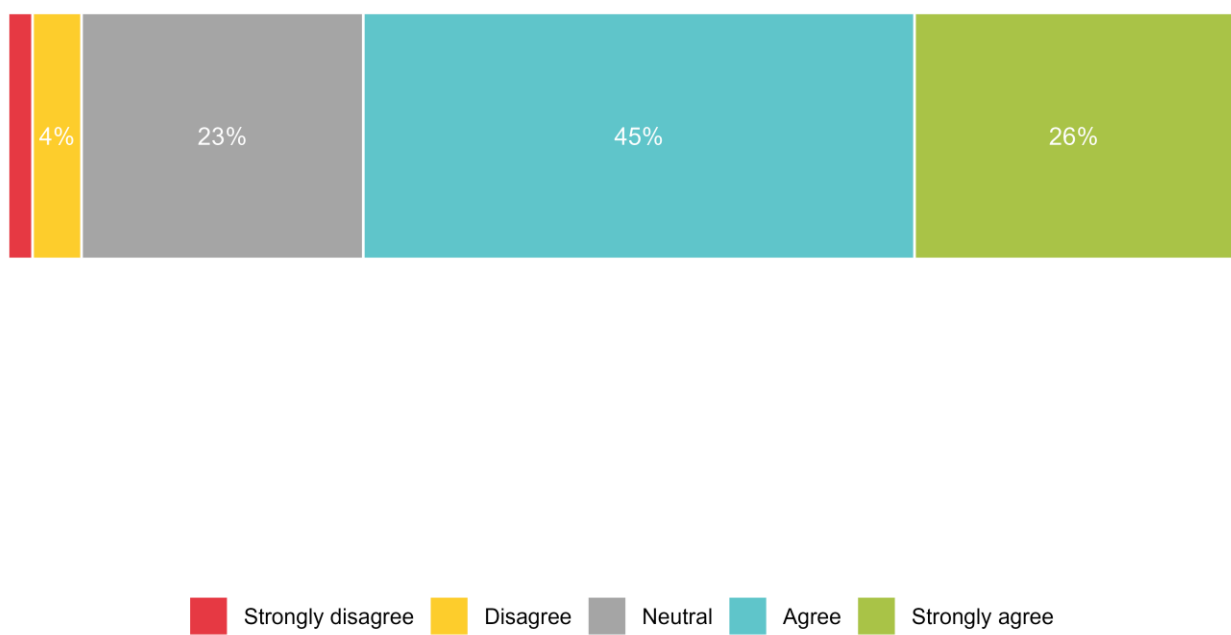


Figure 10: Pride in living in Invercargill (n=932)

Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	18	2
Disagree	32	4
Neutral	194	23
Agree	421	45
Strongly agree	267	26

Table 17: Pride in living in Invercargill

7.2 Pride in Living in Bluff

Among the Bluff respondents who answered this question, the majority agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I feel proud to live in Bluff.” Due to the small sample size, these findings should be interpreted with caution and serve primarily as an indicator of sentiment among Bluff respondents who participated.

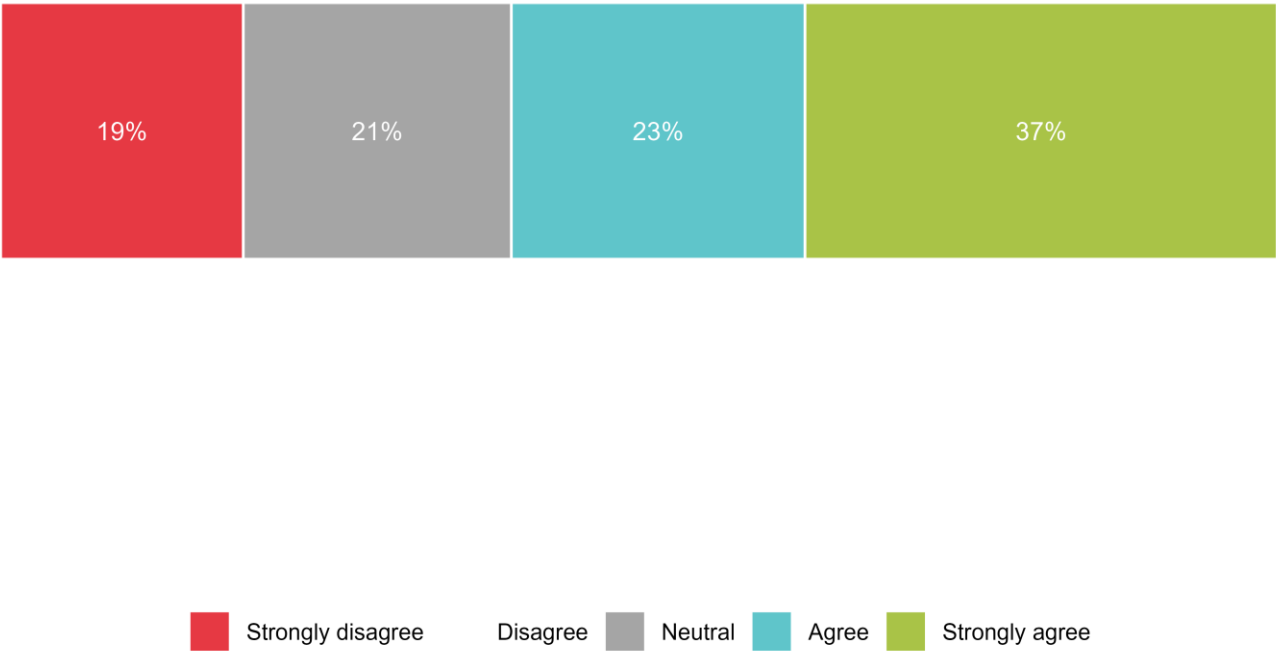


Figure 11: Pride in living in Bluff

Category	Count
Strongly disagree	2
Disagree	0
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly agree	7

Table 18: Pride in living in Bluff

7.3 Pride by Age and Gender

Pride by Age and Gender

Pride Statement	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Male	Female	Total
I feel proud to live in Invercargill	52% (n=40)	62% (n=98)	73% (n=181)	68% (n=142)	76% (n=147)	82% (n=314)	74% (n=288)	75% (n=421)	72% (n=932)
I feel proud to live in Bluff	0% (n=1)	-	77% (n=5)	25% (n=4)	100% (n=3)	100% (n=3)	53% (n=12)	100% (n=4)	60% (n=16)

Note: Percentages show respondents who selected 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'

Table 19: Pride by age and gender

7.4 Priorities for Making Invercargill a Better Place to Live

Respondents were asked what Council should prioritise to make Invercargill an even better place to live. A total of 757 responses were received. The most prominent themes related to city development and the economy (417 coded mentions), infrastructure and roading (268), rates and financial management (237), and parks and recreation (231).

Qualitative Feedback

Fiscal restraint and core infrastructure were the most common requests: secure a second water source, maintain roading, and hold down rates, consultant spending, and cost overruns on council projects. Parks, gardens, and green-belt maintenance featured heavily, as did facilities for young people and families, including requests for a Queens Park-style playground in South Invercargill. Several respondents wanted existing projects finished before new ones start and preference given to local contractors, while a smaller number wrote that they are satisfied with Council's current performance. Individual suggestions included pedestrian safety near Tweed Street and South Invercargill schools, more street trees, and better bus and food options. The museum appeared on both sides of the ledger, both as a criticism and as a priority.

City Development & Economy

This was the largest category, with 417 coded mentions. More events and entertainment led the count (94 mentions), followed by general city tidiness and appearance (74) and filling empty or derelict buildings (73), with respondents naming H&Js, Wensleys, and the fire-damaged Briscoes site. Economic development and business support accounted for 53 mentions, street beautification and plantings for 45, and housing and district planning for 33. Some respondents described South Invercargill and Bluff as neglected relative to other areas. Seventeen mentions raised concerns about the museum project, and a handful concerned Wachner Place.

Infrastructure & Roothing

Infrastructure investment and maintenance was the most coded topic here (79 mentions), with securing a second water source a repeated element, followed by fixing and maintaining roads (51) and poor road conditions (25). Parking cost and availability drew 23 mentions and traffic or speed limit changes 22. Footpaths appeared in 27 mentions across repair requests and condition concerns, and contractor delays and rework in 17, with the Severn Street resealing cited as an example of a newly sealed road dug up months later. Stormwater drainage and flooding (11), accessible parking (9), and street lighting (4) made up the remainder.

Parks & Recreation

Nearly half of this category was a single topic: more family and youth recreation, at 102 mentions, covering indoor and wet-weather options and destination playgrounds. Praise for park maintenance (23 mentions) slightly outnumbered the view that maintenance is declining (17). The rest spread across protecting waterways and the environment (16), more flowers and garden displays (15), heritage monuments and public art (14), dog control (13), community orchards (8), sports ground improvements (6), and positive mentions of Sandy Point, the walking tracks, and Queens Park.

Rates & Financial Management

The largest topic here was a focus on financial prudence and core services (83 mentions), followed by wasteful spending (53), rates being too high (42), and calls to lower rates (39). The projects most often characterised as poor spending were the new museum, the CBD clock, and support for Invercargill Central and hotel development, and several respondents endorsed the government's proposed cap on rates increases. Smaller topics were long-term investment strategy (8), consultant spending (7), and using local contractors (5).

Council Governance & Engagement

Equity between suburbs was the most coded topic (27 of 71 mentions), chiefly the view that South Invercargill and Bluff receive less attention than wealthier areas. It was followed by the view that Council does not listen to the community (21), concerns about transparency and communication (10), and councillor infighting and politics (9). Four mentions suggested better online and social media engagement.

Playgrounds

The 49 playground mentions spread thinly across eleven topics, led by pump tracks and wheeled recreation (7), water play features (6), and five mentions each for inclusive and accessible equipment, equipment for older children, equipment for younger children, and upgrading the Queens Park playground. Shade, fencing, seating, obsolete or unsafe equipment, and safety concerns made up the rest.

Safety & Compliance

More visible policing and safety accounted for 25 of the 43 mentions, with boy racers and feeling unsafe at night the common examples. Antisocial behaviour in public spaces was coded 13 times, and better dog control enforcement five.

General

Twenty of the 37 general mentions expressed satisfaction with Invercargill overall, and another seven praised a specific facility or service. Seven concerned decline in the city's general appearance, and three expressed dissatisfaction with Council's direction.

Bus Service

Extending service hours and days was the most requested change (12 of 37 mentions). Six mentions each covered areas with no service, inadequate timetables, and better route information and technology, with four on fares and three positive about the service as it stands.

Walkways & Cycleways

These 27 mentions divided almost evenly between developing safe cycleways (10), maintaining and developing safe walkways (10), and cycling infrastructure and facilities (7). Completing the floodbank cycleway and safe routes for children biking to school were among the requests.

Waste Management

All 19 waste mentions concerned two topics: a council-supplied green waste bin (12) and lower dump fees (7), the latter often linked to illegal dumping on rural roads.

Trees & Tree Management

Requests to plant more trees, particularly natives, made up ten of the 19 mentions. The others concerned dangerous trees not being addressed (3), overhanging trees and hedges on footpaths (3), and better tree replacement planning (3).

Splash Palace

Nine of the twelve Splash Palace mentions said admission prices are too high; the other three asked for an expanded leisure pool and water features.

He Waka Tuia

Every mention here (11) concerned the pace of the museum build, urging Council to complete the permanent facility.

Building & Resource Consents

Each of the six mentions asked for less red tape and fewer consenting barriers to development.

Library

The four library mentions were positive, praising the facility and its book selection.

Public Toilets

Four mentions said there are not enough public toilets, and three asked for the Wachner Place toilets to be kept open.

Rugby Park

The three Rugby Park mentions concerned the grandstand closure and its state of repair.

What should Council prioritise to make Invercargill even better?

Theme	Frequency
City Development Economy	417
Consider: More events and entertainment	94
Consider: General city tidiness and appearance	74
Consider: Fill empty buildings and address derelict properties	73
Consider: Economic development and business support	53
Consider: Street beautification and plantings	45
Consider: Housing and district planning	33
Consider: Support for community groups and volunteers	19
Concern: Museum project concerns	17
Concern: Wachner Place issues	5
Consider: Bluff needs more attention	4
Infrastructure Rooding	268
Consider: Infrastructure investment and maintenance	79
Consider: Fix and maintain roads	51
Concern: Poor road conditions	25
Concern: Parking cost and availability	23
Consider: Traffic and speed limit changes	22
Consider: Fix and maintain footpaths	18
Concern: Contractor delays and rework	17
Concern: Stormwater drainage and flooding	11
Concern: Footpath condition and accessibility	9
Consider: More disability and accessible parking	9
Consider: Improve street lighting	4
Rates Financial Management	237
Consider: Financial prudence and core services focus	83
Concern: Wasteful spending	53
Concern: Rates too high	42

What should Council prioritise to make Invercargill even better?

Theme	Frequency
Consider: Lower rates	39
Consider: Long-term investment strategy	8
Concern: Consultant spending	7
Consider: Use local contractors	5
Parks Recreation	231
Consider: More family and youth recreation	102
Support: Parks are well maintained	23
Concern: Parks maintenance declining	17
Consider: Protect waterways and environment	16
Consider: More flowers and garden displays	15
Consider: Heritage monuments and public art	14
Consider: Dog control in parks and public spaces	13
Consider: Community orchards and edible gardens	8
Consider: Sports ground improvements	6
Support: Sandy Point and walking tracks valued	6
Support: Queens Park is excellent	5
Concern: Queens Park specific issues	3
Consider: BBQ and picnic facilities in parks	3
Council Governance Engagement	71
Concern: Equity across suburbs and areas	27
Concern: Council does not listen to community	21
Concern: Lack of transparency and communication	10
Concern: Council infighting and politics	9
Consider: Better online and social media engagement	4
Playgrounds	49
Consider: Pump tracks and wheeled recreation	7
Consider: Water play features	6
Consider: Inclusive and accessible play equipment	5
Consider: More equipment for older children	5
Consider: More equipment for younger children	5
Consider: Upgrade Queens Park playground	5
Consider: Shade and shelter at playgrounds	4
Concern: Equipment is functionally obsolete	3
Concern: Safety issues at playgrounds	3

What should Council prioritise to make Invercargill even better?

Theme	Frequency
Consider: Fencing at playgrounds	3
Consider: More seating and picnic facilities	3
Safety Compliance	43
Consider: More visible policing and safety	25
Concern: Antisocial behaviour in public spaces	13
Consider: Better dog control enforcement	5
Bus Service	37
Consider: Extend service hours and days	12
Concern: No service to some areas	6
Concern: Timetable and hours inadequate	6
Consider: Better route information and technology	6
Concern: Fare too expensive	4
Support: Good bus service	3
General	37
Support: Generally satisfied with Invercargill	20
Concern: General city decline and aesthetics	7
Support: General praise for facility or service	7
Concern: General dissatisfaction with council direction	3
Walkways Cycleways	27
Consider: Develop safe cycleways	10
Consider: Maintain and develop safe walkways	10
Consider: Cycling infrastructure and facilities	7
Trees Tree Management	19
Consider: Plant more trees	10
Concern: Dangerous trees not addressed	3
Concern: Overhanging trees and hedges on footpaths	3
Consider: Better tree replacement planning	3
Waste Management	19
Consider: Free green waste bin	12
Consider: Reduce dump fees	7
Splash Palace	12
Concern: Admission prices too high	9
Consider: Expand leisure pool and water features	3
He Waka Tuia	11

What should Council prioritise to make Invercargill even better?

Theme	Frequency
Concern: Museum build too slow	11
Public Toilets	7
Concern: Not enough public toilets	4
Consider: Keep Wachner Place toilets open	3
Building Resource Consents	6
Consider: Reduce red tape and consenting barriers	6
Customer Service	6
Concern: Dog and animal control issues	3
Concern: Parking enforcement complaints	3
Library	4
Support: Great facility and book selection	4
Rugby Park	3
Concern: Grandstand closure and disrepair	3

n = 747 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 20: Priorities for making Invercargill a better place to live

8 Council Contact and Satisfaction

This section examines how residents interact with Council, their reasons for making contact, preferred methods, and satisfaction with the contact experience.

8.1 Contact Recency

Among the 872 respondents who answered the contact recency question, 41% reported never having contacted Council, whilst 31% had contacted Council within the last six months.

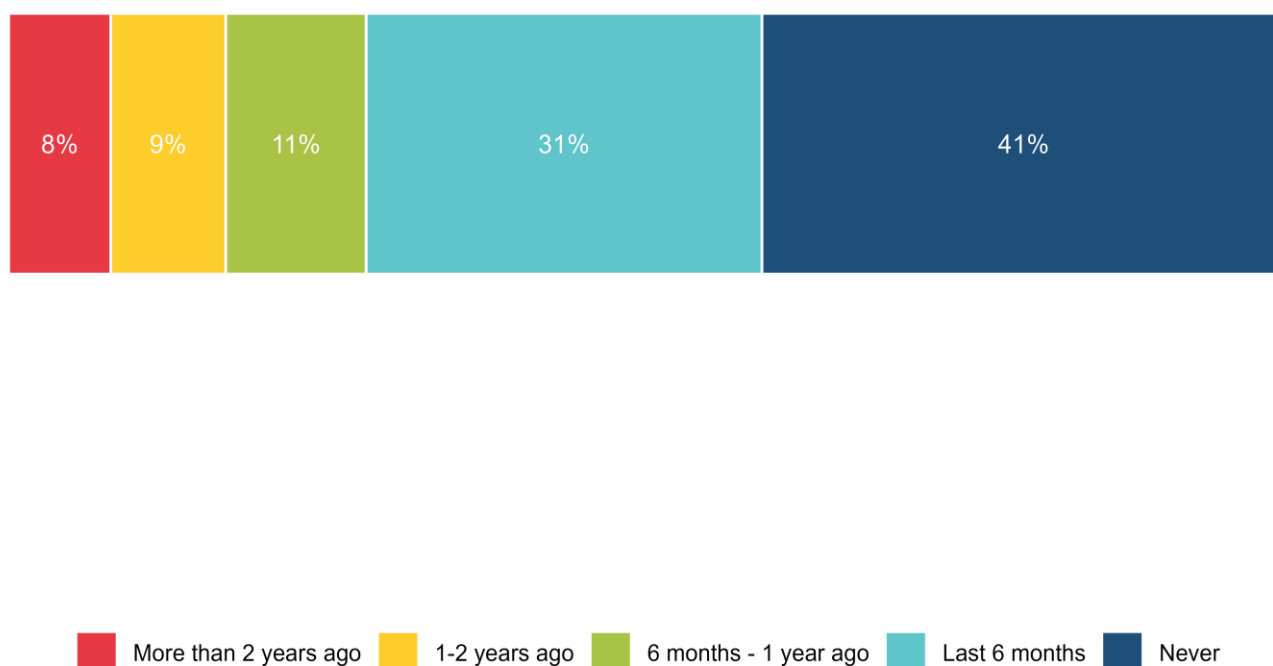


Figure 12: Recency of contact with Council (n=872)

8.2 Reasons for Contacting Council

Among the 443 respondents who reported their reason for contact, the most common reasons were rates enquiries (24%), general enquiries (18%), and road infrastructure issues (16%).

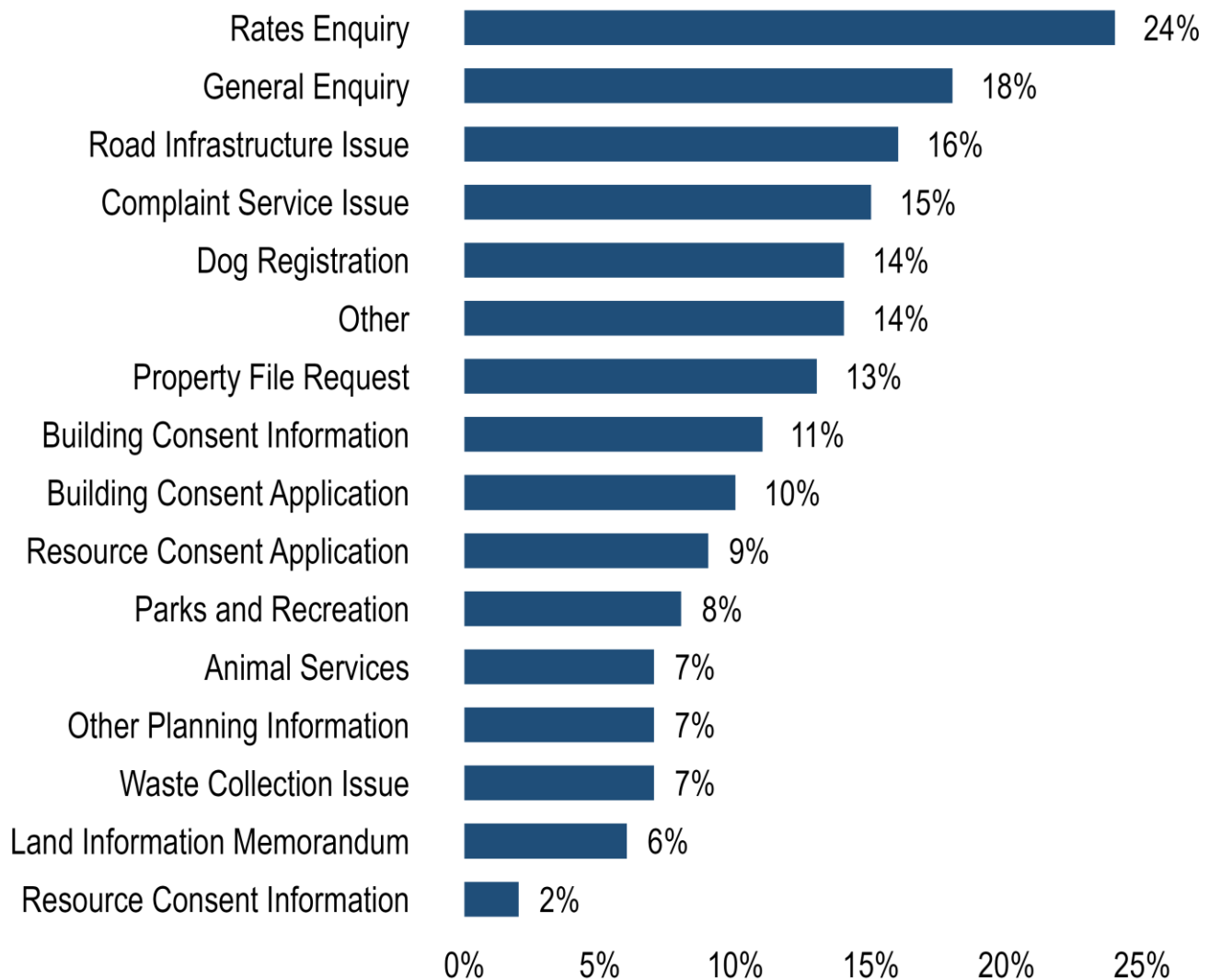


Figure 13: Reasons for contacting Council (n=443, multiple selections permitted)

8.3 Method of Contact

Phone was the most common method of contacting Council at 50% (n=519), followed by visiting Council offices (44%), email (24%), and the Council website (23%).

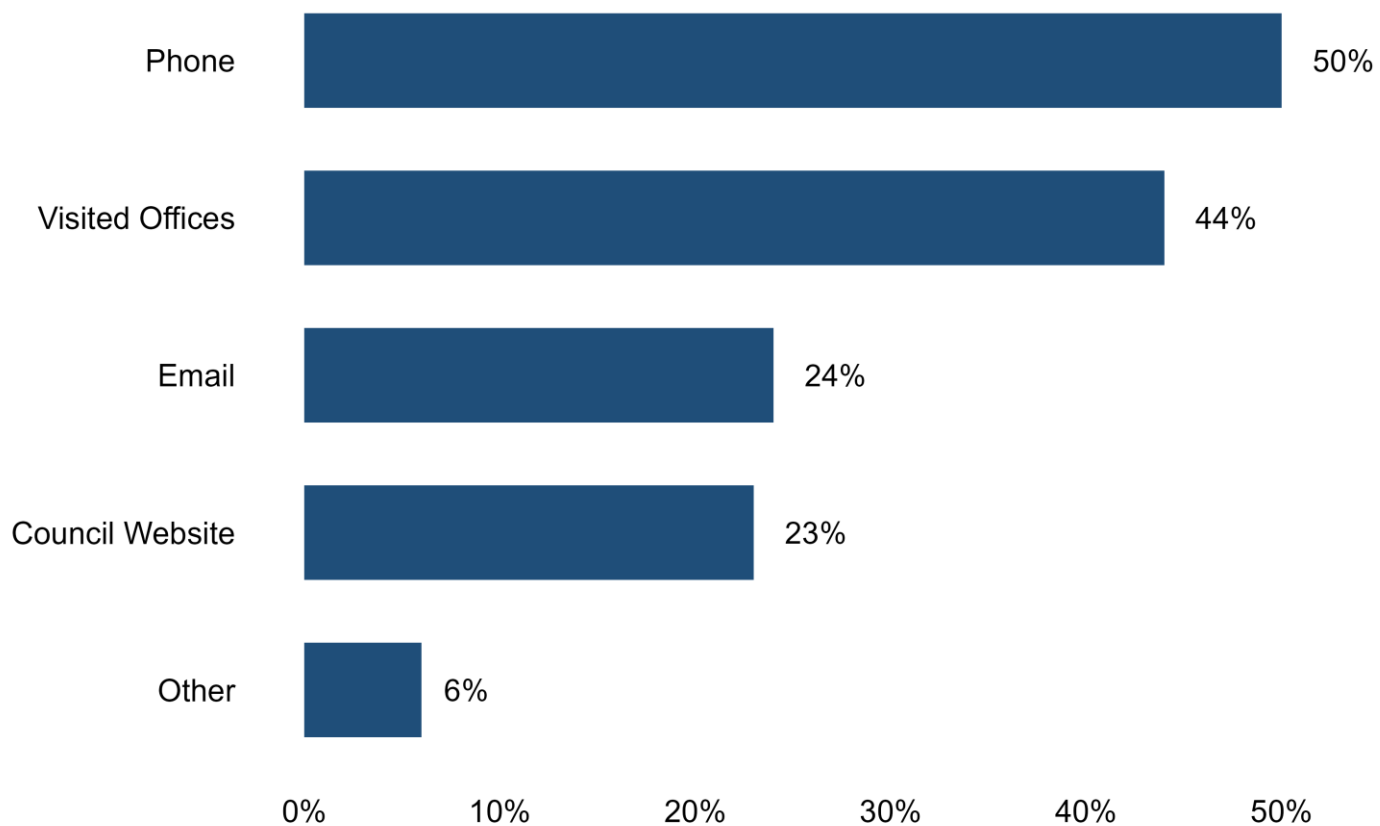


Figure 14: Method of Council contact (n=519, multiple selections permitted)

8.4 Contact Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Council contact experiences varied across five measures. Council staff professionalism and efficiency recorded the highest satisfaction at 66% (n=358). Resource Consent process showed 33% satisfaction, but this is based on only 11 responses and should not be treated as a reliable measure at this sample size.

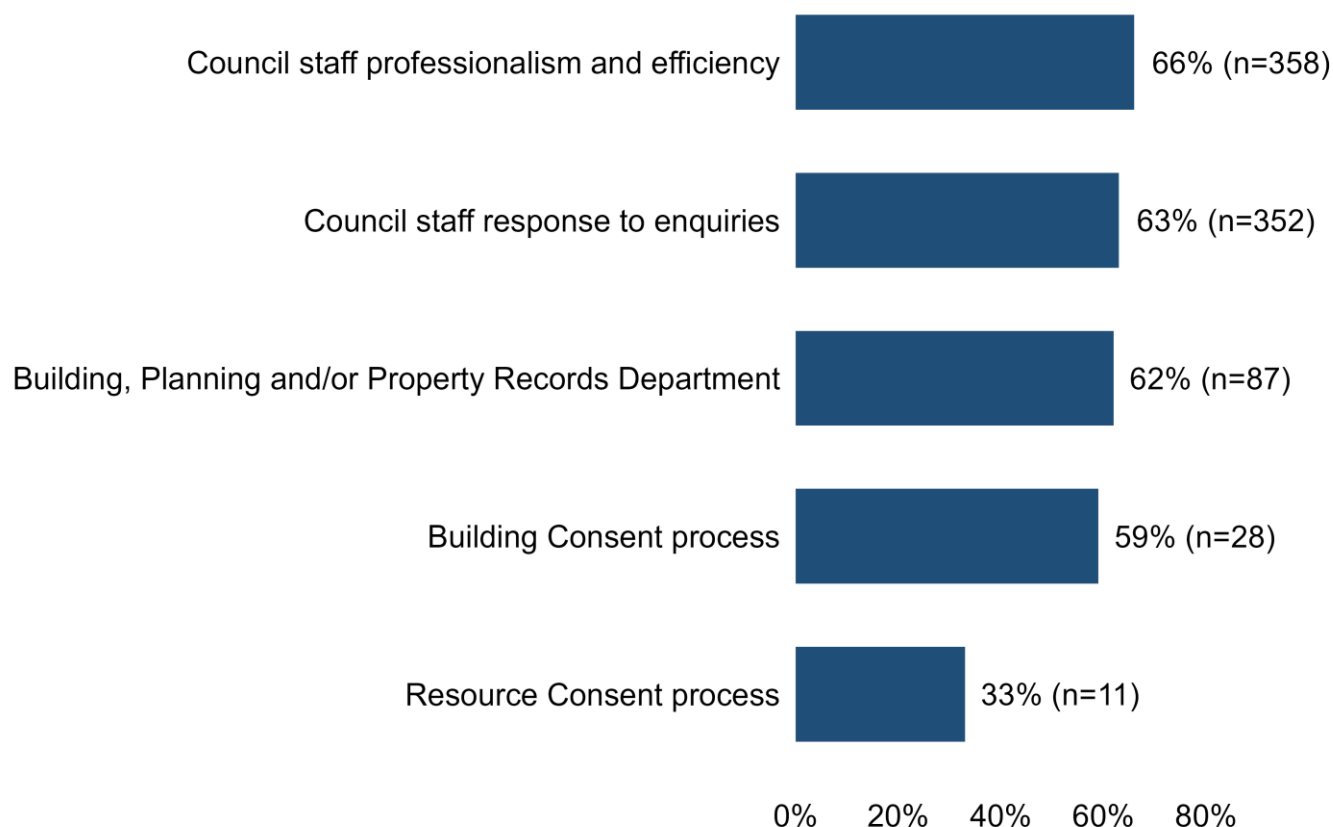


Figure 15: Satisfaction with Council contact experiences

8.5 Contact Satisfaction by Method and Type

Contact Satisfaction by Contact Method

Contact Method	Council staff professionalism and efficiency	Council staff response to enquiries	Building, Planning and/or Property Records Department	Building Consent process	Resource Consent process
Council Website	55% (n=79)	49% (n=79)	48% (n=28)	56% (n=10)	19% (n=5)
Phone	62% (n=180)	58% (n=178)	53% (n=49)	64% (n=19)	27% (n=10)
Email	54% (n=99)	51% (n=99)	59% (n=41)	79% (n=12)	58% (n=5)
Visited Offices	75% (n=149)	73% (n=145)	61% (n=38)	38% (n=11)	46% (n=6)
Other	53% (n=24)	45% (n=24)	26% (n=4)	100% (n=1)	-
Total	66% (n=358)	63% (n=352)	62% (n=87)	59% (n=28)	33% (n=11)

Note: Multiple contact methods allowed. Rows show satisfaction for all who used that method, including those who used other methods.

Table 21: Contact satisfaction by method of contact

Contact Satisfaction by Contact Type

Contact Type	Council staff professionalism and efficiency	Council staff response to enquiries	Building, Planning and/or Property Records Department	Building Consent process	Resource Consent process
Animal Services	46.5% (n=20)	48.8% (n=20)	100.0% (n=2)	100.0% (n=1)	-
Building Consent Information	56.2% (n=28)	52.7% (n=28)	51.1% (n=28)	52.4% (n=21)	18.7% (n=5)
Complaint Service Issue	55.3% (n=45)	55.1% (n=45)	63.2% (n=26)	37.6% (n=9)	27.4% (n=4)
Dog Registration	64.2% (n=47)	55.0% (n=47)	44.8% (n=18)	56.5% (n=6)	36.2% (n=8)
General Enquiry	59.1% (n=58)	57.3% (n=57)	59.1% (n=22)	68.9% (n=6)	35.2% (n=3)
Land Information Memorandum	86.9% (n=11)	86.9% (n=11)	65.5% (n=11)	0.0% (n=4)	30.0% (n=3)
Other Planning Information	44.2% (n=20)	44.2% (n=20)	43.2% (n=20)	22.3% (n=4)	54.3% (n=2)
Parks and Recreation	58.5% (n=25)	61.7% (n=25)	79.3% (n=4)	100.0% (n=1)	-
Property File Request	60.5% (n=32)	68.3% (n=32)	67.3% (n=32)	43.4% (n=10)	23.9% (n=4)
Rates Enquiry	78.0% (n=79)	79.8% (n=79)	73.5% (n=16)	68.2% (n=6)	50.0% (n=2)
Resource Consent Information	54.5% (n=7)	28.4% (n=7)	41.6% (n=7)	22.5% (n=4)	25.1% (n=4)

Contact Satisfaction by Contact Type					
Contact Type	Council staff professionalism and efficiency	Council staff response to enquiries	Building, Planning and/or Property Records Department	Building Consent process	Resource Consent process
Road Infrastructure Issue	57.3% (n=51)	49.8% (n=50)	61.2% (n=18)	87.4% (n=8)	33.3% (n=3)
Building Consent Application	66.2% (n=31)	70.8% (n=31)	61.2% (n=19)	61.5% (n=16)	0.0% (n=4)
Resource Consent Application	74.7% (n=32)	68.0% (n=32)	59.2% (n=12)	37.0% (n=6)	23.1% (n=4)
Waste Collection Issue	52.7% (n=18)	62.9% (n=18)	0.0% (n=2)	100.0% (n=1)	-
Other	70.7% (n=42)	65.2% (n=41)	66.8% (n=4)	42.1% (n=2)	-
Total	65.8% (n=358)	62.7% (n=352)	61.8% (n=87)	59.4% (n=28)	33.2% (n=11)

Note: Multiple contact types allowed. Rows show satisfaction for all who contacted about that topic, including those who also contacted about other topics.

Table 22: Contact satisfaction by reason for contact

8.6 Qualitative Feedback on Council Contact

Customer Service Staff

Counter and reception staff at the Invercargill and Bluff offices were consistently described as friendly, efficient, knowledgeable, and personable, with specific mentions of help with rates rebates, rego changes, parking fines, and consent enquiries. Staff in the rates team were singled out for praise, and several respondents noted same-day email replies. Where criticism appeared, it was directed at follow-through elsewhere in Council rather than at the counter: an unanswered request about a damaged waste bin, an unresolved culvert issue, and work carried out on private property without notice. One respondent summed up this pattern with the remark that “the tail doesn’t wag the dog”.

Comments on Council Customer Service Staff	
Theme	Frequency
Customer Service	296
Support: Friendly and helpful staff	96
Concern: Inadequate follow-through or resolution	71
Support: Issue resolved quickly	48
Support: Knowledgeable and professional staff	29
Concern: Dog and animal control issues	19
Concern: Unhelpful or rude staff	14
Concern: Transferred between departments	10
Support: Online and digital services	6
Concern: Parking enforcement complaints	3
Infrastructure Rooding	8
Concern: Stormwater drainage and flooding	5
Concern: Contractor delays and rework	3
Building Resource Consents	4
Concern: Unhelpful or rigid consent staff	4
Council Governance Engagement	4
Concern: Lack of transparency and communication	4
Waste Management	3
Concern: Waste bin service issues	3

n = 208 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 23: Comments regarding satisfaction with Council customer service staff

Building and Resource Consent Process

Thirty-three respondents commented on this process, and their experiences differed by service area. Property file and LIM requests were praised, with files received within a day and the customer service and properties teams described as professional, prompt, and knowledgeable. The building consent and inspection process attracted the complaints: inconsistent inspections leading to failures, delays and added material costs, limited or vague communication, and advice described as inaccurate or not aligned with the Building Code. Individual concerns covered per-metre stormwater charges on a rural property that funds its own water and septic, and the handling of complaints about a neighbour's sheds and backyard activity. Several respondents contrasted teams that were responsive with others that were slow to reply or difficult to deal with.

Comments on building/resource consent process	
Theme	Frequency
Building Resource Consents	35
Support: Efficient consent process	11
Concern: Slow consent processing	8
Concern: Poor communication during consent process	5
Concern: Inconsistent inspections or information	4
Concern: Unhelpful or rigid consent staff	3
Concern: Reduce red tape and consenting barriers	2
Concern: Unfair consent charges	2
Customer Service	9
Support: Friendly and helpful staff	6
Concern: Inadequate follow-through or resolution	3

n = 33 respondents. Minimum threshold: 2 mentions.

Table 24: Comments regarding satisfaction with building and resource consent process

Other Reasons for Contact

A total of 31 respondents selected 'Other' as their reason for contacting Council.

Other Contact Reason	Frequency
information	2
As a contractor to the council	1
Bee card	1
Building WOF	1
I am a youth councillor	1
I requested a rebate on my rates as I'm a pensioner.	1
Infringement notices	1
New Total Mobility Card	1
Overdue rates	1
Parking	1
Parking for Disabled/Parking Permit holders, and do we still get the 30 minute conciliation as was	1
Parking ticket	1
Pay a \$70 fine - I was a minute over time! I'd gone to the toilet at GWD's	1
Purchase of tickets for events at Civic theatre	1
Reported dumped rubbish on our road	1
Reporting someone living in a tent in softball fields in trees . Nothing has been done	1
Street sweeping as leaves blocked drains	1
To find out why our Lim report said we were on the public waste system but we are not and the	1
To get wheelie bin clips	1
Trees in neighbor's yard	1
Various submissions.	1
Voting form for glass bin etc	1
Water upgrade	1
Weed infestation on Myers reserve	1
Work matters - I work with some of the legends at ICC	1
Youth Council presentation to CWC.	1
buying event tickets	1
cemetery, complaint	1
parking ticket dispute	1
top up bee card. lower bus costs please	1
with councillor	1

Table 25: 'Other' reasons for contacting Council

9 Parks, Playgrounds & Open Spaces

This section presents findings from the parks-specific survey module introduced in Q3 2025/26 and continued through Q4. These questions were asked alongside the main residents’ satisfaction survey to gather detailed feedback on playgrounds, play spaces, and related amenities. A total of 269 respondents provided playground satisfaction ratings, with additional respondents contributing to questions about playground visits, feature preferences, and alternative play spaces.

9.1 Playgrounds Visited

Respondents who indicated they had visited a playground in the past 12 months were asked which playgrounds they had used. Queens Park playground was the most visited at 81%, followed by Anderson Park (39%), Russell Square (24%), and Elizabeth Park (22%). A small number of respondents (7%) indicated they do not visit playgrounds.

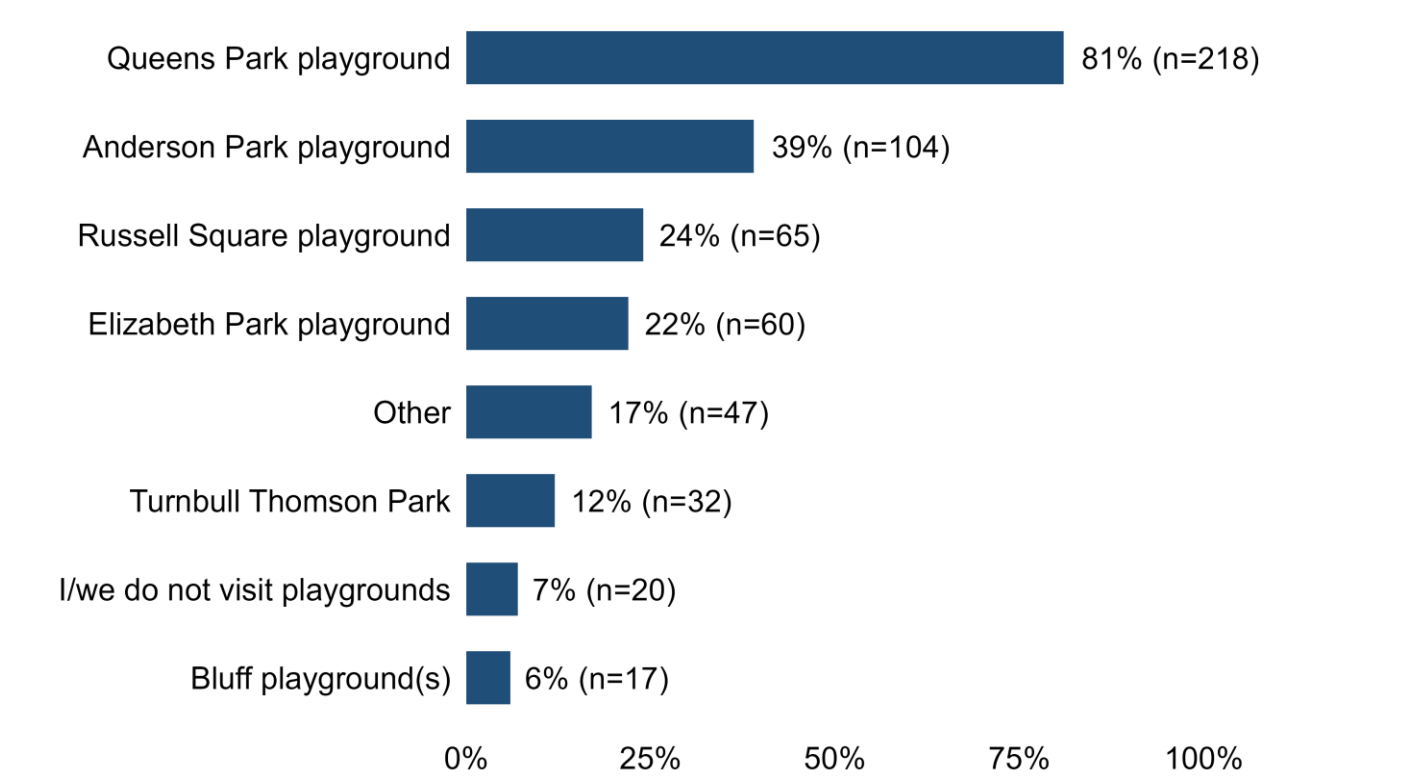


Figure 16: Playgrounds visited in the past 12 months (multiple selections permitted)

Option	Count	Percentage (%)
Queens Park playground	218	81
Anderson Park playground	104	39
Russell Square playground	65	24
Elizabeth Park playground	60	22
Other	47	17
Turnbull Thomson Park	32	12

Option	Count	Percentage (%)
I/we do not visit playgrounds	20	7
Bluff playground(s)	17	6

Table 26: Playgrounds visited in the past 12 months

9.2 Playground Age Groups

Respondents were asked about the age groups of children who use the playgrounds they visit. The 5-9 years age group was most commonly reported (42%), closely followed by under 5 years (36%). Children aged 10-14 were reported by 32% of respondents, and 15+ years by 18%.

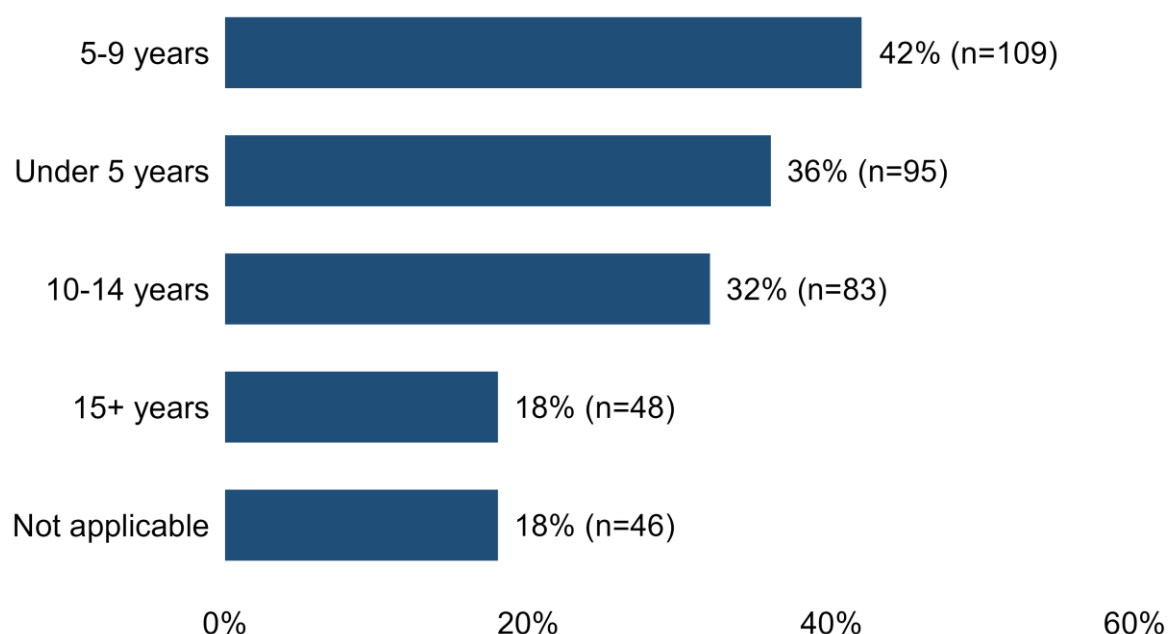


Figure 17: Age groups of children using playgrounds (multiple selections permitted)

Option	Count	Percentage (%)
5-9 years	109	42
Under 5 years	95	36
10-14 years	83	32
15+ years	48	18
Not applicable	46	18

Table 27: Age groups of children using playgrounds

9.3 Playground Satisfaction

Respondents rated their satisfaction across six aspects of playground provision. Safety recorded the highest satisfaction at 66% (n=228), followed by range and variety of equipment at 57% (n=233) and condition and maintenance at 55% (n=230). Satisfaction was lower for suitability for different age groups (54%), seating and shade for caregivers (39%), and accessibility for children with disabilities (39%).

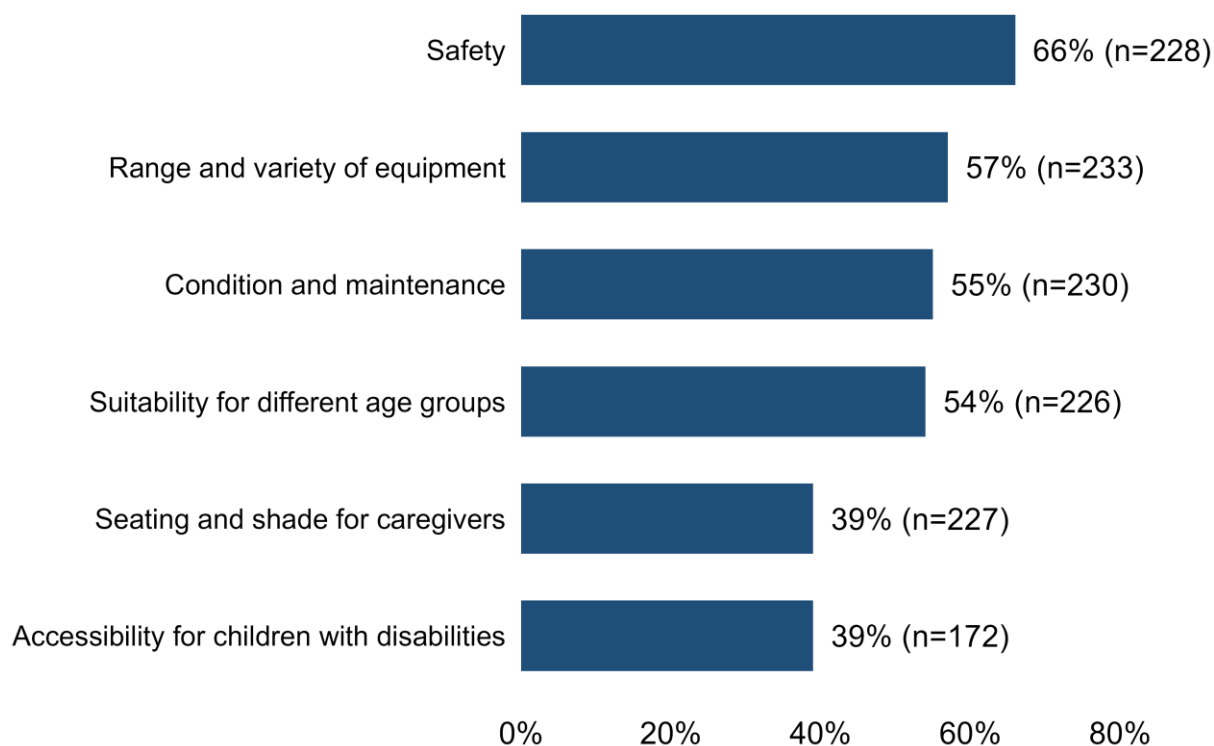


Figure 18: Satisfaction with playground aspects

Aspect	Valid Responses (n)	Satisfaction (%)
Safety	228	66
Range and variety of equipment	233	57
Condition and maintenance	230	55
Suitability for different age groups	226	54
Seating and shade for caregivers	227	39
Accessibility for children with disabilities	172	39

Table 28: Satisfaction with playground aspects

9.4 Playground Feature Preferences

Respondents ranked the features they consider most important in a playground. Equipment for a wider range of ages was the clear top preference (average rank 3.2 of 9). More seating and shade, more challenging play equipment for older children, and toilets nearby formed the next group (average ranks 4.0-4.2). Fencing around the playground and water play features ranked lowest among the nine options. In total 211 respondents ranked at least one feature.

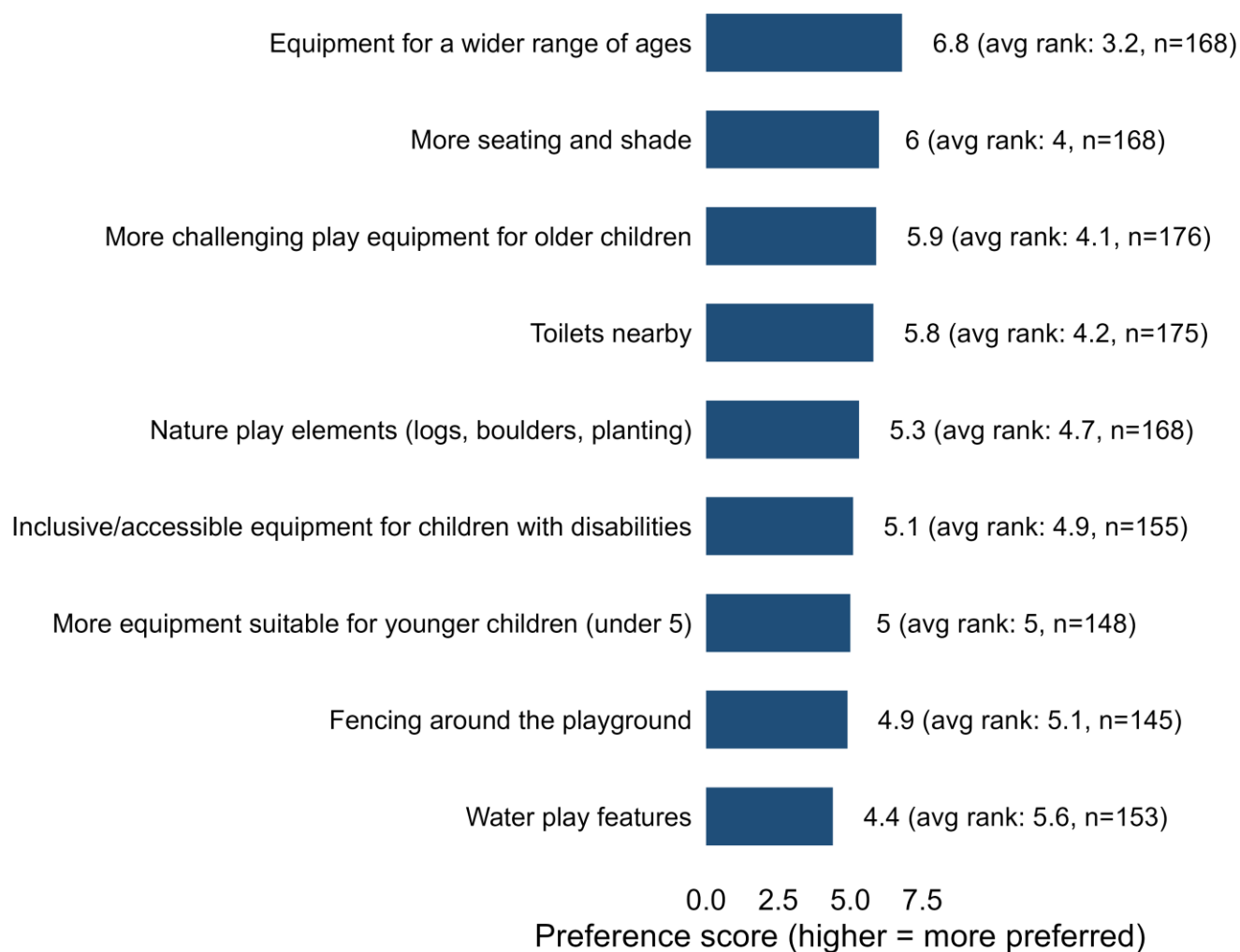


Figure 19: Preferred playground features (ranked)

Rank	Feature	Preference Score	Average Rank	Responses (n)
1	Equipment for a wider range of ages	6.8	3.2	168
2	More seating and shade	6.0	4.0	168
3	More challenging play equipment for older children	5.9	4.1	176
4	Toilets nearby	5.8	4.2	175
5	Nature play elements (logs, boulders, planting)	5.3	4.7	168

Rank	Feature	Preference Score	Average Rank	Responses (n)
6	Inclusive/accessible equipment for children with disabilities	5.1	4.9	155
7	More equipment suitable for younger children (under 5)	5.0	5.0	148
8	Fencing around the playground	4.9	5.1	145
9	Water play features	4.4	5.6	153

Preference score = number of options (9) + 1 minus average rank. A higher score indicates stronger preference.

Table 29: Playground feature preferences (ranked by importance)

9.5 Alternative Play Spaces

Respondents were asked about their level of support for Council investing in alternative play experiences beyond traditional playground equipment. Overall, 56% of respondents (n=430) were supportive or very supportive, with 24% neutral and 19% not supportive.

Response	Count	Percentage (%)
Not at all supportive	34	8
Not supportive	47	11
Neutral	102	24
Supportive	142	32
Very supportive	105	24

Table 30: Support for alternative play spaces

Preferred Alternative Play Types

Among those who supported alternative play investment, nature play areas in parks and interactive street furniture (musical and sensory elements) were effectively tied as the most preferred types (average rank 2.4 each). Outdoor fitness and exercise equipment and pump tracks or wheeled play areas formed the middle group, while playable bus shelters and tyre play installations ranked lowest among the six options.

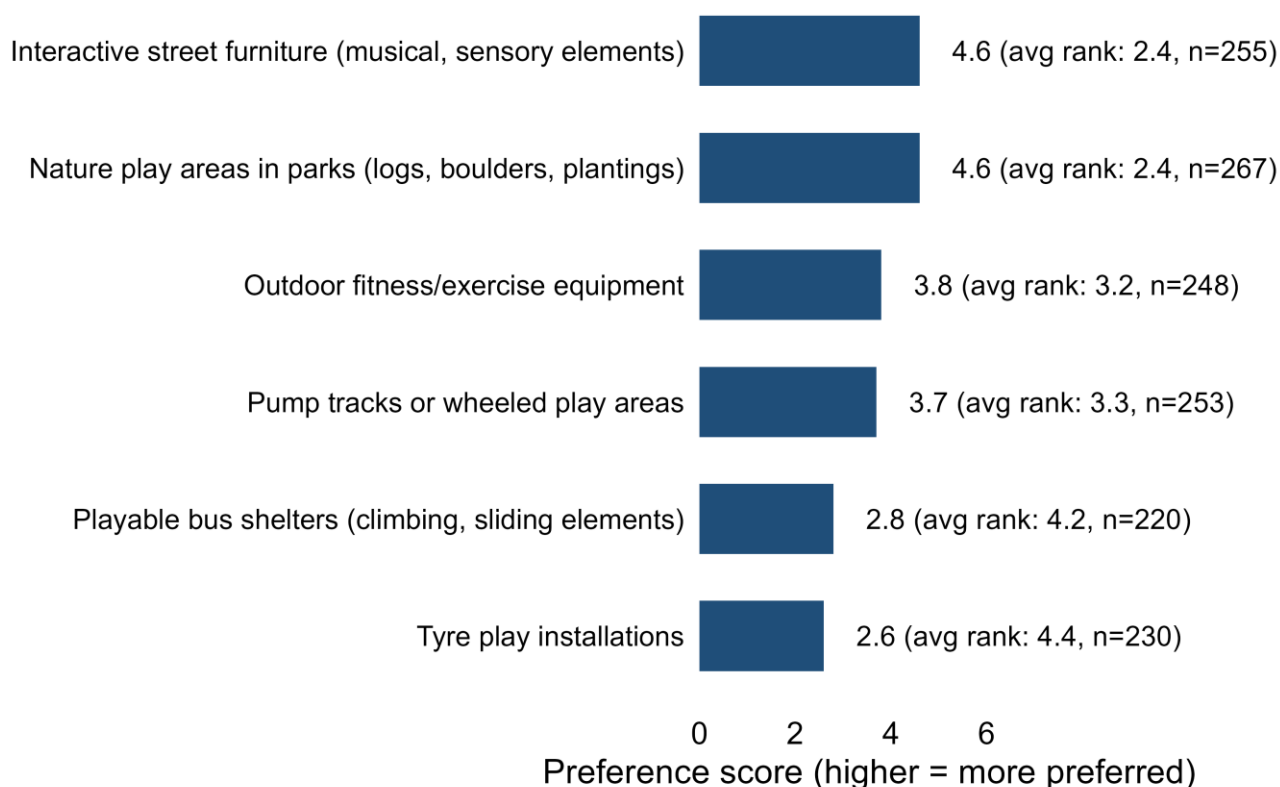


Figure 20: Preferred alternative play types (ranked)

Rank	Feature	Preference Score	Average Rank	Responses (n)
1	Interactive street furniture (musical, sensory elements)	4.6	2.4	255
2	Nature play areas in parks (logs, boulders, plantings)	4.6	2.4	267
3	Outdoor fitness/exercise equipment	3.8	3.2	248
4	Pump tracks or wheeled play areas	3.7	3.3	253
5	Playable bus shelters (climbing, sliding elements)	2.8	4.2	220
6	Tyre play installations	2.6	4.4	230

Preference score = number of options (6) + 1 minus average rank. A higher score indicates stronger preference.

Table 31: Preferred alternative play types (ranked)

Preferred Alternative Play Locations

Queens Park was the most preferred location for alternative play spaces (average rank 3.0), followed closely by along walkways and cycleways and neighbourhood reserves closer to where respondents live (average rank 3.3 each), with the town centre or CBD not far behind. Beach and coastal areas and near schools ranked lower, and Bluff ranked lowest among the seven location options.

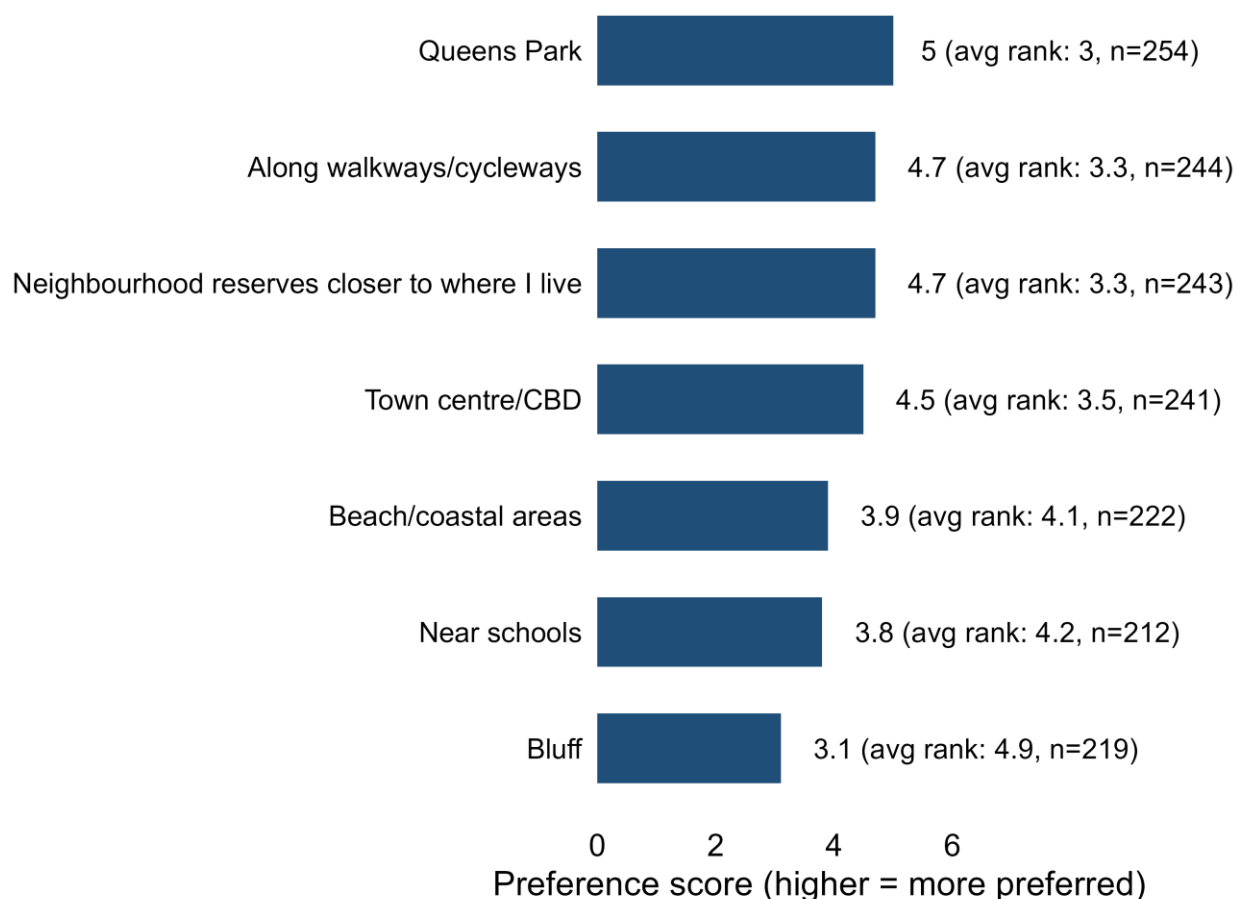


Figure 21: Preferred locations for alternative play spaces (ranked)

Rank	Feature	Preference Score	Average Rank	Responses (n)
1	Queens Park	5.0	3.0	254
2	Along walkways/cycleways	4.7	3.3	244
3	Neighbourhood reserves closer to where I live	4.7	3.3	243
4	Town centre/CBD	4.5	3.5	241
5	Beach/coastal areas	3.9	4.1	222
6	Near schools	3.8	4.2	212
7	Bluff	3.1	4.9	219

Preference score = number of options (7) + 1 minus average rank. A higher score indicates stronger preference.

Table 32: Preferred locations for alternative play spaces (ranked)

9.6 Qualitative Feedback on Playgrounds

Playground feedback split between appreciation and requests for renewal. Respondents described the facilities as tidy, well maintained, and used by children of all ages, singling out Queens Park's flying fox and large slide. The most common complaint was ageing or broken equipment, with some describing playgrounds as outdated, under-used, or due for removal or replacement. Suggestions included more inclusive play equipment, basketball hoops for teenagers, shade sails, fencing, all-weather areas, toilets, and water fountains.

Detailed Playground Experiences

In the more detailed responses, people generally valued the number of local playgrounds while asking for modernisation, and some compared Queens Park unfavourably with newer facilities in Timaru and Christchurch. Frequent requests were toilets (particularly at Elizabeth Park), more seating and shade, safety fencing, and equipment for a wider age range, including younger teens and children with disabilities. Several wanted playgrounds developed as park-like spaces with trees, picnic areas, and natural or multifunctional play elements rather than repeated standard equipment. Drainage at Elizabeth Park, safety at particular sites, and more variety and seating at Anderson Park were also raised.

Comments on playgrounds	
Theme	Frequency
Playgrounds	173
Support: Good variety of playgrounds	58
Concern: Equipment is functionally obsolete	32
Consider: More equipment for older children	12
Support: Playgrounds clean and well maintained	11
Concern: Safety issues at playgrounds	10
Consider: Shade and shelter at playgrounds	9
Consider: More equipment for younger children	8
Consider: Toilets at playgrounds	7
Consider: Upgrade Queens Park playground	6
Concern: Equipment needs cosmetic maintenance	5
Consider: Fencing at playgrounds	5
Consider: Inclusive and accessible play equipment	4
Consider: Pump tracks and wheeled recreation	3
Consider: Water play features	3
Parks Recreation	7
Consider: More family and youth recreation	4
Support: Queens Park is excellent	3

n = 149 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 33: Comments regarding satisfaction with playgrounds

Detailed playground experiences and suggestions

Theme	Frequency
Playgrounds	145
Support: Good variety of playgrounds	21
Concern: Equipment is functionally obsolete	17
Consider: More seating and picnic facilities	15
Consider: Shade and shelter at playgrounds	12
Concern: Safety issues at playgrounds	11
Consider: More equipment for older children	11
Consider: Fencing at playgrounds	8
Consider: Inclusive and accessible play equipment	8
Consider: Nature play elements	7
Consider: Water play features	7
Consider: Upgrade Queens Park playground	6
Consider: More equipment for younger children	5
Consider: Toilets at playgrounds	5
Support: Playgrounds clean and well maintained	5
Consider: Pump tracks and wheeled recreation	4
Concern: Equipment needs cosmetic maintenance	3
Parks Recreation	12
Consider: More family and youth recreation	6
Concern: Parks maintenance declining	3
Consider: Dog control in parks and public spaces	3

n = 94 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 34: Detailed playground experiences and suggestions

10 Cemeteries

This section presents findings from the cemeteries section of the parks-specific survey module introduced in Q3 2025/26 and continued through Q4. These questions gathered detailed feedback from residents who have visited Council cemeteries in the past 12 months.

10.1 Cemeteries Visited

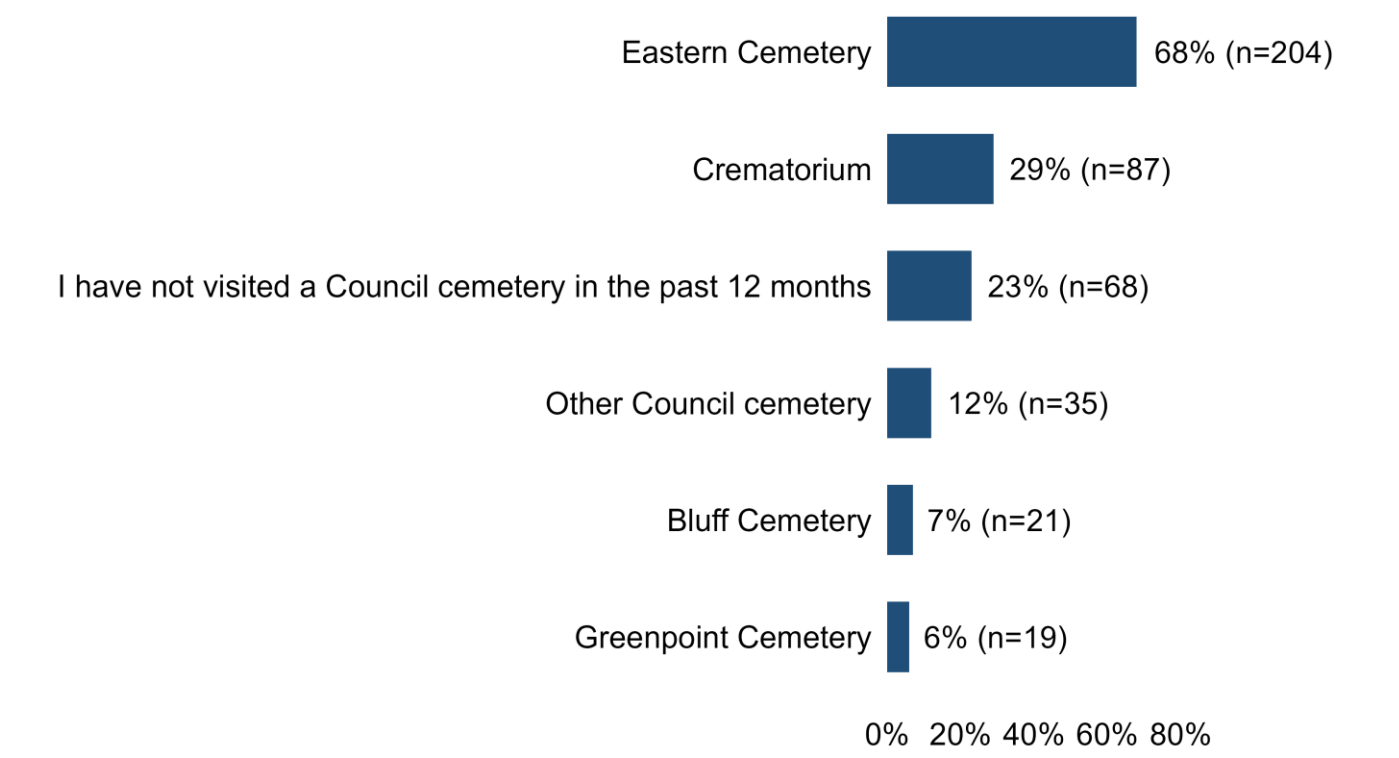


Figure 22: Cemeteries visited in the past 12 months (n=299, multiple selections permitted)

Cemetery	Count	Percentage (%)
Eastern Cemetery	204	68
Crematorium	87	29
I have not visited a Council cemetery in the past 12 months	68	23
Other Council cemetery	35	12
Bluff Cemetery	21	7
Greenpoint Cemetery	19	6

Table 35: Cemeteries visited in the past 12 months

10.2 Cemetery Satisfaction

Respondents rated their satisfaction across six aspects of cemetery provision.

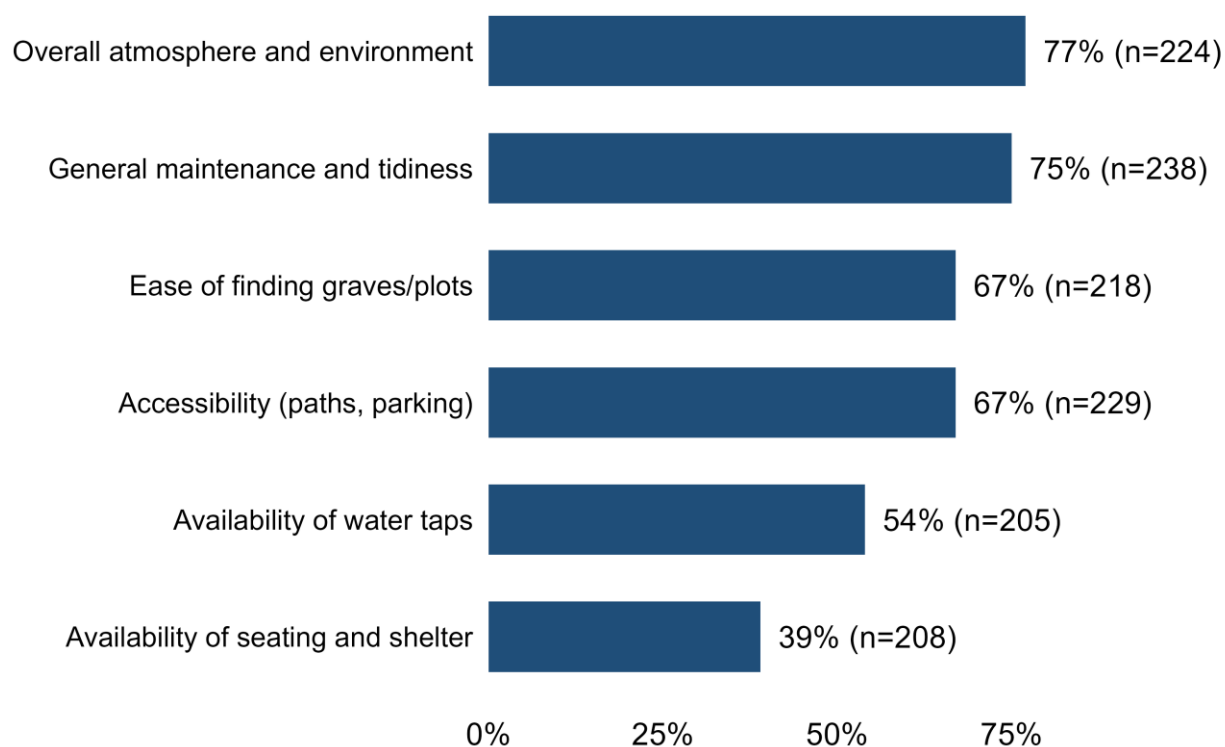


Figure 23: Satisfaction with cemetery aspects

Aspect	Valid Responses (n)	Satisfaction (%)
Overall atmosphere and environment	224	77
General maintenance and tidiness	238	75
Ease of finding graves/plots	218	67
Accessibility (paths, parking)	229	67
Availability of water taps	205	54
Availability of seating and shelter	208	39

Table 36: Satisfaction with cemetery aspects

10.3 Qualitative Feedback on Cemeteries

Comments were largely positive. East Cemetery was described as park-like and well presented, and the Invercargill Cemetery as a tidy resting place with good access and family connections; the Crematorium and its staff were also praised. Complaints concerned maintenance: litter at Winton Cemetery, subsiding ground and lichen-covered, unreadable gravestones on family plots, and requests for more tidying at St Johns Cemetery. A few respondents mentioned difficulty navigating the grounds, or had no settled view because they visit rarely.

Detailed Cemetery Experiences

In the detailed responses, the Eastern Cemetery and Invercargill Crematorium were described as tidy and well maintained with helpful staff, while the Old Bluff and Wallacetown cemeteries were criticised for long grass and unreliable water supply. Access to water taps for tending flowers and cleaning headstones came up repeatedly, with taps described as inconveniently placed or tanks often empty. Respondents also mentioned broken and weathered tombstones needing restoration, overgrown trees and hedges along Rockdale Road, and a growing rabbit population. Views on amenities differed: some wanted more seating and shelter for wet weather, others felt money should not be spent on benches and shelters.

Comments on cemeteries	
Theme	Frequency
Cemeteries	115
Support: Well maintained and tidy	81
Concern: Grass and grounds maintenance	15
Concern: Old graves need attention	10
Concern: Rabbit and pest problems	6
Consider: Better water tap access	3

n = 117 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 37: Comments regarding satisfaction with cemeteries

Detailed cemetery experiences and suggestions	
Theme	Frequency
Cemeteries	41
Support: Well maintained and tidy	18
Concern: Grass and grounds maintenance	6
Concern: Old graves need attention	6
Consider: More seating and shelter	6
Consider: Better water tap access	5

n = 50 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 38: Detailed cemetery experiences and suggestions

11 Trees and Tree Management

This section presents findings from the trees section of the parks-specific survey module introduced in Q3 2025/26 and continued through Q4. These questions gathered feedback on residents’ satisfaction with Council’s tree management and any tree-related issues experienced.

11.1 Tree Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with Council’s management of trees across the district measured 59% (n=424, excluding ‘Don’t know’ responses). The distribution showed 19% were very satisfied, 39% satisfied, 27% neutral, 10% dissatisfied, and 4% very dissatisfied.

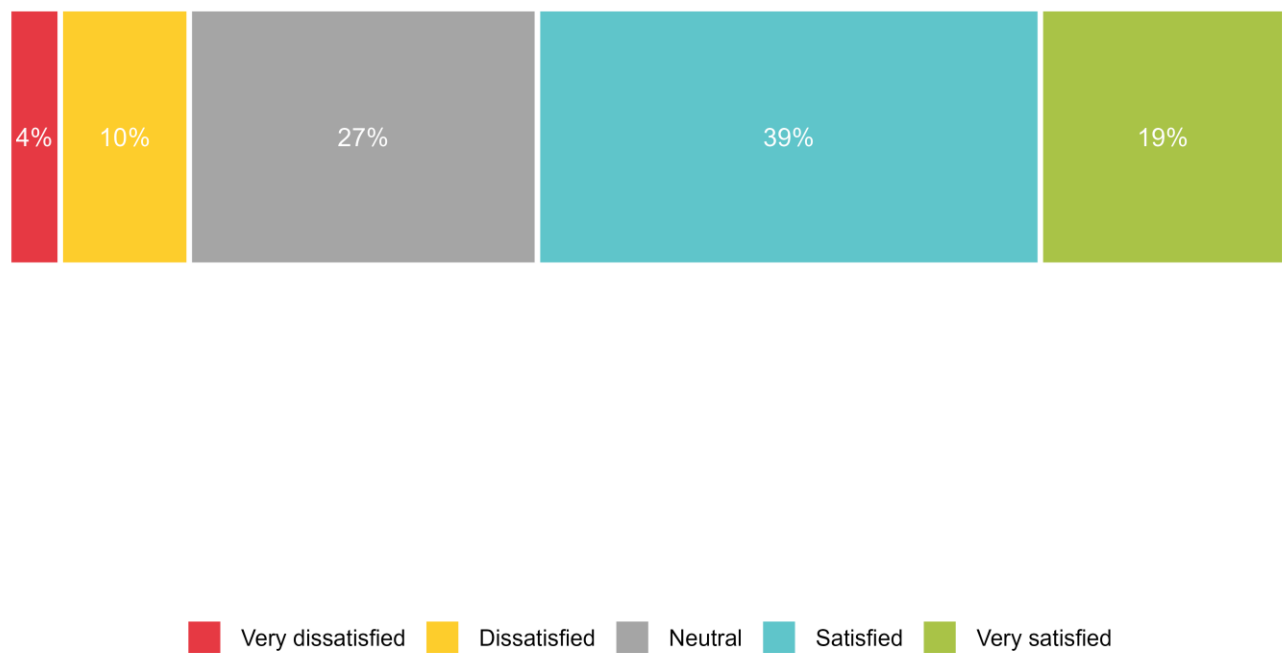


Figure 24: Satisfaction with Council tree management (n=424, excluding Don’t know)

Response	Count	Percentage (%)
Very dissatisfied	16	4
Dissatisfied	44	10
Neutral	108	27
Satisfied	176	39

Response	Count	Percentage (%)
Very satisfied	80	19

Table 39: Satisfaction with Council tree management (excluding Don't know)

11.2 Tree Issues Experienced

Among the 448 respondents who answered this question, the majority (60%) reported no tree-related issues. Of those who did experience issues, roots damaging footpaths or property (15%) and concerns about tree health or safety (14%) were the most common. Overhanging branches causing obstruction were reported by 11% of respondents. Other issues (8%) and removal of trees residents would have preferred to keep (7%) were also noted. Blocked views or light affected 4% of respondents.

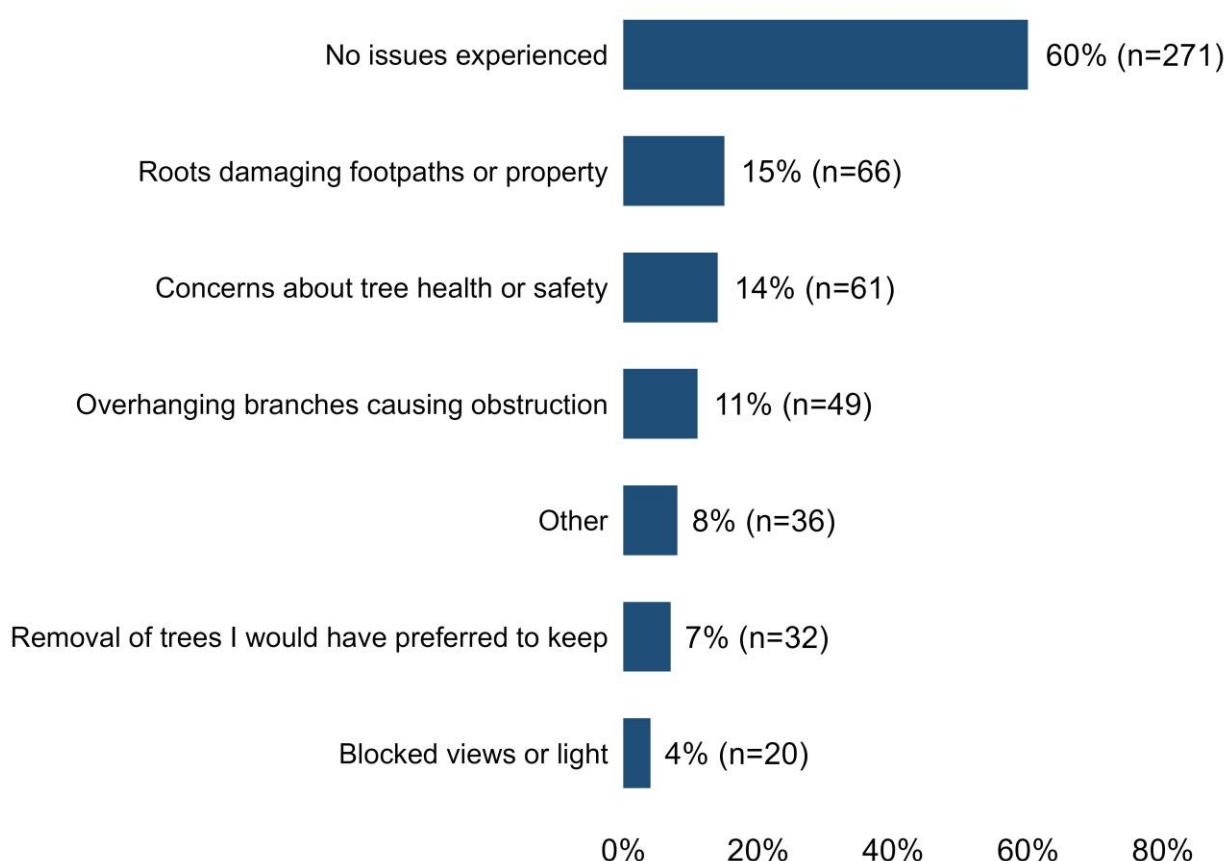


Figure 25: Tree issues experienced by residents (n=448, multiple selections permitted)

Issue	Count	Percentage (%)
No issues experienced	271	60
Roots damaging footpaths or property	66	15
Concerns about tree health or safety	61	14
Overhanging branches causing obstruction	49	11
Other	36	8

Issue	Count	Percentage (%)
Removal of trees I would have preferred to keep	32	7
Blocked views or light	20	4

Table 40: Tree issues experienced by residents

11.3 Qualitative Feedback on Trees

The October wind event shaped much of this feedback. Some respondents praised the Parks division's response and clean-up; others felt tree removal took too long and questioned the cost of clearing along Elles Road and Don Street. Safety concerns named specific sites, including the Queens Drive and Don Street corner, Queens Park, the golf course, Sandy Point forestry, and roots or low branches encroaching on footpaths in Windsor and Otatara. Several respondents asked for conifers and pines to be replaced with natives, cherry trees, and rhododendrons to attract birds.

Comments on trees and tree management	
Theme	Frequency
Trees Tree Management	156
Concern: Dangerous trees not addressed	27
Support: Good storm response	25
Support: Trees well managed overall	19
Concern: Overhanging trees and hedges on footpaths	15
Consider: Better tree replacement planning	15
Consider: Remove specific dangerous trees	14
Concern: Excessive tree removal	13
Consider: Plant more trees	10
Concern: Tree roots damaging footpaths	9
Concern: Storm debris still not cleared	5
Consider: Address pest plants	4
Parks Recreation	3
Support: Parks are well maintained	3
Walkways Cycleways	3
Concern: Walkway maintenance issues	3

n = 128 respondents. Minimum threshold: 3 mentions.

Table 41: Comments regarding satisfaction with trees and tree management

