

ALGIM

Customer Experience Benchmarking Programme 2025

Individual Council Report

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Purpose of this report

This Individual Council Report provides **South Wairarapa District Council** with a detailed view of its customer experience (CX) performance within the national local government context.

In response to sector feedback, Individual Council Reports have been redesigned to offer richer insights, clearer interpretation, and practical next steps tailored to each organisation.

This report includes:

- council-level results
- channel-specific analysis
- peer council comparison
- quartile positioning
- time-of-day insights
- performance by area of focus
- national rankings presented by quartile

Only Individual Council Reports include the full national ranking of all participating New Zealand councils and council-controlled organisations.

Executive summary

South Wairarapa District Council recorded an **overall customer experience score of 97.0%** in the **2025 Customer Experience Benchmarking Programme**.

This result places the Council:

- **4th nationally** among all New Zealand councils and CCOs
- **3rd of the 54 district councils** participating
- **1st of the participating councils in the Wellington region**

South Wairarapa District Council is positioned in the **first national quartile (upper national quartile)** and is recognised as a **Top 10 Council** in 2025.

Key insights

Overall performance

South Wairarapa District Council's overall result reflects **exceptionally strong customer experience performance**, with outcomes placing the Council firmly among the leading performers nationally. The 2025 result represents a substantial uplift on previous years and demonstrates consistently excellent service delivery across all channels.

Areas of relative strength

Customer experience outcomes are **exceptionally strong across all channels**, with standout performance in the **online portal and phone channels**, both of which achieved near-perfect or perfect scores. These results reflect strong frontline capability, effective digital self-service, and reliable first-contact resolution.

Key opportunities

While overall performance is extremely strong, **email performance shows slightly more variability by time of day**, indicating an opportunity to further strengthen consistency in written responses, particularly during morning interactions.

Executive summary

What This Means for South Wairarapa District Council

The results suggest that **protecting consistently high performance across all channels**, while applying targeted refinements to **email handling and time-of-day consistency**, will help South Wairarapa District Council sustain its position as a leading performer. Maintaining current practices while tightening variability in written communication is likely to deliver further marginal gains.

Historical Context (2023–2025)

South Wairarapa District Council's overall customer experience performance has **improved substantially across recent benchmarking cycles**, accompanied by a significant improvement in national ranking.

The Council recorded:

74.8% in 2023 (60th nationally)

77.3% in 2024 (39th nationally)

97.0% in 2025, ranking **4th nationally**

The 2025 result represents a **step-change in performance**, with a **+19.7 percentage point improvement compared with 2024**. This uplift reflects sustained improvements across all channels rather than gains in a single area.

It is also important to note that the **2025 programme includes the online portal channel**, which was not assessed in previous years. As a result, results are **not directly comparable on a like-for-like basis**, and ranking movement should be interpreted as an indication of current performance under the expanded framework.

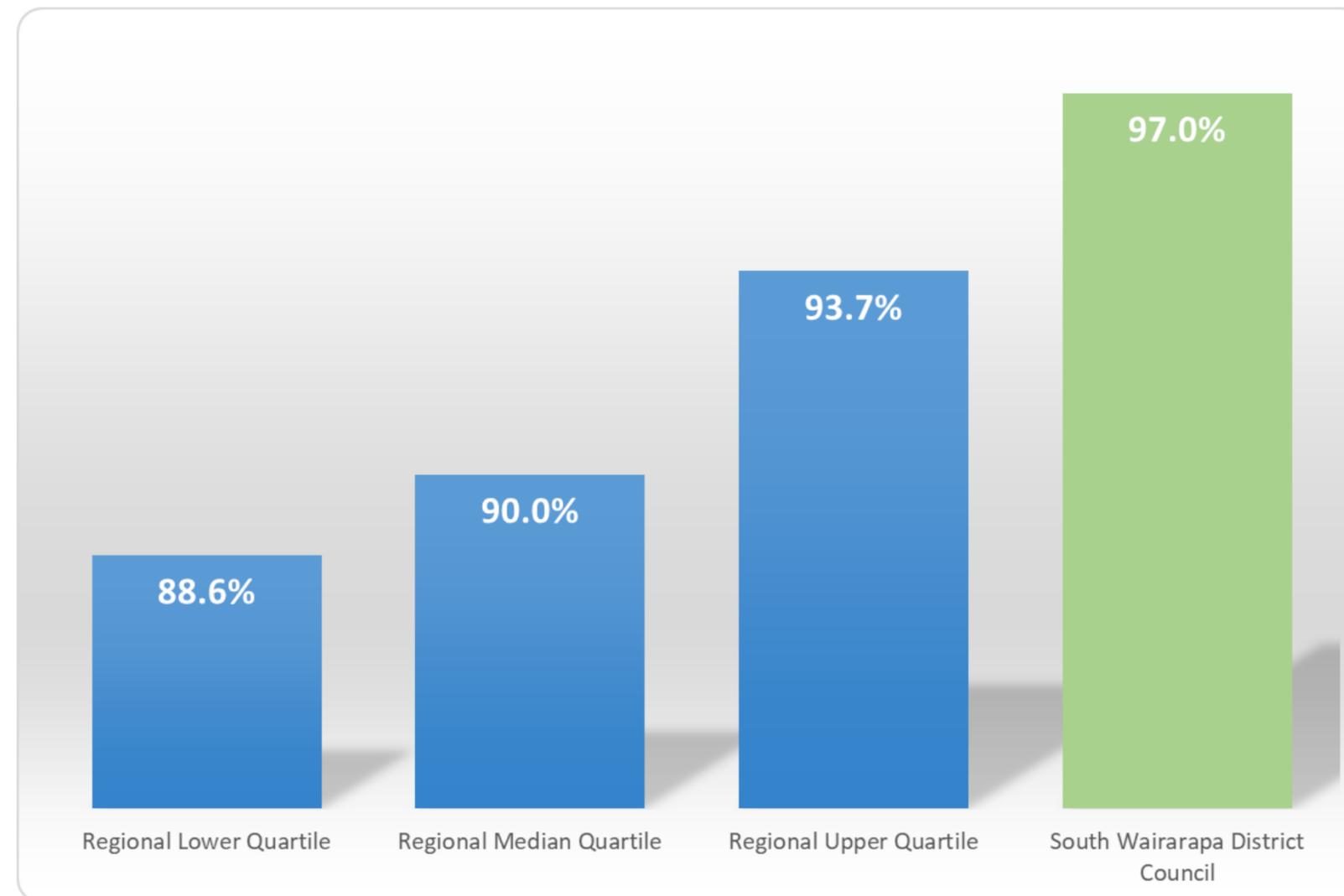
Understanding your results in a regional, national and Australasian context

All participating organisations are grouped into national quartiles based on overall CX performance. Quartiles are designed to support meaningful comparison and learning, rather than competition, and are defined using percentile cut-off points across the full dataset.

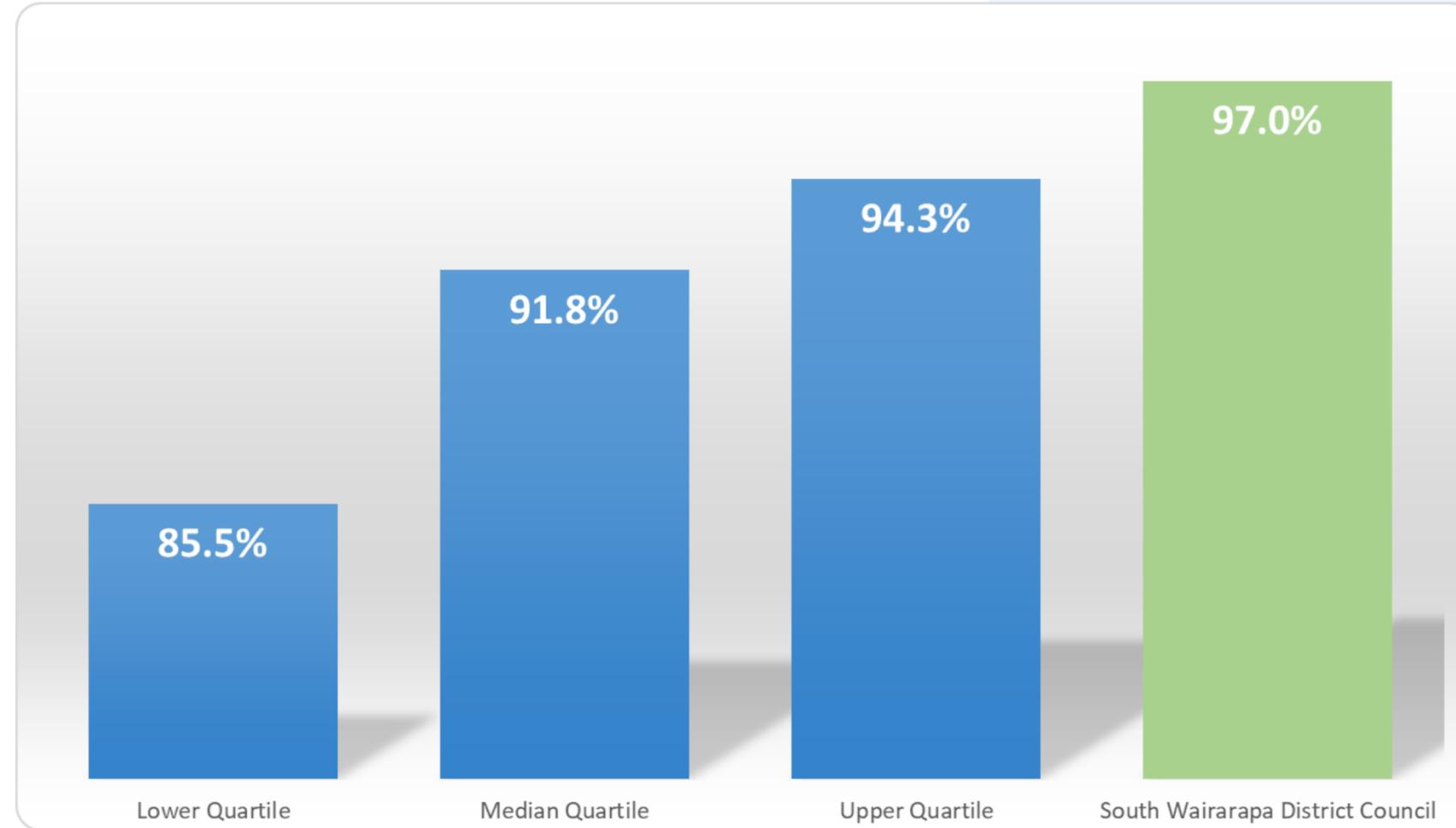
South Wairarapa District Council's placement in the first national quartile indicates performance that is well above the national average and places the Council among a small group of top-performing councils nationally.

To further enrich this perspective, an Australasian comparison has also been included. This uses the same assessment framework and was conducted over the same period, enabling a like-for-like view of performance across New Zealand and Australian councils. There were **18 Australian councils surveyed in 2025**.

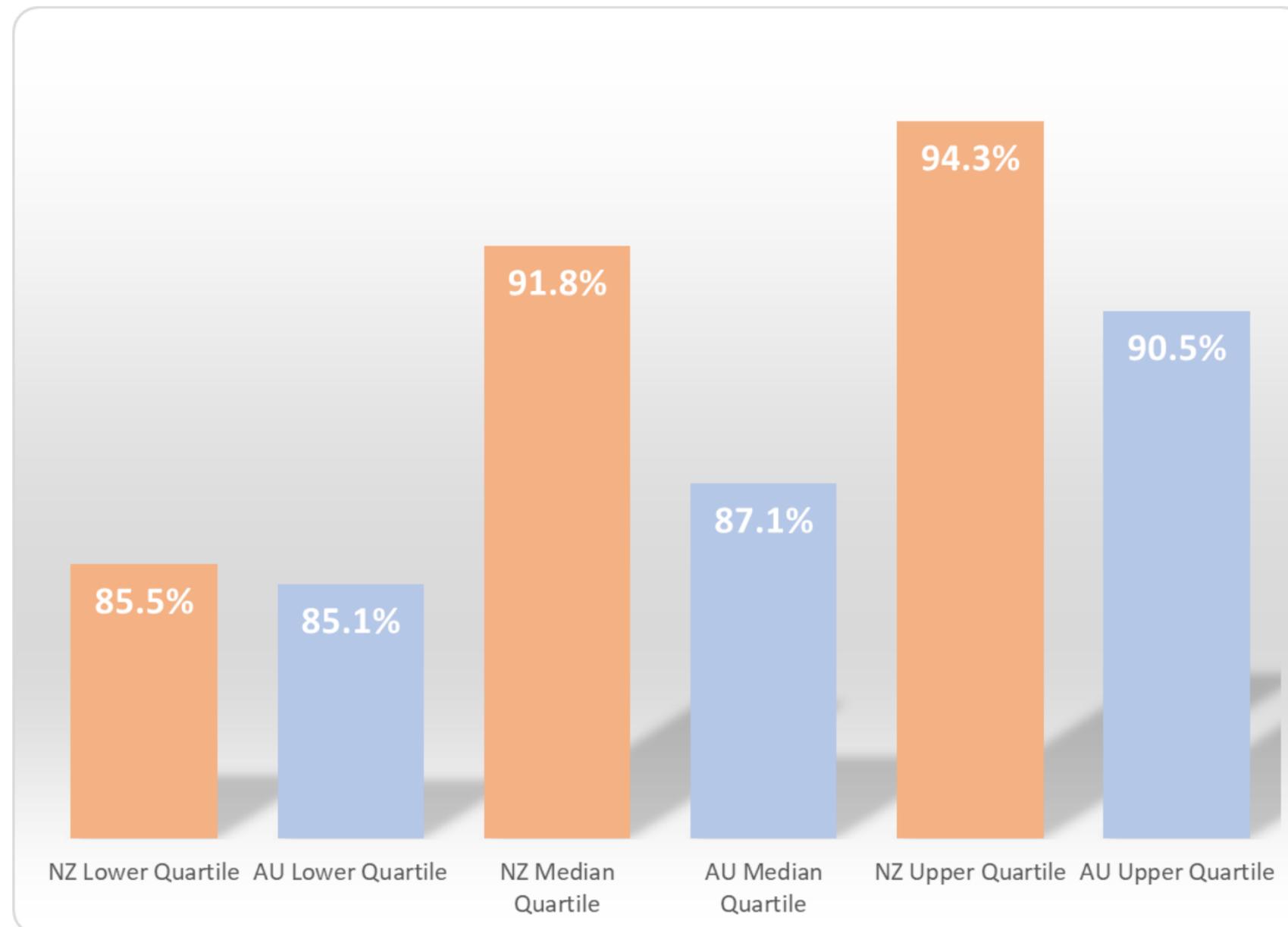
Wellington Region Quartile Comparison with South Wairarapa District Council



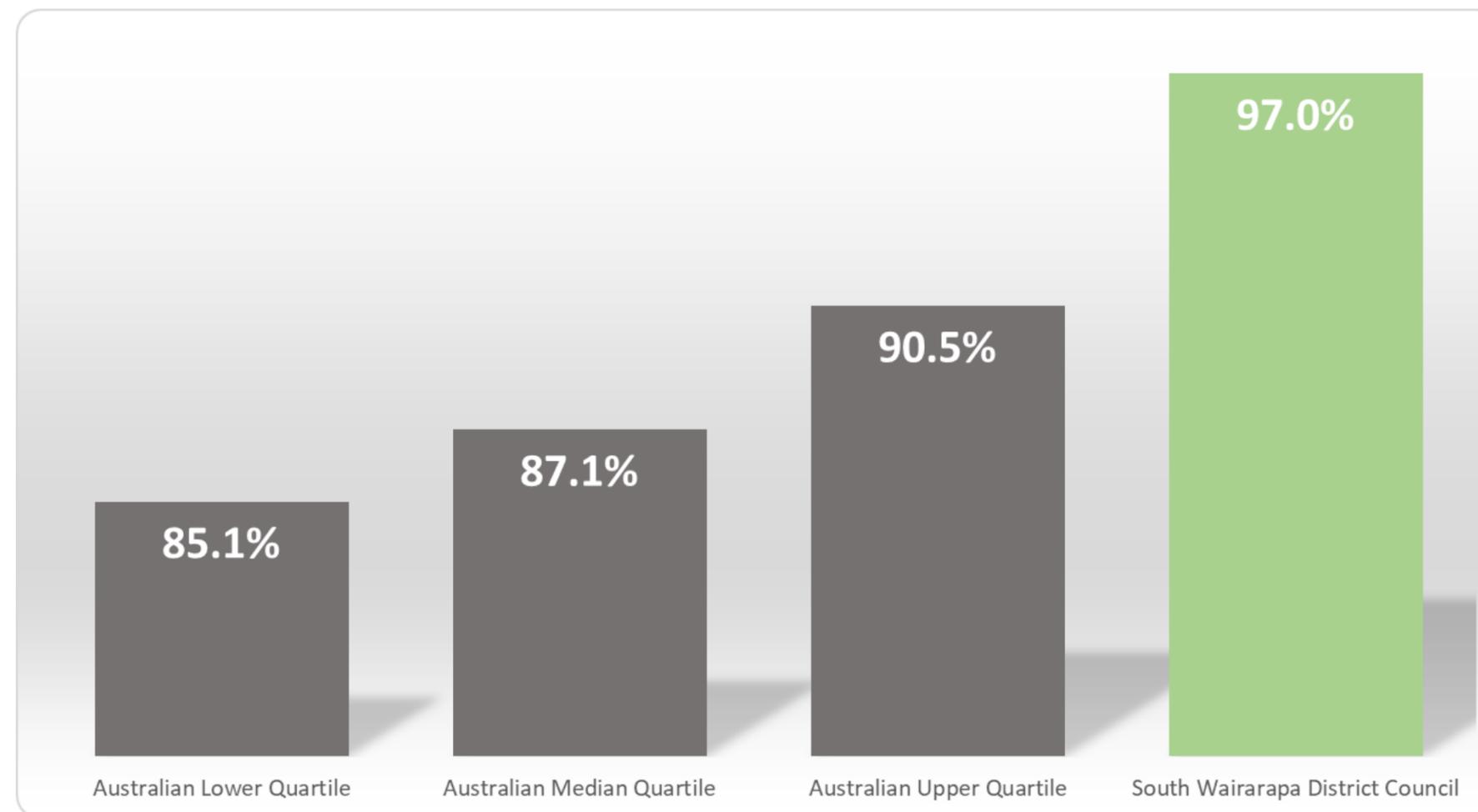
National CX Quartile Comparison South Wairarapa District Council



New Zealand and Australian Quartile Comparison



Australian CX Quartile Comparison South Wairarapa District Council

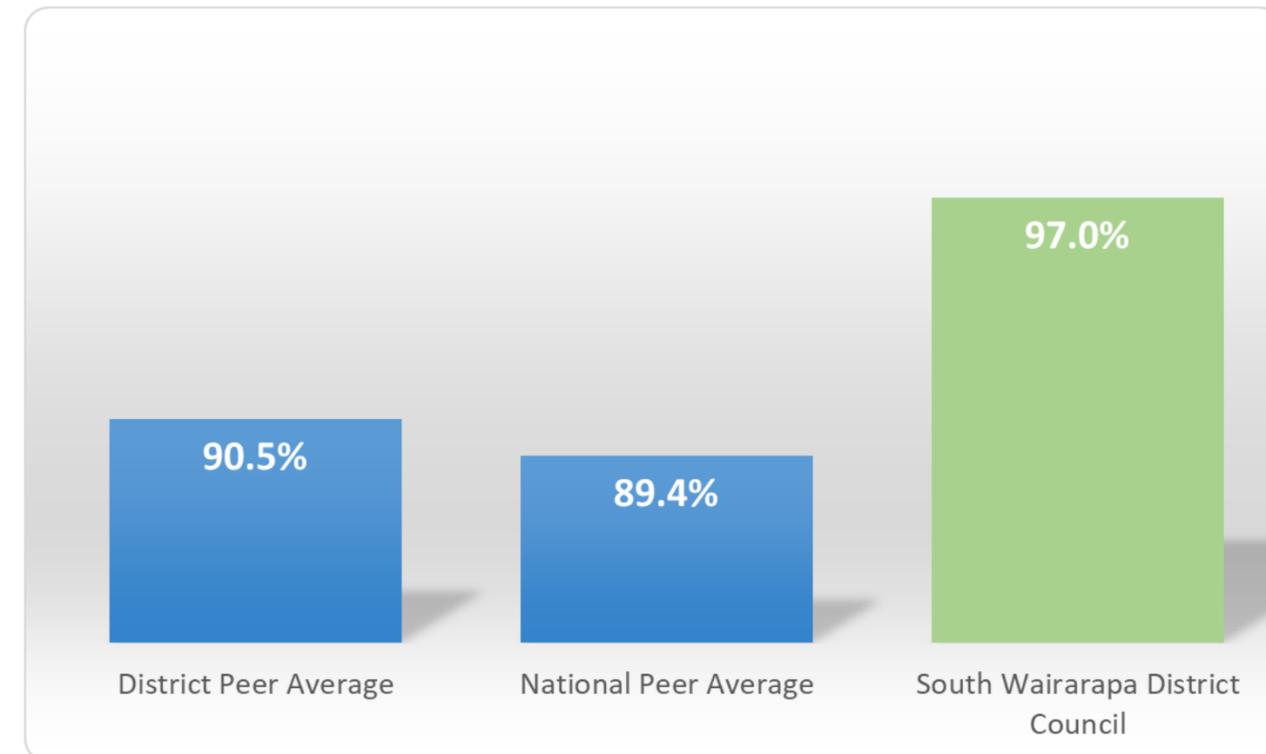


Performance compared with peer councils

Peer comparisons in this report are based primarily on **council type**. South Wairarapa District Council is classified as a **district council**.

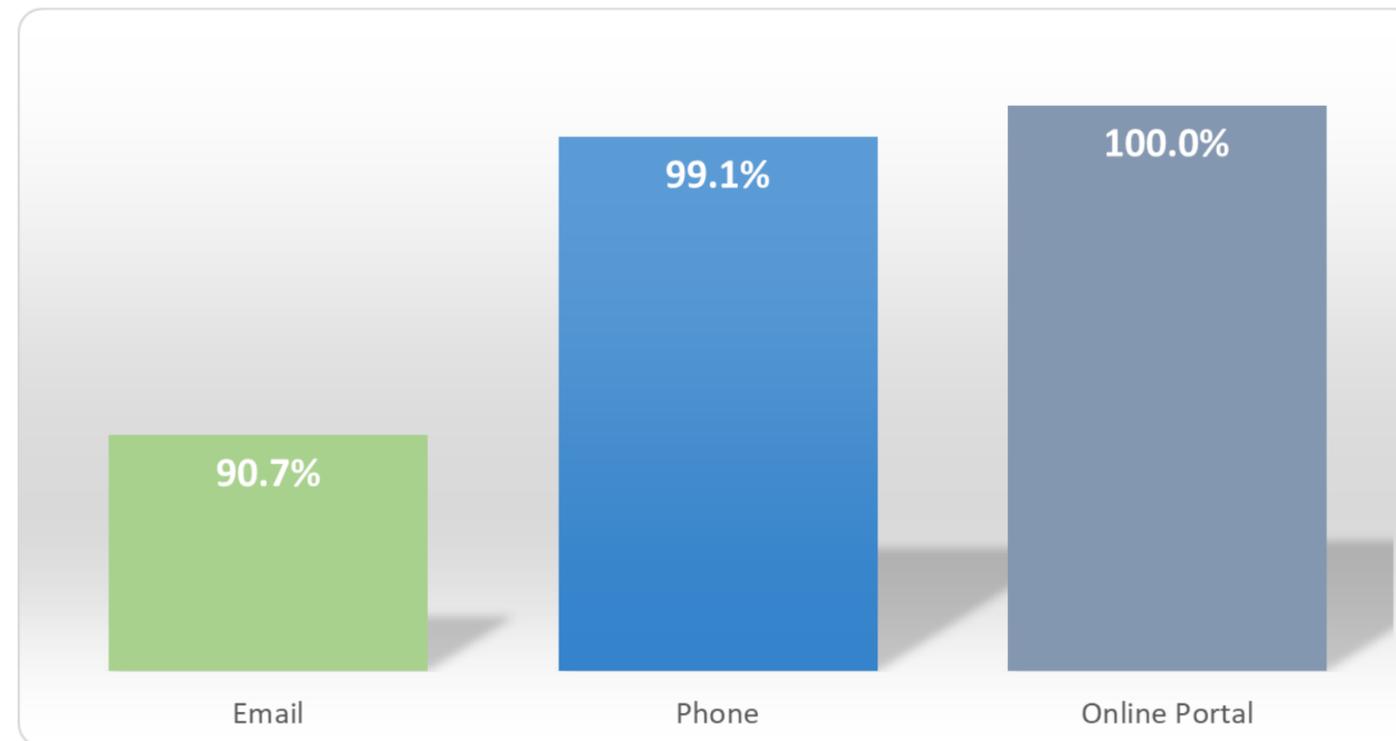
- **South Wairarapa District Council overall CX score: 97.0%**
- **District council peer average: 90.5%**
- **National average (all councils and CCOs): 89.4%**
- Within the district council peer group, South Wairarapa District Council ranks **3rd of 54 district councils**.
- This comparison highlights the Council's position as a **leading district council** nationally, with performance well above both peer and national averages.

Peer Comparison District Councils South Wairarapa District Council



Council-level performance overview

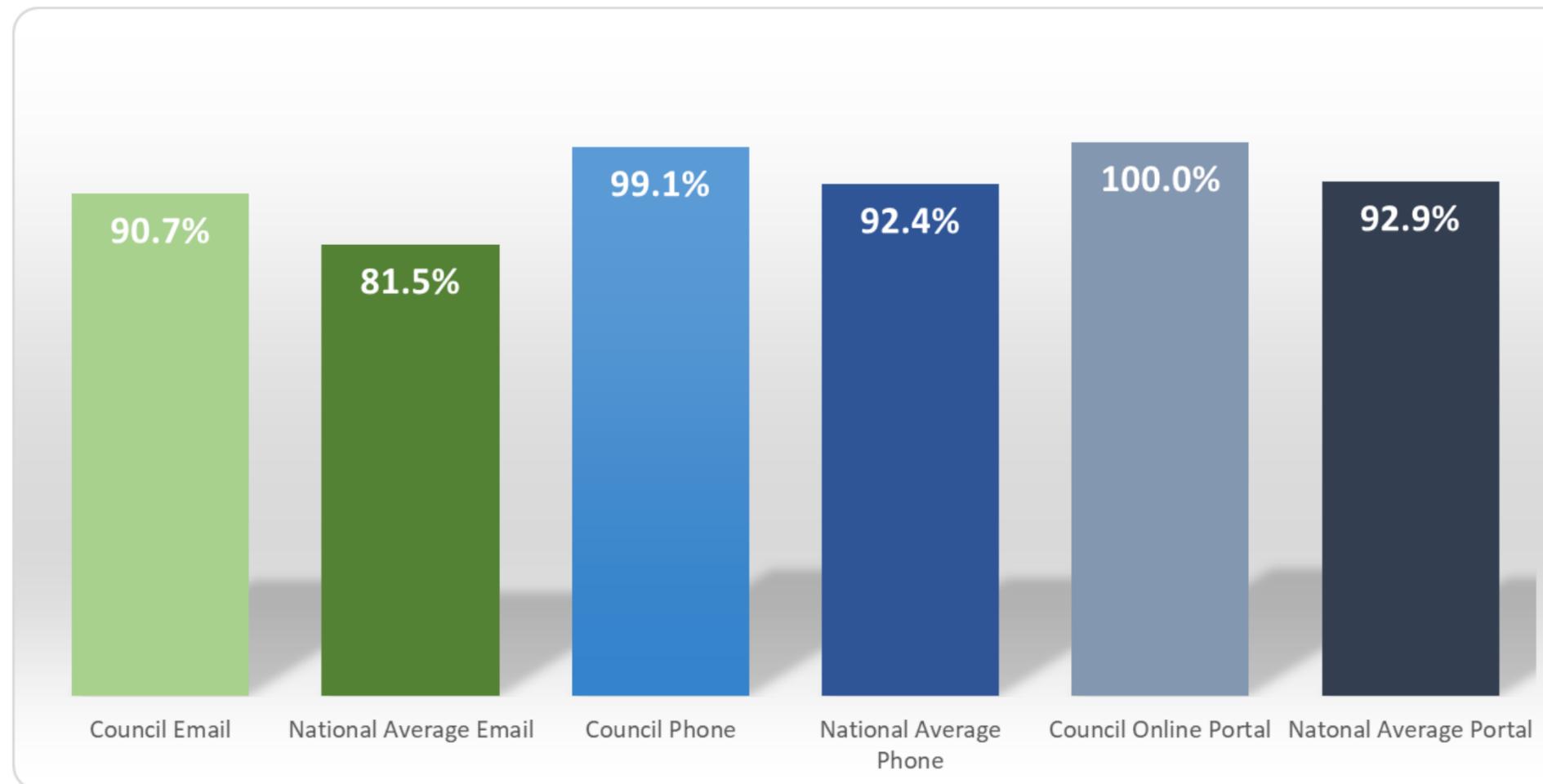
Channel Performance South Wairarapa District Council



South Wairarapa District Council's overall CX result reflects **consistently excellent performance across all channels**, with minimal variation by channel or time of day.

Online portal, phone, and email interactions all deliver very high outcomes, indicating that strong service capability is being **reliably realised regardless of how or when customers choose to engage.**

National Averages and South Wairarapa District Council



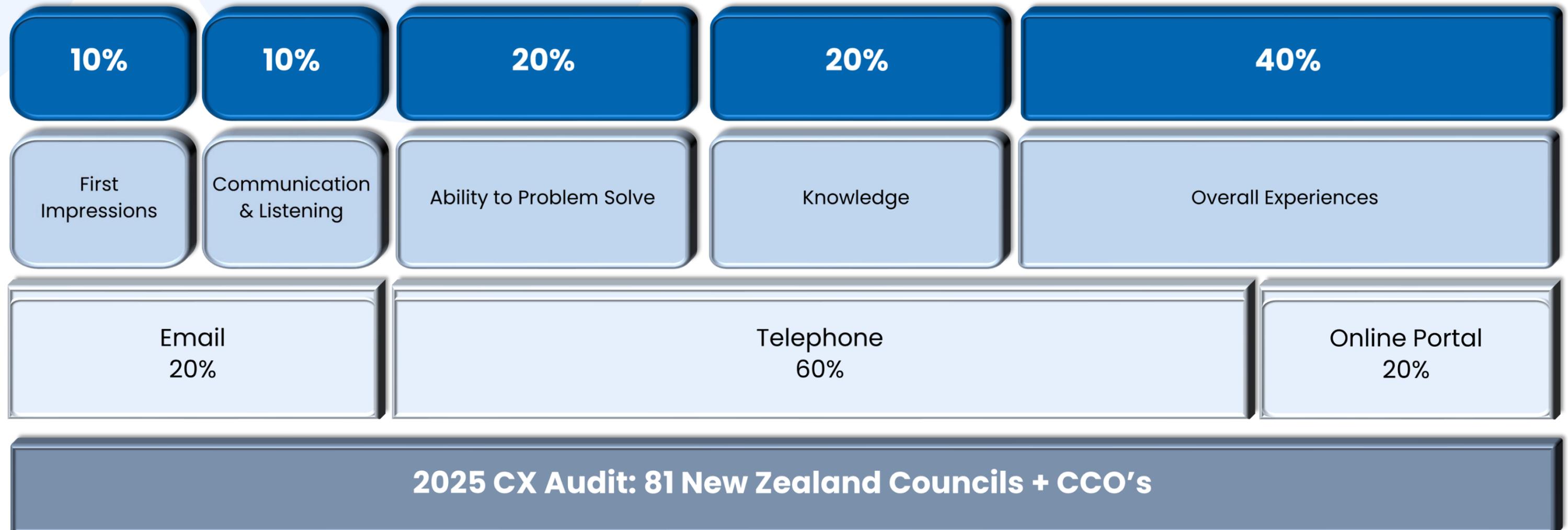
Linking results to current sector challenges

Across Aotearoa, councils are operating under increased pressure related to service resilience, organisational change, and community trust.

For **South Wairarapa District Council**, consistently excellent performance across all channels provides a strong foundation during periods of change and increased demand. Maintaining this level of consistency will continue to support high levels of customer confidence and trust in council services.

Methodology Overview

This slide outlines the methodology used to assess CX performance and is included here to provide context for the CX results by area of focus that follow. Results are based on observed service interactions undertaken by real people, with the weightings shown **reflecting the relative contribution of each assessment area and channel to the overall CX score.**



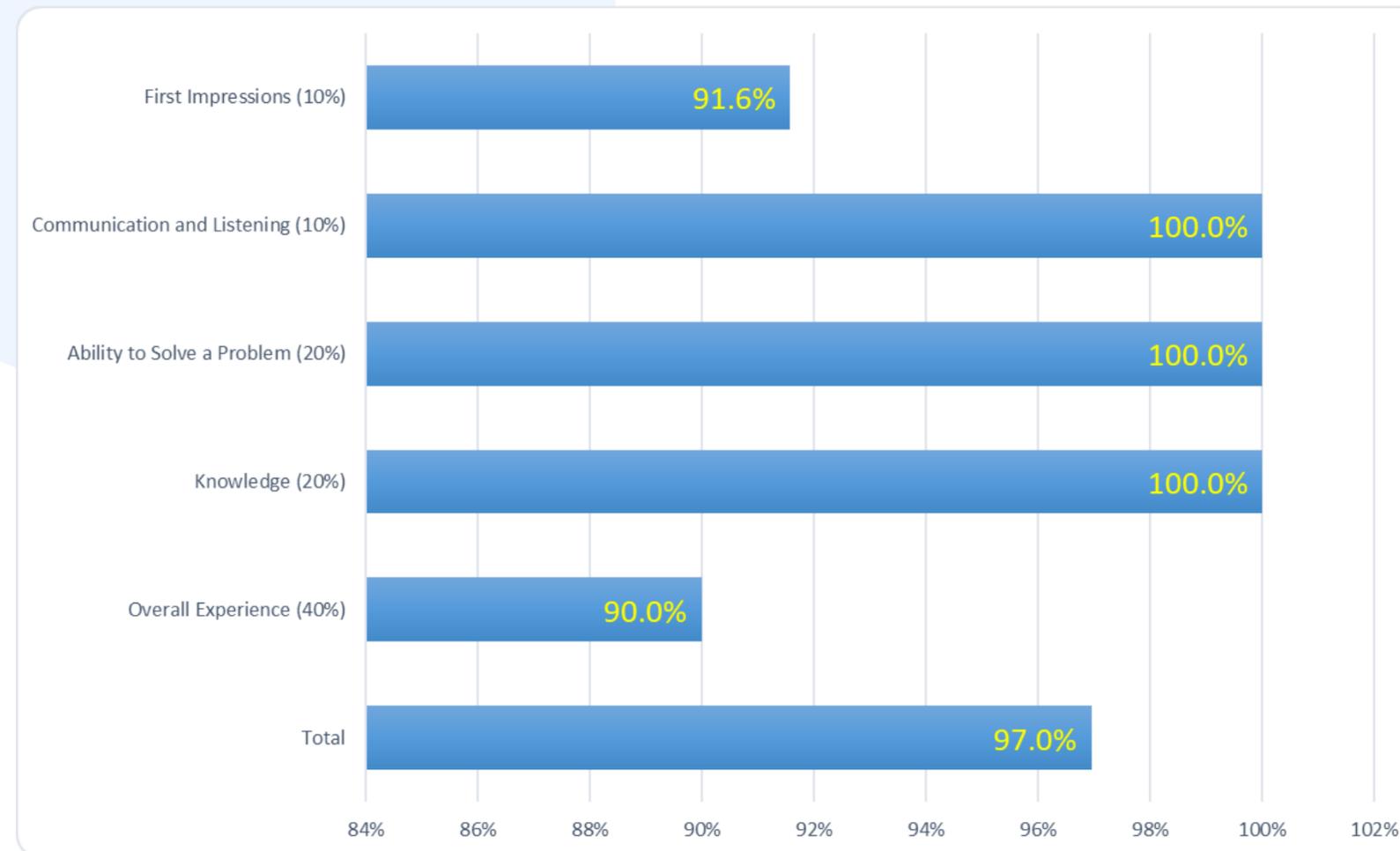
Customer Experience by Area of Focus

The following graph presents average customer experience scores across the core areas of focus used in the 2025 Customer Experience Benchmarking Programme. These areas reflect the national framework outlined in the base report and represent the elements of the customer journey shown to have the greatest influence on overall customer experience outcomes.

Each area is weighted to reflect its relative contribution to the overall experience score, with greater emphasis placed on customers' overall perception of their interaction and the council's knowledge and ability to resolve issues effectively. Reviewing performance by area of focus provides additional insight beyond channel-level results, helping to identify where strengths are consistently embedded and where targeted refinements may further lift customer outcomes.

For **South Wairarapa District Council**, performance across first impressions, communication and listening, problem solving, knowledge, and overall experience is consistently very strong, reflecting mature service delivery practices and a high-performing customer experience culture.

Customer Experience by Area of Focus



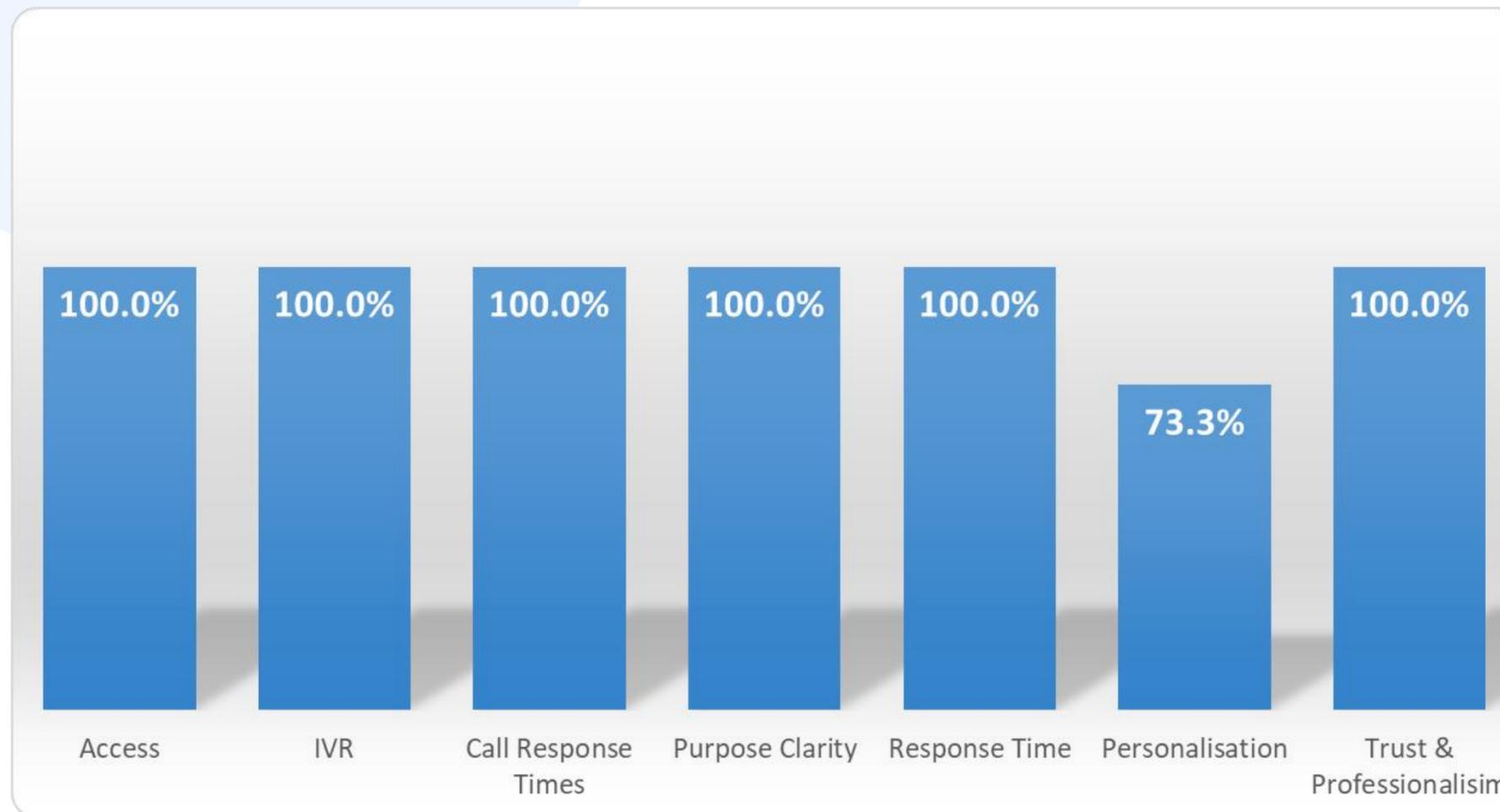
Note: Area of Focus scores are calculated by averaging results across all assessed interactions for each focus area and then applying the relevant weighting to reflect their contribution to the overall experience score.

Performance by Assessment Area of Focus

The following section has been included to provide greater transparency and depth to the assessment results by showing performance at an individual assessment-question level within each area of focus.

Presenting results in this way enables a clearer understanding of how overall scores were derived, highlights patterns of strength and opportunity within each focus area and supports more informed interpretation of the findings alongside the aggregate scores presented elsewhere in the report.

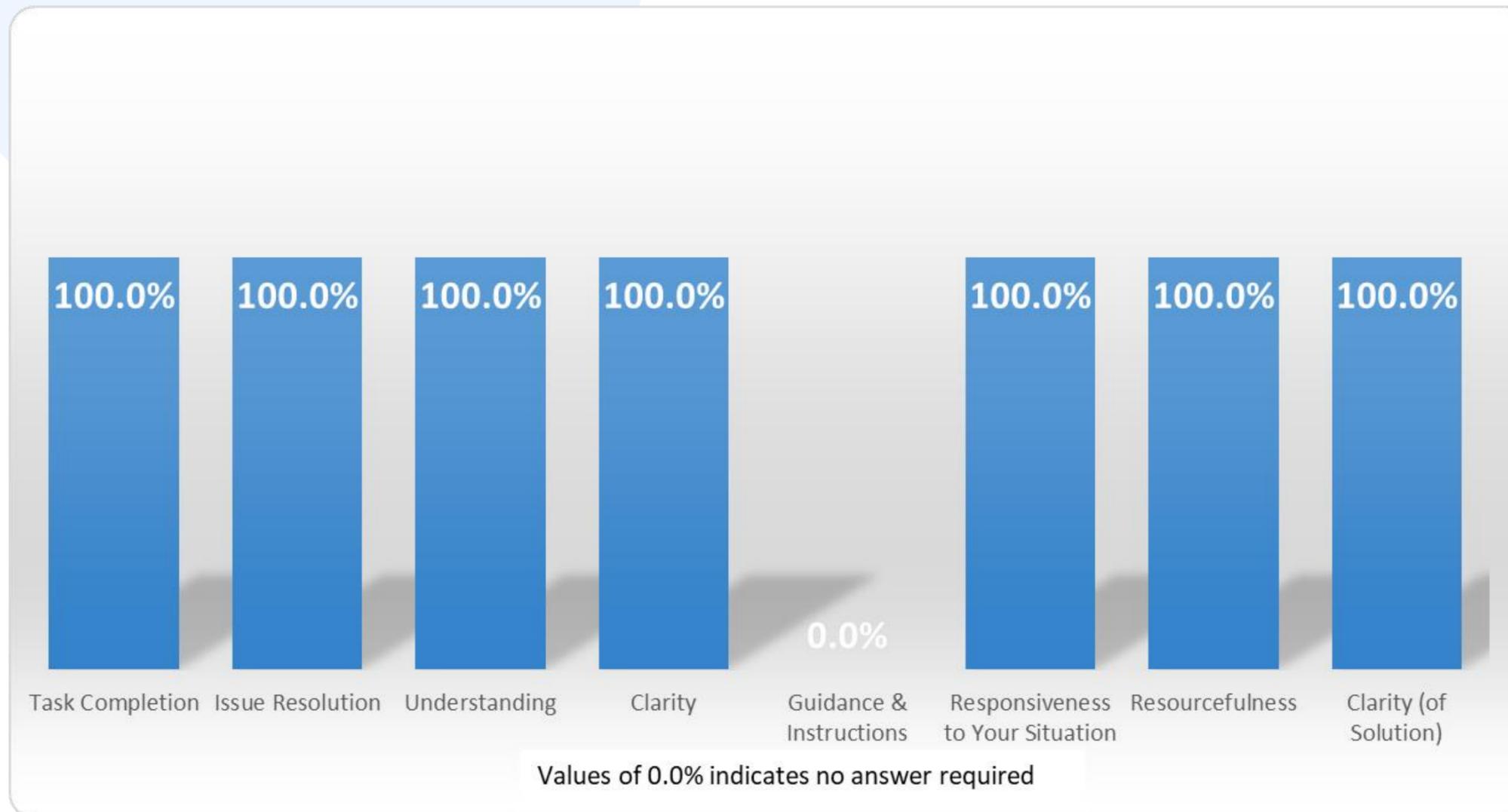
Performance by Assessment **First Impressions** South Wairarapa District Council



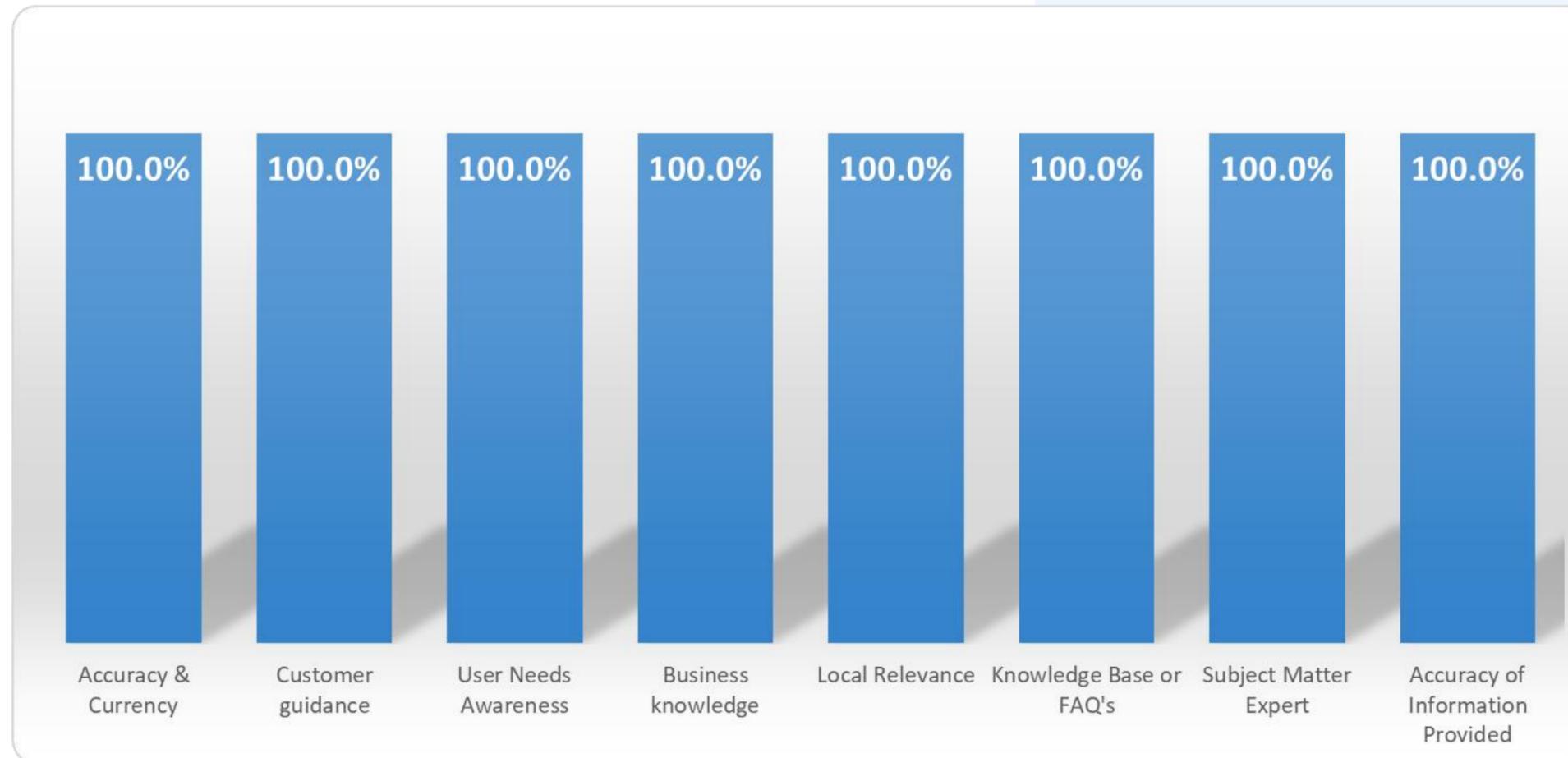
Performance by Assessment **Communications & Listening** South Wairarapa District Council



Performance by Assessment **Ability to Problem Solve** South Wairarapa District Council



Performance by Assessment **Knowledge** South Wairarapa District Council



Performance by Assessment **Overall Experience** South Wairarapa District Council

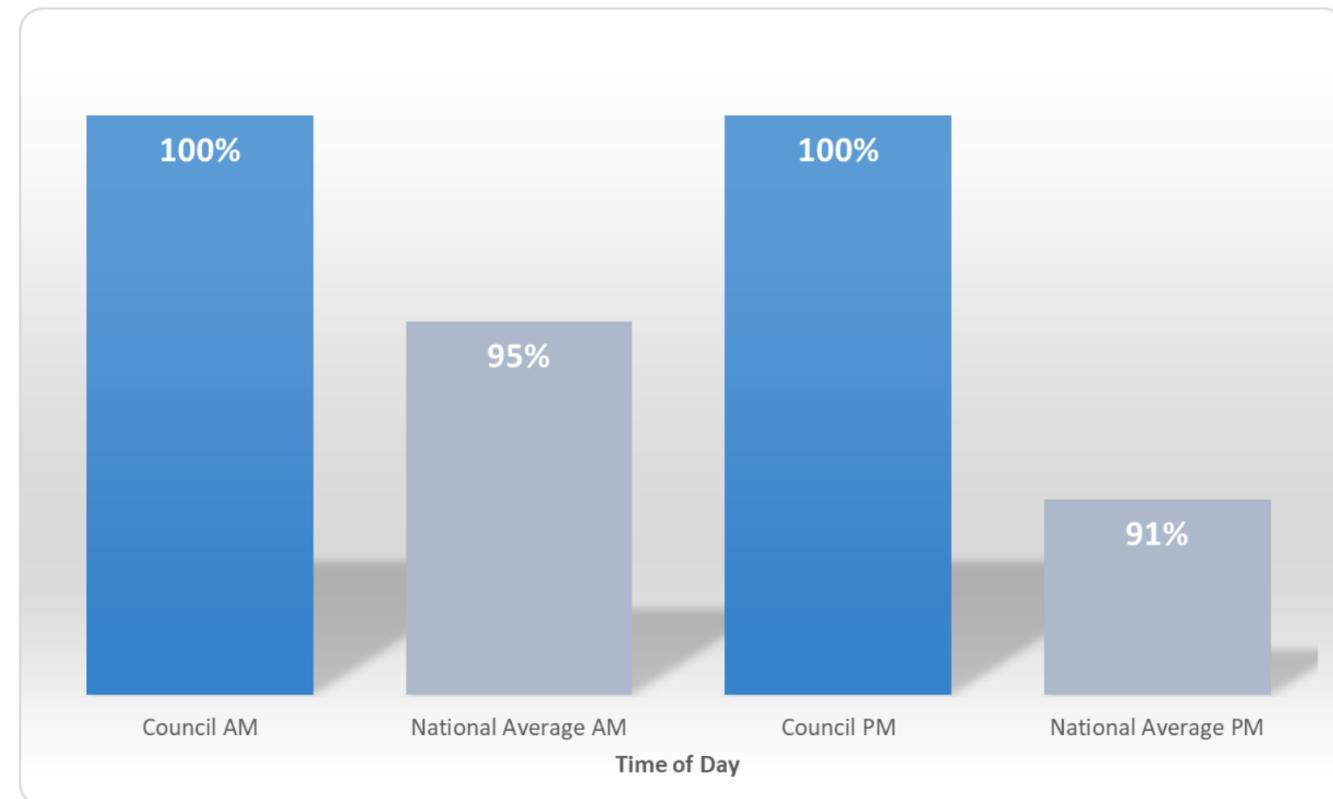
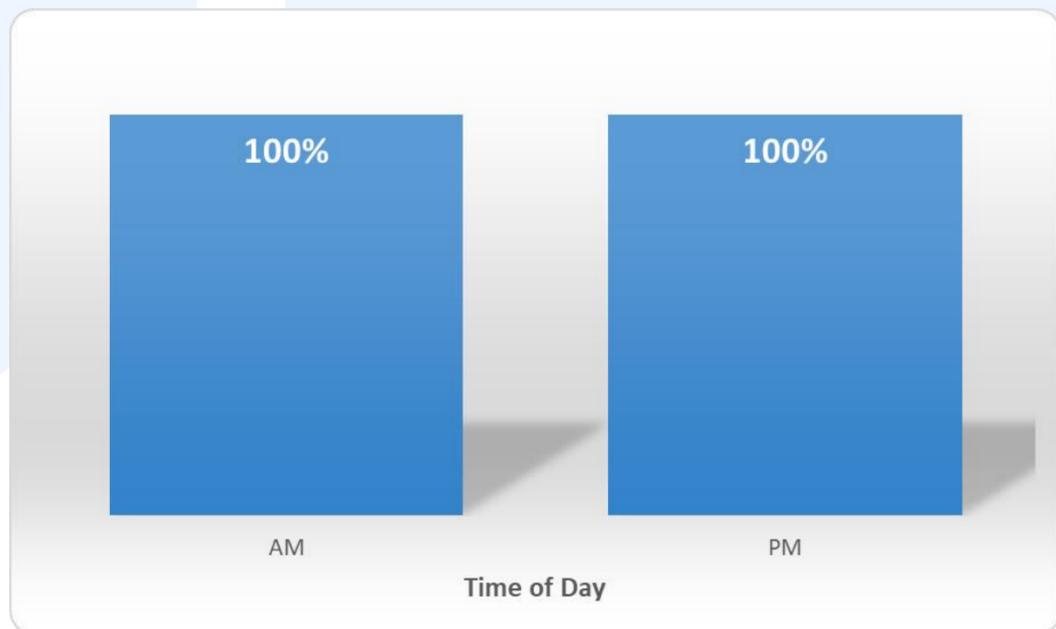


Customer Experience Performance: Comments from Mystery Shoppers

The mystery shopper comments in the following tables are included as illustrative examples only. Each comment has been selected because it reflects commonly observed themes within the relevant service channel and aligns with the overall performance outcome.

Depending on results, examples may highlight both positive practice and areas for improvement. The inclusion of a comment does not imply it is the only feedback received, but rather that it is indicative of the broader experience recorded during the assessment period.

Channel-Specific Analysis: Online Portal



- **Score:** 100%
- **National quartile:** Upper national quartile
- **Position in national quartile:** 1st equal (with 13 other councils)

The online portal is one of the most consistent channels nationally across Aotearoa’s councils and CCOs.

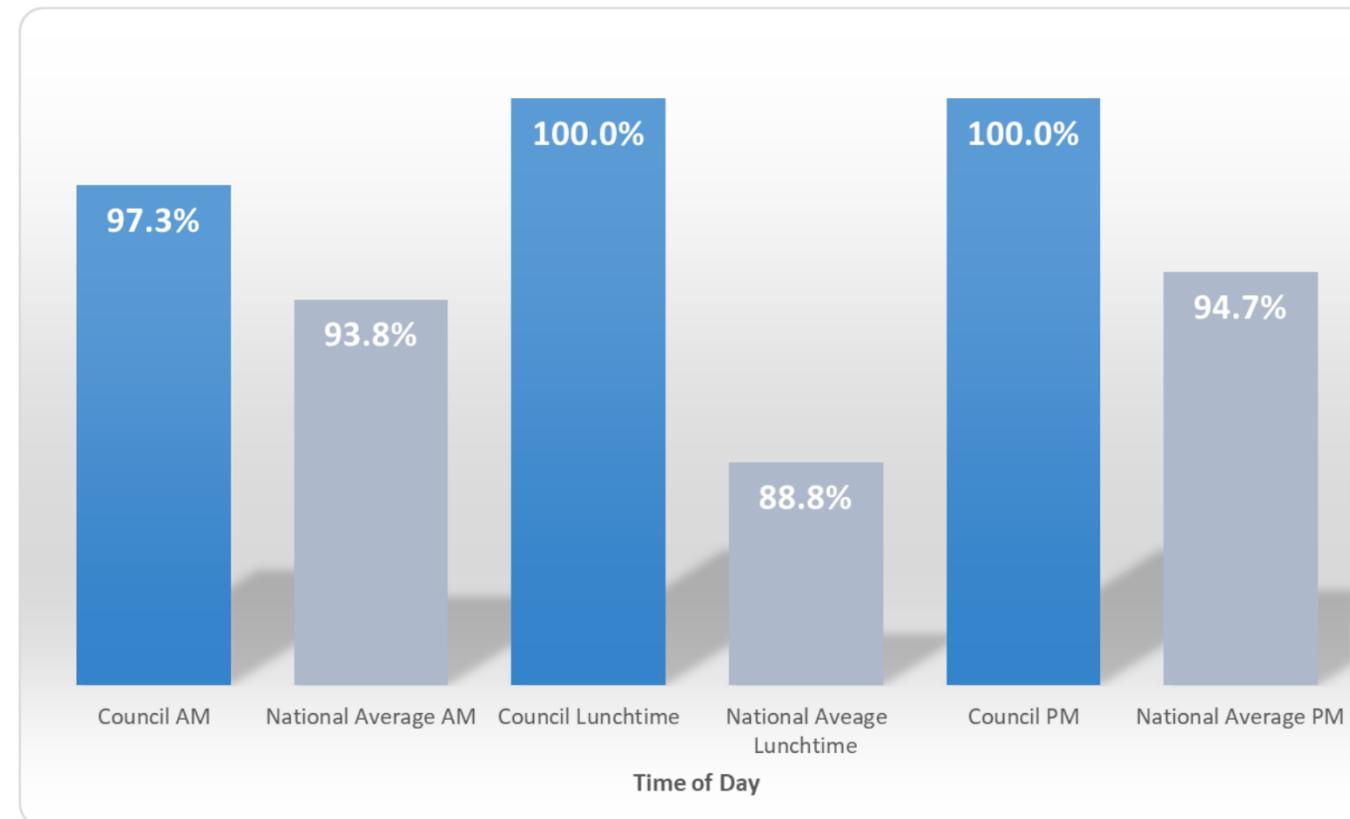
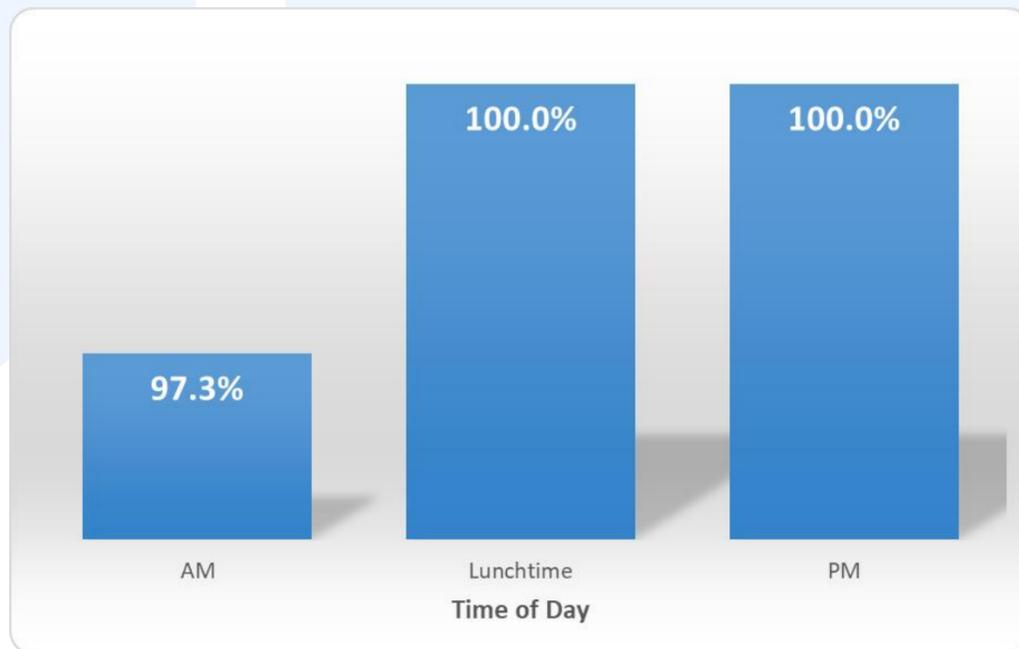
Against this national context, **South Wairarapa District Council’s** online portal performance is exceptional, achieving a perfect score and ranking 1st equal nationally. This result reflects highly effective digital design, clear information architecture, and excellent support for task completion.

Channel-Specific Analysis

South Wairarapa District Council – Online Portal

Area of Focus:	First Impressions	Communications & Listening	Ability to problem solve	Knowledge	Overall experience
Assessment question:	Purpose Clarity	Information Clarity Support Access	Task Completion Issue Resolution	Accuracy and Currency Local Relevance	Overall Satisfaction Future Use
Example Comment:	<p>"On first look you can easily see there is a lot of information available .A large search bar is dominant and helpfully there are a lot of one word links immediately under this (presumably the most often searched things). This includes one for rates, which means it is quite straightforward to know where to click if wanting to know about rates. The way these words are organised under headings including "Pay", "Apply" "Book" aids clarity .The use of white boxes over a photo makes it visually clear it is the Wairarapa and makes the words stand out. There is not too much on the page so the eye can see quite easily where to look for something specific because of the design. Also if generally looking it is easy to see what the range of information available is."</p>	<p>"In regards my query of footpath maintenance . The council has a very informative page on roads and footpaths, which I have attached PDFs of my process of getting to the information. That didn't allow me to report an issue but there is a 1 click link from the main page option and that is "Get it Sorted". It could not get any easier than that. So respect to the council for having more information than any other council I have visited in regards footpaths, as well as a super convenient way to report footpath damage."</p> <p>"This was an easy portal to navigate and access whatever you required, but there was also a footer on the pages which provided council details to call or email for assistance."</p>	<p>"The links on each page work well and make it easy to complete the task in the portal. For rates it took 1 click!"</p> <p>"Very clear instructions and guidance."</p>	<p>"It felt very current. One of the top boxes was details for this week's kerbside collection, and other news was also relevant for this week."</p> <p>"The page felt very relevant to the local community. The fact the words were superimposed on a vineyard photo was attractive and gave a great sense of relevance to locals. Also the weeks kerbside collection details top left felt like it was a practical useful tool for residents (from one who can never remember whether its cardboard or glass and doesn't have such a useful tool on my council site). The local council meetings and much more made it clear this was not a generic site."</p>	<p>"The user friendly nature of the portal is excellent. It has clear and practical headings, grouped in a sensible way to make it easy to see what information is available. These headings take the user to a wealth of in depth information if required, but web design means at no time does the site feel over whelming or hard to understand. I love that I can pay rates online in 1 click. Not only a practical easy to use site, but a site that feels relevant to the locals it serves and has personality."</p> <p>"I wouldn't hesitate to use this website/portal again – the experience is excellent. It is well designed for the lay person to use and provides a convenient way to seek information and perform tasks like paying bills, submitting reports etc online 24/7. I would recommend others use it also."</p>

Channel-Specific Analysis: Phone



- **Score:** 99.1%
- **National quartile:** Upper national quartile
- **Position in national quartile:** 4th equal (with 5 other councils)

South Wairarapa District Council's phone performance is exceptionally strong and consistent across all times of day. This result reflects highly effective frontline capability, strong knowledge, and reliable first-contact resolution.

Phone performance represents a clear organisational strength and a benchmark for other councils.

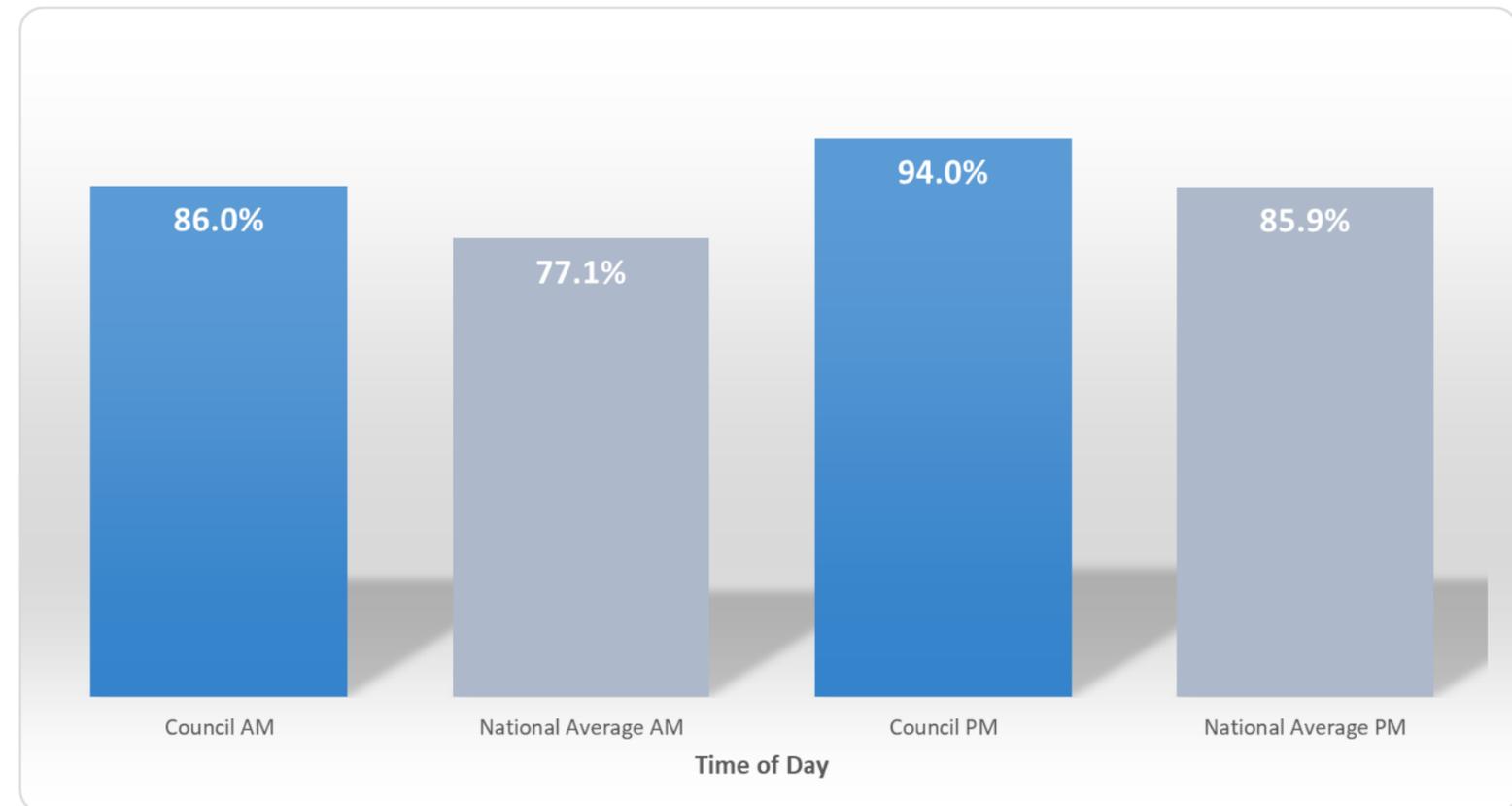
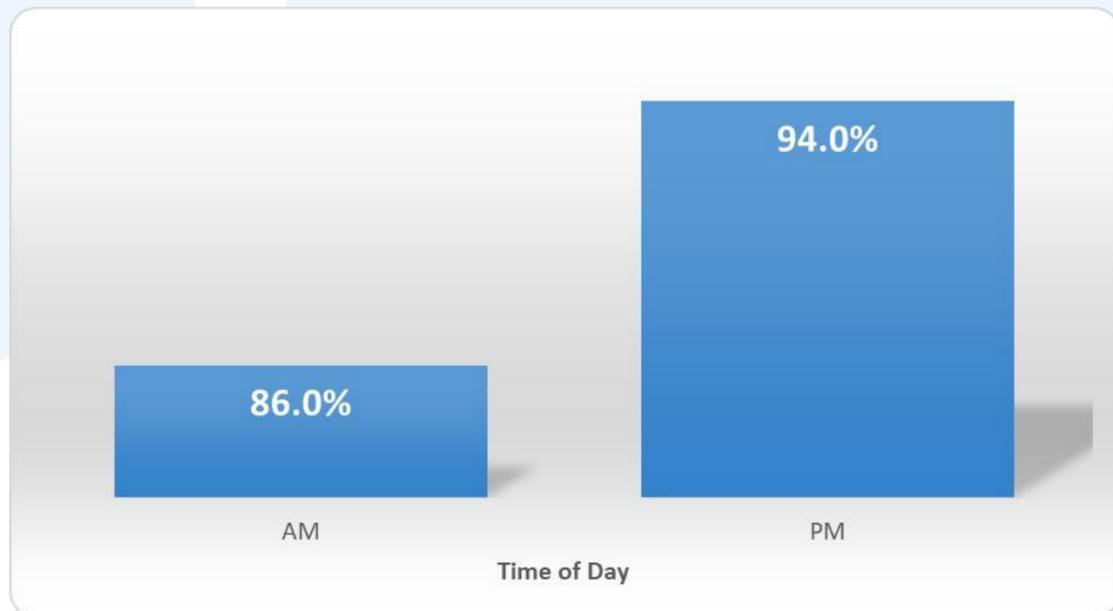
Scores were consistently high nationally, with the lowest result at 92.44% and the highest at 100%, representing a spread of just 7.56% across the 81 councils and CCOs.

Channel-Specific Analysis

Wairarapa District Council – Phone

Area of Focus:	First Impressions	Communications & Listening	Ability to problem solve	Knowledge	Overall experience
Assessment question:	IVR Personalisation	Listening Empathy Clarity	Resourcefulness Clarity (of solutions)	Subject Matter Expertise Accuracy of Information	Call Efficiency Accessibility and Convenience
Example Comment:	<p><i>"10/10 This was a friendly message delivered in a clear and unhurried tone. I particularly like that it gave the option to press a number to speak to the operator first, so you did not have to wait through all the directions of what to press for what department. This mean getting through to the CSR very quick and yet the message was also helpful for those who wanted to listen the full length to get a number to press for a particular department."</i></p> <p><i>"They did not ask for any details to personalise the service."</i></p>	<p><i>"She was super lovely and friendly asking lots of questions to understand my needs."</i></p> <p><i>"They were excellent in this regard using the tone of voice and choosing words to identify with my problem and suggesting what I should do when reporting an issue to remain anonymous and avoid neighbourhood conflict."</i></p> <p><i>"The explained what I needed to know in a clear tone, at an easily understood speed, repeating some points. So they were extremely easy to understand."</i></p>	<p><i>"They had all the information in their head, they did not need to refer to anyone else, or look anything up. They did not miss a beat in conversation thinking about it. I could tell they were confident with their knowledge so they did not need to explore additional options."</i></p> <p><i>"The CSR went the extra mile to explain how to best go through the process and remain anonymous so as not to alert the person being reported."</i></p>	<p><i>"Knew straight away the different ways I could report this issue."</i></p> <p><i>"They inspired 10% confidence."</i></p>	<p><i>"Everything was extremely efficient."</i></p> <p><i>"I was able to speak to a CSR in under 30 seconds, at lunch time. This was excellent service."</i></p>

Channel-Specific Analysis: Email



- **Score:** 90.7%
- **National quartile:** Upper middle national quartile
- **Position in national quartile:** 3rd equal

Email performance is strong overall, with some **variation by time of day**, particularly between morning and afternoon responses. Strengthening early-day triage and response consistency represents the main opportunity to further lift an already strong channel.

Channel-Specific Analysis

South Wairarapa District Council – Email

Area of Focus:14	First Impressions	Communications & Listening	Ability to problem solve	Knowledge	Overall experience
Assessment question:	Response Time Personalisation	Accuracy Professionalism Formatting and Readability	Clarity	Customer guidance	Resolution Time Confidentiality Customer Satisfaction
Example Comment:	<p><i>"A response was received by me in under 5 minutes."</i></p> <p><i>"No personalisation occurred, as my name was not mentioned."</i></p>	<p><i>"The accuracy of the information was great. I clicked on the link and it took me straight to the LIM page.."</i></p> <p><i>"Christine was professional and she was ready to help."</i></p> <p><i>"The layout of the email was fine. She provided the link and had an ending sentence. The layout was structured well."</i></p>	<p><i>"Everything in the email was very clear."</i></p> <p><i>"It was very clear and easy to understand."</i></p>	<p><i>"I was very satisfied and she had given me exactly what I needed to know."</i></p> <p><i>"The guidance and instructions were very helpful."</i></p>	<p><i>"I was satisfied with how long it took to fully resolve my enquiry, it only needed one email."</i></p> <p><i>"At the end of the email, it highlighted that if it was received in error and by the wrong person it should be deleted, however, it didn't delve more into confidentiality." (A.M. comment)</i></p> <p><i>"I felt my privacy was addressed securely and there was a disclaimer at the bottom of the page." (P.M. comment)</i></p> <p><i>"It was satisfactory, however, no personalisation occurred, confidentiality could have been highlighted more and feedback mechanisms could have been provided."</i></p>

Practical next steps

South Wairarapa District Council

The practical next steps are informed by South Wairarapa District Council's overall customer experience performance, which improved by **+19.7** percentage points in 2025 compared with 2024, and by **+22.2** percentage points compared with 2023.

At a channel level:

Phone performance increased from 70.8% in 2024 to 99.1% in 2025, representing a **+28.3 percentage point improvement**, and establishing phone as a clear organisational strength.

Email performance improved from 87.0% in 2024 to 90.7% in 2025, a **+3.7 percentage point increase**, with some remaining variability by time of day.

Online portal performance achieved **100.0%** in its first year of benchmarking in 2025, ranking 1st equal nationally and establishing a strong digital leadership position from the outset.

Based on these results, the following focus areas are likely to offer the greatest return on effort:

1. Protect consistently excellent performance

Maintain the practices underpinning very high performance across phone, online, and email channels, ensuring service resilience as demand or organisational conditions change.

2. Refine email consistency by time of day

Apply targeted improvements to early-day triage and response workflows to reduce variability and further strengthen written communication outcomes.

3. Use top-performing channels as benchmarks

Leverage the behaviours and practices evident in phone and online interactions as benchmarks to support continuous improvement across all channels.

Appendix A: 2025 Customer Experience Benchmarking – National Ranking

QUARTILE 1

1. Waitomo District Council
2. Clutha District Council
3. Hawke’s Bay Regional Council
4. South Wairarapa District Council
5. Whangarei District Council
6. Waimakariri District Council
7. Napier City Council
8. Western Bay of Plenty District Council
9. Horizons Regional Council
10. Bay of Plenty Regional Council
11. Wairoa District Council
12. Porirua City Council
13. Marlborough District Council
14. Timaru District Council
15. Far North District Council
16. Buller District Council
17. Thames Coromandel District Council
18. Whanganui District Council
19. Greater Wellington Regional Council
20. Whakatane District Council

QUARTILE 2

21. Environment Canterbury Regional Council
22. Hastings District Council
23. Waipa District Council
24. Waitaki District Council
25. New Plymouth District Council
26. Otago Regional Council
27. Tasman District Council
28. Tauranga City Council
29. Christchurch City Council
30. Hauraki District Council
31. Invercargill City Council
32. Queenstown Lakes District Council
33. Horowhenua District Council
34. Gisborne District Council
35. Waimate District Council
36. Great Lake Taupo
37. Hurunui District Council
38. Central Hawkes Bay District Council
39. Stratford District Council
40. Westland District Council

QUARTILE 3

41. South Taranaki District Council
42. South Waikato District Council
43. Ashburton District Council
44. Hamilton City Council
45. Rotorua Lakes Council
46. Hutt City Council
47. Nelson City Council
48. Kapiti Coast District Council
49. Kaikoura District Council
50. Central Otago District Council
51. Upper Hutt City Council
52. Masterton District Council
53. Taranaki Regional Council
54. Wellington City Council
55. Matamata Pījako District Council
56. Tararua District Council
57. Palmerston North City Council
58. Gore District Council
59. Chatham Islands Council
60. Manawatu District Council

QUARTILE 4

61. Rangitikei District Council
62. Selwyn District Council
63. Mackenzie District Council
64. Kawerau District Council
65. Hawkes Bay Regional Airport
66. Grey District Council
67. Waikato District Council
68. Kaipara District Council
69. Ruapehu District Council
70. Ōtorohanga District Council
71. Northland Regional Council
72. Carterton District Council
73. Waikato Regional Council
74. Dunedin City Council
75. Auckland Council
76. Auckland Transport
77. Southland District Council
78. Opotiki District Council
79. West Coast Regional Council
80. Wellington Water
81. Environment Southland

Appendix B: District Council – National Rankings

- 1 Waitomo District Council
- 2 Clutha District Council
- 3 South Wairarapa District Council
- 4 Whangarei District Council
- 5 Waimakariri District Council
- 6 Western Bay of Plenty District Council
- 7 Wairoa District Council
- 8 Marlborough District Council
- 9 Timaru District Council
- 10 Far North District Council
- 11 Buller District Council
- 12 Thames Coromandel District Council
- 13 Whanganui District Council
- 14 Whakatane District Council
- 15 Hastings District Council
- 16 Waipa District Council
- 17 Waitaki District Council
- 18 New Plymouth District Council

- 19 Tasman District Council
- 20 Hauraki District Council
- 21 Queenstown Lakes District Council
- 22 Horowhenua District Council
- 23 Gisborne District Council
- 24 Waimate District Council
- 25 Taupō District Council
- 26 Hurunui District Council
- 27 Central Hawkes Bay District Council
- 28 Stratford District Council
- 29 Westland District Council
- 30 South Taranaki District Council
- 31 South Waikato District Council
- 32 Ashburton District Council
- 33 Rotorua Lakes Council
- 34 Kapiti Coast District Council
- 35 Kaikoura District Council
- 36 Central Otago District Council

- 37 Masterton District Council
- 38 Matamata Piako District Council
- 39 Tararua District Council
- 40 Gore District Council
- 41 Chatham Islands Council
- 42 Manawatu District Council
- 43 Rangitikei District Council
- 44 Selwyn District Council
- 45 Mackenzie District Council
- 46 Kawerau District Council
- 47 Grey District Council
- 48 Waikato District Council
- 49 Kaipara District Council
- 50 Ruapehu District Council
- 51 Ōtorohanga District Council
- 52 Carterton District Council
- 53 Southland District Council
- 54 Opotiki District Council

Appendix C: South Wairarapa District Council Channel Contact Details

Date	Time	CSR	Channel
16 September 2025		Christine Allanson	Email AM
15 September 2025	4:20 pm	Christine	Email PM
10 September 2025	10:15 am	Kirsty	Phone AM
8 September 2025	1:25 pm	Ashley	Phone Lunchtime
11 September 2025	3:23 am	Christine	Phone PM
22 September 2025	10:30 am	Not required	Online AM
22 September 2025	4:20 pm	Not needed	Online PM

ALGIM

Bringing people and technology together to deliver better local government services

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