



SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL 2025 RESIDENTS' SURVEY RESULTS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) surveyed residents to understand their views of council-provided services and facilities, leadership and governance, communications, and civil defence preparedness. This year's survey was completed between mid-June and the end of July 2025. A total of n=3,110 South Wairarapa residents were invited to participate in the survey, with n=843 respondents participating. A summary of the main findings from the survey is outlined below.

ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

Satisfaction with rural roads and footpaths remained similar to previous years, however, satisfaction with urban roads increased this year, particularly in Martinborough. Key concerns with roading in the district continued to focus on roading surface conditions, narrow roads, general maintenance, and footpath safety and accessibility.

WATER

Satisfaction with the district's water provision continued to increase this year, with most measures significantly higher than when monitoring commenced. Respondents in Martinborough appeared less satisfied with the water provision, particularly the water quality. Satisfaction with wastewater was similar to that of previous years, with satisfaction consistently between 60% and 70%. However, satisfaction with flooding prevention measures remained low this year, particularly in Featherston. Drainage issues, infrastructure maintenance, and concerns about temporary fixes to water infrastructure remain the primary concerns highlighted by respondents.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management results remained similar to those of 2024, with satisfaction between 60% and 70% for most measures. These results have remained relatively stable since monitoring commenced. The primary waste reduction measures continued to be using reusable shopping bags, the recycling centre, composting, and reusable coffee cups or water bottles. Respondents raised concerns about the affordability of the current waste services (cost of bags and green waste fees), limited recycling options, and whether the current system was fit for purpose.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES

Parks, reserves, open spaces, public toilets, libraries, sports fields, and playgrounds continued to be the most used facilities within the district. Satisfaction with all facilities remained high, with most well over 70%. The exception to this was public toilets, which respondents note need improved cleanliness and upkeep. Satisfaction with library open hours has increased this year, however, satisfaction with the public pools' opening hours has declined. Comments from respondents highlighted the need for continued focus on facilities maintenance and upgrades to optimise the use of facilities among residents.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADVOCACY

Results for SWDC governance and leadership measures remained unchanged this year, with satisfaction less than 45% for all measures. Older respondents (over 80 years) consistently provided higher ratings than others. Comments from respondents identified issues with trust and confidence in the SWDC leadership, concerns about transparency and accountability, and questions over how well the current system represents the SWDC district.

IMAGE AND REPUTATION

Satisfaction with image and reputation measures remained unchanged this year with most measures registering satisfaction lower than 30%; satisfaction with financial management was the lowest rated attribute at 17%. As with governance measures, respondents over 80 were more likely to respond satisfactorily than others. Key concerns raised by respondents about SWDC's image and reputation related to perceptions of trust, communication, and a need to focus on the delivery of key services.

INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL

Forty percent of respondents have interacted with SWDC in the past year, most commonly about a water-related issue, rates, or consents. Eighty percent of respondents who had engaged with SWDC stated that the engagement was very or fairly convenient, and 60% of respondents were satisfied with their engagement. Issues raised by respondents about their engagement with SWDC indicated a mix of both positive and negative experiences, while some respondents indicated poor follow-up and challenges with the timing and accessibility of engaging with SWDC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNICATION

Local community newspapers, Wairarapa Midweek, the SWDC website and Facebook pages, rates invoices, and the quarterly SWDC newsletter were the most preferred channels for connecting with the SWDC. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were satisfied with the information they received from SWDC, with calls for greater clarity of information and greater consideration of non-digital channels.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

The majority of respondents stated that they had a good or excellent quality of life, and two-thirds were satisfied with the image of their local town; both results are consistent with previous years. Ratings of SWDC overall and the direction of the district remained unchanged from previous years, with around one-third of respondents satisfied with either measure. The main concerns raised by respondents relate to infrastructure and core services, leadership and governance, and the affordability of rates.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Ratings for personal resilience remained high and unchanged this year, with most respondents noting they have key emergency items on hand. The primary barrier to preparation was respondents felt they were already prepared, which has remained consistent since monitoring commenced. Respondents' concerns about civil defence related to their community's vulnerability and the importance of communications during emergencies.

CONTENTS

Project Overview	Pg 4
Roads and Footpaths	Pg 7
Water	Pg 12
Waste Management	Pg 21
Community Facilities and Open Spaces	Pg 30
Governance, Leadership, and Advocacy	Pg 41
Image and Reputation	Pg 51
Interactions with Council	Pg 58
Communication with Council	Pg 68
Overall Performance	Pg 72
Civil Defence	Pg 81
Demographics	Pg 86

PROJECT OVERVIEW



PROJECT BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC) is the local area authority responsible for the delivery of services to residents in the South Wairarapa District.

Each year SWDC conduct a survey of residents to understand their perspectives on a range of SWDC services and facilities. This year, SWDC commissioned Versus to conduct the Residents' Survey for 2025. This survey has been conducted since 2021 with any relevant data included for year on year comparison.

METHOD

The data collection for this research was undertaken via an online survey. Residents were sent an invitation to participate in the research, which included a link to the online survey and a unique survey code for them to enter.

The contact details of participants were obtained via the electoral roll, whereby a total of n=3,110 residents were randomly selected to participate. As with 2024, invitations were emailed to anyone whose contact details could be matched to the SWDC ratepayer database, while unmatched contacts received a postal invitation. Reminder emails and letters were sent to participants two weeks after the initial invitation was sent.

Overall, n=1,374 invitations were sent via email with the remaining n=1,736 invitations sent via post. A total of n=843 completed responses were collected from residents resulting in a response rate of 27%.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Residents Survey questionnaire for this year is the same as that used in previous years.

MARGIN OF ERROR

Margin of Error (MoE) is a statistic used to show the amount of random sampling error present in a survey's results. The MoE is particularly relevant when analysing a subset of data as a smaller sample size incurs a greater MoE. The final sample size for this study was n=843 which yields a maximum MoE of +/- 3.4%. That is, if the observed result on the total sample of n=843 is 50% (point of maximum margin of error), then there is a 95% probability that the true answer falls between 46.6% and 53.4%.

SIGNIFICANCE TESTING

Where year on year results have been presented, significance testing has been applied to identify statistically significant differences between 2024 and 2025 findings. Significant differences are shown throughout the report with a square box on figures within the charts and an arrow within tables.

WEIGHTS

Age weights have been applied to the final data set. Weighting is a standard practice in research and is used to account for any skews in the data set, i.e., that each group is represented as it would be in the population.

The weighting proportions are based on the 2023 Census (Statistics New Zealand). These proportions are outlined in the table below:

Age	Weighting proportion (%)
18-34	18%
35-49	23%
50-64	30%
65-79	23%
80+	6%

PROJECT BACKGROUND

NOTES ON REPORTING

Findings for this study have been split and reported in 10 main sections.

The following details should be considered when reviewing this report:

- The question and base size for each chart is shown at the bottom of the page;
- On certain charts, some labels 2% or less have not been shown due to the overlapping of results making it difficult to read;
- Due to rounding and multi-choice questions, not all percentages add up to 100%;
- Demographic results have been reported within tables below the relevant questions.
- Please note some of the demographic subgroups only have a few respondents within the group. The sample sizes for each subgroup are listed below.
 - Male n=394, Female n=441, prefer not to say n=8.
 - 18-34 n=37, 35-49 n=145, 50-64 n=250, 65-79 n=334, 80+ n=77.
 - Greytown n=336, Featherston n=252, Martinborough n=255.
 - NZ European n=742, Māori n=43, Pacific people n=5, All others n=69, prefer not to say n=24 (multiple response question).

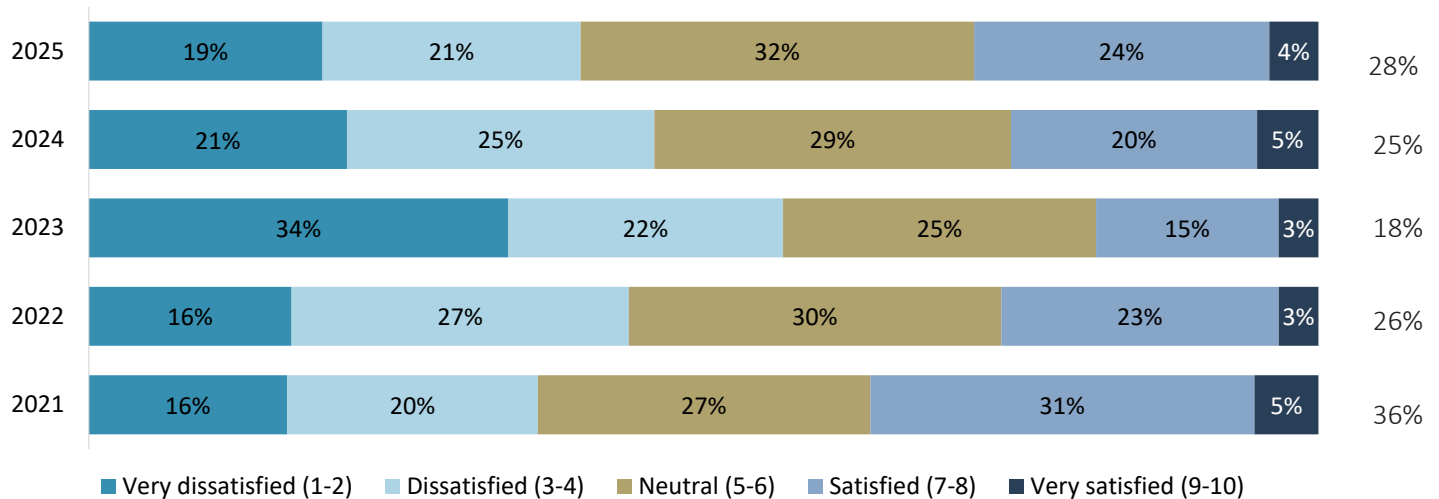
ROADS AND FOOTPATHS



RURAL ROADS

Respondents were asked about the district's condition and maintenance of the district's rural roads. In 2025, 28% of respondents were satisfied with the rural roads, while 40% were dissatisfied. This year's satisfied result is slightly higher than last year's, although this was not a significant change. There were no demographic or area differences in the ratings of rural road conditions.

CONDITION AND MAINTENANCE OF RURAL ROADS

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	35%	24%	14%	34%	30%	29%	36%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	29%	25%	31%	28%	21%	19%	46%

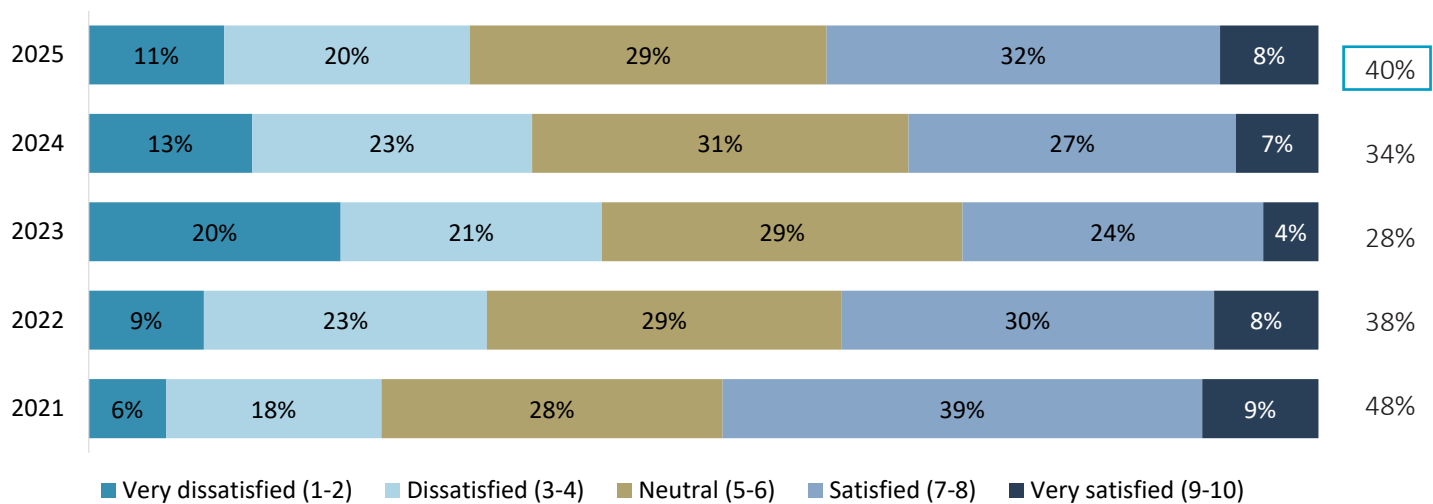
Q. The next few questions are about the roads, footpaths and cycle ways. This does not include the state highways.

Using the 1 to 10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied', how would you rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following... Condition and maintenance of rural roads in the district. Base size n=802 (don't know responses removed).

URBAN ROADS

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the district's urban roads. This year, 40% of respondents were satisfied with these roads, a 6% increase from 2024. Concurrently, dissatisfaction has continued to decline, now at 31%, down 5% from 2024. Martinborough respondents showed higher satisfaction levels than respondents from other areas, while Māori respondents had lower satisfaction with urban roads.

CONDITION AND MAINTENANCE OF URBAN ROADS IN THE DISTRICT

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	41%	40%	35%	43%	40%	39%	49%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	36%	35%	52% ↑	41%	12% ↓	19%	49%

Q. The next few questions are about the roads, footpaths and cycle ways. This does not include the state highways.

Using the 1 to 10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied', how would you rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following... Condition and maintenance of urban roads in the district. Base size n=836 (don't know responses removed).

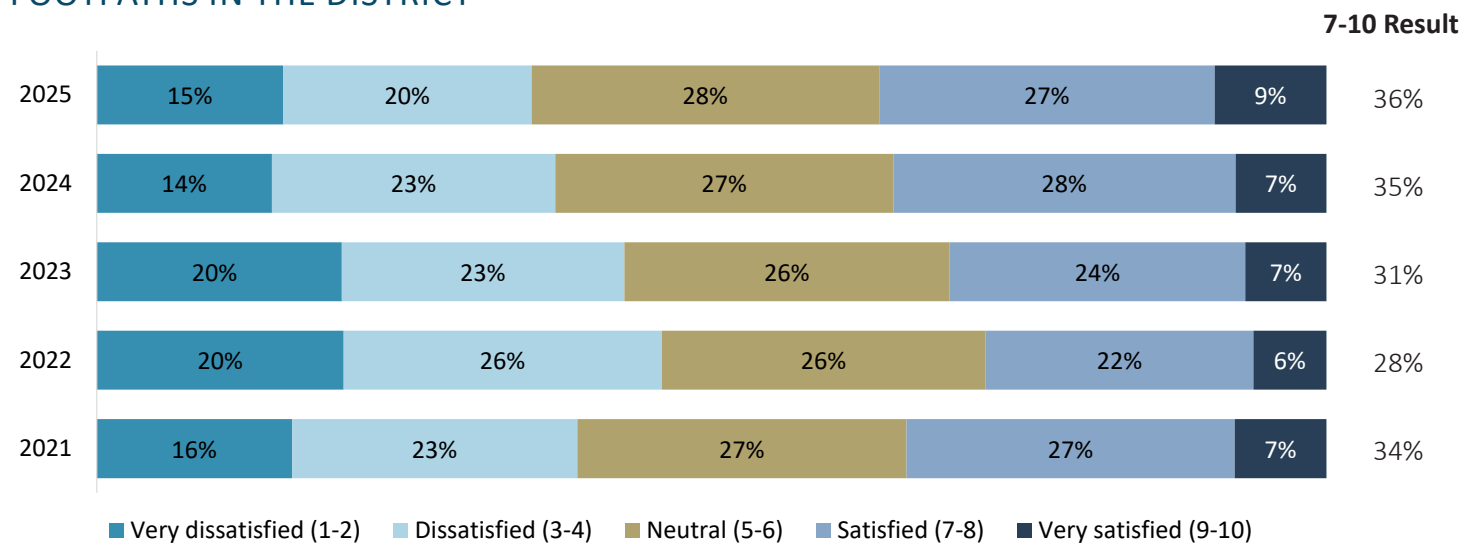
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

FOOTPATHS

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the district's footpaths. The results for 2025 were similar to those from 2024, with 36% of respondents satisfied with the district's footpaths. Dissatisfaction has declined steadily since 2022 and is now at 35%. There were no differences across the different areas of demographics for this measure.

FOOTPATHS IN THE DISTRICT



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	41%	34%	33%	38%	40%	34%	36%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	38%	27%	46%	37%	22%	19%	51%

Q. The next few questions are about the roads, footpaths and cycle ways. This does not include the state highways.

Using the 1 to 10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied', how would you rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following... Footpaths in the district. Base size n=815 (don't know responses removed).

ROADS AND FOOTPATHS SUMMARY

Satisfaction with roads and footpaths remains similar this year to 2024. Levels of dissatisfaction have continued to decline, with most levels now similar to those from 2022.

A total of n=487 respondents commented about the district's footpaths and roads. These comments predominantly focused on the general condition, maintenance, and safety concerns. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

POTHOLES AND SURFACE CONDITIONS

The majority of respondents mentioned potholes and repairs. Comments highlighted that repairs were often short-lived, with potholes reappearing within weeks. The re-emergence of potholes was especially problematic for drivers forced off roads, resulting in tyre damage and safety risks.

"The roads disintegrate easily with early potholes on the rural roads – they get filled then 3 weeks later are back being very dangerous."

"Too many potholes. The grass on the sides of the seal needs to be taken away to let the water runoff."

GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND VISIBILITY

Some respondents pointed to general maintenance issues such as faded or damaged road signs and overgrown verges that limited visibility or impeded runoff. Respondents often raised these concerns with a broader feeling that rural areas don't receive adequate maintenance despite high rates.

"More maintenance – especially rural roads. We pay a LOT in rates and get nothing."

One particular point made about maintenance was the issue of blocked drains and autumn leaf buildup, which respondents noted causes water pooling and slipping hazards on roads. Respondents pointed out that maintenance needs to be consistent to prevent minor issues from becoming significant problems.

NARROW ROADS AND SAFETY

Narrow rural roads were another recurring issue. Some respondents felt that heavily used roads lacked sufficient width and sealing, creating hazards when vehicles pass each other. Respondents suggested widening narrow rural roads and sealing road shoulders to improve safety.

"Some rural roads with high traffic are too narrow – I already have burst two tyres being forced off and into potholes."

FOOTPATH SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Respondents also mentioned concerns about footpath safety. Footpath issues included the visibility at intersections and conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and scooters. Respondents also raised accessibility issues with unsealed paths, loose gravel, or uneven surfaces, particularly for older residents or those with limited mobility.

"Cyclists and scooters on footpaths – dangerous. Who is liable when a cyclist crashes into a car moving from a driveway?"

"It is not easy to walk on the loose gravel."

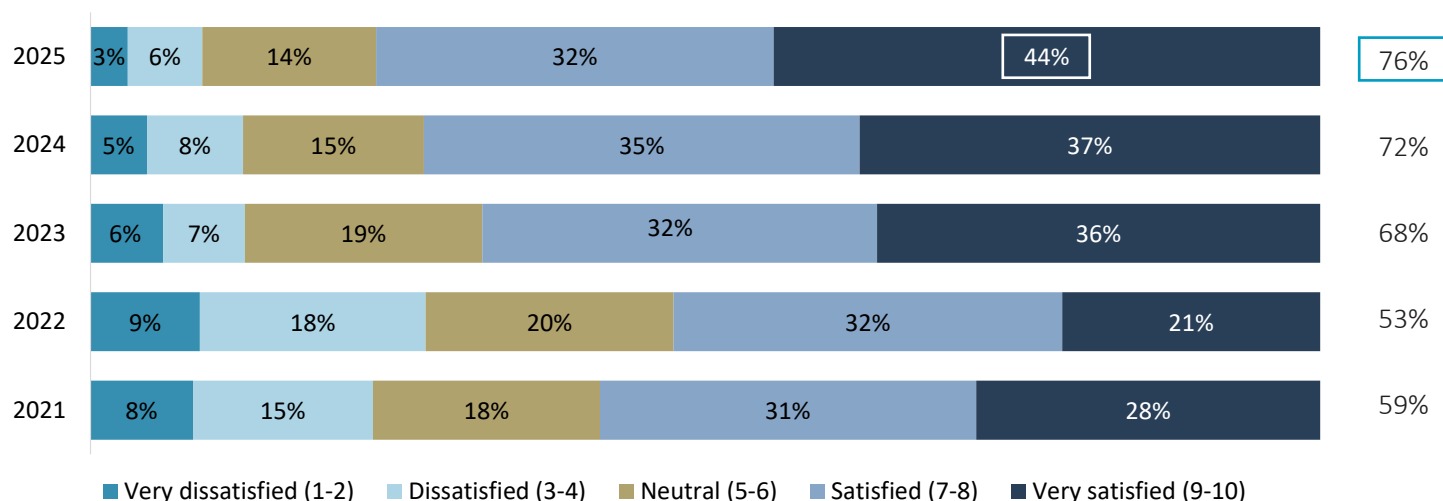
WATER



WATER RELIABILITY

Sixty-five percent of respondents indicated they were connected to a town water supply (compared to 64% in 2024 and 60% in 2023). Respondents connected to the water system were asked how satisfied they were with the reliability of council's water supply. Seventy-six percent of respondents were satisfied with the system, which was a significant increase from the result of 2024 and continues the increase from 2022. Dissatisfaction has continued to decline and is now at 9%. There were no significant differences across areas and demographics for this measure.

RELIABILITY OF WATER SUPPLY

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	78%	76%	76%	78%	73%	78%	81%

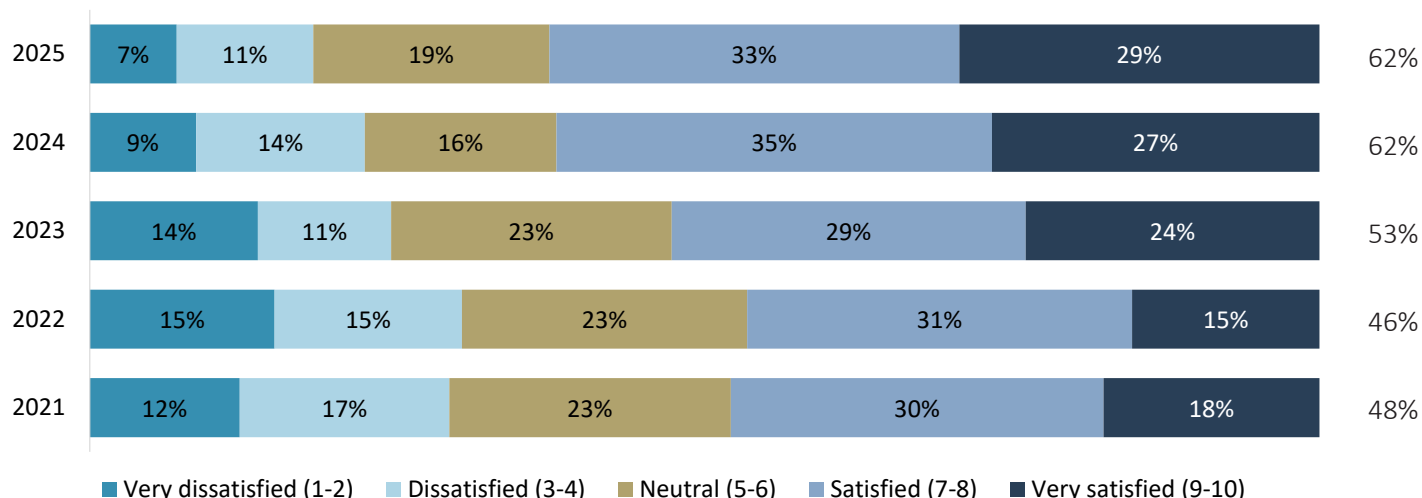
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	81%	76%	70%	77%	74%	69%	79%

Q. For the next few questions, we will use a 1 to 10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'. Thinking about the water supply, how would you rate your satisfaction with... The reliability of the water supply. Base size n=589 (don't know responses removed).
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

WATER QUALITY

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the district's water quality. This year's result was similar to that from 2024, with 62% of respondents satisfied with the district's water quality. Dissatisfaction continues to decline, and it is now at 18%. Satisfaction with the district's water quality was higher among respondents in Greytown and significantly lower among respondents in Martinborough.

QUALITY OF WATER

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	66%	60%	62%	60%	62%	63%	65%

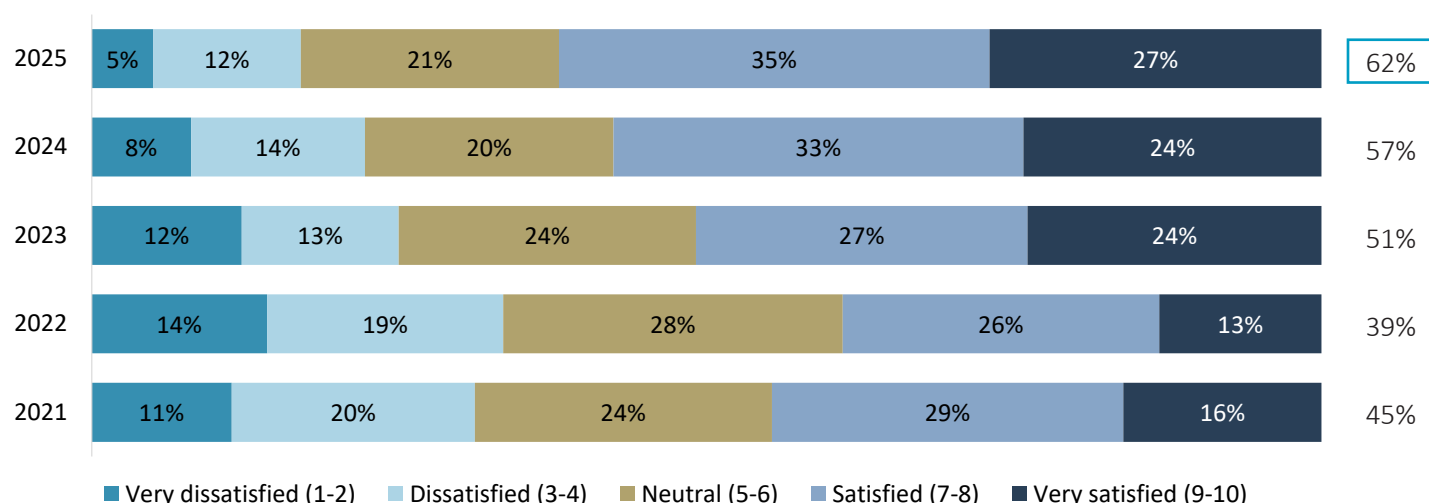
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	75% ↑	66%	34% ↓	62%	44%	55%	66%

Q. For the next few questions, we will use a 1 to 10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'. Thinking about the water supply, how would you rate your satisfaction with... Quality of the water, including odours, taste and colour. Base size n=599 (don't know responses removed). The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WATER OVERALL

Respondents were asked to state their overall satisfaction with the water supply. This year's result saw a significant increase in satisfaction, which is now at 62%, the highest result in the monitoring period. Dissatisfaction was also the lowest it has been over the monitoring period, at 17% (down from 31% in 2021). Satisfaction was lowest among respondents from Martinborough and Māori respondents.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	64%	61%	57%	67%	55%	65%	74%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	70%	66%	43% ↓	63%	34% ↓	69%	67%

Q. And overall, how satisfied are you with the district's water supply? Base size n=582 (don't know responses removed).

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

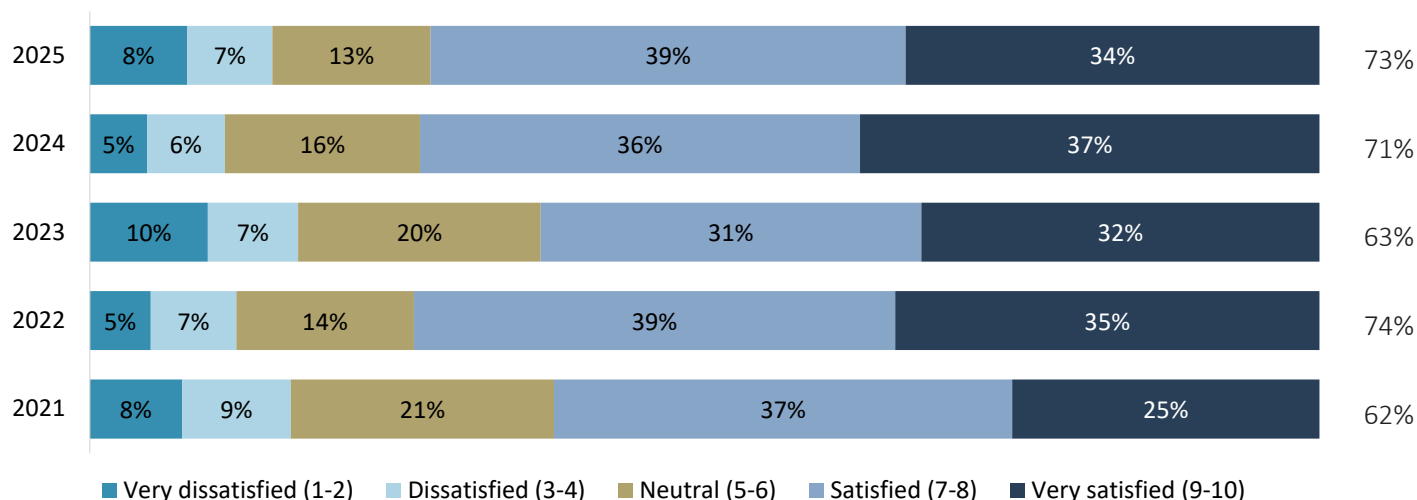
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WASTEWATER RELIABILITY

Sixty-two percent of respondents were connected to the town wastewater system, similar to 2024 (62%).

Respondents connected to the wastewater system were asked how satisfied they were with its reliability. This year, 73% of respondents were satisfied with wastewater reliability, similar to 2024. Dissatisfaction remains low at 15%. Respondents from Greytown had higher levels of satisfaction with wastewater reliability than other areas in the district.

RELIABILITY OF WASTEWATER SYSTEM

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	71%	73%	72%	77%	70%	70%	77%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	81% ↑	69%	63%	73%	52%	50%	79%

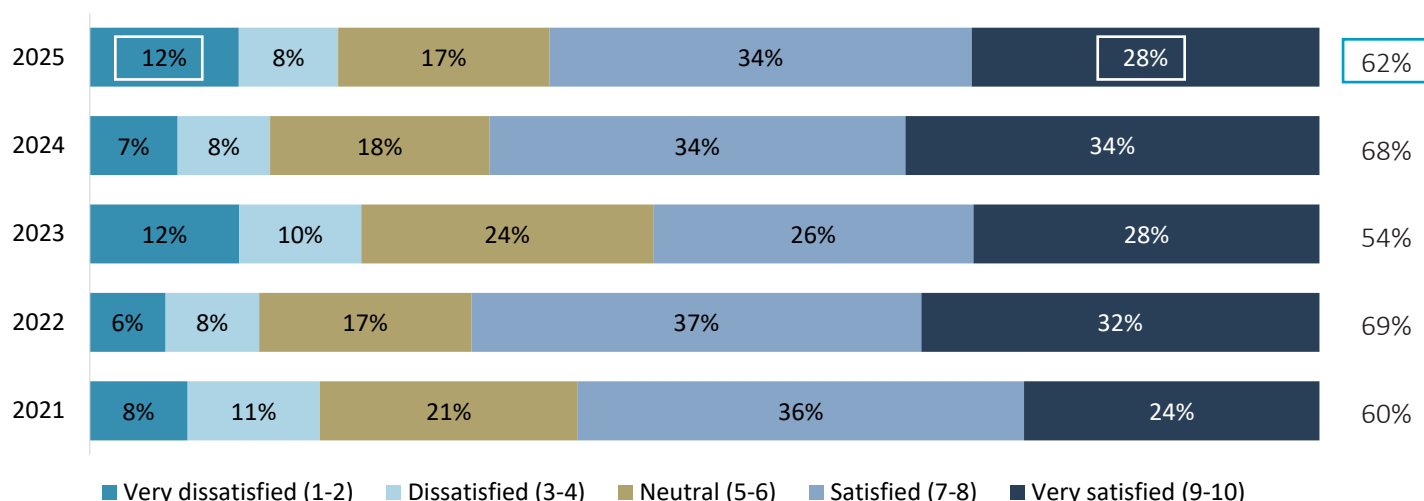
Q. Thinking about the Council's management of its wastewater system, how would you rate your satisfaction with... The reliability of the wastewater system. Base size n=535 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WASTEWATER OVERALL

Respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with the wastewater system. This year, 62% of respondents were satisfied with the wastewater system, a decline from 68% in 2024. Dissatisfaction has increased to 20% this year, with a significant increase in the proportion of very dissatisfied respondents. Respondents in Greytown had higher levels of satisfaction than respondents from other areas in the district.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH WASTEWATER

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	63%	62%	44%	72%	64%	60%	74%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	72% ↑	59%	51%	63%	42%	50%	73%

Q. Thinking about the Council's management of its wastewater system, how would you rate your satisfaction with... And overall, how satisfied are you with the wastewater system? Base size n=528 (don't know responses removed).

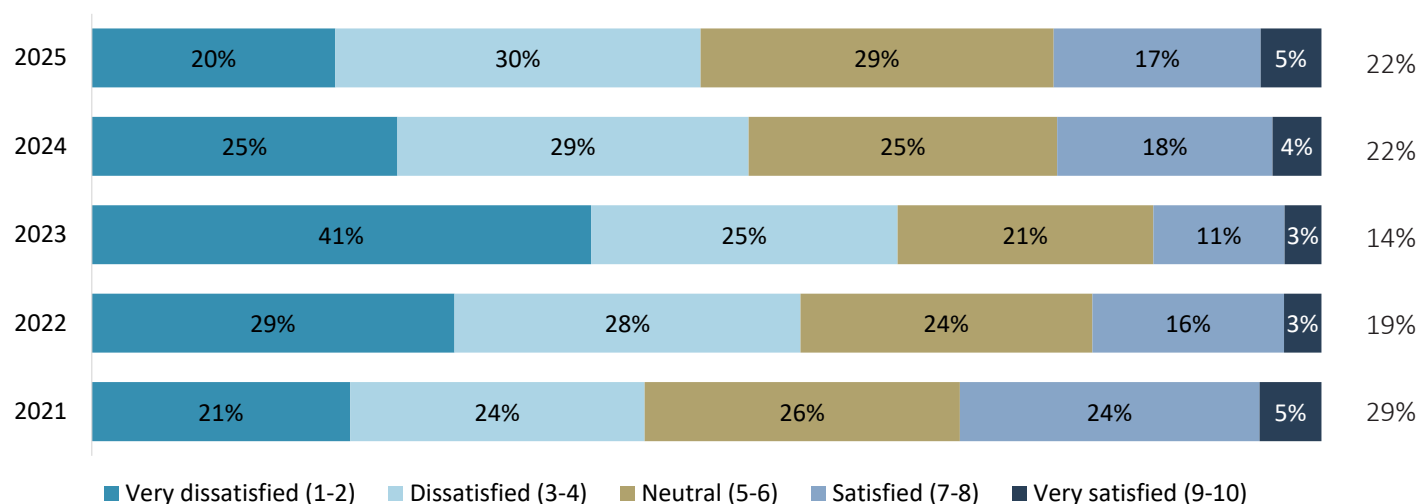
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

FLOODING

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were that the stormwater system keeps the roads and pavements free from flooding. This year, 22% of respondents were satisfied with this measure, which is identical to the 2024 result. Overall dissatisfaction has declined this year and is now at 50%. Respondents in Greytown provided higher satisfaction ratings than other areas in the district, with satisfaction significantly lower among respondents in Featherston. Respondents over the age of 80 were more likely to be satisfied than younger respondents.

KEEPING ROADS AND PAVEMENTS FREE FROM FLOODING

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	25%	20%	11%	23%	21%	25%	48% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	30% ↑	13% ↓	23%	21%	15%	31%	33%

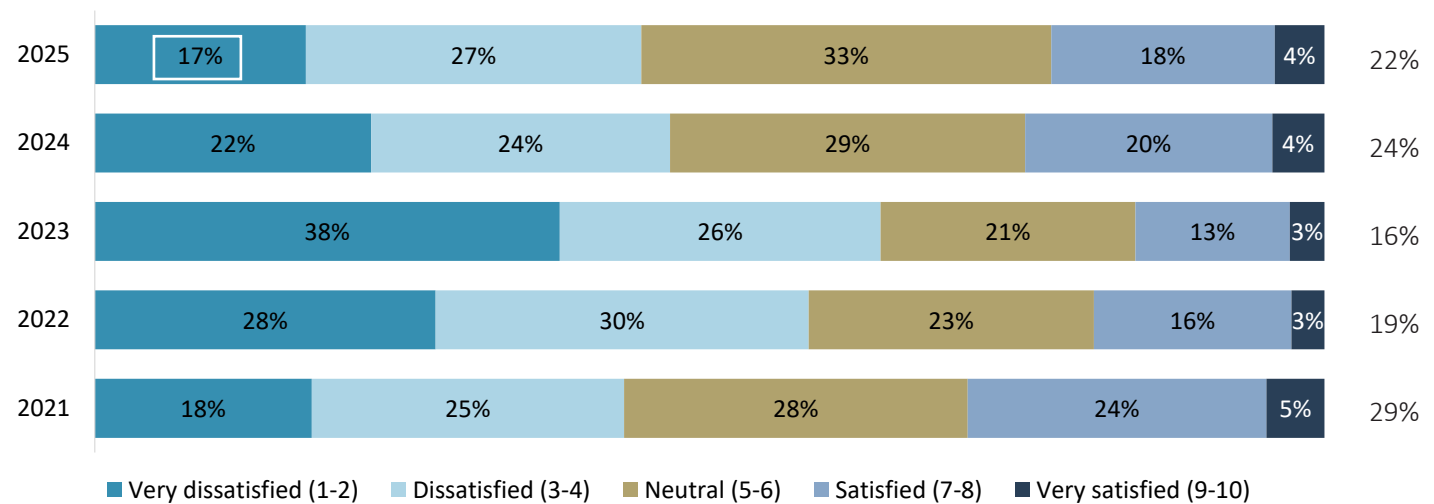
Q. Thinking about stormwater management in the district, how would you rate your satisfaction with... Keeping roads and pavements free from flooding? Base size n=825 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

STORMWATER OVERALL

Respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with the district's stormwater system. Twenty-two percent of respondents were satisfied with the district's stormwater system, similar to the 2024 result. Dissatisfaction is currently at 44%, a slight decline from the 2024 result. Satisfaction was significantly higher among respondents in Greytown and significantly lower among respondents in Featherston. Respondents over the age of 80 years were also significantly more likely to be satisfied than respondents in other age groups.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH STORMWATER

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	27%	19%	8%	28%	21%	26%	48% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	30% ↑	15% ↓	23%	22%	12%	56%	29%

Q. Thinking about stormwater management in the district, how would you rate your satisfaction with... And overall, how satisfied are you with the stormwater systems in the district? Base size n=803 (don't know responses removed).

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WATER SUMMARY

This year, satisfaction with water and wastewater services has generally improved. Satisfaction with the reliability of the town water supply (76%) and overall water supply (62%) increased and are now at their highest levels since monitoring commenced.

Satisfaction with the wastewater system's reliability remains relatively unchanged this year (73%). However, overall satisfaction has dropped to 62%, and there has been a significant increase in dissatisfaction. Satisfaction with the district's stormwater system remains relatively low (22%), and there are high levels of dissatisfaction, particularly in Featherston.

A total of n=397 respondents provided comments about the district's water infrastructure. These comments predominantly focused on issues with drainage, maintenance, and service experiences. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

STORMWATER AND DRAINAGE ISSUES

Several comments noted ongoing concerns about drainage and stormwater systems. A common issue was the lack of regular maintenance of culverts and drains, which respondents felt created surface flooding during heavy rain. These flooding events were reported around residential streets, but greater concern was shown when this occurred around areas of high traffic, e.g., schools.

"The flooding around schools and the medical centre must improve."

INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

Respondents noted the need for improvements in water infrastructure maintenance. The most common suggestions for improvements included more frequent drain clearing, especially during seasons when debris is higher, and upgrading of old systems that are no longer fit for purpose.

Some felt that the current infrastructure does not reflect the increasing severity of weather events or the district's long-term needs. The lack of capacity in wastewater

systems, particularly, the inability to connect new developments, was mentioned as an issue for growth in the district. Several respondents described this as a failure of long-term planning and investment, with urgent calls for modernisation and future-proofing of infrastructure.

"The wastewater issues and not being able to have any new connections is a disaster... Given the amount we pay in rates, it's a sham that this isn't fixed yet."

SERVICE DELIVERY EXPERIENCES

A strong theme throughout was dissatisfaction with the SWDC's responsiveness and planning. Respondents felt the council relied too heavily on temporary fixes, failed to act proactively e.g., clearing leaves before forecast rain, and often lacked clear communication. Many rural respondents who manage their own water or septic systems questioned the fairness of their rates. Others noted that essential services had not kept pace with population growth or climate pressures, leading to perceptions that basic delivery was no longer being met.

"We pay a lot of money for not much service... fix the pipes, this is a basic need."

While much of the feedback was critical of the water infrastructure, a few respondents expressed satisfaction with their water service, specifically praising Wellington Water's role and delivery. These views were less common but offered a more balanced perspective on SWDC's service.

"My experience is limited about other districts, but I consider the council serves the community very well... Wellington Water has been brilliant."

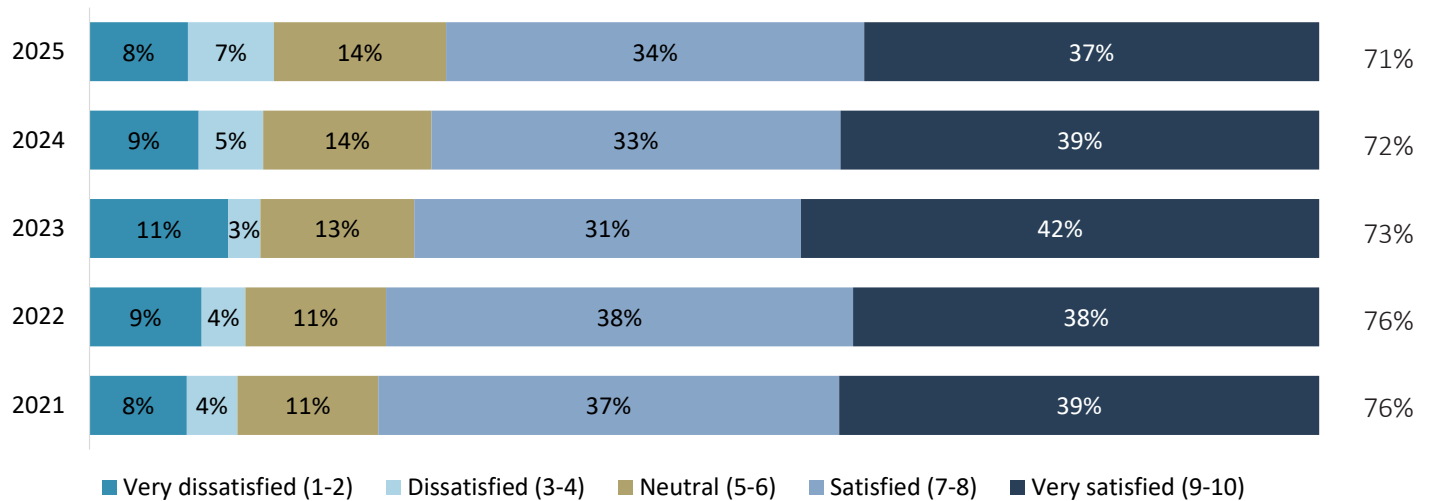
WASTE MANAGEMENT



KERBSIDE RECYCLING

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the kerbside recycling collection service. Seventy-one percent of respondents were satisfied with this service, which was similar to the results from 2024 but is the lowest recorded rating thus far. Dissatisfaction with the service remained low at only 15% but has climbed steadily since 2021. The results were similar across the various areas and demographics, although older respondents were more satisfied with the service than younger respondents.

KERBSIDE RECYCLING COLLECTION

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	73%	71%	45% ↓	78%	71%	82% ↑	85%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	81% ↑	69%	63%	72%	49%	81%	71%

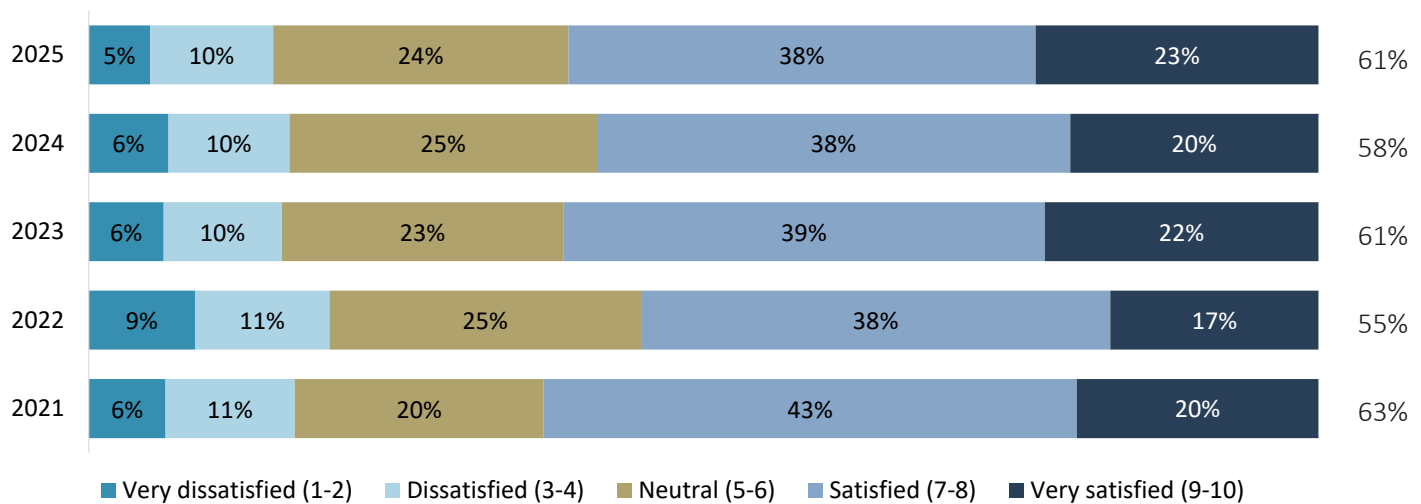
Q. How satisfied are you with each of the following? Kerbside recycling collection. Base size n=722 (don't know responses removed).
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

LITTER CONTROL

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the district's litter control. This year, 61% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the district's litter control, while only 15% were dissatisfied. These results are similar to those of previous years. Greytown respondents have much higher satisfaction levels with the service, while those in Featherston have much lower satisfaction levels.

LITTER CONTROL

7-10 Result



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	59%	63%	39%	65%	68%	64%	64%

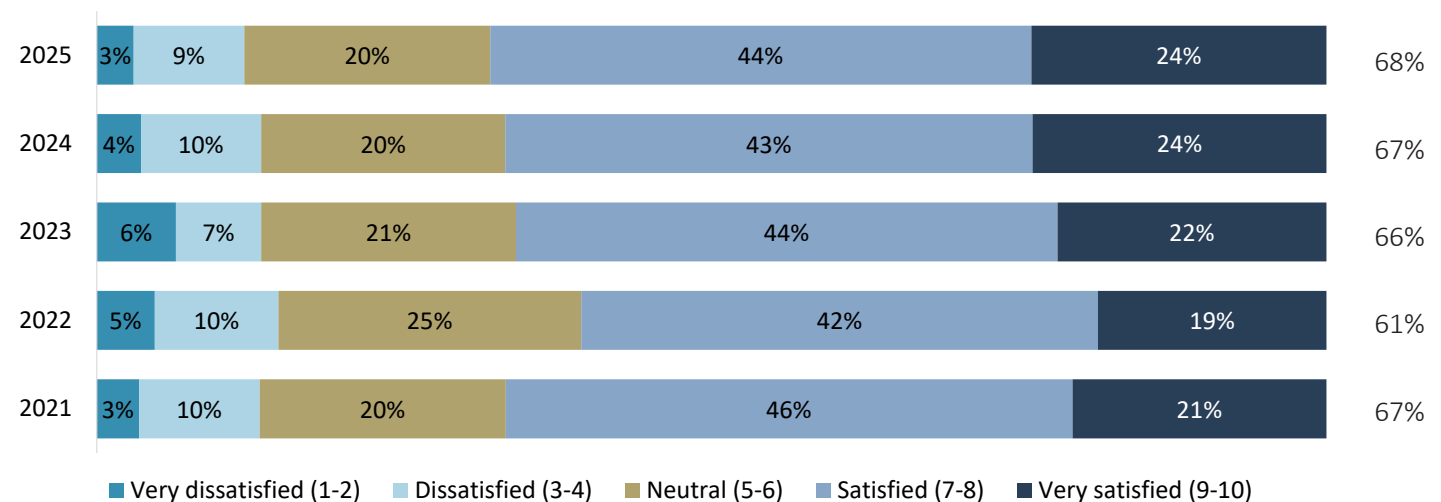
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	72% ↑	47% ↓	62%	61%	51%	56%	60%

Q. How satisfied are you with each of the following? Litter control. Base size n=808 (don't know responses removed).
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

STREET CLEANLINESS

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district's streets. This year, 68% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the service, while only 12% were dissatisfied. These results build on the increases of the previous two years, with this year's satisfaction resulting in the highest level since monitoring commenced. Respondents in Featherston have significantly lower levels of satisfaction than respondents from other areas of the district.

CLEANLINESS OF THE STREETS GENERALLY

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	68%	70%	59%	73%	69%	69%	67%

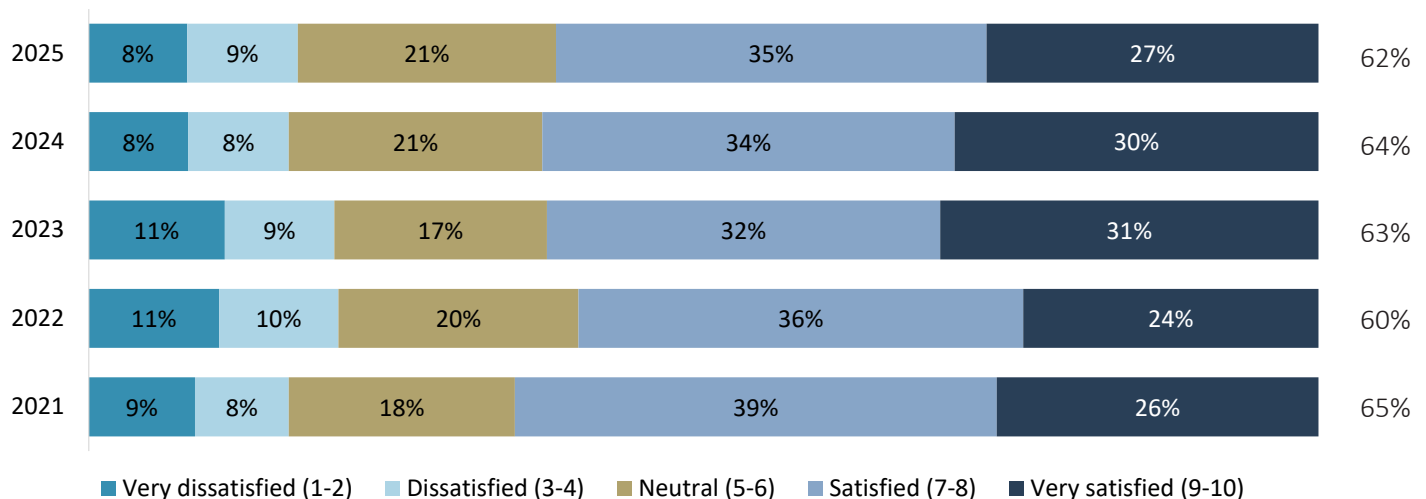
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	73%	58% ↓	73%	70%	59%	69%	63%

Q. How satisfied are you with each of the following? Cleanliness of the streets in general. Base size n=833 (don't know responses removed).
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were that refuse collection and disposal met the community's needs. Overall, 62% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied, while only 17% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This year's result is similar to that of previous years. Respondents in Greytown and those over 65 have higher satisfaction ratings than other respondents.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL MEETS NEEDS OF COMMUNITY

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	67%	59%	44%	64%	61%	72% ↑	78%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	72% ↑	55%	58%	63%	41%	56%	59%

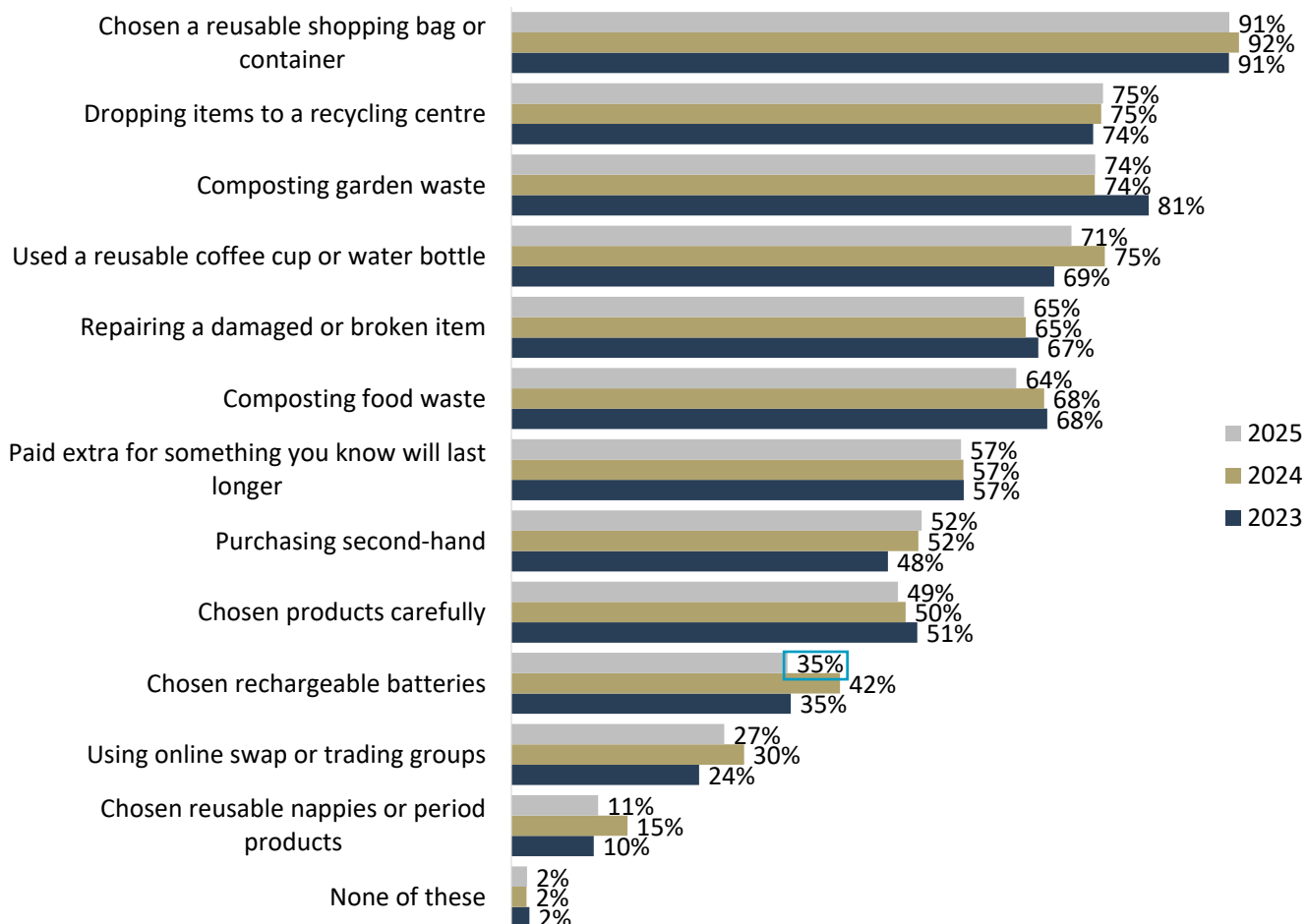
Q. How satisfied are you with each of the following? Refuse collection and disposal meets needs of the community. Base size n=756 (don't know responses removed). The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WASTE REDUCTION

Respondents were presented with a list of waste reduction actions and asked which ones they undertook to limit the waste in their household.

The responses were similar to the 2024 results, with the most common activities being using reusable bags or containers, dropping items off at a recycling centre, and composting. These actions have consistently been the most common since monitoring commenced. Less frequent actions were using reusable nappies or period products, using online swap or trade groups, or choosing reusable batteries. There has been a slight decline in the proportion of respondents who composted their food waste this year. Demographic and area breakdowns of the actions are shown on the following pages.

WASTE REDUCTION MEASURES



Q. And, in order to reduce waste, which of the following have you done over the past 12 months? Base size n=843

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

WASTE REDUCTION

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Chosen a reusable shopping bag or container	87% ↓	94% ↑	92%	91%	93%	91%	84%
Dropping items to a recycling centre rather than landfill	72%	76%	68%	73%	81%	77%	61% ↓
Composting garden waste	75%	73%	70%	77%	75%	77%	58% ↓
Used a reusable coffee cup or water bottle	62% ↓	77% ↑	81%	78%	77%	55% ↓	43% ↓
Repairing a damaged or broken item	65%	66%	76%	64%	67%	61%	47% ↓
Composting food waste	64%	63%	57%	66%	66%	66%	56%
Paid extra for something you know will last longer	55%	57%	59%	62%	59%	51%	34% ↓
Purchasing second-hand clothing or household items	41% ↓	60% ↑	59%	54%	60% ↑	37% ↓	29% ↓
Chosen products carefully, based on how minimised or recyclable their packaging is	46%	50%	49%	48%	50%	52%	26% ↓
Chosen rechargeable batteries	35%	34%	41%	39%	32%	30%	27%
Using online swap or trading groups	24%	30%	38%	34%	29%	13% ↓	9% ↓
Chosen reusable nappies or period products	5% ↓	15% ↑	24% ↑	24% ↑	3% ↓	1% ↓	0%
None of these	4% ↑	1% ↓	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

WASTE REDUCTION

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Chosen a reusable shopping bag or container	92%	90%	92%	91%	78%	75%	92%
Dropping items to a recycling centre rather than landfill	74%	74%	75%	74%	66%	63%	65%
Composting garden waste	73%	72%	78%	74%	50%	69%	80%
Used a reusable coffee cup or water bottle	70%	72%	72%	72%	65%	31%	69%
Repairing a damaged or broken item	64%	66%	67%	66%	40%	44%	62%
Composting food waste	59%	68%	64%	63%	62%	44%	69%
Paid extra for something you know will last longer	55%	57%	58%	57%	34%	44%	56%
Purchasing second-hand clothing or household items	53%	54%	47%	51%	35%	19%	62%
Chosen products carefully, based on how minimised or recyclable their packaging is	50%	45%	51%	49%	26%	19%	53%
Chosen rechargeable batteries	34%	34%	36%	35%	14%	19%	38%
Using online swap or trading groups	26%	29%	25%	26%	17%	0%	41%
Chosen reusable nappies or period products	8%	16%	9%	10%	2%	0%	19%
None of these	2%	1%	3%	2%	13%	0%	4%

WASTE MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Satisfaction with waste-related services remained generally positive, though kerbside recycling saw its lowest satisfaction rating to date at 71% despite low dissatisfaction. Litter control (61% satisfaction) and street cleanliness (68% satisfaction) both held steady or improved this year, with Featherston respondents consistently reporting lower satisfaction.

Using reusable bags, composting the garden, and using the recycling centre remained the most common waste reduction behaviours, although composting food slightly declined this year.

A total of n=322 respondents commented about the district's waste infrastructure. These comments predominantly focused on the cost of the service, recycling options, and the appropriateness of the current system. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESS

Respondents' most significant concerns related to the cost associated with council-provided waste services. Many respondents felt that waste disposal services were increasingly unaffordable particularly for lower-income households and those living in rural areas. The cost of official SWDC rubbish bags, green waste fees, and tip charges was frequently described as excessive, especially in relation to the level of service received. Respondents also questioned whether SWDC was providing value for money in this area and there was concern that the costs for proper disposal may lead to an increase in illegal dumping in the future.

"Price of council bags are more than buying private bins."

"The yellow rubbish bags are extremely expensive... Council should invest in bins for each household."

RECYCLING SERVICES

Several respondents expressed frustration with the limited recycling options suggesting there needs to be more comprehensive and convenient waste services. Suggestions included kerbside food scraps collection, soft plastics recycling, e-waste drop-off points, and scheduled inorganic waste pickups. There was also support for subsidised or free composting systems and improved access to green waste disposal, particularly for properties without trailers or the ability to self-transport. These responses reflected both environmental concerns and a desire to reduce household waste through a greater recycling options.

"We need compost bins and more recycling stations!"

"Polystyrene recycling needed."

FIT-FOR-PURPOSE SERVICES

Rural respondents frequently commented that they receive little to no waste service despite paying the same or similar rates as urban residents. Some noted they have to travel long distances to dispose of their rubbish and recycling. Despite the concerns, respondents shared positive feedback about staff, noting courteous and helpful engagements at local landfill and transfer stations.

"The staff at the Martinborough landfill are lovely."

In comparison, urban respondents noted that kerbside recycling systems were not always fit-for-purpose especially in towns with high-wind areas where bags and bins reportedly tip or blow over easily. This creates scattered litter and contaminated recycling. These issues have led to frustration and calls for more robust and weather-resistant waste collection systems.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES

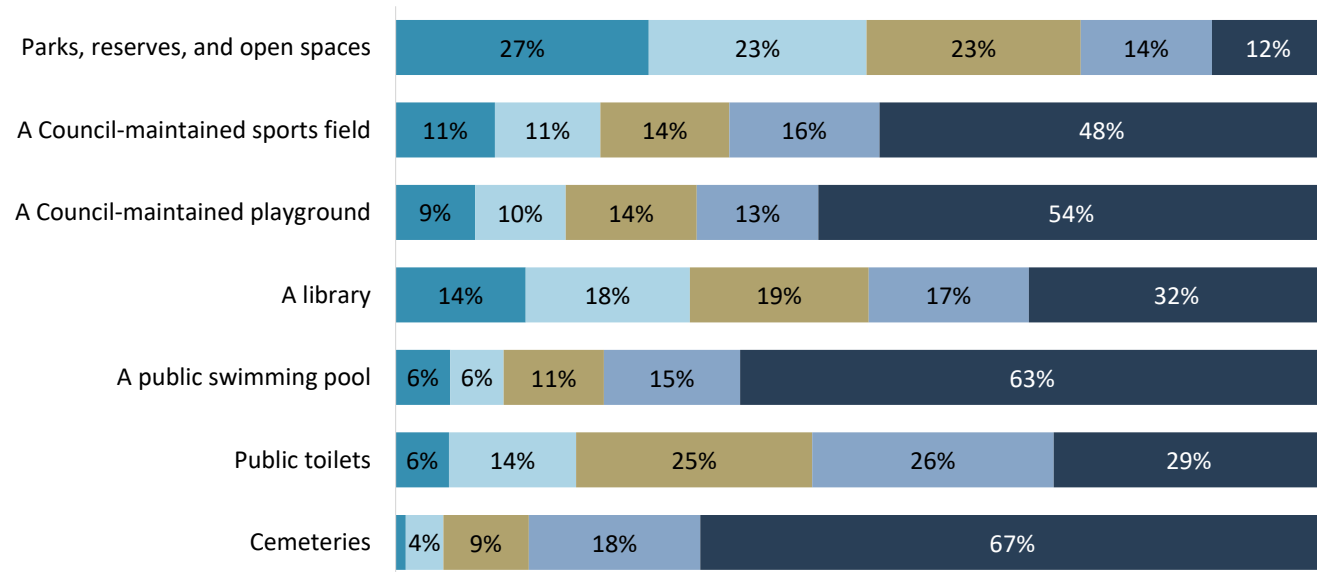


USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES

Respondents were asked about their use of the district's community facilities and open spaces. The most frequently used facilities and open spaces in the past 12 months continue to be the parks, reserves, and open spaces, followed by the public toilets and libraries. This year, however, there have been small declines in use across several facilities and open spaces, although none of these changes are significant.

The tables on the following page show demographic and area differences in using the facilities and services.

USE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



■ Weekly, or more often ■ Once or twice a month ■ Several times a year ■ Once or twice in the year ■ Not at all

USERS (AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	93%	87%	85%	88%	88%
A Council-maintained sports field	58%	46%	49%	56%	52%
A Council-maintained playground	54%	48%	46%	50%	46%
A library	74%	67%	64%	72%	68%
A public swimming pool	41%	33%	35%	41%	37%
Public toilets	70%	67%	72%	75%	71%
Cemeteries	33%	35%	35%	30%	33%

Q. The next few questions are about facilities and services that the Council provides for public use. In the last 12 months, about how frequently have you visited or used each of the following? Base size n=843.

USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (USED AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	89%	87%	92%	94% ↑	86%	86%	69% ↓
A Council-maintained sports field	56%	49%	51%	71% ↑	49%	43% ↓	34% ↓
A Council-maintained playground	47%	44%	43%	65% ↑	37% ↓	45%	22% ↓
A library	70%	67%	62%	77% ↑	60% ↓	74%	69%
A public swimming pool	36%	38%	38%	63% ↑	32%	25% ↓	10% ↓
Public toilets	68%	72%	78%	81% ↑	66%	65%	57% ↓
Cemeteries	30%	34%	32%	32%	34%	31%	40%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	90%	89%	84%	88%	91%	75%	90%
A Council-maintained sports field	54%	46%	56%	52%	56%	75%	39%
A Council-maintained playground	43%	44%	50%	44%	54%	31%	41%
A library	71%	65%	68%	69%	72%	44%	71%
A public swimming pool	41%	37%	33%	37%	42%	19%	42%
Public toilets	70%	73%	69%	70%	65%	81%	79%
Cemeteries	30%	35%	33%	33%	57%	63%	24%

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

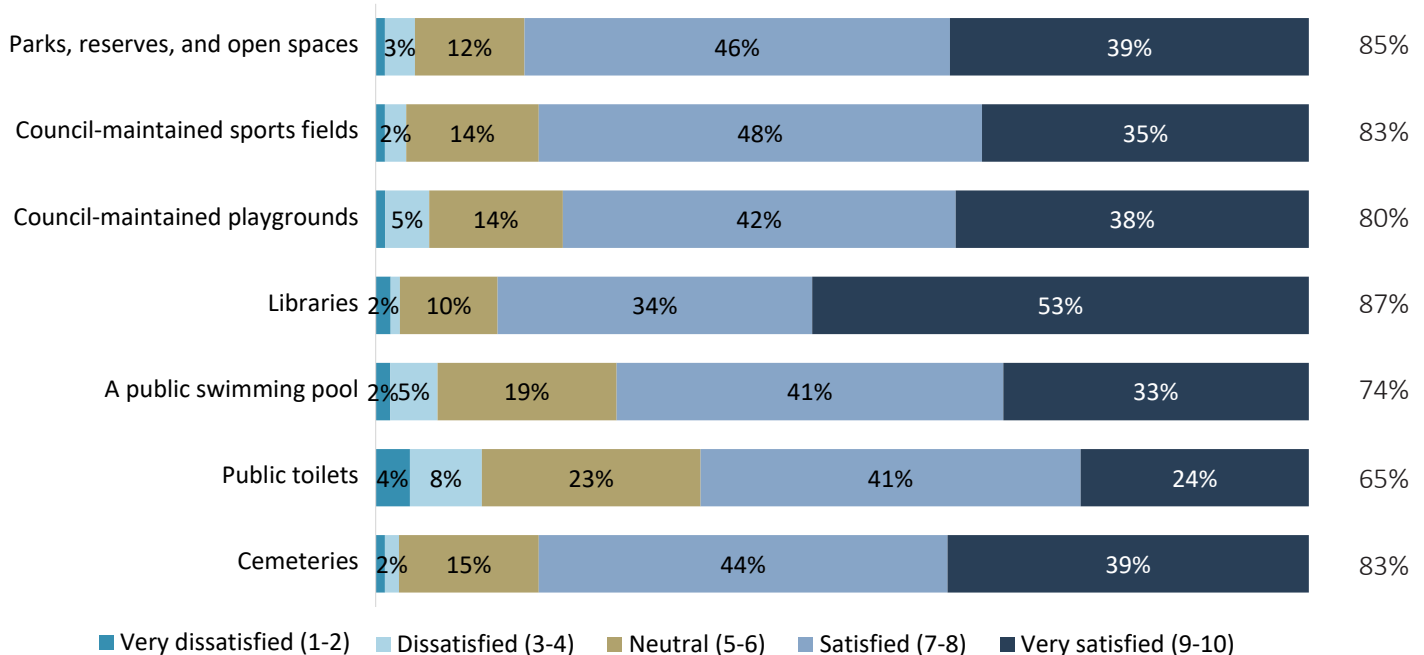
OVERALL SATISFACTION

The chart below shows respondents' varying satisfaction levels with community facilities and open spaces. The facilities with the highest satisfaction were libraries, parks, and reserves, and sports fields consistent with the 2024 results. However, there has been an increase in respondents' satisfaction with the parks this year (shown in the table below). All facilities have very high satisfaction levels, and there was consistently low dissatisfaction across most facilities. The facility with the highest dissatisfaction was public toilets (12%), similar to the 2024 results.

Demographic and area differences in satisfaction with the facilities are shown in the following tables.

TOTAL SATISFACTION

7-10 Result



SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES (SATISFIED AND VERY SATISFIED RESULTS)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	84%	79%	78%	80%	85% ↑
Council-maintained sports fields	82%	78%	80%	80%	83%
Council-maintained playgrounds	82%	76%	76%	81%	80%
Libraries	90%	85%	85%	83%	87%
A public swimming pool	73%	75%	71%	75%	74%
Public toilets	69%	67%	63%	66%	65%
Cemeteries	82%	76%	76%	79%	83%

Q. Based on your experience or impressions (even if you haven't used them), how would you rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following facilities? Base sizes vary: parks, reserves, and open spaces n=773, Council-maintained sports fields n=594, Council-maintained playgrounds n=605, libraries n=699, public swimming pools n=507, public toilets n=675, cemeteries n=438 (don't know responses removed).

An arrow on the table indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	84%	85%	79%	84%	87%	85%	85%
Council maintained sports fields	82%	84%	84%	79%	86%	83%	81%
Council maintained playgrounds	80%	81%	67%	74%	86%	86%	85%
Libraries	88%	87%	81%	89%	85%	89%	91%
A public swimming pool	74%	76%	64%	71%	81%	79%	70%
Public toilets	70%	62%	52%	57%	68%	79% ↑	76%
Cemeteries	81%	86%	82%	80%	84%	84%	82%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Parks, reserves, and open spaces	88%	82%	83%	85%	77%	81%	86%
Council maintained sports fields	83%	80%	86%	84%	69%	75%	81%
Council maintained playgrounds	85%	77%	77%	80%	55%	74%	81%
Libraries	88%	86%	85%	87%	78%	81%	86%
A public swimming pool	74%	74%	75%	75%	41% ↓	45%	76%
Public toilets	72%	56%	69%	65%	49%	76%	73%
Cemeteries	81%	84%	83%	84%	78%	70%	81%

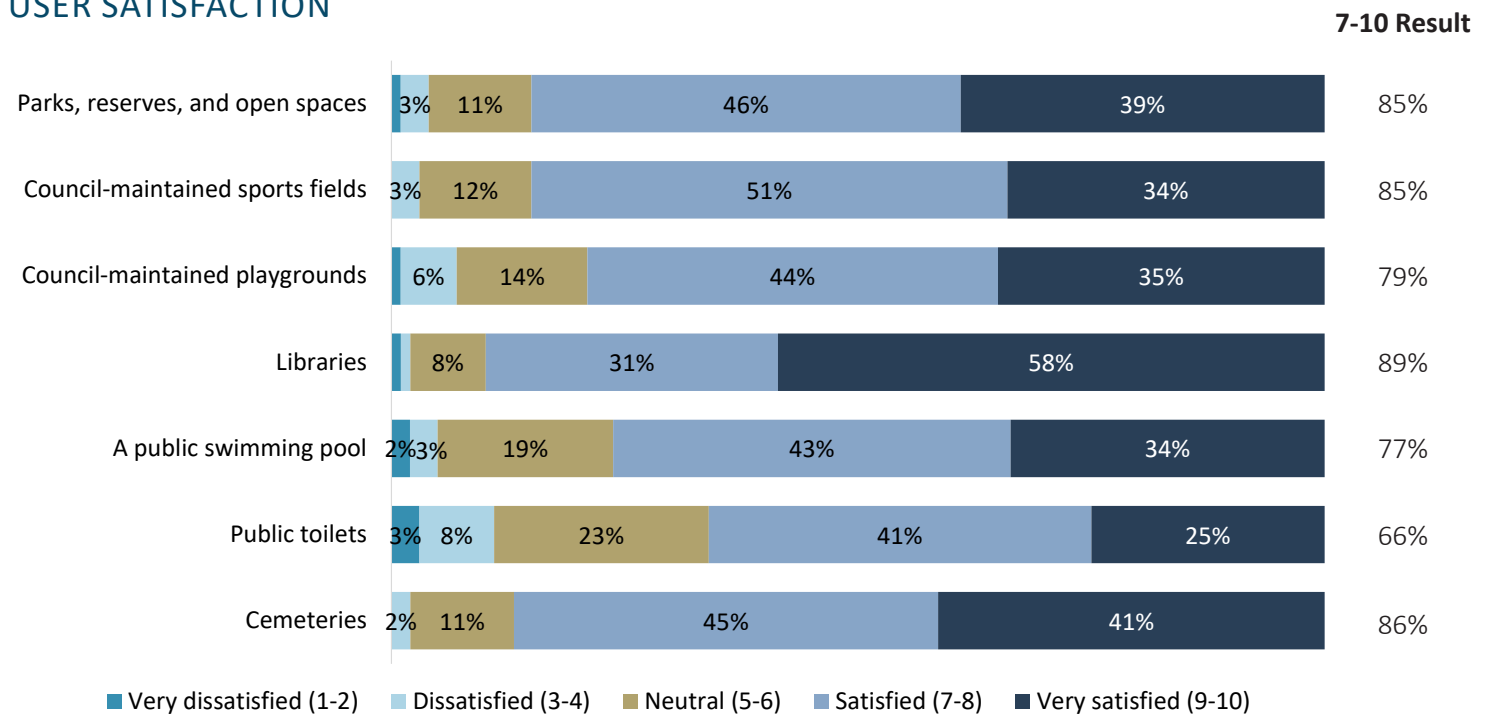
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

USER SATISFACTION

This data outlines the satisfaction of each facility's users. The library has the highest user satisfaction however, results show very high satisfaction levels across all facilities, with sports fields, parks, and cemeteries all well over 85%. Dissatisfaction was low among most facilities, the highest of which was public toilets, with 11% total dissatisfaction.

The table below shows the year-on-year results for user satisfaction. Satisfaction with parks, reserves, and open spaces has continued to grow over the monitoring period, as has satisfaction with public toilets and cemeteries. Other facilities have had consistent results.

USER SATISFACTION



USER SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES (SATISFIED AND VERY SATISFIED RESULTS)

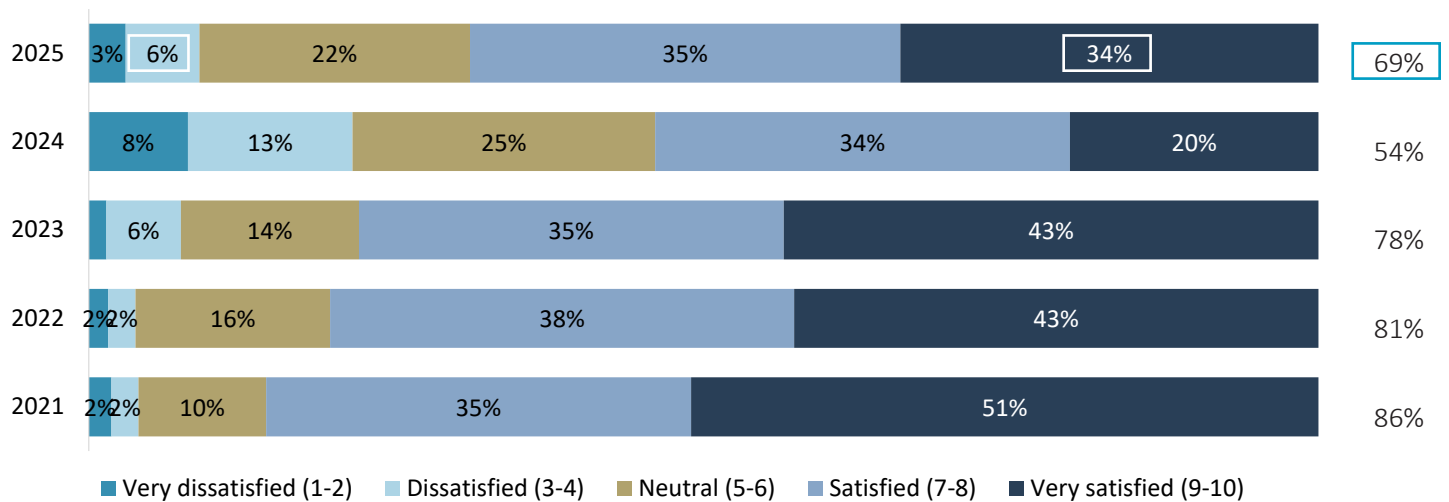
	2023	2024	2025
Parks, reserves and open spaces	79%	81%	85%
Council maintained sports fields	82%	82%	85%
Council maintained playgrounds	77%	81%	79%
Libraries	87%	85%	89%
A public swimming pool	76%	76%	77%
Public toilets	63%	65%	66%
Cemeteries	76%	81%	86%

Q. Based on your experience or impressions (even if you haven't used them), how would you rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following facilities? Base sizes vary: parks, reserves, and open spaces n=705, Council maintained sports fields n=392, Council maintained playgrounds n=355, libraries n=573, public swimming pools n=270, public toilets n=551, cemeteries n=259 (don't know responses removed).

LIBRARY OPEN HOURS

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the libraries' opening hours. Satisfaction with the libraries' opening hours has increased significantly this year to 69%, with an increase in the proportion of very satisfied responses and a decrease in overall dissatisfaction to 9% (down from 21% in 2024).

OPENING HOURS

7-10 Result


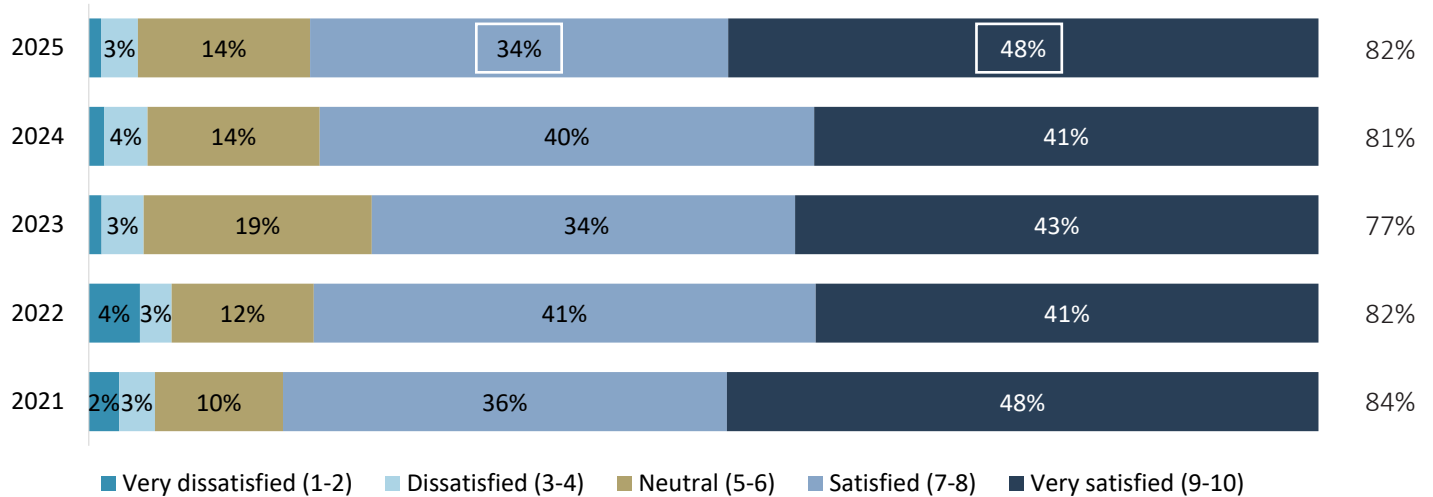
Q. Thinking about libraries, how much are you satisfied with... Opening hours. Base size n=595 (don't know responses removed).
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

LIBRARY BOOKS AND SERVICES

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were that the libraries provided relevant and up-to-date books and services. This year, 82% of respondents were satisfied with the library services, similar to the 2024 result. Despite the limited change overall, there has been a significant shift from satisfied to very satisfied responses.

PROVIDING RELEVANT AND UP-TO-DATE BOOKS AND SERVICES

7-10 Result

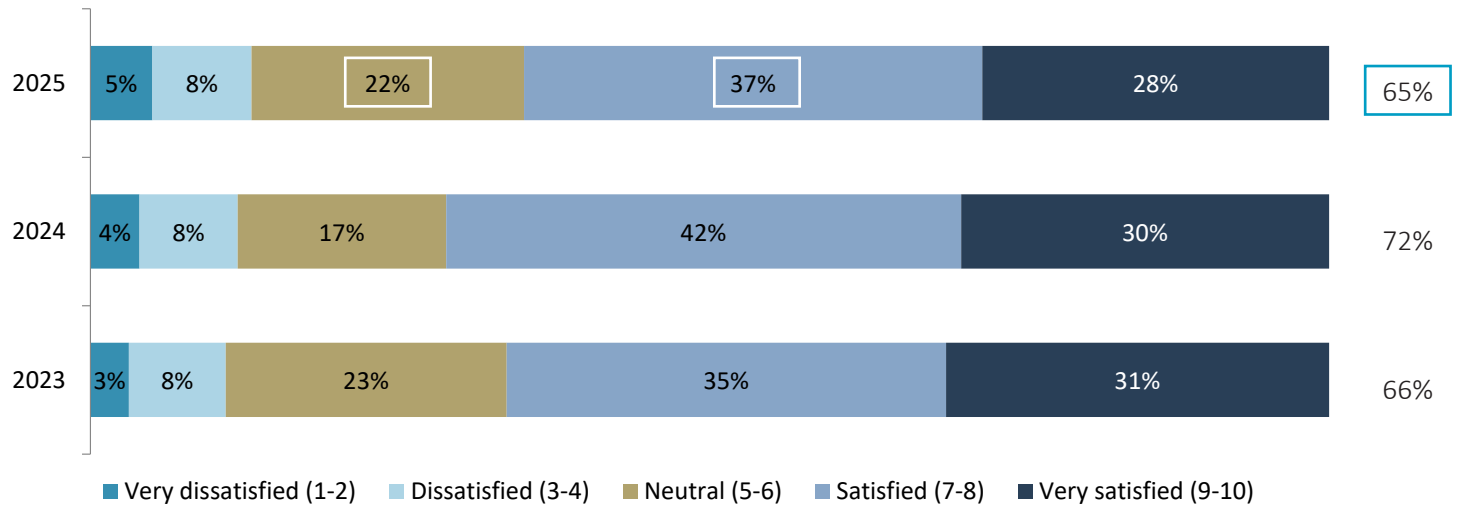


Q. Thinking about libraries, how much are you satisfied with... Providing relevant and up-to-date books and services. Base size n=545 (don't know responses removed).
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

SWIMMING POOL OPENING HOURS

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the district's swimming pool's opening hours. This year, there was a significant decline in respondents' satisfaction with the opening hours, which returned to the level of 2023. Specifically, there has been an increase in the neutral ratings and a decrease in the satisfied ratings.

OPENING HOURS



Q. Thinking about swimming pools, how much are you satisfied with... Opening hours. Base size n=382 (don't know responses removed).
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES SUMMARY

Use of community facilities and open spaces remains high this year, with parks, reserves, public toilets, and libraries continuing to be the most frequently used facilities. Satisfaction remained strong across all facilities, with particularly high ratings for libraries, parks, and sports fields. As with previous years, public toilets have the highest levels of dissatisfaction (although this is only 12% overall and 11% among users).

Library services were rated highly, with increased satisfaction with opening hours and a greater proportion of respondents indicating they were very satisfied with the hours. Satisfaction with the swimming pool opening hours has declined this year, returning to 2023 levels.

A total of n=249 respondents commented about the district's facilities and open spaces. These comments predominantly focused on the need for upgrades, challenges with the access to libraries and pools, and the need to develop the open spaces to increase and optimise their use. A summary of these responses have been provided below.

FACILITY UPGRADES AND AVAILABILITY

Respondents' primary comments indicated a need to improve the facilities and public spaces.

Playgrounds and sportsgrounds upgrades

There were specific mentions of outdated or unsafe equipment, particularly in Featherston. There were frequent calls for better fencing and more diverse equipment, e.g., suitable for older children, shade features, and water access. Some respondents also raised concerns about maintenance and safety at these spaces. Specific mentions included poor lighting, inadequate parking, and poorly maintained or overgrown green spaces.

"The playground is due for an upgrade — broken and dangerous equipment needs regular checks."

Respondents also raised the accessibility of the district's facilities and open spaces. These respondents noted that some facilities were not suitable for people with disabilities or lacked inclusive features. Specific mentions included playgrounds without appropriate equipment and swimming pools without ramps or hoists, limiting access for some residents.

Dog parks

While respondents appreciated having dog parks, respondents called for more off-lead areas, upgrades for comfort, and improvements to waste disposal options.

"The dog park is just a fenced-off paddock — we need trees, shade, and proper drainage."

Public toilets

Numerous comments pointed to poor cleanliness and upkeep of public toilets, particularly in Featherston and Martinborough. Respondents described these facilities as gross, disgusting, or dark, with several saying they avoid them altogether.

"Public toilets need regular servicing — especially for weekend events like Booktown."

CHALLENGES WITH LIBRARIES AND POOL ACCESS

Libraries and skateparks were also mentioned positively and were praised as essential, much-loved community assets. Respondents particularly noted the free access, inclusive environments, and supportive staff.

"The library is the heart and soul of the town."

However, inconsistent or limited opening hours and unexpected closures were frequent sources of frustration. Many respondents called for longer hours during summer, after-school or evening options, and more resourcing to ensure a more consistent service across different towns.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACES SUMMARY

“The pool hours this summer were ridiculous and non-inclusive for working people.”

A couple of respondents also questioned the current shared library arrangement with Carterton and expressed a preference for local control and staffing.

OPEN SPACES NEED DEVELOPMENT TO OPTIMISE USE

Despite the above concerns, many respondents voiced their support for community spaces’ role in enhancing residents’ quality of life. Respondents mentioned that parks, walkways, and sports fields were widely valued and supported both physical and mental wellbeing of those in the district.

However, respondents also noted that the inconsistent maintenance, particularly in reserves, riverside areas, and newer subdivisions may be limiting the use of open spaces. Some suggested expanding off-road walking/cycling tracks and ensuring better facilities for events and recreation (e.g. signage, parking, shaded rest areas).

“Open spaces are generally good but we’re losing trees due to lack of water or care.”

“We need better signage and upkeep on tracks like One Tree Hill and the Otairua Reserve.”

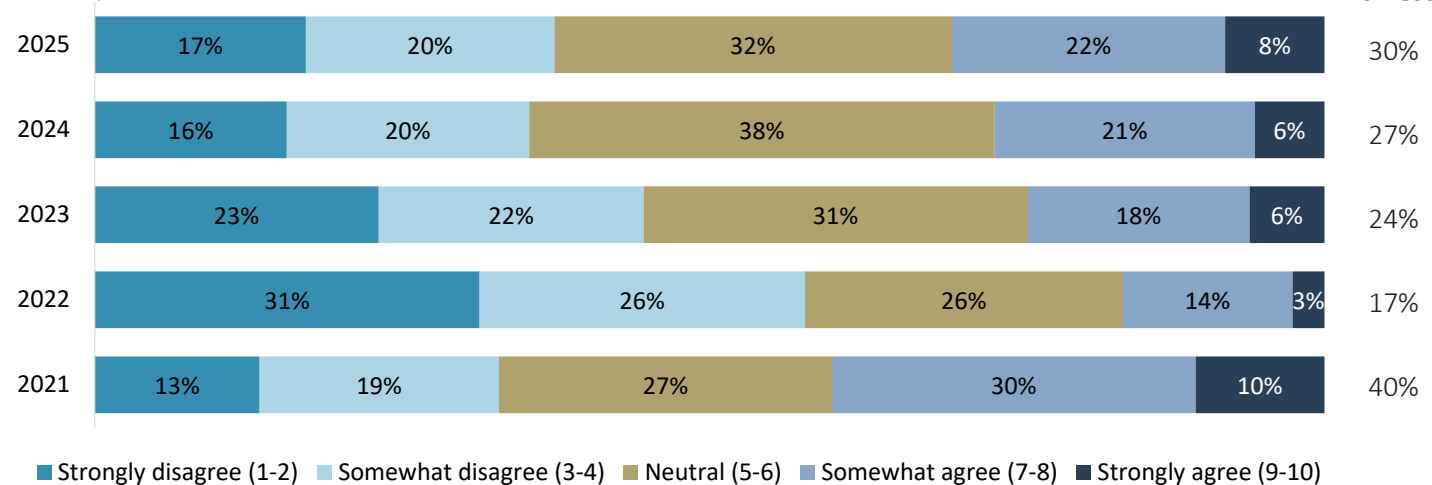
GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADVOCACY



OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION- MAKING

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that there were adequate opportunities to participate in SWDC's decision-making processes. This year, 30% of respondents agreed they had adequate opportunities to participate, continuing the increasing trend from 2022. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of respondents who agree they had adequate opportunities to participate. Overall disagreement was 37%, similar to the results from previous years. Respondents over 80 have higher levels of agreement than respondents in other age groups.

ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	31%	31%	14%	26%	32%	35%	55% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	31%	31%	29%	31%	18%	28%	25%

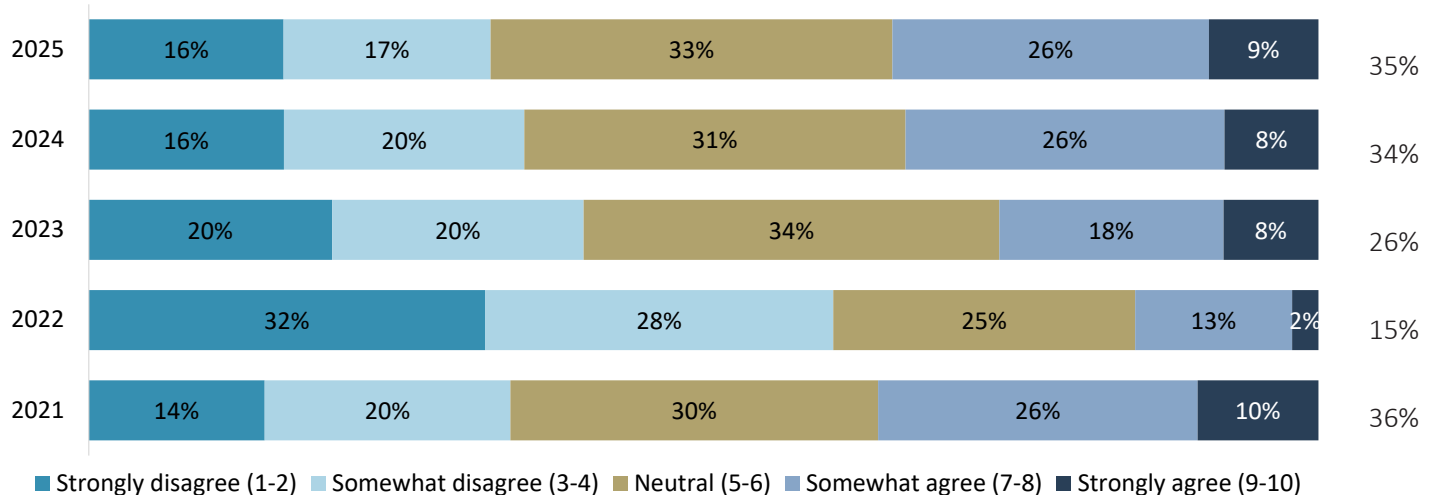
Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? There are adequate opportunities to participate in decision-making. Base size n=631 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE A SAY IN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that there were adequate opportunities to have their say in SWDC activities. This year, the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement has remained similar to that of 2024, with 35% agreeing overall. The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement has slowly declined, continuing a trend from 2022. Respondents over 80 have higher levels of agreement than respondents in other age groups.

ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE A SAY IN COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	34%	37%	29%	32%	34%	39%	60% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	34%	44%	26%	35%	28%	38%	41%

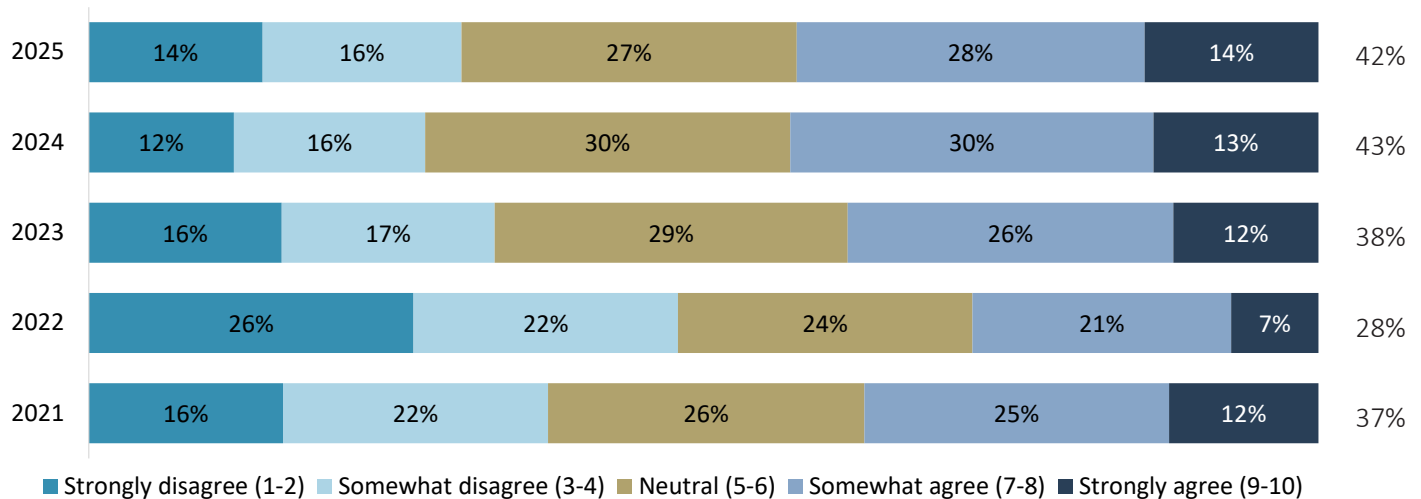
Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? There are adequate opportunities to have a say in Council activities. Base size n=633 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

COMMUNITY BOARD ADVOCACY FOR THE COMMUNITY

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that the community board effectively advocates on behalf of their community. Overall, 42% of respondents agreed, while 30% disagreed. These results are similar to those from 2024, although there has been a slight increase in the proportion of respondents who provided a strongly disagree statement. Respondents over 80 have higher levels of agreement than respondents in other age groups.

COMMUNITY BOARD EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF COMMUNITY

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	39%	46%	37%	37%	40%	46%	66% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	38%	40%	49%	43%	48%	43%	31%

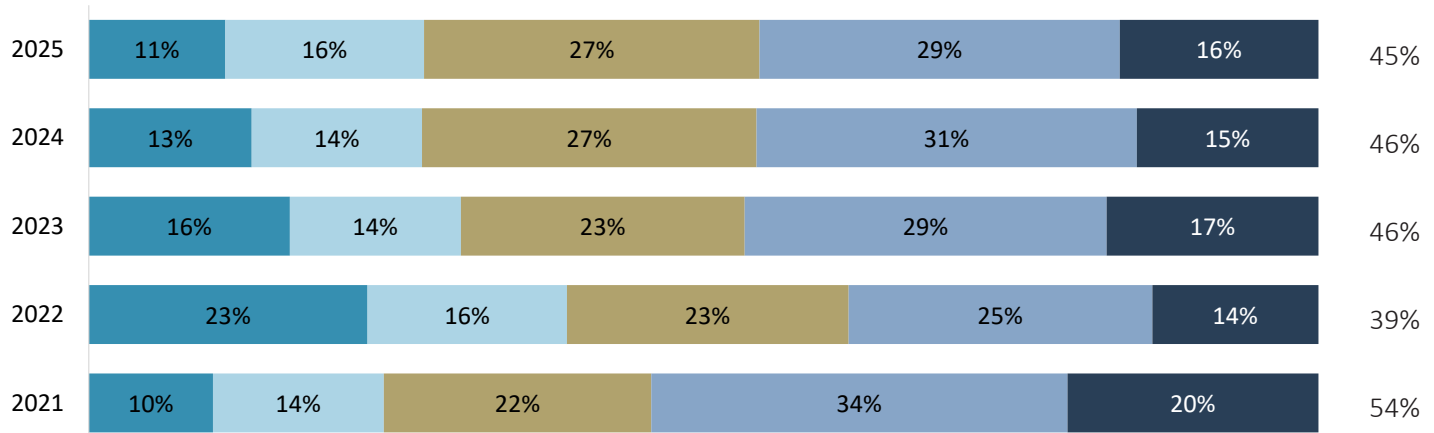
Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? The community board effectively advocates on behalf of their community. Base size n=555 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

EASE OF CONTACTING A COUNCIL MEMBER

Respondents were asked whether they agreed it was easy to contact an elected member to raise an issue or problem. This year, 45% of respondents agreed that elected members were easy to contact, while 27% disagreed. This year's results are similar to the previous two years, with both satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels remaining consistent. Respondents over 80 have higher levels of agreement than respondents in other age groups.

EASILY CONTACT A COUNCIL MEMBER TO RAISE AN ISSUE OR PROBLEM

7-10 Result


■ Strongly disagree (1-2) ■ Somewhat disagree (3-4) ■ Neutral (5-6) ■ Somewhat agree (7-8) ■ Strongly agree (9-10)

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	49%	43%	42%	34%	45%	52%	71% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	42%	51%	41%	46%	46%	22%	51%

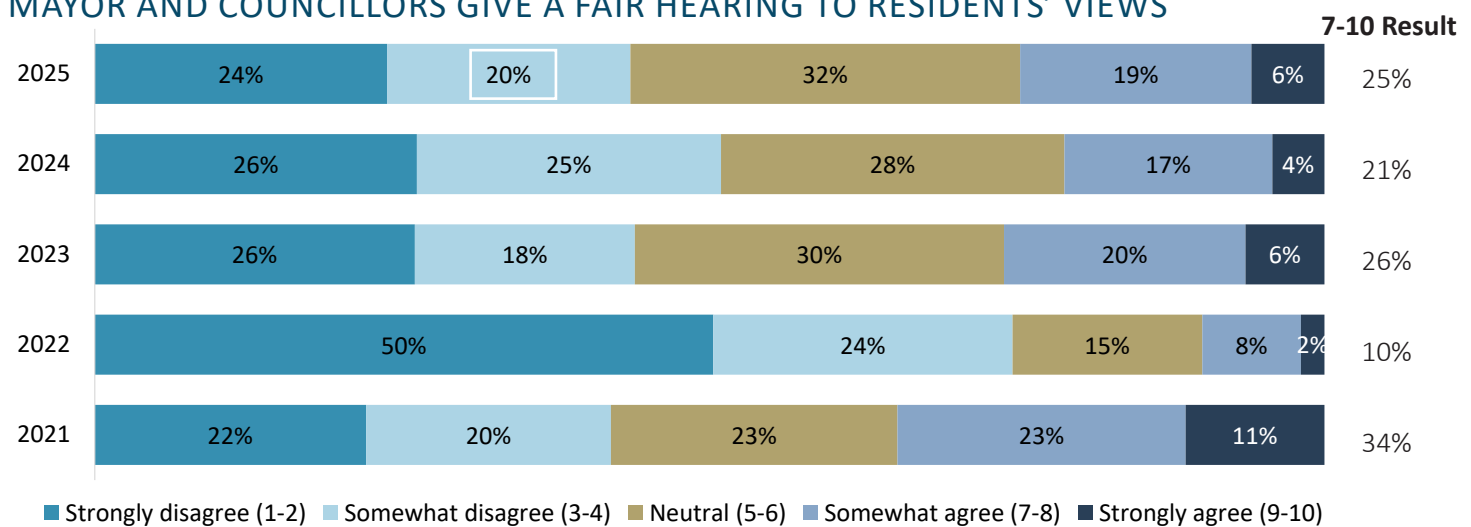
Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? You can easily contact a Council member to raise an issue or problem. Base size n=576 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING TO RESIDENTS' VIEWS

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that the Mayor and councillors gave a fair hearing to residents' views. Twenty-five percent of respondents agreed that elected members gave a fair hearing to residents' views, a slight increase from the 2024 results. Comparatively, 44% of respondents disagreed with the statement, with a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who provided a somewhat disagree response. Respondents over 80 have higher levels of agreement than respondents in other age groups.

MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS GIVE A FAIR HEARING TO RESIDENTS' VIEWS



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	27%	23%	20%	22%	23%	27%	47% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	23%	32%	18%	25%	14%	38%	26%

Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? Mayor and Councillors give a fair hearing to the residents' views. Base size n=566 (don't know responses removed).

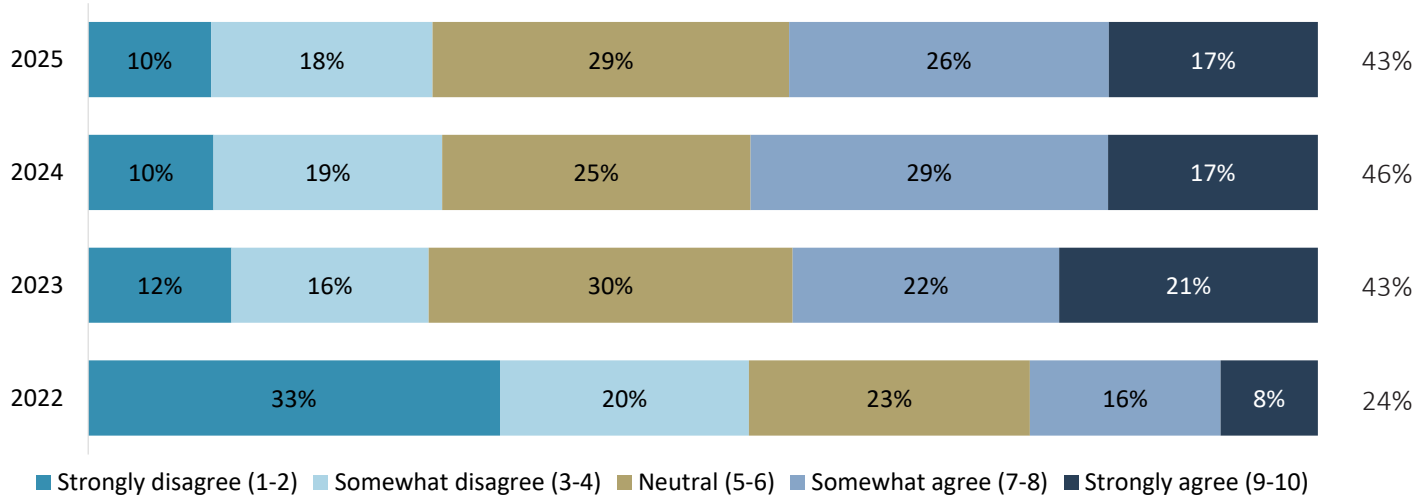
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

MĀORI CULTURE AND TE REO

Respondents were asked whether they agreed that Māori culture and Te Reo were appropriately recognised and visible in the district. This year, 43% of respondents agreed that Māori culture and Te Reo were visible, with 28% disagreeing. These results have remained fairly consistent since 2023. There were no significant differences across demographics or wards this year.

MĀORI CULTURE AND TE REO IS APPROPRIATELY RECOGNISED AND VISIBLE IN THE DISTRICT

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

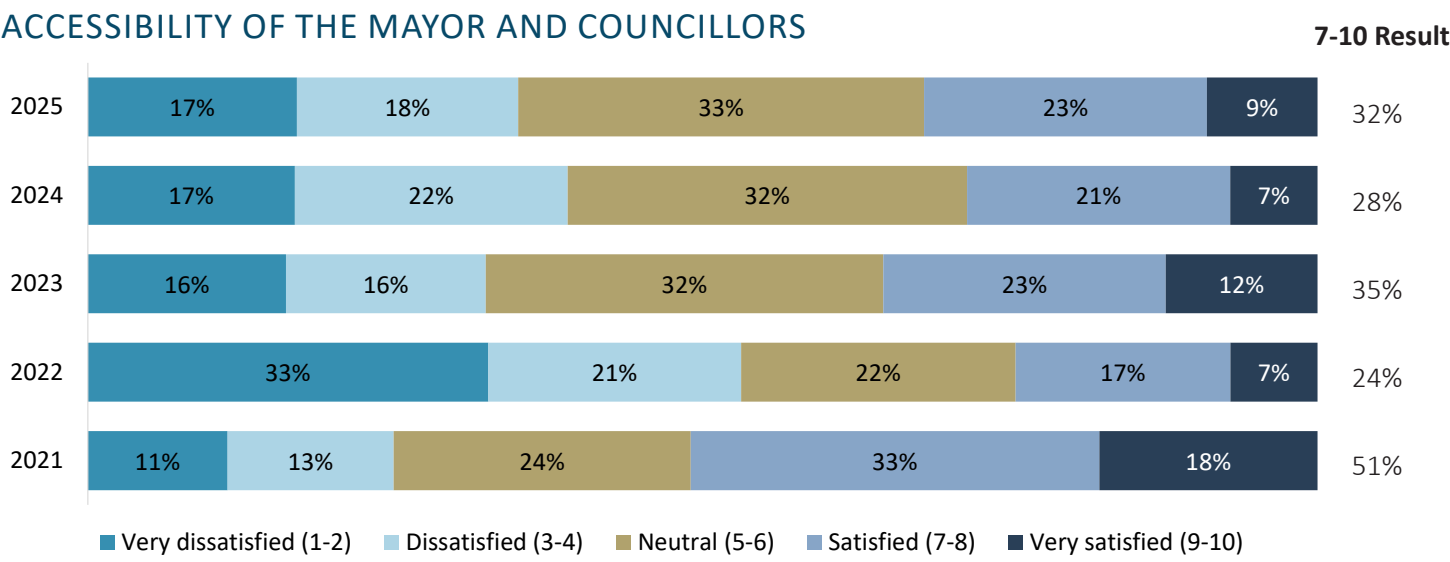
	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	44%	42%	34%	45%	40%	52%	50%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	39%	47%	44%	43%	24%	31%	41%

Q. For the next few questions, we would like to ask you about community engagement and Council decision-making processes. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statements? Māori culture and te reo is appropriately recognised and visible in the district. Base size n=596 (don't know responses removed).

ACCESSIBILITY OF MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the accessibility of the Mayor and councillors. Thirty-two percent of respondents were satisfied with the accessibility of the elected members, which reverses the decline seen in 2024. There has been a decline in the proportion of dissatisfied respondents, which is now at 35%. Respondents who were over 80 were more likely to be satisfied with the accessibility of the elected members.



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	32%	32%	23%	24%	31%	40%	57% ↑

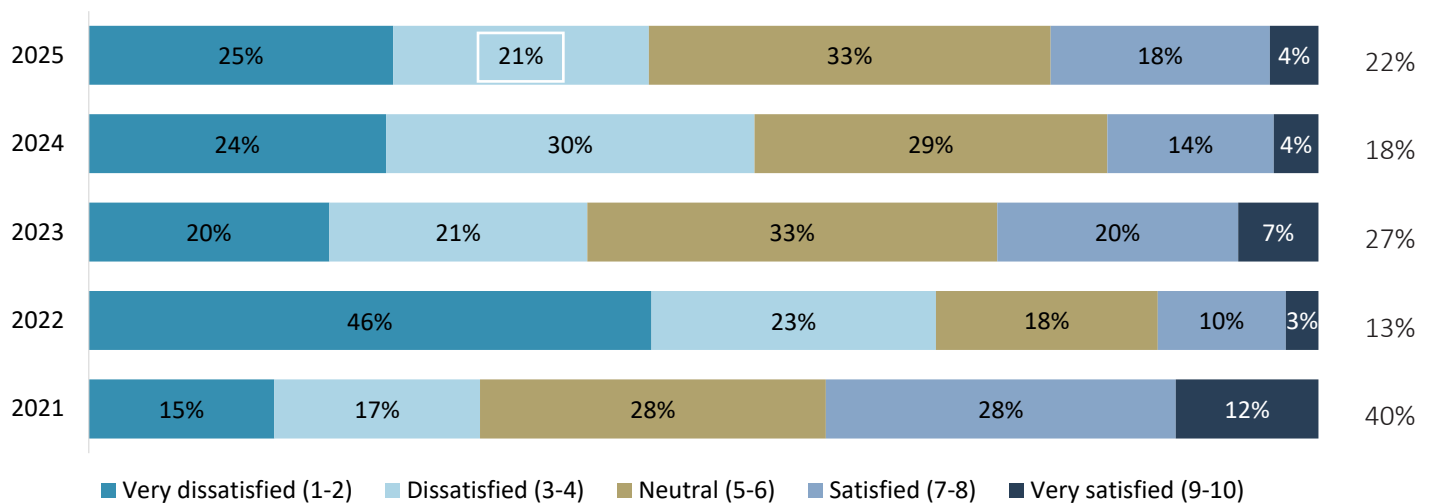
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	31%	39%	24%	32%	19%	31%	35%

Q. Thinking about the Mayor and Councillors, on the scale from 1-10 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied, how satisfied are you with... Accessibility of the Mayor and Councillors. Base size n=557 (don't know responses removed).
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP OF MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the Mayor's and councillors' leadership. Overall, 22% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the advocacy and leadership of the Mayor and councillors, while 46% were dissatisfied. This year sees a slight increase in overall satisfaction and a slight decrease in overall dissatisfaction, particularly among the proportion of respondents who are somewhat dissatisfied. Respondents who were over 80 were more likely to be satisfied with the advocacy and leadership of the Mayor and councillors.

ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	23%	21%	14%	21%	15%	27%	47% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	24%	26%	14%	21%	14%	36%	34%

Q. Thinking about the Mayor and Councillors, on the scale from 1-10 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied, how satisfied are you with... Advocacy and leadership of the Mayor and Councillors. Base size n=636 (don't know responses removed).

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADVOCACY SUMMARY

Perceptions of governance, leadership, and advocacy showed gradual improvements this year. There were slight increases in ratings of both the leadership and accessibility of the Mayor and councillors and recognition of Māori culture and Te Reo remains stable, with 43% agreement and minimal variation across the district. Older respondents (80+) consistently reported higher levels of agreement across nearly all measures.

A total of n=279 respondents commented on SWDC's governance and leadership. These comments predominantly focused on the confidence in the leadership, the transparency of the decisions, and the overall representation of SWDC. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP

A strong theme across the responses was the community's diminishing confidence in elected members. Respondents described a disconnect between SWDC decision-making and the priorities of residents, with some saying they no longer feel represented or heard. Several comments referred to recent decisions or behaviours by elected members as disappointing, embarrassing, or misaligned with the values of the district. Concerns about politicisation, infighting, or a lack of progress on key issues contributed to a broader sense that local governance has lost focus. This has led to growing cynicism about the SWDC's ability to lead effectively or deliver on community expectations.

"There is no real leadership — just noise and blame. It's hard to trust anything will change."

REPRESENTATION

Some respondents questioned the effectiveness of current governance structures, including ward representation and the makeup of the Council itself. There was a view that some areas, particularly smaller or rural communities, may be underrepresented or overlooked.

"We need stronger representation for smaller communities — the current structure doesn't reflect us."

A few respondents raised concerns about the lack of experienced or independent voices around the table, with several noting that long-serving councillors have failed to deliver outcomes. These comments indicated a desire for a refreshed approach to governance that better reflects the diversity and needs of the whole district, including the potential for governance reform or stronger checks and balances.

"The Mayor seems out of touch. The council doesn't seem like a unified entity."

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparency, communication, and community engagement were consistently raised as areas needing improvement. Many respondents felt decisions were being made behind closed doors or without adequate explanation or consultation. There was also frustration with the tone and professionalism of SWDC discussions, with some citing poor behaviour in meetings or on social media. Others called for greater effort to involve the community in planning and strategy, and to rebuild a culture of respect, service, and responsiveness.

"We need councillors who act with integrity and listen — not just push their own agenda."

"The lack of public consultation prior to inserting a Māori ward and its representative onto the council... was high-handed and undemocratic."

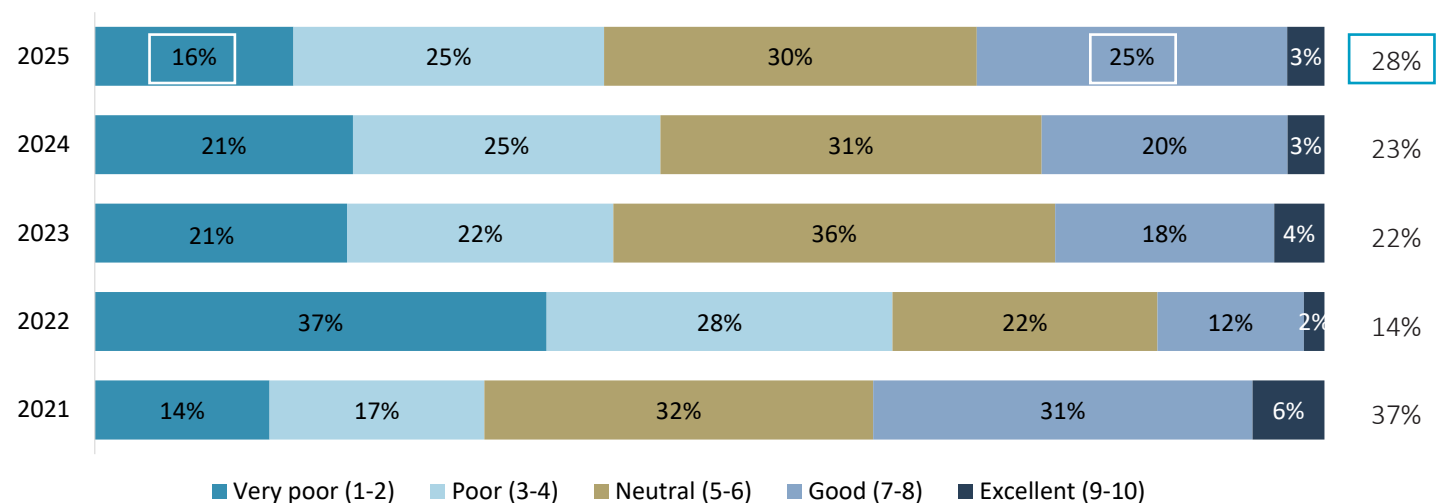
IMAGE AND REPUTATION



COUNCIL'S LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE

Respondents were asked about SWDC's leadership and performance. Twenty-eight percent of respondents provided a good or excellent rating, a significant increase from the 2024 result, primarily driven by a strong increase in good ratings. This year, we also see a decline in the total poor or very poor ratings, with a significant decline in the very poor ratings. Respondents over 80 have a higher proportion of good or excellent ratings than those in other age groups.

LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Good and excellent result	30%	28%	24%	32%	24%	29%	52% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Good and excellent result	29%	31%	25%	29%	15%	50%	37%

Q. The next few questions are about the image and reputation of the South Wairarapa District Council. For these questions we'll use a 1-10 scale where 1 means 'very poor' and 10 means 'excellent'. Thinking about how Council is committed to creating a great district, how it looks after the cultural, economic, environmental, and social well-being of the district, being in touch with the community and setting clear direction, overall, how would you rate the Council for its leadership and performance? Base size n=760 (don't know responses removed).

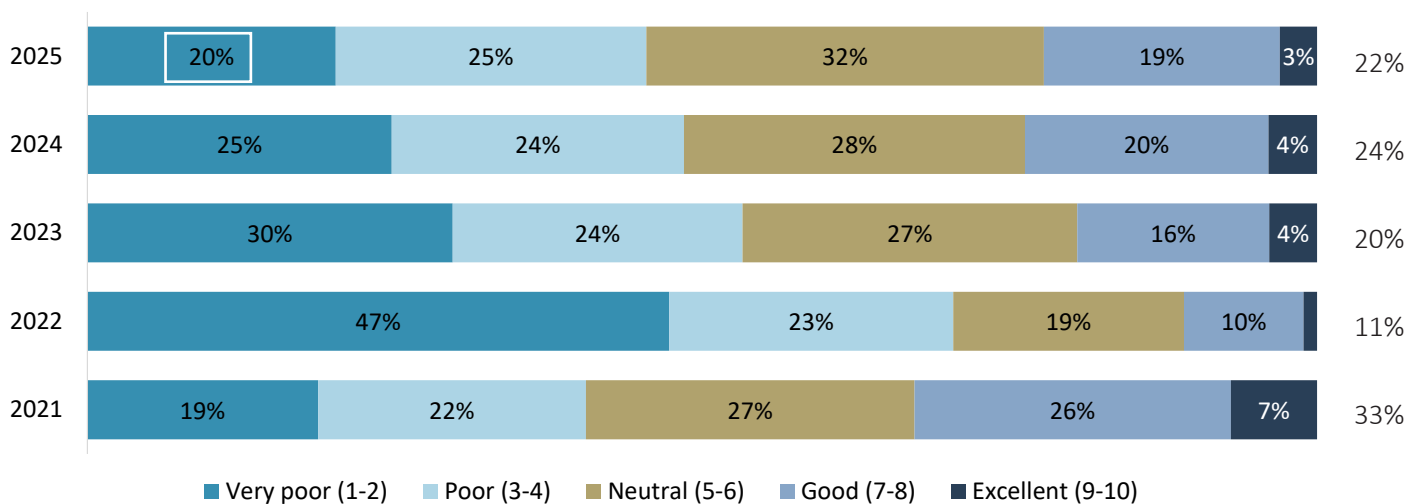
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

COUNCIL'S OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Respondents were asked how open and transparent they felt SWDC had been. This year, 22% of respondents provided a good or excellent rating for SWDC's openness and transparency, while 45% provided a poor or very poor rating. These results show a continued decrease in poor and very poor ratings, which will now be down from 70% in 2022. Respondents over 80 have a higher proportion of good or excellent ratings than those in other age groups, while respondents in Martinborough provided significantly lower ratings than those in other wards.

OPEN AND TRANSPARENT/ TRUST

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Good and excellent result	25%	19%	12%	24%	17%	28%	48% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Good and excellent result	25%	25%	14% ↓	22%	11%	22%	25%

Q. Thinking about how open and transparent Council is, how Council can be relied on to act honestly and fairly, and their ability to work in the best interests of the district, overall, how would you rate the Council in terms of the faith and trust you have in them? Base size n=740 (don't know responses removed).

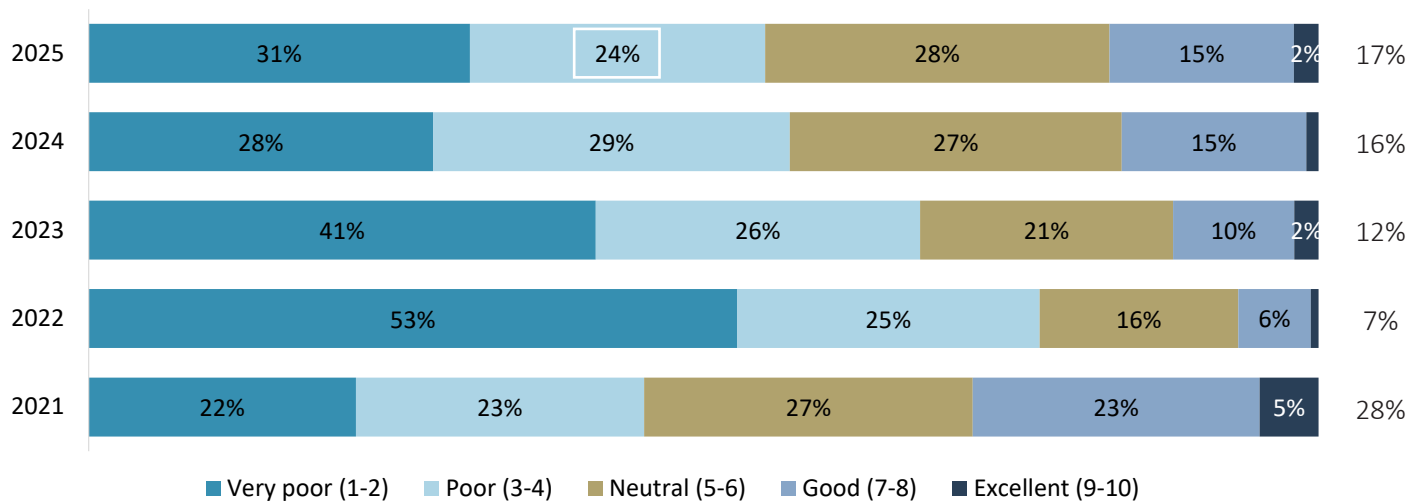
The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Respondents were asked about their views on SWDC's financial management. This year, 17% of respondents provided a good or excellent rating for SWDC's financial management, while over half of respondents provided a poor or very poor rating. These results are similar to those from 2024, although there has been a continued decline in total dissatisfaction since 2022. There were no significant differences across the different areas or demographic groups.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Good and excellent result	20%	15%	20%	16%	11%	19%	30%

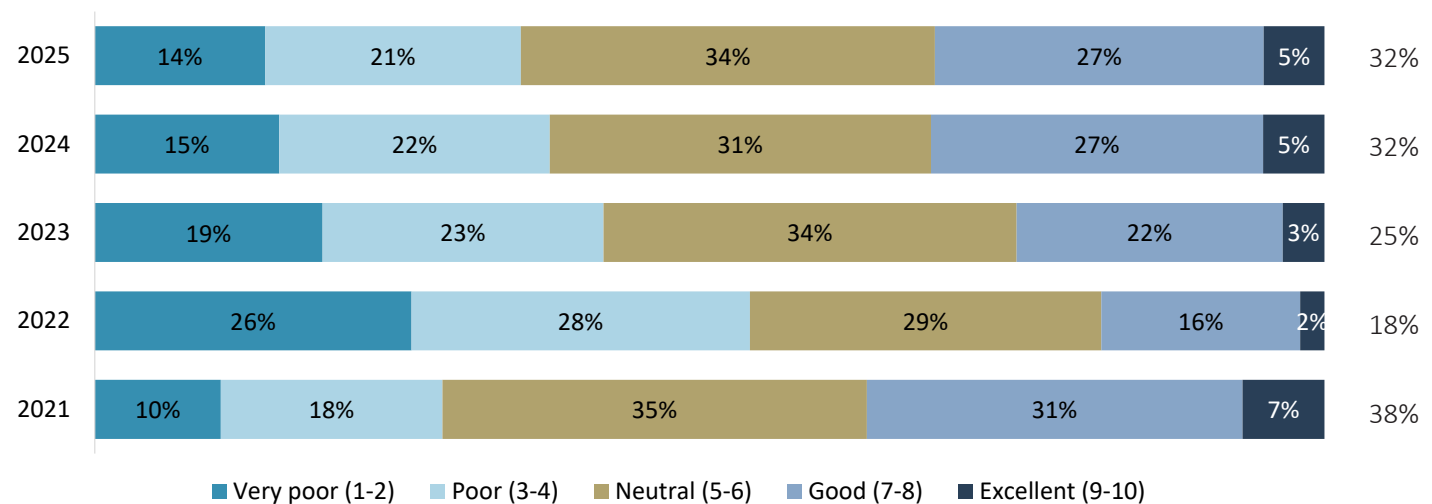
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Good and excellent result	18%	20%	12%	16%	23%	0%	21%

Q. Now thinking about the Council's financial management – how Council allocates rates/funds to be spent on the services and facilities provided, and its transparency around spending, how would you rate the Council overall for its financial management? Base size n=718 (don't know responses removed). The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

QUALITY OF SERVICES

Respondents were asked about their views on the quality of the services SWDC provides to the district. This year, 32% of respondents provided a good or excellent rating, while 35% provided a poor or very poor rating. These results are almost identical to those from 2024 and positively continue a trend of declining dissatisfaction ratings from 2022. Respondents over 80 were more likely to provide a good or excellent rating than younger respondents.

QUALITY OF SERVICES

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Good and excellent result	33%	30%	22%	33%	28%	34%	56% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Good and excellent result	32%	30%	30%	31%	16%	0%	41%

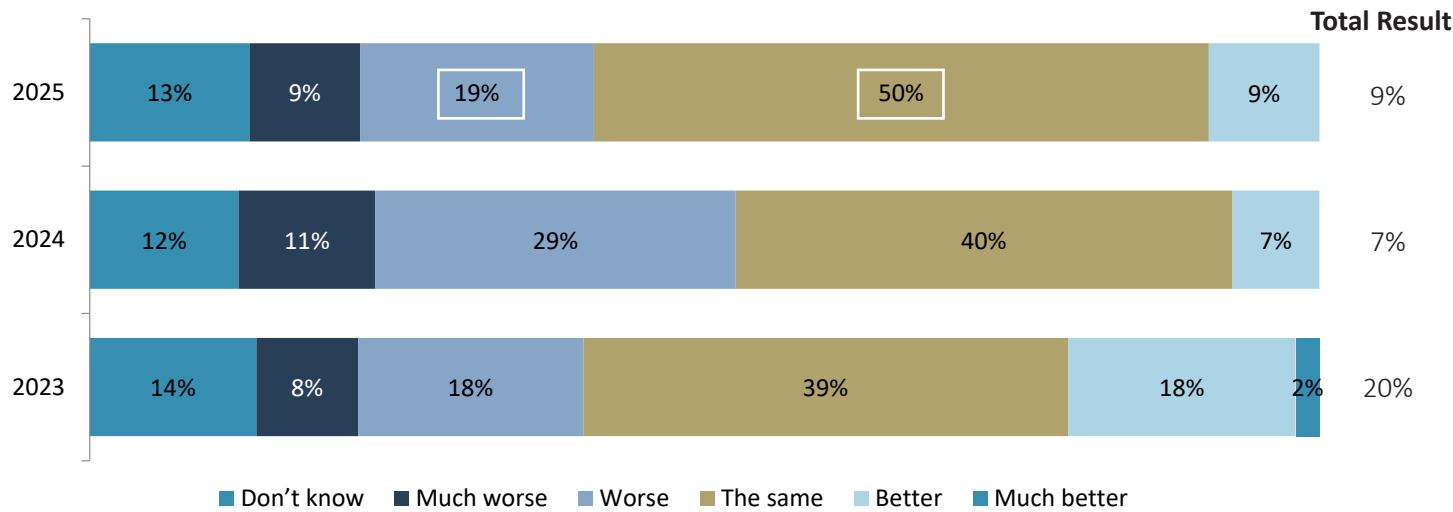
Q. When you think about everything that Council does, how would you rate the Council for the quality of the services they provide to the South Wairarapa district? Base size n=786 (don't know responses removed).

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

COUNCIL'S REPUTATION

Respondents were asked if they felt SWDC's reputation was better or worse than last year. Only 9% of respondents thought SWDC's reputation was better or much better than in 2024, and 28% felt the reputation was worse or much worse than in 2024. Significantly, fewer respondents felt that SWDC's reputation was worse than in 2024, and half of respondents felt that there had been no change to SWDC's reputation in the past 12 months. There were no significant differences across the different demographic and area variables.

REPUTATION



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Better and much better result	11%	9%	5%	10%	7%	15%	12%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Better and much better result	8%	11%	10%	10%	10%	19%	8%

Q. And overall, would you say Council's reputation is better, worse, or the same as last year? Base size n=843
 The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

IMAGE AND REPUTATION SUMMARY

Ratings of SWDC's leadership, transparency, financial management, service quality, and reputation show modest improvements, particularly in the reduction of poor or very poor ratings since 2022. While satisfaction remained relatively low overall, positive ratings have increased across several areas, with respondents aged over 80 consistently giving higher scores. Perceptions of SWDC's reputation remained largely unchanged, though fewer people feel it has worsened compared to previous years.

A total of n=306 respondents commented about SWDC's reputation. These comments focused on the council's public perception, communication challenges, and SWDC's ability to deliver key services. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION AND TRUST

The most significant theme throughout the feedback was a widespread lack of trust in the council, stemming primarily from perceptions of poor leadership and internal dysfunction. Many respondents were critical of the ongoing conflict between elected members, particularly between councillors and the Mayor, describing it as petty, unprofessional, and harmful to public confidence.

"The antics of the Mayor and council infighting have seriously tarnished the image of SWDC – it's embarrassing and affects trust."

Several respondents noted that infighting had attracted negative media attention, reinforcing SWDC's poor image and deterring potential candidates from standing in future elections. There was also concern that elected representatives lacked the experience or governance capability required to manage complex issues and large-scale infrastructure decisions. These dynamics were seen as undermining not only trust in SWDC, but also its ability to function effectively.

"The council has an image for lack of action, vindictiveness... and generally being unable to get the job done."

COMMUNICATION

Several comments suggested that SWDC does not communicate openly or clearly with residents. Respondents expressed frustration at consultation processes that appeared disingenuous or pre-determined, leading many to question SWDC's honesty and accountability. Several respondents referred to being "left in the dark" about key decisions, particularly around water services and rate increases.

"Stop pretending to consult — it just annoys people when decisions are already made. Be honest, transparent, and proactive."

SWDC was also criticised for failing to articulate a compelling long-term vision for the district, leaving people unsure about its priorities or direction. While some acknowledged recent improvements under the new CEO, there was still a strong call for clearer communication, more visibility of councillors, and genuine engagement with community concerns.

KEY SERVICE DELIVERY

Some comments touched on concerns about wasteful or poorly managed funds. Respondents linked the SWDC's reputation to its ability to deliver essential services and manage ratepayer money responsibly. Many felt that the steep and ongoing increases in rates were unjustified, especially given the lack of corresponding improvements in infrastructure or community outcomes. There was particular concern about the condition of water systems, delays in maintenance and development approvals, and general underinvestment in towns like Featherston.

"Featherston is never a priority... I'm sick of paying rates and it's going to bloody Greytown and Martinborough."

Several noted that trust and reputation could only be rebuilt through consistent, competent delivery of core services, such as water, wastewater, roads, and stormwater.

"Reputation comes from performance — fix the basics and stop with the vanity projects, and the image will take care of itself."

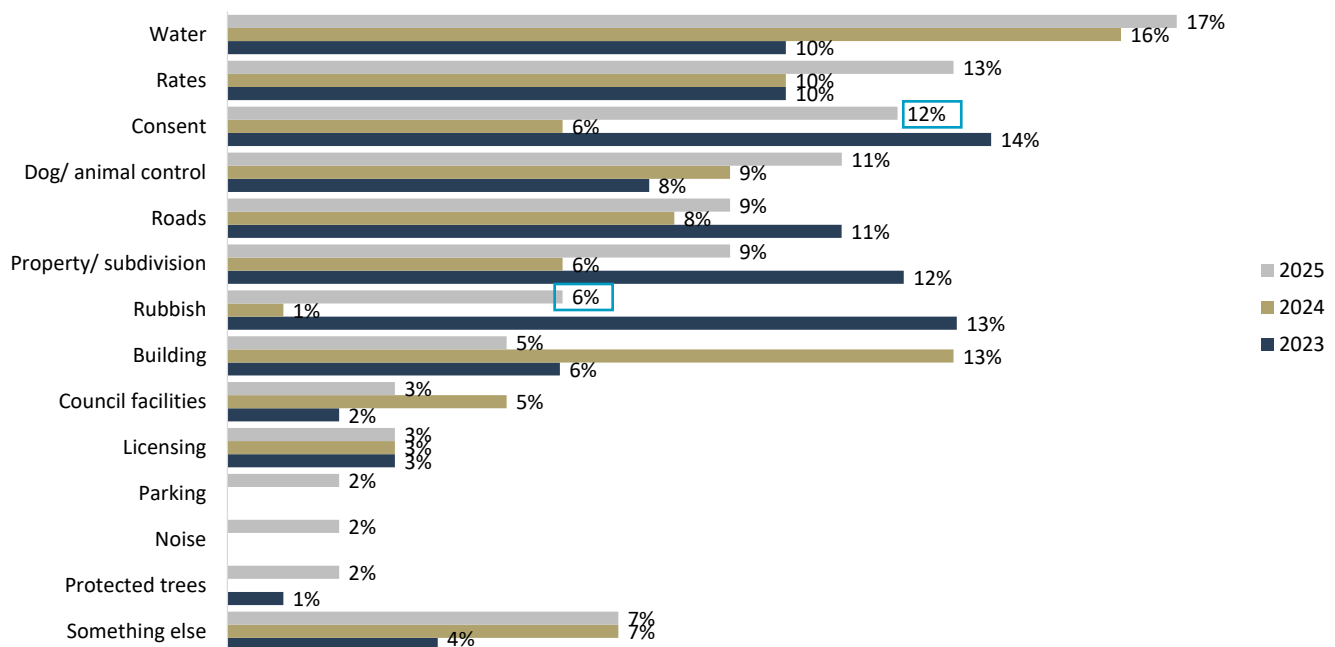
INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL



INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL

Forty percent of respondents have had an interaction with SWDC in the past year (similar to 2024, 40% and 2023, 42%). The most common reason for connecting with SWDC was a water related issue, which accounted for 17% of all interactions. This was followed by rates enquiries, consent queries, and animal and dog control. Queries about consents and rubbish have both increased significantly this year while queries about parking, noise, and protected trees were all new mentions this year.

ENQUIRY



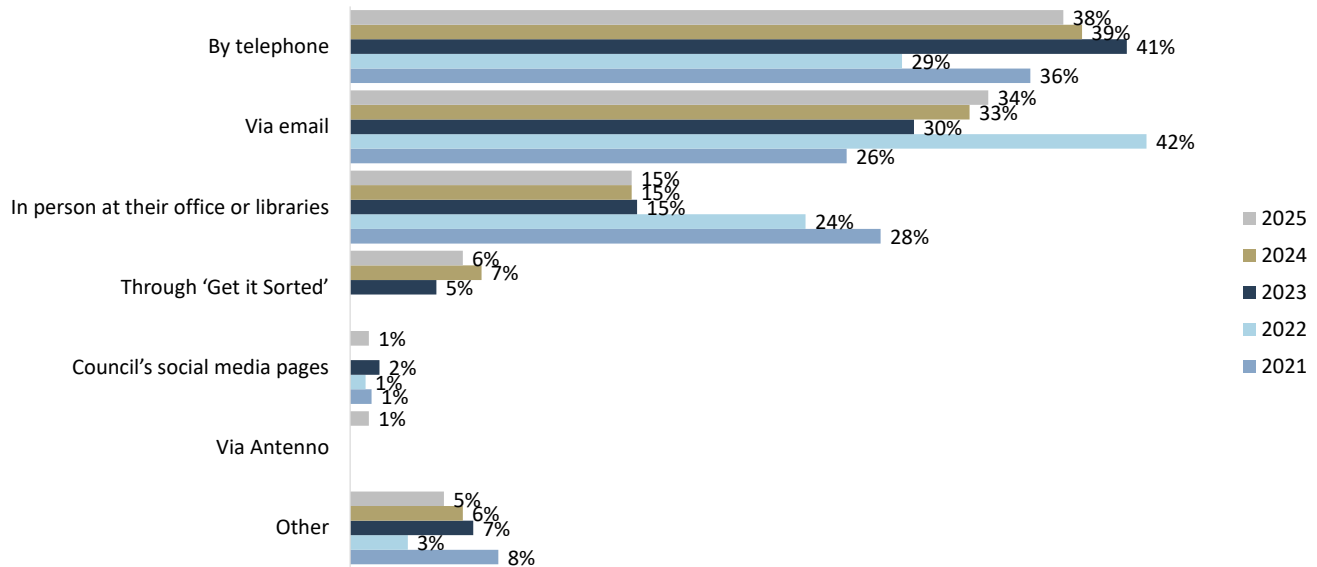
Q. What was your enquiry in relation to? Base size n=361

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

METHOD OF CONTACT

Respondents were asked how they contacted SWDC with their inquiry. As with 2024, the most common forms of contact were phone, email, and in-person contact, with email contact increasing over time and telephone contact slowly decreasing.

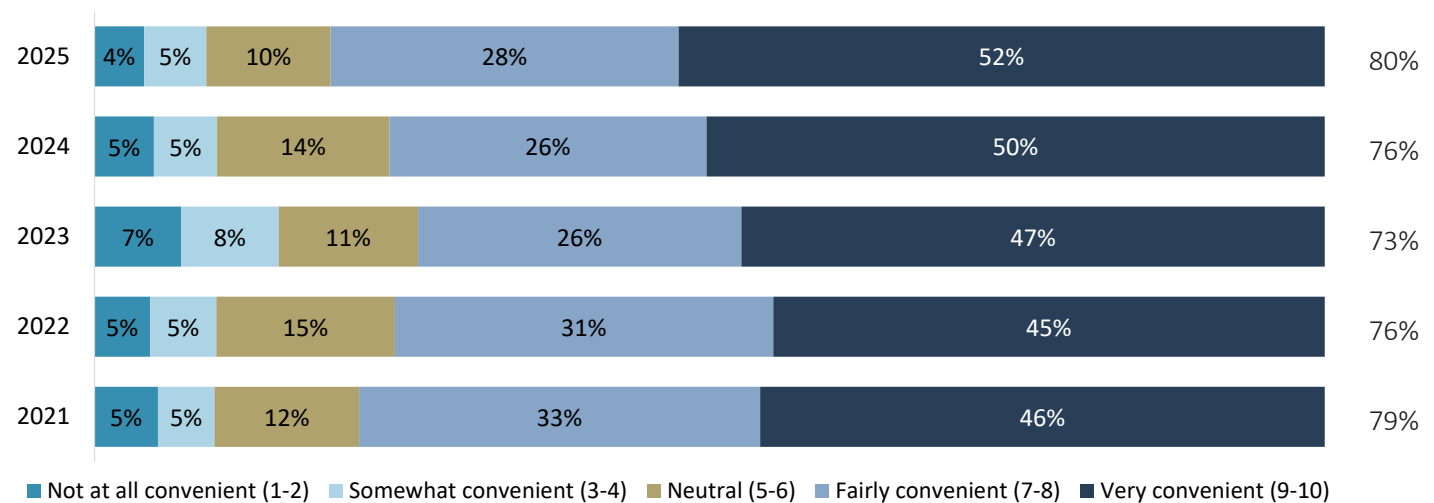
METHOD OF CONTACT



CONVENIENCE OF CONTACT

Respondents who had contacted SWDC were asked how convenient it was to do so. Eighty percent of respondents thought it was fairly or very convenient to contact SWDC, continuing the increasing trend from 2023 and the highest result in the monitoring period. Only 9% felt that it was inconvenient, similar to 2024. There were no significant differences between the results for different demographics and areas.

CONVENIENCE

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

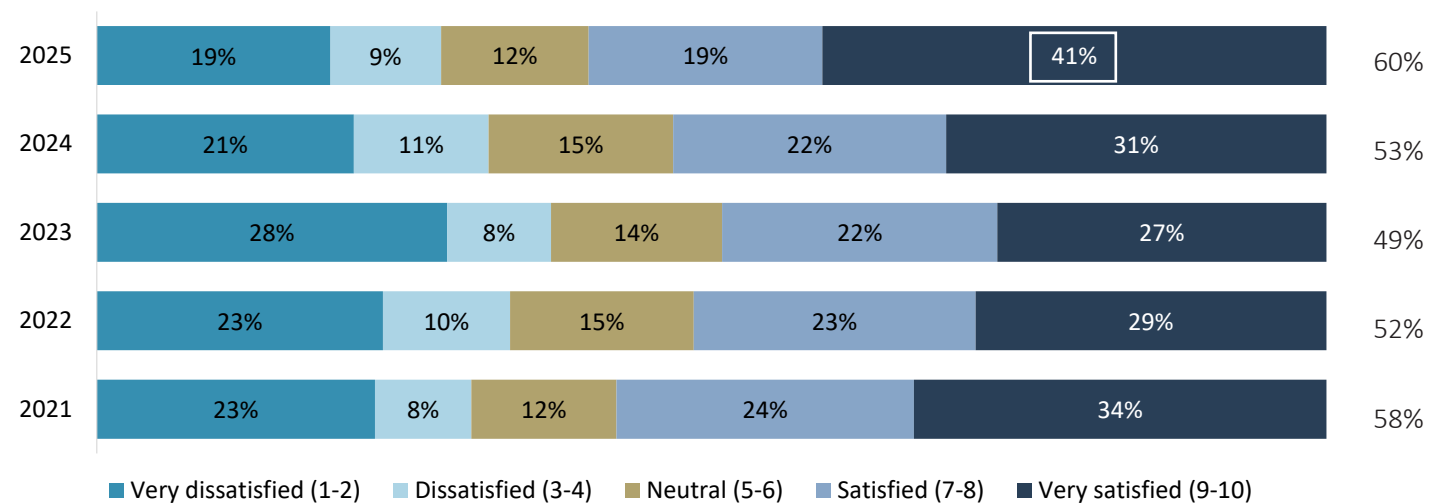
	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Convenient and very convenient result	81%	79%	80%	74%	82%	83%	75%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Convenient and very convenient result	79%	77%	83%	80%	81%	76%	66%

SATISFACTION OF CONTACT

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with how SWDC handled their enquiry. This year, 60% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied which was a 7% increase from 2024. Twenty-eight percent of respondents were dissatisfied with how SWDC handled their complaints; this continues the trend of decreasing dissatisfaction, which is largely driven by consistent declines in the proportion of very dissatisfied ratings. There were no differences between the ratings from different demographic groups or areas.

SATISFACTION

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	64%	57%	70%	55%	56%	63%	63%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	55%	66%	58%	60%	65%	76%	71%

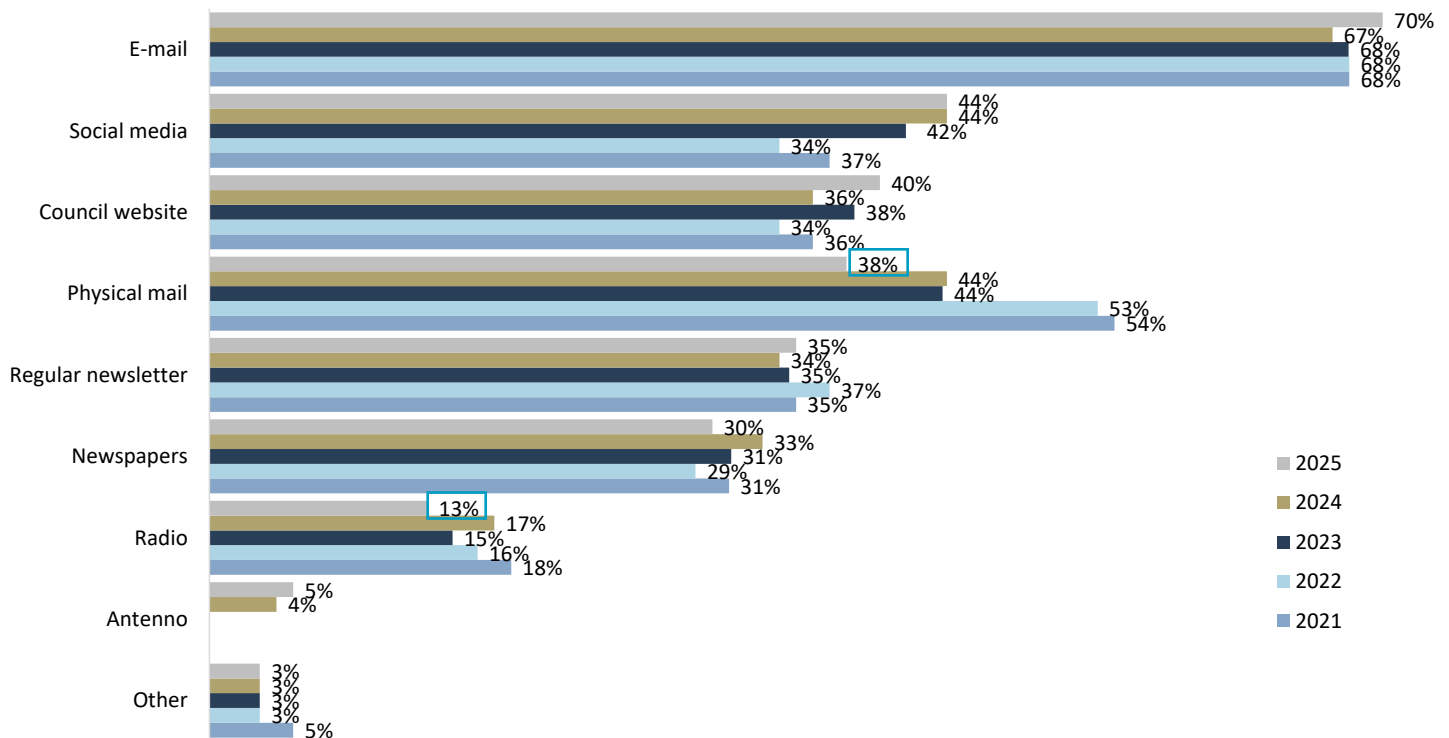
Q. And overall, how satisfied are you with how your complaint or query was handled? Use a 1-10 scale where 1 means 'very dissatisfied' and 10 means 'very satisfied'. Base size n=354

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL

Respondents were asked about their preferred form of contact from SWDC. This year's results show a similar pattern to that of 2024, with email and social media as the most preferred options for receiving communications from SWDC. This year, preference for the SWDC website increased but declined for physical mail and radio. Demographic differences have been shown overleaf.

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCE



Q. When Council needs to communicate information in regard to their activities, what channel would you prefer, please select all that apply? Base size n=843 (don't know responses removed).

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
E-mail	73%	69%	62%	73%	74%	72%	60%
Social media	38%	48%	68% ↑	46%	45%	29% ↓	13% ↓
Council website	40%	41%	51%	32%	46%	37%	18% ↓
Physical mail when needed	38%	36%	32%	34%	34%	45%	56% ↑
Regular quarterly newsletter	34%	35%	19%	28%	38%	47% ↑	49%
Newspapers	36%	26%	22%	23%	32%	40% ↑	38%
Radio	13%	12%	16%	12%	12%	13%	9%
Antenno	5%	4%	3%	5%	6%	4%	3%
Other	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	2%	0%

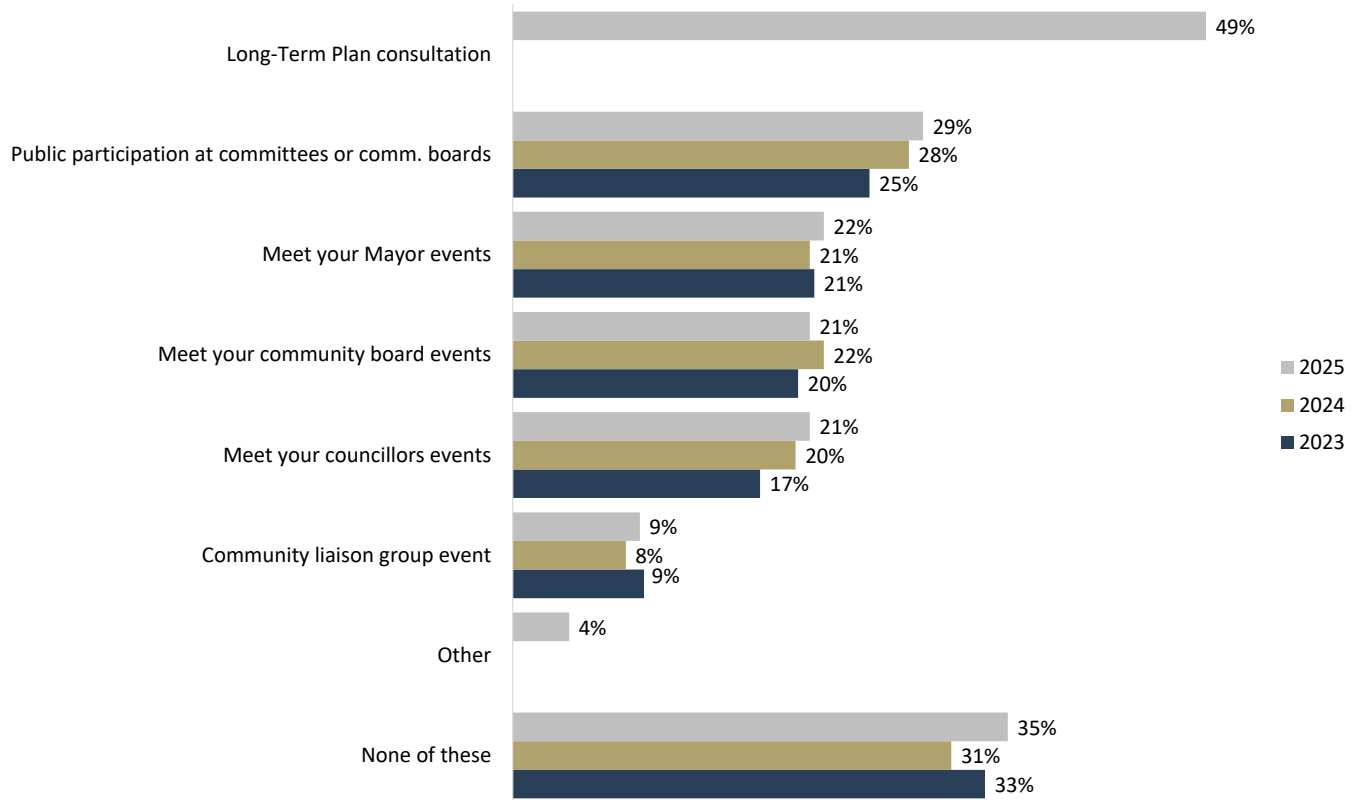
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
E-mail	73%	68%	71%	72%	57%	37%	66%
Social media	38%	51%	43%	43%	48%	31%	39%
Council website	35%	44%	43%	39%	43%	56%	43%
Physical mail when needed	40%	36%	37%	38%	27%	56%	40%
Regular quarterly newsletter	39%	28%	37%	36%	21%	37%	31%
Newspapers	28%	28%	37%	30%	29%	62%	22%
Radio	12%	11%	15%	11% ↓	23%	37%	11%
Antenno	3%	2%	9% ↑	5%	11%	0%	0%
Other	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%	0%	2%

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

AWARENESS OF COUNCIL'S EVENTS

Respondents were presented with a list of events SWDC had undertaken in the past 12 months and asked which ones they were aware of. This year, nearly half of respondents were aware of the Long-Term Plan consultation, followed by public participation in committees and community board meetings, meeting your Mayor, community board, and councillor events. Thirty-five percent of respondents stated they had not heard of any of these events, a result similar to that from previous years.

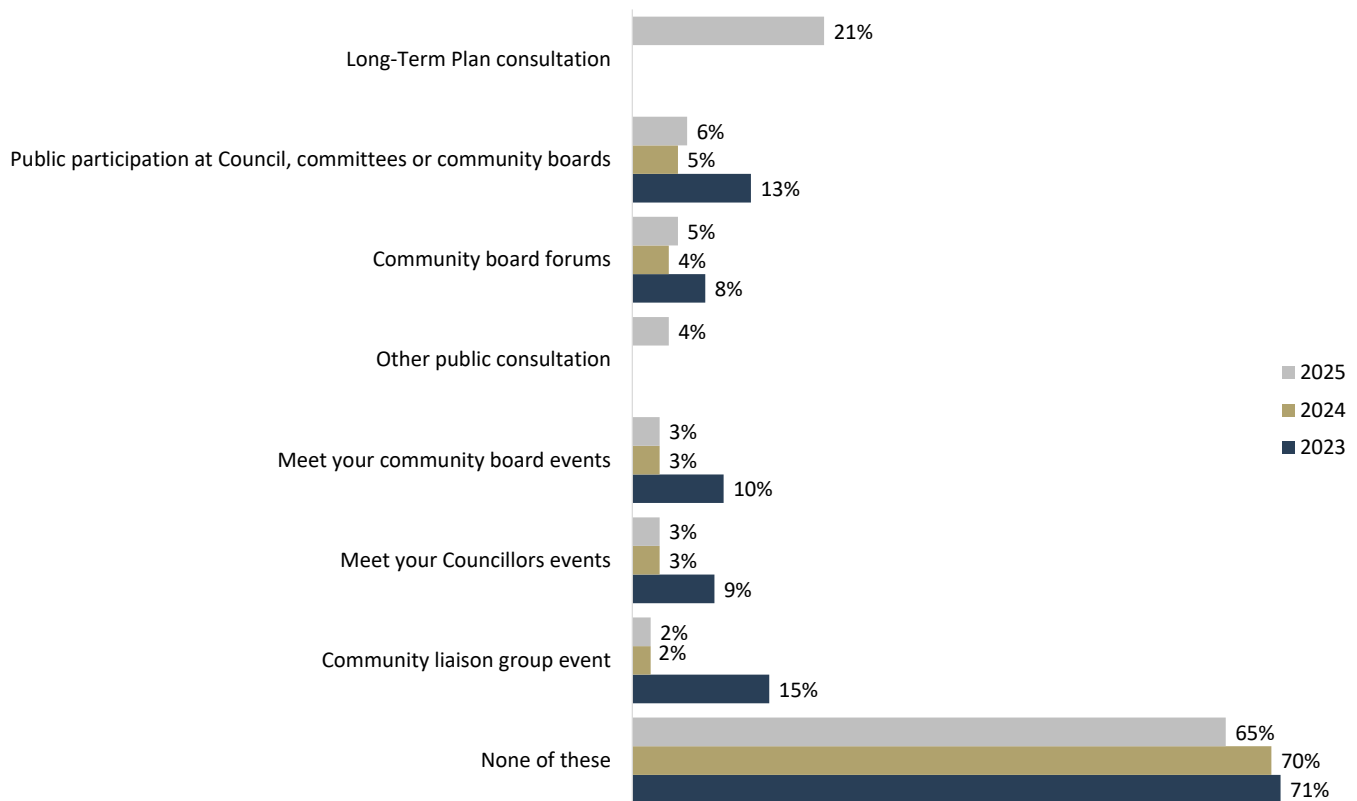
AWARENESS OF EVENTS



PARTICIPATION IN COUNCIL'S EVENTS

Respondents who were aware of at least one event were asked which events they had participated in. Sixty-five percent of respondents did not participate in any events, with the Long-Term Plan consultation being the most participated event. All other events had less than 10% participation.

PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS



Q. And which have you participated in? Base size n=568
 Note: Meet our Mayor events recorded 0%.

INTERACTIONS WITH COUNCIL SUMMARY

Email, phone, and in-person remain the main ways respondents contact SWDC, with email usage increasing and phone contact declining this year. Convenience of contact was at its highest recorded level, with 80% of respondents rating their contact as convenient. Satisfaction with how SWDC handles enquiries has risen to 60%, while dissatisfaction has continued to fall. Email and social media were the preferred communication channels, with a declining preference for physical mail and radio this year.

Awareness of SWDC events remained consistent, and participation remained relatively low. However, engagement with the Long-Term Plan consultation appeared positive.

A total of n=155 respondents commented on their interactions with SWDC. These comments predominantly focused on the mixed experiences they had received, poor follow up and the accessibility of meetings and consultation. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

MIXED SERVICE EXPERIENCES

Respondents expressed a range of experiences when dealing with SWDC. Some reported positive interactions, stating that their engagements were constructive and helpful.

“The dealings were amicable and respectful.”

However, some described frustration at slow or dismissive responses to inquiries or complaints. Staff members’ attitudes and a lack of follow-up were the issues most commonly raised among these comments.

“Better attitude needed from officers responding to queries.”

POOR FOLLOW-UP

A common comment from respondents was the lack of follow-up after making contact or raising concerns. This caused frustration for respondents with many stating their issues were acknowledged but never resolved, or that responses felt dismissive or condescending.

Respondents spoke of being “given the runaround,” receiving conflicting information, or not being taken seriously. This created a feeling that feedback is ignored and that SWDC was more focused on processes than outcomes.

“I gave up contacting the Council about anything — you get nowhere.”

“I reported something, they acknowledged it, and then nothing happened. Weeks passed.”

TIMING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Several respondents raised concerns about the accessibility of SWDC meetings and consultation events. They noted that the timing of meetings often excludes people who work full-time or have caregiving responsibilities and that SWDC should provide virtual options for attending.

“The timing of these often doesn’t work for those of us working in Wellington... Are virtual events an option?”

Some respondents also described the tone of interactions with SWDC as defensive, adversarial, or patronising. There was a strong call for more respectful two-way communication, less bureaucracy, and a genuine willingness to listen.

“They always seem suspicious of why you’re contacting them — not helpful or open.”

“I want to be treated like a partner, not a problem.”

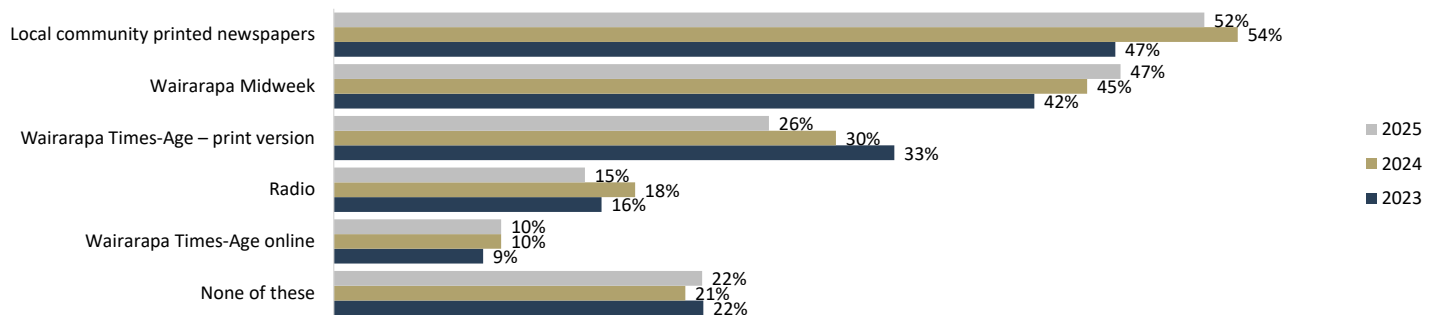
COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL



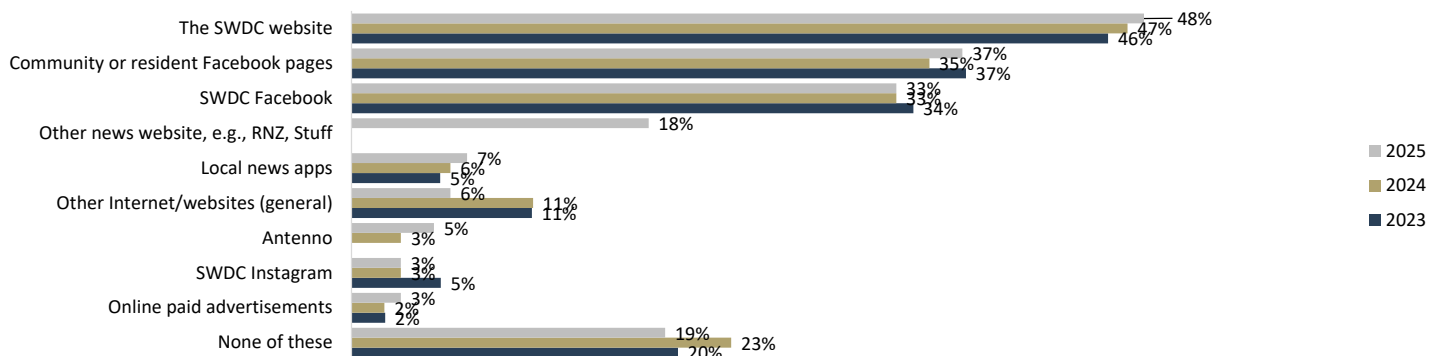
COMMUNICATION PREFERENCE

Respondents were asked where they got their information about SWDC. The most used channels for traditional media are the local community printed newspaper and the midweek newspaper. The print version of the Wairarapa Times-Age has continued to decline this year. The SWDC website and social media channels continued to be the most preferred options for online sources, which were similar to the 2024 results. In a new option this year, 18% of respondents use other news sites, e.g., RNZ or Stuff, as an online source of information. The SWDC rates invoices and quarterly newsletters were the most used direct sources, with a significant increase in the use of both channels.

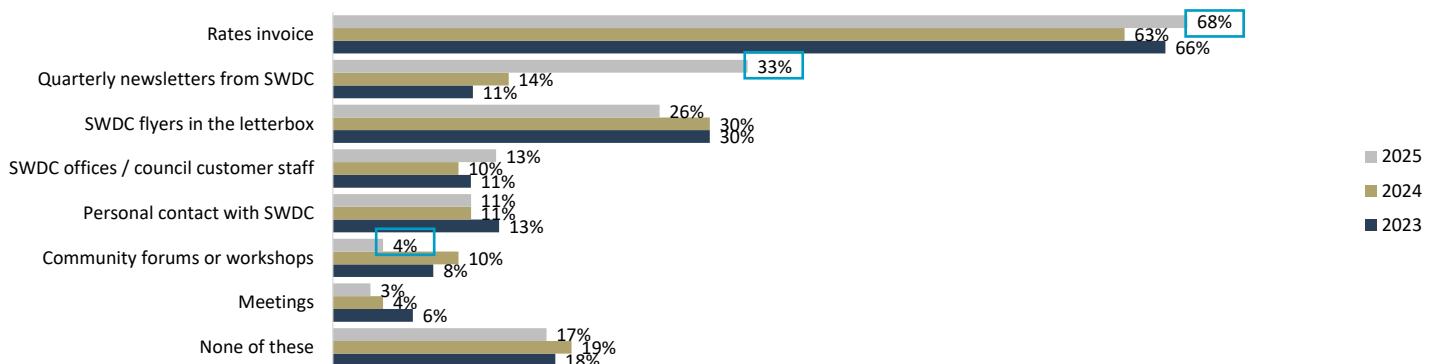
TRADITIONAL MEDIA



ONLINE



DIRECT FROM SWDC



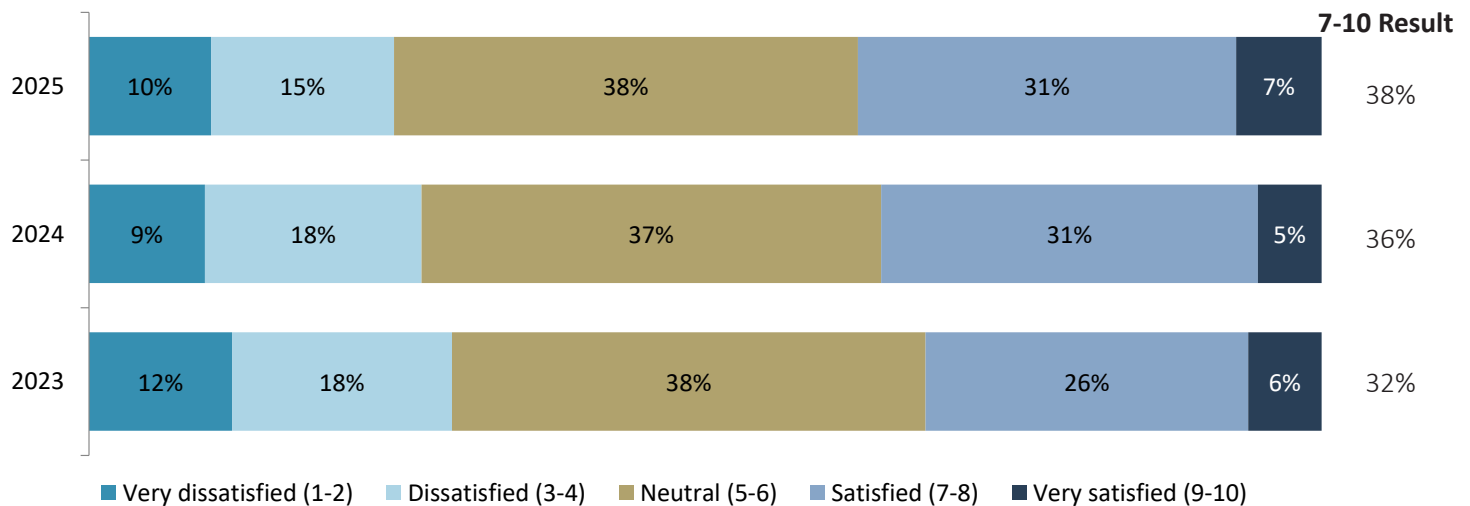
Q. Thinking about information about South Wairarapa District Council, where, or from whom, you get information about Council? n=843

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION

Respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with the information from SWDC. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the information, while 25% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This year, satisfaction has continued to increase, and dissatisfaction has continued to decline. There were no differences between the ratings from different demographic groups or areas.

SATISFACTION WITH INFORMATION FROM SWDC



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	40%	36%	23%	37%	42%	40%	54%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	38%	38%	35%	37%	24%	44%	45%

Q. And overall, how satisfied are you with the information you get from South Wairarapa District Council? Base size n=808 (don't know responses removed).

COMMUNICATION WITH COUNCIL SUMMARY

Respondents' most common sources of information about SWDC were local newspapers, SWDC's website and social media, with the growing use of rates invoices and newsletters. Satisfaction with SWDC information continued to improve, now at 38%, while dissatisfaction has declined to 25%.

A total of n=110 respondents provided a comment about SWDC's communications. These comments predominantly focused on the clarity of SWDC's information and the use of digital communications. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

INFORMATION CLARITY AND RELEVANCE

Some respondents asked for clearer and more straightforward communication from SWDC. Many respondents felt that SWDC communications were fragmented and often hard to follow, with information spread across multiple platforms or buried in dense newsletters. Respondents expressed a desire for more concise, factual updates without unnecessary language, especially regarding changes or consultations that affect ratepayers, particularly rates increases.

"Just the facts would be nice."

"We just get vague statements like 'work on water supply' — we want clear details on where the money is actually going."

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

SWDC's website was seen as a vital tool for communicating with residents. However, some comments expressed concern that communications were too reliant on Facebook or digital platforms, which excludes those without access or interest in social media.

A number of respondents called for greater use of email, text alerts, noticeboards, and printed newsletters, as well as updates in places people already frequent, e.g., libraries.

"Don't assume everyone is on Facebook. We need broader, more inclusive communication — especially for rural ratepayers."

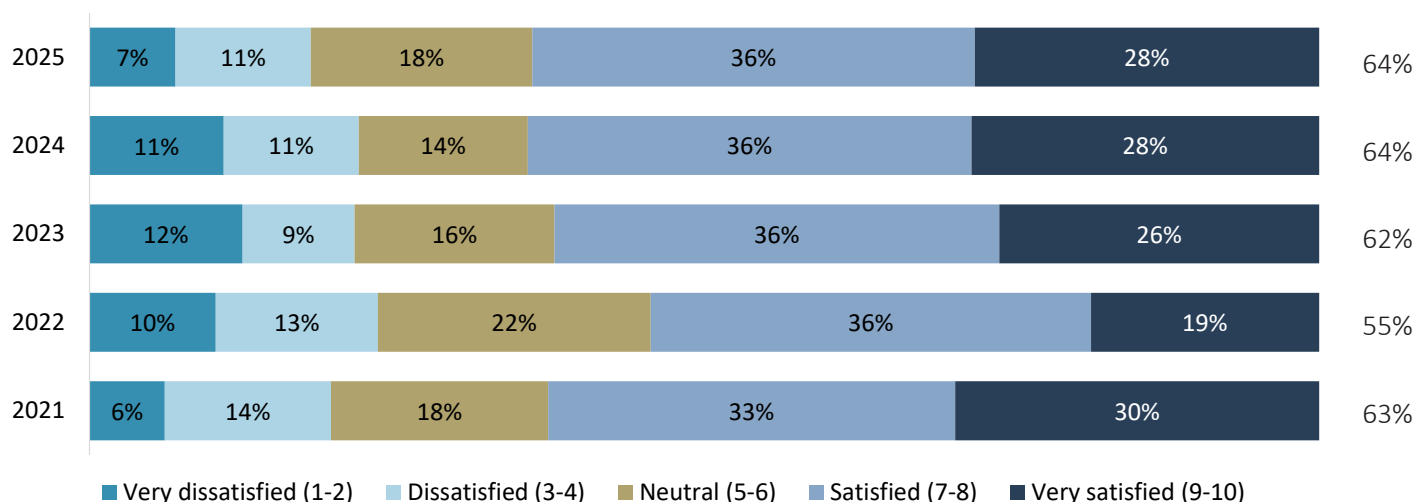
OVERALL PERFORMANCE



IMAGE OF CLOSEST TOWN

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the image of their closest town. Similar to 2024, 64% of respondents were satisfied with the image of their town, while 18% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the image of their town. Respondents from Greytown or Martinborough were more likely to be satisfied with the image of their town.

IMAGE OF CLOSEST TOWN

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	65%	64%	56%	57%	67%	72%	72%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	82% ↑	33% ↓	78% ↑	65%	63%	56%	64%

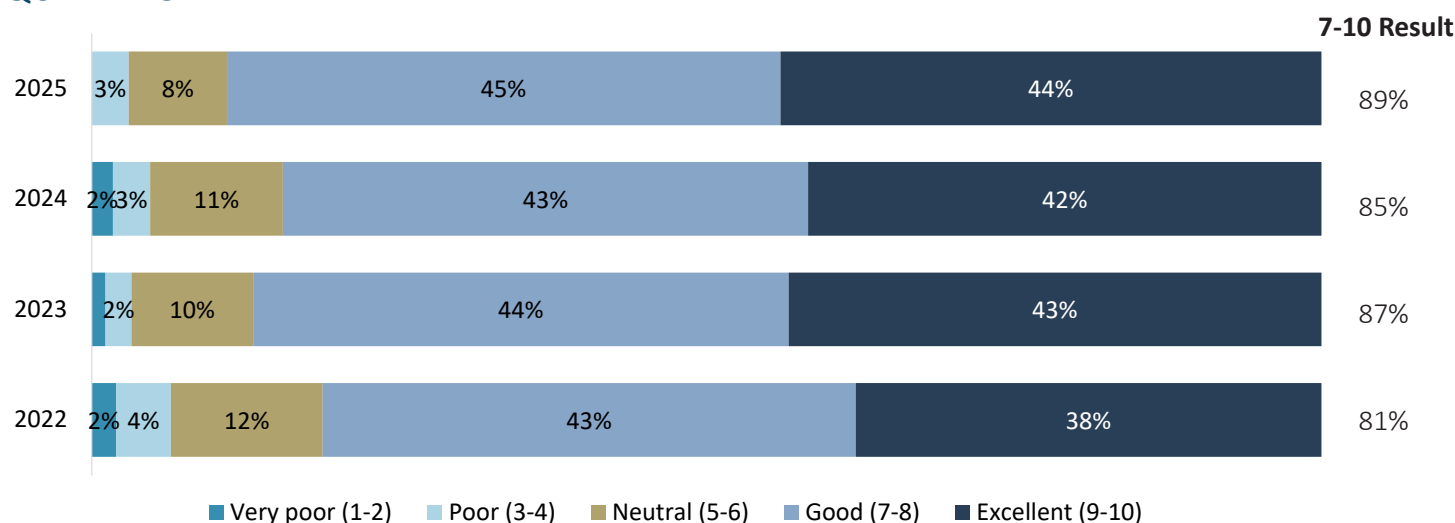
Q. On the scale from 1-10 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the image of the closest town centre? Base size n=835 (don't know responses removed)

The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their quality of life. Eighty-nine percent of respondents stated that their quality of life was either good or excellent, continuing a trend of positive responses over time. Only 3% stated that their quality of life was poor, and none of the respondents rated their quality of life as very poor. There were no significant differences between the ratings from different demographic groups or areas, although the response for Pacific people is lower than that of other groups

QUALITY OF LIFE



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Good and excellent result	89%	88%	84%	85%	90%	93%	94%

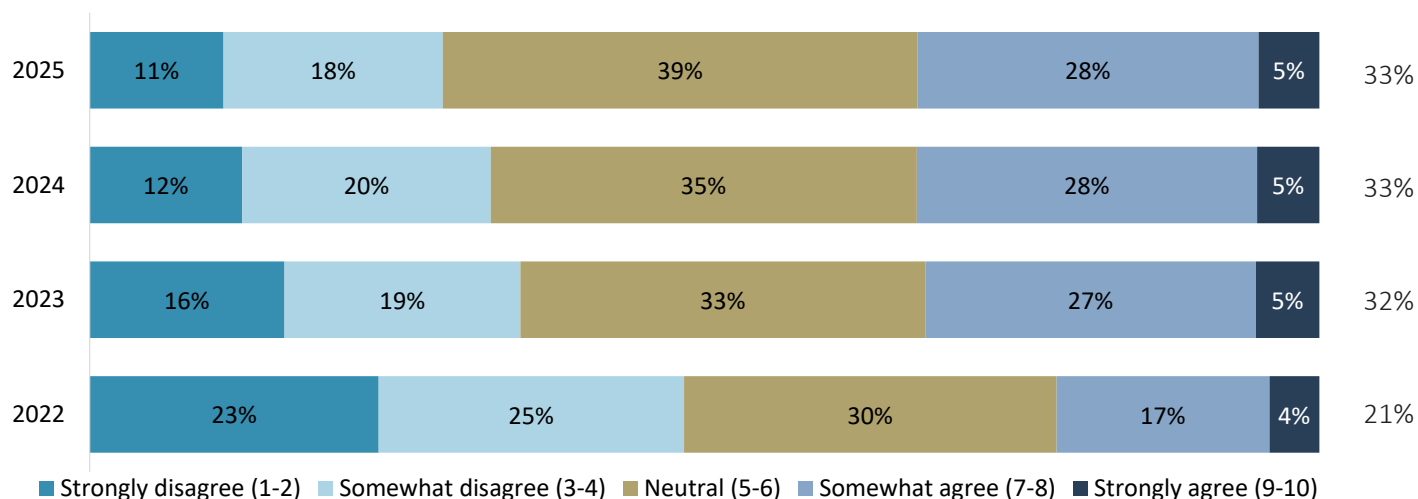
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Good and excellent result	91%	88%	87%	89%	89%	63%	89%

Q. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'extremely poor' and 10 is 'excellent', how would you rate the overall quality of your life? Base size n=840 (don't know responses removed)

DISTRICT DIRECTION

Respondents were asked their views on whether the district is moving in the right direction. This year, one-third of respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that the district was moving in the right direction, while 29% somewhat or strongly disagreed. These results are similar to those from 2024 and continue a trend of decreasing disagreement over the monitoring period. Respondents over the age of 80 years were more likely to agree that the district was heading in the right direction.

CONFIDENT DISTRICT IS GOING IN RIGHT DIRECTION

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	30%	34%	26%	32%	29%	37%	56% ↑

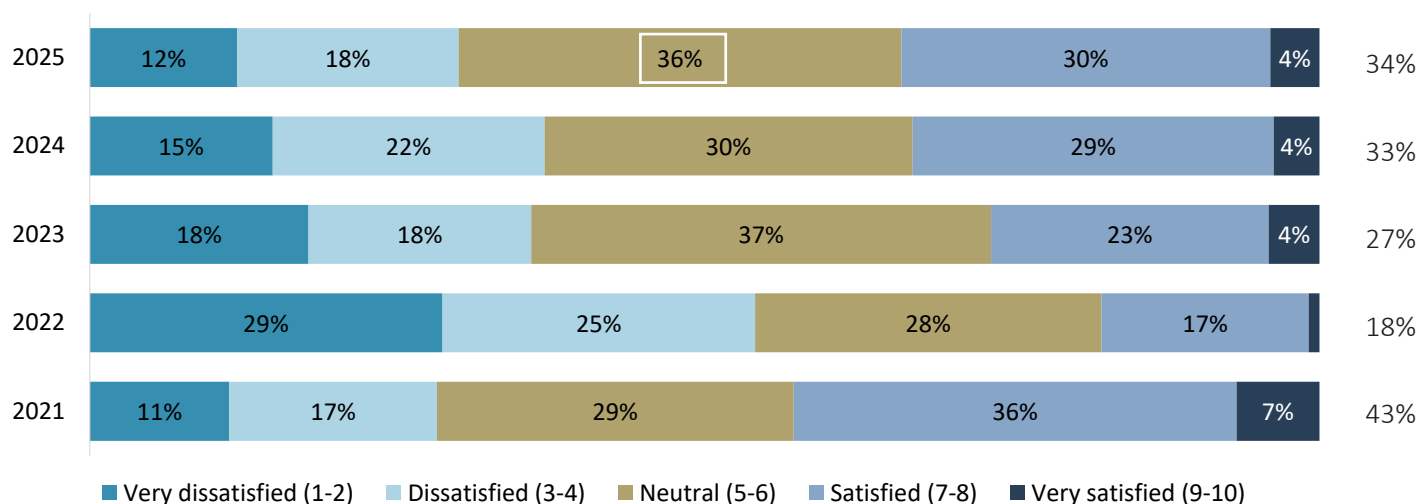
	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Somewhat agree and strongly agree result	38%	28%	29%	32%	14%	72%	40%

Q. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 10 is 'strongly agree', how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement about the District? You're confident that the district is going in the right direction. Base size n=786 (don't know responses removed)
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL

Respondents were asked about their overall satisfaction with SWDC. Thirty-four percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with SWDC's performance, similar to 2024. Thirty percent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with SWDC's performance, a slight decrease from 2024. Respondents over 80 were more likely to be satisfied with SWDC than respondents in other age groups.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL

7-10 Result


DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES (7-10 RESULT)

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Satisfied and very satisfied result	35%	35%	31%	37%	31%	35%	57% ↑

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Satisfied and very satisfied result	39%	34%	31%	35%	27%	44%	40%

Q. And thinking about everything we have discussed about the Council, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the South Wairarapa District Council? Base size n=810 (don't know responses removed)

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

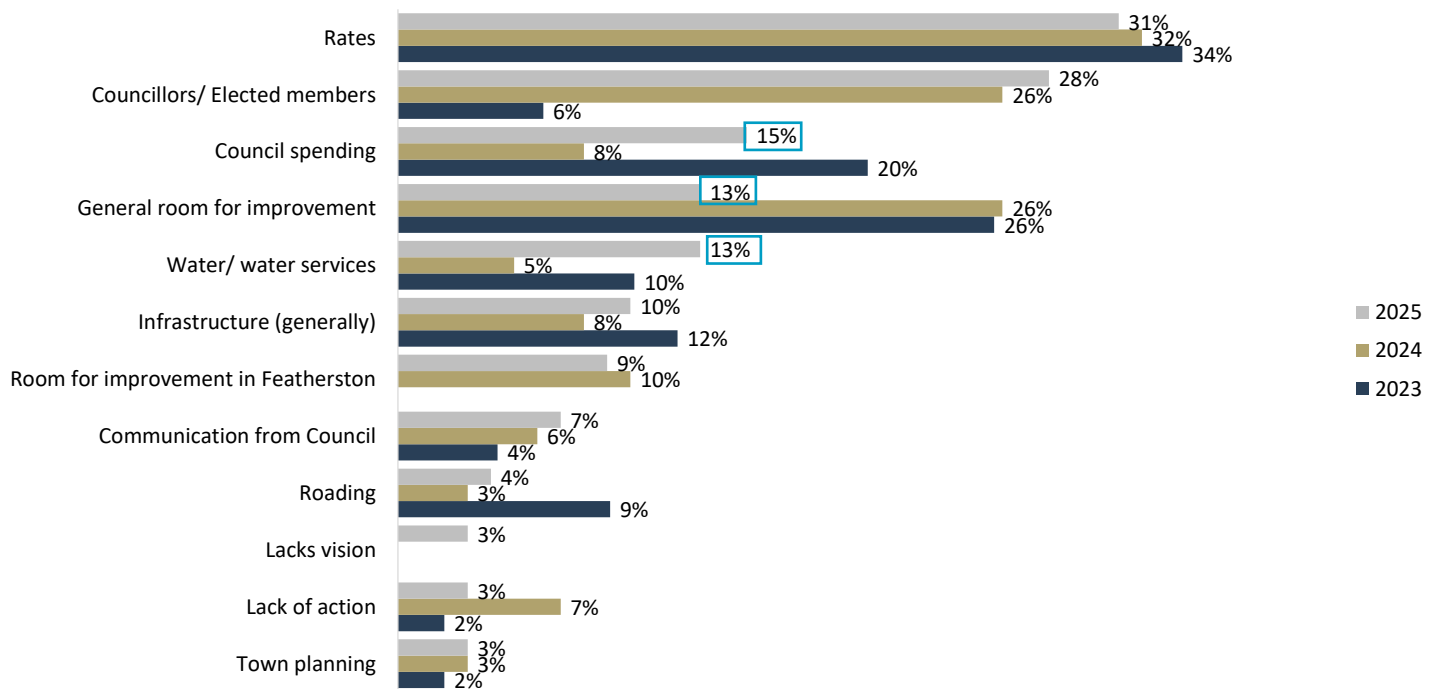
The arrow on the table indicates this result is statistically significantly different from the total level result.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL: DISSATISFIED

Respondents were asked why they rated SWDC the way they did. These responses were provided verbatim and coded into themes after the survey closed.

The primary reasons respondents provided a performance lower rating (between 1 and 4 out of 10) related to rates and views on elected members, both of which were also strong themes in 2024. This year saw a significant increase in the number of respondents who stated that SWDC spending was an issue and there was a decline in the proportion of respondents who mentioned there was general room for improvement. There was an increase in the proportion of respondents who were dissatisfied due to water services in the district, while the proportion of people who noted their dissatisfaction due to infrastructure, issues with Featherston, communication, and roading all remained similar to 2024.

REASONS FOR DISSATISFACTION (1-4 RATING) WITH COUNCIL PERFORMANCE



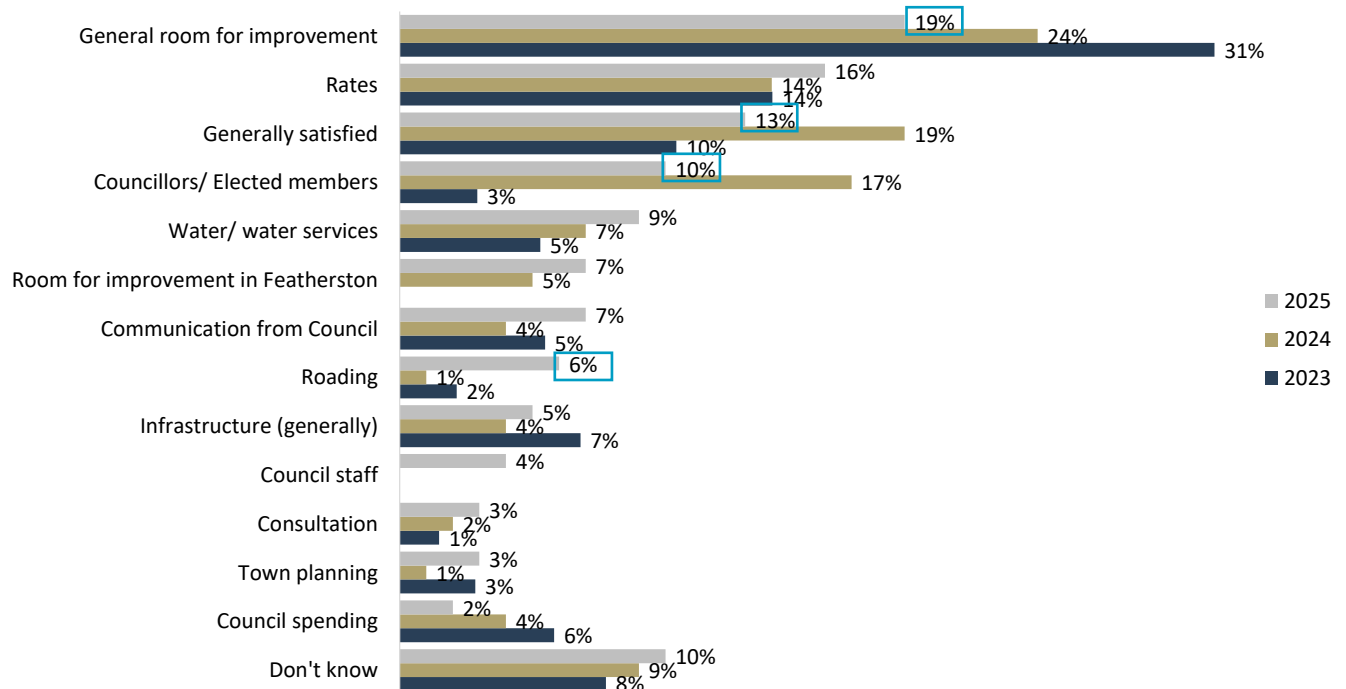
Q. Why do you say that? Base size n=232

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL: NEUTRAL

Respondents who provided a neutral rating (5 or 6 out of 10) noted there was general room for improvement at SWDC. However, the proportion of respondents who mentioned this declined this year as did the proportion of respondents who noted they were generally satisfied with SWDC. Interestingly, there have been increases in a number of more specific issues, particularly water services, issues pertaining to Featherston, roading issues, and new mentions of SWDC staff. There has been a decline in the number of mentions relating to elected members this year among those who provided a neutral rating.

REASONS FOR NEUTRAL RATING (5-6 RATING) FOR COUNCIL PERFORMANCE



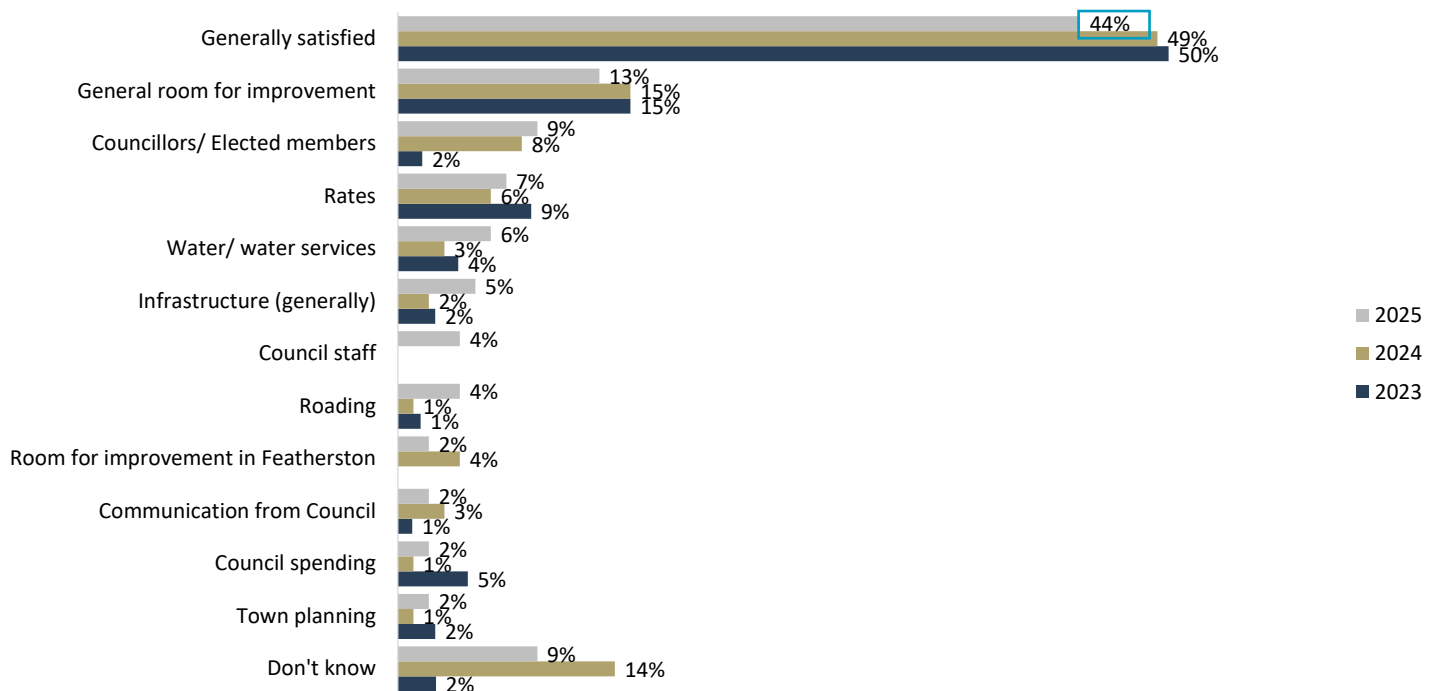
Q. Why do you say that? Base size n=287

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL: SATISFIED

Most respondents who provided a positive rating (between 7 and 10 out of 10) for SWDC's performance stated that they were generally satisfied, although this proportion has declined slightly this year. Thirteen percent of respondents noted there was room for improvement, while 9% of respondents commented about the negative behaviour of elected members, both of which were similar to 2024 results. In a new entry this year, 4% of respondents commented on the SWDC staff, which included a mix of both positive and negative responses about respondents' engagements with staff.

REASONS FOR SATISFACTION (7-10 RATING) WITH COUNCIL PERFORMANCE



Q. Why do you say that? Base size n=291

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Most respondents (64%) were satisfied with the image of their town, with satisfaction highest in Greytown and Martinborough. Quality of life ratings remained high, with 89% of respondents rating their quality of life as good or excellent.

One-third of respondents felt the district was heading in the right direction and a similar proportion were satisfied with SWDC overall. Concerns about rates, elected members, and spending continued to be key reasons for low satisfaction ratings, while those who were satisfied were generally pleased with how SWDC was performing.

A total of n=194 respondents commented on the performance of SWDC. These comments predominantly focused on concerns with infrastructure, leadership, and rates affordability. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CORE SERVICES ARE NOT MEETING EXPECTATIONS

A key theme across the responses was dissatisfaction with the quality and reliability of essential infrastructure and SWDC services. Many respondents noted issues such as unreliable water supply, aging sewage systems, poor road maintenance, inadequate street lighting, and ineffective waste management.

“The more rates we pay, the less we are seeing for our money. It just seems the more rates we pay, the less we are seeing for our money.”

These shortcomings were especially frustrating to those who felt that the basics were being neglected in favour of “vanity projects” or unnecessary spending. Several comments highlighted that visible improvements were limited despite ongoing population growth and rising costs.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND STAFF CAPABILITY

Some respondents expressed concerns about SWDC’s leadership and governance. There were calls for stronger vision, better communication, and greater unity among elected representatives and senior staff. Some described a lack of transparency and accountability and felt that decisions were being made in isolation of real community needs.

There was also frustration about the perceived internal dysfunction, favouritism, and a sense that key staff and councillors lacked the capability or will to address longstanding issues. While a few comments praised staff for being helpful, many comments noted that the SWDC culture needed a reset, with an emphasis on competence, integrity, and action.

“Leadership on big issues is lacking... what’s missing is a clear sense of leadership, equity, and accountability across the district.”

AFFORDABILITY AND FAIRNESS OF RATES

Many respondents described the rates as unaffordable, unsustainable, and unfairly distributed. Rural residents, in particular, questioned why they paid similar or higher rates despite receiving fewer services.

“My rates have gone up 335% in 5 years – yet I receive nothing in return. I am rural and self-sufficient.”

There was a strong view that rising rates were not delivering value, and concerns that the current model was driving long-term residents, especially those on fixed or single incomes, out of the district. Some respondents called for a review of the rating system, clearer explanations of rate increases, and better financial discipline from SWDC.

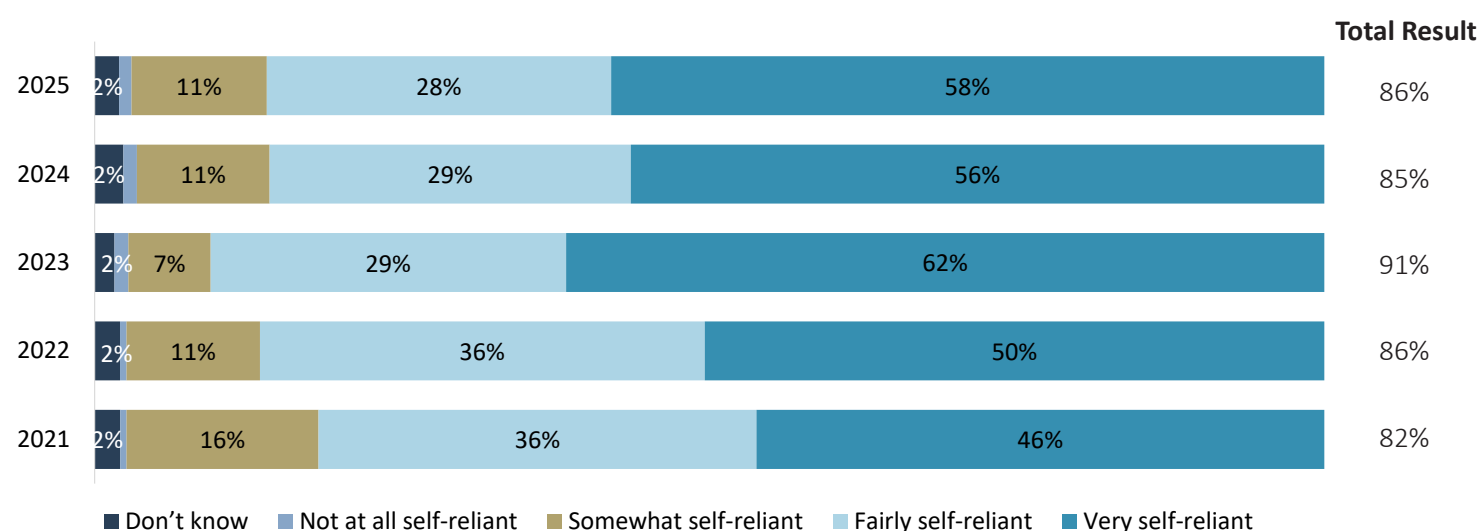
CIVIL DEFENCE



SELF-RELIANCE

Respondents were asked how prepared they believed they were for an emergency. This year, 86% of respondents felt they were fairly or very self-reliant, similar to the 2024 result. The proportion of respondents who were somewhat self-reliant is at 11%, while the proportion who were not self-reliant has remained at 1%, similar to previous years. No significant differences existed between the ratings from different demographic groups or areas.

SELF-RELIANCE



DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

	Male	Female	18 to 34 years	35 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 to 79 years	80 years or older
Very and fairly self-reliant result	86%	86%	78%	81%	91%	91%	81%

	Greytown	Featherston	Martinborough	NZ European	Māori	Pacific people	All others
Very and fairly self-reliant result	90%	83%	84%	87%	78%	56%	85%

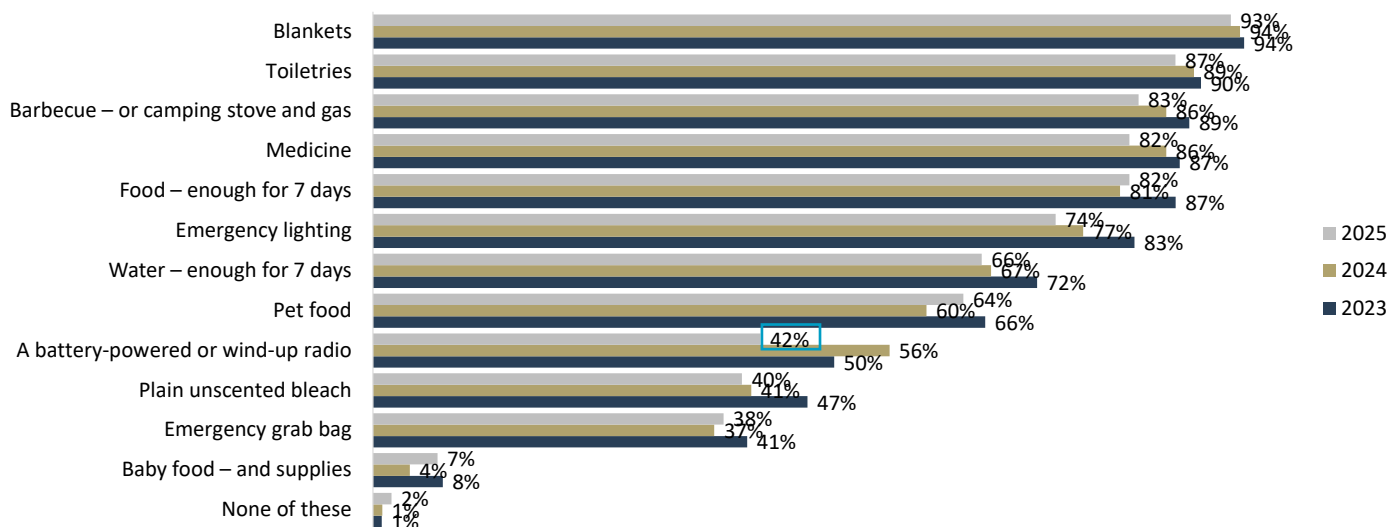
Q. How self-reliant do you believe you have to be in the event of a major civil defence emergency? Base size n=843

PREPARATION

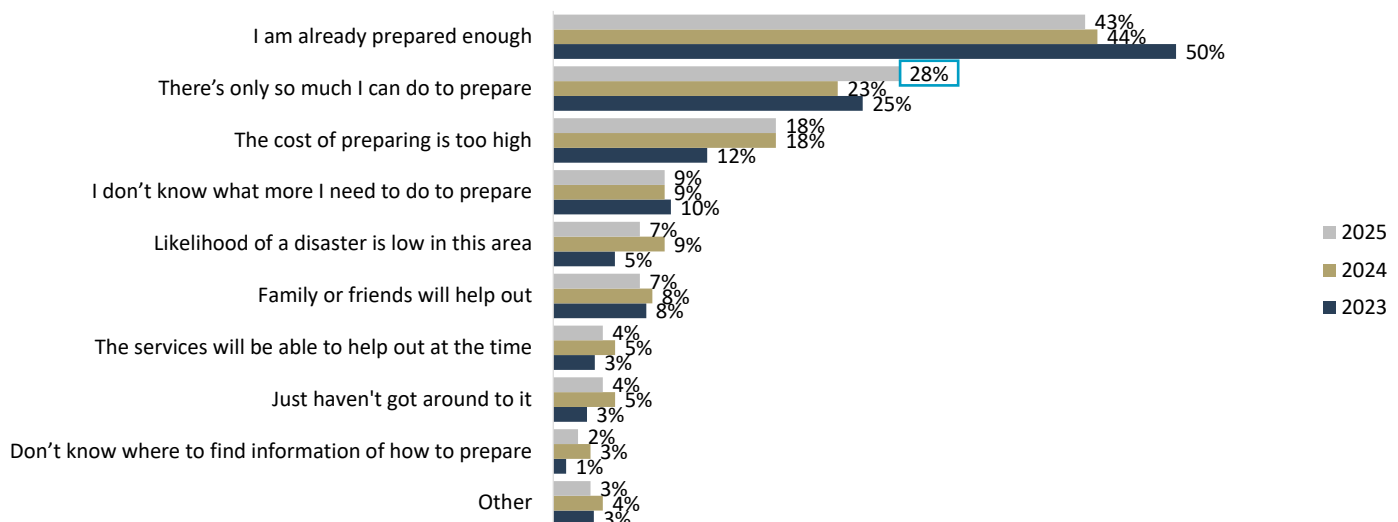
Respondents were given a list of items and asked which they had access to at home. The most common items are blankets, toiletries, a barbecue, medicine, and food for seven days. There has been a continued decline in the availability of battery-powered/wind-up radio or emergency lighting. Grab bags, bleach, and baby food remain the main items people were less likely to have, with only 2% of respondents not having any listed items.

Respondents were asked about barriers to being prepared. The primary challenge to preparedness was the perception of already being fully prepared, this has been a persistent reason for the past three years. Secondly, there was also a perception of only being able to do so much, an issue which has increased this year. Other key issues included the cost being too high to remain prepared and being unsure what is needed to be prepared.

PREPARATION



BARRIERS TO PREPARATION



Q. Which of the following do you have at home? Base size n=843

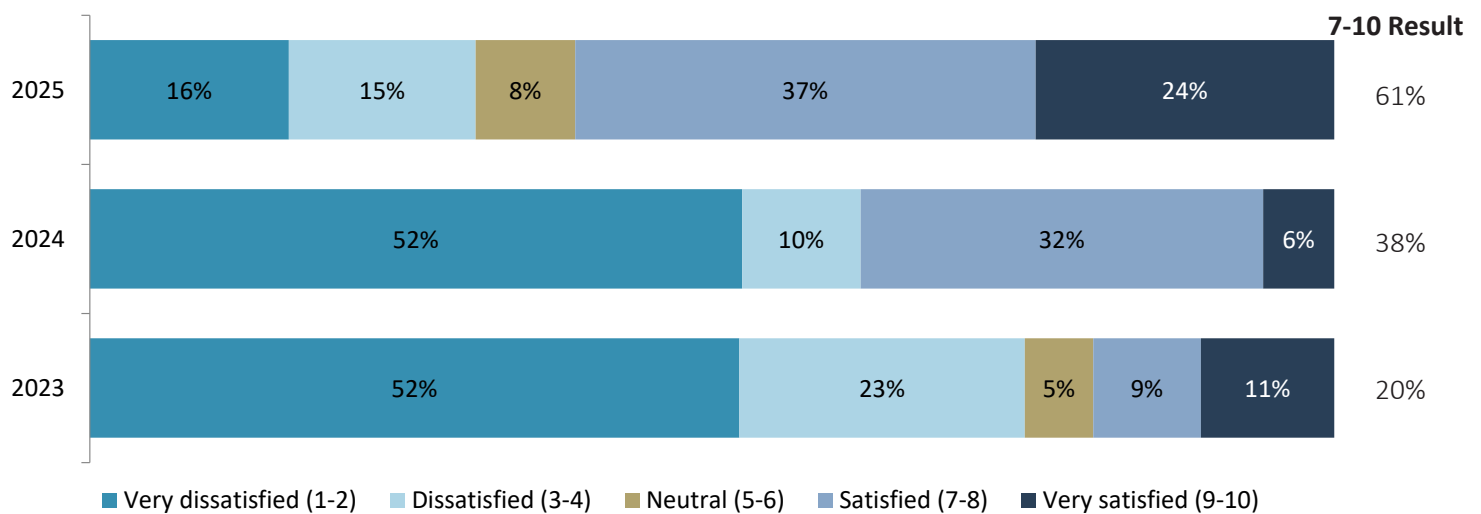
Q. What barriers do you have that prevent you from being prepared in an emergency? Base size n=843

The square box on the chart indicates this year's result is a statistically significant change from last year's result.

SATISFACTION WITH RESPONSE

Respondents were asked if they had been affected by a severe weather event in the past 12 months. This year, 24% of respondents were affected, amongst whom only 7% contacted SWDC (n=16 respondents in total). These respondents were asked how satisfied they were with SWDC's response, of whom 61% stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with SWDC's response and 31% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with SWDC's response.

SATISFACTION WITH RESPONSE



CIVIL DEFENCE SUMMARY

Most respondents (86%) were self-reliant and had several of the required emergency items on hand, although access to emergency radios and lighting continues to decline. Many respondents noted that they were already sufficiently prepared for an emergency, similar to previous years. A quarter of respondents experienced a severe weather event in the past year, but few contacted SWDC.

A total of n=128 respondents commented about the district's civil defence. These comments predominantly focused on community vulnerability (during an emergency) and communications during emergencies. A summary of these responses has been provided below.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

Some respondents expressed concerns that their community was unprepared for serious events like flooding or earthquakes. In light of this lack of preparedness, respondents' suggested there was a need for clarity around designated emergency hubs and evacuation points, i.e., where and how to access them. There was also a call for information about how residents could access basic supplies such as water and first aid during an emergency.

"Emergency hubs need to be set up with medical supplies and provisions for those in need during a disaster."

"I don't even know if we have Civil Defence in our area — where would we go in a flood?"

Many comments also raised concerns about vulnerable people in their community particularly older people, those with mobility issues, or rural households being overlooked in preparedness planning. Some suggested that Civil Defence should work with neighbourhoods, churches, and community groups to identify and support vulnerable residents during an emergency.

"Who checks on the elderly or disabled in a real emergency? Is there a list?"

"We live rurally and know we're on our own — we'd like a generator pool or some kind of backup."

COMMUNICATION DURING EMERGENCIES

Respondents strongly emphasised the need for clear, timely communication during emergencies. Many felt unsure of what to do or where to go and requested better guidance and public education from SWDC.

"Communication is the key so we can all be prepared and know what to do in an emergency."

Residents asked for more proactive communication and public education on emergency planning prior to needing this information. Suggestions included adding emergency information with rates notices, regular updates via newsletters or emails, signage for emergency centres, and community events or workshops. Several respondents wanted a clearer explanation of who does what, in particular distinguishing the roles of SWDC, Civil Defence, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, and regional agencies.

"Please send something to every household — who's in charge, where to go, who to call."

"We need plain language info — not everyone knows what's expected in an emergency."

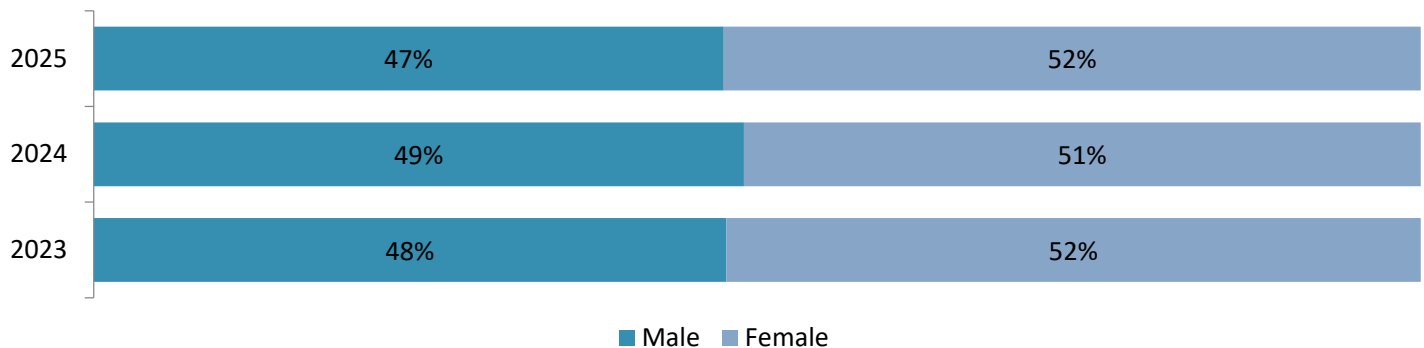
DEMOGRAPHICS



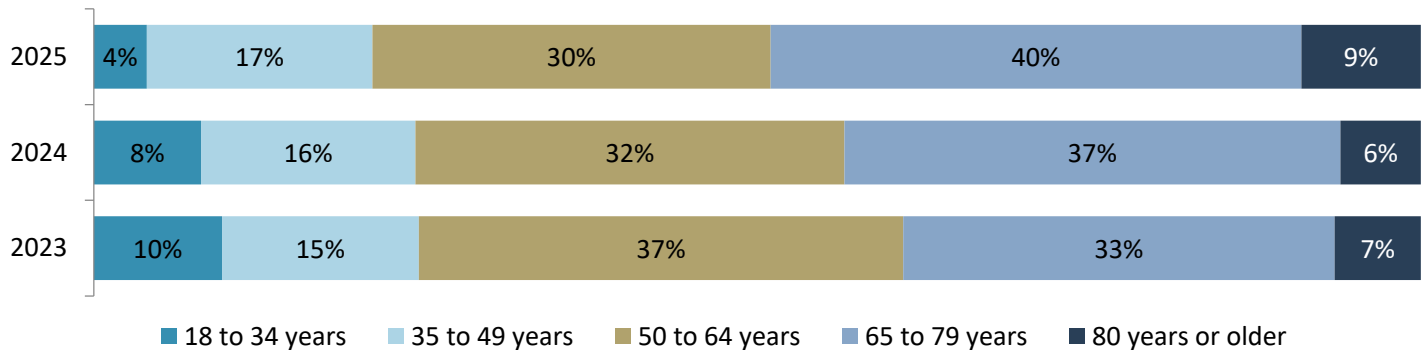
OUR DISTRICT

The results shown on this page are unweighted results.

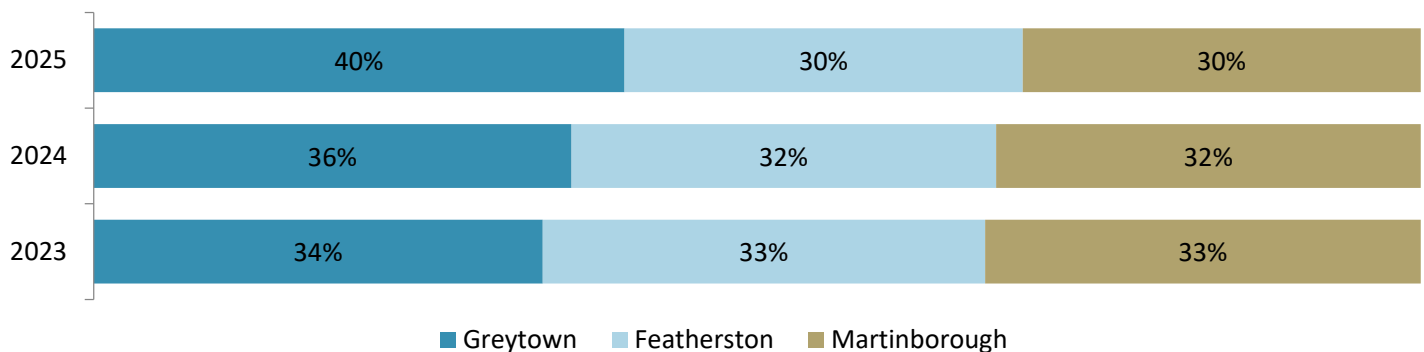
GENDER



AGE



AREA



Q. Are you...? Base size n=843

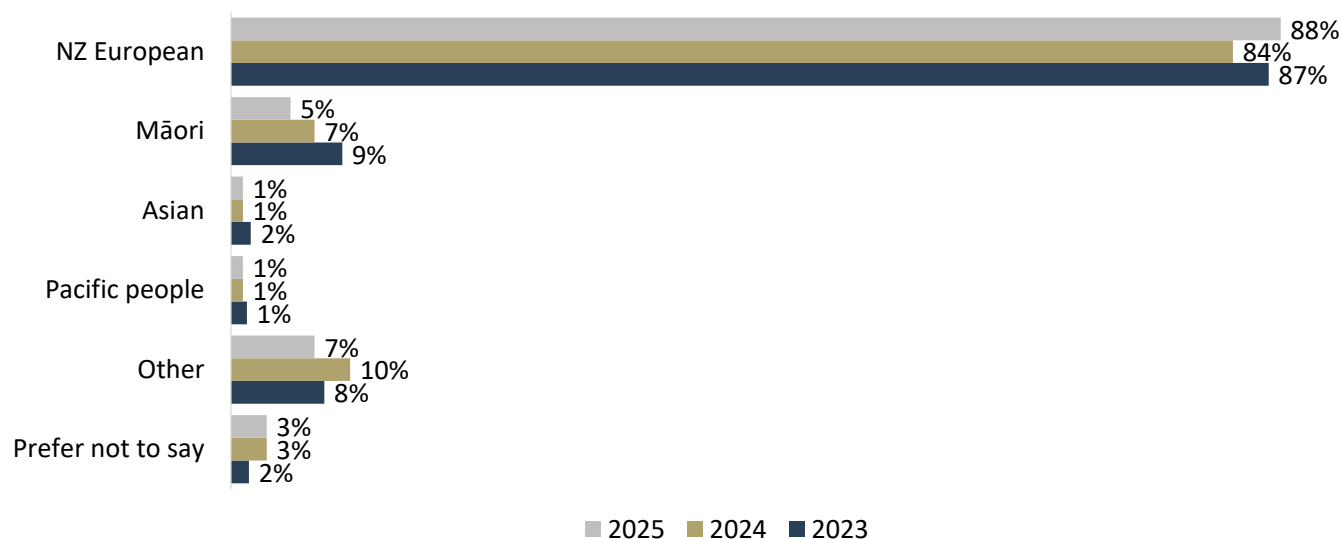
Q. Which age group do you belong to? Base size n=843

Q. Which of the following wards best describes where you live? Base size n=843

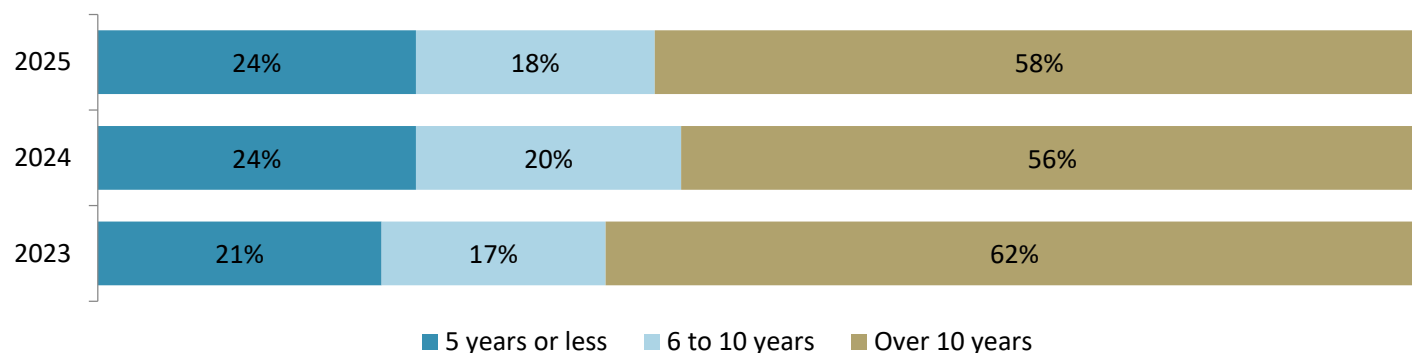
OUR DISTRICT

The results shown on this page are unweighted results.

ETHNICITY



TENURE



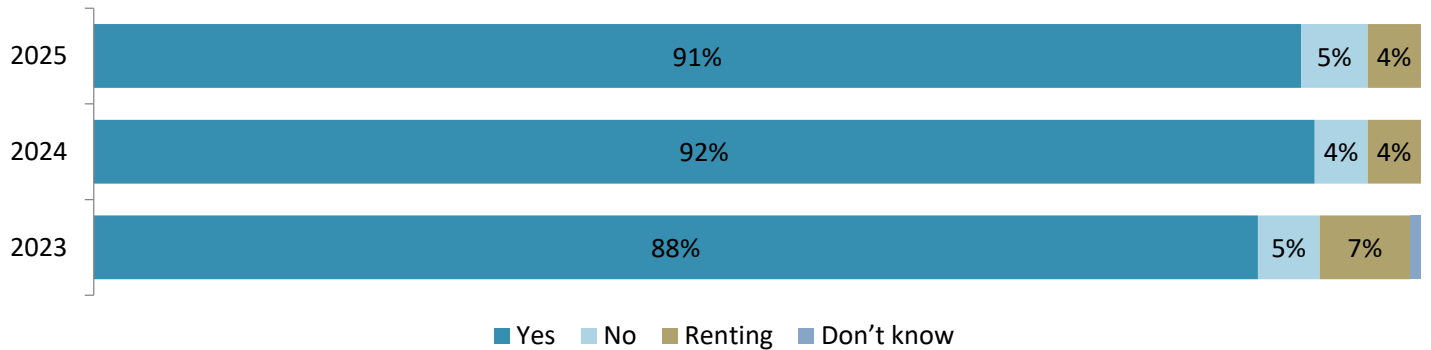
Q. Which ethnic groups do you identify with? Please indicate all the ethnicities. Base size n=843

Q. About how many years have you lived in the South Wairarapa district? Base size n=843

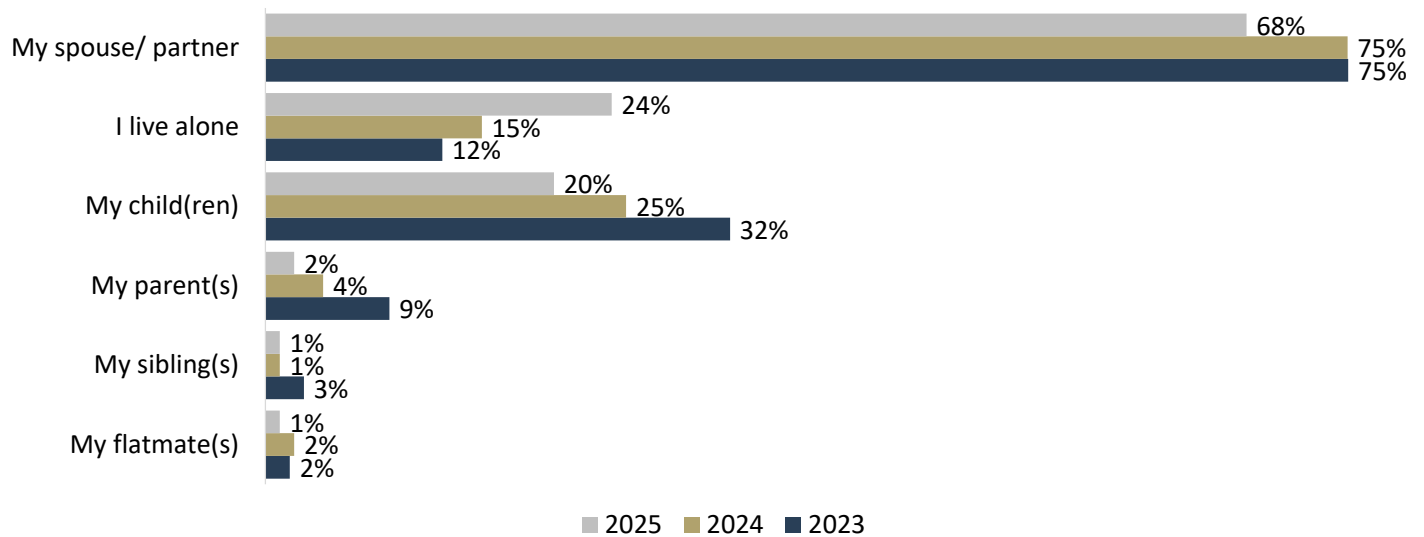
OUR DISTRICT

The results shown on this page are unweighted results.

RATEPAYER



HOUSEHOLD



Q. Do you, or a member of your household, pay rates on a property in the district? Base size n=843

Q. Which of the following best describes who lives in your house? Base size n=843



Versus
RESEARCH

versus.co.nz