

Gore District Council

ANNUAL RESIDENTS' SURVEY

May 2023



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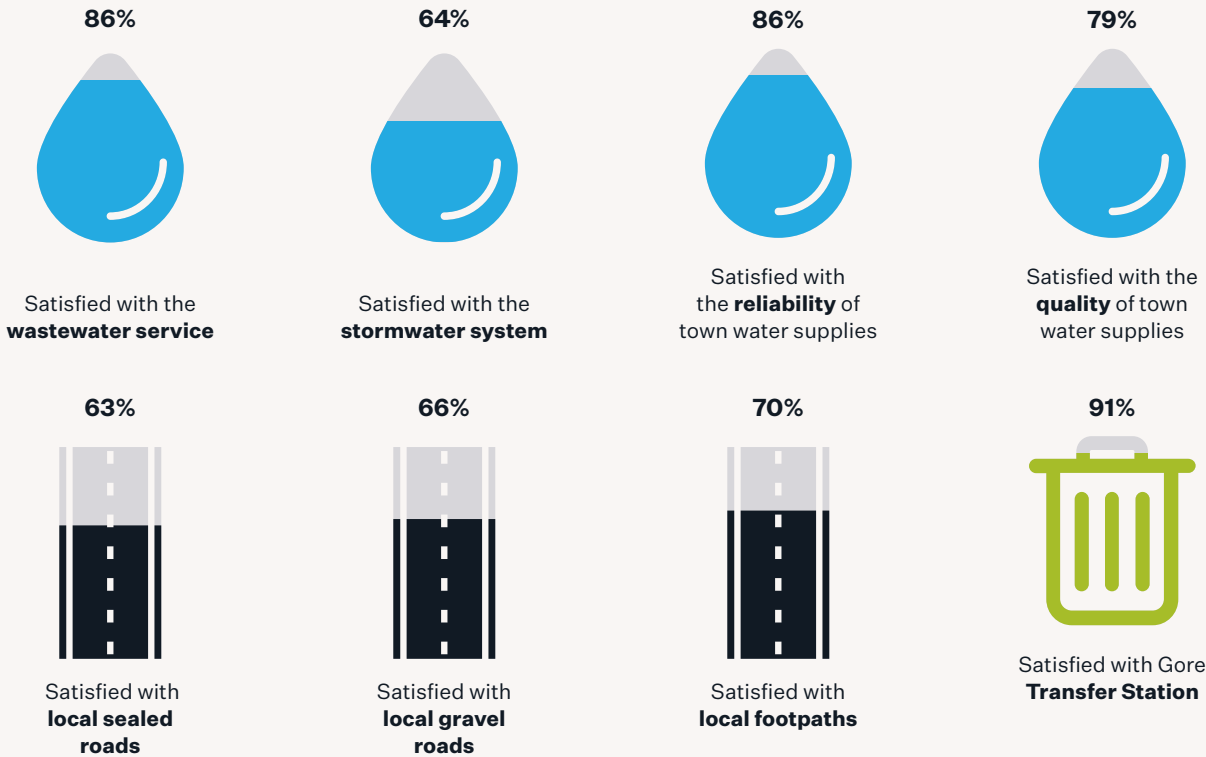
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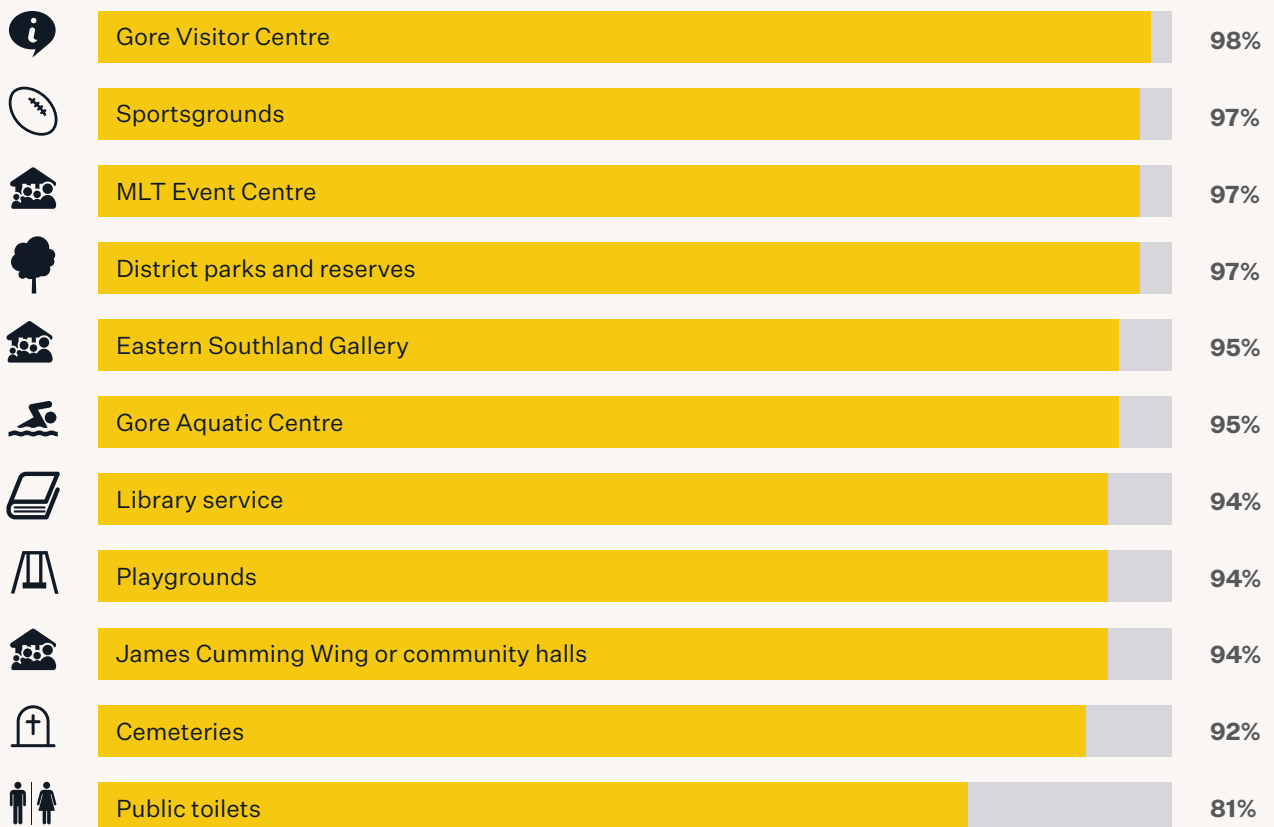
Section 1

Infographic summary

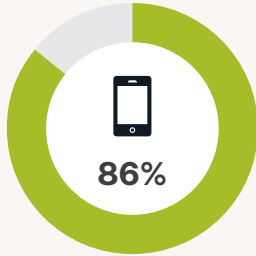
COUNCIL SERVICES



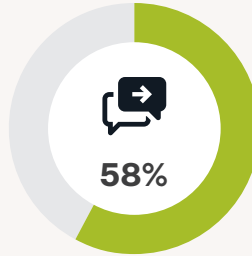
COUNCIL FACILITIES



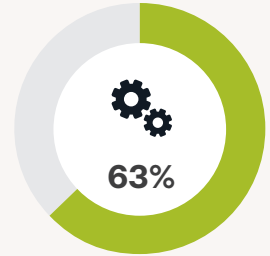
COUNCIL PERFORMANCE



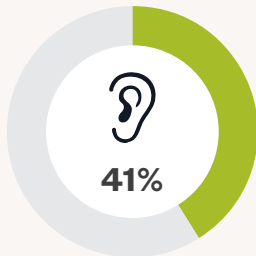
Were satisfied that they can **contact an elected member** of the Council to raise an issue or problem.



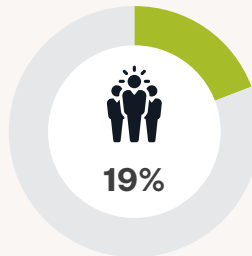
Were satisfied that the Council is responding to the **needs**, and to **issues raised** in the community.



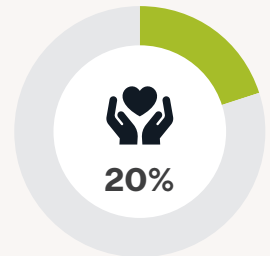
Were **satisfied with the performance** of Gore District Council overall.



Agreed Gore District Council provides enough **opportunities** for people to have their say.



Felt the Mayor and Councillors **display sound and effective leadership**.



Agreed they have good strategies for **developing prosperity and well-being** of their community.

THE GORE DISTRICT

89%



Agreed that the Gore District is a **great place to live**

88%



Agreed the Gore District has good **sporting and recreation facilities**

77%



Agreed there is a **great sense of community** where they live

75%



Agreed the Gore District is a **safe place to live**.

74%



Felt a **sense of pride** on the way their local area looks and feels



Section 2

Research design

Context

The Gore District:

- Was formed in 1989, incorporating the former Gore and Mataura borough councils and part of the former Southland County Council.
- Has five electoral wards for the 11-member council, plus the mayor, who is elected from the community at large.
- Covers 1,251 km².
- Has a capital value of over \$2.6 billion with a strong agricultural-led economy.
- Has a population of 12,396 (2018 census). Gore is the largest urban area, with a population of 7,518. Mataura has a population of 1,629.

Gore District Council commissions an annual survey of residents to find out what they think about specific services and facilities and how they feel about the District and Council's performance.

The key service areas tested in the 2023 residents' survey were:

- Wastewater and stormwater services
- Water services
- Roothing services
- Waste services
- Council services
 - Council facilities
 - Contacting the Council
 - Council communications
- Council planning
- Elected members and organisational performance
- Perceptions of the Gore District

Method

In line with the 2014 – 2022 surveys, the 2023 research was conducted both by phone and online.

PHONE SURVEY WITH ONLINE COMPLETION OPTION

Telephone surveys are ideally suited to surveying large, geographically dispersed populations – exactly like Gore’s. The data produced is the result of random sampling and is therefore free from self-selection bias; it can be considered statistically robust, and levels of statistical confidence can be applied to the data.

An online channel for the survey was included to make the survey more inclusive. Residents contacted by phone who were unwilling or unable to complete the survey, were offered an email containing a link to the online survey. This provided an alternative option to participate for those with a preference for online completion.

STANDALONE ONLINE SURVEY

The research was also promoted across the District as an online survey that anyone could complete, including those without landlines or those who were not invited to take part in the random telephone sample. Communications to promote the online survey to a wider audience included:

- Production of graphics and text used jointly by Research First and Gore District Council. A set of images was produced to appeal to different groups within the population.
- The advert and link to the online survey were placed in the banner section of the Gore District Council homepage to coincide with the start of the telephone survey, providing both promotion of the online mechanism and verifying the legitimacy of the telephone survey.

The survey was visible and created an inclusive approach that ensured a greater community engagement than with the telephone survey alone.

However, the online sample is self-selecting and is essentially different from that provided through the telephone sampling approach (which is based on random sampling where respondents are invited to take part). Self-selecting respondents are likely to have characteristics and opinions that are not consistent with the general population. For this reason, the sample from the online survey should not be viewed as representative of the District’s population. A comparison of results provided from the two different samples is provided in Appendix Five.

The telephone survey provides a sample of 380 respondents that is representative of the District’s population and accurate to +/- 5 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. An additional 281 residents chose to give their feedback through the online survey.



Sampling

The questionnaire for 2023, mostly the same as previous years, does not collect views on Hokonui Moonshine Museum and the Heritage Centre which have been removed from the survey.

Data collection took place between March 18th and April 27th, 2023.

Data collection for the telephone survey was randomised within each household to ensure the sample included a range of respondents based on age, location, and gender, with a quota system being used to ensure the sample was representative of the population, as per census 2018 statistics.

Performance targets and satisfaction measures

Levels of resident satisfaction with services are measured in this report by first removing all respondents who answered 'don't know', 'not applicable', or similar.

Across all KPIs, the KPI measure of satisfaction is reported as the proportion answering neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied.

To ensure consistency, where the total satisfied is reported for any service area, this is the proportion of residents that answered neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied.

Where levels of agreement are reported, the total agreeing is the proportion that either agreed or strongly agreed. In these cases, stating 'neither agree nor disagree' cannot be deemed as agreement.

In this report numbers presented have been rounded to whole numbers. Due to this rounding, individual figures may not add up precisely to the totals provided or to 100 percent.

Section 3

Wastewater and stormwater

Wastewater and stormwater

Overall, results showed that the majority were satisfied with the waste and stormwater services provided by the Council.

- 86 percent of residents were satisfied with the wastewater service over the past 12 months; and
- 64 percent of residents were satisfied with the stormwater system over the past 12 months.

Trend analysis of satisfaction with wastewater services shows relatively stable levels over time. Conversely, satisfaction with stormwater services has seen a marked decrease, falling from 84 percent in 2022 to 64 percent in 2023. This represents the lowest recorded satisfaction rate since 2015. While this decrease is noteworthy, it is possible that the heavy flooding experienced in Gore in December 2022 could be a strong contributing factor.

Comments by residents dissatisfied with any of these services (shown in Fig. 3.3) highlight the need to improve wastewater and stormwater services in general.

Not clearing the gutters and the drains is a continuing concern for the residents.

Others suggested having separate pipes for storm water and wastewater.

“ They just need to spend some money on infrastructure and fix the issues with the stormwater and the wastewater so they need to make sure the drains are cleaned on a regular basis and then we wouldn’t have problems with flooding”.

“ Local businesses and retailers shouldn’t have to be cleaning up after stormwater when the local council aren’t servicing it. Think back to Christmas time - the busiest time of the year - they were closed for cleaning because they had water streaming through them. The cleaning costs were astronomical, the Council has to step up”.

Figure 3.1 Satisfaction with wastewater and stormwater services

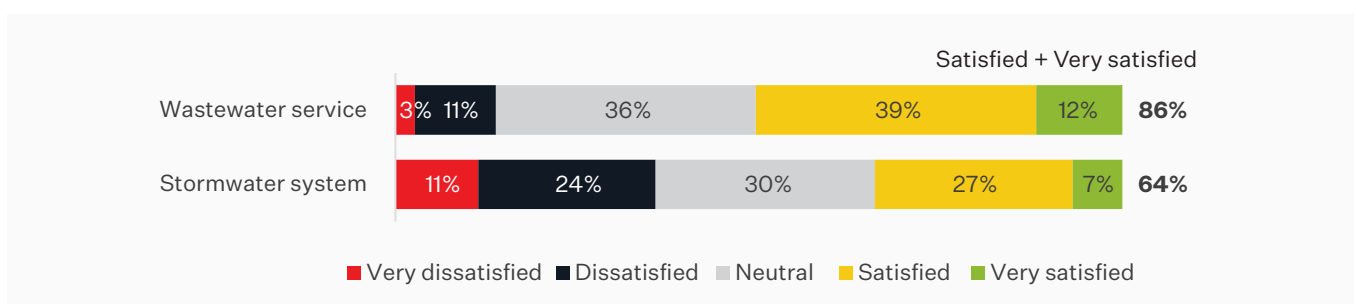


Figure 3.2 Satisfaction with wastewater and stormwater services – trend analysis

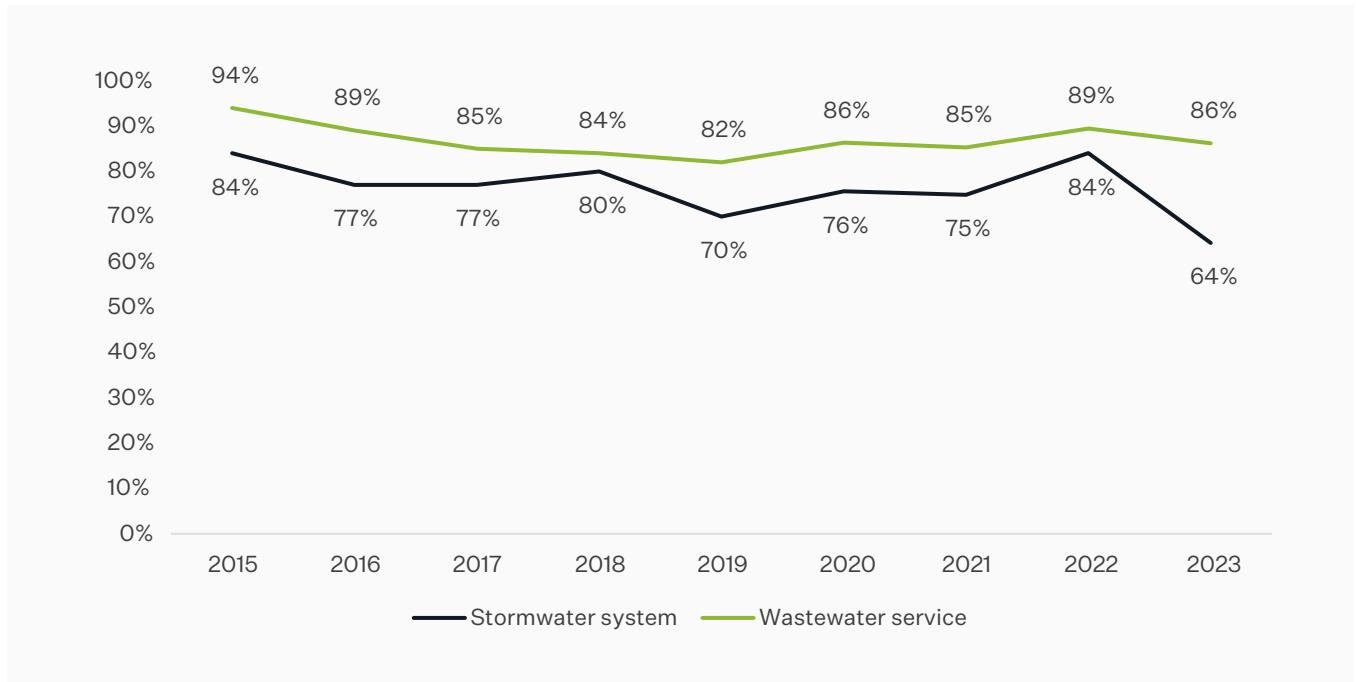


Figure 3.3 Comments about wastewater and stormwater services by dissatisfied residents

	Percentage	Number of respondents
Improve/upgrade services in general	56%	89
Fix or clear drains/gutters/sumps/culverts	21%	34
Remedy surface flooding from stormwater	14%	22
Separate wastewater and stormwater pipes	4%	7
Listen to resident concerns/suggestions	4%	7
Fix/improve wastewater ponds/treatment plants	1%	2
Stop dumping stormwater/wastewater into river	1%	1
Rural areas don't receive these services	1%	1
Bring in water storage	1%	1
Other	4%	7
Total respondents		159

Base: All respondents dissatisfied excluding missing and don't know, N=159

Section 4

Water services

Quality and reliability

About two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) were on the Gore town water supply, 10 percent on the Mataura supply, and 23 percent on a private supply.

Respondents on town supplies were asked a series of questions around water services. Results showed that the majority were satisfied with the water supply.

- 86 percent were satisfied with the reliability of town water supplies.
- 79 percent were satisfied with the quality of town water supplies.

Trend analysis found that perceptions of reliability and quality of town-water supplies have both dropped by 5 percent since 2022.

Results analysed by location still confirm some substantial differences depending on which area the respondents reside in. The residents of Mataura are significantly less likely to be satisfied with the water services.

Residents on the Mataura water supply have reported a higher level of dissatisfaction with both the quality (54 percent dissatisfied) and reliability (44 percent dissatisfied) of their water, compared to residents from other areas of the District. Notably, dissatisfaction rates in Mataura have risen since the previous year, with dissatisfaction regarding water quality seeing a decrease of 9 percentage points, and dissatisfaction regarding reliability decreasing by 14 percentage points.

Figure 4.1 Satisfaction with water services (Reliability & Quality)

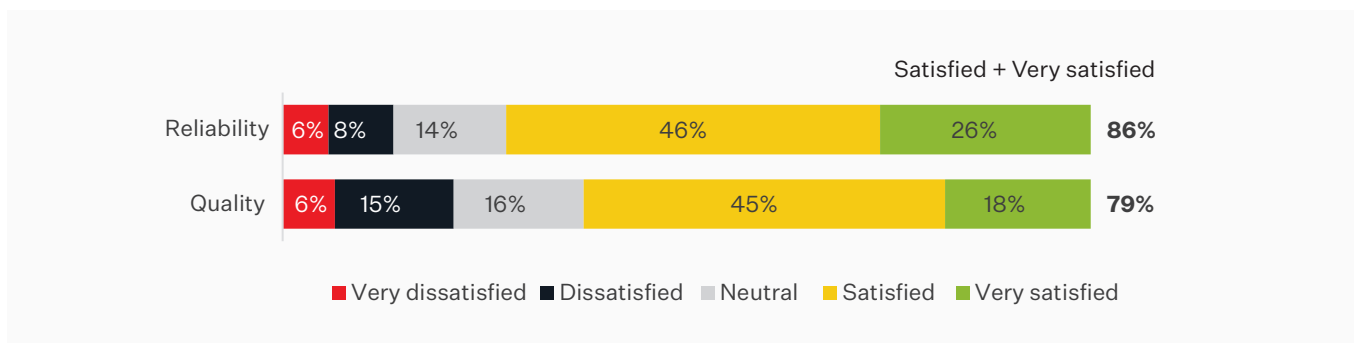
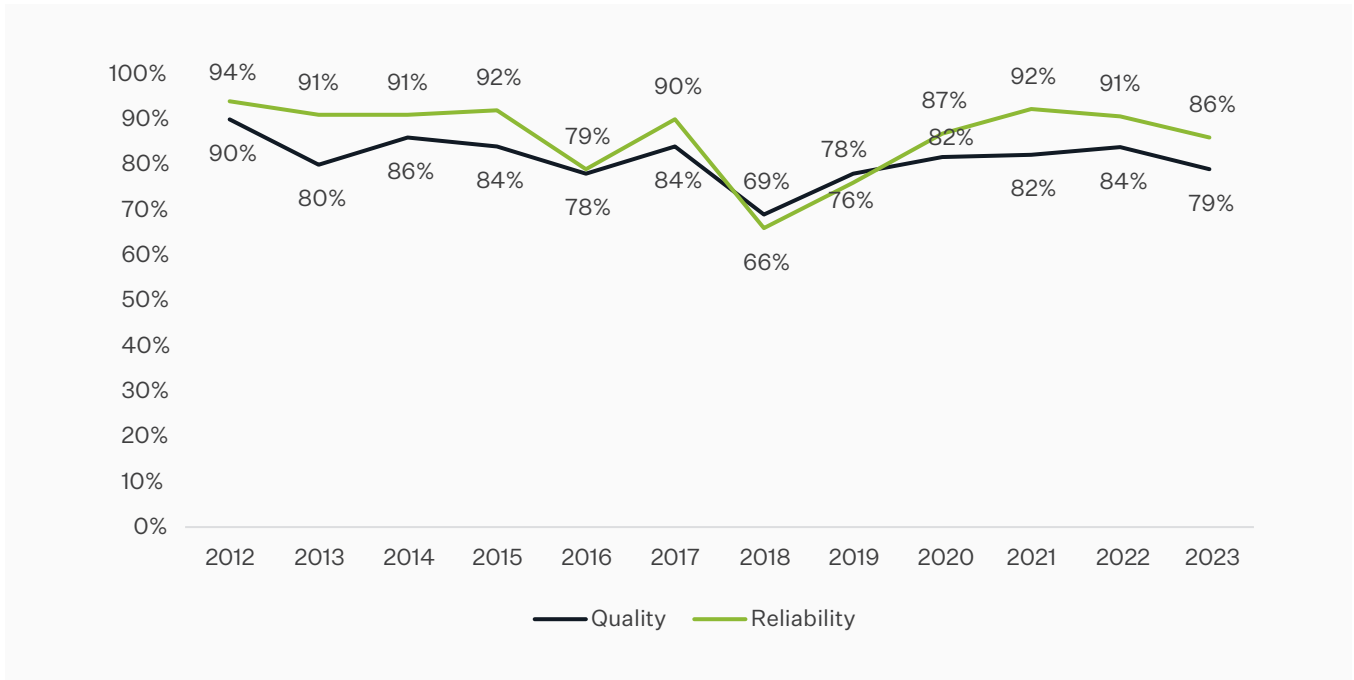


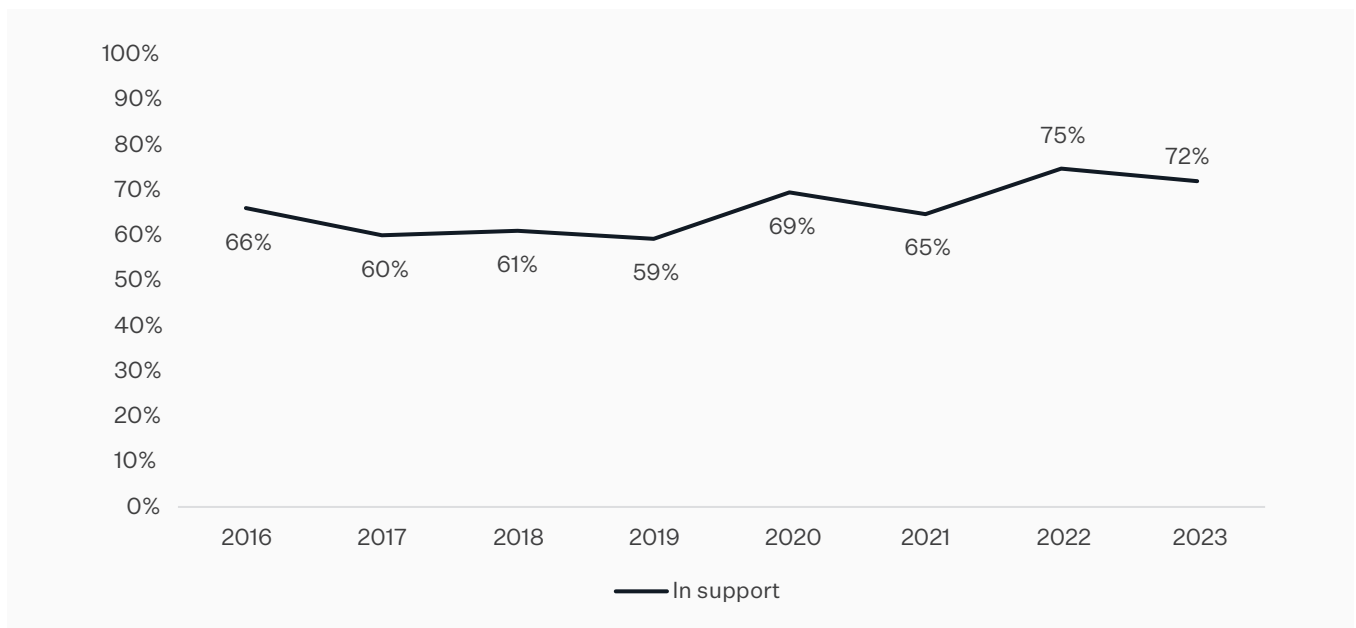
Figure 4.2 Satisfaction with water services – trend analysis



Water restrictions

Seventy-two percent of the residents on town supply supported the Council’s approach of applying water restrictions to manage water use on town water supplies. However, support levels have seen a slight decrease on those reported last year.

Figure 4.3 Level of support for water restrictions – trend analysis



Over a quarter of respondents (28 percent) did not support the Council’s approach for various reasons. The major ones are as under:

- Twenty-three percent feel that the Council should have planned beforehand.
- Twenty-two percent feel that they need/deserve to use water without any restriction.
- Nineteen percent feel dissatisfied as the farmers and businesses get to use water without restriction.
- Fourteen percent mention that restrictions are only a temporary solution/not fixing the problem of finding a new source.

“ Because they’re selling it to a business, namely Mataura Valley Milk and I’m a ratepayer so I’m entitled to have a say”.

“ Because we get restrictions to our supply but the Council are still allowed to keep using water to water their gardens and they have their sprinkler systems going and wet the street. The other reason is they’ve tapped into a new bore just outside of Gore that is feeding a dairy factory and it’s over-supplied so they should use the new bore for our town supply”.

Figure 4.4 Reasons for opposing water restrictions as a means to manage water use on town supplies

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Council should have resolved issues years ago/ planned ahead	23%	34
Need/ deserve to use water without restriction	22%	32
Farmers/business using water without restriction	19%	27
Restrictions are only temporary solution/not fixing problem of new source	14%	20
Council wastes water/spends money on other things	11%	16
Water usage is part of rates/no proposed rates reduction	11%	16
Restrictions apply even when sufficient water available	3%	4
People don't abide by restrictions/use should be measured	3%	4
Other	8%	11
Don't know	7%	10
Total respondents		145

Comments about water services

Residents who were dissatisfied with the quality or reliability of their water supply were asked if they had any comments about Council water services.

Similar to last year, one-third of respondents reveal that the main concern remains the poor (or variable) quality of drinking water. One in five feels that water services needs improvement and about one in ten believes that the Council is poor at planning and management.

- “ The taste of the water could be improved 10x because the water actually tastes disgusting. We actually have filtered water here, but it still doesn’t taste nice”.
- “ Our water is that foul, if we fill our metal water bottles from the tap, they smell bad within two hours. We have to buy bottled water to drink”.

Figure 4.5 Comments about water services by dissatisfied residents

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Quality poor/variable	34%	20
Water services need improvement (general)	22%	13
Council poor planning and management	12%	7
Pressure low	7%	4
Need to solve supply issues/find new sources	5%	3
Need to focus on preservation/rainwater collection	5%	3
Farmer/business usage too high	5%	3
Unhappy with restrictions	3%	2
Some people use water irresponsibly/need to monitor usage	3%	2
Leaks need fixing	2%	1
Other	7%	4
Total respondents		58

Section 5

Local roads and footpaths

Local roads and footpaths

Compared to other services, fewer residents were satisfied with the local roads and footpaths.

- 70 percent were satisfied with footpaths.
- 66 percent were satisfied with local gravel roads.
- 63 percent were satisfied with local sealed roads (15 percent below the performance target of 78 percent – performance target not met).

Much like previous years, residents from different areas have slightly differing satisfaction levels.

- Residents outside of the main urban areas of Gore and Mataura were significantly less likely to be satisfied with local gravel roads (40 percent satisfied).
- Whereas the residents of Gore and Mataura were less satisfied with footpaths than the residents of other areas (68 percent satisfied in each).

Trend analysis shows a decline in the satisfaction levels for local sealed roads and footpaths, and a very minor improvement in that for local gravel roads, compared to 2022.

Reasons for dissatisfaction with roading mainly focused on the condition of the roads, where seal repairs are being poorly done/not repaired for the long term (shown in Fig.5.3).

Eighteen percent suggested improving gravel roads.

“ Gore has a very poor standard of gravel road maintenance”.

“ Local roads are disgusting. McQueen Avenue into the Freezing Works. At the top of the Freezing Works heading out of the plant is a disgusting bit of road. Gravel roads need a good grade up need to fill potholes and sort them out”.

As in previous years, poor or hazardous conditions of footpaths remains an ongoing concern for the residents as mentioned by 28 percent of them.

“ Generally footpaths in Mataura are pretty poor”.

“ They just need to fix them - there are potholes in the roads and cracks in the footpaths - the footpaths are uneven - it's terrible”.

Figure 5.1 Satisfaction with roading services

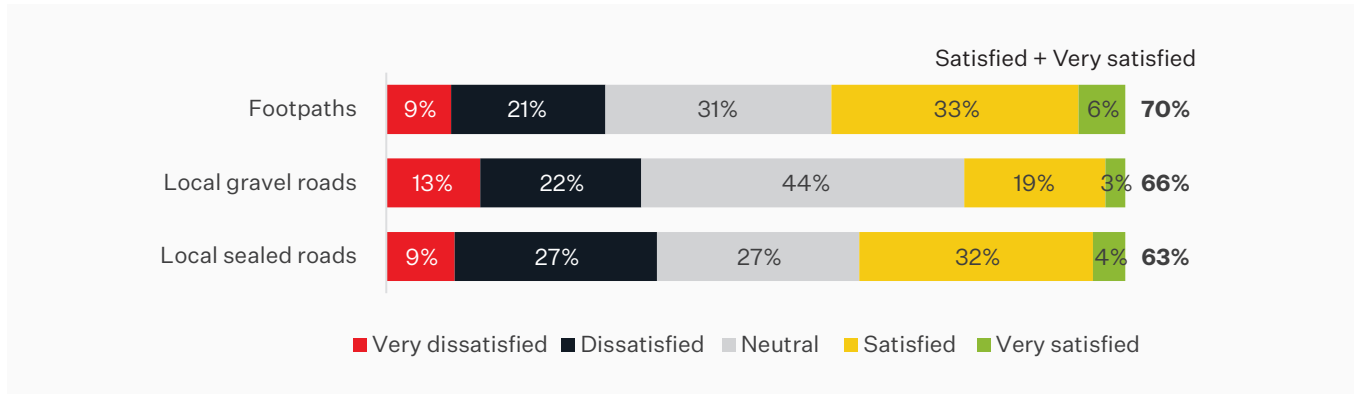


Figure 5.2 Satisfaction with roading services – trend analysis

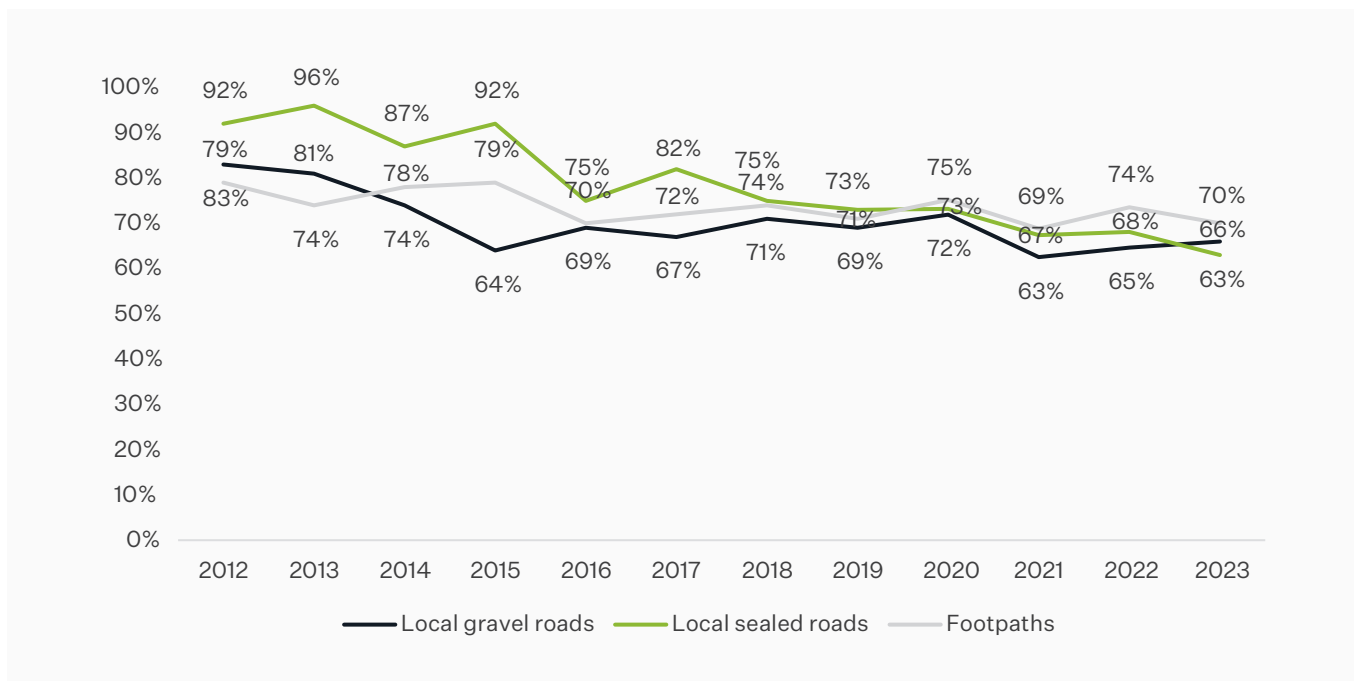


Figure 5.3 Comments about local roads and footpaths by dissatisfied residents

		Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Road	Improve gravel roads (grading, more gravel)	18%	48
	Poor condition	13%	36
	Seal repairs poorly done/need more long term fix	10%	28
	Repair potholes	9%	25
	Prioritise repairs more urgently	6%	16
	Better traffic management systems	3%	9
	Heavy traffic damages road	2%	6
	Cut back trees/foliage	2%	6
	Wider roads	1%	4
	No response from Council when reporting issues	1%	4
	Clean gutters/ debris/litter	1%	3
	Too much roadwork/taking too long	1%	2
	Total responses related to roads	53%	143
Footpaths	Poor condition/hazardous	28%	75
	Prioritise more	5%	13
	Improve accessibility	4%	12
	More pedestrian crossings/walkways	1%	4
	More lighting	1%	3
	Fixes poorly done	1%	2
	No response from Council when reporting issues	1%	2
	Total responses related to footpaths	37%	99
General comments	Services need improvement/maintenance (general)	14%	39
	Problem with roading layout trial	3%	7
	Happy with services	0%	1
	Other	1%	3
Total number of dissatisfied residents providing a response			269

Section 6

Waste

Use of waste services

Respondents were asked which waste services they had used in the past 12 months.

- Sixty percent of residents said that they had visited Gore Transfer Station in the previous 12 months. This is an increase from last year by 4 percent.

Residents in Gore were more likely to have visited the Gore Transfer Station (67 percent) than those from other areas in the District (43 percent).

All respondents were also asked whether they would like to see the introduction of a kerbside service into rural areas of the District. The following was observed:

- Forty-six percent of the respondents said they would like to see the kerbside service in rural areas of Gore District.
- Thirty-five percent stated that it was not their concern.
- Thirteen percent did not want the service expanded.

Respondents from rural areas displayed a higher level of engagement in the introduction of a rural kerbside service compared to residents in Gore or Maitua. With 94 percent of rural respondents expressing an opinion on the matter. Among the rural respondents with an opinion, 59 percent expressed a strong desire to see the service introduced. The consistent level of engagement observed, in line with previous years, emphasises the sustained importance of addressing waste management needs in rural areas.

Satisfaction with waste services

Users of each service were asked how satisfied they were with the Gore Transfer Station, which found that 91 percent of users were satisfied with the facility.

After registering a slight drop in satisfaction with the Gore transfer facility last year, the trend has been restored in the upward direction with an increase in the proportion of residents satisfied this year (from 88 percent in 2022 to 91 percent in 2023).

The majority of residents who are dissatisfied with waste services was largely due to the limitations of what can be collected for recycling, after the change to recycling in 2021.

“ Recycling is inadequate. We are trying to minimise our waste and do the right thing, but we can’t properly recycle. It’s really annoying how they have taken the recycling away. 20 minutes to go to Riversdale to recycle but we don’t pay the rates there. We pay them here in Gore”.

“ I have to wonder why is it that other regions are still collecting plastic and cardboard etc. in their recycling bin, but Gore is not. An explanation would be great especially considering you have cardboard and aluminum bins by the recycling center”.

Residents feel that waste disposal is expensive and suggest improving the current system and providing more recycling options.

“ Transfer station is expensive for low-income earners”.

“ There needs to be a better service for elderly residents to dispose of their green waste. Some do not have means of transport to the dump but them having to pay by way of getting a commercial company to dump is not fair”.

Figure 6.1 Satisfaction with waste services

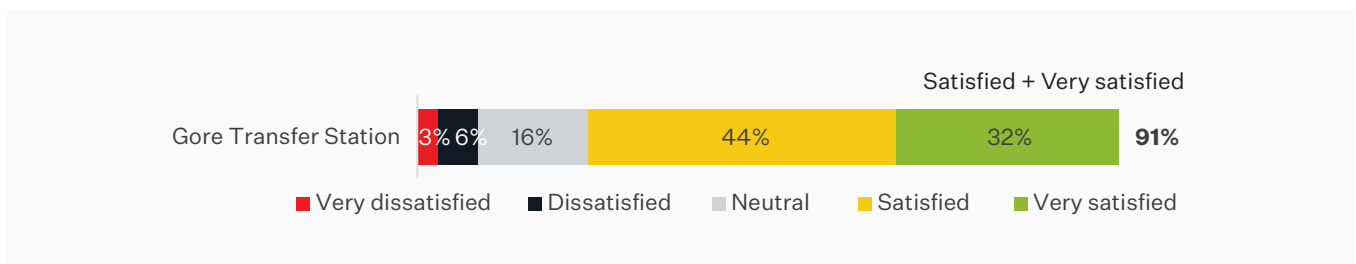


Figure 6.2 Satisfaction with waste services - trend analysis

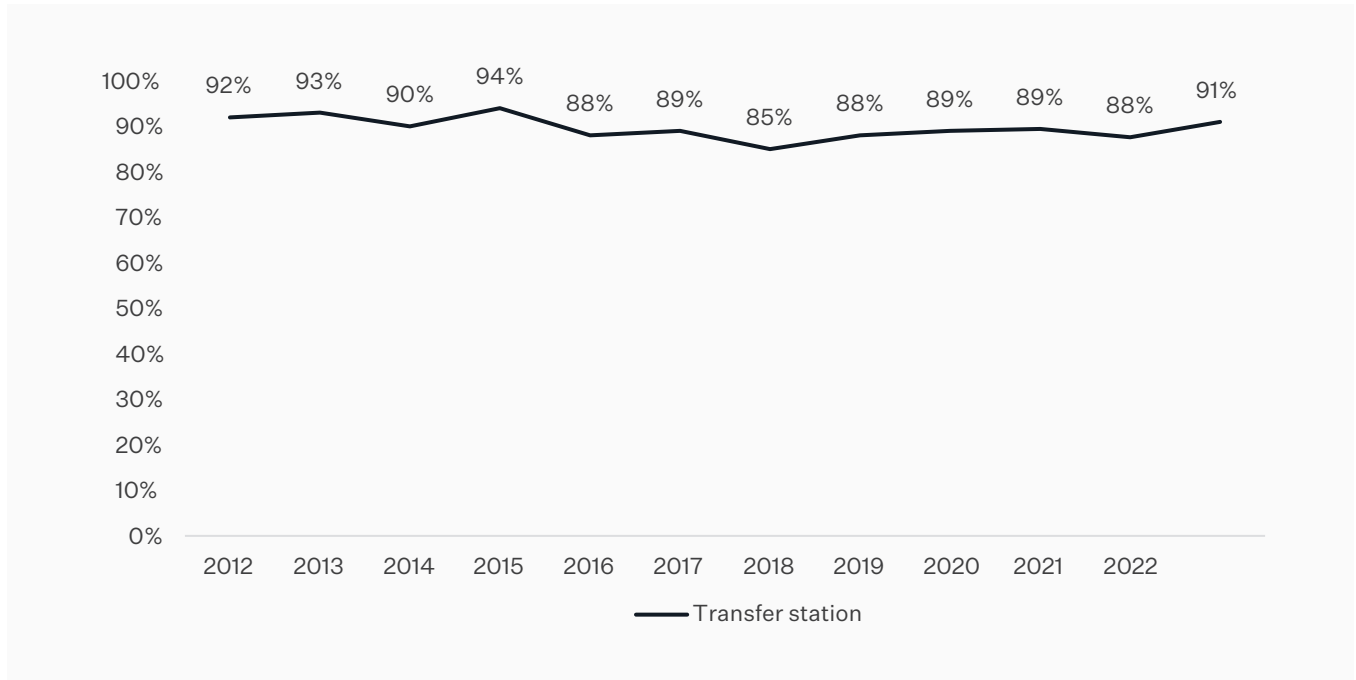


Figure 6.3 Comments about waste services by dissatisfied residents

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Unhappy with yellow bin/glass only recycling/return to recycling plastic and card	47%	14
Change/improve current system	17%	5
Costs too high/worried about cost increase	13%	4
More recycling services/ options	10%	3
Provide green/organics bin	7%	2
Better information/ education regarding recycling	7%	2
Provide weekly service	3%	1
Increase transfer station opening hours	3%	1
Total number of dissatisfied respondents providing a response		30

Section 7

Council facilities

Use of Council facilities

Respondents were asked if they had visited any of the listed Council facilities during the last 12 months. Results do not show the frequency of visits but do indicate that Council facilities have high levels of use amongst residents.

- Overall, the usage of Council facilities in 2023 has increased, as compared to 2022, although not significantly.
- Usage of Council facilities is broadly in line with 2020 findings, except for a decrease in reported visits to the James Cumming Wing or community halls.

Figure 7.1 Council facilities visited in the past 12 months – trend analysis

Percent visited in past 12 months	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Number of respondents 2023
District parks and reserves	69%	79%	76%	78%	73%	79%	75%	76%	501
Sportsgrounds	59%	67%	61%	64%	56%	58%	47%	53%	351
Public toilets	45%	56%	55%	54%	51%	53%	47%	50%	332
Cemeteries	55%	53%	50%	55%	47%	53%	46%	48%	316
Playgrounds	49%	50%	54%	46%	48%	45%	44%	46%	304
Gore Aquatic Centre	58%	61%	56%	53%	52%	48%	35%	40%	263
Gore or Maitaia Library	56%	54%	52%	48%	48%	44%	33%	37%	245
MLT Event Centre ¹	-	-	-	49%	47%	44%	32%	35%	230
Gore Visitor Centre	26%	31%	26%	24%	23%	18%	15%	18%	120
James Cumming Wing or community halls	56%	63%	53%	49%	44%	36%	15%	17%	110
Eastern Southland Gallery	-	-	-	-	-	-	13%	16%	108
Hokonui Moonshine Museum, Eastern Southland Gallery or the Heritage Centre ²	34%	34%	27%	23%	22%	19%	21%	-	
None of these	5%	2%	3%	3%	5%	4%	8%	7%	

¹ New question in 2019

² Please note that in 2023, Hokonui Moonshine Museum, and the Heritage Centre were removed from the survey.

Noting again that the results do not show levels of use but rather indicate whether the facility has been used at least once in the previous 12 months – analysis of the facilities visited by age show that:

- Those between 15–24 years of age were more likely to visit MLT Event centre.
- Higher proportions of the 25–49 age group had used the public toilets and / or visited sportsgrounds, playgrounds, parks, and reserves, as well as Gore Aquatic Centre and MLT Event centre.
- The cemeteries were significantly more likely to be visited by those in the age group 50–64, compared to residents aged 49 and under.
- Higher proportions of the 65+ age group had used or visited the Gore Visitor Centre and the Eastern Southland Gallery.

Only a small proportion of residents across all age groups had not visited any of the Council facilities in the previous 12 months.

Figure 7.2 Council facilities visited in the past 12 months by age group

	15-24	25-49	50-64	65+	Total sample proportion
District parks and reserves	78%	83%	72%	70%	76%
Sportsgrounds	64%	61%	49%	44%	53%
Public toilets	58%	63%	44%	40%	50%
Cemeteries	47%	35%	63%	47%	48%
Playgrounds	53%	61%	40%	31%	46%
Gore Aquatic Centre	38%	54%	34%	29%	40%
Gore or Mataura Library	22%	37%	37%	41%	37%
MLT Event Centre	53%	45%	30%	23%	35%
Gore Visitor Centre	9%	11%	20%	27%	18%
James Cumming Wing or community halls	29%	16%	15%	16%	17%
Eastern Southland Gallery	9%	10%	17%	26%	16%
None of these	9%	5%	6%	11%	7%
Total number of respondents	45	237	193	182	661

Satisfaction with Council facilities

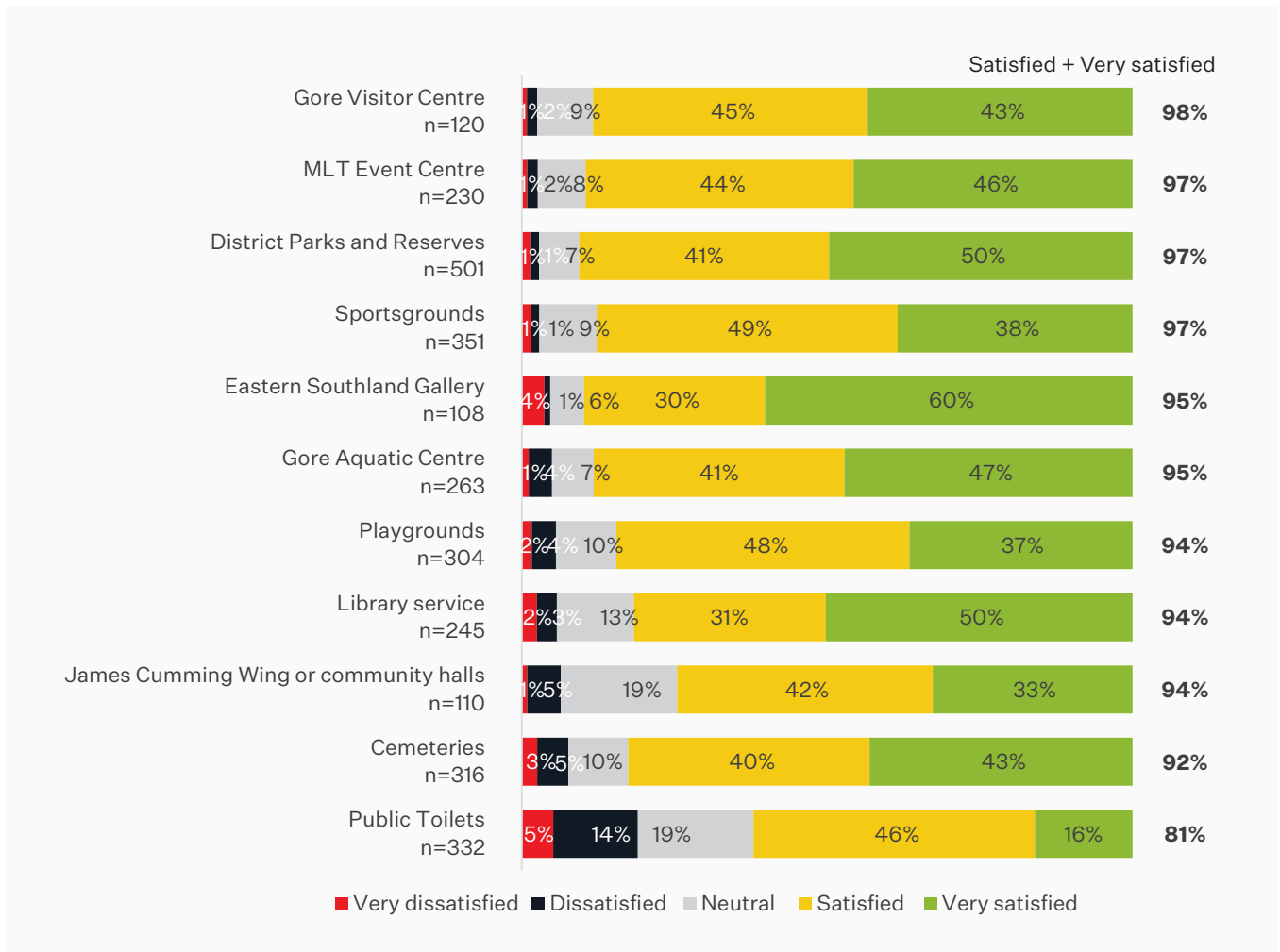
Levels of user satisfaction with Council facilities continue to remain high. More than 90 percent of the respondents reported being satisfied with all the facilities, except public toilets which has witnessed a fall of 7 percent compared to last year.

Performance targets were met for all facilities, except public toilets.

Figure 7.3 Performance targets – satisfaction with Council facilities

	Performance Target	Achieved	
Gore Visitor Centre	90%	98%	✓
MLT Event Centre	90%	97%	✓
District parks and reserves	90%	97%	✓
Sportsgrounds	90%	97%	✓
Eastern Southland Gallery	90%	95%	✓
Gore Aquatic Centre	90%	95%	✓
Playgrounds	90%	94%	✓
Library service	90%	94%	✓
James Cumming Wing or community halls	90%	94%	✓
Cemeteries	90%	92%	✓
Public toilets	90%	81%	Not met

Figure 7.4 Satisfaction with Council facilities



Satisfaction with Council facilities – trend analysis

Analysis shows broadly consistent levels of satisfaction over the years across all facilities, except for public toilets.

Figure 7.5 Satisfaction with Council facilities – trend analysis

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Gore Visitor Centre	98%	98%	98%	98%	96%	99%	99%	97%	98%	96%	97%	98%
MLT Event Centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	96%	99%	98%	98%	97%
District parks and reserves	99%	99%	98%	97%	97%	97%	97%	98%	98%	98%	97%	97%
Sportsgrounds	99%	100%	98%	99%	100%	99%	97%	98%	99%	98%	99%	97%
Eastern Southland Gallery ⁴	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	99%	95%
Gore Aquatic Centre	98%	99%	98%	99%	98%	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%	95%	95%
Playgrounds	98%	97%	95%	99%	93%	94%	96%	96%	98%	95%	96%	94%
Library service	100%	100%	98%	100%	99%	100%	98%	97%	96%	94%	97%	94%
James Cumming Wing or community halls ³	98%	100%	96%	97%	96%	95%	95%	91%	93%	89%	94%	94%
Cemeteries	98%	99%	96%	96%	97%	92%	94%	95%	94%	92%	94%	92%
Public toilets	92%	83%	86%	91%	87%	88%	86%	87%	87%	87%	88%	81%
The Heritage Centre ⁴	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98%	-
Hokonui Moonshine Museum ⁴	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95%	-

³ 2012-2015 surveys asked respondents about 'community centres or halls'.

⁴ 2012-2015 surveys asked respondents about 'arts and heritage', in 2016-2021 it asked about Hokonui Moonshine Museum, Eastern Southland Gallery or the Heritage Centre as one group. Between 2012-2021 satisfaction ranged between 97%-99%.

Resident feedback

Residents who were dissatisfied with any of these services were invited to comment on these individual facilities, or the facilities in general. Seventy-seven residents chose to comment across the various services which generally focused on the need for better maintenance.

Dissatisfied customers mostly expressed concern about public toilets which they felt are poorly maintained and need upgrading.

“ Just upgrade the toilets - other than that everything seems pretty good”.

“ Toilets need to be MORE wheelchair accessible, electric wheelchair users had no room to maneuver in the supposedly accessible bathroom”.

Residents felt that the parks and reserves, cemeteries and library services were lacking in maintenance.

“ Tidy up the road to the cemetery it should look nice for the grieving family”.

Some residents suggested providing more facilities at the aquatic centre.

“ Providing bigger changing rooms at the aquatic center and Gore pool isn't big enough for e.g., family change rooms have been full, and we have had to stand around waiting in the dripping cold with toddlers not fun. Prices could be made cheaper for families”.

See Appendix Two for more details.

Section 8

Council planning

Council planning

Knowledge of the Gore District Plan amongst residents is low, with just over half (54 percent) stating that they have either never heard of it or have heard of it but did not know anything about it. Overall, very small differences were noticed from last year with a similar proportion reportedly having knowledge of Gore District’s plan.

Resident familiarity with the District Plan (have heard of it and know about it) tends to increase with age.

Figure 8.1 Which of the following best describes your knowledge of the Gore District plan – trend analysis

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
I have never heard of it	16%	10%	11%	12%	9%	11%	13%
I have heard of it, but I don’t know anything about it	34%	29%	39%	39%	35%	41%	41%
I have heard of it and know a bit about it	43%	44%	43%	43%	48%	42%	37%
I have detailed knowledge of sections of it that interest or affect me	6%	14%	6%	5%	7%	4%	7%
I have detailed knowledge of the whole District Plan	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Total respondents	446	383	637	556	622	608	661

Residents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements relating to Council planning.

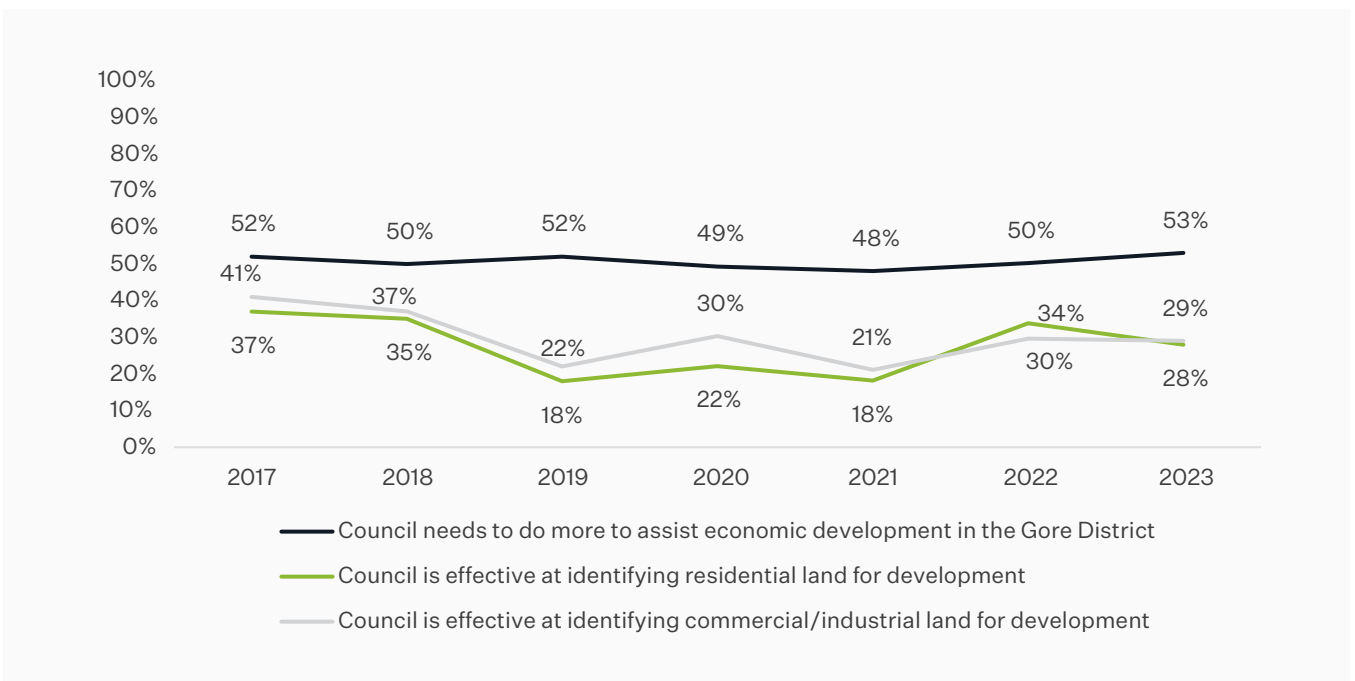
- For each question, a high proportion of respondents (19–31 percent) gave “don’t know” as an answer. Amongst others a substantial proportion provided a neutral rating (28–34 percent). These high proportions of responses in the “don’t know” and neutral categories indicate a lower level of engagement with an area of activity.

When ‘don’t know’ responses were excluded, the following was observed:

- Over half (53 percent) agreed that the Council needs to do more to assist economic development in the Gore District. This is a slight increase from last year (50 percent in 2022).
- Twenty-nine percent agreed that the Council is effective at identifying commercial/industrial land for development (30 percent in 2022).
- Twenty-eight percent felt that the Council was effective at identifying residential land for development (34 percent in 2022).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total Disagree	Total Agree	Number of respondents
Council needs to do more to assist economic development in the Gore District	3%	9%	35%	41%	13%	12%	53%	535
Council is effective at identifying commercial/industrial land for development	5%	17%	49%	27%	2%	22%	29%	455
Council is effective at identifying residential land for development	6%	21%	45%	26%	2%	27%	28%	484

Figure 8.3. Council planning – trend analysis



Section 9

Contacting the Council

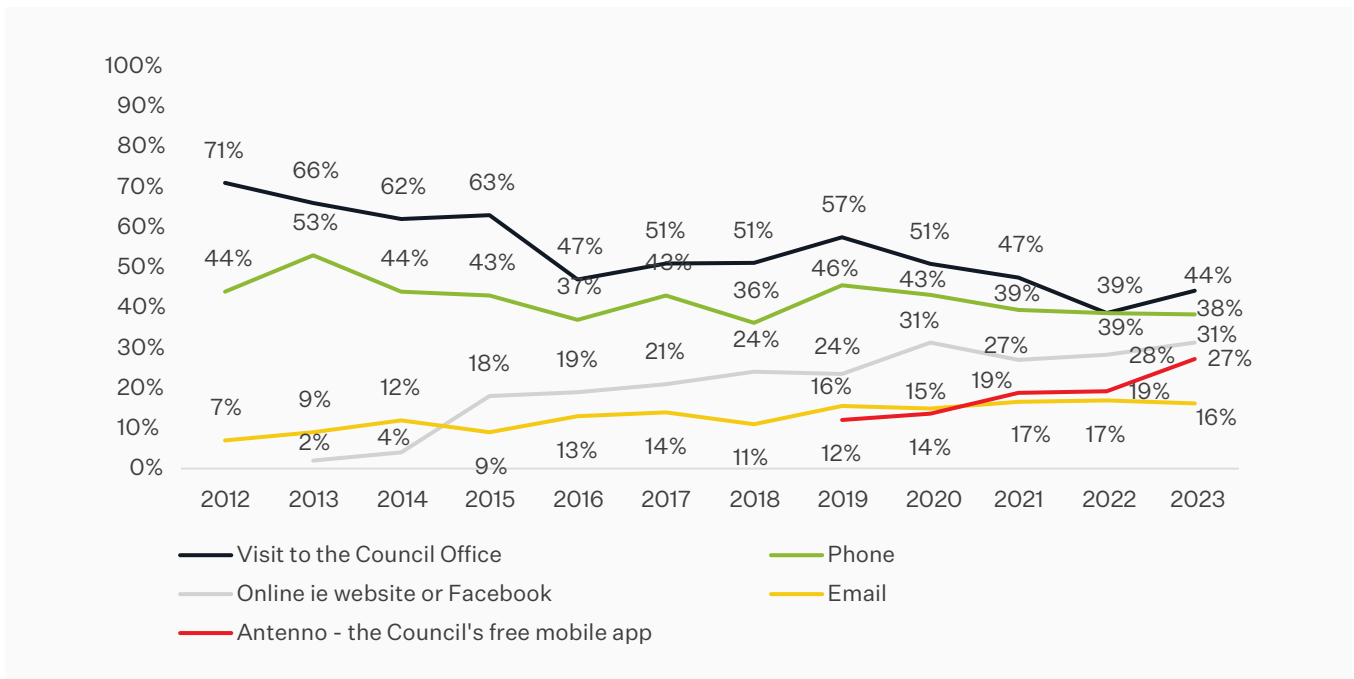
Methods of communication

Seventy-three percent of respondents reported to have contacted the Council in the last 12 months.

Trend analysis shows the continued importance of human interaction, as face-to-face visits (44 percent) and phone calls (38 percent) continue to remain the preferred ways to contact the Council.

- Use of the Council’s website or Facebook page and through the free mobile app, “Antenno”, has increased from last year (currently at 31 percent and 27 percent, respectively).
- Email remains at the lowest contact method used; this is consistent with previous years.
- Residents over 65 years of age are more likely to have visited the Council Office (52 percent).
- Residents under 25 years of age are significantly more likely to not have contacted the Council in the last 12 months (67 percent).
- Residents between 50 to 64 years are more likely to use the phone (48 percent) or the Council’s free mobile app, Antenno, (35 percent), for contacting the Council.

Figure 9.1 Means of contact – trend analysis



Satisfaction with communication

Trend analysis shows a decline in satisfaction for the level of service received through all channels of contact, except over the phone (which showed a slight improvement from last year).

Email contact with the Council was observed to be least satisfactory this year.

Figure 9.2 Proportion satisfied with the level of service received by communication method – trend analysis

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Visited the Council Office	99%	100%	98%	95%	92%	92%	93%	90%	92%	89%	93%	91%
Phone	95%	95%	94%	95%	84%	87%	87%	86%	89%	82%	86%	87%
Online, i.e. website or Facebook⁵	-	-	90%*	99%*	86%*	97%	90%	87%	89%	86%	91%	89%
Email	-	-	94%	95%*	88%*	90%*	86%	88%	87%	81%	92%	84%
Antenno – the Council’s free mobile app⁶	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90%	92%	87%	91%	86%

**Small sample sizes, results should be treated with caution*

⁵ Prior to 2016, the survey asked about Facebook only.

⁶ New question added in 2019.

Section 10

Council communications

Methods of obtaining information

Newspaper articles and advertising, Council Facebook page and website were the dominant ways of gathering information about the Council. Their usage has increased from last year.

Compared to last year, the use of Council’s mobile app has also increased (by 9 percent).

The majority (86 percent) used the newspaper, The Ensign, for Council-related news. Hokonui FM was the most used radio station by the participating residents. Southland Times and CaveFM followed the league in the newspaper and radio segment respectively. This is in line with previous years.

Noting that the results do not show levels of use, but rather indicate whether the method has been used, to obtain information about Council; analysis by age shows that:

- 15–24 age group has a significantly higher usage of Radio (49 percent).
- 25–49 age group is more likely to use Council’s Facebook page (62 percent) or Council’s website (50 percent).
- 65+ age group is significantly more likely to use newspaper articles (82 percent of them) or Council’s newsletter ChinWag (47 percent), for obtaining information about the Council.

Figure 10.1 Methods used to obtain information about the council since 2019

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Newspaper articles	67%	71%	70%	63%	69%
Council Facebook page	37%	44%	41%	38%	45%
Newspaper advertising	46%	46%	52%	43%	44%
Council website	37%	38%	39%	37%	43%
Antenno - the Council’s free mobile app	17%	20%	25%	30%	39%
Radio	35%	43%	38%	32%	32%
Council newsletter ChinWag	36%	30%	31%	27%	25%
Personal contact with Council staff	24%	24%	23%	18%	17%
Councillors	15%	16%	17%	12%	15%
Council meetings	4%	4%	6%	5%	13%
None of these	7%	5%	6%	8%	5%
Total respondents	637	556	622	608	661

Figure 10.2 Newspaper/radio stations used to get Council news since 2019

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Ensign	83%	86%	81%	88%	86%
Hokonui	36%	49%	38%	38%	36%
Southland Times	31%	36%	30%	28%	32%
CaveFM	20%	20%	18%	18%	12%
Otago Daily Times	2%	4%	5%	5%	5%
Magic Talk	-	-	2%	-	0%
Newslink	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%
The Rock FM	1%	-	1%	-	0%
More FM	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Antenno	-	-	1%	-	0%
Newstalk ZB	-	-	1%	0%	1%
stuff.co.nz					2%
RNZ National					1%
Southern Rural Life					1%
Other	9%	6%	7%	5%	4%
Total respondents who used a newspaper or radio station	464	421	473	416	484

Usage of online channels

Online channels are being accessed more than before, as suggested by the increase in the percentage of residents following Council’s Facebook page or visiting Council’s website. Usage of online channels varies.

- Almost two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) had visited the Gore District Council website in the last year.
- The number of regular users is low (i.e., those visiting weekly/monthly or more), with 52 percent of the residents visiting a few times a year or less.
- Forty-three percent of the respondents reportedly followed the Council’s main Facebook page.

Respondents who had accessed the Council website were asked what they had used it for. In line with recent years, the most common reason was to confirm the operating hours of a Council service (71 percent). This was followed by wanting to find out about road closures and road conditions (34 percent) or to find contact details for the Council (37 percent).

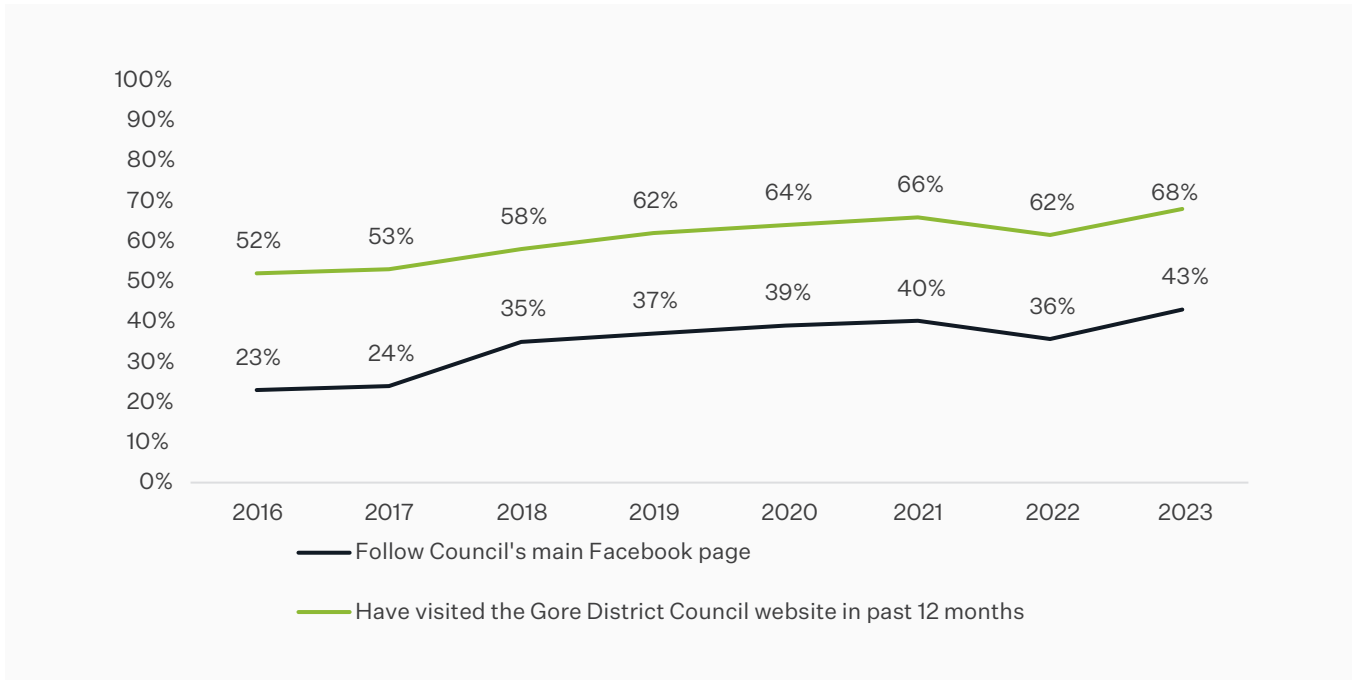
Figure 10.3 Visits to the Gore District Council website over the past 12 months

	Percentage	Number of respondents
Weekly or more	5%	33
Monthly	11%	73
A few times a year	39%	259
Once a year	13%	84
Never	32%	212
Total respondents		661

Figure 10.4 Reasons for using Council website in past 12 months

	Percentage	Number of respondents
To confirm the operating hours of a Council service (e.g. transfer station, library or sports centre)	71%	321
To find contact details for the Council	37%	167
To find out about road closures and road conditions	34%	151
To pay a bill (e.g. rates, parking infringement or dog infringement)	25%	112
To report an issue	24%	108
To apply for a building or resource consent	11%	51
Property searches	2%	7
For general information/ interest	5%	21
Information on water restrictions	2%	8
Access meetings/agendas/minutes	2%	8
To look at dog registrations/licenses and information	2%	7
Information about cemeteries (plots, prices etc)	1%	6
Looking up rates information	1%	6
Information about waste management	0%	2
Looking for jobs	0%	2
Other	5%	21
Don't know	1%	5
Total respondents		449

Figure 10.5 Proportion using online channels – trend analysis



Satisfaction with online channels

- Of the 287 respondents who follow the Council on Facebook, 94 percent were satisfied with the Facebook page.
- Amongst 449 respondents who had visited the website over the past 12 months, 92 percent were satisfied with the website.
- Satisfaction levels with both pages have dropped slightly over last year.

Figure 10.6 Satisfaction with Facebook page and website

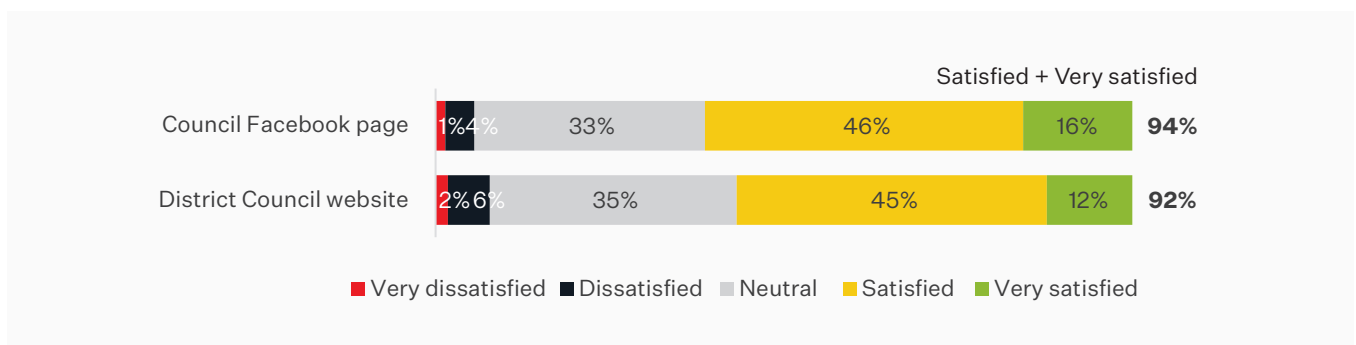
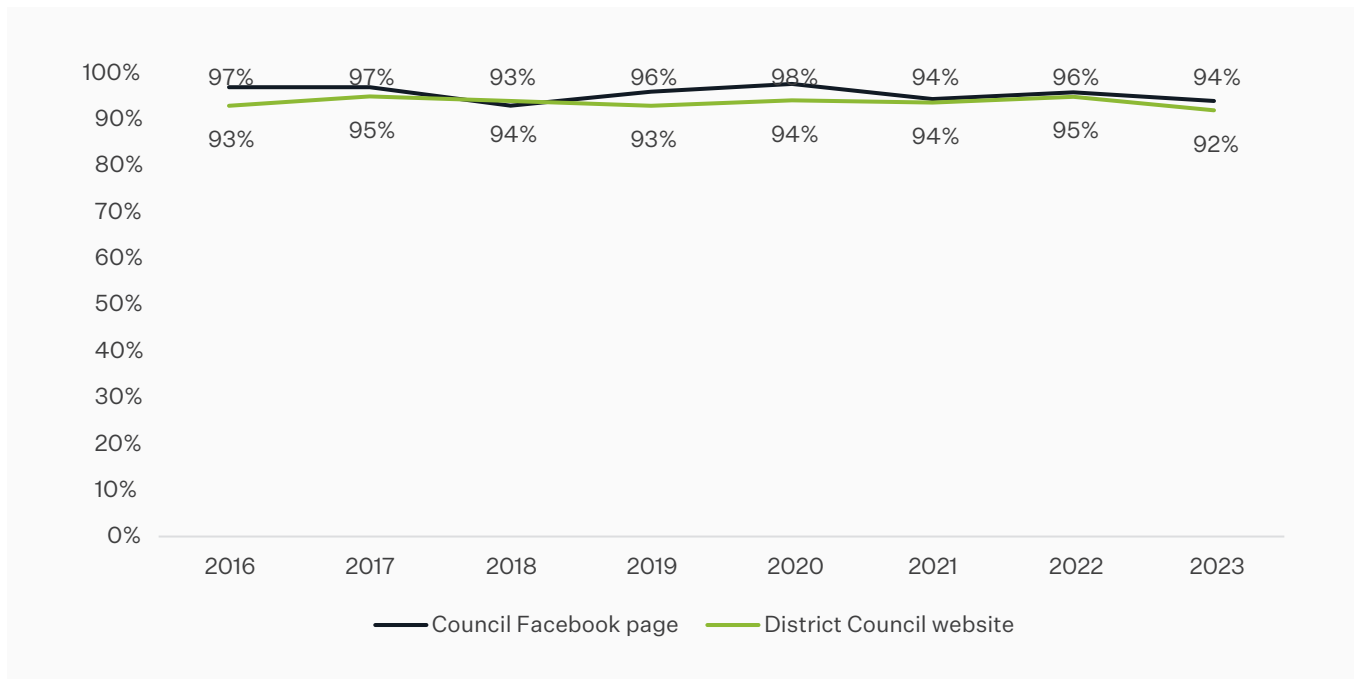


Figure 10.7 Satisfaction with Facebook page and website – trend analysis



Section 11

Elected members and organisational performance

Representation

Fifty-eight percent were satisfied that the Council was responding to the needs of the community and to issues raised by members of the community. This result is below the performance target of 80 percent and continues to show a declining trend.

The majority (86 percent) were satisfied that they could contact an elected member of the Council to raise an issue or a problem. This is similar to the observation since 2021.

Figure 11.1 Satisfaction with Representation

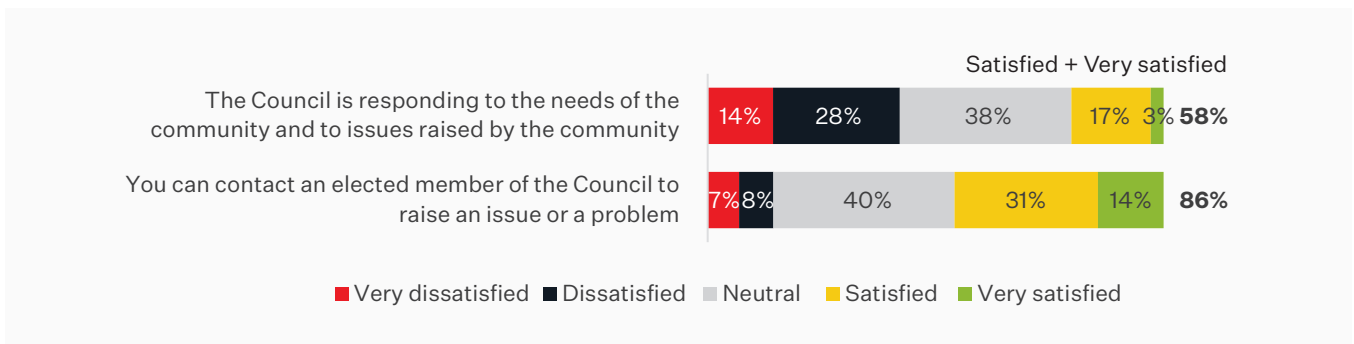
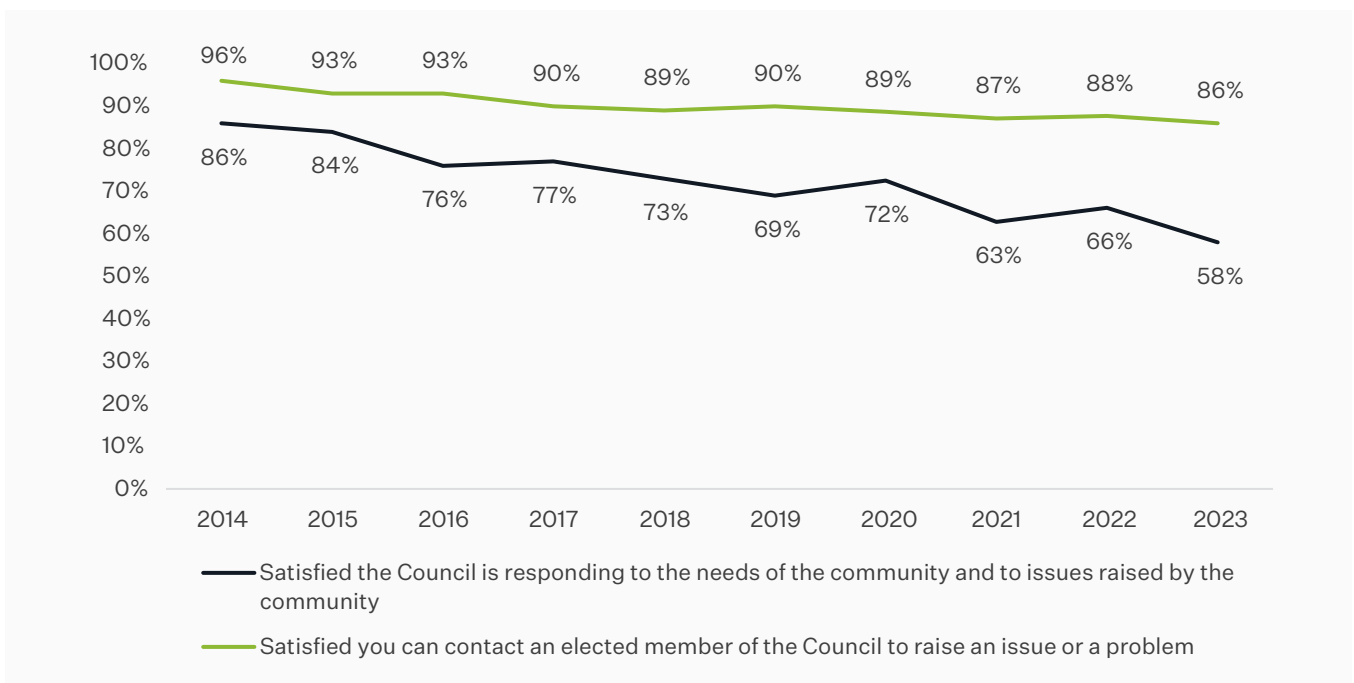


Figure 11.2 Satisfaction with representation – trend analysis



Overall satisfaction with performance

Overall, 63 percent stated that they were satisfied with the performance of Gore District Council.

Trend analysis shows a drop in the residents' overall satisfaction in comparison to 2022 (from 71 percent in 2022 to 63 percent in 2023).

Comments from residents dissatisfied with the Council's performance suggest that the residents are concerned about the conflict that's going on between the Council members (as cited by 48 percent of them).

- “ Just it seems very awful how they are not getting on with the new elected Mayor so it is a bit of a shame and that is all to do with personalities. I feel people get stuck in the mud”.
- “ The in-fighting that's going on between the Mayor and Steve Parry”.

Others feel that the Council does not listen to the ratepayers and are discontented with the way the Council spends money. Issues about Council's staffing, the bridge, water services, recycling, library, and other core facilities were also reported by a minority.

- “ Overspending. Too slow in getting things done”.
- “ We are in a cost of living crisis and I look everywhere in town and buildings are being re built, I just see a lot of money being spent, it's easy for the council to cover costs as you just increase rates but we cannot just increase our income!”.

Figure 11.3 Overall satisfaction with performance - trend analysis

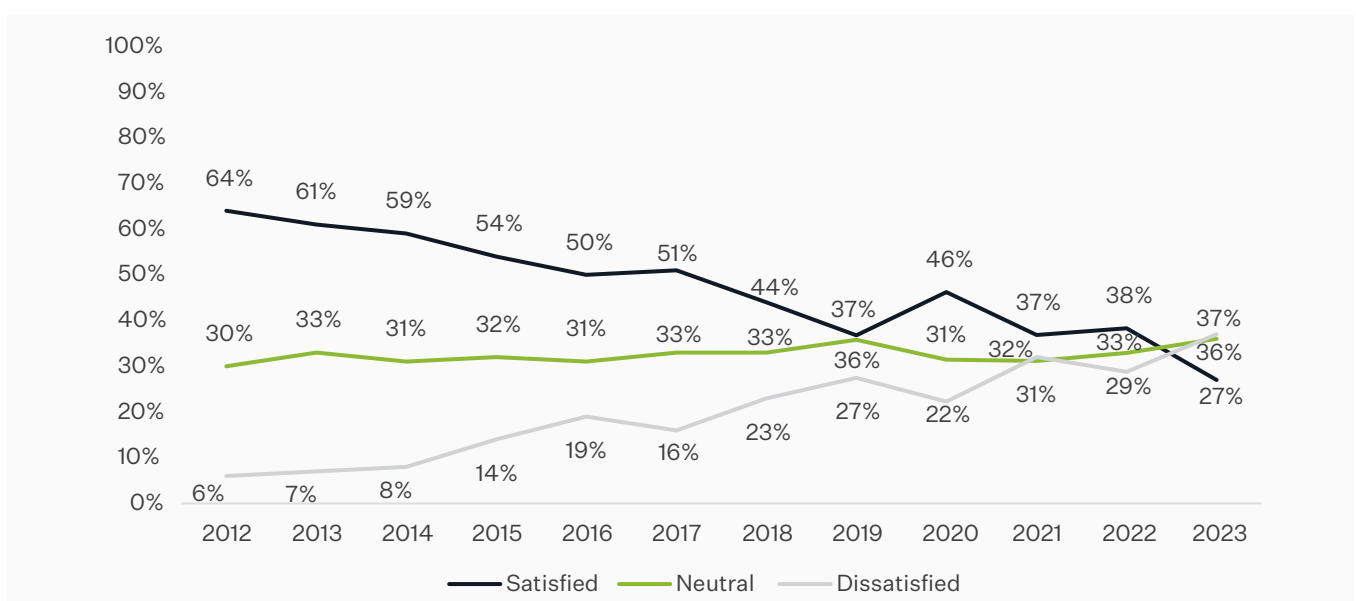


Figure 11.4 Comments about the performance of the Gore District Council from dissatisfied residents

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Council infighting	48%	101
Don't agree with Council spending (general)	12%	26
Don't listen to ratepayers	10%	21
Council management/staffing	8%	16
The bridge	8%	16
Not focusing on core services and facilities	6%	12
Water issues	5%	11
Recycling/waste issues	5%	11
Problems with the library	5%	10
Lack of communication/following up on issues	3%	7
Ignore the needs of Mataura/rural areas	3%	6
Streets Alive	3%	6
Lack of consultation	3%	6
High rates	2%	5
Roading issues	2%	5
Dissatisfied with Council services in general	2%	5
Lack of visibility of Council members/staff	2%	4
Council building/office upgrade	1%	3
Lack of activities for youth	0%	1
Need housing/residential development	0%	1
Other	6%	13
Total dissatisfied respondents providing a response		212

Local leadership

Residents were asked about their perceptions of Council's performance and of leadership of the local government in the Gore District.

- 41 percent agreed Gore District Council provides enough opportunities for people to have their say.
- 20 percent agreed they have good strategies for developing prosperity and wellbeing of their community.
- 19 percent of respondents agreed that the Mayor and Councillors display sound and effective leadership.

Trend analysis shows that results have decreased since last year.

Residents who disagreed that the Mayor or Councillors displayed sound and effective leadership or had good strategies, were also asked if they had any comments on why they were dissatisfied with the performance.

These residents dissatisfaction was mainly attributed to three key areas:

- The majority (59 percent) were disappointed in the Council's infighting that has occurred since the new Mayor was elected.

“ The old timers aren't interested in the young guy who came in so they want him out and they're making his life as miserable as possible to get him out.”

“ I think they need to grow up a bit they're elected to do a job if they can't do that job they should resign and let someone else do it the CEO can't get on with the mayor how ridiculous is that.”

- 10 percent were disappointed with the how the Council is run and the lack of fresh staff/council/ideas.

“ The CEO of the Council needs to be removed - he's not elected and he's hopeless - he's stalled the growth of the Gore sector for many years and he won't allow the Mayor, who's an elected official to get on and do what he wants to do.”

- 10 percent were disappointed with the new Mayor and believed he lacks life experience for the role.

“ I think the Mayors got to get his act together his lack of experience is showing up big time.”

Figure 11.5 Perceptions of local leadership

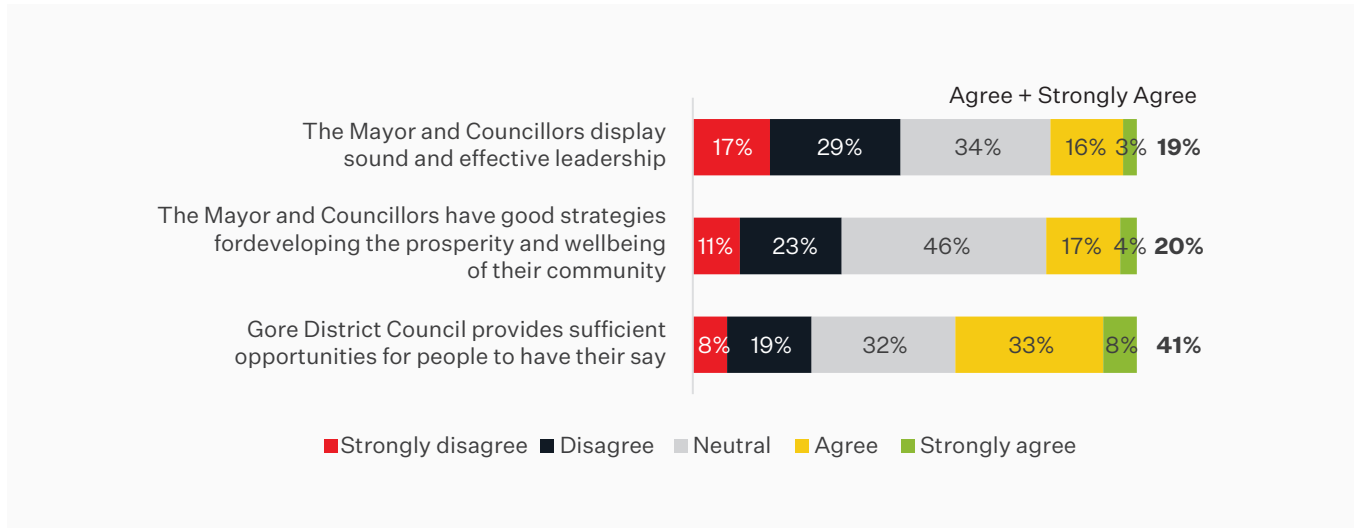


Figure 11.6 Perceptions of local leadership - trend analysis

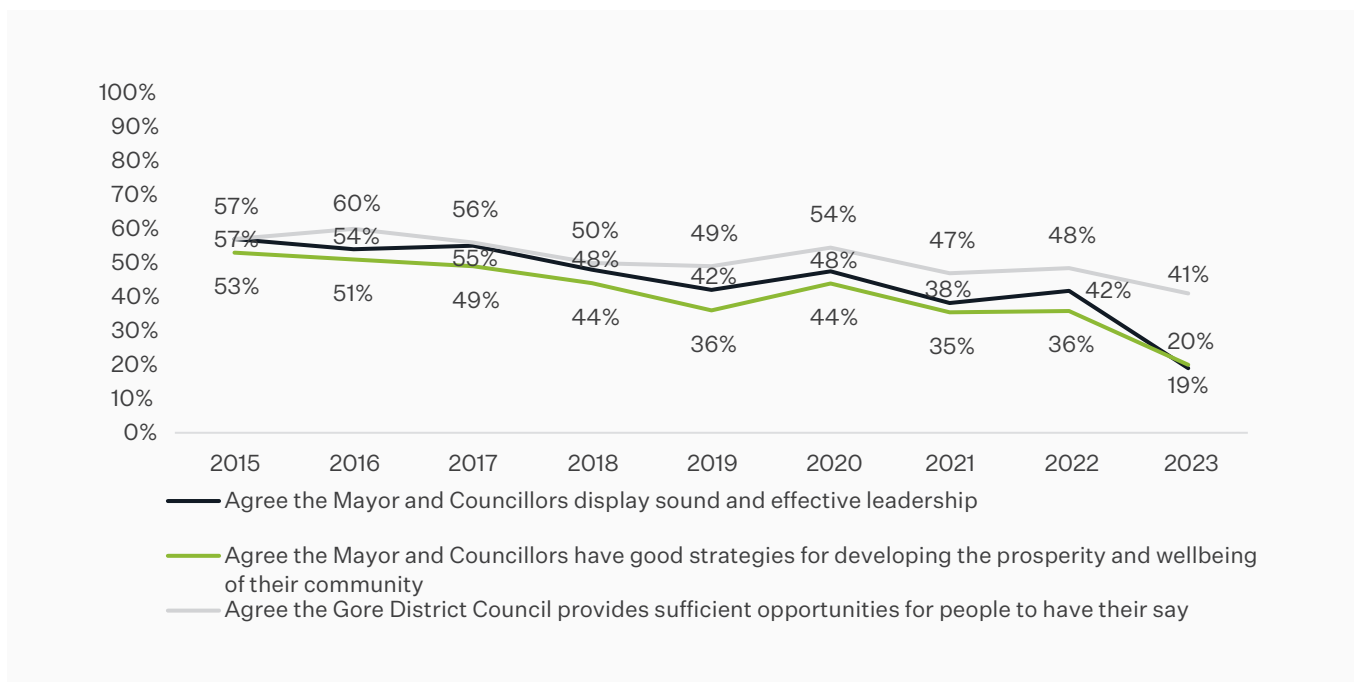


Figure 11.7 Comments about Mayor and Councillors by dissatisfied residents

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Council infighting	59%	146
Disappointed with how the Council is run, and the lack of fresh staff/council/ideas	10%	26
Unhappy with Mayor/Mayor is inexperienced	10%	24
Don't listen/do as they want	7%	17
Unhappy with Steve Parry/CEO	7%	17
Unhappy with spending	5%	13
Unhappy (generally)	4%	10
Not focusing on important things (infrastructure, core services, etc.)	4%	9
Unhappy with Council decisions	2%	6
Lack of visibility/approachability	2%	5
Lack of consultation	2%	4
Ignore the needs of Matakura/rural areas	1%	3
Unhappy with rates	0%	1
Unhappy with the paper mill/dross issue	0%	1
Other	3%	8
Total number of respondents providing a response		248

Priority issues (3 top priorities for the Council over next 12 months)

1. Improving of roading remains the main priority for over a third of residents (37 percent) this year. This is similar to the last two years and is reflective of the continuing dissatisfaction with the roading conditions.
 - Residents from areas other than Matura and Gore were significantly more likely to mention roading as a priority (58 percent of them). This was similar to the observation made last year.
2. Residents also want the Council to focus on recycling and waste services (26 percent of them).
 - Residents from Gore were significantly more likely to mention recycling as a priority (30 percent) than other parts of the District.
3. Water issues is also a priority for 24 percent. This has remained a high priority since 2018. This year the Three Waters situation is specifically mentioned as a focus area.

Figure 11.8 Services or facilities the Council should give high priority to over the next 12 months (mentions over 3%)

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Roading	37%	245
Recycling/waste services	26%	171
Water issues	24%	156
Wastewater, stormwater	18%	117
Footpaths	13%	88
Council expenditure & rates	11%	73
Beautification, upgrade, maintenance, cleaning of town/area	9%	61
Parks/playgrounds	7%	44
Recreation/sports facilities/sportsgrounds	6%	39
Internal Council issues (mayor, infighting, staff)	3%	23
Library	3%	21
Social services for at risk groups	3%	18
Council staff (communication/listening/service)	3%	17
Don't know	12%	78
Total respondents		661

Section 12

Perceptions of the Gore District

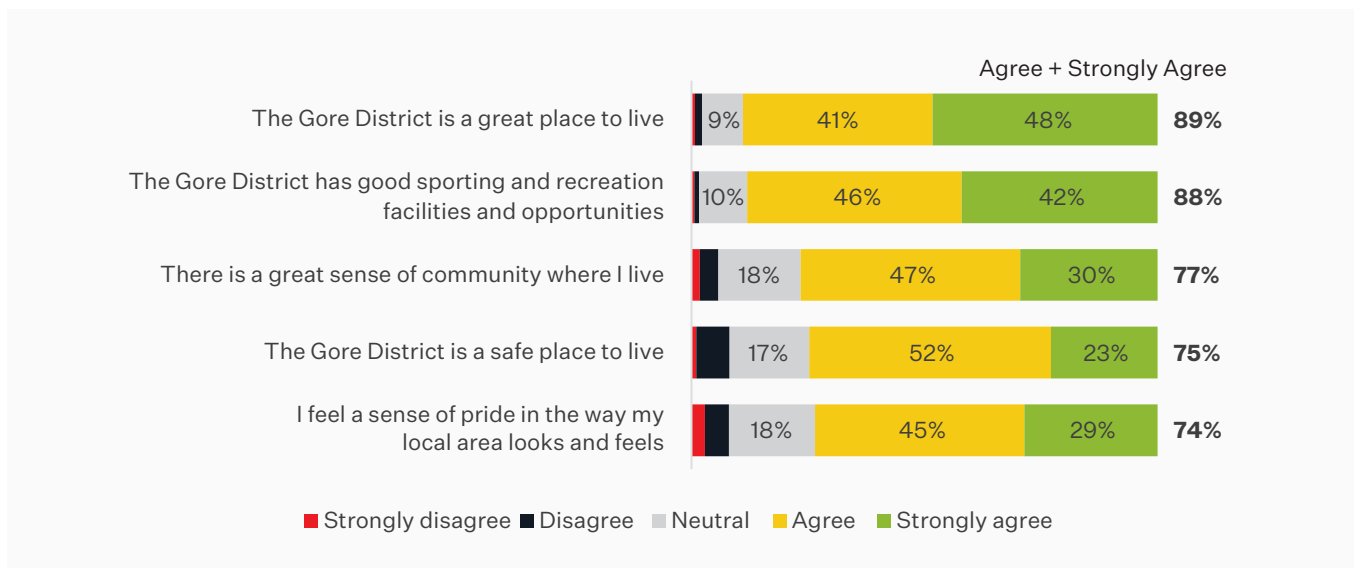
Perceptions of the Gore District

Gore residents were very positive about their District:

- 89 percent agreed that the Gore District is a great place to live. This is higher than national results from urban areas in 2020, which showed that 83 percent of residents agree their city/local area is a great place to live.
- 88 percent agreed the Gore District has good sporting and recreation facilities and opportunities.
- 77 percent agreed there is a great sense of community where they live, compared with 50 percent in the 2020 national urban results.
- 75 percent agreed the Gore District is a safe place to live.
- 74 percent felt a sense of pride in the way their local area looks and feels, compared with 63 percent in the 2020 national urban results.

Results analysed by location shows that Mataura residents are generally less likely to feel as positively about the district.

Figure 12.1 Perceptions of the Gore District



Perceptions of the Gore District trend analysis

Analysis of the results over time identifies that most residents hold very positive perceptions of the area, and these have remained relatively stable.

In comparison to last year, the residents reported an increasing sense of community and of pride in the way their area looks. There was, however, a drop in the percentage of residents who felt that Gore is a safe place to live.

Figure 12.2 Perceptions of the Gore District – trend analysis

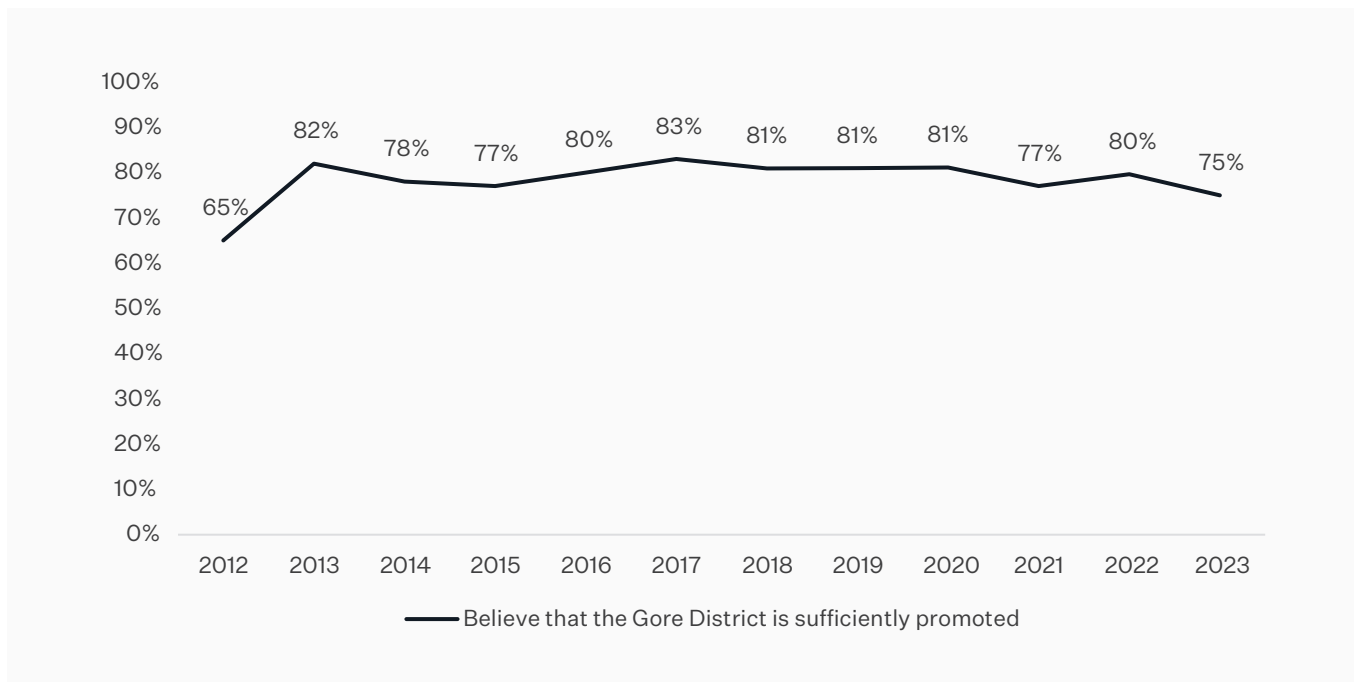
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
The Gore District is a great place to live	93%	96%	93%	95%	92%	94%	87%	90%	87%	90%	89%	89%
The Gore District has good sporting and recreation facilities and opportunities ⁷	95%	83%	90%	95%	94%	92%	89%	89%	89%	89%	88%	88%
There is a great sense of community where I live	84%	86%	85%	84%	80%	84%	75%	79%	80%	76%	74%	77%
The Gore District is a safe place to live	92%	88%	92%	94%	91%	88%	84%	81%	79%	78%	79%	75%
I feel a sense of pride in the way my local area looks and feels	93%	89%	88%	87%	77%	83%	72%	74%	75%	70%	71%	74%

⁷ Prior to 2016, separate questions were asked about ‘sporting facilities and opportunities’ and ‘recreation opportunities’. To allow trend analysis, the mean of these results for each year has been calculated.

Promoting the District

Three-quarters of residents (75 percent) believed the Gore District was sufficiently promoted. There is a decline from previous years.

Figure 12.3 Promotion of the Gore District – trend analysis



Comments about the Council's services (if any)

The residents were asked if they would like to make any comment on the services provided by the Council.

- While 69 percent of the respondents had nothing to say, others made positive comments on the gardens and the recreation services from the Council.

“ The gardeners and the parks and recreation services do a very good job. We have won awards, they are always gardening and working”.

- Overspending is a continuing concern.

“ I just feel that they have overspent in certain areas, i.e. the Gore Library, Arts and Heritage and the gardens”.

- Other issues that surfaced through these comments were regarding recycling, roading and the infighting between Council's staff members which have been highlighted previously in this report.

“ They need to address recycle, we operated a bed and breakfast and overseas people were astounded at our recycling services. The Mayor said he'd get on it but yeah just recycling”.

“ Roothing - been putting up with a gravel road for 30 years and even my green roof is now Brown - I live Middle Street Pukerau”.

- Some suggested that the Council needs to improve support, services, opportunities, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities and the youth in the community.

“ Look at disabilities and the Youth (they leave because there is not enough there for them especially if you are not sports minded)”.

“ Footpaths are challenged for those on mobility scooters, the holes on the footpaths are not liked by the mobility scooters”.

Figure 12.4: Comments on the Council’s services

	Percentage	Number of respondents
None	69%	454
Gardens/gardening	5%	31
Council spending	5%	31
Council staff	3%	21
Rubbish and recycling	3%	19
Council infighting	3%	19
Overall good job	2%	16
Roads	2%	13
Library	2%	13
Promotion	2%	12
Water	2%	10
Dealing with complaints/enquiries	1%	9
Rates	1%	6
Consult the community	1%	6
Streets, footpaths, and lighting	1%	6
Playgrounds/ parks/ sportsgrounds	1%	5
Mataura River bridge	1%	5
Support rural areas	1%	4
Other 2023	4%	24
Total respondents		661

Section 13

Appendix One: Sample Composition

Age

	Percentage	Number of respondents
15-24	7%	45
25-49	36%	237
50-64	29%	193
65+	28%	182
Declined	1%	4
Total		661

Gender

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Male	42%	278
Female	58%	383
Total		661

Length of residence

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Lived in Gore District longer than 12 months	98%	646
Lived in Gore District 12 months or less	2%	15
Total		661

Ratepayer status

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Ratepayer	79%	524
Renter	13%	88
Both	1%	4
Don't pay rent or rates	4%	29
I prefer not to say	1%	9
Other	1%	7
Total		661

District area

	Percent of respondents	Number of respondents
Gore	68%	451
Mataura	12%	78
Waikaka	3%	21
Pukerau	2%	12
Mandeville	1%	4
Rural	14%	95
Total		661



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