



chatham islands council

Chatham Islands  
**Residents' Satisfaction**  
**Survey Report**  
2023

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## Executive summary

The annual Chatham Islands residents survey ran again in July/August 2023. The survey runs every year and is important as a measure of how well Council is performing against our targets set out in the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan.

### Response rate

The survey received a total of 62 responses (48 online and 14 paper copies). Though it is not a high response rate, it is a significant improvement from previous years. We also received two late submissions, which have not been included in the report, as the results had been collated and inputted into documents before they were received.

In 2022 the survey received 22 responses making this an increase of 182% from last year. We also found that in comparison to 2022 (16 paper and 6 online responses), the uptake of digital responses dramatically increased.

Please note that:

- Because the sample size is low, the findings should be treated with some caution.
- In some cases, respondents chose to answer 'I have no opinion' rather than rate a service or facility. Where this is the case, these responses have been removed from the analysis and the subtotal of respondents calculated.

### Top performing areas



Know how to contact  
the Council and Councillors



Satisfied with sealed roads



Feel prepared for an  
emergency event

Council scored generally well on satisfaction regarding communication and engagement. There is confidence that the Council has the community's best interests at heart.

Council emergency management services also scored well. In general, residents feel prepared in the case of an emergency, have confidence in the Council's ability to respond and there are high levels of knowledge regarding evacuation points and emergency coordinators.

## Low performing areas



Dissatisfied with unsealed roads



Dissatisfied with water scheme service



Dissatisfied with waste management services

Satisfaction regarding infrastructure was much lower. Residents expressed concerns with the quality of roading. Environmental services scored below fifty percent satisfaction, concerns regarding pest control and ineffectiveness of current work was also a theme amongst responses. There was also a demand for better waste management services.

## Results over time

Despite some good satisfaction results, the satisfaction levels have decreased in most categories since last year. While the numbers don't look good, it's important to remember that this year's survey captured the sentiment of nearly three times the people of the 2022 survey, so while the figures may look like a decrease, it may not indicate things have worsened, but instead may simply be a factor of a higher proportions of voices being captured.

Question	2022	2023	
How confident are you that decisions are made by Council in the best interests of the community?	75%	68%	↓
Do you feel Council appropriately captures the voice of the community (including cultural considerations), when making decisions?	95%	57%	↓
How sufficient is the level of information provided to the community about our Council's activities?	82%	76%	↓
How satisfied are you with the chip-sealed (sealed) roads?	53%	81%	↑
How satisfied are you with the unsealed (gravel) road network?	43%	32%	↓
How satisfied are you with the Council's Waste Management Services - landfill and recycling services and ease of use?	66%	56%	↓
How satisfied are you with the water scheme service? (of those connected)	40%	31%	↓

How satisfied are you with the wastewater scheme service? (of those connected)	75%	67%	↓
How satisfied are you with our community services, including library and dog and animal control services?	65%	53%	↓
How prepared do you think you and your household are for an emergency event (three days of food stored etc) and do you know what to do in such an event?	76%	74%	
How confident are you that Chatham Islands Council will be able to appropriately respond in an emergency?	77%	68%	↓
How satisfied are you with our environmental services? (Environmental services include pest management, consent & compliance, water monitoring and freshwater management).	59%	64%	↑

## Key findings

### Demographics

The survey asked a number of demographic questions. Notable responses for each category showed:

- Low response rate from those aged under 25, however, a good spread of other age ranges.
- Slightly higher response from females than male or those who prefer not to disclose.
- Majority of respondents own their own home.
- Highest response rates from those who identify as Māori or pākehā, 20% from Moriori.
- Over 90% of respondents are full time Island residents.

### Communication and engagement

Overall, there is a general satisfaction with the communication and engagement from Council to the community.

- 76% of respondents believe the level of information supplied to the community about Council's activities to be sufficient or more than sufficient.
- 95% of respondents know how to contact the Council and Councillors.
- 68% of respondents are confident or very confident that the decisions Council makes are in the best interests of the community.
- 57% of respondents feel that the Council appropriately captures the voice of the community when making decisions.

When asked the open question "Are there any comments you wish to make on the Chatham Islands Council's level of engagement with the community?"

The comments can be categorised as follows:

- (7) Generally positive, e.g. "I like the mayor's update. It keeps us informed"
- (6) Negative, e.g. "Piss poor"
- (5) Neutral
- (5) Suggestions for change; including more communication regarding actions following public feedback, more engagement, and an increased ability for residents to ask for more information.

When asked for how Council could improve its level of engagement, the comments could be themed as:

- (7) A desire for increased accessibility and engagement of Council – including meetings, forums, connection to community etc
- (4) A desire for increased levels of communication
- (3) Generally positive
- (3) Requests to seek more community input
- (2) Comments regarding better communication specifically regarding rates payments.

## **Satisfaction with Council activities**

Regarding infrastructure and work the Council is responsible for, respondents expressed mixed levels of satisfaction.

- 80% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the chip-seal roads.
- 60% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the unsealed road network.
- 85% of respondents are not connected to a water scheme.
  - Of those who are connected, more were dissatisfied than satisfied with the service.
- 88% are not connected to a wastewater scheme.
  - Of those who are connected, more were satisfied than dissatisfied with the service.
- 56% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with Council's waste management services.

When asked for comments on how Council could improve the ease of our waste management services, the comments could be summarised as follows:

- (10) Neutral comments/suggestions regarding general waste
- (7) Comments suggesting that opening times insufficient and closures too frequent
- (6) Requests for roadside waste collection/bins
- (6) Concerns regarding the effectiveness of our current systems
- (3) Requests to simplify the service
- (2) Suggestions regarding accepting green waste.

When asked "Are there any comments you wish to make about our infrastructural services?", responses could be themed as:

- (7) Inadequacies of the roading network e.g. potholes
- (6) Dissatisfaction regarding infrastructure
- (3) Neutral comments
- (2) Requests for more public facilities e.g. rubbish bins and gardens.

## **Community services and Emergency management**

The level of satisfaction in this category was generally high.

- 53% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with community services, including library and animal control services.

Regarding emergency management, respondents were mostly informed and felt prepared:

- 74% of respondents feel that their household would be prepared in the case of an emergency.
- 75% know where the emergency evacuation points are and 73% are aware of their area emergency co-ordinators.
- 62% of respondents feel confident that Council would be able to respond appropriately to an emergency.

When asked "Are there any other comments you wish to make about our community services and emergency management?", comments could be themed as follows:

- (6) General positive, e.g. "Doing a good job"
- (6) Suggestions for improvements e.g. A system where people can report animal neglect anonymously
- (5) General negative, e.g. disorganised
- (3) Concerns, e.g. staff not trained enough
- (2) Neutral comments.

## **Environmental services**

Satisfaction with Council's environment services; including pest management, consent and compliance, water monitoring and freshwater management, rated at just below 50% of respondents being satisfied.

When asked for comments about Council's environment services, comment themes were:

- (5) Concerns that not enough work is being done
- (5) More communication required
- (5) Tighter pest control required
- (3) Costs and practicalities of requirements
- (4) Other suggestions.

## **Closing comments**

We gave respondents the opportunity to add any final comments. The comments have been categorised as follows:

- (11) Generally positive, e.g. "The CI Council has fabulous ladies in the office who do a great job"
- (5) Other suggestions, e.g. "Be more out there as a Council"
- (4) More animal/pest control required
- (2) Neutral comments.

## Recommendations

When reviewing the results of the survey and noting the themes that came through the comments, there are some potential actions that could happen to help increase residents' satisfaction and understanding of Council's work. While Council will continue to drive for more funds in order to do more of the work that the community calls for, some initial steps are recommended below:

- Communicate what Council is doing with regard to investigating the possibility of roadside collection.
- Provide more opportunities for community engagement, meetings or forums in different places across the Island.
- Provide a 'what we heard' article and social media posts reflecting some of the key themes from the survey. I.e. Residents are dissatisfied with the unsealed roads, potholes, etc. Here is what we're doing about it or why we're limited in dealing with these issues.