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What we've heard - responding to the residents' survey

• Last Updated 29 Nov 2023

We appreciate the feedback you shared in the residents' and ratepayers' satisfaction survey. Our commitment is to address your comments and concerns in areas that need improvement.

Recently we released the results of our residents' and ratepayers' satisfaction survey. [Read the full report. \[PDF, 192 KB\]](#)

As promised, we want to address some of the recurring comments and concerns that we noticed through the responses.

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As the report details, there were areas in which we scored highly, and we are proud of those areas. This article, however, is focused on those areas that we want to improve or increase understanding as to why things are the way they are.

Areas for improvement

- [Communication and engagement](#)
- [Roading infrastructure](#)
- [Waste management](#)
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Communications and engagement

The feedback:

The community expressed that they would like:

- More communication of actions following public feedback
- More communication and engagement with the community in general
- An increased ability for residents to ask for more information
- Increased accessibility of Council – including meetings, forums, connection to community, coming to different locations etc.

Our response:

It's exciting to us that there are people within our community who want to hear more from us and engage in our work. You might have already noticed some actions come out of this including a consultation campaign for Waitangi Hall, and this article is an example of us trying to provide open, honest communication back to the community about the actions following feedback. Note that all Council meetings are advertised and open to the public, and we'd welcome your attendance. Other ideas we have to address communication concerns include:

- Host Facebook live sessions where Mayor Monique Croon will provide opportunities for the community to ask questions and she can answer them.
- Explore options for meetings and face-to-face gatherings to be held in different parts of the Island where possible.
- Report back more once we've heard public feedback. The Waitangi Hall consultation and next year's LTP will be great opportunities to report back.

Roading infrastructure

The feedback:

The community expressed a high level of dissatisfaction with unsealed roads and the number of potholes.

Our response:

Fixing potholes can be tricky. It seems as simple as putting some more aggregate (gravel) into the hole and compacting it into place, but the hard part is getting it to stay there. If the road is too wet or too dry, the pothole repair won't stay in place, and all the material used to fill the pothole will get scuffed or washed away. We need precise conditions to ensure the fix will last. Due to the costs of getting bitumen and equipment on Island, fully sealed pavement maintenance is carried out every third year. The last one was done over the summer of 2022/23, so the next one will be 2025/26. In the intervening two years, only temporary repairs can be carried out.

The reason for the number of unsealed roads is due to the Chathams being very remote so anything that cannot be produced on the Island needs to be imported. This makes it very expensive to complete sealed pavement works on the Island. The material that unsealed roads are constructed from can be quarried on Island, which makes it comparatively cheap and easy to build unsealed roads on the Chatham Islands. Unsealed roads are also much easier to maintain using minimal equipment, and are much easier to keep smooth through regular grading.

We have recently submitted our funding request to Waka Kotahi which includes a request for additional funding for both unsealed road maintenance and for a programme of seal extensions to lengthen the existing seal in Waitangi, Te One, Kaingaroa, and Owenga. The outcome of this application will be announced in March 2024.

Waste management

The feedback:

The community expressed that opening times of the transfer station were insufficient and closures too frequent. There were requests for roadside waste collection/bins and concerns regarding the effectiveness of our current waste management systems.

Our response:

Council is committed to continually improving our waste management systems. In 2022 it was estimated that about 26.5 tonnes of recyclables were diverted from landfill, representing an overall diversion rate of just under 5%.

What we've been doing:

- This year we have been trailing longer opening hours Tuesday - Thursday at Te One Transfer Stations due to demand. The transfer station is closed on Mondays and Fridays to enable staff to move rubbish to Owenga and pick it up from Kaingaroa. An answering machine was introduced so the community can call and find out whether it is open. While we understand that it can be frustrating, in order to preserve the health and safety of our employees and the public, the transfer station has to close during high winds.
- Council looked into the possibility of roadside collection. While we acknowledge this would be a good step towards making household waste management more achievable, Council decided against it due to financial constraints, as well as concerns that dogs, other animals, and the high winds would create both a physical hazard and a health hazard with the rubbish likely to be interfered with and not kept contained.
- In the last few months, we introduced rubbish bags and recycling bins to make managing household waste easier for the community.
- What we're planning/considering:
- Starting in early 2024, plastics numbered 1,2 and 5, aluminium and steel cans, collected at two transfer stations on the island, will be sorted and shipped to Timaru to be processed at Enviro NZ's Materials Recovery Facility. Plastics collected from the Chatham Islands will be transformed into new products that are used by the likes of food producers, farmers and the building industry.
- Council is currently in discussion with Ministry for Environment exploring the possibility of green waste options.

Environmental services

The feedback:

The community expressed a high level of dissatisfaction regarding environmental services, in particular, concerns that not enough work is being done, and that tighter pest controls are required.

Our response:

Environment Canterbury is contracted to deliver biosecurity services on the Chatham Islands. A new Biosecurity Lead has taken over the responsibility of the Chatham Islands work at Environment Canterbury and will focus on increased transparency regarding the work we carry out, both on Island and in New Zealand. We hope that with greater transparency, the community will gain a better visibility of the work we're doing for the environment.

We are committed to fulfilling our responsibilities, and these include:

- Border control - performing checks and treatments of freight prior to shipping or air travel.
- Surveillance - twice annual dive surveys at the four main ports, checking that no pest species are sneaking in.
- On-Island plant and animal control -controlling pests, aiming for complete eradication where possible (e.g. broom) or where eradication isn't possible, containment (e.g. gorse).

Hamish Chisholm has moved back to the Chathams to fulfil the role of Predator Free Coordinator. He is employed by Council as part of an agreement between DOC, CIC and Predator Free 2050. His main role at present is to provide support for the Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Group and to liaise with landowners to gain support and approval for predator control.

CIC have also received the funding for pest control on Pitt Island as part of the Jobs for Nature venture being led by DOC. This will support further pest management on Pitt Island.

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