

WEAVING THE
FUTURE, TOGETHER
KOTAHITANGA
ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL SURVEY REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2023-2024



Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o
Ōtorohanga
District Council
Where kiwi can fly



OUR ANNUAL SURVEYS

Ōtorohanga District Council took an exciting new direction with the 2021-31 Long Term Plan (LTP), placing greater emphasis on community wellbeing, building relationships, and making Ōtorohanga an even better place to live, work, and enjoy.

We've been achieving this by deepening our engagement with iwi and the wider community, while adopting a more forward-thinking approach within our organisation. Working together with all parts of our community and planning for future development has been a key focus, all while preserving what makes Ōtorohanga such a special place.

As we weave our future together in the spirit of kotahitanga, alongside our partners and community, it is important that we take a moment to reflect on how we're doing.

This report marks the third Annual Resident and Iwi Leaders Surveys. These surveys are designed to listen to the people of Ōtorohanga District and our Iwi partners, helping us understand how satisfied you are with Council services, assets, performance, and the strength of our relationships. Your feedback is essential in helping us prioritise the improvements that matter most to you.

We'll be using this feedback to track trends and outcomes year by year, to ensure we're moving in the right direction. You can learn more about the goals of this survey below.

WE CONDUCT FOUR KEY SURVEYS EACH YEAR:

- Annual Resident Survey
- Annual Library Survey
- Annual Housing for Older Persons Survey
- Annual Iwi Relationship Survey

OUR SURVEY OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE ONE

To provide a clear and comparable understanding of how our community feels about Council's relationships, services, assets, and overall performance.

OBJECTIVE TWO

To identify the key areas where Council can focus on making improvements that matter most to our community.

OBJECTIVE THREE

To track changes in satisfaction over time, helping us measure progress and align our efforts with the goals set out in the Long Term Plan.

ANNUAL SURVEY REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023-2024

OUR SURVEY METHOD

We collected feedback through a variety of methods to ensure everyone had the chance to participate. The survey was available online, with the full version also printed in the King Country News, and hard copies of both the Annual Residents' Survey and Library Survey were provided at our libraries and the Customer Experience Centre at our main office. The survey ran for four weeks, from 1 August to 31 August 2024.

For residents living in Council's 'Housing for Older Persons' units, we delivered hard copies of the survey directly. Our friendly Customer Experience team also visited each complex, meeting with residents face-to-face to support them in sharing their thoughts with us.

The Iwi Relationship Survey was sent via email to a group of 17 iwi leaders, ensuring their voices were included in our feedback process.



THE MARGIN OF ERROR

The margin of error (MOE) helps us understand how closely the survey results reflect the views of our entire community. It's a useful tool to gauge the accuracy of the survey. A smaller margin of error means we can be more confident that the results represent the overall population, while a larger margin suggests the results may be less reflective of everyone's views.

Generally, a margin of error between 4% and 8% at a 95% confidence level is considered acceptable.

MARGIN OF ERROR FOR EACH SURVEY

The Annual Resident Survey was open to all age groups, though we recognise that those under 14 are less likely to participate. This year, we were pleased to see a submission from a resident under 16. In previous years, the youngest group of submitters was 16-20 (2022-2023) and 20-25 in the first year. While these are still small numbers, it's encouraging to see younger residents getting involved and contributing to shaping their community.

To calculate the margin of error (MOE) for the survey, we used the 2024 projected population data from Statistics New Zealand for residents aged 15 and over, which totals 8,700 people. With 136 submissions received, the margin of error for the Resident Survey is 8%.

Library Survey: This survey targets active library users—those who have used their library card within the last two years. From a total of 1,340 active users (as of June 2022-2024), we received 121 submissions, resulting in a 9% margin of error. To ensure reliable insights, Council aims for a minimum of 122 submissions from our library users.

Housing for Older Persons Survey: This survey was delivered to 28 occupied units, with 16 tenants providing feedback—giving a margin of error of 16%. While we aim for at least 24 responses, we're pleased to note an increase from the 11 submissions received last year. To further encourage participation, our Customer Experience team visited each complex, offering morning tea and support to residents as they completed the survey.

Iwi Relationship Survey: Sent to a group of 17 Iwi leaders via email, we received 7 responses, resulting in a 29% margin of error. Ideally, we aim to gather at least 16 submissions from this group to better reflect their views.

An aerial photograph of a school campus. In the foreground, a large green lawn contains a colorful playground with slides and climbing structures. To the left, a single-story light blue building with a grey roof is visible. To the right, a two-story light blue building with many windows is situated. A paved road with a yellow speed limit sign (25) and several parked cars runs between the buildings. The background is filled with dense green trees.

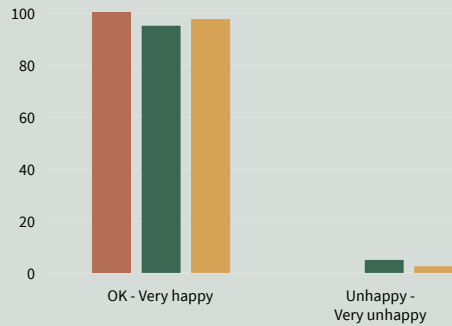
YEAR ON YEAR COMPARISON

YEAR ON YEAR COMPARISON

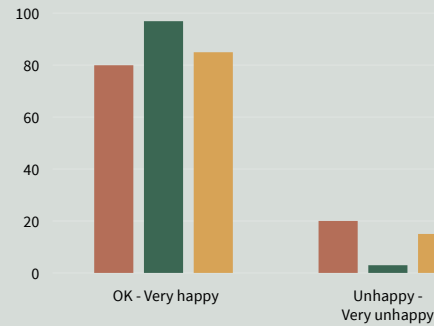
COMBINED SATISFACTION RATING ACROSS BOTH KĀWHIA AND ŌTOROHANGA

2021-2022 Year 2022-2023 Year 2023-2024 Year

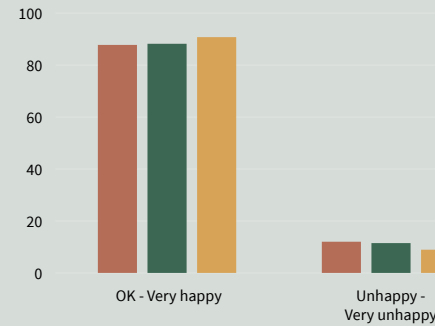
KERBSIDE RUBBISH & RECYCLING



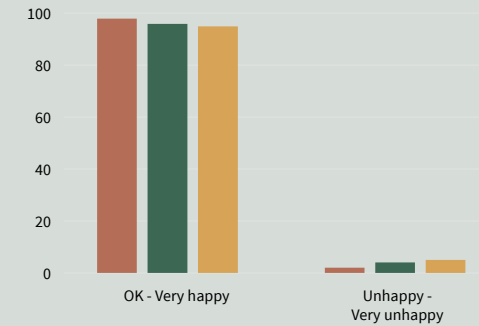
COMMUNICATION



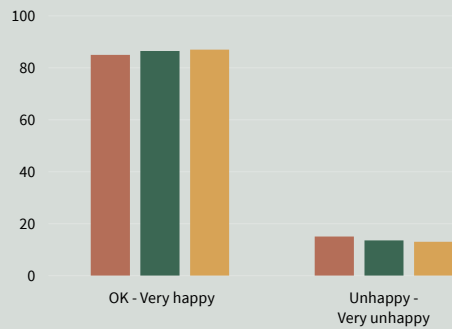
QUALITY OF PARKS AND RESERVES



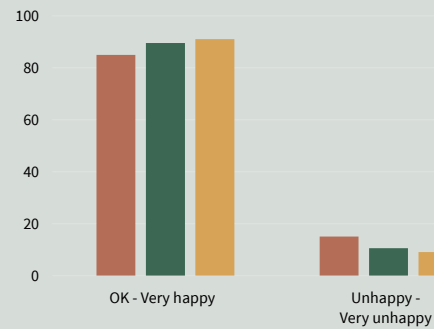
VARIETY OF PARKS AND RESERVES



LEVEL OF TRUST IN ŌDC



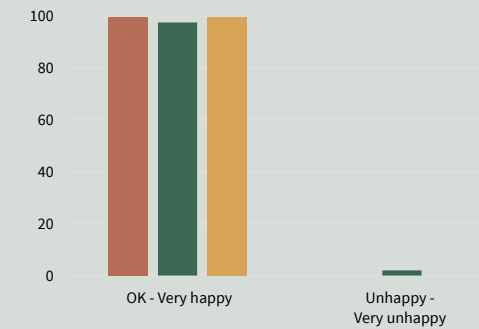
OVERALL ŌDC PERFORMANCE



TRUST OF ŌDC BY IWI LEADERS



LIBRARIES



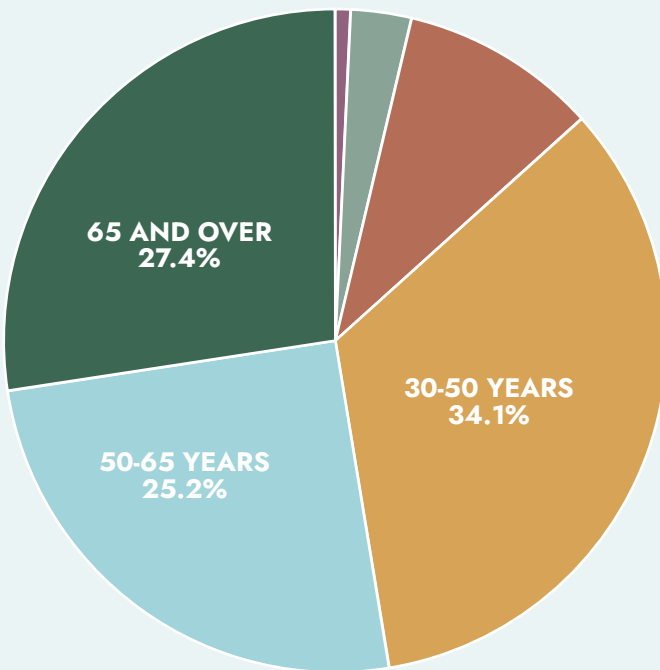
The year-on-year comparison data on this page has been updated from previous reports, which included 'I don't know' responses. To align with our audited Annual Report, we have removed those responses and adjusted the metrics. This approach provides council with a clearer and more accurate understanding of residents' sentiments.

A photograph of two men in a rural setting. The man on the left is wearing a dark polo shirt and sunglasses, with his hand to his face. The man on the right is wearing a blue plaid shirt, a tan bucket hat, and is holding a long-handled tool. They are standing in a field with a wooden fence and trees in the background. The text 'ANNUAL RESIDENT SURVEY' is overlaid in the bottom left corner.

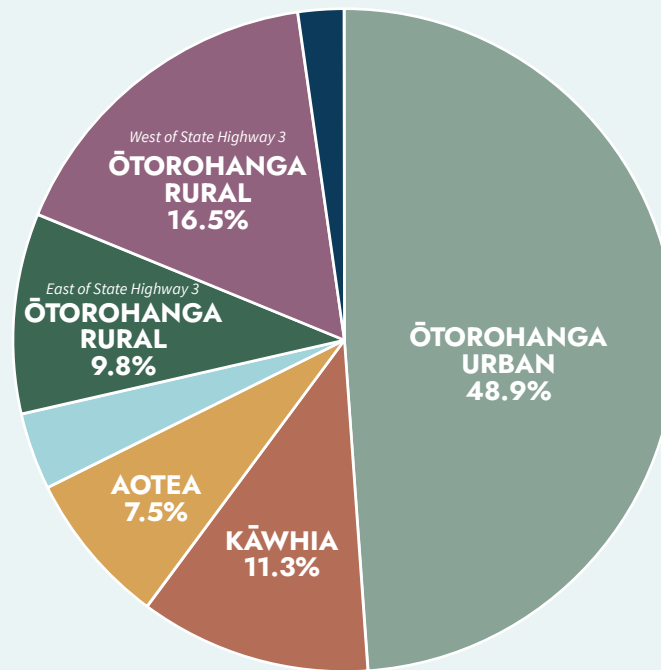
ANNUAL RESIDENT SURVEY

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

WHICH AGE GROUP ARE YOU IN?



WHICH COMMUNITY DO YOU PRIMARILY LIVE IN?



KERBSIDE COLLECTION RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

THEMED RESPONSES TO KERBSIDE COLLECTION RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

Your feedback has reflected a desire for improved waste collection practices, more recycling transparency, and better infrastructure, with a strong preference for moving towards a bin-based system. These themes have been consistently highlighted in previous annual surveys. We're actively working on improving in a number of these areas, though some suggestions are not feasible. Some improvements are ongoing practices, while others are longer-term projects.

TRANSITION TO WHEELIE BINS OVER BAGS:

A significant number of respondents suggested replacing the current yellow bags with wheelie bins. This change is seen as a solution to issues like wind blowing bags around and making a mess and would offer a more durable and convenient system.

- “An option for bins rather than bags would be great.”



IMPROVE RUBBISH COLLECTION PRACTICES:

Respondents mentioned the need for better care in handling rubbish and recyclables, particularly ensuring that dropped or blown items are picked up and that collection times are more consistent.

- “Make sure that any rubbish dropped or glass smashed is cleared right then and there.”



RECYCLING AND WASTE SORTING CONCERNS:

Several respondents raised concerns about the actual recycling process, questioning whether recyclables are properly sorted or end up in the landfill. There is a need for more transparency and education on how recycling is handled.

- “Often recycles are just thrown straight in with the rubbish.”
- “I was told it's a waste of time separating recycling as cans and plastic get thrown in together and buried.”



INTRODUCE ADDITIONAL COLLECTION SERVICES:

Some respondents suggested offering additional services, such as whiteware, or inorganic collections, and options for composting or garden waste collection.

- “Offer an annual inorganic collection, so residents can clean up their properties without unmanageable cost.”
- “Have a composting container for collecting and open this up for people’s gardens.”

“Have a whiteware collection twice a year “

COST OF RUBBISH BAGS:

The high cost of rubbish bags was a common concern, as was the cost associated with replacing stolen bins. Respondents would like to see lower bag prices.

“Reduce the bag cost.”

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

Transition to Wheelie Bins Over Bags: As part of our Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP), we are exploring the potential of replacing rubbish bags with wheelie bins in Ōtorohanga and Kāwhia. Should this investigation receive support from elected members, we will engage in a formal consultation with you to gather broader feedback. This will include details on costs, benefits, and any potential drawbacks.

Recycling and Waste Sorting Concerns: To address concerns about recycling going to landfill, our communications team will work with the waste minimisation officer to launch an education campaign. This will help explain the recycling process and where your recyclables actually go.

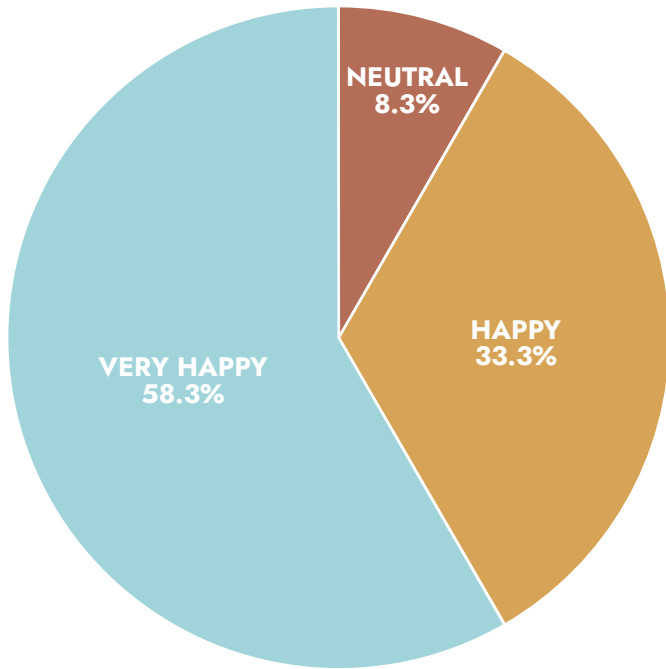
Improve Rubbish Collection Practices: We work closely with our contractors to ensure they deliver the best service possible. However, if rubbish bags or bins are overfilled or break, it isn't the contractor's responsibility to clean up. If you have concerns, we encourage you to use our 'Service Request' system. We'll be stepping up our efforts to promote this process in 2024-2025.

Introduce Additional Collection Services: Central Government has provided national guidelines that standardise what can be collected kerbside. This means that the collection of items like whiteware is not possible. For more information on what can and can't be picked up from your kerb head to <https://environment.govt.nz/what-you-can-do/campaigns/recycle/recycle-item/>. Our waste minimisation officer will explore other ways to support you in reducing, reusing, and recycling waste, including the possibility of one-off disposal days for specific items.

Cost of rubbish bags: While we understand the desire to reduce the cost of rubbish bags, recent increases in landfill levies by Central Government mean that we can't lower these fees. Waste services rely on funding, and the "user-pays" model ensures fairness.

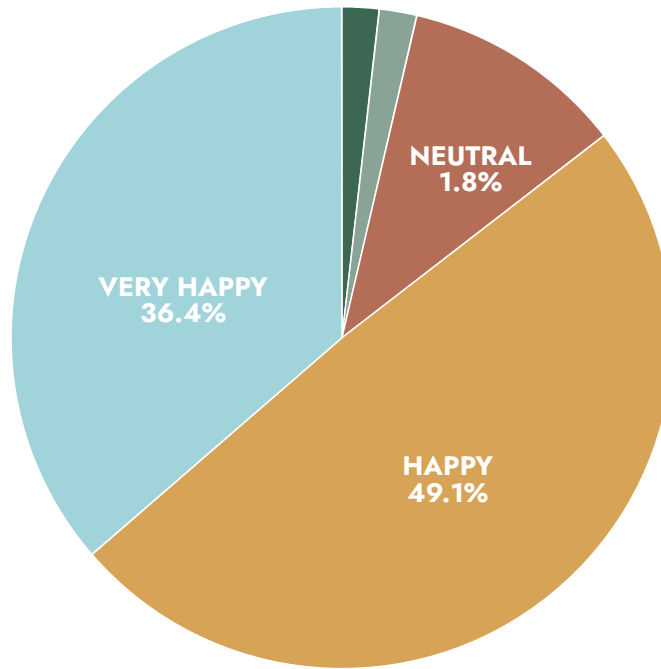
WE'RE LISTENING 
www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE SERVICE OF KĀWHIA KERBSIDE COLLECTION IN THE LAST YEAR?



- Unhappy 0%
- Very unhappy 0%

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE SERVICE OF ŌTOROHANGA KERBSIDE COLLECTION IN THE LAST YEAR?



- Unhappy 1.8%
- Very unhappy 1%



COMMUNICATION

THEMED RESPONSES TO COMMUNICATION

Through your feedback, we've heard that you want more regular updates, better communication, and timely responses. These are important priorities for us, and we're making sure to address them.

INCREASE TRANSPARENCY AND UPDATES ON COUNCIL PROJECTS AND DECISIONS:

You've told us that you want more clarity and regular updates on key decisions, financial matters, and council projects. You are looking for more information, particularly around how public funds are being used and what progress is being made on infrastructure development.

"Any financial decisions made need to be clearer."

- "Updates on projects that contribute to the success of the plans for the district."
- "What Council is doing in regards to rates and managing costs in a recession."

MORE PROMOTION OF POSITIVE STORIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

You want to hear more about the good things happening in our community. You asked us to share more about our successes and the positive work we're doing, ensuring the community is aware of all the great things happening.

- "I want to hear more about the things you are proud of and the good work you are doing in the community."
- "All the good news stories."

EXPAND USE OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS:

To ensure everyone stays informed, you suggested we expand the ways we communicate, including more webinars, emails, and even direct text messaging. It's also important to make sure our communication is accessible to different groups, especially those who may not engage with digital platforms.

- "More webinars."
- "More regular emails."
- "Direct text messaging."

"Many older residents miss out because so much is on devices they don't relate to."

IMPROVE RESPONSIVENESS AND FOLLOW-UP ON INQUIRIES:

We heard your concerns about Council's responsiveness to inquiries. You mentioned the need for quicker and more transparent follow-up, especially on service requests and issues like roadworks.

- "Council response to queries or concerns is not managed or communicated well."

"If a customer wants something, make sure you follow up with them."

COMMUNICATE MORE ON LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ROADWORKS:

You asked for more timely information about roadworks, including specific details on delays, closures, and plans for rural roads and other infrastructure projects. You want to know about disruptions before they happen and what the plans are for addressing them.

- "Roading—anything that will delay traffic or moving livestock."
- "More information on Facebook about roadworks."

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

Increase Transparency and Updates on Council Projects and Decisions

Council decisions are made available through the formal minutes of our meetings, which are uploaded to our website as soon as they're prepared. For decisions likely to attract public interest, a media release will be issued. You can also follow the livestream of our meetings on Council's YouTube channel, with recordings available on our website afterward. As part of our Communication and Engagement Strategy, we will continue to post pre- and post-meeting updates across Facebook and Instagram.

More Promotion of Positive Stories and Achievements

We want to make sure you hear about the positive things happening at Council. We'll continue using the following platforms to share good news:

- Social Media (Facebook and Instagram)
- Newspaper – including the Āmio newsletter
- E-Newsletter (with our expanded database)

Our partner, Elevate, is developing a Promotions and Events Strategy, and already promote a "What's On" guide available on their website www.otorohanga.co.nz. We'll be running a campaign to raise awareness about where you can find the latest updates on events.

Expand Use of Communication Channels

We're committed to using a wide range of platforms to keep you informed, including:

- Our website
- Social Media (Facebook and Instagram)
- Newspaper – including the Āmio newsletter
- E-Newsletter (we're expanding our database)
- Antenno app
- Flyers for key projects
- Posters

New initiatives for 2024/25

- We'll run a campaign promoting the various platforms where you can find important information.
- We'll grow our email database to provide monthly e-newsletters.
- We're exploring ways to allow you to subscribe to updates on specific topics that interest you.
- We're investigating how to better engage absentee property owners.
- We'll investigate the cost/outcome benefit of enhancing our presence on LinkedIn and YouTube.

To ensure you're well informed about Council projects, we'll ensure each project has a communication plan that includes regular updates,

as well as an end-of-project summary. We'll also be consulting the community on potential webinar topics to make sure we're covering the issues that matter to you.

Improve Responsiveness and Follow-Up on Inquiries

We acknowledge that our response times and handling of service requests need improvement. That's why our Service Request Implementation Programme is already in progress to ensure quicker and more effective responses.

WE'RE LISTENING 
www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us

Communicate More on Local Infrastructure and Roadworks

Increasing the visibility of our infrastructure projects is a key part of our Communication and Engagement Strategy. We'll be using our website, Āmio, Antenno, and social media to keep you informed about Council's activities across the district.

How could Council improve the way it communicates?

"I think Council does a great job with communication. Its up to people at the other end to participate in communication as well- its a two way street."

"Ensure that all absentee property owners are also being communicated with"

"More regular emails"

"I feel like communication is consistent and relevant across all channels - great job!"

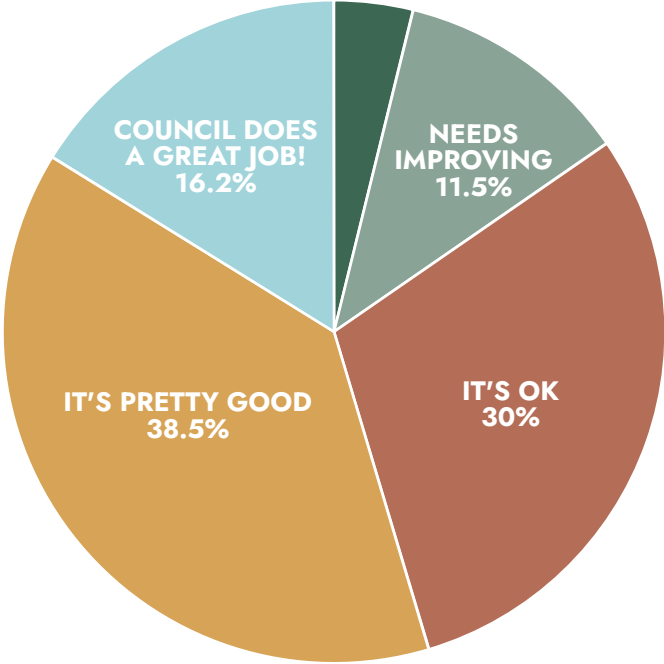
"Regular public sessions around the District & communities are always well received and need to continue. Make it easier for members of the public to attend Council meetings by holding those meetings at key locations within the District - e.g. marae, local halls."

"Many older residents miss out on news etc about Council because so much these days is on devices and they simply can't relate to this form of communication."

"Ability to subscribe to certain topics."



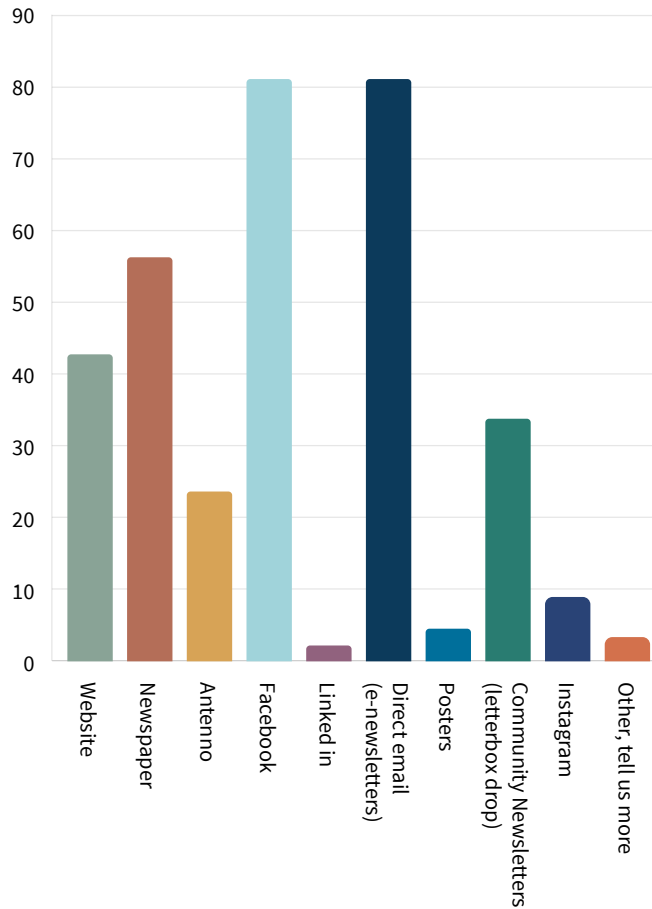
DO YOU THINK ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMUNICATES WELL WITH THE COMMUNITY?



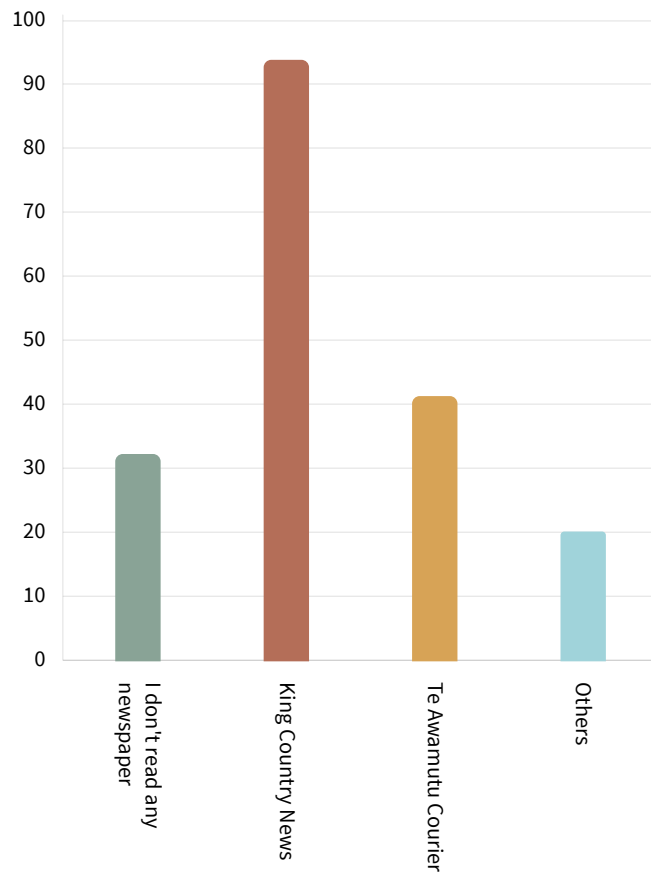
● Not at all

3.8%

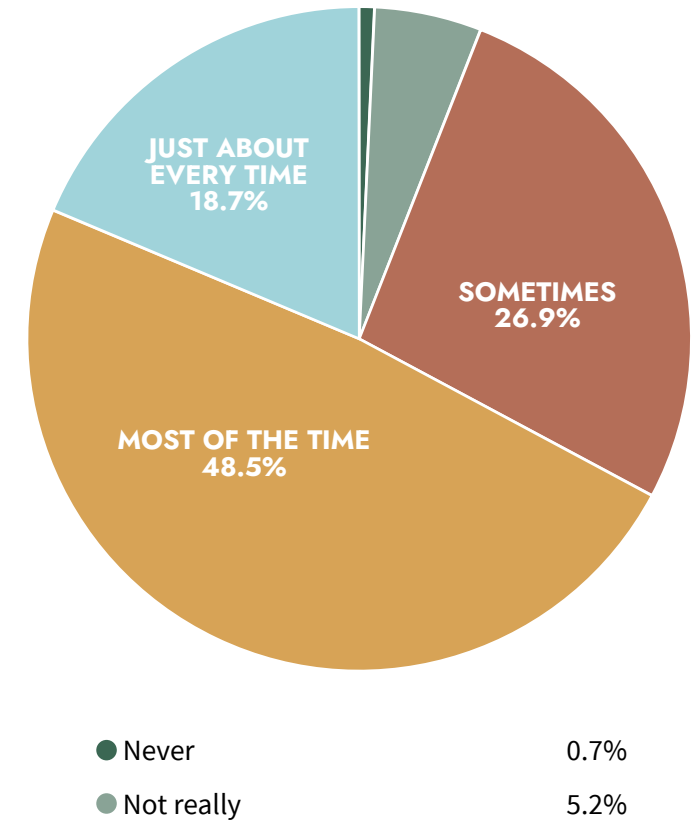
WHAT ARE YOUR PREFERRED WAYS OF RECEIVING COUNCIL COMMUNICATION (UP TO THREE)?



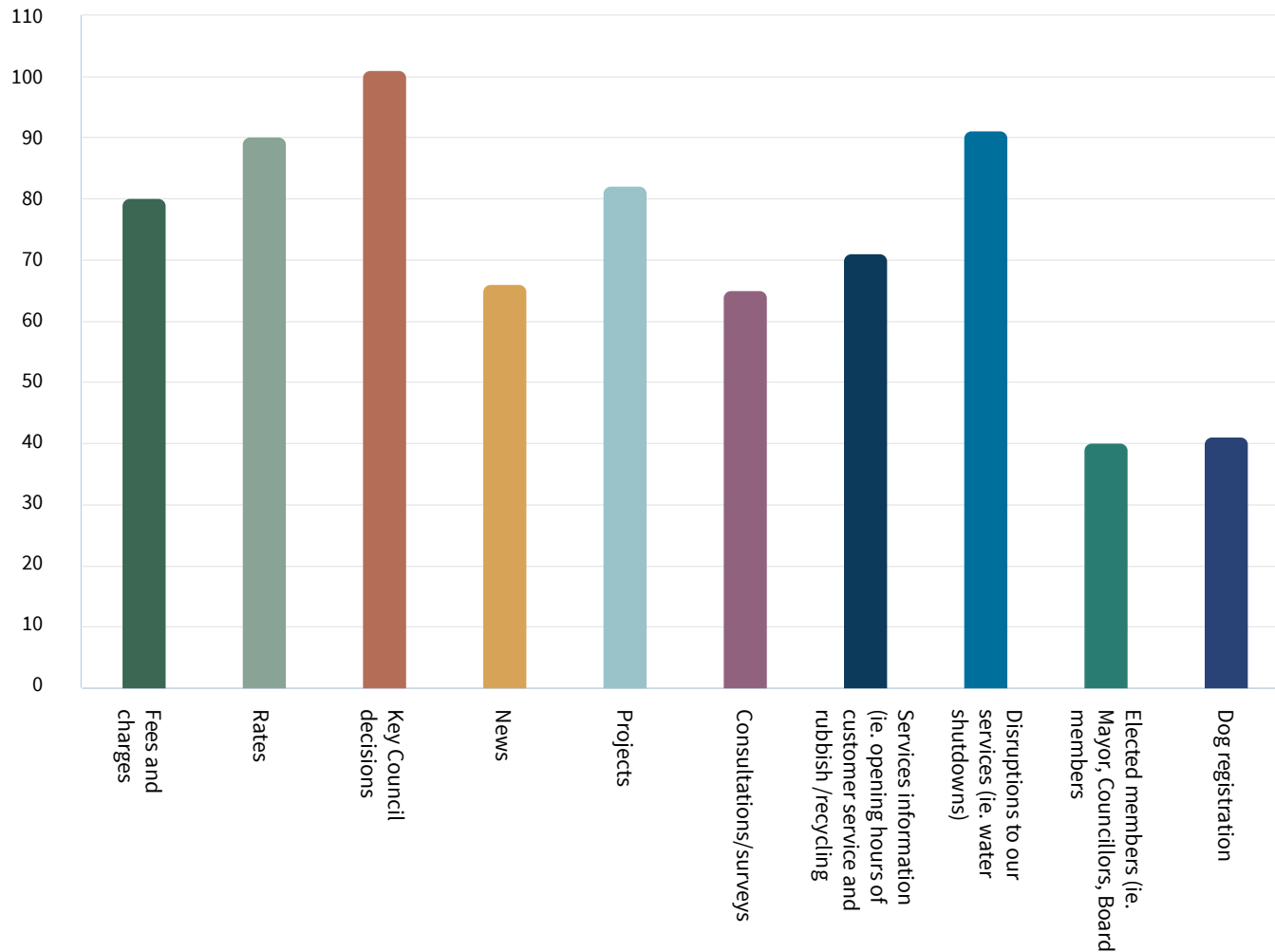
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING NEWSPAPERS DO YOU READ (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



CAN YOU GET/FIND COUNCIL INFORMATION WHEN YOU NEED IT?



WHAT INFORMATION IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU AND YOU WANT TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT?



What other topics are important for you to know more about and would like Council to include in future communications?

“Updates on projects that contribute to the success of the plans for the district”

“I want to hear more about the things you are proud of and the good work you are doing in the community. I don’t think you’re vocal enough about the good stuff”

“For Aotea the recent sea wall work, it is an important community asset. How did it go, did everything planned get done, was it achieved within budget?”



PARKS AND RESERVES

THEMED RESPONSES TO PARKS AND RESERVES

How could we improve the VARIETY and QUALITY of parks or reserves?

Your feedback highlights just how much our community values the variety and upkeep of our parks and reserves. You've shared some great ideas on how we can make these spaces even better, with a focus on accessibility, safety, and enhancing the overall recreational experience.

VARIETY OF PARKS:

DOG-FRIENDLY AND SPECIALISED SPACES:

There's been a strong request for more dog-friendly areas, including well-fenced dog exercise parks. Some of you also suggested introducing specialised spaces, such as dirt bike parks, off-road vehicle areas, and locations for activities like parkour or motorbiking.

- "I think youth and older people need spaces to ride motorbikes, to ride horses, to ride push bikes. We need to address the enthusiasm youth have for motorbikes and provide an off-road dirt bike park."

"Well fenced dog area to exercise dogs."

EXTENSION AND CONNECTIVITY:

Residents want to see more walkways and pathways connecting our green spaces, providing opportunities for biking, walking, and enjoying the outdoors. There were also ideas for new recreational features like pump tracks for kids.

- "Better pump track for kids."
- "Invest in a bike track for young children."

"An extension for the walkway, potentially along the river towards Te Kuiti or Te Awamutu."

PROMOTING EXISTING PARKS:

Some of you weren't aware of all the parks and reserves available in the district. You've asked for better promotion of these hidden gems to showcase the variety we already have.

- "I don't think the variety needs improvement, but perhaps you could publicise the variety we do have some more? There are a few parks and reserves listed above that I didn't know existed and would be keen to visit with some more information about them."

QUALITY OF PARKS:

MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY:

Ensuring our parks are safe and well-maintained is a priority for you. This includes regular maintenance, better lighting, weed control, and making sure our playgrounds are safe for children.

- "Make them more user-friendly, perhaps for people in wheelchairs and older people."

"Make them safer after dark."

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES:

You've asked for more amenities in our parks, including water fountains, public toilets, picnic areas with shade, rubbish bins, and better parking facilities. There's also a desire for improved landscaping to make our parks more enjoyable for everyone.

- "It's great that Windsor park is now having a toilet installed. This has been a very long time coming."
- "Have a water fountain and toilet on the walkway/cycle track."
- "More shade in summer, shade cover maybe."
- "More tree planting and enhancement to make it more pleasant for family picnics or just a pleasant place to sit or walk."

UPGRADING OLDER PARKS:

You said you would like to see our older parks refreshed with new equipment, fresh paint, and beautification efforts. Modernising play equipment, especially for teenagers, was also a popular request.

- “There is a playground area on Panera Street that is in disrepair. Council has found it difficult to take ownership for the necessary remedial work.”
- “By making the skatepark better/more exciting.”

“Update play equipment, oil the squeaky swings.”

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

We're already working on many of these themes, which have also been raised in our concept plan projects. Our priority projects, including the Town and Rural Reserve Management Plans and the Sports Hub Plan, will take your feedback into account as we plan for the future of our recreational spaces.

Promoting Existing Parks

In response to your request for better promotion of our fantastic parks, we'll be running a campaign to shine a spotlight on these spaces and ensure everyone knows what's available.

Maintenance and Safety

Council has a schedule of general maintenance for our parks and playgrounds that includes painting of play equipment and weed control. We also adhere to the national regulation for playground inspection. If there are times you think we have missed the mark on controlling vegetation, or you notice some squeaky equipment, please let us know through the service request system. That way we know exactly where and what the problem is and can get straight on it.

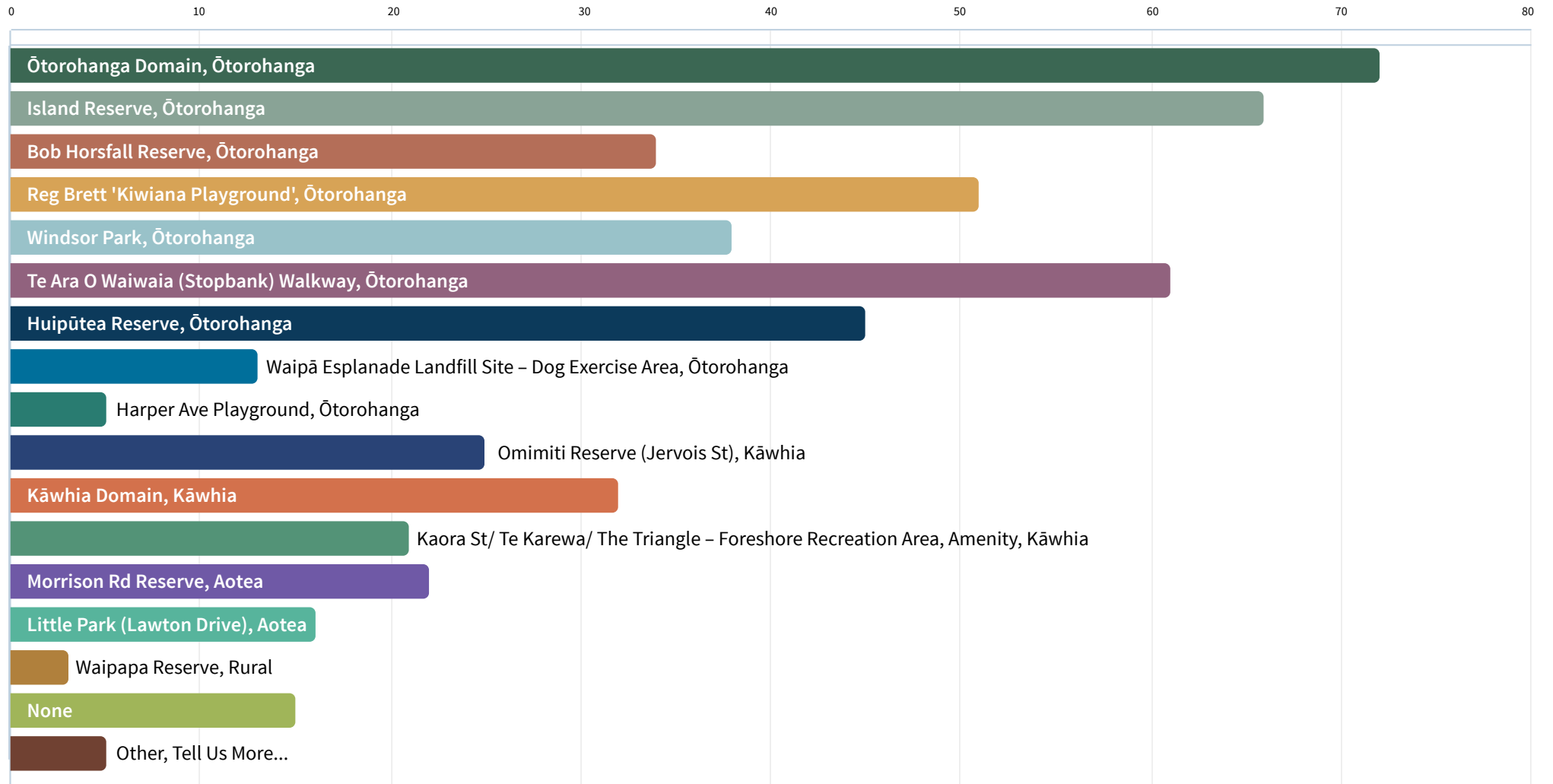
Our parks and reserves are all well maintained and great family spaces - punching above our weight for a small town!”

“The Hub for sports at the Island Reserve is a great idea, keeping sports in town and nesting them together will be good for the community.”

WE'RE LISTENING
www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us

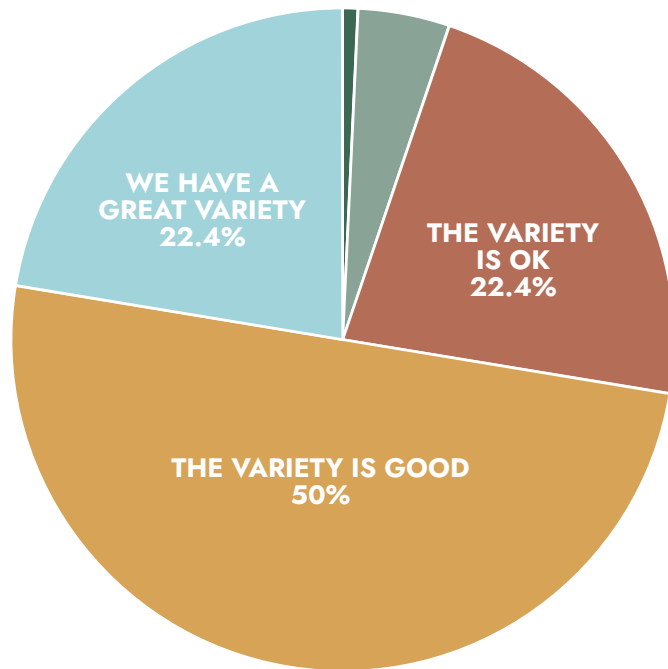


PLEASE SELECT ALL THE COUNCIL PARKS AND RESERVES YOU HAVE VISITED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.



DO YOU THINK THAT THE ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT HAS A GOOD VARIETY OF PARKS AND RESERVES?

DO YOU THINK THAT THE ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT HAS A GOOD QUALITY OF PARKS AND RESERVES?



● Not at all 0.7%
 ● It could be better 4.5%

● Not at all 0.8%
 ● It could be better 8.5%



TRUST

THEMED RESPONSES TO TRUST

The overall response to the community's trust in Council was encouraging, with many positive comments highlighted in the survey's free-text section. However, there are still areas where we can improve, particularly around financial transparency and decision-making processes. Your feedback reflects a mix of trust, based on clear communication and personal experiences, alongside concerns in areas where some feel we could do better.

TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION:

Trust in Council is closely tied to how open and transparent we are when communicating decisions and updates. We noted you appreciate our efforts to keep the community informed, even when delivering difficult news. However, there were also concerns that communication can sometimes feel less open.

- Positive: "This Council is very transparent with the community about its decisions and the reasons behind them."
- Less Positive: "Lack of open and transparent communication. Not replying to queries and service requests."

Positive:
"Council seems to be working hard to be transparent and keep us informed."

POSITIVE PERSONAL INTERACTIONS AND RESPONSIVENESS:

Many of you build trust in Council through positive personal interactions with our team. Friendly, helpful, and responsive service was often mentioned as a reason for confidence in us. However, some expressed concerns about inconsistency, particularly around follow-up on queries and decision timelines.

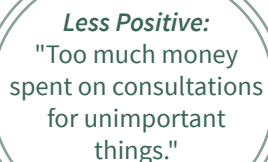
- Positive: "I always have good results from the communications I have with the team at ŌDC."
- Positive: "The last time I wanted the dog man—he turned up immediately, people answer the phone too."

Less Positive:
"Decisions made get changed and timeframes are too long for action to happen."

CONCERNS ABOUT DECISION-MAKING AND PRIORITIES:

While many of you trust the Council's decision-making and financial management, others raised concerns about how decisions are made, particularly around the perceived use of public consultations and project priorities. There's a feeling that, at times, these processes aren't fully transparent or reflect the community's input.

- Positive: "I think we have a much better reputation and relationship with our community than other councils in the Waikato."
- Less Positive: "A lot of money doesn't [go] on public consultations, but Council already knows what they are going to do."



Less Positive:
"Too much money spent on consultations for unimportant things."

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

While we're grateful for the positive feedback, it's important that we also address the areas where you've voiced less positive sentiments.

Lack of open and transparent communication. Not replying to queries and service requests

We recognise this concern, and you can read more about how we're addressing this in the communication section of this report. We're committed to ensuring that all your queries are acknowledged and responded to in a timely manner. www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us/fix-report-a-problem

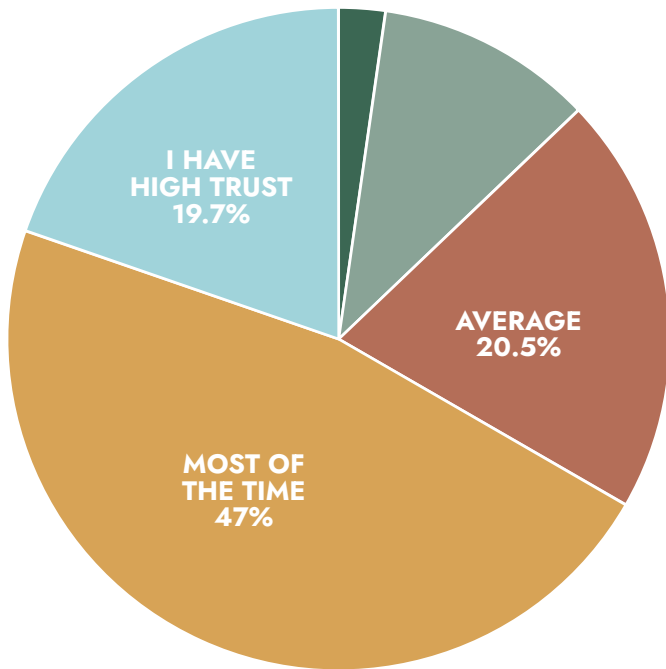
Decisions made get changed and timeframes are too long for action to happen.

As a small council delivering many of the services that larger councils do, we are proud of how much we achieve. However, we sometimes face pressure to meet all our commitments within set timeframes, and on occasion, deadlines may need to be extended to ensure the best outcome for the community. We know this can be frustrating, but we'll do our best to keep you informed when things change.

Money spent on consultations

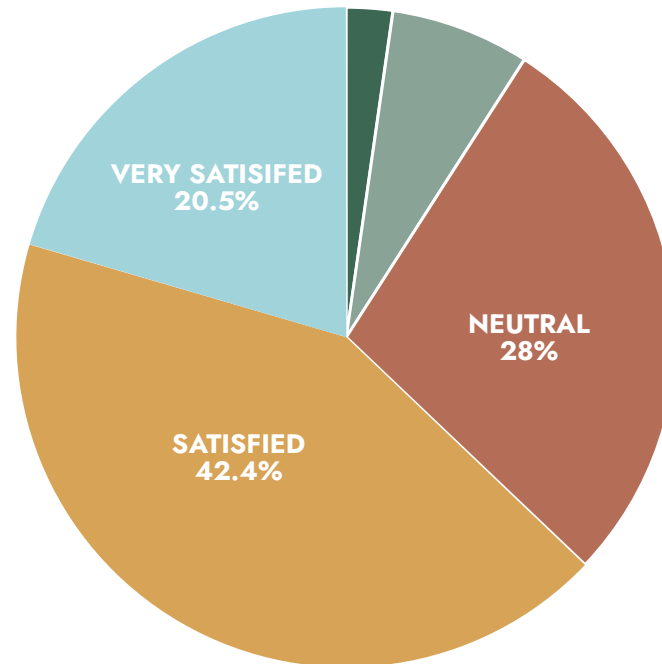
It is important that we include our community in decisions we make for the wellbeing of our generations today and those to come. As we work through our 2024-34 Long Term Plan, we continue to weave the future together—Kotahitanga. The feedback on our approach has been overwhelmingly positive. We remain conscious of our budget and work hard to make consultations as cost-effective as possible, using online platforms, social media, and community networks to ensure we get the best value for our engagement efforts.

**HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE
ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL?**



- Not at all 2.3%
- Only a little bit 10.6%

**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH
THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF
ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL IN
THE LAST YEAR?**



- Very unsatisfied 2.3%
- Unsatisfied 6.8%

ANNUAL LIBRARY SURVEY



THEMED RESPONSES

THEMED RESPONSES TO LIBRARY

Our library is a cherished and well-used community hub, and the overwhelming positive feedback reflects the dedication and passion of our library team. Over the past year, we've made great strides in promoting what the library has to offer, including its programmes, but we know there's still more work to do—and we're excited about how we can continue to improve. We also received some fantastic new suggestions for expanding our collection, which the team is grateful for. It's also been encouraging to see the success of our adult programmes, with requests for even more in the future.

"I use the rural delivery service, there was no section of your survey to cover that service. I have been unwell for 18 months and unable to travel into the library, and without the wonderful women at Ōtorohanga library telling me about that service, it would have been a very miserable time indeed. One day I will be able to use your facilities in full again, but until then, I am beyond grateful for the rural service!"

EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY THE COLLECTION:

You asked for a broader range of books, especially in genres like Christian fiction, children's chapter books, Māori culture (raranga), New Zealand and Pacific authors, biographies, and even access to Native Land Court minutes. There's also interest in expanding our e-book and digital collections.

- "Boost books from New Zealand and Pacific authors."
- "Access to Native Land Court Minutes (1880s-90s) for King Country."
- "The more e-books the merrier! Libby is a fantastic service."

"Advertise new books and ones that may be of interest to many people"

IMPROVE DIGITAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT:

Some respondents found it difficult to navigate or use our online resources. There were suggestions for offering instructional sessions on using digital platforms and improving the website's user-friendliness, visibility, and search functions.

- "I find [the online resources] hard work, not user friendly."

"It is too hard to find what I am looking for, Library hours aren't convenient"

- "Don't know how to use them. Need an instruction class and explanation on what it's about."
- "Could the website be more modern and easier to navigate?"

ENHANCE COMFORT AND SEATING OPTIONS:

Feedback highlighted a need for more comfortable seating, particularly for older patrons. Suggestions included higher seats, additional couches for reading, and improvements to seating in the children's section.

- "More couches or places to read."
- "Higher seats for older people, or put blocks under existing sofas."
- "The kids section needs improvement."

IMPROVE LIGHTING AND ATMOSPHERE:

Some of you mentioned that the library, particularly in Kāwhia, feels a bit dark and less inviting. Improving the lighting and overall atmosphere would make the space more welcoming and enjoyable for visitors who like to stay a while.

- "Kāwhia is what it is, but unsure if the lighting has been looked at. It is adequate."

"I use it regularly - for the research material I'm looking for"

INCREASE STUDY AND WORKSPACES:

There were several requests for more study desks and quiet workspaces. During busy times, the library can feel crowded, so creating additional spaces for study or reading would benefit patrons.

- “More study desks if possible.”

PROMOTE LIBRARY PROGRAMMES, ACTIVITIES, AND OFFERS:

Some respondents indicated they weren’t aware of the library’s programmes and activities. Increasing promotion through social media, newsletters, and in-library displays would help raise awareness and boost participation.

- “I didn’t know we had programmes until I saw a poster. Could there be more awareness on social media of what is coming up?”
- “I would appreciate a monthly update by email as to what is being offered.”

“Encouraging schools to visit regularly so that children get accustomed to what literacy and knowledge options the Library offers”

"Loved the authors night"

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES FOR ADULTS:

While our children’s programmes were praised, you expressed interest in more activities for adults. Suggested programmes included arts and crafts, music, skill-building workshops, and other engaging events for the adult community.

- “Perhaps more programmes for adults to learn new skills, like arts and crafts, music, etc.”
- “The kids programmes are great, but I wish there were more activities for adults

“Adding a self checkout would help when there is a line of people waiting to be served.” / “When taking a book out it’s still very pleasant to be served and have a small conversation with a real person unlike libraries where you do your own book check out. For some people this may be the only person they speak to all day”

“It is super great to see the planning that goes into Storytime for our young tamariki. And how the ladies are involving the community when delivering a nationally recognised theme such as Matariki, Mothers and Father’s Day.....”

“Please keep open every day - some things cannot be measured in money value - books and love of book - (and where they are available) are the future of our generations.

“Please open for a late night (maybe until 7pm) so that people who work until 5pm can still visit the library”

“The staff are always so happy and cheerful not to mention helpful! The children feel confident to approach a staff member themselves when they need help and that says everything!”

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

Expand and Diversify the Collection

Our library team has taken note of the valuable collection suggestions you've made. These will be considered as part of the purchasing process in the coming years. Additionally, staff will investigate whether Native Land Court minutes can be obtained and made accessible to the community.

Improve Digital Resources and Support

Over the past year, we've researched successful digital programmes from other libraries. Starting in 2024/25, we'll begin introducing these new initiatives. We'll also be utilising DORA (Digital On Road Assistance) to deliver a two-week digital assistance programme across the district. One-on-one support will continue for those needing help with our online services, including apps, and group "How To" sessions will be rolled out throughout 2024/25.

Enhance Comfort and Seating Options

We've made this a priority for 2024/25. Our staff will explore repurposing or purchasing additional furniture to improve the comfort and functionality of the library space.

Improve Lighting and Atmosphere

This feedback is particularly relevant to our Kāwhia library, which underwent a makeover during the 2023/24 year. Our staff will look into further improvements to enhance the atmosphere, while

acknowledging the space limitations of this treasured library.

Increase Study and Workspaces

The library's programme room will be better promoted as an overflow space for study and reading when not in use. We will also explore the possibility of purchasing additional furniture to accommodate more patrons.

Promote Library Programmes, Activities, and Offers

In 2023/24, we implemented a promotions plan that has led to a noticeable increase in awareness and participation in library programmes. We'll continue using platforms such as:

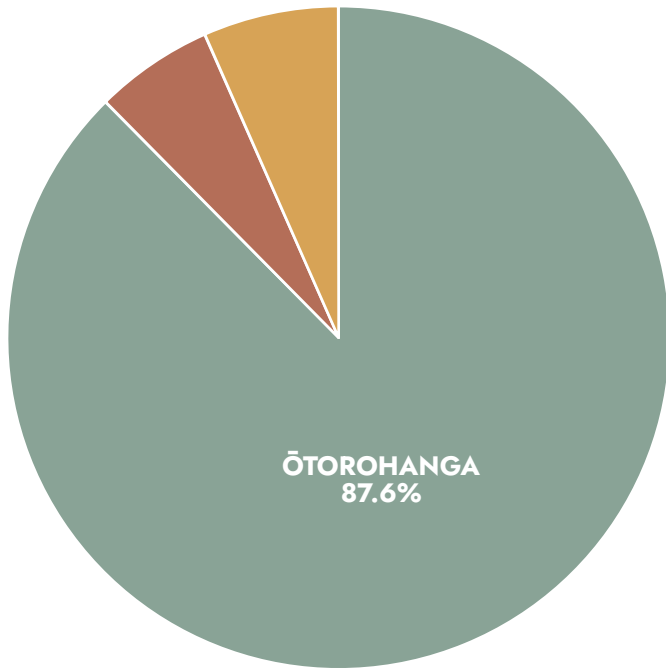
- Āmio newsletters (digital and in King Country News)
- Social media
- Antenno app
- Website
- Direct engagement with schools, preschools, and Beattie Home
- Posters and flyers

We'll also seek further support from the communications team to enhance our efforts in this area.

Increase the Number of Programmes for Adults

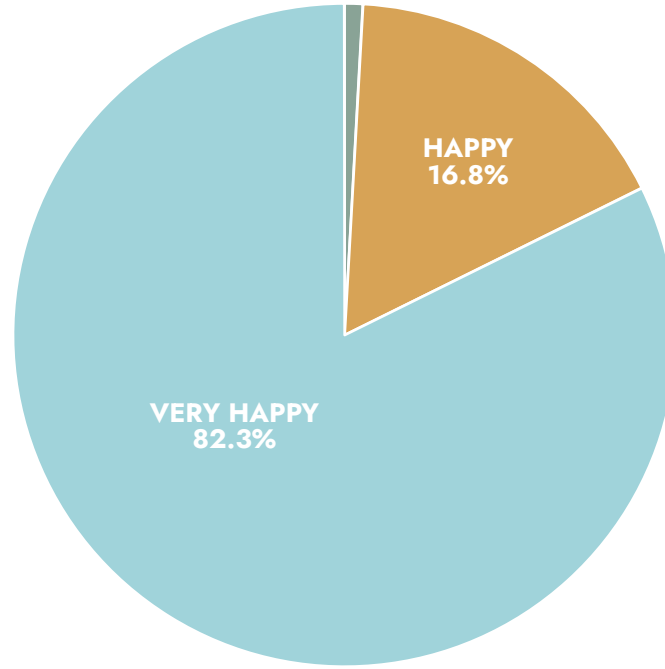
Over the past year, we've delivered two author events, an adult reading programme, and the Local Family History programme. Expanding on these offerings is a key focus for 2024/25, and we're excited to deliver more adult-focused activities.

WHICH LIBRARY, IF ANY, DO YOU USE MOST OFTEN?



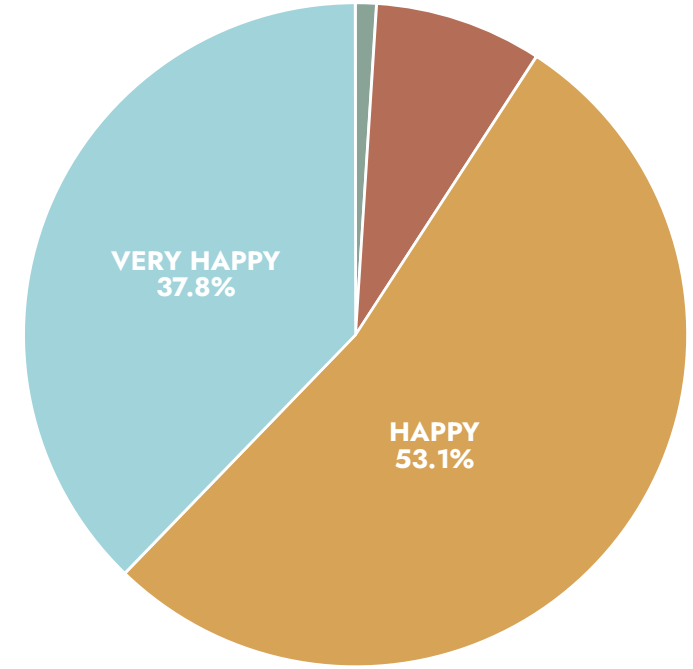
- Kāwhia 5.8%
- I don't use the library 6.6%

HOW HAPPY ARE YOU WITH THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVE FROM STAFF?



- Very Unhappy 0%
- Unhappy 0.9%
- Neutral 0%

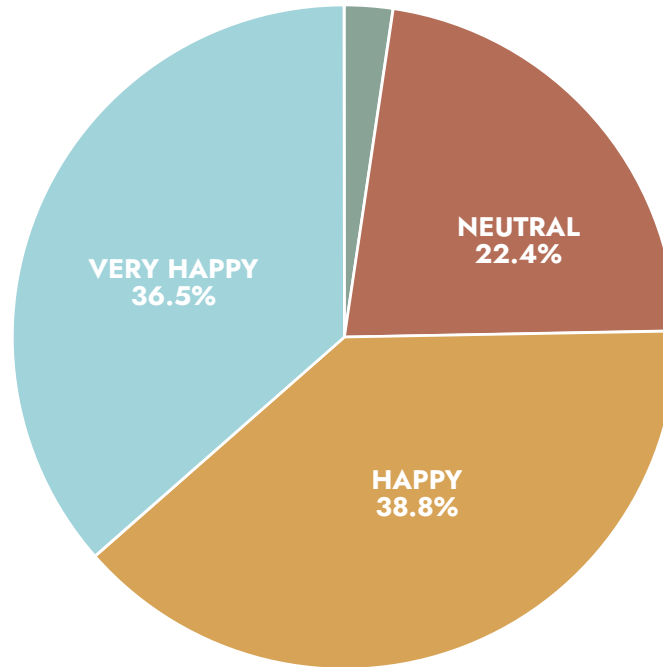
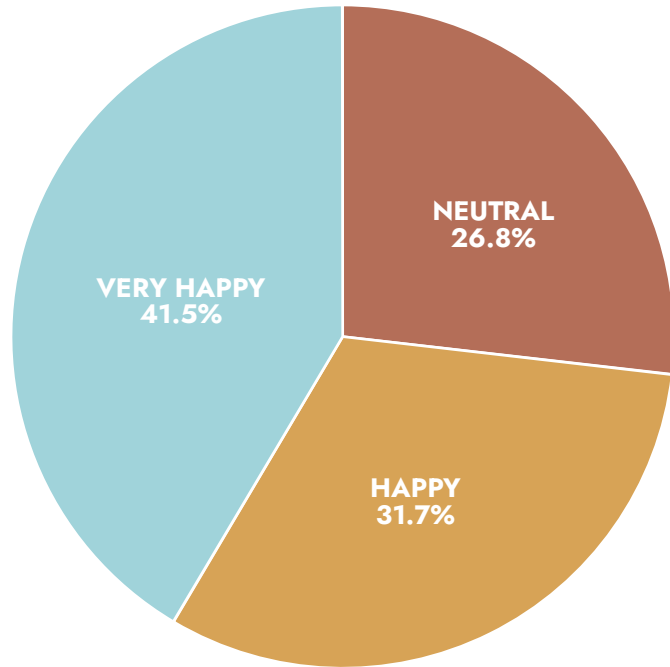
HOW DO YOU RATE THE COLLECTION OF BOOKS, MAGAZINES, DVD'S AND OTHER MATERIALS?



- Very Unhappy 0%
- Unhappy 1%
- Neutral 8.2%

HOW DO YOU RATE THE LIBRARY PROGRAMMES OFFERED? FOR EXAMPLE CLASSES, HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES, STORYTIME, AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMME ETC.

HOW DO YOU RATE OUR ONLINE RESOURCES? FOR EXAMPLE, THE LIBRARY WEBSITE, APPS, EBOOKS, DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES, DIGITAL RESOURCES...



● Very Unhappy 0%
 ● Unhappy 0%

● Very Unhappy 0%
 ● Unhappy 2.4%



**ANNUAL HOUSING
FOR OLDER PERSONS
SURVEY**

RESPONSES

RESPONSES

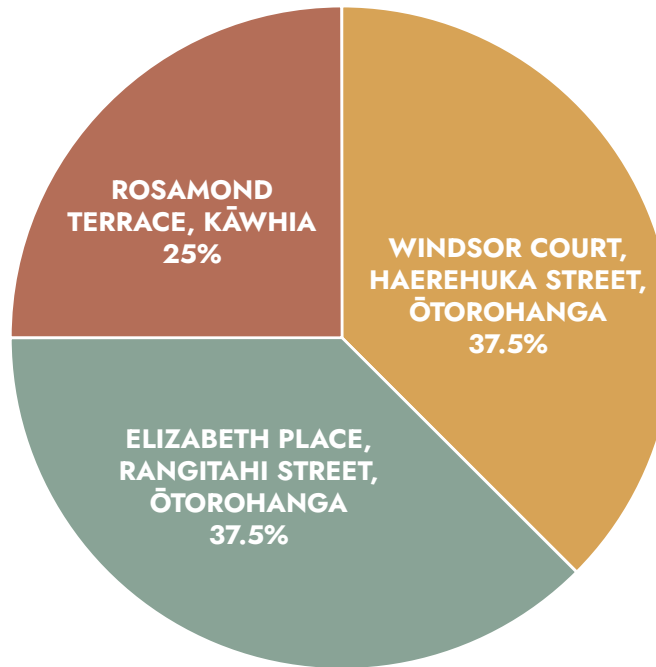
While there were no specific themed responses for Older Persons Housing in this year's survey, a number of comments we received were actually service request items. Our staff have processed these accordingly, but it has highlighted that some of our tenants may not always remember how to let us know when something needs fixing.

To make it easier for our tenants to reach out, we're creating handy fridge magnets with our contact details, so help is always just a phone call away. These magnets will be distributed alongside a letter outlining all the different ways tenants can lodge a service request. We also encouraged anyone needing help with the digital options to visit the library, where our friendly team is available to assist.

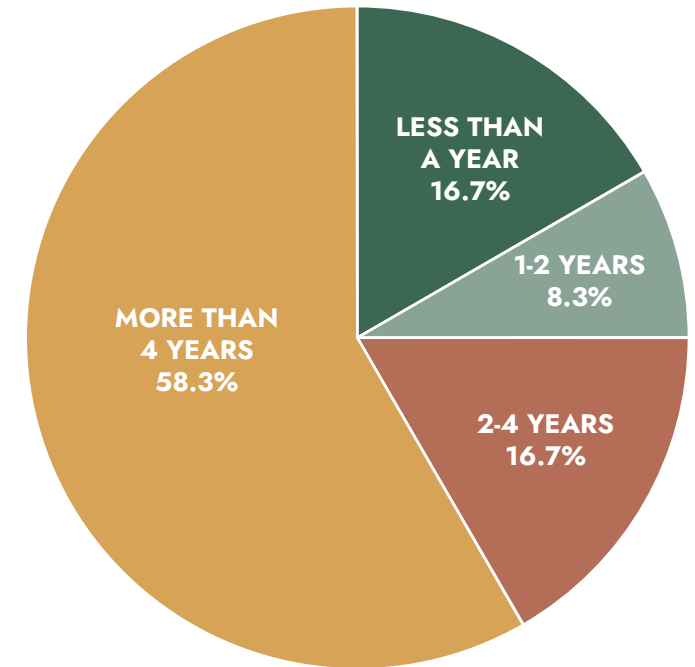
"Most comfortable dwelling in my life"

"Love living in this unit. It is safe and quiet nice people lovely to look over at the park nice and warm with the new heater."

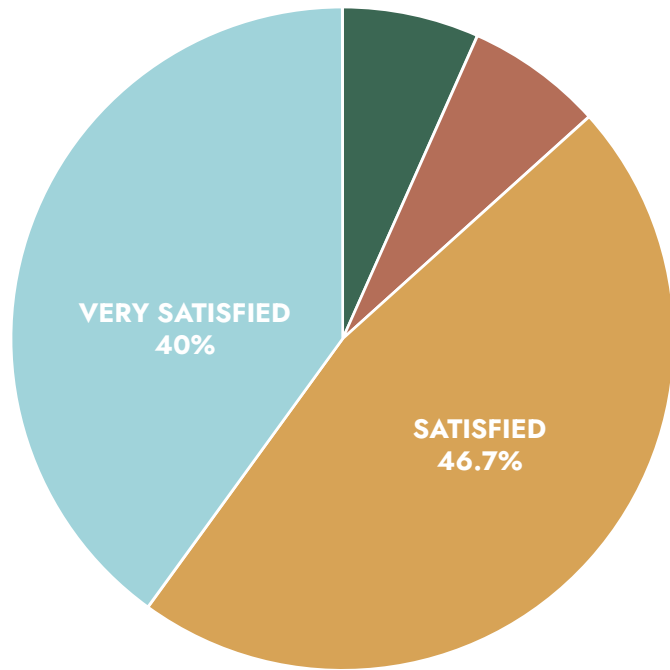
WHICH OF THE HOUSING COMMUNITIES DO YOU LIVE IN?



HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN COUNCIL'S OLDER PERSONS HOUSING?

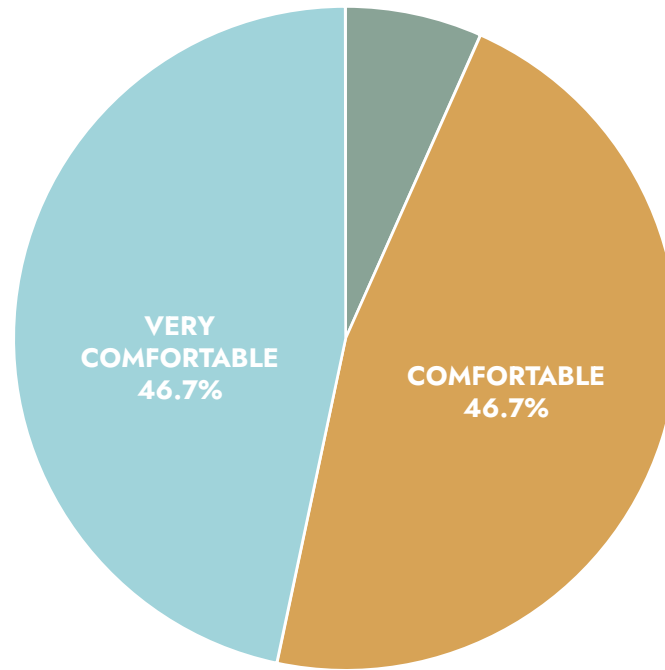


HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE OVERALL CONDITION OF YOUR HOUSING UNIT?



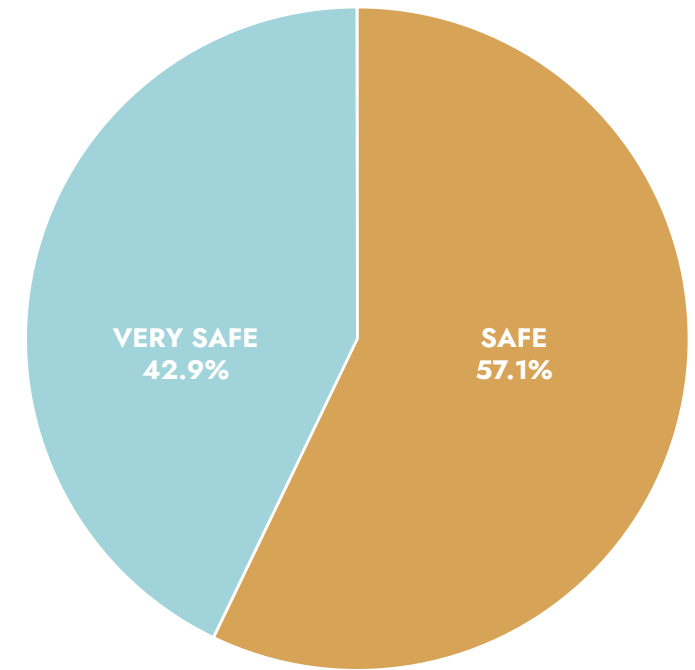
● Very unsatisfied	6.7%
● Unsatisfied	0%
● Neutral	6.7%

HOW COMFORTABLE IS YOUR UNIT?



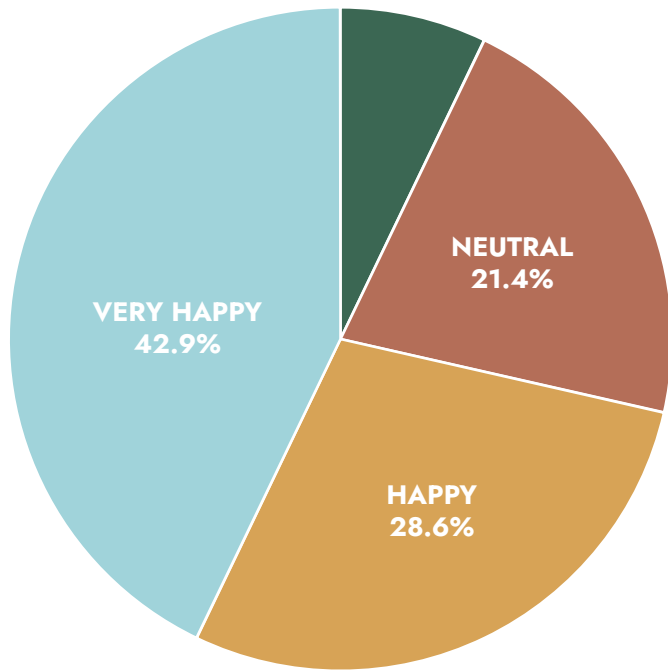
● Very uncomfortable	0%
● Uncomfortable	6.7%
● Average	0%

TO WHAT LEVEL DO YOU THINK YOUR UNIT IS SAFE?



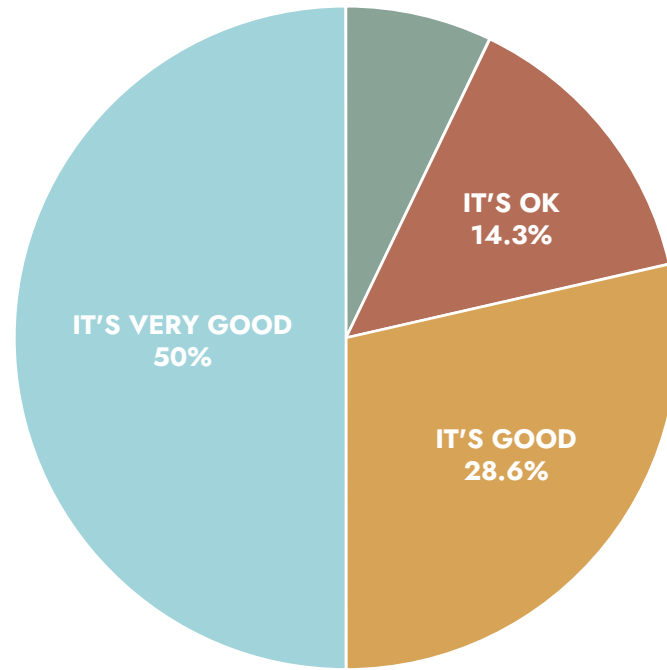
● Very unsafe	0%
● Unsafe	0%
● Average	0%

IF YOU HAVE MADE A MAINTENANCE REQUEST IN THE PAST YEAR, HOW HAPPY WERE YOU WITH THE RESPONSE TIME?



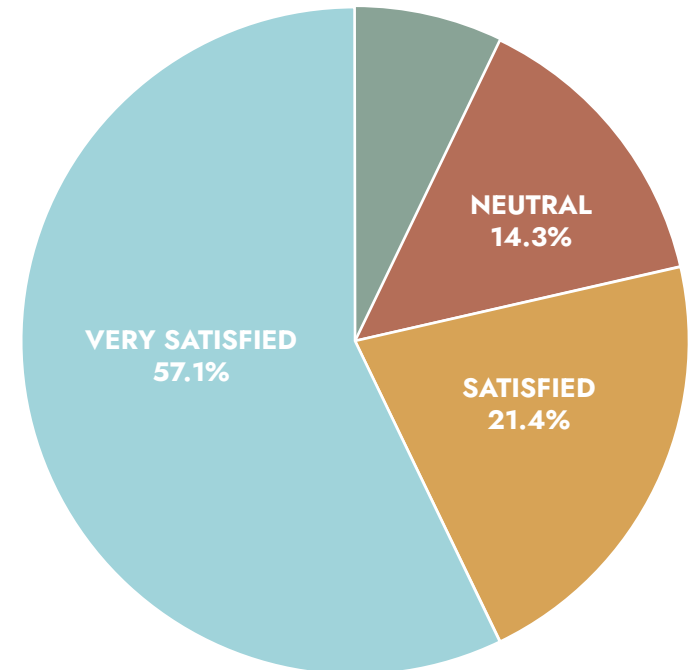
- Very unhappy 7.1%
- Unhappy 0%

TO WHAT LEVEL DO YOU THINK THAT THE UNIT IS WARM, DRY AND WEATHERTIGHT?



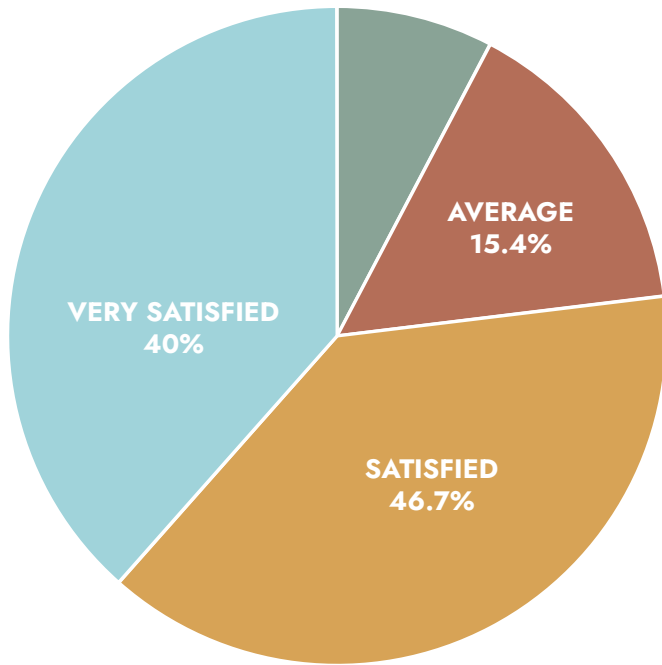
- It's not at all 0%
- It could be much better 7.1%

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE LAWNS AND GARDENS OF COMMUNAL AREAS?



- Very unsatisfied 6.7%
- Unsatisfied 0%

HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR HOUSING COMMUNITY?



- Very unsafe 0%
- Unsafe 7.7%





ANNUAL IWI RELATIONSHIP SURVEY

THEMED RESPONSES

Council, both elected members and staff, have been focused on building authentic and enduring relationships with iwi and Māori. Our achievements so far stem from a two-pronged approach: first, fostering trust and understanding through meaningful engagement with iwi and Māori communities, and second, creating a more inclusive environment for our kaimahi (staff) and manuwhiri (visitors).

While we've made positive strides, it's important to continue this journey and strengthen these relationships. This ongoing commitment was reaffirmed in our 2024-34 Long Term Plan, where we further emphasised our dedication to working in partnership with iwi/Māori.

THEMED RESPONSES TO IWI RELATIONSHIP

The following themes reflect a strong foundation of trust and engagement between Council and iwi/hapū communities, with clear opportunities to deepen collaboration and support.

STRONG ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH IWI AND HAPŪ:

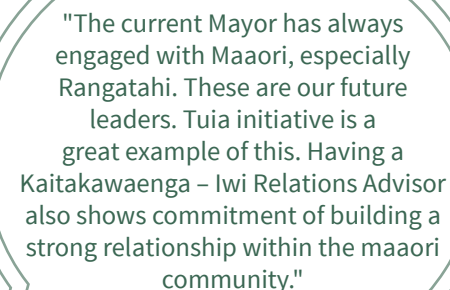
Council was acknowledged for the genuine, meaningful efforts to engage with iwi and hapū, resulting in positive relationships built on trust, openness, and a willingness to work together.

- “ŌDC has made a genuine effort to engage in a meaningful way with iwi and hapū within the Ōtorohanga District both coastal and inland communities.”
- “There is good faith, a willingness to work together, and share. The connection and updates of what is happening in the local area are very good.”
- “Engagement has been open and insightful regarding all things LTP, infrastructure needs, housing.”

VALUE OF MĀORI LEADERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION:

The involvement of Māori Councillors, the establishment of Māori Wards, and the role of the Kaitakawaenga – Iwi Relations Advisor were all valued. Respondents appreciated the inclusion of Māori leadership and input, though some called for broader engagement with more members of the Māori community.

- “Having a Kaitakawaenga – Iwi Relations Advisor shows commitment to building a strong



"The current Mayor has always engaged with Māori, especially Rangatahi. These are our future leaders. Tuia initiative is a great example of this. Having a Kaitakawaenga – Iwi Relations Advisor also shows commitment of building a strong relationship within the Māori community."

relationship within the Māori community.”

- “The current Mayor has always engaged with Māori, especially rangatahi, and they are our future leaders.”
- “I struggle with the term ‘Iwi Leader,’ but I trust the current Mayor and the Māori Councillors to guide the council.”

POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNCIL LEADERSHIP:

Respondents spoke positively about Council leadership, especially the Mayor and Chief Executive, noting their visibility, approachability, and integrity when engaging with the Māori community.

- “The Mayor, CE, and Kaitakawaenga Māori are visible at kaupapa in our community.”
- “The CEO (Tanya) is a great face of the Council and builds trust through actions.”
- “I have seen the Mayor engage well with Māori, and this builds trust in Council's approach.”

INCLUSION AND CO-DESIGN IN DECISION-MAKING:

There was positive feedback about Council's commitment to involving iwi in decision-making processes, particularly through co-designing projects and seeking iwi input on key matters like Reserves Management and Māori Wards.

- "It was a positive process that iwi were invited to come in and share their views, and it was great to see elected members listen."
- "Full engagement on Reserves Management design, and supportive of manawhenua decisions."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

SUPPORT IWI CAPACITY TO ENGAGE:

Some respondents highlighted that iwi may face capacity challenges in engaging with Council and suggested that Council provide budget or resources to support iwi participation.

- "A budget line to support iwi engagement may help facilitate what outcomes Council is looking for and enable iwi to respond."

BROADER COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT:

To maintain the positive momentum, respondents suggested continuing regular communication and updates with iwi and hapū, ensuring that stakeholders are kept informed of project updates, workplans, and priorities.

- "Continue to ask questions of each other about alignment and timing of workplan priorities."

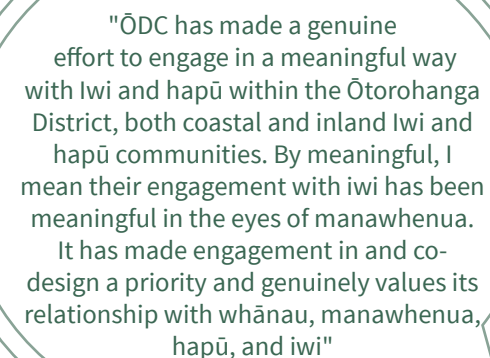
FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION:

There was also interest in creating more opportunities for face-to-face engagement with councillors and staff, including chances for iwi to present their initiatives and priorities.

- "It would be good to meet councillors and have an opportunity to present to them, our mahi."



"ŌDC are proactive with engaging us, through hui, regular comms, on opportunities and work programmes that will benefit our community and Maniapoto. There has been integrity in the relationship with senior leaders at ŌDC and ŌDC senior leaders are also visible at our kaupapa. There is good faith, a willingness to work together, and share."



"ŌDC has made a genuine effort to engage in a meaningful way with iwi and hapū within the Ōtorohanga District, both coastal and inland iwi and hapū communities. By meaningful, I mean their engagement with iwi has been meaningful in the eyes of manawhenua. It has made engagement in and co-design a priority and genuinely values its relationship with whānau, manawhenua, hapū, and iwi"

What advice can you share to help us improve?

" I think it is helpful to have good robust processes in place with plenty of perseverance from staff required in working with iwi who may struggle with capacity to do the work from time to time. I think where possible a budget line to support Iwi engagement may help facilitate what outcomes Council is looking for and enable iwi to respond"

"It would be good to meet councillors and have an opportunity to present to them, our mahi, or even a kaitahi at some point."

"Continue to ask questions of each other about alignment and timing of workplan priorities and how we can help each other."

WHAT WE'RE DOING ABOUT IT:

Support Iwi Capacity to Engage:

We acknowledge the capacity challenges for iwi engagement and will prioritise discussions around financial recompense for the knowledge and expertise that iwi, Māori, and mana whenua bring to the table. This is an important consideration moving forward.

Broader Communication and Engagement:

Council senior staff and project leads will continue to meet regularly with iwi entities to align shared priorities. We will maintain the practice of sharing our three-year work plan, providing a high-level snapshot of current and upcoming projects.

Further Opportunities for Face-to-Face Interaction:

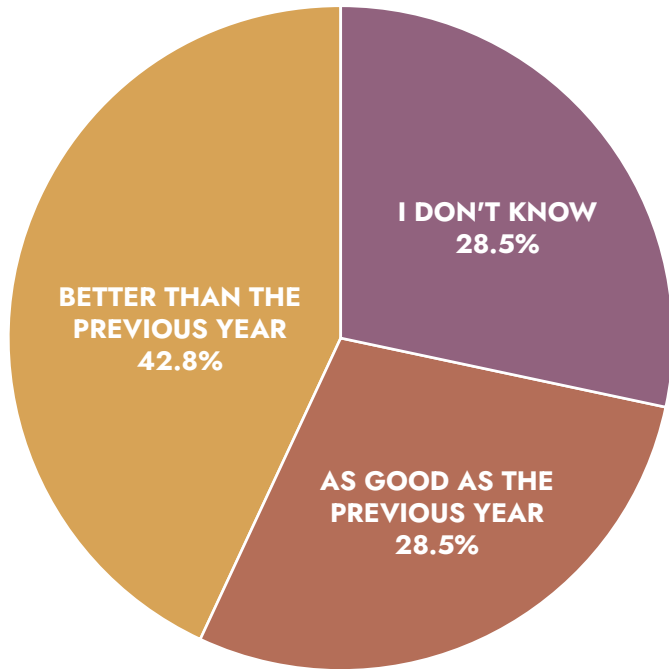
We will ensure that opportunities for elected members to attend iwi events, such as AGMs or specific hui, are shared. Additionally, we will consider periodic invitations for iwi entities to host or meet with elected members to foster deeper connections and share each other's priorities.

What's your reason for your ratings?

"Early consultation on council matters. Council supports mana whenua position on Māori Wards, full engagement on Reserves Management design. Supportive of manawhenua decisions regarding Hui pūtea. Council developing a Māori Engagement Framework Strategy. Manawhenua on the evaluation panel."

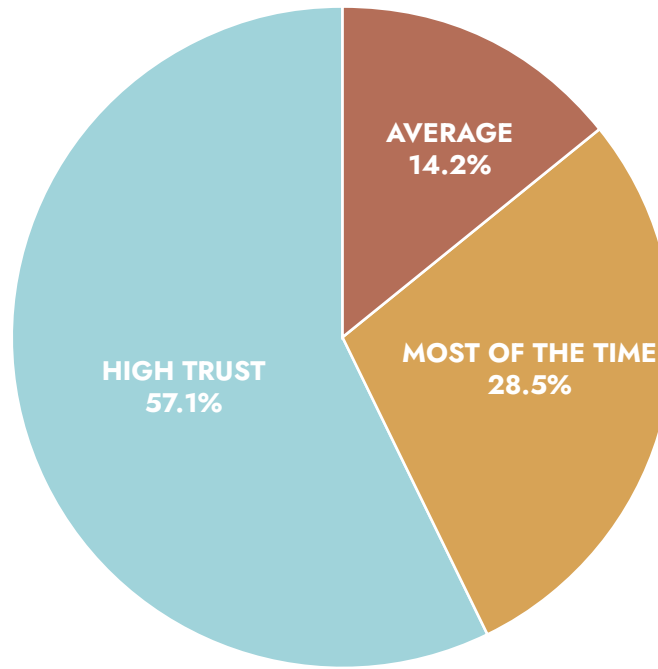
"As above, the Mayor, CE and Kaitakawaenga Māori are visible at kaupapa in our community. At our bi-monthly executive hui, there is full presentation from Tanya and the executive team and a commitment to sharing with high integrity, trust, and good faith, to work together on matters that will provide economic and community uplift for the people in the district."

HAS COUNCIL IMPROVED ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH IWI LEADERS COMPARED TO LAST YEAR?



● Worse than previous year 0%

HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL?

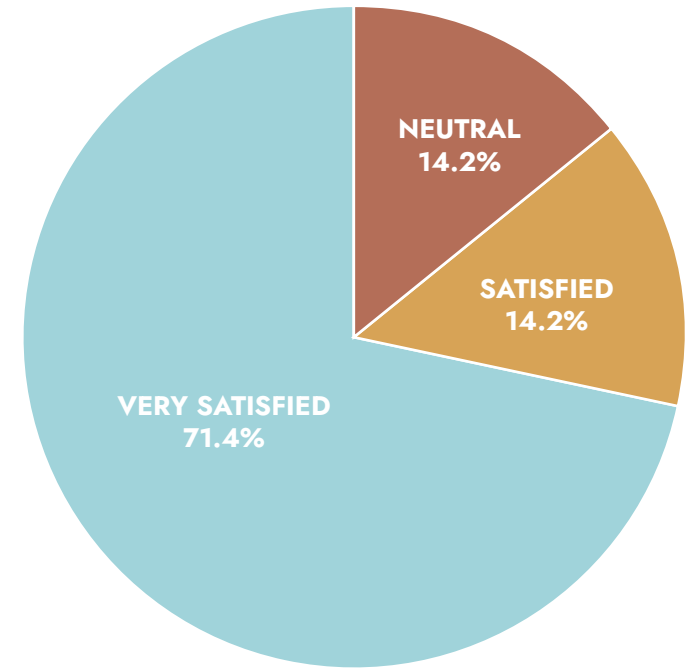


● No trust 0%

● Only a little bit 0%

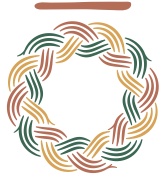
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

(THIS INCLUDES MAYOR, COUNCILLORS, COMMUNITY BOARDS AND STAFF) ARE DOING IN BUILDING AND MAINTAINING AUTHENTIC, STRONG, AND PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH IWI LEADERS REPRESENTING MANA WHENUA ACROSS THE ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT AREA)



● Very unsatisfied 0%

● Unsatisfied 0%



WEAVING THE
FUTURE, TOGETHER
KOTAHITANGA
ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

WE'RE LISTENING

Whether you need to ask a question, make a request, pass on a compliment or complaint about any of our services, or reach an Elected Member - here's how!

HERE ARE ALL OF THE WAYS YOU CAN CONTACT US:

-  **Online** - www.otodc.govt.nz
-  **Lodge a Service Request** - www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us/fix-report-a-problem
-  **Phone** - 0800 734 000
-  **Email** - info@otodc.govt.nz
-  **Antenno App** - www.otodc.govt.nz/contact-us/antenno-app
-  **In person** – 17 Maniapoto Street, Ōtorohanga
-  **Post** - PO Box 11, Ōtorohanga 3940
-  **Elected Members** - www.otodc.govt.nz/about-council/mayor-councillors-and-boards
-  **Follow us on Social Media** - www.facebook.com/OtorohangaDistrictCouncil

ŌTOROHANGA DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEAVING THE
FUTURE, TOGETHER
KOTAHITANGA

Ōtorohanga District Council | 17 Maniapoto St, Ōtorohanga
0800 734 000 or 07 873 4000 | www.otodc.govt.nz



Te Kaunihera ā-Rohe o
Ōtorohanga
District Council
Where kiwi can fly