

Residents' Survey 2019 - Report



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Background, Objectives and Method

Background

- The Northland Regional Council has an ongoing need to measure how satisfied residents are with the resources, facilities and services provided by the Council.

The specific objectives are to:

- Provide a robust measure of satisfaction with the Council's performance in relation to service delivery
- Determine performance drivers and assist the Council to identify the best opportunities to further improve satisfaction, including satisfaction among defined groups within the region and its districts
- Assess changes in satisfaction over time and measure progress towards the Long Term Plan objectives

Method

- A random selection of 2,500 residents from the Electoral Roll were sent a questionnaire to complete and return, with a link to an optional online survey. A reminder postcard was sent to those who had not responded after two weeks. Although methodology was the same as the previous years' survey, an anonymous link was provided for the general public to provide feedback.
- The postal and online survey generated a sample of n=439 residents across the Northland region while there were 327 responses completed via the public anonymous link.
- The postal and online survey response rate was 17.56%. Responses were received between 1 April and 20 May 2019.
- Quota targets were monitored to ensure a sufficient sample by key demographic features including age, location, gender and ethnicity.
- Post survey the data has been weighted to the 2013 Census data to ensure that the sample is representative of known population distributions within the region.
- At an aggregate level the survey has an expected confidence interval at the 95% level (margin of error) of +/-4.67%.

Notes

- Due to rounding, figures may add to just under/over (+/- 1%) 100%.
- Key results of the public survey are also shown for comparison.



Executive Summary



Key Findings

1

Northland Regional Council is perceived positively by 60% of residents, with 46% of them being either satisfied or very satisfied with Council's *Overall performance* (% scoring 7 to 10). This is an increase from its overall performance score of 40% in 2018. *Whangārei* residents are more likely to be satisfied with Council's *Overall performance* compared to residents in *Far North* and *Kaipara*.

2

Residents are mostly satisfied with their recent experience with Northland Regional Council compared to last year's evaluation. Residents ranked *Fair treatment* as the most important aspect regarding contact with Council and staff interaction.

3

Nearly two in five residents (39%) are satisfied with overall *Value for money*. *Younger residents (18-44)*, *Whangārei* residents and *Non-Māori* residents are more likely to be satisfied with the services they received for the rates they pay for than other demographic groups.

4

Awareness of Northland Regional Council's core services is generally high. In particular, over four in five residents are aware of Council's *Environmental management and monitoring services (land, air and water)* (83%) and its work in helping *Coordinate civil defence and emergency management* (82%).

5

Residents who have made contact with Council are more likely to be satisfied with *Overall communication*, *than those who have not made contact*. In terms of overall *Quality of service received*, *Whangārei* residents are more likely to be satisfied than *Far North* and *Kaipara* residents.

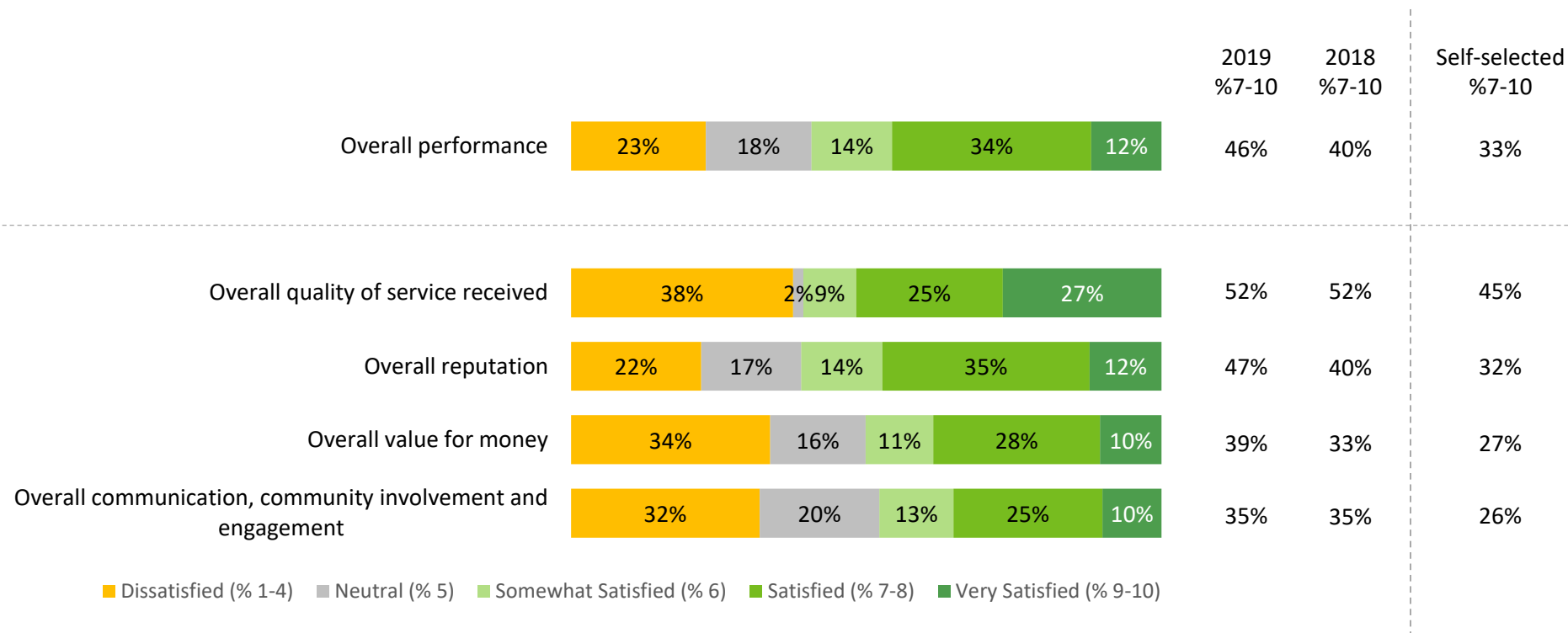


Key Performance Measures



Overall, nearly half of residents are satisfied with Council's performance. Among the key performance measures, *Quality of service received* has the highest percentage of satisfied residents.

Key performance measures



- Q15. Now taking everything we've talked about into consideration - reputation, services provided and value for money, how satisfied are you with the overall performance of Northland Regional Council? Excludes 'don't know' n=384; Self-selected n=309
- CC22. Considering everything, the contact you had, the ease of getting information, the responsiveness of the Council and the outcome you got, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of the service you received? Excludes 'don't know' n=94; Self-selected n=100
- Q6. Given everything you know about the organisation, how would you rate the Council for its overall reputation? Excludes 'don't know' n=373; Self-selected n=302
- Q14. Considering all the services and facilities that the Northland Regional Council provides, overall how satisfied are you that you receive good value for the money you spend in rates and other fees? Excludes 'don't know' n=355; Self-selected n=287
- Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Excludes 'don't know' n=378; Self-selected n=308
- Total sample 2018 n=520; 2019 n=439; Self-selected n=327

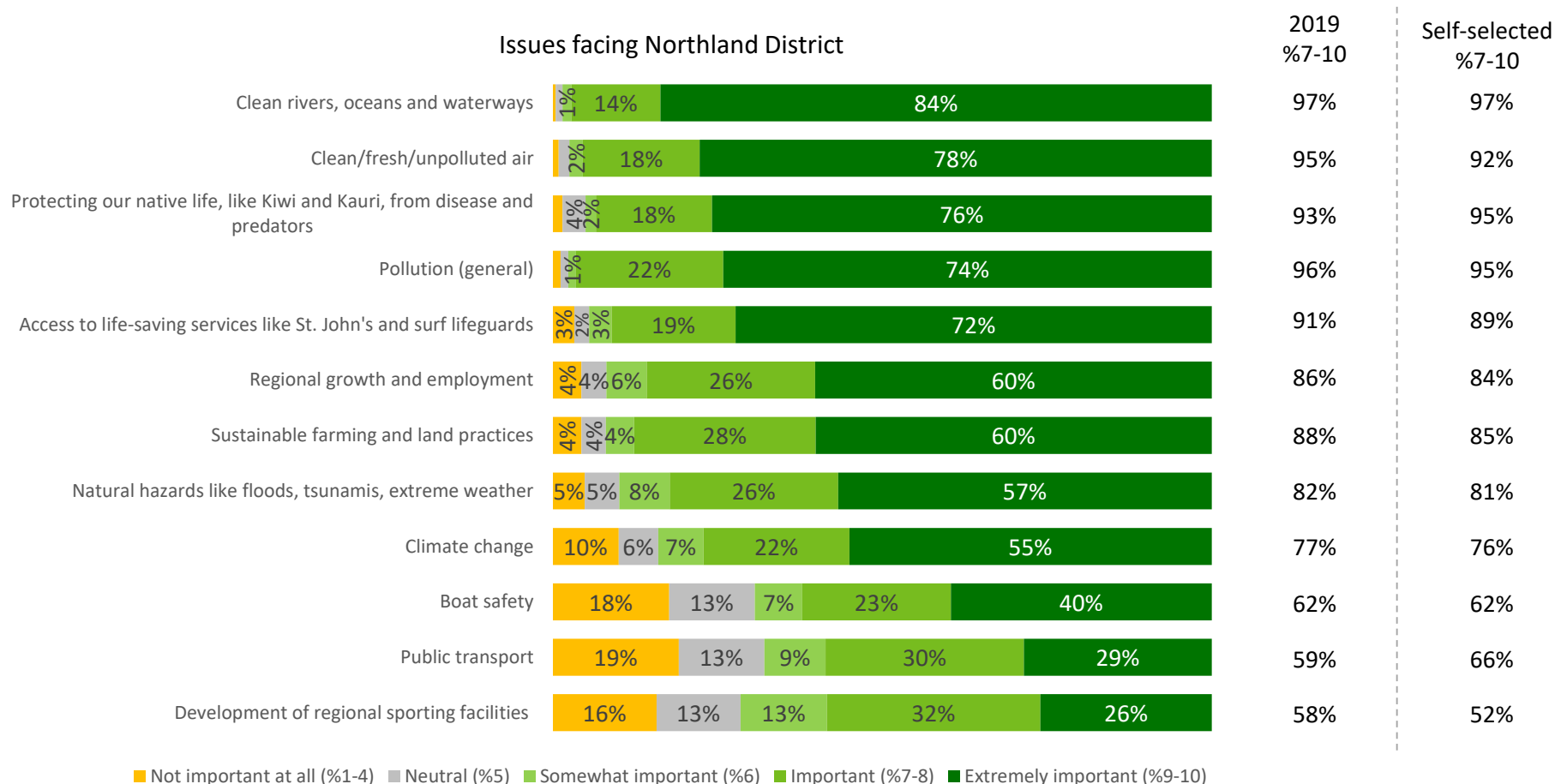


Awareness, Perceptions and Associations



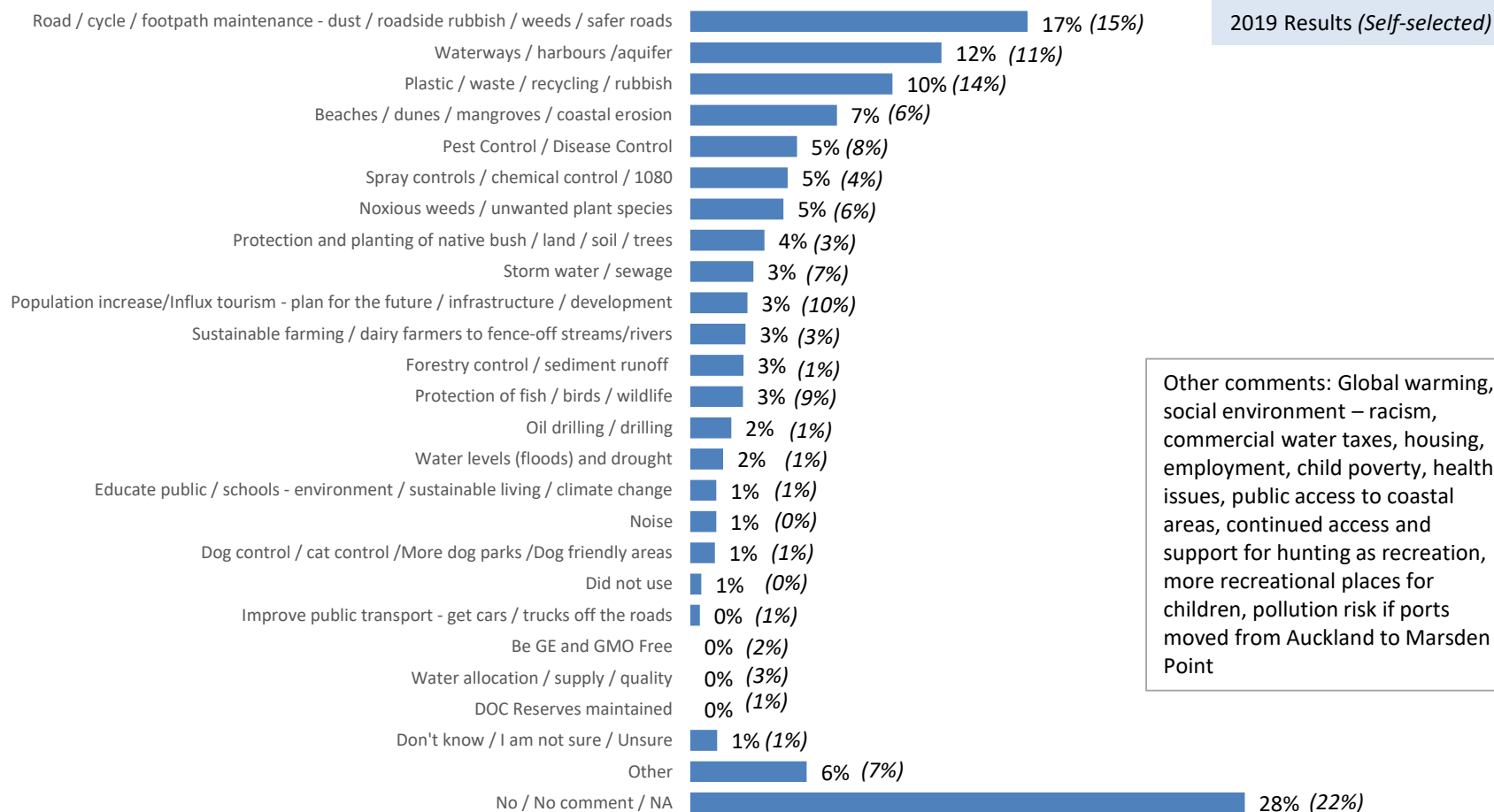
The most important issues facing Northland include maintaining or having *Clean rivers, oceans and waterways*, having *Clean/fresh/unpolluted air* and *Protecting native life like Kiwi and Kauri from disease and predators*.

Important issues facing Northland



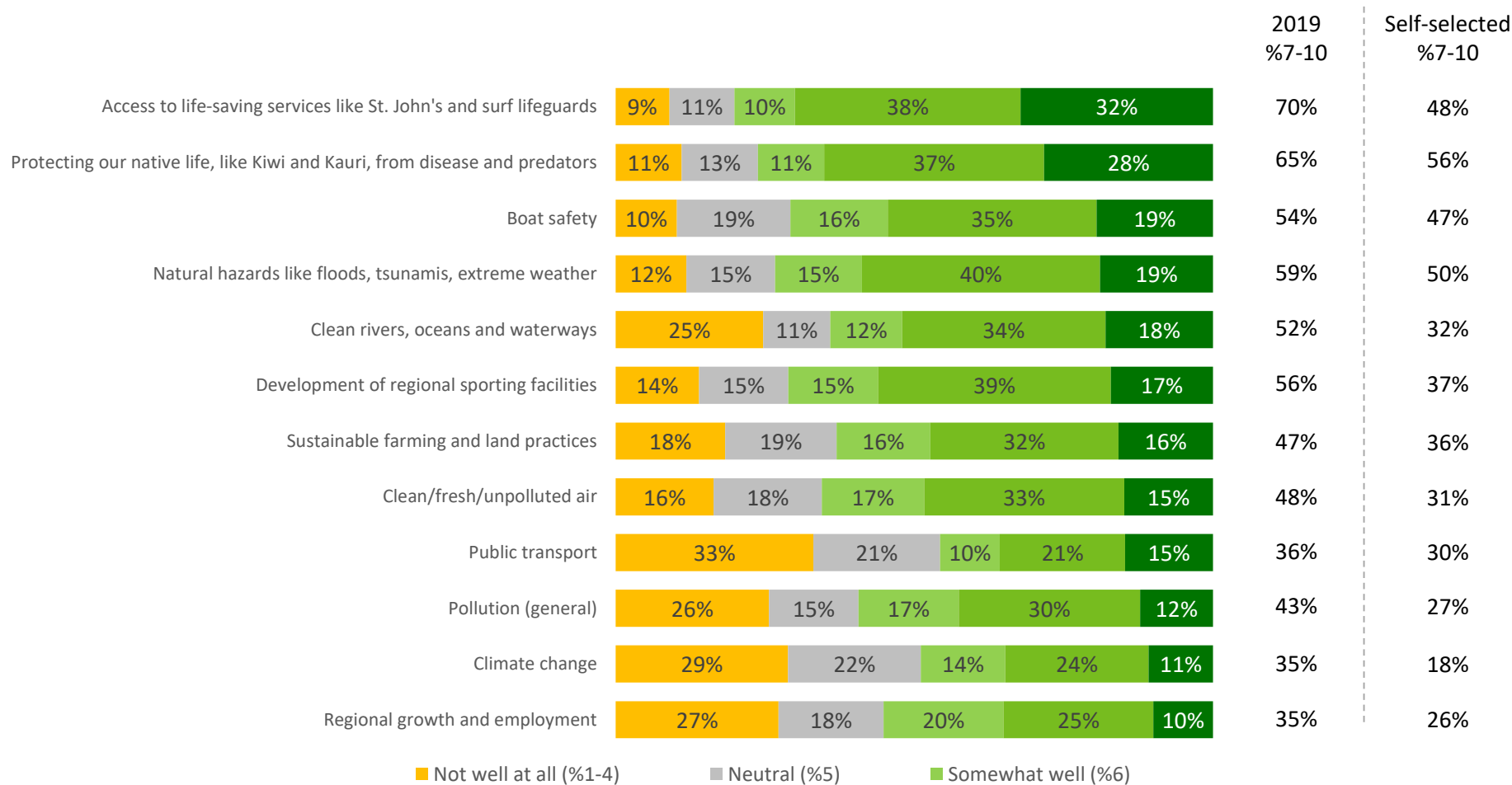
The other environmental issues facing Northland that residents feel important include *Road safety and maintenance, Plastic/waste/recycling/rubbish disposal management and Waterways/harbours/aquifer.*

Other important environmental issues facing Northland



On the issue of *Access to life-saving services* and *Protecting native life, like Kiwi and Kauri, from disease and predators*, over three in five residents think that the Council is responding well. Whereas, on the issue of *Climate change* and *Regional growth and development*, about three in ten residents think that the Council is not responding well at all.

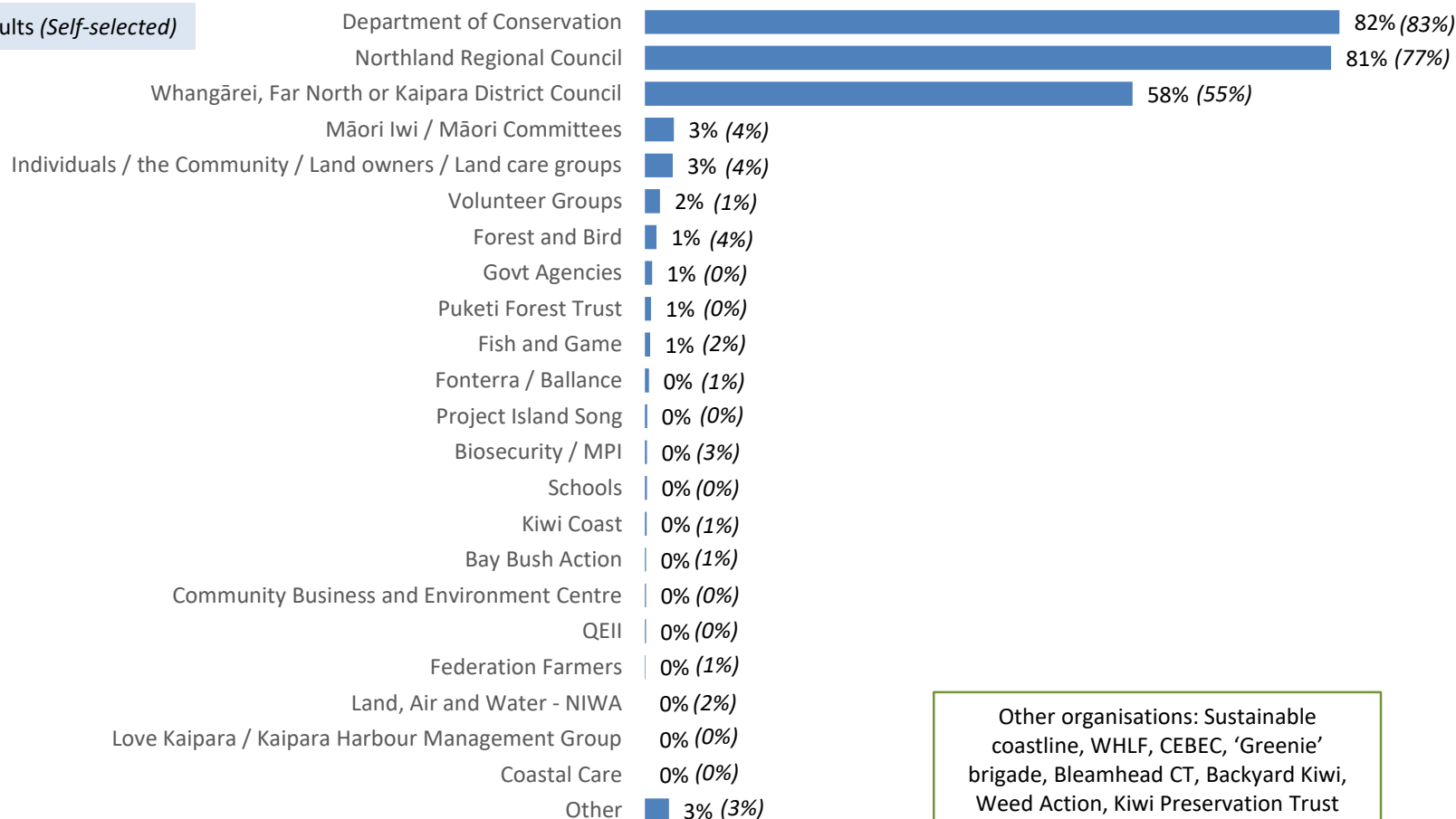
How Northland Regional Council is responding to issues



The *Department of Conservation* is the top organisation that comes to mind about the management of the Northland environment. Other organisations that come to mind are the *Northland Regional Council*, *Whangarei, Far North or Kaipara District Council* and *Individuals/the Community/Land owners/Land care groups*.

Organisations that come to mind about the management of the Northland environment

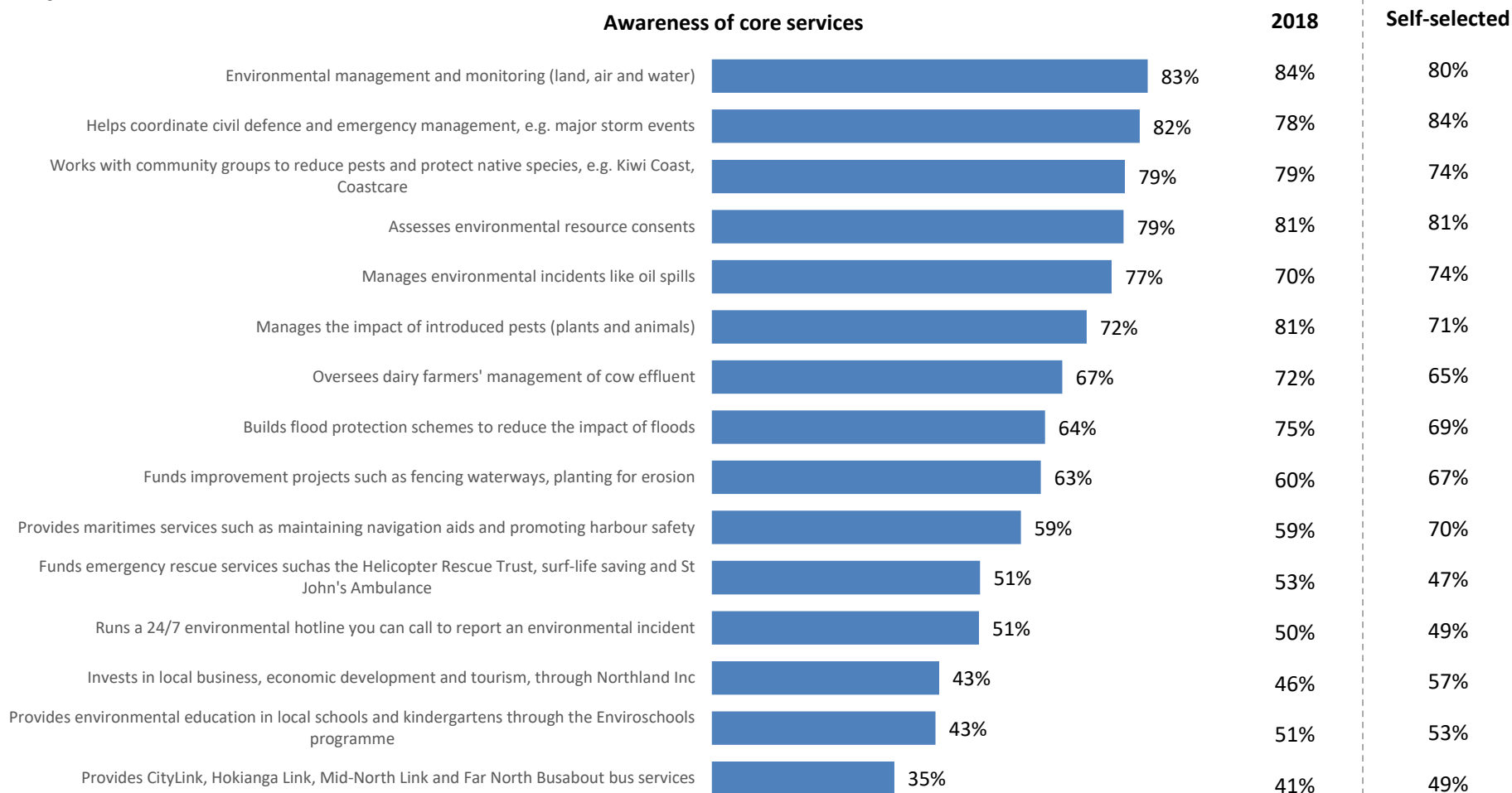
2019 Results (Self-selected)



Other organisations: Sustainable coastline, WHLF, CEBEC, 'Greenie' brigade, Bleamhead CT, Backyard Kiwi, Weed Action, Kiwi Preservation Trust

Residents are mostly aware that Council performs *Environmental management and monitoring (land, air and water)*, *Helps coordinate civil defence and emergency management*, and *Works with community groups to reduce pests and protect native species*.

Proportion of residents aware of core services

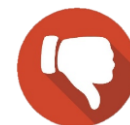


The top positive attributes associated with Northland Regional Council are *approachable*, *helpful* and *competent*. On the other hand, the most common negative attributes associated with the Council are *complicated*, *communicates poorly* and *distant*.

Attributes associated with Northland Regional Council



Positive attributes



Negative attributes

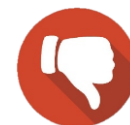


Among self-selected respondents, the top positive attributes associated with Northland Regional Council are *approachable*, *helpful* and *professional* whereas, the most common negative attributes associated with the Council are *complicated*, *communicates poorly* and *old-fashioned*.

Attributes associated with Northland Regional Council – Self-selected



Positive attributes

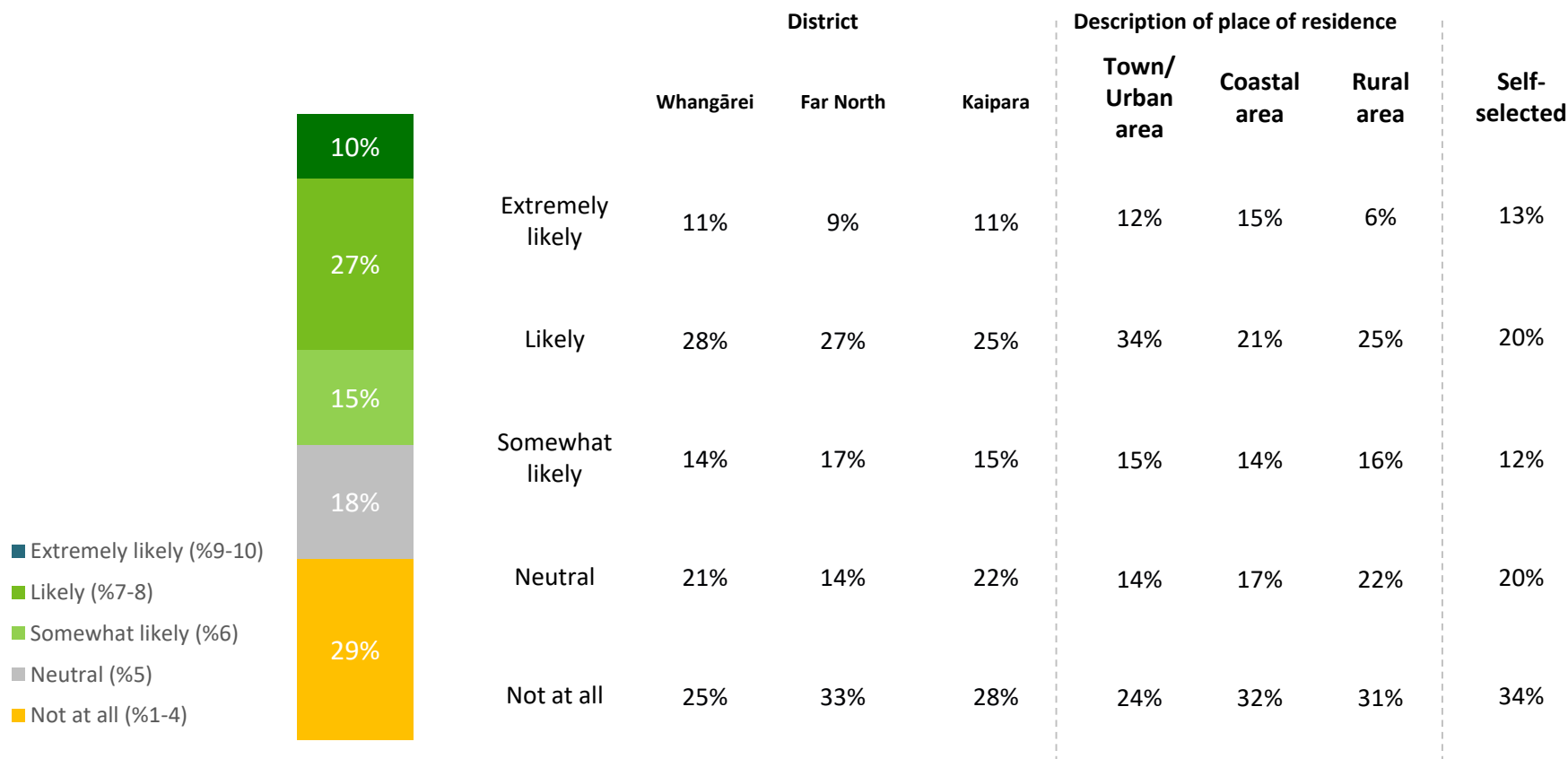


Negative attributes



The proportion of residents in *Whangārei* who are *likely to extremely likely to talk favourably about Northland Regional Council* is similar to that in *Kaipara*. At the same time, the proportion of residents who are not at all to talk favourably about the Council is almost identical for the *Coastal* and *Rural* areas.

Likelihood to talk favourably about Northland Regional Council





Communication, Community Involvement and Engagement

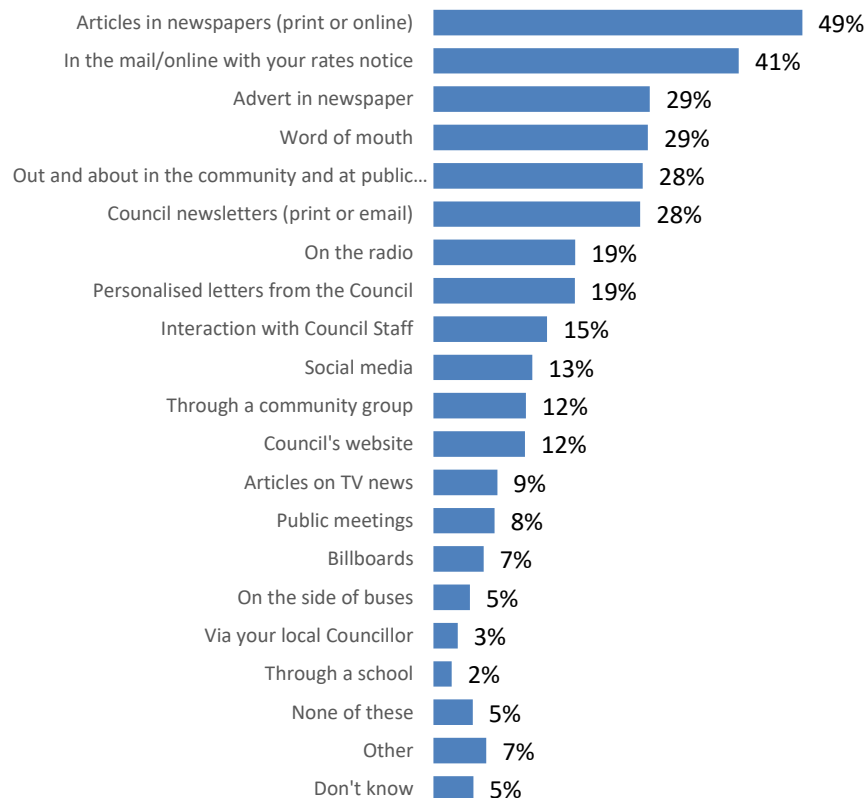


Brand awareness is high. Nearly all residents (95%) have *seen or heard about Northland Regional Council*.

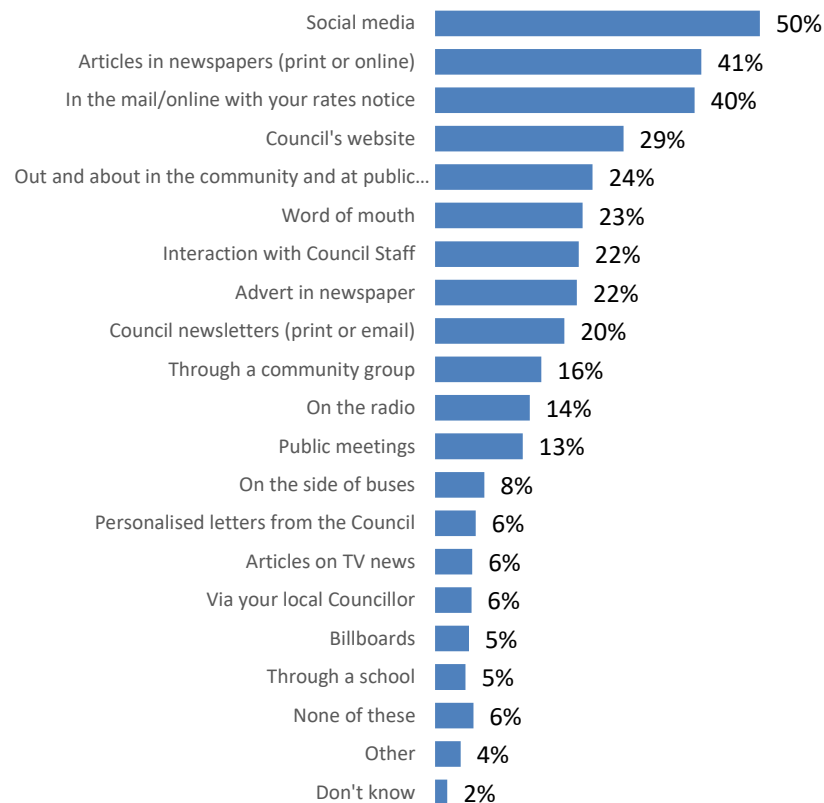
Sourcing information about Northland Regional Council

Where residents have seen or heard about Council

2019 Results



Self-selected

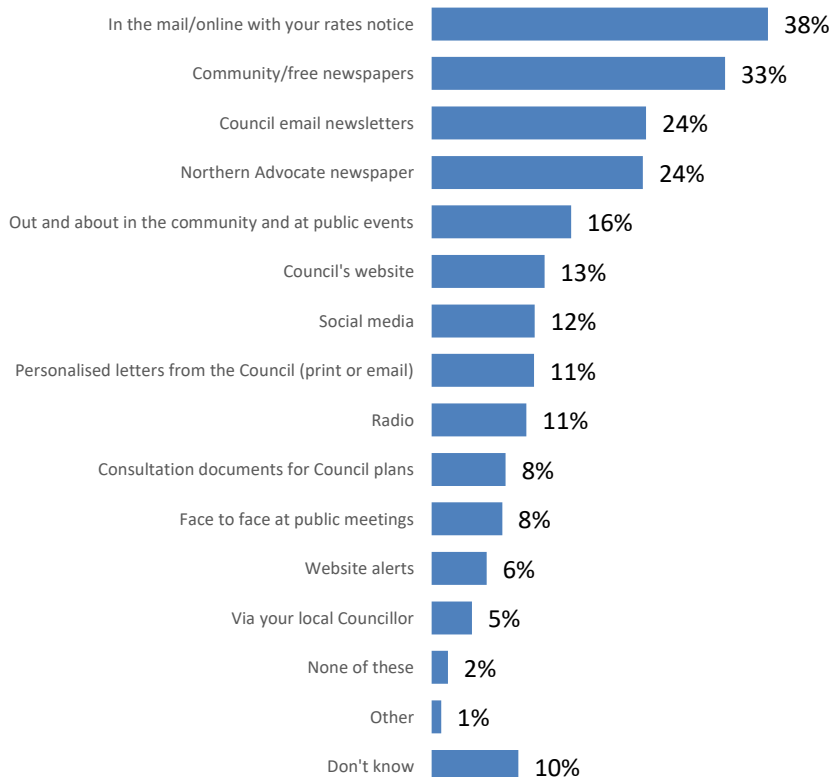


The most *preferred ways* of residents to *keep up-to-date with what the Council is doing* are by way of *Mail/online with the rates notice* and through *Community/free newspapers*. For self-selected respondents, the most *preferred ways to keep up-to-date with what the Council is doing* are through *Social media*, followed by *Council email newsletters*.

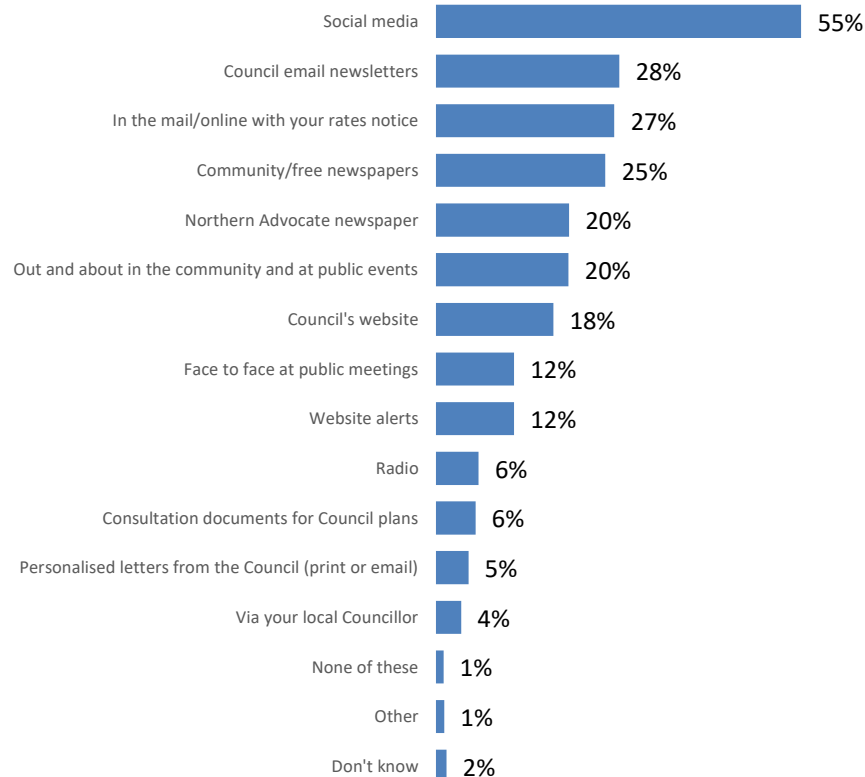
Sourcing information about Northland Regional Council

Preferred ways to keep up-to-date with what Council is doing

2019 Results

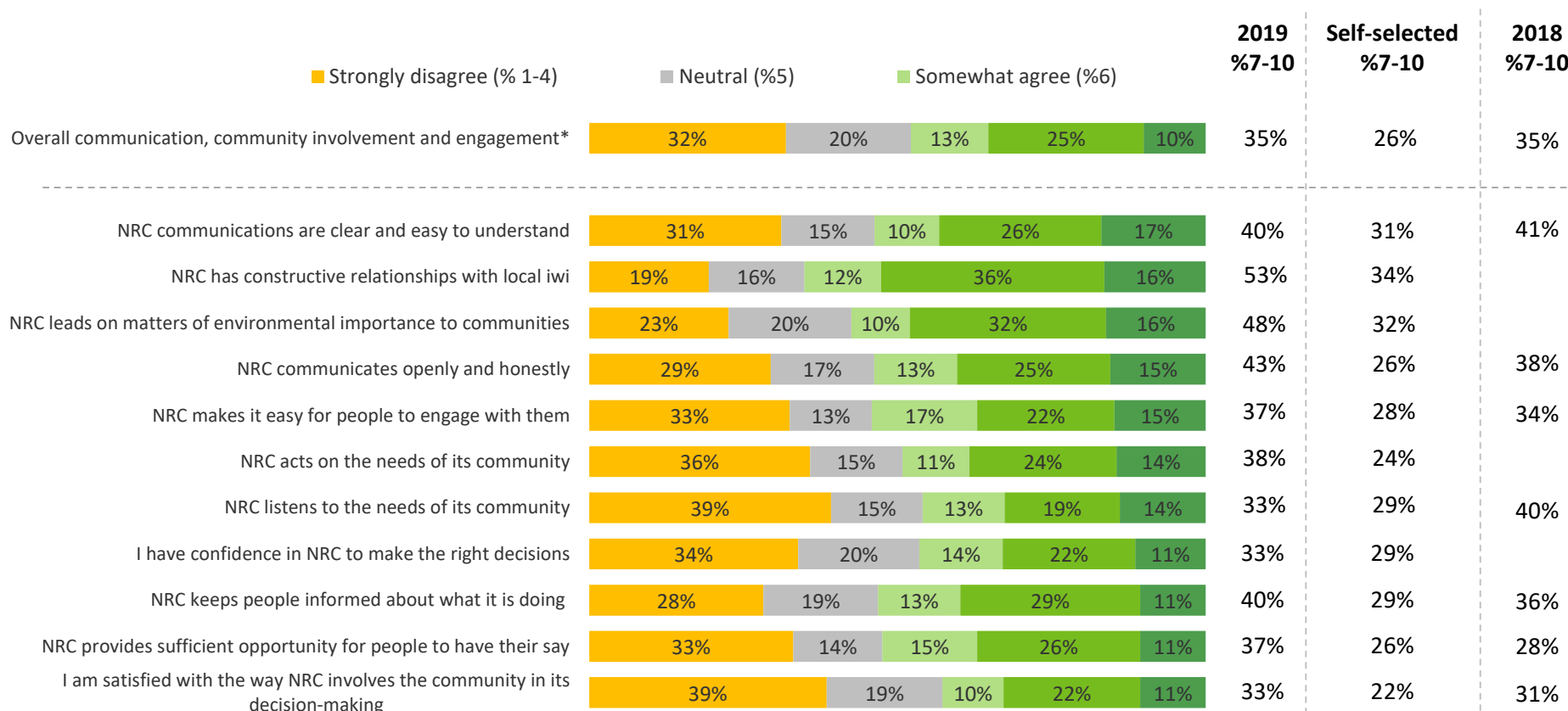


Self-selected



Over one in three residents are satisfied with the Council's *Overall communication, community involvement and engagement* services and activities. More than half of the residents are satisfied that the *Council has constructive relationships with local iwi*.

How well Northland Regional Council interacts and engages with people



* Note - Scale is Very dissatisfied to Very satisfied for Overall communication, community involvement and engagement

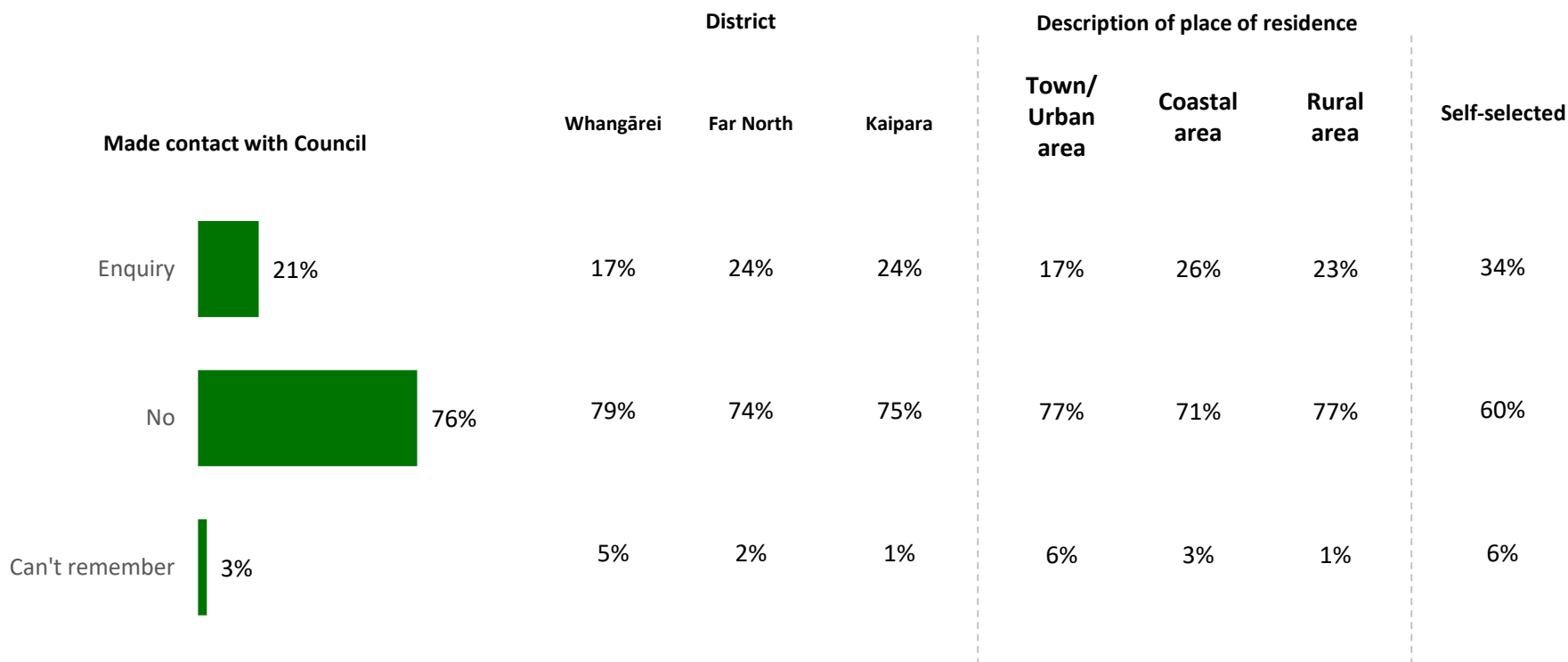


Contact with Council



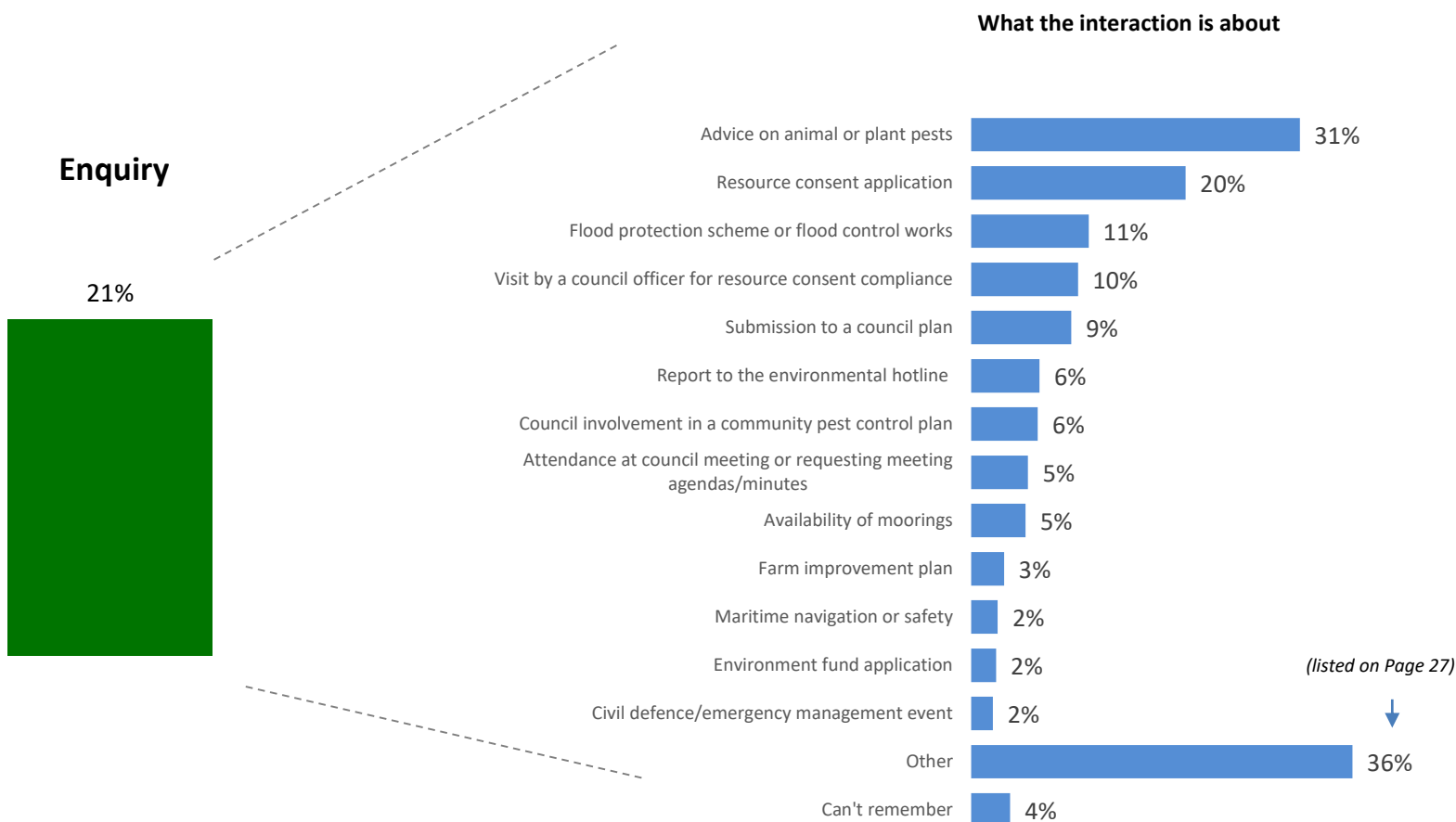
Not many residents have made contact with Council. Among those who made contact, *Far North* and *Kaipara* residents and those living in a *Coastal area* have made the most number of *Enquiries*.

Contact with council



Advice on animal/plant pests and Resource consent applications are the main reasons for contact with Council for an enquiry.

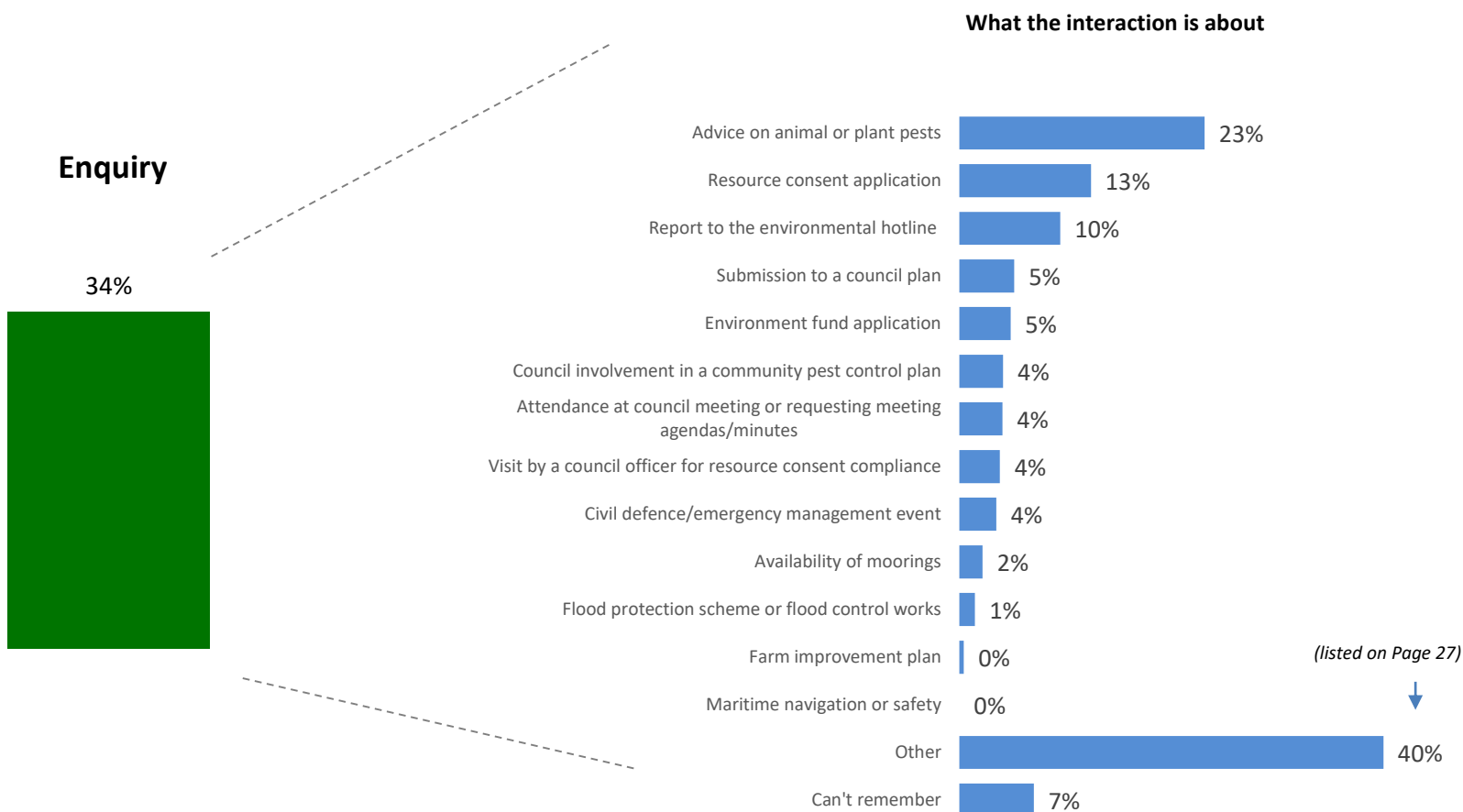
Contact with council



1. CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months?
2. CC11a. Can you tell us what that interaction was about? n=96
3. Enquiry includes request for service and complaint.

Among self-selected respondents who had contact with Council, *Advice on animal/plant pests* and *Resource consent applications* are the top reasons for making an enquiry.

Contact with council – Self-selected



1. CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months?
2. CC11a. Can you tell us what that interaction was about? n=103
3. Enquiry includes request for service and complaint.

A verbatim list of 'Other' reasons for contacting the Council follows:

Reasons for contact that are potentially within scope of work of Council
Road subsidising / road adoption
Change of address
Farm animals on reserve complaint
Conservation covenants
Land purchase
Public transport / transport subsidies
Advice on soil content
Incorrect letters in mail
Pollution
Ballast rocks
Unlawful activity / illegal dumping
Complaint / issue with Councillors / Staff
Damage caused by DOC
Complaint / issue with Councillors / Staff
Protection of coastal areas / beaches / waterways

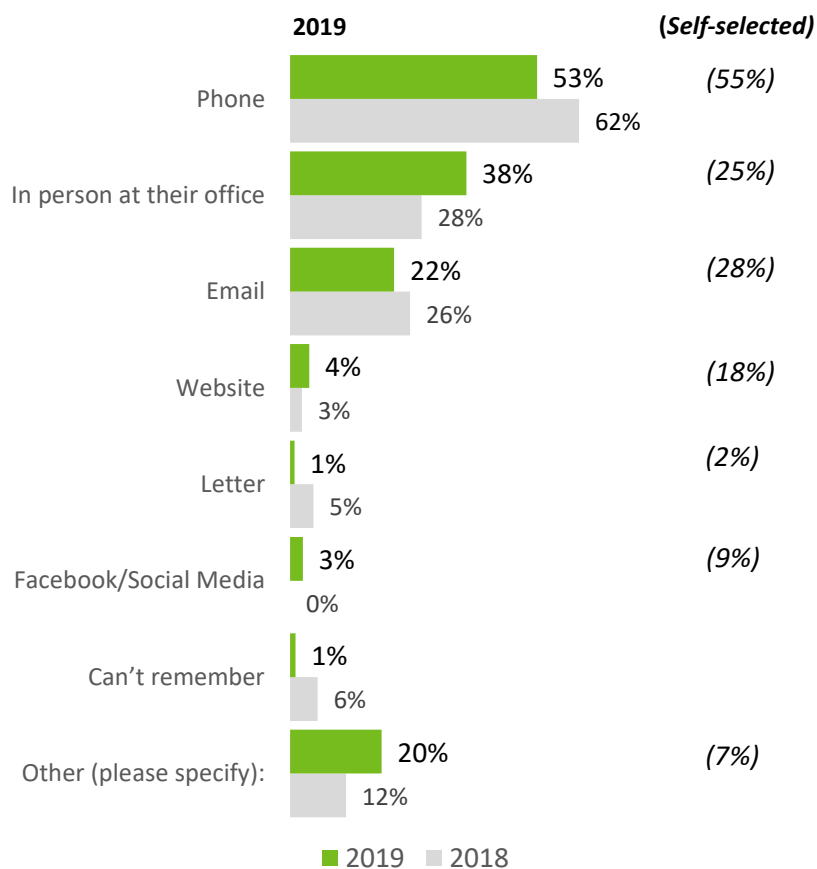
Comments not within scope of work of Council
Roading / reduction of speed limits / road safety / road maintenance
Library / sports clubs / facilities / schools
Unlawful activity / illegal dumping
Footpaths / cycleways
Carparking / parking passes / parking tickets
Recycle bin request / rubbish pickups
Dog registration / permits
Rates payments / rates rebates / where rates are spent
Tree complaint / query
Pollution / sewerage / broken pipes
Tap water quality issues
Noise control

1. CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months?
2. CC11a. Can you tell us what that interaction was about?
3. Total sample n=439; Self-selected n=327
4. The comments include responses from the postal and online survey as well as the survey via the public link.

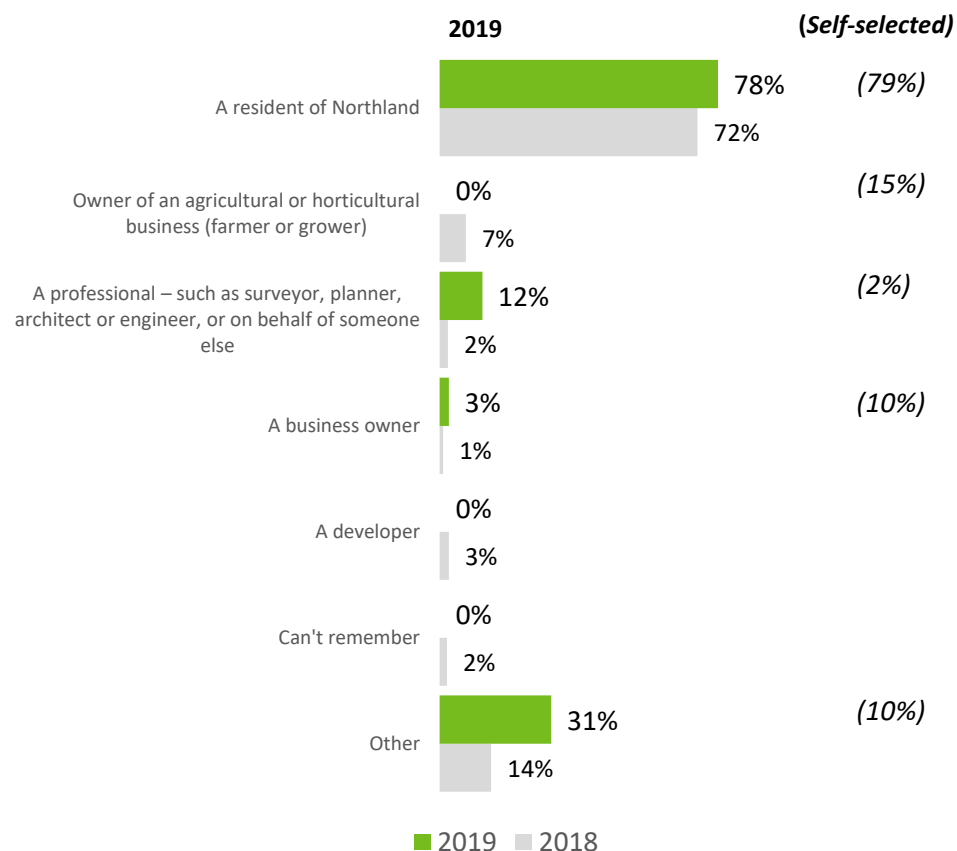
In person contact increased considerably, while a decline in contact by means of *Phone* is noted. Most self-selected respondents had contact with Council via *Phone*, followed by contact through *Email* and *In person at the Council's office*.

Most recent enquiry, request or complaint

Means by which the contact was made



In what capacity the enquiry, request or complaint was made



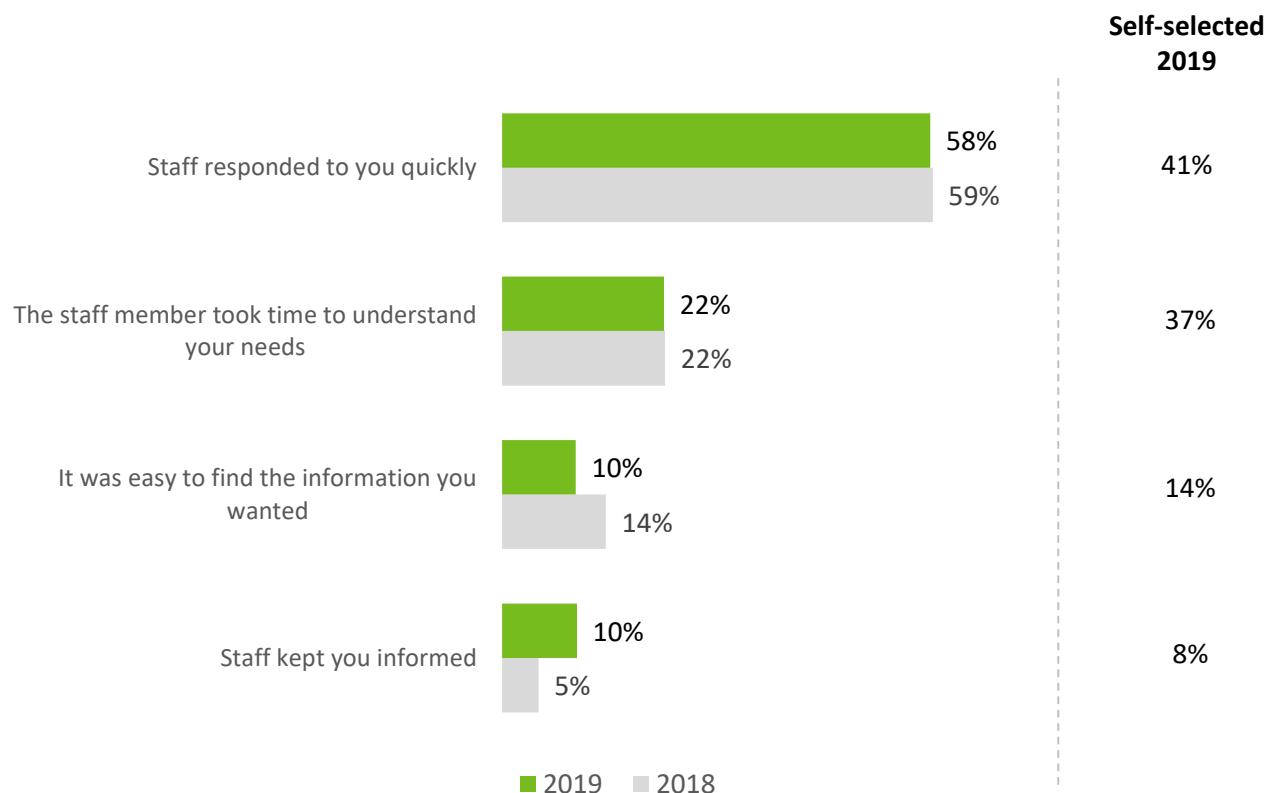
Around three in five residents who had recent experience with Council are satisfied with Council *Staff member taking time to understand their needs* (59%) and *responding to them quickly* (63%).

Recent experience with Northland Regional Council



Quick response remains as the most important aspect regarding ease of getting information and staff responsiveness among residents, followed by *Staff member taking time to understand their needs*.

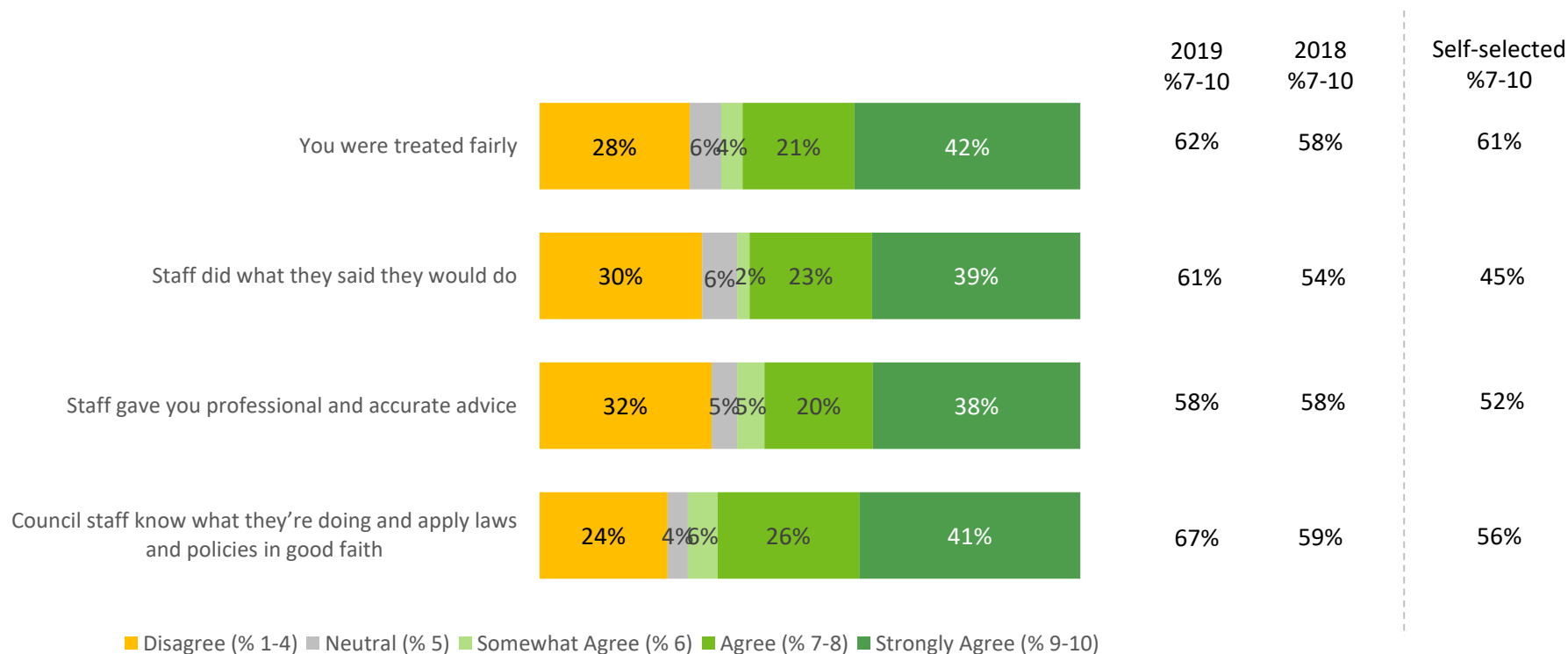
Ranking of importance regarding ease of getting information and staff responsiveness



1. CC15. Still thinking about these same aspects, how important are they to you? Please rank the statements from 1 to 4 in terms of importance, 1 being the most important aspect, 2 as the second most important, 3 as the third most important and 4 being the least important to you.
2. Sample: 2019 n=65; 2018 n=102; Self-selected n=118

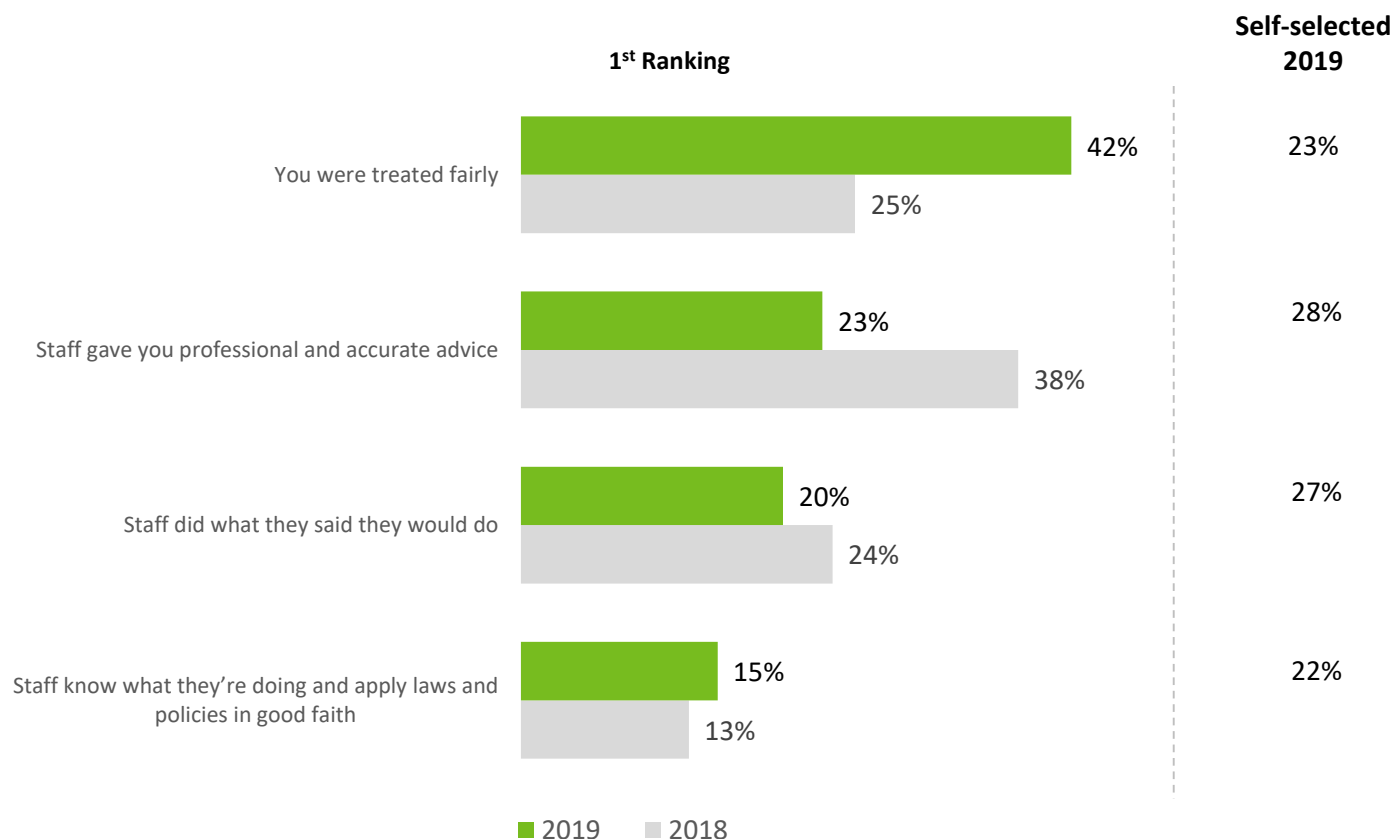
More than three in five residents agree that *Council staff know what they're doing and apply laws and policies in good faith, that they did what they said they would do and that they (residents) were treated fairly.*

Recent experience with Northland Regional Council – Contact with Council and staff interaction



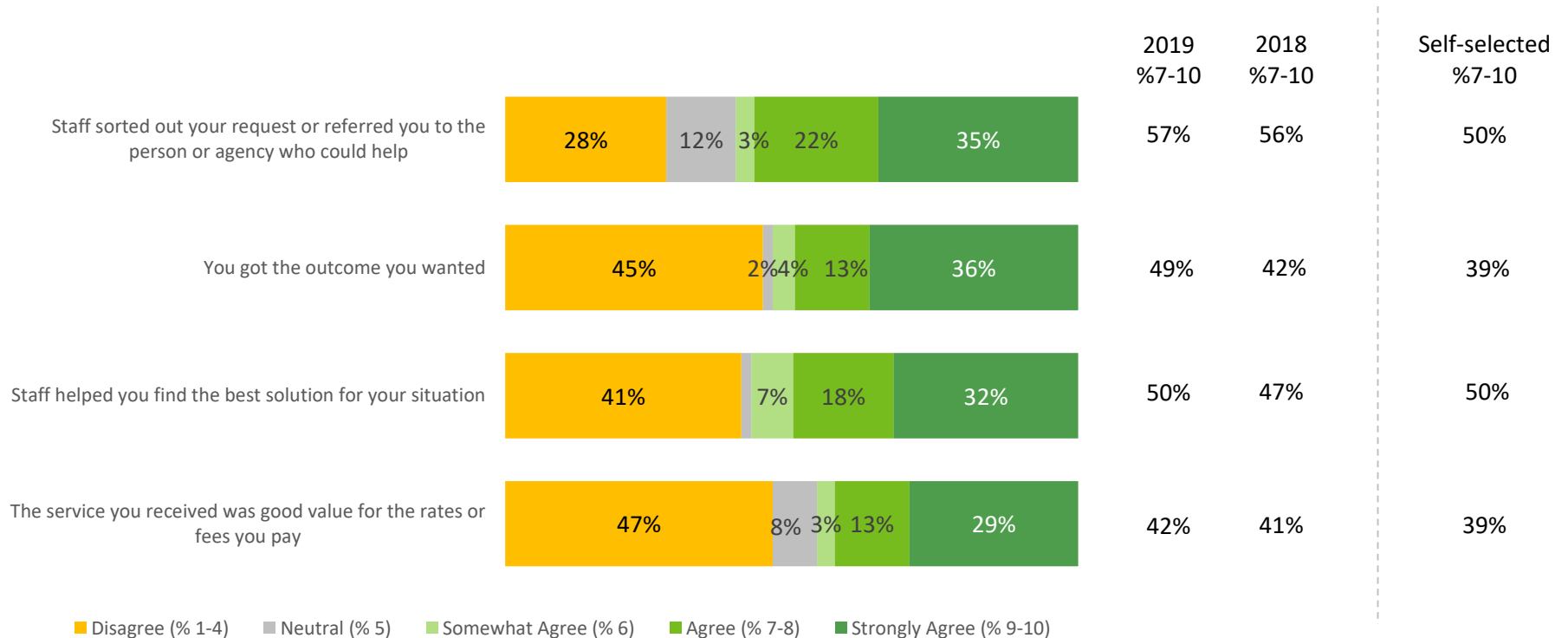
Fair treatment was considered the most important aspect regarding Contact with Council and staff interaction while for self-selected respondents, *Professional and accurate advice* is the most important.

Ranking of importance regarding Contact with Council and staff interaction



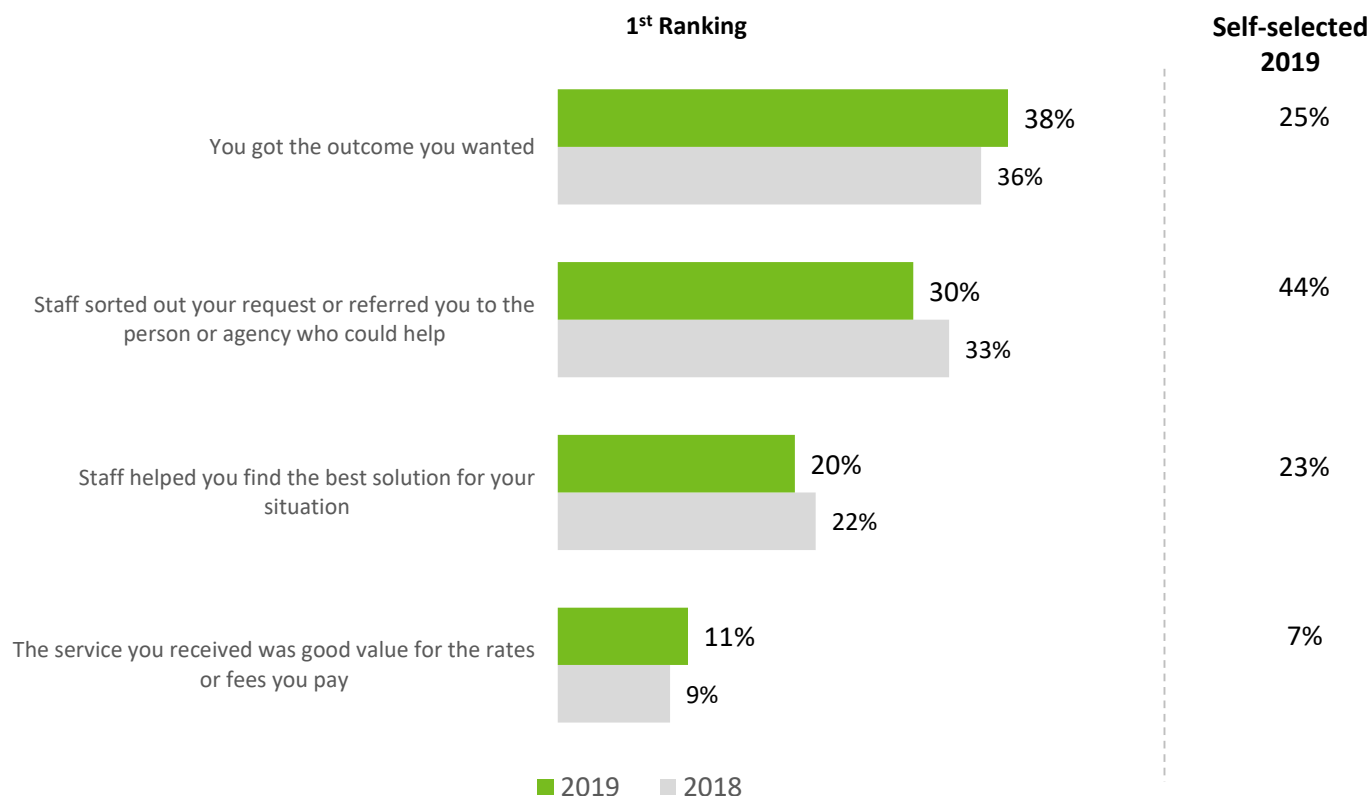
Overall, favourable perceptions about recent experience with Council increased. A large proportion of enquirers agree that *Council Staff sorted out their requests and referred them to the person and/or agency who could help* (57%).

Recent experience with Northland Regional Council - Outcome



The importance of *Sorting out requests or referring residents to the person or agency who could help them* and *Helping them find the best solution for their situation* have decreased while the rankings of importance of *Achieving the desired outcome* and *Getting good value for the rates paid for* have increased.

Ranking of importance regarding the outcome of a recent interaction



More than half of enquirers are satisfied with the *Overall quality of service received*. Favourable perceptions around *Quality of service expected* has declined since 2018.

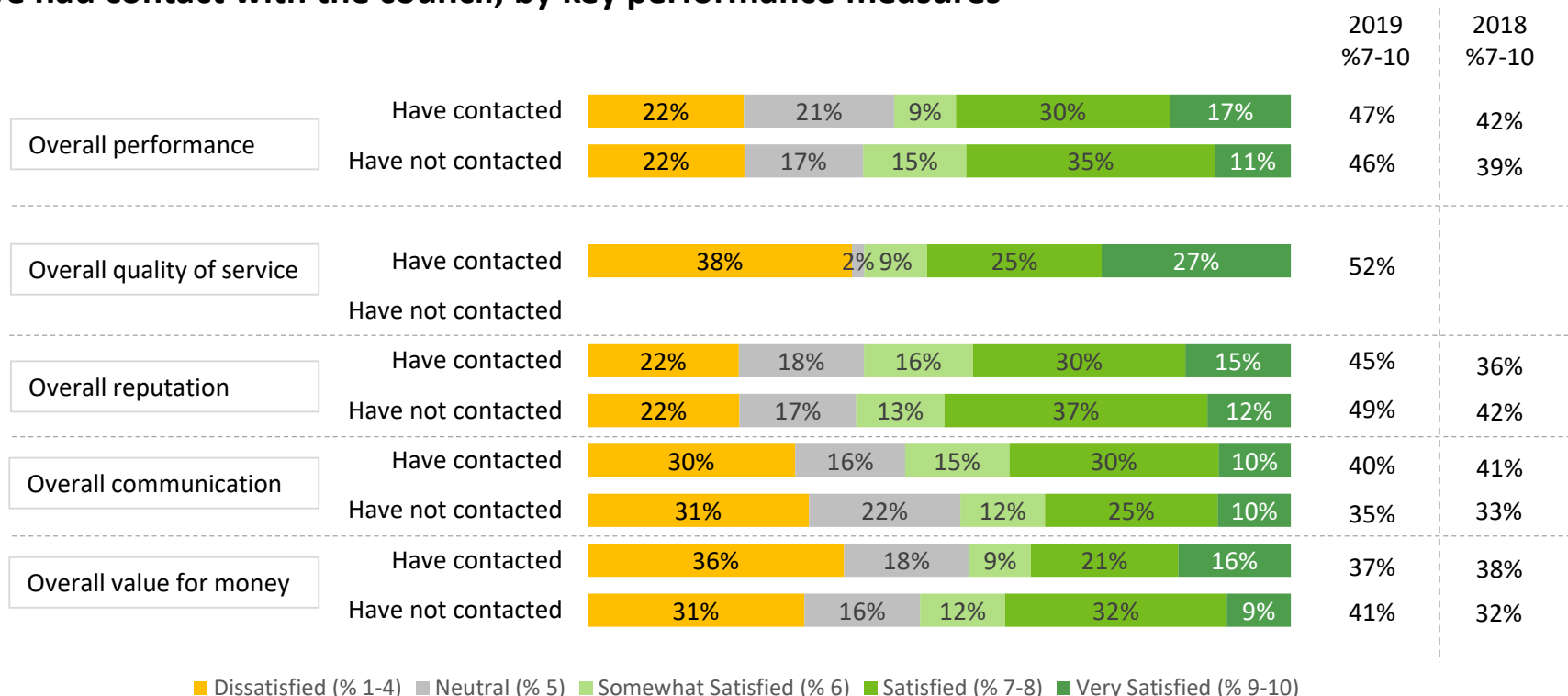
Quality of service received compared to service expectation



- CC22. Using a slightly different scale where 1 is 'very dissatisfied' and 10 is 'very satisfied' and considering everything; the contact you had, the ease of getting information, the responsiveness of the council and the outcome you got, how satisfied are you with...? n=94; Self-selected n=100
- CC20. Using a 1-10 scale where 1 is 'very poor service' and 10 is 'excellent service' how would you rate the quality of service that you expected before dealing with Northland Regional Council? n=88; Self-selected n=98
- CC21. And on a 1-10 scale where 1 is 'much worse than expected' and 10 is 'much better than expected, thinking back how did the service you got compare to what you had expected? n=92; Self-selected n=101
- Sample 2019 n=94, 2018: n=102; Self-selected n=101

Residents who have not contacted Council are more likely to be satisfied with *Overall Value for money* and *Reputation* compared to those who have made contact.

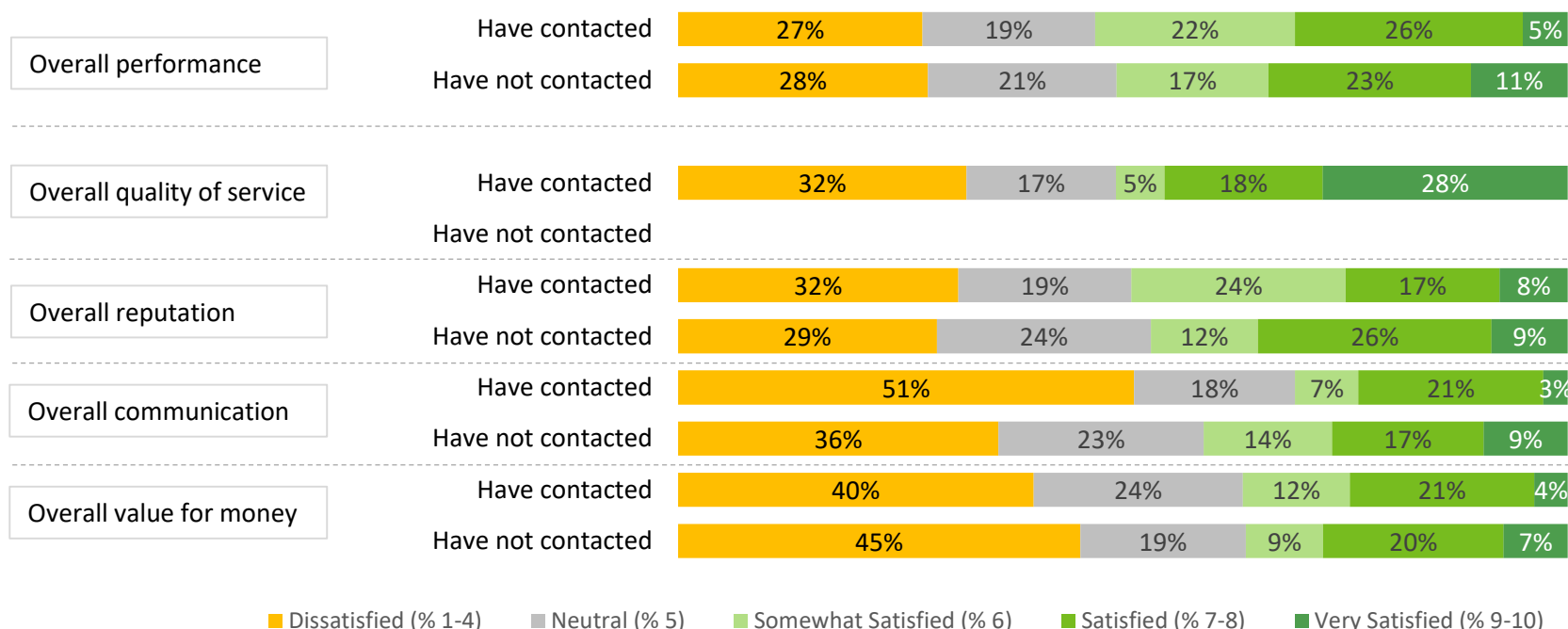
Have had contact with the council; by key performance measures



- CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months? Results exclude 'don't know'
- CC22. Considering everything, the contact you had, the ease of getting information, the responsiveness of the Council and the outcome you got, how satisfied are you with? Made contact n=94; Have not made contact n=0
- Q15. Now taking everything we've talked about into consideration - reputation, services provided and value for money, how satisfied are you with the overall performance of Northland Regional Council? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=92; Have not made contact=283
- Q6. Given everything you know about the organization, how would you rate Northland Regional Council for its overall reputation? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=90; Have not made contact=274
- Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=91; Have not made contact=277
- Q14. Considering all the services and facilities that the Northland Regional Council provides, overall how satisfied are you that you receive good value for the money you spend in rates and other fees? Base: n=182 pay rates and have contacted council, n=433 pay rates and have not contacted council. Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=88; Have not made contact=257

Self-selected residents who have contacted Council are less likely to be satisfied with *Overall communication*, *Value for money* and *Reputation* compared to those who have not made contact.

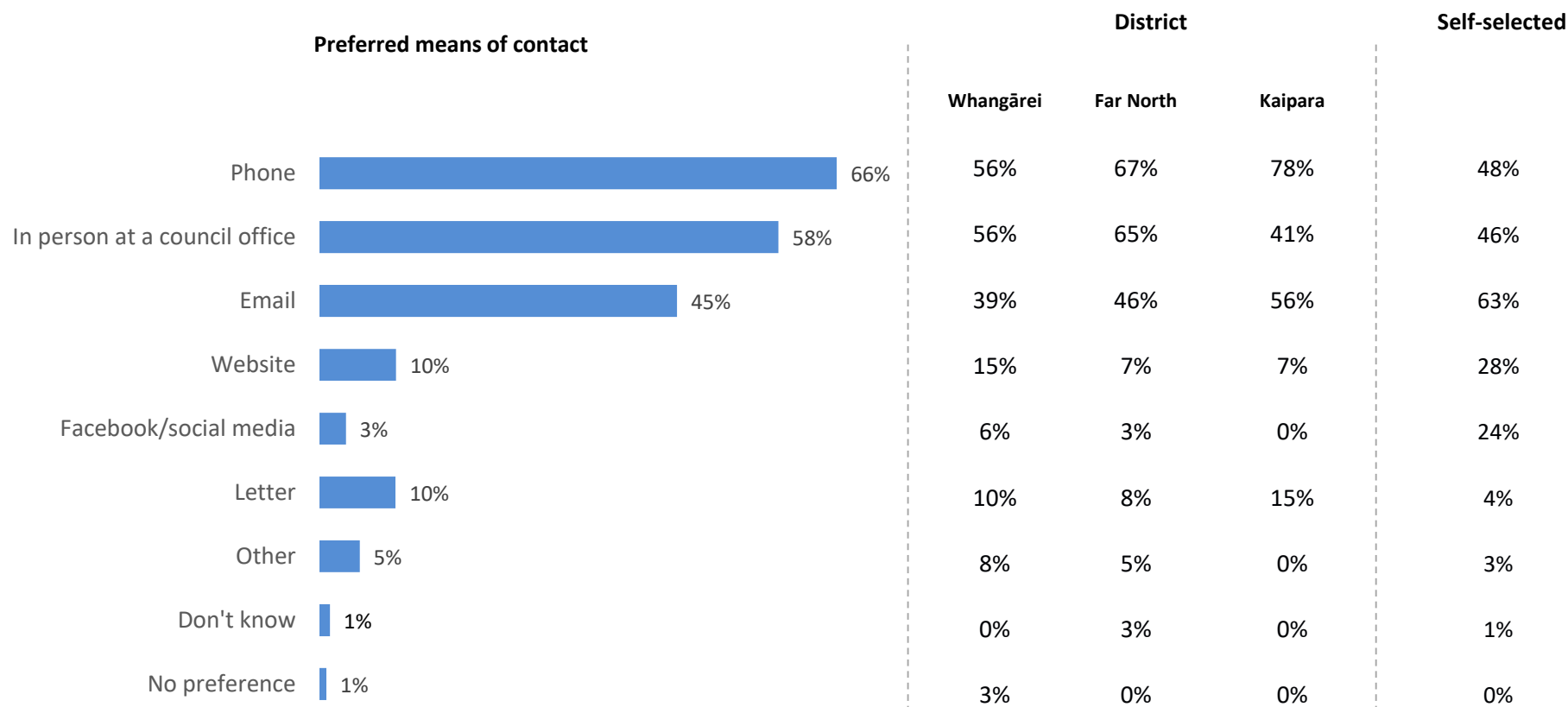
Have had contact with the council; by key performance measures – Self-selected



1. CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months? Results exclude 'don't know'
2. CC22. Considering everything, the contact you had, the ease of getting information, the responsiveness of the Council and the outcome you got, how satisfied are you with? Made contact n=100; Have not made contact n=0
3. Q15. Now taking everything we've talked about into consideration - reputation, services provided and value for money, how satisfied are you with the overall performance of Northland Regional Council? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=100; Have not made contact=191
4. Q6. Given everything you know about the organization, how would you rate Northland Regional Council for its overall reputation? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=100; Have not made contact=184
5. Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=101; Have not made contact=190
6. Q14. Considering all the services and facilities that the Northland Regional Council provides, overall how satisfied are you that you receive good value for the money you spend in rates and other fees? Base: n=182 pay rates and have contacted council, n=433 pay rates and have not contacted council. Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=94; Have not made contact=176

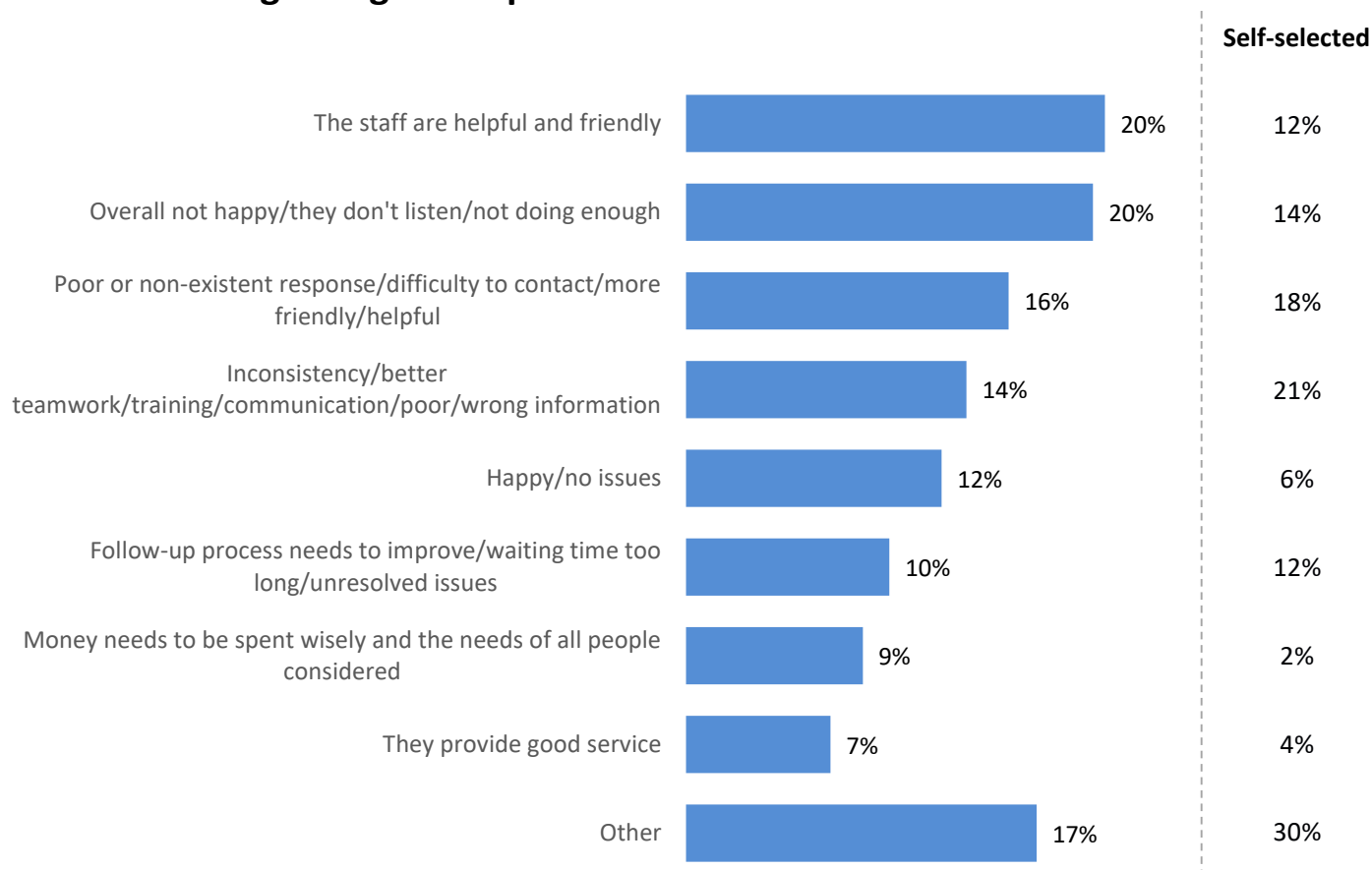
The most *preferred means of contact* for inward enquiries is via *Phone*, followed by *In person at a Council office*. More than half of *Kaipara* residents prefer *Email* as a way to contact Council. Similarly, self-selected residents mostly prefer *Email* as a means to contact Council.

Preferred ways to contact Northland Regional Council in the future



Key themes that emerged from verbatim comments regarding the experience with Council:

Other comments regarding the experience with Council



Other comments: Animal control is not there; Northland Regional Council has very little to do with our community of Tinopai other than the amazing work of the Enviro schools coordinators; Senior decision-makers are arrogant, disrespectful and ignorant of the law.

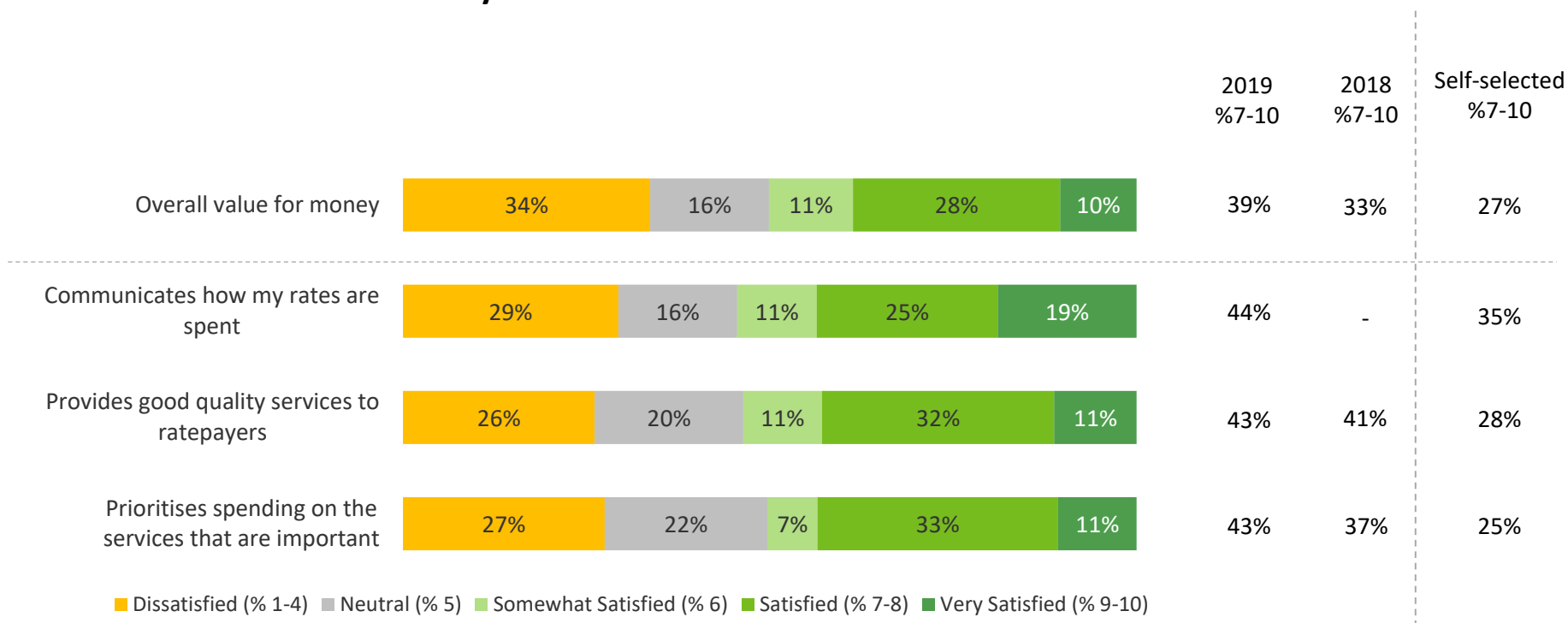


Value for Money



Satisfaction with *Value for money* has increased from the previous year's rating. Satisfaction with *Provision of good quality services to ratepayers* and *Prioritisation of spending on important services* have also increased.

Satisfaction with value for money



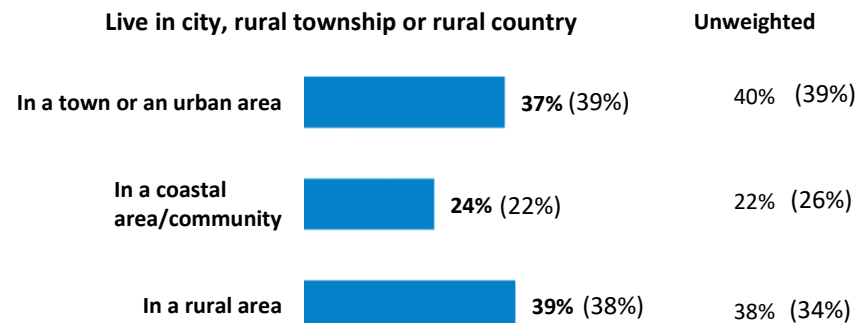
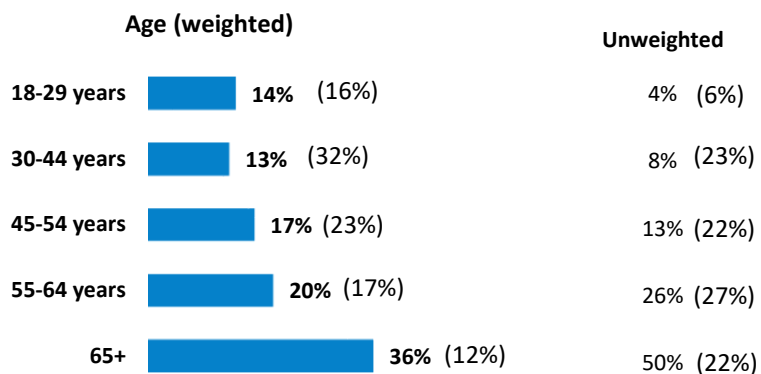
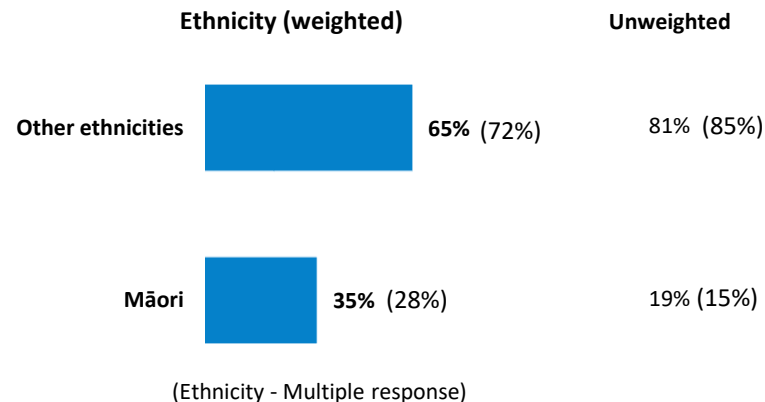
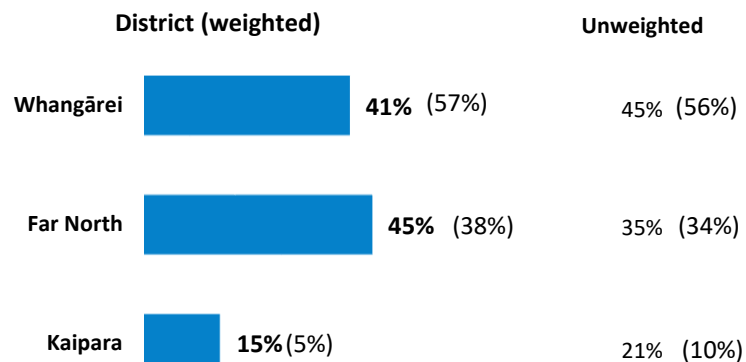
- Q14. Considering all the services and facilities that the Northland Regional Council provides, overall how satisfied are you that you receive good value for the money you spend in rates and other fees? Results exclude 'Don't know' n=355; Self-selected n=287
- Q13. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 10 is 'strongly agree', how much do you agree or disagree that Northland Regional Council...? Results exclude 'Don't know' n=353; Self-selected n=282



Demographic Profile



Demographic profile



Demographic profile

