

# 2020 Residents' Survey - 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 Council.

### The specific objectives are to:

- To provide a robust measure of satisfaction with Council's performance in relation to service delivery
- To determine performance drivers and assist Council to identify the best opportunities to further improve satisfaction, including satisfaction among defined groups within the region and its districts
- To assess changes in satisfaction over time and measure progress towards the Long-Term Plan objectives
- To assess residents' perceptions and awareness of Council's core services as well as the important issues facing the Northland region such as drought and COVID-19 and how Council is responding to these issues

### Method

- Residents from within the Northland Region were randomly selected from the Electoral Roll and 2,500 paper questionnaires were sent out for completion with an optional link to complete the survey online. A reminder postcard was sent to those who had not responded after two weeks. An anonymous link was also provided to the general public for providing feedback.
- The postal and online survey generated a sample of n=362 residents across the Northland region while there were 1,039 responses completed via the public anonymous link.
- The postal and online survey response rate was 14.0%. Responses were received between 25 May and 3 July 2020.
- 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 2018 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 +/-5.15%.

### 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

*Residents' satisfaction with Northland Regional Council* has increased to 62%, with almost half (48%) either satisfied or very satisfied (scoring 7 to 10 out of 10) in 2020. There is also an improvement in perceptions of Council's performance regarding *Overall quality of service* and *Overall reputation* while satisfaction with *Overall value for money* remains at 39% as in 2019.

2

Most residents have indicated that the most important issues facing Northland pertain to maintaining *Clean rivers, oceans and waterways* (96%) and *Clean/fresh/unpolluted air* (94%). In relation to the impacts of *Drought and Covid-19*, more than eight in ten residents (84%) agree that *Council needs to keep investing in protecting the environment* while one in five (20%) think that *Council cannot afford to do environmental protection in the next three years*.

3

Residents' perceptions of Council's performance in responding to issues have improved since 2019. Seven in ten residents (70%) believe that Council has been responding well to the issues of *Access to life-saving services* and *Protection of native life, like Kiwi and Kauri, from disease and predators*. Awareness of Council's core services is high, mostly with regard to *Environmental management and monitoring* (85%), *Working with community groups to reduce pests and protect native species* (82%), and *Coordinating civil defence and emergency management* (80%).

4

Satisfaction with *Overall communication, community involvement and engagement* is slightly better in 2020 than in 2019 (36% vs. 35%). Just under two in ten residents (19%) have had contact with Council in the last 12 months, with more than a quarter seeking *Advice on animal or plant pests* (29%) or having enquiries concerning *Resource consent application* (31%).

5

Council's performance regarding the various attributes of *Value for money* has improved compared with 2019. Around half of the residents are satisfied with Council's *Communication on how rates are spent* (48%) and with Council's *Provision of good quality services to ratepayers* (47%) while a slightly lower proportion is satisfied with Council's *Prioritisation of spending on services that are important* (46%).

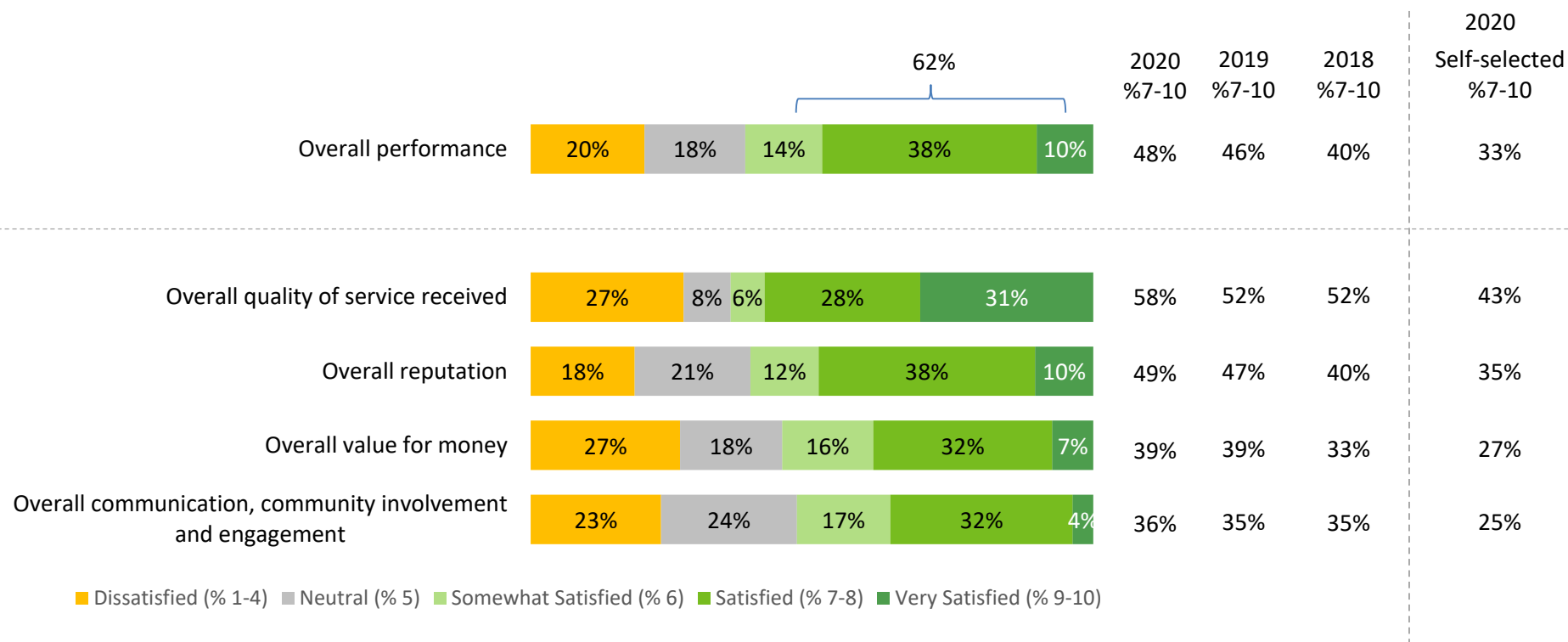




## Key Performance Measures

Perceptions of Northland Regional Council's *Overall performance* has slightly improved from 46% satisfied residents (scoring 7 to 10 out of 10) in 2019 to 48% in 2020

## 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=321 Self-selected n=991
- 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=72; Self-selected n=288
- Q6. Given everything you know about the organisation, how would you rate the Council for its overall reputation? Excludes 'don't know' n=316; Self-selected n=982
- 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=304; Self-selected n=918
- Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Excludes 'don't know' n=313; Self-selected n=972
- Total sample 2018 n=520; 2019 n=439; 2020 n=362



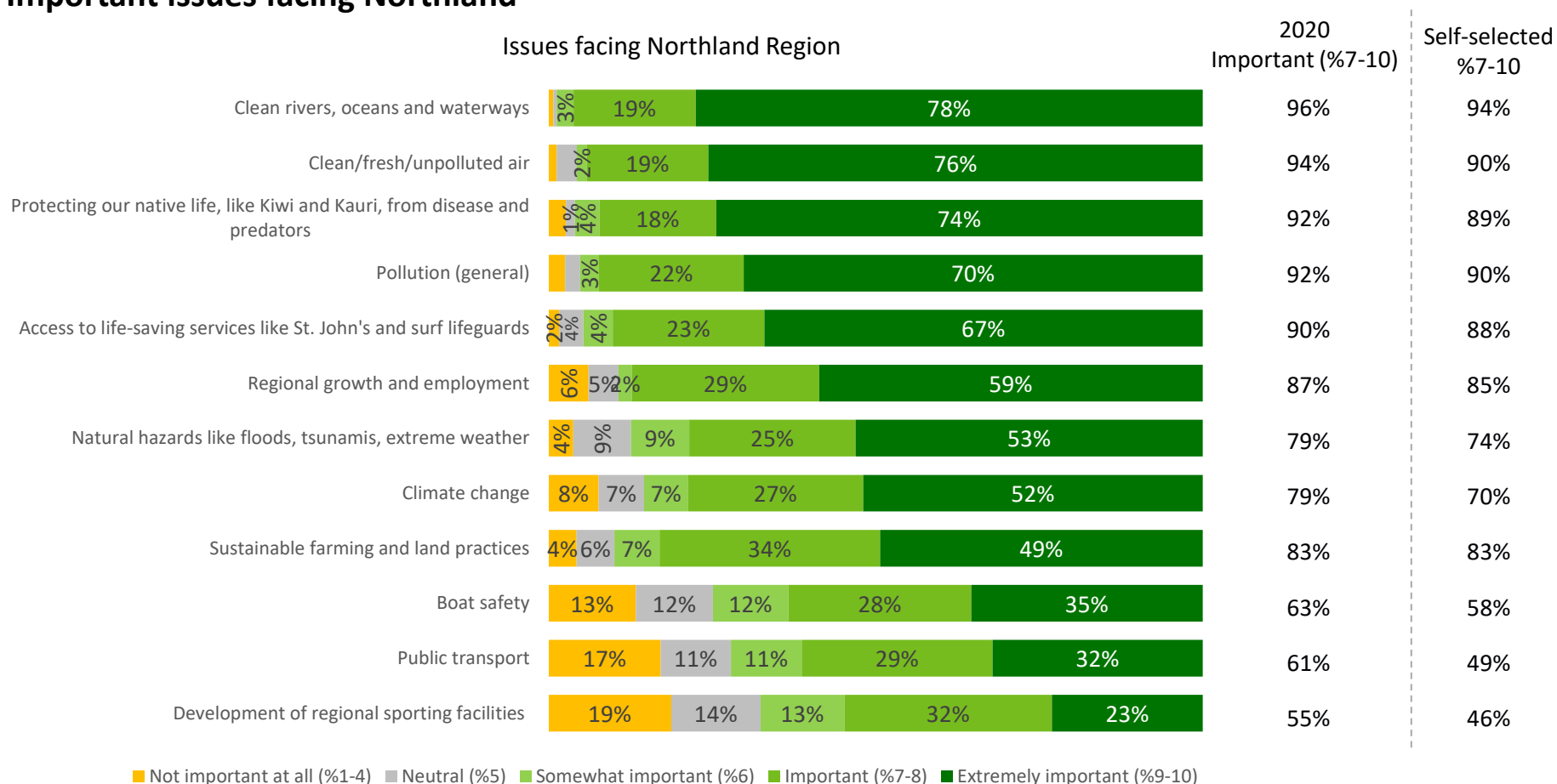


**Awareness, Perceptions and Associations**



Having *Clean rivers, oceans and waterways* and *Clean/fresh/unpolluted air* continue to be the most important issues facing Northland as indicated by at least nine in ten residents

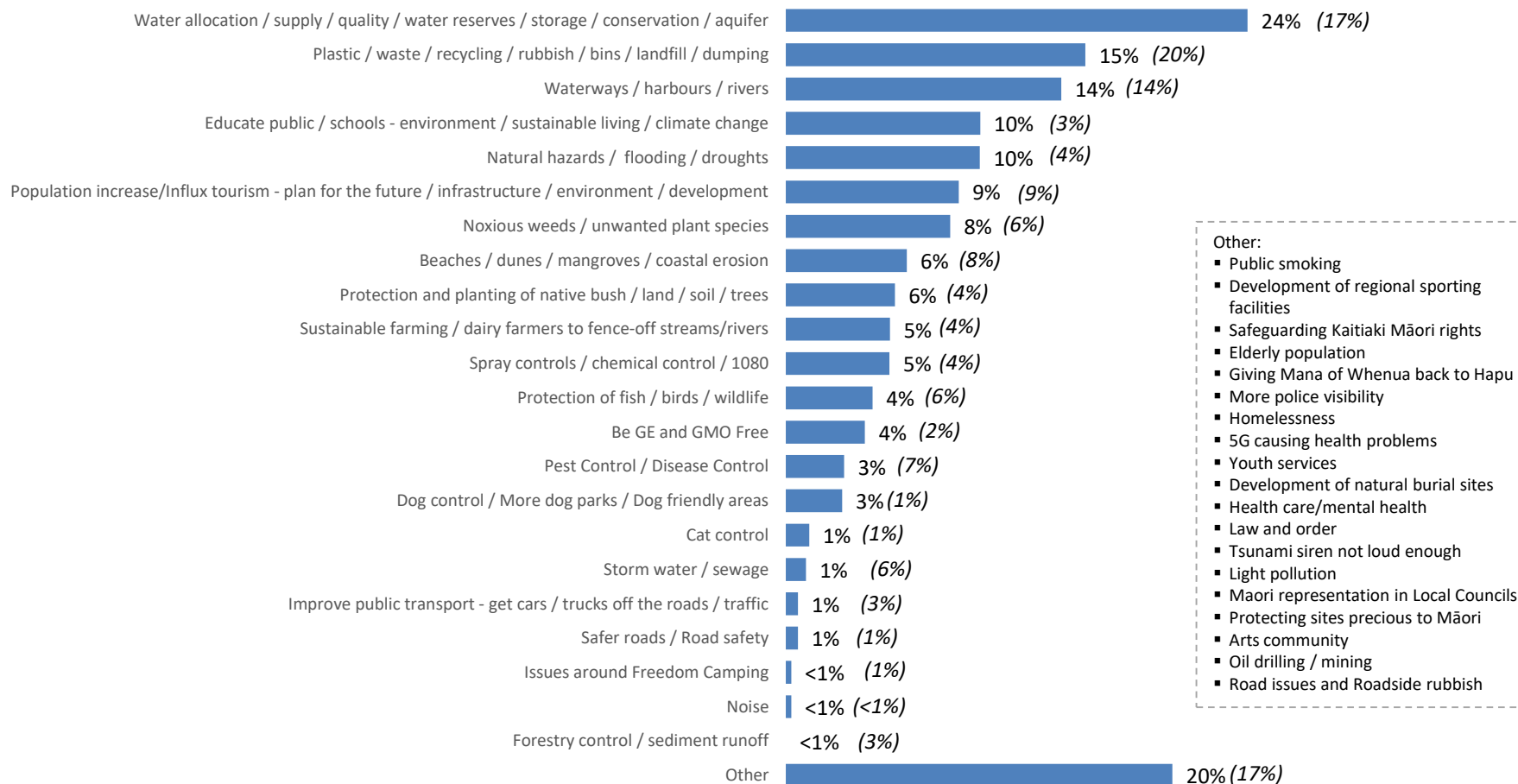
## Important issues facing Northland



In 2020, residents have cited issues relating to *Water allocation/supply/quality* and *Waterways/harbours/aquifer* as two of the other most important *environmental issues facing the region*

## Other important environmental issues facing Northland

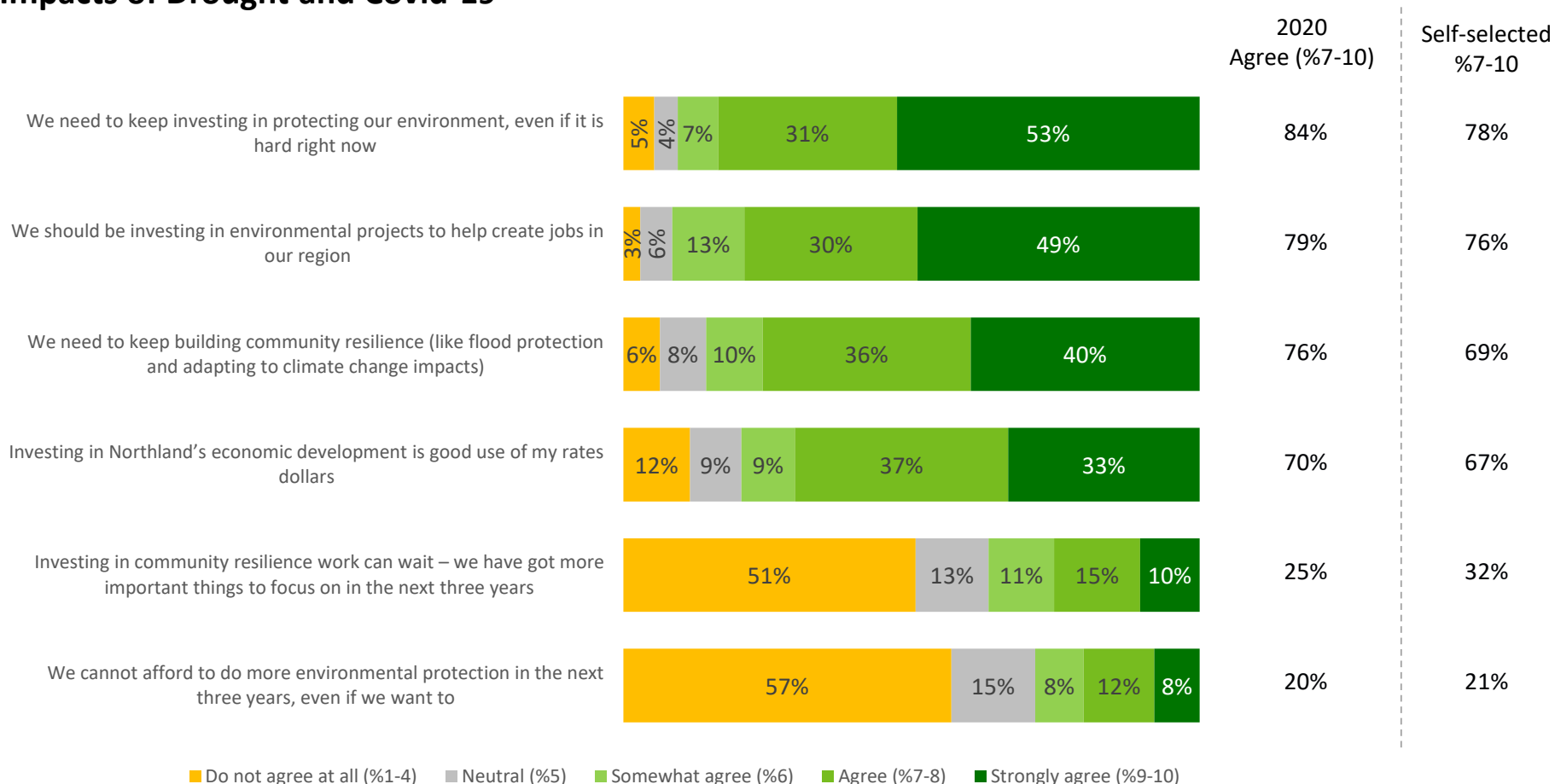
2020 Results (Self-selected)





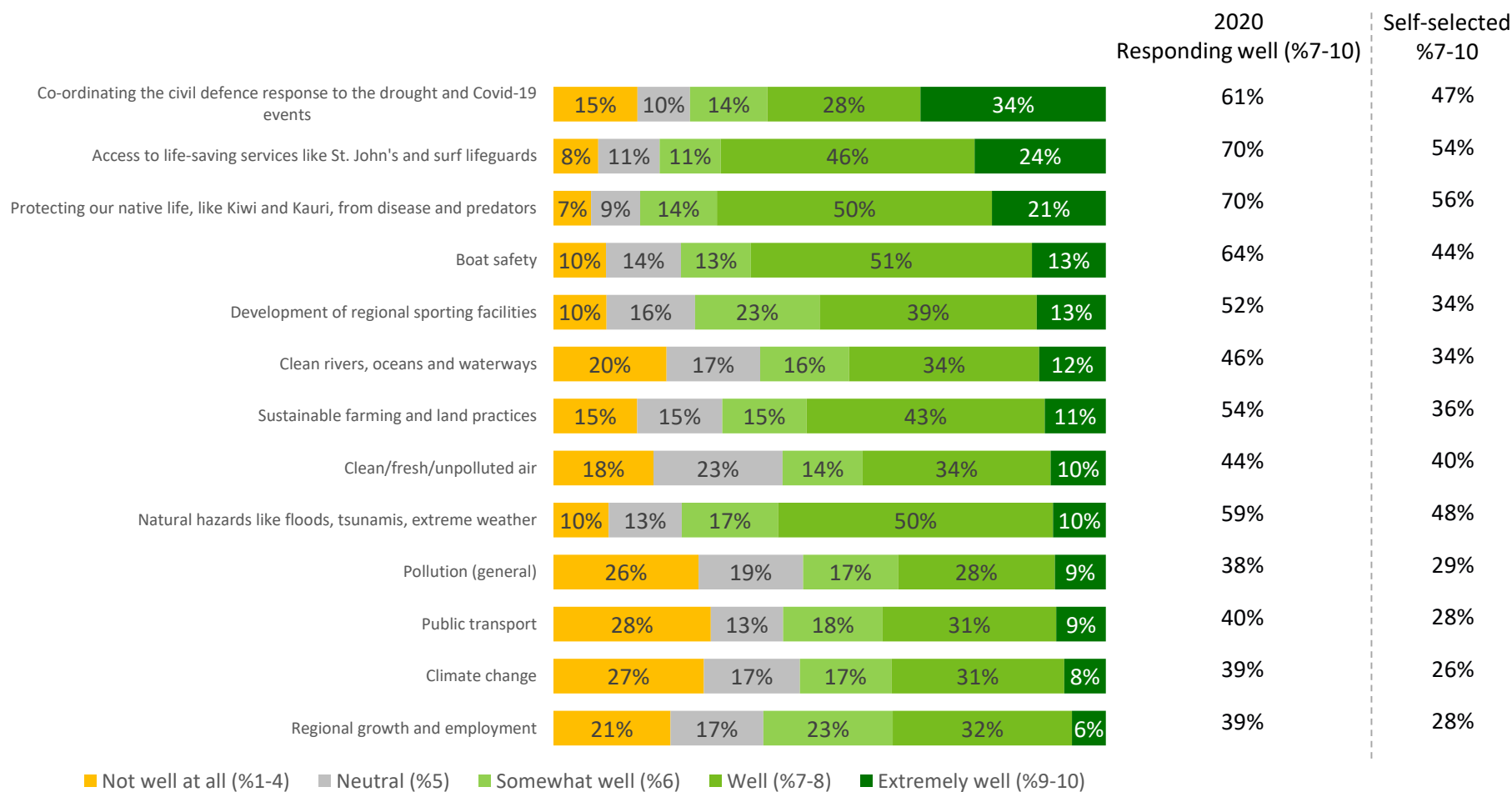
Most residents agree that Council needs to *Keep investing in protecting the environment, even if it is hard right now*. Around three quarters of the residents agree that Council should be *Investing in environmental projects to help create jobs in the region* (79%) and *Keep building community resilience* (76%)

## Impacts of Drought and Covid-19



Perceptions of how Council is responding to issues have generally improved. Seven out of ten residents (70%) think that the Council has been responding well to the issues of *Access to life-saving services* and *Protection of native life, like Kiwi and Kauri, from disease and predators*

## How Northland Regional Council is responding to issues

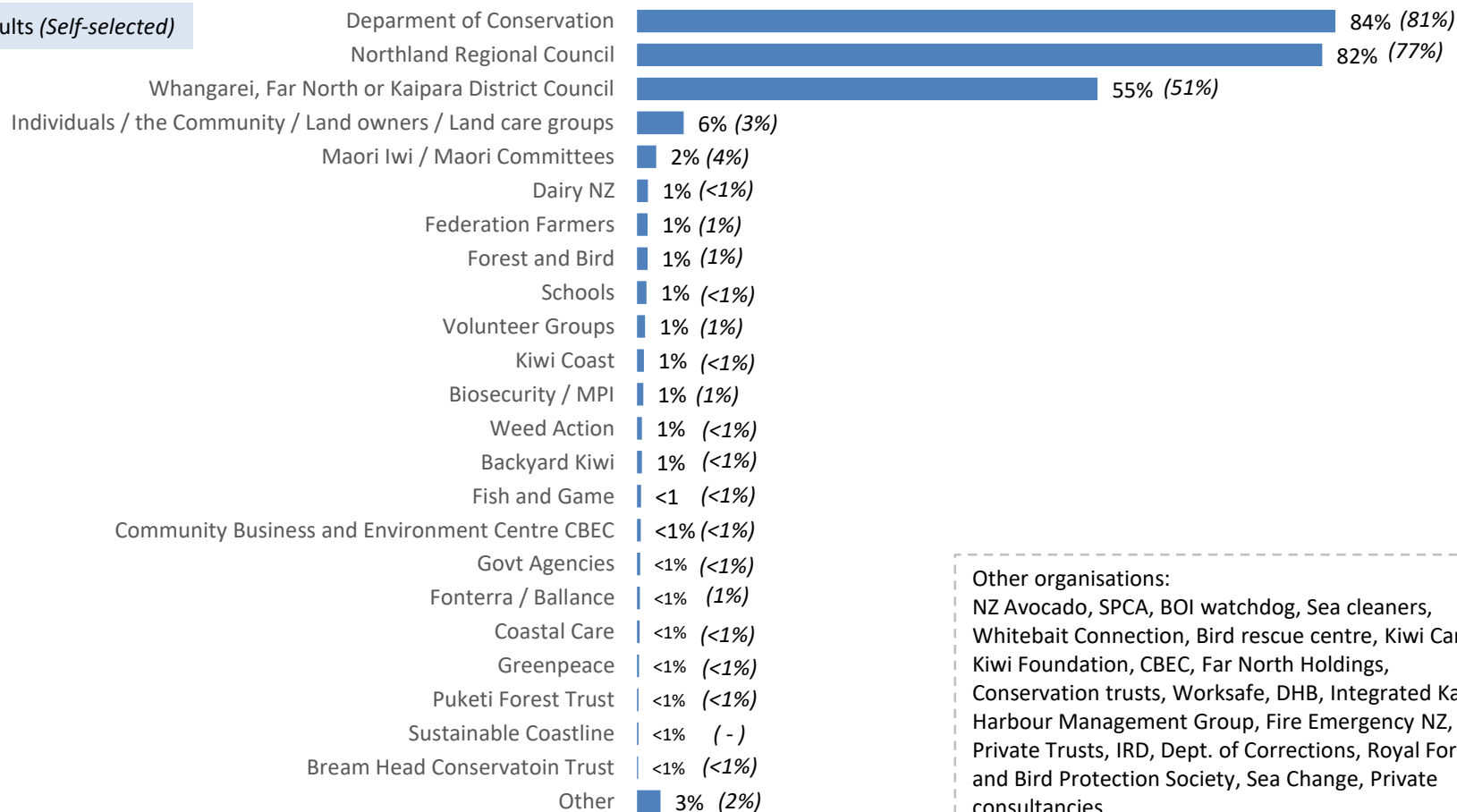




More than eight in ten residents think that the *Department of Conservation* (84%) and *Northland Regional Council* are the main *organisations that manage the Northland environment*

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

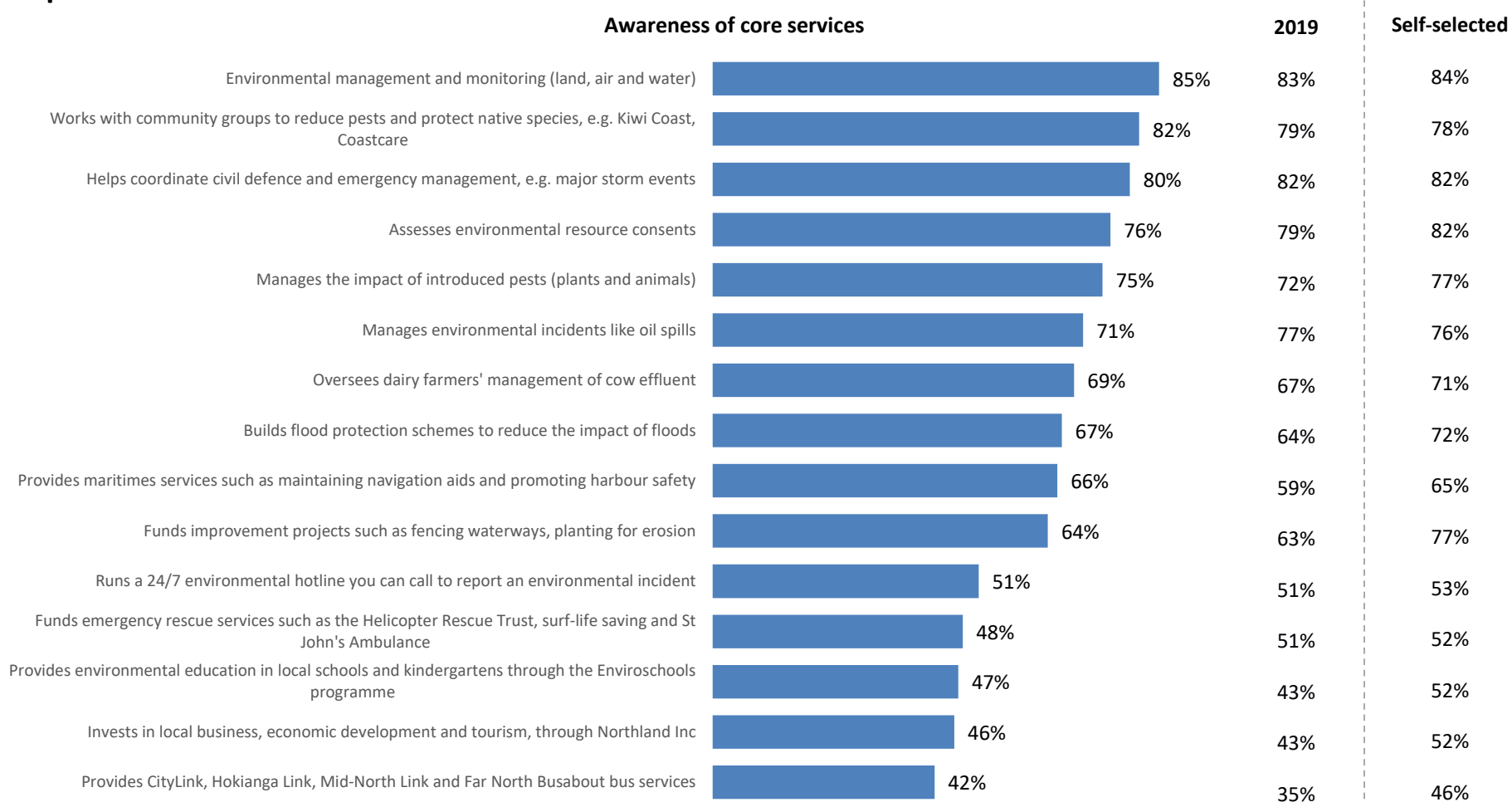
### 2020 Results (Self-selected)



Other organisations:  
NZ Avocado, SPCA, BOI watchdog, Sea cleaners,  
Whitebait Connection, Bird rescue centre, Kiwi Care,  
Kiwi Foundation, CBEC, Far North Holdings,  
Conservation trusts, Worksafe, DHB, Integrated Kaipara  
Harbour Management Group, Fire Emergency NZ,  
Private Trusts, IRD, Dept. of Corrections, Royal Forest  
and Bird Protection Society, Sea Change, Private  
consultancies

Awareness of Council's *Environmental management and monitoring services* is very high. Most residents are also highly aware that Council *Works with community groups to reduce pests and protect native species* and *Helps coordinate civil defence and emergency management*

## Proportion of residents aware of core services



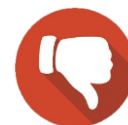


The top positive attributes associated with Northland Regional Council are *helpful, competent, professional and approachable*. On the other hand, the most common negative attributes associated with Council are *complicated, distant and inflexible*

## Attributes associated with Northland Regional Council



### Positive attributes



### Negative attributes

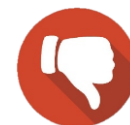


Self-selected respondents also think Northland Regional Council as *approachable, helpful* and *professional* whereas, the most common negative attributes they associate with Council are *complicated, wasteful* and *distant*

## Attributes associated with Northland Regional Council – Self-selected



### Positive attributes



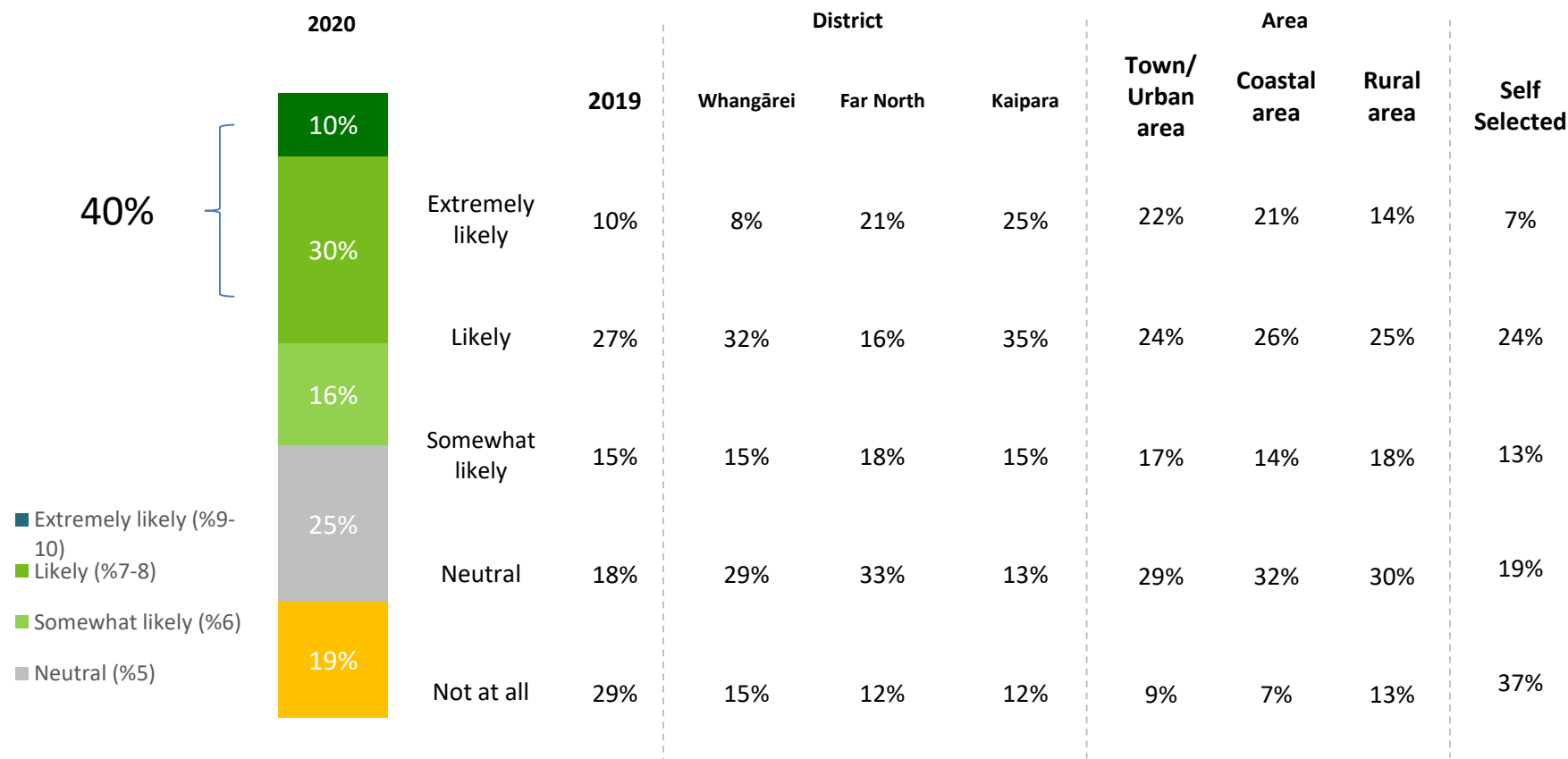
### Negative attributes





Four in ten residents are likely to extremely likely to talk favourably about Northland Regional Council and the proportion of those who would not talk favourably decreasing significantly since the last reporting period (19% from 29%)

## Likelihood to talk favourably about Northland Regional Council





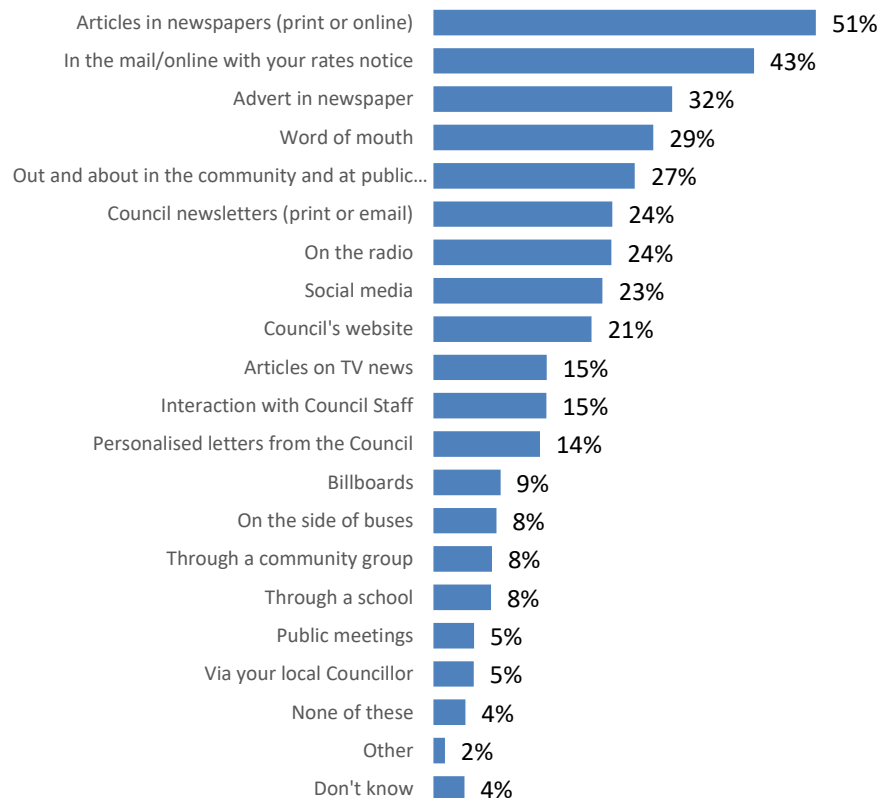
**Communication, Community Involvement and Engagement**

Most residents obtain information about Council through *Articles in newspapers (print or online)*. For self-selected respondents, *Social media* is their main source of Council information

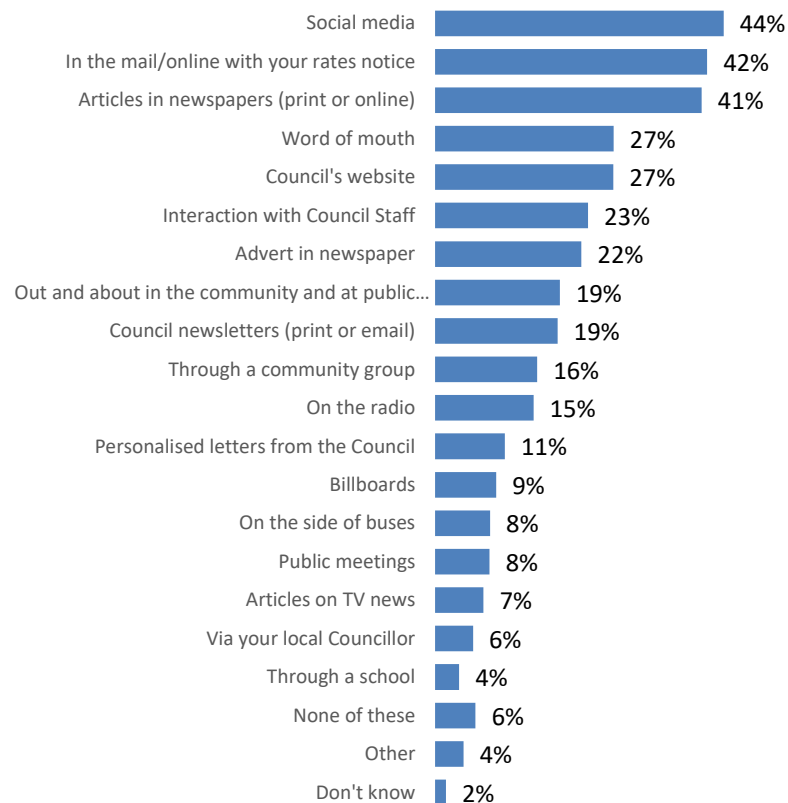
## Sourcing information about Northland Regional Council

### Where residents have seen or heard about Council

#### 2020 Results



#### Self-selected

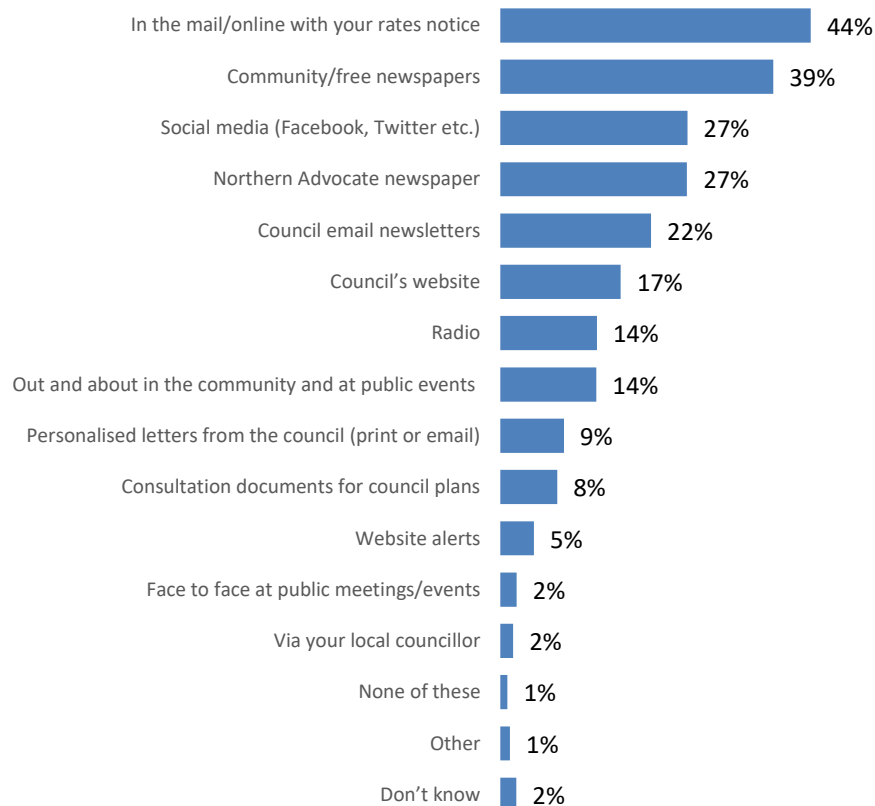




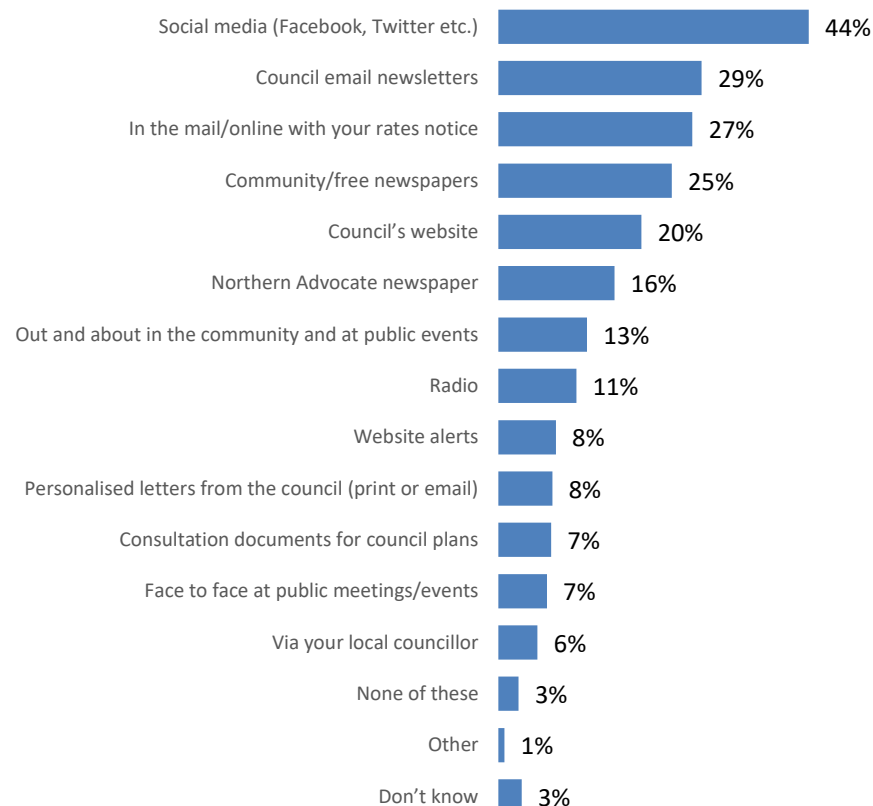
The three most popular methods of receiving communication are *In the mail/with rates notice*, *Community/free newspaper* or through *Social media*

## Methods residents would prefer to receive council information

### 2020 Results

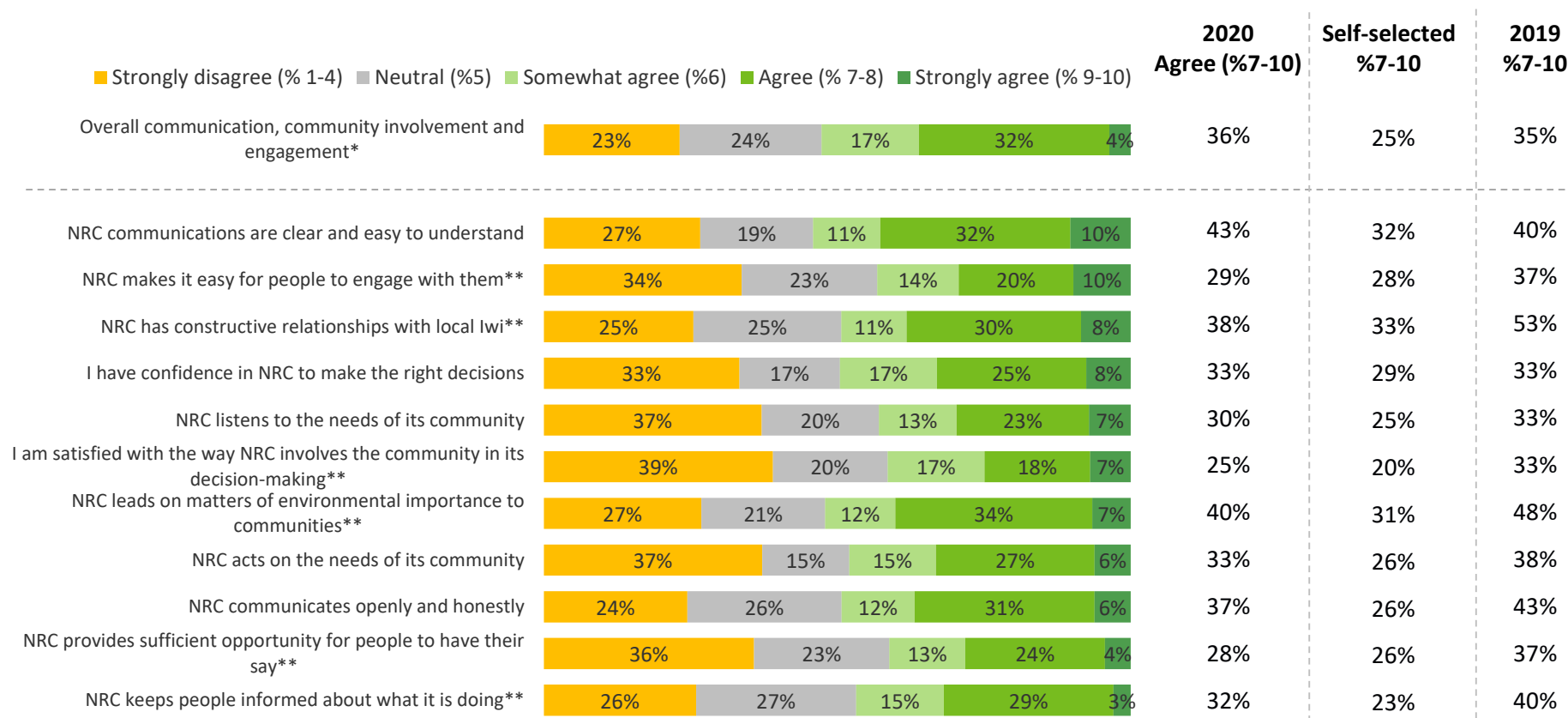


### Self-selected



Over one third of residents (36%) are satisfied with Council's *Overall communication, community involvement and engagement* activities; satisfaction is lower for self-selected participants

## 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

\*\* There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of residents who agree that Council interacts well or engages with the people compared with 2019.

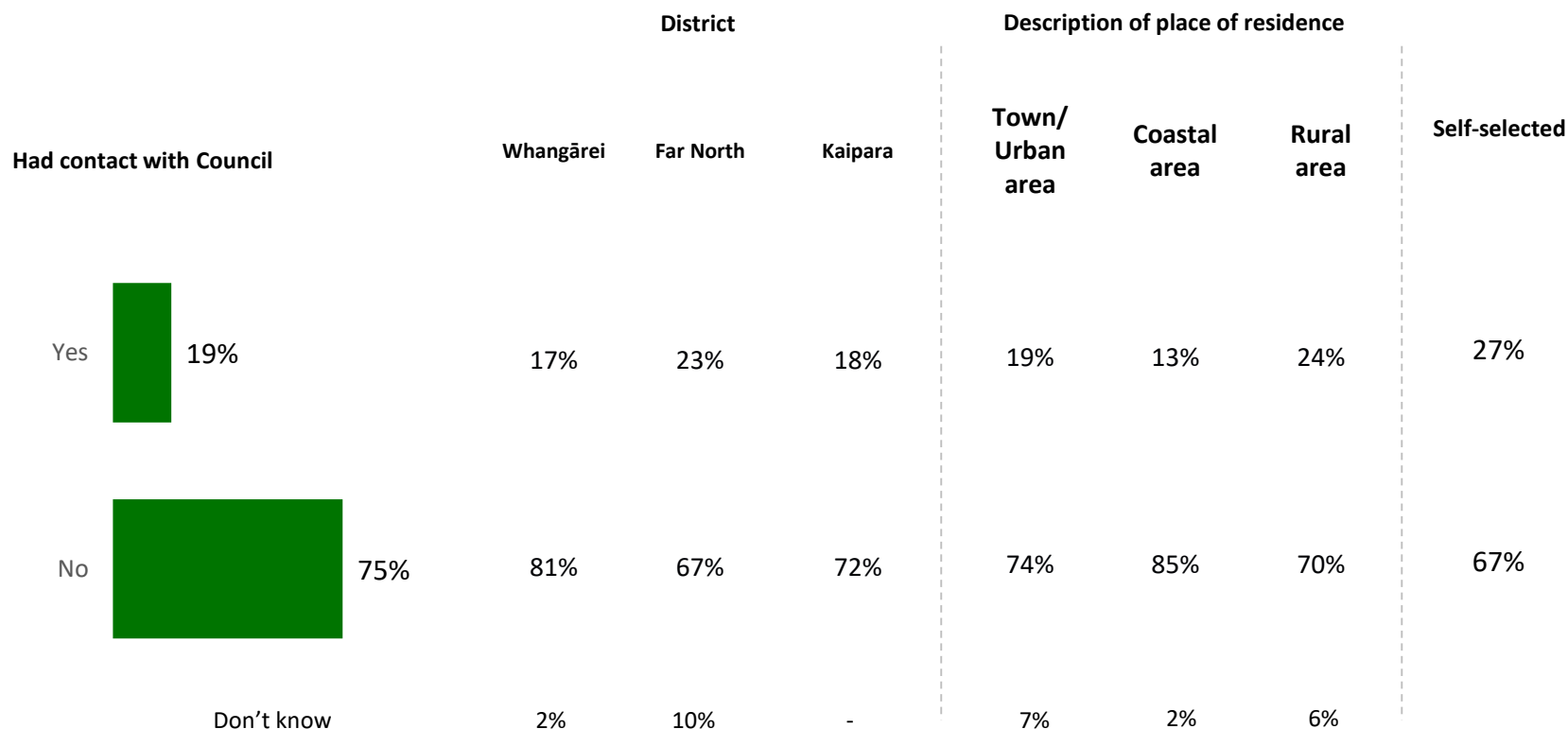


Contact with Council



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

## Contact with council



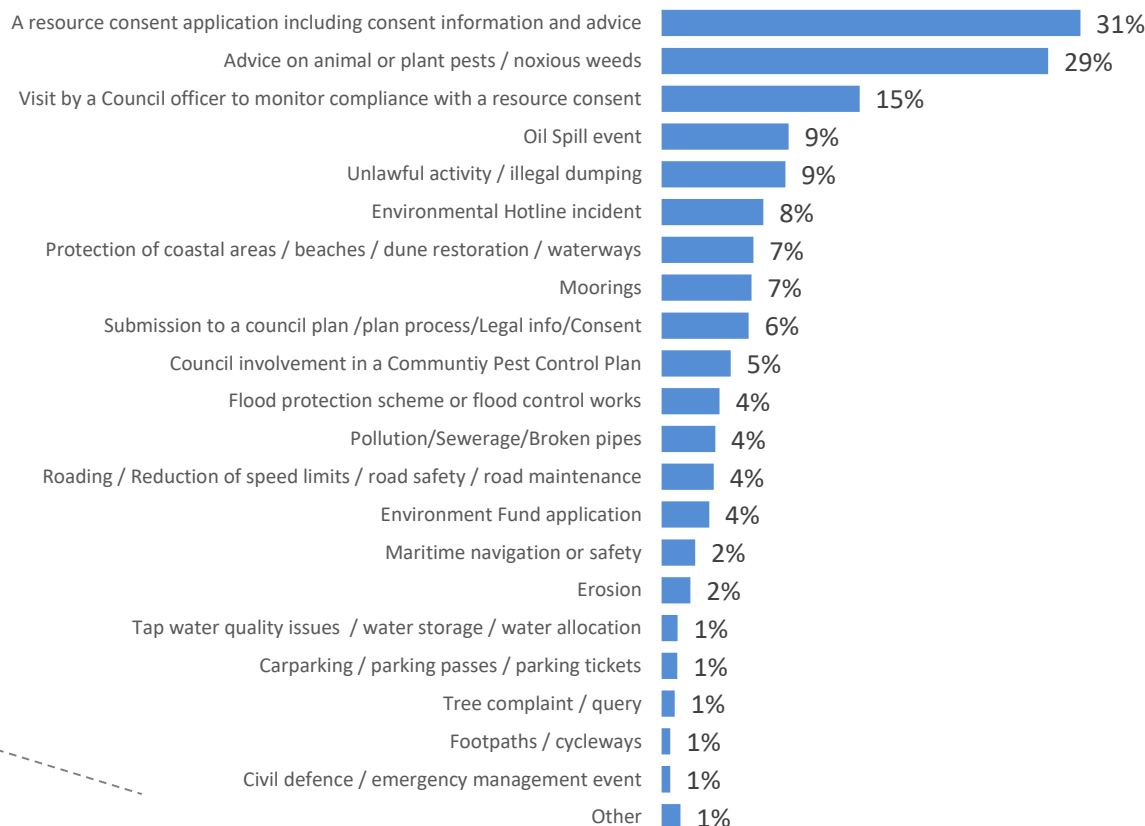
*Resource consent applications and Advice on animal/plant pests* are the main subjects of interaction with Council in 2020

## Contact with council

### Had contact with Council



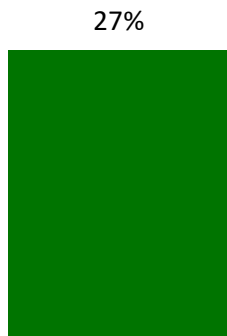
### What the interaction was about



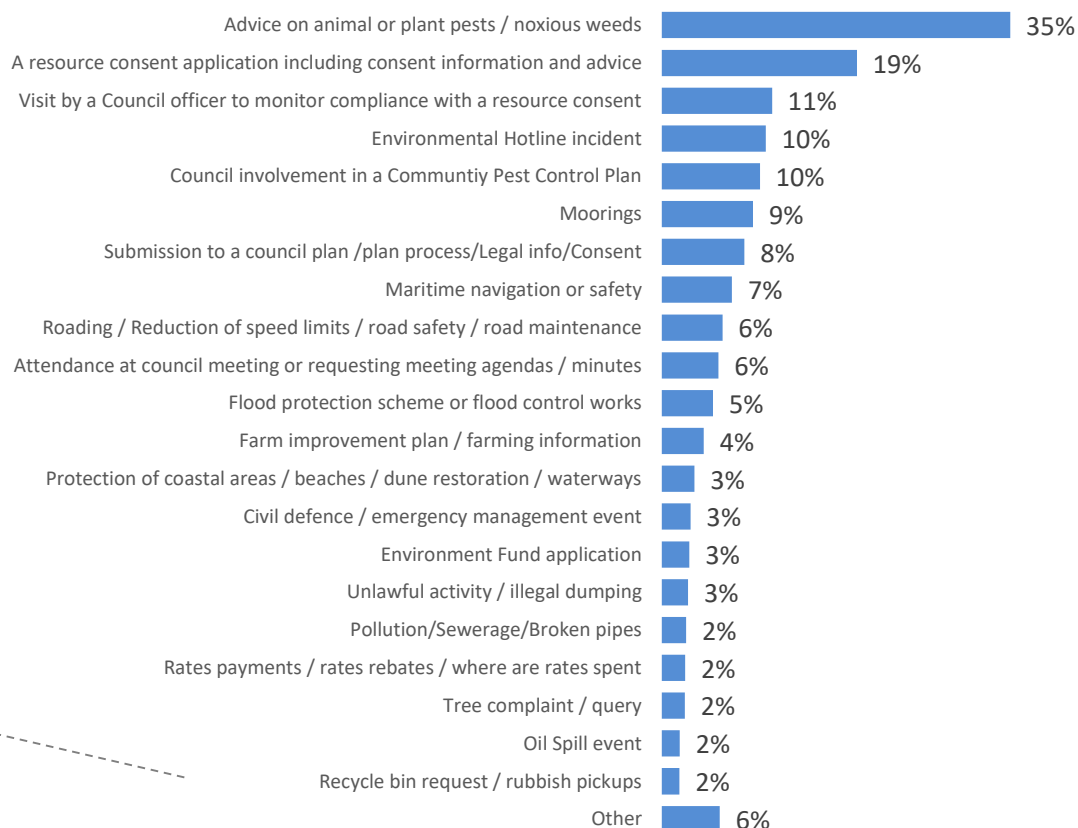
Similarly amongst self-selected respondents who had contact with Council, *Advice on animal/plant pests* and *Resource consent applications* are the top reasons for making an enquiry.

## Contact with council – Self-selected

### Had contact with Council



### What the interaction was about





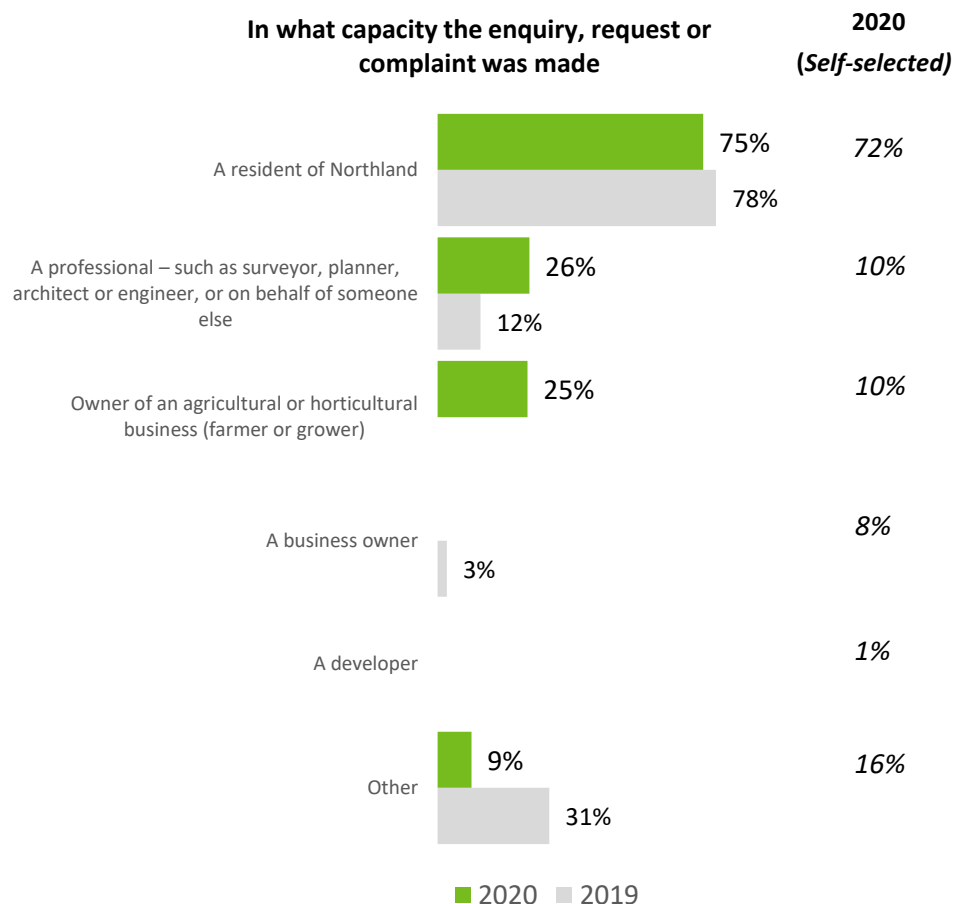
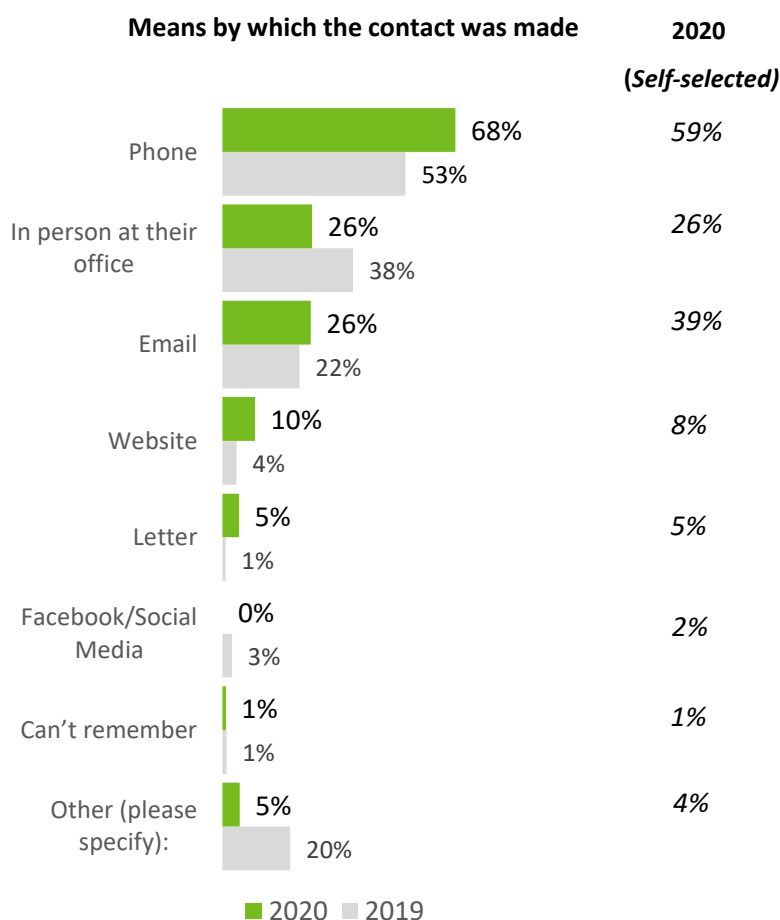
A verbatim list of 'Other' reasons for contacting the Council follows:

Reasons for contact with Council
Payment to the Hydro Metric Network
Attendance at a Beef and Lamb seminar
Easements
Environment court
Covid-19
Community resilience project
Local facilities for children
Council reserves
Assistance regarding GIS map
Fire bans
Safety concern about a NRC project
Real estate signs in public berm
National program
Enviroschools
Lidar mapping

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? Other n=18
3. The comments include responses from the postal and online survey as well as the survey via the public link.

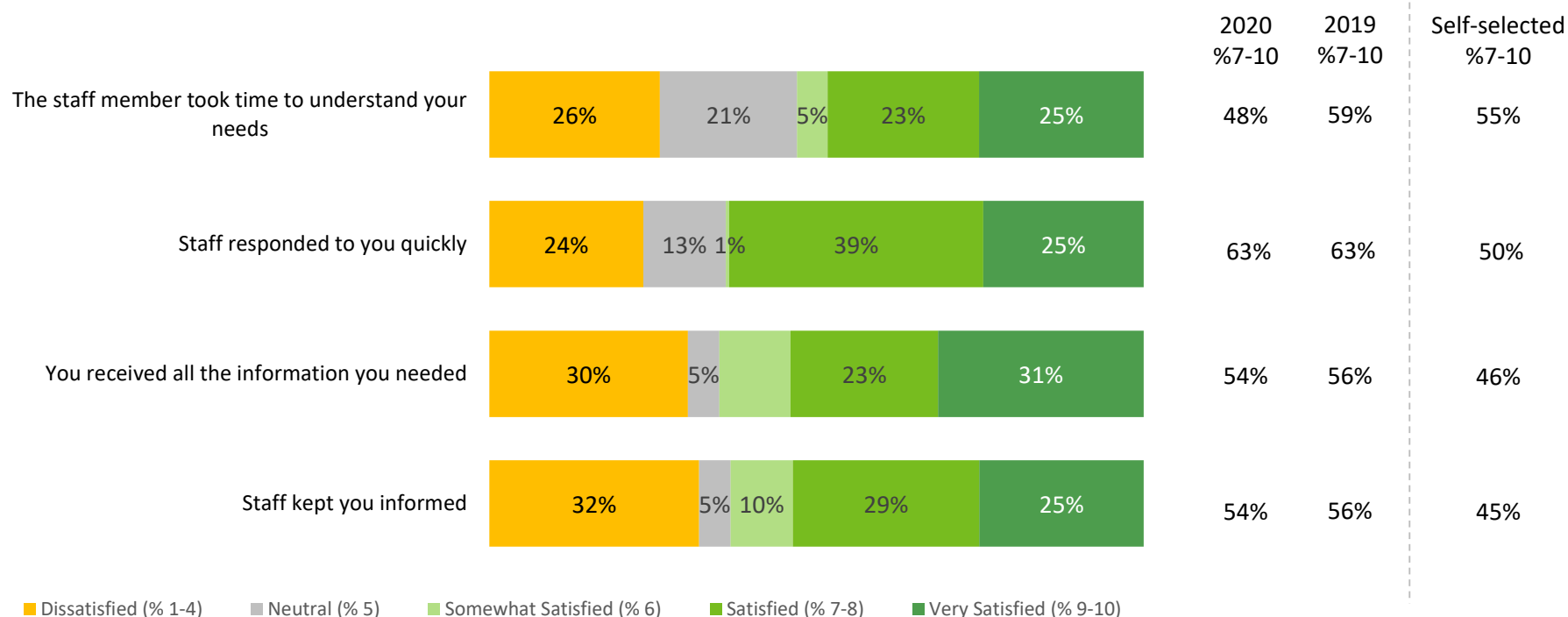
Contact with Council via *Phone* has increased considerably from 53% in 2019 to 68% in 2020 while *In person contact* has decreased compared with 2019. Of those who made an *enquiry, request or complaint* with Council, three quarters (75%) classified themselves as *Residents of Northland*

## Most recent contact with Council



More than half of the residents are satisfied with *How quick Staff responded to residents' enquiries* (63%), *Provision of all information needed* (54%) and *Staff keeping residents informed about their enquiries* (54%)

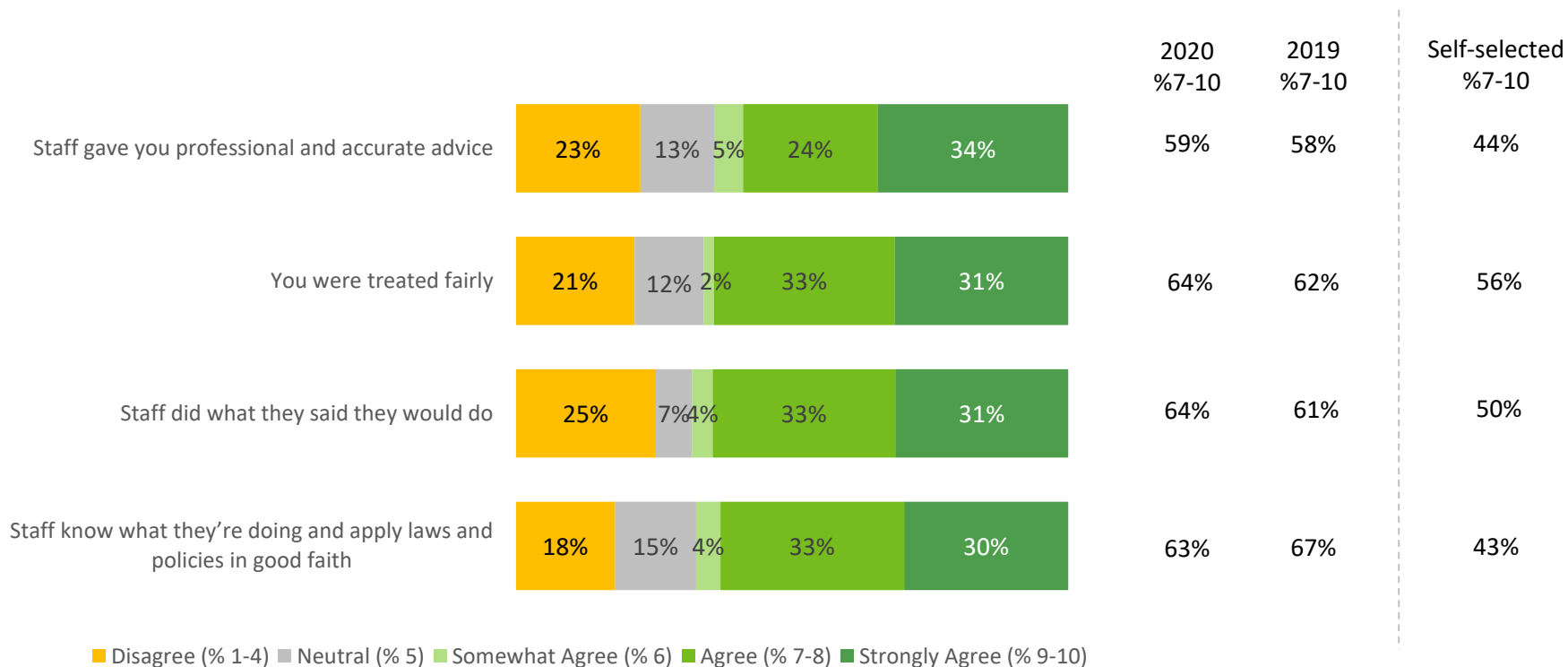
## Recent experience with Northland Regional Council





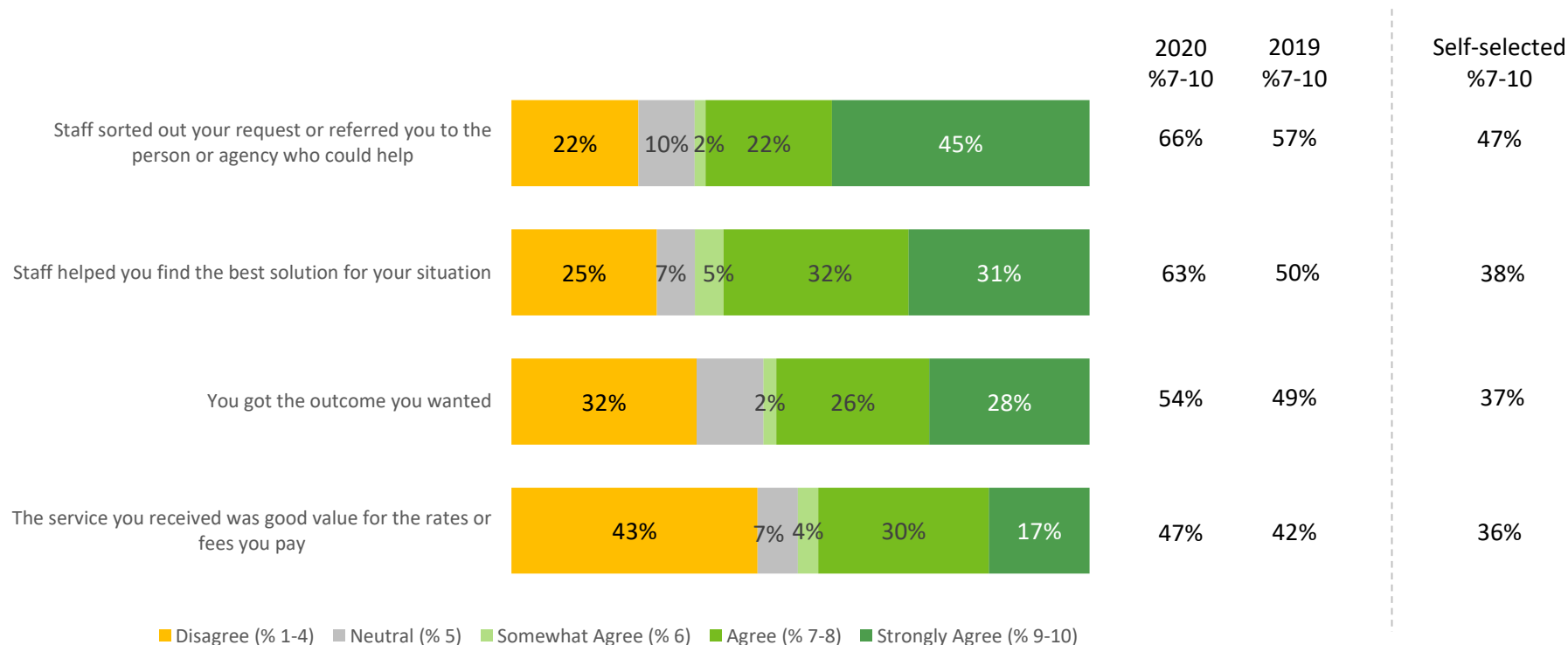
Around two thirds of residents (64%) who have had contact with Council agree that *Council treated them fairly* and *Staff did what they said they would do*

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



Satisfaction with the *outcome* achieved of an enquiry or complaint has increased since 2019, most significantly with regard to *Staff sorting out requests* (66%) and *Staff helping enquirers find the best solution for their situation* (63%)

## Recent experience with Northland Regional Council - Outcome



Service expectations have been met in 2020 as almost six in ten residents (58%) expected Council's *Quality of service* as Good or Excellent or and the same proportion are satisfied with the *Overall quality of service received*

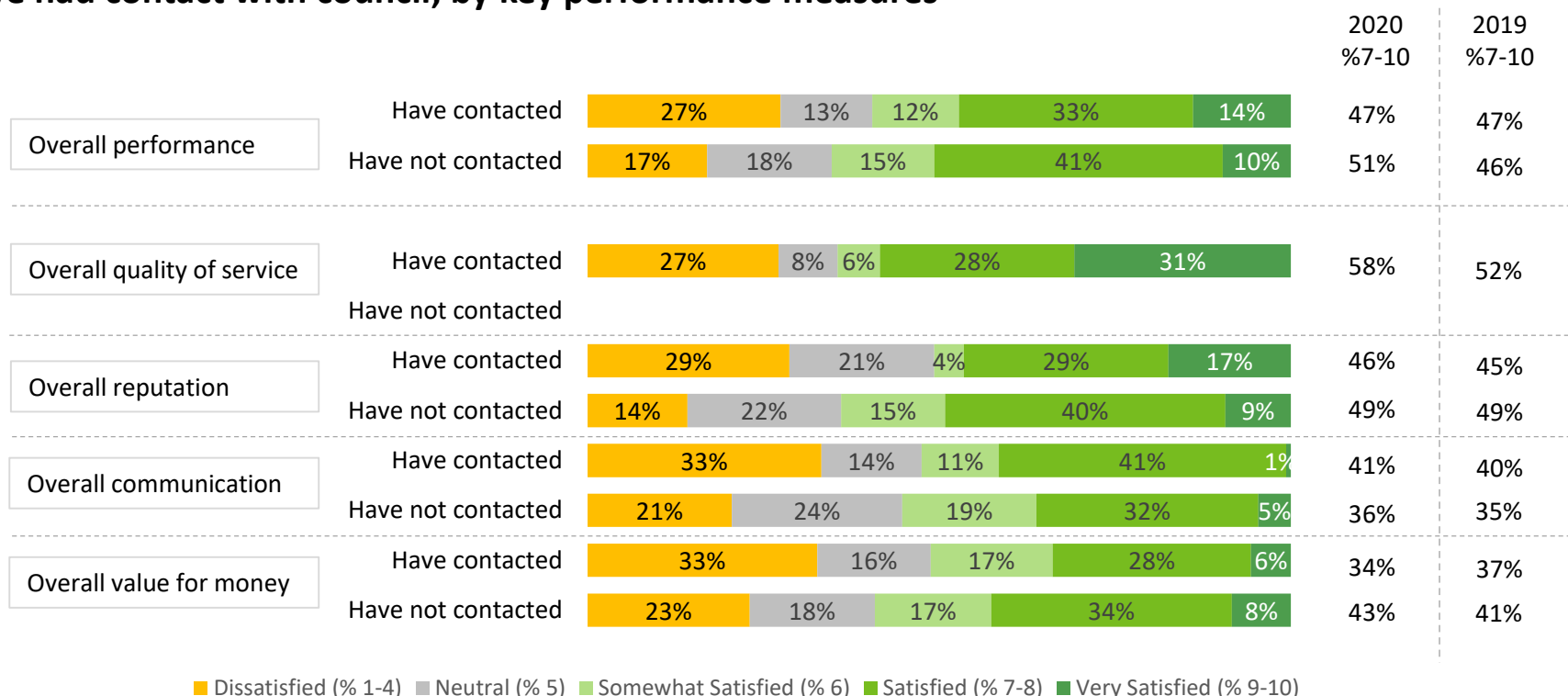
## Quality of service received compared to service expectation



- 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=72; Self-selected n=288
- 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=67; Self-selected n=285
- 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=71; Self-selected n=287

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

## Have had contact with council; by key performance measures

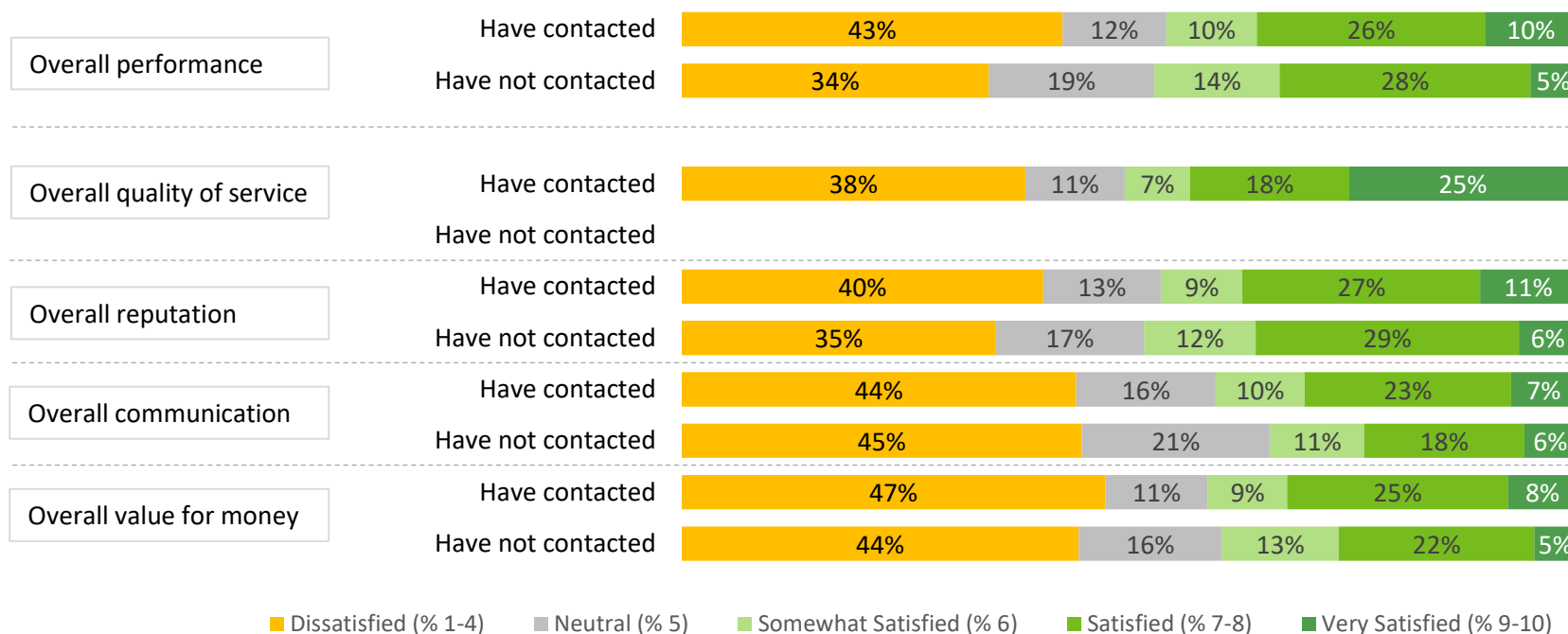


- CC11. Have you made an enquiry, request for service, or a complaint to Northland Regional Council over the last 12 months? Results exclude 'don't know'
- CC22. Considering everything, the contact you had, the ease of getting information, the responsiveness of the Council and the outcome you got, how satisfied are you with? Made contact n=72; 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=67; Have not made contact=241
- 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=67; Have not made contact=236
- Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=68; Have not made contact=232
- 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=64; Have not made contact=227



Self-selected residents who have contacted Council are likely to be more satisfied with Council's performance compared to those who have not made contact

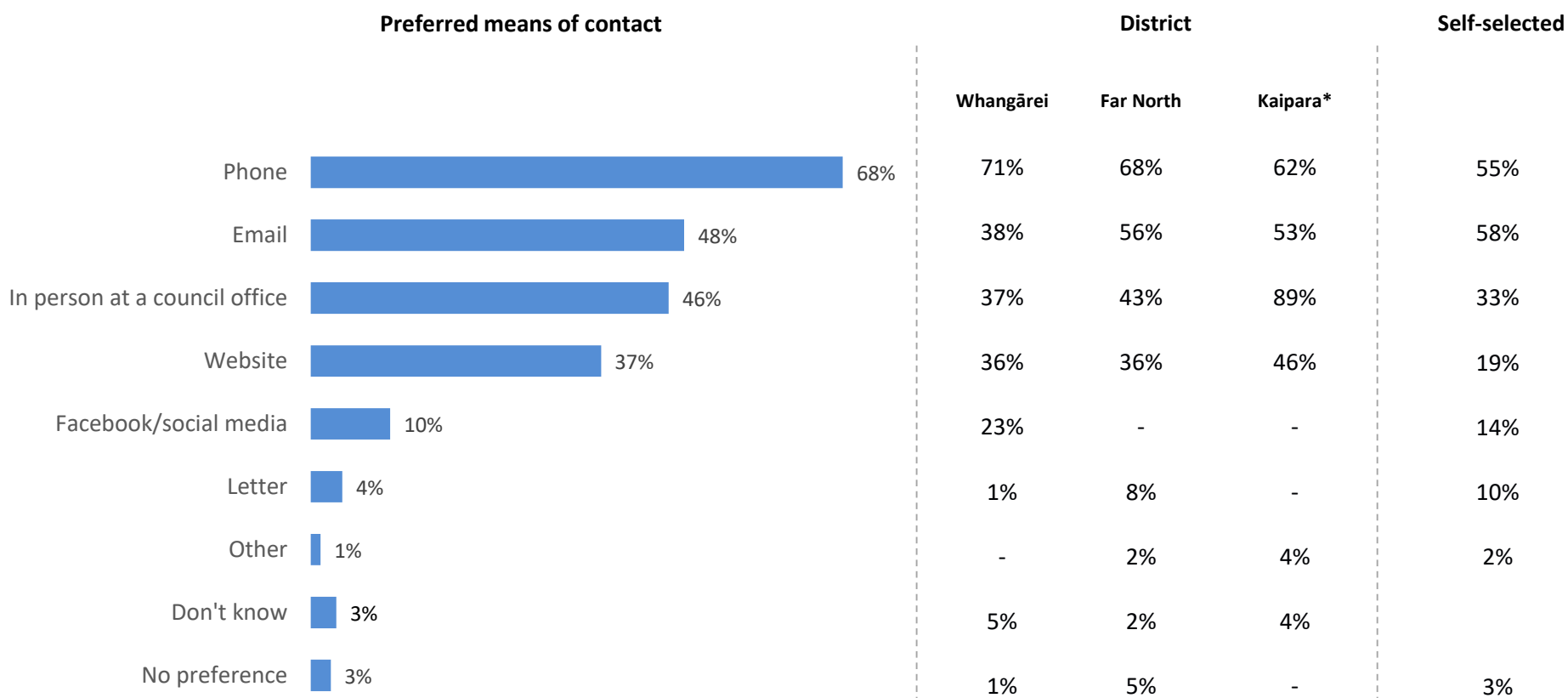
## Have had contact with council; by key performance measures – Self-selected



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=288; 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=284; Have not made contact=643
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=283; Have not made contact=638
5. Q10. Overall, how satisfied are you with how well Northland Regional Council communicates with you? Results exclude 'don't know'; Made contact n=285; Have not made contact=622
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=274; Have not made contact=587

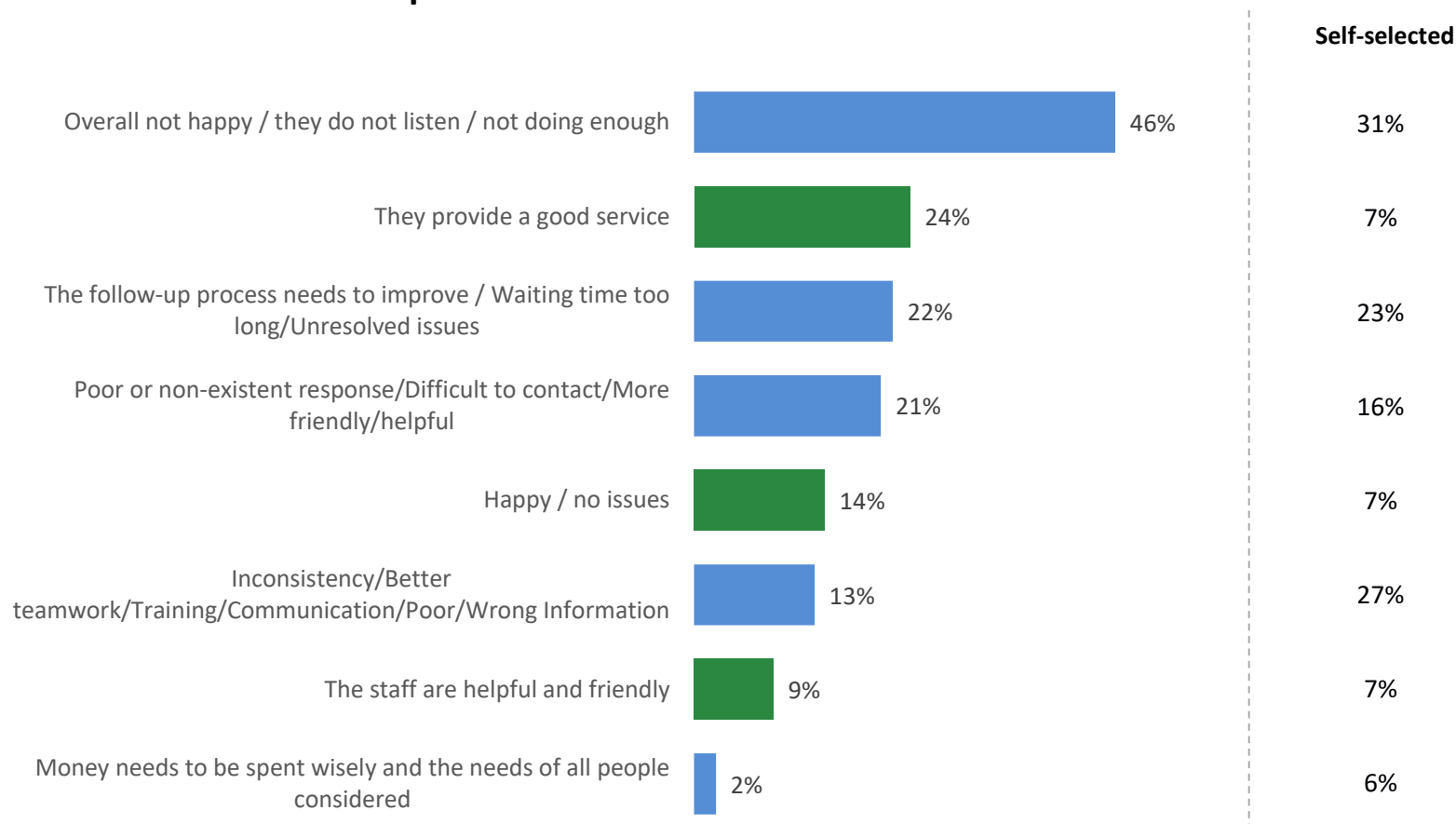
The most preferred means to contact Council is via *Phone*, followed by *Email* and *In person at a Council office*. Self-selected residents mostly prefer *Email* as a means to contact Council

## Preferred ways to contact Northland Regional Council in the future



## Key themes that emerged from verbatim comments regarding residents' experience with Council:

### Other comments about experience with Council





**Value for Money**



Satisfaction with *Value for money* is at the same level as it was a year ago with nearly four in ten satisfied residents (39%). Perceptions of the different value attributes have improved since 2019

## Satisfaction with value for money

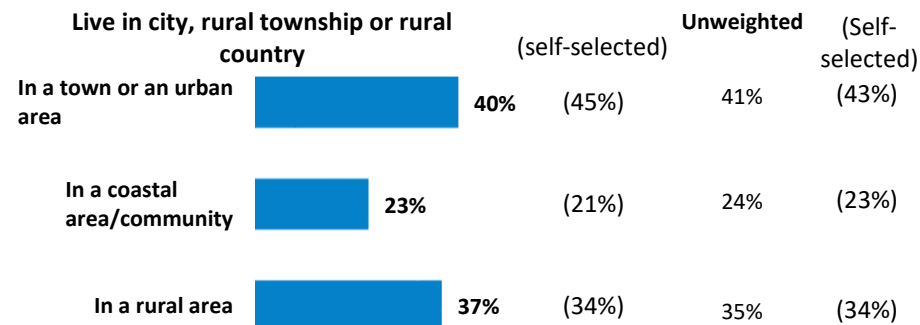
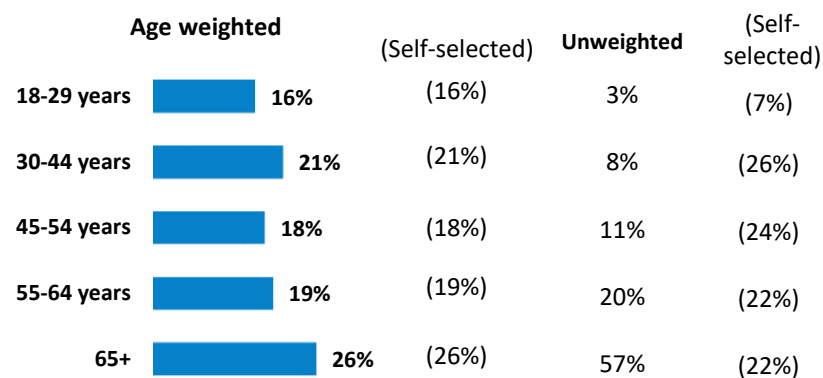
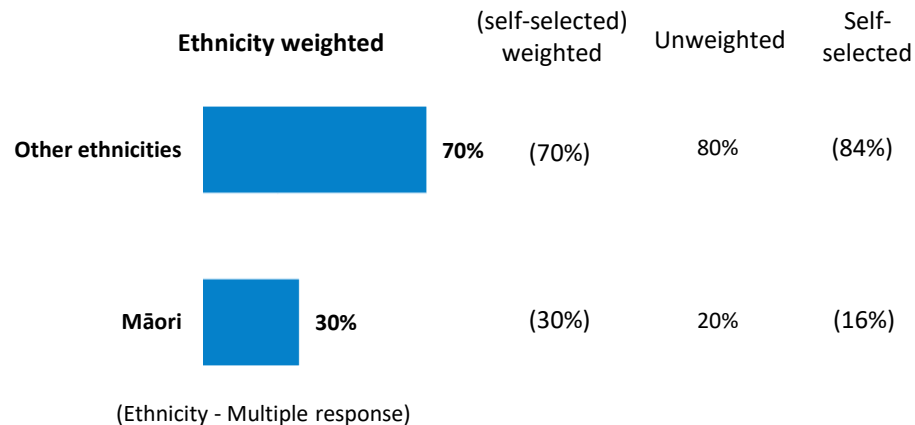
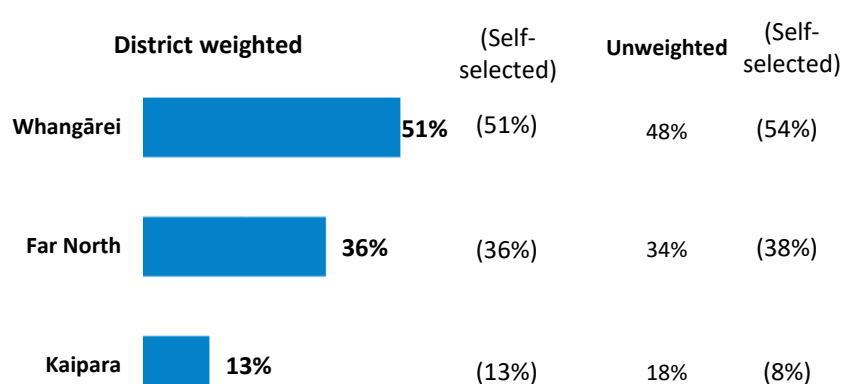


1. Q14. Considering all the services and facilities that the Northland Regional Council provides, overall how satisfied are you that you receive good value for the money you spend in rates and other fees? Results exclude 'Don't know' n=304; Self-selected n=918
2. Q13. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'strongly disagree' and 10 is 'strongly agree', how much do you agree or disagree that Northland Regional Council...? Results exclude 'Don't know' n=296; Self-selected n=913



## Demographic Profile

## Demographic profile



Demographic profile

