

Dunedin City Council - 2009 Residents' Opinion Survey: Summary Points

Introduction and Objectives

The Dunedin City Council has been running an annual *Residents' Opinion Survey* since 1994. The 2009 Residents' Opinion Survey (the Survey) is designed to measure residents' satisfaction with the Council's performance and with Council owned facilities and Dunedin itself. The Council uses the results of the Survey to assess the extent to which it is has met (or is progressing towards meeting) its Annual Plan and LTCCP objectives.

Research Design

Overview: The Mail Survey Design

The 2009 Residents' Opinion Survey was completed using a mail (i.e., postal) survey using a database generated from a probability sample, stratified across Council wards (i.e., clusters of suburbs), drawn from the electoral rollⁱ. 4,500 names were randomly selected, with mail despatched on May 1- 4.

Two aspects of data collection and validation were added for the 2009 survey, being:

1. The inclusion of an on-line version of the questionnaire, to increase the number of ways potential respondents could complete the questionnaireⁱⁱ;
2. The use of a 'refusal survey' to assess and address any non-response bias in the achieved sample.

The Achieved Sample

There are two key data sets to keep in mind when the full Residents' Opinion Survey report. The first data set ('the primary data set') comprises of survey responses from those selected in the original randomised sample. These are those respondents invited to participate in the survey via a letter from the Dunedin City Council. The second data set (the 'secondary data set') comprises surveys completed online.

The final achieved samples for the 2009 Residents' Opinion Survey were:

- The Primary Data Set is based on the 1,359 (30.2%) responses received from the 4,500 names generated from the randomised sample.
 - 239 partial or complete responses were provided via the on-line questionnaire (the secondary data set); and
 - 150 refusal surveys were completed to assess the measure of potential non-response bias in the primary and secondary data sets. These 150 responses provide the refusal survey data set.
- **PLEASE NOTE: The Primary Data Set was developed in line with previous collection of data and should be considered the valid comparative data set for the 2009 ROS. For this reason all of the results presented in this report are based on the Primary Data Set unless otherwise stated.**

Key results – 2009 Residents’ Opinion Survey

Overall Satisfaction with Dunedin City Council

- Satisfaction with the overall performance of the Dunedin City Council was 41% with dissatisfaction at 29%. This result was in line with levels from 2007/08.
- Satisfaction levels were high for both the city (79%) and the central retail area (70%).
- Satisfaction with the look and feel of South Dunedin was stable but low (17% satisfied, 55% dissatisfied) as was satisfaction with safety in the central city at night (29% satisfied, 50% dissatisfied).

Overall Perceptions of Dunedin

- The majority of perceptions of Dunedin are positive, with high satisfaction in the areas of architecture (90%), cultural diversity (74%), and creativity (68%).
- The perceptions regarding Dunedin being a ‘thriving’ city (39% satisfied) declined significantly compared to the previous survey (2006/07).

Satisfaction with Council Services

Rubbish Collection

- High level of satisfaction with household rubbish collection (81%) and kerbside recycling (75%). Levels of satisfaction for all areas related to rubbish collection were similar to those in the 2007/08 survey.
- Unsolicited issue of importance – rubbish on the street (90), and wheelie bins should be provided (70).

Water, Drainage, and Sewerage:

- Residents were highly satisfied with water pressure (81%), and water quality (74%) which was up from 68% in 2007/8.
- Satisfaction levels were notably lower for storm-water services (65%) and the city’s sewerage system (60%) but both measures had improved over the last five years and levels of dissatisfaction with these services were also low (16 and 22% respectively).
- Unsolicited issue of importance – stop sewerage to the sea (76).

Roads, Footpaths, Lighting, and Parking:

- Residents were relatively satisfied with the road and footpath network. (roughly 55-75% satisfied across various factors).
- Lowest satisfaction scores were with the suitability of the road network for cyclists (24%), the availability of parking (30%)
- Satisfaction with traffic flow in peak times (44%) was also fairly low but had shown a steady increase in satisfaction since a dip in 2004/05.
- Unsolicited issue of importance – more parking (100) and cycle tracks (85).

Regulatory, Monitoring, and Environmental Services:

- Satisfaction with regulatory, monitoring, and environmental services was mostly positive.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of hygiene standards in food establishments had increased significantly over the last 3 years.

- Satisfaction with the fairness and attitude of parking wardens was 46%, a notable increase since 2003/04 but slightly down on 2007/08.
- Satisfaction with the processing of building consents was up slightly since 2007/2008 but remained low at 24%.

Customer Service:

- Satisfaction levels with Customer service in 2008/09 were moderate to low, however have improved slightly from those last recorded in 2006/07.
- 34% of residents were satisfied that the Council delivers good value for money compared with 32% of residents who were dissatisfied.
- 51% of residents were satisfied that the Council was constantly striving to improve compared to 15% who were dissatisfied.

Use of Council Facilities

Satisfaction with Council Facilities:

- For most facilities respondents report a high level of satisfaction (65-94%) and very low levels of dissatisfaction (1-7%).
- A notable exception was public toilets (44% satisfied, and 28% dissatisfied).
- Residents were most satisfied with the Otago Museum (94%) and public libraries (93%).
- Unsolicited issue of importance - public toilets (154) and the stadium (141)

Consultation and Communication

Communication Regarding Council Activities

- Users satisfaction was generally in line with 2007/8 levels.
- Although satisfaction levels were generally below 50%, more people were satisfied than dissatisfied under most of the measures of satisfaction with Council communication.
- The exception was satisfaction with the amount of public consultation undertaken with 34% satisfied and 38% dissatisfied.
- Unsolicited issue of importance – need for more consultation (104).

Council Communication Services

- Levels of satisfaction each of the primary forms of Council communication (City Talk magazine, the Council website, the Council's call centre and the Customer Services Agency) was between 68% and 76%. Levels of dissatisfaction were low (4-7%).
- Satisfaction with all Council communication services declined from levels noted in 2007/08.

Economic Development and Promotion

- The largest group of respondents in questions regarding economic development provided neutral responses.
- Three out of the top four biggest improvements in satisfaction from 2007/08 came under Economic Development and Promotion.
- Across all indices, there were far more 'satisfied' with Council support for economic development and promotion (30-69%) than 'unsatisfied' (9-29%).
- The level of satisfaction with the Council's support for business has increased steadily since 2005/06.

Elected Representatives and Council Staff

- There is a high level of satisfaction with relationships with Council Staff (51% satisfied).
- Satisfaction with Elected Representatives is comparatively lower (25-29%). This is consistent with previous years' data.

What would you like to change about Dunedin?

The issues that attracted over 100 unsolicited comments include:

- Better street cleaning/broken glass/graffiti (140).
- Dunedin's environment good (104).
- Enhance and improve facilities (121).
- Satisfied with the arts and cultural environment (98).

Notes on the Calculation of Satisfaction Results

In general there are two ways of determining the percentage of people who are satisfied (or dissatisfied) with a particular service.

The first method is to show the percentage of residents satisfied (or dissatisfied) as a proportion of the total number of people who completed the survey.

The second method is to show the percentage of users satisfied (or dissatisfied) as a proportion of the total number of people who answered the individual question relating to that service.

For the purposes of this summary all figures are based on the second method of measuring satisfaction (or dissatisfaction).