

Dunedin City Council

2014 Residents' Opinion Survey: Summary

Introduction and Objectives

The Dunedin City Council has been running an annual Residents' Opinion Survey since 1994. These surveys measure residents' satisfaction with the Council's services and facilities and its overall performance as well as residents' perception of the city as a whole. The output of these surveys enables the Council to assess the extent to which it has met its performance objectives. Each year subsequent surveys add to a growing body of research about what Dunedin residents think about their city and Council.

Research Design

The 2014 Residents' Opinion Survey utilised a sequential-mixed mode methodology. This involved writing to 4,500 residents randomly selected from the electoral roll, and inviting them to complete the survey online. After two weeks, non responding individuals were sent a self-complete paper questionnaire with a freepost reply address.

In total, 1,248 responses were obtained, giving a response rate of 27.7% and a margin of error of +/- 2.8%. These responses were analysed and are reported as the primary data set. This data set represents the results that the Council reports in its Annual Reports.

In addition, the Council made the survey available online to all residents and sent a survey link to members of its own People's Panel, an email database of residents who have agreed to be contacted by the Council. Because this additional sample was not selected randomly (that is, it is self-selected), the 705 responses received have been treated separately as a second data set ('the secondary data set').

Notes

The Primary Data Set is random and was developed in line with previous collections of data and should be considered the valid comparative data set for the 2014 Survey. For this reason, all of the results presented in this report are based on the Primary Data Set unless otherwise stated.

The 2014 Dunedin Residents' Opinion Survey has been conducted using standard analytical methods. Where the number of responses received to a specific question is less than the total number of responses, those who have not responded are considered to either not know, or not have a relevant response to the question. As such, the analysis of responses, and of satisfaction levels, is generated based on the number of valid responses to that question.

The full results and results from previous years are available at www.dunedin.govt.nz/ros.

Key results – 2014 Residents' Opinion Survey

Residents are most satisfied with

- Botanic Garden (97%)
- Otago Museum (96%)
- Toitū Otago Settlers Museum (94%)
- Libraries (93%)
- Reliability of the rubbish collection service (92%)
- Regent Theatre (92%)

Residents are least satisfied with

- Attracting new businesses and jobs to Dunedin (21%)
- Retaining existing businesses and jobs in Dunedin (22%)
- The overall look and feel of the South Dunedin retail area (25%)
- Supporting the development of Dunedin businesses (27%)
- Processing of applications for building consents (28%)
- The suitability of the road network for cyclists throughout the city (29%)

Largest increases in satisfaction

- The Customer Services Agency in the Civic Centre (+9 percentage points since 2013 to 88%)
- FYI Magazine (+7 points to 77%)
- The suitability of the road network for cyclists throughout the city (+7 points to 29%)
- The DCC's call centre (telephone enquiry service) (+7 points to 85%)
- The availability of information held by the DCC (+6 points to 67%)
- Retaining existing businesses and jobs in Dunedin (+6 points to 22%)

Largest decreases in satisfaction

- Dunedin Ice Stadium (-10 percentage points since 2013 to 71%)
- Storm water collection service (-7 points to 59%)
- The flow of traffic around and through the city at the peak times of the day (-6 points to 47%)
- The overall look and feel of the South Dunedin retail area (-6 points to 25%)

Overall Satisfaction with Dunedin City Council

Satisfaction with the overall performance of the Dunedin City Council increased by four percentage points to 58% in 2014 from 54% in 2013. Levels of dissatisfaction also decreased from 15% in 2013 to 14% in 2014.

This is the highest level of satisfaction with Council's overall performance recorded since the question was first asked in its current form in 2003.

Satisfaction with Council Services

Rubbish Collection

- Satisfaction was highest for the reliability of rubbish collection (92%), kerbside recycling (89%) and household rubbish collection (87%).
- Residents are least satisfied with the cleanliness of the streets in general (55% compared to 58% in 2013).
- Unprompted issue of importance – Rubbish / glass / dog faeces on streets - need to be swept more / gutters and verges need to be cleaned out more (165 responses).

Water Services:

- Residents are most satisfied with water pressure (83%) and least satisfied with the stormwater collection service (5%).
- Unprompted issue of importance - Stormwater cause flooding in some areas/system not coping/no system in place (165 responses).

Transportation:

- Satisfaction levels were highest for the flow of traffic around and through the city at off-peak times of the day (82%), that there are footpaths where you need them throughout the city (80%) and street lighting throughout the city (79%).
- Satisfaction has increased significantly with the suitability of the road network for cyclists throughout the city which has risen to 29% satisfied compared to 22% in 2013 though this is the aspect that residents are least satisfied with.
- Unprompted issue of importance – cycle lanes are dangerous / need improving / need more driver awareness (145 responses), More/better parking/more drop off parking (79 responses), and Roads neglected/poor quality/lack of maintenance/repairs not up to standard (75 responses).

Regulatory Services:

- Satisfaction was highest for the enforcement of hygiene standards in city food establishments (77%) and lowest for the processing of applications for building consents (28%).
- The highest increase in satisfaction was for monitoring and inspection of buildings under construction (39%) which had risen by four percentage points since 2013 (35%).
- Unprompted issue of importance – Dog faeces on streets/need more dog bag collection points/more bins (76 responses) and building consents too slow/difficult/not well run/too much time wasted due to mistakes (61 responses).

Satisfaction with Council Facilities

Parks, Reserves & Aquatic Facilities:

- Residents were most satisfied with the Botanic Garden (97%). This was the most widely used facility of all those asked about, and the aspect that received the highest satisfaction rating overall.
- Satisfaction with winter sports playing fields was the lowest (74%), down from 79% in 2013.

Cultural Facilities:

- Satisfaction was highest for the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum (94%) and the city's Public Libraries (93%) and lowest for the Chinese Garden (69%)
- Unprompted issue of importance – Chinese Garden expensive/waste of money.

'Other' Facilities:

- Satisfaction was highest for the Regent Theatre (92%) and lowest for public toilets (57%).
- Satisfaction with the Dunedin Stadium (Ice Stadium) decreased from 81% in 2013 to 71% in 2014.

Satisfaction with Council Activities

Customer Service:

- Satisfaction with the Customer Service Agency in the Civic Centre was 88% compared to 79% in 2013.
- 55% of residents were satisfied that the Council was constantly striving to improve compared to 60% in 2013.
- 38% of residents were satisfied that the Council delivers good value for ratepayer money.

Elected Representatives and Council Staff

- Residents were more satisfied with their contact and dealings with DCC staff (69% compared to 67% in 2013).
- Satisfaction with the overall performance of Community Board members was 47% and satisfaction with the overall performance of the Mayor and Councillors was 44% though dissatisfaction was only 11% and 19% respectively.

Consultation and Communication:

- Satisfaction has increased across all measures of consultation and communication in 2014.
- Satisfaction was highest for the DCC's website (78%) and lowest for the amount of public consultation undertaken (42% compared to 40% in 2013).
- Satisfaction with the FYI Magazine was 77%, up 7 percentage points from 70% in 2013.

Economic Development and Promotion:

- Satisfaction was up on most measures compared to 2013, such as retaining existing businesses and jobs in Dunedin which has increased by six percentage points and supporting the development of existing Dunedin businesses which has increased by five percentage points.
- Satisfaction with city festivals and events (66%) and media coverage of events run in Dunedin (52%) was moderate but levels of dissatisfaction are low (11% and 20% respectively).
- Satisfaction remained fairly low in other areas. Satisfaction with retaining existing businesses and jobs in Dunedin (22%) and attracting new businesses and jobs to Dunedin (21%) were the lowest rated aspects in the Survey.

Planning and Urban Design

- Satisfaction was highest with the overall look and feel of the city and the overall look and feel of residents' most convenient retail centre (both 75%).
- Satisfaction with the overall look and feel of the South Dunedin retail area has decreased by six percentage points in 2014 (25%) compared to 2013 (31%).
- Three in ten (30%) residents considered the Central City to be their most convenient retail centre followed by South Dunedin (17%) and Mosgiel (14%).
- When residents considered their most convenient retail centre¹, satisfaction with the look and feel of Central City (78%) and Mosgiel (71%) rated highest while satisfaction with South Dunedin (49%) rated lowest.

¹ Only retail centres that have had over 20 respondents considering them their most convenient centre have been included.

Overall Perceptions of Dunedin

Importance and perception of characteristics of the city

- Residents considered that it was most important that Dunedin was a safe city (93%), a thriving city (86%) and a sustainable city (85%).
- 58% of residents actually considered Dunedin to be a safe city (down two percentage points from 2013), 40% that it is a sustainable city (up four percentage points) and 31% that it is a thriving city (up six percentage points).
- Residents were most likely to perceive that Dunedin maintains and preserves its architectural heritage (76%) and recognises and supports cultural diversity (69%).

What respondents would like to change about Dunedin²

- Council staff attitude and performance needs improving (226)
- City/suburbs untidy or tired looking (205)
- Need to support local businesses/new business support (188)
- Need to attract/help businesses come to Dunedin/don't turn away opportunity from investors (181)
- Support for the development of a sustainable Dunedin is currently not being provided effectively (125)

What respondents are positive about³

- Dunedin's environment is good/beautiful (219)
- Satisfied/good Arts and Cultural Environment of Dunedin (188)
- Well managed/I am happy with our Sport and Recreation facilities in Dunedin (154)
- Satisfied with Council services (123)
- Satisfied with Council staff (122)

Priorities for the Council for the coming year⁴

- Encourage businesses/economic development (393)
- Reduce Council spending/control debt (217)
- Control rates (141)
- Provide cycle ways (115)
- Improve look and feel of city (113)

² Note: Results from the primary and secondary data sets are combined for this question

³ Note: Results from the primary and secondary data sets are combined for this question

⁴ Note: Results from the primary and secondary data sets are combined for this question