



# MidCoast Council

**Community Research**

Prepared by: Micromex Research  
Date: August 2023



# Research Objectives

## Why?

- Identify the community's overall level of satisfaction with Council performance and delivery of services and compare to previous research
- Assess and establish the community's priorities and satisfaction in relation to Council activities, services, and facilities
- Determine level of agreement for liveability measures
- Explore and understand resident experiences contacting Council

## How?

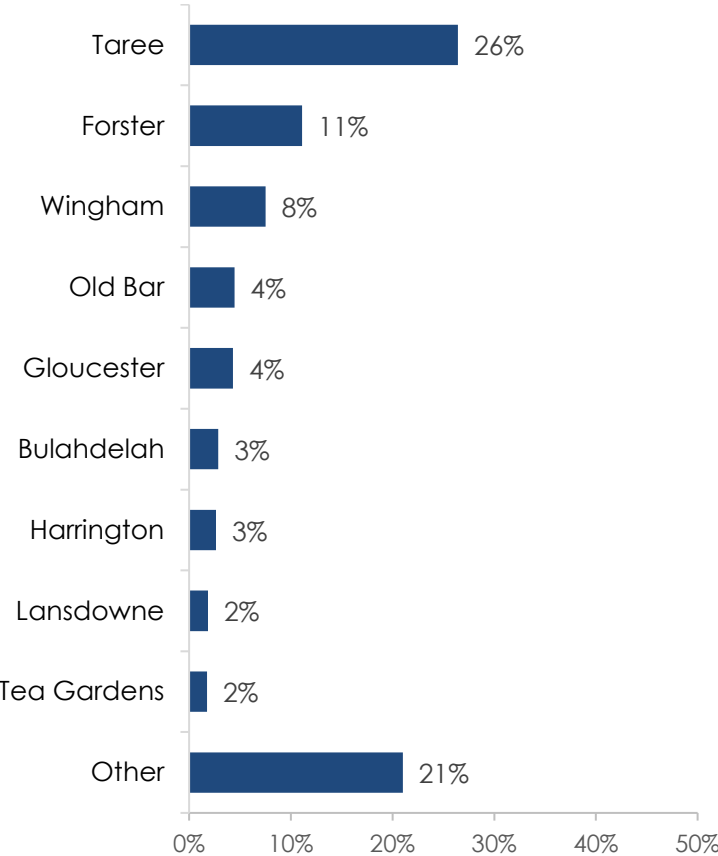
- Telephone survey (landline (N=154) and mobile (N=247) to N=401 residents
- We use a 5 point scale (e.g. 1= not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied)
- Greatest margin of error +/- 4.9%

## When?

- Implementation (3<sup>rd</sup> July – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023)

# Sample Profile

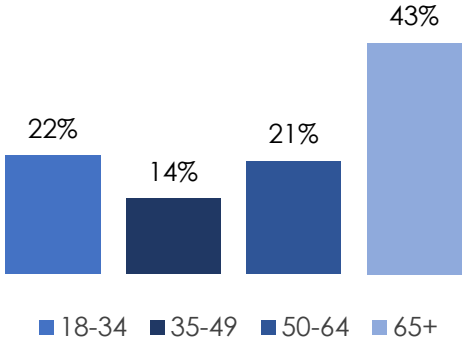
## Suburb



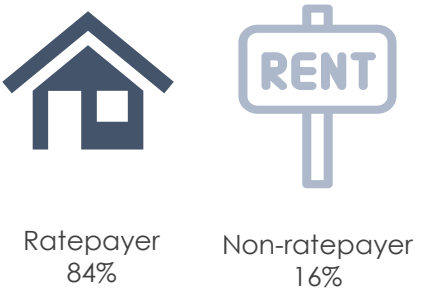
## Gender



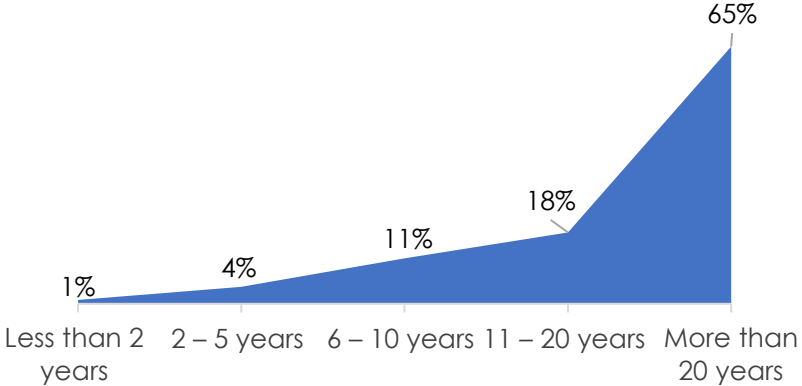
## Age



## Ratepayer status



## Time lived in the area



Please see Appendix 1 for a complete description of 'Other' suburbs  
 Base: N = 401





# Living in MidCoast

# Most Valued Aspects about Living in the MidCoast Council Area

34% of residents mentioned the natural environment as the most valued aspect of living in the MidCoast Council region. A further 29% commented on the rural, relaxed, quiet lifestyle and 11% the location, specifically the proximity to work, family and services.

## Example Verbatims

*"Town is very friendly and has most amenities"*

*"Close proximity to the ocean and it's beaches"*

*"Easy access to everything e.g. river, airport, railway station, council chambers, shopping"*

*"Natural environment, land, trees, beach and the community"*

*"The range of scenery including beaches and mountains"*

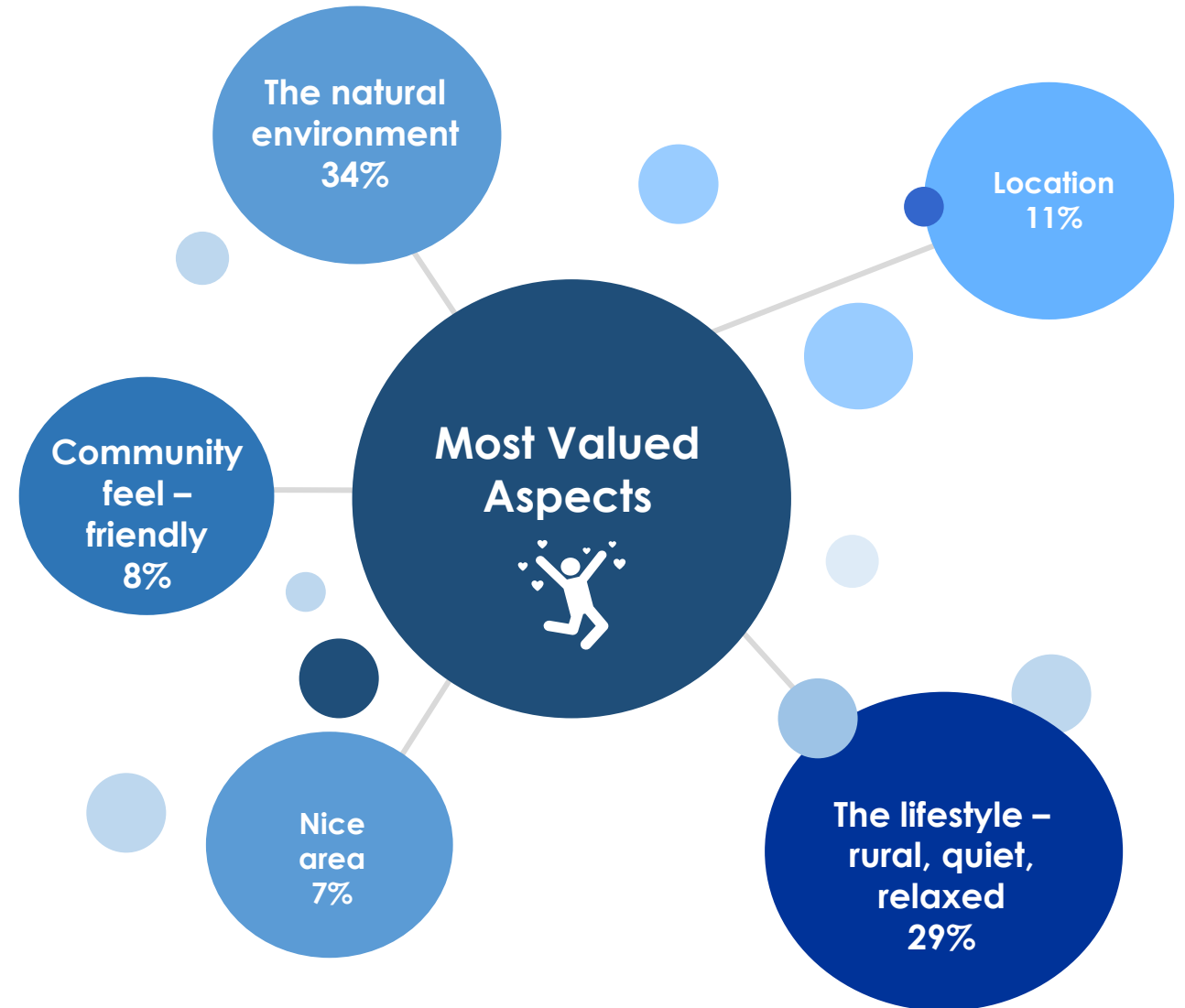
*"The sense of community"*

*"Accessibility to services and facilities makes for an easy lifestyle"*

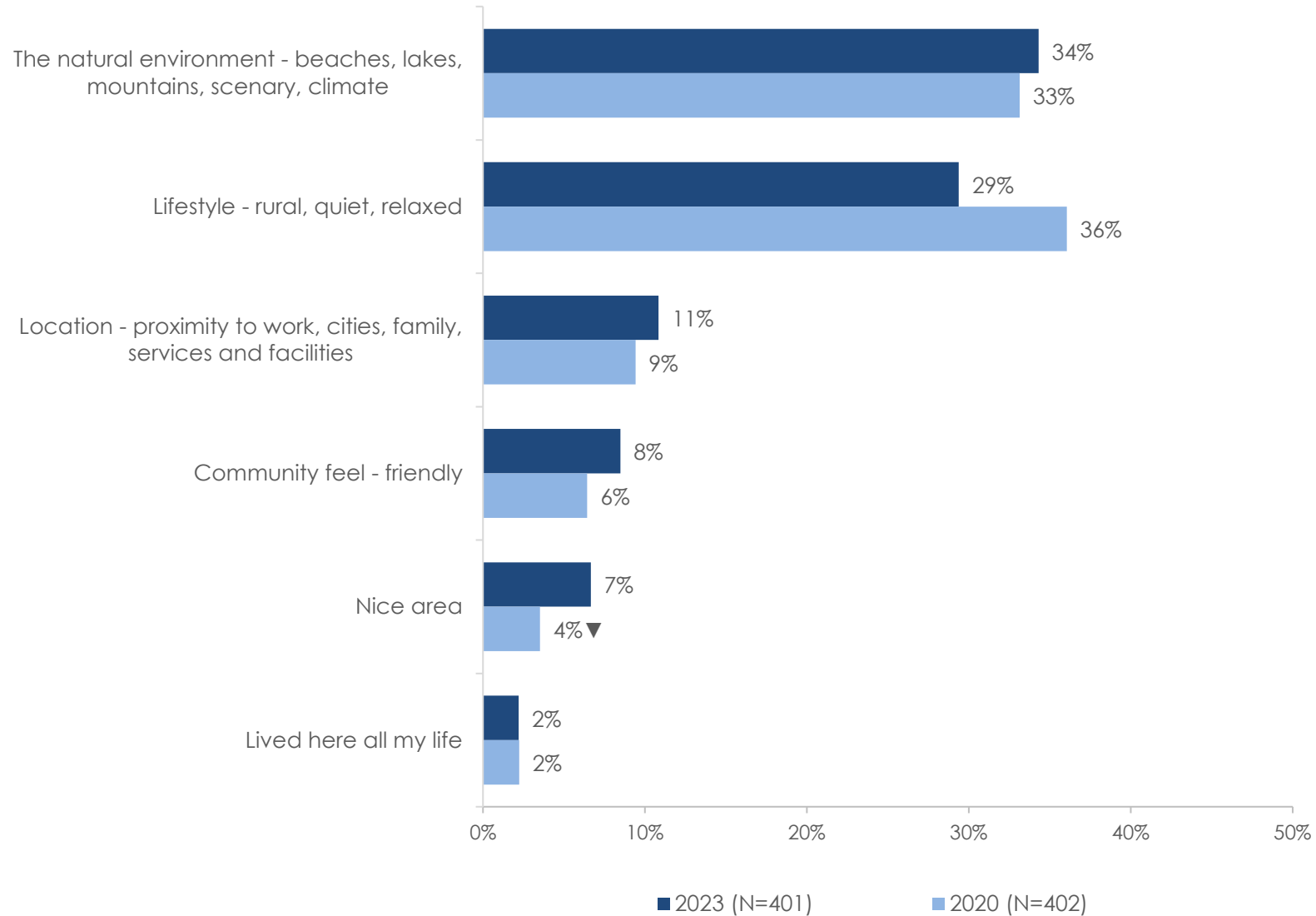
*"The availability of everything e.g., The country feel but also having beaches around"*

*"There's a lot of variety with national parks and forests, beaches, mountains - great environment"*

*"It's a nice place to be and it's relatively quiet"*



# Most Valued Aspects about Living in the MidCoast Council Area



▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (compared to 2020)

Please see Appendix 1 for full list of responses

# High Priority Areas for the Next 10 Years

Compared to 2020 significantly more residents stated 'roads and supporting infrastructure' as a high priority issue (68% compared to 46% in 2020). Other priority areas include more/improved community services/facilities (23%) as well as employment/business opportunities.

## Example Verbatims

*"Sealed road maintenance in residential areas"*

*"Health services and doctors, we need many more"*

*"Managing impacts from increasing population e.g. infrastructure to keep up with increasing population and development"*

*"Improving the quality of roads e.g. compensating residents for damages caused by the road"*

*"Improving the roads including fixing the potholes"*

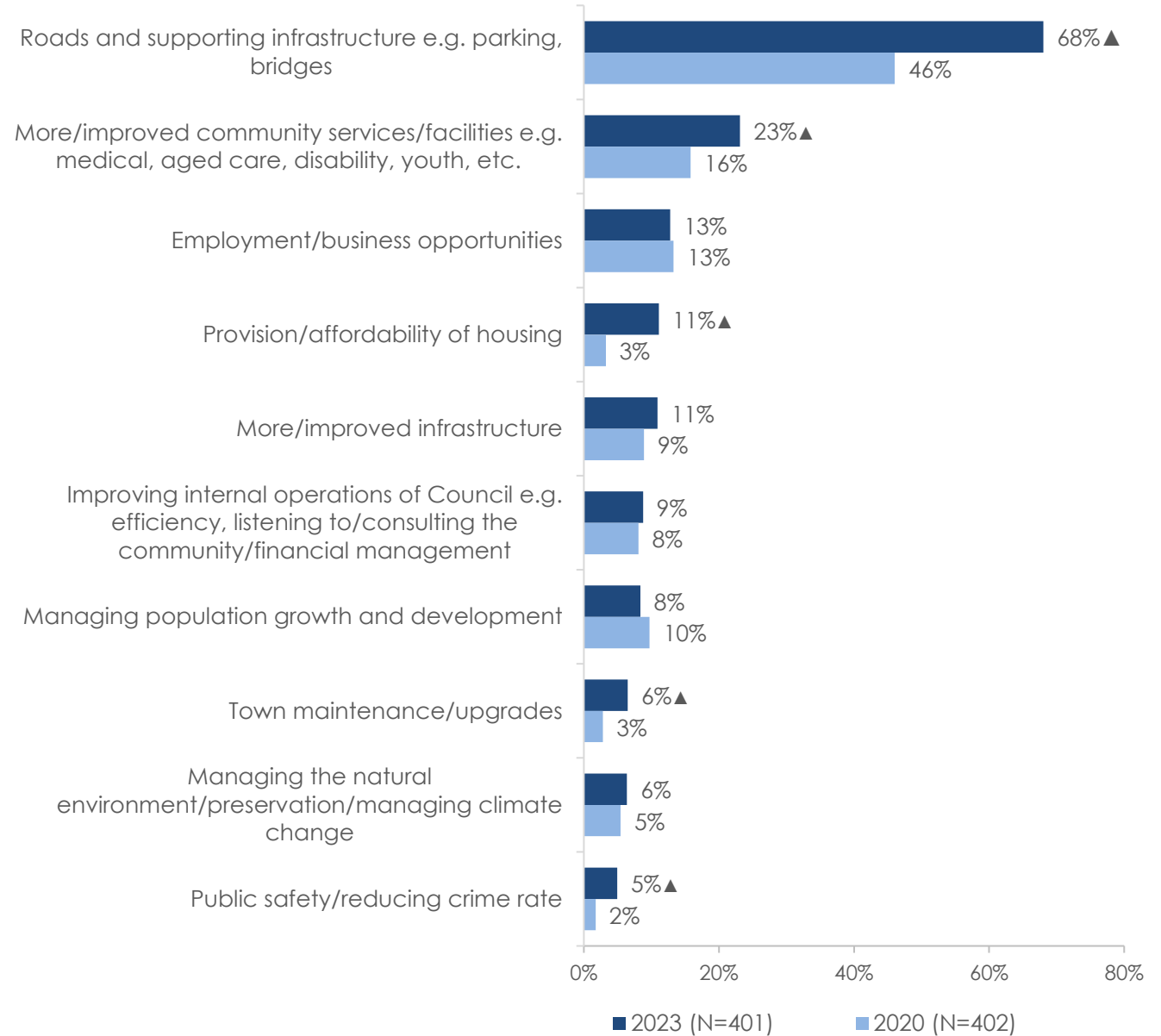
*"Not enough infrastructure for the population growth of the region"*

*"A more balanced focus on infrastructure/facilities for the young and the elderly"*

*"Development and implementation of the appropriate infrastructure to support the growing population"*

*"Job opportunities for the younger generation"*

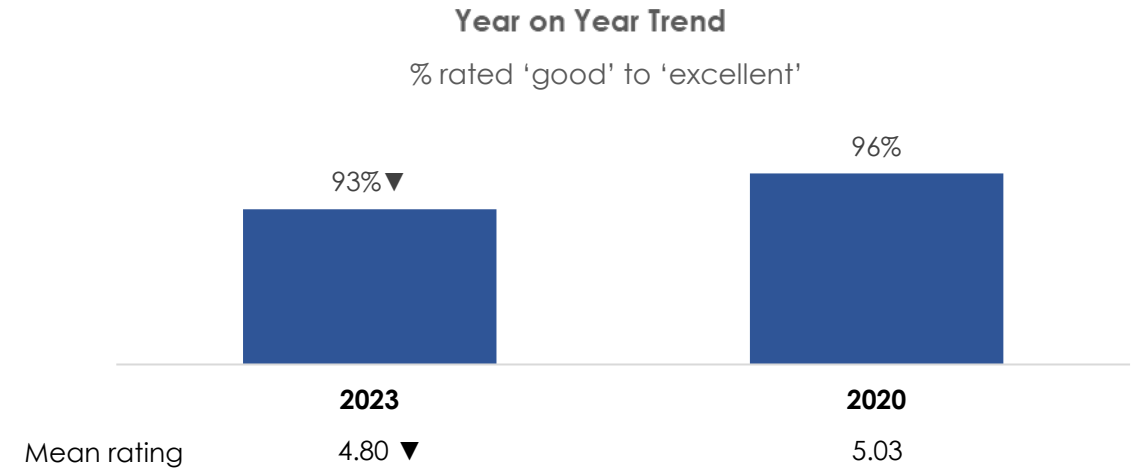
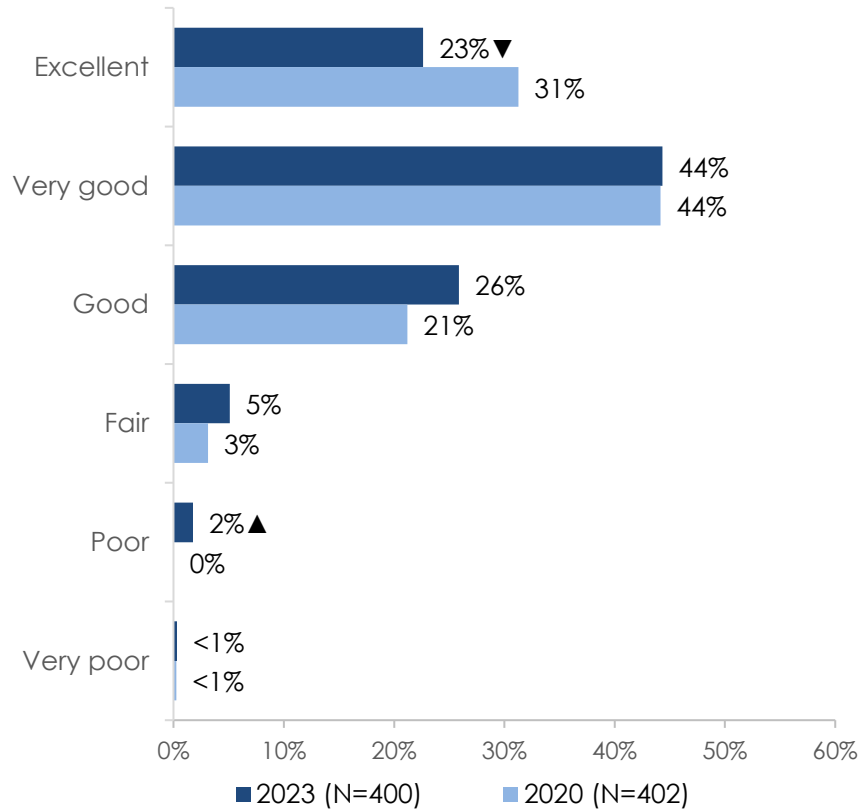
*"Residents in this LGA having lower payrates than other LGA's, for the same job type"*



▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (compared to 2020)  
Please see Appendix 1 for full list of responses

# Quality of Life

93% of residents rated their quality of life living in the MidCoast Council area as 'good' to 'excellent'. Despite a softening in residents' perceived quality of life when compared to 2020 results, results remain on a par with the Micromex Regional LGA Benchmark. Female residents and those aged under 50 expressed a significantly lower quality of life.



	MidCoast Council	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Regional
Top 3 Box %	93%	94%
Mean rating	4.80	4.95
Base	400	13,773

	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
Mean rating	4.80	4.91 ▲	4.70	4.60 ▼	4.57 ▼	4.71	5.03 ▲	4.81	4.73
Top 3 Box %	93%	96% ▲	90%	90%	92%	90%	96% ▲	92%	95%
Base	400	192	207	64	67	107	162	336	63

Base: N = 400

Q1c. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life you have living in the MidCoast Council area?

Scale: 1 = very poor, 6 = excellent  
▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower rating (by group)



# Overview – Living on the MidCoast

	Top 2 Box agreement
You feel safe during the day	82%
Sporting facilities in the area meet your needs	62%
People in the LGA have fair opportunity to participate in community life	62%
You feel safe during the night	61%
Graffiti is adequately controlled	61%
You feel safe using public facilities	60%
Living in the LGA gives you a sense of living in a community	58%
There is a good range of leisure and recreation opportunities	57%
Litter is adequately controlled	54%
MidCoast is a safe area for pedestrians	54%
There is a good range of community groups and support networks for residents	53%
Shops and services in shopping areas meet residents' needs	52%
There are good education and training opportunities available	49%
You feel able to afford a reasonable standard of housing in this area	49%
There is a good range of opportunities for cultural and artistic activities and expression	49%
There is urban vitality and good lifestyle quality in the LGA	46%
The natural environment is respected and protected	44%
Traffic systems provide for safe and efficient traffic flow	42%
The cost of living in the LGA is affordable for you	41%
The community in the LGA is harmonious, cohesive and inclusive	38%
MidCoast is a safe area for cyclists	32%
There is sufficient choice of housing types i.e. apartments, town houses, etc	32%
New developments are helping to provide an attractive urban landscape	30%
The local economy provides a wide range of work opportunities	30%
Public transport is adequate for your needs	29%
The Council supports a variety of businesses	28%
Councils planning and leadership are contributing to a sustainable environment in the LGA	25%
Planning for local economic growth and development is adequate	25%
Council plans well to help secure the community's long term future	23%
Information about Council and its decisions is clear and accessible	22%
Council adequately considers community concerns and views when making decisions	19%

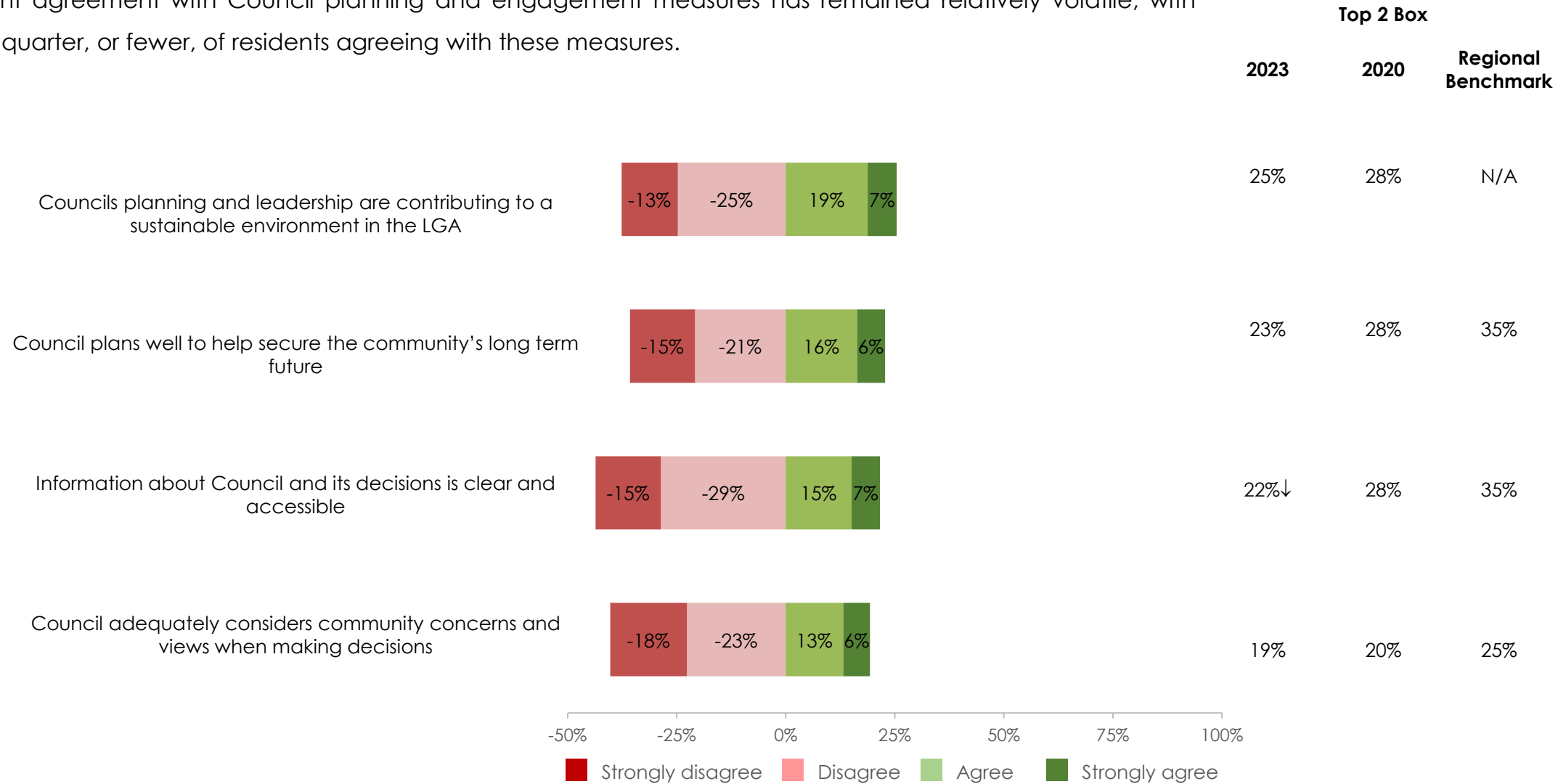
Base: N = 401

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see overleaf for detailed results

# Agreement with Council Planning & Engagement

Resident agreement with Council planning and engagement measures has remained relatively volatile, with only a quarter, or fewer, of residents agreeing with these measures.



Base: N = 401

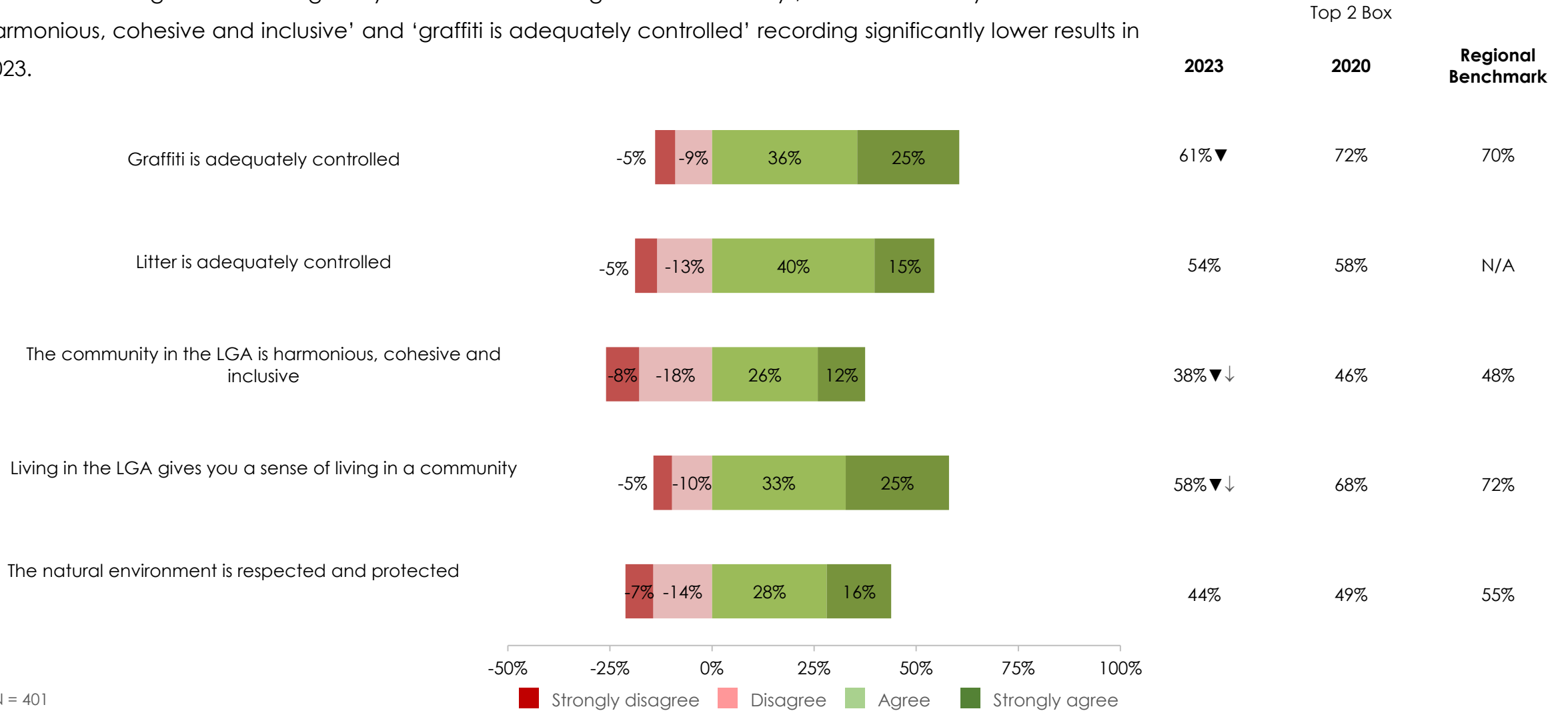
Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to the benchmark

# Agreement with Community Pride

Agreement with community pride measures has shown some movement in 2023, with agreement with the statements 'living in the LGA gives you a sense of living in a community', 'the community in the LGA is harmonious, cohesive and inclusive' and 'graffiti is adequately controlled' recording significantly lower results in 2023.



Base: N = 401

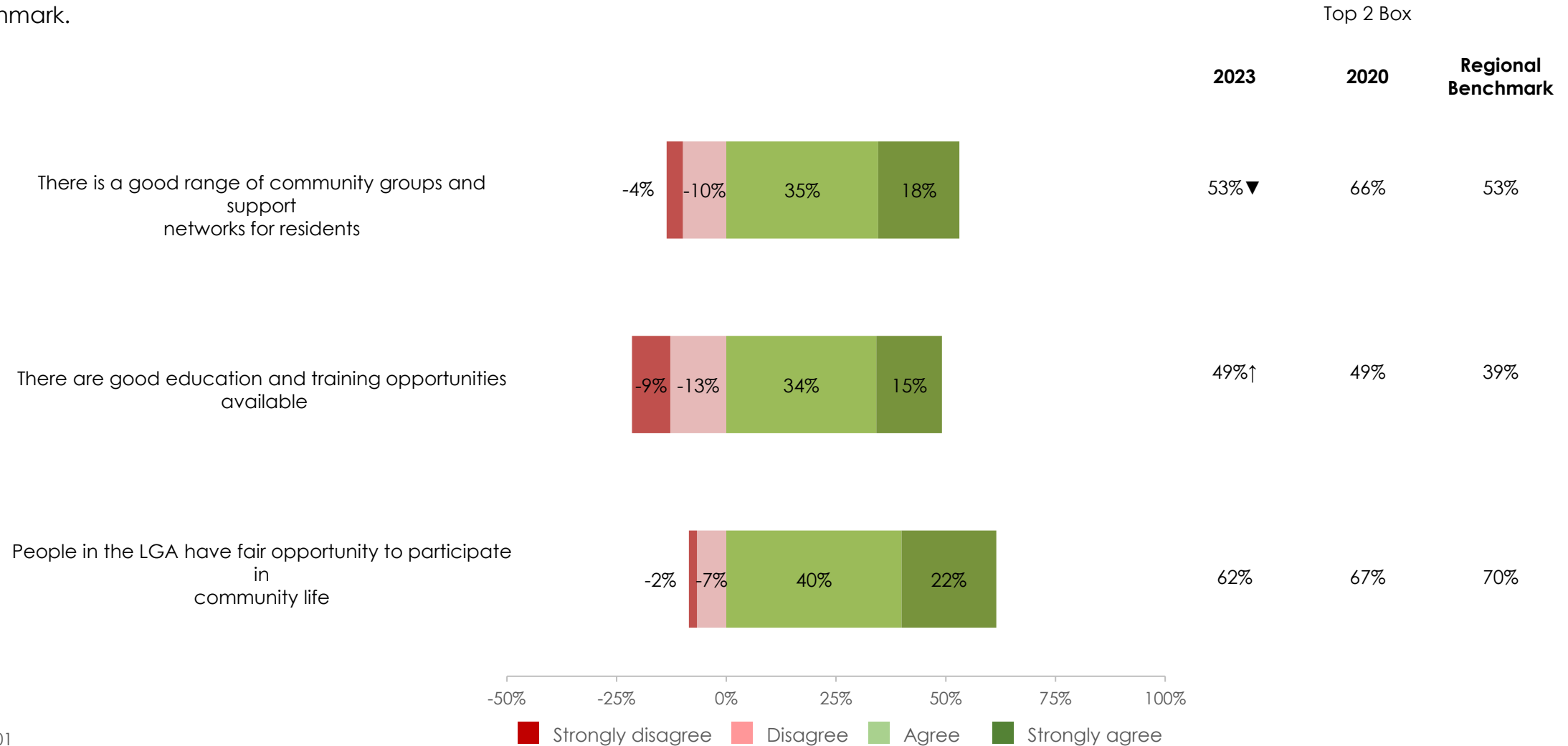
Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to benchmark

# Agreement with Community Services and Support

Approximately half (or more) of residents agree that community services and support measures are adequately delivered in the MidCoast Council area. Residents' level of agreement with the statement 'there are good education and training opportunities available', exceeds the Micromex Regional Benchmark.



Base: N = 401

Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

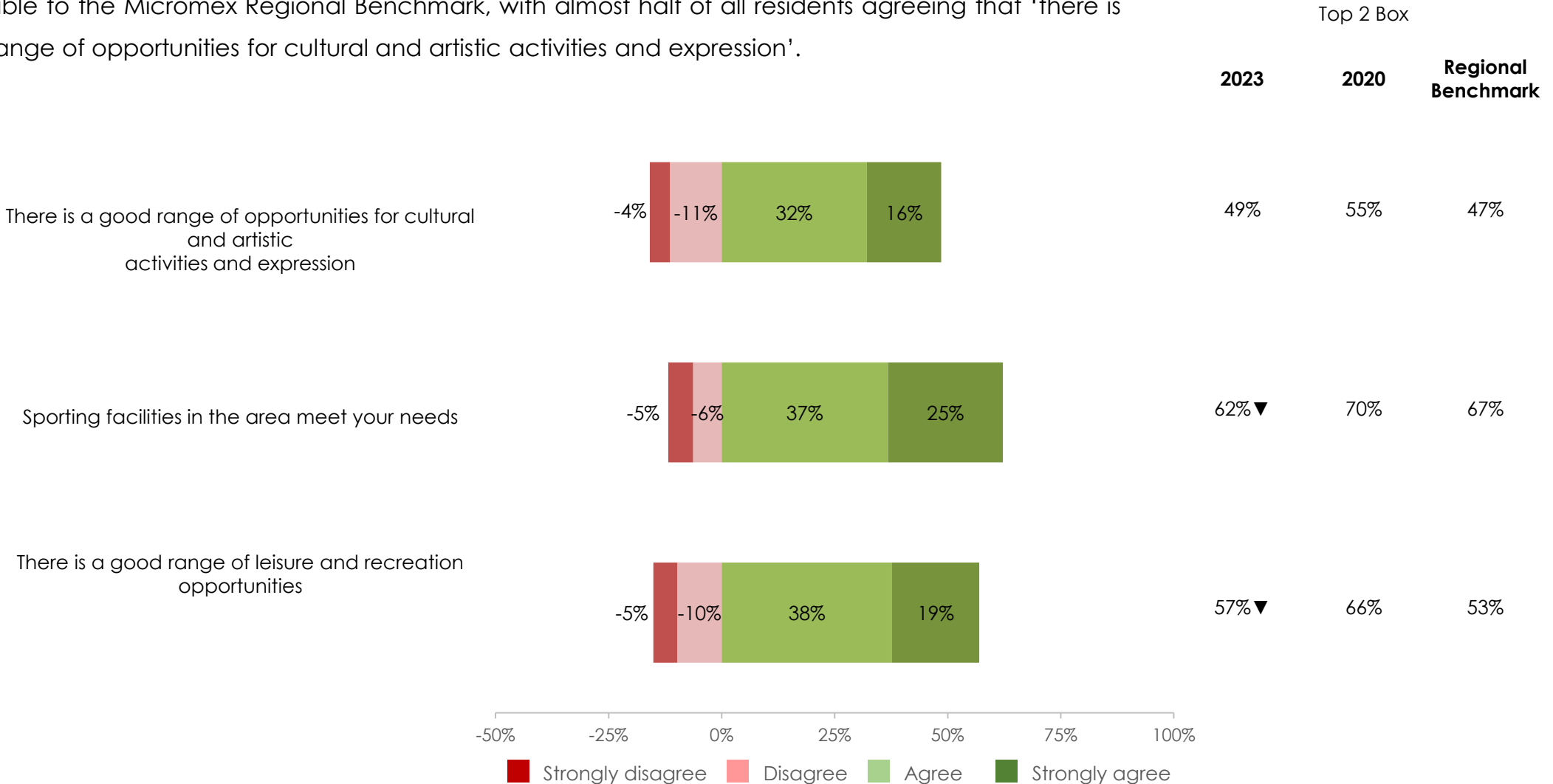
Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to the benchmark



# Agreement with Culture and Lifestyle

Agreement with the delivery on culture and lifestyle measures in the MidCoast area has remained comparable to the Micromex Regional Benchmark, with almost half of all residents agreeing that 'there is a good range of opportunities for cultural and artistic activities and expression'.



Base: N = 401

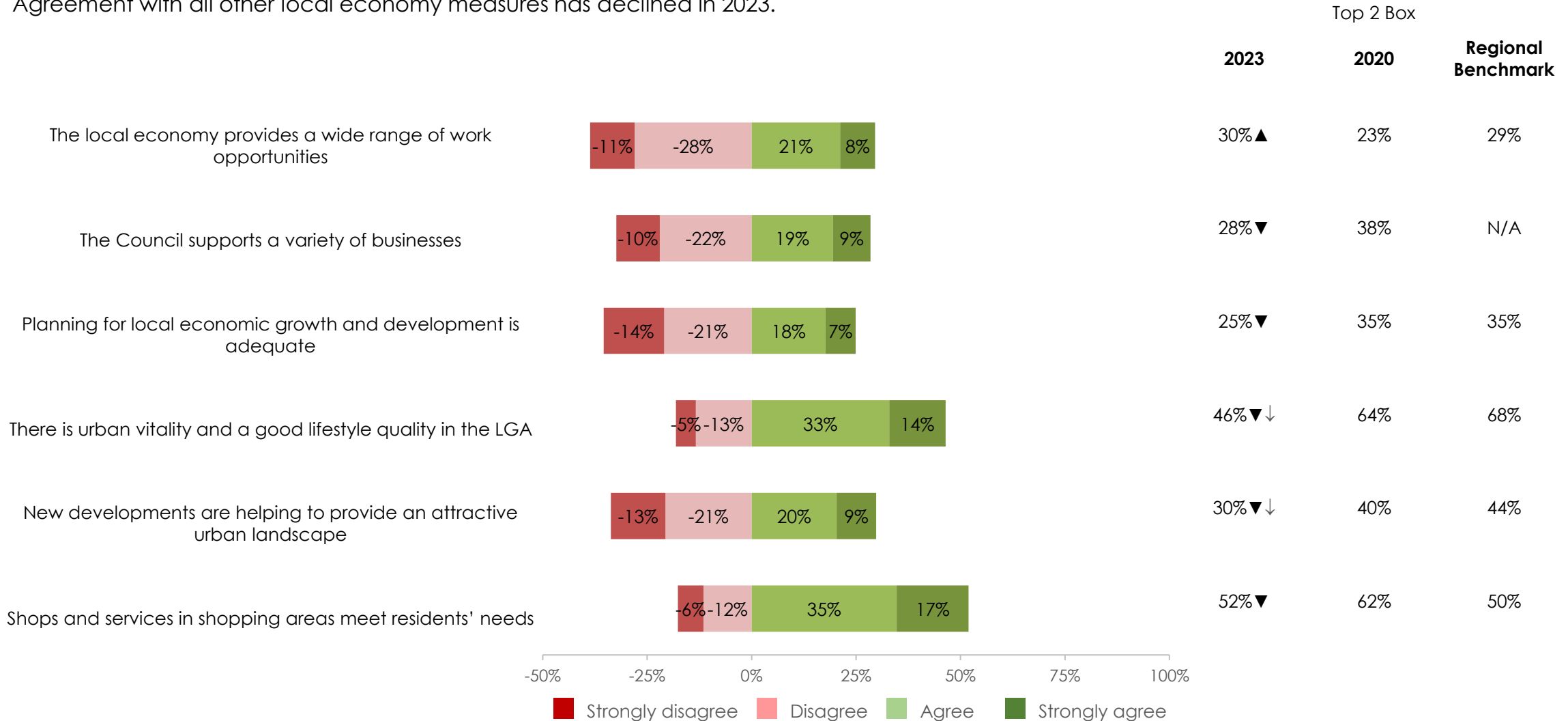
Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to benchmark

# Agreement with the Local Economy

Almost one third of residents agree that the 'local economy provides a range of work opportunities', which has significantly increased compared to 2020. Agreement with all other local economy measures has declined in 2023.



Base: N = 401

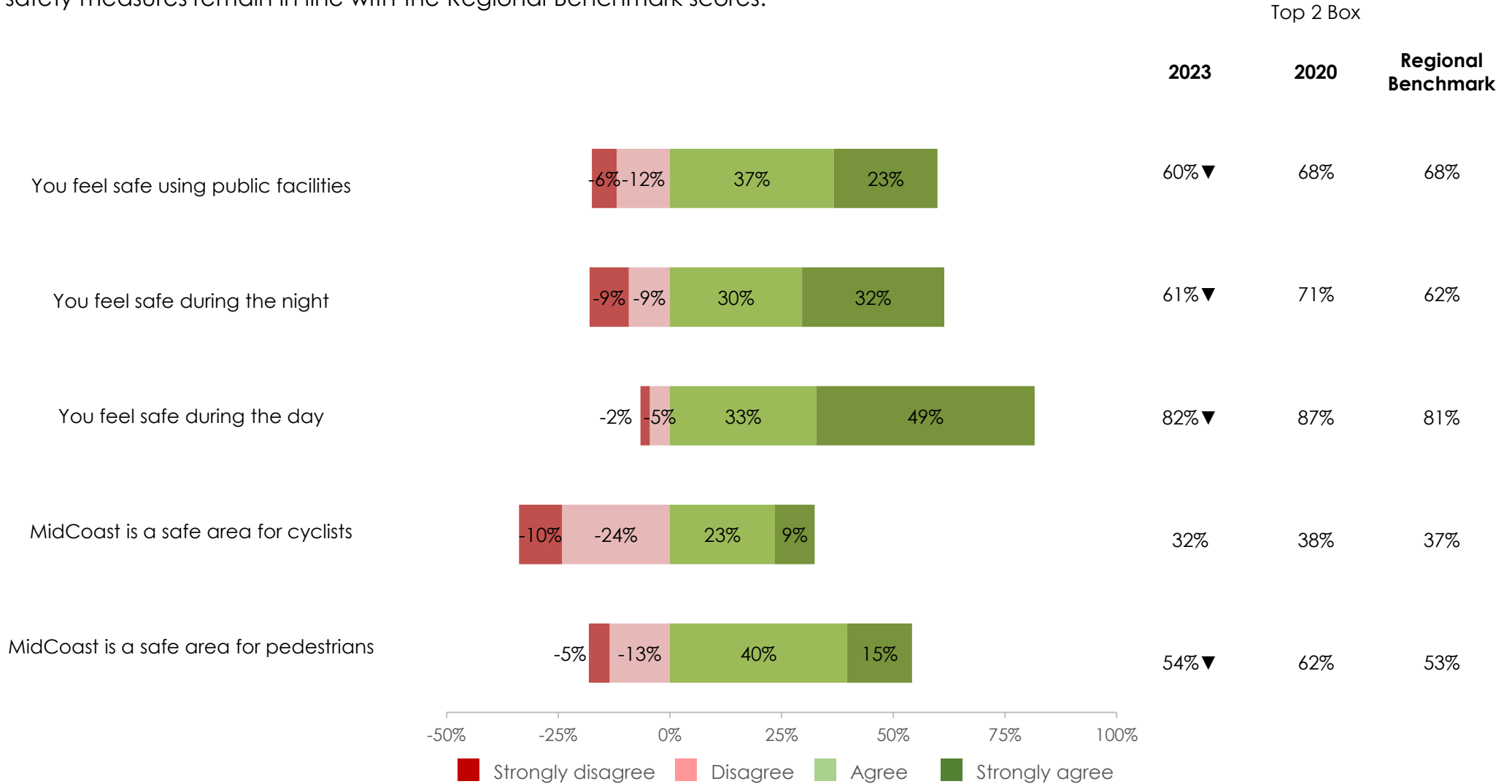
Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to benchmark

# Agreement with Community Safety

Community safety measures are relatively strong in the MidCoast LGA, with 82% of residents feeling safe in the day, and 61% feeling safe during the day. Community safety measures remain in line with the Regional Benchmark scores.



Base: N = 309

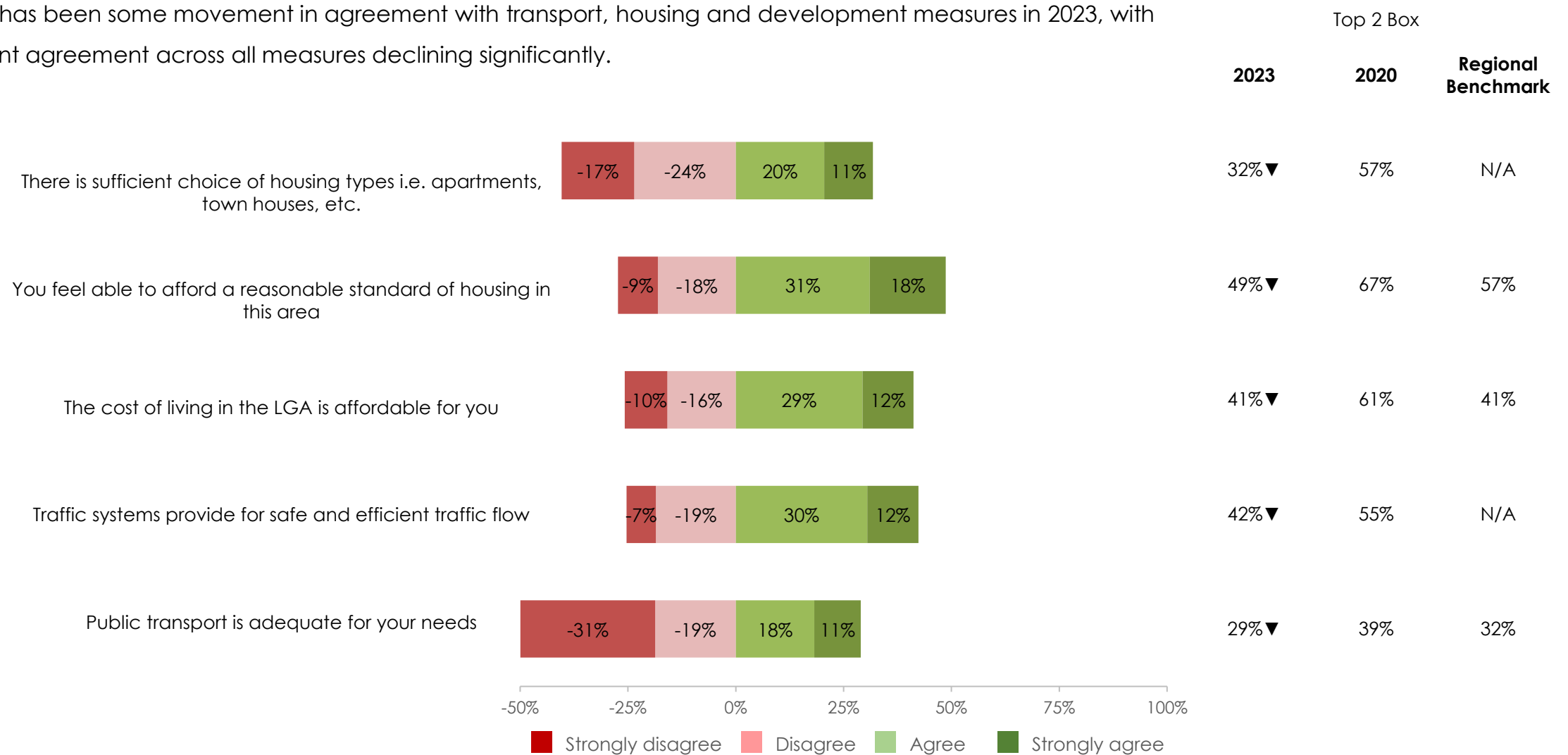
Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to benchmark

# Agreement with Transport, Housing and Development

There has been some movement in agreement with transport, housing and development measures in 2023, with resident agreement across all measures declining significantly.



Base: N = 401

Note: Data labels of <2% have not been shown above

Q4. In this section I will read out a number of statements. For each of these could you please indicate your level of agreement with each statement?

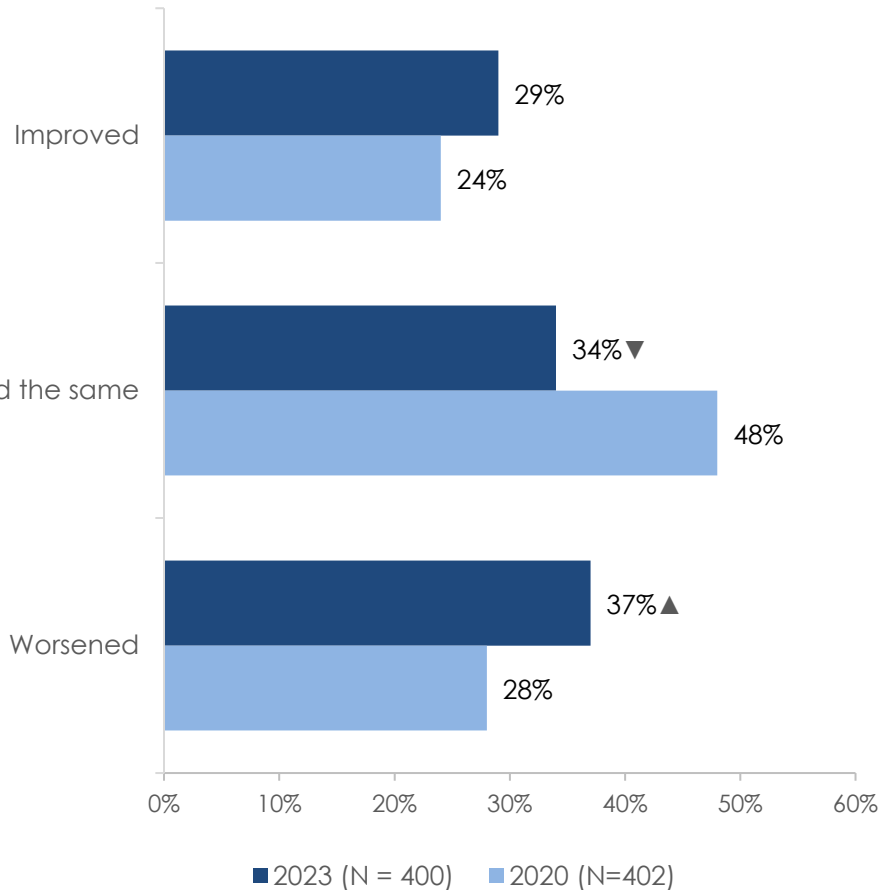
Please see Appendix 1 for results by demographics  
 ↑↓ = A significantly higher/lower rating compared to benchmark



# Respondents Opinion on Road Improvement

37% of residents believe the roads in their local area have worsened, which is a significant increase from 2020.

There was no significant difference in opinion when analysed by demographics.



	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Improved	29%	32%	26%	29%	31%	28%	29%
Remained the same	34%	33%	35%	38%	33%	30%	35%
Worsened	37%	35%	39%	32%	37%	42%	36%
Base	400	194	207	64	68	107	162

	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer	North	South	West
Improved	29%	30%	31%	22%	35%
Remained the same	34%	33%	33%	36%	35%
Worsened	37%	37%	36%	42%	30%
Base	337	63	240	107	53

Base: N = 400

Q5. In your opinion would you say the roads in the your local area have improved, worsened or remained the same?

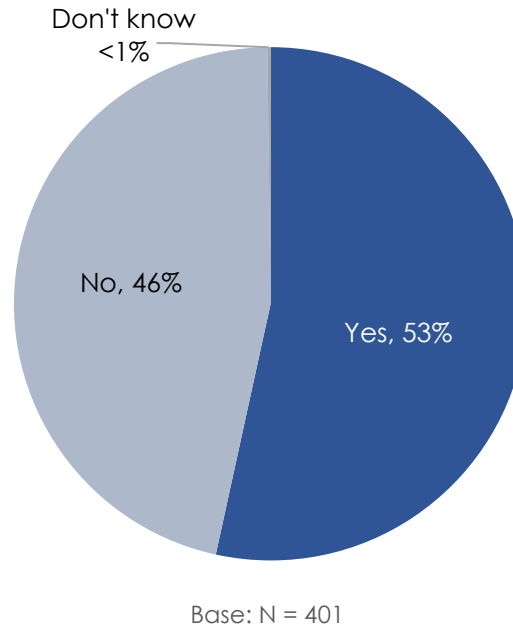
▲ ▼ = A significantly higher/lower percentage (by group) 17



## Summary of Council Services/Facilities

# Contact with Council

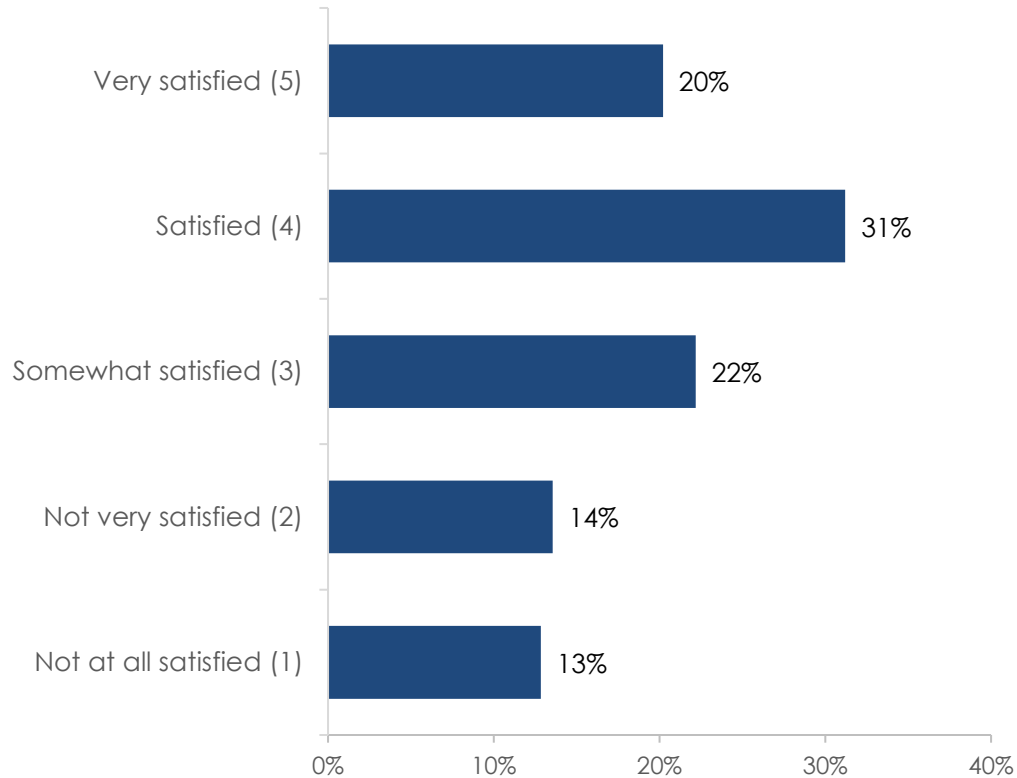
53% of residents have contacted Council in the last 12 months. Younger residents and non-ratepayers were less likely to have contacted Council.



	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
% Yes	53%	55%	52%	43%▼	63%	55%	52%	57%	30%▼
Base	401	194	207	64	68	107	162	337	63

# Satisfaction with Ease of Contact

For those who have contacted Council, almost three quarters of residents were at least somewhat satisfied with the ease in which they were able to contact Council.



	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
Mean rating	3.32	3.31	3.34	2.93	3.29	3.45	3.38	3.34	3.07
Top 3 Box	74%	73%	74%	61%	83%	75%	72%	75%	62%
Base	214	106	108	28	43	58	85	194	19

Base: N = 214

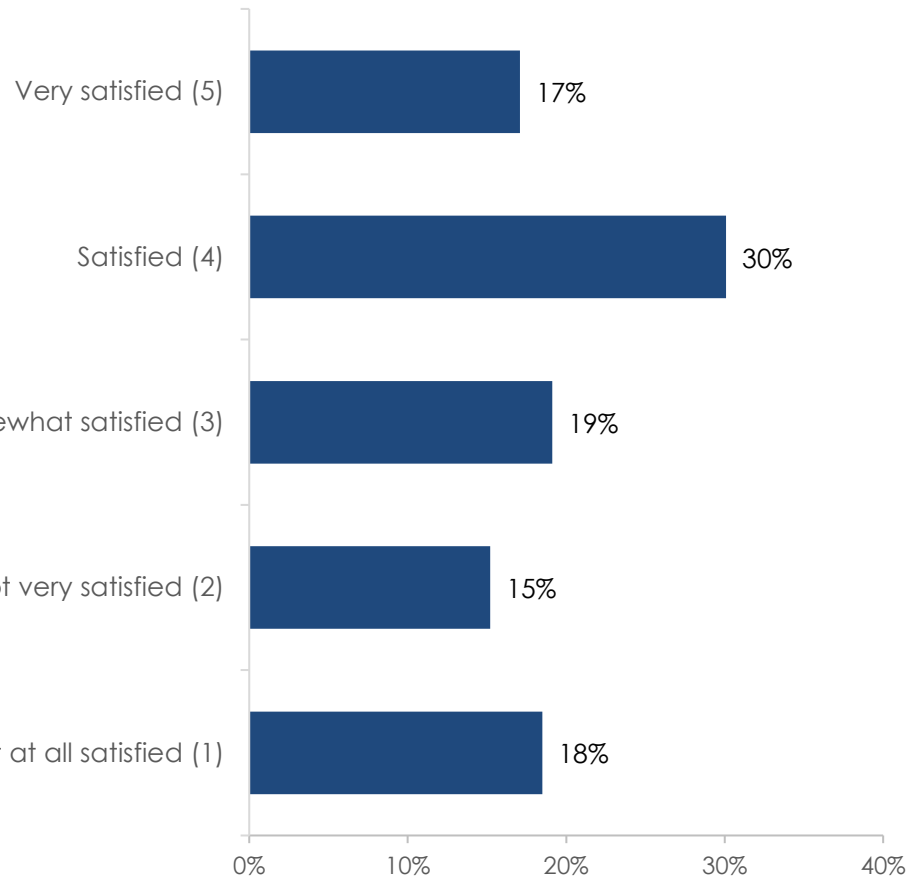
Q9b. Overall, how satisfied were you with the ease in which you were able to contact Council?

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied 20



# Satisfaction with The way Contact was Handled

66% of residents who had contacted Council were at least somewhat satisfied with the way their contact was handled.



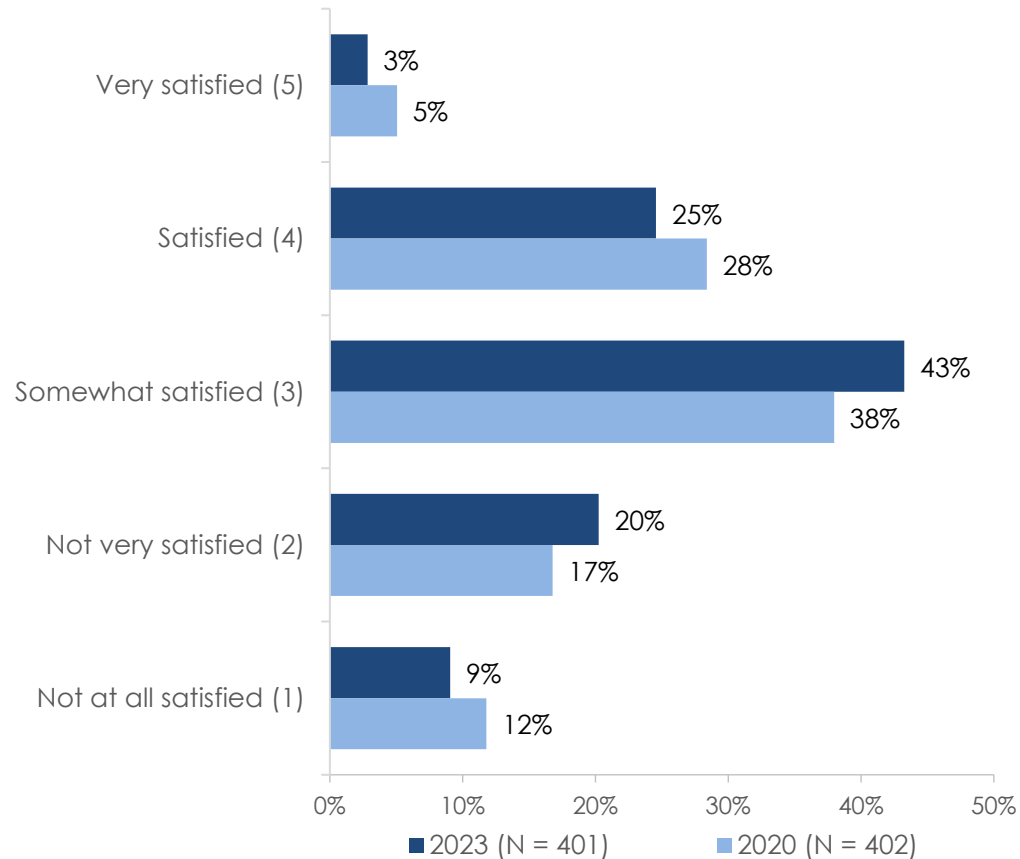
	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
Mean rating	3.12	3.10	3.14	2.80	3.39	3.24	3.01	3.16	2.64
Top 3 Box	66%	63%	70%	53%	75%	70%	64%	68%	51%
Base	214	106	108	28	43	58	85	194	19

	MidCoast Council	Micromex LGA Benchmark
Mean rating	3.12	3.90
Top 3 Box	66%	84%
Base	214	10,385

# Overall Satisfaction

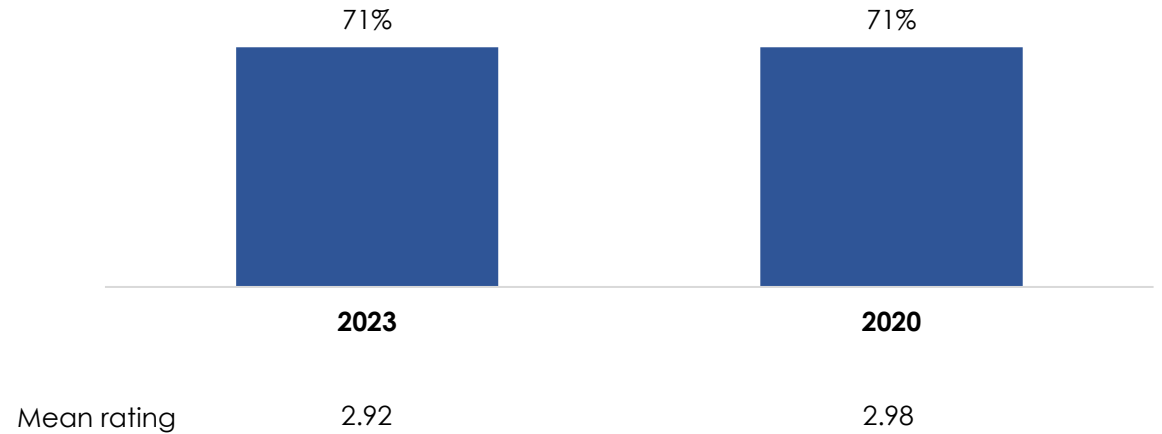
71% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months.

Whilst resident satisfaction has remained similar to the 2020 results, it is lower than the Micromex Regional Benchmark.



## Year on Year Trend

% at least somewhat satisfied



	MidCoast Council	Micromex LGA Benchmark – Regional
Top 3 Box %	71%	83%
Mean rating	2.92	3.33
Base	401	47,365

# Overall Satisfaction – By Demographics

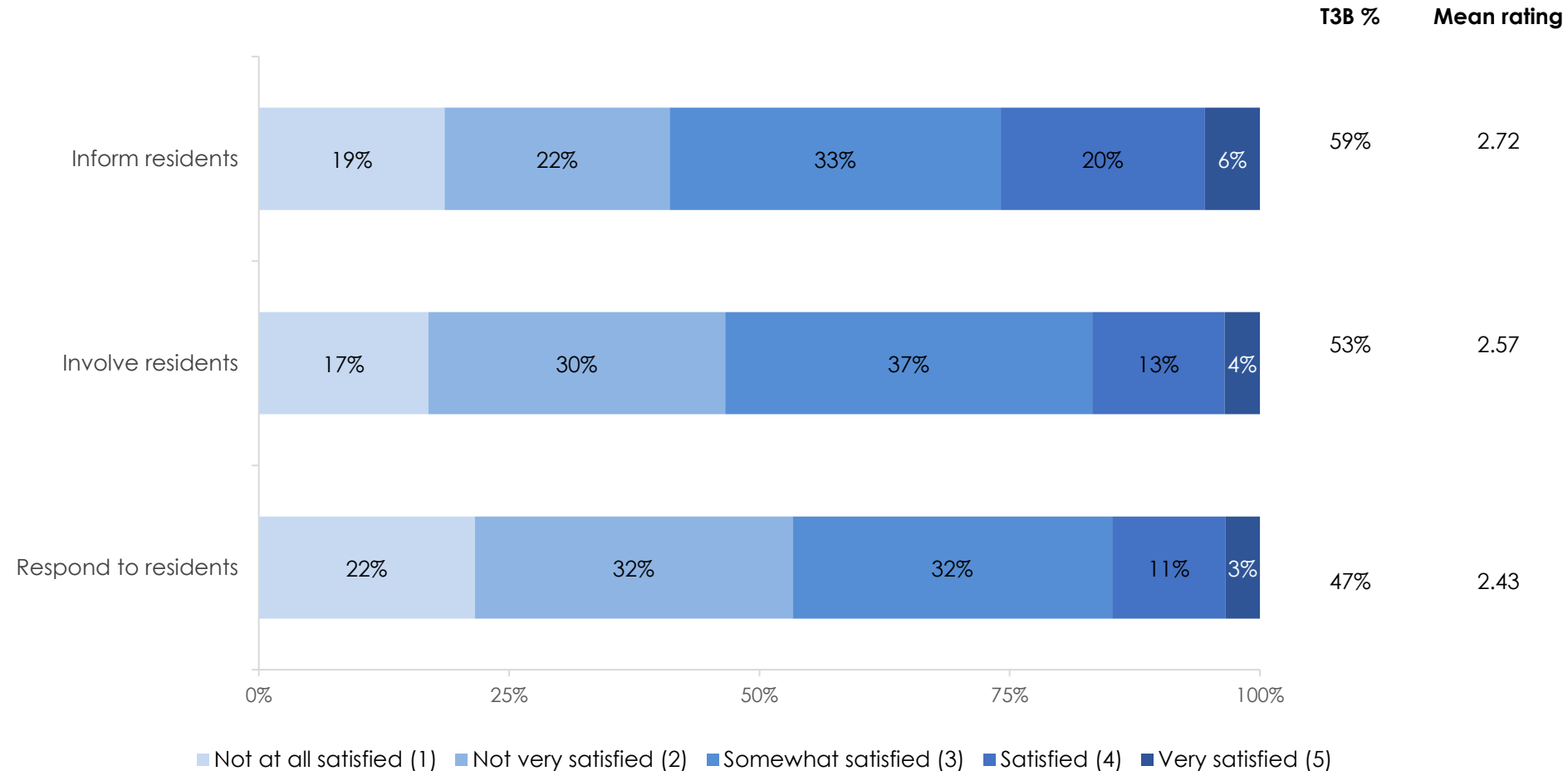
Resident satisfaction is consistent across all demographics.

	Overall	Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	Ratepayer	Non-ratepayer
Mean rating	2.92	2.93	2.91	2.87	2.71	2.92	3.02	2.90	3.01
Top 3 Box	71%	70%	71%	68%	64%	70%	75%	70%	76%
Base	401	194	207	64	68	107	162	337	63

	North	South	West
Mean rating	2.93	2.91	2.86
Top 3 Box	70%	74%	67%
Base	240	108	53

# Satisfaction with Council's Efforts to Communicate with Residents

Approximately half of the community is at least somewhat satisfied with Council's efforts to inform, involve and respond to residents. Residents aged 35-49 expressed a significantly lower level of satisfaction with Council's efforts to involve and inform (see next slide).



Base: N = 398

Q6. Can you please rate the following criteria regarding Council's efforts to communicate with residents?

Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied 24

# Importance & Satisfaction – Highest/Lowest Rated Services/Facilities

A core element of this community survey was the rating of 42 facilities/services in terms of Importance and Satisfaction. The analysis below identifies the highest and lowest rated services/facilities in terms of importance and satisfaction.

## Importance

The following services/facilities received the highest T2 box importance ratings:

Higher importance	T2 Box	Mean
Maintaining local roads	98%	4.86
Overall condition of the local sealed road network	95%	4.70
Supporting local jobs and businesses	94%	4.66
Maintaining local bridges	93%	4.65
Road safety	93%	4.68

The following services/facilities received the lowest T2 box importance ratings:

Lower importance	T2 Box	Mean
Airports	56%	3.61
Heritage sites protected and maintained	59%	3.71
Cultural opportunities and services, such as the Art Gallery and Entertainment Centre	60%	3.68
Climate change	64%	3.76
Provision of bike paths	64%	3.79

T2B = important/very important  
Scale: 1 = not at all important, 5 = very important

## Satisfaction

The following services/facilities received the highest T3 box satisfaction ratings:

Higher satisfaction	T3 Box	Mean
Library services	93%	4.07
Sewerage services	91%	4.01
Cultural opportunities and services, such as the Art Gallery and Entertainment Centre	88%	3.64
Recycling/waste management/landfills	88%	3.79
Water service	84%	3.73

The following services/facilities received the lowest T3 box satisfaction ratings:

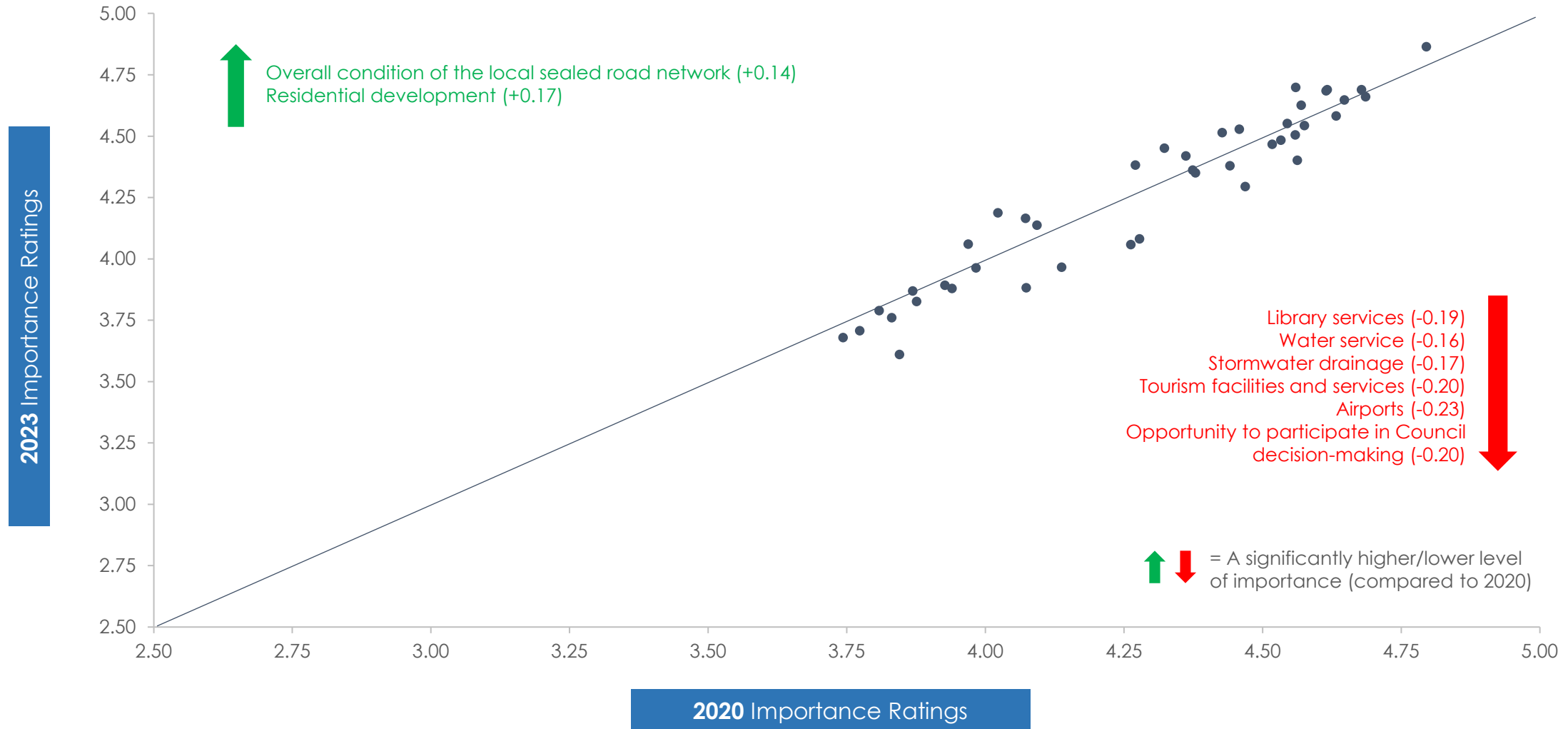
Lower satisfaction	T3 Box	Mean
Maintaining local roads	26%	1.93
Overall condition of the local sealed road network	37%	2.18
Council decision-making reflecting community opinion	52%	2.50
Provision of bike paths	54%	2.72
Financial management	54%	2.54

T3B = somewhat satisfied/satisfied/very satisfied  
Scale: 1 = not at all satisfied, 5 = very satisfied

# Services and Facilities – Importance: Comparison by Year

The below chart compares the mean importance ratings for 2023 vs 2020.

Importance significantly increased for 2 of the 41 comparable services and facilities, there were also significant decreases in importance for 7 of the 41 services and facilities.

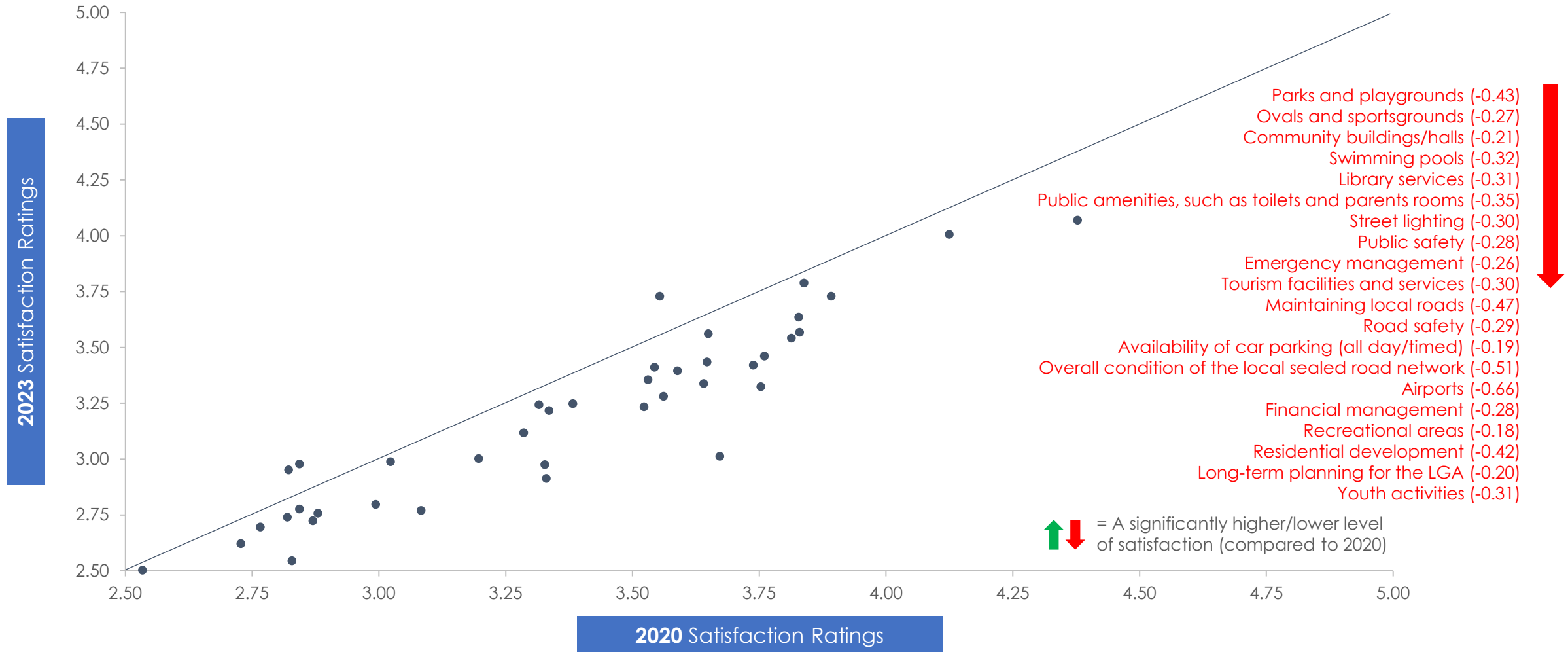




# Services and Facilities – Satisfaction: Comparison by Year

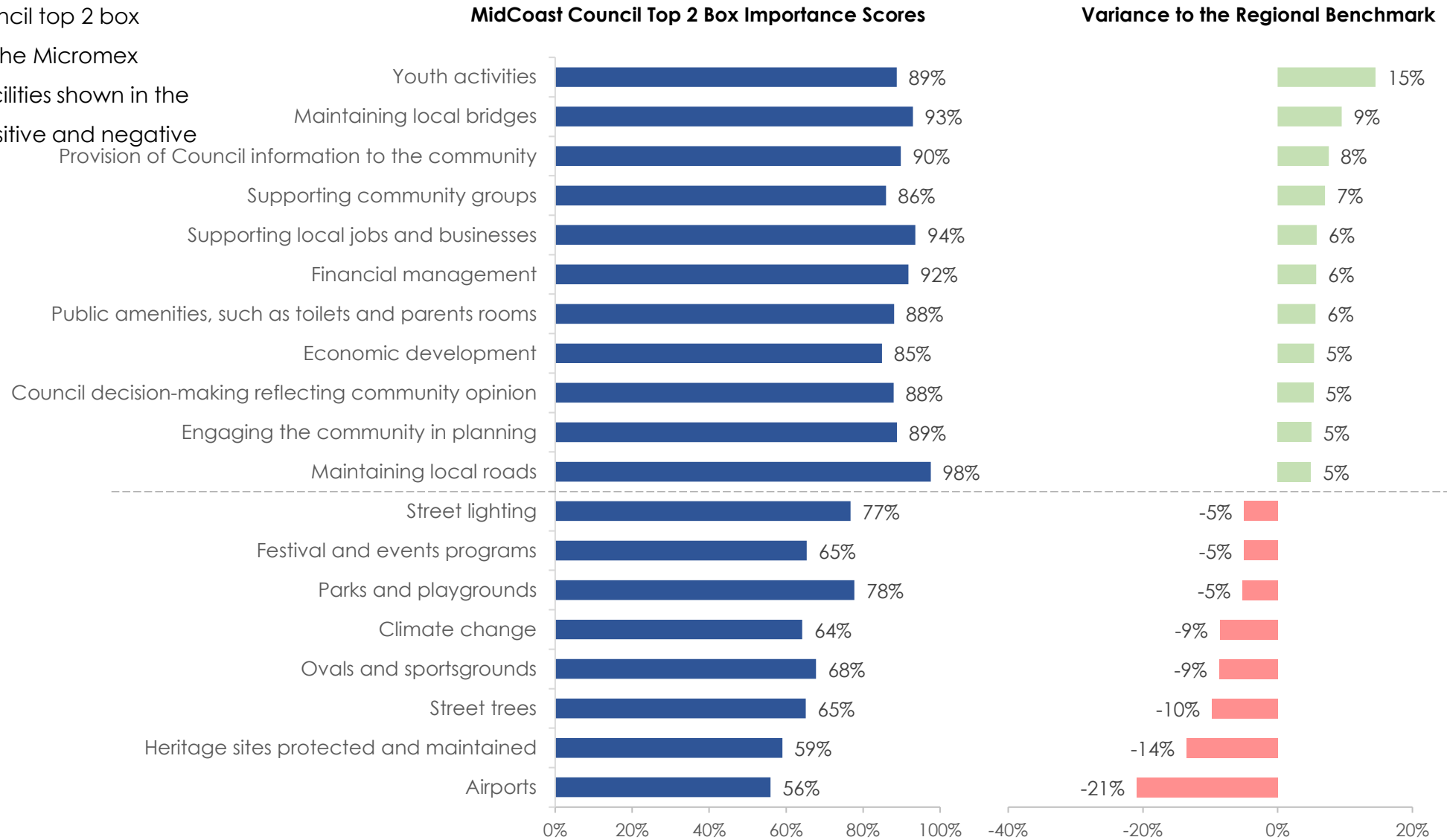
The below chart compares the mean satisfaction ratings for 2023 vs 2020.

Satisfaction significantly decreased for 20 of the 41 comparable services and facilities.



# Summary Importance Comparison to the Micromex Benchmark

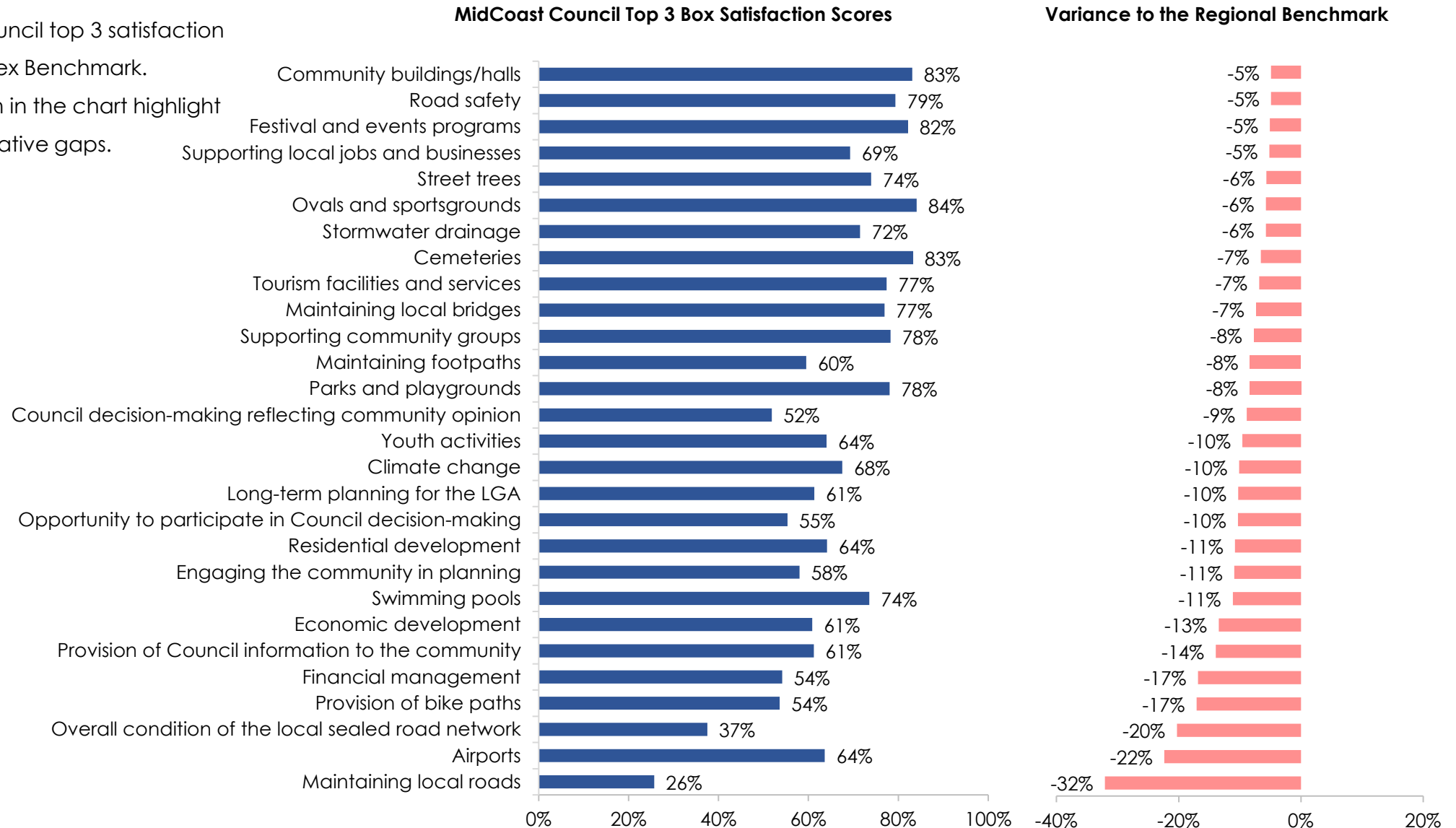
The chart to the right shows the variance between MidCoast Council top 2 box importance scores and the Micromex Benchmark. Services/facilities shown in the chart highlight larger positive and negative gaps.



Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 5% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
 Top 2 box = important/very important

# Summary Satisfaction Comparison to the Micromex Benchmark

The chart to the right shows the variance between MidCoast Council top 3 satisfaction scores and the Micromex Benchmark. Services/facilities shown in the chart highlight larger positive and negative gaps.



Note: Only services/facilities with a variance of +/- 5% to the Benchmark have been shown above. Please see Appendix 1 for detailed list  
 Top 3 box = at least somewhat satisfied

# Performance Gap Analysis

When we examine the largest performance gaps, we can identify that all of the services or facilities have been rated as high to very high in importance, whilst resident satisfaction for all of these areas is between only 26% and 61%.

Of the 8 largest gaps in service delivery, 4 of these relate to governance, leadership and communication.

Service Area	Service/Facility	Importance T2 Box	Satisfaction T3 Box	Performance Gap (Importance – Satisfaction)
Transport and connectivity	Maintaining local roads	98%	26%	72%
Transport and connectivity	Overall condition of the local sealed road network	95%	37%	57%
Governance, leadership and communication	Financial management	92%	54%	38%
Governance, leadership and communication	Council decision-making reflecting community opinion	88%	52%	36%
Governance, leadership and communication	Engaging the community in planning	89%	58%	31%
Governance, leadership and communication	Provision of Council information to the community	90%	61%	29%
Planning and development	Long-term planning for the LGA	89%	61%	27%
Transport and connectivity	Maintaining footpaths	85%	60%	25%

**Note:** Performance gap is the first step in the process, we now need to identify comparative ratings across all services and facilities to get an understanding of relative importance and satisfaction at an LGA level. This is when we undertake step 2 of the analysis.

Please see Appendix 1 for full Performance Gap Ranking



**Improve**  
Higher importance, lower satisfaction

**Maintain**  
Higher importance, higher satisfaction



Importance

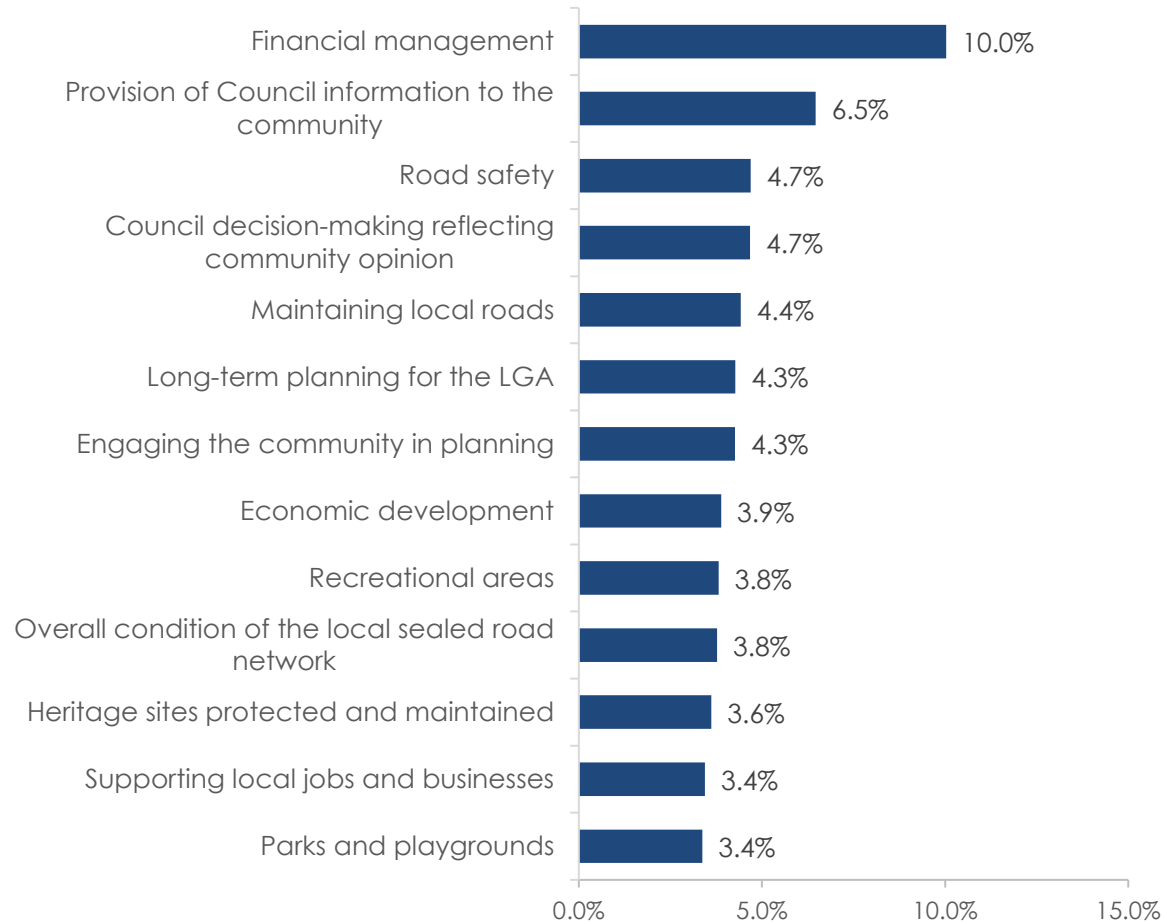
**Niche**  
Lower importance, lower satisfaction

**Satisfaction**

**Social Capital**  
Lower importance, higher satisfaction

# Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction with Council

The score assigned to each area indicates the percentage of influence each measure contributes to overall satisfaction with Council. If Council can increase satisfaction in these areas it will improve overall community satisfaction.



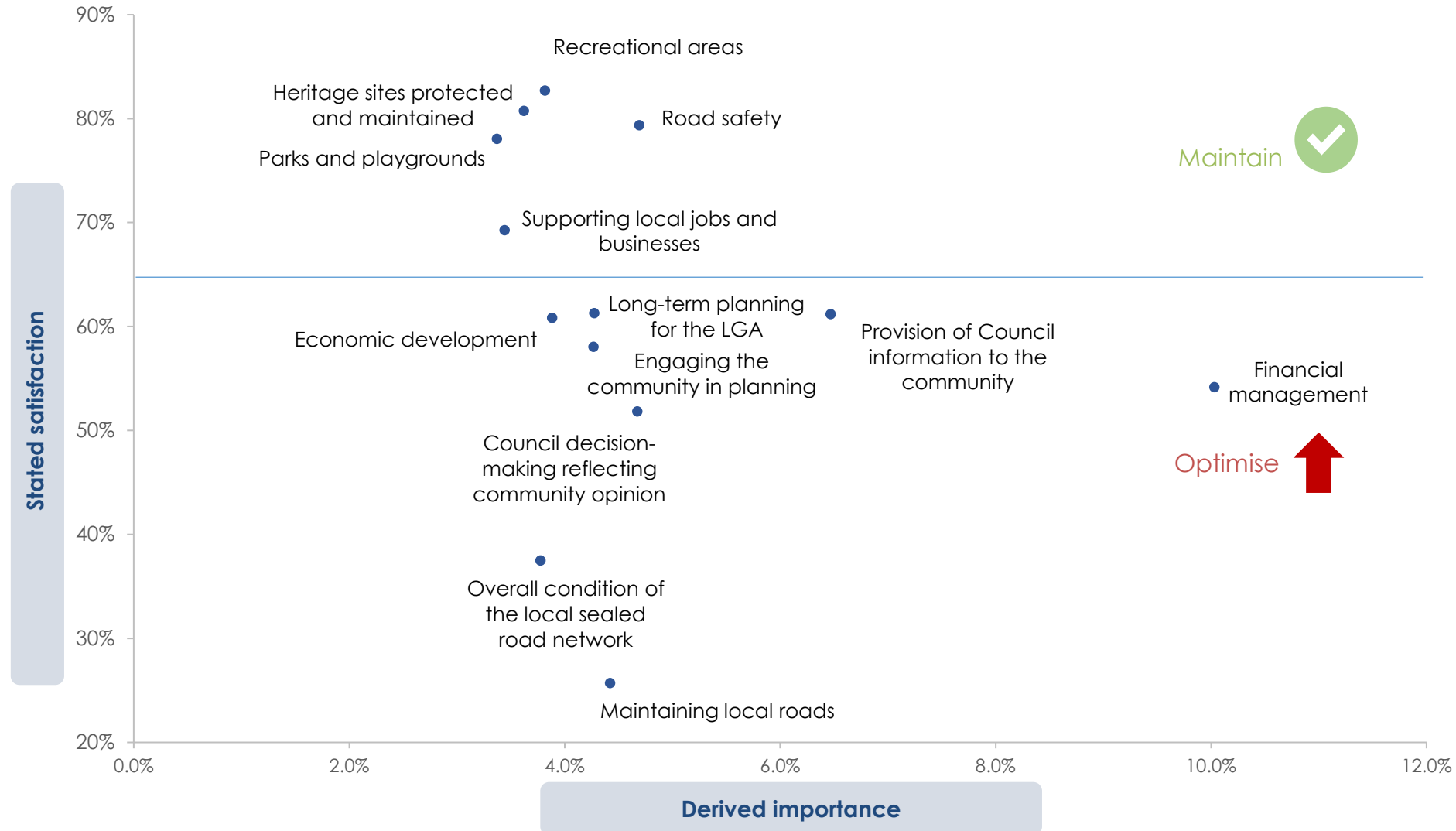
The results in the chart to the left identify which services/facilities contribute most to overall satisfaction. If Council can improve satisfaction scores across these services/facilities, they are likely to improve their overall satisfaction score.

These top 13 services/facilities (so 31% of the 42 services/facilities) account for over 60% of the variation in overall satisfaction. Therefore, whilst all 42 services/facilities are important, only a number of them are potentially significant drivers of satisfaction (at this stage, the other 29 services/facilities have less impact on satisfaction – although if resident satisfaction with them was to suddenly change they may have more immediate impact on satisfaction).



# Mapping Stated Satisfaction and Derived Importance Identifies the Community Priority Areas

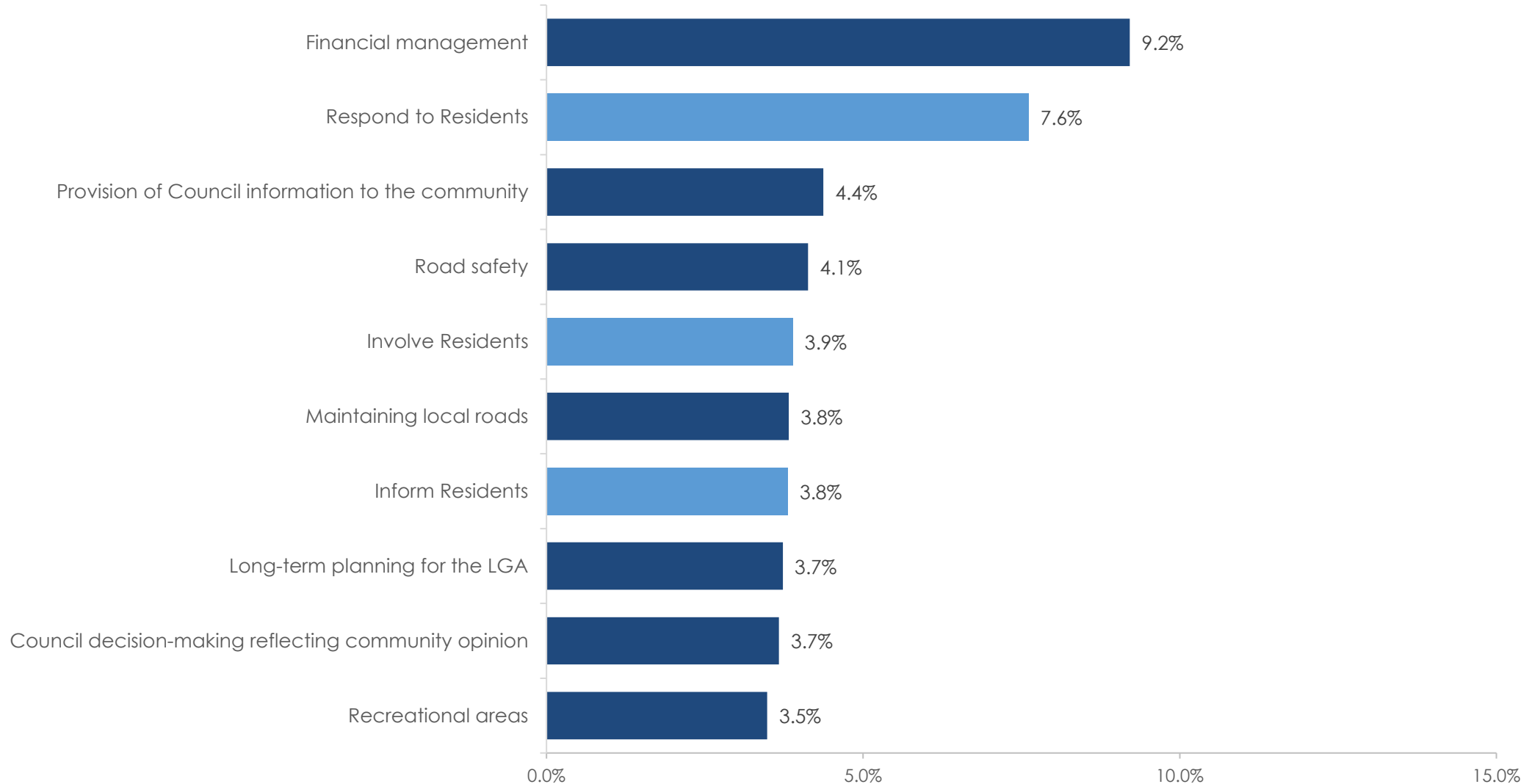
The below chart looks at the relationship between stated satisfaction (top 3 box) and derived importance (Regression result) to identify the level of contribution of each measure. Any services/facilities below the blue line (shown above) could potentially be benchmarked to target in future research to elevate satisfaction levels in these areas.



# Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction with Council – RE-RUN

The chart below is a re-run of the key drivers contributing to overall satisfaction, but with the inclusion of the question 'Q6. Can you please rate the following criteria regarding Council's efforts to communicate with residents?' (see light coloured blue bars).

The inclusion of this question explains more differentiation in terms of the drivers of overall satisfaction, with engagement measures taking a clear lead.

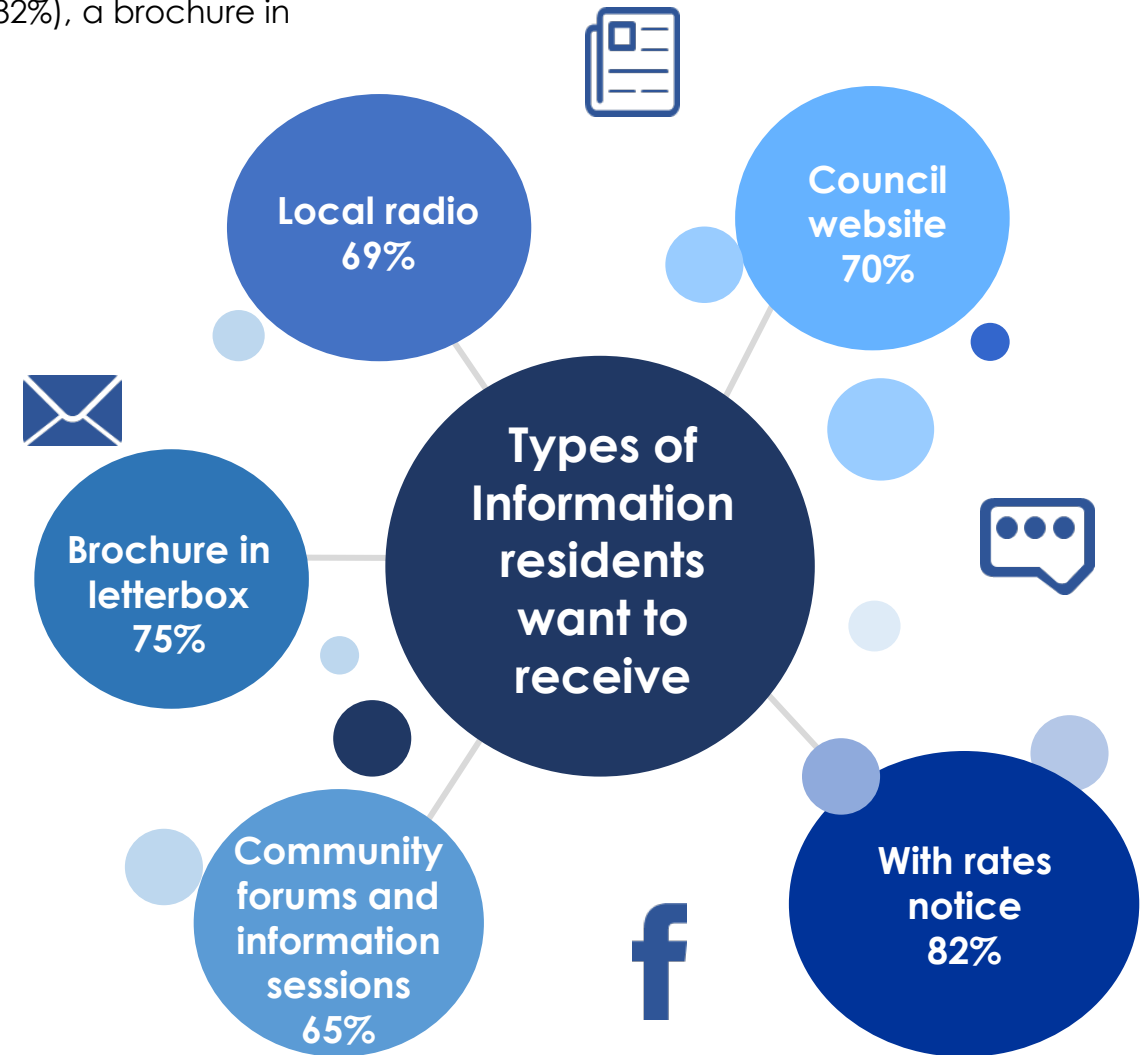
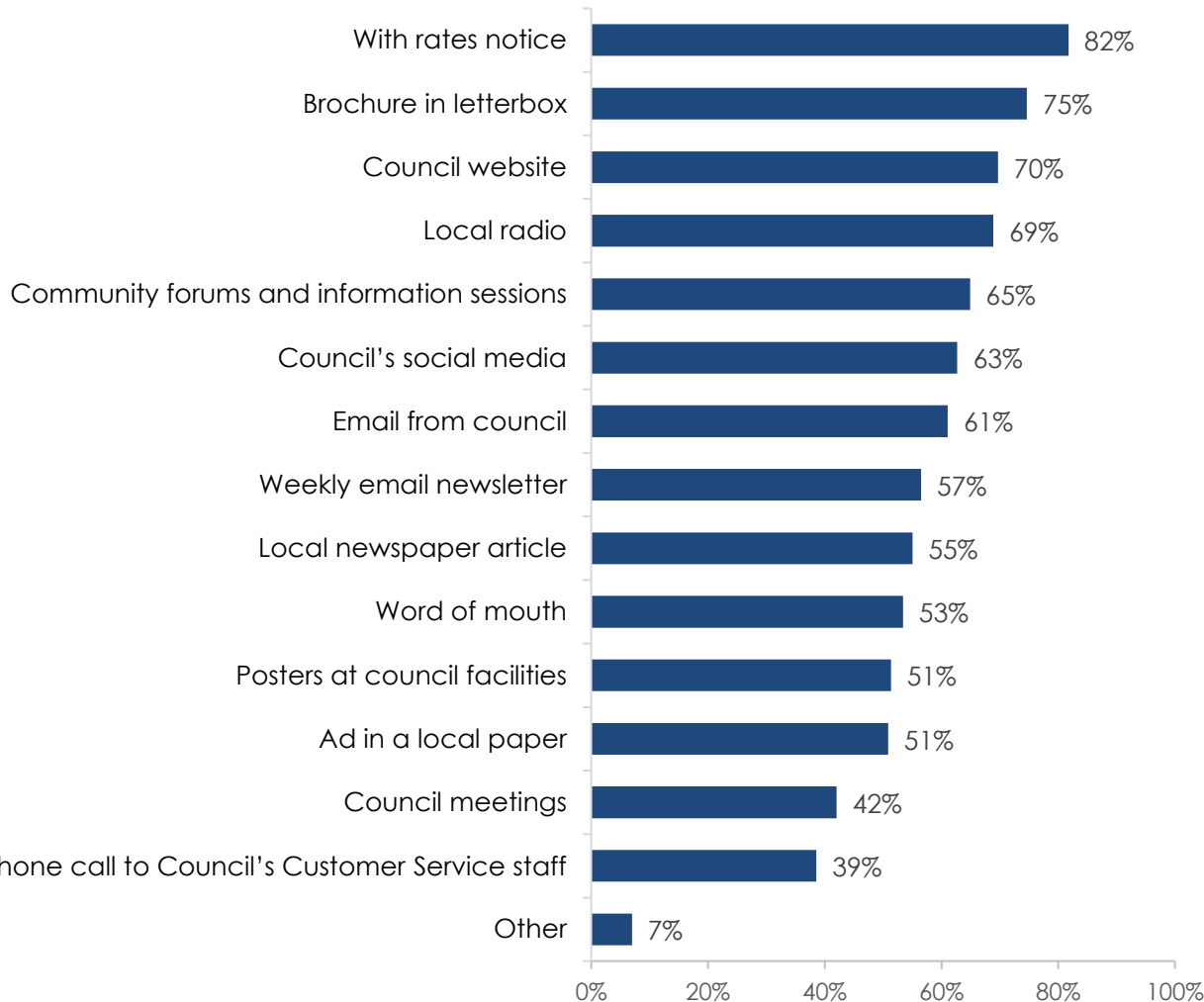


R<sup>2</sup> value = 0.521

**Dependent Variable:** Q3. Overall, for the last 12 months, how satisfied are you with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues, but across all responsibility areas?

# Keeping Informed of Council News and Activities

Residents prefer to be informed of Council news and activities via their rates notice (82%), a brochure in their letterbox (75%) and the Council website (70%).



Base: N = 400

Q8. How would you like to be informed of Council news and activities?

Please see Appendix 1 for analysis by demographics and other specified 35



# Summary

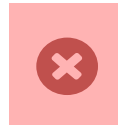
# Satisfaction Scorecard



**Good Satisfaction**  
(T3B sat score ≥80%)



**Monitor**  
(T3B sat score 60%-79%)



**Needs improvement**  
(T3B sat score <60%)

Service Area	Planning and development	Governance, leadership & communication
Heritage sites protected and maintained	Economic development	Climate change
Parks and playgrounds	Recreational areas	Renewable energy
Ovals and sportsgrounds	Residential development	Opportunity to participate in Council decision-making
Community buildings/halls	Long-term planning for the LGA	Council decision-making reflecting community opinion
Swimming pools	<b>Transport and connectivity</b>	Provision of Council information to the community
Cultural opportunities and services, such as the Art Gallery and Entertainment Centre	Maintaining local roads	Engaging the community in planning
Library services	Maintaining footpaths	Financial management
Festival and events programs	Provision of bike paths	
Public amenities, such as toilets and parents rooms	Road safety	
Cemeteries	Availability of car parking (all day/timed)	
Water service	Overall condition of the local sealed road network	
Water quality	Maintaining local bridges	
Street lighting	Airports	
Public safety	<b>Community support</b>	
Emergency management	Supporting community groups	
Stormwater drainage	Supporting local jobs and businesses	
Recycling/waste management/landfills	Youth activities	
Sewerage services		
Tourism facilities and services		
Street trees		



# Summary Findings



## Quality of Life in the LGA

93% of residents rated their quality of life living in the MidCoast Council area as 'good' to 'excellent'.



## Overall satisfaction

71% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months.



## Satisfaction with Council's efforts to inform residents

59% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with Council's efforts to inform residents.



## Satisfaction with Council contact

66% of residents who had contacted Council are at least somewhat satisfied with the way their contact was handled.



## What residents value most about the MidCoast LGA?

- The natural environment (34%)
- The rural, relaxed, quiet lifestyle (29%)

## Highest performing Service/Facility areas:

- Library services
- Sewerage services
- Cultural opportunities and services, such as the Art Gallery and Entertainment Centre
- Recycling/waste management/landfills

## What really drives overall satisfaction?

The Regression analysis highlighted that residents' overall satisfaction with Council is largely impacted by Council's management, engagement/consultation and road maintenance/safety. The top drivers of overall satisfaction included:

- Financial management (10%)
- Provision of Council information to the community (7%)
- Road safety (5%)
- Council decision-making reflecting community opinion (5%)
- Maintaining local roads (4%)

## What should MidCoast Council focus on?

In order to lift overall satisfaction, Council should look to make improvements across communication and engagement measures, specifically in regards to addressing resident expectations surrounding road maintenance and financial management.





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