

Council Performance Monitor





COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND BENCHMARK FINDINGS

Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire

Q4 2003

Table of Contents

- Executive summary
- Introduction and research method
- Overall satisfaction
- Services & facilities: an overview of satisfaction & importance ratings
- Performance Gap Analysis
- Services & facilities: detailed findings



Executive summary

In 2003, the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire joined a local government research syndicate to evaluate and monitor its performance across a range of services & facilities. The syndicate, managed by Australian Market Intelligence and CATALYSE, provides Councils with valid performance measures that can be benchmarked and consistently monitored over time. This report presents the findings from Council's first study, comprising 400 telephone interviews with residents in the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire. Results are compared to a previous study conducted with 150 residents in 1999.

OVERALL SATISFACTION RATINGS	History		Benchmarks (Similar Councils Only)	
	<u>1999</u>	<u>2003</u>	Best Performer	Industry Average
Satisfied (6 to 10)	34%	66% 🛕	75%	71%
Very satisfied (8, 9 or 10)	9%	36%	44%	40%

INVEST

Roads

Youth services & facilities

Aged services & facilities

Planning & building approvals

These areas are rated very important & received lower satisfaction ratings

CELEBRATE

Significant overall improvement

Weekly rubbish collections

Recycling services

Fire prevention actions

These areas are very important to residents and they are delighted with service levels. Ensure these high service levels are maintained.

Consultation Preferences

92% prefer to be consulted by means of a survey

Self-completion surveys are the most preferred option, followed by telephone survey research

Introduction and research method

Introduction and research objectives

Introduction

Community consultation is playing an increasingly important part in local government activities. More importantly, Councils are becoming increasingly aware of the need to respond to community expectations in regard to service delivery. One way to gauge this is by conducting regular community surveys.

While almost half the local governments in the state complete community surveys, the ad-hoc nature of the frequency, depth and method of surveying has thrown doubt on the usefulness of results obtained.

The Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire acknowledges the need for professional and un-biased research into their community's perceptions of Council's performance in delivering its services and facilities. With the growing emphasis on benchmarking and best practice within local government, they recognise the benefits associated with comparing their performance against those of other like municipalities.

To this end, the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire commissioned Australian Market Intelligence and CATALYSE to undertake their community satisfaction benchmarking survey in 2003. This report details the findings of the research.

Research objectives

The research objectives for the research were to identify the:

- Level of overall satisfaction with Council.
- Community's satisfaction with Council's performance in delivering various services and facilities.
- Perceived level of importance for the various services and facilities provided by Council.
- Performance 'gaps' that exist with the services and facilities provided in context with the level of perceived importance.
- How people source information relating to Council activities, services and facilities.
- Preferred methods for conducting community consultation.
- Readership levels of local newspapers.
- How perceptions vary in the community based on respondent demographics.

Research Method

Population & Sample Size

The population for the purpose of the research was all households within the geographical boundaries of the municipality.

For statistical reliability a sample of 400 households was surveyed from the population. This produced a sampling precision of +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence interval and provides a robust and statistically reliable sample on which to make considered decisions. The sampling precision also satisfies the level as specified by the Auditor General of Western Australia.

Only one person was interviewed per household. This person had to be over the age of 18 years, and a household bill-payer. This enabled a wide coverage of the population to be achieved with no bias given to any particular area or household.

Questionnaire Design

Australian Market Intelligence & CATALYSE, in close association with Council developed the survey instrument (the questionnaire). The questionnaire was structured to address each of the research objectives and took around 10 minutes to complete.

A copy of the questionnaire employed in the research is appended to this report.

Data Collection

All data was collected by means of telephone surveys. Interviews were conducted in October 2003 by professionally trained telephone interviewers.

Telephone numbers were randomly generated using an electronic format of the white pages. All households within the population were given an equal probability of being selected. Households were randomly selected throughout the municipality and telephoned by interviewers. When a dialled telephone number was not answered or the appropriate person was not available (away/out, answering machine, etc) these telephone numbers were re-contacted at least three times to ensure each household was given the opportunity to be included in the research.

All interviewing was carried-out in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Privacy Act, and the MRSA Professional Code of Conduct and in strict accordance with IQCA and the ICC / ESOMAR Quality Standards.

The completed questionnaires were checked by trained supervisors to ensure the quality of interviewing was maintained at all times and a minimum of 10% of all completed questionnaires were validated (as required by Market Research Quality Standards).

Research Method

Analysis

Following data collection, each questionnaire was checked, coded and verified before being entered into SPSS. Various analytical techniques were applied to address the research objectives. These techniques included exploratory statistics, descriptive statistics, contingency tabulations and tests of significance.

History

Comparative satisfaction ratings are provided for a previous study conducted in 1999. The 1999 study was completed by 150 residents and used a 7-point rating scale for measuring satisfaction. The previous scores have been converted to make them comparable with the current study.

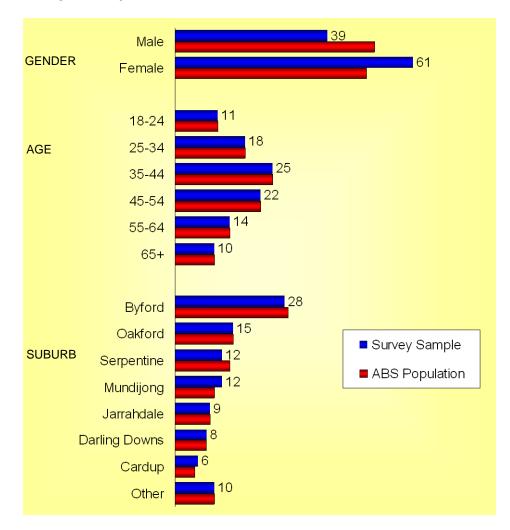
Benchmarks

When three or more participating Councils have asked the same question, comparative benchmarks and industry average ratings are provided. Participating Councils to date in 2003 include:

- City of Armadale
- City of Mandurah
- City of Cockburn
- Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire
- City of Joondalup
- City of South Perth

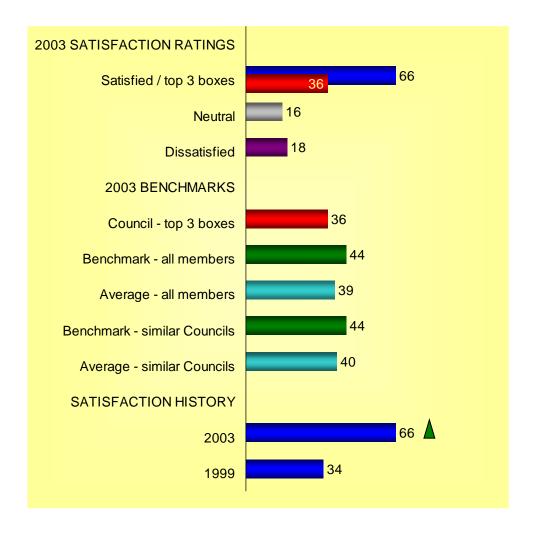
We also provide comparative average scores for similar Councils. For SJS we include Armadale, Mandurah and SJS.

Sample composition





Overall satisfaction

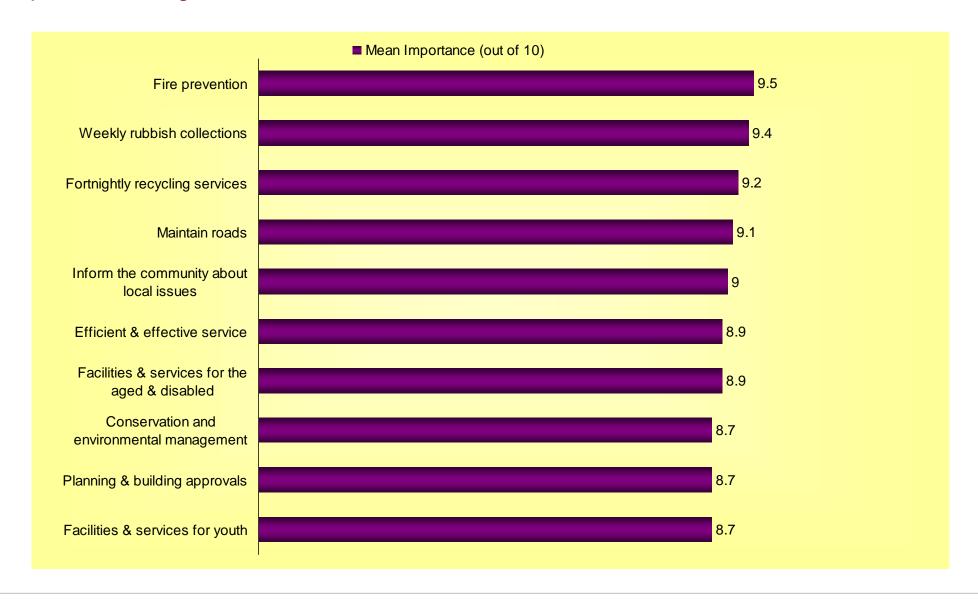


- Satisfaction has almost doubled in the past four years
 - This is a great achievement
- 66% of respondents now express satisfaction with Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire
 - These respondents rate overall satisfaction 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 out of 10, where 10 is totally satisfied and 1 is totally dissatisfied
- Females and the elderly are more satisfied
 - 41% of females rate overall satisfaction 8, 9 or 10
 - This compares to 28% of males
 - 61% of 65+ years rate overall satisfaction 8, 9 or 10,
 - This compares to 43% of 18-24 years; 30% of 35-24 years; 31% of 35-44 years; 27% of 45-54; and, 40% of 55-64 years
- There is still some room to improve
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.3
 - 18% of residents are dissatisfied

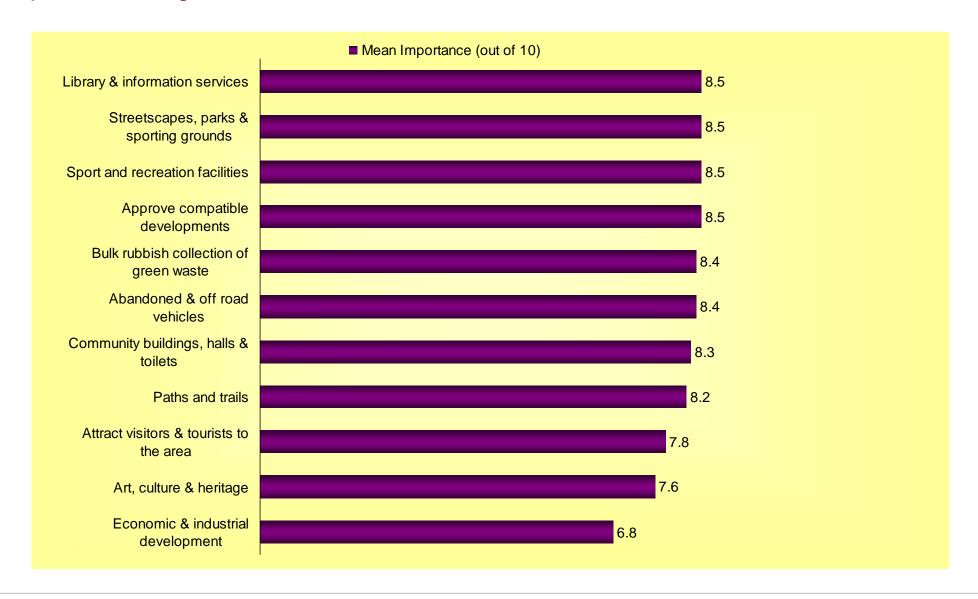
Services & facilities

SATISFACTION & IMPORTANCE RATINGS: AN OVERVIEW

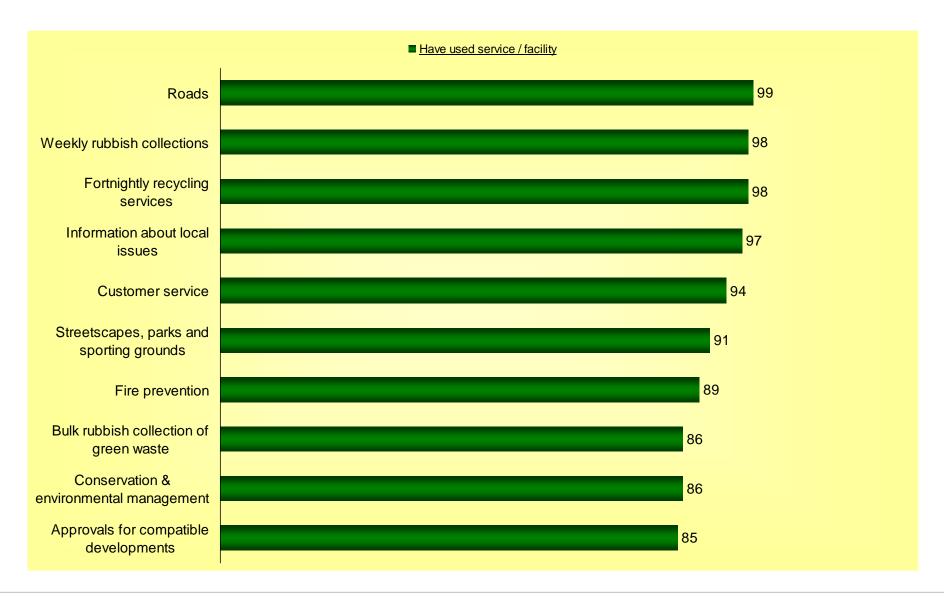
Importance ratings – Council services & facilities



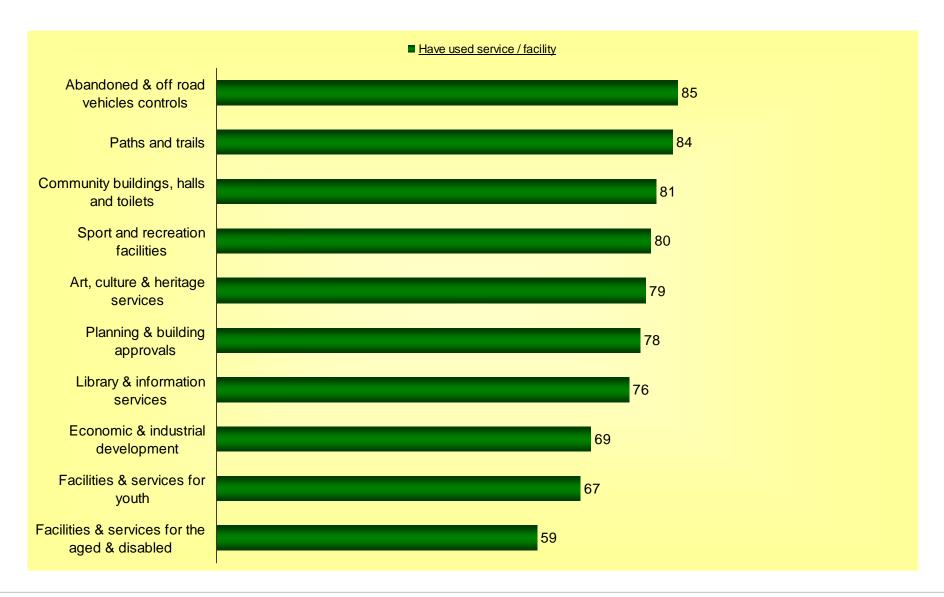
Importance ratings – Council services & facilities



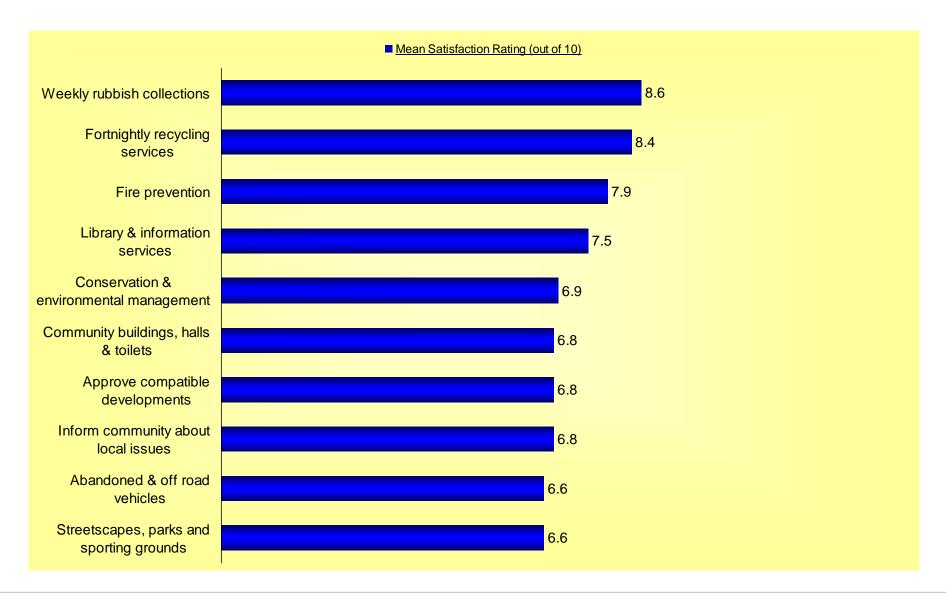
Usage – Council services & facilities



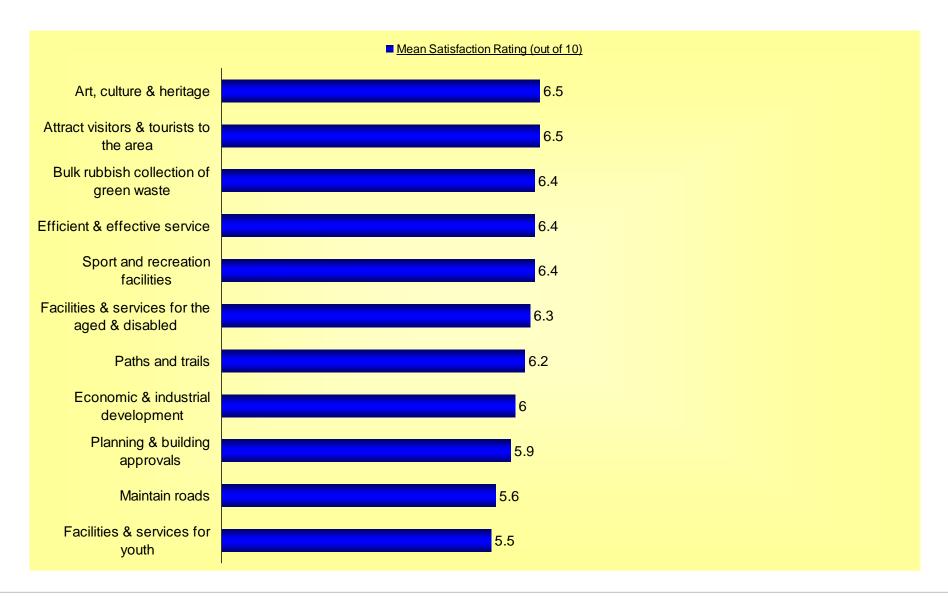
Usage – Council services & facilities



Satisfaction ratings – Council services & facilities



Satisfaction ratings – Council services & facilities



Performance Gap Analysis

Performance gap analysis

Performance gap analysis assists Council to identify strategic priorities. Importance and satisfaction levels are analysed and presented in four quadrants (shown below) to illustrate which services and facilities need to be improved, monitored, maintained and celebrated.

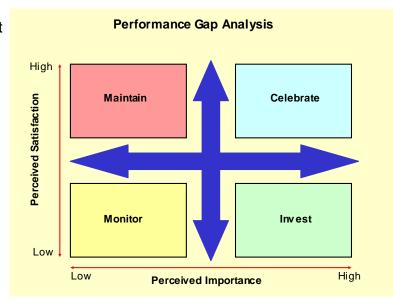
Levels of high satisfaction and lower levels of importance depict the **MAINTAIN** quadrant. Services and facilities that fall into this quadrant are less important to the community and the Council is

performing very well in delivering them (to those who use them). This quadrant requires no strategic intervention besides maintaining current levels of performance.

MONITOR represents the quadrant of lower importance & lower satisfaction levels. Services and facilities that fall into this quadrant are less important to the community and the Council is performing less well in delivering them

(to those who use them). This quadrant requires Council to monitor perceived levels of importance and satisfaction and make required adjustments if a particular service or facility moves into another quadrant. **CELEBRATE** represents the quadrant of high importance and high satisfaction. Services and facilities that fall into this quadrant are important to the community and the Council is performing extremely

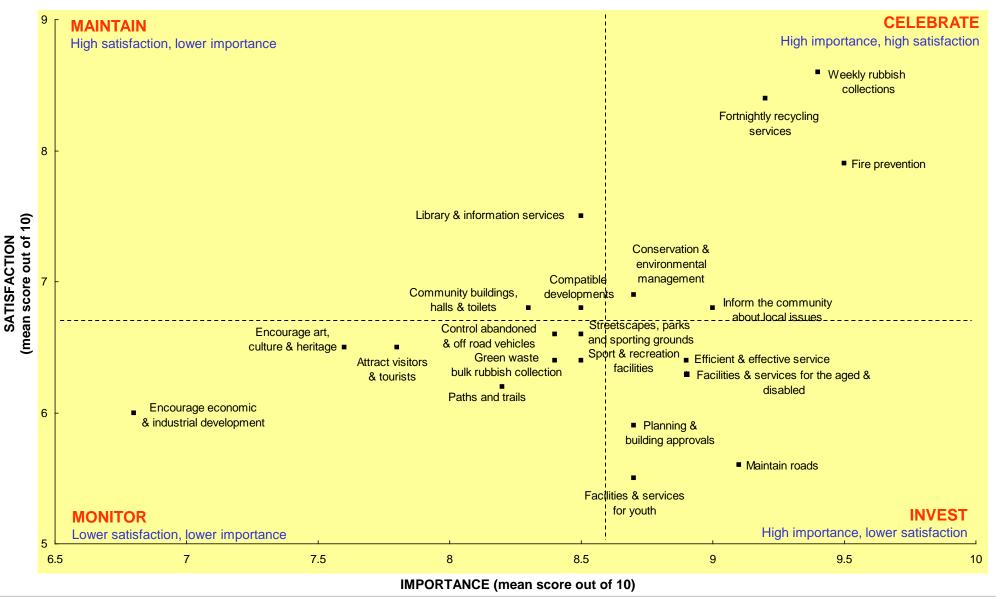
well in delivering them (to those who use them). This quadrant requires no special strategic emphasis besides maintaining current levels of performance and promoting the Council's performance.



The **INVEST** quadrant comprises services and facilities that have high levels of perceived importance and lower levels of

satisfaction. These areas represent the 'hot issues' for Council. Services and facilities that fall into this quadrant require Council to invest resources and effort to improve performance and perceived levels of satisfaction.

Performance Gap Analysis – Council services & facilities



Q: How important do you think it is that Council provides each service to residents of Serpentine-Jarrahdale, The importance can be rated on a 10 point scale where '10' is extremely important and '1' is of no importance. Base: All respondents (n=399)

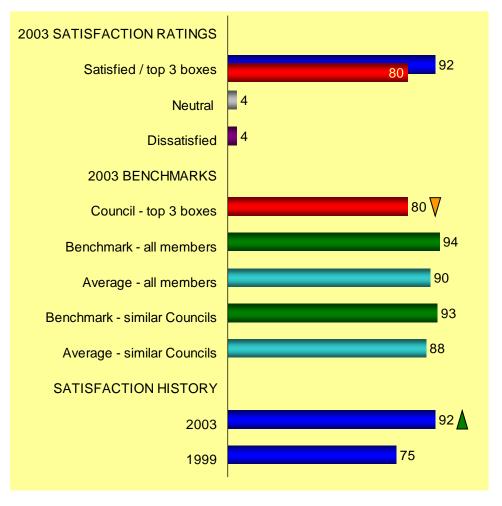
²⁰

Services & facilities

DETAILED FINDINGS

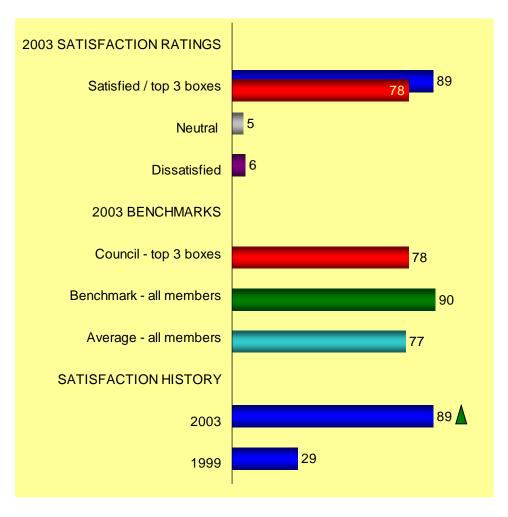


Provide weekly rubbish collections



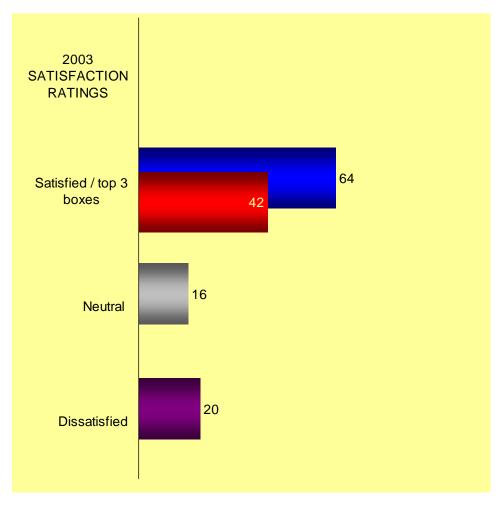
- Celebrate performance in waste management
- Satisfaction has increased significantly over the years
- Residents consider weekly rubbish collections to be the second most important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 9.4
- Satisfaction is very high
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 8.6
- Satisfaction is highest among older respondents
 - 91% of those aged 55+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - This compares to 77% of those aged 18-54 years
- There is some room for improvement
 - While satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, there is still room to increase the degree of satisfaction
 - The proportion who rate satisfaction in the top 3 boxes trails the benchmark & average for similar councils

Provide fortnightly recycling services



- Celebrate fortnightly recycling
- Residents consider fortnightly recycling to be the third most important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 9.2
- Satisfaction is very high
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 8.4
- Satisfaction has increased immensely over the years and is now on par with the industry average

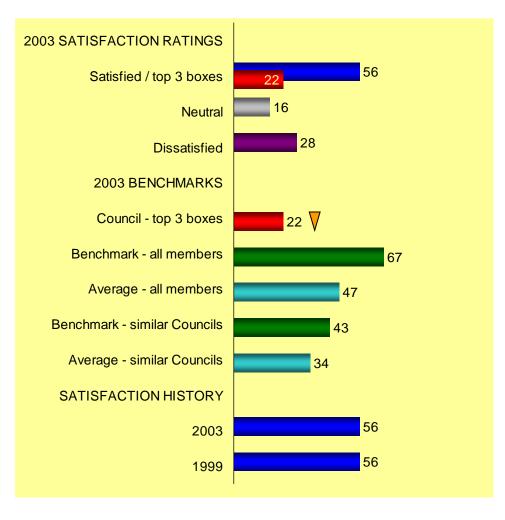
Provide bulk rubbish collection of green waste at least once a year



- Monitor bulk rubbish collections
- Residents consider bulk rubbish collections to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.4
- Satisfaction is moderate, but could be improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.5
 - 20% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Younger and middle aged respondents tend to be less satisfied
 - 26% of those aged 25-54 rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 16% of those aged 55+

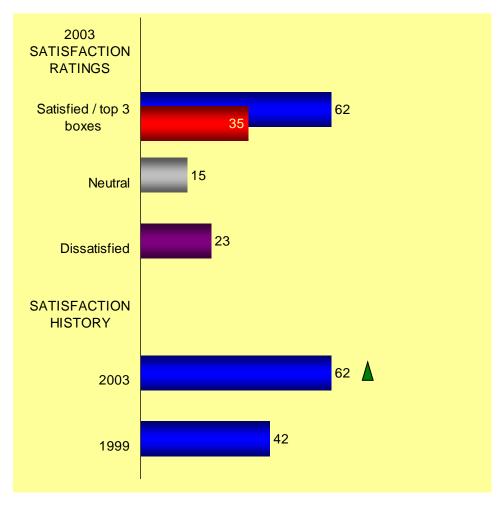
Engineering services

Maintain roads



- Invest resources in road maintenance
- Residents consider the maintenance of roads to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 9.1
- Satisfaction is low
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 5.6
 - 28% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Greatest criticism from younger respondents
 - 41% of young singles/couples (aged up to 34) rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 29% of respondents with family and 21% of older singles/couples (aged 35+)
- Satisfaction is significantly higher among older respondents
 - 48% of those aged 65+ are very satisfied, rating satisfaction 8,9 or 10
 - This compares to just 17% of 18-54 years, and 32% of 55-64 years
- It is important to note that SJS has maintained satisfaction levels over the years, despite decreases in State funding
- That said, when comparing performance to other similar Council areas, there is room for improvement in Serpentine-Jarrahdale

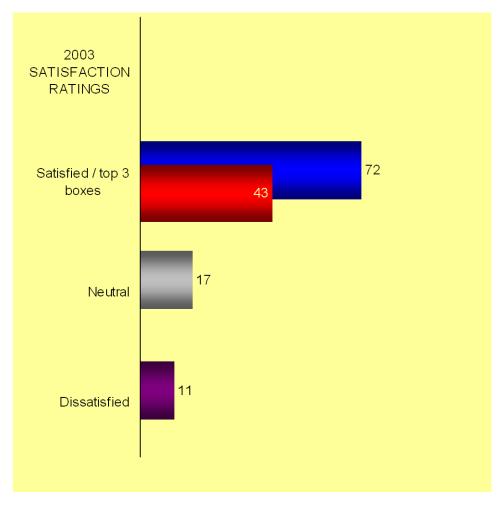
Provide & maintain paths & trails



- Monitor paths and trails
- Residents consider the provision and maintenance of paths and trails to be an important responsibility of Council, though not as important as other areas
 - Mean importance rating = 8.2
- While satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, it could be further improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.2
 - 23% of respondents are dissatisfied
- The harshest critics tend to be respondents aged 25-34 or 45-54
 - 33% of those aged 25-34 and 32% of those aged 45-54 rated satisfaction
 - This compares to just 8% of 18-24 year olds, 20% of 35-44 years and 16% of those aged 55+

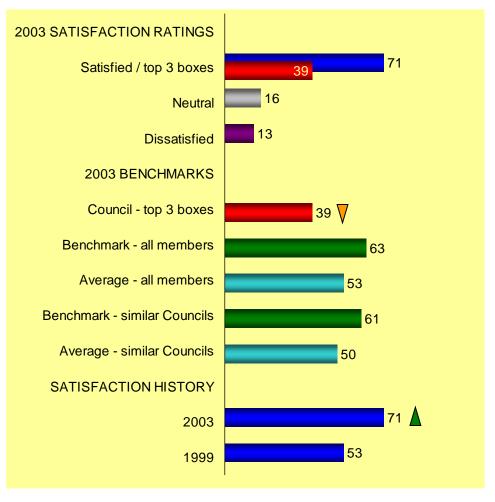
Recreational facilities and landscapes

Provide & maintain community buildings, halls & toilets



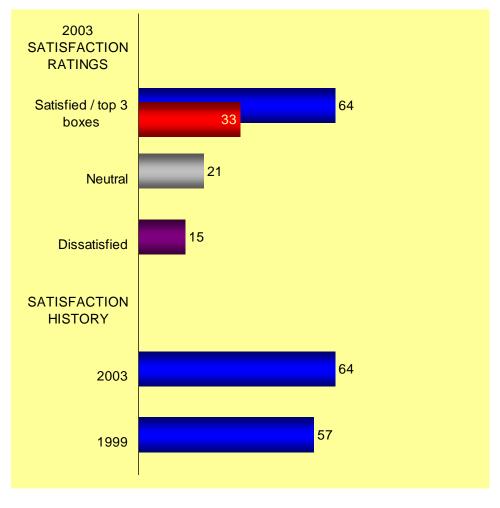
- Maintain community buildings, halls & toilets
- Residents consider the provision and maintenances of these areas to be an important responsibility of Council, however, relative to other areas they are considered to be slightly less important
 - Mean importance rating = 8.3
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.8
- Younger respondents are the harshest critics
 - 25% of those aged 18-24 are dissatisfied, rating satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to just 9% of those aged 25+

Provide & maintain streetscapes, parks & sporting grounds



- Monitor streetscapes, parks & sporting grounds
- Residents consider the provision and maintenances of these areas to be an important responsibility of Council, however, relative to other areas they are considered to be slightly less important
 - Mean importance rating = 8.5
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.6
- Older residents tend to be more satisfied
 - 56% of those aged 55+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - This compares to just 21% of 18-24 year olds and 37% of 25-54 year olds
- Satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, however it falls short of the average score for similar councils in 2003

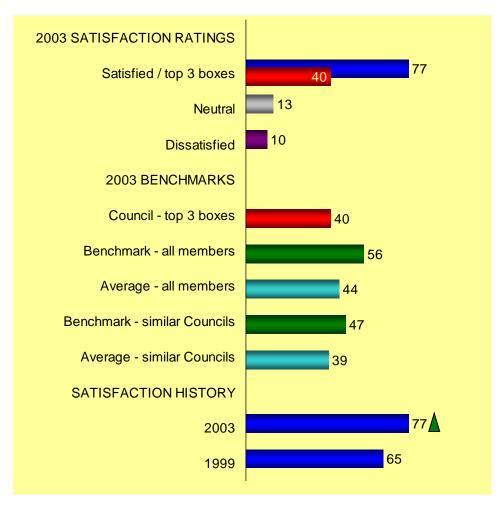
Provide & maintain sport & recreation facilities



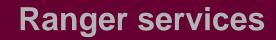
- Maintain sport & recreational facilities
- Residents consider the provision and maintenance of sport & recreational facilities to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.6
- Satisfaction is moderate, but could be improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.4
 - 15% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Older residents tend to be more satisfied
 - 48% of those aged 55-64 and 68% of those aged 65+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - This compares to 27% of 18-54 year olds
- Satisfaction appears to have improved slightly over the years
 - Due to the small sample size in 1999 we can not conclude that this difference is statistically significant



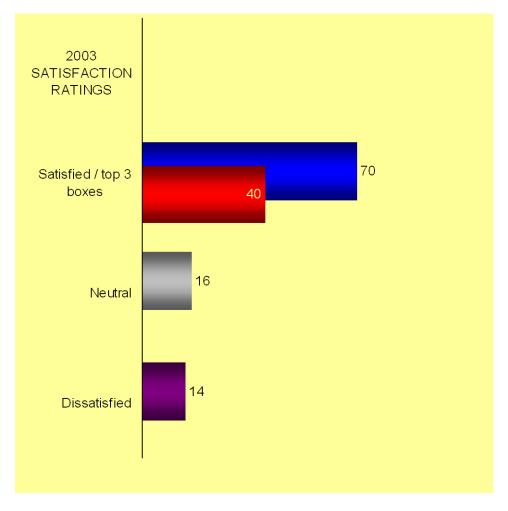
Conservation & environmental management



- Celebrate performance in conservation and environmental management (relative to performance in other areas)
- Residents consider conservation & environmental management to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.7
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.8
 - 10% of respondents remain dissatisfied
- Satisfaction has a direct relationship with age the older respondents get, the more highly satisfied they are
 - Only 23% of respondents aged 18-24 rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes, this increases to 40% among 35-54 year olds and is up to 59% among those aged 65+
- Satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, and is now on par with the average score for similar councils

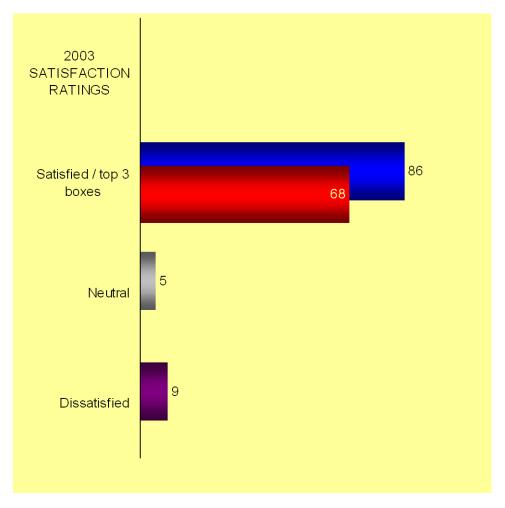


Control abandoned & off-road vehicles



- Monitor abandoned & off-road vehicles.
- Residents consider control over abandoned & off-road vehicles to be an important responsibility of Council, though not as important as some other areas
 - Mean importance rating = 8.4
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.6
 - 14% of residents are dissatisfied

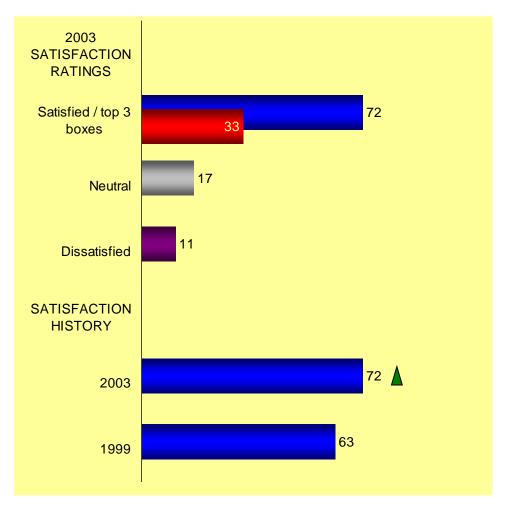
Involvement in fire prevention



- Celebrate fire prevention actions
- Residents consider involvement in fire prevention to be the MOST important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 9.5
- Satisfaction is high
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 7.9

Community services

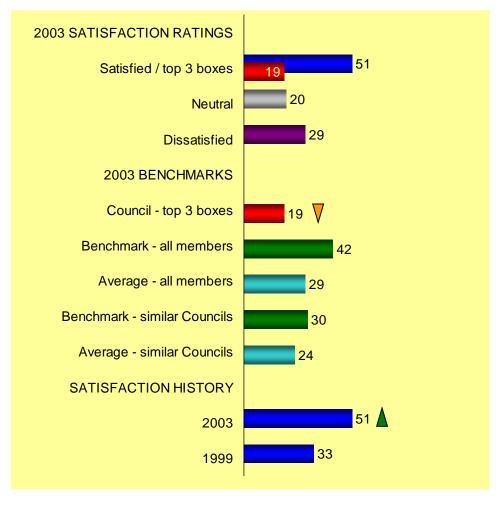
Encourage art, culture & heritage



- Monitor perceptions of Council's involvement in art, culture and heritage
- Residents consider cultural activities to be of moderate importance
 - Mean importance rating = 7.6
- Satisfaction is also moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.5
- Almost total satisfaction among older respondents
 - While 14% of 18-54 years olds rated satisfaction 1-4, only 1% of those aged 55+ expressed dissatisfaction
- Satisfaction has improved significantly over the years

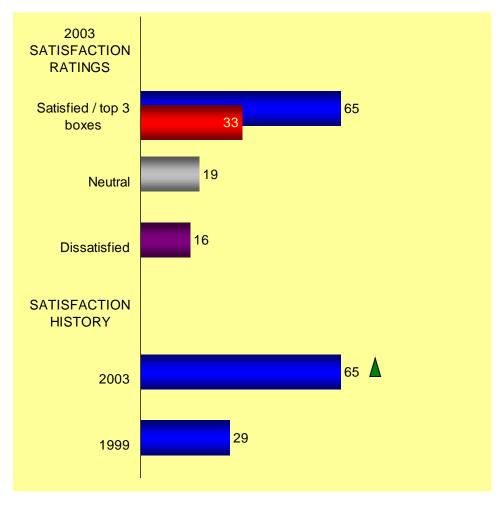
Special interest groups

Provide facilities & services for youth



- Invest resources in youth services & facilities
- Residents consider the provision of youth services & facilities to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.7
- Satisfaction is low
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 5.5
 - 29% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Families and home owners are most concerned with youth services
 - 35% of respondents with family rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 14% of younger singles / couples and 20% of older singles / couples
 - 31% of respondents who own their home rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 14% of those who are renting in the area
- Satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, though still falls short of the average for similar councils in 2003 so there is still room for further improvement

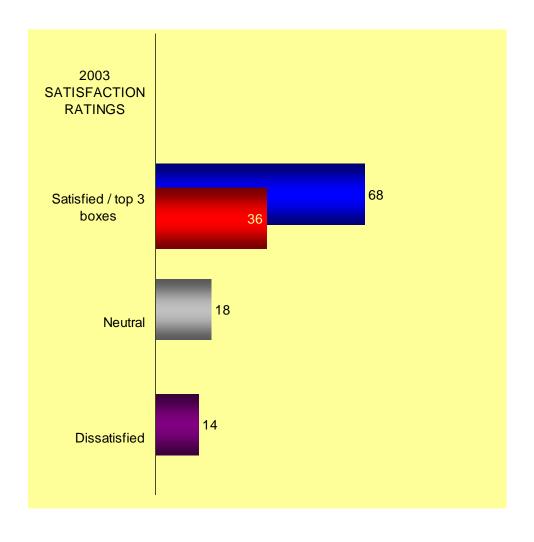
Provide facilities & services for the aged & disabled



- Invest resources in services & facilities for the aged & disabled
- Residents consider the provision of aged and disabled services & facilities to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.9
- Satisfaction has increased significantly over the years and is now at a moderate level relative to other services provided by Council
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.3
 - 16% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Satisfaction is polarised among the elderly
 - 41% of those aged 65+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - By comparison, only 31% of those aged under 65 rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - At the other end of the scale, however, 15% of those aged 65+ rated satisfaction 1-4 (a similar result was obtained in other age groups)

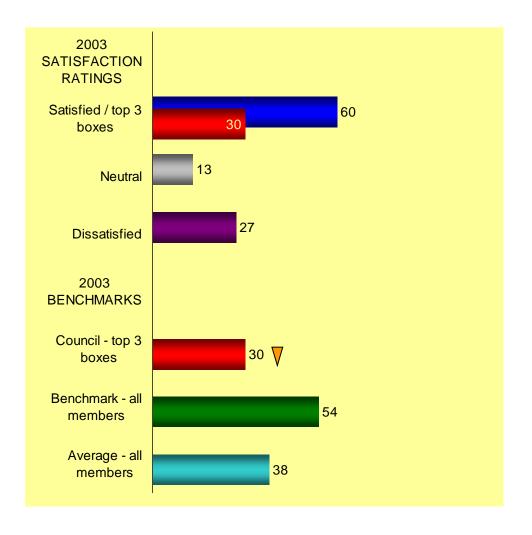


Attract visitors & tourists to the area



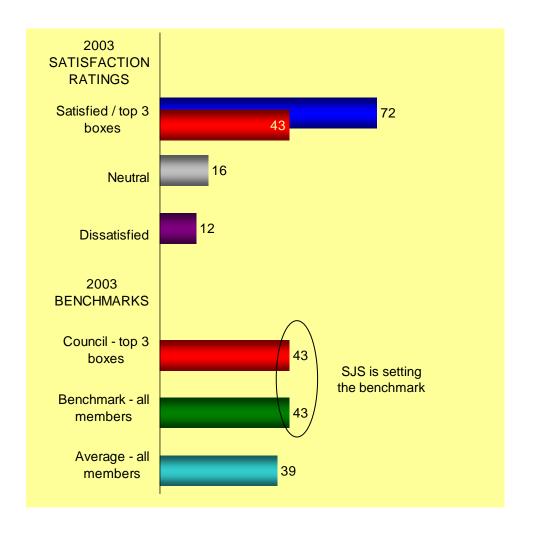
- Monitor the attraction of visitors & tourists to the area
- Residents consider this area to be important, though not as important as some other areas
 - Mean importance rating = 7.8
- Satisfaction is moderate, but could be improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.5
 - 14% of respondents are dissatisfied
- The harshest critics are males and young singles / couples
 - 21% of males rated satisfaction 1-4, compared to 8% of females
 - 28% of young singles / couples rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 16% of families and 6% of older singles / couples

Provide planning and building approvals



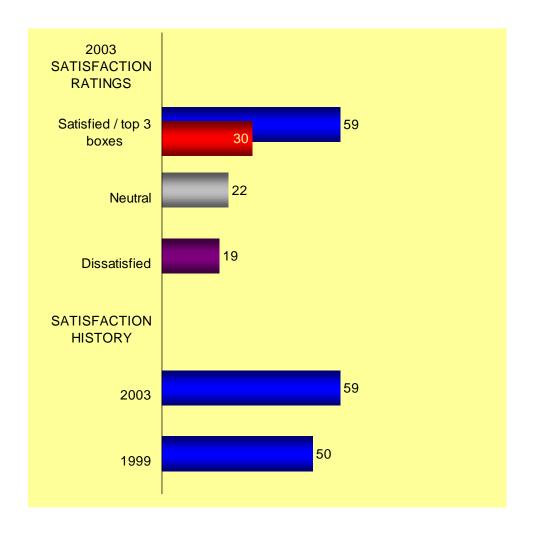
- Invest resources into planning and building approvals
- Residents consider this area to be important
 - Mean importance rating = 8.7
- Satisfaction is relatively low, and could be improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 5.9
 - 27% of respondents are dissatisfied
- The harshest critics are those aged 25-34 and 45-54 years
 - 39% of those aged 25-34 and 35% of those aged 45-54 rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 29% of those aged 35-44 and 24% of those aged 55-64
 - Dissatisfaction was only expressed by 8% of those aged under 25 and 9% of those 65+
- Satisfaction falls below the industry average

Approve & plan developments compatible with the character & historic value of area



- Monitor decisions to ensure developments and plans are compatible with the character & historic value of the area
- Residents consider this area to be important
 - Mean importance rating = 8.5
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.8
- Home owners and middle-aged respondents tend to be the harshest critics
 - 13% of home owners are dissatisfied, compared to just 3% of renters
 - 17% of those aged 25-54 are dissatisfied, compared to just 6% of those aged 55+
- SJS is setting the performance benchmark in this area

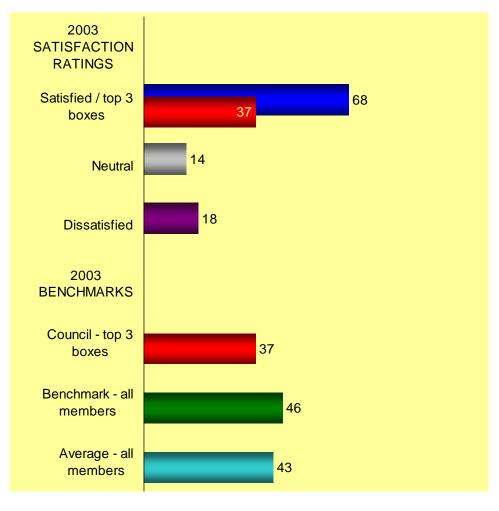
Encourage economic & industrial development



- Monitor economic & industrial development
- Residents consider this area to be lower in importance for Council, possibly because it is perceived to be the responsibility of the State Government
 - Mean importance rating = 6.8
- Satisfaction is also relatively low
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.0
 - 19% of respondents are dissatisfied
- Satisfaction is higher among younger respondents and the elderly
 - 42% of those aged 18-24 and 40% of those aged 55+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - This compares to just 18% of 35-44 year olds, 24% of those aged 25-34 and 33% of 45-54 year olds
- Satisfaction appears to have increased marginally over the years
 - Due to the small sample size in 1999 we can not determine if this difference is statistically significant

Council leadership & management

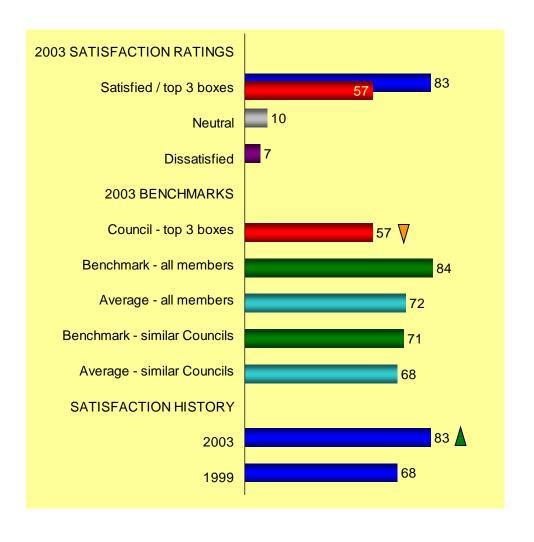
Provide efficient & effective service



- Invest resources in providing efficient & effective service
- Residents consider efficient & effective services to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 8.9
- Satisfaction is moderate
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.4
 - 18% are dissatisfied
- Harshest critics are those aged 25-54
 - 23% of those aged 25-54 rated satisfaction 1-4
 - This compares to 8% of those aged 18-24, and 10% of those aged 55+
- There is room for improvement
 - SJS is slightly behind the industry average

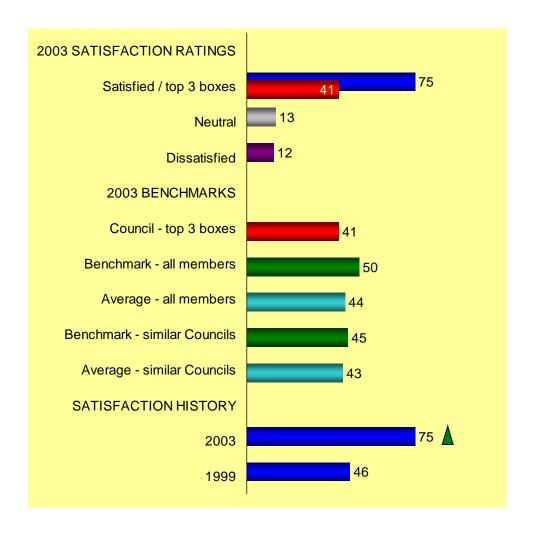
Communication, education and consultation

Provide library & information services



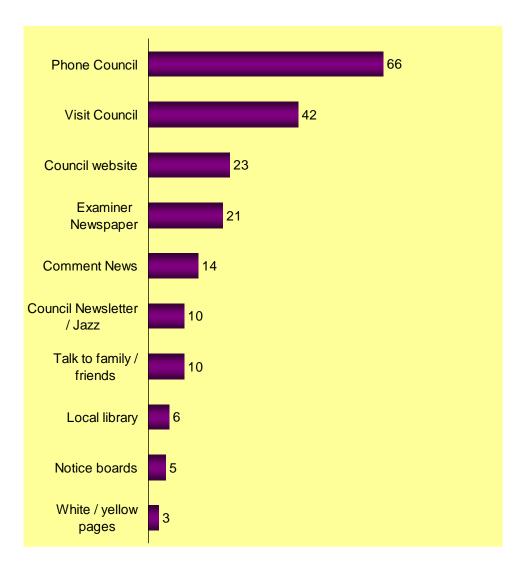
- Maintain library & information services
- Residents consider library & information services to be an important responsibility of Council, though slightly less so than some other services
 - Mean importance rating = 8.5
- Satisfaction is relatively high
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 7.5
- Older respondents are more highly satisfied
 - 85% of those aged 65+ rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes
 - This compares to 43% of those aged 18-34 and 59% of those aged 35-64
- There is room for improvement
 - Satisfaction has improved significantly over the years, but trails average and benchmark performance scores in 2003

Inform the community about local issues



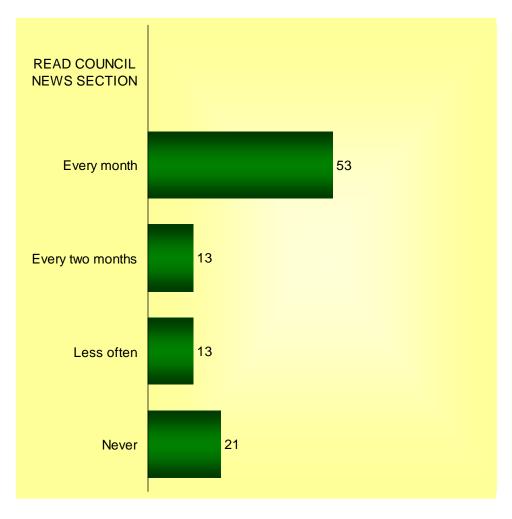
- Celebrate communications
- Residents consider the provision of information about local issues to be an important responsibility of Council
 - Mean importance rating = 9.0
- Satisfaction is moderate, but given its high importance, could be further improved
 - Mean satisfaction rating = 6.8
 - 12% are dissatisfied
- Satisfaction increases with age
 - While 29% of 18-24 years olds rated satisfaction in the top 3 boxes, this increased to 40% among those aged 25-64 and 61% among those aged 65+
- Satisfaction has increased significantly over the years, and is now almost on par with the industry average for 2003

Sources referred to for information about Council activities, services & facilities



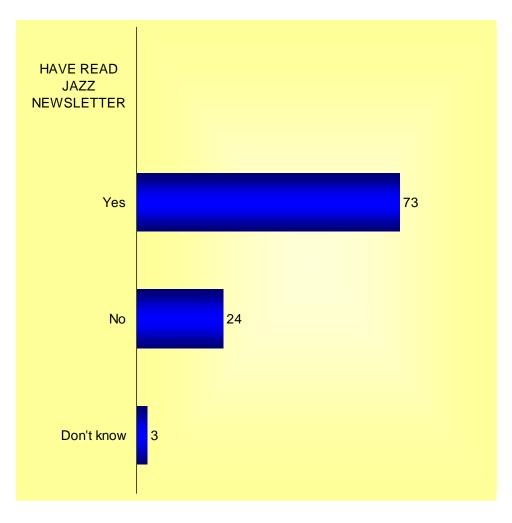
- Most residents will telephone Council if they need information about Council activities, services and facilities
- Followed by a visit to Council offices in person
 - This is a more popular option among males (53%) vs females (35%)
- Council's website is a surprisingly popular source of information
 - Especially among females (27%) vs males (16%)
- Other options include printed media, word-of-mouth communication, the library and notice boards

Readership of Council News in Examiner Newspaper



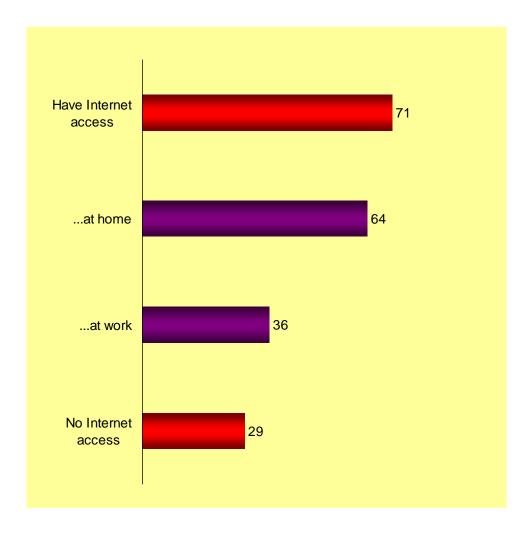
- Almost 80% of respondents read the Council News section in the Examiner
- There is a direct correlation between age and readership
 - 36% of 18-24 year olds read the Council News section every month, compared to 51% of 35-44 year olds and 79% of those aged 65+
- Respondents who own or are buying their home also show more interest in Council News
 - 55% of respondents who own their home read the Council News section every month, compared to 31% of those who are renting
- Males and females showed similar readership profiles

Readership of the JAZZ newsletter



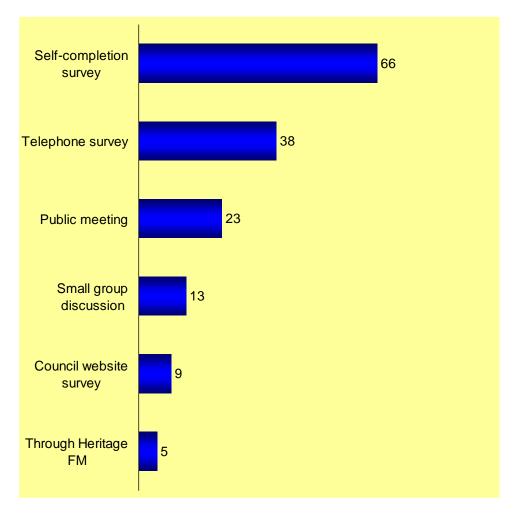
- Most respondents recall receiving and reading the JAZZ newsletter from Council
- Recall is higher among females and those aged 45-54 years
 - 77% of females recall reading JAZZ compared to 66% of males
 - 88% of those aged 45-54 recall reading JAZZ compared to 65% aged under 44, and 74% aged 55+
- Recall is also higher among home owners
 - 76% of home owners recall reading JAZZ compared to 48% of respondents who are renting in the area

Internet access



- 71% of residents have access to the Internet at home or work
 - Nearly all of these users have home access
- Internet access is significantly higher among females and families
 - 75% of families have Internet access, compared to 55% of young singles / couples (aged 34 or younger) and 49% of older singles / couples (aged 35+)
 - 68% of females have access compared to 57% of males
- The aged are least likely to have Internet access
 - While 49% of respondents aged 55-64 years have access, only 25% of respondents aged 65+ have access

Community consultation preferences



- 92% prefer to be consulted through the use of survey research
- Self-completion surveys are the most preferred option, followed by telephone survey research, then web surveys
- Support for self-completion written surveys is higher among females and home owners
 - 75% of females mentioned self-completion surveys, compared to 51% of males
 - 67% of home owners prefer self-completion surveys vs 47% of those who are renting
- Public meetings appear to be a more popular option among the aged
 - 31% of those aged 55+ prefer public meetings vs 20% of those aged under 54

Thank you





If you have any queries about this report, please contact:

John Bourne, Director, Australian Market Intelligence, T: 9440 4404

Lisa Whitehead, Director, CATALYSE, T: 9368 0275