

4. Towns we are proud of

The District has considerable diversity in its urban areas. The largest town of Tokoroa has a forestry heritage, while the smaller town of Putaruru has a more rural atmosphere. The northern gateway village of Tirau boasts boutique retail services and a “corrugated iron” theme, and the western settlement of Arapuni provides tranquil lakeside living and eco-tourism opportunities. Community consultation has identified that South Waikato people take pride in their towns and villages but would like to see them further developed.



A 2005 South Waikato Household Survey revealed that one of the top three issues for residents is to improve the attractiveness of South Waikato’s towns.

This section includes a range of indicators that cross across the spectrum of social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

Indicators for this section were identified through discussions and workshops during 2005 and 2006. The urban indicators have been clustered into three Community Outcome areas as follows.

Code	Theme	Community Outcome
CO4.1	Attractive urban areas	South Waikato has attractive urban areas, open spaces and private properties that people take pride in.
CO4.2	Mobility access	Urban design caters for the elderly and mobility impaired.
CO4.3	Clean, tidy urban environments	The District’s urban environments are kept clean and tidy and there is a widespread culture of respect for our communities and identity.

CO4.1 Attractive urban areas

Aim: *“South Waikato has attractive urban areas, open spaces and private properties that people take pride in”.*

Why is this important?

Attractiveness of the physical environment contributes to the District image and social and economic development. A clean, healthy environment makes people feel good about the District and helps foster community pride and identity.

What are the indicators?

- 4.1.1 Sense of pride in local area
- 4.1.2 Urban trees
- 4.1.3 Open spaces
- 4.1.4 Neighbourhood Beautification groups
- 4.1.5 Strength of businesses and shops

How are we doing?

- At present little specific information is available on the extent to which people feel pride in their local area. Council will look at addressing this information gap over the coming years.
- There are an estimated 2,160 street trees in Tokoroa, but no current estimates for the number of street trees in other towns in the District. Council plants approximately 40-50 new trees per year as replacements for trees that have been removed or as requested by residents. Throughout the District there are a lot of street trees that are reaching the end of their life and need to be replaced. As part of the development of a Street Trees Policy over the next few years, Council will undertake a street trees survey to provide information on condition, age and numbers.
- In some parts of the South Waikato, neighbourhood groups have organised themselves to help beautify their local area. Council is keen to promote more of this type of activity to help foster community pride and raise the attractiveness of the District's urban areas.
- The 2005 Community Outcomes Household Survey asked respondents to rate the strength of their town or area in terms of businesses and shops. The results show that 47% of South Waikato residents rated businesses and shops as good or excellent. A further 30% scored businesses and shops as average, while 15% scored it weak or poor. Respondents from Tirau were most likely to rate the strength of businesses and shops as good or excellent, while respondents from Tokoroa and Putaruru were relatively more likely to rate them weak or poor.

What is being done?

District Strategies	Lead Organisations
SWDC:	Arapuni Residents' Association
• Reserve Management Plans	Fast Forward Tokoroa contractor (TANGS)
• Cemetery Bylaw	Putaruru Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
• Street Trees Policy (forthcoming)	Service Groups (eg, Lions Club)
South Waikato Physical Activity (Leisure) Strategy (forthcoming)	South Waikato Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
South Waikato Graffiti Strategy	South Waikato District Council (SWDC)
South Waikato District Plan	South Waikato Safer Community Council (SWSCC)
Local Area Concept Plans	Tirau Business Association
Potential development of reserve and beautification committees	Tirau Community Board
Mainstreet Minders in Putaruru and Tokoroa	Vibrant Putaruru contractor (PIP)
NZ Urban Design Protocol	
Spring Clean South Waikato	

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Indicator	State	Trend
4.1.1 Sense of pride in local area	?	?

People's sense of pride about their local area provides a summary measure of satisfaction with many aspects of the built and natural environment. Community pride is an important part of overall quality of life. It can impact on people's sense of wellbeing, and can also be reflected in how non-residents view the District.

At present little specific information is available on the extent to which people feel pride in their local area. Council will look at addressing this information gap over the coming years.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.1.2 Urban trees	☹	⇒

The prevalence of street trees and parks in urban areas adds to quality of life and neighbourhood pride. Trees are visually attractive and also provide a home for birds and other wildlife, bringing part of the natural environment into South Waikato's towns.

There are an estimated 2,160 street trees in Tokoroa. There are no current estimates for the number of street trees in other towns in the District. Council plants approximately 40-50 new trees per year as replacements for trees that have been removed or as requested by residents.

Throughout the District there are a lot of street trees that are reaching the end of their life and need to be replaced. As part of the development of a Street Trees Policy over the next few years, Council will undertake a street trees survey to provide information on condition, age and numbers.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.1.3 Open spaces	☺	⇒

Greenscape areas, such as parks and gardens, perform a number of important functions. They help protect and enhance ecosystems, help mitigate the effects of urbanisation by providing open spaces, and provide residents with a range of recreational opportunities. Open space can also help maintain a sense of community in urban areas.

The principal objective for Council's Parks and Leisure activity is to enhance and promote the physical and emotional wellbeing of local people by providing open spaces and facilities for active and passive recreation. Council is responsible for around 240 hectares of parks, sportsgrounds, esplanades, playgrounds, cemeteries and gardens. Council is also responsible for the appearance of urban areas, and uses trees, flower beds and other soft landscaping to make our towns more attractive for residents and visitors alike.

According to results from Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey, use and satisfaction with Council recreational facilities has been generally high and improving over the past several years. For further information refer to indicators 3.7.6 (Use of Council recreational facilities) and 3.7.7 (Satisfaction with Council recreational facilities). Council has set itself stretch targets for the 2006/07 Survey in relation to usage and satisfaction with all its recreational facilities and is

undertaking asset management improvements, reserve management planning and a Recreational Services Review to achieve this.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.1.4 Neighbourhood Beautification groups	☺	?

In some parts of the South Waikato, neighbourhood groups have organised themselves to help beautify their local area. Council is keen to promote more of this type of activity to help foster community pride and raise the attractiveness of the District's urban areas.

Additional information for this indicator is yet to be sourced.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.1.5 Strength of businesses and shops	☺	?

The amenity value of urban areas is partly related to the accessibility and quality of local services. This indicator measures residents' ratings of the strength of businesses and shops in their town or area.

The 2005 Community Outcomes Household Survey of 465 residents asked respondents to rate the strength of their town or area across a range of sectors, including the strength of businesses and shops, using a scale from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent).

The results show that 47% of South Waikato residents rated businesses and shops as good or excellent. A further 30% scored businesses and shops as average, while 15% scored it weak or poor, and 8% did not give a response to this item. Respondents from Tirau were most likely to rate the strength of businesses and shops as good or excellent, while respondents from Tokoroa and Putaruru were relatively more likely to rate the strength of businesses and shops as average, weak or very poor.

Rating of community strengths – Businesses and shops 2005

	Good or excellent	Average	Weak or very poor	Not specified	Total
South Waikato District	47%	30%	15%	8%	100%
Tokoroa residents	23%	41%	28%	7%	100%
Putaruru residents	29%	41%	17%	12%	100%
Tirau residents	89%	8%	0%	4%	100%

Source: SWDC Community Outcomes Household Survey 2005

CO4.2 Mobility access

Aim: *“Urban design caters for the elderly and mobility impaired”.*

Why is this important?

New Zealand has an aging population profile and an increasing number of people with mobility-related disabilities. Improved mobility access can enable greater participation in society by people living with disabilities.

What are the indicators?

- 4.2.1 Barriers to accessing local services
- 4.2.2 Mobility transport
- 4.2.3 Satisfaction with footpaths

How are we doing?

- At present little specific information is available on the extent of perceived barriers to accessing local services. Council will look at addressing this information gap over the coming years.
- Council and Environment Waikato subsidise the Paratransit mobility transport service in the District. This supports discount taxi fares for people with disabilities, including the operation of vehicles equipped with wheelchair hoists. Council also has an ongoing commitment to the installation of mobility crossings as required. Council has budgeted \$6,000 per annum towards this over the period 2006/07 to 2008/09, returning to \$3,000 per annum thereafter.
- According to results from Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey, satisfaction with footpaths in main shopping areas peaked in 2001 and has subsequently declined. The main concern appears to be slippery tiles in the Tokoroa CBD. There is a relatively lower level of satisfaction with footpaths outside the main shopping areas, with the main concern being repairs and maintenance. Council has set itself targets to improve its level of service in relation to footpaths.

What is being done?

District Strategies	Lead Organisations
South Waikato District Plan	Environment Waikato
Local Area Concept Plans	South Waikato District Council (SWDC)
SWDC:	Tirau Community Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve Management Plans • Roading, Footpaths and Crossings Policy 	
NZ Urban Design Protocol	
South Waikato Physical Activity (Leisure) Strategy (forthcoming)	

Indicator	State	Trend
4.2.1 Barriers to accessing local services	?	?

This indicator measures the extent to which a sample of residents feels there are barriers to accessing key local services.

At present little specific information is available on the extent of perceived barriers to accessing local services. Council will look at addressing this information gap over the coming years.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.2.2 Mobility transport	☺	?

Accessibility for people with disabilities is an important component of liveable urban design. This indicator describes the mobility transport options that are available in South Waikato communities.

Council and Environment Waikato subsidise the Paratransit mobility transport service in the District. This supports discount taxi fares for people with disabilities, including the operation of vehicles equipped with wheelchair hoists.

Council also has an ongoing commitment to the installation of mobility crossings as required. Council has budgeted \$6,000 per annum towards this over the period 2006/07 to 2008/09, returning to \$3,000 per annum thereafter.

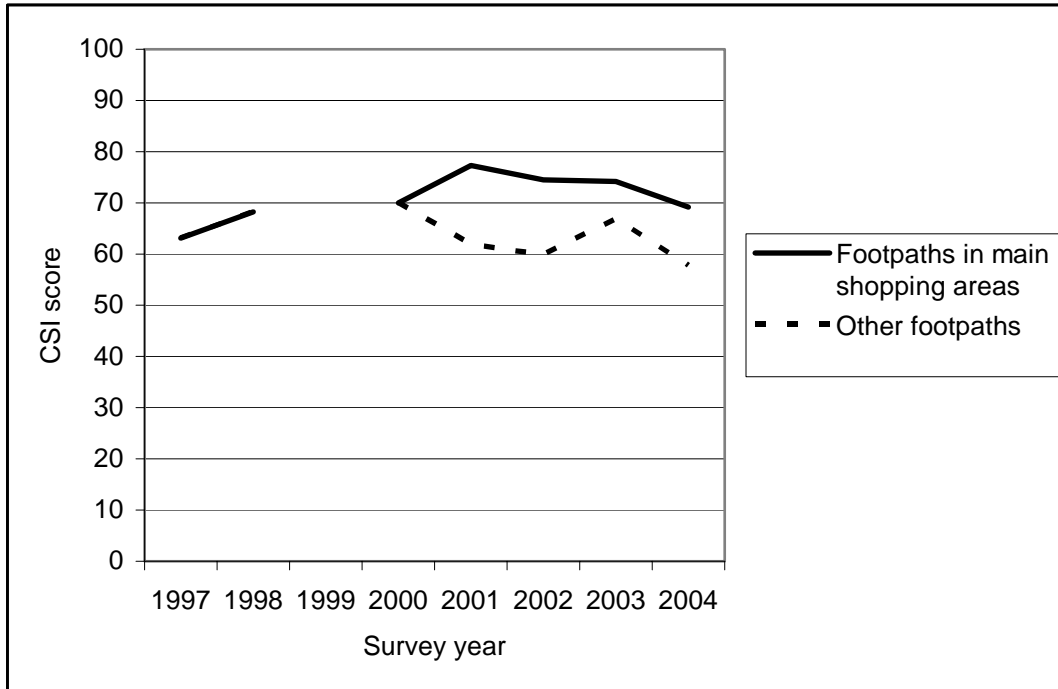
Indicator	State	Trend
4.2.3 Satisfaction with footpaths	☺	⇒

Council surveys people's satisfaction with footpaths in the District, including footpaths in main shopping areas and other footpaths.

Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey asks respondents to score their satisfaction with a range of services using a score from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). The results are then weighted to give an overall Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI score) for each service ranging from 0 to 100. A CSI score close to 100 indicates a high level of satisfaction.

According to results from Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey, satisfaction with footpaths in main shopping areas peaked in 2001 and has subsequently declined. The main concern appears to be slippery tiles in the Tokoroa CBD. There is a relatively lower level of satisfaction with footpaths outside the main shopping areas, with the main concern being repairs and maintenance. Council has set itself targets to improve its level of service in relation to satisfaction with footpaths.

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) – Footpaths



Source: SWDC Resident Satisfaction Survey

Footpaths in main shopping areas

In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, all respondents were asked how satisfied they were with footpaths in the main shopping areas. The majority of the sample rated their overall satisfaction positively. The CSI score was 69.2, which reflects good service but with room for improvement. The CSI for footpaths in main shopping areas has fallen since peaking at 77.3 points in 2001. Verbatim comments suggest that slipperiness of footpaths was the main concern. Council's target for the 2007 Survey is a CSI of 70.

Other footpaths

In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, all respondents were asked how satisfied they were with other footpaths, ie footpaths not in the main shopping areas. The CSI score was 57.8, which reflects that respondents consider this area needs improvement. Comparing the satisfaction profile with that of footpaths in main shopping areas shows that there are more people dissatisfied with footpaths outside the main shopping areas. The main concern appears to be around repairs and maintenance. Council's target for the 2007 Survey is a CSI of 70 points for footpaths outside the main shopping areas.

CO4.3 Clean, tidy urban environments

Aim: *“The District’s urban environments are kept clean and tidy and there is a widespread culture of respect for our communities and identity”.*

Why is this important?

The physical environment includes roads, footpaths, parks, buildings and other infrastructure that provides for social and economic development. A clean, healthy environment is important for people’s physical and emotional wellbeing.

What are the indicators?

- 4.3.1 Graffiti
- 4.3.2 Vandalism
- 4.3.3 Satisfaction with litter control
- 4.3.4 Satisfaction with public toilets
- 4.3.5 Complaints about littering

How are we doing?

- Data on the prevalence of graffiti in the District are yet to be sourced.
- During 2005/06 there were 317 incidents of intentional damage (including graffiti) reported to the Tokoroa and Putaruru Police Stations combined, with an overall resolution rate of 42.3%.
- In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, respondents were asked to score how satisfied they were with the Council picking up litter in public places. The resulting Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) score of 68.6 reflects reasonable to good service but with room for improvement. Comments from people who gave litter control a low score tended to focus on the visibility of litter on the streets. The CSI for litter control has improved over the past decade from a score of 62.3 points when surveying began in 1997. In the 2004 Survey 87.3% of respondents rated their satisfaction with litter control as average, good or very good (scores of 4-10). Council’s target for the 2006/07 Survey is to maintain 88% satisfaction with litter control.
- In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, respondents who had used public toilets in the past year were asked to score how satisfied they were with the public toilets. The resulting CSI score of 64.3 reflects reasonable service but with room for improvement. Verbatim comments from people who were dissatisfied tended to follow two main themes, namely the cleanliness of toilets and problems with being short of supplies, eg toilet paper or soap. The CSI for public toilets has improved over the past decade from a score of 53.1 points when surveying began in 1997. In the 2004 Survey, 53.2% of respondents rated their satisfaction with public toilets as good or excellent (scores of 7-10). Council’s target for the 2006/07 Survey is to maintain 60% satisfaction with public toilets.
- During the year to June 2006 Council received 8 service requests relating to littering, 12 relating to abandoned rubbish and 51 about abandoned vehicles. Systems have recently been improved to ensure consistent recording of all service requests, to help identify future trends.

What is being done?

District Strategies	Lead Organisations
SWDC:	Arapuni Residents' Association
• Street Trees Policy (forthcoming)	Council contractors
• Waste Management Plan	Fast Forward Tokoroa contractor (TANGS)
South Waikato Graffiti Strategy	Police
Council contracts for urban maintenance	Putaruru Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
	Service Clubs (eg, Lions Club)
	South Waikato Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
	Raukawa Trust Board
	South Waikato District Council (SWDC)
	South Waikato Safer Community Council (SWSCC)
	Tirau Business Association
	Tirau Community Board
	Vibrant Putaruru contractor (PIP)

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Indicator	State	Trend
4.3.1 Graffiti	☹	?

Graffiti impacts on the way people feel about where they live. It is perceived as an act of vandalism and can contribute to people feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood, which impacts negatively on overall wellbeing. Graffiti has been mentioned as a substantial concern for many people in the South Waikato, as potentially reflects a low sense of community pride by young people.

Data for this indicator are yet to be sourced.

Figures from the Police on intentional damage, reported under 4.3.2 (vandalism), include graffiti offences but these are not recorded separately.

Indicator	State	Trend
4.3.2 Vandalism	☺	?

Property damage is a major concern for many South Waikato residents. Damage to private and public property costs substantial amounts of money to repair each year. An additional, less tangible cost is the loss of social trust that comes from having one's property damaged.

During 2005/06 there were 317 incidents of intentional damage reported to the Tokoroa and Putaruru Police Stations combined, with an overall resolution rate of 42.3%.

South Waikato recorded intentional damage offences

Tokoroa Station	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Intentional damage offences reported				242	211
Resolved (No.)				89	100
Resolved (%)				36.8%	47.4%
Putaruru Station	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Intentional damage offences reported				123	106
Resolved (No.)				41	34
Resolved (%)				33.3%	32.1%
Tokoroa and Putaruru combined	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Intentional damage offences reported				365	317
Resolved (No.)				130	134
Resolved (%)				35.6%	42.3%

Source: NZ Police

Note: A recorded offences is considered to be resolved by Police when an offender is identified and dealt with (eg, warned, cautioned, prosecuted, etc)

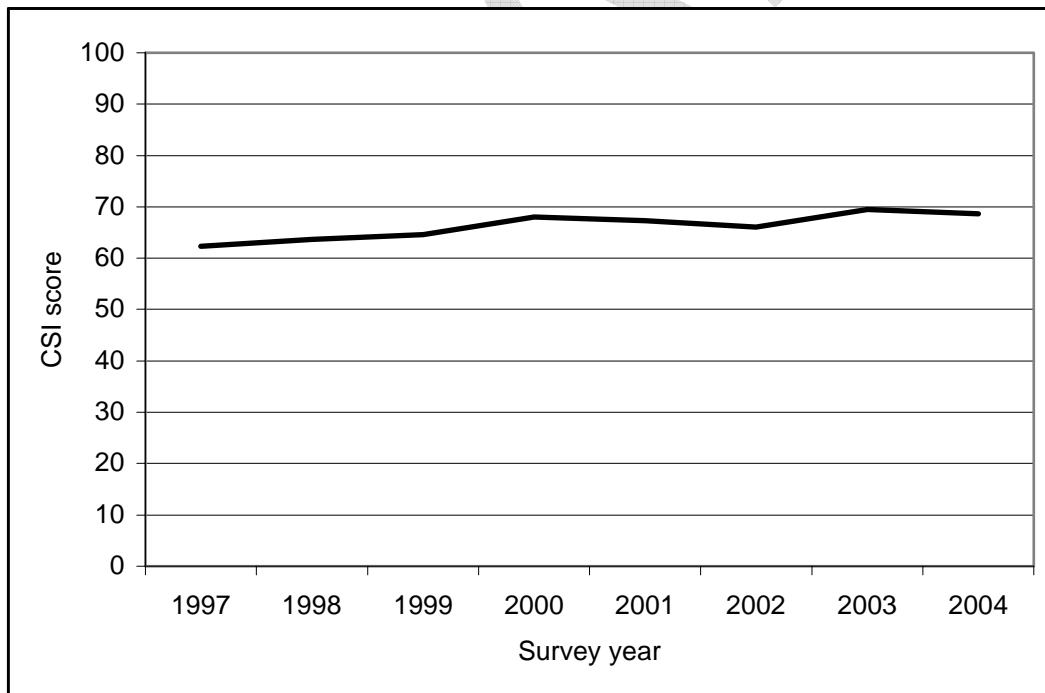
Indicator	State	Trend
4.3.3 Satisfaction with litter control	☹	↑

A clean and tidy environment is important to South Waikato people. Council's litter control function plays an important part in keeping our streets and towns tidy and presentable for residents and visitors alike.

Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey asks respondents to score their satisfaction with a range of services using a score from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). The results are then weighted to give an overall Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI score) for each service ranging from 0 to 100. A CSI score close to 100 indicates a high level of satisfaction.

In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, respondents were asked to score how satisfied they were with the Council picking up litter in public places. The resulting CSI score of 68.6 reflects reasonable to good service but with room for improvement. Comments from people who gave litter control a low score tended to focus on a few different themes with the most common being visibility of litter on the streets. The CSI for litter control has improved over the past decade from a score of 62.3 points when surveying began in 1997. In the 2004 Survey 87.3% of respondents rated their satisfaction with litter control as average, good or very good (scores of 4-10). Council's target for the 2006/07 Survey is to maintain 88% satisfaction with litter control.

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) – Litter control



Source: SWDC Resident Satisfaction Survey

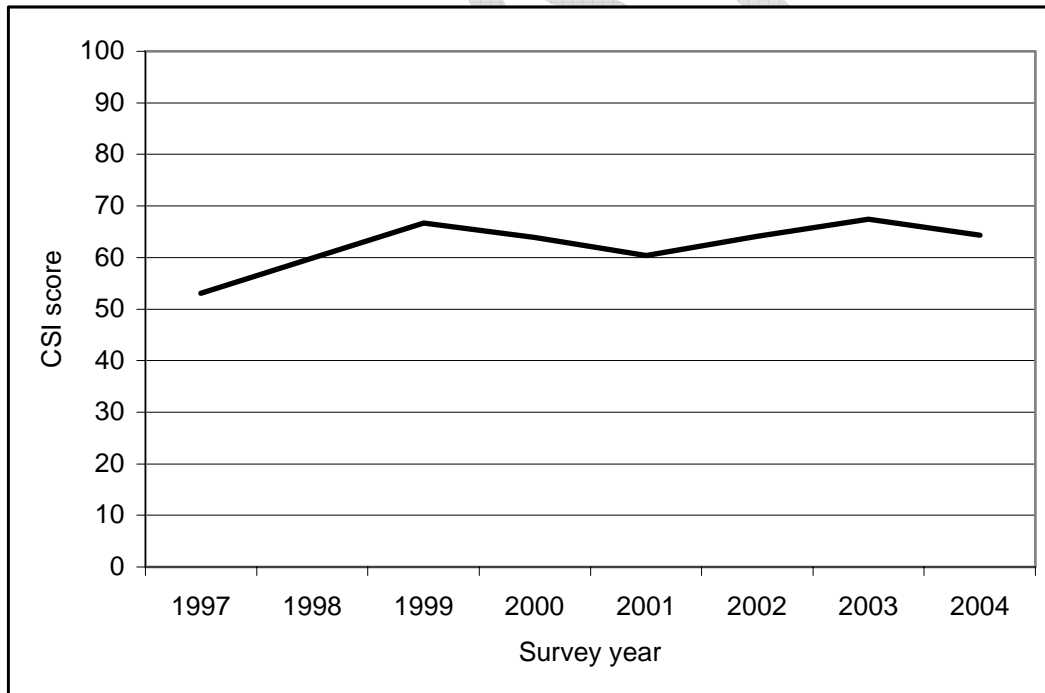
Indicator	State	Trend
4.3.4 Satisfaction with public toilets	☹	↑

It is important to South Waikato residents and visitors that public toilets are maintained to a clean and hygienic standard.

Council's Resident Satisfaction Survey asks respondents to score their satisfaction with a range of services using a score from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). The results are then weighted to give an overall Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI score) for each service ranging from 0 to 100. A CSI score close to 100 indicates a high level of satisfaction.

In the 2004 Resident Satisfaction Survey, respondents who had used public toilets in the past year were asked to score how satisfied they were with the facilities. The resulting CSI score of 64.3 reflects reasonable service but with room for improvement. Verbatim comments from people who were dissatisfied tended to follow two main themes, namely the cleanliness of toilets and problems with being short of supplies, eg toilet paper or soap. The CSI for public toilets has improved over the past decade from a score of 53.1 points when surveying began in 1997. In the 2004 Survey, 53.2% of respondents rated their satisfaction with public toilets as good or excellent (scores of 7-10). Council's target for the 2006/07 Survey is to maintain 60% satisfaction with public toilets.

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) – Public toilets



Source: SWDC Resident Satisfaction Survey

Indicator	State	Trend
4.3.5 Complaints about littering	☹	?

The number of complaints that Council receives about littering and fly-tipping in the District is a potential inverse indicator of the sense of pride that people have in their District and environment.

During the year to June 2006 Council received 8 service requests relating to littering, 12 relating to abandoned rubbish and 51 about abandoned vehicles. Systems have recently been improved to ensure consistent recording of all service requests, to help identify future trends.

Complaints to Council about littering, rubbish and street cleaning

Service requests	Year to June 2006
Abandoned Rubbish	12
Abandoned Vehicles	51
Litter	8
Street Cleaning	2
Street Sweeping	1

Source: SWDC Manager Asset Strategy/Service Requests

