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# HAMILTON CITY QUALITY OF LIFE PULSE SURVEY

REPORT #2: December 2019

# BACKGROUND & APPROACH



## BACKGROUND

This report presents the second wave of this study. Wave by wave comparisons are conducted and highlighted as appropriate.

The purpose of this study is to understand the views and sentiments of residents in Hamilton City and track key indicators so that public products and services can be improved over time by the Hamilton City Council.

Hamilton City Council has committed to improving the quality of life of its residents by including the following five key indicators in the 10 year plan:

- The proportion of residents agreeing that Hamilton is a great place to live
- The proportion of residents saying that Hamilton has got better in the last 12 months
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they have confidence the Council makes decisions that are in the best interest of the city.

This wave we also added some topical questions on the local elections.



## APPROACH

- Online Survey via Nielsen's research partner panel (Dynata)
- Sample size: n=370
- Sample profile: Those aged 18 years and over who live in the Hamilton City area
- Average survey length: 6 minutes
- Incidence rate: 100%
- Weighting: Results are weighted by age, gender and ethnicity to be representative of those aged 18 years and over who live in the Hamilton City area
- Fieldwork period: Thursday 7 – Monday 25 November 2019
- Significance testing: Statistically significant differences in this report are significant at the 95% confidence level. Only differences with a 5 percentage point difference from the total/ previous wave have been mentioned in this report
- **Note:** Due to differences in approach, the results presented in this report are not directly comparable with the biennial Quality of Life Survey conducted by a consortium of councils throughout New Zealand.

# SUMMARY

## Indicators

- Overall, 73% agree that Hamilton is a great place to live, this is similar to last wave (75%). There is a clear correlation between age and agreement; agreement with Hamilton being a great place to live increases with age
- Residents' pride in Hamilton has improved slightly this wave with half agreeing they have pride (48% last wave) and the proportion who disagree has dropped slightly from 17% to 11% this wave
- The number of residents who disagree that they have confidence in the Council's decision-making has significantly fallen this wave (21% vs. 28% last wave). This increase is mainly due to an increase in confidence by males, those aged 65+ and those who have lived in Hamilton for 5 or more years.

## Local elections

- Eight in 10 Hamilton residents were aware the local elections were taking place before the closing date. Those more likely to be aware were aged 50+ while those aged under 25 years were less likely (64%)
- When it came to actually making a vote, we saw a similar pattern where those aged 50+ were more likely to vote vs. those under 50 years
- Of those who voted, their main reasons for doing so were because they saw it as a way they can influence what happens in their local area and/or because it was their civic duty to vote – civic duty is a concept more strongly felt among those aged 65+
- Of those who did not vote, 22% said they intended to vote while 25% said they never intended doing so
- The most common reasons for not voting were that they didn't know enough about the candidates and that they forgot to vote/ didn't get around to it.

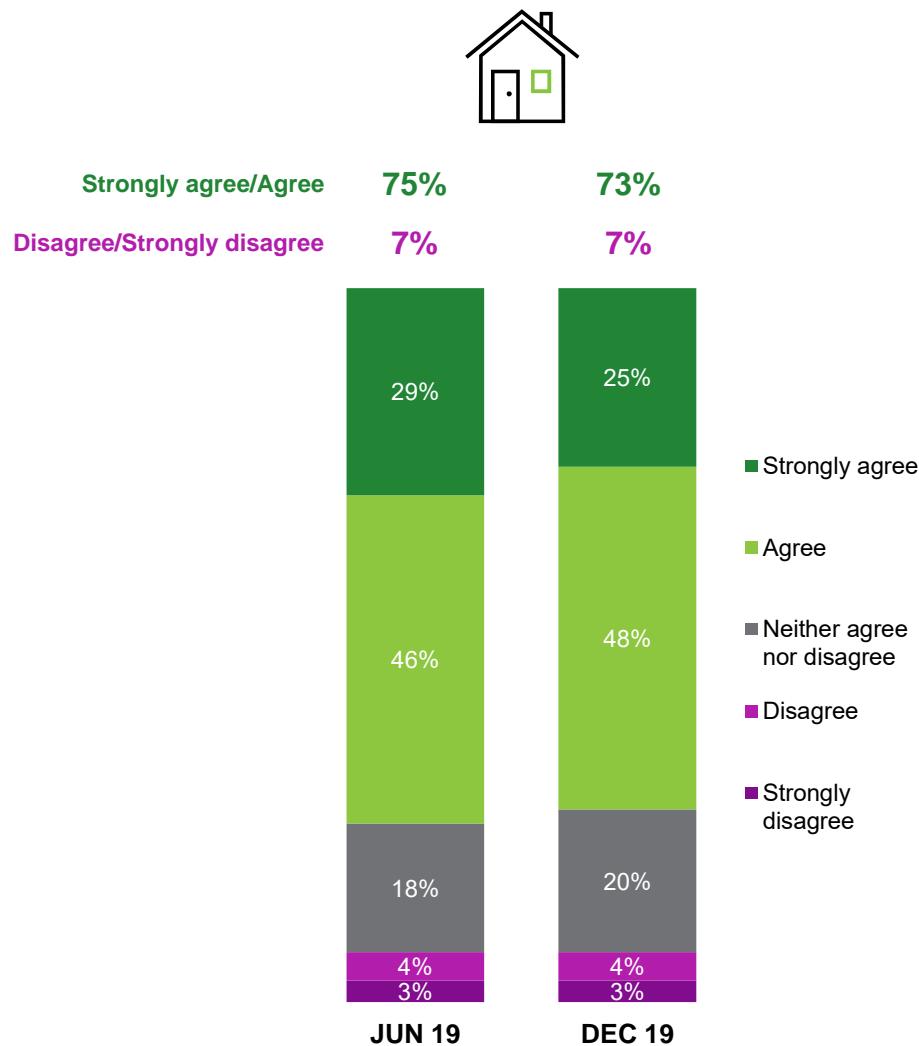
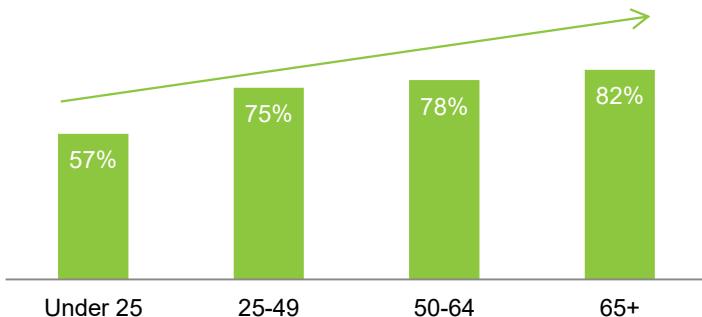
# INDICATORS SUMMARY

INDICATORS	RATING	CHANGE SINCE W1	TWO MOST PREVALENT THEMES FOR RATINGS GIVEN
 Hamilton is a great place to live	73% Agree 7% Disagree	-2 --	
 Better, worse or the same as a place to live compared with 12 months ago	35% Better 22% Worse	+4 --	Good/improved/new amenities Building developments/renovations  Crime/increased crime rate Homelessness/lack of suitable, affordable housing
 A sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels	50% Agree 11% Disagree	+2 -6	Beautiful scenery/street plantings/looks good Clean and tidy city  Rundown, dirty, untidy area Lacks appeal, character
 A sense of community with others in the neighbourhood	39% Agree 18% Disagree	-- -3	I know and get on well with my neighbours Friendly, helpful people  People keep to themselves/no interaction with neighbours More undesirable elements (incl. drug addicts, gang members)
 Confidence in the Council making decisions that are in the best interests of Hamilton	30% Agree 21% Disagree	+4 -7 ▼	Do a great job/I agree with their decisions Trust in them/their reputation to do what is best  Ratepayers' money not being spent wisely Self-serving/pushing personal agendas

# IS HAMILTON A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE?

Similar to the previous wave, around three-quarters of Hamilton residents agree that Hamilton is a great place to live, while only 7% disagree.

Agreement increases with age. Residents aged under 25 years have the lowest level of agreement (57% cf. 73%) while those aged 65+ are most likely to agree (82%).



Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370)

Q6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Hamilton is a great place to live"?

# ARE THINGS GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?

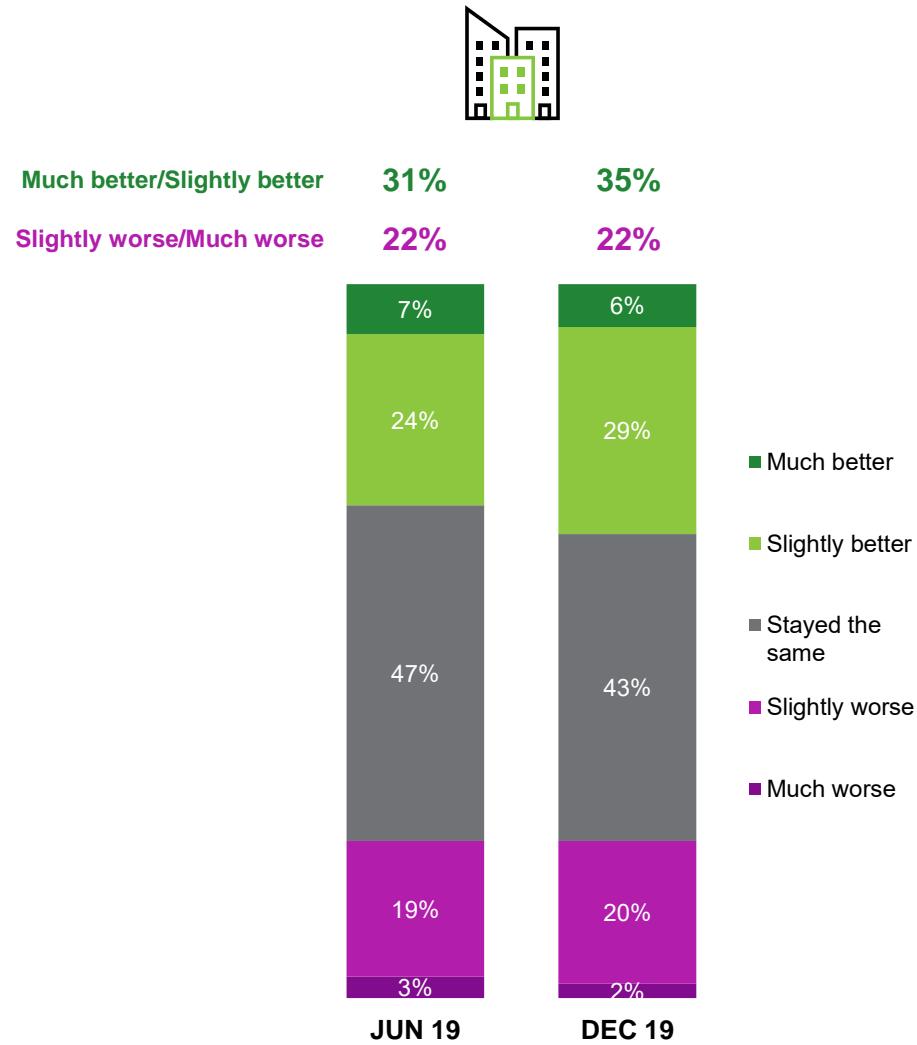
Residents' sentiment towards Hamilton has remained relatively stable this wave. Thirty-five percent claim it has got better as a place to live in the past 12 months while 22% claim it has become worse.

Those aged 25-49 show a higher level of optimism compared with the total with 41% agreeing that Hamilton has got better as a place to live.

Asians/Indians are also more likely to agree (52%) along with those born outside on New Zealand (47%).

*"It's a better place to live than it was 12 month ago because there are more things to do than there was 12 month ago."*

*"Lot of new projects from the Council, new roads, new residential developments, new family parks etc."*

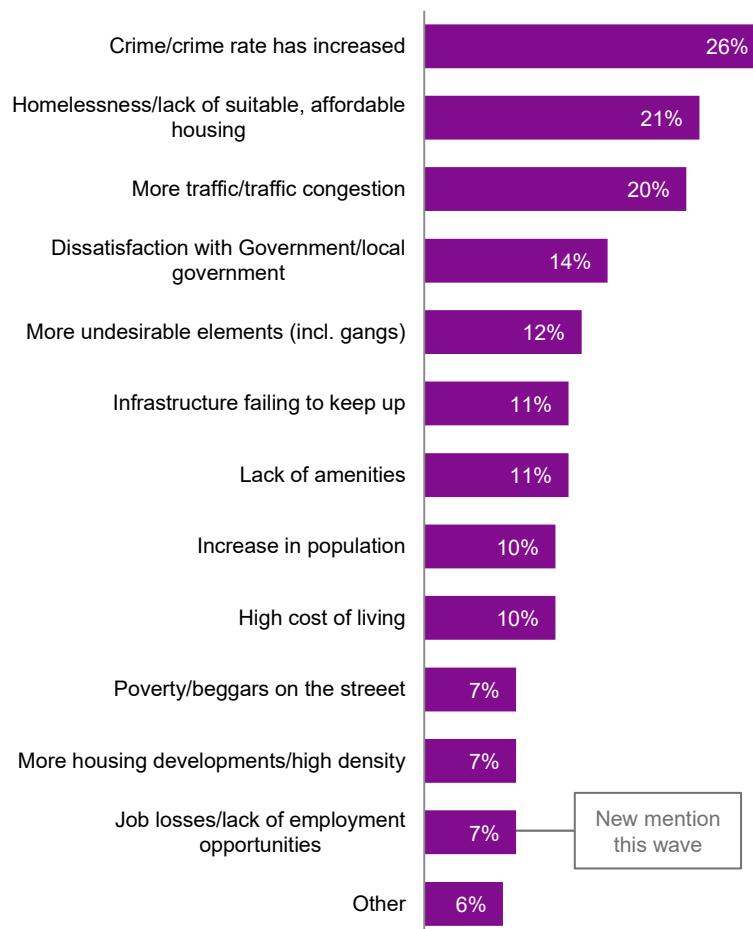


Base: Those who have lived in Hamilton for one or more years; W1 (n=348), W2 (n=343)  
 Q7. And in the last 12 months, do you feel Hamilton has got better, worse or stayed the same as a place to live?

# WHY ARE THINGS GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?

## Reasons for Hamilton becoming worse among n=77 who gave this rating

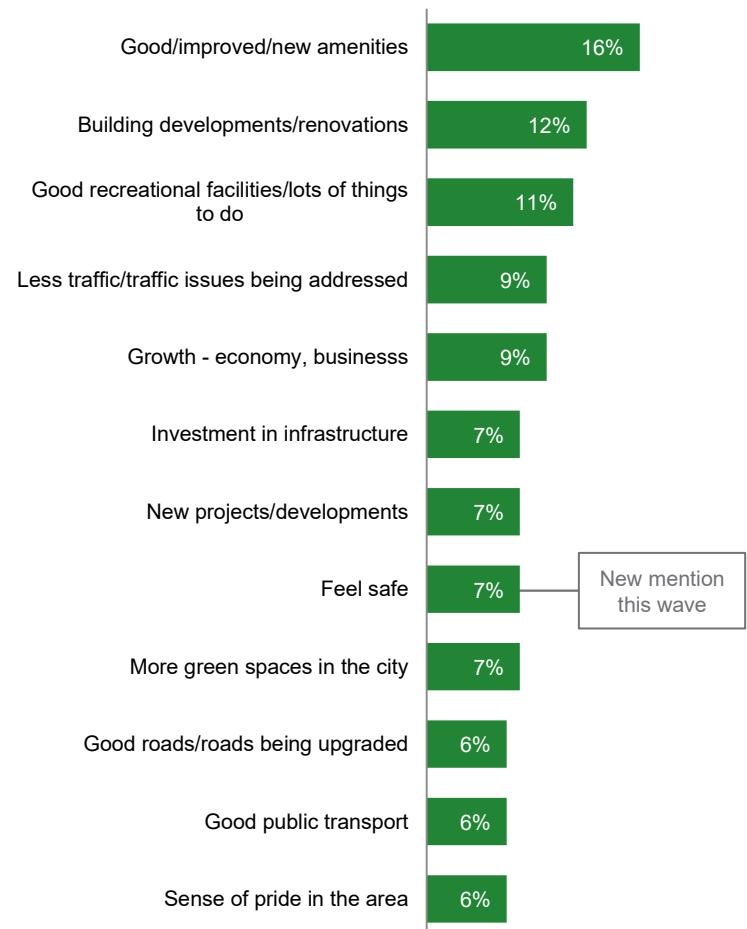
In line with the previous wave, the two main reasons given by those who feel Hamilton has become worse as a place to live in the last 12 months are crime (26%) and homelessness/lack of housing (21%)



Base: Those who say Hamilton has got worse as a place to live (n=77)  
Q8. And for what reasons do you say Hamilton has got worse as a place to live?

## Reasons for Hamilton becoming better among n=119 who gave this rating

Good/improved/new amenities continues to rank in first place (16%) amongst those who feel Hamilton has become a better place to live in the last 12 months



Base: Those who say Hamilton has got better as a place to live (n=119)  
Q8. And for what reasons do you say Hamilton has got better as a place to live?

# DO PEOPLE HAVE PRIDE IN HAMILTON?

The level of pride residents feel toward Hamilton has improved slightly, with half (50%) agreeing they feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels. The proportion of those disagreeing has dropped from 17% to 11% in this wave.

Sentiment amongst younger residents (aged under 25 years) has improved, as the proportion of those who disagree with the statement has significantly lowered (from 40% to 18% this wave). The same is also true amongst those who have lived in Hamilton less than 5 years (from 19% to 8%).

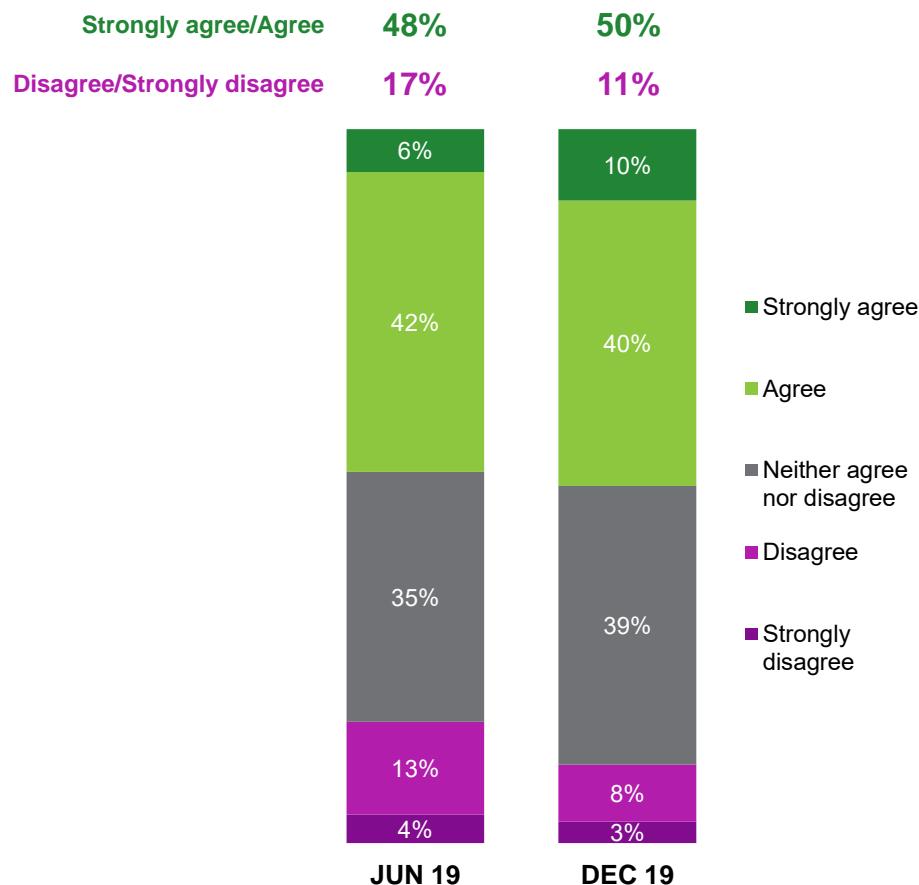
Despite the improvement, those aged under 25 years remain the age group with the highest level of disagreement.

*"Attractions such as Hamilton Gardens, Hamilton Lake and Claudelands Arena get good raps from visiting Family and Friends."*

*"The parks are clean, streets are clean and bus stops are not vandalized."*

*"Waikato River through city is finally being improved in water quality, and city is no longer turning its back on the river. Urban passenger transport is being improved. More cycleways in place."*

*"...no further development in city beautification or riverbank that I can see - the Claudelands event centre is uncomfortable with poor acoustics, the place is really a cultural desert - LIBRARY ?? A JOKE."*



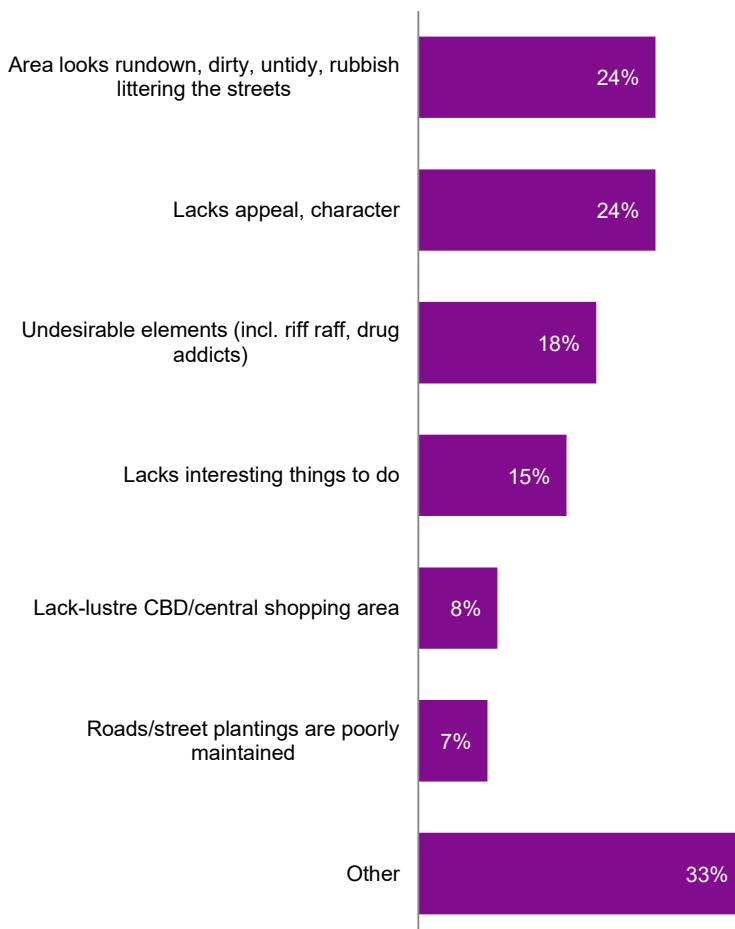
Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370)

Q9. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels".

# REASONS FOR HAVING PRIDE/ NOT HAVING PRIDE

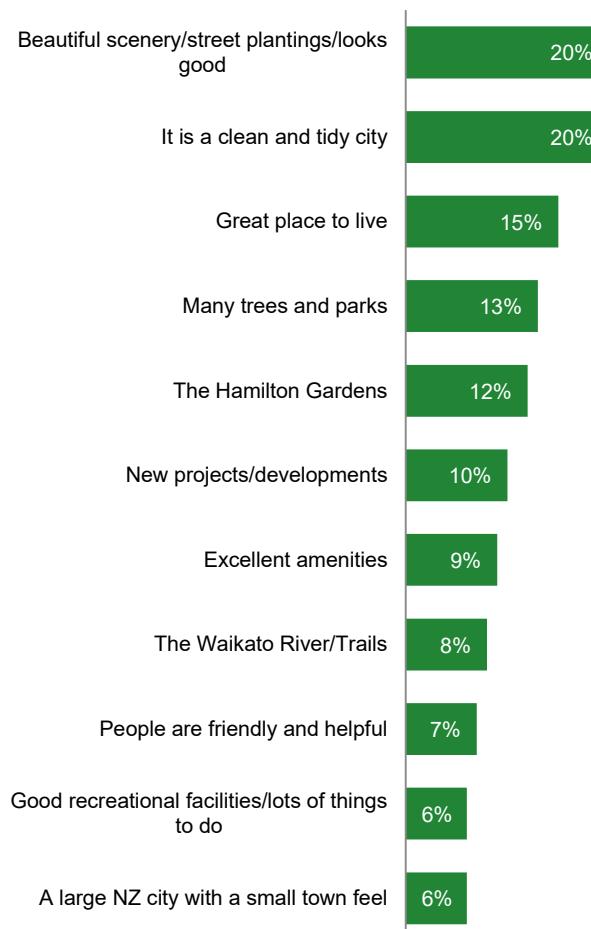
## Reasons for not having pride among n=41 who gave this rating

Run down/untidy area (24%) and lacks appeal (24%) continue to be the main reasons residents mention when explaining their lack of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels



## Reasons for having pride among n=183 who gave this rating

Beautiful scenery (20%) and cleanliness (20%) of the city are the primary reasons residents have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels



Only showing reasons with above 5% mentions

Base: Those who disagree that they have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels (n=41)  
Q10. And for what reasons do you disagree that you have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels?

Base: Those who agree that they have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels (n=183)  
Q10. And for what reasons do you disagree that you have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels? 9

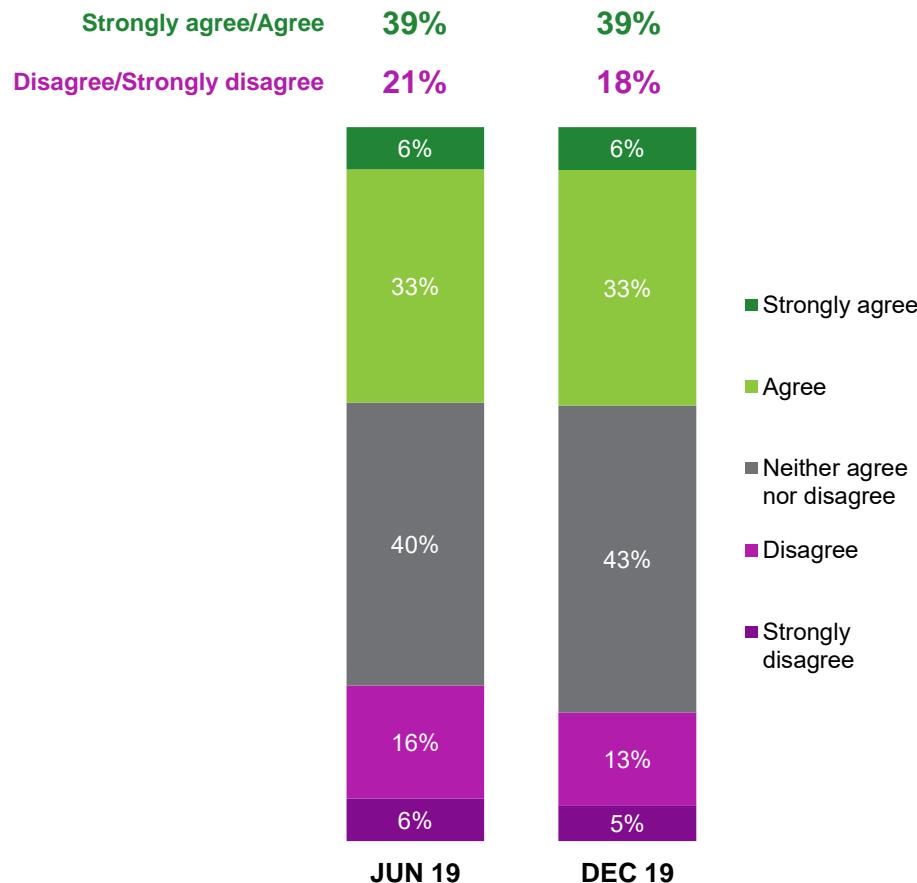
# DO PEOPLE FEEL A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

In line with the previous wave, around two in five (39%) Hamilton residents agree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood. On the other hand, just under one in five residents (18%) disagree with this.

Asians/Indians are significantly more likely to agree that they feel a sense of community in Hamilton (62%) as are those who are born outside of New Zealand (49%).

*"People here are friendly. I have always had positive encounters with people in public spaces, as well as when moving into a new house and neighbourhood."*

*"Glenview needs a local cafe or restaurant that can benefit everyone. There are quite a few parks in the area but the play grounds need updating and adding more to so that there is a place for the community to go to. There needs to be more community driven projects - there is an empty school in Bader that's a bit depressing, the community house has a vege garden which is a good start."*



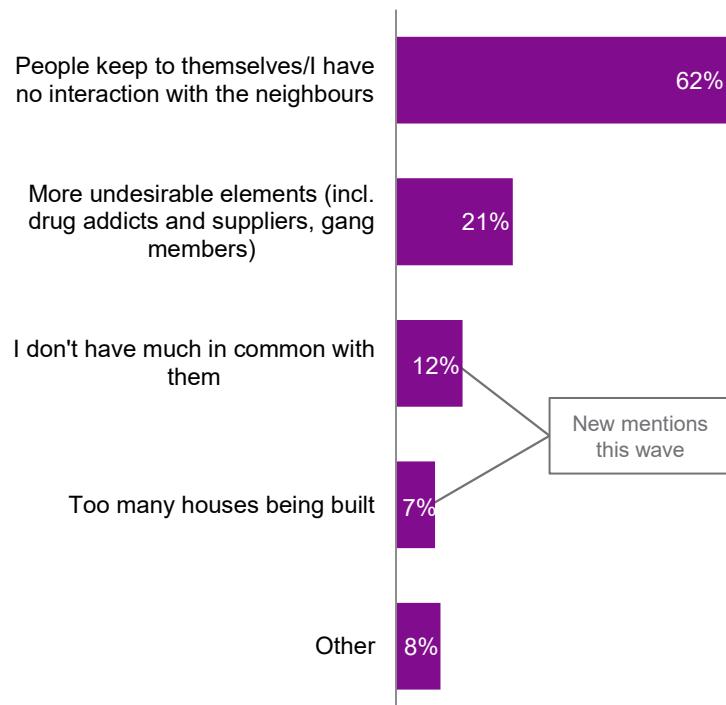
Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370)

Q11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I feel a sense of community with others in my neighbourhood".

# REASONS FOR FEELING/NOT FEELING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

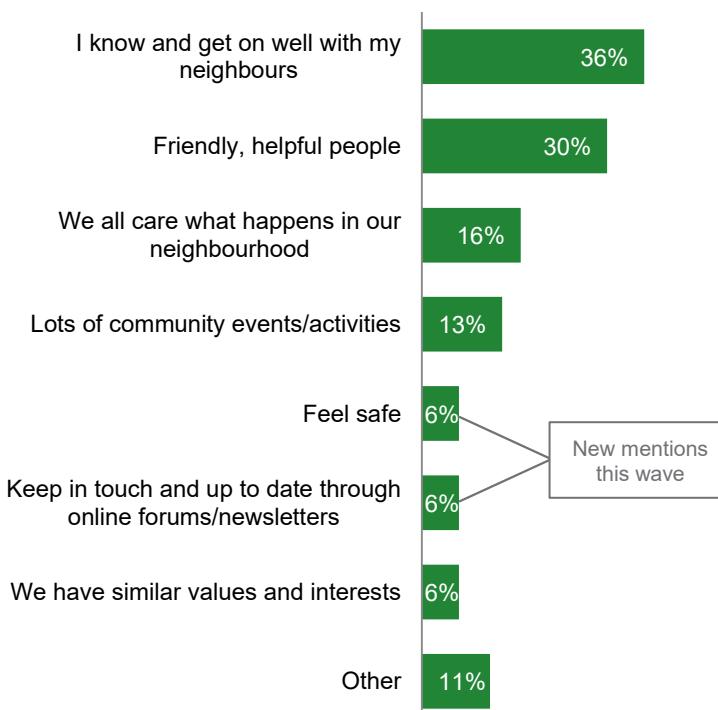
## Reasons for not feeling a sense of community among n=68 who gave this rating

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of those who don't feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood say that everyone keeps to themselves/they have no interaction with their neighbours or don't have much in common



## Reasons for feeling a sense of community among n=140 who gave this rating

Getting on well with neighbours (36%) and friendly, helpful people (30%) are the core reasons for feeling a sense of community with others in the neighbourhood



Only showing reasons with above 5% mentions

Base: Those who disagree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (n=68) Q12. And for what reasons do you not feel a sense of community with others in your neighbourhood?

Base: Those who agree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (n=140) Q12. And for what reasons do you feel a sense of community with others in your neighbourhood? 11

# CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING

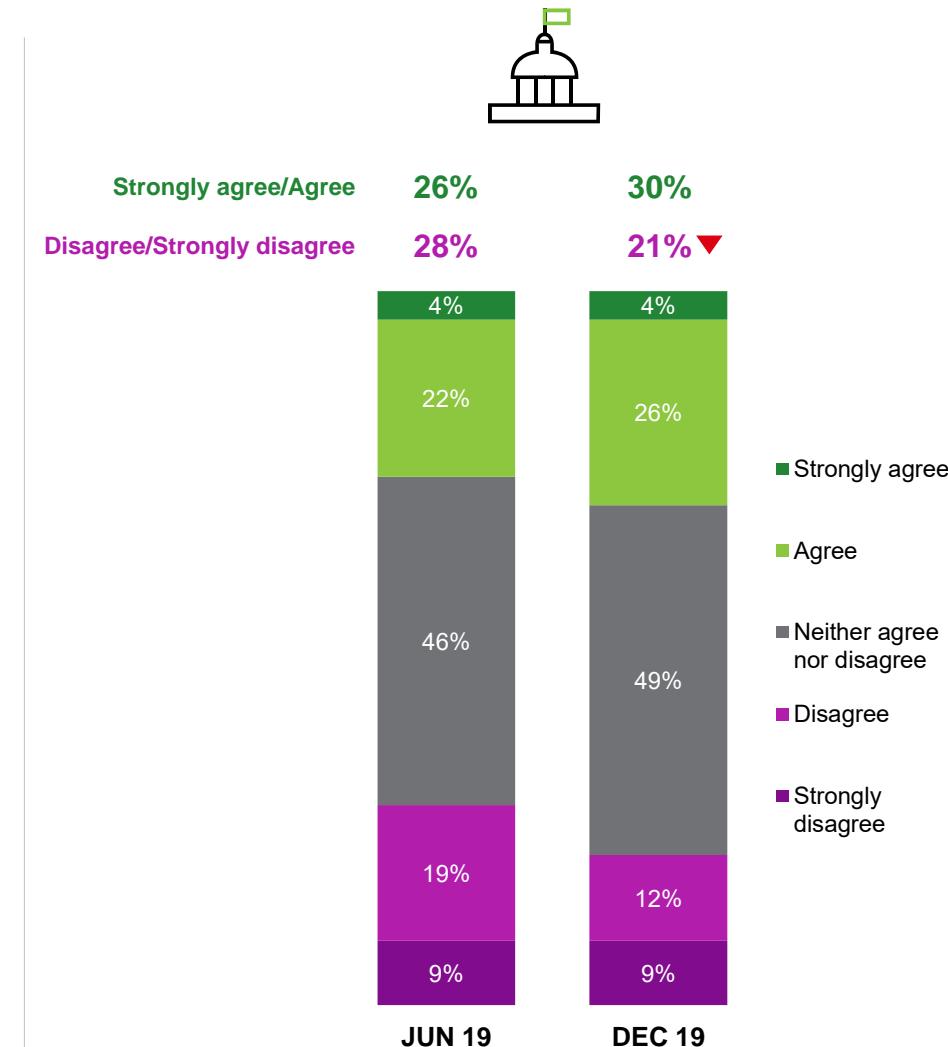
Compared with the last wave, the proportion of Hamilton residents who disagree that they have confidence that their local Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of their city has significantly decreased.

The level of disagreement has significantly dropped within the following subgroups compared with the previous wave:

- Males (from 32% to 20%)
- Those aged 65+ (from 53% to 30%)
- Those who have lived in Hamilton for 5 or more years (from 34% to 24%)

*"We have an awesome mayor who is proactive."*

*"Got rid of the old and in with the new so that there is a better balance present in the new council and less personal agendas."*



Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370)

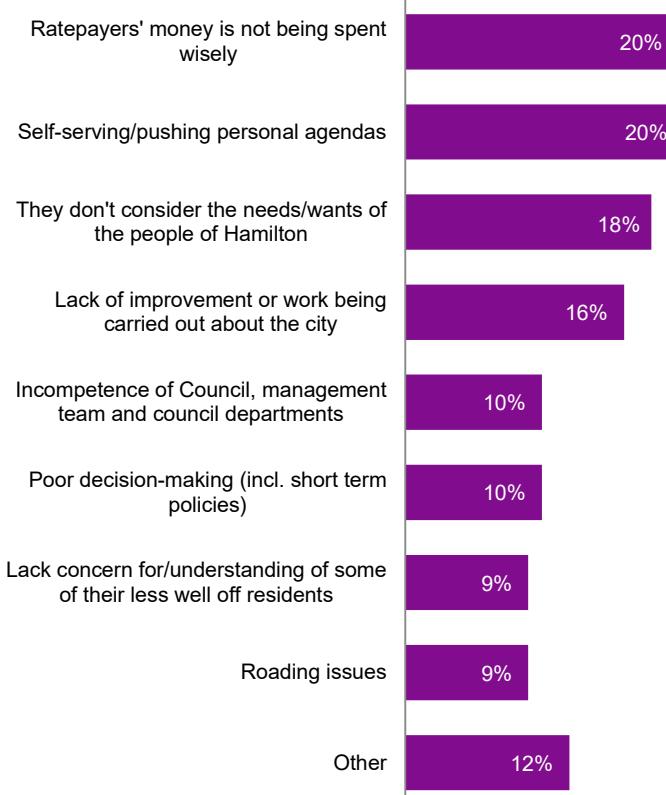
Q13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Overall, I have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of my city".

▲ Significantly different  
▼ to the previous wave

# REASONS FOR HAVING CONFIDENCE/NOT HAVING CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING

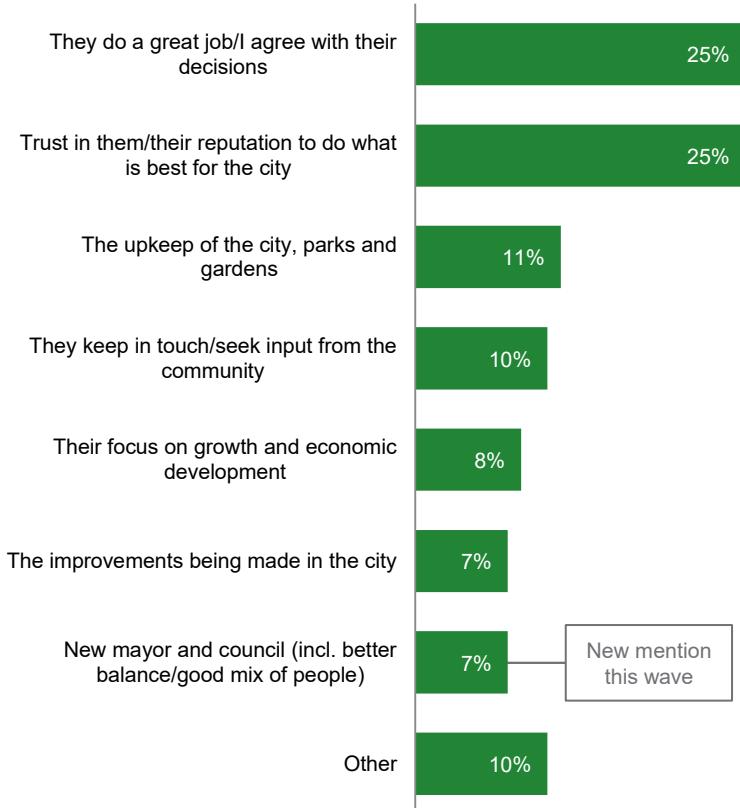
## Reasons for not having confidence in Council decision-making among n=76 who gave this rating

Of the residents who lack confidence in the Council, one in five (20%) believe ratepayers' money is not being spent wisely, and a similar proportion (20%) think councillors are self serving.



## Reasons for having confidence in Council decision-making among n=105 who gave this rating

One in four who have confidence in the Council believe they are doing a great job (25%) and a similar proportion trust them to do what is best for the city.



Only showing reasons with above 5% mentions

Base: Those who disagree that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of their city (n=76) Q14. And for what reasons do you not have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of your city?

Base: Those who agree that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of their city (n=105) Q14. And for what reasons do you have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of your city? 13

# LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS

# AWARE OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

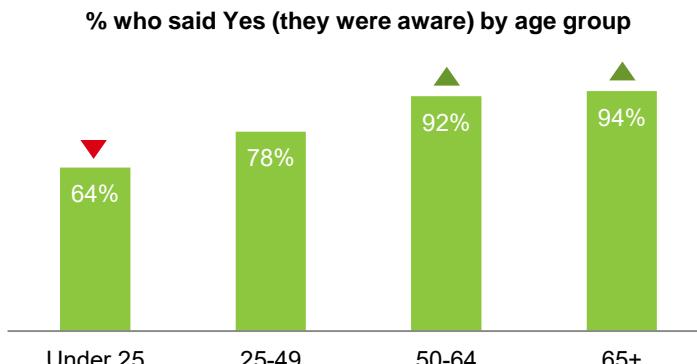
Overall, 8 in 10 Hamilton residents knew the local Council elections were taking place before the election closing date.

Those who were **more likely to say yes** they were aware were:

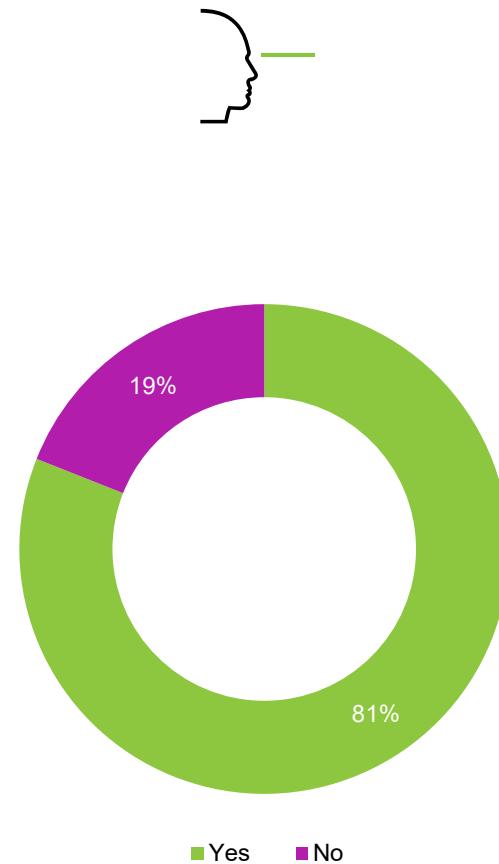
- Those aged 65+ (94% cf. 81% total)
- Those aged 50-64 (92%)
- University graduates (89%)
- Males (87%).

Those who were **more likely to say no** they were not aware were:

- Māori (46% cf. 19% total)
- Those aged under 25 years (36%)
- Those with no formal qualifications (34%)
- Those who have been living in Hamilton less than 5 years (30%)
- Females (25%).



▲ Significantly different  
▼ to the previous wave



Base: All Respondents (n=370)

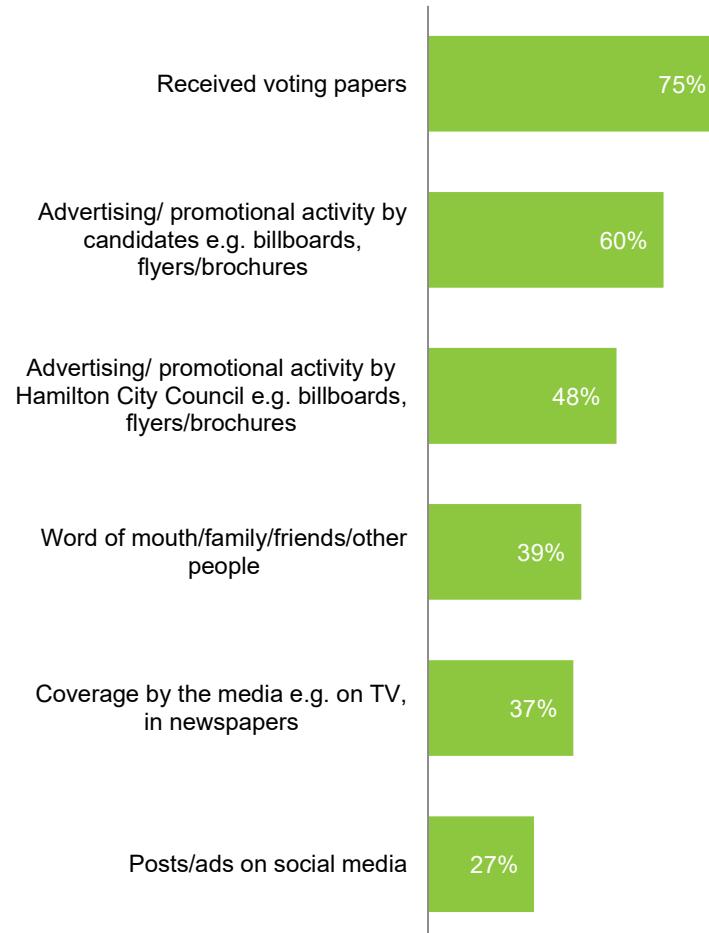
Q25. Local Body Elections, where people could vote for Mayor and councillors, were held in October this year. The closing date for voting was 12th October. Before this closing date, were you aware these elections were taking place?

# HOW DID PEOPLE KNOW THE LOCAL ELECTIONS WERE TAKING PLACE?

Three-quarters of those aware said they knew the elections were taking place because they received their voting papers in the post. Sixty percent said they saw advertising by candidates and just under half (48%) said they saw advertising by Hamilton City Council itself.

Those aged 65+ were more likely to have seen media coverage (e.g. on TV, in newspapers) about the local elections (64%) while those aged 25-49 were less likely (28%).

University graduates were more likely to say they've heard from others about the elections.



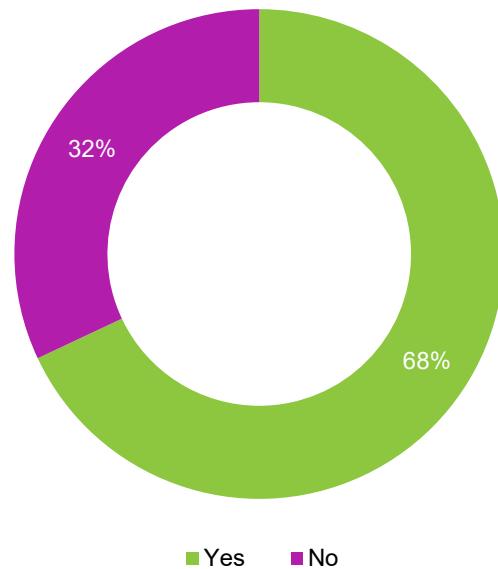
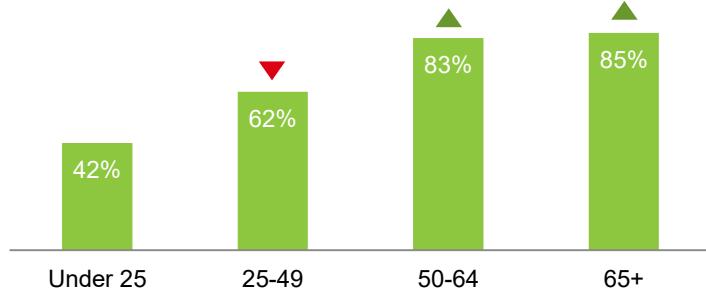
Base: Those who were aware the elections were taking place (n=297)  
Q26. How did you know that the Hamilton City Council elections were taking place?

# VOTED IN LOCAL ELECTIONS

Amongst those aware of the local Hamilton City Council elections, just over 2 in 3 (68%) residents claimed they personally voted.

Residents aged 50-64 as well as those aged 65+ years (83% and 85% respectively) are more likely to have voted, while those aged 25-49 were less likely (62%). Māori were also less likely to have voted (43%).

% aware of elections who said Yes (they did vote) by age group



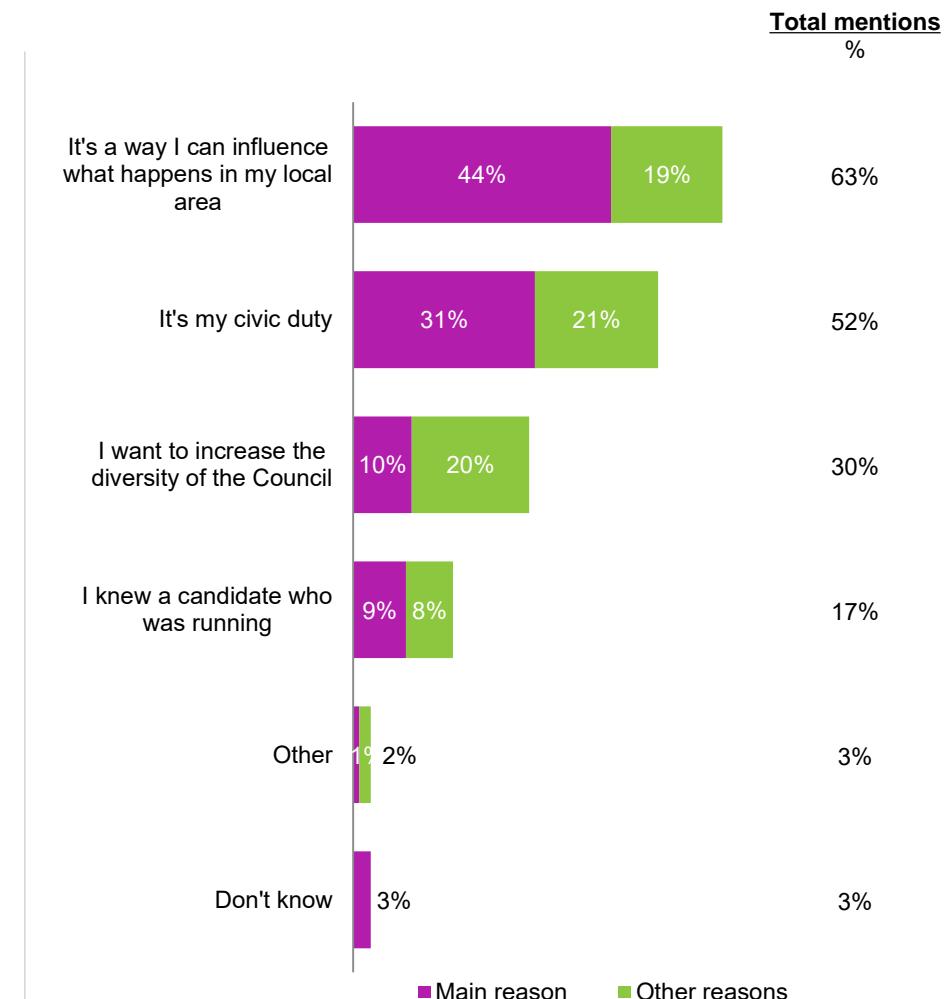
Base: Those aware the elections are taking place (n=297)  
Q27. Did you personally vote in the Hamilton City Council elections?

# REASONS FOR VOTING IN LOCAL ELECTIONS

**Sixty-three percent of those who voted are motivated to vote because it is a way they can influence what happens in their local area.**

This is more likely to be a reason among residents who have lived in Hamilton for 5 or more years, while those who have lived there for a shorter period are less likely to say this (45%).

Overall, just over half (52%) say it is their civic duty to vote. Those aged 65+ are more likely to say this (78%), it is also their top reason for voting. This concept may be of less relevance to younger age groups as only half of those under 65+ years mentioned this as a reason (their top reason for voting is because it's a way they can influence what happens in their local area).

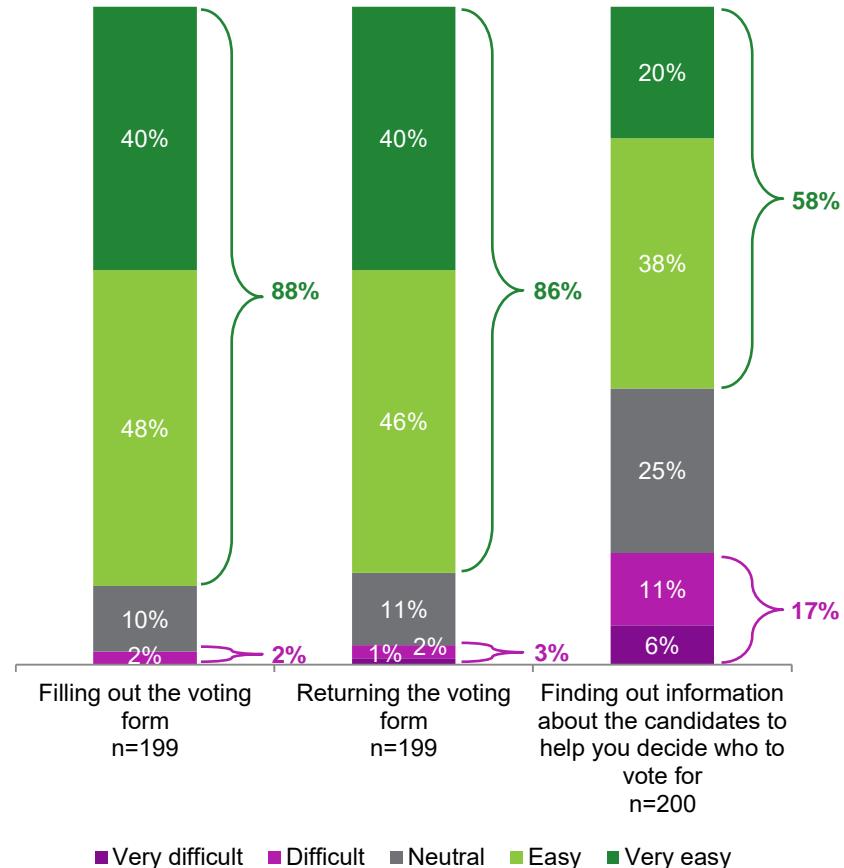


Base: Those who voted in the elections (n=200)  
 Q28. What reasons motivated you to vote in the Hamilton City Council elections?  
 Q29. And what would you say was your main reason for voting?

# EASE OF VOTING PROCESS

Filling out and returning the voting form are generally regarded as being easy to do by voters (88% and 86% respectively).

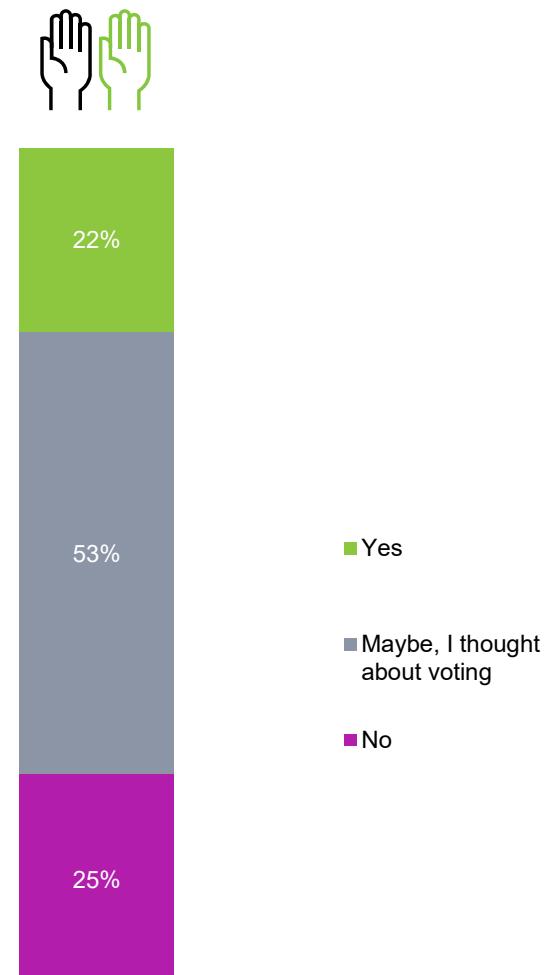
In comparison, finding out information about the candidates to help decide who to vote for is less easy, with only 58% saying that it is easy, while 17% say it is difficult.



Base: Those who voted in the elections, excluding don't know/ not applicable responses  
 Q30. Thinking about the voting process, please rate how easy or difficult you found each of the following...?

# INTENDED TO VOTE IN LOCAL ELECTIONS

Amongst those who said they did not vote in the local elections, one in five (22%) had intended doing so. The majority, 53%, claimed they thought about voting but didn't follow through while the remaining quarter of residents had no intention to vote at all.



Base: Those who did not vote in the elections (n=97)  
Q31. Did you intend to vote in the Hamilton City Council elections?

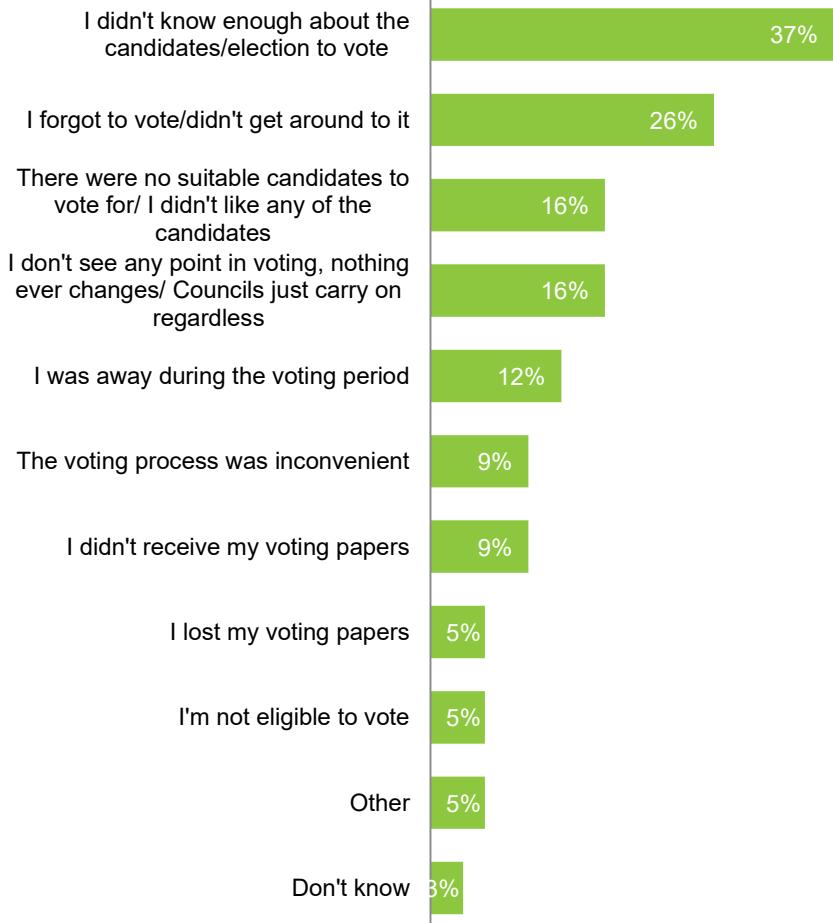
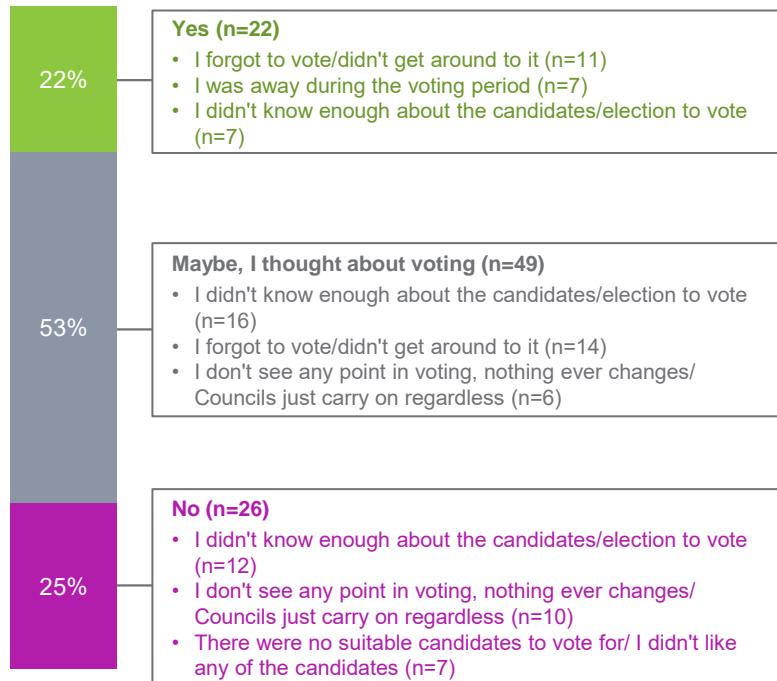
# REASONS FOR NOT VOTING IN THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The main reason for not voting was that residents felt they didn't know enough about the candidates/elections (37%). A quarter (26%) said they forgot.

Due to the small sample sizes there are no significant differences between those who intended to vote vs. those who didn't.

## Three most prevalent themes by intention to vote

*Note: These results are based on very small base sizes therefore we have reported unweighted responses rather than weighted percentages. These should be treated with caution*



Base: Those who did not vote in the elections (n=97)  
Q32. For what reasons did you not vote in the Hamilton City Council elections?



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