SUMMARY

- Use of all the parks and community facilities measured, apart from neighbourhood parks, has declined since the first Customer Satisfaction Survey carried out in 2001. The biggest declines have been in the use of community halls/meeting rooms (-12.4%) and playgrounds/park play equipment (-10.7%). The smallest declines have been in the use of public toilets (-2.9%) and sports grounds (-3.9%).

- Use had declined in the 2013 survey from the levels recorded in the 2010 survey, across all household composition groupings. The biggest declines were in the use of neighbourhood reserves and playgrounds by all adult households and community halls/meeting rooms by households with children. The disruption to community buildings providing space for children’s services is likely to have contributed to the latter.

- Neighbourhood parks, other parks/reserves and public toilets were the only parks and community facilities used by more than half of the households who responded to the 2013 survey.

- In 2013 public toilets were used by the most respondent households at 62.9 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, community halls/meeting rooms were used by the least respondent households at 32.4 percent.

- Neighbourhood parks were used the most frequently with 30.8 percent of respondent households using them at least 12 times a year and public toilets were used the least frequently with 43.1 percent using them less than 12 times a year.

- Households with children used parks and community facilities more than those without, particularly neighbourhood parks, park play equipment and sports grounds.

- More all adult households, with members aged 60 plus, used neighbourhood parks, park play equipment and community/halls meeting rooms than the all adult households, with members younger than 60 years.

- Respondents listed 54 different parks that they used as neighbourhood parks. While half of these were neighbourhood parks, 29.6 percent were sport and recreation parks and the rest were other types of parks. This highlights the role the park network plays in providing for neighbourhood recreation. Victoria Park and Elephant Park stood out as parks used as neighbourhood parks by the most respondent households.

- There was less variation in the use of sports parks by respondent households than other types of park, probably because of the organised nature of sports. The exception was Southbrook Park which was used by twice as many households as any other sports park.
Respondents listed 58 other parks/reserves that they used and eleven of these were natural areas not managed by the Council. Of the listed parks/reserves, Matawai Park and Ashley Gorge Reserve were used by the most respondent households and the beach areas were also popular. Victoria Park also featured on this list which is an indication of its popularity as a destination park.

Respondents listed 29 playgrounds that they used but slightly less than one-third of these were reported as being used by more than five households. The playground at Victoria Park was used by significantly more respondents than any other playground in the District.

Respondents listed 45 community halls/meeting rooms that they typically used. Of these 54.7 percent were privately owned facilities.

Of the 29 different public toilets listed by respondents, the toilets servicing the Rangiora, Kaiapoi and Oxford town centres were the most used. The Victoria Park toilets were used by significantly more respondent households than any other public toilets in the District. The high use made of the park is likely to be a contributing factor.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The main objective of the Waimakariri District Council’s Customer Satisfaction Survey is to obtain a high-level overview of the attitudes of Waimakariri District residents towards the services and facilities provided by the Council. Repeating the survey on a regular basis enables the Council to develop an understanding of the community’s views over the long-term.

The survey does not attempt to explore topics in-depth as the Council conducts more targeted research on topical issues as required.

The Customer Satisfaction Survey is carried out on a three yearly basis and the first survey was conducted in 2001. Subsequent surveys were carried out in 2004, 2007, 2010 and 2013.

The survey is a residents’ survey with the household selected as the unit of analysis and involves the hand delivery of 600 questionnaires to households throughout the District by local community groups.

This occasional paper presents the results of the 2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey with regard to the use made of parks and community facilities and compares these with the results of the four other surveys where possible.

2. **RESULTS FROM THE 2013 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

2.1 **The questions**

Respondents to the 2013 Customer Satisfaction Survey were asked about their household’s use of a range of parks and community facilities provided by the Council, including which of these facilities they mainly used and how often they used them.
2.2 Total use of parks and community facilities

Figure 1 shows a wide variation in the use of parks and community facilities, ranging from 62.9 percent of respondents using other parks/reserves and public toilets to 32.4 percent of respondents using halls and meeting rooms. The high figure for other parks/reserves reflects to some extent the amalgamation into one category of all types of reserves, other than neighbourhood parks and sports grounds.

Significantly fewer respondent households used sports grounds at 43.9 percent than neighbourhood parks at 58.4 percent and other parks/reserves at 62.9 percent. Use of park play equipment was also lower at 40.4 percent.

2.3 Frequency of use

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently members of their household used neighbourhood parks, sports grounds, other parks/reserves, park play equipment, community halls/meeting rooms and public toilets.

Frequencies for respondents’ use of parks and community facilities located throughout the District are set out in table 1.
Table 1 shows that neighbourhood parks were the most frequently used park or community facility with 30.8 percent of respondent households using them “at least twelve times a year.” This was followed by sports grounds at 23.5 percent and park play equipment at 23.3 percent.

Of the parks and community facilities used less than twelve times a year, public toilets were used by the most respondent households at 43.1 percent, followed by other parks and reserves at 38.8 percent and community halls and meeting rooms at 23.3 percent.

### 2.4 Use of parks and community facilities by household composition

Figure 2 calculates the percentages of households using parks and community facilities according to household composition. The percentages are calculated by dividing the number of users within a household composition grouping by the total number in that grouping. For example, of the 190 households with children, 139 (73.1%) used neighbourhood parks and of the 163 all adult households, aged 60 plus, 84 (51.5%) used neighbourhood parks. This approach has been used to eliminate the bias caused by the differences in the sample sizes and allow the results across the different household composition groupings to be compared. It should be noted that seven households did not provide information about household composition therefore the total sample was 483 instead of 490. The sample size for households with children was 190. The sample size for all adult households with members less than 60 years old was 130. For all adult households with members aged 60 plus, the sample size was 163.
Figure 2 shows that proportionately more households with children used all of the specified parks and community facilities than the households without children. Public toilets were the facilities that had the least variation in the levels of use by the three different household composition groupings. As could be expected, the biggest variations were in the use of park play equipment, neighbourhood parks and sports grounds which were used by significantly more households with children than those without.

All adult households, with members aged 60 plus, used park play equipment, neighbourhood parks and community halls/meeting rooms more than all adult households, with members less than 60 years. It is possible that some of the adults aged 60 plus could be taking grandchildren to play in a park and some could have more free time available to visit parks and join community groups due to retirement.

Over half of the all adult households used other parks/reserves, with those aged 60 plus only using them slightly less than those younger than 60. The parks/reserves used tended to be the Council’s significant natural reserves and/or visitor destinations such as the coastal reserves or river reserves. This indicates a certain degree of physical activity by the user and/or a desire to experience the natural outdoor environment.
2.5 Neighbourhood parks typically used
Respondents were asked to list the neighbourhood parks that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular parks but said they used neighbourhood parks located in Kaiapoi (6), Woodend (6), Rangiora (5) and Oxford (4).

A total of 54 different parks were listed by respondents but only 16 of these were listed by more than five respondents. Of the 54 parks respondents used for neighbourhood recreation, 28 were categorised under the Council’s green space asset management system as neighbourhood parks, 16 were sport and recreation parks, four were recreation and ecological linkages, three were natural parks and three were public gardens. This shows that every type of park within the Council’s park network has a role to play in providing for neighbourhood recreation, particularly sport and recreation parks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of reserve</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Park asset management category</th>
<th>No of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Public garden</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elephant Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinemoa Park</td>
<td>Kaiapoi</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southbrook Dog Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Sport &amp; recreation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waikuku Beach Domain</td>
<td>Waikuku Beach</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - District</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakwood Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Park</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
<td>Sport &amp; recreation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torlesse Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pegasus Town parks (unspecified)</td>
<td>Pegasus</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matawai Park</td>
<td>Kaiapoi</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorcroft Reserve</td>
<td>Kaiapoi</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grange View Reserve</td>
<td>Woodend</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley Park</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Sport &amp; recreation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pines Beach Oval</td>
<td>Pines/Kairakei</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen Stalker Park</td>
<td>Woodend</td>
<td>Neighbourhood - community</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Street Reserve</td>
<td>Rangiora</td>
<td>Neighbourhood</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that half of the parks typically used as neighbourhood parks by more than five households were located in Rangiora.

Victoria Park and Elephant Park in Rangiora were listed as being typically used by significantly more respondents than any other neighbourhood parks in the District. Also of note was the popularity of the Southbrook Dog Park.

2.6 Sports parks typically used
Respondents were asked to list the sports grounds that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular parks but said they used all the parks where rugby (6) or soccer was played (3).
A total of 21 different parks/sports facilities were listed by respondents of which five were privately owned. These were Kaiapoi Park (16), Rangiora Show Grounds (3), Rangiora tennis courts (1) and the Rangiora and Kaiapoi High Schools (1 each). Ten of the 21 facilities were listed by more than five respondents.

Figure 3

![Council-owned sports parks used by more than 5 households](image)

Figure 3 shows a more even use of sports parks by respondent households than that of other types of parks. This is most likely because of the way sports is organised. Southbrook Park stood out as being used by twice as many households as any other sports park.

### 2.7 Other parks/reserves typically used

Respondents were asked to list the other parks/reserves (other than neighbourhood parks and sports grounds) that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular parks but said they used all parks (3), the riverbanks (3), the beaches (2) or went for forest/bush walks (2).

A total of 58 reserves/natural areas were listed of which 11 were outside of the Council’s control. These were Mt Thomas, Mt Grey, Mt Richardson, Glentui, the Ashley/Rakahuri River, the Waimakariri River Regional Park, Waimakariri Gorge, the Groynes, Spencer Park, Hagley Park, Whitecliffs and the Blue Skies Scout land. Of these, the Ashley/Rakahuri River (8) and the Waimakariri River Regional Park (5) were listed by the most respondent households.

Of the Council-managed reserves, nine were listed by more than five households. These are shown in figure 4.
Figure 4 shows that a number of the Council’s key natural reserves such as Matawai Park, Ashley Gorge Reserve, Woodend and Waikuku Beach Domains and Kaiapoi Lakes were listed by the most respondent households. The relatively new beach and reserve areas at Pegasus Town rated number seven out of the 58 listed.

2.8 Play equipment typically used

Respondents were asked to list the parks that contained play equipment that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular parks but said they used play equipment located in Rangiora (3) and Kaiapoi (5). Five others said they used play equipment in all of the reserves where it was located.

A total of 29 different parks with play equipment were listed by respondents and only ten of these were listed by more than five respondents.
Figure 5

![Reserves with play equipment typically used by more than 5 households](attachment:image.png)

Figure 5 shows that the playground at Victoria Park was listed as being typically used by significantly more respondents than any other playground in the District.

Playgrounds at each of the District’s popular beach areas were ranked in the top ten. Three of the four town centre playgrounds (Pearson Park-Oxford, Victoria Park-Rangiora, Morgan Williams/Tom Ayers-Kaiapoi) also featured. The exception was the town centre playground in Woodend (Woodend Domain/Stalker Park) which was only mentioned by three respondents. Three of Rangiora’s neighbourhood/community parks were also typically used by more than five respondents as was Hinemoa Park in Kaiapoi.

2.9 Community halls/meeting rooms typically used

Respondents were asked to list the community halls/meeting rooms that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular facilities but said they used halls/meeting rooms that were located in Oxford (7), Rangiora (4) and Kaiapoi (2). Another four respondents said they used church halls without specifying the hall and one specified a hall located outside of the District.

A total of 45 community halls/meeting rooms were listed by respondents and these included Council-operated halls, halls owned by Trusts and recreation groups, school and church halls and private and publicly-owned sports pavilions and facilities. More than half of the respondents (54.7%) listed privately-owned facilities as the ones they typically used.
Figure 6 shows that Council-owned halls/community centres/meeting rooms were typically used by the most respondent households. Church halls, halls owned by Trusts, and recreation and sporting facilities owned by community groups were also used by a number of households.

Only two of the 45 listed community halls/meeting rooms were typically used by more than five households. These were the Woodend Community Centre (8) and the Cust Community Centre (6). The Waikuku Hall was typically used by five households and the Pines Beach and Ohoka Halls by four. Most of the other facilities were typically used by between one and two respondent households.

2.10 Public toilets typically used

Respondents were asked to list the public toilets that they typically used. Some respondents didn’t specify particular toilets but said they used public toilets located in Rangiora (29) and Kaiapoi (21). Others said they used whatever toilet happened to be in the vicinity when they needed one (19) and a few said they used toilets in parks (5).

A total of 29 different toilet blocks were listed by respondents and these included town centre toilets, toilets in parks and toilets at the beaches. Only eleven of these toilets were listed by more than five respondents.
Figure 7 shows that the toilets at the front of Victoria Park were listed as being typically used by significantly more respondents than any other public toilets in the District.

Seven of the top rating toilets were toilets that served a town centre function, one was located on a popular reserve in Rangiora, one was on a larger reserve in Kaiapoi and two were at the beaches.

A number of respondents who used the toilets at the Rangiora Service Centre and the Rangiora Library said they did so because they were nicer and cleaner to use than the other public toilets available and this could explain the popularity of these toilets to some extent.

3. TRENDS IN THE USE OF PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES IDENTIFIED BY CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 2001 AND 2013

3.1 Trends in the total use of parks and community facilities

Limited comparisons can be made between the levels of use recorded in the 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010 and 2013 surveys for parks and community facilities for the following reasons. The questions about community facilities in the 2001 Customer Satisfaction Survey differed from those in 2004 and 2007. In the 2010 survey, responses were sought about the use of local parks separately from playgrounds. In the 2013 survey, the following categories were changed from those used in the 2010 survey, to improve the quality of the information being collected:

- The ‘local park’ option was changed to ‘neighbourhood park’ to better align the question with the parks categories adopted by the Council when developing the Green Space Activity Management Plan. ‘Neighbourhood park’ was the option used in all but the 2010 survey so this change still allows trends to be tracked;
• The ‘playgrounds option’ was changed to ‘park play equipment’ to eliminate some of the confusion respondents have previously had when trying to decide which option to tick, for example, if there was a playground area located on a sports ground;

• An ‘other parks/reserves’ option has been included in the survey for the first time to allow levels of use for parks other than neighbourhood parks and sports grounds to be collected. This will allow user patterns for some of the Council’s most significant reserves to be tracked over time;

• Meeting rooms was added to the community halls option to better represent the range of provision in this area.

Table 3 sets out the percentages of user households for parks and community facilities recorded in the five Customer Satisfaction Surveys carried out so far, where results are comparable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local parks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood parks</td>
<td></td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park play equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports grounds</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parks/reserves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community halls/Meeting rooms</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public toilets</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ The use of neighbourhood parks was similar in 2013 at 58.4 percent of respondent households to what it was in 2004 at 56.1 percent. Use of neighbourhood parks in 2007 was similar to the use of local parks in 2010 and significantly higher than 2005 and 2013 levels.

➢ The percentage of respondent households reporting use of playgrounds has alternated between highs of 51 to 52 percent and lows of 44 percent. The change of terminology used in the 2013 survey from ‘playground’ to ‘park play equipment’ is likely to have influenced the reported usage rate of 40.4 percent but this percentage was not too inconsistent with the lower rates recorded for playgrounds in 2004 and 2010. Overall, the use of playgrounds/play equipment has declined by 10.7 percent since 2001.

➢ The use of sports grounds stayed at around the same level in the 2001, 2004 and 2010 surveys with between 47 and 48 percent of respondent households using them. This increased in 2007 to 53.6 percent but decreased to the lowest rate ever (43.9%) in the 2013 survey. Overall, the use of sports grounds has decreased by 3.9 percent since the 2001 survey.
The percentage of respondent households reporting use of community halls increased in the 2001, 2004 and 2007 surveys. In 2010, the reported use of community halls dropped by over 10 percent and in 2013 it dropped by another 5.2 percent. A contributing factor could have been the temporary closure of a number of halls and meeting rooms as a result of the Canterbury Earthquakes. For example, the main community facility at Kaiapoi (Kaiapoi Community Centre) which provided meeting rooms and space for community groups was commandeered for use in 2010 as the Council’s Service Centre. Overall, the use of community halls/meeting rooms has decreased by 12.4 percent since the 2001 survey.

The reported use of public toilets increased from 65.8 percent in 2001 to 71.0 percent in 2007 and then declined again to a low of 62.9 percent in 2013. Overall, the use of public toilets has decreased by 2.9 percent since the 2001 survey.

Figure 8

Figure 8 shows that the percentage of households using all the parks and community facilities measured, with the exception of neighbourhood parks, has declined since 2001.

3.2 Trends in the frequency of use of parks and community facilities

The frequency rate for the use of neighbourhood/local parks has increased from ‘less than 12 times’ a year in 2004 and 2007 to ‘at least 12 times a year’ in 2010 and 2013.

The frequency rate for playgrounds/play equipment increased from ‘less than 12 times a year’ in the 2001 survey to ‘at least 12 times a year’ in the 2004 survey and has remained at that level in all of the following surveys.

Sports grounds have been used by the majority of respondent households ‘at least 12 times a year’ in all of the surveys apart from the 2010 survey. Sports
grounds were used at the less frequent rate by 1.7 percent more respondents in the 2010 survey, which was well within the margin of error for the survey.

- The most common frequency rate for community halls/meeting rooms and public toilets has stayed at ‘less than 12 times a year’ across all five surveys.

3.3 Trends in the use of parks and community facilities by household composition

Table 4 shows the trends in the percentages of households using parks and community facilities according to household composition over the 2010 and 2013 surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of park or facility</th>
<th>Households with children</th>
<th>All adult households - under 60 years</th>
<th>All adult households - 60 years plus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>% Var</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood/local parks</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>-7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports grounds</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park play equipment/playgrounds</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community halls/meeting rooms</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>-7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public toilets</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Table 4 shows use has declined from the levels recorded in the 2010 survey, across all household composition groupings and park and community facility types.

- All adult households, with members under 60 years old, used neighbourhood parks and playgrounds significantly less in 2013 than they did in 2010.

- Use of parks and community facilities, except for the use of neighbourhood reserves, by all adult households aged 60 years plus, did not change beyond the margin of error for the surveys. The results for the neighbourhood reserves may have been influenced to some extent by the different terminology used in the two surveys to describe these parks.

- Households with children had the biggest decline in the use of community halls/meeting rooms and public toilets. The change in the use of community halls/meeting rooms could have been influenced by the temporary closure of some community buildings after the Canterbury Earthquakes which accommodated early childhood groups. An example of this was the closure of the Kaiapoi Community Centre which housed two play groups.