



people's panel



People's Panel End of Year Review

14 February 2012

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2 Key findings

Key findings

Feedback on the People's Panel:

- 64% felt satisfied with the way the panel has operated and 53% would be likely to recommend it to family and friends
- Most panellists think they receive the right number of survey invitations, however a quarter feel they don't receive result updates often enough, and just under a third feel they don't get sufficient information on other opportunities to participate
- 67% would be interested in receiving invitations to take part in focus groups
- When asked what they liked about the panel, by far the most commonly mentioned theme was that it provides an opportunity for people (across all walks of life and with differing opinions) to have a voice, express their needs and perspectives and influence council's decisions
- A recurring theme throughout the survey was the need for council to take greater notice of the feedback received through the People's Panel, act on it, and demonstrate that they have done so. Panellists said there was a difference between asking for information and actually acting on it, and many would like more evidence that their views have been used to inform or change council's ideas, plans or policies
- Other frequently mentioned improvement suggestions included providing more information and context about the projects and surveys, making surveys simpler and shorter, allowing more space for open ended comments, providing simpler more direct reports with better visuals, and making the panel more representative of Auckland's diverse communities through further promotion / advertising and by providing financial incentives to take part

Regarding council's consultation processes generally:

- 46% of panellists had seen some form of newspaper or magazine coverage relating to the council's planning documents and their associated consultation processes. A smaller proportion of panellists had seen or heard similar coverage and marketing activity online, through radio ads, social media, bus advertising and outdoor advertising
- 62% of panellists had provided feedback on one or more of the council's plans – with the Auckland Plan and the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan receiving the most feedback
- 52% were satisfied with the opportunities Auckland Council provides to participate in decision-making processes, but only 20% felt confident that their input would influence council's decisions

3 Background

3.1 Survey background

Auckland Council conducts many consultation exercises with the people of Auckland to gather feedback and opinions on its policies, plans and ideas. Often consultation activities include the People's Panel, which is an important mechanism for the council to understand the views and needs of Aucklanders.

To help monitor the effectiveness of the panel, and make it more useful for panellists, we asked the People's Panel about the experiences they've had in completing surveys, reading reports and taking part in other consultation activities over the past year. Feedback from the report will be used to make ongoing improvements to the People's Panel and Auckland Council's wider consultation processes and practices.

The following report aims to summarise the key trends and comments identified from the survey.

3.2 About the People's Panel

The People's Panel aims to provide an opportunity for Aucklanders to get involved with a range of council issues, giving feedback by regularly completing online surveys and getting involved with focus groups and other activities as needed.

The panel ideally supplements other research, consultation and engagement activities used to provide public perceptions to help inform decision-making processes. Panellists are recruited to be 'typical' members of the public – that is they include members of the public who come from a range of backgrounds and a range of levels of involvement with the council.

At the time of surveying there were 7,493 people registered with the panel, with representation from residents of each local board area and by age group and ethnicity. The People's Panel is not yet representative of the wider Auckland population and further recruitment is under way to improve participation from particular areas, age groups and ethnicities.

For more information about the People's Panel visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/peoplespanel

3.3 Methodology

This survey was open from Monday 12 December to Tuesday 20 December 2011 and one reminder was sent to those who had not completed the survey. In total 2,017 completed surveys were received.

The feedback has been analysed in two ways:

- For the tick box questions, responses to each option have been reported as proportions of the total sample and presented as charts (and tables in the appendix).
- Responses to open-ended questions ranged from one-word answers to lengthy comments with several points and ideas. Key themes from these comments have been identified and ordered by frequency. A selection of comments has been included in the report, to illustrate these themes.

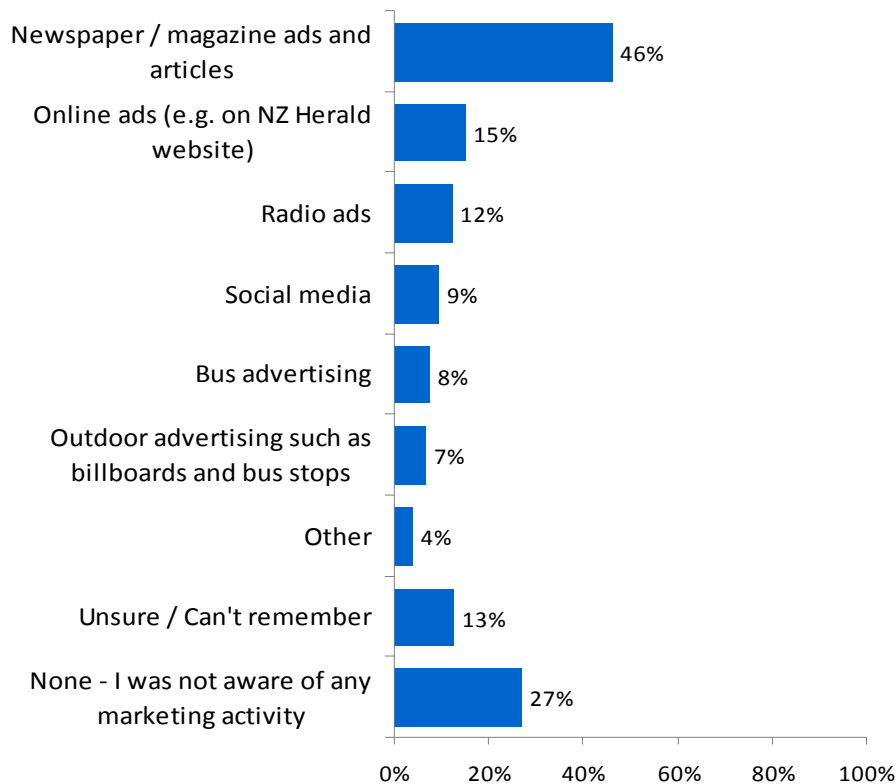
Please note that results in charts and tables presented in this report may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were allowed for some questions and/or as a result of rounding.

4 Survey results

4.1 Awareness of marketing related to Auckland planning documents

Panellists were told that “Auckland Council had released a number of documents over the past year describing its vision for Auckland and outlining how future growth will be managed and paid for. Council wanted to find out what the public thought about these plans and proposals and publicised them through the region by holding meetings, groups and road shows. Aucklanders were encouraged to give their views in a variety of ways - taking part in People’s Panel surveys, community meetings, region wide summits, workshops, hui, fono and focus groups, talking to council staff and by making online, written and direct submissions.”

Were you aware of any of the following marketing activities encouraging feedback on any of the plans?

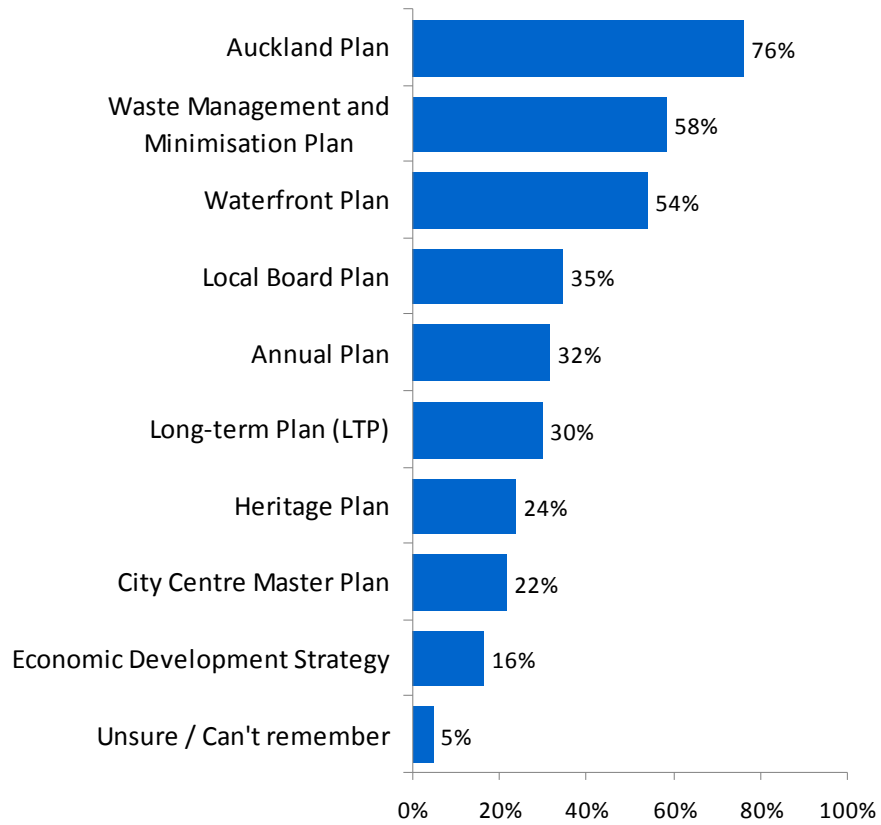


Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Just under half of panellists had seen some form of newspaper or magazine coverage relating to the council’s planning documents and their associated consultation processes. A smaller proportion of panellists had seen or heard similar coverage and marketing activity online, through radio ads, social media, bus advertising and outdoor advertising. However a quarter of respondents had not seen any such marketing activity.

Among those who had seen some form of marketing activity, most had seen content relating to the Auckland Plan, the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan or the Waterfront Plan. Awareness of marketing collateral relating to other plans was considerably lower.

Which of the following plans do you remember seeing or hearing advertising for?

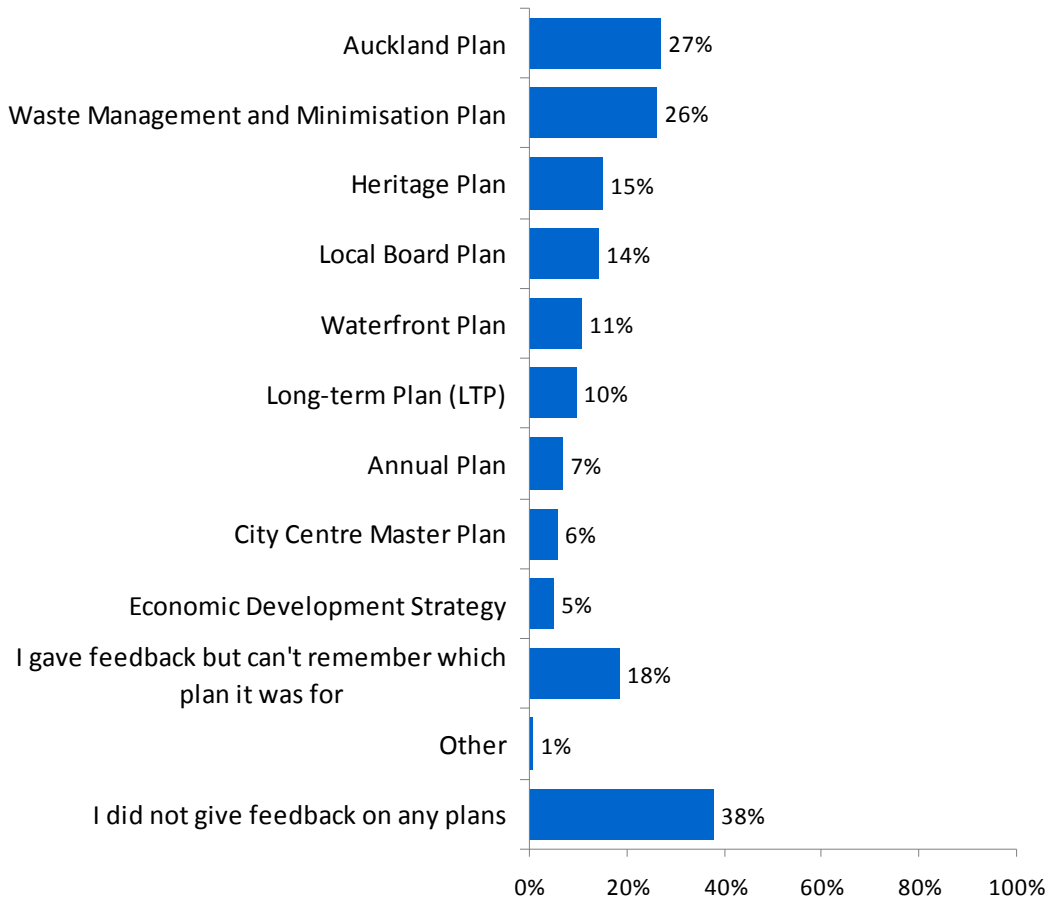


Base: Panellists indicating awareness of some marketing n= 1228. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

4.2 Providing feedback on the plans

Almost two-thirds of panellists had provided feedback on one or more of the council's plans. In line with the awareness results above, panellists were most likely to have provided feedback on the Auckland Plan and the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan.

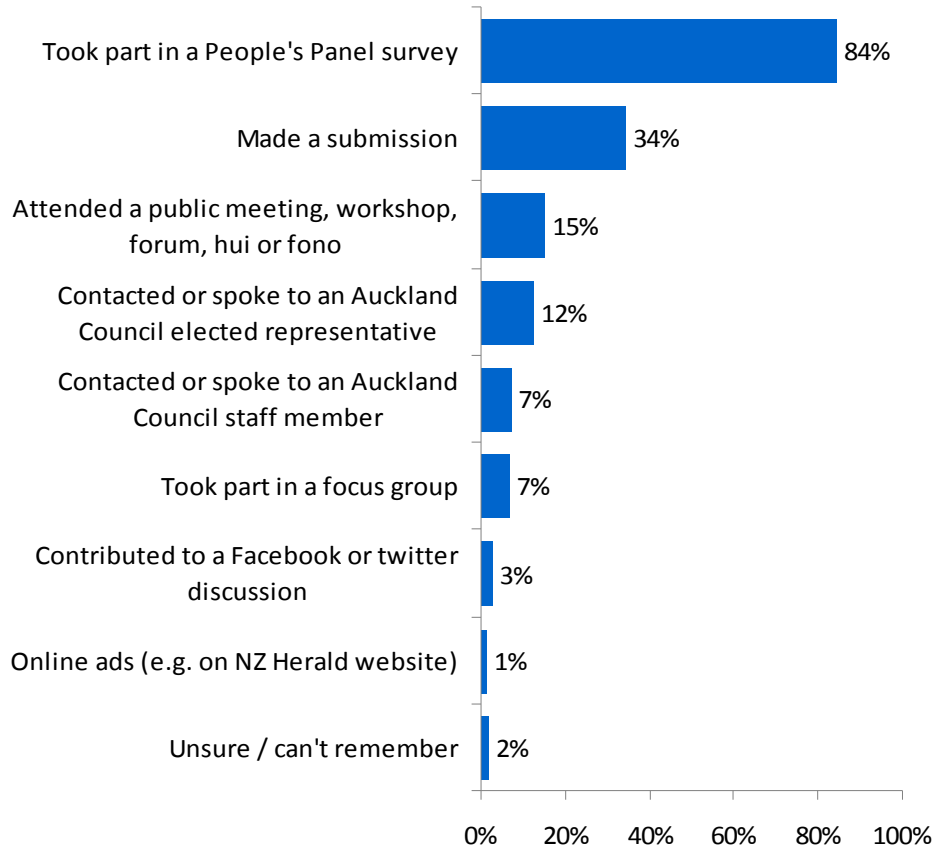
Which, if any, of the following plans did you give feedback on?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Among those who had provided feedback on one or more council plans, the vast majority had done so through a People’s Panel survey. Around a third had made a formal submission.

How did you give feedback?

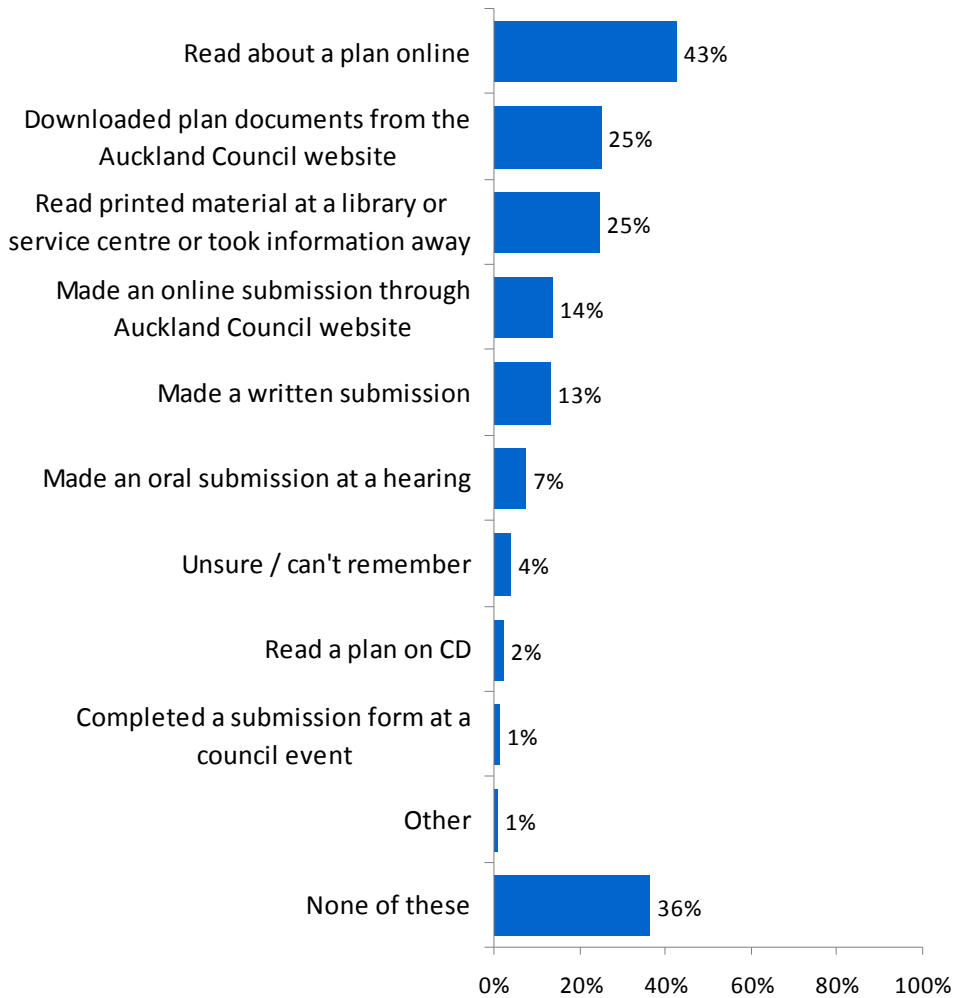


Base: Panellists who gave feedback n=1254. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

4.3 Participation in consultation activities apart from the People’s Panel

In addition to taking part in People’s Panel surveys, just under half of panellists had read about council’s plans online and a quarter had either downloaded printed material or picked it up from a library or service centre.

Excluding any People's Panel surveys you may have completed, did you do any of the following?

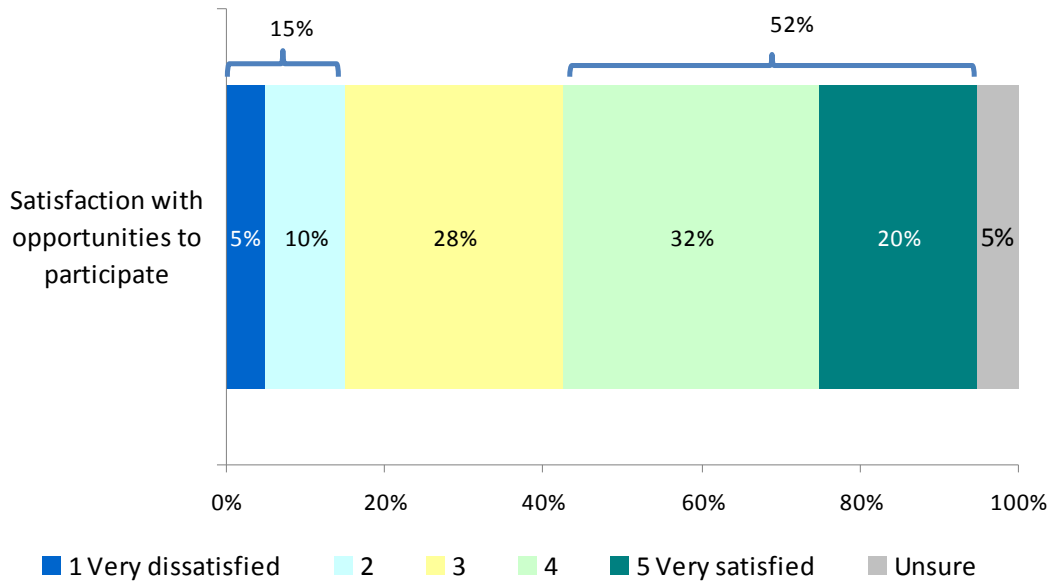


Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

4.4 Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in the decision-making process

Half of panellists were satisfied (rating 4 or 5 out of 5) with the opportunities Auckland Council provides to participate in decision-making processes, while 15% were dissatisfied (rating 1 or 2 out of 5) and a quarter were neutral.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the opportunities Auckland Council provides for you to participate in decision-making processes?

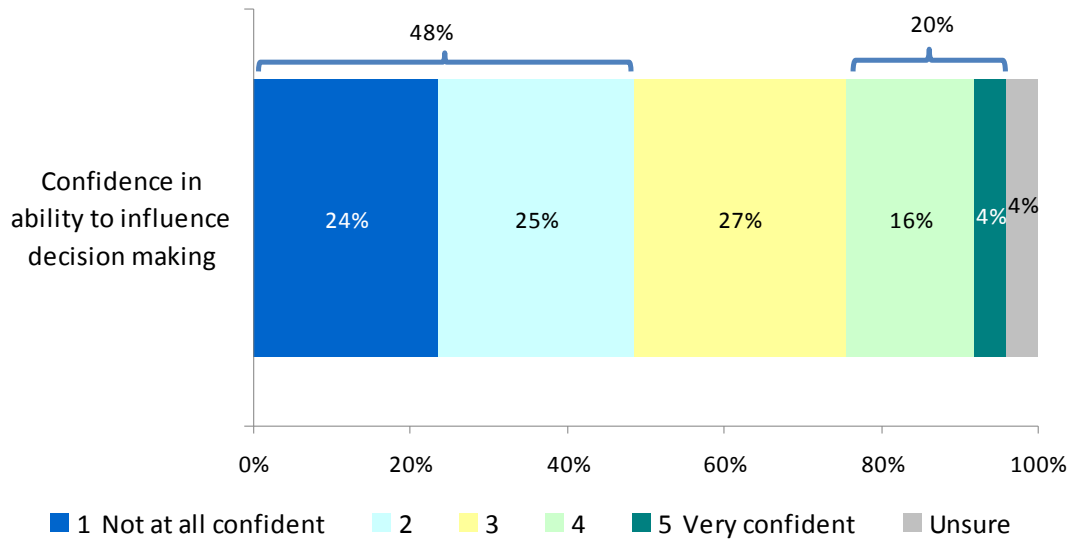


Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

While many felt they could participate in the consultation process (from above), half of panellists were not confident that their input would influence the council’s decision making. Only 20% of respondents felt confident that they could influence council’s decisions, and a quarter were neutral.

Among panellists, those of Asian or Maori descent were more likely to be confident that they could influence council’s decisions than those of other ethnicities (37% and 34% respectively). Men were more likely to be not at all confident (26%) than women (21%).

How confident are you that you are able to influence council decision making by taking part in the consultation process



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

4.5 Improvement suggestions

Panellists were asked to suggest how to improve the council's consultation processes. Their responses are summarised below.

Panellists talked about a need for the council to demonstrate the impact of consultation feedback and what difference it had made to council decisions, a need for simpler, more accessible information and greater promotion of the opportunities to participate. In line with section 4.4 above, panellists felt that there was a difference between asking for feedback and actually listening/acting upon that feedback – and that the council needed to take greater notice of the feedback received from consultation, and give greater power/emphasis to community views.

What improvements do you suggest to the consultation process as a whole?	Number of responses n=749	% of responses
Give communities and the public more power in decision making - empower Local Boards, referendums, actually LISTEN to community, take notice of public feedback, don't make decisions before consultation	143	19%
Tell us what the public said and what you did about it - better transparency/communication concerning survey and/or consultation results and actions resulting from them/feedback	138	18%
Make information easier to understand - simplify the information distributed for consultation/make it less overwhelming/documents too long/publish in a variety of languages and accessible formats	123	16%
Make more of an effort to inform public of opportunities for consultation - advertise and publicise opportunities for consultation more widely/TV ads/Herald/Auckland now/remember rural areas	103	14%
More online consultation - make it easy to give feedback online/improve online services	90	12%
Make public consultation times longer - longer timeframes to engage/inform community/more notice	89	12%
Change/improve the hearings/verbal submissions process - people aren't given long enough to speak, long way to travel for some/outside of work hours	66	9%
Involve the public in different ways and at different times - be innovative/consult earlier in planning process/ongoing consultation	62	8%
Carry out public consultation at appropriate times - make sure consultation doesn't clash with major events like the RWC, Christmas holidays etc	48	6%
Visibility of plans - better and more visibility/circulation of plans	31	4%
Distribute surveys to all households - could add to rates bill	29	4%
Make the topics more relevant - more locally focussed/ respondents comment on particular topics e.g. safety, wheelie bins, downtown carpark	29	4%
People's Panel's influence - increase the panel's influence/hold meetings between People's Panel and Council	23	3%
Fundamentally change the way Council is run - abolish local govt, less autocratic and difficult to deal with, higher calibre of Councillors, better decision making	23	3%
Want to know how Council is spending money - transparency on	19	3%

Council spending/financial management		
Don't support consultation - stop carrying out consultation and surveys/ waste of money	7	1%
Don't know/haven't been involved long enough	8	1%
Other	40	5%

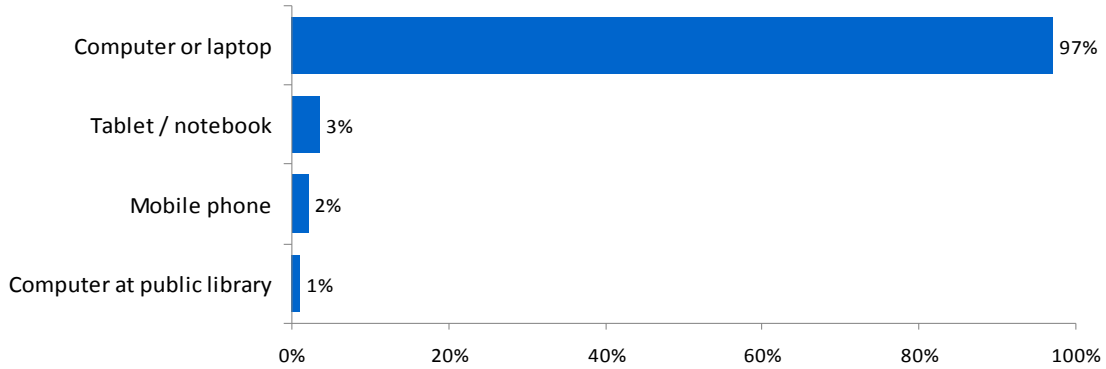
Improvement suggestions - selection of comments

- *“Acknowledgement in all documents of what suggestions originated from public consultation and after further research included in the final plan. Without this acknowledgement there can be no confirmation for most people that their voice is being heard.”*
- *“Asking for feedback & taking notice of it are two very different things”*
- *“Because the documentation/plans now involve the whole of the Auckland area there is a lot of information for the layperson to read through and digest; a lot of it cross references to other plans etc it takes a long time to get through and sometimes you can't find answers when looking for specific topics/areas. There needs to be more time allowed for submissions and there needs to be more advertising or awareness outlining/summarising changes. At a local level there needs to be more meetings and interaction with the local board ratepayers e.g. in Franklin there were only several meetings to service an area from Beachlands to Waiuku which doesn't allow a lot of opportunity for many people to attend particularly for the less populated areas of Franklin board areas. Pukekohe division seems to dictate many outcomes. Many people I spoke to said they started to read the plan but found it too big and daunting so didn't bother. Because the Auckland area is now so big there needs to be a lot more advertising and time spent raising public awareness on things that will affect them.”*
- *“Ensure the project managers at consultation mtgs actually take public concerns into account and provide feedback channels and discussions - please.”*
- *“Consultation should take place before plans are prepared. The plans should be based on Aucklanders requirements, not those of the planners.”*
- *“Create longer time period for submissions to enable more people to make their submissions, especially those that may be making joint submissions, from a particular sector for example.”*
- *“Detailed summary sheets of all the key points in the plan so you can see quickly and easily what all of the main changes proposed in a plan is going to be. For instance, I was very interested in what the Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan had to say around nappies but there's no mention of it in the summary (which I found didn't have many of the proposals mentioned) and I had to get a copy of the full plan to see what was proposed...plus all the other things that aren't mentioned in the summary.”*

4.6 Participating in People's Panel surveys

Virtually all panellists complete People's Panel surveys using a computer or laptop.

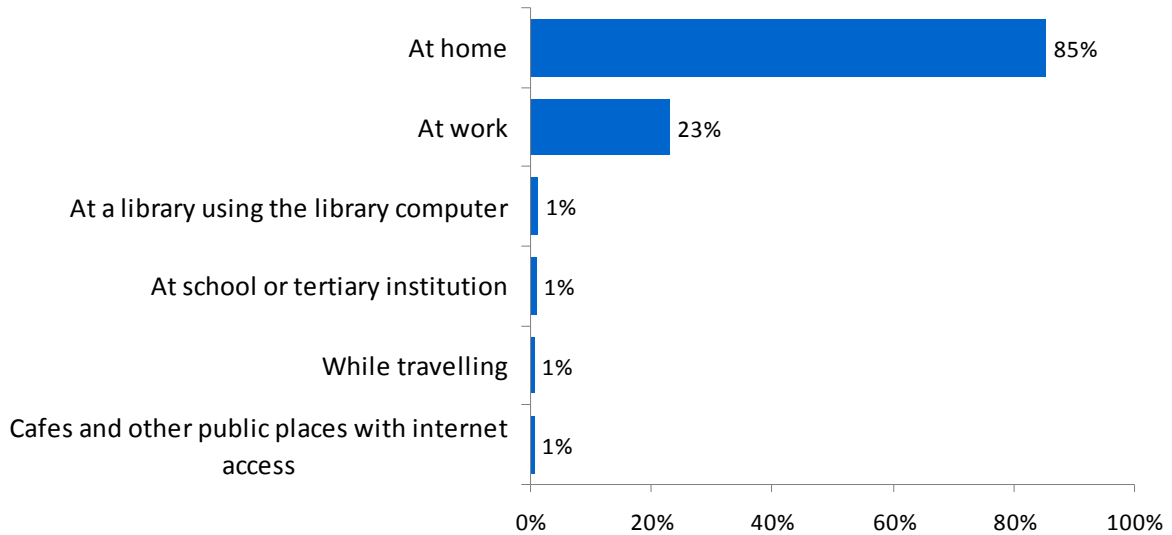
How do you usually access People's Panel surveys?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Most panellists complete People's Panel surveys at home, and a quarter complete them at work.

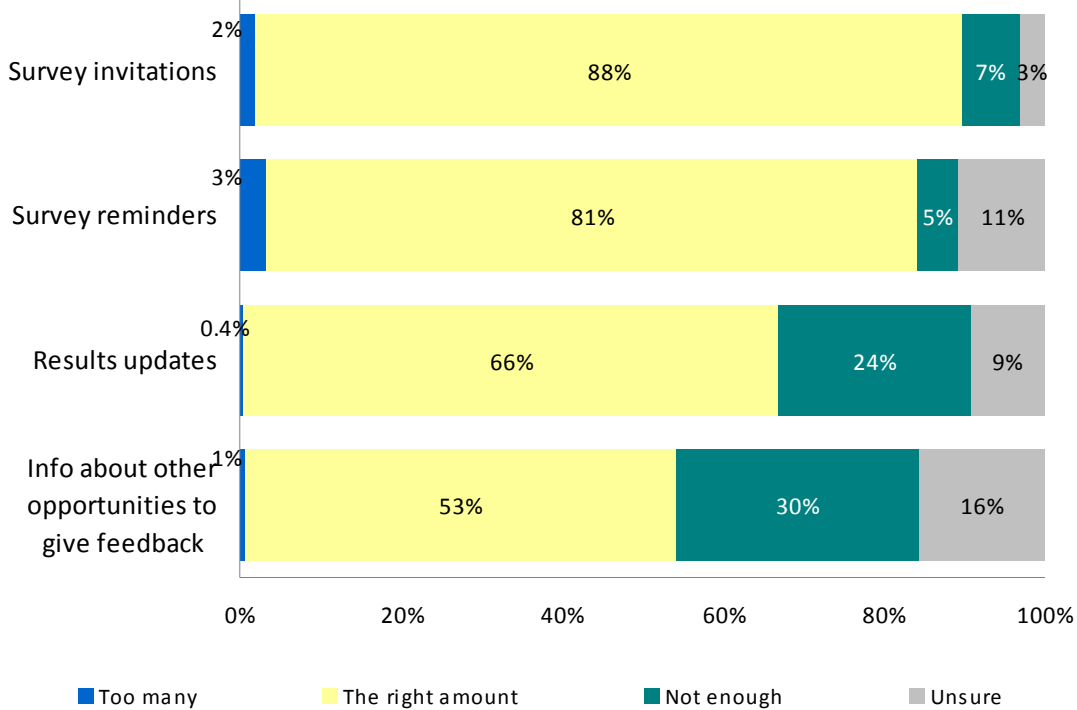
Where do you usually complete surveys?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Most panellists think they receive the right number of survey invitations, reminders and result updates. However a quarter feel they don't receive result updates often enough, and just under a third feel they don't get information on other opportunities to participate often enough.

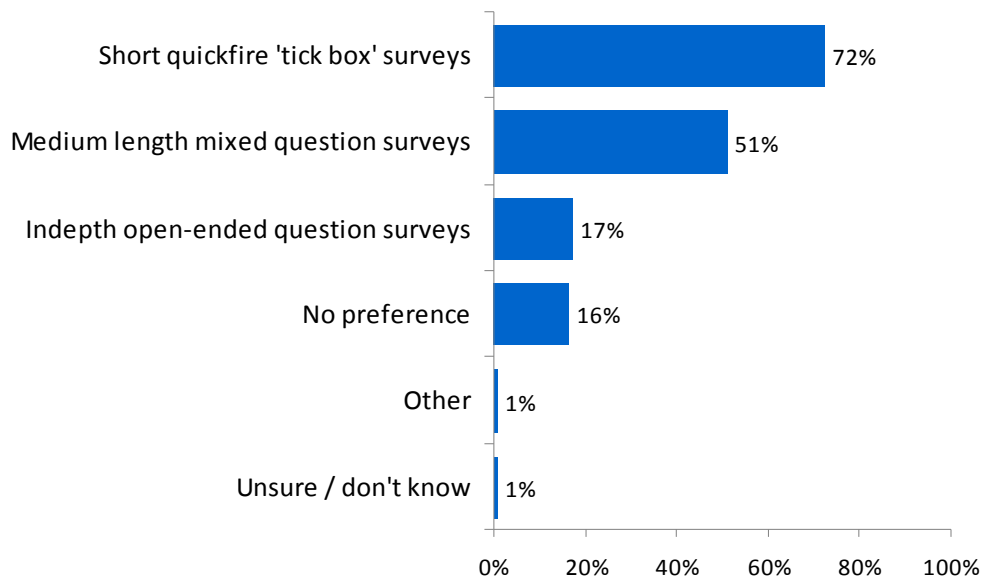
Please tell us if you think you are getting too many, the right amount or not enough of the following:



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Shorter “quickfire” type surveys were more popular among panellists than longer more involved surveys.

Which type of survey do you enjoy taking part in?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

4.7 Improving People’s Panel surveys and reports

Panellists were asked to suggest how to improve People’s Panel emails and surveys. Their responses are summarised below.

While a third of panellists felt that the emails and surveys were fine as they are, others suggested a range of improvements including providing feedback on how the results have been used to impact on council’s decisions, make surveys shorter and clearer, have more open-ended questions, and provide more information to help panellists provide informed feedback.

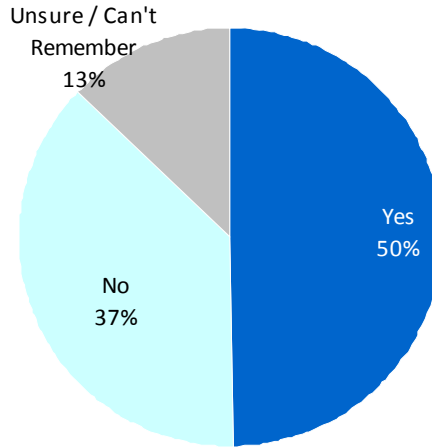
How could we improve our emails and surveys?	Number of responses n=569	% of responses
No improvement needed - OK as they are	184	32%
Provide feedback once surveys have been completed – confirm that results have been listened to and describe how they will be used	75	13%
Survey length - make surveys shorter/always takes longer to complete than the stated time	56	10%
Would like more opportunities to give comments - more open ended questions/ space to put answers in own words	45	8%
Improve the wording of surveys - questions are sometimes leading and/or difficult for a member of the public to answer	42	7%
Technical/systems improvements - make it easier to find things online, add links to emails, have experienced technical difficulties, add a progress bar, use larger/clearer font	39	7%
Give more time to prepare for completing surveys - more lead in time/provide opportunity to research topic before survey arrives	36	6%
More and better information upfront - give more information at the beginning as to how the results of the survey will be used/be specific about the goal of the survey	28	5%
Different survey topics – provide surveys on different topics/topics of interest/ask the people what they want surveys on	24	4%
Want survey results to translate to action - doubt completing surveys makes any difference/council should act based on what the majority want	22	4%
Provide incentives for completing surveys i.e. rates discount	20	4%
More of a local focus - more local board surveys/ surveys on local areas/make more relevant to local area	14	2%
Make surveys more attractive - add pictures, graphics etc	9	2%
Have more surveys - surveys should be more frequent/ should be more of them	8	1%
Want to discuss topics in person - would like more opportunities to add to written submission in person, public meetings etc	7	1%
Ensure a the views of a good cross section of society are canvassed - what about people without computer access, language and age issues, range of political views?	4	1%
Don't know	52	9%
Other	25	4%

Improvement suggestions - selection of comments

- *“Existing survey arrangements and emails are good.”*
- *“From my perspective you do a great job - you inform me but do not annoy me!”*
- *“Give feedback on outcomes of people's panel both what people thought and proposed action if any.”*
- *“Greater indication that written comments or feedback is valued. Often considered opinions are reflected only in generalised statistics and in some cases subjective views are obviously bundled into inappropriate stats, which might legitimise a pre conceived view. Some surveys give user comments and hopefully those comments are also submitted to the decision makers. Perhaps some indication could be given of comments considered worth of going ahead as arguments as opposed to confirmation of a policy.”*
- *“I would be interested to know if they make any difference on the council and what these are. Publicise them so other non participants are aware of the effort you put into others opinions - the perception is often that you only listen to those with strong vested interests not general public and rate payers.”*
- *“Keep the surveys short and succinct. Time is the limiting factor for my input to consultation and surveys”*
- *“Leave space for open replies - they may raise other solutions - but they must be evaluated.”*
- *“Make sure the wording is clear. Make sure we understand what you're telling us, and what you want feedback on. Sometimes I felt that I couldn't answer some questions so make sure an option is given so people aren't forced to choose an option just to exit a question.”*
- *“Make sure they are clear and easy to read and ensure that the closing date gives people sufficient time to respond.”*
- *“Perhaps add a short/summary timeline to indicate when the subject of each survey is to be implemented. (It's sometimes hard to recall exactly when the subject of a survey, or the next phase of it, is intended to be implemented by.)”*
- *“Provide the opportunity for survey participants to send a link to the survey to friends and family who may be interested, perhaps with by completing a form at the end of the survey.”*
- *“Send the results out faster. If people have spent 10-20 mins completing a survey and giving you their thoughts and ideas, and they do this every couple of months, and get nothing in return for it, it would be nice to at least give them some vicarious feedback from what their peers/fellow community members said. Perhaps a nice summary of learnings that you weren't expecting, and some rolled-up scores for the various questions. Nothing too big but not too brief either, or people will wonder 'what about everything else I was asked about'.”*

Half of panellists had read one of the People’s Panel survey reports on the website.

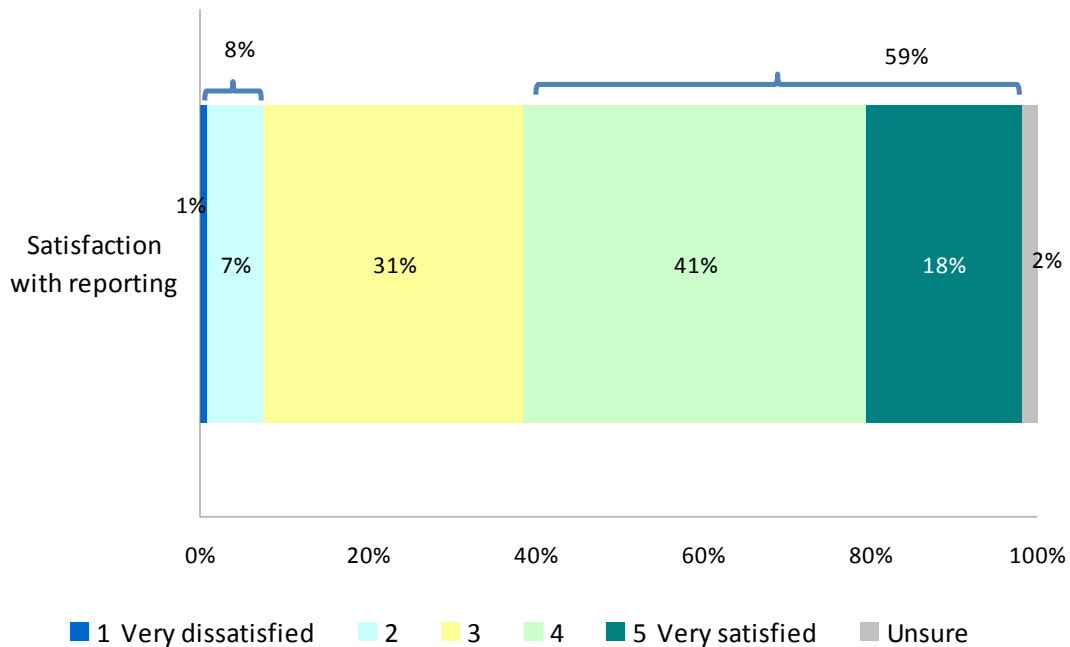
Have you ever read any of the reports on the People’s Panel webpage?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Among those who had read one of the reports, most were fairly satisfied, with 59% giving a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5, 31% were neutral and 8% said they were dissatisfied.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the reporting of People’s Panel results?



Base: Panellists who had read a report in survey n= 1002

When asked to specify how to improve People’s Panel reports, respondents talked about disseminating the results more widely and using different channels (e.g. email, radio, in libraries), providing evidence that the results are being used, providing a succinct summary of the main results, and using more pictures and charts to convey the results.

How could we improve the way we report People’s Panel results?	Number of responses n=585	% of responses
Email results to panellists - not everyone uses Facebook and/or visits council website regularly	187	32%
Provide evidence of impact - advise on all results and any evidence that people's views have made a difference/ information on what is going to happen as a result of the survey	60	10%
More clear and concise - concise summaries/ bullet points/put in simpler language, with the option to access more detailed information easily if desired	56	10%
No improvement needed - keep doing what you're doing/is fine as it is	47	8%
Advertise results through a variety of means - use other media/means of communicating results e.g. radio, TV, libraries, facebook	39	7%
More visuals – use more pictures and charts	25	4%
Opt in for results - create a link on online survey that lets people opt for having the results emailed to them	20	3%
More in-depth - give more in-depth information /more detailed results and/or analysis	17	3%
Interpretations of results are biased to suit council initiatives	12	2%
Make them more relevant - make it more locally relevant/ how will I personally be affected	10	2%
Less visuals - use fewer pictures and graphs	5	1%
Faster analysis and reporting of results.	4	1%
Would like to see 'verbatim' comments	3	1%
Would like to be able to comment on results	2	0%
Don't know/ no opinion	59	10%
Other	24	4%
Did not know you could access results online/haven't seen any	69	12%

Improvement suggestions - selection of comments

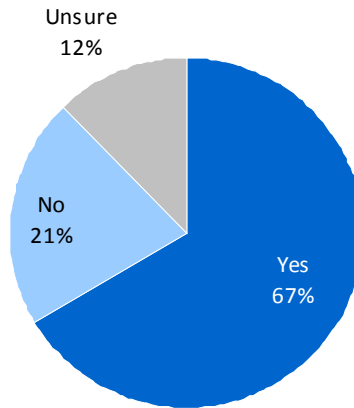
- *“Email results to the survey participants and publish the results.”*
- *“A few results listed in the body of an email to give an overview with the full results available through a link to the website.”*
- *“A reminder to check out the results & the actions taken by the council, want to know that doing the surveys has an impact & not just a token gesture.”*
- *“At some stage tell us whether or not any changes were made to the Plans as a result of the surveys, or are the surveys merely a chance to let us think that we are having a say?”*
- *“By reporting per survey as the results become available - there is no point getting a watered down report later”*
- *“Could be worded in simpler language.”*
- *“Could you make it relevant to each local ward ours being Howick”*

- *"I guess just flick me an email saying the results are on the website - If I'm interested I'll take a look. It'd be good to get one or two key stats from the research "56% of Aucklanders think that..." and put it in the Our Auckland mailbox flyer thingy to promote what the peoples panel does and drive membership..."*
- *"I like the way that the Family commission is publishing their results of questionnaires. (They panel is called "the couch", may be worth looking at how they do it). It's easier to see the results there: <http://thecouch.org.nz/>"*
- *"I should have realised that there would be a website but did not. Please make it easier by providing a link from surveys, e.g. as per Colman Brunton"*
- *"Improve visual presentation - more graphs?"*
- *"Include a link to the actual feedback report in the reporting email rather than just a link to the People's Panel webpage where you then have to find the right link and click again. Where possible use the reporting email to give some feedback on the key points rather than just ask people to click to a website etc."*
- *"People's Panel results seem to be skewed towards an over representation of NZ European/pakeha. Have you thought about how you could more successfully engage minority groups?"*
- *"Perhaps a very basic bullet point breakdown of results emailed to participants, with the link to the site for the full report at the bottom. That way we could see overall results and seek details when we had time."*
- *"Provide much more detail and a summary of comments. Distinguish between the view of urban and rural residents. Lumping us all together as a single class of "ratepayers" averages the results and becomes meaningless, when we know our interests differ greatly from those of metropolis dwellers. The results provide no confidence that there is any recognition of this by metropolitan Auckland Council officers or councillors."*

4.8 Participating in focus groups

Two-thirds of panellists would be interested in receiving invitations to take part in focus groups.

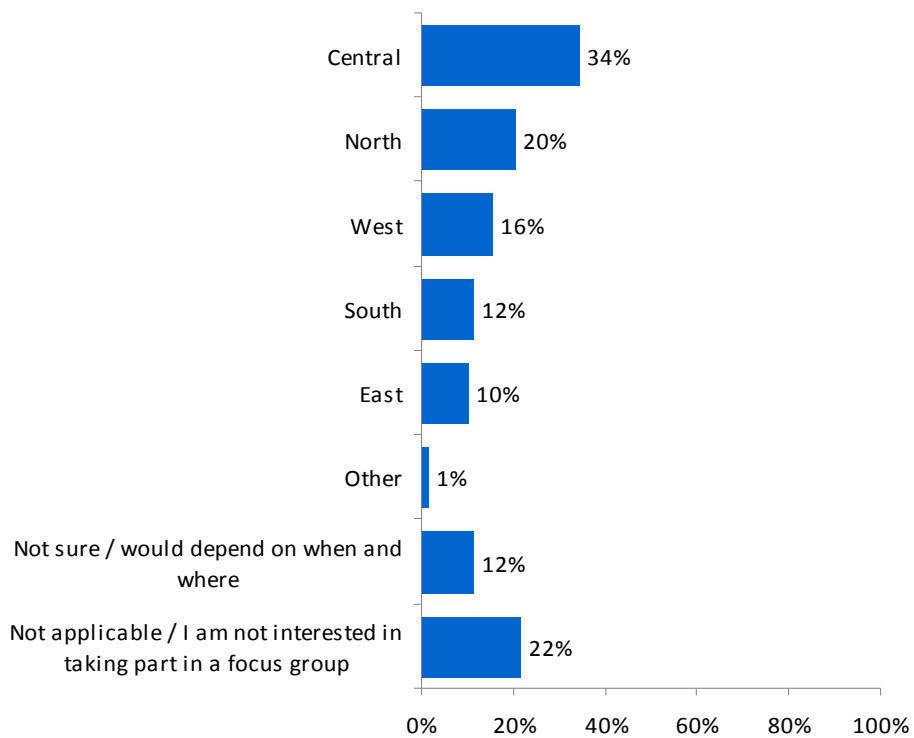
Would you like to receive invitations to take part in focus groups if they were in a convenient location for you?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Panellists mostly prefer focus group locations close to where they live, and as per the general geographic distribution of where Aucklanders live and work, there was most interest in central locations.

Where in Auckland would you be able to attend a focus group, if you were interested in taking part?

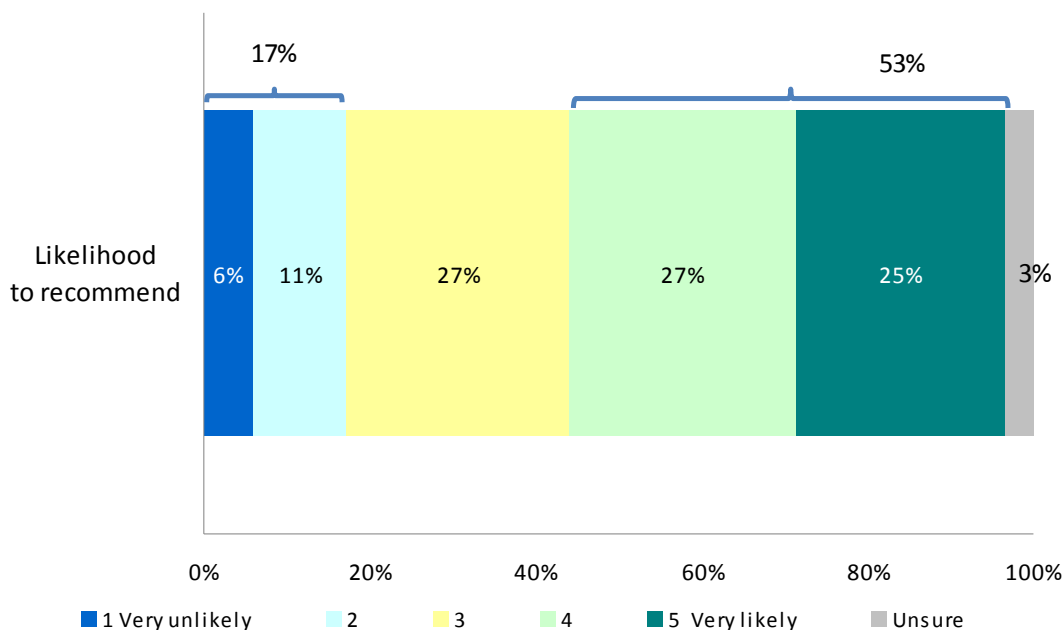


Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

4.9 Overall satisfaction with the People’s Panel and ideas for improvement

Half of panellists felt that they would be likely to recommend the People’s panel to their family, friends and colleagues, but 17% would be unlikely to.

How likely are you to recommend joining the People’s Panel to your family, friends and colleagues?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

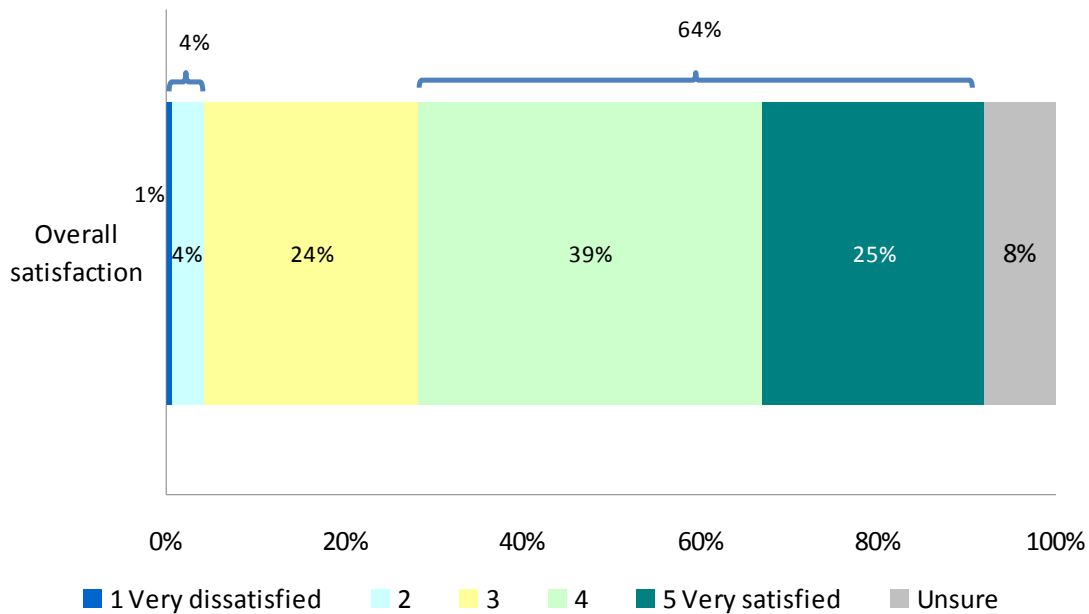
When asked to specify how the council could encourage more people to join the panel, respondents again mentioned the importance of demonstrating the impact that the results have on council’s decisions. Other ideas included financial incentives for participating and promoting the panel through a wide range of sources and media – e.g. mail outs, through community organisations, in newspapers, using social media, in libraries and community centres, etc.

How can we encourage more Aucklanders to join the People’s Panel?	Number of responses n=978	% of responses
By providing financial incentives e.g. zoo passes, rates discounts, prize draws etc	159	16%
By publishing and promoting results with examples of how the People Panel makes a difference	135	14%
Listen and act on what is said so that people know being a member of the panel is a worthwhile use of time	108	11%
Post out flyers/invitations via mail	101	10%
Advertise/promote/spread the word/keep trying (general comment without specifying how)	83	8%
Approach community organisations, educational institutions and grassroots networks	66	7%
Advertise in local newspapers, NZ Herald, OurAuckland	53	5%
Use social media - Facebook campaign/ twitter	46	5%
By keeping topics relevant/interesting/survey people on topics that	37	4%

are important to them		
Use members of the Peoples Panel to spread the word/word of mouth	34	3%
Advertise at libraries, community centres and on community noticeboards	34	3%
Have promotions/roadshows at events e.g. Santa parade/Xmas in the Park	32	3%
There are enough members already/ stay as you are/don't waste money/ its quality not quantity	29	3%
Advertise on council website/ other online advertising	28	3%
Make it easier for people to join/ not too time consuming/ keep it short	26	3%
Advertise on TV / Triangle TV	23	2%
There is not much you can do/ most people are apathetic/ too busy/people have to want to be part of it	20	2%
Advertise on radio: Radio NZ National, bFM	17	2%
Phone/ approach people on street/ shopping malls/markets etc/ direct approach	17	2%
Advertise on buses/trains/bus stops/billboards	13	1%
Through local boards/ residents and ratepayers organisations	10	1%
Involve workplaces/ businesses/try and promote through businesses	7	1%
Don't know/unsure	19	2%
Other	48	5%

Overall, two-thirds of panellists were satisfied with the way in which the People's Panel has operated over the past year, with a quarter saying they were very satisfied.

Overall, how you satisfied are you with the way the panel has operated over the past year?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

When asked what they liked about the panel, by far the most commonly mentioned theme was that it provides an opportunity for people (across all walks of life and with differing opinions) to have a voice, express their needs and perspectives and influence council’s decisions. People enjoyed being kept informed of the latest plans and activities, and taking part in the democratic process. Others liked the speed and simplicity of taking part in People’s Panel surveys. Again however, some raised concerns about whether their views were actually being listened to and acted upon.

What do you like about being part of the People's Panel?	Number of responses n=1256	% of responses
It provides a chance to be heard/have a voice/give my point of view/contribute	689	55%
It allows me to provide input and influence decisions on the development of the city/community	238	19%
I like being kept informed about council projects/knowning what's going on/thinking about issues	222	18%
It makes me feel connected/involved/part of the democratic process	180	14%
It's easy/quick/don't need to attend meetings/accessible/enjoyable	151	12%
I hope I am being listened to/not sure if what I say counts for anything	100	8%
I like feeling that my opinion matters/being listened to	70	6%
I like seeing the results of surveys	11	1%
Provides an insight into council workings	5	0%
Provides a chance to influence council spending	5	0%
Don't enjoy it/negative comment	12	1%
Don't know/just joined	37	3%
Other	33	3%

What do you like about the People’s Panel - selection of comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“I feel I have a say on what is important to me. I am included as a part of the decision-making process”</i> • <i>“It is well presented, painless and you feel like you do have an opportunity to express yourself to people who may listen”</i> • <i>“It appears that I am taking part in “the process” and I can vent at what I dislike seeing in Council”</i> • <i>““Government by opinion poll’ has a bad reputation because it implies some kind of weakness of character and apparently we are all supposed to be humble peasants who secretly just want a strong leader. But it's worth remembering that the alternative to government by opinion poll is “Government by special interests” and Auckland has had plenty of that in the past. The various enthusiasts, advocates, people with a profit motive and retired or unemployed people with time on their hands who make up many of the public submissions on a given issue are not necessarily representative of the views of the whole of Auckland. I like the idea that Auckland Council is taking a scientific research based approach to determining what the people of Auckland want. I hope that the councillors and board members of the council agencies spend a lot more time reviewing results and actively commissioning scientific sample group based information to help them make decisions rather than just listening to whatever a handful of special interests say.”</i> • <i>“A good decision requires that a diversity of views be considered. The People's panel provides that. I have a feeling that maybe the opinions of the general public ARE being</i>

considered, and that to me is most encouraging.”

- *“Being proactive and taking an interest and being involved in what is happening in my community, city and putting forward my thoughts on what I see happening and contributing ideas that may improve or better enhance my community/city.”*
- *“Firstly, by sharing my views and adding variety to what must be a large number of views. Secondly, the possibility (hope?) that it will make a difference to the City's direction. Thirdly, that the combined results contribute to a better civic environment, one that caters to the needs of the widest possible cross-section of our society.”*
- *“Good feedback into Local Government – I think it should be encouraged and if public debate is required then the peoples panel is included even down to day to day issues of judgement for political decisions. I think it makes for a very informed connected form of governance.”*
- *“Gives me an opportunity to be kept informed of Council decisions and goals, as well as giving me the opportunity to state my case.”*
- *“I enjoy the fact that I am making some contribution to the provision of feedback to the AK Council on their running of “OUR” City. In so doing I feel that the Council is kept in touch with what the People of our city think about the issues which effect them as Citizens of our City.”*

In line with comments raised earlier, the most frequently mentioned improvement suggestion was to provide information on how the results of People’s Panel surveys are actually used by the council to inform/change policies and plans. Panellists would like to see both the results of the surveys and a demonstration of what council has done differently as a result. Some would like the results of People’s Panel surveys to carry more weight, with a requirement that the council acts according to the majority’s views.

Other comments included ways to further grow the panel and make it more representative, ways to make the surveys and reports simpler and easier to understand, the need to target surveys to the topics that panellists are interested in, and ways to encourage further engagement (e.g. through online forums, focus groups, face to face meetings etc).

What else can we do to improve the People's Panel?	Number of responses n=632	% of responses
Feedback on results AND their impact - what information did you gain from the survey? What did you do with the information gained from the survey/ why?	101	16%
Positive comments about the People's Panel – I like being in the panel, doing a good job, all fine, can't do any more/keep going	101	16%
More people - promote, advertise and publicise the opportunity to join the Peoples Panel, get more people involved	79	13%
Empower People's Panel - give the People's Panel more power, listen and act on the feedback of the People's Panel/concern that council has already made decision and consultation has no impact	58	9%
Easier to understand - make information easier to understand/ keep it simple/too time consuming/more graphics	46	7%
Diverse/wider range of people - wider range of people involved so that the People's Panel represent Auckland's diverse communities/make available in other languages/variety of well-informed organisations that represent different interests	35	6%
Relevant, important topics - ensure topics are relevant and of interest to panel members/important topics/wide ranging/ ask us what we want surveys about/variety of topics suggested	34	5%

Online user friendly - make it easy to give feedback online/improve online services/chat rooms/apps	31	5%
Develop financial incentives to join the panel- e.g. rates discount/keep offering incentives	28	4%
Better questions/better survey design/improve wording of surveys/less leading or biased questions and information/more open ended questions/opportunity for other comments	28	4%
Engage people in person - hold regular forums/focus groups/workshops/meetings in person/engage in person not just through computer	27	4%
More background information - give more information on the projects being consulted on so panel members can make informed comments	21	3%
Topics with a local focus - would like to have more local board topics and input regarding local issues/ target areas in the city in which projects are being considered	19	3%
Fiscal responsibility - concern about council's financial management	7	1%
Lead in times - Let people know what is coming up for consultation and when	5	1%
More accurate time estimates - it usually takes longer to carry out the survey than originally stated, surveys take longer than five minutes to complete	3	0%
Nothing	14	2%
Don't know/haven't been involved long enough/ no opinion	74	12%
Other	26	4%

Improvement suggestions - selection of comments

- *“Let us know if our opinions have influenced council decisions on anything, or do they like all politicians just find a way to do what they want to anyway. It would be nice to know I am not just wasting my time. Thanks.”*
- *“The survey results are interesting but council should go the next step and show how the results of the survey are being used or implemented. Also it would help if council explained why they are asking the questions they do. Some of the surveys I suspect have an underlying agenda so I request that council be a bit more transparent and disclose the reasons for the survey”*
- *“It's pretty good but some of the surveys could be a little more user friendly.”*
- *“I think that it's a great initiative, being web based is great for me due to time pressures. A greater use of new media, as I said before web seminars, greater use of existing community organisations and groups to involve more people and contact with people outside of regular office hours (much of which you're already doing) is great.”*
- *“Add links into follow up emails that will take us to information we wanted to know about. E.g. I answered a question saying I would like to know more about a subject (think it was the heritage survey) and would've liked an email back to say where I could get this information.”*
- *“A regular forum with a group from the Peoples Panel and the council to discuss issues that confront the city so we can provide feedback and ideas directly.”*
- *“Approach community organisations whose memberships may be interested e.g. service clubs (Lions etc) Probus, residents associations etc”*
- *“Make it simpler for people to cope with the dissemination of vast amounts of information. I have made at least 5 thoughtful submissions and feel burnt out and ineffective.”*
- *“Keep it up, listen to the people- making sure you have a good representation, not just the vocal minority- bit tired of them.”*

- *"Maybe allowing people to form their own local groups in forums hosted by Council so that local people can discuss issues between themselves. Would be useful for participants and also give direct feedback to Council. If you set it up by Local Board areas, it would also give Local Board an area to communicate with local people in their area. I'd be happy to help to work on an idea like that if you want"*
- *"Offer 5% discount off rates bill if survey completed"*

5 How were the results used?

Panellists' comments that they would like survey results to be clearer and easier to access has led to key findings of each survey being included on the People's Panel webpage, along with the full report. The overall findings will be used to guide further improvements to the People's Panel and Auckland Council's wider consultation processes and practices.

Appendix I Questionnaire with tables:

Q1: Were you aware any of the following marketing activity encouraging feedback on any of the plans? <i>Please select all that you saw or heard</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Newspaper /magazine ads and articles	931	46%
Online ads (e.g. on NZ Herald website)	302	15%
Radio ads	247	12%
Social media	189	9%
Bus advertising	154	8%
Outdoor advertising such Billboards and bus stops	137	7%
Other (please specify)	80	4%
None - I was not aware of any marketing activity	544	27%
Unsure/Can't remember	258	13%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q2: Which of the following plans do you remember seeing or hearing advertising for? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=1228	% of responses
Auckland Plan	936	76%
Waste Management and Minimisation Plan	717	58%
Waterfront Plan	666	54%
Local Board plans	427	35%
Annual Plan	388	32%
Long-term Plan (LTP)	369	30%
Heritage Plan	293	24%
City Centre Master Plan	268	22%
Economic Development Strategy	200	16%
Unsure/Can't remember	61	5%
Other (please specify)	5	0%

Base: Panellists indicating awareness of some marketing n= 1228. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q3: Which, if any, of the following plans did you give feedback on? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Auckland Plan	545	27%
Waste Management and Minimisation Plan	526	26%
Heritage Plan	303	15%
Local Board plans	286	14%
Waterfront Plan	216	11%
Long-term Plan (LTP)	193	10%
Annual Plan	137	7%
City Centre Master Plan	117	6%
Economic Development Strategy	105	5%
I gave feedback but can't remember which plan it was for	371	18%
Other (please specify)	18	1%
I did not give feedback on any plans	763	38%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017 Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q4: How did you give feedback? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=1254	% of responses
Took part in a People's Panel survey	1,059	84%
Made a submission (online or written)	429	34%
Attended a public meeting, workshop, forum, hui or fono	191	15%
Contacted or spoke to an Auckland Council elected representative (Local Board member, councillor or the mayor)	154	12%
Contacted or spoke to an Auckland Council staff member	91	7%
Took part in a focus group	84	7%
Contributed to a Facebook or twitter discussion	35	3%
Online ads (e.g. on NZ Herald website)	17	1%
Other (please specify)	5	0%
Unsure/Can't remember	20	2%

Base: Panellists who gave feedback n=1254 Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q5: Excluding any People's Panel surveys you may have completed, did you do any of the following? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Read about a plan online	861	43%
Downloaded plan documents from the Auckland Council website	503	25%
Read printed material (summary documents or full plans) at a library or service centre, or took information away	499	25%
Made an online submissions through the Auckland Council website	273	14%
Made a written submission	263	13%
Made an oral submission at a hearing	151	7%
Read a plan on CD	44	2%
Completed a submission form at a council event (e.g. roadshow, BBQ)	29	1%
Other (please specify)	15	1%
None of the above	730	36%
Unsure/Can't remember	83	4%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017 Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q5: Overall, how satisfied are you with the opportunities Auckland Council provides for you to participate in decision-making processes?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
1 - Very dissatisfied	103	5%
2	197	10%
Total dissatisfied (1 & 2)	300	15%
3	558	28%
4	653	32%
5 - Very satisfied	400	20%
Total satisfied (4 & 5)	1053	52%
Unsure	106	5%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q6: How confident are you that you are able to influence council decision making by taking part in the consultation process (including People's Panel surveys and making online, written or oral submissions)?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
1 Not at all confident	475	24%
2	501	25%
Total not confident (1&2)	976	49%
3	549	27%
4	329	16%
5 Very confident	81	4%
Total confident (4&5)	410	20%
Unsure	82	4%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q7: What improvements do you suggest to the consultation process as a whole?	Number of responses n=749	
Open text		

Q8: How do you usually access People's Panel surveys? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Computer or laptop	1957	97%
Tablet / notebook	70	3%
Mobile phone	44	2%
Computer at public library	22	1%
School or tertiary institution computer	9	0%
Other	5	0%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q9: Where do you usually complete surveys? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
At home	1721	85%
At work	466	23%
At a library using the library computer	22	1%
At school or tertiary institution	18	1%
While travelling	13	1%
Cafes and other public places with internet access	11	1%
At a library using own computer or mobile	5	0%
Other	5	0%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q10a: For each type of email please tell us if you think you are getting too many, the right amount or not enough ... Survey invitations	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Too many	39	2%
The right amount	1772	88%
Not enough	144	7%
Unsure	62	3%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q10b: For each type of email please tell us if you think you are getting too many, the right amount or not enough ... Survey reminders	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Too many	68	3%
The right amount	1630	81%
Not enough	100	5%
Unsure	219	11%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q10c: For each type of email please tell us if you think you are getting too many, the right amount or not enough ... Results updates	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Too many	8	0%
The right amount	1340	66%
Not enough	487	24%
Unsure	182	9%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q10d: For each type of email please tell us if you think you are getting too many, the right amount or not enough ... Information about other opportunities to give feedback	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Too many	15	1%
The right amount	1076	53%
Not enough	610	30%
Unsure	316	16%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q11: Which type of surveys do you enjoy taking part in? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Short quickfire "tick box" question surveys	1460	72%
Medium length mixed question surveys	1031	51%
In-depth open-ended question surveys	349	17%
No preference	328	16%
Other	16	1%
Unsure / don't know	15	1%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q15: How could we improve our emails and surveys?	Number of responses n=569	
Open text		

Q16: Have you ever read any of the reports on the People's Panel webpage?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Yes	1002	50%
No	755	37%
Unsure / Can't Remember	260	13%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q17: Overall, how satisfied are you with the reporting of People's Panel results?	Number of responses n=1002	% of responses
1 - Very dissatisfied	8	1%
2	68	7%
Total dissatisfied (1 & 2)	76	8%
3	312	31%
4	410	41%
5 - Very satisfied	185	18%
Total satisfied (4 & 5)	595	59%
Unsure	19	2%

Base: Panellists who had read a report n= 1002

Q18: How could we improve the way we report People's Panel results?	Number of responses n=585	
Open text		

Q19: Would you like to receive invitations to take part in focus groups if they were in a convenient location for you?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Yes, I would like to be invited to take part in a focus group	1341	66%
No, I am not interested in taking part in any focus group	427	21%
Other	47	2%
Unsure	202	10%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q20: Where in Auckland would you be able to attend a focus group, if you were interested in taking part? <i>Select all that apply</i>	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
Central	692	34%
North	411	20%
West	314	16%
South	232	12%
East	208	10%
Other	30	1%
Not sure / would depend on when and where	234	12%
Not applicable / I am not interested in taking part in a focus group	434	22%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017. Note this was a multiple response question, so responses add to more than 100%

Q21: How likely are you to recommend joining the People's Panel to your family, friends and colleagues?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
1 - Very unlikely	118	6%
2	230	11%
Total unlikely (1 & 2)	348	17%
3	538	27%
4	553	27%
5 - Very likely	510	25%
Total likely (4 & 5)	1063	52%
Unsure	68	3%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q22: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the panel has been operating over the past year?	Number of responses n=2017	% of responses
1 - Very dissatisfied	13	1%
2	73	4%
Total dissatisfied (1 & 2)	86	5%
3	487	24%
4	779	39%
5 - Very satisfied	502	25%
Total satisfied (4 & 5)	1281	64%
Unsure	163	8%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 2017

Q23: What do you like about being part of the People's Panel?	Number of responses n=1256	
Open text		

Q24: What else can we do to improve People's Panel?	Number of responses n=632	
Open text		

Appendix II Respondent profile

	All respondents n=2017	Percentages (%) n=2017	Statistics NZ Percentages (%) 2006 census data
Gender			
Female	989	49%	51%
Male	979	49%	49%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	49	2%	
Age			
15-24 years	46	2%	20%
25-34 years	201	10%	19%
35-44 years	395	20%	21%
45-54 years	407	20%	17%
55-64 years	471	23%	12%
65-74 years	352	17%	7%
75+ years	92	5%	6%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	53	3%	
Ethnicity (Multiple response)			
European	1773	88%	55%
Maori	74	4%	11%
Pacific Peoples	57	3%	15%
Asian	104	5%	18%
Middle Eastern, Latin American, African	23	1%	1%
Other	47	2%	8%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	81	4%	
Local Board			
Albert-Eden	178	9%	7%
Devonport-Takapuna	98	5%	4%
Franklin	94	5%	4%
Great Barrier	3	0.1%	0.1%
Henderson-Massey	112	6%	8%
Hibiscus and Bays	176	9%	6%
Howick	130	6%	9%
Kaipatiki	124	6%	6%
Mangere-Otahuhu	39	2%	5%
Manurewa	45	2%	6%
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	85	4%	5%
Orakei	153	8%	6%
Otara-Papatoetoe	33	2%	6%
Papakura	41	2%	3%
Puketapapa	41	2%	4%
Rodney	123	6%	4%
Upper Harbour	56	3%	3%
Waiheke	19	1%	1%
Waitakere Ranges	91	5%	3%
Waitemata	245	12%	5%
Whau	86	4%	5%
Other/Prefer not to say/Unknown	45	2%	-

Demographics from People's Panel registration information