What Bitou residents want

Ratepayers' survey results and brief for the incoming Council · 738 responses, 20–29 September 2026

Headline findings

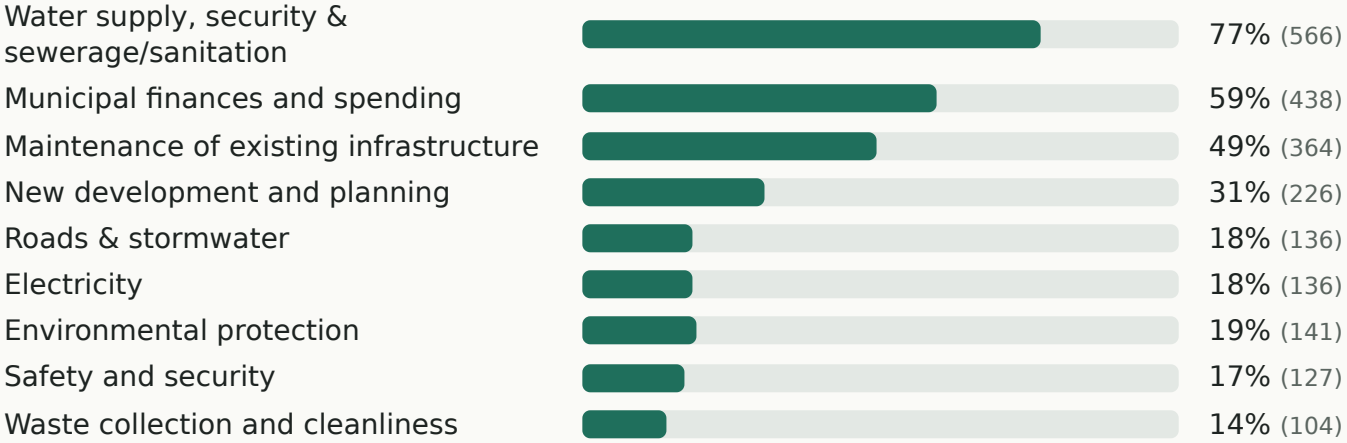
- **Water, sewerage and maintenance come first.** 77% put water/sewerage in their top three, and 75% want future money spent on maintaining what already exists.
- **Governance is the second big story.** 82% want corruption and non-performance dealt with quickly, 75% want competent leaders appointed, and 59% put municipal finances in their top three.
- **Charges are not accepted as good value.** 90% are unhappy with rate and tariff increases; only 10% call them reasonable.
- **Service satisfaction is lukewarm.** Average 2.7 out of 5; 33% dissatisfied and only 12% satisfied.

How far can we rely on these numbers?

This is a self-selected online survey, so it shows what engaged ratepayers think. About 65% of responses came from Ward 2. Even so, the top priorities were the same in every ward with 25+ responses, which makes the main message hard to dismiss. Percentages for "select up to 3" questions add up to more than 100%. Open-text answers (Q2 and Q7) were grouped by keyword, so the figures are approximate and one answer can count in more than one theme. A small number of near-identical response pairs (about 2%) may be repeat submissions; they do not change any result.

Q1. Three most urgent issues for the new Council

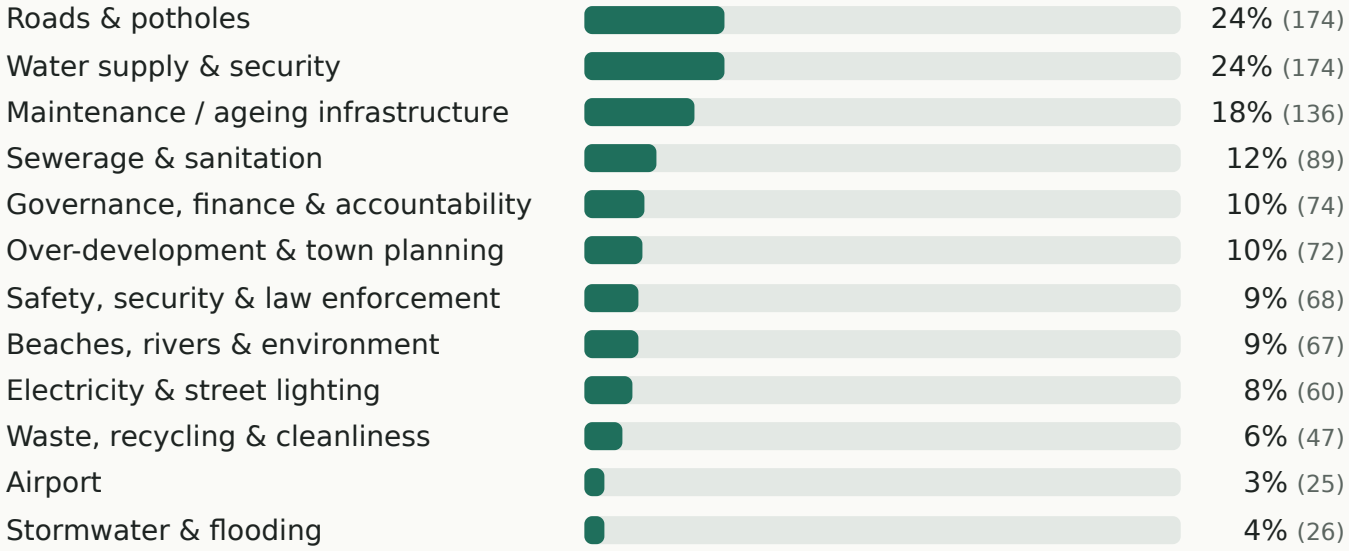
Select up to 3 · 738 answered



> **Interpretation.** Three issues stand well clear: water/sewerage (77%), municipal finances (59%) and maintenance (49%). 127 residents chose all three. Development and planning is fourth (31%). Roads, electricity, the environment and safety each sit near 17–19%. Housing and jobs rank low here, which reflects who responded (largely ratepayers) rather than a lack of need in other communities. Note that water supply and sewerage were combined in one option, so we cannot separate them.

Q2. The one service or issue that most needs to improve in your area

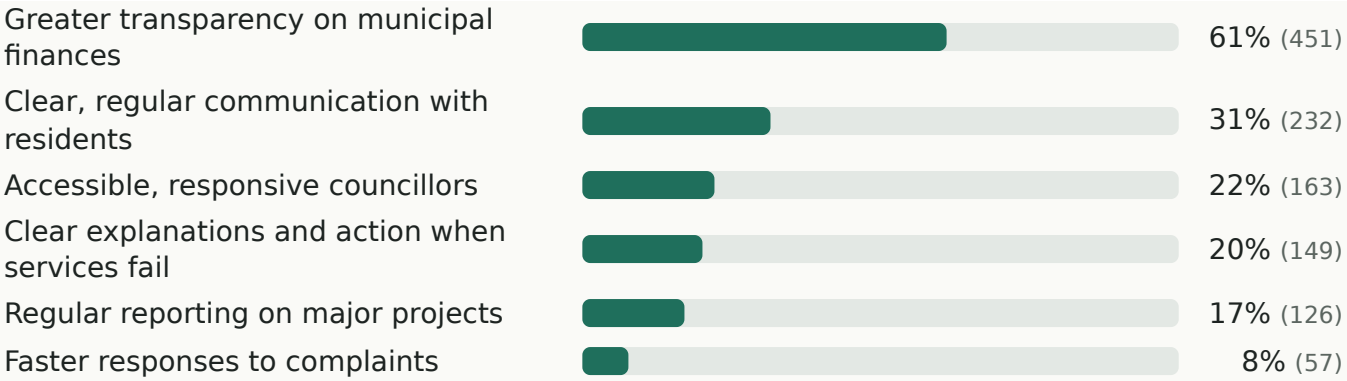
Open text · 737 answered · approximate theme counts



> **Interpretation.** Two out of three answers name basic infrastructure: roads, water, sewerage, electricity or maintenance. Roads and potholes (24%) and water supply (24%) lead, and water plus sewerage together reach about 30%. About one in ten names over-development, and a similar share names governance and spending. Airport reopening (25 mentions) is a small but distinct theme. Repeated local hotspots: Longships Road (11 mentions), Keurbooms River Road (drainage, silting and flooding), sewage into the Poortjies lagoon, a second electricity feed for Keurboomstrand, Robberg beach access and boardwalks, High Street completion, and waste in Kranshoek. Use these as named examples in meetings.

Q3. What residents expect from new Councillors on governance

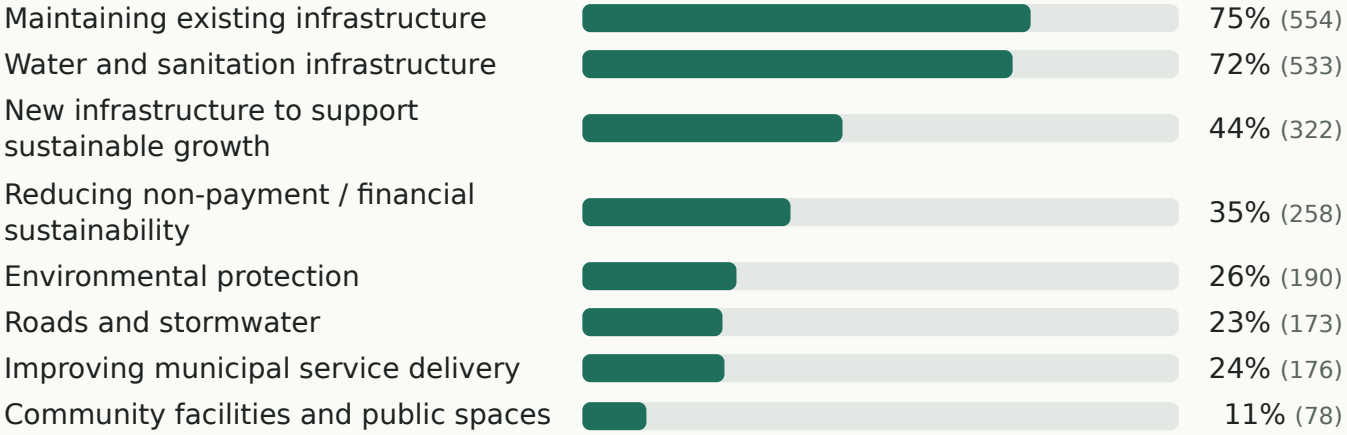
Select up to 3 · 738 answered



> **Interpretation.** This is the clearest result in the survey. Acting on corruption (82%), competent appointments (75%) and financial transparency (61%) are far ahead of everything else, and 463 respondents (63%) chose both corruption and competence. Residents care less about "softer" items like faster complaint response (8%) or project reporting (17%). They want consequences and integrity first, with better communication a distant second at 31%.

Q4. Where limited funds should go over the next five years

Select up to 3 · 738 answered



> **Interpretation.** Maintenance (75%) and water/sanitation (72%) dominate. New growth infrastructure is a clear third (45%), so residents are not against growth; they want the basics right first. This matches the open-text answers, where many ask for development to pause or be approved only once water and sewerage capacity is proven. Reducing non-payment is chosen by 35%, which shows real concern about who is paying for services. Community facilities (11%) rank last.

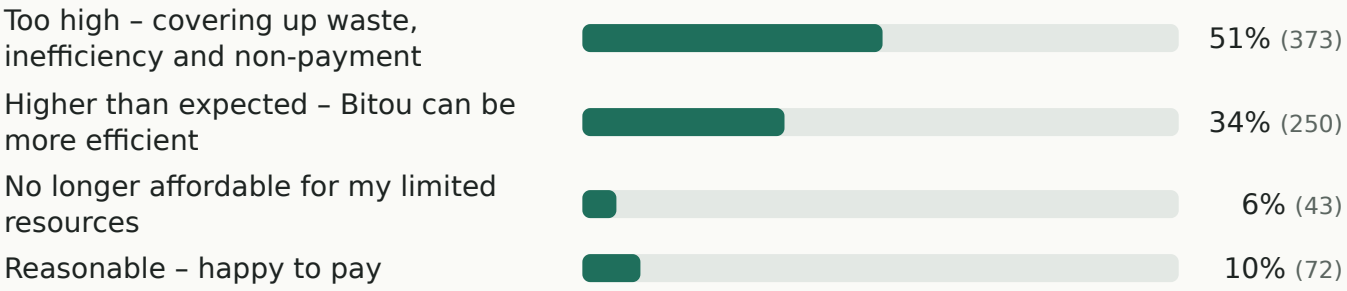
Q5. Overall satisfaction with service delivery

1–5 scale · mean 2.71 · 738 answered

> **Interpretation.** 33% are dissatisfied (1–2) and only 12% are satisfied (4–5); 55% sit at "3 – mostly satisfied". Because the scale has three positive labels and two negative, a 3 is better read as "tolerating, not happy" than as a real endorsement. Nobody is enthusiastic: fewer than 1% gave a 5. The message is a large, reluctant middle that could tip either way depending on the next five years.

Q6. Satisfaction with increases in charges and rates over five years

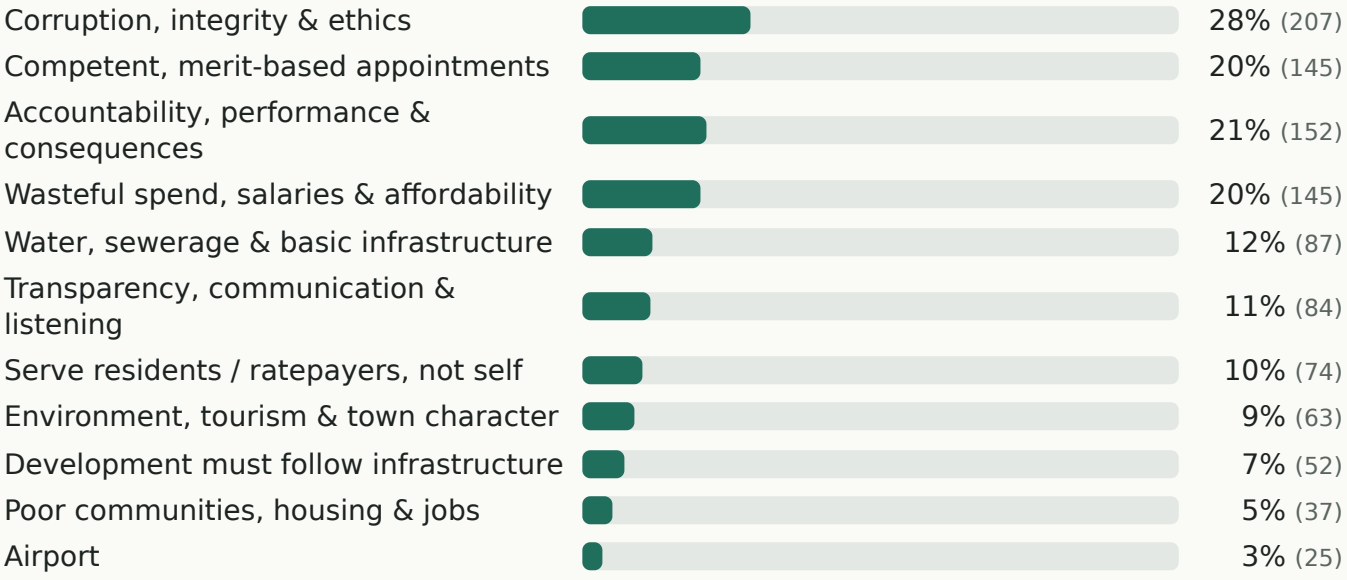
Single choice · 738 answered



> **Interpretation.** 84% say charges are too high or could be delivered more efficiently, and a further 6% say they are unaffordable. Only 10% are content. The most-chosen option (51%) links high charges to waste, inefficiency and non-payment, so residents are asking for value and accountability rather than simply lower bills. Open comments also ask for clearer bills (for example, unexplained electricity line items) and for billing queries to be answered.

Q7. One message or request for the incoming Council

Open text · 736 answered · approximate theme counts



> **Interpretation.** About two-thirds of the messages are about governance and conduct, and the tone is direct: *"Serve the people"*, *"Do the job you are being paid to do"*. Corruption and integrity (28%), competent appointments (20%) and accountability with consequences (21%) lead. Specific asks include ending long suspensions on full pay, independent checking of qualifications, no cadre

> deployment or jobs for friends, clean audits, tender scrutiny and stopping political infighting over positions. Some respondents (roughly 5%) call for attention to poorer communities, and a few raise race in appointments; the association should keep its framing on verified competence for all.

Q8. Ward of respondents

Ward	Responses	Share	Dissatisfied (1–2)	Charges too high / unaffordable
Ward 1	110	15%	35%	88%
Ward 2	467	63%	33%	90%
Ward 3	31	4%	32%	87%
Ward 4	40	5%	30%	95%
Ward 5	15	2%	60%	93%
Ward 6	18	2%	28%	89%
Ward 7	50	7%	26%	94%

> **Interpretation.** The sample leans heavily to Ward 2, and Wards 5 and 6 have too few responses (15 and 18) for firm conclusions; 6 respondents chose more than one ward. Wards 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 all rank water/sewerage, finances and maintenance as their top three.