

4.10 The worst thing about living in Buller



We asked participants what they thought was the worst thing about living in Buller.

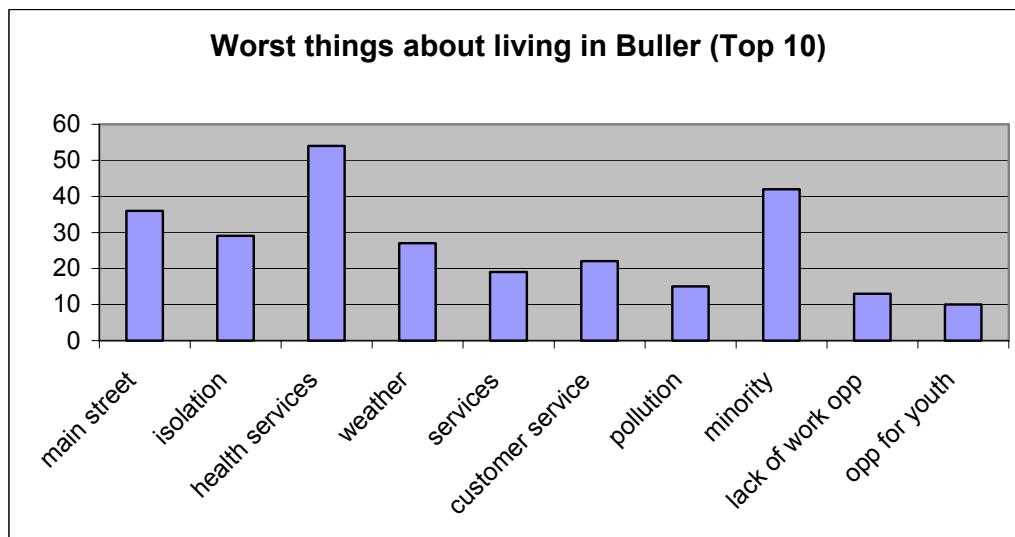
The top 10 collective responses from participants are represented on the graph below.

The uncertain nature of health services topped the responses, with people commenting on health services generally, not knowing what is happening with provision/retention of some health services, and isolation and distances to travel to access health services when required.

While residents in the Buller were positive about the strength of their communities, there was concern over what was generally termed the negative and destructive views of minority groups or extremists. It was viewed that such groups were not generally representative and that agencies, in particular district and regional councils, were being unduly influenced by their views. Comments related to the lack of flexibility of vocal minority groups, resistance to change, narrow mindedness and not being open to new ideas.

Residents wanted to see an improvement in the main street of Westport, which was described as lacking identity, shabby, untidy, and ugly. The approach to Westport was seen as affecting peoples decision to stay on and travel to other areas in the district. Other comments extended to the presence of wrecked cars and rundown properties being of concern.

Isolation ranked in the top 10 best things, as well as the top 10 worst things, with the negative comments relating to distances and costs of travel to main centres when required, particularly to access services not available within the Buller. Lack of public transport etc was also raised.



The weather also appeared in both lists, with the rain, people's perceptions about the weather (usually those who live outside the region), and people complaining about the weather, being listed as the more negative aspects of the regions climate.

A lack of customer service, and poor customer service levels at business and retail outlets locally were mentioned. Access to some services, either due to tradespeople being fully booked and unable to take on new work, or due to a lack of some businesses in the district, were seen as low points. Environmental pollution included comments about air, water and land pollution.

Lack of work opportunities included ongoing career options within the region. Lack of opportunities for youth included day-to-day social and community activities, as well as work opportunities.

What Buller people said.....

"Isolation from health and support services and an inability of Government to recognise this special need."

Comments from youth included "there is nothing to do here, not enough jobs, doctors, boredom!" and "nothing to do for teenagers."

"There is a lack of a main town to be proud of."

"The worst thing is people's apathy – thinking that they are owed a living."

"Our poor health system is detracting people (particularly professional people) from settling in Buller."

"The narrow ugly image of Westport – and its reputation."

"Delays getting professionals – builders, electricians etc."

"Some retailers are not interested in helping due to a lack of competition."

"Pollution of Buller River and lack of recycling facilities."

"Isolation from major centres."

"Inconsistent health services."

"Rubbish dumped on beaches and reserves."

"The old mentality – we've done this for years, so we will just keep on doing it. No respect."

“Ongoing resistance to managed change.”

“Not being able to catch and prosecute the vandals – burnt out cars, graffiti, litter on the beaches.”

“Negativity, widespread ignorance of some people – usually the most vocal, and the minority.”

“Lazy young people who destroy and vandalise what others have worked very hard to establish.”

“Abysmal medical services.”

“An attitude that mediocrity is ok.”

“The sandflies!”

“There’s nothing bad about Buller!”

“I don’t have the beach to myself these days.”

“Slack attitude of locals to dumping.”

“Council cowering to individuals, and procrastination.”

“Business’s not being able to, or wanting to, service customer requirements.”

“Poor secondary education.”

“Ignorance and arrogance.”

“Cowshit on the roads.”

“Unfit drinking water.”

“The complete lack of understanding of the importance of customer service.”

